

Retro Roadtrip: Maine – a fun journey from Kittery to Portland

by Valerie Marier

Josh Hrehovcik's last name would challenge the smartest kid in the Scripps National Spelling Bee. ("It is ridiculous," he admits.) But that name is about to gain local recognition, and generate a slew of smiles, with the publication of his

first book, *Retro Roadtrip: Maine, Kittery to Portland (and a couple of side trips)*.

Josh's day job is running the "big-as-a-house" shredding machine at the Secure Record Management Systems in Sanford, the largest confidential paper shredding company in New England. SRMS is a division of WABAN which provides education, housing and assistance to children and adults with disabilities. Josh notes proudly that 100% of SRMS' net proceeds support WABAN.

But that's during the week. On Sunday mornings around 8 AM, he happily hops in

his gold 2004 Honda CRV (known as "the Hrehovcik Honda" by his pals) and motors off through coastal Maine, heading north, south, east and west. "I don't plan on going to a specific place, so if I get lost, it's an opportunity" to photograph unique, unusual and sometimes kitschy icons of Maine. "Sometimes my best results came from making a wrong turn," he says.

Josh, who grew up and still lives in Kennebunk, had no idea where those roads would lead him when he started photographing "cool things" a year ago. But as his portfolio grew, he began posting nostalgic shots of antique trolley cars, ladies playing bingo in a fire station and snow-covered benches at York's Short Sands Beach on Instagram. He chose Instagram for two reasons.

First, he hoped to convince his cousins ("the New Jersey Hrehovciks") that Maine is a beautiful place to visit. He says, "When they saw my photos, I knew they'd want to drive right up."

Sibling rivalry was an even stronger motivation. Josh says, "My brother, an author and lecturer who travels the world, had 41,000 Instagram followers. I had 157. That's some difference. So my New Year's resolution on January 1, 2019, was to get more followers than him." Gauntlet thrown.

His Instagram

and later Facebook-posted photographs quickly attracted the gifted eye of Geraldine Aikman, a renowned graphic artist and book designer who lives in Kennebunk. Geraldine said, "I became a fan of Josh's colorful photos and witty comments on Instagram and felt strongly that his images, many off-the-beat-en-track places in Maine, would appeal to a wide range of people."

"Let's do a book," she suggested to Josh in February, 2020. And they did.

Over the past several months, the photographer and graphic artist met

weekly to select photos from Josh's inventory of "several thousand." Josh says, "I'd show her six or seven, and she'd whittle that down to one or two." Geraldine curated the images, edited Josh's text and suggested the layout.

Retro Roadtrip: Maine was published in late May. The coffee table book, with a colorful cover photo of the Early Bird Diner in South Berwick, features 130 photos. "It sold copies on Amazon the first day," Josh says with a big grin.

He is still hoping to increase his Instagram followers. "I'm up to 597 now

and my brother has 42,500, so proportionally, I made a major move over the past year," he says. (Helpful hint: Josh's Instagram handle is [retroadtripper65](#)). And the Hrehovcik cousins have yet to arrive from New Jersey. But Josh remains undaunted, if not encouraged. "I hope to do more books with Geraldine in the future," he says.

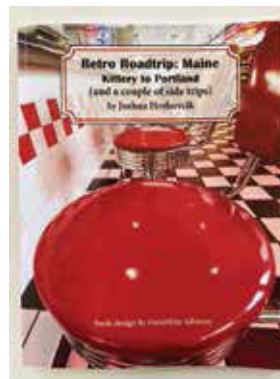
"I like going places where I haven't been," Josh says. "I believe in the philosophy of Scottish singer and Eurythmics lead singer Annie Lennox, who said, 'I don't care how you do it. I just care how it makes me feel.'"

Right now with a new book selling on Amazon, Josh is feeling pretty darn good.

Retro Roadtrip: Maine is available on Amazon and at [www.retroadtripper.com](#).



Diner seats await patrons at the Blast From the Past Diner in East Waterboro, Maine



Above left: On Canada Day at the Seashore Trolley Museum, a conductor navigated the Golden Chariot, affectionately referred to as the Brass Bed. Above right: The front window of The Early Bird on Main Street in South Berwick (or SoBo, as the cool kids call it)

