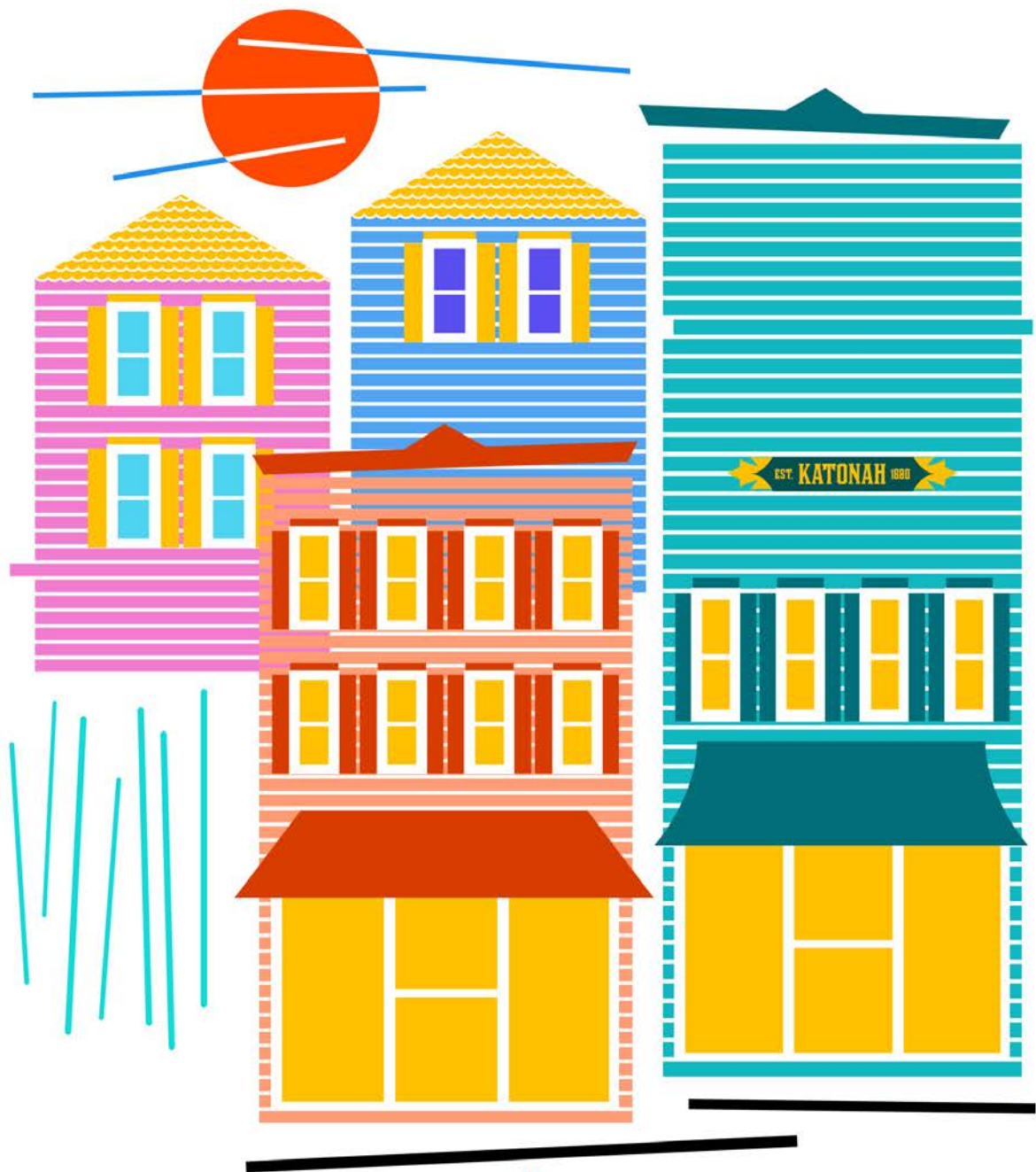


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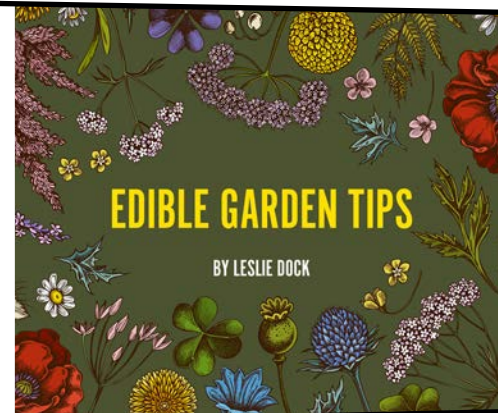
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WELCOME TO KATONAH CONNECT

LETTER FROM THE FOUNDERS

They say writing a book is like birthing a child. But creating and producing a magazine from scratch is like birthing and raising a child.

It demands your attention late at night, early in the morning and on weekends and holidays.

You make decisions not only about what's best in the moment, but what will be best for years to come. (*Will this section have longevity? Will it help the magazine grow? Will other people like it?*)

You seek the advice of experts in your community and turn towards the people around you for advice and support – it takes a village, right?

You continue to work your day job to keep the lights on and food on the table, hoping the decisions you make today will allow your “baby” to become independent and self-sufficient.

You and your partner develop inside jokes, send campy texts and learn what it means to truly support one another in this crazy and wild adventure you agreed to embark upon together.

And then, once your “baby” is ready to leave the nest, you send it off into the world, knowing you’ve done everything you can and hoping they make a good impression on others.

And, like most parents who have multiple children, you begin working on the second one before the first is complete – you’re a little older, a little wiser and perhaps a little less sane...

To be honest, we never imagined that the website we launched during the pandemic would morph into a magazine that connected our communities (Bedford, Bedford Hills, Cross River, Goldens Bridge, Katonah, Pound Ridge, North Salem, South Salem and Waccabuc), but here we are.

When friends encouraged us to transform our humble site into something more, we had several ideas. But given our backgrounds and careers, along with our questionable mental state, publishing was a perfect fit.

So we set about creating a magazine that we’d want to read – a local publication that connects, entertains, informs, advises and even challenges readers to examine complex issues affecting our community, all in a down-to-earth, friendly manner. We wanted a gorgeously-designed magazine that represented our community in a witty, funny, serious, silly and thoughtful manner. *Piece of cake, right?*

What we didn’t know is all the weird things we’d have to do to get there. We actually spent time closely examining and feeling different paper weights and finishes. We went on cold calls all over Westchester, selling a magazine

that didn’t yet exist. We walked into car garages, hair salons, dry cleaners, kitchens and even funeral homes. We analyzed margins, kerning, line spacing, writing style and tone in every publication we could get our hands on. We stayed up well past our bedtimes, writing, designing and texting each other excitedly about images we saw or thoughts that we had that day....but is that really so weird? Okay, maybe a little.

Our journalism professors definitely didn’t prepare us for this!

The thing is, we knew how to put a magazine together. But more importantly than that, we knew why we wanted to do it: **Northern Westchester is a very special place, and we felt it deserved to have its stories told in a truly exciting way – a way that connected people to each other.**

Now that we’ve put our inaugural issue to bed (that’s actually a journalism term – stick around, we’ll teach you a few more), we can proudly say we’ve accomplished everything we set out to do, and more! We’ve made new friends, formed new connections and learned so much about our incredible community. And, we’ve also learned that if you work ‘til 3 a.m., magic elves will

eventually run across your keyboard singing the songs from “Encanto”...

Creating this magazine was a true labor of love for both of us, and one that **couldn’t have happened without the support of our spouses** who lovingly and candidly shared their opinions every single time we asked (but, of course, never when we didn’t).

And so we begin this exciting journey together.

By now, you are undoubtedly wiping tears from your eyes, feel the goosebumps running down your arms, and there are butterflies in your stomach as you excitedly anticipate reading this compelling new magazine. But before you do, we ask that you retrieve that special bottle of Champagne (or beverage of choice) – you know, the one you’ve saved for that job promotion or big family event. Go get it. We’ll wait...

Now raise a glass with us to our inaugural issue of Katonah Connect!

We are proud to be part of this community, and we look forward to many years of storytelling with you. It’s been a true pleasure.

THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH.


GIA MILLER
EDITOR IN CHIEF


JUSTIN NEGARD
CREATIVE DIRECTOR



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Front cover: “Katonah”

digital illustration by Justin Negard.

Back cover: “Losing Hope”

photographic art by Emily Twitchell.

THANK YOU

We’d like to give a very special shout-out to a few people who’ve helped us along the way. While we did our very best to avoid creating a magazine that focused exclusively on the people we knew, being an unknown entity did force us to rely on a bit of nepotism.

Our spouses, Maribeth and Marc, (no, we are NOT married to each other!), who humored us and nodded politely as we shared the details, all the details, of our new venture – page margins, editorial style, punctuation, business names, etc. And, they even indulged our desire to include a family photo (see page 6).

Robin Reitzes, our connector, who introduced us to several people featured in our inaugural issue.

Scott Gillespie, whose sage business advice helped us transform our ideas into a viable business.

Dana Butcher, an incredible Kentucky-based editor who fixed the hairy spots in the sustainability story.

Andy Kritzer from the U.S. Postal Service, who very kindly guided us through the process of getting the magazine into your home, pointed us in the direction of possible printers and checked in on us from time to time.

Russ Adler, who prepared us for becoming employers.

Dorothy Negard, who applied her editing and writing expertise to get us over the finish line.

Vinny, Justin’s son, who happily shared his thoughts about everything from gummy bear houses to time travel.

Various editors and publishers who kindly and generously answered our questions – all of our questions, even the annoying ones.

Our advertisers – you believed in us and helped us make this beautiful magazine a reality.

Emma, our “business manager” (and Justin’s adorable toddler), who kept us entertained during weekly meetings, on photo shoots and as we visited local shops and restaurants throughout our community.

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Ava Fleisher is a student at Horace Greeley High School in Chappaqua, NY. She began interning with Katonah Connect in October and has loved learning about Katonah’s intriguing history. “I love seeing how our past connections impact us today,” she said. In her free time, she enjoys volunteering with local organizations, writing (obviously), and spending time with children, which is why she had a great time interviewing Vinny. She also enjoys traveling and learning new things about the world. In the future, Ava hopes to continue to develop her writing and interviewing skills and eventually pursue a career in journalism.



Leslie Dock is a freelance farmer, gardener, permaculture practitioner and educator based in Katonah. She holds a master’s in acting and worked in the arts for a good while, but made the switch to agriculture when she left NYC for Katonah in 2016. This May, she will begin teaching classes for children and adults at DIG Farm as part of the Westchester Local Food Project. “I am knocked out by the beauty of our county on daily basis,” she says. “There’s so much fertile, open land right in our backyards. We really could localize our food system if we put our hands and minds to it.” When not tending to plants or her students, Leslie can be found romping the local preserves, woodworking or playing the drums.

TAL DORON EMILY TWITCHELL



Tal Doron is a student at John Jay Middle School and budding artist who created her first masterpiece at two years old, which her mom framed and hung in her office. Over the years, she has continued to study art from a variety of in-person and virtual instructors (thanks, YouTube!). “When my mom asked me if I’d like to illustrate the anxiety story, I jumped at the opportunity,” she says. “I thought long and hard about how I could demonstrate the ways anxiety manifests, and I drew five unique images. Even though they only used two, I still got paid in bubble tea for all five, and I’m excited to have my work published! I guess being my mom’s daughter does have some advantages.”



Emily Twitchell is a photographer and visual artist in New Canaan, CT. Focusing on the growing issue of climate change, she creates artwork that “explores the question of how humans interact with the natural world, both in positive ways that celebrate the beauty of nature but also in the negative ways that show how we are hurting the planet.” With the goal of increasing awareness about climate change, throughout the month of April, Emily’s piece “Lost Train” flew as a flag at Rockefeller Center in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme and the New York Climate Museum.





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AND **BEDFORD HILLS** WITH YOUR DELICIOUS BODEGAS.
HELLO TO CHARMING **CROSS RIVER** AND **GOLDENS BRIDGE**.
WHAT'S UP, **KATONAH**? I MEAN, YOU'RE NAME IS IN THE TITLE.
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KATONAH
CONNECT

ANXIETY IN CHILDREN

A CHAT WITH ALISSA GLEACHER, PH.D., WHO TREATS CHILDREN, ADOLESCENTS AND ADULTS WITH ANXIETY, MOOD, BEHAVIOR AND SCHOOL-RELATED DIFFICULTIES

BY GIA MILLER

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TAL DORON

When we get behind the wheel of a car, it's our anxiety that keeps us from running a stop sign. When we give a big presentation, it's our anxiety that tells us to prepare in advance. When we cook a meal, it's our anxiety that tells us to grab potholders before touching the hot pan. We need anxiety in order to survive. It's our body's alarm system — it's meant to keep us safe. On April 11, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force announced their recommendation that children ages eight and up be screened for anxiety. We sat down with Katonah resident Alissa Gleacher, Ph.D., to learn more about anxiety and how we can help our children.

"We all need anxiety," says Gleacher. "At its most basic function, anxiety is what helps us survive to see another day. And, we all require some level of stress and anxiety to perform at our best. If your child has no anxiety about an upcoming test, they won't study, and their performance may suffer. But if they're too anxious, their performance will also decline."

Helping your child find that balance can be tricky, especially during, and immediately following, a global pandemic.

ANXIETY IS VERY COMMON AMONG CHILDREN AND TEENS, BUT THE PANDEMIC MADE IT WORSE

If your child is struggling to manage their anxiety, they're not alone — according to Gleacher, it's one of the most common outpatient disorders in people of all ages, and the pandemic has dramatically increased people's anxiety.

"If we think about what causes anxiety, it makes a lot of sense," Gleacher says. "A lot of the things we took for granted about safety,

such as leaving our house without being in danger, were taken away from kids at very pivotal moments of development. Suddenly, it was only safe to be in our house with our immediate family. And when things began to open up, children had to readjust their thoughts about safety.

"Anxiety," she continued, "is a disorder of avoidance and avoiding things that make us anxious or scared. So, it makes sense that a child's fear would increase, even though it was necessary at the time.

But, for many children, that anxiety has remained heightened, and they're now experiencing an increased level of fear during day to day activities."

Post-pandemic, Gleacher says that many children who experienced a slightly heightened level of anxiety in the past are now experiencing symptoms that rise to the level of a diagnosable disorder, ranging from general anxiety, separation anxiety or social anxiety to obsessive-compulsive disorder (masks! hand-washing!), panic attacks or certain phobias.

WHY ARE KIDS EXPERIENCING SO MUCH SCHOOL-RELATED ANXIETY?

The academic and social demands were different when our children were participating in virtual and hybrid schooling. Going back full time, especially when numerous safety precautions were in place, was not easy.

"When children returned to school full time, teachers used the same pre-COVID curriculum, not accounting for the reduction in learning that occurred during COVID," Gleacher explains. "Additionally, kids were forced to put their social lives on pause during COVID, which definitely

impacted a lot of children, especially those who were socially anxious before."

HOW TO HELP YOUR ANXIOUS CHILD AT HOME

Whether your child is refusing to go to school or experiencing anxiety-related symptoms at school (headaches, nausea, dizziness, exhaustion), there are things you can do to help your child work through their anxiety.

"First, if there's an increase in somatic complaints (physical symptoms), it's important to rule out the possibility of an underlying medical condition by visiting the pediatrician," Gleacher advises. "But, you can also begin to treat the anxiety at the same time."

How you help your child will depend on a variety of factors, but in general, Gleacher encourages parents to remember that anxiety causes your child to avoid the things they believe are threatening. Yet if the threat doesn't actually exist, then you can slowly help them approach the perceived threat and overcome it, which will take some time.

However, when their fear is warranted, such as a person spreading COVID-19 by not wearing a mask properly or at all, then help them focus on what they can control.

"In that situation, they can control wearing their own mask and remaining socially distant from those who aren't and setting appropriate boundaries," Gleacher explains. "But you should also discuss the facts. What does the research say about the realistic threat of getting COVID? Because even though their fear is justified, it's possible that your child may be exaggerating the threat."

You can also create a chart they can check off each time they approached

and overcame their fear.

“Creating charts and collecting data is a very effective way to help children change their behaviors – it works well for multiple ages and types of problems,” says Gleacher. “While your child may need your help to monitor their progress, creating a visual reminder can give them a certain level of mastery. Seeing all of the times they overcame their fear can be a very powerful experience.”

HOW TO HELP YOUR ANXIOUS CHILD AT SCHOOL

If your child is diagnosed with an anxiety disorder, they should qualify for a 504 plan, which will guarantee them classroom accommodations based on their symptoms and needs. Examples include:

- Allowing them to take a break during tests if they begin to feel anxious.
- Taking tests in a separate location.
- Preferential seating in the classroom.
- Additional access to their teacher.
- A copy of their teacher’s notes.
- Reduction in the amount of homework or the time they spend doing it.

“There a lot of different modifications, so the best way to determine what your child needs is to ask them what they’re finding difficult and work with their therapist and the school to put together an effective plan.”

TAKING YOUR CHILD TO THERAPY

Psychologists and social workers can teach your child a variety of skills to handle stressful situations.

“I’m a big proponent of evidence-based treatments that we know have a greater likelihood of bringing about meaningful clinical change,” says Gleacher. “Research has proven that Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) is the most effective way to reduce anxiety-related symptoms.”

Gleacher says that CBT therapy can begin as early as preschool, but therapy for younger children focuses more on the behavioral aspects, rather than the cognitive aspects, which requires more caretaker involvement. But regardless of age, when searching for a professional, look for someone that your child feels comfortable with who can teach them skills and how to track their progress.

“A therapist is only with their client about one percent of the week, so we need to monitor the other 99 percent,” Gleacher explains. “Because change takes time, you want someone who is consistently checking in on your child’s progress and adjusting their goals based on that information.”

WHAT YOU SHOULD (AND SHOULDN’T) DO OVER THE SUMMER

With the school year coming to a close, summer will definitely give your child some time to relax, but it won’t “cure” their anxiety.

“We all want to hope that whatever was plaguing our children at the end of the school year is just going to go away by the start of the next one, but that doesn’t actually happen as often

as we would like,” Gleacher cautions.

Here’s what you can do this summer to help your child reduce their anxiety:

- **Provide your child with some structure to their days.** Whether it’s camp or doing an activity out of the house each day, kids thrive on structure.
- **Return to the bedtime/wake-up routine several weeks before school resumes.** If your child was struggling with school attendance or somatic symptoms, it will be really hard for them to jump right back into that schedule a day or two before school begins. And yes, this means you should be mindful of their school routine as you make plans for Labor Day weekend.
- **Work with the school to create a plan for the fall.** Whether your child had a plan in place this

year, reflect on the situations that caused anxiety. Then, work with their therapist and the school to create a plan that can help your child overcome and master the situations that brought them more anxiety than they needed.

“One of the best things that parents can do is address things before they reach a crisis level,” says Gleacher. “Address them at home, in therapy and partner with the school. Because if you don’t, by the time you get to October, you might not just be treating moderate anxiety – it could be at a crisis level. Try to prepare ahead of time because, sometimes, the wait and see approach will bring about a bigger crisis.” **KC**



CREATE AN
ACTIONABLE PLAN
TO HELP YOUR CHILD
WITH THEIR ANXIETY.



DOWN TO EARTH

BY GIA MILLER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN NEGARD

WE USE TERRIBLE PUNS BECAUSE DEATH MAKES US UNCOMFORTABLE. YET BRUCE REISDORF DEALS WITH IT FOR A LIVING, AND HE LOVES HIS JOB. THOSE WHO KNOW HIM SAY HE'S THE LAST GUY TO LET YOU DOWN (SORRY!), AND WE FIND OUT WHY.

As Benjamin Franklin famously wrote, "...in this world, nothing can be said to be certain except death and taxes." We deal with taxes regularly and they even come up in polite, and not so polite, conversation. But death is a topic that many of us try to avoid. Even though it happens to all living beings, we're uncomfortable with it. It's so...final. Yet those who work in the industry provide our community with an essential service – one that must be done with precision and grace during a time of great upheaval in a family's life. For our very first Coffee Connection, we sat down with Licensed Manager Bruce Reisdorf at Clark Associates Funeral Home to chat about life, death and everything in between.

It often goes like this: Bruce Reisdorf meets with family members of the recently deceased. Their conversation is somber, serious as they review the next immediate steps. It may take minutes or hours for the family to make their decisions, but Reisdorf doesn't mind – he holds their hand every step of the way.

Towards the end of the meeting, Reisdorf has developed a rapport with the family members. He's entered their lives at one of the most difficult times and has quickly gained their trust. Once the family has made those challenging decisions, they sometimes shift into a "first date" conversation. In the early 2000's, the topic du jour was "Six Feet Under."

"We'd wrap up the meeting and people would ask if I've ever watched 'Six Feet Under,'" Reisdorf remembers. "Then the whole dynamic of the meeting would change. We'd start talking about TV..." But I'll never forget this one time where the son of the deceased asked me, "What do you like about the show?"

"So, we talked about the show, specific episodes and things like

that," he continued. "He thanked me for my opinion and then told me that he worked for the show! A couple of weeks later, he sent me a box of swag – a t-shirt, calendar and other really cool stuff. It was great to talk to him, and that was a fun surprise!"

HELPING PEOPLE IN THEIR TIME OF NEED

While Reisdorf doesn't regularly receive a box of swag as a thank you for doing his job, he is often thanked for helping a family get through the most difficult days of their life. He likens his job to that of a "Dutch Uncle," which, according to the Oxford Dictionary, is "a person giving firm but benevolent advice." He and his colleagues feel as though they become a part of the family. They're there for one of the most difficult times and witness families discuss intimate details about their pain.

"When the funeral is over and we're walking away, or when the family comes in a week later to sign the final paperwork, they'll shake my hand or give me a hug and say, 'thanks for everything, we couldn't have done it without you,'" he says. "That's the best part. That's why I do this."

THE JOB REQUIRES MANY HATS

Funeral directors play many roles all at once; they're serving the role of psychologist, family mediator, grief counselor and event planner. In fact, obtaining a degree in mortuary science involves taking courses in everything from anatomy, chemistry and microbiology to counseling, business management and law. They also learn about various religious customs and ethics.

"The best thing that we can do is to be a good listener," he says. "Families are obviously upset when they come to us, and they have ideas about

what they'd like. So, we listen and help them structure a service that's meaningful for them, whether they're very religious or not. We take all their ideas, and within reason, put them into a meaningful service that helps them with the grieving process."

DEATH WAITS FOR NO ONE

Being in a profession that requires you to be on call means leaving during the middle of a birthday party, a family holiday celebration or your child's recital/playoff game. It's not easy on anyone when these calls come in, but having an understanding and supportive family definitely helps.

"We're available 24 hours a day, seven days a week," says Reisdorf. "It's a personal sacrifice that we make – we miss a lot of holidays and birthdays. As soon as the telephone rings, your holiday is over because you realize it's over for the family who is on the other end of the phone. It's a service that we perform for the community. We're try to help the family get through the most difficult days of their life."

Those difficult days are even worse when parents are burying a child. Reisdorf, whose sister died at a young age, is passionate about supporting these families. He encourages them to seek support from a nationwide group called Compassionate Friends that meets locally in White Plains. He's even attended a meeting so he can speak from experience about the supportive nature of the group.

YOU CAN TAKE IT WITH YOU

One of the more interesting parts of Reisdorf's job is what people, or their family members, choose to take with them to the grave. The most common item? Sparky's ashes.

"People have a real attachment to their pets," he says. "Your pet loves

COFFEE CONNECTION

you unconditionally, no matter what. And he’s always happy to see you when you come home at the end of every day.”

Some other frequent requests include golf clubs, fishing poles, baseball hats, sports jerseys and camouflage hunting outfits. He’s also had several requests for food items like pasta and sauce, a full baseball uniform from a fantasy camp and even, ironically, a carton of cigarettes.

“One experience I’ll never forget was with a man who was a big golfer,” Reisdorf remembers. “When his golf buddies came to see him during visiting hours, they each knelt down by the casket. Unbeknownst to us, they did that to secretly put a golf ball in his casket. On the day of the funeral, his golf friends were his pallbearers, and as we’re carrying the casket into the church, we had to put it at an angle. Suddenly, we heard bang, bang, bang, and his friends began laughing. They knew the sound was their golf balls rolling around the bottom of the casket!”


LIFE IS ABOUT LIVING

For Reisdorf, life is not wasted on the living. While his work is rewarding, he also takes time to unwind. His preferred method? Exercise, particularly cycling.

“I’m an avid cyclist and a member of the Westchester Cycle Club,” he says. “I put a lot into to my work, and bike riding serves as a huge stress release. Whether I’m going to the gym or riding with friends, that’s my relaxation.”

You only get one life, Reisdorf chooses to live his well. 





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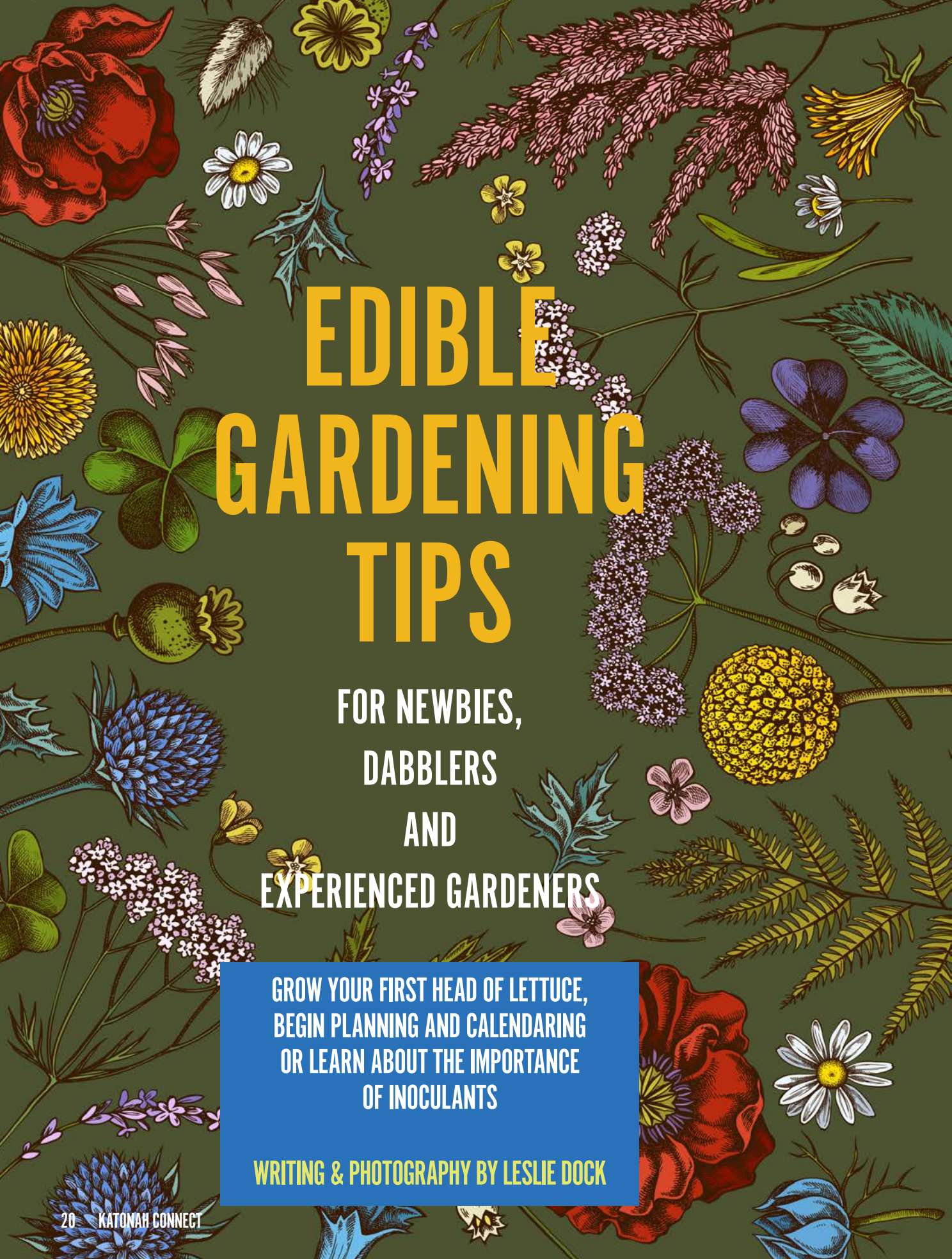
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EDIBLE GARDENING TIPS

FOR NEWBIES,
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GROW YOUR FIRST HEAD OF LETTUCE,
BEGIN PLANNING AND CALENDARING
OR LEARN ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE
OF INOCULANTS

WRITING & PHOTOGRAPHY BY LESLIE DOCK

In each issue of Katonah Connect, Katonah resident Leslie Dock – a regenerative farmer, gardener, landscaper and permaculture designer – will share her gardening wisdom with readers. Whether you’ve never had dirt under your fingernails or excitedly check your mailbox each winter for your seed catalogue, Leslie’s got you covered.

HAPPY SPRING!

We made it through the winter – the frosty nights are behind us, and signs of growth are everywhere. It’s finally time to get our hands in the soil and get dirty.

May is the starting block for the growing season. There’s much to do, and our winter-rested bodies are eager to get to it. However, before you run out and buy a

shiny new shovel, seeds or a bag of potting soil, take time to observe and plan. Careful consideration of where, how, what, when and why you plan to grow will make a big difference in the bounty brought forth from your efforts – it’ll also minimize your stress and produce better results.

Whether you have an acre of fertile soil in full sun or a few pots on your patio, you can grow your own food – no experience necessary. So let’s get to it.

There is a LOT of information on gardening out there. To simplify your plan of action, select your level of gardening experience and head straight to your section below.

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WHAT TYPE OF GARDENER ARE YOU?

LEVEL 1, NEWBIE

Never or rarely have you torn open a seed packet, sunk a trowel in soil or considered where south is in relation to your dwelling space. But you’re always looking for new ideas and inspiration.

LEVEL 2, DABBLER

You have a season or two under your belt. The miracle of growth is no longer a mystery, but your results are spotty and you want to become a more proficient and confident grower.

LEVEL 3, EXPERIENCED

You trade seeds with friends and look forward to getting seed catalogues in the mail each winter. You are confident in your ability to produce a solid harvest, but you’re always looking for new ideas and inspiration.



LEVEL 1

Hey, Newbie! Welcome to your new favorite activity. You have chosen wisely. Before you know it, you will be munching on peas and lettuce that you grew yourself. Let's get you set up for success.

Start small: Start with a couple of big pots. You can expand as you go. Clay pots are a classic. Plastic pots are light. Enamelled pots are beautiful. Whatever you choose, make certain there are one or more drainage holes in the bottom.

Find the sun: The sun is the engine of growth. Vegetable and herbs need at least six hours of sun, but more is better. Take a look at your growing area (patio, deck, yard) at regular intervals throughout the day. Note where and how long the sun hits that area and whether you will need to move your pots to get your plants the sun they need.

Know your soil: Good soil is your plants' home. If you are starting with pots, choose an organic mix made for pots. While you can make a go of it with soil from your yard, you don't know what's in it. Potting soil is made to hold water longer and leave room for tender roots to expand. An organic potting mix is also free from chemicals and usually pre-charged with the nutrients your plants will need to get started.

Choose wisely: It's your growing debut, so make it easy on yourself and choose easy to grow veggies like lettuce, radishes, spinach, beets, arugula and kale — they will all sprout easily and love the cooler temps of May.

Care: Pots dry out faster than in-ground soil, so monitor them every day. Watering in the evening is best, but morning works too. Push your index finger straight into the soil. If you sense dampness before your first knuckle, you don't need to add water. Water deeply — any excess water will drain out through the holes in the bottom of your pot.

LEVEL 2

Ready to up your game? Let's talk location, soil and mulch.

Location: You know the basics and are bursting to try growing in the ground. Your first choice of plot gets full sun, but is it close enough to a water source? Is the plot safe from deer? If you can't answer yes to both questions, consider another spot or make plans to run a water line and install stout fencing.

Soil: Your location is ideal, but before you sink a fence post, test the soil. Even if you plan to install raised beds and bring in good soil, test the soil. You wouldn't buy a house without doing a thorough inspection, and the same goes for soil. For accurate results, take small samples about 6-8 inches below the surface from six different spots in the proposed growing area.

What you're looking for is any evidence of heavy metals or other pollutants. A proper soil test will contain a detailed list of your soil's composition so you know what you're working with and can amend the soil accordingly.

Planning: You've got a rockin' good spot and you're properly fenced — you're ready to grow. Now it's time to consider what will grow where and when. Make sure you are confident on the path the sun will take as it rises and moves west. The angle of the sun is closer to the horizon in the spring and fall, and it's directly overhead in mid-summer. Draw a basic map of your garden and have a list of the vegetables you plan to grow and a calendar on hand. Be sure to leave room for plants to grow, and position taller plants where they won't shade out their shorter friends. Planning and mapping eliminate the guesswork during the season, so you can spend more time caring for your plants and eating the results.

Mulch: The earth considers bare soil a wound that it must cover. Enter weeds. Weeds are highly adaptive, vigorous plants that take advantage of uncovered soil. They're nature's Band-Aid. Weeds store carbon in soil, just like

other plants, but they compete for the nutrients your vegetables need to prosper. To prevent or control weeds, cover any bare soil in and around your garden. For garden beds, chopped straw or leaves are great choices. Around the beds, wood chips work well. Mulch is essential for keeping weeds at bay and serving as a cap to keep the top few inches of soil moist and teeming with beneficial microbial life. Never leave your soil uncovered. Mulch equals a much higher degree of success in the garden.

TIP: Straw and hay are not the same thing. Straw is the hollow stalk of cereal grain plants, such as oats or wheat. It should only contain a few stray seeds here and there. Hay is animal feed and full of nutritious grains that will sprout in your soil and take root. Look for chopped straw, salt hay or mulch with crushed up leaves. Mulch Master Shredded Straw is readily available and will get in all the little nooks and crannies easily.

LEVEL 3

Your early lettuces, spinach, onions and garlic are happily settled in and looking good. Your carrots are already the star of your photo stream. Congrats! You've got some serious skills. So, what's next? Dream big, and dream of plenty, because you're just getting started.

Up your seeding game: Have you added inoculants to your seeding regimen? Inoculants are positive bacteria that help seeds quickly assimilate with the soil and jumpstart growth. They are most commonly found in powdered form and are readily available at any reputable nursery or gardening supply store. There are countless strains of bacteria already enjoying the fertile soil you have nurtured these past few seasons, but a quick dusting of inoculant at seeding time ensures your seeds sprout into the most hospitable environment possible.

A little inoculant goes a long way. Sprinkle just a small amount of inoculant powder into your palm or seed packet — just enough to coat the seeds, then seed as usual. Beans and peas require certain strains of bacteria, so pay special attention to finding an inoculant that

will boost legumes and all your other crops.

Pest Control: Tired of cutting open cabbages only to find colonies of cabbage moth larvae making condos? Time to up your pest control game.

Those pretty little white moths that flutter about your garden are cabbage moths, and they are very proficient at laying eggs on your kale, cabbages, broccoli and other brassicas. Once those tiny little eggs hatch, their larvae eat your crops like it is their job. *Bacillus Thuringiensis* (BT) is a natural strain of bacteria that is toxic to many species of caterpillar-type larvae. Once digested, the larvae stop eating and eventually expire. It's harmless to humans and other animals.

TIP: Spray BT on the underside of all the leaves of your plants (where the pores, called Stomata, are)

as close to sunset as possible. Stomata open around sunrise and sunset, allowing plants to exchange oxygen for carbon dioxide. When plants absorb BT through the Stomata, they become toxic to larvae. You must reapply BT after a rain or every 7-10 days.

That's a wrap for this go around. I hope you learned something or feel inspired to get out there and grow more of your own food. Home grown, super-fresh veggies are highly nutritious, and the process of growing helps us reconnect to our place in the delicate cycle of life. **KC**



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GUMMY BEAR HOUSES TIME TRAVEL & THE SPATULA OF TRIUMPH

BY AVA FLEISCHER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN NEGARD

We connected with eight-year-old Vinny Negard, a third-grader at Katonah Elementary, and spoke about everything from spirit animals and online school to the weather and living in a house made out of gummy bears. Join us for a peek inside Vinny's imaginative and comical world.

KC: WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE FOODS?

VN: I like to eat at fast food places, but I also like Mexican and Colombian food (salmon, buñuelos and empanadas). But nothing with cilantro – that's gross!

KC: IF YOU COULD INVENT SOMETHING, WHAT WOULD IT DO?

I would invent flying cars because you can use them every day. I could fly to space so easily in a flying car!

KC: WHO DO YOU LOOK UP TO?

I like Elon Musk because he has electric cars. They're pretty cool.

KC: FAVORITE SEASON?

I like summer because of the heat and I don't have to go to school. But I also like the winter because of the snow.

KC: DO YOU HAVE ANY HOBBIES?

VN: Cowboy games are really fun and so are video games, like Mario Kart. I also like football – just playing it at recess though, not watching it.

KC: DID YOU LIKE ONLINE SCHOOL DURING COVID?

VN: I kind of liked online school because I had my parents at home with me, but I still missed my friends. So I like in-person school better. When school was all virtual, we had an at-home field day, and I even earned the Spatula of Triumph!

KC: WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP?

VN: I'd like to go to the moon, so I'd be an astronaut. But I also want to be a weatherman because I love the weather. I like to see how it changes, so I check it every day on Accuweather because, well, it's the most accurate.

KC: IF YOU COULD HAVE A SUPERPOWER, WHICH WOULD IT BE?

VN: I want to time travel to the past and see what life was like back when I was born.

KC: WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO VISIT?

VN: I want to go to Nunavut, Canada because it's in the arctic. Or I'd go to the coldest town in the whole world – Oimyakon, Russia.

KC: DO YOU HAVE A SPIRIT ANIMAL?

VN: My spirit animal would be a jaguar because they're really fast – the fastest on earth, even! I think cars would be another one though... except they're not an animal.

KC: WHAT DO YOU WISH YOUR PARENTS WOULD SAY TO, BUT THEY ALWAYS SAY NO?

VN: I always ask my parents for candy and they keep saying no. But, of course, they end up giving me the candy anyways.

KC: WHO'S THE CRAZIEST OR FUNNIEST PERSON YOU KNOW?

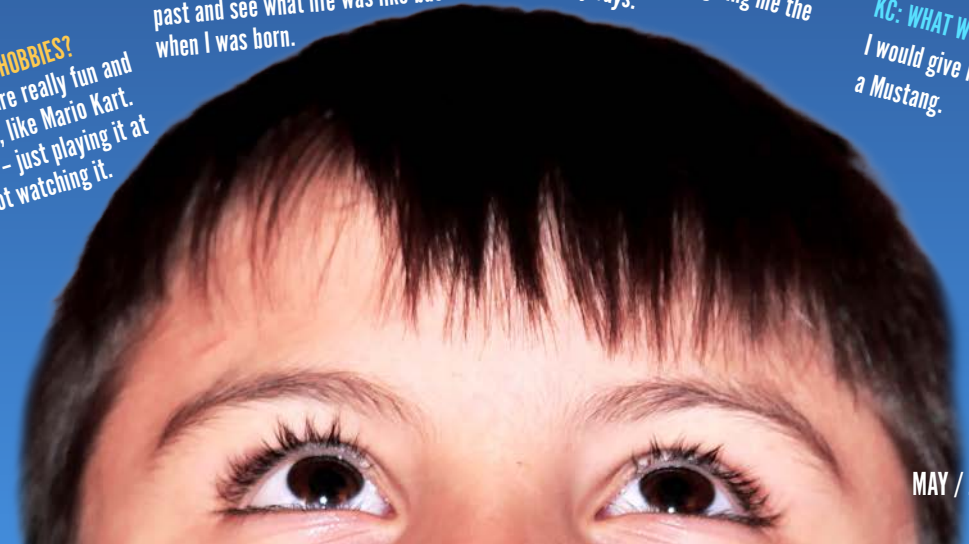
VN: My dad is really funny because he tells jokes, does voices of other people and plays pranks on our family. One time, he pranked my mom by scaring her with a spider, and she was super scared! It was a fake spider though.

KC: IF YOU COULD LIVE ANYWHERE IN THE UNIVERSE, WHERE WOULD IT BE?

VN: I would live in a house made of gummy bears. The whole house would be made out of gummy bears, even the roof, and when it rains, the gummy bears would keep the water out. But I would have to eat them to get out, so I'd share them with all my neighbors. I could also live on Mars because of all the cool rocks there.

KC: WHAT WOULD YOU DO WITH \$100?

I would give it to charity, or I'd get a Mustang.



ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

BUT TRY NOT TO COUGH DURING THE CRUCIFIXION SCENE

BY GIA MILLER PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN NEGARD

When COVID-19 hit the United States in 2020, 12-year-old Waccabuc resident Colby Kipnes began distance learning, just like her peers. But unlike most other children, Kipnes also took on the very adult role of working from home. However, her work couldn't be done at her desk – she had to work in a closet, her mother's closet, to be precise. Kipnes is an actress who was the voice of Oona on Nickelodeon's "Bubble Guppies" for seasons five and six, and even though live theater was closed during the beginning of the pandemic, cartoons were still being made.

Kipnes needed a space that could prevent sound waves from bouncing, so a small room full of clothes was the best option, and her mom's walk-in closet fit the bill. Like anyone who worked from home during the pandemic, Kipnes struggled to get the location, and the technology, figured out. She and her mom did everything they could to create a make-shift studio, including hanging blankets from the ceiling and upgrading their technology. To record Oona, Kipnes used one iPad to connect with the director, another to connect with the producer, a computer to connect with the network and a microphone to record. It was complicated.

"That was an experience," Kipnes remembers. "The blankets kept falling down! Plus, my mom and I aren't very technical. We had to get all of these adapters and connect everything to the Wi Fi, and then a massive storm

came through and all of the cable was out during a 'Bubble Guppies' recording. It was such a mess!"

Eventually, Kipnes decided to use her earnings to purchase a WhisperRoom – a professional sound booth that now takes up most of the space in her mom's law office. "It's really not her office anymore," Kipnes jokes.

Kipnes' career began just before she turned seven. She would sing and dance around her home, so her mom signed her up for a singing class. "The teacher was like, 'Oh, she's actually not that horrible,'" says Kipnes. "She told my mom that a manager was holding auditions and maybe I would like to audition. So, I auditioned for the manager at an open call, had a call back, and I got him. I'm still with the same person (Jason Bercy at Bercy Talent Management), and he sends me auditions all the time."

HER FIRST BIG ROLE

When she was eight years old, her agent sent her on an audition for a show on Nickelodeon, "Nella the Princess Knight." A new character, Riley, was joining the cast for season two, and he thought she'd be great. It wasn't her first audition, but it was one that would change her life.

"I auditioned, I got a call back, and then I actually didn't hear back for three months," she remembers. "I

actually forgot about it. And about three months later, they called and said, 'you got the part.' I was like, wait, which audition was that for?"

She was in second grade and played the part of Riley for the entire season. When that ended, and before she became Oona, Kipnes performed in the regional production of "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" through A Contemporary Theater of Connecticut, known as ACT of CT, which is her home theater.

At ACT, Kipnes has worked alongside professional Broadway actors. Her roles have included a soloist in "Godspell" and a member of the children's ensemble in "Evita." This relationship also gave her the unique opportunity to perform as a soloist at a Salon Night in Greenwich alongside Broadway actresses Jessica Vosk and Caitlin Kinnunen.

Whether through ACT, auditions or paid gigs, Kipnes has also worked with many of the child actors in the area, and many of them have become friends. This past December, she performed alongside several friends, playing Martha Cratchit in "A Christmas Carol" with the White Plains Performing Arts Center (WPPAC).

"It makes me so happy," she says. "Being on stage or being in a recording studio and acting, singing and dancing – it just makes me so happy. It brings so much joy to my life. It takes a lot of hard work, but it's a really good outcome. You have

to put in the effort and get over the nos. I get, like, 1,000 no's a day, but you have to get over those and be excited for the yeses."

Most recently, Kipnes starred as Winnie Foster, the main character in "Tuck Everlasting," at the 92Y in Manhattan. The show ran from March 20 through April 10, and Kipnes says she was "super, super excited" when she learned the news – it was a dream come true. In fact, "Good Girl Winnie Foster" has been Kipnes' preferred song for auditions during the past several years.

SHE'S JUST A NORMAL KID

But what Kipnes wants you to know is that she's really a normal kid. She loves to read, draw, watch horror movies and hang out with her non-theater friends. She has two siblings, an older sister, Kyle, who is 16, and 10-year-old brother named Asher. They don't put her on a pedestal, and they don't really get why she does what she does.

"Asher's first question, whenever Colby books a gig," says their mom, Karen Kipnes, "is, 'how many times do I have to see this?'"

And like a child who is very committed to their chosen activity, she's busy. "My schedule is very packed," she says. She has voice lessons three times a week, works with a performance coach and an acting teacher and she dances five days a week. Plus, there are auditions, rehearsals, performances, etc.

"TRY TO NOT COUGH DURING THE CRUCIFIXION SCENE..."



On stage, Kipnes has had her share of follies. There was the time where she was center stage during a performance of "Godspell," ran and fell flat on her back. Of course, that was the one night the show was recorded. Or once, she ran downstairs to do a dance number for a show and one of her shoes came off. She didn't have time to put it back on so she did the entire number wearing one shoe. But the most memorable was when she was sick, but performing in "Godspell" — and as they say, the show must go on.

"I was sick, and had a bad cough," Kipnes remembers. "I had to be onstage the entire time, so I snuck throat lozenges into all of my pockets. Before the show began, the director was like, 'can you try not to cough during the Crucifixion scene because it's very distracting?'"

WHAT'S NEXT

Kipnes' dream is to be on Broadway, and she's come close. Two years ago, she was one of three finalists to play young Elsa in "Frozen" — the two other girls got the part. But she's not yet sure what she wants to do when she grows up.

"I know I can't be a full-time actor because I won't always have a job," she says. "But I would like to be a part of the business, even if it's not as a full-time actor. Maybe I'll be a director or a casting director or something like that. I just know that I would like to still be linked to the business in some way." **KC**



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CONNECTING WITH WISDOM

MEET WILL RUNYON, KATONAH RESIDENT

BY GIA MILLER

We can learn a lot about life if we take the time to listen to those who've lived longer than us. But if you're young, working and raising children, time is a precious commodity. So we're doing the listening for you by chatting with people who have lived in our community for several decades. For our first issue, we spoke to Will Runyon, a former communications director at IBM who raised two boys in Katonah.

When Will Runyon and his wife Amy decided it was time to leave Greenwich Village and plant roots in the suburbs, they looked at several towns before settling on Katonah. They visited Westport and Irvington, where they grew up, as well as several towns nearby. But they settled on Katonah because they had friends in the hamlet, and they found a house they liked – a house they're still in today. After raising two boys in Katonah, who are now in their late 20s and early 30s, Runyon reflects on his life in Northern Westchester.

ADVICE #1: BIG HOMES AREN'T NECESSARILY BETTER

"I remember the conversation I had with Amy about buying our house and the cost analysis we did of where we were and where we wanted to be," he recalls. "We talked about how we both grew up in big suburban homes and that we often moved to our own corners of the house for whatever reasons. So we thought a smaller home would make us closer as a family."

Over time, they renovated their kitchen, enlarged the back of the house and added a second bathroom,

but they never moved to a larger home. Runyon proposed the idea when their sons were teenagers, but Amy convinced him to stay.

"It felt a little tight, but it worked," he says. "The boys went away to boarding school, so we weren't always on top of each other during those years, but there certainly were times when family squabbles made us want more room. Overall, my wife's wisdom for keeping things close bore out much better than the risks."

ADVICE #2: MAKE FRIENDS WITH YOUR NEIGHBORS

When they moved into their new home, their neighbors made a powerful impact that emphasizes the kind of community he's treasured over the last 30 years. He and his wife have attempted to recreate that experience each time they're blessed with a new neighbor but, Runyon admits, they haven't always been successful.

"When we moved here, we were a young family with young kids, but our neighbors were retirees," he remembers. "About two or three days after we moved in, there was a knock on our door and one of our neighbors welcomed us with a plate of homemade cupcakes. We've tried to reciprocate that hometown welcome as much as we can."

ADVICE #3: WORK A LITTLE LESS, ENJOY LIFE A LITTLE MORE

Runyon began his public relations career in Manhattan as the publicity director for the Clio Awards, and he eventually moved on to a large public relations firm on Madison Avenue. Once he moved to Katonah, commuting to the city meant he didn't

see his kids very often, so he decided to look for a job in the 'burbs. He landed an in-house gig at IBM – it was one of those "right place at the right time" opportunities, but it still required sacrifice.

"I worked really hard in the 90s and 2000s," he says. "I was moving up in my career at IBM, but it was a competitive work environment where you had to put in the hours to achieve your goals. I was away a lot, often traveling internationally. It was hard on me at times, and it was hard on the boys and Amy."

But there were also some perks to working nearby. Runyon became a little league dad and a hockey dad, and ultimately a little league coach and a hockey coach.

Now, in retirement, Runyon says he's reflected on that period of his life, and he referenced former first lady Barbara Bush's famous quote: "At the end of your life you will never regret not having passed one more test, not winning one more verdict, or not closing one more deal. You will regret time not spent with a husband, a friend, a child or a parent."

ADVICE #4: GET CONNECTED

When asked about what advice he'd give to young adults who have just moved to the area and/or have young children, he kept it simple, and in-line with the theme of our magazine: "Get connected."

"Usually, when you're a young parent, those connections come naturally because of school, summer camps or programs, sports or church. However you do it, make sure you find a way to connect with others. That's what makes a small town work – the commonality and personal bonds that you develop with people."

ADVICE #5: READ "THE HAPPINESS CURVE" BY JONATHAN ROUSH

At the end of our interview, Runyon turned the tables and asked me a question: "Are you familiar with the book, 'The Happiness Curve,' by Jonathan Roush?" I wasn't. He said the book has served as a great roadmap for him, especially now that

he's in his "golden years."

"When we moved up here, being a single income family was a bit of a stretch, and it meant I was working long hours," he says. "The Happiness Curve' really maps out what my experience has been. It's the idea that in most cultures, we're happy as kids because life is simple, assuming that we're in a good environment and we're well loved and cared for. Yet when you get to early adulthood, you lose some of that happiness because you are striving to achieve your work goals and have a family."

"But the best news about the curve," he continued, "is that later in your life, particularly in your 50s and 60s, you begin to become happier again. A lot of this is predicated on

retirement and your means, but that stress and grind of your career is no more, leaving you time to pursue your passions, hobbies and marriage in a new, unfettered way."

Runyon, who serves on several local boards, says that he enjoys "being involved in the community and connecting with adults who are mostly my own age who also want to give back."


TO SUM IT UP...

Even if you love your career, there will be stressful periods and plenty of demands. "But that's part of the bargain," Runyon advises. "I always believed that if you work hard, you'll get paid well. But it doesn't come without its challenges, particularly the stress and, at times, anxiety of your responsibilities."

Life is full of ups and downs but try to make the most of it. And hopefully, you'll get to where Runyon is now, experiencing a life filled with "more gratitude and more service." **KC**


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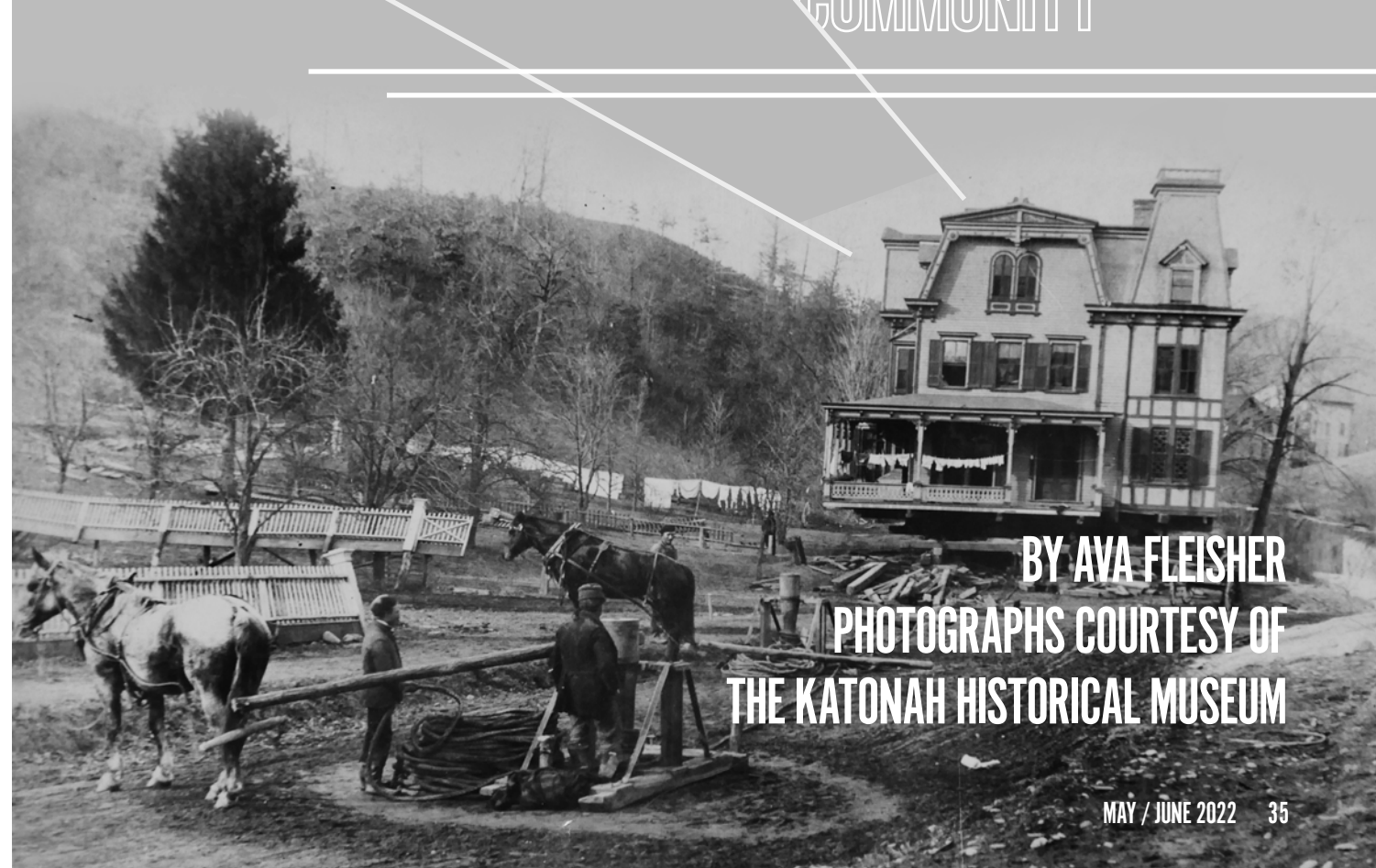
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BY AVA FLEISHER
PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF
THE KATONAH HISTORICAL MUSEUM

You’ve probably heard the story: In 1893, New York City needed more water and devised a plan to flood a few small towns in Northern Westchester to create their reservoir. While residents of the other towns agreed to take the buyout and move, the good people of Katonah refused. They loved their town, and they weren’t about to let Manhattan destroy everything they knew and cared about. Instead, they decided to move many of the homes and businesses to a new location. It wouldn’t be quick, and it definitely wouldn’t be easy, but it wouldn’t be impossible either. And, they decided, they were going to do it while having a life. Here’s how they survived.

Amidst the chaos of the town’s relocation in 1898, the Searles family threw a Mother- Hubbard-themed Halloween Party. Mother- Hubbard? Like the nursery rhyme? Yes, exactly. They all dressed as that popular nursery rhyme of the 1800s. Imagine, if you will, about seventy residents (men and women) in smock dresses and bonnets at a house party – in a house that had barely settled on its new foundation. That night, everyone temporarily let go of their pent-up stress (imagine moving your home by horse, just a little each day) and was just present. From what we’ve read, there were a lot of mistaken identities that night, which led to plenty of laughs.

What else occurred during their move? We’re glad you asked...



CHILDREN

Today, most kids get home from school and play video games, but for the children of New Katonah, life was a bit more exciting. At the beginning of the move, children would leave for school in the morning and come home to, well...no home at all. Their house was being pulled by horses and not in the same place it was when they left.

In 1897, the quite ambitious eleven-year-old B. Robertson dictated his opinions about the town’s relocation in a letter to a children’s magazine. “Katonah has three churches, a public library and reading-room, a village improvement association, and a graded school, and was proud of itself,” wrote Robertson, not afraid to take pride in his newly-established abode. Kids his age agreed they enjoyed their life in New Katonah.

SCHOOL LIFE

School in Katonah began on a rather rocky start when Old Katonah’s Palmer Avenue School burnt to the ground in 1893. The Katonah Village Improvement Society (KVIS) originally planned to move the schoolhouse to their new location, but the non-existent building made that impossible. Instead, a new school was built, even better than before.

The school in New Katonah, which was completed on January 2, 1895, contained two stories instead of one and was more suitable for learning and a growing population.

FAMILY LIFE

Believe it or not, social life for couples and families was not too different in the late 1800s and early 1900s than it is today.

Families would often plan outings to Lake Waccabuc and the horse races during the summer months or attend holiday parties together during the colder months. Lawn and picnic parties were common as well, bringing the whole community together – both parents and their children.

For a night out on the town, couples made plans at the Mount Kisco Opera House or enjoyed dinner in a friend’s home.

1680

Just north of modern-day Katonah, European settlers founded the small mill town of Katonah (now called Old Katonah). It was considered a branch of the town Whitlockville, and its open farmland and accessible livestock allowed many villagers to make a living in the dairying industry.

1893

While rumors that New York City need more water had been around since the early 1880s, an 1893 headline in The New York Times titled “Destruction to Katonah,” shocked local residents. They learned that Manhattan had secured the rights to dam local rivers and establish reservoirs throughout the area. One of those reservoirs, which is now known as the Croton Dam, would flood the village of Katonah.

1894

Many of Katonah’s residents decided they didn’t want to lose their town, so they planned to move it instead. However, a few residents were more reluctant – they thought the move would be too difficult, or that it would be easier to accept the money New York City offered as compensation and move elsewhere.

On KVIS’s sixteenth anniversary, secretary J. H. Eastman encouraged more families to move their homes saying, “.... And we are equally ready to hail the new Katonah, when the alternative is NO KATONAH or NEW KATONAH and to devote ourselves with unflagging zeal to her development and best interests in all respects.”



YOUNG COUPLES (PLUS A WEDDING!)

For younger, more adventurous couples, social groups like The Jolly Ten formed, giving newlyweds an opportunity to get to know each other and plan fun activities.

Marriage and family was so important to the people of Katonah that a wedding actually took place in a home that was moving on the tracks. While going over hills and through the woods, we’ve learned that one lucky couple was honored to have Dr. F. H. Williams (he was important during that time, or so we believe) as their best man.

RECREATION

On a sunny spring day, residents of Katonah enjoyed various sports and games, like Crokinole, a game that involved a playing board and flicking disks.

Another popular activity were the bicycle races. Starting on the corner of The Parkway and Katonah Avenue, in front of Hoyt Brothers (which is now The Jay Street Cafe), the race went down Katonah Avenue and up Valley Road. It continued up Bedford Road all the way to Edgemont and returned to its starting point on Katonah Avenue. The record-holding time for the race was a stunning total of one minute and thirty-eight seconds!

Locals also enjoyed horse races in neighboring areas and nice days at the park. In fact, their love of local

parks inspired New Katonah’s design. When the town moved, KVIS made it a point to design the town in a way that allowed for plenty of parks and open fields for public use, many of which still exist today.

PERFORMING ARTS

A phonograph club, dance performances, the military band, choral club...the list goes on. Once the new village was at least somewhat settled, musicals and theater performances of all types were held weekly for the community, and school-aged children were encouraged to take part.

The people of Katonah thoroughly enjoyed the arts, just like we do today.

1895

All residents in Katonah were required to be out of their homes by May 1, 1895. However, several families were in a legal battle over the amount New York City would pay them for their land. Luckily, the deadline was changed to 1897, and most claims were resolved by the time the move took place.

1896-1897

The Katonah Land Company purchased a farm south of the town’s original location, but the process wasn’t easy. About 55 structures – a mixture of schools, homes, shops and places of worship – were jacked up and placed on rails lubricated with ordinary laundry soap. Then, horses slowly pulled the buildings along the tracks, up hills and through waterways.

It took approximately 18 years to move all the buildings.

While it’s difficult to put an exact date on when New Katonah began, April 5, 1897, was the first day the train went through the old station without stopping and pulled up to the new one. On that same day, mail was first handed out in the new village.

1896-1901

Residents in the prosperous and safe new hamlet of Katonah resumed their countless social activities, careers and daily lives. But, compared to their previous location, New Katonah did not permit dairying because of the lack of farmland, so residents found new ways to support themselves by opening businesses, such as food and department stores.

Katonah’s population continued to grow as more homes were built and more residents moved into town.

It’s believed that the last houses were moved from Old Katonah to New Katonah during this time.

1906

Construction on the new Croton Dam was completed, forming the New Croton Reservoir, which is part of the New York City water supply system to this day.

1985

Thirty-seven buildings that were either moved from Old Katonah or built shortly after the move were admitted to the National Register of Historic Places.

NEW KATONAH NEW LAWS

KVIS assisted in designing a new layout for Katonah, strategically placing moved and newly built homes and buildings in specific locations. Deed restrictions were implemented that positioned businesses near the railroad while libraries, schools and homes were placed farther away from the train, closer to parks and rural areas. These types of zoning laws were very uncommon during this time, making New Katonah unique compared to most villages in the northeast.

There were also several unusual laws, including:

Construction of new retail buildings must cost at least \$2,500.


No slaughterhouses were allowed.

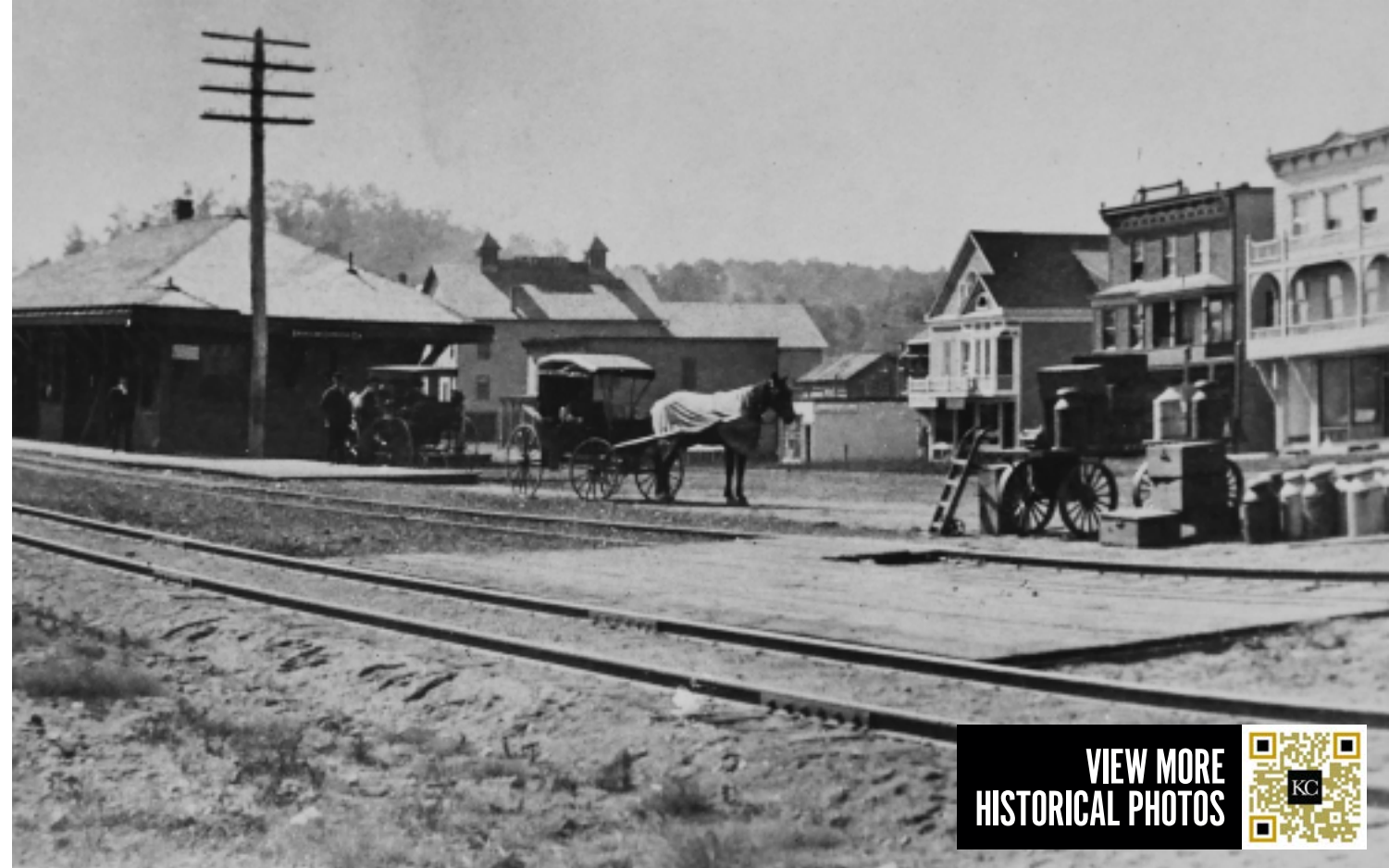
Manufacturing of many goods, including gun powder, candles, soap, starch, glue, ink, vitriol and turpentine were outlawed.

Liquor sales, breweries and distilleries were not allowed. *(Fun fact: This law still holds true today, unless the business is on land formerly held by New York Central, which is what legally allows Katonah Wine & Liquor to operate in the town.)*

The possession of poultry, swine, and vicious dogs was deemed illegal.

No business could tan skins to make leather.

The legacy of New Katonah's brave original residents' lives on today in the town's lively culture and atmosphere. Although we may not get married in moving buildings or throw Halloween parties in homes that have hardly been attached to the ground, there is certainly no lack of social life, a part of our culture that has been baked into the town's history. Clubs, weddings, performances, and more throughout time have turned what was once a dull piece of land in the 1880s into a flourishing community with a true sense of warmth and liveliness for all residents. 



VIEW MORE
HISTORICAL PHOTOS



2021

On December 14, Katonah officially cut the ribbon on the hamlet's first sewage system, a \$21 million project that was decades in the making. The sewers replaced the septic systems in Katonah and Bedford Hills that disposed its wastewater into the New Croton Dam. New York City contributed approximately \$19 million to the project.

2022

In May, Katonah celebrated the 125th anniversary of the move. The town's residents launched a new magazine, Katonah Connect which was hailed across the land as one of the great publications in the region, *especially by its founders.*

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COOKING WITH

CHEF ROMERO

WRITING & PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN NEGARD

“Let me tell you about artichokes,” says Anibal Romero, the former executive chef at The Kittle House, his voice lowered. His eyes dart to the left and right while he leaned in closer to the table. “They are very difficult to cook properly. Removing the leaves, handling the heart, the hairs, it all must be done just right. This is a vegetable they test you with in culinary school. That’s why it’s so sad when a customer leaves any of it behind. All that work wasted.”

For Romero, cooking isn’t a job — it’s his heart. To cook something with the right technique, the proper ingredients, and perfect amount of love is to do something that really matters.

“Food is a universal language,” he explains. “It really has the power to connect people. And so when you see an empty plate come back into the kitchen, you already know that your guest enjoyed the food. It’s a great feeling.”

THIS CONNECTION TO FOOD HAS BEEN WITH HIM HIS ENTIRE LIFE

“The first dish I ever made was eggs and potatoes,” he remembers with a sparkle in his eye. “I was just a boy. It was pretty good.”

Romero’s story is the American dream — he made the journey from being a young man in Guatemala to becoming an executive chef in some of the best restaurants in New York. “I started working in kitchens at an early age. I was quick, I learned fast. My supervisor took me aside and told me that I was a natural, and he really encouraged me to continue.”

And continue he did. Eventually, Romero became a garde manger chef, specializing in salads and desserts, then a pastry chef and finally a sous chef. “It was at this point that I really started learning, working with other great chefs, and exploring other recipes and restaurants for ideas.” This passion took him to the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, NY, then to Germany, Spain and England.



Today, Romero runs his kitchen with purpose. He is a teacher to his staff, treating them not as some band of culinary pirates, but as students and future chefs in their own right.

“In the kitchen, you are caring for people and nurturing them,” he explains. “My job is to instill values and standards in my team. To do the job right each and every time. So that when they work in other kitchens later in life, they will bring that same high standard with them.”

Romero is meticulous. “Every day, I go through our deliveries and weigh everything myself,” he says. “If we receive the wrong fish or too little beef, I get on the phone with them, no matter how small the issue may be. By doing so, our suppliers learn not to take advantage of my kitchen. I do this if they send *more* than I ordered as well, so that they know I am honest and careful, even when it benefits them, and they respect that.”

These standards are also found in Romero’s policy of no waste in his restaurant. Over the years of working in the industry, he says he’s witnessed a disturbing amount of food going into the trash. To him, this is not only a shame, but bad business as well.

“If they send me more produce than I ask for, I tell them to come back and pick it up,” he explains. “If not, I’ve got two days to use it or it will go bad.”

The conversation moved on to new topics—new recipes he was considering and ingredients he hadn’t yet tried. He would be back in the kitchen tomorrow, ready to cook. **KC**

CHICKPEA RAGU (FOR 4-6 SERVINGS)

2 Tablespoons olive oil
1 medium Spanish onion, diced
4 medium cloves of garlic, finely chopped
Kosher salt and pepper, to taste
Pinch of red pepper flakes
2 cups low sodium chicken or vegetable broth
2 plum tomatoes, roughly chopped
2 15-ounce cans chickpeas, drained and rinsed
1 teaspoon chopped fresh basil
2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
1 large eggplant, medium diced, peeled and tossed in olive oil, then roasted at 375 F for five minutes
2 cups baby spinach

Warm the oil in a sauté pan or Dutch oven over medium-high heat.

Add onion and garlic. Cook 3-4 minutes, until they just begin to soften.

Add salt, black pepper and red pepper. Cook another 30-60 seconds, just until fragrant.

Stir in the broth, chickpeas, tomatoes and bring mixture to a boil, then reduce heat to medium-low and simmer for 10 minutes.

Stir in the spinach. Cook 2-3 minutes more, just until the spinach is tender and wilted.

Stir in the lemon juice and basil.

Mix in the diced eggplant.

Taste and season with more salt and pepper as needed.

Finish with a tablespoon of butter, if desired.

Note: This is a flexible base. It could be served as a vegetarian entree, or you can add anything that sounds good in the pantry! Artichoke hearts, olives, or sun-dried tomatoes would all be delicious, and Romero recommends adding them, along with the chickpeas and broth.

WILD STRIPED BASS (FOR 4 SERVINGS)

4 7-8oz center cut portions of bass
3 Tablespoons of grapeseed oil or canola oil
Salt (to season the fish)

Take the fish out of the refrigerator five minutes before using, set over paper towels to absorb any moisture. Season the fish with salt on both sides. **Heat a large pan. Add the cooking oil over high heat. Coat the outside bottom of another slightly smaller sauté pan with oil.**

Gently place the fish filets skin-side down in the sauté pan and place the other sauté pan directly on the fish. (This will lightly press the fish skin of the bass to the bottom of the pan to create a crispy skin.)

After several minutes, remove the pan from the fish, allowing the steam to escape and the skin to become very crispy. As the fish cooks, it will turn from translucent to opaque.

Cook the fish until it is two-thirds of the way cooked, then flip it over for the last one-third of the cooking time. (Note: The rule for fish is 6 to 7 minutes per inch of thickness. Cook a little less if you like your fish on the rare side.)

Place the fish over the chickpea ragu and dig in!

WILD STRIPED BASS IN A CHICKPEA RAGU

**DOWNLOAD & PRINT
THIS RECIPE**





A DAY IN BEACON

WRITING & PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN NEGARD



BEACON IS ... ODD.

There's no simpler way to describe this upstate river town. Just out of reach of New York City's gravity, but not far enough to join the countryside of the Catskills, this community has been forced to find its own identity.

Yet rather than find one identity, Beacon found several. Need a cat lounge coffee shop? They've got it. Shots of Jack while playing Pac-Man? They've got you covered. A quick stop by the apothecary on your way to the crepe shop? Yep, they've got that too. Again, Beacon is odd.

But being odd is sort of great. A simple walk down Main Street is a treat — think Tim Burton meets Edward Hopper. Storefronts are adorned with tinker toy robots, inflatable UFOs, vinyl records and antique lamps. Elegant wine bars play hopscotch with tattoo parlors and CBD shops. There's a perfect hangout spot for anyone, from those who wear boat shoes to those who prefer skate shoes, and even those that covet Nike's latest Air Force 1 — and no one seems to mind.

All of this makes Beacon a perfect day trip for just about anyone. There will be sculpture, there will be music and there will be the stuffing of bacon-filled donuts into one's mouth. Wash it down with a pinot noir or a craft IPA, then get some ink injected into your forearm in the shape of an octopus. It's Beacon — go with it. It's going to get odd.

SO LET'S TAKE IT FROM THE TOP



DIA: BEACON

Nine out of ten visits to Beacon begin at Dia, and for good reason. A playground for installation art, this converted factory boasts the real estate for some truly magnificent work. There is neon, crushed metal, broken glass and seemingly bottomless pits. Surrealism blends into brutalist architecture, leaving a viewer to navigate through less of a traditional art gallery and more of a Dali painting come to life.

Around one corner is an enormous boulder looming over its viewers like Goliath. In the next room, you'll find yourself navigating around what

seems to be the hull of a cargo ship — a rusted metallic wall that towers and bends its way up to the ceiling. Another room features pyramids of sand and gravel with mirrors jutting out. Then there's a terrifying pile of jagged glass trepidatiously placed in the center of the room. Beyond all of this are deep Dante-like holes in a concrete floor, perfect squares and circles that seemingly have no bottom nor sympathy for anyone who approaches them. It goes on like this, room after fascinating room.

Dia plays with emotions. Some exhibits invoke a childlike exploration through painted fabrics, others are melancholy and fatalistic, while some shroud the viewer in total darkness, lit only by occasional strobe lights and neon gas. It's a gallery that features

individual artists, each with their own respective voice, yet they also work together in concert to provide an emotional journey from one end of this massive brick building to the other.

Children and adults alike will have a wonderful time exploring this mysterious and exciting gallery. At the time of this writing, visitors do need to adhere to COVID-19 protocols including masks and online reservations. Be sure to check their website for the most up-to-date information to help plan your visit.





IT'S TIME FOR A SNACK

Beacon residents clearly love a good snack. There's Beacon Creamery for ice cream, Royal Crepes for, you guessed it, crepes, Enoteca Ama features wood-fired pizza, and there are more than enough beer halls and wine bars to suit your alcohol cravings. As for me, I found myself in Glazed Over Donuts.

The good people at Glazed Over Donuts do one thing, and they do it well. Fresh donuts are made on-site in front of each and every customer. You fill out your order form, checking the box for sprinkles or Fruit Loops or bacon or marshmallows, and if you can't decide, let the purveyors of the donut house choose some of the fan favorites.

You can then follow your snack's entire journey, from that alluring o-shaped dough dropped into the deep fryer to its trip down the Wonka-esque conveyor belt of sparkles and rainbows and sugar. After a few minutes, your brown box of fried deliciousness will be ready for devouring, and devour you shall.



SHOPPING ON MAIN STREET

With the sugar rush in full swing, it's time to hit the streets and do some shopping. Head to Main Street for some really quirky and interesting storefronts. There's Hudson Valley Vinyl if you need a good Brooklyn record store fix. Notions N Potions is your one-stop shop for all witchcraft essentials – from potions and magic stones to spell books and candles. Binnacle Books is that neighborhood bookstore that smells just the way a bookstore should, complete with squeaky floorboards and exposed ceiling beams – it's slightly run-down in the very best way.

For the kids, head to Play – a local toy store that features fluorescent rainbow signage and retro robot decor. This little shop boasts a cacophony of vintage treats and toys, like raspberry Ring Pops, pinwheel necklace whistles, Stretch Armstrongs



and sock monkeys for the guests to enjoy. Display tables present a vast lineup of stuffed animals, trucks and trains, books and crayons, and bizarre doodads that aren't found in the big-box stores.

Just across the street, Hudson Beach Glass is an ornate glassware shop that sparkles and twinkles like a three-story kaleidoscope. Converted from an old firehouse, this store offers dishes and decor, candelabras molded into florals, sunbeams and various inspirations from local artisans. Catch the sunlight at the right time, and this shop flickers and dances in colors as they streak across the cathedral ceilings.

End the day with a little inebriation at Happy Valley. This classic hipster bar somehow crashed itself right into an 80s retro arcade, with beer taps and leather stools surrounded by quarter-plunking video game cabinets and silver spring-loaded pinball machines. Brewed local hops are complemented by the 8-bit pixels of Donkey Kong and Frogger as they beep, blip and blop all around you. High scores hang on the walls like Olympic trophies and Hall of Fame plaques. Order a basket of jalapeno poppers and a tall pint or two, then wreak havoc on your kids as they feel the icy stare of Sub-Zero while he disembowels their Mortal Kombat fighter and

shoves it right up their Fortnight. It's retro, baby.

END THE DAY WITH A STORY OR SOME MUSIC

By now, the sun is setting against the red brick storefronts, but if you're a night owl, head to Story Screen



Beacon Theater to catch a late-night flick. Or, round out the day by hopping into one of the many taverns featuring open doors and loud music – they’re beckoning you inside for one more beer. But if food and live music is what you crave, just across the Hudson, you’ll find the Newburgh waterfront for even more opportunities to devour barbecue and margaritas while catching a live blues band. The night is young.

But before you go, remember that no matter when you leave, you’ll need to return. There’s a great many things to do in this odd and quirky town, and one day simply won’t cover it. There are more bizarre shopping experiences, slightly askew coffee shops, museums of astounding art and unusual eateries with deep-fried somethings drizzled in a thick and delicious something else begging to be discovered.

YES, BEACON IS ODD. AND YET, YOU LOVE IT. SO WHAT DOES THAT SAY ABOUT YOU?

KC



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TAKE ACTION

WHEN WILL YOU GO TO BEACON?
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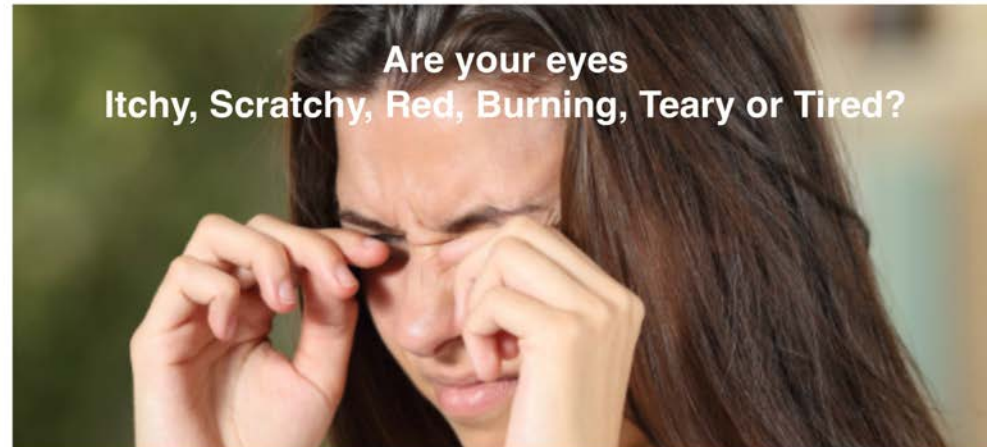


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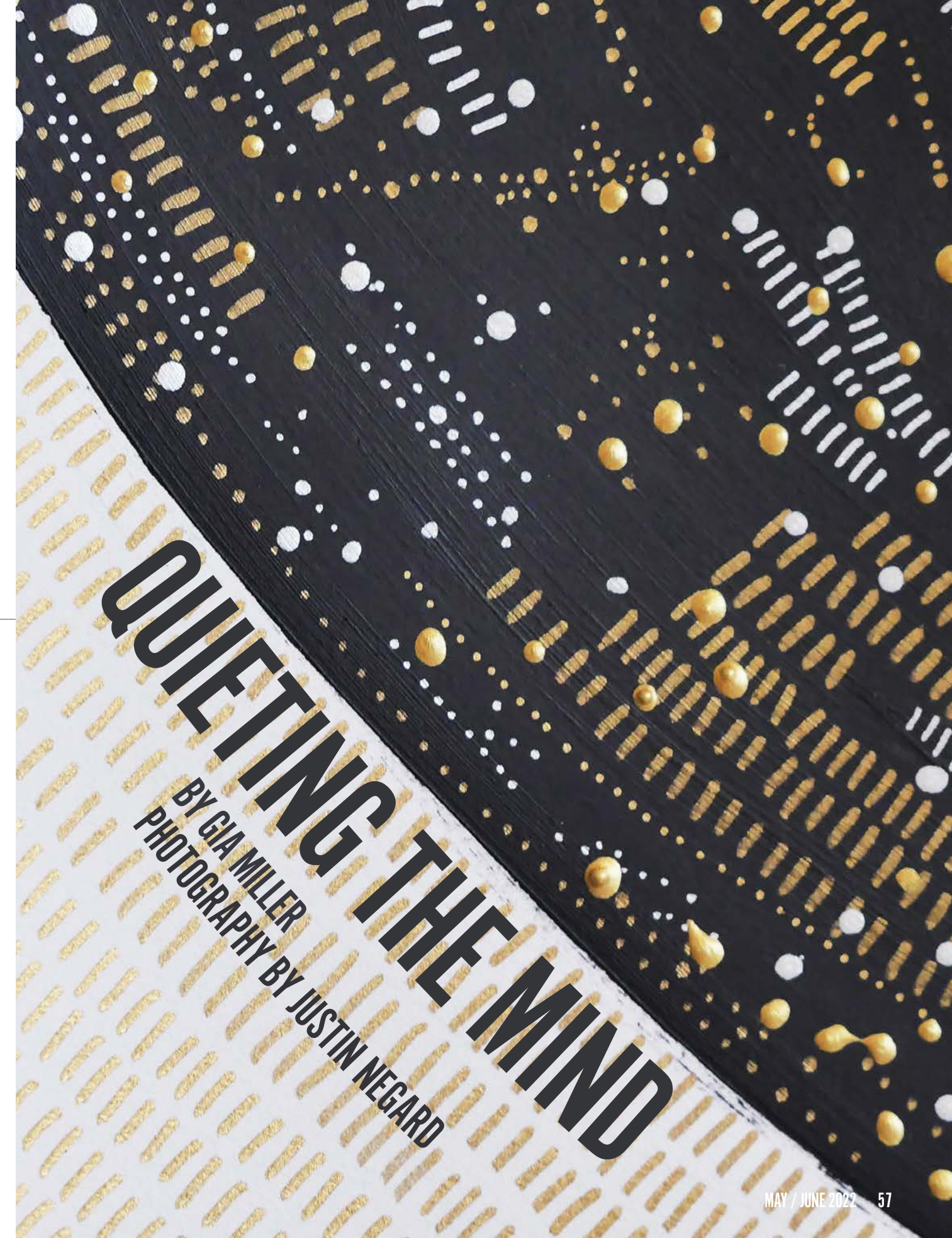
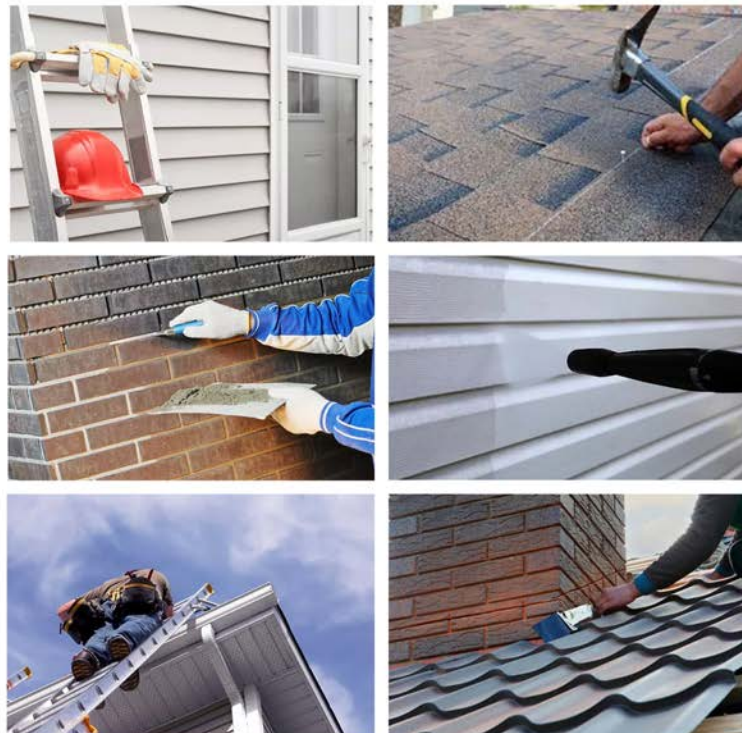
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QUIETING THE MIND
BY GIA MILLER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN NEGARD

ARTIST KATY FERRARONE WANTS EVERYONE TO SLOW DOWN, CALM THEIR THOUGHTS AND EXPERIENCE BEAUTY

“I want to tell you a story,” Waccabuc-based artist Katy Ferrarone says, “It’s about something that has powerfully impacted both myself and my husband, but it’s also a heartbreaking story.

“One of our dearest friends is really, really sick. He lives in London, and he and his wife became some of our closest friends when we all lived Singapore. About six or seven years ago, I gave them one of my large paintings, and when he got sick, he told us how much this painting helped him. He hung it right next to his bed, and he really loves it. He says it helps him meditate – he meditates a lot.

“My husband and I thought it would be nice to give him another painting, hoping it would be an additional source of comfort for him since he’s just at home resting. So, we collaborated on a painting last summer, and it was the first time I’d ever collaborated with anyone. I’m very private with my paintings, and I don’t like collaboration. I don’t like suggestions. I’m kind of stubborn that way. But we wanted to create something special for our dear friend.

“As I started to create this work, my husband would say things like, ‘I like that color,’ or ‘I like the way it’s coming together.’ The piece is very pale – it’s a combination of soft pink, white and gold. And it’s beautiful, especially since we



worked on it together for our friend. It complements the other piece he has, which has a similar style, but with more blues and greens.

“He’s told us that this piece is helping him too. He must rest a lot, and he says my art helps him to relax and meditate – it quiets him down. That’s kind of the experience I hope people will have when they look at my art. I hope they feel joy, peace, happiness and experience beauty.”

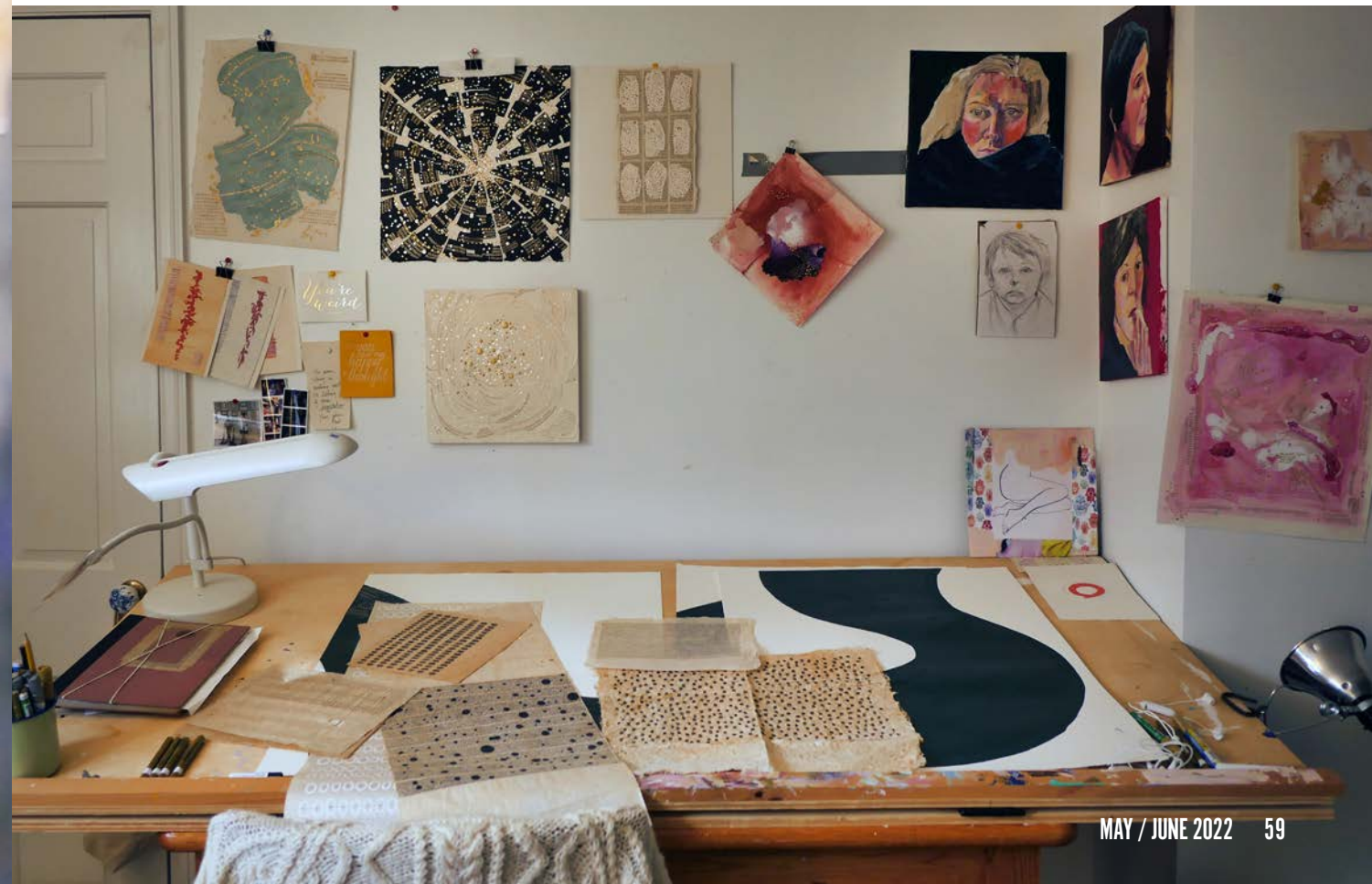
Over the past several years, Ferrarone has developed a signature style that features large, circular patterns painted in acrylic, layered with her signature gold dots, also done in acrylic, and intricate gold lines made with a very specific pen that she can only find from a certain store in Singapore. She prefers to use a single “peaceful” color that makes a statement and displays a pop of color, allowing the viewer to better see the details in her work and immerse themselves in the experience. Her pieces are typically very large and created on either white or ivory canvas or 400-pound watercolor paper.

Upon first glance, Ferrarone’s art provides the viewer with a central focus, something to draw them in to the painting. But as they spend time with her work,

they’ll pause to take in the details and admire the passion she’s poured into her art. When pulling back to admire the whole of the work, the piece appears to take on a softer form, creating an overwhelming sense of serenity.

Ferrarone’s art is very personal to her. She puts her heart, and her emotions, into each piece, regularly spending weeks creating a single work that, when finished, conveys the tranquility and joy she feels inside. Ferrarone, who knew she wanted to be an artist in elementary school, has made this goal a focus of her work since her college years when she studied fine arts at Syracuse University.

“During college, I had an amazing visiting professor who really challenged me,” she remembers. “She taught me a lot about my work. At that time, I had begun working with this idea of calming my thoughts, and she watched me draw hash marks, sew repetitive marks and make my own paper by hand. So, she asked me if I’d ever read about Agnes Martin, and I hadn’t. As I learned about her work, it really resonated with me – it felt very familiar. I then began to explore some similar ideas in my work, and it inspired this whole body of work that still exists in my art today.”



Ferrarone, who is also a yoga instructor, uses her art as a way to create a sense of peace in her life. For her, the entire process is an exercise in quieting her mind while creating something beautiful.

“We all have a lot going on in our head, and we can all benefit from meditation and taking a timeout,” she explains. “I started practicing yoga when I was about 17 years old, and it correlated with the beginning of this work where I realized how beneficial it was to slow down and to really come into my body and mind.”

But Ferrarone didn’t experience success immediately. Instead, she took time to explore, think and learn. After college, she landed a job at Pace Gallery in Manhattan where she was fortunate enough to meet some of the most important artists of our time like Chuck Close, Robert Shapiro and Robert Ryman.

“It was an invaluable experience to see how artists work and how shows are curated and hung,” she remembers. “I also had the privilege of observing clients’ thought processes, how they bought art, and even how the dealers worked. I had a genuine view of the business side of the art world.”

After living and working in New York, Ferrarone moved to Connecticut with her husband, had her first two children and continued her art, exploring colors and form through her paintings. Then they moved to Hong Kong and Singapore for several years.

“It was an incredible experience – those were the best years of our lives,” she recalls. “We met so many great people and had our third child while we were abroad. We traveled to so many beautiful and inspirational places that made a significant and positive influence on me, my work and my ideas about meditation.”

Specifically, New Zealand, Vietnam and Japan made a tremendous impact. For years, Aussies and Kiwis told Ferrarone that her work resembled Aboriginal art. But it wasn’t until she visited New

SHE BEGINS WITH COLOR, MIXING SEVERAL PAINTS TOGETHER UNTIL SHE FINDS A SHADE SHE LIKES – SHE NEVER USES A COLOR STRAIGHT FROM THE TUBE. ONCE SHE’S CREATED A PALETTE, SHE BEGINS. WHEN THE PAINT IS DRY, SHE PAINTS HER SIGNATURE GOLD DOTS AND THEN DRAWS HER INTRICATE LINES.

Zealand and began to research that specific artistic style, that she truly understood the similarities between her trademark dots and hash marks and Aboriginal work.

“In Vietnam, the culture, the artisans, the landscape, the colors, the people – they’re all so extraordinary,” Ferrarone describes. “The feel of Vietnam is pretty special. And in Japan, the aesthetics, the architecture, the colors, the food, the fashion and even their papers, inks and brush strokes – everything is so creative and so beautiful. I was tremendously inspired and influenced by my surroundings and the culture, and it transformed my work. My art became more refined and my career really took off.”

After several years of immersing herself in those cultures, it all began to come together for Ferrarone, and she created a dynamic body of work that gained a lot of interest. As she created the collection, she knew that this was it. “It was a huge shift for me,” she says.

Ferrarone’s first exhibition in Singapore was a solo show called “Mind Maps.” Her 28-piece collection was a success, and by the time the show was over, approximately three fourths of her work had been sold. That’s when things really took off. A friend in Singapore reached out to a connection at Voltz Clarke Gallery in New York. They were immediately interested and organized a two-week show that featured Ferrarone’s work alongside the work of another female artist. Ferrarone’s pieces sold out, and the gallery offered to represent her.

“My dream was to show in New York, and I was lucky enough to have someone who helped me connect to a New York City gallery,” she says. “The fact that my first show sold out was really amazing. But there are a lot of really great artists out there who don’t make it. It’s really hard. It’s not inherent in artists to promote or market ourselves. A lot of it is just about luck and who sees you.”

When they moved back to the states, Ferrarone and her husband knew they

wanted to live near family. Luckily, they found a home in Waccabuc that had the space for her to set up a studio.

When Ferrarone heads to her studio each day, she settles in with some music or an audiobook and works for four or five hours straight before taking a break. She prefers to work on one piece at a time so that she can focus on it exclusively, remain connected to her emotions and maintain a consistent rhythm in her hand. Because her work is so detailed, her pieces generally take several weeks to complete. She begins with color, mixing several paints together until she finds a shade she likes – she never uses a color straight from the tube. Once she’s created a palette, she begins. When the paint is dry, she paints her signature gold dots and then draws her intricate lines.

Ferrarone is still represented by Voltz Clarke Gallery in Manhattan, and her work is regularly featured in galleries throughout New York and Connecticut. She also creates about 5-10 commissioned pieces per year,



usually for couples who have seen her work in a show or on her website or Instagram. Typically, they'll request a certain style and color, and while it won't be exactly the same as what inspired them to commission a piece, it will look similar – she cannot copy a painting.

Before she begins painting, Ferrarone will ask the client to approve the palette. Then, they'll have the opportunity to view the work after a quarter is complete to confirm it's going in the right direction. They'll see it again when she's halfway done, and after that, the piece remains a secret until it's finished and shipped to the client.

While the average size of her work is 64" x 64", she has created pieces as small as 8" x 8" and as large as 70" x 70". Her paintings range in price, typically beginning at just over \$1,200 and steadily increasing from there, depending on the size. Regardless of the size and whether or not it's a commissioned piece, Ferrarone's goal always remains the same: to create beautiful, calming images that invoke a similar feeling in the viewer.

"I want to create something that allows people to stop and quiet down," she explains. "I don't want somebody to react excitedly. I want them to feel peaceful." **KC**



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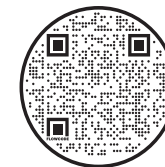
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SUSTAINABILITY IN THE 2020s

PART ONE: HOW TO BECOME A MORE SUSTAINABLE HUMAN

PART ONE OF A FOUR-PART SERIES ON SUSTAINABILITY

BY GIA MILLER
PHOTOGRAPHIC ART BY EMILY TWITCHELL



**WAIT, WAIT,
WAIT!
BEFORE YOU
TURN THE
PAGE AND
MOVE ON TO
THE NEXT
ARTICLE,
PLEASE
TAKE A FEW
MINUTES TO
READ THIS.**

Whether you're skipping over this article because you think you know how to be a sustainable human, or it's just not something you're interested in, please, give us a few minutes of your time. We wrote this article for the habitual recycler, the skeptic and everyone in between. Because becoming more sustainable isn't only for tree huggers, it's actually a way to become happier and healthier. Here's why...

In college, Ellen Calves, a former environmental attorney and former program director for Bedford 2030, asked herself, "what's the biggest threat to the health and happiness of people?" Admittedly, she wasn't "a big tree person." Still, she realized taking care of our natural resources, including the air and water, has a tremendous impact on people's health and overall happiness.

"I became passionate about saving the rainforest back in the 90s," says Calves, currently the Bedford Town Supervisor. "It's full of non-renewable resources, and I realized that cutting it down would eventually impact us and our future. Everything's connected, and destroying the environment affects all of us. Even pollution on the other side of the world depletes our natural resources, disrupts our food supply and contributes to a global climate change that directly impacts everyone.."

The reality is, when it comes to the environment, what we do and how we do it impacts our health and even our happiness. Our happiness? Yes. Believe it or not, becoming more sustainable can actually make us happier. But it's probably not how you think. We're not claiming that becoming "one with the earth" will make you happier. Instead, we're saying that making more sustainable choices can actually improve your overall quality of life, which makes you happier. How? Read on...

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MORE SUSTAINABLE**



WHAT IS A CARBON FOOTPRINT, AND HOW CAN WE REDUCE OURS?

Merriam-Webster defines a carbon footprint as "the amount of greenhouse gases (GHG) and specifically carbon dioxide emitted by something (such as a person's activities or a product's manufacture and transport) during a given period."

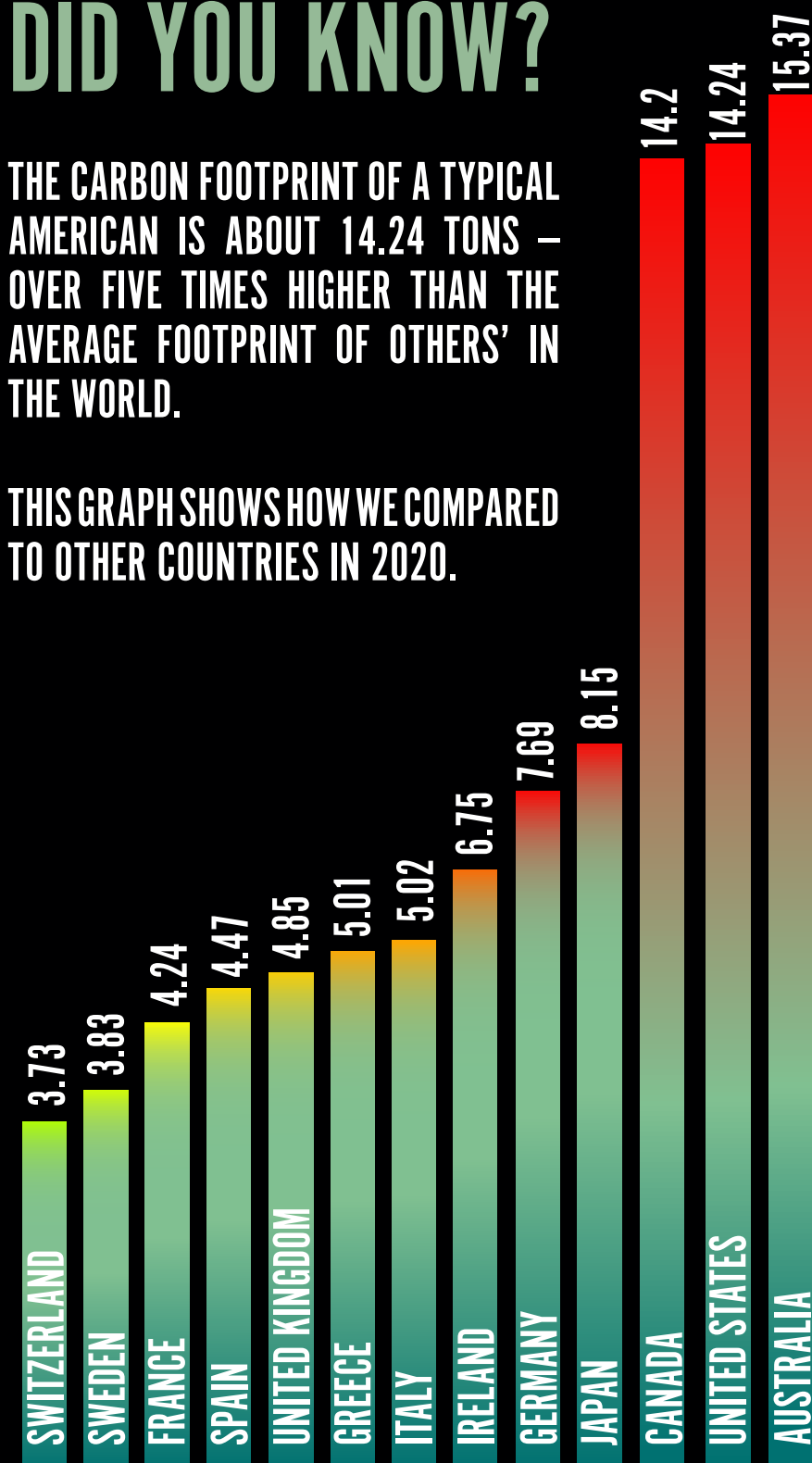
So, what's the best way to reduce your carbon footprint and make an impact: small, daily choices, or big, infrequent decisions? The answer is it's the big, infrequent decisions that matter most. By big, we mean the type of car you drive, the size of your house and where you go on vacation. Those decisions and purchases have the biggest daily impact on your carbon footprint. But, let's be honest, those bigger decisions don't come around all that often. So, you have to start small.

Even though your smaller, daily decisions won't have the same impact, they can influence your mindset. That way, when it's time to make those bigger decisions, you've already changed the way you view your impact on the environment, and you'll automatically consider the more sustainable alternatives.

DID YOU KNOW?

THE CARBON FOOTPRINT OF A TYPICAL AMERICAN IS ABOUT 14.24 TONS – OVER FIVE TIMES HIGHER THAN THE AVERAGE FOOTPRINT OF OTHERS' IN THE WORLD.

THIS GRAPH SHOWS HOW WE COMPARED TO OTHER COUNTRIES IN 2020.



UNDERSTANDING THE LIFECYCLE OF A PRODUCT

One of the best ways to change your mindset is to understand the entire lifecycle of a product, from growing the raw material to throwing it away (“cradle to grave,” if you will). Let’s take a cotton T-shirt, for example. To fully understand the environmental impact of producing one T-shirt, consider the following:

1. The raw material, cotton, uses more pesticides and fertilizers than most crops and is picked by machine: *pollution from the growing and picking.*
2. The cotton is shipped to a factory: *pollution from the shipping and the factory itself.*
3. The cotton is bleached or dyed: *pollution from chemicals and wastewater – often dumped into local waterways.*
4. The T-shirt is sewn by machine, packaged and shipped to a retail store: *pollution from factories and shipping as well as packaging waste.*
5. You purchase the shirt and wear and wash it: *pollution from each cycle of the washer and dryer.*
6. The T-shirt goes out of style, so although it’s in good condition, you throw it out, and it’s sent to a landfill: *pollution in the air and groundwater from methane gas it releases as it decomposes.*

Yes, it can be overwhelming to think about the lifecycle of every product you own or purchase, but that’s the point.

When you start to think “cradle to grave” before you buy an item, your purchasing habits may begin to change.

CHALLENGE YOUR THINKING: ARE YOU REALLY IMPROVING YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT?

Just because something seems more sustainable doesn’t mean it’s the more sustainable purchase. Take reusable water bottles, for example.

“Reusable water bottles are great, but you also have to consider how often you use the bottle to determine whether or not it’s a sustainable purchase,” says Calves. “The natural resources that went into making a reusable water bottle are far greater than a plastic one. If you lose the top, it breaks or you no longer like the style, then maybe drinking out of a paper cup, preferably a biodegradable one, or even buying a plastic water bottle occasionally, is more sustainable.”

Current science suggests that you must use a reusable water bottle 50 times for it to have a better environmental impact than the most eco-friendly plastic water bottles. And that’s before you consider the bottle’s end of life. The truth is, plastic water bottles are much easier to recycle than heavy-duty reusable ones.

IF YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT WHAT GOES INTO MAKING PRODUCTS AND THE IMPACT THEY HAVE ON THE ENVIRONMENT,

The Story of Stuff Project details the process in a 20-minute movie called, naturally, “The Story of Stuff.”

Their website (storyofstuff.org) contains several other short films and a plethora of information to expand your environmental and sustainability knowledge.



HOW TO START MAKING THE SMALL CHANGES

“Live life simply, so that others may simply live.”
Mahatma Gandhi

Starting small is about making daily choices.

Think about what you need versus what you want. Explore how you can get what you need in a less harmful way. Investigate how you can make less of an impact on the environment. Live simply.

Starting begins with education.

“I really treat my life as a sustainable person just like somebody with a weight issue treats their relationship to food,” says landscaper and environmental activist Philippine de Haan, who began Bedford’s Take It Or Leave It (TIOLI) Shed, the Bedford Repair Café and Westchester Pollinators. “I try to understand what my carbon footprint is for everything that I do and buy, just like someone on a diet is learning about the calories in everything they eat.”

But as Calves points out, it’s important to acknowledge and accept that whatever you do, you won’t be perfect, and that’s okay. So instead, choose one thing you’ll start doing every day to change your carbon footprint. Then, as you get into the routine, make an additional change.

“People have their things,” she says. “You might decide that transportation is going to be your thing, and you’re going to try to walk or combine your trips to reduce how many miles you travel. That’s a great first goal. Maybe you’re not ready to totally transform your wardrobe or your diet just yet, but you know you can walk more or run all of your errands on the same day.”

WHEN TRYING TO DETERMINE “YOUR THING,” THERE ARE THREE CATEGORIES TO CHOOSE FROM: FOOD · TRANSPORTATION · CLOTHING

STARTING SMALL: FOOD AND THE PLANET

According to a 2021 study, what people think constitutes a “sustainable” diet differs from what is scientifically sustainable. Many people assume eating sustainably means consuming regional, seasonal and organic foods. When actually, the proven way to eat more sustainably is by eating less, or no, meat. Why? A sustainable diet is one that:

- Minimally impacts the environment.
- Protects and respects our ecosystems.
- Provides safe and healthy nutrition.
- Cost a reasonable amount.

Animal husbandry, or raising animals for food, impacts the environment at every stage: feeding and care, water usage, land, processing, waste disposal, storage, transportation and more. In fact, a 2006 report from the United Nations said animal husbandry produces more greenhouse gases (GHGs) than all the cars and trucks in the world combined. Even consuming dairy products (milk, cheese, ice cream, eggs, etc.) impacts the environment. So, the most sustainable diet is a vegan diet.

But let’s assume you are not interested in cutting out all meat and dairy tomorrow. So, what’s the next best thing for eating sustainably? Try limiting your meat consumption to once a week, buying locally grown foods to reduce transportation and not wasting the food you buy.

“I think food is a really good example of something that has a very high carbon footprint and a big, broad impact on the environment,” says Calves. “We need to look at how our food is grown, what pesticides are sprayed, whether the land is being destroyed, the distance our food was transported and the overall food waste in our own homes.

“There are plenty of opportunities to be more sustainable, like buying locally-made foods,” Calves continued. “You can also join a Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) group that supports local farming and makes less of an impact on the soil than big agricultural farms.”



WASTE IN AMERICA

Globally, we produce two billion tons of waste/year. Experts predict that if we don’t begin to change our behavior, our global waste will increase by 70 percent (3.4 billion tons) by 2050.

In the U.S., we produce about 292.4 million tons of waste/year, which is about 4.9 pounds of waste/person /day.

Based on population, the U.S. produces more waste than any other country in the world. We’re less than five percent of the global population, but we generate about 12 percent of the world’s municipal solid waste.

More than 55 percent of our waste includes items that we could recycle.

Only nine percent of our plastic waste gets recycled. The other 91 percent ends up in landfills.

Approximately 31.3 percent of our glass waste is recycled, yet glass can take thousands of years to completely decompose.

Another step you can take is wasting less food. In fact, we could reduce our GHG emissions by between six percent and eight percent if we stopped wasting food alone. Try only buying or making as much food as you and your family can eat.

“I really enjoy the challenge of figuring out what to cook with everything that’s left in my refrigerator before I go grocery shopping, so I don’t have to throw any food away,” says Calves.

And when it comes to dinner parties, the Guest-imator food calculator on savethefood.com can help you determine how much to purchase and make, so there isn’t any waste. “We have this perception that when we have people over, we should have an abundance of food, but we should really try to size it right,” Calves explains

STARTING SMALL: DAILY TRANSPORTATION

Toward the beginning of the pandemic, when everyone stayed home, news outlets shared images comparing the skyline before and during the lockdown in cities like New Delhi, Los Angeles, Milan and Venice.

Looking at the pictures side by side is shocking. In one image, a brownish-gray haze blankets the city, while in the other, you see clear blue skies, vivid colors and intricate details. The point? Our transportation choices have a tremendous impact on our environment. Just think of the pollution we’re breathing in every day, even in Northern Westchester.

Transportation is the largest source of carbon pollution in the U.S., and our passenger cars account for 41 percent of those GHG emissions. The rest come from light- and heavy-duty trucks, airplanes, ships and boats, trains, motorcycles and busses.

As a general rule, the shorter the distance you travel, and the less you travel, the lower your carbon footprint. You can reduce your daily personal vehicle usage by:

- Selecting one day a week to run all your errands.
- Filling your Amazon shopping cart before placing a

- monthly order.
- Riding public transit (including the school bus) or walking when you can.
- Sharing the trip, or carpooling, when public transit isn’t available.

STARTING SMALL: YOUR WARDROBE

Remember the life cycle of the cotton T-shirt at the beginning of this article? Our clothing production and our clothing waste make a considerable impact on the environment.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) tracks the generation, recycling, composting and landfilling of textiles in the United States. The most recent data (2018) shows that we generated 17 million tons of textiles (clothing and shoes) that year. And we only recycled 13 percent of the clothing we threw away, which means over 11 million tons of textiles our landfills. So, what can we do about this?

“For clothing, a lot of it is a want versus a need,” says Calves. “We need to get away from the disposable clothes culture and think creatively about how to dress well and conserve our resources. One way is to purchase high-quality, classic pieces that will last a long time, and then make them more interesting with things you find at thrift stores.”

In addition to the clothing production itself, you drive to and from clothing stores, which adds to your carbon footprint. Even if you shop online, retailers ship your clothing on a plane and deliver it to your home in a truck, which also adds to your carbon footprint. Plus, over 20 percent of online orders are returned, compared to nine percent purchased from brick and mortar stores, increasing your carbon footprint again.

Reducing your clothing carbon footprint means getting creative. Two more popular approaches are creating a capsule wardrobe and purchasing secondhand clothing.

CREATE A CAPSULE WARDROBE

The concept of capsule wardrobes was originally introduced in the 1970s by Susie Faux, a London boutique owner who believed people spent too much on clothing that wasn’t well-made, didn’t fit well and wouldn’t be in style for very long. So instead, she recommended filling your closet with “at most” a

SMALL THINGS YOU CAN DO RIGHT NOW

IN YOUR HOME

Only run the dishwasher or washing machine when it’s full.

Line-dry your clothing.

Reuse paper by either printing on both sides or using the back as scratch paper.

Mend a ripped piece of clothing instead of buying a new one.

Have, and wear, no more than three or four pairs of shoes.

Recycle. To learn what can be recycled locally, check out the Bedford 2030 Recyclopedia.

WHEN YOU’RE OUT

When you order takeout or delivery, request they leave out the plastic cutlery – it can’t be recycled, and isn’t it nicer to eat with real silverware?

Stop using straws of all kinds. We can’t recycle plastic ones, and we don’t know anyone who doesn’t lose a metal straw after a few weeks, which creates an even larger carbon footprint than the plastic ones.

If you’re going out to eat and might have leftovers, bring your own reusable containers for the restaurant to fill. The restaurant will likely be grateful – you’re saving them money.

Purchase a set of mesh produce bags and bring them with you to the grocery store.

Stop idling your car (it’s also illegal).

Combine your weekly errands into one day.

Stop driving to the gym to exercise.

YOUR THINGS

Stop buying and using paper towels. Instead, cut up old T-shirts, towels or sheets and when they’re dirty, toss them into your next load of laundry.

Bring your own (empty) coffee cup or mug when you meet a friend for coffee and ask the barista to fill that instead of a cheap plastic or paper one.

Don’t buy any food products that are individually packaged – think mini carrots, small bags of cookies or chips. Instead, buy the bigger bag and portion things out yourself.

Buy reusable plastic baggies that can be washed by hand or put in the dishwasher.

Keep your reusable grocery bags in the trunk of your car so you’ll always have them when you need them.

Stop throwing things out. If it’s in good condition, but you just don’t want or need it anymore, give it away to a friend, offer it up on Facebook or bring it to Bedford’s Take It Or Leave It (TIOLI) shed.

dozen high-quality, somewhat timeless pieces, then introducing a few trendy items two or three times a year as needed.

Today, fashion influencers, minimalists, budgeting gurus, and environmentalists all tout the concept of a capsule wardrobe. However, these days, most capsule wardrobes hold more than 12 items. Some claim 15 is the right number; others say it's 27 or 37, etc. In New York, your basics will change depending on the season, but in general, capsule wardrobes include:

- Several high-quality T-shirts and collared shirts.
- One or two pairs of shorts or jeans.
- One or two pairs of slacks or pants.
- A sweater or two.
- A dress for women.
- A fall/spring coat (typically a trench coat).
- A winter coat/gloves/hat.
- Three or four pairs of shoes.

To create a capsule wardrobe, choose a somewhat neutral color palate so you can easily mix and match. Then pare down your wardrobe by donating or selling any items that don't fit well, aren't in your color palette, aren't your style or aren't in style. Finally, fill in any gaps. You may find your capsule wardrobe is mostly complete without buying much at all. (For more detailed advice, a simple online search of "capsule wardrobe" will result in hundreds of articles and blogs.)

Once you've switched to a more refined, minimalistic wardrobe, you'll inevitably look more "put together" each day. You'll spend less time shopping, driving to stores and deciding what to wear. And you'll throw out less clothing (after your initial purge) and even save money by buying fewer pieces.

A LARGER THRIFTIER WARDROBE

If a capsule wardrobe seems unrealistic, another option is buying your clothing from consignment stores, flea markets and other resale venues. While you'll still need to drive to the location, you are purchasing clothing that was previously created, packaged and shipped, therefore reducing your carbon footprint as well as the footprint of the person who previously owned the clothing.

"I have not bought a newly-made piece of clothing for years," says environmentalist de Haan. "If I need new clothing or sneakers, I buy it secondhand. Because we live in such an affluent area, you can get great stuff at our thrift stores."

CHALLENGE YOUR THINKING: CAN BUYING MORE EXPENSIVE CLOTHING SAVE YOU MONEY?

While you'll pay more for each piece of clothing, if you stick to a true capsule wardrobe – one where your core items last for years – you can save between \$12,000 and \$13,000 over a ten-year period (the estimated length of time a high-quality piece of clothing lasts). Here's an example of how that's possible:

CAPSULE WARDROBE

Initial cost: \$1,200 for the first year (\$300/season)
Annual updates: \$600 per year (\$150/season)
Total over 10 years: \$7,200

STANDARD WARDROBE

On average, Americans in the Northeast spend over \$2,000 per year on apparel and related services.
Annual cost: \$500/season
Total over 10 years: \$20,000

THE SHOE CONUNDRUM

Americans throw away 300 million pairs of shoes each year. Unfortunately, shoes are difficult to recycle because they're made of a combination of vinyl, leather, plastic and other materials. It can take between 25-40 years to decompose a shoe in a landfill, and incinerating shoes causes air pollution. So, what's an environmentally conscious person to do? Here are a few options:

- Buy (and therefore throw away) fewer shoes.
- If your shoes are in good condition, sell or consign them. Or donate them to the Community Center of Northern Westchester or programs like Soles4Souls.
- Repair your shoes instead of buying a new pair.
- Recycle your old sneakers through Nike or Asics – they will recycle sneakers from any brand.
- Recycle your shoes through TerraCycle.
- Purchase shoes made with recyclable material.



BIG DECISIONS MAKE THE BIGGEST IMPACT

“The environment is an urgent problem, and while we all need to do the simple, little things, we must really look at the big picture of how we’re living and the impact that has on the earth,” says de Haan.

Our big decisions usually cost more money and involve larger items. As mentioned earlier, the bigger the product, the more GHGs it takes to manufacture, deliver and maintain. So, consider your big purchases carefully. Once you decide that yes, you do need it, think about the impact that item has on the environment and look at all your options.

WHEN IDENTIFYING WHICH “BIG DECISIONS” CAN IMPACT YOUR FOOTPRINT, THREE CATEGORIES COME IMMEDIATELY TO MIND: HOUSE · CAR · VACATION

A BIG DECISION: THE SIZE OF YOUR HOME

The larger your home, the more energy it takes to heat, cool and power it. Therefore, the more pollution you cause. About 20 percent of our country’s GHG emissions come from our homes. And even though homes are becoming more energy-efficient, our GHG emissions aren’t getting any smaller. One contributor is our increasing use of technology. The bigger the house, the more things needed to fill it, and in 2022, it’s more likely those things need power to run.

Wealthier Americans with bigger homes and generally more products to fill them have a 25 percent higher carbon footprint than lower-income Americans. While our next issue explores how to have a more sustainable home, for now, simply start thinking about the size of your home.

A BIG DECISION: WHAT YOU DRIVE

Deciding what you drive happens a little more often than purchasing a home. And by now, we all know that electric or hybrid vehicles are better for the environment. Luckily, these days, you’re not stuck deciding between an affordable Toyota Prius or a high-end Tesla. Now, you can choose from a variety of luxury and economy options to fit your budget and lifestyle. In fact, during the past ten years, our country has gone from just over 16,000 electric vehicles sold to over two million. So, in this category, the idea of choosing a sustainable alternative is catching on.

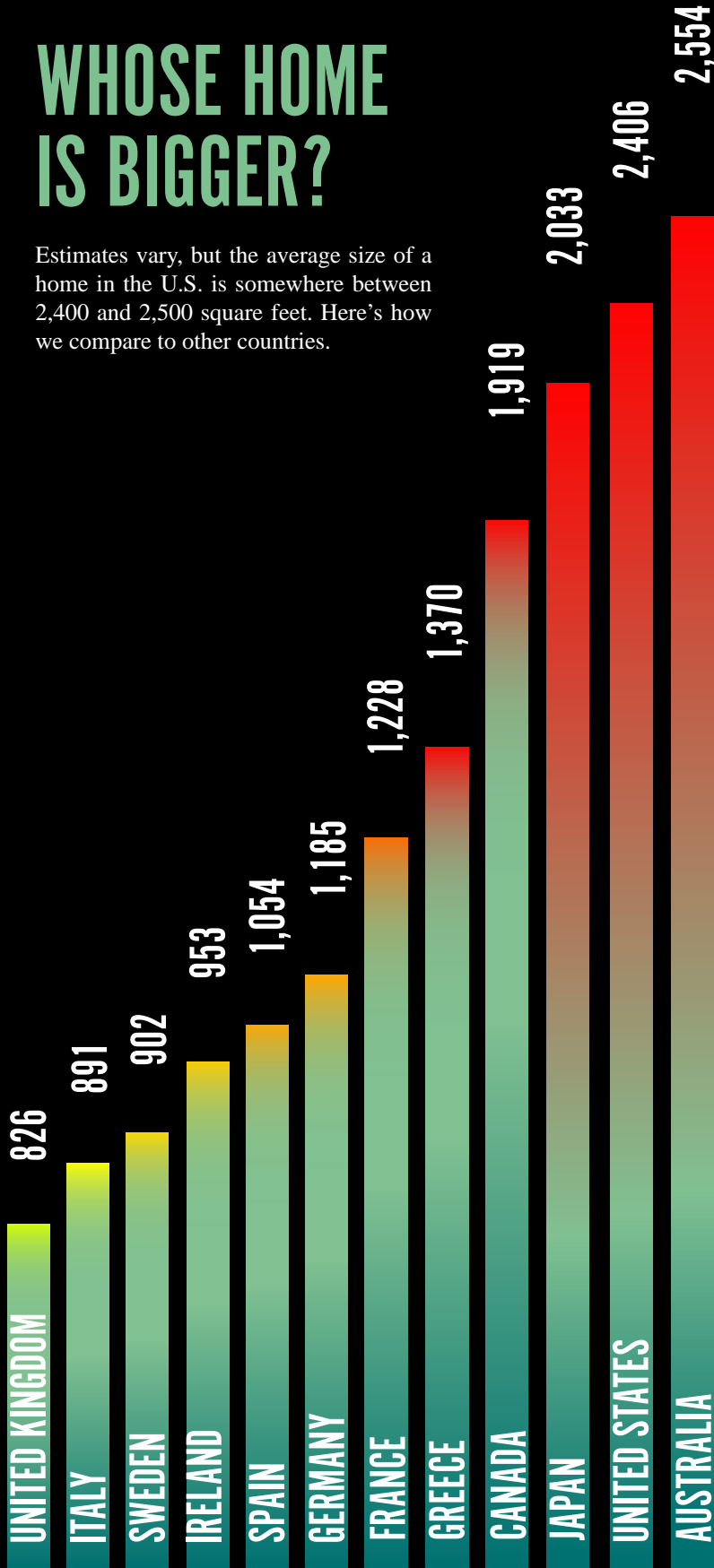
Plus, within the next five years, you may be able to choose from more than 60 new electric vehicles. Automakers ranging from high-end names like Audi, BMW, Cadillac and Porsche, to more affordable options from companies like Chevrolet, Chrysler, Ford and General Motors are getting into, or making further headway in, the electric car market. And there are even several new startups hoping to make their debut in the coming years. So, when it comes time to purchase your next vehicle, you’ll have choices for reducing your carbon footprint.

CHALLENGE YOUR THINKING: PURCHASING AN ELECTRIC VEHICLE CAN ACTUALLY INCREASE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

When considering the purchase of an electric vehicle, it’s not only about the car itself, but it’s also about the type of energy you use to power it as well as what

WHOSE HOME IS BIGGER?

Estimates vary, but the average size of a home in the U.S. is somewhere between 2,400 and 2,500 square feet. Here’s how we compare to other countries.



you're replacing. "It is complicated, and there are a lot of considerations you have to make with any purchase," says de Haan. "If you have an electric car, you must use electricity to charge the car's battery. But if your electricity is not coming from a renewable source, you're not really reducing your carbon footprint. And, if you already have a vehicle that works well, adding an electric vehicle to your life may not be an environmentally friendly choice because you also have to consider the carbon footprint of making that vehicle. If you don't need it because your other car still works, then you've now created a larger carbon footprint for yourself."

A BIG DECISION: YOUR VACATIONS

Vacation travel is the big decision you'll make most often. While we addressed the topic of daily transportation earlier, one of the big ways to reduce your carbon footprint is to consider where you go on vacation and how you get there.

Per mile, you have the largest carbon footprint when you travel by plane. Flying across the country or overseas for a family vacation will produce more GHG emissions than driving to a destination that's only a few hours away. Therefore, one of the simplest and best ways to reduce your carbon footprint is to fly less

often. That means more "stay-cations" or road trips to nearby towns and sites (like Beacon, see pages 46-54).

You can also consider taking the train to reach your destination, which, compared to flying, cuts each person's carbon emissions in about half. Trains carry a lot more passengers than airplanes, so they produce less carbon dioxide per passenger. Plus, on a train, enjoying the interesting scenery can be part of the vacation itself.

CHALLENGE YOUR THINKING: SHOULD YOU DRIVE OR FLY?

While the simple message is that planes produce more carbon dioxide per passenger than cars, it's more complicated than that. You should also factor in the distance you travel to the airport and if your flights or car are full, which can be calculated through various online carbon footprint calculators.

For example, the total carbon emissions for a nonstop, roundtrip flight from JFK to Los Angeles is 1,300 kg, while driving to/from Los Angeles in a new gas-fueled SUV is 2,360 kg.

But, to truly calculate your carbon emissions, you need to do some math that also factors in the plane's size, number of seats, seat occupancy, etc. Luckily,

Google Flights can give you a good estimate of your carbon emissions if you click the down arrow on the right when searching flights. Determining your carbon emissions by car is easier. Just divide the total amount of emissions by the number of passengers. Based on Google's estimation, your carbon emissions for that trip to L.A. by plane would range between 490 kg and 628 kg, and a road trip for a family of four would be 590 kg. So, it's about even, depending on the size of your plane and the number of passengers.

As mentioned earlier, the best way to decrease your carbon footprint on vacation is by choosing a nearby road trip. If a family of four drives to Boston for spring break, their carbon emissions are only 37.50 kg each.

When it comes to travel, if you choose to fly, you should also consider the type of flight you take and how much you pack. For example, you'll have a smaller carbon footprint with a nonstop flight than with connections because take-off and landing are the most fuel-intensive parts. You'll also have a smaller carbon footprint per mile on a longer flight versus a shorter one. And, because heavier planes require more fuel, packing less will also reduce your carbon footprint.

THE CONTROVERSIAL BIG DECISIONS: PETS & CHILDREN

Other big decisions we make that can impact the environment can be a bit more controversial, like having a pet and the number of children you have. Yes, you read that right – some climate activists say you should consider the environment when deciding whether to get a pet and determining how many children to bring into the world.

"Let's consider the fact that all human beings need to eat throughout their lives, and let's think about the impact that has on the earth," says de Haan. "If you want to become more sustainable by instituting Meatless Monday in your home, go ahead. But we need to look bigger because that won't solve our problems, and that's where people, and the media, get stuck. They stop at Meatless Monday because it's the nice news. But actually, we are in a situation that is not so nice at all. We need to consider the not-so-nice reality. And most of us are very reluctant to think or talk about that.

"We really need to look at the much bigger picture and think about your entire family," de Haan continues.



“It’s not just about your meal this evening, but about the fact that you’re a human being and you need to eat a certain amount of food during your lifetime. When you consider that, then maybe we should have fewer people? And, what about our pets? How much do they eat during their lifetime? We all have a carbon footprint.”

The amount of food we eat, the places we go, the things we buy – everyone’s carbon footprint adds up. So, if there were fewer people and pets, there would be fewer global carbon emissions as well.

SUSTAINABILITY REQUIRES RESEARCH

As you’ve probably realized by now, making sustainable choices requires research. The good news is there’s a lot of information out there, and more and more companies are working to become sustainable. Unfortunately, the bad news is there’s a lot of *misinformation* out there and a lot of greenwashing.

If you’re unfamiliar with the term, greenwashing is when a company creates a false impression or provides misleading information to convince consumers their products are environmentally friendly. It could be as subtle as a company using a green label on their products (think McDonald’s and Coca-Cola) or as blatant as an oil company claiming they’re environmentally friendly.

Unfortunately, greenwashing can be very convincing, and it’s not always intentional. Your friends, neighbors or colleagues may swear by certain products they believe are environmentally friendly, but these products may actually do little or no good at all. So, it’s important to always ask questions and always do your research to determine if a choice you make is actually a sustainable one.

CHALLENGE YOUR THINKING: HOW TO ANALYZE YOUR CHOICES

Let’s look at bar soap. In general, bar soap is better for the environment than body wash. It doesn’t require a plastic bottle, it contains 30 percent less water, and typically, it doesn’t include ingredients that may be

harmful to the environment. However, there are other factors to consider.

“I’m skeptical of some of these green solutions because I don’t know what went into the process of making the bar soap, how it was transported and what kind of packaging was used to get it to the store,” says Calves. “If you go to a grocery store early in the morning, you can watch them unload the trucks and see how much packaging goes into what you buy. You may think you’re buying something with minimal packaging, but it could be packaged and transported in a way that’s not environmentally friendly.

Try to be mindful of where things come from, how they were produced, and what raw materials went into making them. If you love your body wash and it’s made from post-recycled content or something that’s biodegradable, it may be greener than the bar of soap that doesn’t have any packaging in the store. There are a lot of products out there that people want you to think are very green but really aren’t.”

CHALLENGE OTHERS EVEN WHEN IT’S DIFFICULT

Becoming more sustainable includes encouraging others to become more sustainable. But in our culture, that’s not easy.

“Americans tend to be very upbeat and optimistic, and they don’t like to be criticized,” says de Haan. “When it comes to sustainability, we are really nice and kind to each other, which is a great thing. But we shouldn’t avoid the things that we need to talk about – the things that might not be so pleasant. This is a topic where we really have to start criticizing ourselves and each other. And that’s really hard work.”

In Europe, says de Haan, people have these tough conversations more often. “Europe is lightyears ahead of us” when it comes to sustainability, she says. “They view it as sharing knowledge instead of being offensive. In America, it’s also very politicized, which is not the case in other countries.”

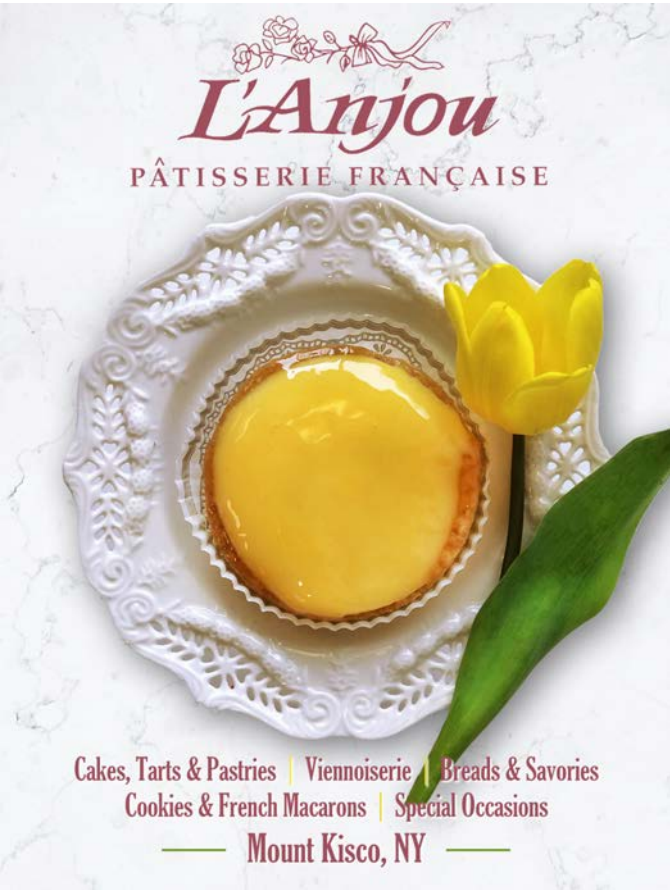
So how can you begin to have those difficult conversations? One method is to frame the topic in a

way that demonstrates you care about the person. For example, if you notice someone idling their vehicle while waiting in a pick-up line at school, when you talk to them next, instead of telling them they’re breaking the law, approach them with concern. Explain that you care about their health and even their wallet. When they idle, they’re polluting the air they breathe, which can cause asthma, chronic bronchitis and more. And, if they’re idling for more than ten seconds, they’ll waste more gas than they would restarting their car, and that costs them money.

Another way is to speak about issues that are meaningful to the other person.

“I have found that hunters want the ecosystem to be healthy so they can hunt, and fishermen want a clean ocean so they can fish,” says de Haan. “So, you can also reach people when you address what’s important to them.”

Whatever approach you choose, make sure you listen to the other person, too – don’t do all the talking. Instead, ask questions about why they’ve made certain choices and don’t judge. By listening to their point of view, you’ll better understand how to encourage new, more sustainable habits.



LESS STUFF = MORE HAPPINESS

If you’re still not convinced that sustainability, and the effort it involves, is worth it, think about this: the more sustainable you become, the less stuff you need to buy. The less stuff you need to buy, the less money you need to make. The less money you need to make, the fewer hours you need to work. Working less allows you more time for the things you enjoy in life: hobbies, time with friends and family, or, perhaps, a more rewarding career where you can help save the environment.

Sustainability is a complicated issue, and we hope you’ll chime in on our website and social media. We want to hear your thoughts on everything we presented here, as well as anything we didn’t cover. Please let us know what you think by participating in our conversations and polls. 

**NEXT IN THE SERIES:
HOW TO HAVE A MORE SUSTAINABLE HOME**

Edward Jones

**Need help
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SPREADING LOVE

A PEEK INSIDE MARY ZIPKIN'S WORLD

BY GIA MILLER

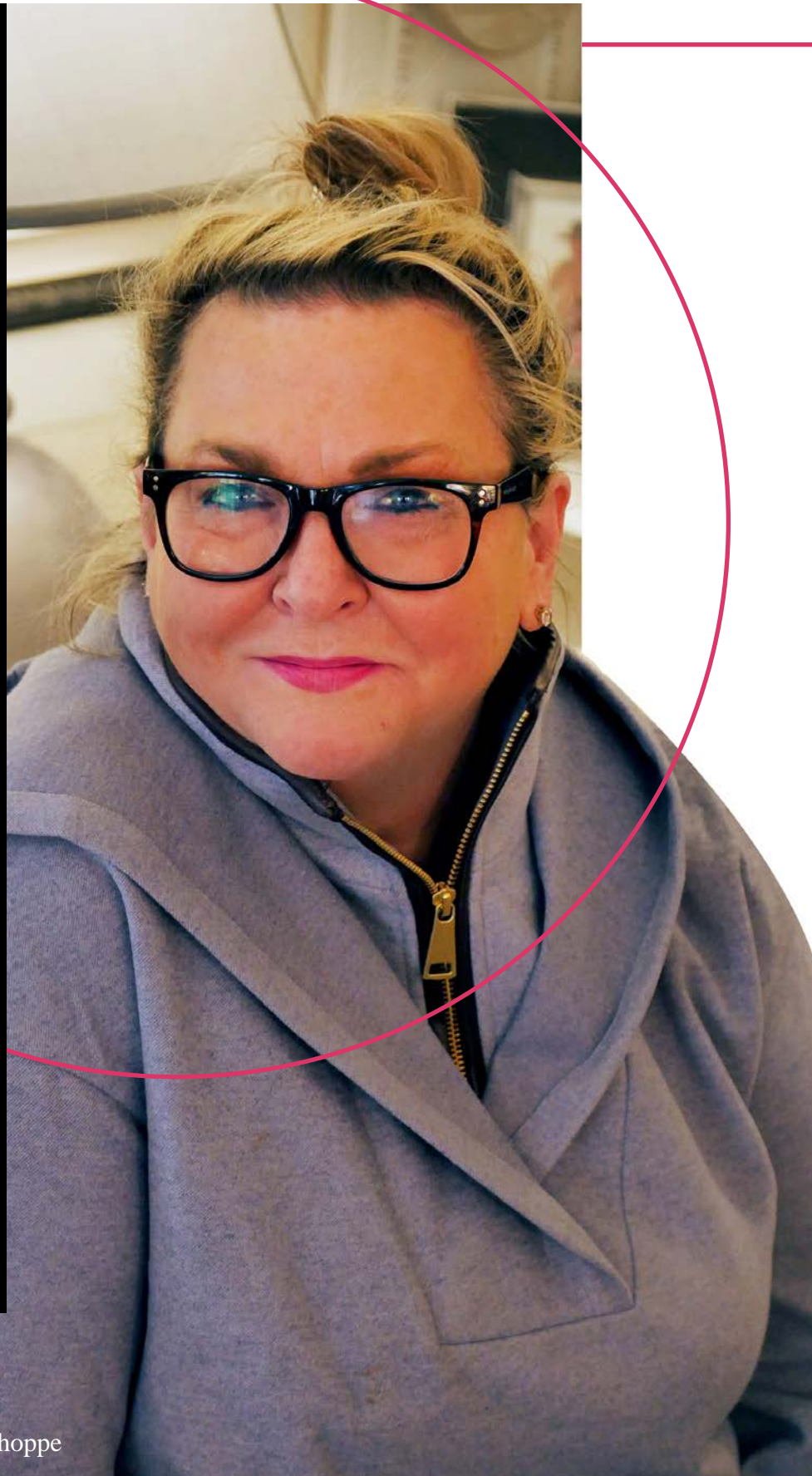
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JUSTIN NEGARD

Ever wonder what it's like to spend a day in someone else's world? What would you see as you go through their homes, their things, their lives? We spent some time with Mary Zipkin of KnaCk of All Trades and The KnaCk Shoppe in Pound Ridge to see what it's like to work as a home stager/consultant, estate sale manager and owner of a consignment shop. What we learned is that she's more than just the middleman (or woman) in the buying and selling of stuff, she's an integral part of life's transitions – the "stuff" is simply the conduit.

To put it simply, Mary Zipkin helps people detach from their things and move on. In the process, she helps them make a little extra cash for their next venture.

But when you peel back the layers, Zipkin's foray into other people's lives and possessions isn't just about getting people to leave their stuff behind, she becomes part therapist, part life coach and part trusted confidant. She's there for the emotion that comes with saying goodbye to items that hold decades of memories, she's there for heaviness that comes with moving to the next phase of life and she's there for the excitement a buyer experiences when finding items that will enhance their lives. Zipkin spreads joy, gives new life to beloved objects and makes people, and our earth, happy.

Mary Zipkin, at The KnaCk Shoppe



When she meets with homeowners, Zipkin treads lightly. "I always start by telling them that this isn't a judgment on what they have. Instead, I'm doing this because I have been very successful with home staging, and what I do will help their house sell faster. Because it is true – a staged house usually sells more quickly."

When Zipkin stages a home, she mainly uses the homeowner's items, but she will add a Ciseaux rug,

modern lamps and perhaps some white bedding or towels when necessary. "When people hear the word staging, they think you're coming in and replacing all their furniture," she explains. "While there are people who do that and have a warehouse full of furniture, it's incredibly expensive. Most of the homes I go into have good bones and the homeowners have nice things. You can do a lot with just editing what they have, and I pride myself in that. I'm not there to take somebody's money, that's just not my motivation."



“WHEN I’M WORKING WITH A HOMEOWNER, AND THEY ASK ME, ‘HOW MUCH YOU THINK WE CAN GET FOR THIS,’

I REMIND THEM THAT THEY DID NOT BUY THAT TABLE 25 YEARS AGO THINKING, ‘I’M GONNA SELL THIS ONE DAY AND MAKE MONEY,’” SHE EXPLAINS.

"You buy a Picasso or other art and hope it will make money one day, but you don't buy a bed or dishes hoping to amortize every stinking dime out of it. So, if you get \$100 for a sofa, you should be happy."

"I tell everyone not to go crazy throwing everything away," says Zipkin. "Don't give away your baseball mitts – people buy sports stuff. They'll also buy nails, a half empty bag of grass seed or used cleaning supplies. It's all about repurposing. Why not spend \$3 on something that's used? Look, \$3 and \$3 and \$3 adds up to \$9. Sell ten of those, and you have \$30. All the little incidental stuff adds dollars to the bottom line."

“EVEN THOUGH THE HOMES ARE VERY NICE, A LOT OF THEM ARE VERY FULL AND NEED TO BE PURGED.

When I edit someone's home, we'll often get a pod if they have too many things. Just under half the time, after everything has been removed and the home has been sold, we'll bring the items back in. The other times, we unload everything and have an estate sale."





Zipkin has a long list of collectors, regular buyers and occasional shoppers that she texts before each estate sale. She also posts her sales online, which helps her draw a crowd. Certain sales will even lure collectors from nearby states. “At this sale, there was a record dealer from Pennsylvania and a book seller who bought about 20 boxes of books. A lot of these books were very dark books about Hitler. But he’ll buy books and sit on them until he can get the price he wants. It can take a long time to sell books like these.”



FOR MOST OF ZIPKIN’S ESTATE SALES, PEOPLE LINE UP AN HOUR BEFORE TO BE THE FIRST ONES IN THE DOOR.

But some of them feature such coveted items that people camp out overnight. A recent sale near Cantitoe Corners in Katonah was one such instance. “There was this beautiful house that had amazing stuff, and I knew it would be an epic sale,” said Zipkin. “The homeowners were an Asian couple who had already moved a lot of their items to their apartment in Manhattan and house in Florida. Their son also took items to his house in the Hamptons. There wasn’t a lot left, but what they did leave was incredible. People were dying for this stuff, and I could tell it was going to get chaotic. So, before I let them in, I said, ‘It’s just stuff, everyone. Please be on your best behavior.’ For sales like this, we give out numbers because we can’t let everybody in at the same time.”



WHEN YOU’VE MADE A CAREER OUT OF WORKING WITH OTHER PEOPLE’S BELONGINGS, YOU LEARN A FEW THINGS ABOUT PEOPLE. MAINLY, MOST OF US HAVE WAY TOO MUCH STUFF. “I ALWAYS TELL PEOPLE THAT THEY SHOULDN’T BE POSSESSED BY THEIR POSSESSIONS,” SAYS ZIPKIN, “WHEN WE’RE PREPARING FOR THEIR ESTATE SALE, I ALWAYS REMIND THEM THAT THEY’RE GOING IN THE HOLE ALONE – THEY’RE NOT TAKING ALL THIS STUFF WITH THEM.



I DO FIND IT’S HARDER FOR THE OLDER GENERATIONS TO GET RID OF THEIR STUFF. THE YOUNGER GENERATIONS DON’T HOLD ON TO THINGS THE SAME WAY.”



THE KNACK SHOPPE

Zipkin opened her first consignment and antiques store with her husband around the time her daughter was born. After the store closed, she began hosting trunk shows featuring jewelry and scarves she purchased in Manhattan. As time went on, she began staging homes and running estate sales. Eventually, she opened The KnaCk Shoppe in Katonah, and she moved to her Pound Ridge location about a year ago.

Zipkin opened the store after completing the estate sale of a 12,500 square foot home in southern Westchester. “Her adult kids were no longer living at home, and the couple was moving to a 6,000 square foot home. She didn’t want to take anything with her, so we did this huge sale. It was fabulous. After it was over, we took two truckloads of the remaining items to the store. Since that time, we’ve had some of her items out in our store at all times.”

Zipkin’s store in Pound Ridge features a variety of items, from home furnishings and decor to jewelry and clothing. About 60 percent of the items are pieces that didn’t sell during an estate sale, but she believes will sell in her store. The other 40 percent are items from consignment.



When it comes to consignment, Zipkin is “very particular.” She doesn’t want broken items and knows what will sell in her store, so she always asks for pictures first. “It saves them time, and it saves me time,” she explains. “Who wants to schlep all that stuff from their trunk into my store and back again? I’m very selective because I want to be known as a high-end store with fabulous prices. I don’t want to be another overpriced store. I also don’t want to be a store where customers see the same stuff every time they come in.”

Zipkin fills every inch of The KnaCk Shoppe with items for sale, grouping like items together. “It always looks better when you have similar colors or types of items together,” she explains. “When people come in, they’ll tell me, ‘I want all of these items because they really look good together.’”



ZIPKIN WORKS HARD, RARELY TAKING A FULL DAY OFF. EVEN THOUGH HER OFFICIAL WORKDAY ENDS AT 5:00 P.M., SHE’S OFTEN RESPONDING TO EMAILS AND PHONE CALLS FOR ANOTHER HOUR OR MEETING WITH CLIENTS.

It’s by choice, though, because she loves the life she’s created. At the end of a long day, she’ll relax by watching a little TV and playing Words with Friends. But even when she’s relaxing, she’s still helping others and spreading joy. “If you play a certain game for a while, you become really good at it,” she explains. “So then, everyone asks you to play them because everyone wants to up their game.”



KC

THE FIRST IMPRESSION

Many buyers decide if they like the house as soon as they walk in the door. People are instantly drawn to what they like, so make the entrance appealing.

THE KITCHEN

The kitchen is where you live. Whenever you go to a party, everyone ends up in the kitchen – it’s the heart of the home. So, it behooves you to make that lovely and charming and desirable.

THE MASTER BEDROOM

The master bedroom is for the people who are paying the bills, so that bedroom should be the most appealing. Buyers should envision how they will relax each evening, where they can put their bed, the TV, etc.

THE MAINTENANCE ROOM

It’s not sexy – it’s the guts of your house. But it should be clean as a whistle and working well. Paint the floor to cover up any rust stains or problems that have been fixed. But don’t cover up actual problems with paint – get those fixed!

4 THINGS THAT SELL A HOME

TAKE ACTION

LIST THREE POSSESSIONS THAT YOU WILL CONSIGN OR DONATE:



JANUARY

ZIPKIN CONSTANTLY RESTOCKS AND REARRANGES HER STORE, OFTEN WITH THE HELP OF HER EMPLOYEES.

She keeps a lot of her merchandise in the basement and switches things out regularly. She’ll bring up seasonal items or pieces of a specific color to create a themed area or room. “The store is labor intensive –there’s no question about it,” she says. “It takes about four to five hours each time I move things around because I rearrange the whole store. I move every single piece. But it’s my joy. Truthfully, it’s what I like to do in life. I need the store to look cute and different all the time.”



DEAR JOHN,

CRAZY NEIGHBORS, TEENS IN LOVE AND UNSOLICITED ADVICE –
FINALLY, A DEAR JOHN LETTER THAT'S ACTUALLY WORTH WRITING.

OUR LOCAL ADVICE COLUMNIST SAYS THE QUIET PART OUT LOUD,
BUT HE ALSO DISHES OUT SOME GREAT ADVICE.

DISCLAIMER: IT'S OKAY TO LAUGH – THIS IS A HUMOR COLUMN! WE WELCOME YOUR
DEAR JOHN QUESTIONS, BUT WE'RE LEGALLY OBLIGATED TO SAY THIS IS NOT A
SUBSTITUTE FOR REAL ADVICE BY PROFESSIONALS.

Dear John,
I am in a tough spot! My neighbor on one side of my house hates the neighbor on the other side and vice-versa! I get along with them both, but they regularly complain to me about each other. It's very uncomfortable to be in the middle like that, and I don't want to betray either of them. How do I stop the madness?

Sally Switzerland

Dear Sally,
Congratulations! You are in the perfect spot for double the coffee cake! With the bar set nice and low, you stand to become neighbor of the year. Since both neighbors are working extra hard to recruit you to their "side," now is your chance to manipulate their emotions for your own gain.

But seriously, a polite chuckle is all that's required to maintain a tepid neutrality without refuting their complaints. In the meantime, enjoy the many cakes and body creams that will continue to arrive at your front door throughout the year.

P.S. If you're really at your wit's end, I recommend hard-boiling a dozen eggs, peel and toss half in each neighbor's yard. At first, they'll yell at each other, but once they realize you were the culprit, they'll get the hint ... and you'll have the peace and quiet you so desperately crave.

Dear John,
Two months ago, a boy in my teenage daughter's biology class began texting and calling her, and I don't approve – I can already tell he's a bad influence. I tried to talk to my daughter, but she wouldn't listen. I blocked his number, but they continued their relationship through an app. The police say it isn't harassment because she's texting him back and answering his calls. So, I can't get a restraining order. My friends say I should let my daughter make her own mistakes, but this isn't a mistake I want her to make. What do I do?

Too Young to be A-Grandma

Dear John,
I'm struggling with a few family issues at the moment that aren't so secret. When friends ask me how I'm doing, I give them an update. In response, my friends usually offer unsolicited, and unhelpful, advice. The thing is, they haven't been in my situation, so they don't know what they're talking about. I know they think they're helping, but they're not. I don't want to tell them I'm fine because it's obvious I'm not, but I really don't want to listen to their bad or wrong advice. How do I handle this?

Sick of Unsolicited Advice

Dear Too Young,
Keep it up! You're on the right track! Hovering as close as possible is the best way to guarantee your child never makes any mistakes. With proper diligence, you can control her free will through college and even during those initial job interviews. This strategy is even more effective when it comes to matters of the heart. Nothing – and I mean nothing – cools a teenage libido like the stern disapproval of a parent.

But when you're ready for your daughter to gain some wisdom, begin by letting go of what you think you know about what's best for her. As the legendary Katherine Hepburn said, "If you obey all the rules, you'll miss all the fun." Let her live a little!

P.S. If the thought of your daughter traipsing through the town with this miscreant is just too much for you to handle, a doctor friend of mine says the best way to ease your anxiety is to place one birth control pill in your daughter's glass of orange juice each morning. Cheers!

Dear Sick,
Opinions are like rear ends, everyone has them. And unfortunately, most of them stink.

Isn't it amazing that so many people struggle to solve their own problems but always know how to solve yours? The next time someone doles out uninvited advice, offer to switch problems – they'll be relieved that you bequeathed a conundrum they can finally handle.

As for your real problems, SPLURGE! Talk to a therapist.

P.S. If all else fails, take a cue from a toddler – plug your fingers in your ears and sing loudly! It may be slightly obnoxious, but you'll make your point.

LIFE, DEATH & MOCHA MEET THE TAZZA PHILOSOPHERS

BY GIA MILLER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN NEGARD

It was our first day on the job. We thought we'd start off with something easy. The plan was to stop a stranger on Katonah Avenue and get to know them a bit. We'd prepared 10 questions and figured it'd take about twenty minutes — plus a quick little photo shoot. That singular person quickly became a trio and those twenty minutes turned into an hour full of conversations about philosophy, war and even time travel.

The Strangers:
Ellen Cohen,
Bedford Hills, Book Editor
David Felder,
Katonah, Business Owner
Alexander Pantaleon,
Yorktown, Finance Executive

WHY ARE YOU HERE?

David: I'm here because this is the best part of my day. I sit here, relax and socialize with friends.

Ellen: On the days that I don't work in the city, I bike here to get a little exercise. I work in the morning, bike here to get my coffee, sit and socialize for a bit, and then I bike back home.

Alexander: I love Katonah — coming here is like a small getaway because it's very peaceful. And, it's given me the opportunity to meet these extraordinary people. During *COVID*, Katonah was my escape, but I still come here almost every day. I get a cup of coffee, sit for a little bit, relax, enjoy the change of scenery and see my friends.

WHAT'S ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING THINGS YOU'VE DONE?

Ellen: I volunteered with Puppies Behind Bars, and being in a women's prison was an eye-opening experience. For their graduation ceremony, you go inside the prison and watch the inmates give the puppies to people in need. It was very touching. I brought my son with me, who was about 16 at the time, so he could see the inside of a prison.

IF YOU COULD HAVE ONE SUPERPOWER, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

Alexander: The most important ingredients in humanity are hope, love and time, and the three of them are interrelated. But hope and love are things that you can sustain. The one thing that you cannot really manage is time. So, it would be very interesting to have the power to somehow change time or go back in time.

WHO IS THE MOST INTERESTING PERSON YOU'VE EVER MET?

David: Marshall Berman, a professor at the graduate school where I taught. When you saw him, you would have thought he was a homeless man because he was so poorly dressed, but he was brilliant — he was nothing but brain. His story is very, very tragic. He lived on the Upper West Side in Manhattan with his wife, who was in and out of a facility to treat her depression, and his three-year-old son. One weekend, his wife was home on leave and threw their kid out of the window then jumped after him. Somehow, the kid got killed, but she survived. I think she landed on the canopy. Marshall was totally shaken and distraught — it was just unbelievable.

A while later, he wrote a book about the modernization and development of New York City titled, "All That is Solid Melts into Air" [published in 1982]. The title is actually a quote from Karl Marx, but it was appropriate

for the book. And since then, that phrase lives with me. Maybe it's part of my character, but I'm always afraid that everything I've built in my life — the relationships with other people, my kids, my family, my property — will one day disappear because of a natural disaster or some sort of upheaval. I would have loved to sit with him, talk to him and ask him about so many things, but, unfortunately, he died [in 2013].

WHAT'S SOMETHING THAT VERY FEW PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT YOU?

Alexander: My father's father was written into the history of the Asia Minor war. He started a shipping business in the Mediterranean, and he was a very prominent, very wealthy man. When the Turks invaded Asia Minor, he used all of his boats to move refugee families to Piareus, Greece. When he went down to Piraeus, he saw

an island called Salamis and bought the whole island for the refugees so they could develop a life there. Today, in the city of Salamina on Salamis, there are about 10,000 people who are descendants of those refugees. My family name, Pantaleon, is written in the history books of the Asia Minor war because of his contribution. And, if you go to Salamina, you'll find a monument to my great-grandfather.

IF YOU HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO SOMETHING DIFFERENTLY IN YOUR LIFE, WHAT WOULD BE AND WHY?

Ellen: I've always wanted to live in a different country. I did study abroad, but I wish that I had spent a year actually living abroad when I was younger. My husband and I have talked about living in Italy, and it's still something I could do, but it's something I wish I'd done when I was younger.

PLEASE TELL ME SOMETHING I DON'T KNOW.

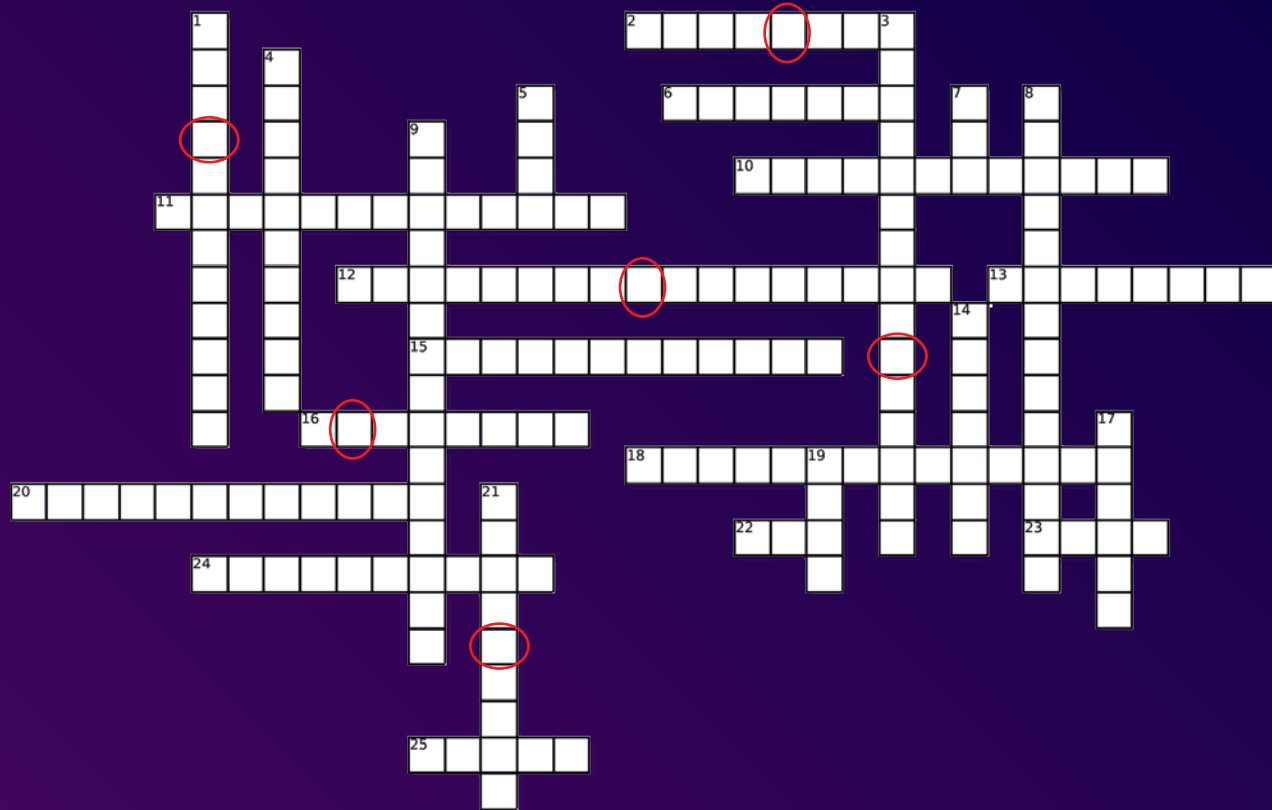
David: I served in the Israeli military for five years, and I don't think people know how horrific it is to be in a war, in a real war. I'm not talking about the wars that you see in the movies — it's nothing like Rambo. It's a horrific, horrific experience. You feel such fear that you never knew existed. When you hear the guns and bombs coming your way, you have no clue if they will fall over your head or half a mile away. Will you survive or not? Because you know that, statistically, some of you will be killed. It's such a humiliating experience. It doesn't matter if you are a good person, if you are brave, if you are a person of character — nothing matters. It's all chance. It's a game of probabilities. That's something that I wish every person would really understand. **KC**



CROSSWORD

Enter to win a \$50 gift certificate to Sustainable Haven in Cross River!

Complete the crossword puzzle, head to www.katonahconnect.com/contests, fill out the form and enter the circled letters in order. One winner will be selected at random and notified via email no later than June 1, 2022. Complete contest rules and requirements are available online.



ACROSS

- 2 Helps plants grow
- 6 Type of paint Katy Ferrarone uses
- 10 Katonah school that burned down in 1893
- 11 Halloween-themed party held in 1898
- 12 Ellen Cohen volunteered with this program
- 13 Increased childhood anxiety
- 15 Bruce Reisdorf can relate to this show
- 16 Month of Katonah's sewer ribbon cutting ceremony
- 18 Annual amount of waste we produce globally
- 20 makes the biggest impact on your carbon footprint
- 22 Will Runyon's former employer
- 23 Toy store in Beacon
- 24 "When the alternative is NO KATONAH or _____"
- 25 Covers bare soil

DOWN

- 1 Will Runyon believes you will regret _____ with others
- 3 Play Colby Kipnes most recently starred in
- 4 Bruce Resisdorf's job is like being a
- 5 Colby Kipnes' character on Bubble Guppies
- 7 Beacon museum
- 8 Consignment shop in Pound Ridge
- 9 Mary Zipkin believes you shouldn't be possessed by
- 14 Country that inspired Katy Ferrarone
- 17 David Felder served in this country's military
- 19 fruit needed for Citrus Fling
- 21 Chef Anibal Romero's country of origin

CITRUS FLING

EMBRACE SPRING WITH A CRISP, REFRESHING CITRUS COCKTAIL

Spring is in full swing! That means longer days filled with outdoor activities like sports, hiking and yard work. But my favorite spring activity comes at the end of a busy day – relaxing with a cocktail while I watch the sunset from my front porch. If you don't have a porch, this cocktail will taste just as good on your back patio, in your yard or wherever it is you go to relax.

NOTE: While you can use whatever brands you choose, each one does have a unique flavor profile. For this drink, I recommend Choya Yuzu liqueur and The Botanist gin.

Dr. Elixir

INGREDIENTS

Serves: Two

- 0.5 oz. fresh squeezed lime juice
- 1.5 oz. fresh squeezed grapefruit juice
- 1 oz. yuzu liqueur
- 1 oz. Aperol
- 4 oz. gin
- 8 drops yuzu bitters
- 1 egg white
- 1 oz. tonic water
- Fresh lime zest

DIRECTIONS

- Chill cocktail glasses.
- Combine lime and grapefruit juices, yuzu liqueur, Aperol, gin, yuzu bitters and egg white in a cocktail shaker.
- Shake for about one minute or until the drink has a thick foam.
- Add four ice cubes and shake for another minute or until cold.
- Strain into chilled glasses.
- Top with tonic water and garnish with lime zest.
- Relax and enjoy.

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