

WHAT'S NEW IS OLD: BREWING LIKE BEN FRANKLIN P. 10

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UNDERSTANDING THE POWER OF RADICAL TRANSPARENCY



SERVING AS THE PRESS COORDINATOR FOR LISA SAVAGE'S RUN FOR U.S. SENATE IN 2020 WAS A LEGIT HIGH POINT IN MY LIFE. OF COURSE, I MADE EXACTLY ZERO DOLLARS DOING IT, PUT IN ABOUT 20 HOURS A WEEK FOR MORE THAN A YEAR, AND OFTEN FOUND MYSELF IN ABSURD SITUATIONS TALKING TO PEOPLE I HAD NO INTEREST IN TALKING TO. BUT IT WAS WORTH IT.

Over 20 years in writing for a living, I've had to spread a lot of other people's gospels. Sometimes, it can feel a little dirty, but you do what you need to when you need to pay the bills. Writers can't always choose their clients or employers.

With Lisa, though, I never had any qualms. It helped, obviously, that we share a lot of political positions. We both are lifelong pacifists and object to our tax dollars being used for weapons of war. We are both lifelong advocates for universal healthcare (seriously, I went door to door for it in 1992). We both believe strongly in a societal responsibility to prevent human suffering and care for our fellow humans, regardless of the choices they've made.

More importantly, though, I never doubted that Lisa believed what she was saying. So often, nowadays, in politics and so many other walks of life, people seem to be saying what someone else wants to hear. It's hardly a controversial observation, since people start saying things in order to be liked as soon as they start communicating, but I don't think we talk about it enough and think about its implications. So often, it seems like people take it for granted: "Oh, he doesn't really believe that! He's just riling up the base!"

With Lisa, though, that was never the case. I saw her tell people things they didn't really want to hear over and over again. She didn't always win the argument, or win people to her side, but she never compromised her values or misstated her beliefs just to make someone happy or try to weasel a buck out of them for the campaign. One time, those weirdos with Project Veritas released a "gotcha" video after a volunteer recorded Lisa at a farmers' market saying she was a socialist.

What a scandal!

We just laughed and thanked them for one of the best pieces of publicity we'd received all campaign. Of course Lisa's a socialist!

Everything they "revealed" was sitting right there on her website in her list of policy positions.

So, I was hardly surprised when she agreed to be photographed smoking weed and telling the world about her lifelong cannabis use. One of my favorite moments of the campaign came after our drive to Presque Isle for the infamous debate where Max Linn (RIP) cut up all those masks. Gasing up for the four-hour drive home, I saw she was sparking up a joint before getting into the car.

"What are you doing?" I asked. "I can assure you that people have smoked plenty of joints in this car." She hopped in — It was cold out — and away we went, laughing about what the other candidates were likely doing on their drives home.

But this kind of radical transparency, this willingness to let it all hang out, is important. It's not just a matter of, "Hur, hur, we smoked weed 10 minutes after saying 'nice debate' to Susan Collins." It's about stripping away artifice and encouraging people to be their authentic selves. How many people feel shame about their cannabis use? How many people use it for pain relief or to stimulate their appetites or to help them relax at the end of a stressful day, but worry about how they'll be perceived, even though it's all now perfectly legal?



I was hardly surprised when Lisa agreed to be photographed smoking weed and telling the world about her lifelong cannabis use.

If Lisa can spend a lifetime smoking cannabis and find herself in her 60s and going toe-to-toe with two experienced politicians and coming out — by many accounts — as the best performer in the debates, surely your cannabis use isn't going to make you any less of a parent, or employee, or friend. Nor does cannabis use preclude you from contributing to your community, being a leader, and having your ideas heard and incorporated.

We smoke weed. We drink beer. And we have great ideas for making Maine and beyond a better place for all of us to play, work, raise our families, and live our lives. How radical.



WORDS / **SAM PFEIFLE**
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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ECHOES OF TANGERINE DREAM

If you're looking for a new album you can just sit on the couch and zone out to, it would be hard to beat the brand-new "Triangles," from Echo Response, a covid project put together by Jason Ingalls, who you might know from Maine bands like the legendary Seekonk (or Sunset Hearts, Baltic Sea, El Malo, etc.). It's an all-instrumental number, full of dub rhythms, trippy guitars, and bass lines you can feel in the bottoms of your feet.

Is it perfect for smoking weed? Yeah, that's kind of by design.

"The original song titles were the names of the strains I was smoking when I wrote them," Ingalls laughs. "But I felt like I had to come up with different song titles when it came to actually releasing the record. None of this stuff was supposed to see the light of day!" Cooped up in his house during covid, these were mostly a lark, until people started loving them.

"Mostly I was like, 'What should I call this bass line? I guess this one's Tangerine Dream!'"

Ingalls hasn't always been a stoner, though. "I had very negative reactions to marijuana for decades," he says. "I would smoke it and it was a roll of the dice whether I would get the spins and throw up. I was awful with weed. So I drank. And I became a self-made alcoholic."

Finally, he dropped the booze 14 years ago. Then, five years ago or so, a roommate moved in who happened to be a doctor who prescribed medical weed. "I was taking lots of pharmaceuticals," he says, "and they suggested I try medical marijuana. He was like, 'Start with some low-dosage indica.' And once my tolerance built up, I was smoking full flower and that was years ago now."

"If I didn't have that to help with my anxiety and depression and PTSD, I would not be the person I am today," he says. "It really did fucking change my life. It really did. So I even thought of calling this band Space Queen, but I didn't. I didn't want people to think I was doing remixes of Queen songs."



BEER FEST SEASON IS BACK

After two years of covid-induced blackout, Maine sees beer festivals return in a big way in 2022. First up was Beers With(out) Beards, held at Thompson Point's Brick South building in Portland in the second week of April. Designed to be inclusive for women and femme-identifying people, the event was created by Grace Weitz after making deliveries for a distributor and realizing there were few in the brewing industry without some kind of facial hair.

In this fifth year, she and Hop Culture brought the event to Portland, with 35 breweries all either owned by women and femme-identifying people, or with women and femme-identifying in prominent management positions.

On June 25, we see the return of the Great Falls Brewfest, the 7th iteration of the event, which will feature more than 50 breweries, right in downtown Lewiston. They're looking at 2,000 attendees this year, with a 3.5-hour session and a 5.5-hour session, depending on your preference, and more four-ounce pours than you know what to do with.

Next up, Mast Landing plays host to its first-ever Wavy Days Festival, which will happen at the former Scarborough Downs racetrack. Already, they've announced more than 40 breweries that will be in attendance, including everyone from locals like Bissell Brothers to Vitamin Sea Brewing in Weymouth, MA; Southern Grist Brewing in Nashville, TN; and Magnify Brewing in Fairfield, NJ. Sample as much as you can from noon to 4 p.m. on July 23.

THIS JUST IN / WORDS / SAM PFEIFLE

DISTRIBUTION DISCOVERIES

EACH MONTH, OUR INTREPID DIRECTOR OF DISTRIBUTION, MARK SAYER, MAKES THE ROUNDS OF THE 150+ BREWERIES AND DISPENSARIES THAT MAKE UP OUR DISTRIBUTION PARTNERS. INEVITABLY, HE PARTAKES IN A VARIETY OF NEW PRODUCTS. BECAUSE WHY NOT? FEEL FREE TO OFFER SOMETHING UP FOR A TASTE TEST!



THIS MONTH HE REVIEWS HERBAN LEGENDS FLOWER FROM MATTERHORN APOTHECARY, IN TURNER:

"Maybe this is spring?," I was thinking to myself as I drove up Rte. 4, windows down, enjoying the warmish air. This month's travels brought me to the Matterhorn Apothecary, a relatively new shop on the northern side of Turner (see "New Weed Options in Turner, Portland, Bangor," December, 2021). It's a fantastic, quirky place loaded with handmade artifacts and crafts of all types, and I find something new to look at every time I'm there.

On the dispensary side, they have a huge selection of flower, concentrates, and edibles, so there's no way to go wrong. I sampled five different strains of their Herban Legends-brand house flower — Strawberry Cough, Fruit Loops, Wine Stomper, Mr. Teeny, and Grease Monkey.

Though all excellent, the standout of the group was Mr. Teeny, a heavy Indica blend of Grease Monkey and Peanut Butter Breath. The bud was beautifully manicured and coated with sticky sugar, and had a sweet, yet earthy taste. Though best saved for night-time use, as I discovered later that afternoon when forced to seek out a nap on the couch, it excels at getting you utterly relaxed.

Also of note was the Sativa-leaning Wine Stomper, a blend of Grape Stomper and Cherry Wine. It's an absolutely delicious, fruity-tasting bud that was much more peppy and energetic than the Mr. Teeny I had sampled earlier. Together, they make a great day-bud/night-bud combination.



STUDYING BEER GROWTH

Maine breweries were the subject of a significant study published in the February edition of the journal Sustainability. Drafted by researchers from the Maine Business School, Valparaiso University, and the Hospitality Business School in Lausanne, Switzerland, the work conducted significant field studies with six Maine breweries, looking at the challenges they face as they try to expand in socially and environmentally conscious ways.

The researchers looked at a series of growth moves and coded them: Were the decisions the breweries made socially and environmentally based or economically based?

They found an inherent tension between experimentation and mass production, between local authenticity and geographical expansion, and between independence and corporate ownership. "The researchers assert that craft breweries need to pay attention to community reactions to attempted growth if they want to successfully maintain their brand and stay true to their founding core values," said Niclas Erhardt, the study's lead author and former UMaine faculty member in the Maine Business School.

GIVE HOPS A CHANCE



CASCADE. CITRA. AMARILLO. LEMONDROP. CENTENNIAL. MAYBE THESE SOUND LIKE NEW PERFUMES, OR SCENTS FOR THE LATEST ALL-NATURAL DEODORANT. INSTEAD, THESE ARE THE NAMES OF DIFFERENT VARIETIES OF HOPS, WHICH ARE THE CRUX OF FLAVORING IN MANY STYLES OF BEER. WHILE IPAS — THE STYLES OF BEER THAT

ARE HEAVY ON THE HOPS — ARE USUALLY THE CENTER OF CRAFT BEER CONVERSATIONS, WE DON'T OFTEN TALK ABOUT THESE INGREDIENTS THEMSELVES AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO ONE'S LIKES AND DISLIKES. HOPS CONTAIN ALL THE FLAVOR COMPOUNDS THAT BRING THAT DELIGHTFUL BITTERNESS TO THE BREW, AND MAINE'S SKILLED BREWERIES HAVE TAKEN FULL ADVANTAGE OF THEIR DIFFERENCES.

A hop, fundamentally, is the flower of the hop bine (not a typo; "vines" are different. Look it up) and produces oils and other compounds that provide those beautiful bitter flavors. Hops bloom and develop their flavor compounds in late summer and are then harvested from the bines, either to be used immediately or processed and stored for later use. Sometimes, they are mashed together into pellets, other times they are processed in extremely low temperatures to draw out the oils and flavor compounds while leaving some undesirable flavors behind.

The number is changing as new hops are developed and hybridized, and as experimental hops become commercial varieties, but there are currently about 80 different hop varieties. While vintners say that there are about 10,000 wine grape varieties, in reality only about two dozen or so make up the majority of commercially available wines.

For a beer drinker, getting to know the various hops unlocks a secret — an enhanced ability to know what IPA you may like on a menu or from a store shelf that you haven't had before. Those who write themselves off as not a fan of the hoppiest brews may also find that it is merely a particular hop that rubs them the wrong way and that there are others they might enjoy in the category. In the early 2010s, a few new hop varieties — including Simcoe and Citra — came out. As they became commercially available to brewers they became rapidly popular, but turned out to be as polarizing as cilantro. To some, the tropical fruits and earthy notes were great; others were reminded of the smell of cat urine.

So how do you get to know these different hops? By reading beer labels a bit more closely. On the side of many breweries' offerings, or on their websites, the hops are often listed. For Sebago's Frye's Leap IPA it's Cascade, Centennial, and

Columbus; for their Haze Forward, it's Amarillo, Citra, Lemondrop, Simcoe, and Strata. Here is where you can start to learn whether or not you like fruitier hops (Cascade tastes like grapefruit juice, Amarillo is orange blossoms, Mosaic for pineapple), ones that lean towards pine flavors (Columbus is often described as pungent and dank like weed), or ones that are super bitter (looking at you, Simcoe), or others that are mild and pleasant (Kent Golding, Fuggles).

Now, to be fair, differentiating hops quickly gets challenging when they are blended with other hops in a particular beer, or if there is something in the brewing process that contributes other flavors that dominate. Add marshmallow flavoring or donuts and you're not going to be able to tell what hops were used unless you have some kind of tasting superpower.

If you want to take on a hop-tasting education, there are a few ways to go about this. First, if you're not a fan of hoppy beer, it's worth checking if a bunch that you've tried have the same hop — and then trying some with other varieties. If you're seeking to expand your knowledge of individual hops, the best way is to look for "single-hop" beers, where brewers focus on a single hop variety or brew the beer in such a way that a particular hop is in the spotlight.

” For a beer drinker, getting to know the various hops unlocks a secret.

Maine Beer Company makes a beer called a tiny beautiful something (lowercased, yes) that is a year-round pale ale that focuses on El Dorado hops, which is a variety easy to like and can throw flavors of flowers and oranges and even apricot in a very pleasant background. Lone Pine's Tessellation puts Mosaic hops in the spotlight and trends more to the tropical fruits, including mango and peaches. Some breweries do single-hop beers as limited releases — worth keeping an eye out for on tasting-room menus.

As we all venture out a bit more this spring, it might be time to read those menus a little more closely ... and get better acquainted with Maine's other "flower."



WORDS / BEER BABE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER



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WORDS / CALEB JAGODA

CALLING BEN FRANKLIN

TODAY'S BEER EXPERIMENTALISTS MIGHT NOT BE AS 'OUT THERE' AS THEY SEEM

Milkshake IPAs. Lactose sours. Peanut butter jelly whoopie pie stouts. The year is 2022, and while we don't have flying cars or watches we talk to (wait — we do have that), we do have all sorts of seemingly impossible beer manifestations, which sometimes read more like a randomly assorted Scrabble board than actual, real-life, congruous brews. This renaissance in craft beer may feel like it's already been around for a lifetime, but as Cheryl Parker remembers, it wasn't that long ago that times were quite different.

It was the early 2010s: The Bruins were Stanley Cup champions, iPhones were hot on the block, and you didn't have to look far to spot a pair of UGGs. Parker was at the Extreme Beer Fest in Boston, pouring beers she'd engineered as a brewer at Throwback Brewery in North Hampton, NH, and one beer in particular was turning heads and tantalizing taste buds: Throwback's jalapeño pilsner. Lines began forming to taste the unusually spicy lager, when Parker spotted one especially notable connoisseur patiently awaiting his chance to try what had become the talk of the town.

"Jim Cook, the owner of Sam Adams, came to our booth," Parker says. "And he knew and met Nicole (Carrier, co-founder of Throwback) because the brewing industry was still so small at that point.

And he wanted to try everything we had, and so I gave him the jalapeño pilsner and he was just like, 'Oh, oh my, that's interesting ... that's not quite for me, but good for you guys.'

"I feel like everyone's doing [experimental stuff] now, whereas 10 years ago, not everybody was doing it. It was a very weird thing to make a weird beer with unusual ingredients. And now it's like, what can you put in it that hasn't been done yet?"

Parker has watched the industry grow from a unique perspective. Working as a research scientist in remote areas of the world before entering the brewing scene in the early 2010s, Parker specifically sought out Throwback because of their defiant MO, which was especially rare at the time: Use solar power, local ingredients, and groundbreaking ingenuity to make out-there brews as a small, female-owned craft brewery. And after cutting her teeth at Throwback, and witnessing the boom of craft brewing bloom around her, Parker took a position at the University of New Hampshire in 2017 as a brewery manager professor. She's single-handedly built up UNH's brewing program — literally building the small campus brewery by hand and designing the brewing minor, complete with three brewing courses that she teaches at the university.

Now somewhat removed from the industry but simultaneously deeply entrenched within it, Parker marvels at the array of strange concoctions her students suggest in class. "I think it was just a few years ago I had a student say, 'I want to make a milkshake IPA,'" she says, "and I was like, 'What is that? What are you even talking about?' And then by the time we made it, it had already become popular. I was like, 'Oh my goodness. I need to listen to the students more when they want to make something weird — they're a little more ahead of the trend than me.'"

In a way, they're another kind of throwback, too.

Back in 18th- and 19th-century America, many brewers were attempting to make their ancestral European or British styles but were forced to improvise certain ingredients out of necessity. They weren't exactly living in an information age, where one click of a button could deliver fresh hops from anywhere in the world right to their doorstep.

"The colonists here in New England were making things out of pumpkins, maple syrup, molasses, walnut chips," Parker says, dipping into her professor bag, "all sorts of weird stuff to both get their sugar to make their alcohol and for the preservative qualities and the bittering. A lot of weird ingredients went into beer in colonial New England, and it was out of necessity. It was completely out of necessity. They wanted to make beer, they wanted to make alcohol, but they were pretty limited as to what they had."

Today's spruce tip beers might seem out there, but they were once merely an example of using what was cheap and freely available.

"Ben Franklin is often credited with a spruce tip beer," says Dave Rowland, co-founder and brewer at SoMe Brewing in York, ME, who's a former high school history teacher. "And was he being creative by using Spruce tips and thinking, 'Well, I think this will taste good'? No. I think a lot of early, pre-Prohibition stuff was really rooted in tradition, and the little tweaks were out of necessity more than anything."

This specific kind of experimentation — borne out of necessity — is no longer needed today, but brewers continue to push the envelope according to their own proclivities, passions, and quirks.

As a brewing professor, Parker's decidedly hands-off in regard to styles and textbook traditionalism, but keen on teaching skills that every successful brewer needs — whether they're making an Eastern European deep-cut or a puree-filled extravaganza.

"I say that the basis of brewing is cleanliness and safety and quality control," she says, "and beyond that, I don't care what you put in the beer. If it's totally gross, we'll just dump it."

With her background in analytical chemistry, Parker's expertise lies in the calculations and technical side of the brew; creating a safe environment with properly-portioned ingredients and maintaining a shrewd eye. And as she explained, one of her co-brewers at Throwback was an art major with an expansive imagination, who knew just what ingredients it would take to construct, say, a carrot cake beer.

Because, with brewing, it's both an art and a science — and according to SoMe's Rowland, this results in three different types of brewers:

There's the "super technical" brewer, who could "brew you any style of beer and it could be perfect," who's "all about the science" (think Parker); then there's the brewer "who knows nothing about science and goes all by feel and it's all art and creativity" (Parker's colleague at Throwback); and, finally, there's the brewer who splits the difference, who knows the science of the process and "can use that with their creative side and are more willing to take chances and do interesting things," which Rowland believes he is. "And I think all those types of brewers have a place."

Rowland's style shows in his specific brand of experimentation. While he's exceptionally passionate about the craft of beer-making, and loves the traditional styles as much as anybody, he's also not afraid to — frankly put — try some crazy shit. SoMe's flagship beer is their Whoopie Pie Stout, a milk stout aged on cocoa and vanilla, and they feature a never-ending list of offshoots according to the season (take, for example, their Peanut Butter and Jelly Whoopie Pie, using raspberry puree and natural peanut butter flavoring).

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Rowland believes in constant improvement; no two of his brews are ever the same — and why would they be? With the incessant flood of information right at his fingertips in our Information-Age-Hellscape of 2022, he doesn't feel the need to do the exact same thing over and over again. I mean, this isn't the '80s; he's not placing a mail-order for a homebrew kit from Brewer's Best. But even when he was doing that, once he got the fundamentals down and began writing his own recipes, he never looked back.

"I'm always tweaking, almost batch-to-batch, because I think you can always make things better," he says. "Whether it be just adjusting mash temperature or moving a hop slightly forward or slightly back in the boil, or slightly increasing or decreasing the dry hops or trying different fermentation temperatures. Most people probably wouldn't notice unless we get lucky and that little tweak yields a drastic improvement, but we're always tweaking, always, always experimenting, even with our flagships. Always tweaking."

Rowland believes it's bigger than him — in a way, he owes it to the craft. One seemingly little experiment can result in a whole new style, and quite possibly, change brewing forever — for better or for worse, depending on who you ask.

"There's a lot of people that are just taking chances and doing cool stuff, or influencing other people to do the same thing," Rowland says. "Either people are trying to stand out, or they're trying to blend in. But for the most part, someone took a chance somewhere, and that experimentation has got us — I mean, look at the New England IPA. That would've never been a thing if people weren't experimenting on where to put hops in the process and putting them later and later in the boil and experimenting with different yeasts to get different flavor profiles ... and now we're in a world where New England IPA is probably one of the best-selling styles in the entire country. And they don't all work."

Nor is pushing the envelope to try something new and different the only way to experiment.

"My experimentations are really pushing the envelope of the traditional beer styles," says Tod Mott, brewer and founder of Tributary Brewing Company in Kittery, ME, who UNH's Parker calls "a brewing legend."

"Pushing the envelope of the big beers and really trying to see if we're worthy. I've been brewing for 30 years — I hope to hell I'm worthy."

Mott made a big splash in the late-2000s with his Russian Imperial Stout — titled Kate the Great — at the Portsmouth Brewery in New Hampshire, although Mott had been tweaking the recipe for years at each brewery that he had previously called home. Parker recalls it as "the very first time I had seen people lining up to buy a beer." Beer Advocate rated Kate the Great as the number one



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best beer in America in 2007, and as the number two best beer in the entire world. And Mott didn't stop there, leaving Portsmouth Brewery to open Tributary in 2014, endlessly impelling his craft and his contemporaries to endeavor for the next great achievement.

Mott's chasing consistency, virtuosity, trying to make Czech pilsners or robust Bocks to the absolute highest degree of mastery. His version of experimentation is certainly a call-back, too, to those early-American brewers who pushed themselves to greatness, adapting traditional styles to what was available to them. Though they couldn't do some of the things that Mott's done, like take a trip to the Czech Republic to try their pilsners and dark lagers, and then come back to America and put a unique spin on them.

And for every passionate traditionalist or out-there experimentalist there's a young brewer like Maggie Forest, just beginning to figure out where they stand in the vast vanguard of strong opinions and steeped heritage.

At 24 years old, Forest is just beginning to get her feet wet in the industry, first cellaring at Great Rhythm in Portsmouth and now working as assistant brewer at Chapel + Main in Dover. Forest just released her first original-recipe beer, called Half Stack, a hazy New England IPA with Bru-1 and Citra hops and a light grain build. While Dave Yarrington, Forest's head brewer at

Chapel + Main, refuses to make hazy New Englanders (and worked alongside Mott at Portsmouth Brewery), he's given Forest free reign to explore and make what she likes. After all, the only craft beer scene she's ever known is one that's championed the haze.

Regardless of schools of thought or personal convictions, Forest is simply excited to be joining a league of craftspeople who take pride in their work and want to make the world a better place, in the singularly handmade way that they know how.

"I like brewing because I'm able to create something that other people will consume and enjoy," she says, "and it's such a rewarding feeling to see someone drink my beer and say that they liked it. Like, at Chapel, when I released my beer, they said that they went through a keg of it a day over the weekend, which was really sweet, and it just made me feel good. I wanna keep doing that kinda stuff where I'm putting something that I'm proud of into the world.

"There's some crazy things you can do — but is it beer? I don't know ... I guess if what you make is something you're actually proud of, if you go to brew a beer and it's something you're proud of, then sure, it can be beer. But it's up to your customers to decide if it's beer or not."

bw WORDS / **CALEB JAGODA**
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

BEER'S MASON-DIXON LINE

The New England IPA just may be the most hot-button, controversial topic amongst brewers. In some ways it's the stark line between the old guard and the new guard, between the purists and the frivolous. Not many old-school brewers like it, but some have begrudgingly come to accept it, with its popularity and impact becoming undeniable.

In a nutshell, it began something like this: The year was 2011, and a Vermont brewer named John Kimmich, at his Alchemist Brewery, decided not to filter or pasteurize a traditional IPA recipe, resulting in a haze fogging the beer's typically clear transparency. Previously, a hazy beer often meant there was some sort of mistake accrued during the journey of the brewing process — brewers wanted a clear beer(!) and that's just the way it was, according to any number of traditional beer styles and the storied history of the craft, and especially when making an IPA. And now, over the course of the last decade, a definitive haze has settled upon the craft beer industry: The hazy boy reigns supreme. But, still, there remains a select few who tarry, clear-eyed, staring deep and defiant into the New England mist.

"We never have hopped on the hazy New England IPA wagon — I've never made a hazy New England," says Tributary Brewing's Tod Mott.

Mott sees himself as a hands-on craftsman attempting to perfect a process that so many before him have attempted to perfect; as a maker trying his absolute best to create the quintessential environment for the brewing processes and chemical reactions to take place, and then and only then, yielding an exacted result that stands up to his acutely traditional standards for what a beer should be, has been, and (in his eyes) hopefully will continue to be. Some brewers are far more nonchalant in their approach and aim to achieve a joyful ease and carefree insouciance, consequently throwing certain pieces of tradition and history to the wind. And there's nothing inherently wrong with that — but Mott is not that, and to Mott, that isn't brewing. For Mott, the fun lies in experimenting as much as you can within the boundaries of striving to create a classically excellent beer.

In other words, he's a fervently proud member of the old guard of brewing.

"I'm not wild about what's happening to IPAs," he says. "If I might've been a little terse, I'm just kinda fed up with ... basically what I call them is 'not beer drinkers,' you know, because all of a sudden there's seltzer, and there's pre-made cocktails, and it's derivative of an expendable money that these fucking hippie young kids are going after, and I think the IPAs that have the lactose and the fruit — they just don't taste like beer to me."

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When she was running for U.S. Senate in 2020, Lisa Savage was different from her competitors — Republican Senator Susan Collins and Democrat Sara Gideon, formerly Speaker of the Maine House — in any number of ways. She was the only one in the race who supported Medicare for All, who put forward a comprehensive plan for meeting the covid epidemic head on, who advocated for conversion of Bath Iron Works from a builder of warboats to a builder of climate-change mitigation products and public transportation.

She was also likely the only one of the three who celebrated a job well done in a head-to-head debate by firing up a spliff in the bathroom of her room at the Holiday Inn by the Bay, in Portland.

"I'm one of those hyper vigilant nervous systems people," she says over the phone from California. She's out there visiting with her sons

(three) and their families (six grandchildren). "Lights are too bright, things are too scratchy. Cannabis just seems to reinsulate my nerve endings. That's what it feels like to me, when you've been awake for a lot of hours and your nerve endings are getting kind of frayed."

Or when you've just been grilled by Maine journalists, had the slightly off Max Linn saying "denied!" and refusing to answer questions, and been book-ended by two candidates who'd raised \$100 million between them.

"I'm also a migraine sufferer," Savage says, "and while I haven't found it helps much with that, I do notice it helps with other kinds of pain. I think it's useful to make me care less about it, or just notice it less."

While the federal legalization of marijuana was among her published policies, though, she didn't choose to make her can-

nabis use a high-profile part of her campaign. Already running as a Green Independent outsider, it would have been all too easy for cannabis use to be used against her to make her not seem like a serious candidate. Luckily, no one ever asked.

"I curtailed many parts of my natural expression of myself in order to fulfill that role" of Senate candidate, she says. "There were all kinds of things I didn't broadcast about myself because people were working really hard to get me elected. ... Now I'm just a private citizen. Okay, I admit it. I'm a pot smoker. Make of it what you will."

Of course, she's hardly idle. Savage currently hosts "Pathways to Progress," a monthly TV show on Portland's community TV channel; sits on the board of Maine AllCare, working to bring universal healthcare to Maine; and is among the most active peace protesters in the state, regularly demonstrating at BIW, the Brunswick Air Show, and on bridges and the sides of roads. Anywhere to spread her anti-war message (the Pentagon is also the largest institutional emitter of greenhouse gasses in the world, FYI).

But she's in a place now where she can reflect openly on a lifetime of cannabis use, going all the way back to high school in Pacifica, California.

She first smoked with "one of my friends, who had older brothers, one of whom had gone to Vietnam as a soldier," Savage says. "He gave it to his sister, who gave it to me as part of getting the group high. It was definitely quite illegal, but in my group of friends, it was pretty ubiquitous."

At the time (she graduated in 1972), she was a creative, and creatives back then smoked weed. The jocks just drank alcohol, while the greasers — car jockeys, motorcycle riders — "were perceived as taking a lot of pills. Seconal, barbiturates, and drinking. Those were the ones who got carried out of the school on a stretcher.

"My group considered alcohol and barbiturates drugs that made you more stupid," she continues. "We were reading Aldous Huxley and Timothy Leary. Marijuana made us feel good, feel rebellious, like we were going against the status quo. The Vietnam war was still raging at that point — and we also took psychedelic drugs as well, of course."

This led to a lifetime of cannabis use. From wanderlust early 20s going to Afghanistan and India and Japan (hash, generally, because it was compact and easy to get) to working in marketing, running bars, and teaching school here in Maine for the last 25 years before retirement in 2020.

"I often sat through meetings," she remembers, "where people were really running down cannabis. Anyone who used it was a loser, couldn't take care of their kids, etc. And I needed to keep my job, so I wasn't in a position to tell people they were full of shit."

She wasn't the only one concealing cannabis use from her employer in the high school, of course, and Savage says cannabis is excellent for getting creative, developing curriculum, and getting kids excited to learn — "many of the teachers who were boomers were pot smokers."

Through a life of being a mom, now grandmother, as well as someone respected enough in anti-war and climate-crisis communities to be tabbed to run for the U.S. Senate, she never felt "getting high" was a detriment to her ability to do what needed to be done.

"I'm from an Irish family," she thinks, "and there are a lot of alcoholics in my family, and I would stand by my feeling that alcohol is a much more destructive habit. I think I'm the original micro-doser. I smoke a small amount of marijuana on a daily basis. ... Three hits at the end of the day now is enough to do what I need to do."

Oh, and her favorite strain? "It's all about Trainwreck for me," she says, "which is a hybrid. It's the best physical and mental high that I've experienced. [The grower of her organic weed] is always trying to grow something else, and I try it, but it's never as pleasurable."

bxw WORDS / SAM PFEIFLE
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

CANNABIS ADVOCACY

While Savage may no longer be running for office, that doesn't mean she doesn't have policy ideas in the cannabis space.

"I've always felt the drug wars were intended to create incarceration nation," she says, "and had almost nothing to do with health and safety." Savage would expunge the records of anyone in jail or prison for cannabis crimes and free them immediately.

She also notes that "the cannabis industry probably owes reparations to some of the people for being jailed for doing the same thing they're now doing legally. And they owe an advocacy role. If they want to be good citizens, they should really be pressing for the release of anyone jailed for a cannabis crime. The reparations piece would be to share some of your profits with families who lost their breadwinners to the drug war."

"I'm not a person with a lot of money," she says, "but I try to pay reparations when and where I can, and I think the cannabis industry would morally benefit at looking to see what they can do in that regard."

TALKING TO BOOMERS ABOUT CANNABIS

WORDS / MICHAEL SAUNDERS

IF MY GRANDMOTHER IS ANY INDICATION, YOU CAN HELP OLDER ADULTS HELP THEMSELVES

For the majority of my grandmother's life, she "hated marijuana." She looked down upon those who used it and blamed cannabis for the corruption and harm she felt it had brought to her children and grandchildren when they were growing up. Yet somehow, in 2019, she became a medical patient, cannabis consumer, and advocate for the medical benefits of the plant.

Hopefully, knowing how she made that transition and understanding the role a supportive, well-informed person can play in the process will be of use to others. It was not, however, a quick process. And to be clear, my grandmother isn't ripping bongos or putting dab clouds in the air, but she does use cannabis-derived medicines every day of her life now — with life-improving results.

Hopefully, our experiences can help guide and support any conversations you might have with an older person about cannabis, regardless of whether your goal is to help improve their understanding and acceptance of your own use of cannabis or to help get your loved one to recognize the benefits of the plant as a medicine and use it themselves.

Cannabis can diminish the need for, or replace, many over-the-counter (OTC) and prescription medications that older adults take daily just to be free from pain, reduce inflammation, or help achieve a restful night's sleep — I've witnessed this in many of the patients I support as a medical cannabis caregiver here in Maine. And knowing some of the long-term side effects of daily use of many prescription and OTC pharmaceutical medications, these could be very important conversations.

Unfortunately, you may have to break through some well-established barriers.

Some common factors that get in the way of older adults pursuing cannabis as a medical treatment are the stigmas associated with it, a lack of education about it, lack of support from a doctor, erroneous beliefs about the plant and the type of people who consume it, and perceived conflicts with moral or religious beliefs. If you can address these core areas with understanding, patience, and education, you may be able to help your loved one find their way to the plant.

STIGMAS AND MISINFORMATION

Older adults are chock full of misinformation about cannabis. Knowing this about my own grandparents, in the months leading up to her decision to explore cannabis, we had conversations that chipped away at the misinformation to which she'd been exposed.

Her generation and others were deliberately exposed to propaganda and misinformation about cannabis — a specific example we discussed was "Reefer Madness," the 1936 film that features a high-school principal detailing the nefarious effects of cannabis on teens. She was part of the generation that was exposed to "Reefer Madness" by trusted adults. We talked about the fact that campaigns against cannabis often played on xenophobic and racist fears and leveraged the plant as a tool to target and imprison minorities.

I told her, too, about the financial role the pharmaceutical, tobacco, petroleum, and textile industries have played in subverting the development of legal markets for medical cannabis. To the pharmaceutical industry, cannabis has always been viewed as a threat to their bottom line. Given the wide range of uses for cannabis as a treatment for common ailments and the fact that it's a plant anyone can try to grow and make into medicine, it's not difficult to see why they've tried so hard to keep legal markets from developing for as long as they could. Exposing your loved one to content they can trust, and which provides accurate information about cannabis, is clearly very important.

And sometimes it helps when a third-party is involved.

For years, my grandmother has received a monthly magazine from the American Association for Retired Persons (AARP). In 2018, they published in AARP Magazine "Boomers Fuel Boom in Popularity of CBD," which discussed some of the benefits of full-spectrum CBD products as well as some of the limitations in our understanding of why it helps. Then, in 2019, she read an article titled, "Medical Marijuana: Your Questions Answered and What We Know Today," which discussed some of the dangers of unregulated products on the market and other concerns, but provided an editorial statement of support for the regulated use of cannabis for a range of ailments.

TO PAGE 20 ►



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FEATURE : HOW TO

◀ FROM PAGE 18

The article touched on many of the points that I had been bringing up. She was curious about how cannabis works in the body, so we talked about it.

I told her humans and other mammals are blessed with something called an “endocannabinoid system.” Amazingly, our bodies naturally utilize and process the chemicals found in cannabis, whereas pharmaceutical medications act on your body and often change your body’s chemistry to create a desired effect or mask a symptom. Research is demonstrating that cannabis contains pain relief, anti-inflammatory, and anti-seizure properties, depending on the strain.

Medical cannabis, I told her, is now widely prescribed and used for patients going through chemotherapy and other cancer treatments as a means to address pain and stimulate the desire to eat. Cannabis has been shown to be effective in aiding addicts during recovery, reducing rates of relapse in many cases. These are real medical uses for the plant, uses that help to reduce the devastation and suffering caused by addictive alternatives offered under the traditional medical model.

But sometimes, people need to experience the benefit to believe it.

My grandmother had been trying to find help with upper and lower GI issues for years. Stomach and GI issues run in my family like freckles run in others. She was suffering from debilitating pain, indigestion, and acid reflux and was getting tired of the pain. She told me a story about a meeting she had with a GI specialist. She told the woman that when she was a child, her mother used to give her an elixir that was meant for humans and livestock to cure a “sour stomach.” My grandmother told me that when the medical professional researched the name of the product, she discovered that it had hemp oil in it. At this point she made the connection that something that had worked for her stomach when she was a child had been taken away just so a doctor could prescribe a pill instead.

All the medical professionals she had seen couldn’t figure out how to address these issues, but taking cannabis oil brought immediate relief to her. She began taking low-dose Rick Simpson Oil capsules (see “Sorry, Not Sorry,” in our November 2021 issue), ingesting tinctures, and applying a topical treatment for arthritic pains. Cannabis even helped her deal with the pain from a cancerous tumor and she continues to use it to this day.

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS OBJECTIONS

Like many Americans, my grandmother is a very spiritual person — she’s a devout Catholic. She has been a dedicated volunteer, coordinated clothing and food drives, and does everything she can to reduce the suffering of those around her as a means to feel closer to God. She has had a life-long relationship with God, so bringing her conflicted feelings about cannabis to her prayer sessions played a big factor in her decision to start using cannabis.

Even though she was suffering from significant pain and discomfort and it was taking its toll, she was concerned that consuming cannabis would be frowned upon by the church and get in the way of her relationship with God. So, we talked about the parts of the bible that refer to humankind’s use of plants on earth. Specifically, we talked about the book of Genesis 1:29-30, which states, “And God said, ‘Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food...’ And it was so.”

” She told the woman that when she was a child, her mother used to give her an elixir that was meant for humans and livestock to cure a “sour stomach.”

Finally, the pain being more than she wanted to continue to deal with, and having been educated with some real facts about cannabis, she was able to square things up morally and spiritually. God wouldn’t want her to be in pain. So she made a decision to attempt using cannabis to treat her stomach pain, arthritic inflammation, and difficulty sleeping through the night. With great success.

EVERYONE HAS A “GRANDMA”

I have been a medical caregiver in Maine since 2019 and have seen the medical benefits of cannabis first-hand in the patients I support, including my grandmother. Cannabis is now a part of her medical and physical health journey because she was open to it and had someone to help lead her in the right direction.

Ultimately, her story with cannabis is one of success, but she’s not a rare case. And research on cannabis has only scratched the surface relative to discovering the full potential of the plant. As stigmas fade away, legal markets continue to develop in various states, and more people are exposed to the medical benefits of cannabis, the educational effort we have to put in with many older adults will likely get easier.

And we’ll all be better for it.

bw WORDS / MICHAEL SAUNDERS
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Michael Saunders is CEO of Forest City Reserve, a medical cannabis retail shop in Lyman, Maine.

I have my grandmother to thank for the insights provided in these paragraphs and for the role she has played as a matriarch in my life. To my grandmother, Aline Saunders, and every mother out there: Happy Mother’s Day!

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DOSE OF REALITY

CJ SPOTSWOOD WRITES THE BOOK ON PSYCHEDELIC MEDICINE



WORDS / SAM PFEIFLE

Nowadays, “medical marijuana” is a relatively mainstream concept. Heck, just three states in the U.S. — Idaho, Kansas, and Nebraska — don’t allow at least some medical cannabis use.

But this hasn’t always been the case. Anyone who’s been in the industry very long has plenty of stories of being scoffed at or ridiculed. It took pioneers like the folks who ran Sticky Fingers Brownies and supplied them to AIDS patients in 1980s San Francisco, as doctors looked the other way, to get to the place we’re in today, where there are literal thousands of medical caregivers growing weed for patients in Maine alone.

CJ Spotswood, a nurse practitioner operating in Gardiner, Maine, is a similar kind of pioneer. In his case, however, he’s arguing for the benefit of psychedelics on physical and mental health — in the face of what can sometimes be ridicule and skepticism. Recently, he was a major voice behind “An Act To Enact the Maine Psilocybin Services Act,” a bill that would have created rules for the medical use of psilocybin, the active ingredient in psychedelic mushrooms, and he has made the study of the medical application of psychedelics a major part of his academic research.

Now, he’s out with a new book, “The Microdosing Guidebook: A Step-by-Step Manual To Improve Your Physical and Mental Health Through Psychedelic Medicine,” which allows those curious to take a risk-based approach to self-medicating via small doses of various psychedelics.

Because that bill failed to pass — it was voted down 8-3 in the Health and Human Services Committee and they wouldn’t even pass a bill to create a committee to study the possibility of legalization. So, if you want to work on healing with psychedelics, you’re on your own. But Spotswood says it’s worth it.

After being a psychiatric nurse for almost 20 years, Spotswood recently completed his Nurse Practitioner studies at the University of Southern Maine, with a focus on psychedelics. It’s a passion that was spurred by what started out as a strange incident: “I had a patient come into the emergency room,” he says, “and they didn’t fit the mold for a first time psychotic break. He was mid-50s, we ruled out everything medically. Then he admitted that he was using Penis Envy mushrooms to treat his depression.”

Among the most popular strains of psilocybe cubensis, the most common mushrooms used to experience psychedelic effects, penis envy mushrooms have gone from the domain of hippies and thrill seekers to being one of the most exciting new treatments for mental illness in contemporary medicine. In 2018, the Food and Drug Administration approved their use (or psilocybin in pill form) for “breakthrough” status in treating depression. Once Spotswood dove in, he was hooked.

“I ended up researching it and looking into the use for depression,” he says. “I knew there was research looking at psychedelics as medicine, but I had no idea the breadth of research there was. Here was this plethora of information, and, oh my god — this is amazing.”

For his grad school work, he put together a paper on psychedelic medicine, and, then, on something of a lark he submitted it for a presentation at the American Psychiatric Nurses Association. Not only was it accepted, but his presentation ended up being standing-room-only, some 500 fellow nurses in the audience.

“Afterward, people were coming up to me,” he remembers, “saying, ‘Oh my god, it’s something so different. I’ve got this experience, that experience. I felt like I was onto something.’”

Then, in 2018, author Michael Pullen, who teaches writing at Harvard and UC-Berkeley, released “*How To Change Your Mind: What The New Science Of Psychedelics Teaches Us About Consciousness, Dying, Addiction, Depression, And Transcendence*,” for which he used psychedelics, guided by medical professionals. People thought it came out of the blue for the food writer, but he noted that it was all of a piece: He’s interested in how natural substances affect the body. Mushrooms and other naturally occurring psychedelics are just another kind of food that does another kind of thing to the human body.

This started to bring psychedelics into mainstream discourse, making Spotswood’s research yet more palatable.

He notes the War on Drugs poisoned people against so-called “drugs,” “how these drugs will rot your brain, sit in your spinal fluid ... this is the movement that we had where mushrooms were demonized and scary, and we indoctrinated people from a young age that these would destroy your life.”

As he began talking to patients, though, “as you come out of the proverbial closet, people are willing to talk about it. They’re willing to hear people’s stories and people have all of these experiences themselves. I have a lot of people coming up to me at conferences who were people who grew up in the ‘60s, who did drugs and no harm came to them, and they think, ‘Yeah, I turned out fine.’ The more people talk about it, the easier it becomes.”

Of course, he can’t prescribe “mushrooms” because there’s nowhere to really get them, but his book offers a way for people to figure out their dosing, understand the feelings they’re having, should they be able to acquire them. Nor is he worried about overdoses, something that would obviously worry him with many other pharmaceuticals.

Quite simply, there’s no evidence that anything truly bad can actually happen, should you “overdose” on mushrooms. “We as healthcare professionals in general, we want evidence,” he says.

“Here’s the research, here’s the safety profile that comes with it, here’s what’s out there. ... The safety profile isn’t to the point where it could be harmful. They’re not going to do any inherent harm. And when we present it that way, on an even playing field with other medications that are out there, people are willing to change their view and are open to hearing about it.”

And what of the criticisms, like those offered by Maine CDC Director Nirav Shah, that legalizing mushroom use will lead to expanded recreational use?

Spotswood has an interesting perspective: “Why are we using the term ‘recreational’? Recreation means ‘fun.’ What about using it for our own personal healing that’s not necessarily medicalization? I think part of the issue is that it doesn’t have to be one or the other.”

When we exercise, and it’s fun, does that mean it’s not good for us? When we eat well, and it’s good for us, does that mean it’s not supposed to be tasty and enjoyable? And what about religious uses — if it’s not medically necessary, are those uses “recreational”?

Of course, Spotswood doesn’t argue for psychedelics as a panacea or as something that will help everyone.

“What I tell my patients,” he says, “is that all medications have a purpose, but they also have side effects. It’s about finding a healthy balance of the best benefit with the least side effects.

“When you’re microdosing,” he continues, “something might cause too much stimulation, so maybe you turn it down a little bit, or maybe you tried it too late in the day and it’s interrupting your sleep. I say, put the information out there and let them tailor how they’re dosing to have optimal outcomes with minimal side effects.”

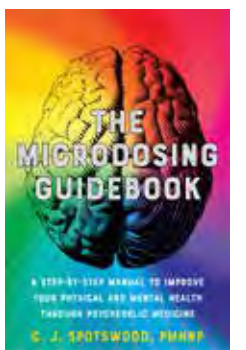
So, anyone know where to find some ‘shrooms?

WORDS / SAM PFEIFLE
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The Microdosing Guidebook
By CJ Spotswood
Published by Ulysses Press,
April 19, 2022



SCAN FOR
MORE INFO





A COMIC BY:
MERRILL MARSH



MATT PATH AND HIS DOG
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OH NO IT'S THAT DO-GOODER
MATT PATH! HE'S FOUND MY GROW!



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Seedlings and soil are first up, though. Okay, maybe you haven't yet purchased and sown your seeds yet. Don't despair! The month of May is 31 days long, totally enough time to sow three photoperiod beans (see our March 2022 issue for the best way to get them). Or you can purchase a seedling to plant, where someone else has already done a bit of the gruntwork.

And you'll still have plenty of time to get your growing area prepared!

However you get your beans, pop them ASAP into some organic-composted, moist soil to germinate. Within five days they will be a little sprout! (It may be necessary to place an upside-down clear glass container on top of a seed to prevent a mouse from nibbling it down.) Keep them moist, give them plenty of warm air and sunshine, and before you know it they will be ready to plant.

If you don't trust yourself with that, you might try established cannabis seedlings from Seed and Soil farm in Monroe. They're passionate about organic weed and have worked with Humboldt Seed Company in California, then launched a seed program in collaboration with HSC at Nymera Farm, an organic weed farm in Canada, to breed the world's first certified organic THC cannabis seed.

Best of all, they have pre-order organic seedling plants available at www.seedandsoilmaine.com that anyone over the age of 21 may purchase for \$25 to \$30 each.

They deliver your pre-ordered seedlings to a recreational distribution store in your area.

While you are waiting for your seed to pop and sprout, or waiting for your seedling from Seed and Soil farm to arrive, the time is prime to get your garden soil all fluffed up. Your garden soil should be your main concern at the start of building a healthy garden.



Spending a good amount of time weeding and amending your garden soil supports a healthy environment to grow great weed. You can order organic compost from **Riverside Recycling Facility** (207-797-6200) if you're here in Portland, or the **Kennebunk Transfer Station** (207-883-3325) down south, or even **J. M. Morin Earthworks Inc.** (207-689-3478) in Poland as you head into the western hills. All carry quality organic compost and sell by the yard or bucket for about \$60 a yard, which is approximately 40 five-gallon buckets.

The amount of organic compost you'll need to mix into your backyard garden depends on the size of the garden, figure about a 25-30% ratio of compost to the given volume of soil; but one to five yards never goes unused in amending your potted plants and your backyard's soil. It's also nice to have your very own black gold (aka organic composted soil) on hand for compost pro-gro sun tea. That will feed your plants with nutrients all summer, leaving the remainder of compost available for next season.

It's best to work the soil a few days after a good downpour. It makes weeding a whole lot easier. It's hard work regardless, but healthy soil repays you far more than the effort it involves. And a puff down at 4:20 always tastes better after a hard day's work.

All your effort enhances your backyard's biodiversity, which creates an amazing environment for soil microbes. This system reduces disease, as the microbes in your soil support your rhizosphere (aka "root system"). Cannabis roots release sugars that attract fungi and bacteria that create a symbiotic system, which helps feed your weed plant by releasing nutrients. These nutrients are assimilated and obtained by your cannabis plant's root network.

We need to protect this microbe world from the sun. This is why cover crops are encouraged. I love nasturtiums as a cover crop, not only are they pretty for us to admire, pollinators and insects also see them as attractive. These companion plants work brilliantly as a weed (the unwanted ones) barrier, sweet pea also works as a cover crop in the same sense, along with pulling in atmospheric nitrogen, as do beans, dandelions, and yarrow.

Companion plants like these attract beneficial insects (ladybugs, parasitic wasps, and honey bees) and also help cut down on the pests (aphids, cabbage worms, caterpillars, white flies, slugs, mice). This practice of companion planting is part of a permaculture system that promotes a self-sufficient and sustainable garden.

The attractors that will fertilize — increase the yield, size, and density of flower — your outrageous weed production are: Thyme, fennel, especially dill (highly beneficial), rosemary, borage, and sage to name a few.

A few of the companion plants that act as deterrents, utilizing their aroma to discourage animals and insects from munching on your pot plants, are lemon balm, tulsi, lavender, coriander, mugwort, and catnip.

On the borders of your garden, planting sunflower, corn, and tomato plants, or a screen of climbing beans, will be beneficial. They grow tall and shield your weed plant from damaging winds that can snap your cannabis branches! They may also camouflage your cannabis plants from human predators.

Field-grown cannabis plants love to be surrounded by their great companion: alfalfa. The deep root system breaks up the compacted soil and helps retain water, amends the soil with nutrients, and attracts helpful insects to scare off the wicked.

With all that decided, and with the knowledge that it's after the last full moon in May and there are no frosts on the horizon, it's time to get our Mars on and transplant our cannabis seedling, being confident that the soil temperature is 50+ degrees to protect the seedling (you can use a meat thermometer if in doubt). Yes, wash your hands, especially if you handle tobacco. Marijuana and tomatoes hate tobacco and bringing them into contact with tobacco may well cause a virus known as TMV (tobacco mosaic virus); this is contagious and dangerous to your cannabis plant.

Make sure to plant the eager seedlings alongside fruit, herbs, and vegetables. Be sure to center your cannabis plants in full sun. Typically, a well cared for cannabis plant will want six to eight hours of sun and approximately 12 square feet per plant for space.

Dig a hole twice the size of the root ball, water the hole, add a healthy amount of compost and a handful of North Country Organics Pro-gro 5-3-4 (we will use the 5-3-9 later in the season), mix it well, and make sure it is wet but not flooded. Take your cannabis seedling and slightly wet it before removing it from the container.

Place your fingers around the plant in an upside down position, release it from the container, with the weight of the soil and roots held by the palm of your hand and the stem and leaves beneath. This tender removal is giving extreme care to not stress out the root system.



Place the roots and 2-3" or so of the stem into the hole. This can be the tricky part. You want to plant the stem partially in the soil because weed plants can tend to get a bit leggy. Use your discretion here to support the plant yet not encourage rot in the stem as you pack the soil around your seedling's roots. When planting your weed plant, think of a cup and saucer; your seedling being your cup and the saucer is the water steward for the supply of water to the roots. You do not want soil packed too far up the stem or in a mound-like planting, where the water runs off and away from the root system.

Offer your cannabis plant a healthy amount of space from surrounding plants; it will want to grow! As some varieties get 10- or even 15-feet tall, the branches will want room. Try not to over water your weed. It should be plenty wet from your planting. The weed seedling will need a bit of a transition time after the transplant mission. Give her a couple of days and she will glisten with growth. Caring for your weed seedling into the vegetative stage is the initiative for the next couple of months. Keep her roots moist.

Create a compost/Pro-gro sun tea by using a 3:1 compost and Pro-gro combination in a five gallon bucket, covering with water to get an amber color. Set it out in the sun, periodically stirring it every 24 to 48 hours. Use this nutritious fertilizer to nurture the cannabis seedling.

The rule of thumb is to keep fertilizer from touching the plant or burning the root system. So gently feed your cannabis plant every other watering. You can depend on the sunshine, water, warm air, and happy vibes to bring persistent growth to your plants.

Now you can fire up the barbeque and enjoy a puff and a cold brew as you admire the gratifying outdoors during this beautiful month of May!



WORDS / **DIRT DIVA**
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

PURPLE BLAZE

GETTING FIRED UP
ABOUT ONE OF MAINE'S
RAREST FLOWERS

WORDS / CYNDLE PLAISTED RIALS
PHOTOS / SEAN FITZPATRICK



The Kennebunk Plains, a 135-acre area located on the inside of 95 on a rural road, are nothing much to look at this time of year. The land is nondescript, flat, brown — it seems an unlikely tourist destination. If you've been to Cape Cod or Martha's Vineyard, you may have seen this kind of wide-open, sandy, grassy habitat before, but here in Maine we're at the northern limit of this type of environment, making it an unprecedented sight for most.

Most people encounter it with the same question on their lips: How?

"It's an outwash plain of sand and gravel deposited by glaciers in the last ice age," says Nancy Sferra, currently transitioning from her role as the Land Management Director of the Maine branch of The Nature Conservancy, who's a particular expert on the Kennebunk Plains and its ecosystem. She was in charge of managing the area for a handful of years in the '90s and is still actively involved in its maintenance.

"There's 90 feet of sand and gravel underneath the soil," she notes. "It's a very dry, nutrient-poor habitat." Despite the fact that it doesn't seem like these conditions would allow natural life to flourish, the knowledgeable and down-to-earth Sferra says the plains are home to a variety of species of plants, birds, and animals, many of them incredibly rare.

One of the rarest species you'll find there is the Northern Blazing Star, scientific name *Liatris scariosa* var. *Nieuwlandii*, a plant with a tall stalk that when in bloom is dotted with flower heads like brilliant purple fireworks exploding up and down the stem. When

they pop in the summer the Kennebunk Plains are transformed into one of the most beautiful places you're likely to come upon.

Heather McCargo speaks reverently of the flower; it's little wonder, too, as she is the founder of the non-profit Wild Seed Project, seeking to "re-wild" Maine and return native plants to its landscape.

"When they're in bloom it is wild," she says gleefully. "It's the open plain, all the flowers, birds and butterflies and bees ... It really is a special place."

And the Northern Blazing Star isn't just distinctively beautiful — it's also highly protected. "It's a globally rare species," McCargo says. "It has an S1 ranking, and it's illegal to pick it or do anything with it because there are a whole host of creatures that need it for their life, and we're just lucky because it's so beautiful."

The Nature Conservancy maintains the growth of the Northern Blazing Star in a dramatic and perhaps unexpected way: by routinely setting fire to the Kennebunk Plains. In a world of so much technological advancement, this is an approach rooted in history; actually in prehistory, if you want to get technical.

"Historically the site was probably burned by Native Americans," Nancy Sferra says. "We know the site was used by Native Americans based on archeological evidence. There was likely a seasonal encampment there, hunting; there's some evidence they were using that site for trade with tribes further to the west." And before the indigenous population burned the area, the Plains were

renewed by fires that roared to life when lightning struck the stoic pitch pines.

The Plains burn well for a few reasons. One is obviously the very dry soil conditions, and the dry plants that call it home. Another reason is an intrinsic feature shared among the various plant species that grow there: They naturally contain a volatile oil that catches quickly and feeds the fire.

And the plants thrive on the treatment. "The Northern Blazing Star really loves the burning," says Sferra. "What's really interesting is [one year] there'll be this basal rosette of leaves and the plant won't bloom, and then you run a fire through there, and all of a sudden the next year you have all these flowers. It's amazing. If there's been a fire within the last season, you'll have this big sea of purple. You can see exactly where we've done burning in the last area because you'll see there are some sand trails that go through the site; one side of the trail will be full of flowering plants, and the other will just have a few."

There are other benefits they've observed from the fires, too, including managing the proliferation of species that endanger the propagation of the Northern Blazing Star.

Sferra describes the phenomenon with excitement: "One really cool thing we found out about the Northern Blazing Stars is that, while the seed head will produce hundreds of seeds, there are two species of little tiny moths that lay their eggs in the seed heads, and the larva will eat all the seeds out. Before the fire,

90% of the seeds will be eaten; and after a fire, only 20-30% will be gone."

Additionally, the controlled burns keep the pitch pine, gray birch, red oak, white pine, and pin cherry at bay, maintaining the open space where so many other species thrive, deliver fresh nutrients to the soil, and encourage new growth. "When a plant gets damaged through drought, insect, fire, whatever, the next year the response of the plant is to produce as many flowers as possible for more seeds. You get this really good shot of nutrients through ashes created by the burn," says Sferra.

Despite the clear benefits to the ecosystem, setting fire to a bunch of dry land and plants seems like a dangerous proposition. And it is. But the TNC staffers and volunteers that participate in the controlled burns are extensively trained.

Sferra lists the particulars with precision. "All of the people that help us on our burns are trained to the federal standards, the same training people go through for wildfire training. For every burn we do we have to write a burn plan that has the specifics about how we're going to do that burn, fire breaks so the burn stays in the box, so to speak. Weather plan with wind direction, contingency plan in place, equipment, number of people, crew positions..."

It's also a time-consuming process. The active part of the burn is about four hours, sometimes shorter, and the crews mop up for the rest of the day, coming back to the site multiple times after the burn to make sure everything is out and nothing is smoldering.

◀ FROM PAGE 29

Further maintenance might include revisiting the area a couple years post-burn to do some mowing. Sferra says that helps maintain the habitat: “These woody trees really want to come in and grow here. It takes a lot of work to keep these open grasslands.”

And money. The curators own two small firetrucks that hold a couple hundreds gallons of water, there is constant need for training, and there is always a need for volunteers to be wrangled.

All of that can be costly, but so worthwhile to Sferra and the people of The Nature Conservancy, whose projects are funded by foundation and federal grants, and of course donations. “It’s not cheap,” she says, “but this is the best means of making sure that these areas are ecologically viable.”

Heather McCargo of the Wild Seed Project is equally passionate about maintaining Maine’s open spaces and native species. “We have these amazing natural areas, and most people don’t even know about them,” she says. “Most of these sand plains are under your local shopping centers and housing developments. Unfortunately that’s the kind of earth that’s especially easy to develop. I don’t wanna sound gloomy, but I don’t wanna be naive either. [The Plains are] rare because of us. Because of people,” she laments, then elaborates. “I should say, it’s how modern people are behaving that is the biggest threat.”

But there’s hope with education, and with letting people know about all of the amazing habitats supporting rare species, tucked within Maine’s landscape. “There’s all the common beauty we all know and love, like the coast, mountains, but within that, there’s all these places with different soils or light levels ...” McCargo says, growing more animated. “Like where there’s limestone in Maine — it’s not as common and there are some rare species there. That doesn’t devalue common nature.”

She turns her attention back to the Kennebunk Plains: “It really is a special place. It would be great if more people knew about it. There’s nothing else like it.”

If you want to experience this one-of-a-kind exhibit of Maine’s beauty, make sure to visit from late July to mid-August, when the Northern Blazing Star is in full bloom. Stroll the sand trails, listen to the calls of birds you’ve never heard before, and take in those seemingly endless fields of rare purple flowers, basking in something rare — something that you can only find in this place, in this moment.

How many experiences like that are we granted in life?

RARE MAINE

Has this article piqued your interest in checking out not just the Kennebunk Plains, but other unusual natural areas in Maine? Here are a few to add to your list!



EDUCATION AND SUPPORT

If you’d like to visit the Kennebunk Plains to experience its unique appeal, it’s open to the public daily from sunrise to sunset. Better yet, follow @wildseedproject on Instagram — they’re planning a field trip for mid-August or so, when the Northern Blazing Star is in full bloom. They don’t have the date set yet, but the trip will include a trek around the plains and some knowledgeable folks ready to tell you all about the habitat and the species it supports. The Nature Conservancy (@tncmaine) is also working on building their volunteer program; they’re in early phases of trying to get some volunteer and community science projects started, and they can also use volunteers (post-wildfire training, of course) on their burns.

THE DESERT OF MAINE, FREEPORT

It’s not a true desert, since the 40-acre area receives lots of precipitation, but it is a wide expanse of sand dunes and glacial silt uncovered by agricultural mismanagement centuries ago, which eroded the topsoil deposited there. It’s an unusual sight to see among the pine trees, and located in Freeport, of all places! Pop in on your next Bean’s pilgrimage.

Maine Beer Company

525 Route 1, Freeport
207-221-5711
<https://mainebeercompany.com/>

With a two-floor tasting room and a slew of tasty beers, it’s no wonder this place is among the best-known breweries in Maine. And, hey, you can feel good that 1% of everything you spend goes to help combat climate change.

Highbrow [Medical]

55 Topsham Fair Mall Rd, Topsham
207-356-9577
<https://www.highbrowmaine.com/tops-menu>

With locations all over the Midcoast, why pick this Highbrow? Well, who can resist grabbing some edibles in a former Ruby Tuesday’s location? See if they’ve got any more of those half-gallon jugs of cider.

GREAT WASS ISLAND PRESERVE, JONESPORT

This island is the easternmost land mass in Maine, and the cool but humid climate created by its proximity to the Gulf of Maine and the Bay of Fundy fosters the growth of all kinds of rare plants, including the Beach Head Iris and Bird’s Eye Primrose. You can also see evidence of the “Fundian Fault,” which runs all the way to New Hampshire, in the granite bedrock faces at the shore.

Bad Little Brewing

101 Court St, Machias
207-578-7800
<https://badlittlebrewing.com/>

One of the newer locations in Machias, this place is located in a historic building, the Clark Perry House, and specializes in locally sourced ingredients for its ever-changing menu. Oh, and they’ve got great beer, too.

Lake Smoke Farms [Medical]

7 Water St., Machias
207-255-4201
<https://lakesmokefarms.com/>

Female-owned and operated, this is a classic family dispensary that knows their product inside and out. Look for a big selection of strains and homemade edibles at bargain prices.

DEBSCONEAG LAKES WILDERNESS AREA, MILLINOCKET

Not far from Baxter State Park, you’ll find what The Nature Conservancy describes as “the highest concentration of pristine, remote ponds in New England,” and thousands of acres of mature forests — in fact, roughly half the forests in the area show no signs of logging ever having occurred there. Also, did we mention the ice caves?

Bissell Brothers Three Rivers

157 Elm St., Milo
207-943-9190
<https://bissellbrothers.com/>

If you’re going to head all the way to Millinocket, you might as well stop in Milo on the way and hit Bissell North, where you’ll find one of the cooler spots in the Maine, dog-friendly and full of good people, beer, and food.

Magic City Med Shop [Medical]

166 Central St., Millinocket
207-261-1004
<https://magiccitymedshop.com/>

The location is as Maine as it gets, with pine countertops and shelving made from 100-year-old timber pulled out of the Penobscot River. Products are widely sourced, but look for local Millinocket growers when you visit — they need the business.



FRENCH CONNECTION

SHOW MOM HOW CONTINENTAL YOU ARE

WORDS / BRANT DADALEARES

Madeleines are small, traditional French sponge cakes that are baked in molds shaped like sea shells. Dating back to the 18th century, you can find all kinds of legends and fairy tales about why they're called Madeleines and why they're in the sea-shell shape, but it doesn't really matter: They're delicious, regardless. And you can find the molds in any cooking store or online.

The cakes are very easy to assemble and are delicious eaten when warm, straight out of the oven, maybe dusted with a bit of powdered sugar. Traditionally, these cakes are flavored with a bit of vanilla, but here I've added Meyer lemon zest (Meyer lemons are sweeter and less acidic than the more widely available Eureka and Lisbon lemons) and rose geranium essential oil to the batter. And for added spring-time Mother's Day flavor, I've also glazed them with a Meyer lemon glaze and garnished them with fresh thyme.

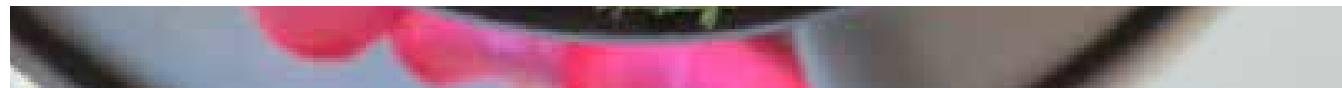
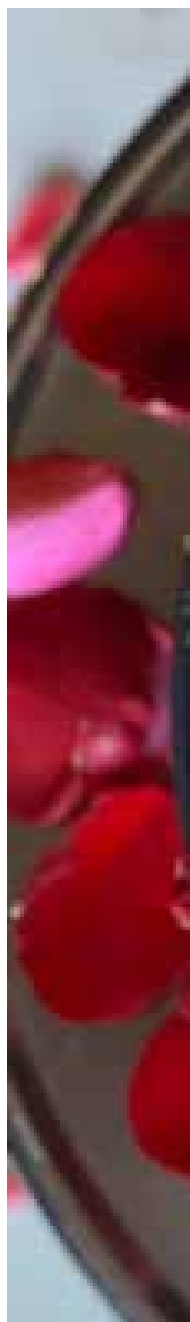
Glazing these little cakes helps retain their moisture and adds a nice, tart sweetness to the final cakes. Mom will be so happy with these little morsels. If you really want some brownie points, serve these fresh with tea. If that's a bit too much to pull off, no worries. The cakes are best the day they are made, but will stay fresh for a day in an airtight container if you want to make them ahead of time.

Cakes Ingredients:

50g. cake flour
150g. all-purpose flour
5g. baking powder
1/2t. fine sea salt
150g. eggs at room temp.
50g. egg yolks at room temp.
54g. sugar
248g. powdered sugar
200g. melted butter
 Zest of two Meyer lemons
6 drops of rose geranium oil (available at health food stores & online)
 Fresh-picked thyme leaves

Cakes Directions:

Start off by preheating the oven to 350°F and setting the oven rack to the middle position. Then butter and flour two large madeleine molds (16 molds on each) and set aside.



MEYER LEMON-ROSE MADELEINES

YIELD: ABOUT 35

Now, in a small bowl, sift together the flours, salt, and baking powder. In another small bowl whisk together the sugar and powdered sugar.

Get your mixer out, next, and fit the whisk attachment. Add the eggs into the mixer's bowl (or a new separate bowl) and mix on medium high speed for about three minutes to lighten and aerate the eggs, then slowly begin to shower in the sugars a spoonful at a time. Once all the sugar is added (this should take a couple minutes), turn up the speed to high for another three minutes or until the eggs reach "ribbon stage," which is when you remove the whisk and the foamed eggs fall from the whisk and hold their shape for a moment. You want them very light and airy.

Remove the bowl and whisk from the mixer, add the six drops of rose geranium oil, and fold them in using a spatula. Gently fold in the dry ingredients, next, in three additions, making sure there are no dry pockets before the next addition. Lastly, add the zest and melted butter and fold that in to incorporate completely.

Ready a pastry bag fitted with a plain ¼" pastry tip, add the batter to the bag, and refrigerate for 25 minutes. Use the bag to fill each of the madeleine molds about three-quarters of the way full.

Finally, bake the madeleines for 12 minutes, then rotate the pans and bake for an additional two to three minutes, or until the edges are light golden brown and the cakes spring back to the touch. Once they're finished, remove them from the oven and let them cool in the pans for a minute before unmolding them (they should slide right out) onto a cooling rack and letting them cool completely before glazing.

Glaze Ingredients:

660g. powdered sugar
 Zest of two Meyer lemons
146g. Meyer lemon juice

Glaze Directions:

In a bowl, whisk together the powdered sugar, zest, and juice. Then cover the bowl with plastic until ready to use.

Once the cakes are cool, place them one at a time in the glaze and flip them over a few times to fully coat them. Now remove them from the glaze, place them onto a wire rack, and immediately sprinkle with a few thyme sprigs and gently press the sprigs into the glaze.

Let the glaze dry completely on top (15 minutes), then gently turn them over and let the bottom side dry for an additional 10 minutes.

Brant Dadaleares is the founder and owner of Gross Confection Bar, which features a bakery, dessert restaurant, and bar in Portland's Old Port. Find it at www.GrossConfectionBar.com.

OLIVER TAYLOR HAWKINS, FOO FIGHTER, 1972-2022



I WAS MICROWAVING MY COFFEE ON SUNDAY MORNING. THAT'S NOT WHEN I FOUND OUT TAYLOR HAWKINS, THE LEGENDARY, GRINNING DRUMMER OF FOO FIGHTERS, HAD PASSED AWAY UNEXPECTEDLY AT AGE 50. THAT'S JUST WHEN IT HIT ME.

As my coffee spun for a minute, I broke down. To avoid having to explain why I'm such a little emotional bitch, I muted my sniffles from my wife and kids, who were in the living room a few feet away. After about five minutes of lachrymose privacy, I wiped my face and returned.

I sat down with my coffee, took a sip, and then immediately started crying again in front of everyone. My cover was blown. I told my wife through my tears, "It just makes me so sad."

When I saw the news, it was like Kano from Mortal Kombat reached into my chest, ripped my heart out, and showed it to me. But it was too much to process. It was shocking. Nobody ever seemed more alive than fucking Taylor Hawkins.

I think some of this has to do with my age. I'm 36. The first CD I ever owned was Nirvana's "Nevermind," when I was seven and when they were — out of Seattle, but seemingly out of nowhere — the biggest band in the world. As a child, "Smells Like Teen Spirit," "Lithium," and "In Bloom" were songs I knew as well as "Row, Row, Row Your boat" or "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star." This was my CD, my band.

And so it was that I was nine years old in the car with my Mom, right outside her work at Springfield Label and Tape in Springfield, Massachusetts, when we heard on the radio that Kurt Cobain had killed himself. She cried. I cried. This was a major heart-break for me. My parents had already been divorced for a few years. I had taken it really hard and had been in counseling. I was somewhat aware that the world was full of unfairness and misery even at a young age. But Earth's most pained, most defiant rock star, dead at the peak of his powers? It was all too cruel.

Fast forward to a weekend with my dad. I'm at Lechmere in the Maine Mall (present-day Best Buy). I'm dragging my finger down the plastic boxes until I find it. There it is. I pull it out and the cover has some gun on it and that weird band name I had heard on the radio: Foo Fighters. I had heard the first single by Dave

Grohl-from-Nirvana's new band and I had to hear the rest of the album. My dad covered the cost and by the next time I saw him a few weeks later, I knew all the words to "For All The Cows," "Big Me" (which was yet to be a single), and the rest of the record. My neighbor Zack B and I were instant fans.

Sitting in the back row of the State Theatre, three years later in 1998, I was one of very few 12-year-olds in attendance. On a school night, with my dad and my little brother, we watched a terrible set by Rocket From The Crypt (at least to my 12-year-old ears) and then the fucking Foo Fighters walked out on stage. Dave Grohl and his new drummer and new-best-friend Taylor Hawkins, who I had seen in all the videos on MTV, right before my eyes. They tore through their classic "The Colour and the Shape" and right into my heart.

Dave Grohl had not only survived the loss of Kurt Cobain. He was back stronger than ever, with new friends, persevering very loudly. And if he could, maybe we all could. I wore my V-neck Foo Fighters tour shirt with the stripes triumphantly to school the next day and every time it was clean for years.

" I wore my V-neck Foo Fighters tour shirt with the stripes triumphantly to school the next day and every time it was clean for years.

Their third album, "There Is Nothing Left To Lose," came in 2000 with a temporary "F.F." tattoo, which I had my mom apply to my neck before school. And so my life intertwined with the career of Foo Fighters, who would eventually get inducted into the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame and remain one of the biggest fonts on the festival fliers for 20-something years.

And so, as I sobbed at the microwave, the loss felt personal. How could the universe put Dave Grohl through this again? How could you twice be a part of the biggest band in the world, losing your best friend, finding a new one, and then losing them, too? It's all so cruel. I'll always love Foo Fighters and be thankful for the hope and the music. But to lose Taylor Hawkins? The smile and the heartbeat of this thing that means so much to me? That really got me.

bxw WORDS / SPOSE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

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