

COLLINGSWOOD

living

FEBRUARY 2022

Meet the **THOMAS FAMILY** Love Blooms in Collingswood

PLUS

- What You Need to Know About Cataracts
- Safe Winter Driving Tips
- Local Love Stories!

publisher's note



DEAR COLLINGSWOOD READERS,

Please allow us to introduce our feature family, Keshia and Lavelle Thomas, an inspiring power couple, and of course Collingswood residents!

We had the chance to sit down with them to get all the details on who they are and we can't wait for you to get to know them too! With February also being Black History month, we're elated to highlight Keshia's entrepreneurial message and mission to help empower the black community. Additionally, we share their beautiful photos from different locations around the 'Wood by local photographer **Bridget Massa** (who we also welcome to our team this month!!)

Our Valentines Day issue is always one of our favorite issues to create. We get to compile lists of love stories from the neighborhood. We were flooded with your stories this year which made it difficult to choose because ideally we would love to feature each and every one of you!

We hear from insurance expert, **Jason Connell**, on "safe winter driving" this month as well as **Kresloff Eye Associates** with a much appreciated piece on "what you need to know about cataracts".

Sal Filiberto, owner of **STANDARD Hair Studio**, weighs in to let us know what hairstyles are trending in the new year.

Camp Expert **Andy Pritikin** writes a relevant piece for summer camp in 2022 as we begin to make plans for our children's upcoming summer.

Our editor Kristen Sipper brings you a festive cocktail this month to make at home for your sweetie! We also focus on gift ideas, pet spotlight (including who is available locally for adoption!) We highlight **NOVA**, **IDA's Book Shop** super spark star of the month – and so much more!!

We are so grateful to our businesses that support this publication, it's the reason we are able to give you, our readers, such a variety of fun and colorful content. As always, thank you to those that took the time to contribute, this publication is what is because of your collective support!

Stay Hip, Collingswood!

Grace
Grace Hopper, Publisher

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Grace Hopper



CONTENT COORDINATOR
Kristen Jorgensen



DESIGNER
Kay Atwell



CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER
Bridget Massa



ADVERTISING

Grace Hopper
ghopper@bestversionmedia.com
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real estate

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264 E Knight Ave	Collingswood	3	1	1,040	\$260,000	\$310,000	\$298
340 Cattell	Collingswood	5	2/1	1,502	\$299,900	\$320,000	\$213
837 Linwood Ave	Collingswood	4	1/1	1,780	\$299,900	\$322,000	\$181
1024 Collings Ave	Collingswood	3	1/1	1,440	\$229,900	\$202,500	\$141
30 E Linden Ave	Collingswood	4	2	1,792	\$550,000	\$576,000	\$321
628 Stokes Ave	Collingswood	4	1/1	1,732	\$439,999	\$440,000	\$254
112 Cooper Ave	Collingswood	3	1	1,116	\$244,999	\$235,000	\$211
1026 Collings	Collingswood	3	1/1	1,440	\$229,900	\$202,500	\$141
11 W Narberth Ter	Collingswood	3	2	2,079	\$474,900	\$460,000	\$221
134 Lawnside Ave	Collingswood	5	2	2,212	\$450,000	\$445,000	\$201
2 Lake Shore Dr	Collingswood	3	1	1,228	\$319,000	\$319,000	\$260



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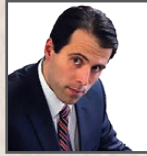
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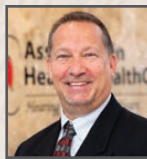
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ACCOUNTING: JOSEPH S. HONER ESQ. CPA



(484) 433 8851 | Jshoner1@gmail.com
Born and raised in Delaware County Pennsylvania, Mr. Honer has been a Collingswood resident for the better part of the past decade. In addition to his tax preparation and consultation services, Mr. Honer is an accounting teacher at the collegiate level. His professional licenses include a CPA, CFE, and Attorney license in both Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Lastly, he is a "die hard" Philadelphia sports fan, which he states, "usually leads to disappointment."

AUDIOLOGY: JONATHAN S. AYES



Hearing Associates, LLC
d/b/a Associates in Hearing HealthCare
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Jon Ayes joined Associates in Hearing HealthCare in July of 2014 as Director of Operations. He became practice owner in November 2018. Jon brings 25 years of experience in managing health care practices in a manner that enhances patient experiences. When not working, Jon enjoys family time and a good golf game.

DERMATOLOGY AND COSMETIC SKINCARE : DR. ANAMARIA NEWPORT, DMS, DMD*, MHS, PAC



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Owner of the Family Skin Care Center in Moorestown, NJ, Dr. Newport is a highly sought after professional with extensive experience in dermatology, skincare, and cosmetic procedures using the latest technology and her own homeopathic style. A renowned public speaker, Dr. Newport is regarded as an "artist" in her industry working with patients of all ages and skin colors.

FAMILY LAW: JEFFREY ALAN KERSTETTER,ESQ.



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Born and raised on the shores of Lake Erie, Jeffrey Alan Kerstetter brings a blue collar ethic and sensibility to his practice of family law. Jeffrey takes pride in helping his clients find practical solutions to their legal issues, whether those issues are related to custody, alimony, child support, divorce, domestic violence, or post-judgment matters such as college costs or relocation out of New Jersey. Jeffrey graduated cum laude with Honors from Edinboro University of Pennsylvania. He then attended Rutgers - Camden School of Law, excelling in his litigation studies and working with the Domestic Violence Clinic first as a student and then, following graduation, as a legal intern. A solo practitioner since 2014, Jeffrey takes pride in providing personalized service to each and every client of Kerstetter Law, LLC.

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The Alber Family has been serving the comfort needs of South Jersey homeowners for four generations. Bill earned a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from Drexel University and has trained a team of home energy experts renowned for delivering high quality customer experiences. Their motto says it all: *We Fix Uncomfortable Homes!*

INSURANCE: JASON CONNELL



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Jason is the principal and owner of the Connell Insurance Agency, licensed in property, casualty, and life Insurance. He's a University of Delaware graduate and a long-term Collingswood resident. He and his family have been helping locals for the last four decades. Connell Insurance Agency (CIA), is experienced people serving the insurance needs of Collingswood citizens and nearby communities throughout South Jersey. Jason is a big advocate of consumers having choice and will work to find you the best coverage and price to fit your needs and budget. As an independent insurance agency, he works with numerous top-tier, leading insurance companies providing competitive options for his customer's needs. It's that simple and the origin of their slogan, "If you work with us, we will work for you."

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NEUROLOGY SPECIALIST: STEVEN M. BROMLEY, MD



South Jersey MS Center | TMS Care Center
Bromley Neurology | 739 S White Horse Pike
Audubon, NJ 08106 | 856-546-2300
Dr. Steven Bromley, M.D. is a board certified Neurologist with more than two decades of experience in the medical field. Dr. Bromley owns and operates the South Jersey MS Center, a one-of-a kind, state-of-the-art private practice which treats MS and a variety of complex neurological conditions. Dr. Bromley has the highest of ratings and has received numerous accolades from his community.

OPHTHALMOLOGIST: MICHAEL S. KRESLOFF, MD



Kresloff Eye Associates | 900 Haddon Ave, Suite 102
Collingswood, NJ | 856-854-4242
www.kresloffeye.com | fb: kresloffeyeassociates
Dr Michael Kresloff, MD is a board certified ophthalmologist, a fellow of the American Academy of Ophthalmology and a member of the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgeons. He is a Wills Eye affiliated surgeon specializing in laser cataract and refractive surgery. His goal is to reduce or eliminate his patients' need for glasses through the use of specialized lenses that correct for prescriptions including astigmatism. He has been recognized by many online, local and national publications as a top doctor for his work and compassion.

ORTHODONTIC DENTISTRY: TEJY M. THOMAS, DMD



Center City Orthodontics | www.centercityortho.com
Pennsylvania: 1352 South Street #C3 | Philadelphia, PA 19147 | (215)-800-1495
New Jersey: 17 W. Ormond Avenue #100 | Cherry Hill, NJ 08002 | (856) 429-9419
Dr. Tejy Thomas is a dual Ivy league trained and Certified Orthodontic Specialist. In starting 'Center City Orthodontics', his vision was to have a patient centered orthodontic practice with the primary objectives of clinical excellence and patient experience. His team is proud to be able to serve the local area with their practice locations in Philadelphia and Cherry Hill. Dr. Thomas holds various positions at the state and national level with the American Association of Orthodontists, as the President of the Pennsylvania Association of Orthodontists and is currently serving as the Director of the Middle Atlantic Society of Orthodontists. Furthermore, he has been recognized as one of the leading providers of Invisalign treatment for adults and teens in the country.

PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY: DR. GEORGE THOMAS LYNCH



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Dr. George Thomas Lynch, better known as "Dr. George" is originally from Southern Delaware and received his undergraduate training at the University of Delaware. He then received his Doctorate at the University Of Pennsylvania School Of Dental Medicine and further received his pediatric dental training at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children. Dr. George is a Diplomate of the American Board of Pediatric Dentistry and an active member within the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry and is excited to be serving the families within Center City Philadelphia and South Jersey. When Dr. George isn't "counting and brushing teeth," he can be found either at the gym, heading to the beach or walking his dog Hudson around the neighborhood.

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Liz is a Collingswood local who is passionate about real estate and truly loves helping others through the process of home buying and selling. She's a twin mom, avid reader and Little Free Library steward. If you're looking for a responsive and reliable realtor, or if you have any questions about the local real estate market, give her a call!

ROOFING: CHARLIE SEITCHICK



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Charlie Seitchick, founder of world roofing has been in the roofing industry since 1984. Charlie has dedicated his career to providing his customers with top notch service through New Jersey and beyond. World roofing is made up of a dedicated and experienced team of technicians whom are all experts at roofing systems.

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Senior Vice President – Investment Market Manager
200 Lake Drive E 3rd Floor | Cherry Hill, New Jersey 08002
Office: (856) 638-4868 | Cell: (215) 882-3048
Frankie.fontanez@pnc.com
As a Vice President and a Senior Investment Manager, Frankie Fontanez provides investment leadership in the creation and implementation of investment strategies. Frankie also serves as an investment advisor for complex accounts. Frankie works with a team of investment advisors, experienced professionals in financial and estate services, trusts and banking services, to help clients achieve their financial objectives. Prior to joining PNC, Mr. Fontanez has spent over 30 years in the Financial Industry at the Philadelphia Stock Exchange, with extensive experience in equities and options, also at Legg Mason/ Morgan Stanley as part of a Wealth Management Team with over \$500 million of assets working with individuals, entities and businesses. His professional licenses include Registered Investment Advisor, FINRA Series 7, 63 and 66 licenses. Mr. Fontanez currently resides in Collingswood, New Jersey with his wife and two children.



Meet the
THOMAS FAMILY
Love Blooms in Collingswood

By KRISTEN JORGENSEN | Photos by BRIDGET MASSA

THIS FEBRUARY, WE'RE INTRODUCING YOU to one of Collingswood's coolest couples, Keshia and Lavelle Thomas. I recently had the privilege of meeting and chatting with the couple at a local gathering during the holiday season. Within a few minutes, I knew that the Collingswood community should also get to know more about this bubbly and perfectly complimentary pair.

Keisha, a self-propelled entrepreneur, grew up as an only child, just a town away in Pennsauken, New Jersey. She graduated from Pennsauken High School in 2006 and went on to attend college at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania. She majored in education and Spanish studies and spent some time teaching abroad in Spain, before returning home and graduating with a degree in Spanish. After college, and early on in her career, Keshia spent time serving in corporate America with positions ranging from education to accounting and finance. It was the sudden passing of her father on September 11, 2015, who Keshia describes as a serial entrepreneur, that propelled her into entrepreneurship. "When he passed, I knew I had to find a way to position myself moving forward in the same direction as my father. I wanted to preserve his legacy and embark on the journey of entrepreneurship." With that new life mission, Keshia walked away from corporate America and launched her first company.

Lavelle was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, until his family relocated to Wilmington, Delaware during his middle school years. He's the oldest of two children, having a younger brother with over a decade between them. Keshia and Lavelle met on a dating app in January of 2018 and the couple had their first date when Lavelle drove to Deptford, New Jersey to meet Keshia for a movie. At this time, Keshia had moved out of her parents' home in Pennsauken,

and into her first apartment in Collingswood, New Jersey. "I moved here because I was in my early twenties, and I wanted to be close to the city. I also worked in Cherry Hill, so Collingswood was so conveniently located to both. I wanted to be able to have fun while being super close to everything. It really was the perfect location."

After a fun and successful six months of dating, in August 2018 Lavelle moved in with Keshia in her first apartment. "Lavelle really took to Collingswood right away. Growing up in the city, he really appreciates suburban living and Collingswood is fully encompassing of that. He also travels a lot for work, so it's really important to him that he feels that I'm safe when he's not home." Lavelle, who works as an L.S.A. for the Northeast corridor of Amtrak, is away from home quite often, something Keshia explains. "I grew up as an only child, so I don't mind the alone time," she laughs. "I have so much to do with work, and the TV show, it all keeps me super busy." Collingswood found itself to be as equally convenient for Lavelle's work commute as it had been for Keshia in the past years.

In November of 2019, after two failed attempts, Lavelle popped the question and proposed to Keshia. But the proposal wasn't an easy one as Keshia laughs. "It's so funny, because that poor man tried to propose to me twice and both times, I messed it up. The first time, he was going to ask me at my father's grave, but I just wouldn't go. The second time was at the Yankee Candle factory in Massachusetts, but somehow, I messed that trip up as well." Finally on his third attempt, Lavelle called Keshia while she was at home and instructed her to grab a chair and to feel around on the top of the kitchen cabinets. She followed Lavelle's instructions, and immediately felt a bag that she pulled down. "Lavelle told me to pull the bag down and open it. Sure enough, inside was a ring box with an engagement ring in it."

We would like to thank WILLIAM KIRBY LAW for bringing you this month's cover story

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Keshia explains Lavelle's next instructions, "Please put that on and are you going to marry me? I have tried to propose to you two other times and you have messed it up twice now." Thankfully, Keshia accepted the proposal and the two started planning their lives together.

With her father having already passed away, Keshia really didn't want to have a large ceremony. Additionally, her grandmother had suffered a stroke in late December and went into rehab and her grandfather passed away on Christmas Eve. "With so many moving parts, it just seemed ridiculous to plan a large ceremony. Lavelle also didn't want to have a long engagement, so we decided to get married in Las Vegas." With a live Zoom camera running, well before the current popularity of doing things remotely, the couple wed in Vegas with friends and family watching on live footage.

After their nuptials, the couple moved from their apartment to their current single-family home in Collingswood. "We're still renting because this market is crazy right now, but we have hopes to buy someday soon. When we were looking to move into this house, we knew that we both felt strongly about staying in Collingswood. We would love to eventually own a home in Collingswood down the road when we start a family."

In addition to getting married, Keshia has been steadily growing her business consulting agency, LCK Consulting Services and running her own TV show "Morning Coffee" on RVNTV. "The show is sort of like 'The View' in comparison, where it's me and sometimes a co-host, and we discuss current events and what's happening in the world, peppering in our opinions. Occasionally we have guests come on that are influential or doing big things here in South Jersey." Keshia's business consulting agency is also thriving, and is not only a fully black-owned business, but is also fully black operated. "Ten years ago, when I was working in corporate America, the boardrooms that I sat in didn't look like the way they do now. Being a black woman, I had challenges. So, when I became an entrepreneur, one of the most important things to me was to make sure that I was amplifying other black voices. Everyone that works for LCK Consulting Services is African American and has a college degree, because I wanted to showcase what a company like ours looks like in this area, a running, thriving and successful black business." Keshia goes on to explain that it did take her time to grow her team to where it is today, because she was very strategic about her employment selection process. "I wanted to make sure we had the right people representing the company. It's all about company culture, and culture in general. It's extremely important to me that my team understands that what we are doing is bigger than us. It's about being able to make sure that we are being the change, and not just the chatter. We want to make sure we're helping to build that generational wealth that folks so often talk about wanting to build."

When these two busy newlyweds take a moment to unwind, you can find them strolling down Haddon Avenue. "We're big foodies and we love grabbing brunch on the weekends at Sabrina's. The quick walk to restaurants, shops and events is great," explains Keshia. She also enjoys shopping for unusual gifts for friends and family at Occasionette. Keshia and Lavelle both look forward to spending more time here and even growing their family in Collingswood down the road. Make sure to say stop and say hello, next time you pass the couple in town! ■

"Success is liking yourself, liking what you do, and liking how you do it."

—Maya Angelou

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 Medical Director

expert contributor



By Jason Connell, Connell Insurance Agency, LLC

Winters in this region can be tough, the weather can be unpredictable, and conditions can change quickly on our NJ highways and local Collingswood streets. Snowstorms and icy conditions present a particular set of driving hazards. Icy road fatalities account for more deaths and accidents than all other weather hazards combined (3.6 times more). Preparing your vehicle for the winter and knowing how to react in severe conditions is the key to a safer and less stressful winter season.

So as a professional and licensed insurance agent, I recommend the following measures be taken to avoid an accident during the cold winter months:

BE PREPARED BEFORE A STORM HITS:

- Make sure your auto insurance policy covers you for roadside assistance. Also, check to see if towing is included. If not, for a nominal fee you should add that as a precaution.
- Have a **mechanic** check your car's battery, brakes, fluid levels (antifreeze, properly working windshield wipers and oil) as well as the heating and exhaust systems to ensure that your car is in good, safe working condition.
- Try to keep your **gas tank full** during the winter months. Don't allow the gas to go below half a tank.
- An adequate supply of **windshield washing liquid** is critical to wash away the mud, salt, and melted snow that can severely limit visibility.
- **Prepare for an emergency.** Keep blankets, flares, shovel,

windshield scraper and brush, tool kit, jumper cables, fully charged phone and/or charger plus a flashlight with extra batteries.

WHEN DRIVING UNDER ADVERSE WINTER CONDITIONS:

- **Take care pulling out of streets** blocked by mountains of snow. It's often difficult to see who or what is coming.
- Back your car into the driveway so you have **better vision** when pulling out.
- Be aware of **joggers** on the street. Often sidewalks are impassable and die-hard joggers venture onto the street for a clearer path. Unfortunately, they may not see icy spots or other hazards hidden below the slush.

IF YOU MUST TRAVEL DURING A SEVERE STORM:

- Make sure to drive **SLOW**.
- **Don't travel alone.**
- Make certain your vehicle has **all-wheel drive** or at the very least a high riding clearance (like a truck or an SUV)
- If stuck, **stay in the car and wait for help.** Run the engine and heater sparingly. Also make sure your exhaust pipe is clear of snow and ventilate your car so that carbon monoxide fumes won't poison you.

Final note: Reach out to your local agent to re-visit your policy and discuss the benefits that best meet your needs. Wishing you safe travels this winter. ■

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expert contributor

What You Need to Know About CATARACTS



By Randi Kresloff, Kresloff Eye Associates

CATARACTS DEVELOP WITH AGE and are the leading cause of preventable blindness in the U.S. They form when proteins and fibers in the eyes break down and clump together in the lens.

As the clumping proteins gradually become more extensive, they start to distort and block your vision. Thankfully, if you are a candidate for cataract surgery, you don't have to live with less than perfect vision.

Once cataracts begin interfering with your sight and making it impossible to perform daily tasks it is time to consider cataract surgery. It is important to discuss your options for surgery with your Ophthalmologist and to assess if you are a candidate.

We have compiled a list of the top 9 signs that indicate that it is time to discuss cataract surgery with your Ophthalmologist.

1. YOU'RE NO LONGER ABLE TO ENJOY YOUR FAVORITE PASTIMES Deteriorating vision can get in the way of enjoying your hobbies. It becomes difficult to see if you have cloudy or blurry vision because of cataracts.

Also, cataracts can reduce your ability to distinguish contrast, making it harder to enjoy everyday activities. This may include simple everyday things like cooking, doing laundry, and even watching television.

2. PERFORMING UP CLOSE TASKS HAS BECOME IMPOSSIBLE Cataract formation is a relatively slow process. Typically, most age-related cataracts develop over a span of years, and they only become a problem when they begin interfering with your everyday life.

If you are having a hard time with up-close tasks, it's likely you have cataracts and require surgery. This might include activities like texting on your phone, sewing, and reading a book before you go to sleep at night.

3. DIFFICULTY DRIVING AT NIGHT To many people, driving means independence. But it can become dangerous with cataracts, and even more so when you're driving at night.

Cataracts create halos around lights, making it hard to see when you're driving in the evening. If you don't feel confident while driving, see your Ophthalmologist as soon as possible.

Driving at night with cataracts can endanger your life and others. For your safety and others on the road, have a friend or family member bring you where you need to go at night until you can have cataract surgery.

4. EVERYTHING HAS A BROWN TINT OR LOOKS YELLOW When you have cataracts, it can appear as though you're looking through a dirty window all the time. Colors may look muddy and faded instead of vibrant.

Another thing you might experience is things that you know are white may look yellow or even brown. This is due to the color of your cataract as it develops and grows bigger.

This can make it much more challenging to perceive fine details or distinguish colors. For most, the solution is cataract surgery to remove the natural lens and replace it with an artificial lens.

This will enable you to see more clearly and allow you to enjoy every beautiful, vivid color the world has to offer once more.

5. YOU SUDDENLY START HAVING DOUBLE VISION Although it sounds unusual, you may start experiencing something called double vision when you have cataracts. It's essential to see your eye care professional as soon as possible to determine what's causing your double vision.

Most cataract patients report double vision in one eye. If you have double vision, it becomes almost impossible to complete any activity. Until you have cataract surgery, avoid activities like lifting, driving, or cooking.

6. YOUR PRESCRIPTION KEEPS CHANGING As a result of aging, it's normal for any prescriptions for your contact lenses or glasses to change over time. But if you find that these prescriptions keep changing more and more, this could be a sign of having cataracts.

One of the problems with having a cataract is that you will eventually get to a point where glasses and contacts will no longer improve your eyesight. When that happens, you'll need cataract surgery to have your vision corrected.



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7. YOUR VISION GETS BLURRY Having blurry vision makes moving around challenging. It also increases your likelihood of falling and injuring yourself and makes it much harder to keep your independence.

If your vision seems blurrier than usual, you need to see your eye doctor for an appointment right away. Though blurry vision can be a sign of cataracts, it's also a sign of other more serious eye conditions.

Seeing your eye doctor is the only way to know the cause of your blurry vision, and if you do have cataracts, determine when you should have cataract surgery.

8. YOU EXPERIENCE LIGHT SENSITIVITY Research shows that one of the early symptoms of cataracts is sensitivity to light, and it can be quite painful. If you experience light sensitivity, your eye doctor can use that to diagnose cataracts before you have more advanced vision changes.

Schedule an appointment if you find headlights glare from oncoming traffic or the sun bothersome.

9. YOU START SEEING WHAT'S KNOWN AS SECOND SIGHT Some patients with cataracts may experience a phenomenon that's known as second sight. Your vision temporarily improves with second sight, especially if you have nuclear cataracts that form in the center of your lens.

The sudden improvement in vision is short-lived and results in worsened vision later. If you see more clearly suddenly after having poor eyesight because of cataracts, it might be time for surgery.

HOW TO PROTECT YOUR VISION AGAINST CATARACTS

There is no way to guarantee that you'll never develop cataracts, as they are simply part of life. But there are some things you can do to try to reduce your chances of developing them earlier in life. You can try some of these lifestyle changes, including:

- Seeing your eye doctor for regular eye exams
- Eating a healthy diet that's rich in vegetables and fruits
- Quitting smoking if you're a smoker
- Limiting your consumption of alcohol as much as possible
- Wearing polarized sunglasses to prevent unnecessary exposure to the sun's harmful UV rays
- Properly managing diabetes, which can cause cataracts

WORLD-CLASS CATARACT TREATMENT

It's important not to ignore the warning signs of cataracts, even when your symptoms seem like only minor inconveniences. Cataracts progressively become worse with time, eventually resulting in complete blindness that only cataract surgery can correct.

Are you worried that it may be time to think about having cataract surgery? Schedule a cataract evaluation at Kresloff Eye Associates by calling 856-854-4242 or by visiting our website www.kresloffeye.com. We believe in our slogans "See Well, Live Well" and "Better Sight Through Better Life." We are here to care for the health of your eyes! ■

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Local LOVE Stories!

By Kristen Jorgensen

“Life is the flower for which love is the honey!”

We believe in love at *Collingswood Living*. And we also believe that everyone loves a good love story. So here is a few from your friends and neighbors!



SHAWN & MATTHEW

We moved to Park Ave in Collingswood in 2019. For the past (almost) three years, we've been working hard to renovate our 1904 home that had been all but forgotten, and to bring it back to its former glory. However, our love story begins long before Collingswood.

My husband and I first met in 2000 as sweet, young 8th graders. As all true love stories begin, it was during a game of truth or dare. While the details of our first meeting are a little foggy, we both agree that's when we shared our first kiss.

We went on to attend Sterling High School together, where we knew each other

(clearly from the fateful truth or dare game), but never really associated much. We had different groups of friends all through high school that occasionally crossed paths and we shared a few classes. However, we weren't much more than casual acquaintances.

In 2004, we both went away to college - Matt at Moravian University in the Lehigh Valley and myself at The College of New Jersey. After graduating college in 2008, Matt moved around NJ quite a bit as he built his career and I went on to grad school at Purdue University in Indiana.

2012, a decade+ after that first kiss, is where our love story really blooms. If you think back to 2012, you may remember the app/game "Words with Friends" was all the rage. He

and I were both playing consistently and the algorithm recommended we play one another. We played several games and after a brutal take down (by me with the word "moo"), I received a message through the app - "moo is not a word". From there we started chatting and catching up on life post-high school.

At the time, I was living in Philadelphia having recently graduated from Purdue and Matt was living back in his home town, Magnolia in South Jersey. In our conversations, we realized we were both commuting over an hour to Pennington, NJ for work and that our offices were virtually across the street from one another. Matt mentioned casually we should get coffee sometime, and of course I was thinking it was an empty offer. It was not. He was diligent and followed up and we eventually met up for that "quick" cup of coffee during a lunch break one day. Suddenly, I looked down at my watch and realized we'd been sitting and chatting for THREE HOURS -

oops! As they say, the rest is history.

A few months later, Matt moved to Philly and got an apartment one block from me. The following year, we moved in together, got a puppy, and in 2014 got engaged in our favorite spot in Philly - Washington Square Park. The following year, we got another pup (everyone needs a best friend) and got married in November 2015. Throughout our relationship, we have moved around a bit throughout Philly and NJ before landing in our forever home here in Collingswood.

And in our most exciting adventure yet, as we approach our TEN YEAR coffee "date-iversary," our sweet son, Archer Matthew, arrived on January 11! We couldn't be happier to be raising that babe in the amazing community Collingswood has provided us.

Everyone is partial to their own love story, I think. But when you step back and really think how much the universe aligned over the course of the last 20+ years to bring us here to Collingswood to raise our child together, it's pretty darn amazing. We hope you think so too!



GINA & DENNY

We live on Collings Ave in Collingswood. We bought our first house together last year, a 100-year-old Victorian home, completely renovated with a huge backyard, that we bought specifically for our two doodle fur babies. A very spoiled Riley (Goldendoodle) and Sadie (our new Bernedoodle).



We met 4 years ago on Instagram! He actually "slid into my DM's" and the rest is history! We are now engaged! Denny proposed right after we moved into our new house, and we are planning on getting married this July at Winterthur!

Denny is originally from Pennsylvania, and had never been to Collingswood. I'm the Jersey girl and I introduced him to Haddon Avenue and this wonderful town. He fell in love with this area too and that's how we ended up here!

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KATE & MARK ROADS

I've been a Colls resident for fifty-one years! I was working for South Jersey Pediatrics in Collingswood. A coworker asked if I would like to write to a young man while he was deployed in Qatar during the Persian Gulf War. Being single and nineteen I said sure!

We exchanged letters, cards and pictures for nine long months. Of course, this was pre "Zoom" and cell phone days! He came home in June 1991 and we met at his coming home party. He gave me a teddy bear and I gave him a yellow rose. From the day we met we've been inseparable. We bought a home two blocks from where I was raised and started our family here in town. We have been together for thirty years and married for twenty five! We also have three amazing children, ages 23, 18 and 17 years old! It's been an amazing journey and may we have many more years together here in our lovely town!



called MiNiPeDi, consisting of Miles, Nicole, Pete, and Diane (get it?????)!!!!

Over the years, many dates, dinners, travels, and adventures culminate in Miles asking Nicole to marry him while they are standing on the bridge over the River Seine outside of Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris (we'll call this "a proposal"). Nicole, of course, says, "Oui, Oui!!!"

You know how the story ends - Nicole and Miles sell their respective castles and buy a single-family palace with inground pool, to which Diane and Pete are constant visitors, along with a gigantic cast of family, friends, students, neighbors, accompanists, trolls, dragons, and of course, liveried mice who answer the door. This home is featured on the Collingswood House Tour in 2018.

Nicole and Miles are married on the grounds of their Collingswood estate in April of 2014, surrounded by family and friends, with both Pete and Diane standing up for them, and with an All-Collingswood-All-Star-celebrity support team made up of catering by Bistro di Marino, cake by DiBartolo's Bakery, live music by She Hates Me, and flowers by Diane.

And they all lived Happily Ever After. In Collingswood.



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THE LOVE STORY OF NICOLE SNODGRASS AND MILES HOLLAND

(A Collingswood Love Story) With Music

Once upon a time immediately following the birth of the 21st Century, in a magical kingdom just outside of Philadelphia, an exceptionally handsome and talented Englishman (we'll call him "Miles") buys his castle. Only a few years later, a flaxen-tressed local lassie (we'll call her "Nicole") buys hers, and entirely unaware of what fate had in store for them, they each - but separately - enroll their respective children in the before school program available to elementary school kids in the fair and fertile land (which we'll call "Collingswood").

There, they meet the Leader of the Collingswood Fairy Godmother's Union who minds the children, and unbeknownst to them, this woman is also the Leader of the Collingswood Matchmaker's Union (we'll call her "Diane")! Nicole, with her young son, and Miles, with his young daughter, meet during the course of dropping off their children into the care of the Fairy Godmother, and it must be said that as sometimes happens in fairy tales, it is love at first sight - between Miles and Nicole, Nicole and Diane, Miles and Diane, Miles and Nicole and Diane and Diane's husband, also a longtime Collingswood resident and Carpenter Extraordinaire (we'll call him "Pete"). Cue the glass slipper!

In the fall of 2011, Nicole and Miles are both cast in the Collingswood Community Theater production of *The Music Man*, with Nicole in the lead as Marian the Librarian and Miles as one of the singers in The Quartet. They pass each other in the hall outside of the audition room and sparks fly. Shortly thereafter, Miles asks Nicole to accompany him for an evening of private entertainments (we'll call this "a date"). In deference to Fat Tuesday, Miles whips up a jambalaya and serenades Nicole with a song that he wrote for her. Diane advises Nicole to put Miles in a pumpkin shell, and burns a 15 Volume collection of CDs of love songs to set the mood.

In 2012, Miles and Nicole are cast together in another community production, Stephen Sondheim's *Into the Woods*, in which they appear as Cinderella's Mother (The Tree) and Cinderella's Father (this is known as "type casting"). None of this is an existential accident; these people are steeped deeply not only in the traditions of musical theater, but music in general. Nicole is the Choral Director at Cherokee High School, leading hundreds and hundreds of souls through their musical paces. Her choirs have performed at The White House, Carnegie Hall, and Radio City Music Hall, in addition to awards and accolades too numerous to mention, but at the risk of being tiresome: Grammy Music Educator Award Quarterfinalist (2016 & 2017), Cherokee High School Teacher of the Year (2018), Conductor of the New Jersey All-State Treble Chorus (2020), and New Jersey Master Music Teacher (2020).

Miles, for his part, is no slouch, as Math Teacher at Collingswood High School, Miles has been recognized as Collingswood High School Teacher of the Year (2013), recipient of the Chuck Ohlinger Award (2013), and *Courier Post's* Girls' Tennis Coach of the Year (2008). Miles can complete a Rubic's Cube in 18 seconds, is a master gardener, and can cook up an incomparable shepherd's pie. Miles and Nicole also host a PorchFest band



JOHNNY AND CHRISTINA

Johnny and I have been Collingswood residents for four years, been together fifteen years, and married for four!

We are NJ natives and grew up in the same town and schools (Branchburg, NJ).

I am a pediatric psychologist at CHOP and I have a really awesome 8-year-old pittie named Stella. We dreamed of living in Collingswood and never want to leave. We have the greatest neighbors on Arlington Ave. We are members of The Pilates Soul Studio (TRX in Knight Park every Sunday morning) and we attend classes at Upcycle. I spend all my money at Haddon Culinary, Everette Wilson, and Occasionette. We have many favorite restaurants in the area. We also have been members of the Collingswood Community Garden for two years and love it! ■



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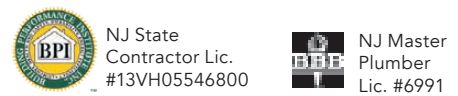
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Tom & Rebecca Potterfield
 Anniversary: Aug. 21, 1993
 in his parents' backyard in Lewisberg, WV

How We Met: We met at my college roommate's wedding. She matched us but weren't introduced until I was leaving! He had just come from an ocean swim, (beach wedding) and I looked down at his feet and I thought to myself, "Those are the cleanest, just-walked-off-the-beach feet I've ever seen!" We dated long distance for two years & have been married for almost 29 years!
First Kiss: Hamilton Street apartment sitting on the love seat! (How appropriate) He kept moving closer so I said, "Aren't you going to kiss me?" He replied "I'm trying!"

Snap Shots of Love:
There's lots of love floating around Collingswood!

Collingswood Living Magazine wanted to spread the love this month, so we asked that you tag your favorite cute Collingswood couple, (or even nominate yourself) because let's face it, we're all a little fabulous - and you all delivered!

By KRISTEN JORGENSEN

How We Met: We met at work. Both of us worked at the corporate office for Bayada Home Health Care. He was in IT security, and I was a Digital Marketing Specialist.
First Kiss: Our first kiss was at a work conference event in May, 2019 at Tradesman in Philadelphia.



Ryan & Emma Mute
 Anniversary: Oct. 1, 2021



Connor & Adam
 Anniversary: Apr. 28, 2021



Deb Francesco & June Masarone
 Anniversary: Dec. 10, 1015



John & Stephen
 Wedding Date: Oct. 2022

How We Met: We met in Asbury Park
First Kiss: We had our first kiss in Asbury Park at Paradise in the Summer of 2020!

How We Met: Luck would have it, we met while both studying at La Salle University! We've been dating thirteen years and have been engaged for three.
First Kiss: Our first kiss was in our college dorm!

How We Met: We met in high school and have been together for 33 years!
 Fun Facts: Married by a judge at the court house on December 10th, 2015 with a few friends and family. After, we had dinner at Saporì's. We later remarried with a big reception in Cape May, New Jersey our favorite shore town, on October 15th, 2016. We honeymooned in Paris!
First Kiss: Honestly, neither one of us can remember! We've had so many kisses.



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Meet **PRESTON,** *the purrfectly imperfect kitty!*

By KRISTEN JORGENSEN

PRESTON IS A SENIOR CAT, at the age of fifteen years old. He was born a stray in Philadelphia, but he's lived his whole life in Collingswood, when his family adopted him from a foster parent. Preston is a domestic shorthair, grey tabby cat with the softest belly that he'll tease you with but never let you touch. He considers himself a helper, and can often be found underfoot. Preston loves tricking you into giving him more treats, and likes to perch on the stair banister in hopes to receive a shoulder massage. We think you're the cat's "meow," Preston! ■

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BOY BOB



LOOKS WE LOVE

By SAL FILIBERTO, Standard Hair Studio for 2022

THE NEW YEAR IS IN FULL SWING and while we don't know what the new year has in store for us, we're going to dress for success and manifest it while we're at it, starting at the top - with our hair!

To get the inside scoop on which trends will be headlining this year, we spoke to the best hair pro in the area, Sal Filiberto owner and head stylist at Standard Hair Studio in Haddonfield, New Jersey.

The overriding trends? Change. Rather than one top cut, there's a bunch gaining popularity, and all offer a fresh alternative to what we've got now, explains Sal. For some people, maybe that means the need to chop it all off with buzz or pixie cuts. For others, some are wanting to grow it all out, so we'll see grown-out bangs that turn into more layered haircuts. Either way, most of us are willing to take extra risks in 2022!

Not sure which cut to get next?

These are a few looks that we love in 2022!

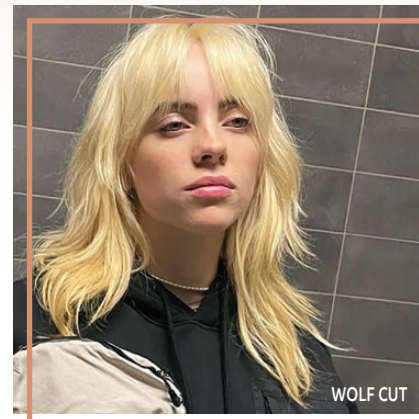
1. THE "BOY BOB" Bobs remain big news and will continue to dominate through 2022. The bob is a classic and there's lots of different ways to wear it. The "boy bob" is a fuller take on the bob where the natural texture is welcomed. Think of it as a square outlined, shorter, blockier bob. Anything from chin to collarbone length is game. What's important is the texture of the bob, it needs to feel a bit undone, and nothing too rigid. It can be worn smooth and sleek for that sharp, clean-cut look, or much edgier with added texture for a messier look. "I always recommend having a consultation before any hair appointment. It's important to have a conversation with your stylist so they will be able to guide what will

suit you best, taking into consideration your face shape, how you style day to day, what you like and don't like about your hair, and so on. If you have an image in mind, then a photo is always helpful too." Sal explains.

2. GROWN-OUT CURTAIN BANGS If you fancy a change, but you don't want to cut a fringe in (or back in), grown-out bangs will be mega popular. The style falls somewhere between a fringe and front layers, giving it versatility. Shorter, face-framing pieces that are almost like a longer curtain bang are beautiful on all hair textures and incredibly easy to maintain.

3. PIXIE CUT As we mentioned earlier, 2022 will be a game of chop and change (quite literally). While some of us will go long, others want to slice it all off. The 'big chop' can mean many things to different people, and we'll see a beautiful array of shorter styles come through. The traditional pixie is always a popular look, but for 2022 it will become longer on the top and tapered at the sides instead of all cut at one low length.

4. 70'S SHAG While there are countless beauty and hair trends that call back to the '90s, the contemporary shag you'll see this season has



roots in an earlier decade. Shags are still on trend, but with more of a '70s styling. Imagine a curtain bang styled back and away à la Farrah Fawcett with tons of movement.

5. THE "WOLF CUT" Wolf cuts, which are essentially the classic shag's equally cool cousin, are rising in popularity as well. It's explained as a shaggy style with short layers up top that blend into bangs that frame the face. The

longer lengths are wispy with soft, airy ends that flick out. A touch of round brushing or finger styling is all that is needed to set this low maintenance style into place.

If you want even more volume or to enhance your natural hair texture, Sal recommends using a mousse or texture spray when lightly blow-drying or letting your strands air dry.

So, whether you feel inspired by the looks we're loving in this article, or perhaps you had something else in mind, like a color change, take the leap and book your appointment. It's a new year, don't be afraid to be fabulous.

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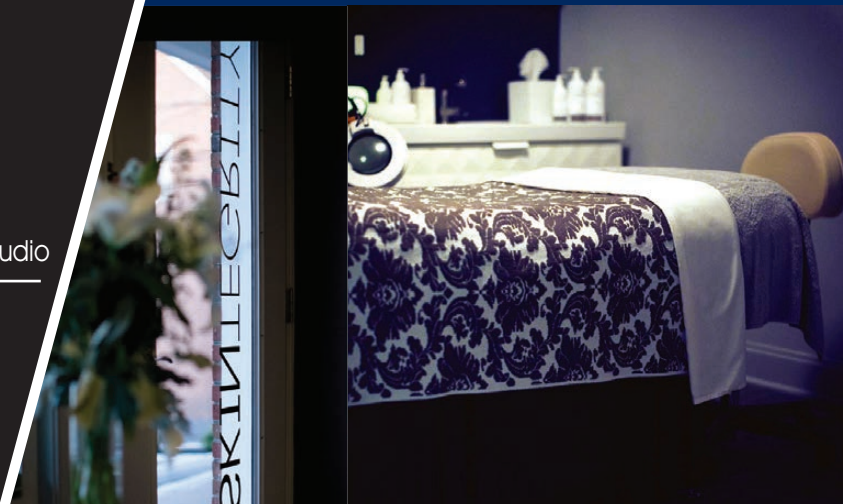


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Lovely Cocktails to Celebrate Valentine's Day

By KRISTEN JORGENSEN

Raspberry Pina Colada

Get your pink on! No matter what your romantic situation is, this cocktail is 100% lit! Whip it up for a fun girl's night in or serve it up to your lover boy or girl, as you're preparing a romantic Valentine's Day dinner for two. However you decide to celebrate Valentine's Day you can't go wrong sipping on this yum-licious cocktail creation. Cheers!

Ingredients:

- 1½ ounces white rum
- 1 ounce gourmet raspberry syrup
- 1 50-ml RumChata
- 3 fresh raspberries
- 3 ounces pina colada cocktail mix

Directions:

Add three fresh raspberries into a cocktail tin and mash them with a muddler. Pour in the white rum, gourmet raspberry syrup, RumChata, and pina colada mix.

Toss in four ice cubes, secure the lid and shake vigorously for 30 seconds. Strain through a fine-mesh sieve into a serving glass. Garnish with a heart marshmallow threaded through a cocktail stick. Serve.



French Martini? Oui oui!

The French Martini brings some fantastic fruit flavors together for a delicious package of adult beverage bliss. This cocktail is simple and easy to make, but it tastes like someone has been working on it for a long time. Pineapple juice matches so perfectly with raspberry liqueur and vodka for this cocktail thriller and there is no reason that any adult shouldn't try this modern classic at least once.

Ingredients:

- 2 ounces vodka
- 1 ounce pineapple juice
- ¾ ounce chambord

Directions:

Add all ingredients to a shaker with ice. Shake vigorously for 15 seconds. Strain into chilled martini glass. Drink!



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Meet

Nova!

Ida's Book Shop
Super Spark Star of the Month



By JEANNINE A. COOK
Ida's Bookshop

SPARK STARS ARE CHILDREN who are using what they learn in books to spark change in our communities. Nova recently spent the entire month of weekends purchasing coats with her allowance money to donate to The Wheels of Change Charity. The charity will transport those coats directly to adults and children in need this winter. Nova was and is so excited to spark change in the community with acts of kindness such as this one!

Nova is currently reading *Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls!*

Email info@idasbookshop.com to nominate next month's Super Spark Star who will receive a \$100 book scholarship. ■



Valentine's Day Gift Ideas

By KRISTEN JORGENSEN

Send Love to your Love with flowers from local florist Michael Bruce! For delivery service only! Call **856-854-6322** for an original design by Michael Bruce Florist. Prices starting from \$75.



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Collingswood SPORTS SPOTLIGHT

By KRISTEN JORGENSEN



1. Congratulations to **MADDIE EIFE** on her signing to Kean! @Colls_HS @KeanUniversity
2. FINAL from Haddon Heights - Collingswood improves to 5-3 w/ a 43-39 road win over Haddon Heights. **MEKHI BASSETT** with 15 of his game high - 17 points in the 2nd half! **STABINAKI & SHANNON** each had 10 for Heights!

3. That's all folks! A big congratulations to the **COLLINGSWOOD SOCCER TEAMS!** A huge "thank you" to everyone - players, parents, coaches and community support for playing a tremendous season and making Collingswood proud!

Collingswood Varsity Team 2021: (Top) Josiah A (c), Owen S (c), Bastion P, Tyler B, Maddox M.T, Seb C, Thijs VL, Lalo P (c), Jacob B, Blago R, Ian L, Owen R, Danny C, Arturo T, Alex P, Ryan S, Brian T. (Bottom) Theo B, Matt D, Elijah F, Alistair B, John L, Pau H, Micah A, Tonio G, DJ R (c) Mario M, Ethan S.

Collingswood Junior Varsity 2021: (Top) John L, Tonio G, Juan V, Danny C, Nathan L, Thijs V.L, (c) Archer K, Brian T, Pierce L, Alistair B, Theo B. (Bottom) Sam McA, Ezra K, Ryder P, Dave B, Tommy Mc G, Angel C, Graham R, Michael R.

4. Basketball Highlight of the Month: Catching "number one" soaring to great heights in a recent game against Sterling!

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Chris Michael AIF
Collingswood High School 2012

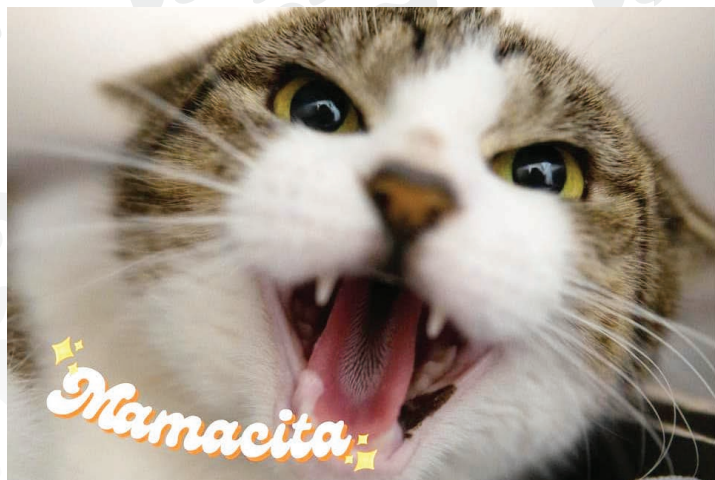
Scott Wight CFP
Collingswood High School 1977

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Seriously though, cats who hiss are usually just scared of humans. They haven't had the opportunity to build trust and can still change their grumpy ways. They need a calm, slow, patient introduction to couch life to see just how chill the world can be.

Help us find the right person to turn these frowns upside down!

Can't adopt? Please share these grumps to your friends and family help us find 6 "purrfect" homes!

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—Joe and Jill Brinsky, Collingswood

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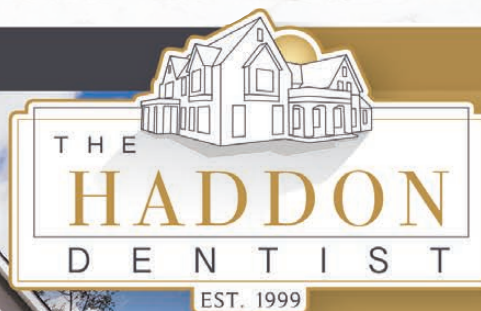
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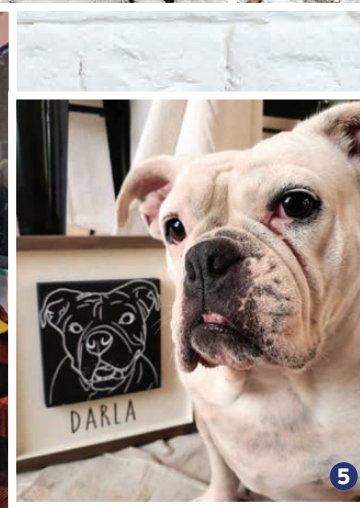
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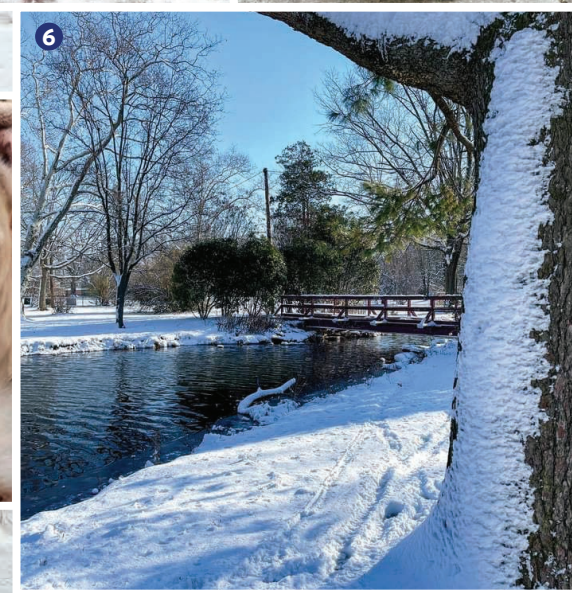
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Around TOWN

By KRISTEN JORGENSEN

1. A peaceful early morning snowfall in Collingswood
2. Nothing beats the excitement of the first snowfall!
3. Two Collingswood cuties painting the town red!
4. We're not sure which is more adorable- the turkey hat or these two Colls cuties?
5. "Paint your Pet" is a the perfect winter craft project you can sign up for at @hammersandstain!
6. Knight Park is a winter wonderland! ■

SUMMER CAMP: The Hot Ticket for 2022!

by ANDY PRITIKIN, Liberty Lake Day Camp

TOO MUCH SCREEN TIME over the past decade and its residual effects on young people have been exacerbated by the pandemic response of “educating by isolating.” Relegated to their bedrooms, basements, kitchens, and college dorms, most socially distanced students were FORCED to stare at their screens from March 2020 until May/June 2021. This extended time of keeping students from physically interacting with peers and teachers has resulted in a mental health crisis we will be feeling for a very long time.

After 15 months of semi-seclusion, missed social opportunities, and frayed friendships, young people were acting out: antisocial behaviors, fights, emotional breakdowns, defiance, anxiety, and depression. Summer camps, however, offered an oasis of sorts- a reset, an antidote, a social-emotional vaccine. Campers, staff, and

even school teachers had a magical and energizing experience being outside, socializing, playing, and interacting again!

The past two summers affirmed unequivocally that there's no better place for children and young adults to learn and regain their social and emotional equilibrium than at Summer Camp. Here's what we observed:

1. Kids bounce back. Kids are resilient. They roll with the punches, learn from their mistakes, and when the bar is set high, with the right encouragement- they rise to the occasion!
2. Kids naturally make friends. Thousands of new campers arrived at camps the past two summers, and it was amazing to see how they were drawn towards one another; quickly building friendships, with their saved up love and empathy.

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3. Kids love being outdoors. Always have. But after being forced indoors for so long, kids cared less about the bugs, the dirt and mud, the liquid sunshine, and even the heat! At Liberty Lake, we embrace the opportunity to jump into a lake, just like kids have done for thousands of years!
4. Kids don't need screens to enjoy themselves. Liberty Lake has been a screen-free haven since day one in 2002, from drop-off to pick-up. You'd think that after so much screen time, that kids would be jonesing for their phones/tablets/TVs... Nope. Playing outside with their friends is WAY more engaging. Older campers and staff actually THANK US for providing an electronic-free, stress-free utopia!

And there's more good news. Thousands of parents who never went to camp, and never sent their children to camp before, have reassessed the summer camp cost/benefit analysis and are flooding American Camp Association accredited camps with registrations like never before. The pandemic has suddenly made Summer Camp as important as it should be. So if you're interested in Camp for your kids this summer, don't delay- because many of the best camps out there have already started waiting lists! ■

Andy Pritikin is the Owner/Director of Liberty Lake Day Camp in Mansfield Township, NJ, and partner of Everwood Day Camp in Sharon, MA, and Camp Southwoods in Paradox, NY. He's the past president of the American Camp Association, NY/NJ, and host of the Day Camp Podcast.



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