

the seabreeze

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Blue Mind

If you're freaked out, get to the water. That's what the newest studies tell us, so compelling is the research it's become a kind of movement or school of thought called the "Blue Mind." The premise of the Blue Mind ideology is simple - the stress of daily life, say in a city rush or suburban landscape is intense. It causes us to become hyperactive, more tense, and as a result less happy. Psychologists, doctors, and even marine biologists have agreed on this seemingly observable phenomenon and have termed it "Red Mind," after the color most commonly associated with stress.

The causes and effects of the "Blue Mind" are less easily observable, but marine biologists, namely Wallace Nicholas, the author of the 2014 book "Blue Mind, The Surprising Science that Shows How Being Near, In Or Under Water Can Make You Happier, Healthier, ore Connected, and Better at What You Do" break them down in a few key points. First is the ambience of water - the soft sound of gentle waves on sand, or the dull pat of water against the haul of a boat. Think of it as a sort of natural white noise in terms of its ability to relax and soothe on even the most chaotic day. Second is the freedom of water. Think about swimming, an activity which can be unmatched in its calming nature. Nicholas describes floating as something of a rest for the brain, in which the mind temporarily gives over control of much of the body to the water, allowing an even deeper sense of relaxation and inner peace. Third is a sense of interconnectedness, which Nicholas claims people who dwell near great bodies of water are often acutely aware of, whether consciously or unconsciously. The fact is that bodies of water like the Penobscot Bay are home to massive ecosystems, in which we play a small part. This realization of connection with the world around us is soothing and comfortable, especially in comparison to cityscapes where environmental connection is tougher to visualize. If that doesn't do it for you, and you're more interested in raw data, perhaps you'll be interested in a 2016 study conducted by doctors, scientists, and the Senior Biologist of Plymouth, England's National Marine Aquarium, which found that just looking at a tank of water causes a significant drop in blood pressure and heart rate; factors associated with reduced stress.

So what does this mean for Bayside? The answer is manyfold. For one, it means significantly reduced stress. The aforementioned British experiment proved that just looking at a tank of water can minimize stress, and biologists such as Nicholas have argued that this effect is only scaled up with larger bodies of water. That means that Penobscot Bay is a literal stress-free zone. Additionally, with below average heart rates and below average blood pressures coming as a result of interacting with water, it can be inferred that people who live in communities such as Bayside can expect longer and healthier lives. Conversely, it means more positivity and happiness and a greater quality of life and level of well-being. I think my 4-year old brother EZ said it best in just a few words - "Every now and then when the ropes inside me become ver taught, and I feel filled with knots I go down to the waterfront, and it's there within sight of the sea, I feel the knots loose, and I am at home." - Aaron Cohen

Kids of Bayside

The cancellation of Bayside's Sailing School, the ban of jumping off the wharf, and the closing of the playground and basketball court area has left many kids without the things they used to enjoy. With all these restrictions in place, what are the youth of Bayside doing to pass the time?

This year as always, kids in Bayside have stuck together, so group activities have been altered to allow for social distancing. Some of this year's games include kickball, taps, and the new fan favorite, Survivor.

The game Survivor, new to Bayside this year is a spin on CBS's game show, in which kids compete in social, physical, and mental challenges while outsmarting teammates, in order to be the last man standing. Kids from all over Bayside compete for a cash prize. The game is always new, and will surely stay for years to come.

Although activities such as swimming and jumping off the pier are not allowed, the kids of Bayside have found new ways to enjoy the bay. Some thrill seeking youth have learned how to perform tricks and flips off of boats in the harbor, including side dives, back dives, frontflips, and backflips. In addition, some have created their own synchronized diving routines to show friends. "A bunch of us set a goal, to learn how to do a backflip, and we'd go out to the boat every day and practice," said Baysider Lulu Trasatti in an interview Tuesday, "after about a week we all ended up being able to do a backflip, which is very cool."

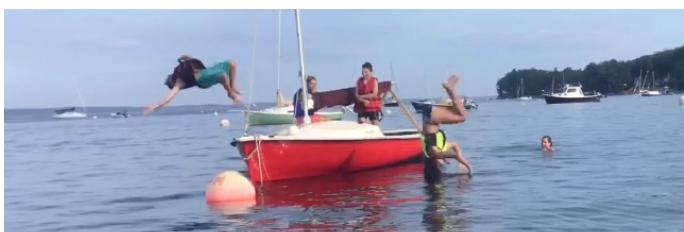


Photo Credit: Jack Fryer

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The Dread Pirate

Picture this. It's the year 1632. You live in a small town called Pemaquid in what will one day become the state of Maine. For now, it's a crucial part of the Plymouth Colony - a capital of fur trading way up in the North. You own a small warehouse in the town, which you've been working hard to keep stocked with furs - the most important and valuable trading good you or anyone in Pemaquid owns. You've wrapped up your duties for the day and are looking forward to a nice night at home. Suddenly you hear gunshots and screams ringing out down by the warehouse and the town's defenses. You rush towards the sounds, only to find a group of fierce-looking men looting the warehouse and setting fire to the town's extensive stockade. As they begin attacking the buildings into the town you begin to fear for your life. And then he enters.

There is not much known about the early life of Dixie Bull. We know that he was born in the early 17th century around the year 1611. We know that he was born in Huntingdon, a small English village about 40 miles inland. We know that he was apprenticed to his brother, a man whose work was in furs, a fact which might explain Bull's later endeavors. But we don't know when he was born, who his parents were, what kind of aspirations he had, and what his reasons were for coming to America, which he did in the early 1630s. But history catches up with Dixie there - we know for sure that he came into the Penobscot Bay area, where he spent months trading furs in locations that could be as close as modern-day Bayside (this all took place long before a couple of Methodists built a camp on the coast), and we know that somewhere around Castine Harbor, just 10 miles away from Northport, as the crow flies, Dixie Bull was attacked and robbed of his furs by a traveling group of Frenchmen. Filled with anger and fear for his future, he headed, SEE PAGE 2

The Two Almas

Bayside is home to a wide array of unique and different names, but in my mind, none are as interesting as the name "Alma." Originally a Latin name arising in the 19th century, the name has become a very uncommon and underrated favorite, coming in at the number 645 spot for most popular baby names in the U.S. This made it especially interesting to note that there are not one, but two Almas in Bayside, from vastly different generations and with vastly different stories to tell.

Alma Brewsher is 13 years old and lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts during the year. Alma Homola is much older than Alma Brewsher and lives in Orono, Maine during the year. I wrote this story to show the different generations and how they are alike and different. And, from what I heard from Alma Homola, kids in Bayside many years ago were much like the ones now: causing trouble, getting yelled at, but most of all, having lots of fun. And with that, here are some questions I asked both Almas:

Alma Brewsher

Q: When and where were you born?

A: I was born September 26, 2006 in Luzern, Switzerland.

Q: How did you get your name, Alma?

A: I was not named after anyone specific, but my parents both liked Gustav Maler, and his wife was called Alma Maler. They did not like the person Alma Maler especially, but what they did like especially was the name.

Q: Where is your family from?

A: My mom is from Armenia, and my dad is from Scotland,

Q: What is your favorite Bayside memory?

A: Last year when me and Lulu Trassati won the John Short Race with Emerson.

Q: How did your family first come to Bayside?

A: While, we were just looking for a summer house somewhere in Maine, because we had ruled out New Hampshire. And, out of luck, we stumbled upon Bayside.

Q: What is your spirit animal?

A: My spirit animal is a chipmunk.

Q: What place in the world would you most want to go right now?

A: That's easy; the Fiji Islands.

Alma Homola

Q: When and where were you born?

A: Well, you know that I may very well have been born right here (her cottage). Because my mother, when she was pregnant, was here in September, and I was born in early October.

Q: How did you get your name, Alma?

A: Well, I was named for my grandmother, who owned this cottage before me. Her name was Alma, too.

Q: Where do you live during the year besides Bayside?

A: I live in Orono, Maine, and I have lived there for more than fifty years now. In fact, one of my friends up here was born in Maine, and she worked her working life in Ohio, and I tease her because she is a "Mainer," and I never will be, but I've lived in the state more than she has, because she retired after she'd been in Ohio for many years, and she had lived many other places before that, so we have that going back and forth.

Q: Where is your family from?

A: Well, on my father's side they are mostly from the Fujian part of the Netherlands, and on my, SEE PAGE 4

The Kids of Bayside

Back on shore, some turned to fishing and crabbing, while others created summer jobs, trying to strike it rich. All in all this summer has been notably different but no matter the circumstances, as long as the kids of Bayside stick together, any summer is a good summer.

-Nate Cohen

The Dread Pirate

Back to the Massachusetts Bay Colony, where, like any good early American, he sought retribution in the still-new and still-English court system. In the end his legal pursuance was a failure: he succeeded only in losing time. Filled with more rage than ever before, Dixie decided to seek revenge the old-fashioned way. Rapidly assembling a medium-sized crew around Boston, Dixie took to the seas, where he spent months making attacks on and plundering English ships. Quickly he gained infamy across the coast, likely gaining a fair sum of money and a few human kills in the process. By 1632 he was ready to make his most daring attack yet.

Let's take a look at Pemaquid. One of the earliest and most profitable colonial businesses was the fur trade, the same business endeavor which pre-piracy Dixie took part in. Early on, the trade was heavily controlled by the French, who traded with local Native groups, but as the English empire in the Americas expanded, so did their interest in the fur trade. In the mid-1630s, the coastal now-Maine fishing village of Pemaquid gained prominence when the English established a permanent fur-trading post in its heart. This is where you (or rather, your character) re-enter the story.

As you approach the burning stockade, you catch a glimpse of the man. He's young but has an aged face like a wise sailor. He has a gruff beard and is carrying a gun, but the most intimidating thing about him is a look in his eyes - like he's still looking for revenge. You hold back. He's armed and you're not, and you'll be no good to work if you're shot. To Dixie's right is another man, his figurative and literal right hand man. As they storm towards the defenses, you hear another shot ring out, this time from your immediate right. A bullet has lodged itself in the right hand man, and he goes down. Bull looks shocked for a minute, but the onslaught isn't over yet. The looting continues for a while, and eventually the pirates reboard their ships and sail off, sans the lifeless body of Bull's second-in-command. Fearful but relieved, you watch the three ships sail off into the distance.

Dixie's Pemaquid raid was incredibly significant for one reason: it marked the first documented time that a colonial American village (and a decently-protected village at that), was attacked by pirates. Imagine the fear that must have inspired in nearby citizens - the idea that at any point in time, your livelihood, your home, or your life could be destroyed by pirates.

Naturally, the raid earned Dixie a nice nickname - "The Dread Pirate," - but after that, history loses sight of him once again. He appears in some myths and folklore, and various legends claim his life ended in a hundred different ways (hanging, shoot-out, comfortably at an old age in a beautiful English village), but nothing too concrete other than a record of his work as a skinner two decades after the attack. Another question lays in the fate of the treasure he seized from countless merchant ships, which some hold is in Boothbay Harbor, just an hour from Bayside.

But with so much time spent in Penobscot Bay, I wouldn't be surprised if some of Dixie's loot still sits on some long forgotten corner of some island - Warren Island, North Haven, Turtlehead - just a quick boat-trip away. Would you?

-Aaron Cohen

September Song

For a long time, Bayside has been separated into two distinct groups - the year-rounders, who live in the community full time, and the summer crowd (myself included), who their title suggests, spends only the warmer months of the year here in Northport. But as the order of things worldwide has thrown out of balance as a result of Covid-19, Bayside has felt the impacts in the form of blurring lines between the groups: with school cancellations and some workplaces going fully virtual, many summer families have decided to brave Maine's colder months and stay in Bayside year-round, or at least for a few extra months.

I talked to a few people who have decided to stay in Bayside about the reasons for their decisions, and received an interesting variety of answers. These included problems with online schooling, a lack of desire to return to a depressing hometown, and an interest in experiencing Maine life after the summer season - "We have never before seen the Around Isleboro Race," said Karen Trasatti in a text message Thursday morning, "we're very much looking forward to that."

Lisa Berry told me, "We are so excited that our local school is remote until November because it enables us to expand our Bayside summer into September, which we have heard is a lovely time of year, but have yet to experience."

Many of the people I talked to are members of households of 5 or more, some including young kids, something that, compared to the average of Bayside's "offseason," community, could be something of a population shock. "It might change the way Bayside runs in the offseason, having all the kids around," said Jessica Medoff in an interview, "I guess we just have to wait and see. This year could be transformative in a lot of ways." Additionally, with the relatively low population of the Edna Drinkwater School, the sudden shift in numbers of local elementary and middle-school aged kids could change the way the school functions, affecting Bayside in more indirect ways.

All in all, the shift of many residents from "summer people" to full-timers promises to change the community, but it's unclear how just yet. Maybe, years from now, the winter population of Bayside will be enormous, and Edna Drinkwater will be something of a bustling metropolis of a school. In the meantime, we'll just have to wait and see. Summerer turned Baysider put it best in a text message Thursday morning - "We all look forward to meeting new people and trying new things and making the most of a crazy time."

-Aaron Cohen

Summer Night

A beautiful summer night.
The tall houses leave
their balcony shutters open
to the wide plaza of the old village.
In the large deserted square,
stone benches, burning bush and acacias
trace their black shadows
symmetrically on the white sand.
In its zenith, the moon; in the tower,
the clock's illuminated globe.
I walk through this ancient village,
alone, like a ghost.

Antonio Machado

Translated from the Spanish by Willis Barnstone

Merithew Square

Bayside is filled with unexpected monuments. From the dedicated rock in front of the pier to the cottages themselves, nearly everything around us has some sort of historical significance. So it's no surprise that the fence in Merrithew Square has a heavy historical presence. Originally built circa 1873, at what seems to be the Golden Age of Bayside expansion, the park's "rustic fence" has been restored and improved numerous times over Bayside's long history, with each generation's carpenter making a careful effort to maintain the original shape, style, and charming appeal of the fence.

Now, 147 years after the fence's construction, that job has fallen to Rob Sherman.

I need to take a minute here to clear something up. I'll be honest; the original intention of this article was to cover the history of Merrithew Square and its surrounding fence, with a few brief quotes from Sherman interspersed to give the point of view of the carpenter working on the job. But about 5 minutes into my interview with Sherman, I realized that wouldn't be possible. The truth was, Sherman was a lot more interesting than the fence. And so, the article transformed from a somewhat intriguing look at Bayside history to an extremely interesting look at living Bayside history. I hope you enjoy it.

Rob Sherman was left in the hospital. We've all heard stories of mothers who fled the maternity ward soon after giving birth, frightened by the mere thought of parenthood. You might have even heard of some who never came back, whose children eventually joined a foster family or a foster home. But Sherman just stayed in the hospital. For two years, he was cared for by doctors and nurses, presumably bouncing around the hospital. Sherman doesn't know the reason for this strange occurrence, and he was eventually sent to a children's home. After bouncing around for a while longer, he was sent to Unity, where "some older couple needed a young guy to help on a farm." He worked there for about 8 years with people he described as "not very nice." During the nearly decade long period Sherman spent on the farm, he worked incredibly diligently - "I don't want to give the classic old guy line, but it was hard work," he said on the porch of his cottage (which shares the name of his childhood town) Saturday, "no electricity, no plumbing." By the time his tenure on the farm had ended, Sherman had gone through high school and was ready to move on. On his 21st birthday, his first eligible day, Sherman enlisted in the army. The world was still experiencing the wake of the Second World War in the early fifties, so Sherman was quickly "trained to work in the medical room as an assistant to the surgeon," and then deployed to Germany, which was still split into its four zones of Allied occupation. "[Post-war Germany was] pretty devastating. There wasn't a lot there. People were pretty cautious of Americans," said Sherman, "we sometimes went to small German towns where people had never seen Americans, and we'd see little kids peeking out around the corners of buildings. People knew we were the big guys."

Sherman was honorably discharged in 1955. The very same year, he began work as a member of a carpentry crew - "I learned by doing," he said in the course of our interview, "We started with the foundation in the basement and went all the way to the roof ... we did everything." The next year, 1956, Sherman began college while continuing his work with the carpentry crew. His work and his education continued for the next four years, during which time Sherman became a skilled carpenter and a college graduate. This fact allowed him to get a job as a philosophy of education professor at the University of Alabama, a position which he held for three years, before moving to the University of Florida, where he worked for a whopping 34 years, teaching classes such as philosophy of education, history of education, and research methods. At one point, Sherman even "taught short class sessions in California, in a Chinese Buddhist University," at the request of,

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The Two Almas

mother's side, they are english, irish, and german.

Q: What is your favorite childhood memory?

A: Oh gosh. It is certainly hard to say. It was just a great time growing up here. My favorite times and memories would have to be growing up as a kid right here in Bayside.

Q: How did your family first come to Bayside?

A: Well, it was because my grandmother lived in the Brewer cottage in Auditorium park, and, as you probably know there was the methodist camp ground over here, and this cottage was built for people to get meals at camp. And I know that my great grandmother came here, and I assume that is the first generation of my family to come here.

Q: What place in the world would you most want to go right now?

A: I'm happy right here in Bayside, I don't want to go anywhere else but here.

-Micah Cohen

Merithew Square

one of his former students. But as a college professor, Sherman lacked work in the summer, so he continued carpentry work during this time, advancing his skill and doing a wide variety of projects around his home.

In 1973, in the midst of this period of Sherman's life, he had the desire to return to Maine, his childhood state. Having no family, Sherman decided to buy a house, and conveniently knew a man selling a cottage right here in Bayside. He took the offer and has owned the same cottage - which he, poetically, named Unity - ever since. Worlds collided when the summer of 1973 turned out to be a wet one - with rain pouring through the roofs of both Unity and it's neighbor, Sherman pulled out the toolkit and began his career of Bayside carpentry.

In 2003, Sherman became involved with the Bayside Historical Society, when his help was enlisted in moving the entire BHPS cottage from Griffin Street to Pleasant Street, quite a distance to move an entire house. Since then, he has routinely worked with the BHPS, most recently on the aforementioned Merrithew Square fence project.

At the very end of our interview, I asked Sherman whether he would consider himself a professor or a carpenter. He answered fast: "I'd say a carpenter for two reasons: first because it's the most recent ... and second because if I told them I taught philosophy of education, they'd have no idea what the heck that is. Everyone thinks they know what a carpenter is." I closed off our interview with a final follow-up question about why Sherman enjoys carpentry work. I think his answer perfectly describes his life and his worldview: "There's a certain kind of psychic pleasure in being able to repair and fix things."

Thanks to Rob Sherman for the interview and for his help in our community.

-Aaron Cohen



Overseer's Update

The afternoon of August 12th was so hot it was almost smokey, but that didn't deter dozens of masked Bayside residents from flocking to the annual Overseer's meeting, this time hosted socially distanced on the basketball court, under the harsh glare of the beating sun. As always, the meeting's central purposes were clearly defined: to review the work of the various committees, to vote for various articles which will affect Bayside in years to come, and possibly most significant, to elect two new members to the Overseer's board.

For the first time in recent years, there were four candidates for two vacant Overseer positions, demanding a legitimate election. As a result, one Bayside resident proposed a quick speech by each of the candidates - who revealed their combined years in Bayside to be close to 200, their work-experiences more than impressive, and their appreciation of our community unmatched. Immediately afterward, an election was held, followed by brief speeches from committee leaders on the Overseer's Board, which covered topics ranging from police complaints to the ongoing brown-tailed moth situation to progress on the Seawall. At the meeting's tail-end, the winners of the contested election for the Overseer positions were announced as incumbent and committee-manager Michael Tirrell, and lawyer and long-time Bayside resident Janae Novotny.

Overall, the meeting was extremely efficient and succeeded in remaining successful despite Covid-era restrictions. Congrats to the new Overseers! -Aaron Cohen



Photo Credit: Steve Nelson

Bayside Boy's First Bike

There are a few important days in a young person's life: wedding day, graduation day and the day you come home with your first bike. In pictures taken on that day, the person will often stand beside that bike like a fisherman standing beside a 800 pound marlin. For a moment, there's just the hunter and the capture. The boy and the bike.

Such a moment was experienced at 1:28 pm on August 14, 2020, the summer of Covid when Elia Zane Cohen (Known in Bayside as EZ) emerged from the Home Supply Center in Belfast, with a gold and green John Deere bike complete with training wheels. Passers by stopped to note the occasion including a bayside woman in a blue cap exclaimed "Oh yes, his first bike!" All the way home, EZ, practiced the new way he could tell his mother and father he could not do his chores. "I'm sorry mom and dad, I have to ride my new bike over to Edna Drinkwater!" -Rich Cohen

