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THE THINGS THAT MATTER

It isn't really until our March issue that our issues have an overarching theme to them, but this one has a bit of a community-oriented lean to it. We aren't straight-out calling it the "community issue" but for all intensive purposes, it really is just that. Our stories in this issue range from an *in memoriam* to Mr. Copake himself, Larry Proper, who left us too soon, just a few short months ago. Larry was the embodiment of community and spirit as well as dedication. Between Ashley, Griffin and myself (the three amigos of the office staff of *Main Street*), we all had the honor of growing up knowing Larry and his family. We can personally attest, like so many others from within the community, to the impact that Larry made on so many lives. And we are honored to share his memory with our readers.

Flipping through the pages of this issue, you'll find that our monthly entrepreneur feature is that of Mountain-side Cafe where they are all about building and re-building community. Mary O'Neill brings us a piece about volunteerism and the positive benefits that volunteering has both on a community, as well as the individuals who volunteer and those who receive the benefits of someone else volunteering. Furthermore, volunteers and the many volunteer-based organizations are often one of the important puzzle pieces of a larger community that help make it so unique and special.

Changing paths slightly, Regina brings us a piece this month about Blue Zones: areas of the world where longevity rules, and the reasons for it. It is quite fascinating to read, but one of the take-aways for me was how being involved in a community, helping and contributing, are factors that lead to a longer life – and perhaps even a higher quality of life. While Regina fills us in on the many factors that help lead to a longer life, Dominique fills us in on the various factors of senior sex lives. Isn't sex an important factor in a quality life after all? Well Dominique, and many others, think so, and with that she's compiled some interesting facts as well as helpful tips and resources. There's sure to be something for everyone – both in that article, as well as the others in this issue. And I've just scratched the surface with these honorable mentions above. There are a number of others and, as always, there should be something for everyone in this issue.

For those interested in being a Friendly Face, Business Snapshot, or submitting an advice column, you can now do so right on our website or give Ashley a call in the office. We thank you for your continued support.

– Thorunn Kristjansdottir



FEBRUARY 2022

Winter is upon us all. Stay warm and enjoy the season.

Cover photo by
Lazlo Gyorsok

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PRINT, LEGAL, ACCOUNTING, & INSURANCE

Printed by **Snyder Printer, Inc.** • Legally represented by **Downey, Haab & Murphy PLLC**
Accounting services by **UHY LLP, Certified Public Accountants** • Insured by **Kneller Insurance Agency**

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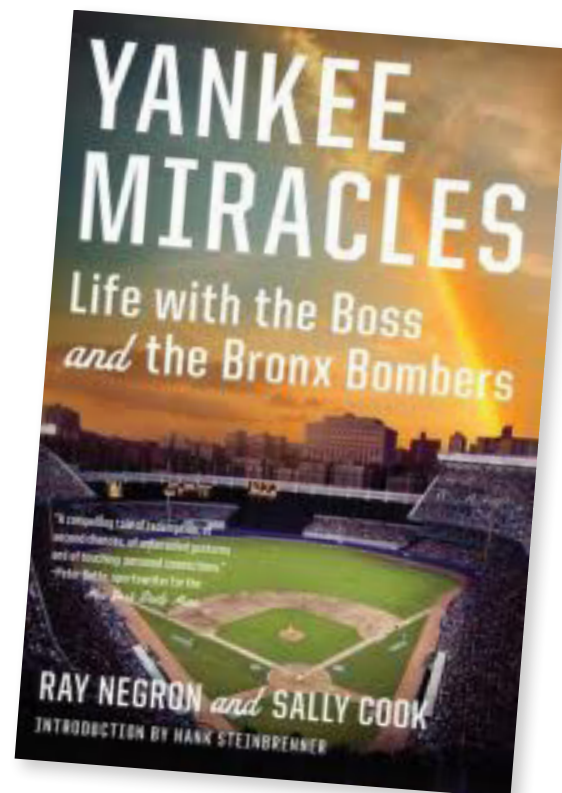
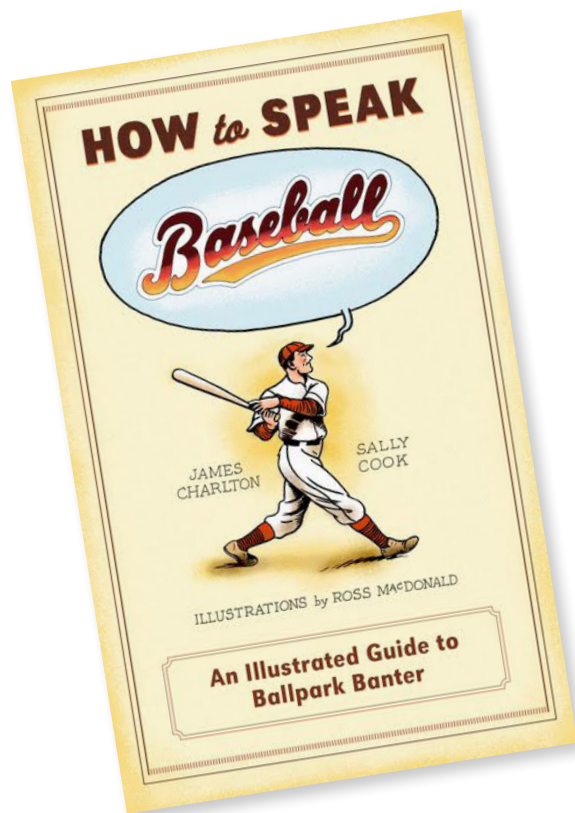
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A WRITER WRITES...AND GIVES BACK

AUTHOR SALLY COOK

By CB Wismar
info@mainstreetmag.com

"Thank you, Mrs. Smith."

Sally Cook is quick to give credit to the second grade teacher at Crystal Springs Elementary School in Roanoke, VA, who offered the decisive bit of inspiration that set her on the career trajectory of being a widely published and eagerly applauded author.

"It was Mrs. Smith who not only encouraged me to read ... but gave me a purple journal and set me on my way with the words 'There's a story everywhere you turn.'"

A dual resident of Cornwall, CT, and New York City, Sally was born into a family where her father was an IBM manager after having been premed in college and her mother taught nursery school. Sally is one of four. Her two brothers are physicians and her sister has worked in gerontology. A fair question would be to wonder why Sally didn't pursue medicine herself.

"I didn't want to be a doctor," she'll candidly reply. "From second grade on, I knew I wanted to write books. Frankly, *Harry the Dirty Dog* changed my life!" It is worth noting, however, that although a career in medicine was not in Sally's future, she has found challenging and satisfying work in her part-time avocation, being the Program and Publications Manager for the National Adrenal Disease Foundation. Writers write ... and give back.

Writing features

Filled with wonder about how society worked and eager to use her writing talents, Sally went to Skidmore College as a Political Science major and graduated in time to journey to New York City and the pursuit of a career in journalism.

Writing feature pieces became a passion, and Cook found welcome publishers at McCall's, Family Circle, and the Associated Press. So intriguing were her pieces for the AP, that she was given her own column – *Kids* – and contributed one piece each week. With the understanding that the interests and appetites of her audience were wide ranging, Sally sought out interviews and told stories of fascinating people to her audience. Meryl Streep, President Jimmy Carter and his wife Rosalyn, Little Richard and country singer Merle Haggard all appeared in her published pieces. So did profiles of an advocate for the Hmong people and the urban gardeners within their group and an environmentalist who had the passion to compost with worms ... in his New York apartment.

An interest to best seller

It was while pursuing the interesting and challenging that Sally became interested in the story of legendary football coach Gene Stallings. To the sports world, Stallings was a championship coach, having been on the coaching staff of the Dallas Cowboys

for two of their Superbowl championships and having led the University of Alabama to the national title. More intriguing to Sally was the fact that Stallings and his wife were the parents of Johnny Stallings, a young man born with Down's Syndrome. *Another Season: A Coach's Story of Raising an Exceptional Son* was co-authored by Sally Cook and landed on the *New York Times* Best Seller list. So popular was the book that it was translated into Japanese.

For Sally, the longer process of researching and writing a book became her passion. Her range would broaden from inspiring stories of sports legends to the discipline that got Sally "hooked" in the first place – children's literature. "I think it took 20 minutes for me to write *Good Night Pillow Fight*," she recalls with a laugh. "Of course, it took five years to get it published, but the wait was worth it." The wait came because of the availability of Laura Cornell, the illustrator who brought Sally's text to life. Committed to illustrating books by Jamie Lee Curtis, Cornell needed the time and Sally was happy to oblige. So positive was the response to the book that *Publisher's Weekly*, the standard for the industry, commented "...the perfect choice for diehard insomniacs – and the parents who try to remember that they love them."

A chance meeting, then another

The allure of books on sports grew for Sally, and when she met author and Lakeville, CT, resident James Charlton at a neighborhood func-

tion, the talk turned of careers and baseball, a passion for Charlton. Their chance meeting grew into a discussion which grew into a plan which ended up being *Hey Batta Batta Swing! The Wild Old Days of Baseball*. Connecticut illustrator Ross MacDonald was enlisted to bring image and color to the book which charmingly told the stories of the early days of America's pastime.

Within the legend and lore of baseball, Sally found an amazing repository of terms that were unique to the game. Another book was in the works. As the first of her *How to Speak...* books, Sally dove deeper into baseball, then followed up with similar titles about soccer, football, and golf. Originally targeted to adult readers, the attraction for younger readers became readily apparent. Ross MacDonald had made his mark with the first baseball book. For the succeeding volumes, he has stayed with the project and won applause and awards.

Sally's latest baseball venture has been her co-authoring *Yankee Miracles* with New York Yankees executive, children's book author and filmmaker Ray Negron. A chance meeting between Sally and Negron occurred at Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital where Sally was visiting in support of her work with the Project Sunshine Book Club and Ray was escorting a young Yankee player to meet some of the patients.

As the story would have it, that day a young fan told Brett Gardiner that he was going to hit a home run that evening in the game. The notion was charming, but highly unlikely. Gardner wasn't even in the starting line-up that night. As fate would have it (and the story is recounted in full in the Negron/Cook book), Gardner was called on when Johnny Damon got tossed from the game for arguing with the umpire. Late in the



Above: Sally Cook. Photo by Bleacher + Everand. Below, left: Sally's book *Good Night Pillow Fight*. Opposite page: Three of Sally's books. Images courtesy of Sally Cook.

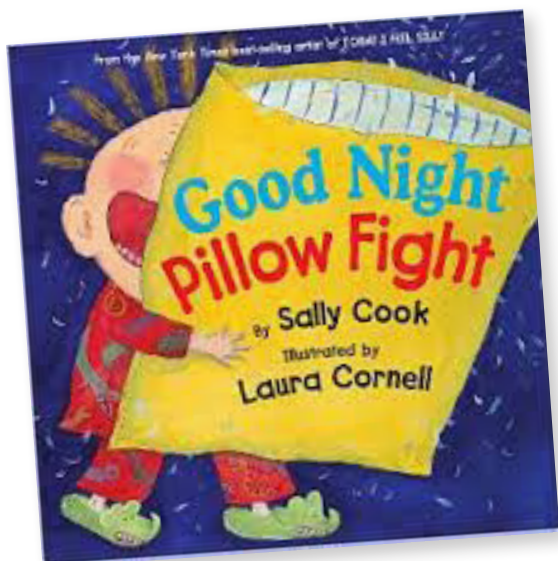
game, Brett Gardner came to the plate and, to the amazement and awe of everyone in the stadium, and a young lady with a Project Sunshine bracelet, hit a very rare "inside-the-park" home run. And, Sally's orchestrated visit to the children's hospital became the stuff of legends.

For Sally Cook, the writing continues. She is currently researching and drafting a biography of the young woman who, at age 16, won the tennis "Grand Slam" in one calendar year. Maureen Connolly had only a 1000-day career, but "Little Moe" was a ground-breaking athlete in the early 1950s, and soon her story, at Sally Cook's behest, will be shared with aspiring young players everywhere.

Ever the earnest promoter of reading and the fate of independent bookstores, Sally Cook is on the board of the Chappaqua Children's Book Festival which will, in October 2022, continue its efforts at bringing young readers and authors together for a celebration of children's literature. Writers write ... and give back. ●

More about Sally Cook can be found on her website, sallycookauthor.com

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.



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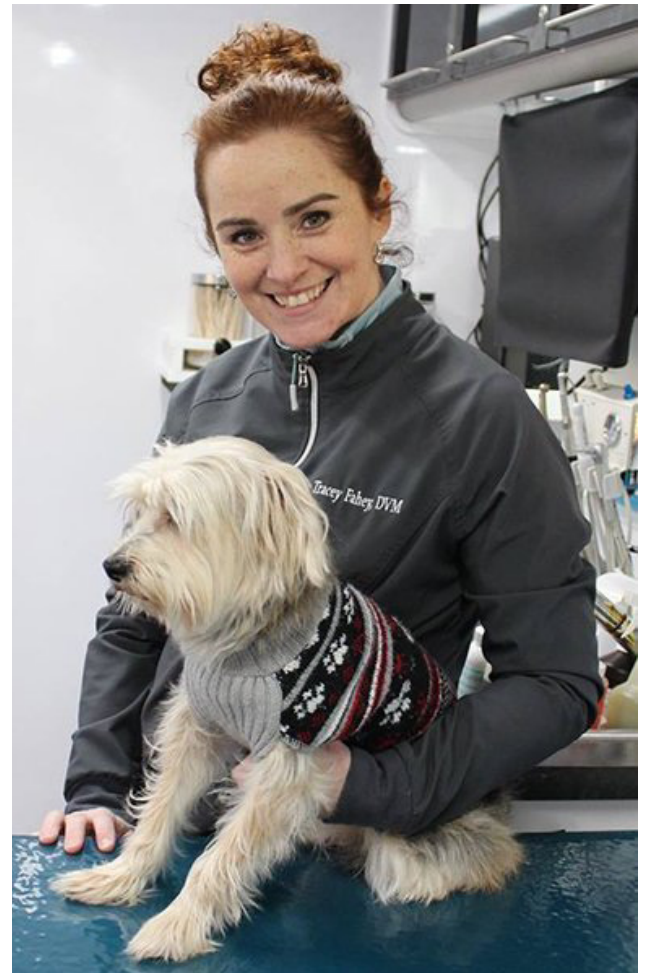


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friendly faces: meet our neighbors, visitors and friends



Kyla (left) and **Kelsey Johnson** (right), age six, are sisters who live in Tivoli, NY, and go to Red Hook Central School. When at school, Kyla says her favorite subject is math while Kelsey loves art class and enjoys crafting and painting. Outside of school, both girls enjoy time with family and staying active. “I love living in a small town because we get to live close to family and take lots of walks,” says Kyla. “My favorite thing to do with my family is taking bike rides, walks, and going to the park in the summer,” echoes Kelsey. In the coming year, the sisters are looking forward to seeing more movies, eating more popcorn, and visiting more family as they say, “We are going to have fun in 2022 and have a good year!”



Millerton, NY's **Peter Richmond** has spent a lifetime writing. Throughout his career Peter has worked for five newspapers, as a staff writer at *GQ Magazine* and has seven published books. “Like most of the writers I know, we don't have a choice. It's therapy,” says Peter. “There are a few things I love most about my profession: The first is curiosity, you have to always be curious – about everything. Also, writing teaches you empathy. You can't create believable characters – real or not – without trying to see through their eyes.” When not writing Peter likes to drive. “My wife and I love to find the soul of the parts of America that get ignored, or put down,” Peter says. In 2022 Peter says he's, “Hoping for harmony – in my village, my state – among the people who seem to always forget that without each other's support, we might as well fold up the tent of Democracy.”



Mara Smith has been working for Stewart's Shops in Hillsdale, NY, as a shift supervisor for the better part of two years. “What I love most about the job is the people I've met and the friendships I've built with my co-workers during my time here at Stewart's,” Mara says. Outside of work, Mara enjoys spending time with her family and hanging out with friends. She also enjoys reading and baking. “I'm originally from Copake, NY, and what I love most about this area is the many kind people and the generosity they have displayed, especially throughout the pandemic,” Mara says.



Sam Busselle's volunteer work started with a seat on the Town Board in the Town of North East, NY, followed by years on the planning board and assembling a small group of community members to form the North East Community Council, which eventually became the North East Community Center. “I'm currently working with our neighbors in Amenia and Pine Plains in a region-wide Tri-Town Housing Coalition,” Sam says. “Using the resources of four rural municipalities to address a severe housing need for our seniors, farm workers, and dedicated essential workers.” After graduating from the Yale School of Architecture, he spent three years in the Peace Corps with his family of four. “I built a house on Martha's Vineyard from scratch with repurposed lumber from an old barn,” Sam says. “That and our 18th-century farmhouse in North East are my life-long art projects.”



Daniel Reed is a shift supervisor for SWM Intl in Ancram, NY, where he has worked for 18 years. Daniel says he enjoys teaching new employees and working with research teams to help develop new products. “Outside of work I enjoy spending time with my wife and family,” Daniel shares. “I am an avid golfer and member of the Copake Country Club. I also enjoy playing basketball, hiking with my family, and hunting in the fall.” Daniel was born and raised in Hillsdale where his family owned a goat farm. “I love this area because it's where I met my amazing wife,” Daniel exclaims. “I enjoy living in this area because of all the outdoor activities available and the close proximity to the many different shops and restaurants in the surrounding towns.”



Athena Marcou is nine years old, is from Millerton, NY, and says her favorite things to do are cooking and reading books. Athena says she also loves learning new things, “I am homeschooled,” she says. “I like reading about lots of things, but my favorite subject is science.” When she's not studying, Athena likes to get together with her family and spend time playing board games. “I am so happy to be from Millerton,” Athena says. “I love knowing so many people in my community, and I get to meet new people every day.” Athena also has a very special attachment to the furry members of her family as well, “I love my cats!” she says. “I am so happy they are part of my family!”



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MOUNTAINSIDE *café*

BUILDING A COMMUNITY ... BY BUILDING A COMMUNITY

By CB Wismar
info@mainstreetmag.com

It's a modest place, tucked away on Route 7 South in Falls Village, CT. Clean white building, ample parking with overflow across the road, a simple sign and a warm welcome. Mountainside Café is one of those unique places where the community inside the building welcomes and builds the community outside the building. During the seemingly endless repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic, the café was forced to resort to carry out service, only. The community didn't seem to miss a beat. Not getting the "Johnny Cash" breakfast inside didn't deter loyal fans who had grown to cherish the clean, bright, friendly café with the wonderfully comforting menu. Now open with limited service, the café looks, optimistically, to a full schedule of days, times and service in the months ahead.

It's that good!

Andy Ignace has been head chef at Mountainside Café for six years. He's built a menu that provides such engaging choices that the often grumpy, picky and cynical TripAdvisor reviewers overwhelmingly applaud the food choices, the quality of the ingredients – many of them sourced locally – and, always, the genial staff. It's interesting to read reviews from travelers who have happened on Mountainside Café in mid-trip and express the longing to return to try more or to have the same breakfast or lunch, again. It was that good.

Local sourcing is far from a mere motto for the café and the chef who prepares new menu items based on the fresh ingredients available and the encouragement and suggestions of the staff. Hurlburt Farms in Goshen, CT, sources the beef on the menu. Sugar Shack in nearby Litchfield, CT, provides maple syrup and honey. Litchfield Locker is the chef's source for chorizo, sausage, and short ribs. "We've had rabbit on the menu when the Locker has fresh rabbit," offers the chef. Few local eateries are offering rabbit, but when it's fresh and available, seeing it on the Mountainside Café menu will not be a surprise.

Ignace became intrigued with cooking at an early age. Graduate of Mt. Everett High School in Sheffield, MA, where he advanced his interest in cooking, Andy continued his chef's training in Lincoln Culinary Institute in Hartford, CT, then returned to work his way up in the kitchen of The Bridge in Sheffield.

When Mountainside announced the opening of the café and the extraordinary program that provides the genial, helpful staff, he was ready to make his move. It was impossible to not embrace the affirmation of community that one can find prominently placed on the Mountainside Café website:

"Community – In addition to supporting local vendors, we are proud to provide a safe and supportive space for individuals in recovery to practice critical life skills as they embrace a sober lifestyle."

Community, lifestyle and rebuilding lives

The inclusion of lifestyle in the community paragraph is directly related to the reason Mountainside Café exists at all. Under Chef Ignace's direction,



the full-time employees of the café are talented, energetic individuals who have become part of the Mountainside Treatment Center and are eagerly rebuilding their lives. From their own descriptive language, "At Mountainside, we believe in caring for the client's total needs, beyond the addiction diagnosis. With this holistic wellness treatment philosophy, we identify a client's personal strengths and goals and care for our clients to facilitate change and empowerment for a healthier life."

It's that spirit that also attracted Sarah Winkley to join the Mountainside Café team some four years ago as Café General Manager. Also a local, having grown up in nearby Millerton, NY, Sarah had spent the early part of her career working in the Region One School District as a Special Educational Paraprofessional. With some additional experience in the food service industry, the opportunity to build and be part of a positive community was a real attraction. "We're committed to making the surrounding community a part of our personal



Above and next page: The food at Mountainside is not just good looking, but locally sourced and delicious. Below, left: Head chef Andy Ignace. All images courtesy of Mountainside Café.



Continued on next page ...

and professional lives,” she notes with a justified sense of pride. “Whether its being an active part of the ‘Trunk or Treat’ outreach or having Santa make a stop at the café so the neighbors can have a personal visit, it’s a real part of who and what we are. And, besides, this is a great team. It’s a bit non-traditional, but creating a peaceful environment in the kitchen goes a long way to building strong relationships.”

But, back to the food. One recent reviewer (from Kingali, Rwanda ... not just around the corner) spared no praise when recommending at least one stop at the café in their five star review.

BEST BREAKFAST EVER!

“Do not pass go – head directly to the Mountainside Café for the most delicious breakfast I have ever had. The goat cheese omelet was sublime and everything we had was amazing! We were visiting from out of town for the weekend, and after a wonderful breakfast on Saturday, we had to go back there for breakfast on Sunday too! Why go anywhere else when the food at Mountainside Café is spectacular! When I walked in the second day, I was greeted by name and they even remembered my prior order. Lovely indoor or outdoor dining and the nicest proprietors!”

The menu at Mountainside Café is both encouraging and comforting. For those who are simply looking for a traditional café meal, there are abundant choices. If there is a bit more imagination in the palette, then

departures from the tried and true beckon.

With the permission of the chef, one of his unique recipes is included, below. Normally found atop a classically prepared hamburger, the Bacon Onion Jam is a café staple and well worth the investment of time and ingredients. Even the novice chef should be able to follow Andy’s recipe to amazing result.

Bacon Onion Jam

Ingredients:

- 2 pounds, diced bacon
- 4 diced yellow onions
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- 2 tsp thyme
- ¼ tsp cayenne
- ½ cup of water
- 2 tsp balsamic vinegar

Directions: Render bacon until crispy, drain and use the grease to cook the onions. When onions turn translucent, add sugar, spices, and red wine vinegar. Scrape the bottom of the pan. Add water and turn down the heat. Reduce until 95% of the moisture is gone. Add back the bacon and the balsamic vinegar.

The Mountainside Café website brings up-to-date information about the opening days and times, access to the menu and concise information about the café, the support program and the reason the café has become a local gem during its seven-plus years of operation. It’s doubtful that most



restaurants have well articulated Mission Statements, but since Mountainside Café is profoundly and proudly on a mission, their Mission Statement brings a real focus to the dining experience.

Mission: Our mission is to nourish and nurture our community by providing fresh, wholesome and delicious foods made with ingredients from local farmers, growers and producers. Through our efforts, we strive to promote healthy lifestyles and sustainable ways of living.

So important is the statement, that it appears on the wall behind the counter that itemizes available beverage items, bakery goods, and services provided by the staff.

The hopes of the team are wrapped in the notion of being able to offer their unique table service in the near future and to look forward to a seven-day-a-week service offering come summer when the roads are filled with locals coming by for a wonderful dining experience and travelers happening on one of the happiest, most welcoming restaurants for miles around. •

For more information it’s always best to check at www.mountain-sidecafe.com for the latest hours, offerings and updates.





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Oreo Truffles

Valentine's Day is this month, and we suggest you take notes. Food is, in fact, the way to one's heart. Say "no thanks" to materialism and consumerism this holiday and whip up a batch of these for your sweetheart! Or just for you; treat yo-self. Oreo Truffles are quick to make, and no baking is required. All you need is a microwave or double boiler and a fridge.

Oreos tend to come in MANY different flavors now. Though we haven't tried using any other than the original, it would be very interesting to do so. Try the red velvet ones for Valentine's Day; the recipe would not change. You can also make these gluten-free with gluten-free Oreos. The truffles can be adjusted for just about any holiday. Mint ones for Christmas with red and green chocolate drizzle/sprinkles, orange and purple for Halloween, pastels for Easter, and for those who would like to add a boozy kick, add some Bailey's Irish Creme for St. Patty's Day. Use your imagination!

If you have any melted chocolate leftover, grab some strawberries and dip them too! 'Tis the holiday for chocolatey yumminess!

Ingredients

- 1 package of Oreos (36)
- 1 8oz package of cream cheese at room temperature
- 1 cup of milk or dark chocolate melting wafers
- 1 cup white chocolate melting wafers
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tbs shortening (optional for thinning the chocolate)

Directions

Place Oreos in a food processor or a blender to crush the cookies into powder (if you have neither of these, put them in a thick resealable bag and

beat the devil out of them). Set aside some crumbs for decoration if you wish. Add the softened cream cheese and 1 tsp of vanilla and combine.

Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper, scoop the Oreo mixture, and form into 1" balls by rolling them in your palms. Place them on the lined cookie sheet. Place the cookie balls in the freezer for 15 minutes (do not skip this step they are much easier to work with when frozen or chilled).

In the meantime, melt the chocolate in the microwave or in a double boiler, add the shortening if using. Retrieve the Oreo balls from the freezer and dip into the melted chocolate. You can use two forks, toothpicks, or whatever you find easiest. If you are using cookie crumbs or sprinkles to decorate the truffles, just make sure to add them before the chocolate hardens.

We like to drizzle white chocolate on top with a spoon, fork or sandwich bag with the corner snipped off for ease of drizzling. Pop them back in the refrigerator to set. They can be kept in the fridge for 2 weeks or frozen in an airtight container for up to 3 months.

Happy Valentine's Day! ●

Olivia and Caroline are enthusiastic foodies and bakers who are constantly in the kitchen, as well as explorers who create their own adventures in our area – and did we mention they are mother and daughter? Follow Olivia on Instagram to see her many creations at @olivaiwvalentine.





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The Houses of Tudor

The revival of Tudor architecture in America

By Christine Bates
info@mainstreetmag.com

Tudor Revival-style houses capture the imagination. They are dramatic whether it's a Snow White cottage, or Jay Gatsby's mansion. These picturesque buildings with a distinctive architectural style stand out amongst the colonial, federal, Victorian, split levels, and farmhouses that crowd our region's villages and roads. "Tudor" commands our attention and for this Main Street issue we look at the origins and characteristics of this unique architectural style.

The Tudor reign

Why did "Tudor" houses, based on a very American idea of English country life, become the preferred building style during the Jazz Age at the same time that modernist architecture was emerging? At the beginning of the 20th century, as the middle and upper classes grew wealthy, there was a movement to the suburbs now accessible by commuter train and car. The individualistic and informal Tudor look with its reference to a bucolic English countryside was hugely appealing to those rejecting the "cut and dried, built by the yard characteristics which come to be accepted as the American type," according to the author of an article in *House Beautiful* in 1911.

As the stock market soared after World War I an estimated 25% of new homes nationally were built in the Tudor style, occasionally referred to as "Stockbroker Tudor" or "Mock

Tudor." These homes spoke to economic achievement, and conservative good taste. Thousands of these homes were constructed primarily in the Northeast and Midwest in the first ring suburbs like Bronxville, NY, and Philadelphia's Main Line west to Lake Forest, IL, and Highland Park, St. Paul. Extolling the Tudor houses of Riverdale, NY, the *Craftsman* magazine wrote that a Tudor-style house, would be "a retreat for men who love the silence, who love to sleep within the sound of rustling leaves, yet who must spend their day in the thick of Broadway and Wall Street traffic."

During the Depression, Tudor-style homes became simpler, smaller, and less popular and architects started to turn to modernism for inspiration. The boom that followed World War II brought modern ranches in developments like Levitt Town on Long Island, and glass houses for the rich and sophisticated. The Tudor reign, which reached beyond the suburbs to small villages like Gilbertsville, NY, rural estates in Connecticut and horse farms in Millbrook was over, but elements of the style are still present today.

Tudor rules

The distinct look of Tudor houses makes them the most easily recognizable architectural style. The roots of the 20th century Tudor style began with the eclectic, revival styles in England which eventually took hold in America. Influential designers like William Morris called for a return to the medieval, which emphasized hand craftsmanship and traditional materials. The Tudor Revival in America was loosely based on English rural medieval building traditions ranging from simple cottages to estates. Train stations, apartment complexes, shopping areas, cottages, and mansions have all received the Tudor treatment.

The most common shared exterior features found in original Tudor Re-



Above: Fox Meadow at 2 Elmsdorf is a classic Stockbroker Tudor located in Scarsdale listing for \$2,795,000 and now pending closing. The property includes four fireplaces, seven bedrooms. Photo courtesy of Heather Harrison of Compass. Below, left: This renovated Lakeville Tudor cottage charms drivers as they pass by on Route 44. Photo by Christine Bates.



vival style homes are: steeply pitched roofs, front facing gables, tall paned leaded casement windows sometimes with diamond shapes, massive chimneys often topped with decorative chimney pots, articulated entrances with front doors with rounded or a flattened Tudor arch, and, most telling, decorative half timbers set off against light plaster. Floating bay oriel windows are often another feature of Tudor façades along with a cantilevered second floor. Exterior walls were usually stone, stucco, or brick, and roofs were slate or, in more modest structures, curled shingles to look like a thatched roof. The colors were natural and subdued, the layout was typically asymmetrical unlike stark white rectangular Federal and Greek Revival boxes. The Tudors of the 1920s were large, rambling, and usually comfortably situated on oversized lots amongst rocks and trees without the requirement for a formal garden.

Inside an Americanized Tudor, the great hall at the entrance created a new sense of space with open informal living areas. Ceilings were beamed and dark woodwork prevailed now that electricity could bring light

into rooms. Ceilings were high and step down, less formal living rooms replaced the traditional parlor. The Tudor interior might have flattened Tudor arch doorways, fireplace mantles and windows. Damask wall covering were common or textured walls painted ivory adorned with medieval symbols like acorns and quatrefoils. Flooring was often wide oak planks covered by Persian rugs. Heavy wrought iron hardware and lighting fixtures completed the look with taxidermy and tapestries hung on the walls.

During this same period small, modest cottages were built in the Tudor style. Remember the cottage in Snow White? While large scale Tudors can seem dark and dour, cottage Tudors are playful and project a gentle, English village air. Look for the swooping gable, the prominent chimney, arched front door surround, and the tall narrow windows (see photo left).

Continued on next page ...

Tudor estates become resorts

Enormous stone quasi-Tudor-style homes were built by the inheritors of the great railroad, real estate, and oil fortunes. These baronial estates emulated English manors and usually sat on large tracts of land. Built beginning in the 1880s by the wealthiest Americans, these homes became the inspiration for the “Stockbroker” Tudor of the early 19th century.

One of the grandest of these estates was Blantyre Castle built on 200 acres in Lenox, MA, modeled after a home in Lanarkshire, Scotland. Begun in 1902, the mansion is a feudal mélange with Tudor half timbering, chimneys, steep roofs, and leaded glass windows with the addition of towers, turrets, and gargoyles. The four-star resort was sold in September 2021 for a reported \$15 million to a Texas real estate developer specializing in the preservation of Gilded Age estates. The buyer intends to invest another \$90 million in an expansion approved by the Town of Lenox planning board.

Migdale in the Town of Washington, NY, owned for the last twenty years by the art dealing, horse breeding Wildenstein family, is a superb Tudor example which is looking for a buyer. Built by Andrew Carnegie’s daughter in 1927, it was modeled after the hunting lodge at Skibo Castle in Scotland. It has 34,500 square feet with ten bedrooms, 17 bathrooms on over 350 acres of land just outside the Village of Millbrook. New York City restaurateur Will Guidara, perhaps inspired by the success of Silo Ridge and Blantyre, was purported to have a deal to purchase the property contingent on Town of Washington approval of a zoning change that would permit

“a world-class getaway” with a hotel, and two restaurants. Local residents quickly mobilized to oppose the project, and, according to the town’s attorney, Guidara has withdrawn his application and the town is revisiting its comprehensive plan to “relook” at hospitality issues. The property was last listed with McGrath Realty for at \$19,500,000.

Really large estates of any style, but especially Tudor’s with their expensive roofs and materials, take a while to sell and sometimes they are just demolished because of the expense of maintenance and taxes and zoning limitations. The Pillsbury Tudor summer palace, built in 1918, was Minnesota’s most expensive listing when it went on the market for \$53.5 million in 2007. After many price reductions and failing to find a buyer, it was demolished in 2018.

Tudor restoration

Remodeling an original Tudor Revival house can be expensive. The wiring and the plumbing may be over a 100 years old and located behind plaster walls. According to expert Bob Vila, original half-timber boards may have rotted and need replacing along with the stucco. Brick cladding often needs repointing. Even if updated in the 1950s, the electrical may need updating to run modern appliances. Leaded casement windows are highly energy inefficient and will need to be replaced with pricey custom-made windows. Slate roofs are difficult and expensive to maintain, and intersecting roof lines are vulnerable to leaking. Plus, steep roofs make replacement even more expensive. In larger Tudor homes, which were



Above: Tudor homes are still being designed and built today. This magnificent house built for a couple who had lived in England was designed by Ira Grandberg, AIA and includes authentic half and whole timber construction. Below, right: Built in 1920, this 7,178 square foot Copake estate on five acres sold for \$1,350,000 in August 2021. Photo courtesy of Frances Ingraham Heins of Heather Croner Real Estate.

designed for servants, the kitchen was typically located in the basement, à la Downton Abbey, with a dumb waiter to the main floor. For most buyers this means moving walls and creating a whole new kitchen.

The Tudor real estate market

Smaller, less expensive Tudors, old and new, that can be used as residences are often available to purchase in our area. In the fall of 2021, a restored 7,200-square-foot Tudor in Copake, NY, with six bedrooms built in 1920 for the Buster Brown shoe family was sold for \$1,350,000 to a buyer looking for a family gathering place. Frances Ingraham Heins, the listing agent with Heather Croner Real Estate, estimated that the cost to recreate the well-built house today would be over \$5,000,000 (see photo above right).

On a more modest scale there is a Tudor home at 61 Innsbruck in Hopewell Junction listed at \$699,000 (see photo left). The 4,500-square-foot house built in 1983 is clearly Tudor-inspired on the outside except for the roof line and lack of imposing chimneys, and very modern inside. Contrast this home to the classic 1924 Stockbroker Tudor at 2 Elmdorf from Scarsdale (see photo previous page), which listed in August 2021 at \$2,795,000 and will close for \$2,515,000 in April. This home demonstrates all of the key elements of the 1920s Tudor Revival style with its dramatic chimneys, steep slate roof,



arched entryway and leaded, vertical windows.

The appeal of the Tudor style still resonates today, usually borrowing the distinctive brown timbering and gables applied to a contemporary house from ranch to big Mac houses. Floorplans.com lists 468 floorplans for Tudor style houses, cottages, barns, townhouses, and gate houses. And custom, grand Tudor style homes are still being built today like the 22,000 square foot Cotswold mansion designed by Grandberg & Associates tailored to contemporary lifestyles with light interiors which respond to the outdoors. A new era of happy Tudors for the very wealthy is continuing the Tudor tradition. ●

Christine Bates, a real estate agent in New York and Connecticut with William Pitt Sotheby’s, has written about all things real estate since the magazine’s first issue.



Above: Built in 1983, this large Hopewell Junction Tudor at 61 Innsbruck Boulevard was just listed in January 2022 at \$699,000. Photo courtesy of Davora Spencer of Keller Williams.

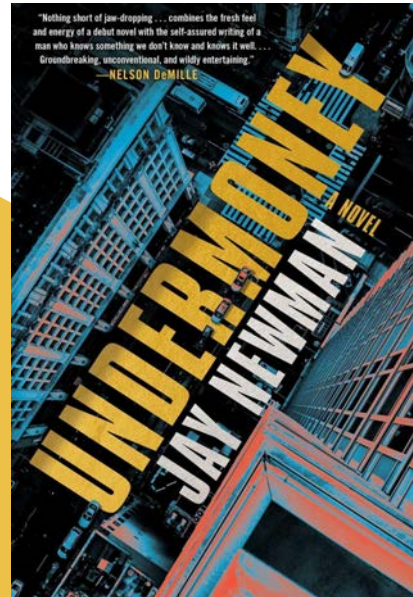


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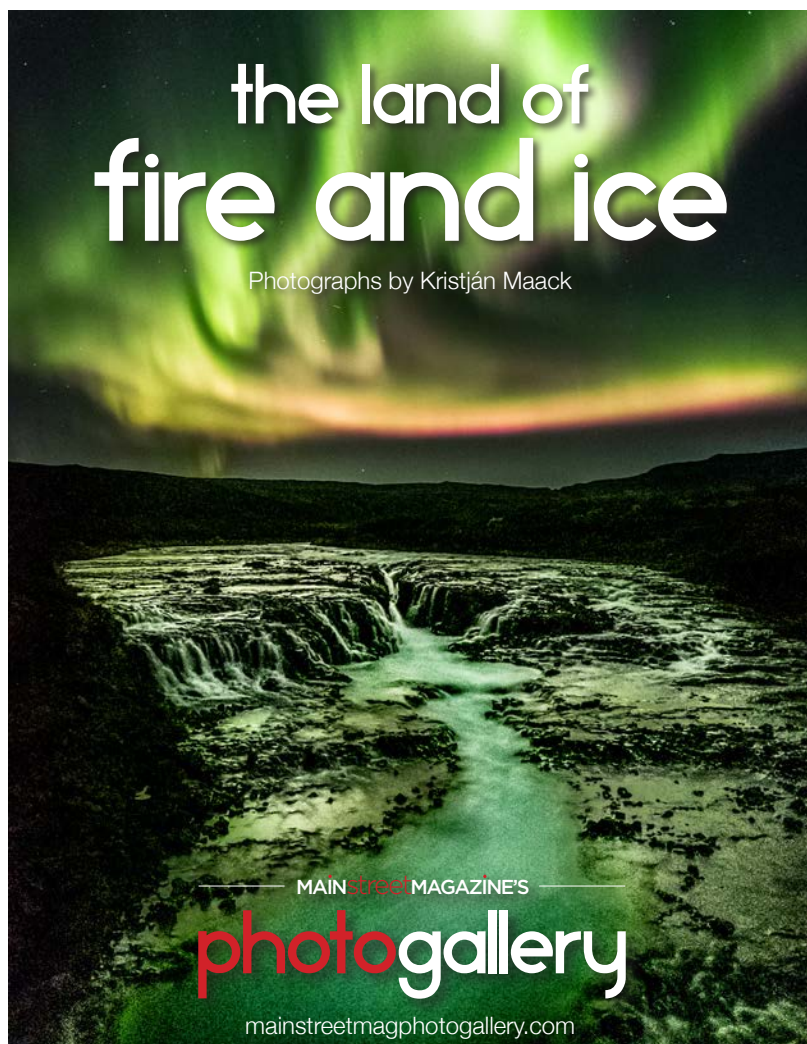


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Volunteering: Why doing good is good for you

By Mary B. O'Neill, PhD
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Volunteerism is the engine that makes many of our communities run. Look around your town, and you'll see what I mean. From houses of worship, fire and ambulance services, food pantries and soup kitchens, libraries, environment and conservation efforts, and social service agencies, lives are enhanced and needs are met through the work of volunteers and the non-profits they serve.

Aside from the good that volunteering does for the recipients in our communities, the act of service carries benefits for the doer. While ethics may promote the moral worth of intrinsically acting out of duty and altruism without regard to external benefits, I think taking a more consequentialist approach to the good we do by volunteering is valid, we can be less concerned about the purity of the intention – the why – and focus on its positive benefits for the volunteers themselves as a motivator to action.

Forget the apple a day – volunteer instead

Volunteering is good for your health and wellbeing. Studies consistently show that serving others provides real mental health benefits, increases happiness, and decreases depression and anxiety. Since there is also a growing body of evidence linking mental health to physical health, volunteering is beneficial for both mind and body. Volunteering is connected to decreased stress and blood pressure in older adults, leading to a longer lifespan.



Above: Volunteer fair. Photo: Mary McGurn. Below, left: Volunteer fair. Photo by Peg McDonough.

Volunteering increases a connection to a cause larger than ourselves – a basic human craving. Isolation, loneliness, and alienation are bad for us. Social interaction, camaraderie, empathy building, and bonding with like-minded people with shared values – all of which volunteering provide – are good for us.

Service to others confers the “happiness effect.” In 2020, *The Journal of Happiness Studies* published a UK research paper about volunteering and happiness. It explored the chicken and egg question of whether volunteers are happier because they volunteer or if happier people tend to volunteer. The study found that even participants who cited lower wellbeing before volunteering reported increased happiness due to giving time to causes important to them.

This happiness effect has real economic value. The study also quantified levels of wellbeing reported as a result of volunteering and found that this level was the same as the satisfaction derived from an extra \$1,100 per year in the pocket of someone with an average middle-class salary.

Volunteers also enhance the health of their communities. They fill gaps and create a more smoothly-functioning society. Grassroots identification and fulfillment of needs means that communities find ways to go beyond what local government and social service agencies can provide.

Creating value for your career

Suppose you want to gain resume-worthy experience, develop leadership skills, expand your professional network, or get a low-risk glimpse into a particular occupation. In that case, volunteering is a perfect solution.

Non-profits are looking for skills and dependable people who have or want to develop them. Direct service delivery, social media strategy and posting, website design, financial and legal services, administrative help, event planning, and fund and friend-raising are just some of the ways you can contribute your time.

Another important volunteer function is board membership. According to Liana Toscanini, executive director of the Non-Profit Center of the Berkshires (NPC), it's a myth that

non-profit boards are only looking for members with deep pockets.

A well-rounded board takes all kinds of skills. “Board membership is a key volunteer position. While board members may be expected to donate funds, they're only asked to do so in a meaningful amount – to them. What's more important is a willingness to roll up their sleeves and help and to assist in making connections in the community.” And those connections include the trades, as well as lawyers and accountants. Everyone needs a plumber – including non-profits!

Toscanini comments that sometimes volunteers don't truly understand how their skills and desire to help can translate into real value for themselves and a non-profit. “Skills-based volunteering is on the rise, particularly among Millennials. That's why NPC assembled a resource listing all of the possible skill sets valuable to a non-profit.” These skills range from technical skills such as Microsoft Excel to soft skills such as patience and creativity.

Volunteering is also an excellent way to transition to employment.

Continued on next page ...

Toscanini reflects on her journey to employee from volunteer at Great Barrington-based Community Access to the Arts. “It happens a lot; someone who proves themselves as an effective volunteer, along with showing a devotion to the non-profit’s cause, can become a valued employee.”

Finding the perfect match

For volunteering to provide maximum benefit to both you and the non-profit, there’s some research and courting that needs to happen. If the fit isn’t right, you’re likely not to feel as good about your time with an organization, which will be less valuable to you and them.

To help volunteers find opportunities, Toscanini is happy to serve as the volunteer yenta of the Berkshires through NPC’s work and its annual *Giving Back Guide*. “We wanted to make it easier for volunteers and non-profits to find each other. The Guide is an exhaustive list of Berkshire-based non-profits, with organizational profiles and specific ways people can help.”

The Salisbury Association in Salisbury, CT, recently published its *Resource Guide for Volunteering in Our Local Communities* with the goal of highlighting local non-profits and opportunities for volunteers.

Websites such as www.volunteer-match.org and www.greatnonprofits.org connects volunteers with organizations and causes that need them.

NPC also hosts a yearly volunteer fair that promotes a speed-dating approach to matching volunteers and organizations. COVID brought that successful event online. This past November, 165 attendees and 37



Above: Board training. Photocourtesy of Berkshire OLLI. Below, left: Volunteer fair. Photo: Mary McGurn.

Berkshire-based non-profits explored connections and ways to provide mutual benefit.

Qualities of a great volunteer

Just saying you want to help is not enough. Even though you’re donating your time, a good volunteer makes every hour count. Effective volunteers bring energy and enthusiasm, creativity, flexibility, commitment, reliability, collaboration, and a willingness to give of themselves to a cause. It also requires an all-hands-on-deck approach of pitching in where the help is needed, whether it’s setting up tables or phone banking during the fundraising season.

Sometimes non-profits are neck-deep in fulfilling their mission and might not have the time to think spaciouly about ways to enhance their work. Think about the organization’s operations and suggest ways you can add value. Is it creating bilingual resources? Proposing a new brochure aimed at a specific organizational demographic? Writing for their newsletter from an alternate perspective? Managing a new type of fundraising event?

Consider the time you have to give to the organization. Can you man-

age a multi-year board membership, or would episodic volunteering suit you better? Maybe you only have the bandwidth to set up an event or stuff envelopes. Never assume that giving a small amount of time would not be valued.

Building volunteer capacity at non-profits

NPC’s mission includes providing a clearinghouse of resources to help non-profits serve their missions more sustainably and effectively. To that end, Toscanini hosts workshops and develops resources to help non-profits attract, train, and retain volunteers.

Part of an effective non-profit’s strategy must include volunteer management. Taking care of volunteers takes time and skill. It’s essential to make them feel respected and valued for the work they do. That means providing them with proper training and instituting a gratitude process to consistently show volunteers how important their time and effort are to the non-profit’s work. Gratitude is a powerful motivator, and it increases the satisfaction volunteers derive from their work, which keeps them coming back and potentially matching their donated time with donated treasure.

Non-profits might also want to consider attracting volunteers in ways that go beyond the cause itself. Instead of appealing to people’s passion for an organizational mission and their sense of altruism, appeal to the other reasons why people volunteer described in this article. Tell them how much fun they’d have socializing and bonding with other volunteers. Provide them with evidence that serving others improves their health. Inform them of the increased happiness,

and wellbeing volunteering would bring them – that warm glowy feeling is a compelling motivator. Show them the skills and professional network they’d cultivate by being involved with your organization that can translate into career success.

Step up in baby steps

The first step in volunteering is to think about your values and priorities and see how they overlap with the needs in your community, as well as the non-profits working in those spaces. From there, assess the skills and capacities you possess or want to build and what you’d like to achieve or obtain out of your volunteer experience, whether is that warm feeling or a specific career objective. Be realistic with the time you commit. It’s much easier to start small and build than to overcommit and under-deliver. Then do some research. Look at websites and social media accounts of specific non-profits, go to an event they sponsor, and talk to staff, board members, and other volunteers. All of these measures will make you an informed volunteer who’s ready to pitch in and contribute in ways that make sense for you and the organization. •

The Non-Profit Center of the Berkshires (NPC) facilitates growth for charitable organizations through shared resources, affordable services, and creative collaborations. For more information about their services and to find their Giving Back Guide and resources for volunteers, visit www.npcberkshires.org.

You can access the Resource Guide for Volunteering in Our Local Communities on the Salisbury Association’s website, www.salisburyassociation.org, and the Town of Salisbury’s website, www.salisburyct.us.





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A full life

A Community Legacy

By Griffin Cooper
griffin@mainstreetmag.com

For those of us who have grown up tucked within the congenial fabric of rural life, that which breeds the kind of familiarity whose beauty is only rivaled by the backdrop of our beloved local landscape, there are those figures who feel as though they can simply never leave us. Those that have been a permanent fixture during our youth and whose visage does not seem to change despite the passage of time. Sometimes it's the hairdresser or the bartender, many times it's the educator or volunteer fireman. All are ubiquitous in their presence, as if they are everywhere at once, and will always be there. They are signposts for the communities in which they live and even a source of steady comfort as we struggle with life's challenges, a sturdy thread that leads back to that familiar fabric of our hometown when we are in desperate need to feel its warmth again.

Each town has its own beacon, usually identifiable for residents by last name: Herrington, Gallup, Avenia, Terni. Each evokes a sense of sentimentality that is only made available through the experience of living within their communal aura. In the farming town of Copake, NY, a place that itself is a living microcosm for rural life in America, many generational names have floated softly over its rolling hills. One name that recalls the culture of the tight-knit community throughout the decades is *Proper*. Today, each member of the Proper family elicits memories from the community both young and old, but it is the family patriarch Lawrence, affectionately known as Larry, whose life's work of giving back and getting involved has become a symbol for the town itself.

Upon his death in November, scores of locals from Copake, Hillsdale and further afar descended upon Peck & Peck Funeral Home

off of Route 22 to honor the man whose beacon shone throughout the Hudson Valley and whose presence most thought would linger much longer, like the familiar smell of smoke emanating from his homemade smoker, the signal for Proper family or community gatherings. Some came because they had the good fortune of knowing Larry personally, others because their parents or grandparents knew him, most came because, in some way, Larry helped to log a precious memory. In a testament to Larry's inevitable place in Copake's history, many came because they belonged to his fire company, attended one of many fundraising events he hosted, or played in the charitable alumni soccer game that he helped to organize.

A community pillar – a beacon

The framework for what would eventually build him into a pillar of the surrounding community began construction while Larry was still a teenager. Thanks to his fervent ambition for volunteerism, Larry became a member of the Craryville Fire Department at just 16 years old, the Community Rescue Squad at 18, and Copake's Volunteer Fire Department at 23. Larry's subsequent list of achievements, including time served as Vice President and Treasurer of the Copake Fire Department, do surprisingly little to reveal the man's hearty congeniality. People were an outgoing passion for Larry and as a result he embodied the resonant character of our area. So it should come as no surprise to know he found love early.

After graduating from Taconic Hills in 1976, Larry married his high school sweetheart, Teri, in April of the following year. Together they would go on to raise three sons Todd, Ryan, and Andrew, and celebrate the birth of their daughter Bridgette later in



Above: Larry Proper with Teri, the love of his life, dancing at their daughter's wedding. All images with this article courtesy of the Proper family.

life. Larry began his eclectic work history immediately taking a job as a bartender at Morandi's, a local favorite in Hillsdale before transitioning to the insurance business and Mutual of Omaha where he worked until 1979. It wasn't long before Larry's penchant for enveloping himself in community life led him back to the Town of Copake and its Highway Department. For the next three decades plus, Larry would serve the community as an equipment operator, Deputy Highway Superintendent, and over a decade as the Town's Highway Superintendent.

Unsurprisingly, Larry's momentum would carry him into town government when, in 1985, he was elected to the Office of Copake Town Clerk. Larry would go on to serve multiple terms as the town's Tax Collector before stepping away in 2020. Perhaps Larry's most celebrated community contribution came in service of the beloved Copake Memorial Park. As a member of the Copake Parks and Recreation Commission as well as serving as the park's Superintendent,

Larry helped to shape the park into a place many still consider to be their backyard. Memories still linger there due in part to Larry's support for youth sports programs. Apart from being a little league coach himself, Larry brought his enthusiasm for grilling to the concession stands where the communal smell of barbecue satiated kids and parents during youth soccer games. Larry would go on to make community engagement a family affair as each year the Proper clan would host the annual Burger/Laverack soccer game and barbecue, an event that raised funds for Taconic Hills Dollars for Scholars.

A family man above all else

While Larry's life accomplishments read like a Hall of Fame checklist for community leadership, the greatest testament to his profound impact can be found in the family he dedicated his life to. For all his time spent making life a bit more comfortable for

Continued on next page ...



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friends and neighbors, Larry's generosity has helped to define the lives of his three sons Todd, Andrew, and Ryan and his endless love has shaped his only daughter Bridgette into a beloved teacher and wife. As the four sit down to memorialize their father, it becomes clear that Larry's beacon of communal light has yet to fade within the hearts of those who loved him most.

Can you describe Larry's early life? His life as a young man/father? Where did he begin his work in the community and how did his service play into his role as a dedicated father/husband?

Ryan: He was a hard worker from an early age. He would tell stories of driving his uncle's tractor on the road at age nine, helping out on the farm and trading milk for cookies on his milk delivery run. He became a volunteer fireman while in high school and a member of the rescue squad shortly after. He treated every person like family, even if they were a stranger. It didn't matter how big or small of a favor they needed, he would make sure it was taken care of and also that it would be done the right way.

Todd: As the oldest of Larry's four kids, I had the distinct pleasure to be able to spend the most time with him while he graced our presence on this earth. Since he worked long hours to support our family and earn extra money that enabled all of us to live life to the fullest, he always tried to make the most of our time together. Every morning before school, and on weekends too, my dad would get up early to make a hearty breakfast for any of us who would rise early enough to join him. I made sure to do

this every day so that I could tell him stories from my previous day, which he would listen to and subtly dole out nuggets of advice about life.

He coached the Copake Little League team for ten years spanning all three of his sons' participation and was quite successful during his tenure, at one point winning five league championships in a row, all while teaching his team to play the game the right way and develop the character that would help them later in life.

Larry was a pillar of the community in Copake. Can you explain how his impact pervaded throughout the town, how many volunteer services did he lead or participate in?

Ryan: When I would enter a business or establishment pretty much anywhere in eastern Columbia County, I would often be greeted with a comment such as "You must be Larry's son" or "You are a Proper." It seemed that every person in town owed our dad a favor or two. When my wife and I purchased our house, about a half dozen of my dad's friends came with chain saws, tractors, shovels, and whatever else was needed to take down trees and build our dream backyard. They worked all day out of respect for my father, their only payment being a warm meal and good conversation among friends.

My siblings and I once tried to calculate how many chickens have been cooked to perfection during the frequent fundraising chicken BBQs over the decades. I believe 80,000-100,000 chicken halves might not be out of the realm of possibility.

Bridgette: Our father took great pride in living in the Town of Copake. He held jobs as the Copake Town



Above: Larry was a proud family man. From L-R, Bridgette, Andrew, Larry, Teri, Alex, Ryan, Kristina, Todd, and Wesley. Below, left: Larry (second in from left) was has been an integral part of Copake government for over 30 years.

Clerk and Tax Collector, Highway Superintendent, in addition to his somewhat informal role of taking care of the Copake Memorial Park. While working these jobs he made sure everything ran smoothly, the town was well kept, and that the residents of Copake were safe. Our father's efforts and dedication were recognized by the town when they dedicated the Copake Park building after him.

How would you describe Larry as the leader of the Proper family? Do you feel his personality led you down the paths to where you are now as adults?

Ryan: He seemed to know everything when I was a kid and young adult. Working with him on many home improvement projects at either my house or his I learned that he didn't always know the answer, but he would figure out a solution to every problem or situation one way or another.

I have always tried to live my life by doing the right thing, even when no one is looking. I am honored to have my last name in our area, as it carries the reputation of being dependable, hardworking, and a person of honor and integrity. That is the legacy that our father left. After his passing, I had a moment of concern over whether I was ready to or going to be able to fill his shoes. A good friend gave me the best advice when he said that I didn't need to worry about filling my father's shoes because he was always very proud of how I filled my own shoes.

Bridgette: Our father did not go to college, so he and our mother made sure that all of us had the opportunity to go to college and pursue our dreams. Having such supportive and encouraging parents allowed me to become the teacher I am today. Growing up I always strived to be hardworking, respectful, kind, and giving like my father. He instilled in my siblings and me all of the tools we needed to be successful and yet still allowed us the freedom to pave our own way in the world and to learn from our mistakes.

Todd: When I was growing up, I was very keen on emulating my dad and wanted to be a fireman, an EMT, and do something that would allow me to operate heavy machinery. As I entered high school and thought more about what I wanted to be when I grew up, I shifted toward studying history, economics, and international relations, all subjects that my dad was not an expert in but he encouraged me to pursue what interested me, not to just follow in his footsteps. When I started my professional career in marketing analytics, my dad would attentively listen to me talk about the clients that I worked with and the business problems, showing a particular interest in the spirits and beer clients. He listened with great satisfaction as he knew that I chose a path that I was passionate about and that was all he wanted for each of his children, a goal which he can rest assured that we have all achieved.

Continued on next page ...



Larry dedicated as much time to his home life and family hobbies as he did to the members of the community. What are some fond memories that revolve around him and his love for family?

Ryan: Over the past ten years or so, our father scaled back his workaholic lifestyle through various levels of “retirement,” which resulted in him diving into endless projects that included building a hot tub, a rock climbing wall, bike jumps, multiple meat smokers out of various appliances, increasingly luxurious hunting stands, restoring a pontoon boat, remodeling his home one room at a time (to name a few), and pretty much anything else that our mom or his grandchildren could dream up. He undoubtedly served his community, but he definitely took care of his family to a level that most couldn’t even imagine.

Andrew: He always seemed very excited about our family vacations to Cape Cod. He would talk about the upcoming trip throughout the year and then load up the trailer full of bikes, kayaks, and coolers for the week. He eagerly shuttled everyone back and forth to the crowded beaches making it as convenient as possible for his loved ones without often going to the beach himself. He instead opted to take our grandparents for leisurely drives around the Cape to take in the sights and prepare drinks and food for everyone’s return from their respective fun activity of the day. I think his favorite part of the trip was relaxing on the back porch, dozing off for a nap occasionally, and enjoying meals surrounded by family.

Bridgette: If anyone knew our father, they knew about his love for food. Every family party at our house was filled with my dad’s delicious meals – sautéed, seared, grilled, smoked, or otherwise. Later in his life, he enjoyed smoking meats and cheeses on his homemade smokers. I remember coming home from college and him asking me what meal I wanted when I arrived. He knew how

much I missed his cooking while I was away and would always make my favorite meal without question upon my return.

Todd: I like to refer to my dad as an engineer without a degree. As my brother noted, he accomplished so much in the time that he was “semi-retired” and it is no mystery why our brother, Andrew, has multiple Masters degrees in the engineering field and has gone on to achieve all that he has in his professional life.

Dad was always one of the most difficult people to buy gifts for because he never really needed anything or generally coveted material possessions ... but one year, I had the idea to start filling out our family genealogy on ancestry.com and sent him an email with a link to the account that I had created on his birthday. He was so thrilled with this gift (which made my day!) and he immediately started filling in additional information on distant ancestors that he knew off the top of his head and eventually ended up purchasing a hardcover family history book that a distant relative had published chronicling our family’s history dating back to the arrival of the Pro(p)per(t)s – over the years, the middle “p” and the “t” were dropped from the family name back in the late 17th century.

Larry’s leadership with the Highway Department is well documented and celebrated. What was it about the Highway Department that drew him into local government?

Ryan: He loved to improve his community, always leaving everything better than he found it. He transformed the Copake Park from a grass pasture to the community hub for all interests that we all enjoy today. He took pride in working along side his employees, never asking them to do something that he wouldn’t himself do. He seemed to always find a way to make his community a better place for his children and grandchildren.

Bridgette: During the winter dad would always stand by the window and just stare outside waiting for the snow to fall. He loved working for the Highway Department and plowing snow. Every summer my dad would bring the snowplows to the Copake



Above: Larry, pictured far left, joined the fire department at a young age and served an integral part of the Copake Fire Department.

Park for the park program to paint and decorate so that way in the winter the kids and everyone in town would see their artwork when the plow trucks came through.

Todd: Dad started his working life as a bartender at Morandi’s, but after I was born he was compelled to find employment that would allow him to keep a more family-friendly schedule and dabbled in insurance sales before finding his niche with the Copake Highway Department. After joining the crew, dad quickly made it clear that Lester Miller should groom him as his eventual successor as Superintendent by tapping him as his Deputy. In addition to his 9-to-5+ duties with the Highway Department, he followed in his father’s footsteps by assuming the role of Town Clerk following a landslide victory in his first election. He served several more terms during two separate stints as Town Clerk and Tax Collector or Deputy alongside his continued service to the local fire company and other local community organizations.

When it comes to local figures like Larry, it might be easy to say that their legacy is well defined. As a family, what do you think the legacy of Larry Proper is and how will he ultimately be remembered?

Ryan: Our father would always refer to his grandfather as the greatest man that ever lived. At a young age his grandfather seemed like an unattainable hero to me, but I definitely learned over the years that our father simply dedicated his life to being an even better man, which he accomplished without question. It has been

an honor and privilege to be his son.

Bridgette: We have decided to create a Taconic Hills Dollars for Scholars scholarship in our father’s name and give it out as a family to a deserving student or students who are involved in community service and who embody the qualities of our father. To raise money for this scholarship we plan to hold fundraising events just like our father did to carry on his legacy and to remind the younger generation how important it is to volunteer and give back to the community.

Todd: In retrospect, as I reflect on my father’s life, I realize that he was the best version of himself every day – no matter how tired he was or if he didn’t feel 100%. He treated everyone with kindness and respect, even those who did not afford him the same courtesy. My hope is that everyone that knew my dad, and maybe even some that did not, will follow his example and help to make our local community and the world in general a better place. That, and the Taconic Hills School Dollars for Scholars scholarship fund should also help to ensure that Larry Proper’s spirit lives on in all of us. •

If you would like to donate to the Dollars for Scholars, please make checks payable to “Community Scholarship Fund” (or “CSF”) and send to the following address: Community Scholarship Fund c/o Teri Proper 447 County Route 7A, Copake, NY, 12516



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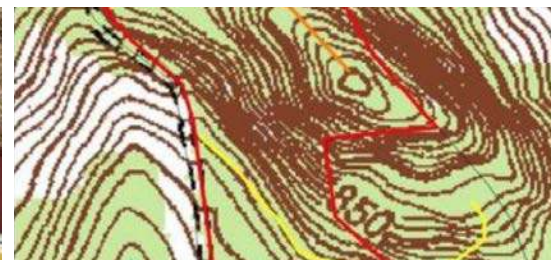
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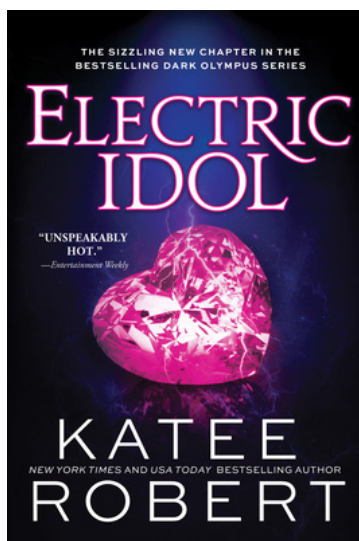
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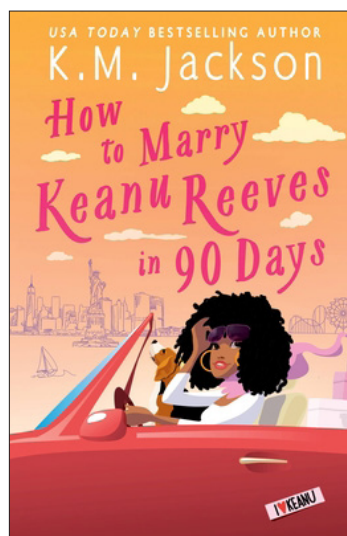
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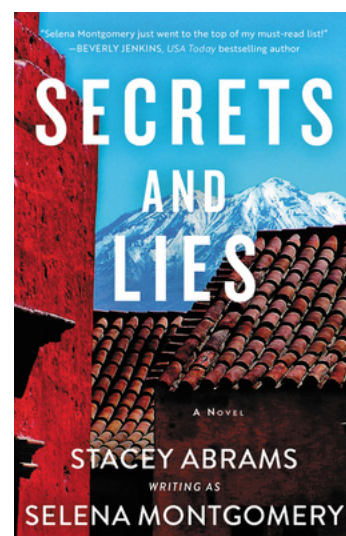
Electric Idol by Katee Robert

"He was the most beautiful man in Olympus. And if I wasn't careful, he was going to be my death." In the ultra-modern city of Olympus, there's always a price to pay. Psyche Dimitriou knew she'd have to face Aphrodite's jealous rage eventually, but she never expected her literal heart to be at stake...or for Aphrodite's gorgeous son to be the one ordered to strike the killing blow.



How to Marry Keanu Reeves in 90 Days
by K.M. Jackson

Bethany Lu Carlisle is devastated when the tabloids report actor Keanu Reeves is about to tie the knot. What?! How could the world's perfect boyfriend and forever bachelor, Keanu not realize that making a move like this could potentially be devastating to the equilibrium of ... well ... everything!



Secrets and Lies
by Stacey Abrams

Tell me no lies... She just witnessed her uncle's murder, she's running for her life, and now Dr. Katelyn Lyda is face-to-face with a man who could be her salvation. It's too bad Sebastian Caine is one of the bad guys... The lady with her finger on the trigger seems to have everything Sebastian needs – and not just the artifact.



Never Fall for Your Fiancée by Virginia Heath

The first in a new historical rom-com series, a handsome earl hires a fake fiancée to keep his matchmaking mother at bay, but hilarity ensues when love threatens to complicate everything.



On a Night Like This by Lindsey Kelk

It only takes one night to fall in love... Within days of wishing she could change her life, Fran Cooper is acting assistant to a celebrity, on a yacht in the Mediterranean, and en route to a tiny Italian island and the glittering Crystal Ball, along with the world's rich and famous.



The Siren of Sussex by Mimi Matthews

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Blue Moon: Backpacking the Winter Equinox

By Ian Strever
info@mainstreetmag.com

The night required a couple layers of wool but no headlamp. As I stepped down from my truck at the Undermountain Trailhead in Salisbury, CT, a row of pines stood before me like a curtain, awash in moonlight, blue and bare like a Hopper painting, though no work of art that I have seen has captured that otherworldly light. Maybe Coltrane. For a moment, I looked around at the world, transformed, quiet and still.

A couple of times a year, I need to spend a night in the woods. In warmer weather, I can usually convince some friends to go backpacking with me, when schedules are lighter and days are longer. But now, just before the Winter Solstice, I didn't even bother asking. Too dark, too cold, too busy to bother. Besides, I wasn't sure I wanted company anyway.

Alone (?) in the woods...

Walking into the woods at night, alone for the first time, is daunting. Not the initial steps, mind you, but miles in, when something unseen darts in the underbrush. A moment earlier, you were lost in thought, one foot in front of the other, and the next you are on alert, scanning the woods for the intruder. With experience, however, one comes to realize that it is almost always a chipmunk, and although I have run into rattlesnakes, bears, bobcats, turkey vultures, and grouse on trails in our area, I learned from each encounter that none of them really are all that interested in humans, and we should all just go about our business.



Staying overnight in the woods is another level of self-reliance, though, and an overnight in the winter is another thing still. For this outing, I packed all of the usual gear, and some in duplicate. In honor of the late Joan Didion, here's my list of what "To Pack and Wear":

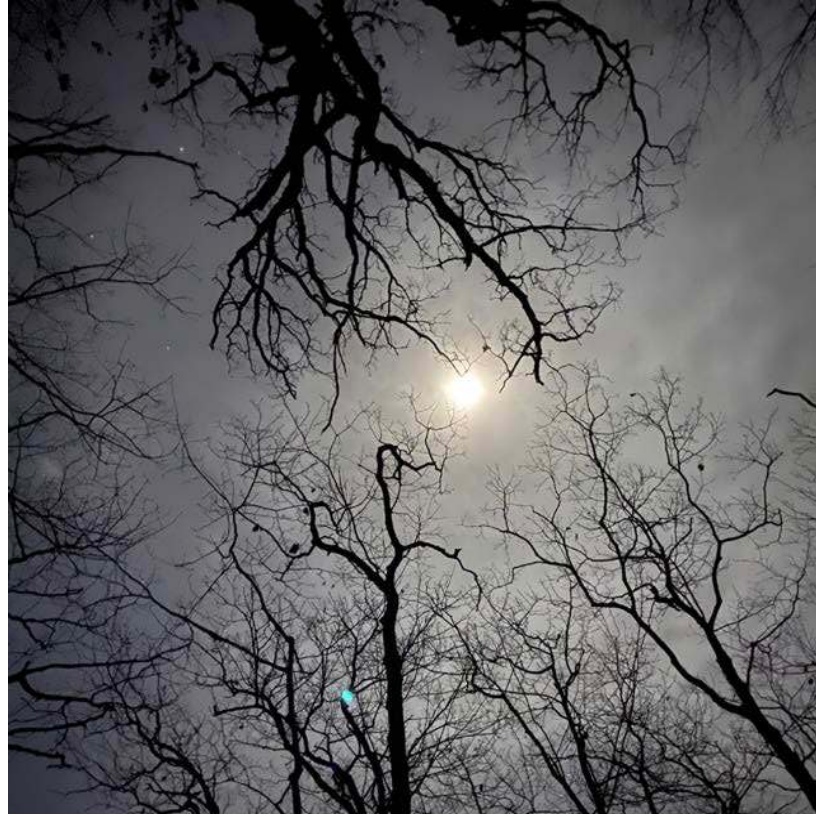
- 4 wool base layers
- 1 puffy jacket
- 1 waterproof shell
- 1 windproof vest
- Non-cotton hiking pants
- 3 pair wool socks
- 1 wool hat
- 1 pair gloves
- Bag with: toilet paper, biodegradable soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, towel, baby powder

"To Carry":

- 20-degree or colder down sleeping bag
- Insulated sleeping pad
- Tarp or bivy sack
- Cook stove and propane canister
- Cook kit with spork
- Lighter and matches
- First aid kit
- Compass
- Paracord
- Headlamp
- Powerbank (charged) and phone cables
- Phone
- Bandana
- ProBar Meal replacement bar
- Knife

Seeking shelter

On this occasion, I left the tent home, as I was planning to stay at the Brassie Brook shelter, which I was reasonably sure would be unoccupied. If not, there was always Riga Shelter, another mile south on the Appalachian Trail. I have operated for awhile now without a tarp, but a March outing in the Catskills last year reminded me how useful and warm they can be even when just strung up to block the wind



Above: A full moon in the winter can rival the sun for illuminating the trail. Below, left: Downed trees become skeletal hands in the moonlight.

on the front of a lean-to. It's on the shopping list, but I will usually throw the bivy sack in my pack, just in case.

A lone Subaru in the trailhead parking lot caused me to think twice about the shelter's availability, but with temperatures in the upper 30s and a forecast of clear skies for the early part of the night, I left the bivy in the truck and set out in brilliant moonlight with a relatively light pack. The scene was a study in blue, and that particular trail is one of the most heavily-trafficked in the state, so I never feared losing my way. I have hiked it dozens of times, so each bend, each water crossing was familiar to me as an old friend. No need for a headlamp.

But then a newly-fallen oak halfway up the ascent threw off my bearings. Trees are supposed to grow up and out, but a fallen tree resembles a skeletal hand, especially in moonlight. I

stepped over the ring finger and under the middle, and paused for a moment to admire the transformation. It was as if I had passed a gate, and the familiar trail assumed a sinister cast.

Fire, flash, out.

I turned on my headlamp, just to restore some order. It is a rechargeable model, going on six months old now after a battery meltdown destroyed my previous one, and I had only used it a few times. The light fired, flashed, and went out. I pushed the button down again. Fire, flash, out. Fire, flash, out. Had it lost its charge? Do I need to hold the button down longer? I kept trying, but all I got was fire, flash, out.

No matter. It was bright enough to do without it, and in a minute I was

Continued on next page ...

looking again at terra cognita in the form of the marker for the Paradise Lane Campsite, posted to the right of the trail. The trail was rocky, but bright and navigable.

About two-thirds of the way up the trail, though, a stand of pines cloaks the path in darkness, and for a few tenths of a mile, I contented myself with bursts of light from my hobbled headlamp, revealing the next five feet in front of me. I inched through the pines, vowing to pick up an emergency headlamp on the next trip to REI.

The astute reader will wonder about the reserve powerbank in my backpack for just such occasions. Yes, I forgot about it, but in my defense, I wasn't desperate enough to extract it. This is part of the mentality that accompanies backpacking: if I forgot it, I'll have to make do without it. Over time, it's an attitude that becomes a trait both on and off the trail. Backpackers are, by definition, planners who prioritize and consider each item on their back, and the veteran becomes a problem solver by experience. Objects such as tarps, ropes, and knives earn their value when they serve as tents, ponchos, windbreaks, clotheslines, and screwdrivers. Still, I learned a lesson this time, and that emergency headlamp is on my shopping list. It would have been worth a few ounces.

The ridgeline of the South Taconic Range features shoulder-high mountain laurel that casts a shadow over the rocky footpath, so it was more

fire, flash, out from the intersection of the Undermountain and Appalachian Trails to the Brassie Brook Shelter. Just before the campsite, one last stream crossing solidified my desire for a working headlamp, but I made it across, dry. The convenient picnic table at the site allowed me to unpack under the moonlight, and within five minutes, I had laid out my bedroll.

"...hidden just beyond sight..."

Winter nights in the woods are long. Even though I had waited for the moon to ascend in the late evening, I was still expecting to spend the better part of nine hours in my sleeping bag. And you notice things. The wind stirring around 2am. Clouds cloaking the moon. Deer tiptoeing through the campsite an hour or two before dawn. Damp, cold feet.

Around 4am, with the prospect of a few more restless hours before sunrise and no headlamp for reading, I decided to burn some cell phone battery on an audiobook version of *The Peregrine* by J.A. Baker, one of the finest examples of nature writing I have ever read. I've become an evangelist for this underread gem, especially in its audiobook format, read by the venerable David Attenborough. In Shakespearean tones, he recounts the balletic flirtation between the narrator and a pair of falcons as it plays out in estuaries to the northeast of London.

An entry from mid-November reads, "All morning, I had the wary, uneasy feeling that comes when a



Above: Shelters allow winter backpackers to reduce their load to just the essentials. Below, left: Water crossings assume otherworldly hues in the moonlight.

hawk is near. I felt that he was hidden just beyond sight; in time and distance barely outpacing me, always dropping below the horizon as I moved up over the curve of the flat green land."

As if on cue, behind me and just outside the shelter, I heard stones crunch underfoot of something heavy. I spun around in my sleeping bag and let out an aggressive, "Ho!" to startle whatever was behind the noise, and I immediately saw a headlamp moving left to right across the frame of the lean-to. "Sorry," trailed behind it as the figure retreated into the woods.

My heart was racing, but it wasn't until then that I noticed a tent erected fifty yards away at a neighboring site.

Subaru.

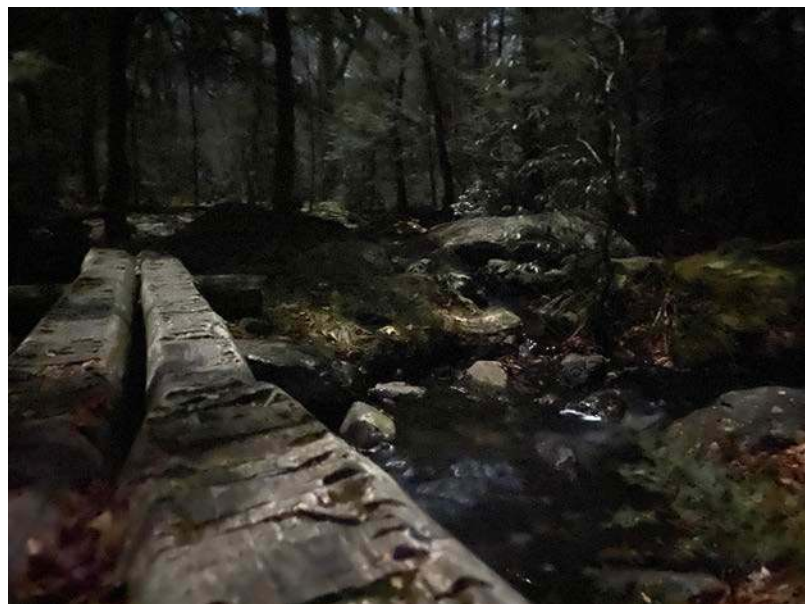
Had he been there all night? Why was he walking through my area? The bright orange nylon stood like a recrimination. How could I have been so unobservant? The flat blue hue of the moon had rendered the world in monochrome, a rhapsody in blue, the ridge pole of the tent just another branch in the understory.

That was the extent of my interaction with my neighbor. Under other circumstances, I might have exchanged some pleasantries or even shared a shelter, but I found the intrusion unsettling, inexplicable. I rolled

around in my sleeping bag for another hour until the sky, now overcast, illuminated the corners of the lean-to, allowing me to boil water for coffee. I gulped it down with an energy bar and made tracks in order to beat the freezing rain that was forecast for the morning.

To exist we need...

I could have spent the night indoors, secure and warm in my bed, but I chose to sleep outdoors, uncomfortable and vulnerable, because sometimes, like in the middle of a pandemic, it's worth recalling what we really need to exist: food, shelter, and warmth. Social media spins on, supply chains buckle, but in the forest, there is a world larger than us that does not account for our comfort and ease. It continues to churn on through seasons of cold and heat, growth and decay, and to intentionally place oneself in the midst of that is to remove oneself from the current paradigm and become situated in something timeless and eternal. Maybe that's not something we will want to do often, but a few times a year, we should all find a way to see the world differently. ●





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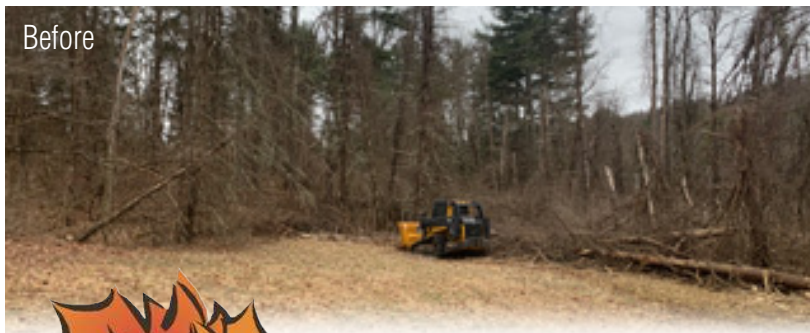
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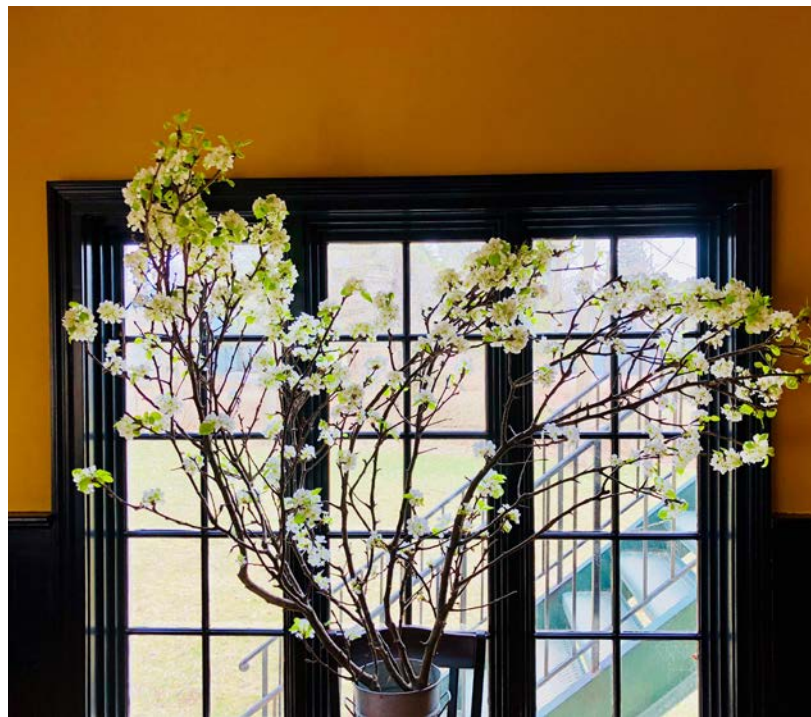
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Lessons in achieving longevity

The Blue Zones research, conducted in several regions of the world with the longest life expectancy, reveals the common practices these cultures share

By Regina Molaro
info@mainstreetmag.com

As we age, we yearn to remain healthy and retain our quality of life. Many believe that age is just a number, and that people are only as old as they feel. Age doesn't hinder some from pursuing an education, exploring an interest, or even engaging in an extreme sport. In celebration of his 90th birthday, the late President George H.W. Bush went skydiving.

American artist Anna Mary Robertson Moses, who also went by the moniker "Grandma Moses" began painting when she was in her seventies. English novelist Anna Sewell began her writing career when she was 51 years old – the life expectancy in the late 1800s was approximately 48 years old – and in declining health. Despite expectations she published *Black Beauty* when she was 57 years old.

Blue Zones

It's the vitality, health, and quality of life of those like Grandma Moses and Anna Sewell that intrigue Dan Buettner, educator, author, and National Geographic fellow.

Buettner is recognized worldwide for his research on longevity. He developed an interest in the subject in relation to demographics when he was traveling the globe as an endurance biker. Exposure to other cultures and their lifestyles sparked his research on regions of the world that have the longest life expectancy, disability-free life expectancy, or concentration of centenarians – people who live to be over 100 years old.

The biking enthusiast reported his findings of communities with increased longevity, identified as "Blue Zones" in his cover story for *National Geographic's* November 2005 edition,

Secrets of Long Life. It became the third best-selling issue in the magazine's history.

The Blue Zones concept evolved out of the demographic work, which was conducted by Gianni Pes and Michel Poulain. It was published in 2004 by the journal, *Experimental Gerontology*. As Pes and Poulain zeroed in on the cluster of villages with the highest longevity, they began referring to the area as the "Blue Zones."

These regions support the ideas of healthy eating, active lifestyles, and community involvement. Buettner is also the founder of Blue Zones, LLC. Its work is rooted in its own research and identification of the world's longest-lived cultures and most extraordinary populations.

Better living

The "Blue Zones" regions are identified as Okinawa, Japan; Sardinia, Italy; Nicoya, Costa Rica; Ikaria, Greece, and Loma Linda, California. Although the residents of these regions are scattered across the globe, they share several commonalities.

Sardinia's Barbagia region boasts the world's highest concentration of male centenarians while residents of Ikaria, Greece have one of the world's lowest rates of middle age mortality and the lowest rates of dementia. Costa Rica's Nicoya Peninsula is home to the world's lowest rates of middle age mortality and the second highest concentration of male centenarians.

The Seventh Day Adventists in Loma Linda, California live ten years longer than their North American counterparts. Finally, in Okinawa, Japan, women over 70 years old represent the longest-lived population in the world.

9 power practices

Research has revealed that lifestyle and environment play a big role in longevity. According to a Danish population-based twin study, only about 20% of how long the average person lives, is determined by genes.

The Blue Zones areas share and benefit from a set of habits called the Power 9 Practices that – together – increase longevity, health, and happiness. These sets of behaviors and outlooks benefit people with longer, healthier lives. It's not just longevity for the sake of a number, but vitality.

1. Move Naturally

The world's longest-lived people don't run marathons, participate in fitness challenges, or dedicate lots of hours at the gym. They happen to live in areas that require them to move a lot (think: towns and villages that have lots of hills or mountain regions). Beyond growing their own vegetables and fruits, they tend their own gardens and don't use modern machinery and conveniences for tackling house and yard work.

2. Purpose

The Okinawans call it "Ikigai" and the Nicoyans call it "plan de vida." This translates to "why I wake up in the morning" or "Soul's Purpose." Knowing your sense of purpose is worth up to seven years of extra life expectancy.

Continued on next page ...



Photo: istockphoto.com contributor Alessandro Biascioli

3. Down Shift

Just like people in the rest of the world, people who live in Blue Zones certainly experience stress. That leads to chronic inflammation, which is associated with every major age-related disease. What's different about stress for people in the Blue Zones, is that they have routines that help them alleviate stress. For example, Okinawans take a few moments each day to remember their ancestors, and the Adventists in Loma Linda use the power of prayer. An afternoon nap is the stressbuster of choice for the Ikarians while Sardinians regularly unite for socializing and sipping wine.

4. 80% Rule

"Hara hachi bu" is the Okinawan, 2,500-year-old Confucian mantra that is said before meals. It reminds people to stop eating when their stomachs are 80 percent full. The 20 percent gap between not being hungry and feeling full could be the difference between losing weight or gaining it. People in Blue Zones regions eat their smallest meal during the late afternoon or early evening and then they don't eat any more the rest of the day.

5. Plant Slant

Beans, including fava, black, soy, and lentils, are the cornerstone of most centenarian diets. Meat – mostly pork – is eaten on average only five times per month. Serving sizes are 3-4 oz., which is about the size of a deck of cards.

6. Wine at 5

People in all Blue Zones (except Loma Linda's Adventists) drink alcohol moderately and regularly. Moderate drinkers outlive the non-drinkers. The key to alcohol and longevity is to drink 1 to 2 glasses per day – preferably Sardinian Cannonau wine – with friends and/or with food. No binging!

7. Belong

All but five of the 263 centenarians interviewed for the Blue Zones research, belonged to some faith-based community. Denomination doesn't seem to matter. Research shows that attending faith-based services four times per month will add between four and 14 years of life expectancy.

8. Loved Ones First

Successful centenarians in the Blue Zones make their families their top priority. They choose to keep their aging parents and grandparents nearby to their homes or in their own homes – a move that also lowers the disease and mortality rates of children in those homes. Most of those who were interviewed have committed to life partners – this can add up to three years of life expectancy. They also make big investments of time and love, into their families.

9. Right Tribe

The world's longest-lived people chose – or were born into – social circles that supported healthy behaviors. Okinawans created "moais" – groups of five friends that committed to each other for life. Research from the Framingham Heart Studies – a long-term, ongoing cardiovascular cohort study of residents of Framingham, MA. It revealed that smoking,

obesity, happiness, and even loneliness is contagious. So, the social networks of long-lived people have favorably shaped their health behaviors.

Blue Zones Project Communities

The Blue Zones Project Communities are destinations where whole communities come together, with guidance, to encourage all community members – as well as local policies and infrastructure – to grow into thriving places where the healthy choice is easy. They used the wisdom garnered to tackle the current health crisis. It's now a solution in almost 50 communities across America. It's been able to boost population health and reduce healthcare costs.

Blue Zones Project Communities have experienced double-digit drops in obesity, smoking, and BMI (body mass index). They've also saved millions of dollars in healthcare costs. Thanks to these programs, there's been measurable drops in employee absenteeism.

In Albert Lea, MN, lifespan and community physical activity rocketed up and has stayed up for a full decade. In Beach Cities, CA, childhood obesity declined by 50%, smoking declined by 17%, and stress by 8%. Fort Worth, TX, transformed from being one of the unhealthiest cities in the nation. Its wellbeing rank rocketed to 58th from 185th out of 190 in America.

More media

For more, visit the Blue Zones website. Its articles section highlights information and recent research from health and wellbeing experts. Content ranges from *Top 10 Recipes, Snacks, Meals of 2021* to *12 things under \$35 to help you connect, move more and smile often*. For inspiration, subscribe to the free Blue Zones newsletter or watch the TED talk that stars Buettner. ●

For healthier meals that align with the ideology behind Blue Zones, refer to one of these cookbooks, "The Blue Zones Kitchen: 100 Recipes to Live to 100"; "Blue Zone Diet for Fresh Starters – Complete Guide to Blue Zone Diet for Dummies"; "Ikaria; Food and Life in the Blue Zone"; "The Blue Zones Challenge – A 4-Week Plan for a Longer, Better Life"; and "The Blue Zones Solution – Eating and Living Like the World's Healthiest People."

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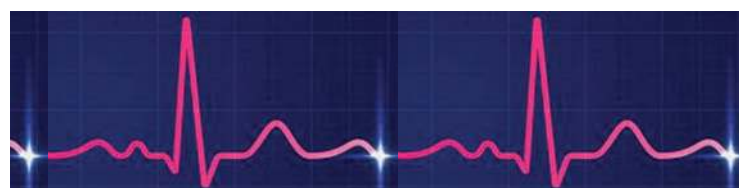
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Are you a sexy senior?

By Dominique DeVito
info@mainstreetmag.com

It's February and that means Valentine's Day. In case you hadn't noticed, the grocery store shelves cleared out Christmas and started stocking Valentine's candy on January 1. Geez. Even if you want to, there's no escaping Valentine's Day.

What do we really want?

As adults, what do we really want on Valentine's Day? Good chocolates are good any time of year. Flowers are always welcome. Dinner by candlelight with mood music? Sure, but that's also something that should be a regular part of life. Hopefully, dear reader, you're blessed with someone who is sympathetic to the pleasure these gifts can bring throughout the year. So let's be honest. What do we want on Valentine's Day? We want passion, we want romance, we want good sex. No, we want great sex.

Where are you with that? Do you agree? Are you having it and looking forward to more? Have you relegated yourself to so-so sex? Do you fantasize about the great sex you'd like to have? Have you given up on sex?

Stop wanting sex?!

I did a Google search on "at what age do women stop wanting sex" and the first piece that popped up was a citation from AARP of all places, dating back to 2017 to a British study, no less. It said, "When asked about their sex lives, 15 percent of men and 34 percent of women surveyed revealed they had lost interest for three months or longer in the previous year. For men, this dip in libido was most common between the ages of 35 and 44, while for women it peaked between the ages of 55 and 64."

As I scrolled through other citations, the results were equally depressing, and telling. It seems a cultural

given that it's assumed we – people of a certain age – have lost interest in or are physically incapable of an active sex life.

I clicked on a piece by Erica Jagger on the website betterafter50.com in which she shared that her gynecologist told her that most women stop having sex by age 65 or 70. She vowed to herself that she wouldn't end up in that statistic, and felt badly for her (elder) gynecologist and the women she was practically dooming to live out sexless lives. I suspect this is something all women can agree on in theory – that they want to continue to have a robust sex life well into their later years – but what about in practice? Do you find yourself slipping into this regrettable but maybe inescapable demographic?

It's no secret that everyone wonders if it's possible to sustain a sexual connection through years much less decades of togetherness, no matter how compatible you are or how wonderful your relationship is. The sex educator Emily Nagoski's TED Talk on this topic has been viewed over 3 million times! Is it possible that by committing to a monogamous relationship we're also committing to a steady detachment, decline, and eventual death of a fulfilling sex life?

Let's not go there!

To AARP's credit, they recently added a sexpert to their roster of advisors on all things aging as part of their online platform, Senior Planet (seniorplanet.org). She's Joan Price, and she is a cheerleader for not just having sex in our golden years, but enjoying it. Really enjoying it!

Joan is a true advocate for ageless sexuality, publishing her first book on senior sex in 2006 called *It's Better Than I Ever Expected: Straight Talk about Sex After Sixty*. A no-holds-barred, lively blend of memoir with candid comments from real women about sex in later life, it launched Joan into the role of Senior Sexpert with



the media and – most importantly – with seniors searching for advice and encouragement.

Joan has since published four other books, including *Naked At Our Age: Talking Out Loud About Senior Sex* (winner of the Outstanding Self-Help Book 2012 from the American Society of Journalists and Authors and 2012 Book Award from the American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors, and Therapists); *The Ultimate Guide to Sex After 50: How to Maintain – or Regain – a Spicy, Satisfying Sex Life*; *Ageless Erotica*; and *Sex After Grief* (winner of the 2020 service/self-help Book Award from the American Society of Journalists and Authors).

I've been following Joan for several years now, delighted to be exposed to so much useful and honest information. I love that she is unapologetic

Above: Sexual connection in later life is a lot about redefining expectations and being open to all sorts of ways to give and get pleasure. Photo: istockphoto.com contributor simonapillola

Continued on next page ...

and unembarrassed talking about sex and pleasure. At the same time, she's empathetic and sensitive. It's no wonder *Sex After Grief* earned such honors from the American Society of Journalists and Authors – it takes seriously and with compassion the experience of widows and widowers and those who become sexually and romantically involved with them, exploring the myriad feelings around love and loss and sex in an age of “move on and get over it.” If you're older and single but want to be in a relationship, you may very well meet someone in this place in their life, or a man with erectile dysfunction, or you may experience painful intercourse. If you are dating and plan to become sexually intimate, be sure to use protection against sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or get tested to be sure you and your partner are free of any. These are very real issues for seniors, and Joan says, “Let's talk about them!”

Senior sexpert advice

Anything you want to know or ask, Joan has explored it and wants to help. Her most popular webinar is titled, *Great Sex Without Penetration*. Yup.

Have you felt embarrassed about exploring sex toys at your/our age? Joan isn't, and she does regular reviews of products that can bring pleasure to women and men (she has a cohort who reviews toys for “penis owners,” as she sometimes refers to men in her blog). You don't have to feel slutty or fear that your computer will start blasting you with x-rated spam when you read this on her website through her blog posts. What a relief!

Joan acknowledges that with changes in our bodies, medical conditions, and relationships as we age, of course our sexual responses are going to change. She maintains that these are

challenges, not dead ends, and she encourages letting go of old beliefs and redefining what gives us pleasure now. Joan's contribution to senior sex was noted and expounded on in a recent feature in *The New York Times*, “The Joys (and Challenges) of Sex After 70,” by Maggie Jones. I was thrilled to see the article, which is a wonderfully researched and written deep-dive into the topic, and delighted that Joan is a big part of it. If this article is piquing your interest, you have to read the piece by Ms. Jones, published January 12, 2022.

Joan's first blog entry of 2022 is a list of *Sexy Seniors' New Year's Resolutions*. Read them in full and get additional resources at joanprice.com/blog. Here is a summary to get you thinking (all direct quotes from Joan):

- **Redefine Sex.** The ways you used to have sex are no longer possible or pleasurable now? Don't let that close off your sexual expression. Instead, expand your definition of sex to include all the activities that arouse you and bring you sexual pleasure now, partnered or solo.
- **Use High Quality Lubricant.** A lubricant that keeps you moist and slick will increase comfort and intensify your pleasure. Use lube liberally both solo and with a partner, and reapply frequently.
- **Self-Pleasure Frequently.** Solo sex is real sex, and it's good for your general health, your sexual health and your sense of wellbeing. Give yourself sexual pleasure, whether you're in a relationship or not.
- **Enjoy Sex Toys.** Our hormonally-challenged bodies may need extra help to reach orgasm. A well-chosen, well-placed vibrator can be the difference between orgasm and no orgasm.
- **Indulge Your Erotic Imagination.** Fantasize, read erotica, view films that turn you on. Don't judge yourself for the kinds of images, fantasies, or private thoughts that get you revved up. Your brain is your most powerful sex organ.
- **Use Your Words.** Learning to talk



Above: Explore what gets you revved up, talk about it, and let it lead where it will. Photo: istockphoto.com contributor simonapilolla

about sex is the key to getting what you want. A long-term partner is likely to continue doing what used to work, even if it doesn't work for you now, unless you redirect the action. A new partner wants to know how to please you. Speak up.

- **Use Safer Sex.** If you're sexual with new partners, use barrier protection. Many people with sexually transmitted infections (STIs) either don't know or don't tell. Use barrier protection (condoms for intercourse and fellatio, dental dams for cunnilingus) every time.

And not to be overlooked or minimized, Joan's list concludes with the practical and sound advice to talk to your doctor about any physical problems that may require medical attention; to a sex-savvy counselor about ongoing sexual problems in your relationship; and to “learn, learn, learn” from the wealth of trustworthy and reliable sources available to us.

Wait until you see everything Joan offers through her website joanprice.com. She recently completed a film with the celebrated sex educator, porn actress, and director jessica drake (who uses lowercase in the spelling of her name), *jessica drakes' Guide to Wicked Sex, Senior Sex: Co-Created with Joan Price*.

So, with Valentine's Day on the horizon, what'll it be? What do you really want? If it's sex, don't be shy or embarrassed to admit it and act on

it – but don't be unrealistic, unkind, or overly demanding, either. If you and your partner need more time and attention to get there together, honor that, but commit to it. Buy yourself a sex toy and get things going.

If you're single, don't waste time fantasizing about what Valentine's Day could or should be like if only you were with a special someone. If you want flowers, get some. Chocolate? Buy something you know you'll love and that's not a budget (or waistline) killer. Crave a delicious dinner? Order in from a favorite restaurant. Light some candles and watch or read something sexy. Get in bed with yourself and a sex toy if it helps, and take your sexual pleasure and your self-care seriously on February 14 and every other day of the year.

Joan Price says, “Sexual pleasure has no expiration date.” Be someone who defies their gynecologist's defeatist demographics. Be a sexy senior! •

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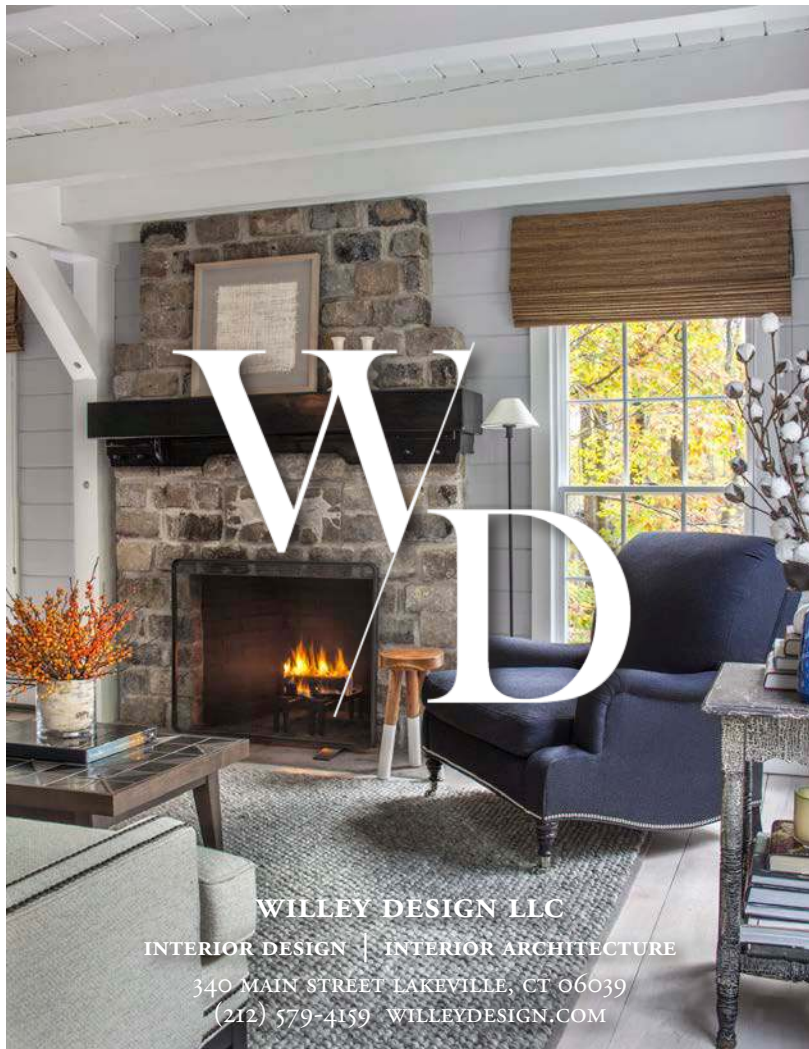
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Located in the heart of Historic Hudson, this dutch gambrel style home is endowed with a classic front porch, this home has unusually large windows which wrap around the house. Originally configured as 4 BR with 1 BA, plans for a conversion to 3 BR and 2 BA will convey with the house, along with the original blueprints. The home is partially gutted and awaits restoration.

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Cakes by Ashlee

Specialty cakes handcrafted, baked and served locally. 181 Healy Blvd., Hudson, NY. (518) 965-1500. cakesbyashlee.com

Eleven years ago, Ashlee Osterhoudt, owner of Cakes by Ashlee, began baking cakes for her nephew, niece, and family. As time went by the customer base for her beloved baked goods grew. Just six months ago, Ashlee decided to leave her day job due to overwhelming demand for her custom cakes. Ashlee eventually found a space of her own and recently opened up a shop in Hudson, NY. Ashlee has established a strong returning customer base, meaning she books out orders weeks to months in advance sometimes. Cakes by Ashlee offers custom decorated cakes for any occasion as well as cupcakes, cakesicles, cake jars, and a few other specialty items. She also does wedding cake consultations and wedding cakes. Ashlee says she is proud to be a locally grown girl who has built her business for the last ten years from home. As a result, she has been part of family celebrations for years. She has watched them grow and they have watched her. Cakes by Ashlee isn't just a small business, it's a family business. Ashlee enjoys establishing a relationship with everyone that walks into the shop. She looks forward to watching families grow and being a part of their celebrations as well as continuing to meet the great people of our area. Soon, Cakes by Ashlee will be expanding staff, adding weekend hours, a coffee station, as well as bigger and exceedingly delicious cakes.



Keller Williams Realty Hudson Valley North

Real estate agency located at 15 Taylor St, Kingston, NY. (845) 481-2700. mc1143.yourkwoffice.com

Keller Williams Realty Hudson Valley North (KWHVN) was launched in March of 2020 and is the third franchise opened under the Keller Williams Realty Hudson Valley and Upstate Group of brokerages, which in total consists of four offices and 500 real estate agents throughout the Hudson Valley. KWHVN has approximately 100 real estate agents assisting home buyers and sellers throughout Ulster, Greene, Columbia and Dutchess Counties. KWHVN provides clients with cutting-edge technology that makes searching for a home and navigating the contract-to-close process easy. Agents say being able to help someone buy their dream home, or sell their home to make a new dream come true is the most rewarding part of the business. All signs are pointing towards a strong real estate market in 2022 and KWHVN agents are confident that with their best-in-class marketing materials and high level of customer service that they are poised to continue to grow their market share throughout the areas they serve to help even more clients. In addition to helping home buyers and sellers in 2021, KWHVN raised over \$10,000 for Sparrows Nest, a local Hudson Valley charity that provides meals for families who have a member undergoing cancer treatments. KWHVN is a local brokerage that is committed to giving back to where they live and is looking forward to continuing that tradition of giving back.



Kent Green

Shopping mall located at 6 Green Pastures Ln, Kent, CT. (860) 927-3344. kentgreen.com

Kent Green is a shopping center in the town of Kent, CT, and serves the surrounding towns in the Northwest corner and over the New York State line. Kent Green's businesses are small, family-run enterprises including Sophie's Bakery & Restaurant, Lore's Nail Spa, and Shanghai Asian Fusion Restaurant just to name a few. The other businesses provide services like an art studio for kids, hair salon, laundromat, yoga studio, and acupuncture. Owner John Casey's grandfather bought most of the land in the 1920s and his father, Gordon, started construction in the late 1950s. Today, Kent Green has 14 buildings and 25 small businesses. Casey says that the most gratifying part of operating a shopping center is giving hard working people a chance and watching their businesses mature and thrive. Kent Green has planted over 30 trees in the last five years, installed 25 birdhouses, introduced native shrubs and plantings, and qualified as a Certified Wildlife Habitat. Recently, Kent Green has been getting a big boost from people who are fleeing the City and looking for a more balanced life in rural New York State and Connecticut. Kent Green's commercial spaces are almost all filled, and its businesses are thriving in a way never before experienced. Casey says that sharing the rural region's quality of life has been good for everyone, and thinks it will continue for a long time.



The Dover Plains Library

A place for books, fax services, free internet and scintillating conversation. 1797 NY-22, Wingdale, NY. (845) 832-6605. doverplainslibrary.org

The Dover Plains Library was first organized as the "Wonder Workers" in 1898 and subsequently chartered as the Dover Plains Library Association by the state of New York in 1904. In 2001, the library moved to its current location in the American Legion Building on Route 22 in Wingdale. Residents and visitors have access to over 44,000 items in the collection such as books, audiobooks, magazines, DVDs, and CDs, as well as the collections from the 66 libraries in the Mid-Hudson Library System. The library also offers other services like faxing, printing, internet access, Wi-Fi, disc resurfacing, notary public, NYS real estate exam proctoring, and Shelf Help, a personalized book and movie recommendation service. The Library is chartered to serve the residents of the Town of Dover, which includes Dover Plains and Wingdale and its dedicated and knowledgeable staff have all held their positions for quite some time – some over twenty years – making the Library a very friendly place to visit. Library staff are currently planning a bookmobile project to expand services to Dover residents who cannot get to the library. Members of the library say they are very excited about the new project and look forward to spreading their love of reading and learning throughout the community, starting in 2023.

INSURING YOUR WORLD

Happy New Year to all of my readers! 2022 has ushered in a new hope that we can be rid of the Covid Cloud and start to get our lives back to some semblance of daily order. Speaking of order, it is time to take a great long look at your insurance program ... to that end, how is your house valued? Recent building costs have increased over 100%. Costs to rebuild a single family residence is currently running between \$250-\$350 per square foot. That makes a 2000-square-foot house at \$300 per foot cost \$600,000 to rebuild! What amount of coverage do you have on your home or rental dwelling? A way to offset the premium increase when raising the value is to raise your deductible to \$2500 or \$5000 – remember, in a total loss these deductibles will seem inconsequential instead of being underinsured on the whole loss. Check your automobile insurance coverage and see if you still need comprehensive and collision on that car that has over 200,000 miles. Does your uninsured motorist coverage equal your liability limit? If not it is a good idea to raise it to meet that limit. And lastly, make sure you have an umbrella to cover over all your liability exposures, home, auto, rental dwelling, vacation home, and boat or motorcycle policy. Take this time to complete a thorough review with your agent!



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Agency

“A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME...”

For centuries the rose has been given as a symbol of love on Valentine's Day. While there are many other flowers in the vocabulary of the floral language, the red rose particularly has stood the test of time as a romantic expression of love. If you choose to voice your love through roses this Valentine's Day, here are some tips to making sure it is long-lasting:

- Always order early and from a reputable florist to ensure the best quality from the start. Most florists will pre-order from a quality grower a large percentage of what they suspect they will need for the holiday. Waiting last minute might mean that they had to call in a second-string grower because that was all that was available.
- Make sure that proper care was taken when purchasing your roses. February tends to be very cold and covering your roses from single digit temperatures could mean the difference between a one-day romance or a long-lasting relationship.
- Once in the comfort of your loved one's home, care and placement will help ensure your roses can go the distance. Always cut your rose stems under water, either fill your sink or a bowl with water and submerge the stem while cutting. This helps reduce the possibility of air in the stems that can cause that all too embarrassing head drop. Also select a cool dry location for them to be displayed. Hot air vents and wood stoves may help keep things steamy, but they can reduce the life span of your roses.

No matter what language you speak, roses on Valentine's Day would smell as sweet.



(860) 364-5380 • www.roaringoaksflorist.com • 349A Main Street, Lakeville, CT

Sparkling wine

Sparkling wine is any wine that contains carbonation. It can be white, rosé or even red, and the bubbles are (usually) a naturally occurring result of fermentation. Champagne, or other sparkling wines, have traditionally been served as an aperitif or with dessert. But there are no hard and fast rules, and in recent years sparkling wines have made an appearance not only before and after, but at every part of the meal. Some examples of sparkling wine are:

- Champagne comes from the Champagne region of France. Champagne has tight bubbles, bracing acidity and a “toastiness” that really makes it unique.
- Cava, from the Penedès region of Spain outside of Barcelona, is similar to Champagne in taste; citrusy, great minerality and it can have that “toastiness” as well.
- Prosecco hails from the region around Venice. Prosecco has a rounder, fuller flavor than Champagne. The grape is the native Glera and its really only grown for Prosecco. Fun, light, and bubbly, it's the perfect brunch wine.
- Lambrusco, is sparkling wine from Emilia Romagna, the same region as some of Italy's greatest treasures. Lambrusco can be white, rosé or red wines of varying sweetness levels.
- Rosé sparkling wines tend to have a little more body than their white counterparts due to the skin contact. They can also be significantly more expensive due to the fact that less rosé is made than white.

Sparkling wine should always be served cold, partly because it enhances the effect of the carbonation and partly because if you try to open a warm bottle of sparkling wine, it's almost guaranteed to explode. (Cool science lesson: It's because cold liquid can hold onto more carbon dioxide).



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Why professional facials are crucial in the winter months

Having the winter blues? Treat yourself to a professional facial with your local esthetician to get a deep cleanse, exfoliation, and hydrating mask leaving your skin feeling refreshed and super moisturized. Facials are beneficial year round but the blistery months of winter can really wreck havoc on your skin!

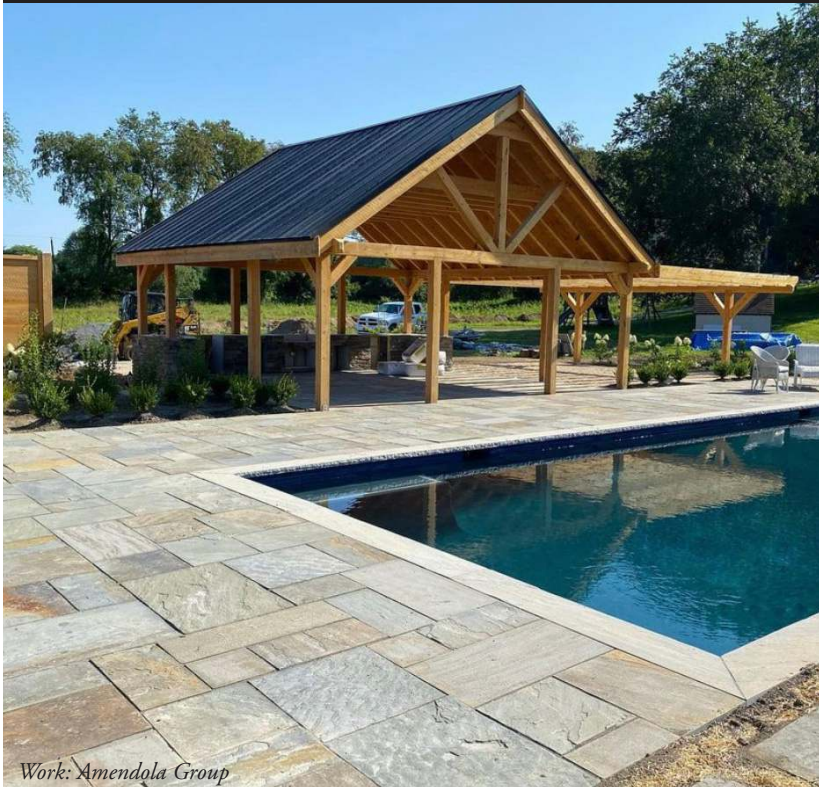
Our skin cells slow down drastically in the winter due to the cold weather, which tends to dry us out making our skin start to feel tight and uncomfortable. That's why it's important to use products with higher oil content, this will help compensate the loss of lipids during the colder months. Layering products like serums and moisturizers is also recommended.

Our facials include a moisturizing cleanser, deep exfoliation and a hydrating mask. Facials vary depending on the different products being used during each particular facial and depending on a client's particular skin care regimen. Facials help minimize signs of aging, even skin tone and restore skin comfort. Professional skincare treatments are customized to correct a variety of skin imperfections and to help reverse signs of aging and maintain a youthful, healthy, and radiant complexion. Facials are recommended every 4-6 weeks.

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