

SHORE

JULY/AUGUST 2021

the wellness issue

mind
body
spirit

Mental Health
Therapies

Herbal
Remedies

Outdoor
Adventures

July/August 2021 \$4.99



6 47732 15651 5

ON THE COVER:
Alice Lloyd builds a
cairn on the shore



The Official Community's Choice program recognizes exceptional local businesses throughout the region in 13 groups and 169 categories. Selections are in the hands of our readers, allowing them to shine a spotlight on their favorite local businesses.

Winners of the awards represent some of the finest the region has to offer and can use this prestigious award to promote their business all year round!

COMING SOON

HOW IT WORKS:

The Official Community's Choice program is divided into two rounds, the nomination round and the top five voting round. During the nomination round, voters visit Stardem.com/contests and MyEasternshoremnd.com/contests and nominate their favorite businesses. At the end of the round, all of the nominations are tallied and the top five nominees in each subcategory move on to the top five voting round. Readers are then invited to cast their votes to obtain the winners! The top three finalists are featured in a Best of the Best special publication and are honored at a special awards gala where the first-place winners are announced.



Coming September 2021!

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ON THE COVER
Alice Lloyd, NTF, builds a cairn (a meditative art form representing life and balance) along the water's edge.
Photo by Stephen Walker



By: Ryan Helfenbein

With the vaccination rate increasing and the CDC beginning to loosen its guidelines, people are starting to ponder what the new 'normal' might look like. Will buying our groceries without personal interaction become the standard? Could the schools of the future be built around remote learning technology? And when it comes to the world of an Undertaker, will we find consumers returning to traditional services?

A 2020 study of consumers conducted by The Foresight Companies looked into the individual attitudes and perceptions regarding the death care industry. With over 2,500 respondents it was learned that nearly 70% of consumers today want a different experience than what the death care industry has presented them in the past. It further went on to show that based on the responses from the data, it is estimated that over 2,000 funeral homes will go out of business over the next 2-5 years due to their unwillingness to accept this change.

Yes, a scary next few years ahead for the sales clerks at the grocery store, classroom teachers and those dim lighted traditional funeral parlors. Much like that of individuals in retail food and school districts, we do find a few modern undertakers adapting to these changing demands. As for the traditionally rooted funeral directors that are not accepting what statistics are proving, they obviously missed the funeral of Prince Philip. Here is a man who is bound to centuries of tradition yet a 2003 Land Rover escorted his casketed remains to create a personalized experience for all to remember. The media did countless stories on this and many across the world witnessed what was revealed from this most recent consumer survey: funeral service is becoming completely reimagined. The undertaker of today must specialize in tweaking tradition to create a one of kind tribute in order to showcase a life lived.

Consumers have hinted at this desire for many years now. We've witnessed modern day undertakers implement food and drink into their offerings, play unique music in the background of services and even arrange for Second Line New Orleans Bands to escort the traditional funeral procession. Motorcycle hearses have been used in place of formal hearses, cremated remains have been formally positioned in the ocean rather than the ground and the traditional urn has been transformed into personalized items, such as a usable fishing lure. Through technology, modern undertakers have even



Ask the Undertaker

taken a standard ceremony and transformed it into what appears to be a MPT (Maryland Public Television) prime time documentary. And now with a Royal opting to reshape the traditional means of transportation from a horse drawn gun carriage to a modified Land Rover unique tributes are all but cemented into the future of funeral planning.

It now rests solely on the consumer to talk about what made their loved one special so that their funeral professional can plan a one-of-a-kind experience. Simply put, consumers will need to determine if they are working with a funeral firm that is one to last, or one of the past. Is the staff making your experience and satisfaction their top priority? Is your undertaker focusing on a life lived by asking open-ended questions so they can better determine how they can be of assistance? Is the staff attentive to specific needs and open to exploring ideas in creating a unique experience? Are they taking what is being shared and providing creative approaches to honoring that person's life? Or is there solely a focus on disposition methods and standard funeral options?

Does the funeral home have internet connection and offer e-commerce opportunities for the event? Yes, some funeral homes today still do not have internet. And even more disappointing, after COVID, they still do not offer a high-definition camera for live streaming a ceremony or even have the capabilities to offer e-commerce opportunities to their community. Be sure to ask about this very early on. Consumers do not want to get too far into the planning process only to learn they'll need to hot spot from their own cellular device or even worse...bring in their own iPad to film the ceremony for the out of state Uncle to watch through a social media account he's not familiar with.

Your modern-day undertaker should become a trusted advisor to help bring ideas from 'what if' to the reality of a creative and memorable experience. Take a chapter out of the life of Prince Philip, a Royal molded by centuries of tradition for 99 years, who altered the expected Royal escort to a personalized vehicle that showcased a passion he had while living. Together, let's continue to reshape the funeral industry, and see that everyone is provided the opportunity Prince Philip had: a unique, one-of-a-kind touch to a final farewell.



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EDITORS' NOTE

We are finally resuming some normalcy in our lives after 18 months of dealing with masks, quarantines, no physical touch, and for many — grief beyond measure. Summertime can offer a natural respite to reassess our mind, body, and spirit. Inside our wellness issue, we introduce you to key individuals who can guide us to become balanced and healthy.

Clinical social worker and therapist Gail Weissert introduces us to the Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) or “tapping,” which addresses issues such as anxiety and trauma. We also learn how the innovative Neurofeedback Program at For All Seasons utilizes computer games to create new pathways in the brain and reduce symptoms related to such issues as ADHD, anxiety, and obsessive-compulsive disorder for people of all ages.

Summer also provides an opportunity for us to take better care of our bodies through healthy eating, exercise, relaxation, and meditation. The Campus Garden at Washington College is teaching students how to reconnect with nature and food in new and ancient ways while taking better care of the planet. Herbal Alchemy in Chestertown is helping the community learn more about the value of herbs as medicine and how they can help us naturally restore our health. We also take notes from Alice Lloyd of Nutritional Lifestyling about the importance of drinking enough water. Finally, reflective guest columnist, George Merrill, challenges us to find how to nurture a healthy spirit amid the stressors of everyday life.

On the lighter side, we visit DocoVino Winebar and Boutique in Cambridge, which in addition to wine tastings, offers a delightful afternoon high tea for its shoppers. Blackwater Adventures in Cambridge delivers up-close and personal kayaking, bicycling, and other adventures — perfect for family outdoor fun. We go behind the scenes of Wishing Well Liquors to learn from wine aficionado Philip Bernot how to pick a great bottle of red or white for a summer gathering. And finally, we have a checklist of colorful community gardens paying homage to the summer season.

In our Overcomer department, we showcase the life and work of Jason Lee of Jason's Computers in Easton, who overcame childhood cancer to create a leading tech resource enterprise. Adrian Holmes, founder of Alpha Genesis Community Development Corporation in Cambridge, has inspired students at Mace's Lane Middle School to write and illustrate a new book entitled *Discovering Harriet* about local hero Harriet Tubman. We also learn how Easton's Londonderry on the Tred Avon Cooperative Community's Resident Ambassador Program offers an essential lifeline to new residents.

In addition to discovering fun on the Mid-Shore with friends and family this summer, we hope this issue helps you explore new pathways to wellness.

Sadly, we say goodbye to our editor Manning Lee, who is relocating with her family to South Carolina. Her stories have enriched our publication and we will miss her on our team.

Happy Fourth of July!

Amelia Blades Steward, Co-Editor
Manning Lee, Co-Editor
Maire McArdle, Art Director

SHORE

President

Jim Normandin

Editors

Amelia Blades Steward
Manning Lee

Art Director

Maire McArdle

Marketing Director

Betsy Griffin

Creative Director

Greg Mueller

Contributing Photographers

Maire McArdle
Stephen Walker
Pamela L. Cowart-Rickman
Lori R. Bramble
Santosh Shanmuga

Contributing Writers

Niambi Davis
Tracey F. Johns
Debra R. Messick
John Rankin

Advertising Contact

Betsy Griffin
443-239-0307

Editorial Contact

410-463-9883

Submissions

submissions@shoremnthly.com

Subscriptions

410-770-4005

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A FIELD OF HAPPY
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PHOTO BY LORI R. BRAMBLE



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1:15 **The Ephraim and
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September 4 - Scrapple Fest

September 17-18 - Community Yard Sale

September 18 - Show Your Wheels

October 2-3 - Triathlon

October 9 - Fall Fest

November 27 - Hometown Christmas

December 4 - Santa's Arrival

December 31 - Hat Parade & Rock Fish Drop

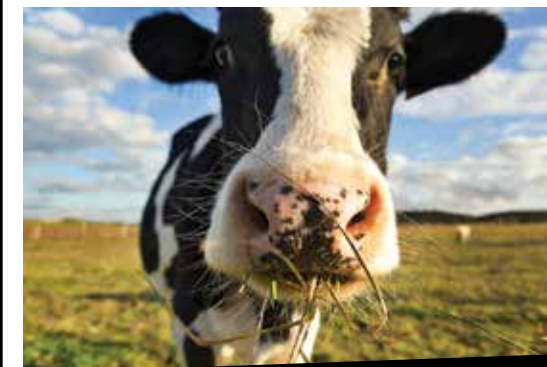
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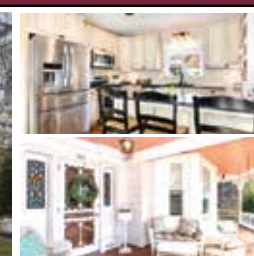
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125 Washington Ave. Chestertown

Incredible home.. "The Pink Lady" This Victorian has been given a new lease on life with a completely updated, gorgeous new kitchen, shining floors, washer and dryer on kitchen level. This house is beautiful. Great location, within steps to downtown shopping and restaurants, and just a couple of blocks from the Chester River. There is new kitchen cabinets, granite countertops, a breakfast room, new windows, beautiful stainless glass windows going up the classically beautiful staircase. It's just a beautiful home, wrap front porch. Gorgeous landscaping. **\$415,000 MDKE117482**



21082 Wyoming Ave. Chestertown, MD

Waterfront.. sunsets are gorgeous... and the house has hardwood flooring pretty much throughout. Two sided wrap screened porch, open porch facing the water, full basement, unfinished. Roof is six years old. All on one level living. There is an additional lot with sewer allocation on the property which makes the possibility of a family compound very feasible. Three bedrooms, 1 bath and beautiful mature landscaping. Just a gorgeous setting. Professional photographs to come. **\$699,000 MDKE118210**



12051 Clark Rd. Worton, MD

This 21st century home was built with energy savings in mind. This 2,842 sq. ft. home is bright with natural light and some vaulted ceilings. Propane radiant floor heat with geothermal wells and central air. The attached greenhouse adds to the heating efficiency and you can grow all year long! There is a 27' X 16' in-home business workshop with a half bath that can easily accommodate a full bath and can be converted to in-law quarters or rental space. Solar panels are seller owned so no leases! **\$699,900 MDKE118116**



103 S College Ave. Chestertown, MD

Updated home.. fenced back yard with a storage shed, zoned heat pumps. There is a patio and a third floor deck overlooking the semi private back yard. Brand new carpet throughout. Tiled floors in kitchen and Florida room, and fresh paint, inside and out. This home is adorable, just a couple of blocks from the wonderful historic Chestertown Shopping Area, and Washington College. One of the rooms upstairs has "cut outs" overlooking the stairway and the owner will close those off to make another bedroom if desired. Shows well. For an acceptable to seller offer he will provide a credit for appliances. **\$275,000 MDKE118202**



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AGENTS

Retha Arrabal
410-708-2172

Bud Felty
410-708-5879

Helen McAdory
443-820-5621

Frances Miller
410-708-7804

Vince Raimond
410-708-9673

William Brockschmidt
240-505-4278

Rick King
410-708-1006

Michele Palmer
410-920-9435

Vinny Assante Di Cupillo
443-480-8668

Beth Ostrander
610-256-3704

Grace Crockett
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Doug Ashley, Broker
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- Water regulates body temperature**
- Water cushions bones and lubricates joints
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- Water empowers the body to heal itself naturally
- Water is one of the biggest components of blood, transporting nutrients around the body**
- Water absorbs shock to joints and bones
- Water improves cell-to-cell communication**

COMPILED BY AMELIA BLADES STEWARD

TIPS FOR DRINKING MORE WATER

- Form a relationship with your water bottle or drinking glass, or spend a little money on your favorite color of Hydro flask and keep it with your phone at all times (works for children too!)**
- Know how much you need to drink for your body and own it every day
- Don't beat yourself up if you don't hit your goal, instead look back at the day and figure out where you could have added more sips in so you can do better the next day**
- Sipping all day is better than chugging
- Drinking away from meals is better than drinking with meals so your body can digest and assimilate your food without being flooded**

Pictured above with her teenage daughter, Gigi, Alice Lloyd, NTP, (nutritionallifestyling.com)

NOTE FROM ALICE
As a Nutritional Therapy Practitioner, I work with individuals, groups, and families to support and address full-body wellness through thoughtful education via nutritional and lifestyle adjustments. An easy habit that we can incorporate into our lives during this time is taking time to drink more water. I recommend the goal of drinking half of your body weight in ounces, every day.

Alice Lloyd, NTP
(nutritionallifestyling.com)

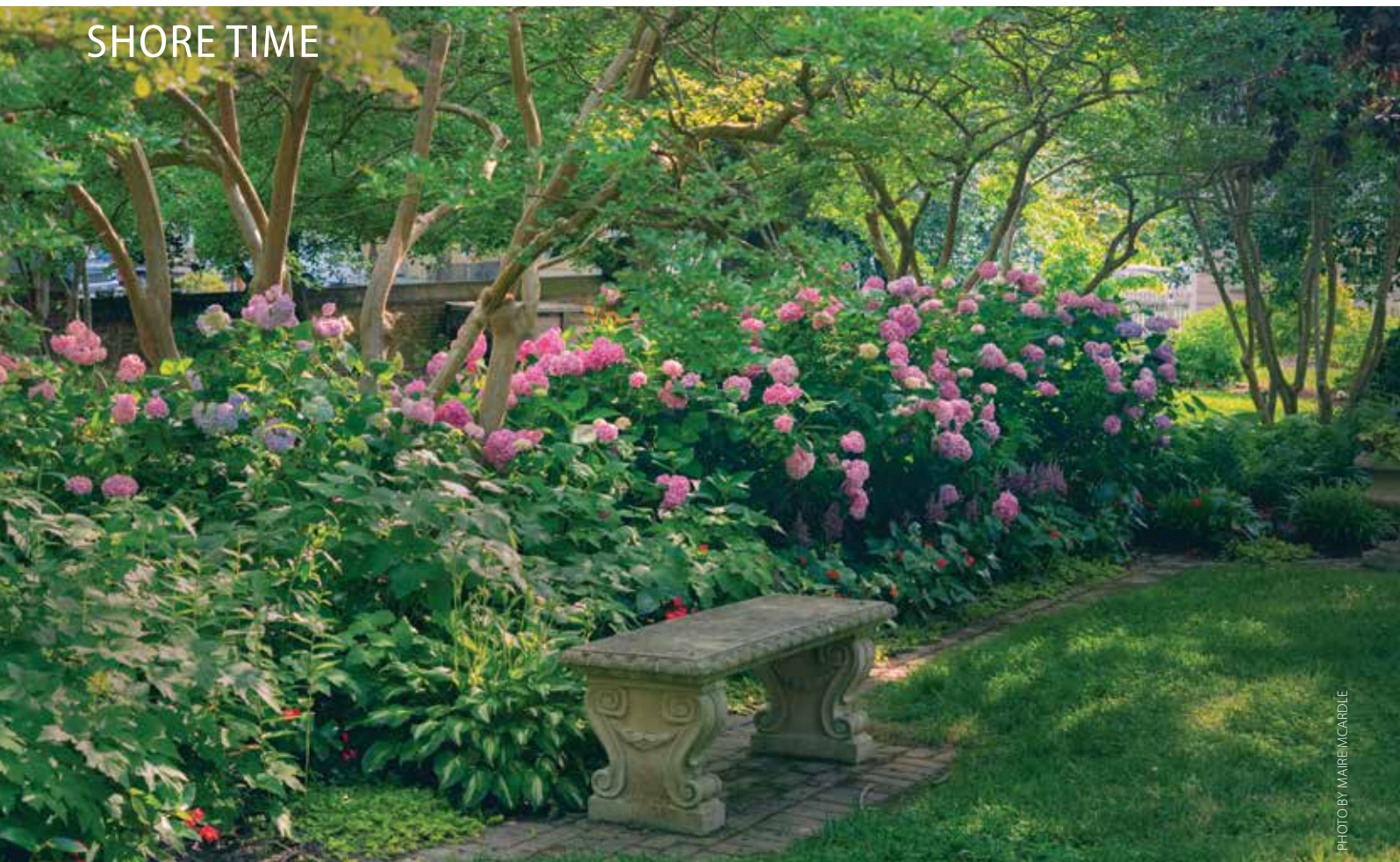


PHOTO BY WAIRE MCARDLE

A WALK IN THE PARK

Enjoy the beautiful summer booms at these five Easton community gardens

THOMPSON PARK

30 W. Dover St., Easton (corner of Dover & Washington St.)

Maintained by the Garden Club of the Eastern Shore and town of Easton, the park was named to honor club member Rebecca Thompson who donated the land. It's open year-round to enjoy the decorative archway, brick pathways, and garden benches. In late spring dogwoods and azaleas are in bloom.

TALBOT HISTORICAL SOCIETY GARDEN

30 S. Washington St., Easton (corner of Glenwood & Washington St.)

Maintained by The Talbot County Garden Club, this one-acre site features mature boxwoods, a terraced shade garden, perennial beds, plus fruit and flowering trees. In July, crepe myrtles and hydrangeas are in bloom.

TALBOT COUNTY FREE LIBRARY GARDEN

100 W. Dover St., Easton

Maintained by the Talbot County Garden Club, this primarily shade garden has 400 tulip bulbs which were planted in conjunction with the young gardener library program. Black-eyed susans, milkweed, and asters, all native pollinators, have been recently added.

FIVE CORNERS FOUNTAIN GARDEN

Idlewild Park, Easton (corner of Idlewild Ave., S. Harrison St., and S. Washington St.)

Maintained by the Talbot County Garden Club, a fresh mix of colorful annuals are added each year to complement the existing limelight hydrangeas. A mystery still looms about this garden because a bench mysteriously disappeared, then reappeared, so it is now locked in place.

FRANCES PLATE MEMORIAL CHILDREN'S GARDEN

in Idlewild Park, Easton (S. Aurora St. and S. Washington St.)

Maintained by the Talbot County Garden Club, the land was bequeathed by a deceased club member and it's designed specially for young children. Look for the osprey nest sculpture, a dolphin statue, an oyster shell-shaped maze, a child-sized wooden work boat and a sundial.



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(Blackwater Adventures)

AUTHENTIC CHESAPEAKE

Experience nature's beauty as you paddle through the calm waters

BY TRACEY F. JOHNS

Our fondest memories are often made by experiences engaging our senses and connecting us to a genuine sense of place — especially places rich in history and that touch our souls in some way. Blackwater Adventures in Cambridge, Maryland delivers on both with unforgettable Chesapeake experiences for locals and area guests alike to enjoy up-close and personal kayaking, bicycling, and other adventures.

Blackwater Adventures' Little Blackwater River location includes a 1930s-era tomato cannery that now serves as a

beautiful backdrop for cycling and touring groups by day, and beautiful weddings and other private gatherings by night. The expansive, waterfront building is also where an impressive inventory of kayaks, bicycles, jet skis, small powerboats, and more are maintained and stored in the colder months.

You can also find Blackwater Adventures on the Choptank River at the Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay with additional motorsport options. For those that want to experience the Chesapeake closer to home,

Blackwater Adventure's owner Matt Meredith paddles to the shore.

EXPLORE THE SHORE



Above: Fun family bicycle outing — all equipped by Blackwater Adventures; Right: Try stand-up paddleboarding. Below: Author Tracey Johns paddles out to experience the beauty and serenity of the area. Opposite: Matt Meredith is the best guide to help you get on the water.



Blackwater Adventures also provides delivery services to your waterway or door within seven Eastern Shore counties.

For my adventure, I headed from Easton to Dorchester County's Harriett Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park and within the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge to Blackwater Adventures' flagship location on the Little Blackwater River.

Flat roads and wide horizons interrupted by an occasional hammock greeted me as I crossed over the Key Wallace Bridge to arrive for my Little Blackwater River adventure. Brackish breezes carried osprey and other shorebirds along a pristine shoreline, as Blackwater Adventures' Matt Meredith helped me gear up, choose a kayak, and launch from their protected beach, with only the sounds of quiet stillness and my paddle lapping in the water. Pure bliss.

I paused just in time to watch a bald eagle land nearby with what looked like a fresh catch of shad in its talons, according to Meredith, 33, a tenth-generation Eastern Shore native. She is one of three siblings who own and operate the 19-year-old adventure business, along with their mother and father, Susan and Jay Meredith. Siblings are Kasey Knox, 29, and Wesley Meredith, 37, with the next generation of children ages nine months to nine years all tour guides in training. The company employs up to 15 locals during the warmer months and attracts customers from throughout the D.C. Metro, Philadelphia, and New York City areas.

"All of our guides are local," Meredith says. "They aren't reading from a script, they are telling their story as they live it. Our experiences leave you with an understanding of an incredible sense of place."

PHOTOS BY MAIRE MCARDLE, STEPHEN WALKER AND COURTESY BLACKWATER ADVENTURES


The family all live in Bucktown, in a 1790 family home and operate the Bucktown General Store that their fifth great-grandfather owned.

"We're here to show the story, not just tell the story," says Meredith. "Our eco and history tours show the unchanged waterways that Harriett Tubman used in the Underground Railroad for example. And we share first-hand stories about the local seafood and trapping industries, the land, the habitat, the significant people of Dorchester County, and more."

He explains to me that a bridge where I had crossed the Little Blackwater Bridge has been there since the 1700s, when Harriet Tubman's grandmother, Modesty, was enslaved on a riverside tobacco farm, as he points to the location — Tubman's mother was also born there.

I could hear a group of bicyclists quietly turning the road's corner as I settled into my kayak's adjusted seat to begin paddling for my self-guided tour, at my own comfortable pace.

I was ready for my unforgettable Chesapeake experience.

I paddled for a bit and stopped to take in the reverence of this sacred place. The shallow, dark waters holding this very history lapped beside me, as I watched for native wildlife including muskrat, otters, songbirds, snakehead, shad, perch, catfish, and more. The experience has forever etched memories upon my soul. I can't wait to go back. 

BLACKWATER ADVENTURES CHESAPEAKE BAY

Flagship Location:
Little Blackwater River
2524 Key Wallace Dr., Cambridge

Choptank River:
Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay
100 Heron Blvd., Cambridge

Delivered to your waterway or doorstep:
Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's
Somerset, Talbot, and Wicomico Counties

See website for discounts and hours
info@blackwateradventuresmd.com
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(DocoVino Wine Bar and Boutique)

SIP AND SHOP

Cambridge business combines shopping and girlfriend fun

BY MANNING LEE | PHOTOS BY MAIRE MCARDLE AND STEPHEN WALKER

“**Pinkies Up,**” is a phrase that dons the front of DocoVino Wine Bar and Boutique. Since the middle of the 15th Century, the practice of lifting the pinkie finger while drinking tea or wine represented a distinction between social classes. In a strange twist of phraseology, it is now a mantra that beckons women to gather, consume beverages, and to be fancy and fun together. No place on the Shore embodies the idea of girls having fun more than DocoVino, a sweet, little wine bar/boutique in the heart of Cambridge.

Amy Betts is a sassy, fun, and bubbly business owner who spent 16 years working at a dental office. She determined that her

nine-to-five job just did not fit her busy lifestyle. Betts took a chance and followed where the wind blew her. She decided to create a successful fashion boutique in the heart of Cambridge. “In Cambridge, it is difficult to find clothes other than at Walmart. I wanted to create a place where women could find unique, comfortable pieces that make a statement while still keeping the clothes affordable and fun,” explained Betts.

In the beginning, the boutique thrived but struggled through the winter months. Betts looked for avenues that would enhance traffic during those times. She hosted ladies’ night each first Friday of

the month. She invited ladies to come, have wine, and shop together in hopes of creating customers. It became wildly popular and sustained her business during the winter months, but it also helped her grow her business the rest of the year.

After perfecting ladies’ night, Betts still wondered, “How could I incorporate even more fun into the boutique?” added Betts. It would need to be something that could get people to come out to purchase from the boutique. Since Betts had success in implementing ladies’ night and since the local wine bar had just closed, she decided to create a new space in her existing



Owner Amy Betts, left, and manager Melissa Newcomb welcome customers into their wine boutique; Opposite: Short jeans cutoffs, the front window display and the exterior signage of DocoVino in Cambridge

SHOP TALK

boutique that ladies could come together, drink wine, have fun, and shop.

While most ladies who visit DocoVino come for the wine, they also want a little something to nibble on while they sip their wine. Betts started by simply serving cheese and cheesecake procured from the Cheesecake Girls in Easton. “In December last year, we added the pancake and Belgium waffle charcuterie boards. We make them from scratch and serve them with some Devonshire cream and syrups,” Betts described.

Betts designed her signature wine tasting flights. “There aren’t a lot of places around here to do tastings.



PHOTO COURTESY AMY BETTS

I know I don’t want to buy whole glasses or bottles of wine if I don’t know if I’ll like them or not. My flights are a fun, affordable way to try several wines at once,” Betts

explained. She gave each flight a playful name. For example, the ‘Big Little Lies’ features organic and biodynamic wine choices. The ‘Betty White’ flight represents the sweetest combination of fruity, floral-bodied wines.

Gaining popularity in the store are DocoVino’s afternoon tea parties on the last Sunday of every month. By reservation only, each tea party is reminiscent of British High Tea. It begins with a bottomless teapot of Fortnum and Mason loose leaf Royal Teas. It also comes with a green salad or seasonal fresh fruit salad and a three-tiered tray full of scones, jams, cookies, and finger sandwiches. DocoVino also reserves



private tea parties for groups of ten or more.

Whether ladies prefer holding a wine glass or a teacup with their pinkies up, there is something for everyone here. DocoVino is the spot

in town where ladies can come with their closest friends to eat, drink wine or tea, buy clothes, and have a great time together. Let the men have their sports bars — the ladies have DocoVino! 🍷

DOCOVINO WINE BAR AND BOUTIQUE

Tea Party Dates for 2021

There are two seatings; 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.; Seating is limited; reservations are required.

July 25
August 29
September 26
October 31
November 28
December 26

Location

406 Race Street
Cambridge, Maryland
Phone: 443-225-5676
www.docovinowinebar
andboutique.com

Hours

Monday-Tuesday: Closed
Wednesday-Thursday:
12:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.
Friday: 12:00 p.m.-10 p.m.
Saturday: 10:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m.
Sunday: 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

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(Jason Lee)

INSPIRING JOURNEY

Local businessman shares his story and commitment to serving his community

BY DEBRA R. MESSICK | PHOTOS BY MAIRE MCARDLE AND STEPHEN WALKER

Building a successful business is a great accomplishment for anyone. But Jason Lee, founder of Jason's Computer Services of Easton, found a way to do so after life dealt him an especially daunting hand.

In 1987, at age 4 ½, Lee was diagnosed with deadly ALL and ALM Leukemia. At that time, the odds of surviving, much less thriving, were exponentially against him. But throughout three years of chemotherapy, radiation, remission, relapse, and a pioneering bone marrow transplant, Lee and his family drew on core values of strength, persistence, a positive attitude and a fighting spirit that wouldn't quit.

Over the past 20 years, the character traits that helped him confront and battle cancer also unwittingly contributed to the steady growth of Lee's "homegrown" brainchild, which has become the area's leading tech resource enterprise.

Knowing from experience that each day is a gift, Lee has worked tirelessly to do the most he can with each one. From that energetic pursuit, he's created a fulfilling career, provided employment for others, and contributed to the community, always focusing on the future and staying committed to excellence.

As Jason's Computer Services

grew, Lee relentlessly sifted through overflowing numbers of applicants to pinpoint the best people for his team. Today, six staff members, including mom Holley Lee, Nathan Allen, Ryan Protos, Punit Patel, Jordan Lane, and Chris Broadka, comprise one of the area's most highly respected businesses offering stellar expertise and customer service.

When last year's COVID-19 pandemic emergency entailed a new normal, suddenly working via computer from home almost overnight, the team he assembled provided a vital lifeline to Lee's loyal client base plus many first timers, who reached out to the service they trusted by experience and reputation to help successfully navigate the transition.

Lee's childhood, where he discovered his love of and gift for computers and tech, was itself marked by uncharted waters. Smaller in stature due to his early treatments, Lee's parents, Jim and Holley, guided him into tech pursuits instead of the traditional childhood sports.

Holley Lee recalled how nurses at Johns Hopkins called on him to help fix the hospital playroom's computerized drawing program whenever it would "tear up;" the youngster also cleared the floor's dot matrix printer's operational difficulties.

As a youngster, Lee's Uncle Tom worked for IBM, and he had ready access to the computer at the home of his Uncle Mike. Growing up in Cordova, Lee became the neighborhood "go-to" computer guy for his neighbors. "At first, I would just help them out, but soon they started paying me," Lee recalled.

His first official "regular" job, meanwhile, was in horticulture at Murdoch Gardens. "I love plants," Lee confided, adding that he's landscaped home and office property. But once, when Murdoch's computer messed up, and Jason fixed it, his employer, impressed, asked him, "Son, what are you doing here?"

While earning an A.A. degree from Chesapeake College, Lee already had accrued a sizable client list. After graduating, he continued to grow his computer operation out of an office loft at his parents' home, but soon needed to relocate to his current standalone property at 9231 Centreville Road, which houses the facility serving as workshop, office, and showroom. Lee recently purchased the property next door, enlarging his customer parking area, completely renovating the current building and adding a second outer facility for more overall office, workshop, and showroom space (augmenting the

showroom set up last November).

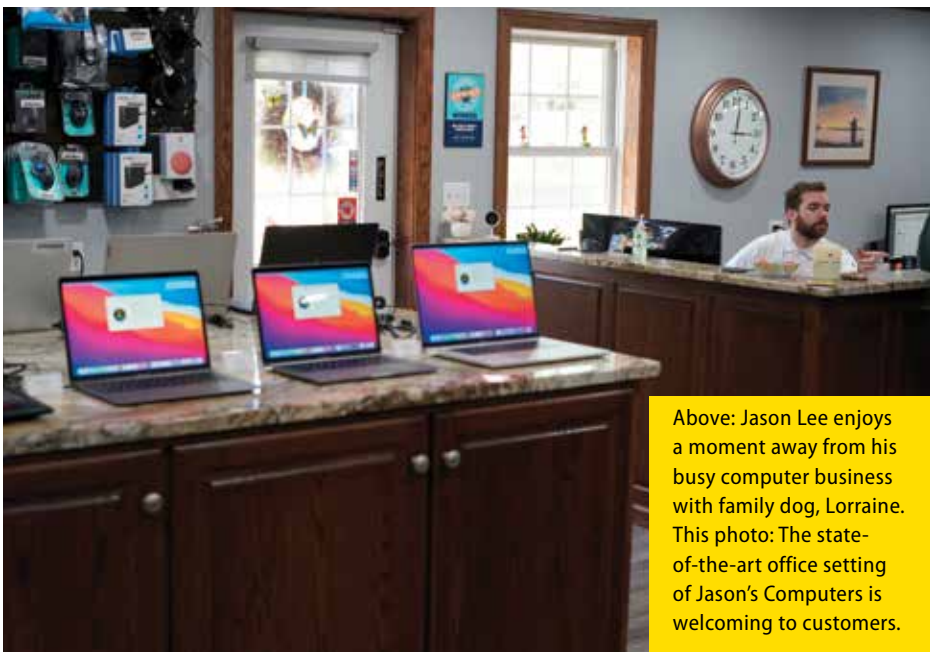
Throughout it all, his passion for providing the highest quality materials and personal service continues to burn brightly as a driving force. Looking back on the incredible, journey he's been on the past 21 years, Lee is not only fulfilled by what he's accomplished, but also excited for what lies ahead, day by day.

Lee feels especially proud to offer an unconditional satisfaction guarantee, to every Jason's Computer Services client. This covers remedying problems large and small, occurring immediately or much farther down the road, with a total refund or replacement, and assurance of being back up and running that day.

He credits his manager, Ryan Protos and the rest of his staff with ably meeting each client's needs, freeing him up to oversee the big picture. But he never completely takes his eye off the ball, always curious about what each person needs and seeking affirmation they've come away satisfied. "I'm slowly learning to let go and delegate," Lee added with a smile. He admits, though, to still being energized by the enterprise he cultivated each step of the way.

Along with going the extra mile for each customer, Lee lends his technical and entrepreneurial expertise to North Carolina High School's Tech program, hoping to guide and inspire youngsters, and hiring several graduates to work in his business.

Lee also hopes his educational path via a community college sends a message to those pursuing higher education, that it's not necessary to bury yourself in debt with a four-year degree. Most of all, he hopes his success story urges others, especially those starting out, to focus on their potential instead of the challenges in their path, and to just get out there, take a chance, and reach their goals, whatever they may be. 📍



Above: Jason Lee enjoys a moment away from his busy computer business with family dog, Lorraine. This photo: The state-of-the-art office setting of Jason's Computers is welcoming to customers.

energy **tap**

A local social worker guides her clients in a stress-release technique

BY AMELIA BLADES STEWARD

Creating positive emotional

states, achieving desired goals, and attaining higher states of health, well-being and resilience are what most people are wanting today in the stressful world in which we live. Many are finding balance through a psychological acupressure technique called Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT), or commonly known as “tapping.”

Clinical social worker and therapist Gail Weissert, LCSW-C, DCSW, of GW Associates in Denton has been practicing the technique since 2008, helping clients with everything from general anxiety, phobias, stress, depression, and pain to helping individuals who have experienced a traumatic event. Since the pandemic when many mental health practitioners are using teletherapy, EFT is proving to be as effective virtually as it is in person.

“I call myself a student of the mind. The mind is so vast and infinite. I am in awe of it. I started

learning with an amazing teacher, Michael Preston, PhD, author of the book, *Hypnosis: Medicine of the Mind*. He mentored me for over 15 years. This experience changed how I thought about therapy of any kind. If I didn’t know what to do about this or that — like a person had hives or was experiencing pain or wanted to stop smoking or lose weight — hypnosis could be effective,” Weissert states.

In about 2008, Weissert learned of the work of Gary Craig, one of the pioneers of the world of energy therapy and founder of EFT. The EFT technique can help people who have experienced some sort of emotional trauma that was compromising both their physical and emotional health. EFT can rapidly reduce the emotional impact of memories and incidents that trigger emotional distress.

“EFT is similar to hypnosis, although they will tell you it’s different because you are tapping

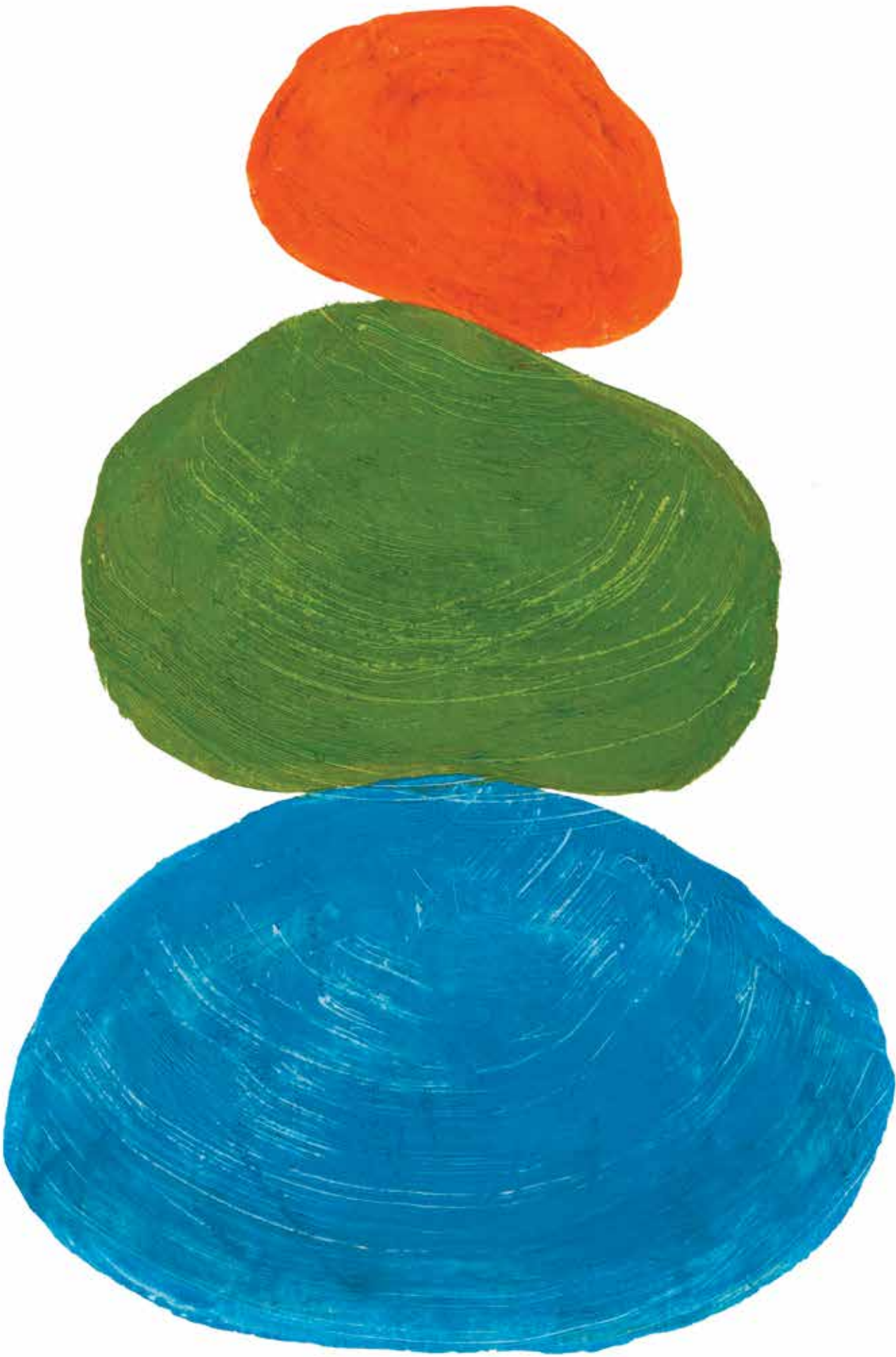


ILLUSTRATION BY MAIRE MCARDLE



Gail Weissert, left, and Bonnie Lewis practice EFT together at Weissert’s woodland-nestled office in Denton

PHOTO BY STEPHEN WALKER

on 13 endpoints of meridians in the acupuncture system, which they believe are portals into your subconscious mind,” Weissert explains.

Weissert shares that Craig, who was an engineer interested in human performance, streamlined and then expanded on the works of others. He simplified the model, assembling the endpoints of the meridians in a way most people could easily understand. The simple tapping process involves using the fingertips to input kinetic energy onto specific meridians on the head and chest while you think about your specific problem — whether it is a traumatic event or physical pain — and voice positive affirmations. The combination of tapping and voicing positive affirmations works to clear the “short-circuit” or emotional block from the body’s bioenergy system. This can help restore the mind and body’s balance, helping create optimal health and the healing of physical disease.

This form of psychological acupressure is based on the same energy meridians used in traditional acupuncture to treat physical and emotional ailments for over 5,000 years but without the invasiveness of needles. Over time the technique evolved to what they call the gold standard that is taught the most around the world. There are nearly 40 different variations of these different types of energy psychology type techniques today.

Of 400 forms of psychotherapy available today, most do not have research backing them. EFT is evidence-based and is in the top 10 percent of published research for efficacy with 114 studies that demonstrate clinical effectiveness,

TAP into EFT

THE SETUP
Choose a problem to address, express it in just a few words, and use those words in the blank below. “Even though I have this _____, I deeply and completely accept myself.”
(The purpose of this language is to acknowledge the problem and accept oneself in spite of the problem.)

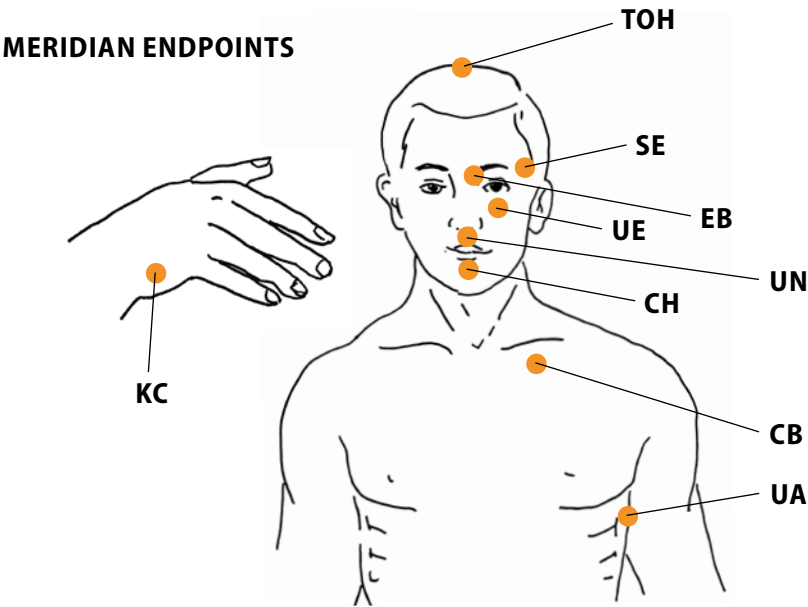
REMINDER PHASE:
The same problem you expressed in just a few words and added to the setup statement above.
(The purpose of this phrase is to maintain the focus on the problem.)

THE SEQUENCE:
Tap about 5 to 7 times on each of the remaining points while repeating the “reminder phrase” at each point. Measure current intensity from 0-10

SUBSEQUENT ROUNDS:
If the intensity has not dropped to zero, ask if the intensity is related to the same thing you just addressed or something new. If it is something new, adjust your setup and reminder language to target the new aspect. If not, try one more round with the same language as before.

Keep in mind you are usually targeting a specific event of three minutes or less with a limited number of aspects.

MERIDIAN ENDPOINTS



- KC:** The fleshy part on the side of the hand that you would use to do a karate chop
- TOH:** At the top of the head in line with the ears.
- EB:** At the inside corner of the eyebrow
- SE:** On the edge of the bone at the outside of the eye
- UE:** On the edge of the bone beneath the center of the eye
- UN:** In the center of the area between the nose and upper lip
- CH:** In the center of the area between the lower lip and chin
- CB:** From the u-shaped bone where a man would knot his tie, go one inch down and one inch right or left.
- UA:** On the side of the body about four inches below the armpit.

SOURCE: GAIL WEISSERT

Neurofeedback

Training the brain to better self-regulate and take care of itself

Neurofeedback is a type of biofeedback that utilizes a person's brain activity (EEG) as a tool for therapeutic intervention. It can reduce the effects of many emotional and physical conditions without medication for people across the life span and is often done in conjunction with psychotherapy to reduce compulsive behaviors and/or improve self-regulation.

TREATMENT AREAS:

- Complex Trauma
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Bi-Polar Disorder
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder
- Addictions
- Muscular Tics

NEUROFEEDBACK PROCESS:

Therapist helps client identify four to five behaviors to address in the therapy

Client connected to an EEG machine for therapist to observe brain waves on the computer screen as the client plays certain computer games

Client gets a beep to reward certain behaviors in the game which helps him/her achieve better emotional regulation while playing the game

By playing repeated games, the brain creates new pathways leading to a reduction in symptoms

Carol Strootman, LCSW-C, Clinical Director at For All Seasons, comments, “This type of therapy helps people learn to pause in stressful situations instead of reacting. Weekly sessions are normally 30 minutes long and sometimes up to 20 sessions are utilized to get lasting results. Some insurance companies reimburse for this therapy.”

The American Association of Pediatrics (AAP) endorses biofeedback in the treatment of ADHD.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, contact **For All Seasons** at 410-822-1018.
For the 24-Hour Crisis Hotline, call toll-free: 800-310-7273.

including MRI scans which show neural changes and drops in the stress hormone cortisol. High levels of cortisol are also associated with lowered immune function, which in turn can have significant and negative effects on our physical health.

“I am just the vehicle for the therapy. I love to see someone use it and get a positive result. It’s not so much what the event is that drives the effectiveness of EFT, but it is how someone is responding to the event in his or her body. I had a client who had a very tragic situation when her husband died suddenly and she had the responsibility for all of their children. She was over the top with her anxiety, describing it as an elephant on her chest. She came out and worked with me and in one session that elephant on her

chest went away," Weissert shares.

“I’ve seen that type of thing over and over again when the physical manifestation goes away. With extreme stress, people have more body aches and more physical illnesses like fibromyalgia when they have experienced multiple traumas in childhood. With acute physical issues, I have helped people come down from a 10 on the pain scale to a seven or eight with EFT.”

What Weissert likes best about EFT is that it's so quick to teach. It is the simplest, fastest way she knows to have people down-regulate when they are over the top with their emotions. She adds, "With hypnosis, you have to get people into deep relaxation first which takes 20 minutes to achieve. You can teach EFT in 10 minutes, however, some issues are more complex and can be

related traumas. In that case, I will attempt to help my clients find that common thread and figure out what it might be, and then try to address those stories, reducing the intensity of the level of emotion for each part of each story. So that's the advanced application of EFT and how it can be used for more complicated things like PTSD."

Another story Weissert shares was using EFT for a client working on weight loss. She went and bought a brownie from the deli by her office. She and the client wanted to see how EFT would work with helping them resist eating the brownie. The client said she was a 10 on a scale of zero to 10 for wanting the brownie and Weissert said she was an eight. Both of them tapped, round after round after round. When they were finished, they opened

the saran wrap surrounding the brownie and neither of them could smell the brownie.

“Some people don’t want fancy tricks — they want to be listened to, and they want to be guided to what seems like a hopeful outcome. So, I kind of combine EFT with talk therapy,” she adds.


Weissert herself used EFT when her house burned down on the property where she has her business. She had to look at the charred remains of the house for eight months out her office window. She had guilt, anger, and resentment and used EFT to cope with her emotions.

“I knew I had to let them go because those resentments were only trapping me,” she reflects. EFT is often used to change

negative feelings, reduce distressing and/or self-limiting thoughts, alter repetitive unwanted behaviors, and is even effective for working with and resolving traumatic memories. Conditions that have been studied using EFT for treatment include general anxiety, test anxiety, phobias, obsessive-compulsion disorder, PTSD, general trauma, stress, depression, addiction, pain including fibromyalgia syndrome, tension headaches, frozen shoulder, psoriasis, insomnia, seizure disorders, sports/athletic performance, learning disabilities/educational challenges, epigenetic and physiological functioning and general psychological functioning.

More recently, the United Kingdom has acknowledged that

EFT research met their inclusion criteria for PTSD treatment and may be a treatment choice for military combat trauma. The U.S. Veterans Administration also approved EFT as a “generally safe therapy.”

In addition to EFT, Weissert has recorded several meditations on the app Insight Timer to help people figure out what change they want to create for themselves. She has over 2000 followers on the app and often has her clients use recordings along with their therapy. 

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

on EFT, visit eftuniverse.com. For more information about Gail Weissert's offerings, visit gweissert.com.



consequential **plants**

Natural prescriptions for better health

BY MANNING LEE | PHOTOS BY PAMELA L. COWART-RICKMAN

S**Stress — whether** environmental, nutritional, lifestyle choices — wreaks havoc on the mind, body, and soul. When we allow ourselves to succumb to stressors, we deplete our bodies of their natural ability to heal themselves. Running to local drug stores to find our temporary fixes hides underlying health issues. When people can't fix their own medical problems, they often grow much worse. There is a reset button we can hit. When we do, it helps us heal in ways that require no surgeries, multiple doctors, or medical debt. When we do reset our bodies back to their original factory settings, it allows us to unlearn

old ways of thinking. The result is balance, peace, and wellness. Deborah Mizeur and Krista Lamareaux of Herbal Alchemy in Chestertown met years ago through their work on Capitol Hill with former Congressman Pete Stark. Their friendship began over their mutual love of Italian culture. In seeking careers of consequence and meaning, both left the Hill and earned their graduate degrees in a program at the Maryland University of Integrative Health (MUIH). Their work together at their Herbal Alchemy apothecary in Chestertown is an outpouring of the disciplines and sciences they lived and learned along the way.



ILLUSTRATION BY MAIRE MCARDLE



Pictured in their garden from left to right: Krista Lamoreaux is a graduate of the Naval Academy and holds master's degrees in Therapeutic Herbalism and Health and Wellness Coaching.

Deborah Mizeur has a master's degree in Health Administration, a Master of Science degree in Herbal Medicine and post-graduate studies in Classical Chinese Medicine.

THEIR APPROACH

"When a person's natural inclination leads them to our door, Herbal Alchemy's approach to healing is a wonderful place to start. We come in when people find something is a little more complicated than what they can take care of by themselves, or when they are looking to complement the treatments they are receiving from western doctors," explained Mizeur.

"As a licensed nutritionist, I'm qualified to develop nutritional recommendations for people with specific medical diagnoses. Although I am able to request specific lab tests for the purpose of determining nutritional sensitivities, we find that people respond to our protocols based on changing diets and adding supplementation or working with specific herbal formulas," Mizeur continued.

Once a client enrolls in the program, they complete a comprehensive health history followed by an in-depth consultation to gain deeper insights into environmental, lifestyle, and nutritional factors influencing health. From this consultation, Herbal Alchemy will develop a personalized plan that gives the patient tools to achieve goals. During the time of implementation and support, patients meet with the practitioner one or two times a month for around three months. At the end of this time, they make new assessments to determine success or the need for further treatment.



An assortment of products available at Herbal Alchemy in Chestertown

ALCHEMY IN ACTION

Last year, Herbal Alchemy's extensive intake process proved life-changing for one patient who had received several lab tests from different physicians over the course of 18 months, but none had taken the time to review and compare the tests. Mizeur added, "When I started to look into her case, I put the pieces together and noticed she had some indications of pre-diabetes. I encouraged her to speak with her primary care provider, who confirmed my assessment. I developed nutritional and lifestyle interventions for her and four months later her updated blood work showed that her condition was reversed. During this time,

she was also able to reduce or eliminate several of the pharmaceutical drugs she was taking."

One of the teachers at MUIH named Dr. Duke was a respected researcher for the USDA. He researched plants and how many chemicals they have and determined that ginger/turmeric has 5000 phytochemicals that can be measured. He asserted that the number could triple as measurement techniques improve. He also surmised that most culinary herbs are the same.

"Different bodies need different chemicals to operate and pull specific chemicals from plants that they need. When the body digests foods, it recognizes its own need. The plant serves as food, nutrition, as well as



A beginner's list of herbs and their uses

PLANTAIN Parts used: Leaf Energetics: Cooling, little moistening Taste: Sweet, salty, astringent Uses: Healing tissue in the gut and on the skin; extracting poison/toxins from bites and stings Preparations: Dried or fresh as a hot water infusion for taking internally or creating a topical wash, raw in salads, vinegar infusion as a salad dressing;	DANDELION LEAF Parts used: Leaf Energetics: Cool, astringent Taste: Slightly sweet, bitter (older leaves are more bitter) Uses: Kidneys, urinary tract, supporting microbiome, detoxification Preparations: Raw in salads or hot water infusions, dried in hot water infusions, vinegar infusion, alcohol extract Note: Be sure you are identifying the correct variety.	LEMON BALM Parts used: Leaf Energetics: Slightly cool, slightly dry Taste: Aromatic, sour Uses: Gas and dyspepsia, general tension, fever, viral infection; has a tonic effect on the heart and circulatory system Plant preparations: Hot or cold infusion; alcohol extract	CHAMOMILE Parts used: Flower Energetics: Neutral to cool, mildly drying Taste: Aromatic, slightly bitter Uses: Internally – gastric upset, indigestion, and inflammation (gastritis), pain, insomnia, and anxiety; Topically – anything red and inflamed (pink eye, gingivitis, rash) Preparations: Hot infusion, alcohol extract; oil infusion (topical)	HOLY BASIL (a.k.a. Tulsi) Parts used: Leaf Energetics: Warm, dry Taste: Sweet and pungent Uses: Pain, ulcers, allergic rhinitis, high blood sugar, depression, anxiety, fungal infection, herpes, viral infection. Preparations: Hot infusion – fresh juice, alcohol extract, infused into honey or ghee; cold infusion of flowering tips is moistening
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medicine all in one serving. When the source of nutrition from the plants replaces the missing nutrients, it retrains the body on how to operate at its original factory settings. There is a beautiful, magical combination that happens when plants help the body remember how to function properly,” Lamoreaux said.

WORDS AS CHEMICALS AND WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT OURSELVES
“The words we speak to ourselves are drugs that create a chemical reaction in our bodies based on our perspective of the world. Whether we feel safe or connected or if we feel anxious and separate, looking

into the narrative of how people speak to themselves and how they interact with the world has a lot to do with their ability to receive nutritious food,” said Mizeur.
“Anxiety is a broad term. When someone says, ‘I have anxiety.’ We have to ask them, ‘What does that mean to you? How does it show up

for you? What do you experience in your body when you have anxiety?” Science shows us that the physical expression of anxiety, or what people call anxiety, is similar to excitement. Just shifting the word from ‘I have anxiety’ to ‘I am excited’ changes the physiology of the word. When they recognize and tell themselves about their excitement, they do better on tests, karaoke and are better speakers,” quipped Lamoreaux.

THE PEOPLE’S MEDICINE
Mizeur and Lamoreaux always believed in using herbs and plants that are local, regional, what stays in season, what is available, and what is close. It is difficult for them to source many herbs. When COVID arrived, they had a terrible time sourcing herbs to supply for their apothecary.

“We asked ourselves whether we were farmers, in addition to being herbalists and clinicians? We decided out of necessity that in fact, we did need to start a garden,” explained Lamoreaux.
The two women put together something they call “Community Supported Herbal Medicine” where they grow between 50 to 60 medicinal herbs each summer. They invite the community to participate financially, but it’s the most beneficial when the community members help in the garden, getting their hands dirty.
In return for community support, Herbal Alchemy gives the members plants several times during the season to make any number of medicines or to turn them into salves for

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Herbal Alchemy
10989 Augustine Herman Highway
Chestertown, Maryland, 21620
Website: www.herbalalchemy.me

anti-inflammatory treatments. As an example, they grow St. John’s Wort to make a lotion that helps nerve pain and shingles, among dozens of other uses.
Mizeur and Lamoreaux are plant and herbal ambassadors, teaching and leading their community to learn more about the true value of plants as medicine. They desire to return the keys to our health and wellness back into the hands of the people through education and hands-on experience. 🌿



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food connection

Washington College's Campus Garden offers students a bridge between past and future

BY AMELIA BLADES STEWARD

1 **Have you ever** wondered how someone foraged for the first mushroom or knew what fruits and berries were edible? As permaculturist Shane Brill explores this question of trial-and-error, the boundary between humans and the environment gets blurry. His work at Washington College in Chestertown, Maryland uses food to reconnect with the innate wisdom of the human body. By aligning people with their personal capacity to thrive, he shows that individuals will collectively do what is in the best interest of themselves and the earth.

"We are part of this living planet," Brill, Interim Director of Sustainability and Regenerative Living for Washington College, explains. "We internalize our environment through the food we eat, and how we perceive our environment shapes our use of the nutrients we consume. Because our culture provides the lens we use to interpret our place in the world, there's a relationship between stories, the experience of living, and the health of our bodies."

Brill is helping students rediscover the ancient human story of living in harmony with natural patterns. The Campus Garden at Washington College in Chestertown,



Shane Brill, Interim Director of Sustainability and Regenerative Living for Washington College

COURTESY WASHINGTON COLLEGE/PAMELA L. COWART-RICKMAN



Maryland is addressing food sustainability, food access, and dietary and social health, using ancient and traditional processes — helping its students and the community healthily connect with food while taking care of the planet.

The Campus Garden uses the Eastern Shore food-shed as its primary context. Although developed as an educational experience for the students at Washington College, programs in the space serve to educate the community at large through hands-on experiential learning from how food is defined to how it is grown and prepared.

The garden sits on a college-owned property that was once a gravel parking lot. Brill has been involved since the garden's inception. Not only has the site itself been transformed into a natural wonder, but the students at Washington College have benefited in transformative ways from their exposure to the garden's plants and ecosystem.

About a dozen students come weekly to work in the Campus Garden each academic year, including students who come for ecology labs, clubs, and extracurricular activities. Last year, the garden launched a compost team that manages a drive-thru bulk compost area where people from the community can drive up and drop off their food scraps. They can produce finished compost in three months.

“Only a small portion of our students come here with previous gardening knowledge. Many are intrigued to engage with nature by sitting by the garden's pond or camping out under a tree to journal or photograph what they

“Many [students] see themselves as **ambassadors of goodness.**”

— Shane Brill

are experiencing. Students connect with each other by learning about the plants together. By the time they graduate, they have expanded confidence and develop a kind of philosophical look at the world and their place in it. Many see themselves as ambassadors of goodness,” reflects Brill.

The Campus Garden is also a great demonstration project for the community to see the benefits of plants that you don't normally see in our gardens. Brill adds, “We are practicing permaculture here — a design approach and philosophy that meets the needs of people while

improving the vitality of the planet. It assumes that we evolved in a world of abundance and we can return to that world by restoring our current place.”

Based on the work of ecologists in Australia, Brill and his students are aiming to create an environment in the garden which includes 70% native plants and 30% non-native plants — making the garden highly edible as well as functional. This plant ratio supports the insect populations that help sustain a resilient environment where every plant contributes.

With the abundance of plant variety in the Campus Garden, students are engaged in several activities.

Washington College's Anthropology Club built an earthen oven in the garden, insulating the base of the oven with glass bottles that were recycled from on campus. The students then made sourdough pizzas topped with cheese they made from scratch as well as herbs from the garden. The garden is also home to beehives, as well as fruit trees and berry and nut bushes. The students have even grown hops to use in beer-making workshops for Oktoberfest. Local elementary school kids visit the Campus Garden to learn how to forage and to think about their place in the world — showing them how food and nature connect. The



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creating **MINDFULNESS** while eating

Preparing for the meal is as important as eating it.

Include gratitude practices before a meal and deep breaths before eating to aid the digestive process.

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Create rituals for dining undistracted by the television or other electronic devices.

Make your meal settings attractive – place flowers on the table or light a candle before a meal to create a calm and welcoming environment.

Take your time eating the meal, pausing for conversation or reflection.

Put your fork down between bites.

Savor the flavor of food. Chew 15 to 30 times per bite.

Make meditation a daily ritual.

Splash your face with cold water to relax.

Try yoga.

Make exercise and movement enjoyable.

Smile.

Spend time outdoors.

Go barefoot if possible.

goal is to show that where food comes from doesn't have to look like a giant farm. And like their ancient ancestors, they express human intuition in their work by approaching themselves as extensions of the world that nourishes them. Trial-and-error is guided by reverence, curiosity, and a sense of discovery.

"We evolved in a very nutrient-rich environment, where there was drinking water that was full of minerals and dirt that was full of probiotic spores that helped us digest our food. We had access to a variety of plants and animals and thrived on everything. Our ancestors carried forth the patterns of their ancestors. By design, they would restore the land base they were living on simply by the way they were cultivating and using the plants — in such a way that created more habitat for animals that they could then consume," Brill explains.

He adds, "Specifically, our ancestors operated in a perpetual 'parasympathetic state,' which means they were relaxed and at peace in their relationship to their food sources. This is the opposite of the 'sympathetic state' in which most of the world's inhabitants are living today where disturbances, such as even the perceived shortage of food and supplies during the recent pandemic, can cause us to have a 'fight or flight' response where our bodies start producing hormones to help us survive."

"Whether we're stuck in traffic or agonizing about what's happening at work or even caught up in a suspenseful film or TV show, these hormones interfere with our natural digestive process and our body's ability to absorb nutrients and process our food internally. I believe we can reclaim our health by how

we interact with food and use food as a healing modality."


Student engagement through the Campus Garden is setting the stage to work with the community on this issue. In the process of becoming a Nutritional Therapy Practitioner, Brill is engaging students in culinary wellness and health and teaching them why they should be selective in what they eat, where it comes from, and how they eat. One way that Brill says that people can take charge of their health is by connecting mindfulness to the preparation and eating of food.

"You can awaken something innately human in yourself being in a garden. Gardens can be equalizers. Regardless of how we have been primed by our culture, the garden helps us get back to what we were

formed to do. Our work is based on how humans have eaten for over 300,000 years. We can't digest the food we eat if we are not in a state of mindfulness," he adds.

An annual spring celebration hosted at the Campus Garden is the Medieval May Day Celebration, in which Permaculture Interns, student beekeepers, and students enrolled in a Chaucer course prepare historically inspired nutrient-dense foods that might represent a food secure future. Using traditional processes, students create a feast of bioavailable food products including apple cider vinegar, bone broth, butter, cheese, dried fruits, fruit leather, fermented vegetables, kefir, kombucha, maple syrup, mead, sourdough crackers and bread, sprouted nut milks, wild

greens, wild teas, and yogurt.

Brill states that in the end, we are all striving for homeostasis — that place of balance and peace between our bodies and the environment. He adds, "We have an illusion of separateness between people and plants, people and the soil, and people and animals. Permaculture, which is the structure we have created with the Campus Garden, helps us take off these lenses and realize we are all connected." 

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

on permaculture, regenerative practices, and the intersection of sustainability and wellness, visit washcoll.edu/sustainability.



AARON SISKIND, *Mexico 29, 1978*, Silver gelatin print
Gift of Marie M. Martin, 2007

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(thoughts on spirituality)

soul status

Listening to the music deep within

BY GUEST COLUMNIST GEORGE R. MERRILL

Spirituality exerts an enormous influence in our lives. It's often disguised. Sometimes you hear only its music. "Rock-a-bye baby on the treetop." So, begins that wonderfully soporific lullaby that has soothed infants for generations, and probably you and me, too. But wait: listen to what mom's saying. "When the bough breaks, the cradle will fall, and down will come baby, cradle and all." My question is why the baby isn't terrified? As mom sings, a whole complex experience is evolving. Baby feels the warmth of mom's body. Mom feels baby's warmth while baby hears the gentleness in her voice and senses the love she has for him. It's a moment in which its total equals more than the sum its parts. It's a moment in which bodies and souls are engaged. Intimacy is one of the ways we engage in the music of spirituality. Words can't tell the whole story. Music helps.

Spirituality is the music of our souls — that peculiarly divine essence that gives meaning and purpose to who we are and what we do. Our interior lives, our souls, typically guide and sustain us. They aid us in finding some measure of equanimity — a sense of peace. Another is the soul's propensity to help us find meaning and purpose in daily life. The soul helps us transcend adversity; even though life might get ugly we feel that unexplainable assurance we'll get through it all. Finally, the soul communicates to us how our whole being belongs to something greater than we are. And with that, there comes an abiding certainty that we are not alone in this universe. For the privileged or impoverished, a functional spirituality and a healthy soul sustain. When the music goes from the soul, a feeling of inner emptiness will rapidly grow. The consequences can be



ILLUSTRATION BY MAIRE MCARDLE

loneliness, depression, alcoholism, addictions of all sorts, and generally speaking — losing our compass.

This past year, a great-grandchild was born into our family and, for safety concerns, we could not hold her for about four months. It was as if history passed us by. Somehow, we wanted desperately just to touch her. If there was a collective experience Americans shared this year; it was living and dying with the reality of the coronavirus. Those who had the most to give, like health care workers, firefighters, and police gave their all. Most of us were bystanders but deeply moved by the sacrifices they made. While some introverts rejoiced in the lockdown, I think most people felt confined and isolated. Human contact is so much a part of our social nature, we suffer considerably when we lose access to it. Contact with one another is among the spiritual activities human beings treasure.

The normal social activities we engaged in before the pandemic may not have considered spiritual needs as such. But they contain that fundamental hunger we are constantly trying to sate: being with one another, enjoying stimulation, sharing affection, reaffirming our sense of belonging, caring while staying informed, and feeling the sense of safety that being a part of a larger community offers.

One of the casualties of the pandemic has been that alcohol and drug abuse have increased. Substance abuse quickly surfaces where a people's way of life is disrupted by things they cannot

HOW TO NURTURE A HEALTHY SPIRIT

Practice humility

Learn trust

Be honest with oneself and then others

Be the best version of yourself

Seek and offer forgiveness for wrongs of yourself and others

Do random acts of kindness

Practice gratitude daily

Take time for reflection, contemplation, or meditation

Recognize your higher power

control. In 2019, individuals suffering from alcohol abuse were estimated to be one in every eight Americans over the age of twelve. Ten million were addicted to opioids and fifty thousand suffered overdoses in 2020 alone.

As chaplain to Connecticut's rehab and recovery programs for drug-dependent persons from 1965 to 1973, I felt as helpless in the face of this suffering as the addicted did. The failure of intoxicants to feed the soul is soon evident in disintegrating lives. By the time alcoholics or other drug-dependent persons hit bottom, personal situations seem hopeless. What is a priest to do, if quoting scripture, saying prayers, or otherwise offering reassurances did nothing? I eventually took the first step; I accepted that I, too, was powerless — except for one thing and this made all the difference in the world. I learned to listen for the music.

I listened to the stories of men

and women with horribly broken lives. Whenever I thought I'd heard music somewhere in their story, or that I caught a note of that plaintive, cello-like tone of deep longing crying out for wholeness, I'd urge them to listen for it with me. We'd listen together — hard to hear at first — and I noticed how we were being strangely guided. I didn't have to know or say anything. I only had to listen as deeply as I could. Over time I came to understand that a higher power was listening, too, and was guiding both of us as we struggled to hear the barely audible notes coming from the music of the soul's spirit.

Another significant way we experience spirituality is through acts of kindness. One day my wife, an artist, commented that she'd become increasingly aware of how many people were out there trying to meet our material needs serving us in retail establishments and restaurants at considerable cost to themselves. How might we thank them? She came up with this idea: she would paint small scenes on paper about the size of a postcard. Whenever we'd shop, or see the postal worker, or when we got our shots, out would come a small painting and she'd hand it to the person. Some viewed the card cautiously as if it might be an unpaid bill or perhaps a complaint. When the person "got it," he or she would break into a smile and thank her. I can't be sure as I did not accompany her every shopping expedition or outing, however, a recipient may have understood Jo's gesture, it was clear to me what it was doing for her. Simply put, it made her happy.

When it comes to the

substantive spiritual values that govern and inform our inner life, the ones in which we take the greatest delight, I believe that gratitude is the most compelling. It is so closely related to love that I've never been able to distinguish clearly between them. It's as if these were two spiritual twins joined at the hip. Expressions of gratitude began appearing throughout the country. It was touching to see how first responders had come to be regarded and how their values of service, dedication, and self-sacrifice were energizing a depressed population.

The substantial values I refer to here will never earn praise

MEET THE AUTHOR



An Episcopal priest and certified psychotherapist, George has directed chaplaincy services for Connecticut's drug and alcohol treatment network. He established community counseling services in Hartford Connecticut and Baltimore, Maryland. He served as clinical supervisor at Loyola College, in the graduate department in Pastoral Counseling. George authored two books on spirituality. His essays appear weekly in the *Talbot Spy* and air twice-monthly on Delmarva Public Radio. He and wife, Jo, live in St. Michaels.

and status, but they will, when carefully expressed, make our lives and others as well, much easier to live. And there's real music in knowing you've lightened someone else's burden.

Internalizing enduring spiritual values can take us safely over some torturous terrain. It's a little like having your own flashlight so when the streetlights dim or

go out, in a few minutes you can reorient yourself and have some idea where you are.

For people seeking non-denominational spiritual guidance, The Retreat House at Hillsboro is a dependable resource. 410-364-7069. For people struggling with mental health or addiction issues, contact For All Seasons at 410-822-1018 or visit forallseasonsinc.org.

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Adrian Holmes stands on the steps of the Dorchester County Courthouse and proudly displays the book, *Discovering Harriet*, created by the students of Mace's Lane Middle School. Opposite: a selection of students' illustrations.

(Adrian Holmes)

BRINGING HARRIET HOME

*A new generation honors
Harriet Tubman's legacy*

BY NIAMBI DAVIS | PHOTOS BY MAIRE MCARDLE

When Adrian Holmes came to Dorchester County, she was certain of one thing only: her move would fulfill a purpose and a destiny. For a woman who believes in divinely ordered steps, each one she took followed a path of service to the community through art and culture. Adrian's example of service was her father, the late Reverend John Green, Jr., pastor of Christ Baptist Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and founder of Alpha Genesis. "He was a fearless pillar of strength who could be called upon for anything at any time." When he passed away, Adrian began a new Alpha Genesis Community Development Corporation in Cambridge.

The organization's connection to honoring the legacy of Harriet Tubman is based upon one of its core principles: to foster community conversations around art and culture. Michael Rosato's "Take My Hand"



The 7th grade students from Mace's Lane Middle School who wrote, illustrated and assembled the book, *Discovering Harriet*, proudly gathered in front of the Harriet Tubman Mural in Cambridge, MD, to celebrate its arrival with their teachers, school administrators, community leaders and parents in early June. Opposite: a selection of students' illustrations



mural is a direct result of one such conversation. Dedication of the world-renowned mural took place on The Day of Resilience 2019, coordinated by Alpha Genesis to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the transatlantic slave trade. On the Day of Resilience 2020, “The Journey to Freedom” came to Cambridge. The sculpture, a 9-foot bronze of Tubman, is the creation of Academy and Emmy Award-winning artist Wesley Wofford.

“People left their cars and ran over to photograph and touch it,” Adrian recalls. The entire community came

together to welcome “The Journey to Freedom” to Cambridge as a 30-day traveling exhibit on the Dorchester County Courthouse grounds.

This collective energy sparked the creation of a coalition to raise money for a permanent tribute to Tubman. An 11-foot bronze sculpture, “The Beacon of Hope,” would also be created by Wofford. A Facebook post announcing the effort caught the eye of John Kahl, a Mace’s Lane Middle School social studies teacher. When Mr. Kahl shared the post with his students, they were determined to play a role in the

fundraising effort. But how? When their brainstorming sessions resulted in plans to publish a book, Mr. Kahl posed the question to Adrian: “How can we work together?”

Adrian makes it clear that her role was that of advisor only — full credit belongs to the students. “We were working off their energy,” she insists. The result of this collaboration became *Discovering Harriet*, written and illustrated by the 7th grade students of Mace’s Lane Middle School. Unlike other books about Tubman, *Discovering Harriet* is written from their

perspective — how they learned about the statue and their plans to bring a permanent sculpture to the grounds of the Dorchester County Courthouse. Charles Ross, a direct Tubman descendant, created the cover art. Participating students wrote the text and created illustrations. Hispanic students involved in the project volunteered to translate the book into Spanish. Nothing could halt the project’s momentum — not even the pandemic. To inspire the budding authors, Alpha Genesis provided a series of virtual events including an assembly with a Tubman reenactor and online sculpting classes with Wesley Wofford himself.

Through determination, hard work, newly developed skills, tenacity, and collaboration, what began as an enthusiastic idea in November 2020 became a reality in May of 2021. *Discovering Harriet* is available online, in Cambridge at the Dorchester Chamber of Commerce, 306 High Street, and the Harriet Tubman Museum and Educational Center, 424 Race Street.

“These kids have got guts, grit, and determination,” Adrian insists with pride. “They’re smart and unafraid. I want to shout from every available platform that I am an advocate for the students of Dorchester County Public Schools.”

From an often-repeated quote, Tubman is described as “the hero we need today, our North Star that recognizes the bravery, strength, and resilience in each one of us.” The same could be said about the 7th grade students of Mace’s Lane Middle School. 📖

FOR MORE INFORMATION

on about how to purchase *Discovering Harriet* or the mission of Alpha Genesis Community Development Organization, visit www.alphagenesiscdc.org
To learn more about “The Journey to Freedom” and “The Beacon of Hope,” visit www.woffordsculpturestudio.com.





From left to right: Londonderry ambassadors Pat Lewers, Ralph Alfenito, Josephine Alfenito, and Judy Lutkus with her dog Max

(Londonderry Ambassador Program)

FRIENDLY FACES

When seniors relocate to this community, there's someone waiting with a helping hand

BY DEBRA R. MESSICK | PHOTOS BY MAIRE MCARDLE AND STEPHEN WALKER

Moving to a retirement community is more than a brick-and-mortar real estate transaction. For many it marks a major life transition, saying goodbye after spending 60 or 70 years in the same home while embarking on a whole new adventure.

For seniors relocating to Easton's Londonderry on the Tred Avon Cooperative Community, a unique safety net is in place to help those taking this journey. The

Resident Ambassador Program offers an essential lifeline, pairing each new arrival with someone who literally has been there and can help ease the adjustment.

"We started this program so that the new residents would not only have a resident to meet and ask questions, but to show them around, take them to dinner for the first time, and make them feel welcome," recalled Pat Lewers. A Londonderry resident herself

since 2013, Lewers also cared for a senior relative at the community in 2000. In 2014 to 2015, she served on the board when the program, started by Sales and Marketing Director Rachel Smith, began. She became chairperson as well as an ambassador herself.

Most people are eager to learn about how to order food, where to pick up mail and packages, trash collection, housekeeper schedules, turning on the heat and air, and



Clockwise from top left: Pat Lewers demonstrates the new iPad system, "CATIE" in the community center library; Judy Lutkus picks up a package in the community center mailroom; Erica Hardeo, staff activities coordinator, in her office. Opposite: A meet and greet gathering in the lobby



other daily living necessities. But each person's needs in terms of knowing and connecting are unique, and ambassadors respond accordingly, going the extra mile, Lewers noted. "Many people moving here are also new to Easton, so we help them learn about the town, as well."

Judy Lutkus has been an ambassador on the receiving and giving end of the program. She and her husband had been ill and "there was a point where I just had to decide that I could no longer stay in my own home," Lutkus recalled.

"The ambassador I was assigned was warm and welcoming. Before I even moved in, she called and took me to lunch. When I was here, she walked me through all the important little things you need to know — where to put the garbage, when the housekeepers are coming to clean. She made

a real effort to introduce me to people, particularly in the dining room, and I adjusted really well," Lutkus added.

After becoming an ambassador, she found that while one couple appreciated learning about the basics but were comfortable introducing themselves to people on their own, another acclimating resident had plenty of questions and appreciated more contact.

"The program reflects the care and warmth you receive moving to Londonderry. The staff recognize that you don't just buy your cottage and then, 'plunk,' you land. There's a support system," she mentioned.

Last year's COVID pandemic protocols led to Staff Activities Coordinator Erica Hardeo stepping in as central "point person." She

was basically each new resident's initial contact — introducing the community's overall operations and answering questions about daily living in addition to delivering 200 meals daily. After meeting with each new resident, she selects a current resident to be their personal ambassador, ideally, someone in their "neighborhood."

When Mrs. Jo Alfenito and husband Dr. Ralph moved to Londonderry two years ago, a friendly ambassador couple arrived at their door with welcoming smiles, filling them in on "all the nitty gritty" basics and planning to meet again. When the Alfenitos became ambassadors last year, COVID necessitated a car window greeting but the outreach was equally warm and friendly.

With vaccinations increasing

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT LONDONDERRY ON THE TRED AVON

and its Ambassador Program, contact Rachel Smith, Director of Sales and Marketing, at 410-820-8732 or visit londonderrytredavon.com

and life beginning to open back up, both Lewers and Hardeo look forward to providing welcoming coffees and dinners again. Both are excited about the new CATIE Ipad system which went online April 1, 2021. Specifically designed to be user friendly for seniors, CATIE enables residents to check the activities calendar and order meals, as well as send email and connect with family members. 📞





Philip Bernot enjoys sharing his knowledge of wines when customers ask for recommendations.

(Philip Bernot)

OF **WINE** AND WISDOM

A wine expert in Easton spills about his travels, his passion for grapes and his goals for the store

BY JOHN RANKIN

One of Easton’s esteemed wine shops can be found at the intersection of Idlewild Avenue and Route 50. Inside Wishing Well Liquors, the ubiquitous array of liquor and wine brands are neatly displayed in the front of the store. But it’s the back room where a wine aficionado will find the “good stuff” and a very special wine professional who counts his wine experience by decades, not years. Meet the wine director, Philip Bernot.

Bernot was only 15 years old when he began working at his father’s convenience store in San Diego, California. Besides snacks and personal goods, the store sold wine. It was there that he became fascinated with wine, reading everything he could about the subject. He admits to having had a few “underage sips,” but instead of the sips leading to a habit, they fueled a passion for wine. One could say that he was hooked on wine at an early age.

For Bernot, wine became much more than just a social beverage. He was fascinated by the ways that wine projects a sense of place. Since wine is

an expression of the soil and climate in which the grapes grow, tasting good wine was like a travelogue to him. Wine takes an experienced and aware drinker to a specific place by presenting nuances that show differently through grapes grown in Place A versus Place B. This connection to “place” is honored particularly in France and Italy.

After moving from San Diego to Baltimore in 1982, Bernot developed the wine list for the Belvedere Hotel. He also became the sommelier at the Pacifica Restaurant, an upscale venue frequented by Robert Parker, one of the world’s renowned wine gurus. The restaurant was a crossroads for wine producers, and it was here that he dedicated his life to wine. Since then, his wine journey has taken him to wineries in France, Portugal, Italy, Argentina, Chile and California, which Bernot calls “a wine country of its own.”

California, he says, enjoys many different wine producing regions, with Napa being the most famous. “While Napa is certainly the most famous region, it isn’t

PHOTO BY STEPHEN WALKER



PHOTOS COURTESY PHILIP BERNOT

Top: The terraced vineyard of Quinta do Seixo Port Vineyard on the Douro River in Portugal

Middle: Bernot cycling through the organic vineyards of Cono Sur Winery, Colchagua Valley, Chile

Bottom: Warehouse trade tasting of over 500 wines, Winchester, Virginia.

really my first choice. While plenty of good wine comes from Napa, the same is true for many other California regions, like El Dorado County. Mendocino wines can be lovely, and there are some very cool things happening in Santa Barbara and the Central Coast.”

Today, winemakers from around the globe continuously visit Bernot at the Wishing Well. When traveling, these people often have brutal schedules, so they genuinely appreciate being invited to Bernot’s house to relax and have a home-cooked meal.

“We have entertained many people over the years, from all parts of the wine world. One very fun lunch we had involved a distinguished, older gentleman from Umbria, Italy. He spoke very little English, and I don’t speak Italian. Thankfully, my importer was there, and he is from Italy. I wanted to cook something that he would never have in Italy, so I made Beer Can Chicken. At one point, the producer stepped out to the deck where the chicken was cooking on the grill, and he was on the phone with Italy. I still laugh about seeing his arm gestures as he told his Italian connection, “You won’t believe it, they

actually stick a can of beer right up the chicken’s rear!”

Through years of experiences like these, education and travel, Bernot became a knowledgeable and highly regarded wine director today. He treats his customers with a gentle manner to explain why a wine will be a good match for what they seek. Because of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, he has no plans to travel abroad this year. But there is one more element in the blend that makes him special — his philosophy.

Philip Bernot’s wine philosophy is what sets him apart from so many wine managers in mundane wine shops. His decades of wine experience help him pair a bottle of wine with the people who will appreciate it.

“I’m exposed to huge variety here in the store. I strive to be a go-between for the people who make wine and the people who buy it,” he reasons. “I understand a wine for what it is, and I love to tell the story of wine to people.”

“I ask myself, ‘What was the producer trying to accomplish with this wine and the grapes?’ I’m looking for wines that have the most direct path from the vine to the bottle. Many brands today are the opposite — there’s too much manipulation. I’ve tasted wines whose flavor, aromas and even color has been doctored before bottling.”

This wisdom spurs reflection, and encourages the wine lover to develop their sensory evaluation skills.

At age 60, Philip Bernot is very satisfied with life and what he does. He believes he has the best job in the store. His job at Wishing Well Liquors is “lots of fun,” and he says that “it’s been a fantastic learning experience.”

“I have found the exact place in the industry for me. I love wine and I want to continue what I’m doing for as long as I can.”



(Bernot’s)

3 SUMMER WINE PICKS

Don’t be surprised by the two reds as natural pairings with outdoor grilling

2018 BLUE QUAIL, ZINFANDEL (CALIFORNIA) \$20
Restrained, aromatic, thirst-quenching and medium-bodied. This is not the high-alcohol, fruit-bomb version of California Zinfandel familiar to most Americans.

2019 HALKIA WINERY, “ASSYRTIKO AMBER” (GREECE) \$23
Here’s the white wine you need with crab, rockfish or other seafood. It’s certified organic goodness with light body and medium acidity, thanks to extended grape skin contact during the crush.

2019 CORALIE ET DAMIEN DELECHENEAU, LOIRE VALLEY RED (FRANCE) \$20
A blend of Cabernet Franc, Cot (Malbec) and Gamay, this shows extraordinary freshness and dares you not to drink the entire bottle before dinner hits the table.



SUBSCRIBE to Philip Bernot’s online newsletter, “Tasting Notes” by sending an email to: newsletterwishingwellliquors@gmail.com



GRAZING IN THE GRASS


A mother and her foal on Assateague Island

PHOTO BY SANTOSH SHANMUGA



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