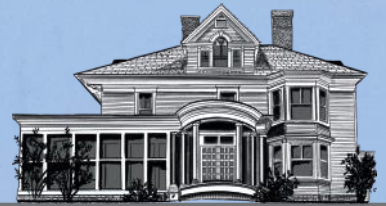


# THE GUILFORD REGISTER

ADVENTURES & STORIES FROM THE MAINE HIGHLANDS



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## SMILE, IT'S CONTAGIOUS.

By John McNamara

Each year, around this time, I am reminded of how “lucky” I am. Maybe “lucky” isn’t the right word, since it implies I have won something, but I haven’t. Most of us haven’t. Sure, there are a fair number of lottery winners and casino winners—gamblers. Sometimes they get lucky, but most of the time they don’t. Occasionally, there will be a local contest (like this year’s Spectacle of Lights in Guilford), but for the most part, most of us are not lucky.

I thought that ‘privileged’ might be the word. Still, by that definition (a special advantage, immunity, permission, right, or benefit granted to or enjoyed by an individual, class, or caste), I don’t think it is the right word either. The word “blessed” is too religious, and I am not religious. No, I think the right word is “happy.” I am reminded how happy I am—happy that I have an education, a job, a family, a roof over my head, food on the table.

Through the years, I have worked very hard to achieve the life I have today—this happy life. The prosperity that I enjoy today was not handed to me. I had to earn it. That does not mean there were not times in my life when I went without, or struggled financially—emotionally. I did not grow up rich; in fact, the opposite was true, but I strived for more. I studied more. I worked harder because I wanted more, and throughout my life, I found ways to achieve that ‘more’ I sought.

Not everyone is that fortunate. Not everyone has access to an excellent education. Not everyone has access to a loving family, a warm bed, a hot meal, or even a firm hug. It is not that those people are not lucky or not privileged or not fortunate or whatever word you want to use here. People who are without or who are struggling might have lost their job, gone through a bitter divorce, or lost their spouse. There are numerous reasons why someone struggles, and in today’s economy, an increasing number of people are struggling and are unhappy.

There was a time when a six-figure salary was all you needed. Make \$100,000, and you could be set for life, assuming you spend and save conservatively. However, that is no longer the case. Someone—a family—making a six-figure salary could still be struggling. So, while money helps, it is not the only factor determining someone’s struggles—someone’s happiness. But in many parts of the country, and I am talking about Maine—more specifically, Piscataquis County, money is a big part of the struggle. There are not enough jobs, and the salaries of the jobs that do exist are so low that people often need two or three jobs, assuming they can find them, just to put food on the table or turn on the heat during the brutal Maine winters.

Now, I am not going to sugar-coat it. I know that no matter what the economic situation of a person or family, things like drugs, alcohol, gambling, and \$5 lattes can play a role in their daily life, wasting what limited money they do have, thus putting those people in a position of struggling for temporary happiness. Then there is the government and its constant reduction of services for older people, for the veterans, which makes it all too easy for someone who was living comfortably one day to be struggling the next.

That brings me to this time of year. Before moving to Maine, every November and December, I would find myself trying to help those in need through charitable donations, volunteering, and so on. I am not sure if it was a guilt reaction or something about the holiday season that reminded me to give back. But, since moving to Maine, this desire to help—to lift everyone to find happiness has been part of my daily routine throughout the year. Not just this time of the year.

And the small things that I, my family, the people in our community, all do throughout the year, while needed and rewarding, do not, for some reason, pull at my heartstrings like they do this time of year. Many people write a check or click a donation button on a website and feel like they have done good, having done their share to better the world. There is no question that those donations help, and help a lot. But I had the privilege recently of helping provide Thanksgiving dinners to more than 300 families, and none of the money I had ever contributed before rewarded me as much as standing in that line, handing food to those in need. Seeing their faces—their smiles of gratitude—of happiness.

My heart aches that those people, and many more who did not come forward for assistance, often go hungry. My heart ached when the government suspended SNAP—10 percent of Mainers suffered as a result. While I am not an advocate for the government subsidizing our lives, I do believe that the government should focus more on taxing the rich and using those dollars to educate and train people to be more self-sufficient, rather than holding millions of people hostage, keeping them all wondering how the children, the elderly, and everyone in between will survive without food.

I think those with the means to make change should step up and help make real change, which goes beyond helping in a food distribution line. It includes providing hugs and advice and assistance to those in need. Being without food or heat or clothing should not be allowed. We should be doing everything we can to help educate, train and elevate anyone who is without food or a home, or medicine, or clothing. It is time we all stood up together—worked together to make a real change in our own lives so that we can help those who need help the most. If everyone pitches in then it is no longer something that might seem ‘impossible.’ Working together makes everything possible.

I know I am not alone in feeling more emotional this time of the year, and I know millions of other people are out and about doing everything they can to help those in need. Those people are the heroes, and I was so impressed with how many came out to help with the Thanksgiving dinners—retired folks, middle schoolers, high schoolers, and Elders of the Mormon church. Caring has no age limit, no religious boundary, and no prejudice. Thank you to all of those people—the ones who care enough to make a difference.

So as you dive into this holiday season, and all the seasons ahead, remember that we thrive when we lift each other up. We shine when we help others shine, and when we take the time to put a smile on someone’s face, it puts a smile on our own face. It’s contagious.



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## THE B-52 CRASH SITE: FROM COLD WAR TRAGEDY TO MAINE WILDERNESS ATTRACTION

By John McNamara

Deep in the forests of northern Maine, a piece of Cold War history lies scattered across Elephant Mountain. On January 24, 1963, a United States Air Force B-52C Stratofortress crashed during a training mission, killing seven of the nine crew members aboard. What began as one of the deadliest peacetime accidents in Air Force history has, over six decades later, evolved into an unlikely tourist attraction that draws hikers, history enthusiasts, and curious visitors to the remote wilderness near Greenville, Maine.

The accident occurred during Operation Chrome Dome, a Strategic Air Command program that kept nuclear-armed B-52 bombers constantly airborne during the height of the Cold War. The aircraft, tail number 53-0406, had taken off from Westover Air Force Base in Massachusetts and was flying a northern route when it encountered severe turbulence and icing conditions. As the massive bomber struggled through the storm over Maine's wilderness, the crew lost control. The aircraft broke apart in mid-air, raining debris across the mountainside approximately 2,000 feet above sea level.

Only two crew members survived the crash: the navigator and the radar navigator, both of whom were thrown clear while still strapped to their ejection seats. They landed in deep snow, which likely cushioned their fall and saved their lives. The seven others who perished were buried at various military cemeteries across the country. The tragedy sent shockwaves through the Air Force and the local community, with search and rescue efforts hampered by the remote location and harsh winter conditions.

What makes this crash site particularly significant is what the bomber wasn't carrying that day. While many Chrome Dome missions involved actual nuclear weapons, this particular aircraft was unarmed, sparing the region from potential catastrophic contamination. Nevertheless, the wreckage contained classified equipment and materials that required a massive recovery operation involving hundreds of military personnel who spent months combing the crash site.

Despite the extensive recovery efforts, the sheer scale of the debris field and the rugged terrain meant that significant portions of the aircraft remained on the mountain. Over the decades, the forest has slowly reclaimed the site, with trees growing around twisted aluminum and moss covering engine parts and sections of fuselage. What couldn't be recovered—or wasn't deemed essential to retrieve—has become a time capsule of 1960s aviation technology.

Today, the crash site has evolved into an unusual hiking destination. The trailhead is accessible from a logging road off the Katahdin Iron Works Road, north of Greenville. The hike to the main debris field is approximately two miles, following an old access road that was cut during the recovery operation. The trail gains about 1,200 feet in elevation, making it a moderately challenging trek through dense Maine forest. For my family and me, we opted to reach this treasure in the woods via ATV. It was a fascinating and bumpy journey through the Maine backwoods before walking into the crash site and being completely amazed at the span of the debris.

Visitors to the site encounter a surreal landscape where nature and machine intersect. Large sections of the aircraft's skin, still



bearing faded military markings, lean against trees. Engine components, landing gear assemblies, and countless smaller pieces of wreckage are scattered across several acres. Some pieces are massive—sections of wing and fuselage large enough to walk through. Others are small fragments of insulation, wiring, and instrumentation, slowly dissolving into the forest floor.

The site has become a sort of pilgrimage for aviation enthusiasts and history buffs. Online forums and hiking websites feature detailed directions, GPS coordinates, and photographs documenting the wreckage. Local outfitters in Greenville occasionally lead guided hikes to the site, contextualizing the crash within the broader history of the Cold War and explaining the technical aspects of the B-52 aircraft. For many visitors, standing among the wreckage provides a tangible connection to a tense period in American history when nuclear-armed bombers circled the skies twenty-four hours a day.

However, the site's popularity has raised concerns about preservation and respect. The crash site is technically on private land managed by timber companies, though public access has generally been tolerated. Visitors are reminded that the site is essentially a grave marker—a place where seven men lost their lives in service to their country. Taking souvenirs is widely discouraged both on ethical grounds and because removing wreckage from a military crash site may violate federal law.

The B-52 crash site also serves as an outdoor classroom about aircraft accident investigation and the dangers of military aviation. The pattern of debris tells the story of the aircraft's final moments—how it broke apart at altitude, how different components fell at different rates, and how the force of impact scattered wreckage across the mountainside. For those with knowledge of aircraft systems, the wreckage reveals the incredible complexity of these massive bombers and the hostile environment in which their crews operated.

As time passes, the forest continues its slow work of reclamation. Each year, more wreckage disappears beneath leaves and soil, and trees grow larger around aluminum ribs and titanium components. Eventually, nature will fully absorb what remains, leaving only memories and photographs to mark the passage of time. Until then, the B-52 crash site on Elephant Mountain stands as both a memorial to fallen airmen and a fascinating, if sobering, destination for those willing to make the trek into Maine's wilderness to witness where Cold War history literally fell from the sky.



## MAINE'S WINTER WONDERLAND: EXPLORING 12,000 MILES OF SNOWMOBILE TRAILS

By John McNamara

When winter's first substantial snowfall blankets the Pine Tree State, an extraordinary transformation takes place. Maine awakens as one of the premier snowmobiling destinations in the country, unveiling an intricate network of over 12,000 miles of groomed trails that wind through some of the most spectacular winter landscapes in New England.

This vast trail system represents more than just a recreational amenity—it's a testament to Maine's deep-rooted snowmobiling culture and the dedication of countless volunteers who maintain these routes season after season. From the rugged wilderness of Aroostook County to the scenic vistas of the western mountains, Maine's snowmobile trails offer riders an unparalleled opportunity to experience the state's natural beauty in its most pristine winter form.

The extensive trail network didn't appear overnight. It's the result of decades of collaboration between local snowmobile clubs, the Maine Snowmobile Association, and private landowners who generously allow trails to cross their property. This unique partnership model has created one of the most comprehensive and well-maintained trail systems in North America.

Over 280 local clubs across the state work tirelessly to groom and maintain the trails, operating sophisticated grooming equipment that transforms rough terrain into smooth corridors perfect for snowmobiling. These volunteers are the unsung heroes of Maine's winter recreation scene, often working through the night to ensure trails are in optimal condition for riders.

What sets Maine's snowmobile trail system apart is its remarkable diversity. Maine's Interconnected Trail System (ITS) forms the backbone of the state's snowmobile network, with numbered routes that connect regions and provide the main arteries for long-distance travel. These primary routes connect to thousands of miles of secondary trails, creating endless possibilities for exploration and discovery.

The trails vary in difficulty and character. Some follow old railroad beds, offering gentle grades and wide pathways perfect for families or less experienced riders. Others challenge seasoned snowmobilers with technical sections through forests or along ridgelines. This variety ensures that riders of all skill levels can find appropriate terrain.

Maine's snowmobile trails serve as a vital economic lifeline for many rural communities during the winter months. When reliable snow arrives, small towns across the state experience a welcome surge in activity as snowmobilers fill restaurants, lodges, gas stations, and local businesses.

Modern amenities have evolved along the trail system, including warming huts, trail-side lodges, and strategically placed fuel stops. GPS mapping and smartphone apps now help riders navigate the extensive network, though many still enjoy the traditional experience of following trail signs and paper maps.

Studies have shown that snowmobiling contributes hundreds of millions of dollars annually to Maine's economy. Trail-side businesses have become destinations in themselves, with some restaurants and lodges catering specifically to the snowmobiling crowd, offering convenient parking for trailers and warm-up stations for cold riders.

Communities like Jackman, Greenville, and Portage have built their winter identity around snowmobiling, hosting events and races that draw enthusiasts from across the country. These towns understand that maintaining excellent trail access and a welcoming atmosphere isn't just good hospitality—it's smart economics.

Here are some of the best destinations that should top every rider's bucket list.

### Aroostook County: The Crown Jewel

When serious snowmobilers talk about Maine, they're often talking about Aroostook County. Known simply as "The County" to locals, this vast northern region offers the most reliable snow conditions and longest season in the state, sometimes extending from November through May. The terrain here features endless rolling hills, dense forests, and expansive agricultural landscapes that offer exhilarating high-speed runs.

The town of Portage serves as an ideal base camp, with direct trail access and amenities catering specifically to snowmobilers. From here, riders can access hundreds of miles of pristine trails, including routes that venture deep into Maine's North Woods. The area around Ashland and Masardis offers similar advantages, with well-groomed trails and spectacular wilderness scenery.

What makes Aroostook County truly special is its snow—lots of it, and consistently. When southern Maine struggles with marginal conditions, The County typically delivers powder-perfect trails. The region's remote character also means less crowded trails and authentic wilderness experiences where encountering moose is more likely than meeting other riders.



### Moosehead Lake Region: Scenic Splendor

The Moosehead Lake area represents Maine snowmobiling at its most picturesque. Centered around the towns of Greenville and Rockwood, this region offers stunning mountain backdrops, vast frozen lake crossings, and trails that wind through classic Maine wilderness.

*(SNOWMOBILES, continued on page 11)*



# SHIRLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PEGGY PHILLIPS

The Shirley Historical Society is in a room behind the “Big” room of the previous elementary school building. The building now houses the town office, library and historical society room. We have been in existence since early 2000 and have added many donations from families in town.

The Historical Society spreads out into the library which houses many of the artifacts including three knitting machines which were part of the Shirley Industries Company during the 30's and 40's. At least 30 families were part of Shirley Industries

knitting 50 dozen pairs of socks each week earning piecemeal rates of \$18 - \$33. Shirley Industries income was critical for many families. Both men and women knitted socks.

The town of Shirley has a rich history of lumbering with woods crews supplying the lumber mill, veneer mill, box mill and shingle mill which were once part of the town economy.

The Historical Society is available by appointment. We are a work in progress, always learning.



## A Drive Along Maine's Scenic Byways

By John McNamara

When the seasons turn in Maine, the state's highways transform into ribbons of pure magic, winding through landscapes that seem almost too beautiful to be real. From the fiery explosions of autumn foliage to the pristine stillness of snow-covered forests, Maine's scenic routes offer travelers an ever-changing masterpiece that captures the essence of New England's most enchanting seasons.

As September gives way to October, Maine bursts into color. The state's scenic highways become front-row seats to nature's most spectacular show, where sugar maples blaze crimson, birches shimmer golden, and oak trees glow in shades of burnt orange and deep burgundy. Route 1, stretching along the coast from Kittery to Calais, offers perhaps the most diverse autumn experience. Here, the brilliant foliage provides a striking contrast to the deep blue Atlantic, creating vistas where forest fire meets ocean calm.

Inland, Route 201—known as the **Old Canada Road Scenic Byway**—delivers what many consider the quintessential Maine fall experience. This historic route follows the Kennebec River northward, passing through the Forks region where the Kennebec meets the Dead River. The highway climbs through valleys ablaze with color, where every turn reveals another postcard-perfect

scene. Small towns like Bingham and Solon offer welcoming stops where local diners serve hearty fare and engage in friendly conversation, providing perfect fuel for leaf-peepers on their journey.

**The Rangeley Lakes National Scenic Byway** presents autumn at its most dramatic. Route 17 winds through mountainous terrain where elevation changes create layers of color—deep reds at lower altitudes giving way to orange and yellow higher up, all against a backdrop of evergreen. The Height of Land scenic overlook, situated above Mooselookmeguntic Lake, offers breathtaking views that have inspired countless photographs and countless more memories. On clear October days, the reflections in the lake below double the visual impact, creating a kaleidoscope of autumn brilliance.

**Acadia All-American Road**, encompassing the Park Loop Road in Acadia National Park, combines coastal drama with forest splendor. Here, autumn paints the granite peaks and valleys in warm hues while the cold Atlantic crashes against pink granite cliffs. The Cadillac Mountain summit road, the highest point on the eastern seaboard, offers panoramic views where autumn forests meet endless ocean horizons. Thunder Hole and Sand Beach take on new character in fall, when fewer crowds allow for quiet contemplation of nature's artistry.

(HIGHWAY, continued on page 14)





## WHERE YOU STAND MAKES A DIFFERENCE

WALTER BOOMSMA

Walter Boomsma is an educator, writer, and the author of *Small People—Big Brains*. With a background in teaching and public speaking, he blends practical wisdom with a deep appreciation for lifelong learning. His work often explores themes of personal growth, communication, and community engagement, encouraging readers to think differently and discover meaning in everyday experiences. Through his writing and outreach, Walter strives to spark conversations that lead to understanding, empathy, and positive change.

Welcome to my “five-minute anti-bullying program.” The program is based on a simple song written based on a story published by Montgomery Ward in 1939. I think it’s a song about overcoming bullying. We didn’t call it bullying back then, but today we probably would. Fortunately, I don’t sing the song; I merely recite it as poetry with some editorializing.

*You know Dasher and Dancer and Prancer and Vixen,  
You know Comet and Cupid and Donner and Blitzen,  
But do you recall  
The most famous reindeer of all?*

Here’s a little experiment for you. Close your eyes and, without singing the song or reciting the line from “’Twas the Night Before Christmas,” try to list Santa’s Reindeer. You’ll find the song irresistible, but I bet the eight regular sleigh-pullers aren’t all that memorable. You don’t readily recall them, but you do recall the most famous reindeer of all. That’s significant.

*Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer  
Had a very shiny nose  
And if you ever saw it  
You would even say it glows.*

Rudolph stood out in a crowd because he didn’t exactly fit. He wasn’t like the other reindeer. While we don’t know exactly how old he was, he’s often pictured with small horns suggesting he’s an adolescent. We know that “fitting in” is especially important during adolescence, so there’s little doubt Rudolph was not a happy reindeer. And it didn’t help that the other reindeer were bullies.

*All of the other reindeer  
Used to laugh and call him names  
They never let poor Rudolph  
Join in any reindeer games.*

Reindeer can be mean, can’t they!? And so can kids. It’s a complicated social dynamic, but a kid who is different—wears a unique style of clothing or has a different physical characteristic (a red nose?) gets ostracized and worse. Simply being ignored by others can be painful. But when they start to laugh and call names, the hurt and pain can seem unbearable.

I think it’s interesting that Santa doesn’t take action. He could have started an anti-bullying program. Maybe created a stop bullying policy and hung up some posters in the barn. In fairness to Santa, we’re not sure if he knew what the other reindeer were doing to Rudolph. Perhaps if there had been a bullying awareness program... But let’s look at what happened.

*Then one foggy Christmas Eve,  
Santa came to say,  
“Rudolph, with your nose so bright,  
Won’t you guide my sleigh tonight?”*



The song doesn’t record Rudolph’s answer. I suppose he could have said, “The heck with you—why should I help after what those other reindeer have put me through!?” We only know that Rudolph was finally recognized as having something to contribute. Ironically, the very thing that had separated him from the herd became the very thing that gave him status. Instead of cowering in the corner of the barn, Rudolph became the leader of the herd.

*Then how all the reindeer loved him,  
As they shouted out with glee,  
Rudolph the red-nose Reindeer  
You’ll go down in history!*

Let’s first consider what didn’t change. Rudolph didn’t get nose surgery, and his nose didn’t get dim. The eight other reindeer didn’t attend some anti-bullying intervention and suddenly become more loving and accepting. It was an uncomplicated process.

First, circumstances changed. It became foggy. (We could wonder how all of Santa’s previous trips were on clear nights, but that would spoil the song and story.)

What happened next is, I think, particularly important. Santa does play a significant role in the outcome of the story. He’s obviously more troubled over the foggy night than he had been regarding Rudolph’s status with the herd. That reality might put a little smudge on Santa’s image, but let’s be honest. He needed a solution to the foggy night problem.

And there was Rudolph with his nose all aglow—a solution to a problem. Santa saw him differently—not as a misfit reindeer with a defective nose. So, perhaps grudgingly, Rudolph steps to the front. And at that moment—as is so often the case with children’s stories—all is well! Everybody’s happy! Santa can make his deliveries. The eight bully reindeer no longer must worry about running into things in the fog. They are shouting with glee! In all the picture books I’ve seen, Rudolph is smiling.

(RUDOLPH, continued on page 8)



# THE GALLERY

## ARTIST STORIES, ARTWORK & INTERVIEWS

Each month we will highlight a Maine artist or art gallery. If you are a Maine artist or art gallery, or know of one who would like to be showcased here, reach out to us at [hjohn@guilfordbnb.com](mailto:hjohn@guilfordbnb.com)

### GETTING TO KNOW FIGURATIVE ARTIST LYDIA ROSE SPENCER

By John McNamara

The first time I saw work by Lydia Rose Spencer was in 2024, when I was a guest of the Guilford Bed & Breakfast. It was cold outside, and I had just driven up from Boston. My wife and I had been studying the photos of the B&B on the real estate website, contemplating a move north. In the pictures, we saw that one of the walls in the second-floor hallway was painted with a mural, but with furniture and lighting, it was hard to really capture the work and detail. Flash forward to that day in April 2024 when I walked up the stairs in the B&B and turned to take in the mural—the entire wall, from floor to ceiling. As an artist, former art gallery owner, and lover of all things creative, I was delighted that the historic home I was considering buying featured a mural. It added to the charm of the then 122-year-old house.

Of course, we bought the bed & breakfast, and as guests came to stay with us, we shared the story of the mural with them—the story that had been passed down to us from the previous owners. But it was not until recently that the story got more real—became our story to tell. A friend suggested that I interview Lydia Rose Spencer, an artist who grew up in Dover-Foxcroft and who currently works in the arts in Monson. When I heard the name, it sounded so familiar, but I couldn't place it right away, and then I did. I was excited to meet the artist who painted the mural that we have been enjoying—that our guests have been enjoying for so long.

The story that was passed down suddenly had more credibility—more meaning because I had the opportunity to sit with Lydia Rose Spencer in our library and hear her life's journey as an artist. Like me, Lydia Rose is 'from away' even though she has lived in the area since she was a child. Like many children, she enjoyed drawing, but growing up on a horse farm, she just assumed that she would grow up to be a horse trainer. That all changed when Lydia turned 18. She explored the art museums of London, where she had the chance to see some of the great works of art that she had only seen in her literature books. In those moments, the art spoke to Lydia in a way that made her realize she needed to figure out how to create great art, too.

Up to that point in her life, Lydia had only created drawings. Still, she knew that painting was her calling, so she went to UMO to study studio arts for a couple of years before moving to the New Hampshire Institute of Art, where she could become completely immersed in art. Like anyone with a passion and a talent for art, Lydia continued to pursue her dream of painting after college. Her schooling marked the beginning of a journey—one she continues to this day. She will tell you, as will most artists, that becoming a good painter, a great artist, is not necessarily a destination. It is not a moment in time when you can say you "made it," because as an artist, becoming great—getting better and better is an endless journey.

Lydia returned to Maine with her husband after art school and began working as a commissioned portrait artist, creating large-

scale works of art for and about people. This experience gave her the time to develop her style, and word of mouth spread, keeping her quite busy. However, in the end, it was tough—always painting what everyone else wanted her to paint. She was not painting what she wanted to paint—she wanted more balance. With the onset of the pandemic, Lydia began focusing more on painting what she wanted to paint.

Like many artists who diversify to keep their work fresh and meaningful, Lydia also started her own natural skincare business. She was creating her lotions from all-natural products and still kept her painting alive by making all of her own labels. You can see her skincare collection on her website at [www.naturegoddessco.com](http://www.naturegoddessco.com).

The pandemic gave Lydia the time she needed to build up a collection of work that she wanted to create—her own visions brought to life, and she shared her work on social media, which is where an art gallery representative from a gallery in Chicago reached out, wanting Lydia to be part of a show—part of the core gallery collection. That relationship has been going strong for several years now, giving Lydia recognition outside of Maine and allowing her to exhibit in other states, including Wisconsin and Montana.

Lydia's focus in painting remains portraiture. She especially loves to paint women and their personal expressions, capturing the stories her models share about their lives and who they are as individuals. Each of Lydia's paintings, as you can see on her Instagram profile (@lydiarosespencer), evokes emotion in the

(SPENCER, continued on page 13)





## THE MANY BENEFITS OF PINE

By Stacy Shaffer

Many of us bring fresh greenery into our houses at this time of year; pine garlands on the table and mantel, along with a Christmas tree in the front parlor or living room. Let's explore other ways of enjoying the beauty and benefits of pine, other than just as a holiday decoration. The Eastern White Pine, the official state tree of Maine, offers a host of medicinal properties and can be used to make a delicious cup of tea or a glass of soda. The tree even played a pivotal role in giving us the saying "bury the hatchet", after five warring Native American tribes literally buried a hatchet under the pine tree as a symbol of peace.

Maine is home to four native types of pine: Eastern White Pine, Red Pine, Jack Pine, and Pitch Pine. To identify a pine tree, look for needles in bunches of 2, 3, or 5, a key distinguishing characteristic of pine. Eastern White Pine (*Pinus Strobus*) is easy to identify by its clusters of five long, slender needles (2-5 inches long). A good mnemonic for identification is that there are five letters in the word white and five needles in a bundle.

White pine needles are a nourishing medicine that can be collected at any time they are green, which is essentially all year round. As always, you must harvest from the correct tree. Check with someone if you are uncertain. When harvesting, avoid roadsides and treated lawns to ensure you are harvesting needles free of pollutants and pesticides. A pair of pruning shears can be used to snip the needles without damaging the tree, or you can gently pull the clusters off by hand. Only take what you need and never strip a single branch or tree bare. Distribute your harvest across multiple branches and trees. Foraging ethically is critical in supporting the long-term survival of the tree.

The needles are extremely high in Vitamin C, containing five times the amount of Vitamin C as an orange. So much Vitamin C that pine was once used to treat scurvy. If you feel a winter cold coming on, brew a cup of White Pine Needle tea. White Pine Needle not only boosts your immune system but also has a lovely, light, piney flavor. You need two ingredients: 16 oz of water and 1/3 cup of fresh pine needles. Remove any brown ends from the needles and chop the needles into half-inch pieces. Chopping helps to release the medicinal compounds. Bring the water to a boil and pour it over the pine needles. Cover the cup with a lid and steep for ten to fifteen minutes. Covering your tea allows the volatile oils in the needles to remain in your tea cup. These volatile oils contain the plant's medicine, so to reap the full benefits of the medicine, it is essential to cover your tea. Strain the needles, add lemon or honey to taste, and enjoy.

Not a tea drinker? No worries, pine needles can also be used to make soda (yes, soda!). I think it tastes like Sprite, but try it for yourself and see what you think. This would be a great activity to do with your children over holiday break. For this simple recipe, you will need two cups of pine needles, four tablespoons of sugar, and 2.5 cups of water. Put the needles and sugar in a glass jar and fill with water. Add the lid and gently shake the jar so the ingredients are evenly distributed. Put the bottle in a sunny windowsill for three days. I left mine longer, so there's no need to worry if you forget to check it after three days. It is important during this step that you do not shake the bottle. That's all there is to making a natural soda. Pretty easy! Enjoy this natural alternative to soda.



Don't feel like going outside to collect needles, no worries, you can enjoy the benefits of pine without going out in the cold and snow. Want to recall the scent of the Christmas tree after it has been taken down? Try pine essential oil. When inhaled, the oil's molecules are detected by smell receptors, which send messages to the brain's limbic system. When diffused, pine essential oil is reported to act as a decongestant, clearing a stuffy nose. The invigorating fresh scent of pine is associated with relaxation, mental clarity, and a boost in energy levels. Plus, it just plain smells good. Reminiscent of walking in the forest without having to get all bundled up and go outside in the cold.

This is just a brief sample of all the amazing things pine can be used for. I encourage you to take a walk in the woods this winter, introduce yourself to the pine tree, and try your hand at making a nourishing cup of tea. If you are feeling adventurous, try making a household cleaner, healing salve, bar of soap, or any number of other things—all benefits of the all too common mighty pine tree.

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*(RUDOLPH, continued from page 6)*

The song doesn't record whether the "other" reindeer changed. Sure, they were shouting out with glee but that was because they were able to complete their rounds without hazard. The question that remains unanswered is whether they became kind and accepting because of the experience. If another reindeer came to the barn with, say, a deformed antler, would they laugh and call him names? Would they let poor Bent Antler join in any reindeer games?

One thing I am pretty certain of, though. Rudolph began to think differently of himself. Where he stood—or flew—made a difference.

\* \* \* \* \*

*If you're feeling troubled or weighed down, please know you don't have to carry everything alone. Reaching out is a sign of strength, not weakness, and there are people who will listen without judgment and stand with you through difficult moments. Help is always closer than it seems, and taking even a small step toward support can open the door to healing and hope. The suicide and crisis hotline is 988.*





## THE BEST CHRISTMAS PAGEANT EVER!

Before moving to Maine, I spent 10 years as the Director of Children's Ministries at two different Episcopal Churches. The first is a smaller neighborhood church; the latter was a grand Cathedral with over 7,000 parishioners. To say Christmas was my busy season would be a massive understatement. There was a lot of work and intention put into the preparations of the "Children's Christmas Pageant". Casting, costumes, scripts, and rehearsals filled my thoughts and hours. Some years, I would be so deep in preparations for the 20-minute pageant that Christmas had come and gone, and somehow I missed the season. I was left so exhausted on Christmas Eve and so fatigued on Christmas Day that I just wanted to nap it away.

When I began working at the Cathedral of Saint Philip, I became immersed in a curriculum called "Godly Play". Godly Play invites children into the Holy mysteries through stories, wonder, and play, while recognizing children's competency and capacity to process their own thoughts and reactions. It's anything but babyish... or cartoony; it truly honors the participant's ability to find their place in the story. Godly Play introduces the sacred stories of the Old Testament, the parables that Jesus shared, the stories of the prophets, and our liturgical actions. The story of Advent was a game-changer in my experience of the "most wonderful time of the year".

In a time when we are rushing around shopping, going to parties, and preparing for Christmas festivities. Godly Play reminds us that Advent is the season to stop, listen, pay attention, something amazing is about to happen. And if we don't slow down, we will miss the whole Holy Mystery that is Christmas. We are given four weeks to prepare for the most wonderful Holy mystery, the coming of a King. This King isn't one of riches and grandeur, but a King of something so special that we need time to prepare. On the first Sunday of Advent, we light a candle to remember the prophets. Prophets are people who are so close to God that God is so close to them; they know what God wants them to say and do. The prophets knew something magnificent was going to happen, and they pointed to Bethlehem. On the second Sunday of Advent, we remember the Holy Family and are invited on the journey to Bethlehem with Mary, Joseph, and the donkey. On the third Sunday, we light a candle to remember the shepherds. They must have been so fearful when the angel came to them and told them a baby, a king, had been born in a manger, in a barn with cows and other animals. Finally, on the fourth Sunday, we remember the Magi, the three Kings. They followed the brightest star and brought gifts of Gold, Myrrh, and Frankincense to this baby, named Jesus.

When I began to really follow this practice, to stop and pay attention, to look for this new kind of King, this baby in the manger, I found a new enjoyment of this busy season. This Christmas Pageant I was in charge of took on a new experience for me. It became an invitation into this Holy and beautiful mystery. The greatest Christmas Pageant for me was truly listening to the call of the choir as they began singing "Oh Come All Ye Faithful." With this hymn, I joined the children and took the journey to Bethlehem with Mary, Joseph, the Shepherds, the Magi, and, of course, the Donkey.





# THE WRITER'S CORNER

## INTERVIEWS WITH MAINE AUTHORS

Each month we will highlight a Maine author. If you are a Maine author, or know of one who would like to be showcased here, reach out to us at [john@guilfordbnb.com](mailto:john@guilfordbnb.com).

### GETTING TO KNOW CHERYL GRANT GILLEPSIE

In our October issue, we were honored to feature a chapter from Cheryl Grant Gillespie's book, **"From Beaver Creek to Hanoi."** If you missed that issue, we recommend picking up a copy, or reading it online at [www.theguilfordregister.com](http://www.theguilfordregister.com) then, if you are interested, consider purchasing the entire book from Cheryl directly through her website at [www.cheryl-writes.com](http://www.cheryl-writes.com).

#### When did you first know that you wanted to write, and when did you discover that you were good at it?

I really enjoyed writing in high school with a wonderful English teacher. I always started something and never finished anything as I was teaching 8th grade Language Arts. In 2000, after losing the last surviving member of my childhood family, I decided I needed to tell my family's stories. I joined a writing group and started taking writing classes at the Maine Women's Writing Center located at the library of the UNE campus in Portland. This group gave writers' an opportunity to share work at an evening presentation. The warm reception I received upon reading an essay was all I needed to continue working. I was able to really focus on my writing when I retired in 2014. I was part of an anthology entitled **Compassionate Journey** that was published by Maine Authors Publishing, a hybrid press out of Thomaston. The book was well received, and I was encouraged to produce two more works of nonfiction. **Gracie & Albert** is about my parents' struggles with my mother's mental illness. **From Beaver Creek to Hanoi**, about a POW mother, followed that book. Both were published by the hybrid Androscoggin Press out of West Kennebunk.

#### If you could sit down with one other writer, living or dead, who would you choose, and what would you ask them?

I would love to talk with Jeanette Walls about her gut wrenching honesty in her writing. I would ask her if the movie version of **Glass Castle** came anywhere close to her vision of it.

#### What was your first published work? Tell us a little about it.

I had a story about a neighbor's dog published in an anthology put out by Grey Wolf Publishing. Powder was a light yellow female Lab who played with our male Lab Bode and continued to visit us after Bode died. I continued to buy biscuits for her visits to reward her loyalty and love.

#### Have you ever taken a trip to research a story? Tell us about it.

I traveled to Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania in 2021 to read and study their Peace Paper collection from the Vietnam War era. I was particularly interested in notes from Cora Weiss and David Dillinger for **From Beaver Creek to Hanoi**.

#### If you could choose three authors to invite for a dinner party, who would they be, and why?

Kristen Hannah, Heath Lee, and Jeanette Walls would create an interesting discussion. These authors all write about strong women.

#### How long does it take you to write a book?

Two of my books took around six to seven years. My book about my mother took three different forms over twenty years.

#### Why did you choose to write in your particular field or genre?

I like to write about true life. It's more interesting than anything one could make up, in my opinion.

#### What qualities do you and your characters share?

I would hope I am strong and resilient like my female characters.

#### How did you deal with rejection letters?

I wasn't successful with traditional publishers, and as a senior writer I decided to seek out alternative ways of getting published.

#### What advice do you wish you'd had before releasing your first story?

Everyone has a story to tell that someone will be able to relate to in some way.

#### What was the most valuable piece of advice you've had from an editor?

Know when to stop rewriting, and call it done!

#### What are you working on now, and what's coming out next?

I'm working on and off with my memoir, but life gets in the way.

#### What was one of the most surprising things you've learned in writing your books?

People bring so much of themselves to a book they read. I have been surprised with how many different ways readers have identified with my writing.



Crossing Moosehead Lake itself—Maine’s largest lake—on a snowmobile is an unforgettable experience, with the Longfellow Mountains rising dramatically from the western shore. The trails here connect to the extensive network throughout the Highlands region, offering everything from challenging mountain terrain to gentle lakeside routes.

Greenville has evolved into a snowmobiling hub, with excellent lodging options, restaurants that welcome riders, and outfitters offering rentals and guided tours. The town’s location provides access to trails heading in every direction, making it perfect for groups with varying skill levels. The nearby trails to Lily Bay and along the Golden Road offer particularly memorable rides through working forest land.

### **Rangeley Lakes Region: Mountain Majesty**

Western Maine’s Rangeley Lakes area delivers a snowmobiling experience defined by dramatic elevation changes and breathtaking mountain vistas. The trails here climb into the surrounding mountains, offering technical riding that rewards skilled operators with spectacular panoramic views.

The town of Rangeley itself sits at a high elevation, which typically ensures excellent snow conditions throughout the season. From here, trails radiate toward Stratton, Eustis, and into the vast wilderness of the Bigelow Preserve. The Height of Land trail, which traverses the mountains between Rangeley and the Carrabassett Valley, ranks among the most scenic snowmobile routes in New England.

This region particularly appeals to riders who appreciate mountain terrain and don’t mind working for their views. The combination of challenging trails, stunning scenery, and charming mountain towns creates an experience that feels more alpine than typical Maine riding.

### **Jackman and the Moose River Valley: Border Country Adventure**

Straddling the Canadian border, Jackman serves as Maine’s gateway to Quebec and offers a unique international snowmobiling experience. The Moose River Valley provides spectacular riding through pristine wilderness, with trails that connect to Quebec’s extensive system for those with proper documentation.



Jackman itself has embraced its identity as a snowmobile destination, with most businesses catering to winter visitors. The trails around the community access some of Maine’s most remote and beautiful terrain, including routes through the Boundary Mountains and along the shores of numerous remote ponds and streams.

The area excels in providing that authentic North Woods experience, with excellent chances for wildlife viewing and the kind of solitude that’s increasingly rare in the snowmobiling world. The region’s consistent snowfall and long season make it reliable even during brutal winters.

### **The Forks and Upper Kennebec Valley: Whitewater Country in White**

Known primarily as Maine’s whitewater rafting capital, The Forks transforms into a snowmobiling destination when rivers freeze and snow arrives. The trails here wind through the same spectacular gorges and valleys that attract summer paddlers, offering a completely different perspective on this rugged landscape.

The region’s trail system connects to both the Moosehead Lake area and the Jackman region, making it an excellent hub for more extended expeditions. The combination of challenging terrain, reliable snow, and excellent trail maintenance makes this area a favorite among experienced riders.

### **Millinocket and Katahdin Region: Big Mountain, Big Adventures**

The trails surrounding Millinocket offer something truly special—views of Mount Katahdin, Maine’s highest peak, from your snowmobile. This region provides access to trails that circumnavigate Baxter State Park, although the park itself is closed to snowmobiles, thereby preserving its wilderness character.

The riding here varies from technical forest trails to open areas with commanding views. The town has worked to position itself as a four-season recreation destination, and snowmobilers will find welcoming accommodations and services.

Regardless of which destination you choose, success requires planning. Maine requires snowmobile registration, and riders should always check trail conditions before heading out. Joining organized group rides or hiring guides can enhance the experience, particularly for those unfamiliar with the region.

Each of these destinations offers something unique, but they all share Maine’s legendary hospitality, excellent trail maintenance, and winter beauty that must be experienced to be believed.





## THE LIBRARY SHELF

### SHORT STORIES & CHAPTERS WRITTEN BY MAINE AUTHORS

Each month we will highlight a short story or serial written by a Maine author. If you are a Maine writer, or know of one who would like to be showcased here, reach out to us at [john@guilfordbnb.com](mailto:john@guilfordbnb.com)

### IT'S NOT ABOUT FLY FISHING

(*Salmon Fly Fishing on Grand Lake Stream*)  
By Dana Green

Two lifelong anglers enter wearing faded brown L.L. Bean waders to fly fish downstream of the dam waters of Grand Lake Stream. They had gottin' up early for a full belly, sporting camp daybreak breakfast. It was going to be a damp and misty morning for fishing. A Mainer's daily fly-fishing conditions ... that those from away ... never grasp or understand.

"Doc, this is as close as I'll get to actually seeing heaven," Rodney said.

"God's Fly-Fishing Paradise, my friend," I said peacefully, casting and mending my line.

Rodney with tears on both cheeks said, "Doc, I will never be able to repay you."

"We can discuss those details over supper tonight," I said.

Turning to get a better view, Rodney asked quietly, "Can you see 'em?"

I replied, "Kind of... glimpses every now and then."

As I was studying the current and the rapid water flowing around the rock cropping, I saw a couple of nice salmon rising gently to the surface. They were up stream to Rodney. I awaited his observation.

Getting more excited Rodney said softly, "Salmon. Big Salmon."

"Rodney, stay calm and focused. You've got your line drifting perfectly...strip it, strip it..."

With a quickening breath Rodney said, "Doc, please call me Rod." He asked.

"Ok. Rod. Some...are ... 16 to 20" ... you got a fight ahead of you, are you prepared for this?" I asked.

Rod responded, "I don't honestly know...I have never been so scared."

"Big salmon fight to the end. You gotta commit yourself to the challenge, to the competition."

"Man. I've never faced...big trout like these before..." said Rod with emotion.

"No guidebook. Rod, just life experience," I said.

"Jesus, Doc, this isn't bull riding."

"You tell me, once you've netted one of those bad ass 20 inchers!"

"Are they swimming up stream?" Rod asked, tilting his head and squinting through his polarized glasses.

"Yeah. Maybe they think there're King Salmon... swimming up stream to die," I quipped.

Rod paused and said, "Doc, I read that King Salmon sacrifice everything to die?"

"That's true."

Rodney went silent for quite some time. I let him linger with his thoughts as I completed a couple more roll casts.

"Doc, my life has not gone as I expected," said Rod, patiently stripping his line.

I replied while keeping tension on my line and bringing my rod up to my waist, "Mine neither."

Rodney glanced my way to watch me stripping my line with pauses and breaks in my pattern.

"Yours didn't go as expected? You're a doctor for christ sake."

I broke out in my best shitty I got a nice-one-on-the-line grin. As I netted my first 18 incher, I said, "I've had many relationships. Not all have turn out as I planned."

"Truer words never said..." said Rodney.

"Huh?" I glanced in his direction with a look of surprise and confusion.

"You know. Cast by cast. Some things get away from us. Some things just cannot be mended."

I nodded in agreement. "Sometimes life is ... like tension on your line," I said.

He recalled, "I have at times felt like I was fighting a King Salmon."

I kept my eyes focused on my salmon as I removed my hand tied, Adams parachute black fly, from its lip.

"What do you mean?" I asked as I released my fish back into the aqua, blue-green water.

(GREEN, continued on page 14)

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(SPENCER, continued from page 7)

viewer, while also conveying a sense of emotion and feeling from the model. Lydia, as the painter, captures that moment in time just perfectly.

In school, and for a brief period afterward, her models would sit. It would take a long time to capture the moment on the canvas, so over time, Lydia evolved to having a photo session, capturing the moment and the light, then using the photos as a reference point as she paints in her studio.

When not in the studio painting or in the “lab” creating her next lotion, Lydia continues to share her love of the arts by working at Monson Arts. Here, she has taught art classes to high school students, collaborated with renowned landscape artist Alan Bray, and contributed to the growth of the artist residency program at Monson Arts.

When teaching, Lydia is more of a hands-on, collaborative teacher rather than one who lectures on technique. Her idea—her preferred approach when teaching—is working on a canvas with the students, discussing the process, and collaborating on it together, showing them her process so they can see it firsthand. Then, as young artists, they can follow along visually and work towards their own style—their own process. They will make mistakes. She makes mistakes, but it is learning from them—learning about how the paints interact with the canvas, how the light and color change with the layers of paint. Just as being an artist is a journey, so is creating a work of art.

***“I think the bravest people in the world are artists because the bravest thing is to face yourself over and over.”***

Lydia, like many of the artists I have met up here, agrees that there is a huge artist population in Piscataquis County. The challenge now is getting them all to come out of the studio and show their work—to let them all know that right now, right here is the time and place to do just that. Thanks in part to the Libra Foundation’s revitalization of Monson as an arts destination, this area is growing in the arts, both in visual and written forms, but we still need more spaces.

As for what is next for Lydia and her art, and where she wants it to go, she is not chasing the big-city galleries. Instead, she is focused on producing truly amazing bodies of work that represent the art she loves to create. If that art is displayed, discussed, purchased, or otherwise appreciated, then that is fantastic, but those are not the ultimate goal. Those are all part of the journey—the journey to being a great artist.

I am grateful that her journey brought her to The Guilford Bed & Breakfast—brought her talent into our historic home so that she could create a giant mural that looks like it was naturally part of the original build back in 1902. Her choice of colors, lighting, and depth perfectly suits the wall, adding a level of charm and sophistication to our historical home.

To view Lydia’s mural works, visit the Thompson Free Library in Dover-Foxcroft or The Guilford Bed & Breakfast in Guilford. Most of her portraiture work can be found on Instagram and her website, [www.lydiarosespencer.com](http://www.lydiarosespencer.com).



When snow blankets Maine, the scenic highways enter a completely different realm. The explosive colors fade to a palette of whites, grays, and the deep green of conifers, creating scenes of stark, breathtaking beauty. Route 1 along the coast becomes a study in contrasts—pristine snow covering rocky shores while the dark ocean churns beyond, occasionally sending spray that freezes into fantastic ice sculptures.

**The Katahdin Woods and Waters Scenic Byway**, encompassing routes through Maine's North Woods, showcases winter wilderness at its most raw and magnificent. Route 11 through this region passes frozen lakes where ice fishing shacks dot the white expanse, and forests so deep and quiet that the crunch of snow seems to echo. Moose, though less frequently spotted than in warmer months, occasionally emerge from the tree line, their dark forms striking against the snow.

Route 27 to Sugarloaf Mountain transforms into a winter wonderland drive, where the highway serves skiers and snowboarders heading to Maine's premier winter sports destination. The Carrabassett Valley presents a picture of winter recreation and natural beauty intertwined, with snow-laden evergreens standing sentinel along the roadside and distant mountain peaks beckoning adventure seekers.

Winter driving Maine's scenic routes requires preparation and caution. Black ice can form unexpectedly, particularly on shaded stretches and bridges. Yet for those equipped with proper tires and patience, the rewards are immense. The quiet isolation of a winter drive through Maine offers a meditative quality—towns become cozier, wood smoke rises from chimneys, and the landscape takes on an almost mystical stillness.

Autumn peak foliage typically occurs from late September to mid-October, although the timing varies by elevation and latitude. Northern regions peak earlier, while coastal areas hold their color longer. The winter driving season extends from December through March, with February often offering the most consistently snowy landscapes.

Savvy travelers check road conditions before venturing out, particularly in winter. Many scenic highways remain well-maintained year-round, but remote stretches may close temporarily during severe weather. Local tourism offices offer excellent resources for planning, including foliage reports for autumn and winter, as well as road updates.

Maine's scenic highways offer more than just beautiful drives—they provide portals into the state's soul. Whether traveling through autumn's blazing glory or winter's peaceful stillness, these routes connect travelers with landscapes that have inspired generations. The journey itself becomes the destination, each mile revealing why Maine remains one of America's most visually stunning states, regardless of season.



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"You're a Doc. You know. It takes real strength to overcome... struggles...like the loss..."

I responded with questioning eyebrows. "Rodney, once you bring that fish to the surface."

"Yeah. It exposes you," Rodney said sadly.

"Makes you vulnerable," I replied.

Looking quickly at Rodney's mending line I noticed movement below the surface. I decided to offer a bit of guidance, "Rodney, keep tension on your line and raise your pole."

"Oh, boy! Gotta real big one, a deep diver I hope."

"Keep some tension but let 'em go down. He will break the surface and then you bring him in."

Rodney's trout dove down a good 6 feet in front of a sandstone-colored rock and then propelled itself to the surface and broke a good 3 feet into the air and then dove back into the rolling water. Rodney regained his line tension and began to reel in his first, large Grand Lake Stream salmon.

As I moved to his side and netted his 20-inch, beauty of a salmon, Rodney said, "That's fishing."

"Rod, you have the strength to overcome. Just net 'em, one problem at a time."

"Doc, I don't need a guide. Just my close friends...and my family. That is all I need."

"Rod. That has been my life."

"Doc. I'm now old enough to know...a single act of kindness can change everything"

I gave Rodney a warm smile of acknowledgment and said, "Fish on my friend. Fish on."

*It's Not About Fly Fishing, is a psychological story based upon my three days of October 2022 as a participant at a Reel Recovery event in Grand Lake Stream, Maine. This short story is a result of my experiences as a medical provider (field of psychiatry) and my passion for fishing. I am a 71-year-old native Maine cogger and cancer patient. My wife, Eileen, and our wonder dog, Gracie, reside in Bucksport, Maine. Be Well! Fish On!*



*Dana L. Green is a 71 year old Mainer. He is a "native cogger" who has lived a charmed life as a small-town farm boy to a college graduate. Now retired from a mid life career in medicine he writes to uncover the mysteries, marvels, and musings of everyday life. He has scribed over 100 short stories that include crime mysteries,*

*historical creative fiction, memoirs, and downeast Maine fables as uttered by a gifted storyteller.*

*His western work has appeared in Frontier Tales (2024-25). September 2025, two of his childhood memoir stories of brotherhood and adolescence adventure appeared in the anthology, Tell Your Story, Write Your Story, Share Your Story (University Maine Press). 10/01/25 Dana's crime story, The Edges of Lying appeared in Luminaura Magazine. Most of his days consist of casting words onto a blank page or a fly line on his favorite lake. His wife of thirty-five years, Eileen, and his 2-year-old toy poodle, Gracie, are fans of his work.*





## LOCAL EVENTS

### THINGS TO DO IN THE MAINE HIGHLANDS

Each month we will highlight a Maine artist or art gallery. If you are a Maine artist or art gallery, or know of one who would like to be showcased here, reach out to us at [john@guilfordbnb.com](mailto:john@guilfordbnb.com).

#### MILLINOCKET MARATHON

December 6, 2025

Although there is no formal entry fee to run the Millinocket Marathon & Half, all participants are strongly encouraged to make a donation at the time of registration to support the bare minimum race expenses. These expenses include race timing, course certification, port-a-johns, bus transportation, and insurance. Anything raised above and beyond our essential race expenses will be donated to local charitable groups and organizations. Learn more at:

[www.crowathletics.com/millinocket-race-overview](http://www.crowathletics.com/millinocket-race-overview)

#### HOMETOWN HOLIDAYS

December, 2025

Throughout Piscataquis County, the individual towns will be celebrating the holiday season with craft markets, parades, light shows, and so much more. To learn more and see the different schedules, visit: [www.piscataquischamber.com](http://www.piscataquischamber.com)

#### RADAR RUN

February & March, 2026

Get ready for a full day of radar run fun, including a beer tent, vendors & food trucks. We will also have apparel for sale to support the Central Maine Racing Foundation. A percentage of proceeds from our events go to the Piscataquis Valley Snowmobile Club & to a scholarship in place to help a high school graduate attend a trade school.

Learn more at [www.centralmaineracingfoundation.com](http://www.centralmaineracingfoundation.com)

#### WILDERNESS SLED DOG RACE

February 7, 2026

Join us for an Iconic 60-mile and 35-mile races, a 4-mile four-dog sprint, plus our 1-dog skijor races in the scenic Moosehead Lake region. Take the challenge and run on some of the most beautiful trails in the Northeast, or come out to cheer on the mushers!

Learn more at [www.100milewildernessrace.org](http://www.100milewildernessrace.org)

#### MAINE MAPLE SUNDAY

March 21-22, 2026

Maine maple producers will be hosting the 43rd annual Maine Maple Sunday weekend. Spring is a great time to get out and enjoy the great State of Maine and everything that it has to offer, including Maine Maple Syrup. Most sugarhouses offer maple syrup samples and demonstrations on how pure Maine maple syrup is made.

Learn more at [www.mainemapleproducers.com](http://www.mainemapleproducers.com)

#### MOOSEHEAD MARATHON

April 26, 2026

Run through the heart of Maine's wilderness and discover what you're truly made of. Moosehead Marathon and Half awaits you on April 26, 2026. Join us for a race through one of Maine's most picturesque regions—the heart of Greenville, along the stunning shores of Moosehead Lake. Whether you're racing the full marathon or the half, this event will take you on a memorable journey through scenic landscapes and charming local landmarks.

Learn more at [www.mooseheadmarathon.com](http://www.mooseheadmarathon.com)

#### PISCATAQUIS FARMERS MARKET

Saturdays in June - August, 2026

Whether you live in Piscataquis County or are traveling through, you will want to stop at the Piscataquis Farmers Market in Guilford. With upwards of 40 farmers and artisan vendors offering fresh fruit and veggies, meats, cheeses and so much more. Enjoy this outdoor market along the Piscataquis River. Learn more at:

[www.piscataquisforward.org/farmers-market](http://www.piscataquisforward.org/farmers-market)

#### RIVERFEST

July 25, 2026

Join us for a day filled with live music, craft vendors, fun activities for the kids, an expanded beer garden, a community run, fireworks, and so much more. It all kicks off with the annual town parade. Come for the fun, stay for the friendships. Learn more and sign up at:

[www.piscataquisforward.org/riverfest](http://www.piscataquisforward.org/riverfest)

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