

# The Kearsarge/Concord Connection

BY Laurie Reynolds Rardin

PHOTOGRAPHY BY Aaron Constant

Looking for something new? Hop on the interstate and take a drive to the Concord area. No matter what route you take, there's a restaurant, shop or event just 30 minutes away. Here are some ideas for fall.

## Making the Work/Family Balance Easier

Need a hand deciding whether to pay the bills or go grocery shopping during your only free half hour of the day? Having trouble feeling good about your job when you are leaving your 3-month-old baby at home every day? FamilyFriendlyLife ([www.FamilyFriendlyLife.com](http://www.FamilyFriendlyLife.com)) can help. Developed by Kim Murdoch, this new business is designed to help families, companies and individuals achieve the often difficult balance between quality time at home and meaningful and productive employment.

After the birth of her first child, Murdoch realized returning to her full-time position as a senior accountant would not allow her to be the hands-on parent she wanted to be. Her request for part-time work was met with ambiguity by her managers and concern over setting a precedent for other employees.

"Many businesses and corporations have no idea how to accommodate working mothers," Murdoch explains. She left her job and began putting together the profile for a business that would help companies create a work environment that gives employees more flexibility for handling family issues, including providing a safe, quiet space for nursing mothers and allowing flex time for taking sick children to the doctor.

FamilyFriendlyLife, based in Concord, uses workshops, custom newsletters and consulting on specific issues to help businesses make simple changes and increase employer/employee communications. Murdoch feels workers who have happier, more positive experiences will be more productive



*Kim Murdoch, founder of FamilyFriendlyLife*

and care more about helping the company meet its goals.

In addition, FamilyFriendlyLife provides parents and individuals with the tools to help streamline the responsibilities of running a home, providing more quality time. Workshops cover issues such as family finances, frugality, simple living, organization and expectant family issues. Murdoch points out that as participants learn how to improve organization in the home they can apply those skills to their work environment. "The ultimate goal is to find a balance between work and family time that satisfies everyone," she says.

Kristen Cole lives with her husband and 2-year-old son in Concord and has attended FamilyFriendlyLife workshops on frugality, the emotional lives of mothers, and living simply with children. "I always come away from these meetings with valuable information and tips on how to improve the quality of life for my family," Cole says. "The beauty of meeting with Kim is that she gets you thinking first and offers suggestions on how to apply the changes you might want to make for the benefit of your own family."

INFO: (603) 369-7889 or [www.familyfriendlylife.com](http://www.familyfriendlylife.com)

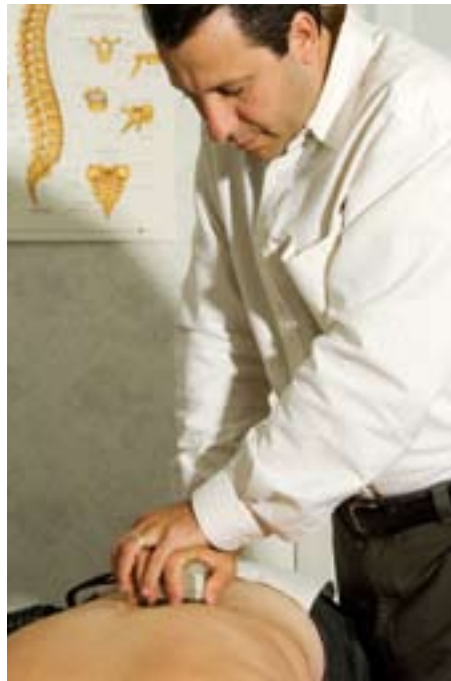
## Product: *Relief for Chronic Back Pain*

Steve Coppola — owner and executive director of Coppola Physical Therapy on Pleasant Street in Concord — spent many years searching for a treatment to relieve his wife’s back pain, which had resisted all traditional methods and techniques. Two years ago, he discovered a tool which had been used in Europe for at least six years, but had only been recently approved by the Food and Drug Administration for use in the United States.

The Advanced Spinal Mobilization Instrument (ASMI) is a handheld device applied to the spine by a therapist who controls the speed, location and pressure of the machine. The patient lies face down in a comfortable position on a curved treatment table that helps open the spine naturally. The four pads on the device move independently, causing the joints of the vertebrae to rotate and open. With repeated treatment, this will increase the movement and flexibility of the entire spine.

“Having been working to help people with back pain for years, I feel that many cases are caused by a stiff central spine which causes the upper and lower spine to compensate,” Coppola says. “If the stiff parts are mobilized and become more flexible, it will relieve the painful areas. The benefit of the ASMI is that it allows a therapist to move the joints of the vertebrae in a way that can’t be done with hands alone.”

INFO: [www.coppolapt.com](http://www.coppolapt.com)




Steve Coppola helps a patient with back pain.

## New: *Churches Embrace Environmental Stewardship*

As individuals ponder ways to reduce the carbon footprint in their homes and businesses, religious communities are also working toward becoming green.

A number of congregations in the Concord area are hoping to make their places of worship energy efficient by participating in STEM (Savings Through Energy Management) training. The program helps church members identify changes in building use and function, such as heating, lighting and insulation, which will lower their carbon footprint. If every church in the country reduced its building’s energy use by 25 percent, it would equal taking one million cars off the road and save \$500 million.

Some congregations have established committees to focus on other ways in which their church or synagogue can become more green. Initiatives include purchasing fair trade coffee for their fellowship hour, drinking beverages from reusable mugs and supporting locally grown food co-operatives. 

INFO: [www.wilsoned.com](http://www.wilsoned.com)

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*Laurie Reynolds Rardin lives in Concord with her family. She writes children’s books, and continues her environmental protection career by working to link spirituality and earth stewardship.*

*Aaron Constant is a commercial photographer residing in Concord. He is a professional member of NHPPA and provides photography for commercial assignment, product, food and stock throughout the Northeast. To view his portfolio, visit his Web site at [www.aaronconstant.com](http://www.aaronconstant.com)*

## Event: *Concord Reads*

Read any good books lately? Each fall for the past six years, the Concord Reads program has encouraged community reading and conversation by promoting a specific book for the public to read at the same time. A series of events provides in-depth information about the book, and creates an opportunity to bring folks together to share their thoughts and celebrate the written word.

This year’s selection, *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life*, by best-selling novelist Barbara Kingsolver, was chosen by the Concord Reads Committee. The book explores a real year in the life of the Kingsolver family, as they pledge to eat only homegrown or locally grown food while living on a farm in the Appalachian Mountains of Virginia. “Kingsolver discusses the ways in which local eating improves our health, environment and economy, and increases the value we place on our community and one another,” says Deb Baker, chairperson of the Concord Reads Committee.

“Everyone loves to eat,” Baker adds, “so you can’t go wrong with a book about food.”

INFO: The Concord Public Library oversees many details of the Concord Reads program and makes about 90 copies of the book available for loan. For a listing of Concord Reads events, scheduled throughout September and early October, visit [www.onconcord.com/library](http://www.onconcord.com/library), and go to the “Highlights” box to link to the Concord Reads page.