

Raw

Continued from Page C1

“They want to incorporate more fresh food in their lives. I’m vegan but am helping people who are omnivores. Sometimes they are new to veganism and need a little guidance.”

She holds raw potlucks in her home once a month and teaches a six-week course demonstrating the fundamentals of a raw food diet. Through one-on-one classes, she’s helped people with weight loss and become more mindful eaters. All demographics have expressed interest, from families to bachelorette parties.

“I’m an artist and oil painter,” Fraser said. “You are dealing with really, colorful, beautiful food.”

Her painter’s eye informs the way she cooks. The deep orange yams of local harvests, the burnt siennas of her palette, purple beets from a farmers market — “we eat with our eyes, and man it’s beautiful.”

Though ensconced in the city, she has no shortage of access to freshness. She shops farmers markets,

“Anything that you can imagine in the cooked food world can be replicated in the raw food world.”

ELIZABETH FRASER

coops and markets like locavore’s haven Rosemont across the street.

“There is an abundance of food. It’s amazing. Anything that you can imagine in the cooked food world can be replicated in the raw food world,” she said.

On the rare occasions when she goes out for Thai food or has cooked vegan meal, she feels less energetic. By shifting to a raw food diet, which happened when she received an uncooked book and on Roy’s suggestion challenged herself to a week of raw food, “I feel more connected to myself and the planet and other people than I ever have before.”

Her need to share has set people on healthier paths.

“It’s so rewarding,” she said. “Sometimes is about weight loss, sometimes it’s about health — it’s about everything.”



KATHLEEN PIERCE | BDN

Elizabeth Fraser teaches people to make healthy smoothies with raw veggies, seeds, fruits and nuts in her Girl Gone Raw kitchen in Portland.

Healing

Continued from Page C1

the Wabanaki or just for Native Americans,” Shay said. “We want to open the doors to all the people in the surrounding area.”

There are some big plans for the property which, until 2008, was home to an equine therapy center.

“There are two major houses with a guest house, a three-bay garage and a 13,000-square-foot horse barn with a running arena you could play soccer in,” Shay said. “Millions [of dollars] were spent developing the place.”

The equine therapy program never really took off, Shay said, and in 2011, Suffolk University, which lists the property among its facilities on its website, took it over for off-campus environmental education classes.

“But that never took off, either,” Shay said. “Time went on, and over the years, a [Penobscot] tribal member has worked maintaining the property, [and] that was costing Suffolk University money every year.”

So Shay said he began talking to members of the Wabanaki cultural commission about the idea of purchasing the property.

“The facilities could act as a central location for the Wabanaki coalition in Maine,” Shay said. “We have a lot of [tribal] organizations in Maine that work with different areas within



ASHLEY L. CONTI | BDN

Some of the land in Passadumkeag near the Penobscot River that Tim Shay, president of the Wabanaki Cultural Preservation Commission, has been trying to help purchase in order to establish a center for culture and healing, can be seen Thursday.

the Wabanaki community that could be centralized there.”

Existing offices and programs addressing health, employment, housing, the arts, language, business development, financing and youth programs could all be moved to the Nibezun Earth Center.

“I believe we can do this,” Shay said. “We can have all these organizations that have different niches come together so they can pool their resources and create a center to help our people and all people.”

High on the list of what Shay hopes such a center

could do is help Maine’s indigenous population start to heal from the effects of 500 years of genocide.

“Anything that can be done to annihilate a people has been done to Native Americans,” Shay said. “But we are still here, the basics of our language is still here, and our history is definitely still here.”

Historical attacks on the country’s indigenous population have created a population with high rates of alcoholism, drug use, domestic violence, homicide and poverty, Shay said.

“Let’s face it, we have problems,” he said. “There

is a 21st Century name for it — ‘intergenerational traumatic stress,’ [and] it is the result of this 500 years of genocide.”

Shay hopes the Nibezun center can do what he said government-funded aid programs have so far been unable to accomplish — break the cycles of poverty and substance abuse among native peoples with culturally-based solutions.

“Like someone in [the cultural coalition] said, ‘The culture is the medicine,’” Shay said. “We need to heal ourselves, [and] that is what Nibezun comes down to — the idea that the culture is

going to heal us so the next generations won’t have to go through what we went through.”

In opening the center to all people, Shay said there also are plans for workshops devoted to sustainable housing, alternative energy, organic farming and natural medicines.

To get the word out, the group has taken to social media, started a GoFundMe site and is working with a local filmmaker to document the process in a series of short videos released online.

“I took part in a ceremony on the land earlier this summer,” Kate Kirby, director and producer with Kindred Planet Productions in Orono, said. “The spirit of what they are trying to do was really captured out there, and all of my plans and other projects went on the back burner so I could work on this.”

Her first video focuses on introducing the Nibezun Project and on the people involved. Successive videos — each about four minutes — will cover what is going with the land, what the project hopes to accomplish and

establish its identity, she said.

“There are so many reasons why people should care about this project,” Kirby said. “Issues like water rights, protecting the environment and the socioeconomics of it all affect all of us.”

She said she is honored to be telling the story through film.

“We have a history in our country of not making space for the native populations their wisdom, their stories and their experience,” Kirby said. “I am so glad to be part of a movement that is capturing that.”

Shay said the Wabanaki Cultural Preservation Commission is actively raising funds for the purchase in time for an Oct. 10 purchase deadline set by Suffolk University.

They are about halfway there, but he said an organization has stepped forward to offer a three-year loan to immediately cover the purchase.

“We feel pretty good about our chances to get the land,” Shay said. “It’s pretty exciting, but pretty nerve wracking, too.”

Farm

Continued from Page C1

The recovery farm, which has been here for close to nine years, serves low-income men aged 18 to 70. They don’t need farm experience or money to enter the program. After six months some have gone on to pursue a life in agriculture, but the real goal is meaningful sobriety.

Referred by shelters, detox programs, Alcoholics Anonymous or probation officers, some residents are surprised that hope arising from despair can be found through agriculture.

“This is reconnecting me to a time when I actually enjoyed life,” said Duncan Blow, a 34-year-old who did jail time for burglaries to fuel his heroin addiction. “When I was running around with heroin on the streets of Biddeford, I would often think if I died that day it wouldn’t bother me.”

Now he wakes up in the morning and isn’t looking for his next fix. He’s thinking about the ducks. Do they need more shade on a hot summer day?

“Seems crazy to think that this is a rehab, to come out and work in a garden,” said Blow, a razor-thin man with spiky hair and missing teeth. “It’s been the best thing for me in a long time. I enjoy it every day. I don’t care if it’s raining or 120 degrees out, I’ll come out here and go to work. I love it.”

While putting the scattered pieces of their lives

back, weeding a raspberry patch helps. “They don’t have to think about the past or the future,” said Ontkush. Just harvesting kale, feeding the pigs or keeping the ducks sheltered is vibrant reality right in front of them.

Inside a refurbished farmhouse, they have meals and participate in group sessions and AA meetings. But a transformative next step to recovery waits right outside on the fertile rolling acres.

“I feel like it’s saving my life every day,” said Blow. “When I come out here I gain that sense of connection to the land.”

The potency of the program is a perfect illustration

of why they came here. A life can be rebuilt from ruins. Agriculture speaks to their ravaged nature without words. Through the seasons, the cycle of life unfolds before them.

“They start seeds under grow lights in February,” says Ouellette. “To see grown men gather around these little seedlings, witness their joy and excitement as they sprout and hearing them talk about the renewal of life, that things go on and start again. And they can start over, too.”

For men like Simpson, who lost his home in Kennebunk, his wife and identity when the bottle called, the country setting restores him. “I could’ve gone to

treatment in the city, but it’s dangerous. Too many temptations,” he said. Working outside, or in the greenhouse, walking trails along the property, viewing the White Mountains on a good day, he feels he can make it.

“The most important thing for me is peace and quiet. I grew up in an alcoholic home, all I wanted was peace and quiet,” said Simpson, looking off into the distance. “The quality in my sobriety will come.”

8th Annual
Acadia Night Sky Festival
Celebrating the starlit skies of Downeast Maine with star parties, hands-on workshops, internationally renowned speakers, and more!
September 22-25, 2016
Bar Harbor & Acadia National Park
AcadiaNightSkyFestival.org

BATTLE OF THE BANDS
A Rockin’ Evening to Support Healthcare for Local Kids
Acadia Hospital FOUNDATION
EMHS FOUNDATION
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 23
7 to 11 pm
Cross Insurance Center, Bangor
Vote for Your Favorite Band!
The Allison Ames Band • Motor Booty Affair
Dance the Night Away!
Appetizers • Cash Bar
Tickets: \$30 per person
Available at the door or online (credit card) at
www.emhsfoundation.org
For more information call 207.973.5055
Sponsored by **21st CENTURY WILBURZ**
To benefit Child and Adolescent Services at Acadia Hospital
blueberry

BDN
Our “A Day of Remembrance” special section is just around the corner and we would like to include your personal military story, or have you share that of a loved one.
Email mdwyer@bangordailynews.com with your story, photos and questions.
Submissions may be selected for use in our printed special section set to publish in the BDN on Friday, Nov. 11.