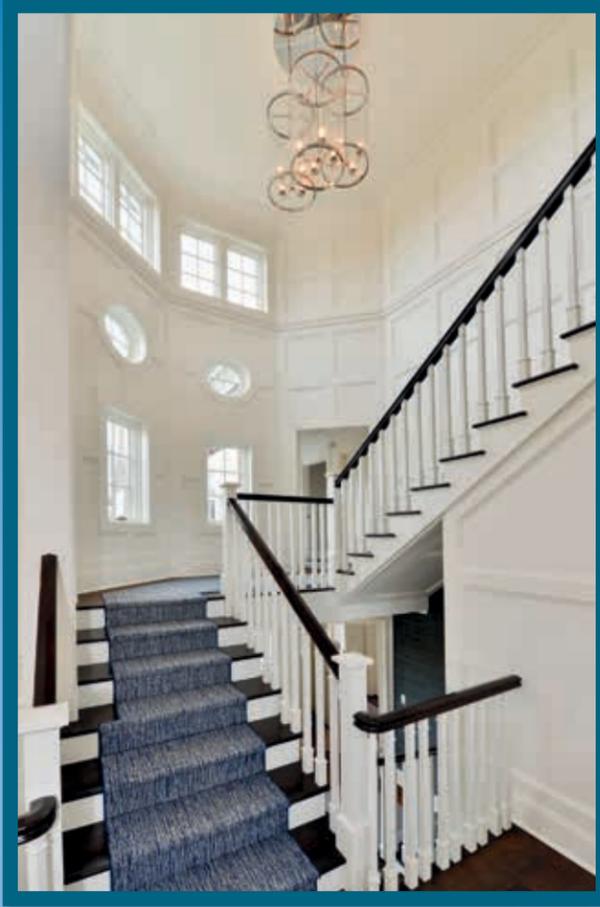


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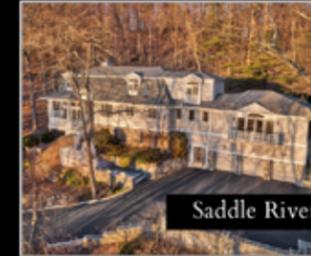


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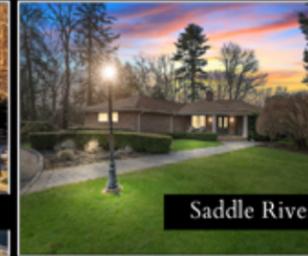
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Saddle River

LISTING UNDER CONTRACT



Saddle River

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Upper Saddle River

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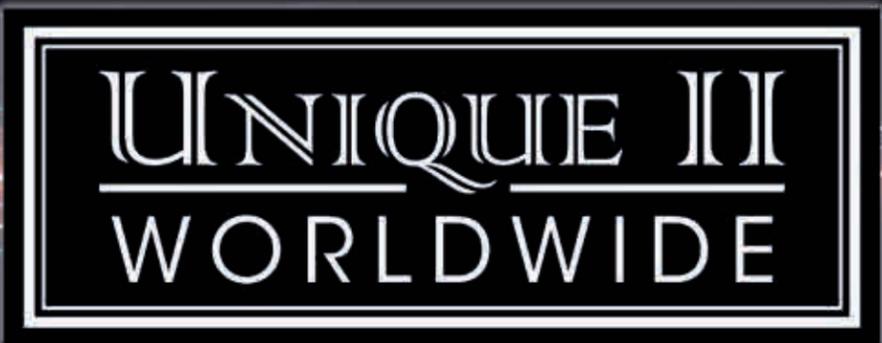


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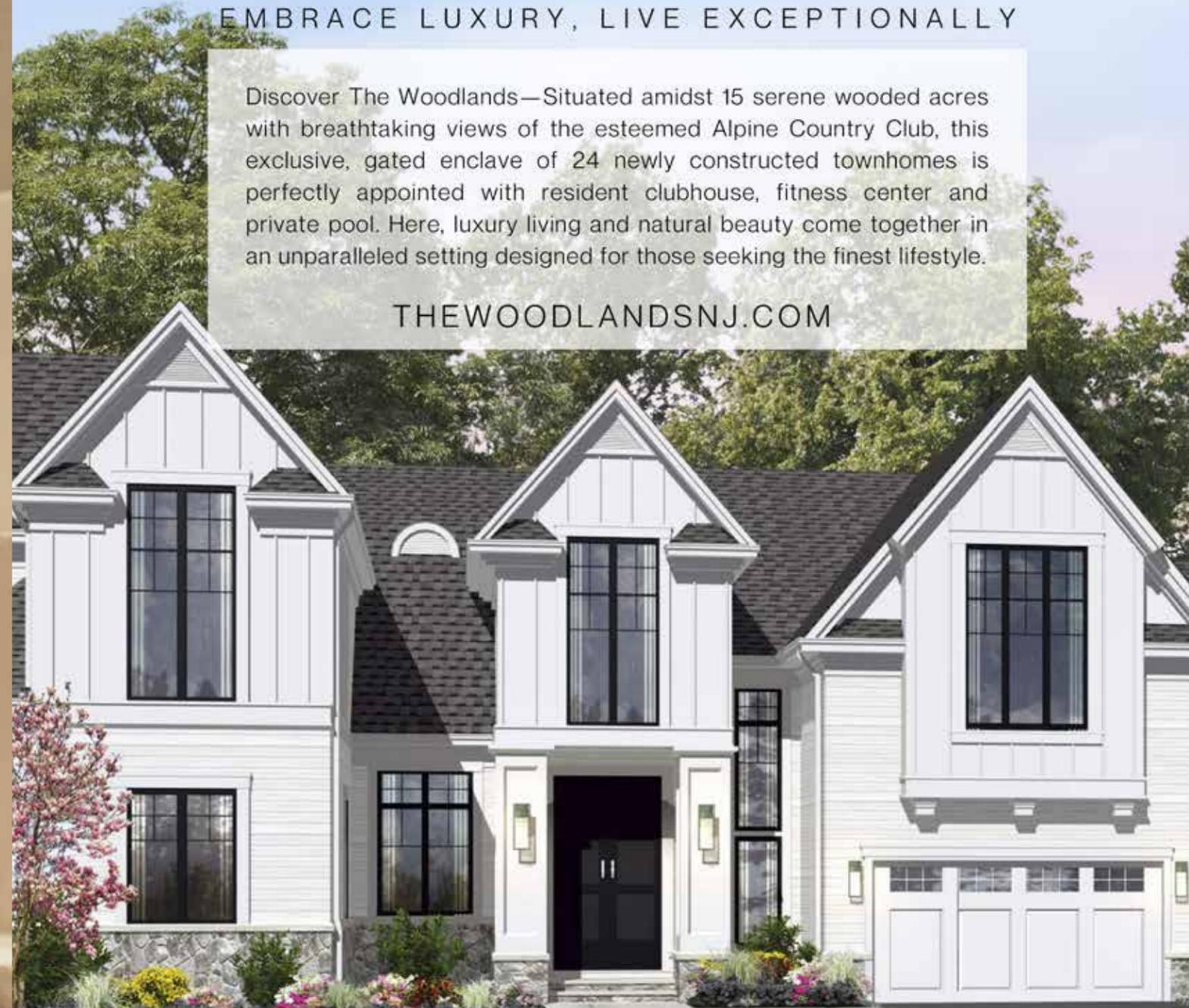
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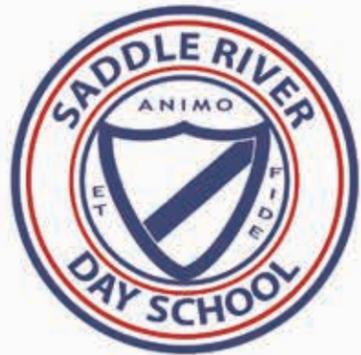


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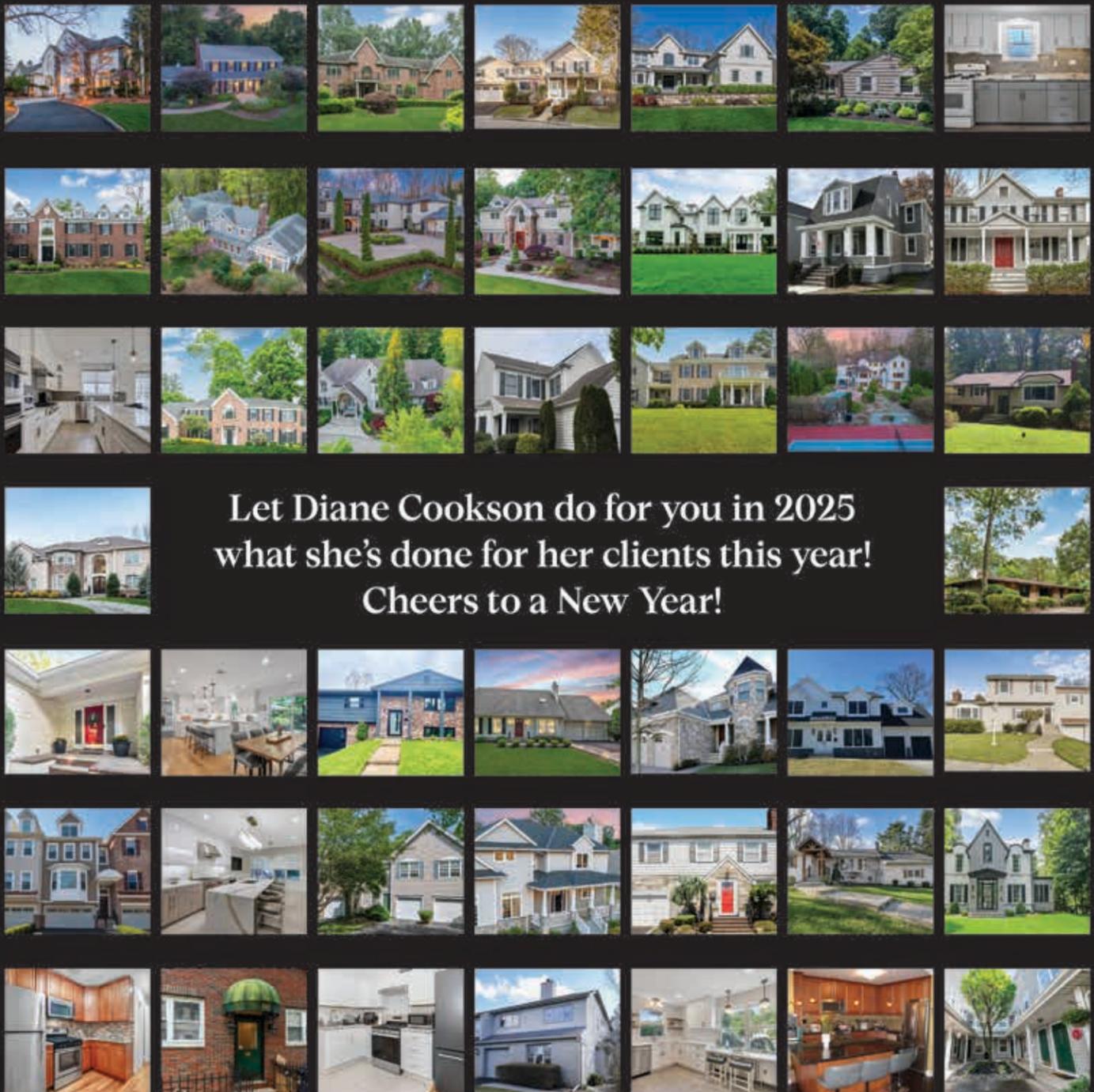


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# Resident Writers



Dr. Robert Lahita  
Ask Dr. Bob



Mayor Al Kurpis  
Mayor's Corner



Ravi Sachdev



Paulie Valetutti  
Talking with My Mouth Full



Kendal Gray  
Helping Hands



Lauren Marie  
Resident Recipe



Terrie O'Connor  
Real Estate News You Can Use



Samantha Holden  
Running with the Devils



Dr. Gina Cinotti  
Superintendent/Principal  
Saddle River School District  
Wandell School



Ann Marie Olson, Sc.D., CCC-A  
Hears to Ears



Linda Rowe Gray  
Your Saddle River Homec



Sangita Naik  
Closet Insider



Sirahn Toufayan



John May  
A Stroll Down Memory Lane



Slava Zborovsky  
Meet Your Neighbors



Carolyn Palmer  
Sculpt Your Life



Salma Hassan



Navreet Sidhu DDS  
Tooth Be Told



Helena Lobo-Zagorski  
Around Town Contributor



Rhea Gupta  
Rhea's Reads



Ronit Gupta  
Travel Tales



Barry Kraushaar, MD



Marcy Valetutti  
Healthy Living

If you or someone you know receives *Stroll Saddle River* and would make a great addition to the writers listed here, please reach out to [StrollSaddleRiver@gmail.com](mailto:StrollSaddleRiver@gmail.com). There are so many creative ways to be a part of *Stroll Saddle River*.

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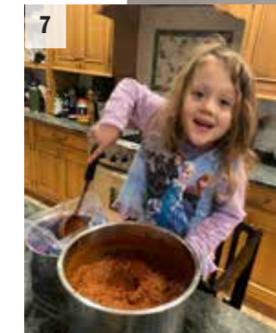
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# THE STORIES YOU TOLD

Stroll through the pages as we revisit some of the stories and events covered in 2024. Enjoy!

## FEBRUARY



**1 / Around Town:**  
Saddle River Christmas tree lighting and Menorah lighting event!

**2 / Around Town:**  
New zoning board member: Congratulations! Farah Qadeer

**3 / Home of the Month: 205 East Saddle River Road**  
Turn Key, All Brick Ranch, nestled peacefully on a level one-acre lot, set far back from the road, ensuring an oasis of Tranquility and Privacy.

**4 / Wandell School News**

**5 / Saddle River Staff Thank You Luncheon**

**6 / Saddle River Police Department:**  
Mayor Kurpis congratulated police Chief Cosgriff on receiving two state of the art police vehicles authorized by the governing body for better protection of Saddle River residents.

**7 / Talking With My Mouth Full: Stories From Our Family Kitchen: Chilly Chili**  
Winter weather is here, and we are choosing to embrace it! Skiing, snowmobiling, tubing, snowball fights and just playing in the snow!

**8 / Resident Recipe: Lobster Ravioli with Champagne Vanilla Sauce**

**9 / Cover Story: Luxury on the Avenue Fashion Show and Networking Event at American Dream Mall**  
Aaron Klein Publications teamed up with American Dream Mall and our wonderful partner sponsors bringing fun networking and social events to the readers of our publications.

**10 / Saddle River Valley Residents Club**  
The holiday season held many memorable events for members of the Saddle River Valley Residents Club. In addition to the annual festive Gala held on December 2, the Club had a busy December.

# MARCH



**1 / Making a Difference: Friends of Saint Dominic's Annual Holiday Handbag Luncheon + Toy Drive**

On Sunday, December 3rd the true meaning of the holiday spirit was in full effect at The Estate at Florentine Gardens in River Vale, NJ as nearly 200 guests gathered from the tri-state area for a Fifth Avenue style fundraising soiree!

**2 / Home of the Month: 14 Christopher Place**

This exquisite home offers an unparalleled level of sophistication and modern amenities. Boasting 6 en-suite bedrooms and 8.5 bathrooms,

this expansive residence spans across a total lot size of 2 acres with over 13k sq ft of living space on 3 levels.

**3 / Wandell School News**

**4 / Talking With My Mouth Full: Stories From Our Family Kitchen: Ski Snacks**

The days are starting to get a bit longer, the air is chilly, and the snow gods have been calling us to the mountains.

**5 / Saddle River Valley Residents Club: Board Game Brunch**

The Saddle River Valley Residents Club brought their energy

indoors and hosted its second annual "Board Game Brunch".

**6 / Around Town: Car Show**

**7 / Saddle River Valley Residents Club: Vino at Cenzino**

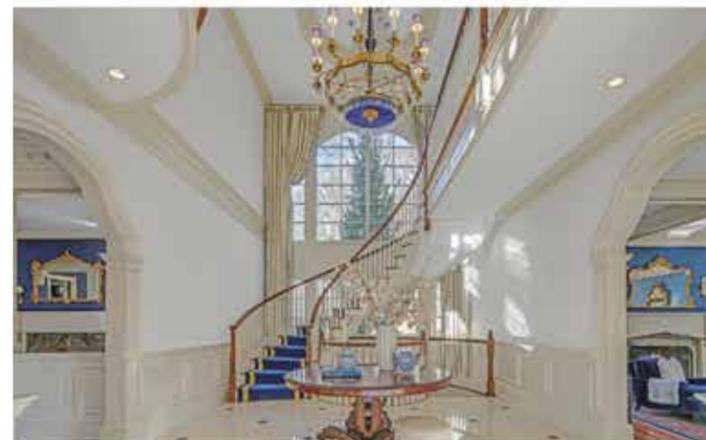
The wine was flowing among the members of both the Saddle River Valley Italian Club and members of SRVRC on Wednesday evening, January 31, 2024 at Cenzino Restaurant in Oakland.

**8 / Resident Recipe: Traditional Sheppard's Pie**

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The private library, richly paneled with custom built-ins, offers a serene retreat, while the upper-level primary suite is a sanctuary of vaulted ceilings, a luxurious bath, and four custom closets. The lower level evokes a country club ambiance, featuring a professional wet bar, wine cellar, theater, and additional fireplace for elevated entertaining.

Surrounded by beautifully landscaped grounds and expansive patios, this estate offers a refined lifestyle for the discerning buyer. Discover the pinnacle of luxury living in Saddle River.



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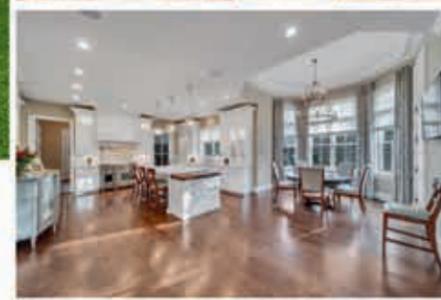
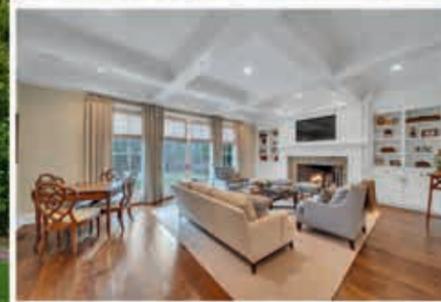


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All information deemed accurate but subject to change, errors & omissions.



## APRIL



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**1 / Home of the Month: 11 Woodfield Lane**  
 Nestled within a serene 3-acre landscape, this meticulously updated country estate exudes a timeless charm and sophistication, reflecting the care and attention lavished upon it by its discerning owners.

**2 / Cover Story: Miles of Hope: Honoring Susan Zabransky Hughes at the 13th Annual Susan Zabransky Hughes Memorial 5K Run/Walk**  
 The 13th Annual Susan Zabransky Hughes Memorial 5K Run/Walk is scheduled for Saturday, April 27, 2024. The event, which loops through Saddle River, has raised funds for cancer support and research in memory of beloved borough resident Susan Zabransky Hughes.

**3 / Neighbors Night Out: Strolls & Rolls Casino Night Fundraiser at Bentley/Rolls-Royce of Paramus**  
 Bentley/Rolls-Royce Motor Cars on Route 4 West in Paramus was transformed into a Vegas Casino on February 29th for an upscale evening for a worthy



2

cause. *Stroll Magazine* and Aaron Klein Productions teamed up with the luxury car dealership to have a fun night out for our readers and advertising partners to raise money for Rare is Beautiful.

**4 / Wandell School News**

**5 / Saddle River Valley Residents Club: Gather and Groove – with the Saddle River Valley Residents Club**  
 For the Saddle River Valley Residents Club, the evening of February 24 became a night filled with strobe lights, sequins and smiles as members gathered at the home of Anna and David Kelley, transformed into an urban dance club.

**6 / Young Achiever: Meet Seven-year-old Piano Prodigy Allison Park**  
 Seven-year-old Allison Park is making a name for herself as an accomplished pianist. This Wandell fifth-grader has already played internationally and has a growing list of awards and accolades.

**7 / Resident Recipe: "Easy-peasy Cheesy Scaccia Ragusana"**



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MAY

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**1 / Meet Your Neighbors: Third Generation Saddle River Resident Zoey "Blazes" Her Way into Family's Hearts**

Zoey Patricia Blazejewski came into the world on August 24th, 2022. She is the first grandchild to "Mr. Saddle River" Michael Randy, Sr. Zoey is the daughter of Alisha Randy-Blazejewski and Joe Blazejewski.

**2 / Home of the Month: Classic Saddle River Estate**  
This home is a classic Saddle River estate with bright eastern exposure on a two-acre private, wooded property with a semi-circular paver driveway.

**3 / Resident Recipe Creamy Asparagus Souffle**

**4 / Talking With My Mouth Full: Stories From Our Family Kitchen: Pre-Summer Party!**  
Memorial Day is next week and we cannot wait to fire up the grills, jump in a (hopefully heated) pool, or get out on the links!

**5 / Wandell School News**

**6 / Saddle River Valley Residents Club: Spring is Social for the Saddle River Valley Residents Club**  
The members of the Saddle River Valley Residents Club (SRVRC) had a wide range of options to socialize and engage with neighbors this Spring.

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## JUNE



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4 / Swearing In  
The Saddle River  
Planning Board

5 / Around Town: Saddle  
River Dredging Grant

6 / Home of the Month: 10  
East Saddle River Road

Privacy seekers will delight in this magnificent, custom-built residence situated on a private road. This turn-key luxury home boasts panoramic vistas, a saltwater pool, gym, and sauna.

7 / Saddle River Valley  
Residents Club: Spring  
has Sprung for the  
Saddle River Valley  
Residents Club

The members of the Saddle River Valley Residents Club (SRVRC) are enjoying the colorful Spring season and its opportunities to share and socialize.

8 / Fire Department Gala

9 / Wandell School News

10 / Around Town:  
Bogota Savings Bank  
Grand Opening

Bogota Savings Bank has opened their newest state-of-the-art branch in Upper Saddle River New Jersey.

1 / Recipe of the Month:  
Pulled Pork Sandwiches

2 / Cover Story: Wandell  
Hosts Wrestlers 4 Change  
for Family SEL Night

Wandell School recognizes the need to teach kindness and emotional well-being to arm Saddle River's children with necessary skills to propel them into a successful future. They began hosting a family Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) night two years ago and have been building on the success of the program.

3 / Talking With My  
Mouth Full: Stories  
From Our Family  
Kitchen: Father's Day:  
Food and Outdoor  
Adventures with Dad

As Father's Day approaches, it's time to honor the heroes in our lives—the dads who have been our guiding stars, our protectors, and our partners in adventure.

JULY



**1 / Cover Story: Joe Aziz: Resilience and Good Marketing are the Keys to Success**

Joe Aziz got into the real estate game a decade ago, getting his feet wet at Keller Williams. He now has branded himself as Joe Aziz Real Estate at his own brokerage, the Prestige Property Group in Montclair.

**2 / Recipe of the Month: Easy Summer Desserts: Red Velvet-Blueberry Ice Cream Pie**

**3 / Home of the Month: 10 Cameron Road**  
The essence of true country architecture! Originally built by premier builder/owner and completely restored and updated by the current owner.

**4 / Around Town: Saddle River Valley Residents Club Events**

Some of the events included the Health & Wellness Chapter chaired by Zora Kassaii went to the Row House Fitness Studio and a Mother's Day Tea Party.

**5 / Education Matters-SRDS New Horizons: Two Cousins Rediscover a Love of Learning at Saddle River Day School**

Ganeev and Arjan both say that the best thing about Saddle River Day School is the people. They felt immediately folded into the community and were surprised by how easy it was to make friends and build relationships, especially with teachers.

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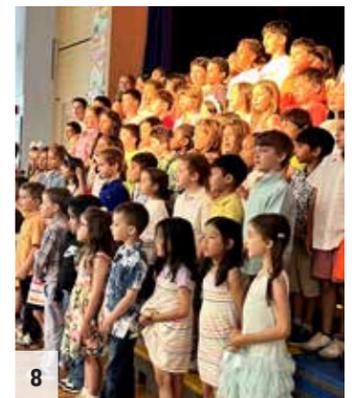
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## AUGUST



**1 / Saddle River Valley Club Event: An Evening at RP Prime's Steakhouse**  
The Saddle River Valley Club replaced their annual picnic for an incredible evening at RP Prime's Steakhouse in Mahwah, N.J. on Friday, June 28th.

**2 / Home of the Month: Classic Saddle River Estate**  
Located on a desirable double cul-de-sac in the heart of this prestigious town. The grand two-story entry foyer opens into the two-story great room with a fireplace.

**3 / Recipe of the Month: Balsamic Bruschetta**

**4 / Saddle River Residents Making a Difference: Community Comes Together in Support of Cervical Cancer Research at 13th Annual Susan Zabransky Hughes Memorial 5K Run**  
More than \$110,000 was raised for cervical cancer research during the 13th Annual Susan Zabransky Hughes Memorial 5K Run/Walk that wound through the borough this spring.

**5 / Meet Your Neighbor: SR Resident Marc Harris Launches Golf Apparel Line, Smooth Butter**  
At the beginning of July, he launched with a full line of 9 products and 29

SKUs – including polos, ¼ zips, vests, jackets, velour hoodies and belts. The brand is positioned to be 'golf lifestyle' and suitable to wear "from the golf course right into a steakhouse or bar." The price point is below that of the competitors and the plan is to add new items every season.

**6 / Talking With My Mouth Full: Stories From Our Family Kitchen; August: The Dog Days of Summer**  
What Are the Dog Days? The term "Dog Days" traditionally refers to a period of particularly hot and humid weather

occurring during the summer months of July and August in the Northern Hemisphere.

**7 / In the Garden: Saddle River Garden Club Celebrates 85th Anniversary**  
The Saddle River Garden Club celebrated their 85th Anniversary in the beautiful formal gardens of Robyn and Val Stevens. The 2023/2024 season proved to be a successful year for the club.

**8 / Wandell School News: Celebrating the end of the school year at Wandell**

# SEPTEMBER



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## 1 / Home of the Month: 10 East Saddle River Road

This magnificent, custom-built residence with approximately 8,000 square feet of finished living space on MULTI-LEVELS, set on a PRIVATE ROAD is now offered UNDER REPLACEMENT COST!

## 2 / Recipe of the Month: Burrata Baked Ziti with Extra Veggies

**3 / Thank You to Our Sponsors! Client Appreciation Luncheon**  
To thank all of our wonderful clients who make Stroll, Bergen County Real Producers, and BeLocal what they are, Aaron Klein Productions held a Client Appreciation Luncheon on

Thursday, July 25th from 11:30-1:30pm at Grand Lux Venue in Teaneck.

## 4 / Talking With My Mouth Full: Stories From Our Family Kitchen: Back to Routines

As we are creatures of habit, the seasonal shift from summer to fall is one of the hardest for us. We go from care-free Fridays and lazy, hot, and humid weekend afternoons and then pivot back to our daily grind simply over one last Labor Day BBQ.

## 5 / Meet Your Neighbor: Colleen Brennan MPH, BSN XO, World Project Foundation CEO & CO-Founder

Colleen Brennan is a nurse and humanitarian who has dedicated her career to improving the lives of women and children in developing countries.

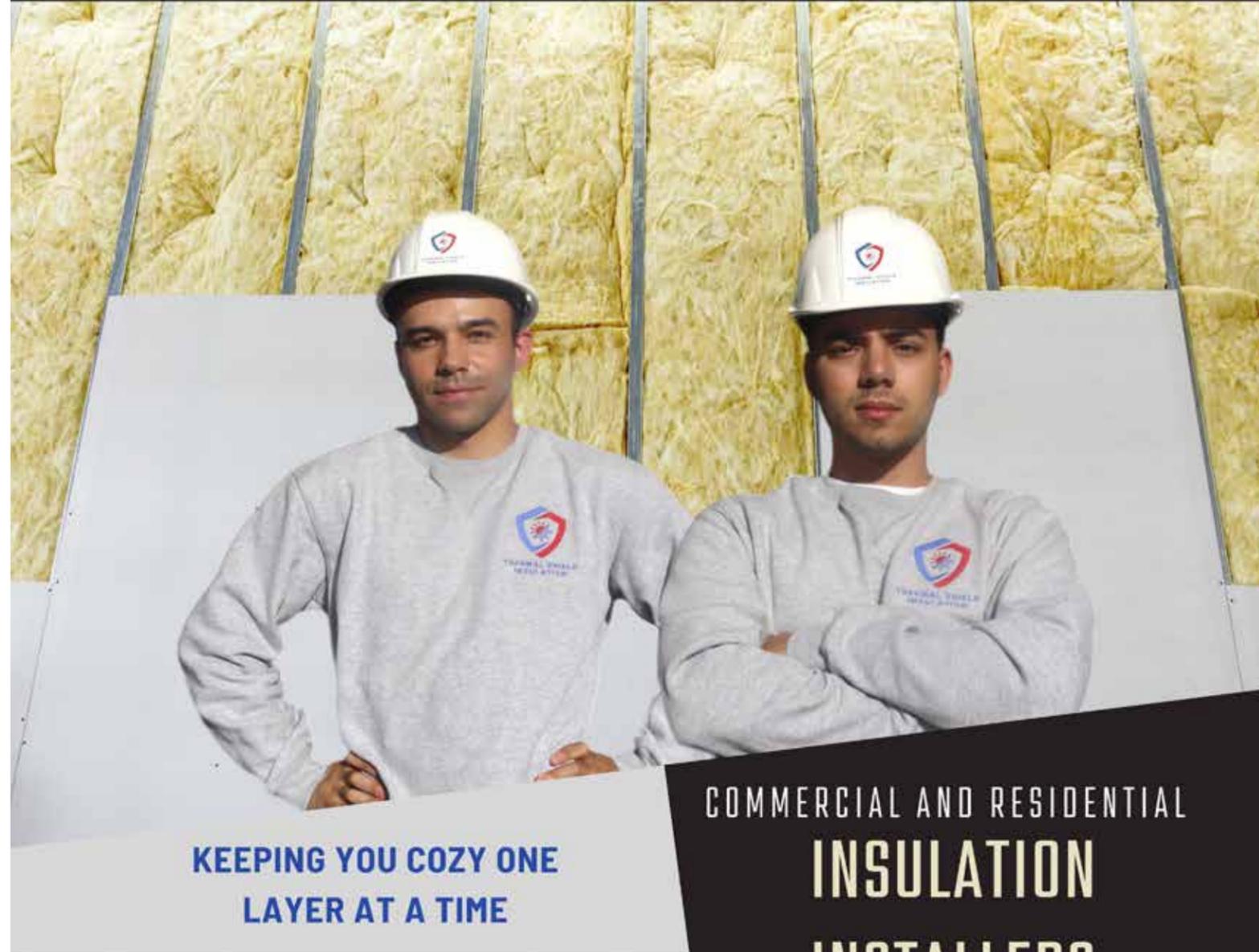
She is the co-founder and CEO of XO World Project Foundation, a non-profit organization, which provides free medical care, training, and infrastructure support to underserved communities around the world.

## 6 / Education Matters-SRDS Student Spotlight: How Saddle River Day Fostered the Entrepreneurial Spirit for David Han '24

2024 graduate, David Han, a Gateway Diploma recipient, is the perfect example of the way in which SRDS welcomes and supports student-conceived and led entrepreneurial ideas, especially when those ideas are in direct response to a perceived need at the school.

## 7 / Wandell School News

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## OCTOBER



**1 / Wandell School News**

**2 / Recipe of the Month:**  
Halloween  
Charcuterie Board

**3 / News from the SRPD:**  
Congratulations!!

Some of the updates from the SRPD: Sgt. Brian Doyle Congratulations on 25 years of distinguished service!

**4 / Home of the Month: 2 Alford Drive, Saddle River**

Nestled amidst the serene beauty of Saddle River, this exquisite brick manor colonial offers an unparalleled blend of elegance and comfort.

**5 / Meet Your Neighbors:**  
Sara and Joseph Daibes

Meet Sara and Joseph, a young professional couple who work hard to balance their careers and maintain family values. They were introduced via mutual friends at a dinner in New York City where they were both living, and are now the proud parents of two young children.

**6 / Luxury Listing:**  
Modern Elegance Meets  
Tranquility in Saddle River

Experience modern elegance and tranquility in Saddle River with this beautifully renovated home, perfectly

situated on 2 serene acres. This residence seamlessly marries contemporary luxury with timeless charm, creating a space that is as functional as it is inviting.

**7 / Education Matters-SRDS: Building Foundations:**  
Julia Rosenfeld Brings  
Her Passion for Early  
Learning to SRDS

Mrs. Rosenfeld loves teaching three- and four-year-olds because, "They are just starting to notice what's happening around them. They're eager to make connections with

teachers, friends, and the world around them."

**8 / Saddle River Valley Residents Club: Changing of the Guard (one of several featured events)**

The Saddle River Valley Residents Club officially ended the 2023-24 season with its annual "Changing of the Guard" event on June 8th at Portobello's Restaurant in Oakland.

**9 / Talking With My Mouth Full: Stories From Our Family Kitchen: October Delights**

As the crisp autumn air settles in and the leaves turn vibrant shades of red and gold, October becomes the perfect month to indulge in seasonal activities and comforting foods.

**10 / Making a Difference: Holden Orthopedic Unit Dedication**

The New Valley Hospital hosted a dedication of the Holden Orthopedic Unit on 8/28/24. This state of the art unit was made possible due to the generous philanthropy of the Holden family.

# NOVEMBER



**1 / Cover Story: Doctors Nicole Anderson and Kelly Blundy Open an Innovative Wellness Center in the Heart of Saddle River**  
The Functional Medicine Center of New Jersey, located right here in Saddle River, was born out of a shared journey of personal health challenges and a passion for helping others.

**2 / Luxury Living: 11 Woodfield Lane, Saddle River**  
A Classically Elegant European-Inspired Estate offers the ultimate combination of luxury comforts, with a custom-built kitchen featuring

professional grade appliances and a butler's pantry, a large home office, theater room, gym, a ground floor entertainment room with a full bar, 5-car garage and an elevator.

**3 / Education Matters-SRDS: How Saddle River Day School Offers Insight into Navigating the Complex College Admissions Landscape**  
Most Saddle River Day School families are familiar with Director of College Counseling, Karen Ferretti. This fall, she is joined

full time in the CCO by Ms. Jackie Williams.

**4 / Recipe of the Month: Turn Your Thanksgiving Leftovers into a Hot Pocket**

**5 / Around Town: The Saddle River Valley Residents Club Opens the 2024-25 Season with a Welcome Brunch**  
On Sunday September 15, 2024, the members of the Saddle River Valley Residents Club hosted its season opening with a brunch at Club President Zora Kassai's garden.

**6 / Around Town: Saddle River Valley Residents Club: Red Hat on the Hudson Brunch**  
We savored a delicious brunch indoors and then moved to the sun-drenched terrace enjoying the radiant sunshine and the serene Hudson River views.

**7 / Talking With My Mouth Full: Stories From Our Family Kitchen: The Magic of Fall: A Celebration of My Wife's Favorite Season**  
For her, this season is more than just a transition between summer and winter; it's a time of joy, comfort, and beauty.

# DECEMBER



**1 / Wandell School News**

**2 / Home of the Month: 15 North Church Road**  
Set on 6.3 acres of scenic grounds, this 9,000+ sq. ft. European-inspired home offers luxurious living at its finest. Built in 2010, the estate features soaring ceilings, detailed trim, and an elevator serving all three levels.

**3 / Meet Your Neighbor: The Journey of Transformation: Leslie Abner's Story of Resilience, Family, and Creativity**  
Known for her dynamic design career and her newly published debut novel, *Renovation*, Leslie

has built a life that celebrates hard work, love, and community.

**4 / Saddle River Valley Residents Club (some of the Fall events)**  
Oktoberfest Luncheon: On a beautiful sunny October day, members of the International Chapter Saddle River Valley Residents Club gathered to celebrate the arrival of the Autumn Season and enjoyed a luncheon at Mezza Luna Bistro in Allendale.

**5 / Talking With My Mouth Full: Stories From Our Family Kitchen: Saddle River Sparkles with Holiday Magic**  
As the holiday season blankets Saddle River in a crisp, festive

atmosphere, our charming town transforms into a wonderland of twinkling lights and heartfelt joy.

**6 / Education Matters-SRDS: Learning to Lead: How SRDS Teaches Election Process and Civic Engagement**  
At Saddle River Day School, we are committed to empowering our students with deep knowledge, factual insight, and robust critical thinking skills to fully grasp the electoral process.

**7 / Recipe of the Month: Bourbon Chocolate Pecan Pie**

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2023 Year in Review

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Fashion Show and Networking Event at American Dream Mall

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Meet Your Neighbor  
**COLLEEN BRENNAN**  
CEO & CO-Founder of XO World Project Foundation

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**MILES of HOPE**  
Honoring Susan Zabransky Hughes at the 13th Annual Susan Zabransky Hughes Memorial 5K Run/Walk



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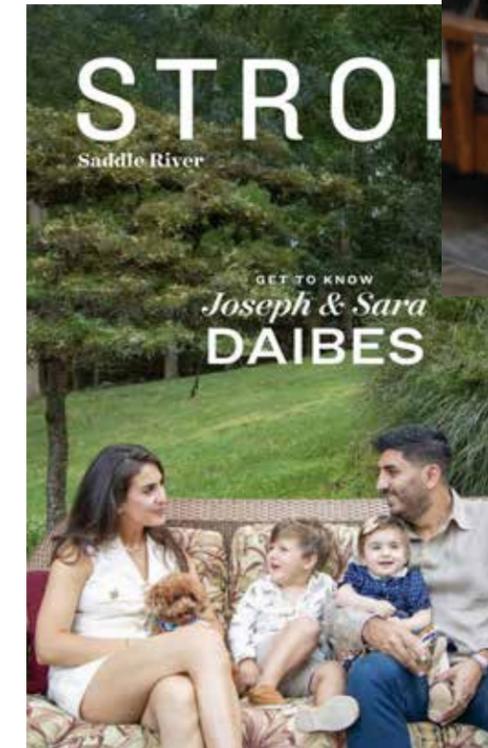
Third Generation Saddle River Resident  
**Becky Blizess**  
Her Way Into Family's Hearts

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Wrestling Hosts  
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Open an Innovative Wellness Center in the Heart of Saddle River



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THE JOURNEY OF TRANSFORMATION  
Leslie Abner's Story of Resilience, Family, and Creativity



lighting was followed by the attendees dancing with a burst of Bollywood music.

The Town Hall was adorned with beautiful traditional crafts and decorations showcasing the rich heritage of Diwali. Delicious Indian delicacies and sweets added to the festive spirit, which wowed the audience of over 140 attendees.

Mayor Al Kurpis eloquently stated, "At Saddle River, we take pride in celebrating the diverse cultural traditions that enrich our community. Our Diwali festival was a beautiful opportunity to come together, share, and honor the values of our Indian community. Events like this remind us of the strength of our shared humanity and the importance of embracing each other's cultures. I am proud of our residents for making this celebration a resounding success."

Poonam Khubani started the cultural programming with the auspicious Indian Diwali prayer, followed by a Tabla recital by Asim Tewary, beautiful Bollywood music by Jassi Singh, and classical dances and Diwali narratives by a team of students from Saddle River and the neighboring towns. Neil Bhatia, a ninth-grader volunteer from the neighboring town, accomplished the DJ's responsibility. Longtime resident Dinesh Khosla passionately gave concluding remarks, stating, "You can be the candle or a mirror reflecting the candle to brighten up the world."

One of the attendees, Anil Bhasin, a longtime resident and Mechanical Engineer, said, "It is so wonderful to see Diwali being celebrated in the great town of Saddle River because we have lived here for 30 years, and no one knew



## Saddle River Creates History in Community Outreach!

Saddle River created another milestone by celebrating Diwali for the first time on Sunday, November 3, 2024. Diwali is the Festival of Lights, celebrated by over a billion people in India and worldwide. The festival marks the victory of light over darkness and good over evil. Key traditions include lighting oil lamps or candles, decorating homes with colorful designs, and performing prayers. Families and communities come together to exchange gifts, enjoy traditional sweets, and light fireworks. This celebration symbolizes new beginnings, prosperity, and the triumph of knowledge over ignorance.

The Saddle River Indian American Group hosted the Saddle River Diwali Event, which was chaired by Ms. Anshu Kapur, who stated in her opening speech, "Let's kindle the light of positivity and sense of togetherness - the essence of Diwali."

Anshu Kapur worked closely with a great group of volunteers - Ms. Pooja Gupta, Dr. Hasna Ravi, Ms. Priya

Roubian, Ms. Dolly Singh, Ms. Sunaina Singh, Dr. Yasmeen Sultana, Dr. Sailaja Valiveti, and Ravi Sachdev, who filled in for Susan Sachdev, and several children volunteers from Saddle River and the neighboring towns, without whom the program wouldn't have been possible.

All of this was achieved with great help from the Mayor and Council, who created an ad hoc Diwali Celebration Committee and asked Ravi Sachdev to lead and make it happen. The program's success wouldn't have been possible without the great help of the lady volunteers and their husbands from the Saddle River Indian American community, who came forward to volunteer for the planning, logistics, and execution.

The Saddle River Diwali celebration happened on a beautiful Sunday afternoon. The event started with the kids and the Mayor lighting the candles outside the Town Hall to commemorate the start of Diwali. The candle





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what Diwali was! Another 35-year resident and renowned pediatric surgeon, Dr. Rajinder Gandhi, said, "Kudos to this town's wonderful people, the Diwali Committee, the Mayor, and the Council for making this event happen. It brought the Indian and broader communities together to celebrate this beautiful Festival of Lights."

As another gesture of harmony, the Saddle River Diwali Committee volunteers included people of Hindu, Sikh, Muslim, Christian, and Jewish faiths to set an example of love and respect for different religions and humanity.

The event was funded solely through generous donations from the Indian American community members, and no taxpayer money was used. Many thanks to Saddle River resident Navjot Arora, the Celebrity Chef and owner of Chutney Masala Indian Restaurant in Irvington, NY, for donating tasty food treats. Special thanks to the Diwali Committee volunteers, Saddle River Mayor And Council, Town Staff, DPW, Police, and Fire Department for their great help in making this event possible in record time. The Indian American community of Saddle River is grateful to the Saddle River community for their love and affection in making this town the best place in New Jersey and the United States.

MAY DIWALI BRING MORE HAPPINESS, PROSPERITY, AND GOOD HEALTH TO ALL!





## Wandell School News 2025-26 PRESCHOOL & KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

The Saddle River School District is now accepting registrations for the Wandell Preschool and Kindergarten programs for the 2025-26 school year.

### Wandell Preschool Program:

Wandell School is accepting Preschool applications for both residents as well as non-residents on a first-come, first-serve basis. Children must be three years old by October 1, 2025, and fully toilet trained. Program and tuition rates are listed below.

Our Preschool program follows the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) Preschool Guidelines/Standards, and is instructed by a NJDOE certified teacher. Classes are in session five full days per week. In addition to our instructional program, our Preschool students have a comprehensive Wandell School experience by attending the following specials: Art, iSTEAM, Library, Music, Physical Education, and World Language on a weekly basis.

Seats fill up quickly so please visit our website @ [www.wandellschool.org](http://www.wandellschool.org) to complete our Preschool application.

Our Tentative Preschool Open House will be held on February 25, 2025 @ 3:00 PM. To register for our Open House, please contact Mrs. Forbes at 201-327-0727 ext. 200, or email [wandell\\_info@wandellschool.org](mailto:wandell_info@wandellschool.org).

### Wandell Kindergarten Program:

Wandell School is accepting Kindergarten registrations for the 2025-26 school year. To be eligible to attend Kindergarten in September 2025, a child must be five years old on or before October 1, 2025. Non-resident students will be considered on a tuition basis, provided there is capacity.

Please visit the Wandell School website at [www.wandellschool.org](http://www.wandellschool.org) to register for Kindergarten and visit our Instruction Overview page. As required by the State of New Jersey, all children entering Kindergarten must have a physical examination, all updated immunizations, and have submitted all of the required documentation for enrollment via the website online registration portal.

If you have any enrollment questions, please email [wandell\\_info@wandellschool.org](mailto:wandell_info@wandellschool.org).

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# Hearing Health Myths to Leave Behind in 2025

BY DR. ANN MARIE OLSON, OWNER AND AUDIOLOGIST AT SOPHISTICATED HEARING – HOHOKUS, NJ, AND SADDLE RIVER RESIDENT



AS WE STEP INTO 2025, it's time to leave outdated misconceptions about hearing health in the past. Here are four common myths—and the truths you need to know for healthier ears.

**Myth 1: Hearing loss only affects older adults**

While age-related hearing loss is common, hearing issues can occur at any age. Noise exposure, genetics, ear infections, and certain

medical conditions can lead to hearing loss in children, teens, and adults. Approximately 2-3 of every 1000 newborns in the US are born with some degree of hearing loss. Noise exposure is making hearing loss and tinnitus more prevalent in teenagers and young adults. Protecting your hearing is a lifelong responsibility, regardless of age.

**Myth 2: Over-the-Counter (OTC) Hearing Aids Are One-Size-Fits-All**

With the growing availability of OTC hearing aids, many believe they're a universal solution for hearing loss. Devices like Apple's AirPods Pro 2 offer features such as adaptive transparency and amplification, but they are not substitutes for prescription hearing aids designed for specific types and degrees of hearing loss. OTC hearing aids work best for a self-perceived mild to moderate hearing loss and should not replace a professional evaluation. An audiologist can help determine if these devices meet your needs or if a tailored solution is better.

**Myth 3: Hearing aids will make me look old**

Modern hearing aids are sleek, discreet, and packed with advanced features like Bluetooth connectivity and AI-powered sound enhancement. Many are nearly invisible, and some resemble stylish earbuds. Instead of making you look older, they help you stay young. Many patients of Sophisticated Hearing report their family and friends say they are more engaged and confident once they are able to hear better.

**Myth 4: If I can hear, my hearing is fine**

Hearing loss often develops gradually, and early signs—like difficulty following conversations in noisy places or frequently asking people to repeat themselves—may go unnoticed. Regular hearing check-ups, much like eye exams, are essential for catching issues early and preserving your hearing.

Make 2025 the year you prioritize your hearing health. Protect your ears from loud sounds, embrace hearing technology if needed, and seek regular professional evaluations. Debunking these myths will empower you to hear your best and enjoy life to the fullest.

**Hearing health is about staying connected—don't let misconceptions hold you back!**

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typically excluded from taxation. The changes could push some residents above Stay NJ's \$500,000 income limit. A New Jersey Spotlight article states that this same law also lays groundwork which will allow residents to more conveniently access their property tax benefits through a single combined application form that should be available in February 2025 and will use a new set of standardized rules for determining annual income.

According to the New Jersey Monitor, "This combined program requires residents who receive tax relief under the three programs to reduce any property tax deduction on the state's income tax by an amount equal to their awards and allows officials to pay out Stay NJ benefits through rebates while officials stand up a tax credit system that aligns with all three programs. The program is expected to cost the state \$1.2 billion annually once it is in full effect, and statutory language bars New Jersey from administering Stay NJ tax credits if the state cannot make full pension payments, fully fund school aid, and maintain a surplus equal to 12% of spending."

Look for more information on the progress of these tax relief programs in early 2025.



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# Streamlining New Jersey's TAX RELIEF PROGRAMS

BY TERRIE O'CONNOR, SADDLE RIVER RESIDENT

In an effort to move forward new tax relief programs for the state of New Jersey, Gov. Phil Murphy signed a bill in early November that makes a series of technical changes to the state's three programs. According to the New Jersey Monitor, the bill seeks to align the new Stay NJ with the Senior Freeze and Anchor property tax rebate programs.

The current Affordable New Jersey Communities for Homeowners and Renters (ANCHOR) program provides property tax relief to New Jersey residents who own or rent property in New Jersey as their principal residence

and earn less than \$250,000. Approved, but not effective until 2026, the StayNJ program has a much higher income threshold of \$500,000 for homeowners ages 65 and older with rebates that are potentially higher to qualified claimants. Finally, the Senior Freeze program reimburses eligible senior citizens and disabled persons for property tax or mobile home park site fee increases on their primary residence.

Among other things, the new bill alters the definition of income under Stay NJ to include Social Security, retirement, and other types of income



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## ASK DR. BOB

### How can I rid myself of leg cramps without taking medication?

Leg cramps are common among many age groups. They often keep people awake at night and can be painful during the day. They are frequently the effect of dehydration, overexertion, sitting or standing too long, or because of medical conditions. A recent study of elderly people in China with leg cramps found that giving daily doses of Vitamin K reduced the incidence of leg cramps. I suspect a daily dose of multivitamins, which all people over 70 should ingest for their health, would eliminate the cramps. Just make sure that there is enough vitamin K in the vitamin to cover the daily requirement. (JAMA Internal Medicine 2024)

### What about people on blood thinners who have leg cramps?

People on anticoagulants (blood thinners) like coumadin or warfarin should be cautious about vitamin K. This vitamin plays a crucial role in blood clotting and may cause problems with the beneficial effects of blood thinners. My suggestion is to speak to your healthcare professional before you take a blood thinner for your leg cramps.

### Do patients on the anti-obesity drugs decrease alcohol use?

I wrote about the GLP-1 drugs in one of my last posts and mentioned that these drugs might "blunt" the wish to have alcohol. There is now a study and data from over

14,000 Weight Watchers participants where the intake of alcohol was significantly less in those who took a weight loss injection. It did not matter if the drug was Zepbound, Wegovy, or Monjouro. (presented on November 6, 2024, at the Obesity Society's Obesity Week).

### Are drugs like Ozempic safe to take while pregnant?

We have all heard of Ozempic babies and the fears that women have about being on the weight loss drug Ozempic and getting pregnant. This drug is Schedule C, which means that you should not take it during pregnancy because of fears that it might cause problems for the fetus. Animal studies indicate that there might be a problem with ingestion of this medicine while pregnant.

### I heard that the GLP-1 weight-reducing drugs might also be used to treat infertility. Is this true?

Maybe. Unplanned pregnancies are occurring while people are on weight loss drugs like Ozempic. Now, fertility specialists are incorporating these drugs into preconception care plans. Obesity is consistently linked to fertility and pregnancy outcomes. This appears to be the case with women who do not cycle appropriately because of conditions like polycystic ovarian syndrome. Women who have regular menstrual periods and who have unexplained infertility might benefit from the use of these drugs before pregnancy.

Most experts say that a woman should stop her semaglutide drugs 1-2 months before conceiving. (according to the manufacturers). These drugs are not known to cause birth defects yet, but research indicates that there are risks for using weight loss drugs and getting pregnant.

### My doctor informed me that my Lp(a) levels were high and that I was at risk of having a heart attack. Is there something that will lower my Lp(a) levels?

Your doctor is right. The Lp9a) is a kind of cholesterol called a lipoprotein. High levels promote clotting and inflammation, significantly increasing the risk of heart attack, stroke, aortic stenosis (a disease of a heart valve), and peripheral artery disease (usually involving the vessels of the lower leg that cause big time cramping). Approximately 20% of us experience this problem. Black African and South Asian people are particularly affected.

Now, a drug called Muvalaplin safely lowers Lp (a) cholesterol levels. This is an oral drug, and a new injectable form is in development. This drug lowered the level of Lp (a) by 70%. About 82% of the research group of patients had their lipoproteins lowered significantly, usually below 125 nmol/L. (American Heart Association, Chicago 2024).

### I hear that the microbiome can predict the risk of disease. Is that true?

The microbiome is a vital component of life. I have not spoken much about it in this column. However, it is critical to your health and well-being. The microbiome is the population of organisms that inhabit your bowel: bacteria, viruses, and, in many cases, parasites like worms. These organisms are in the bowel and your skin, lungs, and urogenital tract. These organisms live in symbiosis with you, providing the immune system and organs like your brain with vital information through epigenetics.

An interesting paper recently published indicates that the risk of developing rheumatoid arthritis (RA) in certain people could be identified by looking at their microbiomes. A bacterial strain called Provetella was an organism found in the patient's gut about 10 months before the disease appeared. This finding suggests that gut microbiomes might help predict human diseases. (Annals of Rheumatic Diseases)

We have a new video podcast called Health Frontiers with Dr. Bob that you might enjoy. Go to the website [www.healthfrontierspod.com](http://www.healthfrontierspod.com) and enjoy the various episodes on everything from Presidential Health to foot health.



Robert G. Lahita MD, PhD, FACP, MACR, FRCP, Director of St. Joseph's Institute for Autoimmune and Rheumatic Diseases, Professor of Medicine at Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine, Clinical Professor of Medicine, Rutgers, New Jersey Medical School, and Saddle River Resident. [r.lahita@att.net](mailto:r.lahita@att.net), phone: 973 754 4175

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PREFACE BY MARIO BUATTA

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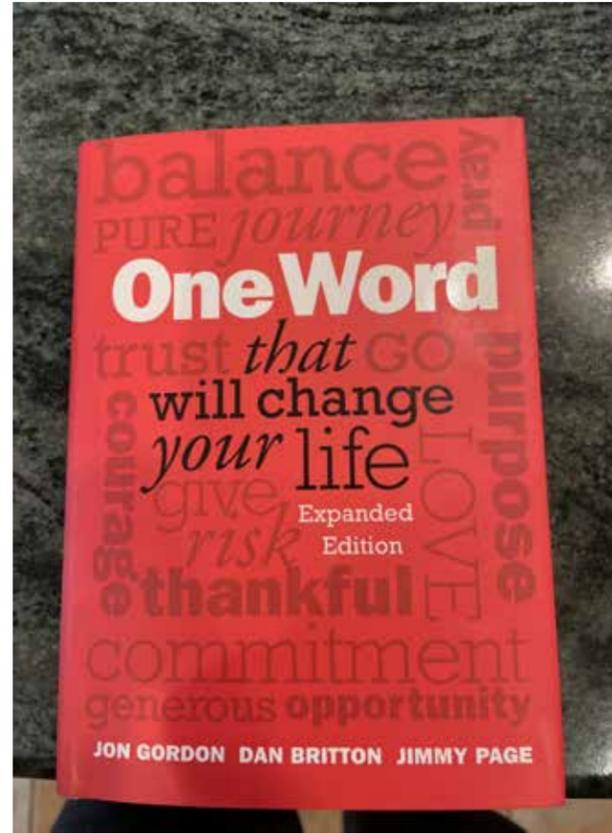


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# Start the New Year with One Word: A Simple Approach to Setting Intentions



As the clock strikes midnight on December 31st, the world pauses in a collective breath, brimming with hope and anticipation for the year ahead. At home in Saddle River, we celebrate the dawn of a new year with traditions both grand and intimate, each imbued with the promise of fresh starts and new beginnings. Among these, a growing trend is to set intentions not through lengthy resolutions, but through the power of one word.

### The Power of One Word

Choosing one word to guide your year is a practice rooted in simplicity and focus. Unlike traditional New Year's resolutions that can quickly become overwhelming and abandoned, one word serves as a touchstone, a guiding star that keeps you aligned with your aspirations. It's a word that resonates deeply with your personal goals, values, and the essence of what you wish to cultivate in the year to come.

### How to Choose Your Word

Selecting your guiding word is a reflective process. Here are some steps to help you find the word that will illuminate your path:

- 1. Reflect on the Past Year:** Take some time to consider the highs and lows of the past year. What challenges did you face? What achievements are you proud of? What themes or patterns emerge from your reflections?
- 2. Identify Your Core Values:** Think about what matters most to you. Is it growth, love, health, or perhaps balance?



Your core values will serve as a compass, pointing you towards a word that aligns with your deepest aspirations.

**3. Envision the Year Ahead:** Close your eyes and imagine the year ahead. What do you want to feel? What areas of your life do you want to improve? What is the overarching theme or goal for your year?

**4. Find Your Word:** Based on your reflections, choose a word that encapsulates your vision for the year. It could be something like "grace," "adventure," "mindfulness," or "resilience."

### Making Your Word Work for You

Once you've chosen your word, the next step is to integrate it into your daily life. Here are some tips to keep your word at the forefront of your mind throughout the year:

- 1. Display Your Word:** Write your word on a piece of paper or create a visual representation of it. Place it where you'll see it daily—on your fridge, your desk, or your mirror.
- 2. Incorporate It Into Your Routine:** Find ways to weave your word into your daily activities. If your word is "health," you might prioritize nutritious meals and regular exercise. If it's "connection," you could focus on nurturing relationships.
- 3. Reflect Regularly:** Set aside time each month to reflect on your word. How is it shaping your actions and decisions? Are there areas where you can more fully embody your word?
- 4. Be Gentle with Yourself:** Remember, the goal is not perfection but progress. If you find yourself straying from your word, gently guide yourself back without judgment.

As we usher in a new year, the tradition of choosing one word to guide our intentions offers a powerful, yet simple approach to personal growth and fulfillment. By focusing on a single word, we can navigate the year with clarity, purpose, and a sense of direction. So, what will your word be? Here's to a year filled with meaningful moments and the magic of new beginnings. Happy New Year, Saddle River!

And while busy thinking up a word for 2025, trying cooking up this *one* recipe that you can keep coming back to all year long!





## CHICKEN CHILE VERDE PRESSURE COOKER RECIPE

Serves 4 to 6 servings

### INGREDIENTS

- 3 pounds boneless skinless chicken thighs
- 1 pound poblano peppers, roughly chopped, seeds and stems discarded (about 3 peppers)
- 12 ounces tomatillos, husks discarded, quartered (about 4 tomatillos)
- 10 ounces white onion, roughly chopped (about 1 medium)
- 6 ounces Anaheim or Cubanelle peppers, roughly chopped, seeds and stems discarded (about 2 peppers)
- 2 Serrano or jalapeño peppers, roughly chopped, stems discarded (optional)
- 6 medium cloves garlic, peeled
- 1 tablespoon whole cumin seeds, toasted and ground
- Kosher salt
- 1/2 cup loosely packed fresh cilantro leaves and fine stems, plus more for garnish
- 1 tablespoon Asian fish sauce, such as Red Boat (optional)
- Fresh corn tortillas and lime wedges, for serving

### DIRECTIONS

1. Combine chicken, poblano peppers, tomatillos, onion, Anaheim peppers, Serrano peppers, garlic, cumin, and a big pinch of salt in a pressure cooker. Heat over high heat until gently sizzling, then seal pressure cooker, bring to high pressure, and cook for 15 minutes. Release pressure.
2. Using tongs, transfer chicken pieces to a bowl and set aside. Add cilantro and fish sauce to remaining contents of pressure cooker. Blend with an immersion blender or in a countertop blender and season to taste with salt. Return chicken to sauce and shred.
3. Transfer to a serving platter, garnish with chopped cilantro, and serve immediately with tortillas and lime wedges or over rice.



*Paul "Paulie" Valetutti is a girl dad, husband, chef and Saddle River Resident. A Bosco and Rutgers Alumnus, he grew up in Mahwah and has cooked professionally in Arizona, New York, France, and Italy. He and his family love to travel, ski, and of course, eat! He is very passionate about the experiences available in life.*

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## Discover the Saddle River Day Middle School Difference: Where Growth Meets Opportunity

SUBMITTED BY THE OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AT SADDLE RIVER DAY SCHOOL

The Middle School years are a time of enormous growth and change for our children. Cognitively, they are becoming more aware of the world around them and are able to grasp, and articulate, increasingly more intricate concepts and ideas. Academically, expectations as well as stakes are rising, and at the same time, their social interactions are changing in ways both big and small. It's a lot to handle and requires students to remain flexible, inquisitive, and open. It also requires their support systems to maintain continuity while also creating room for them to develop into the people they are becoming. Not only do SRDS Middle School faculty and administrators understand the complexity of the Middle School years, they welcome the challenge, and take great pleasure in helping each of their students achieve success in their own personal and particular ways.

The Middle School at Saddle River Day School has seen unprecedented growth in the past few years. Families who are new to SRDS still cite some of our traditional hallmarks like breadth of enrichment offerings, low student-to-faculty ratio, the tight-knit community, and opportunities to try new things as reasons their children have found their home at SRDS. But it's some of our signature academic and student-focused programs, along with new programs, designed to help students succeed and excel in high school, college, and beyond that have made the SRDS Middle School highly desirable, academically rigorous,



and competitive with top Middle Schools all over the tri-state area.

**Through field trips and overnights, students build community with their groups, and advisors have the benefit of getting to know their students as individuals outside the classroom setting.**

As parents, it is both gratifying and comforting to know that our children have trustworthy adults in their lives who challenge, guide, teach, and care for them when we aren't around. This is the intention of the Middle School Advisory Program. Students meet regularly in small groups with a faculty or staff member who provides information, direction, and advice. Through field trips and overnights, students build community with their groups, and advisors have the benefit of getting to know their students as individuals outside the classroom setting. According to Middle School Head, Anastasia Kelly, the advisory program is "an extension of the SRDS value pillar that 'everyone counts.' The advisors are the point people who

are really focused on student's social-emotional growth, and their academic path. Advisors learn their students' passions, skills, and talents and can guide them toward classes, extracurriculars, and enrichment opportunities that advance the big picture and help students plan their futures."

Students are able to participate in enrichment classes that can either deepen their knowledge and skills in an area of interest, or give them exposure to a new discipline they'd like to learn more about. Best of all Middle School students aren't required to choose between an athletic team and a club or an enrichment class. The Middle School schedule has been specifically structured so they can do both. Because we know all our students are multi-faceted and deserve the opportunity to excel at both a sport and Odyssey of the Mind, or robotics, or debate. Or, they can try their hand at the performing or visual arts. Or, they can participate in non-competitive sports like bowling or skiing. The combinations and options are as varied and unique as our students.

In addition, students are encouraged to use their Middle School years to experiment and try new things. But for students who want to more deeply immerse themselves in the study of math or science, and who have demonstrated aptitude for higher level work, Saddle River Day School offers the opportunity

to apply for an accelerated curriculum that will enable them to take advantage of upper and college level classes, as well as AP classes, once they reach the Upper School. Newer to the program is a selection of business, entrepreneurship, and computer science classes that also lay the groundwork for more advanced coursework in these disciplines once students reach the Upper School.

Regardless of the track our students are on, each Middle School student will participate in a multi-year research

curriculum that culminates in an 8th Grade Capstone project that readies them for the demanding work and research that will be critical to their Upper School and college success. Students begin by mastering the fundamentals of research, gradually advancing to deeper analysis of information and sources. This journey culminates in a final presentation that addresses a problem within their chosen area of interest, aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. With increasing emphasis on literacy and critical thinking skills for college-bound students, Saddle River Day School equips its students with the tools they need to excel and thrive.

Research indicates that the success of first year college students directly correlates to the preparation they received in their pre-college years. It is also becoming evident that the skills students need must be embedded in their academic pursuits as early as possible. Saddle River Day School cultivates an environment of curiosity, innovation,

imagination, experiential learning, and personal achievement, all within a supportive, family oriented community. In short, SRDS Middle Schoolers get 'big school opportunities' with all the benefits of a small school setting. With exciting new transformations on the horizon, our students and their parents know we, as a school, will be on the forefront of thought and education. It's how we will fulfill our mission to "inspire each child to achieve their personal and academic best and become a caring and ethical contributor to society."

At Saddle River Day School, we realize that education is evolving, and learning is lifelong. We give students the tools they'll need not only to be successful in the present but to be the leaders and innovators of their rapidly advancing, ever changing future. For further information about Saddle River Day School, contact Kris Sweeny in the Office of Admissions: [ksweeny@saddleriverday.org](mailto:ksweeny@saddleriverday.org)



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## One Word to Transform Your Year

In *One Word that Will Change Your Life*, authors Jon Gordon, Dan Britton, and Jimmy Page reveal a simple, yet profound idea: choosing one word to guide your year. This concept aligns beautifully with functional medicine’s core principles: simplicity, intentionality, and balance, and helps to align your actions, thoughts, and intentions with a central theme.

### Why One Word Matters

Unlike lofty New Year’s resolutions that tend to fade with time or overwhelm, a single word offers a simplified path for deeper growth, clarity, and connection to your higher purpose. It shifts your mindset and becomes the lens through which you view life’s experiences, and gently draws you back to center as inevitable distractions arise by focusing your energy on what truly matters.

### How to Choose Your Word

Begin with self-reflection. Functional medicine emphasizes the importance of understanding your unique story – consider the following questions:

- Which areas of my life feel out of balance?
- What emotional or physical patterns do I want to shift or strengthen?
- What word encapsulates the vitality or calm I seek?
- Where would I like healing or growth?
- What qualities do I feel called to embody?

For example, if you are healing from burnout, your word might be “restoration” or “nourish”. Perhaps you seek “balance” after a chaotic year or “courage” to face new

challenges. Consider writing down words that resonate with your aspirations, then reflect, meditate or pray until one word surfaces as personally significant. Your word should spark emotion, serving as your guidepost throughout the year. A gentle reminder that this process is meant to be peaceful, not stressful, so be kind to yourself as you explore what comes to mind as you reflect.

### Integrating your word into Daily Life

1. To create meaningful transformation, make your word a living part of your routine:
2. Visual Reminders: Place reminders where you will see them daily - on mirrors, journals, bracelets, or screensavers.
3. Daily Reflection: Spend a few moments each morning reflecting on how your word can guide you for the day. For example, as, “How can I embody “presence” today?”
4. Align Decisions: Use your word as a filter by considering whether your choices align with your intention.
5. Share It: Let friends or family know your word, fostering accountability and support.
6. Practice Gratitude: End each day by acknowledging moments when you lived out your word.



Let your word be your catalyst for the year, guiding you toward harmony, healing, and transformation in every facet of your life.



Marcy Valetutti is a mom, wife, official family recipe taste tester, and a Saddle River Resident who is passionate about creating meaningful experiences and powerful connections. She is the owner of BTDL LLC and a wholesome wellness advocate at the Functional Medicine Center of New Jersey.



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