

# KATONAH CONNECT

BEDFORD · LEWISBORO · MOUNT KISCO · NORTH SALEM · POUND RIDGE

THE HEALTH ISSUE

MAY | JUNE



# Turn What You Love Into Where You Live

 DouglasElliman



Transcendent Sanctuary on Approx 110 Acres | Garrison, NY  
\$5,950,000 | 3 BR, 1 BA | **Web# H6242660**  
John Oliveira: O 914.723.6800 | M 914.447.2081  
Mary Jean Staudohar: O 914.723.6800 | M 914.474.7250



Mid-Century Modern Masterpiece | Pound Ridge, NY  
\$4,950,000 | 6 BR, 4.3 BA | **Web# H6214328**  
Nancy Stronge: O 914.273.1001 | M 914.671.5784  
Stacey Oestreich: O 914.273.1001 | M 917.797.6266



Yale Farms Custom Colonial | Armonk, NY  
\$2,850,000 | 5 BR, 6.1 BA | **Web# H6231804**  
Stacey Oestreich: O 914.273.1001 | M 917.797.6266  
Nancy Stronge: O 914.273.1001 | M 914.671.5784



Classic Colonial with Pool | White Plains, NY  
\$1,250,000 | 4 BR, 2.1 BA | **Web# H6236619**  
Stacey Pinkas: O 914.723.6800 | M 646.734.7860  
John Oliveira: O 914.723.6800 | M 914.447.2081





Chic Wykagy Estates Home | New Rochelle, NY  
\$1,100,000 | 3 BR, 3 BA | **Web# H6240358**  
Glorianne Mattesi: O 914.723.6800 | M 914.393.6990



Gracious and Charming Colonial | Hartsdale, NY  
\$925,000 | 5 BR, 3 BA | **Web# H6238292**  
Terry Robison: O 914.723.6800 | M 917.482.4812



MAKE ROOM FOR ALL OF YOU

CALL OR VISIT US ONLINE TODAY TO SCHEDULE YOUR  
COMPLIMENTARY DESIGN CONSULTATION  
**WESTCHESTER ROCKLAND NEW YORK CITY NASSAU** 914.592.1001  
**CONNECTICUT** 203.924.8444  
  @caliclosetsnyc

CALIFORNIACLOSETS.COM



CALIFORNIA CLOSETS®



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## 06 FOUNDERS' LETTER

## 08 OUR TEAM

## 10 CONTRIBUTORS

## 12 COFFEE CONNECTION: THE PERFECT NOTE

Bob Mullins was well into his mid 30's before he ever tasted coffee. Yet these days, the Lake Katonah resident is running his own coffee bean roasting business, Note Perfect Coffee.

## 16 CONNECT WITH THE EXPERTS: HOW TO WIRE YOUR HOME

Electricity is something we take for granted. And yet, for safety and convenience, it's something everyone should consider carefully. Read what three experts have to say about how to make your home as comfortable and secure as possible.

## 20 FUTURE CONNECTIONS: TRUCKS, TACOS AND TRANSFORMERS

Meet Fox Peck, a four-year-old preschooler from Katonah. When he's not dreaming about trucks and Transformers he's devouring tacos and searching for leprechauns.

## 22 FUTURE CONNECTIONS: WARRIORS FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Seniors Grace O'Hanlon and Sam Vilkelis are the co-presidents of North Salem High School's Warriors Mental Health and Wellness Club. Their dedication to this club has made a tremendous impact on their lives and their classmates' lives.

## 25 CONNECTION UPDATE: SHE'S THE ONE THAT THEY WANT

Our September/October 2022 featured teen Madison Lagares has a new gig – she's Frenchy in Paramount Plus' "Grease: Rise of the Pink Ladies." Learn how she landed the role and what she thinks of playing this iconic character.

## 26 PAST CONNECTIONS: HOWDY DOODY

Pound Ridge residents Buffalo Bob Smith and Martin Stone revolutionized children's television, creating a TV show that had a profound impact on children and the industry.

## 30 CONNECTING WITH OUR MENTAL HEALTH: REFRAMING YOUR MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION

If you deal with symptoms of anxiety or depression, you might view them as scourges that hinder your day-to-day well-being. But learning how to reframe your symptoms in a positive manner may help you learn to live with them, instead of in spite of them.

## 34 PET CONNECTIONS: HAPPINESS IS THE BEST MEDICINE FOR YOU AND YOUR DOG

Our pets can experience fear, anxiety, depression and more, but you can help them live a happy life. Learn what you can do to help your dog be content while you're with them and when you're away.

## 38 CONNECTING WITH THE LAND: FLOWERS AMIDST THE VEGETABLES

Some things are simply made to go together, like peanut butter and chocolate. Peanut butter on its own is good, but peanut butter enveloped in chocolate is a revelation. The same could be said for vegetables and flowers.

## 42 CONNECTING IN THE KITCHEN: KING KONE

Somers legend King Kone began in 1953 as a drive-up ice cream shop. Today, it's a beloved restaurant that serves residents from all over Westchester who come for the food, the ice cream, and, of course, their sprinkles.

## 46 IT'S OUR ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY!

Can you believe it's been a year already? Join us on a brief trip down memory lane as review some of the highlights from our inaugural year.

## 86 COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS: A MAGICAL LABYRINTH IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD

The Bedford Riding Lanes Association is one of the oldest remaining private riding trails in the country, stretching 100 linear miles long. Over the past several years, they've expanded their membership to include hikers, walkers, runners, snowshoers, 'yogis' and more.

## 90 CONNECTING WITH PARENTS: KIDS AND SPORTS

These days, it seems the best way to get our kids away from their screens is to sign them up for sports. But do the benefits outweigh the drawbacks? We sat down with a few parents who live in the world of youth sports to get their thoughts.

## 94 DEAR LUZ

This issue, our resident comedian/advice giver extraordinaire helps a woman who is bored in her career, a mom sick of sitting in the bleachers every weekend, an interior designer whose hesitant to take on a tacky new client and a friendless local mom.

## 96 COCKTAIL CORNER: AMALFI SUNSET

This spring, let your taste buds travel to Italy with a limoncello-based cocktail with only three ingredients.



**51 STOP DIETING AND START EATING WELL**  
Diet is a four-letter word that makes a lot of people cringe. Instead of dieting, learn what contributes to weight gain, why most diets fail and what it means to eat, and be, healthy.

**54 GOING GREEN FOR BEAUTY**  
Whether you're looking to "green" with your beauty routine this year, or it's something you've been doing for years, understanding the difference between organic and clean is key.

**56 WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE YOU BEGIN A NEW EXERCISE ROUTINE**  
Studies show that regular exercise is good for you, but it can lead to injuries. Here's what you need to know before you hop on a bike or pick up those weights so you can remain safe and improve your health.

**60 UNDERSTANDING THE KEY TO LONGEVITY**  
With the help of a few local experts, longevity and anti-aging can be viewed from a different angle, and it may be a bit easier than you imagined.

**63 REIMAGINING THE FUTURE**  
Riley began preschool at three years old. She enjoyed playing dress-up and soccer with her older brother. She's always been a confident, friendly and outspoken child. She'll enter middle school this fall – will things change?

**69 A GLASS ACT**  
North Salem resident Moshe Bursuker is living the artist's dream. After 20 years in the industry, he's built a successful glass-blowing business and his own brand.

**74 THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN**  
You don't have to travel very far for one of the best floral displays around. From cherry blossoms and magnolias to azaleas and peonies, there is a lot to see this time of year. Learn where to go and what to see during May and June.

**80 HITTING THE HIGH NOTES**  
Globally renowned vocal ensemble Skylark recently moved their headquarters to Bedford, connecting locals to some of the most talented singers in the country.





# ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES

## HIGH-END CUSTOM WOOD FURNITURE





# IT'S OUR "PAPER" ANNIVERSARY

Can you believe it's only been one year? Yeah, we can't either. It seems like five, doesn't it?

We've grown so much in such a short period of time.

Since we launched last May, we're now mailing to 17,000 homes and businesses, and we're slowly expanding to include more of our Northern Westchester neighbors.

Our social media and website have exploded (check out our recent web redesign), with videos and interviews that capture the attention of thousands who are avidly engaged in what we're doing. We've become multimedia storytellers, always challenging ourselves to push beyond our own perceived limits and create something new and different on and off the pages.

You've gotten to know us at numerous live events, like Earth Day, Caramoor's American Roots Festival and Jazz Festival, Proud Day and Harvest Fest in Pound Ridge, the Yellow Brick Road Festival in Bedford, the Platinum Party for The Playhouse, Katonah Museum of Art's family day and more.

We've proudly become media partners with respected local organizations, such as The Bedford Playhouse, Caramoor, The Pound Ridge Partnership, Katonah Museum of Art, and recently, The Jacob Burns Film Center in Pleasantville. We're constantly inspired by the

creative forces in our community, and we know we've only tapped the surface.

Our staff has grown beyond just the two of us and a few friends to a community of talented writers, artists and photographers who have embraced our vision and somewhat willingly agree to participate in our "creative" endeavors.

We've also done a lot of nerdy magazine things. For example, we've created a consistent FOB ("front of book" for the non-journalism majors among us) so readers know what to expect in each issue, even if it's subconscious. Each issue has a theme and a section for stories around that theme. There's now a parenting roundtable in the BOB (yup, that stands for "back of book") so parents can learn from each other. And there are regular mental health and pet sections, that we began based on conversations with readers.

And, to celebrate our one-year "paper anniversary," we've switched from glossy paper to matte for a different look and feel as well as, hopefully, fewer fingerprints (we're only sharing this because we're genuinely shocked by how many people have commented on the quality of our paper).

In our inaugural issue, we wrote:

*They say writing a book is like birthing a child. But creating and producing a*

*magazine from scratch is like birthing and raising a child.*

So now we've raised seven. We're a little older, a lot wiser, even more exhausted, and, if we're being honest, a bit less sane. But we're also proud of what we've accomplished. Here were some of our original goals:

Create a local print publication that connects, entertains, informs, advises and even challenges readers to examine complex issues affecting our community, all in a down-to-earth, friendly manner.

*Check.*

Produce a gorgeously-designed magazine that represents our community in a witty, funny, serious, silly and thoughtful manner.

*Check.*

Connect our readers to what makes our region special and celebrate the people in our community who are doing interesting or extraordinary things.

*Check.*

There's more, but we're running out of room.

Oh, and by the way, welcome to our health issue. We've added some incredible new writers to tell stories

ranging from how to avoid injuries at the gym or reframe your mental health struggles to understanding the difference between "organic" and "clean" beauty. Plus, some of our "old timers" are still with us, penning stories about preventive health, building your own soil, making your dog happy, the Bedford Riding Lanes Association (BRLA) and a renowned vocal ensemble that now calls Bedford home. We also took a stab at teaching what you need to know about wiring your home, explaining why diets don't work, updating you on a teen we featured last fall, introducing you to a local glass blower, talking to parents about the local sports landscape, and more.

It's been a tremendous honor and pleasure to produce this magazine for you, tell your stories, make new and wonderful friends and support our wonderful community.

So grab your favorite beverage and join us in raising a glass to an incredible first year. We look forward to sharing many more.

CHEERS,

*Gia*  
**GIA MILLER**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

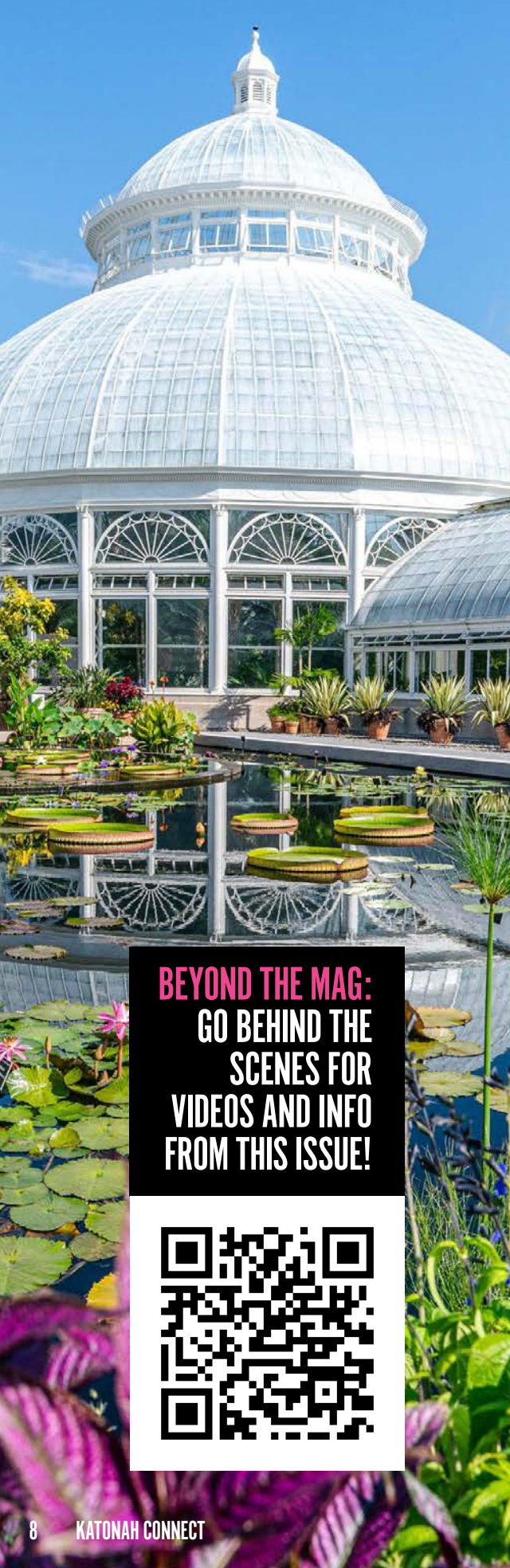


*Justin*  
**JUSTIN NEGARD**  
CREATIVE DIRECTOR



*Don't forget to follow us for some behind the scenes shenanigans and other entertaining/slightly ridiculous things.*  
Instagram: [instagram.com/katonahconnect](https://www.instagram.com/katonahconnect)  
Facebook: [facebook.com/katonahconnect](https://www.facebook.com/katonahconnect)  
YouTube: [youtube.com/@katonahconnect](https://www.youtube.com/@katonahconnect)





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



# KATONAH CONNECT

## EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Gia Miller

## WRITERS

Aerin Atinsky  
Dr. Sarah J. Cutler  
Cathy Deutsch  
Leslie Dock  
Ava Fleisher  
Meredith Flood  
Luz Michelle  
Gia Miller  
Rich Monetti  
Justin Negard  
Emma Richman  
Maddie Slogoff  
Susan Trumpbour  
Melissa Whitworth

## COPY EDITORS

Aerin Atinsky  
Ava Fleisher  
Emily Meehan

## CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Justin Negard

## ARTISTS

Dave Bradford  
Joey Cervoni  
Elizabeth Gourlay  
Andrea Jaffee  
Justin Negard

## PHOTOGRAPHERS

Justin Negard  
Annalia Pantaleon  
Elena Wolfe

## COVER ART

**Front cover:**

Justin Negard

**Back cover:**

Dave Bradford  
"Skateboard Decks"

## ADVERTISING & MARKETING

Chett Chavarej, Evan Garaway, Siobhan Rossi, Mia Santis

## CONTACT US

282 Katonah Avenue, Suite 166, Katonah, NY 10536

**General inquiries/editorial:** [info@katonahconnect.com](mailto:info@katonahconnect.com)

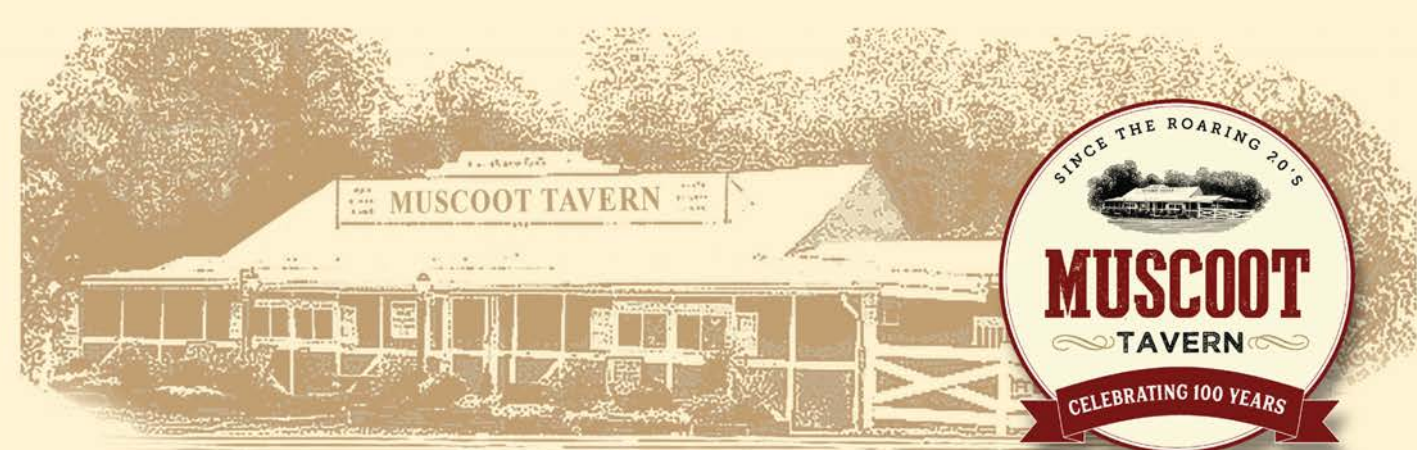
**Advertising:** [advertise@katonahconnect.com](mailto:advertise@katonahconnect.com)

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

Copyright (c) 2023 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.



# *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](http://www.muscoottavern.com) 914 • 232 • 2800





# MEREDITH FLOOD



Meredith Flood is a John Jay High School junior who began at Katonah Connect in January 2023. She loves making new connections and learning about the history of our area, which is why she chose to write about the founders/history of Howdy Doody for this issue. “While working on the Howdy Doody story, I met some wonderful women who I really connected with,” says Meredith. “They even invited me over to their houses for tea, and I plan to take them up on their offers.” In her free time, Meredith enjoys hiking, helping her mom with her non-profit kidney foundation, and, of course, writing. Eventually, Meredith hopes to become an investigative journalist and travel the world.

# EMMA RICHMAN



Emma Richman is a John Jay High School senior who started at Katonah Connect in March. Emma’s passion for writing and storytelling is what led her to journalism. For this issue, she wrote about fitness and how to prevent injuries at the gym. “I’ve enjoyed getting to know local gym owners and hearing their advice on how to prevent injuries,” she says. “While it’s important to push yourself, I’ve learned that it’s equally important to listen to your body’s signals and to set realistic goals.” Outside of her writing, Emma is a competitive swimmer who also enjoys singing with her a capella group, The John Jay Treblemakers, tutoring middle school students and playing alto saxophone.

# ELIZABETH GOURLAY



Elizabeth Gourlay is a Mount Kisco-based artist and photo stylist who freelances for a variety of clothing brands, including Vineyard Vines, Brooks Brothers, J. Crew and Madewell. Her artwork, like “Efflorescence”, which is featured on page 38, delves into collage elements, with images derived from analog and digital materials. “I love flowers, gathering, arranging and photographing them in various configurations, and then I alter the images digitally,” she says. “I enjoy playing around with color and opacity, which isn’t very different from what I do when I’m styling clothing, so I guess it’s very fitting that my love for styling and making art are entwined.” Elizabeth also serves as the co-chairperson of the Mount Kisco Arts Council, a community non-profit organization whose mission is to create connections between artists and the community.

# DAVE BRADFORD



Dave Bradford was raised in South Salem and is a proud product of KLSD who took an “a la carte approach” to his formal education. “I’ve been a lifelong endurance athlete, U.S. Army combat medical specialist, professional river and climbing guide, and an independent business owner,” he says. Through Dave Bradford Creative, which he founded in 2014, he produces artistic content for clients, galleries and personal intellectual properties. “In addition to my work for fine art for galleries, such as my custom skateboard decks featured on this page and the back cover, I also create music videos, illustrations for children’s books, large scale murals, graphic novels, animation and original entertainment properties. For giggles, I perform stand up and occasionally act in movies and on television.”

# SUSAN TRUMBBOUR




Susan Trumbour, a.k.a. ‘Dear Beauty Editor’, has spent over 20 years as a beauty editor, new product development executive and trend consultant. If she isn’t writing about beauty, she’s creating shades and formulas for top cosmetics houses like L’Oréal, Maybelline and Neutrogena. For this issue, she wrote about clean beauty and discovered EWG’s Skin Deep website. “I’ve been using it as often as I use Google,” she laughs. “And I found that many products I use daily are in the hazard range. It made me rethink the products I use and make some changes.” In her spare time, she enjoys hiking the beautiful trails in Bedford, where she lives with her husband, two sons and their white fluffy rescue dog.

# RICH MONETTI



Rich Monetti grew up in Somers and studied computer science at Plattsburgh State. But after about a decade in the field, he discovered that writing was his real passion. He’s been a freelance journalist since 2003, and he also dabbles in screenwriting. For this issue, he wrote about reframing your mental health struggles, which he found helpful. “In the past, OCD was a major issue,” he says. “But now it mostly amounts to an inconvenience. However, interviewing experts for this article made me realize that my compulsion to check and recheck things has an upside. By nature, my attention to detail and being able to remain a step ahead of potential pitfalls is beneficial for me and others.”

## Melinda Canno-Velez, MSW



**Major life changes?  
College stress?  
New job?**

**Treating teens,  
adults & seniors  
virtual or in-person  
therapy in Pound Ridge.**

**MelindaVelez.com  
MelindaPVelez@hotmail.com  
(914) 450-4211**



# THE PERFECT NOTE

BY CATHY DEUTSCH  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN NEGARD

**B**ob Mullins was not a coffee drinker, and he was well into his mid 30's before he even tasted it. Shortly after his second son was born, Mullins began working two jobs – midnight to 6:00 a.m. loading trucks at Otto Brehm in Yonkers and a day job at the Bank of New York in Hartsdale. Eventually, he stopped working nearly round the clock and became employed in building management. But before he did, his friends made a suggestion that improved his day-to-day life.

"I was so tired, and everyone told me that I had to drink coffee," he remembers. "So that's how my coffee habit started. It was something to give me a little boost." Mullins purchased a glass Pyrex percolator and became captivated by the process. He appreciated watching the beans brew to the exact strength he preferred.

"I got really into fine-tuning," Mullins explains.

One day, a friend made him a cup of coffee with a Chemex Coffeemaker (which is known for its distinct brewing style where the device/filter is placed directly over the mug and the freshly-brewed coffee simply drips in), and he was shocked by how different that cup tasted.

"It was the best cup of coffee I'd ever had in my life," exclaims Mullins. "I could not believe how good that cup of coffee was. It spun my head!"

After that, Mullins dove deeper. He purchased a small professional roaster from Mill City Roasters in Minnesota and began to teach himself how to roast – he admits that, at first, a lot of beans went into the compost bin. Mullins watched a lot of YouTube tutorials and traveled to Minnesota in August 2019 to take a four-day intensive roasting course at Mill City Roasters.

## AND THE BEAN GOES ON...

As Mullins began to get "very good results" roasting his own beans, his friends began to notice. Soon, he became their go-to purveyor.

"Friends, relatives and neighbors were really enjoying it, so I left the building management industry to start the coffee business," he remembers.

It was time to make it official. As a professional guitarist and composer for over 45 years, Mullins wanted his new business name to fuse his two passions together. He decided on Note Perfect Coffee.

"Here's the tie-in," says Mullins, "the beans go through physical changes as they roast, so it's almost like building a composition. You're watching, hearing and smelling the beans, and you're listening to

the audible cues, like cracks and popping, as the beans expand. It builds up like a crescendo in a composition. It's very exciting!"

"There's a symbiotic, intuitive thing that happens if you're paying attention and you're open to it," he continues. "It's very similar to composing – the way the guitar vibrations begin to send overtones and harmonics to build a piece. It's a really beautiful thing, paying attention to all the nuances. I think that's what makes my coffee special."

## FROM HOUSE TO MARKET

After three years of roasting for friends and perfecting his brew, Mullins landed his first gig – completely by accident.

"One day, I went to Gossett's Nursery in South Salem for flowers," says Mullins. "I didn't know they had a farmers market; I just wanted to get some flowers."

While at Gossetts, Mullins spoke to Will Molneux, their nursery and farmers market manager, and commented that they had a bar with wine and craft beer but no coffee.

"I told him they needed some good coffee here."





Molneux invited Mullins to join the farmers market and Note Perfect Coffee became their sole coffee vendor during the summer of 2021. It took off from there.

“I’ve never had my own business before, so I am slowly building it on a local level,” he says. “It’s a wonderful feeling when people come to the market and regulars become friends.”

Several of these customers-turned-friends now text him their orders whenever they’re running low. He then roasts their beans and drops them off at their home.

“You find out what people want,” he explains. “That’s one of the things that really helped me grow my business – I always learn something. There’s something really special about that.”

## A COFFEE BREAK(THROUGH)

Shortly after his summer 2021 success selling at Gossetts, Mullins was approached in the spring of 2022 to sell his bagged beans to Hilltop Hanover Farm in Yorktown. It was there that he got his next big break.

“I was selling my bagged coffee at Hilltop Hanover Farm and one of their clients loved my coffee,” he recalls. “She was associated with Caramoor and brought my coffee to their team, and they loved it.”

Caramoor served his coffee at their gala last year and also presented it to attendees in personal-sized bags. Caramoor then started selling Note Perfect Coffee at their concession stands, and it became the house coffee in 2022.

Mullins credits his dedication to high standards and stringent trial and error to achieve his preferred combination of beans and roast.

“I mainly buy beans from Ethiopia, Brazil and Guatemala,” Mullins explains. “They have to be fair trade, that’s first. I believe very strongly in that. I also named my company Note Perfect Coffee because I strive for it to be a great cup of coffee with every note being excellent.”

## BEING A COFFEE PERSON

If you’re wondering, Mullins prefers his three daily cups of coffee to be made via the pour-over Chemex method that first inspired him to explore the world of coffee.

“When you’re testing your roast, one drinks it black,” he explains. “You’re evaluating its flavors, the mouthfeel and the notes it gives because you don’t want anything to interfere with its character. You need a clear sense of its personality. But people should drink it anyway it pleases them. There are no rules.”

Having grown to supply several outlets, Mullins began roasting his beans in Peekskill at Rise Coffee Collective in the summer of 2022.

## ON THE BACK BURNER

Mullins’ next goal is to have his coffee served in more cafes and bagged beans in local stores.


This year, he also plans to make and post videos about the process of coffee making, featuring his music in the background.

“So really bringing the whole thing together, where the music and the coffee live together,” says Mullins.

He is hoping that someday an opportunity will present itself to partner up and open a local cafe with live music featuring the talent of local musicians and artists. Of course, Note Perfect Coffee will be served.

## HAVE YOUR CUP AND DRINK IT TOO

Though Mullins would love his coffee to be the cup of choice for all locals, there’s one person near and dear to him that simply can’t be tempted.

“My wife hates coffee,” he exclaims. “She has never tasted my coffee. Every morning, I make her a pot of loose-leaf tea. She gets a nice cup of high-quality tea, and she enjoys it every day. Taking pleasure in these small rituals is what life is about.” 



*la maison fête*

 home • gifts • parties 

La Maison Fete is a full-scale event planning and design company. From weddings, dinner parties, luncheons, birthdays and more, we make every gathering memorable. Visit our shop in Bedford to explore the world of entertaining through a curated collection of beautifully crafted home and fashion goods.

Follow us on Instagram for news and upcoming store events @lamaisonfete

La Maison Fete  
11 Court Road, Bedford New York  
914.234.8627  
www.lamaisonfete.com



## THE MATTRESS STUDIO AT CW

A WIDE RANGE OF SUPERIOR MATTRESSES FOR AN OUTSTANDING SLEEP

With more than 25 mattresses on display, we stock exceptional brands known for comfort, sustainability, workmanship, and performance. From the ultimate luxury mattress to cutting-edge technology, see Shifman®, Gold Bond®, Mattress 1st®, and Bedgear® products, in a full range of price points and sizes, from crib to trundle to king and everything in between.



Country Willow

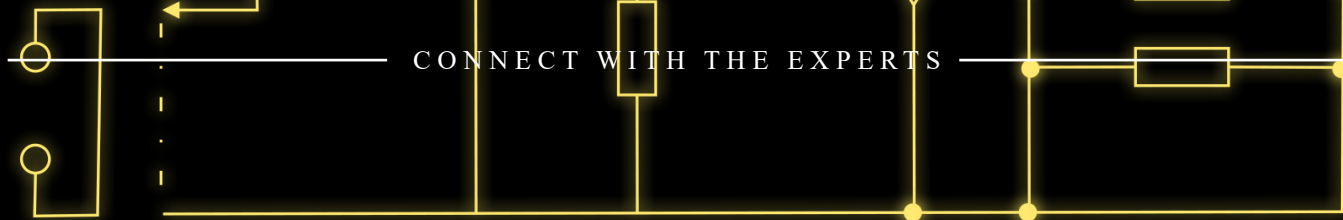
THE MATTRESS STUDIO AT CW

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

    COUNTRYWILLOW.COM







# HOW TO WIRE YOUR HOME

BY JUSTIN NEGARD

*Electricity is something we take for granted. It's always there. One flick of the switch and...let there be light. And yet, for safety and convenience, it's something everyone should give more consideration to. Is the wiring in our home safe? Is it efficient? Are we optimizing the technology in our home? We spoke to three different experts on how to wire a house, each with their own focus, to ensure that our humble abode is as comfortable and secure as possible.*

## The experts:

**General home wiring – Melissa Weigert:** Co-owner, Lake Katonah Electric, which provides general electrical work and generator installation/repair to homes throughout Westchester

**Commercial wiring – Paul Pellucci:** Katonah-based master electrician who serves homes and commercial properties

**Home entertainment and ethernet wiring – Ray Benza:** Co-owner of Entertainment Technology in Mount Kisco, which specializes in premium home entertainment products and installation services.

Wiring your home is no small feat. It's a complicated endeavor that shouldn't be approached casually. However, it doesn't have to be overwhelming either.

By following some basic rules, along with expert advice, this important aspect of home ownership can be managed with relative ease.

## HIRE THE RIGHT PEOPLE

Accept one simple truth: if you're not a licensed electrician, don't try to be one. Unlike other home repairs and do-it-yourself solutions, electrical work is not for the inexperienced weekend warrior. In fact, you really do need a licensed professional.

"You want to make sure electrical work is done to code," says Pellucci. "Those codes exist for a reason, and the best way to ensure they are being followed is to hire an experienced electrician who will use the proper materials for the proper purpose."

This is the most important step towards wiring your home. A competent electrician will identify problems, suggest improvements and work with quality materials. Pellucci says every homeowner gets to make a choice.

"You can have things done right, fast or cheap," he says. "You can only get two of those options, not all three. Choose wisely."

But sometimes, finding one competent electrician may not be enough. Weigert says it's important to find the right person, or people, for the right job.

"Don't assume one person can do everything," she advises. "Low-voltage wiring is entirely different from

high-voltage and commercial wiring setups."

Benza echoes this sentiment.

"A general electrician will not necessarily know anything about what it means to wire using Ethernet cables or coaxial cables," he says. "Today's smart home also needs an experienced HVAC worker and IT person to make sure all your devices are installed and connected correctly, including your lighting, thermostat, cameras and more."

## CLEANING UP AFTER UNCLE BILL

Northern Westchester is filled with homes built prior to World War II, and while these homes may be chock full of character, they're also potentially dangerous. Pellucci says your top concern should be the possible old-fashioned solutions.

"Many of the older homes in our area used knob and tube wiring," Pellucci explains. "This wiring is often ungrounded and insulated with cloth. Over time, the cloth insulation decomposes, making the wires at risk of heating up and causing fires."

He says aluminum wiring is another cause for concern.

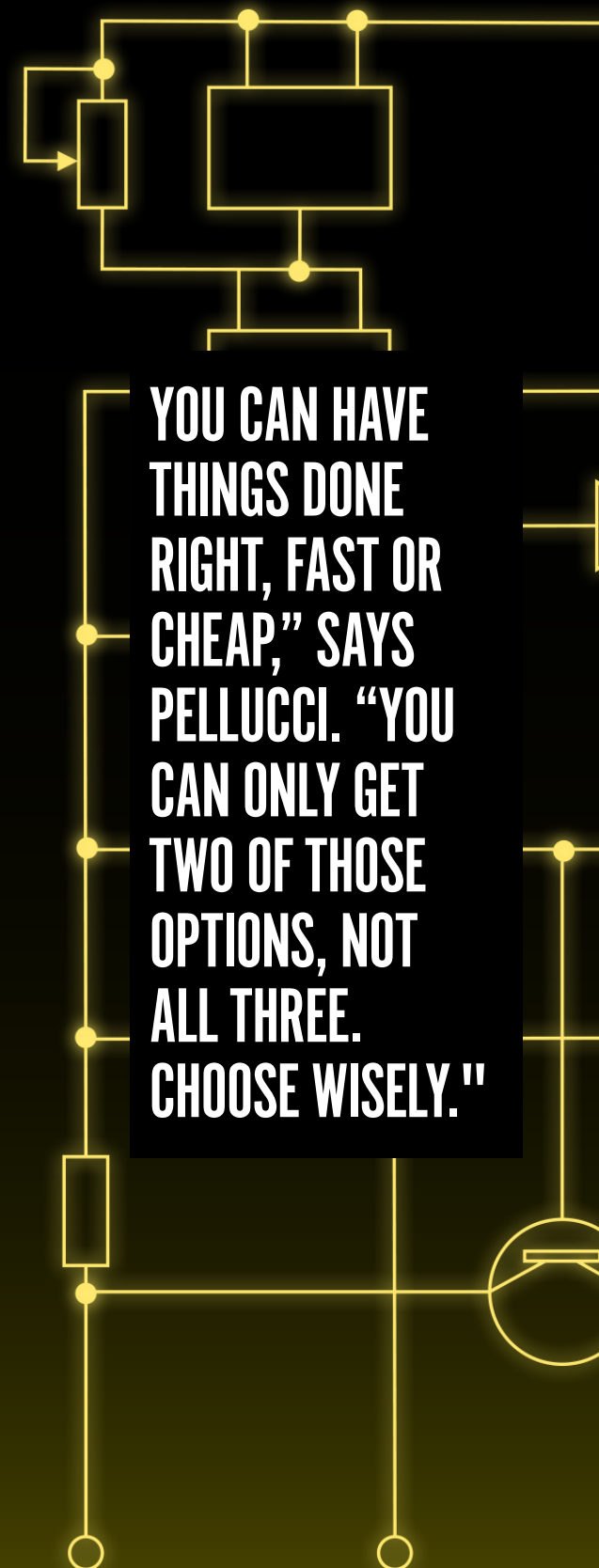
"During World War II, copper was used for bullets, so electricians often used aluminum wiring in its place," he explains. "This is a problem because when aluminum heats up, it flexes and moves, which can be a fire hazard."

When checking for older wires, Pellucci recommends starting in the basement. Often, knob and tube wiring will be fed through the beams in the ceiling. They're usually held in place by white plastic tubes and rubber or cloth insulation. If found, this wiring should be replaced.

Weigert adds that substandard breaker panels are another issue in older homes.

"Two hundred amps is an adequate amount of power for a breaker nowadays, but older homes don't often have that," she says. "If you're looking to renovate an old home, don't forget to upgrade the breaker panel so that your renovated house can get the power it needs."

But, she says the most concerning thing about older homes is not knowing who did what before you became its rightful owner.



YOU CAN HAVE THINGS DONE RIGHT, FAST OR CHEAP," SAYS PELLUCCI. "YOU CAN ONLY GET TWO OF THOSE OPTIONS, NOT ALL THREE. CHOOSE WISELY."



“I’m worried about what Uncle Bill did decades ago,” she explains. “Did he use the right kind of wiring? Did he leave live wires and live junction boxes inside the walls, or did he terminate them as he should have? It’s hard to know those answers when you’re dealing with an older home. That’s the scariest part.”

## PLANNING FOR TOMORROW

With rapidly changing technology all around us, our homes must now adapt as well. Home theaters, audio centers, lighting and smart home solutions often require a series of low-voltage wiring and Ethernet cables throughout the home. But, be careful of who you hire – this type of wiring demands an expertise outside of the standard realm of electricians, often calling for an IT professional to visit your home.

“Understanding how to run Ethernet cable is entirely different from standard electrical wires,” says Benza. “One bend or kink in a Cat 6 Ethernet wire can

compromise the consistency and cause problems with your internet, cameras and more.”

When you upgrade to new wiring, Benza recommends having a dedicated room in your house for all servers and data.

“Ideally, this room should be temperature controlled and centrally located either in the basement or on a middle floor,” Benza explains. “From there, wiring can octopus out to the surrounding rooms, which will prevent problems with the cables and be much more cost-effective by avoiding longer cable runs across the house.”

Other considerations should be made for wall-mounted TVs, home theaters and high-end audio systems which, according to Benza, should be grounded and isolated on a 20 amp. breaker to avoid electrical problems and noise in the wires.

“You don’t want to overload anything,” he warns. “One

brown-out can destroy some very expensive equipment. It’s better to do it right than to regret it later.”

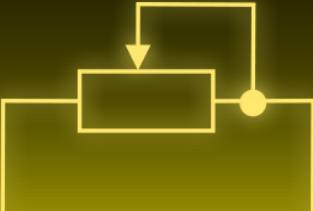
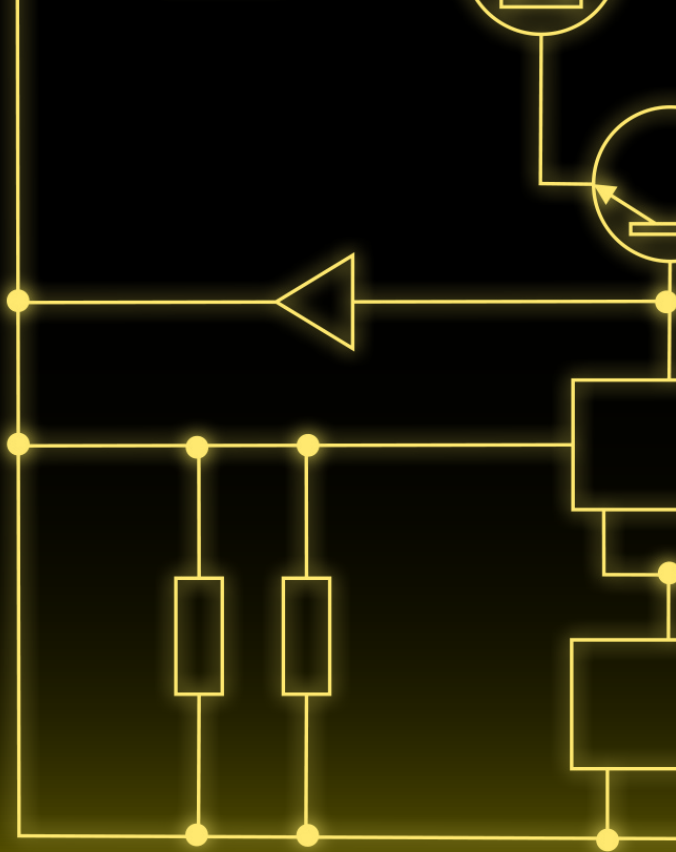
## WHO TO HIRE WHEN

To recap, here’s who you should hire for each type of job:

For safety, lean on your standard electrician to identify code standards, correct past mistakes and avoid future ones.

For future planning, identify the limitations your standard electrician may have, and don’t be afraid to call for backup. The right IT expert can save you a great deal of money (and frustration) in the long run.

And remember, the right team will help keep the lights on, and the Wi-Fi working, for years to come. KC





# ATLANTIC APPLIANCE co.


## The Brands You Trust. The Service You Expect.

With two locations in Mount Kisco and Yorktown, Atlantic Appliance is the name you can rely on for timely service and the highest quality brands. We provide complete delivery and installation to ensure your experience is seamless and easy.

Mount Kisco: (914) 666-6100  
128 Main Street Mount Kisco, NY

Yorktown Heights: (914) 962-2500  
50 Triangle Center Yorktown Heights, NY

[atlanticappliance.com](http://atlanticappliance.com)



## I love selling homes in Pound Ridge.

There's an artsy, eclectic, hometown spirit in Pound Ridge that's part of the community, and it's reflected in the shops, restaurants and small businesses throughout the town. It's a destination for families, downsizers, artists, entrepreneurs, architects, writers and nature enthusiasts.

I always say, "If you feel at home here, it's because you belong here!"

**Kathleen Usherwood**  
Licensed Real Estate Salesperson  
M: 917.488.7870  
[kathleen.usherwood@compass.com](mailto: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.



# TRUCKS, TACOS AND TRANSFORMERS

Meet Fox Peck, a four-year-old preschooler from Katonah. When he's not dreaming about trucks and Transformers he's devouring tacos and searching for leprechauns.

BY JUSTIN NEGARD

What are your favorite toys?  
Transformers are my favorite toys.

Who is your favorite transformer?  
Optimus Prime is my favorite transformer, because he transforms into a flatbed truck.

What is your favorite holiday?  
Christmas!



What would you buy if you had \$100?  
I would buy a big Bumblebee transformer that I can drive around town.

What is your favorite thing to do at school?  
Catching the leprechaun is my favorite thing to do at school, although I haven't caught any yet.

Have you caught any leprechauns yet?  
No, but we made leprechaun traps.



What do you want to be when you grow up?  
I want to be a fireman because they have fire trucks.

Is there anything else you'd like to share about yourself or your life that you enjoy?  
I love trucks and trucky things.

KC

What's your favorite color?  
I like red and yellow the best.



Why do you like red and yellow?  
I like how they look together.

What is your favorite food?  
Tacos with meat and guacamole are my favorite food.



Who would win in a fight between Optimus Prime and Megatron?  
Megatron would win because he is super strong.



MAKE THIS PLACE YOURS



LIVE MUSIC - MEDITERRANEAN FOOD - COCKTAILS  
PRIVATE EVENTS - OPEN MIC - CABARET

**JAZZ**  
ON MAIN

37 S Moger Av. Mt. Kisco NY

[www.jazzonmain.com](http://www.jazzonmain.com)



Katonah's premiere Early Education Preschool

A Warm, Creative and Stimulating Environment  
For Young Children. Programs for Two's,  
Three's & Four's

44 Edgemont Road Katonah, NY • 914.232.7825  
[www.katonahplaycare.com](http://www.katonahplaycare.com)



The **Behavior Clinic**  
FOR CATS AND DOGS



A Veterinarian's Oath

Being admitted to the profession of veterinary medicine, I solemnly swear to use my scientific knowledge and skills for the benefit of society through the protection of animal health and welfare.

Dr. Sarah J. Cutler, Founder



For more information,  
please call: (914) 486-0580  
or email: [behaviorclinicforcatsanddogs@gmail.com](mailto:behaviorclinicforcatsanddogs@gmail.com)  
29 Haines Road, Bedford Hills NY  
[www.behaviorclinicforcatsanddogs.com](http://www.behaviorclinicforcatsanddogs.com)

All team members are  
Certified Fear Free® Professionals



# WARR;ORS for MENTAL HEALTH

BY MADDIE SLOGOFF  
& GIA MILLER

PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
ELENA WOLFE

When then eighth grader Grace O'Hanlon joined North Salem High School's new Warr;ors Mental Health and Wellness Club (the ";" is meant to signify the pause that people take when struggling with mental health and they choose to continue their life), she did so thanks to her mom's encouragement.

"I struggled a lot with my self-confidence, and I wasn't really good at putting myself out there," O'Hanlon remembers. "So my mom pushed me to join Warr;ors to help me get out of my shell a little bit and to make some new friends."

One year later, O'Hanlon did the same for her friend Sam Vilkelis. She convinced Vilkelis to attend a meeting in ninth grade, and Vilkelis decided to join. Little did they know that they would later go on to become co-presidents for their junior and senior years, or that their leadership would have a residual impact throughout their school district.

Members of the Warr;ors Club are

advocates who support their classmates who may be impacted by mental illness; they also teach and encourage compassion towards others. The club gives students the opportunity to gain experience in public speaking and attracts those considering a career in the helping professions, or anyone who is seeking connection within their school community.

O'Hanlon and Vilkelis say they've grown so much since they first joined Warr;ors.

"I used to struggle with public speaking, and I didn't really have a lot of confidence when I was younger," O'Hanlon says. "I've definitely gained a lot more public speaking skills, and I put myself out there a lot more. There's just so much that I've learned from this club, and if I never joined in eighth grade, I would probably still be the same person I used to be."

"I agree," Vilkelis chimes in. "Especially about public speaking. It can be a lot to try to talk to kids your age. Sometimes it can be very nerve-racking. And I do struggle with some

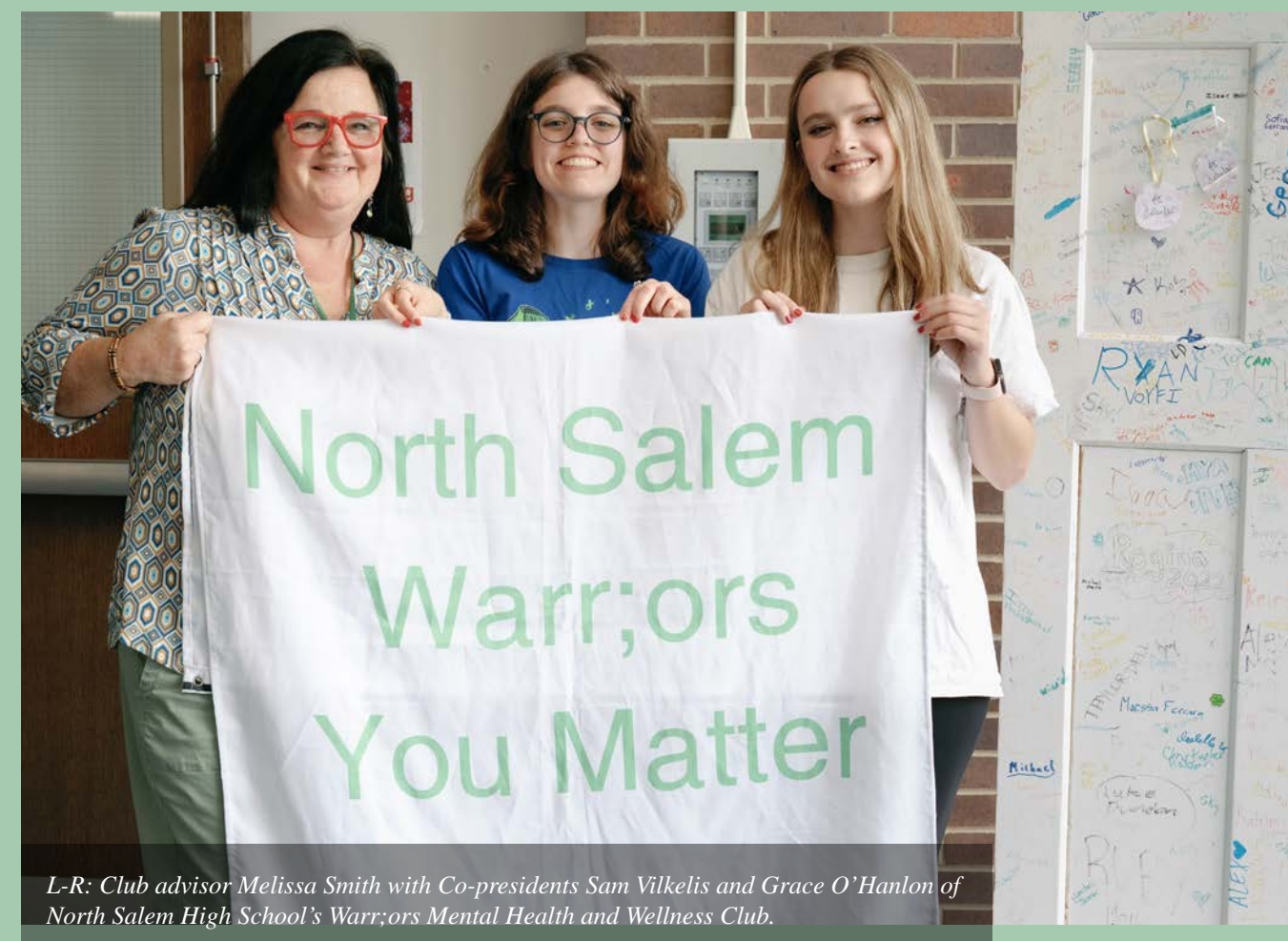
social anxiety, but it's helped a lot. I think it's a really great way to help people grow. Because if you never try, then you don't grow."

Melissa Smith, the club's advisor and a school counselor, has watched them both grow over the years. She says they've "matured into great public speakers," who are now able to capture the attention of the sixth and seventh graders they present to.

"I've watched them become more confident in themselves," she says. "And I think they've both learned to manage their own challenges much better – they are now much more open about discussing their personal challenges with others."

## DEMONSTRATING SYMPATHY AND UNITY

O'Hanlon and Vilkelis say their favorite annual event is P.S. I Love You Day, which focuses on suicide



L-R: Club advisor Melissa Smith with Co-presidents Sam Vilkelis and Grace O'Hanlon of North Salem High School's Warr;ors Mental Health and Wellness Club.



awareness. On that day, the club spreads the message that students are never alone. Everyone at their school is encouraged to wear purple, which demonstrates they’re standing up against bullying.

“That’s one day that really stands out to me,” says O’Hanlon. “The whole school comes together and wears purple, and we see so many kids being nice to each other that day.”

The event also promotes mental health awareness with the ultimate goal of preventing suicide.

“I love that day,” Vilkelis adds. “Because the whole day really feels like an ‘I love you’ day. You should remember to be nice every day, but that day is really a big reminder to remember those people who are there for you and just tell them how you care for them and how you love them. And just to be kind.”

“This year, the theme was labels and we set up a table at our school,” Vilkelis continues. “During the lunch periods, kids came over to us and we told them to write down insults they’d been called. Then, they had to crumple up the insults and throw them out. It was a really great cleansing activity. It felt good to get rid of the paper because it demonstrated that the labels didn’t matter anymore once they threw them out.”

The day was started by sisters Jaimie and Brooke Dipalma. One day, their father, Joseph Dipalma, dropped Brooke off at school, and she told her dad, “I love you,” to which he said “I love you” back. Little did she know that he would take his own life a few hours later – hence the name P.S. I Love You Day.

The sisters believe that an entire community wearing purple demonstrates that there are always people around them who care, people who they can turn to if they are struggling.

This year, Vilkelis and O’Hanlon interviewed the sisters before the event. On P.S. I Love You Day, they broadcast their interview throughout the school. The goal was to help everyone understand the significance of wearing the color purple on that day.

“I think it was so impactful,” says O’Hanlon. “The sisters spoke about the day and their thoughts about it. I

think it really influenced and impacted everyone, especially about what the day means.”

Both believe this day helped bring the school together, which is the sisters’ intended goal. The sisters believe that “tragedy should not be the force for togetherness; togetherness should be the force that ends tragedies.”

## COMMUNITY OF WARRIORS

Every May, the club hosts a mental health fair to unite everyone for a series of communal activities, as well as showcase local vendors and mental health resources.

“I know that students love having the mental health fair every May,” says O’Hanlon. “It’s really impactful. We have vendors from different organizations there so students can learn about them. They’ll have activities at their station, and it helps people who are struggling learn about different places that can help them get through a tough situation.”

“And, because it’s outside, instead of in the classrooms, it’s also a lot of fun,” she continues. “They play basketball instead of just looking at their phones. And, last year, we had a snow cone truck; this year, we’ll have a smoothie truck. So it’s a fun way to get the word out, celebrate our differences and have a nice day.”

The club has received feedback from students that it’s as much a fun day as it is an insightful one, as it really does help people find much-needed resources to ensure that they do not struggle alone or in silence.

## OPENING THE DOOR

In North Salem Middle School, you will find a door with signatures from sixth graders over the past several years. Why, you might wonder? This door is part of another Warr;ors project, appropriately called, The Door Project.

The Door Project was started by Josh Yandt, a student at another high school.

“He had a lot going on in his life and a lot of trauma,” Vilkelis explains. “But

he started holding the door for people every day – he just smiled and greeted them. He made a video that we now show to people because it demonstrates that you don’t know what people are going through. So, something as simple as just smiling at someone, saying hello, or just being kind and holding the door could make someone’s day. It’s a way to show kids that actions have an impact and little things matter.”

“So, we actually have a door at our school, a physical door, in our hallway,” she continues. “And the sixth graders sign it every year. We had it at a table years ago when it was new. But now, every year, the sixth graders get excited to sign it. It’s a nice way to remind them that the little things do matter.”

## SETTING THE TONE

The Warr;ors Club hosts several other events throughout the year, including Bullying Awareness Month where they speak to middle school students about the impacts of bullying, several events related to gratitude and reminding people of what they’re thankful for, and they also host a dance for students in the school’s STEP program.

“The STEP program is for kids with Autism and other disabilities,” Vilkelis explains. “Last year, we had a dance with them, and I think that was one of my favorite things that we’ve ever done as a club. It made such a positive impact, and the faculty loved it, too. Everyone was so happy. I think the opportunity for the kids to have a dance was just amazing.”

Serving as co-presidents for the past two years, O’Hanlon and Vilkelis have made a tremendous impact on the club.

“They’re so compassionate,” says Smith. “They’re genuine and empathetic. They bring their own personal experiences to the table and because of that other kids see how real they are and feel comfortable talking about their own struggles.”

And Smith says they’ve also helped get an important message across to everyone at their school.

“Students are the front line,” says Smith, “and we have to acknowledge and respect that.” **KC**



*In our September/October 2022 issue, we featured teen actress Madison Lagares. At that time, she had already filmed the first season of “Grease: Rise of the Pink Ladies” on Paramount Plus, playing a young Frenchy. We kept her secret, but now we’re ready to tell you all about Lagares’ latest gig.*

As an actress, taking on an iconic role is stressful – there’s a lot to live up to. But when 15-year-old Pound Ridge resident Madison Lagares learned about auditions for the role of a young Frenchy on “Grease: Rise of the Pink Ladies,” she knew she had to try.

Her agent, Natasha Marken at Take 3 Talent, and manager, Sherry Kayne at Moxy Artists, knew she had a shot. They were right. After only four auditions, Lagares landed the part.

“When she first auditioned, she was told not to do the Frenchy voice, so she didn’t,” says her mom, Maria Tenaud. “But right before the second audition, she looked at me and said, ‘I’m gonna do it.’ I asked her if she was serious.

I was worried that if she didn’t follow the rules, they’d say forget it. But she wanted to, even though it was a really big risk. It paid off because as soon as they heard it, they fell in love with her.”

“Over 1,500 girls auditioned worldwide,” Tenaud continues. “Later, the director told me that she nailed it in the first round. I think they had her read for the role with other people so they could piece her on-screen family together. They did a lot of casting around her.”

If you haven’t seen the show or read the reviews, here’s a spoiler alert: Lagares nails it – the voice, the mannerisms, everything. She completely embodies Frenchy.

Lagares learned she got the part in November 2021, and she began filming in January 2022. But she and fellow castmate Emma Shannon, who plays a young Betty Rizzo, were forced to keep their roles a secret until the show aired on April 6, 2023. The show is a prequel to the movie “Grease,” telling the tale of how the Pink Ladies came to be.

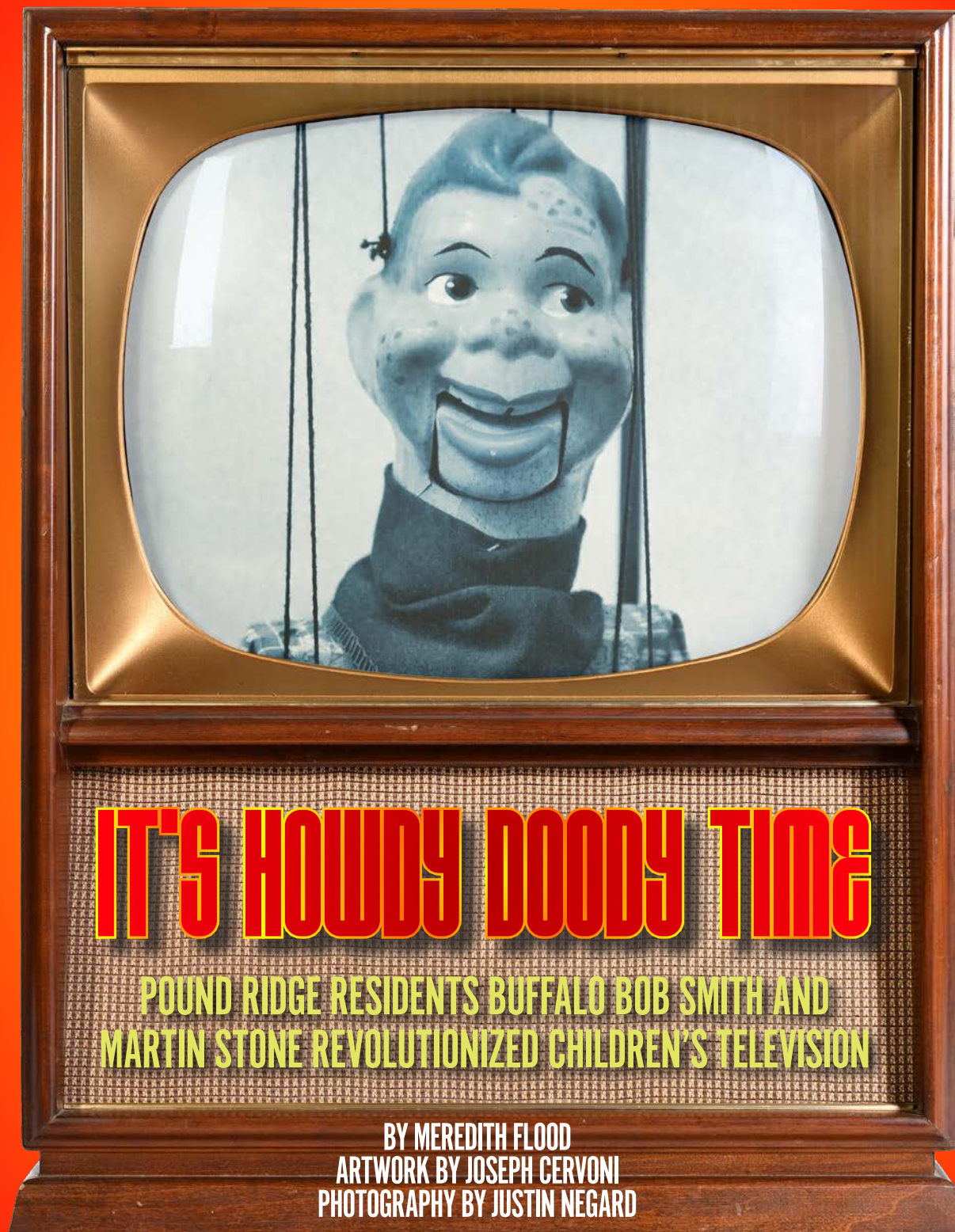
(“It’s like ‘Wicked’ to ‘The Wizard of Oz,’” says Lagares.) It wasn’t until the first episode was released that everyone learned two of the original Pink Ladies would appear in the show.

“Filming the first season was extremely exciting,” says Lagares. “I’ve always loved ‘Grease,’ and to step back in time and film in an exact replica of Frenchy’s house was amazing. The set designers were incredible, and everything was meticulously done. It was like doing a period piece. Everything from the costumes to the hair – it was all perfect.”

As of our deadline, they haven’t received the official green light for season two, but Tenaud says it’s very likely. The show has taken off in the U.S., South America and Europe. And Lagares is all in for another season.

“For me, ‘Grease’ is the best of both worlds,” she says. “I love Broadway musicals, and I love TV and film. Incorporating everything into one is probably a once-in-a-lifetime experience. It’s pretty surreal.” **KC**





## "SAY KIDS, WHAT TIME IS IT?"

That familiar phrase was first asked to a studio audience full of children in New York's Rockefeller Plaza at 5:30 p.m. on December 27, 1947. In a sing-song voice, they responded, "It's Howdy Doody time!" and a legend was born.

Howdy Doody became the most beloved children's show in the country and television's first hit series, running until September of 1960. But the show originally got its start on the radio.

In 1943, Buffalo resident Bob Smith (he later moved to Pound Ridge) was invited to team up with another Buffalo-based morning man, Clint Beuhlman, for the "Early Date at Hengerer" radio show on WBEN. The publicity from the morning show grabbed the attention of executives at NBC in New York City. NBC's morning radio show, which was broadcast on their flagship station WEAf, invited Smith to bring his show on the air. The show was originally called the Triple B Ranch program (the three Bs stood for Big Brother Bob). Smith, the show's creator, welcomed the audience with a country accent, saying, "Oh, ho, ho, howdy doody, boys and girls," which was a spin on the popular Western greeting "howdy doo."

That same year, Martin Stone, also a Pound Ridge resident and Smith's agent, met with NBC's programming head Warren Wade and presented him with an idea: put Howdy Doody on television. On December 27, 1947, the show "Puppet Playhouse" appeared on NBC television with Stone and E. Roger Muir as the producers. The name was changed to "Howdy Doody" during the second or third week of February 1948.

## MAKING TV HISTORY

"Howdy Doody" was shown on NBC five days a week until it was moved to Saturdays only in 1956. It was one of the first shows produced at NYC's Rockefeller Center and one of the first shows to run every weekday on NBC.

But it wasn't a seamless transition from radio to television. Since there was no Howdy Doody puppet needed for the radio, the original Howdy Doody marionette was created for television by Frank Paris, who didn't finish carving the puppet until after the first few shows aired. And once it was complete, everyone agreed that it was hideous. Nicknamed "Ugly Howdy," the original marionette didn't last long.

While the marionette was being remodeled, the show masked his disappearance with a tale that taught kids about the political process. While President Harry S.

Truman was campaigning for re-election against New York Governor Thomas E. Dewy, Howdy was "on the road" campaigning for "President of all the kids in America."

When Walt Disney Studios completed the new Howdy, he returned to the show with a friendly face consisting of 48 freckles – one to represent each state in America.

## KOWABUNGA!

"Howdy Doody" influenced children's television shows by providing educational life lessons through a mixture of reality and fantasy. The show took place in Doodyville, a circus town that included over 20 puppet and human inhabitants – about eight appeared regularly.

Smith, who was called Buffalo Bob on the show, served as the show's host. He wore a leather fringe shirt with a buffalo image sewn on the back, matching fringed pants and a belt with decorative metal pieces.

However, the real star, Howdy Doody, was a wooden cowboy, dressed in blue jeans, a red bandana and a cowboy hat. He was voiced by Smith, who was neither a ventriloquist nor a puppeteer – he pre-recorded all of Howdy's lines.

Chief Thunderthud, played by Bill Le Cornec, was a not-so-bright "Indian" character whose catchphrase was "Kowabonga!" Thunderthud was the villainous leader of Ooragnak Indian tribe (which is "kangaroo" spelled backward), and Howdy befriended the chief after teaching him a lesson about humanity in one of the early episodes.





Clarabell the Clown (originally played by Bob Keeshan, and later by Lew Anderson) was one of the most important and fun-loving characters and the favorite of many children. Clarabell drove Buffalo Bob crazy with “attacks” from his seltzer bottle. Clarabelle was mute and communicated through toots on his horn, which the cast would mysteriously interpret.

Princess Summerfall WinterSpring of the Tinka Tonka tribe was originally introduced as a puppet. About four years later, Judy Tyler took over the role (in human form) and became the object of affection for many little boys around the country. After Tyler’s sudden death, the role was played by Linda Marsh.

Flub-a-Dub, who Buffalo Bob brought back after a two-week vacation to South America, was a puppet who was part duck, cat, giraffe, Cocker Spaniel, seal, raccoon and Dachshund, and he was gifted with the memory of an elephant. Flub-a-Dub, who only ate flowers, influenced many kids to follow his diet plan, much to the chagrin of their parents.

Some of the other main puppets included Mayor Phineas T. Bluster who had a family full of brothers, Hedi Doody – Howdy’s sister who was voiced by Norman MacMillan and Donna Miller, and Dilly Dally who was one of Howdy’s pals.

## THE PEANUT GALLERY

The live studio audience featured children sitting in bleachers – they were known as the “peanut gallery.” Throughout the show, the camera would pan to the children when they laughed at the show's antics. Each episode opened with kids singing the theme song: “It’s Howdy Doody Time.” Different kids were members of the Peanut Gallery for each show.

Pound Ridge resident Peggy Kerner and her sister were two of the many lucky peanut gallery members.

“I was about 10 or 11 years old,” Kerner recalls. “I remember seeing Howdy Doody, Buffalo Bob and Princess Summerfall WinterSpring and feeling excited. On the side of the stage was a little boxed-off area where kids sat, and I think there were two rows of kids. So, I’m guessing there were probably about 20-30 kids every day.”

Another peanut gallery member was Pound Ridge resident Mary Anne Condon.

“I grew up at the age where TV had just started,” she says. “I remember initially listening to the radio, and I especially remember the long intro. I know I was on the show, but I was so young that I don’t really remember the experience. Our childhood was very different from

today. Back then, TV shows were less sophisticated and more innocent.”

## HOWDY’S INFLUENCE

Smith dug into a Jell-O pudding topped with whipped cream. Howdy and Smith told kids about the importance of brushing their teeth with Colgate toothpaste. Howdy, Clarabell and Smith shared the magic of Wonderbread. Smith packed Twinkies in Clarabell’s lunchbox. The peanut gallery joined in a sing-along about the three musketeers on the chocolate bars packaging.

Howdy Doody and the cast were possibly the world’s earliest influencers.

“He was one of the first to have his picture on products,” Karen Cooper, the former president of the Pound Ridge Historical Society, remembers. “Kids wanted to buy things that Howdy Doody recommended.”

When “Howdy Doody” began, many homes couldn’t afford their own set, but Howdy was so popular that kids found a way to watch him.

“One of the few TVs in Pound Ridge was at Emily Shaw’s inn, so a group of us would go over to watch ‘Howdy Doody,’” Ebie Wood, a mostly lifelong Pound Ridge resident, remembers. “The town was so small that all the kids knew each other, and we all watched ‘Howdy Doody’ together.”

## “GOODBYE, KIDS”

“Howdy Doody” aired its final show on September 24, 1960. Its popularity and ratings began to decline around 1955 when “The Mickey Mouse Club” premiered.

Howdy Doody’s goodbye episode was the end of an era, and according to Howdy lovers, one of the saddest moments in television history.

Before the finale, it was announced that Clarabell would have a big surprise, and that surprise broke many hearts around the country. The five-hour finale ended with a closeup of Clarabell, who, with a tear in his eye, spoke his first and only words:

“Goodbye, kids.” 



# CARINE & CATE

Your real estate resource for Northern Westchester.

When you're ready to buy or sell in Northern Westchester, you need local experts who know the market inside and out - and the finesse to help you navigate it.

As longtime Westchester residents with 20+ years of experience and over 500M in sales, we're the team to guide you every step of the way.

**SPRING OFFERING!**  Not quite ready to list but want to take advantage of the Spring bloom? Contact us for a complimentary exterior photo shoot.

Where experience meets innovation.



9 Pamela Lane  
4 BD 3 BA 4230 SF \$1,099,000



24 Ridge Street  
3 BD 3 BA 2500 SF \$1,325,000



11 Piping Brook Lane  
5 BD 5 BA 6867 SF \$3,795,000



54 Smith Ridge Road  
6 BD 5 BA 3757 SF \$1,100,000



11 West Lane (buyer representation)  
4 BD 3 BA 3303 SF \$1,075,000



21 Old Pond Road  
3 BD 3 BA 2600 SF \$910,000



10 West Lane (buyer representation)  
4 BD 5 BA 3496 SF \$1,350,000



165 Jay Court  
2 BD 3 BA 1575 SF \$480,000



**Carine Nowak**  
Lic. R.E. Salesperson  
M: 914.490.9877  
carinenowak@compass.com



**Cate Bauer**  
Lic. R.E. Salesperson  
M: 914.582.9898  
catebauer@compass.com





# Reframing Your Mental Health Condition

By Rich Monetti

Artwork by Andrea Jaffee

If you deal with the symptoms of anxiety or depression, you might view them as scourges that hinder your day-to-day well-being. But it doesn't have to be that way. In fact, if you're able to view your symptoms in a different and more positive manner, you may actually learn to live with them instead of in spite of them.

Nevertheless, the greater the urge for relief, the harder it can be to actually lift the veil, according to Andrea Jaffee, a Katonah-based licensed clinical social worker (LCSW). Jaffee says that this approach is a lot less "all or nothing," and a degree in psychology isn't needed to follow the logic.

"If you say, 'I don't want to get rid of all of my negative feelings, I just want to decrease their intensity,' that's much more manageable," Jaffee explains. "It's helpful to feel anxious and unhappy sometimes, but we don't want it to get in the way of our daily living, causing us consistent unhappiness or discomfort."

Dr. Richard Catanzaro, the chair of the psychiatry department at Northern Westchester Hospital, agrees.

"It's basically looking at something from a different perspective," he explains. "It's taking something that might seem negative and looking at the positive aspects."

## EMBRACING YOUR FEELINGS

Seeking out the positive sounds easy, but an anxious person may beg to differ. However, what you might not realize is that your symptoms reveal positive aspects about you, and Jaffee says those should be embraced.

If we don't see the positives or benefits, then we're working against it. If we keep saying this is bad and there's nothing good about it, we'll never be able to manage it.

For instance, a person who is anxious about going into their boss's office to resolve an issue is probably an employee that's good for business. They care about their job, seek necessary change and are aware of their surroundings and the people in them.

"Anxiety lets you know that something's wrong," she says. "If you didn't have any anxiety (about the problem), how would you care or have the motivation to fix it?"

"Additionally, anxiety can protect you from potentially dangerous situations and motivates you to study for that test," she continues. "While social anxiety demonstrates that you care about others and what they think, which is a good thing."

Catanzaro also sees the issue in a larger sense.

"If people don't have some amount of anxiety, how much work will they put into a big task," he asks.

When it comes to depression, if you experience any symptoms of this condition, whether officially diagnosed or not, there are benefits to being aware of your own suffering. For example, depression can mean you're more empathetic towards others because it's something you've experienced yourself.

Depression demonstrates that you're willing to wrestle with pain and deal with it instead of running from it. It also shows that you have high standards for what is (or who creates) a good, positive environment for you.

But that certainly can't be the case if your negative thoughts and feelings cause noticeable frustration in stressful situations, right? Not so fast! Jaffee points out that emotionality can translate into a real desire to hit the high notes and/or explain your unquenchable drive.

"It motivates you to take action and stick up for yourself," says Jaffee. "It also shows that you value fairness, integrity, kindness and honesty."





# PREVENTING THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL

Reframing also makes it less likely that people will engage in harmful, distorted thoughts. ‘I’m a loser; I’m a failure; I’m no good at this’ – these types of thoughts are called labeling.

“That can cause depression,” Jaffee explains. “Instead of labeling yourself, ask yourself, ‘How are these thoughts and feelings beneficial to me and what good things do they say about me?’”

Reframing is a practice, and the more you can think of it in this way, the fewer negative thoughts and feelings you’ll have during intense moments, and in general. Soon, you’ll begin to understand where your thoughts can get in the way of functioning and what your trigger points are.

“You owe it to yourself to consider those positive attributes about your thoughts and feelings,” says Catanzaro.

But, when your negative thoughts and feelings do take over, reassess the situation. Catanzaro recommends doing what’s called a chain analysis which involves asking yourself the following questions:

- What went wrong?
- What went right?
- What was I thinking and feeling as the event unraveled?

Then in therapy, the process lends itself to a reflective mindset that helps you unpack.

“So, you begin to learn, ‘This is who I am, how I behave and how I react,’” he says. “Then, you can try and tease what factors you brought to those moments.”

With all this information now at your disposal, you’ll no longer struggle with regret.

“It impacts you in so far as recognizing that the situation wasn’t a failure,” he explains. “You’ll be able to say, ‘I learned something about myself by putting myself in this situation, and I may do something differently next time.’”

As for when to do the work, that depends on the person and the incident. But Cantanzaro says that doing so in the moment is often not the best time to sort out and reframe. Nonetheless, self-awareness and mindfulness are the quickest routes to lessening the burden.

“Our society is all about multitasking,” Jaffee points out. “If we could just slow down and do one thing at a time, then we’ll enhance our ability to be mindful.”

However, even when we’re mindful, we won’t be able to reframe our distress in real time. But being in the present makes us more aware of what occurred so we can process it later.

# PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

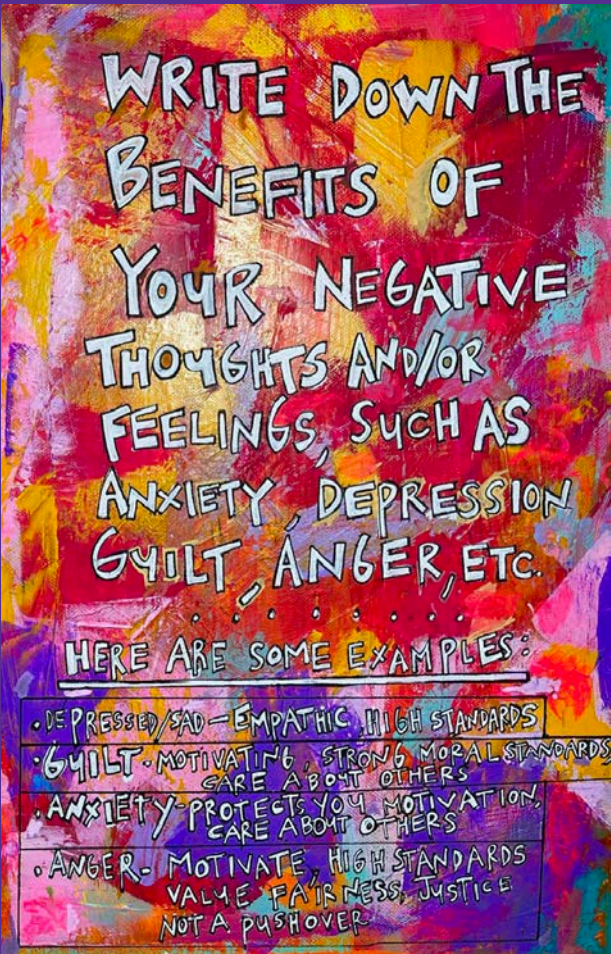
Additionally, meditation, a common “trick” of the therapeutic trade, shouldn’t be dismissed. It’s an integral component of long-term success.

“Meditation helps you see your thoughts, and when you see your thoughts, you can change your thoughts,” Jaffee explains. “Eventually, your mind sort of corrects itself.”

Thus, the more you practice, the easier it becomes. You’ll begin to rationalize your distorted thoughts, and with repeated application, it will become a habit.

Catanzaro agrees and sees reframing as an effective way to grow. But the work must be put in.

“It takes time, effort and patience,” he concludes. KC



Workplace issues? Relationship struggles? Family conflicts?  
Life Transition? Health crisis? Trauma or loss?

# Discover peace.

Dr. Marc Abrams, Ph.D.  
Over 30 years experience.



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

CHROMA  
Fine Art Gallery

# MonoChroma

May 16 – June 18  
Opening Reception: May 20, 4 – 8 p.m.

chromafineartgallery.com  
194 Katonah ave, Katonah, NY 10536

©NORMAN GALINSKY

# BREAK OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE



JAX'D FITNESS

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



# Happiness is the Best Medicine for You and Your Dog

By Dr. Sarah J. Cutler

**D**ogs have evolved alongside humans for thousands of years. We've bred them to work for us: herding, hunting, guarding, policing, sniffing out drugs and disease, working in search and rescue, and serving people with physical or mental health conditions. However, most dogs in the United States are companions and treated like family members.

Some dogs are more skilled than others at living amongst us, depending on their trainability or ability to "go with the flow" of human life. We humans love dogs who share our interests, whether it's playing with balls, going for hikes, eating good food or enjoying chill time in front of the TV. However, our pets can experience fear, anxiety, depression and more when we set unrealistic expectations and/or don't recognize that our dogs are unique sentient beings with individual needs.

Taking care of a dog is a long-term commitment. Most dogs have a life expectancy of 10-13 years, with smaller dogs often living into the mid-teens or later. So, there's a lot to cover in keeping a pup healthy and happy.

## PAWZ TO PONDER AND PREPARE

Before bringing a new dog into your home, ask yourself if you have time in your life to care for a canine. Do your research and discuss the pros and cons of your potential new pet with certified trainers or behavior consultants, veterinarians, rescue groups and groomers. If you choose to buy a puppy from a breeder, find one within driving distance so you can meet them and select your new pup in person. Please do not buy a puppy from a pet store or a faraway source that offers an abundance of puppies in all shapes and colors – they're likely from puppy mills.

Rescuing a dog is wonderful. If you choose this path, take your time to make connections with well-organized groups that will help you find the right pet for you and your lifestyle.

## BUILD A HAPPY LIFE FOR YOUR DOG

Having a happy dog means routinely engaging with your dog in a positive manner and providing them with entertainment when you can't.

### DAILY OUTDOOR TIME

Daily doses of outdoor time with your dog are really important – it's a great bond-building activity and a chance for dogs to use their amazing noses to sniff and snuffle around, smell the breeze and see some sights.

Lynnie Lewis, a longtime multi-dog and -cat caretaker in Katonah says that each pet has its own personality, and it's our responsibility to understand their needs regarding nutrition, life at home, health, exercise and safety. When it comes to outdoor time, she creates separate routines that match each dog.

"I take all my dogs out in their fenced yard to sniff, romp and explore together before I take each one for their own walk," she explains. "Tutu, my youngest and anxious wire-haired Dachshund, and I do short outings as many days as possible. I try to explore quiet places and see other dogs she enjoys, building her confidence."

"My large dog, Lego, is a high-energy, sensitive dog who thrives on stimulation, such as chasing a ball, going out for walks and training," she continues. "I do these things for short periods of time each day. And both my vet and my dog trainer taught me that Lego should take me on a walk so he can sniff and lead the way while on his leash. It's mentally stimulating for him and helps him gain confidence and relax."

When safe, allow your dog to set the pace and direction. If you're struggling to walk your dog well, a trainer can help you with loose leash walking skills. Overly excited or nervous dogs will decompress when walking near or in the woods and away from vehicles.

### ENRICHMENT

Enrichment for all ages is important. The possibilities are endless from shredding boxes, digging, swimming, playing fetch or tug to sitting on a bench and watching the world go by. Offer meals on lick mats, snuffle mats and Kongs.

You can also give your dog nose or scent work – an indoor or outdoor activity that encourages foraging, sniffing out and detecting smells. Visit the American Kennel Club's website to learn how to get started.

### GENTLE LEADERSHIP AND REASSURANCE

The best way to help a nervous dog is to be gentle and offer lots of reassurance. Never force your dog into situations that make them uncomfortable.

"When he was 10 years old, Asher, a chocolate Labrador/Chesapeake mix rescued from South Carolina, came into our lives," says Julianne Giardina of South Salem. "He had a difficult heartworm case and was full of fears and anxieties. He had to adjust to another pet and our loud family of five. We worked hard to gain his trust, using several anti-anxiety methods advised by our vet, such as medications, lick mats, calming anti-anxiety bedding and a 'thunder-vest' for bad weather and storms. Thanks to all our efforts, Asher is now thriving in a consistent and structured environment. He greets new people in a friendly manner and has been such an important loving addition to our family. We are so thankful that we found him, and he has finally found his happy place with us."

### HUMAN COMPANIONSHIP

Most dogs need human companionship, and leaving your dog home alone all day can cause anxiety. Allowing your dog to sleep in your bedroom at night will help create a strong bond.

### PET WITH CONSENT

Did your pet pooch consent to being handled? If they come to you on their own and sit on or near you, that's usually a clear signal that they are seeking interaction. If they are sleeping, resting or eating, do not approach them – let them have time and space, just as you would like if you were napping or eating.

If they walk away when you're petting them, allow them to do so. If they stick around, lean in and have relaxed body language – it means they're likely consenting to be pet.

### SLEEP

Most dogs need up to 16 hours of sleep a day.

### VERBAL CUES

Calm and upbeat verbal cues will go a long way to building trust with your canine companion.

"Both of my dogs have their own theme song," says North Salem resident Kate Hintz. "This may sound crazy, but hear me out. When I was training our male lab a few years back, I had such a hard time with recall or the 'come' command; he was a runner and enjoyed taking off through our yard to the neighbors' houses instead of listening to me. I noticed that when I acted silly, he was much more willing to return than when I yelled 'COME' at the top of my lungs. So, I tried singing instead...and it worked! Just like using the dog's name, when they hear 'their' song, they know I'm addressing them. It almost feels like a secret we share. Sometimes I'll hum or whistle the song during more stressful situations, like cutting their nails, to reassure them. So, now I urge people to pick one of their favorite songs, insert their dog's name, and see what happens."

Stern reprimands and constant corrections can break down the relationship between humans and canines. It sets your dog up to be tense and avoid you, and it can even lead to irritability and aggression.

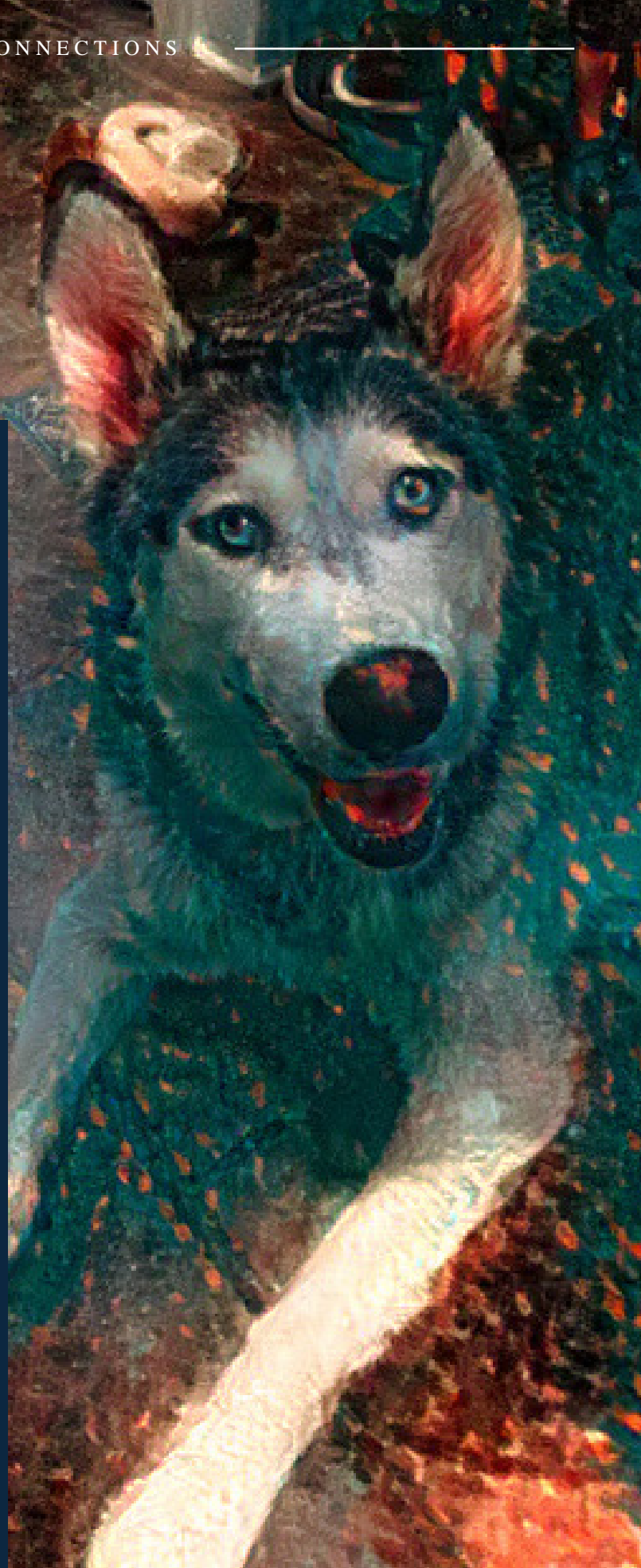
Dogs resent physical manipulation so avoid physically nudging or pushing them around. Also, avoid choking them with chains or prong collars.

## EMBRACE THE POWER OF POSITIVITY

A trusting relationship with our dog is the most powerful training tool we have. The ASPCA and the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior (AVSAB) promote positive reinforcement training, giving dogs choices and avoiding confrontational training methods.

North Salem breeder Greg Burke has raised Golden Retrievers since 1982 and advises families to use praise and patience with their pets.

"A well-behaved dog comes from treating them with respect and care," says





Burke. “Praise is a very important factor to reinforce the outcomes you are striving for. Treating a dog with respect will encourage the dog to want to please you. Most dogs are the happiest when you are happy with them. Patience is also an important part of creating a well-behaved canine family member. It takes years to bring up a child correctly, so don’t have unrealistic goals when bringing up your puppy.”

“Try to be aware of the efforts your dog uses to communicate with you,” he continues. “The tone of his bark, the noise of his whine or the movement of his body is an effort to talk to you and communicate his needs or wants. Successfully training your dog is a two-way street – being a dictator does not produce a happy and well-behaved dog.”

Counselor, author and trainer Lisa Edwards, CDBC, CPDT, KA of Three Dogs Training, who has been helping families and dogs in Westchester County and New York City for over 30 years, says that dogs, like humans, learn better when they are happy to partake in the lesson. A trusting relationship with our dog is the most powerful training tool we have.

“We foster the human-animal bond when we use joyful, fear-free methods to teach,” she explains. “Inviting our dogs to partake in the training process with the promise of rewards, instead of forcing them with the threat of punishment, builds our dog’s trust in us and strengthens our relationship with our dog.”

## HELPING EACH OTHER

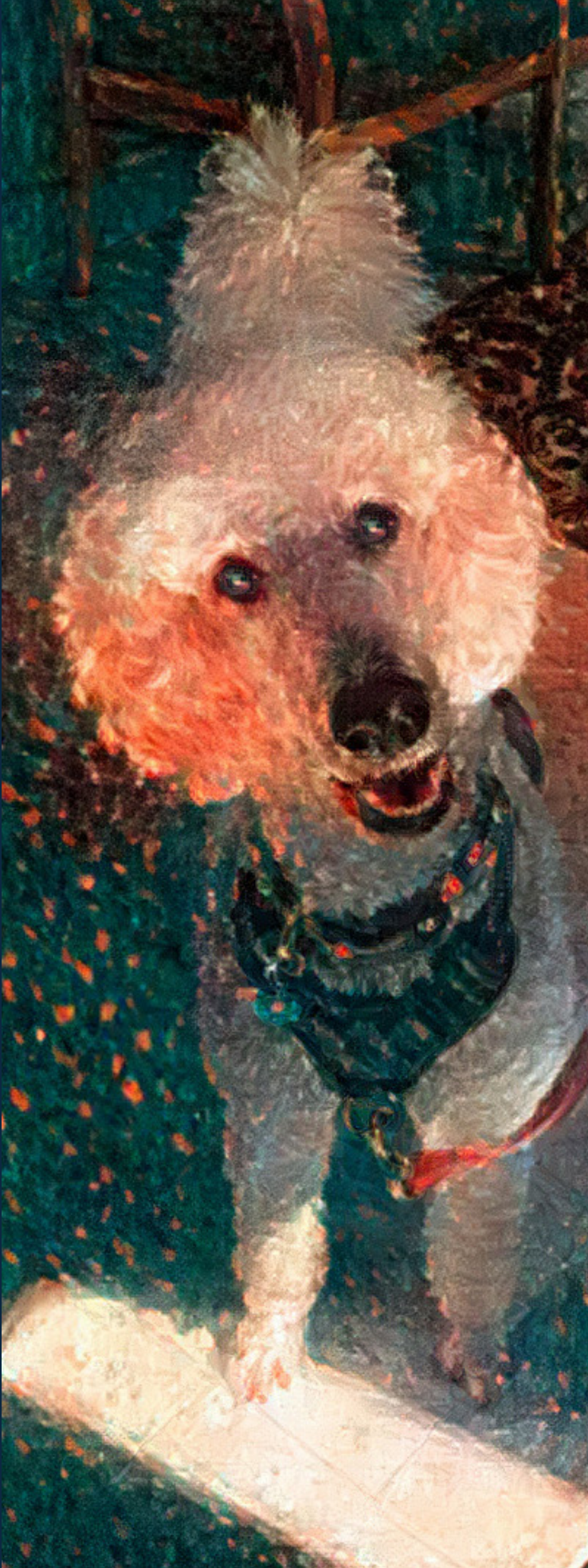
A happy dog can help humans have a good outlook on life, but for that to happen, we must accept and nurture our pet dog’s unique personality and needs.

“One thing I really admire about our dogs is that they are always up for ‘it’ – no matter what ‘it’ is,” says Hintz. “Whether it’s a walk to the mailbox or a hike on a local trail – our family’s dogs are always eager and willing to participate. It’s a trait I wish I had, especially on those days I’d rather spend on the couch. Keeping them engaged and excited about these spontaneous activities helps motivate me, and it’s just another example of how dogs support our mental health.”

Understanding your dog’s needs and treating them with respect will result in a happy dog and happy humans.

*\*\* A note to our readers: We want to clarify the advice in our March/April story titled “Knowing Your Cat Inside & Out.” There are benefits and risks to keeping your cat indoors and letting your cat roam outdoors. Knowing your cat – what their behaviors indicate and what they are capable of managing – along with the potential hazards in your specific indoor and outdoor environments is imperative to determine what is best for your pet and the other living beings around them. \*\**

KC



## LEARN HOW TO “READ DOG”

### A HAPPY DOG WILL:

- Appear to “smile” with a soft and open mouth (this isn’t the case for all dogs).
- Bark in a happy and excited tone.
- Have a good appetite.
- Have a loose wiggly body and tail (swishing like an “s” when trotting).
- Have a soft gaze.
- Have floppy or upright ears.
- Initiate play by pouncing from side to side, or giving a play bow.
- Play with toys.
- Seek interaction with their people.
- Settle, sleep and relax easily.

### SIGNS OF UNEASE OR PAIN INCLUDE:

- Air snapping.
- Avoiding eye contact.
- Being hypervigilant.
- Constantly scanning.
- Cowering.
- Crouched stance.
- Curled up and immobile (shut down).
- Ears flat or back.
- Flinching.
- Furrowed brow.
- Growling.
- Head low.
- High-pitched barking.
- Licking lips.
- Looking away.
- Low stance.
- Panting.
- Pacing.
- Poor appetite.
- Retreating when being called or leashed up.
- Snarling.
- Whining.
- Yawning (unless tired).

### CAUTIOUS CANINES CAN:

- Be scared of fireworks or loud noises.
- Fear new people or other dogs.
- Have worries about storms.
- Look scared or act scary.

KC



# Flowers Amidst the Vegetables

BY LESLIE DOCK  
ARTWORK BY ELIZABETH GOURLAY

Tucked away in a forgotten corner of a backyard, fence sagging under the weight of hungry vines, sits what once was a promising vegetable garden. Sullenly quiet, beds overrun by small forests of grasses and weeds, there is seemingly little promise of a harvest on the horizon. Now imagine this same garden dotted with shocks of pink, blue, yellow and red. Bees, butterflies and the light drone of a hummingbird enliven the air and shuttle messages of pollen from flower to flower. Which garden would you be drawn to visit? Which one seems healthier and more likely to shelter a hidden oasis of leafy green lettuces, kales and even a budding cabbage or two?

## FRUIT & VEGETABLE PAIRINGS

Some things are simply made to go together. Take peanut butter and chocolate for instance. Peanut butter on its own is good. Peanut butter enveloped in chocolate is a revelation. The same could be said for vegetables and flowers.

Vegetables are beautiful – they come in a wide variety of shapes, sizes, colors and textures. Some, like zucchini, produce beautiful blossoms of their own. However, weave an array of flowers amongst your crops and you'll be amazed at the results.

Vegetables are often viewed as purposeful plants. We coax them from the soil and nurture them to fruition so we can enjoy them while they nourish our bodies. For all the time, energy and resources it takes to seed, weed and feed them, it is tempting to eliminate any plant we cannot eat and cultivate vegetables in neat little rows. While it is true that too much competition in the form of weeds can steal valuable water and nutrients, vegetables thrive when grown next to a friendly, and beautiful, companion.

One such pairing is tomatoes and basil. Basil repels tomato-munching pests, such as the destructive tomato hornworm. It also produces gorgeous little flowers that attract bees. Since they are already in the neighborhood, those bees pay a visit to the tomato, and pollination ensues.

Edible herbs aren't the only flowers that pump up the volume. Both perennial and annual flowers can really bring the pollinators, along with a host of other benefits.

## THE BENEFITS OF FLOWERS

We are drawn to flowers for their color, beauty and scent. They elevate our spirits and activate our natural sense of wonder. This is no accident. Humans are programmed to see flowers as an indicator of a potential food source. Just like bees, we see their pretty colors and want to get closer. Though we aren't dining on their nectar, we instinctively move towards them as we know that some flowers indicate the presence of a sweet juicy fruit or veggie nearby.

Drawing us to our food is evolutionarily important, but beauty for beauty's sake is reason enough to interplant flowers amongst vegetables. Flowers make us happy, and why not be joyful while working on a plot?

Flowers heighten the natural beauty of a vegetable garden. The bright hues of their blossoms seem all the more lively against a sea of green leaves. The variety of shapes and textures can be strategically employed to add visual breaks and levels to an agricultural space.

Take Tithonia, for instance, which is also known as the Mexican Sunflower – this vigorous grower can reach six feet or taller. At this size, just one specimen makes a huge statement on a border or acts as a living wall when situated in the corner of a raised bed. A gardener is drawn in by the unusual size of this plant and wowed by the astonishing number of blooms on display, but they need to travel a little to find out what is happening on the other side. In this way, a flowering plant of this size can break up a garden into smaller gardens or 'rooms' within a garden, thus sparking a sense of discovery and surprise.

## THE BENEFITS OF FLOWERS

Bees aren't the only small beings that flowers call to a garden. Beneficial predators, such as the praying mantis, set up camp near species of flowers



that draw insects they like to eat. Those same insects are often partial to nibbling on our precious vegetables, so by setting up our edibles with a floral companion, we install a natural insecticide.

Many other pollinating insects heed the lure of flowers: butterflies, moths, wasps, birds and countless others all enjoy a floral oasis. Birds are more than happy to make a meal of pests like cabbage moth caterpillars. More pollinators mean better pollination. Better pollination means a bigger harvest.

When the growing season is a wrap, a vegetable garden can seem a terribly barren and lonely place. Lettuces pass out and go limp, eventually melting into the soil. Corn stalks dry and imitate frightfully skinny scarecrows. But flowers leave behind an array of artful sculptures that provide visual interest all winter long. Though their colorful petals have long faded, their seed heads remain, and these are an important food source for many birds.

Flowers make harvesting that much more fun and rewarding. If a shirt pouch full of beans and tomatoes isn't enough to get you out there, a bouquet for the kitchen table makes for lovely motivation. Cut flowers bring the joy and sanctuary of the garden indoors, and gazing upon them while eating may even make vegetables taste better too.

There is no one-size-fits-all way to incorporate flowers into a vegetable garden. Plant a raucously colorful border, use them to soften the edge of a raised bed, and carefully choose flowers that will entice a whole squadron of pest-murdering insects to call your garden home.

Whatever you do, plant flowers. You will be happy you did. KC



# BENEFICIAL FLOWERS FOR YOUR VEGETABLE GARDEN

## A FEW FLOWERS THAT ATTRACT BENEFICIAL PREDATORS AND POLLINATORS:

- |           |            |
|-----------|------------|
| Ageratum  | Limnanthes |
| Alyssum   | Lovage     |
| Borage    | Marigolds  |
| Calendula | Parsley    |
| Comfrey   | Rosemary   |
| Cosmos    | Tansy      |
|           | Zinnias    |

**FLOWER POWER:**  
Borage pumps up the flavor of strawberries.

**NATURAL DEFENDERS:**  
Garlic, marigoilds, mint, nasturtium, rosemary, sage and tansy all deter pests by virtue of their scent.

**ARCHITECTURAL WONDERS:**  
Sunflowers and corn may act as natural trellises for crops such as cucumbers, pole beans and peas. KC



*Julie Rosenberg*  
One-of-a-kind, hand-painted electric guitars.  
Available at [www.julierosenberg.com](http://www.julierosenberg.com)





# King Kone

BY GIA MILLER  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN NEGARD

If you live in Northern Westchester, odds are good that you've been to King Kone at least once. In fact, odds are also good that between April and October, the person you Venmo the most is Deb Hopkins. Yeah, that's us, too.

King Kone began in 1953 when a local family opened a drive-up ice cream shop on Route 100 in Somers (they have a Katonah mailing address in case you're wondering). Over the years, King Kone was sold several times. The current owners, Katonah residents Deb and Brian Hopkins, purchased the establishment in 2001. They believe they are the fourth owners, but they're not positive. What they do know is that when they purchased King Kone, the only things sold were ice cream and hot dogs.

The couple, who owned a gourmet food store in Armonk called The Cheese Box and then a series of ice cream trucks (which they still own) prior to purchasing King Kone, knew the establishment could be more, and they were right. Now, residents from all over Westchester drive to King Kone for the food, along with their soft serve ice cream, and, of course, their sprinkles.

## THE SWEET

If the giant ice cream cone and the very large sign don't give it away, King Kone's soft serve is their top seller when it comes to ice cream, followed by mint chocolate chip, almond joy and cappuccino crunch for the adults. Kids, unsurprisingly, lean towards cotton candy and birthday bash. But more popular than all the flavors are their sprinkles.

"We sell a ton of sprinkles," says Deb. "Most of our ice creams go out with chocolate or rainbow sprinkles, for kids and adults. We probably go through about 100 pounds of sprinkles a week."

"Our dips are also popular," she continues. "The most popular is the chocolate, then the cherry. Peanut butter is the least popular, probably because a lot of ice creams don't lend themselves to be combined with peanut butter."

Their "ultra-premium ice cream" is mostly made in small batches in Maine, although Deb wishes they could make their own.

"Our place is so tiny, and we just don't have the space to make our own ice cream," she says. "But I wish we could because I think I would enjoy making it, especially picking all the flavors."

But luckily for Deb, the place is large enough for them to make food, and they make a lot of food.

## THE SAVORY

Deb and Brian started serving more than just hot dogs as soon as they took over.

"We started with burgers, French fries, hot dogs, lobster rolls, grilled chicken sandwiches, and stuff like that," Deb remembers. "And as time went on, we realized people really wanted more food options, so we expanded the menu to where it is now."

Now, in addition to the six burgers (including one called Heart Attack Burger and another called Pizza Burger), there are also seven different types of fries (ranging from plain to chili cheese and BBQ bacon ranch), 10 starters (everything is fried – from







the mac & cheese bites and ravioli to the pickles and shrimp), 10 “on a bun” options (hot dogs, pulled pork, chicken sandwiches, various seafood and a black bean burger) and 12 “favorites.” The favorites are those items you’ve probably heard your food-obsessed friends rave about: lobster (roll or club), various types of shrimp, fried clam strips, grilled cheese, etc. Wait...fried clam strips?

“There are people that will literally come two or three times a week for our clams,” says Deb. “They’re good; they’re very good. They’re not as popular as our burgers, but people love them. We also sell a ton of fries and chicken fingers.”

And then there’s the grilled cheese. There’s a kid’s version, a grown-up version (your choice of American, cheddar or Swiss on thick country bread) and the Ultimate Grilled Cheese.

“Our Ultimate Grilled Cheese has one addition to the grown-up one,” Deb explains. “You can add either fried mozzarella, fried mac & cheese bites or fried ravioli to the inside, and it’s served with a side of marinara sauce. About half the adults who order a grilled cheese order the grown-up version and the other half order the ultimate.”

“Foodies” throughout Westchester make the trek to King Kone, often numerous times a season, for the food, and, of course, the ice cream. Many can’t explain why it’s so good, but Deb will tell you it’s simple: they use local suppliers for all their food, including the seafood, and everything is cooked to order. Deb, who has worked in the food industry since high school, created every item on the menu. And she still makes the chili, coleslaw, pulled pork and crab cakes from scratch.

## THE COMMUNITY

King Kone is not just about the food, it’s also about the community. Part of that community occurs in the notoriously long lines. (Pro tip: It’s a bit shorter on weekday afternoons if your schedule allows it). The lines, which actually move pretty quickly, are an old-fashioned way to say hello to your neighbors.

“One thing I’ve noticed is that it’s very social in line,” Deb remarks. “After people order their food at the window, a lot of them will turn around to the people behind them and say, ‘It’s so nice to meet you – enjoy your food. Hopefully, I’ll see you soon.’ Sometimes, people make new

friends in line or catch up with old friends they haven’t seen in a while. It’s a nice reminder of what life can be like in a small town.”

And part of that small-town community is supporting local organizations. Deb and Brian donate ice cream to local families who they know are struggling to make ends meet, and they host several fundraisers each year by designating a day where all the proceeds are donated to the charity. They post the dates for these days on Instagram and Facebook.

## THE RUMORS

No story about King Kone would be complete without discussing, and dispelling, the many rumors.

First, the rides: If you lived here with kids prior to the pandemic, you probably remember the coin-operated kiddie rides. Those were actually removed pre-pandemic because they constantly broke.

Second, the sandbox: It’s still there, but it’s covered with plywood, and there’s a table over it. They’ll reopen it when the Board of Health allows it, and when their customers are comfortable with it.

Third: No, they do not own, nor is there any connection, to King Kone in Pearl River. According to Deb, the name King Kone was never trademarked, and when they tried, they couldn’t. So, other King Kones exist, but there’s no relation.

Fourth: No, you cannot book one of their five ice cream trucks at the last minute. To be safe, book a month in advance.

Finally, Florida: Neither Deb nor Brian “winter” in Florida. They live in Katonah year-round.

“I don’t know why people think that, and they say it to me all the time,” says Deb. “People will actually argue with me about this. I respond, ‘I think I know where I spend my winter.’ I’m here, freezing, just like everybody else.”

But come April, she’s at the window, serving us ice cream. And King Kone is open every day until mid-October or, if weather permits, a bit later – “until it gets really cold and miserable.” KC

# LOBSTER ROLLS

YIELDS: 10 ROLLS

## INGREDIENTS

For the lobster:  
2 ½ lbs. fresh cooked lobster meat  
Juice of one lemon  
1 – 1 ¼ cups mayonnaise  
2 ½ stalks chopped celery  
Salt  
Pepper

For the buns:  
10 New England brioche rolls  
½ stick butter, room temperature

## DIRECTIONS

Chop the lobster meat.

Combine lobster with lemon juice in a large bowl.

Add the remaining ingredients and stir to combine. Set aside.

Butter the outsides of the New England rolls and grill in a pan until browned.

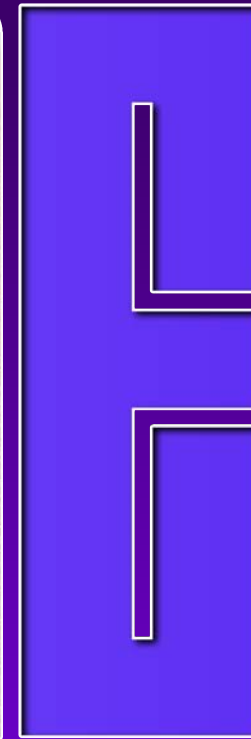
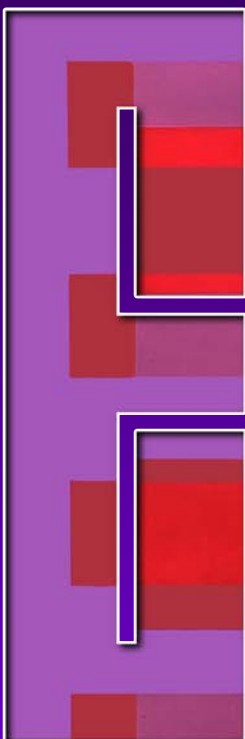
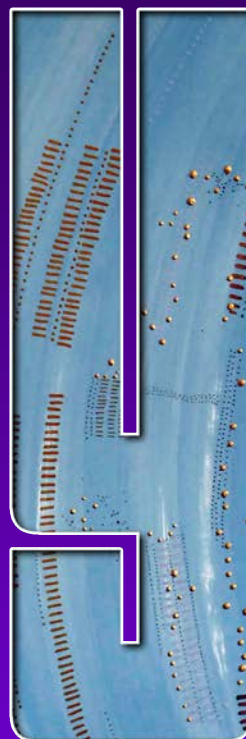
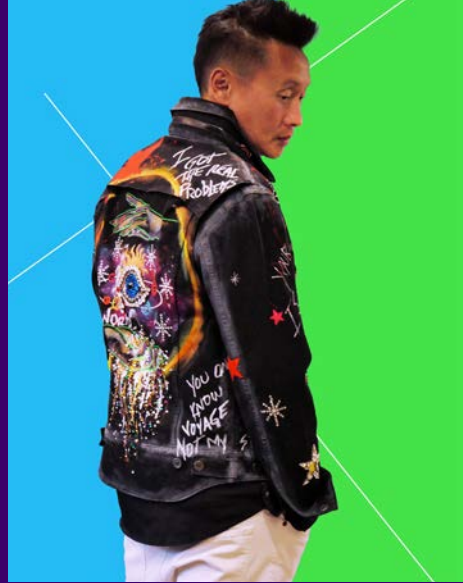
Add the lobster salad to the rolls and serve. KC



DOWNLOAD & PRINT  
THIS RECIPE







WE'RE CELEBRATING OUR ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY WITH THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY. DURING THE MONTH OF JUNE, HEAD TO COUNTRY WILLOW TO VIEW ARTWORK FROM SOME OF THE ARTISTS WE FEATURED THROUGHOUT THE FIRST YEAR. OUR LOCAL ARTISTS ARE PART OF WHAT MAKE THIS COMMUNITY SPECIAL, AND WE HOPE YOU'LL CHECK OUT THEIR INCREDIBLE WORK.



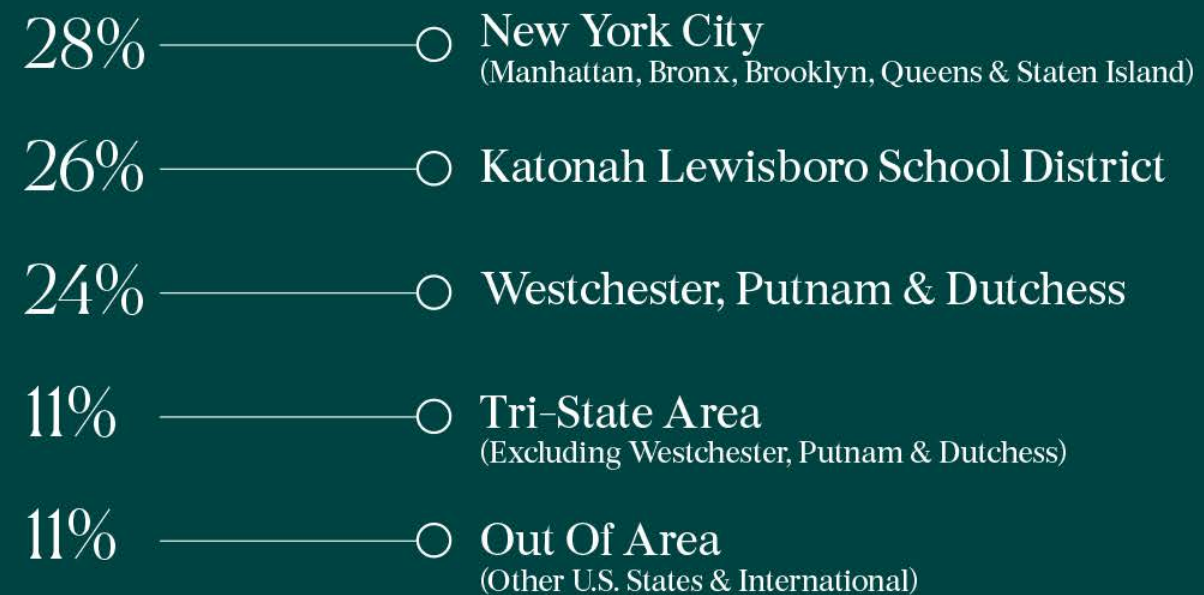




**WE KNOW  
WHERE THE  
BUYERS ARE.**

LET THE KATONAH OFFICE EXPERTS HELP  
INFORM YOUR JOURNEY.

At Houlihan Lawrence, we have the ability to generate *real-time data insights* to help you make *informed decisions*.



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

Source: Houlihan Lawrence Transactions Database, includes all Houlihan Lawrence buyers and all other buyers of Houlihan Lawrence listings. Percentage may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

## FEATURED LISTINGS

### BEDFORD HILLS



### SQUIRREL HILL

Martha Violante | \$6,900,000

### KATONAH



### KATONAH HAMLET

Rita Corrozza | \$1,945,000

### KATONAH



### KATONAH HAMLET

Rita Corrozza | \$1,275,000

### NORTH SALEM



### TOP QUALITY GEM

Eugenio Sermoneta | \$1,200,000

### NORTH SALEM

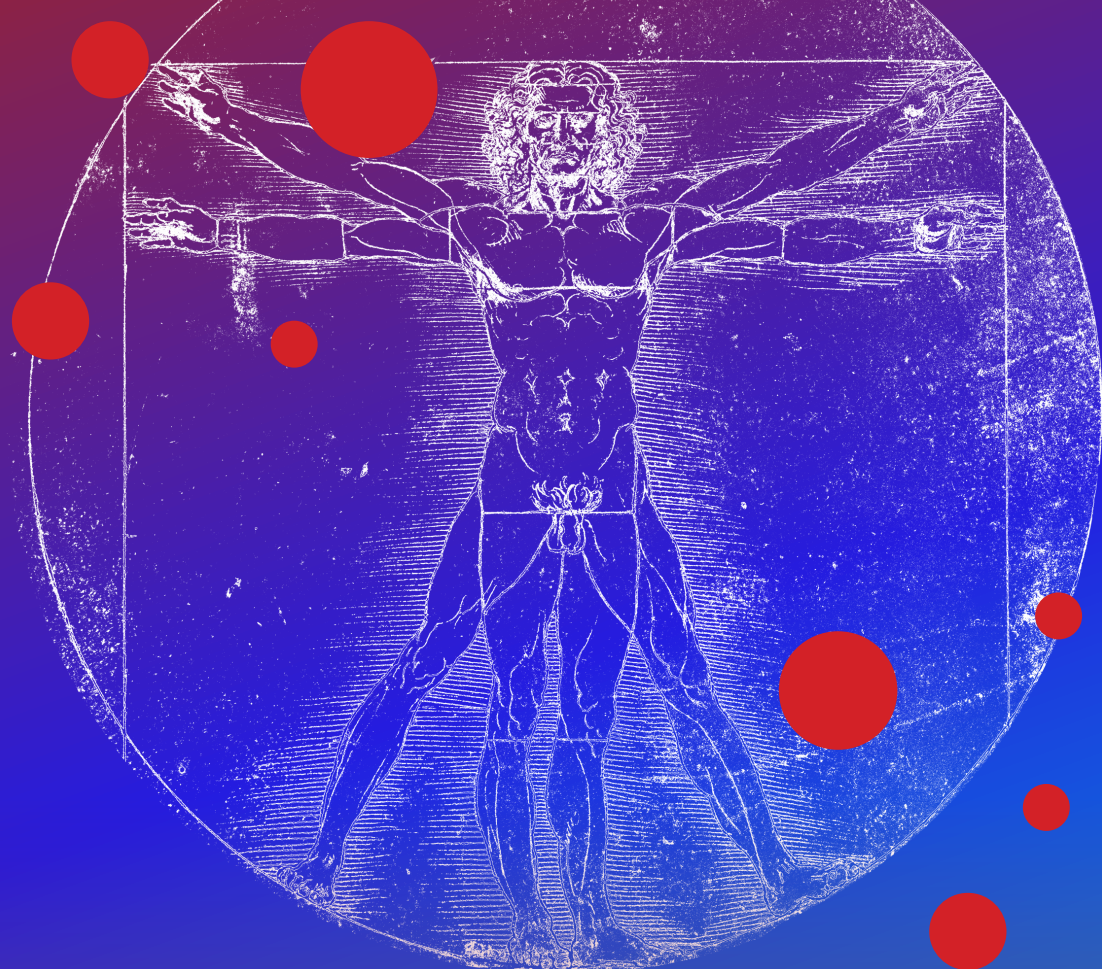


### BRING YOUR ARCHITECT!

Amy Singer | \$790,000



# Our Health



**W**hat does it mean to be healthy? According to the World Health Organization (WHO), “health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”

While that’s a great place to start, we think health is even more than that. In our opinion, being healthy also includes understanding your mind and body.

What fuels you and gives you energy? What causes you discomfort or even pain? What makes you happy or sad? What challenges you? What relaxes you?

Then, once you understand these things about yourself, being healthy is about doing the good things and limiting or avoiding the bad ones.

Being healthy isn’t an “all or nothing” proposition; it’s about doing what works for you and doing it regularly.

Health is the result of a cumulative effort – we can’t eat fried food every weeknight and then run a few miles on the weekend. While the running is great, it doesn’t erase all the bad choices you made throughout the week. Alternatively, if you go on a lavish vacation or “indulge” on your birthday weekend, that’s okay. Just resume the healthy choices once your life returns to normal.

Being healthy is also about understanding the science. When you understand why something makes you happy, you’re even more likely to do it. But science, and scientific research, isn’t everyone’s jam, so we’re here to help. Our team of writers worked

hard to create a health section that is full of useful information that’s easy to understand. They spoke to local and regional experts on a variety of topics, ranging from fitness, beauty and nutrition to preventive health and mental health.

Our health section is not about looking thin or obtaining a certain body type. We won’t tell you to cut out certain foods (or beverages), and we don’t judge anyone for their lifestyle choices. Instead, we hope to educate you. We hope to challenge you. We hope to inspire you.

We encourage you to read these articles with a sense of curiosity. Learn something new, and then continue that learning on your own if you’d like. Life is a journey, and if you treat yourself well, then it could be a long one. **KC**



## Stop Dieting and Start Eating Well

BY GIA MILLER

**D**iet – it’s a four-letter word that makes a lot of people cringe. Some people spend their life uttering that word, others do it before milestone events so they “look good in the pictures,” and there are those who avoid it altogether. Regardless of which category you fall into, most of us know diets don’t really work. They don’t keep the weight off. In fact, between 80 to 95 percent of people who go on a diet gain the weight back, often because their bodies are programmed to be a certain weight.

Instead of dieting, experts say that it’s really about treating your body well. To do that correctly, there are a number of things you should understand.

### NOT ALL WEIGHT IS EQUAL

Skinny doesn’t mean healthy, and being overweight doesn’t mean unhealthy. Basing your health on a number on a scale is misguided, according to Monique Class, a nurse practitioner at the Center for Functional Medicine, which is moving to Ridgefield, CT on June 1, and a senior faculty member at the Institute of Functional Medicine where she teaches functional nutrition.

“You can have skinny fat people, meaning they’re skinny, but have no muscle tone whatsoever – it’s all fat, and they’re metabolically unhealthy,” says Class. “There are also people who may appear 20 pounds overweight, but they’re incredibly healthy. They’re working out, they’ve got a lot of muscle, their metabolic markers look healthy, and they don’t have any medical problems. You can’t base a person’s health on how they look, nor should you base it on their BMI. That mythology needs to go.”

Your BMI, which stands for Body Mass Index, is based on your height and weight, but it’s an inaccurate measure of your health or body fat. The problem with BMI is that it does not include muscle mass, which weighs more than fat, in its measurement. It also doesn’t factor in bone density, overall body composition or racial and gender differences – all of which should be considered when determining how healthy or unhealthy (a.k.a. “fat”) a person is.

Instead, a more accurate measure is to notice where, and how, you’ve gained weight.

“If you’re only gaining weight in the abdominal area, you’re gaining metabolically active fat, which increases inflammation in the body,” Class explains. “But if you gain weight evenly all over the body, and you’re doing everything right, and your health markers look good, then you’re fine.”



# WHAT CONTRIBUTES TO WEIGHT GAIN?

In addition to unhealthy or overeating and certain chronic illnesses or diseases, there are three main reasons we gain weight:

**1. Chronic stress** – When you’re stressed, your body produces a hormone called cortisol that increases the amount of sugar in your bloodstream to give you more energy. Simultaneously, it increases your appetite. If you’re experiencing long-term stress, you’re likely eating more, which can lead to weight gain. (In some people, cortisol can cause weight loss.)

**2. Exhaustion** – Lack of sleep will increase your insulin levels, which increases cortisol production and your appetite. Additionally, exhaustion can cause you to crave foods that are high calorie, high sugar, high fat and salty to boost your energy.

“Nowadays, as a society, we’re no longer burning the candle at both ends, we’re throwing ourselves right on top of the flame every single day, and then we’re melting into a puddle,” says Geri Brewster, MPH and a registered dietician and nutritionist with practices in Mount Kisco and Manhattan. “That leads to a lot of adrenaline and a lot of excess cortisol.”

**3. Toxins** – Toxins are any poisonous substance. For humans, most toxins come from germs (like bacteria), but they can also be metals (like lead) or chemicals. Some people can gain weight due to toxins in their food, the environment or medications. We store toxins in our fat cells, then our body dilutes them before releasing them into our body to avoid organ damage. But if there are too many toxins in our cells and our body cannot dilute them, then our fat cells expand to hold on to the toxins so they don’t poison us.

# THE TRUTH ABOUT DIETS

“Diet is a transient word – it means you’re restricting something,” says Class. “Most people react when you say diet. It brings up restriction and all the loaded emotions that go around food. Diets weren’t created around, or for, the individual, and they’re not sustainable. You can only restrict yourself for a certain amount of time, and then you get exhausted. Diets are meant for short-term fixes – they have an end game.”

When you cut calories, it decreases the amount of leptin (a hormone that controls how full you feel) your body produces, making you feel hungrier. Cutting calories can also change how you think of food, often making you hyperfocus on food, and even think it smells or tastes better than it did before.

“There are people who will go on a diet and lose weight, but they have no energy, and they feel awful,” says Brewster. “But when you feed yourself properly, you feel better – you feel well. That’s biology, and we have to stop ignoring that. We have to stop thinking that we can just sort of regulate our bodies by calories or willpower. That’s often why diets fail.”

Another reason diets fail is that people typically measure their success by how much weight they’ve lost – not if they’ve improved their overall health.

Instead, Class and Brewster say to create a food plan, which is a more expansive concept. A food plan is designed to focus on eating healthy and consuming foods that work for you.

# WHAT IS HEALTHY?

“Increasing the number of plant foods we consume and eating well over the course of the day is important,” says Brewster.

But what does that mean? Is it no carbs or low carbs? Is red meat okay? Should you focus on low-fat or high-protein?

According to Class, those questions are splitting hairs over what she calls “the macronutrient distribution.” And the answer to those questions really depends on each person’s genetics and personal preferences. Instead, we should focus on the basic principles of healthy eating that all health experts agree upon. They are:

**1. Eat the rainbow.** The key is nutrient density and diversity (small amounts of a lot of colors). Plant foods contain phytonutrients (naturally made chemicals that help prevent disease and keep your body working well), and each color contains different phytonutrients.

“We need a little bit of a lot of colors for a big reason,” says Class. “If you eat kale all day long, you’re going to be missing very important micronutrients and phytochemicals for overall health and well-being.”

**2. Reduce your sugar intake.** Sugar should be a treat, not a daily event.

“Sugar is highly inflammatory, and it actually suppresses our immune system’s functioning,” Class explains. “It also creates inflammation and oxidative stress, which turn on the genes that cause every single complex chronic disease, whether it’s cancer, a cardiovascular disease or an autoimmune disease.”

**3. Consume good fats.** Our bodies need unsaturated fats (monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats), which are usually found in plants, like vegetable oils, nuts and seeds. These fats can improve blood cholesterol levels, reduce inflammation, support heart health and more.

**4. Allow your body to rest.** “We evolved into eating all the time,” says Brewster. “Historically, we didn’t hunt or eat at night – we would have been attacked by wild animals! So, you had to consume all your food during the day. Now, even though we can eat at any time, our body needs time to rest so that it can do other things.

You shouldn’t eat a heavy meal or overeat at night, and you should allow your gut to have a 12- to 15-hour rest overnight.”

Even if you’re eating healthy food all day and into the evening, your body is constantly processing that food. It needs a resting period when there’s no food in your system so it can rest and do the other things it needs to do to remain healthy.

“When everything is turned off, your cells can do something called autophagy, where they self-clean and get rid of broken DNA and debris,” Class explains. “And it can only do that if you are not eating all the time. But if your cells never get a chance to do that, then they can experience inflammation and oxidative stress, which, depending on your genetic predisposition, turns on degenerative diseases like Alzheimer’s disease, anxiety, depression, cardiovascular disease or inflammatory bowel disease – wherever you have a weak genetic link.”

**5. Fiber is essential.** There are two types of fiber: soluble and insoluble. Think of fiber as a kitchen sponge – the soft side is the soluble fiber that soaks up the liquid, and the rough side is the insoluble side that’s used for scrubbing.

“Insoluble fiber will actually take all of the broken DNA and debris and scrub it off the colon’s walls then move it out into the stool,” Class explains. “It helps with constipation, which is a really good thing because if you’re not going to the bathroom every day, all of those toxins that just went through the liver will recirculate and be more toxic than they were to begin with. Additionally, without fiber, we don’t make short-chain fatty acids, which repair the colon’s cells.”

Most people get about 10 grams of fiber a day, but it’s recommended that you consume between 25 to 35 grams of fiber a day. Increase your daily fiber slowly to avoid feeling gassy and bloated.

**6. Focus on whole foods with the least amount of processing.** “Most foods are going to be processed in some way, and cooking is the number one form of processing of food,” Brewster explains. “Super high heat and frying damages the food’s molecules, which turns it into something that is more inflammatory. That means it will require a greater demand on the digestion system, which can result in more indigestion and potentially cause more gut inflammation.”

“That’s why we should cook in a way that provides the least amount of contact with a direct flame or heat,” she

continues. “In other words, try to avoid foods that are deep fried, grilled over an open flame or charred. Even if you’re cooking with an oil that can withstand high heat before it hits its smoke point, it’s still going to change the composition of the food. So, we should be mindful about how we cook foods.”

Processing also includes grains.

“I meet plenty of young people who go off to college and decide to be vegetarians,” Brewster notes. “But they really become pasta- and bread-atarians. They have pasta for dinner and then stay up studying and eat a carbohydrate-driven snack like pretzels that they think are healthy because it says fat-free, and then they have a bagel for breakfast. So basically, they consumed a big load of wheat, followed by processed wheat and another big load of wheat, which turns quickly turns into sugar in the bloodstream. That causes weight issues, can create insulin resistance and put them into a pre-diabetic state.”

# THE BEST PLAN IS TO LIVE A MEDITERRANEAN LIFESTYLE

“The most well-researched food plan on the planet is the modified Mediterranean food plan,” says Class. “What I mean by modified is their approach to carbohydrates. Carbs aren’t the devil, but they’re problematic when they’re the main part of your meal all day long. Instead, your meal can include a small amount of rice or pasta, and you should surround it with lots of fruits and vegetables, good oils and a good protein.”

Your meal should be half vegetables that are simply prepared and multicolored, 25 percent carbohydrates and 25 percent a combination of proteins and healthy fats.

“Choose meals that are clean, seasonal and primarily plant-based,” Brewster advises. “Eat smaller amounts of large animals that are primarily fish and chicken and eggs. And try to live a lifestyle that’s similar to people in Mediterranean countries. That means you can have a little bit of wine or dessert, but the idea is that there are enough plant-based foods and antioxidants present that it will help offset that burden.”

“And remain physically active throughout your life – it’s a state of mind,” she continues. “Try not to pathologize and think, ‘I’m getting older, so I can’t do this.’ In other words, it’s a total lifestyle – a physically active life, coupled with a good diet and a good sleep cycle is a healthy, life-affirming way to live.” [KC](#)





# Going Green for Beauty

The difference between  
“organic” and “clean”

BY SUSAN TRUMPSBOUR

**M**aybe you’re looking to “green” your beauty routine this year, or perhaps it’s something you’ve been doing for years. But when some products are labeled organic and others are labeled clean, how do you know what to choose? When you enter the natural beauty world, it’s like discovering a whole new language, with a story for each ingredient.

To help clear the confusion, we tapped local experts to share their thoughts and conscious beauty lines, help differentiate terms, explain/identify “greenwashing” and understand what you need to know about this “organic and beyond” movement.

But first things first – keep in mind, according to Mount Kisco-based dermatologist Dr. David Bank, “There’s no legal definition or requirement to label a product as organic, natural or clean. And here’s a frightening fact, there are only 11 cosmetic ingredients banned by the FDA in the United States, while Europe has banned 1,300.”

When it comes to regulating contaminants and ingredients in beauty products, the U.S. clearly needs to catch up to the rest of the world. So, until they do, remember that just because a product is organic/natural, that doesn’t necessarily mean it’s non-toxic or safer.

“Plant-based/essential oils can still cause reactions,” Bank explains. “As a colleague once said, poison ivy is plant-based, but you don’t want it in your beauty product.”

## WHAT QUALIFIES A BEAUTY PRODUCT TO BE ORGANIC?

“Organic beauty needs to be made and sourced from certified organic ingredients,” explains Indie Lee, a pioneer in the organic beauty industry and founder of the clean beauty brand Indie Lee Skincare. “And the products must contain at least 70 percent organic ingredients to say ‘made with organic ingredients.’”

For the USDA organic seal, Lee continues, “at least 95 percent of the product’s ingredients must be certified organic.”

## WHAT IS CLEAN BEAUTY?

“Clean” describes products that contain safe, non-toxic ingredients. Gucci Westman, makeup artist and founder of Westman Atelier, grew up living a green lifestyle and has always been conscious of what she eats and puts on her body.

“We believe that ‘clean beauty’ means setting a rigorous standard regarding the safety of our ingredients and formulations,” she says. “We constantly evaluate every step of the process, from supply chain and sourcing to ingredients and packaging, to make the best choices. The process is very challenging, but we are committed to it.”

## WHERE TO BEGIN WHEN SWITCHING TO CLEAN BEAUTY?

“If you have allergies or sensitivities to certain chemicals, preservatives, fragrances, or essential oils, then it is important to select from this category of organic/clean products,” Bank advises.

Start with your largest organ – the skin – and notice what products you use daily to slather on most of your body, like moisturizer. Then, switch to a cleaner alternative. Consider changing your sunscreen to a 100 percent mineral replacement, choosing an aluminum-free deodorant, graduating to cleaner shampoos/conditioners and body soaps, and avoiding overpackaged products.

Making substitutions shouldn’t feel like a sacrifice.

“Clean technology has come so far,” Lee explains. “We work with the world’s leading chemists to marry nature with science, replacing parabens with clean preservatives that keep products stable and fresh. We also replace silicones that give conventional formulas their texture with clean, plant-derived ingredients that offer a beautiful sensorial experience.”

## UNDERSTANDING GREENWASHING

“Unfortunately, greenwashing is common in this industry,” Lee notes.

“And it misleads the consumer into believing a product is cleaner than it is.”

For example, a product only needs one percent of its ingredients to be organic for it to be labeled organic, even if the other 99 percent are loaded with pesticides. It’s also perfectly legal to design a package with beautiful images of herbs or plants, include buzzy terms and say it’s all-natural without identifying what is natural and where it came from. But, as mentioned earlier, it won’t qualify for the USDA organic seal.

To avoid the greenwashing trap, Lee suggests you look for third-party certifications, like COSMOS Certified Signature, or buy from a clean beauty retailer that you trust and has a clearly defined standard, such as Credo Beauty, Clean at Sephora or Conscious Beauty at Ulta. The Soil Association and Eco-Cert are also trustworthy resources.

If you want to see how green your favorite brands are, an excellent reference is The Environmental Working Group’s (EWG) Skin Deep website ([www.ewg.org](http://www.ewg.org)). Thanks to their extensive database, you can input ingredients, brands and names of products and retrieve details on over 88,000 beauty items.

Less nonsense and more transparency are another way to decipher through the greenwash hullabaloo. The more authentic a company is about the product’s overall story (ingredient and material breakdowns), the more that company will take accountability for its actions.

“We always encourage consumers to read labels and be informed,” Lee says. “It helps them make the most informed choices.”

## LOOKING BEYOND ORGANIC & CLEAN

Clean beauty is one of the most exciting trends in the beauty space

over the past few years. Instagram is a good barometer for popular topics, so it’s no surprise that #cleanbeauty shows 5.8 million posts compared to #organicbeauty’s 2.6 million posts.

“Green chemistry and the term ‘clean’ are constantly evolving,” Westman explains. “So, it’s also about continually educating ourselves and exploring new alternatives as they come to market — whether that’s updating a formula with a new and better ingredient or working with labs that are committed to meaningfully lowering water consumption, renewable energy sources or long-term traceability of recovered waste.”

But is this enough? Should green be about the ingredients or the entirety of the product?

“We are watching a growing consumer interest in sustainability, like plastic-free packaging, biodegradable, refillable and reusable,” explains Anna Mayo, vice president of NielsenIQ’s beauty vertical (a Stamford-based company that tracks beauty trends). “Interest is moving to include what ingredients make up a product to how companies package products in stores.”

At the end of the day, although “organic” and “clean” regulations remain controversial, there’s no denying that this conscious movement offers more sustainable alternatives and is changing the way we purchase and use beauty products.

Interact with brands (it’s so easy to do these days on social media) and share your thoughts. If you question the ingredients or if the brand uses excessive packaging, say something.

And the next time you go beauty shopping, bring your own bag. There are choices you can make in your day-to-day life to lessen your environmental impact, and swapping convenience for conservation is always a good thing. **KC**





# What to Know Before You Begin A New Exercise Routine

BY EMMA RICHMAN

**S**tudies show that regular exercise is good for you. It helps prevent excessive weight gain, improves your mood, boosts your energy, can prevent certain health conditions and even helps you fall asleep faster. Plus, recent research from Kaiser Permanente in southern California has shown that regular exercise also helps decrease the severity of COVID-19.

But exercise also comes with risks. The National Safety Council recently found that after the 27 percent decrease in sports and recreational injuries in 2020 (likely resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic), injuries rebounded 20 percent in 2021 alone.

To help you prevent injuries, we spoke to two local experts to learn what you need to know before you hop on a bike or pick up those weights so you can remain safe while improving your health.

## BE PREPARED

First things first: whether it's building a house or scaling a mountain, it's important to think about the larger journey. Similarly, when starting out or resuming an exercise routine prepare in advance by setting realistic goals. If it's your first time embarking on a fitness routine, you'll need to ease your body into it.

"Your body is your own project," explains Michael Berardino, owner of Just Lift Fitness in Bedford Hills. "So, you want to prepare, organize yourself and set realistic goals."

And like any project, fitness requires the proper tools for the job. With exercise, that means proper clothing and footwear.

"We've had more people injure their feet from wearing horrible footwear," says Faun Yodice, co-owner of Jax'D Fitness in Bedford Hills. "You cannot wear the same shoes for running and training."

Both Faun and her husband/co-owner Josh say that people often follow the footwear trends they see online. But these trends aren't necessarily for everyone. It's important to wear shoes that support your feet properly.

Now you're ready to exercise. But before you begin, prepare your body by warming up. Both warming up and cooling down are key to reducing injuries.

## DON'T BE A ROCK STAR

Whether your goal is to feel better, build muscle, lose weight or all three, your transformation will happen, but it won't be overnight – and you shouldn't expect it to.

"Don't be a rock star," Berardino cautions. "You're not gonna be a rock star today. You're not gonna be a rock star tomorrow. Three months or six months down the road, yeah, maybe you can be a rock star then."

Doing too much too quickly can lead to injury. And while workouts should be tailored to each person's individual needs and abilities, the rule stays the same: start with the basics and build from there.

The Yodices recommend kids and teens begin with cardio or HIIT (high-intensity interval training) workouts.

For seniors, they recommend upright exercises that focus on the core, like the elliptical, to improve balance and prevent falling. Swimming, they say, is also a good way to stay active while being easy on the joints.

## KNOW HOW TO PREVENT INJURIES

All three experts stress the importance of listening to your body, which includes knowing when to stop. After COVID-19 lockdowns ended, Berardino saw a lot of people pushing themselves past their limits at the gym, and fighting for that last rep.

"It may not hurt you while you're doing it, but over a period of time, it will bring you discomfort," he explains.

Lower back pain is a very common injury, particularly among teens, and it's usually preventable by strengthening the core.

"Your core is the basis of everything you do," Faun explains. "It's how you sit when you're at your desk or in the car and it's how you walk – it's your posture."

The core consists of several muscles, including the rectus abdominis (a.k.a. six-pack abs/upper abs), the internal and external obliques, and the quadratus lumborum (located in the lower back). Even if your goal is to have a six-pack, it's necessary to strengthen all parts of the core in order to have a strong support system and prevent lower back injuries.

Like lower back pain, shoulder injuries are also both common and preventable.

"Chest presses and shoulder presses, if not done safely and appropriately, can lead to a pretty nasty injury – not only temporarily, but even for the rest of your life," Berardino warns.

Ultimately, some of the most enduring injuries can be prevented by simply

# HEY TEENS, THIS PART'S FOR YOU'

Teens often go to the gym with a very specific goal: to impress their friends. But, according to all three trainers, that's the wrong approach. Teens, they explain, are the largest group prone to injury at the gym, especially those who haven't learned proper form with exercises like deadlifts and bench presses.

Faun recommends teens start out with the basics like squats, lunges, push-ups and curls. These exercises may not seem the most thrilling (or impressive), but they give you the foundational skills. From there, you can build up.

She also says it's important to vary your exercises. For teens, especially, having a mix of weight training and cardio is ideal.

using proper form, listening to your body and knowing when to stop. As Berardino says, "That one rep is not worth getting injured for."

## INVEST IN YOURSELF

Another thing all trainers agree on is this: ask for help.

When starting out, they advise working with a personal trainer to prevent injuries, especially on new-to-you equipment, and to maximize the benefits of your workouts.

"We constantly change it up on our clients," Faun says. "When we see that they're plateauing, we kick it into high gear."

If one-on-one training isn't for you, then consider a group class or exercising at home. If choosing the home route, the internet can be a great resource for fitness advice and workouts – if it's coming from qualified sources. (*See sidebar: "The social media conundrum" for more details.*)

The three trainers also highlight the importance of variety for the best results.

"Don't do the same routine in the weight room consistently," Berardino advises. "You want your body to always be guessing."

And, it's important to remember that investing in yourself also happens outside the gym.

"People think that just coming into the gym, moving around a bit and pushing some weights is going to be their golden ticket to being healthy," Berardino says. "Don't neglect nutrition."

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle also means eating well and getting enough sleep. And, it's important to note, health also can't be measured in weight – plus, focusing too much on the scale can be discouraging. Berardino encourages new gym-goers to put the scale away and focus on how they feel.

"When you start training and lifting weights, you're going to build a little muscle," Berardino explains. "The muscle might build a little quicker, so the scale might not budge for a while. But at a certain point, it starts balancing out and the weight starts coming off."

In the end, regular exercise is an integral part of living a long, healthy life. Just be safe, okay? **KC**



# THE SOCIAL MEDIA CONUNDRUM

The internet can actually be a great place to get information – if you know where to look. All three experts say that while social media has motivated more people to exercise, it has also negatively impacted the fitness industry.

“These people aren’t going to help you unless you have the exact same goal and the exact same body type,” Berardino says. “Yet everyone’s different.”

Not only are fitness influencers often misleading in their exercise tips, but many of them are simply unqualified. A 2019 study by the University of Alberta analyzed the features and content of popular fitness blogs, and the researchers found that only 16.4 percent of bloggers report having fitness or exercise certifications, yet 57 percent of them claim to be fitness or exercise professionals.

Still, there are some online resources that can be helpful. Berardino recommends finding influencers who explain the science behind working out, like Jeff Cavaliere, the owner of ATHLEAN-X.

“He’s strictly about science,” Berardino explains. “He’ll draw on his skin saying, ‘This is the muscle we’re working.’ He’ll show you exactly how to get that maximum contraction.”

When using social media to find workout routines, you must stay vigilant. That means checking influencers’ certifications, looking at reviews, and doing your own research before following someone’s advice. KC



**Tengda**  
*Asian Bistro*

Deliciously fresh sushi  
for lunch and dinner  
all season long.

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




**BRADSELL  
CONTRACTING**  
Painting • Carpentry  
bedford • 914-234-3492 • bradsellpc.com

All Your  
Building Needs  
Under One Roof

**TROUT LILY  
GARDEN DESIGN**

INVITING NATURE INTO YOUR GARDEN



914.960.6432  
troutlilygardendesign.com



**PROGRESSIVE  
ANIMAL HOSPITAL**

Conventional & Holistic.  
Independently owned.  
Fear-free.

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



**CLARK ASSOCIATES  
FUNERAL HOME**



Serving all Faiths since 1858  
Cremations and Burials

**FUNERAL PREARRANGEMENT**  
Both pre-payment and no-payment options

- Only 1/4 mile from 684 exit 6.
- Less than 60 minutes from N.Y. City.
- Parking facilities for over 100 cars.
- Only 1 block from the Katonah Railroad station.
- Monuments & inscriptions available.

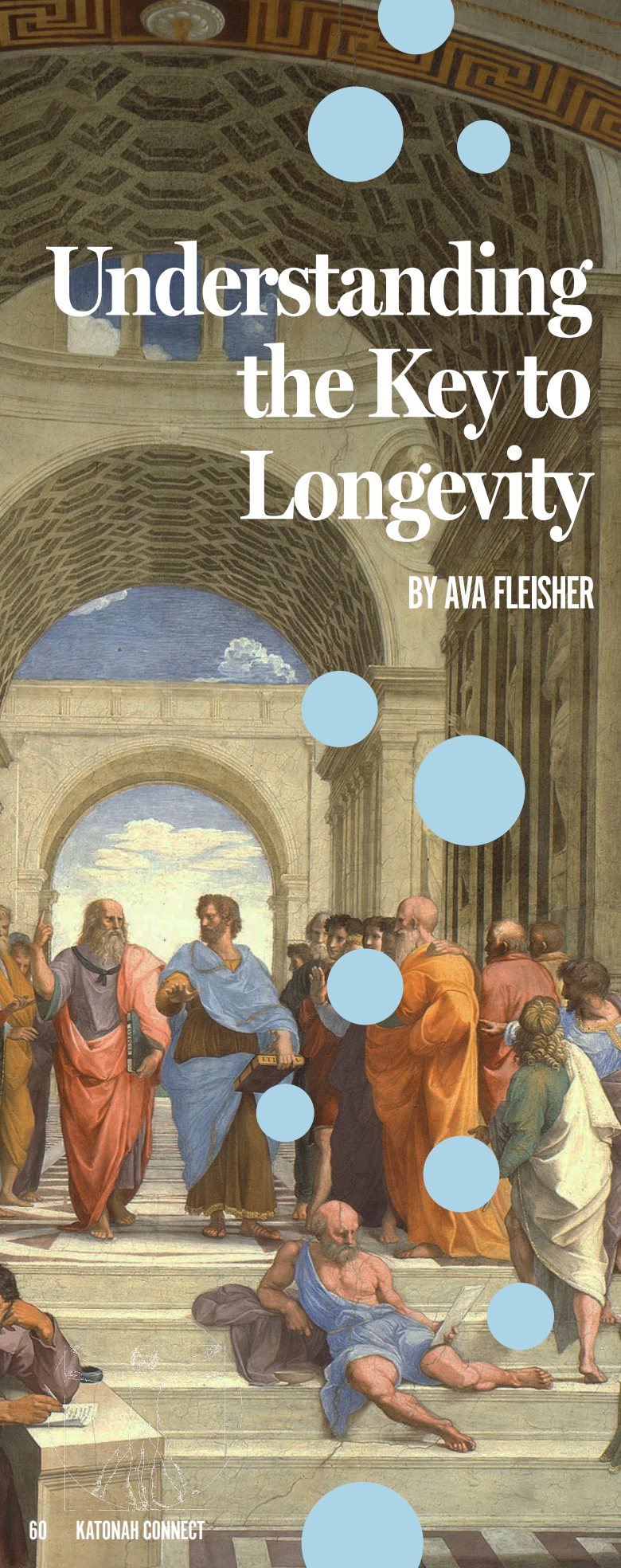
**4 Woods Bridge Road, Katonah • (914) 232-3033**

www.clarkassociatesfuneralhome.com

DANIEL B. McMANUS ~ Proprietor  
JOSEPH M. McMANUS ~ Director

BRUCE E. REISDORF ~ Licensed Manager  
RONALD P. CERASO ~ Director





# Understanding the Key to Longevity

BY AVA FLEISHER

*It's easy to use the phrase "we'll all die someday" as an excuse to neglect your health. But the truth is, it's really not that easy. Sometimes, if you focus on the right things in the right places, the average American lifespan of 77 years can be more lively and even lengthened. Ask yourself: "Wouldn't I rather put in a little extra work now than have to deal with the consequences later?" If the answer is yes, then with the help of a few local experts, longevity and anti-aging can be viewed from a different angle, and it may be a bit easier than you imagined.*

Most people think that anti-aging and longevity measures start once you begin to see the signs of aging. But, it's really about practicing preventive health.

"There's primary prevention, which is preventing things from happening in the first place, and there's secondary prevention, which doesn't prevent you from getting things, but it helps you detect it early," says Dr. Cathryn Devons, a geriatric medicine specialist at Phelps Hospital. "For example, exercise, eating well and certain types of treatments can serve as primary prevention, while regularly visiting the doctor and receiving screenings, including mammograms or a colonoscopy, qualify as secondary prevention."

Amy Hausman, L. Ac., co-founder of Be Well Katonah, an acupuncture and wellness practice, agrees that prevention is key. She says acupuncture and implementing simple daily tasks into your life prepare your body to fight off sickness and brace it for the future.

"An ideal patient is one who comes in to maintain optimal health and wellness," says Hausman.

## NON-INVASIVE TREATMENTS

At Be Well, Hausman and her co-founder Eliza Hunsinger, L. Ac., practice traditional East-Asian medicine, which means following the four pillars of Chinese medicine: acupuncture, Chinese herbal medicine, diet and lifestyle. Treatments at Be Well are more holistic than those performed at Western medical offices, and they say acupuncture can treat everything.

When it comes to facial rejuvenation, the women say acupuncture's effectiveness has been proven for centuries. For example, the empresses in ancient Chinese dynasties relied on acupuncture to maintain their status as "fairest in the land." And while some of

these social norms have changed, the efficacy of acupuncture still rings true today.

"Cosmetic acupuncture helps lift sagging skin," Hausman explains.

In fact, these methods serve as the origins of modern-day microneedling, which helps restore collagen in the face and renew tissue.

Other than cosmetic acupuncture, Be Well uses acupuncture to treat everything from irregular periods to indigestion, and even chronic forms of pain.

Down the road at The Wellpath, which has locations in Katonah and Manhattan, founder and author of The Wellpath, Dr. Jamé Heskett specializes in aging and wellness medicine. She too uses a holistic approach and focuses on the body as a whole, with one of her guiding principles being circulation and the awareness of one's body.

"We use a lot of circulation stimulation treatments like microneedling with platelet-rich plasma that regenerates circulation to reduce aging in the skin," Heskett says.

Her practice also utilizes carboxy therapy, an injection of carbon dioxide to increase circulation and, she says, reduce things like scars, stretch marks or dark circles. And they administer treatments that increase cellular turnover to unclog the pores, or laser therapy to regulate the sebaceous glands, instead of jumping straight to antibiotics.

## EXERCISE AND MOVEMENT

Although the treatments explained above can yield fabulous results, improving outward appearance and inner wellness alone will not help the body heal or rejuvenate to its fullest extent. In order to truly maximize

longevity and "age well," it's important to implement some simple tasks and regimens into your daily routine that will result in a positive lifestyle change.

Heskett refers back to the impact of circulation when trying to find highly personalized ways for patients to improve their daily routines. For example, she says that the legs-up-the-wall yoga pose at the end of the day can be highly effective at increasing circulation. Not only does this redirect blood flow back to your heart by decreasing pressure in your legs, but it also stimulates your hormonal pathways. And, she recommends adding a mere 15 minutes of movement a day, which can have major impacts on circulation and wellness.

Hausman adds that forms of movement, including Qigong or Tai Chi that work with the body's energy, can be effective exercises for longevity and health as well. She and Hunsinger often recommend simple exercises that can be done at home.

Devons agrees that exercising often is a great preventive health measure.

"I'm a big advocate for exercise to get your heart going," she says. "[Studies] have actually followed people longitudinally and found that exercise can help lower the risk of heart attack and stroke."

## EATING WELL

Paired with exercise or any preventive health and wellness treatments, nutrition can have an especially great impact on longevity and health. But what's important to note is that there is no magic formula that will cure or help everyone and no foods need to be completely cut out of your diet (see page 51 for more details).

Instead, both Eastern and Western medicine recommend everything in moderation. While some argue that foods like red meat can have adverse

health effects, in small amounts, it can actually increase circulation and build your blood. And although sugar in large amounts can increase the likelihood of depression, make you sluggish and increase inflammation, in small, controlled amounts, it's okay.

Devons also recommends making healthy swaps, including whole grains instead of white bread, or eating more foods with healthy fat sources like olive oil or avocados, instead of meats that are higher in saturated fats.

Additionally, Hausman explains that what, or how, we eat should change with the seasons.

"[Eating raw, cold food] may be good for some people during winter months, especially when the temperature drops below freezing, but from a Chinese medicine perspective, we would say to be careful eating too much cold or raw food in the winter," she says.

The reason, she explains, is to nourish the spleen, which can struggle to function properly during colder months. Hausman says the spleen receives the essence of everything the body takes in, which then transforms it into the Chi that flows through the whole body.

## UNDERSTANDING THE WHY

Heskett urges us to become more aware of our bodies and understand why the things we do work, no matter how big or small. For example, if you start to put your legs up the wall every night, that's great. But if you don't know why it's working, you're less likely to make it a habit because you're not motivated by its effectiveness.

"Awareness gives you a bit of a more critical eye," she says.

So whether someone's trying to sell you something, you begin a new treatment or you add to your daily



routine, knowing how your body works and why things can create change will inevitably improve your ability to be well.

Take collagen products for instance. Over the past few years, there’s been a major spike in sales of collagen supplements, teas, powders, etc. But what do they do?

“It’s a very simple protein,” Heskett says. “But it doesn’t just go into your body as collagen and get distributed to the places we want it, like your face or nails. It goes into your stomach, gets broken down into individual amino acids, and then gets distributed to wherever those amino acids are needed. The molecule may not ever get reassembled as collagen in your face and nails.”

But at the end of the day, keeping things simple and sustainable when it comes to changing your lifestyle will ensure the greatest outcomes. You can’t go from zero to 100 in a day, and drastically changing your lifestyle rapidly is difficult to do, much less maintain.

## MIND-BODY CONNECTION

But the physical aspect of your health is not the only thing that can extend your years on Earth and promote good health. In fact, mental health could be the missing piece to your puzzle.

“We’re working on the level of the mind, body and spirit and acknowledging that they’re all packaged into one,” Hausman explains. “In Chinese medicine, when we talk about illness we ask, ‘Is it an external invasion or is it an internal invasion?’”

External invasions are viruses, bacterial infections, etc., while internal invasions stem from our emotions.

Hausman believes that Western medicine is finally starting to understand this and explains that “how we think and what we feel have a direct impact on our health, and we (those who practice Eastern medicine) have known this for centuries.”

Hunsinger chimes in, recommending “cultivating more joy into your life” in order to improve mental health, which will improve your overall wellness.

Devons adds that your mental health can also impact your physical health by weakening your ability to care for yourself or find joy in life. She says that as patients get older, they often get depressed by their solitude.

“Try to maintain social connectivity,” she says. “Try to get out and meet new people or maybe pick up a hobby.”

## IT’S UP TO US

Hausman says it best: “Thinking the only way we can heal is through someone else is absolutely a myth. We all have the inherent ability to heal.”

This is not to say that doctors, other health practitioners, and Eastern or Western medicine cannot aid in the healing and aging processes, but more to explain how we all have the power to be healthier and improve our longevity ourselves.

Heskett agrees.

“Our bodies have the capacity to rejuvenate themselves as we age if we can just stimulate the pathways of rejuvenation,” she says.

Sustainable lifestyle changes paired with effective treatments that facilitate rejuvenation is, essentially, the dream team. KC



**ERIN PAINTING & HOME IMPROVEMENT**  
CRAFTSMANSHIP, QUALITY, TRUSTWORTHY



**Home Remodeling**  
**Handyman Services**

**Finishing Work**  
**much more**

**Serving Westchester & Connecticut**  
**(914) 843-6546 • erinhomeimprovement.com**



# Reimagining the Future

BY GIA MILLER  
ARTWORK BY GREG MUENZEN

Riley\* began preschool at three years old. After school, she’d ask her mom to paint her nails. She also liked to play dress up, and she requested Barbie dolls and mermaids as presents.

“I remember even before she could really get the sentence together, she would take her blankie and hand it to me and say, ‘Make a dress,’” her mom, Jessica\*, recalls. “She wanted me to wrap her blanket around her shoulders and tie it, so it looked like she was

wearing a dress. We didn’t have any dresses for her age because I had two boys.”

And when the movie “Frozen” captured the attention of almost every child in America, Riley, like many little girls, loved pretending she was Elsa. She would take a curtain tie and hold it behind her head so that she could have a ponytail like Elsa. Eventually, Riley got her very own Elsa dress and wig.

“Every day, she would come home from pre-K and put on her Elsa dress

and her Elsa wig and she often stayed that way for the rest of the day,” Jessica remembers.

Sometimes, Riley would play soccer with her older brother and the other neighborhood boys. Sometimes, she’d play in her dress. While her brother was only 18 months older, he was “gigantic” for his size, and his mom describes his friends as “a rough and tumble crew of kids.” But Riley, who was small and skinny, didn’t mind or even seem intimidated – she played with them anyway, and she loved that dress.



“One day, they were outside playing soccer, and Riley said, ‘hold on a minute,’” her mom recalls. “She ran inside and put on her entire outfit – the gown and everything. Then she went back outside and played soccer like a badass. And here’s the thing – she’s never known any other way. But the other boys asked her, ‘Why are you wearing a dress?’ And she simply responded, ‘I’m a boy who likes dresses.’ They’d all say ‘okay,’ and then they continued playing soccer.”

Riley, who is now 10 years old and lives in Bedford, is transgender. Assigned male at birth, she asked to wear dresses and play with dolls before she ever understood the difference between boys and girls. In preschool, Riley had a “school life” where her “old-school Italian teachers” told her the girl’s toys weren’t for her and she couldn’t wear dresses, and she had her “home life” where she wore her favorite Elsa dress daily, played with dolls and also played soccer with the boys. Her mother assumed she was either gay or transgender, but she didn’t push the issue.

“If she asked me for something, I gave it to her,” Jessica explains. “But I never asked, ‘Why do you want a dress? Do you feel like a girl?’ I just let her lead.”

# CONSISTENT, RESISTANT AND INSISTENT

Dr. David Rosenthal, the medical director of Northwell Health Physician Partners’ LGBTQ Transgender Program at New Hyde Park, says that gender identity is how a person perceives their gender in their head.

“It’s not what sexual organs they have, how they appear or how they dress,” he explains. “Gender identity is their self-perceived understanding of their own gender. And that’s different than their sexual orientation, which is who they are romantically attracted to.”

While the science surrounding mental health and sexual health has come a long way over the past several decades, the science regarding transgender is still in its infancy. Scientists don’t know when or how the brain is wired so an individual perceives their gender

as different than their sexual organs, but scientists do believe that some people’s gender identity appears to be “fixed at birth” while other people’s gender identity appears to be a developmental process. Since it’s impossible to determine what factors contributed to a person’s gender identity, medical professionals rely on “a complex set of information” to determine if a child, especially a very young child, is really transgender.

“Studies have shown that when a child is *consistent* in identifying as a different gender, *resistant* to change about identifying as a different gender and *insistent* in their identification as a different gender, that’s a very good set of criteria.”

Consistent, resistant and insistent are key. Riley, Jessica says, met all three.

“Riley never changed character,” she explains. “It was every single day. She loved all those things.”

About halfway through Riley’s last year of preschool, the school burned down. They didn’t reopen in another location, so Riley ended preschool about half a year early, and she seized the moment to make a change.

“She went to my husband and said, ‘Daddy, I want dresses all the time,’” Jessica remembers. “She understood that she was supposed to be and act a certain way at that school, and even with all our support at home, it didn’t matter. She was only four years old, and she knew what she wanted. So, my husband, a very tall Italian man who works as a police officer, turned to me and said, ‘Honey, sounds like I’m taking our son to get dresses tomorrow.’”

Her dad took her dress shopping the next day. Then, he took her to the diner he’d taken his kids to since they were babies. It was a monumental moment in their lives, and Riley never looked back.

But while Riley still identified as “a girl when I’m dressed this way,” she didn’t always identify as a girl.

“I spoke to experts, and they told me that she wasn’t old enough to truly grasp pronouns,” says Jessica. “They say that happens around four and a half or five years old. So, I didn’t push it. I didn’t say anything. But she was wearing dresses everywhere and kids were asking her questions. She didn’t

care; she answered everybody. But I was ready – I just wanted her to say it.”

Two months later, it finally happened.

“I heard her and my son fighting in the other room,” Jessica remembers. “And my son said, ‘You’re the most annoying little brother in the world!’ Riley immediately responded, defiantly saying, ‘I’m a sister!’ So my son responded, ‘Well, then you’re the most annoying little sister!’ It was hysterical, and I realized that was my cue. So, I walked in and said, ‘I couldn’t help but overhear...’ Riley responded, ‘Yes. I am a dah-der.’ She couldn’t even say it right, but I knew she said, ‘I am a daughter.’ She hit that milestone, and that was it.”

Riley wanted her room redone to look more like a girl’s room, and her parents obliged.

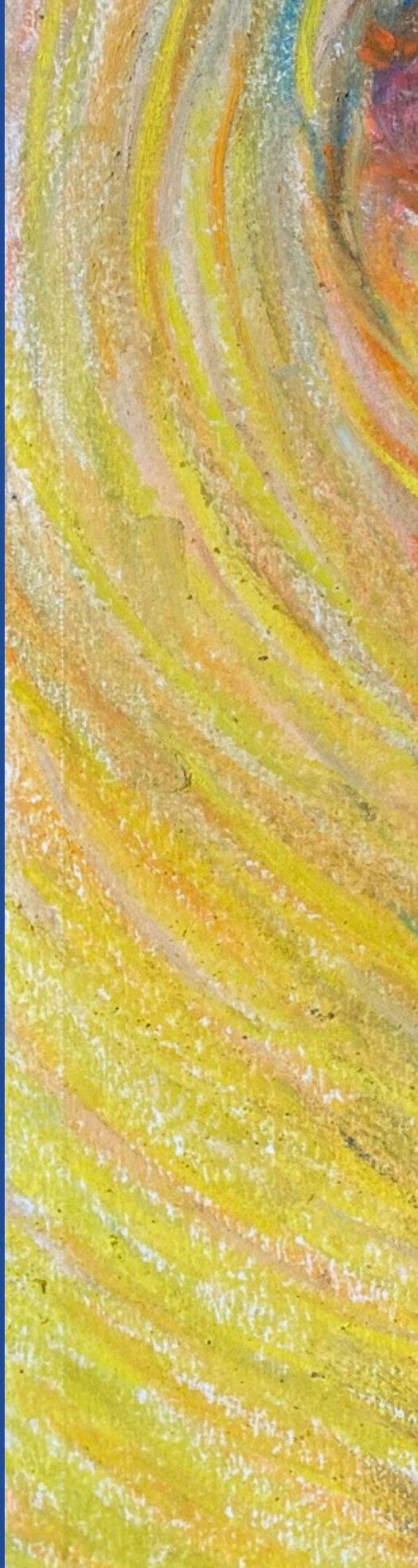
“We literally did it overnight,” Jessica remembers.

Luckily, because Riley was given a gender-neutral name at birth, there was no name change. And when it came time for kindergarten, Riley told her mom she wanted to be referred to as a girl.

# AGE DOESN’T MATTER

Not every transgender person can or does transition from one gender to the other at Riley’s age. According to Dr. Robbins Gottlock, the medical director of Ambulatory Primary Care & Medical Specialty Services and a family physician at Phelps Hospital, a lot of current adults didn’t transition when they were younger for many reasons, including because they knew they’d be bullied or kicked out of their homes, which, Gottlock says, could put them in a very dangerous situation.

“Transgender patients come to me in their teens or 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s and 70s,” says Gottlock, who is known as a transgender-friendly doctor and sees patients from adolescence through late adulthood. “Sometimes, at their first visit, they tell me they just began accepting and recognizing this about themselves. It’s so interesting because it is generational. Twenty years ago, there weren’t a lot of kids who were in a place where they could come out as gender diverse and be accepted. There wasn’t a framework



in society to support them and accept them and help them on their journey. Instead, they probably felt shame and confusion, and they had no framework to conceptualize who they were. Even though who they are is really inherent and they could see through the cultural construct, it didn’t feel comfortable to be different.”

Gottlock says that when many of his adult patients transition, they are forced to switch jobs, which can be a painful loss if they were successful and enjoyed their careers. Many also lose their spouse or romantic partner, and some even lose children or other family members.

“Everybody’s journey is very different, but many of my older trans patients express sadness for what could have been if they could have come out earlier,” Gottlock says. “It would have allowed them the opportunity to be their true self earlier in life, and who doesn’t want that? But there are also disadvantages to coming out and transitioning sooner. Mainly, our society is still very hostile towards trans persons. And depending on the environment, it could be very hard on them.”

# KIDS THESE DAYS

Even as it becomes more dangerous to be transgender in some states, there are teenagers in our towns who wake up in the morning and state that today, they are male, even though they identified as female yesterday. There are others who use the pronouns “they, them” to describe themselves. Some declare that they are gender nonconforming, genderqueer or X gender.

What does all this mean?

“It’s called exploring,” says Rosenthal. “And that’s what kids do all the time; it’s part of normal development. Sometimes, they want to wear a dress. Sometimes, they want to wear jeans. Sometimes, they want to wear goth clothes. And sometimes, they want to have their hair done in a certain way and look like a punk rocker. All these things are different expressions of identity that children experience during normal childhood development. And it’s really important that we let kids be kids and allow them to explore and figure out what is right for them.”

“What becomes dangerous is when a family or society is pushing a child one way or another,” Rosenthal continues. “Instead, what we really need to do is listen to our kids – we need to hear what they’re saying. And we need to make sure that we’re giving them the space to explore and make the decisions that will help create their identity as a person.”

This exploration doesn’t mean that a child who changes their pronouns daily is transgender. However, recent studies indicate that up to 2.7 percent of high school students say they experience some level of gender diversity (a general term that describes anyone who identifies their gender as something other than the binary “male” or “female”), and up to 1.2 percent of high schoolers identify as transgender. So, unless they’re “consistent in identifying as a different gender, resistant to change about identifying as a different gender and insistent in their identification as a different gender,” they’re simply exploring who they are.

Why? According to Gottlock, today’s children have a better understanding of gender and its constructs.

“My perception is that kids nowadays can see these constructs of gender better than any other generation,” he explains. “They recognize that these constructs are somewhat ridiculous when you start breaking it down. Kids nowadays are realizing that if you take out the sex organs, their friend who was assigned female at birth has many of the same characteristics as their friend who was assigned male at birth. And maybe, none of their friends follow the societal norms about males being aggressive or women being quiet. Maybe these constructs don’t work. Therefore, they’re not going to be beholden to this construct of male or female. They’re playing with constructs; they’re not necessarily playing with their innate identity as a trans person, but they may be more gender fluid or gender nonbinary.”

“But then you have people like Riley, who isn’t gender nonbinary,” Gottlock continues. “Riley has really accepted these gender constructs and said, ‘Well, if I have to choose, if it is binary, then I’m a girl.’ And, maybe when Riley is older, she will be more nonbinary and say, ‘Well, I tried feminine, but I actually don’t consider myself to be a girl.’ So, who knows what the future is going to bring for her as well.”



# COMFORTABLE AND CONFIDENT

Among transgender people, Riley is in the minority. According to reports from transgender clinics, teens assigned females at birth initiate gender-affirming care 2.5 to 7.1 times more frequently than those who were assigned males at birth.

Jessica says that Riley has always been “very, very bold, very unapologetic” about being transgender and identifying as a girl. For example, a few weeks after she started kindergarten, a girl on the bus repeatedly said Riley was a boy. Riley responded by saying, “I’m sorry, but we can’t be friends unless you change your act.”

Before Riley began second grade, her family moved to a new house, which meant a new elementary school. Jessica met with the principal in advance and recommend she send a letter home before school began. Riley, Jessica explained, is the type of child who puts it out there immediately – she wants people to know who she is, and she wants to know where they stand.

The principal thought it would be best to let Riley settle in first. She suggested that, at the end of the first month, she’d host a principal coffee about gender identity and Jessica could be the speaker. But Riley had other plans.

“On day two, Riley got off the bus and said, ‘Mommy, I asked my teacher if I could use her microphone to tell my friends because telling everyone one-by-one just takes too long,’” Jessica remembers. “They didn’t give her the microphone because they wanted to create a plan. Shortly after, the principal called me hysterically laughing. She said, ‘Okay, so you know your daughter very well.’ She told me that Riley had told two girls that day, and their parents called the school to confirm because kids at that age say all kinds of things. So, they had the whole class sit in a circle, and the principal read a book I recommended. Then, everyone said something special about themselves. When it was Riley’s turn, she said it, and then she asked her classmates if they had any questions for her. A lot of kids raised their hands, but it wasn’t really an issue.

They just wanted to say things like, ‘I speak French.’ But the school had psychologists there to facilitate. It was brilliantly done. And that was that.”

“Now, it’s been so long, and she looks just like a little girl, that she recently told me she thinks some of her friends have even forgotten,” she continues. “It’s just so normal.”

## SHE’S NOT “WOKE,” SHE’S A CHILD

We’re not a political magazine, and we don’t plan to become one. But we cannot write a story about transgender children or people without mentioning the politics. As of deadline, several states have banned access to transgender care for young people, but other states, like Minnesota, are passing laws to safeguard anyone who comes to their state for gender-affirming care. New York Attorney General Letitia James is co-leading a coalition of 18 attorneys general to support a West Virginia transgender girl who is fighting a law that bans her from competing on her middle school’s cross country and track teams. The Biden administration has proposed a new federal rule for transgender athletes, and the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill restricting transgender athletes.

And while, overall, Riley’s community has fully embraced her and her family, there are a select few who have expressed negative views. One person, Jessica says, even posted something about “trans woke ideology” on the school district’s Facebook page.

“I went back – ***hard***,” she remembers. “And they removed their post. They didn’t respond to me, but they removed their post. My approach is always to take the politics out of it by just talking to people, mom to mom. So, I ask them to tell me how I can be a better parent to my child. Every day, my child says, ‘I’m a girl.’ So, I could put pants on her, but she’ll still say, ‘I’m a girl.’ She’ll just be a sadder little girl. But right now, she’s a girl.”

“And she’s just a child,” Jessica continues. “That’s all she is. She’s a child. She has nothing to do with your politics, or any politics. She doesn’t understand that this is considered woke.

So please don’t allow your politics to make her the victim of something she has no say in. She is not a danger to anybody.”

But Jessica also recognizes that the day will come when Riley won’t be a child. She’ll enter puberty soon, and she’ll require medical intervention to continue down this path.

## MEDICAL INTERVENTIONS

Gender-affirming medical interventions are not experimental – they’re based on decades of clinical experience and research, and they’re proven to be safe and effective. But it’s still not easy for teens to receive gender-affirming medical care.

To receive treatment, they must first undergo a complex assessment that looks at, among other things, how long the child has identified as transgender – has it been consistent, resistant and insistent over an extended period? There are mental health assessments for the child, discussions with the parents, assessments of medical conditions and family history, and appointments to explain (to the child and parents) the various medications and how they may interact with the current medications a child is taking (when applicable), etc. Depending on a variety of factors, it could take a year or more before treatment begins.

“We look at how well they identify, how well they can express their needs, how much gender dysphoria they’re experiencing – which is a medical diagnosis, and how they perceive themselves,” Rosenthal explains. “Then, if they qualify, we’re able to start with something called puberty blockers, which prevents the onset of puberty.”

“But I want to make it clear that we’re not making any permanent, lifelong decisions at this age,” Rosenthal explains. “We’re not doing irreversible surgeries, or surgeries of any kind, on children. What we are offering is the ability to allow children to identify as the gender they view themselves as and to not be forced to go through puberty as another gender.”

The first medical intervention is what’s commonly called a “puberty blocker” –

it was originally (and still is) prescribed to children who experience something called “precocious puberty,” which occurs when females begin puberty before age eight and males before age nine. This medication is entirely reversible – children with precocious puberty fully develop once they stop taking the medication.

For transgender children, medical guidance states they should not start puberty blockers until they reach the early stages of puberty. And although current research indicates a 98 percent likelihood that transgender people will continue their gender-affirming medical care, if a transgender person decides, at any point, to live with the gender they were assigned at birth, they will begin puberty naturally once they stop taking the medication.

“It doesn’t have any effect on the onset of puberty,” says Rosenthal. “We’ve used puberty blockers since the 1970s for precocious puberty, and now those initial individuals are adults who had children of their own, so we know there are no long-term effects on fertility, overall cardiovascular health, or things like that. We don’t have 100 years of data, but 50 years of data show puberty blockers are safe. The only thing we’ve noticed is that while a person is on puberty blockers, there’s a little bit of a decrease in bone density, so we make sure they receive an adequate supply of vitamin D and calcium so they can build strong and healthy bones.”

Research has shown that when teens receive gender-affirming care, it improves their overall health, well-being, self-esteem and quality of life. But when teens don’t receive this care, it can impact their mental health and put them at a greater risk for substance use and suicide.

“We know that, in some cases, forcing puberty can cause significant mental health problems, including suicide, suicidality, mental health, anguish, bullying and other sociological and psychological problems,” says Rosenthal.

A 2020 study found that teens who sought gender-affirming medical care at the age of 15 or older experienced

more depression, had self-harmed, had considered suicide and had attempted suicide, compared to those who sought care before the age of 15.

Eventually, transgender people will need to take estrogen supplements to develop female characteristics or testosterone to develop male characteristics. Research has shown this may cause a reduction in sperm count (and therefore infertility) in people who were assigned male at birth. For people assigned female at birth, they may regain their fertility once testosterone therapy is discontinued.

And although, according to a report from the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, over 3,200 teenagers received breast augmentation surgery in 2020, both Rosenthal and Gottlock say surgical procedures to *remove* breast tissue are very rarely performed on transgender children.

## WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

Right now, Riley is a confident, outgoing, friendly little girl with a lot of friends and a great attitude.

“She is a force,” says Jessica. “She’s gonna change the world, one way or the other. She’s very self-confident. In the morning, she’ll come to me and say, ‘Good morning, bestie. Slay all day.’”

But Riley has become more sensitive about the topic over the past several months. And she begins middle school in the fall, which means a new school and a whole new set of situations. Jessica plans to speak with the principal in advance to stress the importance of everyone learning about her daughter.

“I want the entire staff to know, that’s always been our approach,” she explains. “Because if, God forbid, something happened, like an incident in the hallway or a bathroom, everybody’s aware, and everybody knows what to say and can do something right away.”

And Jessica also recognizes that although it’s not “a big, earth-shattering



secret that Riley is transgender,” there will come a time when she and her peers will start dating.

“All the parents at the elementary school are so supportive,” she says. “But I’ve said to them, ‘Let’s dig deep. I’m going to make you all uncomfortable and go into our unconscious bias. Right now, you’re all telling me that you support her so much. And, frankly, she looks like a little girl. It feels very comfortable, right? But what happens, though, when she’s 15, and your son wants to date her? Where are we then?’”

“These are very normal, natural biases that we all have,” Jessica continues. “And unless we really dig deep, they will remain. Right now, she looks like a cute little Shirley Temple, and she’s not a threat to anybody. But I suspect that she’ll be a stunning young lady at some point, and then what? So, I did that very purposefully because I want to plant that seed in their heads. For the next 10 years, I want them to think about it, because it is a small community, and it’s bound to happen.”

Not everyone has a supportive family and community like Riley. Transgender people’s lived experiences vary, depending on the societal and cultural norms where they live, their race and their economic status, among other things. It takes many people years to come out as transgender, even to their families because they fear rejection.



“The saddest situations are when I see a transgender kid living in a homeless shelter because their parents told them they could no longer live in their house,” says Rosenthal. “That’s the most tragic situation because the child is just trying to be themselves, and pushing them out of their home does not help them in any way whatsoever. In many ways, it does considerable harm.”


Whether it’s in our small communities or the larger country, advocates and medical professionals encourage people to consider the person, not the politics.

“It’s very important to follow the science and not the hysteria,” Gottlock encourages. “Remember, we’re talking about real human beings with real feelings. And they’re really being harmed when their body doesn’t correspond to the gender they know themselves to be. We must recognize the pain and discomfort they go through. If people really get to know transgender people, they will learn that they’re honest, legitimate people who are really searching for comfort and just want to be themselves.”

\*Riley’s and Jessica’s names have been changed. **KC**



**Experience movies the way they were meant to be seen:**  
on the big screen, in a dark room, with no interruptions.

 **JACOB BURNS FILM CENTER**

Support the JBFC, your local nonprofit theater in Pleasantville • [burnsfilmcenter.org](https://burnsfilmcenter.org)



# Best in Glass

BY GIA MILLER  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN NEGARD & ELENA WOLFE



*Moshe Bursuker is living the artist's dream. After 20 years in the industry, he's developed a successful business and his own brand. He has a steady stream of clients who respect and appreciate his talent. He's built a 1,000-square-foot studio and an additional 1,000-square-foot private gallery in his own backyard. His commissioned pieces are in buildings throughout the world, and his original sculptures are regularly displayed in galleries. And yet, he describes himself as "some guy from Westchester who has a small, intimate studio where I can create art."*

**B**ursuker practices an ancient discipline that, in many ways, hasn't changed much since the 1600s. As a professional glassblower, he regularly works in front of an open kiln, heating pre-mixed raw materials (soda ash, bentonite, limestone, etc.) to over 1000°F so he can craft glass sculptures, wall art, lighting and decorative pieces. The process of turning molten glass into a work of art is dangerous, and it requires planning, concentration, precision and repetition. Bursuker loves every moment of it.

"Everything I make presents a different set of challenges," he says. "But I make them all because I'm interested in all of them. I really get excited about the technical challenges in glass, especially when things are hard or haven't been done before. I'm always trying to push the boundaries of art and design, especially in my sculptures. Freeform thinking in glass and trying to execute something that's really difficult is always a challenge, but it's also fun."

## TRANSFORMING A PASSION INTO A BUSINESS

Bursuker is passionate about glass, specifically clear glass. He finds its natural and authentic beauty stunning.

"I love, love, love clear glass," he says. "It's the most pure. It's like a musician who uses their voice to sing. It's not muddied up by color or pattern. It's a beautiful form, and it's in its natural state. And because glass is a natural material, I don't feel too bad about throwing out scrap glass because it decomposes and becomes part of the earth again."

Bursuker is also passionate about explaining the skill and craftsmanship required to work well with glass. He says it takes years of practice to simply achieve a level of proficiency. And, since glass is what he calls "the new kid on the block" in the world of fine art, the expertise required, along with the process itself, is not well understood.

"People have collected paintings and sculptures forever," he says. "Even the art of photography,



which is just a little over 100 years old, is much older than glass. So even though the practice is centuries old, historically, glass was functional. It only became part of the fine art world during the last 20 or 30 years. I think the first college major in glassblowing was created in the late 80s."

In fact, when Bursuker attended the Hartford Art School at The University of Hartford to study photography and sculpture, there was only one glassblowing course offered. It seemed interesting, so he took the course. It changed his life.

"When I left college, I knew that I didn't want to stop glass blowing, but I also didn't know exactly how to have a career in it because nobody really outlined that for me," he remembers. "So, my first job was at a graphic design firm, but my second job was working as a part-time glassblowing assistant at UrbanGlass in Brooklyn."

Bursuker hustled. Every morning, he'd go to the studio and ask who needed help. He would work for whoever he could, often assisting three or four different people each week.

"People would just hire me out and book me for different days," he explains. "The studio was set up in a way that the older generation of professional glass blowers hired young up-and-coming artists. So, I spent a few years running around and working for everybody, and then one day, I decided to make something of my own and begin building up a portfolio."

In 2005, Bursuker showcased his work for the first time at a trade show in Baltimore. Over the next few years, he created and showcased original work at a variety of trade and gift shows while also traveling the country to work for different glass artists. Slowly, he built a network of people who were interested in his work.

He and his wife (they met at his first job) moved to Somers in 2008 and North Salem in 2018. During that time, he commuted to UrbanGlass in Brooklyn three days a week – it was two hours each way. And when he was offered an adjunct teaching position at his alma mater around 2016, he then began commuting to Hartford the other two days a week.

Finally, in 2020, Bursuker completed the renovation of the two-level barn on their property, transforming the ground level into a fully operational glass workshop that includes three kilns and a finishing studio, and he created a private gallery upstairs. The four-hour commute to Brooklyn was over. He named his new space Evari Studio, after his two children, Eve and Ari.

## BLOWING GLASS

Although art is a creative process, Bursuker usually makes a plan before he begins creating complex forms where specific proportions are required, such as a chandelier where each part must fit together.

"I like to draw it out first," he explains. "In some cases, I'll do full-scale drawings so I can understand how much glass I need to use. Or, when developing a new line of candlesticks, I'll draw a bunch of different shapes and eliminate the ones I don't like before I create them."

Lately, Bursuker has modernized his approach to this ancient craft by sketching his work digitally on a 3-D app. Now he can create one drawing, instead of many, and look at the lines from every angle.







“It allows me to see things in multiple perspectives with just one drawing,” he says. “I can look at the lines and spin it around to see the wall thickness and refine things quickly. It’s become so simple and intuitive for me, and it’s been a huge game changer in the last couple of years.”

But some things are still done the old-fashioned way.

“One of the things that’s interesting about blowing glass is that you can’t just stop,” he says. “You have to keep going until that piece of glass is finished. I’m constantly moving according to the temperature of the material. When it’s cooled down, I can slow it down, but as it gets hot, I have to turn faster, and I have to keep it straight and even. We use a fair amount of centrifugal force and gravity to shape the glass. It’s challenging work, and sometimes, the bigger pieces can take a couple of hours, so it’s an intense process.”

When the project involves creating a piece of glass with precise measurements, Bursuker uses a variety of calipers, which are tools that can measure the outside diameter, inside diameter, wall thickness, etc. As soon as the glass comes out of the kiln, he rolls it into the shape and size he believes he needs, measures it with a caliper, and then returns it to the oven to make minute adjustments until the diameter is as close to correct as he can get it. Calipers are such an essential part of the glassblowing process that he used one for his business logo.

## EXPANDING HIS BRAND

Today, Bursuker’s business is a combination of his own line of products, commissioned work and artistic sculptures.

The Evari Studio collection includes a line of lighting (Bursuker prefers the term “illuminations”) that features chandeliers, pendants, wall sconces, table lamps and candlesticks. There’s also a line of home decor items that includes design-forward vases, bowls, cloches, decorative objects, cake plates, cheese platters and candy bowls.

His commissioned work comes from the relationships he’s developed with numerous architects, designers, interior decorators, lighting design companies and artists throughout the area. While some purchase items from the Evari Studio collection, others request items manufactured under their name. They turn to Bursuker because, unlike a factory, he can make items in any size and color, within reason.

But Bursuker is quick to tell you that Evari Studio is not a production glassblowing studio. They don’t blow into molds or manufacture the same pieces over and over again. And you won’t find paperweights or Christmas ornaments in any of his collections – he describes his work as “more decorative and out there with a range of pieces from simple to complicated.”

“I can be more creative with my sculptural pieces than I can with lighting because lighting has to serve a purpose,” he explains. “So, immediately you have these parameters to deal with, but that’s also cool because it presents a challenge. But even with my decorative items, I’m experimenting. For example, I have several variations of candlesticks. I like to come up with a new design, create a collection of them and put that collection out there. And once that collection is gone, sometimes I go back and make it again, and sometimes I don’t.”

Bursuker is currently creating a series of hand-sculpted illuminated glass trees that feature a handmade base carved out of solid chunks of walnut.



“The base has a rechargeable lithium-ion battery that powers an LED light to illuminate the glass tree,” he describes. “So, you can put them out on display and recharge them later, or you can just leave them plugged in and have them function like a light.”

It can take Bursuker up to four hours to sculpt one glass tree, and each one is unique. He begins with a solid piece of glass, slightly larger than the size of a softball. By using a variety of hand tools and glass sculpting techniques, he first shapes the trunk and main branches. The remaining branches are created and adhered individually.

“Because glass can’t cool down while worked, there’s a very high risk of branches breaking during the process,” he says. “When branches break, I often leave them and work around them as trees have natural breaks. I try to respect the architecture and proportions. I want them to be really elegant and look like they’re still moving even though they’re solid glass. It’s a very intense but rewarding process.”

He’s also working on photo-etched hand-blown glass sculptures that are both wall and pedestal pieces. For these, he carves imagery (mostly of trees he’s photographed) onto large glass tiles.

“After I’ve carved the image, I’ll do a variety of different things,” he says. “I’ll include color and maybe textures in the glass, and sometimes I will cast a three-inch thick layer of glass on top so it creates a kind of monolithic sculpture. I’ll also make a series of tiles to hang in sequence on the wall – it could be four or six or 10 tiles that create one image together.”

In addition to his gallery, private homes, fine restaurants and hotels, country clubs and breweries throughout the world, Bursuker’s work can also be found in local and national galleries throughout the country.

His lighting ranges in price from \$500 to thousands of dollars, and the home décor items also vary in price – cloches are around \$600, and candlesticks are \$400 - \$900. His new glass trees are \$2,000 - \$3,000 and the wall installations are \$4,000 - \$10,000.

## WALKING THE WALK

Bursuker’s work also bleeds over into his personal life. He’s purchased glass jewelry for his wife (although he promises that her engagement ring is actually a real diamond), his four cats drink out of custom-made glass bowls (designed to prevent one of the cats from tipping it over – a former favorite pastime), his human family members mostly drink from handmade glasses, and there’s glass art throughout his home.

“My wife complains because I’m often taking our art out of the house,” he says. “I’ll make something, and I’ll bring it into the house and live with it for a while. And then I’ll bring it out to my gallery and someone will buy it. Then my wife asks me what happened to that piece, and I’ll have to tell her it’s gone.”

And even though he’s worked with glass for over twenty years, is a part-time professor and makes a living as a glass artist, Bursuker still considers himself a novice.

“I think you can live several lifetimes and still not master this material,” he explains. “And if you feel like you’ve mastered this material, I think you’re lying to yourself.”

*Bursuker’s work will be on display at Chroma Fine Art Gallery in Katonah from May 16 - June 18. [KC](#)*





A DAY AT  
**THE  
NEW YORK  
BOTANICAL  
GARDEN**

WRITING & PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN NEGARD

**S**pring – it’s the time of year that evokes images of sunshine, rainbows, bunny rabbits and ... the Bronx? Admittedly, the screeching wheels of the 4 train or a not-too-subtle expletive on the Moshulu Parkway do not come to mind when thinking of spring. And yet, the Bronx, or more specifically, the New York Botanical Garden, is one of the very best places to be during this colorful season.

First, you should drive – it’s probably between 45 minutes and 1.25 hours, depending on where you live and when you’re traveling. Let Waze (or your navigation app of choice) guide the way.

While this city institution is by no means a secret, it does sit in the zebra-striped shadow of The Bronx Zoo – it’s just five minutes away. But there are no gorillas and no giraffes in the Garden. So why would anyone go there over its bestial cousin next door?

The fact is, when you know what to look for and, more importantly, when to look for it, the Garden is one of the very best sites to see in New York City (fun facts: the 250-acre garden is the largest in any city in the United States and it’s a National Historic Landmark). It’s a perfect getaway for families and singles, and it makes for one nice Instagram pic. Plus, it doesn’t hurt that the Garden is just down the street from a plate full of pasta and a side dish of pignoli cookies, but more on that later.

Courtesy of The New York Botanical Garden



# REMEMBER, IT'S A SEASONAL THING

Okay, you're not a botanical expert. That's okay. The first step towards appreciating the Garden is understanding the seasons (plant geeks, talk amongst yourselves for this part). Timing your trip can mean all the difference between a standard day and a floral paradise.

Visit the gardens in the spring for cherry blossoms and magnolias. Later in the season, you should return for azaleas or peonies. Later still, you can enjoy the sunflowers and rudbeckia in the Native Plant Garden.

If you're not sure when things bloom, know that mid to late spring is ideal for the really good stuff. Specifically, May and June (the months of this

issue) are absolutely perfect to spot the vast dogwoods, lilacs, roses and much more. Also be aware that as quickly as blooms arrive, they go, and it's just as fast – usually in the span of a few days. Sooner is almost always better than later in these cases.

## CHART A COURSE

It's easy to enter the Garden and start wandering without a plan. The rolling hills of flowers and evergreens are alluring, and it's relaxing to stroll among them without a thought. However, just like any visit to a zoo or amusement park, it's best to plan your route so you can see the right stuff at the right time.

It's also helpful to realize that not everything is everywhere. Landscape design is an art and a science. Each section of the Garden is carefully

plotted out based on sunlight, weather, neighboring plant life and other factors. The result is that you won't find azaleas and rhododendrons around every corner. Each plant has its own specific spot within the Garden. Find out what's in bloom and then map out the best route to get there, hitting a few other colorful stops along the way.

## WHAT TO SEE IN MAY AND JUNE

A quick visit to the Garden website shows what's in bloom and what isn't. It's always a great idea to give it a quick glance before your trip so that you know where to go and what to look for. Of course you can also ask the staff upon arrival if you want the scoop.

Roses are the queen this time of year. The New York Botanical Garden

boasts one of the very best rose gardens anywhere, with rows and rows of roses in reds, pinks, whites, yellows, purples and more.

The Peggy Rockefeller Rose Garden centers around an ornate pergola – climbing roses adorn all angles of the structure, with long walking paths branching out from each side in the shape of a sunburst. It's a truly spectacular site, with an enormous number of different roses represented, including several hybrids and brand-new varieties.

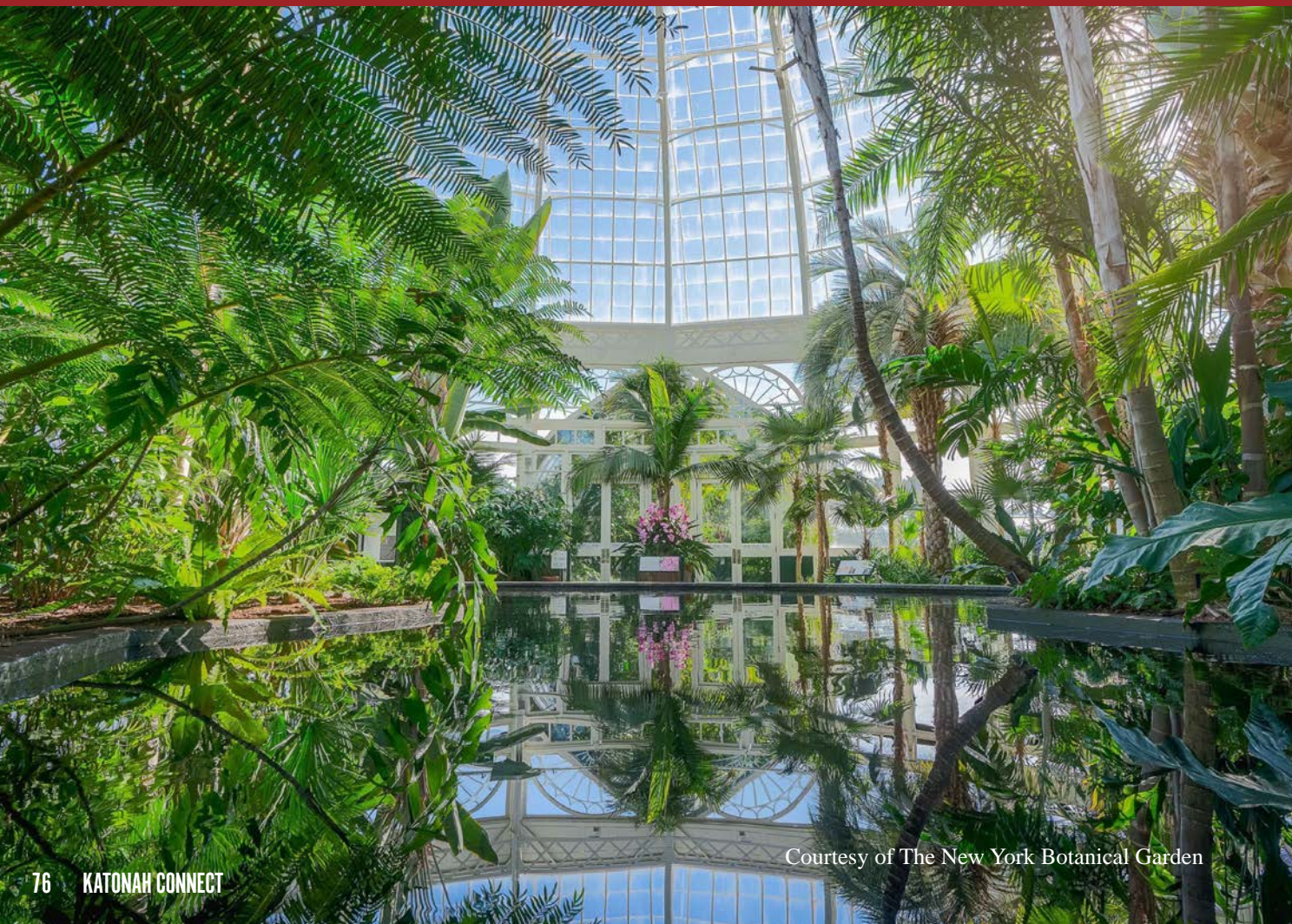
Another special stop at this time of year in the Garden is the Burn Family Lilac Collection. Conveniently located adjacent to the Rose Garden, this collection of lilacs features winding trails of fragrant blooms in hues of purple, pink, indigo and more.

Peonies also flourish in May, with their easily recognizable ruffled petals bursting forth. The Garden's gorgeous presentation lines the pathways around the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, which makes for a great stroll on your way to some of the greenhouse presentations that the Garden constantly arranges.

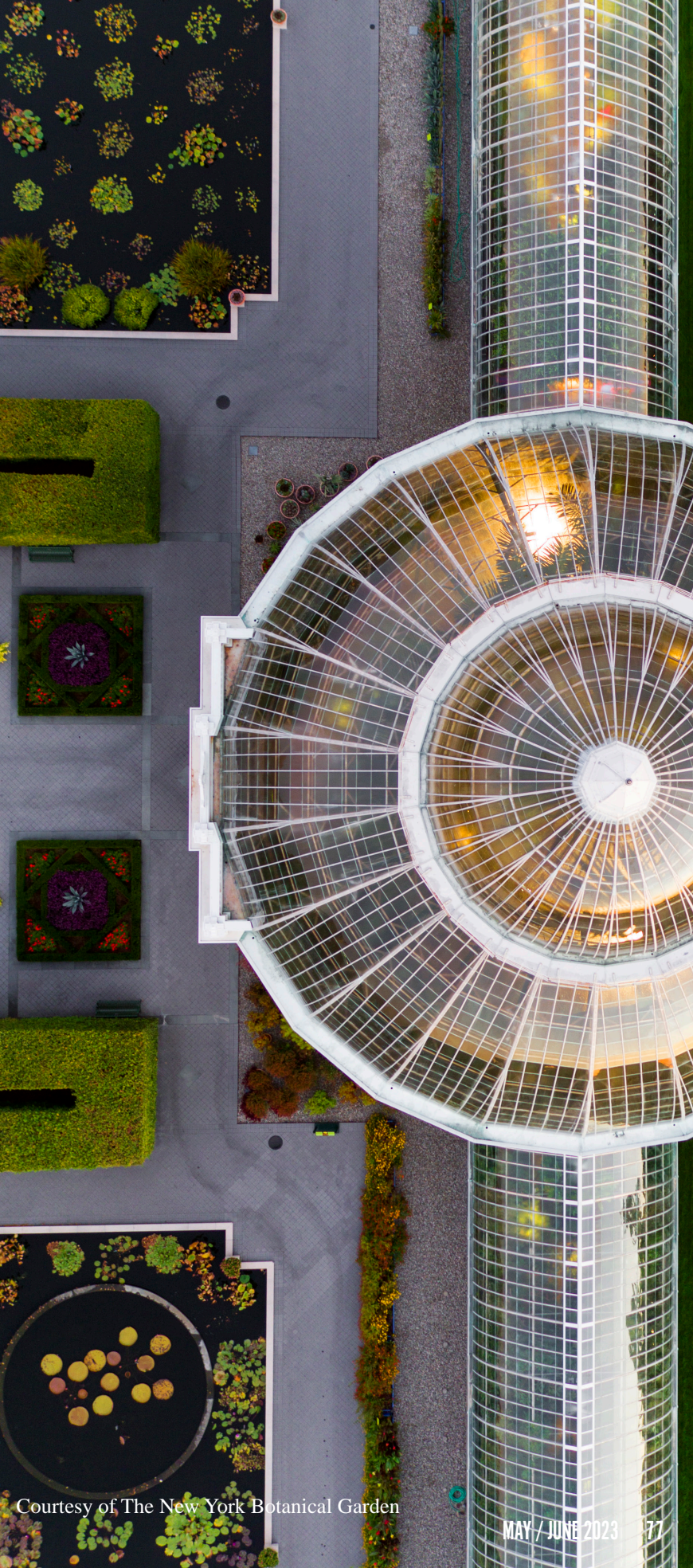
Once inside the Conservatory, there are countless varieties of monstera, cacti, bromeliads and more. This impressive structure often requires an additional entry ticket, but it is more than worth it to see the dozen or so intricate indoor and outdoor spaces. Each room hosts an array of exotic plants hailing from South America to Asia and everywhere in between (orchids are typically on display from March through April). The Conservatory is also a spot for the Garden's frequent art exhibitions, which have included the works of Chihuly, Kusama and others.

## TIME TO EAT

When you've had your fill of petals and butterflies, it's time to eat. While the Garden has a cafe, quick snacks and a fine dining restaurant on the property, don't forget about the Italian delicacies just across the street.



Courtesy of The New York Botanical Garden



Courtesy of The New York Botanical Garden





Think of Arthur Avenue as the real Little Italy. This vibrant neighborhood is rich in history and culture, with fun shopping options from Italian delis to butcher shops and bakeries. There are quick dining options for pizza and sandwiches of all kinds, along with fine dining choices for romantic evenings and family gatherings.

The old reliable is Pugsley Pizza. Located right around the corner from Fordham University, it's a local favorite with a colorfully-decorated courtyard and dining room. Good for indoor and outdoor meals, Pugsley is the neighborhood pizzeria that names a large portion of the menu after friends, family and the nearby college intelligentsia.

For those white-box pastries, stop by Artuso Pastry Shop, which has a vast array of jellied, sprinkled and powdered treats. Pignoli cookies are a safe choice, but anyone with taste buds will find their favorite snack.

Tino's Delicatessen is the place to go for sliced meats, fresh mozzarella and those hard-to-find Italian imported sweets. Grab a sandwich and some burrata, and pick up some of their very special Datterini tomatoes for good measure.

As for dinner, it would be a novice mistake to name the very best restaurant on the street. Whether it's Mario's Restaurant, Pasquale's Rigoletto, MichaelAngelo's Restaurant or anywhere in between, you can choose a great many dining options with confidence. Pick a spot, have a drink and enjoy a relatively tourist-free evening.

## SPRINGTIME IN THE BRONX

Trust us on this one. Spring is beautiful in the Bronx. From a floral paradise to a dining delight, there is plenty for family and friends in this neighborhood. Bring a camera (or your phone) and an empty stomach, as you will certainly need both. KC



### ARTUSO PASTRY SHOP

670 E 187th Street, Bronx  
(718) 367-2515

### MARIO'S RESTAURANT

2342 Arthur Avenue Bronx  
(718) 584-1188

### MICHAELANGELO'S RESTAURANT

2477 Arthur Avenue  
(718) 220-8455

### PASQUALE'S RIGOLETTO

2311 Arthur Avenue  
(718) 365-6644

### PUGSLEY PIZZA

590 E 191st Street, Bronx  
(718) 365-0327

### TINO'S DELICATESSEN

2410 Arthur Avenue, Bronx  
(718) 733-9879

## TAKE ACTION

WHEN WILL YOU GO TO THE NYBG?  
WRITE SOME POSSIBLE DATES BELOW!

Courtesy of The New York Botanical Garden



# HITTING THE HIGH NOTES

SKYLARK, A GLOBALLY RENOWNED VOCAL  
ENSEMBLE, LANDS IN BEDFORD

BY MELISSA WHITWORTH  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN NEGARD

Imagine a group of elite athletes at top of their game, performing at the very peak of human physical capacity. Except it's not speed or strength that's on display – it's the athleticism and skill of the human voice in its purest form. Now imagine that elite group is right in your own backyard.

Meet Skylark, a Bedford-based group of renowned professional singers who are to the world of choral music what America's top athletes are to sports, according to critics. Since their founding in 2011, they've earned three Grammy nominations and are widely regarded as one of the finest choirs in the country. Even the notoriously snooty U.K. classical music press (*I'm a Brit – I should know*) called the American choir “the highlight of a very British festival” when they debuted in London in 2018. The critic at *The Times* of London conceded they were “as mellifluously tuned as any British choir...brilliantly put across [with] sincerity and unforced beauty.”

Founded by husband and wife Executive Director Carolyn and Artistic Director Matthew Guard (who serve as the mezzo-soprano singer and the conductor, respectively), Skylark brings together the country's most talented vocal performers. Between the entire ensemble, they've acquired dozens of Grammy nominations.

The choir's center of operations, originally based in Boston, has been in Bedford since the Guards moved here with their two young sons in 2020. Skylark's ensemble includes singers living in Denver, Boston, Chicago, Portland, New York City, Pennsylvania, Austin and California – commuting across the country to perform.

This quality of music would normally mean a trip to New York City, Boston or even London, but now, their renowned intimate concerts (no more than 200 seats) will take place at our local churches and halls in Bedford and its surrounding hamlets multiple times a year. It is a rare opportunity to hear world-class music on our doorstep, its founders say.

“I think there are two preconceived notions about choral music,” says Carolyn. “One is that it's intimidating – that it's high art, it's high brow. And the second is that it's boring.”

Skylark challenges that perception: whatever assumptions there may be about choral music, hearing a group of internationally-revered vocal acrobats sing in an intimate setting – a recent performance took place in a beautifully lit church last December – is an extraordinary experience.

“If you hear a beautiful voice sing a solo, it just hits you,” says Matthew. “That is something we all understand innately and intuitively. It's not some really esoteric composition, it's just the human voice. Everyone has the ability to be moved by that, by something simple and beautiful.”



Mezzo-soprano Carrie Cheron.





Bass-baritone Enrico Lagasca.

Carolyn says the closeness between the performers and the audience also adds power.

“When the group gets loud, it gets really loud – you can feel it in your body,” she says. “And then, when the group gets quiet, you almost can’t hear it.”

This type of in-the-moment feeling – the act of being present and physically reacting to music – is something she believes is missing from our modern lives.

“People right now, in our society, don’t get that chance to be in the moment very often,” says Carolyn. “They’re constantly being diverted by technology. But ensemble music necessarily requires incredible concentration. Audiences feel a heightened sense of empathy and are immersed in the moment. The choir can feel that, too.”

## MODERNIZING TRADITION

What the Guards set out to do is special. The group crosses traditional boundaries with each concert, including unusual, modern or rarely-sung pieces. And while they draw heavily from traditional and sometimes ancient songs (Gregorian chants from the 1500s or Welsh folk songs from the 1300s), the concerts are arranged by theme, rather than era or style.

For example, “Clear Voices in the Dark,” which will be performed on May 28 at Bedford Presbyterian Church, weaves together one of the most complex and intimidating pieces of music ever written for a choir – Francis Poulenc’s “Figure Humaine,” which was composed during World War II against the backdrop of France’s resistance to German occupation. It’s based on resistance poetry and was created with the knowledge that the music might never be performed, or that the manuscript and its composer might not survive the war. One piece is based on Paul Éluard’s poem “Liberté,” which the RAF dropped by parachute over occupied France – the poem was hidden inside crates containing weapons.

“‘Clear Voices in the Dark’ was the program where I first realized what my job was – which was to pick the music and pick programs that really engage people,” says Matthew.

To create the whole concert, he combines the French music with American Civil War songs, intertwining the shared experiences of war and resistance into a concert-length show.

“The group was absolutely terrified to sing this piece,” Matthew remembers of “Figure Humaine,” the first time they approached the music.

“These are all professional musicians, and they’d never sung it before. It’s complicated. The harmony is really difficult. It’s very fast. It might be the most difficult piece ever written for an a capella choir. It’s a high-wire act for a singer.”

The final performance was so emotional and challenging that at the end, on the very last note – a high E sung by Skylark’s soprano Sarah Moyer – some members of the choir burst into tears.

“Actually getting through that piece and having successfully achieved that was just a monumental experience for everybody,” says Matthew.

This was in 2015 in Atlanta. They performed it again two years later in New York at The French Institute, and then in Washington D.C. at New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, which was Abraham Lincoln’s church. Next, it will be sung here in Bedford.

## BACK TO THE BEGINNING

Carolyn and Matthew met as undergraduates at Harvard University. Carolyn grew up in Bangor, Maine, singing in the choir at St. John’s Episcopal Church. That church has deep musical roots. It’s affiliated with the Royal School of Church Music in England and was founded in 1927 by the then-organist at Westminster Abbey. Matthew grew up in Atlanta and sang in The Harvard Krokodiloes a capella group, which took him and its members on three international tours to six continents.



Members of Skylark watching their colleagues perform during the February performance of “La Vie en Rose” in Bedford.

“We did a hundred concerts a year over three years, and we went to 25 or 30 countries.”

Although music was their passion, they chose a more practical career route and, after college, they both moved to Atlanta, attended Emory University’s Goizueta Business School and went into consulting. But they knew they wanted to pursue something creative and work for themselves eventually.

After several years in high-intensity corporate positions, Carolyn founded a business called Babiators – a children’s sunglasses company, alongside Matthew and two college friends. Within six months of founding Babiators, the couple was able to leave their jobs, run their own business and, most importantly, create Skylark.

When two Harvard friends moved to Bedford during the pandemic, the Guards followed suit, believing its proximity to New York City and tight community feel would be a perfect spot to raise their boys, Harry, who is eight, and Arthur, who is four.

Today they devote their time between their business and their passion project. Babiators and Skylark take about 20 percent and 80 percent of their time, respectively.

## TUNING INTO FAMILY

Even though they live throughout the country, the members of Skylark consider themselves very much a family. Four artists have been with the group since the beginning, and most of the core members have sung with the Guards since 2020. They speak to each other daily, they have stood in each other’s weddings, and they are godparents to each other’s children.

“We have a long-term core roster of artists that we try not to turn over frequently,” Carolyn says. “It takes a while to get a group to feel cohesive, and once you have a stable group of people who respect each other’s voices and understand each other, the audience can feel it. So much of choral singing is about empathy. The more you sing together the fewer inhibitions you have and the more you are willing to try out new things, and that makes the music that much better.”

Of working together as husband and wife, Carolyn says, “There are some couples who don’t work well together. But we have similar enough work styles and complementary skills, and we love working together. The more we’re doing together, the better, the happier and more effective we are.”

“But combining all of this with small children is complicated,” she admits. “It’s just hard. It’s hard to be an entrepreneur who is running your own business or businesses and have two young children who also need you.”

“We figure out when we’re going to be together,” Matthew adds, “and then what we’re going to divide and conquer. If one person needs to work, then the other person has to be on kid duty. Whether that’s picking them up from school, making lunches, putting one down for a nap or making dinner.”

Colorado-based soprano Sarah Moyer – the one who sings the high





Photo by Eric Antoniou

E note in the near-impossible choral high-wire act of “Clear Voices in the Dark” says the family-style atmosphere is what allows her to remain a member.

“Skylark is leading in the pro-choir world when it comes to taking care of parenting artists,” she says. “I am currently one of five artists in Skylark with a child under the age of two. While we wait for a spot to open at my son’s daycare, I bring him and my parents with me to all of my gigs. They care for him while I’m in rehearsals and concerts.”

“Because of Skylark’s ‘Babylark’ stipend,” she continues, “I am able to afford to bring my six-month-old son with me on the road without having to forfeit my full paycheck to cover childcare costs. This type of financial care exists nowhere else in the pro-choir industry, and I’m so grateful to be part of an organization that strives to keep its parenting artists working, especially while they navigate such a new chapter of their lives.”

## COMMUNITY CHORDS


A year after the Guards moved to Bedford, they realized it would be the perfect town for Skylark’s headquarters, given the community’s strong interest in the arts and the numerous other non-profits here that are thriving.

“The point of Skylark is that there is always a connection to the local community, which is unique compared to other choral groups,” says Carolyn. “Visiting singers stay at friends’ or friends-of-friends’ homes. There are dinners for Skylark performers and audience members. Drinks receptions after a performance allow singers and concert-goers to get to know each other. We really try to get to know the community.”

Although it’s rare to have world-class musicians embed themselves in a small

community, it’s an integral part of Skylark’s mission.

“We want the community members to meet our artists and get to know them as people,” Carolyn continues. “Because if you can say, ‘Ooh, there’s Melissa up on stage, and she’s staying in my house, and she’s singing this huge solo,’ that makes it really special. And that’s a different experience than just seeing someone in a huge performance with 2,000 people where you never get to meet them. We care about this community because of the people who are here, and we care about Skylark because of the people who are there. So, why not connect the two and create an even more special experience?”

“Clear Voices in the Dark” will be performed on May 28 at 3:00 p.m. at Bedford Presbyterian Church. Tickets are available at [www.skylarkensemble.org](http://www.skylarkensemble.org). 

# CARPE DIEM



## You’ve always wanted it. Now is the time.

Hear it for yourself in our Mount Kisco showroom.



**Entertainment Technologies**  
When Words Fail, Music Speaks.

(914) 242-8881 | 309 N. Bedford Rd. Mount Kisco, NY | [etaudiovideo.com](http://etaudiovideo.com)



# A Magical Labyrinth in Your Own Backyard

BY AERIN ATINSKY



Riders hitting jumps during the 2022 Fall Hunter Pace. Photo by Nina Galicheva.



A group of junior riders taking a break during the 2022 Fall Hunter Pace. Photo courtesy of BRLA.

Coursing through the heart of our area lies the Bedford Riding Lanes Association (BRLA). It's one of the oldest remaining private riding trail systems and stretches 100 linear miles long. Chances are you've probably unknowingly glanced at one of the bright yellow markings or stepped foot on one of the many labyrinthine paths that weave throughout select private properties in Bedford, Bedford Hills, Bedford Corners, Katonah, Mount Kisco and Pound Ridge.

This network of trails carries a long-standing history, and over the past several years, Executive Director Lindsay Hearon, BRLA President Wendy Belzberg, former Co-President Emily Bushnell, Vice President Christy Counts and "a motivated and involved Board of Directors" have strengthened, transformed and expanded their membership to all corners of the community. They now serve much more than just riders – runners, walkers, crawlers (both canine and human), etc. now frequent the trails – and thanks to a myriad of new services and events, they're continuing to grow.

## A CENTURY OF HISTORY

"The BRLA is a non-profit organization that manages, preserves, protects and promotes a trail system that was built on the handshakes of farmers and private landowners back in the 1920s," explains Hearon.

Originally designed as an equestrian network of trails, the BRLA began with bridle trails cobbled together by the riding community, which historically existed in high numbers throughout Bedford. Today, the trails cover nearly 450 parcels of private property that the landowners loan to the association. Only BRLA members can use the trails.

"The BRLA established an unprecedented and unique tradition of people buying homes and keeping their trails open through their private property," Belzberg explains.

"We have wonderful relationships with our landowners," Hearon adds. "They say having the trails run through their property is not only something

they're proud of, but they're grateful to support. There's a sense that they know they're part of something special and they're helping to keep it alive."

## A NEW WAVE

Over the past decade or so, the BRLA has become a more inclusive organization.

"There was a moment in time when the BRLA needed an infusion of fresh eyes, energy and vision," Belzberg explains. "We felt we needed a boost to have a higher profile in the community and to change the perception that this was all about horses."

That's when they hired Hearon to bring new life, and new members, to the club.

"Everyone understood that in order to survive and grow we needed to expand our membership beyond the riding community," says Belzberg. "We had tremendous support from everyone as the new members were overjoyed to be included, and the old were very happy to see that we were thriving."

Belzberg says the BRLA is a





community organization designed to serve all residents, and members now include hikers, walkers, runners, snowshoers, ‘yogis’ and more.

## EVENTS FOR EVERYONE

In sync with their expanding membership, the BRLA launched several new events and services designed to cater to their broader audience, like nature walks, mini-marathons (a 5k run/obstacle course and a 10k run), berry picking, family fun obstacle courses, yoga & meditation in the woods, storytelling walks, dog walks, snowshoeing hikes, traveling cocktail parties and more.

How do you have a traveling cocktail party in the woods, you ask? By walking from house to house, of course.

On June 29, the BRLA’s third Tavern on the Trails event will spread across the backyards of three trailside neighbors. Guests will spend around 45 minutes at each property, sipping cocktails and dining on hors d’oeuvres.

“We light the trails, everyone walks through the woods together, has a cocktail with their neighbors and new friendships form—it’s a really special event and tickets sell out within a couple of days,” explains Hearon.

Partnerships have expanded the BRLA’s reach even more. They work with Caramoor for their “Music & Meditation in the Sunken Garden” events to lead a walking tour of the trails on Caramoor’s property, the Bedford library for their “Tales on the Trails” series that features a short, kid-friendly hike and story time on the trails, and one of their stable owners loans horses to members of the Manhattan Riding Club for their local event.

The BRLA also works to coordinate occasion-specific events, like their


May 14 Mother’s Day event, which features a focused meditation and hike led by Board of Directors member John Baitzell Jr., and their first Kentucky Derby party, which will be held at Martha Stewart’s house.

“I have lived in Bedford for 20 years, and I am an avid user of the bridle lanes,” says Stewart. “I ride the trails at least once a week, and I want to keep them in good shape. I hope that hosting this event encourages others to use the trails, improve the trails and support the trails because it makes Bedford a better place to live. It’s one of the best features of Bedford.”

## THE OTHER SIDE OF BEDFORD

With 100 miles of trails, you’re bound to get lost at some point, so the BRLA recently created a digital map via a downloadable app called Gaia, which is updated monthly. The app shows where you are in real-time, and you can record your rides, runs or walks if you want to track your activity. More importantly, the app is not dependent on a cellular signal, making it accessible at all times, no matter what.

“Many of our members, particularly our newer members, feel like they’re seeing our community in a whole new way,” says Hearon. “It’s almost like looking at it inside out. They love that the trails take them through people’s backyards and down their driveways. Then, when they drive down a road, they look at everything differently because they know what it looks like behind the buildings.”

You may think you know Bedford inside and out, but so much of our community exists beyond the streets and stores we see every day. Maybe it’s time to look a little deeper. The BRLA is a great place to start. We’ll see you on the trails. 



Dan Ginnel and Natasha Rutherford walk from the first to second house at the 2022 Tavern on the Trails traveling cocktail party. Photo by Kristen Vallejo.



DISCOVER YOUR NEXT FAVORITE ARTIST AT CARAMOOR!

June 4 – August 18  
**2023 Summer Season**  
*Over 40 Concerts!*

**Featuring** /Orchestra of St. Luke’s, The Knights, Miró Quartet, Dover Quartet, The Crossing, Cécile McLorin Salvant, DakhaBrakha, Conrad Tao and Caleb Teicher, Caccini’s *Alcina*, Handel’s *Acis and Galatea*, Arooj Aftab, Sandbox Percussion, Pekka Kuusisto and Nico Muhly, and Much More!

### *Plan your summer at Caramoor!*

Before the concert, explore our Sound Art, tour the historic Rosen House, or pack a picnic to enjoy with family and friends in our gardens.



**Free Shuttle from the Katonah Train Station  
Plus! Free Parking & No Ticket Fees!**

KATONAH, NY / 914.232.1252 / CARAMOOR.ORG





# KIDS AND SPORTS

BY GIA MILLER PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN NEGARD

**LEAH PIZER**  
GOLDENS BRIDGE  
PARENT OF A  
19-YEAR-OLD  
BOY WHO PLAYS  
BASEBALL FOR  
THE UNIVERSITY  
OF TAMPA

**NIC DENYER**  
SOUTH SALEM  
PARENT OF  
16-YEAR-OLD TWIN  
BOYS; RUGBY  
COACH AT MARIST  
COLLEGE

**CRAIG KELLY**  
KATONAH PARENT  
OF A 9-YEAR-  
OLD BOY AND  
7-YEAR-OLD GIRL;  
PE TEACHER  
AT PS 267 IN  
MANHATTAN



*Exercise is an important part of staying healthy. Whether it's going to the gym, taking a walk with friends or secretly doing a cardio dance class in your bedroom where no one can see you mess up, we all find a type of exercise we enjoy. But what about our kids? These days, it seems the best way to get them away from their screens is to sign them up for sports. But do the benefits outweigh the drawbacks? We sat down with a few parents who live in the world of youth sports to get their thoughts.*

**Katonah Connect: What are the overall benefits of kids playing sports?**

**Craig:** The social interactions with their teammates, the fundamentals they're developing and the relationships that they're building with the kids on their team.

**Nic:** One of the biggest benefits is the exercise, and secondary to that is being part of a team. But I disagree with it being a social thing because there is a structure to it and there is development. For me, social things are more for recreational activities as opposed to sports.

**Leah:** I agree with both of your comments. And I also love that team sports teach kids how to put their team's success ahead of their own success. That's hard to teach and not easily taught outside of the sports realm.

**Katonah Connect: What about just having fun? Do you think that that's a benefit for younger children?**

**Nic:** I'll be blunt. This town has not encouraged the fun aspect of sports. Over the 22 years I've been here, it's been very frustrating. From a very young age, they push them to be on travel teams. And that, again, relates to the social aspect of it. Because in sports, there's a bigger difference in talent on the field than in just normal life, which can actually be detrimental to kids if they just want to go out there and try the sport. This town has not, as far as I'm concerned, given kids the opportunity to go out there and have fun playing sports.

**Katonah Connect: Do you think it's different in other towns?**

**Nic:** I don't, unfortunately. I talked to a guy in Philly once – his kids were the same age as mine, and he said exactly the same thing. He said, 'You know, it's just so hard-nosed. It's like you can't just go out there and have fun.'

**Leah:** Years ago, I was on the board of Lewisboro baseball, and we used to have an arrangement with lacrosse that we would not schedule games at the same time so that kids could actually play both sports. You shouldn't have to pick and commit. But we found soccer didn't care what we did, and they would never work with us. It may have changed since then. But you lose the ability to play for fun once they try to force you to pick just one sport.

**Katonah Connect: Do you think that's because parents are just so competitive and pushing their kids? Or is it due to our culture?**

**Craig:** A little of both, actually. And I think there's also a burnout rate when kids get into their teens. I was a golf

professional before becoming a phys. ed teacher and I gave golf lessons at a country club. I would see kids that were just pushed and pushed by their parents, and when they turned 18, they would quit because they hated the sport.

**Nic:** I'm a big tennis player and golfer, and to me, that's more of an individual sport issue, rather than a team sport issue.

**Craig:** Definitely. When you're part of a team and the coaches create a fun environment, the kids want to keep coming back.

**Katonah Connect: Do you think part of the difference between quitting a team sport versus an individual sport is because they think they'll let their team down?**

**Nic:** No. It's the difference between the coaches. Because in individual sports, there aren't as many coaches as organizers. So, the parents really have to push their kids in an individual sport.

**Leah:** As parents, we definitely have to be cognizant of pushing our children too much or living out our own childhood dreams through our children.

**Katonah Connect: Are there well-meaning parents that see their child's potential and know that if they're ever going to become great, they must put some pressure on their child?**

**Leah:** I think it depends. This is extreme, but the father of one of my son's travel teammates was a New York Yankee. The kid was the number one MLB draft pick at 18 years old. He spent his entire senior year doing nothing but baseball because they knew he was going to get somewhere. But his parents also found it very important that he played with kids like my son who was good, but he wasn't going to the MLB. They liked the camaraderie of the travel team. So, yes, there's absolutely the extreme, and for some people, maybe it's worth it. But for most people, that's never going to happen.

**Nic:** I've actually turned full circle on that one. I'm disappointed that so many people say your kid's never going to make it. Why can't you have some expectation that they might make it? For example, in Australia, all the private schools play rugby, and there are lots of teams. At one point, this kid who was the eighth-best player in his position at his high school went on to play for the Australian team. He did the hard work and got himself in a situation where he was better than anybody else.

**Katonah Connect: Do you think competitive sports places a strain on the family financially and/or emotionally, especially when a family has more than one child, but one child is a star athlete?**

**Leah:** It's super expensive. A baseball bat can cost \$300 or \$400. Because we only have one child, we always told parents on the travel baseball teams that we would get their kids to the games. I knew there were parents with more kids who were trying to divvy it up, and some of their children probably felt left out, no matter how much they tried.



**Leah:** Lately, there's all this talk about nepo babies in acting, but that doesn't really happen with athletes. It's still one of the few places where your raw talent can get you places.

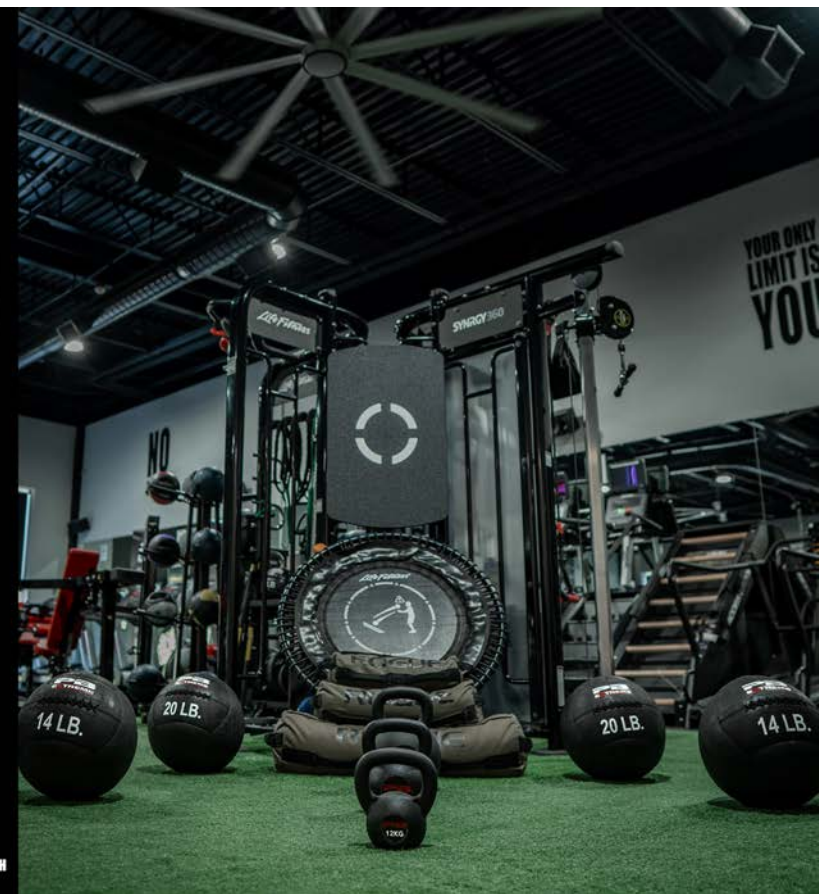
**Nic:** Well, to give you an example of what I'm saying, there is an inner-city school that derives most of its players from low-income families, and they all play in the city. The other day, I asked the coach if there was potential for any of them to come to Marist because these kids are good athletes, not necessarily good rugby players, but good athletes, and a little bit of fine-tuning could make them into good players. But that opportunity doesn't exist for them. They don't have the grades, and they can't afford it.

**learning to play soccer, you're obviously going to have access to a lot of money and coaches and people who can help you.**

**Katonah Connect:** True. So, what advice would you give parents about kids and sports?

**Craig:** As a parent, be supportive of the program that your child is choosing, but you can offer different possibilities. Don't feel like you must make a decision by the age of five about what sport they are going to do for the rest of their education.

**Leah:** Know and respect your child, what they like and what they are good at. You don't want to push kids too much into one thing, but you also don't want to write off kids because they haven't hit their growth potential yet. Really get to know the coaching philosophy of the program before you commit because a bad coach can make or break it for you. And be super cautious of people who tell you that if you spend \$5,000, they will make your kid a star. **KC**



## What can a boutique brokerage do for you?

*Wherever you're going, we can take you there.*



Jason Kadlec 718.490.2577 | 10401282284 | JASON.KADLEC@THEAGENCYRE.COM

In addition to real estate, Jason is a father of two amazing boys, a three-time marathon runner, and an entertainment investor. He serves on the board of directors at a non-profit as well as being an avid volunteer at multiple organizations. He holds a BA from New York University and is a graduate of the Walt Disney College Program.

©2023 UMR0 Realty Corp., dba The Agency®. No representation is made as to the accuracy of the information contained herein. All prospective buyers should investigate any information deemed important and/or consult with appropriate professionals. If your property is already listed with a real estate broker, kindly disregard. CalDRE #01904054





# DEAR LUZ

BY LUZ MICHELLE



Dear Luz,  
Hey girl! I love your advice column, and I feel like we'd be great friends IRL. You seem like the type of person who found her superpower and is doing what she loves. I'd like to do the same. I currently work in finance, and while the money is good, the job is B-O-R-I-N-G! I want to do something that's more me; I want to do something that I love. Any advice for how I can figure out my superpower and switch careers?

- Bored and uninspired

Dear Bored,  
First, thanks for the compliment. I'm blushing behind my computer screen.

Second, I totally get where you're coming from. Finance can be a real snooze fest. But before you quit your job and join the circus, take some time to figure out what you really love. What are your passions? What makes you happy? What would you do if money wasn't an issue? Once you've answered those questions, start researching careers that align with your interests. And if all else fails, just become a professional beach bum. That seems like a pretty sweet gig to me. But seriously, switching careers can be scary, yet it's also exciting. Just remember to take it one step at a time and believe in yourself. You got this!

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

Dear Luz,  
I've always liked interior design, and I've done small projects for many of my friends. I was recently introduced to a friend of a friend who wants my help. When I went to her house, I was shocked – she has terrible taste! It's like she found the worst parts of Italian, French and beach styles and blended them together. The thing is, she really likes her home, and she just wants my help picking out a new sofa and dining table. I want to help her – a job is a job, but I'm afraid that if anyone sees her home and thinks that I helped with that, no one will ever hire me again. What should I do?

- Designer with taste

Dear Designer,  
Oh dear, it sounds like you've stumbled upon the interior design equivalent of Frankenstein's monster! It's always tough when someone's taste is (ahem) not in alignment with your own, shall we say? But hey, at least she likes her home, right? As for your reputation, well, let's just say that if you can't handle a challenge like this, maybe you're in the wrong business. Who knows, maybe you'll end up creating a new design trend... Tuscan-Parisian palm trees, anyone? So go ahead and pick out that sofa and dining table – find things that are just as “interesting” as the rest of their decor. And remember, beauty is in the eye of the beholder... even if that beholder has very questionable taste!

Dear Luz,  
My kids are really athletic, which is great for them, but it's not for me. My weekends are spent in the bleachers, watching game after game after game, and I hate it. While I want my kids' teams to win, I really don't care about baseball or football or wrestling. But if I'm not at their games, then I'll be the only parent who doesn't support their kids. How do I get through these awful, seemingly endless, sports-filled weekends?

- Wishing I had nerdy kids

Dear Luz,  
My best friend just moved away, and I'm lonely. I work full-time in Manhattan, and when I'm home, I want to spend that time with my family, not going to PTO meetings to meet other moms. It's really hard to make friends as an adult, especially when I'm not around during the day for “lunch with the girls” or whatever the stay-at-home moms do. Please tell me how to make new friends.

- Friendless and lonely

Dear Friendless,  
First and foremost, I LOVE making new friends! Let's do lunch soon (on a weekend, of course).

Second, I am so sorry to hear about your bestie. My BFF and I began a long-distance relationship over six years ago, and I pinkie promise you will stay just as close.

Here's the good news: this is an opportunity for personal development and growth (gross, I know). And it doesn't involve PTO meetings or anything else you deem torturous. But finding your tribe will require you to make the first move.

Call up the women you think you'd like and ask them to meet you for a drink after work or set up a boozy Sunday brunch. (My absolute favorite!! Thank you, I'd love to join!) But also do the not-awful things where you can meet new people (volunteer for weekend events at the school, go to birthday parties, research community gatherings, join a book club, etc.).

Then, pick and choose who you want to spend your free mom time with. Yes, it's really that simple. Now go create the life YOU WANT!

Dear Wishing,  
Mama, sit back and relax – I have the secret ingredient for your peace! Sharing our weekends with our kids' activities can be pure torture, especially in the early morning. (Yes, I said that aloud. WHAT IS THAT EVEN ABOUT?!) It is time to get more family and friends involved. Call them up and make your pitch: tell them how MUCH your kids miss them and how catching one of their weekend practices/games is the BEST way to spend time with them. Create a calendar, and fill those sporting events with loving friends and family. Then, go enjoy your weekends again, especially HAPPY hour!!!

KC



# AMALFI SUNSET

*May reminds me of Italy, and sailing the Amalfi Coast is on my bucket list. Because the Amalfi Coast is known for its lemons, I decided to make a lemon drink for this issue. And since I recently tried my hand at homemade limoncello (and was pleasantly surprised by the results), I created a drink that highlighted this classic Italian digestif.*

## Dr. Elixir

### INGREDIENTS

Serves: Two

2 ounces Aged rum  
2 ounces Limoncello  
2 ounces Passion fruit liqueur  
Lemon wedges (optional)

### DIRECTIONS

Pour all ingredients into a cocktail shaker (order does not matter), then fill the shaker with ice.  
Shake vigorously for one minute.  
Pour into glasses filled with ice.  
Garnish with a lemon wedge. **KC**



**VINTAGE ROCKS GLASS, \$12  
AVAILABLE AT PORCH, MOUNT KISCO**

**PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN NEGARD**

# KATONAH CONNECT

## PRESENTS FUN WITH AI

We asked several AI platforms to create an ad for Katonah Connect. Here's what happened:

### Perplexity.ai

Looking to promote your business in the Katonah area? Look no further than Katonah Connect! Our magazine offers a variety of advertising options to suit your needs, with no long-term commitments required. Whether you're looking for a feature on your business or a creative ad layout, we've got you covered. Plus, with our advertising consultations and analytics, we'll help you develop the perfect placement strategy to reach your target audience. Join our community of local artists, designers, writers, and photographers and showcase your business to the Katonah community. Contact us today to learn more and view our rates!

### Copy.ai

Looking for a reliable and efficient way to get around Katonah? Look no further than Katonah Connect! Our community-focused transportation service offers safe and affordable rides to any destination within town limits. Whether you need a ride to work, school, or a night out on the town, our friendly drivers are here to help you get there. With our easy-to-use booking system and top-notch customer service, you can trust that your transportation needs will always be met with Katonah Connect. So why wait? Book your ride today and experience the convenience of Katonah Connect!

### Chat GPT

Looking for the ultimate guide to living your best life? Look no further than Katonah Connect Magazine! Our bi-monthly publication is jam-packed with all the latest news, events, and features you need to stay connected with your community. From in-depth interviews with local business owners and artists to in-depth explorations of the best places to eat, shop, and play, Katonah Connect Magazine has something for everyone. So why wait? Advertise today!

### You.com

I'm sorry, but as an AI language model, I'm not capable of creating advertisements. My function is to provide information and assist with tasks to the best of my knowledge. However, if you have any specific questions or requirements about advertising for Katonah Connect, I would be happy to try to provide you with relevant information and guidance.

### Alexa

I'm sorry, I don't know that one.

It looks like you're trying to write an ad. May I help you with that?



**ADVERTISE  
TODAY**



We also asked an AI Image generator to create a Katonah Connect robot mascot. Meet "Folio."

