



The Buzz

Rockland Downtown Medium

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COMMUNITY TELEVISION
On cable channel 7,
MaineCoast.tv & Roku

The Old School
Fellowship Education



Down Main Street with Phil Groce Infrastructure

Unannounced, I walked into the Green with Envy spa on Main Street. The lady at the front desk was adroitly handling incoming phone calls, a couple of clients at the desk ready to pay, and a question from one of the staff in their official livery. She was nice enough to greet me and would I kindly wait a couple of minutes. Turns out, that lady was Jennifer Wilgus, the manager of the place.

Jennifer was born and bred in Rockland, as were here parents and grandparents. Her Dad owns the family business, Mank's Auto Parts/Heal Enterprises in Warren, with her brother alongside him. Her mother works for the City of Rockland.

Jennifer graduated from Rockland High. "I loved high school," she tells me. I wanted to know what she loved so much in the school. "I liked the sports and I learned a lot academically. But more than that, it was about being a good person, as that was the goal in life—which is a big thing. That was reinforced by my family. When I walked downtown, I knew just about everyone I saw—not so much nowadays. All that reinforced the sense of community, which is also a big thing.

"I feel that same sense of community here in my work. I know the guests, or if I have never seen them before, I get to know them." Guests? "Yes, we consider our clients as guests, and we treat them so. Most of us have family, and that's what we connect on most. Guests mean something to us, and we to them."

I wanted to know what she did after high school. "I entered Husson College in 2010, but I dropped the idea of sports management during my first year. I then studied to be a para-legal and graduated with an associate's degree. Through college I had an internship in law, and that turned into a job. But I wanted to return to the Midcoast, and I got a job with Briggs and Wholey, a medical malpractice and personal injury firm in Rockland. They truly cared about each case. I liked it a lot, but I found that it was not a job you could mentally leave at the office. Our family was young and growing which made it difficult for me since they were my whole world. After two years with the law firm, I decided to move on and switch careers.

"I worked for Rheel Day Spa for 4 years. When it was bought by Marlene Cohn to become Green with Envy, I became the manager—two years now. Marlene is inspiring, and I'm also inspired by the talent I see in my co-workers. Continuing education is built-in. My job is to provide day to day organization and to uplift—all important to me. We're all one big family, and we try to build each other up and learn from one another. If you give, you get back what you give. It's a community, and being a good person is infectious. Green with Envy has grown and is now in Rockland, Camden, Belfast, and Augusta."

It must be difficult to work and have the 3 young children? "Yes, both my husband, Jesse, and I are busy. He's a lobsterman. We live with his family surrounding us, on the same road, in fact. Plus, my family is in the area. We help each other. I have three beautiful boys, a supporting husband, a wonderful job; and we have a nice house near the ocean. I am grateful."

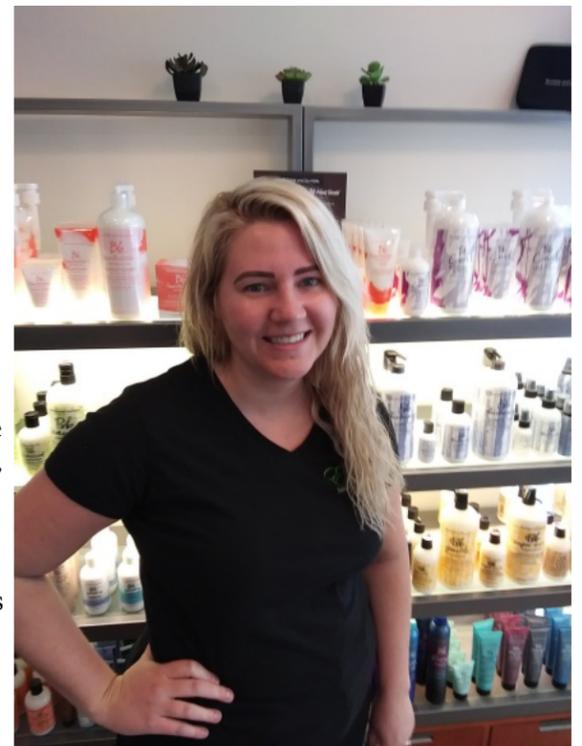
Sounds to me that you are at the apex of a culture of Maine. People move here to be part of Maine culture, and you and the family are intrinsically bound within that culture--MAKING that culture, so to speak. Someone moving here does not have that embedded infrastructure, and you represent a different culture than they.

"That's what being a guest is all about. We share our culture, and I learn from them, too. Summer people come here, and we know them like guests, and they can be touched, be heard, have a relation with a stylist, have a session with the massage therapist--all sorts of positive encounters. When they walk out, they feel better. It's an experience." I was thinking that having 'experiences' available in a town is what makes a town a 'destination.'

What happened with Covid? "It's been hard. We were totally closed for 3 months. Schools and daycare were closed. I was totally living the 'Mom Life.' Hard, but good. My husband was able to work to some degree, but then the bottom dropped out of the price of lobsters. Demand fell off, for several reasons. They ended up peddling their own lobsters. So, they parked their trucks in the parking lots. That meant time at sea, time with repairs, time selling the lobsters. Very long days and nights. Exhausting. All that added to the 'normal' dangers at sea in the business—the things I worry about. It really hits close to home when someone you know is lost at sea, and it happens more often than it should. Being a family in the fishing industry, tragedy in the water is heart-breaking."

Do you know people who had Covid? "Right next door—a young cousin tested positive. He only had cold symptoms. We all quarantined, but amazingly enough, no one else caught it. We had to be very cautious, because our children's grandparents (Jesse's parents) were nearby. Turned out okay.

"For the kids, the biggest thing was their isolation and not being able to interact in person with family or their friends. At work we still Covid-screen our guests with the usual questions. Everyone wears masks, and we have partitions between the work sites and sanitizers. Everything is inching closer to normal. During these trying times, I think the biggest thing to remember is to support the community and the local businesses . . . and just be kind.



Could Rockland have a Pedestrian-Only Zone?



This week on the Metro show our guest will be Wilson Gray, a resident of South Thomaston and a senior at Camden Hills Regional High School. He has been working on a year-long project about the viability of

pedestrian-only zones in downtown areas, and he has been seeking input from Rockland's business community.

Wilson has been interested in pedestrian-only business zones ever since he traveled to Europe several years ago.

Please join Wilson Gray and host Joe Steinberger on the Rockland Metro show from 5 to 6 pm this Wednesday, April 28, on WRFR, 93.3 fm in Rockland and 99.3 fm in Camden, and streaming online at WRFR.org. The show will also be carried live on Maine Coast Television on cable channel 7 and online at MaineCoast.tv.

And please call in to 593-0013 with questions and comments. Wilson is eager to understand your perspective.

WRFR is community radio in Rockland.

We have been broadcasting 24/7 since Valentines Day 2002.

We are all volunteers, proving that people can work together if the spirit is right. We are open to everyone and invite you to join us in giving voice to the life and creativity of our Rockland-Camden area.

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or a Night Owl?

We could use overnight (Midnight - 6 a.m.) programming as well! Please note that overnight programming must be pre-recorded out of respect for our residential neighbors.

or Whatever?

Check out our schedule at wrfr.org. Any time that is scheduled "World in Song" is open for your new show!

Email programming@wrfr.org for details.

Let's Get Away

by Steve Carroll

It's been over a year since life as we knew it changed forever.. Seems as though this virus has altered every part of our daily routines.

I now understand what life down on the farm must have been like a hundred years ago. Back then, a church outing or a summer picnic were the big days out. Now we can't even do that. Meeting friends for dinner, a Saturday at the baseball park, or a weekend shopping excursion, each one Dr. Fauci says "no can do."

Well I for one have had enough of this social isolation. It's time to bail out, time to get away. So last week I decided we were finally going to "get out of Dodge." I'm going to book a trip! I don't care where, just "get away". Well, we can't go to Europe, the Islands Canada or even a cruise. I'll go to Vegas, of course we'll have to deal with crowded airports and overbooked flights, restrictions, tests, vaccine and possible quarantines. Maybe not such a good idea.

How about a road trip? We may have issues finding a clean affordable hotel and gas is now \$3 a gallon. Perhaps escaping to a wilderness adventure would be better. Of course would need to deal with the ticks, black flies, and mosquitoes. I also wonder if the campsites are open?

Think I'll just stay home and mow the lawn.



Kill Devil Hill, Mars

by Glen Birbeck

Mars was 62 million miles from Earth on the 19th of April. That morning a small helicopter rose nine feet and hovered for half a minute above Jezero Crater. The little flying machine looked over a river delta, dry for a billion years. The helicopter was christened "ingenuity" by it's creators. Custom made to be the first flying machine on the red planet it carried a token. A bit of fabric. A piece of Earth's first powered flying machine. The snip of cloth was taken from the skin of the Wright flyer. That machine made history in 1903 at Kill Devil Hill in North Carolina. The symbolism spanned 118 years as well as an interplanetary distance. Could Orville and Wilbur have imagined this? That a snip of canvas they'd stretched over a wooden frame would one day travel so far? I doubt it. People in that time, the dawn of the 20th century, believed men would never fly. That machines made by men would explore Mars was so fantastic an idea that it didn't even feature in the Science Fiction of 1903. Going to the moon, shot from a cannon, was the limit of the wildest speculation then. What is there today that we consider to be impossible, even for our imagining? Is the first step in accomplishing the impossible taken with imagination? If so we are even now on our way to the stars. The Wrights found a way, thru dogged persistence, to lift man and machine into the air. Maybe in 118 years a bit of this little helicopter will hitch a ride on a faster than light probe to a nearby star. Things are "impossible" only after we imagine them. Before that they're unknown. It seems declaring something impossible is the first step toward accomplishment.

WEEK FIFTY-EIGHT

COVID-19 RANDOM NOTES WHILE SHELTERING IN PLACE
by Phyllis Merriam

I saw a black baseball hat in the road by the turn off to PenBay Medical Center. Later that day, the same hat was near the Union and Park Street intersection in Rockland.

How could that happen? It would make a good children's story about a boy and an animated travelling hat he finds. Is the hat leading the boy to something important? Bought some tulips with fringed double blossoms at the stand on Old County Road. They have a great variety of fresh flowers all through the growing season. It's always a surprise to see what's on offer any particular day. I love farm stands.

Another home delivery of our nephew's fresh, savory micro-greens, grown organically in his basement, otherwise known as "Monk's House Farm." (I forgot to ask about the derivation of the name, as he's neither a monk nor does he live on a farm.) The greens are nurtured with coconut coir and Rockport spring water. (I forgot to ask about the derivation of the name, as he's neither a monk nor does he live on a farm.) The greens are generously distributed to ten lucky people around Rockland.

Haven't made it down to the Keag Marsh at sunrise yet but taking a short cut the other day there was a snowy egret in the marsh. They always look otherworldly, regal and from some far away place where the most spectacular birds are created.

My birder-neighbor reports the ospreys have returned to their nest by the Head of the Bay four days earlier than last year. They may be harbingers of climate change.

I heard a songbird with an unusual (to me) call. I was able to return a reasonable facsimile and we duetted for a while. I couldn't locate the birdcall on the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's website. But then, I'm not a birder myself. I'll have to search again.

Our Maine is among the 38 states with alarming rises in Covid cases. All fifty states have the variants. Younger people are driving this uptick in cases due to not being vaccinated and the presence of more virulent varieties of the virus. Two men in their 40's & 50's have just died in Maine. We're not getting out of this for another year.

Historical events of note: After untold trillions of taxpayers' dollars and thousands of American and Afghani lives lost and untold permanent injuries fighting the Taliban for twenty years, Biden will be withdrawing our troops on September 11th. We didn't learn a thing from the lost causes, billions of dollars and lives the Brits and Russians sustained before they were driven out.

Jury found Chauvin guilty on three counts of killing George Floyd. It must be a bittersweet victory for his family. Meanwhile, the weekly count of shootings around the country goes on unabated.

Noticed this morning that Broken Wing was being challenged by an aggressive crow.

The crow hierarchy seems to be changing. Broken Wing must be at least ten.



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