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LET'S TRANSPORT OUR LIFE

Well, well, well! May has arrived and with it so has our annual "Transportation" issue! This seems to be a fan favorite amongst our *Main Street* readers, and that always makes us feel extra happy to put this issue together. For those of our readers out there who are familiar with this issue, we hope that you find something right up your alley and fun in this one. For those readers not familiar with this theme, we of course hope that you find something of interest and that's fun, but additionally we hope that you enjoy our definition of "transportation" and how we brush that term with a wide stroke! We've done that from the beginning when we started with this theme some seven years ago. And let me take this moment for self-reflection because I just can't believe we've been creating content under this themed umbrella in the month of May for seven years! That just goes to show, there's a lot to talk about when it comes to transportation in our neck of the woods.

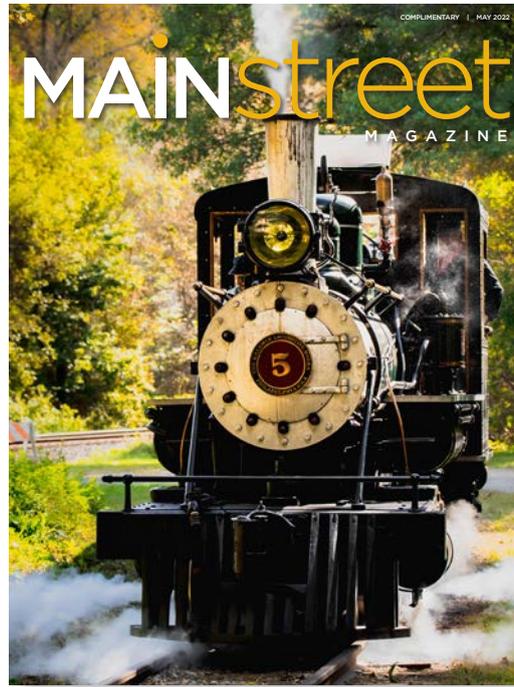
With that said, there are indeed many angles and many stories that we can and do tackle when it comes to transportation. We've had everything from cars to trains to airplanes and boats, but we've also had stories about horses and air gliders. We've had current and historic stories – and just about everything in between! And you know what? It's so fun!

I am so lucky to have such a talented group of writers who come up with these great stories that we're able to share with you. My team is of course incredibly talented, full of great ideas, but further – they're able to put pen to paper... errr, I mean, finger to keyboard, and craft stories that are fun, interesting, and informative. So this hat-nod is to all of my team that help bring so many stories alive on the pages of this magazine, all for your enjoyment.

I would also like to take a minute to thank all of our advertisers and sponsors. You are all incredible! Thank you for your continued support, you are the reason that we are able to create and publish this very magazine and offer it for free to all of our readers. So dear reader, if you're a fan of ours, you are a fan of our advertisers! So the next time you need an insurance agent, a landscaper, a bank, to buy antiques, or want to go out to eat (to name just a very few), please flip through our many amazing advertisers' ads and help support them – and please let them know that you learned about them right here! They will appreciate it, and so will we.

We're here to help spread the good word, to share good stories, and spread positive. We're all about the love. Happy May, and happy reading!

– Thorunn Kristjansdottir



MAY 2022

Who doesn't love a good old fashioned choo-choo train?

Cover photo by
Olivia Valentine

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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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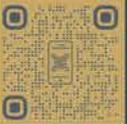
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SURROUNDED BY IMAGINATION

ART TAKES COMMAND

By Griffin Cooper
griffin@mainstreetmag.com

There's a certain inexplicability that comes with properly capturing a moment, scene or feeling. Perhaps that's why the elusive action is so closely associated with the great artist. To funnel the world as it exists through the imagination, molded there into something that others connect with on a level even they cannot articulate.

That, perhaps, is what the phrase "art taking command" looks like. It's a mantra which artist Carl Chalet lives by.

Chalet was born in Manhattan and raised in Mount Vernon, NY, where he could view the spires of the city's skyline from his bedroom window. His imagination would transform this visage of architecture into the image of his own creativity. Soon bridges, trains, remnants of architecture from the 1930s, his grandmother's china, and his father's automobiles would make it onto Carl's canvas as well as onto the pages of his children's books. He would go on to work in a variety of mediums throughout the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, primarily sculpting and painting while teaching art in both college and high schools, before teaming up with his wife, Lynn Ke-

archer, to create *Telford and Earnest*, the series of children's books for which he is best known, and that captured the minds of vivid youngsters for decades. As he continues to move fluidly through his own imagination, Carl discusses his time growing up, his changing style and his current medium of cutouts.

Growing up around Manhattan, was there something about the architectural landscape that planted creative inspiration within you?

Growing up with easy access to New York City and the Bronx, with either a bicycle or subway, allowed for multiple adventures which saturated my imagination. Whether it was the Rainy Gates or Elephant house in the Bronx Zoo, the Haute Conservatory at the Botanical Gardens or the canyons of Manhattan and not least the magnificent ocean liners docked on the West Side, I stored all these impressions for later use – although at the time I simply marveled at them. The sheer scope of proportion and size of the city and its environs intrigued me and kindled a love of perspective and the visual foreplay it engenders. It is the use of perspective that is the main component in all of my work, whether it is the cutouts or drawings, as it allows me to manipulate space.

How did your artistic sensibility evolve or move fluidly over the course of your career? Does there ever come a point where style doesn't change?

Early in my teaching career I noticed students would try to achieve a certain technique but would end up with a different but equally successful solution. This led to a discussion about El Greco in which I brought up the theory that El Greco had a stigmatism that caused him to see the world as he had painted it. I then asked the students if it was equally as valid if he just wanted to paint it that way. I realized intentionality is limiting. What the artist intends isn't usually what results. The process of creation builds upon the artistic, cultural and familial history, as well as the ongoing process.

I create to see what I will create, because it's usually as much a surprise to me at the end of the day as it was a question at the beginning. The question of artistic sensibility is difficult to answer as it evolves over a long period of time. The only constant has been my aversion to stagnation and the embracing of flux. I have alternated between black and white and color, representationalism and abstraction



as a steady course and never the twain have met. Unless they did.

How would you describe the experience of creating *Telford and Earnest* from idea to publication? Did your experience with children's stories shift any perspectives?

The *Telford and Earnest* stories began as a quick sketch and the first story was fleshed out in a subsequent night's studio work. I recognized in the writing Earnest was drawn from my friend and the bird grew to be 6'3". Ernest and I both loved word games so Telford became a lexicologist. The publishing was the result of books sold or paintings sold as all the books were self published.

Developing the *Telford and Earnest* stories was a way for me to meander about introducing wordplay as the vehicle of the story. (Telford after all is a lexicologist). Each story ends not with a moral or parable but rather with a joke; a rose by any other name; a word is just a word; the significance is usually insignificant; evolution isn't all it's cracked up to be.

Sad to say I didn't research the process of writing children's books for children as well as I researched the images. Case in point, Earnest doesn't read as a point of honor as he doesn't want to relive another's experience when he can experience it himself. Not a good way to encourage children to read.

Could you describe the process behind your cutouts? Do you consider each style of your work to exist separately?

The cutouts began a show at the Sharon Historical Society called *Take A Seat*. I chose one of art history's most famous chairs, which is depicted in Vincent Van Gogh's painting *Bedroom at Arles*. I wanted to make it stand alone, thus the cutout. Van Gogh did a portrait of the chair and a companion piece for Paul Gauguin when he came to visit. I did likewise.



While painting in my studio I inadvertently almost sat down on one of the cutout chairs. I realized the presentation of the chairs should be ideally as low on the wall as possible. This led me to think of presentations on walls and what is usually found on walls. Wall lamps begat hurricane lamps which begat coat racks which begged the question of whose coat. Superman begat Sherlock, who begat Captain America.

For my first show I did a cutout of a guest book complete with a cutout pencil for guests not to sign. From there books and magazines from the golden age of illustration ensued. Currently I am working on a series of vases on wall sconces. ●



To learn more about Carl Chaiet and his work, please visit www.carlchaiet.com. All images with this article are courtesy of Carl Chaiet.

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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Tarsha Gordon is a newly-licensed real estate salesperson with Davala Real Estate in Philmont, NY, with a background in business management and accounting. “I love the diversity this career offers me,” she says. When she’s not working, Tarsha enjoys doing DIY projects, spending time with family and friends and volunteering at her church and with local outreach programs. “I’m originally from the beautiful island of Jamaica,” Tarsha says. “While visiting the United States, I fell in love with the cozy town of Cape Cod but then ended in Hudson, NY, where I purchased my forever home.” Tarsha says she also enjoys teaching financial literacy to children and young adults. “Knowing how to manage one’s finances is the key to gaining financial independence,” she says. “The earlier individuals are exposed to financial concepts the better they will become at managing their finances.”



Jason Meltz has worked for his family businesses, Meltz Lumber and Ghent Wood Products, since graduating high school ten years ago. “The thing I love most about my job is working with my family and never knowing what the days are going to bring,” he says. “Every day it seems I’m doing something different.” Outside of work, Jason races weekly at Albany Saratoga Speedway and Lebanon Valley Speedway, and travels around the country for special events. Jason races in a division called Dirtcar Prostocks, where they build cars from the ground up. “I have been racing since I was 14 (I am now 27),” says Jason. “What I love most is meeting new people, working on the car, and being with friends and family through it all.”



Angie Perumal is a full-time nanny in Rhinebeck, NY. Angie has been a nanny for six years, though she is currently in college majoring in Children’s Education. “I think being a nanny is so rewarding because I get a close bond with children of all ages,” she says. “I love connecting with them on an imaginary, creative level and just being a light in their life.” Outside of work Angie enjoys exploring local towns in the area and going on hikes with her dog. “Moving to this area has been such a blessing in regards to my job,” says Angie. “I have been able to help many families all over, connecting with children as their part-time sitter or full-time nanny, especially during this time with day-cares filled, and parents going back to work.”



Mary Burntitus keeps herself busy while helping the community by working full-time as a teacher’s aide at Taconic Hills Central School, part-time as the Director of Religious Education at Our Lady of Hope Parish in Copake Falls, NY, where she helps spearhead the parish’s monthly Food Drive-Thrus, and part-time as a banquet server at the Interlaken Inn in Lakeville, CT. Of her teaching job Mary says the best part is, “the interaction with the students. It’s a rewarding experience assisting them to gain an increase in knowledge and maturity.” Outside of work, Mary loves to run as it is hobby that puts her in motion the most. “Depending on the weather, I try to run at least five times a week,” she says. “It’s not only healthy, but a great stress reliever as well.”



Lann Rubin II is the owner of North East Ford, a Ford dealer in the town of North East, NY, where he manages sales and services specializing in trucks, commercial accounts, and their family members. “I have nearly a thousand customers in my cell contacts and even more have mine,” he says. “I love long-lasting relationships.” When he’s not working, Lann enjoys studying the Bible, playing airsoft, traveling with his wife and sons, and going deep sea fishing. Lann grew up in Roscoe, NY, and was raised there through high school, but now resides in Pleasant Valley, NY. “I love that our area has a country feel with all the amenities of a city,” says Lann. “I’m so pleased with how the community has welcomed us with open arms. The sheer volume of local customers coming all year round has been awesome.”



Work is a big word for **Maria Tamburrino**, because she does many things. “I have owned a house cleaning and catering business for the last 36 years,” she says. “I have also taken care of those that suffer from dementia and Alzheimer’s Disease in their homes for the last 15 years.” Currently, Maria is in the process of opening a secondhand store in Millerton, NY, that will feature a lot of cool new things from local artisans. She also loves to cook and bake and enjoys making meals and desserts for anyone for any reason. “I’m really big on spending time with my family,” she says. “I’ve been in this area for the last 35 years, my kids were born here and this is where I call home. I have the most amazing family, and I am now Nonie to my first grandson.”

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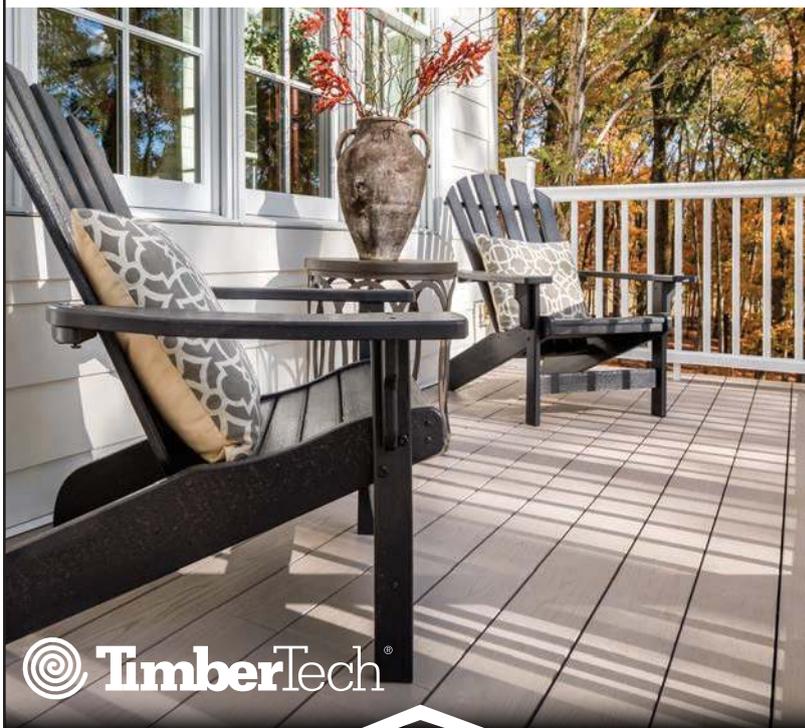
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A building not SET IN STONE

By Thorunn Kristjansdottir
info@mainstreetmag.com

The past few years have proved to be a time like no other for everyone around the globe – and businesses were effected in every which way, too. There were many businesses that struggled due to Covid, while others flourished. This can be said on a global scale and certainly at a local scale, as we all saw and felt in our area. But with those challenges, there were also many opportunities that presented themselves. One young local entrepreneur recognized one such opportunity and took the initiative to start his business and offer a product that he felt there was a need for.

Stone Scasso, the son of entrepreneurs, founded Stonefield Products in the midst of Covid and has been growing steadily since. We were able to catch up with him to discuss his business, everything from his business' conception to what he's got planned on the horizon.

Who is Stone Scasso, and what is your background?

I was born and raised in Millerton, NY, where both of my parents have established businesses. My mom is Joanne Scasso and owns Country Gardeners Florist, while my dad Jay owns Seagull Roofing. Being raised by parents who are local business owners instilled in me the interest of business and being self-employed. I also quickly learned while working

for- and alongside my parents the work and dedication required to run your own business. My parents also instilled in me the interest to foster our community and bringing business to my hometown.

I have always had an interest in building, going so far as having two years of architecture under my belt. But even before that, I suppose the idea for my business now started with my first tree house at a young age.

Where did the idea of Stonefield Products come from, how did it all begin?

I officially started my company, Stonefield Products, in the fall of 2020 – right at the start of Covid. And Covid actually really helped my business' start and to then grow, because we had so many people that had not only moved up here, but everyone was home... stuck at home... really living in their homes and staring at their back yards. I found that there was a great and growing need for storage sheds for wood, equipment, and tools; she-sheds; buildings for home offices; tiny houses; to name a few. Truthfully, I wouldn't have had the level of success that I've had if it hadn't been for Covid.

As for the structures themselves, I had a relationship with an Amish builder and we grew our relationship



All images with this article depict Stone Scasso and his various structures. Photos by Olivia Valentine.

where he builds these sheds and buildings specifically for my market and customers. My next step was to find a visible location to showcase the sheds, and Rob Cooper of Associated Lightning Rod owns the property across from CVS and Elizabeth's Jewelry on Rt. 44 in Millerton and I thought it was the perfect display area for my buildings. I approached Rob and asked if he'd let me use the property for my buildings, in return I'd clean the lot, remove trees, and whatever else was needed to make the area look presentable for my purposes. And from there I hit the ground running.

What kind of buildings and sheds do you have and what are some of your best selling structures?

It's really become endless what kinds of buildings and sheds that my customers want and need. I've sold

Continued on next page ...





I want to build cool structures and I'm excited about some A-frame buildings that I've been developing.

Do you have any advice for other entrepreneurs thinking of starting their own business?

Really work hard and you'll make it. If you're just interested in a 9-5 type of job and not working hard then running your own business isn't for you. It's as simple as that.

People often think that owning your business is easy and that you're just making money – it's not that simple.

When you own your own business, you're having to deal with the work of running your business and then doing the actual work, the paperwork (which can be overwhelming), the customers, the problems – you're fielding phone calls and emails on Sundays and at night. I grew up in not one but two successful businesses, and even I was surprised to find how much work having my own business was.

But it all boils down to just doing the work. And if you're ready to commit and put the hours in, you'll make it. ●

To reach Stone Scasso of Stonefield Products, you can call (845)392-0404 or email stonescasso@outlook.com. His structures are located at 107 Rt. 44, Millerton, NY.



everything from art sheds to she-sheds, barns to tiny houses, garage overflow and run-in sheds to chicken coops, home offices to Airbnb structures – you name it.

My best-selling building has been a 10x16 garage overflow structure. But we can customize any structure – 8x8 and up from there – and all of our buildings use wood that we harvest and mill – we even offer post and beam structures. The wood that we use is what's really important and also sets us apart from a lot of other shed companies, because it is actually real wood and is locally-sourced. Beyond just the structure, I also prepare the ground that the structures will sit on: I land-sculpt, re-negotiate the land, and build the pad that the structure will then sit on and create the appropriate base needed.

My buildings can be super simple to really fancy – the fancier ones can include electric and insulation. But it all depends on the customer and their needs for their structure.

Do you deliver them as well?

Yes, we truck them and deliver them within about a 40-mile radius of Millerton. Like I mentioned, I prepare the grounds before the arrival of the shed, and then we deliver it and make sure it's to my customers' expectations and liking.

How do people learn about your structures, do you advertise?

No, I haven't advertised up until

this point. My first ad is actually in this issue. [Editor's note: there was no pay-for-play with the ad and this article]. Up until now, people have seen the structures on Rt. 44; they stop, look at them, pick up business cards that I have inside the buildings and then they call me. Or if I'm there, people will stop by and talk to me.

Word-of-mouth has been great and really worked in my favor in the growth of my business. I've also had a number of repeat customers who keep adding structures, so that's been amazing. I even feel like a few of my customers are in a competition for who can have the most sheds, one customer is up to five now!

Do you have a favorite structure that you've created and sold?

My favorite thus far was a 10x16 with a 12x12 pitch roof that's 17 or 18 foot tall that has a collapsible roof for travel.



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Apple Pie Enchiladas

The first made this recipe years ago when there was some sort of celebration in a Spanish class. My kids were always bringing something into school for some function or another and it was always brought upon me at the last minute to whip something up for them to share. We always had apples on hand as their grandparents had a fruit farm. Apples, cherries, peaches, pears, and grapes. It was such a treat to go into the orchard and pick from the tree or vine whatever was in season.

Do parents still bring in baked goods for functions or is that not a thing anymore? I do recall that as my kids were getting older, the school was encouraging store bought items instead of homemade. I much rather prefer making something from scratch to avoid things like preservatives, artificial flavorings, and unknown ingredients. Plus, if you have kids, it is so nice to spend quality time with them in the kitchen. Two of my three daughters are very good cooks/bakers, and the other is a very good eater who enjoys anything that is prepared for her! She always volunteers to be a taste tester for any recipes we prepare. I think she enjoys the job title of “Chief Taste Tester!”

The best thing is...

What's great about these apple enchiladas is that they could be enjoyed for not only dessert, but breakfast and brunch as well. This would be a lovely addition to any Mother's Day brunch table this month.

Here's a little helpful tip: When we make anything with apples, we always use a variety. Doing so provides a nice depth of flavor. Some of our favorites to bake with are Granny Smith, Honeycrisp, Jonagold, Pink Lady, Macintosh, and Cortland. For this recipe we used: Granny Smith, Cortland, Macintosh and Honeycrisp.



This apple pie enchilada recipe makes eight enchiladas.

Apple pie filling:

3/4 cup of sugar
2 tbs flour
1 tsp of cinnamon
1/8 tsp nutmeg
1/4 tsp salt
6-7 apples peeled and sliced
2 tbs butter
2 tbs apple juice

Add all ingredients to a medium-sized saucepan and cook over medium heat until the apples are softened and the sauce has thickened. 8-10 minutes. Do not overcook. You still want them to have some bite after baking in the oven.

Of course, if you are in a time crunch, you could use canned apple pie filling. But homemade is best. You can control the amount of sugar and apples and there aren't any preservatives!

Sauce:

1 tsp ground cinnamon
1/2 cup butter
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup apple juice
1 tsp vanilla

In a medium saucepan over medium heat whisk together cinnamon, butter, both sugars, and apple juice. Bring to a boil, then reduce to simmer for 3 minutes, remove pan from burner and stir in vanilla.

Assembling the enchiladas:

Butter a 9x13-inch baking dish. Take eight tortillas and spoon a heaping 1/4 cup of pie filling evenly down the tortilla. Place it slightly off center closest to you. Roll tortillas up without tucking in edges and place seam side down in the baking dish. Sprinkle with about 1 tsp of cinnamon on top.

Pour the sauce over enchiladas and let stand for 30-45 minutes. (Don't skip this step). Bake in preheated 350-degree oven for 20 minutes, or until golden. Baste them a few times while baking to ensure a nice caramelized tortilla with no dry spots.

Serve warm with vanilla ice cream, or whipped cream. If you really want to indulge, add some homemade caramel sauce to it too! ●

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 @oliviawvalentine.

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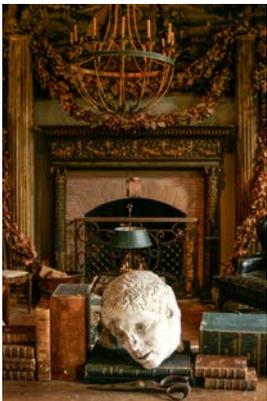
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The down and dirty *The impact of dirt roads on the value of real estate*

By Christine Bates
info@mainstreetmag.com

Many thanks to all of those who have shared their experience with dirt roads for this article including real estate agents, people who live on dirt roads, highway superintendents, town supervisors, first selectmen, and scientists. As usual, what I thought might be a clear conclusion about the impact of a dirt roads on real estate values, turned out to be more complex and interesting.

In the beginning

There were paved roads 4,000 years ago when stone-cutting tools were invented. As early impressive example is the 31-mile road built by the Minoans, composed of mortared sandstone blocks covered by flagstones. During the medieval period while Roman roads deteriorated in Europe, streets in Bagdad were paved with tar by the 8th Century. Fast forward to the United States between the 1870s and the 1920s, The Good Roads Movement for improved roads was led by bicyclists promoting paved roads between rural communities. With cars, economic prosperity, and federal and state funding only a few rural dirt roads were left behind.

We have a LOT of public dirt roads

Our rural region has many public “unimproved roads.” These are not the responsibility of state or county government, but of town highway departments in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York. A spot check revealed enormous town by town differences in miles of public dirt roads. The Town of North East, NY, has 34.23 miles of road but only 3.2 are gravel, similar to Canaan, CT, with close to 5 miles of dirt. But Amenia, NY, has 11 miles of dirt road, Ancram, NY, has 14, Salisbury, CT, has 16.2 miles, and the Town of Washington in NY has a whopping 30 miles of dirt road to maintain and plow. In 19 communities in Western Massachu-

setts 33% of all roads are unpaved.

Mud season with repeated thawing and freezing is the worst time of year for every highway department and each highway superintendent knows exactly where the trouble spots are and what’s the most problematic road. There is not much available public funding for paving dirt roads and the up-front expense of engineering and paving dirt roads versus the annual cost of maintenance is a difficult calculation.

Maintaining the safety of dirt roads is a year-round task, but as Henry W. Todd, First Selectman of Canaan, observed “dirt roads go with our rural character, and they do cut down on traffic. Look, it’s a lot easier to take care of paved roads, but we take good care of our dirt roads. Most of them are lightly traveled and some can’t be improved because of drainage and wetlands issues. Some road surfaces can’t tolerate paving and we don’t want salt from a paved road leeching into the reservoir.” Paved roads develop potholes, but most dirt roads need grading in the spring and fall every year. Dirt roads that are narrow, steep, and wet are the biggest challenge.

Kevin Smith, director of the Highway Department in the Town of Washington, CT, has succeeded in paving a few short dangerous roads in the 28 miles of town dirt roads. Last year despite considerable “push back,” the department paved approximately .5 miles of “scenic” designated Gunn Hill Road at a cost of approximately \$175,000. “It’s very steep and every storm it washed out. We had many informational meetings with the community and most of the people opposed to paving did not live on the section of road to be paved. It was really a safety issue.”

Paving Dark Entry is the next project on Smith’s list with 50% of residents and 50% opposed. The cost, estimated at \$200,000 to pave a mile, is still under consideration. While sec-



Above: Rain can make some dirt roads treacherous. Photo by Christine Bates.

ond homeowners seem to be nostalgic about dirt roads, Smith suggested, “talk to the UPS and Fed Ex drivers and ask them.”

What do home buyers think about dirt roads?

Real estate agents drive everywhere and have firsthand experience with showing hard-to-get-to houses. John Harney of William Pitt Sotheby’s commented: “It depends. A dirt road can cut both ways. We had one customer who demanded to have the car turned around as we were driving down a dirt road to see a property with the comment that, in his mind, ‘Country has paved roads. Wilderness has dirt roads.’”

The other side is a buyer who purposely looks for property on a dirt road, because it is indicative of more open country lands, the road changes with the seasons – mud season in the spring, dusty in the summer, beautiful in the fall and, perhaps, offers more solitude.”

Another experienced realtor with Sotheby’s, Mimi Harson, rides her

motorcycle up Mount Riga Road. “I grew up on a dirt road. It was wonderful. I have never had a client ask about a dirt road or reject a property because it’s on a dirt road.” She also mentioned that motorcycles have GPS specifically for dirt roads, “to avoid them or ride on them.”

An experienced, off-road broker with Elyse Harney, Juliet Moore, drives a Jeep. “I am particularly fond of dirt roads, especially two: Race Track Road in Lakeville, and West Woods Road #1 in Sharon. Because I love to drive, really drive, and can get anywhere in my Jeep, a muddy washboard is just an adventure. I would say that my clients usually have pretty strong opinions on the matter: they love the paved roads that don’t cover their cars with mud, or they would only want to be on a dirt road that forces everyone to slow down. The biggest question new residents

Continued on next page ...

ask is, if a dirt road can be, and will be, plowed. Indeed, it will! Our dedicated road crews, know we count on them to get to work, and deliver our children to school, and for emergency vehicles to be able to reach our homes. They are out throughout the night sometimes going over a driveway more than once in a heavy storm.”

Juliet continued to explain, “I do have to remind buyers who will not be using their homes in the winter, that they still need to have their driveways plowed – for two reasons: so that their properties do not appear vacant and so that emergency vehicles can reach the structures, if necessary. I have represented several listings on West Woods Road #1 and I always tell the customers coming to see the homes: add ten minutes to what you think it will take you, slow down, hug the right, and enjoy the beautiful country drive.”

Alan O’Doherty from Sotheby’s Kent office summed up the feelings of most brokers I spoke to: “The huge benefit of a dirt road is that you don’t get many people passing by. There is wonderful privacy and seclusion, which ultimately is what many people crave when they envision their country home. On the subject of buyers, I’m representing several NYC dwellers at the moment who are actively avoiding any listings that are close to a normal/standard road. They get the feeling that there is a sense of prestige and exclusivity with a property on a scenic, dirt road.”

A scientist with a dirty secret

“The dirty secret is that unpaved roads have a poor ecological record. While they aren’t covered in asphalt



or concrete, they are very compacted. Rainwater runs off of unpaved roads much as it does paved roads,” according to Dr. David Strayer, a freshwater ecologist at Millbrook’s Cary Institute of Ecosystems Studies. “But unlike paved roads, dirt roads are very prone to erosion. This is a problem because sediment can pollute waterways. Ecologist have linked unpaved roads and poorly managed construction sites to the degradation of streams. Animals like trout and stream insects – a lot of them require rocks or gravel or other clean surfaces to live on and when the fine sediments come off the roads, they can smother the habitats for these animals. Sedimentation from unpaved roads can also raise streambeds, leaving us prone to flooding. During dry periods, unpaved roads also generate a lot of dust, altering roadside vegetation and causing breathing problems. And the chemicals used to keep dust down can have additional ecological or health effects.”

Dirt road lovers

A relative newcomer to Sharon’s Bowne Road, Michelle Alfandari, the co-founder of Homegrown National Park, responded enthusiastically to the question about how she felt about dirt roads: “I LOVE living on a dirt road with all its messiness. I NEVER want it paved EVER. We would never have moved here if we weren’t assured that it would never be paved. We love the quiet of the road even though mud season can be a challenge for both driving and keeping one’s car and oneself free of mud and dust. There are downsides, but the upsides all outweigh them.”

A long-time Millbrook on Killearn Road resident was just as positive: “I treasure the fact that I have lived on a scenic dirt road for 50 years. We’re privileged. I don’t want our road to be suburbanized.”

The battle over Killearn Road

Since 2017, a battle has been waging in the Town of Washington, NY (aka Millbrook) over unpaved Killearn Road. Residents opposing paving have stated that Killearn is designated as a scenic road, deserves protection under the comprehensive plan, adds value to



Above: Race Track Road in Lakeville is Juliet Moore’s and the author’s favorite dirt road. Even the day after a rainstorm it’s sunny and pretty dry. Watch out for joggers. Photo by Christine Bates. Below, left: When it comes to driving on dirt roads, do like the Australians do and slow down.

real estate, stops speeding and discourages popularity among motorcyclists. In March of 2021, a new petition was submitted to the town board signed by over 29 residents requesting the town to consider a long-term solution to “create a safe, drivable, and durable road.” They argue that the number of homes on the road have increased from 26 to 50 homes over the years causing an increase in traffic and more wear and tear on the road. A letter to the town supervisor Gary Ciferri, cites safety concerns. “This morning, on the way to dropping my son off at school, my car, going 5 to 10 miles an hour, slid and almost collided with a horse trailer coming in the opposite direction.”

The signatories claim that they have received calls informing them that their children could not be picked up because of road conditions. They also list inability of cars without 4-wheel drive and delivery vehicles to navigate the road, and ruined tires. *Main Street’s* inquiries on the status of their petition to the town supervisor and town clerk have not been returned. Citing the legal concept of “coming to the nuisance,” one dirt road proponent said, “My neighbors bought their house on a dirt road, and I don’t understand why they didn’t buy a house on a paved road.”

Drive safely dirt roads are here to stay

So what can we say about dirt roads and real estate values? Similar to many other special features of a home, like an indoor swimming pool, horse

barns or closeness to a busy paved road, dirt roads can be a plus or a minus to potential home buyers. Perhaps scenic dirt roads are more attractive to weekend, part-time buyers than to year-round residents or UPS drivers. One high-end realtor called it, “reverse snobbery.” Dirt roads require more attention from highway crews and are becoming more vulnerable with the extremes of climate change. Dirt roads, although seemingly natural, may actually be worse ecologically. The reality-check is that very little funding is available for most budget stretched highway departments to pave dirt roads. Never buy on a dirt road with the promise it will someday be paved.

Australians know about driving on unpaved roads – the continent has 280,000 miles of them. Outback motorists offer experienced advice on driving on dirt roads: slow down and drive smoothly, slow down even more for oncoming traffic, check your tire pressures – on the low side is better for long stretches of dirt road, look ahead and read the road, avoid dust from other vehicles, dodge rocks – tires hate rocks, avoid dusk, dawn and night driving when animals are most active. At least we don’t have to worry about being attacked by a wounded emu or kangaroo. ●

Christine Bates is a registered real estate agent in New York and Connecticut with William Pitt Sotheby’s. She has written about real estate and business since Main Street Magazine’s first issue.



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GETTING INTO THE FLOW:

mountain biking hits the high school scene

By Ian Strever
info@mainstreetmag.com

When interscholastic sports first appeared, it was in the form of school organizations that reached out to neighboring schools in the manner of colleges and universities. Track and field, baseball, and football clubs eventually became teams, which in turn spawned leagues, divisions, state championships, and cottage industries of coaches and instructors who promise to turn your fifteen year-old into the next Babe Ruth.

The past decade has wrought some curious changes on interscholastic playing fields and the competitive landscape, building on decades of growth in sports like lacrosse, hockey, and what might have been termed “alternative” sports a generation ago. Sports like rock climbing, ultimate frisbee, rowing, and sailing have strong regional presences, and other activities have begun to edge their way into interscholastic competition. Robotics, Debate, and E-sports, anyone?

While some traditionalists will question the athletic merits of some of those activities, anyone who has seen them in action will attest to the level of collaboration, teamwork, and sacrifice it takes to win at any of these games. And if opportunities to cultivate those skills are the true *raison d'être* for competitive sports, then they deserve a place in our competitive culture as much as traditional team sports.



Fun flow activities, and the control thereof

All of these activities provide constructive outlets for teenagers, but more importantly, they're just fun, partially because they induce “flow.” Psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi defined the term as the feeling that accompanies activities that “have rules that require the learning of skills, they set up goals, they provide feedback, they make control possible.”

In other words, when we can immerse ourselves and get lost in activity, we have found flow, and there is something about control that is especially appealing to young people who may have little of it in their day-to-day lives or world events. Whether controlling a chess piece, a robot, or a basketball, young people can have a say in the outcomes of flow activities.

Becoming one with the bike

Arguably, no other sport has more flow than mountain biking. While road cycling requires hours of relatively mindless, repetitive motion, mountain biking requires continuous attention on the part of the rider. The mountain biker is constantly reading terrain and texture, and adjusting line and position accordingly. It is a constant stream of decision-making and feedback to the rider that requires complete attention and ultimately, transcendence.

Csikszentmihalyi writes, “only when the skills are so well practiced as to have become automatic can one abandon oneself to spontaneous action and experience flow.”

More than that, however, the physical interaction of bike, rider, and environment may activate the endocannabinoid system in ways



that promote overall neurological and immunological wellbeing. The riders become one with the bike and the trail, to the extent that trail builders now intentionally build what are called “flow” trails.

Meet Garrett Hanaburgh

Adult enthusiasts across the country have long known of the benefits of flow, and they are working to expose younger and younger riders to them. Such is the case with Garrett Hanaburgh, a junior at Pine Plains High School who caught the bug from his father, Steve, who rides, well, near him.

Since he began competing in enduro races in 2019, Garrett has gotten faster and faster, now riding far enough ahead of both his father and mother that he needs to sometimes

Above: Garrett blasts through a singletrack section during last year's Eastern States Cup race at Glen Park. Below, left: Race results are best measured not through times but through the number of “bike smiles” seen. Photos courtesy of Sarah Hanaburgh.

Continued on next page ...



Above: NICA sponsors several programs that promote youth involvement in mountain biking, including GRIT, or “Girls Riding Together.” Photo courtesy of NICA. Below, right: Garrett taking a break between stage 4 and 5 at the Mid-Atlantic Super Series Enduro in Glen Park, PA. Photo courtesy of Sarah Hanaburgh.

ride back over the trail to keep the family together. Mom, Sarah gets muddy right along with Garrett and is usually the one who is chasing Garrett through the woods on just about every one of his rides.

In the past, that would have been the end of the experience, but organizations across the country are sponsoring events of all sorts to involve young people in building skills, making friends, and generally just having a blast on their bikes. The National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA) formed when numerous state-level leagues in the west coalesced into a regional and then national organization. There are now leagues in 31 states, including, locally, New York, where Garrett competes. Although NICA had formerly operated independent of USA Cycling (the organization that cultivates our Olympic teams and grooms household names like Lance Armstrong and George Hincapie), as of 2021, USAC began to recognize NICA points in qualifying for national championship events.

Physical endurance and the competitive spirit

Garrett races cross country and enduro events, the latter involving more technical descending skills,

while the former taxes the legs and aerobic system. As a runner for Pine Plains Indoor and Outdoor Track teams, Garrett has the lungs to thrive on the climbing portions of races, but he has also acquired an impressive set of technical bike handling skills in just a few years.

I joined Garrett to try my hand at a fat bike race on a loose, snowy course near Queensbury, NY, and spent more time going sideways on a bike than I ever have in over thirty years of competitive cycling. Garrett took it all in stride, though, and slipped and slid to a second place finish in his age bracket.

The “bike smile”

Talking with Garrett, though, one would never detect such a competitive drive. Although he is talking to coaches at schools like the University of Vermont and Brevard College that have established cycling programs, he mostly wants to ride the world-class trails that surround both of those schools. Mom calls it his “bike smile” that appears, unbidden, when he is doing the thing he loves: flying up and down hills on his bike, and she produced proof of it on her phone when I met up with them one recent morning.

But organized leagues and series provide the infrastructure for Garrett to ride new trails from Vermont to Pennsylvania, so whether it’s the NICA series, the Mid-Atlantic Super Series, or the Maxxis Eastern States Cup, Garrett and his family can check out a considerable swath of the east coast on their bikes. Garrett is already planning a two-week stint at the renown Kingdom Trails network in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont, thanks to an opportunity provided by his team. Two weeks of bikepacking, riding incredible trails, and making new friends is a dream come true for Garrett, and the start of what could be a lifelong relationship with two-wheeled recreation. ●



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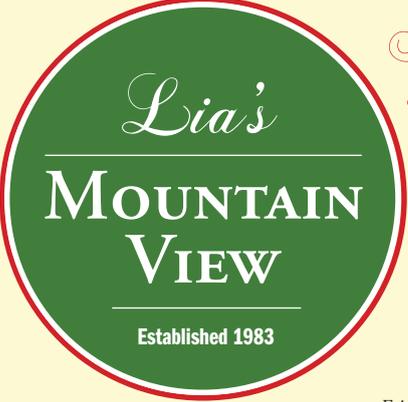
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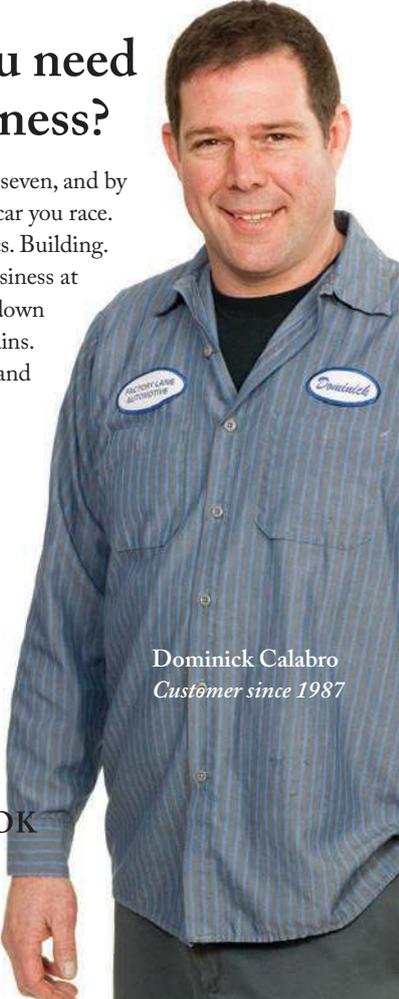
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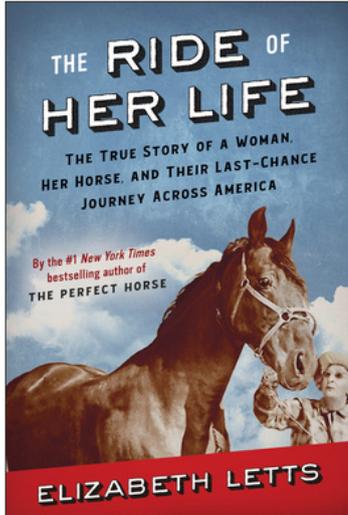


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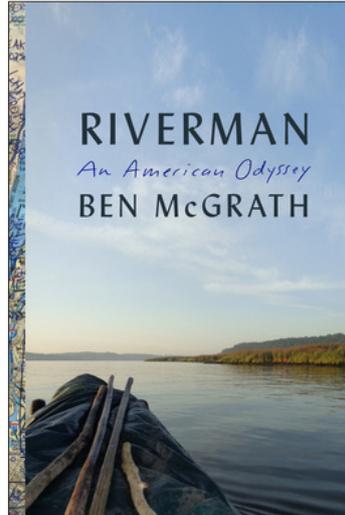
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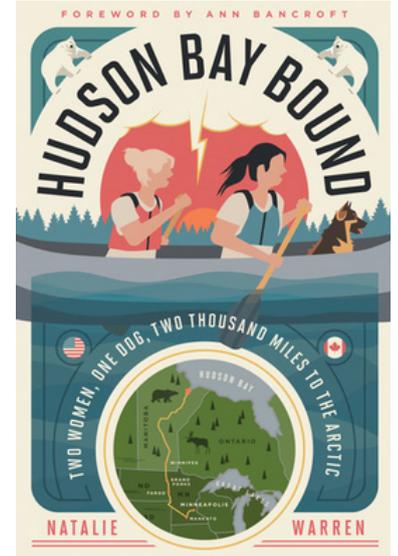
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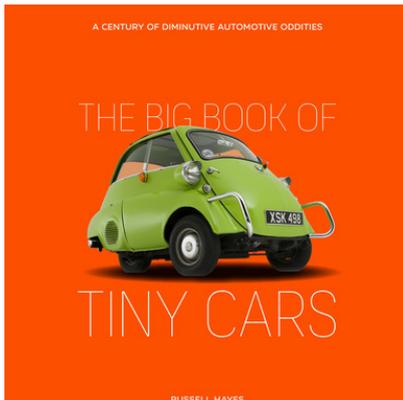
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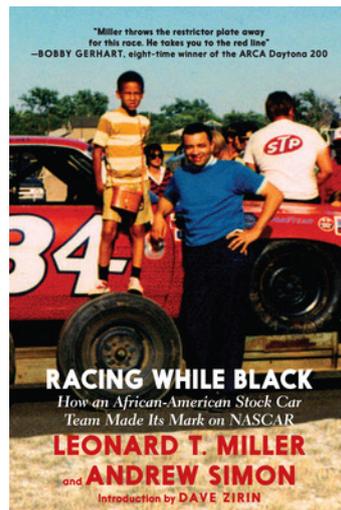
Hudson Bay Bound: Two Women, One Dog, Two Thousand Miles to the Arctic by Natalie Warren

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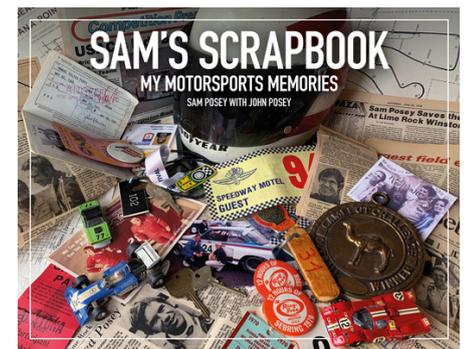
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Richly illustrated and entertainingly written, *The Big Book of Tiny Cars* presents lively profiles of the automotive world’s most famous – and infamous – microcars and subcompacts from 1901 to today. From tiny homes to little lending libraries and even tiny food, people everywhere are resetting the premium they put on size. Fact is, the automotive industry has a “tiny” history going back to the car’s earliest days.



Racing While Black: How an African-American Stock Car Team Made Its Mark on NASCAR by Leonard T. Miller and Andrew Simon

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TRUE BELIEVER: Torsten Gross & the Just Hands Racing Foundation

By CB Wismar
info@mainstreetmag.com

One can hear the energy and the excitement when Torsten Gross talks about his newest adventure. The Just Hands Racing Foundation is the latest in a string of challenging endeavors that has marked the very full life of Torsten. He is a true believer, 100% committed to this intriguing venture.

The foundation emerged from a wedding anniversary gift his wife, Maggie, gave him just over a year ago. She gave him a “track day” at Lime Rock Park in Lakeville, CT. It was a chance for him to take his car on the track and experience what it’s like to tour the mile and a half circuit at speed accompanied by a seasoned race instructor.

One day on the track, and he was hooked. The fact that his car was not really prepared for racetrack conditions only heightened his ambition. “I didn’t realize the strain track driving puts on the brakes. On my 15th lap, I came sailing down Sam Posey Straight and hit the brakes for the hairpin. Nothing. Fortunately, the instructor riding with me barked ‘Turn!’ and talked me through the experience. When I recovered, I had to do it again. It was mesmerizing.”

Enter the M3

Not only did he recover, he went out and bought a new car to have it fitted for the track – A BMW M3 Lime Rock Park Edition. That took a while, but in the interim, Torsten was letting his imagination run wild ... as he had done so many times before in his career, with great result.

The delay in getting his new ride was part of the story that, in newspaper talk, would be called “burying the lede.” Although it has clearly not stopped him in his rich and varied

career, Torsten Gross is a C6 Quadriplegic. The BMW that he was having prepared for more track adventures needed to be converted from “a pedal car” as Torsten would refer to it, to a race car fully controlled by the driver’s hands. Hence the Just Hands Racing Foundation and an adventure that can be added to Torsten’s growing list of accomplishments.

He realized that if he could compete on the race track, the odds versus his competitors were suddenly even. He would not need to compete in wheelchair basketball or have a uniquely made mono ski. “In the car, we’re all in the same class.” In a racecar, Torsten Gross would be 100% independent ... not limited to a special handicapped class, but competing turn for turn with equals.

A complete change of life

A vibrant, active young man, 15 year-old Torsten was diving with his family in the Bahamas when a horrific accident shattered his spinal column, injuring him so severely that he was technically dead for over two minutes. “It was the best thing that ever happened to me. It gave me a life perspective that totally changed.” Strong words from a 6 ft 5 in athlete who has refused to let his life in a wheel chair blunt his absolute passion for adventure.

His love of the ocean was rekindled and Torsten became the first and only Quadriplegic Rescue SCUBA Diver.

Marathons had a real attraction as he saw others in their wheelchairs competing in the grueling events. “Raising the bar” to challenge himself, Torsten trained, then completed 12 marathon events in 12 months.

Sky diving allowed him to feel the freedom of flight and the adrenaline surge of free-falling thousands of feet.

That was not enough. Auto racing emerged as a clear beacon for Torsten. Not only did he want to master the skills of competitive driving and be



Above: Torsten Gross with his BMW M3.

able to display them in head-to-head competition, he wanted others to experience the same elation ... the same sense of true independence that he discovered on that track day.

In subsequent appearances at Lime Rock Park, Torsten has honed his racing skills at the wheel of his specially prepared car. Clearly a competitive person by nature, Torsten soon got to the point where he gained and honed the skills required to not merely drive ... but race. “I was in a bit of a run with a Ferrari and I managed to prevail. Back in the paddock, I parked my car and slid out into my wheelchair. Sure, I was pumped that I had just bested a \$150,000 car when the driver saw me in the chair and in

Continued on next page ...

disbelief blurted out, “That was you?”

Gross’s accomplishments in business are as formidable as those he has shown in the array of sports he has mastered. The fiery imagination that has led him to create Just Hands Foundation was evident early on as he attended Hofstra University and emerged into the highly competitive world of marketing strategy. The list of professional credentials is impressive, to say the least. Tracy Locke, R/GA, J Walter Thompson, Deutsch, BBDO, and now as Global Head of Advertising and Media at TCS.



Just Hands

Torsten Gross is not a stranger to the elusive concept of “giving back.” He has worked for years with the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation, the foundation set up to pursue remedies for spinal injuries named after actor Christopher Reeve. The mandate for the Just Hands Racing Foundation is direct and personally challenging – “Get hand control drivers on a track. Motorsports makes everyone equal, no matter what appendages you use to drive.”

There is an underlying sense of humor in that statement that belies much of Torsten’s personality. There was a time while living in New York that he made appearances on the stand-up comedy circuit. His approach to life is so positive, so engaging, that simply listening to him talk about his experiences and ambitions brings a smile to the face of his audience. This is an immensely capable person who has no time for self-pity or recrimination. What he does find time for is making sure people with physical challenges understand and access the opportunities before them in competitive driving.

Like any foundation, Just Hands is filled with purpose and commitment and eager to get the support and encouragement that come with funding opportunities and avenues that open for the foundation to make driving accessible to a wider audience.

Gross’s first experience in a car speeding around a racetrack came at Lime Rock Park. His affinity for the track has been rewarded with the new ownership of LRP acknowledging the immense value of Torsten’s ambitions and recognizing the Foundation as a select charity for the 2022 racing season. As a result, Just Hands will have a presence and engagement at each of the track’s major event weekends – Trans Am Memorial Day Classic, IMSA Northeast Gran Prix, and Historics Weekend 40.

In addition to high profile presence during well-attended spectator events, Just Hands Racing Foundation is bringing their nascent programs to the track during days that feature HPDE – High Performance Driver Education – where participants bring their own cars to the track to learn performance driving with skilled instructors ... Track Tapas Days where participants experience both the autocross track and the 1.5 mile road racing course mentored by skilled instructors while utilizing the Just Hands racing car.

There’s a second BMW in work – an E92 M3 model that sports wider doors to make access even easier and over 400 horsepower under the hood to make it very fast. With the

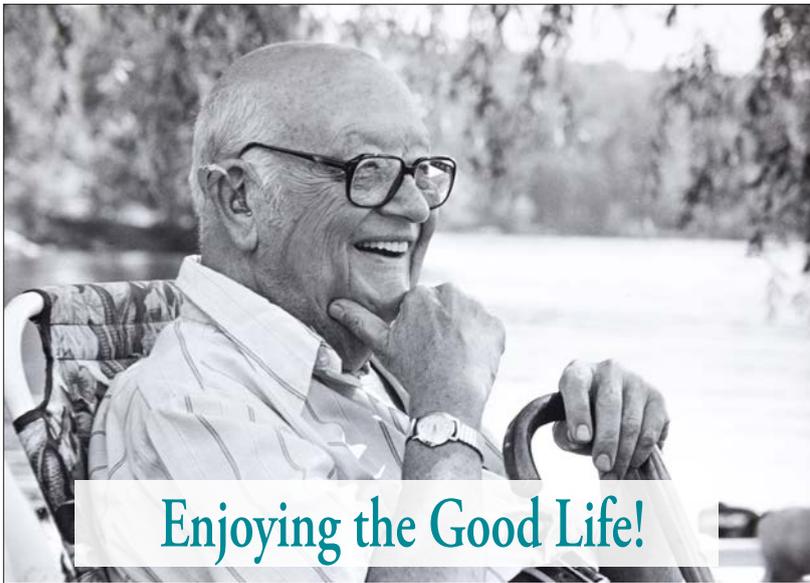
cooperation of several organizations that have signed on as sponsors, Just Hands Racing Foundation is poised to deliver a summer program that will be both expansive and informative. Along with Lime Rock Park highlighting the value and importance of Just Hands Racing Foundation and the various programs that will be offered at the track, Sharon Autosport has been instrumental in preparing the foundation cars with additional support provided by Mobility Innovations, HMS Sports, SCCA, Auto-Technic, Bimmerworld, and HPDE Junkie.

As Torsten Gross would say about the support he and the foundation have been given, “We’re fortunate to have people believe in what we’re doing. Without people believing in our mission, we wouldn’t exist.” Strong words from a person who is very clearly a true believer. •

More information about Just Hands Racing Foundation can be found on their website www.justhandsfoundation.org.



Above, top to bottom: Torsten Gross on the track with his BMW M3. Torsten Gross. All images courtesy of Torsten Gross.



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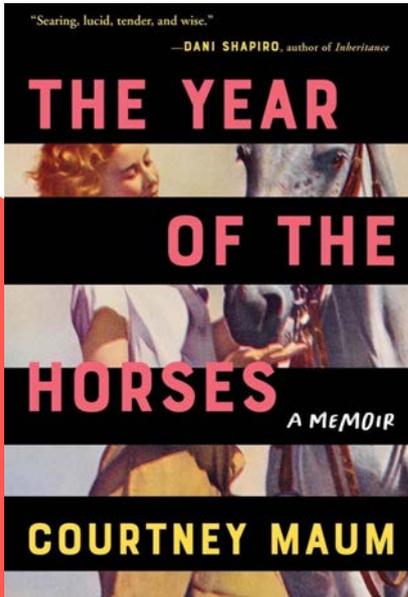
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Slow flowers: *This is a tale of two flowers*

By Pom Shillingford
info@mainstreetmag.com

One began her life in a garden bed in the Northwest corner of Connecticut, just yards from the vase where she would end up. She grew outside 24/7, sustained by sunlight and rain, buffeted and hardened by the wind and fluctuating temperatures. She had been planted in compost and nutrient-rich soil that allowed her to grow resilient enough to withstand the pressures of greedy insects and lurking disease. When in her own time she came to flower, she burst into beauty with a color, elegance and scent that was second to none.

The other flower began life in a greenhouse in Columbia. She grew in a hurry under artificial lights and at the mercy of a thermostat. She was looked after by a low-paid local worker wearing minimal PPE who regularly doused her and themselves in fertilizers, pesticides, and lastly preservatives. Whisked from her artificial nursery, she shot off on a days' long odyssey from cooler to airplane across the equator to cooler to refrigerated truck to cooler to the supermarket – along with her 1000s of identikit unscented poker-straight siblings.

So, which of these two ladies would you rather have gracing your table right now?

Fine, full confession:

I'm an obsessive gardener and seasonal cut-flower grower so I admit I'm biased with this. However, while this analogy is not always as black and white as portrayed above, it's not far off the mark. Flowers are meant to symbolize love, sympathy, joy, and celebration. They should not be the poster child for massive carbon footprints, with a side line in social injustice. Unfortunately, our obsession with out-of-season blooms is making them exactly that. The good news is that awareness of this ecological cost, a desire to return to flowers as they used to be grown back in our grandmothers' day and the impact of Covid on supply chains has led to the appearance of many local flower growers in our neighborhood and across the country.

How to grow/find seasonal sustainable flowers

It's easy – and understandable – to think that we can only have seasonal cut flowers during the spring and summer months. But nothing could be further than the truth. This year I set myself the challenge to have fresh blooming home-grown flowers inside EVERY week of the year and thanks to a little bit of pre-planning last fall, so far, through January, February, March, and April, it's been a cinch. (Gardener's secret – forcing bulbs through the winter is hands-down the easiest flower growing you will ever do. But we'll save that for a few months' time – no one wants to be revisiting the cold dark days of January now!). Come late spring and summer our local growers have an abundance of beauties to choose from that goes on almost to the end of the year. Plus, don't be afraid to include vegetables, perennials, shrubs cuttings, and even some gentle hedgerow foraging in your arrangements. Basically, absolutely no excuses for those flown-from-afar plastic-wrapped supermarket offerings!



Over the coming months I'll be sharing how to grow, cut, and arrange flowers that will not only bring joy to your homes and those you share them with but will do so at the minimal cost to the planet. Even if you decide to fast forward to the arranging stage and skip the growing yourself, consider this to be your guide as to what and where to find your flowers.

The golden rule

Whichever way you choose, you need to keep one thing in mind at all times: The #1 mantra to successfully growing and enjoying sustainable flowers is they need to be seasonal. Flowers are no different from fruits and vegetables. They ALWAYS grow, look, smell, last – and even taste – better in season.

Why? Because of a flower's DNA. We've all witnessed the power of Mother Nature when she's been tipped over the edge by her ungrateful offspring: hurricanes, droughts, floods, wildfires – she is mighty powerful. If you think she can be tyrant on the world stage, wait until you see the havoc she can wreck on your seedlings if you don't follow her lead! Every plant has an ingrained blueprint as to what conditions – soil,

light, temperature, moisture – and the timings of these that they require to first survive and then thrive. Give them those and you're laughing. Try and be clever and skip to the good part? You're likely a large-scale professional grower with years of experience, significant capital investment and a substantial carbon footprint or about to start crying over your seed trays!

So, focus on what's actually in season this WEEK, (yes, you're going to be looking at a six-week max flowering window for each flower – sorry to say peonies do not last all summer!) rather than what looked stunning on someone else's random who-knows-where-in-the-world Instagram post. That way you'll end up with far more beautiful flowers and be inflicting minimal cost to the environment. ●

To find local flower growers near you, visit www.floretflowers.com/directory/

Pom Shillingford is an obsessive gardener originally from England and now based in Salisbury, CT. She offers seasonal cut flowers through English Garden Grown. Find her on Instagram @english_garden_grown.





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Driven to lead:

Sue Serino brings a lifetime of experience to Hudson Valley neighbors

By Griffin Cooper
griffin@mainstreetmag.com

How do you measure fortitude? It is a unique human attribute in that we all possess some measure of it, yet many of us rarely utilize this internal strength to its fullest potential. Even more poignant is the distinct imbalance between those who must retain fortitude in order to simply move forward in their lives. Hollywood films often portray the lives of single, working women as something romantic, or at least conceptually captivating. Female characters' scripted lives often yield results that please the audience, but rarely tackle the endless minutiae that have helped build the centuries-old barriers for women in America.

A symbol of modest fortitude

But it is that kind of reality that makes the real lives of women like New York State Senator Sue Serino that much more endearing – and more important for those that find themselves constantly having to show fortitude in the face of life's obstacles. Serino began her path toward leadership through hard work at the age of 15 and has yet to slow down. Sue began as a waitress in a small, local restaurant, before working her way up to become a manager. After the birth of her son Anthony, she opened her first successful business as a childcare provider. Recognizing the value in home ownership, Sue took on the real estate industry during the mid-1990s. She began working in 1996 and opened her own office in the City of Poughkeepsie shortly thereafter. In 2003, she moved her office to Hyde Park to accommodate her growing team of 26 sales associates. It wasn't long before Serino would encounter the difficulties of being a small business owner in the Northeast. High taxes and bureaucracy drove Serino into local government, hoping to make a difference in her local communities.

Sue was elected to the Hyde Park Town Board in 2010 and then to the Dutchess County Legislature in 2011. As a county legislator, she became a vocal advocate for taxpayers and consistently resisted efforts to raise taxes and fees at the local level. Today, as a member of the New York State Senate, representing the 41st District, Serino has become a symbol for the modest fortitude that outstrips storytelling. The kind of courage that understands barriers to progress still exist, but know they are bound to be broken.

Talk about your time growing up in Dutchess County. Did your experiences inform your decision to run for election locally?

I was someone who never paid attention to politics. It was not until I bought a historic building in my local area for my real estate business and we wanted to renovate it and really fix it up, but I was met with continuous red tape at every turn. I knew that if I was experiencing that, other small business owners were too. I figured the only way to make a difference would be to get involved, so I ran for the Town Board to give other local small business owners a voice in the process.

When I ran for State Senate, I always say I came wearing my small business hat, which helps when we are negotiating and considering how policies will impact our communities, but also my mom hat. There was a time in my life when I was a single mom working two and three jobs, living paycheck-to-paycheck to make ends meet and I never forget what that feels like, and I make sure my colleagues in Albany are thinking about New Yorkers who go through these challenges whenever we are making decisions.

Continued on page 35 ...



Above: Senator Sue Serino. Photo courtesy of Sue Serino.



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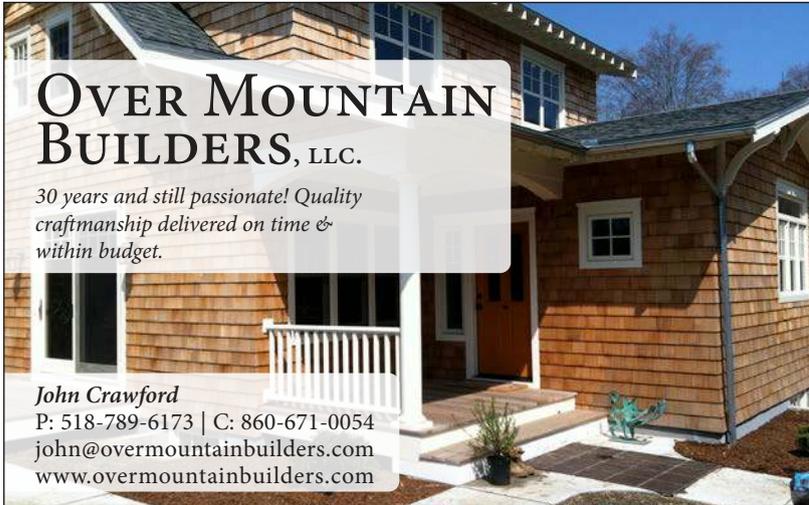


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I always say that Albany lives in a bubble, and I think what sets me apart is my determination not to get sucked into that bubble – to remain grounded in our community and to ensure that our neighbors are heard and their needs met.

You've worked in more than a few professions starting at a young age and including being an entrepreneur yourself. Do you believe that further engages you with small business owners in the Hudson Valley? How do you feel small businesses can overcome the current economic obstacles?

Absolutely. From a small in-home childcare business I started decades ago so that I could also care for my own son, to a deli in Poughkeepsie, an ice cream truck, and now my real estate brokerage, I have always had that drive to be involved in small business. Our community is home to so many unique small businesses, and they are really the lifeblood of the Hudson Valley and what makes this such a special place to live.

I've relied on my small business background quite a bit when negotiating legislation and budgets in Albany, but never was it more important than during the COVID-19 pandemic. I understood the challenges our businesses faced because I know how hard it is to keep the doors open in the best of times, let alone with new challenges brought on by a pandemic and state mandates. One thing about small business owners is we are resilient. We want to not only survive the pandemic, but thrive.

Last year, I launched a 'Small Business Bounce Back Tour' where I traveled to small businesses across the community talking with employers and employees about what they felt was needed to rebuild in the wake of the pandemic. I heard complaints across the board about staffing shortages, high taxes and costs, and government red tape. Our small busi-



nesses have gone above and beyond to keep our community safe and healthy during the pandemic, but now it's time for the state to step up and do what it can to provide much needed relief. That starts by reducing costs, preventing them from being hit with high unemployment insurance rates as a result of state-mandated shutdowns, cutting red tape, and keeping the pandemic policies in place that worked – like unique outdoor dining options and others. It is not easy, but we have overcome challenges in the past and together we will rebuild not only our community, but our state.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, how can leaders help to rebuild communities by promoting innovation?

This has to be one of our top priorities. The pandemic exposed so many gaps in our economy, from supply chain issues, to healthcare challenges, elder care and childcare challenges, and so many more. New York should be a leader in incentivizing innovation, cutting red tape to allow for creative growth and rethinking the future of our communities. Small businesses know how to innovate, how to be flexible and how to adapt to the needs of the day. Now is the time for the state to step back and make it as efficient as possible for businesses, entrepreneurs, and students moving into various industries to innovate.

It is becoming increasingly difficult for those at both ends of the age spectrum to afford to live in the greater Hudson Valley. Are there ways to ease the financial burdens on young homeowners, those in search of their first home and seniors hoping to live comfortably?

As a mom, and as a “grandma wannabe,” my top priority is making our community a place where young people can afford to start their lives and our seniors can afford to stay and enjoy their golden years in the homes they know and love. We have to start by incentivizing the development of affordable housing, renewing first time homebuyer programs that have proven incredibly successful in the past in helping young people get into their first homes, and we have to hold the line on property taxes across the board, but especially for our seniors who live on a fixed income.

It is also important that we bolster services that empower our seniors to stay safely in their homes, by investing in home care staff, home delivered meal programs, transportation options and more.

For our young people, we also have to ensure that the jobs they are looking for are available here in our

Continued on next page ...

Above: Sue speaking at the New York State Capitol. Photo courtesy of Sue Serino.

community. We are home to fantastic higher education institutions, and skilled trades programs, but too often we lose these students after they complete their studies. We need to bolster partnerships between local businesses and education programs to help incentivize the next generation to plant their roots here in our community.

You've taken up the mantle of combating Lyme disease in our area. How are you working on expanding outreach, education and prevention for the public?

I'm always talking ticks! Almost everyone in the Hudson Valley knows someone who has had Lyme or tick-borne diseases. What once was a Hudson Valley and Long Island-centric problem is making its way across the state and the number of confirmed cases of Lyme Disease are on the rise. That is why it is critically important to include funding in the state budget to help combat its spread and why I push for that every single year.

In addition, I have successfully passed legislation that raises awareness among school-aged children by making educational materials available to New York's elementary schools. Each year, I host an educational event for the community, as well as a Lyme Disease Awareness event at

the Capitol, and I continuously work with my Lyme Disease Advisory Board to develop unique ways to help spread awareness to keep New Yorkers tick-free. Awareness is the key to prevention, and with New Yorkers taking to our parks and trails in record numbers, it is critically important that we continue to do whatever we can to help residents understand the steps they can take to prevent a run in with ticks.

Healthcare is a broad issue affecting people of varying ages, is it possible to make access to health care easier without increasing expenses?

Absolutely it is. Driving down healthcare costs must be a top priority, as it is an issue we hear about from far too many New Yorkers. We can start by cutting New York's taxes and fees that drive up the cost of healthcare across the board, as well as the administrative waste. We also need to crack down on fraud and abuse that costs taxpayers billions of dollars each year. No one should have to make the decision between paying for something they need and seeking healthcare.

New York's red tape and over taxation impacts this area tremendously and needs to be scaled back so that New Yorkers can access high quality,

affordable care whenever they need it.

What do you see for the future of the Hudson Valley? Can bipartisanship still exist in today's political climate?

I have never asked anyone their party affiliation. As a representative, for me, it's always about the people we serve, not about the "R" or the "D."

Bipartisanship is essential to democracy and we have to start by bringing back kindness and respect. That may sound very basic, but it is needed in order to work productively and move our community and our state forward, we have to start there. While we may not always agree on policy, I have fantastic relationships with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and as a result, we have made a real difference for our communities.

The Hudson Valley has a bright future ahead if we set politics aside and continue to work together to create affordability and opportunity here in our area. That is what I am committed to doing, and I know that together we can make New York a place people want to live again, instead of one they want to leave. •

To learn more about Sue Serino, please visit www.nysenate.gov/senators/sue-serino. Sue's Albany office is located at 188 State Street, Legislative Office Building, Room 613, Albany, NY 12247. You can call Sue's Albany office at (518) 455-2945 or email serino@nysenate.gov.



Above: Sue chatting with a Veteran at Wappingers Falls Town Hall. Below, left: Sue greeting employees at the ShopRite of La-Grangeville. Photos courtesy of Sue Serino.





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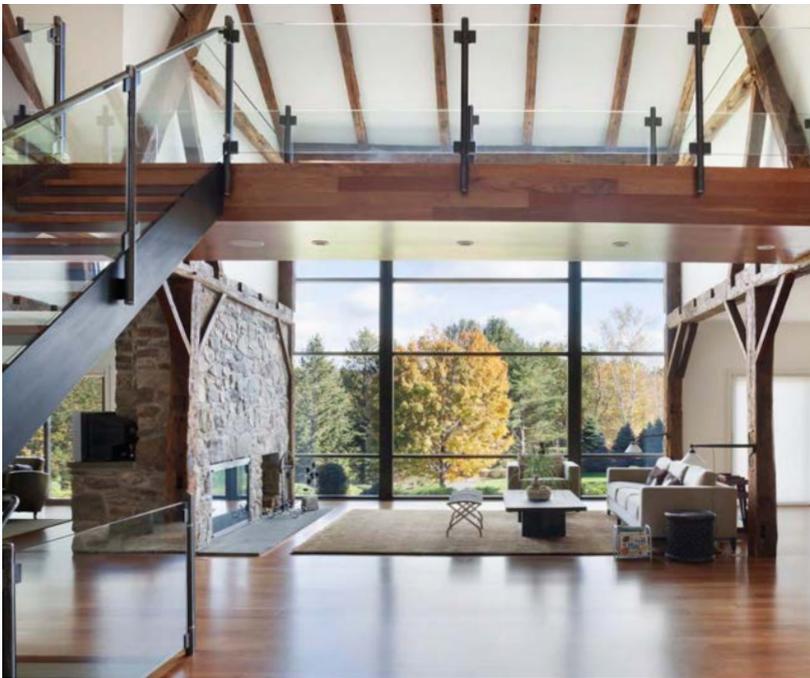
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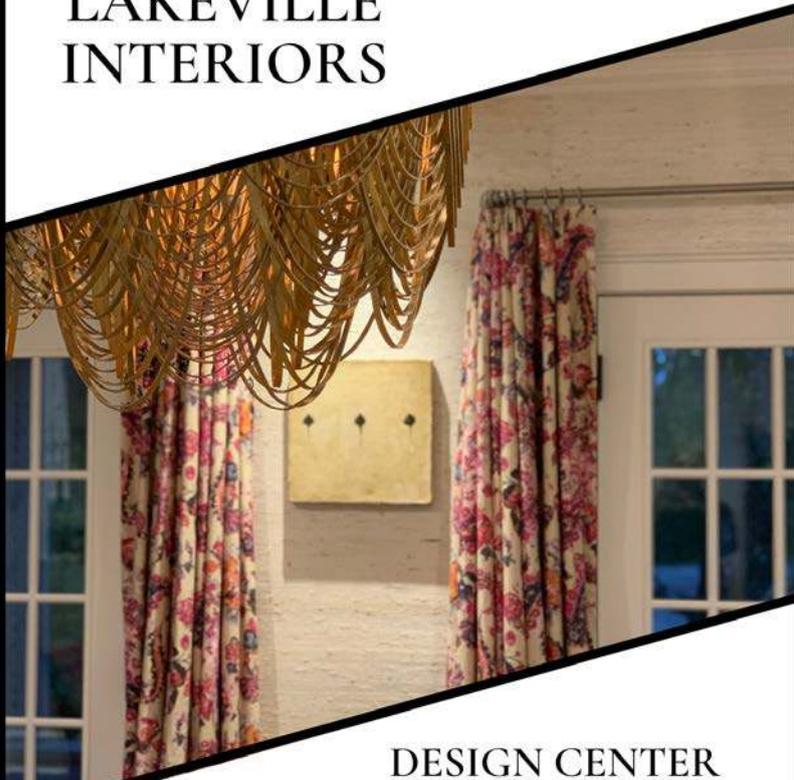
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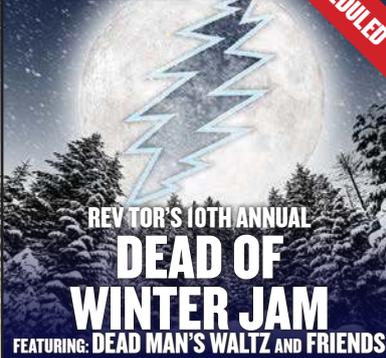
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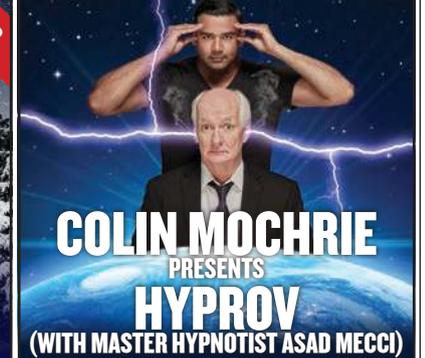
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Walk this way

The Walkway Over the Hudson, a former railroad, was re-envisioned into a park that spans the Hudson River

By Regina Molaro
info@mainstreetmag.com

Tracing history back to the earliest civilizations, people always found ways of traveling from one point to another. Whether it was by walking, traveling by horseback, or via a car, boat, train, or plane, people have always been on the move.

In the same way that former lighthouses have been re-envisioned (such as the Saugerties Lighthouse, which was built in the 1830s and now serves as an area attraction complete with a bed and breakfast experience), some bridges have evolved and been updated to cater to the needs of today's people and communities.

Each year, many people flock to Poughkeepsie's Walkway Over the Hudson to take in the sights as they retrace history while walking, cycling, or running across this area attraction, which has a rich history.

"The Walkway Over the Hudson has become a key attraction, bringing people from all over the world to the Hudson Valley. Not only do they get breathtaking views, but they also get to experience the shops, restaurants, and neighborhoods on both sides of the Walkway," says Maria DiSalvo, marketing and communications manager, The Walkway Over the Hudson.

A bridge is born

The bridge's history dates back to 1889 when the Poughkeepsie Highland railroad bridge was initially erected to transport raw materials to industrial centers. At the time of its opening, it was the longest bridge in the world.



Beyond offering freight train service, the bridge operated passenger trains that connected Boston, New York, Harrisburg, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington. Trolley cars, which were referred to as "rapid transit," were modified to run on both the trolley and railroad tracks. These whisked tourists, students, and shoppers from New Paltz to the now defunct Luckey Platt & Company Department store in Poughkeepsie.

Between 1921 and 1930, special West Point Football trains were used to service the community of fans who went to witness the games. Other types of trains were also in use – from circus trains to milk trains and trains that were used to transport hogs and cattle. At its peak, as many as 3,500 rail cars crossed the bridge daily.

Other highlights from the railroad's history occurred during World War II when the bridge went dark. It was painted black, so that it would be less visible and vulnerable to attack.

Finally, in 1974, a fire destroyed the tracks. Historians believe that the fire was probably started by a spark from a train's brakes. This milestone marked a shift in the railroad's history and transformation.

A new chapter

In 1993, Fred Schaeffer – a lawyer in the Poughkeepsie area visited the bridge. He had a mission to preserve the site and soon began fundraising efforts. From 2004 to 2010, Schaeffer served as Chairman of a new organization called Walkway Over the Hudson.

Thanks to his hard work and vision, and the efforts of the Dyson Foundation – which strives to improve people's lives through grant funding – and countless other donors in New York State, the site was revitalized and re-envisioned. In October 2009, the area was rebuilt and re-opened as Walkway Over the Hudson State Historic Park. It welcomes more than 600,000 visitors annually from



all over the globe.

Soaring 212 feet above the Hudson River, this 1.28-mile linear park boasts sweeping scenic views looking north to the Catskills and south to the Hudson Highlands. The Walkway spans the river between the town of Lloyd in Ulster County and Poughkeepsie in Dutchess County. It is regarded as the "World's Longest Elevated Pedestrian Bridge."

360° of Discovery

Known as "The Great Connector," the Walkway Over the Hudson is now renowned for "connecting people, places, and generations." It offers visitors a "walkway experience," which delivers "360° of Discovery." From the walkway, spectators are invited to take in stunning vistas of the Hudson River. The experience is ideal at this time of year when the trees are in bloom and temperatures are mild.

The Walkway and surrounding areas are easy to navigate via an interactive map, which helps visitors

All images with this article depicting various times and scenes at the Walkway. Images courtesy of The Walkway Over the Hudson.

Continued on next page ...

explore the Greater Walkway Experience Discovery Zones and other regional attractions on either side of the Walkway. Nine “Discovery Zones” beg for exploration by foot or bike. The term “Discovery Zones” relates to a project that called for Poughkeepsie and Highland to be divided up into sections. Each was referred to as a “Discovery Zone” and assigned a color in the Greater Walkway Experience. Helpful signage guides visitors as they traverse the region by foot or bike.

Both urban and rural, the Zones offer curated choices on both sides of the river. Each Zone is ideal for a short visit. The Zones span a variety of interesting options – from wild parks to waterfronts, historic urban districts, and a small hamlet.

The Walkway is part of the Hudson Valley Rail Trail Network, which offers a picturesque and family-friendly adventure. The Hudson Valley Rail Trail stretches 7.1 miles through hardwood forests, over Black Creek, and under two spectacular stone-arch bridges.

Connecting the towns of New Paltz, Lloyd, and Highland, the rail-trail follows the former right-of-way of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad. Two trailside cabooses, one dating back to 1915 and the other to 1926, offer glimpses into the corridor’s railroading past.



Attractions

In 2016, the Walkway was inducted into the Rails-to-Trails Conservatory’s Rail Trail Hall of Fame. A wide, flat, and smooth concrete ground surface makes the area accessible to all. The Walkway boasts a 21-story, ADA handicapped-accessible glass-enclosed elevator, which connects the waterfront and Poughkeepsie Train Station to the Walkway. To assist seniors, veterans, people with mobility challenges, and those with a fear of heights, the Friends of the Walkway’s all-electric 11-passenger, wheelchair accessible tram is in service during select hours.

For adventurers, a Hudson Valley Bike Share program is offered via the Dutchess Welcome Center in Poughkeepsie. Renting a bike is simple via the MOVATIC App. Due to sanitary reasons, bike helmets cannot be rented. Please bring your own helmet.

A mobile web tour is also available to visitors. Signage and information on historic photos are written in English, Spanish, Italian, and Mandarin Chinese. Group tours are also available by reservation. Indoor restrooms are located inside the Welcome Centers on both approaches. Pets are welcome but must be on a leash.

The Walkway is operated and owned by NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and the NYS Bridge Authority. Open year-round (weather-permitting), the Walkway is open daily from 7am until sunset. Please check the website for updated information and details about closings.

Festivities

The Walkway offers a variety of programs, events, and tours to locals and tourists. On May 8, join the gang on the Walkway as they commemorate the 48th anniversary of the fire on the Poughkeepsie Highland Railroad Bridge. *The Great Connector Series: Fire on the Bridge* will kick off at 3 pm.

Other upcoming events include Walkway At Night, which will be held on May 13 from 8:30pm to 10pm and May 27 from 8:45pm to 10:30pm. Spend a moonlit evening on the Walkway while enjoying scenic, twilight views of the Hudson



River Valley.

Guests have an opportunity to view the night sky with telescopes provided by the Mid-Hudson Astronomical Association (weather permitting). Furry friends are welcome to join in the fun as long as they are on a 4-foot non-retractable leash with a light up collar. Glow sticks will be on hand while supplies last. The event is free to Walkway members; donations are encouraged for non-members. “If you haven’t visited the Walkway after dark, you must come to one of our Walkway at Night events. With the recent installation of over 450 solar lights and our guests from the Mid-Hudson Astronomical Association, it is truly a unique experience,” says DiSalvo.

Mayfest

The Mayfest Essential Farmers and Makers Market will be held the weekend of May 21 and 22, from 12 to 5pm. It brings a curated selection of the Hudson Valley’s finest producers, including farms, distilleries, breweries, wineries, restaurants, artists, artisans, and more, to the Hudson Valley Rail Trail and west approach to Walkway Over the Hudson State Historic Park. More than 150 vendors will be on hand to exhibit their wares for tasting or purchase, allowing participants to support several local agribusinesses in one convenient destination.

Beyond the art installations, a special area will be designated for children’s activities. All proceeds benefit the Friends of the Walkway – a non-profit organization that supports Walkway Over the Hudson State Historic Park – and Hudson Valley Rail Trail, which have partnered to present this market.

“At the upcoming Mayfest Essential Farmers and Makers Market, we give visitors access to various products that make the Hudson Valley so special. With this event, we make both locals and travelers aware of the incredible small businesses that this area has to offer,” says DiSalvo.

General admission (excluding the tasting area) is complimentary. Tasting tickets are available for the sampling area (\$25 per wristband; it includes full access to wine, beer, spirits, and cider samples from more than 20 area purveyors. Must be 21 and over to purchase tickets). Walkway members, veterans, active-duty military, and senior citizens (65+) receive discounted admission.

Support

All programming is made possible through membership and donations. Through engaged stewardship, Friends of the Walkway enhances the Walkway experience, supports capital improvements, and delivers innovative programs that attract visitors and contribute to the vitality of the Hudson Valley. •

Dutchess Welcome Center on the East Approach. The Walkway (845) 454-9649, walkway.org. Highland entrance: 87 Haviland Rd., Highland, NY. Poughkeepsie entrance: 61 Parker Ave., Poughkeepsie, NY. Elevator entrance: Upper Landing Park, 83 N. Water St., Poughkeepsie, NY.

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Moving heaven: *Karl on Wheels, Inc.*

By Mary B. O'Neill, PhD.,
mary@mainstreetmoxie.press

Moving is stressful. Upheaval, resurfacing of possessions that trigger memories, deciding what to keep, toss, and donate, guesstimating where the furniture will fit, and finding a mover all contribute to the angst. Even local moves in the same town stir up conflicting emotions and create drama. A recent local move brought all these issues and feelings to the fore for my family and me and opened up overstuffed emotional baggage along with the boxes.

The stress of moving

The Life Change Index, developed by Dr. Thomas Holmes and Dr. Richard Rahe, gauges the stress brought on by life events, both positive and negative. This stress is related to the strength of feelings generated by the event, how unexpected it is, and what the event symbolizes in our lives. The index links the total amount of accumulated stress with the probability of developing illness if this stress level is sustained for three to six months.

A change in residence has an index of 20. To put that in perspective, the death of a spouse is a 100, divorce is a 73, and a child leaving home is a 29. In a recent survey conducted by One-Poll for North American Van Lines, 64% of the 1,000 surveyed within three years of their move stated that

moving was one of the most stressful events in their lives. This survey's sample size and sponsor might have something to do with the rankings. However, speaking from my anecdotal experience, having disassembled the contents of a family home and moving it elsewhere was pretty darn fraught.

How can a person reduce the stress of a move? For one thing, hire a mover. While my husband was convinced we could do it on our own, I covertly solicited bids for the larger pieces. As the move loomed closer, my superior logic won out, and we booked in with Karl on Wheels, based in Cornwall Bridge, CT, a referral from our real estate broker, Elyse Harney Morris.

Whether it was his competitive price or deep soothing voice assuring me that all would be okay that sealed the deal, I can't say for sure. We signed the contract and put our heads back down to sort through three children's elementary and middle school pottery, a wedding dress, accumulated office supplies, and other detritus of life.

Panic set in days before moving the more oversized items after I realized I had miscounted a few rugs, a bed, a picnic table, and a ping pong table. Another clandestine text to Karl asking what would happen if I had more than I thought. He responded, "We're there until we get it done." In an instant, Karl, the move whisperer, was able to return my BP to 110/60.

Who is Karl?

Karl Saliter is the Karl of Karl on Wheels. A Sharon, CT, native and former juggler of balls and other small items and a one-person show, he now performs juggling of a different sort – booking, managing, and executing local moves in a 250-mile radius with his team of six – all from his home office in a former



church in West Cornwall.

For over 30 years, Karl was a vaudeville performer. Then one day, at the age of 53, he had his epiphany moment. He was done with life in the spotlight. Remembering he had no discernible skills other than keeping things in the air simultaneously (the ultimate in multi-tasking), he fell back on his work as a college student.

"When I was studying at Boston University, I worked as a mover for Marakesh Movers in Cambridge. This was where I first noticed the satisfaction in providing this service." Karl feels fortunate, in a virtual world less dependent on bodily experiences to, as he puts it, "be immersed in this lifting and carrying, the highway time, and the very mundane nature of working simply with my body. It offers something hard to put your finger on."

Three years ago, Karl bought a van, then another, and another. He now has five trucks, and COVID

Above: The entire Karl On Wheels team is here to help with all of your moving needs with their fleet and staff. Photo courtesy of Karl on Wheels. Below, left: Karl Saliter. Photo by Sarah Blodgett.



Continued on next page ...

relocations have fueled the company's growth. He performs local moves and piece work and is learning about the administrative, scheduling, and logistic side of the moving process. Yet, sometimes like a cowboy yearns for the open prairie, Karl misses life on the truck. "Sometimes I feel wildly alive when pushing and twisting a sleeper sofa through some narrow doorway. It's hard to explain." As a former juggler, this embodied work appeals to him deeply.

Dr. Karl, Therapist on Wheels

Karl, a deeply compassionate soul, sees the work of himself and his team as itinerant therapists. Moving is heavy – literally and figuratively. The Karl on Wheels movers try to bring lightheartedness to the process yet be serious about getting the work done. "We want to be of service. Moving is intensely stressful. Helping the customer smooth the transition between the old and the new is part of our job."

Karl reflects that "we're moving someone's memories, iconic objects of financial and sentimental value. We're inserting ourselves in an important chapter in a story that we may have no idea about." And so they walk softly and carry a big box.

That echoes my experience. Amidst our sea of Ikea was a buffet we bought when my husband and I married, Karl's team moved it out, in, and

up with kid gloves. As Karl sees it, "Bringing a heavy dresser up a tight, winding staircase isn't for everyone, but when you manage to do that and keep the furniture pristine, and the walls unscuffed, the sense of accomplishment buoys you. People tend to be so appreciative, which goes a long way."

His movers also opined on furniture positioning, moving it a little to the left and the right until it was just so. They also instinctively knew to agree with me over my husband over the placement of objects. This, to me, is the hallmark of a true professional.

Stranger things

Karl will move everything from sculpture and art, Pelotons, grand pianos, and anything else. He moves piece work and the entire home. No job is too small or too big. Unless we're talking about that time he was asked to move a pig to slaughter. That was a rare job he turned down.

Karl's Moving Tips

When the time comes to move, Karl recommends the following:

- BIY – box it yourself. This saves time and money on moving day.
- Label the contents of each box and the room they're destined for.
- He estimates we use about 30% of what we own. The remaining 70% are items we don't use and might not care so much about. Pack these items

early because those are the things you may not consider when planning the move.

- Purge, purge, and purge some more. The famous last words of "What if I need it someday?" garners a Buddhist response from Karl to live in the present. If you don't use it now, don't hang onto it.

- Donate what you don't need so that someone else can give it a second life.

Post a person at the front door of the new home to direct the traffic of boxes and furniture.



Above: The Karl On Wheels team. Below, left: They move more than just boxes and furniture, here two Karl On Wheels team members can be seen moving a piece of art. Images courtesy of Karl On Wheels.

- Ask your moving company if they're registered with DOT, maintain insurance, including Motor Carrier insurance, are bonded, and if the workers are insured.

To these tips, I will add my own:

- Force your adulting children to come home to purge and pack their own possessions.
- Give your husband a wide berth as he empties the garage and sorts through assorted screws – one at a time.
- Pack the Peloton last and set it up first so you can pedal your stress away.
- Meditate before the arrival of the moving truck, pray for patience, and keep some good chocolate on hand to soothe frayed nerves throughout the day.
- Be ruthless in the purging process – except for the kids' pottery art projects. Those are keepers!
- Remember that as the possessions seem to gush from nowhere like blood from a deep wound, there is an end – and a new beginning.
- Show gratitude to your movers. I was grateful for mine. They helped create a seamless transition from old to new and helped me maintain a sense of humor.

I'll end where I started. Moving is stressful. Proper planning and acceptance of this new chapter will help alleviate the stress. So will Karl on Wheels. ●

If you are moving, you can email Karl at karl@karlonwheels.com or visit his website at www.karlonwheels.com.





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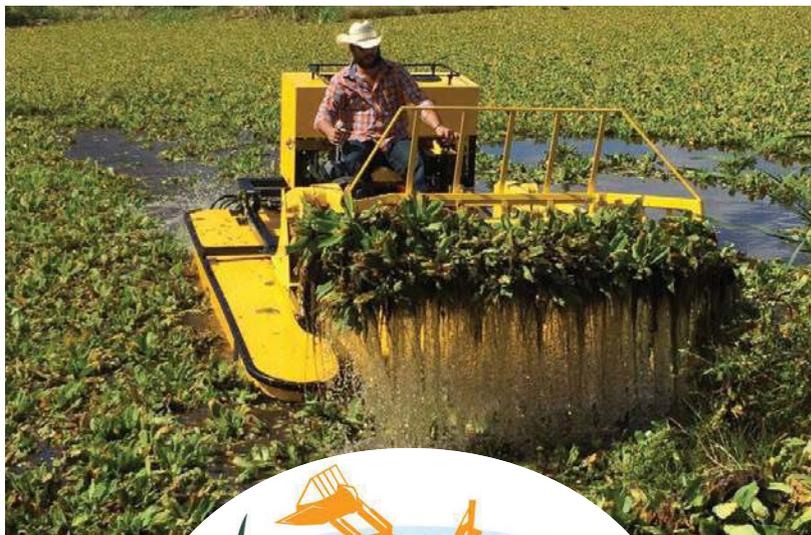
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THE HEART OF CYCLING RETURNS *to Bash Bish Falls*

By Griffin Cooper
griffin@mainstreetmag.com

The notion of combining tradition with passion is baked into the spirit of the Hudson Valley. The open air, along with the history of our area have made it one of the most attractive destinations in the state. When folks come, they cannot help but linger, and when they linger for long enough, they have a habit of staying.

The Hudson Valley and the Berkshires offer something bordering on magic, an opportunity to pursue life's passions among the rolling hills and lush pastures in an honest, determined way. When combined with natural ambition, pursuit in our area brings new meaning to the term "down-home." So this beloved alchemy was for cycling enthusiasts Jordan Hutton, Chris Antonelli, and Gabriele Caroti when chance meetings turned to shared passions and eventually, the lure of hopeful ambition followed. With their hearts alive with the possibility of pursuing a small cycling business venture in the Hudson Valley, the torch bearer for local bike repair was the one to add the last ingredient to the trio's small business hope.

Carrying the torch

For decades Grant Hermans, and his congenial bike shop Bash Bish Bicycle have sat nestled in the heart of Copake Falls, NY, tucked within the broad shoulders of the Berkshire Foothills and the loving embrace of local cyclers. The visage of Grant tuning bikes in his small workshop had become part of the vast mural of life in the area and a lasting memory for those that, despite their travels, recognize the Hudson Valley as home. It couldn't be more apropos then, that the torch bearer for local bike repair be the one to add the last ingredient to the trios small business hope. Now,

combined with the tradition of Grant Herman's former Bash Bish Bicycle, Jordan, Chris, and Gabriele have formed a kindred bond around their love of cycling. They took a moment to sit down with me and describe how they met, their passion for the area and its relationship to cycling and how they will continue to carry the torch of the newly named Bash Bish Bicycles.

What prompted your pursuit of opening a bike shop? What brought you to the Hudson Valley?

JH: I was raised in Wingdale, NY, and have been riding around the area for a long time. Opening a bike shop of my own was a slow build of working on bikes in my spare time and continuing to pursue deeper knowledge in the sport and culture of cycling. That passion and some serious serendipity lead to me meeting my business partners Chris and Gabriele and we were presented with an opportunity we couldn't refuse in taking over Bash Bish Bicycles.

CA: It's long been a dream of mine to operate a bike shop. I've been working in bike shops off and on since I was a teenager. I moved to Milerton from Brooklyn a couple years ago. I'd been visiting friends and riding bikes in the area and just fell in love with it. The Harlem Valley Rail Trail (HVRT) was a huge draw for me as it provides great access to nature and a safe place for my two daughters to learn to ride bikes.

GC: I'll second what both Jordan and Chris said. The serendipity of meeting Jordan first, and the possibility of continuing the tradition of Grant's beloved business was a big part of it for me. The area is just so beautiful, stunning even. Although my family and I are over in Sharon, CT, the whole landscape of the Hudson Valley, Harlem Valley, the foothills of the Berkshires, and of course the Berkshires themselves, is all breathtaking and incredible for cycling.



Above: Jordan Hutton (left) and Chris Antonelli (right) of Bash Bish Bicycle. All photos courtesy of Chris Antonelli.

How did you all come together and decide to pursue a cycling business?

JH: As mentioned above, the stars seriously aligned for all of us to meet. Chris and I met in Wassaic on the Rail Trail and immediately hit it off due to our mutual love of 'country bikes' as Grant Petersen of Rivendell Bicycles has termed a certain style of bicycle. Chris and I began talking about how we could bring that upright body position, and a utilitarian, sporty, comfortable and classically beautiful bike to riders in the area. At the same time, I was working on Gabriele's bike in my home bike shop aka my apartment's kitchen. Gabriele texted me one day out of the blue seeing if I had any interest in opening a bike shop. I was elated and told her to meet me at McEnroe's so I could introduce her to Chris as we had been discussing this venture for the past six months. At the meeting we had really great synergy and hit it off, and one thing led to another and we were able to secure our deal with Grant Hermans, the founder of Bash Bish Bicycle and the torch was handed to us.

CA: We'd been talking about it for a while because the area doesn't have many bike shops and we didn't see

the kind of bikes we wanted available anywhere. We even toured a few other locations as potential shops, but decided to hold off until the right place came along. When we heard Grant was retiring, it felt like the stars were aligning and we jumped at the opportunity to take up the mantle. The location is perfect: right on the Rail Trail and at the entrance to Taconic State Park. Especially now that the trail is open all the way from Wassaic to Copake, it felt like the right time to get into the business.

GC: Yes, precisely. And for me, in addition, a lot of it has also been my life and professional priorities changing in the course of 2020 during COVID and in the wake of the lockdown. I work in the film industry, and as you know that was heavily impacted – and still is – due to the virus. My business specifically has been heavily affected. With that said, my love of bikes was too, but in the opposite direction: it increased by big margins! That, coupled with my

Continued on next page ...

family spending all of the lockdown in Sharon (from Brooklyn), made bike riding a huge priority and activity for us. We went – and still go – on a lot of bike rides together. I myself bought two more bikes, ordered numerous parts and frames on eBay, was obsessively watching cycling videos and movies, and my constant tinkering on all our bikes exponentially grew. This all came to a head when one day I was dropping off a bike with Grant, asked him how business had been and his answer was, “I had my best year ever, but it’ll be my last as I’m retiring. Do you know anyone that wants to buy a bike shop?” And I replied, “Yes! I do!” I then immediately texted Jordan – from the parking lot of the shop!

Has cycling been a long-time hobby? What is it about our area that is so conducive to those who enjoy biking?

JH: Cycling has been a long time hobby of mine and has evolved into a burning passion. From growing up riding in Millerton with all of my friends as newly independent adolescents, to eventually getting my first serious adult bike, a Kona mountain bike at 13 years-old which opened many doors. Eventually I got my first serious road bike at 20 years of age, and at 29 years-old I went to Yamaguchi Frame building school in Rifle,

Colorado to build a custom frame, fork, and stem for myself. Cycling has been a long and continuous thread in my life.

This area is so beautiful and is such an inspiring and relaxing location to ride bicycles. There are great towns to stop and take breaks in and such a marvelous network of backroads if you feel like dipping off the HVRT. Once you start riding around here, you will want to keep doing it more and more.

CA: Like so many American kids, I grew up in car-dependant sprawling suburbs. My first bike was such a pivotal moment for me: all of a sudden, I could explore parts of my neighborhood and spend time with friends on my own terms. Similarly, in college, I got a bike and it totally opened up the city to me. The sense of freedom a bike gives you never goes away. Whether it’s cruising down the Rail Trail, up and down mountains or sailing past traffic in the city, nothing beats that feeling!

The Hudson Valley has a great mix of riding. Obviously the HVRT is an amazing amenity and is a fantastic place for riders of all ages and abilities. We’ve also got miles and miles of scenic roads that wind up and down hills that are the envy of racers across the country without any heavy traffic. I’d love to see the development of some

mountain bike trails in the area as well.

GC: Yes, like Jordan and Chris, I adore cycling. I remember the day my father took off my training wheels on my little red Takara and gave me a big push. I sped down the driveway and didn’t look back; it was life-changing! Since then I’ve ridden my whole life, and



like Chris, got a new bike in college and explored everything around me on it in coastal Maine.

And I love riding this whole area. It’s fantastic. There are trails, dirt roads, paved crests with stunning views, and also challenging, steep climbs. And the Rail Trail is of course fantastic; when it opens up north of Millerton towards Copake Falls, it’s breathtaking, especially on a summer morning surrounded by wildflowers!

What are your plans for the future of Bash Bish Bicycle? What is the character of the store that you envision?

JH: As Chris mentioned, we really want to maintain what Grant Hermans achieved with Bash Bish Bicycle. We also want to be a beacon in the local cycling community and at large. Simply put, our aim is to get people on bikes that they feel comfortable on and proud of, thus inspiring them to ride around the fabulous area we live in. We hope to put more locals on bikes more often, but also attract passionate cyclists from out of town to come and experience all the area has to offer.

CA: We’re really lucky to be able to build on the legacy that Grant built at Bash Bish. It’s been a fixture in our community for more than two decades and we want to honor that by centering the local community and building those same kinds of relationships. We’re also big fans of the outdoors and would love to make

Bash Bish Bicycles a regional hub for cyclo-touring and bikepacking (self-supported camping on bikes). We’d like to be able to offer something for everyone from reasonably-priced hybrids for cruising up the trail, to high-end carbon fiber machines, to traditional handmade touring bikes for folks who want to take full advantage of our beautiful surroundings.

GC: I couldn’t have said it better. Bash Bish Bicycles will continue and we’ll expand upon Grant’s vision. It will be (and I hate using this term, but it is accurate!) a curated shop. We have products that we all love and stand behind, from vintage steel frames and full bikes, to our preferred patch kits, bells, fenders, and cycling caps. (And we already have our own line of summer gloves, thanks to Jordan!) And not to shill too much, but I’d like to add that we will carry a full line of children’s bikes! Chris, our resident kids’ bike expert, secured a relationship with Cleary, a fantastic brand we adore. Grant told us that he watched all the kids in the area grow up and got them their first bikes and we’d love to continue that tradition! •

To learn more about Bash Bish Bicycle, check them out on Facebook or visit them at 247 NY-344, Copake Falls, NY. You can also call them at (518) 329-4962.



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ALL ABOARD

You can journey back into Kingston's past by hopping aboard the Catskill Mountain Railroad

By Regina Molaro
info@mainstreetmag.com

Kingston, NY, is renowned for many things. Most noteworthy, it served as New York's first capital in 1777. After the Battles of Saratoga, the riverside city was burned by the British on October 16, 1777. In the 19th century, Kingston became an important transport hub after the discovery of natural cement in the region. The picturesque town is also known for its railroad and canal connections.

Kingston is also home to the Catskills Mountain Railroad (CMRR), which has a long and varied history in the region. CMRR currently leases 4.5 miles of track in Kingston on the former New York Central Railroad Catskill Mountain branch, which ran from Kingston to Highmount. Enticing events are offered year-round.

When you ride the rails or attend a themed event, you're supporting the Catskill Mountain Railroad – a for-profit organization dedicated to preserving the railroad corridor for all-season recreational use. Despite its for-profit status, CMRR operates similarly to a non-profit organization in that it reinvests all operating surpluses back into the railroad.

Let's talk history

It all began when shipping magnate Thomas Cornell envisioned a railroad connecting the Great Lakes with the

Hudson River. His plan involved transporting passengers and cargo year-round and opening the interior of New York State. Cornell brought his dream to fruition, thanks to the wealth he created by operating a fleet of steamboats along the Hudson River.

The railroad traces its roots back to the original Rondout & Oswego Railroad. Construction began in 1868. In 1869, the railroad was extended to reach Olive Branch, which is currently the town of Shokan. By 1872, the rails stretched all the way to Phoenicia. In 1871, the railroad extended into Arkville and by 1872, it journeyed all the way to Roxbury.

In 1875, the Ulster & Delaware Railroad took over and set its sights on further expansion. In 1881, a narrow-gauge branch was built between Phoenicia and Hunter. The connecting Kaaterskill Railway was acquired in 1892, extending the line all the way to Tannersville.

In 1895, the eastern terminal of the railroad was extended from Rondout to Kingston Point. This enabled a direct connection with the boats that served New York and Albany along the Hudson River. The railroad completed construction to its western terminal and finally reached Oneonta and a connection with the Delaware & Hudson Railway in 1900.

Beyond transporting freight, the trains whisked tourists to and from the scenic Catskills region. As one of the first all-weather routes into the Catskills, the trains brought thousands of vacationers to the grandiose hotels and boarding houses that dotted the region. The rail was also used to deliver fresh dairy products from local farms into Manhattan. Bluestone for the sidewalks of New York was also quarried here.

Between 1908 and 1912, the railroad played a key role in carrying supplies for the construction of the Ashokan Reservoir – part of the system of reservoirs that feed New York City. By



All images in this article courtesy of Catskill Mountain Railroad.

1913, more than 676,000 passengers rode the rails to the Catskills.

The end of independence

Another chapter began when the New York Central Railroad began looking to consolidate several of its leased railroads in the Midwest. Regulatory authorities prevented this from happening.

The effects of the Great Depression coupled with competition from truck transport as roads improved, created challenging times for the Ulster & Delaware Railroad. The regulatory authority proposed that if New York Central acquired the Ulster & Delaware Railroad, it would be permitted to acquire the Midwestern properties as well.

Although the Ulster & Delaware didn't necessarily fit in with New York Central's overall plan, it agreed that this was a small price to pay to solidify its position in the Midwest. A milestone was reached in 1932 when the Ulster & Delaware was purchased. The new venture was named the Catskill Mountain Branch.

A slew of changes followed. New York Central immediately downgraded the Catskill Mountain Branch, reducing speeds on the main line

from 60 to 30 mph. The branches to Hunter and Kaaterskill also slowed down until they were finally dismantled in 1940.

The railroad yearned to eliminate all passenger trains, but that plan was temporarily scrapped as World War II raged on. By 1946, service was reduced to one round trip daily. In 1954, the US Postal Service withdrew its mail contract and New York Central was granted permission to terminate passenger service. On March 31, the last train made its journey.

On the demise

Throughout the 1960s, the Catskill Mountain Branch continued to operate as a freight hauler. Construction of Interstate 88 through Oneonta severed the west end of the line from its connection with the Delaware & Hudson Railway. In 1965, service was cut back to Bloomville. By this time, the major source of traffic was feed and lumber dealers at Arkville, Roxbury, Grand Gorge, and Stamford. After 1968, the New York Central and Pennsylvania Railroads merged



Continued on next page ...

to form Penn Central. No longer regarded as a priority, the Catskill Mountain Branch and the condition of the rails deteriorated. Unfortunately, repairs were postponed, and derailments were frequent. Eventually, service was reduced to one weekly trip. Due to slow speeds imposed by the track conditions, the freight trains often took days to cover the route.

In an attempt to rebuild rail service in the Northeast, SEPTA, New Jersey Transit, Metro-North Railroad took over Penn Central and six other bankrupt railroads in April 1976. The Catskill Mountain Branch was not included in the new system, so New York State arranged a six-month subsidy to have Conrail operate the line while shippers made new arrangements.

The last freight train departed Kingston on September 28, 1976, and didn't return until October 2. Every remaining freight car on the branch was collected for the final return trip. The switch was spiked shut and the future of the line was uncertain.

Rescue and rebuild

Many people in the area had a deep appreciation for the trains and their history. Communities along the line called for the railroad to be saved, but the estate of Penn Central disagreed over the financials. In 1977, William F. Buckley, Jr., a well renowned columnist and media personality toured the line and helped rally for this important cause. Luckily, in 1979, an agreement was finally reached. To preserve the corridor along the 38-mile segment from Kingston to Highmount, Ulster County took ownership of the line in lieu of back taxes.

In 1983, great strides were made.



The Catskill Mountain Railroad was chartered to operate a new tourist passenger operation and limited freight service from Kingston. Passenger trains started in Phoenicia. In 1987, the railroad suffered a major washout at Campground Curve, but it was repaired by CMRR volunteers and the NYS Department of Transportation. Together, they rebuilt the bank to protect Route 28. Additional diesels and coaches were acquired as they eyed expansion.

After years of negotiation, the railroad crossing at Route 28 was reopened in 2004. As momentum was building, a catastrophic flood damaged the CMRR's Phoenicia yard, equipment, and the railroad. Volunteers responded as they worked to extend the Scenic Train from Mt. Pleasant (which was renamed Mt. Temper) to Cold Brook in 2007. Refocusing their efforts in Kingston, the City Shuttle was launched in 2008.

In 2011, tragedy struck again when Hurricane Irene unleashed devastating floods. Once again, Campground Curve was washed out and the Boiceville Trestle was lost. Although there was significant damage to Phoenicia, the railroad equipment was spared since it was moved into storage before the storm. Two weeks later, passenger trains resumed on a reduced schedule. Due to numerous washouts,

service to Cold Brook station was suspended.

In 2012, volunteers repaired and reopened Bridge C9 over the Esopus Creek in Kingston. Themed events such as the Easter Bunny Express, Great Train Robbery, Peace Train, Rails of Terror, Catskill Fall Flyer, and The Polar Express were introduced to great delight. Unfortunately, in 2016, CMRR terminated more than 30 years of service between Phoenicia and Mt. Tremper when the lease for that segment came to an end.

Current happenings

Better days are here. Excursions abound and there are lots of reasons to hop a train from Kingston. Through September, visitors are welcome to explore the natural beauty of the Catskills from a unique vantage point – aboard Ulster County's scenic train. The Catskill Flyer offers train enthusiasts and other day trippers a journey through some of the oldest farmlands in the country. The CMRR uses a historic 1950 Alco RS1 locomotive and a combination of open-air flat cars and coaches to whisk guests across the rails into the Esopus creek via the restored C9 bridge. It then runs through the Hurley Flats and climbs Hurley Mountain. All trips operate round-trip and depart from the Westbrook Lane Station.

Calling all ice cream enthusiasts. Indulge in a delicious ice cream treat as you take in the serenity and stunning vistas of the Catskills from the railroad's scenic train. The ice cream express takes place on the same historic locomotive and open-air flat cars and coaches (mentioned above) and takes the same route as the Catskill Flyer trip (also above). All trips offer hour-long, round-trip rides. All trains depart from the Westbrook Lane Station, which is in the Kingston Plaza adjacent to Uptown

Kingston's Stockade District in the historic City of Kingston. Plenty of free parking is available.

Rallying support

The CMRR is currently asking its landlord, Ulster County, for permission to extend its operable track another two miles to MP 10 at Basin Road where the corridor was converted to the Ashokan Trail. It aims to build a new station there. The new station would enable passengers to combine their train ride with a short walk or bike ride for access to the Ashokan Rail Trail – a 11.5-mile recreational trail that runs along the Ashokan Reservoir between West Hurley and Boiceville. It would also give the CMRR a proper destination.

While in Kingston

Many of Kingston's older buildings are part of three historic districts, which include Uptown Stockade District; the Midtown Neighborhood Broadway Corridor; and the Downtown Rondout-West Strand Historic District. There are lots of places to explore.

For good eats, head to Armadillo (armadillokingston.com); Ole Savannah Southern Table & Bar (olesavannah.com); Savona's Trattoria (savonas.com); or Ship to Shore (shipto-shorehudsonvalley.com). For a great selection of books and a brew or a cup of joe, head to Rough Draft Bar & Books (roughdraftny.com). For new threads or chic homewares, explore Next Boutique (nextboutique.com); Clove & Creek (cloveandcreek.com); or Exit Nineteen (exitnineteen.com). For more, visit kingston-ny.gov.

For more information about the Catskill Mountain Railroad, you can call (845) 332-4854 or visit them online at www.catskillmountainrailroad.com.



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Tulip mania

By Pom Shillingford
info@mainstreetmag.com

We're coming in right under the wire here with this month's seasonal cut-flower gem. Depending on the variety, tulips grown outside here will start flowering in mid-April and go on, depending on the temperature/amount of sunshine we get, until mid-May. So, apologies if you are reading this in late May and have missed the boat. The good news is however like all seasonal flowers, you will always get a chance to try again next year!

With that in mind, one of the reasons I wanted to include this beauty now is, as unfathomable as it seems, the bulb growers are about to launch their catalogues for Spring 2023. I know – it's crazy to be thinking of next spring already when we've finally just got going on this year's. However, there is a real benefit of thinking about this now. Wait until late summer/early fall to choose next year's bulbs and a) they might already be sold out, but b) it is so much easier to plan what to grow in the future with this year's performance, if not still underway, fresh in your mind. What worked, what didn't, what did you love, what is going straight in the compost. However, convinced you are now that you will remember everything in detail, you just won't. So, planning next year's plantings at the time they will actually be flowering is no bad thing.

The lipstick of the garden

Another reason I wanted to include tulips is they are the lifesavers of the winter gardener. Just when we have truly come to the end of our tethers with the blah grey/brown sludge of winter, tulips come rocketing up like a pyrotechnic color explosion. It's not for no reason that they are described as the lipstick of the spring garden. Tulips come in a fantastic array of colors, tones, stripes, and mixes. And there's their size and shape – peony, parrot, emperor, triumph, lily, fringed, singles, doubles... I defy anyone to not find a tulip they love.

Tulips are hands-down the easiest, most forgiving cut-flower to grow. There is only one thing you need to worry about – wildlife loves them. So, find a spot that the deer can't get at them; a bed in a fenced veg garden is ideal. They like well-drained soil in a sunny spot. Tulips are best planted in groups. They look a bit idiotic sticking up like random sentry soldiers otherwise.

How to grow a tulip

If you are growing tulips to cut, the downside is the bulb is one and done. If you remove the flower and foliage that bulb will have no chance of reflowering in subsequent years. It's painful to do but on the compost those bulbs must go. Add in the stem,



leaves, and flower head when she's gone over and you can console yourself that the entire flower from tip to root can now be fodder for next year's crop. Some tulip varieties are perennial but, in our climate here it's tough to have as an impressive display year on year from the same bulbs. If you want to try and get them to repeat flower year on year, pick the right variety and you must leave all the foliage to completely die back.

Tulips need to be planted in the fall when the ground has cooled but not yet frozen. Always enrich your soil when planting with well-rotted compost. Then either dig a trench if planting on mass or use a trowel to go down about two to three times the height of the bulb, pop it in pointy side up and cover. And that my flower friends, is how to grow tulips. You need to do nothing else but wait.

When it comes to 'cutting' tulips, I like to pull the entire stem and bulb together just before the flower begins to open. This gives a) a longer stem to play with, and b) if you want to slow down its opening for a few days, leave the whole flower wrapped in damp newspaper standing upright in the coolest dark spot you can find until you are ready for her. Then snap off

the bulb, give her a nice deep drink of water and if you place her in a warm room, you can literally watch the flowers open in front of you like one of those speeded-up *National Geographic* videos!

Always recut the stems of your tulips before arranging. Make sure there are absolutely no leaves under the water line. Two other things to bear in mind: tulips are heavy drinkers and will need to be regularly topped up with water. And no, you're not imaging it. They will also continue to grow in height in the vase! Depending on the temperature of the room they are in, tulips should last for at least a week once cut. ●

Favorite bulb supplier: John Scheepers Bantam, CT, www.johnscheepers.com.

Top local recommendation to find cut tulips: Tiny Hearts Farm, Hillsdale NY, <https://tinyheartsfarm.com>.

Pom Shillingford is an obsessive gardener originally from England and now based in Salisbury, CT. She offers seasonal cut flowers through English Garden Grown. Find her on Instagram @english_garden_grown.





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The cars in my life

By Dominique DeVito
info@mainstreetmag.com

Often the story and thread of our lives are greatly intertwined with the various moments, people, music, food, and cars that have come and gone. In this candid piece, Dominique shares how the cars in her life shaped the memories and experiences.

First

The robin's egg blue VW Bug my father bought for my older brother and me to drive was a stick shift. It was 1977, turning 16 in May, and I could take the driver's test and get a license. But in a car with a stick shift? That was a challenge! My other option was a big Ford Bronco. I had just grown taller than 5" and the Bronco ate me up. I could barely see over the dash. Plus, the Bug was the car for us kids, so I'd better learn to drive it. My mother was the one who taught me to drive. I'd passed the parking lot trials, and was out on the roads in rural Chester Springs, PA, where I grew up. On one of our lessons, she asked me to pull over to the shoulder of a steep hill and stop the car.

"Start from here," she said. "Put it in first and give it just enough gas to get going or you'll flood the engine and stall." I got to work. One foot on the clutch, the other trying to manage going from the brake to the gas. Stall. Another attempt. Stall. Gunning the engine, stalling again. I flooded the engine trying. I cried in frustration and failure. I begged her to take over so we could start somewhere else.

"You have to do it," she said, becoming increasingly upset herself but not yelling, just insisting. It wasn't pretty when it finally came

together and happened for me, but it happened. And when it did it suddenly seemed so easy. My confidence skyrocketed. I never worried about the stick shift again after that experience. It was a great lesson in silver linings, too. As for taking the test, I couldn't risk failing in the Bug. I put a phone book on the seat of the Bronco and was happy for its automatic transmission. I passed first time.

Second

Once I went away to college, I didn't need a car for years. I lived in cities after graduation, first Philadelphia and then New York, where cars were a luxury that I had no need for. When I was getting married and moving to the suburbs in the late 1980s, it was time to get a car. My husband, Chris, was ten years older than me, and I let him do it. The purchase seemed way too grown up for my life, a symbol of suburban living I wasn't sure I was ready for. I do remember going places in that car, but I don't remember anything about it. I think it was a Volkswagen...dark blue? No matter how I try I can't remember it. When the marriage ended after three tumultuous years with fortunately no more baggage than our crushed expectations, I was happy to let him have it. I moved back to Manhattan and back to not needing a car.

Third

After many years of proceedings, my parents' divorce was finalizing. My mother decided she was going to move back to France. I was living in Brooklyn with Carlo, my soon-to-be husband. We would marry in May, 1995, soon after my younger brother and his fiancée, Jill, and less than a year after

my brother Robin and Julie wed. All of us would be married before she moved, which consoled her. Because we were most in need of a vehicle, she gave me and Carlo her Subaru wagon. It was a blur of a time in my life. I was remarried, we would be moving to New Jersey, my childhood home was being sold, and my mother was getting on a plane by herself to move to Bstinence in southern France, where her mother had lived.

Was I glad to get the Subaru? Eventually. Carlo spent a weekend with it cleaning the tobacco stains from the ceiling and the upholstery and trying to get the cigarette smell out. It was a chore, as she was a chain smoker. He eventually succeeded, thank goodness. The Subaru was the car that christened my commuter life when I left my city job for one closer to home in New Jersey. The car got 35 miles per gallon and put on over 200,000 miles before she was hauled away by a donation service. It was a painful loss in a string of losses, another lesson on impermanence. If a house is just a house, which I had to grapple with when I knew I could never return to my childhood home in Chester Springs, isn't a car just a car?

Fourth

With our first house in Freehold, NJ, and my mother's trusty Subaru in the driveway, suburban life came to necessitate more than one car. Fast-forward to the purchase of a Volvo S80. This was really the first "real" car for me; for us. Its price tag was intimidating and I didn't think it was possible to afford it, but we did. The Volvo was a great car. It was part of our lives for many years in many ways. Most notably, it got us home from Stamford, CT, on Christmas Eve, 2004, during a snow storm that came fast and furious. While I gripped the safety bar and gasped and whimpered with fear

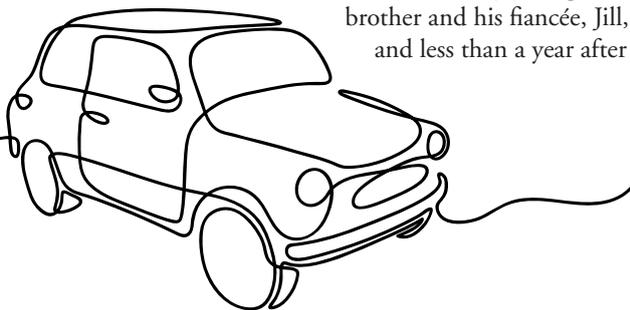
time after time as we trudged along past many cars that had skidded off the roads and Carlo assured me that we would be fine, our little boys in the back, I marveled at the Volvo's steadiness. I would have preferred to stay with the family at his parents' house that night, even if it meant waking up away from our own Christmas morning plans, so I wasn't inclined to be generous in my praise of him, but Carlo did get us home safe and sound in that Volvo.

Fifth

The Mommy Mobile was a Taurus station wagon. Yes, we were living in the suburbs of New Jersey. Yes, we were parents of twin boys. Yes, we also had two dogs. We needed a car with room for all these bodies and lots of stuff. But there was no way I was getting a minivan. For me a minivan was synonymous with the saggy bottoms of middle age, and I wasn't going there... yet. The Taurus was a sea foam green exterior with tan seats. It had plenty of room for the boys' car seats and both big dogs in the back behind them. She was a bit of a gas guzzler, but we had two incomes. And no minivan. I liked that car a lot. I always knew where she was in a parking lot. I liked that you could see into and out of it with ease. There was something nostalgic about it, too, that it was a station wagon like our parents would have driven and not, well, that other kind of middle-aged vehicle so common on the roads.

One of my favorite photos was taken in the Mommy Mobile. It's the car we used to pick up a Dalmatian we thought we'd foster for a bit and find a new home for. She was a thin little thing, and already ten years old

Continued on next page ...



when we took her. The boys were with us. We put her in the way back, boys in the middle seat. Dawson (my son) and Cinder (the dog) hit it off instantly, and the photo is of him with his arms up over his head reaching back to touch her while she, with tongue lolling, put her face by his head. Cinder found a permanent home with us. She was Dawson's best friend. And she was around longer than the Mommy Mobile.

Sixth

Weekly trips up and down the Garden State Parkway and New York State Thruway to go to and from Freehold, NJ, to Ghent, NY – with harsher winter and early spring conditions than I wanted to think about – made it necessary to purchase at least one vehicle with four-wheel drive. Budget was a huge consideration. And of course it had to be big enough for two growing boys, three big dogs, and lots of stuff. I found a white Mazda MPV that had room, four-wheel drive, and a good price tag. My dad, whose opinion I value when it comes to cars and all things motorized (he raced motorcycles, after all), said it would be fine. Carlo wasn't crazy about it, but I bought it anyway. I argued that it could be a good moving ad for our new winery, since it was white and our logo and theme were black and white. We had door magnets of the winery logo made and put on the driver and passenger doors. One of them was stolen at a festival at Brotherhood Winery! I couldn't believe it.

Anyway, the Mazda did its time and served its purpose. I used the four-wheel drive, most notably on one of the scariest drives back to NJ from NY on a Sunday at about 5:30pm. It had started to snow a few hours earlier, and we'd debated staying in Ghent or heading back to Freehold. We finally decided to go. We hastily packed, closed up the house, and got into our cars. Carlo was in the Volvo with Dawson. I was in the Mazda with Dylan and the dogs. I hate driving in the snow. Carlo's was the only

car ahead of us on the road, and I was keeping my distance behind his red tail lights and riding in his tracks. I had forgotten how steep the hill is going out of Hudson toward the Thruway. Because Dylan was in the passenger seat I tried to stay calm, but I was decidedly NOT calm; in fact, I was pretty well convinced this would end badly.

The Mazda was in four-wheel drive. I could do this. I had to do this. I could feel the wheels try to catch. I didn't want to go so fast that I encroached on Carlo, but I couldn't let up on the gas, either. Slow and steady, steady. I went into prayer mode: "Please, God, let me get up this hill. Please, God." We made it – up the hill and all the way home. Again. That Mazda got us back and forth more times than I ever imagined possible. Without ever breaking down, which was a constant fear of mine as I transported my most precious cargo back and forth every weekend. My sons, who grew up in my rear view mirror.

Seventh

Finally, I let a minivan into our lives. A Chrysler Town and Country – what the used car salesman in Hudson called "The Mercedes of Minivans." So here I was, solidly in middle age, solidly an older woman with sons who needed space themselves, but also had friends we would want to be able to pile into the car. And there was all the wine, of course. The cases of wine and the displays for the farmer's markets and the festivals. The pop-up tents. The weights for the tents. The more we could fit in, the better. The minivan was the answer. It was easy to drive, and it was easy to use. The sliding passenger doors made loading and unloading so much easier than a sedan-type car. The look was pure wood tick, though, and the SUVs that were becoming more and more popular were certainly sexier. But when the first minivan needed to be sold for whatever we could get for it and we thought about the next car, it was another Mercedes of Minivans that seamlessly took the first one's place. Not only that, but when Carlo needed his next car, yet another Town and Country came to live in our driveway. How sad was that?

Eighth

It was 2016, a rough time in our lives. Carlo and I were legally separated. We were trying to sell the winery. A promising offer had fallen through. I was living in the house in Ghent. Carlo was living in Catskill, in an apartment I'd found the summer before but had only spent a couple of months in. That's not a story about a car, though, and this is.

The seventh car was a Lincoln Town Car. Champagne colored. Bought from Hall Motors – who else? The minivan was on its next-to-last legs anyway, Dawson had slammed it in a fit of anger and it was rusted and in need of tires. All expenses that, with the prospect of ever-mounting repairs, made it more practical to divest myself of and invest in something else. Dylan had a silver Lincoln. That was part of the appeal. And I wanted something completely out of what anyone would expect – though of course I needed to fit a lot of stuff in it. I loved the color and the heated seats and the moon roof. I imagined myself in a long, flowing scarf, a la Thelma and Louise, sunglasses on and the scarf's end flapping out the moon roof as I drove off into the distance. I asked Dylan if he'd mind if I had the same car as him. He said "No," so that sealed the deal for me. I loved the looks I'd get when I pulled into markets in the Town Car. It wasn't easy to lift stuff out of its massive trunk as I had to bend over pretty far. I put plastic milk crates in its well to prop the heavy wine boxes on so I wouldn't hurt my back. It was not nearly as easy to load and unload as the minivan, but I was OK with that. It was a conversation piece. The Boat.

In the summer of 2019, The Boat got one last overhaul from our trusted mechanic before sailing off with Dawson, whatever he could pack into it, and his two cats. It delivered him safely to his new living arrangements in Omaha, and I was grateful beyond grateful for that. There's one just like it where I live now, so I think about my life in that car a lot. And I wish Dawson was getting out of it here in Troy, NY, to visit me.

Ninth

I never liked the commercials for the Kia Soul when it came out a decade or so ago. Singing chipmunks and colored lights inside the car. I never imagined myself in one. But my friend Betsy had a cream-colored one, a 2012 – newer than anything I'd ever owned – and it was sitting in the parking lot of where she worked. "What are your plans for that car?" I called and asked when I knew Dawson would need the Lincoln to go to Omaha.

She told me what she was wanted for it, and made me a sweet deal for monthly payments with no interest. "That would be wonderful," I said. Money was tighter than ever (if that was possible), and I had been looking at some clunkers online while waiting for Ben at Hall Motors to possibly come up with something that was in my price range. I cried with relief when I hung up the phone.

The Soul fit more in it than I imagined – even the long pop-up tent for markets. I figured if I couldn't get it all in, I'd just go with less wine. But I always had enough.

When a new month came along, I wrote a check for Betsy and put it in a special card, always with a heart bursting with gratitude. People said the car suited me. I was so happy to have it I thought she needed a name. I call her Cindy Lou Who, because I think she's so cute.

In May of 2021, the winery finally sold. I wrote a check to Betsy for the balance owed. HAPPY DAY!! Besides regular oil changes, the Soul hasn't needed a single thing. She has a sun roof, and I have, in a way, driven off into the distance. I turned 60 years old in 2021, and with just 120,000 miles on her, I think Cindy Lou Who and I will share many adventures ahead. •

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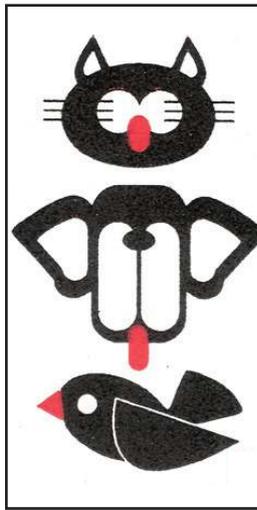
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Hudson Valley Overhead Doors and Operators (HVOD) opened in 2008 with Frank Zacarolli taking ownership in 2011. His many years of experience allowed for the opportunity to take the reins of a well-established business. HVOD provides new door installations, replacements and repairs. They install operators on existing doors and can fix issues with your current system. Sometimes accidents happen and a panel of the door is damaged, they can replace just that panel if the door is still able to function. They work with both residential and commercial businesses. HVOD is a small company which means you get personal service – from a friendly greeting on the phone to prompt responses and many years of knowledge, the team is ready to help. Their vast experience in types of doors, the variety of styles and looks means they can offer just what you need for a new door. They have seen every kind of malfunction, weather issues, and critter influences and can repair or replace them when necessary. Frank and his team are there to help people, this is what motivates them and keeps them going despite freezing temperatures or hot summer days. HVOD works with multiple high quality door manufacturers so they are able to offer standard metal doors all the way to custom wood doors. Windows, insulation, color, material, and accessories are all the customer's choice so they can make the door exactly what they want and need.



PhysioLakeville, LLC.

Physical therapy clinic located at 350 Main St., Lakeville, CT. (860) 596-4264. physiolakeville.com

Despite the challenges that came with the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. Ellen Walker opened PhysioLakeville in August of 2020. Dr. Walker's practice begins with a thorough evaluation, including a history of current injuries and prior injuries that may impact pain and dysfunction. Treatments include myofascial release, manual correction of posture, and exercise for the re-education of muscles, and motor control for correct functional movement patterns. Patients receive a home program which is adjusted as needed and exercises are corrected and progressed to meet personal goals. Dr. Walker studied and worked beside some of the most talented and knowledgeable physical therapists in the field for 30 years to become a Certified Functional Manual Therapist. Several of those years were specific to dance physical therapy, treating professional dancers from Broadway and for the New York City Ballet. Today, she continues to set high standards and treat patients the way she would want to be treated. She answers her own phone and is in constant email communication with patients for continuity of care. After two years of operation, Dr. Walker is looking forward to developing wellness classes that focus on movement, injury prevention, and functionality.



Oblong Valley Home Solutions

Contractors offering new construction, renovation and painting services. (203) 232-3924. oblongvalleyhomesolutions@gmail.com

Cousins Kealan and Sean Rooney started Oblong Valley Home Solutions in March 2021. They have worked alongside each other in the trades for more than twenty years and aspire to keep educating themselves and implementing environmentally-friendly and sustainable building practices wherever possible. Sean has a degree in Environmental Studies and Design from Marlboro College in Vermont. He focuses on the integration of ecologically sustainable building practices and design into our built environment. Both enjoy the satisfaction of a job well done while realizing the vision of the homeowner into a high-quality finished product. Kealan was also the visionary of the Music Cellar in Millerton, NY, and co-owned and operated it for 11 years. Now, he's stepped back in order to focus on Oblong Valley Home Solutions. Kealan attended South Kent School in Kent, CT. After graduating, he attended Endicott College for two years. After college, Kealan decided to go back home and get his pilot's license and continue pursuing home building. In 2020, he wanted to expand his woodworking skills so he worked for Mongiardo Studios in Housatonic, MA, a very high-end furniture building company. After just a year, Kealan gave into his ambition and started Oblong Valley with his cousin Sean – and the rest is history as they say.



Roe Jan Auto Center

Auto repair shop located at 9010 NY-22, Hillsdale, NY. (518) 325-5302.

Roe Jan Auto Center began in February of 1999, after Ed Roberts bought what was originally Herrington-Yaffe Auto Center. Today, Ed, his son Chris, and the entire crew at Roe Jan Auto Center provide nearly every kind of service for most vehicles including normal maintenance, tires, alignments, brake and chassis repairs and check engine light diagnostics and repairs as well as state inspections. They mainly serve the Copake-Hillsdale area, but will take anyone from anywhere that is willing to bring their car to Roe Jan for honest service. The most recent change that Roe Jan Auto Center has made is going to a four-day, ten-hour day work schedule. That has allowed them to be more flexible with scheduling for customer appointments and also allows staff to have more time for themselves outside of work. After all, for the folks at Roe Jan Auto Center, having repeat customers that trust them is what's most important. They are also looking forward to an investment in the future and being able to do more with electric and hybrid vehicles. Like most shops, they have been plagued by technician shortages that are currently industry-wide and are always looking to add more technicians to the team in order to keep up with demand from customers.

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Before you hit the road...

With warmer weather quickly approaching us, people are getting eager to get back out on the road. Whether you've been cooped up all winter and are looking for a weekend away, or you're taking the family on that summer vacation you planned, don't let car trouble get in the way!

You may have noticed that roads aren't exactly in pristine condition after a long frigid winter. You're probably doing your best to dodge potholes and frost heaves, but it's inevitable that eventually you'll find yourself cringing behind the wheel wondering how much damage was just caused. So before you head out on your road trip, it's a good idea to have your steering, suspension and tires inspected for any damage. Sometimes you'll notice a noise that never used to be there, but other times there will be no obvious symptoms, just extra wear and tear on other components that can lead to even more costly repairs in the future.

It's always a smart idea to have your alignment checked periodically, excessive driving on rough roads can cause suspension components to wear and change your alignment angles. Having an alignment that isn't in specification can, and will, cause premature tire wear, a car that pulls to the left or to the right while driving, or just a simple but annoying off center steering wheel.

Before heading out on the road, consider having your car or truck's steering and suspension inspected and aligned to make sure that you and your friends and family can travel safely. Remember, these suspension components are the only link between you and the road!



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Here are some important things to think about before you buy.

- 1. TYPE:** What type of riding will you be doing and where? Do you live at the top of a steep hill or on a rail trail? Will you be using the ebike to commute or ride in the woods. Thinking about these points will help you choose the best ebike to suit your needs.
- 2. FIT and FRAME:** Will you be able to safely mount and dismount the ebike. Correct sizing and frame style (step through vs. step over) are critical. You should always try out the ebike before purchasing to make sure that the fit is appropriate and safe.
- 3. MOTOR and BATTERY SIZE:** There is nothing worse than running out of battery power halfway through your ride. Know your battery amp hours and make sure your motor is adequate for your region. Riding in the hills requires a different level of power than rail trails for most.
- 4. SERVICE:** Where will you get your ebike serviced? Not all bike shops work on all ebikes. Many ebike brands require special tools and training for software upgrades, and repairs/warranty work on the motor and battery. We suggest shopping local, but if you choose to buy online, be sure to check if there is a repair shop nearby.

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