



Winter 2016
**Women's
Quarterly**

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Advertising Supplement

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A new home for a mouse?

It's the way we roll at my house

Just a Thought

BY TERRI HIBBARD



Yes, it's true. When I catch a mouse in my little Hav-a-Heart-like mousetrap called a Mice Cube, I relocate him. And, yes it's also true that I pack a lunch for him so he has sustenance while he adjusts to his new home.

My children accept this as one of my many eccentricities, but I get looks of disbelief (or disgust or sympathy) from non-family members if the subject of mice happens to come up in conversation.

Why would anyone treat germ-laden, wire-chewing, scream-provoking rodents with such care?

Okay, relocating mice is probably not sensible or prudent or rational or practical. But it is the kind thing to do for a creature that — like all of us — is simply trying to have a life. Every little mouse wants a comfortable home and enough food. Don't we all?

I do understand that the mouse I save today may be tomorrow's meal for a hawk, an owl or an eagle, but that's all right. That hawk or eagle is also just trying to have a life, and a mouse meal now and then serves the purpose. For me, relocating mice is so much better than using a horrible neck-breaking trap, or poison that leads to an agonizing death, or those sticky mats that . . . I can't even think about it!

As soon as my children were old enough to understand, I taught them not to step on ants just because they happened to be near a little boy's or girl's foot.

"That ant is trying to get home to take care of her children," I'd explain when the children were too young to understand about respecting a life even if that life seems to be insignificant.

During ant season, I have an ant catcher on my kitchen counter. It's a yogurt container actually. I use the lid to slide the bug into the container and take it outside to place the ant on my rose bushes where it will happily consume the aphids that are trying to consume my roses.

Using ants as a natural pesticide is, I think, pretty darned smart.

My daughter-in-law, Sarah, sometimes reminds me that I really screwed up with Charlotte when it comes to treating bugs with kindness. Charlotte, 7 years old now, is terrified of bugs and stomps on them without mercy. It all began the day I picked her up at daycare when she was about 14 months old. Her daycare was located in a wooded area on Mt. Desert Island and, in May, the black flies were abundant and hungry. Because the little ones spent some time playing outside, Charlotte was covered with itchy black fly bites. We both suffered through a very long, itchy and sleepless night. The next day I kept her inside, but every day after that, when we went out I kept a close watch for black flies and when one came near her, I murdered it without a second thought proclaiming "**Bad Bug!**" each time.

Bad Bug was imprinted on Charlotte's brain never to be altered.

I grew up in a family that took animal kindness to a whole other level. My grandfather, Orville, owned a farm but the animals were all pets. He worked the horses and milked the cows and ate the chicken eggs, but when his animals died, it was of natural causes and they were mourned.

When I lived with my uncle, Chester Hibbard, and our home was invaded by a huge, ugly river rat, Unc' went to great lengths to end its life mercifully. He caught it in a giant net, put it in a tiny bathroom with a bottle of chloroform and Mr. Rat peacefully entered eternal sleep.

Maybe I'm a hypocrite when I talk about being kind to animals because I do eat meat occasionally. But the way I figure it, it's impossible for me to change the meat-eating world and save all living creatures. However, I can have at least an impact on my small world - I believe that's worth something.

Wouldn't our world be a better place if every child grew up believing that all living creatures have a right to a good life?

Director of Maine tourism enjoys the fruits of her labor

Ouellette snowmobiles, rafts, hikes and skis her workplace

BY ANNA MCDERMOTT

*Nancy Marshall Communications
Special to Women's Quarterly*

If you were told you could find the director of Maine's Office of Tourism snowmobiling through the North Maine Woods, rafting Maine's Class III-V rapids, or cooking at her own lakefront restaurant, it might sound like a far-fetched PR stunt.

Yet Carolann Ouellette has done all this — and far more. Her passion for adventure is perfectly suited to her task with the Maine Office of Tourism. An office within the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development, it is charged with supporting and expanding the tourism industry, a vital component of the state's economy.

Ouellette knows from firsthand experience why visitors come to Maine and what it is that makes this place so special. She lives in both Hallowell and Jackman, where her career in Maine's tourism industry began.

After graduating from Cornell University School of Hotel Administration, Ouellette went on to work at Attean Lake Lodge in Jackman where she'd spent summers as a child. Over the next two decades, while enjoying bird hunting, hiking, kayaking, skiing and snowmobiling, Ouellette managed the Sugarloaf Inn, became a registered Maine whitewater guide, co-managed an outdoor adventure company and became the chef/owner of Jackman's Moose Point Tavern, which earned numerous awards and accolades under her ownership.

In 2004, Ouellette worked at the Maine Office of Tourism as a senior tourism officer. She left that position and was re-hired in 2007 as deputy director and, in 2011, she was chosen as director. And it's clear to see why. She lives the life that people want to experience on their vacations here.

"Simply put, my job is to get visitors here by promoting the state as a tourism destination," Ouellette said.

Maine's economy relies heavily on tourism — tourism-related businesses generated more than 94,000 jobs and \$5.4 billion in direct expenditures in 2014, with a total economic impact close to \$8 billion.

"It is why MOT's marketing focuses on our incredible assets," Ouellette said. "The brand platform is expressed creatively in advertising by focusing on the indescribable aspect of Maine that we call 'The Maine Thing.' It's what attracts people who enjoy the outdoors, cultural experiences, discovering new people and



"In the past, research has shown that once people visit Maine, they are very likely to return. Those of us lucky enough to live here know there is something wonderful about each season and there's always somewhere new to explore. Maine is what we're selling, and we have a stellar product."

**CAROLANN OUELLETTE,
DIRECTOR OF THE MAINE OFFICE OF TOURISM**



Carolann Ouellette speaking at Brunswick Station.

places, and connecting with nature."

Ouellette said that preserving Maine's natural beauty benefits not just visitors, but the quality of life for Maine residents and communities.

"The total budget for the office is about \$11 million. And there is good reason much of it is spent on promotion; if the money spent by all tourists in Maine were to drop by 15 percent, the average Maine household would see a tax increase of about \$113 to maintain government services at current levels," Ouellette said.

The mission of the Maine Office of Tourism, Ouellette said, is for Maine to become the premier four-season destination in New England. It seems to be working, as tourism visitation has increased since 2012.

Emphasis has been put on growing the first-time visitors segment, and Ouellette reported that, in 2014, 4 million visited the state for the first time, up 43.5 percent over the previous year. Total visitation also was up, at 32.9 million last

year, compared to 29.8 million in 2013.

Another goal of the office is to maintain the likelihood that visitors recommend Maine as a vacation destination. That likelihood now stands at an impressive 92 percent.

"In the past, research has shown that once people visit Maine, they are very likely to return," Ouellette said. "Those of us lucky enough to live here know there is something wonderful about each season and there's always somewhere new to explore. Maine is what we're selling, and we have a stellar product."

Ouellette is energetic and personable, and her versatility and enthusiasm for her career are apparent. She knows what it's like to be a Maine innkeeper, or a guide on the river, and she understands how much small businesses depend on visitors coming to the state for their livelihood. Her work to bring Maine to the forefront of a competitive tourism landscape is based on years of personal experience and the office's research.

"Our entire marketing program is



Contributed photos

Ouellette enjoys bird hunting, hiking, kayaking, skiing and snowmobiling. In the past, Ouellette managed the Sugarloaf Inn, became a registered Maine whitewater guide, co-managed an outdoor adventure company and became the chef/owner of Jackman's Moose Point Tavern, which earned numerous awards and accolades under her ownership.

based on research," she said. "We need to know what people want from a vacation, who they are and how we can target them."

The latest research allows for the Maine Office of Tourism to market to people most likely to come to Maine, and who will spend the most while they are here. In the past, the Office focused on age groups and activities, but this new approach targets groups of people based on the values they embrace.

"People are looking for a destination vacation experience — a place they can relax, refresh and rejuvenate, or find whatever thrills them, a place where the food is as good as the view, where they can feel free to simply be themselves," Ouellette said. "Maine's culture embraces all of that, and that's why the state continues to gain attention."

Maine made the cut for Fodor's Travel Go List for 2016, a list of 26 can't-miss destinations for travel aficionados looking for a new adventure, according to Ouellette.

"This shows the word is getting out about what makes Maine special, from the beauty of our diverse landscape and coastline, with access to amazing outdoor adventure experiences, to the explosive growth of our 'locavore' food and beverage scene, our friendly people, and the quality of Maine's lodging and cultural offerings

"I have the best job I could ever imagine," Ouellette said. "To promote a place I love is a dream come true."

Life in the stacks — the making of a librarian

Sugden followed her dream

BY NANCY GALLAGHER
Correspondent

Going in circles can be a very good thing. Just ask Waterville Public Library Director Sarah Sugden. Her first job, at age 14, was in the Waterville Public Library.

After graduating from Waterville Senior High School, Sugden earned a baccalaureate in history at Dartmouth College and a graduate degree in library information science at Simmons College. Her work experience ranges from university and college libraries to high school and public libraries throughout the country.

“Public libraries are my favorite,” Sugden said.

She returned to Waterville 11 years ago with her husband, Matthew, and their son, Jack, to become director at the Waterville Public Library. Their Vassalboro home is centrally located for convenient access to Sugden’s siblings and parents as well as her work.

Sugden also enjoys watching Jack, age 13, play basketball. She coached her 7-year-old daughter Madeline’s youth soccer team while also “helping her use her powers for good and not evil,” said Sugden, whose gentle humor focuses on instilling compassion and kindness in her children while encouraging them to make good choices.

Andrew Carnegie gifted the City of Waterville with its public library in 1905. Mid-century renovations, a fire in the 1960s and the passage of time left the building in an unsafe condition. (Mushrooms grew on the ceiling!)

In March, 2005, Sugden orchestrated a capital campaign to remedy these deficiencies. The library reopened in March of 2011 as an “accessible, safe, climate-controlled, mold-free facility” with an elevator, air conditioning, an improved heating system and additional meeting spaces, along with Wi-Fi and security cameras, Sugden said. A converted attic now houses an art gallery with revolving exhibits that feature local artists.

Significant changes in technology have marked the first 27 years in her chosen field. How to effectively incorporate those changes, as well as changes yet to come in the next 27 years, excites her. Why 27 years? Sugden considers this the halfway point in her career because 27 years from now, she said, she can retire.

While the library’s timeless central mission of connecting people with ideas and information has not changed,



Contributed photo
Waterville Public Library Director Sarah Sugden.

Sugden has led an effort to make it easier for people “to access information and ideas and to share their stories.” To that end, she works diligently to identify and eliminate barriers for people so they can connect with critical resources and more dynamic opportunities.

In 2010, in collaboration with the Augusta Career Center, Kennebec Valley Community Action Program, New Ventures (formerly known as Women, Work and Community,) the Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce and the Central Maine Growth Council, she helped create the Business, Career and Creativity Center within the library to enable Waterville area job seekers, business owners and entrepreneurs to locate and connect with appropriate resources. Qualified career counselors are available Tuesday mornings from 10 a.m. until noon for personalized help with resume writing, the Maine Job Bank and area hiring opportunities.

The cost? “It’s free, free, free,” Sugden said.

In the meantime, Sugden has laid the foundation for an impressive legacy. A former Waterville Rotary Club president, she currently serves on its board of directors. She also participates in Rhoda Reads, a Rotary Club literacy skills building program. As a member of the Waterville Historical

“Libraries are here, and if you want to make use of their resources to make your life better, they will help you.”

SARAH SUGDEN, WATERVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Society, she is curator of Waterville’s Redington Museum. In line with her love of learning, she also serves on the board of the Mid-Maine Global Forum.

Sugden is an effervescent cheerleader for America’s free public libraries.

“Libraries are here, and if you want to make use of their resources to make your life better, they will help you,” she said.

With an ongoing to-do list and boundless enthusiasm for her work, her family and her community,

Sugden weaves a colorful tapestry of projects that illustrate how exciting it is for her to be in Waterville these days.

The Waterville Public Library, located at 73 Elm Street, Waterville, Maine 04901, is open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday. During the school year, the library is open from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday. For more information, call 872-5433, consult the library website at www.watervillelibrary.org or email info@watervillelibrary.org.



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New Ventures Maine offers expanded outreach programs to entrepreneurs

BY VALERIE TUCKER
Correspondent

Maine Centers for Women, Work and Community has expanded its programs under a new name, to serve a broader range of the population in today's fast-paced, Internet-oriented economy. With nearly 40 years of experience, the centers help Maine people with employment and job training resources, financial counseling and assistance with starting a business. Their history started during President Jimmy Carter's administration.

National legislation passed the Displaced Homemakers Act in 1977, and Maine established a displaced homemakers program through state legislation in 1978. The effort initially addressed the unique circumstances of women who found themselves in their 40s, 50s and 60s, divorced, separated or widowed. Those first clients had few job skills, and many had never worked outside the home. They were unaware of their resources and weren't eligible for benefits available to full-time workers, including unemployment insurance or Social Security.

In 1994, the several programs consolidated as Maine Centers for Women, Work and Community. In Aug. 2015, they adopted their new name, New Ventures Maine, to reflect a broader outreach and expanded program offerings. Funding and support comes from many partnerships and sources, according to Western Maine Regional Manager Janet Smith.

"New Ventures is administered by and operates under the educational tax-exempt status of the University of Maine System, with a Governor-appointed Advisory Council," Smith said. "Funds comes from the University of Maine, federal and state contracts and grants, grants from private foundations, individual and corporate donations, and fee-for-service opportunities."

Each county offers both an outreach center and dozens of classes throughout the year at convenient locations and times.

Class topics fall within three general categories: Start A Business, Build Your Career and Manage Your Money.

A 60-hour entrepreneurship training course teaches record-keeping, tax planning and preparation, financing and legal resources and an analysis of the competition.

A 2016 New Ventures Entrepreneurship Training runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Wednesdays, from March 1 to May 18, at the Lewiston-Auburn campus of the University of Southern Maine.

Students will have a completed business plan at the end of the class and can attend three monthly follow-up networking sessions. Registration deadline is Jan. 24, with a class orientation on Feb. 24. Class size is limited to 15. The course qualifies for three pass/fail credits from the University of Maine at Augusta upon approval of the completed business plan, with a small processing fee. For more information or to register, contact New Ventures Micro-Enterprise Specialist

"New Ventures is administered by and operates under the educational tax-exempt status of the University of Maine System, with a Governor-appointed Advisory Council."

JANET SMITH, WESTERN MAINE REGIONAL MANAGER



Photo contributed by Wylde Photography

New Ventures Maine's marketing mini-grant program strengthens market access for entrepreneurs by helping them develop professional, well-planned marketing tools, materials and activities. New Ventures Maine awards mini-grants of up to \$400 for micro-enterprises marketing projects. Eligible enterprises must be in business five years or less and employ five or fewer people. A 25 percent match is required. The Deer Isle-Stonington company, 44 North Coffee, was a recipient of a Downtown Dollars marketing mini-grant competition. Co-owners Melissa Raftery (pictured) and Megan Wood custom roast small batches of organic Arabica coffee beans in the upstairs of the historic Deer Isle schoolhouse. They sell their coffee online and have sold to retail stores and restaurants as far as Kennebunkport.

Karleen Andrews at 557-1885 or email karleen.andrews@maine.edu

A Clean Up Your Credit class will be offered from 6-8:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 10 at the New Ventures office at 108 Perham St.

According to the course description, a person will learn how to reduce debt, improve credit, and maintain a good credit score, as well as create a step-by-step plan to pay down debt.

In Augusta, a My Money Works class will run from 6 – 8:30 p.m. on Thursdays, from April 28 to May 19 at Cony High School.

This class can help participants gain the skills and confidence needed to stretch money, pay bills, reduce debt, find money for savings, plan for retirement and set personal financial goals, according to the course description. At the end of the class, participants are expected to have a plan to achieve greater financial stability.

Participants can attend a follow-up session for additional networking and support. Other classes may cover business basics, entrepreneurship and self employment. Students learn the pros and cons of owning a business, steps in the startup, financing and day-to-day phases. They create a simple business plan, market their idea and plan a cash flow.

The centers also award mini-grants for unique business marketing ideas to support their business's growth. One recent award went to the Schoolhouse Gallery on Main Street in Kingfield. The art gallery helped launch the monthly Kingfield Artwalk through downtown. The funds will be used to develop posters and postcards for exhibits to help bring new customers to the gallery and the town.

For more information or to register, visit newventuresmaine.org

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Dark Chocolate Meringue Sweetheart Kisses

BY NANCY P. MCGINNIS
Correspondent

There are some times that just call for dark chocolate. It doesn't have to be much, just enough to transform a gloomy winter day — or perhaps, for those who are willing to share, to serve as a Valentine token of affection.

These meringue cookies, almost lighter than air, are all sweetness and light — and chocolate. Only a handful of ingredients are needed for this classic recipe: a prime example of a case where the sum is definitely more than the parts.

A few tips: whenever beating egg whites to form meringue, allow them to come to room temperature for loftier results. Also, make sure the mixing bowl and the beaters are scrupulously clean, without a trace of oil or fat, which could wreak havoc.

A food processor comes in handy to chop the nuts and chocolate all at once, since they are added together. Avoid over-processing, which can lead to nut butter. Pulse briefly, just as many times as needed to result in fairly even-sized, small pieces. And use the lightest possible touch with the spatula to fold the ingredients together, so that the meringue holds its delicate shape.

The results are slightly chewy, melt-in-your-mouth delectable!



Nancy P. McGinnis photos
With a few simple ingredients and helpful kitchen tools such as a mixer and food processor, it's takes only a few minutes' time and effort to whip up a batch of irresistible, light as a cloud meringue kisses that melt in your mouth.

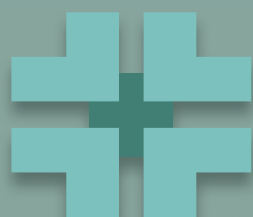
SWEETHEART KISSES
Makes about two dozen

3 egg whites, at room temperature
½ cup sugar
4 oz. bittersweet chocolate, coarsely grated
4 oz. almonds or hazelnuts, coarsely chopped

Preheat oven to 275 degrees. Prepare a standard baking tray or cookie sheet either by lining with parchment paper, or greasing with butter.

In a clean dry bowl, beat the egg whites with a hand-held or stand mixer. Add sugar gradually, then beat the mixture an additional five minutes until stiff and glossy. Using a rubber spatula or wooden spoon, gently fold in chocolate and nuts just until they are evenly distributed.

Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls onto a prepared tray or sheet. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes, until the meringues are just set and take on the slightest golden color. Remove from the oven, and allow to stand briefly. Remove meringues carefully to a wire rack to cool completely.



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Cook helps award excellence with the perfect gift at her Oakland shop

BY SUSAN VARNEY
Correspondent

"I've always wanted my own business," an enthusiastic Rhonda Cook said in her studio lair at Olympic Awards & Recognition, surrounded by computers and graphic engraving machinery, award items and colorful displays and catalogues.

Cook is professionally trained and has been in business since 2008. Jeff Cook, her husband and owner of OMNIGraphique Designers next door, has been in business for 45 years. She said they are a team and she has consulted him for his design and business experience since she started her own business seven years ago.

"Our businesses complement each other and our clients include many local businesses and institutions from community to scholastic," she said.

Together, their client list is a who's who of Maine and New England. Among their customers are many local academic institutions such as Kennebec Valley Community College and nonprofit associations such as the Krohns and Colitis Association, Maine Harness Horseman's Association, Capital Area City Gun and Rifle Club, Arnold Trail Gun Club, Maine Sportsman's Alliance, Inland Hospital, New England Labs, and local businesses such as Silver Street Tavern, TRC and T-Mobile to name a few. The list goes on to include anyone who is celebrating life's special moments and special people.

Olympic Awards & Recognition specializes in plaques and corporate, institutional and scholastic award programs and name badges with attention to detail, innovation and service, making it one of Maine's premier providers of promotional products, according to Cook.

She is a certified laser engraver and has

the equipment to engrave with wood, marble, glass, metal, acrylic, ceramic tiles and various other substrates. Rhonda noted that having a full-time graphic designer in house sets them apart from their contemporaries.

Rhonda holds a business degree from Thomas College, certification in laser and rotary engraving from Gravograph in Duluth, Georgia, sublimation training from JDS Industries, and her design and layout skills from her partner and husband.

Appreciation and promotional items include items such as cribbage sets, chess sets, poker sets, or kitchen tools; a coaster set, water bottles or pet bowls; pen sets, bottle openers, key rings, flashlights, clocks . . . the choices are seemingly unlimited. There is something for everyone, from the sportsman the hunter and fisherman to the golfer and equestrian.

A customer can choose designs for team banners, T-shirts, ribbons, pins medals, luggage tags, bag clips, lapel pins and buttons, or a logo can be imprinted and given to members of a team to show spirit and appreciation, Cook said.

Cook's promotional materials include flag display cases, award frames, desk accessories, shadow box frames for special groupings or a special single item such as a prized golf putter, dress sword or other memorabilia, military and sports awards. Presentation is everything, according to Cook, who said an appropriate presentation can transform treasured items into history and legend.

There is fun stuff such as flip-flops, Christmas ornaments, sublimated photos on stone, acrylic and metal. There are school pennants, hats and scarves, as well as work items such as pin or magnetic-backed name tags in color with the business logo on it. Pet lovers could even get a satin pillow with a photo of their dog.



Contributed photo

Rhonda Cook shows the Maine Sports Legends Hall of Honor at the Boys & Girls Club and YMCA of Greater Waterville at the Alford Youth Center on North Street in Waterville.

Businesses such as Huhtamaki have a perennial award plaque on their entrance wall honoring those employees who have served in the military.

Rhonda Cook loves what she does and loves helping people get the perfect gift or award for their conference, team, staff or wedding. She said she will work with any customer to present options and listen to ideas and design the items they desire.

"Nothing leaves the shop until it's perfect," Cook said.

If a customer is planning a wedding, they also offer a large variety of champagne toasting flutes, cake knife and server sets, groomsmen gifts, bridesmaids gifts, and engraved crystal candles. Engraving the items with names and wedding date, monogram, or a message will add that special personal touch and turn flutes and serving pieces into keepsakes to be used for the many anniversaries to come.

Customers can honor a veteran with custom shadowbox display cases, gift the newlyweds with engraved flutes, say welcome to the world little one to that precious new baby, or say "You're my everything" to the one who's stolen your heart. With unique handcrafted gifts, artisan-quality engraving, and hundreds of personalized message suggestions, Olympic Awards is there to help a person say something special to everyone on their list. "What will your gift say?" Cook said.

For more information:
Rhonda Cook, Master Engraver
Olympic Awards & Recognition
a division of OMNIGraphique Designers
859 Kennedy Memorial Drive
Oakland, 04963
Phone: 465-2600
Fax: 465-4949
Email: rhondacook@roadrunner.com



Photos by Susan Varney

A display case at Olympic Awards & Recognition in Oakland shows wedding items, champagne flutes, wine glasses, cake knives, picture frames, decorative wine boxes and clocks. There are items for the bride and groom and for the wedding party, and all can be engraved with names and dates of the special occasion.

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CA\$H Maine trains volunteers to help prepare tax returns

BY VALERIE TUCKER
Correspondent

Filing income tax returns may be a dreaded chore, but dozens of CA\$H Maine volunteers can help reduce the anxiety and confusion.

CA\$H is an acronym for Creating Savings, Assets & Hope. The free federal and state income tax preparation during tax season is available to individuals making \$54,000 or less annually.

Over the years, volunteers have helped return hundreds of thousands of dollars in refunds and credits back to individuals and into the state's economy. At each location, individuals who are part of the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA) provide free tax preparation and determine whether the individuals are eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit.

Training includes IRS-certified tax preparation certification, experience working with people, experience preparing taxes, and customer service skills.

Throughout the tax season, individuals meet with volunteers at convenient local sites. On Jan. 21, tax sites across the state will start making appointments. Information about the 10 locations can be found at www.cashmaine.org or by calling 2-1-1.

Deb Schmid, who worked for a Waterville branch of Key Bank, said she has a passion for helping others become self-sufficient. She started volunteering through the local United Way and helps people with their tax forms and assists them in understanding, repairing and improving their credit ratings.

"I think people inherently want to do things on their own," she said. "They just need someone to show them how."

Dennis O'Neil has volunteered as a western Maine tax preparer for seven years. He and his wife retired, and he started volunteering for the United Way. When he heard they were looking for people interested in helping with tax preparation courses, he signed up. Preparers, he said, complete the IRS-certified course by taking a test. Although they aren't required to make a commitment to participate throughout the entire tax season, volunteers are considered part of a team.

"We even have had volunteers who finished the training after the tax season has started," he said. "So those of us who have had more experience help them get started, even if it is March."

Starting in late January, clients start calling to make an appointment. A volunteer calls them to explain what documents to bring with them. Before clients leave with their completed paperwork on a Thursday evening or Saturday morning, each return is double-checked.

"We are required to see a physical copy of everyone's Social Security card, including children," O'Neil said. "This and a photo ID provides a level of security against identity

theft, which is a more common problem than it used to be."

Clients often don't realize they may be eligible for a variety of exemptions and deductions. For example, the Earned Income Tax Credit program may provide a refund, even if the individual does not owe taxes for that calendar year.

Three locations in central and western Maine will start scheduling appointments in late January: Capital Area CA\$H Maine in Augusta; Central Maine CA\$H Maine in Waterville; Western Maine CA\$H Maine in Farmington. Other CA\$H Maine sites include Sanford, Ft. Kent, Bangor; Orono, Bath, Lewiston/Auburn and Portland.

The Waterville-based Central Maine CA\$H Maine, coordinated by United Way of Mid-Maine, also provides free tax preparation for individuals in 28 communities, including Cornville, Thorndike, Belgrade and Jackman.

In 2014, the Central Maine CA\$H Maine reported helping clients receive child care expense refunds of \$4,273, child tax refunds of \$8,805, Earned Income Tax Credits of \$55,787, education refunds of \$11,126, federal refunds of \$172,724 and state refunds of \$42,787.

Central Maine volunteers who serve as greeters, intake specialists and certified tax preparers may come from Kennebec Valley Community College, Thomas College, Skowhegan Federated Church, Winslow Community Federal Credit Union, Mid-Maine Regional Adult Community Education, United Way of Mid-Maine, Key Bank and New Ventures Maine, as well as trainers with the IRS volunteer program.

The western Maine collaboration includes members and supporters from the United Way of the Tri-Valley Area, New Ventures Maine, University of Maine at Farmington, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Casey Family Services, Bangor Savings Bank, Key Bank, Foster Technology Center, Western Maine Community Action and the Internal Revenue Service.

New Ventures Maine also offers a Rainy Day Savings program. It is a matched savings account set up for individuals and families to prepare for emergency expenses. People use the money for a variety of things, from car repairs to a primary vehicle used for transportation, to work or for school. Other uses for the savings can include rent, mortgage, or essential utility payments in the case of job loss, reduction of hours, for short-term disability or to replace or repair a household appliance, make unexpected home repairs, pay unforeseen medical expenses, or pay other approved emergency costs.

The Family Development Account, a similar program, is a matched savings account for savings to buy a house, to further one's education, or start or grow a business. Call 2-1-1 or visit www.cashmaine.org for tax preparation help that include 2016 locations and for New Venture Maine sites.



Photo contributed by New Ventures Maine, formerly Women, Work and Community Ken Lust, retired banker, and Rebecca Davis-Allen, consumer loan specialist at Bangor Savings Bank (right, seated) help a client complete her tax forms. As part of the CA\$H Coalition program in western Maine, IRS-certified helpers meet people at University of Maine at Farmington. The free service is available to individuals making \$54,000 or less annually. To schedule an appointment, call 2-1-1 or visit www.cashmaine.org.

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Vampire Facelift® uses platelet-rich plasma

Dr. Burke is one of two certified in the procedure in Maine

BY NANCY GALLAGHER
Correspondent

A “vampire” in a medical office? Who knew?

In researching the latest developments in his field, Dr. John Burke M.D., discovered references to the Vampire Facelift® and its inventor, Dr. Charles Runels, MD. In order to gain firsthand information and training in this method, Burke recently attended a multi-day workshop led by Runels.

Successful completion of this didactic blend of lectures and hands-on training led to Burke’s certification in performing the Vampire Facelift®. His is one of only two medical offices in Maine with this certification.

Why the off-putting name — to create a distinctive trademark for a procedure that happens to involve blood, according to inventor Runels. The concurrent success of the vampire-related “Twilight” novels and movies further inspired his choice.

Burke, no novice to his trade, found the possibilities exciting.

Burke graduated from Boston University School of Medicine and completed a residency in internal medicine at Emory University Hospital in Atlanta, Ga. He then opened an internal medicine practice in Vassalboro.

Patients inquiring about nonsurgical facial enhancements, along with mentoring by a medical colleague and encouragement from Burke’s wife, led him to spend most of 2003 attending the courses and successfully performing the supervised hands-on procedures required to become a Fellow of the American Society of Laser Medicine and Surgery.

He separately trained and qualified for certification in the administration of BOTOX® and other fillers, and subsequently began devoting a portion of his medical practice to these procedures. By 2013, half of his practice was devoted to them.

The purchase of his internal medicine practice by MaineGeneral Health allowed Burke to transition to a full-time laser practice and relocate to Augusta that same year.

How does the Vampire Facelift® procedure work?

Blood is drawn from the patient’s arm into a tube containing a filter. This tube is placed in an ultra-high-speed centrifuge to separate the red blood cells from the plasma, and then further separate out the platelet-rich plasma.

“The reason that’s important is that the platelet layer of your plasma is also where a lot of the growth factors, stem cells, those types of cells within your body reside,” Burke said. He then draws this platelet-rich layer into syringes.

Numbing cream is applied to minimize discomfort. Burke then injects a dermal filler to temporarily plump deeper lines

and wrinkles. He next injects the patient’s platelet-rich plasma into preselected facial areas.

Afterward, most patients wash off the numbing cream, apply their makeup and continue with their regular daily activities. A reddish flush following the procedure is normal.

“Usually within three days of the injections there’s a stimulation process which occurs from the platelet-rich plasma’s growth factors and stem cells that starts to cause your skin to increase production of collagen under the skin. That goes on for a period of at least three months ... and is maintained for a year at least, or maybe even longer,” Burke said. If wrinkles subsequently return, the process may be repeated, he said.

The fee for a Vampire Facelift® is \$1,500. As an elective procedure, it is not covered by insurance. The procedure usually takes about an hour. It avoids general anesthesia, surgery and stitches — factors many of Burke’s patients consider relevant when choosing this method.

The Vampire Facelift® addresses facial aging concerns primarily for women.

What about balding concerns for men?

As an extension of his practice, Burke also offers the Vampire Hair Regrowth® procedure, applying the same platelet-rich plasma principles to stimulate hair regrowth.

Prospective patients should make an office appointment for a free consultation, which includes a discussion of individual concerns, pros and cons, side effects, alternatives, expectations and photographs. The consultation usually lasts 20 to 30 minutes. The next step would be an appointment for any selected procedure.

Maine Laser Skin Care, located at 12 Shuman Avenue, Suite 7, Augusta, Maine 04330, is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Wednesday and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday and Friday. For more information, call 873-2158 or consult the website at www.mainelaserskinicare.com.

“Usually within three days of the injections there’s a stimulation process which occurs from the platelet-rich plasma’s growth factors and stem cells that starts to cause your skin to increase production of collagen under the skin.”

DR. JOHN BURKE, ONE OF TWO MAINE PHYSICIANS OFFERING VAMPIRE FACELIFT®



Contributed photos

Top, before and after photos illustrate the effects of the Vampire Facelift®
Above, the results eight months after one platelet-rich plasma treatment.

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Coloring books: a new escape for adults

BY NANCY P. MCGINNIS
Correspondent

There's a new genre that has taken a front and center space in libraries and bookstores, creating a phenomenon that is catching on across the country around kitchen tables, office break rooms, even shelters — Coloring books. For adults.

At any age, creative expression is a great outlet for stress. Witnessing a child who is totally engrossed with a coloring book, it is easy to appreciate how simultaneously calming and rewarding it can be to lose oneself in the process of choosing and applying colors, and seeing a black and white outline drawing come to life. And, it seems, that is no less true for individuals as they grow older.

Adults can enjoy the same freedom, either meticulously selecting a limited palette or just letting their impulses run wild. There are probably as many who color to “take their mind off things,” to relax and unwind as there are those who use it as a way to focus and re-group.

While it may not be recognized as a form of therapy, those who color note how it can improve the “flow” of their mental and emotional processes. In any case, the opportunity to reconnect with oneself or others serves as a welcome change of pace from screens and software that have become virtually inevitable in daily life.

In addition to requiring no advanced



Nancy P. McGinnis photos

A remarkable array of coloring books for adults is currently available — with themes and styles to appeal to a range of tastes. One of the reasons that coloring is so satisfying is that there are no rules, and no right or wrong way to do it.

skills, special talent or learning curve to be enjoyable, one can color virtually anywhere and anytime, and the cost can be minimal. In addition to something to color, the only other requirement is a few colored pencils, markers or crayons. Some people use oil crayons, or even watercolor paint and a brush; coloring can be seen as a stepping stone to engaging in more elaborate creative arts, or just as a satisfying end in itself.

Adult coloring books range in theme and

style from flora and fauna to fantasy, formal to funky, to repetitive designs evocative of Escher or William Morris, or even kaleidoscopic effects.

There is no “right” or “wrong” way to color, and it can be a quiet, solo pursuit or a group project. Public libraries in Maine and elsewhere have started hosting coloring sessions not unlike needlework groups, in which individuals enjoy socializing and sharing refreshments while they work

at their own pace on their own projects.

It can be an inter-generational pastime: some families choose an oversized image to customize together and then frame it for display. Community shelters are increasingly offering coloring books as an inexpensive way to, as one woman put it, “de-stress and self express.”

As winter drags on, and cabin fever starts to take its toll, an adult coloring book may be just the antidote.

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MaineGeneral invests in continued world-class care for area cancer patients

BY JOHN BEGIN

Communications Specialist
MaineGeneral Health
Special to Women's Quarterly

Kennebec Valley residents who need radiation therapy to treat their cancer soon will benefit from MaineGeneral's significant investment in state-of-the-art technology at the Harold Alfond Center for Cancer Care.

The Center's radiation oncologist, Dr. Grenville Jones, and Chief Medical Physicist, Glenn Collins, said the late-January launch of the first of two new linear accelerators will offer highly advanced cancer treatment techniques to patients, along with increased patient safety that is built into the machine's computer systems.

Work to install and commission the first machine and modify its lead-lined treatment vault took several months and wrapped up recently. The second machine will be installed in Fall 2016. The new linear accelerators are replacing the original ones from when the center opened in July 2007.

The new technology offers greater precision, safety and speed — and the ability to treat brain and liver lesions and tumors close to the spine with stereotactic body radiation therapy (SBRT). Until now, these advanced techniques were only available in Boston.

"The extra accuracy the new machine provides lets us expand into some very specialized treatments," Jones said. "The advanced technology also offers increased safety throughout treatment, so these machines are a big deal."

Collins, whose team of medical physicists has been closely involved with the project, agreed.

"The technology is what really fascinates us," Collins said. "This machine was designed with numerous microcontrollers to allow for a much faster processing of information. Faster communication means real-time control of the machine and much more rapid feedback during patient treatment."

"We're happy to have this technology available for our patients," he added. "That's very exciting for us."

While MaineGeneral is the third site in Maine to offer the latest technology available, Collins noted that it is the only site "fully committed to these machines."

"Every patient will benefit from these new accelerators," he said. "We also have the expert staff to best take advantage of them — two board-certified radiation oncologists, three board-certified physicists and three board-certified dosimetrists, so MaineGeneral's investment isn't just in the equipment."

Colleague Michael Bartels, a medical physicist who came to the cancer center with two years of experience working with the new technology, added that the new machine offers "another layer of accuracy."

"Depending on the type of cancer we're treating, we can reduce the number of treatment sessions, deliver a higher dose and actually have a more effective treatment than what the patient would have had through a prolonged therapy with more sessions."

CHIEF MEDICAL PHYSICIST, GLENN COLLINS



Members of the radiation oncology team at MaineGeneral's Harold Alfond Center for Cancer Care include, from left, Alicia Curtis, lead radiation therapist; Holly Andrews, radiation therapist; Dr. Grenville Jones, radiation oncologist; Juanita Begin, RN, oncology nurse navigator and Michael Bartels, medical physicist.

"While we're very accurate with the technology we're currently using, this machine has a few more energies with it so we can have a slightly more well-tuned treatment plan for the patient," he said.

Both Jones and Collins note that the standard of care for treating cancer with radiation is shifting toward providing higher, more precisely targeted doses of radiation in shorter and fewer treatment sessions. The new linear accelerators' significant advancements in both the machinery and computer and imaging systems will allow the Center's staff to use this approach to treat a variety of cancers.

"Depending on the type of cancer we're treating, we can reduce the number of treatment sessions, deliver a higher dose and actually have a more effective treatment than what the



MaineGeneral's new linear accelerator, the latest technology available, offers greater precision, safety and speed to treat a variety of cancers.

patient would have had through a prolonged therapy with more sessions," Collins said. "A shorter course of treatment also makes it more convenient for the patient."

Jones noted that some patients with small, cancerous tumors in the lung — because of their medical condition — are not candidates for surgery. Others may not be able to tolerate chemotherapy. In these cases, treatment with high-dose radiation to evaporate the tumor and turn it into scar tissue may be an option.

"As long as there is a definable tumor that's small enough, we may be able to use this non-invasive treatment for certain patients to eliminate the cancerous area," he said. "We're excited about this technology because it will help us start doing things we haven't done before and help us continue what we have been doing in a way that can be safer for patients."

To learn more about MaineGeneral's oncology services at the Harold Alfond Center for Cancer Care, call 621-6100 or visit www.maine-general.org/cancer.

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Youth Outreach programs help homeless in central Maine

More than 925 young people are on their own each year

BY ELIZABETH KEANE

*Kennebec Behavioral Health
Special to Women's Quarterly*

Youth homelessness is one of the most critical and challenging issues in Kennebec and Somerset Counties. Each year, there are more than 925 youths in Maine who are homeless, living on the streets or who have run away from home. The majority, most of whom are uncounted, are couch-surfing or living in areas not meant for habitation.

Young people who are experiencing homelessness need a wide variety of services and supports — everything from food and clothing, to case management services and help with family reunification — as well as safe and stable housing.

Homeless Youth Outreach programs, such as the one at Kennebec Behavioral Health, work collaboratively with the youth, schools, doctors and family members to help provide them with needed stability and individualized support to meet their needs and help them reach their potential.

One client's story illustrates the importance of these supports found in KBH's outreach program.

Alex is a 19-year-old transgendered woman who has faced numerous challenges in her young life, including homelessness, family conflict and the risk of dropping out of school, before connecting with a Youth Outreach program.

"I was basically abandoned by my family," Alex said. "I ended up in a shelter for homeless youth. I had moved around a lot before that and didn't have anybody I could rely on."

The staff with the outreach program helped connect Alex with her birth mother, who had been out of her life for a long time, and helped her seek emancipation. They also connected her with transitional housing programs and doctors.

Alex was able to find more stability in being emancipated because she now had the choice to stay with someone long term.

"Getting emancipation helped me know that the judge saw that I had the responsibility to take care of myself and make good decisions," Alex said.

With this new help, graduating school also became less of a dream and more of a likelihood. The outreach program helped Alex change schools and in June, she graduated.

Today, Alex is employed and has her own apartment where she feels comfortable. She now has a primary care physician she sees regularly since being



"I was basically abandoned by my family. I ended up in a shelter for homeless youth. I had moved around a lot before that and didn't have anybody I could rely on."

ALEX, A 19-YEAR-OLD TRANSGENDERED WOMAN WHO WAS ASSISTED BY HOMELESS YOUTH OUTREACH PROGRAMS SUCH AS THE ONE AT KENNEBEC BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

connected through the program.

"I'm planning to go to college later this year. It's been tough to work and get ready for that, but I really want to do it," Alex said. "I also just want to keep working. I like being able to take care of myself."

Alex's story reveals that the connections made with just one individual can often lead to other connections, which can change the life of someone experiencing homelessness or who is at risk of homelessness.

In cultivating these connections, Alex, and others who share elements of Alex's story, may be empowered to take steps toward pursuing dreams and achieving their goals.

"If it wasn't for the Outreach program, I don't think I'd be where I am now," Alex said.

Kennebec Behavioral Health's Homeless Youth Outreach Program connects with young people such as Alex on the streets where they are living and helps provide them with the support and tools to have a more successful life.

This year, an anonymous donor has offered a 1 to 1 match for every dollar that is raised for KBH's Homeless Youth Outreach Program until March 31, 2016, up to \$10,000. Every gift made for youth who are experiencing homelessness will be doubled.

Donations can be made online at www.kbhmaine.org or call the Development Office at 873-2136 extension 1905 to help support the campaign for homeless youth.

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Owner of Maine Woolens restores a textile tradition to Maine

Former Winslow woman continues expansion plans

BY SUSAN VARNEY
Correspondent

With a wind chill factor of 10 degrees below zero and the sun bright enough to call for sunglasses, a recent trip to see the manufacturing of textiles at Maine Woolens in Brunswick brought back childhood memories of the mills in Lewiston.

Owner Jo Miller has made a remarkable effort to see Maine jobs being created with reasonable salaries and benefits for local employees in a safe and healthy environment — by a privately held company that treats its staff like family.

Maine Woolens has been training workers and quietly growing since 2009.

Miller grew up in Winslow, is a graduate of the University of Maine and a former instructor of geology at Colby College. She has four decades of experience in textiles.

“I love creating things with my hands and learned to sew, knit and crochet at a very young age,” Miller said. “In my late 20s, while teaching at Colby College, I took up weaving. When I started to sell more than I could weave, I tried to have an outside mill weave for me. I soon realized that if I wanted to meet delivery deadlines, I needed to control production, and that was how I got started building my own mill.”

Maine Woolens is creating jobs for Maine workers using as much domestic product as possible, creating beautiful blankets and throws that are then sold through a series of well known catalogues, e-commerce companies, boutique stores and its own retail store on Main Street in Freeport. The company also has a mill outlet store on Water Street in Gardiner, which sells firsts, seconds, overruns, discontinued patterns and colors, leftovers and things that just didn't work, according to Miller.

The mill at Paul Street in Brunswick has grown from 9,000 square feet to more than 15,000 square feet, with plans for more expansion from six broad looms and two narrow looms to 10 looms. Miller's son, John Pollock, manages the dye house, as well as being in charge of IT (Information Technology) and vice president of operations.

The secret to their success is creating high quality products that are reasonably priced, according to Ray Boshold, vice president of sales.

“We try hard to do what is right,” he said, describing a manufacturing process that includes concern over how it affects the environment — using lower temperatures for dyeing, using color dyes efficiently in order to have little waste entering the system and working for sustainability and



Contributed photo

Jo Miller, owner of Maine Woolens, Brunswick, is originally from Winslow, where she grew up in a mill family.

safety — doing things right the first time.

“We exhibit at shows in Atlanta and New York City and belong to local organizations such as Maine Innkeepers Association,” Boshold said.

Maine Woolens spends more time in manufacturing than advertising, working to improve the product and offering it at reasonable prices and in environmentally-safe packages.

Maine Woolens has 20 styles and 100 colors, and manufactures blankets and throws in sizes from baby blankets to king-size bed blankets. About 90 percent are cotton, with the remaining 10 percent using linen, alpaca, cashmere and wool often mixed with cotton. If the materials are not sourced locally, the companies are physically visited to assure the quality and sustainability of materials.

The process at the Brunswick mill includes dyeing, weaving, cutting to size, serging edges, hemming, washing, drying, labeling and packaging for the customer, according to Miller.

“I think that manufacturing is one of the hardest businesses to run,” Miller said. “But, the jobs it provides to the middle class is so important to the survival of our economy that I remain adamant in doing my part to bring more manufacturing to Maine.”

“When I started to sell more than I could weave, I tried to have an outside mill weave for me. I soon realized that if I wanted to meet delivery deadlines, I needed to control production, and that was how I got started building my own mill.”

JO MILLER, OWNER OF MAINE WOOLENS



Photos by Susan Varney

Above, a Maine Woolens blanket with tag.

MAINE WOOLENS

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John Pollock, vice president of operations

Ray Boshold, vice president of sales

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A worker oversees the weaving of a king-size red and white plaid at Maine Woolens in Brunswick. About 90 percent of the blankets and throws are cotton.

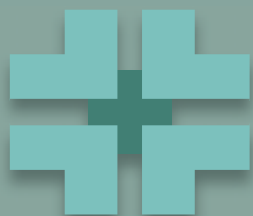
Photos by Susan Varney



Some of the Maine Woolens blankets on display at the mill store in Gardiner.



Ray Boshold, vice president of sales at Maine Woolens, explains the yarns used for weaving blankets and throws at the Brunswick mill. Some yarns are dyed before arriving at the mill, others are dyed at the mill.

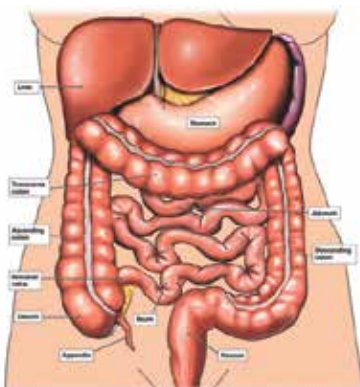


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