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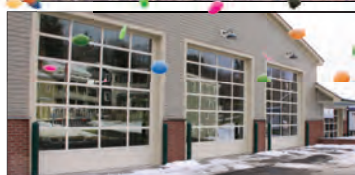
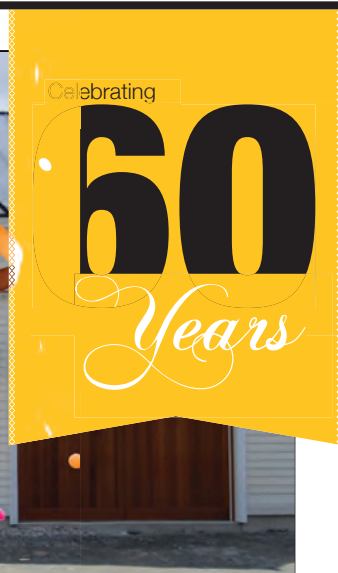
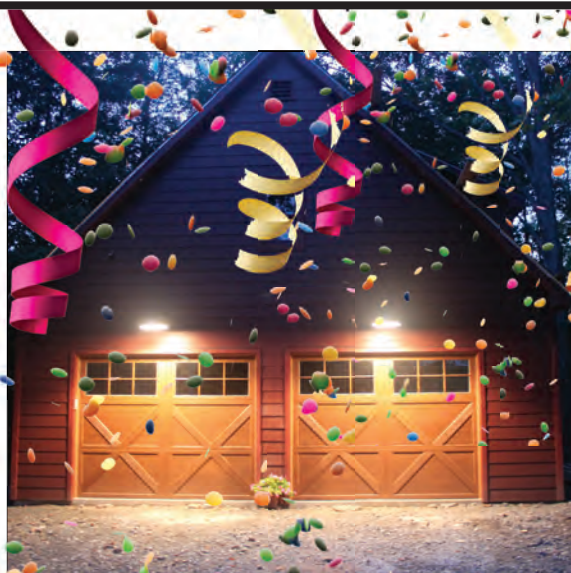
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WILL APRIL SHOWERS BRING MAY FLOWERS?

I think that by now, we've all had our fill of winter, of the snow and of the cold weather – and then some! Thank goodness that April is finally here. I welcome this long-awaited month with open arms and with a big smile. April, for many, marks the birth of spring; flowers start popping out of the ground, and cute little lambs, calves, and foals are born on the numerous farms that dot our area. Spring marks not just birth, but a new beginning. And some of us may use that opportunity to do a little spring cleaning and rid our lives of the clutter that needn't bother us. So go ahead, soak in those sun rays, warm your body, and simultaneously relieve yourself of unwanted items, clutter, and stress!

The lamb and the content within

Our April cover is graced by a newborn lamb at Weatogue Farm in Salisbury, CT. Steven then brings you the story of The 14th Colony Artists, which is an artist group that was formed in 2009 and is comprised of local artists that work and show together.

Since we'll all be a little more active now with the warmer weather, we examined two health terms that seem to be the hype these days – gluten and antioxidants – but what do they mean and how do they affect our health and our lives?

In this month's business feature, Christine brings you Roma Pizzeria in North Canaan, CT and tells the story of our first non-American business person who is surely living the American dream. Christine also features North Canaan, CT in her realty series on page 21, and clarifies what constitutes as Canaan and North Canaan.

We visited Sweet William's in Salisbury for our restaurant review and tasted some of their sweet, sweet pastries. Our farm groupie, Memoree, features Hudson Valley Fresh this month – whose milk would be a great match to Sweet William's cookies! Meanwhile, Melissa tells the story of Christine Gevert: a Chilean who found her way to Lime Rock thanks to music. Sarah Ellen also brings us a story of a few locals: her new series on local heroes focuses this month on some of the men and women of the Millerton fire and rescue squads, without whom we would surely not feel as safe and secure.

Enjoy, thank you for reading, and almost as importantly – Happy Spring!

- Thorunn Kristjansdottir



APRIL 2014

Spring lamb at Weatogue Farm in Salisbury, Connecticut. Weatogue Farm offers fresh eggs and seasonal vegetables at their farm stand.

Cover photo by
Steven Steele Cawman

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LOCAL COLOR

THE 14TH COLONY ARTISTS

By Steven Steele Cawman
arts@mainstreetmag.com

In 2009 Millerton held the town's first "Fall for Art." Retailers opened their shops to local artists, allowing them to display their work around Millerton. It was originally planned to be only a one-day event. Despite torrential rain on the Saturday of the event, huge crowds turned up and filled the shops along Main Street throughout the day. As a result, the successful event was extended and Fall for Art was held again in 2010 and 2011.

The Fall for Art events provided a semi-organized forum where artists could meet and see what their fellow artists were creating and brought the tri-state arts community together. A few weeks following the successful 2009 event, a handful of the artists got together and started talking about organizing a more formal, structured, and on-going social network for artists. Bruce Morse, a painter in Sharon; Moira Kelly, a painter from Amenia; Mark Liebergall, a painter and sculpture from Millerton; Craig Wickwire, a painter from Millerton; Vicki Morse, a dancer from Sharon; and Tilly Strauss, a painter from Amenia held the first meeting one evening to discuss forming a group. They had a lively meeting. By the end of the first year the group swelled from the original six to over fifty members.

The Revolutionary War & the 14th colony

When the time came to choose a name for the new group, the founding members looked to the role the area played in American history. In 1976, during the American Bicentennial, a ninety-six-page

supplement appeared in *The Lakeville Journal*. The supplement focused on the historical role the area around Millerton played during the Revolutionary War. The piece called the New York-Massachusetts-Connecticut area within fifty miles of Millerton "The 14th Colony" for the significant contributions that it played in the fight for independence. The area's foundries and furnaces provided much needed resources on the battlefield for the Continental Army while the bountiful land filled the stomachs of its soldiers. With this in mind, the group named themselves The 14th Colony Artists.

The 14th Colony recognized that part of the success of "The Fall for Art" lay in its ability to capitalize on the existing foot traffic along Main Street while also bringing more visitors to the area. They decided to look for vacant commercial spaces in the area and work with the owners in order to use the location until tenants come along. The first location they occupied was on Railroad Plaza, now the home of Leslie Hoss Flood Interiors. Here, they mounted several highly successful and well-attended shows of their work, bringing thousands of additional visitors to Millerton. The shows were not juried and were open to all members. With increased visibility and as area artists recognized an opportunity to have a place to show their work, membership swelled to almost one hundred members. When Leslie eventually decided to move her business to its current location, The 14th Colony relocated to another space in the Antiques Mall. They stayed at this second location for six months and put on eight different shows. That space is also now occupied and Colony members are currently

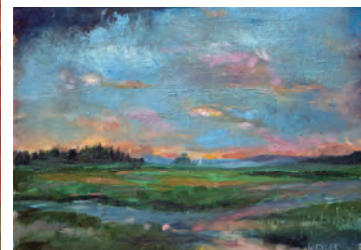
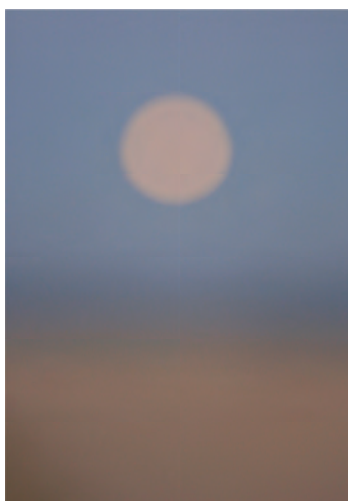
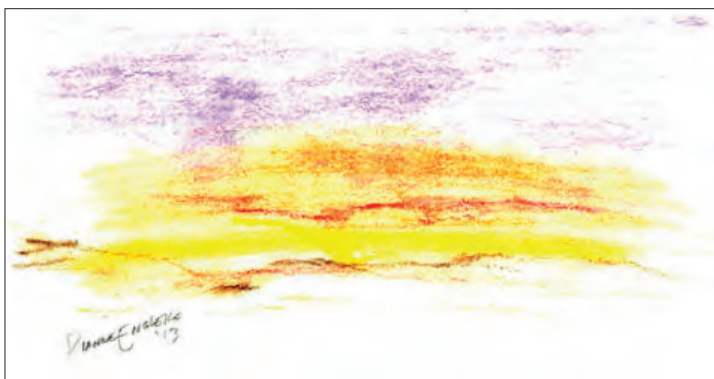
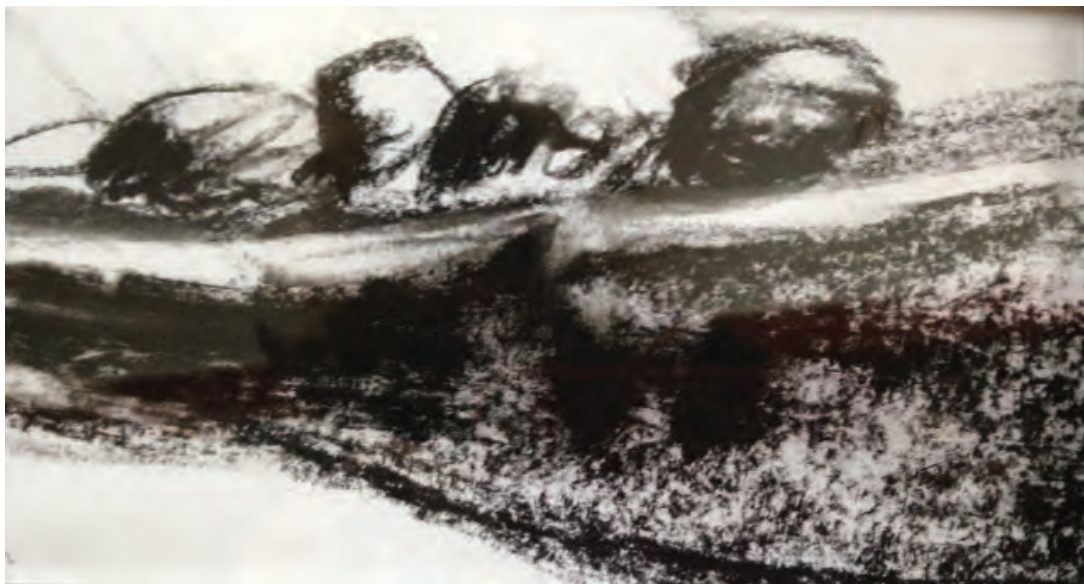
looking for another location to show their work. They are exploring some potentially exciting opportunities.

The Colony's people & collaborative efforts

The group has brought together many wonderful people who might not otherwise have met. Colony members have formed great new friendships and found support from fellow artists. One sculptor, for example, was originally looking for storage space for some of her larger works, but ended up finding another sculptor to share studio space with. Members are also incredibly supportive and help each other out when need arises. "During our first year, one member was awarded a residency at the Millay Colony for the Arts in Austerlitz, New York. He wasn't going to be able to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity because he didn't have studio supplies. We sent an email to 14th Colony members and within a week people had donated enough for him to open his own art supply store," explains founding member Mark Liebergall.

Shows put on by the 14th Colony are a group effort. An initial call for art goes out to all members, listing what the parameters are for the upcoming show. The shows are not juried, which sets the group apart. This means that everyone who brings in work is guaranteed to have his or her art shown and potentially sold. While a show is running, volunteers from the group staff the gallery. In return, the group keeps ten percent of the sale of any works sold during the show, considerably less than most galleries expect from the artists they show.

Until April 27th, their latest show is on display



at Noble Horizons in Salisbury, Connecticut. The show is open on Saturdays and Sundays from eleven in the morning until four in the afternoon and features small works by over seventy members. Noble Horizons is a full-service retirement, rehabilitation, and assisted-living facility offering a variety of care levels designed to meet residents' physical and social needs. The residents love having the art shown at their center. Prior to opening to the public, a very special pre-opening event was held for them. The staff made sure that even those with severe mobility issues were given the opportunity to see the display.

There is no charge to be a 14th Colony member but there are many benefits. In addition to providing opportunities to have your work shown, members receive discounts at several local retailers, news about what is going on in the arts in the tri-state area, and more. The 14th Colony now boasts close to two hundred members. The group holds monthly meetings, has a ping-pong club, and hosts an annual softball game each summer. They are also a member of Fractured Atlas, a national not-for-profit arts services organization based in New York City. Fractured Atlas helps artists with issues including advocacy, insurance, intellectual property, and more. ●

If you have questions, are interested in joining, or would like to be a part of the group's mailing list, email Mark Liebergall at the14thcolonyartists@hotmail.com. For more information about the group, visit their website www.14thcolonyartists.com or check them out on Facebook.

Are you an artist and interested in being featured in Main Street Magazine? Send a brief bio, artist's statement and a link to your work to arts@mainstreetmag.com.

Opposite page: Judy Albright, pastel. This page, top left: Joel Shapira, construction. Top left, lower image: Fran Miller, oil painting. Top right, first column: Turi Rostad, painting. Second column, left: Diane Shapira, ceramic. Middle: Jane Cappellaro, painting. Right: Katia Raskolnikov, painting. Third column: Dianne Engleke, pastel. Fourth column, left: Cindy Snow, photograph. Middle: Bruce Morse, painting. Right: Karin Wexler, painting.


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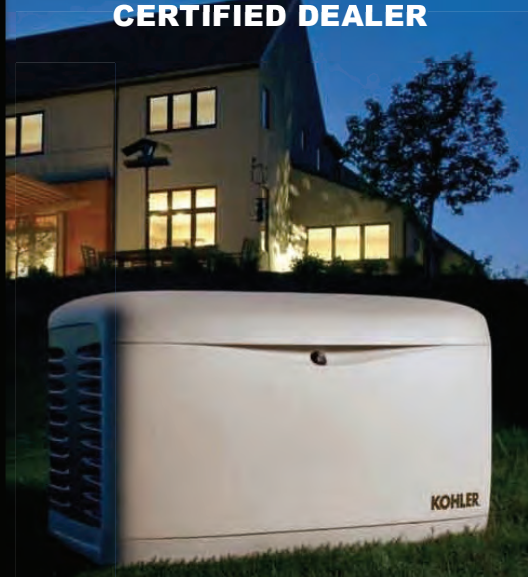


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friendly faces: meet our neighbors, visitors and friends



Taylor DeRocha (left) is a waitress at Dad's Diner in Copake, NY and has worked there for almost two years. **Stacy Smith** (right) works at Mental Health in Hudson, but has worked at Dad's on and off for the past 13 years – and maybe taught Taylor a trick or two? These friendly ladies like meeting all of the customers and forming great relationships with them. They're both from the area and really like it here. Stacy has two girls and can't imagine raising them anywhere else. Taylor is excited to be graduating from Taconic Hills High School this year and plans on attending college in Rhode Island to become a pharmacist. Outside of work, Stacy runs the Taconic Hills youth basketball program, and likes to spend quality time with her family. Taylor likes hanging out with her friends, playing field hockey, and dancing. So what are today's specials?



For the first part of **Tim Berlinghoff's** life, he was a "Looong Eyeh-land-ha." He grew up on Long Island and moved to this area when was 9 years old. Tim acclimated quickly, especially due to his love of the outdoors and the country feel of our area. Tim is the owner and head electrician of Berlinghoff Electrical Contracting based in Pine Plains, NY. He has 20+ years of experience in the field, he is very customer-oriented, and always wants to make sure that his customers are happy with the job that he and his crew do. Outside of work, chances are that you'll find Tim spending time with his family; his wife and son are the apples' of his eye, and his brothers and their families are very important to him as well. Tim and his son spend a lot of time together doing everything from skiing to snowmobiling and four wheeling. Wroom, wroom!



Melissa Jennings is coming up on her second anniversary working for Agway in Claverack. She enjoys getting to know and help her customers. Outside of work you'll most likely find her reading and spending time with her family and fiancé. Melissa is very excited about planning her and her fiancé's wedding and honeymoon in 2015. "We definitely want to go somewhere tropical for the honeymoon!" With the wedding about a year and a half away, we'd say she'll have plenty of time to pick colors, dresses, decorations, and an island to honeymoon on! With summer just around the corner, Melissa is of course looking forward to the nice weather and walking at Bash Bish. "The area we live in is so beautiful and peaceful." She's also excited about expanding her garden and can't wait to cook using fresh vegetables – especially zucchini and squash. So yummy!



Walt Swanson has had one heck of a winter! He's in the home heating business after all. He's an account manager for Lindell Fuels in Canaan, CT, but is very hands-on with everything else that he can help the company with. He has been with Lindell Fuels for 18 months and enjoys his job – getting to know the customer and helping them with their needs. Walt loves the northwestern Connecticut location, "I have lived here for 40 years and it is a beautiful spot! You have Boston, New York City, and the ocean in close proximity and you can also go skiing in the mountains." Once the snow melts and the nice weather finally arrives, Walt is looking forward to hitting the golf course along with hiking and kayaking with his wife. That sounds fun, and warm!



Marguerite Miller works for the Brad Peck Insurance Agency in Copake, NY. She works as a customer service representative and specializes in life, auto, home, and umbrella policies, just to name a few. She just celebrated her 15th year in the business and loves helping her customers – from the initial inquiry, getting the policy started, and maintaining a relationship for many years thereafter. Outside of work you will most often find Marguerite spending time with her grand kids and family, they mean so much to her. She also really enjoys music and drawing. Like many others, Marguerite is looking forward to spring – seeing everything come to life again and being able to enjoy nature – after all, there is nothing better than the feel of great community atmosphere in a small town.



We caught up with **Harvey Weber** while he was about to order a delicious dinner at Dad's Diner in Copake, NY. Harvey is a retired teacher from New York City and is living life to the fullest in our tri-state area. "Everyone here is so helpful and knowledgeable. And I must say the four seasons are breathtaking!" Harvey enjoys the fall foliage, skiing in the winter, and in the spring and summer, besides admiring the beautiful flowers, he loves all of the area's fantastic walking and hiking spots such as Bash Bish Falls and the rail trail. Harvey still deeply cares for the education of our students and is on the school board for Taconic Hills. Harvey is also involved with the Young at Hearters. We thank Harvey for all that he does for our youth! Keep up the good work.



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antioxidants & gluten

MAINTAINING A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

By Thorunn Kristjansdottir
info@mainstreetmag.com



Image source: istockPhoto.com
contributor Okea.

Have you ever wondered what certain health terms/phrases actually mean, the terms that seemingly pop up like fads? Well I have! For example, what in the world is an antioxidant, how does it work, and how does it affect my health and life? At the same token, what is gluten and or gluten-free (the ostensibly new catchphrases) – but more importantly, is it ultimately going to cause my untimely death? If not, is gluten something that I *really* need to avoid? In a quest to answer my lingering questions about these two terms in particular, I turned to the end-all, know-all: Google.

Most of you are probably like me, you kind of-sort of know what antioxidants and gluten are: good and bad for you, respectively. Or that's at least what marketing and packaging tell us. But step away from the hype and marketing, and here are some of the facts that I found.

Antioxidants

Up until this point, I knew that antioxidants helped rid our bodies of free radicals, which are bad. What I learned, in a nutshell, is this: we are obviously exposed to oxygen (oxygen being necessary to our survival), but that exposure can result in oxidation, which in turn causes our body's chemicals to change, creating free radicals. Free radicals can also be created by exposing our bodies to pollution, cigarette smoke, sunlight, and by consuming alcohol. Free radicals can ultimately damage our body's chemicals, DNA, and cells. The danger of this is that, although some cells have the ability to mend the damage, others are permanently damaged which can lead to ailments and diseases such as cancer, heart disease, and diabetes, as well as help and or speed up the aging process.

Enter antioxidants: they are natural, fight free radicals, and can help mend the damage caused

by oxidation. Great! So the next question is: how do I get them into my body? Our bodies already naturally produce some antioxidants, but we can help by consuming a healthy diet and or foods rich in them – fruits and vegetables seem to be the best choice by all accounts. The majority of my sources advised that consuming foods that have vitamins A, C, and E, as well as foods that are rich in selenium, lycopene, lutein and beta-carotene is the best way to get more antioxidants.

You'll get vitamin A by eating foods that such as milk, butter, and eggs. You'll get vitamin C in almost all fruits and vegetables, but the ones with the highest doses include oranges, strawberries, kiwis, bell peppers, broccoli, tomatoes, and kale. The best sources for vitamin E include nuts such as almonds and peanuts, and seeds such as sunflower seeds. Vitamin E and lutein are also found in the leafy, deep green vegetables like kale and spinach. Vitamin E is also found in certain oils like corn and canola oil. Selenium can be found in animal products like beef, fish, and poultry, eggs and cheese, as well as in corn, wheat, nuts, and breads – to name a few. For lycopene, however, you have to go for the pink stuff: watermelon, grapefruit, and apricots, while beta-carotene is found in most colorful fruits and vegetables.

Gluten vs. gluten-free

Until this point, I had more or less associated gluten as something that's found in products such as breads and pastas. And I knew that there are some people who are severely allergic to gluten – come to find out, they make up about 1% of the population and have something that is called celiac disease.

Gluten is a protein that is found in grains. Humans have consumed gluten for thousands of years, but thanks in large part to the Industrial Revolu-

tion, the grains that gluten is found in became more readily available to the masses. Gluten can be found in products such as cereals, breads and other baked goods including pastries, white and wheat pastas, beer, candy, cookies and crackers, salad dressings, sauces and soy sauce, soups and soup bases, processed lunch meats – to name a few. But be aware, gluten can also be found in some medications, vitamins, and cosmetics.

Gluten is problematic for folks with celiac disease and for those whom are gluten sensitive, because their bodies react to the gluten's two proteins and attack the lining of the person's small intestine – which sounds awfully painful. But in addition to the discomfort, this can be quite severe; without this lining, the body will be unable to absorb necessary nutrients. This in turn can lead to nutrient deficiency and anemia (to name two), and in more severe cases it can result in intestinal cancers, other autoimmune diseases (in addition to the celiac disease), or to diabetes.

For those wanting to avoid gluten-filled foods, you can stick to such things as milk, butter, eggs, fresh fruits and vegetables, nuts and seeds – many of the same products which are also quite coincidentally rich in antioxidants. From all of what I read, the majority of the population doesn't need to be gluten-free, and one source said that some will gain weight when they stop consuming gluten.

Knowledge is the key when it comes to anything in life, and that especially reigns true when it comes to our health. In this past year, I've explored numerous outlets for maintaining a healthy lifestyle, and again and again it seems that I return to the fact that it boils down to common sense. Eat well, it clean, exercise, and be mindful of what you put in your body. There's a reason, after all, that they say that you are what you eat. •



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an american success story

ROMA PIZZERIA IN NORTH CANAAN, CT

By Christine Bates

christine@mainstreetmag.com

The business entrepreneurs that Main Street has interviewed in previous issues have all been born in America, and most had strong roots in our region. This month we talk to Benny Ajro, an Albanian immigrant from the former Yugoslavia, who, in the classic style of immigrant entrepreneurs, has built a life and a thriving New York style pizza place and family restaurant in North Canaan, Connecticut in Litchfield County.

Is this a good time to talk?

Every afternoon from two thirty to four, between lunch and dinner, is the quiet time here, but there are still customers. We are busy from eleven when we first open before lunch, to around two o'clock. Then we get crowded for dinner starting around four thirty until we close at ten o'clock every night of the week, except for Sunday when we close at 9pm.

How did you end up in North Canaan, CT?

I left my hometown of Struga in what was then Yugoslavia, but is now Macedonia, a separate and independent country, in 1985 when I was 17 years old and went to California. Then I came here to help my uncle out with his restaurant in North Canaan. I have been here ever since. I liked North Canaan from the day I came here. I worked very hard and became a citizen eleven years ago. I am proud to be Albanian and American. There are lots of Albanians in western Connecticut that make pizza.

Why did you leave your birthplace? What languages do you speak?

I didn't like the Communists. There was no freedom and I wanted an opportunity. I still go back every year to visit my parents. It's changed one hundred percent since I left, but I would never want to



Above: Owner Benny Ajro proudly displays his homemade bread that is baked daily at Roma Pizzeria on Main Street in North Canaan. Below left: Roma Pizzeria's logo is the Statue of Liberty holding a pizza, which appears on their sign, T-shirts, and menus. Photos by Christine Bates.

live there again. I speak Albanian and Macedonian and I learned English when I came here. Being an immigrant has never been an issue for me. Here there are opportunities to do anything. Everybody in America is an immigrant.

When did you start your restaurant?

I started this restaurant in 2001 after working for my uncle in his restaurant for 17 years and learning the business. It took me time to build it up, but I'm very happy now. I should expand, but I don't want to. I bought the building that we're in seven years ago, so I'm not moving.

Why Italian food and pizza?

We eat very similar food where I grew up – we are very close to Italy – just across the Adriatic Sea. I couldn't start a Chinese or a Mexican restaurant. Pizza is a great meal for a family. Four people can have a pizza for the same price as one dinner. But this really is a restaurant with table service and a full Italian menu with pasta, veal, seafood, and salads.

Where did your recipes come from? Do you have a favorite dish?

Over the years I developed all of the recipes. Nothing is written down. It's all up here in the memory book in my head. It's better that way. I love food and I like everything on our menu. And you have to remember that you eat with your eyes, not just your mouth. Everything coming out of the kitchen has to look great.

What's special about your restaurant?

The quality of the ingredients and the food, the service, the portions, and the price make people come back. We make everything ourselves every day – our pizza sauce, our own bread, all of our soup. For our seafood chowder we have lots of fish, crab meat, and squid. [Afterwards my husband said the seafood chowder was the best he had ever had – including the famed Oyster Bar in Grand Central Station in New York City]. We use the best ingredients. We listen to our customers. We're



Continued on next page ...

now offering gluten free pizza. And we have a big delivery business.

Roma's prices seem very reasonable – steamed mussels for \$5.95, a bowl of soup for \$2.95.

I want to keep the prices low for families. That way I see them more often – not just once a year. And our portions are big. Everybody usually leaves with extra food to take home.

But you don't serve liquor? That's a big profit item for most restaurants.

If people want to drink here they can bring their own – BYO – we don't charge extra. I don't drink and I don't want to sell liquor. This is a family restaurant. Besides when people drink, they stay a long time. I want to feed people.

What's your biggest challenge?

The hardest thing is to find good employees who will smile at customers when they come in. Good service is the most important thing. Right now I have a great staff. Personally the long hours are really hard.

How do you market your restaurant?

I don't advertise. Nobody has ever done an article on me before. People come back here. They tell their friends. This community supports me and I do everything to support the community. Last year the Roma Pizzeria sponsored co-ed softball team won the Southern Berkshire championship.

Who are your customers?

All my customers are local people from around here. They are people that know my food and me. I really appreciate all of my customers. I'm happy. There are regulars that I see two or three times a



Above: Roma's Pizzeria is located in the center of Canaan Village, just about 10 feet west of the railroad track. Below left: Roma's clams casino gourmet pizza comes with peppers and bacon – yum! Photos by Christine Bates.

week. In the summer there's always a line waiting for a table. A guy drives over here from Hudson to have our pizza. He told me he passed 15 other pizza places on the way. (A customer from another table confirmed that he drives all the way to Roma from Great Barrington. He thinks the pizza is better than in New Haven).

What advice do you have for anyone thinking of starting a restaurant?

You have to love what you do and care what you serve. It's really tough to start a business. You have to have the right location and the right food. You have to work very long hours. I'm here seven days a week from when we open at 11am until after closing at 10pm – over 80 hours a week.

You have a son and two daughters. Do you hope your children will take over the business some day?

I hope they don't. They help me out now, but in this business you don't get to see your family. It's really hard. I want them to get an education. Italians came here first and started restaurants and their kids went to college. Albanians came later, but we want the same for our kids.

Do you have any time for hobbies?

Sometimes I fish. That's about it. ●

Roma Pizzeria is located at 81 Main Street in North Canaan, CT, their phone number is (860) 824-8125.

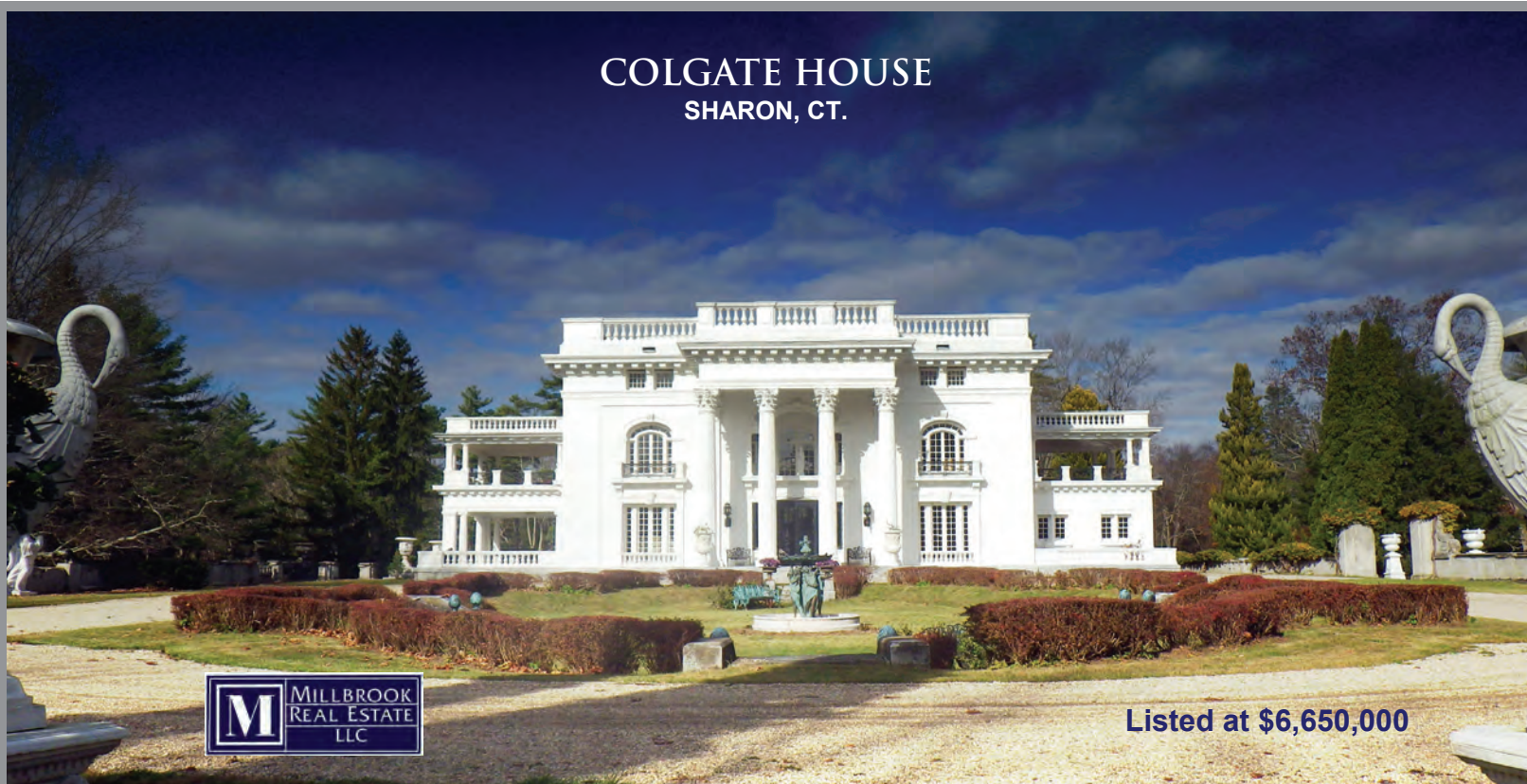
TOP 5 BUSINESS TIPS FROM MAIN STREET ENTREPRENEURS

We've interviewed a local entrepreneur in each month's issue since we began publishing in March of 2013. The businesses have ranged from large to small, and from start-ups to long established firms with millions of dollars in revenue. All of these entrepreneurs, from an auto body shop to this month's restaurateur, have shared their opinions on how to survive and succeed- the five listed below were common to all.

1. You must be passionate about your business whether it's beer, tea, home furnishings, or building stone walls.
2. You should already have some experience, knowledge and contacts in the business that you are entering. Understand the market demand for your product and the customer base.
3. Expect to work long hours – very long hours every day of the week. Forget 9 to 5 with weekends off.
4. Surprisingly, most of the founders we interviewed did not have a business plan when they started (the owners of Big Elm needed one because bank financing was required), but they did take advantage of business courses offered by local community colleges. Once the business got underway, they watched their results carefully and adjusted course as necessary.
5. Starting a business requires a leap of faith. Just go do it – but don't think it will be easy.



COLGATE HOUSE SHARON, CT.



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Situated on 50 plus acres of gardens, park and woodland, Colgate House has been described as "one of the area's most beautiful houses." Dating to 1906, the house is in good condition and retains many of the original features, from the intricate wood carved paneling, the elaborate plaster work on the ceilings and crown moldings to the exterior stonework. There are eight bedrooms, five bathrooms and four, wonderfully proportioned reception rooms; about 10,000 sq. ft. in all. Please go to www.MillbrookRealEstate.com and download a ten page brochure of this historic property. We would be delighted to organize a confidential viewing of this estate. Max Goodwin or George Langa on 845.677.3525.



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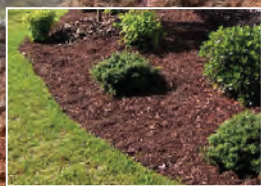
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GREAT GASTRONOMY

By Thorunn Kristjansdottir
info@mainstreetmag.com

Sweet, sweet William! It's as if I've died and gone to a pastry-filled heaven. For those of you who have a sweet tooth, you must visit Sweet William's in Salisbury, CT – but be prepared because you'll be sinking your teeth into dangerously delectable desserts. And for those who love an impeccable cup of coffee, cappuccino, or latte, you'll find your very own piece of heaven on Main Street in Salisbury.

Jason and Michael

Jason Young (pictured left) and Michael Lampro (right) are the men behind Sweet William's. Jason, an Iowa native, has a diverse background but throughout his career his mainstay was always baking. While in New York City, Jason entered Peter Kump's Cooking School where he further studied the art of baking. There he learned more techniques in addition to French pastry-making. He took his newly gained knowledge and incorporated it into his years of experience, and with his own recipes.

In 2004, Jason found his way to our area by way of the theater. And during that time he also formed a wholesale bakery. For a while he rented kitchen space from Guido's, but eventually set up his wholesale bakery shop in Falls Village, CT. Before long, the retail side of his business grew so much so that he moved his business to Main Street in Salisbury in the summer of 2009, and Sweet William's was officially born.

Michael's background involves a mixture of both coffee and design. Michael, a Becket Mass. native, said that he learned the coffee business during the 1990's coffee boom and while working for the Barrington Coffee Roasting Company in Lenox, MA. After some time there he switched gears and studied landscape design, eventually starting his own landscape design business that he ran for about 10 years. After meeting Jason, he thought that the timing was perfect for him to leave landscape design and re-enter the restaurant business, in addition to pursuing his passion for photography. Michael's beautiful images adorn the walls of Sweet William's.

The wide selection...

Sweet William's has European flair which is embodied in their shop as well as in their beautiful selection of pastries. Their menu choices range from pastries and desserts, such as tarts and mini tarts, layer cakes, cookies, scones, muffins, cheesecakes, to birthday cakes and specialty orders. And, as their business card points out, they do really great coffee, too. Coffee is, after all, the perfect compliment to a beautifully delicious pastry!

Just as Jason and Michael are the perfect match for one another, so are their skills: Jason's pastries



are perfectly matched with Michael's coffees. When Michael joined Sweet William's two years ago, he totally upgraded the coffee choices. They've since used freshly ground coffee from Barrington Coffee Roasting Company. They order their coffee once a week, in small orders, and it is roasted that day to ensure that the coffee is as fresh as can be, with good turn-over in the shop. And this is definitely not a chain coffee shop with fancy names and complicated cup sizes, "We have small and we have large," said Michael with a grin.

A pure slice of heaven

When it came time to choose what to taste, I had a wicked time deciding. I asked Jason and Michael what their favorites are; Jason's is the cheesecake and Michael's is the coconut cake. Yes please! In my take-home box, Jason also put one of his beautiful scones, a chocolate chip cookie and a ginger molasses cookie. He explained that the first thing he ever sold was a ginger molasses cookie, so I had to taste-test one.

Let me preface this by saying this: at the time of this writing, my box of delights is half eaten, I'm in a dessert-induced semi-coma, and I couldn't be happier. I began with a bite of the chocolate chip cookie, which was absolutely spectacular. I knew as soon as I broke a piece of it off and felt its texture that it was not your average chocolate chip cookie. The taste: amazing.

Next up was the ginger molasses cookie. I wasn't sure what to expect, because truthfully, I've never been much of a molasses person, but this cookie changed my mind. It was like a little bite of Christmas joy. The explosion of flavor was simply sensational. The combination of just the right amount of molasses with the explosion of ginger and what

seemed like a hint of cinnamon, was an amazing pairing. Wow, now *that's* a cookie!

Next I tried a bite of the scone, which my mother has raved to me about, saying that they are European. Again the flavor and texture were superb. You can really taste the difference. The Sweet William's team uses all fresh ingredients and everything is made from scratch, on site.

Next up was the coconut cupcake, which was a piece of art in itself – I was almost sad to have to take a bite. But it too was the perfect combination: sweet icing with vanilla-y cake and the right amount of coconut flakes on top.

Now, I did save the best for last: the cheesecake. In my life, I've tasted my fair share of cheesecake – what can I say, I'm a fan. I like New York style cheesecakes, but will happily give them all a shot – a fair trial, if you will. Jason had told me that his are a bit different: his cheesecakes are light and creamy, almost moose-like. The beautiful individual sized cheesecake was perfect, from its shape, texture, bottom crust, to the strawberry and blackberries that garnished the top. When my fork sliced through, I felt the moist and lightness that Jason spoke of. The first bite ... amazing, unadulterated ... it's so good that words can't describe. It's in the top two cheesecakes that I've ever had, for sure. It's so rich and creamy, but without being too rich, while light at the same time, and the texture is pure beauty.

I thank Michael and Jason for their dangerously delicious coffee and desserts – my midline does not, but my taste buds do! •

Sweet William's is located at 19 Main Street in Salisbury, CT, they can be reached at (860) 435-8889 or at www.sweet-williams.com.

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Braai (brye) noun **1** a meal cooked over an open fire outdoors. **2** a party at which food is prepared in this fashion. **3** an appliance on which food can be grilled over coals outdoors. verb (braais, braaied, braaing) to grill food over an open fire. [Afrikaans]

An encore of last year's sell-out event, for the benefit of hungry families in the Pine Plains area. Celebrity chef from Johannesburg, dozens of South African wines to taste. Lots and lots of fun. Saturday, July 12 (the week after July 4th). Tickets on sale June 1. Don't miss out this time! Mark your calendar now.



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HUDSON VALLEY FRESH

HUDSON VALLEY'S DAIRY FARMER PARTNERSHIP

By Memoree Joelle
info@mainstreetmag.com



All milk is not created equal. That is what Dr. Sam Simon, President of Hudson Valley Fresh, wants you to remember the next time you're in your grocer's dairy case. He sets high standards for milk production, and quality is a matter he doesn't take lightly. He comes from a family of farmers, and has been milking cows for nearly fifty-five years. Back in 1969, he took over his father's dairy while attending medical school, and even throughout a long and successful career as an orthopedic surgeon, his love for farming never waned. After he retired from medicine, Simon decided to return to his roots, and in 1995 he purchased Plankenhorn Farm, where he currently breeds award-winning heifers for other area farms. In 2005, he co-founded Hudson Valley Fresh, a not-for-profit dairy farmer partnership that has allowed local family dairy farmers to survive while preserving the agricultural heritage of the Hudson Valley.



Photo courtesy of Hudson Valley Fresh

Got local milk?

Simon realized the need for advocacy when he saw that small dairy farmers, including himself, were winning awards for the high quality milk they were producing, yet not receiving a fair price for what that milk costs to produce. "I was receiving the same price for my milk in 2001 that I was receiving in 1977, with no accountability for inflation." He created the Hudson Valley Fresh label and formed a co-operative, with the goal of enabling farmers to take care of their cows the way nature intended and still be able to feed their families. From three the co-operative grew to include nine farms, and today the Hudson Valley Fresh logo appears throughout the Hudson Valley, Connecticut, New Jersey, Long Island, and even in New York City. By establishing a fair price, the co-operative model ensures that farmers can continue to produce premium milk from cows that are allowed to graze, that never receive any kind of growth hormones, and that live a quality of life that every animal deserves. Raising cows this way is not cheap, and Simon hated to see dairy farmers struggling to survive – farmers who simply want to continue the life their parents and grandparents worked for. "They just want to earn a living wage from the land. That's the mission – nothing more, nothing less."

Quality counts

Simon's approach to dairy farming is all about quality, and the heart of quality dairy products begins with the quality of life of the cow. Cows who live in a clean, stress-free environment, and graze on open

pasture naturally produce higher quality milk. "For us, milk is not just a commodity. We take a lot of pride in our product and deserve recognition for that. Our milk has higher Omega 3's, much lower somatic cell counts, and related nutritional, texture, and taste benefits. All milk is not created equal."

All nine Hudson Valley Fresh farms are located within twenty miles of each other, and all are required to be members of the Dairy Herd Information Association. Every cow is checked monthly for the quality of milk it is producing, and are never given any kind of stimulants to up their production. Hudson Valley Fresh milk meets a somatic cell count that is consistently lower than 130,000 a day, which goes well beyond the requirements for premium milk. If you don't know what that means, the lower the number the better. Higher counts (typically over 200,000) indicate infection, and the standard number in the marketplace can be upwards of 400,000. If you care at all about what you put inside your body, you might want to think about those numbers the next time you opt for the mass-produced stuff.

Hudson Valley Fresh is completely transparent in their practice, and in fact, free tours are available to anyone who wants to see for themselves how their cows are raised. "We don't have anything to hide," Simon explains. And that pertains not only to the way the cows are treated and what they are fed, but also to the products that bear the Hudson Valley Fresh name. "A lot can be masked with flavor enhancers and we don't have anything to mask. We

let our milk's purity of flavor speak for itself."

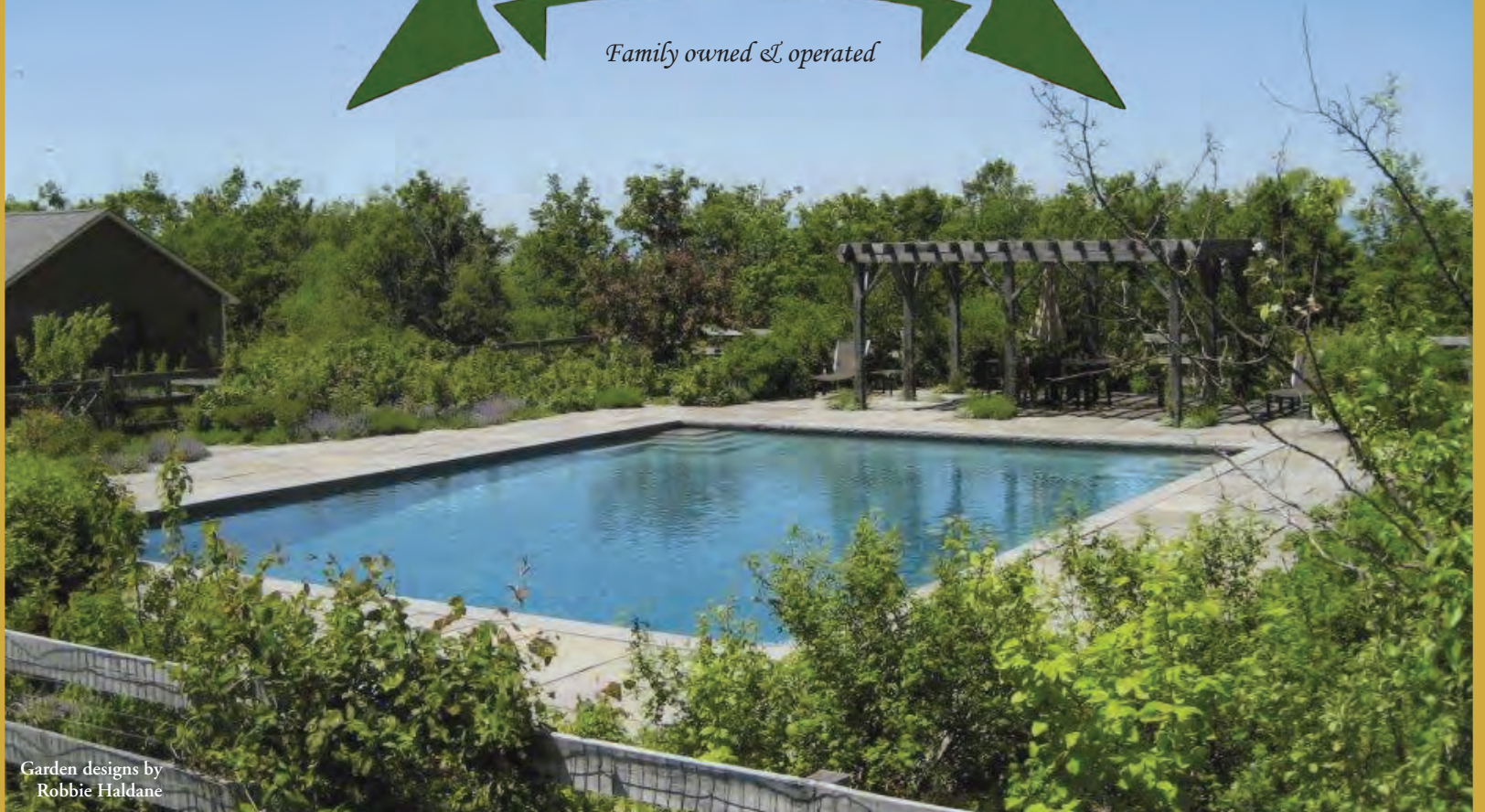
In order to guarantee that purity of flavor, all of their milk is processed at Boice Brothers Dairy in Kingston, where Hudson Valley Fresh is the only milk they process. This ensures no co-mingling or any other funny business, and further allows them to meet the strictest requirements of Kosher law. This means that what you see and taste is what you get. With all of the food and beverage fraud going on in the world, it's reassuring to know that something is 100% real. It's even better to know that the people who produce it are able to practice good stewardship of this land, and carry on the rich agricultural tradition of the Hudson Valley.

The farms that make up Hudson Valley Fresh include Bos-Haven Farm, Coon Brothers Farm, Walt's Dairy, Tollgate Farm, Stormfield Swiss, Shenandoah Farm, Domino Farm, Triple Creek Dairy, Dutch Hollow Farm, and Plankenhorn Farm. They have won the National Dairy Quality Award, and the NYS Environmental Stewardship Award among others. •

You can find Hudson Valley Fresh products, including whole, skim, and fat-free milk, heavy cream, sour cream, yogurt, and ice cream mix in area stores, coffee shops, and at bakeries. For more information, to find a tasting, or schedule a tour, visit www.hudsonvalleyfresh.com.

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a proud blue collar town

REAL ESTATE IN NORTH CANAAN, CT

By Christine Bates
christine@mainstreetmag.com

April's Main Street real estate column returns to looking at a residential real estate market in a particular town. This month we selected North Canaan, the only Northwest Connecticut community in our circulation area that we have not visited in our first year of publication.

Even Connecticut's Department of Transportation is confused about where North Canaan is located. From every direction leading into the town, which is situated next to Massachusetts on the North, West of Norfolk and East of Salisbury, official signs welcome visitors to Canaan and North Canaan. Let's be clear, the Town of North Canaan is a separate town North of the Town of Canaan, which, further complicating matters, is commonly referred to as Falls Village. Originally Canaan was one town, roughly the size of Salisbury. In 1858 two separate towns were created with the larger, southern portion retaining the name of Canaan, and the smaller northern section becoming the Town of North Canaan including the town center of Canaan. The town also includes East Canaan, the fertile Canaan Valley, and its Biblical cousin, Sodom.

North Canaan is not a weekend town

North Canaan is not primarily a town for weekenders or affluent retirees, although real estate developer Roland Betts, George W. Bush's college friend, owns a big piece of property. "It's a proud blue collar town," according to John Harney of William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty. It was never an exclusive summer retreat like Norfolk, or a second home destination like Salisbury and Sharon. It's a working place – North Canaan has over 600 manufacturing jobs and another 350 jobs in health care. It still has five dairy farms – the highest in Litchfield County. It's the town with a



Above: The renovation and redevelopment of the train depot in North Canaan is scheduled for 2015. Photo by Christine Bates. Below left: This new 1,456 square foot ranch priced at \$209,000 on the Blackberry River is an example of the values available in North Canaan. Photo courtesy of Elyse Harney Real Estate.

huge Stop & Shop that draws from towns around, and auto repair garages and pizza. (See article on page 13 about Roma Pizzeria, one of three pizza places in town). "It's an under appreciated 24/7 town," observed Carol Staats of Elyse Harney Real Estate. "The housing stock is more modest, more affordable. And where would the people in other towns be without the auto mechanics, the tire shop, the Rite Aid, and the services that North Canaan offers? It's a hub that serves the entire northwest region of Connecticut."

Joel Ralph, a banker who raised her children in North Canaan, describes the town as a "Wonderful close community with open spaces and great beauty."

Demographic statistics show how North Canaan differs from the other Connecticut towns in our Main Street circulation area – Salisbury, Sharon, and Canaan (see chart). North Canaan has the highest unemployment rate, the lowest household median income, the most manufacturing jobs, the lowest percentage of residents with a college degree, and by far, the lowest median home price at \$157,900.

Changes coming and not coming

Canaan, the town center of North Canaan, developed when the Housatonic Railroad arrived in 1841. A grand train depot was built in 1872 at the

junction of north-south and east-west trains and, until it was damaged by fire in 2001, it was the oldest union depot in continuous use in the country. Second Selectman Charlie Perotti is leading the effort to restore the depot with federal funds already secured and an RFP that will go out to bid soon. The million dollar plus project will restore the center interior of the depot and create a railroad museum and retail shops. Construction will be underway by 2015. Freight cars still rumble on the siding and this year North Canaan will have its 50th anniversary of celebrating the railroad during three weekends in July.

Several years ago the citizens of North Canaan and Norfolk defeated an effort to develop the Yale Farm, straddling the two communities, into a \$20 million luxury golf course on 780 acres of farmland. While the locals fought for years to delay the project, the economy dealt the final blow in April 2009 when Roland Betts, the developer and golf enthusiast, announced that the project would not move forward. "A new club dependent on high initiation fees is simply not a viable option today or in the foreseeable future." Parcels of the land are now on the market.

The center of North Canaan, now dotted with



Continued on next page ...

empty storefronts and ever-changing businesses, used to have Italian green grocers, clothing stores like Bob's and Bianchi's, and other local retail. A savvy real estate investor said he purchased a commercial property in 2007, "Full of anticipation about the boom in Canaan because of the Stop & Shop – myth busted. There has been little or no improvement in activity since." While people remember the old days, explanations for the decline at the center include the 71,000 square foot shopping center one and a half mile outside the village, late implementation of zoning laws, and big box stores in Torrington. No one really knows why, but they hope the renovated depot will draw people back to the center of town.

An active real estate market

North Canaan is unique in the number of homes that change hands without the assistance of a real estate broker. Our Main Street chart, based on all sales of single residence homes maintained by the town's Assessor, shows that between 2009 and 2011 over 50% of homes sold in North Canaan were never included on the multiple listing service (see chart). During the depths of the housing recession, these off-market sales seem to have had a lower median price than broker sales. As the market improved the median private market price actually rose above the value of homes sold by brokers. Apparently, it's the way real estate used to be sold, and in North Canaan the tradition continues.

Typically around thirty single-family homes are sold every year in North Canaan. Unlike markets with many high-end properties, the average and the median price paid are similar, and sales over the last five years have remained in a narrow range between \$150,000 and \$188,000. Last year the number of transactions and sales activity picked up, although prices for individual homes were lower. 2013 sales volume rose above \$5,000,000 for the first time in five years with two sales above \$500,000. Since 2009 no single family home has sold for over \$700,00 and in five years only five have sold for over \$400,000.

On the market now

North Canaan is a great place to buy a reasonably priced house. Of the roughly 30 properties on the market in February, all but one were priced under \$500,000 and 60% of the listings were below \$300,000. The only million dollar-plus property listed is a four bedroom, five fireplace, 4,700 square foot estate on Emmons Lane surrounded by protected land for \$1,750,000. Tom McGowan, the listing broker for Elyse Harney, explained that the Canaan Valley has a special cachet because of its views and closeness to Norfolk. "There is some-

TOWN OF NORTH CANAAN, CT SALES OF SINGLE FAMILY HOMES 2009 TO 2013

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Total MLS Sales \$ 000's	\$2,095	\$1,011	\$2,097	\$3,282	\$3,263
Total Number MLS Sales	12	5	16	18	20
Average MLS Sale \$	\$175,000	\$200,200	\$131,000	\$182,000	\$163,000
Median Sale \$	\$187,000	\$179,000	\$125,000	\$145,000	\$158,000
Total non MLS Sales \$000's	\$2,436	\$3,536	\$2,259	\$685	\$1,999
Number non MLS Sales	14	19	12	3	11
Average non MLS Sale \$	\$174,000	\$186,000	\$188,000	\$228,000	\$182,000
Median non MLS Sale	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$192,000	\$220,000	\$183,000
Total Market Sales \$ 000's	\$4,531	\$4,537	\$4,356	\$3,967	\$5,262
Total Number of Sales	26	24	28	21	31
Total Average \$ Sale	\$174,275	\$189,025	\$155,587	\$188,890	\$169,746
Total Median \$ Sale	\$175,000	\$158,000	\$166,500	\$150,000	\$157,900
Non MLS % Total Sales	54%	78%	52%	17%	38%

Multiple Listing data supplied by John Harney of William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty. Additional market sales supplied by records kept by the assessor of North Canaan. Sales of condos, raw land, multiple family units, and multiple parcels not included.

NORTH CANAAN SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCES ON THE MARKET NOW

VALUE	% OF MARKET	NUMBER	MEDIAN	AVERAGE
Value up to \$200,000	37.4%	19	--	--
Value \$200,000 to \$300,000	22.7%	7	--	--
Value \$300,000 to \$400,000	8.4%	2	--	--
Value \$400,000 to \$500,000	10.7%	2	--	--
Value over \$500,000	20.8%	1	--	--
Total Market February 2014	--	31	\$185,000	\$270,840

Data supplied by John Harney of William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty supplemented by realtor.com. Two government agency owned properties not included. Does not include condos, multiple family, land or commercial listings.

A COMPARISON OF NORTHWEST CONNECTICUT TOWNS*

	Salisbury	Sharon	North Canaan	Canaan
Square Miles	57	59	19	33
Population	3,741	2,782	3,315	1,231
2013 Median Home Price ¹	\$481,000	\$368,000	\$157,900	\$214,000
Mill Rate	10.2	11.35	21.5	20.5
High School Grad Rates	86%	87%	91.4%	94.3%
% over 25 with BA degree	54%	38%	18.5%	34%
July 2012 Unemployment Rate	6.5%	5.9%	8.7%	5.5%
Median HH Income	\$65,000	\$80,000	\$45,000	\$55,000
Major Employment Sector	Education	Health Care	Manufacturing	Retail

* Demographic information from Northwest Connecticut Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy and Action Agenda Report of April 2013.

¹ Median home prices for Salisbury and Sharon courtesy of William Pitt Sotheby's except for Canaan and North Canaan which are calculated by Main Street based on assessor information.

thing for everyone in North Canaan. While prices have definitely risen elsewhere, North Canaan is still waiting. There is no place to go but up."

There are deals in the market and local investors seem to be flipping properties. For example a home on Moses Mead Road, which sold for \$65,000 in May 2013 is now on the market for \$269,000.

The refinancing boom of 2012-2013 when interest rates were low has declined by 80% according to Ross Granna, an assessor in Falls Village. Joel Ralph, a mortgage banker with Torrington Savings, says that fixed rate mortgages are available to qualified buyers. The bank has a special program called "Buyer's Boost" where any buyer with a credit score above 720 can purchase a home with 10% down. For first time home buyers, mortgages with as little as 3% down are available. ●



Above: This house on Moses Mead Road was sold for \$65,000 last year according to assessor's records, and is now on the market for \$269,000. Photo courtesy of William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty.

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christine gevert

INSIDE THE MIND OF CRESCENDO'S ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

By Melissa Batchelor Warnke
info@mainstreetmag.com

Christine Gevert, Crescendo chorus' Artistic Director, is ethereal. Earlier this winter, she greeted me at the door of her Lime Rock home – close enough to Trinity Episcopal Church to share a parking space – and we spent the next three hours talking easily between her music room, where a handful of instruments are carefully preserved, and her kitchen table. I watched the sun set behind her while drinking Sleepytime tea, and when I left the first word in my mind was “wow.”

Crescendo has brought a slice of high-energy, high caliber, choral and instrumental music to a sleepy corner of the country, where Tanglewood and Infinty Hall rule the roost. Christine speaks passionately about Wanda Landowska, the Polish Harpsichordist who died in Lakeville in 1959, as if she were a dear friend, a kindred spirit. She feels the tradition of the music she performs across centuries, speaking with undiluted attention. Tom Schindler, a Crescendo singer who has studied under Christine for ten years, says that his colleagues who have sung with Robert Shaw, who is said to be “the dean” of American choral conductors, compare her to Shaw. What is the source of all of this energy, drive, and pure talent? How did she get from her native Chile, through Germany, to us, exactly?

Early years in Chile: 1966–1989

It starts in Lenox, Massachusetts – but it also starts far before then in the dictator Pinochet's Chile. Christine grew up harmonizing around the house, the shy child of two musical parents who had pursued practical professions. She started learning piano at age five and, while she loved the instrument, she hated the attention; she'd rush recital pieces and dash out of the room without a bow. A few years later, she joined a large concert chorus with her mother, father, and brother. When its conductor fell ill, she asked 13-year-old Christine to conduct a choral section of thirty women. She could sightread easily and spoke Spanish and German fluently, which enabled her to float easily through Lutheran-German church recitals. “That kind of power didn't help to build my character,” Christine said, laughing. “I became used to being in charge pretty young.”

The other parts of her life were more challenging. Her parents divorced. She saw friends shot under the dictatorship. While she studied administration at University, she spent all of her free time with an instructor – learning choral conducting,



Above: Artistic director, Christine Gevert, directing her Crescendo Chorus. Photo: Juliet Mattila.

organ, theory, and singing in a vocal ensemble. Once, after practicing piano past the dictatorship's curfew, she spent the night in a church with a dead body, left there for an open viewing. She laughs talking about that: “It wasn't so scary, actually.”

At age 19, she got one of the best paid organist positions in the city, at an Anglican church. She worked at a Lutheran church in the afternoon. The jobs funded her musical studies in Chile for the next six years.

Germany: 1989–2001

“I didn't want to leave; I was 23, I had all my friends, I had a position, my own home, a husband and everyone admired me. I thought I was on top of the world. But my Chilean music teacher practiced tough love. He said “You will never forgive me if I don't push you now. If you don't go to study in Europe, I will stop teaching you. You cannot be my assistant. I will cut my ties to you completely.” I was an arrogant young fool and did not want to listen; he had to be that strong and that certain. He said “You will never forgive yourself – you'll settle down, you'll have children. You will not make it out of here and your whole life you'll think ‘What if I had done that? What if I had moved on?’”

Her mentor helped her get a scholarship so that she and her husband could move to Germany. After a lifetime in a closed society, she was blown away by the liberal thought, by the social, political, and feminist currents of life running throughout the

city. She was substituting for one of the principal organists in the city. She split with her husband and he returned to Chile to resume a more traditional life.

She moved to Berlin, studying at the renowned and intensive East Berlin School of Sacred Music, which offered eight classes a week solely on choral conducting and had more teachers than students on roster. At age 26, she began playing the harpsichord. Performing in concerts across Europe nearly every weekend, Christine completely devoted herself to her career.

Lenox: 2001–2003

Were you religious? I ask, partway through our conversation. You spent all your time in churches. She was Catholic as a teenager, inspired by the social activism of a mystical Jesuit priest in Chile, but always drawn to the music more than the sentiment. Years later, in Germany, she found a spiritual community called EnlightenNext. Andrew Cohen, its founder lived in Lenox. In 2001, she traveled to Boston to find work for herself and her second husband, Rodrigo Tarraza, an accomplished flautist. A famous harpsichordist she met there told her that Early Music in the United States meant “church job,” plain and simple. She didn't want one.

So she moved to Lenox in the EnlightenNext spiritual community, working as a shipping man-

Continued on next page ...

ager, paid nothing but room and board. Christine is so effusive, so creative and so direct that I can't place her in a behind-the-scenes position, regulating the humidity of the books, shrinkwrapping pallets, and planning distribution schemes. But that she did, for a year and a half.

"Up until then, I had begun to believe I was a little bit special. So there was something about having this small little job in the community that just worked. I learned that my identity wasn't in the end connected to being a performing, professional, great musician. There was something beyond that," she said.

But in order to live in the States, she had to get her work permit through Trinity Episcopal Church in Lime Rock, CT where she worked part time. She traveled to Lime Rock twice a week to play music. Trinity had a broken-down pipe organ and a challenging choir director at that time. But it also had Beth Long, a former nun and openminded Episcopal priest, as its Rector. When Trinity needed a new choral director and organist, and Christine realized that she didn't want to live her life in the spiritual community, she moved in with Beth and figured out where to go next.

Lime Rock: 2003-2014

Christine is not one to sit still. She got to work in Lime Rock, developing a program with workshops about singing, how to approach a score, early music and chamber music. A handful of people, mainly from Trinity, looking to support her work formed a board. They raised \$3,000 at their first benefit concert – small, but a start.

The organization they imagined would become Crescendo. There have been struggles along the way, chief among them the financial crisis that devastated individual giving to the program. But they have consistently offered some of the best, most challenging programming in the area. In 2013, for the first year ever, both of their twice-yearly



Above: Premier U.S. early music instrumentalists and soloists come from New York and Boston to perform with Crescendo. Below left: Andean musician Roberto Clavijo will play a Bombo leguero in Crescendo's upcoming April 5 and 6 concerts. Photos: Steve Potter.

concerts – Before Bach and Music in the Age of Enlightenment – were sold out.

"The struggle always is: what do you do with the resources that you have? Some people want to have a more mainstream repertoire. Baroque music by a Czech composer is not going to sell out. But you can't just pursue being popular," she tells me. Christine has taught classes at Hotchkiss and the Met – she is passionate about expanding Crescendo's educational component, creating appetites rather than meeting them.

What do you listen to when you drive? I ask. "I don't," she says. "When I have breakfast, I think about it so intensely and I rehearse and make music so intensely every day that I don't really listen to it casually. When I do, it's U2, the Alan Parsons Project, Cat Stevens."

What do you do outside of music? I ask. "I don't have much time left. I do like to walk. Many times I have the feeling when I drive around: how beautiful it is. Sometimes I feel on top of the world. Chile is a very dry country; anything that you want to be green has to be constantly watered and New York City is very crowded. This is exciting."

And she spends time with her husband, who she met in a barbershop choir she was directing. She isn't only the music director at Trinity or the Crescendo director. She has led the Salisbury Light Opera Company, the Housatonic Barbershop Chorus, the Millerton Children's Chorale, and others. She has her own Baroque ensemble Les Inégales, with her friend and former husband Rodrigo Taraza. A friend tells me, Christine "has singlehandedly built Crescendo from nothing. She has been a vagabond, living with friends, driving an old car patched with duct tape, working wherever. Besides her work at Trinity Lime Rock, Christine made a Wednesday night commitment to rehearse the little

choir at the Falls Village Congregational Church for years."

What makes her keep pushing, against constraints of budget and time, to achieve ever more with the work?

The Magic of Crescendo

"Over the years there have been people who said that Crescendo couldn't succeed with music unfamiliar to audiences. But Christine had her vision and stuck to it. Our packed houses and standing ovations have proven them wrong. The magic of Crescendo is the trust the singers and the audience have that they will have a wonderful experience with the music Christine chooses. It's not always easy. Christine challenges us, the singers, to master the music, and works with each one of us to be the best that we can be," said a longtime Crescendo singer.

Christine acknowledges that Crescendo asks a tremendous amount from its amateurs. "At the end, the work has to have integrity. Over the years I've learned very simply: you put a lot of pressure on people but you have to give as much from yourself to make it possible. The results have gotten better and better over time."

She loves when people come up to her after a concert and say, "This is the best concert I've ever attended." They give her energy to dream about how she can create the experience again. "The energy is what the audience is drawn to. It's not perfection because it's not perfect. But there's this other element that's very powerful." •

Crescendo's next concert, "Sacred Choral Music from Two Hemispheres: Scandinavian-American a capella Works and a Latin American Mass," will be on April 5 & 6, 2014. To learn more visit www.worldclassmusic.org.



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THE MILLERTON FIRE DEPARTMENT & RESCUE SQUAD



By Sarah Ellen Rindsberg
info@mainstreetmag.com

There are many endearing characteristics of small town life: tranquility, unhurried pace, and minimal density. These towns are also populated with unsung heroes, standing ready in times of need. In Millerton, these strong, cohesive team members constitute the Millerton Fire Company.

What being a member means

The first step in joining the Company is the completion of an application. Next, a sponsoring member promotes the applicant's candidacy, and the membership votes on admittance.

New members are required to pass a physical examination. This is followed by completion of the Firefighter I course in order to attain certification. After this course, some proceed to take Firefighter II and Scene Support – for those not entering structures during a fire. Members of the Company participate in fundraisers and parades, perform routine maintenance on apparatus, and respond whenever possible.

Dedication is a long-standing quality in the Company. Members eagerly sign up and remain committed for many years. Dave VandeBogart, a firefighter and driver, recalls the factors which lead him to join: "I have a long family history," he begins. Many of his relatives have played key roles in the Company: his father Ken, paternal grandfather Roy, and uncles Dick DeWitt and Bernie Silvernail, with the latter continuing today. "My maternal grandfather Silas DeWitt helped found the rescue

squad," VandeBogart adds.

VandeBogart, who has also worn the hats of captain and chief during his tenure, cites another tremendous influence: Walt Bernitt, "a very active member of the Company." Bernitt was VandeBogart's manager at Delson's – Millerton's former department store. VandeBogart also mentions a waiting list, a vestige of the past, when applying in 1984. In addition to the vital role he plays in the Company, VandeBogart is an associate manager at the campus store at The Hotchkiss School, and an accomplished musician.

The Company and the public

The relationship between the public and the Company is "a two-way street." Although the volunteer organization incurs expenses for insurance and maintenance, no salaries are drawn, providing an enormous savings for the community. VandeBogart notes that the community has always been extremely supportive with donations.

Gratitude is always expressed by those who are helped by the Company. After assuring the safety of a villager whose house had been damaged by fire, volunteers secured family photos. The resident thanked them wholeheartedly.

In addition to saving lives and property, the Company frequently reaches out to residents, conducting fire prevention programs, and hosting



Above top, left and directly above: The Ahrens-Fox truck was manufactured in 1937. The pictures are taken in early 1950 and quite possibly on Memorial Day 1951, or the Centennial Parade for the Village in the same year. Right: Hose cart in 1951 Centennial parade. Photos courtesy of the Millerton Fire Department.

Continued on next page ...



Above: The next generation of firefighters taken in October of 2004. Back row (from left): Joshua Schultz, Robert Stevens Jr., John Murphy, Cary Farrar. Front row: Kristin McClune, Ryan Andrade. Top left: Another picture of Explorer Post 1051, (from left) Kristin McClune, Robert Stevens Jr., Christopher Segelken, and Joshua Schultz. Bottom left: Hector "Sandy" McClune's boots. He was a life member of the Millerton Fire Department and was killed in the line of duty on November 26, 2006. Countless fire companies came together to give him a funeral fit for a king. His family received a postcard from a fire company in Minnesota expressing their condolences. You'll never have family like you do in the fire service! Photos courtesy of Kristin McClune.

pancake breakfasts. At the breakfasts (re-instituted last month by popular demand) convivial atmosphere and gleaming trucks reign. Pancakes and all the trimmings including eggs, toast and bacon will be served next on Sunday, April 5 from 7 to 11:30 a.m at the firehouse.

The fire company's history

The Company, founded in 1892, is steeped in history. The five members of the historical committee (including VandeBogart) are currently preparing an in-depth look at the Company which will be presented in conjunction with the North East Historical Society in the coming months.

VandeBogart describes the formation of the Company which started as the result of several major fires in the village in 1891. Everyone, including children, participated in bucket brigades to extinguish the flames. Meetings were held on South Center Street in a bank building, the present day location of Oblong Jr. There, the Edward H. Thompson Hose Company was formed, taking its name from the bank president. The first location of the Company was in Nickel Plate Hall, the former home of Salem Saddlery. The first of two hose carts was purchased with the second following soon after. In 1942, the Company was relocated to the building currently known as Village Hall.

In 2004, the fire district was formed. It in-

cludes both the Village of Millerton and the Town of North East. In addition to the fire district, the Company "supplies mutual aid to the surrounding towns," VandeBogart adds. These include Amentia, Standford, Pine Plains, Ancram, Copake, and Lakeville and Sharon in Connecticut.

Kristin and the rescue squad

The call to serve was heeded at a very young age by Kristin McClune, First Lieutenant of the rescue squad. At age six, while staying with her grandmother in Milan, she heard calls coming in over the radio, directing members of the local company to the scene of the most recent disaster. "Every time I heard the radio go off, I'd salute my grandmother and say 'We're out of here,'" McClune mentions. Family ties to the Company are deeply ingrained. McClune's paternal grandfather, Hector, aka "Sandy" was a life member of the Company. He was killed in the line of duty on November 26, 2006. Numerous fire companies gathered to pay tribute at his funeral.

In 2003 McClune joined the Explorers, a branch of the boy scouts which encourages both men and women to volunteer in the realm of emergency services. In 2012, after completing the rigorous training, she became an EMT. Today, McClune is frequently sighted at the NorthEast-Millerton Library where she works as the Youth Services Coordinator, in close proximity to the firehouse.

One charming story in particular accompanies McClune on every call. While taking the vitals of

an elderly gentlemen in the "boo-boo box" (her term of endearment for the ambulance), she says: "I'm really sorry we met this way." While holding her hand, tears streaming down his face, he utters a moving reply: "I'm just glad it was you [who came]."

On another day, McClune remembers being called to assist a woman in distress. The patient was quickly moved into the ambulance thanks to additional assistance provided by another EMT, a doctor, and a police officer. "The best part of that call was the teamwork," McClune observes. The Company is also known for lending a helping hand beyond the call of duty. McClune reminisces about a certain patient who was reluctant to go to the hospital, because she was concerned about her cats. McClune prevailed upon a colleague to deliver the cats to a neighbor and the boo-boo box departed with the woman safely ensconced inside.

The esprit de corps also creates a feeling of "family," among the volunteers. Even at the wee hours of the morning, they are there, providing mutual support. McClune is taking this a step further, incorporating the familial aspect of the company into her own life. She is engaged to Assistant Fire Chief, Joshua Schultz. •

To learn more about the Millerton Fire Company and Rescue Squad, you can reach them at (518) 789-4645, or millertonfire@yahoo.com and www.millertonfire.com.

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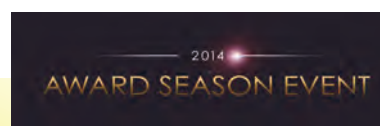
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{ adventures &
misadventures }

tibet & hong kong

Above:
Monastery
in Tibet.

By Melissa Batchelor Warnke
info@mainstreetmag.com

Our contributing writer, Melissa Batchelor Warnke, recently took a whirlwind trip across Asia, traveling to Bangkok, Bhutan, Nepal, Tibet, and Hong Kong. In this last of three pieces, she dodges altitude sickness in Tibet and hangs like a local in Hong Kong.

Tibet

Those of you who have been following along with the series will remember the fun of Bangkok, the peace of Bhutan, and the chaos of Nepal. For our penultimate stop before arriving home, we went to Lhasa, Tibet, unsure what to expect upon arrival. Having dabbled in Buddhism throughout the years, I had built up an idyllic picture of Lhasa in my mind – a place of pilgrims frozen in time, akin to the apricot-drying mountain region of Ladakh, India I visited years before. And yet friends who had studied in Tibet's capital city told me that it was changing rapidly, morphing into an unrecognizable tourist destination for rich Chinese.

Lhasa, Tibet is located on “the roof of the world,” 11,500 feet above sea level. Lakeville, CT, my hometown, is 699 feet. So while I somehow walked off the plane feeling fine, the other ten people with us were knocked almost immediately out of commission. My dad sat down in the hotel lobby, looking uncharacteristically peaked and said, “I feel like I might be having an anxiety attack.” If he was, so was everybody else. While a few of the intrepid wandered into the downtown market, looking at the beautiful silver, hanging dead yaks

with fur still on them and intricate Tibetan hats, most stayed at home with severe altitude sickness that first night. I was told the symptoms felt like the worst hangover of your life with a side of blood poisoning. After we got portable oxygen and time under our belts, the world started to straighten out again. But for those considering Tibet travel, I would recommend adding three days on to your trip solely for the physical adjustment. Then you'll be in ship shape, just like the Tibetan man we saw sprinting up forty flights of crooked monastery steps while smoking a cigarette.

Tibetan food is, for the most part, both bland and rich to the American palate. The staple food is tsamba – a ground barley flour – and the drink of choice is ara, a clear grain alcohol served hot. And you're definitely going to be eating yak with that, whether it's in burger, steak, soufflé, or momo (dumpling) form. You might also be exposed to some Tibetan cheese, served tasteless and rock hard. In Lhasa, many Chinese restaurants are popping up – notable for their electric signs and shiny, generic interiors – to cater to tourists' tastes. After only three days in country, I was done with yak, but in love with their butter tea and preserved goji berries.

Though we were only in Lhasa for a flash, we were fortunate to make our way to two significant monasteries. The political tensions surrounding Tibet's current status as an Autonomous Region

Continued on next page ...

are complex and keenly felt in-country; for those interested in learning more, I recommend Sam van Schalk's *Tibet: A History*. I am not evading the topic of the relationship between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese out of a desire to speak circuitously, but because I am interested in returning to the country.

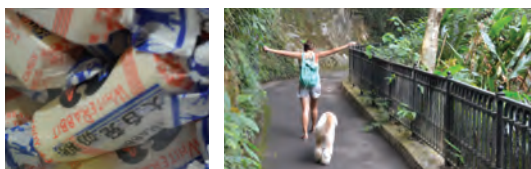
The massive Potala Palace, the chief residence of the 14th Dalai Lama, has now been turned into a gorgeous, rich museum. The Jokhang Temple, the first Buddhist temple built in Tibet (around 642 AD), is also a remarkable site. Dozens of Tibetans gather outside its walls, prostrating after pilgrimages of three to four days. One such pilgrim, a seventy year old woman dressed in traditional garb, pointed at my mother and exclaimed (in English, no less) "Look, it's Lady Gaga!" You can't make that stuff up.

Hong Kong

Our last stop on this marathon trip – then spanning more than three weeks – was Hong Kong, the cosmopolitan world city and densely populated "Special Administrative Region" of China. The air pollution is clearly Chinese, but the street life and culture have a touch of both their former colonial power, the British, and of international business deals being done. For the first time on our trip, I became cognizant of my appearance, realizing that the dusty backpacker khakis and braids to which I'd become accustomed would no longer really fly. Hong Kong is an elegant, gritty kind of city at heart, a sort of sister to pre-Bloomberg New York. It was disorienting, and deeply nice, to feel like I was in a place that played by rules that I again understood.

Much of that had to do with the company; a dear friend of mine from high school is a Hong Kong native, and her family gave us the insider's tour. Eating pickled vegetables and sipping on gin and tonics at the Hong Kong Club, a traditional, mostly male membership club populated by the Hong Kong elite, was a memorable experience we felt lucky to have with them. We went wandering along back alleys and through shortcuts she knew, slipped along the vibrant meat markets, climbed Victoria Peak, the island's highest mountain, and drank from coconuts at an old-fashioned beach bar.

If you have any money, Hong Kong would be an incredible place to shop for clothing and, since



Above, clockwise from top: Temple adornment (Tibet), monks debate each other (Tibet), the author takes a rest (Hong Kong), hiking Victoria Peak (Hong Kong), the beloved White Rabbit Creamy Candy (Hong Kong), devotees prostrate outside of the Jokhang Temple (Tibet), temple adornment against clear sky (Tibet).

I didn't, it wasn't. I did, however, restock on my White Rabbit Creamy Candy supply (China's top brand); if you make it to town, seek the White Rabbit out in any market shop and you will not be disappointed. It's essentially a chewy milk candy wrapped in rice paper that dissolves on the tongue. In 2007, the Philippine and Indonesian Food Control Bureaus found formaldehyde in the White Rabbit Creamy Candies and destroyed all of them. The United States FDA warned consumers they were full of melamine. I discovered this after consuming dozens in a single sitting. Still kicking, but not recommended.

Hong Kong is a place I always imagine going back to for a longer period of time. People know how to have a good time there. Its public transportation is awesome, its business sector is thriving, and it has the longest life expectancy, and one of the highest average IQs of any region in the world. It's a fabulous launching off point for any other trip in Asia and truly not to be missed.

I've had a wonderful time sharing these adventures with Main Street Magazine's readers and, while I'm saddened to wrap up the Asia series, there are always more trips ahead. Stay tuned and thanks for traveling with me. •



Above: Meat market in Hong Kong. Bottom left: Hazy view of Hong Kong.



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Photo: Brian Wilcox



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Williston B. Case III, owner of W.B. Case is coming up on their 15-year anniversary in August. With the pleasure of servicing Litchfield, Dutchess, and parts of Columbia Counties, they provide service and maintenance revolving around plumbing, heating and cooling, well pump and sewer services. While nobody thinks of the plumbing and mechanical systems in their homes as glamorous or something they want to spend money on, clients can expect the highest level of professionalism and attention to detail through an emergency, a renovation, or the process of building and designing the best systems for their new dream home – it's all a privilege to W.B. Case. With the cost of fuel continuously on the rise so many people are becoming much more environmental and energy conscious, and seeking alternative energy options. W.B. Case is happy to share that there are options in the plumbing and HVAC field – from Geothermal, to Solar, to BioMass. In fact, they are the only Tarm and Froling Bio-mass Boiler dealer in the region. Almost anything a client wants, they can implement. Each home is deserving of the time and attention to the mechanics of the property, as well as the aesthetics. Will and his staff look forward to continuing to serve their clients, new and old, for the next 15 years – and more.



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142 Wells Hill Bed & Breakfast

Bed & breakfast accommodations. 142 Wells Hill Road, Lakeville, CT.
(860) 435-8388. 142wellshill@gmail.com

Diane Monroe, proprietor of 142 Wells Hill Bed & Breakfast, opened in October 2010. This gem is nestled 6 minutes in one direction to The Hotchkiss School and 6 minutes in the other direction to Lime Rock Park. With many great restaurants less than 10 minutes from the house, it seems to be the perfect spot. This very cool 1940's house has three guest bedrooms; two large upstairs bedrooms, one being a suite, with the Archie Bunker style bathroom at the top of the stairs. All rooms have their own heat source/air conditioning. The upstairs rooms have walk in closets, full-length mirrors, comfortable chairs for reading, and the charm that old houses offer. Downstairs is a smaller room with its own bathroom. All beds are queens; the Suite has an added twin. A hefty continental buffet breakfast is served each day with fresh fruits, area breads and muffins, yogurt, granola, and fresh hardboiled eggs from their own chickens. For three seasons, breakfast can be set up outside on the deck, which is referred to as the ocean view without the ocean. Fresh flowers and a tray of goodies await guests in their rooms. This house only holds up to seven guests so it's an intimate place for getaways. Reservations are required.

INSURING YOUR WORLD

With spring approaching and folks taking stock in their homes and belongings, it's high time to understand the difference in how your homeowners pays in the event of a loss of jewelry, furs, fine arts and antiques, and collectibles including guns. The basic homeowners policy will automatically cover antiques at their depreciated value, so that grandfathers clock made by the Shaker community handed down from your great grandad will be depreciated and paid based upon what a new replica might cost! In most cases this will result in a monetary loss as compared to the intrinsic value of the piece, have it appraised and listed on a fine arts policy to insure that your heirloom is protected at its' appraised value. What if your wedding ring is stolen or lost? Most policies will pay a maximum of \$2500 under a homeowners coverage, the same holds true of your furs, they are typically capped at \$1500 per piece as are guns at the same limit! Get appraisals and schedule these items to make sure that your investments are properly covered by a floater policy. Lastly, how about that favorite painting that always hung over your grandmothers' dining room table, it may be worth much more than you think, take it to an expert, get an appraisal and insure it appropriately. Remember, people don't plan to fail, they fail to plan!

Kirk Kneller
Phone 518.329.3131
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Brad Peck, Inc.

Start seeds indoors

Starting seeds indoors is a great way to ensure earlier blooms and an earlier harvest from your garden, and allows you to choose longer-growing cultivars to enjoy. Enterprising gardeners can enjoy starting seeds throughout the winter, if they have the right tools to get the seeds growing.

Supplies for Starting Seeds

Starting seeds indoors isn't hard, but having the right equipment can make it even easier.

- **Containers:** Choose a container that can hold 1-2 inches of soil and has enough drainage to keep the seeds healthy, but is sturdy enough to withstand a winter's worth of growing.
- **Potting Mix:** The potting mix for seeds should be as sterile as possible, free from weed seeds or fungus. The mix should also have good drainage to provide plenty of oxygen.
- **Labels:** Carefully label seedling trays so you remember what you're growing. Always save seed packets for the essential growing information they include.
- **Cover:** A cover will help keep seeds moist and warm to encourage germination. Depending on the seeds, either a clear or opaque cover may be necessary.
- **Light:** Seeds and seedlings require many hours of rich sunlight for proper germination and growth, but unfortunately, winter sunlight isn't always adequate. A grow light specifically designed for starting seeds can augment natural sunlight for the best growth results.
- **Misting Bottle:** Seeds must be kept moist to germinate properly, but if they become waterlogged they can rot. A soft spray bottle can be used for gentle watering to keep the seed trays moist without trouble.
- **Seeds:** Even if you have all the right tools, you can't start seeds indoors if you don't have the seeds. Choose plump, healthy seeds for the best results. You can easily save seeds from your own garden to use each year, and it can be fun to experiment with new types of seeds from local Agway dealers.

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Get your generators ready!

Along with the warm spring weather come thunderstorms and power outages we have all come to expect. Many of us rely on our automatic standby generators to switch on when the power goes out, and just like any other engine-powered machine, standby generators require regular maintenance for reliable top performance. We recommend you check your generator or have it serviced according to its service manual every Spring and Fall. No one wants to be outside in a cold spring storm trying to figure out why their generator isn't running!

Just like your car needs an oil change every 3 months or 3,000 miles, most standby generators need one every 2 years or after 200 hours of use. The generator keeps itself in shape throughout the year with weekly low-speed exercise cycles. You wouldn't drive your car for 10,000 miles without getting an oil change and the same goes for your standby generator.

An important rule of thumb, and one we can't stress enough, is to read your owner's manual. It contains model-specific information that will allow the best operation and performance from your generator. A typical standby generator set can last from 10,000 to 30,000 hours. You should figure your standby generator might operate as little as 26 hours a year (based on only 30 minutes of weekly exercise and no outages) or as much as several hundred hours a year, depending upon the number and duration of power outages. In either case, a standby generator set could conceivably last 20 to 30 years. One way to ensure a long, reliable operating life is to implement a preventive maintenance (PM) program. Many generator owners opt to have a certified generator service professional, like Berlinghoff Contracting, perform an annual full-service maintenance on their unit. At a minimum, a good visual inspection should be done on a monthly basis, as well as after any extended generator run times. For more generator maintenance tips, you can give us a call today.



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TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

Slow down just a little bit. Luck is on your side these days and that is why things should, more or less, go your way in the immediate future.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

The best way to utilize your energy throughout the day is to work consistently and diligently. And remember, change makes the soul happy.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

Maybe rationality isn't perfect – not nearly. But no one tries to oppose you because of your firm position and stubbornness.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

It's about time for you to show your loved ones how you feel about them, and to tell them what you think about them. If you listen well, you may learn something important.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

Let your creative juices flow – let them have a tantrum! Don't be afraid to show those close to you what you create. The opportunity also doubles as the calm before the storm.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

It's often helpful to look to history and the past when working on today's problems. Give yourself time to tend to them and then you'll be filled with the will and power to tackle the project at hand.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

You're more than ready to swim against the current to experience what the very few are able to experience. Something that didn't work in the past doesn't work in your vision for the future.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

You need to gain control, both at home and at work. Show composure and everyone will not just pay attention, but will listen.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

Your curiosity will lead you into unknown territory when a surprise project awaits. It's uncertain if many words are involved, but excitement is in the air.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

You're no longer able to avoid those people that you've been avoiding. Self-help books are the perfect reading material.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

Fatherly role models will aid you. Everything that you will take on will potentially result in a profit.



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"Having been a nurse for the past 26 years, I was dedicated to caring for my patients. I tried to maintain proper back care when lifting and transferring patients at all times. However, when an Emergency occurs, often nurses must gather super-strength to assist a patient... Dr. Astrauskas, my PCP, and Christine Lowell, PA, worked with me to gain strength through physical therapy and the use of steroid injections. I did not want to mask my back pain with medication because I had witnessed what prolonged use could do to a person.

Over the past year, it became apparent that the non-surgical interventions were simply not going to be able to cure my back problems. I needed help getting out of bed and moving from room to room. I would wake up in severe pain in the middle of the night. My quality of life was terrible.

Together, Dr. Dan George, Orthopedic Spine Surgeon and Christine Lowell, Orthopedic Physician's Assistant, talked to me about surgical intervention and the next options for my care. We decided to proceed with surgery. It was a complicated case; a fusion with rods placed in my back. From the moment that I presented to the Surgical Department at Sharon Hospital, I was cared for like a member of the hospital family. Not just because I had worked there, but because Sharon Hospital's team of caregivers treats each and every patient as if they are their own family.

There is a misconception among some people that you receive better care at a larger hospital. That is simply not true. I have also worked in large city hospitals in Hartford and Nashville, so I know first hand that the care that I gave at Sharon and the care that I received as a surgical patient at Sharon Hospital is just amazing... The entire team of expertly trained surgeons, nurses, and anesthesiologists were dedicated to making me comfortable each and every step of the way. I was nervous when I went to the operating room holding area but the surgical team's compassion and dedication to my safe care made me feel at ease.

Today I am able to do the things that I enjoy most with my family. I am also able to travel for work to our eight RegionalCare Hospitals. Running through the airport and lifting my suitcase into the overhead bin is no longer difficult. I have my life back. Thank you to Dan George, MD, Christine Lowell, PA, and the team at Sharon Hospital for giving me the ability to move freely again.

My name is Karen. I am proud to say,
Sharon is MY Hospital; where the hospital family
cares for their community family every day."

Karen Arel, MSN, MHA, RN
Registered Nurse | Informatics Analyst
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