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WOMAN
magazine

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CAROLYNN
LEMKE

Owner of Noble Friends talks
drawing pets, growing her business
and making an impact



SPECIAL FEATURE

Salute to veterans
Festival of trees & light
The ultimate gift: Life

HOME DECOR

Holiday decorating
made simple

HEALTHY EATING

The joy of
Thanksgiving leftovers

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Linda Lopez

A tradition of giving

My earliest giving memory is being with my mom and dad and sister at church, and excitedly waiting for the offering basket to be passed down the pew. Before we left the house, we would take a quarter out of our piggybanks so we would be ready to give. We would sit in the back seat of the car, holding it tightly in our hand so we wouldn't lose it. We waited patiently through the sermon, and then watched and waited for our turn to give. It felt special and exciting to share my quarters to help people in need. I didn't know exactly what the money did, but even as a young child I believed I was making a difference.

For The Salvation Army, one of the most visible opportunities to give is the Red Kettle campaign. It got its start in 1891 in San Francisco, when Captain Joseph McFee, a Salvation Army officer was distraught because so many people were going hungry.

He was determined to provide a Christmas dinner for 1,000 people in need but didn't know how he would pay for it. He thought and prayed and remembered a large iron kettle he saw in Liverpool, England where people threw in a coin or two to feed the poor. McPhee decided to place a kettle at the end of Market Street, with a sign that said, "Keep the Pot Boiling" and soon had enough money for his Christmas dinner. All the nickels and dimes and quarters people contributed made an immeasurable difference in the lives of people who were struggling.

I have four children, two adult daughters and two teenage sons, and from an early age I taught them about giving by creating opportunities for giving. Quarters at church, special gifts to families and friends for Christmas and birthdays, and sharing their toys and clothes with others who might need them. Making a card for someone who was sad, helping a neighbor rake their leaves or dropping off a meal for a family who needed a hand taught them that giving time was as important as giving money.

Very important lessons about giving time and money happened while volunteering to ring bells for The Salvation Army at Christmas. As toddlers and teenagers and every age in between, my kids put on a Salvation Army sweatshirt, went with me to the mall or the Syracuse Tree Lighting and rang a bell at the Red Kettle. As little ones, they loved it when people would smile at them, and give them change to throw in the kettle and wished them Merry Christmas.

As they got older, they also started observing the many types of people who gave to the Red Kettle. The little children who couldn't wait to be picked up to throw money in. The surprising number of teenagers who dug deep in their pockets for money to share. The families who stopped by together and chatted about how giving to the Red Kettle was part of their holiday tradition. An older adult who put money in while apologizing that it wasn't more. The many individuals who stopped by to share how The Salvation Army had helped them when they were having a tough time, and now saw the Red Kettle as a way to give back. Volunteering at the Red Kettles taught my children that the world is full of generous people, who will gladly share if given the opportunity to help.

The holiday season is here and opportunities to give are all around us. I hope you give to those you love and enjoy the smiles that come when someone opens up a special gift you picked out just for them. I also hope you experience the joy that comes from giving your time and your resources to people in need.

Start a food drive at your company, collect warm coats at church, volunteer to bake Christmas cookies for a shelter, or donate a toy or book to the community Christmas Bureau. And when you see a Salvation Army Red Kettle, please consider making a gift, knowing that your quarters, added to all the other gifts in the kettle, change lives all year round.

Linda Lopez is the executive director for community services at the Salvation Army, Syracuse.



S Y R A C U S E
WOMAN
magazine

SyracuseWomanMag.com
contact@syracusewomanmag.com

PUBLISHER

David Tyler
dtyler@eaglenewsonline.com

DESIGN

Andrea Reeves

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Alyssa Dearborn
Alice G. Patterson
Chef Eric Rose
Solon Quinn Studios

CONTRIBUTORS

Betsy Bedigian	August Lindsey
Janelle Davis	Linda Lopez
Alyssa Dearborn	Norah Machia
Kathy Franco	Chef Eric Rose
Kate Hanzalik	

Cover photo by Alice G. Patterson

ADVERTISING SALES

Renée Moonan	Linda Jabbour
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Rmoonan@eaglenewsonline.com	
Ljabbour@eaglenewsonline.com	

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315.434.8889 | 2501 James Street,
Suite 100, Syracuse, NY 13206

The magazine is published 12 times a year by
Community Media Group, LLC
and Eagle Publications
2501 James St., Suite 100
Syracuse, NY 13206

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wise

WOMEN IGNITING THE SPIRIT
OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

FEATURED ENTREPRENEUR

Allison Graff

Owner, A. Graff, Mindful Health Coach

Allison Graff, owner of A. Graff, Mindful Health Coach, combines her experiences and passion to guide individuals toward a happier and healthier life. Allison's path led her to yoga teacher training in 2018-19, a period when she was still working full-time. During this time, she often daydreamed about opening her own yoga business. Fate intervened when she was let go from her job in April, which she viewed as a sign from the universe. She took a three-day class with the Small Business Development Center, equipping herself with the essential knowledge needed to launch her business. Allison first founded Ginger Tea Yoga Company in March of 2019. Over time, she expanded her services adding health coaching to her yoga business, officially launching A. Graff Mindful Health Coach in August 2022.

One of Allison's strengths lies in her unique ability to understand her target audience: stressed superwomen. With a focus on helping them achieve guiltless happiness and health by fostering presence in their lives, she combines the roles of health coach, yogi, and mindfulness practitioner. What sets Allison apart is her rich tapestry of life experiences. From surviving health complications to navigating divorce and embracing her identity as a late-blooming lesbian, she has gained deep insights into understanding stress from within. Allison's perspective is deeply rooted in her authenticity and resilience, and she channels these qualities to bring hope—a precious resource—to those she serves.

However, entrepreneurship is not without its challenges. One pivotal aspect of Allison's story lies in her ability to adapt and refocus. A health setback led her to pivot her business focus from yoga to mindfulness and meditation. This transition highlights her adaptability and her commitment to providing what her audience needs, especially during challenging times, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite these hurdles, she found strength in community partnerships and engagement with organizations like WISE Women's Business Center. This community and support system became vital in her entrepreneurial journey, enabling her to brainstorm ideas, seek advice, and sustain her business through collaborative efforts and shared experiences with other women small business owners. Through mentorship and training, the center empowered her to envision and revise her business plan, reinforcing that everyone can make progress, regardless of where they stand in their entrepreneurial journey. Allison attributes much of her growth to the guidance and nurturing environment the WISE Women's Business Center provides.

One of the biggest impacts on her business has been refining her target market. Through her work with WISE in the Business Plan Intensive, she gained clarity on who her business was serving. Allison acknowledges the competitive



nature of the wellness industry, especially when trying to attract paying clients. Being able to refine her target market, mixed with her authentic messaging, will help her push through the noise of her industry to reach the people who will benefit the most from working with her. She emphasizes the importance of persevering and remaining true to one's passion. Allison notes "If you're not understanding the long game of this business, it's too easy to get deflated."

Allison encourages aspiring entrepreneurs not to be daunted by the unknown aspects of starting a business. Allison's entrepreneurial journey is a testament to her belief in taking life one day at a time, one step at a time. She advocates for the power of reflection and self-awareness, which have been instrumental in steering her business toward success. Her journey is a testament to the power of determination and the importance of adapting to fulfill one's purpose. Her journey reaffirms that with dedication, an authentic approach, and a keen understanding of one's audience, passion can be transformed into a purpose-driven business that touches lives and makes a meaningful impact.

WISE HAPPENINGS:

► Check out www.wisecenter.org for a complete list of upcoming events!

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...More on wisecenter.org

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-Allison Graff

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PAST EVENTS

RAISE A GLASS

The Nascenia Health Charitable Foundation recently hosted its 11th annual Raise a Glass event at Timber Banks Golf Club in Baldwinsville. Friends and supporters of the foundation raised \$130,000 for Nascenia's patients and their families at the foundation's largest annual fundraiser.



Photography by Solon Quinn Studios.



THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

On October 11, Francis House welcomed more than 1800 guests to the Exposition Center at the NY State Fairgrounds for their annual "There's No Place Like Home" event. Guests enjoyed delicious food and an open bar while bidding on the silent auction, trying their luck at prize houses and enjoying a night out with friends. Two raffles at the event offered guests the chance to win valuable prizes, including a half-carat diamond pendant donated by Cazenovia Jewelry and a \$500 gift card to Nichols Grocery in Liverpool. More than 100 companies and individuals supported the event as sponsors and more than 350 businesses donated prizes and gift certificates. Art and Anne Palermo of Fayetteville were chairs of the event. Mark and Sandy Baker of Baldwinsville served as vice chairs and will chair the 2024 event next October.



TAP INTO THE MOST

Tap into the MOST, the museum's largest annual fundraiser, was held Friday, September 29, and welcomed more than 850 people to the museum for a night of food, drinks, and fun. More than 50 beer, wine, cider and spirits were available for tasting, along with food from nearly 20 local restaurants and vendors.



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AGE ☐ 18-24 ☐ 25-29 ☐ 30-34 ☐ 35-39 ☐ 40-44 ☐ 45-49 ☐ 50-55 ☐ 55-59 ☐ 60-64 ☐ 65-69 ☐ 70+

HIGHEST EDUCATION ☐ H.S. diploma ☐ Vocational training ☐ Associate's ☐ Bachelor's ☐ Master's ☐ Doctorate

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**WILL YOU HELP US WITH
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Bringing the Festival of Trees and Lights to life

Alyssa Dearborn



For many Central New Yorkers, The Everson Museum's annual Festival of Trees and Lights is a beloved holiday tradition. In its 38th year, the festival welcomes all to enjoy beautifully decorated trees and wreaths, an artisanal market, live performances, cultural activities, and the museum's own collection of art. What many do not know about the festival, though, is that this treasured holiday tradition is the result of hard work and collaboration between the Everson staff and the museum's member council. For the past few years, Liz Herrick – president of the member council and chair of the Festival of Trees and Lights committee – has been at the head of ensuring that the festival can be enjoyed by the community.

"I have been visiting the museum as a guest and attending the Festival of Trees and Lights for probably 20 years," Liz said when asked about how she became involved with the council, "And then about 10 years ago I became involved as one of the chairpeople running the entertainment and contributing trees. So that's how I became involved."

Many of the members joined under different circumstances – some from being introduced to the council by other members and others from their artistic contributions – but all of the members share Liz's enthusiasm for the Everson's mission.

Pat Humpleby, a founder of the festival and a former chairperson on the committee, added, "I was president of the members council for the first [festival] and then I chaired the third one. And I have been involved in some way ever since. A little bit of history, the members council was not that large a group when we started. And so this was a very big endeavor. It was totally volunteer. All volunteers. And at that time, things were different. Women didn't work all the time. Members council was an all women's group at the time and we did everything...The object of the festival was to raise funds for the museum and to have the public come to the museum. And I think the festival accomplished both of these since it's been doing that for 39 years."

"There's a lot that goes on with the museum," Liz said about the importance of the members council, "There are more and more events and activities that are both educational programs, outreach programs and we try to provide volunteers to help out with some of these programs, as well as provide funding that supports them. So it does play an important role in the museum."

Elizabeth Dunbar, the director and CEO of the Everson, added, "The event has changed a little bit in how it's organized and the members council has changed over the years. But we could not function without our members council. Truly, the Festival of Trees takes a village for that to come to pass every year. And we have such a great, dedicated group of volunteers and we have a core group on our members council board and other solid core volunteers. But they're constantly recruiting new people to come and get involved in the museum. They're bringing new folks to visit for the first time, maybe turn them into volunteers. Sometimes they become donors and board members. So truly they are our outreach into the community. They are some of the best ambassadors we can have. And we are so grateful to have them, not working for us, but with us."

When asked how she became the chair for one of the largest events at the Everson, Liz replied, "That's a good question." The group let out a chuckle. Chairing the festival is a time-consuming task, and it is apparent that not many volunteer to take on that task.

"Well," she continued, "you start getting involved making contributions, bringing in trees to display, and then I became a committee chairperson. Then, when Patty decided to take a break, I offered. This is a unique event in that it is a strong collaboration between the Everson staff and the volunteers. So it really is about those interactions. We rely on each other, everybody has a different role to play. To reuse an old phrase, it takes a village to put this event in place and we need both the staff side – all of



their support and professionalism—and then what we bring to the table as volunteers – a lot of hard work and dedication in terms of time and energy and creation of trees and wreaths and other decor items.”

“As everyone around this table knows, being the chair of Festival of Trees is not an easy job to have,” Elizabeth added, “It’s very stressful, you work almost year-round on the Festival of Trees and Light. And there’s so many moving parts that it takes a really special, dedicated, passionate person to take on that title, to take on that role. Being a former administrator in the school district helps for sure. It’s such a tremendous amount of work that it takes a really hard-working, organized person who is very committed to the organization.”

Visitors to this year’s festival can expect to experience everything that has made this event a local holiday tradition – uniquely decorated trees, a variety of seasonal decor, artisan gift items, live performances and family friendly cultural activities. But every year, Liz tries to make the festival bigger and more special.

“Every year we try to make it bigger and better,” Liz said. “So we will have lots of seasonal and holiday items and decor to look at and purchase, so there will be lots of trees and wreaths and menorahs, and wall decor representing a variety of different holidays. We will also have an artisanal marketplace that Roberta is co-chair of.”

Roberta Ripberger, the co-chair of decor on the members council, said about the marketplace, “We’re trying to reach out to the art community here and to contribute pieces of their artwork. I think it’s great exposure and it’s going to be in a beautiful setting in the members’ gallery. What more could you ask for as an artist, to have your work there on sale, on display, at the museum? And we’re really trying to work on that this year to get more and more people.”

“This year, we’ve got some new people coming in that haven’t come before. To me, it’s a lot of fun to reach out to all these music performers,

dance performers, theatrical performers, just to come and share their talents,” said Dave Perry, a former colleague of Liz’s from the Liverpool School District and current chair of the council’s entertainment committee. “Everyone that performs here contributes their services, their talents, their donations to the museum. And it works really well for them because they’ve got a wonderful professional environment in which they can perform. There’s a built-in audience because people are going to be there anyway. It’s a bright, happy, cheery environment for them to share their talents.”

With all the work put into the festival by Liz and other people on the members council, Liz emphasized that, at the end of the day, all of the hard work helps bring the community together.

“The festival has evolved so that it’s not just about Christmas trees and wreaths and those holiday items,” she said, “We are embracing the traditions of a variety of cultural holidays. So we embrace Hanukkah, we embrace Kwanza, and Dwai, as well as the Winter Solstice. It is about reaching out to the community, having them engaged with us, to acknowledge all of these traditions and arts...It’s community at every level. They make it happen. They contribute their items, they perform, and they volunteer during. And so everybody attends. We really have a community in a big sense of the word.” *SWM*

The Festival of Trees and Lights committee, chaired by Liz Herrick, is responsible for putting on the Everson’s largest annual fundraiser and a holiday staple in the Syracuse area.



The ultimate gift: Life

Betsy Bedigian



Organ donation is the ultimate gift. There is no cost, and it can be tremendously powerful. Without the organ donor, there is no story, no hope, no transplant. But when there is an organ donor, life springs from death, sorrow turns to hope, and a terrible loss becomes the ultimate gift.

That fact is not lost on Rea Konowich, manager of Holy Grounds coffee shop at St. Joseph's Health Hospital. With love and pride in her voice, Rea shares the story of her husband's last selfless act. In October 2014, Paul was killed when his motorcycle collided with an automobile.

But Rea and Paul's story begins much earlier. When the couple were young newlyweds, they rented from a man named George. George had received a heart after six years on the waiting list.

"George was an inspiration to Paul and me," says Rea. "He had more energy than anyone else we knew."

The impact the organ donation had on George's life inspired Rea and Paul to register as organ donors. The donor lived on in George.

Rea explains that she and Paul saw it as their duty to become organ donors. The decision to donate their organs and tissues was never forgotten although it quickly took a back seat to family life.

Until that awful day in October 2014, that is.

Arriving at the hospital, Rea was numb to the loss yet found strength in knowing that out of this tragedy, her beloved husband was going to live on through his donation of nerve endings and tissue. In the emotional time that followed Paul's passing, Rea found great solace when she received a letter from a young man who received Paul's tissue. That man had suffered burns on over three-quarters of his body. Receiving Paul's tissue, he was going to walk again.

The matter of organ, eye and tissue donation affects our communities daily and in many aspects. In New York State alone, there are nearly 8,000 patients waiting for an organ, making up approximately 10% of the national transplant waiting list. Despite the need, New York ranks last in the nation with 48% registered donors. The good news: the Finger

Lakes, Central, Southern Tier, and North Country regions are at the national average of 64%. A single organ donor may save up to eight lives and give sight to two people. Tissue donation may enhance the lives of up to 80 individuals.

St. Joseph's Health Hospital is just one of the many local health care organizations partnering with Finger Lakes Donor Recovery Network (FLDRN) to increase the donor enrollment rates because the need for organ transplants remains high.

"Organ donation from a deceased donor is only an option when an individual is either declared brain dead or is too sick in the ICU where withdrawal of life support is decided," said Dr. Dorgam Badran, critical care physician and chair of the Organ Donor Council at St. Joseph's Health. "Our role as health care providers is to provide a caring culture in which to support donors and their families through this difficult decision."

The most common misconception about organ donation is that people think they are too old or not healthy enough to be an organ donor. The fact is, organs have been donated and transplanted from donors in their 90's, and medical conditions like hypertension and diabetes do not necessarily rule-out donation. And unlike deceased donors, a living donor can help a recipient get an organ transplant faster.

Pat Resseguie is a retired teacher, a volunteer at Sunshine Horses and living donor. Pat and Annette met at Palmer Elementary in Baldwinsville and have maintained their friendship even though Annette moved to Pennsylvania. Two years ago, Annette posted to Facebook that she had stage IV kidney disease and needed a live donor.

"Annette doesn't put things out there like that, so I knew it was important," said Pat. Without pause, she began the application to donate her kidney and within 48 hours the first bloodwork was completed.

Previous experience told Pat that the live donor process could take some time. You see, Pat's husband is a living donor, too. About 18 years ago, he received a call from a friend who had polycystic kidney disease and was on dialysis. After a visit to reconnect, Pat's husband began the process to see if he was a match and he surprisingly was. Today, the friend is doing great and able to parent his teenage child.

The initial test results for Pat were not as promising — she was not a match for Annette. That's when Pat learned about the voucher program. The National Kidney Registry (NKR) Voucher Program allows a living kidney donor to donate their kidney to someone on the list, while also providing a voucher to someone else, prioritizing them to receive a living donor kidney if/when they need a transplant.

Pat's surgery was scheduled for June 2022. By noon of that day, a patient at Weill Cornell Medicine in New York City received Pat's lifesaving kidney. Annette received her kidney in April of this year.

According to Pat, there can be up to six people in a live donation chain. "All I know is the person who received my kidney is doing well," said Pat. "I am very grateful to have been able to help Annette and others."

Although their stories are different, both Rea and Pat feel blessed to have been a part of the greater chain of life. For Rea, her husband lives on in the young man who can now walk. For Pat, life improved for her kidney recipient, and her friend, Annette.

"Every day, organ, eye and tissue donors are saving and improving lives around our region and across the county. We're incredibly thankful for donors and families who make that selfless decision to pass life on through the gift of donation," said Nancy Ryan, FLDRN's director of development.

St. Joseph's Health Hospital's Bridge of Life, which connects the Hospital to the parking garage, celebrates the extraordinary legacy and healing impact that organ and tissue donors leave behind.

"The bridge holds more significance to the families than most would assume," said Dr. Badran. "The names prove someone's life can make a difference."

"Even more grateful are the transplant recipients whose lives have been saved or improved because of their donors," Ryan adds. It's incredible to think that one organ donor could give a second chance in life for up to eight people, restore sight to two, and improve the lives of more than 80 more people through tissue donation. So, in essence, the impact of donation is like a ripple in a pond: one donor hero saving and improving lives and inspiring countless others."

There are many reasons why people put off making their end-of-life decision about organ donation.

"The message we want to share is that by doing those things now, you're relieving your loved ones from having to make that decision on your behalf if something were to happen to you," Ryan says. "Joining the donor registry is easy and can be done online, or at the DMV. Plus, anyone age 16 or older can register to be a donor, regardless of current or past medical history. Whatever your personal decisions are about organ donation, letting your family know ahead of time can give them peace of mind."

This holiday season consider giving the amazing gift of life and becoming an organ, eye and tissue donor. Enrolling in the New York State Donate Life Registry is the best way to document your wishes. The registry is an electronic, secure database that is checked at the time of someone's death to see if they have previously documented his or her consent to donate.

Written documents like on the back of a driver's license, last will and testament, or health care proxy where a person may have written down his/her preferences about organ donation are not always accessible or available when decisions need to be made at the hospital. The electronic registry is the easiest and most reliable place to be sure your final wishes about donation are followed.

Scan this QR Code to the donor registry. And be sure to tell your family; timely notification to organ donor recovery agencies can help save a lot of lives, through ensuring all gifts wished for by donors and their families are delivered. *SWM*

Betsy Bedigian has more than 20 years of public relations experience as a consultant, agency, as well as in-house experience with more than a decade expertise in media relations, crisis communications and internal communications, from strategy development to writing and execution.



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LEGACY IN ACTION

GWEN WEBBER-MCLEOD

My parents decided when they had four girls that they were going to teach us to take the world by storm. They saw educating us — teaching us about philanthropy and community service — as a way to fight racism and sexism.

I believe that the eye is the limit and I want to be known as a woman whose every step, every breath, left a gentle impression of good in the world. I am already being remembered the way I want to be. This is evidence my legacy is in action.

With strategic intent, I have designated my legacy gift to the Black Equity & Excellence Fund to ensure that the region remains an equitable place for my people. I hope my gift can be leveraged to give organizations serving Black children the opportunity to expose them to people, places and things beyond what could be limiting for them.



Read more of Gwen's story at
cnycf.org/webbermcleod

Gwen Webber-McLeod pays homage to Harriet Tubman outside the NYS Equal Rights Heritage Center & Auburn NY Visitor Center. The bronze statue, sculpted by Brian P. Hanlon, is accompanied by a plaque featuring a quote from Harriet Tubman at an 1896 suffrage convention that reads: "I was the conductor of the Underground Railroad for eight years, and I can say what most conductors can't say — I never ran my train off the track and I never lost a passenger."



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CAROLYNN LEMKE

OWNER OF NOBLE FRIENDS TALKS DRAWING PETS,
GROWING HER BUSINESS AND MAKING AN IMPACT

Kate Hanzalik

“People with pets are special,” said Carolynn Lemke, a pet portraitist and founder of the eclectic pet product shop, Noble Friends. “Even if I’m just meeting somebody for just a few minutes, I like to kind of figure somebody out, and I kind of feel like that gives me insight on how to work with someone’s pet, and draw them and really capture their personalities, almost like capturing their souls.”

Lemke is special in her own right. This wife, mother of two children, two cats and one shit-tzu transformed her love for painting pictures of peoples’ pets into a global business with best-selling pet products like home decor, custom wrapping paper, totes, clothes, decor, dishware, and ready-made ornaments.

Continued on page 24



Photo by Alice G. Patterson

Carolynn Lemke from page 23



“What I like about [my work] is capturing the pet’s personality more than their actual look through my artwork, and I’ve had so many people say, ‘Oh my god, you got their eyes perfectly.’ But I think I kind of picture what they would be like if they were a person. I find it with my own pets. I have this one cat. And I always say he is like a British butler. I can just see it.”

In 2009, she didn’t see that her pastime would become her career. She worked at a small design firm for a couple of years after she graduated with a degree in communication design from the University of Buffalo, but then the recession hit, and she was laid off. As she struggled to find a new job, she was blogging and often posted about trying to plan her wedding and other things she was going through at the time. She captured the attention of many women who could identify with her. They started to hire her to do wedding invitations, and the wedding industry also hired her to create blogs and websites. “And it all kind of snowballed from there,” she said. “I could keep working for myself, and almost made it up as I went along. I was making an income, and I could do what I loved, and I was thinking to myself, ‘Could I really do this? Could I work on my own and keep this going?’ It kind of felt like a dream.”

Her personalized approach and interest in working with women-led businesses got her clients thinking about the possibilities. Some asked Lemke to draw portraits of them with their pets for their websites. “This woman, she was a photographer and she had me draw her cat and her and her husband, and she was like, ‘Oh my God, I love this cat portrait. Can I print it out? Can you do one for my mom?’ And it just kind of blew up.”

Eventually Lemke added ornaments and custom pet pillows to her menu of pet products. She created an online shop and called it Noble Friends. “At the time, not a lot of people were doing [custom pet products]. So [by] word of mouth, I just started getting orders . . . And I thought it was really fun . . . [but] I couldn’t tell if all the extra time I was spending doing that was worth taking away from the branding income. So I was

like, ‘Maybe I’m going to shut this down.’” Little did she know, a producer from The Today Show was googling pet products and stumbled on her work. The producer fell in love with it, especially the custom pet portrait wrapping paper, so she called Lemke.

“And I was like, ‘Is this spam?’ . . . [The producer wanted] to put all my pet products on a segment. She had me send what I thought were my bestsellers, so I sent her wrapping paper, pillows, I sent her a dog dish, placemats, and I created boards with all of my pet portraits on them.” During the segment, one of the hosts raved about the wrapping paper and it quickly became a bestseller.

“[The business] went crazy of course, and I had so many orders in one day that I didn’t even know what to do.” She was drawing so much that she started to draw with a heating pad on her shoulder. “I didn’t really have a system . . . So immediately I had to learn very quickly [how to create] a very organized system on how to take my orders in mass form, and it really taught me a lot. I took a couple of days to figure that out. And I created this system that I actually still use now. I learned a lot about how to run a business very fast. I made a lot of mistakes, of course. But it inspired me to kind of keep going.”

Now she’s navigating new challenges as the business thrives. “My drawing comes totally last. As any entrepreneur business owner probably knows, I’ll go right into emails, getting those done, work on marketing, what I need to put out on social media, what events I need to do, what ads I need to make for myself, what updates I need to make on my website, and then I probably get to drawing after that, which is probably maybe 20 percent of the actual business aspect of things. It’s a lot,” she said. “I feel like when I sit down and I actually get to draw or be creative, it is where I absolutely feel inspired and excited.”

She’s also excited to work with others. “I find that I really connect with people in general. I’m not one of these people who are like, ‘I love animals and don’t like people.’ I really like people. And I like to find a commonality that I have with just like random people I meet.”

Continued on page 26

“I find that I really connect with people in general. I’m not one of these people who are like, ‘I love animals and don’t like people.’ I really like people. And I like to find a commonality that I have with just like random people I meet.”

Carolynn Lemke from page 25

Making an Impact

Lemke is using her interests, skills, and talents to make a positive impact on the world around her. She's on the board of a philanthropy called GALS Foundation, a women-led 501-C3 that partners with and supports animal welfare organizations around the world. According to Lemke, "Our mission statement is, 'Saving one dog will not change the world, but surely for that one dog, the world will change forever.' While we can't rescue every single animal, doing these little things here and there can make a big difference eventually." This holiday season, GALS will be selling pet ornaments, and all proceeds will go toward saving pets around the world from abuse and abandonment.

Locally, she leads Art Camp for kids every summer, which is something she started when she struggled to find an art camp for her daughter that focuses more on the technical and professional aspects of composition. This past summer, she led a version of Art Camp at the Everson Museum.


She's made a positive influence on the way her children see the world. "[My daughter] really wanted to [go to a horse camp]. I didn't think she'd do it, [but] I said, 'If you can figure out a way to make your own money for it, okay.' So she stayed up two nights making all these bracelets and she took this little wagon, she took my folding table that I take to all my events. She made a sign, she took an umbrella, she set up this whole display in the field by my house where a lot of through-traffic goes. And she said she made sure not to be on her phone and say hi to everybody that drove by. In two hours, she came home and handed me this wad of cash and she said, 'I'm going to camp!'"

The future is bright for Lemke as she considers ways to scale her business and continue to make a difference in the lives of so many people and pets.


SWM

To learn more about her and her work, visit: www.noblefriendsshop.com. You can also find her on Instagram: www.instagram.com/noblefriendsshop. To learn more about GALS Foundation, visit: www.gals.foundation.


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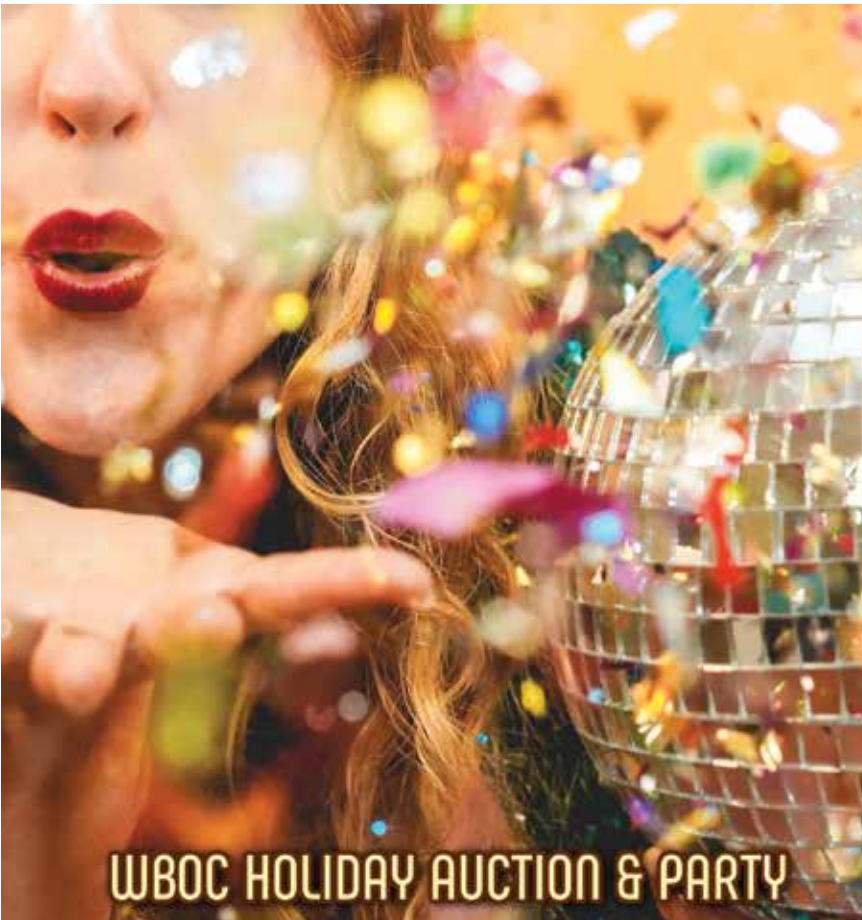
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The joy of Thanksgiving leftovers:

A FESTIVE FEAST THAT KEEPS GIVING

Chef Eric Rose



Hot Turkey Salad Soufflé

As the holiday season approaches, families across the nation eagerly prepare for the time-honored Thanksgiving tradition. It's a special occasion, where loved ones come together to express gratitude and share a heartwarming meal. Yet, in recent years, an extraordinary phenomenon has taken center stage: the enduring love for Thanksgiving leftovers. People have discovered that the real magic of the holiday doesn't end with the main event but lingers on in the delightful reinvention of turkey and trimmings into innovative dishes.

Join us as we explore this evolving love for Thanksgiving leftovers and the art of crafting the ultimate turkey sandwich, emphasizing the importance of good bread and diving into the great mayo debate—Miracle Whip, Hellman's, or Dukes?

The magic of good bread and the mayo debate

Before we embark on this culinary journey, it's crucial to acknowledge the two unsung heroes of the ultimate turkey sandwich: good bread and mayonnaise. The foundation of a perfect leftover turkey sandwich lies in a hearty, fresh bread with a crispy crust and soft interior. This humble slice of bread serves as the stage on which the stars of your sandwich shine. Central NY is blessed with some amazing bakeries. Some of the local favorites where you can pick up some loafs that are sure to make an awesome turkey sandwich our Columbus Bakery Italian Bread, Pasta's Daily Bread stretch bread or Lyncourt Bakery.

But let's not ignore the age-old debate that has gripped the nation — the Mayo Wars. In the quest for the ultimate turkey sandwich, three titans duke it out for the title of Mayo King: Miracle Whip, Hellman's, and Dukes. Each brand boasts a fiercely loyal following, often rooted in regional loyalties and family traditions. The choice of mayo is more than a condiment; it's a culinary expression of identity, and the great debate rages on around Thanksgiving tables across the country.

As the holiday season approaches, and the anticipation for the main event grows, it is clear that the magic of Thanksgiving extends well beyond the dinner table. The growing love for Thanksgiving leftovers has transformed the holiday into an extended celebration filled with innovation and joy. The versatility of these leftovers allows families to relish the holiday spirit for days to come as they craft new and exciting dishes from the remnants of their traditional feast. In some families they plan on preparing extra just so they can make their favorite leftovers.

With these great leftover ideas and two delectable recipes, you can elevate your Thanksgiving leftovers to an entirely new level of deliciousness. These recipes ensure that the festive flavors continue to delight your taste buds well beyond the holiday itself. This year, as you bask in the warmth of your Thanksgiving celebration, remember that the joy of Thanksgiving isn't limited to one day. Embrace the creativity and tradition of Thanksgiving leftovers, and don't forget to have good bread and the right mayo on hand for that ultimate turkey sandwich, a culinary tribute to the enduring love for this holiday tradition.

Thanksgiving leftover ideas:

1. **The Ultimate Turkey sandwich** (see recipe)
2. **Hot turkey salad souffle** (see recipe)
3. **Turkey Enchiladas.** Transform your turkey into mouthwatering enchiladas by combining shredded turkey, black beans, corn,

and your favorite enchilada sauce, then bake until bubbly and golden brown.

4. **Thanksgiving Leftovers Pizza.** Create a pizza with mashed potato "sauce," turkey slices, stuffing, and a sprinkle of cranberry sauce on top. It's the perfect fusion of Thanksgiving flavors and pizza fun.
5. **Turkey Pot Pie.** Make a comforting pot pie with your turkey and leftover vegetables. Top with flaky pastry and bake until golden brown.
6. **Stuffing-Stuffed Mushrooms.** Fill mushroom caps with leftover stuffing and bake until the mushrooms are tender and the stuffing is crisp on top.
7. **Mashed Potato Pancakes.** Transform your mashed potatoes into crispy potato pancakes by mixing in some egg, flour, and chives. Fry until golden brown.

ULTIMATE THANKSGIVING TURKEY SANDWICH

Chef Eric Rose

INGREDIENTS FOR THE SANDWICH

- 2 slices of your favorite hearty, fresh bread
- 4-6 ounces of roasted Thanksgiving turkey
- 2-3 Tbsp of cranberry sauce
- 2-3 Tbsp of stuffing (optional)
- 1-2 leaves of fresh lettuce
- 2 slices of crispy bacon (optional, but highly recommended)
- 1-2 slices of brie cheese

INGREDIENTS FOR THE SPREAD

- 2-3 tablespoons of your favorite mayonnaise (Miracle Whip, Hellman's, Dukes, or your choice)
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- ½ teaspoon honey
- A pinch of salt and freshly ground black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Prepare the spread**
In a small bowl, combine the mayonnaise, Dijon mustard, honey, a pinch of salt, and freshly ground black pepper. Mix well, and set it aside. This flavorful spread will add depth and zing to your sandwich.
2. **Toast the bread**
Lightly toast the two slices of bread to add a bit of crunch to your sandwich. You can do this in a toaster or on a grill pan with a bit of butter for extra flavor.
3. **Assemble the sandwich**
On one slice of the toasted bread, spread a generous layer of the mayo-Dijon-honey spread. On the other slice of bread, spread a dollop of cranberry sauce. Place the lettuce leaves on top of the cranberry sauce. Layer on the turkey slices. Add the stuffing on top of the turkey. Lay the bacon strips over the stuffing. Place the cheese slices on top of the bacon. Carefully bring both halves of your sandwich together.

Note: Feel free to customize your sandwich by adding other Thanksgiving leftovers like mashed potatoes, sweet potato casserole, or green bean casserole for a unique twist.

Continued on page 30

The joy of Thanksgiving leftovers from page 29

HOT TURKEY SALAD SOUFFLÉ

Irene Sloan

Serves 6

INGREDIENTS

6 slices white bread
2 cups of diced cooked turkey, (or chicken)
½ of a yellow onion, diced
½ cup celery, chopped fine
½ cup mayonnaise
¾ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
2 beaten eggs
1½ cups milk
1 can cream of chicken soup (or cream of mushroom)
1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cube 2 slices of bread. Place in the bottom of a 8"x8"x2" baking dish.
2. Combine turkey, vegetables, mayonnaise, and seasonings and spread over bread cubes.
3. Trim crusts from remaining bread. Arrange slices atop turkey mixture.
4. Combine eggs and milk; pour over all.
5. Cover and chill for 1 hour or overnight.

6. Preheat oven to 350° F.
7. Spoon soup over the top.
8. Bake for 40 minutes.
9. Remove from oven and sprinkle with cheese. Return to oven and bake for an additional 20 minutes.
10. Serve immediately.

Ultimate Thanksgiving Turkey Sandwich



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Holiday decorating made simple

Kathy Franco



As a mother with two adult children who live out of state, I take a different approach to holiday decorating in my home. I've begun to simplify and decorate more for my taste. Gone are the endless days of opening boxes and littering every surface with holly branches and tinsel. Now, I find myself drawn to more calming decorations, like white lights, soft candles, greenery, and single-color accents. The holidays are so much more enjoyable when they are no longer bookended with stressful decorating in the fall and days of packing and repacking in the New Year.

When I was a young adult, I never understood why my mother kept all her beautiful holiday décor from my childhood boxed up in the basement. She would adorn a small tree with white lights and blue ornaments once my siblings and I were out of the house. Now, I understand what she was doing! Don't get me wrong, a house bursting with holiday cheer is wonderful, but I've grown to appreciate simple décor that accents a home. This is especially important if you are trying to sell a home over the holiday season. Let buyers see your home for its beauty rather than as a decked-out winter wonderland.

Keep it neutral, keep it subtle

Opt for classic holiday décor that has a broad appeal. Be mindful that not every family celebrates holidays the same way. Decorate with wreaths and garland instead of incorporating too many religious themes. Single color accents and touches of holiday flair go a long way!

Highlight key features

Use your decorations as subtle beacons to draw attention to the best features of the property. A beautiful fireplace can be highlighted with lit garland or a small flower arrangement on the mantel. A custom front door should be adorned with a wreath to create a warm welcome. Use lighting wisely to highlight special areas on the property. A beautiful backyard should have hanging lights for buyers to imagine cozy nights on the patio, and accent walls should be well-lit, so they stand out.



Showcase the whole space

A home is more than just four walls! Decorating the exterior of the property with sidewalk lighting, front porch seating, or seasonal planters can enhance curb appeal. If there is a patio or a porch, stage it with outdoor seating and a charcoal grill. By allowing potential buyers to see the whole property rather than just the house, you're creating excitement and enticing them to submit more competitive offers.

Appeal to all the senses

At Disney World, you smell popcorn as soon as you walk through the gates and suddenly come upon a popcorn vendor. When you're in the vicinity of "It's a Small World," you can hear the iconic music from a distance and the nostalgia begins to well up within your whole family. Implement these same concepts in your showings and open houses. Boil cinnamon sticks or bake a small batch of cookies before the doors open and play light music through strategically placed speakers. Think of what a cozy night at home would feel like and emulate that in real time.

Safety comes first

Candles and wax melts are tempting, but open flames can pose a risk to families with curious children. Turn the lights on ahead of time so walkways and staircases are well-lit. If there's a spill, clean it up right away and move something close to the site to be an obstacle to anyone who may unknowingly walk over a wet spot.

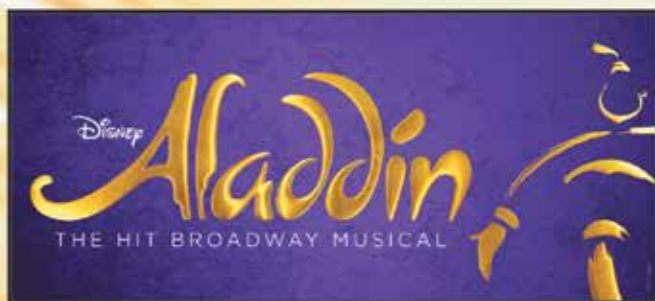
When my children come home for the holidays, I want them to still recognize our house as their familiar holiday home, just a bit pared down. I keep one tree with their handmade ornaments for all of us to enjoy and simple décor throughout the rest of the house. In the long run, we all enjoy the holidays more without the stress. It also lets me keep my decorations up longer after everyone is gone! *SWM*

Kathy Franco is a licensed associate real estate broker with Coldwell Prime Properties. She can be reached at Kathy.Franco@coldwellbankerprime.com.

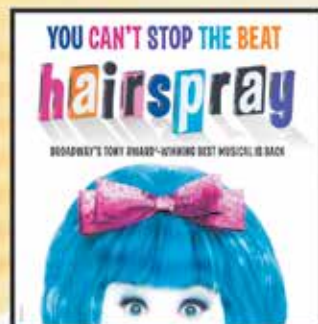


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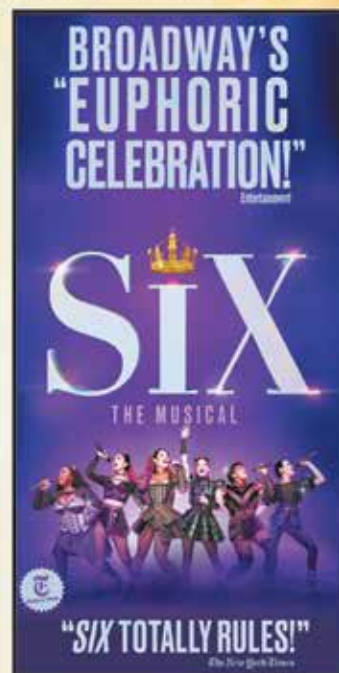
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LAUREN MITER

Teacher travels to Kenya to raise autism awareness

Janelle Davis



Lauren Miter, a special education teacher at Elmcrest Elementary in the Liverpool district, recently returned from a journey to Kenya, Africa for the Global Autism Project. Her time in Kenya lasted two weeks, during which she collaborated with team members, local educators, families, and children to build programs for children with autism. In special education for 12 years, Miter has been familiar with the Global Autism Project for a long time.

"This whole opportunity was incredible. It was eye-opening, fulfilling, and I feel a new urge to continue to build upon what I have been doing in the Liverpool community," Miter admitted. Miter was inspired to apply to take part in the project last November when she met her husband in Brazil after he completed Special Operations Jungle Warfare.

While sightseeing in the city of Manaus, they often passed the local school. This made Miter think about her students at home.

"I was thinking of all of the different needs my students have and how the needs of students in third world countries are not even being close to met," Miter said. "I realized I had to do something to help."

When applications opened, Miter applied, interviewed, and was accepted into the program out of thousands of applicants. From the accepted applicants, various teams are formed to travel to different countries. Miter was placed with a team in Kenya based on her educational ability and background. Miter and her team were partnered with a local school that serves 21 students.

For two weeks, they worked with the young adults in the school in support of the Global Autism Project's motto "Do With, Not For."

They were provided access to a local kombucha brewery where students can be trained in a workplace and where the brewery staff can learn how to train them, so children with autism can be integrated into their community.

Miter explained that, in the Kenyan culture, people with autism are seen in a negative light and that something is "wrong" with them.

"It's important to show the people at the brewery and in the community that children with autism are people," Miter said. "They have just as many skills and purpose as anyone else."

According to Miter, part of the difficulty with spreading autism awareness and acceptance in Kenya is that it is a large country with limited access to basic needs. Most people who live in Nairobi have decent access to education and can be reached. At the same time, there are many tribes further from the city in remote regions more difficult to reach. Progress is made as some students are being accepted into the workplace as coworkers.

The students Miter worked with had an opportunity to go to a factory for a company called, Grounded which focuses on producing all-natural cleaning products. This company also has a brewery component of both coffee and kombucha.

On this particular trip, Miter assisted with transitioning three students from the therapy center into the factory to begin their working careers. They were over the age of 18 and were able to travel to the brewery with a staff member at least once a week. "The students did a great job and were happy while visiting the factory," Miter shared.

Despite the challenge of raising autism awareness in Kenya, most of the factory workers were very interested and open to learning about autism and their future coworkers. They were patient and asked questions. Miter said that the workers even did their own research before the students came.

"It was a great experience to see how the students were welcomed when venturing into this new place. It was great to see the potential of the students and the factory workers working together," Miter shared.

To support the organization's mission, Miter and the team taught strategies and provided resources to the school and the community. They worked with school staff so that they were highly trained and knew how and when to use best practices.

During her time in Kenya, Miter worked very long hours and days to make sure that she could make as much of an impact as possible. There are specific teaching strategies to implement with a student with autism.

"We worked with the staff in transitioning the students into the factory, but we also worked to provide training to them. Four mornings out of the week before students came in, we trained staff in specific areas that staff felt they needed," Miter said. Such areas included behavior management techniques, best practices for teaching students with autism, and how to include rewards and make learning fun.

Miter and the team set up a platform for two different projects for the March Global Autism Project to continue with.

From this experience, Miter was able to meet and work with some incredible people from Kenya. She said it was refreshing to see their passion for work in a setting with such limited resources.

"Life, in general, is harder in Africa, but the people and the positivity are unmatched. I am proud of the experience I had with them and any impact I made. I know I helped teach and collaborate with the center, but I also learned and grew personally and professionally. I have big goals for myself, the Liverpool community, and the individuals with disabilities who live in this area. SWM



IRIS BUCZKOWSKI



Helping people with their philanthropic goals

Norah Machia

A recent study published in Discovery Magazine noted that “giving to charity makes us happier; especially when we freely choose to give. Whether we have a little or a lot of money, how we choose to spend it matters most to our happiness.”

Iris Buczkowski, owner of Birch Wealth Management in Rome, knows this firsthand and shares her experiences of giving with clients as part of their estate planning. Showing people how they can help others is the favorite part of her job, said Iris, a registered investment advisor.

Her company serves clients throughout the Central New York region and nationwide. Iris has more than 20 years of experience in the finance industry and started her business four years ago.

Because her last name is not easily pronounced or spelled, Iris decided to come up with a different business name, one that was symbolic of new beginnings. In researching a name for her business, Iris discovered that birch trees were not only symbolic of new beginnings, but also symbolize resilience in Native American culture.

When Iris helps clients who want to manage their estates through planned giving programs, she first works with them to determine their priorities. “Every person has unique goals, and we bring ideas to people based on those goals,” she said. For example, clients may want to support agencies that have helped them or their family members during a difficult time, such as a medical crisis.

“There are many ways of planned giving,” including capital campaign pledges, legacy bequests, trusts and university endowments, Iris said. “I love giving people many different options,” she added.

A native of Vernon, Iris earned both a master’s degree in finance (with a technology management concentration) and a bachelor’s degree in finance at SUNY Polytechnic Institute.

“We work hard to accumulate our wealth, and we should have a say in where it goes,” she said. “That’s why estate planning is so important.”

Although part of estate planning may involve leaving a bequest to an organization to be given after a person passes away, there are also options to give while a person is still living.

“It’s about what a person wants to accomplish, both in the short and long term,” she said. When people make philanthropic gifts during their lifetime, it allows them to see the impact that they have on others, she said. “It’s inspiring to do more when you see the impact of your gift,” she said.

“People want to be part of something, and giving makes them feel good.” There are ways to leverage money to make even larger donations, she said. For example, a person could purchase a life insurance policy and name a charitable organization as the beneficiary.

Iris made this type of legacy gift to the Upstate Foundation because of the exceptional care that was provided to her oldest daughter, who is autistic, by the Golisano Center for Special Needs at Upstate Medical Center. Her donation will help to establish an endowment to support the needs of the center for future generations.

“I support a ton of organizations,” said Iris, who is married and raising three children. “Ten percent of my revenue goes to local charities.” “You don’t have to be a high-earning individual to make an impactful gift,” she added. For example, a person could donate an annual required minimum distribution from a retirement plan to a qualified charity, and that distribution would not be taxable.

Some clients want to start giving money to their children or other family members from their estates before they pass away. Tax laws allow for gifts of up to \$17,000 per individual without incurring a gift tax. It’s not uncommon for clients to want to give their children money for a variety of reasons – college tuition, weddings, or help in buying their first home, Iris said.

“People can enjoy the impact they’re making” for their family or a nonprofit organization when they give money during their lifetime, she said. Philanthropy can also be in the form of giving time and talent, and a significant contribution to an organization can be made through volunteer work, Iris said.

Iris also specializes in special needs planning for those who have a family member with a physical, intellectual or developmental disability. It’s an area that has deep personal meaning to Iris, as she has done a great deal of planning for her daughter.

“Caring for a child with special needs is multifaceted,” she said. Regardless of the size of an estate, it’s important to have critical documents in place to protect a family member with special needs, said Iris. Supplemental needs trust planning can help families with these concerns. [SWM](#)

Birch Wealth Management also offers eldercare and estate planning. For more information: www.birchwealth.com






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Two who modestly make veteran dreams come true

August Lindsey

It started out as a simple documentary.

In 2019, local filmmakers Andrea Reeves and Eric J. Roberts were inspired by the service work of the non-profit Honor Flight to produce a TV program that chronicles the fine work of the organization.

Honor Flight provides free trips to Washington, D.C. to allow veterans from WWII, the Korean War, Viet Nam and other conflicts to visit the various memorials and monuments that pay tribute to their service and sacrifices on behalf of our nation's liberty.

Dubbed "Honor Flight Heroes," the first episode aired on Veterans Day 2019 on Discovery Networks' American Heroes Channel, and – due to positive ratings – a series was born.

This Veterans Day 2023 (Saturday, November 11), Discovery is broadcasting an "Honor Flight Heroes" mini-marathon of the four episodes produced to date for the series from 4 to 8 p.m. (see local listings for American Heroes Channel).

Chronicle the service stories of World War II vets, creating "Honor Flight Heroes" had an unexpected benefit: the filmmakers fell in love with their "greatest generation" subjects and made lasting, heart-felt friendships with Philip "Curly" Voystock, Harold Stryker, Vincent Terrill, Vivian "Millie" Bailey, Bill Gosch and their families.

"While getting to know about the deeds these amazing people had accomplished on behalf of our country, we also learned about their current unfulfilled dreams and unanswered needs. Because all were in their late 90s or past the 100-year mark, they did not expect anything new to happen," said co-producer Andrea Reeves. "That's why we created 'Deeds, Dreams & Needs' to use as a vehicle to give something unexpected and exciting to our new friends."

Eric J. Roberts explains further, "The World War II veterans are probably the most independent bunch of human beings you have ever met; hence their engagement with life at such advanced ages. All lived on their own. They would not accept something for nothing – we had to offer whatever we gave as a tribute for their service to our country, and – even then – it was tough for them just to say okay!"

Philip "Curly" Voystock, who at 18-years-old supervised German POWs in digging up the remains of U.S. servicemen, an interview subject along with Harold Stryker in the first HFH episode, was a simple man with simple tastes – and a real lover of grape pie. Following a hand-written recipe left by a Baldwinsville woman who specialized in the dish, Andrea Reeves twice a year, would bake Voystock a fresh pie and drive it along with Roberts to "Curley's" home in Pennsylvania about three hours away. The last pie was delivered just weeks before "Curly" passed in May, 2023.

Harold Stryker – who earned a Purple Heart at 19 during the Battle of Okinawa – was constantly having his home phone line in Victor, NY chewed inoperable by aggressive squirrels on his rural property.

Sometimes days would go by before the phone company realized the problem and made repairs. This prevented Harold from calling out and from friends and family being able to reach him. Through "Deeds, Dreams & Needs," Reeves and Roberts honored Stryker with "Jitterbug" cell phone service. Harold cancelled his home phone line and now carries his cell phone with him while doing his gardening, lawn mowing, snow removal, daily trips to his favorite diner, and weekly visits to his local American Legion Hall. Stryker lives a vibrant, independent life, having turned 98 on July 2, 2023.

Harold Stryker and Vincent Terrill, 1945 reunited January 2020



Bill Gosch and family on the jumbotron at his first Buffalo Bills game (below) and in 1944 (inset)

Stryker and Reeves with certificate for new Jitterbug phone



Vincent Terrill – who was a combat buddy of Stryker's during the Battle of Okinawa – found out his old friend was still alive after seeing the "Honor Flight Heroes" premiere episode. Terrill reached out to Reeves and Roberts to see if they could put them in touch again, but the producers did one better – they made a Stryker-Terrill reunion the subject of their next episode, arranging (in conjunction with Honor Flight New England) for the pair to reunite after 75 years in Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts, Terrill's hometown, on January 3, 2020. The HFH van bringing Stryker was greeted with a police escort off the Mass Turnpike and upon arrival the whole town turned out to celebrate as the pair greeted each other as if not a day had passed since they last were in each other's company. Vincent passed away just months after the reunion in May, 2020.

"Honor Flight Heroes" third episode interview subject - Vivian "Millie" Bailey - served during WWII as a commander of segregated black women soldiers, ultimately breaking through the barriers of racial prejudice to make significant contributions not only to the armed forces during her service but also after her discharge. With her husband, she set up a charitable organization regularly sending food care packages loaded with favorite treats to soldiers stationed overseas. Although her accomplishments were honored by two presidents, numerous veteran organizations and her local community (dedicating a waterfront park/playground bearing her name), Millie still had one bucket list item left at 102 years old – she wanted to skydive. "Deeds, Dreams & Needs" made this possible and the event was filmed for inclusion in Millie's "Honor Flight Heroes" episode.

To hear her sky dive instructor clearly, Syracuse Hearing Solutions provided a hearing aid amplifier free of charge that allowed spoken words to be transmitted directly to Millie's hearing aid.

Andrea Reeves and Eric J. Roberts, coproducers, "Honor Flight Heroes"

Deeds,
& Dreams
Needs

Jumping from two miles high, Millie's accomplishment was featured on the national evening news and celebrated with unprecedented viral coverage on the internet. One whole wall in her apartment was covered with photos from the jump. Millie passed away at 104 years old after giving so much to so many in May, 2023.

The newest "Honor Flight Heroes" episode will debut this coming Veterans Day on American Heroes Channel at 7 p.m. and will feature Buffalo native and 99-year-old WWII vet, Bill Gosch. A football scholar at Niagara University, Bill used his athletic prowess to gain admission to the elite Special Forces WWII marine unit named, "Carlson's Raiders," which achieved spectacular success against the Japanese during the war. Returning home after Japan's surrender, Bill became a prominent member of his community and was particularly thrilled when a new professional football team – the Buffalo Bills – sprung up in his hometown in 1947.

Last October, when Bill took an Honor Flight to Washington, DC, Reeves and Roberts learned that, although an avid fan, Bill had never – in over seven decades – seen his beloved team play live, even though the stadium was only a half-hour away! "Deeds, Dreams and Needs," in conjunction with Buffalo-Niagara Honor Flight and the Buffalo Bills, made that bucket list item happen last November, arranging for Bill to be brought by limo with his family to a special box seat to view the game.

At half-time, Bill, surrounded by family, was honored with their images projected on the Jumbotron as a sold-out crowd cheered wildly. Featured on "CBS Evening News" the following week, Bill tearfully thanked everyone who made it happen. Bill still lives in Buffalo with his daughter and will turn 100 in December, 2023.

"It doesn't get much better than that," said Reeves.

For more information about "Honor Flight Heroes" TV program or "Deeds, Dreams & Needs," contact Andrea Reeves at andrea@HonorFlightHeroes.tv.



Philip "Curly" Voystok, 1945 (left) and admiring his grape pie, 2023 (below)

"Millie" Bailey receiving instructions before her tandem skydive

Vivian "Millie" Bailey, 1945

AmeriCU Credit Union teammate paving the way for a brighter future in the Mohawk Valley



Tiffany Abele

AmeriCU Credit Union teammate Tiffany Abele, AVP of talent solutions received the Mohawk Valley Society for Human Resource Management (MVSHRM) Volunteer of the Year Award. This award celebrates Abele's dedication, commitment and remarkable contributions to MVSHRM and the Mohawk Valley. MVSHRM is a local chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), an association that is dedicated to advancing the practice of human resource management and fostering HR professionals' growth and development. Abele's achievement is a testament to the opportunities for growth, community involvement, and personal fulfillment that AmeriCU offers.

"We are immensely proud to have Tiffany as part of our AmeriCU family," said Karen LaPlante, chief talent officer for AmeriCU Credit Union. "Her unwavering commitment to the AmeriCU team and the support she provides to our teammates truly embodies our inclusive culture. We believe that when our teammates thrive, our entire organization flourishes and we are truly honored to have individuals who not only excel in their roles but also contribute significantly to our community."

In addition to serving on the board for MVSHRM, Abele serves as a board member for the Rome Chamber of Commerce. On June 29, Abele completed the Leadership Mohawk Valley program through the Center for Leadership Excellence. Leadership Mohawk Valley is a civic engagement program for community leaders that promotes change and stability within the community. In 2020, Abele completed the Senior Professional in Human Resources Certification.

AmeriCU announces new assistant vice president



Heather Wood

Heather Wood has been announced as the assistant vice president of strategic partnerships for AmeriCU Credit Union, building and maintaining partnerships that align with the credit union's strategic goals.

Wood brings with her over 20 years of experience and knowledge in the credit union industry. Wood's new role will cultivate and foster relationships with existing and potential partners. She will work with internal and external stakeholders to identify opportunities for collaboration, innovation and efficiency improvement.

Wood started with AmeriCU in 2003 when she was hired as a part-time teller. She has since held various roles – member relationship advisory, financial center manager, assistant vice president of operations.

"I have been part of the AmeriCU team for 20 years and have always enjoyed connecting with the community we serve. I am looking forward to further building relationships in our newly expanded footprint," said Wood. "I will help to bring the best AmeriCU has to offer to our local community members and small businesses with everything from financial education to affordable banking solutions to help individuals achieve their financial goals to live life, dream big, and achieve financial success."

Solvay Bank announces new hire



Ashley Gozzi

Ashley Gozzi joined Solvay Bank as a customer relations specialist for the customer relations and operations team. Ashley has four years of service experience in the banking industry. She is an Onondaga Community College graduate and has volunteer experience at The Boys and Girls Club and the Onondaga Sheriff's Department.

Joins Loretto as marketing and public relations manager



Kathleen White

Kathleen White is the new marketing and public relations manager for Loretto. She is responsible for producing and managing strategic marketing and public relations initiatives across multiple channels to promote the work of Loretto and its 19 programs and services.

Kathleen has previously served as a SUNY Oswego faculty member, teaching courses in public relations writing, media management, event planning, and public relations strategy for the School of Communication, Media, and the Arts. Before that, Kathleen was the director of creative content and strategy for CinSyr Creative Group, a marketing agency based in Syracuse. She has also worked in sales for both Reliant Pharmaceuticals and NewsChannel 9.

As the marketing and public relations manager, Kathleen will work closely with Loretto's chief marketing officer, Julie Sheedy, to strategically implement external marketing and public relations activities that communicate the mission and vision of Loretto and its strategic goals. Some of her responsibilities include media and third-party partner management, content curation, social media strategy, and the strategic use of disruptive technologies to promote the Loretto brand.

"Kathleen brings a wealth of in-depth experience to this position with a unique perspective, having been an instructor of public relations at SUNY Oswego, in addition to working in various progressive PR roles on both the agency side and in higher education, among others. She brings an enthusiastic passion for writing and storytelling from her foundation, starting in TV broadcasting that will be pivotal in continuing to grow the positive reputation of Loretto in the region," said Sheedy.

A native of Syracuse, Kathleen is thankful for the opportunity to work for a brand that has meant something to her family. "I have family members who have worked at Loretto, and I recently had a loved one receive care here, so it is a special place for me and my family. I look forward to communicating on behalf of Loretto, where caring is core to its mission and values."

Susan Hughes named recipient of the 2023 Hugh Hastings Award



Susan Hughes

The William G. Pomeroy Foundation's Lead Historian and Archivist Susan Hughes has been named the recipient of the 2023 Hugh Hastings Award presented by the Association of Public Historians of New York State (APHNYS). Susan received the award during the APHNYS conference in Ithaca.

"Susan is an exemplary professional committed to the support and advancement of New York State's public history community," said Pomeroy Foundation Executive Director Carrie Berse. "She has had a tremendous impact through her work at the Pomeroy Foundation, helping people in all regions of our state and throughout the nation research and obtain historical markers for the benefit of their communities. She is truly a leader in the field and a mentor to emerging professionals. We applaud Susan on this well-deserved recognition."

The award is named in honor of New York State's first official state historian, Hugh Hastings, who served in the position from 1895 to 1907.



Friday, Nov. 3 through Sunday, Dec. 24**Art Mart 2023**

What: Shop from locally crafted paintings, photography, pottery, jewelry and more.

Where: 476 S. Salina St, Syracuse 13202

When: Open Monday-Saturday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Closed on Thanksgiving Day

**Thursday, Nov. 9****Au Chocolat**

What: Baldwinsville's annual event of the season is a hunt around the village of Baldwinsville for chocolate and shopping

Where: Village of Baldwinsville

When: 3 to 9 p.m.

**Friday-Sunday, Nov. 10, 11 & 12****27th Annual Holiday Shoppes**

What: Join for a three day holiday shopping extravaganza with over 100 artisans and merchants. Presented by the Junior League of Syracuse.

Where: NYS Fairgrounds, Horticulture Building
581 State Fair Blvd, Syracuse, NY 13209

When: Friday & Saturday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Info: Tickets available at www.jlsyracuse.org

**Sunday, Nov. 12****Hope and Heels Fashion Show and Brunch**

What: Join Hope for Heather to raise ovarian cancer awareness and education across the community. Enjoy local vendors, raffles, silent action, cocktails, brunch, and spring fashions modeled by community leaders and cancer survivors.

Where: Marriott Bonvoy Downtown/Hotel Syracuse
100 E Onondaga St, Syracuse, NY 13202

When: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Info: Tickets available at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2023-hope-heels-fashion-show-and-brunch-tickets-699044038537>

**Thursday, Nov. 16****Holiday Ladies Night**

What: Join Welch & Co. Jewelers and Syracuse Woman Magazine for hors d'oeuvres, adult beverages, a special gift and door prizes.

Where: 513 S Main St, North Syracuse, NY 13212

When: 4 to 8 p.m.

**Saturday, Nov. 18****Indigenous Craft Fair**

What: Shop from over 25 local makers selling indigenous jewelry and crafts.

Where: The Milton J. Rubenstein Museum of Science and Technology (MOST)
500 S Franklin St, Syracuse, NY 13202

When: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Saturday, Nov. 18****10th Annual NYS Craft Brewers Festival**

What: Enjoy unlimited samples of beer from NY breweries big, small and in between.

Where: The Landmark Theater

362 S Salina St, Syracuse, NY 13202

When: 4 to 8 p.m.

Info: \$60 in advance, \$70 at the door. \$15 designated driver.

Free 7 oz tasting glass with ticket.

Info: www.thinkdrinkny.com/syracuse

**Friday, Nov. 24****Dickens Christmas Opening Day**

What: The 30th edition of Dickens Christmas opens with the "world's smallest Christmas parade." with trunk shows, sing-alongs, entertainment and appearances from beloved characters.

Where: Village of Skaneateles

When: Noon to 4 p.m. every Saturday and Sunday through December 23

Info: Free

**Saturday, Nov. 25****CNY Wine and Chocolate Festival**

What: Join for unlimited samplings of wines of all styles and tastes and shop wines, treats, clothing, jewelry and more.

Where: NYS Fairgrounds, Horticulture Building
581 State Fair Blvd, Syracuse, NY 13209

When: 1 p.m. and 5 p.m.

Info: \$30PP. \$15 designated driver. Free glass with ticket.

www.galaxyeventscapany.ticketspice.com/2023-syracuse-wine-and-chocolate-festival

**Monday, Nov. 25 through Saturday, Dec. 23****Night Market**

What: Eat, drink, and shop at a pop-up market of artisans, makers and retailers. Enjoy live music, cash bar, food and shopping.

Where: SKY Armory, 351 S Clinton St, Syracuse, NY 13202

When: 3 to 9 p.m.

Info: www.nightmarketsyr.com





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Editorial, Syracuse.com, April 16, 2023

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