



**Independence Hall #23:**

**One Incredible Day in Camden Maine**

by Joline Godfrey

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The world turned upside down in Maine last month. The usually brisk spring days turned a balmy 75 degrees and the under-25/over 25 women of the town took over to celebrate "One Incredible Day!"

Presented by "With Girls," Independent Means was there to be part of an ambitious community effort to support girls' dreams and provide tools for achieving those dreams.

*Girl of the Year*, a play written by local playwright Cathy Flourde and performed by a cast of six teen actors, launched the day. As a theater critic I would say the play was, "a hoot!, warm and moving, funny and fast, one of the best portrayals of the real lives of high school women I have seen in a very long time." If your local theater group is looking for a play about high school women, this is the one to produce ([email me](#) if you want more information). I admit a little bias -- it was based on the ideas of my book, *No More Frogs to Kiss*. But talent is a gift and this group made the ideas sing!

After the play, the audience of over 300 girls and women broke out into separate seminars. Some participated in a monster game of Hot Company, the board game/tournament that gives women a sneak peak at the entrepreneurial lives and possibilities of women. Others joined Product-in-a Box to develop everything from a high tech toilet (minds go wild at these events!) to a venture capital club for the town's women and girls! Still others chose from seminars on cyberspace, fitness, massage, dating issues, and sexuality.

The day closed with interviews among the high school women and local professional women, each sharing their lives, discovering common ground and exploring potential partnerships. And the town really showed its support for the teenagers by giving away two scholarships to [Camp Start-Up](#). Here's what some of the attendees had to say at day's end:

- "I am determined and energetic and NOW I know I am smart and capable of making good decisions."
- "I've got so many great ideas and I want to make them into realities!"
- "I have seen possibilities open to me as a set of stairs..."
- "I sometimes have trouble speaking up, but after today, I think I will be bolder!"
- "Today I received the first dose of motivation, encouragement, and creativity needed to become a financially secure, self confident, and economically fluent woman of the future!"

The day held something for everyone: grade school girls, high school women, moms, aunts, and women concerned about the next generation. The mood was celebratory, the energy high and the aftermath we can anticipate is a girl friendly town that takes its young women seriously, opens real doors of opportunity, and listens with interest to their ideas and contributions.

How can you make your town girl friendly? Follow Camden's lead.

1. Form a group of girls and women to plan a day for girls.
2. Survey girls and women in town to see what they think would make a "girl friendly town."
3. Once you ask, listen to the real answers.
4. [Contact us](#) at Independent Means for ideas of sessions and programs to include in your events.
5. Visit Camden, Maine. Walk around town, ask people about "One Incredible Day!" and invite them to teach you how to make your town girl friendly too!

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