

KATONAH CONNECT

A stylized sunburst graphic with a central yellow circle and radiating lines of varying lengths and colors (yellow, orange, green, blue, purple). The lines are set against a dark blue background with faint, overlapping circles.

THE HOLIDAY ISSUE
NOVEMBER | DECEMBER

Turn What You Love Into Where You Live



Meticulous Serene Compound | Croton-On-Hudson, NY
\$3,900,000 | 6 BR, 6.2 BA | **Web# H6210418**
Emily Lyon: O 914.273.1001 | M 917.797.6000



A True Hidden Gem | Purchase, NY
\$3,150,000 | 7 BR, 7.1 BA | **Web# H6202838**
Stacey Oestreich: O 914.273.1001 | M 917.797.6266
Nancy Stronge: O 914.273.1001 | M 914.671.5784



Old-World Meets Modern Elegance | Harrison, NY
\$2,249,000 | 5 BR, 5.1 BA | **Web# H6207550**
Anthony DeBellis: O 914.232.3700 | M 914.618.1737



Extraordinary Mediterranean Home | Thornwood, NY
\$1,650,000 | 6 BR, 5 BA | **Web# H6208576**
Emily Lyon: O 914.273.1001 | M 917.797.6000



Impeccable Contemporary | Pleasantville, NY
\$1,499,999 | 5 BR, 3.1 BA | **Web# H6205547**
Glorianne Mattesi: O 914.902.3408 | M 914.393.6990



Expansive European-Styled Home | Katonah, NY
\$1,150,000 | 4 BR, 4 BA | **Web# H6157230**
Melanie Shepard: O 914.232.3700 | M 203.515.8388
Trip Brosmith: O 914.232.3700 | M 914.953.9003



SAY HI TO YOUR NEW FAVORITE CBD TREAT

COME VISIT OUR WONDERFUL WORLD AT THE LITTLE SHOP OF OHHO / 13 COURT ROAD, BEDFORD, NY



TABLE OF CONTENTS

06 FOUNDERS' LETTER

08 OUR TEAM

10 CONTRIBUTORS

12 COFFEE CONNECTION: THE DAILY GRIND

Opening a coffee shop was Michelle Smith's dream, but she and her husband Erich could have never imagined what would happen the day after they opened in March 2020.

16 CONNECT WITH AN EXPERT: HOW TO THROW A HOLIDAY PARTY (AND ACTUALLY ENJOY IT!)

Brett Cameron and Deanna Marano, co-founders of the event planning company/Bedford store La Maison Fête, share tips for how to minimize the stress when throwing a holiday party.

20 FUTURE CONNECTIONS: BASKETBALL, SPIDERMAN AND TMNT

Meet kindergartner Joey Marra. He's an expert when it comes to basketball, Spiderman and the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.

22 FUTURE CONNECTIONS: SPREADING HOLIDAY CHEER

College freshmen Kate Harvey and Luke Torre have spent close to ten Christmas mornings putting the needs of others before their own.

26 CONNECTING WITH WISDOM: THE 411 FOR GETTING ON THE NICE LIST

This time, we're speaking with someone who doesn't actually live here, but trust us, he still knows us all. He's making a list, he's checking it twice and, wouldn't you know, Santa's got some pretty great advice.

30 PAST CONNECTIONS: THE HISTORY OF BEDFORD'S MAPLE GROVE HOUSE

Built in 1757, Maple Grove survived the 1779 burning of Bedford and remained in the care of a singular family for 236 years. From Mary Raymond mending George Washington's gloves to serving as the setting for an episode of "Girls," learn the legacy of this historic home.

34 CONNECTING WITH OUR MENTAL HEALTH: HOLIDAY BLUES

There are many things to love about the holiday season. But for some, this time of year can be difficult. If you're feeling down about the holidays, there are ways to manage your thoughts and feelings, and maybe even find something to be thankful for.

40 CONNECTING IN THE KITCHEN: IT TAKES A VILLAGE

Village Social co-owner Joe Bueti and chef/co-owner Mogan Anthony believe in helping those less fortunate. For the past two years, they've made all the food for The Annual Westchester Christmas Dinner, and they also donate to numerous local organizations throughout the year.

44 CONNECTING WITH THE LAND: YOUR QUESTIONS, ANSWERED

Gardening expert Leslie Dock answers readers' questions about everything from how to store your seeds or prepare your garden for a potential drought to determining your level of gardening experience.

90 DEAR JOHN

Our advice columnist resigned in protest after Blues Travelers' Chan Chinchla knocked it out of the park in our last issue. So we turned to local comedian Luz Michele to help you with your holiday struggles.

92 CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS: WHAT GLASS CEILING?

Meet Vanessa Seide, founder of Very Lovely Soles, and Mimi Wieland-Tesfaye, the owner of Mt. Kisco's Mimi's Coffee Shop. We spoke about everything from Starbucks and skydiving to marathons and running for office.

95 PEOPLE CONNECTIONS: ELIO MENDEZ

Meet arborist Elio Mendez.

96 COCKTAIL CORNER: THE BLITZEN

Making hot chocolate for the kids? Dr. Elixir shows you how to give yours a little kick.





54 FROM THE HEART

Our area has many compassionate, dedicated individuals who spend countless hours trying to make the world a better place. So for our first holiday issue, we chose to highlight some of the smaller charities who aren't often in the limelight.



68 PLAYING HIS DECK OF CARDS

As a child in Argentina, Fernando Silva's art teacher said his artwork was terrible, so he stopped painting. It wasn't until he moved to Bedford Hills as an adult that he was inspired to try again. Nine years later, he participated in his first show at NYC's Gagosian gallery. Since that time, he's developed his own unique style and gained the attention of some well-known neighbors.



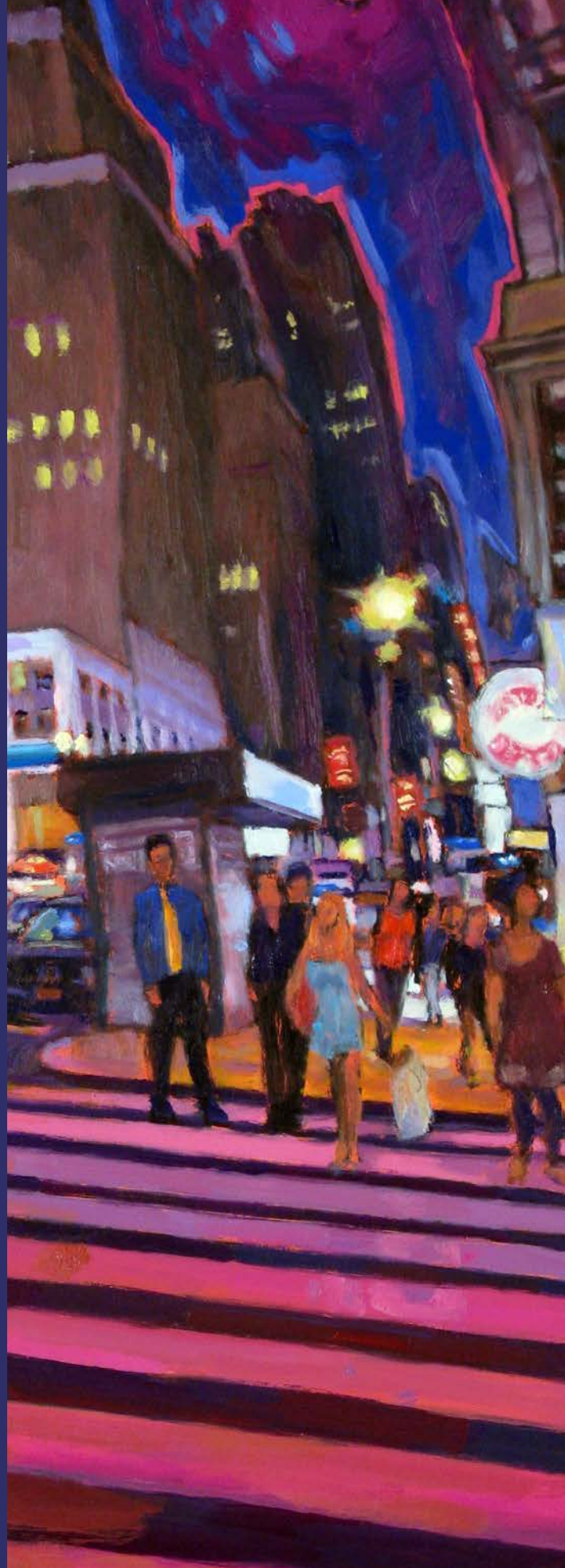
75 HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

You know the drill – it's the holidays, so there's a gift guide...and it's broken up by category. For our very first gift guide, we sought out as many local artisans and makers as we could, paired them with items from some of our favorite stores, and created a list that will allow you to shop local all season long.



82 A DAY IN NEW YORK CITY

Visiting New York City is a time-honored tradition during the holidays. But instead of ice skating in Central Park or visiting the tree in Rockefeller Center, check out some of the city's less popular holiday destinations that will still evoke the spirit of the season.



CARPE DIEM



McIntosh

MA12000
INTEGRATED AMPLIFIER



You've always wanted it.
Now is the time.

Hear it for yourself in our Mount Kisco showroom.

ET Entertainment Technologies
When Words Fail, Music Speaks.

(914) 242-8881 | 309 N. Bedford Rd. Mount Kisco, NY | etaudiovideo.com

'TIS the

SEASON

'Tis the season for contemplating the past year. What did you do well? What do you wish you'd done differently? What will you change for next year? And the question we encourage you to add to that is this: Did you do enough for others?

Giving back is scientifically proven to increase your self-esteem, reduce stress and help you live a longer, happier life. It also creates or strengthens your connections within our community. There are numerous opportunities to give back throughout the year, and not all require financial contributions.

Throughout 2022, our neighbors sent medical supplies and protective gear to Ukrainians, gave blood to help the shooting victims in Uvalde, TX and even donated gently loved books to help rebuild the libraries in Puerto Rico or Florida after recent hurricanes. Locally, they've helped parents or

neighbors shovel their driveways, donated food or gently worn clothing to The Community Center of Northern Westchester and volunteered with our local charities. These are only a few examples of the many ways you can give back.

For our first holiday issue, we wanted to focus on charitable giving, highlighting ways you can make an impact in our community. So we chose to showcase five small local charities that we admire but aren't often in the spotlight (page 54). We featured two families who are funding research to help discover cures – one for a rare childhood disease and the other for an incurable pediatric brain cancer, an organization that supports women leaving abusive relationships, a woman who donates half the produce she and her farmers grow to our county's food pantries, and a charity that rescues both animals and people.

We treated the founders of these charities to a rare day of pampering, with hair and makeup generously donated by The Hair Wharf and Essie Cohen Makeup. Then we dressed them up in elegant ball gowns and dapper tuxedos, thanks to The Community Shop and This & That Vintage. Next, Nicole Mata, owner of This & That Vintage, styled all the women and men with her stunning and extensive collection of vintage jewelry. Finally, we photographed them in a historic Bedford home whose history Ava Fleischer documents in this issue, beginning on page 30. You can check out some behind-the-scenes footage of our photoshoot on our website and social media.

We also spoke to two teens who have spent almost ten Christmas mornings volunteering at The Westchester Annual Christmas Dinner so that some of the neediest families in our community

can enjoy a holiday celebration with a festive meal and gifts (page 22). Additionally, we featured Mt. Kisco's Village Social restaurant whose charitable work we greatly admire (page 40). And, given that this is the holiday issue, we made sure to include a special treat for our youngest readers (as well as those young at heart): Kaitlyn Hardy sat down with Santa Clause before he takes up residence at The Plaza in Manhattan, and she shares his thoughts on kindness and happiness (page 26).

But for those of you who struggle with the holiday blues, there's something for you as well. Elizabeth Kemler spoke with two local experts about the various ways you can survive whatever you may face this holiday season (page 34). Or if your holiday stress is more of the party planning variety, Aerin Atinsky shares Brett Cameron's and Deanna Marano's (of La Maison Fête) expert

advice on how to reduce your stress when hosting a holiday party (page 16).

Finally, in our back of book (that's journalism speak for the pages at the end of a magazine), you may recognize a familiar face dishing out advice for this issue. After Blues Traveler's Chan Kinchla rocked last issue's advice column, Dear John resigned in protest. So, we asked local comedian Luz Michele to help our readers. In this issue, we heard from folks who are struggling with a variety of holiday-related issues (page 90), and in our opinion, Michele nails it, while also making us laugh. And, of course, you can wash it all down with a seasonal drink from our very own Dr. Elixir (page 96).

Regardless of how you choose to read our magazine (front to back, back to front, or skipping around – all are perfectly fine with us), we hope you'll

spend some extra time focused on the charities we've featured. And we encourage you to consider donating.

Whether it's in someone's honor, in lieu of a gift to a person who seemingly has it all, or just because it's something you and your family do or will start doing — we hope you'll join us in making a financial contribution to those who work tirelessly to make this world a better place.

Imagine what could happen if all our readers gave \$5 or \$10 to each charity we featured in this issue. Our community would make a tremendous impact on the lives of thousands.

Cheers to you, your family & loved ones, and here's to a joyous and charitable holiday season.


JUSTIN NEGARD
CREATIVE DIRECTOR




GIA MILLER
EDITOR IN CHIEF



KATONAH CONNECT

EDITOR IN CHIEF

Gia Miller

CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Justin Negard

WRITERS

Aerin Atinsky
Leslie Dock
Ava Fleisher
Kaitlyn Hardy
Elizabeth Kemler
Luz Michele
Gia Miller
Justin Negard
Mason Vitiello

ARTISTS

Richard Chandler
Sam Karlin
Justin Negard

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Greg Muenzen
Justin Negard

ADVERTISING

Gretchen Fleisher
Lisa Steihl

COVER ART

Front cover: Justin Negard

Back cover: Richard Chandler, "Ground Level"

"Katonah Connect is published six times a year by Sonder Publishing LLC
("Sonder Publishing").

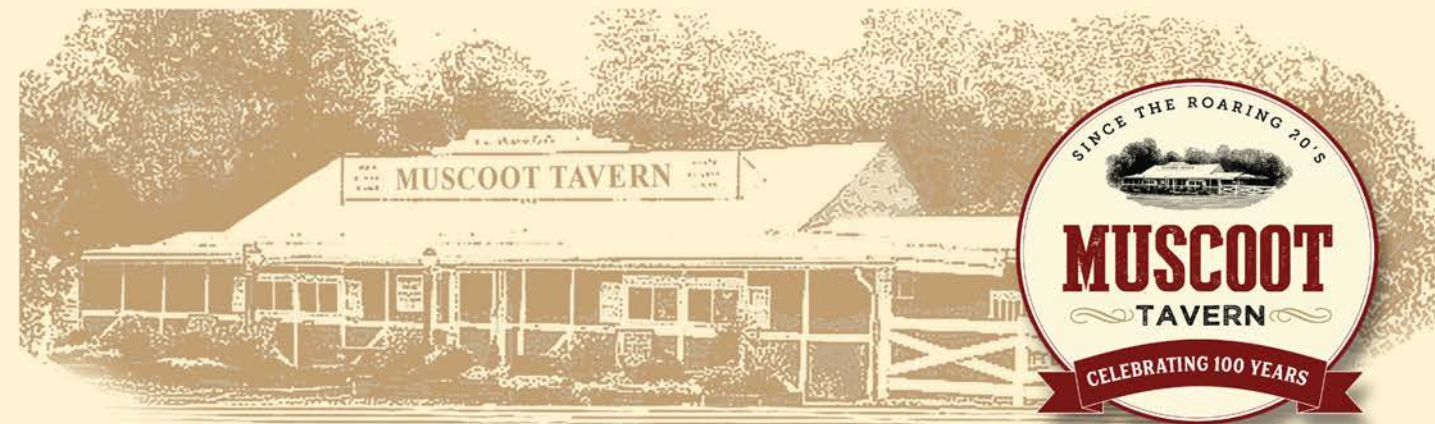
Copyright (c) 2022 Sonder Publishing.

All rights reserved.

Reproduction or use of any part of this publication without the permission of Sonder Publishing is prohibited. Sonder Publishing owns all trademarks and associated intellectual property of this publication. Articles in this publication reflect the views of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the editors or Sonder Publishing. The claims and opinions set forth in paid advertisements published herein are not necessarily those of Sonder Publishing and Sonder Publishing takes no responsibility for any such claims or opinions.



BEYOND THE MAG:
GO BEHIND THE SCENES
FOR VIDEOS AND INFO
FROM THIS ISSUE!



Cheers to 100 Years
MUSCOOT
TAVERN

Being a local favorite since the roaring 20's is something to talk about!

Stop in and try our Chefs fresh daily seafood specials, or our famous "Mussels Muscoot", juicy secret house blend burgers, & signature thin crust pizza!

Come and experience the charm of this historic eatery.

—A neighborhood favorite since the roaring '20's!



Open 7 Days a week • Large outdoor dining space

105 Somerstown Turnpike, Katonah, NY (Corner of Rt. 100 and Rt. 35)
www.muscoottavern.com 914 • 232 • 2800

CONTRIBUTORS

ELIZABETH KEMLER



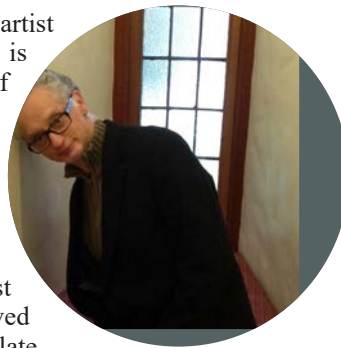
Elizabeth Kemler is a seasoned curriculum designer, social entrepreneur, performer and mental health advocate. For the past 25 years, she's helped people develop their communication skills, social-emotional competence, and mental health through her dynamic programming, courses, and wellness-based goods and services.

In this issue, she wrote about how to survive the holidays. "My best advice is to keep yourself in the present and focus on what you do enjoy, versus thinking about all the joy you should be feeling," she says. "This will help you better manage whatever experience you do have." Elizabeth is also the owner of The Sustainable Haven in Cross River, a rustic-luxe lifestyle shop/café for those looking to slow down, connect, experience meaningful rituals and elevate their everyday.

RICHARD CHANDLER

Cross River based artist

Richard Lang Chandler is drawn to both the art of cityscape and landscape and the powerful connections within these environments. While his work remains rooted in reality, he focuses on light and color against fixed boundaries of observed forms. His buildings undulate, his skies and his sidewalks are wildly dappled, and his perspectives create a compelling narrative. Richard has exhibited in NYC and internationally and is locally represented by Oak & Oil in Katonah. When Richard is not sketching in NYC he is often finding inspiration in Ward Pound Ridge Reservation.



SAM KARLIN



Sam Karlin is a multi-medium abstract artist whose work explores the intersections of contemporary aesthetics and cultural identity. He received his MA and BA from Columbia University and draws on the artistic influence and inspiration of years abroad in Asia and Africa.

When not making a mess in the studio he is also a writer and an avid tennis player and his latest novel *Journeyman*, which plays on those passions, is expected out in early 2023. You can find more of his work and connect with him online at www.samkarlinart.com and [@samkarlinart](https://www.instagram.com/samkarlinart)

LUZ MICHELLE



Luz has channelled her unique life experiences and background into a successful comedy career, gracing stages such as Caroline's, Gotham Comedy Club, The Stand, The NY Underground Comedy Festival, The North Carolina Comedy Festival and more, with her malapropisms and unique style. As Founder of Hard Headed Comedy™, a comedy entertainment company, Luz produces live and streamed showcases featuring a diverse mix of established and up-and-coming comedic talent.



JAX'D FITNESS

Our clients are our focus.
Training for all levels
DONE RIGHT.

www.jaxdfitnessny.com
631-825-2069
info@jaxdfitnessny.com
532 N Bedford Road, Bedford Hills, NY



L'Anjou
PÂTISSERIE FRANÇAISE

Cakes, Tarts & Pastries | Viennoiserie | Breads & Savories
Cookies & French Macarons | Special Occasions
Mount Kisco, NY



HOULIHAN LAWRENCE
KATONAH

LIVINGKATONAH.COM

KATONAH BROKERAGE
143 KATONAH AVENUE, KATONAH, NY 10536
914.232.5007 | HOULIHANLAWRENCE.COM

To our thousands of clients, new and old – And, the community we love to call home – For the countless kindnesses and opportunities afforded us throughout the year –

Many thanks and best wishes for a joyous holiday season filled with every happiness.

THE DAILY GRIND

BY KAITLYN HARDY
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN NEGARD

Coffee is not just a love for Michelle Smith, she calls it “her life.” She’d always dreamed of opening a coffee shop, and in March of 2020, she and her husband Erich realized their dream by opening The Farmer’s Grind – South Salem’s coffee-shop-slash-market-slash-cafe. Their launch was quite tumultuous, to say the least, so we decided to sit down for coffee (what else?) with the Smiths to learn about how they’ve made it work.

BEFORE THE STORM

The Smiths moved from Yonkers to South Salem in 2018 and, after a vacant space down the street became available, the idea for a coffee shop of their very own began to look more like a reality. As passionate as the Smiths were about building a coffee shop, The Farmer’s Grind didn’t open without a little hesitation. Michelle, a self-proclaimed worrier, was wracked with “what ifs.”

“We just kept going back and forth,” she says. “What if this happens? What if that happens? What if no one shows up? But then we said, ‘Let’s just do it.’”

During the months leading up to their opening, The Smiths put as much of their time into grinding out The Farmer’s Grind as they could, each while balancing another job (Michelle as a pediatric trauma surgical physician’s assistant and Erich as a New York City fireman).

“We took out loans, we bought equipment, we built some of the stuff in here and renovated the space,” says Erich.

Hammer by hammer, loan by loan, the shop transformed into a home-grown cafe – just as they’d envisioned. From the outside, The Farmer’s Grind resembles the roadside market you’d stop at on a day trip to the county fair – a small country barn with plants guiding a path to the entrance. The inside, just as rustic, welcomes customers with a rush of homespun comfort, from the tea lights hanging along the windows to the music playing in the background.

Prior to opening, The Smiths gave their social media followers sneak peeks – and tastes – of what they could expect in the coming weeks.

“We were pushing posts and making videos saying, ‘We’re here today, Grinders! Here’s what came in fresh today.’ Or, ‘Look at all of the fresh stuff we painted!’” says Michelle. “Leading up to opening day, we were messing with our espresso machine and tweaking our drinks, so we brewed coffee and espresso and invited people in to try it before we opened.”

Racking up anticipation for their soon-to-be customers and stepping into the springtime rush, the Smiths planned to open their doors in late March to catch hold



of Copia Home and Garden’s (their neighbor) commerce. Little did they know they would be hit with the “what if?” they never could have imagined: a worldwide pandemic.

EVERY CLOUD HAS A SILVER LINING

The whispers in the wind of an increasingly concerning virus blew right past the Smiths – their focus was on getting The Farmer’s Grind up and running by opening day.

“I wasn’t worried about anything else going on, I was just worried about getting this place open and getting customers in,” Erich says. “In the days leading up to opening, we were starting to get a little nervous, but we did not expect a complete shutdown.”

They opened on March 19, and the very next day Governor Andrew Cuomo

issued the “New York State on Pause” executive order, shutting down all non-essential businesses due to the pandemic.

Businesses closed, people stayed locked in their homes, streets became barren – but The Farmer’s Grind, deemed an essential food business, was still standing.

“We were able to stay open, but Copia Home and Garden shut down,” Michelle remembers. “So all those people that we wanted to come for spring, we didn’t have that.”

Despite the shock of a shutdown, the Smiths were determined to keep grinding. Following opening day, they donned masks and gloves, stocked up on hand sanitizer and welcomed customers one by one.

“We were letting in one person at a time,” Michelle says. “We had a border they couldn’t cross, they had to call out

their order (from just outside the store’s entrance). We also did curbside pickup and Erich went on deliveries.”

Even facing the disappointment of a stifled opening and the struggles of jumping through the pandemic’s hoops, the Smiths found silver linings.

“I think COVID actually helped us,” Erich says. “You know what, I *know* COVID helped us.”

Rather than being thrown into the deep end, the pandemic allowed the Smiths to ease into the nitty-gritty of it all.

“The slow process helped us get on our feet and figure out the kinks: what works, what doesn’t, how much you order of one thing,” Michelle explains.

COVID-19 helped with their product orders as well. Fewer customers meant smaller product orders, which they increased as lockdown restrictions loosened, preventing waste.

WON’T YOU BE MY VENDOR?

The local-dependent model of The Farmer’s Grind also softened the blow of COVID-19 restrictions. More than just a coffee shop, The Farmer’s Grind is also a cafe and market, selling products from local vendors, which the Smiths hail as “the best product” they’ve had of that kind. To ensure this rightfully high standard, the Smiths developed close relationships with each of their vendors, sitting down, meeting and becoming not just business partners, but friends. They located local bakers and makers via Instagram, but now, thanks to the pandemic (a phrase we never thought we’d say), most of their vendors now reach out to them.

“With a lot more people staying home and doing nothing since they couldn’t go to work, they started baking and creating,” says Erich.

Fortunately, these creations were products that fit right in at The Farmer’s Grind. And because of the vendors’ proximity, products continued to arrive regularly, preventing shortages larger grocery stores faced.

CREATING COMMUNITY & GIVING BACK

Throughout the pandemic, The Farmer’s Grind gave customers the opportunity to shop at a small, community-driven store featuring local products, instead of a large, crowded national store, and it worked.

“Here, they know the owners, they know the products, they know where it’s coming from,” Michelle says, “We needed our town, and our town needed us.”

They’ve continued to cater to the community however they can. On snowy days, The Smiths hand out samples of hot soup to anyone who dares to venture out. And in the warmer months, they open their parking lot to feature local musicians, food trucks and ice cream, with what they call “Saturday Ice Cream Nights.”

“It ended up being exactly what we want for this place: a local hangout where everyone comes together,” says Erich.

In a time devoid of togetherness, The Farmer’s Grind became a haven for the community. They’re made up and held up by their neighbors, and those customers reap the delicious benefits of their loving support. [KC](#)



A MAJOR LIFE CHANGE?
NEW JOB?
POST-PANDEMIC LIFE?
COLLEGE STRESS?

MELINDA CANNO-VELEZ, MSW
TREATING TEENS, ADULTS & SENIORS
VIRTUAL OR IN-PERSON THERAPY IN POUND RIDGE

MELINDAVELEZ.COM
MELINDAPVELEZ@HOTMAIL.COM | 914.450.4211

PROGRESSIVE ANIMAL HOSPITAL

Combining the best of modern medicine with proven holistic methods.

(914) 248-6220
progressive-vet.com
268 Route 202 Somers, NY

HOW TO THROW A HOLIDAY PARTY

(AND ACTUALLY ENJOY IT!)

BY AERIN ATINSKY



'Tis the season for the annual holiday party where family, friends, coworkers and pets come together for a spectacular night filled with laughter, fun and possibly some happy tears. The question is, though, who's hosting?

What's the very first step to throwing a stress-free party? According to Deanna Marano, co-founder of the event planning company and Bedford store La Maison Fête, it's an easy one: "Hire an event planner!"

However, if an event planner isn't what you're looking for/in your budget, then it's up to you to do the planning. But don't stress, Marano and her co-founder Brett Cameron walk you through the main things you need to know.

THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME

To determine your party location, ask yourself the following questions:

1. How many guests will you invite?
2. What type of party are you hosting (i.e. casual, black tie, etc.)?
3. How far will people need to travel?
4. Will your guests need hotel accommodations? If so, is there one nearby? Or, is there a hotel not too far away from the event where they can enjoy activities?

"Once you determine who you're inviting and the type of party, make sure people are available and can be in attendance – that's how you finalize the date and location of your event," Marano explains.

Then before you book, make sure the space you've chosen will accommodate the number of guests that will likely attend. To estimate this number, Marano suggests accounting for around 80 percent attendance if you're inviting a significant number of people from out of town. If your event is local and people have enough advanced notice, Marano says about 90 percent will likely show.

Additionally, check your local community calendar and touch base with friends before finalizing the date.

"It's such a busy time of year," Cameron notes. "So before you set a date, try to eliminate as many scheduling conflicts as possible."

DETAILS, DETAILS, DETAILS

"Next, take a good look at your contracts and make sure everybody has a cancellation policy or postponement policy that works with your needs," Marano recommends.

Then, select vendors who are experienced with a good reputation.

"Upon booking, check your vendor contracts and make sure your details, including set-up times, and everything is very clear in your initial agreement," Cameron recommends. "Then, you should check in with each vendor a month before and seven to 10 days prior to your event to confirm everything is being prepared according to your contract."

Perhaps most importantly, track your expenses along the way. Nothing ruins an event like the stress that comes with blowing your budget.

"Know what you'd like to spend and stick with it," Murano advises. "Expenses can quickly get out of control, and that causes a lot of stress."

MAKING YOUR PARTY COME TO LIFE

If you're planning a casual gathering, Marano suggests that "a fun cocktail party is always the easiest, as long as you have some good music you can pipe in, a good caterer and maybe one or two stationary things."

But for a formal occasion, everything from seating arrangements and place cards to printed menus and drinks should be considered. Either way, determining your theme, decorations, a schedule and menus no longer means spending days or weeks stressing over how to make your event memorable – social media makes it easy.

"We all want something different today, and we all want to have that 'wow' factor," Marano says. "Thanks to the internet, all the visuals are at our fingertips – it's a great way to get inspiration."



On Instagram, you can search by hashtag, designers, party planners and more. For additional inspiration, Marano also recommends browsing platforms like Pinterest, Carats & Cake and PartySlate.

After settling on your theme, decorations are next; make a list to stay organized, reduce anxiety and prevent last-minute panic. Then consider lighting and table decor, which will tie everything together.

EAT, DRINK AND BE MERRY

Given the prevalence of allergies and dietary restrictions, Marano suggests asking for transparency from your guests on your invitations.

“The majority of the time, the host knows who they are inviting and what, if any, restrictions they have,” she notes. “But if you don’t, you should make a note at the bottom of your invitation.”

Even if no one responds, a great host will have a few options, such as vegetarian or gluten-free items.

“If you’re planning on doing it yourself,” says Cameron, “I recommend a nice station with a big ham or turkey that you could flow into after biscuits or rolls, cheese (Brie is always a yummy holiday treat), and maybe a charcuterie station – DIY is always a good option.”

Marano also notes that food trucks and taco bars are popular choices for variation and to accommodate all types of eaters. And regardless of the budget, a variety of mini desserts is always a crowd favorite.

For a more extravagant meal, do a tasting with your caterer ahead of time, making sure to try options for each course (appetizer, main and dessert). If serving a plated dessert, consider offering mini desserts once your guests move to the dance floor.

When it comes to the bar, Cameron suggests sticking with “the classics” for a formal soiree.

“A lot of people love eggnog and cranberry cocktails for the holidays,” she says. “Making your bar really festive can be the heart of any holiday party.”

But for a casual gathering, Marano says wine, vodka

and tequila with good mixers (like grapefruit juice or soda) are really all you need. And, depending on the time of day, just serving mimosas or bloody marys is also a definite possibility.

ORGANIZING THE SPACE

“I always feel that the flow of a holiday party is important,” says Cameron.

With holiday parties, houses can become overcrowded, so pay attention to how you arrange the food and drinks.

“Think about where your bar placements are, and if you’re going to have stationary food and how this will play out with respect to your house or event space,” Cameron recommends, adding that your guests’ first and last impressions are also important.

Cameron also says to keep arrival needs in mind.

“During the holidays, it gets dark earlier during the holidays, so you want to make sure your driveway and entrance are nicely lit,” she continues. “Think about parking as well as it’s important to make sure your guests are safe. Parking attendants or a valet to help guests navigate parking makes for a good arrival and departure.”

ENTERTAINING THE KIDS

If you’re planning to invite children, plan a few activities in advance to reduce (and possibly eliminate) any stress during the event itself.

There are plenty of ways to occupy your younger guests throughout the event: a musical artist, a group art project, team trivia or board games are all great ideas. Cookie decorating is also easy, fun and deliciously messy – just make sure to select a variety of gingerbread people, stars, etc. so there’s something for everyone.

“Having a piano player or carolers is always nice too,” adds Cameron. “And, I’ve always found that kids love photo booths with fun props related to the event’s theme.”

YOU’VE GOT THIS

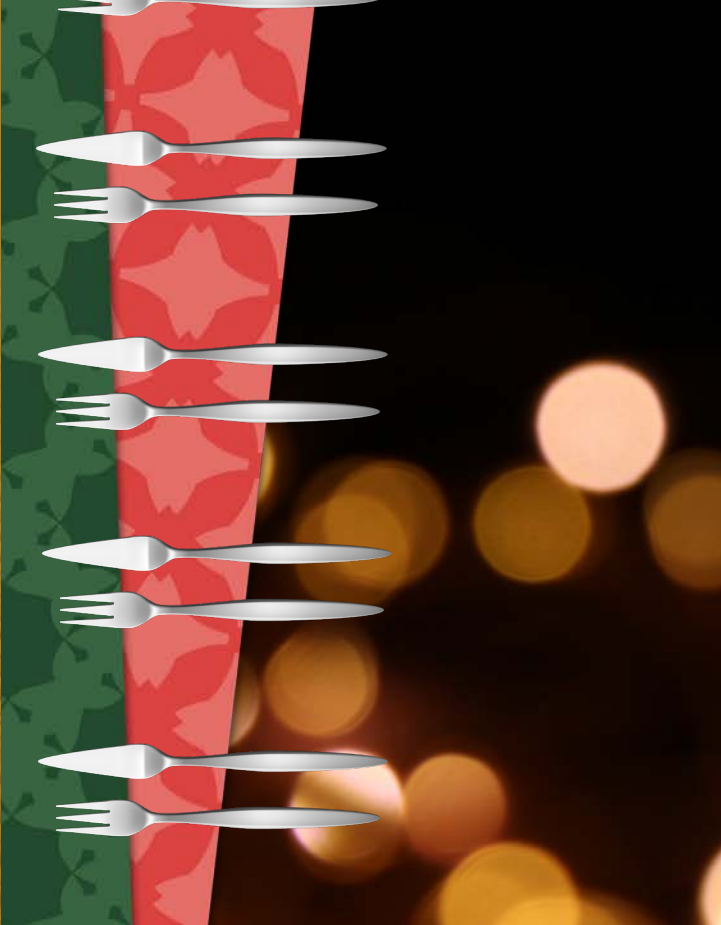
As Albert Einstein once said, “Plans are nothing. Planning is everything.”

If any of this sounds overwhelming, Marano and Cameron say it is possible to stay on top of everything and not feel too stressed.

“Staying as organized as you can prior to the date is important,” Marano says. “To do so, follow up with all your vendors before the event. Make sure you have all your payments confirmed and your communications set so that everyone is on the same page and everyone knows where they need to be at what time.”

That being said, “parties should be fun and represent who you are,” Marano continues. “Today, everybody absolutely just loves a party, and it doesn’t have to be super fancy or anything. I think it should just represent who you are.”

“And remember,” Cameron adds, “It’s a party! It’s supposed to be fun!” **KC**



Learn how to navigate difficult times

For over 30 years, Dr. Marc Abrams, Ph.D. has helped children, teens, and adults through challenging times.

www.drmarcabrams.com • drmarc@marcabrams.com • 914.666.2735 • Mt. Kisco • Virtual or in person therapy • By appointment only



BASKETBALL SPIDERMAN & TMNT

BY KAITLYN HARDY
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN NEGARD

Meet Joseph (a.k.a. Joey) Marra, a kindergartener at Katonah Elementary School. He's an outgoing, talkative five year old who has a lot to say and is full of energy. Plus, he's an expert when it comes to all things basketball, Spiderman and the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.

What's your favorite thing to do?
Play basketball!

What's your favorite animal?
A black bear.

What would you do with \$100?
I would buy lots of toys.

What would you do if you saw a black bear?
I would calm it down and give it some bugs to eat.

If you were a superhero, what would your superpower be?
Webs, like Spiderman!

How long have you been playing basketball?
Five years.

Wow, that's your whole life! Do you want to play when you're older, too?
Yeah, I want to be a basketball player and play on a real court.

Who's your favorite Ninja Turtle?
Michelangelo! He's so silly, and he always tries to tease Raphael.

What are your favorite movies?
Disney! I like "Beauty and the Beast" and "Ferdinand". Oh, and "Space Jam" and "Ninja Turtles", duh!

Who's your favorite superhero?
Spiderman! [singing] Spiderman, does whatever a spider can!

What team would you play on?
The Bulls because Michel Jordan's on The Bulls.

What's your favorite color?
Red or blue.

What's your favorite food?
Spaghetti.

What books do you like to read?
Ninja Turtles and a book about dinosaur battles.

Who would win in a fight: T-Rex or a Raptor?
Probably T-Rex. The T-Rex would go up to the raptor and "chomp!" He'd first eat the stomach then the head.

What's your favorite holiday?
Halloween! One time, when it was Halloween, I saw a zombie come out of the ground - I was sooo scared!!

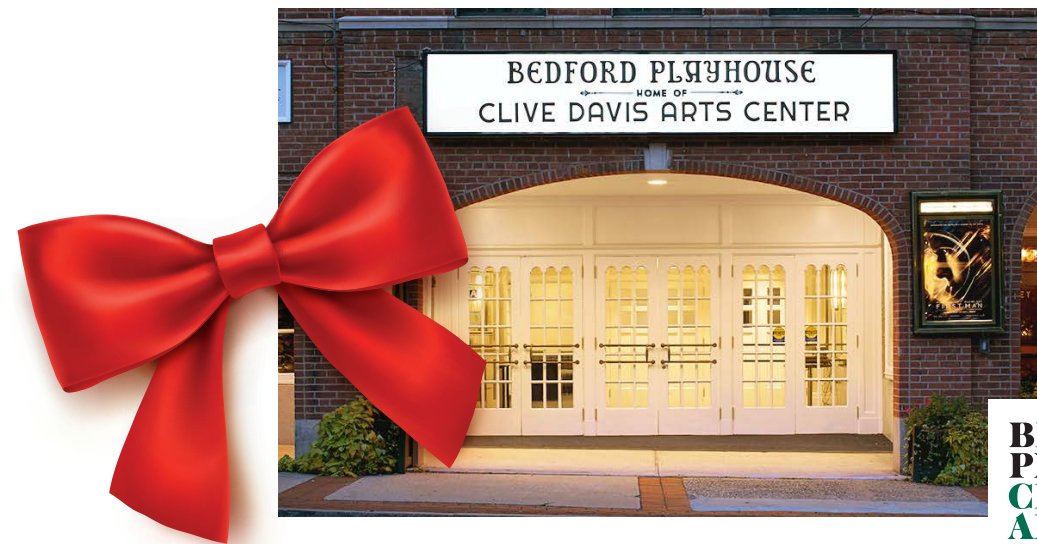
What's your favorite Halloween candy?
Candy corn!

What's the craziest thing you've ever done?
This! Rawrrrr [runs around his yard]



Give the Gift of the Bedford Playhouse this holiday season!

For information, visit Bedfordplayhouse.org



**BEDFORD
PLAYHOUSE**
CLIVE DAVIS
ARTS CENTER

Goats Bring Joy!



HOLIDAYS
BIRTHDAYS
PARTIES
HIKES
&
EVENTS
Year Round



TEXT OR CALL KRISTEN AT
203-645-4272
TO LEARN MORE

CODE NINJAS
MOUNT KISCO

We Make Coding Fun!

CODE NINJAS CREATE

Flexible year-round coding program. Kids aged 7-14 advance their coding and STEM skills at their own pace.

CODE NINJAS JR

Building a foundation of coding and problem solving through fun for young learners aged 5-7.

CODE NINJAS CAMPS

Explore exciting topics like Minecraft, robotics, Roblox, video game development, and much more!

Code Ninjas
Mount Kisco
(914) 920-9898
www.codeninjas.com/ny-mount-kisco/
f @CodeNinjasMountKisco



BOOK A FREE GAME-BUILDING SESSION TODAY!



Spreading Holiday Cheer

BY GIA MILLER

The Westchester Christmas Dinner, now in its 29th year, is a special tradition in our community. Typically held in the gymnasium at St. Mary's School in Katonah, many of our neighbors spend their Christmas morning serving those less fortunate. So, for this teen story, we chose to connect with Kate Harvey and Ben Torre who grew up watching their parents organize and volunteer at The Dinner. Even before their earliest memories, their parents spent Christmas mornings serving those who don't have enough money to purchase food or gifts for themselves and/or their family on Christmas Day. When Harvey and Torre became old enough to volunteer, they jumped right in.

Kate Harvey and Luke Torre were still in elementary school when they first chose to spend their Christmas morning helping those less fortunate. Just kids themselves, their decision meant they couldn't celebrate Christmas (or open presents) until the early afternoon. Instead, they spent their morning volunteering at The Westchester Annual Christmas Dinner. Harvey's dad, Ben, and Torre's mom, Lauren, are two of the three co-coordinators of the event, and the kids wanted to follow in their parents' (as well as older siblings' in Torre's case) generous footsteps.

"I thought what my dad was doing was really cool, and I was excited to finally help out with my mom and run the craft table together," says Harvey who is now 19 years old and a freshman at The University of Fairfield. "When I first volunteered at The Dinner at nine years old, I was a bit surprised. There was a huge crowd of families at their tables, lots of people moving around and loud music playing – I thought it was great! It was amazing to see how many happy faces there were because of what we were doing. It was very exciting."

For the past 28 years, The Westchester Annual Christmas Dinner has treated about 300 of the neediest people and families in Westchester to a gourmet meal (courtesy of local restaurants) and a festive, celebratory event. There's typically a holiday picture booth, craft tables, entertainment featuring Mrs. Claus as the emcee, holiday gifts and, of course, Santa.





For Torre, who is now 18 years old and a freshman at The University of Alabama, even though he was with his family, giving up his Christmas morning at only eight years old wasn’t as easy for him. That first year, he was a bit upset that he’d decided to volunteer, but as the years went on, he realized the event’s importance.

“There are so many reasons why I like doing this,” he says. “Sometimes it’s the little things, like watching everyone’s reaction when Santa comes in – they’re always so excited to see him, and it’s really awesome. It’s also so amazing to watch people’s moods change. Some adults come in a little down because they’re struggling, but as they’re there, I watch them become so joyful and happy. And then, at the end of the day, when we give them their gifts, watching their reactions is incredible. They’re so happy, and the kids can’t wait to play with their new toys.”

Even though COVID-19 forced the co-coordinators to transition to a model that delivered meals and gifts to guests’ homes, both teens knew this work was too important to stop. For the past two years, Harvey spent the days leading up to Christmas helping her dad and Torre’s mom organize all the clothing and toys so that each family received gifts that met their wants and needs. Then, on the day of, she and her mom delivered a meal and gifts to a family. Torre, along with several others,

began his morning at Village Social in Mt. Kisco, where they picked up all the food the restaurant prepared for the families. After bringing the food to St. Mary’s so each volunteer could pick up and deliver the meals and gifts, he and his father made a delivery of their own. But he also remained involved throughout the year.

“Honestly, the planning happens throughout the year, it’s not like a two-week thing where you send people out to buy gifts,” he explains. “The Dinner has a storage locker, and we begin putting things in storage right after Christmas. Whenever my mom needed help, I’d drive to pick up a bunch of gifts from somebody’s house and drop them off at the storage locker. It’s really year-round.”


Although they’ve both had a front-row seat to The Dinner for years, volunteering has always been their choice, and it’s helped shaped their lives. Torre says The Dinner created a very close bond between him, his siblings and their parents. And although his siblings are now adults and no longer live in the area, they still come in every year to volunteer at the dinner.

Harvey and her parents also volunteer at food pantries throughout the year, and, through school, she’s also volunteered at The Boys & Girls Club in Mt. Kisco.

“Being a volunteer at The Dinner is a way for me to

show that I really care,” says Harvey. “I want to give all the guests a great day, make sure they’re happy and help them forget about everything they might be going through in that moment. I always enjoy talking to the guests and even dancing with them. I try to get to know them a little bit – I ask them how they’re doing and if they’re having a good day. I love being a volunteer, and it holds a special place in my heart.”

“It’s such a good feeling, knowing that I’ve helped people,” Torre adds. “It drives me to continue to do it every year. In fact, I think everybody should do this. I’ve gotten a couple of my friends to volunteer with me, and once they do it once, they don’t stop. They come back every year.”

Editor's Note: The Dinner will be remote again this year, but they're increasing the number of deliveries from 235 to 300. To learn more about The Christmas Dinner or sign up to become a volunteer, click on the QR code below. 

VOLUNTEER NOW





Manhattan Style



Westchester Charm



Tongue Tie

An oral condition in children that can impact things such as breastfeeding, airflow, speech, and even dental health.

Call Today



POUND RIDGE

FAMILY & COSMETIC DENTISTRY

914-764-3540
info@poundridgecosmeticdentistry.com
PoundRidgeCosmeticDentistry.com



THE 411 FOR GETTING ON THE NICE LIST

BY KAITLYN HARDY

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. This time, we're speaking with someone who doesn't actually live here, but trust us, he still knows us. Santa Claus is coming to town, and he stopped by to chat with us about his life as...well, Santa.

He's a pilot, a delivery man and a celebrity; he's traveled the world, met millions of boys and girls, has had his fair share of cooies and milk and is the topic of hot debate. Santa Claus has a sleigh's worth of experience, knowledge and wisdom. He's making a list, he's checking it twice and, wouldn't you know, Santa's got some pretty great advice.

ADVICE #1 LIFE'S A MIRACLE, HAVE FUN WITH IT

"Usually, when children meet me, they are enchanted – they look at me with wonder and there's this magic in their eyes," says Santa Claus. "But as they get older, people become a little calloused, and adults don't believe anymore. I really wish they'd keep that innocence, wonder and love."

Santa knows that, more often than not, their disenchantment comes from the everyday stresses of adulthood— mortgages, bills, raising kids, etc. Yet, even while carrying the weight of the world (and the weight of all the world's toys), Santa says he's able to stay merry and jolly.

"I have a great deal of responsibility. I mean, I must deliver gifts to everybody throughout the world – all in one night! Am I stressed because I have a lot to do? Absolutely! But I don't let that override the spirit of kindness and love and peace," Santa explains.

What's the trick? See life as a miracle, including all the minute details. Appreciate every smile that comes your way, look at every cloud in the sky with wonderment, cherish every person you talk to. The best way to live from day to day, year to year, is by "looking at life and having fun," explains Santa. "Keep your eyes open to what is around you and you'll have that spirit and wonder!"

ADVICE #2 GIVE YOURSELF "ME TIME"

As hectic as things may seem, give yourself the rest and relaxation you deserve. Even Santa knows the importance of taking the time to care for yourself. When he's not making toys for children all around the world, which is no small task, Santa still finds time to do the (other) thing he loves most – scuba diving.

"We start preparing toys on December 26, so it's a 12-month-a-year job, but I do take a little vacation," he says. "I like to go to the Caribbean to spend some time in the sun and scuba dive. I love to be underwater because I don't have to hear anything or do anything except listen to the sound of my breathing and look at the beautiful, beautiful, world that we live in. I love the fish, especially sharks – they're the most beautiful animals I've ever seen. To watch them swim is just unbelievably gorgeous."

"On my last diving trip," he continues, "I watched a small octopus move across the coral, which is a rare thing to witness. And as it would move, it would settle in one place for a few minutes and change its color to match the coral. I was in such awe that I just hovered above him or her and watched that whole process again and again for about 10 minutes."

ADVICE #3 SHOW YOUR PARENTS SOME LOVE, NO MATTER YOUR AGE

"When I meet young children, the one thing I always say to them is this: 'No matter how old you get, you have to promise me that every single day, you're gonna go up and give your parents a hug and tell them you love them,'" says Santa.

Even adults should tell their parents that they love them, he says. And do it sincerely. Parents give their children everything they can, from a roof over their heads and food on the table to clothing and experiences. Showing a little gratitude lets them know you appreciate them.

"Sometimes your parents are gonna ask things of you, or get frustrated with you for something, but it doesn't mean that you've done something wrong; they just want to try to guide you in the right direction," he explains. "Parents

love their children until the day they pass on. They love them unconditionally— to the moon and back. And you need to give that same love back to them.”

ADVICE #4 LOVE ONE ANOTHER FOR WHO THEY ARE

“When children meet me, we talk a lot about peace, love and understanding,” says Santa – and he doesn’t mean the song. “I think people need to be more open and understanding. People need to not hold prejudices, and people need to recognize the fact that we’re all here for the same thing – love and peace and happiness.”

While embracing these positive goals, it’s also important to accept everybody’s uniqueness.

“Even though we breathe the same air and bleed the

same color blood, everybody is different in some way,” he says. “And we need to be more receptive to the differences in people.”

We may express these aspects of ourselves in varying ways, showing different talents and skills, but in accepting the beauty of these differences, we “build off each other’s strengths,” says Santa.

ADVICE #5 NO, THERE ISN’T A NAUGHTY LIST, BUT THAT DOESN’T MEAN WE CAN’T ALL TRY TO BE NICER

Santa has a reputation as an expert gift-giver, but he also

believes that generosity and kindness extend beyond special occasions. It’s the little things that matter.

“Hold doors for people, offer to help somebody who is struggling with something, smile at people walking down the street. You’d be surprised at the positive responses you’ll get, and small acts of kindness snowball,” he advises.

Donating your time and abilities is another incredible way to express kindness while giving back to your community. For the past 15 to 20 years, Santa has taken time out of his busy schedule to surprise families at the Westchester Christmas Dinner, an event which provides food, clothes and gifts to low-income families in our area. He says that the volunteers who organize and participate in this event demonstrate the true spirit of the holiday season.

“It’s some of the most incredible hours I’ve spent in my life,” he says. “They provide all these people with an incredible dinner. The guests also receive lightly used clothing, there’s music playing, plus there’s arts and crafts for the kids. And then the elves go around to everybody to find out what their interests are. Then they

go upstairs to these classrooms that are filled with gifts – everything from books to makeup for the older folks and basketballs to handheld games for the kids – there’s pretty much everything for everybody in those rooms. And the volunteers that come from the community to set up the dinner, to provide the gifts, the elves that have to carry all the bags of gifts – it’s all these people that do such an incredible job to help out those less fortunate than us. More people should follow in their footsteps.”

TO SUM IT UP...

“If you didn’t get my drift, I’m all about peace, love and happiness,” says Santa.

Love and kindness make our lives worth living. Plus, “it’s so much easier to be happy than to be miserable.”

Gifts don’t have to be material objects. They can be as simple as a hug, a small act of kindness or, as Santa just gave us, words of wisdom. **KC**



The History of Bedford's Maple Grove House

BY AVA FLEISHER

HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS PROVIDED BY
THE BEDFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN NEGARD

The year was 1779. Hundreds of British and Hessian soldiers stormed across Yonkers, Bedford and Pound Ridge aiming to capture Colonel Elisha Sheldon, per Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton's orders. Little did they know, Sheldon had been tipped off and was waiting for the British when they arrived. The American militia forced them to retreat back to Mount Kisco, but when the militia was distracted, the British returned to Bedford and set the town ablaze.

Homes, the courthouse, and life as the villagers knew it went up in flames. However, one building shockingly remained. It was a fairly large, Georgian-style house called Maple Grove, featuring heavy beams and a large dutch oven in the cellar.

A LEGACY BEGINS

Mary Raymond, wife of James Williams, often told stories to her children and grandchildren about George Washington stopping at her home to have his gloves mended during the war – she was considered one of the first to build the home's legacy. Maple Grove, built by Williams' father, was originally 8,000 square feet and situated on five hundred acres of land. It remained in Williams' family for over 230 years before the passing of Hope Lewis Bedell in 1993.

Williams and his wife Mary had twelve children, the seventh being Mary Williams II, named after her mother. Mary and her husband Lewis Palmer cared for the house after her parents, and together, they had three sons. The youngest, Francis Palmer, a highly successful banker and later philanthropist, became the next owner of Maple Grove, caring for the house from the 1860s to 1882.

But prior to owning the home, the young Francis Palmer left the house in 1831 to pursue a new, exciting, prosperous life in Manhattan. After working as a grocer and then a driver

for the Broadway and Fulton Street Stage Line for several years, he transitioned to the banking industry during the gold rush. By age 26, he and his wife Susannah Sheldon lived in a luxury home at 40 Washington Square. He officially purchased the Maple Grove house from his father in the 1860s.

When Palmer purchased Maple Grove, he implemented several new renovations. The house was cut into two parts, a more modern/central entrance was built, six new rooms were added and he installed an indoor bathroom, rumored to be the first in Bedford. When the renovations were complete, Palmer was so pleased with the new additions that he hired artist George Hayward to paint a water-colored picture of the house and land. Now owned by Smith College, the painting was the first time the name Maple Grove appeared.

George Bianco, the current owner, explains "I'm not sure if that was the actual name, but we adopted it."

THE FAMILY TREE CONTINUES TO GROW

Francis Palmer's older brother, James Palmer (he was the middle child), married and had three children with Matilda Griffen; but unfortunately, Griffen passed away, leaving her three children, Matilda Palmer II, Henry Palmer and Walter Palmer without a mother figure. Luckily, their accomplished uncle, Francis Palmer, and his wife stepped in to help raise the three, given they had no children of their own. Moving back to Bedford, he welcomed them with open arms and showered them with love at Maple Grove.

When Matilda Palmer II and her husband Dr. William H. Lewis had children, they named them Palmer and Susan, after her dear aunt and

uncle who heavily contributed to her and her siblings' upbringing. Francis Palmer later gave Susan Palmer one of his homes in the city at 10 West 71st Street.

Francis Palmer's generosity spread beyond his family. He donated the funds needed to build the Bedford Presbyterian Church in Bedford, and in 1897, he incorporated a trust fund to support other religious establishments.

In January 1882, Francis Palmer passed down the Maple Grove house and five hundred acres of land to his niece, on the condition that her husband was to tend to the active farm. Matilda Palmer II then passed down the property to her son, Palmer Lewis.

Palmer Lewis and his wife Phoebe Frost Lewis later gave the home to Hope Lewis Bedell, who was the last member of the family to live in the Maple Grove house. Without any siblings, she lived in the house with her first husband, Edward Heron Sudbury, as well as her second husband George Bedell, and left no children behind. When she passed away in 1993, she left her estate to Saint Matthew's Episcopal Church, which then sold it to a private homeowner, George Bianco, in 1996.

A NEW FAMILY TAKES THE REINS

For the past 26 years, Bianco and his family have lived in and taken care of the remaining Maple Grove property that has not been sold off over time. In the years following the purchase of the home, several renovations were made inside. However, because of a facade easement, the Historical Society must grant permission for any changes to the outside of the home.

"It looks pretty much like it did before," says Evelynne Ryan from the Bedford Historical Society, referring to the original front of the house. However, "you can see the house is


CHECK OUT OUR
PHOTOSHOOT AT THE
MAPLE GROVE HOUSE





quite large on one side,” referring to the other side of the home. Many renovations have been made to one side to make the home more contemporary.

Now 9,000 square feet with nine acres of land, Maple Grove has been the set for several commercials, television episodes, and movies, including episodes of “Girls,” “Billions” and “Morning Glory,” as well as a Norah Jones music video, and more.

The Red Barn, restored by the Biancos in 1996, follows in Francis Palmer’s footsteps in aiding nonprofits and charitable events such as the recent Yellow Brick Road Festival held by the Bedford Playhouse. The property also now serves as a venue for both private and public events, as well as a functioning farm. On this 28-acre property, volunteers help grow food for a non-profit, Our New Way Garden (see page 62), which provides fresh produce for neighbors in need. 



COMPASS

Kathleen Usherwood

Licensed Real Estate Salesperson
M: 917.488.7870
kathleen.usherwood@compass.com
387 Main Street, Armonk

Kathleen Usherwood is a licensed real estate salesperson affiliated with Compass. Compass is a licensed real estate broker and abides by Equal Housing Opportunity Laws.

Your Northern Westchester Real Estate Expert

What I love about selling homes in Waccabuc...

It’s an exclusive rural enclave of architecturally distinct homes, from antique homesteads to mid-century, to 70s contemporaries, and the more recent farmhouse, all set amidst acres of bucolic woods, small lakes, and the spectacular Lake Waccabuc. Often referred to as a secret suburb of New York City, it appeals to an eclectic gathering of CEOs, art collectors, celebrity chefs, Broadway actors, and privacy enthusiasts.

“If you feel at home here, it’s because you belong here.”



La Maison Fete
11 Court Road
Bedford New York
914.234.8627
laisonfete.com

La Maison Fete is a full-scale event planning and design company. From weddings, dinners, luncheons, birthdays and more, we make every gathering uniquely beautiful. Visit our Bedford shop on Court Road, just around the corner from the Playhouse.



Lake Katonah Electric Inc.

Portable & Automatic Standby Generators



(914) 617-8686 595 Route 22 Croton Falls, NY

lakekatonahgenerators.com

HOLIDAY BLUES

TIPS FOR COPING WITH WHATEVER YOU MAY FACE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

BY ELIZABETH KEMLER ARTWORK BY SAM KARLIN

There are many things to love about the holiday season, from the bright lights and beautiful decorations to the all-around good cheer. But for some, this time of year can be difficult. Perhaps you have a close-knit family, but you can't make it home this year. Or maybe you don't have anyone special to celebrate with or feel like you're missing out on the best holiday parties. If you're feeling down about the holidays, there are ways to manage your thoughts and feelings, and maybe even find something to be thankful for.

DON'T ASSUME OTHER PEOPLE ARE HAVING A STELLAR HOLIDAY EXPERIENCE

The holidays are a notoriously difficult time for many people, largely because of the assumptions that come along with them.

"Many of my clients believe they are alone with their holiday challenges," says Melinda Canno-Velez, LMSW, a therapist in Pound Ridge. "But people everywhere face issues with family, finances and unmet expectations this time of year."

Almost everyone has their own struggles during this time of year, and yours is simply one version of that struggle.

TRY TO KEEP EXPECTATIONS TO A MINIMUM

Keep your expectations in check by staying in the present before, during and after any holiday-related activities. The more you keep yourself in the present and focus on what you do enjoy (versus thinking about all the joy you should be feeling this holiday season), the better you can manage whatever experience you do have.

"Being in the present can prevent you from imagining unrealistic outcomes for future events," explains Cynthia Haupt LCSW, PLLC, a therapist in Cross River. "Try to stay mindful of your thoughts and intentions throughout the day, and do things that create a positive impact in the moment."

REPLACE ANTICIPATION WITH ACTION

Anticipation of what's to come can be overwhelming, but doing something productive (instead of ruminating on all the possible outcomes of the holidays) can help ease your mind. Consider starting that project you've wanted to tackle, setting aside time to learn a new skill or volunteering at your favorite charity.

PLAN AHEAD WITH SELF-CARE STRATEGIES

Don't wait until you're in the midst of the holidays to figure out how to navigate them – start now. Determine what you're going to do to keep your spirits up (or at least not too far down). For example, you can take a day trip to a nearby town or museum you'd like to visit, spend time in nature, volunteer at a local charity, schedule an extra therapy session or work on the aforementioned project.

CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING

Thanksgiving and Christmas come with lots of volunteer opportunities, and showing up for others – even if you feel like you can scarcely manage as it is – will be more than worth it. When you give yourself a concrete task, it pushes you up and out at a time when you may just want to lie in bed (which is almost guaranteed to make you feel worse).

This is also a great reminder that you have something valuable to offer, and that you are needed and appreciated – things you may not be feeling much of during this time.

DON'T PRESSURE YOURSELF TO GIVE THE BEST GIFTS OR HOST THE BIGGEST CELEBRATION


"COVID-19 has greatly contributed to people's holiday stress, in part because they can't afford to celebrate like they have in past years," explains Canno-Velez. "Many of my clients experience guilt because they cannot give their children the same experiences they've had in the past. So, I remind them that it's the quality of their time together, as opposed to quantity of gifts, that kids will ultimately remember. Engaging your children in the act of giving back in some way can also help them focus on the spirit of the holiday."

TRY TO TAKE A LOGICAL, AS OPPOSED TO EMOTIONAL, APPROACH TO THE HOLIDAYS

Be honest with yourself if you're struggling. This may be a difficult time, but you've experienced challenges before and gotten through them. More importantly, you were okay on the other side. Practicing calming techniques can help clear your mind.

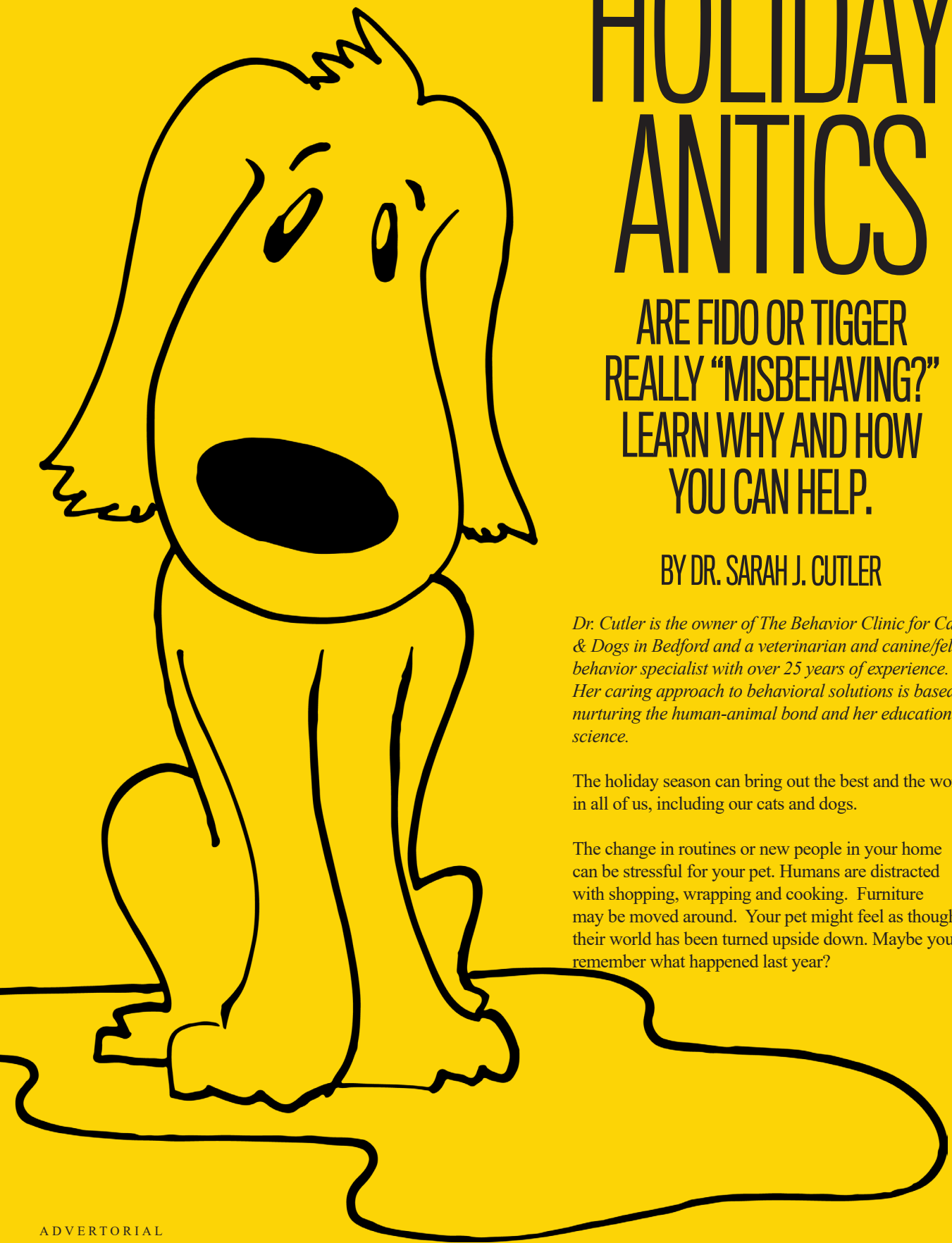
"The most important strategies for managing difficulties over the holidays are often the simplest," says Haupt. "Remember to take deep breaths, pause, talk kindly to and about yourself, and allow moments of reflection. Moment to moment, just keep putting one foot in front of the other, taking one breath at a time and reminding yourself, 'I've got this!' and 'I am ok!'"

And finally, remember that each holiday only lasts a couple of days. By reframing your thinking and reducing the importance of these days, you can get through each one... even if you're forced to wear that ugly Christmas sweater Aunt Edna bought you last year.

Click on the QR code for some easy mood-enhancing tips for the holiday season or any time you need a little boost. 

ENHANCE YOUR





HOLIDAY ANTICS

ARE FIDO OR TIGGER REALLY “MISBEHAVING?”
LEARN WHY AND HOW
YOU CAN HELP.

BY DR. SARAH J. CUTLER

Dr. Cutler is the owner of The Behavior Clinic for Cats & Dogs in Bedford and a veterinarian and canine/feline behavior specialist with over 25 years of experience. Her caring approach to behavioral solutions is based on nurturing the human-animal bond and her education in science.

The holiday season can bring out the best and the worst in all of us, including our cats and dogs.

The change in routines or new people in your home can be stressful for your pet. Humans are distracted with shopping, wrapping and cooking. Furniture may be moved around. Your pet might feel as though their world has been turned upside down. Maybe you remember what happened last year?

THE CANINE COUNTER SURFER

This time of the year, it seems like your dog is even more challenging than usual. As soon as your back is turned, they stand on their back legs and contort their head and neck to get whatever goodies are around – even if the food isn’t on the counter’s edge.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is natural canine behavior. With the abundance of food and the arrival of visitors, your dog’s adrenaline is high. Delicious aromas and the thrill of the hunt will turn any respectable hound into a rule breaker.

HOW TO HELP

1. Create a “safe zone” for your dog with crates or baby gates. There, they can enjoy their own long-lasting treats or enrichment items, such as Kongs or lick mats.
2. Ask a responsible teen or adult to tend to your dog during meal prep or presentation. This might mean keeping them on a leash or going outside to play ball.
3. Praise your dog for having “four on the floor.”
4. If you see your dog heading towards the counter, use a “positive interrupter” to redirect their attention, such as saying their name in an upbeat way or a kiss or click sound. Or, offer an enticing alternative to jumping, such as a piece of high-value food or a new toy.
5. Try not to yell or grab their collar. This can increase their determination, scare them or cause them to snap.

SCAREDY CAT

Your cat runs away at the sound of the doorbell, the clicking of high heels/boots or boisterous voices. When company arrives, you may not see your kitty for hours.

WHAT IT MEANS

Many cats are nervous when new people come to the home. Their fear reactions can be quite dramatic, ranging from

fleeing and hiding to loud vocalizations or even attacking the other feline in the house.

HOW TO HELP

1. Make sure your timid cat has ample places to retreat and hide, such as closets and bedrooms, with easy access to food, water and a litter box.
2. Consider a cat tower. Cats love vertical space, and it can make them feel safe.
3. Advise visiting humans to not chase or search for your scared cat.
4. Consider having your cat safely tucked away before the arrival of visitors.
5. For the sake of your feline, politely decline a friend’s offer to bring their canine along.

GOTTA GO GROVER

The celebrations have begun, and suddenly, your dog begins eliminating in the house.



WHAT IT MEANS

During the busy holiday season, our schedules change, and sometimes our dogs get the short end of the stick. Colder weather and shorter days don't help – your pup's daily walks may be rushed or missed.

Dogs can also be stressed when family dynamics change. The arrival or departure of college-age children or the overnight stay of grandma can cause some unease.

HOW TO HELP

1. Try to stick to your dog's regular feeding, walking and outdoor time.
2. Consider "going for a walk" your holiday gift to your dog.
3. Many dogs need to be able to relax, sniff and snuffle to fully eliminate – give them the time they need.
4. Accidents happen. Don't get mad; this will only add to their stress.

FEARFUL FIDO

Did your dog growl at your cute little niece who just wants to be friends?

WHAT IT MEANS

Many dogs are nervous around toddlers. In their eyes, children between 10 months and four years have erratic body movements and are unpredictable. A growl is their way of communicating their discomfort and requesting, "do not come any closer, please." Your dog may also feel trapped and unable to move away if they're resting on the couch, in their own bed or under the dining table.

HOW TO HELP

1. Have conversations with parents before the big day and make a plan that is fair for Fido and welcoming to your guests.
2. Consider "safe zones" for both humans or canines and separate with baby gates.
3. When a toddler approaches your nervous dog's space, it could trigger fear aggression, so adult supervision is crucial.

4. Don't introduce a child to your dog if they're lip licking, yawning, "shaking if off," cowering or trying to retreat.
5. Whatever you do, don't get mad at your dog for being afraid! This will only compound their anxiety.



FRIENDLY FLUFFY...AT FIRST!

You had me at hello! Your seemingly friendly cat walks right up to a new person and greets them at the door. Your guest instinctually pets your sweet cat, especially if they roll on their back and show their belly. Your cat flees.

WHAT IT MEANS

Many cats are not looking for physical contact. They simply want to say hello and call it a day. They might hiss, swat, nip or run away if their personal space is invaded.

HOW TO HELP

1. If you are trying to get to know a new cat, speak and walk softly, hold your finger out calmly for the cat to sniff, and wait for the cat to come to you.
2. Don't stare! Keep your face soft and blink your eyes slowly. If kitty blinks back, you're making progress!

Just like humans, our pets react to changes in routine. Pay attention to their cues and consider their needs when planning for the holidays. This way, all family members, furry or not, can enjoy the season.



HOME FURNISHINGS • MATTRESSES • KIDS' ROOMS • LIGHTING • WINDOW TREATMENTS • RUGS • ART • DECOR



Country Willow

We've got something for every home and budget.

Country Willow HOME


Country Willow Kids&Baby

THE LOFT AT CW

THE MATTRESS STUDIO AT CW

SHOWROOM: 230 RTE 117 BYPASS ROAD, BEDFORD HILLS, NY 10507, 914.241.7000



COUNTRYWILLOW.COM f @ p



COZY UP AT THE GRIND

475 SMITH RIDGE ROAD SOUTH SALEM, NY
914.533.7139
OPEN DAILY TO 4:00 P.M.

CATERING • SPECIALTY COFFEE
PREPARED FOODS • LOCAL PRODUCE



POURTIIONS™ just right

where mischief meets moderation

You want to be the life of the party— fun-loving, jolly, a joy to be around, right?

Moderation will make sure you don't turn into a grinch (or turn green:)

pourtionsjustright.com
enter KC20 for 20% off

IT TAKES A VILLAGE



BY GIA MILLER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN NEGARD

A WEEK BEFORE CHRISTMAS, THE KITCHEN STAFF AT MT. KISCO'S VILLAGE SOCIAL COME IN TO WORK A BIT EARLIER AND STAY A BIT LATER EACH EVENING TO PREPARE HOLIDAY MEALS FOR THOSE LESS FORTUNATE.

They're doing their part to support The Westchester Christmas Dinner, and last year they prepared all the meals for 235 local families and people living alone. But prior to 2020, they were one of over 60 restaurants who contributed to The Dinner. Yet when the pandemic began and the meals were delivered to people's homes (instead of The Dinner's traditional in-person festivities), Village Social took on the entire job themselves.

For the past two years, they've cooked the entire meal for each family, which includes preparing countless turkeys along with a variety of sides and desserts. And they do it all at cost, only charging The Dinner for the price of the food.

"The Dinner approached us and proposed that we cook the entire meal," explains Village Social Restaurant Group co-owner Joe Bueti. "It was easier for them to have us do it all than to organize and pick up the food from a lot of different restaurants."

"On Christmas morning, a couple of us come into the restaurant and load up the cars with all the food we've cooked," adds chef and Village Social Restaurant Group co-owner Mogan Anthony. "We're more than happy to participate."

Anthony joined Bueti at Village Social in 2011, and although they have very different backgrounds, the two men have a lot in common. In addition to sharing the same beliefs about giving to charity, they also both stumbled into the restaurant business.

Bueti first became interested in the industry during college while he was studying landscape design. He commuted home each weekend to work at Tuscan Oven in Mt. Kisco, and it was there that he developed a passion for the industry, and wood-fired pizza in particular. Much to his father's dismay, Bueti convinced his older brothers to open a restaurant with him, and together they began Caffè Strega in Pleasantville in the 1990s.

"He asked me, 'what do you know about the restaurant business – this isn't the industry you grew up in,'" Bueti remembers. "He was an immigrant from Italy, and he was so upset and so vulnerable that he couldn't help me. All he knew how to do was landscape."

The brothers sold the restaurant in 1999, and Bueti opened 121 in North Salem in the spring of 2000, where he stayed until 2007.

Looking for a change, Bueti joined his father and brothers in the landscape business for three years. But throughout that time, Peter Smaha, a former 121 customer kept in touch. He knew Bueti would return to the restaurant industry eventually, and he wanted to be Bueti's partner. He called Bueti regularly asking him to check out potential restaurant spaces he'd found, but nothing ever seemed right. And then one day, it happened.

"I was driving through Mount Kisco, and I noticed that Woody's was closing up and going out of business," Bueti remembers. "So, I showed it to Peter and approached the owner."

Almost two years after Village Social opened its doors, Bueti hired Anthony to serve as the executive chef. Over time, Anthony has infused Asian culture into Bueti's classic Italian cuisine. "I grew up in Malaysia, and I became a chef by accident," says Anthony. "I was living in Singapore and working as a waiter at popular hotels and golf courses when they asked me if I could help them in the kitchen. Eventually, I ended up working in the kitchen half the time and waiting tables the other half. But when I moved here, I decided I wanted to become a full time chef. So I sought out jobs that would help me learn the fundamentals of cooking."

Anthony first worked under chef Brian Lewis at Bedford Post while also waiting tables at



SEE OUR DAY AT
THE VILLAGE SOCIAL





Tengda in Katonah. After several years, he began interning at Nobu in Manhattan and then cooked at several of John George's restaurants.

"I started at Perry St. – a French-Asian fine dining restaurant, and then I would also work at Spice Market, which is five minutes away and a sister restaurant of John George," Anthony remembers. "I eventually moved to the Michelin Three-Starred restaurant in Trump Tower, which was a big deal as a young cook."

Anthony, who is a self-proclaimed "country boy," left the city in 2010 to become the chef de cuisine at Barcelona Restaurant Group before joining Village Social in 2011.

In 2013, Anthony and Bueti opened their first restaurant together, Locali in New Canaan, and since that time, they've also opened Locali in Mt. Kisco, Pub Street and Fatt Root in Pleasantville, and Village Social in Rye, along with their Ash & Ale pizza truck. But even though they're busy, they make an effort to give back throughout the year.

"We've always believed in providing food for people who need it," says Bueti. "We catered meals at The Ronald McDonald House for years, up until the pandemic."

But even the pandemic didn't slow them down. In March of 2020, Anthony, along with other Westchester chefs, restaurateurs and Captain Lawrence Brewing Company launched the Million Gallon Challenge. Their goal was to cook a million gallons of soup and distribute it to the hungry, especially the hundreds of thousands of hospitality workers who had recently lost their jobs. They delivered soups weekly for two years.

Now, as the world recovers from the worst of the pandemic and charities return to hosting in-person events, Village Social has resumed their charitable contributions. Every fall, they participate in the annual Feed Me Fresh fundraiser, which benefits the Mt. Kisco Childcare Center's scholarship program. They also contribute to Bedford 2030's annual gala each spring. Plus, they donate gift cards and send trays of food to numerous other local organizations.

And yet, Bueti and Anthony don't think twice about giving back – it's simply part of who they are. **KC**

DOWNLOAD & PRINT
THIS RECIPE



IMPOSSIBLE SPICY NOODLES

This classic Asian recipe, from the Sichuan province of China, is typically made with pork or beef. At Village Social, Anthony makes it vegan by using Impossible meat, which is created with about 18 different flavors. When cooked, these flavors seep into the noodles and provide the dish an abundance of flavor. But, says Anthony, the chili oil is what really brings the flavors of this dish together.

Note: You can make your own fried shallots and chili oil or purchase them pre-made.

SERVES 2-3 PEOPLE

INGREDIENTS

4 oz. dry Dandan noodles
1 lb. Impossible beef
2-3 Tbsp. chili oil, plus more for the noodles
Cilantro
Splash black vinegar
Fried scallions
Peanuts

FRIED SHALLOTS (OPTIONAL)

2 Tbsp of a neutral flavored such as canola or grapeseed oil
2 shallots

HOMEMADE CHILI OIL (OPTIONAL)

1 cup of a neutral flavored such as canola or grapeseed oil
5 whole star anise
1 cinnamon stick
1 Tbsp. coriander
6 black cardamom pods
6 cloves
1 Tbsp. Paprika
1 Tbsp. chipotle peppers
1 tsp. cayenne peppers
1 Tbsp. Sichuan pepper for spicy, numbing sensation

DIRECTIONS

If making your own chili oil: Heat one cup of oil until it's between 300 to 400 degrees. Remove the oil from the heat and add the spices. Cool and strain through a coffee strainer until the oil is clear.

If making your own fried shallots: Place the shallots in canola oil and cook over medium-low heat, stirring often with a fork to separate the rings. Cook until the shallots are golden brown, about 20-25 minutes. Drain the shallots then transfer them to paper towels. Season with salt and let cool. Set aside.

Cook the Impossible meat in chili oil (approximately 2-3 Tbsp. per pound), breaking it up as it cooks so it resembles ground meat. When done, set aside.

Bring a pot of water to a boil and add the fresh Dandan noodles. Cook for 2-3 minutes. While the water is coming to a boil, heat the chili oil in a pan. Drain the noodles and place them in the hot chili oil. Toss to combine.

Transfer the noodles to 2-3 bowls, add a splash of black vinegar and top them with a handful each of fried shallots, scallion, cilantro and peanuts. **KC**

YOUR GARDENING QUESTIONS, ANSWERED

BY LESLIE DOCK

YOU ASKED, SHE'S ANSWERING. AFTER A FULL SEASON OF GARDENING TIPS, LESLIE DOCK – A REGENERATIVE FARMER, GARDENER, LANDSCAPER AND PERMACULTURE DESIGNER BASED IN KATONAH – ANSWERS READERS' QUESTIONS.

Q I read your interesting article about fall cleanup/gardening. Thank you for the helpful advice. For years, my mother would keep marigold seeds in a jar, and we would plant them into the ground in spring. But I read that it's better to keep seeds in paper envelopes. Is this true?

A Great question. The simple answer is that either will do if your seeds were dried properly at the start.

Envelopes have the advantage of being somewhat porous, which will allow seeds to continue to dry in storage. Just make sure you place in them in a space with a controlled humidity at or below 50 percent.

The other benefits of envelopes are that they're space efficient for storage, and they're easy to transport.

Jars with tight lids are a great bet for storing well-dried seeds as they aren't

dependent on the humidity of their storage area. Be sure to dry seeds a bit longer if choosing jars. Shoot for two months drying time and be sure to avoid placing jars in direct sunlight.

But prior to choosing a storage method, be sure to choose flower seed heads that are mature and show no signs of rot. Petals will have fallen off and the heads should look dry. For efficiency, cut an entire branch and hang to dry. You want seeds to dry slowly and evenly to ensure viability.

The key to proper drying is air circulation and a humidity of 50 percent or lower. Avoid exposure to direct sunlight and temperatures above 75 degrees.

Q How do I know if I'm a Level 1 or a Level 2 gardener? Do I move up to Level 2 after one year of gardening, or is there a certain way to know when I reach Level 2? What about Level 3?

A A Level 1 gardener is a true beginner, someone who is just starting out and hasn't yet had the opportunity to shepherd a plant from seed to harvest. You'll know you are Level 2 when you have at least one season under your belt.

When season two rolls around, you will have both failures and triumphs to speak of, and you may then don a proud Level 2 badge on your Garden Scout vest.

Warning: Once Level 2 is reached, a gardener may find themselves daydreaming about where to plant next year's tomatoes, or they may find themselves conducting late night online searches for deals on irrigation kits. It's okay – embrace it.

How will you know when it's time claim that Level 3 trophy? When other people start asking you for advice on gardening, you have officially reached

Level 3 status.

Why? Because your results speak for themselves. You've gifted your friends, family and neighbors with baskets of the delicious bounty that you now produce, and they want the secret to the sauce. They could be flattering you just to get free produce, but that's alright. Flattery will get them everywhere.

Another way to know: you've been talking. The frequency and ease with which you mention words such as mycelium and rhizosphere are a tell.

You now proudly wear your gardening heart is your sleeve, so to speak, and everyone admires it.

Q It was a very dry summer. Can I do anything to prepare my garden for a possible drought next season?

A I love that you asked this. Even if our earth wasn't warming, the practices we employ to bring forth food when rain is at a premium are considered regular practices in Regenerative Agriculture.

My favorite of these practices is mulching. Covering all your soil with

at least a half inch of mulch will really help it retain moisture. Mulch also helps keep soil temperature within a range where beneficial microorganisms can survive and thrive. Think of it like this: Picture a caravan of camels and humans making their way under a searing midday sun. What are the humans wearing? Your likely imagining everyone dressed in billowing drapes of cloth with turbans covering their heads. Just as we need to cover ourselves to protect our bodies from burn and desiccation, the soil also requires its own manner of shroud for protection.

Another great reason to mulch during a drought or at anytime is weeds. The earth perceives open soil as a wound, and nature is programmed to heal such a wound by covering it with what we call weeds.

Many weeds have evolved to thrive in conditions where our precious vegetables, fruits and flowers cannot. When temperatures rise and soil is bare, weeds will install themselves and begin to outcompete your precious crops.

There are actually hundreds of weed seeds in only a cup of soil, and these seeds are just waiting for the light, moisture and air they need to grow.

Why make it easier for them by leaving your soil uncovered?

Another strategy for combatting drought is mulching the walkways between beds. Wood chips break down much slower than straw mulch, and you can find them for free in many areas through services such as ChipDrop.

To preserve moisture, place a thick layer of wood chip mulch, about two inches or more, over the path, and cover everything right up to the edge of your growing area.

This also works well in raised beds because mulch really helps keep the weeds at bay, and it cools the soil around the beds.

To prepare for next season, lay mulch thickly in the fall. Come spring, some of that mulch will have been subsumed by the soil. Soil that's composed of a good level of organic matter will be more adept at holding water.

Thanks for reading and keep the questions coming. **KC**

**DOWNLOAD & PRINT
YOUR GARDEN PLAN**



Whether shopping for your home or someone else’s, you can find the perfect gift for almost every room in that home without traveling very far. And, perhaps more importantly, each of these stores offers a unique set of items that you won’t find in the other.



BEDFORD HOUSE, KATONAH

Growing up in High Point, N.C. (a.k.a. “the furniture capital of the world”), you could say that Dennis Anderson cut his teeth in the furniture industry. We suspect it was inevitable that Anderson would open a furniture store at some point, but what wasn’t a guarantee was that his store would be so stunning. Anderson opened Bedford House in Bedford Hills 11 years ago and moved his shop to Katonah 2 ½ years ago. His highly curated boutique focuses on one-of-a-kind vintage and antique items that are rustic, sophisticated and approachable. Anderson’s trained eye is apparent from the very first minute you walk into his store. While his goal is to purchase products specifically for his Westchester clientele, the superior, hand-crafted items in Bedford House have also gained Anderson a dedicated following among discerning Manhattan residents and interior designers.



CHROMA FINE ART GALLERY, KATONAH

Since opening last fall, Chroma Fine Art Gallery has been an intimate, welcoming place for fine art. What we really love about this space is it serves as a platform for emerging and established artists. Owner Rita Baunok has created a truly ambitious program of twelve exhibitions per year. Each month, she transforms her space with a thoughtfully curated and exceptional selection of paintings, photographs, sculptures and mixed media works by both local and international artists. From November 8 through December 4, internationally renowned artist Vincent Baldassano and contemporary sculptor Marilyn Mazin Miller will be in the gallery. And from December 6 through January 9 Chroma will feature a small group show highlighting about 20 artists for the holidays. Chroma’s upcoming opening receptions will be on November 12 and December 10, 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.



COPIA HOME & GARDEN, SOUTH SALEM

Walking into Copia Home & Garden is always a welcoming experience. Their friendly and knowledgeable staff greet you with a smile and can answer all your gardening questions. Owners Peter and Jenn Cipriano are both graduates of Cornell’s horticultural program, and their goal is to help you grow a beautiful, luscious garden that you can enjoy year after year. The Ciprianos and their staff will help you select the right plants and products for your space, so you can whole-heartedly celebrate what nature bestows. Their Plant Whisperer Team can walk your landscape with you to help you create a doable plan, and their professional crew will even deliver and plant your selections. In Latin, “copia” means abundant, and the Ciprianos can help you make that happen.



GATHER, KATONAH

Walking into Gather, your senses are instantly awakened with the clean, fresh, visually appealing look and magnificent aroma, allowing you to simply relax for a moment. Owner Suzanne Martin has created what she calls a “Scandinavian beachy” vibe in this year-old shop. Her goal was to design a calm, welcoming space that makes you feel as though you’ve been transported to a village by the sea, be it Tuscany or Montauk. Martin carefully sources modern, high-quality, handmade goods that are both beautiful to look at and functional. Her products are made from local artisans (like candles from the Hudson Valley) and areas around the world known for their craft (like glass from Poland and linens from Lithuania). While the store is designed to encourage minimalism, the beautiful items always make us want to buy everything inside.



NEW ENGLAND ANTIQUE LUMBER, MT. KISCO

When master woodworker Mauricio Guevara and wife Patricia learn that an old or historical building will be demolished, they rush to save the wood. They’ll travel long distances to delicately dismantle aging structures, saving every piece of wood they can. Then, in their studio, the Guevaras expertly restore the aging wood, transforming it into everything imaginable – from stunning tables and furniture to exquisite fireplace mantles and doors. What is truly exceptional about New England Antique Lumber is that they can create anything you ask, whether it’s a kitchen island for your home or rustic wood paneling for your business. Plus, you’re purchasing a hand-crafted, one-of-a-kind piece that’s strong and durable while also being environmentally sustainable.



THE SUSTAINABLE HAVEN, CROSS RIVER

The Sustainable Haven is a rustic-luxe lifestyle shop and café tucked into the Yellow Monkey Village. If you’re looking to slow down and connect, take time for simple but meaningful rituals or create spaces and experiences that elevate the everyday, this store is for you. Owner Elizabeth Kemler purchases goods from local makers and farms, selecting items for the positive contribution it makes to the world and for their unique ability to help people create their own personal havens. Plus, she partners with other small, environmentally responsible companies. We can never decide what we like best at Sustainable Haven – the home goods, accessories, bath & beauty products, coffees & teas or Kemler's events & workshops/wellness courses.

We’re very fortunate to live in an area where our local lifestyle stores truly care. They care about the goods they sell and the customers who buy them. Walk into any one of these lifestyle stores and you’ll find a selection of high-quality goods for yourself and almost everyone on your list.



ANN’S PLACE – FESTIVAL OF TREES, DANBURY

Want to donate to charity while shopping for holiday gifts? Visit The Summit in Danbury between November 18 and 20 for the 20th annual Festival of the Trees, Ann’s Place largest fundraiser. The festival, which has raised over \$3.55 million to support families facing cancer, includes handcrafted decorated trees, children’s activities, high-end raffle prizes, the Boutique and Quilter’s Corner gift shops and a crafts fair. Ann’s Place offers free services for those in Connecticut and lower Hudson Valley who are living with cancer and their loved ones. The facility features clinical social workers, facilitators and wellness experts who provide a host of services aimed at improving quality of life during and after cancer. Find out more at annspace.org or 203-790-6568.



BEEHIVE DESIGNER COLLECTIVE, MT. KISCO

The Beehive Designer Collective is one of those shops that evokes a feeling of happiness as soon as you step inside. Owner Dawn-Marie Manwaring thoughtfully gathers goods that are well-made, functional and will bring positivity into her customer’s lives. The majority of products in The Beehive are handmade by local and regional artists, but Manwaring has also developed relationships with artisans and craftsman from around the country and world. Whether it’s a beautiful set of French linens, a vintage Kantha from India or a striking piece of jewelry from an artist in the Hudson Valley, The Beehive carries items that are designed to fit into your environment. We love that Manwaring really cares and wants you to find things you will genuinely enjoy.



ECLECTIC COLLECTOR, KATONAH

Eclectic Collector is an unusual gift shop that features hand-made artwork and crafts from over 400 American artists. Owner Ellie Kimelman carefully selects one-of-a-kind products that you won’t find anywhere else, ranging from earrings made of recycled cereal boxes for only \$18 to sculptures and kaleidoscopes worth hundreds of dollars. There’s jewelry, wearable art, word art, animal art, paper sculptures, puzzles, ceramics, folk art and more – all in one store. Plus, there’s a beautiful array of Judaica items (and Hanukkah wrapping paper). We highly recommend you allocate extra time for this store so you don’t miss anything. The Eclectic Collector is our go-to place whenever we need to buy a gift for someone and have no idea what to get.



HICKORY & TWEED, ARMONK

When shopping for ski equipment, it makes sense to head to the store with national recognition. In our experience, we’ve found Hickory & Tweed to have an incredible selection of quality items, ranging from skis to clothing. Their experts really know the products, the customer service is top notch, and they actually have tuning equipment and skilled technicians on-site. Plus, when ski season is over, they can help you find the perfect bicycle to fit your needs or repair your current one. Hickory & Tweed has been a family-owned business since 1961, and their commitment to their customers and community is apparent in the warm, welcoming atmosphere we experience every time we step into their store.



KAHLO COLLECTIVE, POUND RIDGE

As soon as you enter KAHLO Collective, you’ll instinctively recognize that it’s more than just another clothing store. KAHLO is a community founded and curated by Tami McCarthy who meticulously sources sustainable and ethically made products. Her goal is to offer items that can bring ease, peace and relief back into our lives. At KAHLO, there’s everything from apothecary products (soaps, incense, fragrances, candles, etc.) and home items (blankets, vases, bowls, Turkish towels and robes, pillows, etc.) to women’s clothing/accessories and art. We love that KAHLO is an ever-evolving space filled with eco-friendly goods and McCarthy’s carefully planned events nourish the soul. Together, they create an exceptional collective that truly benefits our community and earth.



PROGRESSIVE ANIMAL HOSPITAL, SOMERS

Your pet is a member of your family, and when they need medical care, you want your pet to receive the care that’s right for them. Whether it’s routine veterinary services, a teeth cleaning or to treat a chronic condition, the veterinarians at Progressive Animal Hospital dedicate the time to developing a wholistic approach for your pet. Their patients include just about every kind of small animal and pocket pet: dogs, cats, birds, rabbits, guinea pigs, ferrets, chinchillas, hamsters, gerbils, mice and rats. What makes this veterinary practice unique is they are privately owned and know each and every furry patient. Progressive Animal Hospital offers a combination of time proven Eastern and Western medicine, so your pet may receive acupuncture, herbs, medication or surgery – or a combination of treatments. Their meticulous attention to detail and individualized attention is why pets and humans always trust them with their care.

SHOP LOCAL • INDULGE YOUR PALATE

The holidays aren’t only about shopping – they’re also about eating. Don’t grab a quick bite to go or buy the food lover on your list another sweater. Instead, sit down for a proper meal to enjoy the company you’re with, and shop at local food and beverage stores that will bring a smile to your favorite epicurean’s face.



THE CREEK, CROTON FALLS

Looking for the best wings or burgers, a seasonal menu or an outdoor patio when the weather’s nice? We suggest you visit The Creek at the Croton Falls train station. Whether it’s a date night or a family dinner, there’s always something for everyone – from salads, fajitas and steak to halibut, scallops and a full brunch menu. And on game day, with five different televisions (and two on the patio) and a complete NFL package, owner Chris Mcentee makes it his mission to guarantee all sports fans have an extraordinary experience. As one of the only restaurants in the North Salem area for sports and good food, Mcentee is definitely doing something special, and we’re here for it.



DINARDO’S RISTORANTE ITALIANO, POUND RIDGE

Forty-eight years ago, Frank Salvi opened DiNardo’s Ristorante Italiano in Pound Ridge, serving up a variety of masterful dishes featuring the authentic tastes of Italy. Their menu includes a variety of classic Italian meals, incorporating the best and freshest seasonal produce, Italian cheeses, meat, game and seafood. One of the best things about DiNardo’s is that their fresh, high-quality meals are the perfect choice for a family night out, a romantic dinner for two or a business meeting. While the front of the restaurant features a classic, fine dining experience, there’s also an informal family-friendly pizza room in the back. Plus, their selection of fine wines and option to order take-out means that all types of palates, from the simple to the sophisticated, will find something to enjoy.



FARMER’S GRIND, SOUTH SALEM

Walk into The Farmer’s Grind and you’ll always find beautiful fresh produce from local farms, along with delicious baked goods, artisanal soups, sandwiches and prepared foods made locally, and, of course, amazing coffee. But what makes The Farmer’s Grind truly special is that owners Michelle and Erich Smith have created more than just a place to grab a drink and a bite to eat, they’ve built a community. The Farmer’s Grind is a place to learn the stories behind the local farmers, bakers and artisans whose goods are in the store, and it’s also a place to connect with your neighbors. Whether it’s a random weekday morning or a specific event, like their music-filled Saturday Ice Cream Nights in the summer, The Farmer’s Grind will satisfy your soul and your belly.



FOLKWAYS, CROTON FALLS

Located in a 1917 landmark train station building, Folkways’ storefront might deceive you. Once you step inside, you’ll realize that this wine and liquor shop is anything but vintage. Owners Jonas Anderson and Natalie Gehrels have curated a collection of wines and spirits guided by the desire for discovery. They highlight atypical regions, grape varieties and styles of wine that focus on diverse, naturally driven vintages, conscientious winemakers and small production vineyards. Even the most discerning oenophile can find something new in this shop. Some of their “regulars” are residents of Putnam and Fairfield counties as well as New Jersey because the incredible selection is unlike anything in their area. (Note: They do ship nationally and offer free local delivery to Westchester, Putnam and Fairfield counties.) Plus, Folkways offers a variety of gift items, ranging from handcrafted ceramics and refined stemware to unusual homewares and interesting publications from around the world.



LA TULIPE DESSERTS, MT. KISCO

Chef Maarten Steenman, a second generation, classically trained European grand pastry chef, began his career at age 14. Steenman and his wife Frances, a Bedford Hills native who runs the front of the house, have built a pastry shop that is known as the place to go for everything from breakfast pastries, cakes and chocolate, to macrons, marzipan, gelato and sorbet. Using the finest premium ingredients, La Tulipe’s highly skilled pastry team consistently produces the most heavenly desserts. Their treats are perfect for every occasion, whether it's a celebration, an anniversary or just the fact that you made it through another week. For dinner parties, we often purchase a variety of desserts so there’s something for everyone, and for bigger gatherings, their custom-made cakes are sublime.



MAST MARKET, MT. KISCO

Mast Market focuses on sustainable living, selling a variety of local and organic products, along with Rick and Michael’s famous Mast Brothers chocolate. Here, you’ll find seasonal produce, local dairy (milk, eggs, cheese) and grass-fed meats, along with house-roasted coffee and their very own organic ice cream, made in-house with fresh ingredients. Plus, they also stone-mill their own flours on site, which you can buy alone, as preservative-free/certified organic waffle or pancake mixes, or already baked into fresh breads, cookies and pastries. And, because convenience is important, you can also grab everyday sustainable essentials (think toothbrush, toothpaste, toilet paper, etc.). But our favorite part of Mast Market is their coffee bar – purchase your drink and pastry of choice (along with everything else you’ve shopped for) and sit down at one of their tables for a few hours to work, peruse their extensive book collection, or connect with friends while breathing in the delicious aroma of chocolate and fresh baked goods.



NORTHSTAR, POUND RIDGE

Northstar is one of those restaurants that simply feels like home. When owner Dave Schlack, who greets guests at the door every evening, opened the restaurant 18 years ago, he had a singular goal: create a place where people felt comfortable. At Northstar, they keep things simple. They use fresh ingredients in each dish and treat every customer with kindness. While they aim to have something for everyone, they keep their menu concise so the food is always fresh. Plus, they offer seasonal specials (like butternut squash in the fall, braised meats and soups in the winter, softshell crabs in the spring and lobster rolls in August) and change their fish seasonally. At Northstar, everything on their menu is someone's favorite, and their customers regularly return to enjoy “their dish.”



PHAT OLIVE, KATONAH

Need a gift for the foodie on your list? Look no further than family owned and operated Phat Olive. Since we’ve yet to meet a person who is allergic to olive oil or balsamic vinegars, nor have we met a gourmand who can resist a flavorful dipping or cooking oil, we’re pretty confident you’ll hit a home run with this store. Phat Olive offers over 40 of the freshest olive oils and balsamic vinegars, as well as specialty foods like hot sauces and jams, a variety of kitchen tools and utensils and even truffle salt. Plus, they also offer stocking stuffers and gift baskets, and they’ll ship anywhere in the country. Phat Olive is the perfect place to shop for those who love to entertain or simply cook a delicious meal for their family.



PRIMAVERA RESTAURANT AND BAR, CROTON FALLS

Located in a Victorian-Gothic home built for Joel Purdy in 1864, Primavera’s Italian menu and warm, welcoming atmosphere compliments the restaurant’s grand entrance. Inside, you’ll find a large, open dining hall adorned with a captivating mural of horses, along with tables dressed in crisp, white tablecloths. Owner Jimmy Gjevukaj and his family aim to please, from the initial plate of antipasto and basket of fresh Italian bread to their wide array of classic dishes and dessert. There’s everything from veal saltimbocca to grilled lobster on the menu, but for our money, their signature branzino is the one to choose. For an intimate, small group dining experience, reserve their wine cellar, complete with its own bar.

SHOP LOCAL • THE LATEST TRENDS

There's good news, and there's... more good news. For the latest trends in fashion and beauty this holiday season, our local stores are really where it's at. No more trips to the mall or (gasp!) Amazon, just walk or ride your bike (or drive if you must) into town to find what you need for the most stylish people on your list.



BIJOU JEWELRY, KATONAH

There's no better place to go for jewelry that matches your personal style then Bijou. Owner and Bedford native Casey Carter, who first got into gems via his extensive childhood rock collection, offers a finely curated mix of uptown elegance, country casual and everyday glamour. The store offers pieces from a variety of well-known jewelry designers as well as Carter's own designs. You can find fun, everyday jewelry for kids and teens, stylish gems for adults and stunning statement pieces. Plus, if you've inherited some jewelry that really isn't your style, take it to Carter whose passion is refashioning vintage pieces into modern designs.



EILUJ, KATONAH

For almost 20 years, Eiluj has been a shop for everyone who cares about their skin, regardless of gender or age. Yes, there's makeup, candles and lotion on the shelves, but what we really love about Eiluj are their services. Owner Julie Cuomo (Eiluj is "Julie" spelled backwards) truly offers something for everyone. There are a variety of facials and peels, treatments designed for anti-aging or acne, specialty services for men and teens, hair removal and sculpting, and more. Don't be surprised if you run into customers who come all the way from lower Westchester just to shop at Eiluj – it's known as the go-to place for services and beauty products, including her very own line of makeup. Plus, she wraps gifts beautifully.



ICD PRIVATE JEWELRY, CHAPPAQUA

When you walk into ICD Private Jewelry's new showroom, you'll instantly recognize that it's not a typical jewelry store. Owned by jewelry designer Varda Singer, this Chappaqua boutique provides a full concierge experience, specializing in custom design and redesign of dated jewelry or family heirlooms. Singer and her team also create one-of-a-kind pieces, including designs from antiquity, Roman, Jewish and Muslim coins (all of which come with a certificate of authenticity). They'll go to great lengths to create something that is gorgeous, meaningful and unique. With fifty years of impeccable service, the ICD team will travel to the comfort of your home for presentations, appraisals, redesigns, consultations and deliveries.



RUBYSUE, KATONAH

While there are plenty of women's clothing stores in our area, no one does it quite like Rubysue. For over 20 years, owner Suzanne Martin has never relied on simply selling luxury clothing and accessories. She and manager Ingrid Urraya are also stylists who help women update their look while remaining true to who they are. Their customers are often pleasantly surprised at how amazing they look in an outfit they never believed they could pull off. At Rubysue, you'll learn how to wear your clothing multiple ways, update your existing wardrobe, find accessories that enhance your style and feel more confident. What we love about Martin's store is the way her clothing portrays a fresh and effortless sense of style.



THIS & THAT VINTAGE, CROSS RIVER

If you want to lower your carbon footprint while still looking stylish and not breaking the bank, This & That Vintage should be your go-to spot. Tucked inside the Yellow Monkey Village, owner Nicole Mata has turned her passion for estate sales into a curated shop that features a exceptional collection of vintage clothing and accessories. Here, you'll find everything from vintage denim and t-shirts to beaded ballgowns and an incredible collection of sparking vintage jewelry. Plus, there are even items for men, such as pristine vintage fedoras and unique brooches. We love browsing the racks at This & That Vintage, and we can almost promise you that if you're shopping for your teen, your best friend or your spouse, you'll likely walk away with something for yourself as well.



One-of-a-kind, hand-painted electric guitars.
Available at www.julierosenberg.com

Le Fontane

RISTORANTE

A Taste of Italy Right in Somers

137 Somerstown Turnpike, Katonah, NY
(914) 232 - 9619

JAZZ

ON MAIN

Presents

GOOD MUSIC...
GOOD FOOD...
GOOD LIFE...

LIVE MUSIC - MEDITERRANEAN FOOD - COCKTAILS

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2022

 NOV 4, 7 & 9 PM IMANI ROUSSELLE	 NOV 12, 7 & 9 PM NICOLE ZURAITIS QUARTET	 NOV 26, 7 & 9 PM GIACOMO GATES & TRIO
 NOV 5, 7 & 9 PM MARISSA MULDER WITH BILL ZEFFIRO	 NOV 17, 8 PM ART LILLARD'S ON TIME TRIO & JAM	 DEC 1, 7 & 9 PM JAANA NARSIPUR QUARTET AND JAM
 NOV 10, 8 PM SLIDEATTACK	 NOV 18, 7 & 9 PM ANDROMEDA TURRE	 DEC 2, 7 & 9 PM NICOLE HENRY
 NOV 11, 7 & 9 PM LAUREN HENDERSON	 NOV 25, 7 & 9 PM MISHA PIATTIGORSKY TRIO	 NOV 9&10, 7 & 9 PM ALLAN HARRIS "A NAT KING COLE CHRISTMAS"

37 S Moger Av. Mt. Kisco NY
www.jazzonmain.com



FROM THE HEART

MEET THE INCREDIBLE PEOPLE WHO DEDICATE
THEIR LIVES TO HELPING OTHERS

PRODUCED BY GIA MILLER & JUSTIN NEGARD

Seated, left to right: Amy Benefore, Jessica Foglio, Hank the Boston Terrier, Marla Valentine, Sansan Harashima, Hide Harashima
Standing, left to right: Akio Lloyd, Mike Foglio, Juli Cialone, electric guitar played/signed by Zakk Wylde, James Scova, Patti D'Agostino

Hand-blown purple and blue wine glasses and green martini glasses by Estelle Colored Glass, \$195 - \$215; Gather, Katonah. Dark green recycled glass from Morocco, \$10; handmade for Gather, Katonah. "Coconut & Sambal: Recipes from My Indonesian Kitchen" by Lara Lee, \$35.00; Booksy, Pound Ridge. Floral arrangement from WildFig Floral, Katonah. Swell pillows in beige, 20" x 20", \$79/each; Country Willow, Katonah. Homestead custom throw pillows with scenic design by Rowe, 18" x 18", \$299/each; Country Willow, Katonah. Vintage gowns, jewelry and fedora, This & That Vintage, Cross River. Tuxedos and gowns, free for Community Center of Northern Westchester (CCNW) clients and \$20-50 for the public, The Community Shop, Katonah.

“THINK OF GIVING NOT AS A DUTY, BUT AS A PRIVILEGE.” – JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER JR.

What does it mean to run a small charity? It means dedicating part (or most) of your life to a selfless act that is done to make others' lives better. It means putting the needs of strangers ahead of your own. It means leaving the world a little better than you found it. It means constantly explaining your mission to others. And it means regularly getting out there to raise money so you can accomplish your goals.

Our area has many compassionate, dedicated individuals who strive make the world a better place. So for our first holiday issue, we wanted to highlight some of the smaller charities who aren't often in the limelight.

We selected five charities whose work we admire and treated the founders to a day of glamour. We dressed them up in ballgowns and tuxedos, adorned them with jewels, called in hair and makeup, and then photographed them in a stunning historic local home. And in true Katonah Connect fashion, we've created behind the scenes footage and stories that you can view on our website and social media.

Our goal was to have fun while creating a scene that's glamorous with a touch of humor. And, at the same time,

tell their stories in a way that we hope inspires you to include any or all of them in your charitable giving this year. They are all worthy of your donations.

This entire experience wouldn't have been possible without several incredible community members who donated their time, products and services to help highlight these charities' amazing work:

- Katonah-based makeup artist Essie Cohen and her assistant, Riley Franck, who enhanced the natural beauty of each woman.
- Madi Tiso-D'Aquanni of The Hair Wharf in Katonah who styled every man and woman we photographed.
- The Community Shop in Katonah who loaned us several ballgowns and tuxedos.
- Nicole Mata of This & That Vintage in Cross

- River who loaned us ballgowns, jewelry, shoes and accessories. Plus, she styled each model on the day of the shoot.
- Homeowner George Couri who graciously offered up his home for the shoot.
- Our interns who helped us style and manage the shoot, interviewed some of our charities and made sure George's house was left the way we found it.
- A variety of local stores who loaned us products for the day, which are identified throughout this story.

Happy holidays,
Gia Miller & Justin Negard

P.S. Yes, there are leaves on the trees and plants in the ground – this was photographed at the end of August. **KC**



Left to right: Mike Foglio, Akio Lloyd, Hide Harashima, James Scova
Dark green recycled glass from Morocco, \$10; handmade for Gather, Katonah. Vintage brooches and fedoras, This & That Vintage, Cross River. Tuxedos, free for CCNW clients and \$20-50 for the public, The Community Shop, Katonah.



CHECK OUT THE BEHIND THE SCENES OF OUR SHOOT



Left to right: Sansan Harashima, Juli Cialone, Jessica Foglio, Amy Benefore, Marla Valentine, Patti D'Agostino

Large hanging rattan lantern, \$75; KnaCK of All Trade, Pound Ridge. Hand-blown purple and blue wine glasses and green martini glasses by Estelle Colored Glass, \$195 - \$215; available at Gather, Katonah. Dark green recycled glass from Morocco, \$10; handmade for Gather. Vintage gowns and jewelry, This & That Vintage, Cross River. Gowns, free for CCNW clients and \$20 - \$50 for the public, The Community Shop, Katonah.



STAR FOUNDATION

BY GIA MILLER

Jessica and Mike Foglio

Denise lacquer twisted candles in cream and blue by Graziani, \$48/pair; **La Maison Fete, Bedford. Floral arrangement** from WildFig Floral, Katonah. **Vintage gown, necklace, earrings and blue brooch**, This & That Vintage, Cross River. **Tuxedo**, free for CCNW clients and \$20 - \$50 for the public, The Community Shop, Katonah.

A PROFESSIONAL OPERA SINGER-TURNED-FUNDRAISER SEARCHES FOR A CURE FOR SALLA DISEASE

When Jessica Foglio's second son, Ben, wasn't reaching his infant milestones, he began an intense therapy regimen through the state's Early Intervention program. Ben was diagnosed with cerebral palsy at 18 months old, and Foglio was told to continue his 30 weekly therapy sessions to help him catch up to his peers. Two months after his diagnosis, Foglio's friend, a pediatrician, said she was concerned that Ben's diagnosis was incorrect.

"She said, 'this doesn't seem right – it doesn't seem like cerebral palsy to me,'" Foglio remembers. "She asked me what his birth was like, and I explained that it was a regular, scheduled C section. She suggested I take Ben to a friend of hers, a geneticist at Hackensack Medical Center in New Jersey. She even offered to make the appointment for me. I said okay."

Dr. Helio Pedro gave Ben a urine test and found high levels of sialic acid. In most countries, this is all that's needed to diagnosis Salla disease, but in the United States, patients must complete a Whole Exome Sequencing (WES) test to diagnose the genetic disorder. At the time, the testing was new and about \$16,000. Their insurance wouldn't cover out-of-state testing (they lived in New York), but Columbia University Irving Medical Center, which had never diagnosed Salla disease, offered to give Ben the test for free because they wanted to have the diagnosis on their books.

When Columbia called Foglio in November of 2017 with the test results, Foglio's best friend David Halperin and his family were in her Manhattan apartment. Halperin worked for Jonathan Jacoby, an influential figure in the Israel/Palestine peace negotiations. He was hired right after Jacoby's son was diagnosed with Niemann Pick (a deadly disease at the time) and was tasked with helping Jacoby develop and run the Hide and Seek Foundation. Through the foundation,

Halperin assembled a team of doctors who discovered a treatment for Niemann Pick, which saved Jacoby's son.

"Columbia told me Ben had Salla disease over the phone, and I began crying," Foglio recalls. "It was just serendipitous that David was in the room with us and happened to work for Jacoby. He put me in touch with the lead doctor, Dr. Steven Walkley, who is the director of Albert Einstein College of Medicine's Rose F. Kennedy Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) Research Center, and it all just flourished from there."

Salla disease is a genetic disorder where sailin, a protein in human cells, doesn't function properly and prevents the breakdown of certain fats and proteins. These fats and proteins then accumulate in the cells and cause a variety of symptoms.

According to Foglio, symptoms of Salla disease appear similar to cerebral palsy in the beginning, but by puberty people with Salla disease experience a rapid decline. Their seizures will become very intense, and they'll lose their ability to walk, talk, chew and swallow. Many will eventually need a ventilator to breathe. When Foglio first searched for Salla disease online, she found nothing, and there was no one to talk to.

When Foglio's family first met Walkley, he walked them through the research he'd conducted with his IDD gene team. Then he turned to Foglio and asked about her background. Foglio was an opera singer who graduated from Julliard in 2009 and sang with the New York Philharmonic and the New York City Opera until 2012. She then sang with the Seattle Opera in 2013 and the Philadelphia Orchestra in 2014 before taking time off to care for Ben.

"He said, 'Well, I think you would be a fantastic person to start a foundation,' and I just stared at my son and then at him," she remembers. "He then said, 'You've got friends that can sing and do concerts for you, right?' And I responded, 'Well, yeah.' So he responded, 'You should really think about it because there is no advocacy group for this particular disease.'"

"I looked at Ben and then I looked at Dr. Walkley again and said, 'I don't

have time start a foundation. It's more important for Ben learn how to walk and talk than it is for me to start a foundation.'"

"But about six months later, I asked David for help to start a foundation," she continues. "He said, 'Jessica, I don't have time to do the work, I'm too busy keeping world peace. But I'll tell you exactly what you need to do to start a foundation. 'I will forward you all the forms,' he said, 'but you need to do them. I'll walk you through every step, but you have to do the grunt work.'"

"Then I called Dr. Walkley, and I said, 'Fine, I'll do it.'"

Foglio started the Salla Treatment and Research (STAR) Foundation and set out to assemble a group of researchers. She wanted the doctors who discovered the treatment for Niemann Pick, so Walkley called all 14 doctors, who worked at a range of institutions, from The National Institute of Health (NIH) and Berkeley to Stanford and Yale. They all agreed to meet in Tarrytown in September of 2018 – 10 months after Ben's official diagnosis. Then, Foglio began raising money.

"I raised about \$20,000 to get them all together, and we had a wonderful time," she says. "They discussed how they would start the research, and I invited families from around the world to join us. About 10 families attended, and I created a family camp so the families could go to physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy and vision therapy while the doctors met. I rented a whole hotel in Tarrytown for three days. At the end, the NIH came forward and said, 'We would like to work with you.'"

Since that time, Foglio has raised almost \$600,000 for her foundation. She has donated about \$400,000 to the NIH, \$30,000 to the University of Paris to fund specific research in their membrane transporter lab, \$30,000 to Montefiore Medical Center/Einstein College of Medicine and \$10,000 to the Greenwood Genetic Center. Foglio doesn't take a salary or keep any of the money for herself.

Prior to the STAR Foundation, there was no research on Salla disease and children were frequently misdiagnosed. There were only eight American and 170 global confirmed cases of Salla disease.

Now, the NIH has published papers on Salla disease, which allows doctors to research the symptoms and properly diagnose the disease, while also providing information online for the the general population to read.

Currently, there are over 50 known cases of Salla disease in the U.S. and 300 globally. This, Foglio believes, is because the WES test is now more attainable. But it's also due to Foglio's relentless efforts. Plus, there's some promising research regarding a drug that is already approved by the FDA.

Foglio also speaks about Salla disease approximately four times a year to the New York State Genetics Alliance, World Symposium of Rare Diseases and to Walkley's team. This past October, she spoke at the Global Leukodystrophy Initiative at Children's Hospital in Philadelphia.

Foglio is now pregnant with their third child. Her insurance company required her to conceive via in-vitro-fertilization (IVF) as she and her husband are both carriers for Salla disease. Out of the eight embryos, two had a mixture of normal and abnormal cells, one had Salla disease, one had Down syndrome, two were missing chromosomes and two were healthy – both girls. But one likely carried her husband's epilepsy gene. The one viable option was implanted, and Foglio is donating the remaining embryos to science.

Today, Foglio teaches piano and voice lessons when she's not raising money or speaking to families or doctors around the world.

"I went to Juilliard, and I really tried to hone my craft, and I always thought that was what I was supposed to do," she says. "And it's just funny what life throws at you. I was supposed to be singing."

"So how do you deal with not only losing your child and the hopes that you have for them, but also your career? I think that's why I decided to go full throttle with the STAR Foundation. I had to put some sort of meaning and hope behind all that I've had to lose."

"I look at my friends who are singing opera, and they're singing on the biggest stages in the world. But now, I just feel like my stage is different. My stage is **RC** eant for rare disease

THE LOVE4LUCAS FOUNDATION

BY AERIN ATINSKY



Sansan and Hide Harashima
Gown, free for CCNW clients and \$20 - \$50 for the public, The Community Shop, Katonah. **Necklace, earrings, bracelet, art deco butterfly hair comb and rhinestone filagree dangle brooch**, This & That Vintage, Katonah. **Island wrapped glassware** by Amanda Lindroth, \$60 for a set of four; La Maison Fete, Bedford.

WHEN LUCAS HARASHIMA WAS FIVE YEARS OLD, HIS KARATE TEACHER NOTICED THAT THE TYPICALLY CHEERFUL AND ACTIVE LUCAS WAS HAVING DIFFICULTY BALANCING AND EXECUTING THE KARATE MOVES HE HAD PREVIOUSLY MASTERED.

His parents, Sansan and Hide (pronounced he-day) Harashima, immediately sought medical help for Lucas. A few days later, on September 17th, 2016, Lucas was diagnosed with a pediatric brain tumor called Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG) – a rare and inoperable cancer located on the brainstem for which there is no known cause or cure.

After seeking out every possible treatment and participating in an experimental treatment abroad, Lucas passed away 18 months later, on March 21st, 2018, just two months shy of his seventh birthday. That same year, Sansan and Hide launched The Love4Lucas Foundation, and in January of 2019, the Love4Lucas Foundation was granted 501c3 status.

"Hide and I both felt we needed to channel our grief into something positive for DIPG," says Sansan. "It was so heartbreaking as parents to hear about this disease for the first time and learn it had no course of treatment. It really left us with very little hope. So, we started the foundation immediately after he passed."

DIPG is most commonly diagnosed in children between the ages of five and nine, and the average survival rate is between six to nine months. During that time, these children lose the ability to eat, walk, balance, speak, etc.

"Pediatric brain tumors are the number one killer of children in America, and approximately 300 American children are diagnosed with DIPG every year," Sansan explains. "Their parents are told that there are no known causes and no known cures. There's not much they can do but make memories in the time they have left."

The Love4Lucas Foundation wants to change that. Their mission is to raise awareness and funding for DIPG research. The foundation has raised nearly \$200,000 through different events, merchandise and fundraisers, like the Love4Lucas Fest and their annual 5k run.

The Harashimas held their first, and unfortunately only (due to the pandemic), Love4Lucas Fest in 2019. The family event was created to "celebrate silliness, joy and giving," and held at Pound Ridge Elementary School where Lucas and his older brother, Kai, attended.

"Seeing all of his classmates' families, teachers, administrators and everybody in town come together was extremely special for us," says Sansan. "Seeing the joy on kids' faces and having fun and celebrating Lucas in spirit made it a really beautiful day."

Though the pandemic forced events to go virtual, the Harashimas sustained momentum and actually broadened their outreach. Instead of holding the Love4Lucas Fest in June of 2020, they switched a virtual 5k that October. It was so successful that they've turned it into an annual event.

"Our virtual 5k fundraiser had participation from about seven different countries, including people across America," Hide explains. "We were able to bring more awareness through the virtual event and get more people involved with the broadest reach. In 2020 and 2021 combined, we raised just under \$70,000."

In 2020, the Love4Lucas Foundation donated \$50,000 to the Children's Brain Tumor Project, a laboratory at Weill

Cornell that's run by Lucas's former brain surgeon, Dr. Jeffrey Greenfield. Because of this donation, they were invited to join the Children's Brain Tumor Project Family Council and participate in an annual meeting where they receive updates on what research has been done attributable to their funding.

"That is always a time when we feel very proud to see that our contributions have resulted in more research and the very linear and clear correlation between the amount of funding and the number of research papers written and published," says Sansan. "I think, like with COVID, when you throw enough attention and money at a problem, science can solve even the most difficult challenges. So, we are hopeful that that's also the case for DIPG."

However, discovering and testing possible treatments for DIPG has proved very challenging because children diagnosed with DIPG don't live very long. In fact, Neil Armstrong's daughter Karen passed away from DIPG over 60 years ago, and there's been almost no changes in treatment since.

In 2021, to help increase the likelihood of finding a cause or treatment, the Love4Lucas Foundation donated \$50,000 and made a two-year commitment to the DIPG Collaborative – a group of over 20 small DIPG foundations that pool their resources to accelerate the funding of research grants. Together, this group reviews applications and selects which projects will receive their collective donations.

The Harashimas main goal is to do whatever they can to prevent another family from experiencing the same pain and suffering. Research for DIPG is mainly funded by family foundations like theirs.

"Only a small percentage of government funding is allocated for childhood cancers, and DIPG research gets a fraction of that small percentage," says Sansan. We hope that in our lifetimes we will see progress towards a cure or better understanding of the causes," says Sansan. "It's devastating that parents receive this diagnosis and are told that there's no cure and no hope. That's unacceptable. It's very important to us that we give future parents hope and options for how they can help their child." **KC**





OUR NEW WAY GARDEN

BY GIA MILLER

Amy Benefore and Akio Lloyd

Gown and tuxedo, free for CCNW clients and \$20 - \$50 for the public, The Community Shop, Katonah. **Vintage jewelry and tiger climber brooch**, This & That Vintage, Cross River.

BRINGING THE GARDEN TO THE COMMUNITY, AND THE COMMUNITY TO THE GARDEN

When Amy Benefore, a dance teacher and nature lover, learned that a local farm she treasured was being shut down because they couldn't make the mortgage payments, she decided to help.

"I used to take my children there to buy produce, and we'd feed goats and pick flowers," she remembers. "So when the owner, an elderly man named Dell, told me he had to sell the farm, I met with his mortgage brokers and his business partners, and I worked with the Greenwich Land Trust. We discussed possibly starting a school on the farmland so that it would bring more income to the land, but zoning made it too complicated."

That was in the early 2000s, and in the end, she couldn't save the farm. But in response, she approached her dad and uncle, who had an office building around the corner from the farm, and asked them if she could convert a small area of grass into a vegetable garden. They said yes, and she made a little garden out of less than an eighth of an acre of land. There, she grew "lots of vegetables," which she happily gave away.

Eventually, she decided to turn her little patch of land into a business and created an LLC, naming her business Our New Way Garden after Fred King, a mentor and teacher of hers for 25 years who taught her about "life, change, healing, history and music." He called their work together "the new way work."

"Our New Way Garden really came from his teachings, and then also this farming," she explains. "I realized this was something that might help address a

Benefore transitioned to growing seeds in a shared space at PEPSICO's greenhouse where she became friends with another farmer who used the greenhouse. One day, he asked her to substitute for him while he was on vacation. He ran a gardening program at St. Christopher's, a residential facility for children with special needs.

Benefore agreed, but the farmer never returned, so she took over the program and developed an educational program that she now teaches at several schools and academies throughout Westchester.

In 2012, she transformed Our New Way Garden into a non-profit with education as its main goal. Today, in addition to several year-round school programs, Benefore travels to numerous elementary schools in Westchester and Pelham counties to provide workshops in their gardens. And she has a stable of older students who intern on her farms.

Benefore has developed gardens in New Castle, Harrison (at the town's former swimming pool, which her crew had to first dig up), Old Oaks Country Club in Purchase and PEPSICO. New this year, Our New Way Garden began farming at Maple Grove Farm in Pound Ridge (where this photo shoot took place) and Jade Farm in Bedford, both thanks to a Westchester Land Trust program that connects farmers looking for land to landowners willing to loan some of their land to farmers.

"During the last six years, we've grown over 20,000 pounds of produce, and we've donated at least 12,000 to 15,000 pounds of that food," she explains. "Plus, for the first eight years, we just donated everything. We probably grew between 5,000 and 10,000 pounds a year, and we donated all of it."

"About 50 percent of what we grow today is donated to food pantries," Benefore continues. "We mainly donate to Meals on Main Street in Port Chester – a food pantry and soup kitchen, but we also donate to The Free People's Market in Mt. Vernon, The Slater Center in White Plains and InterGenerate in Mt. Kisco. The other

half of what we grow is sold as CSA shares or at markets."

Her other main mission is to "work with communities of color, especially those injured by our capitalism and adversely affected for generations," she explains.

"It's very important to me to repair the injustices, raise awareness and work in solidarity. It's not charity work, it's solidarity work – it's shoulder to shoulder. We all can work the land, we can feed ourselves and we can take care of each other."

She says that a good amount of her volunteers, board members and staff are people of color, and so are her summer interns.

"It's very important to me that I have diversity, both socioeconomic and gender," she explains. "It's really about solidarity and discovering how we can help each other."

Benefore also works with local community groups and businesses, providing them opportunities to reap the emotional benefits and personal connections that occur during a day of hard work on the farm.

"A lot of corporate groups partner with us for their volunteer days," she says. "The Capitol Theater, MasterCard, Morgan Stanley, Regeneron, PepsiCo – they all come and do really wonderful corporate days. They come year after year because their employees love it. It's so healing for humanity to give back and to connect to the earth and learn where their food comes from."

As Benefore continues to expand, she hopes to secure enough funding to hire a few more farmers who can grow produce and teach, as well as at least one administrative staff member. This would allow her the time to continue to grow her educational programs, secure more land and provide necessary food and job security for those in our county. **KC**





Patti D'Agostino
Vintage jumpsuit, necklace, earrings and ring, This & That Vintage, Cross River. 1986 Porsche 911 Carrera, courtesy of Glenn J. DeFaber.

NEW DAWN

BY KAITLYN HARDY

WITH NEW DAWN FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER, PATTI D'AGOSTINO NARROWS THE GAP BETWEEN RISK AND REFUGE FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVORS.

Nationally, one in four women and one in six men face domestic violence. "Abuse exists everywhere," says Patti D'Agostino, co-founder of New Dawn Family Resource Center, a local non-profit providing services for domestic violence victims in Northern Westchester.

In 2018, at a meeting of The Northeastern Westchester Domestic Abuse Alliance (New DAA) – a committee of service providers, law enforcement, and clergy/faith leaders – members discussed the fact that, despite the disturbing prevalence of abuse, the nearest centers for help were south of I-287, with the Westchester Family Courthouse in White Plains a 40-minute drive away (on a good day).

"It makes it an access issue for people in Northern Westchester to get help until it's too late," explains D'Agostino.

To close this distance and more actively contribute to the area, she and members of the community who have ties to the issue of domestic violence, started New Dawn, "a space where there would be more easily accessible services."

New Dawn then joined forces with the Westchester County Office for Women who had received a \$200,000 grant from the New York State Risk Reduction Enhanced Response pilot program. Together, they made New Dawn the pilot for a program designed to reduce or prevent domestic violence-related homicides. The program had two components. The first was to

create a "high-risk team" who could identify situations with a high risk of lethality. This team was comprised of representatives of domestic violence agencies, law enforcement, the DA's office and the Westchester County Office for Women. The second was to train five local police departments on how to recognize and handle domestic violence cases and assist the survivors. When a case was identified, the victim was referred to the high-risk team. The program launched in 2018 was deemed a success after just one year.

"It proved that if people have access to these types of services up in Northern Westchester, we can actually reduce the number of homicides that occur," D'Agostino explains.

The trainings were expanded to police departments in the greater Westchester area, and New Dawn used it as a jumping off point for their services.

New Dawn has now grown as a consortium of service providers, counselors, law enforcement and town municipalities, coming together to provide people in Northern Westchester with the resources to overcome domestic abuse. It's now supported by five local towns: Bedford, Lewisboro, North Salem, Pound Ridge and Somers.

In addition to hosting the Risk Reduction Team, New Dawn holds a peer support group for victims of domestic violence, offers referrals to local agencies, counselors and law enforcement and provides clients with whatever resources they may need to address and recover from abuse.

Since forming their peer support group in 2019, New Dawn has helped 34 people from 18 different communities, with the majority joining during the last two years.

"During COVID-19, the number of clients we have helped has more than quadrupled," D'Agostino says. "We went from having clients that were from just the immediate five towns to having clients that are from eighteen towns in Westchester County."

Factors that can contribute to abuse, such as confinement and stress, were heightened during the throws of the pandemic, which D'Agostino says resulted in the increase.

In the coming years, New Dawn hopes to expand their services and supports. Specifically, they hope to enhance access to counseling and mental health services, which have become even more scarce since COVID-19. But that's easier said than done.

"As a volunteer group of directors, we don't have a paid staff," D'Agostino explains. "With the increasing number of people who need services and assistance, it's a challenge to connect them to the right resources. Domestic violence agencies across the country have experienced severe federal and state cuts."

"The needs are great, not only in the number of people that need help but in the type of help they need. It's just a really big challenge to meet the needs of absolutely everyone we encounter. We're looking into creative ways that we can start to fill some of the gaps that exist with our partner agencies."

In the meantime, the organization has been raising funds through private donations and fundraisers at the Waccabuc Country Club. During the past year alone, they have raised around \$20,000.

"The ladies from the Waccabuc Country Club have held fundraisers for us, and we're very grateful for their support," says D'Agostino. "Last year, they did a lovely auction and luncheon event with us at the country club. This year they were so impressed and happy about the work we had done that they honored us again."

The very success of New Dawn shines a light on the prevalence and severity of domestic violence.

"It has been a very successful journey, but to be honest, we hope nobody needs our services – it's a necessity that we wish was eliminated." **KC**





RESCUING PETS TO RESCUE PEOPLE

Did Rob Zombie sign your pet's collar? If you adopted your pet from Rock N' Rescue, the answer might be yes. But more importantly, your pet may have changed your life.

It all began in 2008 when Juli Cialone's triplet sons had an idea. Cialone, who lived in Rochester at the time, was a professional photographer who worked with world famous, Grammy award-winning musicians (that, contractually, she cannot name); in her free time, she volunteered at a local animal shelter. Her sons wanted to help their mom integrate her professional work with her charity work in a "fun" way. Together, they decided she should ask the musicians she photographed to sign animal collars. These collars would then be placed on dogs or cats repeatedly passed over for adoption.

"Their situations varied," Cialone explains. "Some were all black, some were really cute but just didn't get

noticed and some had disabilities. We would pick the animals that had been waiting too long to be adopted, give them a signed collar and rename them after the musician or band. Then I would take the animal's picture and my kids would promote it."

It worked, and over the years, Rock n' Rescue has had everyone from Imagine Dragons, Daughtry and Train to Greta Van Fleet, Judas Priest and Rob Zombie sign collars for pets. But things began to change in 2014 when Cialone's sons went off to college and she moved to Westchester. She began volunteering with local animal shelters, but she couldn't find a shelter that she liked, and she began to notice a problem.

"Everybody was rescuing dogs from the south, but nobody was actually saving the southern cats," she says. "I encouraged groups to begin saving cats, but no one wanted to help them, so I decided that I would do it, and I would do it the right way. In 2017, I turned Rock N' Rescue into a 501c3, and thanks to my volunteer work in Rochester, I reached out to a group I had a relationship with in Kentucky."

Cialone rescued and found homes for 450 animals her

first year. During that time she met Marla Valentine, a master social worker who was a foster and volunteer. They clicked and she became Cialone's first staff member.

"I just ended up falling in love with the animals and seeing what they could do for people who really need help," Valentine explains.

By the fall of 2018, Rock N' Rescue began to transform into the organization they are today – a group that rescues both animals and people. That year, they gave two kittens to a young boy from North Salem who had cancer. Around the same time, a family who was fostering a mom and her baby kittens realized that all three felines could detect their daughter's seizures. Then, they began hearing stories from their adopters about how their new pet had improved their lives, and their new mission became clear: they wouldn't just rescue animals, they would provide pets for people in need of therapeutic support for their emotional or physical ailments.

Valentine began offering animal-assisted therapy (AAT), to hospitals and senior living facilities, they saw the true healing power of these animals. AAT uses animals to aid a patient's therapeutic treatment. Research has proven that animals can actually lower a patient's heart rate and increase their oxytocin (a.k.a. the cuddle hormone). The results were incredible. For example, one of the first times they brought a trained therapy cat into a nursing home, they placed it on the lap of a mute man. Almost immediately, he began to speak to the cat – it was the first time he'd spoken in years.

"The animals have a way of knowing exactly what you need, and they know who needs it the most," Valentine says.

She points out that while the most common animals chosen for AAT are dogs and horses, cats can also be wonderful therapy animals. And when the pandemic began in 2020, they realized that rescuing people, especially

children, was needed more than ever.

"I really believe that people under the age of 20 were hit the hardest (mentally) during COVID," says Cialone. "We've never seen so many children struggling, and I believe many children continue to experience the residual effects of this pandemic. Kids weren't allowed to go to college and have fun or graduate with their class, and they experienced more extreme side effects of online bullying. Plus, they watched as the world around them shut down in the prime of their life. So many children were refusing to get out of bed, and we saw how a pet could really help them cope. It's really so sad, but that's why we're here. We're here to help them."

Rock N' Rescue also rescues older cats, puppies, dogs, guinea pigs and more, and they use their custom pet finder application to guarantee a perfect pet/human match.

"Different families have different needs and dynamics, just like different animals have different needs and tolerances," Cialone explains.

In fact, before they accept any animal, the pet must pass their personality test which determines whether or not they're good with humans and/or other animals. This helps the organization guarantee that pets will remain in their new homes for the rest of their lives.

"Our rehoming rate is about four percent, which is one of the lowest rates in the country," says Valentine.

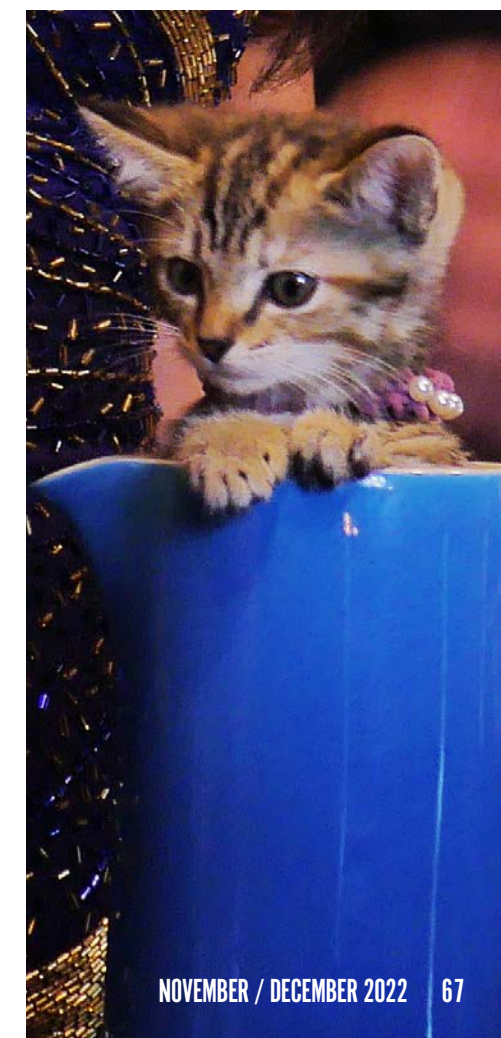
Rock N' Rescue continues to grow, and this year, they hired their third fulltime staff member, James Scova, who serves as the director of communications. Currently, their entire operation is run out of the team's homes and largely supported by local foster families. When they receive notification that the Kentucky shelter is ready to send their "big truck" of kittens and puppies, they rush to secure foster families until the pets are adopted. But if they cannot secure enough foster homes, they are

forced to limit the amount of animals they can accept.

Currently, they are raising funds to secure an external facility so they can rescue even more animals. So far, they've rescued 7,500 pets (and that's a low-ball estimate from Cialone), while also rescuing an untold number of humans – and they're just getting started. **KC**

*(Photo on left:)
Left to right: Marla Valentine, Julie Cialone, James Scova.*

Coffee mugs and French press in Marseille, \$23.99 and \$84.99; Charles Department Store, Katonah. **Large organic serving plate and essential cheese knives**, \$65 and \$45; Gather, Katonah. **"Pieometry" by Lauren Ko**, \$32.50; Booksy, Pound Ridge. **Wines and spirits**, Folkways, Croton Falls. **Vintage gowns, necklaces, bracelets, rings, brooch and fedora**, This & That Vintage, Cross River. **Tuxedo**, free for CCNW clients and \$20-50 for the public, The Community Shop, Katonah.





PLAYING HIS DECK OF CARDS

BY GIA MILLER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN NEGARD

One Saturday morning in early November 2020, Fernando Silva, the wine director of Bedford's Glen Arbor Golf Club, was at home when he received a phone call from Grant Gregory, the club's president.

"He asked me if I was around the next afternoon," Silva recalls. "I said yes. Then he asked me if I could bring my best paintings to the club because a special friend of his was coming to play golf with his friends, and he wanted to honor them with a little private show. So I said, 'Yes, of course, sir.'"

Silva arrived at the club around 11:30 a.m., set everything up and then waited. At 2:00 p.m., Silva texted Gregory.

"I told him I was at the club and asked if he was coming soon," says Silva. "He texted back and asked if everything was set. I wrote 'yes.' He replied, 'Perfect.' And that was it. Radio silence."

Ten minutes later, President Bill Clinton walked in and asked the receptionist if Silva was there. She told him that Silva was upstairs, and then she went upstairs to tell Silva that Clinton had arrived. Silva was shocked – he didn't know who the show was for. He told the receptionist to send him up.

"He came upstairs with 10 or 12 people and asked me, 'You're Fernando?' I replied, 'Yes, sir.' He said, 'You are the artist and the sommelier?' I replied, 'Yes, sir.' 'Good, good,' he said. 'We're here to see your artwork. These are my friends.'"

As they began looking around the room, Clinton asked Silva to tell him about his work. Silva walked



with Clinton, describing the various paintings until Clinton stopped at a 40” x 40” painting, turned to Silva and asked, “Why did you make this one?”

“It was around the time Sean Connery passed away, and I told him I was inspired by James Bond,” Silva explains. “Then President Clinton turned around, put a hand on my shoulder and said, ‘I want you to listen to a story. Back in the day, I met Sean Connery at a Hollywood gala, and we clicked. I told him I wished I was James Bond, and he told me he wished he was the president of the United States. It became our joke with each other. We spent a lot of time together and became very, very good friends. Two days before Sean Connery passed, he called me. He knew he was going to pass.’”

“President Clinton got very emotional,” Silva continues. “And then he said, ‘I’m speechless. Thank you very much. You’re a great artist.’ It was a very strange moment. Then he started to leave, and everybody followed him out. They shook my hand, told me my work was great and thanked me for my time.”

“Then, as the whole entourage was going downstairs, Clinton turned around and came back up. He got close to me and whispered, ‘How much do you want for that painting?’ I said, ‘Mr. President, I want your friendship. How about that?’ He replied, ‘You got it.’ He shook my hand, gave me a hug and took my painting. It’s now hanging in his office, and that experience will be with me forever.”

Now, whenever Clinton sees Silva at the club, he shakes his hand and says, “My artist.” Silva responds, “My president.”

THE EARLY YEARS

Growing up in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Silva’s aunt took him and his two siblings into the city on Sundays “for a stroll and to check out the museums.” Silva was fascinated by the art and would try to copy what he saw when he returned home.

“I was terrible,” he remembers. “It was awful. But I was so enthusiastic about learning to draw and paint that when I was 11 or 12, my aunt signed me up for an art class. Unfortunately, the teacher

was very disappointed with my art. He said, ‘You can’t even draw an apple or a banana. This is terrible. This is not for you.’ So, I stopped.”

At 19 years old, Silva became a waiter on a cruise ship and spent three years traveling the world.

“One of the last ports I visited was New York,” he says. “When I started walking around the city streets, I fell in love. I knew it was where I wanted to be.”

Silva returned home, finished his degree in hospitality and landed a job at BallenIsles Country Club in Palm Beach Gardens, FL towards the end of 2004. He went from dishwasher to waiter in one month, became a head waiter two weeks later and then began serving the VIP tables. One night, unbeknownst to him, he waited on a group of headhunters from New York who were recruiting for a five-year-old golf club in Bedford Hills. They hired him, and he moved to New York in the spring of 2005 to work at Glen Arbor where, initially, he did a bit of everything.

“After a few months, Mr. Gregory came up to me and said, ‘Didn’t I see you behind the bar the other day? Are you doing tables now? I want to talk to you.’ We sat down, and he said, ‘I’ve been watching you, and I like what you do. I like your dedication. What can I do to keep you here forever?’ I responded, ‘A green card would be nice.’ Long story short, I got the green card, and I’ve worked for them ever since.”

FINDING NEW INSPIRATION

Because Glen Arbor was closed between mid-December and mid-March, Silva spent that time visiting Manhattan’s art museums, and he decided to give art another try. He

purchased supplies and turned to YouTube for instruction. With the help of a variety of virtual teachers, including Bob Ross, Silva learned how to paint.

Five years later, when the time came for Silva to leave the country during the green card process, he went to Germany with the woman he was dating. While there, her parents noticed his interest in art and took him to the museums in Paris. He was drawn to the impressionists, specifically Gustav Klimt.

His girlfriend’s parents were also wine connoisseurs, and they helped Silva develop a passion for wine. After 10 months in Germany and two months back home in Argentina, Silva legally returned to New York in 2012 with a new passion: wine. Once again, he turned to YouTube to learn more.

Silva saved money and began taking wine courses during the winter months. He studied at the French Culinary Institute in SoHo and the American Sommelier Association. Because he could only take classes during those months, it took him several years to earn his Court of Master Sommeliers certification. That summer, he approached Gregory about creating a wine program.

“I told them that most of their members are very savvy when it comes to wines, but the club is missing a wine program and a wine cellar,” he says. “I explained that I wanted to create a program for them as a thank you for sponsoring my green card.”

That winter, Gregory invited Silva to his house to discuss Silva’s ideas for the program. “He asked me to write down 20 ideas on how to create a wine program and said he’ll see what they can do. I came back with about 30 ideas, and we’re continuing to implement the ones that are a good fit for the club.”





ONE FATEFUL AFTERNOON

In December of 2013, Silva received a call from one of the club's golf professionals who was on vacation. He told Silva that a member left his golf clubs at Glen Arbor, and he wanted to pick them up before he flew down to Florida. Silva gladly agreed to help out. At the club, he placed the golf bag inside the front door and then brought his easel and paints to the back patio to paint the landscape while he waited.

"The member parked his car on the side of the building and came in through the patio," Silva remembers. "He saw me painting and said, 'I didn't know you paint.' I told him it was my hobby, and he said, 'Let me see that.' He asked me if he could take a picture of my work. I thought he was crazy, but he said he really liked it and wanted to show it to his wife who was a retired curator at Gagosian, a gallery in Manhattan. Then he told me that they were making a short trip back to New York in January and I should bring as many paintings as I have to the club for her to see."

The next month, she critiqued Silva's work, telling him what was okay and what he should never do again. Then, she selected three pieces that included painted swirls, and told him this was the style he should continue. A week later, she called to say that she arranged for him to join a show at Gagosian in March. But just a few days before the show, there was a fire in Silva's home, and he was only able to save 15 of the 40 paintings he'd made. He selected four of those pieces for the show and sold three. It inspired him to buy better materials, and word began to spread about his art.

"A year later, the owner of the club came up to me and said that a member mentioned I'm an artist, and he asked to see my work," says Silva. "He was very, very impressed. I started creating postcards for the club, which were mailed to all the members. Meanwhile, a painting sold here, and another sold there, and I got connected with a gallery in California that helped me get my paintings into Art Basel in Miami every other year."

Silva also began teaching two art classes per year at the club – one for adults and one for children. He also holds an annual art show at the club for his adult students.

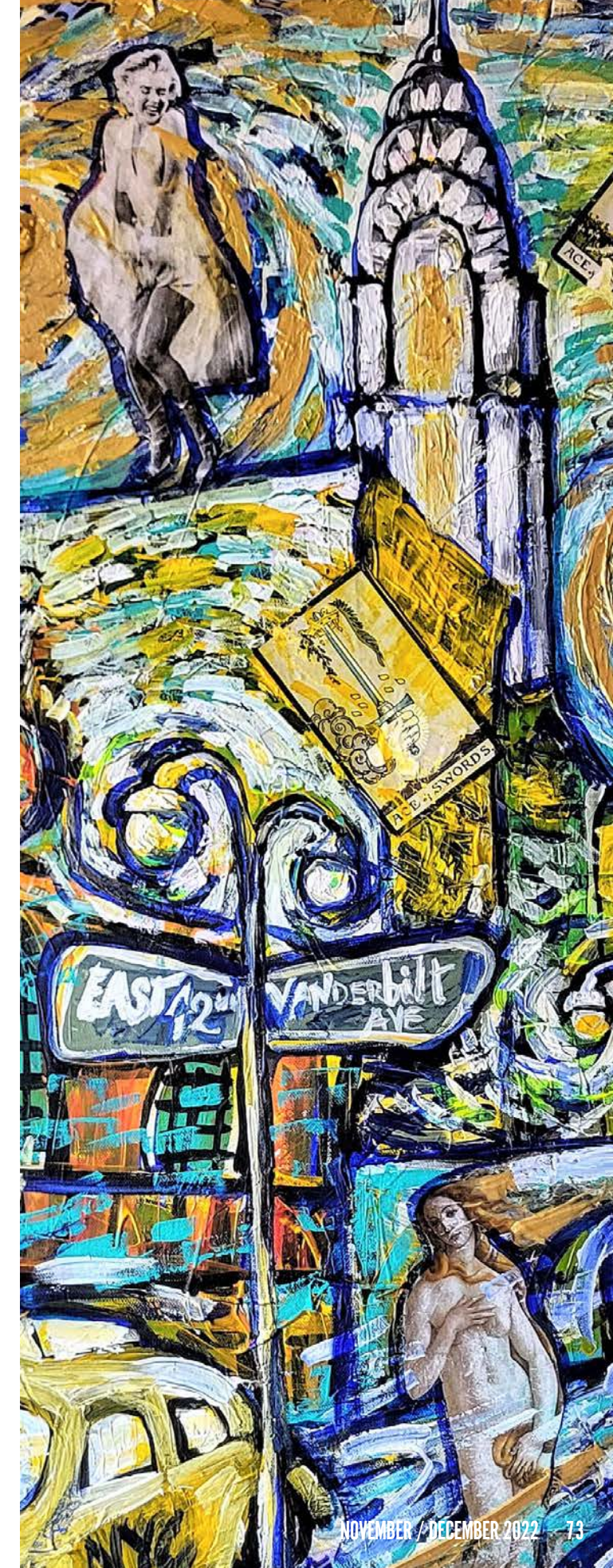
And then, as all stories go these days, COVID-19 happened.

FINDING HIS VOICE

For Silva, 2020 was his most productive year. It's also when he transitioned from copying others' work to finding his voice. But prior to the pandemic, he began his first painting ritual, which, of course, involves wine.

"One night, I came home from the city really inspired by the wine tasting I attended, and I grabbed my brushes and started to paint," he remembers. "I had a glass of wine in my hand, I made a little swirl in the glass, and boom – it splashed onto the canvas. I looked at it and said, 'Okay, wait a second – this is not bad.' So, I took my brush and made a swirl here and a swirl there, and then I start painting. And so, since that moment, it became my ritual before I begin to paint."

Silva paints on Tuesday, his day off, or when he comes home from work in the evenings. But even if he's home





during the day, he can only paint at night, often finishing around 3:00 in the morning.

“Sometimes I can do a painting in five or six hours,” he says. “I’ll paint for about three hours, take a break, come back an hour later, and paint for three more hours. Then I will go back two or three days later to retouch it.”

His inspiration, he says, comes from the heart.

“I think it’s possible to be conscious in every waking moment, but it’s impossible to always be present,” he explains. “When I am present, I realize that a moment doesn’t last forever. I try to capture those moments on the canvas so they will stay forever.”

He typically paints on large canvases (30” x 30” or 40” x 40”) with acrylics. A single painting has anywhere between 10 to 20 layers of paint; and because it can be difficult for him to stop adding to his work, he often adds a lacquer coat to seal it in, which prevents him from touching it further. But just prior to the lacquer, he paints a few swirls of gold leaf, an homage to Gustav Klimt. Prices range from \$3,000 to \$10,000 and most of his work is sold via his Instagram, @Bacchusbysilva.

The final ritual before the lacquer, which did begin during the pandemic, is the inclusion of poker or tarot cards. Without looking at the decks, he selects several cards and adds them to the painting. These cards speak to his personal philosophy on life.

“I think that we we’re all given a deck of cards when we come into this life, and those are meant to be played during different stages of our lives,” he explains. “For example, when you are a teenager, there are certain cards you can play. But as you become older, you have different cards in front of you, and you cannot play the same cards you played as a teen. One day, you’re going to look at your deck of cards and see that the stack is getting lower and lower.”

“There will be time, and this is my own theory, that I will be on my deathbed, and I’m going to look at my last two or three cards. And I’m going to play them right.” KC

**STEP INTO
FERNANDO'S STUDIO**



**2022
HOLIDAY**

GIFT GUIDE

**PRODUCED AND WRITTEN
BY AVA FLEISHER AND GIA MILLER**



Buying the perfect gift is an art. Finding something the receiver will cherish, regardless of the size or price, isn’t always easy. It takes time to find that special item, and when you have an entire list of people to shop for, your time is limited. So we’ve done the hard work for you. We’ve walked through our local stores and searched for local artisans to bring you a one-of-a-kind gift guide that will help you shop local for every human on your list (sorry Fido, maybe next year). So grab a pen and take some notes as you flip through the pages. Then, once all your holiday shopping is done, RELAX! Happy holidays!

FOR THE BUSY MAN IN YOUR LIFE

8:00 a.m.

It's a crisp, sunny winter day – perfect for a morning bike ride.



9:00 a.m.

It's time for his daily Oregon CBD oil, which he keeps in his Dopp kit. The oil relaxes his body and improves his focus.



1:30 p.m.

It's time to head into the office for a few hours of face time with the boss. Before heading out, he packs up his daily essentials: a black leather laptop case, polarized aviators and his custom-made hat.



5:00 p.m.

He leaves work early to surprise his wife with a home-cooked meal for their wedding anniversary. On his way home, he stops at La Tulipe to pick up her favorite cake – she loves the passion fruit mousse.



10:00 p.m.

After dinner, dessert and dishes, he heads to his study to listen to some music and relax with a glass of whiskey before heading to bed.

FOR THE WOMAN WHO DOES IT ALL

8:30 a.m.

She adds a touch of makeup, a spritz of perfume, a little jewelry – these subtle yet important touches are the key to her understated, yet glamorous look.



7:00 a.m.

The best way to wake up on a frigid winter morning is with a warm cup of tea.



8:45 a.m.

Before heading out the door, she slips on her favorite pair of shoes and packs up her tote bag, ready to conquer the day.



4:00 p.m.

She leaves work a little early to get a haircut at The Hair Wharf and then stocks up on some hair-care products to combat the dry winter months.



6:00 p.m.

As the host of this month's book club, she's excited to discuss the book she selected, Michelle Obama's "The Light We Carry: Uncertain Times." She serves everyone a comforting bowl of her signature Bolognese sauce in her favorite pasta bowls.



10:00 p.m.

To end the day, she relaxes with some CBD chocolate and writes in her gratitude journal before dozing off to sleep.

Verve 2 Disco bike, Bicycle World: \$799; Mount Kisco. **Oregon Full Spectrum CBD Oil**, oHhO: \$75; Bedford. **Two-tone Dopp kit with leather handle**, La Maison Fete: \$45; Bedford. **Stressless Mayfair signature chair with ottoman**, Country Willow: \$3,285; Katonah. Connery hat, Jackie Cicogna Millinery: \$850; jackiecicognamillinery.com. **Salt titanium polarized aviators**, Katonah Eye Care + Aesthetics: \$499; Katonah. Handmade leather laptop case, Form Leather: \$1,200; Bedford Hills. **Passionata cake**, La Tulipe: \$45; Mount Kisco. **McIntosh MHA150 headphone amplifier**, Entertainment Technology: \$5,500; Mt. Kisco. **Elijah Craig Single Barrel whiskey**, made exclusively for Mt. Kisco Wines & Spirits; \$39.99. **"Big Headache/Small Batch" ten-ounce whiskey glass**, Pourtions Just Right; \$12.95 for two; pourtionsjustright.com.

Teapot and 10-ounce mug, Bracken Fern Studios: \$155 and \$35; brackenfernstudios.com. **Organic tea**, Mast Market: \$9; Mt. Kisco. **Knotted pearl and bead cluster necklace**, Robin's Art and Design: \$100; RobinsArtAndDesign.etsy.com. **Baked blush in Matte Bouquet and Luxury lip gloss in Sugarberry**, Essie Cohen Makeup: \$16.50 and \$22.50; essiecohen.com. **Natalie fragrance**: \$90; La Maison Fete, Bedford. **Geneva shoes**, Very Lovely Soles: \$110; verylovelysoles.com. **Eyelash tote**, Beehive: \$68, Mt. Kisco. **Saints & Sinners Velvet Divine moisture shampoo and conditioner**, \$20 each, **Olaplex No 6 Bond Smoother and No 7 Bonding Oil**, \$28 each, **milk_shake** **lifestyling dry shampoo and incredible milk**, \$20 and \$25; Hair Wharf, Katonah. **"Al Dente, Al Don'te" pasta bowls**, Pourtions Just Right: \$17.95 for four; pourtionsjustright.com. **"The Light We Carry: Uncertain Times,"** Booksy Galore: \$32.50; Pound Ridge. **Gratitude journal**, Mast Market: \$32; Mt. Kisco. **CBD Night Chocolate**, oHhO: \$22; Bedford.

FOR THE LITTLE RASCALS

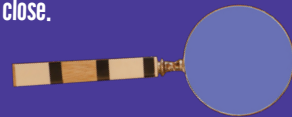
8:00 AM

The twins wake up, look at their fun new clocks. They realize they're going to be late if they don't get up soon!



8:30AM

After breakfast, she draws in her journal while he uses his new magnifying glass to examine the dog's body up close.



4:30PM

Today, they go to their favorite after school activity: coding class at Code Ninjas. Then they convince their parents to get bubble tea just down the street.



7:00PM

Following dinner and a bath, the family plays a game together, and then the twins put on a puppet show.



8:00PM

They brush their teeth and then wind down with a puzzle before crawling into bed.



FOR TEENS, TWEENS AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN

7:30AM

They grab their earbuds as they rush out the door to catch the bus.



6:00AM

She's before dawn to get ready for her presentation at school and slips her favorite wrap dress along with her new stackable rings to accessorize. Meanwhile, he wakes up with minutes to spare and throws on a baseball cap and tee shirt for the day.



3:30PM

When she gets home, she unwinds with her new knitting project and lights a candle with her USB lighter. He relaxes with a speed cube, hoping to break his record time of 15 seconds.



6:00PM

It's Friday night, so they each get ready for dinner with friends. She adds some fun earrings to her outfit and he swaps his cap for a beanie.



6:45PM

They meet their friends at Tengda for dinner.



8:30PM

They head to Bedford Playhouse to see the latest Black Panther movie, "Wakanda Forever."



Fox and unicorn clocks, Beehive: \$74 each; Mt. Kisco. **Hand-painted flower journals**, Hello Petunia: \$10, @hellopetunia on Instagram. **Horn and bone and acrylic magnifying glass**, Bedford House: \$57/large and \$33/small; Katonah. **Code Ninja gift card**, Mt. Kisco. **Bubble tea**, Pick Up Bubble Tea: starting at \$5.50; Mt. Kisco. **Alexander Olive hand-made backgammon set**, Sustainable Haven: \$215; Cross River. **Hand-made puppets from recycled sweaters**, Eclectic Collector: \$28; Katonah. **Wooden puzzle with special animal-shaped pieces**, Eclectic Collector: \$28; Katonah.

Flutter wrap dress in indigo, handmade from recycled sari fabric, Kahlo: \$98; Pound Ridge. **Stackable enamel rings**, Bijou: \$33-40; Katonah. **Sea silk hoodie and trucker hat**: Nine by Ash, \$125 and \$50; Katonah. **Bowers & Wilkins P15 wireless earbuds**, Entertainment Technology: \$199; Mt. Kisco. **Smoke and Slate knitting kit**, Fado: \$30; Katonah. **Rechargeable USB lighter**, Beehive: \$9; Mt. Kisco. **Adjustable speed cubes**: RS3 M 2020, magnetized and adjustable (considered the best performing economy 3x3) and GAN 13 with attracting and repelling magnets (considered the most luxurious 3x3), The Cubicle: \$8.99 and \$79.99; thecubicle.com. **Coeur earrings**, Odette: \$98; odetteny.com. **Cotton beanie hat**, Nine by Ash: \$50; Katonah. **Tengda gift card**; Katonah. **Bedford Playhouse gift card**; Bedford. Bedford Playhouse gift card, Bedford.

FOR THE LOVEBIRDS



9:00 a.m.
The happy couple wakes up in their hand-crafted bed on a cool Sunday morning. It's nice to sleep in once in a while.



12:00 p.m.
They bundle up for a picnic in their favorite spot, bringing along some warm blankets and the gift basket they recently received from her parents.



3:00 p.m.
After a chilly (but fun) picnic, they warm up by a cozy fire and work on a puzzle together.



6:30 p.m.
For dinner, they head out to Muscote Tavern, one of their favorite restaurants, to meet some friends and enjoy a great meal together.



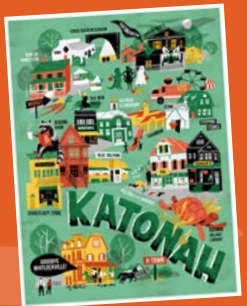
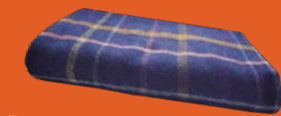
8:30 p.m.
After dinner, they invite their friends over for dessert. Once their friends leave, they end the evening by enjoying a movie on their 85" LED TV.

Virginia Ironworks Chesterfield bed, Country Willow: \$1,339; Katonah. **Folkways & Graze NY gift basket**, Folkways: \$270-\$380; Croton Falls. **Merino lambswool blanket**, La Maison Fete: \$150; Bedford. **Fade puzzle**, Beehive: \$25; Mt. Kisco. **Muscote Tavern gift card**; Katonah. **Berry mousse cake**, L'Anjou; Mt. Kisco. **85" Samsung Class The Frame QLED 4K Smart TV**, Entertainment Technology: \$4,299; Mt. Kisco.

FOR THE HUMBLE ABODE



LIVING ROOM
Liven up your family room with a one-of-a-kind vintage lamp or side table and a few candles.



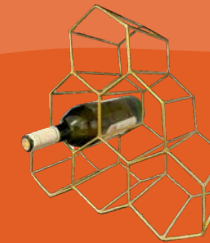
FAMILY ROOM
Add a little comfort to your family room with a warm, cozy blanket and a new poster.



KITCHEN
Start your morning with fresh squeezed juice in a beautiful glass.



POWDER ROOM
Treat your guests to a little luxury in your powder room with Michele Design Works products.



DINING ROOM
Upgrade your dining room with a print from local artist Richard Lang Chandler and a new wine rack.

One-of-a-kind vintage lamps and side tables available at Bedford House, Katonah. **Taper candles in heron**: \$18 for 12" set and \$20 for 18" set, **Georgian wood candlesticks**: \$55, and **Helix matches in a cloche**: \$35, all available La Maison Fete; Bedford. **Katonah or Pound Ridge poster**, 18" x 24" by Marilena Perilli: \$45; marilenadraws.com. **Citrus juicer in pastel green**, **Strawberry Fields and Garden Party Blue cotton tea towels**, Design Solutions: \$250 and \$22 each; Pound Ridge. **Hand-blown rose stemless glasses**, Gather: \$175/set of 6; Katonah. **"Ground Level" – 36" x 36"** oil on canvas, by Richard Lang Chandler: \$4,500; Oak & Oil, Katonah. **Angular Study wine rack**, Country Willow: \$129; Katonah. **Lemon basil hand care caddy**, Michel Design Works: \$26.95; Splash Car Wash, Bedford Hills. **In Bloom linen tea towel**, Design Solutions: \$25; Pound Ridge.



ENJOYING THE HOLIDAYS IN
NEW YORK
(WHILE AVOIDING THE HOLIDAYS IN NEW YORK)

WRITING & PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN NEGARD



THE HOLIDAYS IN NEW YORK CITY

The holidays and New York City: they go together like stripes on a candy cane. The mention of it can evoke images of feathery snowflakes on the sidewalk of Fifth Avenue, the lively scenes created in department store windows, or perhaps Kevin McCallister making a Christmas wish in front of a majestic Rockefeller Center tree.

Real New Yorkers know better.

For those who live in the tri-state area, the holidays can turn the city into a subway packing, traffic jamming, bumper to bumper ordeal that we can surely do without. Feathery snowflakes quickly transform into muddy slush while Midwest tourists stare with wonder at those festive department store windows. As for Kevin McCallister? The poor boy would be trampled by a mass of Rockefeller Center fanny packs and selfie sticks. He would never stand a chance.

New Yorkers have been there and done that, probably more times than we care to admit. The allure is gone, and for most of us, the local tree lighting is all we really need. However, this doesn't have to be so. Sure, Santa Claus may be coming to town, but that shouldn't stop you from heading into the city you love.

It's with this in mind that we put together a few suggestions for those of you who want to venture into the city during the holidays while attempting to steer clear of some of the tourist traps.

THE RULES

Before you even consider entering Manhattan during the holidays, there are a few rules to follow:

1. Fifth Avenue doesn't exist. Wipe it from your memory. Rockefeller what? Saks Fifth where? Avoid it at all costs. Ditto for the nightmare on 34th Street.
2. If you can, visit the city later in the day or possibly the evening. This may be tricky if you have kids, but the evenings will be your friend as the tourist stampedes typically calm down after a full day of staring at trees, peering in windows and dining at Sbarros and Bubba Gump Shrimp.
3. Avoid Broadway. "The Lion King" will be there after the new year. And if you missed "Phantom," then wave goodbye to the angel of music. Also, "Hamilton" is on Disney Plus.
4. Be strong. Your weaker friends will litter their social media with posts about Radio City and FAO Schwartz. Always remember the pain that they endured to get there - traffic, parking, bathroom breaks and crowds. They don't post about that do they?
5. Speaking of bathrooms, if you do find yourself swept into the tourist traps, remember that many hotels have gorgeous lobby bathrooms for all of their "guests." Which you are, right? Right?

TAKE A CRUISE

The best kept secret in Manhattan is the East River Ferry (of which there are several). Beginning in Soundview, followed by the Upper East Side, these ferries head all the way down to Wall Street with stops on both sides of the river along the way. Technically, they're a New York City service intended for commuters. In other words, they were not designed for tourists. Forget the Circle Line and hop on one of these instead.

Not only are the ferries actually comfortable and clean (yes, really), they offer spectacular skyline views of everything from the United Nations and Roosevelt Island to the Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges. Plus the ferry runs a couple of times every hour, and as a bonus, each boat also has bar and snack services on the lower level, which sure beats the subway.

Pro tip: You can also take a ferry to Queens or Brooklyn if you need to visit your favorite hipsters and remind yourself of how "cool" you once were.

YES, WE KNOW IT'S THE HOLIDAYS

We're realistic. If you're going to New York City in December, you probably want to see a few lights and a tree (or, more accurately, your kids do). Don't forget that there's more than one sparkly evergreen on the island of Manhattan.

First and foremost, if you're heading to the aforementioned East River Ferry (and you're starting your boat ride on the Upper East Side), stop off at Gracie Mansion and its neighboring Carl Schurz Park. This park holds an annual lighting ceremony and is a great way to knock out two reindeer with one lump of coal before hopping on your magical ferry ride.

Further south, Madison Square Park is actually the original Christmas tree site – it held the first official tree lighting ceremony in the United States back in 1912. Even though Rockefeller



SEE BEHIND THE SCENES
FROM NEW YORK





Center has stolen the park’s mojo, this beautiful spot is a great place to take a stroll and see some lights. With its proximity to the Flatiron and Empire State Buildings, we cannot guarantee a completely tourist-free experience, but you will be in calmer, less annoying waters. Fun fact: it’s also the site of the very first Shake Shack location.

Continue down to Union Square to check out its charming annual Christmas market. There will be plenty of holiday gifts and hot chocolate as you stroll through the Edison bulbs and makeshift storefronts.

However, do bear in mind that the Union Square subway station is a major transfer point, and you do run the risk of slightly hipper holiday crowds from time to time. It could still get crowded here, but it's probably more manageable than the midtown mobs.

Greenwich Village’s Washington Square Park, the historic hub frequently seen in film and television, boasts a gorgeous sparkling tree alongside the iconic marble Washington Arch. And while it may not be as tall as its Fifth Avenue competition, this beautiful tree happens to be situated near some very delicious food and music options.

DID SOMEONE SAY FOOD?

Let’s not play games. Nathan’s is fine, but you’re hungry and looking to have a real meal. One of the best ways to do both at once is to head to Houston Street and stop into Arturo’s. It’s a classic New York Italian restaurant – the kind of cozy place that feels like the holidays, even in July. Take note of the baby grand piano next to the bar, as this is also a musical hotspot every night with soloists and trios belting out a tune while your pepperoni cooks.

If you want to keep the Dean Martin vibes going, head to Mulberry Street and stop in Caffé Palermo. Yes, we can hear some of you mumbling that Little Italy isn’t really Italy anymore, but this delicious pastry shop will temporarily change your mind. The owners are less than subtle about having the “best cannolis on planet Earth” (note the banner hanging from the ceiling), but in this case, they make a strong argument – the cannolis are indeed quite good.

Or, head east to dine in the beloved Veselka. This



Ukrainian restaurant has been a New York staple for decades, and it’s received additional love over the last year for obvious reasons. The pierogis are the star of the show, along with cultural classics such as the beef stroganoff and borscht.

Meanwhile, St. Mark’s Place is home to spectacular Japanese restaurants, and our top pick is Sake Bar Decibel. Head down the staircase into the basement for a Narnia-style entrance into Tokyo where you can sip some sake or rice wine, slurp udon noodles and enjoy authentic okonomiyaki.

From there, consider some sweet treats at Lady Wong Pastry & Cakes. Owned by Seleste Tan and her husband Mogan Anthony (also the head chef at The Village Social, see page 40), they describe their delicious desserts as “a love letter of Nanyang Flavors.” We were excited by the fresh Southeast Asian recipes that filled the display case. Be warned though, there are two locations: one in midtown at the fantastic Urban Hawker food market, and one in the Lower East Side. With respect to rule number one, we suggest the latter during

holiday time.

But at the end of the day, do you really need us to recommend food in New York? Head in any direction and you will have a delicious culinary experience in this epicurean paradise.

ALL THAT JAZZ

The ultimate way to cap off any trip to New York City is with some music. While midtown is largely off limits (see rule number one), it would still be ideal to hear a trained professional play Jingle Bells, right?

When it comes to the more stylish night out, Dizzy’s Club is one of the absolute best. Located in the Time Warner Center in Columbus Circle, this exceedingly hip nightclub is the more casual offshoot to Jazz at Lincoln Center’s formal performances down the road. As the lights dim into a purple glow, some of the greatest musicians in the world step onto the stage. Plus, there’s



Photo by Lawrence Sumulong for Jazz at Lincoln Center

a kitchen and bar for drinks and snacks, along with a perfect view of the speckled lights of Central Park just outside the windows.

For the less polished, possibly cooler option, try Terra Blues on Bleecker Street. A Village favorite, this blues bar is guaranteed to send B.B. King vibes throughout your body as you listen to guitar riffs that no mere mortals can create. It's the perfect way to round out a Greenwich Village evening.

It's late, really late, so it has to be Smalls Jazz Club. When the latest and greatest musicians in the city have wrapped a gig or simply want to unwind, they'll often head to the famous improv sessions at Smalls. Crowd into this underground hotspot and take in the greatness. Order a drink and give it a solid twenty minutes to arrive. The place is packed every night, and no one is in a hurry, including you.

Side note: If you can't find the time for some late night jazz in Manhattan, there's always Jazz On Main right in Mount Kisco. Owner Shaul Dover has

got you covered (see our Sept. / Oct. issue.)

RETHINKING THE CITY

New York is a big city, and it's not all about the silver bells of midtown. Remember that the holidays are brief, even if they sometimes seem never-ending. Eventually the tourists will head home and Fifth Avenue will settle

down. Until then, there's a lot more city to see.

You officially have our permission to go down to Manhattan and try new things. Use this as an opportunity to show your family, and yourself, some of the fun and offbeat locations that you might not otherwise visit.

Most importantly, remember rule number one. **KC**

TAKE ACTION

WHEN WILL YOU GO TO NEW YORK?
WRITE SOME POSSIBLE DATES BELOW!

BONUS QUESTION:
WHAT'S RULE NUMBER ONE?



ARTURO'S COAL OVEN PIZZA

106 W. Houston Street

CAFFÉ PALERMO

148 Mulberry Street

CARL SCHURZ PARK

East 86th Street &, East End Avenue

DIZZY'S CLUB

10 Columbus Circle

LADY WONG PASTRY & CAKES

332 E 9th Street

MADISON SQUARE PARK

23rd & Broadway

SAKE BAR DECIBEL

240 E. 9th Street

SMALLS JAZZ CLUB

183 W. 10th Street

TERRA BLUES

149 Bleecker Street

VESELKA

144 2nd Avenue

WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK

5th Avenue, Waverly Place, W. 4th Street and Macdougall Street

DEAR JOHN, LUZ

AFTER BLUES TRAVELER GUITARIST CHANDLER KINCHLA GAVE SUCH WONDERFUL ADVICE, JOHN QUIT IN PROTEST. SO FOR THIS ISSUE, WE ASKED LOCAL COMEDIAN LUZ MICHELE TO WEIGH IN.

Dear Luz,
I can't help it, I'm jealous of my best friend. She seems to have it all – the perfect husband, the perfect kids, the perfect life. Meanwhile, my life can best be described as “one hot mess.” My husband doesn't appreciate all that I do, my kids fight constantly, and I'm always late, underdressed and put my foot in my mouth. My friend is always there for me and loves me just the way I am, which makes me even more jealous. How do I get past this?
– Jealous and feeling guilty

*Dear Jealous,
For a moment there, I thought you were jealous of me! But seriously, there's no reason to be jealous – just wave your “Hot Mess” flag, Mama, and be proud of who you are. Eventually, you will get through this simply by going through it. And I'll bet you \$20, all is not as it seems. She's likely just as jealous of you and your freedom to be yourself and not give a \$&%t!

Dear Luz,
I think we all have one of these in our family – the crazy aunt or uncle who always gets drunk and makes a scene. In our family, it's my cousin. She's such a great friend, but I dread our holiday get-togethers because she becomes loud, insulting and tells inappropriate stories in front of the kids. How do I approach her about this without ruining our friendship?
– Loving cousin

*Dear Loving,
Your cousin sounds like a lot of fun! Please let me know next time she is in town – I think we're kindred spirits! Regarding your concerns, take some deep breaths and remember that we all need that person in our lives who can remind us to LET GO and have FUN! I think we're all wound a little too tight these days, and those carefree spirits are the elixir we need to revel in the joys of life and family.

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 Luz,
In our family, I'm in charge of Thanksgiving. I love hosting everyone, but I have this uncle who always overstays his welcome. I serve the meal around 2:00 in the afternoon, and everyone is usually gone by 7:00 p.m. But my uncle just hangs out. He's not helping me clean or playing with the kids, he's just hanging out. He often stays until I tell him we're going to bed (the kids are already asleep). How do I politely kick him out earlier?
– Exhausted hostess

*Dear Exhausted,
Girl! We have all been there! If this were me, I would send invitations with a clear start time and end time. And maybe, your uncle's invitations should include a disclaimer that after 7:00 p.m., there will be a late checkout fee of \$45 (just like a hotel)! You will go from exhausted hostess to hostess with the mostess in no time flat. Promise.

Dear Luz,
The holidays bring out the worst in my kids. They're greedy, selfish, demanding and generally ungrateful. We've read stories about children who are less fortunate, donated money to charity and even volunteered at a soup kitchen, but nothing seems to help. What else can I do?
– Embarrassed by my kids

*Dear Embarrassed,
First off, we are all embarrassed by our kids! So this season, tell the kids that the holidays are CANCELLED due to their ungratefulness. Then just sit back and watch them grab those volunteer sheets real quick!

Dear Luz,
What can I do with our old COVID-19 masks? I was thinking of making them into holiday gifts for friends. Maybe wreaths? Or perhaps I can use them to wrap fruitcakes? Obviously, I'll wash them first. Any other ideas?
– Reusing & recycling

*Dear Reusing,
Good for you for tapping into your creative energy and finding ways to make our world a better place! BUT in this case mama, BURN THEM! Think about it, how would you like a Christmas wreath made out of my kids' used underwear?! I didn't think so. Burn those old masks and let's spend the holidays not handing out extra reminders of the pandemic's wrath.



What Glass Ceiling?

When we virtually met Vanessa Seide, founder of Very Lovely Soles, we knew she was someone we wanted to get to know. Thankfully, she felt the same way and happily agreed to be our “stranger.” It didn’t take us long to realize that her perfect pairing would be another female business owner that we admire, Mimi Wieland-Tesfaye. We all met for coffee at Mimi’s Coffee Shop in Mt. Kisco (of course) and discussed everything from Starbucks and skydiving to marathons and running for office. Here’s our conversation.



BY GIA MILLER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN NEGARD

Katonah Connect: Give us the highlight reel: who are you and what makes you unique?

Mimi Wieland-Tesfaye: I am someone who was born in Ethiopia –Selamawit Tesfaye was my full name. I moved to Mount Kisco when I was 16. To make a long story short, I had an Ethiopian restaurant for 11 years. And then, in 2019, I opened Mimi’s Coffee House.

KC: Why do people call you Mimi?

MWT: Because that’s what my siblings and my parents called me in Ethiopia. When I came here, no one could say Selamawit. It wasn’t by choice, but I just stuck to it.

Vanessa Seide: I’m from Katonah, but I was born in Manhattan. I moved up to Westchester when I was seven, and I went to Rippowam Cisqua and John Jay. Now I am a mom, which is a new role for me, and I’m loving it. I’m also the founder of Very Lovely Soles, which I started in 2012.

KC: What’s one of the most interesting things you’ve ever done?

VS: Skydiving. I was 30, and I decided I wanted to jump out of a plane. In hindsight, I don’t know what I was thinking, but I’m glad I did it. I wasn’t scared at the time; instead, it made me realize that if you can just check out for a moment, you pretty much can do anything you put your mind to. Now I use that moment as a reminder, and I tell myself, “You’re not scared to do it. Just do it.”

MWT: Open a coffee shop right around the corner from Starbucks. And immigrate to a different country when I was 16, without my parents. It was just me and my other sister.

KC: What is something you wish you’d done differently in your life?

MWT: I wanted to open a coffee shop before the restaurant. But instead, I was scared or maybe intimidated by Starbucks. Plus, I didn’t feel like I was ready to open a coffee shop, or I couldn’t find the right spot. So, I just went for the restaurant. That was 15 years ago, and I don’t regret it.

KC: If you could be anywhere else right now, where would you be and

why?

VS: It’s a little lame, but I’m happy where I am right now. Maybe in five years, I’ll have a different answer, but right now, I’m very content. I moved back here for a reason. I love the area. I love the people. I’m happy here.

KC: Tell us one thing about you that very few people know.

MWT: I don’t really hate Starbucks – I think we can coexist. They have a type of client, and I have a type of client.

VS: I’m adopted. I’m one of seven children, and I’m the only one who is adopted.

KC: Are they the same ethnicity as you?

VS: Nope. They’re white and Jewish.

KC: People don’t assume that when they see you together?

VS: They don’t assume that they are my parents.

KC: Would you rather be rich or famous?

MWT: Neither.

VS: Rich. Because we all know there’s a lot of good you can do with money. It’s not just travel –you can do so much good through charity.

There’s so much I want to do in the world, and money can help make those things happen. I’m adopted, and my mentality is that you can’t do better unless you know better and have opportunities. So, I would love to give other kids the same opportunity that I had, and that requires money.

MWT: That’s very true. Coming from Ethiopia, I see that there are so many things you could do with money, if you have it.

KC: Who is someone you’d like to meet?

MWT: Amanda Gorman. I watch everything she says and everything she does. I would really like to meet her. For her age, what she’s done and how she looks at the world – she’s incredible.

VS: Oprah. I originally wanted to work in broadcasting, and she was someone that I always looked up to. But I have noticed a change in her – I don’t find her to be the same Oprah that she was when I was a kid. Maybe it’s because

I’m an adult now and my views have changed? Regardless, I would love to sit down with her.

KC: What’s the number one thing on your bucket list?

MWT: To run a New York City Marathon, and I’m working to make it happen next year.

VS: Mine is not to run a New York City marathon!

KC: What motivated you to want to run a marathon?

MWT: There’s a guy at the gym I go to, and he asked us to do it for his 60th birthday party. I said, “Get out of here!” And then couple days later, he came in with the papers, explained what we have to do and how we become a member of Road Runners.

KC: Wow, that’s a lot of chutzpa!

MWT: Yes!

VS: For me, there are two things at the top of my list. First, and I know this sounds crazy, but I want to run for office. I don’t know how, and I don’t know what, but I want to I do want to run for office in some capacity. And two, I want to start a nonprofit for kids. I don’t know how, but that’s on my list of things I want to do.

KC: Being rich would definitely help! So why do you want to run for office?

VS: I don’t like what’s going on. And it’s not just because of

the last four years. It’s always been something I’ve wanted to do. I feel like because of my upbringing – I knew my biological parents – that I see both sides, and I really understand both sides. I’ve lived both sides. And I feel like there’s something in me that is telling me I have to run for office.

KC: When do you hope to run for office?

VS: Who knows. It could be when I’m 60. That would be my birthday present! **KC**



SEE OUR DAY WITH
VANESSA AND MIMI





CLARK ASSOCIATES FUNERAL HOME

4 Woods Bridge Road, Katonah • (914) 232-3033
www.clarkassociatesfuneralhome.com

Serving all Faiths since 1858

CREMATIONS AND BURIALS FUNERAL PREARRANGEMENT

Monuments & Inscriptions Available

DANIEL B. McMANUS ~ Proprietor	BRUCE E. REISDORF ~ Licensed Manager
JOSEPH M. McMANUS ~ Director	RONALD P. CERASO ~ Director
MARISA A. GIULIANO ~ Director	ADNER J. MONTENEGRO-LEE ~ Director

PEOPLE CONNECTIONS ELIO

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHY
BY GREG MUENZEN

Born and raised in Guatemala City, Elio Mendez made the difficult decision to leave his home at the age of 14. His father thought Elio was too young, but given the poverty and crime in Guatemala, his father recognized that Elio would have better opportunities elsewhere.

“I wanted to provide for my mom and dad, and I knew I couldn’t do it there,” he says. “When I moved to Bedford Hills, I only knew one cousin. It was very hard in the beginning.”

Mendez loves nature, so he chose a career working outdoors and became a certified “tree worker climber specialist.” Ten years ago, he began his own company – M & Z Tree Care and Landscaping, and he now has three fulltime employees.

Mendez lives in downtown Katonah with his wife and two children. His eight-year-old son, Yadiel, wants to be a professional soccer player, and his seven-year-old daughter, Yeila, wants to be a nurse or doctor.

“My business is with homes right here in this area, so it’s important to me that I live here too,” he says. “We really like living here, the friendliness of the people and the strong education our kids are getting. I wanted my kids to be a part of this community and know that anything is possible.” KC



Deliciously fresh sushi for lunch and dinner all season long.

914.232.3900
286 Katonah Ave.
Katonah, New York
tengdakatonah.com

TEAM AT COMPASS

Local Experience You Can Trust

Ellen Schwartz | Devin McCrossan

Licensed Associate Real Estate Brokers
ellen.schwartz@compass.com | M: 914.420.4615
devin.mccrossan@compass.com | M: 646.937.1897
68-70 The Crossing, Chappaqua

Ellen Schwartz and Devin McCrossan are Licensed Associate Real Estate Brokers affiliated with Compass. Compass is a licensed real estate broker & abides by Equal Housing Opportunity Laws.

COMPASS

THE BLITZEN


'Tis the season for colder evenings, holiday parties and sappy Lifetime movies. If that doesn't make you want to grab a drink, perhaps an extended weekend visit from the in-laws will. Join the kids in some comforting hot chocolate but add a little kick to yours.

Dr. Elixir

INGREDIENTS

- Serves: Two
- 8 oz hot chocolate
 - 4 oz bourbon
 - 2 oz orange liqueur
 - Dollop of whipped cream
 - Sprinkle of cinnamon
 - Chocolate shavings
 - Dehydrated orange slice, optional

DIRECTIONS

- Stir hot chocolate, bourbon and orange liqueur together.
- Top with whipped cream, cinnamon and chocolate shavings.
- (Optional) Garnish with a dehydrated orange slice. 

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN NEGARD

DOWNLOAD & PRINT
THIS RECIPE



THANK YOU.

KATONAH
CONNECT

