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page B8

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The Map Man of Appleton

By David Munson
dmunson@villagesoup.com

IT'S EASIER THAN YOU THINK to get lost in Appleton. Like other Knox County towns, Appleton has plenty of roads that are more mud than dirt, where it's easy to take a wrong turn and find yourself stuck somewhere beyond Hope.

Well-known Camden resident Aubrey Young found that out the hard way when his car became stuck on the Peasetown Road, leaving him stranded on the backwater byway for more than two days.

When they received the call that their father had been found, Stuart and Craig Young sped out to Appleton to be on hand for his rescue. Despite the many twists and turns the elderly Young had taken before becoming stuck, his sons were able to find him by following the winding, dotted line that is Peasetown Road on a map they were given by the Camden Police Department.

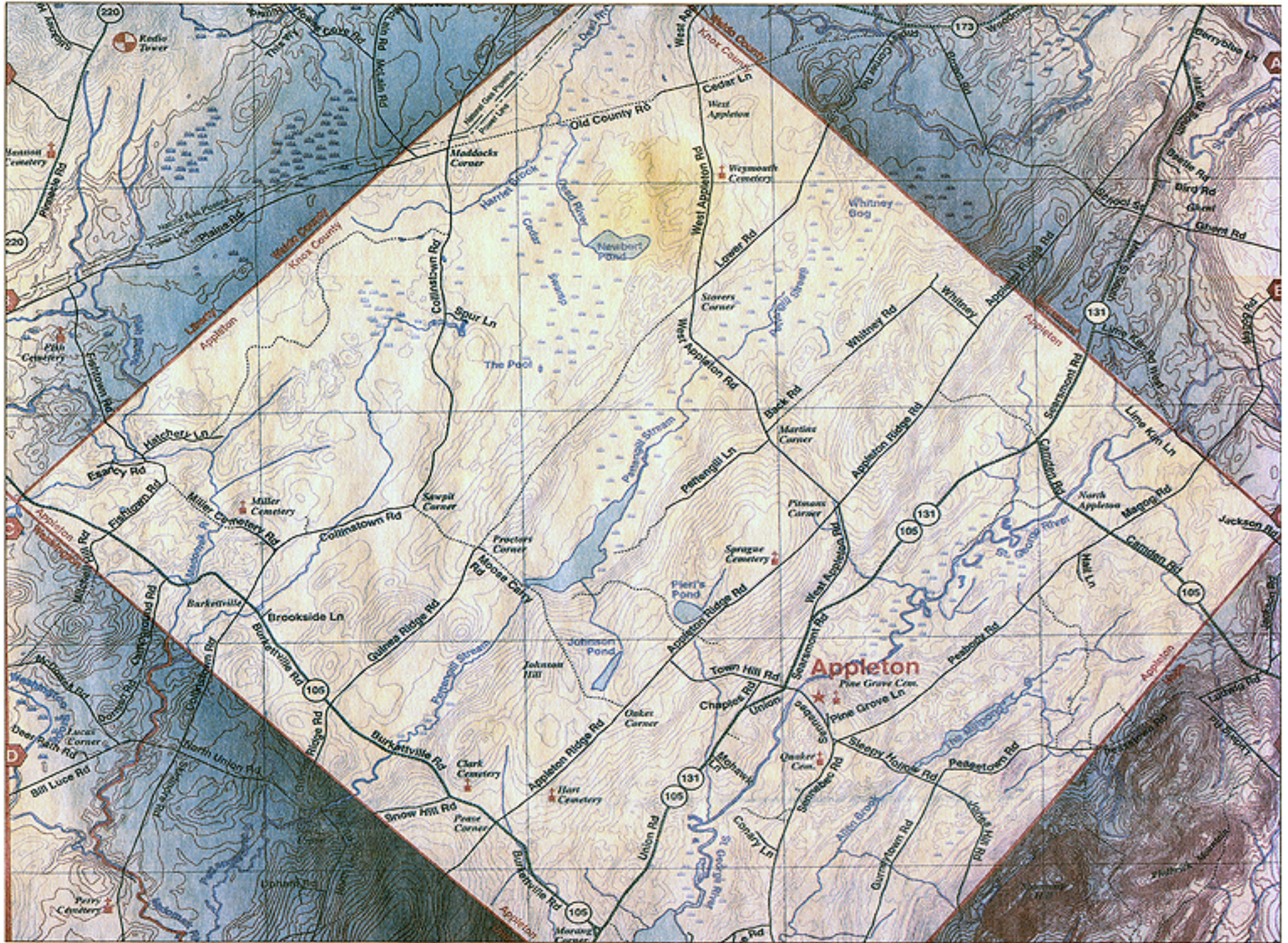
It was Tay Vaughn's map. "After we were given the map, our original plan was to use it to cover all the back roads in Hope, Appleton and Lincolnville, because it was much more detailed than the ones we had," said Stuart Young. "When they called to tell us they found him, I had Peasetown Road in the back of my head, but I wasn't quite sure where it was. We dug out the map, and there it was, as plain as gold."

Empires have been lost for lack of a good map. For a picnicker, an accurate map can mean the difference between a day trip and a lost weekend. For an emergency responder, it can mean the difference between life and death. As an Appleton volunteer firefighter, Vaughn knows the importance of having a good map, and one day last fall he took it upon himself to make one.

"In February we were toned out for a code 2 structure fire and we had two guys that went the wrong way to the fire because they were uncertain where the road was," Vaughn said. "I knew that as firefighters, we have to have a map of all the streets, so I did one and passed it out to all the guys."

After seeing Vaughn's map of Appleton, Union firefighters put in their request for an updated map of their town, spurring Vaughn to map out the entire county.

"If Appleton and Union needed one, I figured all the other towns would need one, too," Vaughn said.



Tay Vaughn's map of Appleton. MAPS COURTESY OF TIMESTREAM MEDIA

"I saw winter ahead of me, and I started to crack away at it."

After accessing publicly available Geographic Information System information from government databases, he began the arduous task of creating a set of clear, readable street maps that included all the highways, byways and tractor paths in Knox County. He merged map information from GIS surveys, existing topographic maps and in-

formation from emergency crews from the various towns, and was able to improve upon existing maps by making his more accurate, more thorough and easier to read.

Working from his office loft in his 200-year-old farmhouse on Searsmont Road, Vaughn made his way through each town mile by mile, correcting road names, identifying landmarks and adding topographical details. He even in-

cluded historical anecdotes about the towns and the people who have lived there, adding interest and local flavor to each page. With hundreds of hours invested in the project, he sent it to the publisher. The finished product, "Complete Knox County, Maine Street Maps, All Towns," arrived in early June.

The project was, and continues to be, a labor of love for the Appleton selectman, whose family roots reach back to the 1700s, when a small group of his ancestors became the second family to settle in what is now Hope. A true Renaissance man, Vaughn has traveled across the country and around the world, pursuing careers as diverse as com-

puter engineering and carpentry. From building a boat and sailing to Panama to running a multimedia company at the dawn of the information revolution, Vaughn's life experiences have taught him the meaning of community. Now his experiences in creating the maps have helped him to get to know his Knox County home a little better.

"Doing this project has turned up some pretty interesting stuff," said Vaughn, pointing out some of the background information he included in the book. "Like this collection of uninhabited islands along here is actually a township, called Muscle Ridge Shoals, and the island of Matinicus is officially a planta-

tion — something that can only be found in the state of Maine."

Vaughn self-published his book and handles all of its distribution. The map is currently for sale at most local bookstores, and he makes sure all the corner markets and roadside gas stations are also well stocked.

"I packed the car with maps, drove to Port Clyde with my 16-year-old daughter and headed north, stopping in every little place we found," Vaughn said. "The stack I had at the Union Market sold out in two weeks. I really think it's the local folks who live and work here who will want it."

Vaughn can be reached at 785-5511 or at timestream.com.



Above: Vaughn poses with Craig Young and dog Simon. Vaughn's maps helped rescuers to scour area back roads and find Aubrey Young. Craig's father, who was missing for two days last week. PHOTO BY DAVID MUNSON

Vaughn's detailed Rockland map, at left, includes street names, landmarks and topographical features.

CONTENTS

Calendar	B4-5
Obituaries	B6
Views	B2-3