

Meet Susan Poulin



Actress and writer Susan Poulin was born in Jackman, the daughter of a schoolteacher and an auto parts store owner. After graduating from Westbrook High School, she studied theater at the University of Southern Maine. Her experiences at USM in the 1980s led to the creation of the Downeast Theater Collective, a three-actor team that performed at the old Odd Fellows Hall in Portland. The group shoveled coal into the furnace in exchange for acting space. After a six-year break when she worked in sales, Susan discovered actor-generated theater and began performing original material at the Pontine Movement Theatre in Portsmouth, a time Susan calls, "very empowering." Still, acting remained a part-time interest and Susan ran Sparkle Susan Housecleaner Extraordinaire to pay the bills from 1990 to 1998. In 1995, she eloped with fellow performer and artist Gordon Carlisle. While driving across country on their honeymoon, the newlyweds developed the idea for what would become the stage show, "In My Head, I'm Thin." The duo soon formed Poolyle Productions and began touring—suddenly, performing was a business and housecleaning became a part-time job. And then, just as suddenly, Ida LeClair changed her life. In 1996, Susan was competing in a Yankee storytelling contest when she realized all the storytellers were men and told stories with a similar voice and outlook. A short time later, as she sat staring at a blank computer screen, a voice popped into her head: "Hi, I'm Ida and I'm a Home Shopping Networkaholic." Drawing upon her Maine and Franco-American roots, Susan created a character with a good-heart, a strong sense of herself, a big sense of humor and real "joie de vivre." Her first Ida show, "Ida: Woman Who Runs with the Moose" debuted in 1997. While Susan still performs as herself, Ida continues to grow in popularity, starring in five stages shows, a weekly blog (www.justaskida.com), and a new self-help book.



Meet Ida LeClair

Susan Poulin's literary character Ida LeClair is a lifelong resident of fictional Mahoosuc Mills, an impossible-to-find, but oh-so-familiar town in Western Maine, where she lives in a tidy and tastefully decorated double wide with Moose Megantic High School sweetheart Charlie and adorable dog Scamp. Ida works down at the Super Food World (still the A&P to locals) and moonlights doing books at Smitty's Hardware and the Mahoosuc Mills Mainely Maine store. Ida is Maine / Franco-American to the core, influenced by her heritage, her parents and her beloved grandfather. She loves country line dancing, making crafts, and giving advice. She also loves chocolate, shopping, (Ida never leaves the house without her "colors," you know, just in case there's a great sale somewhere), and make-up. But one of her favorite things is spending time with her best friends, a group of women who have dubbed themselves "Women Who Run with the Moose." That group of gals is always primed for an adventure. And boy, does Ida have some stories to share.



Finding Your Inner Moose: Ida LeClair's Guide to Living the Good Life

In *Finding Your Inner Moose*, Ida LeClair draws upon her experiences as a daughter, sister, wife, and best friend (as well as those of the noble and majestic moose) to offer practical, commonsense, and hilarious advice on relationships, physical fitness, stress, housecleaning, work, shopping, fun, and more. This is heartfelt, real-life advice with chapters such as: What Did I Do Wrong to Deserve this Turkey Gobbler Neck; I Can't Die Today Because if Anyone Saw the State of my House I'd Just Die; and Feng Shui-ing the Double Wide. This is 100% Ida, who, as Charlie says, "just loves giving advice to people, whether they asked for it or not!"

Finding Your Inner Moose

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