

Ramona Hamblin

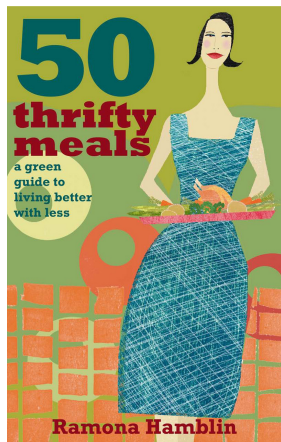
Author of *50 Thrifty Meals*

From a very early age, there were two driving forces in Ramona Hamblin's life: a struggle to make the most of what she had and a genuine caring for others.

Through the years, her career took many twists and turns – from a human services professional to a highly successful attorney to a mother of three – but she never forgot the values instilled by her parents.



And so her new book, *50 Thrifty Meals, a green guide to living better with less*, is not just a cookbook. It's a culmination of her life experiences and ideals. *50 Thrifty* teaches us how to eat better, save money and reduce our carbon footprint.



Growing up in a poor Brattleboro, Vt., family, she was the youngest of six children. “I don’t recall ever being hungry,” she said, “but I remember my parents taking out a loan to pay the rent, which was \$50 a month.”

In addition to her expertise at running a good home on very little money, Hamblin’s mother was a natural conservationist, having grown up on a farm. She was well aware of the amount of work involved with living from the earth.

“Her deep-seated aversion to waste is probably the reason I took up that particular cause,” Hamblin said.

As a youngster, Hamblin actively supported the Campaign for Safe Energy and joined the Clamshell Alliance. Moving to Boston at age 17, she worked as a health care aide for the elderly and managed a residence for physically and psychologically challenged young adults.

A few years later, she attended UMass-Boston, supporting herself by working two jobs. Despite the long days, she graduated with a 4.0 average and became the first UMass-Boston alumna to gain admission to Harvard Law School. Two of her three children were born while she was attending Harvard and it was a struggle to make ends meet.

“I took out any student loan I could get,” Hamblin recalled. “We went to Haymarket on Saturdays and bought the raw ingredients for baby food. We made and froze our own baby food.”

After graduating from Harvard, Hamblin spent worked for the law firm of Sullivan & Worcester LLP before branching out into her own private practice. In 2006, she wrote scripts for *11 Central Ave.*, a four-minute weekly “comic strip” for Chicago Public Radio that examined real-life family issues. Today, the Newton resident is a full-time mother of three and a community activist for environmental causes.

“*50 Thrifty* is something of an homage to women like my mother,” said Hamblin. “She had very little to work with and never failed to please. Feeding her family the best home-cooked meal she could eke out was a non-negotiable obligation. I’m not looking to go back to the life she lived, but just to honor the value of her labor.”