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SYRACUSE WOMAN *magazine*

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SPECIAL FEATURE

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A mother's perspective

OUT & ABOUT

Art Mart

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Better Together

Beth A. Broadway, President/CEO, InterFaith Works

There is an old folk tune that goes, "We may have come over in different boats, baby, but we're all in the same boat now." Some of us came over first-class passage, some deloused at Ellis Island, some came involuntarily chained in a ship's hold, and some were already here. A true recipe for disaster when starting a nation! The hurt and division between us sometimes seems too great to heal. Especially now, with separation across color lines, including red and blue, we have exhausted ourselves with our righteous anger and debilitating hate.

However, there are concerns and issues that bring us together. We all agree that children should not go hungry, and that people who are fleeing violence should be given safe haven. The Blue and Yellow of the Ukrainian flag across our lawns and our community's support for recent refugees bind us to our common humanity. No matter what pin we wear on our lapel, we believe in our nation's principles of justice and freedom. As we come to the end of another challenging year, we stick our noses just above the pandemic wall, collectively hoping for a new life of health and harmony across our nation and world. We are interconnected, and maybe, just maybe, we can learn to care across our differences.

At InterFaith Works, we have been charged with the mission of affirming the dignity of every person, every religion, and working for racial equity by building bridges. We have been graced with the love and support of Central New York since our founding in 1976. Annually, thousands of people pass through our doors as part of our dialogues to end racism and our programs to serve refugees and elders. We recently added support for 30 food pantries in area churches and mosques. Additionally, we support dialogues between police and neighborhood residents. Seeds of Peace is our program for high school students working to create understanding and peace in their schools.

We launched the Community Campaign for Love to champion acts of love that bring us together as one and combat the crush of hate. Love takes many forms and here are a few examples of what love looks like to us:

- Our Neighborhood Advisor goes door-to-door across the county, introducing herself to elders who may be homebound. She recently came across an elderly person who did not have a bed. She was able to secure a bed, and volunteers brought sheets and a quilt. This elder is now receiving our services and support.
- A young brother and sister arriving from Afghanistan started their life over after fleeing their country. They were joined by 200 Afghans and 700 refugees from other countries. In the last two years they all received assistance securing housing, jobs, medical needs, food, and support integrating into American schools. Soon these courageous people will be working, buying homes, and becoming citizens with the help of our community.
- A mother and child are receiving much needed food from one of the 30 new food pantries that IFW helped establish during the pandemic. Groceries for 20,800 meals were distributed this year, and a food drive with diverse community representation made this possible.
- High School and college students from across the city and county are gathering in dialogue circles to face the on-going effects of racism and unequal treatment of marginalized people. New programs in the elementary schools are growing.

Together, we can ALL help to bring about the Beloved Community and we invite you to join these efforts to continue to grow and deepen the love in our hearts, minds, and community.

Beth A. Broadway is the president/CEO of InterFaith Works in Syracuse.



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The publication is available free of charge.

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PAST EVENTS

Hope & Heels

The annual Hope & Heels Fashion Show to support Hope for Heather took place Nov. 13 at Marriott Syracuse Downtown. The event raised \$80,000 for ovarian cancer research and featured fashions, vendor shopping and silent auction and a celebration of survivors.

Photos by Tammy Palmer



Welch & Co. & SWM Ladies Night

Welch & Co. Jewelers and Syracuse Woman Magazine hosted an evening of fun for the annual holiday Ladies Night on Nov. 17. Attendees received a special gift along with door prizes at the festive event.



Au Chocolat Open House



On Nov. 10, merchants in the village of Baldwinsville kicked off the holiday season with Au Chocolat featuring open houses at 17 specialty shops, trolley rides, and, of course, chocolate.

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Art Mart:

LOCAL HOLIDAY SHOPPING FOR 67 YEARS

Alyssa Dearborn

There are many reasons why holiday shoppers should consider shopping local. For the shopper, it can mean finding unique gifts and experiencing what one's community has to offer.

But from a small business's or artisan's perspective, a shopper's choice to shop local means that the money spent directly affects the lives of their neighbors.

"It keeps the money local," artisan Cheryl Brown said, "You don't have to send it to Amazon."

Cheryl Brown is not only a jewelry artist, she is also the vice president and Thursday, Friday, and Saturday manager of Art Mart, a collective of local artisans that hosts pop-up shops. Art Mart is known for its yearly holiday shop that sets up in a Downtown Syracuse storefront. This year, the shop is open from November through Christmas Eve. Before rising into her leadership roles, Cheryl started out as one of Art Mart's many unique vendors.

"We've been in existence for 67 years," Cheryl said about the group, "Obviously the membership has changed. But it started out as mostly fine arts and then they went into the craft side as well. So now it's a balance between the two."

When asked about the variety of fine arts and crafts available at this year's pop-up shop, she answered, "We have paintings, we have photography, we've got prints of paintings by the artists, jewelry."



We have glass, various kinds of glass. Stained glass, ornaments, we've got glass dishes, we have glass jewelry. We've got a lot of pottery. We've got several different potters here. We have one fiber artist who does quilts. There's different novelty items. [The fiber artist] has these riding horses, the horsehead with a stick. They're just really cute."





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Passersby who stop to shop at Art Mart appreciate the variety and sometimes find an unexpected find.

"We just had a bunch of pumpkins go out of here. There was a fire drill across the street and somebody just happened to pop in and he bought a pumpkin. And he came out and six other people came in

because of that. They bought a bunch of stuff. That was pretty fun."

An often-overlooked bonus to shopping local is that the creators of each product are a phone call or email away, making custom orders possible.

Continued on page 12



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Art Mart from page 11



Each table set up at Art Mart's pop-up shop is stocked with artist business cards and the artists take turns working shifts at the shop.

"If you don't see something here, you could always contact the artist. Like, if you got a specific idea in mind that you don't see, talk to the artist."

In order to provide high quality products that are also varied and unique, the artisans interested in having their work

sold at Art Mart must apply and then be selected.

"We're a juried show," Cherly explained, "So we have three new people this year, but everybody else here are seasoned veterans. Some have been here for a very long time. And if anybody wants to join, they can. We need to have photographs of their work, their display, and they have to have a tax number, that's a big requirement. You set up once and your items are available for two months. A lot have done craft shows, so you're setting up for a weekend and you have to tear down and it's a lot of work. People know about us and a lot of people come look for us."

Many of the shoppers who buy from Art Mart are returning shoppers who look forward to shopping there during the holidays. Customers look for Art Mart year after year not only to add a local flair to their gift-giving, but also because the locally crafted products are special.



"There are unique items here. There are things that you're not going to find in the store. It's a great place to do all of your Christmas shopping because of the wide variety of items that are here. And of course you're helping the local artists stay in business. It's a great place to shop. People are friendly. The customers are friendly. Great customer service."

If you are interested in shopping from the over 30 local artists at Art Mart, visit the pop-up shop at 431-433 South Warren Street in Downtown Syracuse. The shop is open Monday through Saturday up until December 24 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. *SWM*

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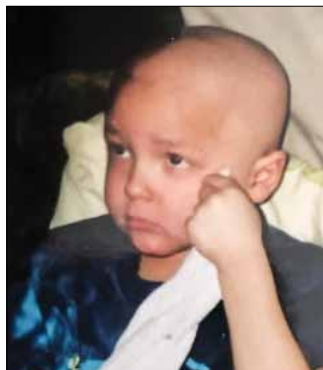
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Cord blood donation:

A MOTHER'S PERSPECTIVE

Cheryl Abrams

Each time GERALYN SAYA sees her son, JARED, she sees another mother who helped save his life when he was just four years old. She sees that mother in labor who had chosen to donate the leftover blood from her umbilical cord, which is typically discarded immediately after a baby's delivery.

She sees a mother who she would like to hug with all her might and say thank you to over and over.

Born healthy and happy, JARED was diagnosed at age two with a severe case of acute myeloid leukemia. After having been treated with powerful chemotherapy in large doses, the toddler survived. Yet two years later, JARED suffered a recurrence of the disease.

Doctors said the only treatment that would save his life was a bone marrow transplant. "Preparation for this would have taken at least three months, from securing a marrow donor to transplant," says GERALYN. "There just wasn't time since his case was too advanced when the disease was diagnosed." Another option presented was a transplant of cord blood.

When MARI, GERALYN and her husband JOSEPH's second child, was born several years prior, they had learned about the rich, life-saving stem cells contained in the umbilical cord. With forethought about JARED's chances for a relapse, the couple opted to have those cells extracted and preserved by a private company for future use.

Using those stored cells, a cord blood transplant was performed, and the couple then waited anxiously with hope and prayers for several weeks; it wouldn't be known whether the transplant had been effective since it takes 21-40 days for the cells to engraft in the body.

JARED's leukemia was very aggressive, and the treatment did not provide the outcome everyone wished for, most likely due to a lack of viable cells in the cord blood collected after MARI's birth. The family's

healthcare team proposed doing a second transplant, this time using cord blood donated anonymously to a public cord blood bank. The cells transplanted into JARED's body were from the umbilical cord of a mother who had delivered in the New York City area.

The second infusion was successful, and JARED, along with his mother, spent more than 100 days in isolation at Strong Memorial in Rochester to prevent any kind of infection from entering his body. They also spent additional time in isolation at a Ronald McDonald House, while JOSEPH remained at home in Syracuse caring for their young baby, MARI.

JARED, now 25, graduated from Christian Brothers Academy and St. John Fisher College and is an insurance broker. He says he doesn't remember the transplant but does recall the nurses and others who helped during his illness. An unforgettable experience was when Make-a-Wish Central New York granted his one request: to build sandcastles. The organization arranged for him and his family to go to Myrtle Beach, S. C., where a huge sandcastle contest was set up on the beach. With a laugh, he adds, "Naturally, I won!"

A teacher in the Syracuse City School District, GERALYN says the entire journey of JARED's illness has made her a kinder, more patient person, and she tries to live every day with gratitude. "To think that a woman simply donated her umbilical cord blood that saved my son's life many years ago is overwhelming," she says. "I'm not sure why every mother delivering a baby would not want to do this."

Meghan Shea-Frederick, RN, agrees. As a nurse on the Labor and Delivery unit at Upstate at Community Hospital, Meghan witnessed the process after babies were born, and the cord blood was collected. "No blood is taken from the baby or the mother. It simply gets taken from the umbilical cord that is very often — sadly — just thrown away.



She should know: Meghan donated her own cord blood when each of her two daughters, now four and two, were delivered. Besides learning about the cord blood collection process while she was a nurse on L&D, Meghan's primary reason for giving was simple: her dad. Having had leukemia, her father underwent a bone marrow transplant. Seeing that treatment first-hand made the decision to donate very clear. "If I had a chance to help save somebody's life by donating my cord blood, I was going to do it," she said emotionally.

Today, Meghan works in the Pediatric Nephrology and Rheumatology Clinic at Upstate. Every day she witnesses children who are very sick and may need, as Jared once did, a cord blood transplant. "I have

Continued on page 15

Dr Suzanne Shapero, DMD, MBA, PC Family & Cosmetic Dentistry

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Cord blood donation from page 15



a whole new perspective on blessings and how one mother can greatly impact the life of one other adult or child in need," she says.

This view is also shared by the five-person team at the Upstate Cord Blood Bank, led by Medical and Laboratory Director Matthew Elkins, MD, PhD. The other four on staff are Business Manager, Ann Marie Straight, MBA; Quality Systems and Laboratory Manager, Patricia Pontello, BS, BB (ASCP), CHS (ABHI); and Clinical Lab Technologists Emily Lee, CLT, (ASCP-i) and Sarah Anderson, CLT (ASCP).

The team members don't view their work merely as jobs, but as being a mission to help others. "The collection and processing of cord blood is highly regulated by both state and federal agencies," says Patricia. "While not glamorous, we provide a lifesaving option to people who cannot find an adult bone marrow match. We are here to save lives."

Emily and Sarah echo this sentiment. "Stem Cell Technology is the future, says Emily. "It gives hope to those who are sick and suffering." According to Sarah, the purposes for use and research in stem cells keeps expanding. "I am proud to be a part of this life-saving technology."

Ann Marie shares that during her career, she's worked with many different types of labs, yet could not pass up the opportunity to work somewhere that directly impacts lives. "I actually relocated my family for my job at the Upstate Cord Blood Bank," she says. "It is why we are all here. We want to save lives."

The cord blood bank, which opened on the Upstate at Community Hospital campus on Onondaga Hill in 2017, is the only public cord blood center in New York State. Collections occur during deliveries of babies at the Family Birthing Center at Upstate, at St. Joseph's Health and at Crouse Health.

The staff works with OB practices throughout Onondaga County to help raise awareness about and encourage mothers-to-be to donate their cord blood. They also work with the OB teams at each of the three Syracuse hospitals to educate them about proper cord blood collection methods. The more blood that's taken from the umbilical cord after a delivery increases the chances that the stem cells will be useful and viable in patients. The cord blood bank's policies and procedures are stringently guided by FDA regulations, as well as oversight by the hospitals, to ensure patient safety and confidentiality.

Taking into account the number of births in Syracuse each year adds up to the potential for more lives being saved. As GERALYN SAYA can attest, that sum is priceless. *SWM*

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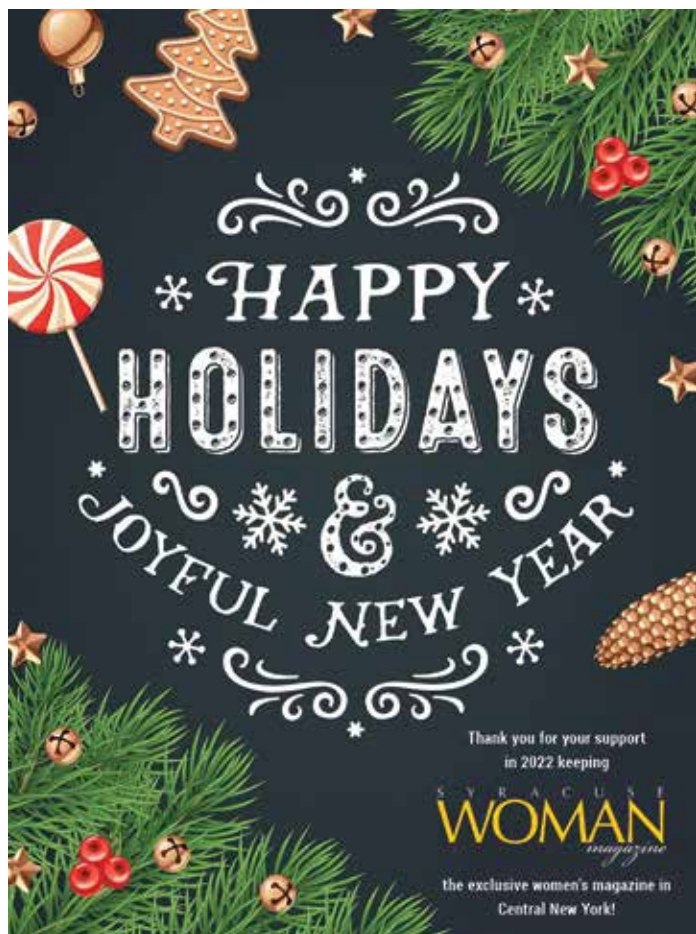
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Small businesses are the backbone of our society. They have always supported us, providing consumer goods, jobs and community investment. They comprise 99.9 percent of all businesses in the United States, and two out of every three jobs added in the past 25 years have come from small businesses.

Though it has been more than two years, small businesses are still struggling to recoup the losses that COVID-19 imparted onto us. Aside from the most severe decline in employment since the Great Depression, small businesses are facing supply-chain issues and many are struggling to compete against their larger, corporate counterparts in the face of high inflation.

Shopping at local businesses may not seem like much, but it has a multiplier effect that snowballs through our nation's infrastructure. According to the American Independent Business Alliance, "independent locally owned businesses recirculate a far greater percentage of revenue locally compared to absentee-owned businesses." A 2018 Small Business Economic Impact Study by American Express found that 67 percent of every dollar spent at a local business stayed within the community. To put it simply, buying local puts money back into the local economy and creates more jobs.

Our governments also receive more tax revenue from local shops which can get reinvested into public services, meaning better schools, transportation infrastructure and resources. Shopping locally also significantly reduces the distance and materials it takes to transport and package goods, minimizing your carbon footprint.

As the holiday season fast approaches, we have a special opportunity to give back to those that make our communities just that: a community. When you shop locally, you support your neighbors, friends, family and yourself. It is also an opportunity to support local women-owned businesses. According to the Small Business Association, 42 percent of businesses are women-owned, and they employ more than 9.4 million people.

Spending your money at a woman-owned business not only benefits the national economy, it empowers women's economic growth and helps close the wage gap. In 2017, women were 38 times more likely to live in poverty than men. Shopping at a local, woman-owned business can improve the lives of all genders and providing women with opportunities that were previously withheld can reinvigorate

innovation. Diversity in the workspace introduces new ideas, and simply supporting a woman-owned business can push the boundaries of industries.

According to the Harvard Business Review, research has shown that firms with more women in senior positions are more profitable, more socially responsible, and provide safer, higher-quality customer experiences. Despite the research, women still face inequality when applying for business loans, even though they tend to ask for \$35,000 less than men and generate a higher revenue than men. If we invest in our local women-owned businesses, we can shift the attitudes towards these businesses and reinforce the help they need to continue operating.

Women entrepreneurs continue to face a mountain of challenges: they often have limited access to funding, resources and mentorship, they have to fight to be taken seriously and they often face higher interest rates than men when they do receive a business loan. Though women have countlessly proved themselves as significant economic assets, they have to work harder than their male counterparts.

Our dollars are a power, and this holiday season, we can reinforce the importance of small, women-owned businesses by shopping at them. Shopping at these businesses is one of the most effective tools we have to fight systemic inequality and gender parity because it applies pressure on those in power to aid and champion diversity in the workforce.

It has been a rough couple of years for small businesses as they try to stay afloat amid this time of economic instability. What better time than now to go shopping and spread some holiday cheer throughout your community? It is easy enough to do, and shopping locally forges friendly relations that reverberate throughout your community. 'Tis the season to spread some cheer, and your local small businesses are a great place to start.

Local shopping does not have to mean spending money at expensive boutiques, rather it is an opportunity to think outside of the box for gifts. Get your loved ones a gift that comes from home, something they will not be able to find elsewhere; this holiday season, shopping locally is the gift to give, and it is the one that keeps on giving. *SWM*

Amisha Kohli is a marketing specialist at Edge Federal Credit Union



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From left to right: Judy Mower, Ann Higbee, Peggy Ogden and Aminy Audi, founders of the Women's Fund of Central New York

A small group of us participated in the national Leadership Women America program in the mid-90s, which awoke our desire to make a change for women. Together with Peggy Ogden, we harnessed our determination, leadership and skills to start the Women's Fund of Central New York. The fund provides support for organizations working to build equitable opportunities for our region's women and girls.

Women were looking for an outlet to be supportive of ideas and programs that were meaningful to them and supported women and girls. We helped them recognize the power of philanthropy and raised more than \$170,000 in about four months. We are extremely grateful for the generosity, foresight and gumption of these women.

We partnered with the Central New York Community Foundation to house the endowment, formalize our goals and create an advisory council. The Women's Fund now has more than \$1.2 million in total assets and has awarded nearly \$450,000 in grants since inception. We're leaving a legacy for our community, our daughters and our granddaughters. This fund is another chapter in that legacy of women's empowerment.

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CHA McCOY

A fresh spirit in the wine world

Norah Machia



"I want to offer people the best wines at a comfortable price. My store represents an accessible and affordable luxury lifestyle of wine and spirits."—Cha McCoy

Photo by Alice G. Patterson

CHA McCOY

A fresh spirit in the wine world

Norah Machia



Photo by Alice G. Patterson

Have you ever looked over an extensive wine list and felt like you were desperately trying to understand a foreign language?

The experience of selecting and tasting wines should be a pleasurable one, and Cha McCoy is determined to help make the experience less intimidating and far more enjoyable for Central New Yorkers.

McCoy is a world-renowned sommelier and businesswoman who opened her first retail shop this fall, The Communion Wine + Spirits, at the State Tower Building in downtown Syracuse. It's not only a shop, but it's a place for wine-tasting classes, collaborations with nearby restaurants, and planning tours of regional wineries. McCoy will also be slowly introducing a selection of spirits into the store.

The Communion Wine + Spirits carries more than 100 varieties of organic, natural and sustainable wines, McCoy said. They are from near and far – closer to home are wines from the Finger Lakes region, and further away are the European wines - including many from Portugal and Italy.

McCoy was able to expand her knowledge of Italian wines while she was studying for her MBA in Italy. "I seek out the often lesser-known indigenous grapes of Italy" rather than the popular French ones, but they are just as delectable, she said.

"I want to offer people the best wines at a comfortable price," McCoy added. "My store represents an accessible and affordable luxury lifestyle of wine and spirits."

She focuses on "low-intervention wines" which typically contain fewer additives (such as sulfites and unnatural sugar) because they're produced through minimal intervention from the winemaker.

"I really wanted to carry wines that reflect the places and people who craft them," she said. For example, McCoy carries wines from lesser-known wineries such as House of Brown, from California's Napa Valley, a Black-owned winery, Brown Family Estate.

McCoy credits her family – particularly her father – for her love and appreciation of dining out and trying new foods and drinks. McCoy's father would explore New York City by way of food, dining at restaurants that represented the diverse cultures that make NYC unique. That was her introduction to the world of cuisine (fast food and microwave meals were never on their menu).

Those dining experiences at a young age in New York City gave her the confidence to later travel and learn more about cuisine and fine wines in other countries. When she moved to Italy, though she did not visibly fit in as a Black woman ("more people looked like me in New York City than in that country," she noted), it didn't stop her from educating herself. She asked questions, later sharing her appreciation of Italian culture, including the diversity of wine and foods among the country's 20 regions, with others when she returned stateside.

McCoy works in an industry that has traditionally been a very white, male-dominated field. She is hoping by sharing her story of success, it will encourage women, Black people and other people of color to consider professional careers in the wine industry.

McCoy, who has a stellar list of credentials, also works as an industry beverage marketing and experience consultant and an educator. She was named one of the "Top 40 Under 40 Tastemakers" in Wine Enthusiast Magazine and featured in "Rising Black Voices in Wine" for Wine & Spirits Magazine.

Her career journey started along a different path. McCoy graduated from Syracuse University with an engineering degree in 2007. After working in the construction industry as a civil engineer on numerous projects, including the iconic Hudson Bay department stores in North America, she decided to leave the field and pursue an MBA degree in international finance through St. John's University in Rome, Italy.

"I had to ask myself if my job was bringing me joy, and if I wanted to do it for the rest of my life," said McCoy. "That's when I quit my engineering job and moved to Italy."

But McCoy was still conflicted about her career direction, even after completing her master's degree. She packed up and moved to Portugal, where she started to turn her passion for wine into a full-time career. McCoy became a certified sommelier and earned an executive certificate in wine management from the Universidade Catolica Portuguesa in Lisbon.

She launched an initiative based on her philosophy of making wine "more accessible" through a wine series called "The Communion" which included wine-tasting events held in five different countries. The experience made her realize the significance of wine beyond the drink itself. Sometimes "it just took one bottle of wine" to bridge the gap in a room full of strangers, she noted.

Continued on page 26

"I worked really hard to get to this point. I had to make a lot of life decisions, and I had to really believe in myself."—Cha McCoy



A fresh spirit in wine from page 25

Never one to slow down, McCoy founded Cha Squared Hospitality & Consulting LLC, a wine experience company that focuses on education, tourism and events connected to the industry. Other honors under her belt include serving as the Charleston (S.C.) Wine and Food Festival Beverage Director, the Brand Ambassador for New York Wine & Grape Foundation, and the first Beverage Director and Editor for *Cherry Bombe Magazine*.

Although she has spent years working with chefs, winemakers, distillers and hoteliers throughout the world, McCoy decided that Syracuse was the perfect place to open her first brick-and-mortar store.

The city's proximity to the many award-winning wineries in the Finger Lakes region was a big draw, she said. McCoy was encouraged to consider the location by her former Syracuse University classmate, Caeresia Richardson, who also received an engineering degree. Richardson is the owner of Ecodessa, a sustainable fashion store in downtown Syracuse.

McCoy worked closely with the Downtown Committee of Syracuse in selecting the location for her retail store at 109 South Warren Street. The initial space needed major renovation work to create the shop of her dreams, but her vision was supported by many people, including the building owners.

"I worked really hard to get to this point," said McCoy. "I had to make a lot of life decisions, and I had to really believe in myself."

McCoy has provided sommelier services for the James Beard Foundation, and corporate clients, Facebook and NBC. She has also worked as adjunct professor, teaching wine history and appreciation at her alma mater, Syracuse University.

She's been able to fulfill her dream of earning a place at the head of the table, so to speak, by gaining the respect of others in the sommelier industry. "This field is still male-dominated," said McCoy. "But I've been able to put myself in a position of being in charge of my own business."

Her message as a Black woman is "just because I don't look like you, it doesn't mean I don't drink the same wine as you." She continues to fight again palate discrimination based on race, sex or age.

In the next few weeks, McCoy expects to have many customers coming to the store seeking champagne and sparkling wines to celebrate the holiday season. It's always been a tradition to have champagne on New Year's Eve, a great holiday that signals new beginnings, she said.

"It's my favorite holiday," McCoy said. "New Year's Eve gets people excited about the future, and what it may bring. People usually feel very hopeful that night."

Sparkling wines and champagnes, however, do not have to be limited to the holidays, McCoy said. "Every day could be a celebration," she added. In recent years, sparkling wines have become more popular throughout the year served with brunches, she noted. The store will be carrying special brands of sparkling wines and champagnes this season.

If you're ready to explore the world of wine, The Communion Wine + Spirits is open 1 p.m. to 8 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday, and Noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday. For more information, check out www.chamccoy.com, www.thecommunion.life, or her Instagram @thecommunion. *SWM*





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'Tis the season of stress

Jim Charon



As the holidays approach we sometimes face stresses and anxieties from the weather, finances and the holiday busyness itself. Many people are facing the crunch of rising prices and shrinking incomes along with the stresses of everyday life. This is even more true for women who traditionally tend to carry additional stresses and anxieties. Over the years, many people have started using natural products to help with their stresses and anxieties and one of these products has been CBD.

You're asking, what is CBD? CBD is the acronym for cannabidiol. This is a compound found in hemp and cannabis plants. The hemp plant has a higher level of CBD than cannabis and contains less than 0.3% THC per the federal guidelines on hemp. THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) is the compound in the cannabis plant that gets you high or causes euphoria.

Since CBD has been federally legalized by the 2018 Farm Bill it has been found that existing preclinical evidence strongly supports CBD as a treatment for many types of anxieties and stresses

(Cannabidiol as a Potential Treatment for Anxiety Disorders, *Neurotherapeutics*. 2015 Oct; 12(4): 825-836). There's also been findings that show CBD may help with sleeplessness, pains and other conditions. These findings have not been approved by the FDA and it is always recommended to discuss using CBD with your doctor and to know where the products come from. According to the statistics from Statista.com 2022, 62 percent of adults use CBD to help reduce stress and 51 percent use it to alleviate anxiety.



The use of CBD has been increasing over the years but the fastest growing demographic has been women. A CBD study from the Brightfield Group and HelloMD of 2,400 participants found that 58 percent were women; and a study by Eaze of their customer database found that female baby boomers represented the largest segment of CBD users. (leafreport.com/education/Why-more-women-buy-cbd-than-men). In fact, we created Syracuse Hemporium in 2018 in response to finding out how beneficial CBD products were for my wife's health in 2015.

There are different ways to use CBD. Gummies or other edibles are the preferred products followed by capsules, oils/tinctures, lotions/topicals, and inhaling. (statista.com/statistics 2022) From my experience, many people find better results when using a combination of products. For example, someone with joint pain might use gummies or an oil taken orally, plus a topical for the specific area.

Many of us have pets that are like our kids and they can face some of the same ailments as we do and CBD has been known to help them too. Some of the reasons could be anxiety/stress from loud sounds and thunderstorms, pain from age or an injury, and epilepsy. Since there are still federal limitations and regulations on CBD many veterinarians do not have much information and are unable to recommend it for any treatment. Some people will do the research and others will go to a specialized CBD retailer for help selecting the right products.

HEMP vs MARIJUANA

HEMP AND MARIJUANA BOTH DERIVE FROM THE CANNABIS SATIVA FAMILY. THEY DO SHARE CERTAIN SIMILARITIES, HOWEVER, DUE TO EACH PLANT'S BIOLOGICAL STRUCTURE, THEY HAVE SEVERAL VERY DISTINCT AND CRUCIAL DIFFERENCES.

HEMP	MARIJUANA
 <p>Product</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CBD oil Hemp oil Cannabis oil (made from hemp) <p>Contains</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0.3% or less of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) <p>Characteristic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hemp and industrial hemp refer to the strain of cannabis plant that is grown for agricultural products such as textiles, seeds and oils. Can grow in most climates, bunched together with other plants, requires little care. Can grow as high as 20 feet with leaves bunched near the top of stem. No psychoactive properties. 	 <p>Product</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> THC oil Marijuana oil Cannabis oil (made from marijuana) <p>Contains</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15-20% of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) <p>Characteristic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marijuana is known for its flowering tops of the plant. The flowers are typically bared to have a high THC. Growth is carefully monitored, controlled in an isolated, warm, humid area to maximize psychoactive uses. Cross-pollination can ruin THC content. Shorter, resembles a bush, with more leaves and buds surrounding the plant's body. Psychoactive side effects.

Now, with the legalization of cannabis, people will be wondering if they will get the same relief as with CBD. Most people that are using CBD are looking for some relief for their conditions more than they are the euphorias from THC. As the popularity of CBD

continues to increase, more and more people are finding the benefits of using the products over pharmaceutical medications, alcohol, cannabis and illicit drugs.

When looking for CBD products you can check with local specialty stores, like Syracuse Hemporium, that will educate you on the benefits of CBD, the products to use, and the proper dosing and usage. You can even support local CNY producers of CBD products that we

carry, such as oils and infused sparkling water, from Beak & Skiff out of Lafayette. *SWM*

Jim Charon is the owner and COE - Chief of Everything - at Syracuse Hemporium LLC, Northern Lights Plaza, Mattydale.



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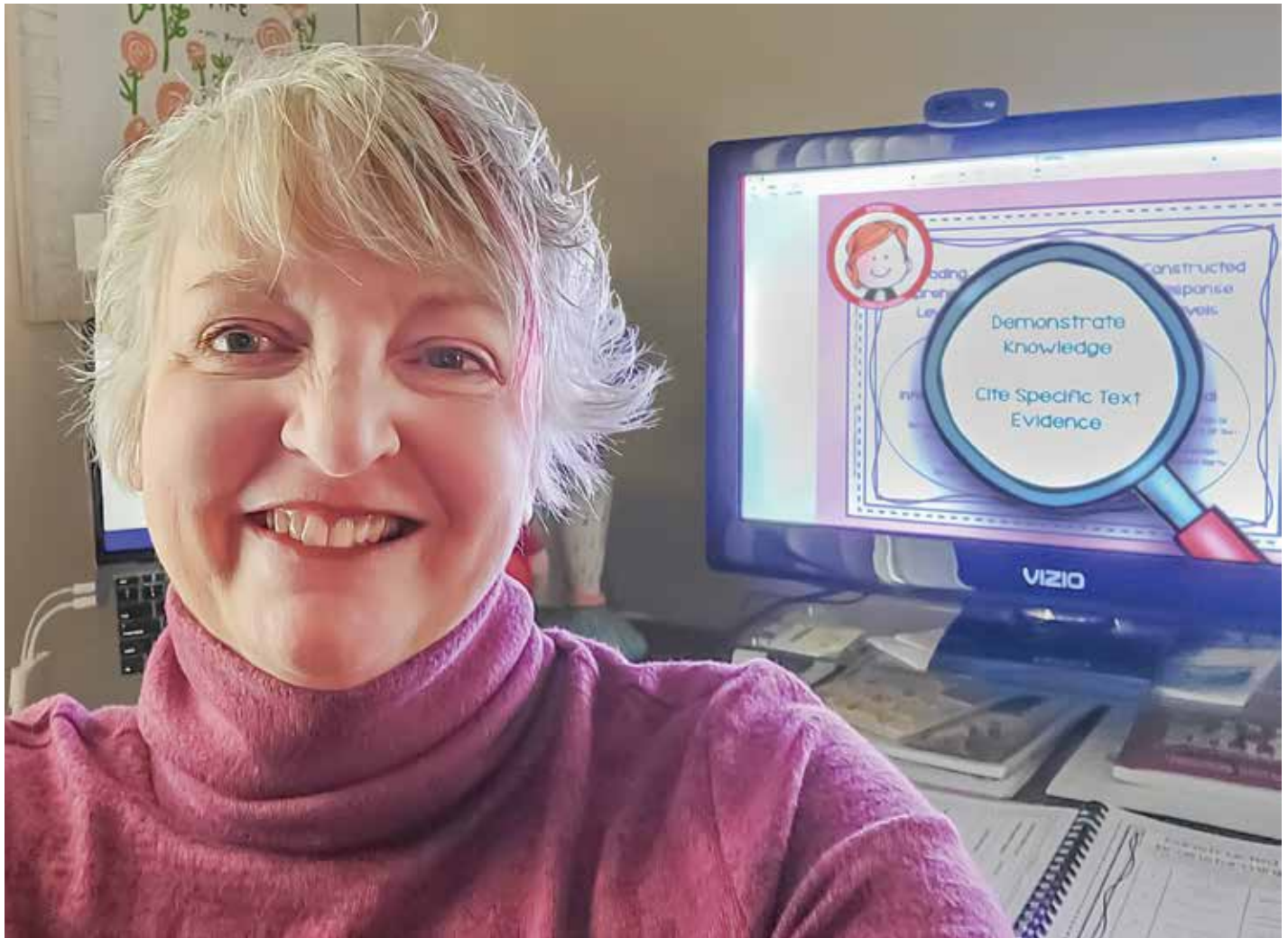


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SHEA PALMER

NEW WOODSTOCK ENTREPRENEUR HELPS EDUCATORS SUPPORT STUDENTS' SUCCESS

Kate Hill



In 2016, retired schoolteacher Shea Palmer established Shea's Classroom, a New Woodstock-based business that creates and shares elementary school teaching resources.

For the past several years, retired teacher Shea Palmer has been using her knowledge and experience to help other educators address their students' needs through her New Woodstock-based business, Shea's Classroom.

Palmer creates and shares elementary school teaching resources targeted at educators seeking lessons and tools to develop their students' critical thinking skills.

Using social media, YouTube, and her website, sheasclassroom.com, Palmer provides her clients with posts that offer insight and perspective on teaching-related questions and challenges. Each post shares methods, strategies, and resources that Palmer employed in her own classroom.

"Webinars and workshops are offered to provide teachers with both resources and the opportunity for professional development," said Palmer. "Consulting appointments are scheduled for the purposes of collaboration, planning, and instruction."

Palmer develops all the resources she offers for purchase through the Teachers Pay Teachers platform. However, in cases where her own materials do not meet the specific needs of her clients, she researches and shares other resources that would better serve them.

The educator, who holds a master's degree in teaching from Le Moyne, taught in the Chittenango School District (CSD) for 20 years, spending her tenure in the third and fifth grades.

Palmer, who describes herself as an accidental entrepreneur, began her journey with Shea's Classroom in 2016. That year, approximately half her class was receiving Reading Academic Intervention Services (AIS), which the NYS Education Department describes as services designed to help students achieve the learning standards in English language arts (ELA) in grades K-12. AIS consists of additional instruction that supplements the regular classroom instruction and/or student support services needed to address barriers to improved academic performance.

“This was an unusually high number of students who required additional support to be successful,” said Palmer. “The model for ELA instruction that we were using was not proving to be effective.” Palmer explained that literacy instruction at the time was based on “guided reading,” a practice where students are assessed to determine their reading levels and then divided into instructional groups. Teachers meet with the groups as they work with texts suited to their reading levels. According to Palmer, the ideal number of groups to work with is three.

“The rule of thumb was that we should conduct a quick mini-lesson at the beginning of each class,” said Palmer. “Then we would spend 10-15 minutes working with each group. When they were not meeting with us, they were given activities that they were expected to complete either in their groups or independently. Best practices dictated we should meet with students reading below grade-level every other day or once a day, if possible. We met with the students reading on or above grade-level less frequently — every other day or every third day.”

According to Palmer, applying this model to her classroom would have required finding texts for six to eight different reading levels that could be used to study the same ELA concept/strategy. It would also require activities to accompany each text.

“Since all students were working at their instructional level, they all needed about the same amount of support and guidance to make good progress,” said Palmer. “While the students who were working below grade-level made progress, their instruction with grade-level text was minimal, making it difficult to ‘catch up.’ [If you had] more than four groups to work with, it would have been very challenging to create a schedule where every group would receive the instructional support they needed.”

After careful consideration and research, Palmer approached her principal to discuss a new model for providing instruction and practice to her students.

Instead of using leveled books and activities for all the different reading groups, she suggested choosing one grade-level book that the class could read together to introduce a specific ELA concept or strategy. The students would then practice/apply that concept through activities that were leveled to meet their needs.

With the principal’s support, Palmer gave her approach a try. She said they both noticed an improvement in student engagement and, to their surprise, growth.

“By the end of the year, we were able to release half the students from AIS reading services,” she said. “Their test results indicated that they were now able to read [and] comprehend grade-level text.”

When creating the leveled activities for her students, Palmer turned to a teaching tool called “task cards,” which each feature one assignment/question that gives students quick practice working with a concept/strategy.

Palmer explained that a character trait task card, for example, would have a short story about a character that describes their actions and reactions. The card would also list three character traits, and the students would be tasked with picking the most appropriate one.

Using task cards as a foundation, Palmer developed activities designed to encourage the development of critical and analytical thinking skills beyond those required to simply choose a word.

“For each word, the students needed to define it, then list the characteristics of a person who exemplifies that trait,” she said. “Once they did so, they used this to identify which trait described the person

in the story. After that, they planned and wrote a short, constructed response explaining/analyzing how the text supported their conclusion. All students would have an exemplar to refer to that we had created using the grade-level book.”

To level the activity for different instructional groups, Palmer created three versions. Students who were reading above grade-level were expected to complete all the steps listed on the card. Students on grade-level were given the definitions and asked to identify characteristics and write a response, and students below grade-level were given both definitions and characteristics and asked to choose a word and write a response. They were also provided writing supports, like sentence starters, to guide their thinking and writing.

The benefit of this approach, Palmer said, is that all students are exposed to grade-level text and objectives, so everyone gets the opportunity to be successful with grade-level analysis and comprehension.

As she was developing the activities, she shared them with teacher/author Rachel Lynette, whom Palmer credits as the creator of task cards.

“She was the one who encouraged me to consider creating a store that would enable all educators to take advantage of my resources,” said Palmer. “So that’s when I created my business, *Shea’s Classroom*.” Palmer added that although she started her business in 2016, she thought of it as a hobby until she retired from CSD in June 2021.

About a year ago, Palmer joined the Women Business Opportunities Connection (WBOC) — a Syracuse-based nonprofit that supports women in business through educational programs, networking, and collaborative opportunities — to help her start developing her business more seriously.

Although she had a solid background in education, Palmer recognized that she required assistance with the “business” side of her business.

“In education, I had a team of colleagues to refer to whenever I was feeling discouraged or challenged,” she said. “Working as a sole proprietor, I do not have the same kind of support system. WBOC has provided me with a network of warm, friendly, female entrepreneurs who are always willing to listen and provide assistance when asked. I always leave our gatherings feeling empowered and grateful. The advice that they’ve provided me with has deepened my understanding and ability to become a successful entrepreneur.”

Today, *Shea’s Classroom* is prepared to work with a range of clients, including upper elementary classroom teachers, AIS/special education teachers, and administrators.

Palmer said that when asked about her decision to continue working in education post-retirement, she thinks about the impact of her work on one student who was facing difficulties in school and was prone to violent outbursts.

“Anything to do with writing was definitely a trigger,” she recalled. “Using a scaffolded resource [that] I had created, their job was to write a short response. This had been a struggle up to this point. Working with assistance, they brought their completed response over and asked me to read it. As I read it, this student was standing nervously, both hands in their mouth, waiting. Using the scaffolds provided they were able to write a complete response. When I told them so, they looked at me and quietly said, ‘I think I’m beginning to like writing’... School can be so challenging for many of our students. If my resources help just one student feel they can be successful, then I’ve done a good job.” *SWM*

To learn more about Shea’s Classroom, visit sheasclassroom.com.

Eating healthy through the holidays

Chef Eric Rose, Certified Health Coach



Are you mentally preparing for the holidays and thinking about your New Year's health resolution? Why wait until the new year when you can eat sensibly now and still enjoy the holidays while creating momentum in your health? Many people throw in the towel on their health from Halloween to the New Year, creating a steeper hill to climb.

As a health coach I challenge you to modify your mindset. You can still enjoy the holidays without giving up on healthy eating. On average the holiday meals make up just over 3 percent (five meals) of the meals left this season (160 meals). Why would you throw away the other 97 percent of the opportunities to improve your health and create momentum moving into the new year?

Consider this:

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5 Healthy meal choices a day (3 meals & 2 snacks)

160 Meal choices

How many holiday meal choices?

- Holiday Party?
- Christmas/Hanukkah Eve? • Christmas/ Hanukkah?
- New Year's Eve? • New Year's Day Football?

Don't delay or blame 5 meals and give up on 160!

'Tis the season of holiday joy filled with family, festivities, and lots of tasty foods. Temptations are everywhere this time of year, and parties and travel disrupt our daily routines. It can seem like there is no end in sight. Holiday celebrations are something families, especially children, look forward to year-round. Whether the party is hosted at your house or you're attending a gathering elsewhere, you'll want to have a plan to keep yourself and your family healthy.

Most people end this celebration season with grand plans: promise to lose weight, work out, save money, get a promotion, and even quit drinking. Whatever the declaration, the essence remains the same—a better person moving forward into the new year.

So, if you choose to take my challenge and not wait until the new year with your health goals, here are some helpful tips.

GENERAL TIPS:

- Let people know your intentions when it comes to eating. Don't be persuaded into eating or drinking something you don't really want or need.
- Don't skip meals to save up for a feast. It will be harder to manage your blood sugar, and you'll be really hungry and more likely to overeat.

- Eat close to your usual times to keep your blood sugar steady. If your meal is served later than normal, eat a small snack at your usual mealtime and eat a little less when dinner is served.
- If you slip up, get right back to healthy eating with your next meal.
- Eat slowly. It takes at least 20 minutes for your brain to realize you're full.
- No food is on the naughty list when it's only available a couple times a year and there are nostalgic memories associated with it. Choose the dishes you really love and can't get any other time of year, like Aunt Bethany's jello mold surprise. Slow down and savor a small serving if it's not the healthiest.
- Schedule some movement. Being active is your secret holiday weapon; it can help make up for eating more than usual and also reduce stress during this most stressful time of year. Get moving with friends and family, such as taking a walk after a holiday meal.

ENTERTAINING AT HOME:

- Start with a big hearty salad.
- Swap out the alcohol drinks for signature sparkling water spritzers garnished with herbs and fresh fruit. Put them in wine or champagne glasses for that decadent feel.
- For main courses, embrace the pastabilities! Take the opportunity to let winter vegetables like spaghetti squash, butternut squash and zoodles shine in noodle form. Kids can have fun using the spiralizer to make linguine style strips, or adults can cut thin layers of sweet potato or squash for wider lasagna-like layers.
- If you have a sweet treat, cut back on other carbs (like potatoes and bread) during the meal.

ATTENDING AN EVENT:

- Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate before you show up and don't let the family show up hungry to holiday parties. Eating something before arriving will help curb hunger and prevent impulse eating.
- Instead of grazing, make yourself a plate. It's all too easy to hover over cheese or a dip and eat mindlessly.
- When it comes to dishing up meals, give the younger kids a hand by making their plates. Doing so may help ensure they eat healthier options, balance portion sizes, and even mitigate the extra snacking. Set an expectation that in order to have something sweet they need to eat something nutritious.
- Consider bringing a healthy dish to ensure that there are some smart options.

You may not be able to control what food you're served and you're going to see other friends and family eating tempting treats. Meet the challenges armed with a plan and stay true to your goals. Most of all, remember what the season is about — celebrating and connecting with the people you care about. When you focus more on the relationships and fun, it's easier to focus less on the food. Trust me, making some adjustments now will make for a much healthier new year. *SWM*

Chef Eric Rose's Holiday Brunch Menu

Christmas Breakfast Casserole

Enjoy this Mediterranean-inspired Christmas-morning casserole while you open presents. Breakfast casseroles are perfect for when you have a crowd to feed, and you can make the prep even quicker by tearing the bread into pieces the night before.

INGREDIENTS

Serves 8

- 1 (8 ounce) fresh spinach
- 1 (9 ounce) quartered artichoke hearts
- ½ cup chopped sun-dried tomatoes
- 2 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- ½ tsp crushed red pepper
- 1 tsp lemon zest
- 2 cups low-fat milk
- 6 large eggs
- 1 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 12 ounces rustic whole-wheat bread, torn into 1-inch pieces (about 8 cups)

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Rough chop spinach. Combine spinach and artichoke hearts in a medium bowl.
3. Cook tomatoes, oil, garlic, crushed red pepper and lemon zest in a small skillet over low heat, stirring often, until fragrant and the garlic is golden brown, 3 to 4 minutes. Stir into the spinach mixture.
4. Whisk milk and eggs in a large bowl. Add the spinach mixture, feta and bread. Toss gently until the bread absorbs the milk mixture. Spoon the mixture into a 13-by-9-inch glass or ceramic baking dish. Let stand at room temperature for 20 to 30 minutes.
5. Bake until set and browned in spots, about 35 minutes. Let stand for 5 to 10 minutes before serving.

Green Eggs & Ham Soup

Would you, could you make this creamy green soup recipe? How about if we told you it's dairy-free--just flavorful pureed veggies topped with a perfectly poached egg and ham? Trust me, whether you eat it in a box or with a fox, in a house or with a mouse, both you and your kids will love this storybook-perfect soup.



Continued on page 34

Eating healthy through the holidays from page 33

Green Eggs & Ham Soup

INGREDIENTS

Serves 8

- | | |
|--|---|
| 4 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, divided | 8 oz thick-cut ham or prosciutto, diced |
| 1 large onion, chopped | 4 cloves garlic, minced |
| 8 cups low-sodium chicken broth | 6 cups chopped broccoli florets |
| 4 cups chopped cauliflower florets | 2 cups frozen peas |
| 4 tsp fresh thyme leaves | $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt |
| 8 cups baby spinach | 5 oz of plain yogurt or sour cream |
| 8 cups water | 2 Tbsp distilled white vinegar |
| 8 large eggs | $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped fresh parsley,
plus more for garnish |

DIRECTIONS

- Heat 2 Tbsp oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add ham (or prosciutto) and cook, stirring often, until lightly browned, about 4 minutes. Transfer to a plate; set aside.
- Add the remaining 2 Tbsp oil and onion to the pot. Cook, stirring often, until softened, about 4 minutes. Add garlic; cook, stirring, for 2 minutes. Add broth, broccoli, cauliflower, thyme and salt. Reduce heat to a simmer, cover and cook until the broccoli is very tender, about 6 minutes. Add the spinach and parsley. Remove from heat and let stand, covered, until the spinach is wilted, about 5 minutes. Add the yogurt then puree the soup in the pot with an immersion blender. You might need to adjust thickness with a little water and adjust seasoning with salt and pepper.
- Meanwhile, bring water and vinegar to a boil in a large saucepan. Reduce to a bare simmer. Gently stir in a circle so the water is swirling around the pan. Break an egg into a small bowl, then submerge the lip of the bowl into the simmering water and gently add the egg. Working quickly, repeat with the remaining eggs. Cook 4 minutes for soft set, 5 minutes for medium set and 8 minutes for hard set.
- Serve the soup topped with a poached egg, some ham (or prosciutto) and parsley, if desired.

Baked salmon fillet with pickled cranberries, parsley & pecans

INGREDIENTS

For the pickled cranberries

- 10 oz cider vinegar
- 10.5 oz sugar
- 12 oz fresh cranberries
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp whole cloves
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp red pepper flakes

For the salmon

- 3 oz panko breadcrumbs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp dried thyme
- 1 lemon, zested
- 5 Tbsp olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
- 8 salmon fillet (5-8oz)
- 2 oz pecans, halved
- $\frac{1}{2}$ small bunch of parsley, chopped, to serve

DIRECTIONS

- Make the pickled cranberries a week or two ahead. Put the vinegar and sugar in a pan over a medium heat and bring to the boil. Stir in the remaining ingredients and continue to boil for 4 mins. Pour the mixture into a 1-qt sterilized jar, or two smaller ones, and seal well, then leave to cool. Chill in the fridge for at least a week.
- Heat the oven to 375°F. Toast the breadcrumbs in a dry frying pan for 2-3 mins until golden and toasted, then tip onto a plate and leave to cool.



- Combine the breadcrumbs, thyme, lemon zest and some seasoning in a mixing bowl. Drizzle with the 5 Tbsp olive oil and mix in thoroughly.
- Lay a piece of baking parchment on a baking tray large enough to fit the salmon fillet. Put the salmon fillet skin-side down on top, and carefully spread the crust mixture over the top of the salmon. Drizzle with a little extra olive oil.
- Bake the salmon for 20-25 mins ideally until it is just cooked and the crust has turned a golden color. Once cooked, transfer to a serving platter and garnish with the pecans, some drained pickled cranberries and the parsley. Serve with mixed greens.

Purple Sweet Potato Pie

This purple version of classic sweet potato pie has a shot of brandy, which adds another layer of seasonal flavor. Serve with a dollop of lightly sweetened whipped cream.

INGREDIENTS

Serves 8

Crust

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup whole-wheat pastry flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt
- 8 Tbsp cold unsalted butter, cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch cubes
- 3 to 4 tsp ice water

Filling

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ lbs purple sweet potatoes, scrubbed | 1 (12 oz) can low-fat evaporated milk |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup light brown sugar | 3 large eggs |
| 3 Tbsp melted butter, cooled | 2 Tbsp spiced or dark rum |
| 1 tsp vanilla extract | $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ground nutmeg |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground allspice | $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt |

DIRECTIONS

- Mix pastry flour, all-purpose flour and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt in a large bowl or pulse in a food processor. Cut in cold butter using a pastry blender or two knives or by pulsing in the food processor until the butter forms pebble-size pieces. Add water, 1 tablespoon at a time, until the dough is evenly moist (but not wet) and is just starting to clump together, being careful not to overmix. Pat the dough into a 5-inch disk. Wrap in plastic and refrigerate for at least 1 hour and up to 1 day.
- Prick sweet potatoes all over with a fork. Microwave on High until tender all the way to the center, 10 to 15 minutes. (Alternatively, place in a baking dish and bake at 425 degrees F until tender all the way to the center, about 1 hour.)
- Meanwhile, preheat oven to 350°F.
- Remove the dough from the refrigerator and let stand for 5 to 10 minutes to warm slightly.
- When the sweet potatoes are cool enough to handle, scoop the flesh into the food processor (discard skins). Pulse until smooth. Add evaporated milk, brown sugar, eggs, butter, rum, vanilla, nutmeg, allspice and salt. Puree until very smooth, scraping down the sides as needed.
- Roll the dough out on a lightly floured surface into a 12-inch circle. Transfer to a 9-inch deep-dish pie pan. Tuck the overhang under and crimp the edge with a fork or flute it between your thumb and index finger. Pour the filling into the crust.
- Bake the pie until puffed and just firm in the center, 50 to 55 minutes. Let cool on a wire rack for at least 30 minutes before serving.



Chef Eric Rose is an award-winning chef and certified health coach.

Adding to this season's culinary supporting cast... Roasted vegetables!

Jennifer Wing

Holidays are about getting together with family and friends, celebrating the season and each other. They also are a time of remembering loved ones we've lost and honoring their memories through traditions and talk of seasons past.

My mother-in-law passed away during the pandemic, and that loss has been hard to bear. She was always happiest when surrounded by family, sitting at her dining room table, enjoying the feast she had prepared.

On Christmas day she would always serve what she called "roast beast," (a term many who are fans of "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas" would understand) along with the typical side dishes most likely featured on tables throughout the country, even the world, that day.

After she died, the loss was palpable, made even worse by the strictures of the pandemic, but I was determined that her tradition of serving "roast beast" be upheld. And that is how a new tradition was born in my household, and how I first learned to cook prime rib. Each year on Christmas day, when I put the "roast beast" on the table, I think of her, and the times we shared at her home, doing the same thing. It is my homage to her, in the same fashion as the dishes from her table that now populate mine.

Making that roast beast the "star" of my holiday table was surprisingly simple – I just followed a formula for minutes per pound in the oven at a set temperature and – voila! A perfect rare in the center, with medium rare to medium radiating out to the deliciously browned outer edge.

The supporting cast to my star, however, was a different matter. Oh, sure, mashed potatoes and gravy are a must to go with the juicy beef, but somehow plain corn and dinner rolls didn't seem to be a fitting foil for our special entrée.

So, when it came to creating something, well, different on the menu, I decided to focus on the vegetable category.

I've had some success with this and, as in the case of a broccoli casserole I once brought to my mother-in-law's house, some failures. That one was pretty bad.

Last year I decided to go with a new recipe and, out of an abundance of caution, made it as a side dish to a meal a few weeks before Christmas, with my husband as guinea pig. Only after he gave it a thumbs-up did I then add it to my roster for the Big Meal.

I chose this recipe not only because I felt it would taste good and would fit in with the rest of the meal, but also because it was simple and could be done while my prime rib rested and was subsequently sliced for serving.

That Christmas morning, after the presents were unwrapped and the resulting mess was cleaned up, I set the table and prepared the salad, mashed potatoes, rolls and corn – feeling I needed to play it safe with a backup vegetable – all the while checking on the "roast beast" in the oven. As its doneness approached, I prepared my new side dish.

Finally, my meat thermometer hit that sweet spot, and I took the meat out to rest, quickly replacing it with the vegetables and adjusting the temperature.



By the time the dish was done, everything else had hit the table and it was just a matter of putting it in the serving bowl and setting it in its new place in the lineup.

Jump to the end of the meal, with everyone bursting at the seams, declaring it was too early for dessert. I polled the audience – how was this new member of the supporting cast to my star roast beast?

The reviews were in – and they were all positive! There might just be an encore performance this year. Or maybe the understudy I've been eyeing will get a turn.

What was this menu ingénue? See the recipe to find out! *SWM*

Roasted vegetables

INGREDIENTS

Makes 5 servings, so for our meal, I tripled the recipe!

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 head cauliflower | 1 large crown of broccoli |
| 1 medium red onion | 2 medium carrots |
| 2 bell peppers | 2 medium zucchini |
| 3 Tbsp olive oil | 2 tsp garlic powder |
| 1 tsp dried oregano | ½ tsp smoked paprika |
| Pepper and salt, to taste | |

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 425° F.
2. Cut the vegetables into bite-sized pieces. (In the case of the carrots, I made the chunks a bit thinner for quicker cooking.) Place in a large bowl, or two smaller bowls if you don't have one big enough for all of the vegetables.
3. In a separate bowl, combine the garlic powder, dried oregano, smoked paprika and salt and pepper; mix well.
4. Add olive oil to the vegetables and mix so that all of the vegetables are coated. Add the spice mixture and mix again so the vegetables are evenly coated.
5. Spread the vegetables out into a single layer on the baking sheet (I used two large sheets because I had tripled the recipe) and put into the oven for 15 minutes.
6. Remove from the oven and mix the vegetables carefully before placing them back into the oven for 10 to 15 minutes more or until cooked through.

Author's note: I cut up all of the vegetables and put them in plastic bags in the refrigerator the night before, saving time on Christmas Day.

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MARYELLEN CLAUSEN



MaryEllen Clausen, founder of Ophelia's Place, is retiring from the organization.

Coming full circle

OPHELIA'S PLACE FOUNDER TO RETIRE

Ashley M. Casey

MaryEllen Clausen first announced her retirement from Ophelia's Place more than 10 years ago — on the cover of the first-anniversary issue of Syracuse Woman Magazine, no less — but she found herself unable to step away from the Liverpool-based nonprofit she founded. Now, a decade later, she is calling it quits for good.

"I feel like I've cried 'wolf' too many times," she said.

Clausen is stepping down at the end of the year from Ophelia's Place, which offers resources to those struggling with eating disorders and promotes a healthier culture around body image. Her daughter, Holli Zehring, is taking her place as CEO.

If a recent email to Ophelia's Place supporters announcing the changing of the guard is any indication, Clausen seems to prefer the word "transition" to "retirement."

"I don't feel like I'm ready to retire. I'm always going to want to do meaningful, purposeful work, but the organization is ready for me to retire and pass it onto Holli," Clausen said.

Previously, Zehring was the director of Ophelia's Place West, located in Gilbert, Arizona — just outside of Phoenix — where she resides with her family.

As teenagers, Zehring and her sister, Nicole, were both struggling with eating disorders. Frustrated at the difficulty their family encountered accessing mental health services, Zehring and Clausen founded Ophelia's Place in 2002. Clausen opened Café at 407 in 2009 to provide a funding stream for the nonprofit organization.

As she withdraws from day-to-day operations at Ophelia's Place and the café, Clausen is writing a book about her experience with both enterprises. "A Café with a Cause" will offer nonprofit leaders an inside look at how to generate revenue.

"I think more and more nonprofits have to be thinking about sustainability from that perspective," she said. "It's so hard — it takes so much energy to fundraise. It often takes you away from the mission of the organization."

Clausen said her daughter has a great vision for Ophelia's Place and is "more than ready to take over the organization." Zehring said her short-term goals for the nonprofit are to continue raising awareness of eating disorders, identifying the gaps in resources, and relaunching the organization's digital course, which focuses on the relationship between eating disorders and the greater culture. The course can help people in their recovery process as well as mental health professionals trying to gain a better understanding of the topic.

Looking back, Clausen said Ophelia's Place not only helped her family persevere through Holli and Nicole's own eating disorders, but it helped Clausen cope with her own anxiety. Over time, the nonprofit's mission has expanded to address the stigma of other mental health conditions and push back against diet culture and shame.

"I'm grateful to the community for believing in the work," she said.

"I think we definitely have evolved over the years and hopefully we've shed a light on the stigma of mental illness."

Clausen said she is grateful for everyone who has passed through the doors of 407 Tulip St., from customers and clients to employees and community supporters.

"They've all kind of left a piece of themselves in the café," Clausen said.

Clausen's best bit of advice for Zehring and the next generation of the nonprofit's leaders? "Look at failure from a different lens."

"We failed a lot over the years and tried things that didn't work, but also those were my greatest opportunities for learning and resilience," Clausen said. "It's hard especially in the nonprofit world because you feel like, 'I can't fail — we have to keep our doors open.'"

One of those "failures," Clausen said, was the café's struggle to stay afloat in the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Café at 407 was forced to close for three months in the spring of 2020, and the café shuttered once again in December 2020 after facing a \$25,000 shortfall. The café piloted a mini-marketplace for local goods, which did not pan out.

"We created a model that didn't necessarily work," Clausen said, adding that such experiences taught her, "I might not know what I do want to do, but I know what I don't want to do."

Fortunately, the café was able to reopen in February 2021. Looking ahead, Zehring is focusing on shoring up the organization and café's financial sustainability.

"The organization can't depend on one person or one thing. We have to have a variety of contributors and revenue streams," Zehring said. "For a long time, it was just [my mom] keeping the organization going and I've seen the toll it's taken on her. We need to carry this load together."

Zehring said she is inspired by Adrienne Maree Brown's book, "Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds," which invites people to help themselves and the world by embracing change.

"Micro actions can lead to macro change," Zehring said. "If we can solve this problem in a community, then we can solve a lot of problems and make people's lives better."

With the year — and Clausen's tenure — drawing to a close, Zehring and Clausen are asking Central New Yorkers to keep Ophelia's Place in mind during the gift-giving season. Supporters can donate directly or purchase gift boxes and local goods at the café.

"The cafe has contributed \$55,315 to Ophelia's Place this year and we are asking the community to match it with end-of-year contributions," Clausen said.

To donate directly to the organization, visit opheliasplace.org/give or stop by Café at 407, which is open from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday. The café is located at 407 Tulip St. in the village of Liverpool. *SWM*



Christin Leah Photography

Holli Zehring

GLENDA
STOWELL

Care Bear Team provides comfort to hospitalized children

Alyssa Dearborn

Since its founding in 2011, The Bear Team has brought over 14,700 Build-a-Bear stuffed animals to children receiving care and treatment at Golisano Children's Hospital. The bears serve not only as companions and comfort objects for the children, but also as reminders that the children and their families are not alone in their difficult time. Making sure that new bears arrive at the hospital each month is a mission that Glenda Stowell, her husband, and the team of volunteers dedicate themselves to on a daily basis.

"I've always been a busy person and we do keep busy," Glenda replied when asked about how she started the organization, "And what happened was we went to Golisano Children's Hospital – it had just opened up – to see if they needed any help. They were looking to do something for these poor kids who come in for surgery. Some are flown in, and they're scared and they have nothing. So we decided on the Build-a-Bear program. And once we got home, my husband and I talked about it. And our first delivery was for 40 bears. Since then, we now deliver about 200 a month... And we do it every single month and I am proud to say we've never missed a month through COVID. And let me tell you, it was hard."

In order to raise enough money, sew enough bear-sized scrubs, and collect enough stuffed Build-a-Bear plushes for The Bear Team's monthly drops, Glenda works with about 25 volunteers. These volunteers help with essential tasks including sewing, fundraising, and finding opportunities for the organization.

"So many of our volunteers work out of their homes, giving all of their love and time at least one day here, most often two days a week this time of year," she said about the team.

When asked how the monthly bear drives are organized, she reinforced how the operation is a team effort.

"How do I organize? Working 24 hours a day!" She laughed, "We have a team effort. We all work together. Somebody knows about a craft fair, they call me. They co do the craft fair. We had a big raffle, that's our main focus. So if anybody wants to help, they can go and call any of the phone numbers that are on Facebook. That's the best thing. They go to Facebook and they can find out what we do, what we need. That's our big organizational thing, I guess."

A major part of The Bear Team's mission involves sewing small scrubs to dress up each bear as a nurse or doctor. The crafting heavily relies on both volunteer time and fabric donations.

"I have a great person who takes care of the sewing and she organizes with who sews and what they turn in. We, of course, ask for materials. We don't have to buy it much because we're really lucky with people donating. They seem to find us when, maybe when somebody [who sews] in their family passes or gets sick and can't do that anymore. They give us all their stuff."

"We're making do," Glenda continued, "We're buying a lot of baskets. And one of the things we do for organization is that everything that comes in is cleaned, we put it in baskets, so when the sewer comes in and needs the material, they have that. We did not have that until our sewer came on. It's been a big help. It's allowed us to grow more."

Despite all the hard work that comes with surprising and comforting ill children with new teddy bears, the outcome is both rewarding and heartwarming for Glenda and her team.

"It's the pictures we get from the kids and their moms with them holding the bears, thanking us. It's the little things to us. Like, oh my goodness, this is a wonderful thing, when a mother just wanted to give you a thank you. Little things," Glenda said, when asked what the most rewarding part of the organization's work is. "We had a little boy send us his money he'd earned and saved all year so he could give back because he had gotten a bear. It's the little things that come back and I hear with all the girls. And that's the feeling of you're doing something that helps somebody else. And not only the child who received the bear, but the family as well. When that child cuddles into that bear, it's such a relief to the parent."

If you are interested in donating or becoming a volunteer with The Bear Team, contact Glenda Stowell at 315-298-5308 or at cnybearteam@aol.com. SWM

Glenda and Fred Stowell make a drop of Care Bears to the Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital.

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Leading the Way with Heart and Hope is the theme of our 2022 Loretto Foundation Appeal — one in which each of us can play a major role. *Leading the Way* reflects the commitment Loretto has pledged and delivered on during our nearly 100 years by continually expanding to serve with care and compassion the unique needs of individuals in Central New York.



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The Loretto Foundation

Symphoria announces staff promotions and new hire



LARA MOSBY

Symphoria is pleased to announce recent staff promotions. Lara Mosby has been promoted to senior manager for advancement and community engagement and Kelly Covert has been promoted to corporate giving and annual fund manager. Taylia Hinds has joined the organization as marketing coordinator.

Mosby has been with Symphoria for two years, beginning as its community engagement manager. Mosby shares that her new position includes more grant writing and grant discovery and that her favorite part of her job is "seeing people at concerts and community events. It's nice to connect with people. The orchestra is first rate, and I work with a lot of fun and talented people in the office." Mosby said. Before joining Symphoria, Mosby worked for many years in the media industry—most recently as assistant operations manager at Forever Media's 7-station radio station cluster in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. She has a master's degree from Syracuse University and a bachelor's degree from Cornell University.



KELLY COVERT

Covert has been with Symphoria for nine years. "I work for Symphoria because I love this organization. At Symphoria we are doing important and valuable work in CNY that reflects my personal values. I feel 100 percent aligned with our mission and vision," she said. Covert is also a musician in Symphoria's orchestra and a board member. Before working with Symphoria, Covert started her career teaching flute privately and at Syracuse University, Ithaca College, Oswego State University and Hamilton College, running her own coaching business that includes a podcast, and performing in and around Central New York as a flutist.



TAYLIA HINDS

Hinds was hired as marketing coordinator in October. She is a recent graduate of Syracuse University and holds her bachelor's in communications and rhetorical studies and minored in vocal instruction at Syracuse University. "Everyone in the office is very warm and welcoming," Hinds recalls, "As a vocalist myself, I am very excited to work with other musicians." She shares that her favorite part of her job is "getting to help share amazing music with the Central New York community."



KATHY COFFTA SIMS

Pomeroy Foundation hires director of communications

The William G. Pomeroy Foundation has announced that Kathy Coffta Sims has been named director of communications. Coffta Sims, a native of Buffalo, has more than 30 years experience in communications and marketing work in the Syracuse region. Most recently she served as the director of communications for the Alzheimer's Association, Central New York Chapter. Prior to that she was the director of communications for the Onondaga County Public Library system.

"We are delighted to welcome Kathy to the organization. Her deep knowledge of communications and marketing trends and her years of experience in the field will be an asset as we continue to promote our mission and grow our programs," said Deryn Pomeroy, trustee and director of strategic initiatives at the Pomeroy Foundation.

Coffta Sims, a former reporter and editor, has a bachelor's degree in journalism from the State University College at Buffalo and a master's degree in education from the State University College at Oswego. "I am thrilled to be working with such a talented group of people who are so invested in sharing our country's rich history," Coffta Sims said. "I also look forward to helping others learn about the important work the Pomeroy Foundation is doing to increase awareness of life-saving treatment for blood cancer patients."

Gillibrand recommends Owens-Chaplin to serve on DoT Committee

U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand announced her recommendation for local I-81 advocate Lanessa Owens-Chaplin to join the Advisory Committee on Transportation Equity within the U.S. Department of Transportation.

"I am proud to recommend Lanessa Owens-Chaplin to the DOT's Advisory Committee on Transportation Equity," said Senator Gillibrand. "Lanessa is a dedicated public servant committed to helping her community and fighting for environmental and racial justice."

As an attorney and director of the Environmental Justice Project at the New York Civil Liberties Union, Owens-Chaplin has been effectively working with state and federal officials and stakeholders surrounding the I-81 project.

Owens-Chaplin is a 2003 graduate of Onondaga Community College, a 2021 distinguished OCC Alumni Faces Honoree, and at OCC's commencement ceremony earlier this year she was awarded an honorary doctorate from SUNY.

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Through December 18

29th Annual Dickens' Christmas

What: Merriment for the whole family: "A Christmas Carol" trunk show, sing-alongs, entertainment, horse-drawn carriage rides and appearances by beloved Dickens characters. A mask-friendly event. Produced by Scarlett Rat Entertainment and presented by the Skaneateles Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation.

Where: Throughout the village of Skaneateles

When: Noon to 4 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays

Info: Call 315-685-0552 or visit skaneateles.com



Friday, December 2

Cazenovia College 11th Annual Arts and Craft Fair

What: In conjunction with the village of Cazenovia's 43rd Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony and Holiday walk, a variety of handmade creations will be available for purchase.

Where: Reisman Hall Art Gallery, Cazenovia College, 6 Sullivan St., Cazenovia, NY

When: 4 to 8 p.m.



Sat. & Sun., December 3 & 4

Syracuse Peace Council's Craft Fair and Peace Festival

What: Central News York's premier multicultural craft fair includes 120 area craftspeople and community organizations and draws thousands of attendees from around the region. The show also offers on-going live entertainment and food from local food trucks.

Where: Nottingham High School, 3100 E Genesee St., Syracuse, NY 13224

When: Saturday: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday: 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



Tuesday, December 6

Intermezzo Holiday Luncheon

What: The Syracuse Sounds of Music Association, Inc. will host the event. Shopping, socializing at 11 a.m., luncheon at noon. Symphoria Woodwind Quintet performs at 1 p.m. A fashion show featuring fashion from Frameology and Mally Mae. Encore Thrift Shop will have a pop up shop.

Where: Bellevue Country Club, 1901 Glenwood Ave., Syracuse

When: 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Cost: \$40 per person



Wednesday December 7

Roaring 20s WBOC Holiday Auction and Party

What: Fabulous food, desserts, raffle tables and silent auction. Proceeds will go towards sustaining the WBOC's mission.

Where: The Collegian Hotel, 1060 E. Genesee St., Syracuse, NY

When: 5 to 9 p.m.

Cost: \$60 per ticket.

Info: wboconnection.org/event-5012705



Sunday, December 11

Brass and Bells Concert

What: Annual family holiday concert by the Syracuse University Brass Ensemble and the United Church Handbell Choir. Free will offering for Haiti and non-perishables for the FM Food Pantry appreciated.

Where: 310 East Genesee St., Fayetteville.

When: 3 p.m.



December 29 - January 2

Disney On Ice: Let's Celebrate

What: With more than 50 beloved characters in the show, the legacy of Disney is displayed through 14 classic and modern stories, including "Frozen," "Finding Dory," "Aladdin" and "Beauty and the Beast." Visit disneyonice.com for tickets.

Where: Upstate Medical Arena at The Oncenter War Memorial

Info: disneyonice.com/lets-celebrate



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