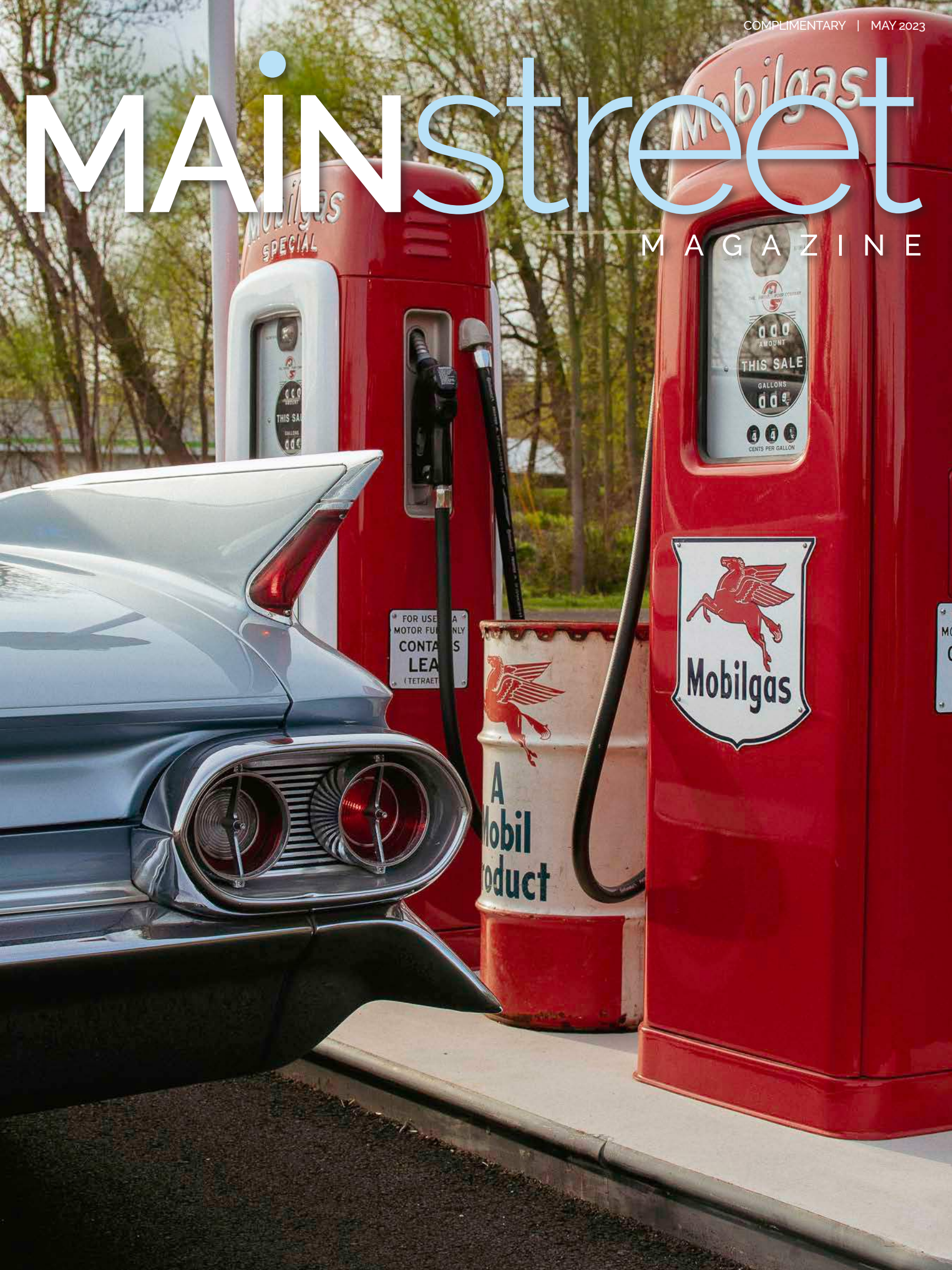


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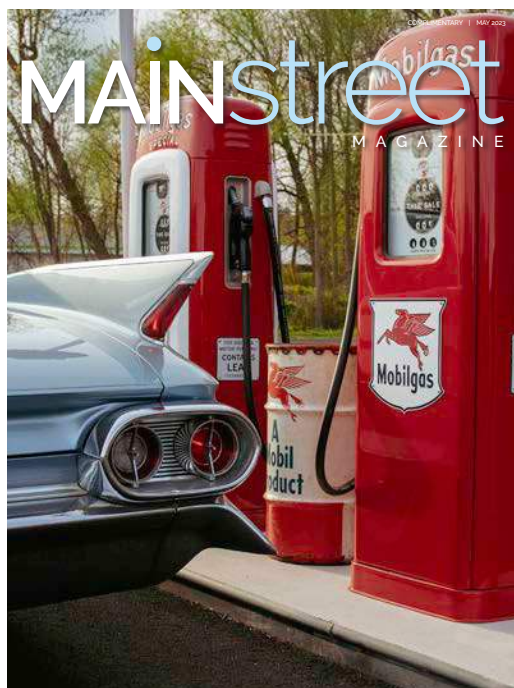
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TRANSPORTED IN TIME, SPACE, AND INWARDLY

This "Transportation" issue has become one of our readers' favorite issues over the years, and we've certainly brushed the theme with a broad stroke. Most people will think of the likes of planes, trains, and automobiles when they hear the word "transportation," however we think there's so much more to it. In the past we've also featured stories in about horses, paragliding, and bicycles – just to name a few. This particular issue has some of the more "standard" topics, like our biggest story where Jesse DeGroot shares with you the ins and outs of the Taconic State Parkway – it's not as cut-and-dry as you might think a story about a road would be. Jesse makes it quite interesting and funny. But we are also pleased to include some non-standard stories such as a piece that Dominique DeVito wrote about flotation. You may think, "flotation? What is that and how is it transportation?" Valid questions. But as Dominique ties it together for us, it is more about transporting one's mind and spirit, while the body... well, floats. So as I said, our brush strokes tend to be wide when it comes to themes because we like to think and look outside the box whenever we can.

Speaking of being transported mentally and spiritually, as I write this, it is mid-April, and I have very much been inwardly transported to another time and space. You see, earlier today I learned that one of my favorite childhood teachers had passed away. A lot of folks in the Taconic Hills School region will remember Ann Hunter. She was a much-loved third grade teacher at TH, shaping the minds of generations of students – making a lifetime impact on so many, including yours truly. Learning of her passing brought me back to the fall of 1989 when I entered her classroom not knowing a lick of English. But it was with her kindness and care that I learned so much and was shaped in large part into the person that I am today. She in fact made such an impact on me that I can remember that first day of school like it was yesterday. With that said, I wanted to take a moment to recognize her and thank her for all that she's done for me and for so many others. You will be missed but never forgotten, and I send my deepest condolences to your family, friends, and loved ones. You have left your mark on the world in so many ways! <3

– Thorunn Kristjansdottir



MAY 2023

A step back in time – a 1961 Cadillac Coupe deVille pulls up to a Mobilgas station complete with the pegasus symbol.

Special thanks to Rob Cooper of Associated Lightning Rod for allowing us to use his Mobilgas station and to Precision Auto Storage for lending us their Cadillac.

Photo by
Olivia Valentine

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THE ARTIST, KATHLEEN KUCKA IN HER FALLS VILLAGE STUDIO

*By Anna Martucci
anna@mainstreetmag.com*

The first time I met the artist, curator and gallery owner Kathleen Kucka was at a dinner at The White Hart in Salisbury, CT. I overheard her describing her artistic process, which involved using hot objects to burn canvas. I was immediately intrigued yet couldn't quite understand how it worked – wouldn't it just look like a scorched mess? I knew about Kucka's gallery "Furnace" in Falls Village, whose name suddenly made sense to me, and I asked if I could visit her studio.

Kathleen Kucka was born in East Hartford, CT, and grew up in New York City. She attended NYC public schools including PS 9 for middle school, where she first discovered her love for art. Kucka's middle school teachers encouraged her to apply to the Music and Art High School (now known as LaGuardia), which at the time was located on West 135th Street in Harlem. She got accepted and spent the next four years surrounded by "so many talented young people – musicians, artists, opera singers; it was an incredible experience. It was the best sense of liveliness and creativity, and it changed my life."

After high school, Kucka attended The Cooper Union in the heart of the East Village. "Cooper Union was a central place to be if you were studying art – it had excellent facilities and faculty for sculpture and painting." She graduated in 1984 and later went on to earn an MFA from Hunter College in 1994.

Visual concept over narrative concept

Kucka is a visual artist whose process generally consists of repetitive mark making and abstraction on paper and canvas. Critics have said that her work evokes aspects of formalism, the critical position that the most important element of a work of art is its form, or visual aesthetic, rather than its narrative concept.

In her early work, Kucka often used everyday objects such as irons, hot plates, and charcoal lighters to scorch, or "draw," patterns on paper and canvas. Much of this work was monochromatic, often in gray, black, brown, and white hues. The resulting images were abstract yet intentional, with each burn mark placed in a measured, sequentially flowing pattern. She allowed the natural result of the burn to guide the direction of the sequence.

In addition to her burn works, Kucka created pieces with sewn shapes and pockets laid out in symmetrical patterns. Her use of traditionally

female-associated domestic objects and skills such as irons and sewing elicits a feminist critique, in particular as a metaphor for breaking free. The burning, in essence, “wounds” the object, creating space for healing and rebirth.

From burns to pours and back to burns

In the 2000s Kucka was living and working just ten blocks from the World Trade Center towers during the September 11 attacks. After 9/11, Kucka set aside her burn works and shifted her focus to a style of painting called “pours.” Instead of using brushes, she poured acrylic paint directly onto aluminum or wooden panels. Again, Kucka combined intention with nature’s unpredictable forces, in this case gravity and the variations of the paint’s viscosity. The result are loosely patterned swirls of varying depths and sizes. The dimension was further emphasized by her use of a muted, earth tone palette.

In 2013, Kucka returned to her burn works, this time by suspending one canvas in front of another painted canvas. She then used a charcoal lighter to burn holes in the top canvas revealing the colors of the canvas underneath. The burn holes are similarly shaped and placed in concentric, lin-

ear, and swirling designs. In some, the burns create flaps on the outer canvas that peel away from the interior. The double canvas and complementary colors create dimension and a play with light and shadow, changing as the viewer moves.

In 2015, Kucka started working in a Falls Village barn with high ceilings and open spaces. She notes, “Living in a rural area has been a big change, and I have felt so inspired by the natural beauty of the Northwest Corner.” This deeper connection to nature and the seasons is revealed in her new work.

During the COVID lock-down in 2020, Kucka saw a beautiful space on Main Street in Falls Village and was inspired to open an art gallery dedicated to showing works on paper. The Furnace – Art on Paper Archive opened its doors in the spring of 2021 and has hosted numerous exhibitions.

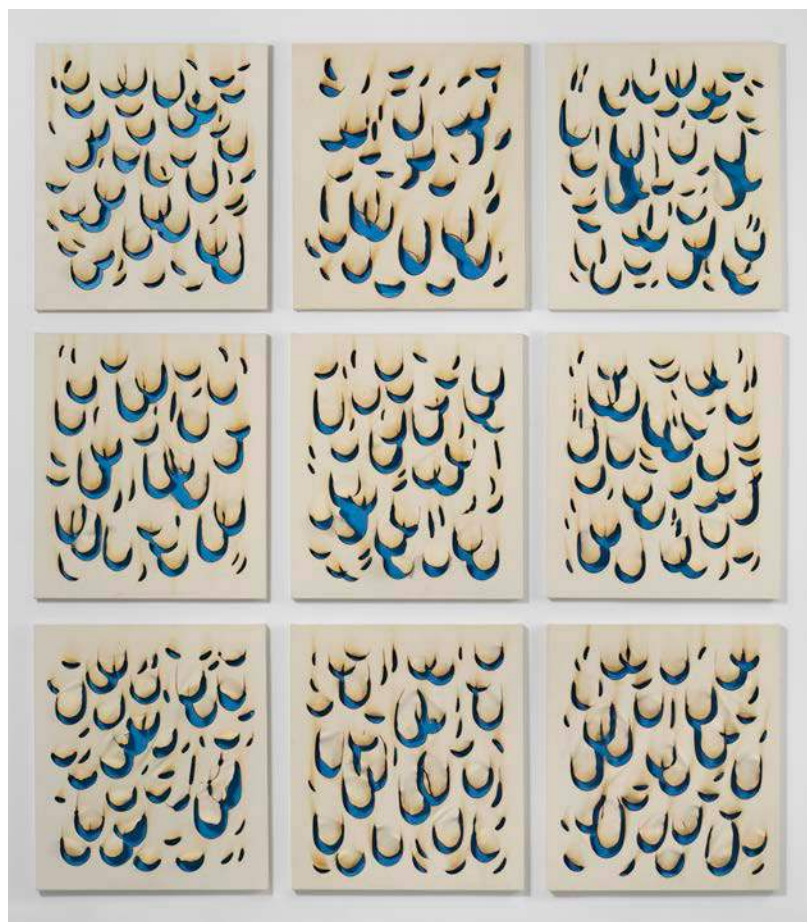
“It’s pretty amazing when you see people coming into the gallery who aren’t expecting to see abstract art in a tiny village like Falls Village. The beauty is you can hike the Appalachian Trail, get off the trail, have a latte, and see some amazing contemporary art. Falls Village is very special and unique.”

Kucka is currently focusing on an upcoming exhibition in June of her paintings and works on paper at Heather Gaudio Fine Art in New Canaan, CT. ●

To learn more about Kathleen Kucka and her work you can visit her website, kathleenkucka.com.

Kathleen Kucka’s next show is opens at Heather Gaudio Fine Art in New Canaan, CT, on Thursday, June 15. Learn more at heathergaudiofineart.com.

Furnace - Art on Paper Archive is located in Falls Village. Learn more at furnace-artonpaperarchive.com.



Above: *Sun Still Tender - Blue*, 2019. Burns and oil. Paint on canvas. 96" x 84".
Left: *Visual Juice*, 2015. Acrylic and burns on canvas. 85" diameter. Below, left: The artist, Kathleen Kucka, in her Falls Village studio.

Opposite page, L-R: *Pocket Pyramid*, 1995. Sewn canvas pockets. 15" x 15". *Black & White in Flux*, 2002. Acrylic paint on aluminum. 44" x 44". All images courtesy of Kathleen Kucka.





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Shannon Schober manages and runs all three locations of Body Be Well Pilates. Shannon is a nationally certified Pilates teacher through the Pilates Method Alliance® and holds a BM in Music Recording Technology and a BA in German from Lebanon Valley College. She was introduced to Pilates after her sister, Chelsea opened Body Be Well Pilates in Red Hook, NY, where she soon became a regular client and found the training immediately gratifying. Shannon was surprised to see how the techniques could be applied to every type of person and how Pilates helped them with everything from daily activities to building better bones. She decided to become a certified Pilates instructor through Body Be Well and has hopes to help people look and feel better both inside and out. She believes that continuing her education is super important and is always learning more so that she can help others benefit from the Pilates method!



Andrew Gates works for Houlihan Lawrence in real estate brokerage throughout the wider region. "I am licensed in Connecticut, New York, and Massachusetts and have been active in the industry for the last 22+ years." We then asked him if he had a favorite part of the job, to which he said, "I love meeting the interesting people, as well as exploring the nooks and unique spots within our incredible region." If that didn't keep Andrew busy enough, he shared that he's an avid skier and travels throughout North America to ski. "I also at times 'skin,' which is the climbing / uphill side of the sport." When we asked Andrew what he loves most about the area, he had this to say: "We live in one of the most beautiful places in the world, and if you're willing to take a drive, there are an endless number of new places to explore."



Tracie Herrman is the manager/bartender for Champetre which is located at 2938 Church St. in Pine Plains, NY. She said that she's been in her current position there for two years, but has spent 15 years in the hospitality sector. "I love the creativity that comes with bartending, and I enjoy being able to make someone's evening relaxing, special or memorable." Outside of work Tracie said that she likes to spend time with her huskies, reading (for enjoyment and learning new interests), tarot, and occasional video games. "I grew up in Stanfordville, and I have always loved the beauty of this area; the mountains, the sunsets, how clearly you can see the stars." When we asked if she wanted to share anything else she said, "Come visit us at Champetre! We really enjoy what we do, and I think it shows in the experience we create. We would love to take care of you!"



John Kalogris was a man of select words when we caught up with him and he took time from his busy schedule to answer some of our questions for this Friendly Faces feature. But in that time John shared that he works as a commercial fleet manager at Northeast Ford in Millerton, NY. He said that he's been working in this field for over 30 years and enjoys what he does. He keeps very busy when outside of work too, and he fills that time with carpentry work. When we asked him if he's from the area and what he loves most about our beautiful neck of the woods he said, "Yes, I am, and I love the scenic landscape." Us too, especially this time of year when everything is green again, and we're able to enjoy the beautiful outdoors and that scenic landscape you spoke of!



Sophia Zhou is a concert pianist and educator. "I also curate the Chamber Music Series at The Stissing Center in Pine Plains, NY, bringing world-class music to the community and supporting young musicians." Sophia has worked as a professional musician since age seven, "I feel very blessed to be able to express myself through music and share the love with my audience." Outside of creating music, Sophia likes to go hiking and to cook with friends and watch films. "I am thinking of taking up sailing and acting classes in the near future," she shared. "I am from Shanghai, China, which is thousands of miles away and a vast metropolitan city. I fell in love with this area's closeness to nature and the preservation spirits. I feel incredibly lucky to work with my wonderful colleagues and share music with the community. Come to the Stissing Center and share a beautiful afternoon/evening with us!"



Some of you might recognize this friendly face! **Amy Carol** works as a hair stylist at The Hair Lounge in Miller-ton, NY. "I have been a hair stylist for 35 years, and I love the social part of my job – meeting new clients from all different areas and backgrounds." Outside of work Amy says that she likes to bike ride in the summer, ski and snow shoe in the winter, and support local events as well as spend time with friends and family. "I am from Sharon, CT, originally then moved to Canaan when I was in high school. I love the landscape of our area, I also love all the local events," she said. We asked Amy if she'd like to share anything else and she said, "My husband and I have been fortunate to have been able to raise our son in such a special part the world. There are so many kind people who live here." We couldn't agree more!



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Investing for the future

James Demmert, founder-chief investment officer, of Main Street Research of Lakeville, CT

By Christine Bates
info@mainstreetmag.com

James Demmert had to run after our early morning conversation to appear on the Yahoo Finance channel, where he's a frequent talking head on stock markets. In our brief 45-minute interview, he explained that attending Berkshire School had turned his life around and made him return to set up a New England office of his successful California money management firm Main Street Research – no connection to our magazine.

What does Main Street Research do?

We manage money for wealthy individuals, families, and foundations. Our goal is to make money last for generations with a unique process of managing downside risk called Active Risk Management. We focus on publicly traded securities from around the world and build individual portfolios based on each investor's goals. All investors' funds are held in custodial accounts with Charles Schwab.

I founded the firm in 1993, and Main Street Research now has 23 employees, mainly in Sausalito, CA, but we also have offices in Midtown Manhattan, NY, and Greenwich and Lakeville, CT.

What's your view on the Stock Market right now?

I'm always open to sharing my opinion. We've been in a bear market, with some stocks down 30 to 50% from their highest value a little over a year ago. During this time, our active risk management process has kept assets in a defensive position (much less stock exposure), which our clients have appreciated. However, the bear market in stocks is getting closer to its end, so we have made a list of great stocks for the new bull market we see ahead – possibly this summer.

Some of the most attractive sectors are technology, telecommunications, energy, and industrials. We are also finding many opportunities outside the US in international markets.

Are there any individual stocks you are currently recommending to your clients?

Since the bear market began 15 months ago, we have advocated that clients have less than normal stock exposure and focus on recession-proof businesses such as healthcare (McKesson, Novo Nordisk), and consumer staples (Coca-Cola, Unilever). Most recently, we are seeing value in the tech sector in companies like AMD and Apple.

How did you get started in this business?

When I was ten years old, my mother took me to the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, and I knew immediately that I wanted to be part of that world. During college at Harvard, I worked as an intern at LR Rothchild and, after graduation, went to California as an equities analyst at Lehmann Brothers. When I left to start my own firm in 1993, it was really tough, but I had no wife or kids. Everything turned around after five years, and in 1994 my firm started a partnership with Charles Schwab. Schwab plays an integral role as a high-quality institution in the custody of our client assets.

What's different about Main Street Research?

Typically, clients approach us because they have done poorly in the market on their own or with an advisor. Sometimes clients come to us specifically for our distinct ability to manage risk in bear markets or for our very unique fee based on performance. They are looking for a team that can create a detailed financial roadmap to make their assets last their lifetime and, in many cases, for future generations. We do this through a detailed and holistic wealth planning process that serves as our roadmap for creating an ideal investment strategy. Our portfolio managers have a direct,



personal relationship with our clients. Client satisfaction, a combination of performance and communication, is the most important thing.

What is Main Street's investment style?

We fall into the value investing GARP category – growth at a reasonable price. We pick individual stocks and bonds, employ risk management tools such as stop losses, and adjust portfolios to changes in the economy. Last year, the stock percentage in many of our portfolios was reduced from 70% to nearly 20%, which provided much less volatility and more peace of mind during the bear market. With every client, we begin with financial and wealth planning. What are their expenses? What is their income? Do they have kids? What are their intentions and goals?

How are your fees structured?

We give clients two choices. One is a simple fee based on the total assets we are managing per year ranging from

James Demmert is ready for his live appearance from Lakeville, CT on Yahoo Finance. Photo by Clementina Davilla, courtesy of Main Street Research.

Continued on next page ...



Above: The former back-office building at 342 Main Street in Lakeville, CT, retains the original barn beams and now houses Demmert's collection of vintage Porsches. Photo by Clementina Davilla, courtesy of Main Street Research. Below: The interior of 344 Main Street in Lakeville was transformed into a sleek office for Main Street Research. Photo by Christine Bates.

1.25% and down to .25% depending on the size of the relationship. The other is performance-based, which has lower management fee scaling from .75% down to .15% depending on the relationship and includes a 5% profit allocation when the portfolio has new profits. Like most money managers, the minimum initial investment for a relationship is \$1,000,000. We have over 750 clients with almost two billion dollars under management.

How important are PR, Internet, social and investment media, and cable in attracting clients?

As the business has grown and evolved, we have been lucky to receive inquiries from the media about our view of markets. I am very grateful to have been invited to the Bloomberg studios and for my appearances on CNBC and Reuters. This week our work was also quoted in *The Wall Street Journal*. This type of press and media exposure is always good for clients and prospective clients to see and sometimes will inspire them to refer friends or family. We are getting a lot of client referrals because of our presence here, and we're building our brand in northwest Connecticut.

Are there any clients that would not be a good fit?

We're very flexible and match clients with appropriate portfolio managers. However, clients who have short-term

growth expectations should probably go someplace else.

Why are you here in Lakeville, CT?

When I was a kid, I went to Berkshire School, which was a lifesaver. I wanted my kids to go to Berkshire School; they are in tenth grade there now. In 2018 we bought 166 Main Street in Lakeville and started major renovations. Yes, we were the people from California who purchased the Nemiroff house. It was a heart and soul thing and became our home during Covid. We treasure the house and the peace and serenity of life in a small town. Next, we purchased the former White Gallery buildings to have an office presence here on Main Street, and now we're renovating the Borden building next door.

Do you give back to the community?

As we did in northern California, we are big fans of giving back to our local community by supporting many of the non-profits in the area in hopes of making the north corner an even better place.

What is in the big, black garage behind your office?

Do you remember all the little office spaces in that back building? When we gutted the interior, we discovered it was initially a barn with a hayloft built over 100 years ago. We saved the structure with the old beams, and it

now houses my vintage Porsche collection. My favorite car is the 1956 Speedster that was once in Reggie Jackson's collection. When we moved here, I didn't know Lime Rock was nearby. I've raced on the West Coast and am hoping to do some driving at Lime Rock this summer.

You and Main Street Research

have received many awards. What are you proudest of?

Being named as one of the top advisors in the country by both *Barron's* and *Forbes* was the most significant honor so far in my career.

Besides your own, what are some great books about investing – or life?

I'm a fan of Ray Dalio's *Principles* and any autobiography or biography of

successful businesspeople or politicians.

Who has inspired you?

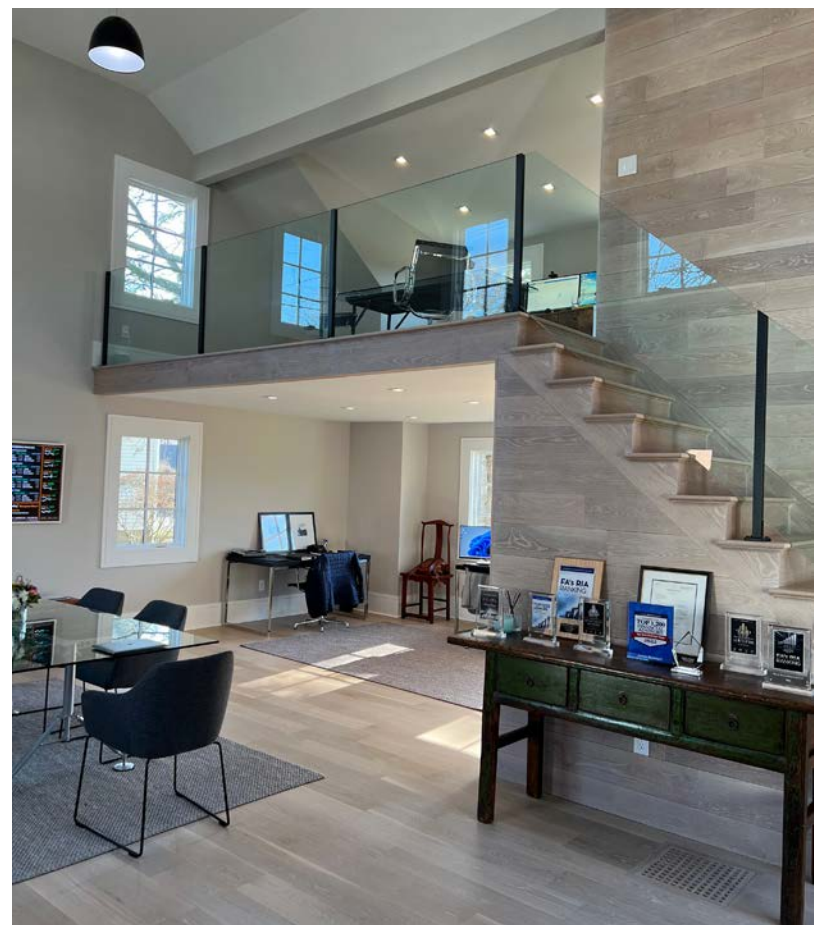
My mother.

What's next for you?

I'm never retiring – I love what I do. I love writing about investing and am working on my third book now, tentatively called *Wall Street Lessons* – it's about investor psychology. I also love educating. Every year I teach a class for students at Berkshire School about finance and investing, and it's always oversubscribed. Further, our firm was early to create an internship program so young people could get to know the business. •

To learn more about Main Street Research, you can call them at (415) 289-0105 or visit them online at ms-research.com.

**Disclaimer: All information and background presented in this article was directly provided by the subject and is based on his work, experience, and or professional opinion. Main Street Magazine is not responsible for any financial advice that is provided here. The information is general in nature, and readers should consult a financial advisor for their specific situation and needs.*



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Lentil salad

By Olivia Valentine with
Caroline Markonic
info@mainstreetmag.com

This may not be the sweet treat you are accustomed to getting from us, but this lentil salad has a sugary element to satisfy that sweet tooth. In addition to being delicious, lentils provide fiber, plant protein, polyphenols (a type of antioxidant), and folate; are low in sodium and saturated fats; and are high in potassium. This salad is packed with carrots, golden raisins, walnuts, and red peppers.

A little fun fact about lentils is that the botanical name of the lentil plant is *Lens culinaris*, which is because of the curved lens-like shape of the lentil seed.

Lentils for summer!

Summer officially kicks off at the end of May. This salad is perfect to bring to your Memorial Day picnic, pack it in a cooler for the beach, or make it early for Mother's Day, which is Sunday the 14th. What mom wouldn't love a healthy salad for lunch or dinner!

Olivia first had a salad similar to this while visiting Martha's Vineyard. Whenever she and her honey are on the island, they stop at a little cafe in Vineyard Haven. The cafe has a very small menu, but everything is homemade and super yummy. They also serve up some

of the biggest, most delicious slices of cake. We're talking cake that could be shared by two or more! But, the one item on the menu that they always order is the lentil salad. Healthy lentil salad for lunch and a big slice of cake to wash it down. That's what they call balance.

While enjoying a meal at the little cafe sitting at one of their picnic tables, Olivia's honey asked if it was possible that we could recreate this salad at home. This is her version with inspiration from the vineyard. We hope you enjoy it.

Lentil salad ingredients

1 cup lentils
3 cups vegetable broth (or water)
1 bay leaf
½ cup finely chopped carrots
½ cup golden raisins
½ cup finely chopped red pepper
½ cup finely chopped walnuts
1 clove minced garlic
4-5 sliced scallions
¼ fresh chopped parsley
Salt and pepper to taste
Feta cheese (optional, but we think it is a must to sprinkle on top)

Maple syrup dressing ingredients

¼ cup olive oil
¼ cup balsamic vinegar
2 tbs pure maple syrup
½ tbs Dijon mustard
1 clove minced garlic
Salt and pepper to taste



Directions

In a medium saucepan add 3 cups of vegetable broth or water and 1 bay leaf. Bring to a boil. Add 1 cup of rinsed and drained lentils to the broth. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 15-20 minutes depending on desired firmness. While the lentils are cooking, dice the carrots, red pepper, walnuts, garlic, scallions and chop the parsley; set aside. Make the dressing by combining all the ingredients into a blender or mini food processor. If you don't have either, place all ingredients in a glass jar and shake well; set aside.

Drain lentils and allow to cool. Once cool, add the diced vegetables, raisins, walnuts and chopped parsley to a medium bowl, and stir to combine. Pour about a ½ cup of the dressing onto the lentils. Season with salt and pepper to taste and sprinkle with crumbled feta cheese. Add more dressing to your liking or upon serving.

Cover and let chill for a bit in the refrigerator before serving to allow the ingredients to meld. You can either enjoy the salad on its own or serve it over a bed of mixed greens. Enjoy and here's to summer! •

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 @oliviavalentine.

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NEW YORK STATE PROPERTY TAXES

What to know about assessments

By Christine Bates
info@mainstreetmag.com

It's happening again. Revaluation is increasing assessment values based on top of the market sales. What's worse people don't know how much their taxes will be until county and school budgets are finalized months from now. This month's real estate feature will try to explain the complex assessment process in New York. Each state has different rules and methods; however, the underlying principle is the same – to treat all property owners fairly for tax purposes by adjusting property assessments to recent market data.

Property owners in Ancram are furious. In early March they received a notice in the mail from the town's assessor, Rene De Leeuw, that a revaluation of the town's parcels had been completed and that their property assessment had been reviewed and revised. How much is owed in property taxes is based on the assessed value of the property times the tax rate of the town, the school district, and the county. Some Ancram taxpayers are receiving new taxable assessed values tripling the assessed value of their properties. (See photo above – full disclosure this house belongs to the grumbling author of this article.)

Listen to the grumbling over coffee in Ancram's Little Store. "I can't afford to stay here when I retire. Where will I go?" "The town is trying to get rid of local people. They want this to be the suburbs." "New Yorkers moved in and drove up real estate prices." "My landlord is going to sell because the taxes are going to go up so much it doesn't make sense to rent."

In tiny Ancram the increased assessments are especially large because no revaluation has been done in over 15 years, and real estate prices in the last three years have increased dramatically because of COVID and remote working.

Will taxes go up?

To be clear, the assessors for each town merely adjust the assessed values of tax parcels to market rates. The amount of taxes to be paid by an individual property owner is determined by how much each taxing authority spends – the budget for the town, the county, the school district, and the fire district. In Ancram for example, the town tax rate will be reduced from 2.4 mills to 1.4 mills to reflect the increased value of all taxable properties – roughly 60%. This means that as long as the new assessed value on the property doesn't increase by more than 60%, its taxes will remain about the same. But for owners who saw their property values more than triple, their property taxes could double. And the new rates for the county and school district are yet to be determined.

Where did these numbers come from?

A revaluation is expensive and time consuming to conduct. Ancram's was delayed by COVID, lack of personnel, and funding shortages. Last summer employees of the county visited every Ancram parcel and took measurements and photographs. Specialized consultants then reviewed town sales records for the last three years, crunched data on lot size, building size, condition, age, and location. A preliminary value for the land, and a total value of the property were calculated. For example, a small lot will be assessed at more per acre than a parcel with ten acres. A house will be largely valued on its square feet, the number of bedrooms and bathrooms, condition, age, and improvements. Recent sales in the neighborhood will also affect the assessments. In the case of Ancram, the revaluation is based on "good" sales in the town for the last three years. Good sales exclude estate sales, foreclosures, and other sales the assessor deems unrepresentative of the market.



Assessments can change year to year

Buyers always ask if they pay more than the assessed value of a house will the assessment be changed and increase the taxes? A periodic revaluation of all properties, like Ancram's, reviews all assessments in the town because of higher sales prices. However, annually, assessors look at sales activity and determine whether a non-appraisal reassessment should be made to adjust an entire neighborhood based on recent sales activity that seems out of line with the rest of the town.

Assessors may also increase assessments based on documents filed with building permits. Did you build a whole new house? Did you add a bathroom, an addition, a swimming pool, or make general improvements which would increase your assessment? Perhaps you tore down a building which might reduce your assessment. A revised assessment will reflect these official changes to the property between revaluations.

The assessment on this Ancram, NY, rental property was increased from \$199,000 in 2022 to \$611,000 in the recent Ancram revaluation.

Continued on next page ..

How can owners protest?

Property owners can discuss the amount of their property's assessed value with their town's assessor at any time by requesting an appointment at the town hall. Assessors are numbers and fact driven so be prepared. Begin by examining the details included in your property description report. These are publicly available on every parcel. In Dutchess County look online at gis.dutchessny.gov/parcelaccess and search by name of owner, address, and parcel number. Similarly in Columbia County just Google sdg Ancram.

Examine each element of the property description. Is the property classification correct? Are you a one family, or a two family, etc. Is the total acreage correct? If you have a recent survey the acreage may be different from the information on the books. Likewise, is the square footage of your house correct? Do you have a fireplace or a swimming pool? Are room descriptions accurate? Is the purchase price right?

The most important part of the argument is to present the fairness of the assessment. This involves research and analysis of neighboring properties. It is the same exercise that an appraiser might conduct for a bank or for estate purposes. Compare the important characteristics of your property with neighboring parcels that use the same public tax records. For example, you might notice that your neighbor has the same size lot but a very different land assessment or that the huge house down the road is assessed much less on a square foot basis than your own. For the assessor, comparable sales within the neighborhood are also an important gauge. Gather recent sale information and compare your property's location, condition, age, square feet, and improvements with those properties. This information is available online at real estate sites by searching for recent sales.

You could also ask a real estate agent to prepare a comparative market valuation of your property. What is your house actually insured for? If you are not a number cruncher you can retain an appraiser to value your property. Don't forget to mention negatives the assessor might not be aware of like restrictions on dividing the property, wetlands, power lines, road noise, etc.

Your approach to the assessor should be professional and cooperative. Work with the assessor to find a fair assessment based on facts. Emotional arguments like, "I can't afford this" or "This is wrong, I just know it" should be avoided. Using an attorney at this stage is usually unproductive and expensive.

Exemptions can help

While you're at the assessor's office ask about any tax exemptions you might be qualified to receive. Your assessment, and consequently your taxes, could be reduced by a veteran's, senior, or disabled exemption — all calculated by the assessor based on a complex mix of age, income criteria, and even combat duty.

If you have seven acres or more of land that is used for agricultural purposes, you could be entitled to an "ag exemption," which would reduce your assessment and taxes. In New York this must be applied for annually with the assessor. Another New York program, the 480a, which can also reduce your assessment, applies to 50 or more acres of forest land owned by the same entity. Remember that parcels under conservation easement are not entitled to reduced property assessments.

Middle-class taxpayers are entitled to receive reductions in local school taxes from STAR, the School Tax Relief Program. All New York taxpayers are eligible for this program on their primary residence. You need to provide a record of taxable income to the assessor and register to receive this benefit, which will not affect your assessment just reduce your school taxes. The size of the benefit will vary based on income, the cost of the property when it was purchased, and the school district. In fact, according to *Crain's New York*, even Donald Trump



The heart of Ancramdale, NY.

took advantage of STAR on his NYC penthouse, saving him about \$350 in taxes annually.

Grievance Day

By law in New York, there is one day a year, usually the fourth Tuesday in May, when you can formally "grieve" your tax assessment. The Board of Assessment Review, five town residents appointed by the town, meets to hear why you think your assessment and your taxes should be less. Again arguments that are successful are based on factual market and property conditions, and all your arguments should be documented on paper. Form RP-524 must be completed in advance, including the basis for the complaint: unequal assessment, excessive assessment, unlawful assessment, or misclassification. Members will examine the information and make a decision.

Tax Certiorari

If after research, arguing to the assessor and the Board of Assessment Review fail to significantly lower your assessment, you can take the town to court in a process known as Tax Certiorari. Over 100 condo owners at the Silo Ridge Club are individually suing the Town of Amenia arguing their tax assessments should be reduced. This route requires the assistance of an attorney who will present arguments in the Supreme Court of the State of New York in Dutchess County. One case that started in 2019 was not decided until 2022, but if you are complaining about an \$8,000,000+ assessment it could be worthwhile.

Alternatively, you can request a small claims assessment review, which is less costly and time-consuming and does not require an attorney. The instructions to file may be found at nycourts.gov/LegacyPDFS/LITIGANTS/scar/SCAR-genInfo-in-NYC.pdf.

The assessment game

Assessors and the county and state do their best to come up with assessments that are fair to everyone, but owners often have a different view. The owner of a Westchester golf club began fighting the tax assessment on his property in 2015, seeking a 90% reduction on a golf course valued at \$50,000,000 in financial statements. A settlement was finally reached in August 2021, reducing the tax liability by 32%. In addition, the owner received a retroactive tax refund of \$860,965 from the Briarcliff Village and School District, the town of Ossining, and Westchester County. The impact of this adjustment will increase everyone else's taxes. ●

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 in 2013.

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Love, loss, and a 1954 Hudson

By CB Wismar
info@mainstreetmag.com

We are a nation divided. Deep chasms have opened in our society, stretching the boundaries of decorum and decency. It is not helpful that major corporations, those behemoths with countless resources, have taken sides in this debate, leaving individuals struggling to find and cement alliances in the face of seemingly relentless advertising and incentives.

Politics? They have little to do with this situation, which has existed long before there were “blue states” and “red states.” In fact, the only color available when this struggle began ... was black. That’s what Henry Ford offered as the choice of colors when the Model T began rolling off the assembly lines in October of 1908. Eleven years later, Chevrolet entered the fray, and the battle was on for the hearts and minds of America.

Not to be left behind, Chrysler Corporation saw the emerging middle class and the appetite for affordable transportation. Twenty years after Ford threw down the gauntlet, Chrysler introduced the Plymouth with great fanfare.

Where do your loyalties lie?

The question became endemic: Were you a Ford, Chevrolet, or Plymouth family? If fortune smiled, did you extend your reach and become a Mercury, Buick, or Desoto family? Race, religion, and ethnicity had nothing to do with the raging ideological battle. What kind of car did you drive? Which side are you on?

It is intriguing how the automobile has been ... continues to be ... a defining gesture in our society. We are proud of our automobiles, quick to defend them and ready to debate their value in the light of the opposition. Perhaps we can recall the decals pasted in the rear windows of pick-up trucks depicting a young lad relieving himself on the logo of a competing brand. Emotions run deep.

As the industrialized world watched the vast American market, the marques (car brands) from overseas began to be off-loaded at ports of entry on the East, West, and Southern Coasts. It was not long before the debate became “foreign or domestic?” German or Japanese? Korean or British? Somewhere in that onslaught of new entries into the market the phrase “Buy American, be American” emerged, and the intellectual and emotional struggles found new platforms.

And, your humble commentator was not above the allure and intrigue of the battle. Over the course of several decades, there have been British, Japanese, Swedish, and German cars in the driveway. There was even a five-week love affair with a French beauty that simply refused to run and, as a result, broke my heart.

The one that got away

But, as is often the case, our first love is the one that haunts us, emerging in late-night reveries and musings of “what if?” It’s entirely possible that nine out of ten will not remember the Hudson. Like so many American brands ... think Edsel and Packard and Plymouth and DeSoto and Mercury and Stanley and Tucker and Saturn and Studebaker and Oldsmobile and Pontiac and ... Hudson began manufacturing cars in 1909 and continued to bring them to market until the dominance of “the Big Three” became too great.

My first car was a 1954 Hudson Hornet. For four years, Hudson had dominated NASCAR racing and my grandmother, not a NASCAR fan but a bit of a terror on the open road, bought her second Hudson from a storefront dealership located on Route 7, just north of Sheffield, MA. It

was in that monster that I learned to drive. I believe the statute of limitations has run out, so I can admit to having driven on route 126 at 14 years old, clutching the giant steering wheel of that beauty and willingly becoming infected with the auto-virus that divides as much as it unites.

It was when I came of age to get a license that every cent I had saved up was handed over in a family transaction, and the red and white sedan became mine. I had entered the ownership phase of the national divide over motor cars. The fact that my brand was Hudson put me in a rather small circle of like-minded believers, but I was there, just the same.

Flash forward through a parade of vehicles that have each, in their own way, fueled the sense of pride that ownership can bring. Of course there are those who loudly proclaim that “it’s just transportation ... a way of getting from here to there.” In the most basic, emotionless way they are right. But a thoroughly unscientific survey of car owners will, no doubt, prove theirs to be a very small minority. We love our cars. We wash and polish them. We smile when a similar make and model glides past. In some cases, we even wave to drivers coming in the opposite direction ... a kind of “secret handshake” moment that acknowledges a bond and an affirmation.

Back in the throes of debate

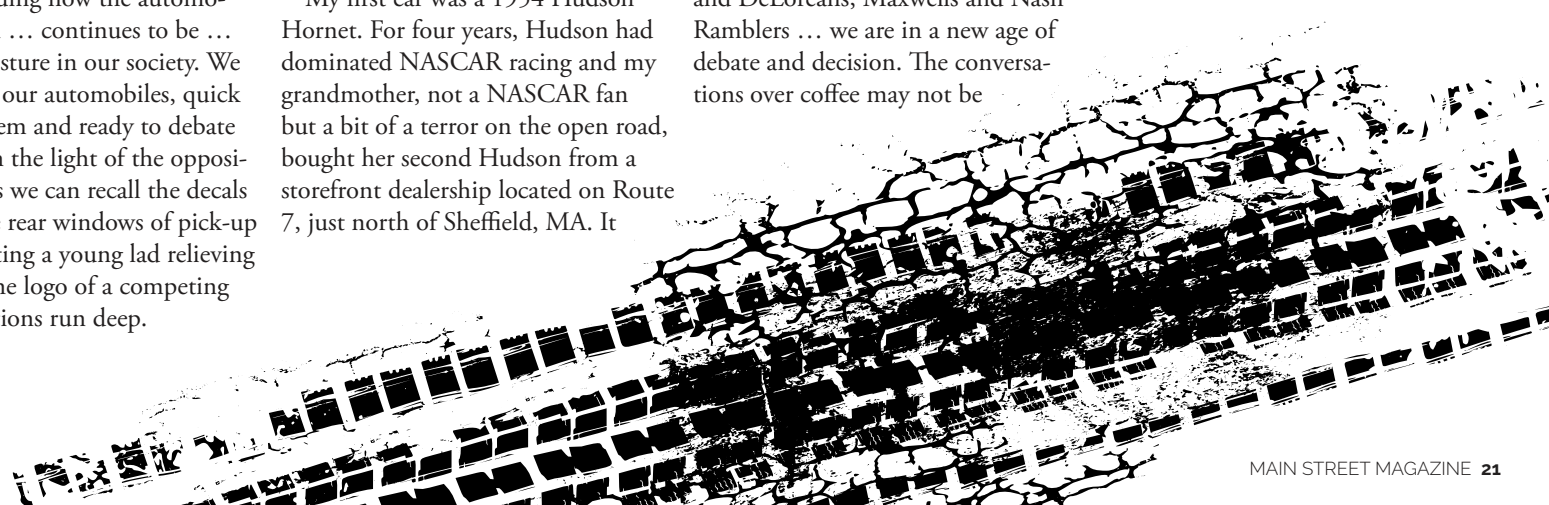
With all of this history ... Cords and DeLoreans, Maxwells and Nash Ramblers ... we are in a new age of debate and decision. The conversations over coffee may not be

heated, but they are intense. There is a sense of non-theological predestination, but we are a nation divided. The age of the electric vehicle is upon us, and we are back in the throes of debate, dissent, and decision.

Since the first viable automobile was offered to the American public in 1880, the primary fuel that fed 2, 4, 6, 8 and 12-cylinder engines has been gasoline. Our use of fossil fuels to fashion a global economy has placed us in an environment that, most would agree, needs serious repair if generations to come will have a livable world. What began as a very modest experiment has turned into a global revolution, reinforced by government edict and corporate response. The State of California recently declared that one half of heavy trucks sold in the state by 2035 must be electric. That’s garbage trucks and cement mixers.

The electric car. The electric truck. Tesla, Rivian, Renault, Volkswagen, General Motors, BYD (Build Your Dreams from China). Every major manufacturer of cars and trucks in the world has joined the movement to move away from the gas pump to the electric outlet. Will our hearts and minds follow? The debates will rage on – first electric or gasoline, then Chevrolet or Toyota.

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DRIVING INTO SUMMER

By Regina Molaro
info@mainstreetmag.com

Summer is the ideal time for drive-in movies. After recapping the history of the drive-in movie, *Main Street* shares news on a local spot in Amenia that offers films, food, and so much more. There are lots of other movie nights in the Hudson Valley region, so grab your calendar and start planning.

Car culture

An icon of American culture, the automobile, was invented and perfected in Germany and France in the late 1800s, but the history of the car is often associated with America because the US quickly dominated the automotive industry in the first half of the twentieth century.

Of course, the automobile's history is also linked with innovator Henry Ford – the founder of Ford Motor Company. Even as a kid, Ford had a keen interest in all things mechanical.

Ford teamed up with a group of 12 others and collectively, they invested \$28,000 in Ford Motor Company. The first car built was sold on July 15, 1903. Beyond taking people from point A to point B, the auto has sparked other inventions that have played important roles in American history.

The automobile was also the starting point for Richard Hollingshead's creation. A movie fan and sales manager at Whiz Auto Products in Camden, NJ, Hollingshead is credited for creating the drive-in-movie. At his job at his father's company, Hollingshead worked around cars and became inspired. According to the *Smithsonian*, "The concept of showing movies wasn't novel; people often watched silent screens set up at beaches or other

places boasting an abundance of sky. However, it took this auto-parts salesman from the Garden State to deliver a leisurely event that tied in with America's car-loving society one more activity they could do in their vehicles."

Revvng it up

As the saying goes, "necessity is the mother of invention." According to New York Film Academy, the first patented drive-in opened on June 6, 1933. Hollingshead dreamed up the idea as a solution for those, like his own mother, who had difficulty fitting into the rather small movie seats available at traditional theaters.

Hollingshead yearned to create a spacious, open-air theater where people could watch movies in the comfort of their own automobiles. The History Channel cites that, "He experimented in the driveway of his own house with different projection and sound techniques, mounting a 1928 Kodak projector on the hood of his car, pinning a screen to some trees, and placing a radio behind the screen for sound. He also tested ways to guard against rain and other inclement weather and devised the ideal spacing arrangement for a number of cars so that all would have a view of the screen."

In May of 1933, Hollingshead was granted a patent for his concept. The first drive-in movie theatre to debut was Camden Drive-in in Pennsauken, NJ. British comedy *Wives Beware* was the first movie to be shown.

Continued on page 25 ...



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With Julie Hart, Dee Salomon, Michael Nadeau & Michelle Alfandari.



Saturday, May 13 - 6:30 PM

Meet the Director: TOP HAT & TALES: HAROLD ROSS & THE MAKING OF THE NEW YORKER

+ Q&A with Director, Adam Van Doren.



Wednesday, May 17 - 6:30 PM

THAT WEEK WITH THE BACHS + Q&A

With writer/lyricist William Kinsolving in conversation with Dan Dwyer.



Thursday, May 18 - 7 PM & Sunday, May 21 @ 1 PM

NTLive: BEST OF ENEMIES

By James Graham. Directed by Jeremy Herrin.



Saturday, May 20 - 12:55 PM

MetLive in HD: Mozart's DON GIOVANNI

Directed by Ivo van Hove. Conductor: Nathalie Stutzman.



Tuesday, May 23 - 6:30 PM & Sunday, May 28 - 1 PM

Exhibition on Screen: TOKYO STORIES

From the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. Directed by David Bickerstaff.



Wednesday, May 31 - 6:30 PM

THE GREAT ITALIAN AUTEURS - Fellini's LA STRADA (1956)

+ Intro and Q&A with Professor Joseph Luzzi.

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Of course, Hollingshead's success sparked the launch of many more drive-ins in every state in the US and in international locales.

Post WWII

Drive-ins remained quite popular especially after WWII and during the 1950s and '60s – the concept really appealed to the Baby Boomer generation. At the time, there were about 5,000 theaters in America. Unfortunately, interest began to wane with the introduction of the VCR. When VCRs became more mainstream, drive-in movies took a backseat to a new favorite pastime – watching movies from the comfort of your own home. Families were delighted at the idea of not having to pay admission for every member of the family.

According to the National Association of Theater Owners, 549 drive-ins remained in the US in 2020. The Hudson Valley boasts a few of them.

Local drives

Four Brothers Drive-in in Amenia, NY

Amenia, NY's Four Brothers Drive-in is rolling into its tenth season in business. Why a drive-in? "We always loved bringing people together and we love entertainment," explained John Stefanopoulos, a family member who helps run the business. With plenty of open land and not much entertainment in the area, the drive-in concept proved to be a win.

This summer, Four Brothers will show first runs and classics. Movies are offered seven days per week, rain or shine. Live music entertains crowds on weekends. The summer schedule includes *Mission: Impossible*, *Barbie*, *Fast & Furious*,

Guardians of the Galaxy, *Spider-Man*, *Transformers*, and *Wonka*, to name a few. There are also some iconic throwbacks such as *Back to the Future*, *Grease*, and *Jaws*.

On the topic of throwbacks, Four Brothers will host several throwback events, which will include guest appearances. It teams up with Boondock's Film Society to present a showing of *Wayne's World* on May 25th. The event will boast a special menu and offer pre-show entertainment. Other special events are planned, so stay tuned.

Amenities abound

Also, on site are camping, and glamping at Hotel Caravana – one of the most unique airstream hotels in the world (as written about on *Lonely Planet's* top airstreams in the world content).

Four Brothers also features a chic outside patio for dining. There's a playground, open field for enjoying time with the kids or with pets, a fire pit, and electric car charging stations. "It's very happening over here," says Stefanopoulos.

Four Brothers' drive-in venue attracts everyone from those enjoying date night to families, groups of friend, and kids. The cost is \$15 per person (walk-ins or people on bikes are welcome; guests can bring their own radios or use one provided by Four Brothers) and \$10 for kids and veterans.



There's plenty of appeal in a drive-in movie experience. "It's more flexible than traditional movies. There's more freedom at drive-ins. It's not so much about the movie but the whole experience," says Stefanopoulos.

Food is available from the Four Brothers restaurant menu, which offers top-notch fare including salmon burgers, meat burgers, Impossible burgers, chicken sandwiches, truffle fries, lobster rolls, and beyond. "We've been building some serious attention around how our lobster rolls are best in area," added Stefanopoulos.

The beverage offering includes fresh lemonade, iced lattes, and Nutella shakes, as well as wine, margaritas, and beyond. Another snack menu highlights soft serve and other ice creams as well as sundaes and other treats.

"What's so special about our theater is that it's also a venue – we have done weddings, graduations, fundraisers, car shows, corporate getaways, outings, screenings for A-list stars, events for the community, and the list goes on," concluded Stefanopoulos.

Continued on next page ...

istockphoto.com
contributor Kirkikis

Company roots

Four Brothers traces its history back to the 1970s when the Stefanopoulos brothers emigrated from Greece. Their strong unity cultivated ideas, love for one another, and inspiration. In 1972, they opened their first locale in Connecticut. By 1974 the brothers owned five restaurants – one by the name of Brothers Pizza. It was during this period that they developed their famous pizza recipe at the Brothers Pizza location in Lakeville, CT.

The collaboration between the four brothers inspired the name, Four Brothers Pizza Inn. Since then, the Stefanopoulos brothers have expanded their portfolio to nine restaurants and added The Boathouse in Lakeville, CT. The family taps their local farm for dairy products and their olive orchards in Greece for olive oil.

To learn more you can visit the Four Brothers Drive-in at 4957 NY-22, Amenia, NY, or visit them online at playeatdrink.com.

Other outdoor flicks: Movies Under the Walkway, Poughkeepsie, NY

Throughout summer and into the fall, Movie Nights Under the Walkway in Poughkeepsie offers free, family-friendly movies to the public. The bonus: there's also musical entertainment. The Saturday dates include June 24 (classic movie

night); July 22 (superhero night and kids costume contest); and August 5 (animation night). At press time, the organization was still finalizing the movie titles, which will be released on Memorial Day weekend.

With the help of several other not-for-profits and area businesses, MHR Foundation spearheaded the creation of movie nights in 2015. The initiative is part of the Foundation's vision to improve both the quality of life and sense of community in the Hudson Valley. Since its inception, MHR Foundation has donated more than \$500K to local non-profits. The movies will be shown in the Upper Landing Park in Poughkeepsie. The pre shows kick off at 7pm; the films start at sundown. Food vendors will be on site offering refreshments. Free parking is available at Mid-Hudson Children's Museum & Metro North. Sunshine only, guests are encouraged to bring blankets and chairs.

Movies Under the Walkway are located at 83 N. Water St., Poughkeepsie, NY, or you can visit them online at mhrfoundation.org.

Movies Under the Stars, Kingston, NY

Movies Under the Stars is an annual summer series of free family-friendly events. Its 2023 season will run from May to August and will feature everything from family-



friendly films to diverse musical performances by jazz, country, rock, and Latin artists. It will also feature live performance art. All events are free of charge and held at multiple locations throughout the city.

For more information, visit kingstonny.gov/moviesandmusic or the Parks and Rec facebook page, facebook.com/kingstonparksrec

Boondocks Film Society, Various location, USA

Boondocks Film Society is a non-profit pop-up film series, which is held at locations throughout the Hudson Valley, Litchfield Hills, and the Berkshires. Beyond watching a movie, guests can enjoy drinking and dining at each locale. A mixologist will be on site at every event to craft themed cocktails while a chef will be on hand to whip up themed menus.

In June, Gedney Farm in Marlborough, MA, will show a movie, but at press time, the film was not ready to be announced. On July 14, *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* will debut at South Farms in Morris, CT. The event will feature live "Prohibition Era" jazz, movie-themed food, and craft cocktails.

To learn more about the Boondock Film Society, visit them online at boondocksfilmsociety.org.

The Four Brothers Amenia Drive-in has a large variety of food and drink options, as well as areas to hang out and for families to play.





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Float away

YES YOU CAN

By Dominique DeVito
info@mainstreetmag.com

Remember the jingle, “Calgon, take me away!”? It became a motto for stressed-out women. Stepping into a tub of bubbles was any and every woman’s way to escape her problems: the job, the kids, the housecleaning, the husband. Tranquility was just a bathtub away. For many of us, a soak in the tub is still a great escape. It is for me. Same with swimming, whether in a pool or the ocean. If these ways to be soothed by water have always been delightful for me, then what about a sensory deprivation float tank? With the theme of this issue in mind – transportation – I thought I would explore being transported by going to a float tank. It worked.

Finding a float center

I had booked a 60-minute float for a friend and myself in side-by-side tanks at Requiescent Float Center in Albany, NY. (There are several flotation centers in the Hudson Valley. They’re listed at the end of the article.) I had a sense of what to expect as I had been in a float tank once before, though it was way back in the early 1980s. My memory of that experience was very positive – transporting, for sure – and I was looking forward to something similar. My friend had never had a float tank experience and in fact had never heard of such a thing.

Prepping to float

Requiescent Float Center’s motto is “Walk In & Float Away.” It’s as simple as that, really.

We were greeted by Vam, a friendly and attentive man who explained that each tank room featured a shower, some towels, a couple of pairs of wax ear plugs, a thin foam ring to put behind your head to keep it safely buoyed while floating, and the tank itself. Locking yourself inside the tank room, you took off your clothes, showered to get wet, secured the wax ear plugs (so as not to get the Epsom salt-rich tank water in your ears), climbed in, shut the tank door, pushed the button to turn off the single light in the tank, and lay down to float. Vam explained that when the hour was up we would hear music that would slowly increase in volume. After a few minutes of music, a light would flash. Emerging from the tank, we could throw away the ear plugs, shower, and get dressed. We were excited to start our floats.

The temperature of the water is 94 degrees, which is regulated to complement a normal body temperature. It’s warm, but not too warm. It’s not deep, either. The tank is essentially a large rectangular bath tub with a nice high ceiling. There was no odor in the tank, either, which was nice. Once the button was pressed to turn off the tank light, there was complete darkness and complete silence.

The float

Settling into the experience is like settling into meditation. If you’re practiced at quieting your mind, you’ll float away sooner, I suspect. My monkey brain kicked in and I was hyper-aware of whether I had the ear plugs in properly to keep the salt water out. It took sitting up a few times and squishing them around to reassure myself that they were indeed doing their job. The water moves you around a tiny bit, like an inflatable on a still pool, and my mind fussed a little with that.

I’ve meditated and done relaxation exercises before, so I steered my thoughts in the direction of focusing on my breathing, taking deep breaths, and sinking into the float. Out of nowhere I felt like crying, but it came up and went away. I imagined myself in a favorite place, on a rock at the top of a hill in a pasture where I grew up. I felt the sun on my face and could see everything around me clearly and calmly. People from my past bubbled up, people I hadn’t thought about in years.

The thin foam piece behind my head was very comfortable, but I felt tension in my neck and shoulders. This was interesting to me, as I have chronic pain in my right shoulder for which I’ve tried several treatments with varying degrees of success. I bent my elbows and positioned my arms with palms facing up on either side

of my head, picturing my cat on her back in the sun. This was much more comfortable and I stayed in this position.

The feeling of being safely buoyed by the water – floating – was wonderful. There was nothing but the sound of my heart beating in my ears and my breath coming and going. And just as Vam had said, at some point I became aware of music. Massage music. Slipping in like a stream of color. Becoming aware of it made me realize I hadn’t been aware of anything physical for who knows how long.

Getting out of the tank took discipline. It was really nice in there. The shower was great, though, and they had body wash, shampoo, conditioner, and lotion, as you’d expect at a spa. I heard my friend emerge from the adjacent tank and the sound of his and Vam’s voices.

Back to earth.

Post-float glow

The after effects? The float left me and my friend feeling, well, floaty. We both wrestled with settling into it at first and both felt that when we heard the music at the end of the hour, it was like no time had passed. A kind of dreamy contentment floated with us for most of the day, even when we

Continued on next page ...

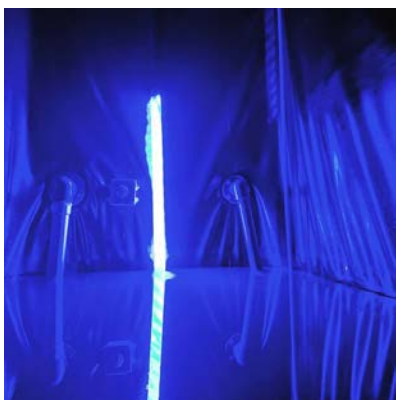
spent time with a very active toddler later in the day.

Who came up with this stuff, anyway? I hadn't given any consideration to the creating of the experience when I did it in the '80s, but I wanted to know now.

Thank you, Dr. Lilly

The isolation tank was a creation of John C. Lilly, MD, a noted physician, neuroscientist, psychoanalyst, and psychonaut. (A psychonaut is someone who, in sum, seeks to investigate their mind using intentionally induced altered states of consciousness for spiritual, scientific, or research purposes. Timothy Leary, with whom Lilly was friends, was considered a psychonaut as well.) While studying neurophysiology at the US Public Health Service Commissioned Officers Corps in the early 1950s, he became curious about the brain's function without sensory input. He created what has remained the prototype of an isolation tank — a dark, soundproof tank of warm salt water in which subjects could float in sensory isolation. The therapy was called REST — restricted environmental stimulation technique.

He said of the work, "At the National Institute for Mental Health, I devised the isolation tank. I made so many discoveries that I didn't dare tell the psychiatric group about them all because they would've said I was psychotic. I found the isolation tank was a hole in the universe. I gradually began to see through to another reality. It scared me. I didn't know about alternate realities at that time, but I was experiencing them right and left without any LSD."



It wasn't until the 1970s that Lilly and a fellow floating enthusiast, Glenn Perry, thought to expand the use of floatation therapy for the public. They formed the Samadhi Tank Co. and were able to offer tanks for home floating by 1973. They opened the country's first floatation center in Beverly Hills, CA, in 1979. Perry said of floating, "In my life, I have always had a deep-down feeling that I was not okay, not complete, that I did not accept myself. Whenever I float, I come out feeling at ease, at peace, and loving. The more I float, the more this feeling fills my life." The Samadhi Tank Co. is still in business (samadhi-tank.com).

The early 1980s was a good time for floatation therapy. *The Book of Floating: Exploring the Private Sea*, by Michael Hutchinson, brought it to a wider audience, and the movie *Altered States*, starring William Hurt, did even more to promote Lilly and the therapeutic and mind-altering benefits of floating. It fell out of favor in the late 80s, however, when the AIDS epidemic led to suspicion that the warm, wet tanks in which people floated naked could provide an environment of transmission of the disease.

Rebounding from AIDS, the 1990s was about wellness, and floatation therapy fit right in. Always considered odd and somewhat experimental, it was featured in an episode of *The Simpsons* in 1999 when Homer and Lisa floated in side-by-side tanks. More recently, podcaster Joe Rogan is a very vocal proponent (and what a microphone he has, reaching nearly 11 million people per episode of *The Joe Rogan Experience*). Professional athletes float for mental and physical health benefits. Several NFL teams use floatation therapy. Basketball star Stephen Curry credits floating with elevating his game through visualization.

What's next?

In the research I did, the positive effects of floatation therapy were proven and even profound. On WebMD (which I consider a trusted source), I read that one hour of floatation therapy can equal up to six hours of sleep; that "people participating in a seven-week-long floatation program



Dr. John C. Lilly introduced floatation therapy in the 1950s. Below: Inside the blue tank at Requiescent Float Center in Albany. Images courtesy of Requiescent Float Center.

finished the program with significantly less depression, anxiety, pain, and stress. Sleep quality and optimism, on the other hand, increased." The only reasons cited not to go into a float tank were if you have epilepsy, open wounds, claustrophobia, low blood pressure, kidney disease, or a contagious disease. Oh, and if you aren't open to a potentially mind-altering experience.

Frequent floaters call the therapy "getting tanked," and it's definitely catching. Medical practitioners continue to learn about benefits for chronic pain, addiction recovery, and more. Mindfulness and holistic therapy enthusiasts love it for where it can take body and soul.

Dr. Lilly has a website that's as weird and wacky and brilliant as the man himself. He passed on in 2001 at age 86. You can spend a college semester on the site exploring all the areas this highly educated and scientifically curious man was into. Then you can read one or more of the 19 books he published. I love how his bio reads.

Here's just part of it:

"Lilly's life and work at the forefronts of human knowledge encompass the major themes of the twentieth century. A distinguished brain researcher even before he became a public figure, Lilly has sown the seeds of several scientific revolutions, including the theory of internal realities,

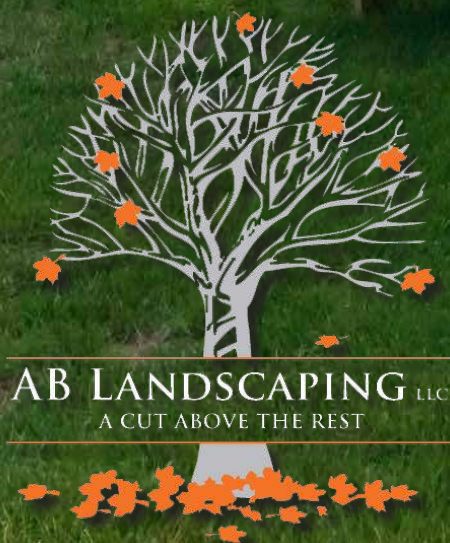
the hardware/software model of the human brain/mind, and the initiation of worldwide efforts at interspecies communications with large-brained dolphins....Lilly pursued a brilliant academic career among the scientific leaders of the day [and] has lived in the company of associates and intimates including Nobel physicists Richard Feynman and Robert Milliken; philosophers Buckminster Fuller, Aldous Huxley, and Alan Watts; psychotherapy pioneers RD Laing and Fritz Perls; spiritual teachers Oscar Ichazo and Baba Ram Dass; and a host of luminaries, inventors, writers, and Hollywood celebrities."

What a trip! I know I'll go and float again. ●

Three floatation Therapy Centers in the Hudson Valley: Requiescent Float Center, Stuyvesant Plaza, Albany. Requiescent.com. Mountain Float Spa, New Paltz. Mountainfloatspa.com. Zephyr Float, Kingston. Zephyrfloat.com.

**Disclaimer: All medical claims made in this article are information provided by the subject. The information is general in nature and not specifically meant for any particular individual. You should always seek out medical assistance from a medical professional based on your individual needs and circumstances.*

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The Taconic State Parkway



The Taconic State Parkway never quite got to where it was going. While some drivers love it and others hate it, at 105.3 miles in length, it is the longest parkway in New York State, we'll give it that. If there's anyone here who's not driven the road, I'm thinking you may want to consider purchasing a lottery ticket tonight, because to have not traveled at least some portion of the TSP – officially designated New York State Route 987G – is nearly impossible when tooling around these parts.

By Jesse DeGroodt
info@mainstreetmag.com

From start to finish

Beginning at the commanding presence of the Kensico Dam/Plaza in Westchester County and terminating in northern Columbia County at Chatham and the Berkshire Spur of the New York State Thruway, the north-south oriented TSP passes through the counties of Westchester (21.6 miles), Putnam (13.5), Dutchess (38.6), and Columbia (31.6).

Its construction was a combined project of the Westchester County Park Commission, the Taconic State Park Commission, and the New York State Department of Public Works.

In 1992, the New York State Legislature designated the TSP a State Scenic Highway, and in 2005, it took its place on the National Register of Historic Places. It has also at least once earned the less-than-coveted tag of New York's most dangerous highway.

A little historical context

As the automobile began making inroads into American life, future United States President and Hyde Park native Franklin Delano Roosevelt, serving as chairman of the Taconic State Park Commission in the mid-1920s, envisioned would become the TSP: Approximately midway between Albany Post Road and the Harlem River Valley and coming out on the west side of Shenandoah Valley, passing thence east of East Fishkill, east of Hopewell ... to Philmont and past Chatham, with the idea that at some point north of Chatham it

would be divided so one fork would lead northeast to Williamstown and the Mohawk Trail and the other fork northwest passing east of Troy to the Saratoga Battlefield.

New York City planner Robert Moses was not of the same mind. Sparks flew, as Moses lobbied for a parkway to extend easterly to Jones Beach, and for a spell Moses appeared to gain the upper hand as TSP funding was curtailed. But that didn't last long. Under the aegis of the Taconic State Park Commission, the design of the TSP fell to the care of the designer of the Bronx River Parkway, landscape architect Gilmore Clarke, charged with developing a route for automobiles that took in views of the Hudson Highlands, Catskills, and Taconic regions.

In the autumn of 1937, unofficial estimates held that the cost of constructing the parkway to Lake Taghkanic would wind up at approximately \$5 million. That

Continued on page 35 ...

Above, L-R: Aerial view, Westchester County, Saw Mill interchange. Circa 1940, view of Peekskill Hollow Road interchange, Putnam Valley, view south. Photos: Library of Congress.



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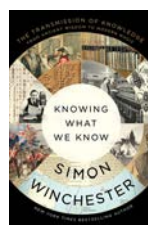


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same year, Paul Winslow, executive director of the Taconic State Park Commission, noted that it was not possible at that time to travel non-stop over parkways from Arthursburg in Dutchess County to the lower end of New York City. "It is obvious that a great amount of traffic is going to roll over the Taconic Parkway in getting to and from New York City," he said, while urging that this increase in traffic spark some giddy-up in TSP construction and continue the push northward to Columbia County.

From that point, the TSP would require another 26 years to complete, with the last segment – ending in Chatham at the Berkshire Spur of the New York State Thruway – opening in 1963. A planned ribbon cutting would be canceled with the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

A change of thought and use

By this time, the idea of parkways connecting urban areas with parks and recreation sites, simultaneously following rivers and valley and encompassing regional scenery in order to create a pleasant driving experience, had become passé. "Thruways" and "freeways" and their accompanying increase in

speed were quickly becoming the preferred method for getting from one place to the next.

As Casper Gutman would tell Sam Spade in *The Maltese Falcon*: "These are facts, sir. Not school book history, not Mr. Wells's history, but history nevertheless." Putting the nuts and bolts aside for a bit, let's wander off and chat about some TSP-related stuff.

"Super-duper roads"

Shortly after joining up with the TSP at the southern end looms the Gate of Heaven Cemetery, where such luminaries as Babe Ruth, Dorothy Kilgallen, Dutch Schultz, Mary Higgins Clark, and – for all we know – Judge Crater and Jimmy Hoffa, are interred. In pre-Internet days, one could spend a good part of the day scouring its 160 acres searching for the Babe's grave. One could, and one once did. Nowadays, I'd surmise it'd be easy as pie to walk right up to it, given the all-knowledge-all-the-time device in our pockets. But where's the fun in that?

I'm thinking it was the summer of 1969 when one young fella and his mom and dad were on their way to Shea Stadium for a Cards-Mets doubleheader, when they stopped at an eatin' joint inside a log cabin-looking building in the vicinity of the Hawthorne Circle, which from 1931-71 connected the Saw Mill Parkway with the TSP. Milling around the cash register at the end of the meal, the young fella took a shine to a colorful display of lollipops that resembled whistles. No doubt figuring a load of ballyard food awaited the young man, mom and dad declined to spring for the lollipop whistle, at which time the gent at the register said, in a wistful tone that even a kid could detect, "Go ahead and take one. We won't be in business much longer once the circle is gone and traffic doesn't pass by here." Oof.

Continued on page 37 ...



Above: 1955 section of the parkway between NY Route 199 and Route 82, Columbia County at Dutchess County.

Left: Parkway view southbound at NY Route 44 interchange, Poughkeepsie.

Far left, top to bottom: Chief Martindale Diner at NY Route 23 exit, view east from TSP. Unknown location or date.

Photos: Library of Congress.





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Above, top, L-R:
Jackson Corners Road
overpass, view NW.
John Gass, photogra-
pher August 9, 1949:
Paving construction,
northbound drive, new
section of parkway
between NY Route 55
and 199. NY Route 82
underpass at north-
bound exit, view SW.

Above middle, L-R:
NY Route 52 overpass
bridge, elevation, view
NE. NY Route 134
overpass, Pough-
keepsie. Northbound
parkway view near
Snydertown Road in
Columbia County.

Directly above: Park-
way view with rock
cut in foreground,
Columbia County.

Photos: Library of
Congress.

Progress. Or not. “Lovely,” Mrs. Toby Berg of Millbrook would be quoted with blatant disdain on the day the aforementioned new interchange opened in 1971. “The more I see of these super-duper roads, the less I like them. So we’ll be able to go a little faster. Great big deal. They’ve ruined the landscape.”

Carvel had a dream

Sometime thereafter, along came ice cream tycoon Tom Carvel, who had a dream: He transformed 778 acres adjacent to the TSP off Ferris Lane, Red Hook, into an 18-hole, 7,030-yard championship golf course; a separate nine-hole, par 27 course; tennis courts; a 36-hole putting green; the All-American Collegiate Golf Hall of Fame; three swimming pools; stables with rental horses; a skeet-shooting range; hiking trails; and a toboggan run, all of which would be known as the All American Sports City, Inc.

Among Carvel’s associates in this doomed endeavor were Bob Hope, Arnold Palmer, Perry Como, Sammy Kaye, and Chris Schenkel with Vic Damon serving as vice-president of the complex. In 1974, the New York State high school golf championship was held on the course, and in 1975 and ’76, the LPGA would conduct

what was known as the Girl Talk Classic on the All-American Sports City course. In time, it all cratered in rather mind-numbing fashion, and with it plans for condos and hotels.

Today, you’d be hard-pressed to detect many signs – other than from miles above on Google Earth – of the golf course that once occupied the site.

UFOs on the TSP

In the early 1980s, UFO sightings sashayed into TSP lore. On separate occasions a retired New York City cop and a Yorktown police officer spotted what was described as a large, V-shaped aircraft approximately the size of a football field and for the most part, in no particular hurry, at least until it suddenly had enough and zipped away. A white light was said to emanate from the thing. Shortly thereafter, it was observed lingering over the TSP, with drivers stopping to have a look and causing a miles-long traffic backup. Eventually, thousands would report a sighting.

Continued on next page ..



Above, top to bottom: Shenandoah service station, view NE. Southbound view of northern end of Taconic State Parkway, Columbia County mile marker 1311.

Above, right: Aerial view, Columbia County, Lake Taghkanic.

Photos: Library of Congress.

In 1984, officials told *The New York Times* that it was a “cleverly executed hoax ... formed by five to six pilots flying in tight formation.” Hogwash, said one pilot, who had experience flying in tight formations in jets and who had himself observed the mystery craft. Along came the *Unsolved Mysteries* TV show in 1992 asking pilots who claimed responsibility for whatever it was to duplicate their results, but when challenged by host Robert Stack, they vanished quicker than the UFO.

Meanwhile, back at the oasis.

“I have to go pee!”

What I’d like to know is where all the rest stops that once dotted the TSP went and why. As a kid, I thought all the stops along the way were pretty snazzy. Could be they had lollipop whistles, for all I can recall. But then they started knocking them down and, in what seemed an odd twist on a rather heavily traveled road offering no end of potential challenges, particularly at the southern end where things can get a bit white-knuckled and otherwise not for the faint of heart, turned one at Todd Hill in

Poughkeepsie into a Taste NY store that, among its wonderful array of New York-produced agricultural products, peddles adult beverages. Hmmm. Drink responsibly!

For those inclined to wallow in some serious minutiae, I’d suggest a visit to dot.ny.gov/display/programs/scenic-byways/taconic-pkwy, where the TSP Corridor Management Plan, all 263 pages, awaits.

The last stretch

In 1958, the state opened an eight-mile length of the TSP from Route 82 in West Taghkanic to Route 23 at Martindale. Four years later, bids opened on the construction of the next 11.95 miles, to Route 203 in Chatham. Subsequently, four additional miles were tacked on, bringing the TSP to its terminus at the Berkshire Spur. Despite the years of hue and cry calling for the parkway to be extended into Rensselaer and Berkshire Counties and ultimately to the Canadian border, that was all she wrote. ●

Sources: New York State Department of Transportation, Library of Congress, The Chatham Courier, Pawling-Patterson News Chronicle, The New York Times, The Times Record, Albany Times-Union, The Register Herald, U.S. Department of the Interior, Plane & Pilot Magazine



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PHOTOGRAPH 51

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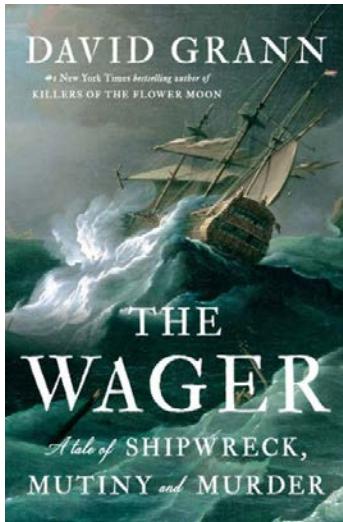
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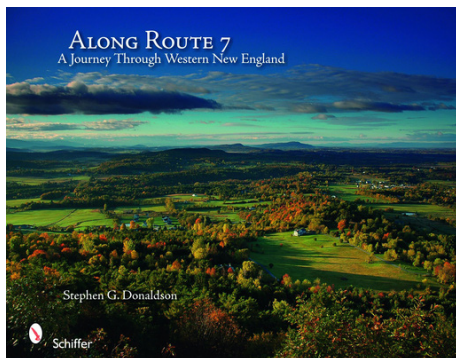
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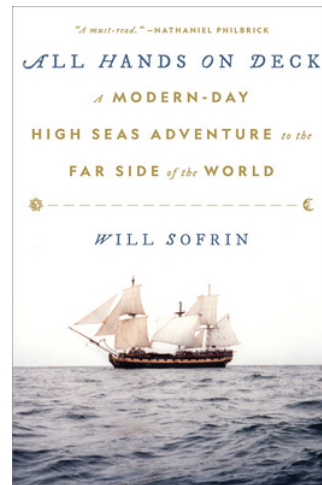
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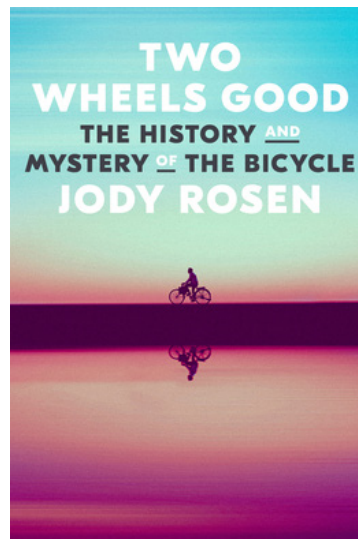
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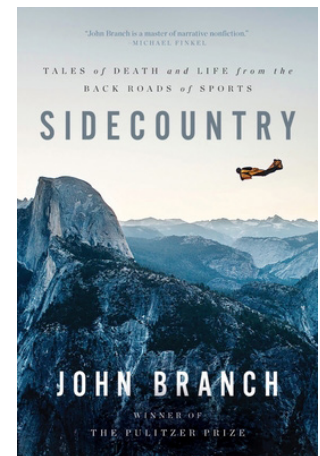
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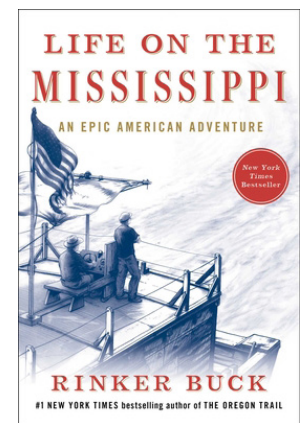
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Sidecountry: Tales of Death and Life from the Back Roads of Sports by John Branch

The New York Times reporter John Branch's riveting, humane pieces about ordinary people doing extraordinary things at the edges of the sporting world have won nearly every major journalism prize. *Sidecountry* gathers the best of Branch's work for the first time, featuring 20 of his favorites from the more than 2,000 pieces he has published in the paper.



Life on the Mississippi: An Epic American Adventure by Rinker Buck

The eagerly awaited return of master American storyteller Rinker Buck, *Life on the Mississippi* is an epic, enchanting blend of history and adventure in which Buck builds a wooden flatboat from the grand “flatboat era” of the 1800s and sails it down the Mississippi River, illuminating the forgotten past of America's first western frontier. Now, Buck returns to chronicle his latest incredible adventure: building a wooden flatboat from the bygone era of the early 1800s and journeying down the Mississippi River to New Orleans.

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The museum road trip

TAKING IN THE SIGHTS, FROM NEW YORK TO FLORIDA

By Whitney Joseph
info@mainstreetmag.com

There's no arguing that New York City has some of the best museums in the United States. One may maintain that the Metropolitan Museum of Art is the cream of the crop. It has two iconic locations, with the main museum stationed at 1000 Fifth Avenue and The Met at The Cloisters located at Fort Tryon Park.

Certainly that could be up for debate among those in the art world, but there's no arguing that the Met's 20 curatorial themes offered to museumgoers are worthy of its golden reputation. They include: African Art; American Art (inclusive of an "ever-evolving collection," according to metmuseum.org, of African American, Euro American, Native American, and Latin American Art); Ancient Near Eastern Art; Arms and Armor; Asian Art; Costumes; European Paintings; Sculpture and Decorative Arts; Greek and Roman Art; Islamic Art; Photographs; and Musical Instruments. The collections are so vast that viewers could easily get lost in the 2.2-million square foot space.

But there are many other, dare we say lesser-known museums that dot the eastern seaboard of our US map, along with a number that may be more familiar to many of our readers. We here at *Main Street*

Magazine thought it might be fun in this month's transportation issue to share some of those spots with you, to help you gear up for your next museum road trip.

So buckle up as we hit the road and head south from the Empire State to the Sunshine State and peek into some of those museums that are more familiar and some of those that tend to be off-the-beaten-path – we promise you won't be disappointed!

Storm King Art Center

Before exiting the Hudson Valley, it would behoove you to make a quick stop by the Storm King Art Center. It promises a world-class artistic experience unique to the Hudson Valley – to leave the area without enjoying this outdoor museum spread out across a 500-acre park would be a missed opportunity.

Storm King was dreamed up in 1960, as a larger-than-life way to experience large-scale sculpture that's site-specific. The pieces that are lucky enough to grace the majestic mountain rest under open skies; some are hidden among the hills and meadows. The art is to be witnessed in the natural landscapes of the Hudson Valley. The exhibits rotate and the programs change, keeping things fresh and interesting at the outdoor museum.

A nonprofit, Storm King Art Center was founded by two benefactors and opened in 1960 in Mountainville, NY. According to its website, stormking.org, the art center was originally intended to become a museum "devoted to Hudson River School painting [but] by 1961 its founders had become committed to modern sculpture."



With the 1967 purchase of 13 pieces from the estate of sculptor David Smith (1906–1965), sculpture became front and center. In the 60 years since, Storm King's place among the world's leading sculpture parks has only grown.

Storm King Art Center is located at 1 Museum Road, New Windsor, NY. For more information, call (845) 534-3115 or email info@stormkingartcenter.org.

The National 9/11 Memorial & Museum

Of course, it would be impossible to leave New York without a stop at The National 9/11 Memorial & Museum in lower Manhattan. The powerful 110,000-square-foot space teaches visitors about the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, at the Twin Towers.

Continued on page 45 ...

Above: Storm King Art Center's 500-acre park allows for plenty of wandering and exploring. Image courtesy of Storm King Art Center's Instagram. Left: The National 9/11 Memorial Museum, a 110,000-square-foot space in lower Manhattan, tells the story of the worst terrorist attack on US soil. It is a powerful experience for those who visit. Photo: Jason Shavelson.





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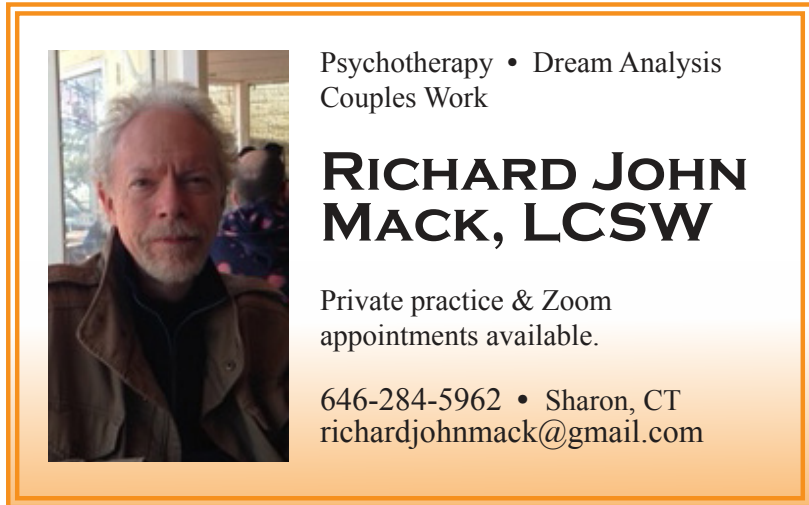
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Above top to bottom: The High Museum in Atlanta, GA., exhibits American artist Roy Lichtenstein's fabricated painted aluminum House III, the iconic pop-artist's image of a quintessential American suburban home. Here, one museumgoer posed in front the sculpture to show its scale. Photo: Rorry Joseph Lovins. Children learn, explore, and play at the Marbles Kids Museum in Raleigh, NC. Images courtesy of Marbles Kids Museum's Instagram.

It also teaches of the 1993 bombing at the World Trade Center.

A combination of "architecture, archaeology, and history" tells the tale of what occurred in 1993 and in 2001, during what was the worst terrorist attack on US soil, according to the museum's website, 911memorial.org, and "creates an unforgettable encounter with the story of the attacks, their aftermath, and the people who experienced these events."

The museum is located at 180 Greenwich St., New York, NY, and may be called at (212) 312-8800 for reservations; it may also be emailed at reservations@911memorial.org for further details. Admission is free.

Philadelphia Museum of Art

Travel outside of New York, and there are just as many interesting sights, including in Philadelphia, PA, the largest city in the state. Of course, we all know the city is of great historical importance – home to the Liberty Bell and the Declaration of Independence. The Philadelphia Museum of Art is one such worthy attraction to investigate, with many incredible works to view.

Located at 2600 Benjamin Franklin Parkway in Philly, the museum is close to the city center. Current collections include: Contemporary Philadelphia artists on view; Korean artists; Black artists; The Ramayana (The Journey of Rama); Art Depicting Ben Franklin; Grace Kelly's Royal Wedding Dress; Self-Taught Art; Masks and Face Defenses; and A Place of Celebration.

There are so many sights and sounds to enjoy in Philly, and we're not just talking about the cheesesteaks for which the city is known, though that's certainly something to remember while making the drive down south (and don't forget to ask for extra onions!). One thing to definitely add to your list, though,

is a day trip to the Philly Art Museum – the exhibits are always lively and lovely, and the calendar often has activities that are fun for the entire family.

For more information make sure to check out its website philamuseum.org or call (215) 763-8100.

Marbles Kids Museum

Want to really get your kids to use their marbles during your next road trip and to play smart? Well, then head to downtown Raleigh, NC, and take the whole family to the Marbles Kids Museum, founded in 2007 with the bright idea of getting youngsters to use their brains more and play intelligently.

According to the museum's website, marbleskidsmuseum.org, its aim is to serve "a diverse population" including families, schools, and community groups with themed exhibits, summer camps, IMAX documentary and feature movies, and special events. The museum seeks to build intellectual, social, and emotional skills in children to make them successful in learning and in life, while promoting sustainability and stewardship that encompasses social equity.

It's quite a mission and one that we think is worth checking out while winding your way from the Northeast down south if you've got little ones in tow.

For more information on the Marbles Kids Museum, call (919) 834-4040, or stop by 201 East Hargett St., Raleigh, NC.

The High Museum of Art

The High Museum of Art, located at 1280 Peachtree St., NE in Atlanta, GA, is worth the stop when traveling southward toward Florida. There one can witness some pretty remarkable works of art and get

Continued on next page ...

a sense of that which makes the creative mind want to expand beyond our “normal” boundaries and explore other realms and realities. Exhibits at The High often challenge our concepts of what’s what – which is usually a good thing and very often a goal among artists.

In addition to the myriad events and activities at this Atlanta museum, The High has collections that include African Art; American Art; Decorative Art and Design; European Art; Folk and Self-Taught Art; Modern and Contemporary Art; and Photography.

One exhibit at The High has American artist Roy Lichtenstein’s fabricated painted aluminum House III stationed outside of the museum. The miniature sculpture gives viewers an up-close-and-personal look at what the iconic pop-artist’s image of a quintessential American suburban home should look like.

For more information about The High Museum, call (404) 733-4400 or go to high.org.

The Dali Museum

When you finally cross over the state line and reach your destination of sunny Florida, it only makes sense to drive directly toward one of the most surreal museums in the world: The Dali. Celebrating the mustachioed master of surrealism, Spanish painter Salvador Dali, The Dali Museum was founded in St. Pete back in 1982 and has been central to the Tampa Bay arts scene ever since.

A newly designed modern building by architect Yann Weymouth was unveiled in 2011 and it’s simply breathtaking. There’s also a lovely garden right on the Tampa Bay waterfront, creating an extremely inviting experience for visitors that’s not only educational but completely relaxing and exhilarating.

For more information about The Dali Museum, located at One Dali Blvd., St. Petersburg, FL, go to thedali.org or call (727) 823-3767; you may also email info@thedali.org for further details.

Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens

Before you wrap up your museum road trip, park your car and settle on the sand in the Sunshine State, make sure to take advantage of what is assuredly an unexpected treat in Boca Raton on the border of Delray Beach that many are surprised to discover: the Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens. These beautiful and tranquil Japanese gardens opened in 1977 and have been delighting those seeking peace in South Florida ever since.

Visitors to the Morikami can stroll the peaceful sanctuary while enjoying countless ponds and landscapes laden with lush plants, statuary and rock gardens, bonsais and benches. Visitors may also enjoy rotating exhibitions, monthly seasonal tea ceremonies performed



in the tea house, and educational outreach programs that share the culture of Japan.

In the nearly 50 years since it’s been open, the Morikami has been an outpost of Japanese culture and arts in South Florida. “Our mission at Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens is to engage a diverse audience by presenting Japanese cultural experiences that educate and inspire,” states its website, morikami.org. Make sure to check it out, as it accomplishes its mission beautifully.

You can visit the Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens at 4000 Morikami Park Rd., Delray Beach, FL, go to their website morikami.org or call them at (561) 495-0233. •



The Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens, which border Boca Raton and Delray Beach, FL, offer lush landscapes, serene ponds, flowering trees and bushes, rock gardens, statuary, and benches plus a tea house, museum, gift shop and café. It’s a lovely place to spend the day and learn about Japanese culture and influence in South Florida. Photos: Whitney Joseph.



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The Flâneur and the Saunterer

By Ian Strever
info@mainstreetmag.com

A first, stumbling step beside the coffee table. A wobbly turn of the pedals. An unexpected lurch when you step on the gas: the great milestones in life – and in human history – involve transportation, but none more so than the initial steps taken by our African ancestors six million years ago that led to bipedalism.

Perhaps it was in pursuit of prey, or to escape a predator, but somewhere around modern-day Kenya or Chad, early humans discovered that two legs worked better than four limbs for all sorts of purposes. Walking upright allowed us to use our hands for gathering and to make the most of our opposable thumbs: two benefits that have ultimately made us the most clever and adaptable animals on earth. In time, walking brought us agriculture, animal husbandry, architecture, and, several million years later, John Travolta strutting down 86th Street in a black leather jacket.

Although we cannot run as quickly as many four-legged animals, “we are exceptional walkers, possibly the best walkers of all species,” claims Shane O’Mara, a professor of experimental brain research at Trinity College Dublin. “And this has been the secret underlying our far-flung dispersion across the face of the earth.”

Walk

But the popular image of modern humans more closely resembles the dystopian depiction in Disney’s 2008

Wall-E, where a sedentary population has access to every imaginable necessity, sucking soda from the armrests of their mobile La-Z-Boys and gawking at screen-based entertainment. We know that moderate exercise in the form of walking not only has innumerable health benefits, but profound neurological ones as well, so how do we get ourselves to walk?

We walk to the kitchen, we walk through the grocery store, we walk to and from our desk at work, but modern humans must invent reasons to overcome Newton’s First Law of Motion: objects at rest tend to stay at rest. We are inventive monkeys, though, and the latter half of the nineteenth century saw the emergence of a class of people prosperous enough to carve out a philosophy of walking that would lead us down the primrose path to treadmills.

Flâneur

As civilization attained a certain level of comfort and insulation from privation, the French contrived the *flâneur* as their answer to obligatory walking. According to Baudelaire, “for the perfect *flâneur*, the passionate spectator, it is an immense joy to set up house in the heart of the multitude, amid the ebb and flow of movement, in the midst of the fugitive and the infinite.

Continued on next page ...



Although the navigational demands are greater, land trusts like those in Sharon offer nearby access to pleasant walks in nature.

To be away from home and yet to feel oneself everywhere at home; to see the world, to be at the centre of the world, and yet to remain hidden from the world.”

In other words, to saunter amid the bustle of the city while it courses around the *flâneur* like a river. Indeed, this is the *raison d'être* for the *flâneur* – a purpose for walking, albeit somewhat... purposeless. Try to engage in *flânerie* on Madison Avenue, and you will know just how different this kind of walking is from the kind of gravitational compulsion that seems to demand speed walking.

Walking to the Holy Land

Although less bustling than Manhattan, our area does afford some opportunities to practice *flânerie*. Hudson and Kingston, NY, and Great Barrington, MA, have vibrant downtowns with enough foot traffic to practice such detachment, and the influx of visitors during summers and weekends injects an urbanity into the scene that might be hard to find in more isolated cities. Even smaller towns like Millerton, NY, and Kent, CT, have recently recast their parking and sidewalks to invite foot traffic, although the crowds will never rival those of New York or Paris. In true capitalist form, these reimagined townscapes are more about drawing customers to small businesses than drawing them to healthful walks, but their design accommodates both uses.

Around the same time that the *flâneur* arrived in Paris, our Baudlerian equivalent, Henry David Thoreau, distilled a more American spirit of *flânerie* in his essay, *Walking*, that is better suited to our rural environs. Thoreau's saunterer shares a French etymology but has a more intentional purpose:

“I have met with but one or two persons in the course of my life who understood the art of Walking [...] who had a genius, so to speak, for sauntering, which word is beautifully derived from idle people who roved about the country, in the Middle Ages, and asked charity, under pretense of going a la Sainte Terre, to the Holy Land, till the children exclaimed, ‘There goes a Sainte-Terrer,’ a Saunterer, a Holy-Lander. They who never go to the Holy Land in their walks, as they pretend, are indeed mere idlers and vagabonds.”

Thoreau shifted the saunterer's destination from a geographic location to a spiritual one. Hiking, with its orientation to peaks and views and even fitness walking, undertaken for health reasons, may never get to the Holy Land he describes, but the American goes to a Holy Land of the mind.

Amble along

In practice, though, Thoreau's requirements for intentional walking are more expansive than restrictive. While hiking is not sauntering by



Downtown Kingston, NY, with its covered sidewalks and considerable population, is ideal for walking in almost any season.

his definition, it could become so if we are mindful of our surroundings and their impact on us. Almost any walk can be a saunter, and while there are innumerable places to practice mindful walking in our area, from Bartholomew's Cobble in Sheffield to the Dover Stone Church, even the dirt road down the street or a dead end lane will provide enough seclusion to appreciate the subtle changes of season and the clarity of mind that comes with blood flow and improved circulation.

In fact, hiking, with its navigational demands, may be less suited to sauntering than a dead end road or Main Street, where one can amble along at a comfortable pace and practice *flânerie*, sauntering, or even the *passeggiata*, the Italian tradition of a casual, sociable stroll after dinner.

City planners may employ O'Mara's acronym "EASE" when they design urban spaces that are Easy to walk, Accessible to all, Safe for everyone, and Enjoyable for all. Curb transitions, wider walkways, designated crosswalks, and level, even surfaces make our cities eminently walkable, and although quieter, our rural Main Streets offer enough human traffic to invite sociability as well.

The physical and mental benefits of walking are well-documented, and even businesses are starting to appreciate the benefits of standing and walking meetings for office culture and creativity. In an increasingly information-driven culture, we need to appreciate the interaction between body and mind that lends itself to creative thought, and as technology continues to shoulder more of the burden of handling data and logical thought, our ability to make intuitive leaps may be the trait that distinguishes us from artificial intelligence. Descartes might revise his declaration from, "I think, therefore I am," to "I move, therefore I am."

Now put down this essay, put on some comfortable shoes, and see for yourself. ●



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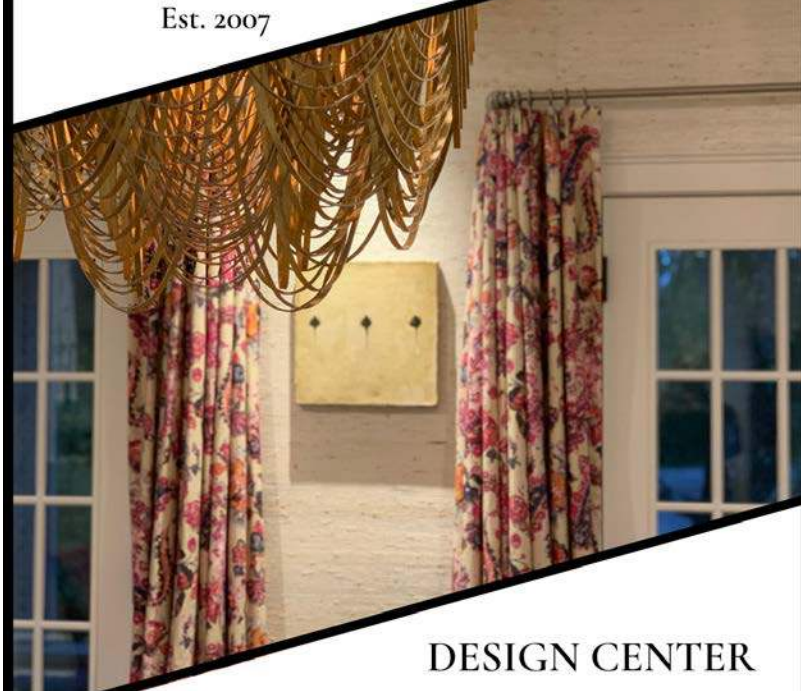
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Alliums



By Pom Shillingford
info@mainstreetmag.com

If I say the words onion, garlic, and shallot, your mind might not automatically spring to images of beautiful perennial flower borders or even stunning floral arrangements. You are more likely to be picturing vegetable gardens or your kitchen counter. Allium is the Latin word for garlic, and these stalwarts of most people's culinary repertoire are all part of the allium family, which includes literally hundreds of the most beautiful ornamental varieties. Every flower gardener and fan of bringing the outside in should definitely consider growing them.

Origins

Originating in Central Asia in the 16th century, alliums were discovered by the Russians in the 1880s, then became a focus of the great British plant hunters, who caused their popularity to explode. It is one of the largest plant groups in the world with between 600 and 920 species.

Alliums are said to symbolize unity, good fortune, prosperity, humility, and patience. And, as we can never

have enough of those these days, the best news of all is they love our horticultural zone here in the Northwest Corner!

Variations

One of, if not the, most stunning architectural plants you can grow, alliums come in a large range of colors, heights, flower forms, and bloom timing so there are opportunities to use them in a myriad of ways in the garden. My earliest flower in mid-May, and I have varieties still going strong through the fall. Because of the wide variation in form – think small tight ball to size-of-your-head firework explosion – it can seem like having an alphabet of different plants growing rather than just more of the same.

Each allium head is actually comprised of multiple florets. They vary in color and, while purples and mauves are probably the colors that spring first to mind, they also come in white, red, yellow, pink, and green. They add phenomenal architectural structure to any perennial bed and can be grown as a cut flower crop too.

Alliums are incredibly easy to grow. These are some of the most resilient flowers you'll ever have gracing your garden. They are not bothered by deer, rabbits, chipmunks, or voles. No diseases or insect pests bother them. Instead, bees, butterflies, and pollinators absolutely love them. I don't wish to cast shame here but just compare that maintenance level to that, say, of a rose.

Low maintenance

Almost all allium varieties like to be in a sunny spot, although some can take more shade, and planted in free draining soil. It's worth considering planting some of the very tall varieties, like Globemaster, Ambassador, or Gladiator, in a slightly sheltered spot to help them withstand any strong winds. Alliums are extremely drought-tolerant so no need to worry about them in our hot summers. The

Continued on next page ...



larger varieties look best planted in odd-numbered groups. In the case of the smaller varieties, these look best planted en masse so they form drifts in either mixed perennial beds or natural meadow-like settings. Plus, like our friend the daffodil last month, they multiply naturally so you can plant them, sit back, and enjoy them for years.

Now is the time to be planning where to place them and to get your wish list in order. Remember that bulb catalogues come out any day now, and it is best to order now to avoid disappointment later. Any bulbs ordered now will not be shipped until they are ready for planting in the fall. Some nice companies don't even charge you until then.

A league of their own

If you've been reading this column for a while, you will know how obsessed I am with seasonal flowers and bringing the outside in. If garden architecture and color were not enough to persuade you to grow these, then this, my cut-flower friends, is where alliums are in a league of their own.

People worry that they smell of onions, but it is the leaves more than the flower heads that give off an odor. Allium flowers can be cut while in full bloom and are fantastic to use as a focal or a filler flower depending on the variety. However, once their blooms go over and their seed heads form, they become the bee's knees in flower arranging. Even better, you don't need to cut them straight away but can enjoy them in place in the garden all summer and then bring them in to dry.

Cut and dry

Once cut and dried, the seed heads will last for years – literally! The secret is when cutting them, dry them separately so the seed heads from one stem do not tangle with another. Otherwise, you can easily end up with a cat's cradle knot and a lot of snapped stamens as you try to detangle them. And I say 'cut,' but to be honest, you don't even need to do this. When they are ready to dry, give a gentle tug and the flower stem will easily release from the bulb.

My favorite varieties are the workhorse Purple Sensation, the onomatopoeically named Schubertii, and Sphaerocephalon or, as it's more commonly known, the Drumstick allium which looks exactly as its name suggests. They all are completely different but just as easy to grow and give spectacularly long-lived cut and dried flower heads. Please do try one (or more) at home! ●

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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RELIEF CHIROPRACTIC AND WELLNESS CENTER

By Anna Martucci

anna@mainstreetmag.com

Have you ever experienced vertigo? A few months ago whenever I would exercise, stand up too quickly, or even roll over in bed it felt like the world was spinning. After losing my balance a few times and feeling nauseous, I went to my doctor who gave me a prescription medication for motion sickness.

I did some research and learned that balance problems can be caused by spinal misalignment so I sought out the help of chiropractor Dr. Tyler Van Steenberg. You may remember Dr. Van Steenberg from the space above Leslie Eckstein's fitness center in the former firehouse in Lakeville, CT. When the building was sold, Dr. Van Steenberg moved his practice to Millerton, NY, where he, along with his wife Emily, also have a wellness store.

I had been in their wellness store a few times to buy some of the thoughtfully curated high-quality vitamins, kombucha, organic dark chocolate, and even some picturesque stationery. I always felt confident in my purchases, knowing that not only were the products of the highest quality, but also that they were products Dr. Van Steenberg and Emily had carefully researched, believed in, and used themselves.

Getting an adjustment

I made an appointment with Dr. Van Steenberg for a chiropractic consultation and adjustment. After a thorough intake of my health history and areas of concern, I laid down on the table, where the doctor took his time to gently manipulate my spine and adjust me. He then used a cold laser on my neck and jaw to bring down inflammation. I left feeling calm and hopeful. A few hours later, I noticed a mild earache in my right ear and what felt like fluid draining inside. The next morning the earache was gone and my vertigo was greatly reduced. Two treatments later and the vertigo was completely gone.

Suffice it to say, after that experience, I am an advocate for chiropractic medicine and Dr. Van Steenberg in particular. Dr. Van Steenberg takes a holistic approach to medicine and on subsequent visits has shown me how to incorporate simple exercises into my daily fitness routine to support the overall structural health of my body. I had a chance to sit down with him recently to talk about his practice, his approach to health, and his love for the Hudson Valley.

Tell us about your background and why you first became interested in chiropractic medicine.

I grew up in Litchfield County, CT, and was always very interested in sports and athletic performance. When I was a teenager I suffered from severe seasonal allergies and began taking over-the-counter medications that my doctor suggested. After several weeks on the medications, I still had headaches and sinus issues. During this time I ran into my friend's father who was a chiropractor, and he recommended that I get adjusted and take certain supplements. I initially denied his offer to adjust me and continued to suffer from allergies.



Dr. Van Steenberg is shown here in his store on South Center Street, and below in the room where he adjusts patients.

Finally one day, I had enough of all my sneezing and sinus congestion and decided to give chiropractic care a try. He did a very comprehensive spinal exam and explained to me that my symptoms were coming from my spine. After his report of findings he adjusted my spine, and I remember immediately feeling my sinuses drain and my headache disappear. He then gave me bioflavonoids to help in reducing my histamine levels. I immediately stopped with the over-the-counter medications and began taking the supplements with regular chiropractic care.

After getting treatments, I began to see that the adjustments were significantly helping with my athletic performance as well. Chiropractic care is so effective at increasing athletic performance and reducing risks of injury that over 90% of professional and Olympic-class athletes use chiropractic care regularly.

Continued on next page ...





Dr. Van Steenbergen's store and office is located on the corner of Main Street and South Center in Millerton, NY. For Dr. Van, it's a family affair!

What is chiropractic medicine?

Chiropractic is a health care profession that focuses on disorders of the musculoskeletal system and the nervous system, and the effects of these disorders on general health. These disorders include, but are not limited to: back pain, neck pain, pain in the joints of the arms or legs, and headaches. Doctors of Chiropractic practice a conservative approach to health care that includes patient examination, diagnosis, and treatment. DCs have broad diagnostic skills and are also trained to recommend therapeutic and rehabilitative exercises, as well as to provide nutritional, lifestyle, and dietary counseling.

Chiropractic care acts as a "first line of defense against pain." The essential services provided by chiropractors represent a primary approach for the prevention, diagnosis and conservative management of back pain and spinal disorders. It can often enable patients to reduce or avoid the need for riskier treatments such as prescription opioid pain medications and surgery.

That said, you don't have to be in pain to see a chiropractor. When you focus on spinal alignment you are getting deep healing throughout your entire nervous system.

I have also integrated the perfect adjunctive tool for chiropractic treatments and myofascial releases into my treatments, Erchonia lasers. They hold 22 of the 26 total FDA clinical trial clearances; the most of any company. Clinical applications of the cold laser are used for acute and chronic pain reduction, inflammation reduction, enhanced tissue healing, and cell regeneration. The results have shown very rapid pain reduction and accelerated recovery times, far exceeding conventional methods.

Laser therapy aims to photo-bios- stimulate chemically damaged cells via specific wavelengths of light. When cells are chemically damaged they stimulate the pain cycle. Laser excites the kinetic energy within cells by transmitting healing stimuli known as photons. Once photons reach the cells of the body, they promote a cascade of cellular activities. Laser light therapy can ignite the production of enzymes, stimulate mitochondria, increase vasodilation and lymphatic drainage, ATP synthesis, and elevate collagen formation substances to prevent the formation of scar tissues. This is a critical step in reducing long-term disabling chronic myofascial pain syndromes. Simply stated, laser therapy enables patients to get out of pain faster and heal at the same time.

What is your philosophy of and approach to healing?

Start with yourself. Look at what you are consuming both physically as well as mentally. We need to move well, eat well, and be conscious of everything we are taking in from the world around us. If you have pain, you should be going with conservative treatment first. Stay consistent with therapy and stay persistent with exercise and nutrition.

I hear all the time that people don't have the time to take care of themselves. I'm not going to force you to exercise, but it truly is a necessity for you to move your body. There is no drug, no surgery, no supplement out there that could ever replace what

movement and good diet can do for your body. Thomas Edison said it best, "The doctor of the future will give no medicine, but will interest his patients in the care of the human frame, in diet, and in the cause and prevention of disease."

What do you and your wife Emily love the most about the Hudson Valley?

My wife and I absolutely love living in this area. We enjoy going for hikes on some of the most spectacular hiking trails around. We also love going to the local farmers markets, shopping at local farm stands, and going fruit picking.

General Information

The first visit with Dr. Van Steenbergen lasts around 40 minutes during which patients are taken through a comprehensive exam that covers everything from areas of concern to diet to exercise habits. After the exam, Dr. Van Steenbergen performs hands-on chiropractic care where he may utilize decompression therapy, myofascial release, joint manipulation, and cold laser therapy. •

Relief Chiropractic Wellness is located at 64 Center Street in Millerton, NY, and is open Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. You can learn more about Dr. Van Steenbergen and book an appointment at drvan.co/

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Healing Nest Norfolk

Hypnotherapy, guided shamanic alchemy, medical reiki, reflexology, yoga – and much more. 3 Station Place, Norfolk, CT. healingnestnorfolk.com

The Healing Nest opened in the spring of 2021. Dianna Hofer describes its origin: “I was retiring from 30 years of teaching, and I had been training to be a hypnotherapist for about a decade. The beautiful space in the historic Royal Arcanum building of Norfolk opened up and I jumped in – it’s been a journey!” The services that she provides include hypnotherapy, guided shamanic alchemy, medical reiki, animal reiki, reflexology, private yoga sessions, house clearing, magnetic therapy jewelry, and tarot readings. When asked what sets her business apart, Dianna says, “Very individual personalized service, and unique opportunities! The Healing Nest has been doing free demonstrations and informational sessions at the Nest and at the Norfolk Hub, including free reiki clinics, a group past-life regression session, sound therapy, and more.” The most rewarding parts for Dianna are the people she meets, the connections she makes, and the actual work that she is doing with clients – she says it is powerfully transformative. “It’s an honor and a privilege to do this work!” The future? “I see a healing/wellness center that’s expanding its reach and its programs, benefiting the local and surrounding communities with information and opportunities for alternative and transformative healing modalities.”



Baby Knits NY

Hand-knit baby sweaters, dresses, booties, and hats as well as adult headbands and washcloths. Hillsdale, NY. mcspezia@gmail.com

Michelle Spiezia started her business Baby Knits NY two years ago. “I retired and had always enjoyed knitting. I had gotten so many compliments on the baby gifts that I made that I decided to try and make a go of it. I hand knit baby sweaters, dresses, booties, and hats as well as adult headbands and washcloths.” When asked what makes her handmade items different from others she says, “Each of my items is truly one-of-a-kind. I rarely make the same thing twice and when I do, I use a different color or different buttons. Additionally, once I run out of a certain yarn, I move on to other yarns and or colors.” Michelle says that the best part of her business is meeting people and seeing their expressions when they see her work. “People love to buy these items as gifts.” When asked what she sees in her future, she offers, “Maybe becoming a little more known so people will actually seek me out for my one-of-a-kind creations. Right now it’s more of an impulse purchase for my customers.”



Laura P. Griffin

Tech is just the tool,
you are the artist

Laura Griffin

Technical solutions for small businesses and community organizations. Valatie, NY. lapgriffin@gmail.com laurapgriffin.com

Laura Griffin began offering technical services and software training a long time ago. “It got started with my first job as a computer operator and grew from there once I found I was drawn to it. I’ve been doing this solo for about 18 years.” She provides technical solutions to small businesses and community organizations. “Count on me for graphic design, website admin and design, email marketing, social media admin, content creation, and software training.” When asked what sets her business apart she says, “I’m not sure there are similar businesses, because of the number of different services I offer. And, although I am not old, I have an awful lot of experience solving challenges, offering solutions, being creative, and bringing value, all in a personal and friendly manner.” The most rewarding part for Laura is solving a problem or issue for a fellow small business or a community organization. “When you make a mistake, it feels great to be able to pass on what you learn so another person/business doesn’t repeat it. I love my job.” As for the future she shares, “Many of my clients are long term so I plan on continuing to support their journeys. But it’s exciting to get a referral to a new client, a new challenge, while broadening my own horizons, too. I never want to stop learning and growing.”



Cornwall Bridge Gardens

An eclectic mix of flowers, food and antiques. 2 US-7, Sharon, CT. cornwallbridgegardens.com

When asked how Cornwall Bridge Gardens came about, Megan Mollica shares, “I started as a gardener 15 years ago, but when the opportunity came up for us to buy Nora’s Nursery, my husband and I jumped at it. I had a vision for a new garden center.” When asked what the garden center offers, she answers that they have a very eclectic mix of flowers, food, and antiques. “In addition to our traditional garden center offerings, we have a supply of locally sourced foods, a state-of-the-art bakery run by Blue Gate Farm out of Warren, CT, and a small antique shop.” When it comes to setting their business apart, Michelle offers, “Our business is very hands-on and mostly run by family members. Each visitor is greeted with a smile and our full attention. It is a very welcoming place where many locals, hikers, and visitors gather to enjoy a coffee and grab healthy provisions, a gift, or garden supplies.” As for the most rewarding part of the business, Michelle has always loved the outdoors, plants, and gardening; running Cornwall Bridge Gardens affords her all of those things. Going into her second year, Michelle is looking forward to this new season. “Our hope is to increase awareness about what our business has to offer to the communities in the Northwest Corner.”



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INSURING YOUR WORLD

TRAVEL INSURANCE: It's been three-plus years since the travel industry has seen some upward trending in their bookings. COVID is not behind us, but it definitely has become a manageable sickness for those that aren't immuno-compromised. As we begin to purchase our plane tickets, let's not forget that the airlines as a whole are still not back to 100% labor capacity, which is causing major delays as well as cancellations for folks traveling. During a recent trip my wife and I took, we fell victim to such a cancellation, which was settled by our travel agent who made it possible to change flights at the last minute to get us home on the same day. She indicated that delays and cancellations are the new norm so folks should expect such inconveniences. One way to take the financial burden off delays and cancellations is to purchase travel insurance. There are many types starting with trip cancellation, which insures the entire cost of a trip should the traveler not be able to go on their scheduled journey. The best type of coverage is cancel for any reason, which ensures that you will be reimbursed for the bulk of the cost depending upon the limits you choose on your policy. Another type of yearly policy covers the cost of flights, rental cars, missed event costs, and even the cost of hotels for unexpected delays. These policies, which are not that expensive, are ideal for folks who have vacation homes as well as travel frequently. One purchases a yearly policy that covers all your travel throughout the year. Call your agent today before you incur unwanted expenses due to circumstances beyond your control!



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BENEFITS OF E-BIKING VS. PEDAL BIKES

Electric bikes have become increasingly popular in recent years due to their many benefits over regular pedal bikes. With a motor and battery, e-bikes make it easier to climb hills, travel long distances, and reach places faster and easier than with regular bikes.

But that's not all! E-biking offers a tremendous cardio workout and keeps hips, knees, and joints exercised without the threat of too much stress or impact. It's the perfect exercise to lose weight and build muscular strength while improving balance.

"We so often see that e-biking can also help an individual keep pace with faster riders and make riding in a group more enjoyable," says Bob Ensign of Covered Bridge Electric Bike of Kent, West Cornwall, and North Canaan, CT. Riding shoulder-to-shoulder with spouses, co-workers, friends, and families can make for healthy exercise routines and terrific experiences.

Overall, e-bikes offer many benefits over regular pedal bikes. They are easier to ride, offer a different riding experience, and have many health benefits. They can also help you save money on transportation costs and reduce your carbon footprint.

Sales and rentals

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Check engine

We are so fortunate to live and raise our families in beautiful northern Dutchess County, where the grass is green and the streams run clear. Growing up in the automotive industry, while having a love for the outdoors and our beautiful area, it hurts sometimes to see the lack of respect, or blatant disregard for the environment, when it comes to some of the vehicles on the road today. Our modern cars, when maintained correctly, produce far lower emissions than the ones of earlier years, but this doesn't happen by magic. A very sophisticated electronic system in all vehicles today is constantly running series of tests while you drive. If a test fails, you get a light on your dash. This may say "check engine" or something of the sort, indicating that one or more of your systems is failing or malfunctioning. Next step should be scheduling a time with your mechanic to diagnose your problem and make sure your engine and emissions systems are in check. We have been here for 35 years, repairing and maintaining vehicles and keeping upstate New York's air clean and healthy for everyone to enjoy. You can help too by not ignoring that exhaust leak or loud rumble under your vehicle, or that light or message that keeps popping up on your dash. Next time this happens come down to Factory Lane Auto, and we will get you all fixed up!

Fun fact from Chris: Did you know that with modern technology, we can completely recycle your old, rusty, worn-out gasoline or diesel-powered car or truck. Every component is recycled and every material re-used!



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Factory Lane Auto Repair

The top four things you need to know about an auto lease:

1. A lease is just another way of financing, you have to know your price and rebates. If a dealer isn't clear on these, leave immediately.
2. Everyone checks mileage charges, but is there a disposition fee? (A charge the lease company hits you with... just to drop it off!). Make sure to check to check the lease-end terms.
3. You can call the leasing company and get your buyout figure any day during the lease. Do this before you start shopping. Just like a finance contract you owe them until it's paid or traded. You simply have the choice to walk away or pay/finance at the end of the term.
4. Also, before you get too concerned about being upside down or underwater, know that supply line issues are making inventory very scarce. Subsequently, dealers may want your car enough to buy it out for close to what you owe.

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