These Mainers
have a gallimaufry of
accomplishments
but retain a
remarkable humility.







NORTH OF EVERYWHERE

What's the fastest way to get from Bethel to DC? Poetry.

RICHARD BLANCO

Poet

INTERVIEW BY DAVID SVENSON

hen the Presidential Inauguration Committee announced that Bethel resident Richard Blanco, 45, would read the poem at President Obama's second inauguration, newspaper headlines along the eastern seaboard quickly grabbed their maps and set Blanco within their borders: "Former CCSU [Connecticut] Professor is Inaugural Poet"; "... Miami Poet Richard Blanco..."; "Mainebased Richard Blanco..."; and "Mainer chosen as inaugural poet."

So, to whom does this poet belong? And how does he feel about being pulled in so many directions at once?

"I think it's cute," says Blanco, about the headlines. "I am the son of Miami, that's for sure, but Bethel is my home now."

You were conceived in Cuba, born in Spain, raised in New York and Miami—and now Bethel, population 2,607 (2010 Census). What's that like?

There's a time in your life when smalltown rural life is right. We were living in Miami, and we'd always been dreaming about having a place somewhere like New England. My life partner [Mark Neveu] had a business opportunity here as a research scientist. We decided it was a welcome change of life and pace. We said we might never get this opportunity again, and we fell in love with Bethel.

Do you feel "from away" in Maine?

I've told my mother in the past that I feel more like I'm in Cuba here than I do in Miami.

All my family in Cuba is from rural areas; my parents grew up in a very rural area and rural sense of life, real salt of the earth. I feel that here. Even though it's culturally on the opposite end of the spectrum, in some ways it's emotionally very familiar.

So is it the idea of poetry that's really "from away," no matter where you happen to be living—a lost art?

That's why I hadn't come out of the poetry closet here in Bethel, because when you say to people that you're a poet, they're like, "Oh, my uncle wrote poems." I have to say, "No, I'm a poet. I went to an MFA. I have books." And there's this look in their eyes like "Oh my God, there are still living poets." They think a poet's some dead white guy in a book. It's amazing. Even the smartest people, the most avid readers, don't always know that poetry's still being created every day in this country.

Was Bethel the right place to write the inaugural poem?

Yes, thank goodness we were here...There were TV news vans all over my mom's house. The neighbors thought she'd won the lotto.

There wasn't that media frenzy here; I was in a quiet place to finish the poem. Even when the news was announced, I was still working on it, so I needed writing time and

practice. I was glad we were here, because of the ability to feel supported by the community and not be overwhelmed in the home stretch.

In your new book, For All of Us, One Today (Beacon Press), you say you practiced reading to a snowman. What would it have been if you were in Miami?

I don't think there'd be an equivalent of a snowman. Maybe I'd play in the sand for a while, build a sand castle. Maybe a sandman? I probably would have read the poem walking along the shore and just read it out to the sky.

You're always asked how your selection as the inaugural poet came about. And your response is nearly identical every time: You don't entirely know.

That's part of what I wanted the memoir to do, to answer it for now and for the future. Not only through the factoids, but really the emotional details which are hard to get across. That whole feeling of receiving that call...

I wanted to document it myself so I could go back and understand exactly

(Continued on page 92)







GREENPEACE ROMANCE

The lifelong activist's latest challenge is a Murmansk jail after arrest for protesting Arctic drilling. The other side of the crisis is experienced by his newspaper publisher wife back home in Islesboro, separated by world events from the one she loves.



PETER WILLCOX

MAGGY WILLCOX

Publisher

INTERVIEW BY COLIN S. SARGENT

Te are being boarded. Everybody OK." Peter Willcox, captain of the Greenpeace-owned ship MV Arctic Sunrise, managed to dash off this email to the Greenpeace office, seizing a second to cc his wife, Islesboro resident Maggy Willcox, editor and publisher of the Islesboro Island News. It was September 19, 2013. The day before, screaming across the icy waves in Zodiacs, the captain, 60, had led his crew, under the watchful cameras of journalists on board, in an unarmed attempt to grapple up the side of the Prirazlomnaya drilling platform in the face of automatic fire slashing around them as warning shots. Owned by Gazprom, Russia's largest oil company, the high-tech rig is not only the first ice-proof drilling model in the Pechora Sea, it's the first above the Arctic Circle anywhere in the world—and if the first is successful, surely many more will follow.

For Greenpeace, the opportunity to stop a fossil-fuel Manhattan Project is worth risking one of the privately funded organization's ships and their most experienced captain. Now, the *Arctic Sunrise* had been halted by warning shots from the blue-and-white cutter parked a couple hundred meters away, while FSB (Federal Security)



agents embedded with coast guard boarders arrived to apprehend her crew.

The response to the Greenpeace crew's direct action has led to charges of piracy filed by the Investigative Committee of Russia, despite Russian President Vladimir Putin's dismissal that "obviously, they are not pirates." But behind, and indeed, part of the personal support structure of Captain Peter Willcox is a salt-sprayed New England romance between sea captain and island girl that is both immediately current and reminiscent of maritime dramas that have been reenacted for nearly 400 years.

"He was captain and I was the cook," explains newlywed Maggy of her first-blush encounter with Peter in the '70s. They were both aboard Pete Seeger's Maine-built sloop *Clearwater*, the heart and floating classroom of environmental education and advocacy group Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Inc. "He just made...he makes...my knees weak. He's just really a nice-looking man. I remember thinking, 'Oh my God, what a hunk!' But working with him was what really did it for me. Even at that

(Continued on page 95)



LUCKY GUY

Experiences, even the worst kind, open doors.

STEVEN CALLAHAN

Sailor and writer

INTERVIEW BY CLAIRE Z. CRAMER

spent my 30th birthday in a life raft, and my 60th birthday riding a hospital bed!" says Steve Callahan, 61, of Lamoine. "I'm very lucky. This life doesn't owe me a thing."

In 1981, Callahan sailed his 21-foot sloop, *Napoleon Solo*, which he'd designed and built himself, from Newport, Rhode Island, to England. In 1982, sailing alone on a stormy night a week out from the Canary Islands and bound for Antigua, Callahan's vessel collided with an unknown object and began taking on water. He inflated his life raft and stocked it with what he was able to grab from the boat before watching her sink. He spent the next 76 days in a 6-foot, tented Avon raft learning survival in real time—saving rainwater, patching raft punctures, catching and eating fish and sea

birds—as he drifted west with the current and trade winds, finally to be rescued by fishermen within sight of the Caribbean island Maria Galante near Guadeloupe. *Adrift*, his 1986 recreation of the experience, spent 36 weeks on the *New York Times* best-seller list.

"In 2010, [film director] Ang Lee's assistant called me out of the blue to say Ang wanted to talk to me because I was mentioned in the novel *Life of Pi* [Yann Martel's 2001 bestselling adventure novel about a boy surviving more than 200 days at sea after a shipwreck]. They came to Maine, and we talked about all kinds of stuff," says Callahan. "I was hired to 'lend authenticity.' Making a movie is like creating a whole business for one product."

Lee's *Life of Pi* went on to win Academy Awards in 2013 for best director, cinematographer, visual effects, and original musical score.

"Once something works, everyone jumps on the bandwagon. Since *Pi*, there are now a handful of movies in production

that are about shipwrecks. I made a mental list of about 12 things in the Robert Redford movie [*All is Lost*] just based on seeing the trailer" that didn't look realistic. "But it's such a challenge to make a movie on the water, even with *Life of Pi*, where we had more fluid standards of what was real."

In January of 2012, Callahan was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia. He was given a dismal prognosis so he elected to undergo an experimental stem-cell transplant "to raise my odds to maybe 50-50. It's a complete replacement of your immune system with donor stem cells-I'm actually part female now. I haven't done much of anything for 20 months-it was life in a bubble," restoring his immune system. "I try to take things as they come. You don't go through these things without being scarred. But did I ever feel sorry for myself? Absolutely not. I'll tell you, there's nothing like going into a hospital to make you realize how much worse so many other people have it."

Too weak to attend the Oscars in Febru-

ary, Callahan flew to England in September to contribute "a little input, not as much as Life of Pi," to the shipboard authenticity in Ron Howard's forthcoming film based on Nathaniel Philbrick's 2000 National Book Award winner, In the Heart of the Sea: The Tragedy of the Whaleship Essex. "It's the so-called true story Moby Dick was based on," says Callahan. "A cabin boy from Nantucket survives a shipwreck in the Pacific in 1820 and years later writes an account," which Melville read.

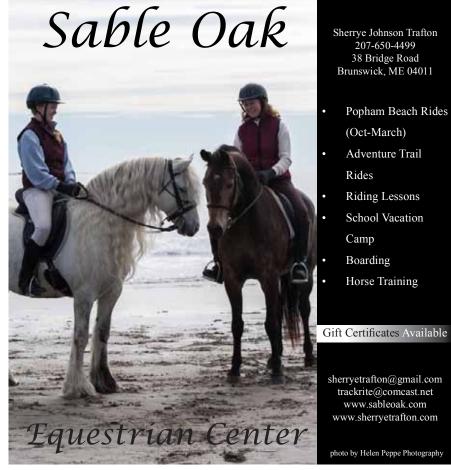
"It's funny, back when I wrote *Adrift*, people told me, 'You can't really make a movie about *one guy* cast away on the ocean." Callahan pauses, smiles. "But then came Tom Hanks in *Cast Away* and *Life of Pi* and Redford and Ron Howard...The movies certainly pay better, but I like doing books and articles, too. Still, movies are today's most powerful form of storytelling, they reach the most people."

Callahan and his wife Kathy Massimini live in Lamoine and have since the '80swhen they're not sailing. On his website, he states simply that "books by sailors like Robert Manry, Eric Hiscock, Bernard Moitessier, William Willis, and many others helped me discover that a life of adventure and personal fulfillment is open to anyone." He's a naval architect, boatbuilder, marine consultant, writer, photographer, and artist-a marine jack of all trades who adores sailboats, no matter how many hulls they have. "I never took sides back in the '70s when multihulls were sort of maligned by monohull sailors. I've sailed, built, and owned both. I like both. Our last boat was a 40-foot tri-we sold it in Australia. I try to take things as they come. I feel like my life is always flowing down the river, and it's always led to cool things."











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rom Downeast to Down Under to downtown Philadelphia: South Portland's Brett Brown has the court covered.

As the new head coach of the Philadelphia 76ers (the team's eighth coach in 10 years), his challenge is to rebuild a team that finished 34-48 last season.

But Brown, 52, doesn't shy from a challenge. "That's how I was raised," he says of his boyhood as the basketball-star son of legendary South Portland High coach Bob Brown.

Brett was point guard on the team that won South Portland the 1979 Class A state championship, a game his dad remembers with awe: "After the game, we spent the night in Bangor, but were we ever surprised on the way home. Our team bus was met at the turnpike entrance, and there were cars and people lined all the way to the high school. You go out and get off the turnpike at the South Portland exit and see how far that is," Bob says. "A red and white wall all the way down the stretch."

What Brett learned on the court at SPHS he carried to Boston University, where team-

mates like Dan Harwood immediately felt the young Mainer's love for the game, which came in handy when the two were playing for an even bigger legend, coach Rick Pitino. They took the Terriers to the NCAA tournament in 1983, the first time they'd made it to the show in 24 years.

"He didn't always look it—he was a cute kid who was like 5'11"—but he was a tough player." Harwood explains of Brett's edgy verve. "Out of all the guys on our team, Brett had probably played for the most demanding high school coach.

"I'd go up there [to Maine] in the summer, and I got to know his dad through some basketball camps," Harwood says. "I realized [Brett] got his competitive streak from his dad...and his sense of humor from his mom."

Both qualities have directed Brett's career since the late 1980s. After quitting his first real post-college job with AT&T ("I didn't want to wear a suit every day, work nine to five every day"), he moved to Australia, where, his father says, "the coaching bug got to him, and that's all he wanted to do." Brown coached in Melbourne and Sydney before accepting a position as an

assistant to San Antonio Spurs coach Gregg Popovich, where he's been since 2007. In 2012, he took a hiatus to coach the Australian National Team at the 2012 London Olympics. (They made it to the quarterfinals, losing there to Team USA.)

As for his fast break from Maine, "The older I get, the more I travel, the more I appreciate just how special the state is," he says. "It's how the people are, it's the land-scape, it's the four seasons..." For Brown in particular, it's also the ocean.

"Most of my favorite places were always...the beaches," he says. "The majority of my life has been around the ocean," from Scarborough Beach to Scarborough, Western Australia. "There's something people who haven't been around an ocean don't really understand... I feel the need to be around the ocean."

Maine may be the only coast button Brett will be allowed to push during his trial by fire in Philadelphia as leader of the Sixers.

"This'll be a big test for him," says Harwood. "But Brett has his infectious personality, his ability to relate to players. The biggest part of coaching is the people business."



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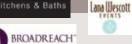
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SPACE CADET

Caribou native hits new heights

DR. JESSICA MEIR

Astronaut

INTERVIEW BY ADAM PURPLE

aribou native Dr. Jessica Meir was recently named as one of eight people to join NASA's latest class of astronauts. Valedictorian of her high school class, she earned a bachelor's degree from Brown University, a master's degree in space science at the International Space University in France, and a Ph.D. from the Scripps Institute of Oceanography. Among her specialties: the physiology of animals subjected to extreme, low-oxygen environments, whether at the top of the Himalayas, or in the frigid depths beneath ice sheets in the Antarctic. She most recently worked as an assistant professor at Harvard Medical School before her move to Texas this summer to begin astronaut training.

You're not the first astronaut to come from Maine (Christopher Cassidy from York earned headlines on the International Space Station), but it seems likely you're the first and only from Caribou. Did your friends and family see this coming?

I've wanted to be an astronaut since I was about five years old, so yes, anyone who



knew me well in Caribou growing up (family, friends, teachers, and classmates) has heard me talk about this for a very long time. I'd forgotten about it until someone mentioned it the other day, but I listed "Going for a space walk" as my "future plans" in our Caribou High School yearbook. It's shocking to me that I'm finally beginning to step toward that now.

What sparked your interest in science, biology, and physiology?

I'm sure my Caribou science teachers had something to do with it. Beyond watching Wild Kingdom with my family, I distinctly remember watching episodes of George Page's Nature show in Mr. Thibodeau's class in middle school and my freshmanyear biology projects with Mrs. Thibodeau. When I got to Brown and took the introductory biology course with Dr. Ken Miller, I was absolutely hooked and knew I wanted to pursue biology. That quickly evolved into an interest in physiology, which perhaps was also there all along, growing up with my father as a physician and watching episodes of Doctor's Sunday showing surgical procedures over breakfast.

(Continued on page 96)



AZANDE ACTIVIST

Making a difference is accomplished by doing what must be done.

BAKHITA SABINO

Community organizer

e are trying to help the women back home," says Bakhita Sabino, 36, of Portland, speaking of her former friends, family, and neighbors in the South Sudanese village of Azande. "I just came back from six weeks in Azande. The women there need so much. The goal is to find them training, but also just to bring them basic things, diapers. Girls marry too young there. We're losing a lot of women to pregnancy; there aren't enough hospitals."

Sabino and her husband Mekki arrived in Portland 14 years ago; they have four children, ages 17 to 8. She arrives at the interview after work as an Ed Tech at Portland's Riverton Elementary School accompanied by her daughter Lodia, 15, a Cheverus sophomore. Sabino has just completed her bachelor's degree, a step toward her goal to become a teacher. In September, she was elected chairman of Azande Community, a Portland group that raises funds for their village in Sudan. "The Sudanese community here is a big umbrella. There are a lot of Azande here. We have an Azande women's group, too. I'm the financial officer. We meet once a month, usually at church, and everyone pays 10 dollars, or five. We've applied for non-profit status. When we can find training programs for women here, or someone has a financial problem, we meet and vote on what we can contribute. I get a lot of training in my work, but not everyone is this lucky."

The Republic of South Sudan achieved independence in 2011. In October of 2012,

the new vice president, Riek Machar, visited Portland, met with Mayor Brennan, and spoke to hundreds of Maine's Sudanese residents at South Portland High School. Sabino provided coordination, translation from Arabic, and transcription services for the event. "Now when people come from anywhere, I interpret." Sabino was in South Sudan in August when Governor Lepage came to Portland to meet with local Sudanese community leaders; the secretary of the Azande women's group, Esta Beri, attended instead.

"I'm also in My Sister's Keeper for Peace, in Boston," she says. "A friend of mine is in the leadership, and she suggested I come to a meeting, so I did." This women-led, women-focused organization has sent volunteers yearly since 2002 to South Sudan to provide resources to women in need. "In 2010 [in anticipation of the independence], some of us trained in Boston, and then we went there to teach women how to vote, and to hold workshops."

"Women in Juba [South Sudan's capital] make up about 25 percent of the work force, and our voice is considered 25 percent. Here it's different—that's why we're pushing to get attention. Because we can."

Yet whenever Maine's Sudanese community leaders appear in the media, they seem to be exclusively male. "We don't have a lot of women available. In our culture, the men make all the decisions for the family. And here all the women work. After work, they come home and care for the children and cook, so it's the men who are free to attend meetings." So how is it that she is the activist and not her husband?

"I decided this is what I want to do. And this is why I *really* appreciate him," says Bakhita, smiling and closing her eyes.

"My mother is the only one here who goes back to Sudan," says Lodia. "The men don't go. I went once with her when I was in sixth grade, just the two of us. It took two days to get there! I wanted to see what it's like. There's no point in us being here if we don't go back to help."

How does Bakhita Sabino find the hours in the day to work full time, serve in a minimum of three organizations a month, and keep a family of six running successfully?

"There is no time. It's just about commitment. I try so hard to take classes online at night, to get this done. I feel like I have to help; it's what God gave me."

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HOLLYWOOD POLYMATH

What hasn't he done?

J.J. ABRAMS

Actor, Composer, Writer, Director, Producer

hat does Star Wars have to do with Maine, Obi-Wan?
Now that Disney has bought up the rights to Star Wars from Lucasfilm, they're going to ride it hard and

hang it up wet. A new *Star Wars* feature film will relentlessly come out every year until further notice. Directing the first effort, *Star Wars Episode VII*, is J.J. Abrams, who is well known for enjoying his summer place on a lake near Camden. Rumored stars for Abrams's guaranteed hit are: Harrison Ford, Mark Hamill, Carrie Fisher, Billy Dee Williams, and Anthony Daniels.

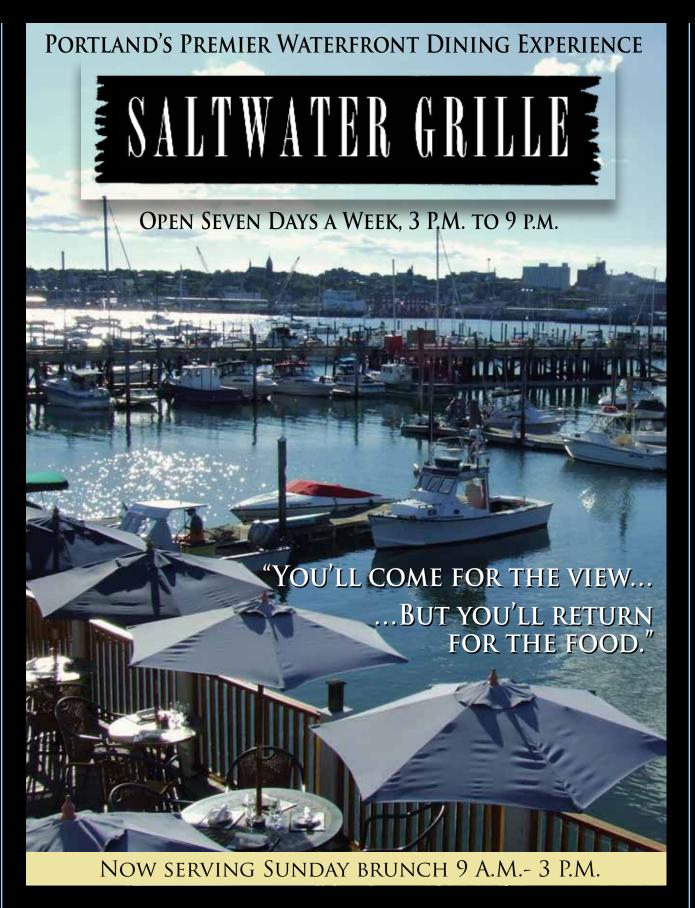
Born in 1966, Jeffrey Jacob Abrams's feverish rise to Hollywood power includes his Emmy-winning production of *Alias* (featuring Jennifer Garner and Maine native Rachel Nichols), as well as *Lost*. Today on the small screen, he's at the helm of *Revolution* and *Person of Interest*. Movies include *Mission Impossible 3, Star Trek* (where Nichols appears again, as the Green Girl), *Star Trek into Darkness, Star Trek Ghost Protocol*, and on and on. One of Abrams's earliest appearances on film was as Doug in *Six Degrees of Separation*,

which starred Stockard Channing, who lives in Georgetown, Maine.

One early foray for Abrams into this state occurred in 2006, when Stephen King invited him here for a "panel discussion on creativity," according to the *Bangor Daily News*.

Abrams's Maine retreat is a 60-acre lakefront mansion. When he purchased the place through Edward Libby of Real Maine Real Estate in Yarmouth, he emailed the following enthusiastic note, according to realmaine.net. "Holy Shnikies! You're a Genius! Amazing Work With The Price. THANK YOU! Huge Thank You. I Know You Worked Hard (And Brilliantly) To Make This Happen. Katie And I Really Appreciate It."

Abrams's wife, Katie McGrath, is a 1986 graduate of Brewer High School. At press time, Abrams had no fewer than 28 projects in development, two in production.



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LEADING LADY

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ANNA ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

CEO, Goodwill Industries of Northern New England

INTERVIEW BY DONNA STUART

ife isn't siloed; it's all connected," says Anna Eleanor Roosevelt, 65.
"That's the way I look at everything I do, not as a one-off, but as something that leverages something else and has a greater

impact because of the connective tissue between things."

Called Anne, but named for, and the image of, her grandmother (yes, that Eleanor Roosevelt), the Stanford-educated Roosevelt continues, "My work at Goodwill actually informs the work [I do on the board of the] Maine Charitable Foundation, the Roosevelt Institute, and Net Impact. It's a wonderful addition to what I can offer those organizations and vice versa."

There is a common thread that runs through her professional and philanthropic work: the development of progressive ideas and leadership, whether accomplished by empowering students and professional leaders around the globe as Net Impact does, or by crafting a New Deal for the 21st century, a goal of the Roosevelt Institute.

She's accustomed to high visibility, and grace under pressure comes easily to her. She's worked for the Democratic National Committee, and for Senator Paul Simon of Illinois. In 2001 she became Boeing's director of community education, and eventually rose to vice president of global corporate citizenship for the aerospace giant.

Through it all, her family legacy has accompanied her like a shining dream. When you're a Roosevelt, you learn about civic duty young. "The reference point for us was: How does this square with what FDR and Grand-mère thought and did and advocated for." No doubt, they'd be proud.

"I never went to Campobello with

my grandmother." (She was 13 when the first Eleanor Roosevelt died in 1962.) Sensitive to Campobello's magic, "I have had several wonderful visits to the International Park, but it's been a few years since I drove up there...My home is in Somerset County; I work out of Portland." She's a mother of two and grandmother of four (soon to be five), including a grand-daughter named Eleanor.

Does she shop at Goodwill?
"Of course!" Has she ever
found one of those little black
dresses that Goodwill has
cleverly adopted to add
style to the organization's
image? "There are certainly
little black dresses theresome of mine are somewhere in the system!"





PEOPLE

Blanco (continued from page 52)

what had just happened and to remember it. But also there was so much that I experienced that was so much about how America responded to the poem and what happened after the reading, and I wanted to share that story, too. I wanted America to be in there. That was part of the creative drive.

You must have been prepped by the inauguration committee...

No coaching. They didn't ask me to read it

pened. This isn't fame that's happening... It's an experience that's emotional, creative, spiritual, life-changing... It's hard to relate through a story or in the context of [my] life to my other poet friends. I mean it's not just a reading, guys.

Take us to your Bethel house.

It's all clad in pines and hemlocks. It feels like a very special retreat, like a monastic space. I'm in the middle of forest basically. It's instant peace when I'm here—something I need these days.

There's the guest cottage on our property. I thought it would be my office space, my writing space, but I can't justify heating it in the winter. I use it for friends, and I invite writers up for informal residencies.

Has the pressure to write a poem for the nation overshadowed your later work?

It has in the context that it's opened up a new creative pathway for me. I've been getting commissions to write more occasional poems. I've written poems for the Boston Strong event, for the Fragrance Foundation

It's all clad in pines and hemlocks. It feels like a very special retreat, like a monastic space.

-Blanco on his home in Bethel

Awards-a big to-do in Lincoln Center.

Writing the inaugural poem has given me another way to solve a poem, which I've fallen in love with: the idea of the public poem, which has gotten away from us in America. I think the tradition still exists in Latin America, certainly in my Cuban roots.

My mom writes occasional poems. They



once. It was amazing to think about the trust the committee placed in me. I could have gotten up there and read Allen Ginsberg. Or I could have freaked out and had a panic attack. I never even had any kind of relationship with the president. I think each inaugural poet had some sort of relationship prior—in other words there was more reason to trust them. So they did pick me out of the blue. It speaks to our democracy, and it's a very powerful statement.

Your selection came with a lot of firsts for an inaugural poet: first openly gay, first engineer, first Latino, first foreign-born, first Floridian, first Mainer. But how do you connect with the previous inaugural poets Frost, Angelou, Williams, and Alexander?

It's like no poet understands-forget about the average person. But as a poet, it's kind of alienating to explain to [poet friends of mine] when [I] don't understand [myself] what hap-



call her the poet laureate of Regions Bankverses for retirement parties. It's just so much more entrenched in my culture than I realized. But I don't see it as diametrically opposite. I think I'll still always have my personal, autobiographical voice.

What the inauguration did was give me permission to speak about America and subjects I felt I couldn't write about because it wasn't in my immediate realm of experience. It's really helped my writing to be more confident instead of looming over me or haunting me.

Between the commissions, the Boston Strong event, and a list of at least 50 appearances this year since the inauguration, do you feel like a rock star?

I feel more like a country singer on the bus. Sometimes I joke that I'm on the poetry bus.

At the May 30 Boston Strong event at TD Garden, headliners included Aerosmith, Boston, Boyz II Men, Carole King, James Taylor, and others. Were you a rock star then?

I got to meet them all backstage. But it was crazy hectic–just pleasantries. But it was neat to meet them. But again, why not? Why can't poetry open every rock concert? This was a very special one, and it went off amazingly. It started really solemn but then was a celebration, like "Let the music begin."

With so much exposure and travel, what keeps you here?

We love Portland. When we first moved here we thought we'd be going to Boston, but we realized that with Portland there's no need to go outside the state. There's great food and an incredible art scene, and now that we actually have friends in Portland, when before we went out anonymously, there's an emotional connection.

And the mid-coast: Camden, Rockland, Belfast. We keep going back there; we've always loved it. It's a lot like Miami was back in the day. Miami was a much smaller community before the big explosion. The mid-coast reminds me of that seaside feeling, and it has an incredible sense of community.

And the lobster?

Yes, certainly. But I like lazy lobster, already out of the shell. I like my lobster roll. I haven't mastered the whole lobster.

If both Florida and Maine both offered you their state poet laureate titles at the same time, what would you do? I guess I'd have to choose Maine.

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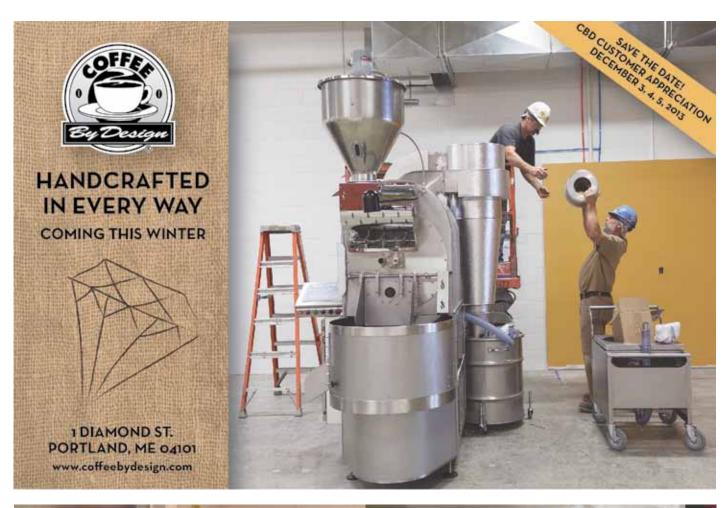
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Willcoxes (continued from page 53)

young age—he was 23 when he was captain of the *Clearwater*—he was just an extraordinarily capable and calm person. Unflappable. His demeanor made him seem so wise. He's one of the most innately confident people I've ever met. He's been sailing all his life, so he has this assuredness without any swagger.

"The other thing that really impacted me at the time was that it was the era where women were coming into their own. For whatever reason, there was nothing 'put on' about Peter when he encouraged women to take part in the responsibilities of the ship. He not only showed his own confidence, he gave confidence to others, and cared to do so for women. For example, in a time when a lot of captains wouldn't have even thought it, he paved the way for the first female captain on the *Clearwater*, whom he tutored and who took over from him.

"I've worked under captains and chefs who exert their authority like children...all shouting and anger and ego. Peter doesn't have anything like that, and that's what makes the crews lay down their lives for what he believes in. And he's shown incredible commitment to his cause: he's been doing this since his twenties."

"So of course I fell madly in love with him, but he had a planet to save. Though we married others, and I married a second time, we'd see each other and I always felt the same, but the circumstances were never right." In February 2013, "we'd finally both drifted into freedom, the stars all aligned, and he just called me up and said he was delivering a boat. Maggy closed her eyes. "'Yes! I can come meet you in Buck's Harbor!"

She raced to the marina. "In order to get there you park in the lot at the top of this steep hill. Walking over, I heard him laugh. It had been 10 years, but I just started crying at the sound of him.

"His arms were full, but he just dropped everything to the ground. We took one look at each other and realized this is our time at last. He asked me to marry him, and he asked me to do it Right Now. Just weeks later we were here in Islesboro, in front of a little stone pulpit."

Captain Willcox delights in Maine, finds it calm and relaxing, especially after decades of fierce excitement. "We've never re-

ally talked out his stories, when he was in danger, because he has to relive it for countless interviews," Maggy says. Peter was a world newsmaker at a young age when, as captain of Greenpeace's ship *Rainbow Warrior*, on the eve of sailing into a South Pacific danger zone in protest of French nuclear testing in the 1985, his ship was bombed in Auckland harbor by French agents of the Direction Générale de la Sécurité Extérieure, sinking and killing photographer Fernando Pereira.

"So when he's up here, it's vacation time for him," Maggy continues. "He loves island life. We spend a lot of time as people do, going to dinner at each others' houses on the island. With no restaurants up here, we all spend a lot of time in a dinner circle, taking the chance to watch ev-

this situation without anybody being humiliated. Drilling up in the Arctic, it's been a dream of Russian and Soviet governments since Stalin to get at that oil up there. Now that the ice has melted, they can finally do it. And Putin's not the only powerful person in Russia...there's opposition folks who want to embarrass him. I just worry when I think that Peter and the others who are imprisoned are now at the mercy of forces beyond anyone's control. But he's stalwart, a man of strong convictions. And there's no one better to help the other 29 people on his ship through this."

The couple's buoyant sense of humor keeps them afloat. Maggy recently confided to the *Huffington Post* that while she and he were tough enough to endure a "long-distance relationship" that included ex-



ery sunset we can. We love watching baseball together, but since he grew up in Connecticut, I have to put up with his Yankees hat. He doesn't eat meat, so he loves seafood. And he's always found lobster is the king of seafood."

As for the future, "Peter wants to retire up here, to Islesboro–his idea," Maggy says. "There's too much traffic around the community where he grew up, and now his youngest daughter's off to college. We've only been able to be together twelve weeks, but...I know he'll be OK. What scares me, though, is I don't see how he can get out of

tended separations, she'd recently gotten word to him that, "'You know, honey, I wasn't thinking of a gulag in Russia.""

Detained in Murmansk while the world holds its breath, Willcox, along with his crew and journalist passengers of the *Arctic Sunrise*, face charges that could lead to 15 years in Russian prison, even as state-friendly Russian media organizations have been voicing protests of the government's charges. Here's hoping *Arctic Sunrise* breaks through the ice so that President Putin can pardon them with ostentatious magnanimity.

Meir (continued from page 59)

The Mercury astronauts were military pilots. How would you describe your peers?

Astronauts have to be very well rounded in their skill sets and training these days, as tasks on the International Space Station can range from in-flight maintenance to participation in a wide variety of science experiments, robotics tasks, and space walks. All eight the planet, the Himalayas. These birds are capable of conducting sustained, flapping flight, which has a very high oxygen requirement, at altitudes where there is only one-half to one-third the amount of oxygen we have here at sea-level.

We know these birds have several physiological responses and adaptations that assist in their performance at these alti-

more easily train them and familiarize them with the equipment needed to obtain our measurements.

Of course I didn't need to train them how to fly, they know how to do that by instinct alone. But it did take quite a bit of work and patience to get them successfully flying in place in a wind tunnel.

During that period, I enrolled them in my own sort of "flight training" program, which consisted of them following next to me as I sped down the road on a scooter. Since the birds thought I was mom and didn't want to be left behind, as soon as I took off on the scooter, they'd follow. It was truly an incredible feeling, with my goose sometimes so close that its wing tip was brushing my shoulder.

What kind of diving partners are Antarctic penguins?

During my Ph.D. I studied diving physiology, trying to understand how animals that are elite divers, like emperor penguins and elephant seals, are able to dive so deep and for so long. These animals are airbreathing, breath-hold divers just like us, yet an emperor penguin can dive for almost 30 minutes, and an elephant seal can dive for 2 hours on a single breath!

We learned that emperor penguins drop their heart rates dramatically during diving, at times as low as six beats per minute sustained over a five-minute period! Remember, these birds are actively swimming around, exercising and pursuing and catching fish while they're under water. We also learned that both emperor penguins and elephant seals are extremely efficient in how they manage their oxygen stores and that they can tolerate much lower levels of oxygen than humans or other terrestrial animals can.

I've also been lucky enough to scuba dive beneath the sea ice while in the Antarctic. The Antarctic is an exceptional place...on the surface so pristine and austere and dramatic, and almost devoid of any color other than white. But then when you plunge into the water, you can see for hundreds of feet; there's such astonishing visibility that it plays tricks with your mind. You feel as if you're looking through air, not water, and finally you realize where all the color is. The sunlight comes through the holes and cracks in the ice, shooting its rays toward the sea floor, which is teeming with life.



of us in the new astronaut candidate class will go through the same sort of diverse training program, with the exception that only those of us without military flight training experience will head to Pensacola for flight school. I do have my private pilot's license, but I'm extremely excited to step it up a level with that training!

Not that birds and "extreme" migrations aren't fascinating.

I pursued this while a post-doctoral researcher at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver (2009-2012). We are interested in the bar-headed goose because of the extraordinary migration this bird makes over the tallest mountains on

tudes, but there's been little work done on obtaining physiological measurements from these birds during flight, and no existing data from these birds while they are flying in low levels of oxygen.

To tackle that question, we decided to fly the birds in a wind tunnel, providing a controlled environment in which we could obtain several measurements of various aspects of their physiology. To facilitate this, I had bar-headed geese imprint upon me, meaning I had them from the moment they hatched from the egg, becoming a modern day Mother Goose. Since the geese think that I'm their parent and are comfortable with me, we could

Bright red sea stars, yellow sea spiders, big piles of multi-colored ribbon worms, giant white sponges, not to mention the occasional Weddell seal cruising by. The view is simply astounding.

How do you think you will adapt to the rigors of space?

The critical thinking and operational experience I gained conducting scientific experiments in a harsh, logistically challenging environment may be applicable to my training at NASA. In addition, the principles of diving physiology are relevant to avoidance of decompression sickness, which is also a potential problem in space since the suits used for space-walks operate at a different pressure than the space station.

The STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) are a hot topic in education now. Based on your experience in Maine, do you think that small or rural communities face particular challenges in STEM education? I've been very passionate about scientific outreach and education through my past research and am thrilled to have another avenue to help inspire the next generation of scientists and explorers. I can't speak to specific programs in small, rural communities, but I do know the education I received in Caribou certainly served me well. I do hope that efforts continue to emphasize the STEM fields, and, of course, I'll do whatever I can to help!

Your work has taken you to the end of the earth and beyond. Have you found time to return to Maine for a visit?

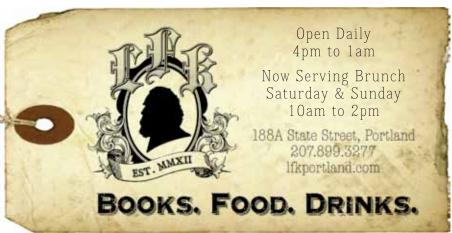
Yes, of course! I return to Maine whenever possible. My parents moved to southern Maine when I went to college—I usually end up in the Portland area a few times a year, much more frequently since I've been back in Boston. I definitely need to fit in a visit back up to Caribou at some point as well.

When can we expect to see you headed into space?

At this point, I'm simply incredibly excited to play a role in NASA's human spaceflight program. Members of our class will be training for possible long-duration missions to the International Space Station, and helping NASA prepare for exploration of asteroids and Mars. I would be thrilled to play a role in any of those missions.

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