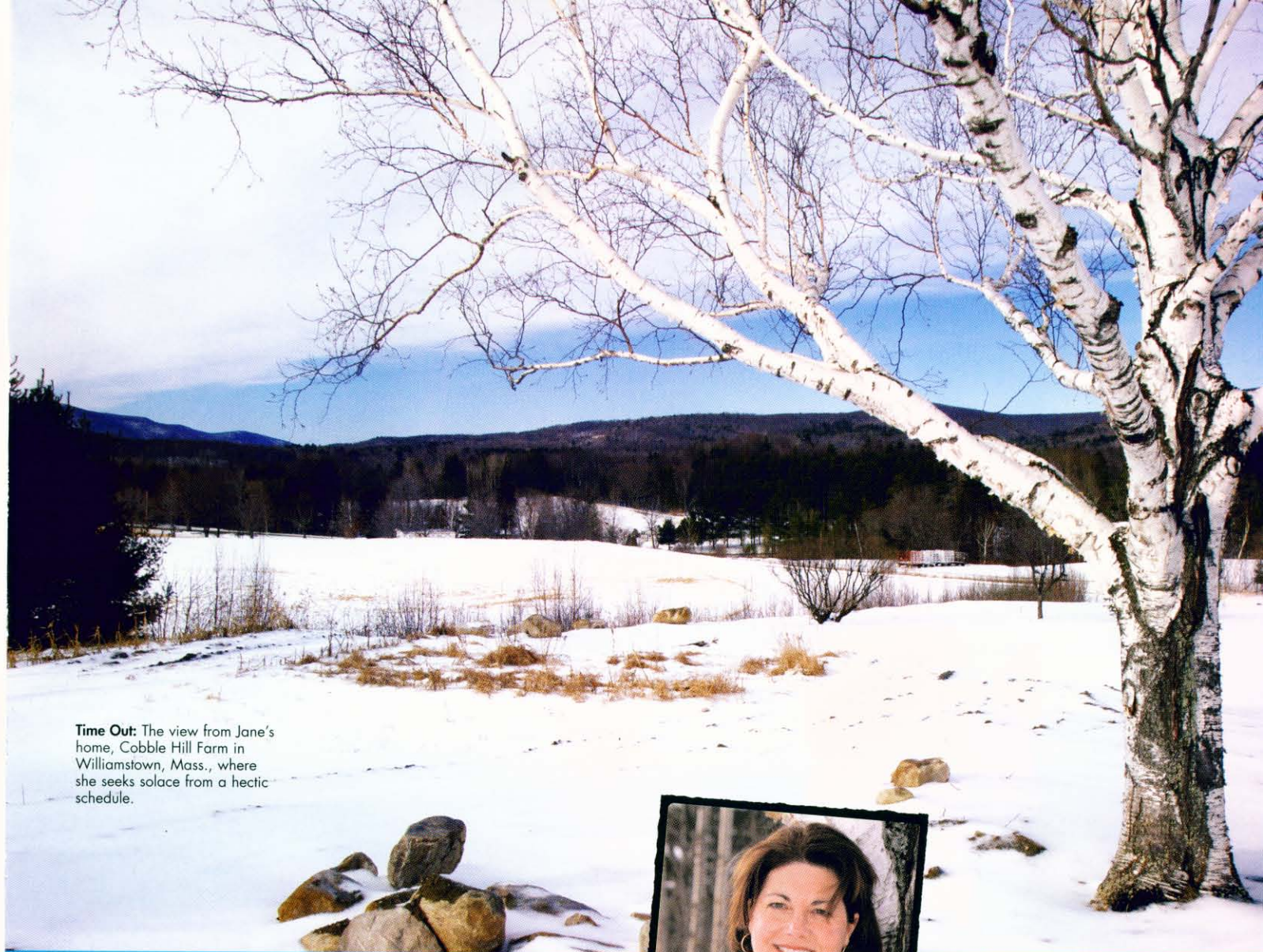


What Ever Happened To Governor Jane?

With her short, tempestuous stint in the Massachusetts statehouse behind her, Jane Swift carves a new life for her family, her community, and herself

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Time Out: The view from Jane's home, Cobble Hill Farm in Williamstown, Mass., where she seeks solace from a hectic schedule.

Jane Swift isn't running for public office these days, but she's still running. She bursts into the cafeteria at the Williamstown (Mass.) Elementary School holding aloft four large Dunkin' Donuts coffees in a cardboard carrying tray. "Cream and one sugar," she says, passing the first cup to her mother, Jean. Another for her Daisy Troop co-leader, Marianne DeMarco. A third for DeMarco's mother, Jane, and one for herself. Each cup delivered to its owner with exactly the right combination of amendments.

This is no ordinary scout mother. Jane Swift has run things like the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and before that, the Massachusetts Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation. She was the youngest woman ever elected to the Massachusetts State Senate—at the tender age of 25—where she served three terms, eventually becoming assistant minority leader.

The story of how Jane Swift came to be co-leader of Daisy Girl Scout Troup 560 says a lot about how she runs her life. When Swift

herself decided she wanted to be a Girl Scout at the age of six, she set the terms of her contract. She insisted her mother lead the troop. Jean, then a stay-at-home mother of four, protested. "You'll get me involved and then you'll leave," she worried. "No," Swift responded, "I'll be a scout for the rest of my life."

Keeping that promise wasn't easy. When Swift's daughter Elizabeth (famous for being born just before her mother became lieutenant governor) was ready to begin her own scouting career, there was no troop in Williamstown. Even after a well-attended informational meeting, no one stepped forward to lead the Daisies. Swift had gotten to know Marianne DeMarco, a pathologist at Southwestern Vermont Medical Center in Bennington, because their daughters were classmates. "Suppose," she suggested, "you and I co-lead the group." The idea of two full-time



working mothers handling the oversized group of 16 five- and six-year-olds was novel. But what makes it unique is that both of *their* mothers joined the leadership team as well.

Ordinarily, Swift spends most of her time with grownups. In 2003, she joined Arcadia Partners, a venture-capital firm that raises money for education-based, for-profit companies. With the two founding partners, she oversees five active startups that provide products for corporate training, K-12 education, and consumer health education.

Months before she left the Statehouse in January 2003, she started networking for a new job. While venture capitalism wasn't on her short list, the education industry was. "I love my job," she says, sipping a latte at Williamstown's bustling Tunnel City Coffee. "There's a fit between what they do and what I'm interested in and good at."

Swift's business partner, Liam Donohue, agrees it's a good fit. "Her DNA is [wired for]



Scouts for Life: Jane with daughter Elizabeth

creating, taking ownership, and building things, not just advising people on how to build things." He points out there's a historical flow between venture capital firms and state governors. Former Massachusetts Governor William F. Weld and Swift both transitioned to private equity venture capital after leaving office. (Governor Mitt Romney's path went in the other direction.) Donohue points to other parallels. Both jobs require skill in raising money, good judgment about how to spend it, and a talent for making deals. Swift points out, "The tactical stuff is very similar—figuring out the influencers, identifying key individuals, and practicing strategy to secure their support."

She sounds like the Jane Swift of the campaign trail when she launches into a description of one of her current projects—Health Dialog. This company provides a full-service care-coordination program to aid patients in making informed decisions about health-care options. Swift was intimately involved in helping the company secure a contract for a federally funded pilot project that, over three

years, could translate into as much as \$150 million in revenues. She emphasizes the details of the process and the implications for improved health care in the same way she might have made the case for college scholarships for foster children when she was acting governor.

As lieutenant governor and then governor, she made the controversial decision to live on her husband's family farm in Williamstown. Then, as now, primary care for Elizabeth and her twin sisters, Lauren and Sarah, now three, fell to Swift's stay-at-home husband, Chuck Hunt. As governor, Swift frequently commuted the three hours between the Statehouse and the Village Beautiful on a daily basis, reading memos, making phone calls, and writing speeches. These days she spends more time on airplanes, though she still drives more than the average Berkshirite, to and from Arcadia's Boston office several times a week.

She's mother to three children under seven, works a high-pressure, full-time job, travels extensively, is deeply involved in com-

munity activities, and is engaged in a year-long renovation of the Williamstown farmhouse that will more than triple the square footage. How does she do it?

Swift prefers the word "integration" to the more traditional "balance." She explains, "Balance implies that you are often at risk of falling off the beam—to one side or the other. Balance conveys the sense that one is living a double life—and while I often feel that way, it is not the state that I am aiming to achieve. Integration offers the opportunity to achieve a permanent state where competing interests peacefully coexist."

Integration is actually a Swift hallmark. Andrea Nuciforo recalls the campaign of 1996 when he was running for her vacant state senate seat and Swift was campaigning for U.S. Congress against incumbent John Olver. (Nuciforo won; she lost.)

"I remember observing her at a county fair in Sheffield. Swift does farm attire as well as she does business attire. She interacted with the farmers as authentically and comfortably as she did with her fellow state sena-

"I enjoyed the privilege being governor gave me and the opportunity to serve and impact issues I care a lot about. But I didn't enjoy the notoriety of it. One comes with the other, so it's just the price you pay."

tors. She was a young woman in a man's game. She was smart, tough, friendly, and very well liked there. Swift understood the importance of personal relationships."

Donohue recalls the first time he met Swift at lunch at Harriet's Table in the Charles Hotel in Cambridge, Massachusetts. "I was extraordinarily impressed that she clearly had an agenda for the meeting. She knew the five points she wanted to get across."

Jennifer Trainer Thompson, director of external affairs at MASS MoCA in North Adams, Massachusetts, works with Swift on community projects. "She's so dogged in the way she tackles things, but she does everything with a great sense of humor."

When things get really intense, Swift relies on a Boston working mothers' group she joined years ago. Twice a month, high-profile working moms gather to let off steam. "Sometimes you want to be able to complain about your life without having people think you don't like the choices you've made," she explains.

Is it all worth it? "Absolutely," she exclaims. "I have the rare privilege of raising my children in the place where my husband and I grew up. We do the community things I remember from my childhood." At the annual Applefest celebration to raise money for the Little Red Schoolhouse in Williamstown, Swift manned the front desk. Her husband took the kids on hayrides. The twins attend classes in the two-room schoolhouse—the only cooperative nursery school in Northern Berkshire County.

Visiting Cobble Hill Farm, you can understand why Jane loves it. "We have one of the most gorgeous views I've ever seen any-

where," she says. The panoramic vista includes Mount Greylock in Massachusetts and mountain ranges in neighboring Vermont and New York. There are horses, a barn, some laying chickens, and even a bunny rabbit for the girls to nuzzle. It's a placid place to live.

Swift's political career, however, was anything but placid. It included moments of good fortune, like when her boss, Peter Webber, elected not to run for a sixth term in the State Senate and threw his support to Swift, or when Paul Cellucci tapped her to be his running mate in 1998. Best of all was when President Bush appointed Cellucci to the Canadian ambassadorship, thereby leaving Swift as acting governor. But there were also moments of poor timing, like being pregnant when she campaigned for lieutenant governor and again when she took over in the Statehouse. Of course, the worst luck was being edged out of running for her own term as governor by the Republican establishment's pick—Mitt Romney.

And then there were the scandals—using a state helicopter to race home to an ailing Elizabeth on Thanksgiving of 1999, and having members of her staff baby-sit for her young child while mom conducted affairs of state. There's the still-unresolved firing of two employees of the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority, one of whom took the issue to court. Finally, there was the revelation in 2001 that her husband concealed two of his three previous marriages on their marriage certificate application. Swift has publicly admitted that she made mistakes, and in the case of the baby-sitting episode, forked over a \$1,250 fine when the State Ethics Commission found that the episode created "the appearance of

impropriety." Still, many people on both sides of the political aisle agree she was badly abused by the press.

Andrea Nuciforo, who succeeded Swift as senator, says, "Berkshire residents don't appreciate the length to which big city newspapers go to destroy people in public service. *The Boston Herald* and *The Boston Globe* hurt Swift and they did it in ways that were not fair and did not serve their readers or the voters. This wasn't an isolated incident. Swift isn't the only one they wanted to burn. It's a condition that affects politics here and throughout the country."

Swift didn't enjoy the lack of privacy. "I enjoyed the privilege being governor gave me and the opportunity to serve and impact issues I care a lot about. But I didn't enjoy the notoriety of it. One comes with the other, so it's just the price you pay."

In fact, Swift hasn't been back to the Statehouse since January 2003. And she won't go back until next fall when her official portrait is unveiled. It's being painted by Sarah Belchetz-Swenson, a distin-

guished portrait painter from Williamsburg, Massachusetts. This will be the first original gubernatorial portrait by a woman artist and one of very few by a Western Massachusetts artist to hang in the great hall.

At 25, Swift planned for a career in politics. Today, she says, "I have great respect and admiration for people who do public service, but it's not something I'm thinking about right now for myself."

But she is thinking about it for other women. Swift says Barbara Lee, the Boston divorcee who is using her share of her ex-husband's millions to make sure there's a woman president in her lifetime, is onto the right strategy in supporting congresswomen, women senators, and women governors. In fact, Swift has broken with the Catholic Church and her party to support a woman's right to choose. She is on the board of The WISH List, whose mission is to raise funds to identify, train, and elect pro-choice Republican women at all levels of government—local, state, and national.

Swift may change her mind someday and return to politics. After all, she has what Bill Clinton says it takes to succeed politically—"the wussy-mommy qualities and the macho-tough qualities." **BI**

Susanna Oppen, who lives in Alford, Massachusetts, writes for and about business.

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Programs promoting women in politics include:

The Barbara Lee Family Foundation
www.barbaraleefoundation.org

The White House Project
www.thewhitehouseproject.org

The WISH List
www.thewishlist.org



Strong Speechster: Whether it's with a group of fifth and sixth grade Girl Scouts or policymakers in the Statehouse, Jane Swift commands attention.