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Saddle River

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a white textured jacket over a blue top and blue jeans, stands in a kitchen. She is leaning on a white countertop with blue bar stools. A light-colored dog is sitting on the floor in front of her. The kitchen has white cabinets and a marble backsplash.

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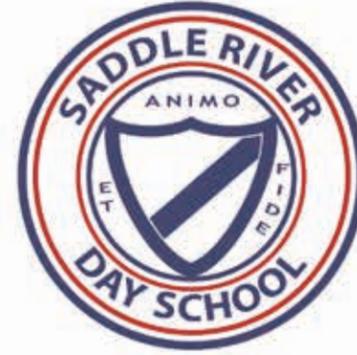
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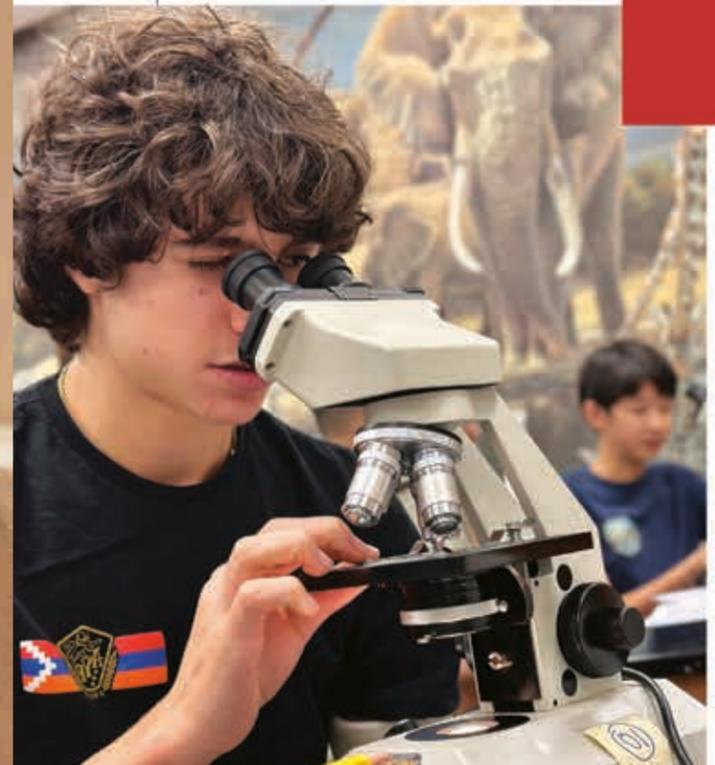
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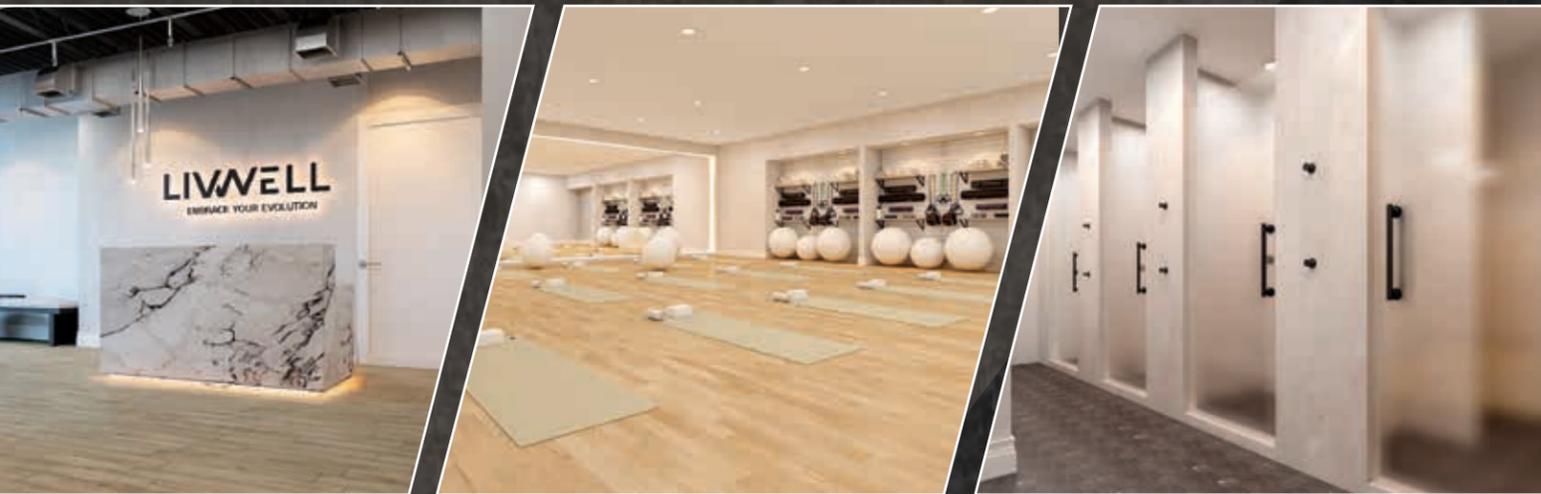
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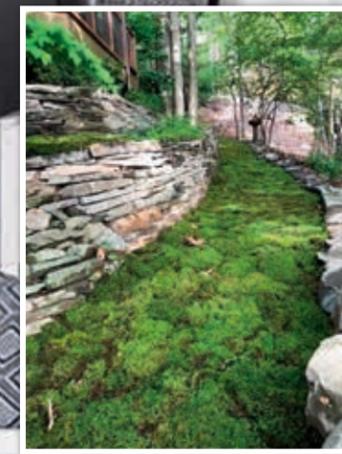
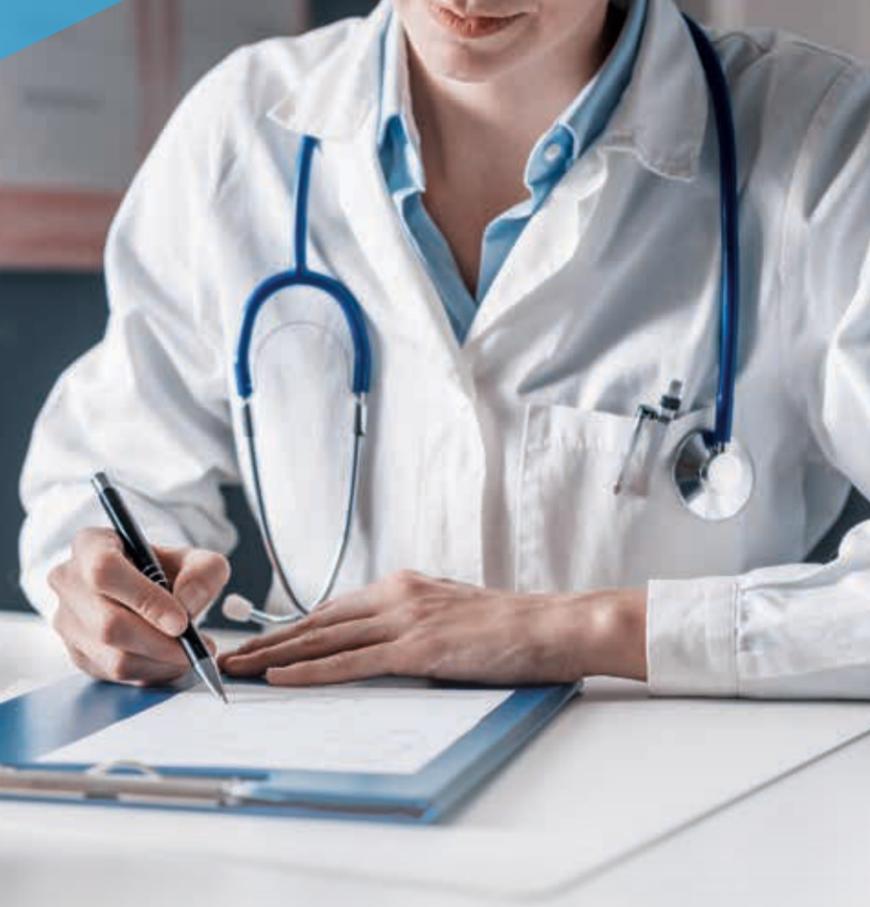


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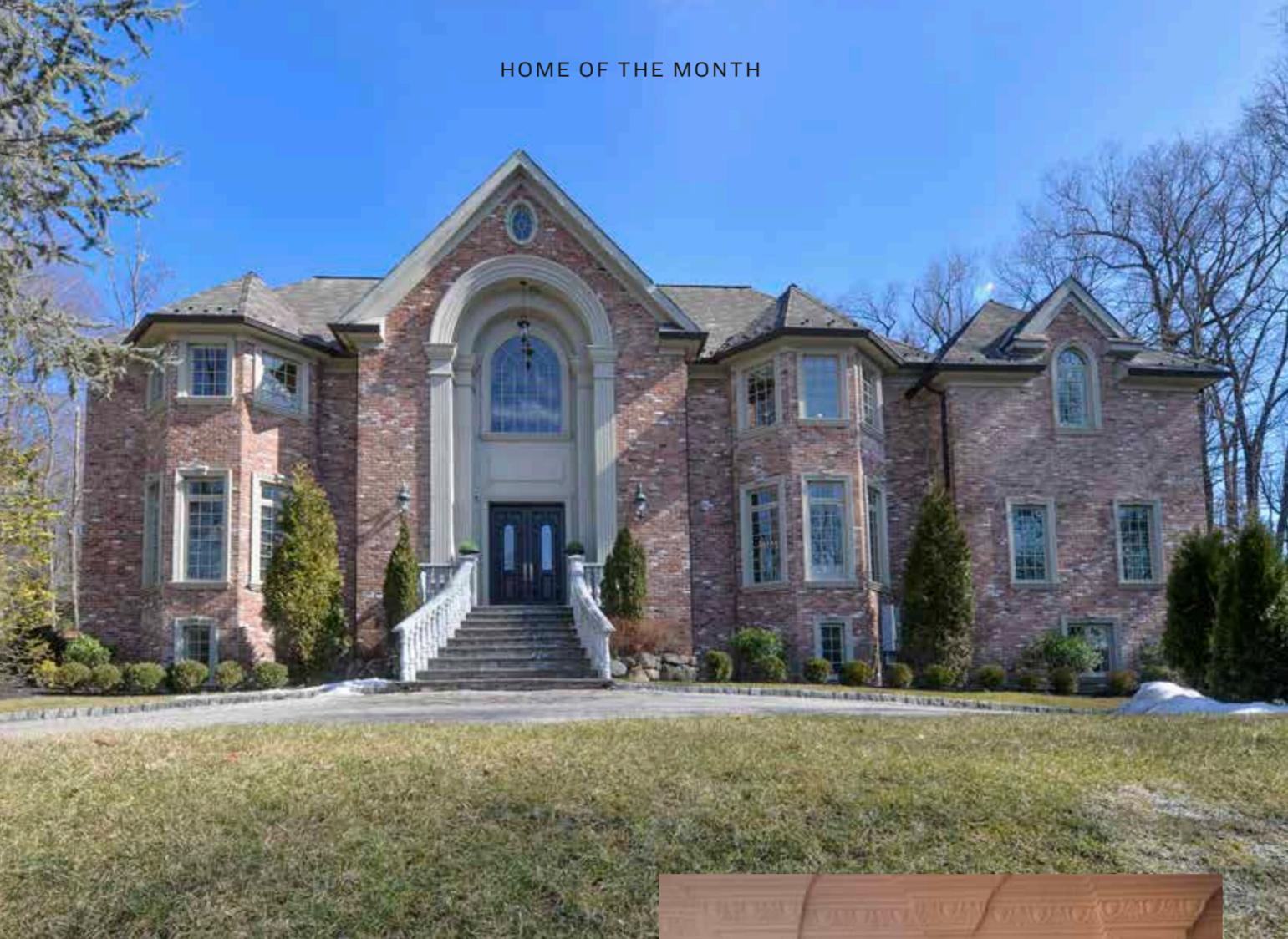
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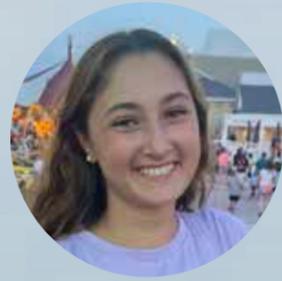
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To My Mother



BY SIRAHN TOUFAYAN, SADDLE RIVER RESIDENT AND TWELFTH GRADER AT ACADEMY OF THE HOLY ANGELS

A soft voice of comfort
That heals a broken heart,
Warm arms that embrace me,
And put together what has fallen apart.

She is a pillar of strength,
Weathering storms of many kinds,
Guiding me through the darkness
And understanding my complicated mind.

A gentle hand stroking my hair,
Soft kisses on my brow,
Lulling me to sleep,
Despite the fact that I'm older now.

This great woman,
I am blessed to call her my mother,
My teacher, my supporter, my role model.
I must say that like her there is no other.

When once she'd watch me while laughing as I
haphazardly applied smears of glitter to my eyes,
Now she sits smiling at me,
While I show her how her new blush is applied.

After long days,
When she at last prepares to sleep,
If she hears that I need to talk,
She'll brush aside her fatigue.



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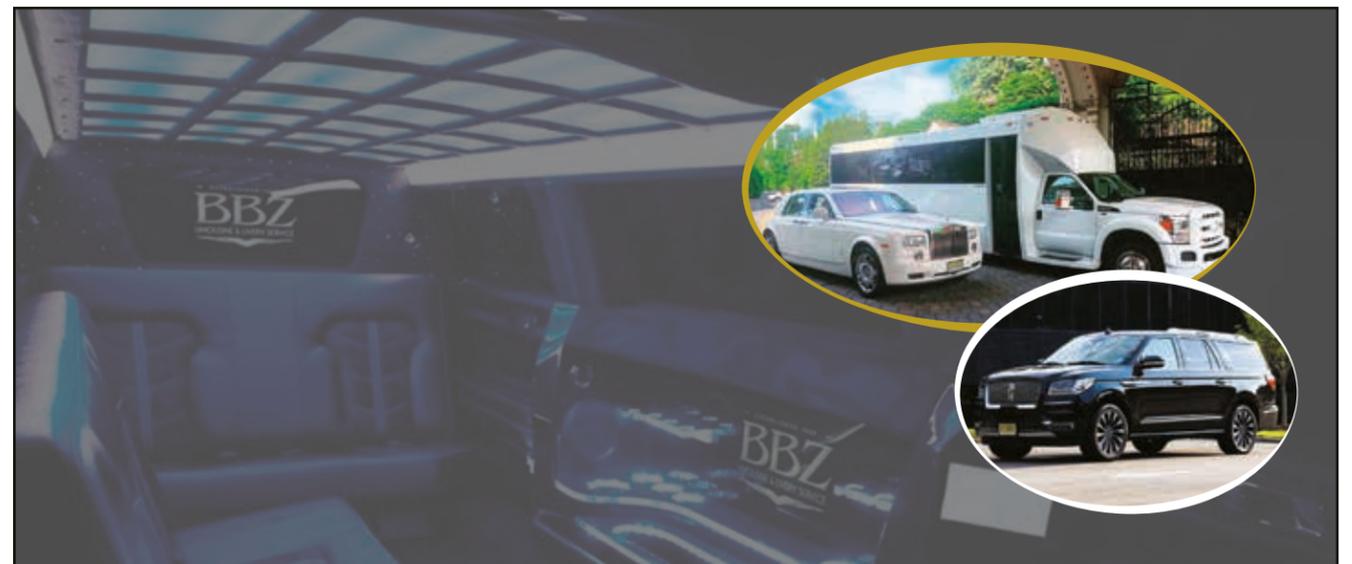


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Is The Housing Market Shifting?

BY TERRIE O'CONNOR, SADDLE RIVER RESIDENT



Established in 1991, Terrie O'Connor Realtors is a leading independent real estate brokerage committed to providing hallmark service, anticipating changing market conditions and setting the standard for excellence in the real estate industry. With nine branch offices and more than 475 licensed real estate professionals, Terrie O'Connor Realtors provides exceptional real estate services throughout northern New Jersey and southern New York states. Terrie O'Connor Realtors is a proud member of Leading Real Estate Companies of the World, a network of leading independent real estate brokerages across the country and representing more than 70 countries worldwide, as well as the invitation-only luxury property marketing division, Luxury Portfolio International.

Anxious buyers looking to purchase a home in certain areas of the country are starting to be pleasantly surprised to find the tide is shifting their way this spring after years of challenging affordability. CNN Business has posted that in January, there were 3.7 months of housing inventory across the country. Altos Research predicts that by the end of the year, listing inventory across the country should be back up to pre-pandemic levels. With it taking more than three months for listed properties to sell in some areas and the general rule of thumb that more than four months indicates a buyers' market, are sellers slowly losing leverage?

The answer to that question really depends on the local market you may be researching. According to the Wall Street Journal, stark regional differences are opening up in the housing market. Buyers have the power now to demand big price cuts in some parts of the country but still face bidding wars in other areas. While recent months are clearly showing signs of a market coming into balance, the national supply of homes for sale hasn't returned to normal yet. According to the National Association of Realtors, U.S. existing home inventories in January were 16% below levels seen five years ago at the same time. Yet, pockets of opportunity for buyers are helping to turn the trend. In an Altos Research study for the month of

February, it was found that two market areas in the country were experiencing negative property appreciation. In March, the research company found that now five market areas had negative appreciation. Another property data firm, Attom, recently stated that more than 50 counties throughout the country are at risk for a housing market downturn.

For example, if you have been considering a move to Florida but have put that dream on hold because of the fast paced market that has been that state's trademark in the last few years, now may be your time. Home shoppers in southeast Florida have the most buying power of anywhere else in the country right now. In cities like Cape Coral and Miami, there are more than 11 months of home supply on the market per the CNN Business article. Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach and Jacksonville as well as areas in Texas, California, Illinois and Louisiana to name a few are also on target to become strong buyers' markets.

So what about the New Jersey market? Spring has long been considered the busiest home shopping season as warmer temperatures and the end of the school year tend to entice new buyers and sellers into the market. However, persistently high borrowing costs and fewer new listings in 2024 stymied the action and home sales fell to some of the lowest levels we have seen in three decades in 2024.

As we approach spring 2025, we have experienced more new listings this year vs. 2024. According to the New Jersey MLS (NJMLS), our area experienced 14,599 new listings in January and February vs. 12,010 for the same time in 2024. Yet, New Jersey's real estate market continues to exhibit the characteristics of a sellers' market. Even with the uptick in new listings, the inventory has yet been able to meet the robust demand from buyers in our area and sellers are still getting 100% of list price on average per the NJMLS. This persistent imbalance between supply and demand suggests that the market will continue to favor sellers in the next few months. That said, Attom Research CEO Rob Barber cautions "While the housing market boom continues to gain momentum, some markets show signs of potential instability." Of the 51 most vulnerable counties cited by Attom, 24 were in the NY metro region including Brooklyn, Staten Island and The Bronx in New York and four counties in New Jersey including Essex and Union.

Sellers beware! While home values are projected to increase, the rate of appreciation is expected to be a much more modest rate of 2-4% this year. In addition, the NJMLS reports 4-5 months of listing inventory in the first months of 2025 vs. as opposed to an average of only 2-3 months in 2024. With these growing statistics and more and more areas of the country beginning to experience a balancing in the market, now may be the time to cash in on all that equity you have built while you still have a bit of an upper hand!



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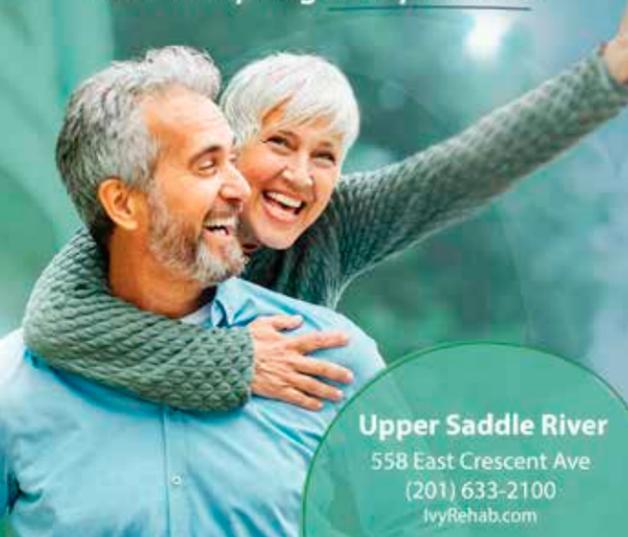



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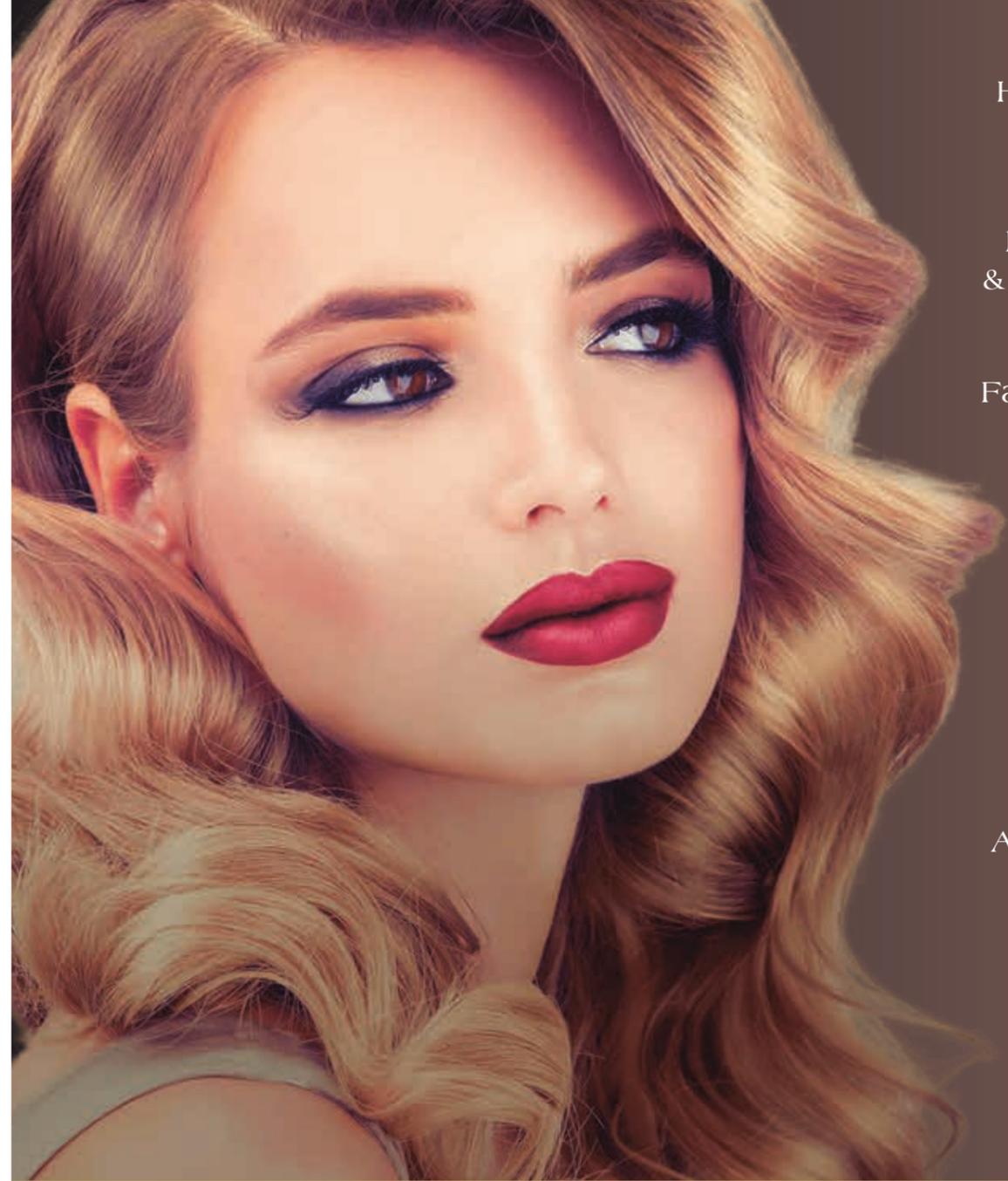
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May is Better Hearing Month

INVEST IN YOUR HEARING HEALTH

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



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Personal connections are perhaps the most immediate and heartfelt reason to prioritize hearing care. Struggling to follow conversations at social gatherings, family events, or business meetings can lead to frustration and withdrawal. Better hearing enhances relationships by allowing for meaningful conversations, deeper connections, and an enriched social life.

Better Hearing Month is the perfect reminder to schedule a baseline hearing evaluation. Just as we routinely check our vision, blood pressure, and cholesterol, hearing tests should be part of a proactive health plan. Early detection allows for better treatment outcomes and can prevent further decline.

At Sophisticated Hearing, we believe that *when you are ready to hear, we are ready to help*. This May, take a step toward protecting your hearing and enhancing your quality of life. After all, life's best moments are meant to be heard. When you're Ready to Hear, We are Ready to Help.



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AS AN INDEPENDENT PRIVATE PRACTICE audiologist, I see firsthand how hearing health impacts every aspect of life. May is Better Hearing Month, a perfect time to raise awareness about the importance of protecting and preserving your hearing. In a community that values quality of life, investing in your hearing is just as important as maintaining your physical health, financial well-being, and personal connections.

Hearing loss often develops gradually, making it easy to ignore until it significantly affects daily life. However, research

shows that untreated hearing loss is linked to cognitive decline, increased risk of falls, and even cardiovascular issues. Struggling to hear places extra stress on the brain, which can lead to fatigue and reduced mental sharpness. By addressing hearing loss early, you not only improve communication but also support overall physical and cognitive health.

Financial well-being is another important aspect of hearing health. Studies indicate that untreated hearing loss can negatively impact job performance, leading to decreased earnings over time.



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Your Monthly Health and Wellness Advisor

This month I will discuss two topics of popular interest. The medical risks of tattoos and microplastics. More interesting topics will be available in this month's video podcast. www.healthfrontierspod.com.

What are some risks associated with tattoos?

Tattoos have become popular over the past few decades, with people from all walks of life opting to adorn their bodies with permanent designs. While many view tattoos as self-expression

or a way to commemorate significant life events, it is essential to be aware of the potential dangers and complications associated with getting inked. This small section answers many of the readers' questions about tattoos.

I observe a high prevalence of tattoos in both outpatient and inpatient populations. It has become so common that almost every patient under the age of 50 has at least one tattoo. Many millennial patients have their torsos covered in ink.

What are some health risks with tattoos?

• Infections

One of the most significant risks associated with getting a tattoo is the potential for infection. The process involves puncturing the skin with needles to inject ink, which can introduce bacteria and other pathogens into the body. The tattoo artist's improper sterilization or negligent aftercare elevates the risk of bacterial infections, such as *Staphylococcus aureus*. In severe cases, infections can lead to abscesses or systemic conditions like sepsis.

• Allergic Reactions

Another potential danger is an allergic reaction to tattoo ink. Tattoo inks contain various chemicals and colorants that can cause allergic reactions in some individuals. These reactions may manifest as redness, itching, swelling, or hives at the site of the tattoo. Sometimes, years after application, allergic reactions can occur, making it difficult to pinpoint the cause. Individuals with known sensitivities should consult with a dermatologist before getting a tattoo.

• Skin Conditions

Tattoos can exacerbate pre-existing skin conditions or trigger the development of new ones. The trauma caused to the skin during the tattooing process can trigger conditions such as psoriasis, eczema, and dermatitis. Tattoos can mask the early signs of skin cancer, making it more challenging for dermatologists to detect and diagnose malignant skin changes.

What are the long-term risks?

• Tattoos are now linked to cancer.

Many people regret getting tattoos and develop more embarrassment toward them as they age. However, a new study suggests that there are more serious things to worry about. A study from Europe (Lund University, Sweden) suggests that the ink placed in your skin does not remain there. The study shows that having a tattoo could predispose you to getting lymphoma (cancer that affects the white cells called lymphocytes, eClinical Medicine). The findings suggested one has a 21% higher risk of developing lymphoma than people without tattoos.

• Granulomas and Keloids

Sometimes, the body may react to the foreign substances introduced during tattooing by forming granulomas or keloids. Granulomas are tiny knots or nodules of inflamed tissue that can develop around the tattoo ink particles. Raised, thickened areas of scar tissue, known as keloids, can grow beyond the original tattoo site. Both conditions can cause discomfort and may require medical treatment to manage.

• Blood-borne Diseases

Improper hygiene and sterilization practices risk transmitting blood-borne diseases through tattooing. Contaminated needles and equipment can spread serious infections such as Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and HIV. It is crucial to choose a reputable tattoo studio that adheres to strict sanitary protocols to minimize this risk.

Tattoo Removal Complications

As tattoos are permanent, removing them can be a complex and painful process. Laser tattoo removal is the most common method, but it can cause complications such as scarring, changes in skin texture, and hyperpigmentation or hypopigmentation. Some tattoo inks may not respond well to laser treatment, making complete removal challenging.

Mental and Emotional Risks Regret and Stigma

While tattoos can be a source of pride and personal expression, some individuals may experience regret after getting inked. This regret can stem from various factors, such as changes in personal taste or circumstances, flawed designs, or the negative stigma that still exists in certain social or professional circles. Seeing some of these designs and their haphazard application, I wonder how anyone gets hired if a tattoo is visible and prominent. The permanence of tattoos means that regret can have long-lasting emotional and psychological effects.

Conclusion

While tattoos are a popular and often meaningful form of body art, it is essential to be aware of the potential risks and complications associated with them. Infections, allergic reactions, skin conditions, and long-term health issues are among the risks to consider before getting a tattoo. One should not overlook the emotional and psychological effects of tattoos. By researching tattoo studios, understanding proper aftercare, and considering long-term implications, individuals can make informed decisions and reduce the risks associated with tattoos.

Please remember to look at my new video podcast: www.healthfrontierspod.com

The podcast is for patients only.



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, phone: 973 754 4175



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Saddle River Valley Auxiliary

A Legacy of Support for Valley Hospital



For decades, the Saddle River Valley Auxiliary has been a cornerstone of philanthropy, tirelessly supporting Valley Hospital through fundraising and community engagement. Founded with a mission to enhance healthcare services and support medical initiatives, the Auxiliary has played an integral role in ensuring that Valley Hospital remains a top-tier institution for patient care.

Pooja Kumar a Saddle River resident was recently appointed as Chair for Valley Hospital Saddle River Auxiliary Branch. Pooja is involved in several non-profits, where she helps strategize community outreach initiatives, donation drives and fundraising efforts. Her leadership in these roles has resulted in increased awareness and resources for the causes she champions. Pooja has her Masters in Business Administration and works as a Senior Director with CareTen, a home care company providing care to elderly with compassion and empathy. Her passion

and commitment has led CareTen to win numerous awards including recently being awarded Inc5000 one of the fastest growing private company in America. With her deep passion for helping others and giving back to the community (both at work or on personal front), Pooja actively participates in various local projects. Her ability to connect with people from all walks of life, along with her tireless dedication, has earned her the admiration of both peers and the people she serves.

The Valley Hospital Auxiliary was a major catalyst in the founding of the hospital, raising funds and establishing community support years before the hospital opened. The VHA was founded in 1944. Since its inception, the Auxiliary has helped serve local communities by raising funds for specific healthcare programs and services. To date, the Auxiliary has donated more than \$18 million to Valley. The mission of The Valley Hospital Auxiliary is to serve as a community liaison for the hospital, assist the hospital through a variety of traditional and non-traditional volunteer services, and raise funds for vital

hospital programs. Today's Auxiliary, which consists of members from many local communities, remains an integral part of hospital life.

The Auxiliary's contributions extend far beyond financial assistance. Through their dedication, members have organized countless fundraising events, from elegant galas to community-driven initiatives, fostering a spirit of giving that unites residents and strengthens their commitment to high-quality healthcare.

One of their most notable recent efforts includes a highly successful fundraising campaign aimed at securing advanced medical equipment for the hospital's state-of-the-art facilities. Thanks to the Auxiliary's tireless work, Valley Hospital has been able to upgrade critical patient care services, ensuring that cutting-edge technology is available to those in need.

The Auxiliary's current pledge is to raise \$3 million to establish the Pediatric Section of the Emergency Department at The Valley Hospital, and \$100,000 for Valley Home Care's endowment for services, and raise funds for vital *Butterflies*, a pediatric in-home palliative



CONTINUED →



“I aim to inspire others to join in, contribute, raise awareness, and create lasting impact for a cause that truly matters.”

and hospice care program for seriously ill children. The Auxiliary may provide additional financial support to other Valley Hospital Auxiliary and Valley Health System initiatives. Our Saddle River Auxiliary Branch, including other branches in Bergen County, are committed to assisting Valley Hospital with these initiatives.

In addition to raising funds, the Saddle River Valley Auxiliary has been deeply involved in volunteer efforts, providing comfort and support to patients and families. Their presence in the hospital has been invaluable, offering not only financial contributions but also the human touch that makes a difference in healing and recovery.

Pooja shares her passion for the cause: “Through my role as the Chair for Saddle River Valley Auxiliary Branch, I aim to inspire others to join in, contribute, raise awareness, and create lasting impact for a cause that truly matters.”

The Auxiliary’s work continues to inspire new generations to contribute, carrying forward a tradition of generosity and service. As they look ahead, their commitment remains steadfast—to support Valley Hospital in its mission to deliver exceptional healthcare to the community.

Through their unwavering dedication, the Saddle River Valley Auxiliary proves that philanthropy is

not just about giving but about creating lasting change, ensuring that Valley Hospital continues to provide the highest level of care for years to come.

We welcome you to join us at our upcoming Saddle River Branch Auxiliary events:

- Annual Spring Luncheon will be held on Wednesday, June 4, 2025, at The Tuxedo Club in Tuxedo, NY.
- 20th Annual Holiday Luncheon and Boutique will be held on Wednesday, December 3, 2025, at Seasons Banquet in Washington Township, NJ.

For more details, please go to: valleyhealth.com/services/auxiliary

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SHAPING TOMORROW

Saddle River Day Launches Middle School National STEM Honors Society Chapter



The Merriam-Webster definition of the word “middle” is, variously, “being in the midst of something,” “something intermediate,” or “the center of a formation”—and aren’t those all perfect descriptions of what being in Middle School is like? It’s the time when, as Anastasia Kelly, Middle School Head, says, “children transform from little kids into young adults.” It’s when they are figuring out their passions, interests, and strengths. It’s when they start making decisions about their path in the future, and it’s a time when they can try something new.

At Saddle River Day School, we help our Middle School students on their journey of discovery by giving them as many varied and diverse experiences as possible, and we also offer them the opportunity to practice the skills they will need to be successful in the Upper School, college, and beyond. Our PBL (Project Based Learning modules) gives students the chance to collaborate and work in teams, and to practice design thinking and problem solving, aggregating ideas from various disciplines into their final projects. The Odyssey of the Mind club gives students the opportunity to think deeply about a topic that is of interest to them, and then asks them to articulate and present their thinking clearly and concisely. N block enrichment classes encourage students to make intentional choices that will help inform their elective decisions in Upper School.



This commitment to preparing our students for success down the road is also why, this year, we established a chapter of the National STEM Honors Society. STEM education is embedded in the curriculum at SRDS from our Early Childhood Program on. But Middle School is when it’s important to increase our students’ exposure not just to Science, Technology, Engineering and Math, but to the skills required to be successful in these disciplines; skills like problem solving, critical inquiry, communication, and data analysis.

In order to be considered for induction into the National STEM Honors Society, students must maintain at least a 3.0 GPA in relevant coursework, they must be “good citizens” with no disciplinary issues, and they must complete 80 hours of STEM related activities outside of the classroom. They are also required to participate in 240 classroom hours in STEM related subjects but, as we know, the middle school curriculum has that well covered.

Thirty two middle schoolers are currently pursuing membership in the NSHS. Within the Middle School, N block and enrichment classes including a robotics team, 3D printing, mini golf design, and in one case, a student designed hack-a-thon, can be applied towards their enrichment hours. Mini Science Challenges, hosted during lunch and after school by Middle



School faculty members, also count. Additionally, students who choose a STEM topic for Odyssey of the Mind can apply those hours, as can students in Advanced Science, who are participating in the Upper School Science Olympiad preparation.

The Middle School faculty are also helping students achieve their goals by arranging STEM field trips. Last month, students visited Liberty Science Center, attending a group presentation in the planetarium, and then choosing to participate in either a physics workshop that studied car crashes, or a criminology workshop that taught them about forensic science. Next month, students will visit the Columbia Materials Engineering Lab for a real-world look at research they could be assisting with during their college years.

Within the Middle School, N block and enrichment classes including a robotics team, 3D printing, mini golf design, and in one case, a student designed hack-a-thon, can be applied towards their enrichment hours.

Critically, candidates for induction in the NSHS will need to proactively seek out enrichment opportunities in their time away from school. Students can attend additional classes or camps, tutor other students, watch a documentary, or go to a science museum. Many of the provisional candidates have done just that and the Middle School team is preparing to hold an induction ceremony this spring for the students who have achieved all their milestones and are eligible for NSHS membership.

Opening this chapter of the National STEM Honors Society is just one more way in which Saddle River Day School is preparing our students to be successful in their fast-moving future. Even if that future is as close as the Upper School, where the valuable skills they’ve perfected while completing requirements for NSHS will serve them well if they choose to pursue a Gateway Diploma. At SRDS, this time in the middle, of transition and formation, of discernment and hard work, helps our students maximize the benefits of everything that comes next.

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A lot of
thought and
care went
into designing
the office to
create a fun,
welcoming
space for kids,
from toddlers
to teens.”
”



find time to brush, I completely understand!” she shares. Her own experiences raising children in Bergen County shape her empathetic approach, allowing her to provide practical advice that resonates with parents.

Her journey to establishing Bergen County Pediatric Dentistry has been one of dedication and passion. After earning her degree from Rutgers School of Dental Medicine and completing a pediatric residency at Tufts University, she gained experience in Boston, Westchester, and Manhattan before opening her own practice in 2024. “A lot of thought and care went into designing the office to create a fun, welcoming space for kids, from toddlers to teens,” she says. The result is a state-of-the-art practice that blends top-tier dental care with a warm, child-friendly atmosphere.

Bringing Dentistry to Life Through Storytelling

Beyond the office, Dr. Mermelstein extends her mission of making dentistry enjoyable through her children’s book series, *The Magical Dr. Dee*. “Each book focuses on a different dental procedure,” she explains. “For example, my most recent book, *Pinky Pie’s Teeny Cavity*, follows a bunny getting a cavity filled at the pediatric dentist.” By turning dental visits into engaging stories, she hopes to inspire excitement and reduce fear in young patients.

Through her innovative approach, compassionate care, and commitment to education, Dr. Mermelstein is changing the way children experience the dentist—one magical smile at a time.

Bergen County Pediatric Dentistry

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A GENTLE TOUCH

Bergen County Pediatric Dentistry’s Approach to Happy, Healthy Smiles

When it comes to children’s dentistry, creating a comfortable and positive experience is just as important as the treatment itself. At Bergen County Pediatric Dentistry, Dr. Danya Mermelstein has built a practice centered around making every child feel at ease while fostering lifelong healthy dental habits.

A Unique and Magical Approach

What sets Dr. Mermelstein’s practice apart is her ability to truly connect with children. “We recognize that every child is unique, so we tailor our approach based on factors like age, temperament, and individual needs,” she explains. A signature part of her method is using fun and engaging techniques to make dental visits less intimidating. “For younger or more anxious children, I dress up as the Tooth Fairy. It’s comforting for them to meet a fun ‘character’ they’ve heard about, adding a touch of magic to their visit.”

Another tool she uses is the “tell, show, do” method, which helps build trust between dentist and patient. “For example, I refer to the suction straw as a ‘bubble catcher.’ I show them how it works first, then we ‘catch bubbles’ in a cup together, using

water to demonstrate its function.” This hands-on approach ensures children feel in control and understand what to expect.

The Importance of Early Pediatric Dental Visits

Dr. Mermelstein strongly advocates for early dental visits, emphasizing their benefits in preventing issues before they arise. “Starting good oral hygiene habits early is key to fostering a positive relationship with oral health that will benefit your child for years to come,” she notes. She highlights three key advantages:

- **Preventive Care** – Early visits help identify potential problems before they become serious.
- **Education** – Parents receive guidance on proper oral hygiene practices, including brushing, flossing, and dietary habits.
- **Comfort** – Familiarity with the dentist’s office at a young age reduces anxiety in later years.

A Personal Perspective on Pediatric Dentistry

Dr. Mermelstein’s role as both a dentist and a mother gives her a unique understanding of the challenges parents face. “When a mom tells me the morning is chaotic and it’s hard to





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WANDELL SCHOOL NEWS



Dear Saddle River School District Parents/Guardians and Community Members,

After an extensive Superintendent search that included an exceptional pool of applicants, the Saddle River Board of Education has appointed Dr. Jennifer Macones as the new Superintendent/Principal in Saddle River.

With over two decades of experience in education, Dr. Macones is a passionate and innovative leader dedicated to fostering a thriving school culture where students, educators, and staff feel valued, supported, and inspired. A strong advocate for student success, Dr. Macones believes in creating an engaging and dynamic learning environment where curiosity is nurtured, and students develop and foster a lifelong love of learning. Dr. Macones shared that “when students and teachers are excited and motivated, school becomes an incredible experience. My goal is to create an environment where learning

is engaging, inspiring, and filled with opportunities to grow. By fostering a culture of enthusiasm and curiosity, we build a strong foundation that extends far beyond the classroom and into a lifetime of success.”

Dr. Macones earned her Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Centenary University, where she conducted a comprehensive study on the relationship between principal leadership and teacher morale in K-12 schools. Her research, *A Study of the Relationship Between Principal Leadership and Teacher Morale in a K-12 School Setting (2019)*, examined best practices in leadership that promotes positive school culture and staff engagement. She also holds a Master’s degree in Educational Leadership from Centenary University and a Bachelor’s degree from William Paterson University. Prior to joining Saddle River, Dr. Macones served as Principal of Birchwood Elementary School and District 504 Coordinator for Rockaway Township Public



Beyond her work in schools, Dr. Macones is an author and speaker. She has written *Make Your School Awesome: Building School Climate and Morale* and *Food Fight: An Educator’s Survival Guide to Lunch and Recess Duty*.

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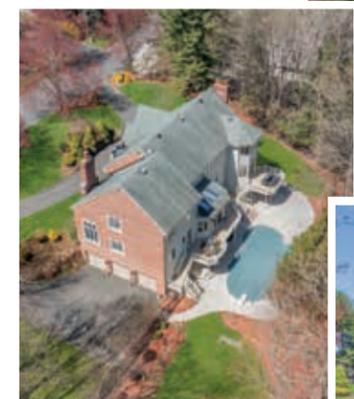
Book Fair

Schools. A dedicated educational leader, she has 10 years of experience as an administrator, serving both the Great Meadows and Rockaway Township school districts. Throughout her career, she has led numerous initiatives, including the development of STEAM and Makerspace programs, early education expansion, and data-driven intervention models that have significantly improved student outcomes.

Beyond her work in schools, Dr. Macones is an author and speaker. She has written *Make Your School Awesome: Building School Climate and Morale* and *Food Fight: An Educator's Survival Guide to Lunch and Recess Duty*. Through her books and presentations, she shares practical strategies for educators to build strong school communities, enhance classroom engagement, and boost teacher morale. The Saddle River Board of Education enthusiastically embraces Dr. Macones' student-first leadership, creating an enriching and inspiring learning environment for our community.

We are confident that Dr. Macones embodies the characteristics of a school leader that were defined within our community candidate profile. We thank the community for their feedback throughout this process and enthusiastically look forward to welcoming Dr. Macones to our community of learners.

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Ready, Set, Summer!

MEMORIAL DAY IS ALMOST HERE, and the warm weather is welcome! Long sunny days, warm nights peppered with cool outdoor firepit evenings, this is why we live in the northeast. Is the shore calling your name yet?

Summer food has its own unique smell. The smell of the gas, propane, or charcoal lets the neighborhood know that you are about to celebrate the start of summer with some flame grilled food. Make sure your outdoor cooker is in top shape before you put it into service this season:

- 1 /** Propane users: check your tanks, make sure to refill any empty tanks.
- 2 /** Grills: Check the burners for rust holes, clean the grease catch, lay down new foil.
- 3 /** Grab a fresh wire brush, get the grill nice and hot and brush off any remnants of last fall!
- 4 /** Any Traeger users out there? Make sure to vacuum the fire box, and give the outside a spit shine.

Who's on first? An ol'fashioned dog? What's on second? Homemade burgers from a custom blend of beef cuts? I don't know is on third. How about a lamb burger, make sure to grill that on the side of the grill that has no flame.



Once you've decided what is going on the grill, what's going on that? Are you for or against toppings? Cheese, kraut, sauces, there are so many choices...and there's always naked for the purists. This year we have been using frozen pesto cubes from last year, spring lettuce and home-made hot sauce to top our grilled burgers. Once the garden gets growing, we are hoping for some homemade pickles and kitchen counter fermented sauerkraut (as long as Marcy can endure the 1st week's smell.)

We will definitely be hanging out by the grill a lot this year and I am excited to show Isabella some of my chef tricks/tips. Nothing like learning how to cook and tasting food right off the grill. I know that's how she came to love grilled asparagus!

National Hamburger Month

May is hamburger month, why not celebrate? Make your own burger blend! Grab a package each of chuck, brisket, and sirloin. Bring them to the butcher window and ask them to grind them together for you. Now you can have a custom blend in a matter of no time!

Here's a perfect recipe to fire up the grill this May if you are bored of burgers

CONTINUED →



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.

GRILLED HONEY-LIME CHICKEN SKEWERS

INGREDIENTS:

- 1.5 pounds boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 2 tablespoons lime juice (freshly squeezed)
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Wooden skewers (soaked in water for 30 minutes before grilling)

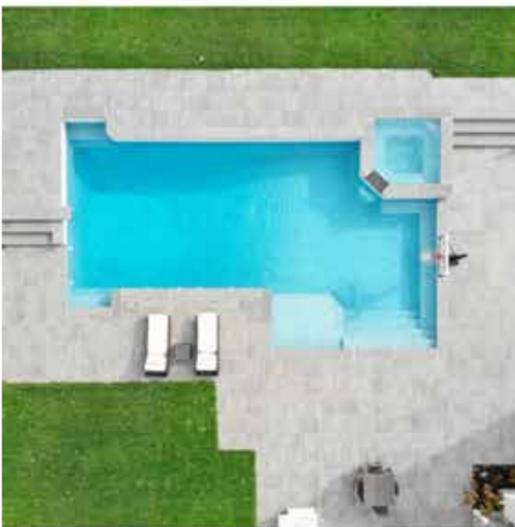
INSTRUCTIONS:

1/ In a bowl, whisk together olive oil, honey, lime juice, garlic, chili powder, cumin, salt, and pepper to make the marinade. Add chicken cubes to the marinade and toss to coat. Cover and let marinate in the fridge for at least 30 minutes (or up to 2 hours for more flavor).

2/ Preheat your grill to medium-high heat. Thread chicken cubes onto soaked skewers.

3/ Grill the skewers for about 10-12 minutes, turning occasionally, until chicken is cooked through and has a nice char.

4/ Serve with a squeeze of lime and garnish with fresh cilantro, if desired.



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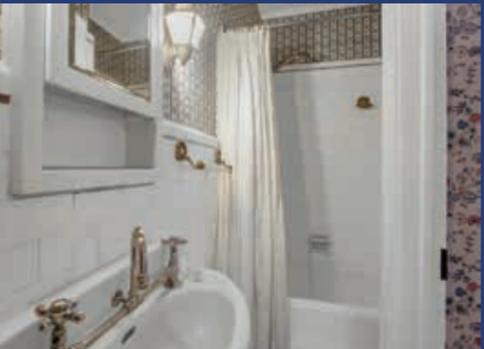
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