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MAGAZINE





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## STARTING THE NEW YEAR OFF FRESH

Well, happy 2015 to you! I hope that 2014 brought you lots of joy, and that 2015 will prove to be even more prosperous and joyous for each and every of you. Let's kick some serious butt this year!

Many view the start of the year as a "start over" or "refresh" button, a second chance and a clean slate. It doesn't always quite work out like that (that's just being a realist), but I will say that the attitude and mind-set is certainly admirable and it's the first step in the right direction. My personal belief is that every day, every hour, and every minute is an opportunity for greatness. Only you, can stop you. And just because it's January first doesn't mean that that's the only time that it can be done.

Take your life by the horns, and attack it with fierceness. But that's only effective if you mean it. And if you stay the course. That is a recurring theme that you may have noticed which we keep discussing in the monthly *Healthy Living* columns: live the life that you want, and stick with it.

But alas, this is not meant to be some New Year's pep-talk, nor is it an inspirational speakers lecture. It's just a little glimpse into how I begin every year, thinking positively and counting all of my fortunate and lucky stars. After all, let's not forget the power of positive thinking! If you don't believe in you, no one will.

With that being said, what are your goals for this coming year? And don't even dare tell me that you don't have at least one! If you don't, you must sit down at this very instance and come up with a few. And once you have your goals, I wish you the very best of luck in achieving them. Go after your dreams and your goals with fierceness every time.

### A big thanks to you all

I wanted to take this moment, while we're thinking so positively about the future, and say a big thank you for everything that has taken place in the past. We are fast approaching the two-year anniversary of this publication, and it simply wouldn't have been possible if it weren't for our advertisers, readers, the subjects of our stories, and my amazing and talented team! A special "thank you" goes out to every single one of you.

And as I wrote at the beginning of this positive spiel: I hope that 2015 proves to be both joyous and prosperous for you all. Best wishes in the New Year, and please keep reading!

- Thorunn Kristjansdottir



JANUARY 2015

This beautiful fox peeks up from his nap in Millbrook, NY just long enough for a photo.

Cover photo by  
Lazlo Gyorsok

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By Brandon Kralik  
arts@mainstreetmag.com

Just when it seemed that everything for our homes was being mass-produced and that IKEA, the world's largest furniture store, and others like it had effectively killed off the aesthetic of beauty in favor of cheap and easy, I walked into Ian Ingersoll's gallery in West Cornwall, CT. Clearly the art of furniture making is alive and well in our area.

"The relevance of living in the forest when you build pieces out of wood is that you not only take your materials from the forest, but you also find your inspiration in the forest. In this region we find a diversity of hardwoods that would be the envy of anywhere in the world. We have at our fingertips incredible supplies of the best Cherry, Maple, Oak, and Walnut," exclaimed Ingersoll.

#### A firm relationship with history

From the beginning Ingersoll's desire was to further the art form, to learn every aspect of craftsmanship, how to turn wood, how to steam bend it, how to dove tail it, everything that anyone had ever done to shape wood, "I felt that I had to master that first. If you are going to make an intelligent step forward then you have to know where we are coming from. I find that the most successful designs that I have created are derived from historical pieces. Probably 85% of the design is grounded in history, but that 15% is a matter of intuitively finding that inspiration to recreate, redesign, and re-shape something traditional in a more modern way, in a more contemporary way and hopefully in a classic way," said Ingersoll.

"In history you see this lesson over and over

again, people who started with one form and evolved it to another, and what I am doing is emulating the work that they did and taking my process from what exists today and take it to where it should be tomorrow."

Ingersoll explains that the style of furniture is cyclical and that if you have a good working knowledge of what you are involved with, in this case furniture, then you will be able to see the circle and identify where you are in it. A good analogy would be Vidal Sassoon: He takes a classic form and does a fresh take on it. The country girl comes into the city with her long flowing locks and he cuts them off and gives her a straight bob. She is instantly transformed into a woman who is slick and modern. The form is the same only slight differences are made to evolve the style.

"When I was starting out I was introduced to the work of James Krenov, who apprenticed in woodworking shops in Scandinavia. He had just come back from Sweden and published books with all of these great designs based on his time there. Simultaneously I received a bunch of home decorating magazines from an employee of SAS which I tore through and absorbed, even though I couldn't read them I was attracted to the primitive pieces that I saw people had in their homes. I made the connection between that and what Krenov was doing. He took history and brought it forward, and that is what I wanted to do," explained Ingersoll.

There is a huge amount of influence in New England and there are lots of great collectors of period furniture, not just in museums but in the antique shops; and publishers were creating books about furniture, so Ingersoll had access to designs

by Chippendale, Hepplewhite, and Queen Anne, going all the way back to the early Hadley chests which are incredibly carved pieces. After a period of trial and error, as is natural when one is searching for one's own style, Ingersoll's search led him slowly through a variety of frustrations and disappointments to that which he was looking for. It had been under his nose the whole time in the form of Shaker furniture.

He explained to me that the idea was to copy something in an effort to learn, the way you see a painting student copying a masterpiece in a museum. That is a great thing to do both for painters and furniture makers.

#### The Shaker style

"What I liked about the Shaker furniture was the ambiguity of design. They had been led by their religious doctrine to create furniture in the simplest way possible. For instance, the ornate molding on a William and Mary chest became simple and straight (see example opposite page, bottom left). It takes the same space but in a straight line. They didn't waste a lot of time but retained the original beauty of the crown moldings. The function followed form, which is a classic model that appears in the cycle often," explained Ingersoll.

By 1986 the world had discovered Shaker, it had been discovered in the 30's too, but in the 80's it was rediscovered. There was an exhibition of Shaker furniture at the Whitney and books with color plates were appearing for the first time and it was impossible to ignore the impact it was having in the marketplace. Ingersoll was in the right place at the right time.



"I was a bit like Siddhartha, sitting by the river waiting for the world to come to him. I just sit here by this covered bridge and people stop and walk through the door!"

Ingersoll continued: "One day a group of businessmen came in and started asking me about my business and come to find out they were in Hartford to discuss a children's hospital and needed 100 rocking chairs. They asked me if I would be interested in bidding on them, and within a year I was contacted by a company interested in purchasing a version of my Shaker no. 7 Rocker, and we got the bid on 100 Rockers without any marketing at all. Now, that would not have happened if I had not put the effort into understanding in real detail what Tom Swagen had done in 1850. I got into his mind-set and learned to replicate every aspect of what he did."

### Keeping with and ahead of the competition

It is clear that there are similarities between painting, music, and furniture design, even with hair and clothing design. Ian Ingersoll has had to continually keep ahead of the competition. "You can't expect to do just one thing and have the world stay with you through your whole career. You have to keep evolving."

Ingersoll gave a couple of examples of how he has remained creative and competitive. "We created a bathroom vanity a few years back. Walnut had re-emerged as a wood to use and we were working with it. It had priced itself out of the market in the 60's and disappeared in the 70's and by the late 80's you could get it dirt-cheap, nobody was using it. I started using it because it was a good price and it's a beautiful hard wood. Now it has evolved back into being hot as can be in the market place, but back in the 80's it was just re-emerging," Ingersoll said.

"So, at that time we kept staining it darker and darker since dark wood too had cycled around and become popular. The vanity was a contemporary take on a Shaker piece, but what pushed it over the top and made this particular piece so popular is that I added 3" of stainless steel to the bottom of the leg. That was an element I took from British design where they would have two or three inches of brass and a wheel and that was something that 100 years ago was used and quite popular. It made a lot of sense. A bathroom vanity doesn't need wheels but the metal on the legs, being in a bathroom, it also just made sense. Brass against the Walnut did not register but stainless steel did since it wouldn't rust with the water in the room and the silver against the dark color of the wood. That piece was a home run and we made a lot of them. The point was that within one year of adding that stainless steel foot to the design I began to see it in catalogues, where other designers had picked it up and were using it. Within three years it was in every showroom. It was an easy thing to execute but somebody had to get the idea and implement it."



Another example is Ash. It has also priced itself out of the market and then there was a blight that killed off a bunch of Ash trees so there was an abundance of it. "We developed a way of burning Ash that really brought out the beautiful grain of the wood. We then rubbed gold into the grain and it gave it something special that hadn't been done before, which figured into the work we did later in Las Vegas. We have to be the creative ones and then you have a period of time before the other guys knock off what you do," Ingersoll said.

### Recession and finding the market

There was a time, during this last recession when Ingersoll thought it was over. "We had run through our inventory and there were no new contracts coming in and I thought, 'Well, I have had a pretty good run, 30 years.' But before I threw in the towel I felt that I had to create some pieces for myself that had been on the drawing board forever, not to sell, but just because I had to make them. I did that and then afterwards, I had these beautiful pieces and realized that I did actually have to sell them. Since the market wasn't coming to me anymore, then I had to go out and find the market."

This is something that New Englanders have always done. Created a great product and then sent it out into the world. It didn't take Ingersoll long to figure out that the market is in China. Shanghai especially, is the New York of China and they don't

want things that are made in China, they want things from America and Europe. "I decided that it would be advantageous to have an article published there and connected with a journalist who wrote the story for a magazine. She sent me an invite on LinkedIn and so I saw that she had gone to Vanderbilt. Well, my daughter had gone to Vanderbilt and it turns out that they were in the same class and were doing the same thing in different parts of the world."

There is a certain amount of synchronicity that plays a role in success. We see that in every walk of life, but the harder one works the more magic seems to happen. Ian Ingersoll has capitalized on the opportunities that open up to him, and when they were not there, he has created them. "If your market is not here, you have to go there."

"From my point of view, you have to put every iron in the fire that you have," Ingersoll states matter of fact, "That is how we have not only survived, but thrived in a competitive market, by building on a tradition." ●

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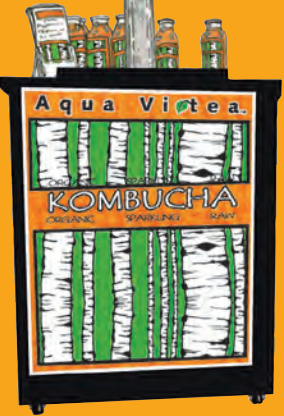
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## friendly faces: meet our neighbors, visitors and friends



**Paula Redmond** is a real estate broker and is the owner of Paula Redmond Real Estate with offices in both Millbrook and Rhinebeck. Paula started selling Real Estate in Millbrook in 1984, but didn't open her own company until January in 2003. "I work with a great group of agents and we all love what we do." Paula enjoys the diversity of real estate – looking at properties of every description and walking the countryside. After being in the business for over 30 years, she feels like she knows most every part of central and northern Dutchess County in New York. If Paula has the opportunity to get away, she and her husband love to travel. "There is not a lot of extra time from real estate, but I do enjoy painting landscapes and getting together with friends."



Besides being the proprietor of the Hillsdale General Store in Hillsdale, NY, **Matthew White** has an interior design business and also writes a lot for his radio show on Robinhood Radio, called *The Shape of Things*. Matt serves on various local committees such as Historic Hillsdale. The Hillsdale General Store is well into its fourth year and Matt especially loves talking to his customers, hearing their stories, and witnessing how good memories come back to them when they enter the store. "Small business owners have very little downtime, so fortunately I love what I do." In 2015, he plans on opening a Kitchen Store called HGS Home Chef. It will be right across the street from the Hillsdale General Store and they will offer all kinds of kitchen gadgets plus cooking classes. Stay tuned as details unfold! (Photo by Joe Major).



**Kathy Shapiro** has been working at Irving Farm for about five years and currently manages Millerton's Irving Farm Coffee House. She really likes working with the staff, not only are they great, but they're also very diverse. The customers are also so wonderful, and they are incredibly loyal, too. When Kathy isn't at the coffee house, she makes cases for knitting needles, which she has been doing for about 15 years. Her family also has a fruitcake company and she helps out there quite a bit as well. Kathy really likes Millerton, even after living here for 20 years. She says she's always at the Moviehouse, and likes dining out at Manna Dew, and of course the scenery is just gorgeous even on the nasty, rainy days. In 2015, Kathy hopes to get out more and take advantage of where we live.



**Rich Stomski** is the Store Director for LaBonne's Market in Salisbury and is a fixture in town. He has been in the grocery business for 46 years beginning at the A & P in Torrington and made the move to the LaBonne's store in Farmington, CT in 1988, hired as assistant manager/produce manager. Rich arrived at the Salisbury store 15 years ago. Meeting the customer's needs, interacting with the clientele, and having the freedom to order unique items that the clientele frequently request are all aspects of the job he enjoys. He also likes that LaBonne's features specialties not found anywhere else locally. Rich lives in Torrington, has been married 42 years, and has two children. Free time finds him trout fishing, gardening, and enjoying UConn Sports. Stop in at LaBonne's and have Rich order something unique for you.



**Dana Shlomo** is a new and welcome addition at Academy Street Salon in Salisbury, CT. She is a licensed cosmetologist and is very excited to be a part of the team at Academy Street Salon. She's looking forward to meeting many new people and creating a clientele. Dana specializes in curly hair but loves to cut, color, and style everyone's hair. She tells us "I never feel I am at work, I take pride in- and love what I do." She also loves keeping up on the latest and greatest styles and trends. When Dana isn't behind her chair, she loves going out to eat, watching good movies, and hiking in this beautiful area with her boyfriend. She is very excited about these changes and can't wait to see what the new year has in store for her!



**Ed Thorney** is a certified Gestalt Therapist and experienced Wilderness Guide. He is also a veteran outdoor educator/counselor and is highly effective at helping people make positive change. He tells us that he feels he instills trust, is creative, and seeks the best in people focusing on their abilities and desired future. The woods, streams, lakes and rivers are Ed's classroom and counseling space. His particular expertise is combining adventure activity with therapy, and believes in a family systems and solution-based model working with children and young adults and their parents. His wife, Jill Gibbons, also a Gestalt Therapist and professional parent educator, provides the parental support necessary to ensure positive change. Together, they have four adult children of their own and reside in Lakeville, CT.





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WHAT DOES MAINTAINING A

## healthy lifestyle mean to you?

By Thorunn Kristjansdottir  
info@mainstreetmag.com

*Happy 2015! At the start of this new year, how many of you have made a New Year's resolution? I bet all of us have made one (or three or four) by this juncture in our lives. But maintaining a healthy lifestyle goes beyond the month of January, it's an all-year commitment. In that spirit, we want to introduce you to Stephanie, Darren, and Hannah. They are three local residents who maintain a healthy lifestyle all year long, and we asked them what maintaining a healthy lifestyle means to them, as well as how, when, and what they do to maintain it.*

### Stephanie Pellegrino

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle, for me, means eating well, exercise, and trying each and every day to find some sort of spiritual balance in my life.

Since diabetes runs in my family and I've seen firsthand its effects on the human body, I have become very conscientious of what I eat. I've pretty much eliminated most processed sugar from my diet (no cookies, cake, candy etc., although, every once in a while I do indulge a tiny bit) and I try to buy fresh, organic foods as often as possible. I limit my consumption of wheat-based products (breads and pastas) and try to include as many fresh fruits and vegetables in my daily diet as possible. I'm not vegetarian, and I eat a minimal amount of red meat. I enjoy cooking and preparing tasty and healthy meals for my husband and I (I never buy boxed or frozen prepared/processed foods). Even when I eat out at restaurants, I try to make healthy choices. I do incorporate vitamin/mineral supplements, as well.

As for exercise, owning and operating Petpourri in Lakeville for the past 22 years has definitely kept me fit (lifting all those heavy bags of dog food)! I've always enjoyed being active and perform some sort of regular physical activity. For the past 10 years I've been doing Pilates with Rachel Hay of Ellora Pilates in Lakeville. Rachel is such an amazing instructor and is the primary reason why, after 10 years, I haven't become bored with it. It has definitely kept me strong and flexible (being over 50, to be able to stretch, stay flexible, and maintain strength is so important). On the days I'm not doing pilates, I walk. Mostly 3-5 miles, whatever I have time for. Now that it's winter, I try to get out and walk (with the exception of very cold and windy mornings or icy ones). I have not tried walking the indoor track at Hotchkiss yet, but perhaps I'll give it a try.

As for maintaining my sanity, I meditate and try to spend some time just being quiet and reflective. Those of us who live in this little corner of the

world are so fortunate. There is such beauty which surrounds us! A short hike up to the top of Lion's Head and I'm spiritually restored. So, I guess you can say that my main objective is to be happy, stay healthy, and in between the trials and tribulations of life, try to find some modicum of peace.

### Darren Reid

I work out almost every day, which tends to keep me more disciplined about food choices and drink (especially). Kevin Finn was my personal trainer for about a year and a half. I credit him with teaching me a holistic view of health. Exercise, rest, heart rate, food (especially), and a dramatic decrease in drinking wine (down to maybe once a week).

I start each workout with cardio, either running or recumbant bicycle. Next I do some core exercises on a soft mat, and usually finish by lifting moderately heavy weights. Kevin integrated a lot of creative things into my workout so I wouldn't get too bored and it'd be simple to do anywhere. I travel back and forth from Austin, TX to CT and have enough equipment in both places to make it easy to do.

I got very sick about five years ago with a bad bout of Rheumatoid Arthritis. I struggled to walk and did nothing at all besides experiment with a variety of pretty harsh medicines. One day I just got sick of the doctor and med routine and decided to get healthy again – I needed to for my family. I grew up being an athlete and working out a lot, then I became an Internet startup guy and kind of let my health fall apart. Getting really sick has a way of resetting your priorities around health and I wish I could tell my story to a bunch of people who could get their act together before they get slammed by something (if they're unlucky and unwise like I was). Now I really work out every day. Even on holidays. My kids are great sports about working out and my wife is incredibly healthy – both through exercise and food choices (we're the kale family and have been for many years).

Kevin was generous enough to get my kids on board with exercise, so as a family we got in the groove and encouraged each other. I'm working on a family app called DJED (djed.com), a new startup based in Austin, that allows families to keep track of everything that matters to them, including health and fitness, but a whole lot more. We have found that keeping score of what we're doing tends to create a much more honest dialogue about what we're spending our time on, how healthy we are, and where we're eating.

### Hannah Frater

A healthy lifestyle is living in any way in which one can make themselves feel energetic and strong. Per-

sonally, this lifestyle is characterized by exercise and sleep. I'm a 16 year old sophomore at the Hotchkiss School, a Varsity Volleyball and Basketball player, and I'll try out for the Varsity Lacrosse team in the spring. In addition to being a student-athlete, I founded a club called *Girls with Goals* that is dedicated to the support of girls athletics in underprivileged schools. Our current project is to fund a girls high school lacrosse team in a low-income area of New York City.

I live according to a healthy lifestyle from day to day because I have to. As an athlete, I need to be in my best physical shape at all times or else I can't perform at a high level. When I'm not in a sport, which only happens for a few weeks a year, I have more trouble eating healthy and exercising, but I try to exercise every day. I don't have a real mantra, but I try to live by my favorite quote by Wayne Gretzky, "You miss 100% of the shots you don't take." I know that training hard and being healthy will give me the best chance at achieving my goals. Because I'm a teenager and am very active, I mostly eat whatever I want, but I make a point of eating a fruit and vegetable with every meal.

I stay active for the most part because I have sports every day. However, when I'm out of season I like to hike, walk with my dogs, ride horses, go to the gym, run, and swim. In the summer, I swim across Lake Warmaug and back with my mom, or go paddle boarding. Steep Rock is great for hiking and horseback riding. I work out with Kevin Finn when I'm home, and we usually do a lot of cardio as well as body weight exercises, TRX, weights, and rowing. The Hotchkiss gym is a great resource for people in the area because there's a weight room, basketball and squash courts, a hockey rink, and a pool. In terms of diet, I just try to limit processed foods, but there's nothing that I cut out of my diet completely.

My healthy living goals are mostly about my sports. I'm currently working on increasing my vertical jump, my endurance and strength. I focus on building lean muscle and gaining more muscle definition, but I work out for practical reasons rather than for body image. In order to achieve these goals, I have to work out outside of practice. The main challenge with that is that I only have so many hours in a day because of school, studying, and extracurriculars. It is extremely difficult to keep up a healthy lifestyle, but I always feel much better when I'm exercising and eating well, and that helps me in other aspects of my life as well.

There's no such thing as a bad workout. All you need to do to be healthy is just to get out there and get active. Nobody's ever regretted exercising. •



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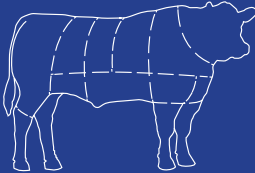
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VISIONARY COMPUTER, LLC. – LAKEVILLE, CT

By Christine Bates  
christine@mainstreetmag.com

*Every month Main Street Magazine interviews a local entrepreneur to learn about their experience growing a business. After talking to area business owners – from organic farmers and real estate brokers to micro-brewers – this month's issue adds our first technologist, David Maffucci, founder, President and Director of Technology of Visionary Computer in Lakeville.*

## What does Visionary Computer do?

Visionary Computer is an “Apple Specialist,” which means we sell and support Apple’s products. We are also an Apple Authorized Service Provider, which allows us to service and repair Apple’s products such as the Macintosh computer, and iOS devices like the iPhone and iPad – both in and out of warranty. We are the only Apple authorized location in the tri-corner area. Our closest competitors are located in Pittsfield in Massachusetts, Danbury in Connecticut, and Albany in New York. We operate in a “white space” and have the corner on a very small market.

## When did you become an Apple expert?

My father was a data management professional before personal computers existed, when there were huge mainframe computers tied to dumb terminals. My first computer was a Commodore 64 in the early 1980s. Then when I was in high school I got hooked on Apple computers. I went on to study at UConn and initially majored in engineering, but the program was not very sophisticated. It seemed like they were training engineers to work in IT de-

partments at insurance companies, so I switched to business management. I partially paid for college by working in the UConn Mac Lab showing students how to use equipment and software.

## So how did you get to Lakeville?

The director of the Mac Lab at UConn had a friend in Lakeville who worked for a small company named Inline Software that created games for Mac computers. She suggested that I talk to Darryl Peck, the owner of Inline Software, about a job. The Inline office was located across the street from here at 308 Main Street, and Mr. Peck offered me a job as long as I could start working the very next week. Just days after I started, we headed out to Macworld Expo in San Francisco. I was able to finish my degree at UConn on Fridays.

## Why did you start your own business?

In the early 90’s there were very few Mac users and the ones around here all knew that Darryl was a Mac expert and asked him for tech help. When I arrived he turned all the Mac users over to me and started me on this path. After two years, Darryl sold his game company, but rather than join him in Boston, I decided to strike out on my own. I had a base of maybe ten customers including Rick Kopeck, director of the Shelby American Automobile Club who is still my customer. Together, Rick and I computerized the club’s registry of every Shelby produced. It was a great first project.

## What were those early days like?

It was just me with \$5,000 in savings. My expenses were low and I ran the business out of my apartment in North Canaan. I was 24 years old. Gradually my life changed and my business grew slowly. I got married, and I built a house with an office for my business. Seven years ago I bought this building located at 29 Bissell Street in Lakeville. Initially Visionary Computer occupied just the small front part of the building and I only had one full-time employee.



## You take up the whole building now. What happened?

I decided to go beyond repairs and tech help and seek out the Specialist Authorization. That allowed us to sell the iPad and really push the retail end of the business. Getting that authorization was no easy task; it required testing, writing a business plan, financial commitments, etc. However getting that designation really changed things and opened doors for us.

## What’s next?

I need more space. We’re looking into adding onto this building or moving to a larger space.

## How many employees do you have now?

Right now we have five full-time employees including my wife Shelley and myself. I’m currently looking for another technician that can repair equipment, and a sales person for the store.

## Who are your customers?

Schools, public and private, are a very important foundation for our business. Private schools especially, since they are more likely to have Apple equipment. Our individual customers are people who break the mold. They are creative, educated



Above top: The iMac with Retina 5K computer is the new hot product at Visionary Computer. Photo courtesy of Apple Inc. Above: David Maffucci is holding the battery press needed to fix the iPhone 5. Photo by Christine Bates.

Continued on next page ...



and wealthy. Being up here they use technology to close the distance gap. We count anyone who buys something here as a customer. We send emails to over 3,000 of them. I would guess that about 50% of home/small business computers around here are Macs.

In terms of profitability, schools account for around 40%, small businesses 30%, and individuals another 30%.

### **What's the biggest mistake you've made in your business?**

Not buying the firehouse in Lakeville. I had some great ideas to turn it into a technology center, but I thought about it two months too late.

### **What have been your most important decisions?**

The transformative decision was to become an Apple Specialist. In 2007 an Apple rep visited and told me that I'd never be able to do it. That really made me try and by 2011 Visionary Computer earned the title. This means that I receive allocations of product and can sell the Apple computer line and accessories. Marrying Shelley, who now works here, and buying this building were two other key decisions.

### **What do you think is key to entrepreneurial success?**

Being ethical and genuinely wanting to help people. Tech expertise is critical in our business, but it's caring about people that's important to long term success. And you must have a passion for what you are doing because you work very long hours. If you are a dog groomer, you should love dogs. I love Apple computers. In your own business you also have to be able to tolerate ups and downs.

### **What are your biggest business challenges?**

Fighting to get product allocation from Apple is always a challenge. Sometimes I have to use personal relationships to get the products our customers are asking for. Finding and affording a larger space is an important issue right now. I want to double our show room size and have room for higher margin products. Attracting qualified employees is another ongoing problem. Young people don't seem to want to move here.

### **What was your worst moment?**

The one time I thought about taking a regular job with Apple was when my only employee (at the time) quit to move to New York and start a web design company. It was a very lonely time. Losing good employees is tough.



Above: The staff at Visionary Computer wearing their Black Friday shirts. From left to right: Shawn Takatsu, Shelley Maffucci, David Maffucci, Andrew Cantu, and Allen Berrian. Photo courtesy of Visionary Computer.

### **What has changed since you started this business?**

The incredible success of Apple has fueled our business growth. The iPhone has created a much broader market. iPhone users become computer "switchers" who want to have one platform for all of their electronic devices. We repair iPhones, which brings people into the store. We fixed a lot of iPhone 5's with failed batteries during the recent recall. Consumers have also changed. The rise of instant gratification means that having the right product in stock is key. Customers want to have what they want immediately. Obviously the Internet has changed everything in the last twenty years. People have moved from desktops to laptops to tablets. Smart phones have become ubiquitous.

### **What don't people know about your business?**

No one would believe how slim the margins are on Apple computers. We typically make less than \$100 on a computer sale. Our survival depends on tech service and repairs. We sell product to sell service. The hardware is almost a loss leader.

### **How many computers do you repair every year?**

My repairs database says that so far this year we have serviced 2,003 computers. That's about seven repairs a day.

### **Do you have a business plan? A marketing strategy?**

We had to do a business plan in 2011 to become an Apple Authorized Specialist and we haven't updated it since. It was hard researching demographics and making sales forecasts back then, but we've actually exceeded our estimates.

Our marketing strategy is pretty simple. We advertise in print and at The Moviehouse in Millerton, which is very effective at reaching our customer base. We have an informative website, although we don't do any Internet sales. Word of mouth is always important, but the repair referrals from Apple really drive our new business. We try to differentiate ourselves by operating as though our

biggest competitor were right next door.

### **How often do you look at your financials?**

I look at our sales religiously every day and compare to previous days and historic information. I built my own MIS program using FileMaker Pro and have records dating back to day one. Right now we are growing at a sustainable rate while many of our competitors are trending down.

### **Are there any courses or books that you would recommend to entrepreneurs? Did you read the biography of Steve Jobs?**

Most of my reading is done on the Internet, but I did read the Steve Jobs book. I met him several times, and know people who knew him well. It's a pretty accurate picture of a driven person.

For me the Apple Specialists Group's two conventions a year provide tremendous relevant technical and business education. Just talking to people in your own industry is incredibly important. We have improved professionally and keep setting a higher bar for ourselves.

### **Do you have time for any hobbies?**

I have two hobbies. Since I was a kid I have raced radio controlled cars. It's very competitive with special tracks in Enfield and Wolcott. I used to write articles for the enthusiast's magazine, *Radio Control Car Action Magazine*, but now I don't have time. Recently I've graduated from toy cars to real cars and have taken up high speed driving at Lime Rock. And I'm a member of the Sports Car Drivers Association. My wife Shelley thinks it's dangerous, but she is very supportive of my passions.

### **What's your favorite Apple product right now?**

The iMac with Retina 5K display that just came out in October is my favorite. There are no visible pixels, and the image just pops off the display. We've sold 14 so far. I think it will be the hot gift for Christmas and year end. •

For further information call (860) 435-2211, visit them at 29 Bissell Street in Lakeville or online at [www.visionary-computer.net](http://www.visionary-computer.net)



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# trattoria san giorgio

## GREAT GASTRONOMY



By Thorunn Kristjansdottir  
info@mainstreetmag.com

Only a few select words are really necessary to describe the creations of Joe Comizio of Trattoria San Giorgio in Millbrook, NY. A lot of words could undoubtedly be used, but the few needed go something like this: delicious, beautiful, phenomenal, artistic, and amazing. I'm describing the food that I feasted on at this Italian restaurant, which I'm still dreaming about a week later – that tells you something.

First, I must begin by saying that Joe (pictured far right) is one of the nicest guys around. It was as if he were welcoming us into his beautiful and spotlessly clean home (seriously, check out how clean his windows are). He then said to us, "Do you like pizza?" I said to myself, 'Is rain wet?' But I contained my excitement and said "Yes, of course." He then asked, "Do you like mushrooms, Prosciutto, and truffle oil?" There was no containing the excitement at that point: "Yes, that sounds amazing!" To that Joe said great, and that he'd be right back with our pizza. He then walked a few steps away from our table to the pizza station which is in the far corner of the restaurant and that's where the beautiful wood oven stood in all of its glory. The blue tiled masterpiece literally sparkles thanks to the lights above reflecting off of its blue tiles. It heats up to about 900°F and so it only takes Joe a minute or so to bake each pizza, ergo it wasn't long until he returned with that night's pizza special (see image directly above). We hadn't even had a moment to study the menu before we were already feasting.

The first bite, I swear, I thought I had died and gone to a Neapolitan pizza heaven. Joe explained the process and all of the special ingredients and how the flour is better and lighter and therefore easier to digest, but truth be told, I hardly heard any of what he said because with each bite of that pizza I was in my own truffle-filled world. The first bite can only be experienced and cannot be described. All I will say is

that if you like real, authentic, Neapolitan, or wood fired pizzas, then you must try this one. Everything about it was fresh, succulent, and other-worldly.

### How does one choose between delicious and more delicious?

Once I snapped back to reality, I realized that I hadn't even seen the menu. Our waitress, Emily, had arrived who was also so nice, and funny, too! She began telling us about the drink specials that evening and oh my goodness! In that moment I wished that I could drink fancy drinks with liquor, and that I had a driver to take me home afterwards, because they sounded spectacular. Instead I opted to go with a nice glass of Pinot, which I thought would be a nice compliment to the Italian feast that was coming our way.

Once our drinks arrived, Emily began telling us about their evening's specials. The specials, just like the menu, had so many delicious dishes to choose from and yes, a lot of them are Italian, but there are other choices (like salmon). While Emily was talking, I spotted a large Caesar salad arrive at my neighbor's table – wow that looked good! And a big portion, too. But since this was an Italian restaurant, we opted to stick with some of the more traditional choices. We began by ordering the Caprese (top center image), which is a piece of art. The tomato is cut into sections and slices of mozzarella cheese help layer the tomato back together. The roasted red peppers are not just pretty, but they add a hint of sweetness. And the balsamic glaze that is drizzled in an artistic formation is incredible! We also decided to try that night's special Melanzane Ripiene, which is a layered eggplant with smoked mozzarella and Prosciutto, that is then lightly breaded, fried, and served with marinara sauce and cabbage (bottom row, second image from left). Let me tell you something, that dish may just have ruined whatever else we were going to order because it was spectacular! We won't compare it to the pizza though, because how can you compare anything to my pre-

cious truffle oil pizza? Let's just be real about that.

For our main courses, we stuck with our theme and ordered the Chicken Parmigiana and the Spaghetti Carbonara. When in Rome, right? Now, do you see the beauty that arrived in front of us? If not, take a look at the pictures above.

When ordering the Chicken Parmigiana you have a few choices when it comes to your sides and we opted to go with the potatoes (which were so sweet and delicious) and the broccoli rabe. But that chicken cutlet with the cheese and sauce – Mama Mia! The eggplant appetizer now had some competition. The Spaghetti Carbonara was also in a league of its own. It was totally worth the carbs and calories, and I will order it again, I don't care what my personal trainer says! The pasta was perfectly al dente – seriously, it was perfect! The sauce was light and the Pancetta, oh what a pairing! It was so good that I didn't want to share, but the portions are so generous that there was no chance of me finishing it by myself.

### Would you like dessert?

We had our leftovers wrapped (awesome lunch for the next day), and Emily asked if we wanted dessert. I told her "I do" but I didn't think that I could. Oh, what was the harm in hearing the selections? So she started rattling off one delicious dessert choice after the next, until I broke down and ordered the Gelato Trio, that she said "Came all the way from Rhinebeck" which included vanilla, chocolate, and pumpkin spice. And of course it was delicious! By the time we threw our spoons in the empty bowl, Joe was about to have to either roll or wheel us out of there, we had eaten so much and were so incredibly happy.

Thank you to Joe, his wife Gordana, our waitress Emily, and the entire staff for an absolutely incredible meal! We will be back – very soon! •

For more information, you can reach Trattoria San Giorgio at (845) 677-4566 or at [www.trattoriasangiorgio.com](http://www.trattoriasangiorgio.com).



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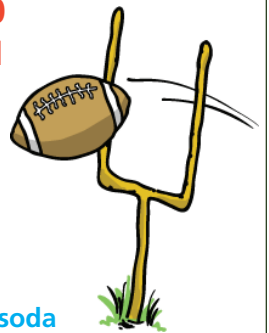
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# fox hill farm:

A MATRIARCHY OF HERITAGE IN COLUMBIA COUNTY

By Memoree Joelle  
info@mainstreetmag.com

“That’s Judy, and her offspring, Julie, who had Jewel. Her offspring is Juliette, who had the youngest calf, Juniper.” The mother-daughter duo of cows each stood elegantly poised for the camera, perfect bovines now forever captured on (digital) film and printed on glossy paper.

## A different kind of family album

I was standing in the kitchen of Larry Lampman, who not only owns the cows, but took the photographs. He pointed to each one, all of them pasted to large cardboard displays, which he takes with him to events.

“That’s Sugar, Salty, Spice, and Saffron,” he told me, in between slicing apples in half, which he then filled into buckets. A kind man with a calm demeanor and easy smile, his great affection for his animals was apparent as he spoke of the heifers and their offspring, some of whom in the eldest generation are now fifteen years old. He stopped working on the apples for a moment to indicate Francois, a handsome young Murray Grey bull whose name fit his features. Next was a photo of Francene, now fifteen, and Fanny “Funnyface” the sixteen year old matriarch of the group. Larry seems almost in awe of them, and as we poured over the images, I realized that what we were really looking at was not just a handful of cow pictures, but a well-documented family album that spans generations.

## Up close and personal

When the aroma of freshly-cut apples had saturated the room, Larry handed me one of the buckets, we climbed into his car, and a few moments later I found myself face-to-face with the esteemed herd



Above: Denise and her calf in the morning light. Below left: Fanny Funnyface and Starlet trying to get Larry’s attention by sticking their heads through the rolled down window. Photos by Larry Lampman.

I had already come to admire in my imagination. A dozen or so British Whites and Murray Greys huddled together at the top of the hill, which I later learned is their favorite spot to graze and sleep, and approached curiously when we greeted them with our apples.

Larry showed me how to place the apple all the way inside the mouth, which I was timid to do until he reminded me that cows don’t have top teeth, and can’t bite down. Within minutes, it was obvious that these gentle creatures could do no harm, and the affection between this farmer and his animals is mutual. They nuzzled him with their giant faces as he showered them with pats on the head and even a few bear hugs.

Larry knows each cow by name, and he recognizes them by face, not by tag. Back in the car, he rattled off more names as we drove through his pastures, which spread picturesquely out over a total of 315 acres.

## Over the river and through the woods to the cows’ pastures we go

Nothing like the typical flat, rectangular, cow pastures with perhaps a hill or two, Fox Hill Farm boasts hills and valleys, winding paths, peaks and dips, and turns that make you feel like you’re ex-

ploring a mysterious landscape – as in a dream. We drove through a small forest, and came out onto a clearing, where a single British White stood upon a large rock. She peered out at us under long dark lashes, then looked out at the other cows lower down, as if surveying her subjects.

Another turn, and the valley narrowed again and we drove through a path lined on each side with thick hedgerows. Larry rolled down the windows and we idled near a small group of heifers who seemed genuinely excited by his presence. They dipped their large faces inside the vehicle when the apples were uncovered, and followed us a bit when we continued on our tour, leaving behind one especially spunky young Murray Grey leaping and shaking her head in hopes of another treat.

## The difficult question

After I had been properly introduced to most of the animals, a question now loomed large. “Do you ever get so attached to your animals that you have difficulty sending them to slaughter?”

“Well, only the steers go to slaughter, and those

Continued on next page ...



I do not name,” explained Larry. That made perfect sense, because if he were to get as attached to them as he is to the heifers, business would suffer. And that is another point Larry made very eloquently. “When you get into the business of raising animals for meat, you have to always remember that they are eventually going to be sold for that purpose. But that doesn’t mean I believe in consuming large amounts of meat, either. I subscribe to the views of Michael Pollan, and like he said, ‘Eat food. Mostly plants. Not too much.’ And besides raising the animals where they live a good life, that is the way I approach eating meat, and having beef cattle.”

Words of wisdom from a farmer with a long history of farming in our area. His grandmother moved to Ancramdale in the late 1800’s from Copake, and even attended the little white one-room school house down the road. His grandfather raised horses and sheep, and his father and uncle were dairy farmers, and ran Fox Hill Farm as a dairy operation until 1997.

#### Land conservation and sustainable farming

In 1999, Larry and his wife, Erna, a kindergarten teacher, brought in their first breeding herd. For many years, Larry, now a retired environmental engineer, farmed while also commuting between his job at the Department of Environmental Conservation in Albany. Land conservation is an issue close to his heart, and his own land is fortunately



Above top: Sugar seen through the spider web. Above left: Gigi, Babs, and a steer relax on a hill. Above right: Lampman feeding Mary and Franny apples. Below left, top: Murray Greys, Fran and Queen. Below left, bottom: Two new British White calves. Photos by Larry Lampman.



protected from development by a land conservation easement.

He practices sustainable farming, and chose British Whites, Murray Greys, and Red Devons specifically because they are ideally suited to survive entirely on grass. Grazing cows on rotated pastures support good soil health, as does the fact that there are no row crops on the farm like corn and soy, which cause erosion. Instead, the Lampman cows graze on a salad of naturally growing timothy, alfalfa, nettles, clover, and other greens. In winter, their diet is supplemented with hay and baleage, but they are never given grains.

In stark contrast to factory beef and feed lots, it is so very beautiful and tranquil to see these tame animals move across the landscape, foraging in the grasses and lying beneath the fifty, even one-hundred year-old oaks. As we made our way back toward the main house and barns, Larry pointed out the oldest trees, which he knows just as well as he knows his cows. It is truly a magical place – a preserved landscape that allows a matriarchal family of heritage to thrive. The farm is now for sale, but hopefully the Lampman family will move their gentle giants to other, nearby pastures.

#### Where to find Fox Hill Farm products

If you haven’t heard of Fox Hill Farm, it’s because you won’t find them at your local farmer’s market. Larry Lampman sells mostly whole animals and sides, and quarters of beef. His famous ‘PaPa Dogs,’ are all beef, nitrate-free hot dogs with a natural casing, and these can be found at a few area stores including the Berkshire Co-Op, and the Copake Front Porch Market.

You can also find Larry with the matriarchal family album at events such as the Newport Jazz and Folk festival, the Pete Seeger Clearwater Event, among others. This year will be his 13th year to participate in the annual “Strolling of the Heifers,” the title of which is self-explanatory. •

*For more information, to purchase beef, or arrange to visit the farm, visit [www.foxhillfarmgrassfedbeef.com/](http://www.foxhillfarmgrassfedbeef.com/) or contact Larry Lampman at (518) 810-3274, [lampman1@fairpoint.net](mailto:lampman1@fairpoint.net).*



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## DO FIREPLACES ADD VALUE TO YOUR HOME?

By Christine Bates

christine@mainstreetmag.com

*After examining the Kent, CT real estate market in December, wintry January's monthly real estate feature tries to figure out whether a fireplace adds to a home's value. As usual there are no simple answers.*

### A very brief history of fireplaces

The traditional wood-burning fireplace with a chimney was a big improvement over the smoky open hearths in the center of a home that were the norm well into the 16th century. The next major fireplace advancement occurred around the time of the American Revolution when Count Rumford altered the design of the firebox and flue to lessen smoke and boost heat efficiency.

In the early 19th century iron stoves, fueled by wood and then coal, were introduced. Fireplaces were gradually replaced as the primary heat source and became largely decorative. In fact, many Victorian homes in the Northeast were built without fireplaces. By the 1920s oil fired furnaces started to replace coal and became commonplace after World War II.

Wood stoves enjoyed a brief period of popularity when the first energy crisis hit in the mid 1970's and oil prices spiked. Some of these early versions caused chimney fires and were poorly designed and manufactured. When the price of oil stabilized, many of these wood stoves were removed. Today new technology is bringing more energy efficient gas and wood fireplaces that are environmentally friendly, but still satisfy man's primeval desire for the warmth and beauty of a fire.

At the intersection of Salmon Kill Road and Route 44 near Salisbury Village, the center brick chimney of the 1772 Stiles House has been rebuilt. The house, which was sold in October of 2014, has five large wood burning fireplaces and the new owners are carefully restoring them. Joe Brennan, the general contractor overseeing the work, explained that, generally, chimneys over a hundred years old need to have the flues relined for safety reasons. How much value did these fireplaces add to the sale of the house? Would anyone buy a pre-Revolutionary house without them?

### Fireplaces continue to be a selling point for properties on the market

After establishing how many bedrooms and how many bathrooms any house listed for sale has, buyers ask about fireplaces. In a 2012 research survey buyers ranked fireplaces as one of the top three features they would most like in their home. Demonstrating this trend, approximately 60% of new homes today include at least one fireplace, up from



Above: Distinctive outdoor rooms with fireplaces offer another space to congregate. Photo courtesy of Jim Crisp.

36% in the 1970s. While the presence of fireplaces is definitely a plus, it seems essential to weekend home buyers. One first time country house buyer said, "I won't even look at a house without a fireplace."

"Fireplaces are an essential element in what people think of as a country home," confirmed realtor Elyse Harney. "Over and above the fact they were the original means of heating a home, they now embody the cheer and comfort so needed to relax."

### How much value does the fireplace add to resale?

National Realtors Association studies conclude that while most buyers find fireplaces an attractive feature, they claim to be willing to pay, on average, only \$1,400 more for them. But in our area's affluent second home market, Harney estimates that a working fireplace in a primary room like the living room or kitchen adds \$50,000 to the price of a home. The absence of fireplaces can be an issue with many Victorian houses, which omitted fireplaces because central heating had just arrived.

The age of a house or a town is revealed by chimney profiles. In colonial settlements like Salisbury, most homes have substantial masonry chimneys, while railroad era villages like Millerton and Mill-



Above: Only one fireplace remains in the 1820 Wake-man Bradley house at Spencer's Corners, which originally had five chimneys. Photo courtesy of William McGinn, Best & Cavallaro.

Continued on next page ...





Top image to right: Hill House, with 13 fireplaces may be rented for special occasions. Photo courtesy of Elyse Harney Real Estate. Right: Chimney being relined in the 1772 Stiles House in Salisbury. Far right: A gas fireplace is an ideal solution for this master bath. Photo courtesy of Jim Crisp. Below: This gas fireplace in an extensive renovation in Salisbury was designed so it could be removed and utilized as a traditional wood-burning fireplace. Gas, which offers greater fuel efficiency and ease of use, is becoming a more popular option in new construction. Typically gas fireplaces cost less to build, require less space, and are easier to maintain than a traditional wood fireplace.



brook often display only small chimneys to vent oil and gas furnaces. In conversations with area realtors for this article, no one recommended adding a fireplace to make a house more saleable, because the cost would most likely not be recovered. But they did advise repairing a faulty fireplace. In general fireplaces add little value to less expensive homes. One local realtor observed that for modest houses a fireplace does not really add to the price, but becomes a requirement for homes priced over \$300,000.

Millbrook architect Jim Crisp regularly has clients who want to add fireplaces during renovations and always specify them in new construction. Outdoor fireplaces in exterior rooms continue to gain in popularity, but again they only add value to higher priced homes.

The downside is that fireplaces may also increase your home's assessed value for property tax purposes. Salisbury Assessor Kayla Johnson explained that the assessed value depends on the grade of the house and that each fireplace could add as much as \$7,500 to the assessed value of a high-end property. Interestingly real estate appraisers who determine market value for mortgage purposes don't specifically attribute value to fireplaces.

#### How much do fireplaces cost?

New construction of a traditional wood burning fireplace with a masonry chimney and supporting

foundation will typically cost \$20,000 to \$50,000 to construct. Gas fireplaces, which are especially popular in cities where natural gas lines are available, can cost less than 50% of a traditional wood-burning fireplace. Bob Cohen, a long time distributor of fireplace equipment in Hudson, estimated that 79% of Long Island fireplaces are gas, while in our area the figure is closer to 20%, in part because natural gas is not available and wood is plentiful.

While wood burning fireplaces are still the norm in our area, gas fueled fireplaces are becoming more popular with more realistic logs and improved designs. They also offer the benefit of immediate on and off flames, remote controls, and no dirty logs to drag inside or ashes to remove. High quality wood burning metal inserts and the new zero clearance wood fireplaces are also less expensive than traditional fireplaces. They can offer all the aesthetic and emotional appeal of a traditional wood fireplace, but can actually heat the whole house and offer the important bonus of being environmentally friendly.

As cities like Paris and state governments like California limit the use of traditional wood burning fireplaces to cut down on particulate pollution and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, consumers will be looking for new ways to balance the eternal desire for a crackling fire with concern for the environment and improved heat efficiency. •



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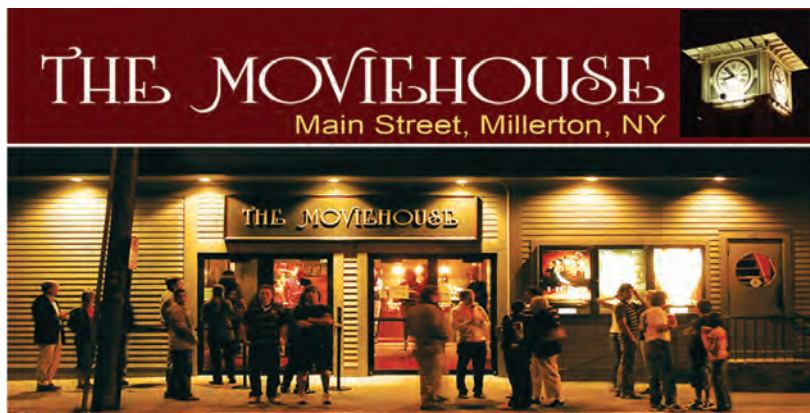
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# makeover magic!

## ENHANCING BEAUTY

By Sarah Ellen Rindsberg  
info@mainstreetmag.com

Trees and mountains adorned in a coat of snow render the countryside a magnificent white canvas. Shorter days and cooler temperatures lead some to venture out less. Instead of yielding to the urge to devote oneself solely to indoor pursuits, we propose using this season as the time for a new outlook – both figuratively and literally. This is an ideal time for the ultimate pick-me-up: a makeover.

One of the first questions posed to Kelly Kilmer, proprietor of Kelly & Company Hair Salon in Amenia, was that of timing. Makeovers are appropriate for all ages and all stages of life, she assures us. A stunning look for a prom may be the first time that a young woman sees how her features may be enhanced for maximum effect. This treat is not to be reserved for the young, however; it applies to the young at heart of every generation. In fact, the aging process and makeovers work hand in hand.

“What I applied in my twenties, I don’t do in my forties,” Kilmer says. This is necessitated by changes; skin becomes drier, hair more brittle. “I’ve adjusted my makeup to a tinted moisturizer for a more natural, lighter feel,” she adds.

### Total, partial, or an in-between makeover

The process need not require a total change of existing tools and techniques. Kilmer asks clients to bring in their current array of products as a starting point. She then ascertains whether the colors in the palette are compatible with skin tone and recommends changes when appropriate. The amount of time a client has to apply makeup and the amount they feel comfortable wearing, are also taken into consideration. This highlights a major advantage of the in-person consultation versus the virtual. An informative conversation ensures the creation of a viable routine.

“We literally have lessons,” Kilmer says. “I show you how to apply the products and then you try it.”

The scope and style of a makeover is tailored to the client’s interests and concerns. “There are so many aspects as to what can be a makeover – a new way to blow your hair, new cut, new color, adding a few highlights,” Kilmer says.

Waves may be added with curling irons or



Above: Tina Hale before her makeover. Right: Tina Hale after her makeover. Makeovers don’t have to be synonymous with a “complete makeover.” Sometimes just the slightest change is all that’s needed to make a complete transformation. Picture by Stephanie Stanton.



perms. A dramatic change is achieved when naturally curly hair is straightened. Finding a way to tame frizzy hair or add body to less than lustrous strands is a valuable discovery.

### Making those eyes pop!

And now, on to the face. For some brow shaping is a must, whereas others may be waiting to experience this option. Achieving perfectly shaped brows at home can be a lengthy process. Under the hands of a professional, the results are amazing, providing a stunning frame for dazzling eyes. When a recent client decided to try this technique for the first time, the transformation made her look ten years younger.

Now, the focus turns to the eyes. Whether the goal is a completely different look or an update, this is the point where color comes into play. To bring out the natural beauty of the eyes, a complimentary color is applied. Then, eyeliner is selected, “to really make the eyes pop.”

Mascara, the venerable standby, may be next. After all it’s a tried and true method of drawing attention to the eyes. Modern techniques of tinting, lifting, and extensions have become viable options for creating fuller lashes. These are true time savers, eliminating the need to curl and apply mascara.

tive events – a milestone birthday party, a gala to support a favorite arts institution, a high school reunion, or a family wedding – are replete with photo opportunities. LinkedIn and dating websites, bring them on! A makeover as the prelude to a new headshot guarantees looking your best.

New baby on the way or already in-house? The new mother, feeling overwhelmed, will truly appreciate the opportunity to focus on herself and acquire some time-saving techniques.

For those coping with illness, a makeover can be a real lifeline. Cancer survivors, in particular, reap tremendous benefits from both the attention showered over them and the reflection they see in the mirror.

A makeover is just the thing needed to conquer the winter doldrums. “Giving ourselves love and attention by making ourselves look a little different helps us change our outlook,” Kilmer says.

The boost to self-esteem is tremendous “It helps you hold your head a little higher.” Stepping out with regal bearing is empowering. •

To learn more contact Kelly at Kelly & Company Hair Salon at (845) 373-8490, on the Kelly & Company Hair Salon Facebook page, or at [www.kellycompanyhair.com](http://www.kellycompanyhair.com).

### It’s always a good time to get a makeover!

Tangible reasons for a new look abound. Fes-





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By Claire Copley  
info@mainstreetmag.com

Winter often feels barren. Plants have died back or lost leaves, grass is covered with snow, and the soil crust is hardened by low temperatures and drying winds. But there is action underground. What we might view as lifeless is actually a complex functioning ecosystem that we gardeners know all too little about. In fact, the deep space of soil is home to millions of organisms: nematodes, algae, amoeba, fungi, actinomycetes, and bacteria all functioning together to break down the detritus of life above ground (organic matter) and release the nutrients contained therein.

### What is soil?

Soil is created from what I can only describe here as rocks (originally from the planet's crust) in varying states of decomposition. A number of inputs; physical (think plant and tree roots), climate related (wind, water, and ice) and chemical processes, break down the rock slowly. Add to this plant and animal remains, and billions of decaying organisms, or decomposers, that consume organic matter as a food source, returning most of the carbon to the atmosphere as carbon dioxide and leaving behind a residue called humus. It is the recycling of nutrients through decay of organic matter that primarily defines nutrient availability and productivity of the soil. Humus is the foundation of life for our plants.

Like all life, microorganisms need air, water, and food to thrive. These are most prevalent in the top two feet of the earth surface. It is this top layer (the A Horizon) that contains most of the organic matter, oxygen, and water storage as well as plant activity. This area, the "Rhizosphere" (rizo=roots) is the interface zone between roots and soil. Plant roots are the connection between the plants and their life support system and their job is to seek out and extract the available nutrients from the soil.

This zone is also the most impacted by fluctuations in temperature, water content, and sunlight.

The vast majority of players in the soil ecology system are too small to be seen with the naked eye. The one key exception are the earthworms. Earthworms feed on organic matter and it's mother lode of fungi and bacteria and excrete "casts," which are dense particles of super-rich organic matter. Through this activity, decay and nutrient cycling in the soil is greatly accelerated and nutrients become more available to plants. Worm castings are made soluble in the soil by bacterial enzymes. Worms tunneling back and forth to the surface are of particular help as they aerate the soil, bringing valuable oxygen and nutrients underground and keeping soil loose. Worms are a visible sign of soil health because conditions in which earthworms thrive are also good for other soil flora and fauna and ultimately plant roots.

While earthworms are highly beneficial to our gardens and to agriculture, they can be very destructive in other settings. The glacial scraping that occurred eons ago eradicated the local earthworm population, and other species invaded and multiplied. As a result, our Northern Forests are at risk as worms hungrily consume surface leaf litter that the forests rely on for nutrients, protection of young seedlings, and insurance against erosion. The forest ecosystem is now severely out of whack. Climate change has added to the concerns surrounding Northern Forest lands, but in the garden, earthworms are our friends.

### The power of fungi

The microorganisms that inhabit and enrich our soil are varied. Bacteria are a huge class of simple, single-celled organisms that break down organic matter in the soil. A few types of bacteria cause

plant diseases, but we couldn't exist without them and their important function in the nutrient cycle.

Most fungi resemble a mass of tangled threads (mycelium) beneath the soil. Some types of fungi (mycorrhizae) gather around plant roots and form symbiotic relationships. Researchers are only beginning to understand the importance of these mycorrhizae to our plants, but we do know that these fungi actually enhance the plants ability to extract the nutrients from the soil.

Mushrooms are the fruits of fungi and are attached to miles of mycelium under the surface. While mushrooms in our garden beds can be bothersome, they indicate a highly developed fungal population (a good thing). This mycelium is one reason why we are admonished to only till our gardens minimally as disruption of this web is detrimental to the soil ecosystem. Many Mycologists (mushroom specialists) now believe that we can use the vast digestive powers of mycelium to decompose toxic wastes, filter silt, and pathogens from watersheds, and generally enhance the health of our planet.

### Bacteria and Algae

Actinomycetes, or mold bacteria, also grow in a threaded network. They are aggressive feeders and exude chemicals that can inhibit growth of other microorganisms. Many useful medicines and antibiotics derive from actinomycetes, and they are believed to have the ability to protect plants from certain disease causing pathogens.

Algae are single-celled organisms that live in water. They are chlorophyll-containing plants and can photosynthesize on their own. Certain algae

Continued on next page ...



combine with fungi to form lichens, which grow on rocks and excrete mild acids that dissolve minerals (and rocks), thereby adding to soil formation. The rest of the micro fauna of the soil are also single-celled organisms that serve a variety of functions, not least is regulating the bacterial population.

So “healthy” soil is soil with a large and diverse population of beneficial microorganisms. More diversity means more biological functions fulfilled and greater biological stability. As gardeners, it falls to us to promote healthy populations in our soil. Soils can be amended by the introduction of “good” organisms, either through inoculation (adding specific minerals), or supplying large quantities of organic matter for the organisms to eat, grow, and thrive on. Remember that we are feeding the hungry hordes each time we add organic matter to the garden, so go heavy with the compost.

### Helpful hints for soil health

The list of Best Management Practices for garden soils suggests practices that improve soil conditions for beneficial microorganisms:

- Reduce tillage of soil. Tillage mixes things up and produces a brief explosion of microbial activity, but the new nutrients are quickly consumed. Reducing tillage maintains a more constant food supply and enhances conditions for fungi.
- Improve drainage. Wet soils inhibit microbial activity by restricting airflow. Improving drainage will improve the capacity of the soil to hold and provide oxygen. There are numerous ways to alter the drainage of your soil. Plant selection can help with this as well.
- Minimize compaction. Compaction is simply compression of garden soil. Loose, light soils are desirable so microorganisms get the light and oxygen they need. Don't walk on garden soils! Especially when they are wet. Place stones on the ground to provide access to garden areas.
- Maintain adequate nutrient, moisture, and pH levels. Have soil tests done to determine your needs (visit: <http://soilhealth.cals.cornell.edu/>). Once your needs are determined you can make amendments to your soils where and when necessary. Add organic matter in the form of compost, organic mulches, or composted manure regularly.
- Keep soil planted. Organisms such as mycorrhizae require association with roots to function optimally. Use cover crops in the winter to provide this in areas that are not planted with perennials.

Practicing these simple steps will immeasurably improve your soil, thereby enhancing your garden output, whether flowers or edibles.

The most important thing to remember is that garden soil needs a constant replenishing of organic matter. Organic matter is lost through erosion and digestion and the soil becomes depleted. There are several key ways to make sure you maximize the



organic matter in your soil. Simply leaving crop or plant residues on top of and in the soil is an easy way to provide organic matter. If this detritus aesthetically bothers you, you can till it into the top inch or two of the soil. Or simply add more compost on top.

### Plant diversity and its benefits

Soil enrichment has long been practiced in agriculture by implementing crop rotation. Increasing diversity of your garden habitat increases the numbers and varieties of beneficial organisms, both above and below the soil. By increasing the populations and types of microorganisms we increase the many biological functions taking place in the garden. Plant diversity, for example, means different root systems, different rhizospheres, different residues and different effects on the soil. Diversity means a healthier, more robust growing environment.

Many gardeners can enrich their gardens with organic materials such as animal manures, kitchen waste, and sewage sludge in the form of compost. Compost is simply organic material that has started the process of decay in a controlled environment above ground. Compost can be made at home or purchased in bag or bulk locally. Leaves, grass clippings, and kitchen waste can all be composted and added to the soil.

Mulches are another way to add organic matter to the soil. Only organic mulches should be used because dyes, chemicals, or herbicides that are frequently contained in commercial mulches will severely affect the microbial environment of the soil. Straw, sawdust, woodchips, or other natural materials spread several inches deep on the ground will decay and provide organic matter in addition to smothering some weeds. Other benefits of mulch include improving soil-water content, limiting evaporation from the soil surface, and moderating soil temperatures.

### Cover crops

Cover crops also add diversity and mass to garden soils. Cereal crops, such as rye and winter wheat, protect the soil from leaching minerals and also help stabilize soil carbon, essential for microbial health. Research shows that the population of

microbes around cereal roots can actually grow during winter, generating organic nutrients ready for spring.

For the home ornamental or vegetable gardener, cover crops, or “green manure” are not “crops” at all, but an important method of soil enrichment. Once seeded they grow rapidly, and are then plowed under, or cut and composted, before they go to seed (this is important). Crops come in three main types: leafy fast growing grasses – oats, rye, barley, and various types of wheat; nitrogen-fixing legumes such as alfalfa, clover, vetches, peas and beans; and finally, a few specialist crops such as buckwheat and mustard. The type you decide to sow depends on the season of planting, your particular soil conditions, and what you want to achieve. Soil managers highly recommend planting as much of your garden area as possible throughout the year for maximum soil health.

Cooler soil temperatures of winter slow the decomposition process. Few microbes are active below 41°F, and most grow better in warmer soils. The inputs of light intensity and air temperature fluctuate daily and determine soil temperature in this top layer. While activity slows in winter, it doesn't stop. In fact, researchers are exploring how microbes survive in sub-freezing temperatures for thousands of years only to emerge intact. Worms, the largest of our decomposers, burrow deeper into the soil and curl up in a cocoon-like state to get through a harsh winter, and then again, some don't make it and become food for the armies of decomposition.

The thing is, our soil is not an end product; it is a process. As gardeners we need all of our activities to enrich this process and we will be rewarded with more robust, productive gardens. In days gone by our soils were enriched by falling leaves, branches, and even trees. Animals that were once abundant died and decomposed in the soil, floods and storms provided deposits of organic matter on a pretty regular basis. These days, with so much of our land built on or in agricultural use, organic inputs are fewer and fewer. Our soils are depleted and hungry. Our job is to rev up these engines of plenty by adding as much new organic material as possible. Here in the Hudson Valley we are doing pretty well. ●



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# the history of hillsdale

By Sarah Ellen Rindsberg  
info@mainstreetmag.com

When Hillsdale Town Historian Peter Cipkowski addressed the audience at the Roeliff Jansen Community Library on November 9th, it was standing room only. A crowd of this size for a talk on the history of Hillsdale begs the question: What is it about this town's tale that is so intriguing? The subject matter revealed the answer in an alliteration of R's. Although a riot, rebellion, and the Revolutionary War were some of the more livelier topics, these events did not overshadow the more mundane.

## The Massachusetts-New York dispute

The first white settlers in the area lived on land they had purchased from the Mohican tribe. The British Crown decreed that their land fell under the jurisdiction of the state of Massachusetts. In 1754, after a territorial dispute between New York and Massachusetts, an agreement was reached. A vestige of this border runs down the slopes of Catamount, the western portion lies in New York and the eastern in Massachusetts.

Conflict also arose when Sir Henry Moore, the Royal Governor of New York, weighed in on the status of the settlers. "He believed their Massachusetts deeds were illegal. New York folks felt they [the squatters] were obligated to pay taxes to New York," Cipkowski says.

The riot of 1766 ensued and the squatters were forced out. The area was resettled by European immigrants and named Nobletown after founder Robert Noble. It was subsequently renamed Hillsdale after being carved out from Claverack in 1782, and designated as a town in 1788.

Although no battles of the Revolutionary War took place here, a notable figure in the army did pass through. Henry Knox, a former bookseller in Boston, had been dispatched by General Washington to commandeer cannons from Fort Ticonderoga and transport them to Boston in order to strengthen the patriots' position as the British menace grew. Knox did so, traveling through Nobletown on his way back to Boston.

## The rent boycott and the fulling mills

The next conflict was precipitated by the death of Stephen van Rensselaer, head of his eponymous manor, in 1839. Although the senior van Rensselaer had overlooked rents in arrears, his sons were not so inclined. A rent boycott was organized. Some dressed up as Native Americans "borrowing from the [Boston] Tea Party," Cipkowski says.

The boycotters prevailed and the feudal system then entrenched in local manors, ended around 1840.



Above: The Hillsdale railroad station, plow works, and milk depot circa 1910. Photo provided by the Roeliff Jansen Historical Society.

As agitation quelled, the town began to prosper. One of the main factors in this transformation was the existence of several fulling mills. In the fulling process, lanolin, dirt, and plant debris are cleaned from the wool brought by farmers, shorn from the backs of their sheep. This is an integral part of the process of creating woolen textiles which "was a huge source of income."

Iron ore was also a major factor. There were a small number of furnaces one of which provided the raw materials used to make the side-hill plow. One of the salient features of the plow was the "flick of the foot [used] to reverse direction." The demand for charcoal was high as all the furnaces in the area needed large quantities. Farmers constructed pits in which they burned wood to produce charcoal.

In the 1820s to 1840s, the Second Great Awakening (a religious revival) came to town. There were many active houses of worship including the Krum church, built in 1769. In the 1800s more opened their doors – the First Methodist, North Hillsdale, and German Evangelical Lutheran. Services were still being held in German at the latter in 1950.

## The railroad arrival

Another force that contributed to the vitality of Hillsdale came in the form of the railroad. The route was in the planning stages around 1839 and by 1852 it was built. The Harlem Valley Railroad

went through Hillsdale and continued on to Egremont in Massachusetts.

"Hillsdale was one of the busiest stations on the line," Cipkowski says. The Hillsdale Plow Company (maker of the aforementioned plow) was located near the depot along with an icehouse, creamery, foundry, and wagon shops. There were three hotels situated near the depot to accommodate visitors who came in abundance to enjoy the countryside. News was published first in the *Hillsdale Herald* and subsequently in the *Hillsdale Harbinger*.

The educational system included a grand total of 18 schoolhouses for elementary and middle school students. High school students attended the Hillsdale Institute. There was also a telegraph college where operators were trained.

Famous residents include James Agee, author of *A Death in the Family*, and Edgar Lee Masters who penned *Spoon River Anthology*. •

Further information is available at [www.hillsdaleny.com](http://www.hillsdaleny.com).





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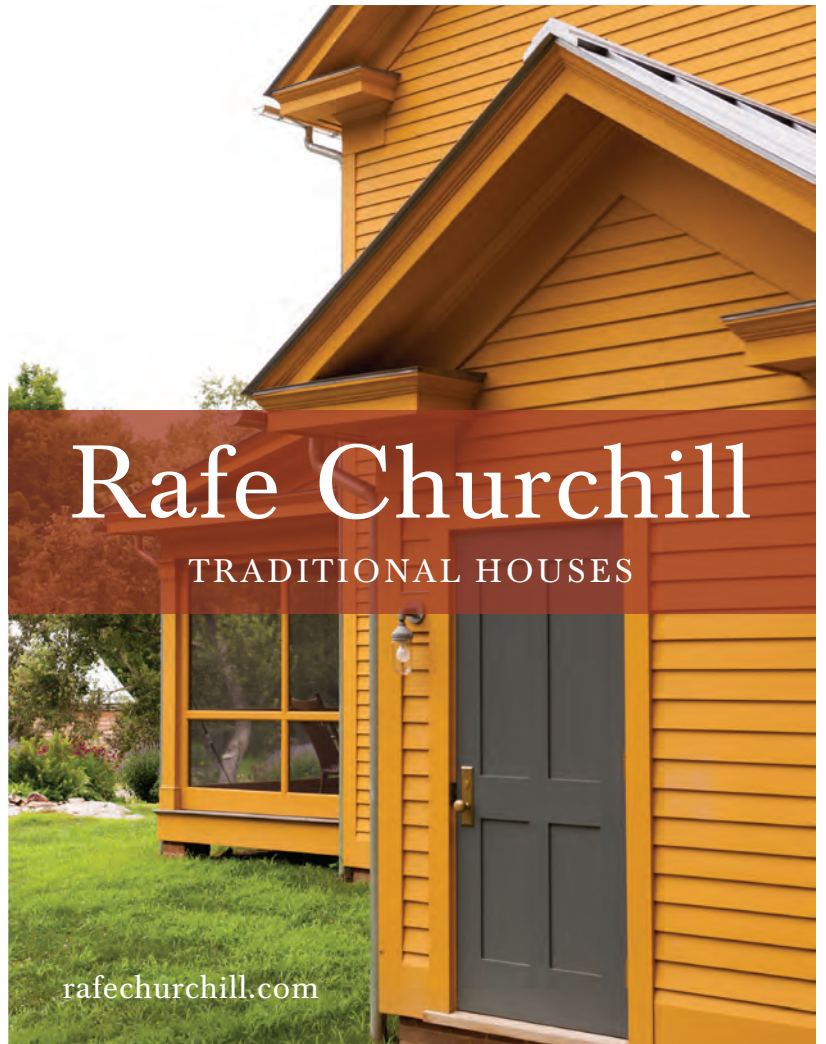


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# THE lantern inn:

## A WASSAIC TRADITION

It's 5:30 on a Thursday evening, and lights are glowing inside The Lantern in downtown Wassaic. An older, bearded man in a flannel jacket and work boots is smoking a cigarette on the front porch, and nods a greeting as my friend and I swing open the old screen door. The bar's proximity to the train is what lured us in (that, and the word had gotten around about the wood-fired pizza).

Inside, a group of three middle-aged men in baseball caps are gathered at the end of the bar drinking beers in plastic cups, intermittently erupting in uproarious laughter. A pool table sits at the other end of the room, and a young hipsterish couple are intently immersed in their game. To the right the bar opens up into a much larger room, with long, sturdy industrial farm tables with benches, dim hanging lanterns, and a few small tables with chairs against the windows.

A view into the small kitchen reveals the pizza oven, and the smell of yeast and tomato sauce competes with the bar-beer smell from the front. My friend, a hint of skepticism in his voice, remarks, "this seems to be a dive bar." And well, it is a dive bar. But it's not your father's dive bar. Your grandfather's, maybe.

### The Lantern's long history

The Lantern has changed hands many times during the course of its history, which began in 1890. From an early nineteenth century inn to a pizza joint, it has always held its appeal to the regulars

who have gathered at its familiar long, dark wooden bar for many years now.

In 2010, it was acquired by its current owners, Tony Zunino and Richard Berry. Zunino appointed his son-in-law, Jeff Barnett-Winsby, who also runs the Wassaic Project, as Manager. Since then, change (the good kind) has been in the air, as Jeff and his wife, Bowie, have slowly but surely made The Lantern into a unique, inviting space.

Respectful of The Lantern's history, they have strived to add on, not take away from its roots. Jeff reflects, "The Lantern served the industrial and agricultural communities back in the day, and while those things have mostly died away over time, it has always, and continues to cater to the locals who grew up coming here. It is very important to us to keep this a neighborhood bar and serve long-time regulars, while being inviting to weekenders as well. Having those different communities unite under one roof to eat and drink together is our goal, and it's a great equalizer."

In renovating the space, Jeff and his crew have taken the slow approach. "When we find something we like we add it, and as that casual pace has progressed, it has helped maintain for locals the feeling that this is still their bar. And I want it to feel that way for my family as well. We wouldn't

By Memoree Joelle  
info@mainstreetmag.com  
Photos courtesy of  
The Lantern Inn

Continued on next page ...





have wanted to create some kind of packaged space. For us, this is almost like an extension of the Wassaic Project, where we're creating a place for everyone to come together."

### Food philosophy

When it comes to the food, Jeff's philosophy is straight-forward. He sources almost all of the ingredients from local farms, and is a big supporter of local agriculture. But he doesn't treat it with an air of trendiness that might be associated with that approach. "There's no need to be fancy," he explains. "Our goal is to take good ingredients and then perfectly execute very simple recipes."

The locally-famed wood-fired pizzas are made in-house by bakers Irfan Zaidi and Peter Siegenthaler, the recipes for which were developed largely by Angelo Womack, who has since relocated. The sausages on the pizzas are custom-made by Jack Peele of Jacuterie, and the mozzarella is made in-house from purchased curds. Most of the vegetables are sourced from Olde Forge Organics down the

road, like the kale on the popular Lutherbarn Pizza, made with kale, lemon oil, garlic, romano, and house-made mozzarella – a must-try, whether you think you like kale or not (see the large image on the previous page).

### Food that's comforting and affordable

Other items on the menu may alter between perfect fried chicken to short ribs to the burger, which is a typical diner burger but larger, and served on an English muffin; a twist you will either love or hate. This is diner food that is comforting, thoughtful, affordable (the most expensive item on the menu is \$12) and that delivers just what you wanted, if not what you expected.

The way this menu came to be, while largely a group effort, originated in Jeff's nostalgic vision of what good diner food should be – a vision which he says was never realized in the reality of the Americana he experienced growing up.

"I love good food, and growing up in Kansas where diners are everywhere, I was continually disappointed and frustrated by their inability to deliver the most basic dishes. What should have been homemade pie tasted like it came out of a Sysco can. Everything tasted very artificial, and was just a bad facsimile of the vision I had created in my mind."

Well, now that piece of American diner food history has been actualized, and as the saying goes, if you build it they will come.

By 7:30, the lively group of three at the end of the bar has become five; the couple playing pool has doubled, and groups of friends and even a few families with kids have filled up the larger tables. The man who originally greeted us has migrated to the back of the room to chat with the pool-players, and offer his advice.

My friend and I finish our drinks and pizza, and as we leave, the bartender waves a goodbye. Outside, I cast a glance back, and through the windows is a scene of people who seem to blend together, becoming a single vision of one big group as we walk away. The night has grown darker, but The Lantern lights are still glowing. •

*To find out which nights you can enjoy perfect fried chicken, and other important information, visit [www.Wassaiclanterninn.com](http://www.Wassaiclanterninn.com).*





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*By Sarah Ellen Rindsberg  
info@mainstreetmag.com  
Photos by Doris Berman  
& Sarah Ellen Rindsberg*

*We wanted to start the year off with a travel story as part of our “Adventures & Misadventures” series. In this story, Sarah Ellen traveled to Peru in South America in order to experience the magnificence of Machu Picchu. Here is her adventure, and perhaps it will spark an idea for your next adventure!*

Machu Picchu, that magical place, figures on many a bucket list. For me, it was about halfway down the list when suddenly I found myself on a plane to Peru. Here’s the backstory. One evening, my American friend’s son, Eric, was in a bar in Berlin, Germany. Mónica, a Peruvian woman, spotted him across the room and offered to buy him a drink. The attraction was evident and before long, they were engaged.

When I told my daughter about the wedding in Peru she said, “Mom, I’ve always wanted to go to Machu Picchu.” “Hmm,” I thought to myself, “you’re 21 and have plenty of time to get there, but who knows when I’ll have the opportunity.” Embracing the spirit of *carpe diem*, airline tickets were booked.

#### **Logistics, planning, elevation and declining oxygen levels**

In planning the trip, logistics play a key role – the order in which places are visited is crucial. Rest easy, all the legwork has been done, so sit back and enjoy the voyage. The tricky part about a trip to the Andes is the elevation – the highest encountered on my trip was around 3,400 meters/11,155 feet above sea level. Oxygen levels begin to decline at heights above 2,400 meters/7,874 feet, necessitating a brief acclimation period.

All flights from the east coast will bring you first to Lima. A minimum stay of two days is sufficient to begin your immersion into Peruvian culture. Tiled floors, chandeliers, and architectural details make for an authentic Peruvian stay at Hotel Antigua Miraflores. We dined nearby with Eric at IK, the restaurant where Mónica is head creative chef. Pisco sours, pizzas topped with the freshest mesclun imaginable and eel stew, made for a sumptuous meal. Time constraints allowed for only one museum, Museo Larco, and I could not have made a better choice. Pre-Columbian history and culture are described in an entertaining and erudite fashion. Knowing that the museum is renowned for its erotica collection adds to the appeal.

#### **The Sacred Valley**

From Lima, a flight to Cusco brings you closer to your ultimate destination. Cusco is the highest elevation experienced on this trip so take a taxi immediately and head straight for the Sacred Valley to begin the acclimation process. A two to three-day stay is ideal for a gradual adjustment to the oxygen level. To heighten my level of preparedness, I took acetazolamide in the morning and at night, and am pleased to report that breathing was easy.

Although Machu Picchu is the highlight, the sights in the Sacred Valley run a close second. Each day dawned on a new adventure. In Ollantaytambo, a quaint Incan town, replete with rivulets running through street canals, the ruins are the main attraction. El Albergue Lodge and Restaurant

Continued on next page ...



provides excellent accommodations and easy access to several side trips.

Touring Salineras brought new meaning to the expression “back to the salt mines.” Amidst a stunning patchwork of salt pools, each a different variation of white and tan, workers filled large bags and carried them perched on their shoulders. Some of the women accomplished this task while carrying small children, tied on their backs in vibrant textiles.

At Moray, we hiked through concentric circles. In so doing, we were actually treading on the site of former crop fields, still delineated by terraces. The varied elevation of the terraces – located in sink-holes, formed naturally by erosion from rainwater – allowed the Inca to determine the ideal planting environment for each seed. Note to the hiking-averse – any of the sights mentioned herein may be viewed from a vista, sans effort.

A full day was allocated to the ruins of Pisac. Although some visit this town solely for the marketplace (which in my estimation, houses the best selection during the journey), the ruins are one of the most impressive sites and merit close examination. Climbing affords astonishing views of snow-capped mountains.

At this point, the renowned trek on the Inca Trail is the option for those seeking a prolonged commune with nature. This path follows the footsteps of the Inca en route to Machu Picchu. Trips range in length from two to five days. The closest I got to this experience was in conversations with participants, proudly displaying their certificates.

### The new seven wonders of the world

Machu Picchu may also be reached via modern transportation – by a direct ascent or an overnight, closer to the peak. Opting for the second involves a night in Aguas Calientes, which may be viewed with disdain as the ultimate tourist trap or alternatively as simply a place to prepare for an amazing day at one of the new seven wonders of the world. There are indeed thermal baths as the town’s name indicates, but since several sources counseled



Above top: Concrete circles in Moray. Above left: Machu Picchu. Above right: Masterful masonry of the Inca. Below left: The salt mines of Salineras.

against their use due to a lack of cleanliness, they were not patronized. If splurging is an option, this is the place to do so since the quality at the low end is sketchy. La Cabana has an extremely limited number of rooms with Jacuzzis, i.e. one, so booking early is key. Dine at The Tree House and order a box lunch for the big day.

Rise early and take the bus up the mountain to the entrance. Word has it that the sunrise is spectacular. Although it poured for most of the day on September 5th (the weather, oblivious to the fact that it wasn’t the rainy season), clouds lifted toward the end of the day and spirits remained intact.

After showing tickets and passports (checked frequently at tourist sites) access to the inner sanctum is granted. Even for those who chose to familiarize themselves with the layout and history in advance – by viewing a documentary on the History Channel and reading Mark Adams’s delectable account in *Turn Right At Machu Picchu* – nothing prepares you for the site laid out in all its splendor. Transpose current day visitors in your mind’s eye to the original occupants: Incan royalty and servants who resided at this retreat for several months at a time when temperatures plummeted in Cusco.

Hire a guide – there will be throngs of them as you descend the bus – to fully understand the significance of the site, constructed around 1450. Guides invariably identify many important pieces, invisible to the untrained eye. The most astounding one was delivered in an explanation of the selection of the site. We were shown a photograph of an adjacent peak. When rotated, a profile appeared,

that of a mountain deity, keeping a benevolent eye on the inhabitants.

### Incan stonework represents an incredible feat of engineering

Originally, stones were fashioned to form magnificent structures, sans mortar. Each structure was assembled with the utmost care and precision. Placement of temples was defined by the path of the sun’s rays during the winter and summer solstices – holidays revered by the Inca.

The sense of peace felt is unimaginable. The spiritual vibrations emanating from the Andes, sensed by the Inca, are still palpable today. It is impossible to conceive of a more fitting location for yoga and meditation. One visitor who had difficulty with balance in her practice in the States, found it here.

It is true that the view of Machu Picchu on its own level is utterly amazing and more than sufficient for most. I, however, became convinced in my research that the view from above was even more spectacular. Brandishing our tickets for Huayna Picchu, an adjacent peak, we embarked on the ascent. Clouds parted as we neared the summit, permitting us to witness the glory of Machu Picchu from above.

Somehow we forced ourselves to leave at the end of the day, obligated by train tickets for Cusco. The only way to part was by vowing to return.

Be proactive. The odds of a wedding invitation to Peru are minimal at best. This is the trip of a lifetime and is not to be missed. ●



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Photos by Jonathan Doster

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# sami glass

HASN'T FORGOTTEN HER ROOTS AT HOTCHKISS

By John Torsiello  
info@mainstreetmag.com

For Sami Glass, Lakeville's Hotchkiss School is never far from her mind, even now that she has moved on to Yale University.

"I refuse to lose contact with my fellow runners from Hotchkiss for I'm a huge advocate for the team's success," said the freshman at Yale, who to even her own surprise, became a key member of the Ivy women's cross-country team this fall. "I am frequently in contact with Sam Pastore, Marco Quaroni, Jack Humphries, James Post, and Rebecca Silva."

## A standout career

Glass enjoyed a standout athletic career at Hotchkiss. She was a two-time Founder's League champion in 2012 and 2013, All-Founder's League from 2009 to 2013, All-New England in 2012 and 2013, All-Northeast Regionals Footlocker, and competed in the Junior Olympic Nationals in Nevada and Alabama. In track and field, she was All-Founder's League and All-New England from 2010 to 2014, and competed in the Junior Olympic Nationals in Kansas. She graduated cum laude.

Her fondest memories of Hotchkiss were going on long runs with the "LSD Crew." She says, "It sounds hard-core but it really just means Long Slow Distance, during which the guys accepted me as one of the pack, and we would sing and go on exploratory runs through the woods that always ended up in us getting lost. My most wonderful memory is standing at the top of the Twin Oaks field, before the storm blew them [the twin oak trees] down, and looking out over the winter landscape. It's truly breathtaking there."

## An up-and-comer at Yale

Glass was somewhat surprised by emerging as one of Yale's top runners. "Going into the season, I was not expecting to be in the position that I was in at season's end. Nevertheless, I truly appreciate how within the team there is complete enthusiasm and support and we direct all our competitive juices toward the races. Honestly, everyone gives their very best and thus we each play a fundamental role in the success of the team."

She finished a strong 14th at the Ivy League Championships held at Princeton University, helping to lead her team to a sixth place finish. Her time for the 6,000-meter course was a sterling 21:16.4. Glass also finished second for her team at

the Pre-National Invitational in Terre Haute, IN, held at the LaVern Gibson Cross-Country Course, the site of the NCAA Northeast Regional Meet as well as the National Championships. The LaVern Gibson Cross-Country course is one of the few courses in the country built specifically for the sport.

Glass posted a time of 21:57.5 for the 6-kilometer course to finish a little over 43 seconds behind Yale's number one runner, Kira Garry. The Bulldogs placed 16th out of 43 teams in the event and Glass was 88th of 293 runners. Earlier this season, Glass was fourth on her team at the Paul Short Collegiate International Women's Gold Race at Lehigh University in Lehigh, PA. She didn't get a chance to run at the NCAA Northeast Regionals because of an injury.

## Why attend Yale?

Glass began running in the seventh grade in order to cross train for soccer. "I had a rough start, and remember how I just about collapsed after my first two-mile race. Nevertheless, I would not have kept pursuing this sport if it had not been for several of the coaches at St. John's in Watertown. They kept pushing me to build up my strength and potential."

Unlike most high school students, Glass didn't have to debate over where she would go to college; she made her mind up early. "I decided to attend Yale when I was in third grade. Ever since then I have been trying to absorb every minute of my time here. My decision was based on establishing a multifaceted identity. I wanted to be able to pursue interests with like-minded people and create powerful connections that would last me my entire life. Entering my junior year at Hotchkiss, I began to strongly consider attending West Point. My decision came down between these two incredible institutions, and at last I based a large portion of my choice on the fact that my sister is a junior here at Yale and I would be able to have her nearby as my closest confidant and advocate."

Glass says adjusting to college life has not been too challenging for her, pointing to her schooling at Hotchkiss as a main reason the transition has been smooth. "I am genuinely grateful to Hotchkiss for preparing me for such an intense learning environment and establishing fundamental skills in time management. Being on the cross-country and track team has helped me form wonderful friendships and speed up the process of adjusting. Although I am still figuring out an efficient routine, all has been going wonderfully."



Above: Hotchkiss School graduate, Sami Glass, racing with the pack during a meet for Yale University this fall. Photo courtesy of Yale University Sports.

## The commitment required of an athlete

She adds, "Running in college is a huge commitment, however. My weekly mileage has shot up, and the hours I spend working out have increased astronomically. But with such a large group of positive girls, even the hardest practices can fly by."

During the season, Glass' training consists of alternating workout days, in which the team spends time on pacing and leg speed, and long run days. "We also lift, which I was fortunately prepared for by my coach at Hotchkiss."

She points to her first cross-country meet at Yale as her most exciting moment to date at the Division I college ranks. "The first meet was held on the Yale Golf Course. Not only had I never raced with such elite women runners, but also I completely surprised myself while racing towards the finish. Due to my increased mileage during training, I had worried that I would lose my kick at the end of the race. Out of the blue I saw a Princeton girl trying to edge ahead of me on the final stretch, and I just bolted passed her to the end. It was truly exhilarating."

Glass does not have to declare a major until the end of her sophomore year. "When I graduate, I hope to move to Paris. I don't know what I will do there, but I know that I will be happy."

She says her goals for her college career are to "remain healthy in order to continuously contribute to the success of the team, all the while maintaining a focused attitude. I never want running to become a job for me. I hope to always derive a sense of accomplishment from each race." ●



# Grow your business with the proper tools!

## Don't suffer from the cobbler's child syndrome!

This is the best time of year to focus on your own business' needs and gear up for the coming year. That may include a multitude of things, but don't forget about the importance of your graphic and visual needs. They may include revisiting your website for updates or a face-lift, new ad and or marketing campaigns for the coming quarter or season, new brochures to give to your customers, or perhaps it is finally time to give your business a complete makeover in the form of an entirely new identity system – there's no change like that which is apparent after all!

When running our own business, we are all guilty of focusing on running the day-to-day functions of our business and keeping our clients and employees happy, but don't forget the importance of keeping your business current with the times, technology, and appearance. Successful informational materials (like brochures, websites, business cards, etc.) help to instill confidence in your customers and clients. Those materials provide

your customers with needed information and it is another service that you provide them with.

But don't feel overwhelmed at the thought of yet another thing that you have to do. I am here to help with all of your design and marketing needs. Have a happy and prosperous 2015!

## And here's a little bit about what I do:

To me, it's all about aiding you and or your business in achieving profitable growth. I am here to serve you, my clients, whether you have design, marketing, branding, photography, web, web hosting, or social media needs.

I will not talk over your head by throwing corporate jargon at you. Instead I work WITH you at a human level to better understand not only your business but your very specific needs. Every business is different. And I approach every business' needs with that in mind – there is no such thing as a cookie-cutter solution. My design, marketing, branding, and web solutions are as individualized as you are.

## Design

To design is to create, execute or construct according to a plan. I design by creating according to your specific needs. There are many design solutions, but by getting to know you and your needs, the solutions become fewer and clearer. My design bias and passion is always to strive to create the "wow" factor.

## Marketing

Marketing is done by a process or technique of promoting, selling, or distributing a product or a service. There is no one marketing solution that works across the board – that is my belief at least. Every client's marketing needs are different, and so the marketing plans that I develop for my clients are all custom-made for them and their business to try to achieve their desired outcome.

To learn more about design and marketing go to my website [www.thorunn designs.com](http://www.thorunn designs.com).

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## Pieces

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Looking for a local one-stop shop kind of a store that carries something for you and your home? Look no further than Pine Plains, NY. Annie Jones opened Piece in June of 2013 and has been evolving and continuously transforming ever since. Annie appreciates beautiful things, hence the reason why she is selective about what she offers. Everything carried in the shop is something she loves and is excited about sharing with her customers. Pieces is filled with lovely jewelry, pillows, rugs and home decor. Pieces has the most beautiful zinc, steel, and wood topped tables anywhere and will even accommodate custom orders. Customers are often looking for a source for unique lighting, and Pieces is happy to say that they have a great array for you to choose from. Annie wanted to provide people with a comfortable place to shop where you will find pieces that are a bit outside of the box, and in many instances, one of a kind. As Annie reflects on her business, she is proud to say creating Pieces has been relaxing, fun, and satisfying “it is about the journey.” Annie also invites you to come in and play the Indian Temple Bells! Open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday 10am-4pm. Don't forget to like Pieces on Facebook, too.



## Campo de' Fiori

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Campo de' Fiori truly is a destination venue for those who seek something out of the ordinary for both their gardens and their homes. The gardens are a delight to visit throughout the year and their exotic shop combines one of a kind antiques with all manner of plants strewn about, garden containers and ornaments of all shapes and sizes as well as a broad array of botanically inspired gifts, distinctive lighting, decorative accessories, and country furniture. Campo de' Fiori designs and manufactures all of their offerings. Terra-cotta is covered with their trademark moss for a timeworn look on planters. Designs include carved stone, forged iron, cast bronze, hand-blown glass, and zinc planters and tables. Each piece is made by the hands of skilled artisans from materials drawn from the earth and to which they are ultimately welcomed back. Owners Robin Norris and Barbara Bockbrader have melded their experience and their talents that reflect Robin's fondness for classical architecture and design (he grew up in both London and Rome) and Barbara's unmistakable love of plants and all things horticultural. They have been nurturing Campo de' Fiori for nearly 25 years. And it shows – seeing is believing. While personal visits to the shop and to the gardens are most welcome, one may shop online or visit their newly enhanced website.



## Noble Horizons

Retirement, rehabilitation, nursing care.  
[www.noblehorizons.org](http://www.noblehorizons.org)

Noble Horizons is a continuum of care retirement village situated on a picturesque 110-acre campus in Salisbury, CT. It's also a vibrant hub where the wider community comes to attend talks by nationally-known speakers, authors and health experts and classes as diverse as dog training, watercolor painting, and social media. With its ongoing series of public programs centering on wellness and healthy aging, Noble is a vital resource. For more than 20 years, the Noble Horizons Auxiliary has presented a Holiday Fair and Festival of Trees that attract several thousand visitors. Fifty one and two-bedroom cottages on winding roads throughout the campus accommodate residents who live independently. A suite or private room in the residential hotel is another independent option. Those who require assistance live in private rooms in intermediate care, skilled nursing, and memory care wings. Noble's recreation staff creates a lively atmosphere, giving residents a wide choice of enjoyable and enriching activities. The eXtend Rehabilitation Center provides highly skilled physical, occupational and speech therapy, and also offers short-term residential rehabilitation for those recovering from surgery or illness.



## VK Larson Communications

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Victoria Larson started her business in November of 2013 unofficially, and officially in January 2014. Her first clients were the states of Baden-Wuerttemberg and Saxony in Germany. VK Larson Communications is a full service communications firm focused on producing excellent content and positioning for its clients – small and medium sized businesses. The company provides the full spectrum of today's communications portfolio: newsletters and press releases, media relations and pitching, business strategy and development, social media, website content and copy, event and campaign management, and graphic design. VK Larson Communications works in travel and tourism which comprises cities and historical sites, art, architecture, design, culinary and hotel clients as well as businesses in the U.S.-European arena. Victoria really enjoys working closely with her clients and being part of the action. She finds it rewarding when getting the right results for the company's clients and seeing their satisfaction. One cannot guarantee results in public relations “but we always work really hard to make things happen and when they do, it is a great feeling not only for the clients but also for us because we know that the clients will be pleased and that we have delivered.”



## INSURING YOUR WORLD

The holidays are here, decorations to hang, lights to put up, candles to get out and lastly, gifts to purchase! Although this is a wonderful time of year, it is not without potential pitfalls. Remember to check all of your lights and extension cords to make sure they are free from faulty wiring for both inside and outside lights, many fires are a result of over loading an extension cord or a poor light receptacle on a Christmas tree or outside shrub. Check out your candle sticks and Menorahs for loose parts and tight fitting candles before lighting and test your fire extinguishers to ensure good operation in case of an accident. Remember when buying that nice piece of jewelry or expensive watch for a loved one that you contact your homeowners carrier to make sure it is listed on your fine arts or jewelry floater, this also goes for an expensive gun or piece of artwork, these items may not be covered for the full amount of their purchase price. So take a moment to make a phone call to your agent and check for safety in your home so we can all have a very Happy Holiday!!!

Kirk Kneller  
Phone 518.329.3131  
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Brad Peck, Inc.

## How to identify and treat frostbite in dogs

Some breeds of dogs such as Bernese Mountain Dogs, Huskies, and Malamutes are almost made for winter, whereas most others are definitely not. Frostbite occurs when tissue is damaged due to exposure to temperatures of 32° F and below. The tissue damage can be superficial or major depending on the length of time that your dog is exposed; wet dogs, dogs with health conditions such as diabetes, and dogs that are exposed to sub-zero wind chills are especially susceptible.

**Identifying frostbite:** The condition is described by the Britannica Concise Encyclopedia as, "Cell damage, tissue dehydration, and oxygen depletion caused by freezing and thawing can lead to blood-cell disruption, clotting in capillaries, and gangrene." First degree frostbite is easy to miss, but look for pale skin at the extremities of your dog such as the ears, lips, tail, face, feet, and scrotum. The affected area may also be hard or cold to the touch. When the dog warms its skin will look red, swell, and will become painful before turning scaly. If your dog's circulation has been badly affected, the tips of its extremities may even rub off; careful handling is essential. Second degree frostbite will also see your dog developing skin blisters. Third degree frostbite, the most serious, can be identified through your dog's skin turning dark or black over a period of several days. Where the flesh is badly injured, there is usually a clear difference/line between damaged and healthy tissue.

**Treating frostbite:** Get your dog inside and gently warm the suspected frostbitten areas with warm, never hot, water. Do not rub or massage the affected areas as this could release toxins into your dog's bloodstream. Once your dog is warmer, gently dry it, taking care not to rub the affected parts; it is also important that you stop your dog from licking or scratching the frostbitten areas. It is advisable to take your dog to a vet as soon as you can. However, do not be tempted to turn up your vehicle's heating too high on the journey; warm or slightly cool is best.

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## What to do when the power goes out...

- Pull the plug on motor-driven appliances (such as refrigerators) and electronic gear (such as computers and televisions) to prevent damaging electrical overload when power is restored.
- Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible.
- Use extreme caution when using alternative heating or cooking sources. Never use camp stoves, charcoal-burning grills or propane/kerosene heaters indoors. Don't use a gas stove or oven to heat the house. They all pose the risk of fire and carbon monoxide poisoning. The symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning include headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, chest pain, and confusion.
- If you use a portable generator, plug appliances into the generator. Connecting the generator directly to your home's electrical system can send power up the line and kill a utility repairman working on the power lines. Generators produce deadly carbon monoxide, so be careful when placing it. Never refuel the generator while it is running.

Many people living in a rural community like ours opt to install an emergency standby generator that automatically powers on the household electricity within minutes of a power failure (whether you are home or not) and can provide emergency power for days. This not only provides comfort and convenience, but it can be essential in the winter for providing heat for homes with elderly residents, children, guests, pets, and even ensuring your plumbing does not freeze during extended outages!



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## what is graphic design?

Do you know what graphic design is? Google defines it as: "the art or skill of combining text and pictures in advertisements, magazines, or books." And some think of it as a form of commercialized art. When I was in college studying graphic design, we were part of the Art School and so we had numerous classes with other Art majors in other Art disciplines. Those kids would often say that graphic design was commercialized art, or not art at all, and that we didn't belong in the Art School because of how we were hired to do our work. As you can imagine, this lead to some interesting conversations. I defined myself as a graphic designer, which is an artist in its own way, but I did and do not call what I do "fine art" - we'll leave that categorization to artists such as painters. But graphic designers are indeed hired to create an end product that serves a very specific purpose, i.e. a brochure, a website, a book, or a logo. Whereas our painter friends would often get commissions to paint a specific subject matter for a painting. In that respect, we aren't so very different, are we?

Graphic design is indeed an art and a skill where we use our knowledge, experience, and artistic touch and eye to combine text, pictures, or graphics in such finished products as ads, books, magazines, websites, and so on. Our finished products most often serve a very specific purpose for our clients, such as helping to identify them (with an identity and a logo), provide information about them with words and pictures (with brochures or websites), to direct people (with signage), or to tell a story (in books or ads), and our end products can most often be mass produced (through printing). Can anyone with a computer and the right software do what we do? Yes, technically they can. But they can't do it as well because a graphic designer is the artist and he/she is best equipped to do the best job for you, just like a doctor is the best person to treat you if you're sick, or a mechanic is the best person to fix your car.

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# WHAT'S YOUR SIGN?

## ARIES (March 21-April 19)

You've had to really dive into things. Artists always suffer for their work, even when it's like trying to squeeze blood from a carrot.

## TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

Be cautious about all experiments that may deplete your enthusiasm. Remember not all is gold that glows.

## GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

Fashion has an impact on both your appearance and behavior. Some will heed your wisdom while others will barely listen to your answer.

## CANCER (June 21-July 22)

Don't let others' karma and glow misdirect your vision. Being helpful is important but don't forget that you are also helpful.

## LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

Perfectionism causes stress. Always set the bar high and then go for it! You know the story behind the story.

## VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

Don't let things get you off balance. Listen to the advice of a good friend. We each create our own fortune.

## LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

You let your anger get the best of you. There's a lot of friction in your life, and you need more and more comfort.

## SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

Go with your gut and be organized with your career and personal life. Let others prove themselves to you.

## SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

Change will be good for you. Maybe the good that change will bring will last for a long time.

## CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

You may have to take on a difficult person or a difficult project. Stand your ground, make your point, but listen to what the other has to say.

## AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

When there's chaos around you, that's the worst time to fall. If you keep that in mind, everything will work out.

## PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

Your work requires more skill and confidence than you think you have. Don't get carried away. You got this.





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