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magazine

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ROBIN & SYDNEY
CHALIFOUX

Mother and daughter
give hope to those
with breast cancer

FOR A GOOD CAUSE

Sheena Solomon

HEALTHY WOMAN

She Matters and the
"Mammovan"

HEALTHY EATING

Healing your body and
fighting cancer through
nutrition

SPECIAL
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A legacy of hope
Salt City Roller Derby

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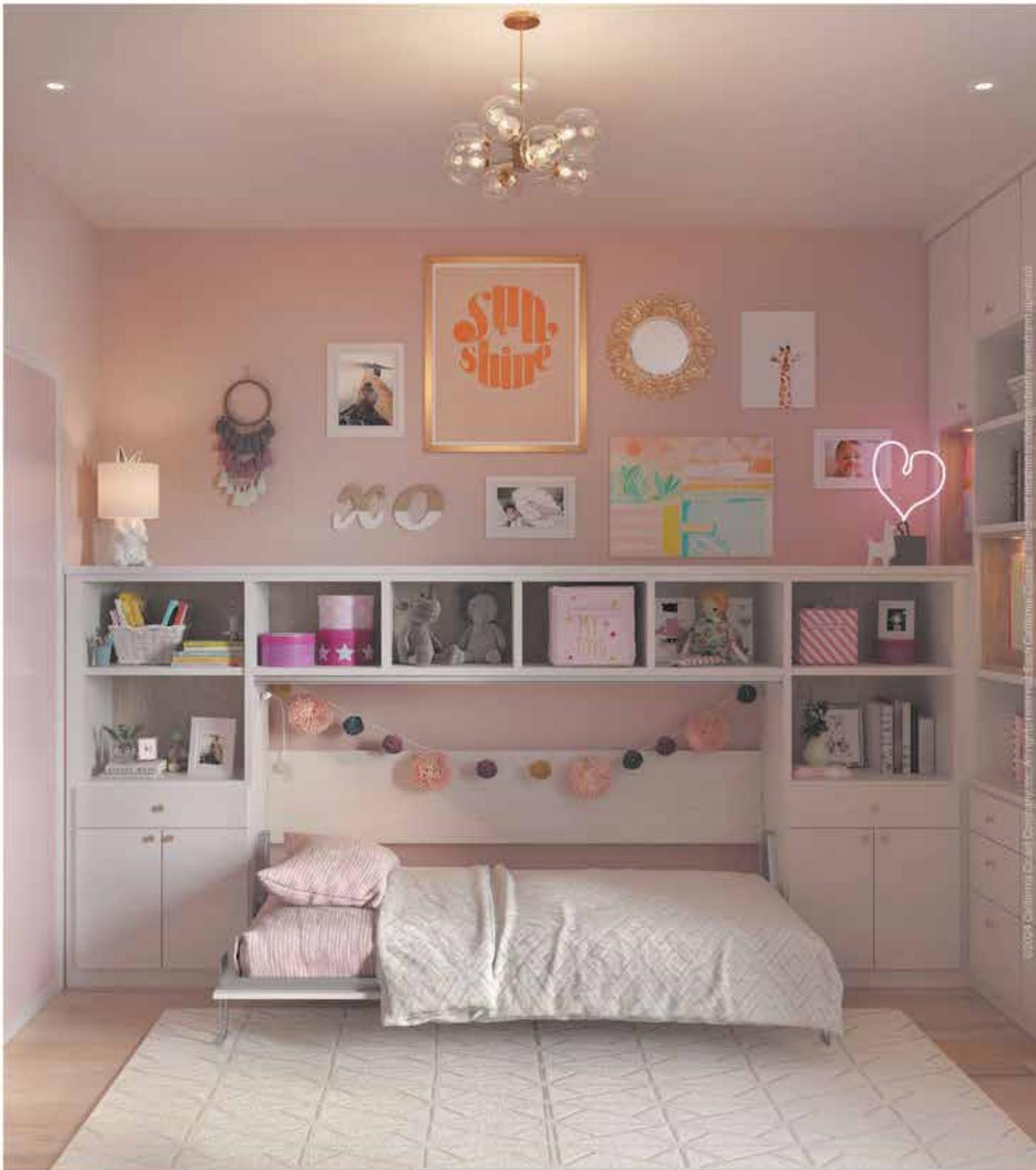
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october

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Barb Shepard

Rethinking recovery

EMBRACING AN ALCOHOL-FREE LIFE ON YOUR TERMS

Almost five years ago, I traded in a life that included alcohol for one without it. I made a decision to go “alcohol-free” in an effort to be my best mentally, physically, and spiritually.

When I decided to pursue an alcohol-free journey, I did so with uncertainty about what this choice would mean socially. At that time, there was not a well-trodden path for those who wanted to stop drinking but did not identify as being in recovery.

Historically, recovery from alcohol has been understood in binary terms: if you chose to stop drinking alcohol, it was because you had major problem alcohol. This framework has been a cornerstone of organizations like Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). AA and traditional recovery models undoubtedly have their positives; AA remains lifesaving for many people today, and adopting the label of “alcoholic” can be a pivotal point for some, as it grants entry into a community that helps people get sober among their peers — a very powerful experience.

However, this view has had an unintended consequence: it limited who has culturally been “allowed” to question their relationship with alcohol. It left little room for those who didn’t fit neatly into these categories — those who wanted to drink less, but did not necessarily see themselves as alcoholics. As a result, a significant group of people who could benefit from rethinking their relationship with alcohol was excluded from the conversation.

When I decided to go alcohol-free in 2019, I discovered a niche corner of the internet filled with sober bloggers and influencers after a simple Google search: “People who are sober but not boring.” While I now know that a sober life is anything but boring, the words I typed into Google at that time reflected what we have been culturally conditioned to believe a life without alcohol entails. Fortunately, that search led me to several pioneers in this movement who championed the idea that you could stop drinking alcohol for a novel reason: simply because you want to. No label, no big explanation needed.

By 2020, the alcohol-free movement gained momentum. What started as quiet, personal reflection during the COVID lockdowns — when many reevaluated their relationship with alcohol — evolved into a mainstream phenomenon. The sober curious movement began to take the world by storm as celebrities like Chrissy Teigen began to share their efforts to go “alcohol-free” or explore “sober curiosity.”

I witnessed firsthand the shift from menus lacking alcohol-free options to those featuring dedicated mocktail sections. What was once unusual — to tell friends you’re not drinking — was becoming a socially accepted, even celebrated, choice. Finding resources for a sober curious lifestyle transformed from a struggle to an abundance of options. The non-alcoholic beverage market is not only gaining traction but outpacing the growth of the traditional alcohol industry.

Choosing an alcohol-free lifestyle has been transformative. Beyond the physical health benefits, not drinking has deepened my presence in all aspects of life. Life without alcohol feels brighter, bigger, and more expansive — not at all limiting as society historically suggested. If you believe life without alcohol will be boring, it will be exactly that. But if you embrace the possibilities sober curiosity holds, the whole world will open up.

If you’re sober curious like I was, know that this path is accessible and welcoming. There is a growing community and resources to help you explore your sober curiosity and start this journey on your own terms. In redefining what it means to survive and thrive without alcohol, we are expanding the conversation and making room for everyone to live a fuller, healthier, and more mindful life.

Barb Shepard is a licensed mental health counselor in Fayetteville, who specializes in anxiety, OCD, and alcohol use disorders. To learn more about Barb's services, visit barbshepardcounseling.com or [@anxietyocdsobriety](https://www.instagram.com/anxietyocdsobriety) on Instagram.

S Y R A C U S E
WOMAN
magazine

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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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Women's Day at the Fair

Women's Day at the New York State Fair, sponsored by Fidelis Care & Wellcare, was an opportunity for many community advocacy groups to provide women attendees information about the services they offered. Women's Day is an annual event that takes place in the Chevy Court Pavilion. *Syracuse Woman Magazine* is a proud participant of Women's Day at the Fair. Photos by Nancy Miller



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'Guided Networking' at WBOC

On Sept. 4, Women Business Opportunities Connection hosted a session on Guided Networking at Drumlins Country Club. WBOC provides networking, education and support via our monthly program meetings. Meetings take place at the historic Drumlins Country Club and are typically the first Wednesday of each month. Open to all WBOC members, their guests, and non-members, too.

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The Milton J. Rubenstein Museum of Science & Technology (MOST) held its annual TAP into the MOST fundraiser on Friday, Sept. 13. This year's event was presented by Margaritas Mexican Cantina and featured more than 30 local restaurants, breweries, wineries, and other vendors. More than 900 attendees filled the museum to sample dozens of items and enjoy and interact with the exhibits. This fundraiser helps the MOST offer numerous free STEM education and outreach programs to the local community throughout the year and support ongoing improvements and maintenance at the museum.





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A legacy of hope

MAUREEN'S HOPE FOUNDATION CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF COMPASSION

Janelle Davis

In the face of unimaginable loss, Susan Bertrand found a way to transform her grief into a beacon of hope for thousands. As Maureen's Hope Foundation celebrates its 20th anniversary this year, we look back at the journey that has touched countless lives and continues to evolve with its founder's personal growth.

The story of Maureen's Hope begins with a tale of two sisters, Susan and Maureen, whose bond was unbreakable. "We had dreams of our future and growing old together," Susan recalls. Those dreams were shattered when Maureen, at 28 and newly pregnant, was diagnosed with an aggressive form of cancer - clear cell adenocarcinoma of the cervix.

The diagnosis was devastating, but the cause behind it added another layer of tragedy. The cancer was linked to DES (diethylstilbestrol), an FDA-approved drug prescribed to women between 1940 and 1971 to prevent miscarriages. Along with an estimated 4.8 million women, Maureen's mom was prescribed the drug, which years later was taken off the market because of potential consequences. "It was then discovered that exposure to DES in the womb could cause this very rare and aggressive cancer," Susan explains.

Despite treatment at Sloan Kettering, Maureen passed away two years later at the age of 31, leaving behind a grieving family and a sister determined to make a difference. "Maureen's Hope was started out of grief and anger, but also hope and so much love," Susan said.

What began as a simple act of creating care baskets filled with Maureen's favorite items has blossomed into a multifaceted foundation supporting thousands of cancer patients and their families. From patient care baskets to practical support, from the Beads of Courage program to the You and Me Bears initiative, Maureen's Hope has continuously evolved to meet the needs of those facing cancer.

One of the foundation's most impactful programs is its retreats and spa days for mothers of cancer warriors. "Our retreats offer moms a space for self-care and connection with others who understand their journey," Susan explains. Through breathwork, meditation, journaling, and more, these events provide a sanctuary for healing and forging lifelong friendships.

As the foundation has grown, so has Susan's approach to support. "Twenty years later, we are still a grassroots foundation. We have that personal, direct connection with people and families," she says proudly. This connection is maintained through an all-volunteer staff, a testament to the community's belief



in the foundation's mission. Susan's personal experiences have profoundly shaped the foundation's evolution. Surviving a near-fatal cycling accident taught her about physical pain and suffering, complementing her understanding of emotional pain. "I feel like our work has gotten deeper," she said. "I value items less at this point in my life, and I value relationships, connection, mental health."

This shift in perspective has led to new initiatives, such as grief retreats that bring together parents who have lost children to cancer and those still in the midst of treatment. "I think we always have to look at where there are gaps," Susan notes, emphasizing the importance of adapting to meet changing needs.

Throughout its 20-year journey, Maureen's Hope has touched thousands of lives, distributing countless care baskets, providing practical support, and creating spaces for healing and connection.

As Maureen's Hope Foundation approaches its 20th anniversary celebration at Anheuser-Busch this November, Susan reflects on what she's most proud of: "The community support we've had. We would not be here today if it was not for the community believing in our vision and our mission and supporting us."

Looking to the future, Susan sees the foundation continuing to grow alongside her own personal journey. "I feel like Maureen's Hope has grown with me, and where I've grown and what I can take on and hold," she says. This growth promises even more profound and meaningful support for those facing the challenges of cancer.

The foundation's 20th anniversary celebration, set for Saturday, November 2, 2024, from 6:30 to 11 p.m. at the Anheuser-Busch Baldwinsville Brewery, embodies this spirit of growth and community. The event will feature music and dancing with Prime Time Horns, fabulous food catered by Angry Garlic, BG1, and Liehs & Steigerwald, a silent auction, and Anheuser-Busch products. Dr. Kaushal Nanavati will serve as Honorary Chair, while Ashley & Taylor Papworth and their daughter Laila will be Honorary Mission Chairs.

This celebration not only marks two decades of hope but also sets the stage for the foundation's future endeavors. For tickets and additional information, interested parties can visit www.maureenshope.org.

Twenty years on, Maureen's Hope Foundation stands as a testament to the power of turning personal tragedy into a force for good. It's a legacy of love, a tribute to a sister lost too soon, and a beacon of hope for thousands navigating the stormy seas of cancer diagnosis and treatment. As Susan Bertrand and her team of dedicated volunteers look to the future, one thing is clear: the spirit of Maureen continues to shine brightly, touching lives and bringing hope to those who need it most. *SWM*



ANDREA PRICE

'Priceless CNY Realtor'

Alyssa Dearborn

Andrea Price, a realtor with Howard Hanna Real Estate Services and also known as the "Priceless CNY Realtor," has had roots planted in Central New York her entire life. She is involved in a variety of local events and organizations, adopted her dog from Helping Hounds Dog Rescue, and loves to eat local and recommend local businesses to those she works with. Andrea is a true local who has a genuine appreciation for Central New York.

It's that appreciation for home that has helped her become one of the area's top real estate professionals. Breaking her own sales records and being honored with the 2023 Greater Syracuse Association of Realtors' Shining Star Award, she has proved to be a natural entrepreneur. However, she did not always think that she would pursue a career in real estate.

"I went to Upstate Medical University for two years," she said when asked about her decision to change careers, "Before that, I was accepted to the school early on in my college career at Binghamton. So, it was always just the goal to get there and figure out what I wanted to do. When I was there, I wasn't feeling that feeling of enjoyment like I thought I would. I couldn't exactly find what field I wanted to go into, so I decided to take a gap year.

During that gap year, I found time to just do something that I was passionate about."

Wanting to try something new that encouraged her entrepreneurial spirit, she found a mentor to work with in real estate. Finally finding that fulfillment that she had been looking for, Andrea decided to pursue real estate as a career.

"I went full force from there and realized how much I loved it, how rewarding it is," she continued. "I was actually very good at it and I did well, but also found it to be extremely rewarding...I just decided that after a year of doing real estate during my gap year to not go back to med school."

When she is trying to help people sell a home or find a new home in Central New York, her knowledge of and love for the area are assets. When asked what she loves most about the area, she emphasized the region's unique sense of community.

"I grew up right in Manlius, went to Fayetteville-Manlius High School, have a lot of family and friends here, but what I love most about Central New York is the community. I'm very community oriented. I participate in a lot of different networking groups, volunteer activities, nonprofits...I have lots of [friends and family] in the area that are in a bunch of different fields. So I stay well connected with people."

"We also offer a lot to young professionals," she added, "There's activities to do. We have all of the Finger Lakes. We have all four seasons. You can go up to the St. Lawrence and go boating in the summer. I just really enjoy all of the activities that we offer here for families."

Although it is wonderful to find a career that is personally fulfilling, Andrea has found that her favorite part of her work is helping her clients. When asked about her favorite part of her work, she said,

"It's helping clients – whether it's buyers, sellers, or investors – purchase the largest asset that they may ever purchase in their entire lives or to sell their home for top dollar. It's typically a very emotional time for some people...So I think just being there, being their trusted real estate professional, their advisor, someone they can lean into. I know I can be there for them and do a great job for them, to get them from Point A to Point B with as little stress as possible on them."

The WBOC has helped connect many local professional women to networking and professional development opportunities. When Andrea joined the organization, she was able to further develop her skills and make invaluable connections with fellow professionals.

"It's helped me in many ways," she explained. Barb Stone was her first contact with WBOC and she helped Andrea with WISE business mentoring. "To me, it's helped me not only get connected with clients through this organization, but also through the WBOC I've been able to grow professionally. Every time we're there, we practice our pitch of what we do. So it helps with public speaking. This past June, I was able to get up there and do a ten-minute presentation in front of everyone [about] my background, how I got into real estate, what I do to help people. It's good to practice those professional skills while I'm there, but also just the connections we make are so valuable and personal and I really cherish those connections." SWM

Women Business Opportunities Connections (WBOC) is an all volunteer, non-profit organization where CNY women can find networking, education and support among peers. To learn more about the organization, events, or membership, visit WBOCconnection.org. Syracuse Woman Magazine is a proud strategic partner of the WBOC.

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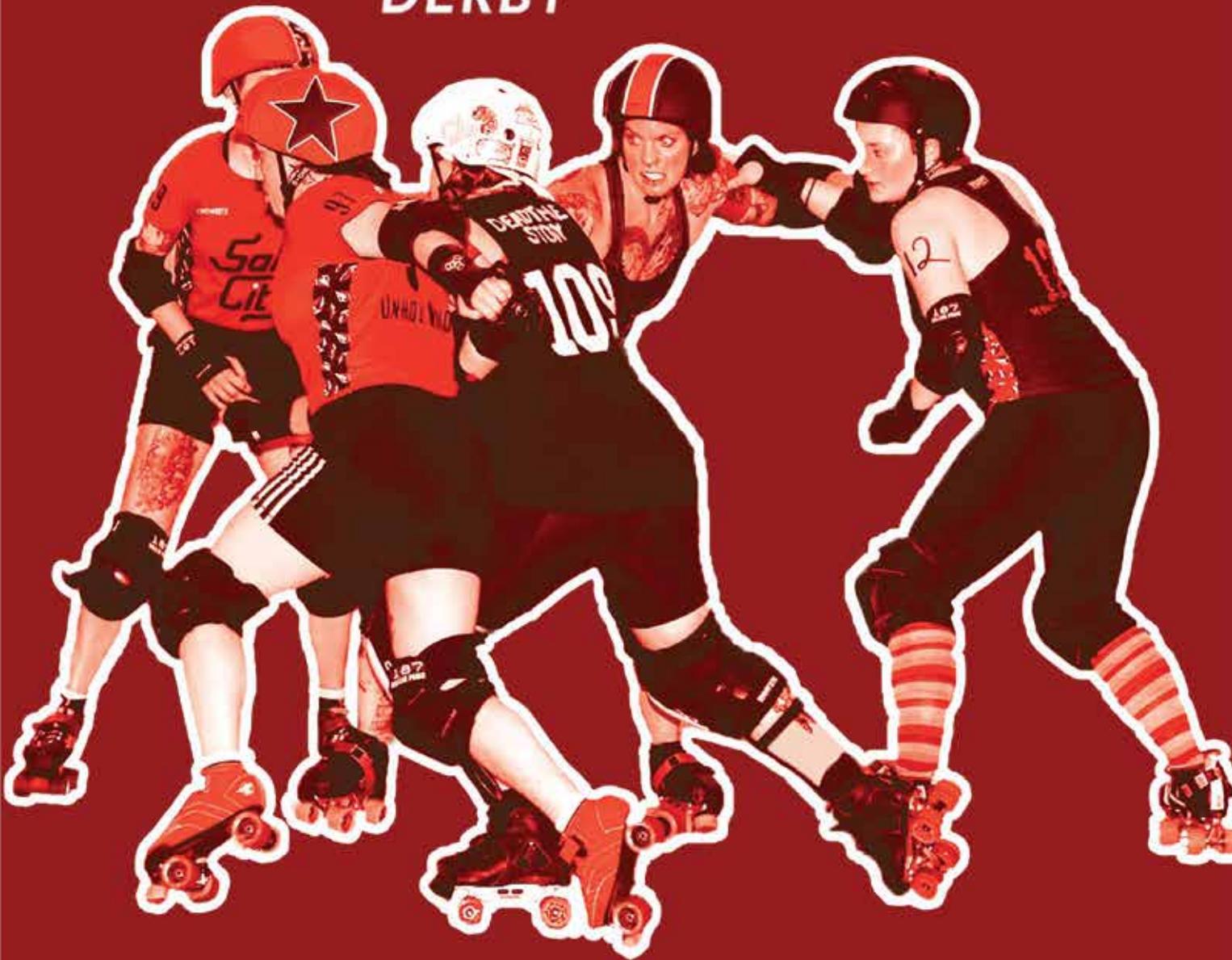


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Salt City

ROLLER DERBY



Camaraderie and contact

Alyssa Dearborn

When many people think about the sport of roller derby, certain images come to mind. You might think about clever, pun-filled nicknames, brutal gameplay, or even the 2009 film *Whip It*. But today's culture of roller derby defies those preconceptions. Salt City Roller Derby is a skater and volunteer-led organization that prioritizes community, good competition and acceptance. At one of the team's events, though, you should still expect to see real, full-contact action.

The league has been recruiting skaters since 2007 and has remained independently operated by skaters and volunteers. As of today, it is still the first and only flat-track roller derby league in Syracuse. But like the wider culture of the sport, the culture within Salt City Roller Derby has evolved over the years.

Skater Nicole DeSalvia – known on the rink as Bruise Cruise – who originally joined the team in 2015 and returned to her position earlier this year after a move, said that she noticed that the sport has become a lot more inclusive over the years.

"It's hard to say from leaving and coming back because I didn't watch the progress between that time," she said when asked about the team's evolution. "But I think just roller derby in general has evolved a bit over those ten-ish years. I feel like the old school style of derby is a lot more of, like, hit all the time. And now there's a lot more strategy and I've learned a lot more things that I should have learned when I first started, like specific footwork [and] a lot of fundamental stuff that we work on all the time. I think that's really good."

Another skater, Stefanie Maffea-Hachett – who goes by Luna Shovegood – has been skating since 2019 and has also felt that evolution first-hand.

"I only transferred up here from Long Island in January," she said, "I went to my first practice, actually, the weekend I moved up here. I needed that transition of my typical support to continue during my time with moving and my job changing up here. I do know that the team has really prioritized its ability to welcome all skaters, to really make sure that skaters have the ability to do this competitively. It's a really supportive environment. They're really an incredible team to be a part of. I know that the team has worked really, really hard over the past few years to become how it is today."

Many of the skaters a part of the league have had little or no skating experience before joining. Through their recruitment bootcamps, the team provides a space where people of all skill levels can learn more about the sport or, in some cases, learn how to roller skate.

"I had just gotten finished with grad school and played lacrosse my whole life. I've always had some sort of athletic thing going on," Nicole said when asked how she first got involved with roller derby. "A friend of mine sent me a newsclip of WSYR doing a story on [the league] and said that they thought that I would be good at it. So I went to a new recruit meeting and I didn't know how to skate or do anything. I just started from there."

Stefanie had a similar experience when she first got involved with the sport.

"I had gone through a really bad breakup at the time and I felt as though I did not have a sense of self at that point," she said. "A friend recommended that I consider doing roller derby, even though I have

no form of athleticism to me. So I just made the jump and went out and spent the money on the gear and I just jumped in. That's how I got into it."

Salt City Roller Derby prides itself on the diverse backgrounds and walks of life the skaters and volunteers come from. Within this group of individuals, everyone has at least one thing in common: dedication to the sport they all play and enjoy. Many skaters on the league find a sense of inclusivity that can be difficult to find in other environments. "[It's] very supportive," Stefanie said, "It's just the best environment for folks that, maybe in the past, wouldn't have fit in the most. It's like the place for misfit toys. It's a really, really cool environment where every body type is welcome, every person is welcome. It's very queer friendly. It's a really empowering sport."

"There's always really different people," Nicole said about the sport's diversity. "Even now within the league, some of the people I really don't know what their jobs are or what they do in their day-to-day, or what their religion is, or what their orientation is. It's very welcoming where you come together as a team and it doesn't really matter in the moment. You're just there to push each other to be better. So I've always felt like it's a really open community. No matter who you are, there's a way for you to fit in."

Although the skaters are the highlight of every match, not everyone who is involved with the Salt City Roller Derby is a skater. The league relies on people who help out behind the scenes to help with organization and promotion. Even for those who don't want to lace up a pair of roller skates and join the rink, there is a place for them to fit in on the league.

"We are completely skater run," Stefanie explained, "We're a nonprofit organization as well. We can't function without each other, the league members. We are always looking for new [members]. We have bootcamps that happen during the year where we teach new skaters how to play. We want to be able to make new friends and to compete with as many people as we can."

Although those involved with the league do what they do for the love of roller derby, skaters and volunteers stay involved for the sense of community. This unique community helped many team members find a sense of home and belonging in Syracuse. When asked about their favorite parts about being involved with the Salt City Roller Derby, both skaters agreed on the sense of community.

"I recently got injured and I needed help from people," Nicole said. "The majority of people that are coming to help me are my teammates. So I think it's just the people having shown up. Most of these people I've just met in January. Not a lot of people were there from the original team. There's a couple, but mostly people I literally met eight months ago. And they're just showing up at my time of need, no questions asked. It's really, really supportive."

"For me, personally, it's the sense of community," Stefanie agreed. "As someone who is not from up here and had nobody personally here when I moved here a few months ago, having a community I could get absorbed into has been the best part of being a part of the league." swm

If you are interested in becoming involved with the league or want to become a fan, visit www.saltcityrollerderby.com.



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ROBIN CHALIFOUX & SYDNEY HOPKINS

Mother and daughter give hope to those with breast cancer

Kate Hanzalik

Robin Chalifoux and her daughter Sydney Hopkins have always had a close relationship, one that has given each of them solace, courage, and hope as they've navigated their own unique challenges with regard to breast health.

"We talk about boobs in our household constantly," laughs Sydney in a recent interview with Robin for SWM. The two are part of a long line of women in the family with a history of breast disease, and together they're intent on keeping the conversation going beyond their household.

Robin's road from diagnosis to treatment and recovery began with a conversation she had with her husband when she was 38. "My husband actually told me about a woman that he worked with who had just been diagnosed, and I thought, 'Well, I haven't done a self-exam in a while.' So I did, and found a lump."

Continued on page 24



Photo by Alice G. Patterson

Mother and daughter give hope to those with breast cancer FROM PAGE 19

The lump was so small, just under one centimeter, that she had five needle biopsies just to determine what it was. The process was long and painful but eventually the doctors determined it was malignant cancer. “I had to have a mastectomy and I think I would have anyway, because my mom had breast cancer. So, I knew there was a chance that it could go down a bad road.”

Because the tumor was small, the doctor gave Robin the option to do chemotherapy. “The doctor said, you can choose to do the chemo if you want because it was right on the border. It’s just under one centimeter. So he said, ‘It’s really up to you.’ But I thought, if I don’t get chemo and it comes back, you know, I’ve only myself to blame. And what do you do then?”

She underwent six rounds of chemotherapy followed by five years of taking tamoxifen, a hormonal drug therapy that prevents estrogen from triggering breast cancer cell growth. “I did the works. Luckily for me, the chemo that I did have, because [the tumor] was so small, was one of the lesser potent cocktails. So I was tired, but I still ran through the treatments and I didn’t lose my hair. I had follicular activity, but no hair loss. So, I could feel itchiness [on my scalp], and it’s definitely thinned out, but no one would have been able to know.”

Even if people did know, it wouldn’t have mattered. Robin and Sydney agree that “it’s not where the love is” when it comes to the aesthetic effects of breast cancer treatment. The love was in the family and friends who helped Robin during this difficult time, whether that be babysitting her two young daughters or taking her Christmas shopping.

In the not-so-distant future, at age 16, Sydney discovered several lumps in her left breast. “I was having to have biopsies. And I had one removed. So from the time I was 16 to 26, I had seven or eight biopsies. And they were MRI-guided needle biopsies. They were very painful.” Sydney was diagnosed with juvenile papillomatosis, a rare condition where benign masses, lesions, and calcifications form in the breast tissue.

“That diagnosis along with family history was sort of what prompted me, after a lot of thought and biopsies and things like that, to do something preventative. So I got a prophylactic double mastectomy two-and-a-half years ago. I got it done ahead of any cancer diagnosis because I felt like every time I had a lump, it was just waiting for the other shoe to drop.”

Sydney looked to Robin for support and guidance during the difficult time. “I didn’t have anyone I knew that had done that at my age. So to have her to just talk to about everything, and as a sounding board, I think it was really helpful.”

Robin explains, “To do that at 28 is really a brave move . . . I don’t think I fully understood how challenging it would be emotionally to do that and physically, but emotionally, especially when you’re 28, I mean, and she hadn’t had her babies yet, you know, so that took out the opportunity to nurse, which, you know, a lot of people don’t, but if you wanted that opportunity, she didn’t even have that option.”

During Robin’s journey, she turned to the Komen Foundation for support. “It was such a good organization when I first was diagnosed because they were so supportive and they did the race [Race for the Cure], which was so heartwarming to go to and see all those pink shirts and the bald heads and everybody just coming together and supporting each other. And they would have a dinner for survivors who got to just talk to other people and hear their stories and what they’ve been through.”

Komen is no longer active in Central New York but Robin and Sydney are involved in a charity called Maureen’s Hope, which is in Baldwinsville. “She focuses on cancer patients and the families of folks going through cancer treatment. She doesn’t specifically focus on breast cancer, but I think any cancer diagnosis comes with a lot of challenges. And so we take on that organization for that reason,” says Robin.

Robin and Sydney’s experience has inspired others to become more vigilant about their own health. Sydney says, “Since I was 16, a lot of my close friends have always been privy to it. And I think they definitely are more hyper-aware of making sure they’re checking themselves. There used to be an assumption that breast cancer was only something that older women got. And so I think if nothing else, my friends sort of were jolted at the idea that it’s not always that case. You can actually be young and have issues.”

Continued on page 26





Mother and daughter give hope to those with breast cancer FROM PAGE 25

Robin adds, “Even if you are young, pay attention to your body and make sure if something feels like it’s not quite normal, that you are vigilant about it and be your own advocate about it. I think that’s important. Get your mammograms, do your self breast exams because that’s how I found it. I was 38 so I hadn’t even had a mammogram yet because they wouldn’t even recommend one until 40. So it’s not too early to do your self-exam.”

Sydney, now 31, is married and has one daughter. “I will do everything to make sure that my daughter is in the same position as I was, that there’s an open line of communication, and that she’s aware of what you should be doing and all the tools that are out there, the resources. Because there are a lot. Hopefully there will be even more by the time she’s in any position to worry. Maybe even a cure.”

Now, 27 years after her diagnosis, Robin is hopeful. “I think probably the biggest lesson was that there is hope and it’s not a death sentence. Every time I hear [that someone has died] from breast cancer, I’m shocked. And I know there are exceptions. . . . But it just seems like there’s so much now that people can do. It’s okay, you’ll make it through, people are out there to support you.”



It’s all about communication. “Moms should be talking to their daughters,” says Sydney. “My mom was so good about that, and that’s part of the reason that I was able to get ahead of things, because I was so aware of it at an early age and because she was so aware of it. I think anybody who has a daughter in that age group should not be treating it as some taboo subject, but be proactive about having those conversations.”

“I don’t think anybody in our lives forgets because we’re kind of shouting it from the rooftops any time we get the chance. But I do think anybody outside our circle is maybe forgetting. People’s lives are so busy that they don’t always take the time to think about it or do what they need to do to stay healthy. But October is a good reminder month.”

Resources

To learn about convenient options for getting a mammogram in the Syracuse area, visit Upstate Mobile Mammography’s website: www.upstate.edu/mobile-mammography. SWM

For more information about breast cancer and advocacy work, visit the website for Komen Foundation, Komen.org, and The National Breast Cancer Foundation, Nationalbreastcancer.org. To find out more about Maureen’s Hope Foundation, visit www.maureenshope.org.

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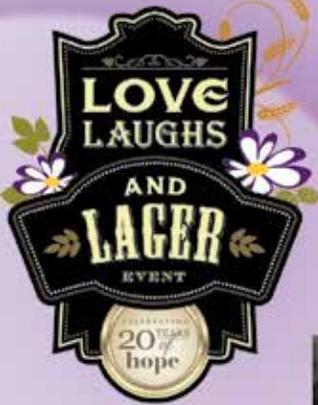


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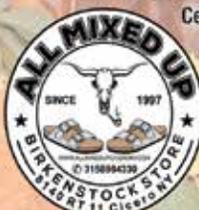
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Celebrating visionary leadership

SHEENA SOLOMON, 2024 WISDOM KEEPER

In the heart of Central New York, one woman's unwavering commitment to nourishing inclusive communities has earned her the esteemed title of 2024 Wisdom Keeper. Sheena Solomon, the executive director of The Gifford Foundation, is a beacon of change and compassion, whose profound impact resonates throughout Central New York.

Sheena's journey is one marked by transformative leadership and tireless dedication. Her vision, action, and impact have significantly bettered the community, leading FOCUS Greater Syracuse, Inc. to recognize her as a 2024 Wisdom Keeper. This honor celebrates her extraordinary journey and landmark achievements, a testament to the lasting imprint of her leadership.

Since joining The Gifford Foundation in 2007 and being appointed executive director in January 2019, Sheena has been resolute in her mission to guide the foundation towards greater community impact and inclusiveness.

At the core of Sheena's esteemed tenure at The Gifford Foundation lies her commitment to spearheading community impact initiatives. She champions diversity and inclusiveness within nonprofit boards through the "Nourishing Tomorrow's Leaders" program, which Sheena created because she believes in the transformative power of diverse perspectives in nurturing resilient communities.

Beyond her professional endeavors, Sheena's personal values and leadership approach are supported by a profound reverence for patience, understanding, and the celebration of diversity. She believes in fostering personal and community growth and champions the notion that inclusive, diverse groups form the foundation of a flourishing community.

Sheena's impact transcends beyond The Gifford Foundation, as she actively involves herself in numerous local and national boards,

including You Can't Fail Inc., the Syracuse Economic Development Corporation (SEDCO), and the Urban Minority Economic Association (UMEA). In these capacities, she champions equitable development and advocates for economic opportunities for marginalized communities.

Notably, Sheena's creation, the "What If..." Mini-Grants initiative, stands as a testament to her commitment to empowering residents to instigate positive change within their neighborhoods. This city-wide program embodies her philosophy of "teach them to fish," equipping individuals with the resources necessary to drive growth and capacity-building, thus nurturing vibrant and inclusive communities across Central New York.

Sheena Solomon's journey as a leader is distinguished by confidence, competence, courage, and calm leadership, a testament to her enduring impact on the community members she serves.

FOCUS Greater Syracuse, Inc. extends an invitation to unite in celebration of Sheena Solomon and Robert M. Simpson, the president and CEO of CenterState CEO, the esteemed 2024 Wisdom Keeper Honorees. Sheena's visionary leadership, unwavering dedication and profound impact on Central New York serve as a testament to her embodiment of this year's theme: Vision, Action, Impact.

The 2024 Wisdom Keeper Celebration will take place on Tuesday, Oct. 22, 2024 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. The event will be held at Daniella's Fresh Seafood and Pasta House. To reserve tickets today at www.focussyracuse.org. SWM

Submitted by Alicia Ernest, program director, Vision Greater Syracuse, Inc.





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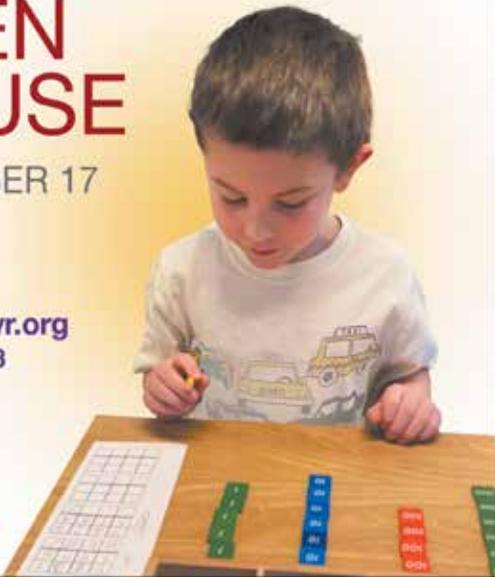


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Upstate's Mobile Mammography Unit, the 'Mammovan,' recently visited St. Camillus to provide breast cancer screenings for the staff members that work there. The van is typically on the road four days a week providing breast cancer screenings at locations across Central and Northern New York.

She Matters and the 'Mammovan'

EXPANDING BREAST CANCER SCREENING TO UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

David Tyler

Two local organizations that have helped thousands of Central New York women get screened for breast cancer are celebrating anniversaries this year.

She Matters originated in 2014 as a collaboration between Upstate and Syracuse Public Housing to help underserved residents of public housing facilities get screened for breast cancer, said project and program outreach coordinator Rachel Osiecki.

In its infancy, the team at She Matters went into Pioneer Homes, where they recruited and trained residents to become health advocates so they could let their neighbors know about the importance of getting screened. The theory was that by training neighbors to advocate for women's health care, they are able to overcome some of the mistrust and hesitancy to get screened.

To break down any barriers, She Matters provides flexible scheduling, transportation to their location at 550 Harrison St., Syracuse and incentives like refreshments and a Walmart gift card to ensure women get the care they need.

Since 2014, the program has expanded into many different public housing and senior facilities around the area and is constantly looking to expand its services. To date, more than 1,100 women have been screened through She Matters.

A few years later, enter the 'Mammovan,' Upstate's mobile mammography clinic that was originally funded with a state grant in 2017 and hit the road in 2019, providing breast cancer screening to a nine-county area across Central and Northern New York. When the three-year grant for the van ended in 2022, Upstate increased its footprint to include portions of the Finger Lakes as well.

"We go everywhere," said Wendy Hunt, program manager, adding that the van is typically on the road about four days a week. In many cases, the van provides breast cancer screenings to underserved rural populations. Other days, it is serving clients in senior facilities or housing projects in the Syracuse area or other cities across its coverage area.



The two programs work well together to identify places that are underserved, and to date, the Mammovan has provided breast cancer screenings to 4,367 patients.

Nationally, the ratio of cancer diagnoses to mammogram is about one per thousand. But for these two programs, because they serve populations that often haven't had regular screenings, the ratio is much higher. So far, the She Matters program has found 10 women with breast cancer – nearly 10 times the national average. And 18 women who otherwise would have gone undiagnosed have had their cancer discovered aboard the Mammovan.

"That shows that the population in the hard-to-reach areas that we go to really need that service," Wendy said.

If follow up screenings are needed, either through She Matters or the Mammovan, both teams are dogged about ensuring that patients follow through.

"We will work with you as many times as it takes to make sure you show up. We will go knock on your door if we have to," Rachel said.

"We'll do whatever it takes."

Similarly, the staff on the Mammovan works with patients' primary care physicians and insurance companies to ensure that everyone who needs care gets care. If a woman doesn't have a primary care physician, an Upstate physician can provide the prescription for the mammogram and the nurses ensure any follow ups are attended to, whether at an Upstate facility or elsewhere.

For Rachel, getting more women to get screened for breast cancer is personal. Her grandmother was lost to breast cancer at a young age. By the time she was diagnosed, the disease had already spread to her brain.

"I think with the awareness and technology we have now, it's so important to go and get that mammogram because they will find that breast cancer before you can feel it," Rachel said. "That's when you have the best treatment options."

Wendy recalled the story of a woman from Brighton Towers, who had a mammogram aboard the Mammovan that resulted in a cancer diagnosis.

"She said 'if you didn't bring the van to my building, I would have never been diagnosed ... I would have probably died,'" Wendy said. She was so happy with the Mammograms services that she called Upstate to get the van to come to her place of business to screen her fellow employees.

"A lot of these women, in the beginning, we had to convince them to come," Rachel said. "Now they're excited to come. And seeing that change in them wanting to take care of their health, and feeling empowered to take care of their health and looking forward to it, versus before they were hesitant to go... I guess that's what really makes me want to keep doing this."

To schedule a mobile mammography clinic at your site, contact Wendy at 315.492.3353. The inquire about the She Matters program, contact Rachel at 315.484.4237. *SWM*

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Healing your body and fighting cancer through nutrition

Eric Rose

Cancer is a word that strikes fear into the hearts of many, but what if we could empower ourselves to fight it with the very thing, we put into our bodies every day—our food? While medical treatments are essential, the role of nutrition in healing and supporting the body cannot be overstated.

Food can be medicine, and when approached with intention and knowledge, it becomes a powerful ally in the fight against cancer. However, it's important to note that bad nutrition can hurt us even more than good nutrition can help. The foods we choose to avoid are just as crucial as the ones we decide to include.

The power of nutrition in healing

Our bodies are designed to heal themselves, but they need the right tools. Nutrition provides the building blocks for cellular repair, immune support, and overall vitality. When we fuel our bodies with anti-inflammatory, antioxidant-rich foods, we create an environment less conducive to cancer growth. On the other hand, processed foods, sugars, and unhealthy fats can create a breeding ground for inflammation, which has been linked to numerous chronic illnesses, including cancer.

Choosing foods that nourish rather than harm is the first step towards creating a healing environment within your body. It's not just about adding healthy options but also about minimizing the intake of those foods that cause harm. By focusing on nutrient-dense, whole foods, you can support your body's natural defenses against disease and promote overall wellness.

Key nutrients and foods for fighting cancer

ANTIOXIDANTS: THE BODY'S DEFENSE SQUAD

Antioxidants are compounds that protect our cells from damage caused by free radicals, which can contribute to cancer development. Foods rich in antioxidants, such as berries, leafy greens, nuts and seeds, should be a staple in your diet. Specifically, vitamins C, E and beta-carotene are known for their protective qualities.

Berries: Blueberries, strawberries, and raspberries are high in flavonoids and vitamin C, both powerful antioxidants.

Leafy Greens: Spinach, kale, and Swiss chard contain chlorophyll, which can help block the carcinogenic effects of certain chemicals.

Nuts and Seeds: Almonds, walnuts, chia, and flaxseeds provide vitamin E, selenium, and omega-3 fatty acids that support cell health.

CRUCIFEROUS VEGETABLES: NATURE'S DETOXIFIERS

Cruciferous vegetables like broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, and cabbage contain compounds called glucosinolates, which are broken down into biologically active substances such as sulforaphane and indoles. These compounds help detoxify carcinogens and prevent cancer cell growth.

Broccoli: Rich in sulforaphane, which has been shown to reduce cancer cell proliferation.

Cauliflower: Contains compounds that support liver detoxification and hormone balance.



Hudson Hadley is getting an early start on making healthy eating choices.

Brussels Sprouts: High in fiber, vitamins C and K and detoxifying phytochemicals.

HEALTHY FATS: NOURISHING THE BODY

Not all fats are created equal. Healthy fats, like those found in avocados, olive oil, nuts, seeds, and fatty fish, support cellular integrity and reduce inflammation, which can lower the risk of cancer.

Omega-3 Fatty Acids: Found in salmon, sardines, flaxseeds and walnuts, these fats help reduce inflammation and support brain health.

Monounsaturated Fats: Olive oil and avocado oil are excellent choices for cooking and salad dressings. They provide vitamin E and antioxidants that protect cells.

HERBS AND SPICES: SMALL BUT MIGHTY

Herbs and spices are often overlooked, yet they pack a powerful punch of antioxidants, anti-inflammatory compounds, and cancer-fighting phytochemicals.

Turmeric: Contains curcumin, a potent anti-inflammatory compound with cancer-fighting properties. It's best absorbed when combined with black pepper, which enhances its bioavailability.

Ginger: Aids digestion and reduces inflammation; its active compounds have been shown to suppress cancer cell growth.

Cinnamon and Cloves: Both have strong antioxidant properties that can help protect cells from damage.

FIBER: THE UNSUNG HERO

Fiber supports gut health, aids in the removal of toxins, and can help regulate hormones, all of which are crucial for cancer prevention. A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and legumes provides the fiber your body needs to function optimally.

Whole Grains: Quinoa, oats, and brown rice are excellent sources of fiber and nutrients.

Legumes: Beans, lentils, and chickpeas are rich in fiber, protein and essential minerals.

Healing starts with the gut

The gut microbiome plays a crucial role in our immune system and overall health. A balanced gut supports the body's ability to fight cancer by enhancing immune function and reducing inflammation. Prebiotics and probiotics are essential for maintaining a healthy gut environment.

Prebiotics: These are found in foods like garlic, onions, asparagus, and bananas and help nourish good gut bacteria.

Probiotics: Fermented foods like yogurt, kefir, sauerkraut and kimchi introduce beneficial bacteria to the gut.

Eric's Pro Tip: Shop the Perimeter of the Grocery Store

One simple strategy for improving your nutrition is to shop the perimeter of the grocery store. This is where you'll find fresh, whole, and unprocessed foods - meats, dairy, whole grains, fruits, and vegetables. These items form the foundation of a nutrient-rich, anti-cancer diet. Avoid the inner aisles, which are often filled with highly processed, sugary, and preservative-laden foods that can undermine your health.

Limiting Cancer-Promoting Foods

While it's important to focus on what to include in your diet, it's equally crucial to be mindful of foods that can contribute to inflammation and cancer growth. Processed foods, refined sugars, and unhealthy fats can compromise your body's healing ability.

Processed Meats: Linked to an increased risk of colorectal cancer; limit intake of sausages, hot dogs, and bacon.

Sugary Drinks and Snacks: High sugar intake is associated with obesity and increased cancer risk; opt for whole fruits and water instead.

Trans Fats: Found in many fried and processed foods; these fats can increase inflammation and should be avoided.

Holistic approach to cancer prevention and healing

Nutrition is just one piece of the puzzle. A holistic approach, including regular physical activity, stress management, adequate sleep, and a strong support system, plays a vital role in cancer prevention and recovery.

Exercise: Regular movement helps reduce inflammation, balance hormones, and boost the immune system.

Stress Management: Chronic stress can weaken the immune system. Techniques like yoga, meditation, and deep breathing can support emotional and physical well-being.

Sleep: Quality sleep is essential for cellular repair and immune function. Aim for 7-8 hours of restful sleep per night.

Healing your body and fighting cancer through nutrition is about making intentional choices that support your health. By focusing on nutrient-dense, whole foods and limiting cancer-promoting ingredients, you can create a foundation for wellness that empowers your body to fight back. Remember, every meal is an opportunity to nourish and heal.

Start with small changes, embrace the healing power of food, and give your body the tools it needs to thrive. Make your grocery shopping intentional, stick to the perimeters, and keep your meals fresh, colorful, and full of life-giving nutrients. Your body - and your future self - will thank you. SWM

Editor's note: Chef Eric Rose is an award-winning chef and health coach.

Golden Paste

2 ½ cups Purified Water

5. 31 oz Organic Raw Turmeric Powder

.5 oz Organic Black Pepper Peppercorns

1 cup Organic Raw Unfiltered Honey

2.5 oz Organic Fresh Ginger (peeled & sliced)

2 Cinnamon Sticks

.5 oz Organic Clove

METHOD

Add water add peppercorns, fresh ginger slices, cinnamon sticks, and cloves to a medium sized pot and simmer for 15 min. Then filter out seasonings and return the liquid back to the pot. Add turmeric and stir heating over very low heat for 2-3 minutes. If it is too thick you might need to add a little more water. Remove from heat and add honey and mix well. At this point it should resemble a thickness like gravy. This base will last about two weeks in the fridge. It can be frozen.

PREPARATION

Take one tablespoon golden paste and add it to 1-2 cups of warm milk (almond, coconut, cashew, oat milk) or your favorite tea. You can add additional sweetener, cayenne or black pepper if desired.

** Golden milk paste can be stored in the refrigerator for up to two weeks once open.*

According to WebMD, turmeric tea/milk can help with: heartburn, stomach pain, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, diarrhea, intestinal gas, stomach bloating, loss of appetite, jaundice, liver problems, stomach ulcers, Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), high cholesterol, radiation and chemotherapy, skin inflammation from radiation treatment, fatigue. Other ailments treated with turmeric include: headaches, bronchitis, colds, lung infections, fibromyalgia, fever, menstrual problems, itchy skin, recovery after surgery, cancers, Alzheimer's disease, diabetes, water retention, urinary bladder inflammation, and kidney problems.

Continued on page 38



Healing your body and fighting cancer through nutrition FROM PAGE 37

Kale Waldorf Salad

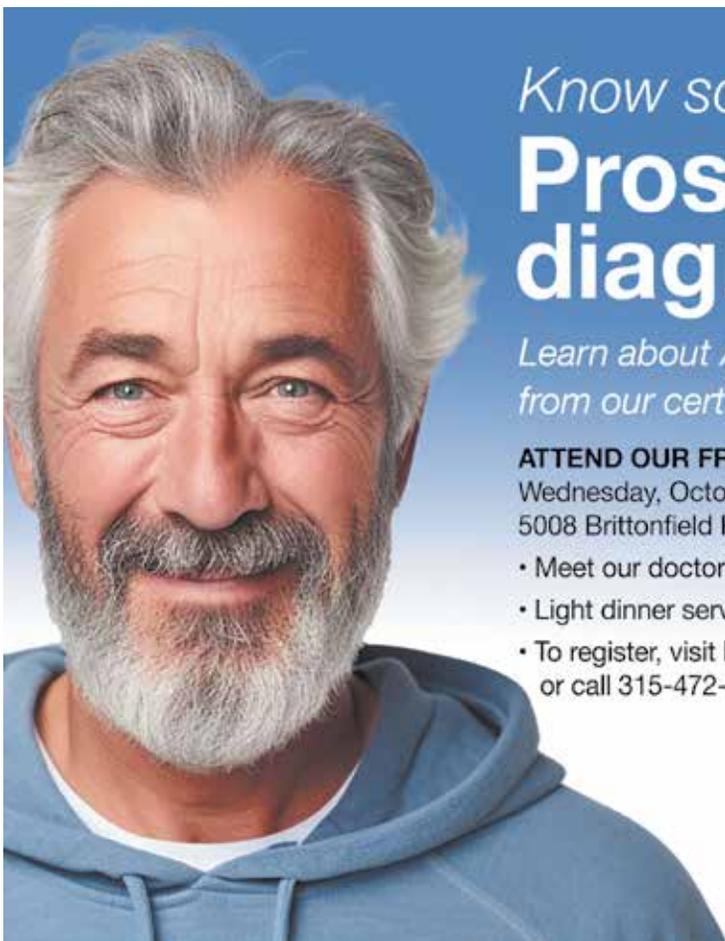
This version adds kale to the traditional apples, enhancing the salad's nutritional profile with vitamins A, C, and K; antioxidants; and fiber. The blend of fruity, crunchy flavors and textures makes it both delicious and satisfying. Additionally, replacing mayonnaise with a cashew-based dressing adds creaminess in a lighter, healthier way. Tree nut consumption is associated with reduced cancer.

Serves 4

¾ cup Raw Cashews	¼ cup Apple Cider Vinegar
8 cups Kale	2 each Apples
2 Tbsp Olive Oil	2 ribs Celery
1 Tbsp Honey	½ cup Pecans
2 each Lemons	1 cup Dried Blueberries

METHOD

Fill a small bowl with water and add cashews. Set aside to soak. Remove stems and ribs from kale. With a little extra olive oil rubbed into your palms, massage kale for a minute, until bright green and soft. Add leaves to a bowl with olive oil, lemon juice, half the apple cider vinegar and salt to taste. Thinly slice apple into matchsticks and cut celery into a ½-inch dice. Add half the apple and celery to the kale mixture. Add the remaining apple, celery, apple cider vinegar, soaked cashews, honey, and 8 tbsp water to a blender or food processor. Blend until smooth, adding more water if necessary. Add salt to taste. Pour over kale, then add pecans and blueberries and toss well. **Add a protein to this salad and you have a perfect meal option.*



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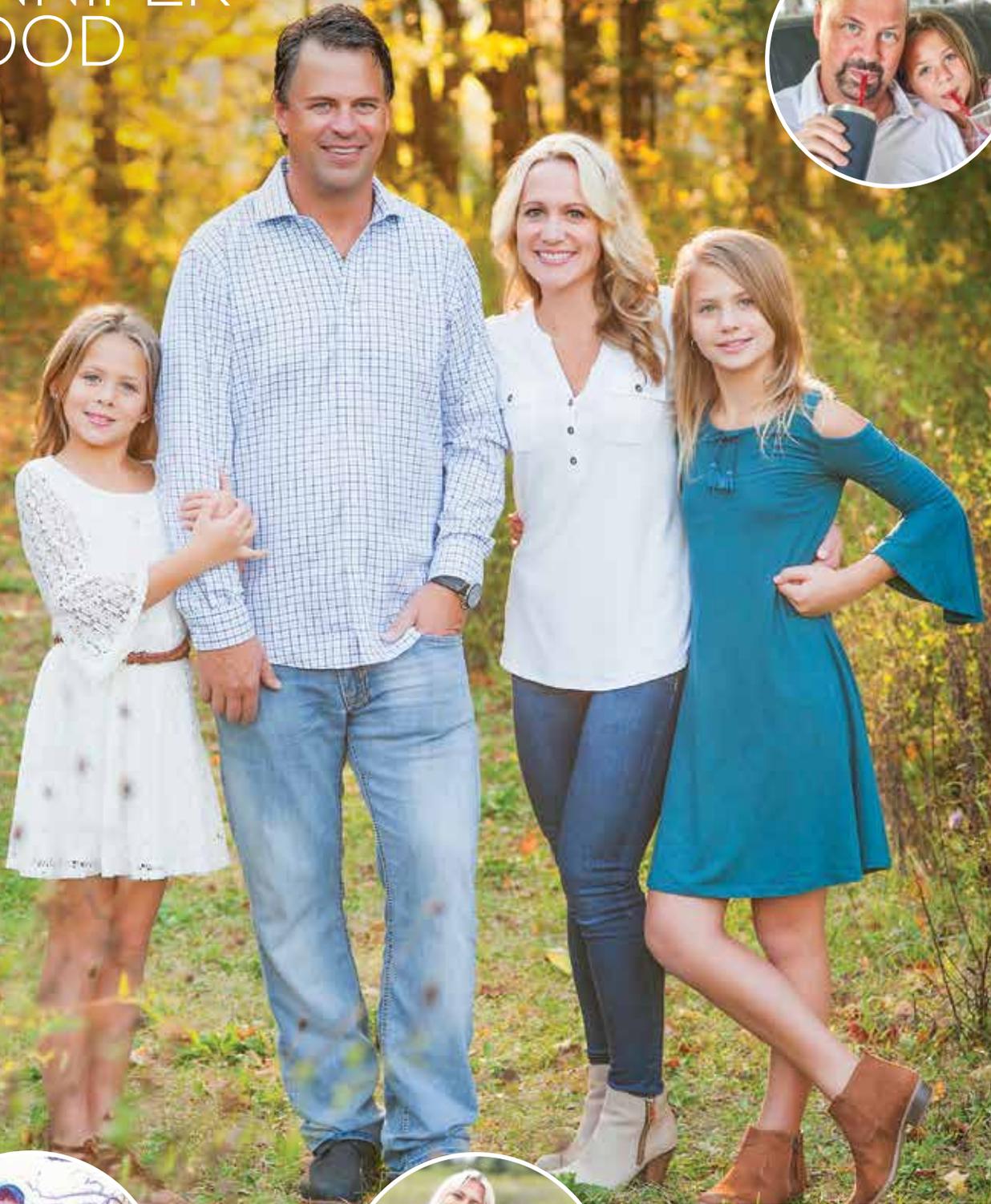
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JENNIFER WOOD



Trappers II owner perseveres following husband's death

Maggie Nerz Iribarne

The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic brought pain and separation, but undeniably it brought many communities together. Neighbors paraded down their streets for kids' birthday parties, families gathered outside their grandparents' nursing home windows, cities and towns celebrated essential workers with songs and honking horns. That same year Jennifer Wood, owner of Trappers 2 Pizza and Pub (T2) in Minoa, struggled through a separate trauma, the tragic loss of her husband, but found in her community the strength to not only survive, but thrive.

In early 2020, Jen and Aaron Wood had been married for almost 14 years and were the proud parents of daughters Madison (13) and Avery (11). They bought out their business partner in 2014, becoming the sole owners of T2. Between Aaron's job as a financial advisor, their rental properties, their girls' sports schedules, and T2, their lives were busy and happy. By spring, that world came crashing down, not just because of COVID, but because of Aaron's diagnosis of neuroendocrine cancer, a condition his doctors insisted wasn't terminal, but caused Aaron debilitating, worsening pain.

"At first Aaron and I were making decisions together of how we were going to operate. The sicker he got the less he was able to participate so it was me and our niece and General Manager, Bri [Sturick], navigating it, trying to interpret any new rules...implement all the new protocols," Jen says.

Jen still calls herself "Chief Problem Solver" to this day, and it was during that hectic and devastating period that she began to tap into her inner visionary and leader, finding one solution at a time to every problem that arose while running T2 during a family crisis and a pandemic. A staunch believer in giving back to her community by treating others how she would like to be treated, she saw the pandemic and even her family's misfortune as opportunities for generosity.

"We would raise money for families affected by COVID, or who were struggling financially. Customers would call in and buy trays of ziti or pizza and we'd deliver them to local families."

Under Jen's and Bri's direction, T2 weathered the COVID storm and survived, though Aaron did not, passing away at 50 years old, 10 months after his diagnosis.

Neither COVID nor Aaron's death pressured Jen to sell T2. She retained her employees, increasing their pay and constantly encouraging them to learn from their mistakes and manage stress by maintaining a healthy perspective on work. And, she hired lots of high school students.

"I'm a huge believer in high school kids working, managing extra-curricular activity and excelling in school. This makes for a good adult. I just put my faith in them and they do well. I move them up. I'm going on my second dishwasher moving all the way up to general manager. They are all awesome. I'm lucky," she says.

Instead of doing less after their loss, Jen and her daughters did more. They got involved in travel lacrosse (Madison) and soccer (Avery),

finding another community of parents, coaches, and young athletes. They traveled to games on weekends, made new friends.

Still, it wasn't easy.

"I think the hardest internal thing I deal with is the fact that Aaron was my best friend. He had my back no matter what. He and I raised the kids together, each assuming a role. Losing the father of my children I've had to try to fulfill both roles and I think along with that comes the guilt of having to be away from my children, of working, dividing my attention between earning money for my family and tending to their other needs," Jen says.

Four years have passed. Madison is driving, working at T2 and thinking about college. Avery plays every season of sports at school: soccer, volleyball, and lacrosse. Jen has met a new love, Steve, introduced by a friend of Aaron's. She continues as Chief Problem Solver for both home, T2, and her other business ventures.

At first skeptical about her abilities, she now owns 20 properties in total. She faced a steep learning curve when she built the side patio on T2 and her current project an elegant cocktail and small plates bar she's named, aptly, Good Wood, scheduled to open next year. Many of Jen's efforts, including renting her first new property to childhood friend Jamie Weisberg who runs Northbound, a holistic mind and body shop across the street from T2, have been attempts at erasing the recurring "Where's Minoa?" line from all outsider conversations, an interest she shares with her friends from nearby Spill the Tea Café and Infusion Yoga Studio and Mayor Bill Brazill.

T2 has flourished. It is a force in Jen's life and the community. People might seem to be coming for the pizza and beer but they are also coming to connect with family and friends, play volleyball or trivia, or even attend a private party. Jen

adores her staff and fosters a family-like environment at T2. She revels in her high standard (one Aaron shared) of generosity. She donates pizzas to East Syracuse Minoa concessions, teams, and other organizations and funds three \$1000 scholar-ships a year to kids that work (preferably at T2), have good grades and do an extracurricular activity. Jen continues to think big for T2 and the community by expanding delivery and outside catering, renovating the whole building, hosting bigger parties, and dreaming of bands on the patio and even a future music festival on Main Street.

Jen wants people to know how she survived such a devastating loss. "Appreciate whatever it is that you have for what it is, especially if it's just your health. Focusing on what I did have and not what I didn't was the key for me to maintain my strength and composure. When I was really missing Aaron or really stressing, being appreciative and grateful gave me the focus to carry on and thrive," Jen says.

In her darkest moments of grief, Jen remembered her community of family, friends, and coworkers.

She had so much to live for. *SWM*



Grateful /'grāt(fə)l/ – that's been my strength, my survival warrior word. When Aaron passed instead of me wallowing in self-pity and sadness, I focused on all the things that were good in my life and I was very appreciative of that. I have a lot to live for.

LUANE MURPHY

A stroke of resilience

Janelle Davis

In the heart of Cicero, stands All Mixed Up, a vibrant gift shop that reflects the spirit of its owner, LuAnn Murphy. On a warm, sunny Saturday in October 2023, LuAnn's life took an unexpected turn when she experienced a stroke. Her story is one of awareness, resilience, and the power of community support.

The day began like any other busy Saturday at All Mixed Up. LuAnn was in her element, bustling around the shop, assisting customers, and managing the day's hustle. Amidst the flurry of activity, she noticed something unusual: her peripheral vision had become distorted, resembling a kaleidoscope.

"Looking straight ahead, my vision was fine," LuAnn recalls. "I thought I was just picking up reflections from all my crystals." Unaware of the significance of this symptom, she continued with her day, even going grocery shopping after work.

It wasn't until she arrived at her camp and dozed off on the couch — something she hadn't done in years — that her family became concerned. Her husband, sensing something was amiss, called their son, Tyler. As neighbors gathered and an ambulance arrived, the gravity of the situation began to sink in.

The follow up

Despite her vitals appearing normal, LuAnn's husband drove her to the hospital as a precaution. Initially sent home that night, it was her family doctor who insisted on further testing. This decision proved crucial.

"I went back Tuesday morning to confirm I may have had two small strokes," LuAnn says. "Thank God I went back for testing." This experience underscores the importance of listening to our bodies and seeking professional medical advice, even when symptoms seem minor.

LuAnn's recovery journey was marked by both physical and emotional challenges. "Luckily, I didn't have any noticeable damage," she shares. Her recovery focused on adjusting to new medications for blood pressure and cholesterol. However, the emotional toll was significant. "I was scared it was going to happen again," LuAnn admits, a fear that lingered for about six months.

During this time, LuAnn's family proved invaluable. Her husband Tim and son Tyler stepped up, helping manage All Mixed Up while LuAnn regained her footing. Their support, along with the concern and care of her loyal customers, became a cornerstone of her recovery.



A new perspective on life and business

The stroke experience has given LuAnn a renewed appreciation for life and her community. "I always say I have the best customers," she beams. "Everyone was checking in to make sure I was good."

LuAnn's approach to work became a form of therapy. "When I'm busy, I don't have time to think and worry about things," she explains, finding solace in the familiar rhythms of her shop.

This experience has also reinforced the importance of family in LuAnn's life. "Life is short!" she exclaims. "My husband and my kids (including 2 dogs) are my life." She speaks proudly of her sons — Cody, an accountant in New York City, and Tyler, who works with her husband in landscaping — and their support during her recovery and the early days of her business.

LuAnn's experience has made her an advocate for stroke awareness. "Unfortunately, I didn't know that the kaleidoscope eye symptom was a sign," she shares. She now emphasizes the importance of recognizing potential stroke symptoms, including migraines, which can also be a warning sign.

Her advice to other small business owners who might face similar health challenges is simple yet powerful: "Ask questions. Talk about what's happening." LuAnn credits open communication with her customers and family as a crucial factor in her recovery. "So many people have great advice," she notes.

Looking forward

As LuAnn continues to thrive, she remains grateful for the support system that carried her through this challenging time. Her story is a testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the strength found in community bonds.

For those visiting Cicero, a stop at All Mixed Up offers more than just unique gifts — it's an opportunity to witness the embodiment of perseverance and the warmth of a community that rallies around its own. LuAnn Murphy's journey reminds us all of the preciousness of life and the importance of cherishing every moment with loved ones. *SWM*



Drakos hires two



Sheila Ptak, MSN, CPNP-PC

Drakos Clinical Dynamics has announced the hire of two new health-care providers at Drakos Pediatric Urgent Care in Liverpool.

Sheila Ptak, MSN, CPNP-PC, serves as a pediatric nurse practitioner. Her previous experiences include holding RN positions at SUNY Upstate Medical Hospital, Boston Medical Center in the Pediatric Emergency Department, Boston Children's Hospital, Ellis Medicine and Oswego Hospital. She received her MSN and PNP degrees from SUNY Upstate Medical University, as well as BSN and RN degrees from the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Science.

Madeline Frank, M.S., PA-C, serves as a physician associate. Her previous experience includes physician associate positions in both Auburn Community Hospital's Emergency Department and St. Joseph's Health's Emergency Department. Madeline earned her M.S. in Physician Assistant Studies, summa cum laude, from SUNY Upstate Medical University, and her B.S. in biology from SUNY Oneonta,

where she also graduated summa cum laude and received the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence and SUNYAC Scholar Athlete of the Year award.



Madeline Frank, M.S., PA-C

Sunshine Horses announces new board members



Betsy Bedigian

Sunshine Horses is pleased to announce the addition of Betsy Bedigian and Christine Petrone, CPB to Sunshine Horses' board of directors. Both bring to the Sunshine Horses a breadth of experience as members of and working with non-profit organizations.

Bedigian rekindled her bond with horses as a Sunshine volunteer following retirement from St. Joseph's Health. Bedigian served as a board member of the American Heart Association (CNY) and Limestone Pony Club, along with several other nonprofit organizations. She holds a master certificate in health care management from SUNY Empire State College and bachelor of science in business administration from Le Moyne College.

Petrone has been involved with horses since she was 8 years old. She brings to Sunshine Horses' board over 11 years accounting experience as the accounting and advisory services director for Dannible and McKee, LLP.

Petrone specializes in not-for-profit organizations and municipalities. A graduate of Cazenovia College, Christine currently resides in Cazenovia with her three horses,



Christine Petrone, CPB

three barn cats and one house cat. She is excited to bring her equine knowledge and nonprofit accounting expertise to Sunshine Horses, Inc.

Two hired at Women's Opportunity Center



Stefania Ianno

The Women's Opportunity Center has announced the addition of two new employees.

Stefania Ianno brings a wealth of expertise to the Women's Opportunity Center with her master's degree in marriage and family therapy and years of experience in the world of development, donor relations, and customer service. She is also the inspiring founder of Breaking Stalking, providing education on stalking awareness and prevention; her passion for this topic is commendable.

Sam Monroe has rejoined in the role of resource navigator. As the primary point of contact for WOC, she will be working diligently to connect our community with essential resources and support. With Sam's deep knowledge of our organization and her passion for serving the community, the organization is confident she will be a valuable asset in helping achieve its mission.



Sam Monroe

Syracuse Stage adds new trustee



Jessica Cain

A Central New York native and graduate of Syracuse University, Jessica Cain has spent nearly two decades working in the New York State media landscape. Before her current role as a reporter at NPR affiliate WRVO, Cain worked as an anchor, reporter and producer locally at CNY Central, WSYR and WWNH-TV and at Fox News in New York City—work that earned her recognition from the Syracuse Press Club and the New York State Broadcaster's association.

Cain teaches as an adjunct professor in the broadcast and digital journalism department at the Syracuse University Newhouse School of Public Communications. No stranger to Syracuse Stage, Cain played Belinda Cratchit in the company's 1992 production of "A Christmas Carol" when she was just eight years old.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, Oct. 5

Jowonio Speedway

What: Join for a candy-fueled evening of Mario Kart, scooter races and adult tricycle races! Featuring live music and food trucks. Proceeds support the school's inclusive preschool special education program.

Where: Jowonio School, Syracuse.

When: 5 to 8 p.m.

Info: For ages 8+. Tickets available at app.givebacks.gives/tricycle. www.jowonio.org.



Saturday, Oct. 19

Vera House's New Beginnings Gala

What: This formal gala raises money for supporting Vera House's life-changing services. Ticket includes cocktail reception and dinner.

Where: The OnCenter, Downtown Syracuse.

When: 5 to 9 p.m.

Info: Tickets starting at \$200. www.verahouse.org.



Sunday, Oct. 6

Nascentia Health's Raise a Glass

What: Food & drinks, amazing silent auction items and trips, basket raffles and more.

Where: Timber Banks Golf Club, Baldwinsville

When: 1 to 4 p.m.

Info: Tickets: bit.ly/raiseaglass24



Oct. 11-13

Retro Game Con 2024

What: Upstate New York's largest game expo celebrates all things gaming with vendors, artists, tournaments, cosplay, gaming and more.

Where: The Oncenter, Downtown Syracuse.

Info: www.retrogamecon.com



Sunday, Oct. 20

Making Strides Against Breast Cancer

What: Join forces with American Cancer Society to help end breast cancer as we know it for everyone.

Where: Clinton Square, Downtown Syracuse

When: 10 a.m.

Oct. 24

The Promise Continues

What: The Saint Agatha Foundation will celebrate 15 years at its annual gala. The foundation works with a variety of area healthcare providers to help pay for a wide range of breast cancer treatment and recovery-related costs.

Where: The OnCenter, Downtown Syracuse.

When: Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.; Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

Info: www.saintagathafoundation.org



Oct. 11-20

Pippin

What: The first son of King Charlemagne embarks on a delightful journey to find his own "corner in the sky" in this musical.

Where: The Syracuse Stage, Syracuse.

Info: Tickets starting at \$15. www.syracusestage.org/drama.



Oct. 24-27

Enchanted Beaver Lake

What: View over 400 specially carved jack-o-lanterns and enjoy fortune telling, food, entertainment, and more. This is the nature center's largest fundraiser of the year.

Where: Beaver Lake Nature Center, Baldwinsville.

When: Dusk.

Info: \$30 per vehicle. Tickets must be bought in advance on the website. www.beaverlakenature.org.



Tuesday, Oct. 15

Friends of the Central Library Author Series: Bonnie Garmus

What: Bonnie Garmus' debut novel, Lessons in Chemistry, has been translated into over 40 languages, selected by Queen Camilla for the Queen's Reading Room, and adapted into an Apple TV+ series.

Where: Oncenter, Downtown Syracuse.

Info: www.foclsyracuse.org.



Oct. 26 & 27

Halloween Fun Days

What: Enjoy a non-scary event for all ages featuring activities, games, live entertainment, themed food, and more.

Where: Great Swamp Conservancy, Canastota.

When: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Info: www.greatswampconservancy.org



Wednesday, Oct. 16

Whiskey Pairing Dinner

What: Experience four curated whiskeys paired with a four-course dinner.

Where: The Tasting Room, Downtown Syracuse.

When: 6 to 8:30 p.m.

Info: 21+. www.thetastingroomsyr.com.



Saturday, Nov. 2

Maureen's Hope 20th Anniversary Celebration: Live, Laugh, Lager

What: Enjoy music, dancing, food, a silent auction and beer at this celebration to support people facing life-altering diagnosis.

Where: Anheuser-Busch Brewery, Baldwinsville.

When: 6:30 to 11 p.m.

Info: \$125. www.maureenshope.org/purchase-tickets-here.



Wednesday, Oct. 16

Francis House's There's No Place Like Home

What: Enjoy wonderful refreshments while bidding on a variety of great silent auction items at Francis House's largest annual fundraiser

Where: Exposition Center, NYS Fairgrounds

When: 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Info: Tickets are \$50; www.francishouse.org



Thursday, Oct. 17

Syracuse's Go Red for Women Luncheon

What: Dress in red and join the American Heart Association in this special event to raise awareness of heart disease among women.

Where: OnCenter Convention Center

When: 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Info: For information and to register: heart.org/goredsyracuse



Thursday, Oct. 17

Movie Night at the Most

What: The museum is open late for after hours fun! Disney's Coco will show in the Explora Dome.

Where: The MOST, Downtown Syracuse.

When: 6 p.m.

Info: Regular museum admission for the museum. \$6 for the movie. www.most.org/late-till-8.





Join Welch & Co. Jewelers and Syracuse Woman Magazine for

A Holiday Ladies Night

Thursday, November 21, 2024
4 to 8 p.m.

Enjoy free hors d'oeuvres
& adult beverages

Bring your friends to enjoy an evening of fun, a special gift & door prizes!
RSVP recommended

513 South Main Street Rte #11
North Syracuse, NY 13212

TEXT your RSVP to
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WelchJewelers.com 

Create your very own wish list
Ladies...
HINT HINT!



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