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After



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LET'S SHOW MORE LOVE...

The month has arrived for all of you lovers out there: February is here! So break out the chocolate and the romantic dinner for two... or three or four if you have kids. The more the merrier!

For this shortest month of the year, we have decided to focus on family and our community. All of the articles in this issue somehow tie into that subject, and frankly, it's hard not to! Just about everything in our region ties into our greater community and revolves around family in some fashion. This issue has some fun and happiness, as well as some trials, tribulations, and sadness. But even in the darkest of times, the best of humanity often shines and that is best highlighted in one story in particular. We hope that this February issue reminds you of the incredible community that you are a part of and all that it has to offer each one of us.

As we sit here and tick in the first few days of 2021, we have already undergone a tremendous amount of changes. We now have a new President. Covid vaccines are more widely being given out in hopes that we can get control over this pandemic. A lot has changed for us in these last 12 months, both good and bad. My hope is that with the rising sun and the longer days that are in our near future, that we retain the positives that have come out of this crisis that overtook our Earth this past year. And I also hope that we have learned valuable lessons from this past year that we'll take with us going forward. And of course we are all hoping for a return to some form of previous normalcy with increasing numbers of vaccines being distributed. So with all of those hopes and dreams outlined in black and white here, don't you think that focusing on family and community couldn't be more fitting?

Perhaps we also take a look around and take in what we have all, collectively, been through in the past 12 months. And perhaps, the most valuable lesson we take from it is to show our unity and humanity. Some of our neighbors could use a helping hand, or at least a check-in, while some would just appreciate a simple "hello" – the gestures don't have to be large. But showing a little humanity and compassion can make all of the difference, for those that we give it to as well as to you too for giving/showing it.

So perhaps we can all push ourselves to make 2021 about compassion, understanding, and a little bit more love. You can never give (or receive for that matter) enough love, so what can it hurt? So dear reader, I am sending my love to you, happy February, and thank you for reading.

– Thorunn Kristjansdottir



FEBRUARY 2021

The micro details of February and Mother Nature are beautiful.

Cover photo by
Lazlo Gyorsok

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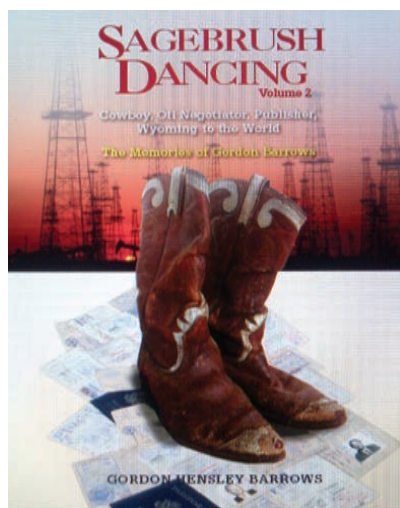
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And, the story continues

ARTIST PROFILE: PATTY EWALD



By CB Wismar
info@mainstreetmag.com

There is a term used freely in analyzing novels, screenplays, even 30-second commercials for use on television. “Story arc.” It’s really shorthand for the always critical questions of “How does the story start, what happens and how does it end?”

Patty Ewald has not come to the end of her story arc, but the adventures, so far, have been the stuff of a decent screenplay or a “can’t put it down” novel.

Born and reared in Atlanta, GA, Patty Ewald – or Peregrine Potter as she continues to use her *nom de plume* – was born to an industrialist who had served in World War II and come home to make his fortune and his wife, a theatrical performer. From childhood, Patty could draw on the logic of how business works and a complete appreciation of the arts.

School behind her, she ended up married, in the city of Worcester, MA, looking for not just any job, but something that would engage, challenge, and satisfy her incredible curiosity.

Arts in the city

These were the days of government funding for social projects, the focus on strengthening neighborhoods by providing programs and motivation for residents – especially children – to learn and grow. Patty joined the city government to work in the Model Cities program and turned to cultivating the arts in the community. Working with the schools, the “Discovery Program” was launched and supplemented by a large-scale summer

arts series “Summer’s World,” which brought concerts and performances to Worcester in celebration of the diversity of its population and in celebration of the heritage of each group that made up the city’s population.

And, if you look at a story arc, the first half is all about the climb. How does one build on creating and managing fresh, exciting programs for a medium-sized city? One gets a call from the mayor of a big city with the invitation to come and visit.

Patty’s tenure on Mayor Kevin White’s staff in the City of Boston did not last long, but not for lack of challenge. It was just that, when things were beginning to come together in the Neighborhood Improvement Team within the office of the Consumer’s Commission, the phone rang, again, and Patty answered the siren call of a national stage.

Armed with certification in Arts Administration from Harvard Business School, she joined the national headquarters of the AFL-CIO in Washington, DC, and dove into the task of evaluating labor economics with a concentration in the various arts organizations that were gaining importance. Modeled on the Medieval “Guild” system, unions that represented screen actors, directors, writers, and musicians were supported by unions that represented theatrical stage employees and stage actors. It seemed that Patty’s experience in government, community organization, and arts management had all come together as she worked on the inside and gathered a list of friends and acquaintances that would make a syndicated gossip columnist jealous.

On the one hand, Patty Ewald was quite comfortable with the representatives of the vast pools of talent that

were part of the American cultural tapestry. At the same time, she was becoming quite familiar with the intricate workings of the Federal Government. She was, after all, billeted in Washington, DC, within sight of the Capital. When the Labor Department wanted verification, support, insight, information, and representation, it turned to the AFL-CIO, and whenever the arts were involved, they turned to Patty Ewald. She became a regular in congressional inquiries and journeyed, on behalf of the State Department to Geneva, Switzerland to United Nations Headquarters for the Creative Community Outreach Initiative where she met, among other international leaders, Nobel Laureate Lech Walesa, founder of Solidarity.

“Newman here...”

Despite the international intrigue and the often “heady” feeling of being near the seat of power, Patty Ewald’s story arc continued to evolve. The phone rang, again. This time, it was Paul Newman on the other end of the call. “Can you come to New York?”

The Actors Studio is a legendary place ... an almost sacred organization created by actors for actors, writers and directors. It is a closed community that charges no membership dues. Entrance into the famed group is attainable by audition, only, and highly coveted for the experiences that membership offers.

Among the theater and film legends who have been an active part of The Actors Studio are not only Newman, but Ellen Burstyn, Al Pacino, Marlon Brando, Jane Fonda, Robert De Niro, James Dean, Julie Harris, Norman Mailer, Jack Nicholson, Sally Field, Sidney Poitier... The list seems endless.

It was the time after Lee Strasberg, the driving force behind The Actors Studio, had died. There was a great hole at the top of the organization, and without strong leadership, the iconic building in the Theatre District would soon fall into disrepair and lack of use.

Creatives. Union leadership. Arts funding. Organizational skills. Leaking roof. Artistic egos. Common sense management. That was not the job description, but it might as well have been. Invited to Ellen Burstyn's home in suburban New York City and surrounded by giants of the acting and writing world, Patty agreed to a three month consultancy "to see what we could fix."

And, with that, the momentum on the journey across Patty Ewald's story arc increased to light speed. If DC was where government power resided, New York City is where creative power resided, and Patty was immersed in it from day one.

The next chapter

High profile positions demand high energy investments to say nothing of killer hours, tugs from every direction and the sense of exhaustion that begins in the chest and radiates out to every finger and toe. Patty needed a change, and it was time for another re-invention.

There had been a great deal of writing in her life. Reports, speeches, great applications, annual reports, thousands of letters, the occasional poem which nourished a habit she had begun as a child. But writing for communication is a very different discipline from writing for creative expression. Back to the "story arc," creative communication needs to tell a story ... a story that the reader can engage with, be intrigued by and drawn to as the pages turn.

For most of life, we read because we must. The law. The recipe. The installation instructions. When we read for enjoyment, the writing must be compelling.

Patty Ewald's new chapter began

as she became determined to capture her diverse skills and focus them on writing – on telling a story that had substance, energy, and grace. At the core of the writing discipline is the capacity to build on life experiences, push limits of imagination, and formulate ideas that live ... on "the story arc."

In her many travels in the creative and power circle of New York City, Patty had the chance to spend time with notable names – both in the dramatic arts, the broader artistic community ... her friendship with artist Peter Max was one such connection ... and the circle of power brokers who operate at the very top of the world's commerce.

Patty had met Gordon Hensley Barrows, a visionary in the global energy markets, and was in several conversations of his exploits, experiences, and insights. "I knew that his story would be fascinating ... but I also knew that he would never sit down and do his own memoir," recalls Patty. And with that insight, a new door opened and a major challenge presented itself.

Patty Ewald convinced Barrows that she could be the one to memorialize his story. The commitment spanned years, involved a complete immersion in the world of publishing, and consumed every hour of every day. She learned about the global energy markets, the ways of Western living, the preservation of landmarks, and the rarified air of corporate decision making at the very top. When finished, the multi-volume *Sagebrush Dancing* project had been all-consuming, but immensely gratifying. Having learned every aspect of idea to finished volume, Patty became not only writer but publisher. *Sagebrush Dancing* was published by Peregrine Potter Press, and the circle was complete.

Long a resident of New York City, Patty Ewald has found Northwestern Connecticut a welcome place to become immersed in the writer's life. There are books in work, screenplays outlined, and potential memoir proj-



ects on the horizon. From the vantage point of a hilltop home in Lime Rock, CT, Patty Ewald is intent on pursuing the next segment of her own "story arc." And, the journey should be a most interesting one. In the words of celebrated Falls Village playwright, Lonnie Carter, "Patty Ewald's breadth of imagination is boundless. Funny, smart, learned. A powerful talent." •

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 through the arts form on our "arts" page on our website.

Above, top to bottom: Patty Ewald with Paul Newman. Patty Ewald with Peter Max, Norman Mailer, and Robin Williams. Opposite page: The memoir that Ewald wrote entitled *Sagebrush Dancing*. All images courtesy of Patty Ewald.



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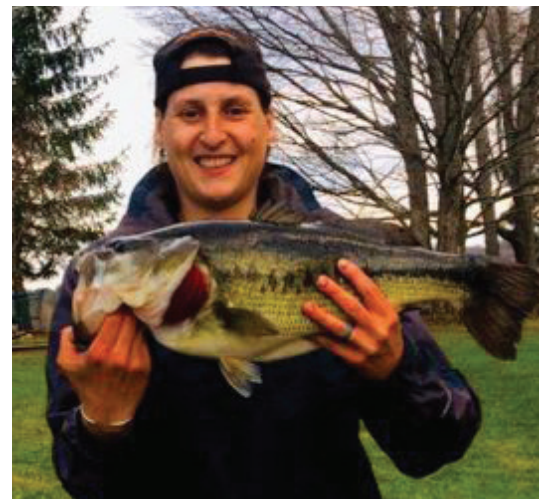
friendly faces: meet our neighbors, visitors and friends



As a certified ophthalmic scribe and technician, where she assists physicians with documentation of patients' medical records as well as performing vision and diagnostic tests, **Abby Della Cerra (Valden-Slater)** has truly found her calling in life as a self-confessed "eye nerd." As a result, Abby says, "I love seeing diagnostic images of our patients with different pathologies." Outside of work, Abby enjoys painting, crafting, hiking, cooking, and of course eating whatever she makes. "I'm originally from Ancramdale," she says. "What I love most about our area is its simple beauty, like the sky on a cloudless night." Undoubtedly, what Abby loves most in her life is her awesome family including her husband **Nick Della Cerra**, son **Anderson Della Cerra**, and extended family.



Zachary Nayer has been a music therapist for Premier Healthcare at two nursing facilities in our area for almost five years. "I mostly love doing music therapy for the residents at these facilities because I feel like I'm bringing something to them that they might have lost a long time ago," says Zach. "When they hear 'their' music, just seeing their reaction to the music can't even be described in words. It's something that you would have to see to believe." When he's not working, Zach loves to go on hiking trails, hang out with friends, and play music with multiple instruments. This past year, Zach put on live Facebook concerts every Saturday night. "I would play my instruments and sing to a variety of songs," he says. "I also accepted requests from viewers as they tuned in."



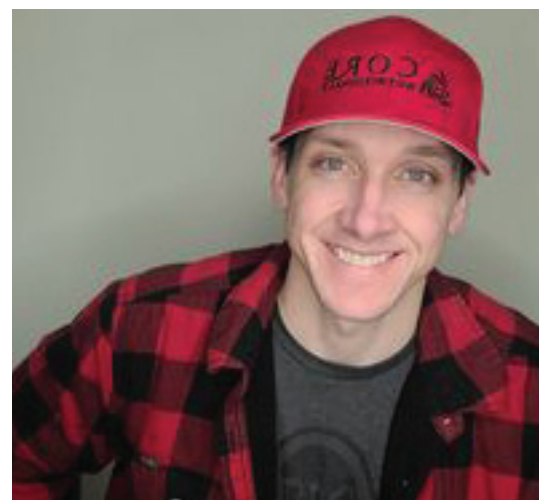
Brooke Chastain is a local craftsman and woodworker who has been working alongside her uncle and his established business, Michael's Custom Furniture, for three decades. Local to the Hudson, NY, area, Brooke says she really enjoys fishing outside of work. "It's something to relieve stress and allows me to enjoy the beautiful outdoors," she reflects. "Being from Hudson and living in this area for most of my life, I have found that what I enjoy most is the surrounding community. It's nice to run into friends everywhere you go. If people don't know me for my woodworking it's usually to congratulate me on my latest catch! I take pride in my family's business and knowing as many folks as I do locally."



Beverly (Bev) Turner is the director of social work and case management at Columbia Memorial Health (CMH) in Hudson, NY, and has been employed as a social worker at CMH since 1985. "What I love most are the people, patients, co-workers, and contacts in other agencies I have made throughout the years," she says. "There is always something new to learn, respond to, and problem-solve." For Bev, this has been especially true during the pandemic. "We have been responding to situations that we have never encountered before," she says. "It is a very stressful and sad time for so many people on so many levels. It feels good to be able to provide some assistance, encouragement, and positivity." Outside of work Bev says she enjoys cooking, biking, and kayaking. "I also love reading and traveling, particularly to warm ocean beaches as well as spending time with my family, friends, and cats."



Despite being twins, **Aubrey** and **Layla Valyou** proudly proclaim to be total opposites. When it comes to school subjects, Aubrey enjoys math and reading while Layla prefers lunch and recess. "I want to be a vet tech because I am an animal lover and I like to help animals," says Aubrey. While Layla's dreams include being a "pediatrician because I love babies." When it comes to their hometown, both sisters have found some common ground. "I love living in a small town where I can play with my friends and take walks to the park," says Aubrey. Layla says, "I like the place I live because I have a big backyard and I can see my friends every day. We go to the blessing box and donate food, give Christmas gifts to kids who don't have a lot of money, and donate brand new jackets every year." The future certainly looks bright with such kind, caring, and compassionate individuals as these two!



After working in the fitness industry over the last decade, **Spencer Hoffman**, owner of the brand-new Hall of Fame Fitness in Millerton, NY, is as excited as ever. "As a professional bodybuilder, I have learned the kind of discipline and diligence that I would like to share with others," Spencer says. "I love working with people and want to share my passion for fitness through Hall of Fame Fitness." Hall of Fame Fitness will officially launch in February and will include a wide range of customized fitness services like personal fitness training, group fitness training along with the opportunity to book private gym sessions. "I know how important fitness is and the impact of living a healthy lifestyle has on individuals," Spencer says. "I hope to be able to provide positive changes to others through Hall of Fame Fitness."

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NANCY HEATON, CEO OF
FOUNDATION FOR COMMUNITY
HEALTH, SHARON, CT

By Christine Bates
info@mainstreetmag.com

Many of the stories in Main Street's February issue relate to families and our greater shared community. The Foundation for Community Health (FCH), located in Sharon Valley, is a not-for-profit foundation that supports many rural health-related initiatives behind the scenes providing grant money and expertise to health and social service non-profits in both New York, Connecticut and Massachusetts, which in turn provide vital programs and services that enhance the health and wellbeing of our local communities. Nancy Heaton, FCH's CEO, spoke with us about the organization.

Can you explain what the Foundation for Community Health is?

FCH is a private not-for-profit foundation dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of the residents of the greater Harlem Valley in New York and the northern Litchfield Hills in Connecticut. We make grants, conduct research, provide technical assistance and support collaboration and advocacy all aimed at improving access to healthcare for people living in the FCH region.

How was FCH created?

FCH was formed when Sharon Hospital was sold for approximately \$16 million to for-profit Essent Healthcare in 2003. Connecticut law requires that the net proceeds from the sale of a not-for-profit hospital remain in the charitable sector through the creation of a "conversion" foundation that has the same mission. The process was guided by Richard Blumenthal, who was Attorney General at the time, and formalized by a decision of the Superior Court of Connecticut.

The first board of directors composed of representative community members was appointed by Blumenthal with input from the Berkshire Taconic Foundation, another grant-

making foundation. The process was transparent and people were invited to be on this panel. From the very beginning the board of FCH had a "strategic" vision for this new community resource.

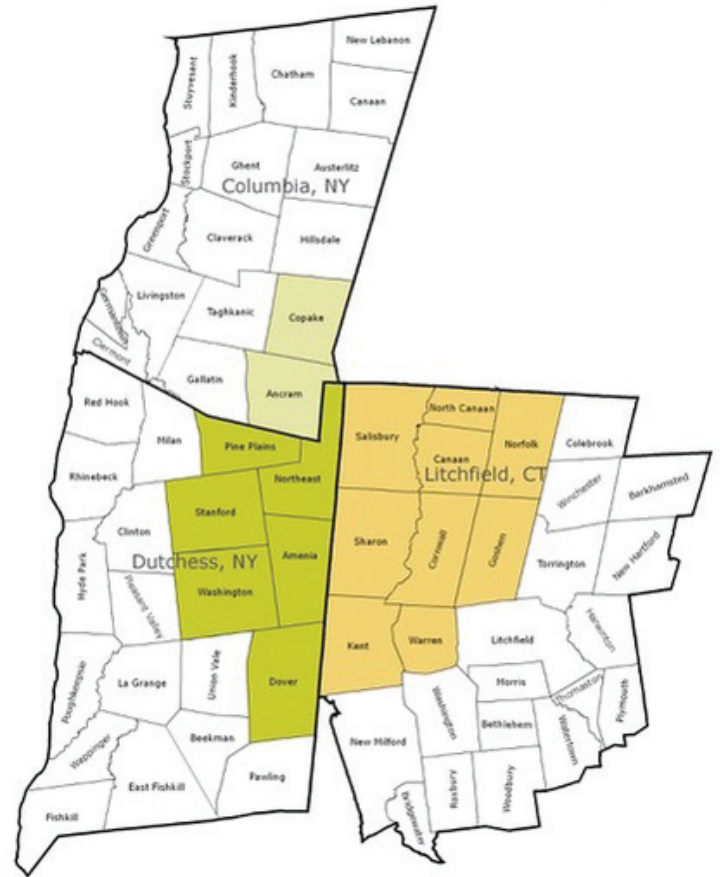
The directors set out to find an executive director to build, lead, and manage the organization. I was the first hire and began working here in 2004. Together we spent the first few months defining the mission, vision, and purpose of this fledgling organization. We also explored the definition of health and decided that it broadly was the state of wellbeing of mind, body, and the capability to function in the face of changing circumstances. In other words health is being able to do what you want to do.

What are the assets of FCH?

FCH received net \$16 million in unrestricted funds when the sale was completed. Additionally FCH was also designated to receive legacies left in wills and trusts to Sharon Hospital. We currently have \$25 million in our own assets and draw funds from an additional \$10 million in assets held by other trusts and community foundations. We have disbursed \$18 million in direct grants and several million more in program and technical support over the past 17 years. Our funds are managed by Berkshire Taconic Foundation.

What was your background before joining FCH as executive director?

I went to Lafayette College in Pennsylvania majoring in government and law. I intended to become a lawyer, but after directing field operations for The International Alliance for Children in Manila where I ran a home for orphaned, abandoned, and neglected children, I found my passion. Instead of law school, I went to graduate school at San Jose State in California in Public Health and Community Health Education. Before starting at



FCH in 2004 my last position was as executive director (ED) of the Northwestern Connecticut AIDS Project serving Litchfield County.

Why did you take the job? Why did they hire you?

The interview process was intense. There were seven directors present for my first interview. I was excited about the possibility to look at things from a higher level and to work with and assist direct service providers and policy advocates on improving the health and wellbeing of our shared communities, rather than just providing services directly. The board felt the first executive director should have lots of executive and board management experience. Also, I believe my career was as a community health educator with a focus on prevention along with my strong belief and experience in getting things done through networking and collaborations were attractive to them.



Above, top to bottom: The map of FCH's coverage and service area. A selfie provided by Nancy Heaton, CEO of FCH.

Continued on next page ...

What is the secret to being an effective executive director?

Regardless of the mission of a non-profit organization, the ED and the organization's Board of Directors have to work well together with clear lines of communication, support, and responsibility. Trust and identifiable objectives are key to the success of the ED and the organization. When an organization is small the ED also has to be a jack-of-all-trades. In addition to the ED role, board members have to acknowledge and appreciate that he/she may also be the program staff, the HR director, the bookkeeper, and even the building maintenance worker!

What is the role of the Board of Directors?

The directors' role is to oversee and define the larger agenda in terms of priorities and approach. The board sets the guardrails and the staff executes in service to the mission. Our 16 board members live or work in our communities from Kent to Pine Plains and are active in making decisions. Unlike most not-for-profit boards, FCH directors are not expected to fundraise, although, as a 501©3 organization, we certainly accept donations. I feel it is important that all board members understand our work, as well as our finances and

so, for example, when a new director joins the board, it is required that they sit on the Audit Committee. The notes in the Audit provide a wealth of information about an organization's operation that no other document provides.

How does FCH approach grant making?

Our goal is to engage with the communities we serve and work together to solve problems or enhance programs that work. We provide support not only through direct grants but also through research, technical assistance, content and facilitating connections. FCH has a formula it uses to determine how much money will be dispersed each year. This is the budget that I work with. However, sometimes there are extraordinary circumstances like when we provided \$3 million dollars to Health Quest/Nuvance Health to convert the hospital back to a non-profit community owned asset and keep Sharon Hospital open. The board is always supportive when there is an emergency or an important unforeseen opportunity.

Every grant we give is very specific about the performance expected. We work with the grantees to figure out how we can work together and agree on outcomes. We also have had outside evaluators come in to review our processes. Going forward we intend to be more proactive in sharing what we've learned about the community, as well as about our work.

Every few years FCH conducts a regional needs assessment to help set its priority areas. One thing to note is that accessing the full range of behavioral health services, from prevention to inpatient care has consistently

come up as an issue in our community. Our research is focused on evidence-based approaches. For example, one of our first assessments identified access to dental health for school age children as a critical need. We then worked with schools to provide the service and then found dentists willing to participate. Sometimes it can take a long time to move the needle on a program, and in this case it took four years to get a dental clinic up and running at Hudson River Health Care (now called Sun River) just so that there would be a dental practice willing to go into Dutchess County schools to offer free screenings, cleanings, and sealants.

How did FCH respond to COVID?

In March, the timing was serendipitous, we just happened to enable an online grant application process just as the COVID epidemic closed everything. This was a tremendous help for both grantees and FCH staff, greatly streamlining the grant-making process.

The first thing we did was to call all of our existing grantees and ask them how they were responding. What did they need? Many asked to convert their current grants into general operating funds or toward a program that they felt the community needed and we agreed to all requested changes. The board immediately added another \$100,000 to our 2020 grant-making budget and in the end spent around \$250,000 in our Rapid Response and Recovery funds to help them address whatever immediate needs they had. Many requested money to provide

food for pantries, rental assistance, communications, assisting in health service delivery, etc.

We also increased our monthly Prescription Assistance Fund allowance to \$350 per month for households living at 400 percent of poverty.

What do you see changing in the future?

FCH is in the middle of a strategic planning exercise right now. Part of our focus will be on evaluating and improving processes for grant-making, and program evaluation to ensure that we are using an equity lens in all of our work and decision-making.

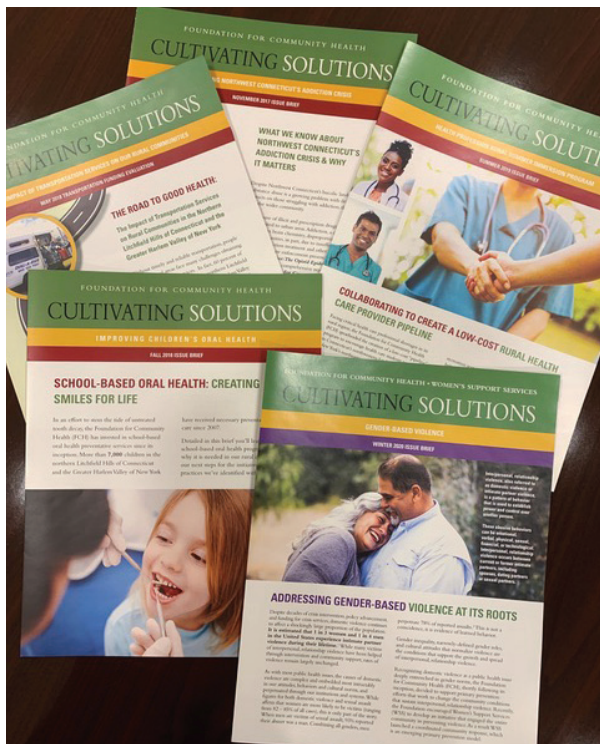
What do you do in your spare time?

I am married with a 21-year-old daughter, twin 19-year-old boys, and three dogs. I belong to a fabulous book club, and I quilt and cook. I love the ocean, travel, and have spent lots of time in South East Asia, Eastern Europe, and the Netherlands. ●

To learn more about the Foundation for Community Health, visit them online at www.fchealth.org.



Above: FCH working with the NECC food transportation. Below, left: FCH's Cultivating Solutions reading materials. All images courtesy of FCH.





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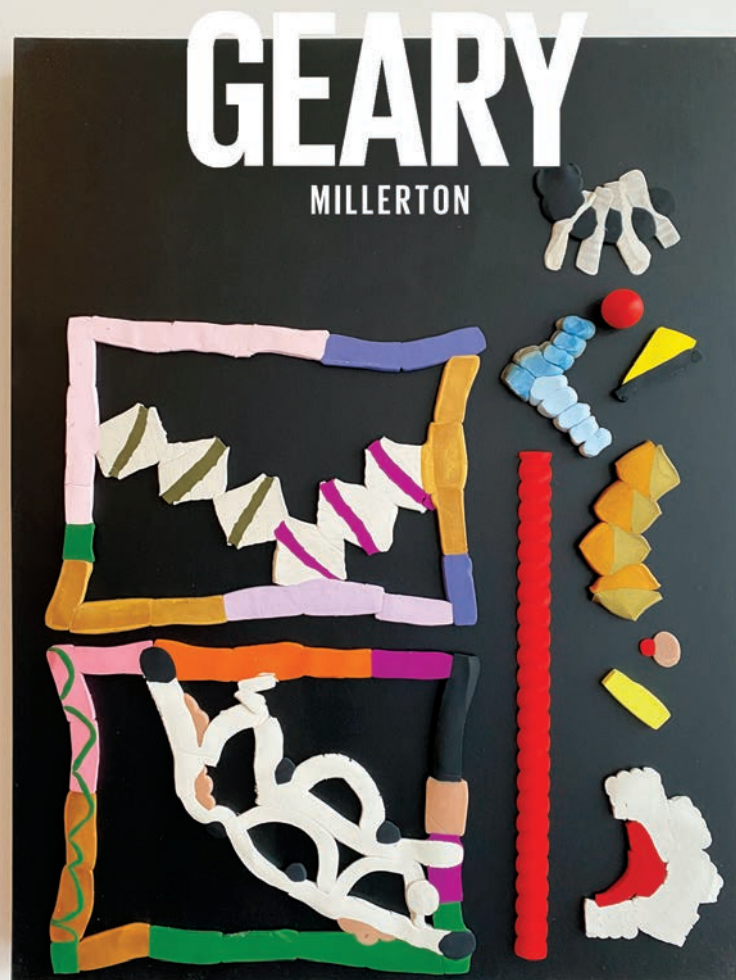
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LEMON SUGAR

Dutch Baby

PANCAKE

By Jessie Sheehan
info@mainstreetmag.com

A Dutch Baby Pancake is not only a sight to behold, what with its light and eggy batter that miraculously climbs the sides of the vessel it's baked in, but it is easy-peasy (like a billion times easier than making individual pancakes on the stove top), one-bowl (okay, one blender) and incredibly delicious. And – in case you were wondering – a Dutch Baby Pancake is not in fact Dutch at all, but is German, and apparently gets its name due to a “corruption” of the word “Deutsch.”

Similar to a Popover or a Yorkshire Pudding, a Dutch Baby is made by blending (or whisking together) eggs, flour and milk. I add a little sugar, a splash of vanilla and a smidge of salt, too. But if you were thinking that perhaps a savory Dutch Baby sounds tasty, you can omit the vanilla and sugar and throw in a handful of shredded cheese instead (yum). I have been making these for my kids fairly regularly over the last several years, and they are big fans – in fact when I made the one pictured here recently, my younger son bemoaned the fact that it had just been too darn long since last he ate a Dutch Baby (oops!). His Dutch Baby always includes a scattering of mini chocolate chips, but I am (and maybe you are, too) partial to a squeeze of lemon juice and

a dusting of confectioner's sugar (or even a sprinkling of granulated sugar, which provides the loveliest crunchy texture). If you do not have a blender, or do not want to pull it out to make breakfast, you may whisk together the wet ingredients in a large mixing bowl and then add the dry ingredients, whisking until smooth, or at least almost lump-free.

Honestly, the most time-consuming part of Dutch Baby pancake-making is waiting for your oven to reach temperature – but once that has happened and you've added your blended ingredients to your hot pan, you are literally ten minutes away from a show-stopping, breakfast of – dare I say – champions.

What you'll need:

4 large eggs
 1/2 cup whole milk
 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
 3 tablespoons melted butter
 6 tablespoons all-purpose flour
 2 tablespoons cornstarch
 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt
 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
 Lemon slices
 Confectioners sugar for dusting

What you'll do is:

Heat the oven to 450°F. Grease a 12-inch cast-iron skillet (or other oven-proof frying pan) with butter or cooking spray. Place in the oven to heat up.

Add all of the ingredients to a blender, beginning with the wet and finishing with the dry. Blend on high until smooth about 30 seconds. Scraping the container if needed.

Remove the pan from the oven and carefully pour in the batter. Bake for 10 to 15 minutes, checking on the pancake after ten. The pancake should be nicely browned, puffy, and dramatically climbing up the sides of the pan when it is ready.

Remove the pan from the oven and immediately dust with confectioners sugar and serve with slices of lemon. Enjoy immediately. ●

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



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The Biggest Hits

The highest priced homes sold in 2020 by town

By Christine Bates
info@mainstreetmag.com

In each of our region's communities the year of 2020 showed record median prices and sales volumes; however, for our February issue, Main Street decided to just highlight the single most expensive property sold in each town in our circulation area.

Spectacular trophy properties can appear anywhere, at any time. The highest sale, \$10,470,000, was the former home of Melva Bucksbaum, noted art collector and trustee of the Whitney Museum, in Sharon, CT, that was initially listed at \$20,000,000. The next three ten million dollar sales were all in New York towns. The least expensive highest priced home by town was in North Canaan, CT, at under \$500,000. Many of these sales were due to the great migration, which included sellers leaving high taxes behind for Florida, buyers fleeing from California, young families seeking more space to work at home, and renters seeking a permanent rural get away. Several of these properties, even in the seller's market of 2020, sold for substantially less than their original listing price and none were a record high price for their town. Don't worry there are higher priced properties still available if you're looking for a trophy estate!

1. Sharon, CT – 36 Herrick Road. Sold in December for \$10,470,000

Listed and sold by Shaylene Neumann Kelly of Neumann Real Estate. The only sale this year that included a 14,000-square-foot state-of-the-art museum called the "Granary." This estate, on 51 acres, has seven out-buildings with views, an orchard, and chef's garden. This was the highest sale in Sharon in the last four years.

2. Amenia, NY – 171 Red Tail Pass, Silo Ridge Field Club. Sold in August for \$10,325,000

Sold by Discovery Land Company. Not publicly listed. In 2020 the highest sale in Amenia was a furnished 7,000 single-family residence on less than half acre of land overlooking the golf course. During the year there were at least seven sales over \$1,000,000 at Silo Ridge, five of them for land only.

3. North East, NY – 964 Huckleberry Hill. Sold in November for \$10,300,000.

Listed and sold by Brian McGrath of McGrath Realty. Atop Cascade Mountain on 435 acres, this estate offered seclusion, panoramic views, 422 acres and two 18th-century homes moved and masterfully restored by the former owner, musician Daryl Hall.



4. Washington, NY – 543 N. Mabbettsville Road, Millbrook. Sold in July for \$10,250,000.

Listed by John Friend of Houlihan Lawrence and sold by Candace Anderson of H.W. Guernsey at Compass Realty. With 372 acres and a heliport, Lighting Tree Farm is one of Millbrook's great estates. The sale included the 1850 five-bedroom main house with a home theater and wine cellar, an 18-stall horse barn, pool, three-bedroom guesthouse, and formal gardens.



5. Salisbury, CT – 310 Wells Hill Road, Lakeville. Sold in August for \$5,300,000.

Listed by Elyse Harney Morris and John Panzer, sold by Elyse Harney. Privately situated on 17 acres, this prestigious Wells Hill Road compound in Lakeville offered an 8,700-square-foot home with six bedrooms, a pool, a wine cellar, and open views.



Continued on next page ...



6. Stanford, NY – 771 Duell Road. Sold for \$3,600,000 in July.

Listed by George Langa of Berkshire Hathaway Home Services in Millbrook, and sold by Karen Volino of Houlihan Lawrence in La Grange. Overlooking the Hudson Valley, this stately 11,000+-square-foot Georgian-style home built in 1986 included a tennis court, swimming pool, and 13-foot coffered ceilings.

7. Copake, NY – 239 Island Drive, Craryville. Sold in August for \$3,450,000.

Listed by Lindsay LeBrecht of Copake Lake Realty. Built in 2013, this imposing Adirondack-style waterfront property on 1.3 acres included a 6,700-square-foot house with six bedrooms and a lawn sloping down to a dock.

8. Kent, CT – 23 Kane Mountain. Sold in September 2020 for \$2,500,000.

Listed and sold by Madonna & Phillips Real Estate Group at William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty. Featured in *Architectural Digest*, this former residence of Evita's Patti Lupone, includes total privacy on 85 acres, sweeping mountain views, a main house and six-bay garage, guest house, and, best of all, a Civil War-era log cabin pool house.

9. Cornwall, CT – 13 Yelping Hill. Sold in September for \$2,450,000.

Listed by Elyse Harney Morris and Liza Reiss of Elyse Harney Real Estate and sold by Julie King of William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty. This quintessential New England farmhouse on over 60 acres is the perfect family compound with a five-bedroom main house, two-bedroom guesthouse, 2400-square-foot entertainment barn, and a pool.

10. Ancram, NY – 309 East Ancram Road, Ancramdale. Sold in June for \$2,150,000.

Listed by John Friend and Ann Dyal of Houlihan & Lawrence and sold

by Elyse Harney Morris and Holly Lebrock. There were multiple bids on this contemporary country farmhouse built in 2006 with views in every direction, 7,000 square feet, five bedrooms, and a pool.

11. Hillsdale, NY – 135 Labranche Road. Sold for \$1,600,000 in December.

Listed and sold by Peter Newman of Beach & Bartolo. Built in 1928 in the style of a Scottish hunting lodge, this 8,000-square-foot nine-bedroom home on 122 acres hosted famous guests like Walt Disney, Babe Ruth, and Edna St. Vincent Millay. This unique historic property will be completely renovated by a Hollywood couple.

12. Pine Plains, NY – 3978 Route 199. Sold in August for \$1,575,000.

Listed by James Avery of Coldwell Banker in Katonah, NY, and sold by Wendy Loring of W. Raveis in Katonah. Contemporary hillside 4,000-square-foot home has incomparable Catskill views and 31 acres bordered by conservation land.





13. Canaan, CT – 28 Aspen Hill Drive. Sold in August for \$935,000.

Listed by Liza Reiss and Tom Callahan and sold by Bill Melnick all of Elyse Harney Real Estate. Majestic views of the Berkshires combined with quality construction made this home the highest sale in Falls Village/Canaan, CT, in 2020.

16. North Canaan, CT 331 West Main Street. Sold in August for \$455,000.

Listed and sold by John Harney of William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty. Puddin Lane Farm, a secluded 1762 antique house with wide board floors and four fireplaces on 32 acres of farm land sold, quickly last summer at close to the listing price. •

14. Gallatin, NY – 282 Church Road. Sold in August for \$875,000.

Listed and sold by Pamela King-Belfor of Gary DiMauro Real Estate. Built by Shaker artisans for a retired architect in 1992, this hand-crafted home came with seven bedrooms and a salt water pool on 24.6 acres.

Please note, all photos were provided by listing agent unless otherwise noted. Information gleaned from MLS records in NY and CT with additional data from New York State Sales Web database, the help of area of real estate agents, and online real estate sites. If we missed your sale, please contact Main Street and the sale will be included in our digital edition.

Christine Bates is a registered real estate agent in New York and Connecticut. She has written monthly for Main Street Magazine since its very first issue.

15. Millerton, NY – 41 Main Street. Purchased in August for \$647,500.

Private sale. The highest sale in the Village of Millerton in 2020 was the former Saperstein's landmark, now transformed by Andrea Westerlind into an outdoor fashion store with a food boutique in the basement.



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One family's tragedy helps restore hope in a community

By Griffin Cooper
griffin@mainstreetmag.com

As we emerge from the hazy fog of 2020, its lessons shall not soon be forgotten. Tragedies in every community across the globe have been impossibly innumerable – almost too many to bear. However, through the scourge of a lifetime's worth of fearsome challenge has been forged a renewed cast-iron will. A will and a willingness to not only stand and face tragic circumstances, but to do so with the unwavering support of friends and neighbors. The kind of support that had never left, but rather had been tucked away behind the modern social media divide – like a beloved family heirloom waiting to be rediscovered.

So it was for the small town of Copake, NY, when this past summer one family's world was unexpectedly dealt a tragic blow. What, by any reasoning, could have been a loss so devastating as to sink those impacted into unimaginable depths, became a testament to the uplifting will of a community. While the impact of their tragedy will no doubt leave a scar on the hearts of those involved, what was once the specter of a seemingly endless nightmare blossomed into hopeful optimism within the loving embrace of those willing to give back without question.

Small towns like Copake have since become a microcosm for the rallying cry of hope and togetherness that grows louder with each passing week in America. In her own words, Copake-native Chrystal Albright recounts how her life changed tragically over the course of seven months, and how the outpouring of community support has given her a renewed sense of hope for the future.

A tragic night never forgotten

"On July 2, 2020, our world was turned upside down." To allow this story to be told in any other way besides in her own words would do a disservice to the most poignant moment in Chrystal Albright's life. Chrystal somehow found the strength

to recount the events of the early morning hours that would forever change her and her family – a fact that will no doubt come as little surprise to those who know her.

"On that morning, not only did I lose my other half of over ten years, Calvin Valyou at just 44 years of age, but four children lost a father. Two children, Patrick and Claire, were from a previous marriage and together we had nine year old twin girls Layla and Aubrey. His mother also lost her youngest child on that heartbreaking morning."

Calvin, who was better known by his friends and family as "Butter" was born on June 9, 1976 in Sharon, CT, and from a young age was known by many as an extraordinarily talented mason. For nearly a decade, Calvin worked for Pondside Nursery in Hudson, NY, where he threw himself into his passion for craftsmanship. During his life, Calvin was well-known for being an incredibly hard worker as well as an avid hunter, fisherman, cook, and storyteller.

"He had the amazing ability to light up a room and make everyone laugh with his stories," says Chrystal. "As I sit quietly from time to time, the little bits of his personality come sharply into focus. Calvin was silly, smart, loud, and something of a know-it-all individual, but it was his children who he felt were his greatest accomplishment." Mr. Valyou was warmly regarded as a generous man who was well-liked by all in the community – making the morning of July 2 all the more heart wrenching for Chrystal and her family.

Chrystal recounts solemnly, "Calvin went in June of 2020 for what was supposed to be routine hernia surgery. Unexpectedly, he ended up staying in the hospital for twelve days and required a second surgery due to an infection. The doctors were aware that the hernia was large but the situation turned out to be much worse than they could have anticipated. When



Above: A happy moment for Chrystal Albright and Calvin Valyou with their twin daughters Layla and Aubrey.

Calvin was finally released, he was home for a little over two days before tragically passing away. I was awakened at around 2:40 in the morning and found Calvin complaining of leg pain. I managed to get him into his favorite chair and proceeded to call 911. Calvin would take his last breath before the rescue squad arrived at our house. I will never forget watching him fight for his life. The incredible folks from the Copake Rescue Squad tried to revive him but to avail – he was gone. I later found out Calvin abruptly passed away from severe pulmonary embolisms, which are described as large blood clots in the lungs."

Love by more than one name

The abrupt loss of Calvin left a sudden, jarring chasm in Chrystal's life, and unfortunately grief wasn't the only obstacle she would have to overcome. Due to Calvin's extended battle with his hernia, Chrystal was forced to go through multiple insurance agencies to help cover the costs of surgery. After being denied multiple times and ultimately postponing Calvin's surgery, Chrystal was finally able to find an insurance company

Continued on next page ...

only to have the surgery postponed once again due to the spread of COVID-19. On June 19 he finally underwent the very intense and complicated hernia surgery. During that time, Calvin was not allowed any visitors due to the pandemic. He was eventually discharged from the hospital and sent home two days before that fateful Thursday morning in July.

However, like most stories from our area whose origins find themselves deeply rooted in personal tragedy, it is the decisive and unconditional response from the surrounding community that helps families like Chrystal's persevere.

"I couldn't believe the outpouring of love and support we received from our community and even from people we had never met before in the immediate days that followed," Chrystal recalls. "The community here in Copake and the surrounding towns as well as my family and close friends got behind us each and every day."

In the immediate aftermath of Calvin's passing, Chrystal's longtime friend Samantha Leonard-Tilton organized a GoFundMe page that quickly raised over \$21,000 of a \$20,000 goal. "I am still shocked by the generosity of everyone who donated to the GoFundMe page," Chrystal says. "But it wasn't just financial support. The beautiful cards, food donations, meals, gift certificates, and unprompted visits we received revealed a new kind of love that I feel lucky to have experienced."

It wasn't only friends and neighbors who stepped forth to aid the grieving family either, local businesses felt compelled to show their love and support as well. The staff at Herrington Fuels, a local fuel-oil provider that has been family-owned and operated for over 70 years, offered to pay for Chrystal's fuel. "They told me having to worry about keeping my home warm for the following cold winter months should be least of my concerns," says Chrystal. "As a result of their kindness, I pay a budget every month, another burden I do not have to carry by myself."

The Church Street Deli, located right in the center of Copake, once again showed why they have been a staple for local food in the area for decades. "The folks at the Deli sent us food the day Calvin passed for everyone who was here at home grieving alongside me and continued to refuse money in the days and weeks that followed."

Chrystal also expressed her gratitude to Gary from the Copake gas station, "he has donated a tremendous amount, and every time the kids have gone into the gas station he gives them candy or sends it home with my sister if she goes in there." Chrystal continued by saying, "Dad's Diner has been great, giving a donation and gift card as well. Their waitress Colleen has twice donated a huge amount, the second time being on the day of Cal's services, which made the GoFundMe fundraiser an even 20k – she wanted me to wake up and have a smile on such a hard day."

Perhaps the most pivotal moment for Chrystal came when it was time to lay Calvin to rest. "If it were not for everyone's support, it would have been very difficult to give Calvin a proper goodbye," says Chrystal. "My unbelievable best friend Samantha sat down with me and helped me write his obituary. My mother was, and is my everything. She helped us get by every single day leading up to the funeral. One of Calvin's former co-workers, Kenny Farwell, kept a piece of rock Cal broke and was no longer usable and came to the wake with a beautiful homemade rock picture frame with a photo of us inside. It was amazing what he did with it and where the rock had broken looked remarkably like a sunset. I stare at this frame, this bit of Cal, every darn day. I treasure that in a way that has become hard to explain."

A shift in perspective

As she stands – like many – in nervous anticipation for what the new year may bring, Chrystal looks out into the world, family and community standing firmly behind her, with something only life's irony could deliver from such devastating tragedy – hope.



Above: Calvin Valyou is lovingly remembered by his family and friends.

"As hard as it is to comprehend life without Cal, it has become just as hard to describe how grateful I feel," Chrystal says. "In the best way I can, I want to say one more huge thank you to everyone who was there for us, not just financially but in one way or another. Whether it was a call, message, or stopping by socially distanced. It was an indescribable experience and I am forever thankful to you all for forcing your light into such a dark time in our lives."

As days pass, Chrystal takes 2020's more subtle lessons along with her. "The past year has taught me so much," she says. "I never would have thought I possessed the kind of strength it would take to get through each and every day after watching Cal pass. It took time to accept that I couldn't save him. It taught me that my bad days weren't so bad, and to take more than a few deep breaths every now and again. The most important lesson I have learned despite everything is that anything can happen. In the blink of an eye your

life can change forever. What matters are the people who stand beside you through that inevitable change."

So it is, in big cities, small towns, and households across the country. As we hunker behind the social walls we've built, retreat to our corners and close ourselves off, something remains gone but not forgotten. The unmistakable part of the human condition that blinds itself from opinion, favor, frivolity, and politics in favor of an unwavering need to support and, above all, connect with one another. As 2021 begins, perhaps it is now time to revisit the old shelf and take out that old heirloom, dust it off, and rediscover that something once again. •

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Scoville Library's Common Ground Conversations: Listening beyond differences



By Mary B. O'Neill, PhD
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The year 2020 was an extraordinary one. COVID-19 and the political and social landscape have exposed the best and worst in what humans are capable of. We simultaneously feel torn further apart and drawn closer together. We rely on virtual interpersonal connectivity in ways we might not have considered possible a year ago.

Unhealthy media diet of sameness

News and social media feeds are constant, global, and algorithmically-designed to deliver content that confirms what we believe – not challenge it. This “confirmation bias” in our news diets narrows our perspectives, heightens our tribal instincts, and polarizes us.

When we engage in confirmation bias, we accept as true those ideas and facts that reflect our beliefs and disregard those that don't. The result: we are channeled toward those who think as we do and run the risk of dehumanizing those who believe differently. Yet despite this, we crave a connection to something larger than ourselves, seeking meaning and purpose in our lives.

Creating safe spaces

Scoville Memorial Library director Claudia Cayne believes that the library can play a role in bringing people together to begin rebuilding our civic and social lives. Over the years, the Library has built a respected reputation for balanced, innovative, creative, and thought-provoking programming.

In 2020, Scoville was able to pivot its programming to adapt to COVID-19 realities. It hosted over 400 programs both in-person and virtually, which were attended by over 8,000 people. Throughout that time, Cayne observed that community members are growing weary of polarization, “I've noticed that people are interested in ending divisions and finding common footing with each other.”

With its robust public programming and role in the Salisbury Forum speakers program (Cayne was a founding member), Scoville Memorial Library is a vibrant gathering place and a respected community leader. These factors make Scoville well-suited to bring together diverse voices and identify topics and issues that people want to understand more deeply and talk about in a meaningful way. “People in this area have a hunger for big-picture ideas,” explains Cayne.

Local synergy

Recently, Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation (BTCF) announced a special grant initiative funded by Berkshire Bank. *Bridging Divides, Healing Communities* supports community efforts to build connections and foster positive local change.

Cayne seized the opportunity and applied for a grant, which she received on behalf of the Library, to host a series of four conversations called Common Ground. She issues an open invitation to discuss rebuilding our civic lives and opening our minds and hearts to others. “For us to come together, we need a variety of people who think differently from each other. We want to hear from anyone willing to give their time and share their voice and perspectives and listen to fellow participants,” offers Cayne.

To help plan and facilitate the sessions, Cayne approached Dr. Mary B. O'Neill (author of this article). For eight years, O'Neill was an award-winning philosophy and ethics lecturer at Western Connecticut State University and now develops and delivers interactive and

inclusive workshops on a variety of topics including confidentiality, effective communications, finding purpose, achieving work/life/family balance, situational ethics, and resolving conflict.

Creating spacious thought

For Cayne, the hope is that we will begin to listen more closely, talk to and not over each other, think more broadly, and embrace an appreciation for difference through small acts of inclusivity in our daily lives. These are the conversations worth having and the ones that are necessary to have as we move forward into 2021.

The goal of these sessions is not to solve big problems, change minds, or make everyone see the world the same way. Diverse views are healthy and necessary. Underlying that diversity is often shared values. Seeking and finding those commonalities means listening to accepting the “other” as an individual striving to create a life worth living – as they define it.

During the sessions, participants will learn skills for intentionally and empathetically listening and speaking to each other. They’ll then use these skills to discuss common values and concerns and think

about how to heal the tears in our social fabric. In later sessions, they will focus on the need to attach to some larger purpose as part of the human experience and as a tool to build connections to each other.

The Zoom sessions will be interactive, with discussion prompts, small break-out groups, and opportunities to share with each other. No advance preparation is required and different questions will be explored each week. Participants can attend one or all sessions.

Calling all viewpoints

If you’re concerned about the loss

of civility, connectivity, and respect in our civic and social lives together, maybe it’s time to act. Instead of lending credence to those divisive forces, embrace the power you have as an individual to end division, promote mutuality and respect, and establish common ground.

Cayne invites you to participate, “People who think differently are welcome. We need you. We don’t have to agree, but we must embrace and respect each other’s viewpoints. We want the same goods out of life. If we come together productively to achieve them despite our differences, we’ll end up with a more robust and inclusive civic life and learn from each other in the process.”

We can start with this baby step. Bring your curiosity, an open and engaged spirit, and a desire to actively listen to others. One hour at a time, we can begin to rebuild our communities and respect those who challenge our views. •

Scoville Memorial Library will host Common Ground conversations on four Sundays from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. The dates are February 7 and 21 and March 14 and 28. For more information and to register, visit www.scovillelibrary.org. For more information about the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation’s Bridging Divides, Healing Communities grant initiative, visit www.berkshiretaconic.org.



All images in this article show- and are courtesy of- the Scoville Library.





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Retail evolution

Rhinebeck Department Store is a family-owned business that traces its roots back several decades

By Regina Molaro
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On the corner of East Market Street and Montgomery Street is Rhinebeck Department Store – a retail destination that is brimming with stylish apparel, colorful accessories, home decor, and coveted gift items. Barbara and Dick Schreiber are the visionaries behind the shop. They've been at the helm since 1992.

"We started as weekenders from Manhattan in 1980 and fell in love with the idea of living here and owning a business in Rhinebeck," says Barbara, president and owner of Rhinebeck Department Store. In 1986, the timing was right and the Schreibers started planning their move – one that would transform their country weekend home in Milan into a primary residence.

With the move, the Schreibers were also rethinking their careers. Together, they set their sights on the Hudson Valley Department Store, which had a long history in the area. The department store opened its doors to the community in 1946.

"The store was an anchor with good quality basics for the whole family. With some good luck and persistence, we were in the right place when the former owners wanted to retire and were ready to sell in January 1992," says Barbara.

The idea of taking over a department store wasn't daunting for the Schreibers. Prior to their relocation to Milan, Barbara served as executive vice president of design and merchandising for a women's wear company in Manhattan and Dick was an executive sales account manager for a prestigious think tank.

"As former weekenders, we felt that Hudson Valley Department Store was great, but could easily transition to serve the getaway crowd. Our vision was to take this important retail store into the future. We knew we were the

right people to evolve the business to stay relevant," adds Barbara.

One of the earliest decisions the duo made was to expand Hudson Valley Department Store's offerings to include iconic brands such as Pendleton, Habitat, Tribal, Dakota Grizzly, and Flyshacker. They also held onto the Levi's, Dockers, and Jockey brands for basics.

Today's fashions

More than three decades later and the brands the Schreibers brought in are still staples. Other fashion labels for women include April Cornell, Eileen West, Hatley, and beyond. For men, the collection includes Perry Ellis, Allyn Neckwear, Dorfman Pacific, and more. Colorful, cute items for infants, toddlers, girls and boys includes Little Blue House, Manzella, Hatley, and April Cornell.

Rhinebeck Department Store also offers a Comfort Collection of cozy zip-hoodies and other stylish athletic leisure wear. It also boasts the La Cera sleepwear collection of robes, chemises, and beyond.

"Our sleepwear business has trended up every year. In 1992, it was our mission to concentrate on comfortable clothing. It still is and lounge pants and soft knits are a favorite for all ages," reveals Barbara.

Other top brands at Rhinebeck Department Store include Woolrich, Fresh Produce Clothing, Color Me Cotton, Habitat, and beyond. Prices run the gamut from \$7 for fun, colorful Hotsox to up to \$250 or more for select outerwear. Most clothing items range from \$40 to under \$100.

With the anticipation of Spring 2021, the Schreibers snapped up shirts embellished with whimsical prints for men. Although khakis will dominate men's shorts, sailor-style faded shorts will be in store in March. For women, it's tunics from Habitat. Of course, in a sign of the times, washable cotton face masks are also



Photo: Maureen Gates / Sharp Images Photographic

trending. The novelty masks feature adjustable ear straps and a nose brace.

People and community

Beyond the Schreibers, experienced, loyal staffers help shape the store's life-style feel, curate its merchandise, and attend to each customer who walks in.

Customer service and a knowledgeable sales force is paramount. The Schreibers believe it's important that every customer feels warmly welcomed, their questions are answered, and their shopping experience exceeds expectations.

The team remains dedicated to the economic, social, and philanthropic activities in the community. "We believe in paying it forward to worthy causes. We try to be as generous as we can to many local organizations," says Barbara. The list includes Northern Dutchess Hospital, Fisher Center at Bard, Rotary Club of Rhinebeck, Wilderstein Historic Site, and more. Since 1992, Rhinebeck Department Store has been a member of the Rhinebeck Area Chamber of Commerce – an organization that Barbara once served as co-president of from 1992 to 1994.

In 2009, Barbara helped launch the co-op collective, EnjoyRhinebeck.com, to help boost tourism and drive commerce to Rhinebeck. The store has also been involved with Rhinebeck Responds – a citizen-run effort to recruit volunteers, identify needs, and facilitate community service.

The Schreibers community efforts extend beyond these endeavors. In 1995, the couple purchased the historic three-story building that houses Rhinebeck Department Store. In 2000, they began restoring it with guidance from Warren Temple Smith Architects. The building continues to be a cornerstone of the community. "We always feel so lucky to live here," concludes Barbara. •

To learn more about Rhinebeck Department Store visit and shop at 1 East Market Street, Rhinebeck, NY, or call (845) 876-5500, or visit and shop online at www.rhinebeckstore.com.



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A Community Unto Itself

By Ian Strever
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In the semi-official town of East Canaan, CT, there is a small community with its own road network, hundreds of homes, its own sewer, water, and electric systems – and a population of over 1500. That population is large enough to justify its own store and deli – even a lounge – as well as a laundromat, several pools and playgrounds, and a recreation hall. In some places, a town of that size might have its own town governance, fire and police forces, mill rates, and all of the other associated structures that support a small community. Yet each year, that population drops to zero on October 15, then shoots back to upwards of 1500 on April 15.

This community has returned each year for the last fifty-six years, along with its annual celebrations, customs, and mores that transform it from a gathering of people into a community. If the essence of community is commonality – a grouping of shared interests – then Lone Oak Campground reconstitutes itself each year in the name of camping. But why here, in East Canaan? Why this place and this community?

Over the Yellow Bridge

As I turned onto the campground road, I entered a large field, bounded by lines of trees. Ahead of me, the campground sat atop a small rise, just past a yellow bridge that crosses the Blackberry River that runs downhill from Norfolk. The wheels of my RV rumbled across the bridge and I entered a grove of shady oaks before emerging into the brilliant sunshine of another field populated with kids on bikes and folks of all ages milling around their campers. It was as if I had entered another town where all the houses have wheels, and where the normal rules of New England society no longer apply. In other words, everyone was social, and no one was indoors.

Sociological studies of small communities are fascinating in their attempts to understand the complexities of community development and discourse. On a small scale, I have become something of an amateur sociologist ever since I stayed at Lone Oak two summers ago and later, at various campgrounds around New England. I began to notice that each campground had



its own culture and social network: some more pronounced and calcified, others nuanced and tacit. I was an outsider in some campgrounds where seasonal campers returned year after year, congregating at each others' sites and socializing around fire pits. In other places, the campers were more nomadic, coming for a week each year, and no one really knew each other outside of some small clusters of families camping together.

The attributes and quirks of Lone Oak

Lone Oak was the very first campground I went to as an RVer, mostly because it was close. I could run home for tools if I needed them, and the act of towing and hooking up just seemed a lot less intimidating at that distance. It was a good move, and I also learned that Lone Oak has on-site repair service in case I needed it.

It also has immediate access to one of the better trout streams in Connecticut, and as I began to set up camp, a woman who turned out to be my neighbor walked up the hill to show me the string of brookies she had just pulled out of the Blackberry. We chatted for a

All images depicted with this article are from seasons past. All images courtesy of Lone Oak.



Continued on next page ...

few minutes while I fumbled with water hoses and sweated in the midday sun, and she pointed out a few of the finer points of setting up camp. In no time at all, I was able to relax and enjoy the spot, with a comfortable breeze blowing down from Norfolk along the backdrop of Canaan Mountain. After cooling off, I set out to explore the rest of the place.

Everywhere I looked, people of all ages drove by on golf carts. While I hoofed it to the farthest reaches of the park, families were zipping around on their electric conveyances, and not just your garden-variety golf carts. Fans of the television series *Pimp My Ride* will similarly salivate over the chrome rims and paint jobs that festoon these rigs, and when the sun goes down, the LEDs and underbody lights come out because, you know, safety.

It's all in good fun, or at worst, a kind of harmless, keeping-up-with-the-Joneses-golf-cart phenomenon. What was less harmless – I think – were the cornhole competitions that bordered on the maniacal. The sun went down, the fires went up, and the beanbags flew for hours on end, even to the limits of quiet hours. I suspect that the campground's security was largely installed to intervene in line violations and scoring disputes.

A relationship builder

Of all the campsites I've visited in New England – and I've been to dozens now – I've never seen anything quite like it. When I spoke with owner Peter Brown, however, he framed it in a larger context. “A campground is just a place to build relationships with either your own kids or your spouse or even the guy camping next door... Even the golf carts – I call them Mobile Visiting Devices – because half the time, they're stopped, and they're BS'ing with their buddies about what they're going to do that night.”

Brown went on to talk about the married couples that met at Lone Oak and, “older couples that have lost their spouses in their seventies and they just became friends. They'll just go riding around the campground and it kind of looks like back to the fifties. People of that age and era would cruise around town and just enjoy the evening.”

Timeless fun in the modern era

But don't mistake Lone Oak for a retirement community. It's just that the Browns find a way to offer something for everyone. When the pandemic closed their adult lounge, they worked with the state to create an outdoor music venue that is fun for all ages. Almost every weekend is a themed weekend, including



Christmas in August, Pirate Adventure, and Safari Weekend, and the programming staff keeps it fresh by collecting surveys and feedback from the campers to know what's working.

Sometimes, what works is what has always worked: fun. This past season, Lone Oak reinstated The Peanut Drop, a stunt that was the brainchild of his father, “Bucky” Brown. He enlisted a friend with a pilot's license to drop peanuts on the campground, some of which were painted special colors that entitled the finder to a prize. After a twenty-year hiatus, Peter brought it back and instead dropped the peanuts on an open lot next to the campground. It was once again a hit with young and old alike.

There is a staggering amount of work that goes into running a campground of this size. Lone Oak employs a staff of 70 or 80 during the summer that maintains the campground's septic and water systems, electric, and, increasingly, internet. With campers getting bigger and bigger, and with COVID-19 inflating the demand for sites, the Browns have had to keep pace with the times. Somehow, though, they manage to employ enough distractions to keep people off their phones and socially networked around campfires.

“That yellow bridge that you saw when you came over the Blackberry, people have told me how they feel a little bit more relaxed when they went over there,” says Peter. For most members of this community, it must feel like coming home. •



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Vasilow's Confectionery's *Sweet secret of success*

By Lisa LaMonica
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A dedicated candy shop in any town seems a rarity these days. Vasilow's Confectionery in Hudson, NY, has been offering magical treats for decades to neighbors, visitors, family and friends, and is beloved by area locals and visitors, winning twice *Hudson Valley's Best Of* in area magazine polls.

For every occasion, you can find a sweet treat or gift there: stocking stuffers, Easter, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Halloween, hostess gifts, birthdays, anniversaries – the experience of shopping there is seldom a one time event since the atmosphere is conducive to many repeat visits. Picking out treats among the many offerings is pleasurable and brings out the inner child in all of us.

A community staple, starting in 1923

Vasilow's was open in Hudson before the Great Depression, having opened its doors in 1923. And their reputation and status in the region has grown since then. Vasilow's uses all natural ingredients, making their many treats in house. In the 1960s, when the two founding brothers contemplated retiring and closing up shop, there was such an outpouring of affection from the community. Ultimately the brothers retired and Vasilow's Confectionery closed for many years until happily a family descendant reopened its doors in 2002.

Vasilow's has become a part of many family and local traditions in the last (almost) one hundred years. Vasilow's has become one of Winter Walk-goer's favorite stops

during the annual event that normally draws thousands of locals and visitors to Warren Street to kick off holiday festivities at Christmas time. Winter Walk-goers like to stop by Vasilow's because it is a must-see for unique gift giving.

We all have memories of certain sweets for special times throughout our lives. Vasilow's offers the traditional and some not-so-common flavors: peanut butter ribbon candy, chocolate-covered bacon, black licorice Scotty dogs, chocolate Thanksgiving turkeys, English Toffee, fall apple cider fudge, sea salt caramels, cinnamon candy, chocolate-covered berries, chocolate-covered fortune cookies, chocolate-covered Twizzlers – just a smattering of what might find in the shop.

What Vasilow's mean to neighbors and friends

Many people were happy to share their fond memories of what Vasilow's has meant to them over the years. Jean Porreca Brew shared, "I have such great memories of Vasilow's. We would go there after school, I think probably from about 11 or 12 years of age. I remember the tables and chairs, I think they are called Ice Cream Parlor Sets. Mr. Vasilow was a Yankees fan and we were Brooklyn Dodgers fans, and we would bet on the World Series. If the Dodgers won we would get a free sundae, but I can't remember what we had to do if the Yankees won. But the thing I remember most was the cinnamon candy – the beautiful glassy red color, the square shape, and the intense cinnamon flavor. I remember Mr. Vasilow invited us into the kitchen to see him pour the hot red liquid into the pans where it would cool and

harden. He was such a nice man."

Jean Fleming Martin shared, "Oh, I remember when I went to junior high, we'd walk 'up street' with our bag lunch and go to Vasilow's to have a nickel cherry coke and one of the Vasilows would walk in the back of the store where they made their candy and roasted the peanuts, and they would always lay a handful of peanuts or a few pieces of candy on our table. Always so nice to us 'big spenders,' but 60+ years later I still think fondly of the Vasilow brothers."

Cassandra Langdon expressed joy in this way: "The very, very long candy canes at Christmas – they must have been 12 inches or longer – the smell of the candy that was being made there: perfect! I feel very lucky to have grown up with our own Hudson candy store. Thank you Vasilows."

Bill Dale said he waiting with great anticipation for spring because that is when Vasilow's would make their fresh peach ice cream. Tom Mullins recalls ten cent ice cream cones. Jann Walker, formerly of Hudson and now residing in California, shared memories and old photographs from when the sweet shop originally sat at 505 Warren Street and said that she loved the store so much.

With a visit to Vasilow's it's easy to see its enduring charm. •

To learn more about Vasilow's, you can visit them in person at 741 Columbia St, Hudson, NY, call them at (518) 828-2717, or visit them online at www.vasilows.com.

The Millbrook School was founded principally on its Commitment to community service

By John Torsiello
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“Our motto is *Non Sibi Sed Cunctis*, meaning not for oneself but for all or, for all others,” said Cameron Hardy, who serves as the school chaplain and is co-director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at the school. “In its early days (the school was founded in 1931 during the Great Depression) this took the form of serving local farmers by helping them till soil, harvest, and help with animal husbandry, especially during the war years. Primarily it was carried out within the school, where every student and faculty member contributed to the welfare of the whole.”

Hardy called community outreach “one of our most important core values.” She added, “It is absolutely essential in order for us to live our mission. Empathy, responsibility, empowerment to take action based on core values, which lead to effective change and justice. Our commitment to community service and service learning is school-wide. It’s safe to say that every one of our students and faculty will have engaged in some form of direct service and community engagement in their time at Millbrook.”

Acts of service and their organization

The school’s domestic/community outreach is managed weekly by its Outreach and Literacy Connections Community Service teams, so there is dedicated time in daily schedules. The Outreach Team hosts fundraisers to financially support these efforts.

“Any outreach/service learning opportunities involving travel do take a great deal of time and effort to plan and execute,” explained Hardy. “We

start at least a year in advance, partnering with agencies, communicating with families, applying for visas, etc., and preparing the group through education and reflection. We have built up a financial aid budget over time so that these expensive trips are open to all students.”

Activities by students and staff early on in the school’s history and as the years went by included such tasks as running the fire station, caring for zoo animals, tracking and banding birds for the Audubon Society, and running the school store and bank. Said Hardy, “These were not just jobs but acts of service, student-led, which taught responsibility to the common good in a democratic society.”

That model is still in place at Millbrook. The school has a “community service block” woven into its school day, four days each week. With the expansion the campus population, facilities, and programs the school has expanded offerings to include those that reach beyond the campus proper and are facilitated through various departments and programs. In Hardy’s 30 years at Millbrook, this type of community outreach has been “vibrant and varied.”

One of Millbrook School’s newest community services is Milly Thrift, a thrift store that “up-cycles” and sells clothing donated by students and faculty. All of the proceeds go to local agencies or families in need. This fall, through Sunday pop-up shops by the school’s students and staff, \$1,500 was raised, some of which went to the Food Bank of the Hudson Valley and to a local farmer whose hay barn burned to the ground in October.

Addressing poverty

A spring semester course will investigate poverty and educational inequity faced by residents of Dutchess

County. Hardy said through readings across disciplines, films and guest speakers, students will explore the nature and extent of poverty and educational inequity in the region. “We will consider philosophical and systemic questions, such as why is poverty so persistent in our area, even as it becomes more affluent; why are poverty rates for minorities and children so high; are public schools effective or ineffective in breaking the cycle of poverty; what moral and legal rights should the poor have, and what obligations do society, organizations and individuals have to the poor?”

Long-term relationships

Millbrook School has had long-term relationships with a handful of organizations beginning in the early 2000s. Facilitated primarily by an Outreach Community Service group, students and faculty work with Literacy Connections and Grace Latino Outreach each week teaching ESL to adults and caring for their children in Millbrook and Pawling. The school provides and/or packs food for the Comida de Vida clients (families) at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Amenia and the Union Guatemalan Seekers in Dover and Pawling.

Since 2003, the school has been a member of the Midnight Run (midnightrun.org), a non-profit that organizes groups to bring food, clothing, and conversation to un-housed individuals in Manhattan, NY. “We drive down at night and are given a route of stops throughout the city where folks gather,” said Hardy. “We do a similar project in Poughkeepsie through Dutchess Outreach called the Bright Nights run. It is a similar concept, but a lot closer and therefore with more frequency.”

The Millbrook School has engaged in week-long projects with the

Anderson Center for Autism, Winter Haven, House of Hope, and the St. Patrick’s Soup Kitchen in Newburgh, The Lunch Box in Poughkeepsie, Habitat for Humanity, Hudson River Housing – to name a few. “Some of our VI Form (Senior) projects and internships have evolved from relationships with these organizations,” said Hardy.

There’s also a program called Millbrook Engage, which is open to “rising” seniors. Said Hardy, “In the summer before their final year, juniors are given the opportunity to apply for a paid internship with an organization of their choosing, entirely oriented to service but in an area of particular interest to the student. There were 13 students that were interns last summer.”

For the past five summers, going further afield, the Millbrook School has partnered with Simply Smiles, Inc., sending students and faculty to the Cheyenne River Lakota Sioux Reservation in South Dakota where the school group lives in the village of residents, learning from elders and bringing activities to conduct camps for children, as well as doing some manual labor constructing homes and a community hall.

“We have sent three groups to do hurricane relief in Pass Christian, MS, after Katrina and then another four years of groups working with the St. Bernard’s Parish in New Orleans; several to Red Hook/Brooklyn after Sandy, one to Houston after Harvey, and another group to Puerto Rico after Maria,” said Hardy.



International outreach

She continued, “In my time, our first international group trip was organized in 2006 by our headmaster, Drew Casertano and Liz Morrison, our former assistant head who brought a group of students to Guatemala City to work at Safe Passage. Safe Passage works with the poorest of Guatemala City, those families who live and work in the Guatemala City dump collecting a living from garbage. Safe Passage has founded a school and safe place for the children to learn and play, programs for mothers to become more economically self-sufficient through artisanship and education. Drew and Liz took the trip with a dozen students every year from 2006 to 2014 spending time teaching children and youth lacrosse as a means to gain confidence and camaraderie.”

A former dean of faculty and one of Millbrook School’s most senior faculty members, Kathy Havard, developed the Social Justice and Community Engagement course and is “singularly responsible,” said Hardy for maintaining the school’s relationships with Literacy Connections and Grace Immigrant Outreach. Havard has been to Ghana and India, “embodying just

as powerfully as Drew Casertano, our mission and values”.

In 2011, Hardy and three colleagues brought a group of eight students to Ghana, working with Hearts of the Father Outreach, an organization that not only has a children’s home of its own, but also supports a network of children’s homes and schools throughout Ghana. “We were there for three weeks, working with the children, learning from them, and touring the country. We returned in 2012, 2014, and 2018. We are also one of the pioneer schools hosting Ghanaian students from the Right to Dream Academy, therefore we shifted from working with the Hearts of the Father Outreach to working directly with the Right to Dream Academy. We were to return this past summer but those plans were interrupted by COVID-19.”

Having made a commitment to having some form of international outreach opportunity every year, Hardy and other staff took students to India in 2013 and 2015 and Cambodia in 2016 in alternate years partnering with Deep Griha Society in Pune, a non-profit that supports mothers and children in the slums of Pune

through education, healthcare, children’s crèches (nursery-day care), and youth empowerment. They also have a rural boarding school for orphaned or foster children from Pune called City of Child and a school called City of Knowledge, which provides educational opportunities and community building for rural children.

The bigger implications

Millbrook School’s community outreach programs have had a significant impact on its students.

Jackie Crowley, who worked with the Western Connecticut Health Network as a senior said, “I learned that little things matter and that becomes really apparent when you interact with families and patients in a hospital.”

Jonathan Dastazio, another graduate, said of his time with the organization, Rural Build, “I know I want to follow a path of community service. If I can find a way to help combat housing insecurity in the region that is what I want to do.”

For Millbrook School’s founding headmaster, Edward Pulling, the purpose of the community service/outreach program at Millbrook was to have every student maintain respon-

sible leadership in service as a part of their daily life, therefore creating a culture of student-driven empathic leadership.

Said Hardy, “Thanks to headmaster Drew Casertano, whose leadership embodies our mission this is the culture of our school to this day. With the exception of our relationship with Safe Passage in Guatemala, which significantly was forged by our headmaster, all other relationships with agencies have been inspired by students and alumni, such as Simply Smiles, Hearts of the Father, Comida de Vida/Food of Life, Midnight Run, Habitat for Humanity, the Bright Nights Run, Anderson Center for Autism, and Hudson River Housing, to name a few.”

For staff and students at The Millbrook School, charity starts on campus but reaches out across the globe. •

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A cosmic idea:

ONE FAMILY'S DETERMINATION FOR DEEP-FRIED PERFECTION

By Griffin Cooper
griffin@mainstreetmag.com

What could possibly be more difficult to resist when we resolve ourselves for the new year than temptation? Be it a new weight-loss goal, abandoning an unhealthy habit like smoking, or simply managing a few spending tendencies – temptation will eventually make its unwelcome presence known at some point within the coming months. Sometimes however, it is important that we not lose ourselves in the jungle of anxiety that can come with self-improvement. Our temptations can at times reveal who we are with the kind of subtlety not found in the grandiose proclamations of the new year. For one local family, temptation became the idea for a business that would eventually open the door to a whole new world.

It was her own temptation that gave Jhori Jurgenson, owner of the local phenomena of a donut shop known as Cosmic Donuts, the inspiration that led to the unstoppable ambition. Alongside her mother and longtime boyfriend Jason Garvey, the young entrepreneur opened Cosmic Donuts in the village of Kinderhook, NY, in 2020, a year

that has since gained an historic infamy for small business owners everywhere. Despite the challenges, Cosmic Donuts has done more than simply beat the odds, the gourmet donut shop has become a veritable celebrity on social media as well as within the local community at large. With their dazzling displays of sweet creativity infused into each delicious fried ring, Jurgenson and her family of co-workers seem to be on a cosmic rise to the top of the donut kingdom. In between manic shifts and lines of customers akin to hardcore fans queued out the door, Jhori took some time to discuss how temptation became the driving force behind a life she could have never imagined just one year ago.

How did the idea for Cosmic Donuts come about?

The idea for Cosmic was years in the making – a few years ago my partner Jason and I competed in competitive bodybuilding. With the rigidity of our diet, we always – and I mean always – craved donuts: big, fluffy, overindulgent donuts. We searched everywhere for donuts like these and couldn't find any locally, so we started daydreaming of the possibility of owning a donut shop. Fast forward to March 2020, in the middle of a pandemic, with a newborn, and I was feeling pretty bored and needed motivation to start something. I was visiting my mom and the idea just popped into my head: "Hey, let's open a donut shop." And we did. We immediately got to work planning, designing, working on recipes – and within seven months we opened the doors of Cosmic Donuts!



Has baking been a passion of yours for a while?

Baking has always been a passion of mine, but one that I really only ever did in my spare time. I started off with cupcakes years ago, dabbled in cakes, and then worked in a bakery for a short period of time. I love the creativity and science of baking – there's so much ingenuity to be had and the options are endless, especially when it comes to donuts.

Would you describe Cosmic Donuts as a family enterprise? How has the experience of owning a family business been for you?

Cosmic Donuts is definitely a family enterprise – my mother and I are there five days a week – she does the dough-making and frying and

Continued on next page ...



I create the butter creams, icings, and recipes that we use once the donuts are ready to be filled and decorated. Jason works full-time at the Columbia-County Sheriff's Department, but when he has a little time he'll help in the shop, whether it's putting boxes together or making donuts. My older son earns money working in the shop on his days off from school and our ten-month old has spent most of his life so far in the donut shop! The experience of owning a family business has been both fun and stressful at times – working with family can be extremely challenging and we all definitely have our moments.

How did Cosmic Donuts come to Kinderhook?

Kinderhook was our location of choice because I spent most of my adolescent years in the area and my family and I live nearby. Kinderhook is a quaint town and we felt it needed a little something more – something quirky and different – and we feel Cosmic Donuts does just that. We found a perfect spot right in town and got to work making it as weird and different as possible, and we think our little

multi-colored shop with the neon lights in the window brings a little magic to the area. Also, if you're out early in the morning you can even smell us when you're near the square!

Where did the idea for all the specialty donuts come from?

Dunkin' Donuts is the only place to get donuts in the area and we wanted to bring a specialty donut shop – gourmet, if you will – to our little corner of the world instead. Our donuts are fresh-made daily and the flavor varieties are unlike anything else around. You can do literally anything with donuts – they're just delicious fried balls of dough – and you can dress them up any way you want, which is the best part of the job. We wanted to bring something like that to the area because we realized there was nothing else like it anywhere around! We wanted to become a destination for people like myself who used to drive to other states just for a box of donuts.

How has the community support been since opening?

The community support has been fantastic since we've opened – we



still reminisce on our first days in business where our line stretched out the door and around the block. Since then we've met some pretty fantastic people in the area that come often for our donuts, we have a few weekly regulars who we appreciate so much, and we couldn't be more thankful for everyone that has supported us since day one.

It's still extremely surreal to think that I co-own a donut shop in Kinderhook, and we've been open for a short while, but have already amassed quite a following and sold thousands (yes, thousands) of donuts! We know our community has played a large role in our success and for that, we are extremely grateful. •

Join the massive following for Cosmic Donuts on social media @cosmicdonutsny or browse their selection at www.eatcosmicdonuts.com. All images courtesy of Cosmic Donuts.



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Creating a park for everyone

By Jennifer Dowley
info@mainstreetmag.com

Not long ago, Eddie Collins Memorial Park was a family destination for swimming, baseball, community events, and even ice skating. For those who haven't seen the Park, drive about a quarter mile north of the Village of Millerton, NY, on Route 22 and look to your left. You will see a playground with climbing towers and swings, playing fields, a picnic pavilion and cinderblock buildings. From a distance, it looks reasonably healthy, but closer inspection reveals facilities in unwelcoming states of disrepair.

It wasn't always that way. Stacey Moore of Moore & More Printing remembers playing in the women's softball league in the Park against the Millerton Pork Chops until the late 1980s. John Scutieri, owner of North Elm Home Furnishings, says his four grown children still tell stories about their summers in the Park. They all learned to swim at Denney Pool (now filled in) and where, as young teenagers, they got their first jobs as camp counselors.

Jennifer Najdek, Deputy Mayor of Millerton, grew up on South Center Street. During her high school summers she dribbled a basketball down Main Street and up Route 22 to Eddie Collins Field to shoot hoops and play pick-up games all day long. She'd take breaks to cool off in the swimming pool and go back to the court for more. Her dream was to be good enough to win a full basketball scholarship to a Division I college. She did win that scholarship and stepped into coaching for a time.

I moved to town in 2005 and took my young children to the Park to see the circus every summer. There were the usual acrobats and cotton candy, but the most memorable act

was performed by a very very tall man who danced with a 12-foot python. He offered to let the snake drape over anyone who wanted to step up. Amazingly, a friend volunteered and has a photo to prove it. Exotic happenings at Eddie Collins!

That was then, this is now

Over the past 15 years, the Park has fallen into disrepair and disuse, so much so that only a complete upgrade is the solution. Former Village trustee Stephen Waite dreamed of rebuilding the Park in 2015. With the blessing of the Village Board, he formed a committee, for which he serves as chair. A survey of residents' ideas was conducted and a grant secured to develop a master plan – pictured here. The plan retains the best of the old and adds several new facilities that will assure the Park's future significance.

A new swimming pool will be accessible to everyone, including people who use wheelchairs or walkers. There will be a new bathhouse with restrooms and a concession stand. The playground, the only handicapped accessible one in the region, will be resurfaced and repaired. There will be a new, regulation-size soccer field that can also host public events like the circus, community days, car shows, craft fairs, concerts, biking events and the like. Two new basketball courts will be constructed and the Little League field will be upgraded to appropriate standards. There will be a new entrance, more parking and extensive landscaping to create shaded walkways with benches and tables. A trail with exercise equipment adjacent to the playground will make it possible for parents to parallel play with their kids! And finally, lighting will be installed throughout the park so that games can be played long into summer nights.

A grand vision for a reason

This is a grand vision that will return the Park to its central role in the lives of our residents. We all need a



Above: The proposed plans for Millerton's park. The Park is located off of Route 22 just north of Millerton with Route 22 running North-South to the far right of the schematic.

community gathering space, and this will be the only such place in town. It's a vision that includes everyone. Centralized parking and paved paths mean easy access to those with physical disabilities. Baseball and soccer leagues from around the region will have a beautiful place to play. Lively basketball tournaments will make a comeback. If you don't play sports and just want time to meet friends for a picnic, you'll find tables and benches tucked under trees. Maybe you're a chess player? There's space for you, too. How about a large concert? Outdoor movies on a warm summer's night? Tennis courts? Pickleball? New skateboard park? All possible!

We're calling the new park "Millerton Community Park – a place for EVERYONE". Julie Schroeder, owner of Silamar Farm, explains it beautifully: "I look forward to having a place where something like Millerton Community Day could happen again – a big barbecue at night where everyone comes – from farm hands to those who have seats on the NY Stock

exchange! A place where there are no divisions, a place where we can all just be from Millerton enjoying our town and each other."

Sounds like just what we need. As of this writing, the Village is reviewing construction documents and funds are being raised from public agencies, foundations and generous individuals. The price is ambitious, \$5.3 million, but well worth it for a first-rate park. Funding for Phase 1 has already been secured and ground-breaking is expected later in 2021. •

To learn more, to donate, to help or to follow the progress, please visit the Park's website www.millertonpark.org.

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Millerton, it's time to wine!

By Dominique DeVito
info@mainstreetmag.com

Like anything worth waiting for, the opening of Millerton Wine & Spirits on Main Street had its share of ups and downs, but the wait is over, and the store is open. What makes this gem of a store so special is not just its selection or its presentation (these contribute, for sure!), it's the *joie de vivre* and knowledge of the proprietor, Christopher Jeans. I caught up with him to learn more about what brought him to Millerton and what inspires his passion for wine.

"How did I get here?"

It turns out that like many of us who find ourselves doing something unpredictable with our lives, the same happened for Chris. He grew up in Litchfield, CT, and worked in restaurants to pay for college. "I was on my way to law school," he said, "leaving in a few months, and I went into a wine store in search of a particular wine. The owner and I started talking – and tasting – and he offered me a job." He liked it so much that he put off law school first for a year, and then for, well, life. "That was almost 30 years ago," he mused. "Never would I have suspected that I would be in the wine business."

Chris and his family live just over the Dutchess County border, in Connecticut, and he'd been a buyer for Little Gates for the past few years, so he already knows the tastes and predilections of the area's wine lovers. Millerton feels like a "little Soho," he said, "the art scene is outstanding, the food scene is growing, it's a very happening town." Chris's sensibilities around wine and the pleasures it can bring are a perfect fit.

Liquid history

"Some of my greatest experiences with wine," he said, "have been drinking really old bottles. Bottles that look almost scary with age, but when opened up yield heavenly wines. You sip an old wine – or any wine – and think about what was happening when the wine was grown and made. It's amazing. Wine is liquid history."

To that end, Chris is interested in wines from around the world. His selection is global, for sure, but with a nod to different styles, too. You'll find local wines there, natural and biodynamic wines, wines for those with traditional tastes, and wines for those who are looking for something different. He is also keenly aware that wine selection can be intimidating. He has spent his decades of involvement with wine helping people maximize their enjoyment, wherever it is they're coming from. He's aware and proud of the aesthetic message of his store and its location, but quick to add that customers should "not be alarmed by the beautiful setting as we are shrewd buyers. Values abound. We simply want our clients to be happy."

"The message is simple." He continued, "we work for our clients. We want them to let us know what they like, what their preferences are for growers and styles and regions, what their price range is, and what foods the wines might be paired with." Chris's experience in the restaurant business, and his lifelong and ongoing learning about wine and its place in people's lives and on their tables, makes him eager to share pairing recommendations. He loves nothing more than talking about what will contribute to an outstanding meal or occasion.

Wine is an endless adventure

"The thing about wine," he added, "is that it can never be mastered. There are currently 900 grape varieties in Italy alone," he exclaimed. "And that's



Above: Millerton Wine & Spirits has a wide selection of wines and spirits from around the globe.

just what's been discovered so far. Wine is dynamic, humbling, and an endless adventure. The secret is to be accepting of its tutelage and not rest on one's laurels. There are no laurels with wine; it is an endless education and I truly enjoy being one of its students."

The enjoyment of wine has come so far in the US in the past 30 years. A market that was once dominated by old world wines – French and Italian, mostly – is now flowing with wines from all countries in Europe, all continents on the planet, and all 50 of the United States. It's a great time to enjoy wine, and while the pandemic has

Continued on next page ...

limited being able to travel to explore wine on its native shores, opening a bottle from a faraway place can in fact take you there.

Ask Chris about the differences in a Pinot from France vs a Pinot from California vs a Pinot from New York State. “I love turning people onto new wines,” Chris said. “It takes trust, which is built over time. I like to start by suggesting value wines to pair with what’s for dinner.” It’s fun to think you could travel the world in a month just through the wines you experience.

I asked him the difficult questions about favorite wines and favorite wine regions. “My wine choices are dictated by mood and food,” he quipped. “I do enjoy bringing something old and rare from my cellar to share with friends when the occasion calls for it, but I also enjoy fooling them with what I think are great wines that are tremendous values.” As for favorite wine regions in the world?

Let’s go!

“I can never get enough of Italy,” he said. I’ve been there a few times and what I love is that for the Italians, less is truly more. They are living, and we are simply existing. Theirs is a beautiful life of simplicity: family, vino, olive oil, etc.” Another country he has in his sights is South Africa. “I haven’t been there,” he said, “but I’ve only

heard amazing stories from everyone that has. In my opinion it is still an undiscovered area for excellent quality wines and unbeatable prices compared to other areas of the world.” A surprise third choice? Patagonia, the southernmost wine-producing region in Argentina, South America. “I may not return from there if I go,” he laughed. “I hear it is the true expression of nature – tremendously pure and undiscovered.”

We turn from dreaming about the wonders of the world’s terroirs back to Chris’s hopes for Millerton Wine & Spirits.

“At this point,” he said, “we are growing and still fine-tuning the store – perhaps we will never finish as we are always tweaking. I hope customers leave feeling excited about what they’ve purchased, and that they’ve learned something about it. We delight in every customer interaction. As a local resource for wine (and spirits!), we can deliver, host a private tasting, source rare wines, design and construct wine cellars, and consult even if customers are using wines from their personal cellars that aren’t purchased from us for an occasion. I honestly believe,” he continued, “that we are in the relationship business, we just sell wine and spirits to further relationships.”

Wines for Valentine’s

Speaking of which, it’s February, which means Valentine’s Day. The Roman poet Ovid, born in 43 BC, said, “Wine prepares the heart for love.” This has certainly been borne out over the centuries. If there’s an occasion for wine, this is one of the big ones. What are Chris’s recommendations?

“Valentine’s more than any holiday is about pairing and marrying the flavors of food and wine,” he agreed. Since this year will be about staying home, as was the case with the end-of-year holidays, people can really indulge in wine. They don’t have to worry about drinking and driving. They don’t have to worry about consuming the whole bottle, even. They can choose a wine that would be so much more expensive in a restaurant. Valentine’s Day 2021 can really be about relaxing and pampering the



Owner Chris Jeans (pictured below, left) loves to help customers pair wines with food.



special people in our lives. “We want people to let us know what they’re planning for dinner,” Chris said, “and we will pair exquisite choices. From bubbles to dessert wines, let us know. With advance notice, we can also special order for that certain bottle.” I can tell the abundant possibilities of pairing suggestions – and the ideas of the meals themselves – delight him. “Imagine our world,” he said, “if every day was Valentine’s Day.”

Indeed. Imagine your world now that you have Millerton Wine & Spirits as your go-to shop for experiencing and learning more about wines. “It’s truly a lifelong journey for all of us,” Chris added. “Enjoy being a student.” I’ll drink to that – with a glass of 2018 Degrendel Single Vineyard Amandelboord Pinotage from South Africa. Thanks, Chris! ●

Millerton Wine & Spirits, find them at 34 Main Street in Millerton, NY. Call them at (518) 789-3899, and follow them on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. A website is in the works. Store hours are Tuesday 12-5; Wednesday 12-6; Thursday 11-6; Friday 11-7; Saturday 11-7; and Sunday 12-5. Closed on Monday.

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With 2021 in full gear and the Pandemic stronger than ever, it seems we will continue to see many workers working from their makeshift offices in their homes or adjacent buildings to their homes. This is a great concept for many employers, yet there are a multitude of insurance repercussions both from an employers' perspective as well as the employee, and how the home office may impact their personal homeowners policy. Let's start with the employer; assuming that you have outfitted your employees with a new computer, printer, screens and all the additional gear needed to carry on the duties of the employee, does your policy cover this equipment if it is off your business premise? Most policies will require that those off premise locations be listed and charged for both property and liability. If they are not listed then there is no coverage! What about if the business has an employee collecting and depositing receivables, who is covering the deposits if the deposits don't get to the bank? Perhaps an employee dishonesty bond should be looked into? And lastly, what about the cyber threats if the employee doesn't have a secure internet connection and has a cyber criminal hack the business' system? These are just a few examples of the major issues that can arise if coverage isn't modified to fit the new business model. The employee could have repercussions too since a homeowners policy is designed to cover only personal type claims and is very specific about excluding business exposures. You may be able to endorse incidental office liability coverage to pick up the "new home office," but if you are operating out of a detached outbuilding, be careful since all outbuildings are excluded from homeowners policies if they are used for business purposes... so check your policy to make sure that you have the appropriate coverage and you don't end up with an uninsured loss.



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Seldom have Americans spent as much time in their own homes as they did in the past year. Suddenly the things we only took notice of on hectic weekends or late in the evening following a busy work day have become the center of our entire lives. With this in mind it is so important to make the items in your home as meaningful and pleasing as possible, to everyone who uses them. Use this time at home to reevaluate your interiors and create shared spaces that the whole family can enjoy. The cornerstone of well-rounded family living is based in the design of shared spaces. Centering your dining area around a large farmhouse table is a great way to achieve this! Choosing the right dining table for your space and family can feel daunting. Begin by evaluating your dining area and asking yourself a few questions about how you typically use it: How many people will sit at this table daily? Do you like to host large gatherings where guests will be seated? If this is the case, then perhaps you should consider choosing a draw leaf or extendable dining table to meet those needs. Do you prefer oval tables or rectangular ones? Do you like to serve your meals family-style or with plated courses? If you enjoy having lots of serving dishes on your set table consider opting for a wider table leaving more space in the middle for food. Enjoy getting together with your entire family this year around the perfect dining table.

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SELECTING THE FAMILY VEHICLE

The "family" car has played an Important role in the history of America and continues to be a daily necessity for families across the country. It has shaped the landscape of the land and made suburban living and family vacations possible. Picture the station wagon crossing the country loaded inside and out with an Air-stream in tow. The family car made this possible and cemented its role in our society that still endures today. A lot has changed with families and cars over the years. The need to shop for and select the next family vehicle has not. Some thoughts on that process: The family budget often scores low on the list of considerations in the initial selection process. This is often a mistake. Knowing what the family can afford helps ensure a successful purchase of the right vehicle. What are the needs of the family and what are the things that would be desired if the needs were met and there was additional room in the budget? The most important need is to be able to carry the size of the family comfortably and safely. How many children and how far apart do they need to be to make it to the destination without conflict? Any more than two children warrants strong consideration of a third-row seat. Regardless of the passenger capacity needed, you will also want to make sure you have adequate cargo space. Many but not all vehicles with three rows of seating lack cargo capacity when the third row is in use. In the Northeast 4WD should also be considered. Once you cover the must haves, its time to get out and select that new family ride!



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5 Minute Car Care Tips

1. Microfiber towels: A pack sells for less than \$10. Use them to wipe down your steering wheel to prevent germ transfer and stickiness. Use them to wipe down your dashboard and to avoid dust accumulation.
2. Interior detail spray helps maintain the vinyl, plastics and Pho-finish. This can be wiped down with the microfiber. If you have these on hand for that coffee spill, you will avoid sticky residue build up or staining your fabric or carpet.
3. Open your hood. Wipe down dust, grime, and build up. Check for evidence of critters. They form nests, hide acorns in crevices in addition to feces.
4. Does your vehicle have a pungent odor from hitting a skunk or a bad spill? Place an open bag of cheap whole grain coffee in the car overnight.
5. Invest in a polymer wax and apply it twice a year. The polymer blend is easy to apply and remove. The wax prevents winter salt build-up, road grime, and it maintains and protects the paint.

Countryside Car Service

518-567-5761 • Hillsdale, NY
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Animal Welfare Society

Animal shelter in New Milford, CT. (860) 354-1350. 8 Dodd Rd., New Milford, CT. aws-shelter.org

Formed in 1965 by a group of volunteers trying to save impounded dogs from being euthanized, the Animal Welfare Society in New Milford, CT, provides medical care, spaying and neutering in a safe environment for homeless dogs and cats until they are adopted into their forever homes. The beloved animal shelter serves the many towns that dot Northwest Connecticut and, when space permits, those areas where the animal population needs help. The Animal Welfare Society takes pride in hosting spaces where potential pets are able to meet the public. The shelter hosts a local veterinarian each week who comes to treat the animals and maintains a well-trained staff that is skilled in making the adoption process a good experience for all involved. Folks at the Animal Welfare Society say the most rewarding aspect is to see the animals, once homeless, leave the shelter with a new and loving family. Residents and visitors in the area value the shelter as being a resource for pet owners as well as for potential adoptees. Working tirelessly to keep each pet in loving homes and out of the shelter has helped the Animal Welfare Society build a one-of-a-kind relationship with the surrounding community. The shelter has also implemented a senior-to-senior program that matches older animals with seniors looking for a companion at no charge to the adopter.



Casa Marcelo

Interior design firm focused on empowering families through well designed spaces. Falls Village, CT. (347) 601-1089. casamarcelo.co

Abigail Marcelo started Casa Marcelo in 2018 after working for a variety of different firms throughout her career. Today, Casa Marcelo, located in Falls Village, CT, provides full-service interior design including space planning, furniture, and finishes sourcing, procurement, installing and styling for new builds, full-gut renovations and per-room updates including kitchens and bathrooms. Abigail also offers E-Design services for non-local residents. Clients have raved about Casa Marcelo's uncanny ability to make them feel seen, heard, and involved in the process from the very beginning. Casa Marcelo designs with the client in mind. Abigail's ten-year experience in high-end residential design helps her service the Northwest corner of Connecticut, as well as Southwest Massachusetts (Sheffield to Great Barrington), and upstate NY. She also has a few projects in New York City as well. Abigail says it's truly rewarding to see all of her hard work make an individual or family genuinely happy. As a first-generation American, Abigail says she has always dreamed of owning a business. She sees Casa Marcelo growing to have several employees and continuing to obtain projects in both our area and beyond. Abigail also hopes to continue collaborating with local brands and businesses in efforts to support the local community.



Matt Oner – Photographer

Portrait photographer capturing moments in the Hudson Valley, Western MA, and NY Metro area. (646) 932-6637. mattoner.com

Matt Oner began his freelance photography work in 1987 after leaving his staff job at the Hess Oil Corporation. Having worked in a corporate environment for a number of years, Matt was eager to start out on his own and expand his range in photography. Today, Matt's primary specialty is portraiture, however, over the years he has worked with a range of editorial, advertising, and corporate clients and subject matter, which included editorial feature stories, corporate annual reports, aerials and industrial work, lifestyle and food, as well as fashion and travel work. Matt maintains an office in Columbia County, NY, and while his main area is the Northeastern US, including New York City; he also works for clients in Europe – Holland in particular. Though we may live in a world of an abundance of quality photographic work from amateurs and professionals alike, Matt has come to be known as the consummate professional and punctual collaborator; he solves problems, respects requirements, and honors commitments. In terms of portraiture, Matt has a great rapport with his subjects, a crucial aspect of working with people. After many years in photography, Matt maintains that everyday is a new day and he is still as excited working on current assignments as if it were his first. Matt says he is always available for a chat on photography or other topics.



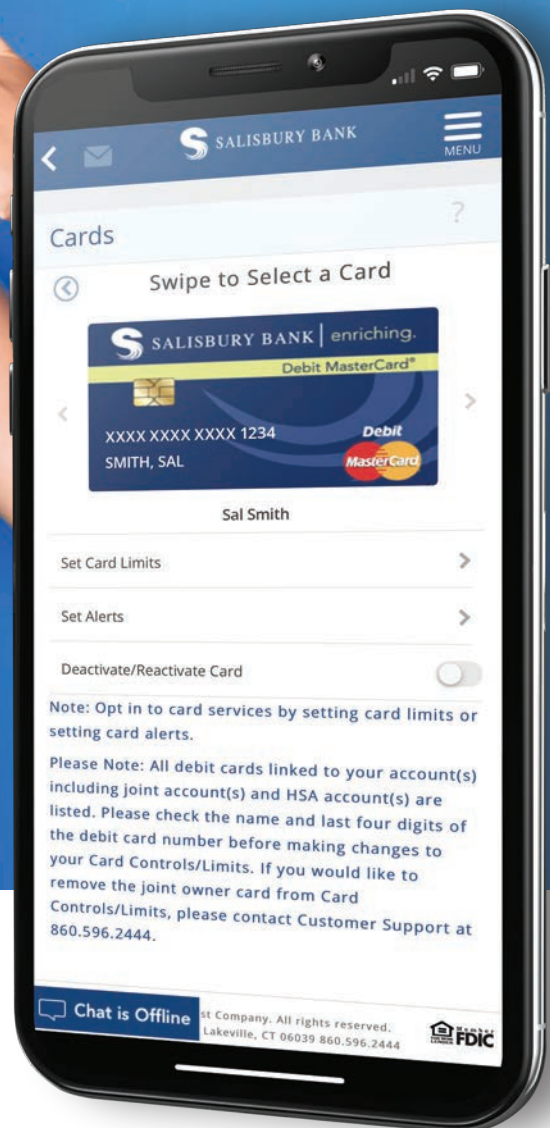
Passports Antiques

One-of-a-kind antiques, freshwater pearl jewelry, and everything in-between. 14 Main St., Salisbury, CT. (860) 435-8855.

Passports Antiques started more than 20 years ago in the small town of Salisbury, CT, when Elaine LaRoche, an American business woman living in China, began exporting antique furniture and artifacts from her many travels. In addition to antiques, Passports' offerings include jewelry, men and women's accessories, tableware, home decor, lamps, unusual gift items, and garden ornaments. The folks at Passports say their clientele are local, weekend, and seasonal residents. Many boarding school families, first-time visitors, as well as people returning to the area enjoy seeing what's new at Passports. Passports is committed to presenting decorative and useful items at a variety of price points. For example, the Passports Pearls collection of cultured pearl jewelry, while luxurious, represents great value at both ends of the cost spectrum. At Passports, they treasure the relationships with customers, some multi-generational, some who live a great distance away and make a point of visiting whenever they're in the area. Customers inspire the Passports vision, and they strive to exceed expectations. With the increasing interest in antiques and unusual vintage pieces, which can be used to add color and texture to interiors, the folks at Passports strongly encourage browsing and "reconnaissance shopping!"

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