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*magazine*

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**Making wise decisions  
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Nourishing our aging bodies

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Making self-care a priority

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Lindsay Kratzer

## Aging in place

STAYING SAFE AND COMFORTABLE  
IN YOUR HOME

As people grow older, the desire to remain in the comfort of their own homes becomes increasingly significant. Aging in place is the concept of living independently and safely in one's home as long as possible, even as health and mobility challenges arise. This approach is not only cost-effective but also allows older

adults to maintain a sense of familiarity and dignity.

As the owner of Reflections Management and Care, a local care management company, I frequently hear the desire of many to age in place. Aging in place however requires careful planning and the right support systems to ensure safety, comfort, and well-being.

### UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT OF AGING IN PLACE

Aging in place involves making adjustments to both the living environment and lifestyle to accommodate the changing needs that come with aging. This concept emphasizes the importance of staying in a familiar environment while receiving the necessary care and support.

### BENEFITS OF AGING IN PLACE

**Independence.** Maintaining control over daily activities and personal choices.

**Familiarity.** Staying in a well-known environment with memories and comfort.

**Cost-effectiveness.** Reducing the need for expensive long-term care facilities.

**Emotional well-being.** Avoiding the stress and anxiety associated with moving to a new, unfamiliar place.

### STEPS TO TAKE FOR AGING IN PLACE

**1. Assessing the home environment.** The first step in preparing to age in place is to assess the current home environment. This involves evaluating the safety, accessibility, and overall suitability of the home for long-term living.

**2. Planning for health and personal care needs.** Aging often comes with increased health challenges. Planning for these needs is crucial to ensure that one can remain at home safely. Considering in-home care services, technology solutions as well as nutrition and exercise are all crucial strategies.

**3. Financial planning and legal considerations.** Proper financial planning is essential to ensure that aging in place remains feasible in the long term. Things to consider are budgeting for modifications and services, legal preparations (preparing or updating legal documents such as wills, power of attorney, and advance directives to ensure that your wishes are followed) and reviewing insurance and benefits to optimize coverage.

**4. Social and emotional support.** Staying socially active and emotionally supported is vital for mental health as one ages in place. Engage in local community activities, senior centers, or clubs to stay socially connected. Maintaining strong relationships with family members and friends to avoid feelings of isolation are critical, and consider therapy or support groups to address any emotional challenges related to aging are often helpful.

### THE ROLE OF AN AGING LIFECARE PROFESSIONAL

As an aging lifecare professional, we are a vital resource in the aging-in-place process. We are professionals trained to assist older adults and their families in navigating the complexities of aging. We provide personalized care plans, coordinate healthcare services, and ensure that all aspects of an individual's life are considered in the planning process.

### KEY CONTRIBUTIONS INCLUDE:

**Comprehensive assessment:** We conduct thorough evaluations of an individual's health, home environment, and social needs to create a tailored aging-in-place plan.

**Coordination of services:** We manage and coordinate in-home care services, medical appointments, and other necessary support systems.

**Advocacy and support:** We act as advocates, helping families make informed decisions and ensuring that the older adult's needs and preferences are met.

**Crisis intervention:** In the event of a health crisis or emergency, we provide immediate assistance and help navigate the very complicated healthcare system.

Aging in place is a desirable option for many older adults, offering the comfort of staying in one's own home while receiving the necessary care and support. By taking proactive steps — such as assessing the home environment, planning for health needs, managing finances, and seeking social support — older adults can successfully age in place. Incorporating the expertise of an aging lifecare professional further enhances this process, ensuring a comprehensive and well-coordinated approach to aging with dignity and independence. Check out an aging life care professional in your area at [www.aginglifecare.org](http://www.aginglifecare.org).

Lindsay Kratzer is the owner and founder of Reflections Management and Care, a care management company helping families as they navigate the aging process.

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WOMAN  
magazine

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The publication is available free of charge.

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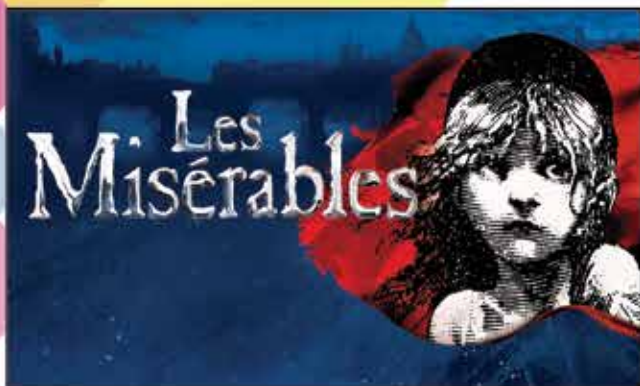
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Suite 100, Syracuse, NY 13206

The magazine is published 12 times a year by  
Community Media Group, LLC  
and Eagle Publications  
2501 James St., Suite 100  
Syracuse, NY 13206

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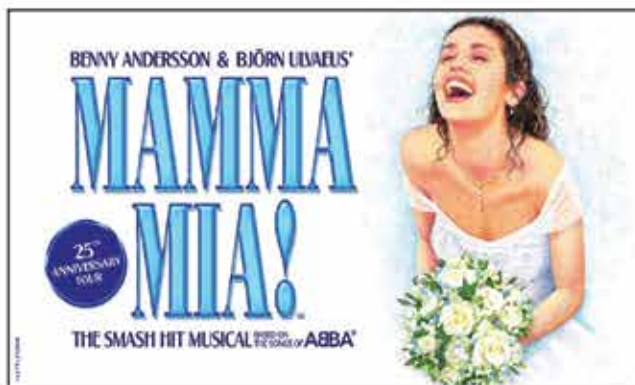
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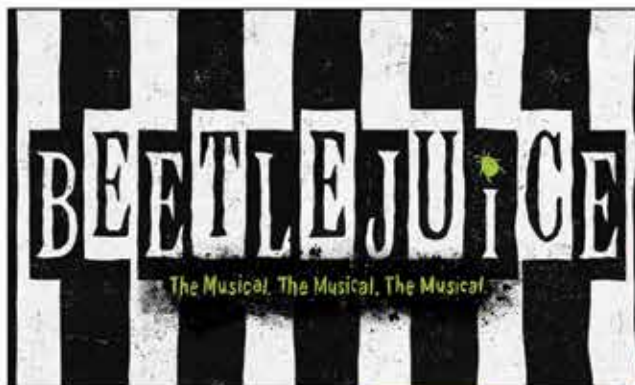
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PAST EVENTS

WBOC hosts summer Brand Bash

WBOC held its most recent Brand Bash at 443 Social Club, which is owned by former WBOC President Julie Briggs Leone. The event provided women business leaders from the Syracuse area the opportunity to show their wares and network with their peers and friends.

The next WBOC event will be held Sept. 4 at Drumlins Country Club.

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# Syracuse is front and center in local author's debut novel

Alyssa Dearborn



Syracuse native Elizabeth Staple has always been a writer. Between being a life-long reader and a writer who began telling stories at a young age, it was inevitable that she would want to eventually write a book. Now, with the release of her debut novel with Penguin Random House, *The Snap*, Elizabeth can call herself a published author.

"I've always really loved writing," she said when asked about her writing life, "I think genuinely since the time I could write, I've been writing stories. I was very awkward as a kid. I'm not much less awkward now. But I would come home from some interaction at school and rewrite it so I would do better in it. So I've just been writing my entire life and that naturally lead to writing longer and longer stories. And I'm such a big reader that I wanted to try my hand at a book. I read a lot of mysteries and I like writing mysteries. It's like a big puzzle. It's such a challenge to try to put together the pieces in a way where there's clues you can follow, but they're not too obvious. I very much enjoy that part of it."

In *The Snap*, Elizabeth tells the story of Poppy Benjamin, the media relations director of Syracuse's fictional NFL team. Described by the publisher as "Friday Night Lights meets I Know What You Did Last Summer", Elizabeth's debut provides a murder mystery, insights into toxic work environments, and a message about professional responsibility.

"I think one important thing about [the book] is that it's told in two different timelines." She said about her book, "One is from before the *Me Too Movement* and then one is after, following the same characters. So, in one timeline, she is beginning with the team as an intern. And in the second, she has become the head of her department, which is media relations. And I think that's really important because... those different eras. We all remember the early 2000's. I remember that Paris Hilton era that was just really mean and difficult for young women. And now, extensively, it's so much better. As opposed to having women competing with each other for limited resources in the workplace, we're encouraged to build each other up, which is awesome. But it's true that when you have no authority—you're at the bottom of the ladder, you're trying so hard to make a name for yourself—you're not necessarily going to deal with things differently. You don't want to make a fuss, you don't want to cause a problem. I think watching the main character handle things from those two different chairs will be interesting."

Within this story of murder and professional reckoning, *The Snap* also highlights the unique culture and setting of Syracuse. Local readers can expect to see many iconic landmarks as well as inside jokes that will make any Central New Yorker feel seen.

"Well, one [reference] that I knew I had to include was a reference to a truck hitting the Onondaga Lake Parkway bridge." Elizabeth laughed when explaining one of her references to Syracuse, "In fact, my sister had a great suggestion that the marketing for this fictional football team should be that their defensive line is as strong as that bridge. I can't imagine a better endorsement for a defensive line."

"I tried to put so much in," she continued, "I think Syracuse is such a unique place that just does not get the attention it deserves. You know, it's not a major city, and unless you're from here, it might not be on your radar. But it has such a personality to it. I tried to put as much of that into the book as possible by referencing local businesses and the traditions and food and the kinds of things that would be immediately

recognizable to someone that's from the area...I'd love for more people to know all the cool things about our city."

Many of the incidents from the book – except for the mysterious murder of a head coach – are inspired by Elizabeth's own career. Prior to beginning a career in law, she worked in media relations for Syracuse University and several NFL football teams. During this time, she experienced both the ups and downs of being a woman working in sports.

"I think it's fair to say that all of the scaffolding of the book is from my professional life," Elizabeth said, explaining the inspiration behind the book, "So anything that you could categorize as a microaggression in the book is probably a real thing that came from me or one of my friends working in sports... But yeah, all of the little details, all of the microaggressions, are true from life."

Elizabeth, like many women in the workplace, experienced good, bad, and gray situations during her time working in media relations. But, just like the main character in *The Snap*, some of those darker or gray-tinted workplace situations remained unaddressed.

"Although the book raises some points about the frustrations of women working in sports," she explained, "in general, I really loved my time working in athletics. I started by working in athletic communications at Syracuse University. I had a fantastic experience there. After that, I worked for a few different NFL teams. I really loved that time as well. And the point really isn't that this was all good or all bad, it's that

almost everything has shades in between. There were certain things that if I had brought up to them and said, 'hey, by the way, this person did this to me', it would have been immediately handled. But I just didn't know enough, that that was not a normal thing for someone to do in a workplace. Especially at a sporty workplace, I wanted to be cool, I wanted to be good humored. So a lot of the book is about what happens to you before you know any better...But it's difficult to be young. You make some mistakes and you have to figure out how to deal with them." SWM

*Elizabeth Staple's The Snap is now available in hardcover.*



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# wise

WOMEN IGNITING THE SPIRIT  
OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## FEATURED ENTREPRENEUR

**Megan Rydzak**  
Owner, Fatcat Baking

Megan Rydzak, the owner and visionary behind Fatcat Baking, has carved a distinctive niche in Central New York's culinary scene with her vegan bakery. Launched in early 2020, Fatcat Baking is known for its delicious vegan treats and Megan's dedication to making veganism inclusive and accessible. Specializing in various dietary needs, the bakery reaches a wide audience through wholesale distribution and pop-up events, without needing a traditional storefront.

Originally from Southern California, Megan's journey began in the realm of advertising and editorial photography. Her passion for food, sparked by shared meals with friends, led her to pivot from lifestyle photography to the food industry upon moving to Syracuse. Despite an initial aversion to baking—due to its perceived rigidity as compared to the more forgiving nature of cooking—Megan developed a passion for it over time. A significant turning point came when her in-laws gifted her an advanced pastry certification course through the Culinary Institute of America. This newfound passion flourished as she began sharing her baked goods with her roller derby league, receiving enthusiastic support that encouraged her to test the waters of selling her products.

In December 2019, Megan conducted a successful small-batch trial, and when the pandemic led to her layoff a few months later, she seized the opportunity to fully commit to her bakery. Thus, Fatcat Baking was born. The playful name "Fatcat Baking" reflects Megan's growing love for cats, mirroring her journey from initial resistance to a profound appreciation for both cats and baking.

Entrepreneurship has granted Megan the autonomy and flexibility she longed for, allowing her to infuse her business with her personal values and vision. Reflecting on her journey, Megan shares, "I always wanted to do something myself. I never wanted to work for somebody else. I always knew that I was going to be my own boss." This determination has driven her success with Fatcat Baking.

Yet, Megan's path has not been without its challenges. Like many entrepreneurs, she has wrestled with imposter syndrome and often found herself to be her own harshest critic. However, the support of her partner Alex and a carefully managed "low and slow" growth strategy have helped her navigate these hurdles. Her ADHD also plays a role in her business management approach, particularly concerning financial tasks, which she delegates to alleviate anxiety and focus on daily operations and creativity. This strategy allows her to stay adaptable and manage unexpected issues effectively.

Megan's commitment to continuous improvement is evident in her involvement with the WISE Women's Business Center. Through her participation in WISE's Accelerate Business Plan Intensive Program, Megan gained more than just business knowledge; she acquired a deeper understanding of how to structure and sustain her business in the long term. The program offered her practical insights into effective business planning and equipped her with more tools to navigate the complexities of entrepreneurship. Beyond the technical skills, Megan found a supportive community of like-minded entrepreneurs who shared their experiences and challenges. This collective environment provided her with validation and encouragement, reinforcing her belief in her business vision. The built-in



accountability through the Accelerate Business Plan Intensive motivated Megan and also made her more confident in the steps she was taking to strengthen her business. On her business journey, Megan has learned the value of self-acceptance and the importance of surrounding herself with honest, supportive people. Her support network has been pivotal in helping her overcome self-doubt and celebrate her business achievements.

Looking to the future, Megan plans to expand Fatcat Baking by opening a small storefront and growing her team within the next two years. She aims to focus more on wholesaling and strategic growth, fostering community connections, and strengthening her business foundation. Megan's journey, marked by her passion, adaptability, and community support, highlights the importance of embracing challenges and lifelong learning in entrepreneurship. Her story is a testament to the fulfillment derived from pursuing one's passion with dedication and authenticity.

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# Making self-care a priority

Angela Perry

The changing of one season to the next is a great time to reflect, reset and restore those areas of our lives that we want to take back or change. Wherever you find yourself in life, whether heading to college, starting a new career, adjusting to being a stay-at-home mom or a working mom, it is never too late to take inventory of your life.

One area that I consistently need to be mindful of is how I care for myself. When the seasons change, I try to reflect on how I did in the last season and what I can do differently in the one ahead to prioritize what is important to me and how I take care of me.

Many of us are taught at an early age that putting others first and being selfless is an important characteristic to have, and certainly there are benefits to altruism. However, sometimes the messages we hear of striving to be the best, fulfilling your dreams, making all A's, being the best mom are louder than the message of it is okay to rest, to prioritize self-care, and to take time to heal from soul wounds. If striving messages are not tempered with self-awareness, intentionality, and healthy boundaries, they can lead to burnout, anxiety, resentment, and unhealthy expectations that will affect our lives and relationships.

My first experience on an airplane was in my early twenties. I thought it was so strange when the flight attendant said if we are in a situation and the pressure changes in the cabin and the oxygen masks drop, first put the mask on yourself before you put it on others, even children. I never forgot that moment as it was so counterintuitive of what I was taught and shown growing up. Putting yourself last was almost a badge of honor to be worn and self-sacrifice was at the forefront of every area of life.

I know for me, and I would guess for many women, it can be difficult to prioritize yourself. It can be a difficult lesson to learn because it is easier to do what we have always done, than to reset our routines, and reprioritize being intentional about taking care of ourselves. I promise you, when you do, there is much joy and freedom that comes. It is not being selfish; it is being wise.

However, you might be surprised at what self-care really looks like. People usually equate self-care with a spa day, or a vacation. While these can certainly be a part of self-care, when taken because we are burnt out from our lives they become more like urgent care.

Self-care is being intentional about creating a life that you enjoy and not one that you always feel the need to check out of. It is putting margins in your life and establishing routines and practices that might be difficult at first but will bring joy, peace and freedom. It is letting go of being perfect and just concentrating on making progress.

## Here are some examples of self-care:

1. Creating a non-negotiable routine in the morning that will start your day off well.
2. Prioritizing sleep and healthy nutrition.
3. Facing unresolved issues instead of avoiding them and then trying to soothe and distract yourself later.
4. Seeing a professional to help you process past hurts, grief or trauma and gain tools to move forward in life.
5. Doing the hard work of setting boundaries and saying “no” when needed.
6. Loving yourself and giving yourself compassion and grace.
7. Compassionately accepting yourself and your limitations for who you are instead of burning yourself out trying to be everything to everybody.
8. Forgiving, letting go and accepting what you can't change or control.

This is not an exhaustive list, but I encourage you to take this next season to reflect on the areas that you would like to change, especially when it comes to your self-care, then reset and begin to restore them in your life. This is a lifelong process, not perfection, just progress along the way. Remember, you matter, and your presence matters to those around you. *SWM*



Angela Perry is a certified life coach and consultant. To contact her, email [aperry.life@gmail.com](mailto:aperry.life@gmail.com).







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# LENA McGUIRE

## Making wise decisions on the road to success

Kate Hanzalik

If there is a theme to Lena McGuire's life, it would be about making good decisions. "You can have anything you want, but you can't have everything. So, choose wisely," she said.

As the owner of Spóca Kitchen and Bath LLC, Lena is all about choices. She helps homeowners create new spaces by giving them options for anything they would want, whether that be refreshing, replacing, reconfiguring, or remodeling their homes.

"Most of my clients are empty nesters and they just want to have a good lifestyle. It doesn't mean that they have a luxury budget. It just means that they want to have nice things in their home. We prioritize what they need, what's going to allow them to stay there, how they're best going to function and have their aesthetics met."

She also leads workshops for people looking to improve their homes. "I teach a lot of classes at local libraries. I've taught six in the past three months. I try to do 10 or 12 seminars a year so that people are educated, so they learn about what the remodeling process entails, how much it costs, what to budget, where to splurge, where to save."

Spóca Kitchen and Bath is thriving. In fact, she's in the process of starting a satellite location in Nashville, which is a good decision for her both professionally and personally. Now she can reach more customers, she is expanding her network, she is able to see her son regularly, and, as someone who loves to travel, she is expanding her horizons, all at the same time.

"I find it very invigorating to fly every two or three weeks to go down there and meet with the business group that I'm involved with."

Lena is from Syracuse. She moved away for 21 years, but when her mother became terminally ill, she and her husband and their young children moved back home.

"We found that the lifestyle here in the Syracuse area is very nice. I live in Camillus. It's a super walkable community. The schools are great."

*Continued on page 20*



Photo by Alice G. Patterson

## Making wise decisions on the road to success FROM PAGE 19

They wanted to be a part of a community that cared more about people and less about money. She said that Onondaga County fit the description. “I enjoy the family attitudes here. It’s a little bit laid back... I feel like I have a better work-life balance here. I don’t have to keep up with the Joneses.”

### The way to choose wisely

Lena makes good decisions by being intentional about planning, which involves prioritizing, calendaring, time blocking, and routine. “Traveling and seeing my family is the most important thing. So that’s the first thing I put on my calendar and then my business stuff, and then the extra stuff that’s going to help my business. It also helps with budgeting so that I can afford to do what I want to do.”

At 64, Lena is finally prioritizing herself. “Until I started blocking the travel and putting things to do on my calendar, I wouldn’t do them. So now I prioritize the things that are important to me. I get to be a person, part of a couple, a mom, a family member, a member of my community, and a businessperson. I have all these different things, and I need to be able to do all of them, and now I do them all without any guilt or regret because everything fits into my schedule.”

She already knows exactly what she will be doing in 2025, such as traveling with her sisters to Music Row in Nashville, going on a Caribbean cruise, spending quality time with her children, traveling with her husband and making an impact in Nashville. Planning helps her lead an adventurous life, something she encourages women entrepreneurs to prioritize.

“You’re widening your horizons. You’re seeing things from a different perspective, and it improves your vision [for life] and it improves your world, it gives you a new perspective. If you’re just staying home and not doing anything, you’re going to get the same old, same old all the time. You’re not going to be inspired. You’re not going to feel good about yourself. You’re not going to feel good about the world. You need to get out there and experience different things.”

Lena has a network of friends throughout the United States, which has helped her to grow. She’s in a coaching group, she has an accountability buddy in Florida, friends in Rochester, and she is part of a group of women business owners in Nashville. “I’m seeing stronger women that are making the same mistakes that I’ve made. And they’ll tell me that they’ve made those mistakes. So you can learn from them and grow. They call it growing pains for a reason. It hurts, but it doesn’t have to kill you. It just is uncomfortable. If you feel like you’re out of your comfort zone, you’re where you need to be. That’s where you grow.”

“So now I prioritize the things that are important to me. I get to be a person, part of a couple, a mom, a family member, a member of my community, and a businessperson. I have all these different things, and I need to be able to do all of them, and now I do them all without any guilt or regret because everything fits into my schedule.” —Lena McGuire

### Giving women the dignity of life

Lena does not want to be a solopreneur anymore, so one of her priorities is to hire women. Her plan is to pay them living wages – but not the all too familiar kind where they are working in poverty, living paycheck to paycheck. She wants to give her employees living wages that actually give them a good life and most importantly, dignity.

“I really feel for single moms, people who are divorced, people who were never married and have children. You don’t have that second income and you can’t afford a decent house. If you had a good, decent income, you would have the dignity of life. That’s so important to me.” Through her research, she found that dignity of life in Syracuse means making at least \$58,000.

Lena wants women to have the power to make good decisions. “When you don’t have control over your life, and you have to rely on somebody other than yourself, I don’t think that’s right. I don’t think you should have to marry someone because you need their paycheck. I don’t think you should have a roommate that has different ideas of how you want to run your household. They might be a slob, or they might not want to have home-cooked meals. You’re compromising your life because you can’t afford it. So money is a huge thing.” Lena serves as a shining example for all business owners.

“We grew up very poor. My mom was a single mom with four kids. And I had the best childhood. I never felt like I was poor. I always felt like we had everything we wanted. On Christmas, we always got that one thing that we really hoped would be there. She always found a way to make sure that we felt like life was great,” she said.

Lena and most of her family grew up working in the retail business. “When you work in retail, you feel like they own you. You don’t have a consistent schedule. You’re not in charge of how much money you earn. You don’t know if you can take a vacation or if you can sit beside your mother when she’s dying because you have to ask for time off. Drives me crazy. I would like to be the kind of boss that says, ‘This is what needs to be accomplished. This is what you’re accountable for. I don’t care when you work . . . if you want to work at three in the morning, I don’t care. If you want to work two hours today and ten hours tomorrow, I don’t care. Just get the work done.’”

Lena has gotten a lot of work done in her life, and this Syracuse woman does not plan to retire anytime soon. SWM

To learn more about Lena and Spóca Kitchen and Bath, visit [www.spocakitchenandbath.com](http://www.spocakitchenandbath.com)



Photo by Alice G. Patterson

### Marquis Tournament a huge draw

The inaugural Marquis Tournament was held for the first time at the Cavalry Club in Manlius on July 29 and 30. This two-day tournament, renamed to honor the legacy of Michelle Marquis, aims to promote friendship and the love of golf among women of all ages and abilities.

Participants competed as individuals and teams of two, encouraging collaboration and camaraderie. This event promotes women's golf in Central New York and celebrates the contributions of Michelle Marquis to the golfing community.



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# Syracuse Boat Tours

## CENTRAL NY'S NEW ADVENTURE

Anna Edwards

This summer, a new boat tour company has made its way onto the waters of the Seneca River and Onondaga Lake. Syracuse Boat Tours allows locals and visitors to gain an appreciation for the Syracuse area and the beauty that it has to offer.

Annette Peters, the company's owner, lived on the Seneca River for years and enjoyed taking her friends out to boat on both the river and Onondaga Lake. She noticed how blown away they were by the beauty of the water, especially the lake.

"When I would take people out there it was like they had never been there before. They were always kind of slack-jawed and just in awe of how pretty the city looked from that view," said Annette. "It made me start thinking, 'We should be doing this. People should be enjoying this lake.'" She started working on her idea a few years ago and opened her company in July.

Syracuse Boat Tours holds regular themed cruises on a 22-person boat and offers many experiences for different audiences. Rides include sunset cruises, beer and popcorn tours, wine tasting, bourbon tasting and cocktail cruises. There are Tiki Bar Tuesdays, a Historical Lake Cruise, and even a Swiftie Cruise where guests can sing along to their favorite Taylor Swift songs and enjoy a themed cocktail. There are also family tours that appeal to all ages.

All tours are captained by U.S. Coast Guard Master Captains. Annette says that each cruise is special, and everyone has a good time. "Hanging out on the boat, having a cocktail, good music ... It's fun," she said.

Customers get to build the experience that they want on their tour. They can pick their music and their overall environment. There are some tours where participants want to hang out and belt out songs as a group and others where they choose to keep things more private.



“It’s really the experience that people want. They kind of pick their own thing,” Annette said. “It’s kind of like running a party. It’s about making sure everybody has a good experience.”

Most tours last 90 minutes, with some lasting an hour. The company is open to letting customers set the tone and schedules tours depending on customer wants. “I will go out as many times as people will book,” Annette said. “We’re just going to experiment to see what works and what people are interested in.”

The boat is also used for special events in which groups can rent out the entire boat for whatever kind of ride they are looking for. It has hosted corporate charters, birthday parties, baby showers, anniversary parties and church groups. “It’s kind of a perfect little intimate party venue,” Annette said.

People come from all over to experience the tour. It’s a great place to bring guests from out of town or for locals to gain a new appreciation for what is right in front of them. Annette loves the energetic environment on the boat and the feeling of happiness everyone expresses. “I wonder why I didn’t do this years ago,” she said.

Annette has been involved in all aspects of the tours, from being the company’s owner to being the bartender during the boat rides. “I am having a blast. I am having as much fun as the passengers are,” she said.

After spending most of her career in human resources and marketing, Annette was ready for a big change. She always felt a pull to do something adventurous, and it finally felt like the right time. “I just had this bug, you know? I just wanted to do something really fun,” she said.



Annette says that the business has been a good fit for her because she has been able to use strengths from her past employment. She has management experience from her work in human resources and marketing experience from her time as the vice president of marketing for Advanced Media NY. She is a people person and loves to meet new customers on her boat. “I think it pulls everything I’ve done in my career together,” she said. “I love it all. I love the marketing side of it, I love running the business, I love being on the boat.”

As the owner of the company, it is Annette’s job to keep the business side of the company running, but also to do the on-site work. She has many of the same tasks each day, but also

must be ready to deal with issues that come up, just like any small business owner. “I buy ice, I stock the bar, I help dock the boat, I schedule things, I reschedule things, I do it all. I order the liquor and the food, make sure the boat is clean and maintain the grounds,” she said.

Midlakes Navigation, run by the Wiles family, had previously given boat tours in this location. When they sold their company in 2019, the dock went vacant. No one was giving boat tours on Onondaga Lake or the Seneca River. “It just seemed like a big void,” Annette said. She started doing research after the spot opened and is thankful for the advice that she received from the Wiles family along the way.

As fall approaches, there will be new tour opportunities to fit

the season, including apple cider tours with local treats and hard cider and leaf peaking tours where people can admire the foliage. Tours will go and will be held on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays in the fall. SWM



To learn more about Syracuse Boat Tours or to book an excursion, visit <https://syracuseboattours.com>.

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# Nourishing our aging bodies

## THE POWER OF DIET, MUSCLE HEALTH AND LONGEVITY

Eric Rose

**A**s we age, our bodies undergo significant changes that require us to rethink how we approach our health, particularly when it comes to diet and exercise. One of the most pressing challenges is sarcopenia, the gradual loss of muscle mass and strength that begins as early as our thirties and accelerates as we reach our fifties and beyond. However, the latest research has shown that maintaining sufficient muscle mass is more critical to longevity than simply achieving a healthy BMI. By making informed dietary choices and incorporating resistance training into our routines, we can slow this process, maintain our strength, independence, and overall well-being, and even enhance our lifespan.

In recent years, scientific studies have increasingly highlighted the importance of muscle mass in predicting long-term health and longevity. While maintaining a healthy BMI has long been considered a cornerstone of overall wellness, emerging research suggests that sufficient muscle mass is an even more crucial factor in living a longer, healthier life. Muscle mass supports metabolic health, protects against chronic diseases, and contributes to better physical function, which is vital as we age.

Sarcopenia, characterized by the loss of muscle mass and function, is a natural part of aging but doesn't have to dictate our quality of life. Muscle loss can lead to decreased strength, balance, and mobility, making daily activities more challenging and increasing the risk of falls and fractures. Several factors contribute to sarcopenia, including hormonal changes, decreased physical activity, and inadequate nutrition—particularly a decline in protein intake.

Essential amino acids (EAAs) are the building blocks of proteins, crucial for the synthesis and repair of muscle tissue. Unlike non-essential amino acids, which our bodies can produce, EAAs must be obtained through our diet. Foods rich in EAAs — such as lean meats, fish, dairy, and certain plant-based proteins — are vital for stimulating muscle protein synthesis. Leucine, in particular, plays a key role in triggering the body's muscle-building processes, helping to counteract muscle breakdown and promote growth and repair.

As a health coach and chef, I know that a balanced, nutrient-rich diet is essential for supporting muscle health and longevity. Here are some strategies to help combat sarcopenia and promote long-term wellness through diet:

- **Prioritize Protein-Rich Foods.** Protein is essential for muscle health, and its importance only grows as we age. Aim to include a source of high-quality protein with every meal. Lean meats, poultry, fish, and seafood are excellent sources, providing the EAAs needed to maintain muscle mass. For those who prefer plant-based options, legumes, tofu, tempeh, and quinoa are all great choices.
- **Incorporate Fiber-Rich Foods.** A healthy diet is about more than just protein. Fiber is crucial for digestive health, regulating blood sugar levels, and maintaining a healthy weight. Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and legumes are rich in fiber and should be regular staples in your meals.

- **Don't Forget Probiotics.** Maintaining a healthy gut is vital as we age. Probiotics, found in fermented foods like yogurt, kefir, sauerkraut, and kimchi, support digestive health and boost the immune system. Including these foods in your diet can help promote a healthy gut microbiome, which is linked to overall well-being.

- **Consider Essential Amino Acid Supplementation.** For some individuals, particularly those who struggle to consume enough protein through food alone, an EAA supplement may be beneficial. However, it's important to consult with a healthcare professional before starting any new supplement regimen.

While diet is a cornerstone of healthy aging, it must be paired with regular physical activity, particularly resistance training, to be truly effective in promoting longevity and combating sarcopenia. Resistance training involves exercises that work your muscles against a force, such as lifting weights, using resistance bands, or performing bodyweight exercises like squats and push-ups.

This form of exercise is one of the most effective ways to preserve and build muscle mass as we age. It helps counteract muscle loss, improves muscle strength and function, and supports metabolic health. Additionally, resistance training has numerous other health benefits, including improving bone density, enhancing insulin sensitivity, and boosting mental well-being.

Aging is a natural process, but with the right approach to diet and exercise, we can maintain our strength, vitality, and independence well into our later years. By prioritizing muscle mass through protein-rich foods, incorporating fiber and probiotics into our meals, and considering essential amino acid supplementation, we can support our muscles and overall health.

Pairing these dietary strategies with regular resistance training will help combat sarcopenia, keeping our muscles strong and functional.

*Continued on page 30*





**Nourishing our aging bodies** FROM PAGE 27



Most importantly, this holistic approach to aging recognizes that maintaining muscle mass is key to not just living longer, but living better. Remember, it's never too late to start taking care of your body. By making these changes today, you can enjoy a healthier, more active tomorrow — and a longer, more fulfilling life.

*Chef Eric Rose is an award-winning chef and health coach.*

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- 13 oz. Chicken
- 5 c. diced zucchini
- 1 small diced green pepper
- ¾ c. low sugar pasta sauce
- 48 slices turkey pepperoni
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. Italian seasoning
- 1 tsp. salt to taste
- Pinch pepper to taste
- Pinch Red pepper flakes
- 2 c. low fat mozzarella cheese
- 4 tsp. olive oil

Sauté chicken and zucchini, pepper in olive oil until cooked, add other ingredients and top with cheese until melted in the skillet.



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# MARYANN ZEPPELLO





# Staying active the key to a fulfilling life

Janelle Davis

In the city of Syracuse, where community spirit thrives, MaryAnn Zeppetello stands as a beacon of vitality and wisdom for seniors everywhere. Her story, filled with enthusiasm for life and a commitment to staying active, inspires those navigating their golden years. As we delve into MaryAnn's world, we uncover the secrets to a fulfilling life that defies age and embraces the joy of constant engagement.

## The Power of Staying Active

MaryAnn's philosophy is simple yet profound: stay active, stay engaged, and never stop learning. "It's crucial to keep moving, both physically and mentally," she explains. "Whether it's kayaking on a serene lake or diving into a good book, staying active is the key to feeling alive and connected to the world around us."

Her words aren't just talk – MaryAnn has lived this philosophy throughout her life. In a remarkable display of lifelong athleticism, she took up skiing in her 30s and continued to hit the slopes until the age of 88. Even more impressively, she was an active jogger with the Syracuse Chargers well into her 70s, a feat that set her apart from her peers. "Nobody else my age was doing that," she recalls with a mix of pride and humility. "But I never saw age as a barrier to staying active."

Her dedication to physical activity has been a constant thread throughout her life, adapting and evolving as she's aged but never diminishing in importance. Even now, at the age of 93, MaryAnn embraces an active lifestyle. She still enjoys daily walks and, when the weather permits, kayaks in the spring-fed lake right in front of her house at Erie Village. This daily connection with nature and physical activity is a testament to her enduring spirit and commitment to healthy living.

"During COVID-19, it became even more important to find ways to stay connected and active," she reflects. "I discovered that even simple activities like daily walks or video calls with family could make a world of difference."

## Nurturing the Mind and Spirit

For MaryAnn, staying active isn't just about physical exercise. It's equally about keeping the mind sharp and the spirit young. "I'm a firm believer in the power of puzzles and reading," she shares. "These activities pass the time and keep our minds agile and curious."

MaryAnn encourages everyone to find activities that challenge them mentally, whether it's learning a new language, taking up a craft, or exploring local history. "There's always something new to discover," she insists. "And that sense of discovery keeps us young at heart."

One of the most striking aspects of MaryAnn's approach to healthy aging is her emphasis on social connections. "Isolation can be a real threat to our well-being as we age," she says. She encourages fellow seniors to stay socially active, whether it's joining clubs, volunteering, or simply meeting friends for coffee.

MaryAnn's own social calendar supports this philosophy. From community events to family gatherings, she makes it a point to stay connected with others. "These interactions are enjoyable and vital for our emotional health and give us a sense of purpose," she shares.

## Balancing Solitude and Togetherness

While MaryAnn strongly advocates social engagement, she also recognizes the value of solitude. She thinks that it's important to find a balance. "Spending time alone allows us to reflect, recharge, and engage in personal hobbies," she shares.

This balance, according to MaryAnn, is key to maintaining a healthy and fulfilling lifestyle in one's senior years. She practices what she preaches, alternating between quiet afternoons spent reading or kayaking and lively evenings with friends and family.

A deep commitment to self-care and gratitude is at the heart of MaryAnn's philosophy. "Taking care of ourselves isn't selfish," she emphasizes. "It's necessary. When we prioritize our health and well-being, we're better equipped to engage with the world around us and contribute to our communities."

For MaryAnn, self-care encompasses everything from maintaining a healthy diet and regular exercise routine to practicing mindfulness and expressing gratitude. "Every morning, I take a moment to appreciate the good things in my life," she shares. "This simple practice sets a positive tone for the entire day."

## Inspiring Others Through Example

"Age is just a number," MaryAnn says with conviction. "We're capable of so much more than we often give ourselves credit for. It's never too late to start something new or to pursue a passion."

"I've always believed that staying active is key to a fulfilling life," MaryAnn reflects. "It's not about competing with others or even with your younger self. It's about finding joy in movement, in learning and in engaging with the world around you."

Her approach to life serves as a powerful example for seniors everywhere. It shows that with determination, a positive attitude and a willingness to adapt, one can continue to lead a rich, active life well into their golden years. MaryAnn's story can encourage others to view aging not as a limitation, but as an opportunity for new experiences and continued growth.

## Looking to the Future

As MaryAnn looks to the future, she remains excited about the possibilities that lie ahead. "Life is an adventure at any age," she declares. "There's always something new to learn, someone new to meet, or a new challenge to overcome."

MaryAnn Zeppetello's journey is a testament to the fact that with the right mindset, a commitment to staying active, and a willingness to engage with the world around us, our golden years can truly be some of the best of our lives.

MaryAnn's last piece of advice: "Embrace every day with curiosity and gratitude. Stay active, stay connected, and never stop exploring. That's the secret to a life well-lived, no matter your age." SWM

# Go Red turns 20

Kristy Smorol

Women are not simply smaller men. Women's health needs to be addressed differently. For decades, heart disease was considered a man's disease, but the reality is, heart disease is women's greatest health threat. Twenty years ago, the American Heart Association created the Go Red for Women movement to help empower women to take charge of their health.

2024 marks the 20th anniversary of Go Red for Women. For two decades, Go Red for Women has been saving and improving lives by advancing equitable research and care, advocating for inclusive health policies and raising awareness. Over the past 20 years, Go Red for Women has expanded its reach and impact. The movement has become part of pop culture and has even gone global. Go Red is now in more than 50 countries.

In 2004, as part of the first year of the movement, the American Heart Association published the first set of evidence-based guidelines for the prevention of cardiovascular disease in women. The guidelines were published in the inaugural Go Red for Women special addition of the AHA journal *Circulation*. There are significant biological differences between men and women.

Unfortunately, women continue to be underrepresented in research. Historically, clinical trials have not included enough women, particularly women of color.

As of 2020, only 38% of cardiovascular

clinical research trial participants were women. In 2019, the American Heart Association launched Research Goes Red to help increase the number of women participating in cardiovascular research. Go Red for Women's impact on research, both for participants and female researchers themselves, is part of the movement's legacy.

Recently, Go Red for Women has broadened its focus to address critical needs in mental well-being and maternal health. Women are twice as likely to be diagnosed with depression, which can impact cardiovascular health. The U.S. has one of the worst maternal mortality rates among developed countries and heart disease is the No. 1 killer of new moms. Women's cardiovascular health is influenced by biological differences rooted in unique life stages like pregnancy and menopause. Go Red for Women is working to support women's health at every age and stage of life by advocating for more equitable health care to help close gaps in education, resources and support.

Next month, the American Heart Association will celebrate 20 years of Go Red for Women here in Syracuse. The annual Go Red for Women Luncheon on October 17th will recognize the legacy and



Kristy Smorol

impact of the movement, while celebrating the work being done locally.

The Go Red for Women movement in Central New York has brought thousands of women and men together over the past 20 years. Go Red volunteers have created programs focused on health equity; advocated for lifesaving policies including pulse oximetry tests for newborns, requiring Hands-Only CPR training for high school graduation and raising the smoking age to 21; raised millions of dollars to help save women's lives and worked to create a healthier community.

"Serving as the Syracuse Go Red for Women Campaign Chairperson has truly been an honor and one of those times in life when you feel like something is coming full circle," said Heather Drake Bianchi, chairwoman of the 2024 Go Red for Women campaign and CEO of Drakos Dynamics. "Making sure the community has access to AEDs is a cause that's especially close to my heart because

as a paramedic, I saw firsthand how lives are saved with readily accessible AEDs. As research from the American Heart Association shows, early electrical intervention is by far what saves the most lives. Every second counts, and time is heart muscle."

Drake Bianchi's passion for emergency cardiac care highlights another important element of women's cardiovascular health. Women are less likely to receive



Heather Drake Bianchi

bystander CPR than men, and men have 23% higher odds of surviving a sudden cardiac arrest than women. Black and Hispanic women are even less likely to receive CPR.

The Go Red for Women movement is working to raise awareness of these facts and teach more people Hands-Only CPR. During the Syracuse Go Red for Women Luncheon last year, the American Heart Association held a live demonstration for the crowd of nearly 400 people, adding them all to a Nation of Lifesavers that can respond to a cardiac emergency.

"The Go Red Campaign offers an opportunity to come together to make a difference for each generation, for all of the daughters, moms, grandmothers and great-grandmothers in our lives," said Drake Bianchi. "I would love for as many people as possible to learn why it's important to contribute to this cause. It's not just about this year's event – it's about our future." *SWM*

*Kristy Smorol is the communications director for the American Red Cross of Central and Western New York. To learn more about the upcoming Go Red for Women luncheon, visit [heart.org/goredsyracuse](http://heart.org/goredsyracuse).*

# 20 Years of Go Red for Women



**2004-2005**

## Launching a Movement

Go Red for Women officially launches in 2004, and within a year, over 70 Go Red for Women Luncheons are held nationwide, raising \$7 million. Twenty years later, over 150 signature Go Red for Women events are held annually, collectively raising more than \$700 million for women's cardiovascular health.



**2006 - Going Global**

Go Red for Women goes global with its first international license. Today, Go Red for Women is licensed in over 50 countries supporting over 55 sister societies. Licensees can develop their own women's heart health initiative and benefit from Go Red for Women's strong brand reputation and resources.

**2007 - 2013 - Innovating to Meet Women's Needs**

Go Red for Women continues efforts to support women taking charge of their heart health and expanding our reach by creating a robust presence on social media, stepping into pop culture, advocating for public health policies for women and addressing inequities. To help shine a spotlight on the real challenges women living with heart disease and stroke, the Go Red for Women Real Women Class of Survivors campaign launches in 2008 to highlight stories of everyday women surviving and thriving.



**2014 - Iconic Red Dress Collection**

Go Red for Women begins hosting the iconic Red Dress Collection in February to kick-off American Heart Month, bringing together powerful voices to amplify a singular message - cardiovascular disease is the number one killer of women. Today this annual event where entertainment, fashion, health and philanthropy collide for a common cause, continues to generate billions of media impressions driving significant public awareness and engagement.



**2015-2016 - Launching Lifesaving Research**

The American Heart Association launches its first Strategically Focused Research Network (SFRN). The Go Red for Women SFRN focuses on five centers studying key women's health issues. The SFRN's findings were published in 2021 as well as expanded to continue research in critical areas including stress, sedentary behavior, poor sleep, pregnancy and heart failure.



**2017-2018 Current and Future Women Leaders**

STEM Goes Red is launched to engage young, diverse girls in STEM careers, addressing a troubling issue around the underrepresentation of women in STEM fields. In addition, the Go Red for Women National Leadership Council is established and recruits influential women executive leaders from some of the largest companies in the U.S. including CVS Health, Amazon and Big Lots to help guide Go Red for Women into the future.

**2019 - Engaging More Women in Research**

Research Goes Red launches to increase the number of women participating in cardiovascular research with the goal of creating the world's largest and most engaged women's health registry and platform for research. Today, more than 22,000 women (about the seating capacity of Madison Square Garden) have consented to participate, resulting in multiple scientific publications.



**2020-2023 - Addressing Critical Needs**

Go Red for Women broadens its focus to maternal health and moms, mental wellbeing in women and research including launching new studies through Research Goes Red, establishing new campaigns for moms like My Health is Our Health, and deepening our work in community health with a focus on improving health outcomes in women. In addition, Go Red for Women launches new peer-to-peer fundraising campaigns: Woman of Impact and Teen of Impact engaging over 500 participants and raising more than \$5 million annually.



**Today**

As Go Red for Women celebrates its 20th year alongside the American Heart Association's centennial celebration, we will continue to walk hand in hand with women across the country and around the world in an effort to save more lives of women everywhere. Why? Because losing even one woman to cardiovascular disease is too many.

## Manlius Girl Scout earns top award



Olivia Barnhart

GSNYPENN is proud to announce that Gold Award Girl Scout Olivia Barnhart of Manlius is the Girl Scouts NYPENN council's recipient of the 2024 GSUSA Gold Award Scholarship for her outstanding community-based project, "Informing and Educating My Community on Mental Health and the Resources Available."

Olivia, a June 2024 graduate of Fayetteville-Manlius High School, was awarded \$5,000 to help defray her college costs.

"Thirteen years in Girl Scouts has shown me how to embody empathy, contribute to the greater good of the world and maintain a strong work ethic," she says.

Nationally, GSUSA recognized close to 3,000 members of the 2024 Gold Award Girl Scout Class who contributed more than a quarter of a million hours and invested over \$1.6M toward creating take action projects with long-term solutions to community issues they're passionate about including education, children's issues, health, environment and sustainability, life skills and more.

Olivia's Gold Award project addressed the stigma around mental health and the lack of knowledge of mental health services in her community by making support materials and resources more obtainable. She worked closely with her Gold Award project advisor William DeSantis, a mental health educator through Contact Community Services at F-M Schools. Her target audience was middle-high school students and families in her school district and the wider community.

Olivia offered her audience mental health support by creating a pamphlet and an accompanying online document. Her pamphlet outlined healthy ways for students to cope with stress and her online document summarized mental health resources available on her school district's website and through Onondaga County.

Olivia made her materials accessible to the community by tabling at school events including freshman parent orientation night and the high school's open house and activities fair. To help reduce peer pressure and further destigmatize mental health, she also distributed Pura Vida mental health awareness bracelets and had honest discussions with her peers and fellow students.

"Through my Gold Award project, my leadership, communication and multitasking abilities strengthened. Girl Scouts has prepared me for the next chapter of my life by shaping me into the person I am today and allowing me to build lifelong connections I'll rely on moving forward," says Olivia.

"The Gold Award is one of the highest honors our Girl Scouts can achieve, through which they address issues that today's teenagers feel are most prevalent in our world," says GSNYPENN CEO Julie Dale. "We are incredibly proud of Olivia and her accomplishments."

## Local artist opens new gallery



Karen Tashkovski

Syracuse artist Karen Tashkovski has opened an art gallery inside AFL STUDIO, a hair salon located at 301 E. Seneca Street, Manlius. Current hours for the salon are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

The artwork currently on display and for sale is from three different decades of Tashkovski's career: the Target paintings, 36" x 36" oil & collage (from 1997),

the Talisman series, 18" x 24" oil & collage paintings (2008) and the new (2024) Arcadia series, 9" x 12" encaustic & collage paintings, as well as small heart encaustics that rest on display stands (included).

Tashkovski will also be involved in the Cazenovia Art Trail from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on September 28th and 29th, 2024 stationed at the American Legion Hall, 26 Chenango Street, Cazenovia, NY 13035. There will be art for sale at this venue from five artists (Tashkovski included) plus food trucks in the parking lot. The Cazenovia Art Trail is a yearly event where Cazenovia-based artists open their home studios to visitors.

In addition, Tashkovski will exhibit twenty-four encaustic & collage paintings in a show titled Bungalow at the East Syracuse Free Library, 4990 James Street, East Syracuse, during October and November 2024 with an art reception on Thursday, October 17 from 4:45 to 6:45 p.m.

Tashkovski used a metal detector to hunt for treasure in the backyard of her one-hundred-twenty-four-year-old bungalow. She incorporated the finds into the collage element of these encaustic paintings (encaustic is a combination of oil paint and beeswax).

Tashkovski is a graduate of Syracuse University (BFA in fashion design & studio art, 1985; MS in art education, 1993). She lives in East Syracuse. For more information, visit [www.karentash.com](http://www.karentash.com).

## Weidman to take helm of AURORA of CNY



Kate Weidman

AURORA of CNY has announced the appointment of Kate Weidman as deputy executive director. Weidman will transition into the role of executive director following the retirement of current Executive Director Debra Chaiken, ensuring a seamless succession in leadership.

"I am honored to join AURORA of CNY and to have the opportunity to work closely with Debra during this transition," says Weidman. "Debra has established a strong foundation for this organization,

and it is an honor to continue to build upon its successes."

Weidman brings nearly two decades of experience in non-profit management. She was most recently the director of compliance & training at Mosaic Health, a Federally Qualified Health Center based in Rochester. She holds a bachelor's degree in business and organizational management from Russell Sage College and a master's degree in organizational management from Sage Graduate School.

"I am confident that Kate will propel this agency to new heights," said Chaiken. "Her leadership and commitment to the people we support will undoubtedly drive AURORA to achieve new milestones."

Weidman will succeed Chaiken at the end of 2024, when she retires after 30 years of service to AURORA of CNY. Under her tenure, the agency saw tremendous growth including the establishment of The Children's Hearing Aid Program to supply youth with hearing aid devices and a pre-college skills program for students with vision loss. For more information about AURORA of CNY and its services, please visit [www.auroraofcny.org](http://www.auroraofcny.org).



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Friday Night Vibes**

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Where: Epicuse, Downtown Syracuse.

When: 5 to 9 p.m.



**Sept. 7**

**Art on the Porches**

What: In its 26th year, Art on the Porches celebrates local fine artists and craftspeople, music, and the Strathmore neighborhood.

Where: Ruskin Ave., Syracuse.

When: 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.



**Sept. 7-8**

**Golden Harvest Festival**

What: Join for an old-fashioned country fair-style celebration featuring live music, games, crafts, local vendors, a pie eating contest and more.

Where: Beaver Lake Nature Center, Baldwinsville.

When: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.



**Sept. 12**

**Shrek Rave**

What: Cool is dead at this Shrek themed rave! Dress up, enjoy music and have fun.

Where: The Song and Dance, Syracuse.

When: 9 p.m.

Info: [www.thesonganddance.com](http://www.thesonganddance.com). \$15. Ages 18+.



**Sept. 14**

**Holistic Wellness and Spiritual Day Retreat**

What: Join for a day of speakers, workshops, a farm-to-table lunch and women's circle.

Where: Wyllie Fox Farm, Cato.

When: 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Info: [www.theintentionalfeminine.com](http://www.theintentionalfeminine.com).



**Sept. 21**

**Canine Jamboree**

What: Join for the largest animal rescue event in the North East! Enjoy adoptable animals from over 40 shelters, vendors, demonstrations and more.

Where: Jamesville Beach Park, Jamesville.

When: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Info: \$5 entry. Friendly canine friends welcome.



**Sept. 22**

**Westcott Street Cultural Fair**

What: Come to an annual celebration of the diversity and uniqueness of the Westcott neighborhood featuring art, food, organizations and activities.

Where: Westcott Street and side streets, Syracuse.

When: Noon.



**Sept. 26**

**Yoga at the Everson**

What: Close out the summer with out door yoga and a meditative walk through the museum.

Where: The Everson, Syracuse.

When: 5:30 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.

Info: [www.everson.org](http://www.everson.org). Register in advance. Pay as you wish. Bring your own yoga mat.



**Oct. 2**

**Women, Business, Opportunities, Connections Monthly Meeting**

What: Join the WBOC's monthly meeting for networking, education and support.

Where: Bistro 1926, Drumlins Country Club.

When: 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Info: [www.wboconnection.org](http://www.wboconnection.org)



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