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MAGAZINE





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After



Before



After



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VERY EXCITING NEWS

I have what I consider pretty exciting news to report to you. I could be biased of course, but I think this will be such a great thing for all of our readers, as well as our collaborators, advertisers, and for the magazine.

Without further ado, in the month of August we will be launching our new website. We will be more than quintupling the size of it – that's right, that's more than 5x the size that it has been. Up until now our website has basically just been an information site about the magazine: advertising rates, distribution area and locations, about our writers and staff, past issues, featured articles, and the like. And because we are a monthly print publication, it is hard for us to cover a lot of events and current things.

Well, that is all changing now – it'll all be going on our website!

We will be completely restructuring our website and adding a ton of new pages – over 50 of them. The additions will be new content for our readers to enjoy, and it will be just like our printed magazine: stories and features about things that matter to all of us in this Tri-state area. We will always focus on the people, places, things, history, businesses, and curiosities in our area. And now through our website, we can do more of it.

We will be partnering with a lot of local people, businesses, professionals and / or experts in their field who will be sharing their expertise through all of our new content. We will also be able to share with you things that we weren't able to include in our printed magazine, like parts of our interviews that we didn't have room for, we'll be creating podcasts, and we'll also have a very active events calendar – so if you're looking for something to do in the area, then you must look at our website.

To get more specific, here are a few of the pages that we'll be adding: top 10 lists, our favorite things, reviews, real estate, business, history, animal tips, the Otis feed, farm feature, the great outdoors, horoscopes, home and garden, arts and literature, health and wellness – and much more.

We are currently welcoming advertising sponsors on our website. All ads can be changed twice a month, and they'll link back to the advertiser's website. But we project that our website's traffic will help our advertising sponsors and our collaborators get the word out about their products and services, too. We are all in this together, after all. We all live and coexist in this amazing area, and we are so excited to be able to share even more about the area where we live, work, and are raising our families!

– *Thorunn Kristjansdottir*



AUGUST 2019

The frog prince at Wethersfield Estate in Dutchess County, NY.

Cover photo by
Lazlo Gyorsok

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Oskar Espina-Ruiz, Music Mountain Festival Fipple flute to formidable musician

By CB Wismar
arts@mainstreetmag.com

Oskar Espina-Ruiz, artistic director of the Music Mountain Summer Festival is such a complete gentleman that when he explains that his illustrious career began at six years old, playing the flute and drum in the religious processions in his Bilbao, Spain, home, he doesn't overwhelm his audience with the name of the flute ... the txistu.

Espina-Ruiz is proudly of Basque heritage, and the "fipple flute," native to the portion of Spain and France that are Basque territory, is a traditional three-holed, vertical flute that can be played with one hand while using the other to strike a small drum. Clearly, the maestro had not only musical ability but great dexterity at a young age.

"I remember studying in clandestine schools," he recalls. The days of the Basque separatist movement made it possible to keep traditions alive only in secret." His musical abilities could not remain unnoticed, however, and he quickly gained a wider and wider audience.

At 16 years old, a star is born

Studying at a conservatory in Bilbao, Spain, Oskar moved from txistu to clarinet ... and the road forward rose to meet him. By the time he was 16 years old, he was playing in the Bilbao Symphony Orchestra – its youngest member.

Moving to New York and studying with some of the legendary clarinetists, he has become a world renowned performer, arranger, and conductor and is on the permanent artistic faculty of the University of North Carolina School of the Arts during the academic year and artistic force behind what *The New Yorker* has called "the summer shrine of the string quartet."

Music festivals are not unfamiliar territory to Espina-Ruiz, who created the festival in Guernica, Spain, and served as its artistic director for five years. He holds the same position at the Treetops Chamber Music Society in Fairfield County, CT.

The world has been his concert hall, with celebrated performances across Europe, South America, and Asia. His mastery of the clarinet has been hailed as "highly expressive," a compliment that extends throughout his musical career and his passion to bring music to the widest

possible audience. Before accepting his current position in North Carolina, Espina-Ruiz was on the faculty of the Puerto Rico Conservatory of Music in San Juan, PR.

Music Mountain at the ripe, young age of 90

In 2019, Music Mountain celebrates 90 years of bringing the finest string quartets to perform in the sylvan landscape of Northwestern Connecticut. First organized by Jacques Gordon, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Concert Master as the Great Depression began to cripple the American economy, the Music Mountain Festival has returned, year after year, to offer an ever expanding selection of classical concerts, supplemented by "Twilight Series" concerts on Saturday evenings that bring jazz and cabaret performances to a growing audience.

"Music is music," muses Espina-Ruiz who revels in the fact that the Twilight series introduces a new



Above, top to bottom: Cassatt string quartet with art work by Vincent Inconiglios. Oskar Espina-Ruiz. Opposite page, top to bottom: Gordon Hall at Music Mountain. Jacques Gordon 1899-1948. Photos courtesy of Music Mountain.

audience and leads to a supportive, appreciative audience for the Sunday afternoon classical offerings. Additional departures from the traditional – notably the “Painting Music” experience that matches the brilliant work of students from the Music Mountain Academy with the celebrated local artists – encourages young and old to spend a day painting to wonderful musical presentations.

Musician as teacher

With the passion of a dedicated teacher and mentor, Oskar Espina-Ruiz has elevated the Music Mountain educational experience to ever growing heights. “We will touch over 100 young artists this summer, alone,” reflects Espina-Ruiz, “with many hundreds more being exposed to chamber music through a program we’ve developed with the Region 1 schools.” Chamber music in the age of Hip-Hop? “It’s amazing how they respond to the music. We’ve created an incentive program for students to bring their families to Music Mountain to experience a live concert in Gordon Hall. We’re building the audience of the future.”

The performance space, Gordon Hall, is an acoustical marvel, having been carefully designed by founder Jacques Gordon and executed by Sears, Roebuck & Company. Their pre-fabricated housing division also

built the four houses set back in the woods on campus – one house for each member of a string quartet. Now fully air conditioned, the concert hall was ingeniously designed to have acoustics that mimic the resonant body of a violin.

Looking forward to the culmination of this artistic season, those walls will reverberate with the sounds of some of the world’s most celebrated string quartets. For those with only a passing knowledge of classical performance, the names underscore the importance of the place, the Festival and the dedication of the artistic director who has curated a stellar summer season. Emerson, St. Petersburg, Cassatt, Shanghai, Daedalus, and the final concert of the season, the Julliard String Quartet – all world renowned groups. “The Shanghai Quartet will be playing at the Mountain for their 30th consecutive year. That’s quite a record of brilliant performances.”

The repertoires announced include some of the most legendary pieces created by the Masters – Mo-

zart, Beethoven, Haydn, Brahms, Mendelssohn, Shostakovich. Added artistic guests will turn quartets into quintets and pieces offered that span the centuries – from Bach’s 1742 Art of the Fugue to the 2010 composition by Gabriela Lena Frank entitled *Milagros* (Miracles).

Not to be overshadowed, the Twilight Concert Series continues to offer lively Saturday afternoon performances that attract a slightly different, but just as dedicated audience. Local master performer Michael Berkeley performs show tunes, the Wolverine Jazz Band plays ragtime, Barbara Fasano & Eric Comstock bring New York cabaret to the Litchfield Hills and The Galvanized Jazz Band brings New Orleans to Falls Village.

Espina-Ruiz, himself, appeared with the American String Quartet in July, no small accomplishment with the travel schedule that he has managed. “I’ve been recording music by the Basque masters in Spain,” he says with the sweet mixture of accomplishment and weariness. “Working with pianist Victoria Schwartzman, we’re recording the often under-appreciated works of Arriaga, Isasi, and Donostia. We’re keeping the Basque ‘brand’ alive.”

Always the gentleman

Between teaching, touring, recording, directing and doing painstaking research on the music he loves, Oskar Espina-Ruiz has a very full creative life. It is important to note, when meeting him on the grounds of his beloved Music Mountain campus, that he is generous and

genuine – an approachable artist who seems to radiate his own happiness when he encounters others who find the music so intoxicating. “You must come see us ... come experience the incredible beauty of chamber music in this perfect setting,” he offers as sincere invitation. The days of playing the txistu and drum in the street processions of Bilbao may be behind him, but the passion for music has simply grown stronger year on year, season on season.

Oskar Espina-Ruiz’s invitation? “I look forward to meeting you at the Mountain!” ●

Explore the varied program schedule for Music Mountain Festival at www.music-mountain.org, which also offers a biographical snapshot of Oskar Espina-Ruiz. Tickets for both Sunday afternoon Chamber Music Concerts and Saturday evening Twilight Concerts can also be obtained by calling (860) 824-7126.

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





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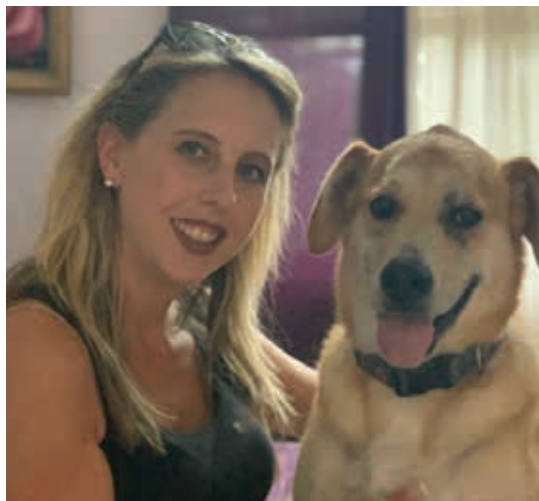




If This Home Could Talk! Originally built in the Revolutionary War era, this was the Tenant House for the Old Dutch Inn at one time. The lower level of the main house has a separate entrance that could be perfect for commercial use. Zoned HM-C. Then there are two barns. The possibilities abound. The 3 plus acres reaches back to a second access on Pill Hill. The seller has put together a small history of this area. Great exposure on Route 23 by the intersection with 22, if you're looking for it. A park-like setting with mountain views in the back yard, if you're looking for something more laid back. This is a property to get excited about! Listing Price: \$410,000

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friendly faces: meet our neighbors, visitors and friends



Nicole Rao-DiPilato works for Ruge's Automotive at the Chevrolet branch in Millbrook, NY. "I have been here for four years in the accounting department. I love working for a family-owned and operated company." Nicole was born and raised in Dutchess County, has been in Verbank, NY, since 1996. She loves the small town life and says it's a wonderful place to raise her three children. "My dog's name is Duke; I adopted him five years ago from Hudson Valley Animal Rescue, where he was rescued from South Carolina. Duke is a lab hound mix. Our favorite thing to do together is sit on the porch and enjoy the beautiful weather." When Nicole isn't working at Ruge's or hanging with Duke, she enjoys spending time with her family and friends, traveling to Myrtle Beach, and shopping at local antique stores.



Our pets will follow us to the ends of the earth, especially when we give them the second chance at love and companionship that every shelter animal deserves. **Michael Gregory** and his dog Princess have returned up the East Coast in pursuit of love and a higher education, with the latter sticking by his side the whole way. Princess is a five-year-old Chow, Labrador, Golden Retriever mix rescue that Michael adopted at the Humane Society while living in Charleston, SC, around four years ago. He immediately fell in love with her immeasurable amount of affection and high energy. "We love going to the park to play ball, going on hikes to see waterfalls, and training for 5ks together." Today, Mike and his fiancée Bridgette live in Schenectady, NY, with Princess while he pursues his Bachelor's degree in Physical Education.



There is perhaps no better example of the unbreakable bond between owner and pet, and how the animals we love provide us with comfort and support like no other, than that of **Emily Guilzon** and her dog Chance. Chance is a seven-year-old Black Lab and during those seven years, Emily and Chance have experienced life's ups and downs together. "He's the best part of life, he knows when I'm sad and cuddles me and licks my tears away, sometimes his head on my chest is the only thing that comforts me." Emily is a waitress at Stella's in Athens, NY, and her free time with Chance is spent being active and exploring the area, "I love taking him to swimming holes, hiking the mountains and trails, or just going with him on a long walk."



Four horses, two goats, 21 chickens, two dogs, and two cats live at the Jenks' small family farm in Millerton, NY. "Don't ask me who my favorite is because I love them all," says **Molly Jenks**, director of surgical services at Sharon Hospital. However, she is a bit partial to her dog Ace, a 14-year-old Labrador Retriever mix rescue. "He is so loyal and just wants to please and be loved." Ace has even spent time as a therapy dog in the hospital, where Molly has worked for 22 years. Molly is in charge of all of the patients undergoing surgeries and says the "dedication and passion my co-workers have for patients inspires me every day." Outside of work, Molly truly enjoys her community, including running the 4-H shooting sports and horse clubs. "The beauty of this area is an amazing reminder of the beauty God has created for us to appreciate," she says.



Craig Diehl is a quality assurance lead working for a small software company in Albany, NY. Having worked in the IT (information technology) field for over 28 years, Craig's position consists of looking for defects in software code and making sure they align with certain requirements. "I love making the software product better and more user-friendly. Now that I am a lead, I also like being able to guide others." Craig grew up in Columbia County, and after moving to different states for jobs in the IT field, he now lives in Greene County. When Craig isn't busy working, he loves being outdoors with his miniature long-haired Dachshund, Maggie Mae, who will soon be turning ten. Together they enjoy going for long walks, taking in the perks of the area along the way. "I moved back here because I love the four seasons, the mountains, and the green trees. The skies are so blue here."



Samantha Barrett is the owner/licensed esthetician of Samantha's Serenity Spa just on the outskirts of Hudson, NY. She was born and raised in the area and loves being part of a town that just keeps growing. "I absolutely love what I do for a living and feel so blessed to have my career and passion come together!" Outside of work Samantha loves to golf, hike, and hang out with friends and family. "We got Boomer on Christmas Eve 2018 and he is the love of our lives. He is an eight-month-old Cavapoo (King cavalier spaniel and toy poodle mix). We take him everywhere with us from hiking at Olana State Park, to lunch dates at breweries, and trips to the beach. Boomer has the best temperament and is so loving."



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Luxury on the Green

Richard Lambertson
& John Truex in
Sharon, CT

By Christine Bates
christine@mainstreetmag.com

Curious about the newcomers to Sharon on the Green? So was Main Street Magazine when the distinctive name, Lambertson Truex, appeared on the window at the stop sign across from JP Gifford. What was this high-end brand from the turn of the last century doing in Sharon, CT? I sat down with the two designers and business partners on a Friday morning and talked about the iconic leather accessories brand they built – and are now relaunching.

You started your business in New York in 1998 and it was an immediate success. How did that happen?

JT: We were both working as fashion executives. I began in the accessories business with Carlos Falchi and was creating the ck Calvin Klein leather product line when we started our business together in 1998.

RL: In 1990 I moved to Italy to assist in the rebranding of Gucci, and to build their design team. After several years I returned to Bergdorf Goodman to be SVP, creative director of the store. It was a very big job to leave to start up a new company. Neither Bergdorf Goodman nor ck Calvin Klein would accept our resignations and we each continued to work full-time, three days a week, while working on designs and plans for our own brand. We had our wholesale launch in April 1998.

Our first collection arrived in the stores the Fall of 1998. We spent much of that summer working with manufacturers – we already had relationships with many of them. When our samples were ready, we presented them to the buyers in the amazing office of our architect friends, Tsao & McKown, located in Soho. Bergdorf Goodman came and negotiated an exclusive New York deal for their store and gave us our own boutique on the main floor. Neiman Marcus put us in their stores. We started with 13 key accounts in the USA, Europe, and Hong Kong.

JT: We just hit the market at the right time. We realized there was a place for a luxury product that was NOT covered with logos, that was sleek and clean. It was never about the logo, but how it made you feel. We also knew lots of key buyers on the account side. In 2000 we won the CFDA (Council of Fashion Designers of America) Award for the Accessories Designer of the year, which also helped support our brand. The same year we won the ACE Award from the Accessories Council. *The Financial Times* called us the Hermes of America.

How did you decide on the name?

RL: We were thinking of something conceptual and foreign sounding, but when we met with our lawyer to draw up the corporate documents, he suggested Lambertson Truex. We ran the idea by friends at Bergdorf and they thought it sounded European and exotic.

Did you have a business plan when you started?

RL: No, we had eight storyboards and no numbers. We still don't. We're just not those kind of designers. The plans followed later!



Above: Richard Lambertson (left) and John Truex (right) the creators of Lambertson Truex in their Sharon design studio. Photo: Christine Bates. Below, left: This leopard print satchel bag retails for \$1,900. Photo: Lambertson Truex.

What was the most difficult part of starting your business?

RL: We were self-funded, no investors, no banks. It was difficult to pay the \$33,000 to produce a line of samples to get things going. Then when we had our first orders and we had to pay up front for them since we were new. Some of our stores were very supportive of innovation and wanted us to succeed. They paid a portion of their order up front to help us out. We had to be selective about customers because we just didn't have enough working capital. We turned down Saks for four years before finally accepting their order.

How do you describe your relationship with your customers?

RL: Every season, every spring and every fall, we did in store trunk shows. We would spend an entire day on the floor explaining the line to employees, talking to customers, and going out to lunch and dinner with customers. We heard their voices and developed a loyal following – a face behind the brand. In many places we would have private appointments with the store's

customers and one client might place a single order for \$100,000. We also have many male customers – both for themselves and for their wives. They have always felt comfortable with our brand – they couldn't make a mistake selecting a gift for someone important to him.

You sold your business in 2006. What happened?

RL: The majority of our business was acquired by Samsonite, which had a retail vision for our brand in 2006. They financed the opening of retail stores in LA, Las Vegas, and NYC, which we never could have done alone. We wanted to build our brand and they provided the working capital and financial resources we did not have. Then the recession of 2008 began, and Samsonite sold Lambertson Truex to Tiffany & Company in 2009.

JT: We were really lucky and worked with a great team at Tiffany. Our entire design and product development teams went with us. Over

Continued on next page ...



almost five years we built a \$40 million luxury leather goods product line for them. When we decided it was time to leave, we asked if we could have our name back. They thought about it and agreed in 2014.

RL: It was time for a change, and we set up our own independent design studio in Chelsea working with fashion clients. Then Shinola came along. This was the brainchild of Tom Kartsotis, the founder of Fossil. The vision was to create a luxury American brand in Detroit. For four and a half years we were back and forth between Detroit, New York, and Sharon. Exhausting. Together we created a full leather line from bags to wallets to belts for men and women. The look was very sporty and casual. Our goal was to apply the vocabulary of the brand, whether Tiffany or Shinola, and translate it into superb leather goods.

Now you're relaunching your own brand here in Sharon, CT

JT: Right after completing our work at Shinola we decided to relaunch Lambertson Truex. We had a pop-up boutique at Privet Lives in New Preston, CT, in the Fall of 2018 and Spring of 2019, selling pieces from inventory as well as creating one-of-a-kind bags for clients. The reception was very positive. We're starting with

baby steps by showcasing our line at Privet House/Privet Lives and distributing selectively at specialty stores. Our internet site went live just before Christmas last year. Customers can buy online at retail prices.

Where are you making your bags?

RL: Our bags made from exotic skins like python and crocodile are manufactured in Cape Town, South Africa, and most everything else comes from various manufacturers across the United States from Florida to New York. When we have a big order for a corporate customer (or our men's collection) we work in China. Our designs are manufactured in the best facilities around the world.

Do you both live in Sharon? Do you like being on the Green?

JT: I live in Ellsworth. We've both been in Sharon since 2004.

RL: And I have a house on Calkinstown Road that I purchased in 2014.

JT: It's worth every penny to not have to work at his house or my house and move all of our files around. We're part of this community and this location in the center of it allows us to be creative. Sometimes people walk in because they think we're an art gallery. It's easy doing business here. We take the orders, do the fulfillment, and ship out from right here.

How do you determine price points? How much do some of these bags cost?

JT: The cost of each product is dependent on the materials — leather, hardware, etc., and the labor involved. We have a wide range of retail prices which you can see on our website. We also make custom bags for people and the



Above: Color swatches and a sketch of a bag. Below, left: This season's inspiration board on display in the design studio of Lambertson Truex. Photos: Lambertson Truex.

price is not unattainable. You can tell a high-quality bag by the leather, the hardware, the stitching, the interior detailing, and the design.

What's new in the business relaunch?

RL: We are growing a business designing exclusive high-end corporate gifts for select customers. Of course, selling directly to our consumer on the internet is not something that was very possible in 1998. Today, we have Instagram and Facebook accounts and are learning more every day about this different way of doing business.

This relaunch twenty years later is to a whole new generation. Some of our clients were not even born when we started the line.

How do you divide up the responsibilities?

RL: Actually, we don't. We are both involved in everything and neither one of us uses a computer design program. My drawings are very abstract, and John usually needs to resketch my ideas! John does all of the technical work because the factories need

every single detail of each design to be defined and measured.

What is luxury?

RL: Luxury is a word that is way over-used. Maurizio Gucci's father once said, "Quality is remembered long after price is forgotten." You probably have no idea of how much you paid for that LT handbag you brought with you, but you've kept it in perfect condition for all these years. (Note: the author brought her own Lambertson Truex bag to show to Richard and John).

Where do you want Lambertson Truex to be in five years?

RL: I hope we have cracked the internet and made it work for us, that our corporate gift relationships are strong and growing, and that we have a loyal, private client base. ●

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Strawberry rhubarb

GALETTE WITH CREAM CHEESE CRUST

By Jessie Sheehan
info@mainstreetmag.com

You might think of a galette as the lazy-baker's pie, and you might not be wrong. For those of us who love the combination of buttery pastry and lightly sweetened fruit, but don't totally love the time spent rolling out a perfectly round circle of dough, that is the perfect 1/8-inch thickness; and then transferring said circle (without ripping it, mind you) to a pie plate; and then delicately and decoratively crimping its edges; and then praying that said perfectly crimped edges do not slump and collapse once baked, well, let me just say the galette is for us.

The advantages of a galette

Gallettes leave lots of room for error, or, as I like to think of it, lots of room for creative license. The circle you roll out when making a galette does not need to be perfectly round, nor an even 1/8 of an inch thick. When rolling out a crust for a pie, on the other hand, it must be done evenly, as an extra thick pie bottom might bake more slowly than slightly thinner sides. Moreover, the filling in a pie can take quite a while to really set, and by the time it does so, the crust can be quite dark – maybe even too dark.

But with a galette, there is no pie plate to contain all of its magnificence: it bakes evenly due to the sheet pan it lies on. Moreover, the filling is spread in a thin layer across the dough, allowing it to set much more quickly than the traditional pie. Thus galettes are not only less finicky to assemble than pie, they are also much faster to bake.

Finally, there is no careful crimping with a galette: rustic is the name of the game here, so as you make your folds around the edge of the dough, sealing in the filling, do not worry if

one fold looks completely different than the next – that is to be expected and applauded.

This particular galette

As for this galette, well, honestly, it has a lot going for it. First, it is made with a cream cheese crust – cream cheese is substituted for some of the butter – and this means it is not only tender, but much easier to roll out than a dough made with only butter (you're welcome). Second, strawberry and rhubarb is just simply one of the best pie filling combos there is, and with a sprinkling of black pepper, for a tiny kick, and a few bits of butter for richness, this particular one, coupled with the cream cheese in the crust, truly can't be beat.

Finally, when serving this galette I am partial to scooping my ice cream directly on to the center of the galette, as in the photograph, and serving it to my guests already topped, as it were, as to me there is something super show-stop-y and fun about this presentation. But if this is not your cup of tea (and it is not my husband's, FYI) then by all means scoop individual servings onto each person's plate. I won't hold it against you.

For the crust:

1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
2 tsp granulated sugar
1/4 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp salt
4 oz cream cheese, chilled, cubed
1/2 cup unsalted butter, chilled, cubed
2 tsp apple cider vinegar, chilled
1 tsp ice water

For the filling:

3/4 – 1 cup granulated sugar, depending on the sweetness of the berries



2 tbsp arrowroot powder, or cornstarch
1/4 tsp salt
3-4 grinds black pepper
3 cups chopped strawberries
2 cups chopped rhubarb
2 tbsp lemon juice
2 tbsp strawberry jam
1-2 tablespoons softened butter

For the egg wash:

1 large egg
1/2 tsp salt

Turbinado sugar for sprinkling

What you want to do is...

For the crust, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt in the bowl of a food processor fitted with the metal blade and process briefly to combine. Add the cream cheese and butter, and pulse until the mixture resembles coarse meal.

Remove the mixture from, the processor and place in a large mixing bowl. Add the vinegar and ice water and then mix with a wooden spoon. Once a bit of dough can be pinched together between two fingers and hold its shape, bring the dough together into a disk, kneading it a bit if necessary. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least one hour or up to three days.

Remove the disk from the refrigerator, place a large sheet of parchment paper on a work surface, and roll the

dough into a 12 to 14-inch circle. Lift the parchment and place it on a cookie sheet and transfer to the refrigerator while you make the filling.

To make the filling, combine the sugar, arrowroot powder and salt in a large bowl and whisk to combine. Add the fruit and then lemon juice and stir to coat.

Spread the jam over the chilled dough, leaving a 2-inch border. Place the filling in the center of the dough and spread it out over the jam. Fold up the border of the dough over the edge of the filling and crimp the dough together as you move around the galette, sealing the filling in, as you go. Place small bits of butter over the filling.

To make the egg wash, whisk together the egg and salt and brush over the edges of the dough. Sprinkle the edges with Turbinado sugar.

Freeze the galette for one hour. Preheat the oven to 425°F.

Bake the galette for 50-55 minutes until the filling bubbles in the center and the edges of the crust are nicely browned. Let rest about an hour so the filling sets up, or serve warm and a bit runny. Vanilla ice cream – atop the galette or next to it – is an awfully nice accompaniment. •

Jessie is a baker and cookbook author; you can learn more about her through her website jessiesheehanbakes.com.

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Real estate in the Town of Sharon, Connecticut

Unchanging Sharon, the long view

By Christine Bates
christine@mainstreetmag.com

Main Street published our first and only to date article about the Sharon, CT, real estate market exactly six years ago in 2013 just as home prices everywhere were making an unsteady recovery. We look way back to 2003 to see what had happened and where we are now. (You can check for yourself by going online to the August 2013 issue at www.mainstreetmag.com and select “past issues”).

Sharon’s historic Green runs through the center of town surrounded by historic homes, Robin Hood Radio, churches, a legal office, the town hall, and doctor’s offices. The Green has been the center of Sharon since it was incorporated in 1739. What’s new is Standard Space, a contemporary art gallery, Lambertson Truex’s studio (see article on their activities on page 11 in this issue), and just off the Green, JP Gifford’s for morning coffee and The Edward for an evening glass of wine or a craft beer.

Outside of the center of Sharon, Sharon Hospital remains open,

although under new management, and Paley’s Market thrives in the summer.

Retail activity – grocery shopping, the pharmacy and the wine store – remains confined to the shopping area just north of the center.

Sought-after, but quiet

Sharon has the comfortable, stability of a long sought-after place. “It’s a town where everyone knows one another but is ‘consistently quiet,’” observed realtor Chris Garrity of Bain Real Estate six years ago. Nothing has changed.

Fred and Alexandar Peters bought their house on Sharon Mountain Road in 2004 and echo that sentiment. “We owned a house in Northern Westchester for many years. As time went by, the area became less a country suburb and more a suburb; we needed to find some place wilder, some place which was really the country. Lower taxes across the state line were also appealing when we found our



Above: This house on the Green listed at \$649,000 by Klemm Real Estate represents the midpoint in terms of price of all homes currently for sale in Sharon. Photo by Christine Bates. Below: Chart 1.

1790s house in Sharon, at the top of Sharon Mountain. Inside, it has wonderful detailing and the widest imaginable pine and chestnut board floors. Outside, it has a completely dark sky, old trees, a beaver pond, and abundant birds. The extraordinary conviviality of the town and

our neighbors made us feel quickly like part of the community and we find ourselves spending more and more time in Sharon. It’s a magical place.”

Statistically how does Sharon compare?

Demographically, Sharon is richer and older than its neighboring towns. Sharon has the highest household income – over \$80,000, the oldest population with a median age of 60, and the highest owner occupancy of any of its neighbors – Salisbury, Kent, Cornwall, and Canaan according to recent state research (see Chart 1).

Given those statistics it’s not surprising that Sharon has slightly more registered Republicans and fewer Democrats than surrounding towns.

Sharon is projected to continue to experience negative population growth over the next few years similar to most towns in the northwest

Continued on next page ...

CHART 1: SHARON AND NEIGHBORING CT TOWNS

	Sharon	Salisbury	Kent	Cornwall	Canaan	State
Actual Mil rate 2016 ¹	13.7	10.70	17.86	15.13	23.5	
Owner occupied dwellings ¹	83.80%	68.80%	69.40%	80.80%	78.20%	66.50%
Poverty rate 2012-2016 ¹	9.70%	10.40%	7.90%	5.30%	5.30%	10.40%
Projected 2020 population/growth ¹	2,395/-3.5%	3,368/-2.2%	2,843/-3%	1,266/-1.4%	1,333/2.9%	0.10%
Median age ¹	60	55	54	55	51	41
Eduction - BA or more ¹	45%	58%	46%	53%	40%	38%
Median household income 2012-2016 ¹	\$82,714	\$74,853	\$61,875	\$74,107	\$72,174	\$71,755

¹ CERC 2018 Town Profiles produced by the CT Data Collaborative generated in January 2019.

12 month median price as of June 2019 ²	\$330,000	\$550,000	\$379,000	\$325,000	\$230,000	
12 month total \$ sales volume ²	\$21.6 Million	\$33.3 Million	\$20.6 Million	\$4.7 Million	\$4.7 Million	

² Data from Connecticut MLS June 2019 Rolling 12 Months

Registered Republicans 2018 ³	26.50%	18.80%	22.00%	18.20%	22.20%	
Registered Democrats 2018 ³	39.60%	46.20%	42.70%	47.00%	41.10%	

³ Based on reports provided to Connecticut Secretary of State by the Registrars of Voters as of Nov. 5, 2018



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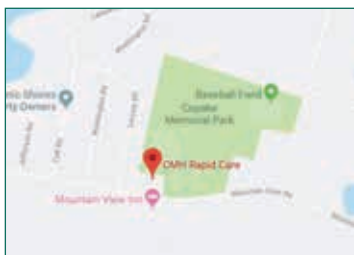


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corner of Connecticut. It also enjoys relatively low property taxes, but not as low as neighboring Salisbury.

Sharon's June twelve month rolling median housing price of \$330,000 is about the same as Cornwall, but much lower than the \$550,000 median sold price in Salisbury. In terms of dollar volume of single-family residences sold in Sharon, it is similar to Kent, far above that of Cornwall and Canaan, but only 60% as large as Salisbury. Some of the difference is attributable to the population of each town and Salisbury's higher home prices driven by lake front property. With the exception of Canaan, sales volumes across the region have decreased 20% to 30% in the last 12 months.

Surprising long view

The recovery and recent performance in the Sharon real estate market, and others in our area, is surprising. Looking back 16 years to 2003 at total market sales of single-family residences in Sharon, the dollar volume of all closed houses spiked in 2006, and 2007 (see Chart 2 below).

The market retreated from that activity level until 2015 when it rose to sales volumes well above the "bubble" years – almost \$50 million in annual sales, only to plummet in 2016 and recover in 2017 and

2018, although still below 2006, 2007, and 2015.

Volumes in the luxury segment of \$850,000 and above, which reached a low in 2013 to 2014, have not reached the level of 2006 and 2007, and are far below the activity in 2015. Maybe 2015 was a mini bubble?

Median Sharon prices have declined

Median sales prices show a slightly different picture from the overall market activity. (Median is the mid point between the highest and lowest sale, which in markets like Sharon will be lower than the average price, see Chart 3). While sales volumes were low in 2010, the median price rose to over \$600,000 – maybe only wealthy people were buying?

Median prices rose again in 2014 and 2015, but dropped dramatically along with volumes in 2016. In the last three years both volumes and median prices have risen BUT the median sale price is still below 2005, 2009, 2010, and 2014. This suggests that the Sharon single-family residence market has not climbed back to previous highs and may be in fact in another soft spot. This could be attributable to rising interest rates in 2018, the new federal income tax law limiting property tax deductions to \$10,000,

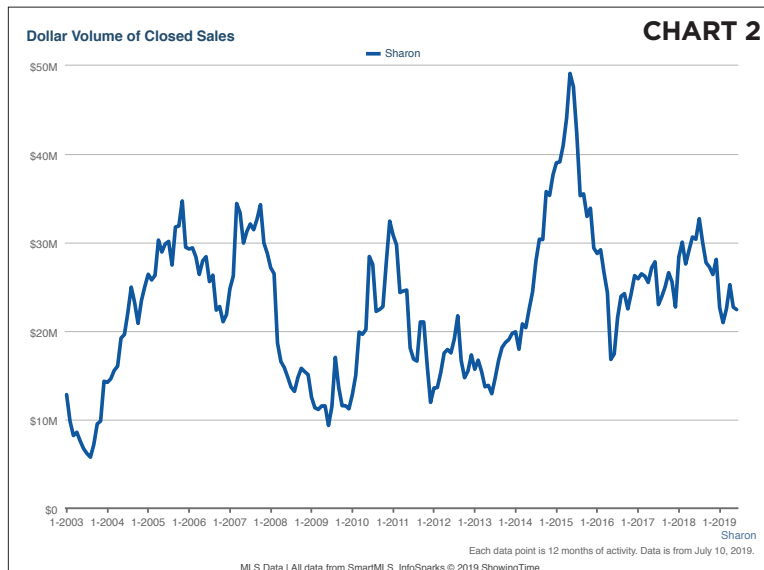


or the recent fall in consumer confidence to its lowest level since September 2017, in part due to international tensions, trade wars, and economic uncertainty despite a record high stock market.

Price per square foot lingers around \$200 on average

Most telling of all may be the price per square foot paid since 2003 in various price segments of the market (see Chart 4). This analysis shows that houses in the lowest priced segment, which during the bubble peaked at over \$200 a square foot, have not risen and are now around \$150 a square foot. The highest priced red line segment, over \$850,000, is now around \$300 a square foot – lower than the \$550 in the bubble, and \$500 in 2016

Above, top to bottom: Chart 3. This large 1988 four-bedroom home on Sharon Mountain Road is listed at under a \$100 a square foot. Photo by Noah Butler, courtesy of Best & Cavallaro Real Estate. Left: Chart 2.



Continued on next page ...

and 2017. The purple line reflecting the overall market remains stable at around \$200 a square foot since 2010. (See photo of Sharon Mountain Road house listed at less than \$100 a square foot).

In short, the median price per square foot in every price segment has not regained its previous high. Will median prices and prices per square foot continue to decline or level out? Real estate sales volumes on a 12-month rolling basis at the end of June are down 28.6% in Sharon and for all of its neighbors – Salisbury off 25.5%, and Kent -32.4%.

All is not well in the million dollar plus market

About one third of the 62 houses currently listed for sale in Sharon are priced over a million dollars. Over half of these 19 million dollar Sharon homes have been on the market for over 300 days. Four \$1,000,000+ homes have closed so

far this year; all are below two million dollars.

The highest sale was \$1,600,000 for a Sharon house originally listed for \$4.75 million in 2015. Another sale was for a home purchased in 2007 for \$2.1 million dollars, re-listed at \$2.4 million in 2009, and, after various times on and off the market and price decreases, sold for \$1,230,000. It is the lack of activity in higher priced home market that is affecting the market overall.

The market right now

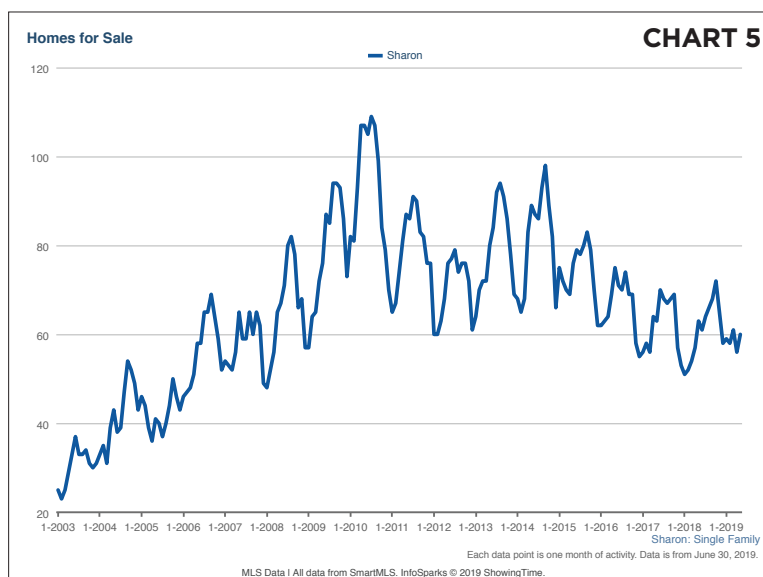
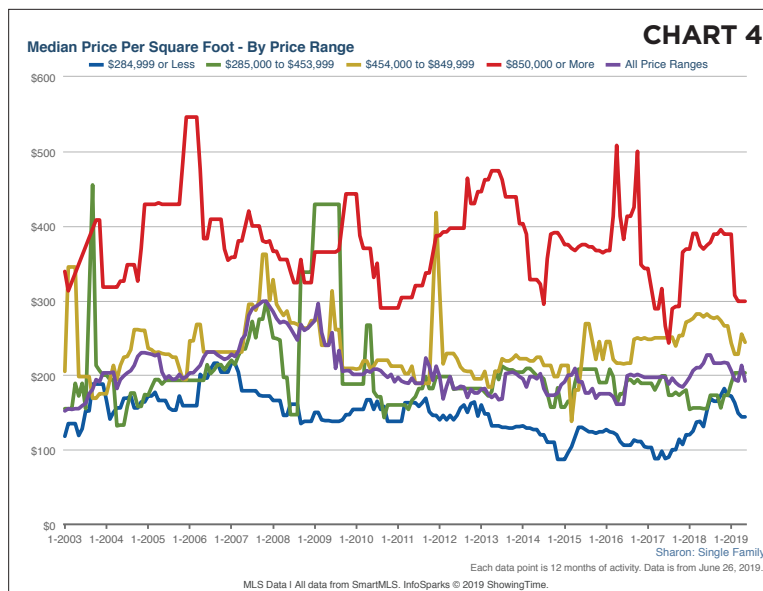
An example of a median-priced listed single family residential property is located on Upper Main Street at \$649,000 (see photo on page 17) on the Green in Sharon. The asking price contrasts to the \$320,750 median price of homes actually sold in the last 12 months. Total inventory is low despite sellers feeling that it's a good time to put a house on the market.

The trends we identified six years ago are even truer today. Buyers are looking for value and less exposure. Increasingly they are younger, come from Brooklyn, and expect to pay less. Antique houses have become even less alluring and few are looking for a renovation project.

Long-time Sharon realtor Chris Garrity has seen the cycles in the northwest corner real estate market. He finds it challenging in a market dominated by second home buyers to make sellers and buyers understand that buying a second home is not a financial investment with a certain return, but a purchase to enjoy over many years. Garrity and other experienced brokers take the long view.

They don't see much change in the Sharon market despite its gyrations. Buyers remain cautious, financially prudent and better informed because of the internet. Sharon will always be an attractive place to own a weekend or full-time home.

"For a small town, Sharon has some amazing attractions," according to Pat Best of Best & Cavallaro



Above, top to bottom: Charts 4 and 5. Built between 1885 and 1886, the iconic Sharon Clock Tower honors the memory of Emily Butler Ogden. Photo by Christine Bates.

Real Estate. "The Sharon Playhouse offers top quality entertainment; the Sharon Country Club has golf, tennis, great dining and children's activities; and there's the impressive Hotchkiss Library of Sharon and Sharon Historical Society and Museum on the Green. Sharon's proximity to the Metro North train and it's bucolic atmosphere make it a very appealing destination for all ages." ●

For historic information on Sharon go to www.sharonhis.org or visit the town's website at www.sharonct.org.

Christine Bates has written about real estate since Main Street's first issue. She is a licensed real estate professional, licensed in Connecticut and New York.

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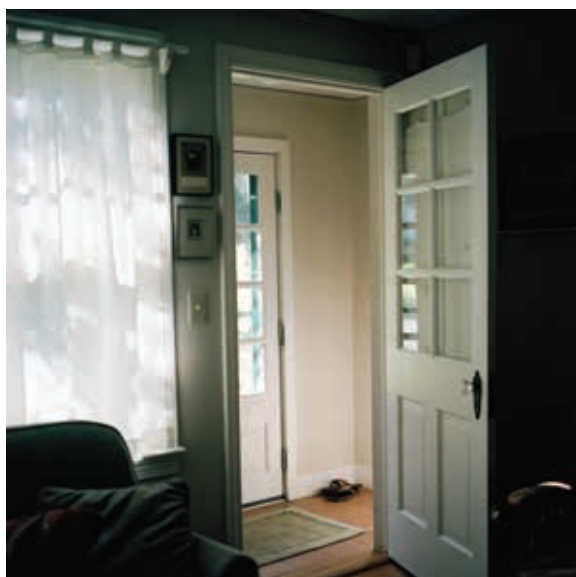
Amy Clampitt in the Berkshires

By Betsy Maury
info@mainstreetmag.com

In 1992, American poet Amy Clampitt purchased a modest house near Lenox, MA, with part of the money she had received that year in a grant from the MacArthur Foundation. The MacArthur Foundation makes six-figure, so-called “genius grants” to “individuals who show exceptional creativity in their work and the prospect for still more in the future.” The award has been given to literary luminaries such as John Ashbery and Cormac McCarthy in the past, among many others. These grants are precious to mid-career artists and often propel them to produce extraordinary work that only time and resources allow.

A darling of the literary world

Clampitt’s first full-length collection of poems, *The Kingfisher*, was published in 1983 when she was 63. Highly acclaimed after that, Clampitt became a darling of the literary world, earning an Academy of American Poets Fellowship in 1984. She would go on to feverishly produce and publish four additional collections over the next decade: *What the Light Was Like* (1985), *Archaic Figure* (1987), *Westward* (1990) and her last book, *A Silence Opens*, in 1994.



The house near Lenox was a present to herself late in life secured by unexpected resources. After years of small apartments and frugal living, the house was hers to enjoy in the serenity of the Berkshires, a place of her own in which to write and prosper. Sadly, expectations went unmet; within two years of owning the house, Amy Clampitt died of ovarian cancer.

The Amy Clampitt Fund

The Amy Clampitt Fund was established through the estate of Clampitt’s husband, Harold Korn, who lived in the house until his death in 2001.

Korn left the house to charity to operate as a poetry residency. The idea was to establish a permanent resource to “benefit poetry and the literary arts” in the Berkshires in Clampitt’s name. The house has been operated and overseen as a poetry residency since 2003 by Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation and has welcomed 26 poets and poetry scholars to the Berkshires.

Each year, emerging and mid-career poets from around the world spend up to a year living in the house. Applications are by nomination only and residents are selected by an advisory committee of poets and editors, many of whom knew Clampitt in her life and were involved in shepherding her work to publication. Some Clampitt residents burrow in, to use the



precious time and space to finish collections or start new projects. Some happily engage with a poetry-loving community at local libraries and bookstores. All of them leave a trail; the house has a dedicated shelf of published work produced by Clampitt residents during their stay.

Places of meaning

Clampitt’s connection to the Berkshires was brief and in truth, her poetry is not wholly infused with a particular Berkshire sense of place. There were other places and things of meaning in her work: birds, ancient Greece, the natural world in general, and Maine in particular.

Continued on next page ...

Above: Amy Clampitt was a highly acclaimed poet whose last years were spent in the Berkshires. Photo by Thomas Victor. Below, left: Her house now operates as a poetry residency though Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation’s Amy Clampitt Fund. Photo by John Dolan.

Her poetry doesn't belong to the Berkshires as say, Wordsworth's belongs to the Lake District and Dove Cottage.

Nevertheless, through the residency now in its 19th year, visiting poets have appreciated the Berkshires and in turn have connected the life, work, and legacy of Amy Clampitt to the local community. Some Clampitt residents – like recent poet Jessica Piazza – have held readings in places like the Bookstore and Get Lit Wine Bar in Lenox and the Lee and Stockbridge libraries. For many years, an elegant Amy Clampitt memorial reading took place nearby at The Mount, Edith Wharton's majestic home, and featured some of the nation's most popular and decorated

poets like Billy Collins and Natasha Trethewey.

Connecting Clampitt, art, and the community

This year, on July 21 and August 18, Berkshire residents and visitors will join in a walk that connects Clampitt to the community of the Berkshires in a new, innovative way. Her work will be read during "Walkin' with WordXWord," a free, approximately 90-minute moving exploration of The Mount's grounds and SculptureNow exhibit that features poets, dancers, and other performers responding to the natural surroundings and the individual works of art.

As part of each tour, a poet will read one of Clampitt's poems that

complements a stop on the walk, which, depending on the poem, could be a particular sculpture or vista or natural feature of the landscape. In this new format, visitors unfamiliar with Clampitt's work will get a gentle introduction to it in a very Berkshire context. In addition to featuring sculpture and poetry, these walks are produced in collaboration with performers from Jacob's Pillow and Lift Ev'ry voice, an organization that celebrates African-American culture and heritage in the Berkshires.



Above: A young Amy Clampitt. Archival photo. Below, top to bottom: Recent Clampitt residents include Patrick Donnelly, Tyree Daye (who received the prestigious Whiting Award shortly after leaving the Berkshires in 2018), and Jessica Piazza. Photos by John Dolan.



In residence

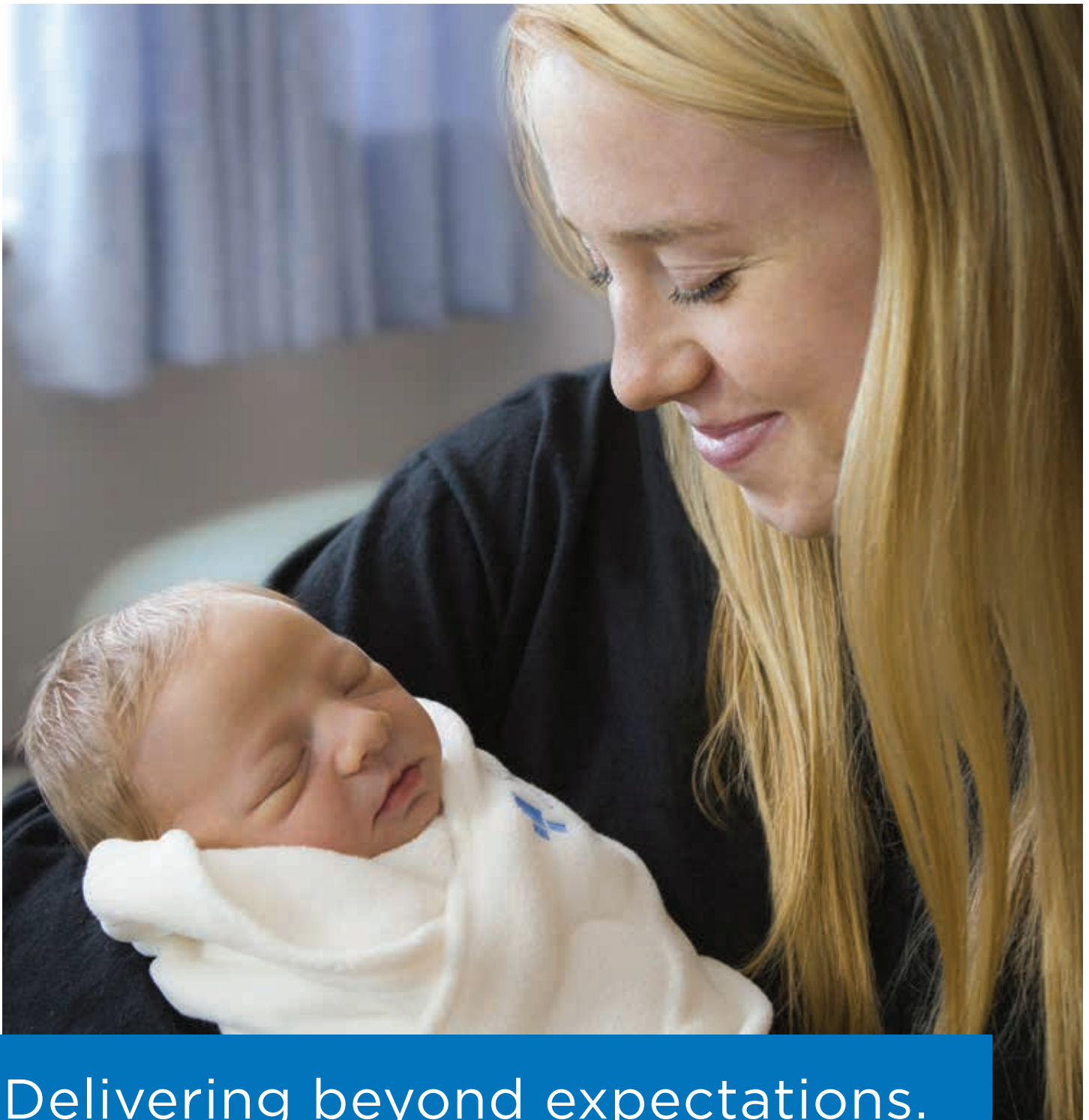
This year also marks the beginning of work on a dedicated biography of Amy Clampitt to be written by Willard Spiegelman, former Hughes Professor of English at Southern Methodist University and editor in chief of the *Southwest Review*. Spiegelman is both a Clampitt scholar and the very first resident in the Clampitt house. Taking letters, journals, and ephemera left in her estate, Spiegelman will place the poet – whom he calls the patron saint of late bloomers – in historical and literary context.

By August 27 Clampitt resident Colin Channer will have arrived in the house for six months to read, work, and enjoy precious space to write. His journey to the Berkshires is via Jamaica, New York, and Rhode Island. He may venture out into downtown Lenox on occasion or take in one of the many world-class cultural experiences one can have here in summer. Or, he may just write and observe a new natural setting or ponder the many Amy

Clampitt artifacts in the house – her hats, her box of sea glass, or her beloved collection of Keats volumes. Whatever the residency holds for Channer, it will include time and space in the Berkshires Clampitt desired for herself and activity that is likely to "benefit poetry and the literary arts" as intended by her widower, Harold Korn.

In this sense, the poet whose life took root near Lenox only briefly still nurtures other poets to plant seeds and thrive in Berkshire soil. ●

On Sunday, August 18, at 3pm, poets, dancers, and other performers will respond to the SculptureNow exhibition on the grounds of The Mount, Edith Wharton's Home, located at 2 Plunkett St. in Lenox, MA. The Walkin' with WordXWord at The Mount event is presented in partnership with Jacob's Pillow, Lift Ev'ry Voice and The Mount, and sponsored by the Amy Clampitt Fund, a fund of Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation.



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ROOSTERS

route 82 home & hardware center

By Griffin Cooper
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When Jeff Como and his wife Amy took over the former McKeough's Hardware Store in March of 2018 the venerated couple may have been newcomers to both the area and to the world of local hardware and garden retail – but they remained determined to achieve one purpose; to make the renamed Roosters Route 82 Home & Hardware Center a sort of home-away-from-home for every member of the surrounding community.

Jeff and Amy aren't your average transplants from New York City looking to escape the hustle and bustle of the Big Apple in favor of quiet solitude. No, the two have taken a collective risk that most of us, city or country folk, would never consider no matter the circumstances. Jeff, a chief information officer for a major non-profit and Amy, the former Deputy Commissioner for the City of New York for child enforcement, left behind their distinct and esteemed positions in favor of a hard day's work that feels a bit more, personal.

Their odyssey upstate has not come without a purposeful sense of

practiced business acumen, which includes a combined 50+ years of corporate experience in a fast-paced, high stakes executive world. Certainly, having lived previously in White Plains, the pair had become accustomed to navigating the heavy traffic and clogged public transit one must endure in order to commute to work in the big city, with Amy having spent most of her weeks traveling via Metro North and navigating the subways of Manhattan that would eventually lead to her office located in the Freedom Towers.

However, the bustle of city life left little time for much else, especially family and their dog Zoe, who happily peruses the aisles of Roosters stopping only occasionally to stare curiously up at the large imitation oak tree in the middle of the store adorned with a soft expression of peaceful comfort.

An itch for freedom

After spending several weekends hiking, antiquing, and exploring the lush trails of the Hudson Valley and

the stylish yet laid-back streets of towns like Rhinebeck and Hudson, Amy and Jeff decided their itch for freedom and family was one that simply must be scratched. So it was, after much research and deliberation as is their way of tactical risk management, the couple purchased the hardware store in Stanfordville, NY, formerly known as



Above: Roosters Route 82's beautiful store frontage. Below, left: Owners Jeff and Amy Como outside of the Garden Center.

McKeough's and owned by Larry and Debbie McKeough for the previous seventeen years.

"It was fate!" Jeff says as he stops for a quick chat in his effortlessly friendly manner while still keeping one eye on the beautiful garden center just outside the store on a gorgeous summer afternoon, keeping stock in his mind.

Jeff continues, "We wanted something we both could manage every day and enjoy our lives here." As Amy playfully nudges him adding, "and someplace we could bring our dog to work as well."

A few changes

Managing a place that has stood in one form or another for the better part of a century comes with a certain set of expectations. Yet they remain steadfast in retaining the simplicity of the store, not obsessed with growing it into a ten-million-dollar super business. Still, with the expansion of Roosters's stock, all of which is purchased and curated by Amy, and the addition of the new Farmhouse Gift and Decor Shoppe, the store has updated its inventory to include something for every visiting and local shopper.

The large restored carriage house that sits ideally adjacent to the outdoor garden center adds to the historically rustic aesthetic of Roosters. "We

like to call it our urban farmhouse," says Jeff who has taken a certain amount of modest pride in this new offering, which features unique home furnishing and accessory items for every season.

That's really the heart of Roosters Route 82, from the straightforward selection of gardening, hardware, and home supplies to the giant Rooster that sits in the loft of the store's barn-style frontage greeting visitors from above, it's a variety of offerings to match the variety of customers in the Hudson Valley – and beyond.

When looking back on their time spent in their fast-paced corporate existence and all of their tireless efforts that have led them to being the fifth owners of the store now called Roosters Route 82 Home & Hardware Center, Amy says of the contrast: "we probably actually work longer and harder now, but we are able to work at our own pace, the business choices are ours to make and that has been such a nice transition."

Both Jeff and Amy welcome the new challenges that come with country life and owning a local business, "The Hudson Valley has a lot to offer and we would like to add to that wonderful scene." ●



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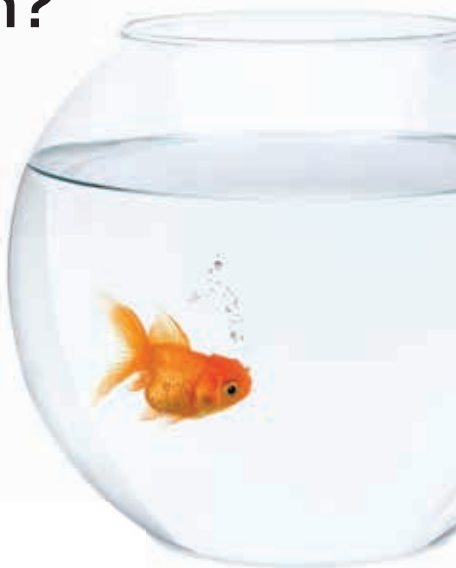
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WHAT WE TALK ABOUT WHEN WE TALK ABOUT

Vacations

By Ian Strever
info@mainstreetmag.com

There is something inherently interesting in asking someone about their vacation plans. Beyond the social propriety of inquiring about the status of a fellow human being, travel plans can be quite revealing about the personality of the traveler. Do they go to the same place every year, or do they explore new destinations? Do they only travel in the summer or throughout the year? Do they prefer mountains or oceans, resorts or roughing it? “If our lives are dominated by a search for happiness, then perhaps few activities reveal as much about the dynamics of this quest – in all its ardour and paradoxes – than our travels,” writes contemporary philosopher Alain De Botton.

The vacation began on... Instagram

If what De Botton says is true, then we would all benefit from a more mindful approach to vacationing. So if I’m being completely transparent, my vacation this year began on Instagram. I have a friend who posts dozens of photos from the hikes he does every weekend, and he manages to find the most incredible destinations that are just off the beaten path. Think the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Smith Rock State Park in central Oregon. Lassen National Volcanic Park. You may have to

look them up, but if you search for them on social media, you’ll see what I mean. All the views, none of the crowds.

At least that’s how it looks on Instagram. My newfound commitment to a mindful vacation, however, requires me to examine my thinking and motives more thoughtfully. A trip to the Maroon Bells in Colorado a few years ago proved what a disaster it can be to plan one’s trip around appealing social media posts. I spent the first few hours of a three-day backpacking trip circumambulating scantily-dressed twenty-somethings who were busy pursing their lips and adjusting the tilt of their trucker hats in coordination with the scenery they were trying to get in the background of their Snapchats. To the rest of the world, it probably looked like they were the only ones in the park that day.

Seeking true isolation

My friend’s posts about Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, had that same edge-of-the-earth feel, but given its location at the northeastern-most tip of the continent, it seemed plausible that I might actually find the isolation that I was seeking in a vacation. Stark seaside cliffs and dramatic views of the North Atlantic suggested a dynamic like



that of Acadia National Park where one could hike tall mountains with views of the ocean, without Acadia’s crowds.

But why was I seeking isolation in the first place?

As a high school principal, I spend my working hours obsessing over a million details involved with running a school and interacting with scores of people, so when I vacation, I prefer activities like backpacking that reduce existence to the essential components of life: food, water, heat, and shelter.

Through intentional self-denial, I achieve an ascetic intimacy with my surroundings that anchors me in the present and re-creates me in a way that all recreation should. In other words, I look for the opposite of my daily routine.

In favor of the unknown

That also means a chance to escape bells, meetings, schedules, and routines in favor of the unknown and unplanned. Having never been to Nova Scotia, I could check the “unknown” box for this trip, but my familiarity with the outdoors and the routines of backpacking, learned over decades of practice, would have

Above: No cheese, no drink, no sunset ... no vacation?
Below, left: Cape Breton’s iconic coastline is best appreciated under less than ideal conditions. Storm surges can make for fantastic displays of the ocean’s power.



Continued on next page ...

sapped the trip of some adventure. So instead, I opted for a whole new breed of adventure by taking a 19' travel trailer along as my primary residence for the week.

At its core, adventure is exploring the unknown, however we interpret that. I've been within striking distance of moose, rattlesnakes, bears, and mountain goats, but the prospect of trying to back my Airstream into a camping space truly terrified me. It took me back to the trauma of learning to drive stick by being forced by a foreman to drive a 1983 crew cab Chevy from a construction site in New Haven back to the garage, three towns over. Horns honking, drivers fuming, and me grinding the last teeth out of the gears.

RV life

This is not to mention all the unknowns of RV life. I'd grilled every owner I knew for tips and tricks, and I'd taken a short excursion to Lone Oaks in East Canaan, CT, to try out the basic functions, but I had yet to really put it all to the test. What I did know was that I didn't know much about this whole venture, but I was about to learn on the road.

What was important metaphysically was the vision I had for this trip that, try as I might, I could not dislodge from my imagination. Whenever I envisioned it, the same image arose, as if planted there by the Airstream marketing department: it was a view from beneath the canopy of my trailer, cheese and crackers by my side and a cold

beverage in hand, watching the sun set over the ocean. That's it. Never mind that the sun sets over the Pacific most of the time – this was my vision.

Not-so-picture-perfect?

So when the first evening presented me with a pair of Adirondack chairs overlooking the Atlantic at a campground along the Maine coast, I was unprepared to embrace the fulfillment of my expectation, even with many of the elements in place. "Too soon," I thought, and what's more, the chairs were hewn from unfinished birch logs, which proved to be rather painful after ten minutes. Then there were the bugs, which set in on my scalp just as the last brush strokes of pink left the sky. Sure, the view was spectacular, and the prospect from thirty feet above the water was approximately aligned with my expectations, but unprepared for it, I had failed to acquire cheese, and left the beverage back in the trailer.

The next three days of rain ruled out any hope of realizing my vision, but they also introduced an element to it that I had not anticipated: reality. Boredom, primarily, which ebbed against the bulwarks of my fantasy in unexpected and creative ways, both during unending expanses of unremarkable Canadian highways and inside the Airstream, where each evening, instead of surveying the sunset, I listened to raindrops. Somewhere along the way, a slight stiffness in my shoulder grew to a dull throb, and it was clear that in addition to reality, I had failed to



Above: "Kindred Spirits" shots like this one are the meat and potatoes of Instagram marketers. Just keep in mind that it took 2.5 miles of hiking and some rather artificial posing to get it. Below left: On the west coast of Cape Breton, it is possible to see the sun set over the ocean, when it's not covered with clouds...which isn't often.

account for one other aspect of my vision: myself.

In conjuring up a depiction of the ideal vacation, I had snared myself on a trap of my own making. I had elevated the four or five simple elements in that vision to a *sine qua non* of my vacation, even when I could not possibly achieve at least one of those elements on this side of the continent. The fantasy of relaxing in front of my camper and taking in a sunset was inconsistent with the reality of Nova Scotia's (as I was soon to discover) notoriously Scottish weather, but more importantly, it was inconsistent with my inability to sit still when all five elements of said vision have not been achieved. If I got the right cheese, I would get the wrong wine. If the sun wasn't setting at just the right angle, the whole image would be compromised. There would always be something missing from the picture.

Live in- and enjoy the moment
And isn't that a delusion to which

we all fall prey when we vacation? We want to believe that in the right climate, under the right conditions, we will achieve a happiness that we do not in our ordinary lives. The poet Charles Baudelaire noted, "It always seems to me that I'll be well where I'm not, and this question of moving is one that I'm forever entertaining with my soul."

Many of us spend more time planning future trips than we do appreciating the present, to the detriment of both the trip and our lives.

On the last morning of my trip, I awoke to a halo outlining the ridge behind my campsite. The leaves of a nearby birch grove flickered in the breeze, and sun dappled the forest floor. Birds chirped, and a man with a towel over his right shoulder plodded toward the showers. I stepped from my trailer with confidence that my long-sleeved pullover and shorts were just right for the temperature. Eventually, I made coffee, and the morning was complete. •



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Making it

Community and craftsmanship are the inspiration behind Gallery & Goods – an art gallery and retail space in Pine Plains, NY

By Regina Molaro
info@mainstreetmag.com

More than 180 years ago, people from the Pine Plains, NY, community united to build a church. They gave of themselves – volunteering their time and skills to create a space for community to gather to celebrate love. The hand-chiseled wood beams that bring character to the now historic building were once hauled from nearby forests.

It's that same spirit of community and craftsmanship that inspired co-founders and co-owners Brett McCormack and Josh Nathanson to create Gallery & Goods – an art gallery and retail space that offers a curated selection of locally sourced, nature-inspired handmade goods.

"We were honored to take stewardship of an architectural gem that began in 1838 as a church, became a Grange Hall in 1929, and later became an antique store. Its history as a community space, bringing together the lives of a range of people inspired us to create this community-focused art and maker space," says Josh Nathanson.

A vision

After several months of sanding, painting, and restoring this spectacular historical building, McCormack and Nathanson opened the doors to Gallery & Goods in May 2017. They shared a vision:

To highlight the process of crafting items by hand. They were united in their desire to encourage others to return to using ages-old practices and techniques to create wares.

Fusing the concept of a traditional gallery space with a makers' collective, the duo created a unique space that presents a collection of artisanal treasures. Some can be classified as purely decorative *objet d'art* while others such as the healing salves are functional in nature.

Since McCormack and Nathanson both recognize the artistry, spirit, and dedication to craft that is channeled into every item, they yearned to use their space to challenge others' perceptions about "art." Beyond the stark black-and-white paintings and hand-painted furniture, their collection includes clay vessels embellished with feminine lace patterns, wood bowls crafted from oak, and soothing lavender facial scrubs.

The artistic line-up

Gallery & Goods' makers and artists include: JRN Pottery's functional ceramic pieces by Josh Nathanson; Brett McCormack's art, hand-painted furniture, and decorative objects; hand-poured candles by Bell's Beeswax; Natalie Feldsine's facial- and self-care items; Maclaren Fixture Company's custom-made decorative porcelain lighting fixtures; Melissa McCormack's wellness-driven self-care items; Bart Tenore's raw wooden creations; and Dan Wheeler's smooth, hand-turned bowls. All items are crafted locally, so the journey from maker to consumer leaves a minimal carbon footprint. Prices range from \$10 for a luxurious soap to \$10,000 for handcrafted furniture.

Brett McCormack, whose work has been seen in museums, galleries, and private collections worldwide,



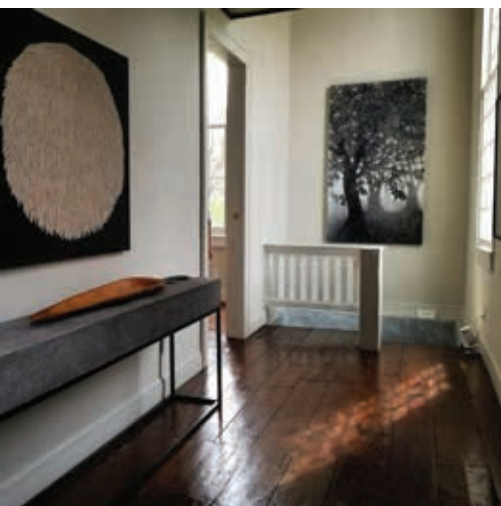
has also been spotlighted in *Elle Décor*, *Harper's Bazaar*, and *The New York Times*. He acknowledges that the pioneers who had a hand in shaping the earliest settlements on earth also engaged in some of the same processes employed by makers and artists today. They include pottery, working with wood, and crafting home remedies in the form of elixirs.

"We yearn to celebrate the evidence of human touch in every item we offer. We're also proud to share the personal stories of the hands who created all that brings life to our space," reveals Brett McCormack.

When guests purchase a ceramic serving platter or decorative bowl, they're sharing some of the creator's spirit. As they hand wash their items, they're retracing the hands of the artist. Rather than being consumer-driven, Gallery & Goods celebrates authenticity – the personal stories and people behind each handcrafted item.



Above, top to bottom: The exterior of Gallery & Goods in Pine Plains. An old photograph captures the community spirit that has long been a part of this building's history. Left: Sunlight illuminates the handcrafted works on display at Gallery & Goods.



Continued on next page ...

The space

The original set of doors grants entry into the ethereal space. Guests will be captivated by the soaring, vaulted ceilings; exposed beams; elongated, dramatic windows; and airy interior. A calming palette of white washes over the walls – a stark contrast to the rich, dark tone of the original hardwood floors.

The gallery/retail space is sectioned off by a series of decorative partitions that feature windows, which invite sunlight to flood the space. Some of McCormack's handmade tables are adorned with pottery while others display a lineup of glass canisters – each one filled with handcrafted soaps from Forget Not The Earth by Melissa McCormack. A white claw-foot bathtub is the focal point of another display

area, which houses self-care items by both Natalie Feldsine and Melissa McCormack.

The collection strives to awaken people's senses. Guests are encouraged to cast aside their cell phones and indulge in the clean scents of the soaps or the tactile feel of the pottery. Many guests enjoy getting acquainted with the makers and artists. As they stroll about the space, they can see their portraits and read their stories, which are artistically presented on clipboards placed throughout the room.

McCormack personally handcrafted the artistic displays, which are upcycled, reimagined, or repurposed. The bathtub, discarded windows, and wooden planks featured in the displays were salvaged from farmhouse renovation projects. The

displays also feature upcycled scrap lumber and screens of burlap.

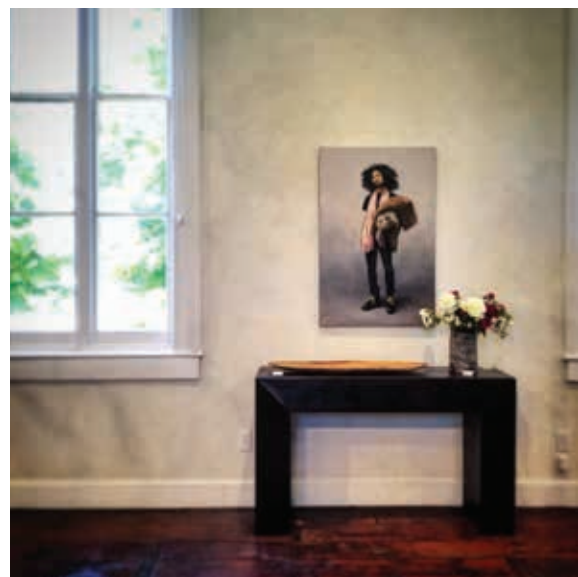
On view

On display through September is *Portraits of Pine Plains* – a collection of oil-based portrait paintings created by Pine Plains-based artist Mary Bridgman. The faces she presents represent the diversity of the region – the many different generations, perspectives, and experiences of the town's residents.

It took Bridgman more than one year to scout out the lineup of people to paint. Each person resides within walking distance



Above: A dramatic overview from the former church's choir loft. Below, left, top to bottom: One of artist Mary Bridgman's paintings from *Portraits of Pine Plains* hangs above Brett McCormack's table. Handcrafted displays highlight the works of local makers and artists.



of Gallery & Goods. Before creating the paintings in her Pine Plains studio, she photographed each person in the natural lighting that illuminates the gallery. Each portrait is currently on display in the section of the gallery that the subject was initially photographed in. The gallery is continuing this process with custom portraiture commissions available in the same inspired way.

The people Bridgman featured, their families, and friends all gathered to attend the opening reception, which was held in May 2019. The event drew a wide range of people including those who previously didn't have much interest in attending galleries as well as others who were well acquainted with the goings-on of the gallery scene.

"Art is for everyone and it's the most powerful tool we have to open up hearts and minds, and soften hearts. If the arts continue to exist in a bubble, we'll lose the potential for the evolution of our culture and emotions," believes McCormack.

Emotions were certainly present at the opening reception. One guest shed tears while gazing at a portrait of a neighbor who gener-

ously provided him with food and clothing. "For us and for our guest, this moment will always be sacred," says McCormack.

Starting in August, the community will be invited to gather in Gallery & Goods' downstairs space to share creativity and get inspired. The space will feature hands-on workshops, educational presentations, and other programs led by makers, artists and other creatives and enthusiasts. The inaugural hands-on workshop will feature artist and weaver Nelson Kauamarix who will teach tablet weaving.

"When we speak about community, we want to address all communities and make our space accessible to everyone. Here, we want to lift spirits, inspire, and influence a brighter future of people," concludes Nathanson. •

To learn more about Gallery & Goods, you can visit them in person at 3007 Church St, Pine Plains, NY, give them a call at (845) 635-0422, or visit them online at www.galleryandgoods.com.

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For love of the exotic

Elizabeth Warner's Maasai Collections is inspired by how she lives

By Joseph Montebello
info@mainstreetmag.com

Elizabeth Warner loves adventure and she has been fortunate enough to find it in many places. Born in New York City, she lived there until her parents divorced when she was five. She was whisked off to Spain where she spent several years until her mother, an artist, took part in an exhibition in Africa and discovered Kenya – and found a stepfather and a new life for Elizabeth and her sister.

“We moved there in 1975,” Warner explains. “My stepfather was in telecommunications and it was post-colonial Africa. I grew up mainly in that country, except for summers when my sister and I were shuttled off to New York to spend time with our father. But it was then that my love for Africa began.”

Travel and a love of art and design

And it is a love affair she has carried on for many years. Modeling enabled her to travel to the fashion capitals of the world where she was exposed to style and design. “I modeled from 1984 until the early ‘90s and I learned so much,” Warner says. “I knew that I wanted to create things.”

But it was love that finally brought her back to Kenya. Former

beau Anthony Russell, a safari guide and conservationist, was responsible for creating the award-winning eco-tourist destination Shompole Lodge in the Great Rift Valley on the border of Tanzania. Warner was involved in the decorating for that project and it was what prompted her to build her own house in Africa.

“It was Anthony who inspired me to live there and to create a unique environment for myself,” Warner explains. “I built a rectangular-shaped house out of local quarried stone, with everything on one level. The furnishings were a mixture of ethnic, colonial, and heirloom. I even had my great grandmother’s Biedermeier table shipped over. It was a dream come true.”

The Maasai Collections

While Warner was living that dream she entered another phase of her life: creating the Maasai Collections. It all began with beading and beaded accessories. Eventually she added African printed kaftans and sarongs with hand-beaded ties, beaded wrist cuffs, and canvas and leather bags.

“I began to partner with the local indigenous Maasai women to create

unique tribal-chic handmade designs,” she says. “Everything is based on what they know and they are really global artisans celebrating and preserving classical African traditions.”

Maasai Collections caught the attention of designer Donna Karan, who carries Warner’s accessories in her Urban Zen shops.

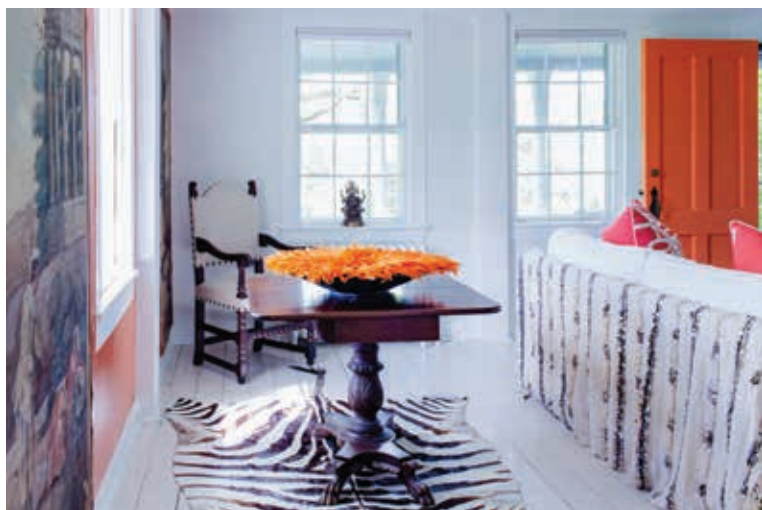
Privet House in New Preston has created a

pop-up shop at Privet Lives for the collection. The shop will showcase pieces that create a unique story, influenced by Warner’s journey from Africa. Everything from bags, kaftans, shoes, accessories, curiosities, art, photography, books, and furniture. The shop will be open until the end of August. “I want to create a whole environment, all designed around Africa,” says Warner. “It will be an entire lifestyle built around the things I love and want to share with everyone.”

“When we first discovered Maasai Collections, it was love at first sight,” says Suzanne Casano, co-owner of Privet House. “Learning the story behind Maasai Collections, as told by Warner herself, was icing on the cake. Her story is genuine and reminds us that Maasai Collections is more than just



Above: Elizabeth Warner on horseback with her daughter, Maya Luna. Below, left: Warner’s Litchfield home embodies Warner’s design and inspirations combining her two worlds. Photo by Jennifer Beecher. All photos courtesy of Elizabeth Warner.



Continued on next page ...

a curated selection of objects and clothing. It's about collaborating with communities to create ethically sourced goods, uncovering your journey, and taking the road with more curves."

Creating a new home - here

And while she continues her passion for Africa, Warner has made a part-time home in Litchfield, where her mother has lived for many years. "Africa is fabulous, but I wanted to be closer to my family and my mother has always loved being here. So in 2010 I bought a house. Just opening the door and coming in I am transported to another life - of serenity and peace."

The house in question is a charming, somewhat rambling one, the original part of which was built in 1860. It has since been added on to several times but maintains an aura of charm and history. It is approximately 2800 square feet and came with 18 acres of land, the majority of which is in a land trust.

"The house was very dated when I bought it," recalls Warner. "It was like a bad dream, but I knew underneath it all there was a magic and charm about it and that I could make something special out of it. We took down one wall, redid one

bathroom, and painted everything white. And voila!"

And it is indeed magic. With Warner's keen sense of color and design the house flows and offers a surprise at every turn. For instance, the zebra rug under an antique table, which holds a bowl of bright orange feathers. The large living room with a wall of glass doors, featuring a round mosaic table, rattan tables, period chairs, and an impressive collection of photography. It all works thanks to Warner's discerning eye and talent for creating magical spaces. There are two living rooms, a kitchen and dining room, as well as a large room that Warner uses as a studio and storeroom for her collections. All of the bedrooms are upstairs. The windows look out on to vistas of trees and land. One is not aware of the other houses nearby.

Maya Luna

But as heavenly as this is, Warner will continue to divide her time between two continents. One important reason is Maya Luna, the baby she adopted in Africa. "Maya is now five and part of the reason that I am there. When she came into my life I wanted to bring her back here to be part of my fam-

ily. With her here I feel my life is settled. But Africa has got my heart. I am trying to have the best of both worlds. And Maya will be traveling with me. Since she is African she must know her roots and where she came from. It is such an important part of her identity. So we will go back in November for a period of time. Maya attends school there as well as when she is in Litchfield."

Meanwhile Warner will concentrate on promoting her Maasai Collections and championing the work and talent of the artisans from Kenya. Her mind is always working, inspired by everything around her,

here and in her adopted home. She is proud of what she has done to promote African artisans, creating side-by-side with these Maasai women, giving them the opportunity to pursue their ancient craft. As well she should be. ●



Above: Two samples from the Maasai Collections. Below, left: Warner's living room in her Litchfield home. Photo by Jennifer Beecher. All photos courtesy of Elizabeth Warner.





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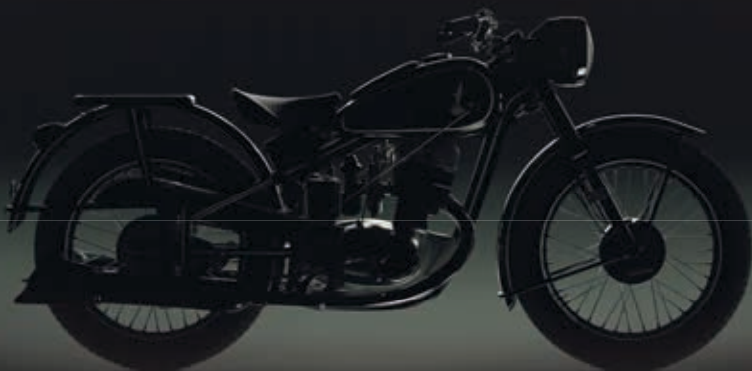
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Divide & conquer:

HOW AUTHOR COURTNEY MAUM
BLENDS HISTORY AND FICTION
IN HER STUNNING NEW NOVEL
COSTALEGRE

By Griffin Cooper
griffin@mainstreetmag.com

The heart of the matter

In their starred reviews, critics have described author Courtney Maum's new novel *Costalegre* as a "delectable tale of art, love, and war." (*Publisher's Weekly*), and a "lush chronicle of wealth, adventure, loneliness, and folly told by a narrator you won't be able to forget." (*Kirkus Reviews*). But truthfully the prolific author's third offering is perhaps the most personal examination of the how the most fundamental relationships in our lives are cultivated by status and deprivation.

Courtney sits comfortably in her art deco-style lounge, adorned with her children's toys and her socialite feline Chester as she discusses her new novel which was released on July 16. Confident and reserved, she's been here before, she's been everywhere before, seen much, too much perhaps to know exactly how her protagonist Lara Calaway feels seeing the world from the background of society's collective consciousness.

Maum has experienced her fair share of the publishing world's unstable nature. Its broken promises and empty assurances, especially for the aspiring female writer, but it's Courtney's persistence that keeps her slender frame as sturdy as the tall pines that surround her home in Norfolk, CT. A persistence that has crossed the Atlantic and has survived a life in Paris where she spent time in her youth as a party promoter for Corona Extra. Since then, Courtney has found herself at various points in her life as a trend forecaster and a fashion publicist, she is currently a product namer for M.A.C. cosmetics. Her marketing acumen has never outgrown her love for fiction however, and now her experience as a successful business woman and her undeniable skill as a writer reign supreme.

Costalegre

"I once read a review in the *New York Times* that said my writing feels oxygenated, I'm sure that's a compliment but I wanted this book to feel a bit more reserved." Indeed, *Costalegre* feels like more of a meditation on growing up as a female artist than a sprightly fiction narrative that earnestly attempts to leave its readers bread crumbs along a traditional linear path.

Costalegre is as an epistolary account told from fifteen-year-old Lara Calaway's perspective as she travels with her mother Leonara, an esteemed art collector, from 1937 Paris to an isolated resort hideaway in Western Mexico named Costalegre, a safe haven for her mother's most prized artist friends. The relationship between Lara and her mother is loosely based on the very real life relationship between famous art collector Peggy Guggenheim and her daughter Pegeen, an artist herself who seems to have been somewhat forgotten in the annals of art history.

Maum is masterful in her blend of real life events and narrative fiction, Ms. Guggenheim herself did indeed flee Hitler's Europe with a group of influential artists sometime around the beginning of World War II. In 1940, American journalist Varian Fry became a founding member of the "Emergency Rescue Committee," a group of activists who dedicated themselves to helping refugees who had been displaced during wartime. Fry assisted in relief efforts by whatever means necessary including creating fraudulent documents made to help immigrants escape tyranny under the auspices of the French government. Peggy Guggenheim, emboldened by relief efforts similar to those of Fry's, fled Europe with her family and her



Above: Author Courtney Maum just released her third book, titled *Costalegre*. Photo by Colin Lane. Photo courtesy of Courtney Maum.

Continued on next page ...

collection to New York City in 1941 where she opened her gallery Art of this Century in October of 1942.

In *Costalegre*, Leonora Calaway uses her clout to escape France – where Hitler had indeed started placing artists in internment camps – by private plane to the jungles of Mexico, a setting that can only be properly described as savagely mysterious. Maum herself used the real life setting of Costa Carey as a backdrop for her narrative, “In 2010 I wrote a chapbook called *Notes from Mexico* inspired by a place in Western Mexico that is strange, right on the pacific, hours away from resort towns. It’s a world apart, the roads are washed out, the water is incredibly dangerous, Costa Carey is sort of a secret hideaway that was created for friends at first, it’s a wild place. I always knew I wanted to do something with it.”

The right opportunity

Unquestionably, *Costalegre* is an examination into how social status, particularly wealth, does not prevent, and sometimes even propagates, the emotional and psychological deprivation of familial relationships. The ever-present cycle of material neglect is manifested in Leonora’s idle perception of her daughter Lara, one that is proactively a toxic relationship built around status, self-indulgence, and ultimately neglect.

“It’s a very convoluted relationship to say the least,” says Maum who, growing up in Greenwich CT, has seen first-hand what loveless material privilege can do to a young woman. “I think you can safely argue that all of my books are concerned with the emotional deprivation that can come with material privilege, and I sometimes interrogate myself on whether or not these accounts are worth

exploring at a time when so many people are suffering. I think they are because so many of our problems are created by excessive wealth and class discrimination. I am interested in how the psyche can be damaged by too much material wealth and if that can be corrected especially in young children. Despite inherent opportunities, real life kicks in, people get sick, loved ones pass away. Money cannot protect you from that stuff and it can lead to some emotional damage.”

It is this contradiction of lifestyle and happiness, set in a mysterious locale, that allows for the skillfully crafted character development in *Costalegre*. Leonora’s life is compounded not only by her clandestine escape from persecution, but by her fear of the vast expanse of the ocean as well. Peggy Guggenheim’s father went down with the *RMS Titanic* in 1912 and as a result she became frightened by water, so to be surrounded by the Pacific makes perfect sense. Furthermore, the danger that young Lara feels in her vulnerable state is also magnified by the wildness of Mexico making for a surreal reading experience.

Subverting reader expectations

Maum’s most notable success with her new novel can be found in her constant effort to subvert reader expectations. From her literary choice of having *Costalegre* be told from the perspective of a young girl and the innocent vulnerability that comes along with that particular context, to the very cover of the book itself which, upon first glance, almost seems like an illustration for a children’s storybook. In fact the very title itself denotes something of an emotional deception, *Costa* in Spanish means coast, and *alegre* translates to happiness or joy, so the title of the book can technically translate to coast of joy or happiness.

The fact that the novel is in fact a very dark adventure through the mind of a young child should clue audiences into the irony of the author’s



Above: The cover for Courtney Maum’s third book, titled *Costalegre*. Photo courtesy of Courtney Maum.

creative choices. The colorful design of the cover, a Kipling-inspired jungle scene complete with an ethereal tiger and moth is in itself a reader-driven illusion as to the content inside. “There aren’t any tigers in Mexico and the Death’s Head Moth, in Latin American culture, is a sign that death is imminent.”

All of these signposts point to one distinct purpose for *Costalegre*’s inception, to convey a singular characterization of a young woman’s struggle through a life of neglect, isolated in Mexico, surrounded by what one could only describe as predatory older men looking to escape the horror of the Nazi invasion whilst simultaneously fulfilling the need to feed their artistic egos. What is most dark ultimately gives Lara and thus Pegeen, and by comparison the author herself, their long-awaited, long-overdue agency. •

For more information on Courtney Maum and her new novel “*Costalegre*,” visit her website www.courtneymaum.com and look for “*Costalegre*” in stores July 16.



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Tomatoes

TEN WAYS

By Dominique DeVito
info@mainstreetmag.com

Hooray, it's tomato season! There's really nothing like a sun-ripened tomato. From the look, the feel, the smell and the taste, a ripe tomato just says summer.

It's strange to think that it wasn't until the late 1800s that the tomato's popularity with Americans began to solidify. Before that, the fruit that's a relative of deadly nightshade was thought to be a fairly tasteless and potentially poisonous plant. This didn't deter everyone, and they were cultivated and enjoyed in many places, but they were not popular. How did the tomato emerge from this reputation? Soldiers in the Civil War needed to be fed, and canned foods were the way to do it. Tomatoes were well suited to canning and became popular that way.

Today, tomatoes are popular around the world, with over 2.5 billion pounds of fresh market tomatoes being grown in the US alone, and nearly 200 million tons of fresh and processing tomatoes being produced globally. That's a lot of sauce, paste, ketchup, salsa, juice, and so much more!

Now that it's tomato season, I thought it would be interesting to learn how people in our area enjoy tomatoes, so I reached out to a chefs, farmers, and friends for their favorite recipes and thoughts about tomatoes.

A few fan favorites

Nicole Friedrich is the Market Manager for the Copake Hillsdale Farmer's Market. You'll find her on Saturdays at the market's location at the beautiful Roe Jan Park in Hillsdale, NY, where the market goes from 9am to 1pm. She's a huge fan of anything and everything fresh, and was delighted to share this recipe.

Nicole's Famous Tomato Mango Salsa

"This is my all-time favorite recipe for summer, using farm market tomatoes, of course," she wrote. "My family waits all year for it. I love to use Sun Gold cherry tomatoes and Candyland Red cherries mixed from Common Hands Farm or Hawk Dance Farm. Cut them into pieces, removing as much of the seeds as possible. To the chopped tomatoes," she said, "I add some diced red onion, garlic to taste, fresh cilantro from Earthborn Garden Farm, fresh-squeezed lime juice, fresh corn off the cob from White Oak Farm, and some diced mango. Season the mixture with salt and pepper. Let the mixture sit for a couple hours at room temperature before serving so all the flavors mesh. Soooooo delicious!!!!"

Jake's Market Salsa

Jake Samascott is one of the owners of Samascott Farm in Valatie, NY. Samascott has been farming in Columbia County for over 100 years, currently producing hundreds of varieties of fruits and vegetables grown on over 1000 acres. They have an Orchards location and a



Photo: istockphoto.com contributor p_ponomareva

Garden Market in Kinderhook and Valatie. You can also find Samascott at markets in Manhattan and Albany.

"My favorite way to eat tomatoes is in fresh salsa," Jake said, "and my favorite place to do it is at the farmer's market. It is a great snack that can be quickly put together when there are a few slow minutes at the market." The technique? "Using a nice sharp knife, just cut up tomatoes and onions, add some super-fresh cilantro, and eat it with a spoon. Even better," he said, "find a nice piece of bread and call it lunch."

Amy Lawton's Grilled Tomato with Chèvre

I wrote about Random Harvest in Craryville, NY, for the July issue of the magazine, and I got to meet Amy Lawton, who's the chef-owner (one of five women who own the co-op). I also got to try her food, and I was hooked, so of course I wanted to know how she best loves summer tomatoes. In keeping with the generous person she is, she shared two recipes, adding that she

prefers tomatoes at their peak to be the feature and not prepared in any ways that are overcomplicated or that distract from what is already perfect. Great advice!

"For this recipe I love the green zebras, black trim and Brandywine tomatoes," she shared. "Cut your tomatoes in half and brush them with some olive oil with a little fresh chopped garlic in it. Place the cut side with the oil and garlic down on a hot grill for just a minute or so. You are looking for a little char and a warm fruit. Remove, place on a platter, crumble plain goat chèvre over the tomatoes, and drizzle a little of your favorite vinegar on top. I like so many different ones! Champagne, red wine, balsamic, sherry ... try them all!" she suggested. "To finish, sprinkle just a little salt and enjoy!"

Continued on next page ...

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Amy Lawton's Veggie Toast

"This is another of my faves," Amy shared. "Take a slice of good and sour sourdough bread, a little handful of fresh basil, a generous slab of fresh mozzarella, and your favorite thick-sliced tomatoes. Pile it up on a cookie sheet and pop in a 350-degree oven just until your mozzarella becomes a shape shifter and your exposed bread edges gather color. Yum!"

Tomato Bruschetta My Way, from Karen Martin

Karen Martin and her husband, Elliot, are transplants to Columbia County from Long Island. Retired now, they were eager to leave the stresses of their professions behind and enjoy the country life. On what seemed to be a property just waiting for them, they now have ducks, chickens, a dog, and a massive garden. Both are very creative in the kitchen and love that so much of what they eat comes straight from their back yard. Tomatoes included!

"For the bruschetta, use one to 1½ pounds of fresh, local, organic tomatoes at room temperature. The tomatoes should be in as many colors and varieties as possible. Remember," Karen emphasized, "you eat with your eyes before you even taste your food! Use a few sprigs of curly parsley and basil, and one small red onion or half of a small yellow onion. Rinse and dry the tomatoes, cut them in half, and remove as much of the seeds as you can. Dice them and put them in a large bowl. Finely dice the herbs and onion and add them to the tomatoes. Set aside. For the dressing, use a quarter cup balsamic vinegar, one teaspoon local honey, one tablespoon of extra virgin olive oil, and salt and pepper to taste. Whisk them in a bowl and add them to the tomato mixture. Toss well. Let sit at

room temp while you prepare the toast."

"For the toast, I use one loaf of day-old French bread sliced into about quarter-inch thick slices," she continued. "Peel four cloves of fresh garlic and cut them into quarters. Using my cast iron skillet on medium heat," she said, "add a quarter cup extra virgin olive oil, the garlic pieces, and a pinch of salt. When the garlic becomes soft and brown, remove it from the oil. Turn off the heat. Never allow the garlic to get dark brown," Karen added, "as it makes it bitter. If you want, mash the cooked garlic and spread it on the toasted bread later."

"Next, put the slices of bread in a large bowl. Drizzle the heated and seasoned oil over the pieces and toss evenly to distribute the oil. Return the slices to the reheated pan and lightly brown on both sides. Alternately, bake them in a 350-degree oven or put them on the grill. You want golden-brown slices of toast. While you've been making the perfect toast, the flavors in the dressed tomatoes have had a chance to work their magic. When ready to serve, just spoon the tomato mixture onto the toast pieces. Arrange on a platter with some additional basil and parsley for garnish if desired. Enjoy!"

Lisa Fielding's Tomato Jam

Main Street Magazine is of course a wonderful and beautiful resource of information on our area, but another is the online e-newsletter *Rural Intelligence*. Described as celebrating "the best of rural life in Berkshire, Columbia, northern Dutchess and northern Litchfield counties," one of those "bests" is, naturally enough, food. The recipes are wonderful. They're contributed by Lisa Fielding of Secret Ingredients, a caterer based in Westport, Connecticut. I asked if she would share her recipe for Tomato Jam, and she graciously agreed.

Here it is: Tomato jam is one of those layered confections wherein you can taste the rich spices, heat, sweet and savory. It's one of my



Above: When it's too hot to cook, this is what Nancy Fuller eats. Photo: Jamie Prescott.

favorite concoctions to eat and it is also a lovely hostess gift so make a big batch this summer when tomatoes are at their peak and spread the love. Tomato jam is still relatively unknown and you can't find it on your grocer's shelf either, which makes it that much more special.

- 2 lbs. tomatoes (any variety), cored and coarsely chopped
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 tablespoons fresh squeezed lime juice
- 2 tablespoons freshly grated ginger
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1 pkg. unflavored gelatin

1. Combine all ingredients with the exception of the gelatin in a heavy saucepan.
2. Bring to a boil over medium heat stirring often. Reduce heat and simmer, stirring occasionally until mixture has thickened considerably for about an hour.
3. Taste, adjust seasoning (I err on adding more cloves and red pepper

flakes), and remove from heat.

4. Dissolve gelatin in a small bowl with a few tablespoons of the jam. Add a tablespoon of water if necessary. Add to the tomato jam and cook over low heat for an additional fifteen minutes.
5. Remove from the heat and cool. Spoon into a jam jar and seal.
6. Refrigerate. Jam will last for several weeks until opened.

The Ridler's Tossed Caprese Salad

Stephen Ridler is the Market Manager for the Troy Waterfront Farmer's Market, which is celebrating 20 years this year and showcases 100 vendors. He and his family live in Troy and are also urban farmers, participating in a community garden near their home. They grow tomatoes there. When I asked him how he best enjoys a ripe summer

Continued on next page ...

tomato, he didn't hesitate: "Just eat them." When I pressed for a recipe, he and his daughter Jillian shared a family favorite.

"Take a loaf of really good day-old bread," he said. "Break it into pieces and put them in a bowl. Chop up tomatoes, seeds and all, and toss them in with the bread. Add some onions, cilantro, basil, mozzarella, olive oil, and some really good balsamic vinegar. The older the better. A little salt and pepper, and it's done."

"It's Just Too Hot to Cook" Dinner from Nancy Fuller

When I think about chefs and farmers in the area, I always think about Nancy Fuller. I met her when we first moved to the area and started the Hudson-Chatham Winery. She and her husband, David, own Ginsberg's Foods, and several years ago she launched a show on the *Food Network* called "Farmhouse Rules." It features her cooking with the Hudson Valley foods she grew up with. Nancy is gregarious and charming and enthusiastic about everything, and her cookbook, *Farmhouse Rules*, is full of that energy. I had to share this recipe, whose title says it all for summer: "It's Just Too Hot to Cook!" Here it is.

"When David and I come home from work on a hot summer day and I don't want to cook, this recipe is a winner! It's a lovely, light dinner and the only heat you need to add is a few minutes of the toaster for the bread. If you have a big family like my daughter Nita does, are throwing a simple dinner party, or are feeding a herd of hungry farmers, you might want to double the recipe!"

8 slices sourdough bread
2 medium zucchini
1 ½ cups jarred roasted bell peppers, sliced
3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar plus 4 teaspoons for drizzling
6 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
½ cup fresh basil leaves

Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper
2 ripe summer tomatoes
1 (12-ounce) ball fresh unsalted mozzarella cheese
8 cups mixed baby greens
Crushed red pepper flakes (optional)

Lightly toast the bread in the oven or a toaster and set aside.

Cut the ends from the zucchini. With a vegetable peeler, shave the zucchini, skin and all, into long ribbons into a large bowl, stopping when you get to the very seedy core. Add the roasted peppers to the bowl and sprinkle with the vinegar and olive oil. Tear the basil leaves into the bowl, leaving a handful for garnish at the end. Season with salt and pepper and toss well. Let sit while you assemble the rest of the ingredients.

Thickly slice the tomatoes and season with salt and pepper. Thickly slice the mozzarella.

Arrange the greens on four plates. Top with the toasts, then the sliced mozzarella, then the sliced tomatoes. Mound the marinated zucchini and pepper mixture on top of the cheese and drizzle the sandwiches with any dressing left in the bowl. Tear the remaining basil over the top and sprinkle with the red pepper flakes if you'd like a little heat. Drizzle with balsamic vinegar and serve immediately.

(Excerpted from FARMHOUSE RULES: Simple, Seasonal Meals for the Whole Family by Nancy Fuller. Copyright © 2015 by Fuller Farms, LLC. Reprinted with permission of Grand Central Publishing. All rights reserved).

Bob Hoover's Classic Gazpacho

As I gathered these tomato recipes and stories, it surprised me that gazpacho wasn't offered by someone. I have such fond memories of gazpacho from trips to Spain and also from my own childhood. My father rarely cooked, but he loved gazpacho, and he made it in the traditional Spanish way so that we could add extra veggies to our liking.



Above: Her family waits all year for Nicole's tomato mango salsa.
Photo: Nicole Friedrich.

3 large, ripe tomatoes
1 cucumber, peeled, seeds removed, and diced
½ yellow onion, diced
1 green pepper, seeds removed, diced
3 cups tomato juice (he used V8)
3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil (Spanish if you have it)
Dash (or two) of hot sauce (or you can use spicy V8)
Salt and pepper to taste
Good bread or croutons

Into a blender or food processor, add two of the tomatoes, chopped. Then add half of the diced cucumber, all of the onion, and half of the diced green pepper. Pour the tomato juice over the vegetables and add the vinegar and olive oil. Pulse the ingredients into a coarse liquid. It should be liquid but slightly lumpy. Pour the soup into a bowl, add the hot sauce if desired, and season to taste with salt and pepper. Refrigerate for several hours.

Put the reserved diced vegetables into separate bowls. Halve the last tomato and remove as many seeds as possible, then dice it and put it in a bowl. Put the bowls in the refrigerator.

When ready to serve, put the soup and the bowls of veggies out so everyone can help themselves. Croutons are a nice addition, too. Or serve with good bread.

A word from our staff

Last but certainly not least, I thought I should ask the fine folks who publish this magazine for their thoughts on tomatoes. I'm so glad I did, because here's what Thorunn replied: "I detest tomatoes! I've never liked them, and I think there's nothing worse than that slimy tomato juice! Yuck." She was quick to add that her director of advertising, Ashley Kristjansson, feels just the opposite, so I asked her how she enjoys them.

"I don't have any recipes for tomatoes (I'm honestly not much of a cook at all)," Ashley shared. "I do, however, LOVE tomatoes on my sandwiches and in salads, and there is nothing better than a fresh tomato straight out of the garden. Especially a cherry tomato right off the vine! My mouth is watering just thinking about it – way better than any candy bar! I also really like yellow tomatoes, too, which are less acidic. And purple tomatoes." Well, perhaps Ashley will gather up some fresh tomatoes and hit the kitchen with a few of these recipes!

Happy Summer and happy tomato season! ●

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What they found was overwhelming. "People pushed their babies at us," recalls Kathy. "They tugged at our sleeves with tears in their eyes and begged us to help their children." In Naga City, approximately 300 families arrived hoping their children would receive surgery, but the team could only treat 40 children. As they prepared to leave, the Magees made a promise they would return to help more children.

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Dressing the part

ALICE AND RONNIE LINDHOLM ARE THE TALENTS BEHIND A VINTAGE CLOTHING RENTAL WAREHOUSE IN COOKS FALLS

By Regina Molaro
info@mainstreetmag.com

Miles from the bright lights, rolling cameras, and buzzing action of the film, TV, and theater industry is Cooks Falls – a quiet town in the Catskills where the Beaver Kill's trickling waters entice anglers. Renowned as a top destination for trout fishing and the birthplace of American Dry Fly Fishing isn't the region's only claim to fame.

Since 1986, the area has been home to Right to the Moon Alice – a vintage clothing rental warehouse that specializes in fashions that span from the 1940s to the 1990s. It's a go-to destination for costume designers, creatives from costume departments, and set decorators to source period clothing for productions.

When fashionista Midge Maisel of *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* beguiles audiences with her stunning lineup of glamorous dresses, there's a likelihood that some of them hail from Right to the Moon Alice.

Beyond *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*, the rental warehouse has worked with *The Deuce*, *Green Book*, *Orange Is the New Black*, *The Sopranos*, and *Young Sheldon*, among other notable productions.

Vintage wares

At the helm of the company are Alice and Ronnie Lindholm. The couple

met many moons ago in New York City while Alice was working as an actress and Ronnie as a lighting and special effects technician for Broadway shows.

At the time, the vintage fashion category was a relatively untapped market. As a fun side business, Alice and Ronnie began selling vintage wares during the '70s out of a Manhattan loft. Over the years, they also sold their fashions at antique shows and art deco festivals from the New York area to Miami.

A visionary, Alice always had a passion and appreciation for vintage. "As a kid, I always preferred wearing hand-me-downs," reveals Alice.

When the vintage aesthetic started going mainstream, Alice and Ronnie decided to take their show on the road. In the mid '80s, they partnered with colleges and universities with notable art and design programs to launch "pop-up shops" (before the term "pop-up shop" was even coined) in the Northeast. They spent lots of time selling to fashionistas in New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and beyond.

Wearing many hats...

Throughout the years, the entrepreneurial duo wore many hats as they tailored their business to evolve with



the shifting times. It was back in 1986, when they made the decision to escape the city and relocate to the Cooks Falls area. The region's reputation as a top-notch trout fishing destination is what lured the duo to this riverfront town. A native of Montana, Ronnie is an avid fly fisherman and sculptor.

It was in this location that the business officially became known as Right to the Moon Alice. When coining the name, Ronnie was inspired by comedian Jackie Gleason who played Ralph Kramden in *The Honeymooners*. At the time, Alice and Ronnie were selling lots of styles that hailed from the '50s – Alice's favorite era for fashion. The first episode of *The Honeymooners* also aired in 1955. The name Right to the Moon Alice also tied-in to fictional character Alice Kramden – Ralph's on-screen wife. During *The Honeymooners*, Ralph would frequently say, "to the Moon Alice!"

Continued on next page ...





Deviating from the sales-oriented focus of the past, Alice and Ronnie repositioned their business as a rental company for costume designers, costume departments, and set decorators. Their extensive collection currently spans 40,000 square-feet of space. An expansion scheduled to be completed in the fall will bring the total to 50,000 square-feet.

Right to the Moon Alice's offers designer apparel, and an extensive collection of accessories, which includes handbags, shoes and boots, hats, scarves, and beyond. The collection is also rich in leather, coats, sweaters, denim, and swimsuits, as well as men's tuxedos, suits and ties, and military apparel. It also includes a large collection of children's apparel and accessories.

A "Renaissance Man," Ronnie is adept with his hands, so when the displays and fixtures need to be rearranged, it's Ronnie who steps in to spearhead construction needs.

Getting in character

While some costume designers and set decorators personally visit Cooks Falls to source for their productions, others rely on Alice's flair for selecting styles. They provide her with a snapshot of each character they're dressing. It includes economic level, size, color preferences, and beyond.

Since Alice has prior experience working as an actress, she enjoys the task of snapping into character mode. "Excavating my past acting skills in an effort to 'try-on' the personalities of each character I help dress, embraces skills from my past along with other skills that I've learned recently. To imagine what someone in any given situation and socio-economic class would choose to wear requires a focus that requires me to be in an almost meditative zone," reveals Alice.

When asked to share a few highlights of some of her previous jobs, Alice recalls a recent experience working with *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* team. When the show was filming in the Catskills, one of the costume designers turned to Alice when a fashion emergency arose. It was late in the afternoon and the crew was preparing to film a party scene, but didn't have enough party dresses, suits, and shoes to deck out the cast. Time was slipping away and the scene needed to be

filmed before dark. The team rushed over to meet with Alice. Together they zipped through the cocktail section, pulling party attire items for the characters.

Alice finds a bit of humor in another memory while working with *The Sopranos*. The wardrobe team informed Alice of their need for leather goods to be featured in a pork store scene. Alice struggled to find a connection between the pork store and leather. The wardrobe team explained that during the scene, the Tony Soprano character would be peddling stolen leather goods out of the back room of a pork store. That was Alice's "aha" moment.

The colorful fashions that line the walls of Right to the Moon Alice have had many lives and continue to take on new roles in film and theater. Beyond being worn by fictional characters on screen, they've been worn by real people who have experienced milestones both big and small while donning these clothes. When strolling the warehouse space, I imagined the countless people who once wore these garments and all the emotions, occasions, and stories behind each piece. ●

To learn more about Right to the Moon Alice, you can visit them online at www.righttothemoonalice.com



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Peaches, pears & plums

By Lisa LaMonica
info@mainstreetmag.com

It's summertime and those words conjure mouth watering images of color and taste bursts. Columbia County in New York State is home to Love Apple Farm in Ghent, which within its 50 year history, has reinvented itself spectacularly.

The newer market, cafe and bakery opened in summer of 2016 offering over 9,000 square feet of products and savories from local farm partners and purveyors. Meats, cheeses, fresh produce, groceries, children's eco-friendly shampoos, finger paints and toys, eco-friendly cleaning supplies, even eco-friendly diapers and baby wipes are readily available. There are numerous home goods for weekend and holiday entertaining, which are also great for giving as hostess gifts.

Fresh baked

The cafe and bakery offers pies, scones, cookies, ice creams, and daily breads offered year-round, not just in the summer. The cafe offers breakfast and lunch daily with a menu that showcases Love Apple Farm's local partners and catering is available. "Fresh not fast" is the motto for soups, salads, and sandwiches.

Love Apple Farm is pleased to have a new addition, Bailey Sangret, as their new baker. "I believe in using fresh, local ingredients from people who also have their eyes in the details. It makes for an extraordinary collabora-

tion. I am amazed by the bounty of the food the Hudson Valley has to offer and I am forever grateful to all the farmers who make it possible. Without them, I couldn't do what I do."

The Viva Mexico dishes such as tostadas and tacos are inspired by the Martinez family and their place in the Love Apple Farm family since 1969. Jane's ice cream is refreshing and handmade in the Hudson Valley since 1985. Cones and sundae toppings to enjoy on site or to make at home are all available.

They've got animals, too!

Love Apple Farm's petting zoo is open year round as well and gives children a tactile treat as well as the opportunity to host birthday parties.

The U-Pick season, always weather dependent, this year will run from July until November. The farm at Love Apple grows apples, sweet and sour cherries, peaches, plums, blueberries, raspberries, and gooseberries. New York is apple country and Love Apple Farm does not disappoint with their selection: Braeburn, Cortland, Golden Delicious, Gala, Jonagold, McIntosh, Paula Red, Honey Crisp, Fuji, Ginger Gold, Jonathan, Empire, Idared, Rome, Sensa, Fortune, Jonamac, Macoun, and Zestar are all for the picking. The beautiful orchards are open 9am-5pm for your walk-



ing and hiking pleasure, but please no pets permitted within orchards or playgrounds due to strict NYS Agricultural Health Laws.

A little bit of art

Francis Greenburger and his wife Isabelle Autones have brought culture to the country since adding the Love Apple Art Space to Love Apple Farm atop the hill with lofty views in a refurbished 1800s farmhouse. In addition to purchasing the entire enterprise in 2012, Francis has also Omi International Art Center to his credit.

The Art Space this summer and fall is home to the Francis Greenburger Collection with exhibiting artists from the Art & Buildings Program of rotating art from Time Equities' many additional buildings. This year's featured artists are Alice Aycock, Tarik Currimbhoy, Julia Greenberger, Renee Iacone, and Alain Kirili. "I always thought I was an accidental collector," Greenburger said, sitting in his 15th-floor West Village office during an interview. The Francis J. Greenburger Collection now has close to 1,000 pieces, to which Francis replied: "That

many? Good grief," when interviewed by *ArtNews* in 2015.

Not only has Francis supported the arts by purchasing works of art from artists but he also created in 1985 the Francis J. Greenburger Awards going to artists whose work is under-recognized; giving grants sometimes of up to \$12,000.

There is still time to enjoy the free admission to the Under The Tent Music series on Sunday from 1-4pm. Alex P. and the Shoestring Revue perform on August 11 while the Wild Weeds kicks it up on August 25. Fall events may be added soon too so please be sure to follow Love Apple Farm on social media and visit the website often.

Before the seasons tumble into one another, plan a visit for yourself or with friends and family! ●

Love Apple Farm is open 8am-6pm, 7 days a week, year round and it is located at: 1421 State Route 9H, Ghent, NY. You can call them at (518) 828-5048 or visit them online at www.loveapplefarm.com.



Photos courtesy of Love Apple Farm.



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91 years young: THE BERKSHIRE THEATRE GROUP

By CB Wismar
info@mainstreetmag.com

“What’s past is prologue.”

So true is that quotation from Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* that it is chiseled in the granite base of Robert Aitken’s sculpture, *Future*, that guards The National Archives Building in Washington, DC. For the energetic team that comprises The Berkshire Theatre Group, that truth is a living, breathing reality that flows over nine decades, across three stages, through a comedy cabaret, and out into a receptive community.

When Kate Maguire became both artistic director and CEO of “the BTG” as it’s known in local shorthand, she merged a theatrical career that began at the ripe old age of four with an organization that stretches from Pittsfield to Stockbridge, MA, and includes the grand Colonial Theatre, built in 1903, with The Fitzpatrick Main Stage (its history dating back to the 1880s as The Stockbridge Casino) and the Unicorn Theatre.

The theatrical offerings on those three stages are as different as the buildings, themselves. The Colonial Theatre in Pittsfield offers a year-round season that permits Kate Maguire and her team to bring sprawling musicals to an eager audience. The Fitzpatrick Main Stage in Stockbridge is home to classical pieces as well as world premieres of new, exciting work. The Unicorn

Theatre provides a wonderfully intimate theater setting flexible enough to mount musicals like last season’s revival of *Hair* to the four member cast of this year’s charming *Outside Mullingar*.

And, then, there’s “The Garage.” In a space generously carved out adjacent to The Colonial Theatre’s lobby, BTG has crafted a venue for stand-up comedy and cabaret concerts featuring area performers and touring comedians and musicians who make Pittsfield a welcome stop on their peripatetic wanderings.

Beyond plays and musicals, the Colonial stage also welcomes touring groups. Fall performances will be as varied as blues great Albert Cummings and the Russian Ballet Theatre performing *Swan Lake*.

A vibrant educational program

The summer camp and intern/apprentice programs offered by BTG find a joyful resolution with the staging of musicals at The Colonial

carefully designed to attract and engage a younger audience. *Shrek – The Musical* will carry that tradition forward from August 1–17. “We’ll have over 120 local elementary and middle school students fully engaged in the program and on stage,” reflects Maguire with the knowing smile of one who knows the patience and elation of moving adolescent cast members from awkward stage fright to exuberant performers. “These programs do many things, but perhaps the most important result is that the participants become part of a wider, exciting community and truly get a sense of themselves.”

Closely following *Shrek – The Musical* will be *You’re a Good Man, Charlie Brown* and, in October, *Willy Wonka Kids* based on the book *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* by Roald Dahl.

So keen is the interest in delivering a bountiful educational offering that BTG has an executive director of education, Allison Rachele Bayles. Overseeing the year-round



Above: The Colonial Theatre in Pittsfield, MA. Photo by Nicholas Whitman. Below, left: The Fitzpatrick Main Stage in Stockbridge, MA. Photos courtesy of The Berkshire Theatre Group.



Continued on next page ...



Above, top to bottom: Kate Maguire. Photo by Eric Korenman. The Barn and The Unicorn Theatre in Stockbridge, MA. Photos courtesy of The Berkshire Theatre Group.

program, she has piloted the expansion from serving a few hundred students to include “touring shows, an after-school program, field trip opportunities, summer classes, internships and job shadow opportunities.”

Kate Maguire calls the education program “the core of BTG’s vision to enrich and give back to our community.” BTG Plays! not only brings theater to classrooms and camps, but offers annual scholarships that provide campers the chance to attend shows, fund field trips for school groups to attend live performances, support seasonal interns in acting, production and administration and even provide an annual award for talented candidates striving to have a career in theatrical directing.

You will laugh ... you will cry

As wide an impact as Berkshire Theatre Group may have on the communities of Western Massachusetts – BTG Plays! was formed in 1928 and touches 13,000 school children each year across 15 towns – it is the high-profile theatrical productions on the three stages that attracts regional, even national attention.

Already in the 2019 Summer Season, the Unicorn Theatre has hosted two exceptional plays. *Outside Mullingar* directed by celebrated actor/director Karen Allen transported the audience to rural Ireland and the tragic, comedic world of Irish wit and wisdom. It was, however, the first offering of the season – *The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?* written by Edward Albee that was the product of Kate Maguire’s restless nights. “I woke up one morning, turned to my husband and said, ‘I think it’s time for *The Goat*.’”

And so it was. Between cutting edge dramas, world premieres (*What We May Be* a comedy written by Kathleen Clark and directed by Gregg Edelman will open on August 8 on The Fitzpatrick Main Stage in Stockbridge), and stalwart classics like Thornton Wilder’s *The Skin of our Teeth*, the season offerings are varied, ambitious and of relentless high quality.

The Berkshire Theatre Company is fiercely loyal to its communities but equally committed to the highest levels of professional theater that attract an audience that is willing to travel some distances to be challenged and entertained. The ambitious presentation of *Working*, a musical based on the work of Studs Terkel that includes music by Lin-Manuel Miranda of *Hamilton* fame and local iconic troubadour James Taylor can be held up as just such a venture.

The stars have come out in the Berkshires

Carrying forward the “past/prologue” concept, the combining of the rich heritage of The Colonial Theatre and impeccable reputation of The Berkshire Theatre Festival in 2010 forged a bond between two

great histories and created a unified, enterprising organization – The Berkshire Theatre Group.

The pedigree of The Colonial Theatre had included celebrated appearances by John and Ethel Barrymore, Sarah Bernhardt, Eubie Blake, George M. Cohan, Will Rogers and band impresario John Philip Sousa.

For its part, the Berkshire Theatre Festival had staged plays from 1928 onward with such internationally celebrated actors as Buster Keaton, Gloria Swanson, Al Pacino, Jane Wyatt, Cicely Tyson, Hector Elizondo, Isabella Rossellini, Richard Chamberlin, Chris Noth, and Lois Nettleton.

And, true to the axiom, the parade of notables continues, this year welcoming George Wendt who charmed audiences for years as Norm on all 271 episodes of *Cheers* to the current production of *Rock and Roll Man*, the Alan Freed story, at the Colonial.

And, what of the prologue? The remainder of the summer season on the Berkshire Theatre Group’s stages is a rich one and the combination of performance and education rolls well into the fall. Varied, complex, engaging and altogether satisfying, The Berkshire Theatre Group celebrates the present ... and eagerly anticipates what is to come. •

The full schedule of offerings for The Berkshire Theatre Group can be accessed via their website at www.berkshiretheatregroup.org. Through the site, tickets for all of the programs can be purchased. For additional information, a call to (413) 997-4444 will provide just that.

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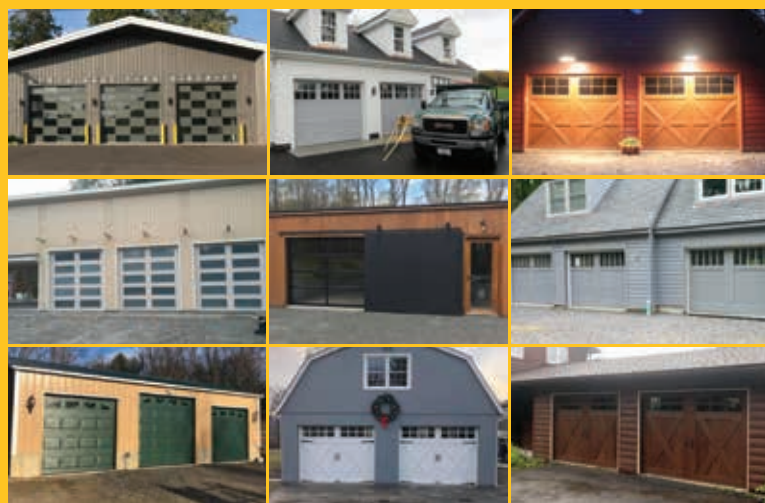


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For the past year and a half, residents of the Tri-state area have been treated to one of the most unique and personal kinds of healthcare ever experienced in the healthcare industry. Great Barrington Integrative Wellness (GBIW) began as the combined vision of Dr. Jay Kain, who has been practicing in the Berkshires for over 36 years, and Lori Parsons, a Health, Wellness and Exercise Science expert, who recently joined forces to create a one-of-a-kind Combined Hands Manual Therapy approach. It comes as no surprise that the young practice has made such a positive impact given that GBIW offers a wide range of health services that have had profound healing effects on acute and chronic pain, orthopedic and neurologic injuries, auto-immune diseases, food sensitivities, inflammation, stress disorders, and much more! In a short time, the comprehensive holistic and integrative wellness practice has extended its outreach beyond Great Barrington to include patients from all over the country and abroad. GBIW stands out as Berkshire County's only Combined Hands Therapy practice! When asked what they envision for GBIW going forward, Kain and Parsons echo the identical goal, to “share their work within the community through innovative treatments and globally through teaching workshops to anyone striving to achieve optimal health. Both of us are fully committed to supporting each individual's progression towards self-care and wellness.”



The Hair Lounge

A color and hair design studio. 143 Route 44, Millerton, NY. (518) 592-1167.

One of the keys to beauty is feeling comfortable in your own skin, and at this neighborhood salon in Millerton, NY, customers cannot help but feel relaxed when they walk in the door – and glowing with confidence when they walk out. Aptly named The Hair Lounge, this quaint local business sits right off Route 44 just east of Main Street Millerton where feeling like a member of the community is most rewarding for owner Loren Whiteley who says, “We have all been working together for eight plus years, a lot of our clients know one another when they come in so it's a very friendly, fun atmosphere.” Though it officially opened its doors in September of 2018, Loren and her staff have been working locally for most of their lives making this young business already a familiar part of the fabric of the local community. The Hair Lounge is a full-service salon offering not just haircuts but coloring, highlighting, Brazilian blowouts, and facial waxing as well. The future is already bright for The Hair Lounge but for Loren, the future brings the hope of fostering new relationships with members of the community, “I hope to see many years of continued relationships with our loyal clients and hope to meet many new clients as well. We love making people feel beautiful when they walk out the door!”



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Buying a home in the Hudson Valley has become as much an attraction as the area itself in recent years. With so many towns and idyllic properties driving the headwind of prosperity it can become somewhat of a dizzying experience trying to put down residential roots. At Columbia County Real Estate Specialists, co-founders Margaret and John Avenia have witnessed the evolution of the area firsthand and understand intuitively the combination of *nouveau* charm and honest rural aesthetic it takes to find the perfect home setting. This native intuition isn't something that the Avenias take lightly, having spent their entire lives being a part of the fabric of their community, Hudson Valley real estate essentially runs in their blood. Margaret has spent her life cultivating relationships across the region with honesty and an infectious personality. In 1961, her grandfather George H. Beach started a real estate company of his own in Spencertown, NY. Forty years later Margaret joined her grandfather where she learned the values of persistence and perseverance that exist in the very nature of the members of the Hudson Valley and that are essential when helping individuals find the home of their dreams. Margaret says her grandfather often told her, “the key to being successful is integrity, honesty, and hard work.” Today, the spirit of those ambitions live on in Columbia County Real Estate Specialist's commitment to the community where they live.



PRIME

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One of the first questions homeowners ask themselves when contemplating a fresh coat of paint on the exterior of their homes has surprisingly little to do with color, texture, or anything aesthetic, and more to do with the temperatures outside. “What time of the year should I consider painting my home?” is one of the most commonly asked within the industry. For anyone in need of a paint job in the immediate future, thankfully, we are in the prime painting season right now. The aptly named PRIME painting specializes in knowing what best suits your exterior painting needs right down to the ideal weather conditions. Owner Broderick Jennings also offers interior painting services as well as staining, protective coatings, refinishing, and driveway sealcoating. With his extensive experience in large-scale painting projects on both bridges and expansive architecture, Broderick has begun focusing his skills on residences around the Hudson Valley. Though his business may be in its infancy, Broderick's highly skilled background gives him a unique advantage when it comes to personalized knowledge and care. He prides himself on his willingness to work with any customer request and being able to show up to every new project himself, ready to see the job through to its completion.

INSURING YOUR WORLD

This column is devoted to some "Quick Hit Thoughts" regarding potential coverage issues that most folks are not aware of until they have a loss and are told they have no coverage. Uber or Lyft drivers are NOT covered by their respective personal auto policies while transporting riders. Homeowners that use their detached barns or outbuildings for business purposes are NOT covered under a homeowners policy. Fine arts or special antiques are NOT covered for their intrinsic value under a homeowners policy. Cash money is limited to \$500-\$1000 in coverage under all homeowners policies. Antique or classic vehicles need to have "Stated Value" coverage to be covered for their actual appraised value which is NOT covered under a standard auto policy. Individual health insurance has NO waiting period for pre-existing illnesses or injuries. All homeowners policies EXCLUDE flood and earthquake coverage. Tractors and lawn mowers are NOT covered for liability once they leave the insureds premise. These are but a few types of potential coverage issues that commonly are NOT reviewed yet should be noted that may apply to you!



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Tooth decay – formation & prevention

A cavity first forms when bacteria demineralize enamel, the outer aspect and hardest part of the tooth surface. When bacteria are allowed to sit on teeth, a plaque biofilm forms. Most of the bacteria are naturally occurring throughout our mouths, but are given an opportunity to thrive upon consuming food and drinks that contain sugar. The growth of the plaque biofilm produces acids. Once acids weaken the enamel, they are left to attack the next and softer portion of our teeth, the dentin. Bacteria can come in contact with the most inner layer of the tooth, the pulp. The pulp can become irritated and one may feel discomfort while chewing, and, in more advanced stages, it is possible to experience pain or swelling. As the bacterial insult progresses, the body mounts an immune response to fight the initial insult to the tooth. This can lead to an abscess, which may require a root canal or extraction. The best way to prevent cavities is proper home care: brushing twice daily with a fluoride toothpaste, flossing once daily, and minimizing sweet, sticky foods and beverages – all of which can greatly reduce the risk of cavities. Regular visits to your dentist can help reduce the risk of cavities and halt the progression before they become too advanced. The dental visit usually involves x-rays or radiographs once a year to assess the areas of the teeth that cannot be viewed clinically. Various filling materials can be used to fill cavities, your dentist will recommend which type of material is best for you. If your dentist does find a cavity, do not fret, it's not uncommon to have cavities. Tooth decay is preventable! Regular dental visits, proper oral hygiene, and good eating habits can save your teeth!



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NOT ALL GUTTERS ARE CREATED EQUAL

Sometimes we neglect our gutters. It's understandable, they are manufactured for the very purpose of blending in with our homes and being easily unnoticed, it's part of their function. However, our gutters play a vital role in protecting the integrity of our homes by diverting rain and other types of water run-off. By directing the flow of water away from our homes, gutters help to protect our foundations, prevent structural erosion, and basement flooding. Summertime presents the perfect opportunity to check our gutters for clogs and cracking in preparation for the upcoming leaf fall, as well as ice and snow. Homeowners should know that not all gutters are alike, seamless gutters present certain advantages that your average length of gutter simply cannot. Firstly, and perhaps most importantly for homeowners, seamless gutters provide a more pleasing aesthetic that holds its finished look longer than the average sectional gutters. Seamless gutters are manufactured for the express purpose of providing better protection for your home. Regular gutters have seams of course, and more joints holding sections together therefore they are more prone to leaks and wherever those seams exist the gutter is more likely to sag and hold water. Not only can the seams in sectional gutters leak, they also have a tendency to hold other things like the dreaded clog. When debris causes these clogs water is unable to flow and drain freely, causing potentially damaging backups. One of the most efficient aspects of seamless gutters, and one we offer at Superior Seamless Gutters, is the capacity for a custom fit. Using a specialized gutter machine on location, we guarantee a perfect fit no matter how unique the gutter location may be.



STONE: THEN AND NOW

History is full of trends and cycles especially when it comes to architecture and home aesthetics. Ever since the construction of the Roman Coliseum in antiquity, stones have been used to emphasize the power of the natural world in architecture. Today, the use of stone veneer is coming back in style around the Hudson Valley. The term "stone veneer" may automatically bring to mind the image of manufactured or *faux* stone in the minds of many customers and home remodelers, however the manufacturing process behind the stone veneer product does not necessarily mean that the stones themselves aren't genuine. There are indeed two types of stone veneer available in the marketplace, both manufactured and natural stone veneer, and they provide customers with a similar look that can immediately breathe new life into any landscape, outdoor patio, or home siding project. With the advent of new stone cutting systems, stone veneer projects are more accessible and less labor intensive than they have ever been before. Today, manufactured stone is made by using a unique concrete mixture that is poured into a variety of rubber mouldings that feature different pigments blended together in a streamlined process that allows the manufactured stones to maintain the integrity of actual carved stone. The look is one thing, but manufactured stone's lightweight constitution means that the veneers are as versatile as any construction material in the industry. Even natural stone veneer has benefited from modern processes that cut them into thin slabs, reducing the time and effort it takes to transport them from site to site. At Ghent Wood Products, we offer a variety of stone veneers as well as natural stone slabs including Fieldstone, Thermal Bluestone, and Colonial stone.

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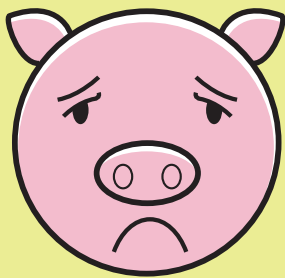
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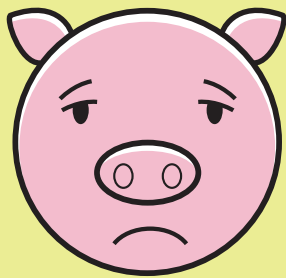
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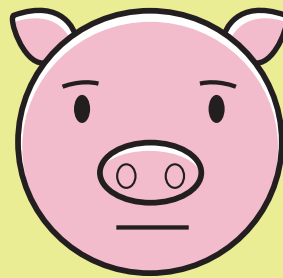
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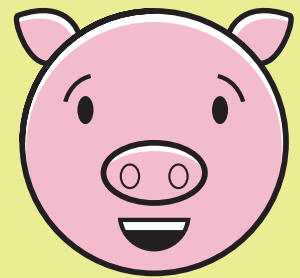
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