

# Nantucket TODAY

## In This Issue

Electrifying the RV world

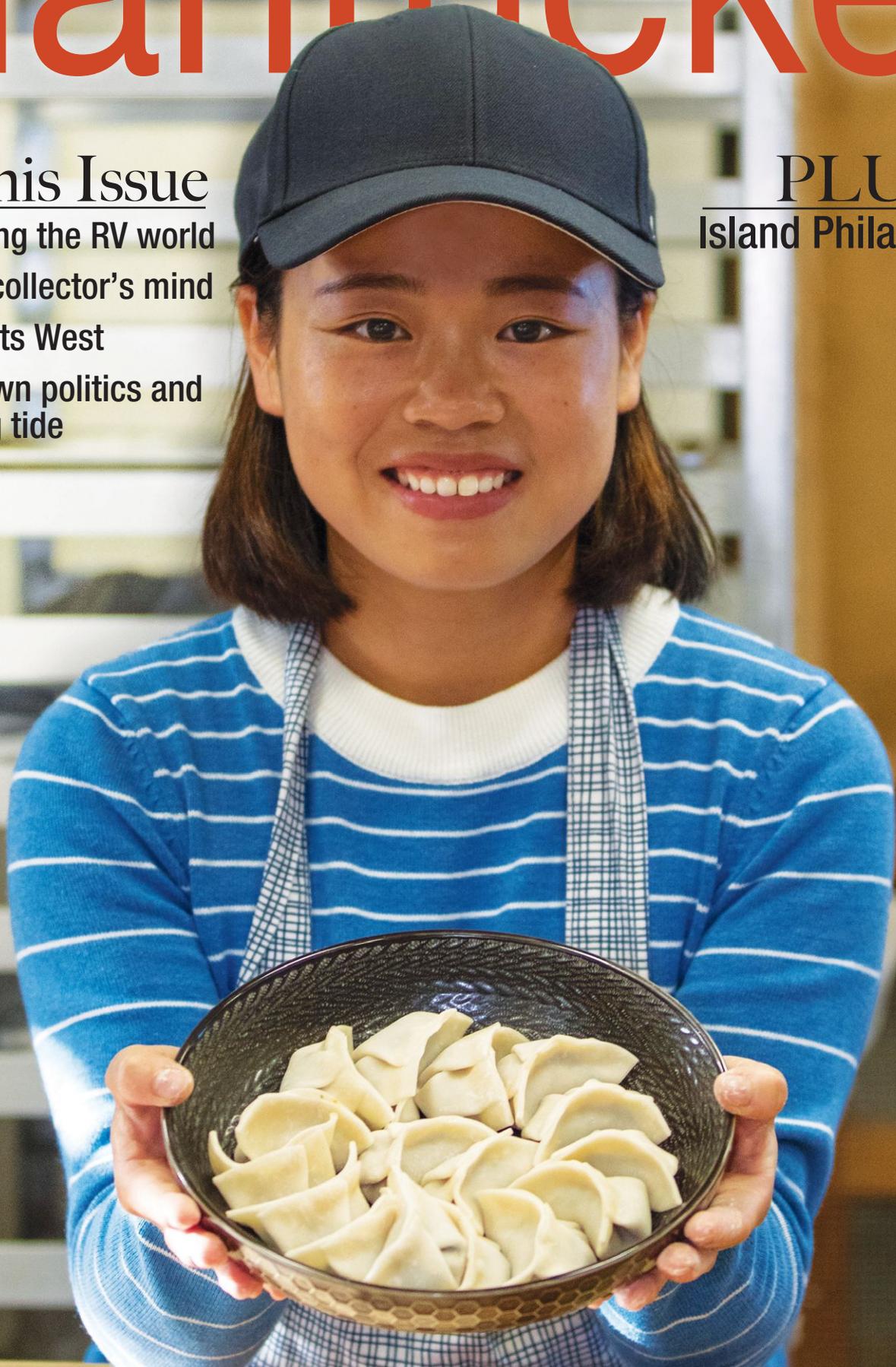
Inside a collector's mind

East Meets West

Small-town politics and  
the rising tide

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(Closed Sundays and Thanksgiving Day)

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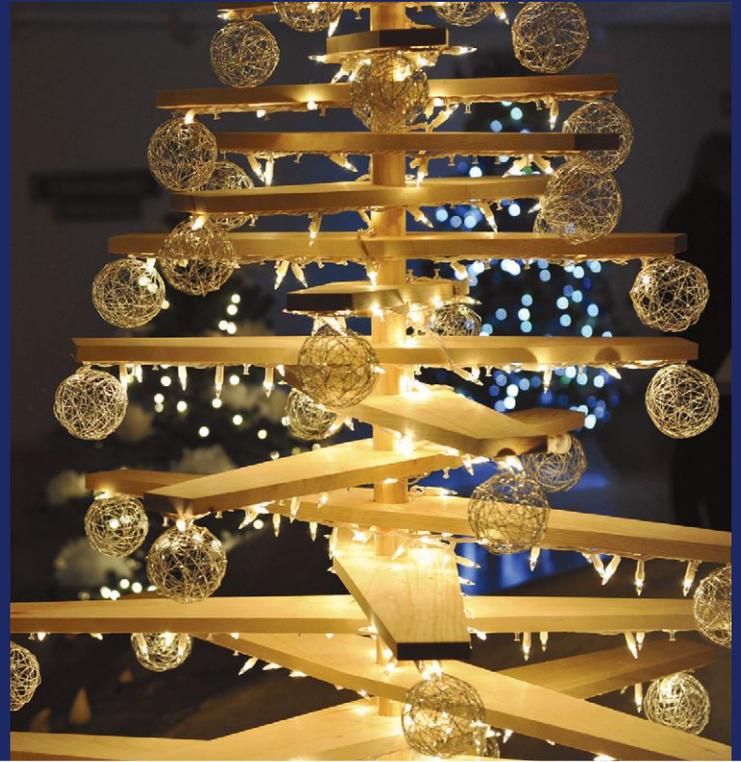


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Friday, December 31

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PHOTO BY KEVIN STANTON

I have this memory of the late, great novelist Kurt Vonnegut telling the following story. It is lost to me whether I read it, or heard him telling it at some lecture. In the anecdote, Vonnegut, who considered writing a trade, had hired another tradesman, a carpenter, to build an addition on his house.

When the job was completed, Vonnegut and the carpenter stood in the yard looking at it. It was a job well done. Vonnegut remembered, or made up, the carpenter saying, almost to himself, “How the heck did I do that?”

He meant the story, I think, to reflect how he felt when he finished one of his books.

This is the last issue of *Nantucket Today* for the year. Six issues, beginning in the late spring and ending in the off-season. Our trade is to build mirrors. If we do a good job, those mirrors should reflect life on this island, in a way that our readers see as true reflection and not some fun-house reflection.

I hope we have come close to doing that. And if we have, let me just say, “How the heck did we do that?”

Nantucketers know the value of having a trade. Ben Parker’s trade is engineer. He grew up here, studied engineering at Dartmouth, and worked for Tesla in San Francisco on the

batteries that power those electric cars, before heading out to follow his own idea and solve his own engineering puzzle. He is a young man at the very beginning of a journey. You can read about him in this issue.

Another kind of engineer, coastal engineers, have suggested ways this island can prepare itself for the inevitable rising sea levels, driven by climate change. The town has released a coastal-resilience plan that outlines many of these mitigation ideas.

A few years ago, at a conference called *Keeping History Above Water*, a coastal engineer suggested to me that there will come a day when clever engineering solutions and grant money from the state will not be enough. What will stand in the way, he suggested, are small-town governments not designed to deal with what sea-level rise will eventually require.

It was only a toss-off comment over a cup of bad coffee, but it might be wise to keep in mind as you consider that the Sankaty Bluff, a relatively small and eroding piece of land, has been the center of a battle that is older than some of our staff writers. We ask in this issue if the bluff is a coming attraction of the problems

of getting things done in the face of rising sea levels.

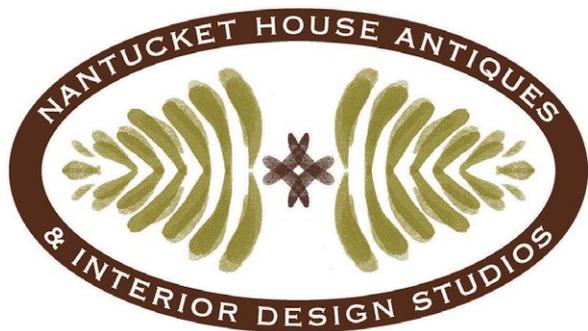
We also talk to David Billings, who has a collection of Chinese art that would not be out of place in any museum, about the urge and the joy of collecting. And to Anna Montgomery about cooking with cannabis, something I never thought I would live to see.

This summer seemed like a struggle, at least to friends in the restaurant business. Difficulty in finding and keeping staff. Customers who seem to have forgotten how to act. The rest of us sat and stewed in the worst traffic we have ever seen on this island. But whether you see it as good for business, or a cautionary tale of runaway growth, we can all agree that the off-season feels like island life as it ought to be.

Almost every day in the summer you could look out my window at the newspaper and see a line of traffic from the rotary back almost to the airport. Today, in mid-October, the traffic is a slow flow of cars and pickup trucks. I personally know about half the drivers.

Soon there will be scallop boats on the harbor. It’s a much smaller fleet than there once was, but big enough to remind us that we live in a place that has rhythms connected to the seasons. Enjoy the off-season. We will see you in the spring.

John Stanton  
Editor



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PHOTO BY BEVIN BIXBY

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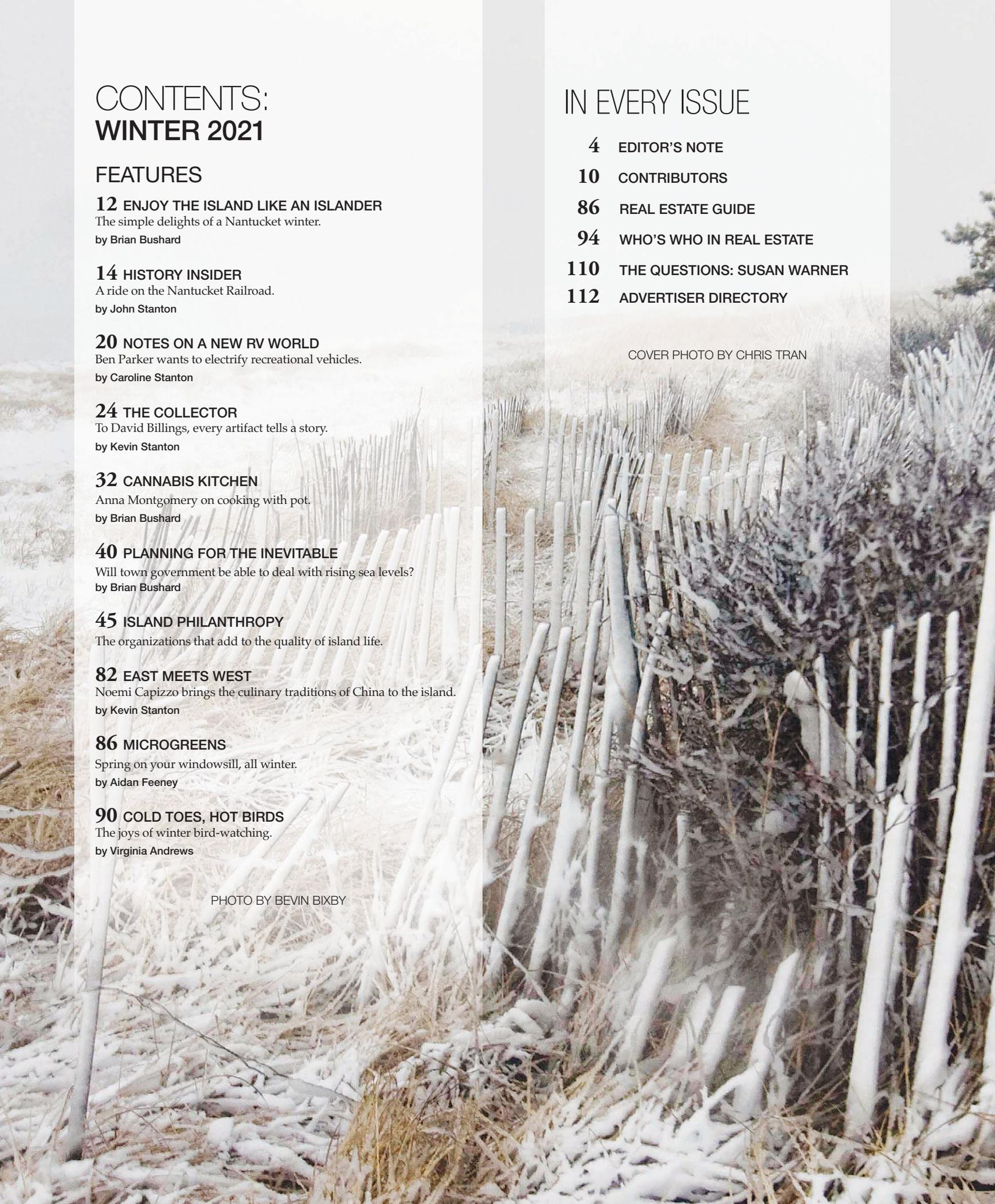
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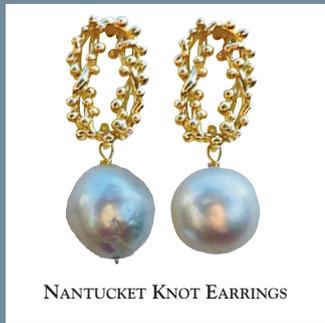


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Showing at Erica Wilson and the Nantucket Artists Association

# Nantucket TODAY

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# CONTRIBUTORS

Understanding Nantucket requires being part of year-round life here. We are happy to introduce some of the people who showed you our island.

## Marianne R. Stanton

Marianne Stanton's roots are deep on Nantucket and in the newspaper business. As editor and publisher, she took the newspaper into the digital world. When not at the newspaper, which is most of the time, she can be found gardening.



## Dean Geddes

Dean Geddes is a 10-year veteran of *The Inquirer and Mirror*. He grew up in Japan before moving to Delaware during his high-school years but always returned to Nantucket every summer. When not working as a staff writer for *The Inquirer and Mirror*, he can be found at Miacomet Golf Course, in search of his errant tee shots.



## Cary Hazlegrove

moved from southwest Virginia to Nantucket in the spring of 1978. Nantucket has been her home and central to her work for over 40 years. Her photographs illustrate several stories in this month's magazine.

## Chris Tran

The spring issue of *Nantucket Today* was Chris Tran's first time behind the lens for the magazine. He graduated from Lasell University during the pandemic year of 2020, and picked up his interest in photography there. He is also part of the production team for both *The Inquirer and Mirror* and *Nantucket Today*.



## Virginia Andrews

comes by her love of birds through her late mother, ornithologist Edith Andrews. She likes to joke that barn owls were her siblings growing up on Nantucket. Ginger gives bird walks and does barn owl research for the Maria Mitchell Association.

## Virginia Bullington

grew up on Nantucket before leaving to study at The University of Southern California. When she is not writing, she is getting her hands dirty landscaping with the Garden Design Company.



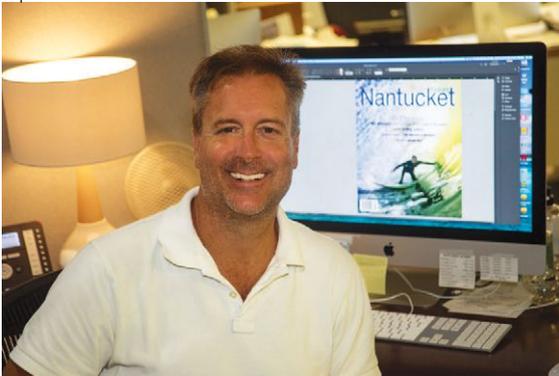
## Caroline Stanton

Grew up on Nantucket before leaving to study at Vassar. She now lives in Oakland, California, where she is an elementary school teacher and high school lacrosse coach.

# CONTRIBUTORS

## Peter Halik

If you like the look of this magazine, you can thank our art director, Peter Halik. He studied graphic design in college, and worked for *The Inquirer and Mirror* when he first arrived on Nantucket. But like so many of us, he also worked in the trades, building houses.



## Kevin Stanton

Kevin writes our Eat/Drink column, as well as profiles on everybody from a well-known fish cutter to a collector of Chinese art. He is a graduate of the Massachusetts College of Art. His paintings can be viewed at [greyladygallery.com](http://greyladygallery.com).



## Cam Gammill

has been chasing bluefish since he was a little boy. He is the co-owner of Bill Fisher Tackle and co-owner of Fisher Real Estate. He also fishes with Bill Fisher Outfitters, owned by his twin brother Corey.



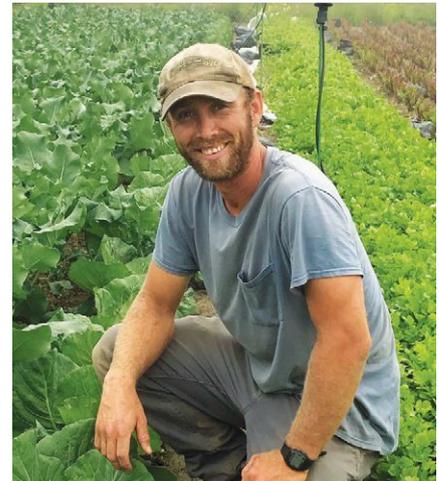
## Brian Bushard's

idea of a good time is a very long walk. He once walked 24 miles, from Wauwinet to Great Point, along Coatue, and back to Wauwinet. These were beach miles, across the sand. He is a staff writer at *The Inquirer and Mirror*.



## Joshua Balling

has been at *The Inquirer and Mirror* for 27 years, with a brief 18-month stint at *The Patriot Ledger* in Quincy. On the rare summer day he's not working, he enjoys sailing.



## Aidan Feeney

Aidan Feeney grew up on Nantucket. He left to study sustainable agriculture at Sterling College in Vermont. In 2019, he came home and started Fog Town Farm.



## High-school Sports

Cheer on the Whalers as they make a playoff push this month in football, soccer, volleyball, golf, cross-country and field hockey.

Home football games are an experience all their own. For food, you have the choice of classics like hamburgers and hot dogs, but you'll also find a weekly Nantucket special from the Booster Club that runs the gamut from linguica to turkey legs.



## Recreational Scalloping

Who can't resist eating bay scallops in the winter on Nantucket? It's a perk of island life. This year, why not try catching your own scallops from the harbor? All you need is a rake, a bucket, a wetsuit or waders and a permit, and you're good to go in one of Nantucket's three harbors.

Recreational scalloping season opened at the beginning of October. It remains open through the end of March. Resident permits are available for people 14 years or older. They cost \$35, and can be purchased through the town's permitting office at the Natural Resources Department. Permits are \$125 for non-Nantucket residents, and free for residents over 60 and retired commercial scallopers.

Of course, there's an easier way to get fresh scallops. They are available at Souza's Seafood, Glidden's Island Seafood, Sayle's Seafood, 167 Raw and the Nantucket Meat & Fish Market.

## Pickleball

The sport is an amalgam of tennis, badminton and Ping-Pong all mixed into one, and played with a Wiffleball. It might seem strange, but it's also one of the fastest-growing sports on the island. It's especially popular in the off-season, when you're bound to find pairs of pickleballers on the Land Bank's new outdoor courts behind the paddle-tennis courts off Hinsdale Road near the airport.

On the weekends and after the workday, they pack the courts in droves. They're beginners looking for something to do, as well as pickle-pros who have made the game something of a routine. All you need is a paddle. All are welcome.

# ENJOY THE ISLAND

---

## *Like an Islander*

BY BRIAN BUSHARD





## Curling

Inside the Nantucket Ice skating rink, a group of curling diehards and beginners meets every Sunday afternoon, sliding stones and sweeping brooms.

Curling has become something of a niche sport you might catch on a barroom TV, and it's been prominently featured in coverage of recent winter Olympics.

It doesn't take long to get hooked.

The Nantucket Curling Club was formed in 2016 with the goal of providing islanders a new sport in the winter. No equipment is required. They've got the stones and brooms to get you curling in no time.



## Coast-to-Coast Trail

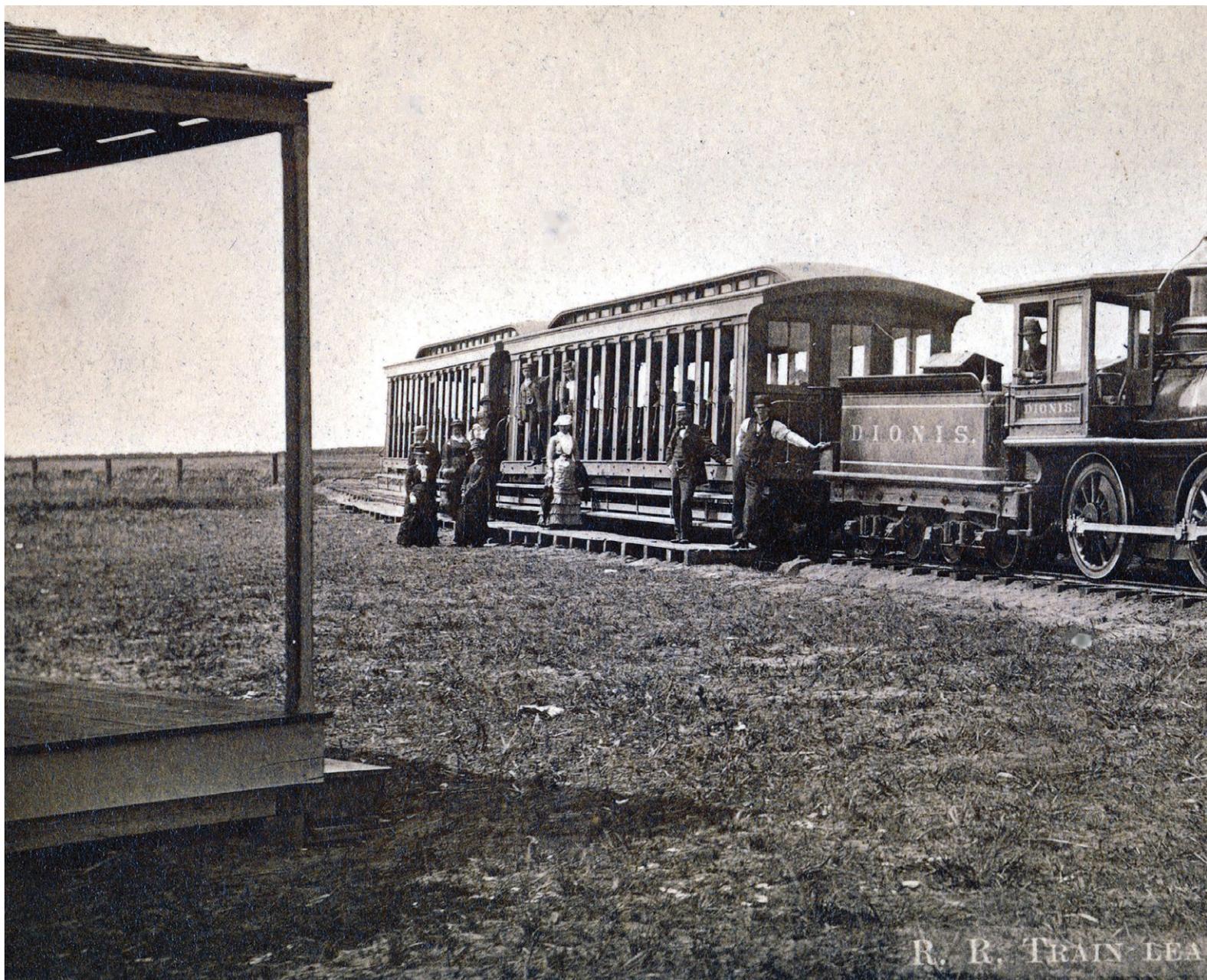
The signs for the coast-to-coast trail went up this summer, identifying the 24-mile hike from Settler's Landing in Madaket to the end of Hoicks Hollow Road, just south of Sesachacha Pond, on the east end of the island.

The walk passes a mosaic of different environments: sandplain grasslands, pitch-pine groves, fire breaks, kettle-hole ponds, moors, rolling hills and beaches.

The trail is a collaborative effort of the Nantucket Conservation Foundation, Nantucket Islands Land Bank, Massachusetts Audubon Society, the town and state. The idea began to take shape two years ago, after the Land Bank led the first-ever cross-island hike, inspired by a similar event on Martha's Vineyard.

At times, the walk can be grueling and time-consuming. It is 24 miles, after all. Walk all of it if you're looking for a challenge, or just a mile or two if you prefer. That part is up to you.





R. R. TRAIN LEA

“**T**he peal of the first locomotive bell, the shriek of the first locomotive whistle in our land was heard; the throttle was pulled, the wheels revolved, and Dionis and her tender moved slowly over the road, greeted by the shouts of the hundreds assembled,” read a story in that week’s *Inquirer and Mirror*.

It was only a distance of four miles to Surfside. But watching that engine, with its open passenger car, must have felt like looking at the future. The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad had begun in 1827. The final spike of the transcontinental railroad was driven in May of 1869. But this was a seasonal railroad right here on Nantucket. This was a way to get to someplace that did not include a horse-drawn cart.

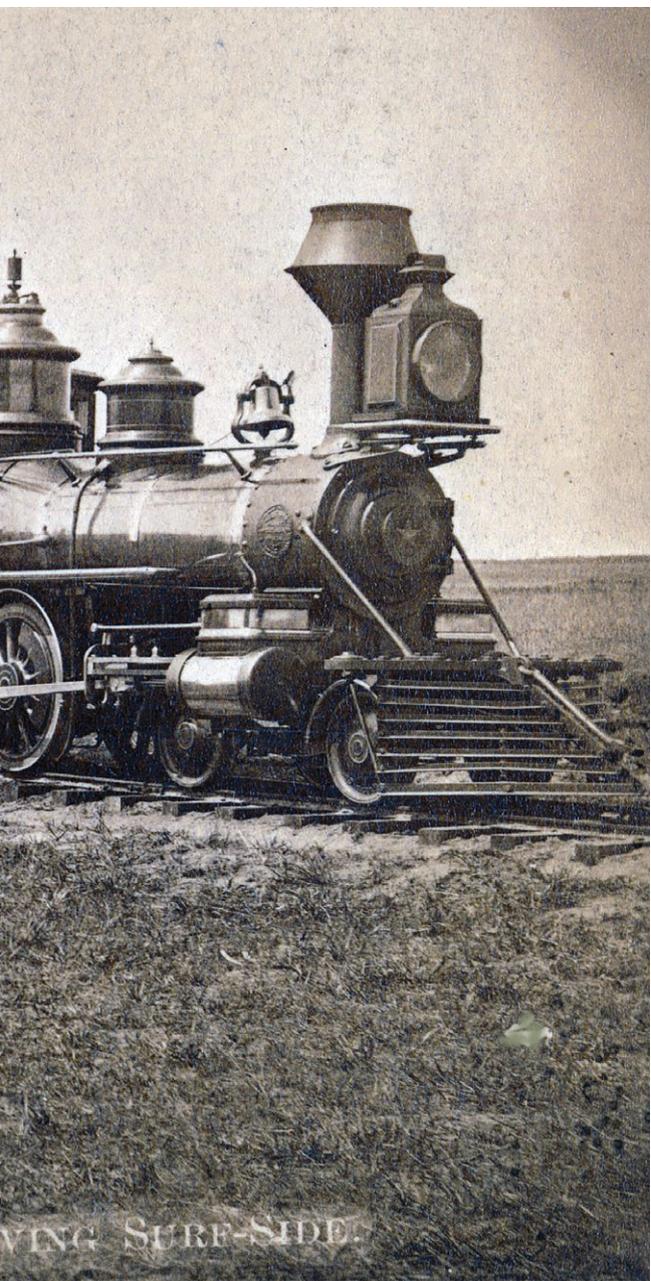
“There are those in our midst, who until Friday, had never been favored with the sight of a real locomotive and cars,” read

the newspaper story.

To the writer, who was one of a small group selected for the first ride, train travel took on a poetic dimension: “The familiar scenery along the route seemed laden with a different and peculiar charm. Passing along the pleasant shore of the harbor, thence across the flats, the Goose Pond, the Clay Pits, out into open fields, entering a sweet grove of pines, then picking up speed and rushing out upon the broad, level common, with the sea in front.”

The tracks were brought all the way to Sconset in 1884. But Surfside was the first reason for the railroad. What people were calling the Surfside boom was underway. A group called the Nantucket Surfside Land Co. had a map printed in the newspaper, outlining a very large number of house plots for sale. The train was an essential sales tool.

Two years later, a hotel called The Riverside was moved from the Providence River and shipped to Nantucket. It was renamed



# *The Short, Sweet Life of the Nantucket Railroad*

BY JOHN STANTON

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE NANTUCKET HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

*A large crowd had gathered at the foot of Main Street to see the locomotive, which had been christened Dionis. It was the Fourth of July 1881. The Dionis was decorated with flags. It was belching smoke and steam, almost as if it was getting impatient for its inaugural run.*

the Surfside Hotel, and quickly became a favorite of summer visitors, complete with a large wrap-around porch and a dance hall. The Surfside area, until then a beach for cod fishermen to launch their dories, was expected to become a tourist mecca.

Plans for the railroad began in 1879, when a Boston businessman with island family connections, P.H. Folger, was able to put together a group of investors. That same year, surveyors arrived to lay out the route, which originally was to run west to Madaket, then back along the shore to Sconset. Those plans gave way to the town to Surfside route. Ground was broken on the south shore in May of 1880, and the next month a cargo of sleepers and track arrived.

Sleepers are those ties that provide a surface for the tracks, which are driven into place on the sleepers with railroad spikes. The Nantucket Railroad ran on narrow-gauge tracks, which were built only three feet apart.

A crew of 26 laborers began digging out a road bed, “a little to the south of the old brass foundry. The following day Goose Pond was bridged. In less than three weeks the road bed was completed for Surfside and from there they pushed forward a few miles to Sconset.”

When the track was laid, town crier William Clark was given the honor of driving in the first spike. A train depot and restaurant were built at Surfside. According to the Nantucket Historical Association’s magazine, *Historic Nantucket*, by the end of that first season an estimated 30,000 passengers had ridden the train, at 35 cents a round-trip ticket.

But the Atlantic Ocean had begun cutting into the bank on the south shore, over which the train ran, almost since that first train ride. In 1887 the tracks were moved back, away from the bluff, after a storm. But not far enough. The next year a heavy storm washed the tracks into the surf.



Captain Jack Killen drives in a golden spike to connect the newly-replaced rails at Sconset.

Opposite: The first engine of the Nantucket Railroad, called Dionis, leaves the downtown terminal and heads to Surfside.

In August of 1893, another storm washed out a stretch of the rails at Nobadeer. Dionis plunged into the breakwater.

“Those huge waves worked sad havoc with the road bed and track, and at Nobadeer, Maddequecham and even Tom Nevers it has been sadly wrecked and cannot be repaired, it is thought, in time for use again this year,” read the Aug. 26, 1893 issue of *The Inquirer and Mirror*.

The newspaper did not seem to cover an incident after that storm, when Dionis went off the track and into the surf. It did, however, print a bit of a sarcastic poem.

“The next morning like a lightning flash, she scuttled out of town; at Nobadeer with one fell splash, she to the deep went down,” it read in part.

The Surfside route was abandoned altogether in 1895. Storms and erosion had caused the tracks to be moved several times. The railroad was under new management and running under a new name, The Nantucket Central Railroad.

The new route turned at Fairgrounds Road to Tom Nevers, then to Sconset, bypassing Surfside and the south shore. The Surfside boom was over. The land company had sold 180 lots, but the Surfside Hotel had long been out of business. It fell into decay, collapsing in on itself in November of 1899. In 1901, Dionis was replaced by an engine called simply “Engine No. 1.”

The new century brought new ideas. A New York group now owned the railroad and tried replacing the steam locomotives with a gasoline powered motor-car. They also announced their intention

to run the railroad year-round.

The first of these gasoline-powered cars held only six or eight passengers and was known as The Bug. It was fast, bringing passengers to Sconset in 19 minutes. It eventually tipped over and was crushed.

The next year a bigger motor-car went into service. It could accommodate 30 passengers, but the vibrations over the tracks were so intense that the owners finally shipped it back to the mainland.

In 1909, a locomotive was bought from the Revere Beach line and the railroad depended on a steam engine again. Less than a decade later the railroad was gone, as if it simply disappeared into the fog.

“It was never a money-maker,” read an *Inquirer and Mirror* story on the 50th anniversary of that first day in 1881. “It was rebuilt, re-organized, and restocked, several times, only to pass into oblivion in 1917, after one last run in September.”

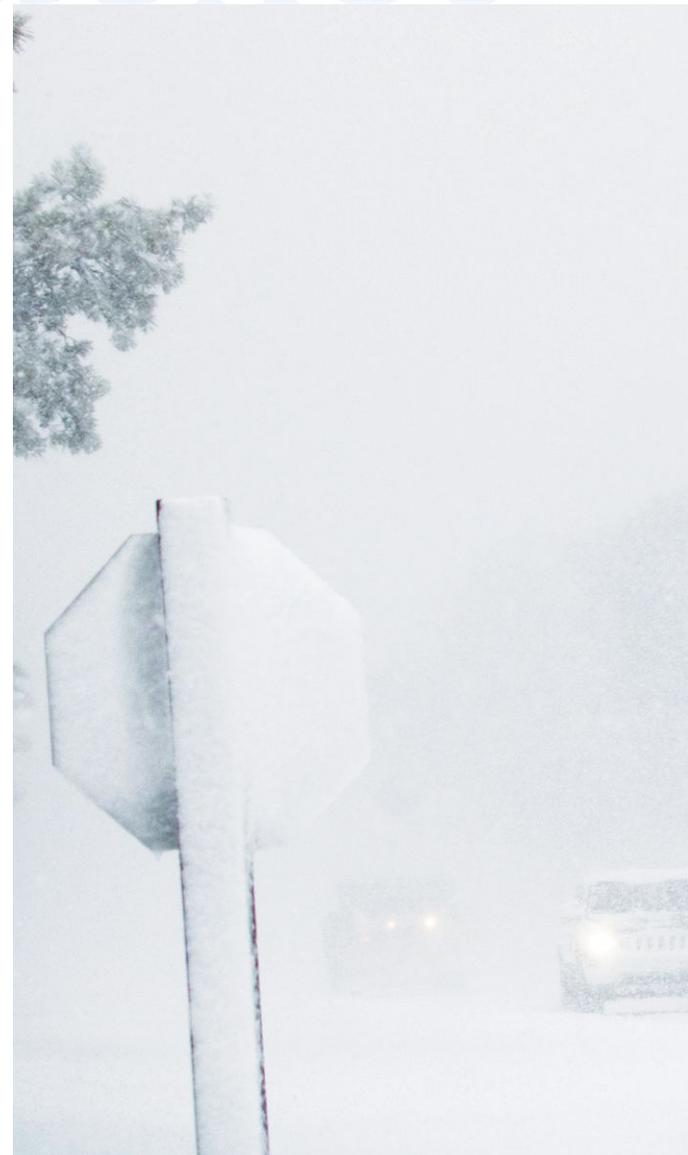
It was a business decision. World War I had driven up the price of scrap iron. The season was shorter than it is now, and the continual repairs were costing more and more. Track was torn up, the locomotive and cars were sold the next year and transported to Bordeaux, France to help the war effort.

“And thus closes the story of Nantucket’s unique little railroad,” the story read. “Born in 1881, died in 1917. Now only a matter of history.”

*John Stanton is a writer, documentary filmmaker, associate editor of The Inquirer and Mirror and editor of Nantucket Today.*



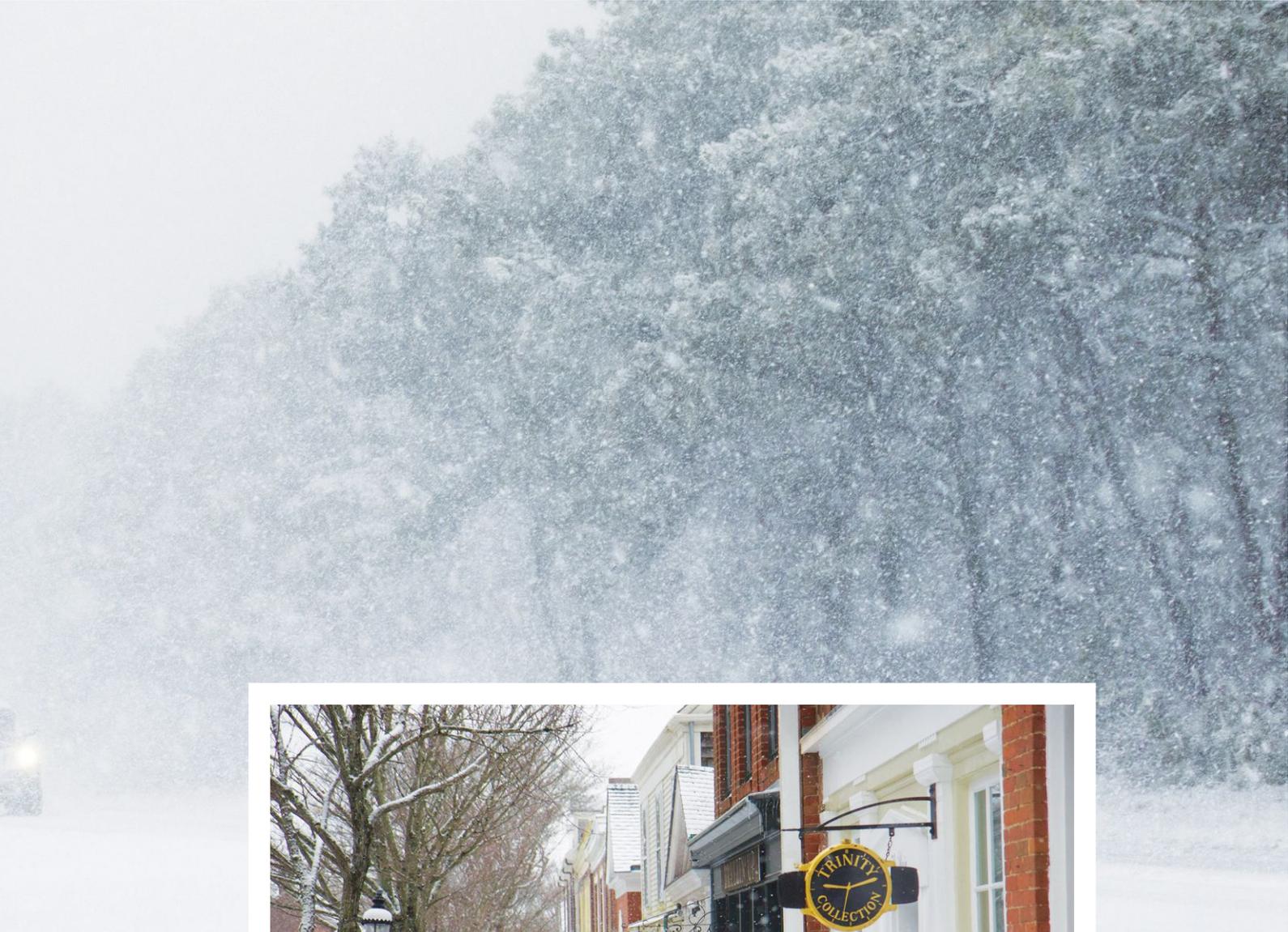
# Nantucket



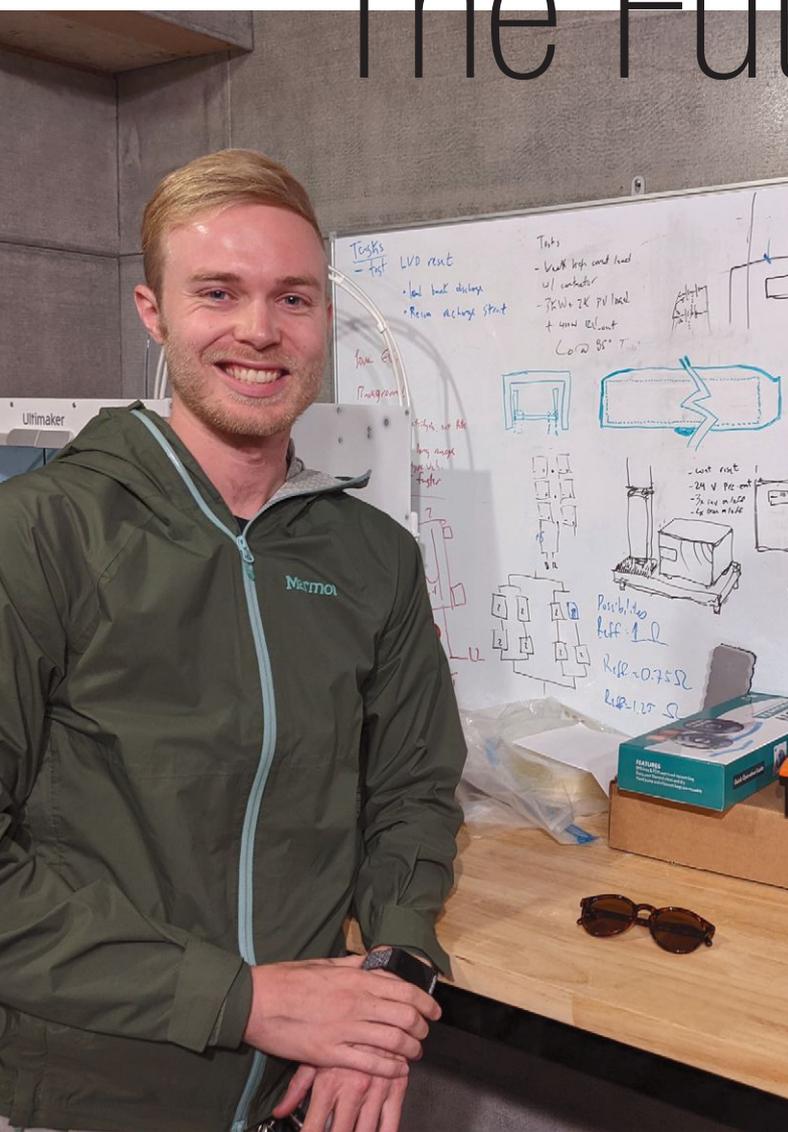
It has been called **“the other island,”** those winter months when Nantucket can seem like a **small world**, encased in **snow**, hemmed in by the weather, and sometimes subject to harbor freeze-ups that leave us cut off from the mainland. There is a kind of **silent satisfaction** to a snowy day anywhere, but somehow it is more so on Nantucket.

CHANGE OF SEASONS

# Winter



# The Future is *Electric*



BY CAROLINE STANTON

PHOTOS BY CAROLINE STANTON & BEN PARKER

It is a clear-skied Thursday afternoon in the Mission District of San Francisco. **Ben Parker** is sitting at a table in a Mexican restaurant called Chuy's Fiestas talking about the path between finding an **idea**, shaping that idea, and turning that idea into a **start-up**. It is the sort of conversation that feels as if it continually takes place here, close to the center of the **high-tech world**.

**A**fter studying engineering at Dartmouth, a job at the electric-car company Tesla brought him to San Francisco. Today he is talking about how an idea germinated, changed, and how a pandemic road trip through the RV parks of the American West focused that idea and allowed him time to explore how best to take the next steps in his life.

"I was like, 'Oh, it's obvious. Go out into the chaos and see where the opportunity is,' because when the whole world changes, there's a ton of new opportunity," he said.

Parker has found a lead investor for his idea, a firm called Obvious Investments. That investment allowed him to officially put together his company, called Lightship, in a nod to Nantucket. He is not the first young tech entrepreneur to ask himself the following question: "Did someone just give us a bunch of money to live out our dreams?"

The idea began with food trucks, which are a common sight here in the East Bay. While at Tesla, he wanted to find a way to electrify food trucks. In 2019 he spent nine to 10 months on this pet project with

a co-worker.

Throughout the project, he consulted Select Board member and Something Natural owner Matt Fee. Parker worked at Something Natural throughout high school and some of college, and expresses an admiration for Fee as a businessman and steward of the island's energy use. He recalled a time when he was sitting on the production floor at Tesla working on the Model 3 battery when he read about Nantucket's purchase of a Tesla power-pack installation – which Fee was instrumental in making happen – to help address the surge in summer energy demand.

"I definitely consider him, like, kind of a mentor and influential figure in my life growing up," Parker said.

Parker was willing to build an electric food truck to sell Fee's sandwiches around the island, but he ultimately found that electrifying food trucks would not make the profit or impact he was aiming for. He began shifting away from the food-truck idea after "realizing that the food-truck market is neither big nor is there a lot of extra money in food-truck businesses. They're primarily mom-and-pop businesses."

During his nine-week road trip he kept a running update on the

social-media platform Medium. He explained the goal of the trip in one of his first postings.

“Why am I on this journey? I could not sit still in San Francisco for more than two months and knew there must be a way to maintain physical distance and germ-safety protocols while seeing new sights. I am 26 years old, just left my job as a battery design engineer at Tesla after about 5 years (including internships) and am due for soul searching.

The open road called me, and an RV made the most sense in the midst of a pandemic while also allowing me to explore my business idea: battery electric home power systems for RVs, a way to eliminate the smelly, noisy gas generators that RV operators must use today for power while camping off grid. I will use my RVing experience these next two months to generate and refine on a product concept for superior off-grid RV power.”

Parker had been negotiating the confines of a shared home workspace, feeling disconnected from co-workers in the new world of the virtual office, and burned out at work.

“The pandemic whipped up and things were super-stressful with me and my roommate,” he said. “It was just like, if I have any control over being in the city and in this living situation, I should exercise it now.”

So he set out on a 5,389-mile trip through the West.

As he hoped it would, the trip provided inspiration, allowed him to road-test his technical idea and do some

soul-searching. Now he is back in San Francisco with two rounds of fundraising under his belt and the task of building a diverse team of engineers to bring the idea to fruition.

Parker comes by his urge to start a business honestly. Both his parents were small-business people. Matthew, his father, built and ran the Seven Sea Street Inn, a bed and breakfast on-island. Mary, his mother, bought and ran an island quarterly magazine called *Nantucket Magazine*. She later sold it for a profit.

“I wanted to try entrepreneurship – I had known that really in some form for a long time – because I just really liked growing up in a small-business environment,” Parker said.

It is not so much the success of these businesses, rather the risks his parents were willing to take for an idea they thought worthwhile, that stuck with him. In describing his father’s business, he said, “I really respected that my dad had the chutzpah to go out and try this thing where he was, like, taking loans on loans to make the business work for the first five years because he didn’t have any basic customers, like guests, at that point.”

Food trucks were removed from the equation when people he knew in the electric-vehicle (EV) world, people he shared this work with, saw potential in another industry.

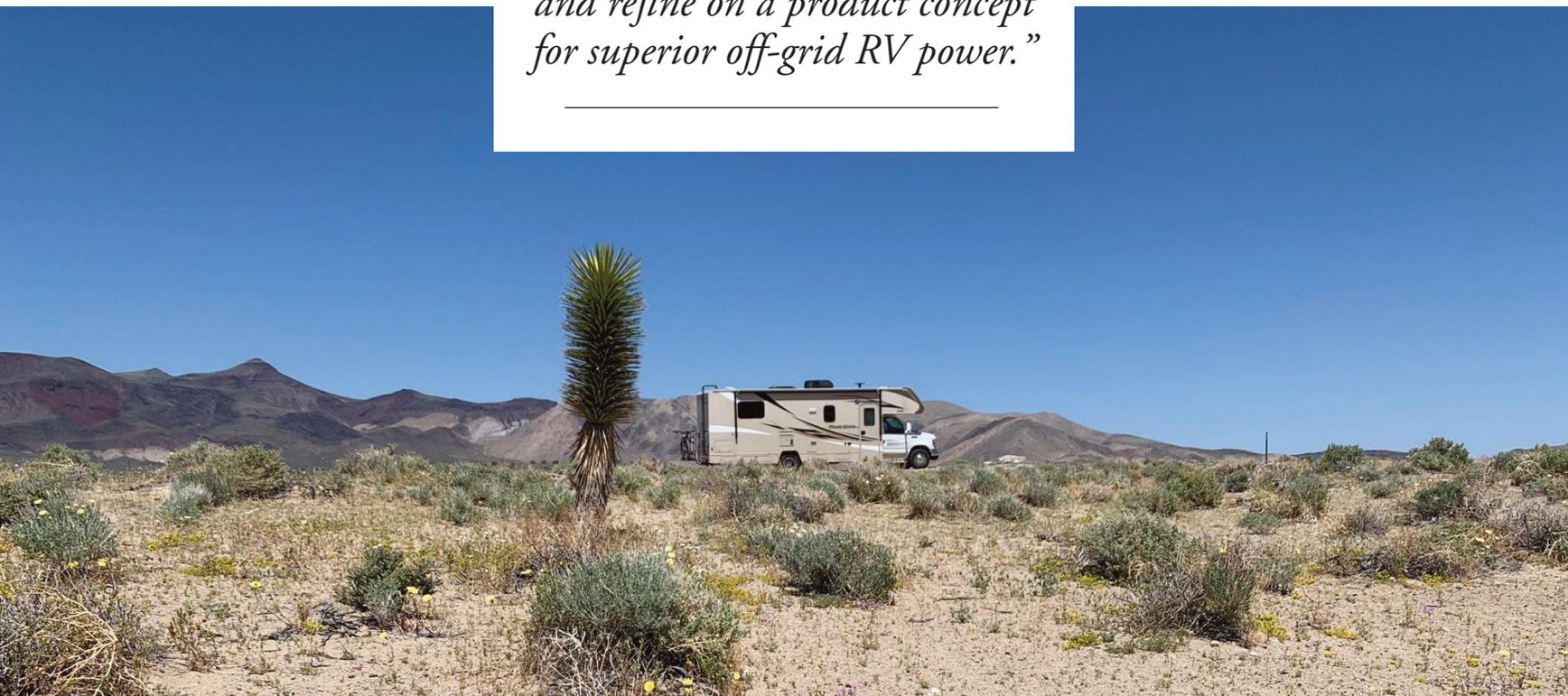
“When I talked to more entrepreneurially-minded folks about the food-truck business, they would always bring up RV-ing. RVs seemed to share a lot of the same needs as food trucks and were way more popular,” he said.

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*“I am 26 years old, just left my job as a battery design engineer at Tesla after about 5 years (including internships) and am due for soul searching.*

*I will use my RVing experience these next two months to generate and refine on a product concept for superior off-grid RV power.”*

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Recreational vehicles are a \$25 billion industry. One in 10 Americans owns one and over half a million RVs are sold a year. These statistics were surprising to Parker.

“It’s not something I would have guessed having lived in a college town, on Nantucket and in San Francisco – the three most unlikely places to find an RV in the country,” he said.

He soon realized that he had a lot to learn, if he was going to make his name in this industry. “It was an amazing opportunity to do long-form user research,” Parker said about the trip.

In a time of great political divide, Parker found a space for connection in the world of RVing.

“Everyone is just there to have a good time. It’s like the least-contentious setting you can imagine. There’s a ton of opportunity to build bridges between people, and by that I mean to build a common understanding of each other.”

RVs, Parker soon found, provide a chance for people to step out of their silos.

“It’s also one of the few forums you can find in America where there is that amount of mixing because people are traveling from all over,” he said. “Right now we’re geographically polarized as well. You have the coasts and the whole middle section of America and people from those various environments don’t come together physically that much anymore.”

Throughout his road trip, Parker was also able to collect data to help guide his business endeavor. Using an app on his

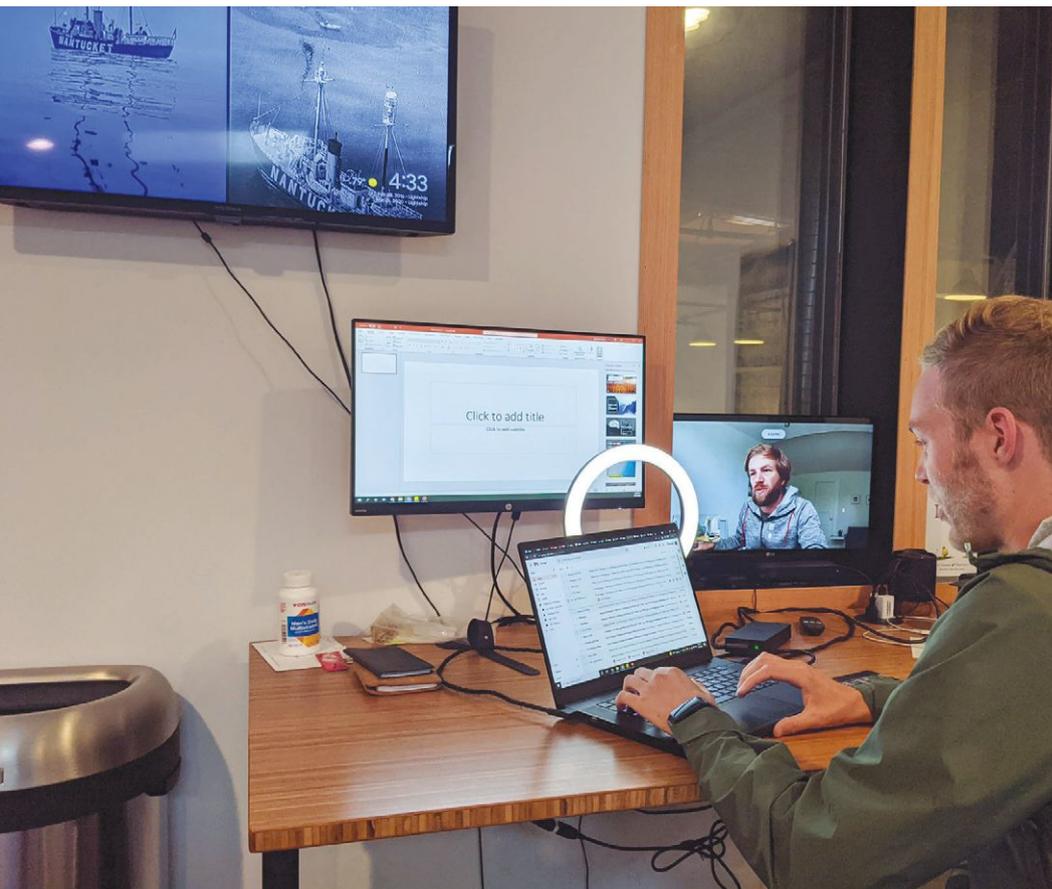
phone, he kept track of the different types of RVs he saw. By a landslide, the most popular was the trailer. It was a stroke of fortune since he has found that electrifying a motorhome would not be as nearly as feasible.

“Trailers are the vast majority of the market and they are way easier to electrify,” he said.

Back in San Francisco, Parker began an advisorship with Dorian West, one of the first dozen people hired by Tesla in 2005. West was the engineering leader for the Tesla semi-truck program for the first couple of years and now has his own company called Electric Hydrogen.

Parker said West loves camping and has gone RVing, so was naturally taken with his idea of electric RVs. West became Lightship’s first investor and helped Parker find a co-founder: Toby Kraus. Kraus was in the finance department for most of his time at Tesla from 2009-2014. He then took on the role of director of finance and strategy and later became vice president of an electric volt company for commercial vehicles called Proterra.

“The world is electrifying,” Parker said as he pulled up the slideshow for the first Lightship prototype on his phone. A key feature to Parker’s



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*“Everyone is just there to have a good time. It’s like the least-contentious setting you can imagine. There’s a ton of opportunity to build bridges between people, and by that I mean to build a common understanding of each other.”*

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electric trailer is how it compacts when on the road and tucks in behind the tow-vehicle to reduce drag.

“When you’re going down the road, you want something like an airplane fuselage, basically as low-profile and sleek as it can be, because the air should flow smoothly over it instead of hitting it like a wall, which is what happens on most RVs today,” he said.

When at a campsite, the roof of the trailer pops up to create an eight-foot ceiling inside. The roof has solar panels that can generate energy for onboard appliances and even charge the tow vehicle, if it is electrically powered.

“This is EV architecture,” Parker said. “The whole interior, the design and styling, needs to be updated, needs to be more modern. There really aren’t that many modern-design RVs out there.”

Parker is now focused on bringing together a team of engineers from diverse backgrounds to take this idea from the drawing board to the showroom. Diversity in hiring is especially important for Parker, who believes that a company is limited in who it can market to if its employees only reflect a single subgroup of the population.

“You and I both know the reputation of RVing as an industry and a pastime is stodgy, old and white,” he said. “There is so much more opportunity to expand it as a pastime to a truer cross-section of America than the industry is capable of doing right now.”

“I think the way that we reach a diverse group of people is by first getting representation in the business, for making a diverse, equitable and inclusive business. That’s an internal revolution that can lead to a serious competitive advantage when it comes to marketing and the growth of the company.”

Stepping out into the sunny San Francisco afternoon, Parker admitted he had seriously considered leaving the world of electrification and EVs just before his road trip.

Why the change of heart? Why double down and start his own electric-vehicle company?

“I realized that I only have one life,” he said. “I think climate change is a defining challenge for all of us in this generation and I like working on electric vehicles. It is a way that I can really contribute to the world.”

*Caroline Stanton grew up on Nantucket and now teaches elementary school in Oakland, California.*

Ben Parker’s road trip through the RV parks of the American West not only focused him on how best to electrify RVs, but gave him time to contemplate his own path forward.

Opposite: Parker meets with his business partner. His new company is named after the Nantucket lightships in the photos above his desk.

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*“This is EV architecture, The whole interior, the design and styling, needs to be updated, needs to be more modern. There really aren’t that many modern-design RVs out there.”*

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# The Collector

BY KEVIN STANTON

PHOTOS COURTESY OF  
ROB BENCHLEY AND BEVERLY HALL



*It is a rather plain looking white vase. It would be hard to blame you, if you passed it by with only the slightest interest. When **David Billings** looks at the vase, it conjures stories of the Silk Road, closely-guarded secrets and conversations between Marco Polo and Kubla Khan.*



### Jade Princess

Jade body burial suits were made for the very elite during the Han Dynasty (206 BC-220 AD). This one is composed of 2,500 carved jade tiles and stitched together with 14k gold wire. Below: David Billings assembling the Jade Princess.

**T**he Silk Road opened relationships with Persia. When Marco Polo landed on China's doorstep and made friends with the foreign ruler, Kubla Khan, he mentioned a beautiful turquoise glaze he had seen on his travels.

"The Persians wanted the white glaze, the pure-white glaze on porcelain that they had been making in China for five to six hundred years," Billings said. "It was unknown outside of China. No one else made it. It was a closely-guarded secret. The Persians did not get the white glaze. Kubla Kahn did get the ingredient for the turquoise glaze. That ingredient was cobalt and that was used in the blue and white. And it is made to this day."

That is what Billings calls context.

"It's that context that weaves it together in sort of this great mosaic of what was going on in whatever period.





#### **Storyteller**

Made of earthenware (pottery), this wonderfully-expressive storyteller would have accompanied the deceased into the afterlife. It dates from the Han Dynasty (206 BC-220 AD), essentially spanning the birth of Jesus Christ.

#### **Buddha Statue without head**

This is a large carved sandstone (1,200 lbs) figure of the Buddha of Sarnath. It commemorates where the Buddha preached his first sermon. It is from Sarnath, India, circa 475 AD, made during the Gupta period.

Whether it's the Neolithic period or the Ming Dynasty or the Ching Dynasty, or when they had dynastic changes that led to huge disruptions in everything, including the arts," he said.

When Marco Polo came home to Venice he was branded a liar and his recounting of his travels was known derisively as "the million lies."

Billings wants you to think of the grand scheme of things when you look at his collection of Chinese art and artifacts. He wants you to think about Marco Polo and his "million lies" and the fact that you can still buy this style of blue and white plate in the mall.

His passion for the objects comes from the research. He wants to know everything that was happening around the time when the object was made. He wants to know how it all played out across time.

Billings recalls a time early in his life collecting rocks from summer camp in New Hampshire. His parents weren't sure what to make of the fact he ditched all of the clothes in his suitcase to make room for his new collection. He was curious. He was born with the soul of a collector.

"There are two things that I can recall that I've done my entire life. One, I can't recall a time in my entire life when I didn't wear a coat and tie. I also can't recall not being a collector," he said.

Billings remains curious in his pursuit of Chinese artifacts. While most collectors hone in on one thing, his collection has a wide breadth and spans 6,000 years. It is something that you would see in a museum. So, it only makes sense that Billings and his wife, Beverly Hall, have taken to creating a museum at their home in Madaket.

He will be the first to admit the way he collects isn't the most conventional way to go about it. It all started with a book and two pieces of Asian art given to him as a gift. That book sparked an interest and is now one of 11,000 volumes in his library. He jokes that his collection did after all start before you could just look everything up on the Internet.

"When I got this book and these few pieces I was fascinated, and I started reading and I became even more



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*Billings wants you to think of the grand scheme of things when you look at his collection of Chinese art and artifacts. He wants you to think about Marco Polo and his “million lies” and the fact that you can still buy this style of blue and white plate in the mall.*

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**Guanyin**

This is a life-sized carved wood figure of the Bodhisattva Guanyin, the Goddess of Mercy, seated in the royal ease position.

She was purportedly brought to Nantucket in the early to mid 19th century on the return voyage of a whaling ship, possibly as ballast. She remained in the captain's family for several generations. She is from the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), probably early 17th century.






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*Billings and Hall have had a busy year. They have been working on a book, with photographer Rob Benchley, illustrating more than 600 objects from their collection.*

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fascinated. So, I got more books,” Billings said. “I was in the New York area so I would go into galleries and museums there. Then I would go to a couple of the auction houses to see what I was reading about.”

A majority of the objects in his collection were discovered in tombs. There are ceramic figures of storytellers, dancers, acrobats and even treasure chests. He even has a wonderful pigsty from the estate of Andy Warhol.

The purpose of these items was to keep the dead happy in the afterlife. Why a storyteller?

“Nothing keeps somebody happier than a jester, whether it’s Bob Hope or whoever,” Billings said.

“We know so much about some of these dynasties largely because

of the things that have been left behind, that were buried, in their tradition of the afterlife. We find out more all the time,” he said.

He tells the story of a brick in his collection that depicts a chariot. For some 50 years the scene depicted on the brick was thought to be that from a myth, until a farmer fell into a tomb and discovered a life-sized bronze version of the chariot.

When Billings decided to move to Nantucket year-round he was living in a small house on Milk Street. He began to move a majority of his collection to the island.

“People were very nice and invited me over. I was single. This was before I met Beverly, obviously. Of course, any time anyone asked I would tell them about my Chinese collection,” he said. “So, I thought I have to have people over. You couldn’t put more than 25

people in the room at most.”

He rearranged the place and started inviting people over. In the span of four nights he hosted four different parties. He always enjoys seeing what people gravitate toward. He tries to guess what they may be interested in before they come over. He is almost never right, but he is always delighted.

“You think they’re going to be really interested in this because they own a horse. Show them the horse. In this case I thought my friend was going to love this because he is a doctor, and in the Tibetan gallery we have a human skull that has been decorated and we had to have the permission of the Dalai Lama for it to be removed from Tibet,” he said.

His doctor friend wasn’t all that interested in the skull, but someone else was.

Sitting on his couch holding the skull was a polite 90-year-old woman. She was quietly turning the skull around in her hands, marveling at the meticulous gold inlay.

“She knew what it was. I didn’t want to say to her, ‘you know that’s a human skull you’re holding, right?’,” he joked.

Billings and Hall regularly host school field trips and invite guests to view the 4,000 artifacts in his collection. He enjoys sharing his knowledge just as much as he enjoys collecting. He doesn’t have a canned tour. Since he has acquired everything individually and done the research he can speak extensively about the collection.

“I love it when people don’t know anything. They ask the best questions. They are not encumbered by prejudice. Kids ask the best questions. If someone told me 20 years ago that I’d be interested in china and how it’s made I’d have said they were out of their minds.”

In his view he doesn’t own any of these objects. He is just a custodian taking care of them until they move on to their next home.

Billings and Hall have had a busy year. They have been working on a book, with photographer Rob Benchley, illustrating more than 600 objects from their collection; and working on an exhibit at the Nantucket Historical Association set to open in May 2022.

Among the objects planned for display are a statue of a goddess that came over to Nantucket as ballast on a whaleship, a jade burial suit that is the only one in the United States, and of course, a storyteller.

*Kevin Stanton is a Nantucket native and a graduate of MassArt, where he studied painting. He lives on island year-round with his wife Danielle and their dog Lou. His work can be viewed at [greyladygallery.com](http://greyladygallery.com)*



The cover of “Passion and Pursuit: The Billings Collection.” The book, which depicts 600 artifacts from his collection, is set to come out this winter.

Opposite; David and his wife Beverly Hall Billings with their trusty Corgis and their cat Caper.

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Crème Brûlée

# Cannabis Kitchen

BY BRIAN BUSHARD

PHOTOS COURTESY OF ANNA MONTGOMERY

*Anna Montgomery's dinners are not your typical four-course private affairs.*

*When Montgomery is cooking, you can expect everything from the cocktails to crab Rangoon to be **infused** with a healthy dose of **CBD** (cannabidiol), the calming chemical compound in marijuana, and **THC** (tetrahydrocannabinol), the psychoactive ingredient. Simply put, this food is going to get you high.*



Caramel apple, dark chocolate pecan and pumpkin sweet potato mini pies

“**E**veryone looks at edibles as brownies, cookies, chocolate bars and tinctures,” Montgomery said. “To create something that’s more of a food experience for foodies is what I’m looking for.”

Her dishes are well beyond the classic edible. They are no dorm-room pot brownies. Montgomery, a former pastry chef at Lemon Press, is cooking full-on meals: bay scallops with infused cannabis butter, cocktails with a THC tincture, and elaborate cakes, turnovers and cookies all baked with a certain amount of CBD and THC tailored to the tolerance level of whoever is eating it.

It is a philosophy of cooking that’s just getting its bearings around the



Passionfruit mango infused smoothie



Cinnamon sticky toffee pudding

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*“I’m trying to create something off the beaten path, having great food but also food that’s not too far out to discourage people from trying it.”*

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country, popularized by shows like “Bong Appétit” on Viceland, but not something Montgomery had seen before on Nantucket.

“I want people to have a better understanding so they’re not just dumping in a whole jar of (THC-infused) olive oil and getting super-high, because they will,” she said.

Her dinner service is called ACK Supper Club. Montgomery said it’s an entirely new way to reimagine cooking.

“People who like having a culinary experience, having a few courses for dinner, talking about the food and having local vendors provide things, alongside cannabis – that is what drew me into it,” she said. “I’m trying to create something off the beaten path, having great food but also food that’s not too far out to discourage people from trying it.”

For the past seven years, Montgomery has been a pastry chef who made pot brownies and cookies on the side. She came to Nantucket in 2015 to take a job at the Nantucket Golf Club, after graduating from the Institute of Culinary Education in New York.

She went to Colorado for a few years after that, once again as a pastry chef, this time specializing in wedding cakes. She came back to Nantucket in 2019 to take the job at Lemon Press.

When she started ACK Supper Club last summer, she had no idea how many people would want to get



Vanilla bean cannabis ice cream with salted caramel and a candied cannabis leaf



Strawberry rose jam pot tarts

*“Everybody eats with their eyes. Creating an image of something delicious that also has cannabis in it is a two-for-one, and it catches people’s attention because they want to know what it’s about.”*

high while they ate.

Then they started reaching out. From the woodwork they came for dinner parties, college reunions, anniversaries, and in one case, a 70th birthday party.

The food she started making was a reflection of what she likes to eat when she’s by herself. Local vegetables in the summer. Heartier plates in the fall. Bay scallops in the winter.

There’s also a question she keeps in her head when she’s trying to decide what to prepare for a client.

“What would a stoner want to eat?” she said.

“Everybody eats with their eyes. Creating an image of something delicious that also has cannabis in it is a two-for-one, and it catches people’s attention because they want to know what it’s about.”

She smokes her scallops with nori seaweed flakes, scallions, THC-infused sesame oil and a cannabis leaf for garnish. For dessert there’s a cereal-milk cinnamon roll with a THC-infused glaze.

It is the kind of comfort food she believes someone would want when they’re high. It’s no surprise they were a hit.

There was also the crab Rangoon with a THC-infused cream cheese. “I got super-stoned off of those,” Montgomery said. “I ate way too many of them. I realized I have to eat them low and slow.”

There’s a method to the madness, and Montgomery is well-suited to define that method. Not only does she run ACK Supper Club, she also runs the edibles program at ACK Natural, the island’s newest dispensary, which opened in July.

The edibles it sells are primarily gummies and chocolate bars. Each one has a specific dose of CBD and THC, carefully measured in a lab at the dispensary.

Some are designed to give you a calming feeling without the classic high sensation. Others are more potent.

Montgomery brings the same approach to the cannabis cooking she does at home. Before the dinners begin,



Tomato basil crème fraîche bisque

she likes to ask clients how often they smoke, how many milligrams they typically take in at one time, and how long they've been smoking.

"You have to calculate what their tolerance is and what they can handle, so that these people aren't going home annihilated," she said.

She also likes to start slowly. Too much weed can mean the munchies. It can also mean people walk away from the dinner still feeling hungry. Going too fast can mean not allowing your body to process the cannabis before dinner is over.

The idea, she said, is to get people high on good food, but not put them over the edge.

"You're not going to get that paranoia with an edible unless you're overdosing. And even if you are overdosing, you're probably just going to fall asleep," Montgomery said. "It's a science. The last thing I would want to do is make someone uncomfortable or too stoned."

"But there's so much of a stigma on it still. People are scared of it, scared they'll get uncomfortably high. But it has so many beneficial uses. It helps with anxiety, depression, sleep problems, loss of appetite. The wellness you get from this plant is beyond obvious. It's remarkable to me that people can't see that."

Earlier this year, a group of four women reached out to Montgomery to cook a dinner for a small get-together to celebrate their college reunion. There were appetizers. There was a chocolate espresso cake to finish the meal.

They told her they don't smoke much marijuana or eat many edibles. But the idea of a cannabis dinner sounded fun and they wanted to learn more about it, the same way someone would want to learn about knife skills or using local ingredients in the kitchen, Montgomery said.

"Going into it I knew if they were going to have that cake at the end of the night, I didn't want to dose each of them with more than 10 milligrams," she said. "Not having much of a tolerance, even if they're eating, still could have made them uncomfortable. With four of them, each getting a slice, they're getting seven or eight milligrams, depending on how big the slice was."

"When you smoke you get an immediate high, but edibles are nice because they take much longer to digest. It's actually more of a sedative. It eases the muscles in your body and has more of a soothing effect. That lasts anywhere from eight to 10 hours."

On top of being an innovative way to make a dinner, cooking with cannabis can also be a lucrative business. Montgomery said she can charge more for cannabis-infused dinners than she could for any other dinner. Marijuana isn't cheap, and the labor that goes into infusing butter or oil can be intensive.

By the time dessert wraps up, she said, the people she cooks for, chefs and foodies alike, tend to have a lot of questions about the whole process.

"The fact that people take interest in this in general is still exciting for me," she said. "In the end, people are just curious about it. The spectrum of people have been from college students to 80-year-old men that wanted to do a boat party with their guy friends." ///

*Brian Bushard is a staff writer at The Inquirer and Mirror, Nantucket's newspaper since 1821.*



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**Bay scallops** have been harvested in the waters off Nantucket since the 1870s. It is probably more accurate to say they have been **harvested for generations**, one generation following the next.

It was work both men and women did. There were **sons following their fathers** onto the water, **husbands and wives** working together in an open boat, dredging the harbor, or off Madaket, for that day's limit of scallops. People who never set foot on a boat made ends meet opening scallops.

The work created an **island culture**. It defined the off-season, including both those beautiful fall mornings and the **freezing, rough** weather of the winter.

Today, just a handful of scallop boats set off to meet the day.



# Scalloping





# Will town government be able to deal with the changes sea-level rise will bring?

BY BRIAN BUSHARD

PHOTO BY PETER SUTTERS

*You do not have to look any further than Sconset to get an idea of the political battle that's coming when the town tries to figure out how best to protect the island from rising seas.*

**S**pecifically, look at Sankaty Bluff, the epicenter of an ongoing and contentious debate that's played out in courtrooms and regulatory hearings for over two decades, where the opposing sides are so entrenched in a political debate that compromise can sometimes seem impossible.

At its heart is 950 feet of sand-filled geotextile tubing funded by a group of homeowners on Baxter Road, designed to protect the neighborhood, but caught in a fierce debate over its merits.

Both sides call the other side liars. One side wants the project removed, arguing it escalates erosion on downdrift beaches. The other side sees it as the silver bullet to saving the neighborhood. Neither side seems willing to compromise.

Now, the town has a highly-anticipated large-scale coastal-resilience plan from a coastal-engineering firm called Arcadis, which calls for everything from dune nourishment on the south shore and raised

roads and bulkheads, to a potential surge barrier running from Brant Point to the Nantucket Harbor Creeks, and in Sconset, for the geotubes to remain in place until Baxter Road is eventually relocated.

Select Board member Matt Fee believes the debate over the bluff will provide an outline for the political battle-royal that's coming islandwide.

"Getting it done is very difficult," said Fee, who has been trying repeatedly for the past three years to reach a compromise on the bluff project. "That whole thing is politically charged. We're learning stuff (from that debate) that has to be used for the rest of the island."

Town officials are now concerned about the chances of 40 multi-million-dollar projects in the coastal resilience plan making it through the gamut of town politics, starting with Town Meeting.

"If we can't convince the taxpayers, the island might as well bend over and kiss its ass goodbye," Conservation Commission vice-chair Ian Golding said.



PHOTO BY BRIAN BUSHARD

Earlier this year, the town contracted a coastal-engineering firm called Arcadis to start planning how it should respond to a projected five to nine feet of sea-level rise by the end of the century. Now that the recommendations are out, it's a matter of navigating a challenging political storm to take the proposals past the planning stage.

Right: Town coastal-resilience coordinator Vince Murphy.



PHOTO BY BRIAN BUSHARD

## Comprehensive Plan

The recommendations in the coastal-resilience plan run the gamut from living-shoreline-type projects, designed to work with the ebbs and flows of nature, to hard-armored projects, mostly downtown.

In Madaket, the plan is to replenish the beach with tons and tons of sand, to re-engineer the Ames Avenue bridge, and in some cases, move homes away from the shoreline. The plan also recommends raising Polpis Road at Folger's Marsh and Sesachacha Pond and Madaket Road at Long Pond to allow floodwater to push past existing salt marshes to the marshes on the other side of the roads, which can act as buffers.

Downtown, there are recommendations for raised wharves, roads and bulkheads, berms that can stop floodwater at certain points, and in the long-term, a potential harbor wall from Brant Point to the Creeks to attenuate pounding waves in a storm.

"The coastal-resilience plan is one giant compromise after another," Nantucket Land Council ecologist RJ Turcotte said. "This is going to take everyone to pull in the same direction. The idea of a

tight-knit community is going to be put to the test. Everyone is going to have to compromise. Nobody is going to be 100 percent satisfied."

That's been the case in Sconset for the past two decades.

Looking at the battle on the bluff, town officials wonder how the town can find a compromise on an islandwide coastal-resilience plan if there isn't any compromise on 950 feet of bluff.

This year alone, there's been a ConCom order to remove the geotubes following a violation of the Sconset Beach Preservation Fund's permit for the project. As soon as that vote was taken, the Select Board urged the ConCom to reverse its vote and consider the bigger picture of combating erosion. For three months, the two town boards refused to meet with each other until an appeal from the SBPF of the ConCom's removal order was filed, bringing the controversial project to court once again.

The SBPF has also threatened to throw in the towel and remove the geotubes, if the town couldn't back a proposed 3,000-foot expansion. Several town officials implored the group to wait for a new study from Arcadis, in hopes it could convince the ConCom to keep the geotubes on the beach. But that report only led to frustration

# Short-term coastal strategy 2020-2030



Draft proposals from the town's island-wide coastal-resilience plan call for a range of raised bulkheads, roads and wharves, elevated berms and building relocation along the downtown waterfront. In the long term, the report from Arcadis lays out a possible surge barrier (right) to protect the downtown from pounding waves during a storm.

from the SBPF when the ConCom upheld its vote to remove the project, and frustration from the ConCom, which believed the town didn't have its best interests at heart.

"The Select Board needs to value the opinions of their regulatory boards and their advisory committees," ConCom chair Ashley Erisman said. "Right now they've been holding meetings behind closed doors, not taking into account what their own appointed people are saying. That's not a good strategy long-term."

The Select Board, however, believes there's more to the issue than a single violation of the SBPF's permit. There's the bigger picture of combating erosion and protecting the neighborhood, the public road and access to historic Sankaty Head Lighthouse.

"I'm wondering what the Select Board means by 'big picture'," Erisman said. "The ConCom looks at applications before us and thinks about big-picture natural-resource issues, not bigger political issues."

## What Next?

It's been a debate playing out all year. There have been work groups seeking compromise. But they couldn't reach a resolution. The two remain at loggerheads about the future of the bluff. It's as much of a political debate as it is an ecological one.

The consensus on Baxter Road is that there is no consensus. After months of debate, even with the plan laid out by Arcadis, the question now is what happens next, and what happens when bigger and more difficult decisions must be made in an effort to mitigate rising sea levels driven by climate change.

"Nantucket is going to have to change if we're going to adapt to what's coming," said Jen Karberg, research program supervisor at the Nantucket Conservation Foundation. "We can't sit back and do nothing. We are going to have to compromise. We're going to have to decide where to take preparation value over ecological value or aesthetic value."

# Long-term coastal strategy 2050-2070



IMAGES COURTESY OF ARCADIS

*“If we can’t convince the taxpayers, the island might as well bend over and kiss its ass goodbye.”*

- Conservation Commission vice-chair Ian Golding

“The Coastal Resilience Advisory Committee is starting to talk about getting people on board, but it’s going to be difficult. We have to make sure we’re OK with the plan and approve it, and then figure out our role. But I worry that these are options that even when we get people on board, there’s a lot of money and a lot of permitting that’s going to slow it down.”

The risk of doing nothing, according to Arcadis, is severe. By 2030, it estimates approximately 1,051 buildings, or 8 percent of all structures on the island, will be exposed to storm water. By 2050, that number rises to 1,253, and 1,518, or 12 percent of all buildings, by 2070. Arcadis estimates that by that date some 54 miles of roadway and nearly 4,000 acres of open space will be lost.

“There will definitely be pushback (to the coastal-resilience plan),” Erisman said. “It’s easy to collect a group of people at Town Meeting to stack against one local issue.”

Then there are zoning and Historic District Commission regulations. Arcadis recommends limited growth in high-risk flooding areas through zoning and by encouraging building design that can withstand floodwater, and strategic retreat and relocation in Madaket and Sconset.

“It’s not going to be perfect. It’s going to be as good as our implementation of it going forward. We have a lot of things that should have happened, of which only a few have happened,” Fee

said. “We need to get to the next phase of this.”

Any of the 40 or so coastal-resilience projects coming over the next few decades would need to go to the ConCom for approval under state and local wetland-protection bylaws. For

funding, they would need to go to Town Meeting, unless they can be paid for privately by homeowners. If the projects are on town beaches, they would need a subsequent Town Meeting vote.

The report recommends the town start work by 2025 on dune restoration in Madaket, Coatue and Surfside at the sewer beds, structural work on the Ames Avenue bridge in Madaket, a plan for a flood barrier downtown along Easy Street from Straight Wharf to Steamboat Wharf, and a study of near-shore breakwaters along the Sconset Bluff.

From that point on, it will be a matter of finding state and federal grant money to help fund the projects. That’s going to be yet another challenge of turning recommendations into projects, town coastal-resilience coordinator Vince Murphy said.

“Nantucket will be vying for its share with large cities like Miami and New York that take large chunks of money,” he said. “For them, it’s a benefits-cost analysis. You look at the number of people and facilities in that area. When you compare the problems of Nantucket to the problems of really large cities, you’re not going to be benefiting as many people.”

On one hand, Karberg said, the work needs to start as soon as

Chris and Cheryl Emery's iconic stilt house in Madaket was taken down three years ago after a winter storm pounded the beach, depositing tons of sand in a washover between the beach and Hither Creek.



PHOTO BY NICOLE HARNISHFEGER

possible. But knowing the difficult road ahead, members of the Coastal Resilience Advisory Committee want to make sure the plan of attack is well thought-out.

“I think the timeframes (Arcadis has) given are in response to the predictions in the data,” Karberg said. The timeframes are what we have to work within but it’s going to be extremely challenging. We also can’t just say, ‘we have a coastal resilience plan, we can take a couple months off and breathe’.”

The town also has a number of other large-scale capital projects coming up over the next few years that will compete for funding.

Next spring’s Town Meeting could see requests for proposals like the \$6 million project to design a municipal building at 2 Fairgrounds Road, \$3 million for Department of Public Works property improvements, \$5 million to begin work on a parks and recreation master plan, \$11.15 million for the sewer department, including a possible sewer extension to Madaket, and \$16.4 million requested by the school for improvements to its sports complex.

“If we do nothing it’s going to get a lot more expensive,” Linda Loring Nature Foundation research director Sarah Bois said. “We might also need to have all those capital projects going through be re-thought with this in mind. You don’t want to put tax dollars into something that’s going to be impacted in the short term. It’s kicking the can down the road and not solving anything.”

Fee agreed.

“The question is who’s going to pay and how are we going to pay for it,” he added. “We have this every time we do sewer work, when people want someone else to pay for it. We need to have some principles on how we’re going to fund this so we can do as much of this as possible. If it all falls on the tax base, it’s going to have its knees chopped off.”

## Visionary Changes

In June, a group of architecture and ecology students compiled two semesters worth of designs that could completely reimagine the look of downtown: reclaimed saltmarshes and rain gardens by the town pier, raised boardwalks, wind turbines and harborfront houses relocated to higher ground.

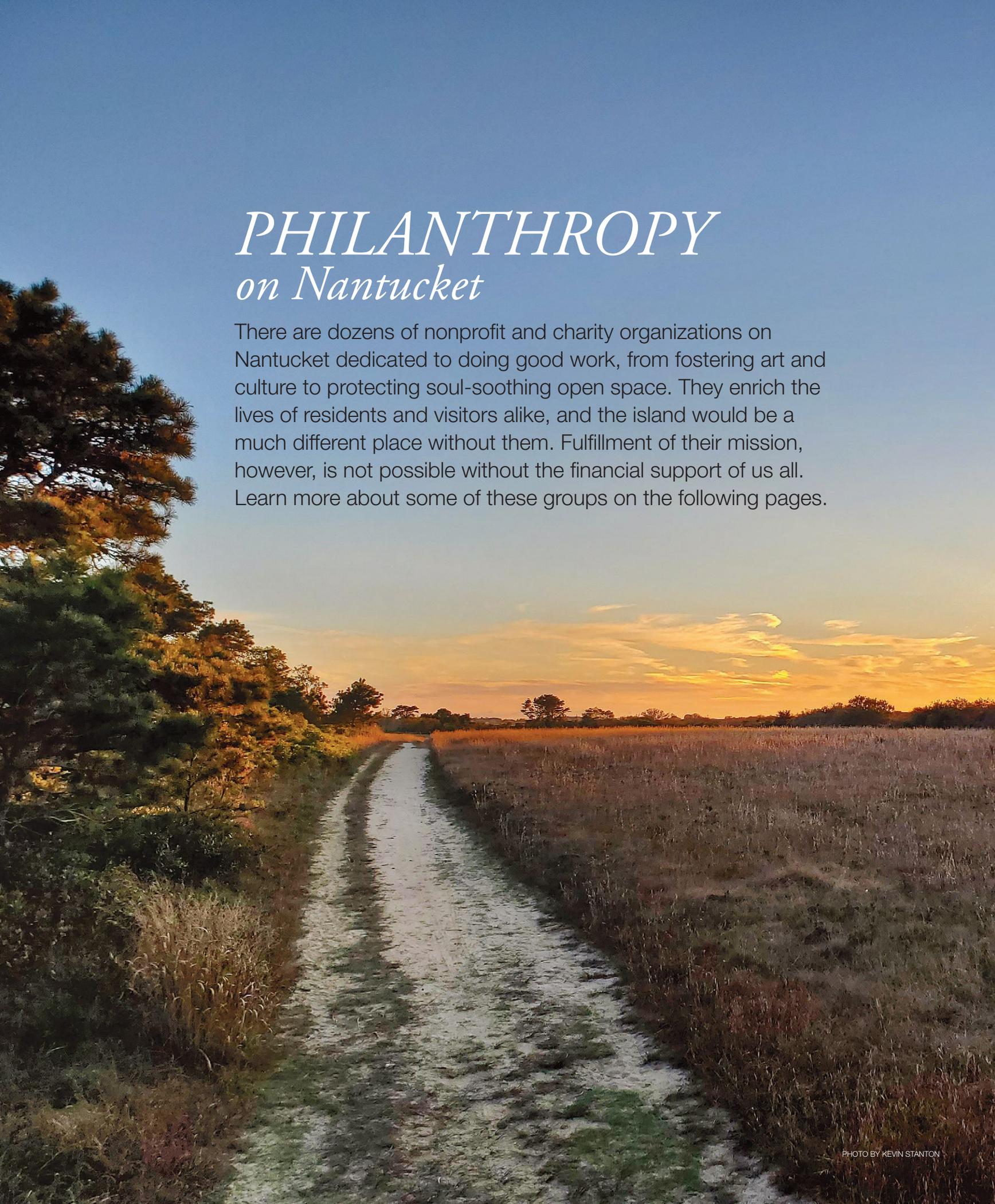
The ideas came from ReMain Nantucket’s Envision Resilience initiative. The renderings of a future Brant Point and Washington Street stopped people in their tracks. In those renderings, the longstanding summer houses were gone. There were raised jetties and wharves around the saltmarsh, now reclaimed to what it had been before the neighborhood was developed.

They were meant to be visionary. At the time, Nantucket Preservation Trust executive director Mary Bergman wanted to remind people that a similar level of change has happened before.

“These proposals might strike you as dramatic, but what’s more dramatic than moving the town of Sherburne to where it is today when the former harbor silted over? What’s more dramatic than traveling around the world in search for whales?” she said.

“Our thinking has to change and our policy has to change, and these thoughtful and exciting designs presented today are challenging. They challenge our notions of what makes Nantucket, Nantucket.” ///

*Brian Bushard is a staff writer at The Inquirer and Mirror, Nantucket’s newspaper since 1821.*



# *PHILANTHROPY* *on Nantucket*

There are dozens of nonprofit and charity organizations on Nantucket dedicated to doing good work, from fostering art and culture to protecting soul-soothing open space. They enrich the lives of residents and visitors alike, and the island would be a much different place without them. Fulfillment of their mission, however, is not possible without the financial support of us all. Learn more about some of these groups on the following pages.



# COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR NANTUCKET

*Supporting our Island's Most Critical Needs*



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## COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR NANTUCKET

### OUR MISSION:

To strengthen Nantucket now and for future generations through informed philanthropy and community leadership. In pursuit of this mission we act as a:

- **Charitable Resource** – by maintaining a trusted in-depth knowledge of the nonprofit sector, and by providing resources for donors, nonprofits and the community.
- **Grant Maker** – by awarding grants through the **Nantucket Fund™** and donor-directed funds that respond to pressing Island needs.
- **Convener** – by organizing community leaders to affect collaborative solutions for Nantucket's most critical needs.
- **Steward** – by creating and managing funds to ensure a permanent legacy for charitable solutions.



This past year has been the most active year in CFN history. Support our operations and help us continue to address the needs of Nantucket.

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[nantucketdreamland.org](http://nantucketdreamland.org) or email: [michelle@nantucketdreamland.org](mailto:michelle@nantucketdreamland.org)



## EGAN MARITIME INSTITUTE'S SEA OF OPPORTUNITIES

Sea of Opportunities is an educational experience and learning environment that expands students' knowledge of Nantucket's seafaring heritage. It gives local youth a platform to foster a deeper connection to their coastal community while introducing them to careers available in the maritime world.

As of September 30, 2021, Sea of Opportunities has facilitated 5,154 student experiences in a classroom or on the water since its launch in 2012.



The mission of Egan Maritime Institute is to inspire the appreciation and preservation of Nantucket's maritime culture and seafaring legacy. To learn more please visit [eganmaritime.org](http://eganmaritime.org)

Recently Egan Maritime Institute celebrated 30 years, which would not have been possible without the support and participation of our donors. They make extraordinary things happen for island youth, all the while sustaining the nation's first lifesaving museum, the Nantucket Shipwreck & Lifesaving Museum.

Founded in 1989 by Albert F. "Bud" Egan, Jr. and his wife Dorothy, Egan Maritime's mission is to preserve and celebrate the island's seafaring heritage. Throughout the past three decades, Egan Maritime's effervescent contributors have invigorated our mission, expanded our public offerings, and made a profound impression on Nantucket. The impact of their support is so much more than its sum. **Annually, they:**

- Provide maritime education to all island private and public schools
- Ensure all Nantucket students have access to on the water experiences
- Give island youth free Tall Ship experiences every summer on two to eight day sails
- Secure and sustain the Nantucket Shipwreck & Lifesaving Museum
- Honor the men and women who continue the island's inspiring lifesaving legacy



To help sustain our founders' vision we hope that you can become a member of the exclusive "Bud and Dorothy Egan Leadership Circle" with a gift of \$5,000 or more. But gifts of all amounts are truly and sincerely appreciated and go a long way to advancing our mission.

To make a donation or become a member please visit [eganmaritime.org/donate](http://eganmaritime.org/donate)

Our mailing address is PO Box 2923, Nantucket, MA 02584

If you have any questions please contact our Director of Development, **Jeff Coakley**, at **508-228-2505** or [jcoakley@eganmaritime.org](mailto:jcoakley@eganmaritime.org)

# YOUR STORY MATTERS

When you share the story of your struggles with depression, trauma, or other challenges, you have the chance to reorganize your sense of self and reclaim your power.

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At Fairwinds, compassionate, trained mental health and recovery therapists will listen to your story and help you make sense of it.

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**and more**



# LINDA LORING Nature Foundation



## 275 Acres of Outdoor Classroom

At the Linda Loring Nature Foundation, we promote environmental literacy through research, education and stewardship to empower our community to develop a sense of place by deepening their connection to the natural world.

Find YOUR place in nature!



ur founder, Linda Loring, was a devoted wildlife advocate and conservationist. She strongly believed in young people having the opportunity to learn about and enjoy the natural world. Our land is forever protected by a conservation restriction as a wildlife sanctuary and outdoor classroom for the community to experience nature.

Year-round, we are in classrooms educating Nantucket students, holding field trips on our trails, and hosting community tours and presentations on science and nature topics. Our 275-acre preserve is open daily as a place to take a quiet walk, listen for birdsong, or simply enjoy the natural landscape.

As we enter our 15<sup>th</sup> year as an organization, LLNF has developed strategic goals to further three critical components of our work.



### Stewardship and Conservation

Our vision is for a comprehensive, adaptive management plan that protects an undisturbed, undeveloped area for scientific research, education, and passive recreation with management practices that enhance the assets of the property while protecting native biodiversity.



### Research

By leading and facilitating ecological research while working to expand research tools and techniques, we will create new opportunities for meaningful discoveries in the natural sciences and build relationships to foster a research community.



### Education

We share the Foundation's property and Long Pond with students to connect them to the incredible natural resources found right here, at home. We are developing mentoring experiences for high school and college students to bring climate resiliency and solutions to the next generation of leaders.

Our supporters are an important part of our conservation legacy. Join us in our mission to foster environmental literacy for all at **LLNF.org!**

For over a century, the **NANTUCKET MARIA MITCHELL ASSOCIATION** (MMA) has educated and inspired the next generation of scientists and environmental stewards. Just as our namesake Maria Mitchell, we have mentored and launched countless students into their careers in the sciences and we have sparked an interest in the natural world for tens of thousands of families who have participated in our award-winning programs.

**This summer, 11,500+ learners of all ages explored the sky, land, and sea of Nantucket Island through our programs, events, tours, and facilities.**

Help us to continue creating opportunities for all to develop a life-long passion for science. Enable us to remain a leader in STEM education. Allow us to continue connecting learners of all ages to the natural world. Support us in honoring Maria Mitchell's legacy.

## **INVEST IN THE NANTUCKET MARIA MITCHELL ASSOCIATION TODAY**



[WWW.MARIAMITCHELL.ORG](http://WWW.MARIAMITCHELL.ORG)

**Science is our passion.  
Education and Research are our specialties.  
Nantucket is our classroom.**

**Maria  
Mitchell  
Association**



**NAMI**  
National Alliance on Mental Illness

**Cape Cod  
& The Islands**

on  
**Nantucket**



Home of

**NANTUCKET  
BEHAVIORAL  
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TASK FORCE**



**YOU'RE NOT ALONE.**

**SUPPORT**

Support is provided through local support group meetings, membership meetings, speaker events, and other services provided through our local office at 5 Mark Lane in Hyannis.

**EDUCATE**

Education is provided through classes and programs offered to both family members and individuals with mental illness as well as participation in community activities, resources, and a newsletter.

**ADVOCATE**

As a recognized voice on mental illness, legislative advocacy is provided at the local and state levels as well as through the national organization in Arlington, VA.

**OUR MISSION**

NAMI Cape Cod and The Islands serves individuals and their families who are affected by the broad spectrum of mental illnesses and neurological disorders through support, education and advocacy, and promotes mental wellness for all.

**OUR VISION**

NAMI Cape Cod and The Islands strives to provide an understanding of the broad spectrum of neurological disorders and differences. We provide a network of systems, support groups, and educational programming for individuals and their families.

We advocate for and support services for the mental wellness of our total constituency. Enlightenment and education of the general public on matters of mental health is part of the ultimate goal.

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NAMI Cape Cod & The Islands on Nantucket and The Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention Programming is Supported by:





The Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention has come under the NAMI Cape Cod & The Islands umbrella and as part of NAMI Cape Cod & The Islands on Nantucket offers the following services on the island...

**The A.S.A.P. mission is to foster a safe, healthy Nantucket community through education, awareness, advocacy and prevention strategies.**

- Family Awareness Program on addiction
- Community Awareness Program / Brain Matters
- Drug and substance misuse prevention
- Youth Empowering Lasting Leadership (Y.E.L.L)
- ACK Teen Collaborative Mentoring and Empowerment Programs
- Teen podcasts
- ACK Teen Collaborative
- Real Talk @ Teen Night
- Red Ribbon Week
- Collaboration with 'A Safe Place'
- Collaboration with 'Nantucket Behavioral Health Task Force'

**For more information,  
email [nantucketasap@gmail.com](mailto:nantucketasap@gmail.com)  
or call 508-778-4277.**

# What we're *doing on Nantucket*

## CURRENT NANTUCKET SERVICES INCLUDE

### THE DAVID GLIDDEN TRAVEL FUND

#### INDEPENDENT THERAPIST REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

providing sliding scale and free therapy for those in need

**COLLABORATION WITH AND EDUCATION** through the Behavioral Health Advisory Group

#### NAMI FAMILY-TO-FAMILY OFFERED IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH

A free 12-session course for family members of individuals with mental illness that teaches participants about various illnesses & disorders, medications, empathy, communication skills, and self-care.

### SUPPORT GROUPS

#### FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

Drop in support group for family and friends of people with mental health issues. (Meets the 2nd Tuesday of the month from 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm in the Sherbourne House Room at Sherbourne Commons.)  
Call **508-778-4277** for more information.

### UPCOMING PROGRAMS & SERVICES *Watch for fall 2021 and winter of 2022*

- Family programs and additional support groups in Spanish, Portuguese and English
- Educational mental health materials including our 86 mental health providers
- On-island addiction recovery program - (SOAP - Structured Outpatient Addiction Program).
- Anti-stigma campaign

508-221-6202

[NAMlonNantucket@gmail.com](mailto:NAMlonNantucket@gmail.com)

[www.namicapecod.org](http://www.namicapecod.org)

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Located on the east end of the Nantucket Atheneum's first floor, the Weezie Library for Children was built in 1996 with a generous grant from the Weezie Foundation and named in memory of Louise Frances Walker.





# NANTUCKET BOOK FESTIVAL

PRESENTED BY THE  
NANTUCKET BOOK FOUNDATION

## CELEBRATING OUR 10TH ANNIVERSARY

People were meant to be connected. We long to share stories and experiences, encourage and inspire one another, and explore new horizons together.

The Nantucket Book Foundation believes that reading broadens our horizons, creates connections, and inspires imagination. Books are a connective thread that brings our world together. We commemorate ten years of bringing the best and brightest authors to our island schools and community, and are committed to continuing our work into the future.



# CONNECTION

2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 **2022**

The Nantucket Book Foundation celebrates the transformative power of words to inspire, illuminate, educate,  
and to connect us to each other through our shared humanity.

We are building a community of readers and writers on and beyond Nantucket.

For more information, visit [www.nantucketbookfestival.org](http://www.nantucketbookfestival.org)



Skip Finley



Alice Hoffman



Mitchell Jackson



Jean Hanff Korelitz

## Save the dates for our



Imbolo Mbue



Tiya Miles



Azar Nafisi



Evan Osnos

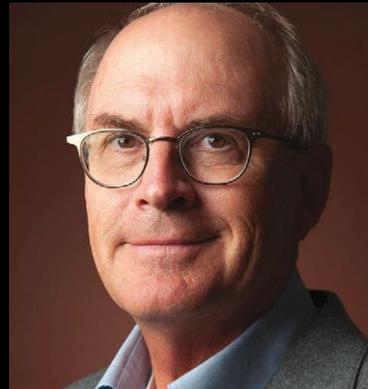
## 10th Anniversary Book Festival



Peter Osnos



Louise Penny



Nathaniel Philbrick



Sharon Stone

# June 16-19, 2022

The Nantucket Book Festival is grateful for our 2021 sponsors.



The Inquirer and Mirror  
Nantucket's newspaper since 1821





**Nantucket Boys & Girls Club Employee Housing Project**

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Serving those in my community brings me a sense of pride in my job.  
The live-work-play community the Nantucket Boys & Girls Club has provided  
through stable, year-round housing is exactly what work/life balance is all about.

— Heather McAuley

Heather is a Youth Development Professional  
living in Club housing with her husband and  
two school-aged children

## Did you know?

No other  
Boys & Girls Club  
in America offers  
employee housing.



## Club Employee Housing Stats



## Employee Housing Equals Staff Retention & Stability



Executive Director



Athletic  
Director



Program  
Director



Teen  
Coordinator



Communications  
Director

## The Club receives **no** public funding.

**How can you help?** The Club is always looking for hard working professional staff and volunteers. We are seeking bilingual community members to work, volunteer and coach at the Club year round.

**To find out more visit [nantucketbgc.org](http://nantucketbgc.org)  
or call 508.228.0158**

**Schedule your tour today!**

**[nantucketbgc.org](http://nantucketbgc.org)**



The Nantucket Conservation Foundation's Science and Stewardship Department undertakes focused research, inventory and monitoring projects aimed at providing increased understanding of the rare resources found on our properties. This information is used to make well-informed ecological management decisions and develop detailed plans for the stewardship of the Foundation's conservation lands. To accomplish this, we work closely with our Properties Maintenance staff, seasonal field assistants, volunteers, local conservation partners and outside researchers.

The Foundation strives to be an ecologically-responsible steward of its many unique properties by basing management and conservation goals on current, accurate research.

**Please support our work on Nantucket and become a member today.**





# A healthy community starts here.

7 days a week.  
365 days a year.



*Abby and Bob Alario with their son, Jack.*

**W**hen Abby and Bob Alario decided to start a family, they wanted their medical care delivered with compassion, kindness, and a sense of community. After careful planning and consideration, they knew the best place to meet their needs was Nantucket Cottage Hospital.

“We had lots of friends and family members that have had babies in major cities and realized a lot of hospitals treat labor and delivery like a factory line and don’t provide dedicated care,” said Bob. “We wanted something more, and we are so grateful we chose Nantucket Cottage Hospital.”

As it turns out, Abby’s delivery was more complicated than anyone expected. After 10 hours in labor, Abby was rushed to the operating room for an emergency c-section, where Jack Sampson Alario was safely delivered.

As Jack was passed from mother to father, the joyful occasion took a turn for the worse.

“The fantastic team of nurses monitoring me realized that I was hemorrhaging, diagnosed the issue and rushed me back into the operating room, all within about 30 minutes,” said Abby. “If it wasn’t for the nurses’ constant presence,

diligence and care, we would have missed it and this life-threatening situation may have gone undiagnosed.”

As the NCH medical team worked through the night to save Abby’s life, nurses stayed by her side to calm her and guide her through the procedures. “It was terrifying but there was constant reassurance and someone leading me through the steps. It could have been so overwhelming, but they were with me at all times,” said Abby. “It would have been far scarier if we were in a different environment.” After extensive intervention, Abby was cleared to resume her recovery and return to her family waiting outside the operating room.

“The next day I was thinking about how our friends didn’t get the care they needed during delivery because doctors didn’t have enough time to spend with them, it was comforting knowing we went through this scary and joyful experience with the best possible care,” said Bob. “My mother worked in a hospital, I spent a lot of my life around nurses, I know the difference between good care and bad care, and this was great care.”



♥ Your support of the hospital is an investment in our community.

[nantuckethospital.org/donate](https://nantuckethospital.org/donate)

We preserve and interpret the history of Nantucket through our programs, collections, and properties, in order to promote the island's significance and foster an appreciation of it among all audiences.



ACKHISTORY

The NHA celebrates community with programs, exhibits, events, and scholarly lectures aimed to entertain and foster the many groups it serves.

Gifts to the Annual Fund support every aspect of the NHA and allow the organization to fulfill its mission through outreach and collaborations.



**NANTUCKET**  
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Support the NHA with a gift to the Annual Fund today.

Visit [NHA.ORG](http://NHA.ORG)  
or call (508) 228-1894



# Nantucket Land Council

The Nantucket Land Council, Nantucket's only environmental advocacy organization, was founded in 1974 by concerned Nantucket citizens who cherished the island's pristine natural setting and who were troubled by increasing environmental degradation and loss of Nantucket's rural character. Throughout the past 47 years, the nonprofit organization's leadership and membership remain committed to the original purpose of **defending the island's natural resources** in addition to addressing current issues such as **coastal resiliency**, through "planning, protecting and preserving", in particular via the Water Fund – a donor restricted fund to protect Nantucket's **marine and fresh water resources**.

Double Your Impact! Make a donation before Dec 31, 2021 and your donation will be doubled thanks to a \$50,000 matching grant!

Scan the code to make your donation today!



## NLC JOINS WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE!

*The Nantucket Land Council is thrilled to officially join the Waterkeeper Alliance and administer the first ever Nantucket Waterkeeper program. The Waterkeeper Alliance is an international organization spanning six continents and over 350 nonprofit member organizations. Every single member has the same stalwart goal- swimmable, fishable, drinkable waters for all.*

# #NantucketTrashTag Makes an Impact!

The Nantucket Land Council along with Nantucket DPW and Nantucket Clean Team joined forces again this summer to clean up our island roadsides, bike paths and beaches during Nantucket TrashTag. Thanks to our over 50 enthusiastic and spirited volunteers, we were able to clean dozens of bags of plastic bottles, cans, food wrappers, cigarette butts, and even a full sized camping tent complete with poles and tarp, to help keep our island clean and beautiful. Join the NLC Associates for next summer's Nantucket TrashTag in August 2022. Interested in joining the NLC Associates? Email [meg@nantucketlandcouncil.org](mailto:meg@nantucketlandcouncil.org) for more information! Follow @nantucketlandcouncil on Instagram and Facebook for updates on all NLC events and programs.



**T**he Nantucket Land Council has been working diligently in 2021 to protect and preserve our island's natural and water resources through our Advocacy, Research, Education and Land Protection programs. Nantucket Waterkeeper and NLC Ecologist RJ Turcotte works with research specialists to execute a number of projects from year to year; recently this has included an eelgrass seeding project in Nantucket Harbor, our eelgrass health research in Madaket and Nantucket harbors, a green crab molting study and green crab population research, Harmful Algal Bloom studies in

Gibbs and Capaum ponds, small pond water quality studies island wide, and much more. The NLC maintains over 90 Conservation Restrictions and actively seeks out additional land to protect each year. NLC Staff attend all local regulatory meetings to monitor development proposals that threaten our precious environment. In addition, the NLC continued our free, community Clean Water webinar series - watch all past episodes on our YouTube channel. We invite you to learn more about the NLC at [nantucketlandcouncil.org](http://nantucketlandcouncil.org) and follow us on Instagram and Facebook @nantucketlandcouncil.

508-228-2818

[nlc@nantucketlandcouncil.org](mailto:nlc@nantucketlandcouncil.org)  
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- understand your disease, treatment, and options
- navigate the healthcare system
- manage and relieve symptoms
- make decisions about care and advance care planning
- cope with the stress and emotional impact of your illness
- coordinate care
- attend to spiritual issues, depending on beliefs



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- **Grief Support** - for anyone who has experienced loss



## Yoga 4 Cancer Care

yoga and meditation to reduce stress and enhance well-being for cancer patients

## Volunteers

- provide assistance and companionship
- offer respite for caregivers

## Marla Ceely Lamb Cancer Travel Fund

reimbursement for travel related expenses for cancer patients who need to go off island for treatment and care

# WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

palliate/ pal/li/ate

- to ease symptoms
- to soothe, calm, or comfort
- to make less severe, alleviate

MOST palliative care is NOT hospice.

Hospice is a type of palliative care towards the end of life.

Palliative care is for all stages of illness, curable or not.

**PASCON IS NOT HOSPICE**

## Annual Community Events



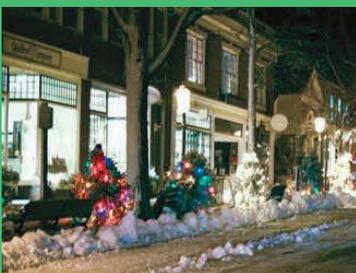
### Daffodil Planting

Honoring caregivers and volunteers; spreading hope.



### Tree of Remembrance

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### Art Show

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## *Setting the stage & making magic on Nantucket since 1956*

when *Heaven Can Wait* was performed at the newly founded Theatre Workshop of Nantucket. From those first performances on Straight Wharf to its current home inside Bennett Hall at 62 Centre Street, Theatre Workshop has been entertaining audiences and enriching island life for 65 years.

This year's season began with the mega-hit *Mamma Mia!* which performed throughout July and August at a specially built outdoor stage at Bartlett's Farm. "The Bartlett family has been incredibly generous," said Justin Cerne, TWN's Producing Artistic Director. "This relationship represents the spirit of Nantucket, two long-standing island institutions working together to make something magical." With a cast of 12, several from the Broadway and touring versions of the show, and with the beautiful sunsets at the farm, each evening was pure Nantucket magic.

Later this summer, when the theatre received approval from the professional union, Actor's Equity Association, to resume indoor productions after the long COVID pause, TWN staged Rodgers and Hammerstein's *A Grand Night for Singing* in Bennett Hall. The joyful reimagining of hits from the R&H songbook was a nod to both the history of Theatre Workshop and how far the organization has come as a professional theatre.

This fall Theatre Workshop followed Broadway's lead and implemented new COVID safety protocols for audience members. On stage, Cerne returned to a staple of the last several seasons, with the great American playwright Neil Simon's *London Suite*, which brought several of the actor's from 2019's hit production, *California Suite* together on stage again.

The 65th Season will wrap up with *Forever Plaid: Plaid Tidings*, the funny and joyful holiday version of *Forever Plaid*, which will run over Thanksgiving and Christmas Stroll weekends re-establishing the TWN holiday show as a 'can't miss' part of Nantucket's traditional holiday festivities.

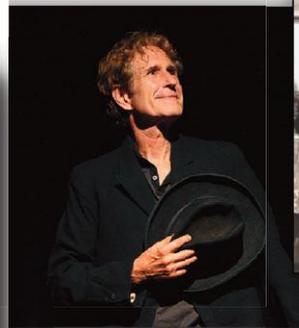
*"This Season is a celebration of who we are as an organization..."*



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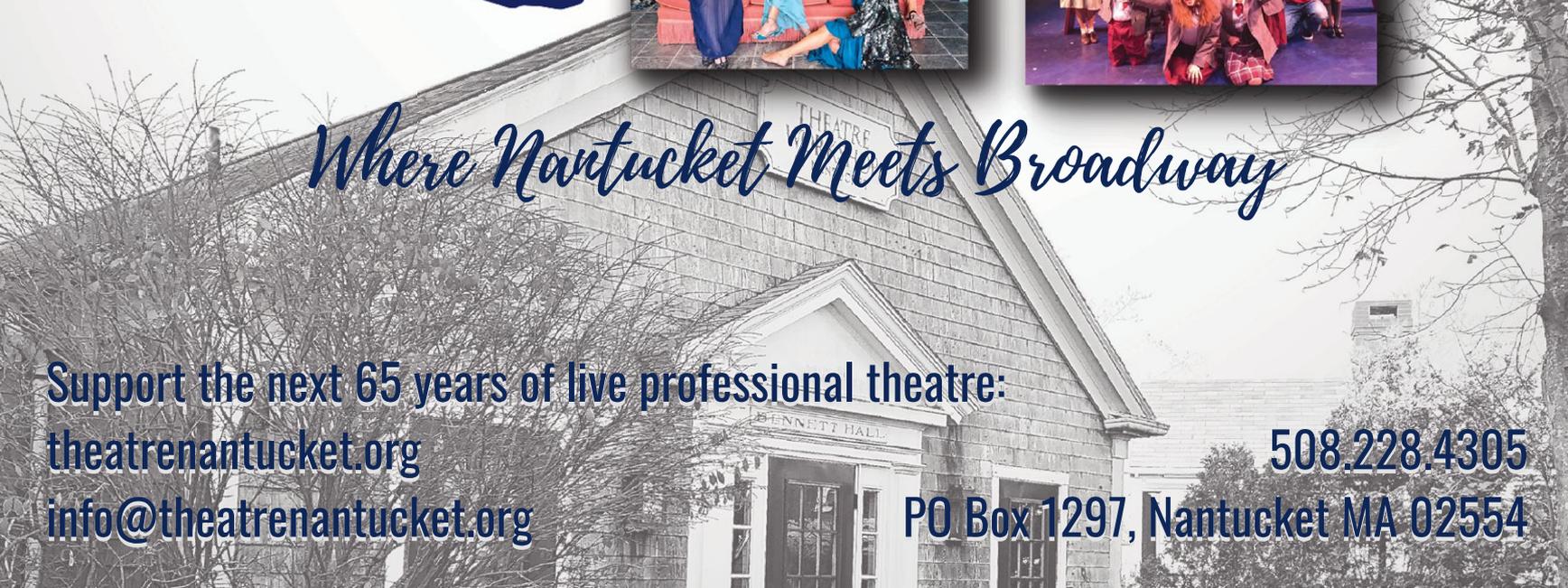
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# East Meets West

BY KEVIN STANTON  
PHOTOS BY CHRIS TRAN



**Noemi Capizzo** doesn't think making **dumplings** is an overly-complicated process. As we sat in her commercial kitchen and talked, she effortlessly folded them one by one until she had a sheet-pan full.

**I**t's something she learned from her mother at a young age growing up in Liuzhou, in the south of China.

Food can be comforting and bring you back to another time and place. For Noemi, her new dumpling business not only fills a niche on Nantucket, it also shares her culture and helps make sure her children don't forget their roots.

"Growing up my mom made them. It is a family tradition, especially during Chinese New Year," she said. "I want my kids to know where they're from, because here, there is no Chinese food. I keep reminding my kids that they are half Chinese."

Noemi is married to Scott Capizzo, son of the late Whalers football coach Vito Capizzo. The idea of bringing the food she grew up eating to Nantucket started as a COVID-19 project. The dumplings she sells out of Mark and Eithne Yelle's commercial kitchen on Young's Way are frozen and come 20 to a bag. All you need is boiling water to drop them into.





She has nine different flavor combinations and three different sauces that can be ordered on her website [noemidumplings.com](http://noemidumplings.com) and picked up at 20 Young's Way. I had the pork and leek and they were delicious. The filling was very flavorful and the dumpling wrapper had a beautiful texture to it.

If you are feeling fancy you can add some chopped scallions and sesame seeds. She said they can also be added to a broth to make a delicious dumpling soup.

Noemi said she and her family regularly take day-trips off-island, just to eat at restaurants that remind her of home. When her mother calls, she only speaks Chinese with the children. About once every two years they go to China to visit family. She jokes with her husband Scott about how he isn't an adventurous eater and the food on their first trip was a little outside his comfort zone.

"He kept eating KFC, McDonald's and Pizza Hut. At first he was very hesitant," she said.

He eventually warmed up to some of the local cuisine.

"Going over there, it was mind-blowing. Especially being from Nantucket. It's so different from anything I've seen," Scott said.

Nantucket has come a long way from the Yankee cooking of its past. Jamaican food has been featured on the menu at Stubby's for some time and newer places like the Nantucket Trading Post and the Salvadoreña Market showcase Latin-American cuisine. Food representation in a small town is important. It can make people feel like they are home and not just visitors.

Noemi's Dumplings are a new and bright spot on Nantucket. I hope we start to see more people bring their culture's food out from the shadows of kitchens across the island and into the spotlight. ///

*Kevin Stanton is a Nantucket native and a graduate of MassArt, where he studied painting. He lives on island year-round with his wife Danielle and their dog Lou. His work can be viewed at [greyladygallery.com](http://greyladygallery.com)*

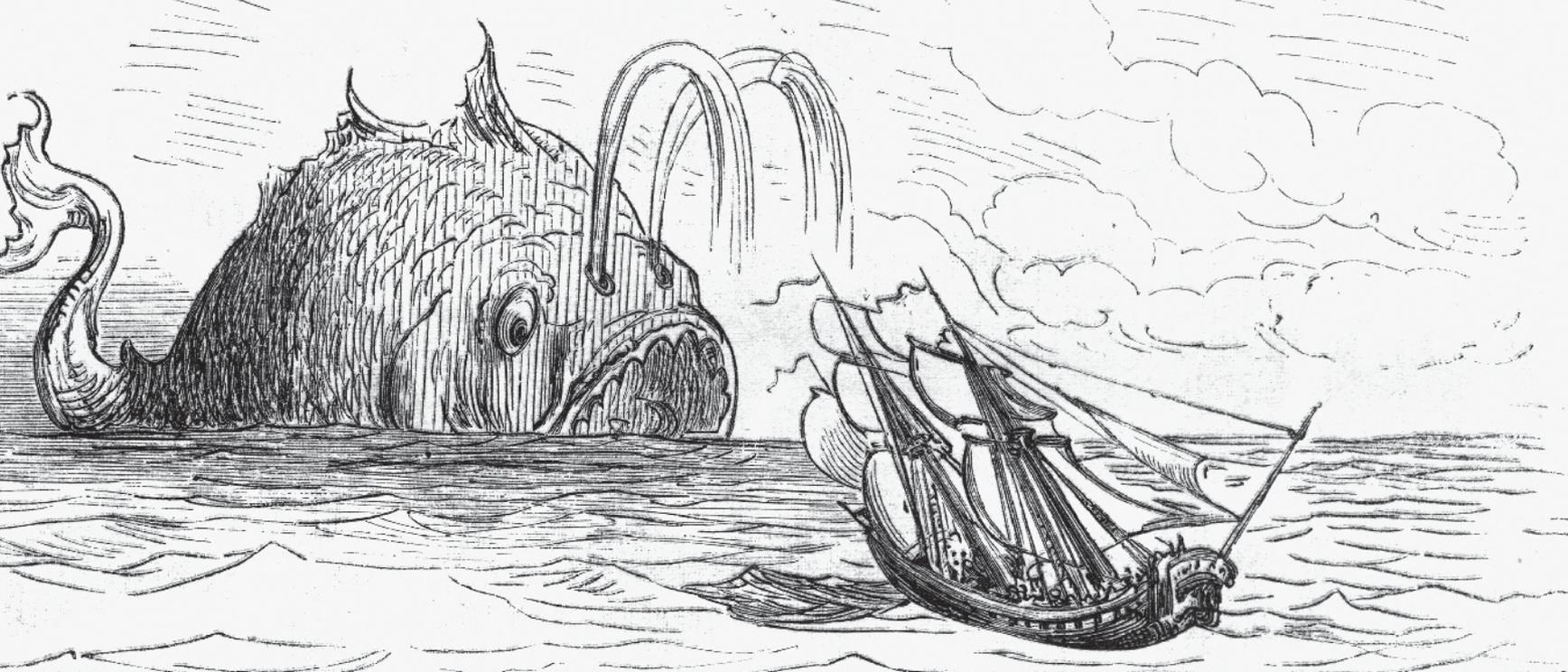
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IN THE GARDEN

# *Microgreens*

A Tray of Summer  
in the Depth of Winter

BY AIDAN FEENEY



*“People ask me what I do in the winter, when there is no baseball. I’ll tell you what I do. I stare out the window and wait for spring.”*

– Hall of Fame baseball player Rogers Hornsby

W

inter can be a time of despair for gardeners. To the uninitiated, it is hard to describe how a gardener feels perusing the produce aisles of Stop & Shop in the winter months. California-farmed greens are no substitute for a fresh salad from your own garden. Luckily, there is a way to move your garden indoors during these dark and cold months.

Microgreens are a relatively new culinary trend. You have probably seen them accentuating plates at high-end restaurants, used for both visual appeal and to pack flavor into a dish. Originally, I was reluctant to try growing microgreens because I saw them as impractical and nothing more than an ornamental garnish.

Since that time, however, I have come to appreciate them as food. Fresh microgreens have an exquisite texture that is crisp yet delicate, and the best way I can describe their flavor is supercharged.

Microgreens are similar to sprouts, which most people are familiar with already. The difference between the two is that microgreens are grown in soil and sprouts are germinated in water without the use of soil or a potting mix.

The fact that microgreens are grown in soil opens up a lot more possibilities for crop selection. With sprouts, you need to grow fast-germinating crops, otherwise the seeds will rot in the water. With microgreens, there is a learning curve with each type of crop and some are much harder to grow than others, but with that said, people grow a wide variety of crops as a microgreen, including

corn, cilantro, amaranth, nasturtium and any other vegetable you can think of.

Growing your own microgreens, whether in the winter or the summer, gives you access to fresh, nutritious greens all year long. They require very little space and a modest investment of time and money. In the summer months, they can be grown on your deck. In the winter they can be planted and germinated anywhere indoors, and once they’re germinated, all they need is a sunny window.





## What you need to grow microgreens

- **Potting mix:** A high-quality, compost-based potting mix is essential to growing high-quality and nutritious microgreens. I have seen other growers try to grow them in soilless substrates, but the greens do not look as vibrant and robust as those grown in an organic potting mix. My first choice for a potting mix, whether for microgreens or for starting vegetable transplants, is the Fort Vee mix by Vermont Compost Company. Other potting mixes worth a try include Coast of Maine, McEnroe and Fafford.

- **Seeds:** In my experience, if you want consistent results, it pays to buy seed from reputable companies, even if cheaper options are out there. Johnny's Select Seeds of Maine offers the highest-quality seeds available, along with great customer service and a website that has technical information for growing most crops. High Mowing Seeds of Vermont is another great company with a lot of microgreen seeds to choose from. Truleaf Seeds is a newer company that offers a lot of microgreen seeds. I have ordered a few items from them that seem to be of good value for the money spent.

- **Growing Trays:** You will need several trays to fill with soil for planting your microgreens. I use 10-by-20-inch trays that are 1.5 inches deep with a 95 percent solid bottom. The 10-by-20-inch trays are standard for greenhouse production, so you will be able to find these at any greenhouse or garden-supply outlet. They can be purchased online from Johnny's or any number of places.

- **Digital Scale:** While not entirely necessary, digital scales are very useful for weighing out the amount of seed you would like to use for each tray. Being able to measure the amount of seed per tray accurately will help you get consistent results.

- **Sharp Knife/Scissors:** Once it is time to harvest, you will be very happy to have a sharp tool to harvest with. Microgreens are very delicate, and you do not want to tear and rip them from the tray with a dull cutting tool. A sharp knife or pair of scissors will make the harvest much easier and help you keep your greens clean and in good shape.

- **Watering Can/Spray Bottle:** Once germinated, your microgreens will need water regularly. You will need to find a way to water them evenly and gently that best fits your situation, whether you are growing indoors or outside.



Radish

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*Once the soil is tamped down and flat, water the potting mix thoroughly but gently as to not disturb the soil. This will ensure adequate moisture to germinate your seeds.*

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Pea Shoots

## What to grow

- **Radish Microgreens:** Radish microgreens are a good crop to try out first. They are fast-growing and relatively simple to grow, so a good choice for beginners. They also have a potent, spicy flavor that is a great way to jazz up any meal or salad.

For varieties, I like to grow China Rose from Truleaf and Confetti Mix from Johnny's. Both are colorful varieties with a lot of red, pink and purple on the leaves and stems.

To prepare your tray, fill it with potting mix and tamp the soil down until you have a smooth and flat surface to work with. This can be done by stacking trays on top of one another or by using a piece of plywood cut out to fit your trays.

Once the soil is tamped down and flat, water the potting mix thoroughly but gently as to not disturb the soil. This will ensure adequate moisture to germinate your seeds. Next, sprinkle the radish seed evenly across the top. This works best if you work methodically from side to side.

I use a small cup and gently shake the seeds out onto the soil. You want to cover your tray with seeds, but not so heavily that seeds are piled onto one another. I weigh out two ounces of seed for this.

If seeding multiple trays, you can stack them three high to ensure even germination. Good soil contact speeds up the germination process and helps you grow a uniform tray. If growing a single tray, you can cover it with a wet paper towel or simply an empty tray with some weight in it. If all goes well, the seeds should be germinated three to four days later and your tray should be ready to harvest about seven days after seeding.

- **Pea Shoots:** Pea shoots are another great type of microgreen to start with, as they are pretty easy to grow and harvest. They have a great yield per tray, making the most use of your space, and they have a sweet, crunchy pea flavor that is great in salads or stir-fries. I recommended trying Dwarf Sugar Gray and Spotted Pea for varieties.

One worthwhile trick for peas is soaking your seed in water prior to planting. This will make the crop germinate faster and more evenly and shorten the time to harvest. I weigh out about 10 ounces of dry seed per tray and soak it in water for eight to 12 hours.

After soaking the seed, strain the water, re-weigh your seed if seeding more than one tray and divide the new weight by the amount of trays to be seeded and plant the same way as described for the radish.

Stack the trays no more than three high. Peas typically take three to five days to fully germinate, at which point unstack/uncover your trays. Peas normally take seven to nine days from seeding to harvest.

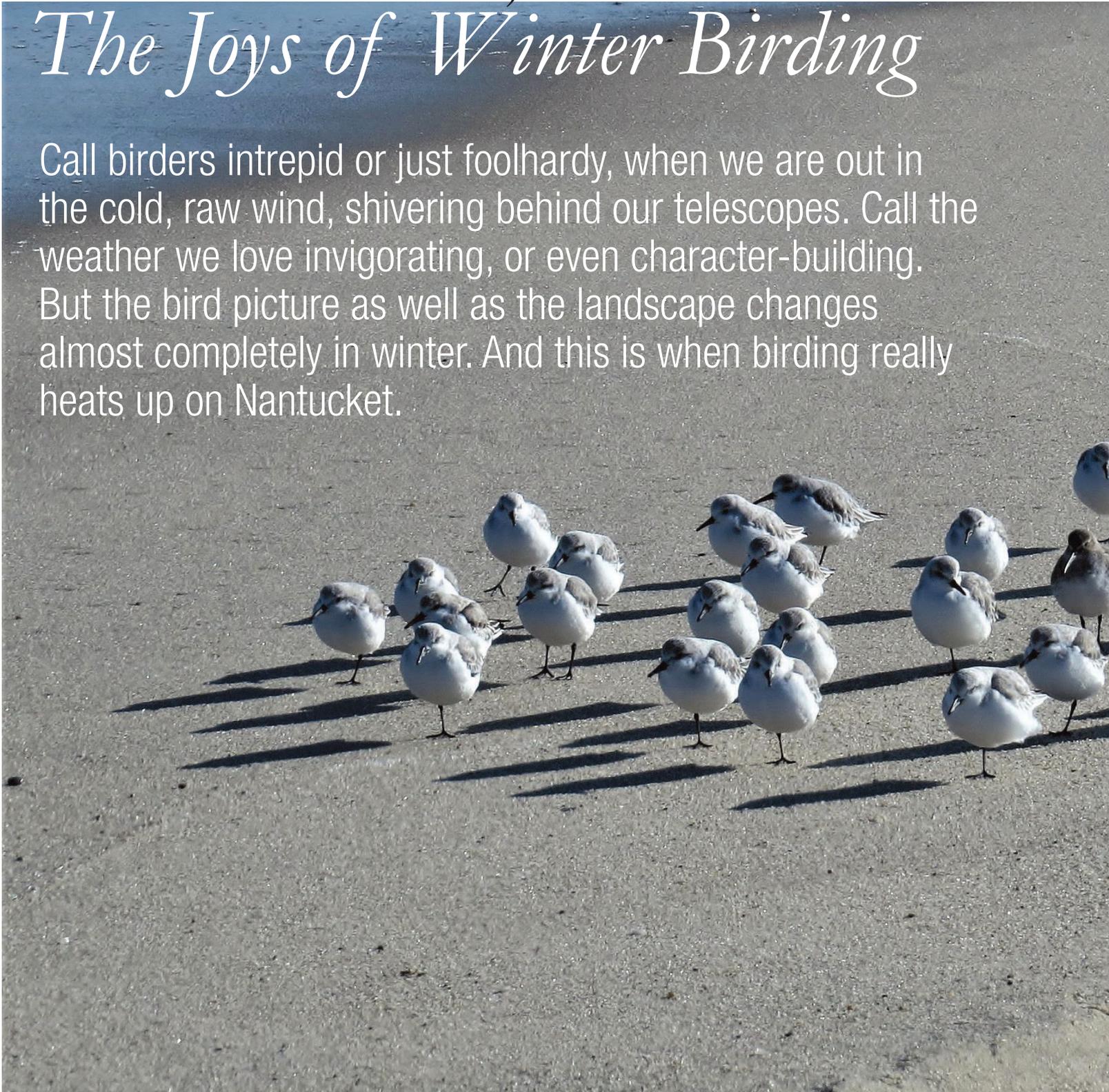
Truth be told, I am still a relative novice when it comes to growing microgreens. The great thing about them, though, is that they grow so fast they provide you with many opportunities to learn from mistakes and make improvements. What other vegetable crop allows 50 opportunities for improvement in a single year? This will help you fine-tune your system until you are growing more greens than you can eat. Best of luck. ///

*Aidan Feeney is the owner of Fog Town Farm on Nantucket and a regular contributor to Nantucket Today.*

# Cold Toes, Hot Birds

## *The Joys of Winter Birding*

Call birders intrepid or just foolhardy, when we are out in the cold, raw wind, shivering behind our telescopes. Call the weather we love invigorating, or even character-building. But the bird picture as well as the landscape changes almost completely in winter. And this is when birding really heats up on Nantucket.



BY VIRGINIA ANDREWS



DUNLIN WITH SANDERLINGS PHOTO BY TRISH PASTUSZAK

One question birders always ask as colder temperatures creep in is, “will we see any snowy owls this year?” Alas, there’s really no answer until one actually alights. Highly nomadic, these semi-magical birds can be, or not be, just about anywhere. Some years, we just totally strike out. Other years, they are all over the place. Even so, sighting one usually requires just plain luck. But this makes it seem even more like a personal gift.

Hope draws birders to the beaches, where the bleak landscape reminds wandering snowy owls of their Arctic tundra home. There’s food for them there. They might catch a rabbit or some shorebirds, or even a luckless snow bunting or three.

On warmer days, plump and tasty voles might wake up and be active too. An owl with a bulging crop is a happy owl. But don’t be fooled by every white blob sitting up on a dune. Washed-up buoys, bleach bottles or even balloons can look so temptingly like a white bird. One clue is, bleach bottles don’t turn their heads. See their yellow eyes and you’ve got one.

But even without promising an owl, the winter beach has its rewards. Thanks to our location away from the mainland, Nantucket gets pelagic species that usually require a boat trip to see.

Consider the northern gannet, a more reliable winter treat. Handsome and blue-eyed, almost as big as an albatross, their mostly white plumage stands out starkly against a pewter sky. A magnificent sight, they soar on black-tipped, six-foot wings. Even in silhouette they can be recognized by their streamlined shape, pointed at both ends. With rounded heads and rapier-like bills, southern birders will recognize them as cold-water relatives of the sulids, aka boobies. But preference for cold water aside, there is another difference. Gannets are champion divers.

Few birds show more exuberance than a flock of diving gannets. Unlike ospreys, which grasp fish in their feet and rarely submerge, gannets plunge bill-first into the sea with a giant splash. They can retrieve their food from depths of over 70 feet, and use their wings to swim under water as well as propel themselves with their feet.

Nesting in large colonies on rocky cliffs at Cape St. Mary’s in Newfoundland, in winter they range across the North Atlantic from European coasts to the North American continental shelf. It’s worth the effort to see their superb adaptation to conditions that challenge us.



SNOWY OWL PHOTO BY VERN LAUX

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*The beach has other delights, too. From Low Beach to Great Point, wind and tide sometimes bring in a gull show, sometimes called a gull soup, where Iceland, glaucous or Bonaparte's gulls mingle with our year-round herring and great black-backed gulls.*

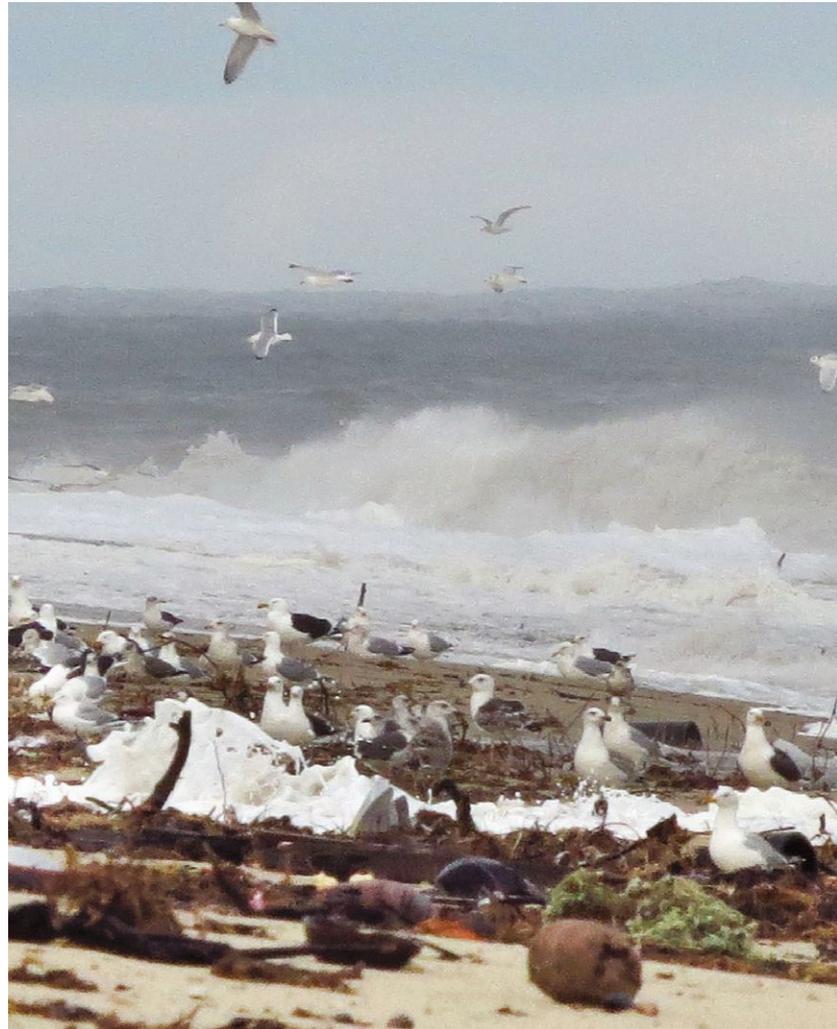
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Lesser black-backed gulls, a European species that has recently moved to North America and likely breeds during summers in a yet-to-be-discovered location, are also on many a birder's wish list. With travel still a dicey pandemic proposition, it isn't always necessary to get on a plane when the birds come to us.

Sanderlings, which nest in the far north of an Arctic summer, also spend the winter on-island. Some continue on, even as far south as Tiera Del Fuego. But others remain here, still pursuing their food in the swash, rushing between the run-up and retreat of the waves, just as they do in the fall. With them, you might also see dunlin in winter plumage, their larger size and longer bills a detail to look for. Or, scan the dunes for a small flock of horned larks.

Snow buntings are winter treats for birders, too. Fans of

GREAT AND LESSER BLACK-BACKED AND HERRING GULLS  
PHOTO BY GINGER ANDREWS



mid-century musical theater might start singing a parody lyric to the old Irving Berlin tune, "there's no buntings like snow buntings, like no buntings I know – everything about them is appealing . . ."

True, the shore can be a cold, raw place to go birding. It's not so much what the thermometer reads, as what the wind gauge says. While it may not be cold by mainland standards, standing on an exposed beach requires serious outdoor clothing. We always try to find a dune or shrub for a windbreak, but sometimes there are none where the birds are.

Pond ducks are more varied and numerous in the off-season too, with more shelter or even places to go car-birding, a warmer experience. Nantucket is the best place in Massachusetts to see redheads, for example. These colorful ducks breed in the Prairie Pothole region of the Great Plains. Most of them remain south in winter, with thousands in Texas' Laguna Madre. But some nest closer to us, along the eastern Great Lakes or St. Lawrence River.

They winter from Massachusetts to the Gulf of Mexico. Thanks to their willingness to join decoys, they are a favor-



WESTERN Tanager PHOTO BY GINGER ANDREWS



NORTHERN GANNET PHOTO BY VERN LAUX

ite of hunters, who call them fool ducks. Ongoing monitoring and responsive bag limits have preserved them for hunters and birders alike. But they are pretty safe in Miacomet Pond, one of our favorite winter hotspots. Canvasbacks, bufflehead, scaup, American wigeon, American coot and more make it a worthwhile stop.

If it's cold enough for a freeze-up, the ducks will concentrate in the small areas of open water, where springs slow ice development.

Of course, even easier birding is achieved by just watching a bird feeder. Cardinals and goldfinches, house finches and sparrow species delight us with their activity. But don't be lulled to complacency by just the usual suspects. Part of the pleasure is the unpredictability of rare or unexpected species that sometimes blow in, as if by accident.

A female western tanager haunted a feeder in Madaket last year. Normally found in the western third of the U.S., Nantucket has had several records in recent years.

Even more colorful was a painted bunting, more commonly one of the delights of Florida. Both an adult male and a female

– also familiarly known as a “greenie” – were seen at several birdfeeders on the outskirts of town in 2016 and 2017. There were a number of previous sightings about 10 years ago, but the earliest on Nantucket was in 1961.

What leads a bird to go astray and wind up in what might be considered the wrong place, on the wrong coast, or at the wrong latitude? Are they born with faulty navigational senses, sick or carried by storms out of their normal range?

Perhaps it is our limited knowledge or wrong expectations that are at fault. Birds do what they do. When they are young, more numerous, seeking habitat, or perhaps simply hardy pioneers, they use their wings and fly.

With every observation, we learn more about birds themselves, and also about the environment. So another, perhaps more subtle joy is that of discovery. We never know what we might see, if we just go out and look. ///

*Virginia “Ginger” Andrews has had a lifelong exposure to birding through her mother, the late Edith Andrews, a noted ornithologist. Ginger leads bird walks for the Maria Mitchell Association and writes “Island Bird Sightings,” a weekly bird column, for The Inquirer and Mirror, Nantucket’s local newspaper since 1821.*

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Surfside | "The Big House"  
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# CONGDON & COLEMAN

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Town | 38 & 38A Vestal Street  
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4 Beds 3 + Baths  
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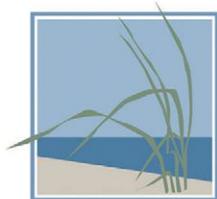


Town | 38 Vestal Street  
3 Beds 2 + Baths  
\$2,850,000 | Keri Kalman



Town | 38A Vestal Street  
1 Bed 1 Bath  
\$1,025,000 | Keri Kalman





### ICONIC BRICK AT 19 PLEASANT STREET



Moors End, a stately three-story brick home was constructed between 1829 and 1834 by Jared Coffin, a wealthy mariner and ship builder, during the heyday of Nantucket's prosperous whaling era. This iconic property, situated on over an acre of land, includes an extensive heirloom Rose Garden framed with formal boxwood hedges, and is encircled with a brick wall for privacy on Pleasant Street. Two additional structures complete the estate including Nine and Eleven Candlehouse Lane featuring an 1850 Carriage House and Stable and Two Mill Street, a 1921 home, awaiting renovation to become an in town private residence.

Linda Bellevue & Mary Malavase

### DIONIS DREAM



Situated on almost 2 acres surrounded by conservation land, this property features a four bedroom main house, two bedroom guest cottage, a 20x50 heated pool and a garage. Located close to the beach with easy access to Town.

\$5,250,000 | Lisa Sherburne

### TUCKED AWAY



On a secluded shell lined street with magical first floor views of Hither Creek, Madaket Harbor and Tucker-nuck, this special property offers direct water access. Delightful coastal inspired home with expansion potential to maximize the stunning backdrop of sea and sky. Seller is a MA licensed Real Estate agent.

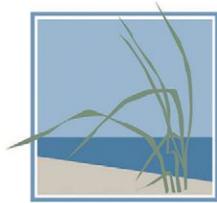
\$2,650,000 | Christine Whelden

### TUCKED IN ON CLIFF ROAD



Close to town, Jetties Beach and nearby bike path with views of hidden pond. Extensive landscaping at the entrance with mature perennial plantings and stone walls complete the grounds. Excellent rental history.

\$2,975,000 | Mary Malavase



# ATLANTIC EAST

## NANTUCKET REAL ESTATE

### 49 UNION STREET



Formerly the home of the Nantucket Lightship Basket Museum, this oversized lot of 7,400 square feet can be residential or commercial for a non-profit. Renovate to your taste, plenty of off-street parking.

\$1,795,000 | Linda Bellevue

### 4 CURLEW COURT



Three bedrooms, two full baths with open concept kitchen/dining/living room and cozy den. Professional landscaping enhances the outdoor living spaces with a stone patio, brick walkway and sweet garden shed. Community tennis and swimming pool.

\$1,595,000 | Linda Bellevue

### NASHAQUISSET'S CHARM BECKONS



Picturesque "Sconset Cottage" in the heart of the nationally acclaimed community of Nashaquisset. This award winning layout boasts a bright two story living room, an easy open floor plan, and a covered front porch to capture the sunsets. This property offers all of the amenities and maintenance-free living of a private club, only a mile from Town.

\$1,435,000 | Melinda Vallett

### CENTRALLY LOCATED



Spacious house near schools, transportation, shopping and bike path. Nearly 3,000 s.f. with five bedrooms, four full baths and a full basement. Off-street parking.

\$1,285,000 | Penny Dey

### SEE THE SUNSET



Renovated townhouse in Madaket with spectacular western exposure and pond views of White Goose Cove. Three bedrooms and two full baths. Open living areas on the second floor and decks on both the first and second level.

\$950,000 | Linda Bellevue

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\$5,900,000



5 MILK STREET | 6 BR 4 FULL 3 HALF BA



\$5,350,000



9 WILLARD STREET | 5 BR 5BA



\$4,995,000

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36 SHEEP POND ROAD | 3 BR 2 BA



\$4,750,000



66 SOUTH SHORE ROAD | 4 BR 4.5 BA



\$4,495,000



3 KITTIWAKE LANE | 4 BR 3.5 BA



\$2,395,000



Town | \$4,500,000  
Barbara Jenkins



West of Town | \$3,595,000  
Bernadette Meyer



Cliff | \$8,795,000  
Bernadette Meyer &  
Kathy Gallaher



Mid Island | \$1,995,000  
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Wayne Viera



Tom Nevers | \$3,495,000  
Chandra Miller



Brant Point | \$2,895,000  
Craig Hawkins &  
Bernadette Meyer



Shawkemo | \$13,600,000  
Craig Hawkins &  
Bernadette Meyer



Polpis | \$15,250,000  
Craig Hawkins &  
Bernadette Meyer



Cliff | \$8,355,000  
Gary Winn



Town | \$3,800,000  
Gary Winn & Mary Taaffe



Polpis | \$26,500,000  
Gary Winn and Lisa Winn



South of Town | \$2,395,000  
John F. Trudel III



Cliff | \$8,795,000  
Kathy Gallaher &  
Bernadette Meyer



Town | \$3,250,000  
Kathy Gallaher &  
Gary Winn



Surfside | \$3,495,000  
Mary Taaffe



Sconset | \$3,995,000  
Mary Taaffe & Lisa Winn



Cliff | \$1,595,000  
Marybeth Gibson



Dionis | \$5,250,000  
Marybeth Gibson



Pocomo | \$4,500,000  
Susan Chambers



Surfside | \$6,795,000  
Will Maier



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# NOTHING COMPARES



## 256 POLPIS ROAD IS TRULY AN EXCEPTIONAL OFFERING.

Properties of this caliber rarely become available on Nantucket Island. This beautiful compound, spread over six+ acres of pristine land, includes a sprawling circa 1920s 5 bedroom/4+ bathroom main house with spectacular water views from every room, a 2 bedroom guest cottage, a 3 car garage, a boat house and a 1 room cottage perched on the rim of Polpis Harbor, and two boat moorings. A path meanders from the house to the harbor, where favorite Nantucket pastimes such as boating, kayaking, canoeing, fishing, and scalloping can be enjoyed.

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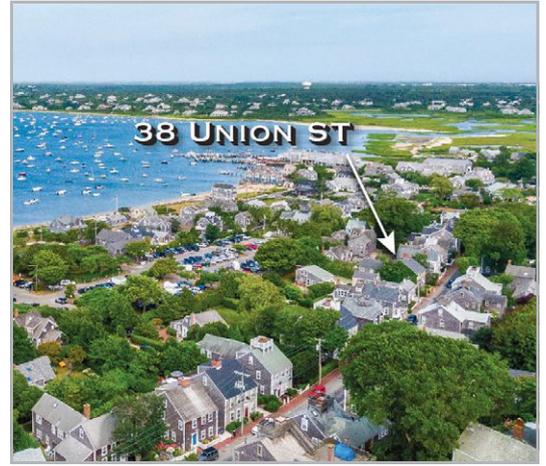
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**38 UNION STREET | TOWN | \$2,725,000**

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**SUNSET SURF SHACK | 308 MADAKET ROAD | MADAKET | \$2,600,000**

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IMAGINE LIFE BY THE OCEAN



**46 MADEQUECHAM VALLEY ROAD | \$12,500,000**

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### 31 DUKES ROAD

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\$3,595,000



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# Nantucket Real Estate Review

Every Thursday in the

*Inquirer and Mirror*

and on line at [ack.net](http://ack.net)



THE QUESTIONS



# Susan Warner

started her iconic Nantucket Clambake Company out of a Volkswagen van in 1984 because, she said, “You can do anything.” Eventually, her traditional clambakes on the beach became a sort of trademark.

In another nod to island tradition, Warner also worked on a commercial scallop boat on the waters of Madaket Harbor. She understood the rhythms of a summer season catering clambakes and the off-season scalloping in a way that made sense in the mid-1980s.

She has seen those island rhythms change over the last few decades.

**Q. You were one of the first female commercial scallopers on-island. How did you begin that kind of work?**

A. “You have to be careful when you say ‘first’ because there were always lots of women involved in scalloping, on the boats and off the boats, but few women scallopers had their own boats in the 1980s. In the late 1970s scalloping was a really important part of the economy of Nantucket in the winter. Most of the people I knew were involved in scalloping somehow. As an opportunity for work in the winter, you either opened scallops or you went out on the boat as a culler, or in my case you did both. So, I started on other people’s boats going scalloping, and then I got my boat and started one March and had very long days. But I learned a lot and got to spend my days in Madaket Harbor.”

**Q. Did you have any role models in those days?**

A. “There were people, but basically you had to be impressed by those strong-willed Nantucket women who raised families, went out on boats, opened scallops, even though they didn’t have their own scalloping boats. I think you have to be tenacious to be a good scalloper. I think it was the tenacity of most scallopers that was my role model.”

**Q. Would you also say it requires tenacity to live on island year-round?**

A. “Yes, but it was a lot different in the late 1970s and early 1980s. There were seasons and they were almost black and white. Right before November everybody was wearing fishing boots. But by the end of the time that I was scalloping, people were oblivious to the fact that the fleet was out there or what was happening, because they were so busy building houses, or with restaurant work, or working on Christmas Stroll.”

**Q. How have the economics of scalloping changed since you left it?**

A. “It’s like anything, it’s more expensive to do now, the set-up and everything. There weren’t as many options in the winter, but also I think the type of people that went out scalloping were a little more independent. That’s why I did it. I wanted to be out on the water. I could have been working at the Mad Hatter for the rest of my life until they tore it down, but I just went, ‘No, I want to experience something else’.”

**Q. Your catering company would put on clambakes, which is a traditional mode of cooking seafood. Why did you choose to offer this service?**

A. “That came about in just deciding to get out of restaurants and their four walls, wanting to do outdoor catering. I think I had heard about other people doing private clambakes for friends and stuff like that, and I just thought, my god, what a great experience to just be out on the beach doing a traditional clambake, or traditional by our means. I also thought it was important to do the traditional clambake, even though I did some with cookers, but for the first couple of years, most of my clambakes were the traditional beach clambakes. I think I did three straight years where I only did clambakes because I wanted to master it and get organized. The clambakes were extremely labor-intensive. After three years, clients that I had done clambakes for would ask me to do their daughter’s wedding. I would just comb my hair a little more and do fancier occasions. So that’s how it started.”

**Q. How did your clambake company compare with regular restaurant work?**

A. “It was basically the same as going scalloping, if you think about it. I wanted to take advantage of Nantucket as Nantucket was, the beauty of Nantucket, the water, the beach, the outdoors, versus being inside. And doing both of them allowed me to be my own boss. I never had any desire to own a restaurant.”

**Q. Has the Nantucket catering scene changed over the years?**

A. “The way catering has changed mirrors the changes of the island. I think the simplicity has disappeared or diminished, only because you used to be able to say, ‘can’t get that.’ There was no Federal Express, no high-speed boat. Also it’s a change of time and who is coming here and why they’re coming here. People might think they want to go to the beach now but they really don’t. It’s too much of a hassle for them. I think the biggest change in catering is just the number of vendors and services that are available now than in the 1980s or the early 1990s, but that was created by the increase in people expecting those services. That’s where the simplicity is diminished.”

**Q. What’s your favorite way to have seafood?**

A. “I don’t really have a favorite way. I’m just not a favorites person. I think variety is great as long as it’s fresh. My mother would say her favorite way is if somebody else is cooking it.” ///

*Virginia Bullington is a staff writer at The Inquirer and Mirror, Nantucket’s newspaper since 1821.*

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