

Around CONCORD

SUMMER 2021 VOLUME 14, NO. 2 \$4.95

community · culture · lifestyle

**Laura Knoy
has news
to share**

**PLUS: A look
at the busy
summer
ahead**





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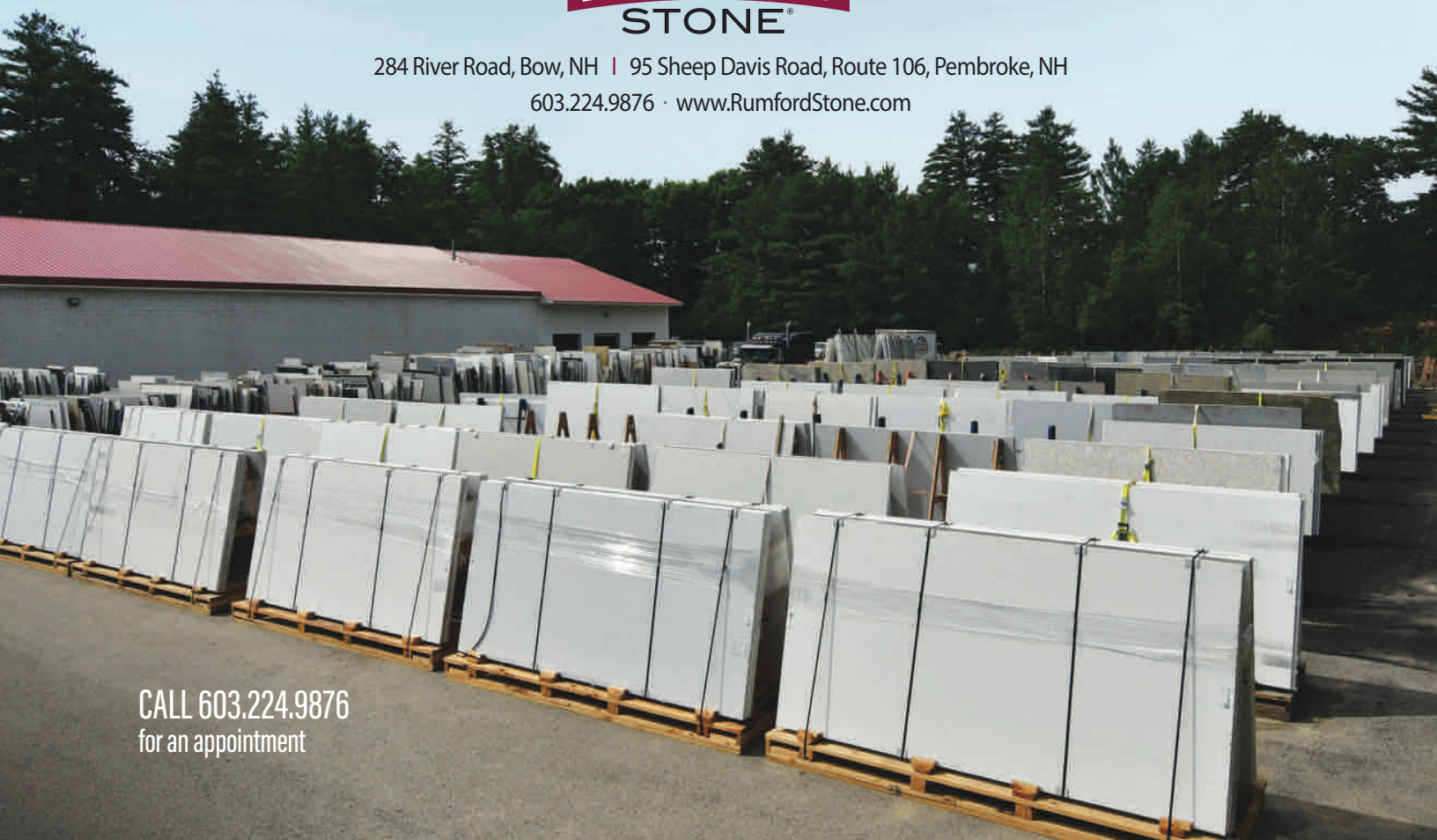
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A summer to celebrate

Many cities and towns across the state are planning a return of July 4 fireworks shows. Check with your local organizers to see dates and times.



20 Laura Knoy reflects on 25 years at NHPR's 'The Exchange'


COVER PHOTO BY GEOFF FORESTER

24 Start planning your summer: A sampling of the big events

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42 It's game on: Tips on golfing, races, camps and other sports

52 Excerpt: Mother writes of 121 days following son's near-fatal crash

A close-up photograph of a young couple smiling and embracing. The woman is in the foreground, leaning her head against the man's shoulder. Both are smiling broadly, showing their teeth. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blue sky.

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With appreciation, adventures await

It feels good to break the shackles of a global pandemic and get back to a bona fide New Hampshire summer.

Finally, we can feel the wind whip through our hair while we speed across the water, shouting to our friends over the whir of the boat engine, "This is incredible!" Wait, did he say, "Watch out for that other boat!"?

Unleashed from the short radius around our homes, we'll venture back to the White Mountains, where step by step, we can once again climb one of 4,000-footers to soak up the view from the top and relish the simplest of pleasures – a granola bar and a cool sip of water. Forget the blisters, of course.

Our bicycles are well-oiled and will carry us along trails traversing cool streams and glistening ponds. We need not worry about a small crowd in the trailhead parking lot any longer. But you'd be wise to remember the bug spray.

Most of all, we can return to the coast now that parking bans along Route 1A have been lifted. But make sure you leave early – summer is back, and the competition to get one of those coveted roadside parking spots will be fierce. We can put out our beach towels and umbrellas, curl our toes in the sand and go for a chilly dive in the waves.

Yes, yes, we're all ready to get back to life as usual, but before we do, it's worth considering some of the things COVID taught those of us who made it through with our good health.

Life slowed down during the pandemic. We went out less, drove fewer miles, stayed home more often, tended to our gardens, and finally made progress on that ever-growing list of projects. Given the threat of debilitating disease, the role of family in our lives became more clear. The pandemic highlighted how much we care about each other.

The wave of changes made us bristle at first, but looking back, it helped us appreciate a few of the tangible things in our community, like *The Exchange* with Laura Knoy (Page 20), and a few of the ethereal things, like looking out for more than ourselves, that we often take for granted.

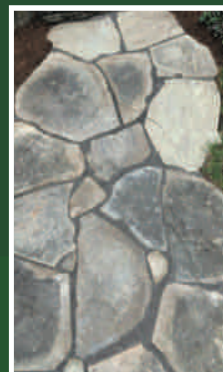
It sure is time to get back out and return to all the things we love, complete with bugs, and crowds, and Massachusetts tourists, but let's try not to lose sight of what we learned as we rush back to normal.

Let's hope this becomes the summer of renewed contentment.

Jonathan Van Fleet
Editor

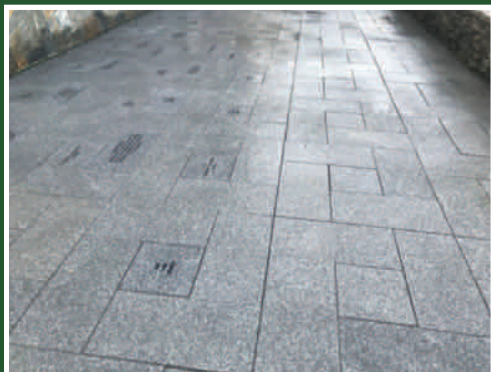
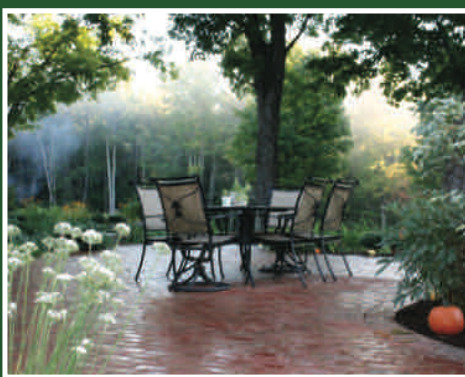
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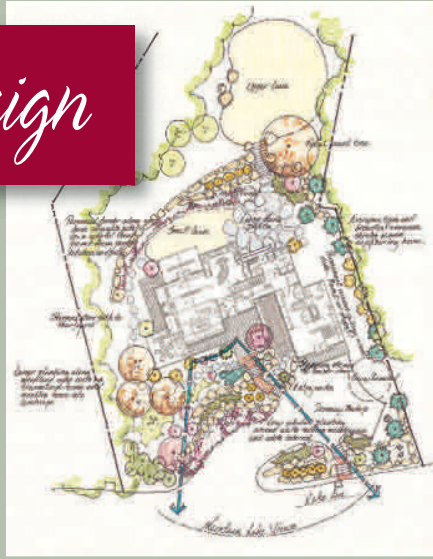


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READER CONTEST



Joe and Shelley Speer

TAKE A RIDE! WIN A WATCH!

There was a time when the best way around Concord was a ride in a Concord Coach. This issue we continue a reader contest: Find the four wheels of a Concord Coach hidden within four different ads in this magazine. All winning submissions received by August 15 will be entered into a random drawing for a New Hampshire Watch Company wristwatch, up to \$400 retail value, supplied by Speer's Fine Jewelry.



There are two ways to enter:

- Write down the page numbers of the ads in which the wheels appear on a sheet of paper with your name, address, phone number and email and mail to: Advertising Sales Manager, Around Concord, P.O. Box 1177, Concord, NH 03302-1177; or
- Go to the online form at aroundconcord.com/coach and submit the page numbers of the ads along with your name, address, phone number and email.

Limit one entry per household. The winner's name will appear in the fall issue. Good luck!

Employees of Newspapers of New England and their families are not eligible to enter.



Joe and Shelley Speer of Speer's Fine Jewelry congratulate Anna Thomas of Loudon on winning a \$400 New Hampshire Watch Company watch as part of the Take A Ride! promotion in the spring issue of *Around Concord* magazine. Anna was especially eagle-eyed. Rather than the usual four hidden icons, there were only three (our mistake!), yet she was able to identify them all. The Concord Coach wheel was embedded in ads in the spring edition on pages 34, 35 and 36. **The contest continues this issue.**



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THE TIP LIST

Fast faves

While driving through Concord 15 years ago, Dan Andrus said to his wife, Cheryl, "This is it. This is where I would like to be more than any place." Two years later, that dream came true. As the former fire chief for the city of Concord and now the director of Substance Use Disorders Treatment Project for Foundation for Healthy Communities, we figured Dan might know a thing or two about the importance of finding time to relax (especially given this past pandemic year), so we asked him to tell us his favorite places in Concord to find peace and de-stress.



Sewalls Falls area

There are so many incredible recreational areas in Concord, but this one is easily accessible and offers a pleasant place to sit by the river. Bring bug spray.



Larry L's Barbershop

(Editor's note: What a nice haircut!) This family-run business is a welcome throwback to the time when a barbershop was as much about friendly relations as a haircut. The Gobeil family has been part of the Concord community for many years and has some great history with the city.

At left, then Concord Fire Chief Dan Andrus helps turn on the Christmas lights at the Central Fire Station in Concord in December of 2019.



White Mountain Gourmet Coffee

Many great meetings have taken place here over the years. There are always a few packages of coffee in our home kitchen.



Red River Theatres

Comfortable seats and great films. They have also been very supportive of discussions around issues of homelessness and mental health.



Planet Fitness

The pandemic has severely curtailed my visits here, but I am looking forward to getting back 3 to 4 times a week.



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Michael Clark “tees off” at Top O’ The Hill Disc Golf in Canterbury in May.

Melissa Curran

Destination Disc Golf

Leave the cart and the irons behind and head to Top O’ The Hill in Canterbury for a different kind of round



Players can use a variety of discs and they are generally classified as drivers for long throws, mid-range and putters.

What took root decades ago as a college cult sport has slowly made its way into the mainstream as a competitive pursuit for serious players or a fun weekend outing for first-timers.

Disc golf has always formed the basis of its sports around the rigid rules found on the links. You tee off and you try to hole out in as few strokes as possible. It’s how you get there that’s far different on a disc golf course. As long as you can somewhat toss a frisbee (or disc for these purposes), you’re good to go. You’ll toss your disc around tree limbs, over shrubs and across wide open fields. And just like in golf, you’ll on occasion be forced to hunt around for an errant shot. The game itself goes much quicker, and is far easier to pick up, so give it a try. It’s also much less costly than a traditional round. Among the growing number of courses in New Hampshire is Top O’ The Hill in Canterbury. Important note – you’ll need to set a tee time at topodg.com.



Melissa Curran

Shown at top is one of the greens at Top O' The Hill Disc Golf in Canterbury. Unlike a golf course, where the goal is to get the ball into a tiny cup marked by a pin, disc golf players shoot to place their frisbee into a metal basket. The scene around the Canterbury course includes players like Scott White teeing off, a club house, hole markers that give you a glimpse of what's ahead, and, of course, trusty Tristan, the course mascot.

THE SIT-DOWN



Concord Monitor

A packed North Main Street, shown in 2017, was unimaginable during the height of last summer's pandemic, when organizers canceled Market Days. The popular downtown event is scheduled to make its return in August.

QA

She arrived as the new head of InTown Concord in the middle of a pandemic. Now **Jessica Martin** is leading the events organization into a packed summer.

It's been a whirlwind past few months for Jessica Martin, who took over as the new executive director of InTown Concord in December, months into a pandemic and at a time when climbing infection rates and the uncertainty of the vaccine roll-



out made even the optimists among us fret for the months ahead. Martin's mission is to promote downtown Concord, mostly through events, a job description made all the more difficult in a remote world. Martin, though, forged ahead and she's helped plan the city's marquee event, Market Days, for the end of the summer.

Martin sat down with *Around Concord* publisher Steve Leone to discuss her role, what's on tap this summer and what's to come.

Around Concord: A lot of people may not know what InTown Concord is or does. Can you give us an overview?

Jessica Martin: Our mission is to promote, elevate and celebrate the city of Concord and we have a focus on the downtown community so we try to support small businesses and shopping local. Our major job, if you will, is that we put together large

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community events. So we are kind of a convener, bringing people downtown. We do that through Market Days, which is our most well-known event. We also have Midnight Merriement and Halloween Howl. We have a winter festival that we do in January, and a couple other events throughout the year, so just basically trying to put Concord on the map with the large events, getting people down here and getting them to experience all that Concord is – the great downtown that we have, the lovely retail shops and restaurants.

AC: So why don't you tell me about yourself, how you arrived to this spot.

JM: So I'm originally from Maine, and I went to Southern New Hampshire University. So that's kind of how I got into New Hampshire, and I ended up at the Greater Manchester National Board of Realtors as the marketing person and then I became the Executive Director. ... So, a little bit of a meandering path to get here, but

when I saw this position available I thought, this is just the perfect marriage of the executive director position, which I loved, and the events that I really loved. So I get to focus on events but I also get that nonprofit management piece.

AC: So you came this past December. What's that been like as someone who's drawn to events coming in a time when events don't happen?

JM: Yeah, it was a little bit like, "You can have this job, but it's a pandemic, so good luck with that." I was looking at it as though we weren't going to have any events. At least for 2021, I was thinking that way. But I think that events are such an important piece to getting back to normal and having some sense of normalcy and community. So I knew that they'd come back. I just knew it was a matter of time. I knew it was important for the person stepping into this role to be able to think outside the box. I had done some virtual events and I was

comfortable with that so I thought, "Oh, if that's what I have to do, I think I'm the right person for that because I have done it." So I was prepared to do that and, luckily, for 2021 all of our events will go forward because we did our winter festival. We actually added a Follow the Bunny event, which was kind of fun, for Easter, and Market Days is going forward. So every event is scheduled to move ahead.

AC: Of course, Market Days is your big event. What was that decision like, and how did you make that decision? What considerations did you have?

JM: I started in December so coming on, Market Days was on the calendar for June, and just looking at it I'm thinking, you know, June seems too soon for vaccines and COVID and everything. Probably in January I brought it to the board and said, "What about August?" They had thought about moving it to August the previous year and ended up canceling it, and they were all on board with that. It gave us just that much more time to see where everything was. Also, selfishly, it gave me a little time to get my bearings before I had to plan this event. The board was very supportive and I think the timing is going to be perfect.

AC: What's it going to look like this year?

JM: We're moving forward, kind of going back to basics in the sense that it's going to be what people have always experienced with Market Days. It's going to be music and food and shopping, but there's not going to be a lot of extra stuff. We're going to have all of our vendors. The city hasn't said that we have any type of limit as far as what we can have for vendors. So it'll be our normal number of vendors. We'll have three stages – Bicentennial Square, Eagle Square and the main stage on Main Street. We'll have a kid zone. So it's going to look very much like it has in the past. We've done a tightrope walker before and a hot air balloon. We've done a lot of extras and this year we're really just going back to basics on a lot of things. We are go-





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ing to encourage people to wear masks. We're requiring our vendors to wear masks, we're going to have stations for hand sanitizing and, we'll be promoting social distancing.

AC: Things that are just part of life now.

JM: Yeah. For right now, but you know, in August, things could change and it could feel totally different so we'll see but that's the way we're approaching it. I think the timing is good too because enough people will have been vaccinated by then, and enough people will have been doing things throughout the summer. So being outside at a festival won't seem as strange.

AC: Who gives you guidance on health-related issues? Do you do talk to the hospital or the city?

JM: The city is a huge support for us in that sense. They have their health officer, Gwen Williams, who we work really closely with. We also talk to other event coordinators throughout the state and see what they're doing. We're part of a networking group to see where other people are at on things like that. On our board, we have somebody from Concord Hospital too. Something that was really exciting for us is that the Chamber of Commerce had the governor in for the State of the State and someone asked him on the call, "What about events like Market Days? How are you feeling?" and he was like, "Full steam ahead. Go big. Plan as you always would." So it felt good to get the governor's stamp of approval on specifically Market Days.

AC: How would you characterize the mood of downtown Concord at this point?

JM: I feel like everyone's excited. It's just that time of year where the weather is starting to get nice and you know people are going out more and the merchants that I've talked to, the restaurants that I talked to, they're all really excited. We have the expanded outdoor seating going on right now downtown. That's a huge help for the restaurants who've been experiencing

I think the (August Market Days) timing is good too because enough people will have been vaccinated by then, and enough people will have been doing things throughout the summer. So being outside at a festival won't seem as strange.

such a revenue hit through this last year. So that really helps them to have that option for outdoor seating.

AC: I know that's been extended for this year. Any idea if that's going to last?

JM: Anecdotally I think everybody wants to see that be something that stays after the pandemic – the people that we talk to supporting the restaurants, and the restaurants too. As a downtown organization promoting the downtown, it's so vibrant. When people are outside eating and chatting and you see their dogs and it's just such a nice feeling. So it becomes easy to promote that to people outside of Concord.

AC: What do you see as the biggest challenge facing Concord after the pandemic?

JM: I think our job, something that InTown is doing is trying to promote Concord to businesses looking to come in. That's something that continues to be a priority for the city – just promoting the downtown to incoming businesses and filling some of those vacant storefronts. It continues to be a challenge moving forward, especially because the pandemic has impacted some small businesses.

AC: So how do you do that? How do you promote Concord to those businesses?

JM: I think that in some ways, the pandemic helped us with that because a lot of people now realize that they don't have to live in metropolitan cities like Boston. Maybe they're seeing Concord as a great option versus living in Boston or living in one of those big cities where commuting is such a headache. From a downtown perspective, I think we have so much to offer. We have great stores, great restaurants. The landscape of our

downtown is, as far as I'm concerned, the best in New Hampshire because of the changes made a few years ago.

AC: Restaurants are certainly a big part of downtown, and they've faced some really significant challenges. Some have found different ways to do business and probably in ways that will serve them for a long time going forward. And then there are places like arts venues, which aren't doing well right now. Do you have any specific goals or plans to help lift the arts community, which is seen as a big, big piece of Concord's business future?

JM: One thing that we're planning to do in the fall – actually, we have a date now, it's October 2 – is we're doing an upstairs downtown tour, and we're planning to do that with the different theaters that we have downtown. So it will showcase some of those places that have been shuttered during the pandemic. Our plans are to go to the Capitol Center for the Arts and then we're going to start at the Red River Theatres and then from there, the different groups will break off and go get tours of different areas and each area will have a little show with it. These are huge economic drivers for the downtown, and we need to support them in whatever way we can right now. It's tough. I can't wait till we get there. I know they're coming back though. And then also the Capital Arts Festival will be at the end of September. That's not an InTown Concord event per se, but we are on the committee that's working on it. So that will be promoting art and getting the word out there. I think really we should be a destination for people who want to experience the arts because there is so much here. And some of it is just letting people know. ♦

NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE



“There’s just language that completely dismisses out of hand what the other person might be thinking, and shows an utter and complete lack of curiosity as to why the other person might be thinking that way and how we might come together and solve this.”



Laura Knoy at the New Hampshire Public Radio studios where she hosts, "The Exchange." After 25 years, Knoy is stepping away from the grind of putting on a daily radio show. She said, however, that she'll continue to work with NHPR in some capacity.

Geoff Forester

THE VOICE OF N.H.

After 25 years of managing civil debate on NHPR's 'The Exchange,' Concord's **Laura Knoy** is stepping away from the microphone.

By TEDDY ROSENBLUTH

Laura Knoy first considered leaving *The Exchange* in 2020, shortly after wrapping up her election coverage of the New Hampshire primary.

She thought the show's coverage of the tumultuous election was well-received and leaving at the 25-year mark would be a nice, round number to end on. Then, the pandemic struck.

Listeners who relied on Knoy's pointed questions and the calming cadence of her voice to guide them through the largest issues facing the Granite State turned to her for assurance and guidance.

"I thought, well, 'I'm not going to leave now,'" she said. "I mean, I just couldn't do that."

She traded her studio for a small room on the second floor of her Concord home, where family photos, inspirational quotes and post-it notes paper the walls. After a year of pandemic coverage, Knoy was planning to host her final episode of *The Exchange* on June 10, a full 26 years after the show began in 1995.

Knoy has operated at a breakneck pace for decades, of-

ten waking before the sun rises to put the final touches on her script, scour the internet for that day's most important headlines, and meet with her team before she goes live at 9 a.m.

By the time the show wraps up at 10 a.m., she is already working on the next day's show, and the show after that, and the show after that.

This routine has carried her through coverage of seven presidential elections, devastating local natural disasters, seven N.H. governors, national tragedies like 9/11 and school shootings, and now, a global pandemic.

She said working with constant daily deadlines during the pandemic has been especially difficult and cemented her desire for a slower pace.

"I sometimes feel bad complaining, because I'm not an ER doc trying to resuscitate someone. . . . I'm not helping people down in homeless camps," she said. "But I think in my job you're sort of processing people's trauma. And at the same time, you're processing your own trauma, because the pandemic has been traumatic for all of us. So, day after day, after day, it's been hard."

Knoy is careful to point out that she is not retiring. She'll continue working with NHPR is some capacity and start focusing on some of her other passions, like writing and hosting community events.

"I'm not old enough and not wealthy enough to retire," she said. "I just want to see what else I can do."

Knoy got her start in journalism earlier than most.

It started in elementary school, when she released her rendition of a newspaper that featured interviews from her friends and cat, scratched with pencil on flimsy paper. Around middle school, Knoy made her radio debut on a mock public radio station she called WARP that she and her best friend (who has now also made a career in public broadcasting), recorded on a small cassette player.

Since then, her resume has grown to include roles at WAMU in Wash-



New Hampshire Public Radio's Laura Knoy chats with former Gov. John Lynch during a segment of "The Exchange."

NHPR

ington, D.C., national NPR shows, and USA Today.

During her career, she developed a style of journalism that held the civil exchange of ideas sacred and made exhaustive preparation necessary.

"I come from the over-prepared school of journalism," she said. "I have notes and I've gone over them because in live radio. It's so easy to make a mistake and it's just so embarrassing."

She recalled her first time filling in for the local Morning Edition show in Washington D.C, when she confidently introduced herself as Bill Redlin, the usual host.

"After that, I took little post it notes and I would write 'WAMU Washington. I'm Laura Knoy,'" she said.

When Mark Handley, the former president of NHPR, courted Knoy for a position at the station, she said she would consider joining if she could host her own show. Her own burst of confidence on her phone call with Handley still baffles Knoy.

"To this day, I don't know what made me say that," she said.

Thus, *The Exchange* was born – a

take on talk radio that valued civility and in-depth exploration of statewide issues.

"I really saw that there was a need for a place for a calm and rational discussion of the issues," Handley said of the genesis of *The Exchange* before his death.

While the show's mission has remained the same over the last 25 years, much of New Hampshire has changed. Politicians are more robotic, political parties use more divisive language and people are less willing to listen to each other, Knoy said.

"I do think people are just a lot less interested in figuring things out and more interested in just fighting," she said.

In a world that has become increasingly hostile, Knoy has been stubbornly kind.

The belief that differences in opinion should be approached with love is something that has been engrained in her since childhood by her father, a former minister.

Her strategy to combat the changing landscape is, of course, more research. She preempts tired, partisan

scripts with carefully thought out questions that force politicians to consider other perspectives.

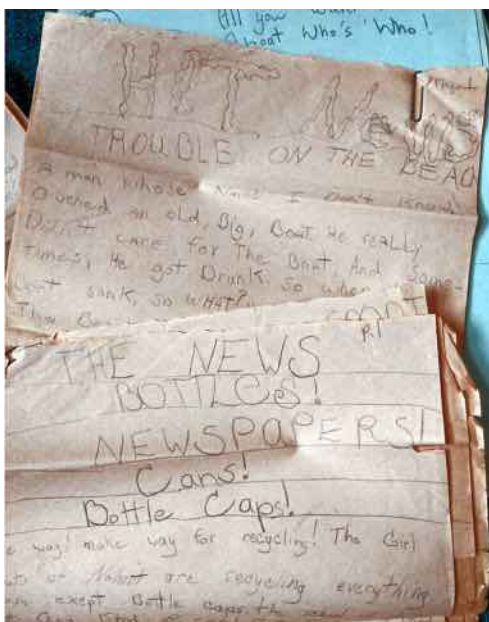
Her producers frantically research her guests' claims on air to produce live fact checks on divisive subjects.

"There's just language that completely dismisses out of hand what the other person might be thinking, and shows an utter and complete lack of curiosity as to why the other person might be thinking that way and how we might come together and solve this," she said. "We have big, big, big, big, big problems, and we're just yelling at each other. As a journalist, that's not interesting."

Knoy's favorite memories from *The Exchange* are not from shows that make national news or interviews with presidential candidates, though she's had plenty of each.

The memories that stick out to her are calls from Granite Staters that offer a candid window into the community. She recounts a call from a man who left his home in the wake of the 2006 floods that ravaged central New Hampshire.

Live on air, he opened the door to his house for the first



Laura Knoy

Knoy always showed journalistic ambition. As a child, she created a newspaper that had interviews with her friends and cat.

time since the flood. Listeners heard his heartbreaking reaction to the damage that rendered his home virtually unlivable.

"You're just not going to get that in any other sort of format," she said.

Another one of her favorite shows came after the Boston Red Sox won the World Series in 2004. A stream of calls came in from listeners who were convinced their personal traditions were responsible for the win – a woman who's boyfriend hadn't changed his underwear in a month, a man who had eaten Babe Ruth candy bars to kill the Curse of the Bambino, another man who wrote a song about the win and sang it for the NHPR audience.

Knoy's plan for her final show included ample time for listeners to call in and share their favorite memories from the show and reflect on how it

has impacted their lives.

Following the announcement of Knoy's departure, listeners have found their voice too.

"I'm not one for nostalgia, but I never knew New Hampshire without her," one listener posted on Facebook. ♦

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**A sampling of what's on
deck in the months ahead**



EVENTS

YOUR SUMMER TAKES SHAPE

JUNE 11 TO 27

Hampton Beach Sand Sculpture Festival

Two hundred tons of sand will be imported to the beach and invited sculptors will compete for \$25,000 in prizes. Judging and people's choice awards will be distributed on June 19 from 1 to 3 p.m. with an award ceremony at 7 p.m. that night. The area is illuminated for nightly viewing.

hamptonbeach.org/events/sand-sculpture-event



Associated Press

The annual sand sculpture event draws artists from across the world.



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Especially this summer, events are subject to last-minute changes. Remember to always check with the venue before the event.



Concord Monitor

JUNE 19

Concord Arts Market

This summer, the award-winning Concord Arts Market, founded in 2008, will move to a monthly event in Rollins Park. The city park provides us with a sprawling green space, allowing the arts market to grow both in the number of talented art and artisan vendors, but also in the variety of vendors and opportunities, including food, musicians and more.

Rollins Park, 33 Bow St., Concord

tinagagnon.com/shows/concord-arts-market

JUNE 19 TO 20

Father's Day Weekend Arts & Crafts Festival

This New Hampshire Craft Show will have fine art, fine craft and crafts exhibitors, and 4 food booths. Admission tickets are \$5-\$7.

castleberryfairs.com

JULY 8 TO 11

Hillsboro Summer Festival

Enjoy a midway with carnival rides, live music on Friday and Saturday, and fireworks on Saturday night. You can also check out the car and truck show, parade Sunday at noon and a 5k road race on Friday. Hours will be Thursday, 6 to 10 p.m.; Friday, 5 to 11 p.m.; Saturday, noon to 11 p.m.; and Sunday, noon to 5:30 p.m.

hillsborosummerfest.com



Concord Monitor

Each summer, Bike Week draws visitors from across the country.

JUNE 12 TO 20

Bike Week

The 98th Laconia Motorcycle Rally and Race Week will offer dozens of events scattered throughout the state, especially for motorcycle enthusiasts. It is the oldest motorcycle rally in America, with roots stretching back to the summer of 1916, when a so-called "Gypsy Tour" gathered for several days at Weirs Beach on the shore of Lake Winnepesaukee.

laconiamcweek.com

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AUG. 6 TO 8

39th Rotary Hot Air Balloon Rally

For over 30 years the Suncook Valley Rotary Club has successfully presented a great weekend of hot air balloons, entertainment, food, rides, arts and crafts and more.

Fri: 3 p.m. to 11 p.m.; Sat: 5:30 a.m. to 11 p.m.; Sun: 5:30 a.m. to 10 a.m.; 47 Barnstead Road, Pittsfield



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JULY 11

NH Brewers Festival

The NH Brewers Festival showcases nearly 45 breweries. This “For the Brewers, By the Brewers” Festival is a one-of-a-kind event, featuring the largest single collection of New Hampshire’s breweries anywhere in the state this year. The festival will be held along the grassy shore of the Merrimack River at Kiwanis Waterfront Park in Concord (behind the Everett Arena).

beerfests.com/events/nh-brewers-festival

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AUG. 7 TO 15

Annual Craftsmen's Fair

Event will display products and services like handmade crafts, fashions and accessories, hand-made furniture, wall hanging, basket, kids tools and many more related products and services etc. at the Mount Sunapee in Newbury.

nhcrafts.org/annual-craftsmens-fair

AUG. 14

New England BBQ and Food Truck Fest

The family-friendly event will feature live music, cornhole tournament, eating contests, crafters and artisans, kid's zone, libations tent, food trucks, and more. Hours: 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Hampshire Hills Athletic Club, 50 Emerson Road, Milford

gncraftartisanshows.com/aug-food-truck-fest

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AUG. 19 TO 21

47th Annual Market Days Festival

A free three-day street festival right on Main Street in downtown Concord. There will be live entertainment, delicious food, and fantastic shopping each day from 10 a.m. - 10 p.m. This is a fun event for the whole family! Market Days will be following CDC guidelines regarding COVID-19 to ensure all attendees, vendors, and volunteers are safe throughout the event.

marketdaysfestival.com

AUG. 20 TO 22

Cornish Fair

Since 1950, The Cornish Fair remains a traditional, family-friendly, educational, agricultural fair located in Cornish, NH. Fair-goer's come from all over to see the fruits and vegetable exhibits, horse and oxen pulling, 4-H, crafts, children's activities, live entertainment, vendors, amusement rides and more.

cornishfair.org



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AUG. 20 TO 22

24th annual White Mountain Boogie N' Blues Festival

The three day festival will feature award-winning blues artists, craft vendors, food vendors, fireworks and more. Kids will enjoy climbing wall and various other fun activities. NH Route 175, Thornton

whitemountainboogie.com

AUG. 21

Concord Gun and Knife Show

Attendees can buy, sell or trade. You will find a variety of firearms, knives, ammo and accessories. Hours: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Bektash Shrine Center, 189 Pembroke Road, Concord

gunshowtrader.com/gun-shows/concord-gun-knife-show/

AUG. 22

Celebrate International Arts

Concord Multicultural Festival joins Intown Concord to present cultural performances and artist demonstrations throughout the day in Eagle Square. Activities will include African drumming; Colombian dancing; Irish dancing; Salsa, Bachata, Tango; Zumba; artist demonstrations; immigrant stories; recipe presentations; and kids activities, and more.

SEPT. 10 TO 12

New Hampshire Seafood Festival



More than 50 of the Seacoast's top restaurants serve an abundance of mouthwatering delicacies. There are also arts and

crafts vendors, merchants, chef demonstrations, and live musical entertainment. The weekend concludes with the lobster roll eating competition and fireworks display.

seafoodfestivalnh.com

Keep up-to-date on the summer schedule by visiting the online events calendar at concordmonitor.com.



Concord Monitor

Country music singer Nicole Knox-Murphy sings at a recent Hopkinton State Fair. Music will return to the annual event.

SEPT. 2 TO 6

Hopkinton State Fair

The Labor Day weekend state fair is expected to make a full return in 2021 with Fiesta Shows midway, agricultural showcases, contests, food and shopping.

hsfair.org

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SEPT. 10 TO 12

Hillsborough County Agricultural Fair

Have some old-time NH fun with truck & tractor pulls, draft horse & oxen pulls, 4-H animal shows, horseshoes, games and rides. There will also be a stage with live performances.
15 Hilldale Lane, New Boston



Concord Monitor

SEPT. 17 TO 19

New Hampshire Highland Games

While the event will be different from past years, festival attendees will find many of their favorite aspects of the Games: hearing the pipes play, seeing athletic feats of strength and endurance, enjoying fantastic Celtic musical acts, sheep dogs, trying their hand at curling or sipping some whisky. Our friends at Clan Village and some of our fantastic vendors and so much more – will be there! This year, there will be a limit set on capacity and will include on-site parking only for all ticket holders. All attendees must purchase a ticket in advance.

nhscot.org

SEPT. 18

Hooksett Old Home Day

A craft fair event with parades and bounce houses for families while they browse a variety of local vendors and food booths.

10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Main Street, Hooksett

hooksettoldhomeday.org

SEPT. 19

14th Annual Concord Multicultural Festival

Each year, the Concord Multicultural Festival features a full lineup of performances, food vendors, craft vendors, artists and activities that represent the many cultures from around the world, presented by folks who live and work locally.
Keach Park/Heights Playground, 7 Newton Ave., Concord, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

concordnhmulticulturalfestival.org



Concord Monitor

SEPT. 25

Winchester Pickle Festival

A day of fun, food, music, a parade and lots of pickles! 2 to 8 p.m.

winchesternhpicklefestival.org/welcome



Concord Monitor

OCT. 8 TO 10

Warner Fall Foliage Festival

The WFFF committee is planning to bring back one of Warner's most beloved traditions in full swing. As we draw nearer to the event, more information will be posted.

wfff.org



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SEPT. 30 TO OCT. 3

Deerfield Fair

New England's oldest family fair will be back with all traditional activities and attractions.

deerfieldfair.com

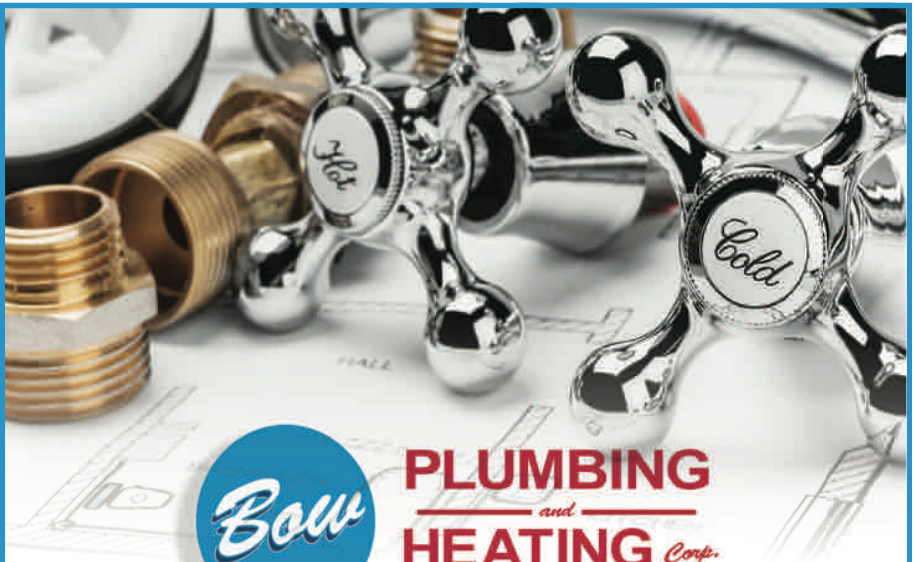
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THEATER

THE SHOW MUST GO ON

This summer, many theaters are taking things outdoors

By SARAH PEARSON

Theater lovers should rejoice that once again plays and musicals will be returning to the stage. However, for many companies, those “stages” will feel more akin to Shakespeare’s Globe or Greece’s odeons. Many are planning for outdoor performances to increase capacity while maintaining social distancing precautions.

New London Barn Playhouse

The Barn will be staging its shows outside on the field at Colby-Sawyer College’s Ivey Science Center for what it is calling its “Summer Under the Stars.” The outdoor shows come amid a major upgrade to the theater’s usual complex.

Four of the shows are concert-style musical shows, which will rotate from June 29 to Aug. 22. They are “Shining On: An Original Revue,” “A Grand Night for Singing: An evening of Rodgers and Hammerstein,” “Anything Goes in Concert” and “And The

Project Shakespeare in Jaffrey helps young actors discover and explore the classics. They are once again planning to put on outdoor shows, but they have yet to release their summer schedule. Visit projectshakespeare.org.

Project Shakespeare

World Goes 'Round: Songs of Kander and Ebb." Closing out the season will be "Always, Patsy Cline" from Aug. 25 to Sept. 5.

nlbarn.org

Peterborough Players

One of New Hampshire's oldest summer stock theaters is kicking off its season with Thornton Wilder's "Our Town," staged on the town green that is rumored to have served as inspiration for the play.

"We're the only professional theater in the world that could do this play, in this way, in this place. It's exciting," said associate artistic director Tom Frey.

■ "Our Town" will run Aug. 4 to 15 in downtown Peterborough.

■ "Beehive: The 60 Musical" will run Aug. 18 to 29 on a newly built outdoor stage at the theater complex on Stearns Farm.

■ "Where You Are," a U.S. premiere, will run from Sept. 1 to 12, also

at the Stearns Farm outdoor stage.

peterboroughplayers.org

Barnstormers Theatre

The state's oldest professional summer theater company also will be

staging New Hampshire nostalgia on a newly-constructed outdoor stage outside the Tamworth History Center.

■ "Our Town" will run July 17 to 31.

■ "Far From Canterbury" will run Aug. 11 to 21.

■ A third show, which hasn't been announced yet, will be staged Aug. 31 to Sept. 4.

barnstormerstheatre.org

Prescott Park

The Prescott Park Arts Festival is no stranger to outdoor shows, as it's been putting them on for years. The summer schedule is still in the works, but at least one of the shows will be "You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown" from July 9 to Aug. 15.

prescottpark.org

Jean's Playhouse

For the first time since its beginning over 30 years ago, Jean's Playhouse will put on an outdoor performance of the "The Sound of Music in Concert" from July 8 to 10 at Loon Mountain. The remainder of the season will be held at the playhouse.

■ "Clue: The Musical" will run July 15 to 31.

■ "Evita" will run from Aug. 5 to Aug. 14.



■ "Forever Plaid" will run from



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The porch outside the New London Barn Playhouse is usually packed on performance nights.

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Aug. 19 to 28.

jeansplayhouse.com

Winnepesaukee Playhouse

The playhouse has planned an ambitious professional show series for the summer that will split between an outdoor amphitheater and the indoor theater.

■ “Betrayal” will run June 16 to July 3 outside.

■ “Sleuth” will run June 30 to July 17 inside.

■ “Dani Girl” will run July 14 to July 31 outside.

■ “Tell Me on a Sunday” will run July 28 to Aug. 14 inside.

■ “Hooligans and Convicts” will run Aug. 18 to Sept. 4 inside.

■ “It Had to Be You” will run Sept. 1 to Sept. 18 outside.

■ “Glorious” will run Sept. 22 to Oct. 9 inside.

winnepesaukeeplayhouse.org

Hatbox Theatre

Concord’s own theater will bring plays back to the stage indoors with “Holmes and Watson” on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from June 11 to 27. Check out the calendar for more shows as the summer progresses.

hatboxnh.com

Weathervane Theatre

Weathervane Theatre is also opting to resume shows indoors with limited capacity. The playhouse offers shows in a rotating repertory. The 2021 line up includes “Buyer and Celler,” “American Idiot,” “Hello, Dolly!,” “Disaster!,” “Kinky Boots,” “Amadeus,” “The Addams Family,” “Pippin,” “The Mountaintop,” “Always ... Patsy Cline,” and “She Loves Me,” which collectively will run from June 29 to Oct. 10.

weathervanenh.org

Seacoast Rep

There are two musicals planned for the Seacoast Rep’s summer season.

■ “Pippin” will run June 10 to



Courtesy

The Hatbox Theatre in Concord is known for its imaginative indoor shows.

July 18.

■ “Cabaret” will run July 22 to Sept. 5.

seacoastrep.org

Interlakes Theatre

Billing itself as the “Broadway in

the Lakes Region,” Interlakes Theatre is planning to pick up where it left off. It will start off with “A Chorus Line,” which was canceled in 2020. The rest of the 2021 season has yet to be announced.

interlakestheatre.com ♦

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Jordana Korsen, owner of Hot Glass Art Center in Marlborough, crafts a glass ball at her studio.



MAKING ART

THE HEAT IS ON

**Artists make their work come to life
at Hot Glass Art Center in Marlborough**

Photos by Melissa Curran



At left, Jordana Korsen, owner of Hot Glass Art Center in Marlborough, expertly crafts a glass hummingbird feeder while Joey Dibiccari blows air into the pipe connected to the glass. Above, Dibiccari heats up the glass. A 55-gallon heated drum is used to make the glass pliable so that it can be shaped.



NINE DAYS OF ART

Jordana Korsen is a juried member of the League of New Hampshire Craftsmen. This year's 88th Annual Craftsmen's Fair will be held at Mount Sunapee Resort in Newbury Aug. 7-15.

Photos by Melissa Curran

Right, Oakley lounges at Hot Glass Art Center in Marlborough. Far right, Korsen works on the feeder.



In 2015, Korsen opened the Hot Glass Art Center in Marlborough, where she makes all her pieces ranging from vases and bowls to pieces of art. She also uses the space to teach about hot glass as an art medium.



The Concord
Criterium cycling race
will take over the
streets around White
Park on Aug. 7.

Concord Monitor

SPORTS

GAME ON

Lace 'em up because races, games and activities are set to return

By TIM O'SULLIVAN

Last summer there were virtual road races, limited capacity events and socially distanced activities. Not every restriction has been lifted, but this summer marks a return to the action when it comes to sports to play and watch around Concord.

Running

The always popular Rock 'N Race already took place, and it did look different than it has in years past with the former start/finish line around the State Capital moved to Memorial Field and start times staggered. But if you just loved starting and ending a race under the Golden Dome, there's the Runner's Alley Capital City Classic 10k on June 27 at City Plaza.

Before that event, there's a race that happens in plenty of space – the Over the River and Through the Woods 5k on June 12. The family-friendly run starts at the Delta Dental



Concord Monitor

Area long-distance runners, or those looking to try out a fun 5k, will have lots of options this summer.



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campus and includes a portion through the woods at the Forest Society on Portsmouth Street. A month later there's another road race in Concord, the Bill Luti 5-Miler honoring the former Concord High track coach takes place, where else, at Memorial Field on July 17.

The races move just outside the city later in the summer with the Canterbury Woodchuck Classic 5k on July 31, the Epsom Old Home Day 4-Miler on Aug. 8 and the Angels 5k Run/Fitness Walk in Penacook on Aug. 14. For runners who want to take the competition into the long term, Over the River, Capital City, Luti, Canterbury and Angels are all part of the Capital Area Race Series, which calculates results over an eight-race season from May 15 to Sept. 18. Runners are invited to join for some or all of the events at runcarsnh.com.

Golf

The pandemic actually had a positive financial impact on last year's golf season when all was said and done as



Beaver Meadow Golf Course in Concord.

Concord Monitor

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courses across the country reported record numbers. Course owners are expecting another banner summer, so golfers should still try to book their tee times in advance as often as possible.

The New Hampshire Golf Association, which is located in Concord, will be holding its 2021 Women's Team Championship at Beaver Meadow on June 9 to 10. It's a two-person, 36-hole best-ball event. For male amateur golfers looking to test themselves against the best in the state, there are two local qualifiers for this year's State Am – June 27 at Beaver Meadow and June 29 at Loudon Country Club. The State Am itself will be held July 12 to 17 at the North Conway Country Club.

You can play some golf and support the defending Division I state champion Concord High boys' hockey team at the 26th annual Friends of Concord High School Hockey Tournament on June 25 at Beaver Meadow. The four-person team scramble event starts at 8:30 a.m., and is open to all.



Tomie dePaola, *The Art Angel*, 2005



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A rainbow rises beyond the outfield during a Sunset League championship series game in Concord.

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NE-351717

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Camps

The Concord Parks & Recreation Department is offering summer camps, lessons and leagues for children and adults this summer with only a few restrictions. In July, kids can learn the fundamentals of golf with Junior Intro Classes at Beaver Meadow or the basics of tennis through Tennis In the Park. Beaver Meadow is also offering a Girls Only Golf Camp on July 20 to 22 for ages 8-14, and two sessions of Junior Golf Camp for ages 8-13 on July 13 to 15 and Aug. 17 to 19. Teens ages 14-17 can take hour-long tennis lessons on Tuesdays in July and August through Parks & Rec. And students in grades 3-8 can go to the Crimson Tide Basketball camps on July 26 to 30 run by Concord High coach Tim LaTorra.

Parks & Rec adult sporting options include a men's basketball summer league at the City Wide Community Center on Tuesday and Thursday

evenings from July 6 to Aug. 26, and Tennis Leagues on Tuesdays or Thursdays from June 15 to July 15.

To register or for more information on these or other activities, go to concordnh.gov/666/Parks-Recreation.

White Park

Concord's White Park is a great place to throw a frisbee, walk your dog or play some soccer in the summer, but it's also a good place to watch some sports. The Sunset League, which began in 1909 and is the oldest after-dinner baseball league in the country, will begin games in late June as usual. And the streets around the park will be closed on Aug. 7 as part of the course for the Concord Criterion, a day of bicycle races that attracts some of the top riders in New England.

The speedway in Loudon

New Hampshire Motor Speedway in Loudon operated on a limited schedule with reduced fans last summer, and this spring NHMS became a vaccine super-site on three occasions and helped thousands of residents receive doses. Now, NHMS is ready to get back to its normal summer routine.

The first major event of the summer at the Speedway will be Motorcycle Week from June 12-20, which coincides with Laconia Motorcycle Week. There will be on- and off-track two-wheel activities all weekend, book-ended by two weekends of racing.

The showcase NASCAR weekend is July 17-18. It opens with 'Double-header Saturday,' which features the Lakes Region 200, an Xfinity Series race, and the Whelen 100, a Whelen Modified Tour event. On Sunday, the world's best stock car racers will compete in the Foxwoods Resort Casino 301. It will mark the 50th Loudon appearance for the NASCAR Championship Series.

NHMS is also hosting the Granite State Legends Cars Road Course Series, which is run as part of U.S. Leg-



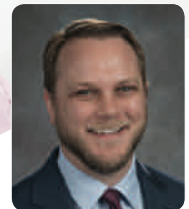
Russell LaBounty/NKP

NASCAR's top drivers come to New Hampshire Motor Speedway in July.

ends Cars Internationals. That 13-race schedule began in April and runs through September.

For more information about all the events and for tickets, go to nhms.com. ♦

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SUMMER READS

The tide comes in at Hampton Beach. Read Jean Stimmell at jeanstimmell.blogspot.com and in the Concord Monitor.

Jean Stimmell

From the shelf to the beach

By SARAH PEARSON

As spring turns to summer and the hours of sunshine grow, take some time to slow down and relax. One way to unwind is to pick up one of the latest titles by New Hampshire authors. Here's a few to check out:

The Hummingbirds' Gift



New Hampshire naturalist and author of more than 20 nonfiction books about wildlife and the world, Sy Montgomery, is back with a new tome, *The Hummingbirds' Gift: Wonder, Beauty, and Renewal on Wings* (Atria Books), about hummingbirds and bird rehabilitator Brenda Sherburn.

As one of the most beautiful and intriguing birds found in nature, hummingbirds fascinate people around the world. The lightest birds in the sky, hummingbirds are capable of incredible feats, such as flying backward, diving at speeds of 62 miles per hour, and beating their wings more than 60 times a second. Miraculous creatures, they are also incredibly vulnerable when they first emerge from their eggs.

With tenderness and patience, Sherburn rescues abandoned hummingbirds and nurses them back to health until they can fly away and live in the wild. In *The Hummingbird's Gift*, the extraordinary care that she provides her peanut-sized patients is revealed and, in the process, shows us just how truly amazing hummingbirds are.

Montgomery has won numerous awards for her books, including a National Book Award finalist for *The Soul of an Octopus*. She's received a lifetime achievement award from the Humane Society and the New England Booksellers Association.

O' The Happy Pines

Littleton author Duncan Cullman has released *O' The Happy Pines* (Dorance Publishing), a refreshing collection of poems that has an existential



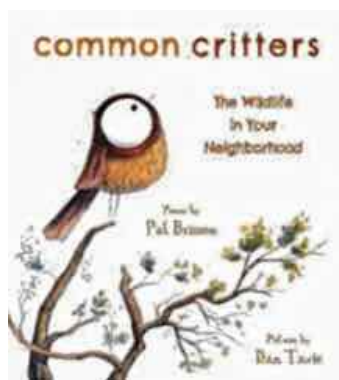
Duncan T. Cullman

theme appealing to the audience in a way that is both vibrant and whimsical. The eclectic subject matter is current, based on historical myths and facts. It is indeed a spiritual insightfulness that

hints of reality.

Cullman is a ski racer, freelance writer and mad poet. He wrote the poems in this book in Argentina, Peru, Chili, Latin America and the United States. His other publications include *Infernomeister* and *Chairlift Philosopher*.

Common Critters



Common Critters (Tilbury House Publishers) celebrates neighborhood wildlife in verse. A familiar cast of characters — worms, slugs, caterpillars, ladybugs, robins, mourning doves, houseflies, spiders, squirrels, skunks, and others — crawl, run, buzz, and flit through these lively poems, which show how exotic these seemingly ordinary creatures really are.

Dan Tavis's humorous illustrations crank up the delight, and a child wanting to learn more will find it in the natural-history discussion. Pat Brisson employs a variety of verse forms in the book.

Common Critters is a three-tool STEAM book with delightful reading, natural history, and language skills rolled into one.

For weekly book reviews and for the latest bestsellers, pick up the Sunday Monitor.

He Loves Me Not

Dating violence is becoming so common in America, that many teenagers think the abusive patterns in their relationships are completely normal. One out of three teenagers will experience dating violence this year. Victims of dating violence are at a higher risk of long-term issues like alcoholism, eating disorders, violent behavior and suicidal ideations. 50% of young people who experienced physical or sexual dating violence attempted suicide. Relationship violence is commonly beginning as early as sixth grade.

Nenia Corcoran has been a police officer in the Upper Valley since 2012, having worked for the town of Hanover, the city of Lebanon and the town of Canaan. She teaches a female self-defense course that emphasizes educating women and girls to survive dangerous situations and make themselves less vulnerable to potential predators. She's also a survivor of both sexual assault and



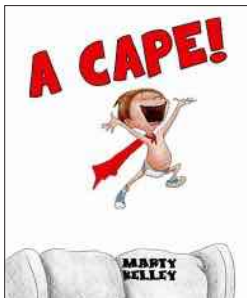
dating violence.

On June 30, her debut novel *He Loves Me Not* will be released. Corcoran aims to break the silence surrounding dating violence and sexual assault, and shed light on the impact they can have on the mental health of the victim.

In the novel, self-conscious Sasha Collins has never had a boyfriend. She never would have imagined that anyone, much less the star of the varsity baseball team, Adam, would be interested in her unruly red hair and socially awkward tendencies. As an unlikely relationship blooms, Sasha feels like she's living out a made for TV fairytale. Everyone, including her own mother, constantly reminds her how lucky she is to be dating a guy like Adam. But Sasha soon finds there's more to Adam than his classic good looks and athletic ability. Navigating his jealousy, mood swings and possessive behaviors prove just to be the tip of their complex relationship.

A Cape!

Author and illustrator Marty Kelley, a New Hampshire State Council for the Arts visiting artist, recently reprint his illustrated children's story, *A Cape*, with Sleeping Bear Press.



Imagination is a super-power in this delightful tale. While the child in this story only needs briefs, sneakers and a piece of red fabric to transform into a superhero, his father is less convinced behind his newspaper.

The boy, all exuberance, is pictured in full color, his boasts in a playful red font. Dad is drawn in plain pencil, his long-suffering rejoinders in boring Times Roman.

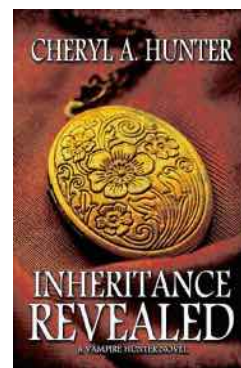
After much begging and cajoling, Dad decides to don his own cape, because there's always fun to be had when you share an experience with someone you love.

A Cape! is a (not-so) epic origin story, full of heart and humor. The story encourages young readers to use their super imaginations to dream big and have fun.

Kelley's other children's books include *Experiment #256*, *Santa's Underwear*, and *M is for Money: An Economics Alphabet*.

Inheritance Revealed

Arianna Sabini is a first-year professor wrapping up her dissertation while teaching at a New York university. She meets James, an intriguing man at the university who claims to



also be writing a novel. A relationship develops and everything seems to be going well until Arianna is viciously attacked. Then, she must take stock of her life as she comes to realize the mythology she teaches is not entirely fiction. With the help of a cranky mentor, Arianna discovers new talents and unravels her family's secrets.

By Concord author and artist Cheryl Hunter, *Inheritance Revealed* was published in May from Black Rose Writing. The story is a modern take on a vampire story with lots of dialogue between characters.

When she's not writing on multiple genres – fantasy, nonfiction, and contemporary fiction – Hunter works as an artist in glass, ink and watercolor, and photography.

The House of Grass and Sky

On a small hill overlooking a meadow, the house has sat for many years watching families come and go,



grow and change, dream and play. Until for a while, it sits empty. Are the days of joy over for the house?

Written by Mary Lyn Ray and illustrated by E. B. Goodale, *The House of Grass and Sky* (Candlewick Press) is a sweet and calming tale. New England residents will feel as though the house is one they've driven past on a scenic byway, or perhaps lived in themselves.

The book is a moving tribute to family and the place we call home.

Ray has also written *Christmas Farm*, *The Thank You Book*, *The Friendship Book* and others. Among Goodale's other illustrated books are *Here and Now*, *Under the Lilacs* and *A Most Unusual Day*. ♦

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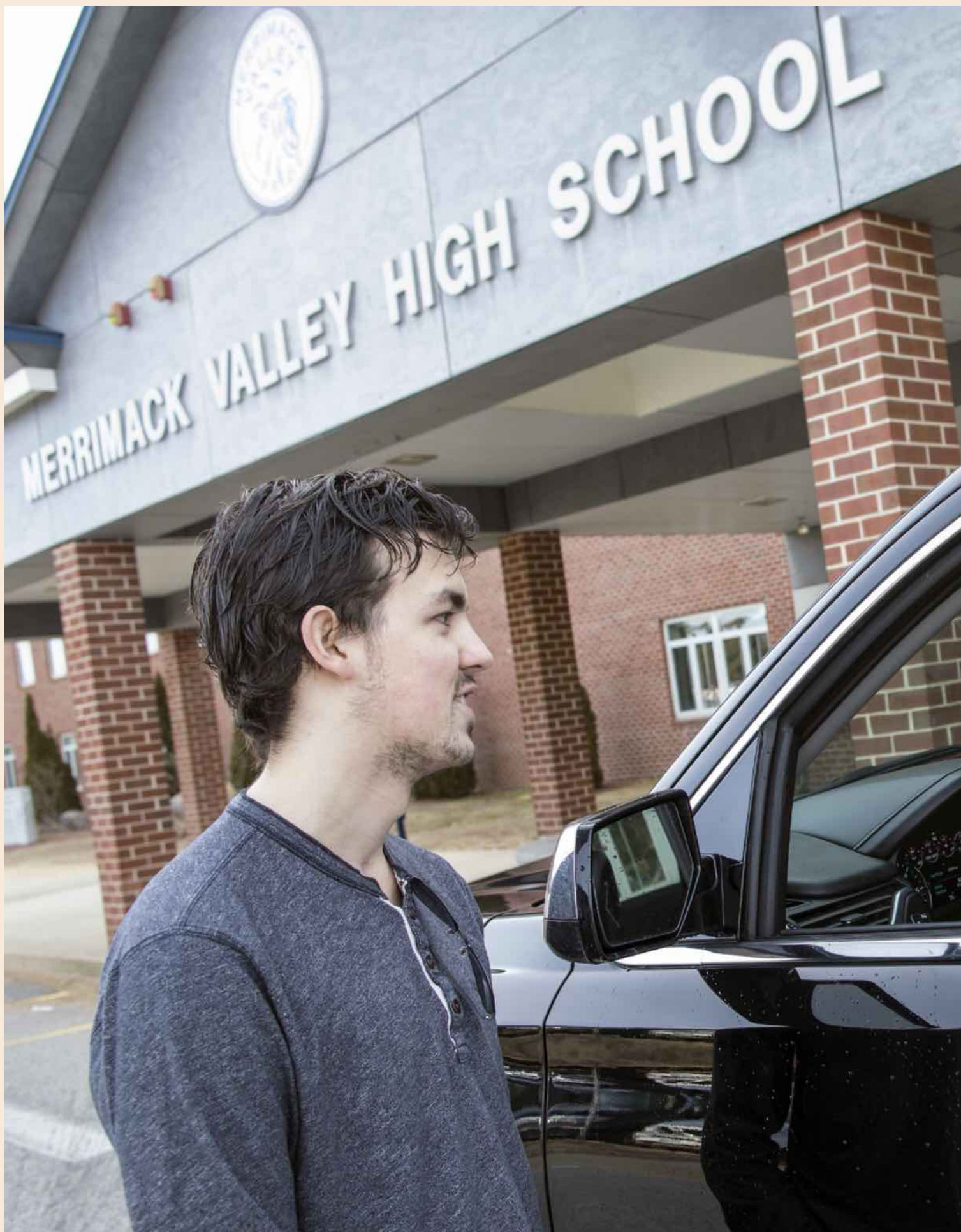
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BOOK EXCERPT

'Was Corbin in that car?'

A typical day turns into a 121-day ordeal that would prove to be the biggest test for a young man, his mother and their loved ones.

Excerpt starts on Page 54

On April 5, 2019, many months after his near-fatal accident, Corbin Raymond says goodbye to his mother Sadie at the entrance of Merrimack Valley High School as he attends a meeting with his teacher.

Concord Monitor

121 Days Starts Now

The morning of July 4, 2018 began like any other in Sadie Raymond's household. What Sadie and her family didn't know, however, was that by the end of the day the course of all of their lives, especially that of their teenage son, Corbin would change forever.

After receiving a phone call that chilled her to the bone, Sadie rushed to the scene of a car accident. There, she discovered that her son had been a passenger in a car that had crashed into a tree and was on his way to the hospital via an ambulance.

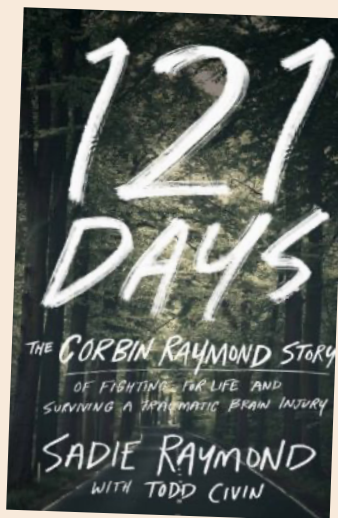
For 121 days, Corbin fought an arduous battle for his life in the Intensive Care Unit at Boston Children's Hospital and at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital. New Englanders from across his home state and beyond declared themselves Corbin Strong. His family and friends found their strength and resilience in the face of adversity. And, through faith and love against all odds, Corbin won.

Featuring real-time journal entries and contributions from other members of Corbin's family, 121 Days chronicles the harrowing days, weeks, and months following the accident. Candid and evocative, 121 Days is a revelatory story of the depth of fear, the duration of courage, and, ultimately, the power of triumph.

Chapter 1: A Memorable Independence Day

By Sadie Raymond

For the first dozen years of my married life, we celebrated the Fourth of July with a much-anticipated party at our Boscawen, New Hampshire, home. It had become a huge part of the family tradition that America's independence would be acknowledged in the Raymonds' backyard complete with family, friends, and more of the kids' friends than we'd ever stop to count. We looked forward to it and we wouldn't want it any other way. From just before noontime until the wee hours, we'd enjoy burgers, dogs, watermelon, countless homemade



"121 Days: The Corbin Raymond Story" was written with Todd Civin

Find the book at 121days.net, on Amazon and at several local Barnes and Noble book stores.

side dishes, and s'mores, splash loudly in the pool and ingest a healthy dose of calories, laughter, and libations. The daylong celebration would be capped off with our very own New Hampshire legal, homegrown firework display in the sky above our home.

For most of those celebrations, Jeff and I played gracious hosts to anyone who happened to show up and, for years on end, the day was filled with joyous memories. After Jeff and I divorced, the tradition continued but instead with my boyfriend, Steve, taking over as the acting grill master and the male head of the household. The Fourth of July, in the year 2018, became as unforgettable as those that preceded it, but



Corbin Raymond, left, and his cousin, Tanna Valliere, during a presentation of the Civilian Lifesaver Award at the annual Fire Service and EMS Awards in Concord. Valliere is credited with helping to keep Corbin alive following their crash.

Courtesy

for a completely different reason and one we will remember much longer than any of America's prior birthday celebrations. Unfortunately, the memories that will be forever etched in Raymond family lore were not those of sparklers, fireworks, and burgers on the grill. Instead, we were left with the life-altering sights, sounds, and recollections of horror, heartache, and tragedy.

As that fateful morning began, I opened one eye and then the other, as the sun snuck through a slight crack that I had left between the bottom of the shade and the windowsill. I contemplated rolling over, putting the pillow back over my head, and falling back to sleep. However, I knew that I had a full day of work ahead of me. That year, the Fourth wouldn't consist of celebrating with friends, flipping burgers, or drinking from red Solo cups filled with beer. Instead, I'd be bartending at CC Tomatoes, a local restaurant in Concord where I worked part-time. It was far from glamorous, but it paid the bills and unfortunately, life was in a place where that was becoming necessary.

I let out a cat-like stretch, slithered from beneath the sheets, and began the holiday as a forty-year-old, single mother of four children. My life was certainly not at its peak as I peered at my tired-looking reflection in the full-length mirror that hung from my bedroom wall. Jeff and I had parted ways about four-and-a-half years ago, and I found myself in a failing relationship yet again. Only this time, it was with the father of my two-

year-old son, Grayson. My soon-to-be halted relationship with Steve was challenging right from the beginning. Like the little girl with the curl, we were either good or really bad with very little in between. We were smoking hot or freezing cold, but never lukewarm. We shared very few mutual friends, and during any free time we would usually stay home with the kids and ignore each other. Or we would go to his mother's house in Nashua to visit. He was always on the verge of moving out and, quite fittingly, he scheduled two days after the Fourth to officially pack his bags and finally provide us both with our independence.

My life hardly screamed of independence at the time, and instead, it seemed to constantly shout back at me, "What the hell did you do to deserve this?" Without my four incredible children, who I love more than life itself, and an extremely supportive family and circle of friends, I'm not quite sure how I survived each day. I wasn't certain what life would hand me next, leaving me questioning how I ever managed to get in this position and what I needed to do to straighten out my family's slightly runaway course. As a parent, whether with a partner or not, it was my obligation to ensure that my family did not suffer one bit because of my ill-advised decision-making skills.

I began bartending several nights a week to create some much-needed cash flow for my suddenly single-income family. I chose the evening



Courtesy

**Corbin Raymond
suffered life-
threatening injuries
on July 4, 2018.**

bartending schedule so that I could be home during the day with Grayson, while Corbin, Grace, and Cohen attended school. Though I had hoped to spend at least part of the day with the kids to celebrate America's 242nd birthday, Corbin and Grace made plans with their friends, Jeff offered to take care of Cohen, and Steve took Grayson to his family's house. So, I gave in to working a double shift hoping to earn some extra tips courtesy of any patrons who may have chosen to spend their Independence Day sitting at a bar.

Corbin, who was sixteen going on "man of the house," made plans to celebrate his own sense of independence and was pumped to meet up with his cousin, Tanna, and a few buddies to tube down the Merrimack River that afternoon. When he asked me if he could go, I was very hesitant. The other boys wanted to tube partway down the river, camp out on the beach overnight, and float the rest of the way down the gentle rapids the next morning. None of the kids had their driver's licenses for even a year, and the thought of them being alone on the river reminded me a bit too much of what I was likely doing at the same age.

I have always been a little overprotective of my children, so I argued with myself whether to let him hang with his buddies for the day. Corbin was scheduled to work that night so he would only be on the river a few hours and not overnight like the other boys. Much against my better judgment, I reluctantly agreed.

I had to be at work by 10 a.m. to prep for the

lunchtime crowd, so I did my best to make myself presentable to face the long day ahead. I made it downstairs and searched the kitchen counter for my always elusive car keys. It seemed like nothing was easy for me these days and even starting the SUV involved a quick game of hide-and-seek. I heard Corbin shut the shower water off and step onto the bathroom tile. I tapped on the bathroom door to go over his plans for the day and to request a comforting promise that he would be careful and behave. No mother feels right without instructing their child to be careful (as if it does any good whatsoever).

A typical teenage boy and likely wrapped in a towel, he responded through the bathroom door and gave me a half-hearted "Goodbye, Mom" without seeing me. Not entirely comfortable with my decision to let him go, I mothered him a bit more and told him to text me when he left the house to recap his game plan for the day. He begrudgingly agreed and advised me that Grace was still in bed sleeping.

The bar opened at 11 a.m., and I was expecting it to be rather slow, knowing how beautiful the weather was supposed to be. I stocked the bar with a few buckets of ice, cut up some lemons and limes, gave the bar area a quick vacuum, and waited for at least one patron to provide me with someone to chat with. My first and, what would be, my only customer of the day, came in shortly after opening and ordered a sandwich for lunch. I recognized him from years prior when our boys

were little, so we started reminiscing about their T-ball days. We chatted about how quickly they grow up and ironically, how scary it can be when those same little toddlers become old enough to get their driver's licenses.

The unfamiliar tone of my new cell phone interrupted our conversation. I had just gotten it a few days earlier, so I hadn't transferred all my contacts over yet. Unable to recognize the number of the incoming call and not wanting to be rude, I decided not to answer, figuring that they would call me back if we really needed to connect. In an eerie case of foreshadowing, my customer continued the conversation and shared a story about how his son was recently in a fender bender on the highway. He told me that it was one of those situations where traffic suddenly came to a halt and unable to react quickly enough, his son rear-ended the car in front of him. Luckily, no one was injured, and he chalked it up to the inexperience of his son behind the wheel, perhaps tailgating a bit, but hopefully not engaging in teens' favorite current pastime, texting.

He wasn't quite finished sharing the story when I heard the ping of my phone advising me that I had a text. Steve's number was one that I certainly recognized even without having his contact added to my phone. His text ordered me to call him immediately. "It's an EMERGENCY," he texted, likely knowing that without such detail and the capital letters, I would ignore him and not hurry to return his call.

All I could think was that something had happened to Grayson. They were going to be at his sister's pool for the day. I immediately got a huge lump in my throat and assumed the worst. I excused myself from my customer and called Steve in a near panic. He let me know that Grayson was fine, but he had received a call from my sister-in-law, Kim. She told him that my nephew, Tanna, had been in an accident and was reportedly trapped inside the vehicle. Corbin and Tanna are first-cousins and have been nearly inseparable since he moved up from Florida in 2014.

I wasn't sure why she chose to notify me first, but I assumed that I must be closest to the accident so was the first one called. An instant later it hit me that Tanna was supposed to be with Corbin on the tubing trip. The decibel level of my voice increased as I peppered Steve with ques-



Courtesy

Corbin spent 121 days in the Intensive Care Unit at Boston Children's Hospital and at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital in Charlestown, Mass.

tions in rapid succession as soon as I realized that the boys were likely together. "Where are they? Where is the accident? Was Corbin with him?" Steve tried to get me to calm down, while letting me know the road the accident was on.

I hung up the phone without saying goodbye, much like many calls Steve and I had over the past several months. I quivered uncontrollably, not sure what to do first. In a state of mild hysteria, I began asking myself a new series of questions under my breath.

"Should I go to the hospital? Should I head to the road where the accident was? Oh my God! Was Corbin in that car?" The speed of my breaths heightened, and I knew I had to gain control of my emotions before I boiled over. I ran over to my coworker, told her about the call, asked her to serve the sandwich to my now abandoned customer, and then bolted out the door.

I flew across the parking lot, my feet hardly touching the pavement, and threw my SUV into drive while simultaneously jamming the gas pedal to the floor. I immediately dialed my mother while on the way to see if she had perhaps heard what happened. Mom answered the phone, sounding almost as frantic as I was. She told me that Kim

had called her as well. She had been notified about the accident via her Life360 app and asked Mom to get to the hospital as soon as possible because she and my brother Chris were on their boat for the day. They were coincidentally boating on the same river that the boys were headed for, and she didn't know how fast they could get to shore and the accident scene.

My mother had no details about Corbin and that helped me in making my decision to head straight to the scene of the accident. As I sped down Fisherville Road with absolutely no concern of the speed limit or oncoming vehicles, I glanced down at the dash and saw an all too familiar sight. The bright orange light on my gas gauge greeted me and indicated that I had once again ignored its warning the night before. "God, damn it! Not now!" I screamed to myself, out loud, for only me to hear.

I had worked late and I noticed the low fuel light was on, but true to habit I procrastinated. With so much going on in my daily life, I think I do a pretty good job keeping up with everything thrown at me in real-time, with little delay. However, the one area that I fail miserably in, repeatedly, is filling my gas tank despite the warnings.

Lo and behold, it would soon bite me in the ass. When I needed it most, I was running on fumes and despite the reality of the situation, I was still debating whether I had enough fumes to get to the accident scene. My mind played tug of war with itself, as it so often does when I'm in this position. Do I stop at the next station and get a bit of gas so as not to delay myself? Or do I pray for an act of God and try to make it to the scene of the accident?

What if I run out on the way there and find myself stranded? I knew the right answer to my litany of questions, but as I've often done throughout my life, I made the wrong decision and I decided to risk it. I had to know that Corbin was fine and, Lord willing, no lack of fuel was going to delay me

from getting there.

I sped toward River Road and dialed up Grace over and over with no answer. As soon as it went to voice mail, I'd hang up and neurotically press

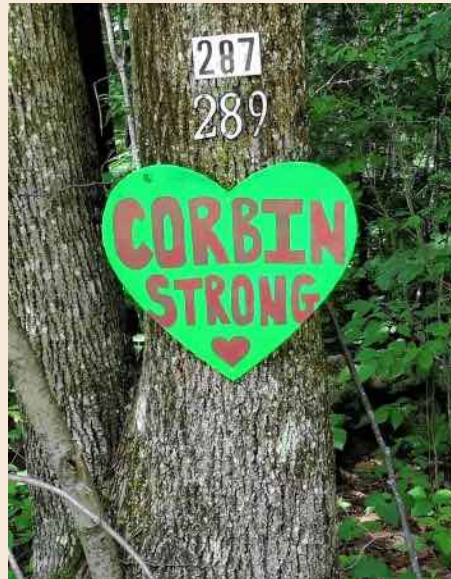
redial in hopes of a different result. I just wanted her to tell me that somehow Corbin had been delayed and hadn't left the house yet. Corbin hadn't texted me to tell me that he was leaving, as I had instructed him to, so he must still be there or so I desperately wanted to believe. I gave up on connecting with Grace and began calling Corbin's phone with the same maniacal repetition as I had his sister's. Ring, voice mail, hang up, dial. Ring, voice mail, hang up, dial.

During my incessant dialing fit, I hadn't even noticed that I had reached River Road. The knot in my stomach seemed to climb up into my throat as I swerved recklessly onto River Road without any thought of

flipping on my directional light. What am I going to see? Even if Corbin miraculously wasn't involved in the accident, my nephew was reportedly trapped in the vehicle. I knew the scene that awaited me was not something anyone looks forward to witnessing. The thoughts whipped through my mind one after another without even a second of delay in between.

I felt like I had been driving for much longer than expected as I passed one of the popular spots where people put their tubes into the river or go swimming. Groups of kids were laughing and screaming with excitement as I drove by in a completely opposite mindset. No one looked as though they had just witnessed a horrific accident like I anticipated seeing. Again, my mind and inner voice took control of the dialogue.

Maybe this was all a bad dream or was blown out of proportion. Maybe this was a blessing to get me out of working on a day that I really didn't want to be there anyhow. I was going to come upon a slight fender bender, exchange insurance papers, and head back home to spend the day bar-



Courtesy

Corbin's mother, Sadie, was his biggest supporter, but there were countless members of the community who supported the family on Corbin's road to recovery.

becuing after all. I continued to feel like this was the longest drive of my life. I had been on River Road hundreds of times, and it never felt this long. Each minute that passed gave me a bit more hope with the belief that I should have come across the wreck by now.

Suddenly, the tar road seemed to turn to dirt, and all I could see ahead were flashing lights. I drove as close as I could before a wall of emergency vehicles prevented me from getting any closer. I threw my SUV into park and jumped out with no concern of closing the door behind me. As I ran frantically toward the lights, I stumbled upon an odd thought. I was confused by the fact that the road was dirt when, to my knowledge, it was a completely paved road.

The experience was so surreal. If I hadn't felt a burst of hot summer air hit my face, I may have been able to convince myself that this was a weird, horrible dream. Instead, I'd soon realize that it was the beginning of our real-life nightmare. After a few more steps, I realized that the vehicle had torn through people's yards and woods covering the unrecognizable road in a furrow of dirt, burying the pavement underneath.

A police officer grabbed me by the upper left arm as I tried to maneuver my way through the sea of rescue workers. I tried to wrestle my way by him like a football player trying to break a tackle. His attempt to slow me down and stop me was successful. I found myself momentarily speechless, standing ankle-deep in dirt. I came face-to-face with a white car on its side hurled up against a tree. Tears welled up in my eyes as my hand came to my mouth.

The vehicle had no roof, and its entire white interior was saturated with blood. I was briefly relieved upon witnessing the sight of the car. "I don't even know that car. None of Corbin's friends drive a convertible." Though a momentary reprieve, I remember feeling a slight sense of relief, my mind constantly searching for any reason to excuse this as someone else's tragedy and not mine. Sure, I'd

feel horrible that "their Corbin" had been injured in a horrible crash, but my Corbin was joyfully tubing down the river on the Fourth as planned.

I snapped back to reality, pulled my arm away from the officer, and said, "I think my nephew was in this accident." The officer calmly asked me his name and then confirmed that Tanna was indeed a victim in the accident. He told me that he had

been removed from the vehicle and was being tended to in the ambulance that was parked to the right of the accident scene.

Though frantic, I reluctantly asked if Corbin was also in the vehicle. I felt the police officer hesitate slightly. Though his pause was negligible, it was long enough that I noted his delay. I knew his answer before he told me. Corbin was not only in the vehicle, but he had also suffered the most severe injuries. Another ambulance had already rushed him to the hospital.

Again, I tried to understand why the medical team seemed to be so calmly working on my nephew at the scene of the accident, while Corbin had been whisked away in an ambulance. How could two in-

juries in the same demolished vehicle be so different?

I beckoned the officer to tell me the extent of Corbin's injuries or to provide me with any calming information at all. I peppered him with questions, which were all just variations of the question, "Is my son okay?" All the officer would say was that Corbin was alive when he left in the ambulance. There was little or no comfort in those hollow words and, though I knew he was simply doing his job, I didn't care.

I needed to find out, and find out now, whether my son was okay.

I hushed the officer mid-sentence, reversed field, and ran just as quickly back to my SUV. The door was still open, and it was covered with a thick layer of dust that had settled on the hood, windshield, and the front seat. With the gas gauge still gasping for breath, I threw the vehicle into reverse and unintentionally spun my tires as I headed for the hospital. ♦



Courtesy

Sadie Raymond tells the story of anguish, survival and recovery from a mother's perspective.



The Eagle Hotel was photographed by Ernie Gould, who was commissioned to document the Concord downtown in 1977. The hotel was painted white while it was a home for the elderly.

Crosscurrents of Change

A downtown reimaged

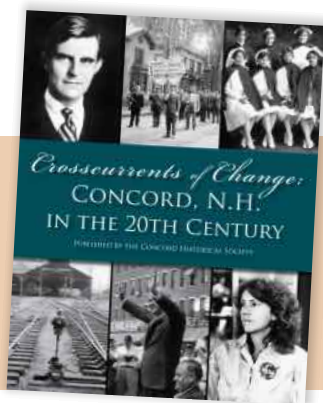
Concord's government and Chamber of Commerce continued to discuss the shortcomings of Main Street. The early 1970s, marked by the proliferation of strip malls and suburbanization, were a dark time for down-

towns. Martin L. Gross, city councilor from 1970 to 1982 and mayor of Concord for the next six years, described a downtown that clung tenuously to life.

"There were empty storefronts, empty buildings, the major commercial tenants were leaving and going out to strip malls; stores that had been anchor tenants of the downtown were

out of business or gone; the supermarkets had all spun out to the periphery. There was not much to bring people downtown, and everything was generally falling into decay." A renovated and revitalized downtown became imperative.

While there was no shortage of plans for reaching such a goal, putting one into effect proved somewhat diffi-



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'Crosscurrents of Change' Concord, N.H. in the 20th Century'

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Crosscurrents of Change

The Concord Public Market was located on Main Street between Pleasant and Warren Streets.

cult. In 1971, with the Capitol Shopping Center nearing its ten-year anniversary and the threat of another shopping center looming at a filled-in South End Marsh (which never materialized), the Chamber of Commerce commissioned an architectural study. Guy Wilson called for improved signs and more benches, lights and trees along Main Street for new life and vitality and proposed an indoor mall over the James R. Hill Building, occupied at the time by the F. W. Woolworth Company. Though that specific plan never came to fruition, it was prescient; the following decade brought a major revitalization of the block.

A subsequent study concluded that despite population increases, “there’s little happening” downtown. Even more bluntly, it said that the area “needs more visual delight – you ain’t got much there.” Suggestions again included pedestrian walks and improved landscaping, sidewalks and signs – even a “people-moving

system” such as a moving sidewalk to bring people from the Capitol Shopping Center to Main Street.

In the following years, planners, developers, merchants, and property owners worked hard to rehabilitate downtown. The period from 1973 to 1986 saw four major revitalization projects: Bicentennial Square, the Firehouse Block, Eagle Square, and Capital Plaza. A fifth, to remodel the Sears block, southeast of Main and Pleasant Streets, never materialized, although the Sears building was replaced by Capitol Commons in 2007. All four relied, at least in part, on federal and municipal funding.

The following excerpt was written by Geoffrey R. Kirsch and Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, It was part of Chapter 2, Granite, brick, steel and wood: A city’s sinews in “Crosscurrents of Change: Concord, N.H. in the 20th Century.”



Geoff Forester

The Tuft of Flowers

BY ROBERT FROST

*I went to turn the grass once after one
Who mowed it in the dew before the sun.
The dew was gone that made his blade so keen
Before I came to view the levelled scene.
I looked for him behind an isle of trees;
I listened for his whetstone on the breeze.
But he had gone his way, the grass all mown,
And I must be, as he had been, – alone,
'As all must be,' I said within my heart,
'Whether they work together or apart.'
But as I said it, swift there passed me by
On noiseless wing a 'wilderer butterfly,
Seeking with memories grown dim o'er night
Some resting flower of yesterday's delight.
And once I marked his flight go round and round,
As where some flower lay withering on the ground.
And then he flew as far as eye could see,
And then on tremulous wing came back to me.
I thought of questions that have no reply,
And would have turned to toss the grass to dry;
But he turned first, and led my eye to look*

*At a tall tuft of flowers beside a brook,
A leaping tongue of bloom the scythe had spared
Beside a reedy brook the scythe had bared.
I left my place to know them by their name,
Finding them butterfly weed when I came.
The mower in the dew had loved them thus,
By leaving them to flourish, not for us,
Nor yet to draw one thought of ours to him.
But from sheer morning gladness at the brim.
The butterfly and I had lit upon,
Nevertheless, a message from the dawn,
That made me hear the wakening birds around,
And hear his long scythe whispering to the ground,
And feel a spirit kindred to my own;
So that henceforth I worked no more alone;
But glad with him, I worked as with his aid,
And weary, sought at noon with him the shade;
And dreaming, as it were, held brotherly speech
With one whose thought I had not hoped to reach.
'Men work together,' I told him from the heart,
'Whether they work together or apart.'*

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THE SCENE



Mike Sato

Artist in residence Mawouko Aboussa installs a piece in the Carolyn Jenkins Gallery at the Kimball School of Art.

A display of community



Geoff Forester photos

Above: The Concord High School boys hockey team celebrates on the ice after defeating Salem, 7-0, to win the state championship on March 13.

Right: The Bishop Brady girls basketball team beat Kennett 52-50 to win the D-II Championship on March 14. The title, which was the first in program history, came on a last-second steal and layup.





Geoff Forester photos

Fresh chef salads are prepared in the Concord High School kitchen. Not only have the food service workers prepared food for students at the school, but they prepare both breakfast and lunch deliveries around the entire district.

John Amin Wani and Lea Tuyisabe began their expanding business by helping the immigrant population with their taxes.



Landon Woodward lines up the Ludacrisp apple saplings for Carter Hill Orchard owner Todd Larocque on a three-acre spot on May 12. The saplings will bear fruit in three to four years.

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Geoff Forester

Kearsarge Middle School music educator Sue Berlenbach cleans out her classroom at the end of the 2020 school year.

A farewell to fleeting moments

Here, at *Around Concord* magazine, we like to look ahead to tell you about all the adventures and options that await. Sometimes, though, we have to look back, even if it's only to reflect on the meaningful moments. We ran into this photograph taken in the middle of last June. Here, we see retiring Kearsarge Middle School teacher Sue Berlenbach as she packs up the classroom she left months earlier during the start of the pandemic. "It feels like a huge loss," she said at the time. "I just never thought my career at Kearsarge would end like this. ... There was no goodbye." This month, fortunately, students were once again in their classrooms, and this time they were able to say their goodbyes.

Contribute



Welcome to 'A Thousand Words,' a quarterly feature that ends the magazine with an iconic photo. Share your image with us, and we may be able to use it in a coming issue. Only high-resolution photos are accepted, and despite the intent of the feature, we will need to accompany your image with a few words. So please send your photo and a brief description to editor@aroundconcord.com.

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