NOVEMBER 2026

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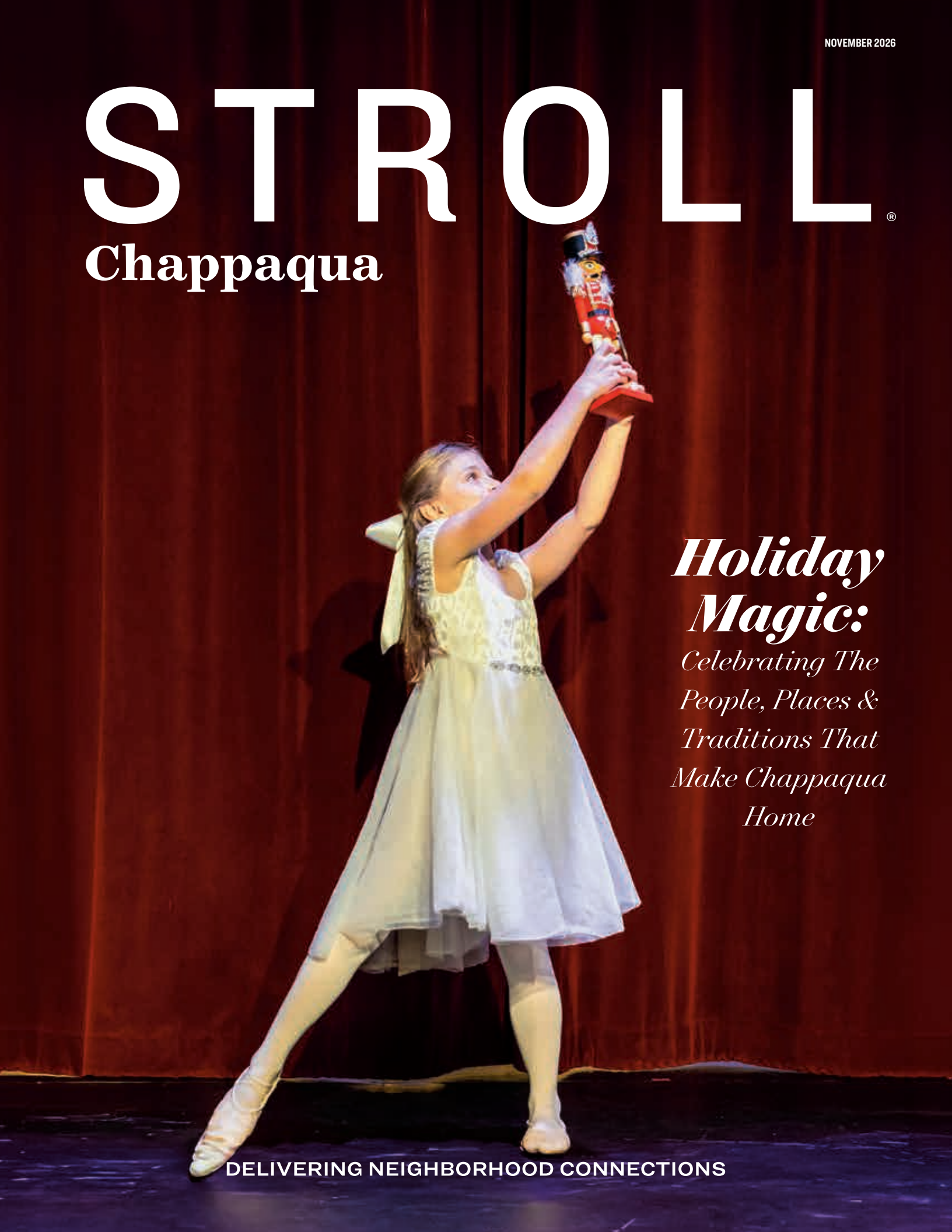

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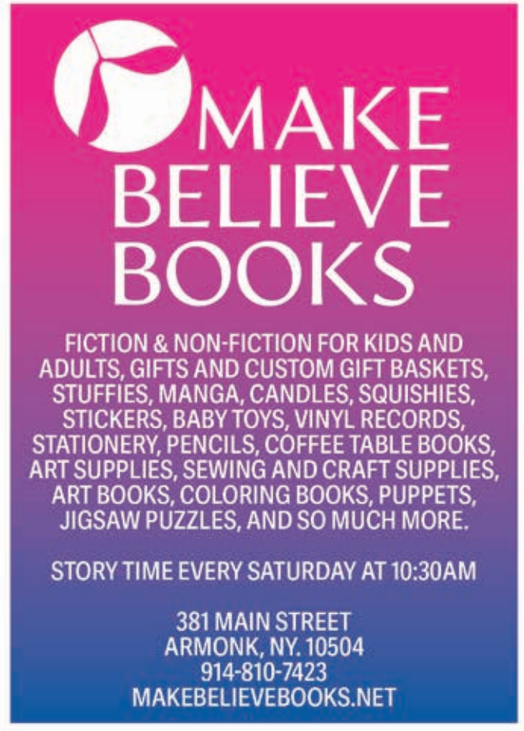






# The Art of Giving

**AS THE HOLIDAYS APPROACH,** I've been thinking about what makes a gift special.

For me, gift-giving has become less about what's inside the box and more about the thought behind it—a small gesture that brightens someone's day, something that makes life a bit easier, or that perfect find that simply says, "I know you, and I get you."

In a world of one-click shopping and doorstep deliveries, personal touches feel more meaningful than ever to me.

That's the inspiration behind **The Art of Giving**, our special holiday feature this month. We're celebrating the many ways our community gives — from young local dancers bringing holiday magic to the stage to thoughtful finds from our downtown Chappaqua merchants and unique gifts and experiences from our STROLL sponsors.

We're also shining a light on local nonprofits and causes close to our neighbors' hearts, reminding us that generosity comes in many forms, and sometimes the best gifts are not wrapped in a box. Sometimes they're wrapped in a hug.

As you turn these pages, I hope you'll be inspired to discover something new, shop a little closer to home, support a cause you care about, or simply find a special way to make someone smile.

Here's to giving a little more thought, a little more time, and a little more of ourselves this holiday season.

Wishing you a joyful and bountiful season!

*Stacy*

Stacy Ciaravella
Publisher, Stroll Chappaqua
publisher@strollchappaqua.com



Thankful for my boys...my turkeys!

## THE STROLL HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

Thoughtful Gifts. Memorable Experiences.
A Little Something for Everyone.

This holiday season, think beyond the wrapping paper. Support the local businesses that support our community and discover how many wonderful gifts are waiting right in our own backyard.

### 1. The Gift of Feeling Fabulous

A little indulgence is always in style! Think luxurious facials, beauty treatments, gorgeous jewelry, and stylish eyewear — perfect for someone who deserves a little extra sparkle.

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### 2. The Gift of Feeling Your Best

Give the gift of feeling good, inside and out. From acupuncture and Pilates to personalized wellness and restorative therapies, a little self-care can go a long way.

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Give the gift of interior design for the holidays. Leah Weinberg Design is offering a holiday special: a one-hour design consultation for $200.

### 3. The Gift of Loving Where You Live

Home is where the holidays happen! Think beautiful flowers, inspired interiors, thoughtful design, and improvements that make everyday living more comfortable.

**Our Stroll Sponsors:** Leah Weinberg Design • Four Seasons Flower Shop • Live Well Modifications

### 4. The Gift of Life's Little Pleasures

Sometimes the simplest gifts bring the biggest smiles. A wonderful new book, a favorite coffee, or a thoughtful surprise - like the gift of free travel - can make an ordinary day feel special.

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Make Believe Books: Mention this guide and get 10 % off your entire purchase! Free wrapping for all your holiday books and gifts for adults and children. Gift baskets available!

### 5. The Gift of a Happy, Healthy Pup

Our four-legged family members deserve some holiday love, too! From preventive care to keeping those tails wagging, their health and happiness is a gift to the whole family.

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### 6. The Gift of Car Love

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### 7. The Gift of a Home Refresh

Who says practical can't be wonderful? A freshly cleaned exterior, a home improvement project finally checked off the list, or a long-overdue repair can be a gift that keeps on giving.

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### 8. The Gift of Peace of Mind

Not all gifts come wrapped with a bow. Sometimes the most thoughtful gesture is helping someone get organized, plan for the future, protect what matters, or simply feel a little more secure.

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### 9. The Gift of a Fresh Start

New beginnings deserve a little help! Whether it's a move, a new venture, or a productive place to work, these services help make the next chapter a little easier.



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**To purchase gift cards or explore these thoughtful gift ideas, simply reach out to our sponsors directly! You'll find their contact information in our Sponsor Index.**

A Little Something in Bloom!
Four Seasons Flower Shop welcomes first-time Chappaqua customers with 10% OFF their first purchase of beautiful flowers and gifts. Treat someone special — or yourself — to something lovely!

**"The best gifts aren't always things. Sometimes they're experiences, a helping hand, or simply the gift of feeling cared for."**

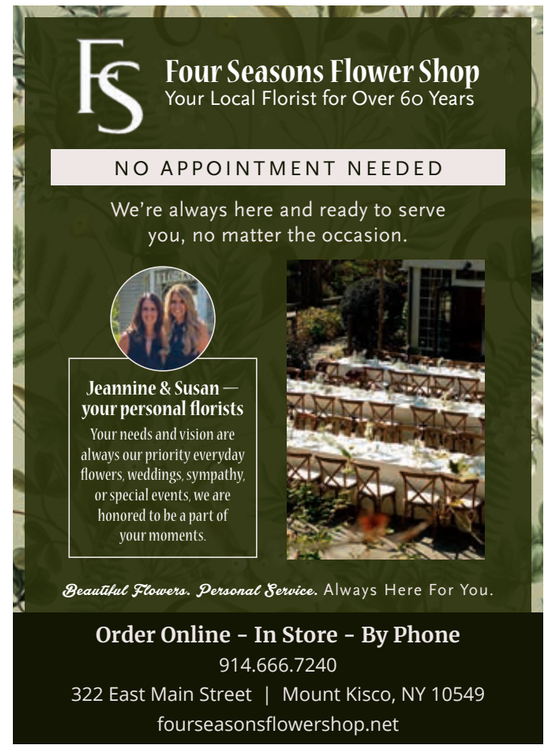
## HAVE A STORY TO TELL ABOUT LIFE IN CHAPPAQUA?

We'd love to hear it.

Stroll Chappaqua is always looking for local writers, creatives, and community members to share thoughtful, uplifting stories that celebrate our neighbors, neighborhoods, and the moments that connect us. From personal essays and community spotlights to seasonal ideas and unique perspectives, we welcome pitches that reflect the heart of Chappaqua.

If you have a story idea, article pitch, or would like to be considered as a contributing writer, please submit a brief description of your idea along with any relevant writing samples. Help us tell the stories that make Chappaqua feel like home.

Scan for more information.




Robin's dog Ruby enjoying her favorite meal-er, holiday!

# November

Thanksgiving brings familiar traditions, good food and, in some homes, a hopeful four-legged guest "keeping an eye" on the table. That spirit of gathering is part of what makes this time of year—and Chappaqua—so special.

In this issue, we're sharing stories about the people, places and traditions that bring our community together. I'm glad to share them with you as Content Editor of *Stroll Chappaqua*. Wishing you a warm and happy holiday season.



*Robin Goetz*

Get in touch! Email me with news and ideas: robin@rg-pr.com

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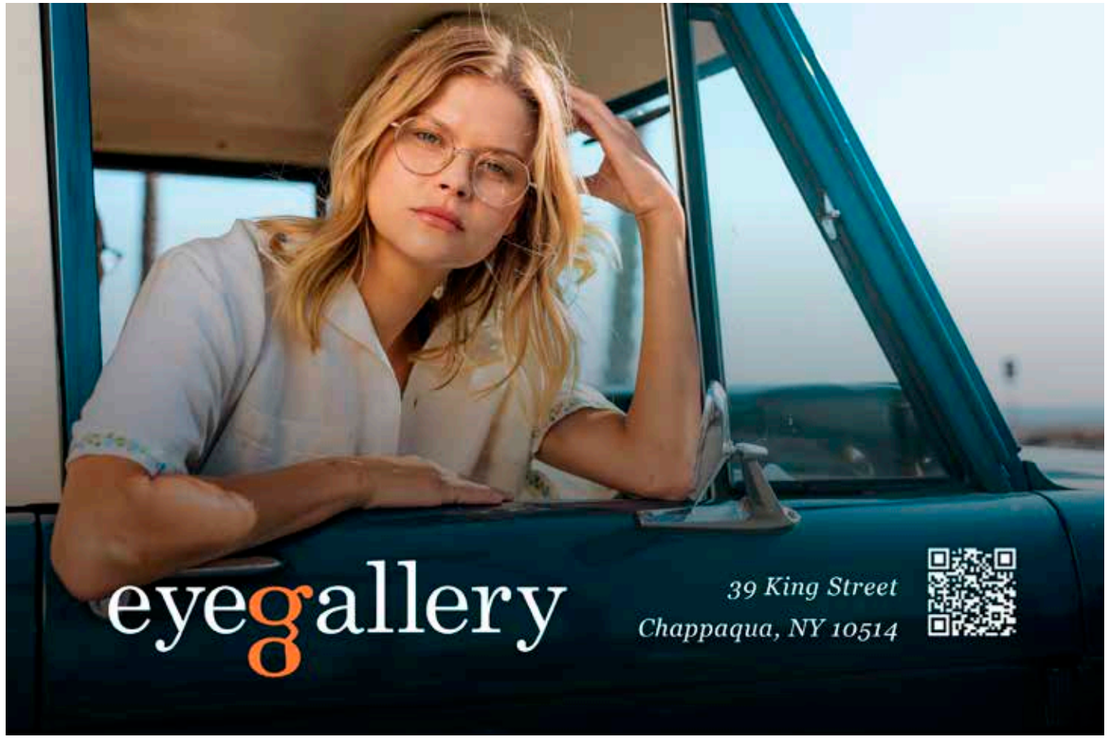


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Dear Neighbors,

I'm Donna De La Torre, a Private Client Insurance Advisor with Brown & Brown Insurance in Rye Brook, New York, and I am excited to start getting to know the Chappaqua community.

I work closely with individuals and families, and for me, its always about the relationship first.

Thank you,

*Donna*



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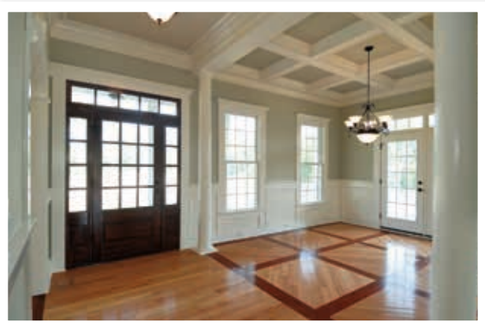

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# Holiday Gift Guide

*Find the perfect gifts close to home! Our Holiday Gift Guide highlights great finds from Chappaqua's local shops and businesses, making it easy to check off your list while supporting the community.*






**1 /** Three Stories Elongated Love Explosion Diamond Earrings A dazzling burst of sparkle, these 14-karat yellow gold earrings feature 0.22 total carats of diamonds in an elongated, firework-inspired design. $3,980 at House of 29

**2 /** Blind Date with a Book!
Don't judge a book by its cover! Choose your next read based solely on the clues on the outside for a fun literary surprise. $15 at Scattered Books

**3 /** Musée Bath & Spa Gift Sets Give the gift of relaxation with a bath balm set featuring a satin pillowcase, eye mask and two bath balms, or a spa kit tucked inside a tote. $52 bath balm set; $32 spa kit at hip-kid

**4 /** SPCA Westchester Holiday Ornaments Beautiful holiday keepsakes with an even more beautiful purpose: 100% of the proceeds are donated to SPCA Westchester. $14.99 - $34.99 at Desires by Mikolay







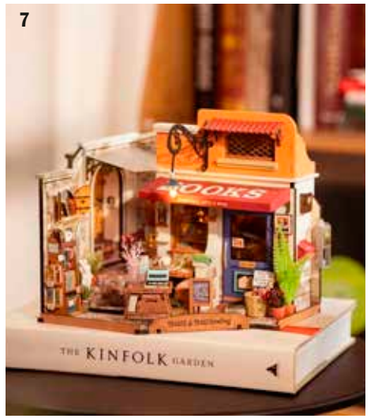


**5 /** Lazuli Scented Candle A statement candle as beautiful as its fragrance, presented in striking marbled glass with rich blue effects inspired by lazuli stones. $190 at ROCKS

**6 /** Minnie Rose Shaker Snap Cardigan A cozy ribbed shaker-stitch cardigan with snap closures and a ribbed neckline and cuffs, available in an array of colors. $198 at ROYAL

**7 /** Miniature House Kits A charming DIY gift for creative hands, these intricate miniature house kits are as much fun to build as they are to display. $50–$60 at The King's Scribe






## GIVE BACK LOCAL: THE CAUSES OUR TOWN CARES ABOUT

The spirit of giving goes beyond what's under the tree. Meet the local nonprofits making a difference in our community—and discover meaningful ways to support their work this holiday season.

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- ArtsWestchester
- artsw.org
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Westchester & Putnam
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- Furniture Sharehouse
- furnituresharehouse.org
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- LLS.org
- Neighbors Link
- neighborslink.org
- New Castle Historical Society
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- ReSET Westchester
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- The Pantry
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- Westchester Youth Alliance
- westchesteryouthalliance.org



# The Art of the Holiday Card

BY ALISSA SAMPOGNA, CHAPPAQUA RESIDENT





I also think the little details matter. The texture of the paper, the color of the envelope, the typography and the finishing touches can make even a simple card feel special. And because December always seems to arrive faster than we expect, I encourage people to start thinking about their cards early enough to actually enjoy the process.

One of my favorite things about the holiday season is seeing refrigerators, mantels and kitchen cabinets turn into little galleries of the people in our lives. Each card represents a family, a friendship, or a connection, and together they tell a story of the people who matter to us.

As a graphic designer and illustrator, I've spent years working with paper in all its forms, from invitations and personal stationery to the little details that make life's celebrations memorable. What I love most is finding ways to make something feel uniquely personal.

And I think that's the real magic of holiday cards. In a world where almost everything disappears with the swipe of a screen, a beautiful piece of paper arriving in the mail still has the power to make someone stop, smile—and maybe even save it for years to come.

**IN AN AGE OF TEXTS,** emails and social media, I still think there's something special about opening the mailbox in December and finding an envelope addressed just to you. I've always loved paper and stationery, and the idea of sending something tangible feels more meaningful than ever.

A holiday card isn't just another photo or message that you scroll past. Someone took the time to choose it, personalize it, address it and send it to you. It's a small gesture, but one that feels especially thoughtful in our increasingly digital world.

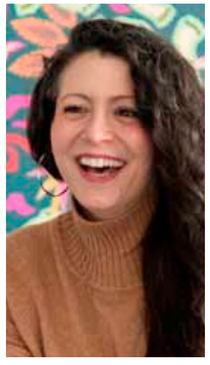
It's also a tradition with surprisingly deep roots. The first commercial Christmas card dates back to 1843, when Englishman Sir Henry Cole commissioned artist John Callcott Horsley to create a card he could send to friends and acquaintances. By the late 1800s, advances in printing and the postal service had turned holiday cards into a widespread tradition.

Nearly two centuries later, I love that we're still carrying on that tradition, while finding new ways to make it our own. For me, the most memorable holiday cards are the ones that really capture the personality of the family sending them. It might be the photograph, the colors, a beautiful paper, an unexpected detail, or even something funny. The best cards feel personal rather than perfect.

Some of my favorites break the rules a little. Maybe it's an unexpected illustration, a family joke incorporated into the design, or a creative way of sharing a favorite memory from the year. There's no single right way to create a beautiful holiday card. Some families love something elegant and traditional, while others prefer colorful, whimsical, or completely unexpected.





**MEET ALISSA**

Alissa Sampogna turned her love of illustration, graphic design and paper into a full-time stationery studio in 2008, later opening The King's Scribe in Chappaqua. Today, the shop serves as both her design studio and a carefully curated destination for fine stationery, greeting cards, custom invitations and unique gifts. A graphic designer and illustrator, Alissa brings an artistic, highly personal approach to the tradition of written correspondence.



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# Gluten Free Latkes



BY ADALAY SHALOV, CHAPPAQUA RESIDENT



Addy, who loves finding and making gluten free recipes and researching (and trying) gluten free restaurants, is a currently a student at the University of Vermont.

**Gluten-Free Latkes** (from glutenfreebaking.com)
**Serves 6**

## INGREDIENTS

- 2½ pounds russet potatoes, peeled (about 5 medium)
- 1 small onion, peeled
- 3 large eggs
- ⅓ cup white rice flour or sweet rice flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- About ⅓ cup safflower oil, for frying
- Sour cream and applesauce, for serving (optional)

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. If you'd like to keep the latkes warm while you cook, preheat the oven to 225°F. Line a baking sheet with paper towels or set a cooling rack over the sheet.
2. Grate the potatoes and onion using a food processor or box grater.
3. Divide the mixture in half. Wrap each half in a clean kitchen towel and wring out as much liquid as possible.
4. In a large bowl, combine the potatoes and onion with the eggs, rice flour, salt, and pepper.
5. Heat about ⅛ inch of oil in a nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering but not smoking.
6. Working in batches, drop a scant ¼ cup of the mixture into the hot oil for each latke. Flatten slightly with a fork or spatula. Avoid crowding the pan so the oil stays hot.
7. Fry for 2–3 minutes per side, until golden brown. Transfer to the prepared baking sheet. Serve right away, or keep warm in the oven while you cook the remaining latkes.
8. Serve with sour cream and applesauce, if desired.












# A WELL-COLLECTED HOLIDAY TABLE

BY BENTLEY WATERS, CHAPPAQUA RESIDENT







There's something about the holidays that makes setting the table feel like part of the celebration itself. I love moving away from perfectly matched place settings and overly formal décor in favor of something more personal and collected—layered with color, pattern, treasured pieces, and a few unexpected finds.

I approach designing a tablescape the same way I design a room—layering lots of pattern and color, keeping things fun and fresh, and always incorporating something vintage. My style is vibrant and chic, with bright colors and playful patterns that create spaces that feel glamorous, happy, and welcoming.

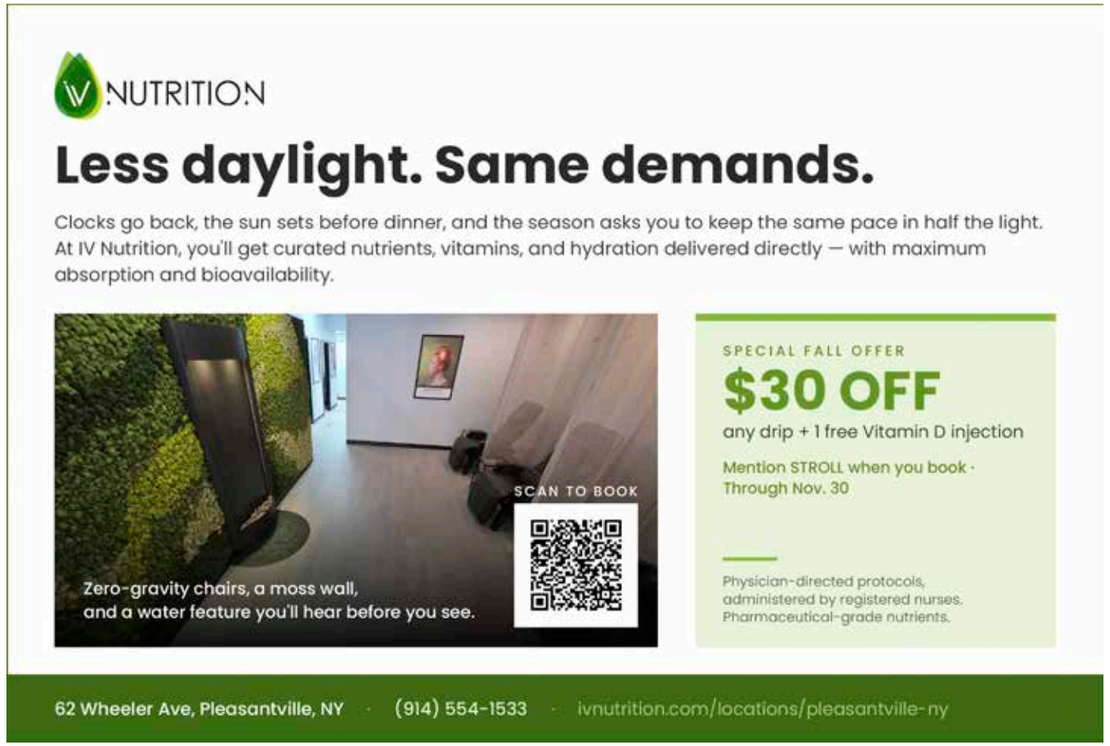
I collect table linens and glassware and am constantly on the hunt for something special to add to the mix. For me, the best tables feel collected, layered, and a little unexpected. And when our new Bentley Jane store opens in Darien, you'll find plenty of those special pieces—beautiful table linens, glassware, tabletop accessories, and unique finds to help you create your own collected tablescape.

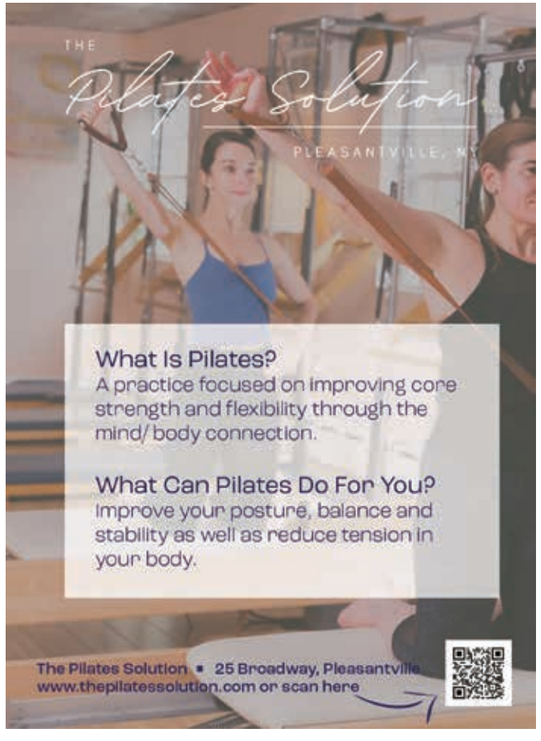
I've always believed that making a house feel like a home goes beyond traditional decorating. Whether it's accessorizing a cozy space, setting an inviting table, or crafting the perfect cocktail, I love all the little details that make a home feel warm, welcoming, and ready for a celebration.

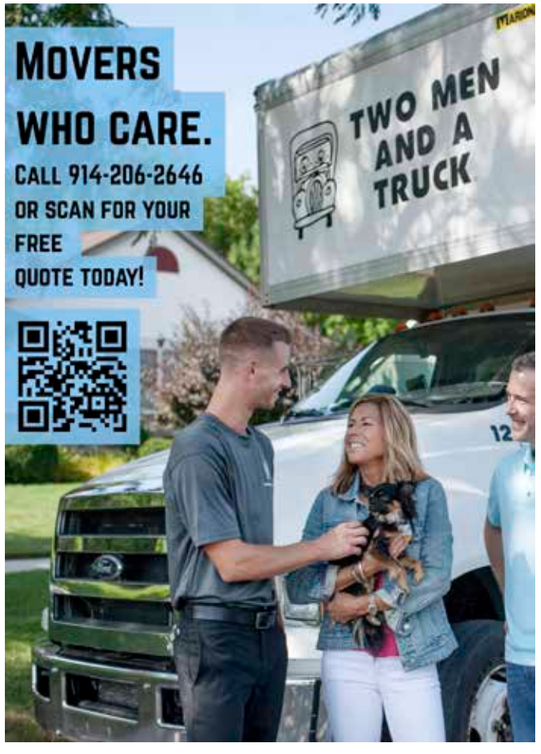


**"As a busy mom and interior designer, I understand the need for a beautiful yet durable home, a place to be loved and lived in."**

—BENTLEY.



Somi Calica takes her final bow as Clara in last year's production.

# A Chappaqua Holiday Tradition Takes Center Stage

BY CHRISTINE GREY, ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS
PHOTOS BY: CHRISSY GINGUE / PAPER CRANE PHOTOGRAPHY

For the past five years, a beloved holiday tradition has been taking shape right here in Chappaqua. This December, the New Castle Parks and Recreation Department's dance program will present its 5th Annual Children's Nutcracker at the Chappaqua Performing Arts Center.

The performance is the culmination of the program's fall dance session and brings together young dancers from across the Chappaqua community. The program has grown to approximately 100 students, with nearly all coming from Chappaqua Central School District schools and area preschools.

That strong community connection is at the heart of the program. Children from all three elementary schools and both middle schools have the opportunity to meet and form friendships outside of their regular school day, while learning and performing together in a fun, noncompetitive environment. Many students are even bused directly from school to their dance classes, making participation easier for local families.

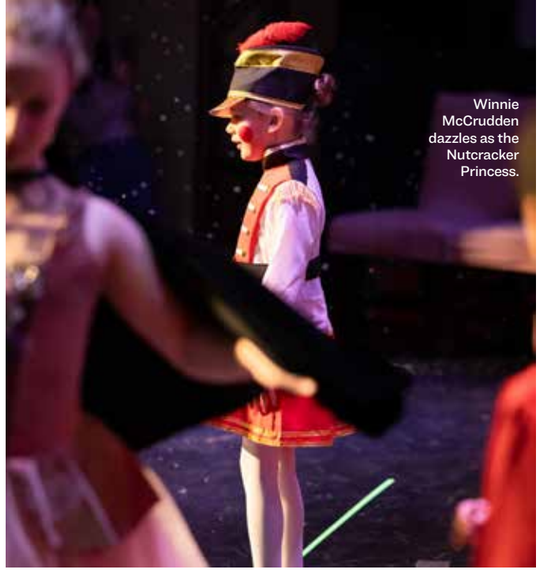
Classes are offered once a week and follow the CCSD calendar. They are held at both the Community Center in Chappaqua and the Chappaqua Performing Arts Center. Families can choose between two sessions: a fall session running from September through December and a longer spring session from January through June. Students can participate in either or both, allowing children to experience dance without requiring a full-year commitment. In addition to the annual Nutcracker performance in December, the program holds a spring recital each June.

The program is led by New Castle Assistant Superintendent of Recreation and Parks Christine Grey along with Kelly Tunstall, Katerina Leslie and Gina Bergamini, all of whom share a belief in the benefits that dance and performance can offer children. Through dance, students have the opportunity to develop strength and coordination while also building expression and confidence—skills that can extend far beyond the dance studio.

Just as importantly, the program gives children a place to experience the joy of dancing and performing without the pressures of competition. Over the course of the sessions, students learn, practice and ultimately have the opportunity to take the stage together.

The Stars in Motion Dance program is my most favorite program to oversee," remarked Christine. "To have watched the participation double in size since coming back from COVID is amazing. I have had the pleasure of watching multiple families participate in the program year-after-year with each of their children. But the truly amazing part of the whole program, is the commitment that the instructors make towards the children and the program. Watching the Instructors teach the basic footwork to conceptualizing a dance routine and then choosing a beautiful costume that ties it all together which then brings out 400 people to watch a performance makes me so proud and full of joy. I am so fortunate to work with a fantastic team!"

With approximately 100 young dancers now participating, the program has become much more than a weekly dance class. And as the Children's Nutcracker prepares to return to the Chappaqua Performing Arts Center for its fifth year, it has also become a special community tradition for many local families.



Winnie McCrudden dazzles as the Nutcracker Princess.



A life size doll, Serena Muskat, comes to life and dances for the guests.



Clara receives a unique gift and the adventure begins.

## "The Stars in Motion Dance program is my most favorite program to oversee."

—CHRISTINE GREY



Olivia Bodden and the party guests dance with their new toys.



# A Distinctive Cabin Ridge Home Brings the Outdoors In Chappaqua

Tucked into a private, wooded setting on just over an acre, 7 Cabin Ridge Road offers a particularly Chappaqua interpretation of mid-century modern design—one where architecture, natural light and the surrounding landscape are very much part of the same story.

Built in 1972, the cantilevered cedar contemporary was designed to take advantage of its setting. Throughout the three-bedroom home, oversized windows, skylights, soaring wood ceilings and multiple outdoor access points create a constant connection between indoors and out.

That relationship is perhaps most dramatic in the main living space. Four skylights rise above a vaulted wood ceiling more than 14 feet high, while walls of glass look out toward the property. A step-down conversation pit centered around the fireplace gives the room a quintessentially mid-century focal point, and sliding glass doors open directly onto a large deck. Overhead, a loft den overlooks the gathering space below.

The home's multilevel layout makes the most of those views. The formal dining room overlooks both the entry foyer and living room and includes a Juliet balcony, built-in dry bar, wine rack and china cabinetry. Nearby, the eat-in kitchen pairs maple cabinetry and natural quartzite counters with Bosch appliances and a U-Line beverage center. A French door leads to the upper deck, while the adjoining casual dining area is wrapped in picture windows and sliding glass doors.

Upstairs, wood ceilings and floors continue through the home's three bedrooms. Oversized windows bring both morning and evening light into the primary suite, while skylights brighten its bath as well as the additional hall bath. A private office located off the home's 16-foot-high entry foyer provides a separate workspace, and the finished lower level adds flexible living space currently used as a gym, along with a full bath and access to the two-car garage.

But much of what distinguishes the property lies beyond its walls.The landscaped grounds unfold in lawns, mature trees and layered plantings, with a bluestone terrace overlooking a pond complete with steppingstones and an aerating fountain. Copper beech and Japanese maple trees anchor a landscape filled with rhododendron, azalea, hydrangea, viburnum and peony, while daffodils emerge each spring.





Decks and terraces extend the living spaces outside, making the landscape feel less like a backdrop and more like another room of the house. Despite the secluded atmosphere, the property remains minutes from Chappaqua's shops and transportation, as well as the North County Trailway, Metro-North and the Taconic State Parkway.

More than 50 years after it was built, the home's distinctly mid-century features—the conversation pit, cantilevered architecture, dramatic ceiling heights, warm wood and expanses of glass—feel remarkably current. Rather than separating the house from its surroundings, the design continually directs attention outward.

At 7 Cabin Ridge Road, light does much of the decorating, and nature does the rest.









# MEET SCARLETT!

BY KRISTI GULLEN, CHAPPAQUA RESIDENT

## ALL ABOUT SCARLETT

**Breed?** 14 breeds! Mostly Australian Cattle Dog (35%), with a little wolf and Xoloitzcuintli.

**Age?** About 8.
**Nicknames?** Scarlotta, Little Bear, Pesty Poodle and "Scaramouche" (sung like Queen).

**Three words?** Sweet, silly, chill.

**Favorite spot?** Gedney Park, for off-leash runs and stream wading.

**Favorite treat?** A round rawhide rolled for her to pounce on. "Good save!"

**Favorite meal?** Le Jardin Du Roi's pork tenderloin and risotto.

**Funniest habit?** At 3 a.m., she begs to go out, then lounges on the patio.

**Special talent?** Happy spins when her favorite humans arrive.

**Biggest fear?** The sound of aluminum foil tearing.

**Favorite people?** Her family, especially Ryan and Kirsten Marcus.

**Dog friends?** Bella for walks; Champ, the family's Egyptian rescue, whom she mostly tolerates.

**Life with Scarlett?**
"A constant reminder to enjoy every day to its fullest."



Scarlett Gullen may have started life as a stray in Georgia, but today there is little question where she belongs: Chappaqua.

In 2020, Scarlett was found wandering in Georgia and transported to a foster home in South Carolina, where rescuers discovered she was pregnant. After giving birth to six puppies, Scarlett and her babies traveled north through a special transport arranged by SPCA Westchester.

Kristi's daughter, Sonja Marcus, heard about the canine family and suggested her mother might be the perfect foster-to-adopt home. In October 2020, the family met the transport van carrying six puppies and one deserving mom, who they brought home. Scarlett promptly climbed onto the couch and fell asleep. Her journey was over.

Two of her puppies, Blue and Milo, also found homes with Chappaqua families.

Scarlett's name held special meaning. She shares it with Scarlett Chwatko, the young Chappaqua animal advocate and SPCA volunteer who died from cancer in 2019. Before her death, Scarlett founded draw for paws, using her artistic talents to raise money for SPCA Westchester and help shelter animals find loving homes. For the Gullen and Marcus families, giving Scarlett the dog a loving home became a way to honor her legacy.

But shortly after her adoption, Scarlett's new community would demonstrate just how deeply it shared that commitment.

During Chappaqua's annual Sidewalk Sale, something startled Scarlett. She slipped out of her collar and ran. Attempts to catch her only heightened her panic. Children downtown tracked her movements, directing Sonja as she sprinted down Greeley Avenue toward the library. Soon, Scarlett disappeared.

The community mobilized. Residents searched, shared sightings on social media and contacted lost-dog organizations. Flyers covered storefronts, poles and walls throughout Chappaqua. When sightings suggested Scarlett might have followed the train tracks, the search expanded into Mount Kisco and Pleasantville.

Several evenings later, after searching dumpsters hoping Scarlett might be looking for food, Kristi sat crying in her car at Bell School. Outside, two high school girls were still calling Scarlett's name. Then her phone rang.

A middle school student traveling through Pleasantville with his father had spotted movement on a home's front steps near the railroad tracks. Remembering Scarlett's flyer from the dog park, he insisted they stop. They found Scarlett, badly injured.

The responding Pleasantville police officer had Scarlett's flyer in his pocket and had already sent emergency veterinary information to her family.

No one knows what happened during Scarlett's disappearance. Her physical and emotional recovery took time, but gradually the once-frightened rescue grew comfortable with people, other dogs and her new life.



Scarlett and Champ



Kristi and her grandchildren with Scarlett on adoption day



For months, residents recognized her around town: "That's the dog who was lost. I saw the flyer." Those flyers mattered. So did the children, teenagers, neighbors, police officer and observant middle schooler who helped bring her home.

Today, six years later, Scarlett enjoys family visits, adventures at Gedney Park and a life filled with love. For her family, she remains a living tribute to Scarlett Chwatko and the dream behind draw for paws: that every shelter animal deserves a loving home. Scarlett certainly found hers. And when she needed them most, she discovered that her family extended far beyond her own front door. Her home was Chappaqua.

NEW CASTLE VETERINARY HOSPITAL

**Is your furry (or feathered… or scaled!) friend ready for their close-up? We're on the hunt for our next Pet of the Month to feature! Whether they're cuddly, quirky, regal, or downright hilarious, we want to share their adorable story. Nominate your pet—or a neighbor's—by sending us a cute photo and a few fun facts. We can't wait to celebrate the four-legged (or two-winged!) members of our amazing community. Email us at publisher@strollchappaqua.com with "Paw Prints" in the subject line or call New Castle Veterinary Hospital at 914-483-3334 and ask for Judith. Scan this QR code to tell us more! Let's make your pet a local celebrity!**



# Designing a Life—and a Home—with Leah Weinberg

PHOTO CREDIT BY MICHELLE LEVANTE



Photo Credit: Jessica Paschkes / Pretty Pictures Photos



Photo Credit: Michelle Levante

For Chappaqua resident Leah Weinberg, good design starts with understanding how a family actually lives. Through Leah Weinberg Design, she creates homes that feel polished and personal without sacrificing comfort or function. In this Q+A, Leah shares how she approaches residential design, what sets her process apart, the path that led her from fashion to interiors, and her advice for Chappaqua homeowners looking to create spaces that feel cohesive, intentional, and distinctly their own.

**Describe what your company does.**
Leah Weinberg Design is a full-service residential interior design firm serving families in Westchester and Connecticut. I work with families of all ages and sizes to design homes that marry form and function, so each room is beautiful yet practical for the people who live in it. I love color and pattern, and I always look for ways to introduce interesting materials and unexpected combinations of texture. I guide each project from the first walkthrough through floor plans, selections, ordering, project management, and installation.

**How many people does the company employ?**
I am the only employee. When you hire me, I serve as your designer and point of contact, and we work together directly from start to finish. I outsource bookkeeping, procurement, and occasionally CAD and rendering work, and I rely on a trusted network of local contractors, workrooms, and tradespeople.

**What is unique about your business?**
I run the business with clear systems and processes. My clients always know their design fee, the next step in the process, my role, and their role, so no one has to wonder where things stand. At the end of every week, I send a recap of what was completed, what is coming up, and any important dates on the calendar. Each client also receives a furniture budget guide with low, middle, and high ranges by category, so costs never come as a surprise. Clients come to me for creativity and a home they will love, and this structure gives them confidence that their project is in professional hands and that their investment is well spent.

**What prompted you to start your own business?**
I earned my degree in Fiber Science and Apparel Design at Cornell University and spent 12 years designing handbags in New York City for brands including Coach and Tommy Hilfiger. I loved both design and the business side, but I wanted to work from home and set my own schedule so I could be present for my family. In 2017, I left my last full-time fashion job and began freelancing as a handbag designer while taking interior design classes at Parsons School of Design. I graduated in the spring of 2019, the same season my daughter was born. I started taking on projects for friends and family, and the business grew from there.

**Given your business expertise, what advice can you offer Chappaqua residents?**
Before you buy anything, decide on an overall vision for your home: the mood, the aesthetic, and the colors that express your style. Then work room by room, giving each space its own design that fits within that larger vision and suits how you use it. Rooms can carry different moods depending on what happens in them. You might want a moody bedroom or TV room for evenings and a brighter kitchen and living room for the hours you spend there during the day. Setting the vision first keeps you from ending up with pieces that do not go together or are the wrong scale for the space. If planning a whole-house feels intimidating, a designer can help you put that plan in place.



Photo Credit: Michelle Levante



Leah Weinberg
Photo Credit: Jenna Galletti

**Tell Us a Little About Yourself**
I grew up in New City, in Rockland County, about 30 minutes from Chappaqua, and graduated from Clarkstown High School North. Today, my family and I live near Seven Bridges Road, and we've called Chappaqua home for six years.

My husband, Bret, grew up in Briarcliff and works in tech as the head of sales at a data company. Together, we have two daughters: Winona, who is in second grade at Westorchard Elementary, and Mila, who is three and a half and attends Young Wonders in Briarcliff.



Photo Credit: Michelle Levante

**"Clients come to me for creativity and a home they will love, and this structure gives them confidence that their project is in professional hands and that their investment is well spent."**



Photo Credit: Michelle Levante

When we travel, Bret and I love to scuba dive. At home, I like lifting weights, playing tennis, and playing mahjong with friends. I'm a big music fan and go to concerts whenever I can. I'm always in the middle of a good movie, TV show, or audiobook. Every year, I plant a vegetable garden in our backyard. I also love shopping at flea markets and estate sales, and many of my finds end up in my clients' homes.

**Is there anything else you would like to share?**
Leah Weinberg Design is a 2026 Westchester Home Design Awards finalist and a 2026 Best of Houzz winner. Outside the studio, I co-lead my daughter's Girl Scout Brownie troop and serve on the house committee at Temple Beth El. You can see my work on Instagram at @LeahWeinbergDesign.

**Leah Weinberg Design**
**email: info@leahweinbergdesign.com**
**phone: 917.513.8639**

# Community Spirit Shines at New Castle Community Day

Neighbors, local organizations and businesses filled the Chappaqua Train Station for the annual **New Castle Community Day**, hosted by the







Rotary Club of Chappaqua. The longtime tradition featured live music, food, rides and family fun, with a special appearance by New York Governor Kathy Hochul.

Rotary Club President Angela Papazoglou added, "Community Day is really a celebration of everything that makes New Castle special—our neighbors, local organizations, businesses and volunteers all in one place. Having Governor Hochul join us this year made an already wonderful day even more memorable."

# ROCKS Comes to Downtown!

PHOTO CREDIT: CAROLYN SIMPSON/ DOUBLEVISION PHOTOGRAPHERS




ROCKS recently celebrated the Grand Opening of its new location at 75 South Greeley Avenue in Downtown Chappaqua.

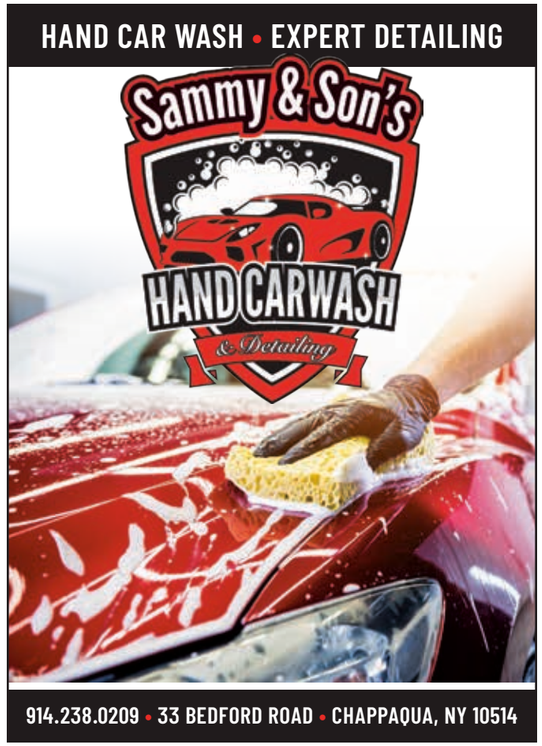
Owner Tanya Tochner welcomed friends, neighbors and local business leaders for a ribbon cutting and evening reception celebrating ROCKS' return to Chappaqua.

"As a Chappaqua resident for 25 years, opening our doors downtown feels especially personal. Your encouragement, kindness, and support helped make this moment so special," said Tanya.





The celebration brought together longtime ROCKS customers, new faces and members of the local community to toast the store's newest chapter. Tanya also thanked her team and the local businesses who helped bring the evening together. The new downtown location marks a meaningful homecoming for ROCKS and reflects Tanya's longstanding connection to the Chappaqua community.









# Chappaqua Comes Together for Mount Kisco Child Care Center

BY KEIRA TREANOR,
CHAPPAQUA RESIDENT



Photo Caption: Chappaqua residents who support Mount Kisco Child Care Center through board leadership and committee volunteer service gather with MKCCC Executive Director Dawn Meyerski and the Center's Junior Chefs at Feed Me Fresh: An Edible Evening.









As a Chappaqua resident and President of the Board of Directors of Mount Kisco Child Care Center, I have the privilege of seeing firsthand how deeply connected our community is to the Center's work.

For more than 50 years, MKCCC has provided high-quality early childhood education and care to working families throughout Northern Westchester, committed to making that care accessible regardless of a family's financial circumstances.

Chappaqua residents have long advanced that mission by serving on MKCCC's Board of Directors and Board of Advisors, volunteering on key committees, and holding leadership roles within the Center. This year's Feed Me Fresh honoree, Paula Backer, is a former Director of Development at MKCCC.

Under Paula's leadership, MKCCC surpassed fundraising goals year after year, achieved record-setting results, and elevated Feed Me Fresh to new heights. Other board members include Barbara Klein, a former early childhood educator whose dedication to the Center spans many years, and Christie Krase, an educator and early childhood advocate who has been a passionate champion for the Center and its families. Amy Epstein currently serves as Vice President of the Board and will succeed me as President in 2027.

As board members, we help steward MKCCC's mission and future while supporting Executive Director Dawn Meyerski and the extraordinary team she leads. We bring our professional experience, community connections and individual perspectives to help strengthen the organization and ensure it can continue serving local children and families for generations to come.

One of the most visible examples of our board and community coming together is Feed Me Fresh: An Edible Evening, MKCCC's signature annual fundraiser. Now in its 22nd year, Feed Me Fresh brings together hundreds of supporters, local businesses, chefs and community leaders for an evening centered around great food and a shared purpose.





**"We understand the importance of investing in children, supporting working parents and lending our own skills and resources to strengthen the communities."**

More than a wonderful night out, Feed Me Fresh raises funds that help provide scholarships, making high-quality child care and early education accessible to local working families. Every sponsorship, ticket and donation helps MKCCC welcome children whose families might not otherwise be able to afford care.

The event is the culmination of months of work by board members and a dedicated volunteer committee, including fellow Chappaqua residents Scottie Guerney, Eri Sato and Rachel Szymanski. Together, we secure sponsors and auction items, build community partnerships, promote the event and attend to the countless details that bring the evening to life.

I see that spirit of service reflected again and again among my fellow Chappaqua residents. We understand the importance of investing in children, supporting working parents and lending our own skills and resources to strengthen the communities around us.

Feed Me Fresh is a celebration, but what we are really celebrating is the opportunity we can create for children and families when a community comes together.

I'm proud that the Chappaqua community remains such an important part of that story.



It Takes a Village. Join Ours.

Come to a fundraiser, pitch in at an event, join a committee, or volunteer in a classroom. We'd love to meet you!

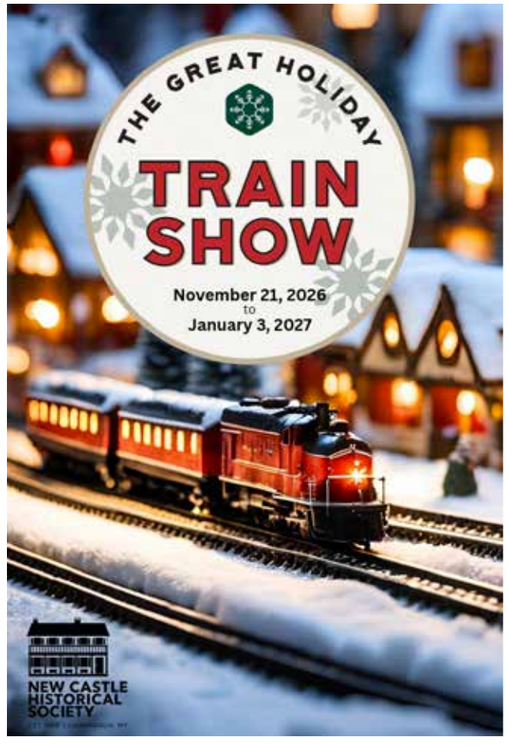
Scan to get involved
mkccc.org/contact

Mount Kisco Child Care Center
Making The Difference – When It Counts










# All Aboard for the Great Holiday Train Show

**A FAVORITE CHAPPAQUA HOLIDAY TRADITION** is pulling back into the station! The Great Holiday Train Show returns to the New Castle Historical Society at the historic Greeley House from November 21, 2026 through January 3, 2027.

Each holiday season, the Greeley House is transformed with working model trains traveling through festive miniature villages and displays throughout the historic rooms. Past shows have included favorites such as the Polar Express and Santa's Holiday Train, along with elaborate LEGO displays, a train-themed scavenger hunt, hands-on activities and crafts, and a mini train engine perfect for photos.

The show has grown into a major local tradition since its 2021 debut, drawing thousands of visitors to downtown Chappaqua during the holiday season.

This year's show will be open weekends and on weekdays during the school recess. The Historical Society is also planning special family workshops and activities during the run, with dates and details to be announced.

newcastlehs.org





# 7 Holiday Shopping Tips to Save Money and Maximize Rewards

CINDY GREENSTEIN

**1. Start with shopping portals.** Before you buy, click through a portal like Rakuten or Capital One Shopping, or your favorite airline's shopping site. Earn extra cash back, miles or points on top of your card rewards. Check exclusions before shopping.

**2. Activate your rotating cash-back categories.** Have a card with 5% rotating categories? Check what's included this quarter and activate the offer. Watch the spending cap and any exclusions.

**3. Use the right card for the right purchase.** Not all cards earn equally. Use the card that gives you extra points or cash back where you're spending, whether that's dining, groceries, travel or online shopping. A little planning goes a long way.

**4. Shop local and still earn big.** Buying in-store? A flat-rate card that earns 2x points or 2% cash back keeps rewards simple, especially when the store doesn't fall into a bonus category.

**5. Use your statement credits.** Check your cards for credits at places like lululemon, Resy, Ticketmaster, StubHub and Dell. Enroll where required and check eligible purchases and expiration dates before buying.

**6. Check credit card offers.** Look for offers on your cards, like Amex® Offers, before you shop. For Amex® Offers, add the offer to your eligible card first, then use that same card for a qualifying purchase under the offer's terms.

**7. Give the gift of free travel.** A gift certificate for a Points Mom consult can help someone learn to turn their points and miles into their next trip.

THE POINTS MOM
pointing you towards free family travel



Cindy Greenstein, The Points Mom, is a former lawyer & CPA, but her focus now is on helping people travel for free using credit card and loyalty program rewards. She helps ensure that you are maximizing your rewards, taking advantage of card benefits, and using your rewards for the most value through her 1:1 consultations, group sessions, and speaking gigs. Follow her on instagram at @thepointsmom_.



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# *resident* business guide

This is a current list of business owners and professionals from our neighborhood. It is an opportunity to network, qualify, and potentially build a business relationship with other successful individuals who also live here. To be included in the Resident Business Guide, email your name, business name, phone number, and email address to stacy.ciaravella@n2co.com.

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**Joshua Shelley**
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shelleycpa.com

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A Publication for the Residents
of Chappaqua




New Castle Veterinary Hospital has been serving Chappaqua and surrounding areas for 30 years. Our professional staff delivers excellent medicine and personalized care. Dr. Bradley Emott joined New Castle Vet in 2024 and has brought a fresh approach to the care of our patients. Dr. Emott is an experienced general practice veterinarian who can see your pet for routine care or for any problem. We offer digital x-rays, ultrasound, in-house lab work, an online pharmacy for home delivery, soft tissue surgery, and dental procedures. Please call us anytime to schedule an appointment and let us work with you to care for your beloved pet.

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