



Rockland Buzz

Sweet Summer

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The Old School
Fellowship Education



STRAND ON THE AIR

Broadcast on WRFR this Sunday, June 28

Original radio comedy, original music – and plenty of fun for the whole family. THE STRAND ON THE AIR, presented by the Strand Theatre, and hosted by House Manager Liz McLeod, features original music by Strand Education Coordinator Brittany Parker, original sketches featuring The Strand Family Players, and your ubiquitous announcer Dan Bookham. Come along as newscasters Karl Stuffle and Camomile Bourgeois keep you informed with “All Things Resicinded”, and head on down to Abysmal Point -- the town the travel writers forgot – for the adventures of crusty old clam-shack proprietor Mrs. Grunden, her ne’er-do-well husband Merton, her eye-rolling young sidekick Lilita, her unpredictable friend Gertie Crummet, and anyone else who happens to wander by. The Strand On The Air – coming to you once a month thru this summer (June 28, July 26, & August 30) with a much-needed dose of real hometown entertainment!

Check it out on WRFR: 93.3 fm in Rockland, 99.3 fm in Camden, and streaming worldwide at wrfr.org



A conversation
about local issues
on WRFR,
Wednesdays
from 5 to 6 pm



Ron Tesler



Ron Tesler

Down Main Street with Phil Groce

So Far, So Good

From the back-parking lot of the old Van Balen building, you have a great view of the ocean, also true from the back windows on the 4th floor where Continuum Physical Therapy finds a home. Sam Powell, one of the co-owners of Continuum Physical Therapy, is moving around so fast, I don’t suppose he has time to notice the view much. But you can see, when he comes to a client, he is all-stop and client centered.

Sam was born in China, ME, attended Erskine Academy along with his twin sister. His sister was salutatorian, but Sam didn’t have an over-abiding interest in high school with exception of the sports, but he did alright. He knew he was heading for college, because that was the way laid out by both his parents who themselves just retired from their jobs at Maine General in nuclear medicine technology. They combined 78 years of work in that system.

There was always a medical input into the family, and Sam figured he could combine that interest with his interest in the human body and its physical activity. After high school he enrolled in the physical therapy program at University of New England. His twin brother became an engineer, and his younger sister, a nurse practitioner. He and his wife, Kate, had been friends since high school, and post-graduation they married and moved to Colorado Springs for Sam’s clinical internship. Kate works as a dental hygienist. After 6 months they returned to Maine to go into business and start a family.

Kim Gallagher, a PT, and her husband started Continuum in 2009. Sam bought her husband’s share in 2016. Making lots of money was not the main object, but Sam and Kim wanted to emphasize 1:1 care and continuing education of both the clients and the staff, and especially prevention. The clinical staff has 5 physical therapists, 2 physical therapy assistants, and 2 smiling front office staff.

“Prevention is key,” says Sam, “but prevention does not appear a goal of our society in general.” We talked of systems where prevention is key, and we both decided that we need a single payer system, where everyone is in the system in order to have a consistent thrust toward prevention. Prevention isn’t glitzy, but what is better?

“We are planning to have classes for prevention and the approach to exercise for the general public,” says Sam, “but we are not quite there, yet. Our clients now consist of post-illness and surgery rehabilitation, athletic injuries, and a little workers compensation.” I knew that physicians, nearly all employed by hospitals, direct their workers compensation patients to hospital-run programs.

I knew Sam had recent additions to his family. “Yes, we had fraternal twins, born 10 weeks early. They’re now 6 months old, and doing well after 54 days in the neonatal intensive care unit at Maine Medical. Kate is back to work for 3 days a week, and I work 4 days a week. For 2 days, Kate’s parents take the kids.” That sounds like a lot, I remarked. “We worked hard to have them, and we are so grateful that it makes up for it. Not to forget that we have a lot of care-help from both our parents.”

That stay at Maine Medical must have been costly. “We haven’t gotten the bill yet, but we have our fingers crossed. We just paid off our student loans which combined, added up to more than our house. From student loan bills, and now to medical bills. I guess that’s the new American Dream.”

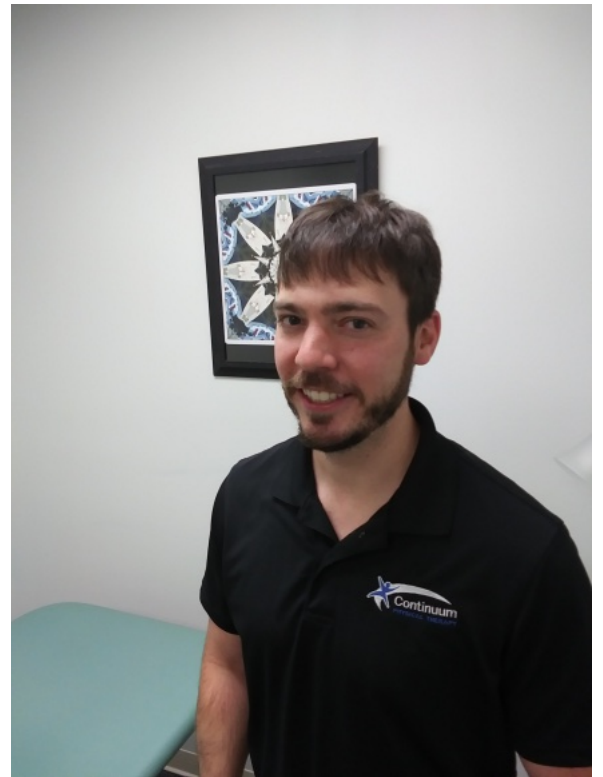
“On the heels of all that, then Covid comes along,” Sam says with a shrug. I asked how it changed things. “We had to shut down to 20% of our usual load and only take post-op and low-risk clients. We did enroll in the State’s PPP [Paycheck Protection Program] which allowed us to continue to pay all our employees their regular wages. They also took sick-time and got more than caught-up with continuing education and back paperwork. But the PPP is about to finish. We are now running at about 60%, but the hospital is starting more elective and day surgery. Things are beginning to pick up. People are still reluctant to come in because of Covid. But as you can see, we are very careful here.”

As Sam knows, I have been a physician for more than 50 years. In my work I am always grateful and amazed by the expertise of physical and occupational therapists. I depend on them. “We have a lot of training,” Sam says, “and after 7 years, we get a doctorate in physical therapy. One of the strengths of the program at UNE is their emphasis on inter-disciplinary treatments. There is so much expertise out there, from primary care docs, NPs, and PA’s and especially the orthopedic surgeons, but also chiropractors, massage therapists, podiatrists, yoga—even dental health—very important. My sister, the NP, feels the same way. She says that any one person knows only so much. So, we all have to be on the team.”

It’s a complicated life. “I’ve had it easy, compared to most.” he replies. “We have 2 great children, fabulous in-laws, and both our parents encouraged us in education all along. Not to forget the group of therapists here, with all the special expertise in things like balance, pain, using the laser. I guess I lucked out.”

How old are you? “I’m 34.” I thought he more than lucked out—there was a lot of effort, too, and he continues to be enthusiastic and happy. “So far, so good,” he replies with a smile.

As a physical therapist, do you have any one message you would like to say to everyone? He thought for a moment, then he says, “If you are talking about the degenerative diseases, especially osteoarthritis, also diabetes, brain health, cardiovascular disease, then exercise is the one silver bullet for them all. My message is EXERCISE, EXERCISE, EXERCISE. It’s the key to prevention.”



Sam Powell

The Mask Issue

by Judy Pasqualge

As the Rockland City Council, among other officials in the State of Maine, try to determine how to best keep the public safe while also encouraging a return to work and resumption of consumer purchasing, the aim of this letter is to come up with some 'talking points' pertinent to the issue of the use of masks in public.

There are some givens, from a medical point of view, and as per CDC guidelines: more use of masks will lessen both the number of cases and deaths; the issue is crucial in both indoor and outdoor settings; and, as an Arizona health official stated today (23 June), the voluntary restrictions (an ideal) tried there haven't worked.

Sometimes the issue is characterized as involving a choice between false dichotomies: freedom v. a lack of; freedom v. authority; choice v. unfreedom.

Since the general public currently does follow such restrictions as not shouting 'fire' in a crowded theatre and not going barefoot in stores, and cannot avoid penalties for drunk driving and speeding due to a claim of ignorance, the above dichotomies only characterize the current politicization of the issue.

Understandably, in this politicized climate, the position of state and local authorities is very difficult - to the point that, from a private citizen's point of view, enforcing the law may not be possible with regard to the pandemic in Maine. That is the image being given right now.

This image is not helped by the lack of a concerted, continual education campaign - which uses various media in various places with varied timings (i.e., repetition); this would be a true public service; after all, even our culture's super heroes wear masks.

From my point of view, which, granted, is also self-interested, I see a lot of fear about the lack of enforcement of the mask requirements: in business people (including in business/trade organizations), in younger people who fear going back to work and are changing jobs to increase safety, in older people and sick people (unwilling to shop unsafely) safety does not seem to be the number one priority.

Why do private establishments claim they have no mandate to enforce the use of masks (a bank I use, the Hannaford store in Rockland, which gives only three hours a week to those most at risk, with no mask enforcement)? Such positions are not the choice of employees (many are very afraid). At the least, such practice shows a real failure in corporate public relations.

Mostly, as things stand now, the issue is so politicized that impunity to break the law has been granted to the uninformed and, to a too large degree, the supporters of one political party. Who exactly is allowed to break the law, and which laws?

And with such a situation of impunity - which can tend to increase impunity - what's next?

The under-recognized factor in illness, including COVID-19 stress, is increased in this situation.

I'm grateful that the City Council is trying to take action, and agree that the police should be consulted on what is possible (and not) and how to go about it. Churches can also be brought in, social service groups, any group. Private business groups and business sectors can provide expertise, and, as is now necessary, address and detail the priority given to safety. And, finally, how can public views be determined?

WEEK FIFTEEN

COVID-19 RANDOM NOTES WHILE SHELTERING IN PLACE

by Phyllis Merriam

I'm feeding Corvid (crows) during Covid. Crows loved the leavings of a shrimp and fries basket for breakfast. One crow, maybe a young adult, denied food by the other four crows flew away. Before that, it collapsed in the grass, head down. The crows gathered in a circle around it. Finally, the crow raised itself and tried again for food. It must be starving but catching it for rehab at Avian Haven seems impossible since it can fly. Avian Haven volunteers have rescued injured birds for us over the years.

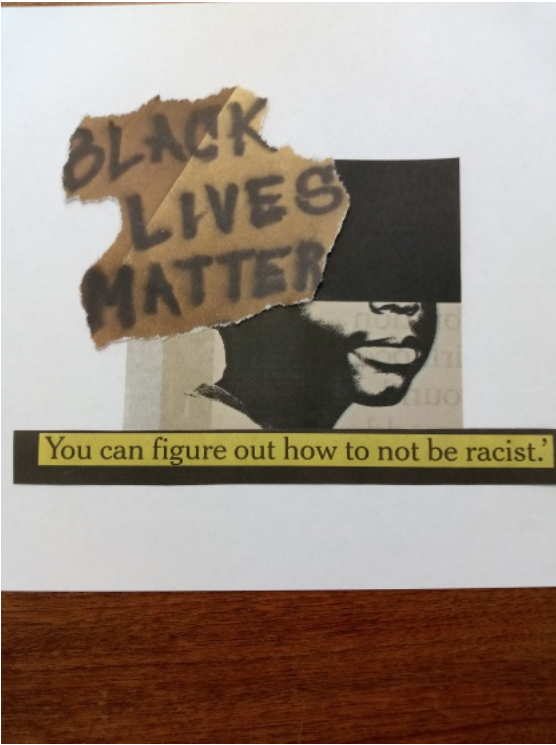
Today a friend visited me outdoors as we wore masks and social distanced while discussing the large upsurge in mask less people around Rockland. We agreed denial or arrogance is a powerful variable in these behaviors that spurred the scorn we both have experienced from mask less Rocklanders. The CDC recommends people wear face coverings and practice social distancing to protect each other. To act otherwise is at best foolish and at worst a, “Me first & the heck with you!” approach.

Maine CDC reported Knox County continues to have one of the lowest covid cases and Maine the lowest in the Northeast. But this shouldn't leave us complacent.

Just read that Pepsi Co. plans to change the 130 year-old Aunt Jemima pancake & syrup name & logo that is based on the racial stereotype “Mammy” trope of the female African-American household slave. My husband and his eldest sibling remember as kids going to the Rockland Food Fair, circa early 1950's, held at the Rockland Community Center (now the Flanagan Bld.) where among the promotional booths there was a Black “Aunt Jemima” making pancakes. She was not allowed to stay in local hotels, so Ruth Hoch sheltered her. Uncle Ben's Rice Company is also planning to change its photo of a Black man – the male version of “Aunt Jemima” - on it's packaging. I recently finally found some Uncle Ben's at Hannaford. I've been so white-privilege-black-blind that I've never really noticed the photo on the package.

Went to Zack's Shack for lunch to find neither the staff nor customers wore face coverings. I kept to my mask-on-social-distancing. We will not be returning.

During the Rockland march for George Floyd, as we were gathered at the courthouse,



a man drove by yelling, “All lives matter!” Of course all lives matter. But people of color have suffered, still suffer all manner of deprivations and discrimination in all areas of life and death. Maine media report alarming disparities among Black and African American Mainers' rates of covid compared to whites here in Maine and the country.

Found Moen Toilet Safety Rails at Lowe's for my husband. Returned home, easily assembled the rails. A brother-in-law arrived to help attach it to the toilet. Neither had the strength to unscrew the toilet seat bolts. His son was enlisted. After struggling an hour, the job was done. Moral of the Story: The job took two doctors – both PhD's. Or as my brother-in-law quipped, “Start with a BS, get a MS then a PhD: Pile it Higher and Deeper.” Would have made a great YouTube video.



The Flipside, on WRFR

Sundays 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Saturdays 6 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Hosted by Spike Hyssong. "THE FLIPSIDE SHOW": a tour through my collection of sound recordings that are kept in my innersanctum known as 'The Flipside'. Sound recordings are in the form of 78 rpm records, 16-inch radio transcriptions, reel-to-reel tape, etc and include things from jazz, big band, classic radio broadcasts, novelty, rare, unusual and/or forgotten goodies!"

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