

River Bindery, an operation that started in Jericho, then moved to Essex. Holzer worked her way up to various supervisory positions within the company.

When Brown's was reorganized and folded into a larger bindery called Kofile, Holzer decided the time was right to set up her own business. As it happened, her mother had recently moved out of the downstairs apartment in Holzer's home. That freed up the cozy space that, in 2008, Holzer turned into her own bindery. To honor her family's craft legacy, she still uses the logo from her grandfather's shop.

Though Holzer can and does create entire bound volumes from scratch, most of her projects are repairs, often on the beloved literary heirlooms of private clients. She can fix torn pages or create new ones for old books, trimming new folios, stitching them into signatures and assembling them into custom bindings.

During Seven Days' visit to the bindery, Holzer was performing surgery on some old, careworn, hardback copies of two of L. Frank Baum's Oz novels. The client who'd brought them wanted to resuscitate the books for sentimental reasons, and they needed a great deal of attention. Nearly all of both books' pages were brittle, tattered and detached from their bindings, from which the glue had long since cracked and flaked off. Still, Holzer estimated the job would take her just a couple of days of mending, and only an hour or two to sew the pages back together.

Holzer has multiple sclerosis, which can make such detailed work difficult, so she's glad, she said, to have assistance from her husband, folk musician Rik Palieri. In between his concert tours, Palieri helps out on the larger binding orders, including the municipal records of a number of Vermont towns. (Holzer is reluctant to say which ones.)

Palieri professed admiration for the kind of beautiful, hand-bound books that Holzer Bindery produces. The couple has preserved and bound their own cherished keepsakes, such as an original program from one of Buffalo Bill's Wild West shows. Palieri's own daily journal is a huge, green, handcrafted volume that would look right at home on the shelves of a city planning office.

Repair jobs come into the bindery in what Holzer described as a "steady but not overwhelming supply." Every one is different, and, she said, without first inspecting the book, it's difficult to estimate the cost of the repairs. Prices per piece range from about \$100 to more than \$1,000.

"It will depend on what needs to be done, what the customer wants, if we are trying to save all the original material or make a new cover, and then that will depend on whether it is in leather or imitation leather," Holzer explained.

Demonstrating her craft to a visitor, Holzer smiled and laughed frequently. She took particular delight in the gold stamper, with which she embosses books' spines and covers with shiny letters and designs. With this device, Holzer can also turn strips of scrap leather into personalized bookmarks, mementos that she gives visitors to the bindery.

Holzer's shop—along with the handful of other small bookbinders scattered around the state—embodies the spirit of quality artisanship associated with Vermont. Case in point: Holzer mentioned a client from Houston, Texas, for whom she bound a memorial Bible. Its owner had found Holzer Bindery online and chosen the company specifically because of its Vermont location, she said; to him, this guaranteed careful craft.

Over cups of tea served beneath the cuckoo clock in her kitchen, Holzer talked with Seven Days about the fine art of fine books.

SEVEN DAYS: How did you get started in the bookbinding business?

MARIANNA HOLZER: My father was 70 when I was born—30 years older than my mother. I was pretty young when [his bindery] was still going in Boston. He closed the business in 1960, when he was 80, and moved to southern Vermont, to Putney. He passed away when I was 11, and my mom set up a little bindery later, when I was in high school, in the basement of our house. She taught me a few basic things.

I went to UVM, [where I] studied plant and soil science. I got a job at Four Seasons Garden Center [in Williston]. I kind of got sick of that, and found out that there was this small bindery [Brown's River Bindery] in Jericho, and went to see them. That's how it began.

SD: What are all these tools used for?

MH: The board shears are basically a huge paper cutter; the guillotine, which needs to be super-sharp, is for trimming the edges of a book's pages. I use a lot of mending tissue, which is a Japanese tissue used to fix rips and tears. The rounding or backing hammer—one of my father's tools—I use for rounding a book's spine. One of my favorite things to do is the gold stamping, which presses down on a thin piece of Mylar covered with 22-carat gold. That's how you decorate a binding, letter by letter.

SD: What services do you offer?

MH: One thing I do here is deacidify paper. Anything before the mid-1800s was printed on rag paper, which holds up quite well. Newer paper is made with wood pulp, and we didn't know until more recently how acidic it was. It gets really brittle and cracks when you turn the pages. So we can deacidify the paper, and it'll stop the progression of [the decay]—though it won't bring it back [to its original condition].

SD: Bookbinding is such a niche field. What challenges does your business face?

MH: It seems to me, in some ways, books are becoming more precious as people realize they have certain books that they want to preserve and pass on. Bibles are one thing. It's cheaper to buy a new one, but [the owner has] written all over it. Children's books—people have grown up with a book. And cookbooks! People have written in them, or they have their mother's cookbook. The newer versions they don't like as much.

These days, newer bindings are single sheets that are just glued in. When you open them up, they sometimes crack and fall apart. And those are kind of hard to fix, because they don't have enough of the margin that's necessary to drill the holes for stitching. Older books tend to be in better shape.

SD: How does having MS affect your work as a binder?

MH: I just get really tired sometimes. It's almost like I'm walking through mud or something. It's a big effort to do things. It's also dexterity, fine motor control.

SD: Are you concerned about the new all-in-one machines that can print a book from a digital file and then bind it?

MH: Not particularly. You see a book, and you never think what goes into making it. They [bind books] by machine nowadays. But if you want to repair a book, you can't do it by machine.

TRIBUTE TO REVEREND LEONARD ROBINSON

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I wish to speak about one of Wyoming's greatest World War II heroes, the Rev. Leonard Robinson. Leonard is a special man whose sacrifice speaks louder than his words.

In 1942, less than 1 year after shipping out from Fort Bliss, TX, Robinson found himself among 75,000 American and Filipino soldiers and civilians surrendered to the Imperial Japanese Army. He was one of the fortunate to survive the barbaric 65 mile, 5-day Bataan Death March. Those who were unable to keep up with the march were either beaten or shot by Japanese soldiers.

Robinson was held as a prisoner of war for almost 3½ years. He survived the Bataan Death March, disease, malnutrition, slave labor and torture through his faith in God. Both spiritually and physically, Reverend Robinson credits the Bible with saving his life during his time as a prisoner of war. It is through his faith that he persevered through one of the greatest atrocities committed against our soldiers.

As a prisoner of war, Leonard would often recite Psalm 23 to get him through his struggle. Rev. Leonard Robinson's life has been a journey of war, suffering, hope and peace. Leonard embraced faith in his darkest hours, showed a commitment to duty when all else was lost, and held dear to the memory of his brothers in arms who did not return. In his battered billfold, Leonard kept a roster of his unit and the names of the fallen soldiers. He is a living testament to the often overlooked sacrifices that make our men and women in uniform America's greatest treasure.

Today, Reverend Robinson is being honored at the Casper Area Chamber of Commerce "Hiring a Hero" luncheon. The event's goal is to promote veteran employment through recognizing our service men and women who have triumphed over adversity with a proven ability to overcome challenges and obstacles through strength and determination. I do not know of a better example than my friend and my surgical patient Rev. Leonard Robinson. He epitomizes the service and sacrifice of our men and women in uniform.

STRENGTHENING SOCIAL SECURITY ACT

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I have spoken on the floor of this body on a number of occasions about the impending retirement crisis facing this country. I know from my constituents that the dream of a secure retirement is growing fainter and fainter. In fact, the retirement income deficit—meaning, difference between what people have saved for retirement and what they should have at this point—is a staggering \$6.6 trillion and growing. Today, half of Americans have less than \$10,000 in savings, and only 14 percent are "very confident" they will have enough money for a comfortable retirement.

I am deeply concerned by these statistics. That is why, in 2013, I introduced legislation to tackle this challenge head on. My legislation, S. 567 the Strengthening Social Security Act