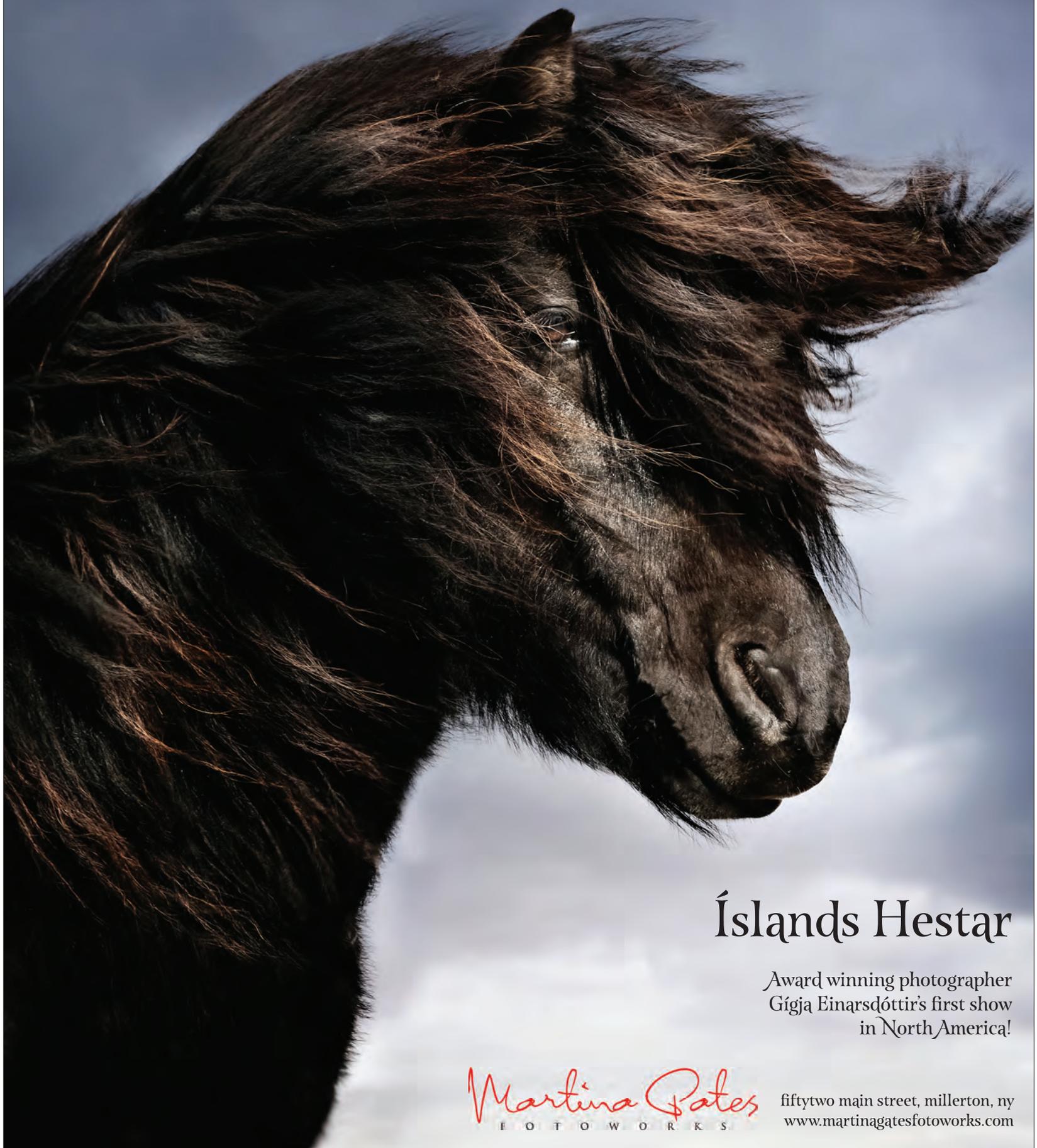


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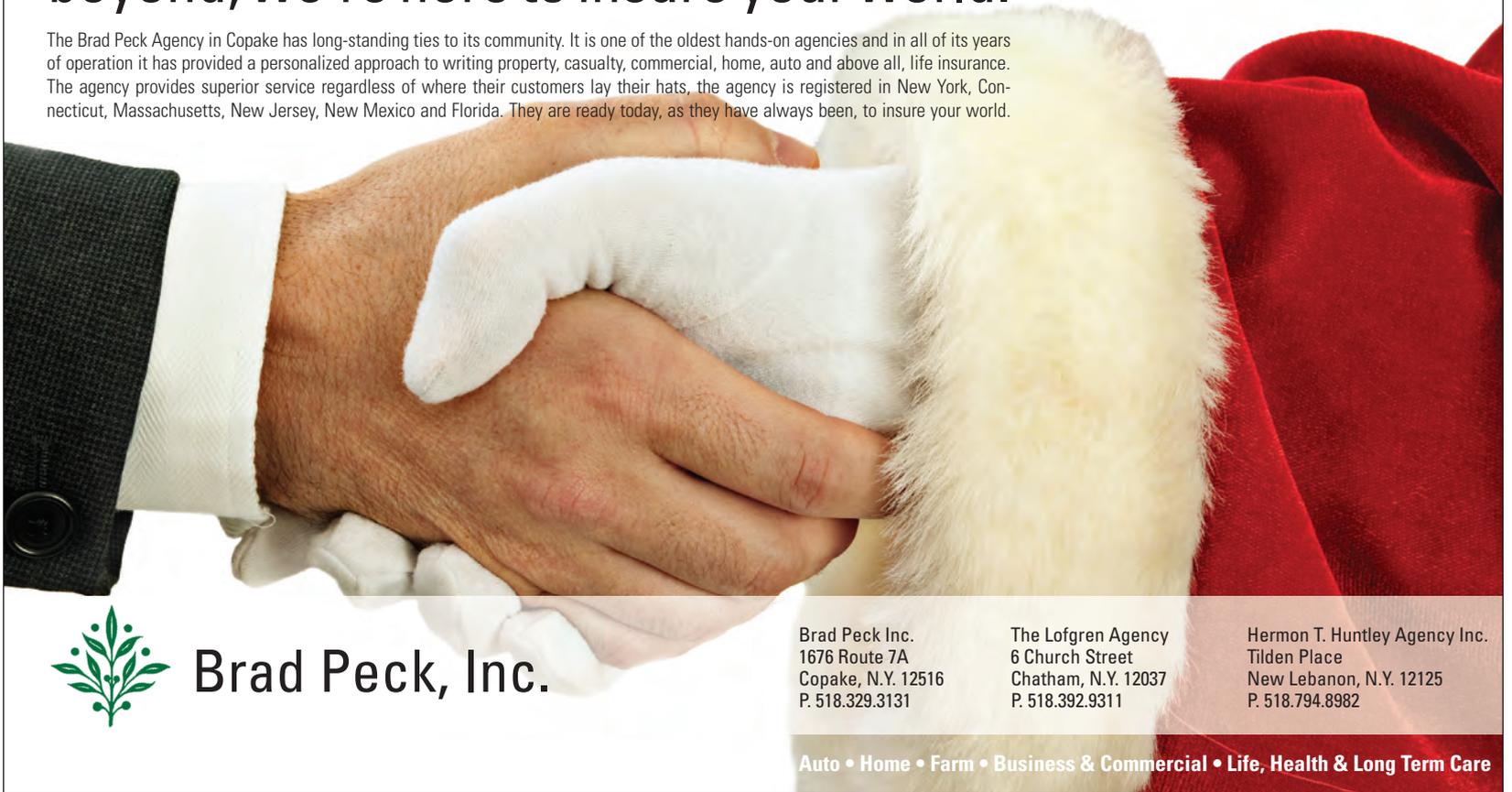
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A VERY HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON TO ALL OF OUR READERS!

I would like to wish you and your family the very best this holiday season! I have nothing but warm-and-fuzzy feelings when I think about the holidays and upcoming holiday season ... well, it gets warm and fuzzy once all of the presents and holiday food have been taken care of and are on the premises. After they are secured, I then feel warm-and-fuzzy because I think about my family, and sharing special moments with them. Sure, we eat a wonderfully prepared meal and we exchange gifts together, which we spent hours thoughtfully dreaming up and finding and then wrapping. But that isn't what the holidays are about. Of course if you look at the holidays from a religious perspective, it has little to nothing to do with the likes of gifts and Christmas trees. But for me, the holidays are all about family.

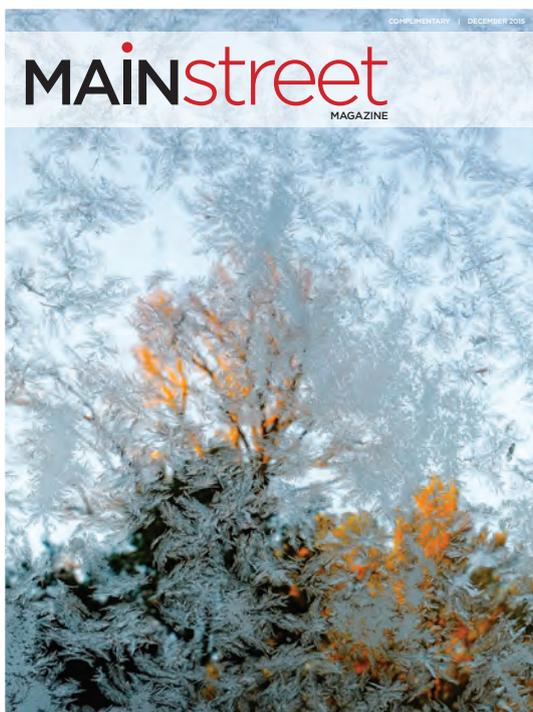
At Thanksgiving we take a moment to give thanks, but I think that we should also do that at Christmas-time. I feel that we need to stop and contemplate what it is that we are thankful for more than just once a year (at Thanksgiving), and we should also contemplate who we are thankful for. In light of the recent attacks in Paris (which have just taken place at the time of this writing), I think that we are all faced with the reality of how quickly things can change. And so, it is so important to stop, and to think about what truly matters, and what is truly important. To me, it is family, kindness, and joy.

Take care of thy neighbor

On a global scale, we are in essence all family for we share this world together. So in the spirit of this holiday season and in the spirit of kindness, I ask you to think of those less fortunate. Ask yourself what you can do to make their holiday a little more special? Mary O'Neill has written a wonderful piece about Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* in this issue, and at the end of the article we have listed a number of local organizations and events where you can donate food, toys, or your time.

If there is one thing that you do this holiday season that will make a true difference, it is doing something completely selfless and helping a complete stranger. Can you imagine what would happen if every person were to pay it forward and do something nice for a complete stranger? Imagine what a wonderful world we would then be living in! Let's make it happen, let's pay it forward! Happy holidays.

- Thorunn Kristjansdottir



DECEMBER 2015

Winter brings with it many beautiful features. Winter frost with the setting sun lighting up the background, behind the frost is one of them.

Cover photo by Lazlo Gyorsok

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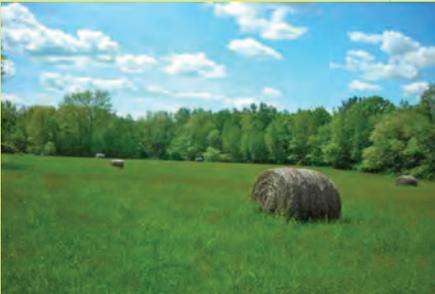
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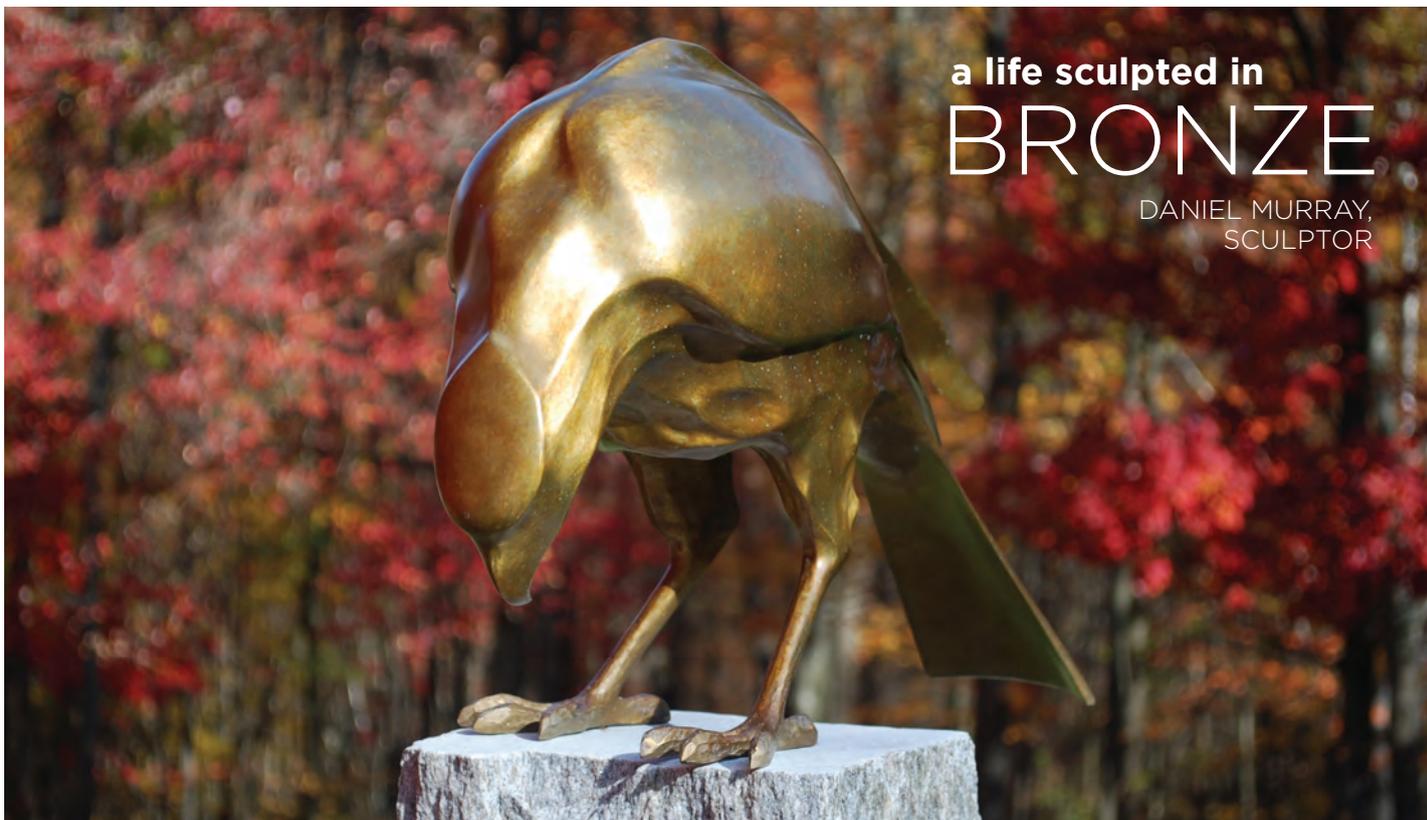
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a life sculpted in
BRONZE

DANIEL MURRAY,
SCULPTOR

By *CB Wismar*
arts@mainstreetmag.com

It never fails. Every welcoming weekend in Kent draws families to the shops and cafes, and draws kids to Daniel Murray's bronze mountain lion sculpture that guards Kent Wine & Spirit on Main Street.

Life-sized and eerily menacing, the cat is a great attraction for families wanting to get one photograph that will prove that the kids, between begging for a cup of hot chocolate and wanting to know when they can go home, had a great time, too.

It's no surprise that people are attracted to his sculptures. Dan Murray invests a great deal of his own environment and experience into the animal forms that he brings to life through the arduous art form of lost wax bronze casting. When a work can take between four and 12 months to complete, there is a great deal of time for personal reverie and reflection. The investment is not a small one, and the results reflect the hours and pure talent it takes to start with an idea, and end with a bronze form that will endure for centuries.

The road to becoming a sculptor

After a stint at the US Merchant Marine Academy and the mandatory training voyages around the world, Dan settled on painting and sculpture as his real passion. His father had been a commercial artist, so paints and brushes were easily accessible at home. From the time he can remember, there was always art at the center of his life.

With a freshly minted degree in painting and sculpture from the University of Connecticut, Dan headed to New York to ply his trade as a portrait painter ... and an actor ... and a bartender. His voice and face paid the rent, his open personality created a circle of friends (and led him to meet his wife, dancer and actress Alina Hernandez), and his search for the room and physical context to create not only portraits but his sculptures led him to the hills above Macedonia State Park in Kent. When a bout with cancer in 1999 cut his acting career short, it was time to make the move — to the land of hawks and bobcats and mountain lions.

An artist's inspiration

As artists mature, their influences and personalities become more evident. Dan Murray openly identifies Lucien Freud as an influence on his painting, and gently smiles when David Hockney is mentioned. His sculpture, these life-sized exceptionally strong presentations of mountain lions and



hawks and his beloved dogs, have come to be his signature work after the encouragement of beloved local sculptor Paul Suttman, who created truly imaginative sculptures in his South Kent studio before his death in 1993.

There are other classic artists whose influences can be seen in Dan Murray's engaging work. Le Nantec's female forms, Bugatti's great menagerie of bronze animals that set the standard for animaliers in the early 20th Century and, certainly, Auguste Rodin. Like Dan, they each worked through the process of sculpting in clay, creating plaster molds, meticulously pouring in hot wax, building ceramic shell molds, transporting them for foundry workers to pour in

Above, top: The bronze hawk. Above: Daniel Murray, the sculptor.

molten bonze and waiting waiting to see what would emerge for the artist to weld, sand blast, bathe in acid and polish until the crouching mountain lion or vigilant hawk brilliantly appears.

Murray's classical training, his appreciation of the masters, and his vivid imagination dramatically intersect in the mythical forms he creates as a pleasing counter balance to his realistic animal sculptures. "Artists have created forms and figures that reflect not only the real, but the mythical and imagined, as well," muses Murray. Gargoyles, griffins and chimera were all an enduring part of the culture from ancient civilizations up to the present. Sculpture can be as much social, political, and spiritual commentary as it can be striking art. And, it endures. It is not crumpled up like yesterday's newspaper and soon forgotten.

The Sphinx

In Murray's words, "American Sphinx is just that – a reflection of our culture."

The striking sculpture in question is reminiscent of the sphinx creations of Egypt, but the traditions of half human/half animal figures range from Assyrian culture to India, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, and the Philippines to the age of Greek mythology where the sphinx represented bad luck, even destruction. The mind and cunning of the human being matched to the strength, courage, and ferocity of the animal. That is the sphinx.

Dan Murray's sphinx appears mild enough, at first glance. The woman's

head is elegantly cosmopolitan with a hairdo reminiscent of the fashion days of Rudi Gernreich and Andre Courreges. The body is a sleek "designer dog" form, with wings. Then comes the tail. Is it a hair dryer? A sprinkler head? For Murray, it is indicative of the march toward technology. "It ushers in the era of the drone..." says Dan. Elegant sculpture and the artist's reflection of contemporary culture. The Greek mythological reference to less than good luck resonates in this American Sphinx.

The heroic-sized chess set

The marriage of classical context with contemporary social commentary comes vividly to life in the heroic-sized chess set currently under development in Murray's studio.

"The queen began with a nod to 'The Woman of Willendorf' (fertility figure estimated to have been carved 25,000 BCE) and went from there," he says with a smile. With almond-shaped eyes and a classically beautiful face, she is both lovely and primally powerful.

The king is a different matter, altogether. "Recall 'Ming the Merciless' from Flash Gordon, add a bit of a self portrait – make sure it doesn't look too much like Lenin – add an English goatee and notice the similarities to Walter White (lead character from *Breaking Bad*). The Bowler hat is still an option."

Murray finds great promise in the creation of these chess pieces. Not only do they capture his uncanny capacity to embrace the natural grace and danger of the animal kingdom, but their execution weaves in social commentary, mythology, and his own ironic sense of humor. "The bishop is a distrustful bobcat. The rook places the head of a hawk on top of a column. I just picked up the cloak from the foundry and can't wait to see what it will look like. It can be either a shield, or wings."

The knight in Murray's set is not the classical horse head figure, but rather a mountain lion that appears to be ready to pounce. In the game of chess, the knight's movement is



limited – two squares forward and one on the diagonal. It does not run free, but pounces, and so will this lion.

At first encounter, the pawn is innocent and lovable. It is a puppy – homage to Dan's love for his dogs. But moving around the piece, one finds not a tail, but a crank. "He's the foot soldier on the board, and the authorities can always turn his 'crank' to make him do their will." There is the other side to this chess piece, however, and Dan acknowledges it with his knowing smile. "Don't forget. The pawn can also become the queen."

Dan Murray's sculptures can be seen at the Ian Ingersoll Studio in West Cornwall as well as The Granary Gallery on Martha's Vineyard. Easier access might be to visit www.murraysculpture.com and experience the grace and power of his work. Or, there's the opportunity to drive down Route 7 into Kent and join the families taking pictures of Dan's mountain lion. ●

To learn more about Dan Murray visit his website at www.murraysculpture.com or see his pieces in person at the locations mentioned above.

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



Above, top: American Sphinx. Above: A detail of the bishop's face, the distrustful bobcat. Left: The chess king. All photos courtesy of Dan Murray.





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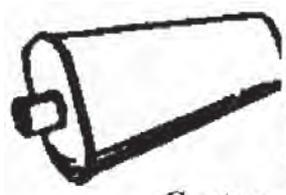
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Michael Lampro has been the co-owner of Sweet William's Bakery in Salisbury, CT for four years. He is a Becket, MA native, is now a resident of Salisbury, but still owns a home in Becket. His expertise in the business lies in everything coffee, and that is his role in the business, letting his partner handle the baking duties. Michael was trained at Barrington Coffee Roaster's years ago and prides himself on serving a high quality product. He also enjoys interacting with the many regulars that frequent the establishment. To boot, he is an accomplished photographer and his photos adorn the walls of the bakery. In his free time he plays guitar, likes mountain biking, hiking, theater, dining out, and travel. He is ever aware and appreciative of the landscape and beauty of the Northwest corner and the surrounding area. So what's the sweet of the day?



Pat Best is the co-owner of Best & Cavallaro Real Estate in Salisbury, CT. After graduating from Boston College she worked in the real estate syndication business in Boston until moving to New York City in 1985, where she and her husband started a family. They moved to Lakeville from Manhattan in 1992 to give their children the opportunity to enjoy growing up in the country. Pat started Best & Cavallaro with her partner, Mardee Cavallaro in 2006. An active fundraiser, volunteer and leader in our community, Pat served as President of the Board of Directors of Tri Arts for over 15 years. Aside from her busy real estate career, Pat loves to renovate houses (a self-confessed HGTV addict), she is a singer and guitarist, an avid tennis player, and loves to cook. We think that makes her quite the quadruple threat!



Will Carter, proprietor of Pine Plains Fine Wines, says it's a wonderful experience to own a wine shop! Meeting people from all walks of life, continually learning, and being inspired by an 8,000 year-old tradition of winemaking, and getting to share all of this with customers and friends. "I never dreamed 14 years ago when we bought the shop that this would be so important. We taste every bottle in the store – fortunately my liver has held out!" Good food goes with all of this wine, and cooking for family and friends is a great pleasure, particularly during the holidays. Music is also a part of Will's holiday traditions. Somewhere in his past, Will was a Juilliard-trained classical organist, giving Christmas concerts at St. Patrick's every year. Ahead of your holiday feast this year, stop in and say hi to Will and check out his many offerings.



Rob Maher, driver and dispatcher for Herrington Fuels since 1996, says without a doubt that the best part of his job is interacting with folks in the community. Rob is also active in his church, the Columbia County 4H program, enjoys hunting, fishing, spending time with his family, and two companions, Nellis and Bentley. Born and raised in Maysville, Kentucky, he met his wife in Las Vegas while they were both serving in the Air Force. They married in 1986 and moved to Copake in 1988. "I love the hills and dales, the woods and climate. I've met so many wonderful people and found this to be a great place to raise our two children, Amanda and Colton." For the holidays Rob spends time with family, eats (a lot), and reflects on everything that he is thankful for.

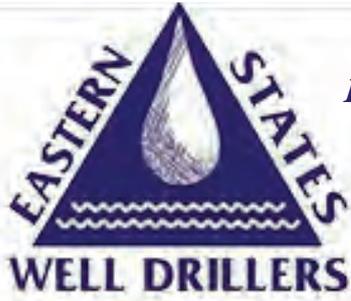


Kathy Wismar, a Falls Village resident, is a ceramic artist and painter whose studio in Kent Green serves not only as her creative workspace, but as a colorful gallery of her work. She has worked in clay since taking an introductory wheel throwing class forty years ago in Santa Monica, California. Clay is one of the oldest art forms and a medium that is as fresh today as it was 10,000 years ago. Her clay work, which is functional items that can be displayed with pride then used on the dinner table, is as colorful as are her abstract paintings. The Northwest corner is an artists' haven, Kathy offers. "I love the colors, the characters, and the gentle ebb and flow of life that make every day here a chance for discovery."



Anthony Silvia was born with artistic skills running through his veins. His mother paints and he refers to her as a "culinary artist." His dad creates sculptures, paintings, and makes signs. "I have been working with my hands for 20 something years doing carpentry and sign making." Until recently, Anthony never really embraced his sign making skills. Every time he creates or restores a sign, he holds his dad's ability as a standard. Anthony also enjoys painting (some of his work is on display at the Black Rabbit Bar and Grill), and playing guitar in a band called Spacesuit Monkey. This holiday season Anthony is looking forward to eating delicious food, spending time with family, but most importantly being with his 13 year old son.

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The wine merchant of Shekomeko

INTERVIEW WITH NEAL ROSENTHAL OF MAD ROSE GROUP, ROSENTHAL WINE MERCHANT

By Christine Bates
christine@mainstreetmag.com

After learning about field-to-glass whiskey in last month's Main Street interview with Jeff Baker of Hillrock Estate Distillery, we decided to explore the world of European wines with Neal Rosenthal, one of the most highly regarded importers of French and Italian wines in the United States. The home of the Mad Rose Group can be found on a Shekomeko hills farm in the Town of North East, NY. Between Irving Farm Coffee Roasters, Harney & Sons tea, Hillrock Distillery's whiskey, and Mad Rose's Rosenthal Wine Merchant, are we becoming the premium beverage capital of the country?

What does a wine importer do exactly?

We search out traditional, family-owned vineyards in Europe, purchase cases of wine directly from the vineyard for importing to the United States, arrange and pay for shipping to the US, pay all the customs duties, and transport and store the wine in our warehouse in Queens. Rosenthal Wine Merchant sells our wine directly to retail wine stores and restaurants in New York, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Southern California, and through distributors in the rest of the country. Our wines are available in 42 states. We just haven't found the right distributor in the states where we don't sell, like North Dakota and Alaska.

You are known for selecting very specific types of wine. How do you describe your taste?

First of all I only select wine that I like. I don't buy wine because I think it will sell. I am drawn to wines that embody the "terroir" of the place where the grapes are grown. These wines have had geographical and cultural connections for hundreds of years and are produced by families who grow their own grapes and make their own wine. Wines imported by Mad Rose's Rosenthal Wine Merchant



Above: Rosenthal exploring new territory in Calabria, Italy this autumn. Photo courtesy of Neal Rosenthal. Below: The back label on every bottle of wine that Rosenthal imports hasn't changed in 35 years. These two bottles represent the lowest and highest prices for Rosenthal wines currently in stock at Salisbury Wines in Salisbury, CT. The Côtes du Rhône is \$15.00 while the 2012 Chambolle Musigne is \$156.00. Only 200 to 300 cases of Chambolle Musigne are imported to the United States in any given year and Salisbury Wines was fortunate to secure six bottles. Photo by Christine Bates.

are not fruity; they evoke the soil, the climate, and the history of where the grapes are grown. In a way it is farm to table. You know who produces the wine and how, and exactly where it comes from.

Wine reviewers often use words like 'hints of strawberry with chocolate undertones.' Does that make sense to you?

That is such bullshit. And assigning wines numerical scores. And those annoying shelf talkers in wine stores – those little tags sticking out with a number and a few words. Wine evokes something different in everyone.

You started out as an international tax attorney, how did you end up in the wine business?

My father owned an old-fashioned pharmacy on Lexington Avenue in New York City. It was open every day from 6 o'clock in the morning until 9 at night. In those days pharmacies usually had lunch counters. That's a tradition that goes back to the nineteenth century when Coca Cola and other concentrates were prescribed by the pharmacist and mixed with seltzer. Eventually my father sold the pharmacy, but retained the lunch counter in the back and turned it into a very small liquor store, very small.

Despite being on law review at Columbia, I never really enjoyed being an attorney. There's a trap in doing something well that you don't like. One day in 1977 after being a lawyer for seven years I just stopped. I got divorced from my high school girlfriend, moved to a small apartment and took

over the liquor store from my parents. My idea was to buy them out and, in a few years, write the great American novel. The store was so small that it had no bathroom. Gradually I began talking to the wine distributors that came into the store and started to learn about wine. My grandparents had emigrated from Eastern Europe and wine had never been part of our family's culture.

The owner of the apartment building across the street in this very wealthy part of Manhattan suggested that I take over two retail spaces on the ground floor and move the store to a larger space. I decided to make it an all wine store and invested all of my money in fixing it up. My father helped persuade Chemical Bank to lend me \$25,000 to make lease hold improvements. We were a curiosity at the time – the only liquor store that sold only wine. Customers came in to visit my French poodle.

It was a very tough time for me. Paying off the loan, paying the rent, paying alimony. Remember that my loan was at Prime plus 2% and prime went up to 23.5%. I had nothing and I lived like a Bohemian.

When did you start sourcing your own wine directly?

My first exploratory trip was to California in 1979. I located some excellent sources and started selling these wines in New York. Early the next year I went to Italy and that was really the beginning.

Continued on next page ...



How did you know what to do?

Where to go?

I guess I just had a knack for finding the right people and confidence in my taste. I only buy for people who share my taste. I learned Italian and improved my college French. Language is the front door of any culture. You must speak the language. I am not a negotiator. I just ask the price. And I don't have any written contracts with any of my producers. It's all a handshake. In my view it's not the best policy, it's the only policy. We actually created a market for some of our early producers who had never bottled and sold wine under their own label. We put them in business.

How many vineyards do you work with?

Where are they located?

We work with over 100 producers. 60% are from France and about 35% from Italy. The remaining 5% is sourced in Spain and Switzerland.

Do customers in wine stores ask for a Rosenthal wine?

Absolutely. We are the brand on the back of the bottle. Our label hasn't changed in 35 years.

How much do your wines cost in a retail store?

First of all price is not an indicator of value. You could find our lowest priced wine for \$12 and our highest at \$400 a bottle. For me \$400 is way too precious. Most of our wines sell between \$25 to \$40 a bottle.

What are the trends in the wine importing industry?

There are two distinct trends happening at the same time. There's growing commercialization of wine brands with an emphasis on advertising and marketing, and simultaneously a parallel track of higher quality and greater sophistication.

What has been the key to the success of Rosenthal Wine Merchants?

Not only do we have the best wines, we also have the best service. We have total control over our product because we have our own warehouse, unlike most importers who rent space in someone else's warehouse. If a restaurant in New York runs out of wine, we can restock the next day. If Harvard Business School studied our business they would say we have way too much inventory. But our inventory guarantees availability to all of our clients. And of course, just like Hillrock, our inventory continues to increase in value.

Our excellent service is due to our personnel. We have incredible people working with us. We have eight sales people who cover the country. Some of them have been with us for 25 years. We have another 12 people in our warehouse operation, 11 of whom are Haitians. Wonderful people! Then



Left: Salisbury Wines carries 30 wine selections from Rosenthal Wine Merchant. The Sancerre on the far left is the most popular. Photo by Christine Bates.

we have another five people handling administrative tasks. Our employees stay with us because we respect them, and some of them have made a good deal of money working here.

Where did the name Mad Rose come from?

The Mad Rose Group is a combination of the first syllables of Rosenthal, my last name, and my business and life partner's last name, Kerry Madigan. Kerry does all the work and I'm the front man of our business. My mother and father always worked together, maybe there's a theme here.

And what personal traits have contributed to your success?

Discipline. I learned discipline from cross-country running. It extends to everything you do from law school to business.

What advice would you have to a starting entrepreneur?

You have to really love what you are doing, believe in yourself, be prepared to sacrifice, and work like a dog. You have to be doing the right thing and doing it well.

Did the downturn during the financial crisis hurt your business?

Our business was down 12% to 15% for nine months when the crisis hit, but we didn't panic. Since 2010 we have had double-digit growth every year. Downturns are actually a great time to start a business.

How important is the Internet to your business?

The Internet made it possible for us to conduct our business here in the country. We moved up here 21 years ago. Our website www.madrose.com is always

being updated and we are constantly revising and improving our site. In the next year or so we will be adding more videos and educational material.

What are your passions?

My passions are writing, running, piano, dogs, life. I don't consider my business work.

What is most difficult about your business and most satisfying?

The difficult part is that it takes hold of you and won't let go. It's really not glamorous and it's physically challenging to be on the road for an eleven-day foreign trip, visiting four or five producers a day and working 18 hours every day. For me the most rewarding part is affecting the lives of so many people that are linked to the business.

What other wine areas are interesting to you? Where's your favorite place to drink wine?

Greece and Germany have potential, but forget about China and Australia. My preference is to drink wine at home. The contents of 750 milliliter wine bottle demand to be shared – it's too much for one person to drink.

What's the next step for you?

A few years ago we interviewed some investment bankers and they recommended selling the company. But why would I want to do that? ●

To learn more about Neal Rosenthal and the wine business acquire a copy of Neal Rosenthal's "Reflections of a Wine Merchant," on a lifetime in the vineyards and cellars of France and Italy. Published in 2008 by Farrar, Straus and Giroux. To learn more about wine marketing, Napa and "terroir" watch the 2005 documentary "Mondovino" that includes Neal Rosenthal, Robert Mondavi, and Robert Parker.

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seasonal effects?

By Thorunn Kristjansdottir
info@mainstreetmag.com

I was in the bar area at the Harpa Conference Center in downtown Reykjavik, Iceland over a year ago, waiting to be seated at one of Harpa's chic restaurants. Above the bar was a neon sign that simply stated "Scandinavian Down." At the time I found this to be peculiar, but I didn't pay any real heed to it. That sign recently popped back into my mind's eye when I found myself engaged in a conversation about Vitamin D deficiencies and seasonal depression. "But of course!" I said to myself. That neon sign now made complete sense for it was Icelandic humor, and the sign was implying that the way to cure seasonal depression (in Iceland) was to go to the bar and have a drink.

Don't misunderstand me; I'm not making light of seasonal depression, nor am I saying that seasonal depression's cure comes in liquid, alcoholic form. Far from it. In contrast, in the days since I remembered that sign, I've been thinking about the severity of seasonal depression – and might I add that it is fitting for we now find ourselves in the longest and darkest month of the year!

Seasonal depression

The correct name for seasonal depression is Seasonal Affective Disorder, or SAD. Essentially, and in layman's terms, it is when the darkness of winter (and everything that comes with it) affects a person more than most, and can result in depression. But to quote Wikipedia, and to give you a more accurate definition of this disorder:

"Seasonal affective disorder (SAD), also known as winter depression, winter blues, summer depression, summertime sadness, or seasonal depression, is a mood disorder subset in which people who have normal mental health throughout most of the year experience depressive symptoms in the winter or summer. ... The US National Library of Medicine notes that 'some people experience a serious mood change when the seasons change. They may sleep too much, have little energy, and may also feel depressed. Though symptoms can be severe, they usually clear up.'"

When I was in college and studying psychology we covered SAD, and I will always remember one example in the textbook about this disorder. The textbook compared percentages of the population suffering from SAD in New York State to those in Iceland. The reason that this stuck out for me is that I am Icelandic and I lived in New York State. I grew up in Iceland, and so I have spent plenty a winter there. Iceland is an island in the North Atlantic, so the winters there can be pretty tough, to say the least.

What this Icelandic saga has to do with any-

thing is that in the winter, it's dark. And it's dark, a lot! And it can be pretty brutal and cold. December 22nd is the shortest day of the year, where Iceland has about two hours of daylight. And so from growing up with that and knowing people who suffered from SAD in Iceland, I was very intrigued to learn that the result of this comparison was that New York State has a higher percentage of seasonal depression than Iceland does. I would have thought that it would be the opposite, for at least here in the Northeast we have a full day of daylight, versus only a few hours in Iceland.

I was and am fortunate for SAD never really affected me. But I will admit that one of the things that I truly hated about Icelandic winters was getting up when it was pitch-black outside and coming home and it was already dark again. Likewise, I really don't like when they change the clocks here in the US in the fall, and we lose an hour. Why do they do that? Who likes it being dark at 5 o'clock anyway? But that's a topic for another day.

Seasonal depression is something that does affect quite a few people and you can find various websites to read up on it and its symptoms if you want more details than the few I've provided here. All of the research that I did, and all of the knowledge that I have of it, all directs people suffering from SAD to speak with their doctor or healthcare professional because there is help to be had.

Vitamin D deficiencies

According to just about every doctor that I've ever spoken to, they have said that most of the population is Vitamin D deficient. I found numerous figures and one stated that about one billion people worldwide are Vitamin D deficient. Additionally, some of the sources that I've read say that people often don't realize that they have a deficiency because they think they are getting enough D from the foods that they eat. But that's just not the case.

We do get Vitamin D from certain foods, yes, but it is usually only in small amounts. It is naturally found in fatty fishes like sardines and tuna, and Vitamin D has been added to juices, cereals, and dairy products, which you can see on the label that that foodstuff is marked as being fortified with the vitamin. But according to WebMD, between 80 and 90% of our Vitamin D comes from sunlight, and therein lies our deficiency.

How many of you wear sunblock? How many of you work indoors? Sunblock blocks the sun's rays (which is good), but it is also not so good. When you stay out of the sun, yes you avoid the harmful rays of the sun, but you also don't get sun exposure and therefore don't get Vitamin D.

Vitamin D is super important for our well-being, as are most other vitamins and minerals. As I've often stated in this column, you should at least

once a year get all of your levels tested when you see your primary doctor for that yearly check-up. And at the follow-up appointment, you should discuss your levels with your doctor in depth so that you know where your body is at, and what you need to either add or watch.

Vitamin D is the only vitamin that is also a hormone. It is important in so many functions of the body, and here are just a few examples to give you an idea: it helps your heart, blood vessels, fights high blood pressure and high cholesterol; it helps with muscle weakness, diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, asthma, bronchitis, and tooth and gum disease; it helps fight/treat weak bones or osteoporosis, and other bone related illnesses like bone pain, loss, fractures and breaks; it can also help prevent cancer; helps to boost the immune system and prevent autoimmune diseases; it is also responsible for contributing to our intestine's absorption of different minerals like magnesium, zinc, calcium, and iron; and so the list continues.

But Vitamin D is also important for our mental health, and here is how my conversation about Vitamin D deficiencies tied into SAD. According to an article that I found on *Psychology Today's* website, Vitamin D activates our genes that help to regulate our immune system and then release such neurotransmitters as dopamine and serotonin. These neurotransmitters affect both our brain development and function. "Researchers have found vitamin D receptors on a handful of cells located in regions in the brain – the same regions that are linked with depression. SAD, a mood disorder featuring depressive symptoms, occurs during the dark times of the year when there is relatively little sunshine, coinciding with the sudden drop in vitamin D levels in the body. Several studies have suggested that the symptoms of SAD may be due to changing levels of vitamin D3, which may affect serotonin levels in the brain."

I am not a medical professional, nor do I claim to be an expert, but as we find ourselves in the longest and darkest days of the year I thought it appropriate to discuss these two issues, which may be linked. And by being aware of SAD, in particular, we can both be aware of our own bodies and help to keep an eye on our family and friends and recognize symptoms. As I always say, if you think that there might be something wrong, speak with your healthcare professional or advise that your loved one see their doctor.

Be your own advocate and take the best care of yourself and those that you love. Have a happy and healthy holiday season. •

Web links: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vitamin_D and <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-breakthrough-depression-solution/201111/psychological-consequences-vitamin-d-deficiency>

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HUDSON-CHATHAM WINERY:

DISCOVERING TERROIR IN THE HUDSON VALLEY

By Memoree Joelle
info@mainstreetmag.com

History. Terroir. Dirt. Rocks. Fruit. Wine. Those are the key words Hudson-Chatham Winery uses to describe their philosophy and approach to wine-making. I had the privilege of a private tour and tasting with owner Carlo DeVito, who is also a published author and editor, with over twenty years experience as a wine editor.

Hudson-Chatham is DeVito's first venture in wine production, and he and his wife, Dominique, purchased the property in Ghent in 2006. They chose the site for its soil quality (it was previously a dairy farm) and geological position, which makes it ideal for a vineyard. The couple is leading the way in growing hybrid grapes, which are hearty and well suited for the Hudson Valley, and also produce traditional vinifera wines from grapes grown in neighboring vineyards.

Winemaker and grape historian J. Stephen Casscles, also an attorney, has won the winery numerous awards over the years, and recently took on a project cataloging all of New York State's wine grapes. The rest of the staff includes vineyard manager Greg Esch, vineyard specialist Mike Pagnani, cider maker Ron Bixby, farm manager Ralph Cooley III., tasting room manager Bryan Van Deusen, and Karen Mink, a sales associate in the tasting room. The DeVito family also includes sons Dawson and Dylan, who grew up helping out on the farm.

Recently, a second tasting room was opened in nearby Tannersville, giving the public two destinations for some of the Hudson Valley's finest, award-winning wines.

Leading the way in French-American hybrids

North Creek Vineyard, the estate vineyard of Hudson-Chatham Winery, is made up of five acres of hybrid grapes including Seyval Blanc, Baco Noir, and Chelois. These are the grapes that intrigued me, in particular the Baco Noir, known for its rustic and hearty nature. Because of its ability to withstand very cold temperatures, it is a premier grape in cooler climates like the Hudson Valley. Thick skinned and therefore deeply pigmented, it contains higher levels of resveratrol (that popular wine antioxidant) and often has nuanced flavors of cherry, cedar, and wildflowers. Baco Noir lends itself to being made in whatever style the winemaker chooses, whether it is dark and heavy or lighter, and more feminine. Hudson-Chatham is producing the latter. It's all about red fruit, and finesse.

Chelois, another French-American hybrid, is produced in small quantities, and if forced to make



Above: Perfect terrain for growing wine. Below: Carlo DeVito, owner of Hudson-Chatham Winery. Photos courtesy of Hudson-Chatham Winery.

a comparison, I would liken it to a French Morgon. Like a light Pinot Noir, it is pleasant and shows red fruit and bright acidity. While I am not too keen on drinking pure native grapes (though they deserve their own place on the beverage map), hybrids wonderfully bridge the gap between purely indigenous grapes and vinifera, some of which might not show their character as well in a cold place. Hybrids like the ones produced by Hudson-Chatham offer a more intimate experience of the Hudson Valley's local flavor.

The winery sources grapes (and apples for cider) from other local vineyards as well, including two vineyards owned by winemaker Stephen Casscles. Hudson-Chatham produces single-vineyard wines, premium wines, and everyday drinking wines, alongside cider, sherry, and dessert wines.

Terroir – Burgundian tradition on Hudson Valley soil

Terroir (how a particular region's climate and terrain affect the taste of a wine) is a word most frequently associated with the Burgundy region of France, where every bottle offers up a unique experience depending on its precise growing location.

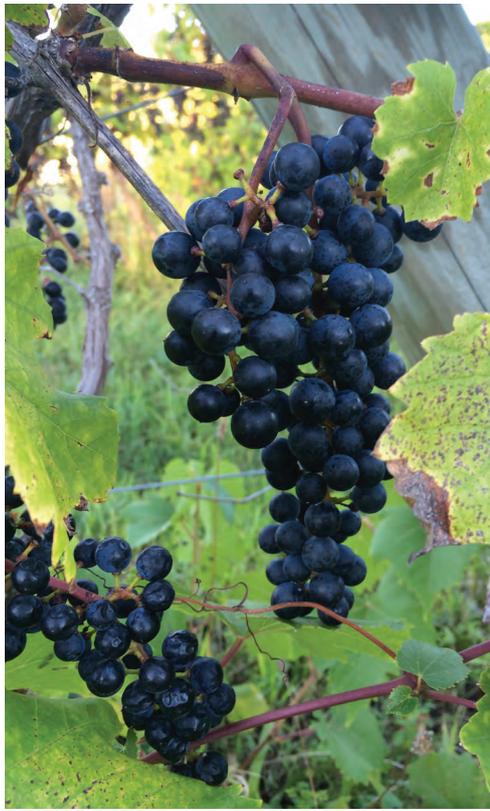


Continued on next page ...

Similarly, Hudson-Chatham wines are descriptive of their place; earthy, mineral-driven, with subtle fruit. Visiting the winemaking facilities – which were comprised of a few sheds and former dairy barn that once held the same equipment now used to make the wine – was also akin to what you'd expect to find in Burgundy. Vastly different from Bordeaux or the Napa Valley with their pristine new barrels and tasting rooms adorned with crystal chandeliers, this was more like visiting a true working farm. I was reminded of those small family plots in France whose cellars smelled of yeast and a pleasant muskiness when Carlo showed me the tanks and the barrels. Nothing fancy here, and nothing to hide, either. These are handmade wines; all unfinned and unfiltered, pressed in small basket presses, and aged in used oak barrels acquired from other wineries.

All of the wines can best be described as food-friendly, are lower in alcohol, and ready to drink now, though a few can be cellared for several years. After tasting the full line-up of reds, I was impressed by all of them, but a few stood out. The Baco Noir Reserve, from Casscles Vineyard, was full of bright cherry aromas, followed by a luscious, medium-long finish. It is perfect for holiday meals, and would compliment a variety of meats and cheeses. I also tasted the Old Vines Baco Noir, made from grapes grown on 60+ year-old vines; the Empire Red, which is a blend of both hybrids and vinifera, and a bit fleshier than the others.

The most interesting red, however, was the Middle Hope Baco Noir, grown on Casscles Vineyard



Above: Harvest time. The winery uses small basket presses and whole cluster fermentation. Below: A bottle of Hudson-Chatham's award-winning Baco Noir. All photos courtesy of Hudson-Chatham Winery.

in Middle Hope, New York. More layered than some of the others, this one can be aged for a number of years, and wavers between fruit – forwardness and pure earth, with a hint of that barnyard quality so many Burgundy purists seek out.

Vinifera, old-world style

Beyond hybrids, Hudson-Chatham is producing pure vinifera wines as well, including a Merlot that has been highly praised by wine critics in publications like *Wine Enthusiast* and *Wine Spectator*, among others. A Malbec is included in the line-up, and as someone who generally avoids that grape, I was surprised by how much I enjoyed it. With green pepper notes and a wonderful inky color, it holds up to the more typical big-bodied malbecs without being overpowering. I didn't get a chance to try the Cabernet Franc, but the 2012 vintage was awarded 88 points by *Wine Enthusiast*.

Cabernet Franc is increasingly becoming the most popular red wine grape on the east coast, where it is well suited to the growing conditions. In Europe it is used largely as a blending grape, but here it gets a chance to stand on its own, and at Hudson-Chatham, it is a rising star.

Sherry, baby

Because there weren't any open bottles of sherry on hand to try, I was offered the rare honor of a barrel tasting. Most of the sherry is made into cream sherry to meet popular demand, but I was lucky enough to get to taste it dry. Good sherry can be hard to come by around here, so I braced myself. I was not disappointed.

This sherry was exactly what sherry should be –

only the slightest hint to sweetness, nutty, slightly viscous, rich, smooth, and with a long, succulent, savory finish. With its warmth still in my chest, we visited the small building that contains the solera system it gets made in. If you're not familiar with sherry-making, solera is the traditional system used in Spain, where fractional blending results in a product that is a mixture of ages. True to its method, the sherry made here is complex and flavorful.

Drinking history, dirt, rocks, and fruit

I left the winery that day with a bottle of Old Vines Baco Noir. Cold weather was moving in, the harvest was complete, and all the grapes had been pressed and were fermenting. In fact, there was little evidence of the magic that was happening silently inside those tanks and barrels. In the quiet of the bare trees and winter sun, there was only one thing to do; drink the history, terroir, dirt, rocks, and fruit that make up what we call wine. •

In addition to wine and sherry, Hudson-Chatham produces dessert wines and cider, maple syrup, and offers a variety of locally made cheeses and other edibles for sale in their two tasting rooms.

Visit Hudson-Chatham Winery's website to read more about their vineyards, wines, and history: www.hudsonchathamwinery.com, and visit their tasting room locations in Ghent and Tannersville. For more information, call (518) 392-WINE.



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View Point

CLEARING LAND FOR A VIEW, A BUILDING SITE, A ROAD, OR A MEADOW

By Christine Bates
christine@mainstreetmag.com

The silhouette of the Catskills stretches across our far Western horizon. The Taconic Mountain chain lines New York's border with Connecticut and Massachusetts and the Berkshires rise east of the Housatonic River. This is still a land of expansive views in all directions, but sometimes you can't see the view for the forest or the trees. This month's Main Street real estate article examines the benefits and challenges of clearing land to build a house, put in a driveway, or open up a view to the sky.

Big views sell houses

"The only time I ever sold a property from our website without the buyer actually visiting the property was because of the photo of the view from Belgo Road," according to Elyse Harney of Elyse Harney Real Estate. She guesstimates that as many as 10% to 20% of home seekers are adamant about a view – about the same number as want to be secluded surrounded by trees in the woods. Both Harney and Katherine Dunlop, of Katherine Dunlop Real Estate, agree that western views that capture the last moment of the day and the sunset are the most sought after.

The view that built the house

Finding a spot to build a home with a view, or just an open, cleared site can involve hiking through



Above: Looking out at the view from a kitchen on Belgo Road. Below: Views from a Lakeville home. Photos courtesy of Elyse Harney Real Estate.

woods, examining topographical maps, and consulting with excavators and landscapers. A Catskill view from Skunk's Misery Road in Pine Plains was confirmed when the buyer paid \$40 to have someone climb up a tree and take a photo.

The owner of 33 Ore Hill Road in South Kent shared the process of creating a forever view. The six-bedroom house with 40 acres and a pool is now on the market for \$6 million (see photo on next page).

"Once we decided to build our house at the top of our original plot of land in South Kent, we knew we wanted it to fit in naturally and not stand out. This decision dictated not only the type of house we would build, but also the design of the land on which the house would sit. The hill at that time was totally wooded. We were not aware of the magnificent view that was out there until we started taking down a few trees to start the project. While the house was being designed, additional trees were taken down very judiciously for the house site. Some might have just clear-cut the area because of the impact of the view; but we left standing many trees (all great oaks) that to this day weave in and around the house, some in front of the view. We've had to add lightning rods to several since they remain close to the house."

"The house site is probably about only three acres and the cutting was done by our designer/architect/builder who had studied with Frank Lloyd Wright and had an instinctive eye for nature and how it interacts with housing. The really cool thing is that we used all of the trees we took down ... and the stone recovered from blasting the foundation. Through the use of a portable mill that resided on the hill for about six months all of the beams, and all of the floorboards in the house came from those great oaks. And all of the stone used inside and out of the house for fireplaces, siding, and stone walls also came from the site... Also many large boulders

were meticulously placed alongside of the climbing driveway to prevent erosion and to add to the aesthetic of the approach."

How to go about clearing the land

Before you begin cutting down trees, first investigate any local restrictive regulations. For example Connecticut has rules about how many stumps you can bury. Ancram and Amenia in New York have rules about building on ridgelines. Some towns require permits to clear land.

Landscapers and excavators stress the importance of judiciously clearing the land. "I love trees," said Florian Thomas, a contractor in Sharon. "I always try to save the white and red oaks, and the sugar maples." Identifying valuable trees like black walnut that can be sold can reduce the final cost of land clearing. Leaving key specimen trees will increase the desirability of the property dramatically. Erosion must be considered on rocky hill tops. Frank Duncan of Northwest Landscaping in Millerton, NY said the best time to clear land is in the spring or fall – the off-season for landscapers. But you should consult with your landscaper when the leaves are still on the trees. Consult with arborists about the types of trees on the property, their age and health. Don't over harvest. Duncan reminds, "There's no way to hit rewind when it comes to land clearing. Make sure your decisions are informed."

Everyone Main Street consulted about clearing land for residential purposes agreed that commercial loggers are not the best alternative. Their prices may be lower, but Duncan observed that they typically have a disregard for nature, and damage trees they don't cut.

Continued on next page ...

How much does it cost?

Every project is different, depending on size, slope, soil conditions, type of vegetation, and disposal of sawdust, chips, and stumps. There is no simple answer. The website www.homewys.com estimates around \$8,000 to clear an acre in our area. Duncan says that most clearing jobs are on half an acre to one acre and can involve as much pruning as actual tree removal. Drew Hingson of Klemm Realty has seen a range of \$2,000 to \$10,000 an acre, depending on the method, the extent of the “grooming,” and the wallet of the owner. Frank Duncan agreed with a mid range of \$4,000 to \$5,000 per acre, but cautions the price could rise to \$12,000 an acre if all stumps were removed and a lawn seeded. Jim Murphy, who has a reputation for artfully clearing land and a long waiting list of clients, provided a ballpark estimate of \$4,500 to \$7,500. Additionally, the gravel road required to get to the site would cost \$30 to \$60 a linear foot

How much is it worth?

If you know what you’re doing and buy at the right price, clearing land and adding the infrastructure of driveways, roads and utilities can be very profitable. Dunlop estimated that land is 25% to 30% more valuable once cleared, or as she calls it, “groomed.” John Panzer, who specializes in selling raw land for Elyse Harney Real Estate, sited a large parcel in Millbrook which was purchased for \$500,000. Artfully divided into five estate sized lots with views, each then sold for \$500,000.

Drew Hingson, Klemm Realty’s land specialist, cautions the range is wide. “You could triple the value or come out with little or no profit.”

Dunlop, Hingson, and Panzer all agreed that raw land prices, view or no view, remain depressed. Hingson estimated that prices in Columbia County are two thirds lower than at the height of the market, and 50% less in Dutchess County. Dunlop says that the prices of land sold now range from \$12,000 to \$15,000 acre, “If you’re lucky. It’s very hard to get \$20,000.” Other brokers reported price levels as low as \$7,000 an acre for some properties to find buyers.

In 1998 Elise and Arnold Goodman had been looking for a private property with a view for eight years before hiking into the woods on Skunk’s Misery Road with realtor Katherine Dunlop. She showed them where a Catskill view might be and they reconfirmed it with maps and aerial photographs. They paid \$350,000 for 165 acres, built a mile long, gravel road, selectively cleared some of the land and erected a contemporary Dutch barn home. “We had no idea that the view would be so panoramic, so expansive from North to South.” They have now parceled off 50+ acres with the same magnificent view, which is on the market through Drew Hingson for \$1,150,000.



Above: Magnificent views of the Catskills were revealed after clearing 15 acres on this Skunk’s Misery Road property in Pine Plains. Photo by Christine Bates. Left: Sky views from the living room at 33 Ore Hill Road in South Kent. Photo courtesy of Randy O’Rourke and William Pitt Sotheby’s International. For a video of the view go to <http://vimeo.com/99663829>. Below: Land before and after a herd of goats browsed on the brush. Photo supplied by Rent-a-Ruminant.



Rent a goat – organic land clearing

With no noise, no fumes, no clippings to discard, and no scattering of seeds to grow back next year, some property owners are renting goats to help them eliminate brush and even poison oak. This is especially effective in deeply sloped areas and wetlands where it would be difficult for humans or machines to tackle the job. Locally at the Vanderbilt Mansion in Hyde Park, goats graze on seven hilly acres and at Wilderstein mansion in Rhinebeck they keep the underbrush under control.

Seattle-based Rent-A-Ruminant’s founder,

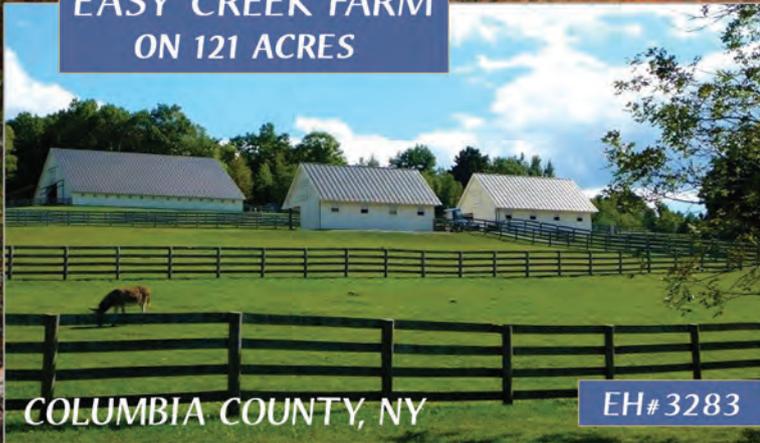
Tammy Dunakin, estimates that in these difficult situations, a herd of goats would do the job for 75% less than humans. She calculates that a herd of around 100 goats working 12-hour days could clear an acre of waist high brush in four days. If you are interested in starting your own rent-a-goat business, Dunakin is now offering franchises globally and hopes to be the Starbucks of land clearing goats. (www.rentaruminant.com). ●

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IS THERE A

Santa Claus?

By Allison Guertin Marchese
info@mainstreetmag.com

Not far from Millerton, a bit north and a bit east, is the town of Valatie, New York. Its original name was Vaaltje, which is Dutch for “little falls.” The town also has a few other names including “The Yuletide Village,” declared by the Columbia County Chamber of Commerce in 1950 because of the outstanding holiday decorations created by nearly every shop and home along the main streets. How Santa became such a strong portion of Valatie’s history goes back a bit further, indeed.

The Santa Claus Club

Back in 1946 the first Santa Claus Club in the country was created by fifteen former soldiers who used their military pay to buy gifts and bring holiday cheer to families who were suffering due to the closure of the town’s mills. In 1947 another veteran of the Italian campaign by the name of William Farrell took it upon himself to be sure that no child was forgotten at Christmas-time in Valatie. At the time, the town created the Boys’ and Girls’ Christmas Committee and Bill decided that he would visit each of the 247 children and give each a gift. Out of his own funds, Bill bought presents and dressed up like Santa, and on Christmas Eve he personally visited “as many homes as he was permitted,” according to *The Chatham Courier*.

Bill was able to afford this generosity for another season, but when he couldn’t the following year, the whole town pitched in to help and three assistant Santas were appointed to make deliveries. All kinds of businesses donated money, from the big mill owners to the lawyers and merchants. Bill was in charge of the collections and when the money was finally turned over, he again purchased upward of 250 gifts. News of the Christmas committee spread and others joined. As a result the Santa Claus Club in Valatie still exists today.

The question was asked and was answered every year thereafter

Santa Claus holds another piece of Valatie’s history. Virginia O’Hanlon Douglas died on May 13, 1971, at the age of eighty-one, in a nursing home in Valatie and is buried in the Chatham Rural Cemetery. It turns out that Virginia was the famous little eight-year-old girl who wrote a letter to the editor of *The New York Sun*, Francis P. Church, asking “Is there a Santa Claus?”

The editor’s reply is now a Christmas classic. Church wrote in his editorial on Tuesday, September 21, 1897, “Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus.” The editorial would run each year in newspapers across the country and in *The Sun* until it went out of business in 1949.

Virginia would go on to live most of her life in New York City as a school teacher, but when she became ill she moved in with her daughter in North Chatham, NY. Local lore has it that she loved how Valatie honored the spirit of Christmas and Santa Claus. According to *The Albany Times Union* in 1963, Mrs. O’Hanlon Douglas, residing in North Chatham made a Christmas wish which seemed to be a lifelong mission for her, and that was to keep the spirit of Christmas in schools so that children may not lose any part of their heritage. And a few years before she died, Virginia O’Hanlon read the Francis Pharcellus Church editorial to a group of school children in Valatie which was recorded on the local WTEN television station.

Oddly, later in 1965 on a cold December night, Virginia answered a knock on the door of her daughter’s home in North Chatham to find children selling Christmas cards. Seconds later a neighbor also knocked to tell she and her family that their house was on fire. Luckily they all escaped unharmed, though a third of the house was destroyed.

It seems that throughout her life, Virginia responded to letters to her about her affection for

Santa Claus. And after she passed away, her grandson Jim Temple who lived in Valatie, continued to tell Virginia’s story. During her interview with the *Times Union* back in 1963 she concluded by saying “In closing, may I say with Tiny Tim, A Merry Christmas and may God bless us all everyone.”

From The Amenia Times

Closer to home, seasonal sentiment frequently appeared in area newspapers in the late 1890s. This piece ran on Christmas Eve in the *Amenia Times* in 1896.

“The White Christmas has arrived and now children are on the qui vive for the jingling of Santa Claus’ bells and the trampling of little hoofs of his famous reindeer team and the cheer voice of their patron saint as he shouts now Dasher, now Dancer, now Prancer, now Vixen, now Comet, now Cupid, now Dunder and Blixen. How it revives childhood’s memories and we never seem to grow old in their remembrance and although our heads may be whitened by age, our limbs grow feeble and faltering yet never while time with us lasts can or would we forget our childhood’s Christmas ... The holiday trade in our village has been larger than ordinary. Hawley reports his sales as beyond his best expectations. Trip has no cause to complain. Hotchkiss & Eggleston have constant flow of customers and Smith’s shoe store in the Brick Block is thronged. The post office comes in for a good share and James Finch is carrying away fine pieces of his choice furniture. McArthur can hardly get out sausage to supply the demands of his customers. Deakin has turkeys by the wagon load.”

Happy Holiday! And please support your local businesses this season. ●

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THE LASTING APPEAL OF DICKENS'S
A CHRISTMAS CAROL

By Mary B. O'Neill
info@mainstreetmag.com



M

arley was dead: to begin with ... This must be distinctly understood, or nothing wonderful can come of the story I am going to relate.

The holiday classic *A Christmas Carol* opens in Stave One with the icy Ebenezer Scrooge standing in contrast to his kindhearted nephew Fred and his tentative, fearful, yet faithful clerk Bob Cratchit. It is Christmas Eve, and Victorian London is bustling to beat back the cold and fog and welcome in the impending holiday. From his counting house office of Scrooge and Marley, Scrooge holds forth with icy words and a frost-bitten heart. Thus he barricades himself against the cheer and warmth that are an affront to his frozen and fixed perspective.

In the following staves or chapters Scrooge is visited by his late business partner “seven years dead.” Jacob Marley, his jaw bound by a tattered kerchief and his limbs fettered by heavy chains, warns Scrooge of the precarious state of his soul. He emphatically discloses that Scrooge wears his own invisible chain, forged by neglect of the common welfare and a single-minded pursuit of material gain.

Marley then foretells of three ghosts who will visit in rapid succession. “Without their visits you

cannot hope to shun the path I tread,” warns the ominous Marley. So begins Scrooge’s temporal journey. All the while he is battling his past, coming to terms with his present, and seeing the effects of what he will have wrought in the future.

The ghosts reveal to him that a different way is possible, that the past does not have to define his future, and that redemption is within his grasp in the present. We meet characters that challenge Scrooge’s world view. At different junctures in the story they offer him exit points off the path of financial gain toward one of “charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence.” Former boss Old Fezziwig, ex-fiancée Belle, nephew Fred, employee Bob Cratchit, and Cratchit’s ailing son Tiny Tim all show him a way forward toward the generosity of spirit he has lacked.

Then with rapidity of transition very foreign to his usual character, he said, in pity for his former self, “Poor boy!” and cried again.

A Christmas Carol contains themes that emerged from Dickens’s childhood. At the age of twelve Dickens was forced to sell his much-loved books, leave school, and work in a shoe blacking factory while his father

served a sentence in debtors’ prison in Marshalsea.

This fall from grace had a huge impact on Dickens and formed his thoughts about social class, inequality, children’s rights, education, and social justice. He wove all these themes into the packed pages of this holiday novella and many of his other works.

This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware them both ... but most of all beware this boy, for on this brow I see that written which is Doom...

The early 1840s saw a confluence of events that led to the writing of *A Christmas Carol*. Dickens’s visit to the Field Lane Ragged School in London confirmed his belief in the power of education to lift people, children in particular, out of poverty. In a letter to *The Daily News*, Dickens explained that ragged schools were an attempt to educate those on the very margins of society by providing free education, often during the evening, and always in the “most obscure and squalid parts of the Metropolis.”

He further stated that, “They who are too ragged, wretched, filthy, and forlorn to enter any other place: who

Continued on next page ...

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Landscape painter **Chris J.T. Dixon**



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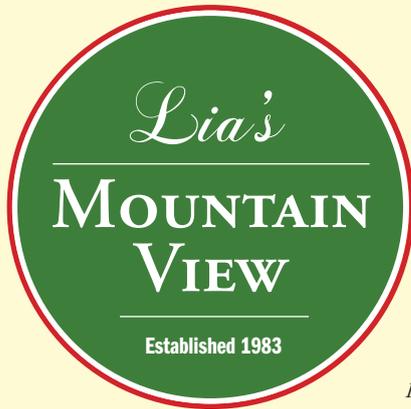
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could gain admission into no charity school, and who would be driven from any church door; are invited to come in here, to find some people not depraved, willing to teach them something, and show them some sympathy, and stretch a hand out, which is not the iron hand of the Law, for their correction." Dickens acutely understood that education was, and still is, the key to lifting children out of their poverty and ignorance – not prisons and workhouses.

Further, in 1843 Parliament issued a report that described a seamy underbelly of the Industrial Revolution. This document exposed the Revolution's effects on children, society's most vulnerable members. Dickens planned to issue a leaflet to publicizing these findings and sounding a call to arms on the issue.

In October 1843 he delivered a fundraising speech at the Manchester Athenaeum and urged workers and employers to use educational reform as the means to improve life circumstances. Filled with fervor, in the days following his talk in Manchester he scrapped the earlier pamphlet idea and plotted out the storyline of *A Christmas Carol*.

"Are there no prisons?" asked Scrooge... "And the Union workhouses... Are they still in operation?... The Treadmill and the Poor Law are in full vigour, then?... I can't afford to make idle people merry. I help support the establishments I have mentioned: they cost enough: and those who are badly off must go there."

Increasing poverty rates brought efforts to address their divisive effects on society. The early Poor Law of 1815 dictated that each parish must look after its own poor. This provided local assistance to the economically disenfranchised. Yet the dawning Industrial Revolution caused numerous societal shifts including the swell of factory labor; the migration of agricultural workers and trades people from rural to urban centers; the rise in concentration of wealth and ensuing inequality; a fall in wages; and an increase in breadth and depth of poverty.

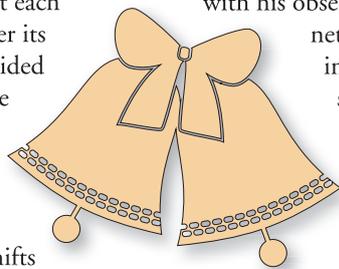
Further, by 1830 the cost of The Poor Law had risen dramatically and so had mounting resistance to its funding. The dwindling middle class, through taxation, was bearing the burden of supporting an increasing

number of the indigent. Stereotypes of a lazy and undeserving poor having more children than they could feed were on the rise, along with resentment and lack of compassion for their plight.

This led to The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 that ended direct monetary support through local parishes, and called for the establishment of workhouses. In exchange for food, clothes, and housing the poor were kept on a rigorous schedule of work, with little time for meals or rest.

In these workhouses, families were often split apart. Residents were forced to wear uniforms. Living conditions and food quality were deplorable. Workers were forced to walk treadmills for hours on end, at first to grind wheat or pump water and then as punishment for perceived idleness. Some observers of these conditions believed this law and the ensuing cruel treatment of the poor made workhouses "prisons for the poor." Those in need would truly rather die than go there.

Dickens's own personal financial woes also fueled his motivation for writing a popular piece. With his wife pregnant with their fifth child, a heavy mortgage, and slumping sales from monthly installments of *Martin Chuzzlewit* he needed fast cash. Memories of his father's stint in debtors' prison and the catastrophic effect on his own early life, combined with his observed lack of social safety net, provided the fire in the belly for penning a successful book.



I have always thought of Christmastime... as a good time: a kind forgiving, charitable, pleasant time: the only time I know of, in the long calendar year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys.

The events and institutions described above, Dickens's personal responses to them, and his vision for social reform

gave birth not only to *A Christmas Carol*, but Dickens's self-described "Carol Philosophy."

Eschewing position papers, speeches, and the bully pulpit, he now believed what any fundraiser today knows – that if one wants people to make an issue personal and motivate them to change or to give, one needs a powerful personal narrative. *A Christmas Carol* provided the platform for social justice issues and the heartfelt emotional pull to drive the message home.

Dickens used the season of good cheer to help people awoken from the slumber of material self-interest to see those in need existing beside them. For Dickens, we were all on the same journey from birth to death and some, through accident of birth, circumstances beyond their control, and the vagaries of industrial capitalism, had fallen outside the acceptable limits of society.

I have endeavoured in this Ghostly little book, to raise the Ghost of an Idea, which shall not put my readers out of humour with themselves, with each other, with the season, or with me. May it haunt their houses pleasantly, and no one wish to lay it.

After writing and publishing *A Christmas Carol* on December 19, 1843, Dickens gave the original version to his solicitor Thomas Mitton as a gift. Earlier in December Dickens wrote to Mitton inquiring about a short-term loan of £ 200. Dickens stated that his account was overdrawn and this loan was a temporary one, citing that his forthcoming "Christmas book... will enable me to keep comfortable."

This handwritten manuscript was written in black ink with a goose quill pen, bound in red goatskin, with Mitton's name stamped in gold on the cover. It contains glorious and telling cross outs and corrections. These edits and marginalia are documented proof that signify the author's intentions.

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Photo source: istockphoto.com contributor Stendec.



Insights such as these are becoming rarer in our technological age.

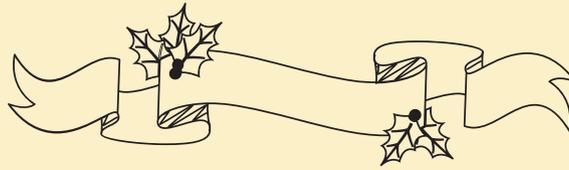
The manuscript exudes the air of a work written with great haste and fluidity, probably due to an effective alchemy of inspiration, a looming deadline, and financial need.

In 1875, Mitton sold the manuscript to London bookseller Francis Harvey for £ 50. The volume changed hands a number of times until the early 1900s when American tycoon Pierpont Morgan purchased it for his collection. It is on display online and each holiday season at The Morgan Library and Museum in Manhattan (blocks from Grand Central Terminal).

Best and happiest of all, the Time before him was his own, to make amends in!

Aside from the wonderful imagery contained in this neat literary package tied up in a heartwarming bow, in *A Christmas Carol* we catch a glimpse that our own redemption is achievable. Life offers us many opportunities for change. Our own ghosts can be mustered to see the world and our place in it with more compassion and less emphasis on mammon.

The transformed Scrooge enables us to capture a glimmer of our own salvation, and like him, we have the power to craft it through a simple, yet profound shift in thoughts and actions. ●



Oh! but he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching covetous old sinner!

A Christmas Carol and the transformation of Scrooge has been with us continuously since its publication in 1843. Countless film, stage, television, and radio productions have been mounted of this timeless tale. Shakespeare-worthy actors, from the likes of Patrick Stewart to Mister Magoo, have played the meaty part of Ebenezer Scrooge.

Amy Wynn, executive director of NW CT Arts Council dedicated to promoting and sustaining “all things cultural for northwest Connecticut and surroundings” has seen productions of *A Christmas Carol* as a staple offering of the holiday season for local theatre.

For Wynn, the play version “is forever relevant. Many people find themselves seeking it out, just because of the feeling they get after seeing, hearing or reading the story each time.” This year is no exception. In the local area there are a variety of ways to take in this holiday classic.

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www.rivertontheatre.com

Shakespeare in Waterbury
December 20
Staged reading by Douglas Schlicher
www.shakespeareproductions.org

Hartford Stage
November 27- December 27
www.hartfordstage.com

MASSACHUSETTS
Berkshire Theatre Group @ Colonial Theatre in Pittsfield
December 12-22
www.berkshiretheatregroup.org

NEW YORK
Half Moon Theatre at the Culinary Institute of America
December 3-19
www.ciachef.edu/half-moon-theatre

The Players Theatre on MacDougal Street
November 29-December 30
Musical production
www.scroogeinthevillage.com

The Morgan Library and Museum
Original manuscript on display through mid-January
www.themorgan.org

Copies of *A Christmas Carol* are also available at Oblong Books in Millerton and Rhinebeck and your local library.
www.oblongbooks.com

Some ways to help your neighbors this holiday season:

Sunday In The Country Food Drive raises money for local pantries, purchases all food from local vendors, and most of all, feeds local families in need. www.sundayinthecountry.com

Salisbury Family Services is committed to helping those people in our community experiencing difficulties. With respect for the individual, and a vision for a better community, their goal is to help people help themselves. Salisbury Family Services acts as a liaison to many services available in Salisbury. www.salisburyfamilyservices.org

Chore Service is the leading in-home care resource for stay-at-home services in the Northwest Corner. They specialize in one thing: personally helping you get the assistance you need to stay in your home. www.choreservice.org

Housatonic Youth Services Bureau seeks to create a supportive environment and empowering experiences where children and young adults can embrace their full potential as individuals, as students, as family members, and as community members. www.hysb.org

The Corner Pantry (formerly Owl's Kitchen) provides nutritious, healthful food and ingredients to residents of the tri-state area. www.thecornerfoodpantry.org

Women's Support Services seeks to create a community free of domestic violence and abuse through intervention, prevention, and education. www.wssdv.org

The North East Community Center seeks to build a healthy, caring, responsive and welcoming community for all who live and visit here. www.necmillerton.org

Dutchess Community Action Partnership helps with rent and utilities, prescriptions, food and clothing, and much more. Local advocates in northeastern Dutchess County. www.dutchesscap.org

Grace Smith House offers shelter and counseling to victims of domestic violence and their dependent children in need of safety and protection. www.gracesmithhouse.org

Dutchess Outreach meets temporary basic needs of individuals and families when no other resources are available. www.dutchessoutreach.org

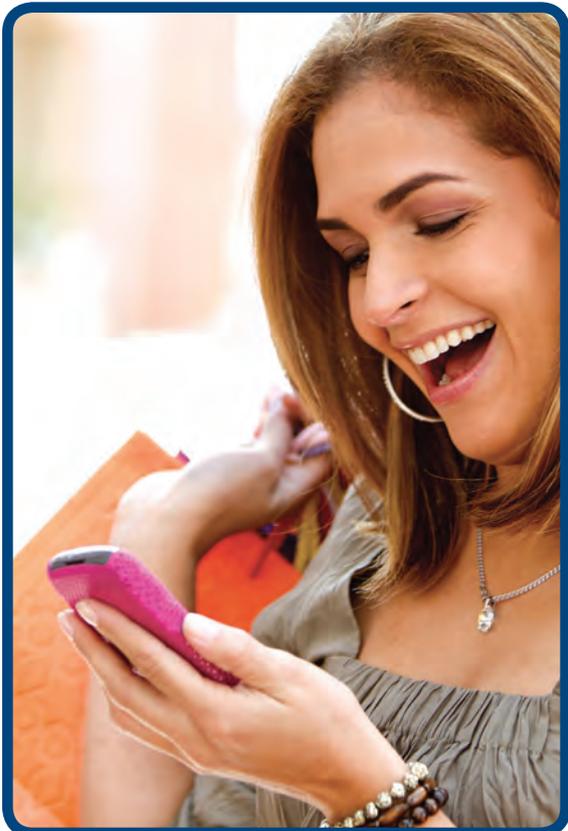
Mental Health America of Dutchess County promotes mental well-being and advances recovery from mental illness by providing a range of rehabilitation, supportive, case management, education, advocacy, and drop-in services for adults, children, youths, and families. www.mhadutchess.org

The Moviehouse and Salisbury Bank: Salisbury Bank will be funding the free viewing of *It's a Wonderful Life* on Sunday December 13 at The Moviehouse in Millerton. They will be accepting donations for locals in need, please visit www.themoviehouse.net for details.

Consult your local houses of worship as well for additional ways to give to those in need during the holiday season.



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helen klein ross

By Betsy Maury
info@mainstreetmag.com

When I suggested to writer Helen Klein Ross that we meet at Irving Farm in Millerton to discuss her new book, *What Was Mine*, I got a very agreeable “perfect!” It turned out to be both a perfect place and a familiar one for us to discuss writing; we sat down at the very table where Helen had worked on her book much of last year. She’d had to research child abductions, meditation, and Chinese big box shopping patterns among other things. We talked about writing, remote working, and country life in our corner of the world. Before we knew it, the barista was sweeping the floor and ready to see us out.

Writer’s surroundings and Irving Farm

Dorothy Parker is said to have remarked, “I hate writing; love having written” and every writer I know secretly feels this way, including Helen. With the writing of this book squarely behind her, galleys on their way to being covered, bound and shipped to bookstores, Helen looked back at her researching days at Irving Farm with a sigh of relief. We agreed Irving Farm provided the right amount of energy for our community of independent types – entrepreneurs, creative freelancers, and local business people. For remote workers, it’s more stimulating to plug in here than the solitary confines of home, and for grab-and-go regulars, the place has a neighborly vibe where making new connections is always a possibility. On any given day, there are half a dozen adults with laptops and headphones doing their thing, turning the wheels in their own universe. The coffee shop as community hub and office certainly has taken root in Millerton.

Ross is no stranger to life in the Northwest corner. She and her husband Donald have been coming to the area since they bought a farmhouse in Amenia, NY as a weekend retreat in the 90s. The country house provided relaxation from the hustle and bustle of New York City living for the whole family. Helen remembers her daughters’ birthday parties in Lakeville and trips to Rudd Pond when her children were young. The area also provided fertile ground for her creative pursuits. In addition to writing fiction, Helen is a *New Yorker* published poet and ground breaking Tweeter with a long career in advertising copywriting. Her first novel, *Making It*, set in the *Mad Men* world of

Madison Avenue, was written in a detached writing shed on the Amenia property, one she now mistily recalls.

For a writer, the right creative space is crucial and a dedicated room with a view of the Harlem Valley with a door you can close is a cherished luxury. Her work now keeps her sequestered in the third floor of her historic home, Holleywood in Lakeville, which the Rosses bought and renovated in 2010. As beautiful as her house is with its view of Lake Wononscopomuc, writing is solitary work sometimes in need of company, hence the familiar table at Irving Farm.

The novel

Helen’s novel, due out in January from Gallery/S&S, is about a woman who makes an impulsive and life-changing decision in 1990 to steal an unattended crying baby in a shopping cart, take her home and raise her as her own. When she’d told me about it months ago, I loved the set-up. Could such a thing really happen? Implausible as it seems in today’s wired world of constant contact, Helen pulls the conceit off in a world with no viral news gathering, no cell phones. From this shocking beginning, *What Was Mine* delves into the lives of Lucy, the baby stealer and Mia, the unknowing child over 20 years. The book is deftly told from alternating points of view: Lucy’s and Mia’s, but also the birth mother’s, the babysitter’s, and the aunt’s. All this makes for riveting reading, and more complex emotional turns than you’d expect, questioning the reader to decide what is forgivable and what is motherhood. There’s selfishness and rage, abject love and unexpected compassion. One of the joys of the book is that each character takes the reader closely into confidence and we see firsthand how a shocking, inconceivable act ripples through the lives of so many.

I asked Helen how the book came about and her answer was straightforward: as a mother of young children she was terrified of losing them, in the mall, at the airport, in the produce aisle of the grocery store. She raised her children in New York City where a mother is almost never alone in any of the regular places she goes with children. This fear lends the book its universal hook; there’s hardly a



Above: Helen Klein Ross. Photo by John Gruen.
Below: The cover of “What Was Mine.” All images provided by Helen Ross.

mother (or parent) alive raising a child anywhere who hasn’t panicked at the momentary loss of her charge. What makes the book so affecting are the themes that bind all mothers, the desperate quest to become one, the joy of mother/child intimacy, the fear of losing primacy in a child’s life. Helen told me she was fascinated with portraying what she calls a “normal” person committing a monstrous act and her belief that circumstance can tip the balance of good and evil in an ordinary life.

As a protagonist, Lucy is this very ordinary woman who’s endowed – in not quite equal parts – with both good and evil. That we could care for so flawed and selfish a character is a minor act of writerly magic in my view.

The book began as a short story hatched many years ago in the writer’s shed in Amenia. In its earliest version, Lucy gives the baby back and lives a childless life, chastened by her bad deed. But over the years the story felt unfinished and Lucy more nuanced so Helen reconsidered it, and tried to reconcile Lucy’s truest desires with a version where she might just get away with it. She ultimately imagined a different, more involved trajectory for Lucy, one long and engaging enough to fill the pages of a book. In the end, *What Was Mine* became what it was meant to be, a fully formed tale of a woman desperate to become a mother, whose secret becomes her burden, and whose impulsive act shatters the lives of those around her. This was no doubt achieved through hard, solitary work done in a nurturing creative space, one possibly in your own neighborhood. •

To learn more about Helen Klein Ross and her writing you can go to www.helenkleinross.com. Both Helen and Betsy recommend Irving Farm, Rountuit, and the Scoville Memorial Library as three possible off-site locations that are great for writing.

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dreaming of a potting shed

WHEN CONSTRUCTION MEETS GARDENING

By Claire Copley
info@mainstreetmag.com

Recently my husband and I decided to build the garden shed I have dreamed of for so long, or at least a modest approximation of my dream. But then reality intervened. We do not have a garage, and as winter approaches, the specter of cleaning snow off of the cars with freezing hands and noses was becoming increasingly painful. A garage is much more practical, so we decided on a combo structure: a basic two car garage plus twelve feet at the back for a potting shed.

What is the ideal potting shed? What is its function and how should it be designed? Gardening magazines show gorgeous rustic spaces, organized, labelled, and staged with flowers, copper sinks, and comfortable chairs. Real-life limitations offer different choices.

The ideal (and realistic) shed

Ideally, a potting shed is in the middle of the garden and becomes a garden element. A garage, however, has very different siting goals. For better or worse, (winter will tell whether this was a good idea or a bad one) our garage is sited away from the house, closer to the garden. My shed will not get a lot of warming sunlight as it faces north, but it does look out on green space rather than having a southern view of the driveway. A potting shed facing south would be preferable as the sunlight would keep it warm and help over-wintering plants survive. But north or south-facing, my shed will provide a space for working on transplants and seeds, and storage space for the thousands of ancillary items every gardener accumulates.

For the last four years, I have (like so many) conducted my seed starting, repotting, and transplanting activities in whatever space is available. In my case this is a storeroom attached to the house. Unfortunately, the garden chaos has overtaken the storeroom and made it impossible to use for anything else. In fact, it has become difficult to enter and impossible to traverse. One might suggest, as my husband has, that I simply weed out



Above: The construction of the gardening shed/garage. Below: The “stuff” that accompanies gardening and is waiting for its new (organized) home.

and organize this space. A sensible idea if I do say so myself. But it is always so much easier to start fresh and arrange a new space. With the increased square footage that the garage and potting shed will provide, I can find a place for everything! No need to throw anything away!

Construction and planning

So we began the process of putting up our structure. Every time I go out to check on the progress I look in my shed space and begin to dream. I picture myself out there starting seeds in spring, storing bulbs and tubers, making divisions, potting up seedlings and repotting all manner of overgrown plants. But there are so many things to consider: how to best store tools and pots, how to organize the many bags of necessary materials, not to mention small things like hose connectors or twist ties. I must have space for books and journals, as well as boots and hats. I will need to make sense of all of this so once I store things I will be able to find them again. At present I don't know where things are, but I know they are in there somewhere. The most important thing will be finding a way to maintain the order.

What is essential to me is that my “She Shed” be a place where I can comfortably work and spend productive time on my gardening chores. It will never be a show shed like I see in the magazines, not that we could afford it anyway, but it should be aesthetically pleasing. My shed will have a concrete floor (easy to clean) and plywood walls so I can hammer in a nail whenever I need to hang some-

thing up. I will leave the ceiling beams exposed so I can hang things there as well. And windows – plenty of windows.

Good lighting is a must for any potting shed. Seeds and seedlings can be tiny, and you need to be able to see what you're doing. (Note to self: make a permanent home for my glasses!). The shed will have electricity as well as water, so I can power grow lights for seedlings and overhead lighting for me. The structure will be insulated, so I will be able to heat it somehow, I just haven't figured out the most efficient way yet.

The work area

Any potting shed worthy of the name must have a potting bench. A potting bench, or gardening table, is a kind of workbench used for intricate gardening tasks such as transplanting seedlings. A basic potting bench has a counter surface at working height, comfortable for a standing person; and storage for potting soil, pots, and tools. Having a bench or counter that runs under the windows for the length of the shed would give me ample working space. Given that I am the victim of “gardeners back” (and “gardeners knees”) maybe a bench height that would accommodate a stool would be better.

Since this surface will be exposed to soil, water, and sunlight, it should be made from weather-resistant materials or it will decay rapidly. Cedar wood

Continued on next page ...

seems to be a popular choice and, for those who can afford it, there is teak. I might consider some type of metal counter, although I am already shivering when I think of working on a metal counter in February.

Organization for ease of use

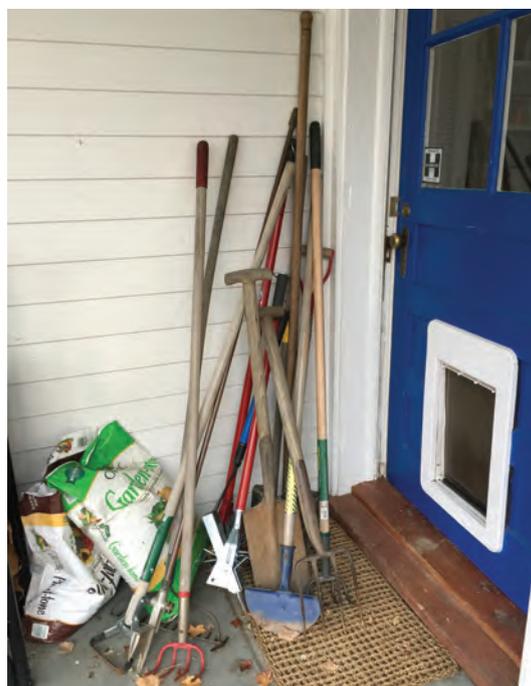
There should be a shelf underneath so that all those open bags of potting soil, vermiculite, perlite, fertilizers, and birdseed will have a place. Using large bins – labeled and stowed beneath the potting bench – would certainly be efficient. Plastic bins with covers, neatly labeled, would help to keep items separated and accessible. Smaller bins or baskets could be used for storing hose attachments, gardening gloves, balls of twine, and other small articles. But I will keep each in its own bin. I will, I will.

I also want space at the bench to use as a desk. Journaling about the garden is something I never do but know I should. I do make notes, but then can never find the notebook in which the notes were written. A garden journal is a great way to keep track of what plant blooms when, as well as seed-starting schedules, and new garden-design ideas. As my best gardener self, I will write copious notes and keep an orderly shelf for my notebooks.

I will also need a space to draw. Drawing planting designs, or just getting a sense of what a new bed will look like in terms of space, texture, and color will help me in my planning process. A portable drawing board can be hung on a wall for use on the potting bench.

The need for water

Having water is essential. I will need to pre-moisten potting soil, water plants, seedlings, and cuttings and, of course, wash my hands. No need for hot



Above: There needs to be ample light, and a cement floor for ease of cleaning. Left: The windows in place. Below: All of the long-handled tools can present a problem for neat storage.

water, cold will be sufficient. I began searching online for a shallow utility sink, and though I loved the old stone farm sinks I found, I didn't love the prices. I considered a shower bed basin, but they are wide and would not fit in a counter space easily, not to mention they don't have faucet holes and would have to be jerry-rigged. Finally, I found an old cast iron sink with double sided drainage boards at a salvage yard for \$125.00. It will be perfect when it is cleaned and installed. I did have to spring for a sprayer faucet, but I am happy with the package.

I will need watering cans, and what's a potting shed without a variety of watering cans? A narrow-spout can is preferred for watering around tender transplants, but those with a rose, or sprinkling head, work equally well for most other chores. There is something so charming about the sheer variety of old watering cans. I am inspired to expand on my basic collection.

And shelves – yes, lots. I will definitely need shelves for my huge assortment of pots. Reusing plastic nursery pots is very handy. I know I will need to soak them (in my new sink) in a solution of one-part bleach to nine-parts water to use them again. These pots are great for potting up plants, starting transplants, and cuttings inside and seeds outside. There will be narrow shelves for smaller pots, small bins, books, and gardening magazines. Wider shelves will be better for larger pots and bins of supplies. These will have to be closer to the floor as the contents get heavier. If I run out of money before we get to interior shelves I suppose I can buy temporary ones and build more permanent

ones later (probably means never). Prioritizing and budgeting is essential.

Then there are the tools

Tool storage is a design problem in and of itself. Many tools are long-handled and don't store easily. Usually I am pawing through a large pile of handles trying to locate the tool I need for a specific job. Finding a way to store tools individually will be a challenge. Brooms, dustpans, and rags will be essential – the garden shed will be filled with dirt, mud, and leaves – and will need to be stored, preferably out of sight.

I am using the internet to research what others have done and, ruling out the impossibly expensive, I have found some wonderful ideas. One picture showed a line of small sections of plastic piping at waist height with a corresponding row at floor level to store long handled tools. I saw baskets hung from the rafters, and a row of hooks for coats, hats, and rain gear. I even saw a rack of pegs that would hold boots upside down and off the floor (brilliant!). Storing hand tools in flower pots is not rocket science I suppose, but it looks attractive as well as functional. An old ladder makes a great drying rack for garlic or herbs. The list is endless.

While I am not competing to appear in glossy magazines like *Fine Gardening*, I am fulfilling some inner fantasy here and don't want it to get the better of me. I am, for the moment, forgetting about the mud, snow, and chaos that fills my garden and my storage shed, especially in winter, but, with a real goal in mind, a girl can dream. ●



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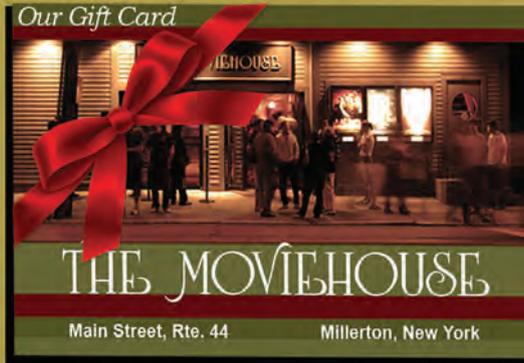
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Holiday shopping local style:

UNIQUE GIFTS FROM MILLERTON & BEYOND

By Memoree Joelle
info@mainstreetmag.com

It's holiday shopping season, and choosing the right gifts isn't always an easy task. Sometimes it just feels easier to give a gift card, and be done with it. But before you take that route, maybe this list will inspire you to get a little creative, and a lot more local this year.

Let them drink (New York) wine

Do you have a wine connoisseur (or maybe just a wine enthusiast) in your life? Well, nothing says Christmas like red and white – bottles of wine, that is. Here are my top local picks: Millbrook Winery, best known for their outstanding Cabernet Franc and Tocai Friulano, offers customized gift sets throughout the holiday season, and you can taste before you buy when you visit their tasting room in Millbrook. Take a tour, roam the beautiful property, and check out their gift shop for other wine-centric gifts, including some excellent olive oil. www.millbrookwine.com.

Hudson-Chatham Winery has two locations now. Their original tasting room in Ghent, and an expanded version in Tannersville. Known for their award-winning Baco Noir, they've also been turning out some impressive Merlot and Malbec. More than wine, you can find maple syrup, jams, dessert wines, sherries, and locally made cheeses and other edibles at both locations. Owner Carlo DeVito also happens to be an author, so this is your chance to give a signed copy of one of his many books, all of which you can find at both locations. www.hudsonchathamwinery.com.



Some local style

For the stylish and sustainable, go straight to Copper Star Alpaca Farm on Main Street in Millerton. It's actually one of only three alpaca stores in the country, so you are truly giving a unique gift when you shop there. From hats, sweaters, rugs, to baby clothes, you're sure to find something lovely and cozy, and feel good about supporting a business that takes care of its animals. And if you know a knitter or a felter, be sure to browse their extensive array of colorful spun and unspun yarns. You can even buy doggie gifts, and handmade goats milk soaps made right on the farm. www.copperstaralpaca.com.

A few doors down, don't miss The Village Herbalist. Terri Lundquist offers more than just herbs in her charming, welcoming space. Organic cosmetics, hand creams, soaps, and aromatherapy candles will tempt your senses, and it's one of the most relaxing spaces to browse in, taking the stress out of your last minute shopping. www.tvhmillerton.com.

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Did you know that Millerton is home to several renowned artists, authors, and craftspeople? Millerton resident and author Ashley Mayne has two published works of fiction you can pick up or order at Oblong Books & Music, and even get one autographed, if you play your cards right. www.ashleymaynebooks.com.

Artist Richard T. Scott, whose studio is on Park Avenue in Millerton and regularly opens for tours during the summer months, is available for commissions, including portraits. His work is on view at the New Britain Museum of American Art, and he also designs coins for the US Mint. Read more about his work at www.richardtscottart.com.

Meta44 on North Elm in Millerton combines a west coast organic vibe with chic modern design, and here you can shop for home décor, artwork, and furniture that is designed by architect John Allee. www.meta44.com.

Kids love animals, and they love



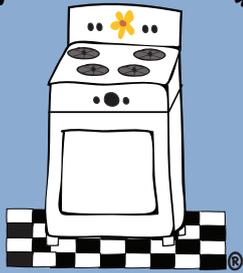
toys, and they usually love toy animals. So why not take it a step further and give them a locally made, cool and collectable little animal finger puppet? Jocelyn Krodman, of Copake, hand-dyes and felts these whimsical beauties with love and skill. She has been featured in Martha Stewart American Made, and sells right out of her Etsy shop and at craft fairs around the region. Take a look at her collection at www.petitfelts.com.

Last but not least, let's not forget that this is farm country, and for a few hundred dollars, you could give someone a CSA share that will feed them all spring, summer, and fall of the coming year! Sol Flower Farm (to name only one local farm) in Millerton is already taking orders, and their holiday market, located at Silamar Farm Stand on Route 22 in Millerton, is open Fridays through Sundays until Christmas. You can purchase a CSA or a gift card, and shop for locally made wreaths, maple syrup, baked goods, and other treats. www.solflowerfarm.com.

Have a happy holiday and shopping season! ●



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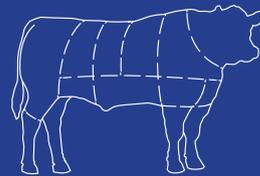
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good fight herb co.



By Melissa Batchelor Warnke
info@mainstreetmag.com

LAUREN GIAMBRONE has charted an uncommon path for herself as a full-time herbalist and the owner of Good Fight Herb Co., a company that “organically grows, gathers, and sources medicinal herbs for handcrafted, small batch products that promote self care and thriving health.” After an activist career in New York City, Giambrone moved to Germantown, NY, which she describes as “super friendly and quiet and lovely.” It’s where she feels at home, and where she plans to stay for the foreseeable future.

What’s herbalism?

Herbalism is the use of plants for medicinal purposes, and the study of that use. An herbalist’s work includes consulting with people about their ailments, large and small, and making herbal products (tinctures, soaks, oils, etc.) to address these problems. Giambrone works with Western herbs, though she’s inspired by the five-element theory of Chinese philosophy as well as the concept of physical and energetic seasons.

Giambrone keeps busy; when we spoke, she was getting sick, which she traced to overworked adrenal glands. “I’m ecstatic to be out of the city, but I brought it with me,” she says. “It’s the nature of farm-type work, with so many different things to do. People don’t work any less hard here.” Luckily, she knows the perfect remedies for when she gets out of balance.

Learning herbology

While Giambrone has been working as an herbalist for five years and studying for longer than that, she says that the self-education process is lifelong. She started her formal training in herbalism with an immersion apprenticeship at the Northeast School of Botanical Medicine, where the students worked in the Ithaca Free Clinic. Courses included botany, plant identification, and medicine-making. Giambrone has continued her education with “apprenticeships, classes, training, studying from health practitioners and herbalists, constantly reading on my own, going to conferences, and studying online.”

This lengthy education has paid off. Giambrone now has a garden in Germantown, and Good Fight Herb

Co. has established a presence in Hudson at the Farmers Market and local boutiques. While she grew up in New York City and New Jersey, and later moved to Wassaic, she’s put down long-term roots in Germantown, a small town with a classic New England Main Street, which is becoming “more on the map,” as people are buying second homes there or those who grew up in Germantown are finding reason to return, Giambrone says.

This fall, she took the next step in her business by populating Good Fight Herb Co.’s web store, where you can now buy a range of products including her Self Love Potion #9 (a liquid “indicated for heartache, grief, insecurity, being disconnected from your personal power, and any time your heart needs support”), a Deep Breath De-Stress Blend of herbs, and a friend’s handmade indigo hankies. She also offers a Care Package Program (which she calls “an herbal CSA”), which she ships to several dozen subscribers across the country. For \$365

Continued on next page ...

Above: Burdock root being chopped and processed, spring.

per year, subscribers receive what Giambrone calls “one big bountiful care package per season,” including herbs that deal with the energy of the season and a book on how to use them.

It’s hectic being a one-woman operation. But for now, she’s trying to make time to rest.

The medicine-making seasons

Medicine-making works in tune with the seasons. Early spring to late fall is the hectic season, when she weeds, makes paths, harvests herbs, processes them into medicine, bottles and labels products, and ships out the CSA. In the winter, there’s more hibernation involved; she cleans her apothecary, takes inventory, dreams up new projects, and does all the back end admin work that doesn’t get done during the summer months. “In January, I don’t put too much pressure on being super connected and getting a lot of work done,” Giambrone says. “I spend a lot of time cooking and relaxing. In February and March I’m planning, and boom! In April, I’m cleaning up the garden.”



Activism and herbalism

Giambrone grew up in an Italian family that saw food as the source of “what it is to be well.” But in her twenties, like many others, she lost her balance and burnt out from all the work and activism she was doing. She was working full time for a non-profit and doing activism work, working every day at a radical bimonthly newspaper which was part of the New York City Indymedia collective.

After that she worked as a cook and milieu counselor at the Street Works Harm Reduction program, and she loved working at the center – showing up for the kids day-in-and-day out, being someone they could talk to. But she was hardly sleeping, getting sick all the time, and eventually, “I knew I really needed to restore and repair my nervous system,” she said. “This is how I got to studying herbal medicine, from activism burnout. Then I went to herb school.”



Above, top: Lauren weeding the lavender in fall. Photo by Jersey Walz, www.jerseywalz-photographs.com. Above: Smudge bundles grown and gathered by Good Fight Herb Co., hanging to dry.

After herb school, she worked at Street Works for about a year and a half and then a room in a house upstate opened up, with an existing garden she could walk right into. She quit her job, started tinkering online, and realized that activists could become healers and healers could become activists. This led her to the Rock Dove Collective, an alternative community health exchange that emphasized bringing self-care to the activist movement. As she began to find amazing health practitioners with good politics and analysis around race, class, and gender issues, she started linking them with people who needed health care services. Eventually, she met an herbalist through the collective and the rest is history.

Now, she spends her days surrounded by the stuff of herbalism: a tincture press, knives, chopping blocks, high quality grain alcohol. Giambrone describes her work as equal parts farming and medicine-making.

It’s also part counseling. In an initial consultation either in person or over the phone, Giambrone asks her clients lots of open-ended questions; about their physical body and digestion, work life, support systems. “Wherever anyone is is great, and we go from there,” she says. “I don’t push an agenda on anyone.” Her potions can address stress and digestion, heartache, self-love, lack of energy, Lyme disease, and more. “If you want to feel well, I’ll give you herbs to nourish the hell out of you,” she says.

The work of a herbalist never ends

It’s work she’s proud to do. This is her fifth year at the market in Hudson, and she’s seeing herbal medicine gain traction in the community. “The first year, people thought I was some crazy plant lady. Now they’re seeking me out,” she says.

While Giambrone seems to have her finger in every jar – she also cohosts a radical health radio show, is involved with a community of herbalists organizing against a corporate remedy “fire cider,” manages two full-time work traders and two part-time work traders, and runs all of Good Fight Herb Co.’s social media – she’s got a few more goals. She wants to host an herb school, hire more staff, and set up Good Fight to one day run itself. But underpinning all of this is the same wish that brought her to Germantown and to Good Fight to begin with; “I just want to create more,” she says. •

You can follow Good Fight Herb Co. on Facebook and Instagram, visit them at the Hudson Farmers Market, or email Lauren if you are interested in volunteering: good-fightherbco@gmail.com.



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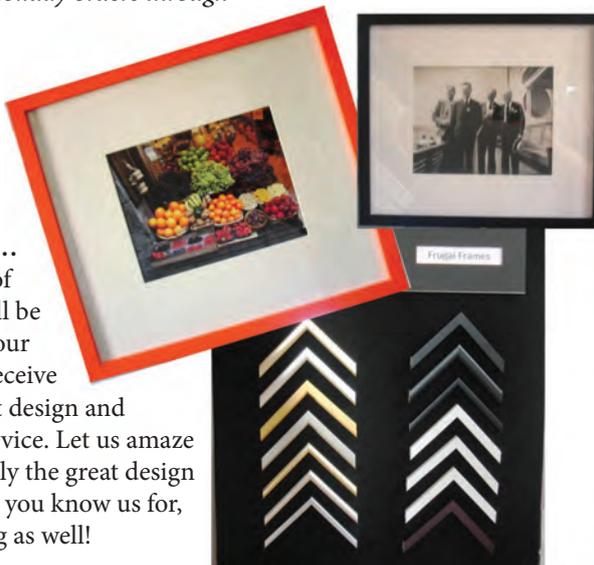
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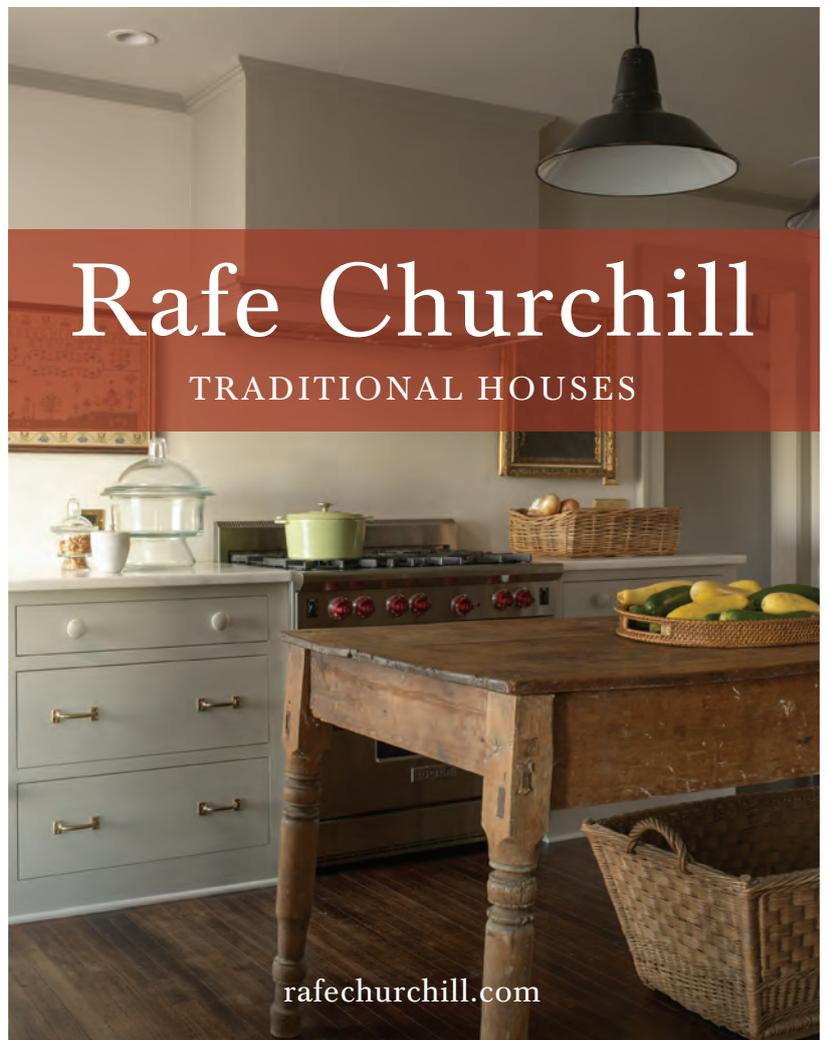


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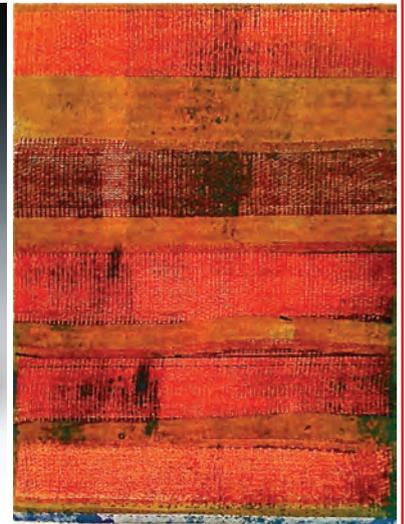
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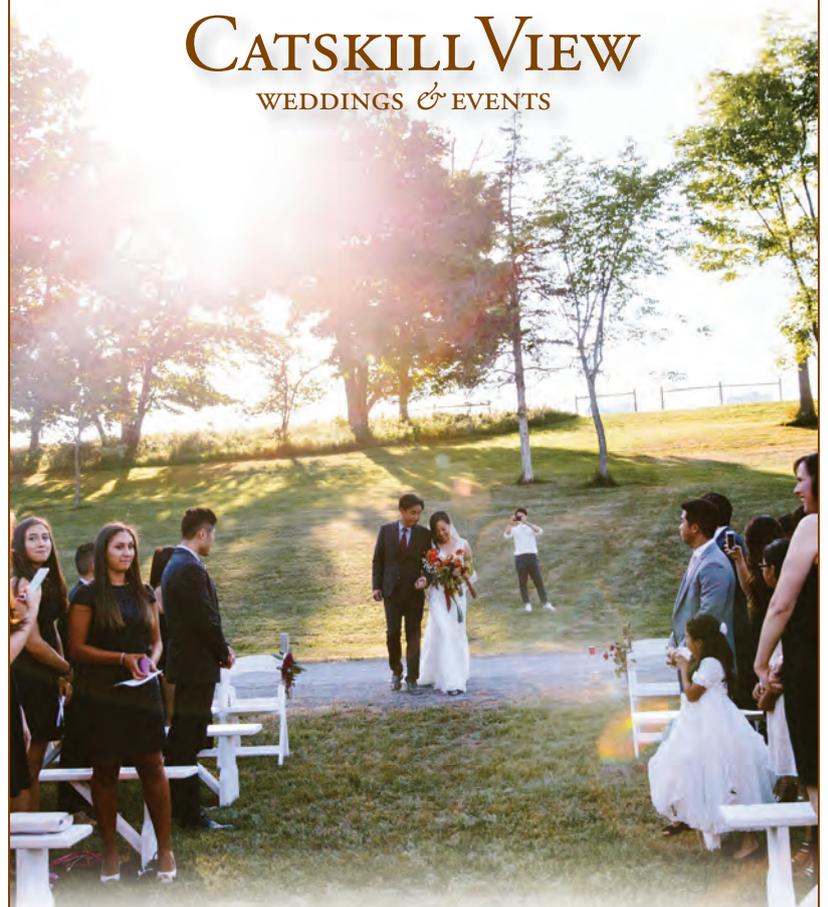
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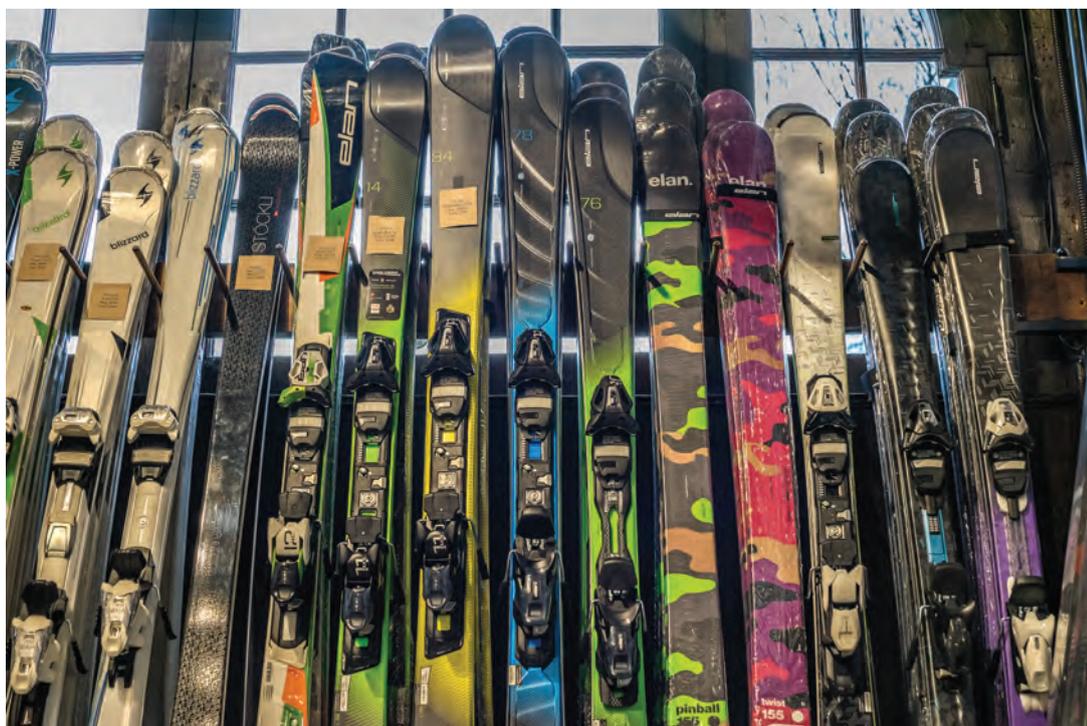
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Let it snow!

By Sarah Ellen Rindsberg
info@mainstreetmag.com

The region will soon be transformed into a winter wonderland. Timing is inexact but the certitude exists so why not embrace the season by exploring innovative options for fun and comfort. A fireside chat with the experts at Kenver, the venerable outdoors-oriented shop in South Egremont, MA, revealed the hottest new products.

Treasures abound, and we culled through the astounding array to bring you some outstanding highlights for the holiday season. Proceed down to the lower level – the former dining room of this 1731 structure which functioned first as a stagecoach stop between Hartford, Albany, New York City, and Pittsfield. Current fare begins with amazing skates. Doting friends and relatives will rejoice in a new feature in skate design for kids: five sizes in one pair. General Manager Aaron Malin presses a button and a size four instantly expands to size eight. The days of freezing fingers, battling with laces are long gone. One pull on the lacing system and they're onto the ice.



Above: The ski wall at Kenver. Photo: Aaron Malin Photography. Below: A sequined toque and neck gaitor add a glamorous touch.

A more graceful ski boot

An alternative to the clunky heel toe dance of ski boots has arrived. Ski boots that transition from binding to lodge in one graceful step have arrived. Release the binding and proceed to walk in the comfort of a boot that bears a close resemblance to a snowboard boot. Not only does it rival snowboard boots in terms of look and feel, this boot can actually be used for two sports: skiing and snowboarding. “This is one of the biggest changes to boots over the years,” Malin asserts.

Technology is key for downhill enthusiasts. The element of graphene in Head skis is a standout. The honeycomb layer (present for years in the brand’s successful line of tennis rackets) provides “better edge hold with lighter weight.”

Snowboards, fashion, and bikes

In the snowboard department, hip graphics adorn the season’s offerings geared especially for young snowboarders. Malin points to the Burton Chopper; its new design results in far fewer spills and greater enjoyment of the sport. “It’s a better learning experience now, the best time to learn,” he says.

The pièce de résistance in ladies outerwear is the fox-trimmed Mountain Force parka. Kenver owner Lucinda Fenn-Vermeulen dons one, extolling its virtues. The down lining is “mapped.” This refers to the strategic placement of down, eliminating bulk in key areas. “It minimizes the hip, accentuates the waist,” she says. “The four-way stretch is more fitted and feminine because there’s give to the fabric.” Utilitarian features are gracefully disguised; a storage area is hidden in the back.

A surprise awaits in the après-ski boot department. Fenn-Vermeulen pulls out a small white plastic tool, inserting it under a panel in the sole of a sleek black Pajar model and voilà, tiny cleats appear, ensuring a safer stroll on the ice. “I wore these everyday last year walking Bear (the friendly standard poodle by her side whose only resemblance to his namesake is the color black).”

Look up. During this time of year, bikes are suspended from the ceiling. The fat tire model flying over the display of skis is made to handle snow and ice and can also traverse streams.

Unique gifts

Accessories are no longer relegated solely to the stocking stuffer department. Many have become mainstays including GoPro cams which no longer appear solely on helmets. These tiny devices may also be secured on gloves or on top of a jacket. This enables the filmmaker to shoot from “different points of view,” Malin says.

If there’s a four-legged friend at home waiting to be pampered, check out the pet section. Mom isn’t the only one who craves the quilted fabric of Barbour. Your pooch will sleep better on a Barbour bed. To supplement nature’s fur coat, an adorable down coat, replete with treat pocket, awaits.

The warmth at Kenver is twofold. It manifests first in the heartfelt welcome echoing that offered to stagecoach travelers of yesteryear. Today, coffee and cider are available adjacent to the entrance and apples are piled high on the counter. On the lower level, heat emanates from the hearth.

Vacationers coming to the area for the first time stop at Kenver, benefiting from expert advice on the appropriate gear. Customers who arrived first as toddlers, return, sometimes bringing offspring in tow. There are numerous third and fourth generation families among the cherished clientele.

In anticipation of a fun-filled winter, the topic of snow – how much and when – adds excitement to the mix. Guess the date, time and amount of the first snowfall and the lucky winners will reap the rewards. ●

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POWER COUPLES:

Dr. Hetson & Dr. Hetson

By CB Wismar
info@mainstreetmag.com

Dr. Jill loves horses ... and dogs and cats and animals in general, and has served on the Board of The Little Guild of St. Francis in Cornwall, CT for as long as she can remember. "I think it's in my DNA. Every year I'd ask for a horse for my birthday. Finally, my father would ask me 'What do you want for your birthday – aside from a horse?'"

Dr. George loves horsepower ... and making things work and wood-working and playing golf. George really loves playing golf. "I really did think about going pro ... but I was discouraged to a good end." On a rather circuitous journey, George and Jill ended up with a widely respected dentist firm in Kent, Connecticut.

Days filled with their mutual practice and evenings and weekends filled with their other passions leave George and Jill Hetson only one mutual regret – there just aren't enough hours in the day. With none of the typical, overpowering impatience of classic "Type A" personalities, they manage to squeeze several vocations into two parallel lives, and truly enjoy the gentle chaos.

The moment of truth for George

George Hetson did not start his career as a dentist. Growing up in New Jersey, he spent summers as a caddy at nearby golf clubs while still working in the family paint business, Purity Paint. A great moment of decision came when, high school diploma in hand, he had to decide where to attend college. Yale would have welcomed him, for not only was he a good student, but he was a "scratch" golfer at age 18 and would have had an immediate impact on the Eli golf team.

Instead, George went to Tufts outside of Boston. No golf team. Not even a golf club, but a school that provided a strong education for a young man destined to be ... a paint chemist. When he left with a Master of Science degree in chemistry, little did he know that several years later he would be back on campus.



Above: Jill Hetson with one of her 'rescue' horses, and George Hetson with his 1950 Buick Roadmaster.

George the talker

This is no "high school sweethearts" story. Jill Hetson also grew up in New Jersey, but traveled to Massachusetts for her undergraduate degree at UMass, Amherst. From college, it was back to New Jersey and to work fitting contact lenses for an eye doctor. For her, life changed in a major way the evening that her father, who had George's father as a client, came home one night with a modest confession. He had given Jill's phone number to the young chemist who had gone to great lengths that day to explain a machine he had crafted that could measure the "thermal conductivity of thin films." It seemed young George Hetson was a talker, and when he had finished with his explanation, Jill's father had responded with: "You should meet my daughter."

George and Jill's courtship

Their courtship began on the phone. For over a month, they would talk, set a date to meet each other, then (according to Jill) George would have something to do at work, and he would cancel.

When the day finally came, no fireworks went off. No angel choir sang and the earth did not change its orbit. Jill and

George didn't really like each other that much. She thought he was "strange." He thought she was "weird." It could have well been the end of a very short story.

But for reasons that will elicit a gentle, knowing smile from both of them, the phone calls persisted ... and so did the dates. "We were married within a year," recalls Jill. "We shared interests in skiing and hiking, and almost every weekend we would get out of the city and drive into the countryside of upstate New York and nearby Connecticut."

George is quite direct in his reflection. "I really have no affinity for the city." It was an opinion that would be actualized, only after a rather complicated series of events.

Life changes

In summary, George decided to go to dental school. Jill was working. They lived in New Jersey. And, although NYU was close and Fairleigh Dickinson University even closer, George opted to return to Boston

Continued on next page ...

and Tufts, where Jill changed careers and worked as an orthodontic assistant while he studied.

When they returned to New Jersey with his newly minted Doctor of Dental Medicine (D.M.D.) degree, it became Jill's turn to pursue dentistry. Off she went to Fairleigh Dickinson after taking a few chemistry courses to prepare for the course load. "She'd be valedictorian in any school she went to," offers George with great respect. "She never got an A-minus."

So why the Northwest corner? Why Kent?

"We were looking for a practice to buy, and a broker told me about a practice in Kent, Connecticut." George is very straightforward about how he and Jill came to Kent over 30 years ago. It was all because of the weather. "I was going to play golf with my dad, when the broker called and said I had to look at a practice in Kent. I said I wasn't interested. When the broker told me it was going to rain, I still wasn't interested. We'd play in the rain. When he said with great authority that there would be lightning and thunder – and suggested I watch the weather on TV to prove it – I called and asked my dad if he wanted to drive up to Connecticut since only fools play golf in a lightning storm."

They commuted for years. Jill in New Jersey in dental school. George in Kent establishing the new dental practice. They agree that the move was absolutely the right one. "I'd have a hard time picking a better place to live," says George. "I simply love living here," offers Jill, who cites the genuine caring of a small town community and the ways in which people come together to support each other.

"When our daughter Rachael was born and we brought her home from the hospital, there was Gail Oslin-Leo from The Villager at the front door with a tray of food. 'Don't even bother to wash the dishes' she said. 'We'll come back and pick them up in a couple days.'"

Perhaps because of the widely diverse backgrounds that led them to practicing dentistry in Kent, or perhaps because of



their active imaginations and their remarkable skill sets ... or because of all of the above, Jill and George still have the challenge of time. There is never enough to get everything done.

A love of animals

The three horses, Toby, Mia and Gypsy, in the beautifully constructed barn behind their home are all "rescues," as are Reagan and Belle, two wonderfully friendly dogs and Butterfly, who acts more like her canine "co-habitors," and Truffle, the family cats. "I love riding and simply being around the horses" professes Jill. "Our daughter Rachael is the same. She captained the equestrian team at Kent School while in high school. She's at Rollins College, now and sadly, they have no equestrian program."

Jill's involvement with The Little Guild of St. Francis is reflective of her care and concern for animals. Watching her interaction with the animals around her, it's not difficult to see how she lives out the philosophy of The Little Guild: "We believe in the intrinsic worth of all living things and recognize in particular, the unusually long and close association humans have had with dogs and cats."

And a love of cars

George's love of cars and working with wood date back to a childhood of curiosity and exploration. "My father sent me out into the varnish yard when I was 12 or 13. He wanted me to clean it up, and rather than just throw things away, I became

curious how the discarded pumps and motors worked. Soon I was ordering parts and rebuilding them. It was second nature."

These days, part of George's relaxation is to work on the cars that fill his five bay garage or the equipment parked carefully behind the barn. "I'm self taught. I just love to figure out how things work. My maternal grandfather was a genius with his hands. I just inherited the inclination and the interest."

George can re-do the brakes on his classic 1950 Buick Roadmaster as easily as he can make an elegant oak dining room table or, for that matter, fade a lengthy tee shot on a golf hole and hit a chip and a putt to finish with a birdie. Eye-hand coordination? A natural instinct that mirrors 'The Tao of Physics'? George is almost self-deprecation. "It's just fun."

Two parallel lives. Two parallel careers. At the end of the day, how do they find the separation needed for couples to stay happily together for 36 years?

"The practice is the practice, and when we need a second set of eyes or a different opinion we consult," offers George. "We just like being together," offers Jill. •

To learn more about the Hetsons and or to reach them, you can visit www.drgeorgehetson.com.

Above: Dr. Hetson and Dr. Hetson's dental practice sign.



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With the new year comes the time to create a strategic business plan outlining your desired growth for the year ahead. There's no better time to sit down and plan than now, and that specifically includes a marketing plan. Your new plan should include examining your existing customer base, targeting your desired audience and examining how best to reach them as well as continuing to reach your existing customer base, re-branding and or re-positioning yourself, creating new marketing materials, examining your SEO effectiveness, social media efforts – and so the list goes on. Or you can give us a call and have us help you with these crucial items.

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Adventures & misadventures:

kampala, uganda: part one

By Melissa Batchelor Warnke
info@mainstreetmag.com

As we quickly approach 2016, our minds may begin to drift and to think about our next getaway, adventure and vacation. And who can fault us that? It's winter and we're in the Northeast – daydreaming of an exotic land is an easy thing to do. In this first installment of two, Melissa shares her adventures in Kampala, Uganda.

"Absolutely hell no," I thought as I surveyed the sticky hotel room quite a long ways down a dirt road from the small city of Jinja, three hours north of Uganda's capital city, Kampala. I'd flown from Rwanda to Kampala, taken a bus, a boda boda (a motorcycle taxi, on which you grab the driver's waist and pray), then stayed overnight at a hostel, another bus, another boda boda. And now I was here, at the source of the Nile River, just what I'd come to see.

I hadn't seen that old river yet, though; I'd only seen my hotel room. Yes, the floor was scattered with dead bugs, the blankets were crusted with dirt, and there were no other guests in view, but it was something much less defensible than hygiene, never a dominant personal concern, that had me running for the hills: I had a creepy feeling. My friend, who would be arriving in a few hours from Kenya, and I both didn't have working phones. But I handwrote her a note and went on foot looking for Somewhere Else. More on that later.

Cultural differences

The day and night I'd spent in Kampala by myself had been a release, especially after six straight



Photo source: istockphoto.com contributor egadolfo



Above: Two Ugandan women chatting and hanging out in Kampala. Below: The bus station in downtown Kampala, where buses wait for travelers.

Photo source: istockphoto.com contributor P-ierre

months in Rwanda, a place I'd been doing research in and about for eight years. Rwanda is a gorgeous country with many kind and curious citizens, but politeness and propriety rein. Many Rwandans speak so quietly you have to lean close to hear them. Most live inside walled compounds. Once I went out to dinner with a Rwandan friend who received a call. "What are you up to?" I'd heard the voice on the other line say, and my friend said something like "I'm on the bus to Musanze." That sort of misdirection happened often.

There's no room for American wildness in Rwanda, nor for confrontation, nor hurt feelings, nor even noise. Too much had happened, and now the people wanted peace. If the price was expression, well, then that's what was paid. Kampala is crowded, dirty, diverse, loud, swindling; it's the kind of place where you'll get sold a watch that stops working before you're out of the store. There are 1.2 million people who live there, and life is performed outside; even the busy road from the airport is lined with life, from people flipping *chapatti* (fried bread) to bathing their children to hemming their skirts.

Walter's Boda Boda Tour

In Kampala, make Walter's Boda Boda Tour the first stop. Everywhere you'd want to go, Walter will take you. He's an amiable young guy who picks you up at the airport and whips you around town

for less than \$40 for six hours, including admission to all the sights and airport pickup. By boda boda, you'll scoot through the downtown, including the massive Old Kampala bus stop. There's a certain musicality to the rhythms of the hundreds of buses moving in and out, narrowly avoiding passerbys trading cash for change or trying to sell trinkets that would be useless to someone embarking on a bus trip (clothes hangers, for instance). Walter brings you downtown, to Idi Amin's torture chamber, the Gaddafi Mosque, markets, a Bahai temple, and any other sites a newcomer might like to see.

There's no reliable public transport in Kampala, and it's an unwalkable city; if you refuse to ride on a boda boda, you'll be stuck with a high taxi bill. On the other hand, if you ride on a boda boda, there's a chance that you'll meet your maker earlier than you'd like, as the drivers weave in and out of traffic at 60 km an hour. And yet, in all their years of operation, Walter's boda bodas have never had any sort of accident. According to Walter, anyway.

To be continued next month... ●

Tune in next month for Melissa's second piece on her Ugandan travels, this time to the Nile River. Although located in the same country, she said comparing Kampala to Jinja and the area around the Nile is much like comparing New Orleans to the Grand Canyon.



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In 1972 David Bain started with Devoe Real Estate and 10 years later opened his own shop with the (rather long) name of David L. Bain Real Estate Investments. This was soon shortened by answering phone calls to a simpler, “Bain Real Estate.” Over the ensuing 33 years, offices were added in Sharon and West Cornwall and 14 associates to cover the 14 towns in Northwest Connecticut, and some of Dutchess and Columbia Counties in New York. Bain Real Estate is a full service real estate firm specializing in the second home market, summer and year round rentals, and they handle the local commercial markets. They are a small family business. David’s son-in-law is his partner and they feel and act like a family, helping one another instead of competing. They meet once a week as a group to solve listings and selling problems and ensure that they offer the best ethical and professional services in the market to their clients. The market took a severe hit in 2008 and many of their clients were hurt. It has been a slow path to recovery and now they look forward to continued slow improvement. For more information please call or visit the user-friendly Bain Real Estate website.



SoDelicious HomeMade Bakery

1 Kent Green Blvd., Kent, CT. (860) 592-0743. Find them on Facebook. www.sodelicioushomemade.com

Stacey Spence Grimsley is the proprietor and pastry chef of SoDelicious HomeMade Bakery, located on the Green in Kent, Connecticut. The business has been up and running since April of this year and is thriving due to the ecstatic clientele spreading the word about this sweet establishment. The philosophy of SoDelicious HomeMade Bakery is based on the mantra: pure, simple, delicious. Nothing is pre-packaged, scooped from a bucket, nor pulled out of a box. Everything that comes out of Stacey’s kitchen is made in her kitchen like her puff pastry, graham cracker crumbs, and vanilla extract. She uses only high quality natural ingredients like European butter, Valrhona chocolate, and gluten free organic oats. The bakery offers a wide array of delectables, as well as freshly roasted coffees, teas, and hot cocoa made from a family recipe. An extensive menu can be found on the bakery’s website. They happily encourage special orders as the menu at the bakery changes regularly. Stacey, a dog lover, will soon be including dog cookies in the bakery fare, the proceeds of which will be donated to area shelters. She believes in building relationships and looks forward to having new faces sample and enjoy the best that her bakery offers.



Pieces

Refined home decor with many objects of interest. 2816 Church St., Pine Plains, NY. (914) 388-0105. Like Pieces on Facebook.

New places to shop are always fun and you are about to hit the shopping jackpot! Pieces opened its doors in May of 2014 in Pine Plains, New York. The store is tucked back from the road, but you can’t miss the bright green sign at the end of the driveway. Today, the adorable shop continues to find its niche. Annie Jones, owner, is happy to say that the reaction when people walk in to the little, out-of-the way boutique is extremely positive. Pieces offers unique and high quality furniture, home decor, artwork, lighting, jewelry, and most recently some ladies clothing – also in the unique and somewhat funky genre. Pieces is not only a place to find some wonderful elements for your home, but a great local spot to pick up a quick, yet thoughtful gift. New inventory arrives often so don’t let your visits get too few and far in between. In the near future, Pieces is planning a “Men’s shopping night” and a separate “Ladies shopping night” for the holidays. To learn more about the shopping nights, please like their Facebook page and keep an eye out for dates and times. You are also welcome to stop by Friday through Sunday, 10am to 4pm. Annie looks forward to meeting you!

INSURING YOUR WORLD

The holiday season is upon us and I'm sure work parties are being arranged as well as family parties. If you are a restaurant or caterer, be sure that you have the appropriate product liability and liquor legal coverage in place before serving these parties. Another question to ask your insurer is if you are covered for parties that are done off the restaurant or caterers' premises. Many policies have a designated premises exclusion which only allows for coverage on the designated premises! Also note that if you are offering rides for those that have been drinking alcohol, be sure that you have the appropriate coverage while transporting your customers, you don't want to get into an accident and not be insured for damages to the passengers you are carrying! If you are just a plain old "Joe," having a Holiday or New Years party, the same issues apply. All homeowners' policies cover for host liquor liability as long as no charge is being made for the liquor. And let's not forget to give someone a ride home even if they are not drunk, yet have been drinking. A designated driver is a must these days at any party. Happy Holidays to all!

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Top Holiday Gifts for Pets

Pets are often treasured members of the family, and what better way to include them in holiday celebrations than with gifts of their own? To keep that excitement going, get your pet a gift they can really enjoy, such as:

Toys: Toys are always top holiday gift choices, particularly items that are colored or themed to match the holiday. Puzzle-style toys can keep your pet interested as they seek out hidden treats, and any new toy will provide great stimulation to keep them happy. Be sure all toys are safe for your pet.

Food: From gourmet, seasonal treats to new chew bones to a special, tasty meal, food is always a great gift. Do not change your pet's diet drastically for the holiday, because the gift of digestive trouble and stomach problems they may give back to you won't be quite as welcome. Similarly, avoid giving pets human treats.

Supplies: Any holiday can be a great occasion to give your pet new or upgraded supplies, such as a new leash, a new litter box or scratching post, to name a few.

Grooming: Grooming is essential for a pet's health, and it can help them look their best for a holiday. Invest in a good bath, clipping if necessary, and nail trim to help your pet feel better, and don't forget a few holiday photos to show off their spiffiness.

Attire: Different types of clothes for pets are always popular holiday gifts, and practical items such as booties to help an elderly pet gain traction on a slippery floor, a rain coat for a pet that loves to be outside, a sweater or jacket for cold weather, or even a life jacket for boating pets can all be great choices to help pets enjoy different activities.

The best gift of all: The single best gift for a pet is your love. Even though schedules can be hectic during holidays, take the time to play with your pet, cuddle them, and otherwise let them know you haven't forgotten about them. That gift will keep on giving as they return your affection all year round.

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Dollars & sense

Holiday spending can leave shoppers in the red, but it doesn't have to. "Simple planning will keep the season festive and help you control your budget," says Bank of Millbrook Executive Vice President Stacey Langenthal.

To keep your spending within your means, consider the following tips:

- **DEVELOP A BUDGET.** Determine how much you can spend and make sure to include costs like postage, gift wrap, decorations, greeting cards, food, travel, and charitable contributions.
- **MAKE A LIST AND CHECK IT TWICE.** Limit your gifts to family and close friends.
- **BE CREATIVE.** Home-baked goods, simple crafts or hand-made gift certificates for your time or talents are often less expensive and more appreciated than what you might buy.
- **SPEND CAREFULLY.** Avoid shopping while rushed which can lead to overspending.
- **AVOID TRAPS.** Finding a spectacular sale on something you've been wanting can throw you off course, and don't apply for store credit cards to get a one-time discount.
- **USE CREDIT WISELY.** Limit the use of credit for holiday spending. Pick a date when you can pay off your holiday credit card bills, and commit to paying off the balance by that time.
- **SAVE YOUR RECEIPTS.** Not only will you need them for possible returns, you'll need them to keep track of what you've spent and to compare with your credit card statement.

Bank of Millbrook is committed to helping you handle credit responsibly and save for the future. If you don't have one already, make it a New Year's resolution to open a Christmas savings account for next year!

Stacey M. Langenthal
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Health and Beauty

HOLIDAY STYLE TIPS FOR ALL OF YOUR FESTIVITIES

For your holiday festivities you may want to spice up your look. Here are some things to keep in mind for your party prep:

- Always start with a clean, moisturized face so your makeup will stay fresh and stay put.
- When adding shimmer, don't overdo. Choose shimmer for either eyes or lips, but never both.
- You might also add a touch of shimmer to your cheeks, but avoid your neck.
- For eye shimmer, stay centered on the lid above the iris and on the inner corner of the eye.
- For a smoky eye, use dark grey or dark brown eyeliner around the eye, smudging the top lid. Then use a light grey or matte mauve shadow between lid and brow.
- The finishing touch for eyes is a volume producing black mascara.
- Choose the correct shade of red lip color for elegance, but use a light touch when applying. These colors will enhance your black, grey or shimmery holiday wear and make it special.
- Finally, softly defined, loose curls are the top trend for your long hair this season. You can achieve this by wrapping sectioned hair around the entire outside of your curling iron, holding the ends away from the iron. Then spray and don't touch! This gives the hair a less formal curl, and it will last all evening.

Remember, your professional stylist is always happy to help. Happy Holidays!



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Catskill View Wedding & Events
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SVNA
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salisburyvna.org
The Moviehouse
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themoviehouse.net
The White Hart Inn
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bainrealestate.com
Best & Cavallaro Real Estate
860 435 2888
bestandcavallaro.com
Copake Lake Realty Corp.
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copakelakerealty.com
Elyse Harney Real Estate
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860 435 2200
HarneyRE.com

John Harney Jr.,
William Pitt Sotheby's
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williampitt.com
Paula Redmond Real Estate, Inc.
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berkshireproducts.com
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Hollis Gonerka Bart, LLP
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hgblp.com
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kennyfuneralhomes.com
Michael D. Lynch Law
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michaelylnchlaw.com
Perfection Fly Reel Company
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roaringoaksflorist.com
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conklinfuneralhome.com
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stonepolishingct.com
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vklarsoncommunications.com

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countrygardenersflorist.com
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cranesop.com
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WHAT'S YOUR SIGN?

ARIES (March 21–April 19)

Let your light blossom and seek the strength to start new projects. Always be prepared and remember that you are your own luck-maker.

TAURUS (April 20–May 20)

No matter what you do, seek those who agree with you. The technique is to figure out who will gain from the work, and how you will prosper.

GEMINI (May 21–June 20)

You have a lot going on at home. Create your own safe-haven and follow your instincts.

CANCER (June 21–July 22)

You need to get your financial affairs in order, be disciplined, and not waste money. Get your financials in order ahead of your holiday shopping.

LEO (July 23–Aug. 22)

There's no reason to feel down nor be ashamed at any sign of resistance. Examine your finances because there isn't any rush and there are plenty of fish in the sea.

VIRGO (Aug. 23–Sept. 22)

Now is the time to take the lead and finish those projects! Don't buy anything other than groceries though.

LIBRA (Sept. 23–Oct. 22)

Even though you get your point across in a fun way, it doesn't mean that everyone blindly agrees with you. You like to be creative and bring joy to those around you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23–Nov. 21)

Someone is likely to say something to you that touches a sore point. But your words bring joy to your loved ones in ways you can't imagine.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22–Dec. 21)

The solution to problems is often very simple and is often so obvious. People in high places get you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22–Jan. 19)

Work will go well when you know when to participate in a project and when to quit. Don't make too big of a deal out of it.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20–Feb. 18)

Many things are making you happy these days. You feel good coming up with new ways to reach your goals.

PISCES (Feb. 19–March 20)

Things relating to higher education, finances, and the media are in your favor. But clean up your own affairs and keep your house in order.

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