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Inside:
Weddings
Today

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Delaware Today is dedicated to providing the most current information about local lifestyle and leisure trends while taking an unflinching look at the people and issues that influence the way we live.

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**2020 Delaware Today Top Doc*

DELAWARE ORTHOPAEDIC SPECIALISTS

WHAT THE HEALTH?

When the corona madness hit mid-March, I was in the process of changing primary care physicians. In lieu of an office visit, the doctor's assistant told me we'd have an early morning "televisit." Naturally, at the time, I interpreted that to mean a phone call.

I was working from home that day, my schedule surprisingly free of Zoom meetings, in-person interviews or photo shoots. So there I was, in the T-shirt I slept in and Pippi-style braids, when my phone rang in that familiar tune.

FaceTime?! He's FaceTiming me?

Slightly embarrassed, I wasn't quite vain enough not to answer. I thought, *at least I've brushed my teeth*, and greeted him with a joke about my obvious misunderstanding of the word "televisit."

This buzzword—referring to the practice of seeing patients virtually—has been a thing for a while, it turns out. While some practitioners in Delaware were already using virtual or telehealth, as it's also called, others were forced to transition to this new model when the pandemic prohibited in-person appointments. And as you'll learn in "Virtual Reality" written by Joan Page McKenna (page 60), it's meant patients in need of medical care can access immediate—sometimes lifesaving—treatment via video, phone or text. Talking with local physicians and therapists, McKenna explores how this vital practice just might become the norm in the future. In the same section, we honor 586 of the state's top doctors in various fields; we praise their innovation, dedication and spirit, especially during these last seven months.

Also mastering the art of the pivot this year is the wedding industry, as venues temporarily shuttered only to reopen under strict occupancy guidelines. While some betrothed couples canceled their Big Day entirely, most have postponed until 2021 (they hope!) or hopped aboard a new marital trend: the "minimony."

Inside this issue, the Fall/Winter edition of *Weddings Today* explains how this pared-down event doesn't have to compromise your grand vision, as well as why some couples are opting for two celebrations. Also review other top-knot trends ("All the Things"), be inspired by real-life wedding celebrations (before and after COVID-19) and discover romantic honeymoon staycations ("Destination Unknown").

Speaking of travel, if a summer of staying grounded has you wanderlusting through the fall, maybe it's time for a day trip. This month, we take you to Chester County, Pennsylvania, where the beautiful countryside offers everything from apple-picking and cider doughnuts to canoeing and canoodling with farm life.

For all of this and more, read on.

Happy trails!



Ashley Breeding
Editor

EDITOR'S PICKS

APPLE EVERYTHING

From ripe off the branch to fermented cocktails, locally grown apples are one of the best things about fall. And it doesn't get much better than the apple cider doughnut—baked with cider reduction, dipped in cinnamon and sugar, and served hot and steamy. Journey to nearby Chester County and find them at both Northbrook Marketplace and Highland Orchards.



ON THE ROAD AGAIN

After the mixtape came the mix CD, the "friendship bracelet" for teenagers of the 1990s, if you will. I didn't stop burning these until the birth of the first iPod, and recently rediscovered an old "road trip" collection from my 20s—everything from Willie Nelson to Wu-Tang Clan, sometimes in the same mix—which I've been spinning in the car ever since. There's nothing like the hit of nostalgia that old tunes (or the scent of special places revisited) brings.





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ON THE WEB



Instagram Alert

Thanks to photographer Angie Gray (@graygirlphoto) for capturing our "Renaissance men" for September's cover story!

Corrections

In the September issue, Top Nurses (page 59) honorees Kathleen DiGuglielmo and Nattalie Masso's names were misspelled. Honoree Grace Ngamau's title is RN, Women's and Children's Postpartum Unit, ChristianaCare Health System.

IN THIS ISSUE



Weddings Today

Planning during the pandemic? In this season's issue, we help you realize your original vision for the Big Day.

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One elbow can inspire a generation.

An elbow injury stopped Katie Piotti's BMX season. But it couldn't stop Katie.

Katie Piotti is a rising star in the sport of BMX racing and an inspiration to young women across the country. In fact, Katie has used her growing fame in this male-dominated sport to encourage the next generation of female athletes to pursue their dreams.

"Around the age of 14 to 16 girls start to drop out of sports in pretty high numbers," Katie

This past year, Katie was having her best season yet. She was nationally ranked and a lock to make the finals. But just one week before the championship race, Katie had an accident on the course, which resulted in a serious elbow injury. Her hopes of claiming her first BMX title were dashed.

Never one to give up, Katie looked to Bayhealth for treatment. Bayhealth has the

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explains. "That's why I love to work with young women in this age group. I enjoy coaching them and mentoring them and showing them that being an athlete is as cool for girls as it is for boys."

only specialized surgeons in the region who could diagnose, plan, and perform her surgery successfully. And here, Katie was able get the care she needed to get back on the track.



KATIE PIOTTI
BMX Racer
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**LAYERED ABSTRACTION:
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302 FIRST

PROFILE 20 | DIVERSIONS 24

HEALTH

BABIES ON BOARD

ChristianaCare brings a new model of **family-centric** care with the **Center for Women's and Children's Health**.

BY MEG RYAN

ChristianaCare continues to transform how it provides health care in Delaware, even amid the pandemic.

Last spring, while we were all hiding behind closed doors, Christiana Hospital was getting ready to open new ones at its Center for Women's and Children's Health in Newark. Offering multiple services for mothers, babies and families, the eight-story, 400,000-square-foot tower focuses on evidence-based, patient-centered treatments, according to ChristianaCare.

"We [took] every precaution for the health and safety of the families who count on us for the very best care," says Dr. David Paul, M.D., chair of the pediatrics department. "We have continued caring for new families without missing a beat, and babies don't wait."

Christiana Hospital is one of the highest-volume delivery hospitals in the region, welcoming more than 6,000 newborns each year.

Ranked by *Newsweek* as one of the nation's best maternity hospitals, ChristianaCare implements an innovative model of care for mom and baby at its recently opened Center for Women's and Children's Health in Newark.

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ChristianaCare is one of the only hospitals in the country to provide 'couplet care,' which keeps mom and baby together even if both require medical attention.



Within the new center is a state-of-the-art neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), offering private rooms with sleep-in space for parents. It's also one of the only hospitals in the country to provide "couplet care," which keeps mom and baby together even if both require medical attention.

The center also focuses on wellness and the reduction of infant mortality, neonatal abstinence syndrome, maternal mortality and postpartum depression.

In August, ChristianaCare was ranked as one of the nation's best maternity hospitals by *Newsweek* and Leapfrog, a nonprofit organization focused on the safety and quality performance of health care facilities in the United States.

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This month, Chesapeake City plays host to *The Revisionists: A Haunted Victorian Walk*, an event that's part theatrical experience and part history lesson.

WALK THIS WAY

A self-titled '**experientialist**' offers Delawareans a ghostly autumn **adventure** across the bridge.

BY DAVID HOWARD

Most marketers are hoping to sell you something, but Gregory Shelton has a far grander ambition: He wants people to have a cool experience. And folks who live in and around Chesapeake City, Maryland, will notice that the town feels a little livelier this autumn as a result.

Shelton, 50, runs Poplar Hall, a consulting firm named after the home and farm he and his wife, Dawn, own in Newark. The property is on the National Register of Historic Places, and the business is part production company, part marketing shop. But what excites Shelton most is creating exciting in-person events—something memorable that guests can take part in, even in the age of COVID-19. “I’m what I call an experientialist, which is something I came up with myself,” he says. “I’m immersed in the idea of creating experiences for people.”

This fall, Shelton will bring his brand of three-dimensional marketing to Chesapeake City, the nearby border town where he grew up and where some of his family still resides. His series of events began in August with a farmers market every Friday evening on the waterfront behind the Inn at the Canal and the town hall. The market ran through the end of September.

This month, Shelton will serve up something even more innovative: a theatrical stroll around the city titled *The Revisionists: A Haunted Victorian Walk*. The event, which Shelton describes as a hybrid “mobile theatrical experience and history lesson,” is rooted in the period between the 1880s and 1920s that Shelton says is considered the golden age of ghost stories. “My goal is to make historic Chesapeake City the next *Sleepy Hollow*, and really own the month of October here,” he says.



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My goal is to make historic Chesapeake City the next Sleepy Hollow, and really own the month of October here.

—Gregory Shelton

Audience size will be limited to 10 to 15 people to allow for social distancing, and Shelton says the event will meet pandemic-related health requirements. Performances are scheduled for Oct. 23–24 and Oct. 30–31, with more to be added the week before and after those dates if they sell out. Attendees are encouraged to wear Victorian garb.

Shelton's business relationship with Chesapeake City was forged around a European-style Christmas market that he debuted at Poplar Hall in 2017. After two years, the event outgrew his property, so Shelton relocated it to Chesapeake City. Since the event had generated significant buzz, Councilman Ed O'Hara asked Shelton to resuscitate the town's farmers market, which had disappeared a decade prior.

Mayor Rich Taylor says Poplar Hall's reputation for creating high-end experiences for all ages "dovetails nicely with what we're doing with Chesapeake City in terms of being an upscale family destination."

As a waterfront town with 693 residents, Chesapeake City has no trouble drumming up excitement during the summer, but the fall and winter have been a different story—at least up until this year. Shelton will wrap up his agenda with another Christmas market Dec. 5. Taylor says the town plans to expand the Christmas market in the future, after the coronavirus is no longer a factor.

For more about the event, visit poplarhall.us **DT**



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Doctors not in photo - Lena Jia, DDS and Ellie Baker, DMD, FAGD

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EMBRACING THE WEIRD

The **Oddporium** in Arden offers up **curiosities** and **horrors**—and real learning.

BY DAVID HOWARD

A global pandemic means living in strange, if not unprecedented, times. If you're inclined to lean into health-related adventures—plus a vast array of other eccentricities from the world of science and the paranormal—consider a visit to the Oddporium.

Part store, part museum, part community for people devoted to fringy things, the Oddporium is run by Arden natives Ken and Beth Schuler. Visitors are met with a panoply of curiosities from the late 1800s and early 1900s, ranging from vintage medical devices (an early electroshock therapy machine) and reconstructed skeletons to the preserved remains of a cycloptic pig. Guests can ponder an instrument once used for a procedure known as an ice pick lobotomy or flip through century-old records rescued from asylums facing demolition. Some of the items are for sale, while others are permanent exhibits. "It's really a wide range of subject matter in the store," Ken says. "There are a variety of things that appeal to what we like to call 'fellow weirdos.'"

Growing up, Ken was friends with Beth's older brother; she describes herself as "the annoying little sister." Ken was fascinated by animal skulls and old bottles they found in the woods and abandoned buildings; she had a crush on him and tagged along, eventually developing an interest of her own. "We were the first ones to poke something with a stick," she says with a laugh.

The couple wound up marrying and becoming collectors of curios and oddities gathered during urban exploration expeditions and demolition photography. When Ken lost his job, they decided to open the business in 2014 in a building Ken's family had owned for more than a century.

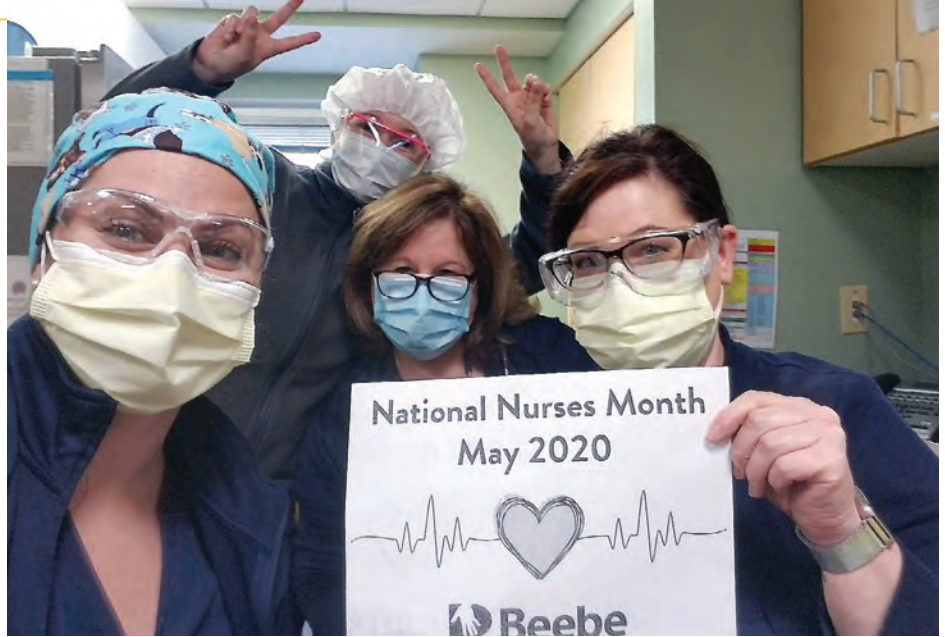
In addition to the hard-science items, the Oddporium sells tarot cards, crystals and other New Age merchandise. The Schulers have also created an educational prong of the business. Beth runs a science program for local middle schools, and AP science classes take field trips to the Oddporium, where the Schulers use a Tesla coil to demonstrate how electricity works.

In October, offerings will expand even further. Later this month, the Schulers plan to begin showing old horror movies on a 12-foot screen set up outdoors on their half-acre property, using an FM transmitter for sound; plots will be gridded out for

Continued to page 27



At the Oddporium, visitors are met with a panoply of curiosities from the late 1800s and early 1900s, ranging from vintage medical devices (an early electroshock therapy machine) and reconstructed skeletons to the preserved remains of a cycloptic pig.



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“
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a safe spot—a space
where people can come
and feel comfortable
with different
interests.”

—Ken Schuler

appropriate distancing. The series will debut with *Plan 9 from Outer Space*, a 1959 film that Ken admiringly describes as “the king of schlocky bad movies.”

Halloween is naturally a robust time of year for the Oddporium, but they also see unexpected surges of interest, like around Valentine’s Day. The Schulers once came into a supply of lamps made from cow femurs and sold their entire stock around that holiday.

The business has survived the pandemic intact. Fewer people are allowed in the small shop at a time, but the only substantial challenge the Schulers face is restocking popular items. “That’s always hard,” Ken says. “It’s not like there’s a superstore you can go to to get vintage medical equipment.”

In addition to airing horror classics, the Oddporium is reaching out to the local filmmaking community with an offer to premiere movies at its outdoor venue. Also on tap is an outdoor lecture series involving local UFO organizations; Dr. Lou DiMieri, who does programs on local ghost stories and founded a local ghost-hunting group; and Matt Lake, who has written a series of books on paranormal activities in several mid-Atlantic states, including *Weird Maryland* and *Weird New Jersey*.

Ultimately, the Schulers say, the Oddporium is about fostering a community. “We’ve always been a safe spot—a space where people can come and feel comfortable with different interests,” Ken says. “We’ve always embraced that. If you’re into Bigfoot, you can come here and you’re not going to be judged.” DT

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Source: The *Barron’s* “Top 1,200 Financial Advisors” list, March 13, 2020. The *Barron’s* “Top 1,200 Financial Advisors” ranking considered advisors with a minimum of seven years financial services experience and have been employed at their current firm for at least one year. This is a list of the top advisors in each state, with the number of ranking spots determined by each state’s population and wealth. Other quantitative and qualitative measures include assets under management, revenues generated by advisors for their firms, and the quality of the advisors’ practices, regulatory records, internal company documents, and 100-plus points of data provided by the advisors themselves. Rankings and recognition from *Barron’s* are no guarantee of future investment success and do not ensure that a current or prospective client will experience a higher level of performance results, and such rankings should not be construed as an endorsement of the advisor. *Barron’s* is a trademark of Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All rights reserved.

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BIG AMBITIONS

*Delaware Prosperity Partnership CEO Kurt Foreman has grand business visions for the **First State**.*

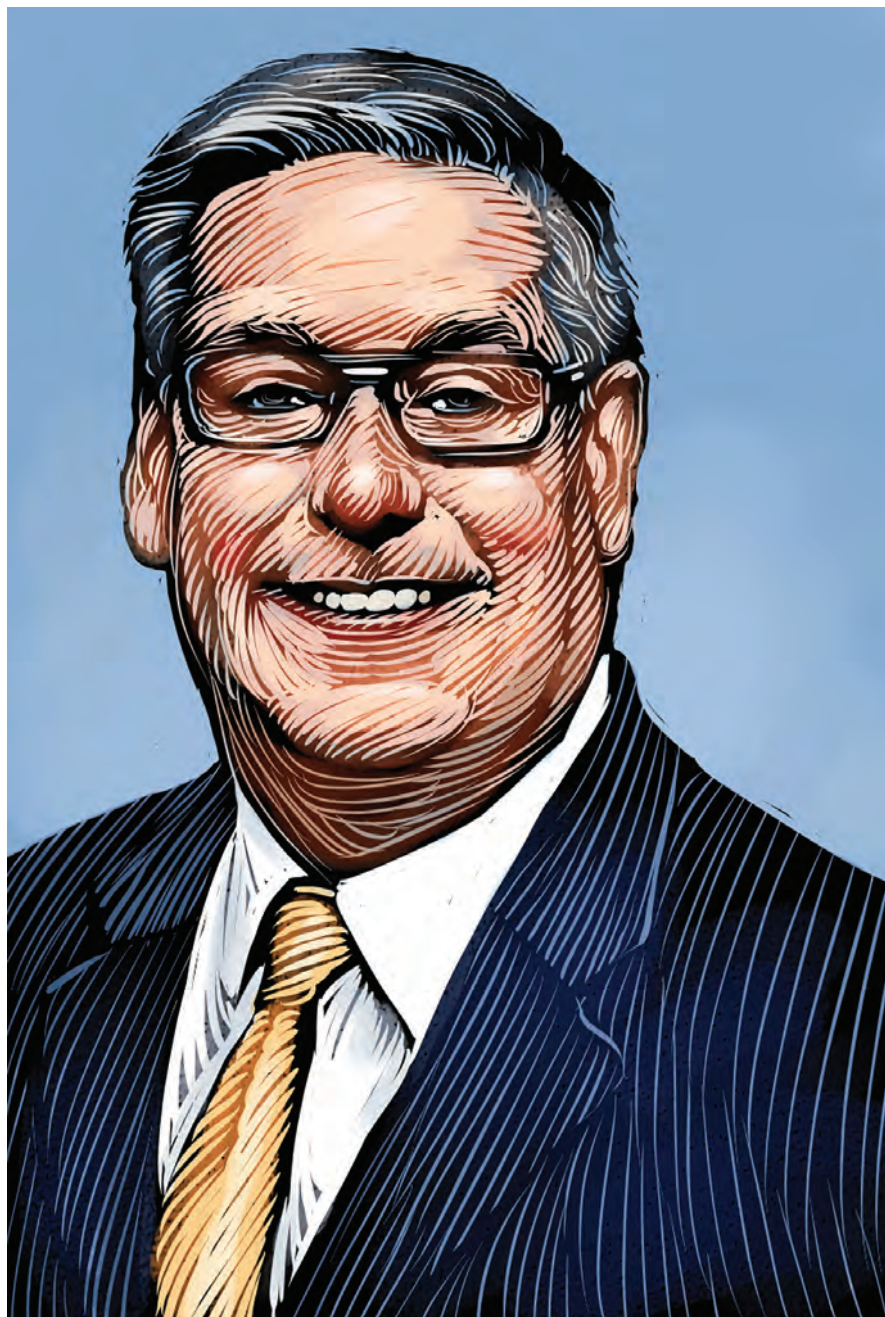
WORDS BY SAMANTHA DRAKE
ILLUSTRATION BY TIM FOLEY

By the time Kurt Foreman moved to Delaware in 2018 to become the first president and CEO of the Delaware Prosperity Partnership (DPP), he had already moved all over the country.

Yet Foreman and his wife, Julie, who have four grown children, weren't just parachuting in. Although they hadn't lived in Delaware before, Foreman says the move was a bit of a homecoming for him because he had lived in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Maryland for much of his youth.

Foreman hit the ground running to recruit a small team and launch the state's first public-private economic development organization. Delaware's prime location between New York and Washington, D.C., and its reputation as one of the most cost-effective places to operate on the East Coast make the state a key regional business hub.

Foreman says he's big on building partnerships to promote Delaware's business environment and attract more entrepreneurs and innovators to the state. One of DPP's primary goals is to spread the word beyond the mid-Atlantic region and internationally about the state's business opportunities. "Delaware doesn't always get its due as a vibrant and well-equipped place to do business," notes Foreman.



Delaware Today talked with Foreman about how he's getting to know Delaware on a personal level, his early career aspirations and his knowledge of local history.

Delaware Today: You've lived all over the United States, most recently in Louisiana. Where are you from originally?

Kurt Foreman: I've been accused of living everywhere, which is not true, but I've moved 28 times, I think. My dad was in the military as an Army chaplain. I was born in Fort Mead, Maryland, and I mostly grew up in the mid-Atlantic area.

As CEO of the Delaware Prosperity Partnership, Kurt Foreman works to attract more entrepreneurs and innovators to the First State by promoting far and wide the many business opportunities it offers.

DT: What's your favorite road trip or outing in Delaware?

KF: I enjoy the backroads of Delaware. I love driving through western Sussex County and through the marshlands. I like to get lost and see cool little places.

DT: What fact about Delaware do people find most surprising?

KF: A lot of people don't know that Delaware seceded from Pennsylvania. Our three counties were part of Pennsylvania at one time. I grew up in the region and I didn't know that.

DT: As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

KF: A forest ranger. Later, my fantasy job for many years was to be on Broadway—not to be a star but just to be in the cast. I thought that would be a lot of fun.

“

We have to work with others even if they feel they don't have to work with us.”

DT: What was your first job?

KF: I worked as a cashier at a Pathmark grocery store. Our store was the first to have scanners in our part of New Jersey.

DT: Do you have a personal motto?

KF: Not necessarily. The closest I have is something I've talked with staff about everywhere I've worked: “We have to work

with others even if they feel they don't have to work with us.” Another way of putting that is: “There's always room at the table for another chair.”

DT: What historical person do you most admire?

KF: William Lloyd Garrison. He was an abolitionist who was well ahead of his time on equality. He went beyond slavery into women's rights before the Civil War. The community tried to lynch him a couple of times and he was fairly disliked, but I think he's a fascinating person. Garrison had a great quote that I love: “I have a need to be all on fire, for I have mountains of ice about me to melt.”

DT: If you could have a superpower, what would you want to be able to do?

KF: It sounds hokey, but I'd like the ability to make people feel more empathetic and feel more comfortable cooperating, even more than they already do. **DT**



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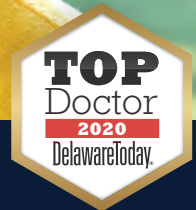
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WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY ASHLEY BREEDING



Above: October is your last chance this season to canoe or kayak down the Brandywine River with a local adventure outfitter. Sign up with Northbrook Canoe Co. and start at one of three different locations—depending on how far you want to paddle. The crew will take you where you need to go. Opposite: Barnard's Orchard offers about 10 different varieties of apples, ripe for picking through the end of the month.

MOOOVIN' ALONG

Just 20 minutes from downtown Wilmington, Route 52 and scenic back roads wind to **Baily's Dairy**, a historic farm perched on a hill in Pocopson overlooking 65 acres of bucolic beauty. Owned by the Baily family since the 1880s, the farm oversees all steps of the process, from birthing calves to bottling milk. Here among the mixed breeds of cows you'll find a herd of American Linebacks (identifiable by their pretty speckled coats and dark muzzles) roaming the grass pastures that help them produce nutrient-rich milk chock-full of antioxidants and omega-3s. The Bailys also breed for A2A2 milk, believed to be more easily digested than average moo juice. Kids (and adults) can canoodle with the farm's other fuzzy friends, including goats, sheep, chickens and one big bunny (if you can find him). Inside the marketplace, shop for dairy, locally grown produce, seasonal sauces and



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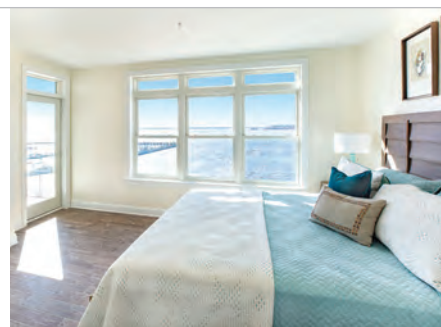


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Another 10 minutes (and more winding thoroughfares) takes you to Wawaset Road and **Barnard's Orchard**, a fourth-generation farm sprawled across 74 green acres. Growing produce year-round, Barnard's autumn harvest provides seasonal staples like kale, pumpkins and apples—the latter of which you can pick yourself. Among the dozen or so variety of apples (the season typically runs from late September through October, but Mother Nature makes the call) are Jonathan Golds, Ida Reds and Stayman Winesaps—a No. 1 seller that “blows Honeycrisps away,” says owner Lewis Barnard. Purchase a bag at the little market out front (don't forget to stop and say hello to Bootsie the barn cat) and get pickin'. 610-347-2151



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Above: A must-visit for every hiker, Coatesville's ChesLen Preserve boasts miles of trails through farmland, meadows, cool woodlands and valley streams. Opposite: Around the bend from Northbrook Canoe Co., Northbrook Cattle's resident herd welcomes passersby from the pasture fence. Be sure to give them some space, as their massive horns can stretch 8 feet across.

Another hop, skip and a spin through horse country and you'll arrive at **Highland Orchards**, owned and operated by the Hodge family since the 1940s. Originally 100 acres used primarily for growing apples, it's since expanded to about 300 and sprouts everything from early-summer rhubarb, berries and cherries to late-summer corn. In the fall, you'll find a variety of pumpkins and over 30 different kinds of apples, from sweet Fujis to sour Granny Smiths. In a typical year, the farm's team offers "Safari Shuttles," dropping off customers who want to pick their own. (At press time, they were still working out the details of how to do this in a way that was safe and socially distant.) Known in these parts for its season-long festival and moonlit hayrides, those events are sadly on hold until next year. But the market, offering cooking staples and treats made close by, remains open. Enjoy a pastry in the picnic grove adjacent a playground and herd of goats.

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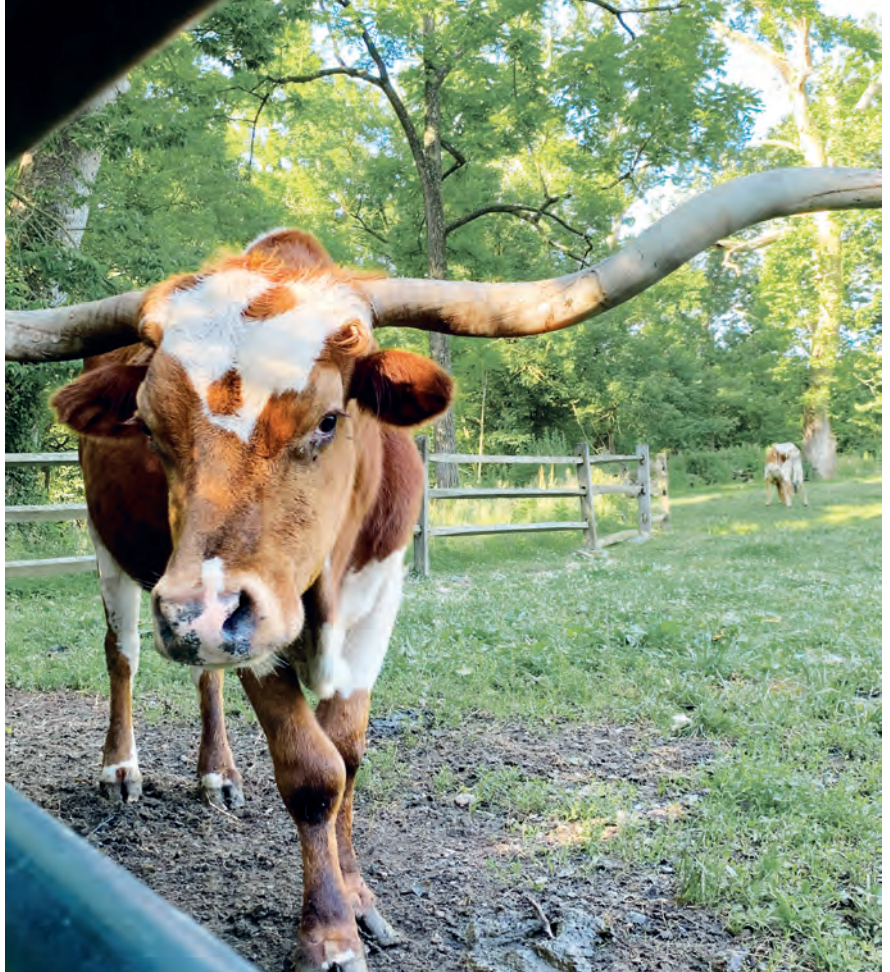
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BACK IT ON UP

To get to the orchard, you have to pass through Marshallton and Northbrook Historic District. Worth a stop on the way is **Northbrook Cattle**, where a herd of Texas Longhorns amble around a roadside pasture conveniently located across from a gravel lot. If you give them a whistle or a holler from the fence, they'll usually come over. As you might've guessed, these cattle are named for their massive horns—which can extend more than 8 feet—so you might want to wave hello from a distance.

UP THE CREEK, WITH A PADDLE

Around the bend from these hooved creatures, an old barn houses **Northbrook Canoe Co.**, an outdoor adventure outfitter in operation since 1977 that offers canoe and kayak excursions through October. If you speed past the signage, you're sure to catch sight of a caboose as you slow over the train tracks—a remnant of when the Brandywine Scenic Railroad operated here in the 1990s.



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DOING DOUGHNUTS

A beloved hangout of classic-car enthusiasts and local cyclists—you'll often see them in groups in the early hours on weekend mornings, their backs soaked with sweat and their bike cleats clicking all over the place—**Northbrook Marketplace** is perhaps best known for its apple cider doughnuts, served year-round but especially delicious in the fall. And that's not all this spot—housed in a big red barn on the corner of Wawaset and Northbrook roads—serves up. Need coffee? Pick your pour from a full bar. A heartier bite after that ride? Jump in line for something hot from the oven or pre-prepared in the fridge. Seeking locally made treats? They've got everything from jams and syrups to jerky and gourmet snacks. Come toward day's end and you can catch a sunset from a rocking chair on the front patio.

TAKE A HIKE

Once used to fatten cattle and for mushroom farming, **Natural Lands' ChesLen Preserve** in Coatesville is steeped in agriculture and history. At a vast 1,282 acres, it is Chester County's largest privately owned preserve that's open to the public and features a trail for every hiker. Littlest legs will enjoy climbing logs and exploring streams at Ollie Owl's nature playground, while older adventurers can meander (or trek) miles of marked trails through wild meadows, farmland, woodlands or valley streams. natlands.org/cheslen-preserve

FOX GOT YOUR TONGUE?

From Barnard's, a long stretch of the PA-842 spits you onto Route 82 and into the charming town of Unionville, with its historic structures and tight-knit community vibe reminiscent of a much simpler time. At the heart of the village is **Foxy Loxy Ice Cream Parlor and Coffee Shoppe**, boasting 18 flavors of hand-dipped ice cream served year-round, plus a bevy of other tasty bites and beverages. (I recommend this be your last stop, so you can sit back and relax with an espresso. Choose from a patio, picnic tables or a small firepit—and enjoy the sights and scents of fall.) 610-347-1129 **DT**

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Signe Cable-Knit Sweater, \$108, at Anthropologie.



Jasper and brass fringe gemstone necklace (32 inches), \$54, at Shoppe Marche, Kennett Square.



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WHAT'S THE POINT?

REFLEXOLOGY, AN ANCIENT HEALING MODALITY, MAY HELP QUELL MODERN-DAY STRESSES.

BY MINDY TORAN

The first time I had reflexology, I fell asleep. The gentle pressure of the therapist's hands kneading at my feet felt so soothing that I just nodded off. Reflexology, however, is much more than a foot massage. This therapeutic healing modality dates back to ancient Egypt, India and Babylonia. Evidence of the therapy dating from 2330 B.C. was found in the Egyptian pyramids, and it was also practiced in China as early as 5,000 years ago.

Reflexology is based on the theory that different points on the feet and hands correspond with various parts of the body, and that pressure applied to these "reflex points" can relieve stress and tension. It's a natural therapy that is believed to help balance the entire body and get energy flowing in a healthy direction.

"We all know that when our feet hurt, we often feel bad all over," says Kathy Schaubert, LMT, a certified reflexologist and owner of Tranquil Spirit in Bear. "The feet are mirrors of the body; reflex points on the hands and feet correspond to every organ, gland and

part of the body." Reflexologists use their thumbs and fingers to work these reflex points to bring the body back into balance, she explains. "Once balance is restored, the body can begin to nurture and repair itself."



The feet are mirrors of the body; reflex points correspond to every organ, gland and part of the body.



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In Western medicine, reflexology dates back to the early 1900s, when Dr. William Fitzgerald, M.D., wrote a book describing his success in relieving pain by using various devices on the fingers and toes. His practice became known as “zone therapy.”

Physiotherapist Eunice Ingham mapped out all of the body’s reflex areas, highlighting 10 imaginary zones—five on the right side of the body, five on the left—from the toes to the head. Each zone corresponds with a different body part. Applying pressure to the big toe, for instance, impacts the sinuses and the head; the ball of the foot between the toes and the arch relates to the lungs, chest and heart; and the heel of the foot relates to the intestines.

“Zone therapy is similar to the meridian lines found in acupuncture,” explains Greer Thompson, LMT, owner and director of HeartWish Healing Center in Rehoboth Beach. “In reflexology, we refer to what’s known as ‘marma points,’ or sensitive or vulnerable areas that can be stimulated to relieve energy blockages and improve energy flow throughout the body.”

While the physical impact of reflexology is similar to massage, there are also several other health benefits.

“Reflexology can be used to alleviate a variety of conditions,” explains Nickole Visan, MSOL/LMT, owner of Rehoboth’s Visan Massage & Bodywork. “When people experience agitation, stress, anxiety or persistent worry, reflexology can help bring them back into balance. ... It calms the mind, improves circulation, relieves stress and tension, alleviates foot pain and boosts the immune system.” **DT**

When seeking out a reflexologist, it’s important to look for a licensed massage therapist (LMT) with experience in reflexology as a complementary therapy. The International Institute of Reflexology in St. Petersburg, Florida, run by Dwight Byers, the nephew of Eunice Ingham, and the American Reflexology Certification Board, based in Grand Rapids, Michigan, can help you find a certified reflexologist in your area. Visit reflexology-usa.net/referrals.htm or arcb.net for more information.

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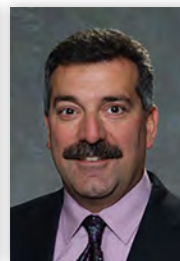
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2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020



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HOME & GARDEN

WHAT YOU GET 52

SPOTLIGHT

SINFULLY BEAUTIFUL

Be the envy of the neighborhood with this eclectic historic home in downtown Lewes.

BY JOAN PAGE MCKENNA



A 20-foot fountain anchors the lush, statue-filled garden at this unconventional Late Victorian in the Lewes Historic District.

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\$1.795 million



ADDRESS: 115 Kings Highway, Lewes **YEAR BUILT:** 1907 **BEDROOMS AND BATHS:** 5 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, 1 half-bath **SQUARE FOOTAGE:** 4,962 **LOT SIZE:** 23 acres **SCHOOL DISTRICT:** Cape Henlopen

More steps from the Zwaanendael Museum in the Lewes Historic District, this eclectic Late Victorian blends modern amenities, historic architecture and a soupçon of Dante for a perfectly quirky gem.

Two winged griffins perch atop the home's stairs, steadfastly guarding the front entryway. Seven impressive columns—each carved in relief with one of the seven deadly sins—frame the wraparound porch, with greed and sloth flanking the enigmatic griffins.

The home's life began on Christmas Day 1907 when Anthony Paynter Ingram and wife



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Above, left: The updated kitchen features quartz countertops, stainless steel appliances and an island; a posh bathroom offers an ornate framed mirror and stained glass. The wraparound porch, far left, includes columns carved with the seven deadly sins, while a retro downstairs bar, left, has a speakeasy feel.

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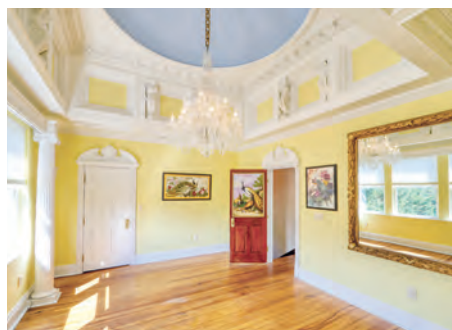
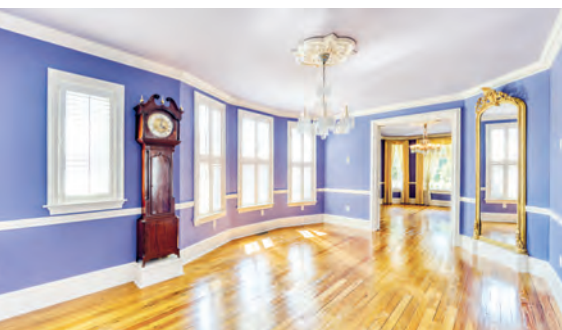
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“

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Mollie Virden Poynter Ingram took up residence at the new build on the corner of Franklin Avenue and Kings Highway. Anthony, 47, had just married his young bride—only 19—the year prior, after his first wife died.

He spent his days working at his family's nearby coal and lumber operation, while Mollie tended to their ever growing family. The pair raised six children together until his death 20 years later. Mollie stayed there another two decades before relocating for the remainder of her life to her childhood home on Madison Street, where she had married Anthony so many years before.

The original 2,200-square-foot house gradually fell into disrepair, until art conservator Richard Verzier and his partner Glen

Thompson purchased it in 2001 with a full restoration in mind. They spent three years working on the house, first adding a three-story, 2,800-square-foot addition and creating a tea room, a music room and an area for entertaining.

They re-created the faux-brownstone façade using hundreds of 20-inch cement blocks custom-made in Baltimore at \$20 apiece—a sharp contrast to the 8 cents each “Belgian block” cost back in 1906 when they were made in Seaford. “Bide a Wee,” meaning “stay a while” in Old English, was engraved over a newly created side door facing Franklin Street.

Since the home would backdrop Verzier's extensive art and religious artifacts collection, some of it dating back centuries, the couple expanded the design outdoors with



This page: Anthony Paynter Ingram and Mollie Virden Poynter Ingram, the home's original owners, married in 1906—he was 47, she just 19—and took up residence in the brand-new build on Christmas Day 1907. Opposite: A large deck overlooks the back garden. Charming historic features include crown molding, ceiling medallions, hardwood floors and wainscoting.



Designed by Katy Wolfington



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The home's all-season sun porch offers views of the koi pond and the fountain, as well as the statue-filled garden. The original home was 2,200 square feet, but new owners purchased it in 2001 and spent three years restoring it and building out a three-story, 2,800-square-foot addition.



a religious theme. The seven columns and griffins were installed, along with various winged statuary throughout the garden, reportedly leading neighbors to dub it the "House of the Seven Sins."

In a nod to the original owners, a portrait of Anthony and Mollie Ingram presided over the entranceway.

The five-bedroom, 4 1/2-bath home has successfully retained its historic charm—including crown molding, ceiling medallions, hardwood floors and wainscoting. Chandeliers hang everywhere, with a spectacular Waterford crystal masterpiece highlighting an ornate, 14-foot-high domed room.



There are plenty of modern touches now, too. The kitchen features two sinks, a gas stovetop and oven, quartz countertops, stainless steel appliances and an island. A formal dining room and an all-season sun porch offer views of the lily pad-filled koi pond and Roman centurion-style fountain, as well as a lush, statue-filled garden.

A majestic wood staircase leads to a second-floor master, which opens to a large deck (more patinated statues!) overlooking the backyard, along with three more bedrooms. The finished basement offers a vibrant bar with a 1920s vibe, plus a full bath.

Listed by Nick Carter, Jack Lingo Realtor

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ADDRESS: 14 Pheasants Ridge N., Greenville
BEDROOMS, BATHS: 4 bedrooms, 3 baths, 2 powder rooms
SQUARE FOOTAGE: 5,675
LOT SIZE: 2 acres



RESTFUL RETREATS

THESE EXPANSIVE **NEW CASTLE COUNTY** HOMES OFFER **TRANQUIL** LIVING AND ROOM TO MOVE.

BY JOAN PAGE MCKENNA

Bucolic Beauty

\$850,000

Nestled on 2 acres amid conserved land by the Coverdale Farm Preserve, this traditional château-style home offers an idyllic, light-filled getaway with easy access to the city. A soaring entryway invites visitors to enjoy formal and informal entertaining spaces featuring millwork, French doors and hardwood floors. A high-end kitchen includes Calcutta marble, a granite island and stainless-steel appliances; a full-height stone fireplace warms the cozy breakfast room. An elegant master suite has a Jacuzzi tub, while a walk-out lower level adds a wet bar and access to the outdoor hot tub and slate patio.

Ashle Wilson Bailey, Long & Foster Greenville

Stone Manor

\$849,999

With a gray stone façade reminiscent of castles on misty English moors, this three-story Colonial on a full acre offers upmarket finishes in a quiet setting. An inviting kitchen includes an island, a Viking range, a Subzero refrigerator, a butler's pantry, granite counters and a fireplace. The grand foyer welcomes guests, who can then partake in libations at the wet bar before heading outside to enjoy nature views from the multilevel deck. The party continues inside with a spacious third-floor media room. Other features include a large in-law suite and a three-car garage.

Listed by Joe Rosauri, Delaware Coastal Realty



ADDRESS: 1797 Yeatmans Mill Road, Newark
BEDROOMS, BATHS: 5 bedrooms, 4 baths, 2 half-baths
SQUARE FOOTAGE: 5,425 **LOT SIZE:** 1 acre





Fostering Hope

For one **Middletown** couple, being parents is about more than just **providing** the necessities.

BY MEG RYAN

On Saturdays, Natalie Price-Starks vigorously preps meals. The kitchen is abuzz with sounds of chopping, sautéing and mixing as the Middletown mom crafts dinners for the week. Some dishes she drives into Philadelphia to give to her mother. The rest are for her blended family, which includes her husband, their 9-year-old adopted daughter and four foster children.

“We just all get in the kitchen and everybody has a piece of the puzzle,” she says.

Right now, the favorite meal in the household is tacos.

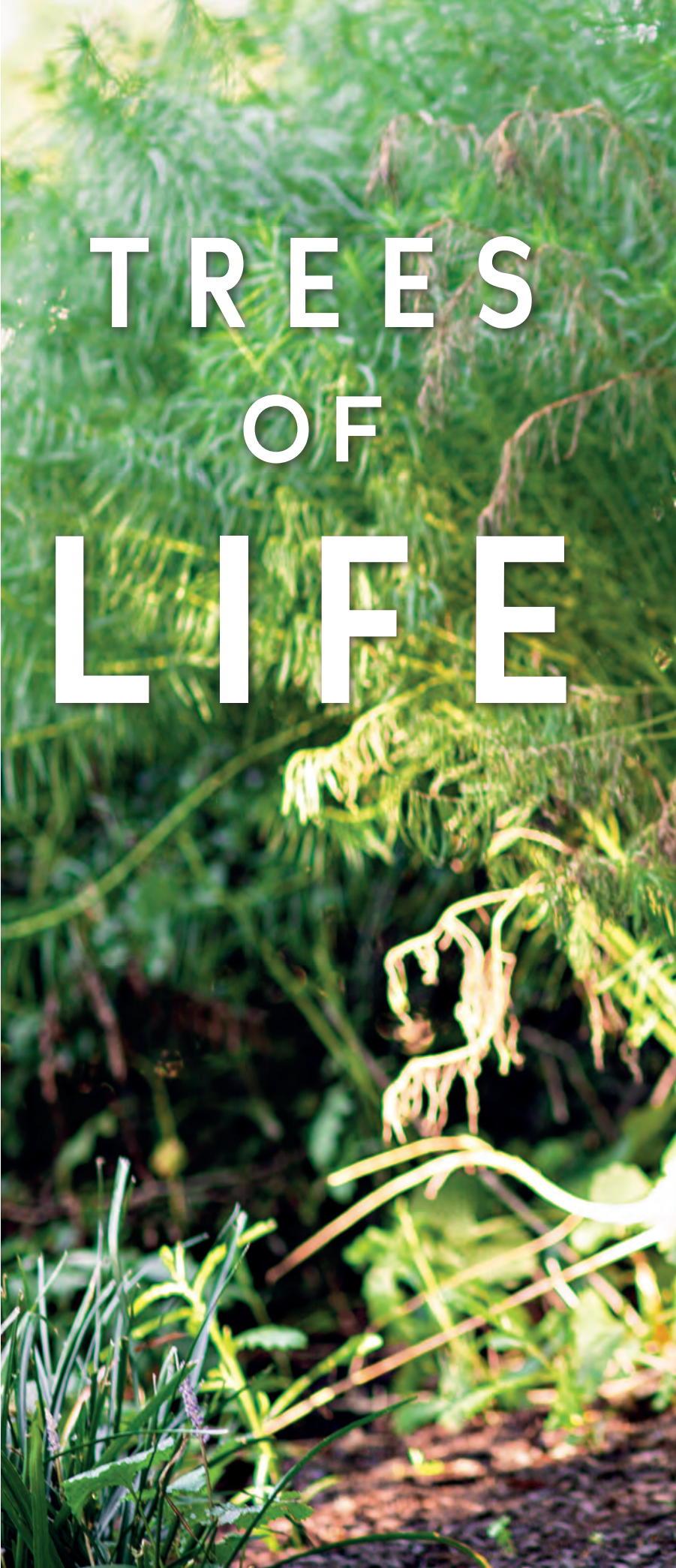
Price-Starks has always been nurturing, but after giving birth to one biological child (now an adult) and realizing she couldn’t have more of her own, the Philadelphia native looked into foster parenting. Nineteen years later, she’s cared for more than 20 children, from infants to teenagers. Price-Starks works exclusively with Pressley Ridge, a social-impact organization that helps children and families through an array of supportive services, including foster care.

Pressley Ridge offers a treatment program that focuses on reducing a child’s trauma by ensuring they are safe and cared for by trained foster parents; when appropriate, it assists foster parents and families on their journey to adoption. Each year, more than 1,500 youths find loving homes with highly skilled foster parents, according to the organization.

Continued to page 172

Over the course of two decades, the Price-Starks family has fostered more than 20 children at their Middletown home. Their blended family currently comprises one biological daughter, an adopted 9-year-old daughter and four foster children.

TREES OF LIFE



Delaware's formerly incarcerated often have trouble landing work after prison. One local program helps them branch out into a promising career.

WORDS BY JORDAN HOWELL

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANGIE GRAY

After George Wright was released from James T. Vaughn Correctional Center in Smyrna, one of the biggest challenges he faced was keeping a working cellphone. It's an all-too-familiar dilemma among the formerly incarcerated: You can't get a job if you don't have a phone, but it's difficult to keep a phone when you can't find a job.

"It was hard," says Wright, 32, who was unemployed for 13 months after being released—13 months of doing whatever he could just to hold on to that phone, waiting for callbacks on the four or five job applications he submitted every week. "They always tell you to be honest on applications and in interviews, but it never worked."

The employment hunt was endlessly frustrating. When Wright first started looking for work, he followed all the rules, even checking the box asking if he had been convicted of a crime. After months of not hearing back, however, checking that box became more and more difficult. It was like a scarlet letter, the mark of the undesirable, immediately disqualifying him from the jobs he wanted most.

"I realized a lot of companies will say that they hire felons or people with criminal backgrounds, but that's not actually what's happening, at least not in my experience," Wright says.

So, he did what any person would under the circumstances: He stopped checking that box, stopped acknowledging his criminal record. Suddenly, he started getting more callbacks and

Continued to page 93



Delaware Center for Horticulture's Branches to Chances program hires and trains unemployed, underemployed and previously incarcerated individuals for entry-level positions in the horticulture industry, providing economic opportunity. For former inmate George Wright, above, the program was a chance at a new life.



This Old (Green) House

WHETHER RESIDING IN A **VICTORIAN MANSION** OR POSTWAR SPLIT-LEVEL, HOMEOWNERS ARE DISCOVERING **AFFORDABLE** WAYS TO MAKE EXISTING HOMES MORE **ENERGY EFFICIENT**.

WORDS BY ROGER MORRIS | PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAN LIDON





Homeowners in the mid-Atlantic are embracing the principals of green living while respecting the area's history. Instead of new builds, they're investing in older houses to make them more energy-efficient.



Darren Wright knows a thing or two about old houses and drafty windows. Wright and his wife, Karen, own a castle-like mansion in New Castle called Lesley Manor, built in 1855 and on the National Register of Historic Places. Purchased by the Wrights in 2006, the mansion has 39 rooms spread over 13,000 square feet. More importantly, Wright says, "It has 99 windows, and each one is different."

Although most people might not realize it, drafty windows and doors are among the biggest energy-wasters in any old house, not just mansions. Wright says that while the couple hasn't been able to deal with all 99 windows at once, they have gradually installed new custom-built storm windows, "which makes a massive difference in energy savings." And while the Wright home is not within New Castle's historic district, "We're trying to stay as close as possible to the historic nature of the house," he says.

At \$150 to \$900 per window, the couple is willing to forgo some niceties to continue their upgrades.

"Every year we put up more storm windows," Darren says. "Often it's a case of, 'Happy birthday, honey! I bought you a new storm window for a present!'"

Meanwhile, in the Brookside neighborhood just east of Newark, Carol Maker is undertaking a similar energy makeover in the postwar split-level house where she spent her childhood. "My family moved here in 1955," she says. "The house was brand new."

After living in Oregon for several years before returning to Delaware, Maker is now going through the step-by-step process of doing an energy upgrade of her new old home, adding major insulation in the third-floor attic in line with an energy audit she did after moving back.

"I was shocked by how little insulation the house had, although I remember as a kid it being too hot in the summer and too cold in the winter. I'm still feeling my way through the process," Maker says. "Insulating the crawl space under the house is next."

Just southwest of Glasgow, Kim and Scott Witman have decided to go solar after having looked at the technology several years ago. "The cost was exorbitant back then," Kim says, "so we put it on the back burner." Now, after almost 28 years of living in their attractive, single-level brick home positioned on a large lot, installing rooftop

solar panels makes economic sense. “We figured that it will be paid for in about seven years,” she says.

Homeowners in the Mid-Atlantic region are discovering that not everything that’s green about their houses has to be the color of the mold that the local humidity regularly deposits on their exterior siding. They are deciding to stay in their older houses longer and investing to make them more energy-efficient.

There are a variety of reasons for these decisions, including the obvious ones of having more comfortable places to live during hot summers and cold winters, and saving money on fuel costs. But there is also a cultural vibe brought on by concerns about climate change, spurring people to take on the responsibility of helping save their small corner of the planet. And homeowners are finding multiple ways to reach these goals.

Call it the “greenification” of the neighborhood.

To speed up the process, both federal and local governments are encouraging this residential renaissance through tax credits and other financial incentives and by sponsoring programs that ensure that energy efficiency reaches homeowner in all parts of the state and at all income levels.

“Each year, we help about 240 homeowners become more energy-efficient,” says Brad Whaley, director of community development and housing for Sussex County. To qualify, the homeowner must have an income that falls under 80 percent of the county’s median, have paid taxes and insurance, and live in the renovated property as their primary residence. In return, the total expenses for the energy fix are paid for by the county, which puts the upgrade contract up for bid and then oversees its execution.

As with the Wright mansion in New Castle, Whaley says one of his biggest problems is windows. “Of the 240 or so houses we repair each year, I would guess that the major energy needs for around 200 of them are better windows and doors,” he says.

There are many ways that upgrades are being made to make homes both more energy-efficient and greener in general. Among them:

Interior insulation and house wraps

Energy-efficient windows and doors

Alternate sources of fuel, such as solar, natural gas and geothermal

More efficient heating and cooling systems

More efficient appliances, from water heaters to refrigerators

Smart home monitoring systems that better determine when and where heating, cooling and lighting are needed based on family activities

Deciding which areas of a home consistently need more or less heating or cooling

“Thinking green” by deciding where energy use can be reduced, reusing products, recycling and buying environmentally friendly cleaning and gardening supplies

Vince and Elizabeth Moro have waded through many of the choices. It is a raw afternoon in late November, and the residue from a midday drizzle still hangs in the air. “Come around 4:30 p.m. while there’s still light,” Moro says in his email invitation to visit the 1800s farmhouse located roadside on a slope leading down to the Brandywine. The couple are currently living in half a house, having moved into the renovated portion while the other half is undergoing its makeover.

Like many farmhouses from the 18th and 19th centuries, the Moro property was originally a small dwelling with a stone foundation. As the farm became more prosperous and more children joined the family, additions were built. Over the years, the building went through subsequent metamorphoses as 20th-century owners added electricity and plumbing.

Continued to page 176

10 DIY Energy Upgrades

NOT ALL ENERGY UPGRADES TO OLDER HOMES INVOLVE HIRING CONTRACTORS AND SPENDING THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS. EVEN SMALL, DO-IT-YOURSELF PROJECTS CAN CONSERVE ENERGY AND MAKE THE ENVIRONMENT GREENER.

Door draft stoppers The oldest trick in the book is a horizontal “beanbag” or other long, flexible stopper that snuggles up against your door. Make one if you have sewing skills, buy one online or find one at the antique mall.

Weather stripping If you don’t have time or the resources to install draft-free doors and windows, peel-off weather stripping is inexpensive and quick.

Leak-proof pet ports If you have indoor-outdoor animals, a lot of cold air sweeps in and out of your house or garage through pet ports. Newer versions with flexible panels that are often magnetized create stronger seals while keeping pets safe.

“Home schooling” Teach everyone in your family the basics of energy savings—turn off lights when you’re not in the room, adjust the thermostat when you leave the house, wash dishes and clothes only when you have full loads, run hot water only when you need it and limit shower time.

Low-VOC paints Use paints that have low levels of VOCs—volatile organic compounds—to help reduce the danger of indoor air pollution from chemical outgassing.

Green pest controls Many companies offer green pest management outside and inside your home, but learn what is being done differently before signing the contract. Help yourself by cleaning up pest-attracting clutter outside your home and inside your basement.

Organic cleaning supplies As with green pest controls, search out cleaning products that will break down quickly in the environment.

Detox your home At least once a year—spring is a good time—rid your home of all excess cleaning and gardening compounds, disposing of them according to county regulations or at approved disposal sites.

Do an energy self-audit While professional audits are best, go to energy.gov/energysaver/home-energy-audits/do-it-yourself-home-energy-audits for a government-approved DIY check list.

Electric cars Technically, autos aren’t part of your home, but they do live in garages and are a great, if initially expensive, DIY way to reduce greenhouse gases.



VIRTUAL REALITY

As the **coronavirus** spread like wildfire, **Delaware's** innovative **healthcare** providers ramped up **telemedicine** services at lightning speed.

BY JOAN PAGE MCKENNA

Unprecedented times call for extraordinary ingenuity. When the coronavirus hit the nation like a tsunami this spring, Delaware's healthcare workers hit the ground running.

As the number of COVID-19 patients grew exponentially, everyone else still needed care, too, for everything from chronic conditions to minor injuries. Faced with the dilemma of needing to treat patients without risking exposure to the virus, many of Delaware's healthcare practitioners pivoted to virtual treatment, or telemedicine, almost overnight.

Fortunately for the First State, ChristianaCare Health System was already well prepared with its superconnected CareVio program, which launched in 2012 with a \$10 million grant from the Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Innovation.

"When COVID hit, we were able to monitor the patients," explains Sharon Anderson, MS, BSN, RN, CareVio's president and chief virtual health officer at ChristianaCare. "The coronavirus is very variable: You may feel fine, just a little bit of a fever in the first three or four days. By day eight, you can hardly breathe." In one case, someone they were monitoring remotely went into respiratory distress on day nine, but they were able to get an ambulance sent immediately.

"We get a lot of feedback from our patients, because we're open seven days a week and continuously text them up to three times a day," she says. Throughout the pandemic, CareVio has exchanged 600,000 texts and monitored 9,000 people.



At the Christiana Spine Center, Drs. Ann and Nancy Kim (twin sisters and 2020 "Top Doctors") transitioned to a nearly all-virtual-medicine model when the coronavirus emerged in March. They say telehealth, which is used to treat a variety of conditions, saved some of their patients from emergency-room visits.

schedule who initially scheduled in-office visits and told them how we are transitioning over to telemedicine, and the patients were very responsive to that and very grateful," she says. "I can't tell you how many folks said, 'Thank you so much for continuing our care. We were so scared that there was going to be no answer when we called the office, that nobody was going to be there.' ...The worst thing would be to leave patients abandoned, so we're very happy that we could be there for them."

They did not use televideo—nor were they even set up for it—until the coronavirus started, Nancy adds. "We saw that it was going to be a necessary means to treat our patients, because we certainly didn't want them to come in when they didn't feel safe and it really wasn't safe."

Although it seems counterintuitive, Ann says several conditions can easily be treated virtually, even things like low back pain.

"We can get a good history from the patient by asking about their pain location, if they're having any numbness or tingling or any weakness," she explains. An exam can also be conducted through telemedicine. "We can ask patients to bend forward, backward—are they having pain? So, we can certainly evaluate low pain and pinched nerves in the back," as well as neck, hip and shoulder pain issues.

There have been some challenges along the way, however. On Nancy's very first virtual visit, technical gremlins wreaked havoc.

"The biggest challenge was having a patient understand how to connect. With the electronic medical record and all the HIPAA guidelines, there's a certain way that you have to connect," she explains.

First, her patient had to download new telemedicine software. Then the Wi-Fi blipped and they lost their connection. "So then I ended up having to call the patient and then do it through the telephone, and we tried to reconnect again through the televideo, and then we finally connected. By then, a half an hour had passed, but

And there's no sign it's letting up, either. Forrester Research predicts the number of virtual healthcare interactions will exceed 1 billion nationally by year-end. That will likely amount to year-over-year growth of 64.3 percent due to COVID-19, according to research from Frost and Sullivan, and a potential sevenfold increase by 2025. By 2026, it could represent a \$186 billion market in the United States, Fortune Business Insights reports.

It's no wonder. According to the American Medical Association, telehealth offers patients numerous benefits, including continuity of care, immediate and after-hours access to help, relief from having to travel, and easing clinician shortages and increasing access, particularly in rural and underserved populations.

While the definition of telemedicine—and its associated regulations and medical billing policies—are in a state of flux, especially now, the term generally encompasses a wide range of methods for delivering treatment. (Anderson dubs it "virtual health.")

It can include scheduled audio/video visits, plus texting, phone calls, emails

or shared images when the need arises, with doctors, nurses, social workers, pharmacists, speech-language pathologists and other clinicians. It can also mean home biometrics with devices that remotely monitor diabetes, blood pressure and other chronic conditions.

"You can do your EKG on your iWatch," Anderson says. "And there are [digital] otoscopes that are connected from a telemedicine visit. People can look in your ears and your eyes and listen to your heart. If there's any positive about COVID, it's that it made virtual care much more of a reality."

Doctors Ann and Nancy Kim (twin sisters and 2020 "Top Doctors") specialize in physical medicine and rehabilitation at Christiana Spine Center. Telehealth—like phone calls—has long played some part in their practice, but when the pandemic emerged in March, they moved to nearly all-virtual medicine.

"We could see where things were heading and [our practice manager] was very proactive," Ann says. "As a team, as a practice, we all got on board, and we were all able to get together to make things happen efficiently and quickly."

"We contacted all the patients on the

then it went smoothly.”

Michelle Blankenship, MS, CCC, SLP, is director of Outpatient Rehabilitation Therapy Services for Easterseals Delaware & Maryland’s Eastern Shore. She understands the challenges of virtual health all too well, especially since many of the patients her organization sees are “littles”—kids under 3.

“We had a clinician who was treating a child who I guess was [just] done,” Blankenship says. “So he put the phone in his little Playskool barn and said, ‘Bye,’ and shut the door. The therapist was on the phone in a barn, going, ‘I’m in the barn! I’m in the barn!’ so the child’s caregiver would hear her.

Transitioning to telehealth this spring “felt like zero to a hundred,” Blankenship says. Her practice had been looking into telehealth as an option for a while, but regulations precluded its viability. “When COVID came, there were some lifted restrictions related to teletherapy and who could provide it, and where they could provide it,” she says. “So that allowed us to really dig in and provide our expertise with families through a screen.”

Easterseals has locations in all three counties, as well as one in Salisbury, Maryland. Pre-coronavirus, clinicians would travel to work with parents and caregivers on early intervention strategies for children with developmental delays, genetic syndromes and autism, including offering communication therapies. The week they went virtual, they held 600 televisits.

“Telehealth has allowed us to significantly empower our families,” Blankenship says. “In person, we can demonstrate first and then have Mom try, and we can have varying levels of participation,” she adds. “But through telehealth, it really is the therapist teaching Mom. We’ve been able to connect with some parents that we hadn’t been able to connect with as consistently prior to COVID.

“It was a very hard, fast shift, and the team has been amazing,” she continues. “We really were amongst a whole tribe of clinicians who were figuring it out, and

I can’t speak enough to their heart and their hustle that enabled us to provide these services to families that otherwise would have gone without support.”

Telehealth can also help ease disparities in access, Anderson says. ChristianaCare received a \$714,000 grant from the Federal Communications Commission in late April to support its telehealth services during the pandemic—one of only 17 healthcare providers in the country to get one.

“We’re going to have over 600 iPhones to give out and medical diagnostic equipment to bring into people’s homes, as well as being able to give them minutes and broadband access to connect for telemedicine services,” she says, including at offsite locations like the Latin American Community Center and Kingswood Community Center in Wilmington, where they offer a virtual COVID-19 practice, with testing, symptom checks, televisits and monitoring.

ChristianaCare practices what they preach, too. They’ve offered virtual primary care for their own employees for two years, which now treats 500 people, with in-person visits taking place only 4 percent of the time. Their new telehealth-based program for workplaces to monitor and combat COVID-19 is used by 27 employers across multiple states.

As for what the future holds for telemedicine in Delaware, “We believe that virtual is the future of health care,” Anderson says.

Nancy Kim says their practice will continue with in-person visits, but calls telehealth “a huge game-changer.”

“Had it not been for [virtual visits], none of our patients would have been able to make their way over to get treated. They would have ended up in the emergency room. I think telehealth is amazing. It’s made life easier for our patients. ... So for us, it’ll definitely stay.”

“There have been some bright spots that have come out of COVID,” Anderson adds. “People should get health care the way they want it. ... Home is our new venue of care, and we need to embrace that, and I think patient satisfaction will soar.” **DT**

THE RESULTS ARE IN

Who are the top doctors in Delaware? Once again, we asked physicians to vote for nominees using a secure online peer balloting system. In this year of extraordinary challenges, *Delaware Today* is honored to present our annual list of the best of the best in our state.

The top vote-getters are in bold.

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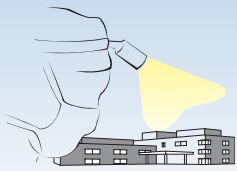


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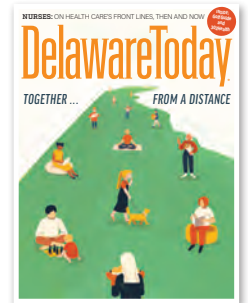
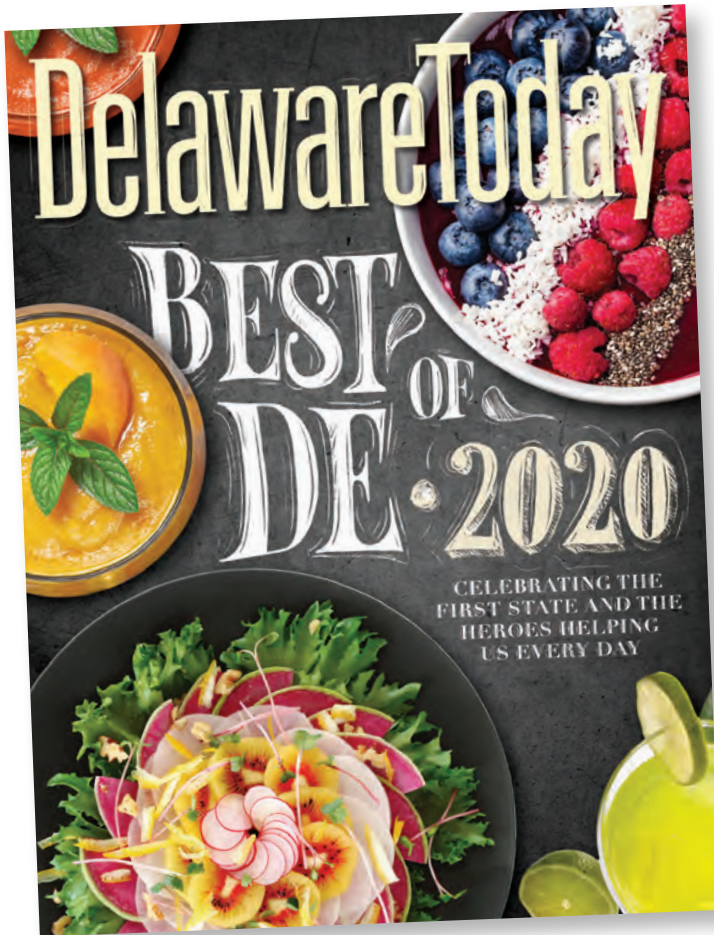
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Medical Profiles 2020



CARDIOVASCULAR

Dr. Malick Islam is Board certified in Internal Medicine, Cardiovascular Disease and Cardiac Electrophysiology. He completed his training in Internal Medicine from the University of Louisville, Cardiology from St. Louis University Hospital and Electrophysiology at Bay State Medical Centre in Springfield, Massachusetts. With a special interest in Atrial Fibrillation, Dr. Islam is skilled at performing a range of electrophysiologic procedures including pacemakers, defibrillator, Bi-Ventricular Defibrillator implantation, and radiofrequency ablation for supraventricular and ventricular tachyarrhythmia. He recently established a Watchman left atrial appendage occlusion program for patients with atrial fibrillation.



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Pictured above:

Dr. Malick Islam above with his partners and nurse practitioners.

Left to right is the following:

Alice Hopple, NP, Rajinder Prasad, MD, Jude O. Ediae, MD, Malick Islam, MD, Ehtasham Qureshi, MD, Nina Varughese, NP

Photo Credit: Maria DeForrest

CARDIOVASCULAR

Dr Qureshi has been providing exceptional cardiology services in Sussex county since 2007. He has been actively involved in establishing a strong cardiovascular service line at Beebe Healthcare and in the community. He has a busy office practice that is patient-centered along with his partners at Delaware Cardiovascular Associates.

He is the medical director of the Interventional program at Beebe Healthcare and was instrumental in starting a radial access, atherectomy and TAVR program - bringing these unique services close to home. Under his leadership, Beebe has been ranked amongst the Top 5% in the nation and among the best hospitals in Delaware in cardiovascular care.

Dr. Qureshi completed his medical training at St. Luke's Roosevelt Hospital/Columbia University in New York City and his cardiology training at Lankenau Hospital/Thomas Jefferson University at Wynnewood, Pennsylvania. With strong interest in primary prevention, Dr Qureshi believes that good heart care starts with healthy lifestyle choices and education.

Dr Qureshi provides educational seminars and community health lectures. He is sought for his expert opinion and strong interventional/procedural skills. In his career, he has received various honors and awards and is also well published in scientific journals.

Dr Qureshi lives in Lewes, DE with his wife and two daughters. He is an avid reader and travels frequently with his family.

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Dr. Ehtasham A. Qureshi

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Pictured above:

Dr. Ehtasham A. Qureshi above with his partners and nurse practitioners.

Left to right is the following:

Alice Hopple, NP, Rajinder Prasad, MD, Jude O. Ediae, MD, Malick Islam, MD, Ehtasham Qureshi, MD, Nina Varughese, NP



Dr. Wasif Qureshi has been providing the highest quality of cardiovascular care to his patients for the past 14 years. He is currently the President and Governor of the American College of Cardiology for Delaware (March 2020-2023).

He finished medical school from Aga Khan University Medical College and completed Internal Medicine Residency, Cardiovascular Disease and Interventional Cardiology fellowships at West Virginia University.

He is Board Certified in Internal Medicine, Cardiology and Interventional Cardiology. In addition, his expertise is in Endovascular and Structural Heart Disease.

Dr. Qureshi was first in Delaware to perform the first TAVR in Feb 2012, first Watchman Left Atrial Appendage Occlusion (LAAO) implant in Nov 2015 and the first MitraClip implant in Oct 2018, and active in all those programs. He is the Medical Director Structural Heart Disease at Christiana Care since 2012.

Dr. Qureshi has been involved with training Cardiovascular Disease and Interventional Cardiology fellows at Christiana Care Hospital since 2007.

Dr. Qureshi treats patients like his own family members. He is known as "the doctor who listens to his patients". He is passionate about helping his patients achieve and maintain the best quality of life.

Yuanyuan Zhang MD, Ph.D., is a board-certified cardiologist caring for patients at Delaware Cardiovascular Associates in Newark, Delaware, and Elkton, Maryland. After receiving her MD and Ph.D. from Shandong University Medical School in China, she went on to do genetic research in diabetes and atherosclerotic heart disease at Joslin Diabetes Center/Harvard Medical School, where she published several studies in peer-reviewed journals. Subsequently, Dr. Zhang completed internal medicine residency training at New York Downtown Hospital and cardiology fellowship training at Jefferson Medical College/Christiana Care Health System. Aside from Cardiology, Dr. Zhang is also board-certified in Internal Medicine, Adult Echocardiography, Nuclear Cardiology, and Lipidology. Her special interests are lipid disorders, preventive cardiology, and cardiac imaging.



CARDIOVASCULAR

DELAWARE CARDIOVASCULAR ASSOCIATES

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Pictured from left to right:
Dr. Wasif Qureshi and Dr. Yuanyuan Zhang.

Photo Credit: Maria DeForrest



For over twenty years, the mission of Southern Delaware Foot & Ankle (SDFA) is to provide the most comprehensive medical and surgical treatment of conditions affecting the foot and ankle in a safe, comfortable atmosphere. We provide valuable education in an effort to positively influence the lives of our patients so that they may live an active and fulfilling lifestyle. The physicians and surgeons at SDFA have been trained to provide a wide array of surgical and non-surgical options for our patients' foot and ankle pathologies.

Dr. Brad Lemon is Board Certified by of the American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery. He has also been affiliated with the American Diabetes Association and the American Professional Wound Care Association. Dr. Lemon has special interests in great toe joint arthritis, flat foot reconstruction, achilles tendon pathology, and hindfoot reconstruction.

Dr. Allen Mirzaei is Board Certified by the American Board of Podiatric Medicine. He is a Fellow of the American College of Podiatric Medicine. He is Board Qualified by the American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery. Dr. Mirzaei enjoys the medical and surgical management of all ailments of the foot and ankle with a passion for sports medicine.

Dr. Christopher Heisey is Board Certified by the American Board of Podiatric Medicine. He is Board Qualified by the American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery. Dr. Heisey has a passion for the treatment of foot and ankle fractures. As a former collegiate runner, he also enjoys treating disorders and injuries associated with running and other sports. Dr. Heisey was among the first to offer minimally invasive bunion surgery in Delaware.

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Pictured in photo left to right:

Allen Mirzaei DPM, Bradley Lemon DPM,
Christopher Heisey DPM

Photo Credit: Maria DeForrest

ORTHOPAEDICS

Dr. Kistler was born in Horsham, PA and attended the University of Pittsburgh for his undergraduate education. He then went on to medical school at Temple University. While at Temple he was inducted into the prestigious Alpha Omega Alpha National Honor Medical Society and received the Mary Daly Award for Clinical Excellence, as well as the John W. Lachman Orthopaedic Surgery Award. He went on to complete his residency training at Temple University Hospital, where he was awarded the Outstanding Research Award as a Chief Resident and served as the editor-in-chief for the Temple University Journal of Orthopaedic Surgery and Sports Medicine. Following residency, he completed his fellowship training in hand and upper extremity surgery at the Rothman Institute at Thomas Jefferson University. During his fellowship he received extensive training in the diagnosis and treatment of a variety of hand and upper extremity conditions as well as minimally invasive endoscopic carpal tunnel release. Dr. Kistler also performs a number of surgical procedures using only local anesthesia (wide awake) hand surgery allowing his patients to avoid general anesthesia.

Dr. Kistler has multiple publications in peer-reviewed journals and has given national presentations for his research work including: the use of antibiotics in hand & upper extremity surgery, upper extremity trauma and compartment syndrome, nerve injuries, and hand infections.

Dr. Kistler will see patients beginning in September 2020. He will specialize in the following:

- Surgery of the hand, wrist, and elbow
- Orthopaedic trauma & fracture care



Pictured:
Dr. Justin Kistler



DELAWARE ORTHOPAEDIC SPECIALISTS

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ORTHOPAEDICS

Dr. Tainter graduated from Duke University with a Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Engineering. During his senior year, he won a national engineering design competition and was a finalist in a second competition. He then earned his Doctor of Medicine at Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School, a joint medical school between Duke University and then National University of Singapore.

Upon graduating from medical school, Dr. Tainter completed his orthopaedic surgery residency at Duke University Medical Center. There, he developed a smart treatment program for osteoporotic patients with fractures. Dr. Tainter then pursued a trauma fellowship at Virginia Commonwealth University Health System in Richmond, Virginia. During his fellowship, he gained valuable experience in the treatment and rehabilitation of complex orthopaedic injuries.

Dr. Tainter will see patients beginning in September 2020. He will specialize in the following:

- Orthopaedic Trauma & fracture care



Pictured:
Dr. David Tainter

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OPHTHALMOLOGIST



DELAWARE EYE CLINICS

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Dr. Edward Jaoude, a board-certified ophthalmologist and the only cornea specialist in Southern Delaware, is devoted to his patients' care, endeavoring to deliver a balance between a personal approach and the most current technological advancements in medicine. His philosophy and experience come from a well-traveled career that began with medical school at American University, followed by a fellowship at Johns Hopkins, an internship at Boston University, and Chief Residency in the department of Ophthalmology at the University of Kentucky. Following the completion of a prestigious fellowship training in Cataract Surgery, Corneal Transplantation and LASIK surgery at Emory University, Jaoude moved to Delaware. In 2003, he founded Delaware Eye Clinics and sixteen years later, the state-of-the-art, full service facility continues to provide excellence in eye care to patients in Sussex County and neighboring areas. As a cornea specialist, Dr. Jaoude performs corneal transplantation and DSEK (Deep Stromal Endothelial Keratoplasty) at the Lewes Surgery Center. He also performs laser vision-correction or LASIK and repeatedly hears the thrill his patients feel, following the procedure, as they wake each day to a new life in focus, without glasses or contact lenses. It takes only minutes and it is life changing. At the heart of his philosophy is the belief that despite all the differences in medical conditions, everyone deserves the best attention and care when it comes to something as precious as their vision, and that's exactly what he and his staff strive to deliver every single day.

Pictured:

Dr Edward Jaoude



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Uday Jani, MD, a board-certified internist, blends the best of traditional, integrative and functional medicine at his Milton-based concierge practice, Shore View Personalized Medical Care. He believes in treating the whole person - body, mind, spirit and community - utilizing an evidence-based integrative approach to best facilitate each patient's innate healing response. Dr. Jani completed his residency at North Shore University Hospital N.Y., followed by a two-year Integrative Medicine fellowship at the University of Arizona, the leading integrative medicine program in the world, and later trained at The Institute for Functional Medicine in Minneapolis. He previously served as the Director of Integrative Health and chairman of the Medical Department at Beebe Medical Center. Dr. Jani was named one of the Top Doctors in Concierge Medicine for 2020-2021, recognized for excellence in personalized patient care and his dedicated support of community wellness.

Pictured

Uday Jani, MD



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Dr. Michael Munro, a board-certified ophthalmologist, was voted Delaware's Top Doc 2020 in Ophthalmology. His outstanding devotion to the specialty and to the patients he treats is just one of the reasons why Dr. Munro was selected as Top Doc. Dr. Munro employs various surgical and medical eye treatments for condition such as Cataracts, Glaucoma, Diabetes, Refractive (LASIK), and Dry Eye Syndrome/ Tear Dysfunction. He, and the other doctors at Eye Specialists of Delaware, uses only the latest technologies and cutting-edge techniques. Dropless cataract surgery, Wavelight LASIK, and LipiFlow are a few examples of many that set Dr. Munro apart from other ophthalmologists in Delaware. Eye Specialists of Delaware is the first practice in Delaware offering the most advanced laser technology in refractive surgery – Contoura Vision - Topography-guided LASIK. Dr. Michael Munro and other surgeons in the practice are at the forefront of providing the most advanced vision correction options in the State of Delaware. He is a family man with a wife and five children. Dr. Munro is accepting new patients and looking forward to providing the highest quality medical and surgical eye care to the residents of southern Delaware.



Pictured:

Michael Munro, D.O.



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Dr. Manonmani Antony, MD, DABA, DABIPP is one of the most renowned and extensively credentialed pain doctors in the country. A triple-board certified physician who is well known for her functional approach to pain, Dr. Antony is credited with bringing interventional pain to prominence in Southern Delaware.

"The pace of innovation in Interventional Pain Medicine has been extraordinary over the last few years. Pain relief can come with the push of a button these days. These drug-free procedures are all out-patient and covered by insurance. They give patients the freedom to take their lives back," she said.

The Chief Physician and sole founder of Sussex Pain Relief Center, Dr. Antony had this to say about celebrating their 10-year anniversary this year. "Doing the right thing for my patients is what's allowed us to thrive and grow. It's why I started my practice."

Pictured:

Dr. Manonmani Antony, MD, DABA, DABIPP



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"I like to think we're the place where people go to finally get their dentistry questions answered," he says. "One of the things that lights up my life is teaching, and it truly excites me to help people." Because of his extensive skill and knowledge, Dr. Rosen has been recognized by The News Journal as a Readers' Choice and Delaware Today as a "Best Dentist" for excellence in delivering both cosmetic and general dental care to patients of all ages. Call today!



Pictured:
Michael T. Rosen

CONGRATULATIONS
— to this year's Top Doctors! —



interviews. He applied for jobs in telecommunications and networking, hoping to finally utilize his talents and previous experience in web design. Charming but a little shy, and sporting a magnetic smile, Wright sailed through interviews and aced the technology skills tests. For some jobs, he was even able to start working and earn a paycheck for a few days or weeks—that is, until the employer reviewed his background check.

“That was the one test I could never pass,” he says. Those sporadic paychecks, usually amounting to just a few days or weeks of pay, were barely enough to keep his phone working and restart life on the outside.

Wright’s experiences mirror those of Roger Collins. After six months in Howard R. Young Correctional Institution in Wilmington, the 60-year-old returned to society, only to find himself unemployable.

“When you’re just coming out of being incarcerated, you need to figure out that first step. I’m free now, so where do I go from here?” says Collins, who was a landscaper before his stint behind bars. But once he was released, no one would hire him, save for a few odd jobs. To be trusted by others—something he had once taken for granted—evaporated into thin air.

“Plants and horticulture, through a kind of natural renewal, can really provide, in their own way, kind of a rebirth.”

—Vikram Krishnamurthy, executive director, DCH



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October 18 at the Delaware Beach



A Round for the Kids

October 26 at DuPont Country Club

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The stigma Wright and Collins encountered as formerly incarcerated individuals seeking work is an experience shared by many Delawareans. A 2019 study by the Utah-based PrisonEd Foundation rated the First State as one of the worst for recently released inmates, a troubling assertion given Delaware's high incarceration rate. About 22,000 residents are either behind bars or living under some kind of criminal justice supervision like probation or parole, according to data compiled by the Prison Policy Initiative. The state currently has an incarceration rate that surpasses the majority of the other states and every other nation in the world, with people of color comprising a disproportionate share of those affected.

At the center of it all is the Delaware Department of Corrections, which has come under fire over its handling of the fatal Vaughn prison riot in 2017, and more recently, for the COVID-19 outbreak in Sussex Correctional Institution in Georgetown, which has killed two and sickened hundreds. Family members of the incarcerated have held protests calling for greater transparency from the department regarding coronavirus outbreaks in the state's prisons, as well as the immediate release of vulnerable populations.

But even for those who are released with hopes of restarting their lives, the prospects are daunting. For Wright and Collins, that stigma finally ended on the verdant grounds of the Delaware Center for Horticulture (DCH) in Wilmington.

SECOND CHANCES

Vikram Krishnamurthy can talk about trees all day—not only about their environmental and ecological advantages but also the numerous benefits trees bring to communities in terms of social cohesion and climate justice. As DCH's executive director, it's his job to talk about how green spaces improve quality of life and wax philosophical about the primal, almost instinctive connection between humans and these woody living things that predate the dinosaurs.

"The more research that is done, the more we find trees are increasingly important elements of people's lives," Krishnamurthy says. "And so we recognize there are a whole range of benefits that trees provide, and

Continued to page 169

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After the "minimony," why not
embark on a "minimoon"?

On the cover: Joanna and Seth Cisco,
photographed by Tina Jay at French Creek Golf
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All the Things

FROM *SOMETHING NEW* TO THE *CEREMONY SEQUEL*, HERE'S WHAT'S *TRENDING* IN WEDDINGS NOW.

WORDS BY ASHLEY BREEDING



SEEING DOUBLE

Envisioning your formal ballroom wedding, you purchased an embellished Cinderella gown to suit to the occasion. But now you're opting for a minimony before the Big Day and need something elegant yet a little less fussy. Those who were undecided between the fairy-tale frock and edgy pantsuit or fringe midi will be excited for the opportunity to wear both. Whether your smaller celebration is in a garden or a wine cellar, simple is the new stunning.

FROM REAL LIFE TO RUNWAY

Generally, the fashion industry ideates a trend before the world starts rocking it. With the pandemic, the need for face masks generated an onslaught of this latest accessory from nearly every design house. You're an athlete? Athleta makes a more breathable option. A mom? Now you and your littles can have matching masks. A bride-to-be? Choose from lace, silk, satin and even a "bride"-inscribed face covering.



COURTESY OF TERRAIN EVENTS

THE WEDDING SEQUEL

Want to have your wedding cake and eat it, too? Well, now you can. For those eager to exchange vows now and host a grand party with 250 of their closest friends later, there's the wedding sequel—essentially, the Big Day as it was originally planned but pushed to a post-pandemic date and preceded by the aforementioned minimony.

WE WISH WE'D BOUGHT STOCK IN ZOOM

Worried your wedding ceremony won't be as special the second time around? If you're committed to your initial guest list, there's an app for that. While most of us have come to know Zoom as the everyday conference room, it's also great for keeping in touch across the miles, coordinating with planners during COVID-19 and, you guessed it, broadcasting your vows to everyone who wishes they could be there in person. Make the Zoom invite extra fun by dressing up and toasting the newlyweds from the comfort of your home.

WHAT'S OLD IS NEW

There's nothing quite as special as a wedding ring passed down from an older relative. But if Victorian vintage is more your style than modern bling—and his grandmother already gifted hers to your sister-in-law-to-be—you're not out of luck. Current designs pay homage to the past with an antique patina and hand-finished head settings fit more for an Old Hollywood starlet than a Beverly Hills Housewife.



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Sometimes going small allows you to go bigger. When you're hosting 10 guests instead of 100, there's more time (and budget) to polish the details. Serve caviar at the cocktail reception. Design a five-course prix fixe meal. Offer extravagant wines. Opt for the orchids over the daylilies. And personalize things for your guests, from custom place cards to engraved party favors.

Sometimes going small allows you to go bigger. When you're hosting 10 guests instead of 100, there's more time (and budget) to polish the details. Serve caviar at the cocktail reception. Design a five-course prix fixe meal. Offer extravagant wines. Opt for the orchids over the daylilies. And personalize things for your guests, from custom place cards to engraved party favors.





THE MINIMONY

This buzz term stands for “mini ceremony,” or a scaled-down version of your dream wedding. An alternative to another popular option, saving the date, it’s for couples who simply don’t want to wait to tie the knot. Typically comprising fewer than 15 guests—all socially distanced, of course—minimonies allow couples to either go big with just their loved ones or keep costs low with a less elaborate event altogether.



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Not only does nature make for a spectacular backdrop in the fall, but many guests also feel more comfortable outside than spaced apart indoors. Pitch a wedding tent to provide a warmer space, use fire pits, offer blankets and serve hot cocktails to keep the event cozy.

For a list of venues in Delaware and the Main Line, visit weddingstodaymag.com



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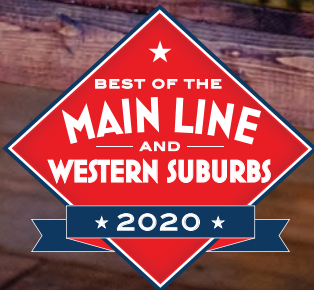
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Face Forward

BEFORE THE BIG DAY,
GET *CAMERA-READY* WITH
A *HEALTHY SKIN CARE*
REGIMEN.

BY ASHLEY BREEDING



The bad news? The pandemic has postponed your wedding until 2021. The better news? You now have more time to prepare, especially when it comes to getting camera-ready. Skin specialist Emily Keller Rockwell, founder of The Montchanin Center for Facial Aesthetics in Wilmington, advises brides to begin a skin care regimen as early as possible. “As soon as you get engaged, schedule a consultation and create a long-term skin care plan to fit your skin and current lifestyle needs,” she says. If you’re late to this beauty wisdom, worry not. Read on for what you can start doing now to get glowing.

Weddings Today: What does a proper skin care regimen include?

Emily Keller Rockwell: A cleanser, exfoliant and toner, customized for your skin type, morning and night. Exfoliating dead skin cells is key to obtaining that wedding glow. Once you’ve gone through several months

of skin-cell turnover, you can begin to incorporate other treatments.

WT: How long does it take to see a difference?

EKR: The goal is to achieve smooth, soft, even-toned skin that’s truly healthy, and that takes about six months to a year.

WT: What are some other treatment options and how far in advance of the wedding should I get them?

EKR: Overall, Botox is the best treatment for everyone in the wedding party. If it’s your first time, your treatment should be two months prior, as it takes approximately two weeks for it to kick in and lasts three to four months. The biggest mistake most brides make is getting Botox at the last minute, which doesn’t give their face enough time to settle into the treatment. A first lip filler—also very popular since they’re long-lasting and look super natural—should be done six months earlier. For extra pout, get your last filler two months before the wedding.



Emily Keller Rockwell, founder of The Montchanin Center for Facial Aesthetics in Wilmington, advises brides to begin a skin care regimen as early as possible.

WT: What facials of the moment do you recommend?

EKR: The anti-aging Vampire Facial is an incredible option for older couples and mothers of the bride. Combined with microneedling, it uses a patient's own platelet-rich plasma, which includes growth factors that help tighten, improve texture, shrink pores, blur acne scarring and stimulate collagen production and cell turnover. The Red Carpet Facial, one of the hottest treatments this year, also stimulates collagen production and increases cell turnover. It can also diminish dark spots, smooth rough texture and reduce fine lines and acne. Whichever facial you choose, allow two months of downtime before your wedding to let your skin settle into a gorgeous glow.

WT: How does healthy skin help with makeup application?

EKR: Makeup is only as good as the skin underneath. This is why I recommend all brides work to achieve a flawless complexion before their Big Day.

“A well-balanced diet keeps skin looking fresh and fabulous. Certain foods like dairy, simple carbohydrates, alcohol and salt can cause breakouts, dehydration and inflammation.”

WT: How does diet affect skin's appearance?

EKR: A well-balanced diet keeps skin looking fresh and fabulous. Certain foods like dairy, simple carbohydrates, alcohol and salt can cause breakouts, dehydration and inflammation. Eating healthy fats (avocados, salmon) will keep skin hydrated. Vitamin A (sweet potatoes, collards) increases blood flow, reduces wrinkles and gives skin a more youthful appearance. Vitamin C (strawberries, broccoli) boosts collagen and keeps skin firm and plump.

WT: What are some mistakes to avoid before the Big Day?

EKR: Many women try to cram a year's worth of skin work into days. Don't do this: Get Botox or fillers a few days before, as they can cause bruising and swelling; try new products you've never used before; at-home treatments. If you want to look your absolute best, give your skin the time and attention it needs. ■



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W THE LOOK

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An outdoor ceremony, even in the fall, requires SPF. Beach Gypsy Glitter Sunscreen, \$28, at Beauty Bar by Kristina Ruggerio, Wilmington.



Micronized tourmaline and rice powder naturally brighten, while pineapple and papaya enzymes smooth and refresh the complexion. Brighten Pineapple + Gemstone Mask by Herbivore Botanicals, \$48, at Terrain, Glen Mills.



Plump your pout with a little shine. Clé de Peau Beauté Radiant Lip Gloss, \$38, and Clarins Lip Comfort Oil, \$26, both at Nordstrom.



Glow Sweet Glow gummies by Hum Nutrition, \$25, contain hyaluronic acid and vitamin C to keep skin hydrated, plump and—you guessed it—glowing. At Houppette, Greenville.



Ad Astra Nighttime Eye Cream Emulsion by Kypris, \$150, keeps eyes smooth and wrinkle-free with a luxurious blend of botanicals and peptides. At Nordstrom.



Radiance Chic Cheek and Highlighter Duo by Chantecaille (shown here in Coral), \$84, adds just the right amount of flush with a sweep of sheen. At Bluemercury, Ardmore.



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Love Will Find a Way

HOW TO PLAN A *WEDDING* IN A *PANDEMIC*

WORDS BY FRANCES NGUYEN

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The only thing small about the minimony is the guest list—and maybe the cake. Everything else can be as big and bold as your vision.



In the grips of a global pandemic, a wedding—the epitome of a social gathering—doesn't readily seem like a great idea.

Many plans for the Big Day have already come to a screeching halt, only to be postponed until next year or canceled altogether. Some couples are instead opting for weddings over Zoom or backyard ceremonies with only immediately family. While a



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dream wedding might seem hopelessly out of reach at the moment, the pandemic hasn't derailed all possibilities for creating a memorable event.

"There are other options," says wedding planner Cathy Johnson of Royal Weddings by Cathy Johnson in Newark. "You just have to be open to those options."

Johnson has experienced a surge in last-minute planning requests in recent months, some with only a few weeks' notice. "The [couples] who are doing it are the ones who are very persistent and committed to having some sort of memory," she says.

Navigating lockdown restrictions and guidelines when the situation seems to change by the day might seem impossible, but if anyone knows how to adapt to unforeseen changes, it's wedding planners.

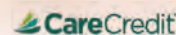
"Event planners are accustomed to having to pivot and solve problems on the day of or on very short notice," Johnson explains. "This is not new to us."

Amber Perry of Wilmington's Lady in Waiting Services was a bride herself last year, so she can easily put herself in her

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clients' shoes. Perry says if her wedding were happening this year, she would want to proceed with the ceremony anyway, putting off the larger party until it's safe to do so. That's why she has created an attractive—and safe—package for couples who want the same.

Perry began piloting her custom, COVID-19-compliant “minimonies” in June. They're an extension of her Intimate Weddings package, which is a pared-down version of the big affair. Instead of a five- or six-hour event, Intimate Weddings are only three. The only concession is time: florals, design, photography, the Champagne toast, cake and catering are still dictated by what the couple envisions.

“Minimonies are for those who say, ‘You know what, I love you and I want to get married no matter what. And then we will wait until the coast is completely clear to have the celebration we really want,’” Perry explains.

Like the Intimate Weddings package, there's no skimping on the details that make the Big Day so special. “‘Mini’ only means a cut on how many people can be there,” Perry explains. “You don't need to feel like things are being discounted because of COVID. If you want an elaborate bouquet and to be all glammed up in your beautiful ballgown, please do that. We're not stifling what your décor or setup will look like. Whenever you're spending money, it needs to be what you want.”

Minimonies work best with about four to eight guests in attendance, she says. This way, they can spread out enough to hear the ceremony and feel close to the couple while remaining at least 6 feet apart.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention doesn't offer recommendations on the number of attendees for these kinds of gatherings, but it does encourage event organizers to focus on limiting people's contact with one another. This is why both Johnson and Perry, who are regular collaborators, work only on events that are held outside. The fewer guests invited means the more successful they can be at executing a fun and safe wedding right now.



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“Minimonies are for those who say, ‘You know what, I love you and I want to get married no matter what. And then we will wait until the coast is completely clear to have the celebration we really want.’”

Minimonies and more intimate weddings also offer added flexibility with dates, venues and budgets. While the ideal lead time for a minimony is a full month, Perry has pulled them together in as little as two weeks. Johnson created events over the summer in similar time crunches.

The only tradeoff is having to work with what you’ve got, Johnson says. She has had to be frank with her brides about what’s affordable, plus what’s available and when, since some vendors can’t access their normal inventory. “I’ve had to be very direct and realistic with my brides because, with the pandemic, there’s only so much we can do,” she says.


Ultimately, though, the concessions are few. “I try to find those special touches so that you know that this is your wedding day, and it is OK, even with everything that’s going on in the world,” Perry says.

Johnson agrees, adding, “With the pandemic and so many other things that are going on, it’s a little hard to see that you do have all these options that are available, and you could be just as happy—if not happier—with the wedding that you end up with.”



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WITH 2020 *HONEYMOONS* REBOOKED AND *CHALLENGES* AHEAD FOR 2021, THE *PANDEMIC* HAS THROWN WEDDING TRIPS INTO *DISARRAY*.

WORDS BY SCOTT PRUDEN

Travel agent Lisa Whitmarsh is living a travel professional's nightmare.

Not only is she faced with a long list of honeymoon cancellations forced by the COVID-19 pandemic but she's also having to reschedule wedding trips planned for 2020 and juggle additional rescheduling for 2021 weddings.

Meanwhile, she's just been notified that the largest resort in Hawaii is throwing in the towel for 2020, closing its doors for extensive renovations and not opening again until June 2021, effectively canceling a March honeymoon Whitmarsh had booked for a wedding couple.

GET INSURED

No matter what you call it—travel insurance, travel protection—paying a little extra to guarantee a cancellation won't ruin your honeymoon or result in a significant financial loss is a great investment, however modest or extravagant your trip might be, travel pros say.

"I've always been a big supporter of travel protection," says Lisa Whitmarsh, a luxury travel advisor for Accent on Travel in Wilmington. One reason is that it gives travelers options. If they decide to cancel the trip outright, they'll pay for the deductible but get the balance of trip costs returned. "But if you move the trip, everything moves. So that's why I believe it's been more positive to encourage couples to move their trips."

Whitmarsh says encouraging honeymoon couples to pay for the travel protection is a matter of course for her, but it's even more important now that "you never know what might happen."



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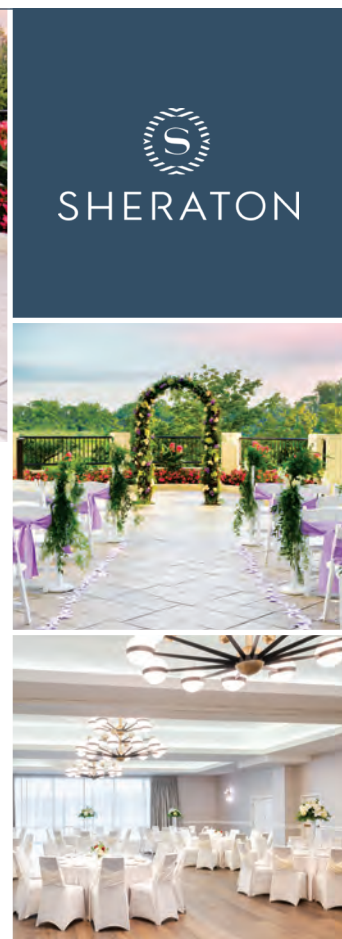


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“Is there not enough that’s been going on for the last six months that you’ve got to shut down *now*?” she asks rhetorically.

In short, Whitmarsh, a luxury travel advisor for Accent on Travel in Wilmington, is having a bit of a day. She and her clients are in much the same boat as travel professionals and honeymooners throughout the world—destinations are closed and trips are being postponed until next year. Those who had planned to marry in 2021 are finding that many of the most desirable destinations are already booked solid by 2020 holdovers.

National numbers bear out Whitmarsh’s anecdotal accounts. A survey released in July by Honeyfund, a website dedicated to helping engaged couples manage their wedding registries, found that only 7 percent of couples set to marry in 2020 were anticipating taking the honeymoon they had originally wanted. The majority said they intended to either postpone their trip until 2021 or travel domestically instead.



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THE MAKE-DO HONEYMOON

While the exotic honeymoon you planned might be on hold, you can still make your escape with a little last-minute planning, creativity and flexibility. Here are a few tips on how to go from staycation to vacation with your newly betrothed in the time of social distancing.

KEEP IT LOCAL

Staying closer to home doesn't mean you can't enjoy yourself in a new (or at least different) location. Given travel restrictions still in place in some states, avoid crossing borders so you don't risk a mandatory 14-day quarantine upon your return. For those in Delaware and Pennsylvania, there are plenty of options. Delaware is known far and wide for its bay- and seaside resort towns that will get you

to the beach, even if it's not to that all-inclusive resort in Greece. And while the only beachfronts you'll find in Pennsylvania are on lakes, the sheer size of the state offers an even wider array of travel destinations with more opportunities for seclusion.

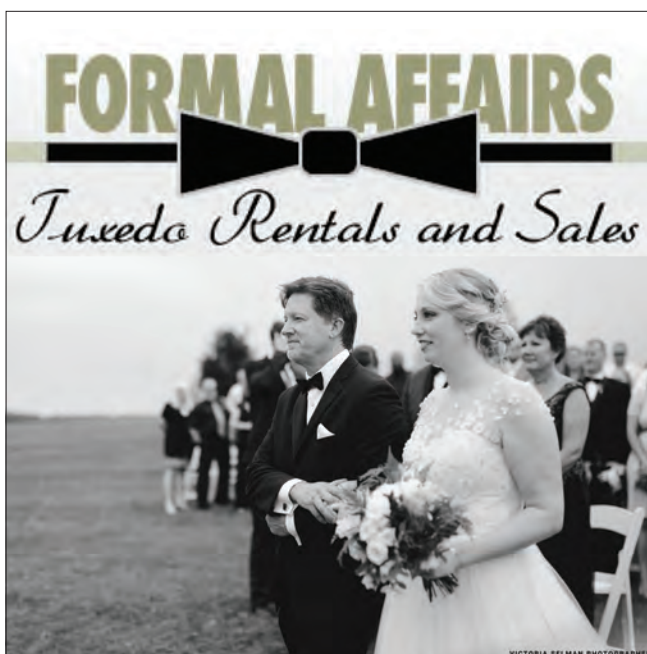
KEEP IT PRIVATE

There's no denying the appeal of a bustling European city or a tropical resort town for adding fun and excitement, but now isn't the best time to throw yourself in among the teeming crowds. Instead of planning around busy hotels, bars and restaurants, opt for a staycation. Check out local vacation rental properties through real estate firms or visit home rental sites like Airbnb or VRBO, part of the Expedia travel network, for the perfect getaway home with lots of isolation. Prefer something more rustic? Tentrr is an Airbnb subsidiary

devoted entirely to campsites, with many providing permanent structures and heavy-duty tents that are more "glamping" than camping.

GO MOBILE

Hopping in a recreational vehicle and heading out on the road might sound like your parents' vacation, but more compact and well-appointed RVs or refurbished travel vans are increasingly appealing to the younger traveler. Don't believe us? Check out the #vanlife hashtag and scroll for days through photos of the young and beautiful doing the camper van thing full time. It's essentially your own self-contained car and hotel room that gets you as close to—or as far away from—things as you like. Book overnight sites at campgrounds where there's sufficient distance between you and your neighbors.



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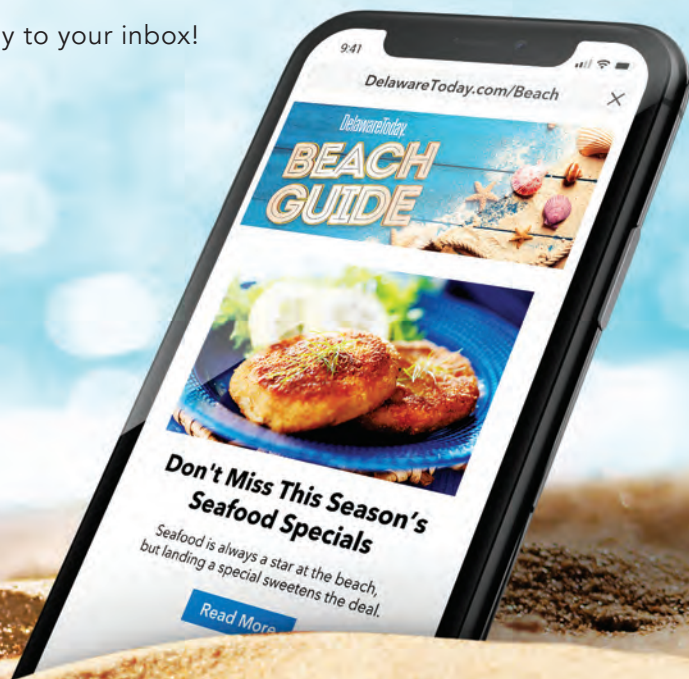
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W TRAVEL



Larry Mahan, CEO of Expedia CruiseShipCenters in Bear, remains optimistic that travel will have returned to normal by next summer but agrees that with all the rescheduled trips from 2020, people booking honeymoon travel now will have fewer options in 2021.

“Those who closed resorts or canceled cruises gave very attractive offers—what they call future travel credits—and most of them have to be used in the next year, so that pretty much guarantees that there’s a lot of rebooking,” he says.

What will result is diminished capacity at resorts and aboard ships in conjunction with high demand from both rebooking travelers and those who were already planning for 2021 wedding trips.

For anyone considering destination weddings—where the wedding party and guests are expected to travel to a resort area for the ceremony—Mahan has two words: “Book early.”

“If you wait until January, February or March [2021], the good stuff’s going to be sold off,” he says. “Just getting a wedding venue has been tricky for the past few years anyway, and it’s unfortunately going to become even more of a challenge.”

Mahan adds that some couples who were originally planning weddings in foreign locales have reconsidered and booked domestic travel instead. While

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“For anyone considering destination weddings—where the wedding party and guests are expected to travel to a resort area for the ceremony—Mahan has two words: ‘Book early.’”

they’re not the Seine, the Mississippi River, the Great Lakes and rivers throughout the Pacific Northwest offer river cruises that are comparable in many ways to those in Europe. Some couples are exploring national parks or just opting to rent a beach or mountain house this year while pushing their big wedding trip to 2021.

“If you’re a vacation property owner in a halfway decent area, it’s a very good year for you,” he says.

Also, as coronavirus numbers change, some destinations are opening while others slam shut. As Hawaii was tightening restrictions, destinations like Cancun, Punta Cana and Jamaica were welcoming travelers.

“If you’re determined to go right now this year, we can help you find something you can do,” Mahan says. *W*

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**WORDS BY ASHLEY BREEDING
PHOTOGRAPHS BY THERESA EMMETT**

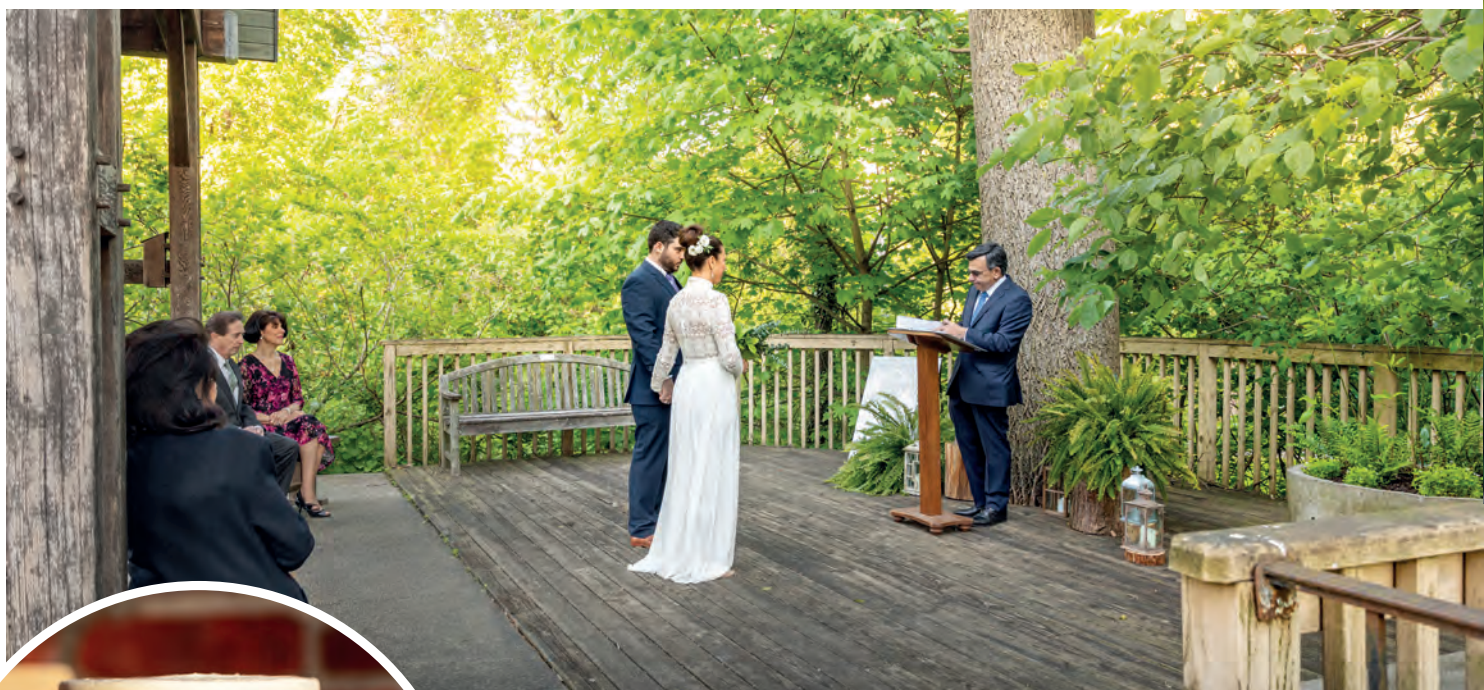
In second grade, Erica Razze carpooled to school with a neighbor, an older girl she only vaguely remembered until a few years ago. One day while at work, Erica had a disagreement with a co-worker over the phone. When she hung up, she thought, why does his name sound familiar? Suddenly, she remembered the toddler in the back seat of her carpool many years ago.

"I immediately called him back and said, 'Random question, but are you Jennifer DiGiacomo's little brother?'" Blake was, and the realization that they went so far back dissolved any friction that might have resulted from the previous moment's exchange. They became fast friends, but Erica felt the reunion was serendipitous and pursued something more.

"Yeah, I chased him for a while," she says, laughing. Soon(ish), the relationship blossomed into romance and ultimately a proposal at Rockford Tower, where the couple frequently hiked with their dogs.

Erica didn't see it coming, though she did spot something: "My dog took off after this tree, and I assumed it was a squirrel," she says. But when she turned to run after him, Blake quickly spun her back around. Bending down on one knee, he pulled a diamond ring from his pocket—"no box or anything," she says—and asked her to marry him. Moments later, she realized the familiar scent her dog had tracked was Blake's brother, who was hiding behind the tree to capture the moment on camera.





of what could ensue if they didn't delay the wedding. So with her family's blessing, she expressed her concerns to each vendor, politely requesting to postpone until the same weekend the following year. It became a trial run for the calls she'd soon be making on behalf of all her wedding clients as social distancing guidelines took hold.

As their initial wedding day approached, the prospect of hosting an event even a year later became bleaker. Eager to be married, they decided to throw together a "minimony" with immediate family. "It was a hard decision, because we badly wanted Blake's sister and my brother to be there from out of state," Erica says, but ultimately, with full support from family and friends, the couple quickly planned an intimate ceremony at the Delaware Center for Horticulture.

With "10 1/2" in attendance and Blake's dad as the officiant, the couple exchanged vows under the rustic wood pavilion, surrounded by verdant gardens and groups of guests spaced 6 feet apart. Some wore fancy masks, while others maintained even greater distance. "One of my best friends came with her husband and 3-year-old (the 1/2), who was supposed to be our

While the down-to-earth pair would have settled for a simple wedding, their large Italian families would not. Engaged in June 2019, they planned a 250-person affair for the following Mother's Day weekend at Hagley Museum, complete with formal dress, a family-style supper overlooking the mansion and all the traditional accoutrements, from bouquets to bands.

By early spring, every detail had been accounted for and every deposit made. (As the founder of Capiche Events, Erica is an expert wedding planner.) Then the pandemic brought new meaning to the term March Madness. Before Gov. John Carney announced any restrictions, Erica took control. "I just knew this wasn't going to get better," she says, keenly aware



flower girl, and they sat on the outskirts,” Erica says. They also added “floating chairs” for other close friends who might decide to attend, adding that they would have respected the decision of anyone who felt uncomfortable.

During the ceremony, more than 100 other guests “Zoomed” in from afar, some even dressing up to watch from home. “So, in a sense, we still had our big wedding,” Erica says.

Feeling that her original dress—an elegant number from Jennifer’s Bridal, which she planned to pair with her mom’s cathedral veil—was too formal, Erica quickly ordered a less frilly lace frock online. (Plus, her gown was stuck at the seamstress and the veil hadn’t yet been altered to match the style of her dress.) Blake donned a cool blue suit from Mainline Custom Shop, seamlessly blending in with the rustic and casual setting they were after.

Even with a pared-down affair, it was important to Erica and her family to follow tradition: Her mom still had the honor of zipping her daughter’s wedding dress, while Erica and her dad shared the “first look” from a distance.

Afterward, the party moved to the veranda, where each group had their own designated cocktail table, complete with a flower arrangement (Alexis Florals), a cheese basket hand-picked and put together by Erica, and a bottle of wine. For hours they talked, laughed and enjoyed one another’s company as photographer Theresa Emmett—founder

of Fouryouth Productions, a Wilmington nonprofit focusing on education for at-risk youth—captured each special moment of their small but very big day. (“She’s not a wedding photographer,” Erica notes, “but I love her style and she knows the DCH grounds well.”)

The couple plans to hold their big wedding at the same time next year, but Erica is taking it one day at a time: “Who knows? By the time we throw this party, it might be for a child’s first birthday.” ■

DETAILS

Ceremony and reception: Delaware Center for Horticulture, dch.org

Guests: “10 1/2” (10 adults, 1 toddler)

Bride’s gown: lulus.com

Groom’s attire: Mainline Custom Shop, West Chester, mainlinemenscustom.com

Florist: Alexis Floral, Wilmington, alexisfloral.com

Photographer: Theresa Emmett, Fouryouth Productions

Signage: Girl Holding a Pen, girlholdingapen.com

Honeymoon destinations: Because of their work schedules, the couple plans to hold off on their honeymoon but “go big” in Europe.



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It Had to Be You

YEARS AFTER MEETING, THIS
DOWNTOWN COUPLE
RECONNECTED AND
FOUND LOVE.

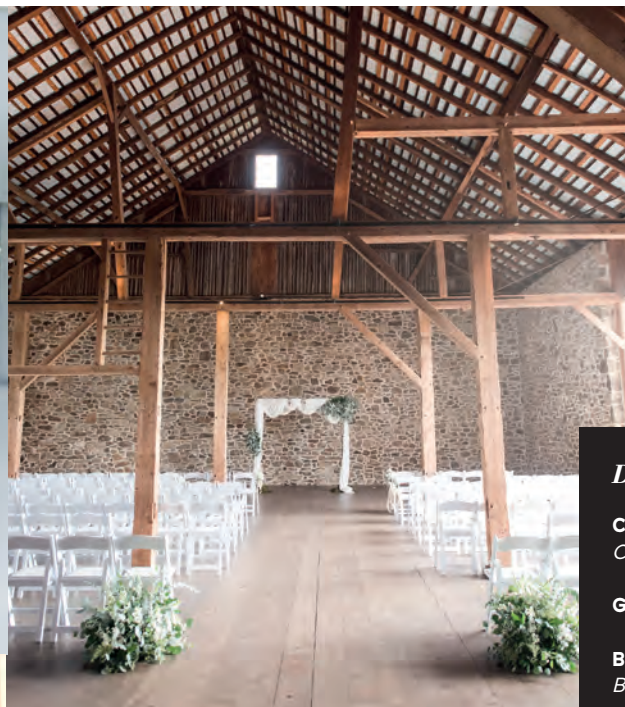
WORDS BY LISA DUKART
PHOTOGRAPHS BY TINA JAY

Despite becoming friends while working together at Concord Country Club in Glen Mills, Joanna Ferreri and Seth Cisco eventually drifted in different directions. But fate seemed to know something they didn't and brought them together at a Festival Pier concert a few years later. Amid the jumble of music lovers, the two ran into each other and reconnected in 2010.

Joanna knew then that Seth was the one. "He is such a good guy, so funny and kind. We got along so well and it was just really easy," she recalls. Within a year of that concert encounter, the couple moved in together, relocating to Bethlehem for Joanna's nursing career.

Happily together for many years, their love grew, and on New Year's Eve of 2017, Seth asked Joanna to marry him. The pair were alone in their new DOWNTOWN home, the first they'd purchased together. "It was where we love to be," Joanna says of the intimate proposal. Later that night, they were joined by family and friends who would help them ring in 2018—and celebrate their engagement.





Set on an October wedding—Halloween is Seth's favorite holiday and Joanna loves the change of the seasons—the couple waited nearly another two years so they could hold their nuptials at the perfect time and place. They landed on French Creek Golf Club in Elverson. "It's a little spread out and has beautiful scenery," says Joanna. "It was worth the wait."

Wanting a simple but elegant aesthetic, Joanna opted for clean lines and natural colors on her big day. Joanna and her bridesmaids—her two sisters and her sister-in-law—carried bouquets of baby's breath, which was mirrored in the boutonnieres worn by Seth and his groomsmen—his three brothers.

"I just loved it. I thought it was just the perfect [shades] of white and green," says Joanna, who used it for inspiration for much of the wedding. "It's simple but looks beautiful with the wedding dress." Greenery was subtly carried through in the décor and even their wedding cake, which was ringed in fresh leaves.

Thanks to the venue's rustic barn—with soaring ceilings and abundant green space—the couple was able to incorporate their love for nature into the celebration. Both enjoy hiking and Seth likes camping, so those elements made their special day all the more personal. They hosted their ceremony in the barn, officiated by Rev. Bob Devine, a former Catholic priest. This

DETAILS

Ceremony and reception: French Creek Golf Club, frenchcreekgolf.com

Guests: 150

Bride's gown: Pronovias, Van Cleve Bridal, thevanclevollection.com

Bridesmaids' dresses: W2 by Watters, Van Cleve Bridal, thevanclevollection.com

Groom's and groomsmen's attire: Calvin Klein, Men's Wearhouse, menswearhouse.com

Hair and makeup: Ulta Beauty, ulta.com

Entertainment: Jack Faulkner Orchestra, jackfaulknerorchestra.com

First dance: Frank Sinatra's "It Had to Be You," covered by the Jack Faulkner Orchestra

Cake: Cakes and Candies by Maryellen. Joanna and Seth shared a gluten-free almond cake, while guests enjoyed Champagne and lemon-raspberry cakes.

Officiant: Reverend Bob Devine, reverendbobdevineweddings.com

Florist: Blue Moon Florist

Photographer: Tina Jay Photography, tinajayphotography.com

Biographies: Joanna is a nurse practitioner in Penn Medicine's hematology/oncology department; Seth is an electrician at Philadelphia's Navy Yard.

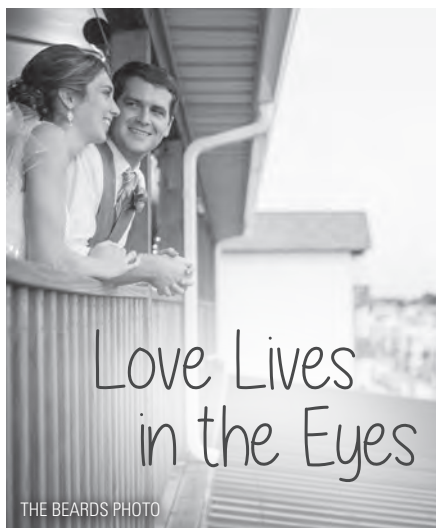
A romantic couple is shown in silhouette, embracing and kissing. They are positioned in the lower center of the frame, with the sun low on the horizon between them, creating a bright, warm glow and lens flare. The background is filled with the dark, intricate silhouettes of trees against a soft, orange-hued sky.

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element was important to Joanna, who is Catholic but didn't want a full church ceremony. Instead, the clergyman loosely followed a traditional Catholic service, delivering the religious aspects Joanna wanted. Two friends also offered readings.

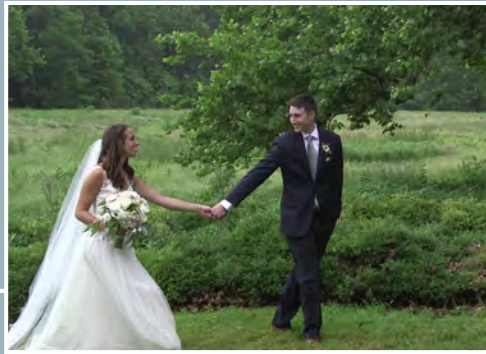
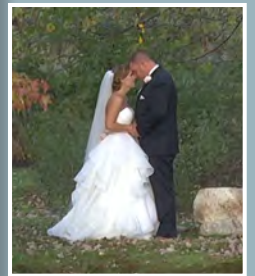
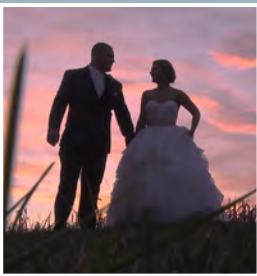
After the couple exchanged vows, nature served as the backdrop for cocktail hour. Later, the reception was held in the clubhouse. Wanting their wedding to be a lively celebration, the

couple opted for the large Jack Faulkner Orchestra. "They were amazing. People danced the whole night, which was really important to us," says Joanna.

The band also performed for Joanna and Seth's first dance, a rendition of Frank Sinatra's "It Had to Be You." A favorite artist when they prepare and share dinner at home, the song was a fitting choice and a reminder that fate had brought them together many years before and made sure they found one another again. **W**



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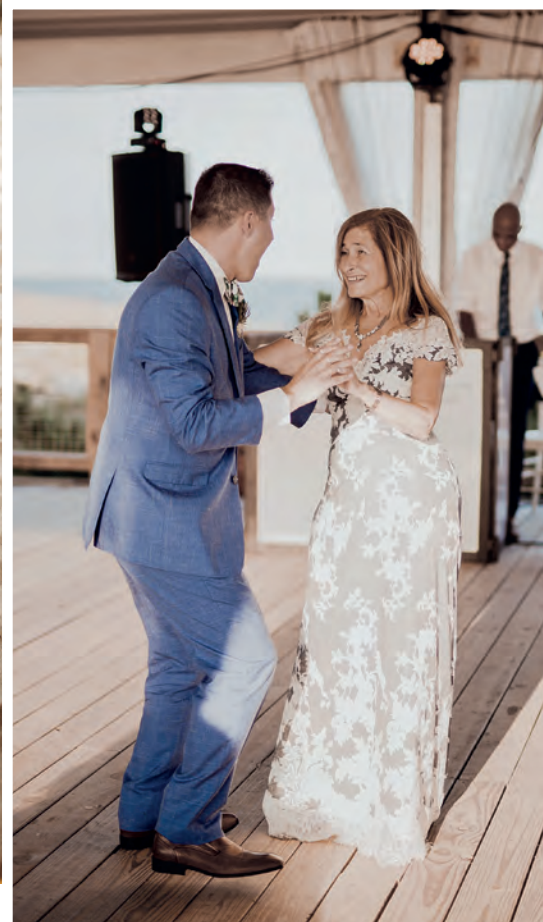
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Sunset and Sand

THE *BEACH* PLAYED AN
IMPORTANT ROLE IN THIS
COUPLE'S *RELATIONSHIP*, FROM
THE MOMENT THEY MET TO
THE DAY THEY *TIED THE KNOT*.

WORDS BY LISA DUKART
PHOTOGRAPHS BY DEANNA MICHELE

Growing up, Justin Noble wasn't sure marriage was in the cards for him, but he hadn't yet met Evan Koslof. A Delaware native raised near Old New Castle, Justin spent a lot of time at his family's second home in Bethany Beach. Evan, a Boston native and reporter at WBOC, had come to call the Delmarva Peninsula home.

After talking for a few months over a dating app, the pair decided to take the plunge and meet in person in late 2015, but they were nearly thwarted by a going-away party for one of Evan's co-workers. Something made him decide to skip the party in favor of his date with Justin. "I went on this date, and I'm really happy I did," Evan says.

They went to Stingray, a sushi spot in Rehoboth Beach, and then out for drinks nearby. "It was just a really great first date," Evan recalls.

When Evan realized a year and a half later that he'd found the one in Justin, he thought they should move in together. Simultaneously, Evan landed a reporting





job in Washington, D.C., so they uprooted their separate lives and began one together in the nation's capital. "I could see that we had a future," Justin says about deciding to relocate.

One day, while joking about marriage, Justin told Evan he was ready to tie the knot and was just waiting for a proposal. Opting to make it a surprise, Evan hatched a plan with the help of both of their families. On a solo visit to Justin's parents, Evan asked for their blessing. While there, he put his reporting skills to work to create a congratulatory video for when he popped the question. Justin's brother and sister-in-law, as well as the couple's friends, joined the celebration.

In April 2018, on a chartered catamaran cruise in the Gulf of Mexico with family, Evan popped the question. While Justin lounged in a hammock—which he was initially reluctant to leave—Evan set the scene, even rigging GoPros to capture his proposal. There on the azure and golden waters at sunset, Justin was in the dark about what was to come.

DETAILS

Ceremony and reception:
Big Chill, bigchillbeachclub.com

Guests: 140

Grooms' and groomsmen's attire:
Generation Tux, generationtux.com

Caterer: *Fork + Flask, forkandflask.com*

Day-of wedding coordinator:
Angie Smythe, [Eventfully Yours, eventfullyyoursmd.com](http://eventfullyyoursmd.com)

Entertainment/DJ: *Just Kidding Around*

First dance: *Rihanna's acoustic version of "Umbrella"*

Cake: *Carolina Sugar Fairy, carolinasugarfairy.com*

Florist: *Bleached Butterfly, bleachedbutterfly.com*

Photographer: *Photography by Deanna Michele, deannamichelephotography*

Biographies: *Justin is a Realtor and Evan is an on-air reporter.*



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Evan presented him with a Movado watch rather than a ring—something the two had previously discussed. A Movado held more significance, since it's the brand Justin's grandfather wore. "I thought [he] was the epitome of a gentleman from the way he spoke, the way he carried himself, the way he treated other people," Justin says. "For me, a Movado is a very special and classy watch." A month later, Justin bought Evan his own Movado engagement watch.

When it came to the wedding venue, there was no contest: "Our relationship was born at the beach, so I couldn't imagine getting married anywhere else," Evan says. They also wanted to share this special place with Evan's family, who'd be traveling from Boston.

On Labor Day weekend of 2019, the couple exchanged vows in the sand, officiated by a family friend of Evan's. The nondenominational ceremony honored Evan's Jewish faith with the traditional breaking of a glass. "It was just perfect. Justin had a great speech that made everybody laugh and made people cry," Evan says.

They celebrated with a reception at the Big Chill, with sweeping views of both the Atlantic Ocean and the bay, plus the iconic Cullen Bridge. "You can't get that view anywhere else," Justin says.

Now, whenever they return to Bethany, it feels a little sweeter. "Even though that's what I've known my entire life, it definitely means more to me now," Justin says. ■



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THEIR **LAVISH** WEDDING PLANS INTO
AN **INTIMATE** CELEBRATION
AMID COVID-19.

WORDS BY LISA DUKART
PHOTOGRAPHS BY KELLI WILKE

Twelve years after developing crushes on each other in college, Kendall McDowell and Jonathan Tilton finally found the right timing to pursue their feelings. “He was totally off-limits,” Kendall remembers of their college years. (They both attended the University of Delaware, where Jonathan roomed with a friend—who happened to be Kendall’s brother.) The two Wilmington natives remained friends and the latent spark lingered. “Every time I would run into him, I would just brighten up,” she says. In December 2015, they both attended a mutual friend’s party—and at last the spark fully ignited.

But their first date didn’t go as planned. Wanting to catch a movie, they tried several theaters, finding all were sold out. So they went to Wilmington’s Trolley Tap House instead, a move that proved far better than any film. Over drinks, they agreed to try psychologist Arthur Aron’s 36 questions meant to cultivate intimacy. They had read about the concept in *The New York Times*’ “Modern Love” section and were curious.

The questions start out simple: “What would constitute a ‘perfect’ day for you?” and “If you could change one thing





about the way you were raised, what would it be?" Then they get progressively more intimate: "What is your most treasured memory?" and "Complete this sentence: 'I wish I had someone with whom I could share ...'" At the end, partners spend four minutes looking directly into one another's eyes. So that's exactly what Kendall and Jonathan did. "It was just beautiful, because it was like two souls looking at each other," Kendall says. At the end of the night, she felt like Jonathan was "the one."

And he was. Their relationship steadily progressed, and both knew marriage was inevitable. Jonathan popped the question on a trip to Rehoboth Beach, where both had spent time as children. On Kendall's birthday last year, the couple took a stroll around Lake Gerar Park, where Jonathan got down on one knee, ring in hand. "My jaw just dropped and he was tearing up," Kendall says.

Back on the beach, they met up with Kendall's parents. "My mom was so excited that she made us reenact it," Kendall says.

DETAILS

Ceremony and reception:

Greenville Country Club, greenvillecc.com

Guests: 11

Bride's gown: *Lazaro, Jennifer's Bridal, jennifersbridal.com*

Groom's attire: *J. Crew, jcrew.com*

Hair: *Salon by Dominic, salonbydominic.com*

Makeup: *Jackie Scully Beauty, jackiescullybeauty.com*

Wedding planner: *Christine Dominique Jennings*

First dance: *A live rendition of Elvis Presley's "Can't Help Falling in Love"*

Cake: *Michele Mitchell Pastry Designs, mmpastrydesigns.com*

Florist: *Flowers by Yukie, flowersbyyukie.com*

Photographer: *Kelli Wilke Photography, kelliwilke.com*

Calligrapher: *The Shaded Maple, theshadedmaple.com*
Honeymoon destinations: *Rehoboth Beach; they are planning a forthcoming trip to Greece and Italy.*

Biographies: *Kendall is a nurse at ChristianaCare at Wilmington Hospital and Jonathan is a day trader.*

The couple soon set a date for the following June, planning a lavish 200-person affair—complete with nine bridesmaids—to take place at Greenville Country Club. "I wanted a fairy-tale wedding," Kendall says. "I wanted to feel like a princess."

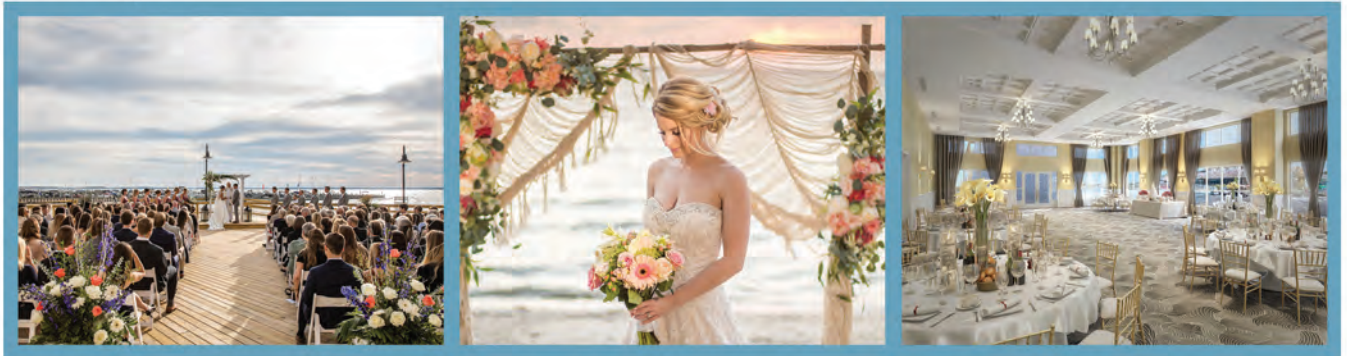
Save-the-dates were sent out and vendors were booked. By mid-March, those plans began to shatter as COVID-19 swept the country. Ultimately, the other slipper dropped. Gathering restrictions put in place didn't ease until June 1, just four days before their intended wedding date. Having canceled their plans, the easing of restrictions allowed them to move forward with a cozy guest list of 11.

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"It was important to me to keep the date," Kendall says. "I didn't want to be sad on June 5, 2020."

And she wasn't. After getting ready in Greenville's tower room, Kendall and Jonathan exchanged vows under an arch of peonies, surrounded by their immediate family. The ceremony was far more intimate and personal than they could have dreamed. "What was truly important was the love between me and Jonathan," Kendall says. "A small wedding gave me the opportunity to just focus on that—on my dad walking me down the aisle, and my mom and her special moments with me, and just the people who really, really love me."

Memorable touches included a mutual friend presiding over their nuptials and two of Kendall's musical friends performing a violin and ukulele duet of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" as she walked down the aisle. Later, she and Jonathan shared a first dance to a live rendition of "Can't

Help Falling in Love." Their children (two terriers named Benny and Timmy) were also in attendance.

"They're part of the family, so it was special to have them," says Kendall, who hadn't planned on including them at the larger ceremony.

Following their vows, the couple cut a small cake, and Kendall's father, Sen. Harris McDowell III, made a toast. Her brother, who served as best man, read a Senate tribute made in honor of the day. Afterward, the group adjourned to Jonathan's mother's home, where they dined on a meal from the House of William and Merry, one of the couple's favorite date spots.

"All these beautiful little details came together to make our wedding so special," Kendall says. "I feel blessed the way it all turned out. It was like the heavens opened up and all the things that truly would have made it extra special were able to happen." ▮



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Fiona gown by Mira Zwillinger, \$9,350, at Elizabeth Johns, Ardmore.

2

Antonia gown by Maggie Sottero, starting at \$1,800, at Bijou Bridal & Special Occasion, Ardmore.

3

Belize dress, \$275, at BHLN, Devon.

4

Karina gown by Jenny Yoo, \$995, at BHLN, Devon.

5

Moon Shadow gown, \$16,995, at Monique Lhuillier, New York.

6

Catherine Deane Kellyn Gown, \$1,995, at BHLN, Devon.

7

Costarellos BR-96 gown, price upon request, at BHLN, Devon.

8

Bree gown by Maggie Sottero, starting at \$1,600, at Bijou Bridal and Special Occasion, Ardmore.

9

Tiana dress, \$1,509, at Claire's Fashions, Wilmington.

10

Venus gown, \$4,990, at Monique Lhuillier, New York.

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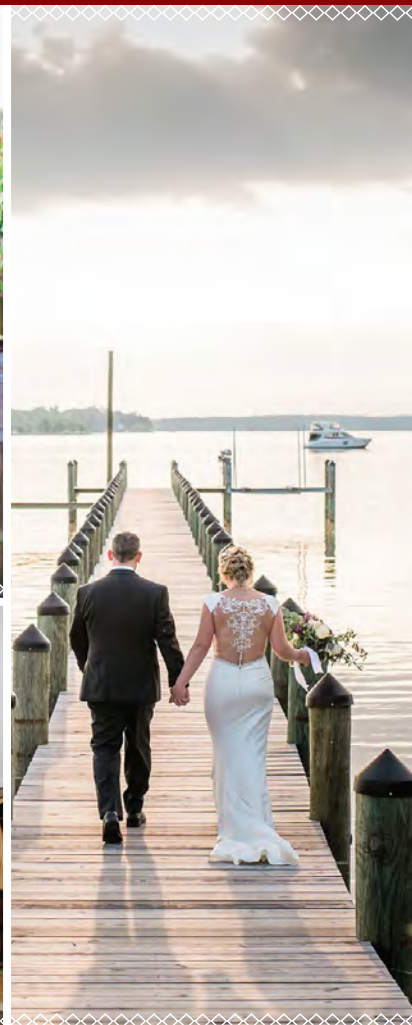


KAJSA AND RICHARD HARACZ

of North Wilmington celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary on June 8.

“ *The keys to a successful marriage: **Love and commitment**; without those, nothing else matters. **Patience and forgiveness**; through the course of a relationship, there will be many challenges. These qualities are essential to work through them. **Selflessness**; you must think of the other person's needs for the marriage to grow. And **teamwork**; life is a journey that is best traveled together. Have your partner's back, always.* ”

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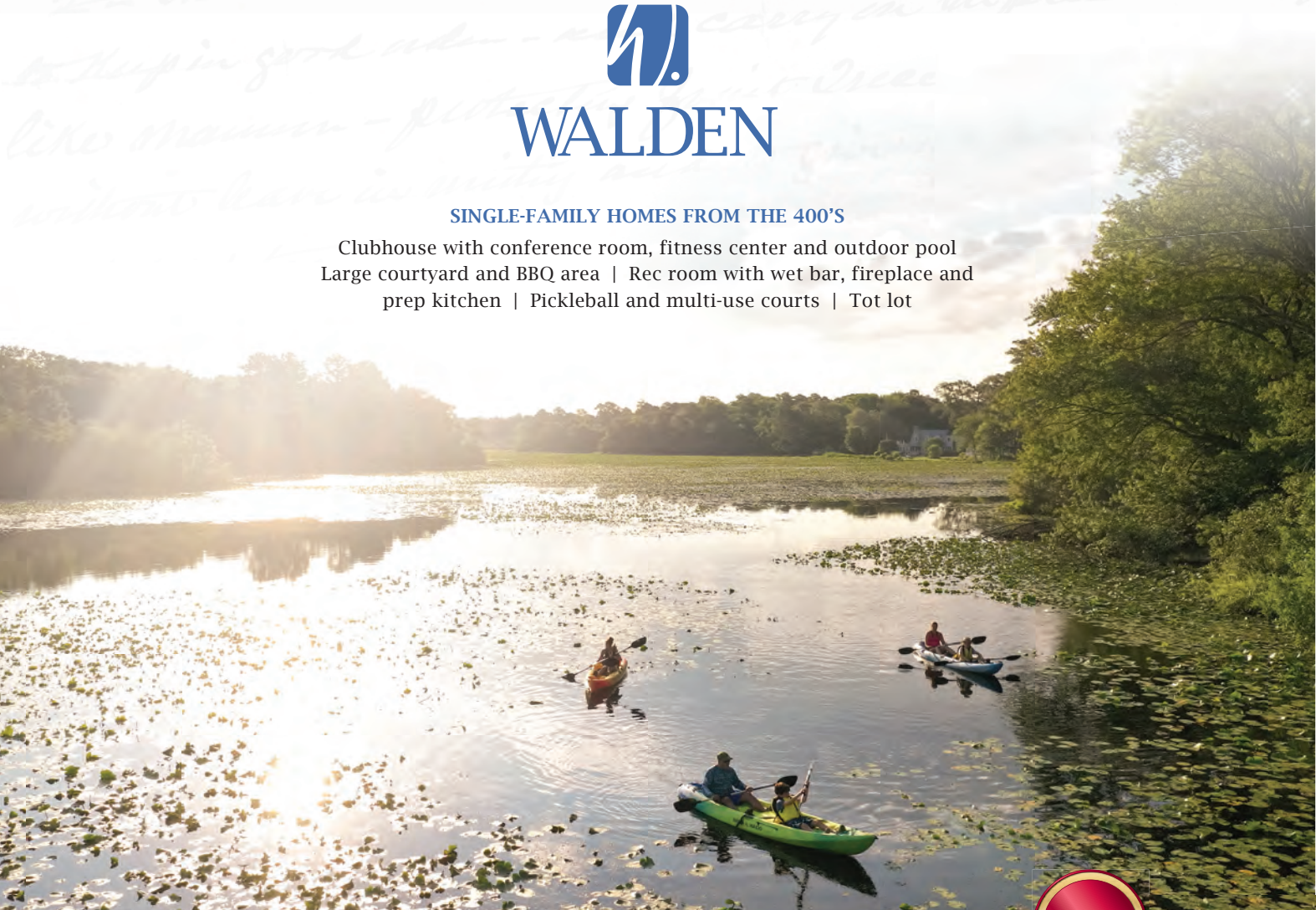
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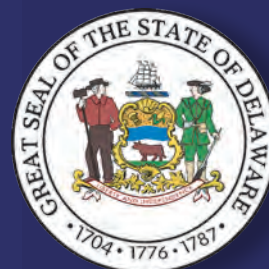
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Homes Matter Now More Than Ever

REALTORS® meet coronavirus issues head-on with advocacy and action

An Alabama couple didn't see their new home in Camden until four days after they bought it – and they loved it, thanks to extraordinary work by their REALTOR®.

Transferring from Fort Rucker to Dover Air Force Base, coronavirus restrictions meant they couldn't explore homes in person. They picked out 10 homes and REALTOR® Beau Zebley, the Delaware Association of REALTORS' 2020 president, created a video tour of each. After the couple chose the Wild Quail Golf & Country Club home, Zebley explored it a dozen times, measuring basement support columns and taking videos of cabinets opening.



George Thomasson, 2020 Sussex County REALTOR® of the Year.

What Zebley did exemplifies how the industry has changed the way they do business in the wake of the coronavirus, according to

- Virtual showings are soaring in popularity.
- Open houses and showings for buyers involve less touching and more cleaning.
- Multiple listing services sport a new framework for digital open houses.
- Settlements call for fewer and socially distant people.
- Documentation is electronic.
- Communication is by phone or computer.

The process relies more on negotiating skills, expertise and the can-do attitude of REALTORS®.

"Buyer, seller, buyer's agent and listing agent all must work together in good faith," Zebley says. "We're trying to bring a level of normalcy by adding a layer of care."



Photo by: Luigi Ciuffetelli

Carl Wahlig, president of the New Castle County Board of REALTORS® adds, "We're following the strictest of guidelines to minimize

unnecessary contact. But we're still in the relationship business, to market and sell and deal with people. We have adapted to it just fine."



The Delaware Association of REALTORS® as an organization pivoted well.

In mid-March, they set in motion steps to support the industry,

says CEO Wes Stefanick.

Those steps included working with the Division of Small Business to create industry-specific guidance so that REALTORS® could continue to safely work with buyers and sellers.

In advocating to the Delaware Real Estate Commission, emergency orders were issued to expand required continuing education opportunities to synchronous virtual sessions for the first time.

The state association's Forms Committee created documents for a smoother and more transparent process. One form asks questions about any recent exposure to people diagnosed with COVID-19; a second involves liability; the third acknowledges the pandemic can impede timing.

“

We're trying to bring a level of normalcy by adding a layer of care

- Beau Zebley

Stefanick notes that industry-specific guidance was updated multiple times while working with Governor Carney's administration, and the association educated members on almost a daily basis.

"We continue to focus on protecting the needs and right of buyers and sellers. Housing is essential to families, and the industry is essential to our state economy."

Safety measures taken at closings were also stepped up. "We're all getting through it well," says Andy Taylor, a Copeland Taylor attorney and the state association's legal counsel. "Very comprehensive safety measures" in his office include reducing the number of people attending settlement, sending out documents in advance, keeping buyers and sellers in different rooms and using ultraviolet air purifiers.

On the other side of the coin is Delaware's popular beach rental market. Short-term rentals at Sussex beaches became a huge issue, with out-of-staters first banned, then quarantined.



"We take every measure possible and work really hard to keep people safe," says Sandi Bisgood, president of the Sussex County Association of

REALTORS® and a REALTOR® with Ocean Atlantic Sotheby's International Realty.

“

We take every measure possible and work really hard to keep people safe

- Sandi Bisgood

That push includes deep cleaning, fogging equipment, and sometimes removing accessories like throw pillows. Agents have increased the time they devote to cancellations, postponements, and other changes, "trying to negotiate fair outcomes for all involved."

REALTORS® partner with the Delaware State Housing Authority to find help for renters who may be compromised.

"Delaware was one of the first - if not the first - to deploy emergency rental assistance" for people hit hard by the coronavirus, says Anas Ben Addi, the Delaware State Housing Authority's director.

The authority is working with the state judicial system on a more comprehensive solution to evictions and foreclosures and is also promoting forbearance, which pushes payments into the future.

As for commercial real estate, Vincent White, a commercial property specialist with Patterson-Woods Commercial Properties/CORFAC International and an agent with 20 years of experience, says the market can and has bounced back. "America has a great sense of entrepreneurship."

He cited the example of a strip shopping center that in March was welcoming a new personal trainer and a relocated massage business. "How can we make this work?" The answer? Abatement and reduced operating costs that pushed some costs to the leases' back end.

A Little Help From Our REALTORS®

Across the state, signs of hope during times of crisis are everywhere.



Sussex County REALTOR® Kathy Engel went to work during lockdown to make sure masks were available.



New Castle REALTOR® Jennifer Kulas put skills from her youth to work, making and donating about 1,000 masks to hospitals, charities, family, neighbors, and colleagues.



A fire at a local apartment complex displaced Dover residents early in the pandemic, and Kent County REALTORS® were there to help.

A PIVOT IN PRACTICE: Virtual Showings and Tours



With travel tough or restricted, particularly for out-of-state buyers, Delaware REALTORS® needed to quickly find a way to serve their clients. A pivot to technology and virtual methods to show homes and properties has helped to keep the industry moving – an industry vital to the state's economy.

"It's a difficult time, but some people have to move," says Nikolina Novakovic, a Century 21 Gold Key Realty agent with 12 years of experience. She conducts live tours via her phone camera with out-of-state buyers and, if needed, records videos for them to view later. The videos run 20 to 25 minutes. She starts narrating

from the front door and takes requests from clients along the way, sharpening her awareness of what the client needs and wants in a home. "Then I do a walk on the outside and a little on the development by foot or car."

Cathleen Wilder, a REALTOR®/broker associate at Long & Foster with 24 years of experience believes "It's made the industry more efficient." Her virtual showings evolved from still photos shown over a soundtrack to three-minute video tours over a soundtrack, created by Josh Wheeler of Wheeler Home Concepts. She is also comfortable conducting FaceTime personal tours.

“

**It's a difficult time,
but some people
have to move**

– Nikolina Novakovic

"Working with one couple, the husband wanted to see the electrical panel, and the wife wanted to see the kitchen cabinets," she recalls. Wilders was able to accommodate both in real time. "They bought the house that night."



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State Realty Cooperative and Diamond State Property Management. "People are hesitant about putting their houses on the market and are waiting for next year." New construction is delayed in permitting.

Sussex County:

By the coast, "it's still a seller's market," says George Thomasson, associate broker/REALTOR® with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Gallo Realty. Yet "sellers are more willing to negotiate, with sales averaging 95 percent of asking."

Commercial Real Estate Statewide:

"Everyone is waiting for a market correction" and consistent guidelines for coronavirus operations, says Chris Moore, an investor for 20 years and broker for a half-dozen, now a Certified Commercial Investment Member at Patterson Woods Commercial Properties. Quick-serve and to-go restaurants are doing "exceptionally well," but there was "an instant recession for high-end restaurants and retail. Multifamily units and industrial remains strong."

The Current Market Environment

New Castle County:

The seller's market in New Castle County is intensifying, according to Mia Burch, a Long & Foster REALTOR® and president-elect of the Delaware

Association of REALTORS®. There were 2,393 homes priced from \$50,000 to \$500,000 in July 2019, but just 928 homes a year later. There's not enough building, and for those who want to upgrade, "the problem is finding the next home."

Kent County:

In the middle of Delaware, the "inventory is lacking," says Monica LeBlanc, broker/owner of Diamond



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January 2020

Moving Forward in a New Normal

REALTORS® work to make
Delaware better for everyone.

Moving forward, there are four issues at the forefront for the 4,000 members of the Delaware Association of REALTORS®. Those issues include the realty transfer tax, property reassessments, the environment, and climate change, says Phil McGinnis, chair of the state association's public policy committee and an industry veteran since 1980.

The association wants the state's 4 percent tax brought back down to the 3 percent it was in 2017, because the higher rate is "an obstacle to purchases and economic development." Buyers must bring more cash to the settlement table, and that's usually something that hasn't been in their budget.

Reassessments

Property reassessments, in the news this year after a Chancery Court judge struck down the system in all three counties, should be done "fairly" and not as a hidden tax increase, McGinnis says.

The association supports "timely reassessments of true value," says Trina Joyner, an associate broker with Coldwell Banker Resort Realty with 17 years of experience, adding that the counties would be more efficient in handling reassessments than the state.



January 2020



Environment / Climate Change

The environment is always a consideration, and one that REALTORS® understand is a major contributor to the health and well-being of our communities.

"We favor rebuilding Delaware's drinking water infrastructure, preventing flooding in vulnerable communities, and keeping contamination out of our waterways," explains Sandra Ware, a

REALTOR®/senior advisor at Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Gallo Realty Commercial Division with 23 years of experience. This includes defending private property rights while addressing potential polluting access points from septs and environmental runoff. "We support funding mechanisms for these projects that do not include raising taxes," Ware added.

The association has "always been neutral on climate change," McGinnis, managing broker of McGinnis Real Estate, says, but "we do not support disclosures that scare people and stigmatize certain locations." McGinnis also cites a successful effort to ease the process of updating deed restrictions to allow for renewable energy like solar panels.

Fair Housing

Affordable housing is a growing concern, says Denise Forman Gaines, co-chair of a new statewide diversity and inclusion committee dedicated to providing "an ongoing conversation" about diversity and inclusion in the profession, inclusive of selling, buying, lending, and renting.

One new approach to affordable housing is coming from the Delaware State Housing Authority. Director Anas Ben Addi said it has launched an acquisition rehabilitation loan program geared to homes that need work. Appraisals are based on the rehabbed value, and the loan covers



both purchase and rehab, making the home-buying process easier for cash-strapped families.

The authority originates about 12 percent of the state's mortgages, a great percentage of which are for buyers of color. That impressive performance comes from multiple initiatives, including outreach, counseling, partnerships with faith groups, and loans for down payments, he says.

Additional support by REALTORS® involves engagement in efforts initiated by the National Association of REALTORS®, but increasing accessibility is often a one-on-one effort. Denis Forman Gaines, a Century 21 Gold Key Realty REALTOR® with 21 years of experience, remembers how she connected a young couple to a credit counselor, whose work a year later enabled them to buy a home. "It's helping people achieve their dream," she says, recalling how she cried at the time when she heard their news.



REALTORS® Of The Year

is a national program adopted by local organizations to recognize one member for not only business accomplishments, but also for outstanding service to their REALTOR® organization and their communities.



Andrew Bryan
Kent County
Association of REALTORS®

A REALTOR® for 27 years, Andrew has been a team leader since 1998 and recently served on the state association's task force examining the role of teams and the procedures and regulations that guide them. He currently leads 18 full-time agents with a philosophy of personal growth that is evident in both his work and that of his team. He received the franchise's Lifetime Achievement Award, and was named to both their Diamond Club and Hall of Fame. Andrew has served on the Kent County Association of REALTORS® Grievance Committee and assisted with numerous projects and special events.



Denise Forman-Gaines
New Castle County
Board of REALTORS®

Denise is president-elect of the New Castle County Board of REALTORS®, has served on its board since 2016, and has both chaired and been a member of numerous work groups. She is a current board member of the state association, and was recently named chair of that organization's new diversity and inclusion task force. She is a Military Resource Professional and Seniors Real Estate Specialist, and has earned corporate recognition for quality of service to her clients. Her community outreach includes fundraising and volunteer service to several local efforts, including Career Wardrobe and the Making Strides Walk.



George Thomasson
Sussex County
Association of REALTORS®

With more than 20 years of professional experience in real estate, George has been involved in a vast array of activities in both business and his community. George serves on the Board of Directors of the Delaware Association of REALTORS®, is a member of the National Association of REALTORS® Resort and Second Home Committee, and has held numerous leadership positions at the Sussex County Association of REALTORS®. He holds an E-PRO certification and is an associate broker. George is currently serving his 5th year as a Commissioner on City of Lewes Historic Preservation and Architectural Review Commission.

Helping Hands

REALTORS® help their communities in a multitude of ways.



Food banks have a critical need for supplies as unemployment has risen during the pandemic. NCCBOR donated \$1,000 to the Food Bank of Delaware to help meet that need. Pictured are, from left, Dawn Harris, 2020 Chair of NCCBOR's Community Outreach Task Force; William Smith, NCCBOR CEO; Larry Haas, Food Bank Chief Development Officer; and Denise Forman Gaines, President-elect of the NCCBOR Board of Directors.



It takes a team, and REALTORS® stepped in to make sure food got out the those who needed it. From left, Reyna Gil (REALTOR®) SCAOR Marketing Coordinator Stephanie Moody, Cheryl Crowe (REALTOR and SCAOR Board of Directors), Chrissy Steele (REALTOR® and SCAOR Board of Directors President-Elect) and her son Owen Steele.

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The Good Neighbor Program is a national initiative that begins at our local associations to recognize those REALTORS® whose engagement in community has been outstanding. Each of Delaware's three local associations takes nominations and one person is selected each year as their Good Neighbor. The state association recognizes the work of each local Good Neighbor with a contribution to their charitable organization.

2019 Good Neighbors



Kim Rochford, KCAR

Kim volunteers with the Girl Scouts of America and is a troop leader, cookie chairperson, and successful fundraiser. She has served over 200 young women, working more than 300 hours and raising more than \$15,000 since 2017. Kim actively plans and participates in volunteer projects with her troop, which last year focused on using recycled materials to support the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA).



Bonnie Sherr, NCCBOR

Bonnie takes her cause personally: both her mother and grandmother had Alzheimer's and died from complications of the illness. She is passionate about helping to find a cure. Bonnie serves on the Board of Directors of the Delaware Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association and is a committed volunteer. Her work has included raising money through the Walk to End Alzheimer's, hosting events, advising caregivers, and reaching out to private donors.



Kristina Lingo, SCAOR

Kristina's infectious enthusiasm for her work with Sussex Strong created an environment of creativity, energy, and inspiration for all. Not only did volunteer numbers increase in 2019, the October Gala brought in over \$50,000, to assist more than 295 underprivileged children in Sussex County. Throughout the year, Kristina contributed more than 1,000 hours to the group's efforts, and recruited volunteers who gave more than 12,000 hours to the organization's mission.

2020 Good Neighbors



Colleen Kellner, SCAOR

Colleen is the events coordinator for Operation SEAs the Day – a week-long event for wounded soldiers/veterans and their families at Bethany Beach. Housing is donated by local homeowners, and events planned for the week include deep sea fishing, horseback riding, cookouts, tours, a concert, car show, Heroes Parade, and more. Colleen also organizes Christmas gifts for children at Selbyville Elementary School each year, providing toys, clothing, and other necessities.



Kathy Pennington, SCAOR

Kathy contributes to host of community service projects. She helped raise over \$8,000 for the American Cancer Society and has been a fundraiser for "Dewey Goes Pink" for six years. She also supports the work of The Bayard House, Meals on Wheels, and Elks Lodge #307. She participates in numerous Christmas drives and adopt-a-family initiatives for Mary Mother of Hope House and St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church.



Liza Orlando, KCAR

Home of the Brave provides transitional housing, basic living essentials, and food for homeless veterans, and collaborates with other organizations to provide support services such as transportation, mental health counseling and medical services. Liza raised over \$31,400 for the organization, spent hours researching shuttle services to transport working veterans to jobs, and recruited volunteers who gave a total of 56 hours in service to more than 200 veterans.



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one of the concepts that arose in terms of rehabilitation is the notion that plants and horticulture, through a kind of natural renewal, can really provide, in their own way, kind of a rebirth.”

The renewal power of trees became the guiding vision for Branches to Chances, a job-training program that provides formerly incarcerated individuals with extensive learning and professionalization opportunities to start a career in horticulture. The program includes introductions to horticulture and public gardens, urban agriculture and caring for plants, trees and arboreta. Hands-on learning happens in parks, medians and other public spaces where participants can learn about the intricacies of landscaping. In partnership with other institutions, the program also offers career-building classes focusing on financial literacy, opening a bank account, how to write résumés and cover letters, and basic computer skills.

“Delaware Center for Horticulture welcomed me with open arms, and I realized that I love nature and the outdoors, and from that point on I’ve never looked back,” says Wright, who started working at DCH before entering the Branches to Chances program, first driving a truck and watering green spaces that DCH maintains around Wilmington. After a few months, Krishnamurthy recommended that Wright apply to the program and expand his knowledge of horticulture.

Each spring, Branches to Chances admits eight participants who are hired at DCH as seasonal temporary staff and receive a paycheck as part of their commitment. The 12-week program begins in March and concludes in May, a crucial time for landscape companies as they hire crews and prepare for a busy summer.

“It’s not easy finding skilled employees in the landscaping industry,” Krishnamurthy says. “And so what we heard from employers was that this is an ideal time to fill out their landscape crews. Closing out the program in May means that they can get right to work on jobs as we hit the annual frost date.”

For the last two weeks of the program, each participant completes an “externship” with potential employers like Davy Tree Company, Atlantic Landscapes, and the Wilmington Department of Parks and Recreation, where Collins worked the

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summer of 2018, cutting grass and pruning trees in city parks. Much like Krishnamurthy, Collins compares his horticulture learning and experience to a kind of spiritual growth.

“To get to know a tree—how far down you need to dig to put in the ground, how much space it needs to grow, how to nourish it, feed it, care for it and stuff like that—really brought me into contact with a really beautiful picture of nature,” he says, “and I felt both an obligation and an opportunity to make it grow and keep it alive.”

The city of Wilmington has partnered with DCH on this program through multiple administrations. According to Kevin Kelley, the director of the Department of Parks and Recreation, many of the candidates who graduated from Branches to Chances have found permanent employment with the city.

“It’s a no-brainer,” Kelley says. “Somebody has developed skills that we need through a program like DCH. We know they’re qualified and willing to work. It’s a win-win for everybody.”

If all goes well during the job placement, and usually everything does, then those employers will hire the candidates at the end of the



“I realized a lot of companies will say that they hire felons or people with criminal backgrounds, but that’s not actually what’s happening, at least not in my experience.”

—George Wright

program. Many participants have also gone on to start their own landscaping companies, including Wright and Collins.

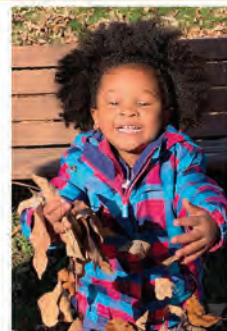
After Branches to Chances, Wright worked with DCH but also started taking on side jobs and continued to grow his knowledge about horticulture and landscaping. Then came a referral from one client for another job, and then another. Now he has his own landscaping company and employs two seasonal workers.

“I’ll never take another job where I have to remain indoors seven or eight hours at a time,” he says. “This has enabled me to be my own boss and make more money than I ever thought I’d make.”

Buoyed by DCH and the knowledge he acquired through Branches to Chances, Collins was also able to start his own landscaping business.

“It teaches so much more than horticulture,” he says. “It’s about developing the body and the mind, both learning how to care for trees but also confronting the pain or whatever it is you’re dealing with on the inside. The program taught me how to better myself and my business.” **DT**

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Fostering Hope Continued from page 53

Price-Starks began working with Pressley Ridge when she relocated to Delaware nine years ago. She welcomed sisters Dakota, 13, and Rylee, 15, into her home just over a year ago, and their newborn brother, Zander, the following summer.

"I felt comfortable ... that their standards for the care of the children—which is always my main concern—was their main concern," Price-Starks says of Pressley Ridge's foster care program.

The organization welcomes anyone to become a foster parent in the six states where it currently operates, but individuals and couples must meet both their state's requirements and those from Pressley Ridge, such as having a clean record, reliable income and transportation, and an adequate bedroom for a child.

Pressley Ridge provides extensive assistance to its foster parents, such as parenting courses, care breaks, tax-free

compensation and 24/7 phone availability, which Price-Starks says helps her feel supported.

BUILDING A FAMILY

Even before becoming a foster parent, Price-Starks had a special place in her heart for children.

She worked in pediatrics at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children and Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. After raising her first daughter and becoming an empty nester, she missed having someone to care for.

She began the process of becoming a foster parent in Philadelphia, working with Jewish Family and Children's Service of Greater Philadelphia and taking in two of her grandchildren, who had become part of the system. Then she met her husband.

The couple agreed to continue their journey as foster parents together. "He had the same mindset," Price-Starks says. "We're very family-oriented."



Pressley Ridge offers a treatment program that focuses on reducing a child's trauma by ensuring they are safe and cared for by trained foster parents; when appropriate, it assists foster parents and families on their journey to adoption.

They then adopted their daughter LaShay and relocated to Delaware. Once settled, the family opened their home to many more children in the foster care system and prioritized making everyone feel like part of the family. Their success is evidenced by the number of children who have returned to visit after moving out.

While children are staying with the Price-Starks, communication with their biological parents is allowed with proper supervision.

"I build a bond with the families," Price-Starks says. "Parents care, and they want to know the person that's taking care of their children while they're going through



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A young boy with short brown hair is smiling at the camera. He is wearing a green zip-up sweatshirt with a white 'TH' logo on the left chest. He is sitting outdoors, possibly on a wooden bench or deck, with a brick building and some foliage in the background. He is holding a blue pen in his right hand and writing on a clipboard held in his left hand.

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whatever it is that they're going through [also] really cares." Fostering, she says, is all about making sure children have stability and feel loved.

Her family bonds over games and movie nights; walks around the neighborhood and to the playground (when they're not closed due to a pandemic); and reading time and schoolwork.

"I don't look at them as foster children," she adds. "I don't refer to them as foster children when I'm out and about. These are my children. They walk in my door, they become my children."

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Price-Starks has done her best to provide activities that her kids once enjoyed outside the home. Sisters Dakota and Rylee love gymnastics, so she purchased equipment for them to practice at home.

They've also been able to keep in touch with their biological mother and see their two older brothers, who live with another foster family. Seeing their baby brother come home to live with them was the best surprise of the summer.



Every case is different, every situation is different and sometimes these children come from a home or a background where they just don't know the right way and are looking for guidance and looking for structure.

— Natalie Price-Starks

ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE

For Price-Starks, another important aspect of being a foster parent is educating the public.

The biggest misconception about foster children, she says, is that they misbehave and aren't trustworthy. In reality, all they need is "a bit of guidance and a little extra love."

"Every case is different, every situation is different and sometimes these children come from a home or a background where they just don't know the right way and are looking for guidance and looking for structure," she says.

And while there are stressful days, those are outweighed by the good days. She says she wouldn't change a thing about being a foster parent.

"For me, it's about the kids and seeing them smile and making them comfortable," she says. **DT**

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These later upgrades were mainly just cobbled together without the residents attempting to systematically make the place both comfortable and attractive. But the Moros were not content to live in a proverbial “drafty old farmhouse,” instead doing a complete redesign to make their home more inviting and more energy-efficient.

We walk first outside around the stone foundations of the house, where Moro points out the new, long-lasting copper roof. Inside the gutted section, with its exposed beams and unfinished walls, Moro, equally comfortable as a business entrepreneur and a hands-on fixer-upper, points out what he is doing and what still needs to be done.

“We’ve sprayed in open-cell insulation between floors,” he says, explaining that open-cell better fills in between the wood joists. Closed-cell insulation has a higher R-value (the measurement of a material’s resistance to conductive heat flow) by

Drafty windows and doors are among the biggest energy-wasters in any old house. For Darren and Karen Wright, replacing the 99 windows in their 13,000-square-foot New Castle mansion was the first step. But energy savings don’t have to come at a high expense. Here, spanial Tyson enjoys the sunshine..



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itself, but experts explain that when evaluating the efficiency of a whole wall or ceiling/floor, there isn't that much difference. Plus, he notes, open cell provides better sound insulation.

Rather than relying on a furnace, the Moros are converting to zone heating and cooling by using mini-split ductless heat pumps to heat individual rooms or zones, the same solution Maker is considering to replace her old oil heater. Each unit costs several thousand dollars, but that cost can be recouped within a few years. Additionally, the Moros have resisted the temptation to have high ceilings—big energy wasters—in their reconstructed rooms.

For hot water, Moro has already installed a Navien two-zone tankless gas water heater that provides hot water on demand. "I can see no reason

to store and continuously reheat 40 to 60 gallons of hot water," he says. He is also installing more efficient Anderson 400 Woodwright windows throughout the house. The Moros do have one indulgence—a new fireplace. Fireplaces can be notorious energy wasters even while temporarily providing cozy comfort. "But I've installed cold air vents to the outside within the fireplace," he says, "so there's less air from the room going up the chimney."

Like Moro, the Wrights in New Castle have also gone to zone heating and cooling, now with seven zones supported by heat pumps, compared with the two in place when they bought the property. In addition, they do in their large house what people should do in their smaller homes, particularly as children move out—shut the doors



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Making Efficiency Affordable

Not every family can afford to make energy renovations to their homes, no matter how badly they may need it. That's when public agencies can sometimes step in to help.

Frank Paquette is housing and community development supervisor for Kent County. He tells the story of how a family of six living in a one-story 1950s ranch-style home in southern Kent County was able to access help to make their home more energy efficient.

The family's annual income was \$45,540, making them eligible for help from the county. After they contacted Paquette's office in March 2017, they were placed on the waiting list. Though it took nearly two years for the work to be bid out to local contractors and completed, the family received repairs and upgrades worth \$24,605, about half of which was directly related to energy efficiency.

The work was done at no expense to the family, but there were continuing contingencies.

"The program does require that a 'due on transfer' lien be placed on the property," Paquette says. In this case, the lien term was 15 years with zero percent interest and no payments, with the amount of the lien decreasing 1/15 each year. At the end of the 15-year period, the lien is released. If the house is sold before then, the lien transfers to the new owner, who must pay the pro-rated lien amount at settlement.

and close off heat ducts to unused rooms. The house's design helps—pocket doors throughout can be closed to seal off large rooms. In at least one former fireplace, the couple has installed a rebuilt antique gas space heater that provides warmth without the inefficiencies of a traditional fireplace.

Of course, one of the trendiest, if no longer the newest, ways to address efficiency makeovers is through solar energy. "The first thing that people need to do before deciding whether or not to install solar energy is to look at what's possible" both structurally for the house and financially for the family budget," says Dale Davis, president of CMI Solar and Electric in Newark, which has been installing home solar panels for 20 years.

"Older houses are in some ways the most space efficient for solar," he says, as they generally have larger, uninterrupted roof space, although minor reinforcements may be needed to support the extra weight of the paneling. Next, an energy audit will give an idea about how much solar paneling is necessary and how long it will take a homeowner to recoup the expenses of buying and installing a system.

In most cases, Davis says, the new solar house is permitted only to provide a maximum 110 percent of the anticipated



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energy the house will need. The energy bill from the utility company will be reduced accordingly. “We tell clients it will normally take seven to 10 years to break even, even if they get a loan for the project,” Davis says. However, homeowners interviewed for this article reported actual or projected paybacks within six to eight years.

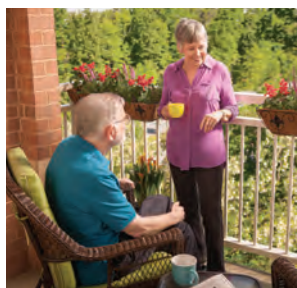
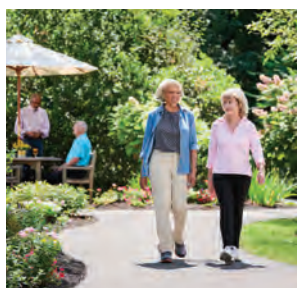
Part of this calculation is figuring in government programs, such as tax credits, which encourage switching to solar. Basically, the federal Consolidated Appropriations Act will allow a 26 percent tax credit for solar systems installed during 2020 and 22 percent for 2021. There is no maximum credit, and the home can be a primary residence, vacation home or rental property. Davis estimates basic solar home installation costs about \$20,000 before rebates and credits and about \$12,000 after.

The Witmans’ Glasgow residence is a good case in point. “We decided to begin by replacing our roof, which was 20 years old,” says Kim Witman, “so the project cost was somewhat higher—about \$38,000 for the roof, the paneling and the installation. We decided to pay \$11,300 out of pocket and took out a loan for the rest. The federal tax credit [which was 30 percent in 2019 when their project was undertaken]



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reduced that by \$11,400, and a Delaware tax credit by another \$3,000. So we figure we have a net cost of about \$23,000, which we financed at \$266 a month for 10 years. With the utility savings, we figure after seven years it will have paid for itself."

State Rep. Paul Baumbach recently moved into a 30-year-old one-level house north of Newark, and he is looking for a similar return on his investment.

"I drive an electric car, and we would have had solar energy installed at our previous house, but it was in the woods," he says. "We had to have the roof shored up on our new place, so the total work took about seven days."

Baumbach also had to have a tree next to the house removed that would have shaded parts of the roof's four sections of paneling. "But we've already put a new tree in further from the house," he reports. Baumbach expects a seven-year return on his investment.

Tom York, who with his wife, Mary Louise, recently moved to Milton from North Carolina, had 22 solar roof panels installed over the course of two days at their Sussex County home. "I really appreciate that \$20-a-month electricity bill," Tom says. "Previously, the monthly bill ran about \$100."

Less glamorous than solar energy but quite effective and cost-saving are energy-efficient appliances such as refrigerators, freezers, washers and dryers. As older appliances need to be replaced, one way to help the environment and the utility bill is by purchasing appliances that come with the Energy Star label. Energy Star is an EPA-sponsored program that endorses appliances that meet its standards.

The Energy Star website, energystar.gov, states that if every appliance purchased in the U.S. this year were Energy Star certified, it would prevent greenhouse gas emissions equal to those from 215,000 cars and save \$360 million in annual energy costs.

Although the smart home technology that tends to get the most attention might be doorknob cameras that allow you to talk to potential burglars while you're having dinner 20 miles away and devices that allow you to watch your pets while you're visiting grandma, smart home devices can help you conserve energy as well—whether or not you are at home.

The list begins with smart thermostats that control home temperatures based on family routines, both while you're at home and when you're away. Additionally, there are smart sprinklers, electrical plugs and lighting, as well as automated blinds to manage how much sunlight rooms receive.

In addition to federal tax credits and assistance programs for lower-income families, there are also other energy programs sponsored by the state and by utility companies. Energize Delaware has several programs to encourage making old homes energy efficient, including total home energy audits. More information can be found at energizedelaware.org.

Carol Maker's energy audit, performed by a private contractor, helped her identify and prioritize needed improvements, starting with added insulation. "The audit cost me \$400, but \$300 of that was covered by Energize Delaware, plus they installed free energy-efficient LED lights throughout my house."

Delmarva Power, an Exelon Company, doesn't offer in Delaware the incentives for improved home energy efficiency that it offers in Maryland, but the company continues to provide energy integration for customers who also use solar power.

"As of Oct. 31, 2019, approximately 5,634 Delmarva Power customers in Delaware had installed private solar at their residence or business, totaling around 63 megawatts," says

Delmarva senior communications specialist, Timothy Stokes.

"We do have net energy metering in Delaware, so customers who generate their own electricity with renewable energy sources can interconnect with the electric grid and receive bill credits for excess generation," he says. "A special net-capable meter measures the energy a customer uses off the grid and the excess generation the renewable system provides onto the grid, and calculates the difference, or 'net.'"

Maker, who was required to have a professional energy evaluation before she sold her home in Oregon and voluntarily did one when she moved back into to her home in Newark, says. "I think energy audits should be a requirement in Delaware. If you want to make your home greener, an energy audit is where it all begins." **DT**



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TASTIER TIMES AHEAD

Executive Chef Dwain Kalup's Charred Spanish Octopus sits atop creamy pancetta polenta and is garnished with a shallot salad.



With **Dwain Kalup** as its new executive chef, **La Fia Bistro** is reinventing the plate—and how ‘dining out’ is done during the pandemic.

BY MEG RYAN

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
CHRISTINA PETERS



You might notice our dining listings aren't printed in this issue. For a full list of restaurants offering takeout, delivery and dining reservations, visit delawaretoday.com.



Above: The Tuna Crudo looks more like a work of art than a meal of freshly sliced tuna with tomatillo buttermilk, grapefruit, basil and pomegranate. Right: Chef Kalup prides himself on the restaurant's charcuterie board, which includes a selection of meats and cheeses that are his personal favorites.

La Fia Bistro is quiet most afternoons.

If you happen to step into the little French eatery before the dinner rush, though, you'll find executive chef Dwain Kalup in the kitchen, busily preparing for hours before his staff arrives.

His skillful use of ingredients and reimagination of already perfect plating is why La Fia owner Andrea Sikora says Kalup is one of the best chefs ever to grace the restaurant, which she owns with husband Bryan.

Kalup and Bryan crossed culinary paths about seven years ago at an event.

"He tried a piece of the cake that I made and was asking me what I did to make it taste so good," Kalup remembers. "He was just very interested in what I was doing, so I could just tell he was all about the food."

It was a match made in confection heaven.

He could tell that Andrea, too, was a foodie.

"They [both] love the culture ... so I'm excited to work with both of them."

The Sikoras opened the bistro in 2013, which attracted patrons with its European-style vibe: intimate tables, a smattering of cheerful plants, good wine. The restaurant received praise from the



beginning for its French/Mediterranean-inspired fare. But with Kalup, they believe they've found their top chef. Since he took over, Andrea says, the response from patrons has been outstanding.

Kalup favors inventive, seasonal fare—focused on local and sustainable ingredients—served as traditional small plates, small courses or full entrées. The restaurant prides itself on making much in-house, from oven-baked breads to desserts.

Many Delawareans remember Kalup from the now-defunct Domaine Hudson. The Brookhaven, Pennsylvania, native found his love for cooking while working in a retirement home for nuns. One day, he was asked to help out in the kitchen and “kind of fell in love with it,” he says, inspiring him to study culinary arts and train as a chef at the Art Institute of Philadelphia.

His background is primarily in traditional French cooking, but when working in the kitchen, he takes inspiration from almost everything.

“I read a lot of cookbooks to get different ideas and techniques,” he says. “I love to grill at home ... experiment with different things to see what could potentially work at the restaurant.”

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After leaving Domaine Hudson in 2018, Kalup moved to Scottsdale, Arizona, cooking at The Hermosa Inn's Lon's Restaurant in nearby Paradise Valley.

"Working in Arizona exposed me to a different array of ingredients that I wouldn't normally use, like mesquite syrup, mesquite flour, different cactus and cactus fruits," Kalup says. He also used a lot of the state's local ingredients.

Kalup and his wife returned to Delaware in March after their first child was born. With his connections to the Sikoras, it only made sense to reach out to let them know he was back in Wilmington.

Since starting at La Fia in May, Kalup has honored the restaurant's roots while also refreshing the menu. Dishes like the Tuna Crudo (tomatillo buttermilk, grapefruit, basil and pomegranate) and the Charred Spanish Octopus (creamy pancetta polenta, lemon aioli, Calabrian chile vinaigrette, crispy garlic, shallot salad) have been invented as works of art; they're almost too beautiful to eat.



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Kalup favors inventive, seasonal fare—focused on local and sustainable ingredients—served as traditional small plates, small courses or full entrées. ”

The popular charcuterie board includes a rotating list of meats and cheeses that Kalup himself enjoys. And the Grilled Foie Gras Sausage (rhubarb compote, Sicilian pistachio purée, tarragon) showcase his ability to take something simple and elevate it.

Since the pandemic limits dine-in seating, the restaurant began offering the La Fia a Casa option, where customers can reserve a multicourse dinner early in the week and then pick it up for the weekend to enjoy at home. (The meals, ranging from French and Spanish to New England lobster rolls, have reheating instructions, so patrons can put dinner on the table with ease, Andrea says.)

With many customers working from home and not as much of a market for upscale dining these days, Andrea says La Fia will continue to make an effort to cater to current events. Look for lower-priced menu items in the future.

(The Sikoras also plan to reopen Merchant Bar across the street as soon as this month, where Kalup is working to revive the gastropub's menu.)

[La Fia Bistro, 421 N. Market St., Wilmington, 543-5574, lafiawilmington.com](#)



Left: The Grilled Foie Gras Sausage with rhubarb compote is presented on a serving board. Above: Chef Dwain Kalup returned to cooking in Delaware this past May after a stint in Arizona.



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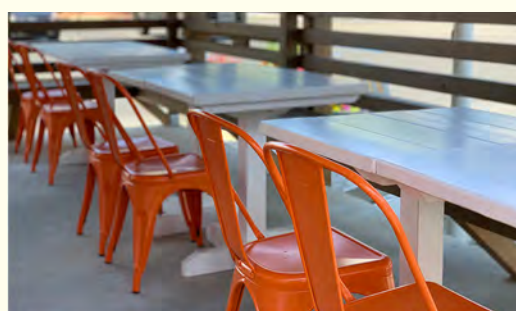
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At Wilmington's Drop Squad Kitchen, owner and vegan Abundance Child says her passion lies in "the alchemy of using plants in creating works of art that satisfy the palate."

PLANT ALCHEMY

Drop Squad Kitchen's Abundance Child feeds the soul and body with her vegan cuisine.

BY FRANCES NGUYEN

Abundance Child isn't haranguing anyone to become vegan. In fact, she's not a huge fan of how often vegan culture skews towards elitism and shaming. When asked what she thinks the most compelling argument for being vegan is, she replies, "I don't think I have the right to compel anyone to be anything other than who they are."

But Child does have a few compelling counterarguments to common aversions to vegan food—namely, that it doesn't taste good. "When I go to family barbecues, my potato salad, my pasta salads, my veggie burgers and my hotdogs are always done before the meat," she rebuts. "I can bring lasagna to a family dinner or to any other function, and it's always the first to go."

Child says she's always surprised when first-time patrons at Drop Squad Kitchen, her vegan restaurant at the Wilmington Riverfront, tell her how impressed they are by the taste, texture, and freshness of the food. Still, she hears from customers "all the time" how her food has turned them into vegans.

What makes Drop Squad customers convert is Child's commitment to mastering those three things they mention. "My passion is in the alchemy of using plants in creating amazing works of art that satisfy the palate," she



says. For example, she uses hearts of palm to mimic the flakiness of fish. “We know the only reason fish tastes like fish is because of the seaweed it eats, so I season my hearts of palm with seaweed,” Child explains.

She considers to be her main job to be creating the textures people are looking for. The delicious taste, she says, simply comes from the plants and the diverse flavors they provide.

“It’s taken me 20-something years to figure out how to do it, but I think time and attention are what people are noticing. I call our food ‘fresh vegan soul’ because of the amount of care that we put into it.”

Child says she wouldn’t serve her customers anything that she wouldn’t eat herself. “We actually eat our food in our family,” she says with a laugh. “We don’t go anywhere else.”

And, just like a home-cooked meal, Kitchen makes the food it serves either the night before or that very same day. “I’m [all] about eating fresh food ... about good food being cooked in small batches, being handled well. Period.”

Another argument Child easily debunks is that eating vegan is too expensive. “I like to be the kryptonite to that,” she says. “I started Drop Squad Kitchen on a food-

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stamps budget. I raised my two children, as a single mother, for at least six months being a vegan on food stamps, and I was eating better than I ever ate before.”

What’s more, she adds, “The time and money that people spend on being in poor health is very costly. People spend a lot on ineffective health care when you can easily buy plant-based foods, yoga classes, cooking classes and health-coaching sessions, and still have money left over for preventive care.”

“
*I call our food ‘fresh
vegan soul’ because of the
amount of care that we
put into it.*”

- Abundance Child

Child isn’t, however, as plugged in to the animal welfare argument. Especially given today’s social climate, she prefers to prioritize her community’s health and well-being. “Animals get treated better than brown people around the world,” she says. “So that wasn’t a factor for me. You can’t expect people to go into a vegan lifestyle when you see that those same people don’t treat people as well as they treat animals.”

And while she agrees with veganism’s benefits to the environment, she believes it comes down to health at the end of the day, and she’s committed to contributing something nourishing and—as her food is best described—soulful to the community.

“Because of disparities in health care, education and socioeconomic status, we have higher rates of heart disease, diabetes and other illnesses,” she points out. “And especially with COVID-19 and people’s health on the line, you want [them] to enjoy the things that they put in their bodies.”

That may very well be the best way to describe what she does at Drop Squad Kitchen: making food that feeds the body and spirit—and demonstrates the expanse of what’s possible with a little ingenuity. Drop Squad Kitchen; 928 Justison St., Wilmington; 984-2773; dropsquadkitchen.com **DT**



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In Our Glass

Each month, *Delaware Today* tastes local libations. Our favorites make a splash here.



LIBATION OF THE MONTH: Punkin Ale

WHERE TO FIND IT:
Dogfish Head Craft Brewery,
6 Cannery Village, Milton; 684-1000;
dogfish.com

October is the month I allow myself to give in to pumpkin overload—pumpkin spice latte, pumpkin bread and even pumpkin coffee (I'm typically a tea drinker). But pumpkin beer is where I draw the line—usually. Then I took a sip of Dogfish Head's Punkin Ale. The Delaware brewery began crafting this full-bodied brown ale in the mid-'90s, and it's no wonder it returns every fall. With hints of brown sugar, spices and—of course—pumpkin, the beer offers a sweet flavor that doesn't overwhelm the taste buds. Many pumpkin beers come with a double-edged hangover, part alcohol and part sugar, but this brew doesn't leave any unwanted aftertastes. It pairs well with savory dishes (an important factor during the holiday season), as well as leftover Halloween sweets. Just be sure to grab a six-pack before the holidays, as Dogfish warns the beer disappears from shelves quickly. So, relinquish control to the gourd gluttony and indulge.

—Meg Ryan

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Hot Tickets

WHAT TO WATCH, READ AND
PLAY THIS MONTH.

Dance, Dance

The female K-pop act Blackpink drops its debut album with YG Entertainment on Oct. 2. Currently being teased as "The Album," the EP's lead single "How You Like That" was released in the summer, garnering high praise from fans.

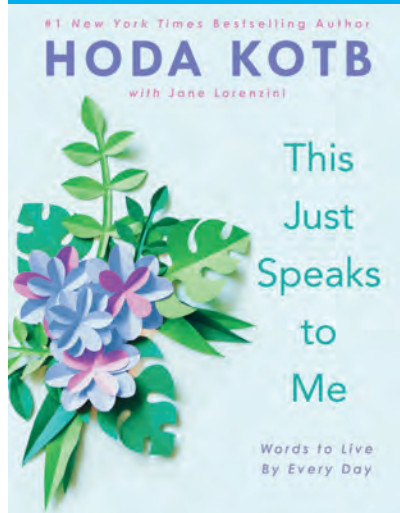


BAD GUYS

Dive into a new television drama as Marvel and Hulu pair up to present *Helstrom*. Based on the original *Helstrom* comic book series, the story revolves around two children of a supernatural serial killer who aim to find and defeat it. The new series begins streaming Oct. 16.

Inspiring Through Word

Broadcast journalist and television personality Hoda Kotb releases her second book of quotes and stories Oct. 13. *This Just Speaks to Me* reflects on the people and moments that have enriched her life. A poignant read in modern times, the work looks at acts of kindness during some very challenging months.



TO INFINITY ...

Take flight with EA's latest release, *Star Wars: Squadrons*. The space combat game in the Star Wars universe, set after *Return of the Jedi*, takes players for a ride across the galaxy in iconic starfighters and support vessels. Gamers can play in five-on-five multiplayer arenas or single-player story mode. Available Oct. 2.

COURTESY OF G.P. PUTNAM'S SONS (HODA KOTB) AND EA (STAR WARS)



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AT PRESS TIME, THESE LOCAL EVENTS WERE STILL SCHEDULED. CHECK THE EVENTS' WEBSITES TO STAY UP TO DATE.

Beginning Oct. 1: Following Delaware Contemporary's major fundraising event, *Art & Couture: A Contemporary Centennial*, the museum presents **Suffragists**, an exhibition featuring fashion designs by artist Shawn Baron Pinckney. The event celebrates the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment and modern-day suffragists. *Wilmington, decontemporary.org*

Beginning Oct. 2: The Delaware Contemporary presents **Through the Looking Glass**, an exhibition comprising the works of artists Samara Weaver and Carson Zullinger. While their styles are distinctly different, each exhibit aims to transport the observer to a new world through texture, color and perspective. *Wilmington, decontemporary.org*

Oct. 2-4: Score the best deals on boutique items at the **44th Annual Fall Sidewalk Sale**, extending from downtown Rehoboth Beach to Dewey and Route 1. 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., *Delaware beaches, beach-fun.com*

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The Delaware Contemporary presents *Suffragists*, an October exhibition featuring fashion designs with a message by artist Shawn Baron Pinckney.

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New Castle County Executive Matt Meyer
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Oct. 3: Walk around at **Wings & Wheels** for a showing of vintage cars and aircraft. This family-friendly event has it all, including an appearance by the Naval Academy Parachute Team. Georgetown, wings-wheels.com

Oct. 7-9: Support the American Heart Association with this year's **Heart Walk Digital Experience**, a modified version of the in-person event. For three days, participants can register, donate and walk wherever they live. Teams are set up for Wilmington and southern Delaware. Statewide, www2.heart.org

Oct. 7-10: Dog lovers come together for the annual **Greyhounds Reach the Beach**, where greyhounds and their pawrents partake in series of events, ending with a walk down the boardwalk. Rehoboth Beach, grtb.org

Oct. 10: The **Boardwalk Buddy Walk** is also going virtual this year. In support of the National Down Syndrome Society, participants can donate and stroll in their neighborhood or town on the date of the annual event. Statewide, ds-stride.org

Oct. 11: Celebrate Italian culture with Old World music, cuisine and vino at la **Vendemmia da Vinci Wine and Food Festival**, a highly



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The Vendemmia da Vinci Wine and Food Festival brings lovers of Italian wine, food and music to the Wilmington Riverfront's Tubman-Garrett Park.

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Pack a picnic, don your costume and climb aboard the Halloween Express for a ride to Mt. Cuba's picnic grove.

anticipated fall event held in Tubman-Garrett Park at the Wilmington Riverfront. *Wilmington, visitwilmingtonde.com*

Oct. 11: Meals on Wheels Delaware is set to host its **18th Annual Beach Brunch** fundraiser, with a few adjustments this year. From 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., patrons can enjoy a prix fixe "Beach Brunch for Two" as either takeout or dine-in at participating restaurants. The week prior to the event, Meals on Wheels will host a virtual auction. *Delaware beaches, mealsonwheelsde.org*

Oct. 17: Artisans from across the mid-Atlantic come together from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. to display and sell fine arts, crafts and gourmet items at the **Hagley Craft Fair**. *Wilmington, hagley.org*

Oct. 17: Support the Alzheimer's Association at the **2020 Walk to End Alzheimer's**. This year, the walk takes place wherever participants choose to lace up their sneakers. *Statewide, act.alz.org*

Beginning Oct. 21: Delaware Theatre Company presents **The Lifespan of a Fact**. This critically acclaimed 2018 Broadway play questions "How negotiable is a fact?" with humor and relevance in today's times. *Wilmington, delawaretheatre.org*



Oct. 29: Roll up to the Delaware Art Museum, where DelArt Cinema hosts a drive-in showing of **Frankenstein** to put you in the Halloween spirit. Parking begins at 8 p.m. Wilmington, delart.org

Oct. 31: All aboard! The Wilmington & Western Railroad is set to host its **Halloween Express**, where families can come dressed in their costumes and enjoy a ride to the Mt. Cuba's Picnic Grove. Remember to pack a picnic. The train departs at 12:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. Wilmington, wwrr.com

Through Oct. 31: The Delaware Breast Cancer Coalition may have cancelled its annual **Dewey Goes Pink 5K** and party, but that doesn't mean the celebration can't continue. This year, they're asking folks to donate and register for a special T-shirt design. Participants can wear their T-shirt all month long to support breast cancer awareness and still win an award if they raise the most funds as a team. Statewide, debreastcancer.org

Calendar compiled by Meg Ryan

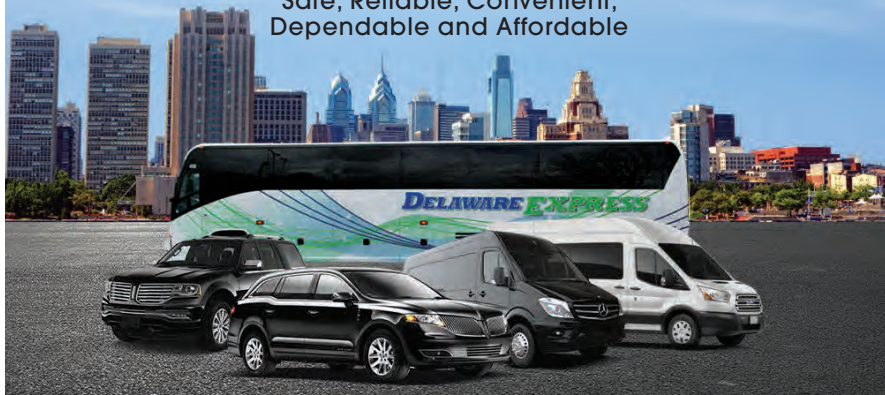
To be included, email photographs and event details to editorial@delawaretoday.com or send to: Calendar, 3301 Lancaster Pike, Suite 5C, Wilmington, DE 19805. Space limitations force us to be selective. Deadline for the December issue is Oct. 31.

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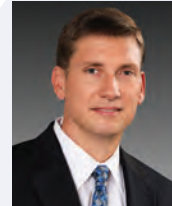
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