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Instilling fitness and empowerment
at a young age*

WOMEN'S MENTAL HEALTH

Dr. Audrey Van Voolen

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Lauren Burdick

Understand what type of motivation keeps you going

As the new year approaches many people begin to create new goals for themselves. The most common New Year's Resolution is the goal of beginning an exercise regime. As an athlete and coach, I always see an influx of people in the gym from January through February and then they slowly taper out. Why are these people abandoning their goals so soon and what could have been done to help them meet their goals? As a coach, I see different mind sets and it's left me wondering "why do some people have the motivation and why do some lose it"? There are two types of motivation that play a huge role in training, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Let's explain what these are.

Intrinsic motivation refers to a behavior that is driven by internal rewards such as feeling the enjoyment of an activity or seeing it as an opportunity to explore, learn, and increase our potential. In contrast to this motivation, is extrinsic motivation which involves engaging in a behavior in order to earn external rewards, like money, praise or approval.

Running a speed session on your own or hitting the gym for an hour for the inherent satisfaction of the challenge or joy of the work you are putting into it rather than for some separate consequence is an example of intrinsic motivation. Having a great time with your exercise buddy is an example of extrinsic motivation. You may enjoy spending your day doing something other than exercising, but you're motivated to do it because you get time to see your friends.

What are some tools to use for staying consistent?

- Find a buddy to exercise with, join exercises classes, or a running group to make friends, suffer together, and support one another during the tough exercise sessions.
- Use a mobile app. There are thousands of free apps to choose from where you can log you exercise and food while earning badges for completing consistent workouts and eating the right amount of calories for your body. Some apps even allow others to comment to motivate you. The biggest thing with my company app is our group chat. This is where people tell one another their accomplishments, races they just ran, and they have direct contact with us (their coaches) right at their fingertips. The accountability helps.
- Slowly work your way into the regime and let your body get used to the activities you are asking it to do. On days you are tired, instead of an off day – tell yourself just a 15-minute walk. 15 minutes is better than nothing. Often, once you are outside, you will go longer.
- Don't get down on yourself for a having a day where you ate something unhealthy or did not work out. You have not undone your work. Please do not skip your next meal and nor workout an extra hour. Move on and keep working towards your goal!

Some athletes will always have strong self-discipline (intrinsic motivation) and some athletes have outside factors influencing them (extrinsic motivation). Depending on the season, it can differ for all of us and that's ok. You should not be training hard all year round. Having downtime and maintenance time allows for recovery, finding enjoyment in exercise, and bonding with your friends. The best way to handle a busy lifestyle while being an athlete is about breaking things down into smaller sections, blocks you can handle. *SWM*

Lauren Burdick is a certified nutrition consultant and running coach. She and her husband, Jared, run Miles & Macros, LLC, an athletic training and nutrition company located in Fayetteville. For more information, visit milesandmacros.net.



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WBOC goes back in time for the holidays

The WBOC held its annual holiday auction and party on Dec. 7 at the Collegian Hotel in Syracuse. Attendees of the Roaring 20s-themed event were entertained by music from Ormond Entertainment and a performance by the Museum of Intrigue.

Photos by Nancy Miller



New year, new “me” experience

It's impossible to have a new year, new me experience if you are going into 2023 with the same mindset you had last year. Often, New Years' resolutions are created with quick fixes of deep issues one hasn't processed yet, or they are based on a low vibrational mindset already leading to the lack of follow through on the resolution throughout the year. So, ask yourself, how is your mental health? How do you feel about yourself and your connection to the world around you?

Now, there are many mental health resources and tons of self-help books and articles; however, the overwhelming amount of information can lead one to get lost in all of it and be unable to apply the skills to their life. Let me help you curate an action plan to go into the new year with a mindset focused on and ready to receive the joy you deserve in 2023!

Step 1: Identify your top five core values and determine if you live a values-based life. A values-based life means that your career, hobbies, and interpersonal relationships encompass at least one of your core values. If you reflect and determine that some things in your life are not aligned with your values, then that is where you need to do the work.

Example: If one of your core values is innovation, but your employer doesn't allow you to engage in this, there is a misalignment. Perhaps your core value is peace, but you are always wrapped up in drama with your friend group, identifying another misalignment.

When you live a values-based life, you feel authentic and improve your mental well-being by eliminating the clutter of contradictions in your life.

Step 2: Get rid of self-limiting beliefs. There is a vast difference between being humble, accepting your imperfections, and allowing your imperfection and self-limiting beliefs to be your primary identity. The fastest way to stop self-limiting beliefs is to be aware of your language. Language is powerful as how you talk to yourself determines the lay of the land of your mental well-being.

Example: Perhaps you made a mistake while presenting and said to yourself, "I'm horrible at public speaking." This is a self-limiting belief. Reframe this by saying, "I made a mistake, but I'm learning how to become a better speaker." This reframing stops you from allowing the mistake to define you as a person, accept accountability, and have an attainable goal.

Step 3: Often said that comparison is the theft of joy. You should stop comparing yourself to others you feel are doing better than you, but did you know that comparing yourself to others you feel are doing worse is also stealing your joy? I find that those with higher vibrational mindsets don't let anyone's joy or demise influence how they feel about themselves.

Example: When you get into the comparison game, remind yourself of the saying, "you should only look in another person's bowl to see if they need more." These sayings, such as, "At least I don't have it that bad," or "They have it so good," will only fuel insecurities or allow you to avoid and invalidate issues that need your attention.

When you seek connection instead of comparison amongst others, you will see significant improvement in your mental well-being.

Step 4: Take time to reflect on the past. Too often, people want to bypass reflection of difficult times due to painful or uncomfortable feelings. So instead, they look to rush directly to the future. This can have negative implications on your mental well-being. If you cannot radically accept your past, engage in accountability and forgiveness, then action plan on moving forward based on the new information

from hard times, you will ultimately make your future more difficult every time.

Example: I call this the 3-step process of knowing if you've completed the above exercise and have the mindset to step into the future.

The first step is still reminiscing about the toxic, painful, or harmful behaviors of the past, and this can include still highlighting the "good" or even missing that chaotic era of your life. The second step is finding that when reflecting on these events, you feel immense shame, guilt, and even physical cringe. The third and last step is when you can reflect on your past events with indifference, knowing that this was and is

now all part of your human journey.

Step 5: When developing your new year, new me resolutions, remember that they should not add more negative stress to your life. Implementing new habits can cause some discomfort as you learn a new behavior. This is identified as short-term stress and gives you a boost of motivation and the ability to focus your energy. But at no point should you feel overwhelmed, or the thought of your resolution leads to anxiety.

Example: If your New Year's Resolution requires you to overhaul your life, this will lead to bad stress and deterioration of your mental well-being. If you create nearly unattainable resolutions, you can engage even more in self-limiting beliefs when you don't meet your resolution. Even worse, you will begin to refrain from small goals and new habits in the future.

Just a reminder that resolution is often a synonym for a solution; this is when New Year's Resolutions can become problematic for your mental health. We are all living through a human experience, on a journey, and there is no final solution. So, when developing your New Year's Resolution, be sure you understand that you are simply changing your behavior or picking up a new behavior to help you grow.



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Girls on the Run

INSTILLING FITNESS AND EMPOWERMENT AT A YOUNG AGE

Alyssa Dearborn

Girls on the Run was introduced to the Central New York area in 2002. Twenty years later, program director Andrea Autry has been able to expand the nonprofit from its beginnings in Skaneateles to several other counties across the region. Today, Girls on the Run Upstate New York has sites close by in towns like Phoenix, sites in the north towards Potsdam, and sites in the south towards Groton.

"I knew a friend who talked about this organization, and at the time I had a younger daughter and she was in middle school." Andrea said when asked about how she first became involved with the organization, "The middle school years are a little tough and I remember thinking to myself, how can I help her get through these years and...how do I understand maybe what's going on in the mind of a middle schooler."

"And at the same time, my friend told me about Girls on the Run. So I spoke with Elizabeth Dreyfus – who started the program in the area – and we connected and that was kind of it. I jumped on board and started doing the programming for Girls on the Run."

The program is part of a national nonprofit organization whose mission it is to not only instill fitness into the lives of girls, but to also inspire those girls to build confidence, kindness, and decision-making ability. The organization has programs for girls in grades three through five and in grades six through eight and also recruits girls 16 and older for junior coach positions. In the Upstate and Central New York chapter, there are nearly 500 girls who participate in each spring session.

"Typically, international and national, they have a program in the fall, in the spring, and also in the summer." Andrea said, "We here in Upstate New York have a fall program and a spring program. So basically, in both of these times we reach out to schools in the area or afterschool programs and recruit them to have a program at their site. We do not typically do a summer program, yet."

At each site, the participating girls are coached and mentored by volunteer coaches. According to Andrea, these coaches are usually teachers from the area schools or other individuals from within the community, some of them even being women who participated in the program when they were girls themselves.

"I think with both the junior coaches and the regular coaches, the impact is phenomenal. These young girls, there's a lot going on with social media and just everyday life of being a young girl trying to get through those years. And I think the impact they have on the lives of these young girls is wonderful. They can talk to them not only about experiences. They can help and sort of mentor them. And the program's really about trying to teach these young girls to become strong young women, and then, hopefully, strong and powerful, empowered women. So I just think that going through the programming and going through the curriculum is what helps empower these young girls."





The impact of Girls on the Run improves both the emotional and physical lives of the participating girls. The program also tries to draw connections between emotional and physical wellbeing, giving the girls important tools to live healthy, empowered lives.

"There's a lot of independent studies that Girls on the Run has gone through," she added, "For instance, [the girls are] increasing their physical activity. Maybe some of these girls weren't as active during school, so by joining Girls on the Run, it's increasing their physical activity. It's increasing the amount of interaction with other girls their age who are going through the program as well. They're learning critical life skills, resolving conflict, making decisions, things like that. So it's just important to do things with your peers that are potentially going through the same thing and work together with them towards a common goal. At the end of the program, they run a 5k. It's just something different than school. You're interacting with different individuals, you're learning something other than what you're learning in school."

The 5k at the end of the program is a reflection of what the girls can achieve in the program as well as everything that makes Andrea's work worthwhile. When asked about the most rewarding part of her work, Andrea stated, "I think the most rewarding part is actually seeing these girls at the 5k at the end of the season: running the 5k and completing it and just feeling the sense of accomplishment. In the spring last year, we had probably close to 1,000 people at the end of the 5k. Between the girls from all the different sites, their coaches, and then their families there cheering them on, it was a good feeling to see these girls have a sense and feeling of accomplishment. That's the biggest thing. It's all working towards the same common goal of trying to empower these young girls and it's nice and refreshing to see when that happens."

Despite now having the program in 11 counties throughout Upstate and Central New York, as Andrea looks towards the future, she is making it a goal to expand the program even further to reach the girls who could benefit from Girls on the Run the most.

"Just being able to bring something like this to the community and watch it grow is phenomenal. I think what started as one site in Skaneateles has grown to 11 counties and close to 500 girls in the spring season is phenomenal and great. There's always a conscious effort to get this into schools. And there are some schools and some sites whose families can afford it and then there are others that are a little bit more in need of programming like this. We just want to work to get this into as many schools and provide it for as many girls within our 11-county area."

"There's a conscious effort to get it into more city schools in Syracuse. We have some rural areas, we have some urban areas. That's really what we're trying to do...No girl is ever turned away. Through our financial aid assistance and some very generous local sponsors, we are able to help make sure that all girls that want to be involved are able to do so." *SWM*

If you are interested in finding a program site, becoming a coach, or learning more about Girls on the Run, visit the Upstate and Central New York chapter's websites at www.gotrupstateny.org/.



wise

WOMEN IGNITING THE SPIRIT
OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

FEATURED ENTREPRENEUR

Melody Smith Johnson

Owner
Melody's

Melody Smith Johnson is an entrepreneur many times over. She is the owner of Melody's, a co-working and event space that opened in the summer of 2022 in Auburn, NY, as well as the Founder and Lead Designer of Divine Coverings, LLC, and the Founder and President of Beverly L. Smith Empowerment Initiative Inc, both launched in 2016. Melody's work to empower women is the common thread between all three businesses.

Melody grew up in the Bronx, where she made her first foray into entrepreneurship at only eight years old. Melody developed a paper route as a kid, no bike required. She delivered newspapers to the women she knew across the 21 floors of her building. She charged them the cost of the paper for the service and profited off their tips. Not only did this provide people with their morning papers, Melody would also visit with her customers, who often wanted more company. Melody had a natural talent for identifying needs, finding solutions, and engaging people. As an adult, Melody built a career in human resources, before diving into entrepreneurship again. Melody started Divine Coverings after people approached her asking where she got the things that she had customized with shine for herself. This had Melody's entrepreneur ears ringing, and Divine Coverings was born. In that same year, Melody started the Beverly L. Smith Empowerment Initiative, where she works toward empowering other women. As Melody grew her businesses, she needed an office space and a maker space for them. Her newest business, Melody's, was born out of the realization that other women in the area needed the same things that she did for their own businesses and projects. With the opening of Melody's in Auburn's downtown Business Improvement District, Melody is the first Black woman to open a coworking space in downtown Auburn. Location is everything for Melody, who chose Auburn because it was Harriet Tubman's chosen home. Melody can feel the power in the ground beneath her, knowing Harriet once walked the streets where Melody's is.

As a solopreneur, business has its challenges. Melody notes that one of the hardest parts is doing business while building her business, taking the time to continuously plan and not wing anything. As a business owner, you must ask for support where you need it. Her vision is huge, so connecting to the right resources is invaluable. Central New York is ripe with resources for business owners, you just have to make use of them. One of the resources Melody taps into is WISE Women's Business Center, where she meets with a business counselor. One of the best things that Melody gets from WISE is the support of a whole group of women who see her, understand her, and want her to succeed.

Photo Credit Mapleseed Creative, LLC



Melody aims to serve the community authentically, knowing that she is bold and fearless, two things you must be to serve with conviction and compassion. She believes that you must be courageous and confident to go into uncharted waters, as she has done with the opening of Melody's. Being an entrepreneur gives her the opportunity to inspire others, and to help others find the freedom she found for herself. To accomplish these goals, Melody is working on an entrepreneurship learning initiative for young women of color, giving them the space to follow their dreams. When people enter Melody's, Melody wants them to remember that by pursuing their dreams, they are not running away. Instead, they are leaving a good place for somewhere better. If that journey leads them to Melody's, they can look up and see the reminder in fluorescent script, "You're right where you belong."

WISE words of wisdom...

Find your village. This
journey is not meant to be
done alone.

-Melody Smith Johnson

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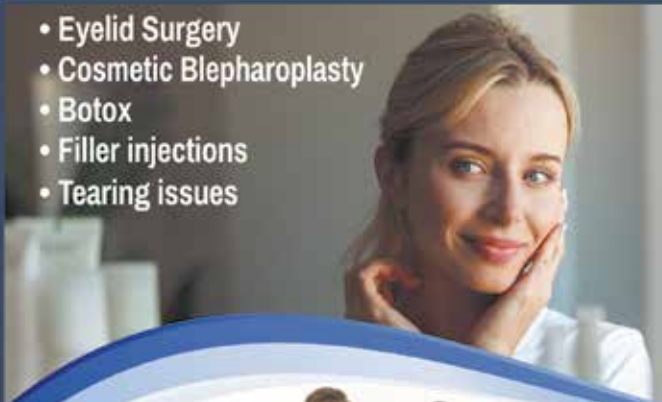


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DR. AUDREY VAN VOOLEN

Founder of Skaneateles Psychology Associates utilizes a strength-based approach

Kate Hanzalik

The idea of playing to your strengths resonates with Audrey Van Voolen, PhD. It applies to her professional trajectory as a psychologist, her approach in treating patients, and the way she works with the providers in her group practice.

As a pre-law student at Cornell University, she interned at a law firm in Washington DC while working on a research project and taking policy courses. “At the end of the semester my advisor took me aside and complimented my work but said he would’ve liked to see what I could do if I was actually interested in what I was studying,” said Dr. Van Voolen almost 30 years later. “I was taken aback as I wasn’t aware that he could sense my apathy to the subject and I realized in that moment that I would forego law school and apply myself to a field that was equally challenging but more suited to my temperament and spoke to my heart. That field was psychology.”

Her heart led her to a doctoral program in clinical psychology at American University, an externship at the Georgetown University counseling center, an internship at Georgetown University Medical Center, then post-doctoral training at Children’s National Medical Center in Washington DC. After moving back to Central New York, she worked as a psychologist at SUNY Upstate and eventually started a private practice in Skaneateles. “I thought it would be a supportive place to live and raise a family and a place where I could make a difference.”

And she has made a difference. “After many years of practicing on my own, the idea of a group practice started taking shape. I had been spending a lot of time talking to potential patients and finding the right providers to refer them to. I realized that many people were traveling long distances, being put on extended wait lists, or turned away for mental health services as there was little care available. I thought that if I could assemble a team of clinicians with various specialties, then the needs of these various patients could be met closer to home.”

By bringing people together, she felt both patients and clinicians would benefit. “I have worked in a variety of settings, a number of academic medical centers and I enjoyed the intellectual stimulation of case conferences and other professional learning opportunities as well as having colleagues you can consult with, and I think that results in happier clinicians and higher quality care. So, I sort of envisioned recreating that.” In 2019, her vision became Skaneateles Psychology Associates.

A guiding principle of the practice is to harness the unique strengths of clinicians. “Rather than, for example, putting out a job description and then plugging someone into that, I work with the clinician to figure out what they like doing, what they’re good at, then we create something around that. We tailor our services around our people. When a new clinician starts with us I have them imagine what they want to be doing in five or ten years and then we start building their practice around that.”

The approach has been successful. “We are growing. We are opening a second location in the village of Manlius to accommodate some of the demand for mental health services and we’re looking to bring on additional providers.” They’re also offering post-doctoral fellowships. According to Dr. Van Voolen, the idea is to “supervise clinicians working toward their hours for licensure. That way we can find good people and train them, and hope they’ll stay in our community.”

Observations of a professional

Sometimes people meet with a psychologist not for symptom relief but for self-improvement. “We tend to see some of the healthiest people I know because they’re the ones who come in, they want to understand themselves, they are motivated toward growth.”

Choose your therapist wisely. Make sure you know the professional credentials of the provider you’re seeing, and respect how you feel when you meet them. “The match between the clinician and the patient is really essential.”

She prioritizes exercises to stay strong both physically and mentally, especially yoga. “I believe in it. I practice almost every day myself as a way to clear my mind before work and sometimes after. It’s a great tool not only for clarity but also for sparking creativity,” she says. “Every day my schedule is built around my family, yoga, a walk or other outdoor activity, and work fits in there. I encourage our clinicians to fit their work around their life and family, not the other way around.”

Self-care can be a beautiful thing, Dr. Van Voolen learned from her mentor. “She always had a vase of fresh flowers in her office. I asked her once who the flowers were from and I was surprised to find out that she bought them for herself each week. She told me, ‘You are responsible for keeping your own vase full.’ The flowers served as a visual reminder to her. I always returned to the idea that my well-being is my responsibility. I see taking care of myself, keeping my vase full, as part of my work actually. There are a lot of people counting on me,” she says. “I feel very humbled and honored to have people entrust me with the inner workings of their lives. I can’t imagine a more rewarding profession.” SWM

To learn more about Dr. Van Voolen and Skaneateles Psychology Associates please visit <https://www.skanpsych.com/>. They are currently recruiting clinicians and post-doctoral fellows. To obtain a listing of local psychologists in the Syracuse area, Dr. Van Voolen also suggests the Central New York Psychological Association at www.cnyapa.net.

"I feel very humbled and honored to have people entrust me with the inner workings of their lives. I can't imagine a more rewarding profession."
—Dr. Audrey Van Voolen



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DR. KATHRYN ANDERSON

**From Minnesota
to Thailand to
Syracuse, new health
commissioner
focused on improving
public health**

Abigail Welles

“One area that our community and the United States needs to grow is health literacy. How to take in health advice and make educated decisions for yourself and your family.” —Dr. Kathryn Anderson

DR. KATHRYN ANDERSON



From Minnesota to Thailand to Syracuse, new health commissioner focused on improving public health

Abigail Welles

Dr. Kathryn Anderson began her role as the county health commissioner in early November 2022, succeeding Dr. Indu Gupta who served the Onondaga county for more than seven years. The role is one Dr. Anderson is immensely passionate about but not one she expected taking when moving her family to Syracuse in 2019.

Anderson has dedicated much of her professional life to researching infectious diseases. She was lured to the field began through a simple interest in biology and that brought her to research carrion beetles during her undergraduate studies. Limited in her societal impact, she sought out research that would prove more insightful to greater public health problems. It was then that she transitioned from carrion beetles to mosquito borne viruses, years prior to our global understanding of Zika and other associated threats. Her fascination with emerging viral diseases and the desire to develop solutions has since transformed into 20 years' worth of research.

Anderson received her MD/PhD from Emory University where she studied as a physician scientist. Upon completing her residency at the University of Minnesota, worked as a hospitalist and researcher of emerging infectious diseases. More specifically, she has spent the past 20 years living between the states and Thailand to study dengue fever, a mosquito borne illness and global public health problem. She has collectively spent nearly five years of her life in the Southeast Asian country studying infectious patterns around dengue to understand its transmission and immunology in order to design vaccines.

Photo by Alice G. Patterson

In late 2019, a handful of months before the global pandemic emerged, Anderson was appointed as Director of the Center for International Research at SUNY Upstate.

She moved her family from Minneapolis to Syracuse for the prospect of working more closely with colleagues on existing dengue research. In March 2020, when COVID-19 effectively sent the world into panic, she and her coworkers were forced to quickly translate their research on viral diseases, infections, and transmission to focus on an unknown virus that brought with it a sudden and immense threat.

"There were similar questions. They are both RNA viruses, also huge public health threats... We adapted a protocol we used in Thailand to study dengue in households to study COVID in households here to try to understand risk factors for transmissions," Anderson said. "We took a lot of the exact methods we used to research dengue. We also just took the general concept of working together with people across disciplines to develop tools we could apply quickly."

While Anderson's work at Upstate did not collaborate directly with Gupta's COVID initiatives, she did work with teams dedicated to improving diagnostics, all of which informed work that the county was doing at the time. "I was very fortunate to be working within a very multi-disciplinary group so we asked a lot of what we call translational questions about COVID. How can we design better diagnostics and we applied those to our epidemiological studies" she explained. "The saliva PCR diagnostics, for example, that Frank Middleton developed, we used those across a variety of platforms to ask research questions. We developed immunological tests to better understand immunity, duration of immunity, and breadth of immunity."

Anderson had only been a resident of the Syracuse area for less than six months when she was pulled into what would prove as a memorable chapter in her career.

"When Upstate went to incident command in March of 2020, I was pulled into the response in part because of my experience in the epidemiology of emerging viruses. [I was] highly engaged in trying to help interpret data that was emerging in real time to help make recommendations," she said. "It was the first time I was involved with community outreach, working with the media, and I found that really satisfying... I discovered that working more locally and with the community was really something I appreciated the opportunity to do and it sparked something in me."

Despite dengue research starring in the majority of her life's work, Anderson began to see the value in local public health work. "Dengue doesn't affect Syracuse but here we were studying something that is

impacting our lives, my family's life, my colleagues' lives." Beyond the evitable impact her and her colleagues' work was doing for the local area, the general sense of community was a driving factor in her decision to move out of her role at Upstate and into the role of health commissioner.

"I enjoyed the opportunity to get to know so many community members... all kinds of working together on the public health response. It inspired this desire to do something locally," she said. "I didn't really know what to do with that until this position became available."

For Anderson, community strength remains one of the most important lessons the county learned throughout the pandemic. "I think that there have been connections formed in the community in terms of what people can accomplish together that is really powerful," she said. "That includes working with people who are developing diagnostics... but also community-based organizations, working with government, working with academia... That was powerful to me, that we can do more. And I hope we don't lose that. I hope we can only strengthen that."

Anderson began her work with COVID out of necessity. She worked with the very colleagues she moved to Syracuse for, excited to continue their work in dengue research, to advance our understanding of COVID and protect the greater community. Now health commissioner, she is still learning the vast expanse of the community and what it has to offer, but does have a general vision for her tenure as health commissioner. Her platform intends to uplift health literacy and promote better data collection, driving an overarching theme that organized, expert information is a powerful tool in promoting the health of a greater community - especially in the wake of the pandemic.

Health literacy was a major challenge during the pandemic, serving as a primary source of anxiety for many as they sifted through boundless amounts of information - and misinformation - around COVID, vaccinations, and prevention.

"I've learned that public health is underappreciated or underestimated in terms of importance. And we saw that nationally. People don't understand how public health affects their lives and how to appreciate health insights from experts," explained Anderson. "One area that our community and the United States needs to grow is health literacy. How to take in health advice and make educated decisions for yourself and your family."

Continued on page 22

"I discovered that working more locally and with the community was really something I appreciated the opportunity to do and it sparked something in me."—Dr. Kathryn Anderson

New health commissioner from page 21

As the community continues to grow past the pandemic, the county remains committed to ongoing education around COVID and emerging vaccines. There are still lingering questions surrounding the virus, vaccines, and boosters, and the county's public health teams are dedicated to ensuring members of the community get the answers to information they need.

In addition to continuing to support the community through the aftermath of the pandemic, Anderson plans on promoting the expansive public health programs Syracuse has available and investing energy into supporting poverty related health concerns such as lead poisoning, mental health, and general health care access. This also includes proactively supporting the opioid crisis, which is a cause Anderson has been working on for the past decade.

"I've been working in hospitals in Syracuse and Minnesota since 2012, and the increasing use of opioids and overdoses have been evident in the hospitals and it's been frustrating as a clinician to feel as though options and our resources are limited for a problem that is worsening," she said. "Our county is actively involved in harm reduction... We will be initiating legal exchange at some sites in Syracuse. This is one of those programs that I am really proud of in terms of how we are out in the community trying to meet people where they are at."

Her goal is to promote the vast variety of public health activities across the community in a way that is positive and proactive, especially those that are overlooked until there is a significant problem. A major theme to help with promotion dwindles down to data collection.

"There is value in having local data available at our fingertips... We are very different from New York City and the need to know what is happening in our region is important and to not take our eye off of [COVID] while we are increasing our focus in other areas such as lead or opioids." Dr. Anderson hopes to leverage better data collection in order to elevate how the county organizes and synthesizes data to inform vital decisions about public health initiatives. "My goal is for all of our big initiatives and priorities to, in an ideal world, have dashboards where we can track our big programs... We have pretty lofty goals and it's a lot of data but we have exciting work to do."

As for COVID, they intend on continuing to pull and monitor data across the county in order to keep a finger on the pulse while we are expanding new programs. In the meantime, the public health team is reminding the community to remain proactive with their health this holiday season and New Year by getting their flu shot and updated vaccines. swm

"My goal is for all of our big initiatives and priorities to, in an ideal world, have dashboards where we can track our big programs... We have pretty lofty goals and it's a lot of data but we have exciting work to do."

—Dr. Kathryn Anderson



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New Year dieting resolutions

PUT THE FOCUS IN THE KITCHEN

Chef Eric Rose, Certified Health Coach

The best gift to have this New Year is your health! If you're looking for more energy, motivation and overall health, many experts can assist you with diet and exercise plans, but ultimately that decision must come from YOU. Change is hard! But when you focus on small actions over time you will develop new habits, and those new habits will determine your future self. One of the quickest and most impactful ways to change your health is to change what you fuel your body with.

As a successful health and wellness coach, I've discovered that you can't outrun your fork. You may have been able to get away with bad dietary choices in your twenties, but rest assured that won't work for you as you get older. What you find at the end of your fork has the ability to affect you so many ways — your mood, your immune

system, your weight and even your skin, hair and nails. Health coaches know that your health is 80 percent nutrition, 20 percent exercise and 100 percent mindset. Exercise is futile for weight loss if your hydration and nutrition aren't right.

Many people make new year's resolutions, and about 65 percent of those resolutions are around health. That being said, typically people focus on the 20 percent (exercise) and but don't address the 80 percent (nutrition) correctly. Sometimes people try to go from couch potato to Olympic hopeful in the first couple of weeks, only to trail off by week three. Typically, that happens because they limit calories or eat the wrong foods while increasing their caloric demand by working out. This can create a tremendous amount of inflammation in the body.

The smarter choice would be to focus on your nutrition first by feeding your body for repair, working on your gut health (which has a large effect on your mood and sleep), and taking some weight off before you engage in a more aggressive exercise plan. Working out and changing your diet all at once can put a lot of stress on the body. Even small healthy changes can initially create a level of stress. When your body is under stress, you might tend to seek comfort in unhealthy foods that release dopamine—so not taking the right approach can defeat your good intentions right from the beginning.

Be aware there are a lot of different opinions on what is best for you, and a lot of marketing around magic pills or plans that are not sustainable or simply unhealthy to begin with. You should seek out a health or wellness coach who has a success record of sustainable results. All health and wellness coaches will agree that your personal health is best changed by what goes in your cart at the grocery store as well as what is at the end of your fork. Results are created in the kitchen! Focusing on removing temptations from your pantry and making healthier food swaps can have a huge impact on your health in the new year. Here are a few of my tips to guide you at the grocery store, in the kitchen, and at the table to help you and your family get healthier in 2023. And remember, change takes time — keep your eye on your goal, and you'll be successful!

Healthy Grocery Shopping Tips

Make a shopping list: Before going to the store, make a plan of what you are going to buy. Create a list of ingredients, meals, or recipes that you want to make for the week and stick to it! Menu planning ahead of time helps save money and avoids impulse purchasing.

Shop the perimeter: The perimeter, or outside aisles, of a store are where the healthy foods like fruits, vegetables, dairy, meat, and fish are usually located. Center aisles are where the "junk" foods lurk.

Choose "real" foods: Fruits and vegetables are a must-have for every shopping trip. Spend most of your time in this section and be sure to choose a rainbow of colors to reflect the different vitamins and minerals of each low-calorie item. Best foods don't necessarily need a nutrition label.

Don't shop hungry: Going to the grocery store with an empty belly often results in impulse purchases that may not always be the healthiest. Enjoy a light snack before heading to the store so that you will choose healthy options for your weekly menu.

Read the nutrition labels: Nutrition labels provide useful information to help you choose appropriate foods for your lifestyle. Search for items that contain low amounts of calories, added sugars, saturated and trans-fat, and sodium. Items high in protein and fiber are typically smart choices.

Healthy Food Swaps

Reducing your intake of calorie-rich, nutrient-poor items by choosing more whole foods can significantly improve your overall health.

Switch out taco shells and tortillas for lettuce wraps

Switch out pasta for spaghetti squash, zoodles, and palmini noodles

Switch out milk for unsweetened nut, oat or hemp milk

Switch out dressings for fresh squeezed lemons or limes and a touch of olive oil

Switch out rice for cauliflower rice

Switch out fried foods for air fried foods

Switch out soda and fruit drinks for sparkling water

Switch out chips for air popped popcorn



NO GUILT PASTA NIGHT

The family is sure to love these low carb pasta ideas all less than 500 calories.

Lighter Eggplant Lasagna

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

2 lbs eggplant, 1 large or 2 medium olive oil spray
 12 oz part-skim ricotta ¼ cup + 2 Tbsp Pecorino Romano
 ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped 1 large egg
 2½ cups part-skim mozzarella 1 tsp kosher salt
 4 cups homemade tomato sauce or jarred marinara

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 400°F. Spray two sheet pans with oil. Heat tomato sauce and while simmering slice the eggplant into ¼ inch thick slices. Transfer to the prepared pans, it's ok if they overlap slightly. Season with salt. Bake for 20 minutes, turning halfway through until eggplant is golden. Meanwhile, in a medium bowl combine ricotta, egg, parsley and ¼ cup of grated cheese. Put ½ cup sauce on the bottom of a 9x12 baking dish, and build three layers of ricotta mixture, sauce, and mozzarella. Add 2 tbsp of Pecorino Romano to the top. Cover with foil and bake until cheese is melted and everything is bubbling, about 40 minutes. Remove foil and bake an additional 10 minutes. Take it out of the oven and let it sit about 10 minutes before cutting.

Continued on page 26

New Year dieting resolutions from page 25

Chicken Broccoli Alfredo

(Try over spaghetti squash, zoodles or Palmini noodles)

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

1 medium spaghetti squash
24 oz (cooked weight) chicken breast
¾ cup half-n-half
8 wedge light laughing cow- garlic herb
½ cup parmesan cheese
6 cups steamed broccoli

DIRECTIONS

Cut squash in half and take seeds out. Roast upside down in 350°F oven for 45-50 minutes. Cool slightly and remove squash with a fork. Sear chicken breast in a cast iron skillet, then finish in oven. Steam broccoli. In a saucepan whisk the laughing cow, cream and parmesan until a sauce is creamy. Slice chicken breast and add that and broccoli to sauce and mix.

Cauliflower Bread Sticks

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

2 cups raw grated cauliflower
½ cup egg substitute
2 cups shredded mozzarella (1 ¾ cup + ¼ cup)
Garlic salt and Italian seasonings, to taste
Marinara Sauce
1 cup homemade tomato sauce or jarred marinara

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350°F. Mix cauliflower, egg substitute, and shredded mozzarella together in a bowl until combined. Line a 9 x5 loaf pan with parchment and lightly spray with Pam. Pour mixture into pan about 1 ½ inches deep. (It is okay if the mixture does not cover the entire pan). Bake for 30 min. or until set. Lift the edges of the parchment and place bread with parchment on to cookie sheet. Carefully use a spatula to lift the edges of the dough off the parchment and flip the dough. Bake for an additional 15 minutes at 450°F. Take out of oven and with a pizza cutter, slice strips through set dough. Separate slightly. Sprinkle with garlic salt, Italian seasonings ¼ cup mozzarella. Continue baking at 450° for about 10 more minutes until cheese is melted. Serve with marinara sauce.

Heavenly Ricotta Chocolate Pecan Mousse

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

2 cups skim ricotta
4 tsp unsweetened cocoa
1 tsp pure vanilla extract
2 pk organic stevia
2 oz chopped pecans

DIRECTIONS

In a large bowl mix all ingredients together except almonds. Pour into a small ramekin - top with almonds. Chill for at least 1 hour before eating.

Award-winning chef Eric Rose is the owner and president of Rose Health.



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JANET REILLY



Making fitness fun

Alyssa Dearborn

“I do elder companion care and I think staying in shape is always important—mentally and physically—so I can be the best at what I do.” Janet Reilly said when asked about how having an active, healthy lifestyle affects her everyday life.

Janet’s job has days that are filled with activity and others that are very quiet, but the physical activity that she does in her free time helps her have the energy to help the individuals that rely on her. Being an avid pickleball player keeps her active and provides her with energy to thrive in her everyday life. But playing pickleball and serving as a USA Pickleball Association Ambassador provides her with fulfilling personal benefits as well.

“It’s also nice that I also have an outlet to spend time with friends, to maybe burn off a little bit of stress and to come back each day refreshed for what I do,” she added.

Pickleball is one of the country’s fastest growing sports and Central New York has more than 1,000 players. Like other sports, it can be a very effective workout. But pickleball has become more known for its inclusivity and its welcoming nature.

“I was a member of the North West YMCA and I was running on their second level track when I heard the popping of the pickleball on the paddles down below.” Janet said when asked how she first got into playing the sport, “So I ran around a couple times and decided, well, I’m just going to go down and ask about it. So I walked down and there were some people who were waiting. And I said, ‘Hey, can you tell me what this is all about?’ And they put a paddle in my hand and they said, ‘Jump in! We’ll teach you as we go.’ And it was absolutely love at first sight.”

“So it’s just something that I’ve stayed with,” she continued, “I’ve also become a USA Pickleball Association Ambassador. That was something that happened when the previous ambassador left town and needed someone to take the reins... So I accepted the responsibility. I met even more people through that experience.”

Pickleball has since become an important part of her active lifestyle. Like other players of the sport, Janet has found that playing pickleball has improved her physical health as well as her mental health.

“At the time I found it, my kids were aging to the point where they were independent. They had their cars, they had their licenses, and so

I had this new-found freedom.” she said about how her involvement has affected her life, “I’ve always been active but wasn’t particularly proficient in any sport other than golf. Pickleball is a wonderful way to stay in shape. It’s still challenging mentally, challenging physically. But not so much that you don’t feel like you can do it on any given day. It’s an easy game to play, but still challenging enough to get your heartrate up.”

But the hallmark of the sport is its sociability. As Janet pointed out, it’s the only she knows of where you compliment your opponent for

making a good shot. When asked what she thinks draws people to pickleball the most, she said,

“I think it’s the social aspect of it. I think how easy it is to learn and play. However, it’s easy to learn, harder to master. So it’s constantly challenging. There’s so many different levels of play that you are constantly striving to do better.”

“There aren’t really teams per say,” Janet added, “Pickleball is just kind of a drop-in sport. You don’t need a partner, you don’t even need to know anyone. It’s a game where you just kind of stop in at a park or perhaps when the Y is offering it. Generally, pickleball is a welcoming sport.”

It is this sense of welcoming and community that keeps players coming back to play. It is a game that can be fun and beneficial to athletes of all ages and abilities, which is a feature that Janet thinks is important.

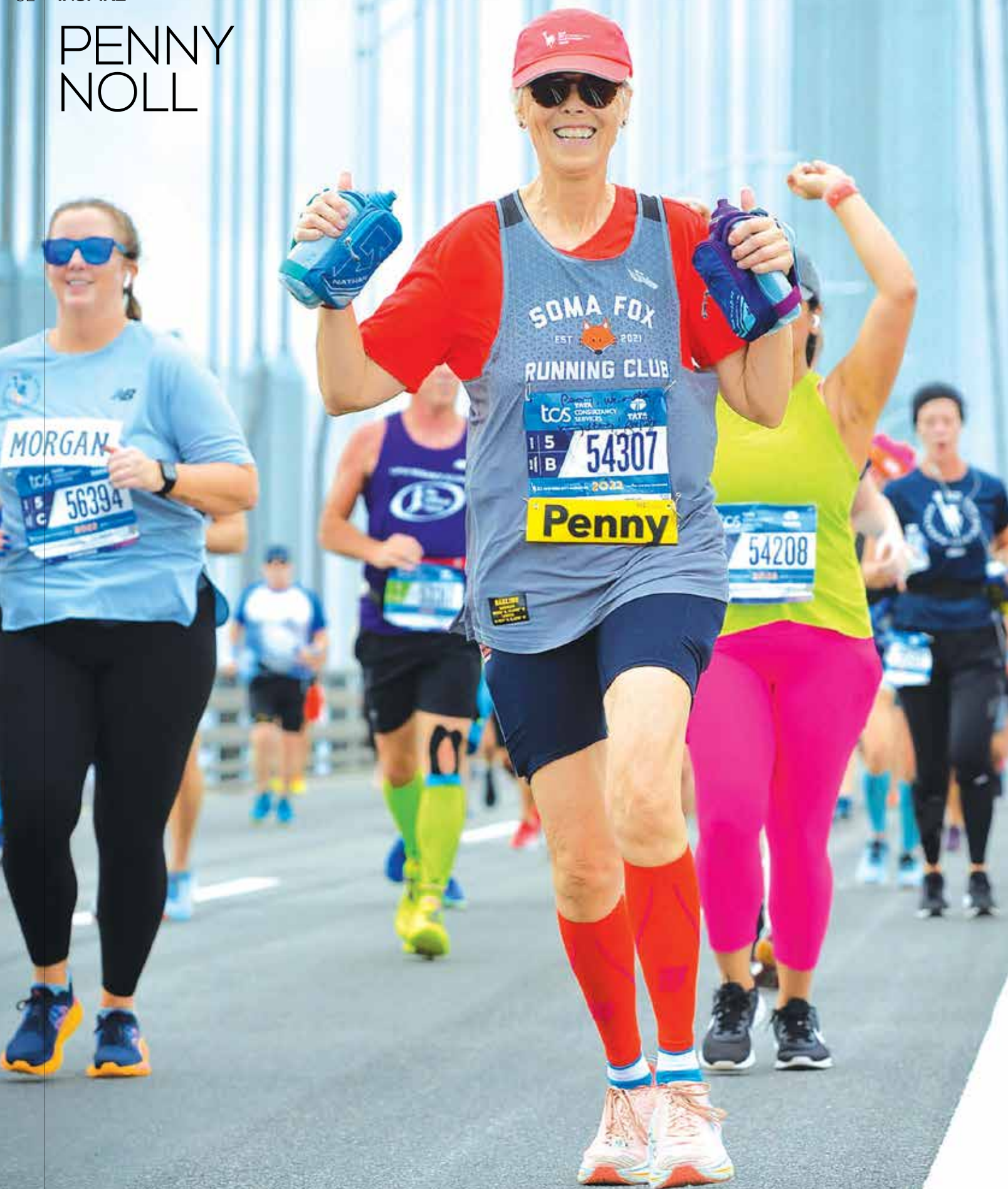
“I think the beauty of pickleball is, also, that any age can play,” she explained, “It is a sport that you can play into your senior

years. I know that they’re teaching it in P.E. classes, and all the way up through into your senior years... It’s just a welcoming sport and one that you don’t have to be terribly athletic to be able to play, at least in the beginning. So it’s kind of an open door sport.”

If you are interested in learning how to play pickleball or finding ways to participate in local meet-ups, Janet encourages you to visit www.cnypickleball.com. The website has a spreadsheet showing the different places and times for each meet-up. There are also resources for those who want to learn how to play. SWM



PENNY NOLL



On a mission to run a marathon in every state

Kate Hill

Longtime Cazenovia Children's House (CCH) director Penny Noll is well on her way to accomplishing her goal of running a marathon in every state in the country by 2025.

On Oct. 2, 2022, Noll took first place in her category at the 41st Annual Guthrie Wineglass Marathon in Corning, New York. "I was very proud to achieve a first-place award in the 70-74-year-old age group, and also I am very thankful that I have the health, support, time, and finances to be running in my 70s," Penny said. Just over a month later, she finished her second New York City Marathon, which she last ran in 2011.

Noll, who worked for CCH for 27 years before retiring in 2015, said she started running 18 years ago while helping CCH and the community to organize Cazenovia's first Annual Chilly Chili 5K Run/Walk. Founded in 1970, CCH is an early learning and childcare center that serves families in the greater Cazenovia area. The annual Chilly Chili race, which is typically held each January, is the organization's biggest fundraiser.

Noll ran her first marathon, the Toronto Waterfront Marathon, in 2006. "I had so many memorable marathons," said Noll. "I would say that my first marathon was the most memorable as I cried crossing the finish line. I accomplished a huge new achievement after months and miles of training. My longest run was eighteen miles, and I had no idea how I would feel running 26.2."

In 2010, she learned about the 50 State Marathon Club, a non-profit organization whose members share the common goal of running a marathon in each of the 50 states. To join, a runner must have completed a marathon in at least 10 states. As of Dec. 5, the club had 5,104 members in all 50 states, DC, and 21 foreign countries. Its members have run a combined total of more than 353,000 marathons.

Earlier this month, Noll ran the Three Bridges Marathon in Little Rock, Arkansas. "It will be my 45th state and 55th marathon," she said the week before the race. "My next marathon will be April 1, 2023, in Nevada."

Registration is now open for the 18th Annual Chilly Chili 5K, which will be held Sunday, Jan. 22 at 1 p.m. in Cazenovia. *SWM*

For more information or to sign up, visit runsignup.com/Race/NY/Cazenovia/ChillyChili5KRunWalk.



Former Cazenovia Children's House director Penny Noll is on a mission to run a marathon in every state in the country by 2025.

CATHY HUSS-JOHNSON

Losing the weight. Gaining a new life.

Cheryl Abrams

Catherine Huss-Johnson isn't a healthcare professional who simply talks the talk. She's actually taken the steps to improve her life — and is still walking the walk.

Putting years of medical experience and education into a new venture to guide those who've had bariatric surgery, Cathy the provider had become the patient when she walked down her own gastric bypass path 10 years ago.

That personal choice has come with setbacks and successes that have shaped Cathy's understanding and empathy — and why it's been her dream for several years to start a bariatric practice built upon providing continual sound advice and direction, along with deep caring, attention and support.

BariBootCamp launched last fall to fill a place in the healthcare spectrum that became increasingly challenging during the pandemic and after: ongoing patient follow up.

Dr. Kenneth Cooper, a surgeon with Crouse Medical Practice Bariatric Surgery, says there is a definite need among bariatric patients for this specialized service. "It's a proven fact that the more bariatric patients interact with the medical team post-operatively, the more they will sustain weight loss," he says. "Our practice offers much follow up, but Cathy is able to provide personal and professional attention that greatly enhances the patient experience — and success."

Cathy is quick to point out a key aspect of BariBootCamp: She works to augment the medical direction provided by an individual's bariatric surgeon and members of his or her team. "Our mission is not to replace the care provided by a client's bariatric provider," she emphasizes, "but to help a patient adhere to their prescribed medical plan and to learn tools to reach short and long-term goals."

Reaching such goals is one reason why Cathy is so inspiring. Before bariatric surgery, patients undergo psychological counseling, as well as a consultation with a nutritionist. It's also recommended that one lose a specified percentage of their weight to demonstrate a commitment to the process. Besides trying to diet, she began an exercise regime that was not easy for someone described as "morbidly obese." Yet she kept at it and qualified for her bariatric surgery.

The next goal was to lose the weight post-procedure, which she achieved. Yet the biggest hurdle was to maintain the loss. "I won't sugar coat the experience," she says. "People tend to comment that bariatric surgery is 'the easy way out.' It's not; it's just a tool, one that data shows to be highly effective. The real work is done by the individual who wants to transform their weight loss into a new lifestyle not just for looks, but for increased mobility and health over the long haul."

Lorna Boyer Chase is a marriage and family therapist in Central New York who has an extensive background in working with clients privately and in groups who are struggling with weight issues. "Cathy possesses the perfect combination of medical education and skills, combined with her own first-hand experience," says Lorna.

The psychotherapist says that many of us deal with stress by turning to other behaviors, often addictive, to cope with and avoid stress, including gambling, drinking and eating. "Cathy is well equipped with both knowledge and empathy to guide bariatric patients to change those destructive habits and make better choices."

In addition to deciding to confront her own increasing weight gain and then finally tackle it head on, Cathy serves as an inspiration for



anyone seeking to achieve professional success. She's enjoyed a fulfilling personal life: She and husband, Brian Johnson, CPA, a partner at Dannible and McKee in Syracuse, have been married for 40 years and raised two sons, both now living in Virginia — Christopher, a history teacher in Williamsburg, and Zachary, an attorney in Alexandria.

While tending to family life, Cathy moved along the medical educational ladder, having become a registered nurse, followed by earning her nurse practitioner degree and a bachelor's in sociology. She spent 30 years at Crouse Hospital, where her last assignment was on a unit dedicated to post-surgical bariatric patients. Several years later, she moved to Crouse Medical Practice to focus on helping individuals before and after their procedures. "Everything I now know is due to what I learned from Dr. Cooper and Dr. Jeffrey DeSimone," she says.

Yet Cathy had one more proverbial mountain to climb: She wanted to earn a doctorate. She began studies while continuing to work full time, and credits her bariatric surgery and dramatic weight loss for increasing her stamina during this time. At an age when many would be contemplating the relaxed life of retirement, Cathy reluctantly left nursing practice to dedicate herself to full-time studies. She earned her Doctor of Healthcare Administration in May 2022.

The span of her entire doctoral studies was focused on the bariatric surgery experience, with much of it dedicated to developing a business model to do exactly what she recently launched: her own practice to help encourage and enable other bariatric patients to live their best lives through adherence to their medical providers' guidelines; sound practices and proven tools; and, especially, the personal caring that only comes when you've actually walked the walk.



While raising a family and pushing herself to achieve new heights professionally, Cathy also explored a personal pursuit that wasn't practically possible when she was at her highest weight: travel and adventure. Once she lost the pounds, she gained confidence and, as she puts it, "stopped being so fearful." She took a scenic helicopter tour over the Grand Canyon and even ziplined for the very first time over an alligator pit in Florida.

Now working with bariatric surgery clients, Cathy reflects on her personal life, her professional endeavors and her new-found venture. "Life is meant to be lived at its fullest, and my hope is that I can help others to reach their goals and aspirations." SWM

To learn more about Cathy's new venture, visit baribootcamp.com.

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New executive director for The Manor and Springside



Leigh Hilgenberg

Licensed nursing home administrator Leigh Hilgenberg has joined Oswego Health as the executive director and administrator at The Manor and Springside at Seneca Hill.

For the past decade, Hilgenberg has devoted her career to quality management, and ensuring patients within Central New York have the necessary services for their continued care and treatment. As a licensed nursing home administrator and licensed master social worker, she has experience working in roles including social worker, director of social services, and assistant administrator of several skilled nursing facilities and rehabilitation centers. Hilgenberg earned her master of social work from Syracuse University in 2011 and her bachelor of arts in sociology from the University of Richmond in Virginia.

As the executive director and administrator of both the 120-bed skilled nursing facility, The Manor, and Springside at Seneca Hill, an independent retirement community, Hilgenberg will be responsible for direct oversight in ensuring the quality of resident care and services at both facilities.

Wandersee joins ACR Health as COO



Andrea Wandersee

Andrea Wandersee has joined ACR Health as the chief operating officer. Wandersee has more than 25 years of experience in non-profit and higher education leadership, with a background in organizational development. She is passionate about promoting healthy communities, especially for those who are underserved by mainstream systems.

Prior to joining ACR Health, Wandersee served as the executive director of The Northeast Hawley Development Association (NEHDA) for four years. She has also served at Open Hand Theater, Hospice of Central New York, and consulted with several other non-profit agencies. Andrea currently serves on the board of directors of the Syracuse Cooperative Federal Credit Union, and Exceptional Family Resources. She has an MPA from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University and a BA in History from Hartwick College. Andrea has lived in Eastwood since 2007.

Elbridge Elementary welcomes new nurse

Elbridge Elementary welcomed Lindsay Handley as the incoming school nurse, as nurse Ginger Smith got ready to retire at the end of December. Handley is a Jordan-Elbridge alumna. She has four children, three of whom are students at Elbridge Elementary. Her fourth will enter the 3YP program next school year.

Handley said she's looking forward to working where her kids are, and in a school where she has so much respect for the teachers, staff, and administrators. "It's nice to be back home," Handley added. "This community, this school, it's always been home to me, so it's nice to be on the inside of it."



Lindsay Handley and
Ginger Smith

When asked what she'd miss most about Elbridge Elementary, Smith said it's the funny stories she hears from the students. She remembered one, when two students were sent to her because one had bitten the other. When asked why he did it, the student told Smith "Well, I'm a dinosaur, and dinosaurs are carnivores."

"At this age, they're just cute, it doesn't matter what grade they are in," said Smith.

Elbridge Elementary welcomed new school nurse Lindsay Handley as Ginger Smith retired from the position in December.

AmeriCU supports fight against breast cancer



AmeriCU recently presented a \$120,000 check to Beth Baldwin, the Baldwin Fund's executive director, to support the nonprofit's commitment to provide critical funding for cancer research in Central New York. "AmeriCU's continued support of The Baldwin Fund helps us reach our research funding goal," Baldwin said. "All the funding stays local in our area and helps support breast cancer research grants."

The Baldwin Fund recently funded one such grant that allowed researchers at Upstate Medical University to make a groundbreaking discovery: how a breast cancer tumor will spread in the future, resulting in significant advancements in methods of detection and treatments for breast cancer.

"AmeriCU is humbled by the advancements that The Baldwin Fund has made towards cancer research and feel honored that we can help contribute to these milestones," said Ron Belle, AmeriCU president and CEO. "So many of us have personally been affected or know someone that has suffered from breast cancer. This is an opportunity to help make a difference in the lives of our friends, family and in our community." AmeriCU has supported The Baldwin Fund since 2010. The check was presented to Baldwin at AmeriCU's Camillus Financial Center.

AmeriCU recently presented The Baldwin Fund with a check for \$120,000 to help fund the fight against breast cancer.



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Friday, Dec. 29 to Monday, Jan. 2

Disney On Ice: Let's Celebrate

What: Get ready for the ultimate party with more than 50 Disney characters. Sing along with Olaf as he dreams of summer and dance with Aladdin as he stays "one jump ahead." Learn how to be a toy with Forky and forget your worries with Timon and Pumbaa. Dream big with the Disney Princesses and more.

Where: Upstate Medical Arena at The OnCenter War Memorial, 515 Montgomery St., Syracuse, NY 13202

Info: Disneyonice.com for information and tickets



Wednesday, Jan. 4

Engaging Youth in our Democracy

What: The League of Women Voters will host a discussion on Engaging Youth in our Democracy. The speaker will be Nick Doran the Youth Coordinator for the New York State League of Women Voters. Attendees can attend in person or participate through Zoom.

Where: Dewitt/Jamesville Library, 5110 Jamesville Road, Jamesville, NY 13078

When: 6 p.m.

Info: <https://my.lwv.org/new-york/syracuse-metropolitan-area/calendar> for information and Zoom details



Wednesday, Jan. 4 – Sunday, Jan. 8

Disney's The Little Mermaid

What: Dive into musical family fun with Ariel, Sebastian, and all the watery gang from this beloved tale. With spectacular aerial acrobatics by 2 Ring Circus, this production promises enough thrills and delights for landlubbers of all ages.

Where: Syracuse Stage, 820 East Genesee Street, Syracuse, NY 13210

When: Evening performances: 7:30 p.m., Matinees Saturday and Sunday: 2 p.m. (no evening performance on Sunday, Jan. 8)



Thursday, Jan. 5 to Sunday, Jan. 8

Open Moonlight Snowshoeing & Skiing

What: Take advantage of the moon lighting your way at Beaver Lake. Trails will remain open until 8:30 p.m. if there is adequate snow cover. Bring a friend and flashlight and enjoy this special experience! Park gates are locked at 9 pm.

Where: Beaver Lake Nature Center, 8477 East Mud Lake Road Baldwinsville, NY 13027

When: 5 to 8:30 p.m.



Saturday, Jan. 7 and Sunday, Jan. 8

The Syracuse Vocal Ensemble - A 12th Night Celebration

What: A celebration of their 50th anniversary with two performances of a 12th Night Celebration Concert. First concert is Sat., Jan. 7 at 3 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church in Cazenovia, the site of the ensemble's very first performance in 1973. Second concert is Sun., Jan. 8 at 3 p.m. at the Syracuse Marriott Downtown. Both concerts will feature receptions with cookies and a cash bar. The repertoire includes celebratory seasonal music by Johannes Brahms, Benjamin Britten, Gustav Holst, Vaclav Nelhybel and a comical setting of the 12 Days of Christmas in styles from Gregorian chant through centuries of musical eras. The concert also features a string quartet, piccolo, percussion and piano.

When: 3 p.m. both days

Where: First Presbyterian Church in Cazenovia on Saturday
Syracuse Marriott Downtown on Sunday



Friday, Jan. 13

Comedian Brian Regan

What: Critics, fans and fellow comedians agree: Brian Regan is one of the most respected comedians in the country with Vanity Fair calling Brian, "The funniest stand-up alive," and Entertainment Weekly calling him, "Your favorite comedian's favorite comedian." Having built his 30-plus year career on the strength of his material alone, Brian's non-stop theater tour continuously fills the most beautiful venues across North America, visiting close to 100 cities each year.

When: 8 p.m.

Where: Crouse Hinds Theater at OnCenter, 411 Montgomery St, Syracuse, NY 13202



Through Friday, Jan. 13

"Off The Wall" a holiday show and sale

What: Associated Artists of CNY presents "Off The Wall", our holiday art show and sale. Art may be taken at the time of purchase. The Show is at the Gallery at the Manlius Library.

Where: Manlius Library, 1 Arkie Albanese Way, Manlius, NY 13104

When: Regular library hours



Sunday, Jan. 22

Chilly Chili 5K

What: Registration is now open for the 18th Annual Chilly Chili 5K in Cazenovia, which raises funds to support the Cazenovia Children's House.

Where: Cazenovia College, 22 Sullivan St, Cazenovia

When: 1 p.m.

Info: runsignup.com/Race/NY/Cazenovia/ChillyChili5KRunWalk for information and to register



Tuesday, Jan. 17 to Saturday, Jan. 21

Anastasia

What: Inspired by the beloved films, the romantic and adventure-filled new musical Anastasia is on a journey to Syracuse. From the Tony Award®-winning creators of the Broadway classic, Ragtime. The Saturday, January 21 matinee performance will be ASL interpreted.

When: Performances begin at 7:30 p.m. except for Saturday, performances will be at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Where: The Landmark Theater, 362 S. Salina St. Syracuse, NY 13202



Saturday, Jan. 21

Symphoria Masterworks IV: Journey of Rediscovery

What: A champion of the music of Florence Price, Michelle Cann takes us on a journey with Price's Piano Concerto. Discover how Gabriela Lena Frank's Elegia Andina evokes power and grandeur of the Andes Mountains. Rediscover favorites Smetana's Ma Vlast: Vltava (The Moldau) and Dvorak's Symphony No. 8.

When: 7:30 p.m.

Where: Crouse Hinds Theater at the OnCenter, 411 Montgomery St, Syracuse, NY 13202

info: experiencesymphoria.org for information and tickets



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