

Pass It On®...

Living Alone doesn't Mean you Have to be Lonely.

How a community in Maine supports those who want to be left alone.

Dan has always lived in Maine. He grew up hunting and fishing in the woods. He doesn't mind the cold. The bugs in the summer don't bother him. And being self-sufficient year-round is the lifestyle he has chosen.

Sometimes he picks up jobs as a laborer if he needs supplies, but mostly he lives off the land, heating his cabin with a wood-burning stove and chipping ice off the nearby river to access water. This is how he has lived for over 50 years. If you want to know how to weave your own rope or chink the walls of your log cabin, ask Dan. He'll spend a day with you, helping you get the job done and teaching you along the way.

It's a simple life, and Dan likes it that way. He'll tell you he only takes what he needs, and he has become a bit of a sage in the area, teaching kids about nature and living in harmony. He's good with hand tools and is always available to help dig a ditch for a neighbor or put in a fence line. But he's getting old.

Dan doesn't have the back he used to have. And while he would never ask for help, the community recognized that Dan could use a better solution to get water into his cabin, especially during the winter. But they also didn't want to take away from Dan's sense of self-reliance. So one October afternoon, 11 of his neighbors showed up with picks and shovels to dig a four-foot-deep trench a hundred yards to the river at the edge of Dan's property. They had to get down below the frost line, dig a sinkhole protected by a rock bollard in the river and run the pipe into the cabin. They outfitted the cabin with a hand pump because Dan's off-the-grid lifestyle meant there was no electricity.

The project was finished well after dark and just a few weeks before the first snow. Dan was ready: He treated them to roast venison, slow-cooked on a spit over an open flame. It is Dan's way, a simple, grateful life.

You can still see Dan around town, loitering in the hardware store, offering advice or painting a widow's barn in exchange for a couple of jars of canned peaches. As the town modernizes around him, Dan is a reminder of past values that never change: Be responsible for your own life. Only take what you need. Give help when it's needed. Appreciate everything. Dan's new water system is also a reminder that sometimes the help people need is help just being themselves.

The Right Helping Hand...[PassItOn.com](https://www.passiton.com)

By The Foundation for a Better Life®

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