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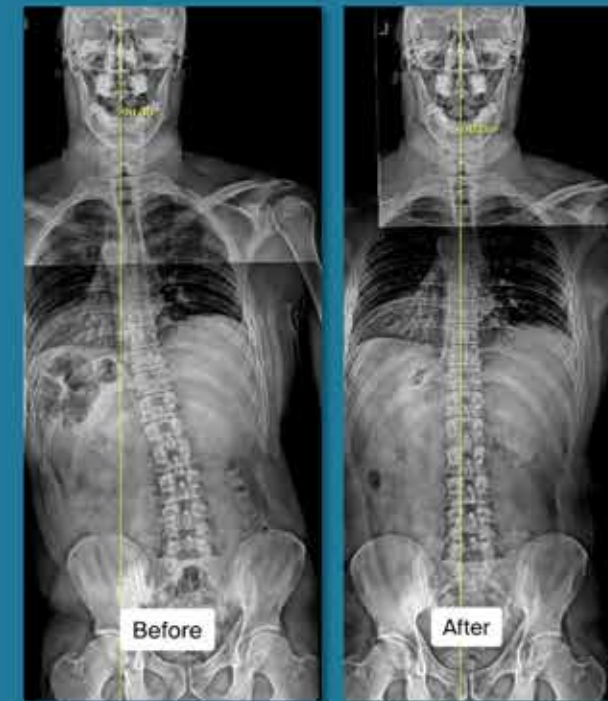
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Stroll Clarkson Valley Social Committee



Meet your *Stroll Clarkson Valley* team! We'd like to thank all of our writers for their valuable contributions to the magazine.



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We'd love to hear from you!

Our goal is to build community in the neighborhood by helping everyone get to know each other a little better and make *Stroll Clarkson Valley* the best it can be! Please let us know how we are doing. Do you have any article ideas? How about ideas on neighborhood events? This is your publication!

Want to write for *Stroll Clarkson Valley*?

We are always looking for community members who would like to take an active role in writing stories for *Stroll Clarkson Valley*. We currently have openings for resident article contributors and junior writers — kids who want to get involved, gain valuable experience, and/or build their resumes and portfolios! If you or someone you know might be interested, please email Bill.Tuttle@n2co.com.

New to the neighborhood?

Are you and your family new to the neighborhood? If so, welcome! Please send your contact information to Bill.Tuttle@n2co.com to be added to our event invitations and contact list.



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CLARKSON VALLEY
Living

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Meet Our Newest *Stroll Clarkson Valley* Preferred Partners!

Please take a minute to familiarize yourself with these local businesses now sponsoring *Stroll Clarkson Valley*. Not only do they make this newsletter free for all our residents, but each business is interviewed and evaluated before allowing them to come on board as a partner. Please support these businesses and thank them for supporting *Stroll Clarkson Valley*!



The Debbie Weber Team

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Debbie Weber is committed to helping her clients achieve their real estate goals. With over 20 years of experience in customer service and sales, Debbie is a proud member of the St. Louis and National Association



of REALTORS® and serves on the SLAR Diversity and Urban Affairs Committees. She is a member of the St. Louis Association of Real Estate Professionals, whose mission is to provide communities with exemplary real estate services via education, professional ethics, and cooperative economics. A member of the Agent Leadership Council of Keller Williams Realty STL, Debbie believes educating her clients is the best way to prepare them to make good decisions. Debbie's clients have consistently remarked about her ability to exceed expectations!

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Heather Swan has always dreamed of owning her own business. After two decades in the corporate world, she recently resigned and started working on opening a local yarn shop and launching the Midwest Fiber Festival. Heather's greatest excitement is introducing the fiber arts to those who have never experienced them. She will be hosting events for girls' nights out and date nights, as well as kids' classes. She will also be working with local homeschool, scout, and church youth groups. If this sounds fun to you, let Heather know!

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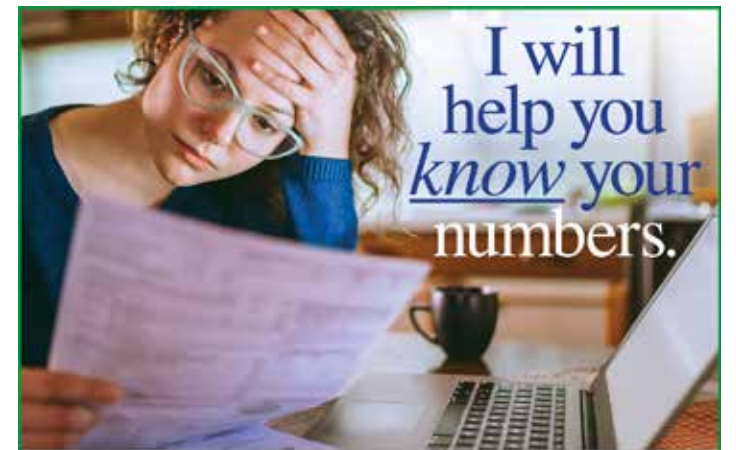
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ELECTION? READ ON...

BY CLARKSON VALLEY MAYOR SCOTT DOUGLASS



Some of you are smiling — maybe even gloating (not always a good idea). And you will enjoy saying, “the people have spoken.” From the other side, you can see the sadness and most likely hear, “if we/he/she led just” — well, next time. So, the united call of our elected officials is time to get busy and move forward together. Looking forward is what this article is about. The next municipal elections in Missouri are set for Apr. 4, 2023. In your city, this means there will be three (of the six) alderpersons’ positions on the ballot, along with the mayor’s position. Filing to be on the ballot opens Dec. 6 and closes Dec. 27. The necessary qualifications for these positions are:

Alderpsons (two-year term)

- 21 years of age
- U.S. citizen
- One-year city resident
- Ward resident at filing

Mayor (four-year term)

- 25 years of age
- U.S. citizen
- One-year city resident

If you are interested in serving in any of these positions and you are qualified, filing is easy. Come to City Hall (during the filing period); we will help you fill out the necessary forms, and there is a \$10 filing fee. There is a name that will not be on this ballot (April 2023); it’s Scott Douglass. I have had the privilege and honor of being your mayor (and the

only mayor) since our incorporation as a fourth-class city in 1989. Wow! It doesn’t seem possible — 34 years. I was 25 years old then (double haha.) Seriously, a tear in my eyes may have dropped on this page, but it’s time.

Let me assure you my commitment of 34 years remains the same — to be your mayor through March 2023 (Election Day: Apr. 4). So, let’s continue to work together and hand off the mayor’s position. Michele McMahon has made the same commitment.

There are many things I want to share with you. It’s a good time for you to look for those previous discussions we have had — yes, the ones you feel I haven’t completed or met my commitment to you. Let’s right the ship (or sink it, if appropriate). Call me at **636-394-8916** or email rsdoug@sbcglobal.net. So, it’s not the end of an era, not ‘til April 2023; it’s simply a heads up. Your city remains viable, and I’m looking forward to continuing in a stable existence to serve. Stay tuned.



Clarkson Valley Recycling Results
September Recycling Tonnage: 20.19 Tons

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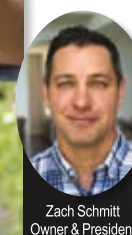
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A municipal election will be held in the city of Clarkson Valley, St. Louis County, MO, on Tuesday, Apr. 4, 2023, to elect a mayor to serve a four-year term and one alderperson from Ward 1, Ward 2, and Ward 3, each to serve a two-year term.

Filing a declaration of candidacy for said offices begins Tuesday, Dec. 6, 2022, at 8 a.m. The closing date for filing will be at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 27, 2022.

A candidate for mayor must be at least 25 years of age, a citizen of the United States and a resident of the city at the time of election for at least one year preceding the election.

A candidate for alderperson must be a resident of the ward from which elected, at least 21 years of age, a citizen of the United States and a resident of the city at the time of election for at least one year preceding the election.

Michele McMahon
City Clerk

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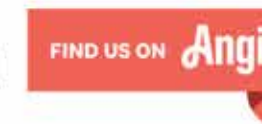


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MEET THE THEODOROPoulos FAMILY!



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Meet Chelsea, Ted, Connor, Clara, and brother-in-law Fred. They are the Theodoropoulos family! Let's not forget their beautiful mini Goldendoodle that goes by a few different names: Mimi, Molly, Doodle, and Meatloaf, but doesn't respond to any of them! This energetic family is originally from Charlotte, North Carolina. They moved into the Forest Hills neighborhood three months ago. They have fallen in love with Forest Hills because it is beautifully peaceful, and it keeps them present in the moment by slowing down their hectic schedules. They now feel like they have enough roots in St. Louis to call it home.

Chelsea and Ted are successful business owners of Burn Boot Camp and InfoDash. They moved to St. Louis almost five years ago based on market research to open up Burn Boot Camp after buying into the franchise. Now, they have four locations (#5 opening in 2023). Through their business, they have been fortunate enough to be able to give back to their community by raising over \$130k towards the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA). They also host monthly workouts for KEEN.

The Theodoropoulos family loves the outdoors. They enjoy camping together, and they are now on their fifth camping season. They appreciate visiting many of the local Missouri state parks. When they cannot get away, they are usually hanging out in their backyard while Ted is mastering the barbecue, their favorite family dinner, and enjoying a bourbon. Connor and Clara enjoy playing soccer. Chelsea loves reading, writing, and fitness. They recently went on a self-led barbecue tour of Austin, Texas, and this is tied with Yellowstone Park and Grand Tetons in Jackson, WY, as their favorite vacation spot. Their favorite season is fall, but their favorite holiday is Christmas. During Christmas, they enjoy a quiet day of board games, movies, and naps. The Theodoropouloses have become a St. Louis-loving family that cheers on the Cardinals, as well as the UNC Tarheels. They love all that St. Louis has to offer!

Get to know your neighbors better by having your family featured in the next available issue and receive a free mini-photoshoot from Jill Gray at Higher Focus Photography or nominate a family and we'll contact them! Email Ximena.Bolanos@n2co.com.com.



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Sully Brown & His Paw Paw

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Grandparent's Name: Robert D. Meyers
Nickname: Paw Paw
Grandchild's Name: Sullivan Barrett Brown
Nickname: Sully
Subdivision: Dunhill Farm
Age: 8

QUESTIONS PAW PAW ASKED SULLY:

What do you want to be when you grow up and why?
 A soccer player because I would get to travel the world.

What is your favorite family tradition?
 Christmas at Maw maw and paw paws because of the food, snacks, and presents, and we get to stay up late and sleep over.

What kind of chores do you do?
 Make my bed, take out the trash, take care of my little brothers, clean the basement, and take dirty dishes to the sink.

What makes you happy?
 Soccer games, getting good grades, my family, and family vacations.

Who is your hero?
 Nolan Ryan because my dad really liked him when he was younger, and he is very good at baseball, and he's very nice. He sent me signed cards when I wrote him letters. Also, Leo Messi because he is very good at soccer.

What's one of the things you like doing most with Maw Maw and Paw Paw?
 Sleepovers and going on vacations with them.

How many children do you think you will have? How many grandchildren?
 Three or four children. Six grandchildren.

What are you afraid of?
 Losing in a tournament (sports).

What's one way the world will be different when you're my age?
 I'll be famous.

QUESTIONS SULLY ASKED PAW PAW:

When you were my age, what did you want to be when you grew up?
 At your age, all I dreamed of was playing baseball. I wanted to be a professional baseball player for the Cardinals. I played all through little league, junior high school, high school, and into college. I played



shortstop. I did get invited to try out a couple of times for the Cardinals, Royals, and Phillies.

What's one way the world was different when you were my age?
 One big difference today is that electronics play a much bigger role in society and business. We did not have computers, cell phones, iPad, or video games which might be why I played baseball outside as much as I could.

Is there a story behind the name I call you? What is it?
 When my first granddaughter was learning to talk, she couldn't say "Grandpa," so we shortened it to "Pa." From there, it became "Paw" and then "Paw Paw." When you were born, my nickname was already established as Paw Paw, and your mommy always called me that when I was with you so you would learn my name.

What's your favorite memory of your own grandfather or grandmother?
 My grandparents lived in a very small town of 50 people in a remote area of Illinois. My memories of them are nothing but great. On weekends my parents, aunts, uncles, and cousins would go to my grandparents and spend the weekend (sleepovers). We would play outside all day while the adults would sit outside under the shade and play cards and talk. In the summer, I would spend weeks with my grandparents. My grandpa taught me to do chores, ride a horse, fish, and hunt. I remember my grandma making breakfast every morning of bacon, ham, and eggs. I loved my grandpa and grandma so much, and I think that's what taught me a very strong love for my family.

Generation conversation is a way for a grandparent and grandchild to learn more about each other and how the world has both changed and stayed the same. To be featured, email Ximena.Bolanos@n2co.com.



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- Christmas, December 25th
- New Years Eve, December 31st

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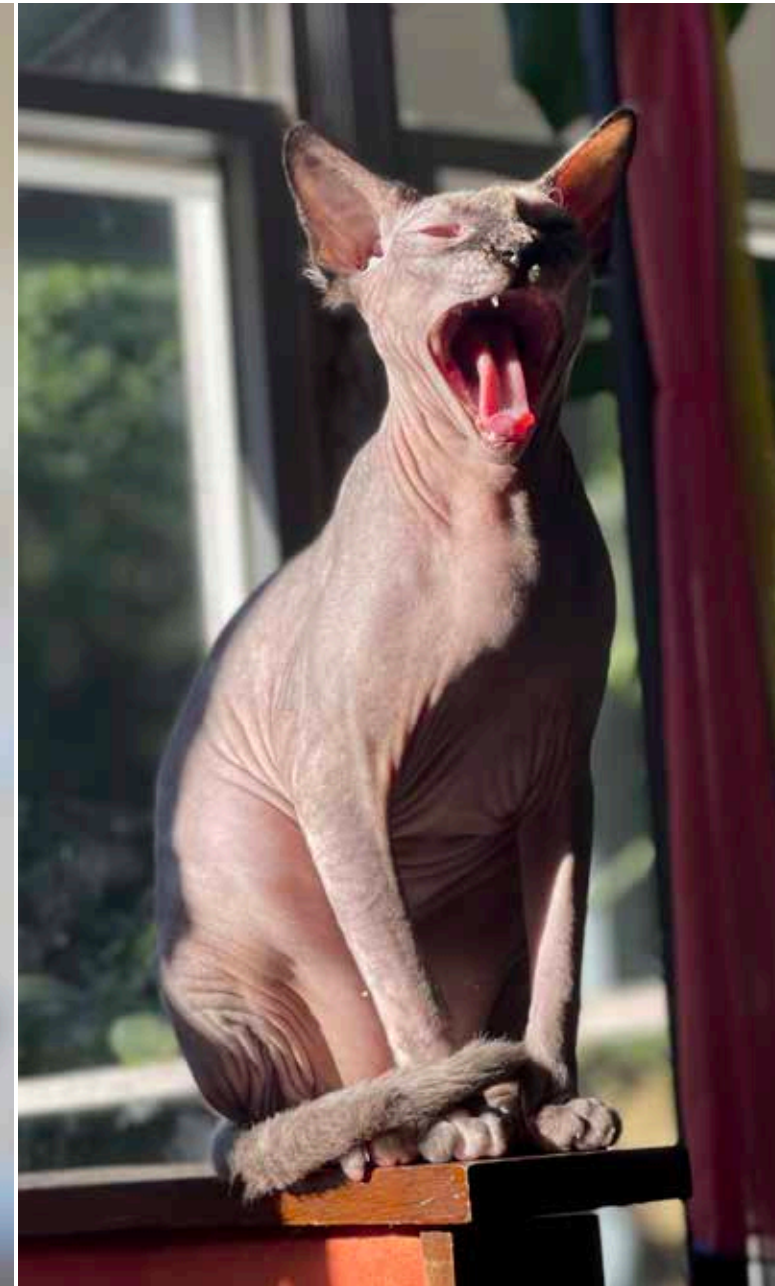
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Hi, my name is Pearl. It took my mom three days to name me, and she finally came up with Pearl. Later on, she wanted to change it to Oatmeal. Thank goodness she didn't. I love my name. I am a 1-year-old Sphynx. Even though I am hairless, I have a fuzzy tail and hair behind my right ear!

I am very high maintenance, a cat diva. I love to be pampered. Who doesn't?! My ears and claws need to be cleaned weekly. I also get very cold; remember, I don't have any hair to keep me warm, so I love to be under blankets or on the floor vents, especially during the winter. I also can't be outside too much because I can get sunburned. Being this fabulous isn't easy. When guests come over to my house, I make sure they know I am there. I want to be everyone's friend.

You could also say that I love to live dangerously. I go high up on the highest ledge I can find and just hang out. I would want nothing more than to just break out of the house and roam free. When my family leaves the doors or windows open just enough for me to squeeze through, I am free! No fear whatsoever.

Do you have a family pet we could feature? We want to meet them! Email Ximena.Bolanos@n2co.com.



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YEAR-END GIVING

As the year comes to a close, it is the perfect time to think about year-end giving. Particularly in the aftermath of a years-long pandemic, we can help those in need — necessary every year but now crucial for many nonprofits struggling to balance increased demand and decreased support — and, meanwhile, save on taxes. Year-end giving is a win-win!

BY SHAUNA OSBORNE

SUPPORT NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Charities and nonprofit organizations often rely solely on donations to fund their missions. Interestingly, according to Charity Navigator, half of all nonprofits in the U.S. receive the bulk of their funding during the last quarter of the year. Make the final months of the year count through giving; resolve to champion whatever cause is near and dear to your heart.

When you do, be sure to keep a record of your donation. Taxpayers must have a bank record or some sort of written receipt from the charity, which has the organization's name, date and amount of the contribution. Other acceptable records include bank statements, credit card statements or canceled checks.

Additionally, the 2020 CARES Act allows you to take a \$300 deduction for cash donations to qualifying organizations, which must have a charitable, educational, religious, literary or scientific purpose and be classified by the Internal Revenue Service as tax-exempt, even if you don't itemize.

DONATE CLOTHING AND HOUSEHOLD ITEMS


Do you have gently worn clothes or functional household appliances, furniture, furnishings or electronics that you no longer use and could benefit someone else? Why not donate them? If your charitable donation is worth \$250 or more, be sure to include a receipt (or written acknowledgment) from the charity, with a description of the items.

Don't let this holiday season pass you by without giving to those less fortunate. After all, **'tis the season to be generous!** Doing so will help others and help yourself when April 15 rolls around.

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IS LIFE INSURANCE WORTH IT?

Deciding if life insurance is worth purchasing starts with looking at what's important to you.

BY KEHRS MILL TRAILS RESIDENT
TANIA INTERIAN

HOW MUCH LIFE INSURANCE DO I NEED?

When looking to purchase life insurance, look at income, your family size, your home's value, the debt you carry and any business you may own. If you have a family, you'll want to make sure that everything will be taken care of, from their basic costs like mortgage, taxes, food, and clothing, to college in the future. What will your family need if you are no longer here to help support them? A simple way to determine the amount of life insurance needed is to multiply your current income by 10 to 15.

WHAT IF I CAN'T AFFORD MORE LIFE INSURANCE?

What if you've done an analysis of your needs, only to find out the premium isn't something you're able to afford right now? There are different life insurance options available, so it's a good idea to visit with a State Farm® agent to see what makes sense for you. Two options to consider are term and whole life. Then, as your income increases, you can reassess the life insurance you have — especially if your liabilities have also changed.

IS MY CURRENT LIFE INSURANCE COVERAGE ENOUGH?

Some people who have life insurance through work may assume that will be plenty for their family to live on — and that may be correct depending on your life stage. Other times the amount could fall short once you start to determine basic and future costs. Often, people will determine they need more than what an employer may provide.

COST OF NOT HAVING LIFE INSURANCE

How do you decide if life insurance is worth it? The most important thing to keep in mind is that it could mean you're able to take care of the people you care about for the rest of their lives instead of them losing everything.

Life insurance can protect your family for years to come if you are suddenly no longer here. If you have any questions or want to discuss more, please don't hesitate to call your "Good Neighbor," Tania Interian, your resident State Farm Agent at 314-822-5180, or visit gowithtania.com for more information.



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FOR YOUR FAMILY
The biggest reason people buy life insurance is to protect their loved ones. If you have a partner or a family and don't have life insurance, they could lose everything if something happened to you. Life insurance will help ensure your family will be taken care of if you're not there and allow them to continue their standard of living.
Most wage earners find it especially important to have life insurance as a plan B, but stay-at-home parents can benefit from it, too. If something were to happen to them, the other parent would potentially have added expenses, like childcare, house cleaning, eating out more, etc. Even if you don't have a family yet but plan to, it's more affordable the younger you are.

FOR YOUR BUSINESS
What will happen to your business at your death? Will your heirs need to sell the business to obtain cash to pay estate taxes and liabilities? Will your heirs and surviving owners work together harmoniously? As a small business owner, you may be able to use life insurance to help with an orderly economic transition.

FOR GIVING BACK
Some people are passionate about nonprofits and have chosen a charity as the beneficiary of their policy, so even if they're not around, they can continue to give back to their cause. "It's something that's dear to them, and many people decide it's important enough to protect."

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Connor O'Brien and Taylor Ries
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Marquette Senior Nathan "The Shark" Narsh of Kehrs Mill Estates wins Homecoming Spirit Captain!

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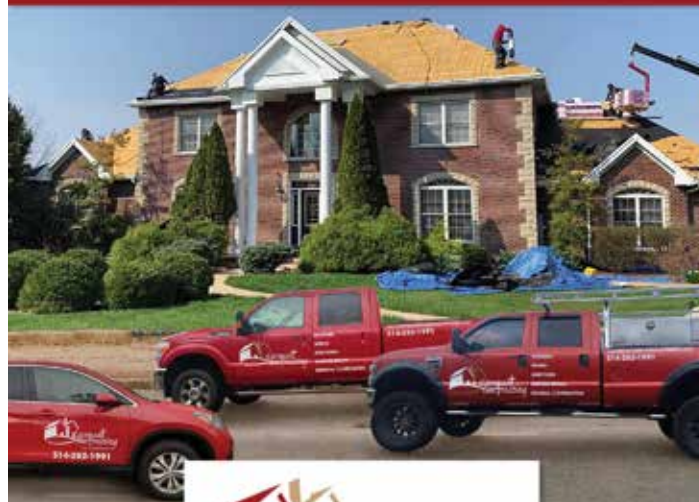
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Lauren Bickel

Attending the University of Texas at Dallas!

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VALUABLE INSIGHT FROM LAUREN'S MOTHER

When we started looking for colleges for Lauren, it was overwhelming. Lauren had a specific area of study in mind. In addition, she hoped to play softball. There was no process lined out that I knew of, and I felt like we could easily miss something important. When my husband and I went to college, it was easy; we had two large universities in our state, and we chose one. Now, with Lauren, we had much more to consider.

There were hundreds of colleges that fit Lauren's criteria. We had no idea how to narrow down the search aside from writing an essay on the pros and cons of each. With that many possibilities, that just wasn't feasible. We also had many questions, a few of which are listed below:

1. First and foremost, how do we determine which are the best academic schools for her area of study?
2. How do we know which schools have quality softball programs?
3. Which schools put academics before athletics?
4. Could the cost of some schools become more affordable with scholarships and/or a good GPA and test scores?
5. What size of school is right for Lauren?
6. Where do we start?

We knew and trusted Cindy Zelinsky as Lauren's pitching coach. Cindy played softball in college and also coached at the college level for many years. Therefore, when we



Eric, Lauren & Anna Bickel

discovered she was also a college consultant, we were relieved to know she could help us navigate the college process. Cindy started with a high-level overview of what we should think about first. A few of the topics she covered: budget, merit money, school size, etc. Then after helping Lauren narrow down the list to a handful of schools, she provided specifics we wouldn't have known to ask during a college visit, how to follow up with college coaches after a visit and pointers regarding applications and acceptance. She helped us through the entire process.

Now, less than a year later, although it was busy, Lauren has accomplished so much. She was accepted to the University of Texas at Dallas, her number one choice, where she plans to study Neuroscience and play softball. UT-Dallas checked all of her boxes, and my husband and I fully support her decision. We are proud of her for reaching the goal she set. Luckily, Southwest has multiple direct flight options to Love-Field Airport!

Lauren wouldn't be where she is today without her own personal drive and also Cindy as a coach and college consultant. We are very thankful for Cindy at Absolute College Consulting. I highly recommend utilizing a consultant as opposed to trying to navigate the college process on your own. In addition, I feel that college consulting will benefit all types of students, not just those wanting to explore athletics.

A QUICK Q&A WITH LAUREN BICKEL

High School and Graduation Class: Marquette High School, Class of 2023

College Attending: The University of Texas at Dallas

Area of Study/Major: Neuroscience

Clubs and Organizations: Softball

Throughout your college search process, what was most challenging? How did you overcome these challenges?

The most challenging part of my college search experience was forming my own opinions and getting an idea of what type and size of college was the best fit for me in contrast to popular opinions of well-known

private schools and large state schools being the only answer to success. Cindy really helped me understand the factors that were important to my personal journey versus looking solely at rankings and others' opinions. We devised my plan and research around my goals!

What areas in the college search/application process were you not aware of or prepared for? How did you approach these areas?

At the beginning of my college application process, I was not really prepared to write a college admissions essay and the different emphasis put on standardized test scores at each school. Cindy was very helpful in working through the writing process, assisting me with brainstorming topics and encouraging me to be patient with the process, revising my essay to write an essay that best represented me. I wrote my essay over the course of the summer, spending time brainstorming and digging deep into my personal values and interests. I worked hard to study and improve my ACT scores over time.



Calling all high school and college students! Do you have a story to tell about your high school experience or college selection/experience? We'd love to hear about it! Email Ximena.Bolanos@n2co.com.

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FOREST HILLS COUNTRY CLUB

A private event for Clarkson Valley living residents.

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Mike Rose with Mike and Tania Interian our local State Farm Agent from Kehrs Mill Trails



Bill Meyer resident of Dunhill Farm with Forest Hills residents Jeff and Chase Lottmann of Dielmann Sotheby International Realty

Recently, our *Stroll Clarkson Valley* neighbors, along with a few preferred community partners, enjoyed a social Neighbors' Night Out at Forest Hills Country Club. Cocktails, food, and conversation with live entertainment featuring Riley Holtz! The club is over 55 years old and, for years, has been recognized as the premier private country club in the West St. Louis area. Members enjoy world-class golf and amenities within a friendly and inviting atmosphere.

ALL BEGAN THE EVENING WITH A COCKTAIL OF THEIR CHOICE AND WERE ABLE TO ENJOY THE FOLLOWING APPETIZERS:

- Antipasto display — Cured meats and fine cheeses, hummus, grilled flatbread, baguette, roasted peppers, and dijon mustard
- Spinach artichoke dip with grilled flatbread
- Chips, salsa, and guacamole
- Sweet and sour meatballs
- Fried shrimp with remoulade sauce
- Asian-style ribs with hoisin barbecue glaze
- Grilled chicken sliders on a pretzel bun with apple fennel slaw, remoulade sauce, and sweet potato fries
- Assorted cookies and brownies

Known as “The Family Club of Choice,” membership at Forest Hills Country Club offers an exclusive private



Stroll Clarkson Valley Publisher Bill Tuttle with resident of Kehrs Mill Estates Elena Sordo-King, owner of King Homes



Mike Rose and Rachel Welch of Afflecto Media Marketing with Kailyn Killoran and Cara Smith from Performance Eyecare



Kehrswood residents Rick and Sharon Huemoeller with Rachel Welch



Bob and Susan Snyder with Gary and Carol Presley of Kehrswood



Dana and Diana Griggs of Clarkson Mill with Lucy and Corey Arbini of Forest Hills



Our entertainment for the evening, Riley Holtz!



Elena Sordo-King with Forest Hills residents Lee Reid and Butch Welsch of Welsch Heating & Cooling



Susann Kostors and Taylor Heaton of CycleBar Chesterfield

club lifestyle without pretense or arrogance. Members take great pride in the friendly, family-oriented environment where lifelong friendships and memories are created. Here's what a few of our neighbors had to say about their experience:

Elena Sordo-King (Kehrs Mill Estates and King Homes): “Delicious food and great service!”

Gary and Carol Presley (Kehrswood): “Great venue with beautiful surroundings and fabulous food selections.”

Susann Kostors and Taylor Heaton (CycleBar Chesterfield): “The food was fresh; they refilled it before it was completely out. Friendly service, too!”

Corey and Lucy Arbini (Forest Hills): “Outstanding food, friendly service and the cookies were crunchy on the outside and gooey on the inside!”

Butch Welsch (Forest Hills and Welsch Heating & Cooling): “Forest Hills is a great venue! The food was good, and I thought it was a good crowd.”

Dana and Diana Griggs (Clarkson Mill): “Great food with plenty of room to talk with many people.”

Richard Shea (Kingspointe): “Great food and cocktails!”

Rick and Sharon Huemoeller (Kehrswood): “The food is wonderful. The clubhouse is elegantly comfortable. The staff is very courteous.”

Cara Smith and Kailyn Killoran (Performance Eyecare): “We enjoyed the food, service, and views of the golf course, and the easy parking was a plus!”

Michael Rose (Afflecto Media Marketing): “Great food and a chance to meet people from Clarkson Valley.”

Jeff and Chase Lottmann (Forest Hills and Dielmann Sotheby International Realty): “The food was spectacular. I went back for three plates. Each dish was high quality and full of flavor!”

Tania and Mike Interian (Kehrs Mill Trails and Tania Interian Agency): “We enjoyed meeting new neighbors. Nice to have live music and relax after the work day.”

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Holiday Home Preparation

The air is crisp, the leaves are changing, and the holidays are just around the corner! The cheerful months of November and December always fly by, but a little advance cleaning and organizing can help keep holiday entertaining worries at bay. Here are a few home-preparation tips to make your space fresh, festive and ready to entertain!

BY SHAUNA OSBORNE

PREP APPLIANCES.

Prepare appliances for the holiday cooking overload with a thorough cleaning and inspection.

- Check the temperature reading with an oven thermometer to ensure accuracy.
- Remove all food residue and build-up in the washtub, drain and around the door of the dishwasher.
- Sharpen kitchen knives.
- Clean out refrigerator and freezer, checking for blocked air vents.
- Replace worn flapper valves on toilets (and don't forget to provide plenty of extra toilet paper and a plunger)!

ORGANIZE LIVING SPACES.

Focus on beautifying areas guests will see most, like the front porch, entryway, kitchen, living room and bathrooms. Stash away easily decluttered items, which gives the illusion of clean space (even if it isn't).

SAFEGUARD YOUR HOME.

Here, an ounce of prevention prevents a pound of cure.

- Always keep windows and doors locked.
- Don't advertise big-ticket gifts by putting boxes outside the home.
- Lock away all medications, firearms and household chemicals.
- Never leave open flames unattended.
- Utilize light timers to regulate electricity usage for decorations.

STOCK UP ON ESSENTIALS.

A few days before having houseguests, inquire about favorite snacks and drinks, and stock up on those items, as well as coffee, tea, creamer/sugar and simple breakfast items, like cereal, milk, juice, fruit and granola bars. Stock up on essentials like paper towels, tissue, toilet paper, hand soap and toothpaste to have on hand.

WE ARE PROUD TO SPONSOR THIS MONTH'S LIVING SPACES FEATURE

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TAKE INSPIRED ACTION



FIVE “FEEL GOOD” HOLIDAY HACKS

BY FOREST HILLS RESIDENT
CHELSEA THEODOROPoulos

Why do our fitness goals become less important during the holidays? I see first-hand in my own gyms how discouraging this time of year can be for many. We lose our habits and get sucked into a vortex of social gatherings. We think, “I have too much going on; I’ll just start at the new year.” But what if you didn’t? What if you used this time to work toward your goals without having to sacrifice the holiday spirit?

HERE ARE FIVE “FEEL GOOD” HACKS TO SURVIVE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON:

PORTION CONTROL

You don’t need a food scale to be successful — you only need your hand. This portable “scale” is proportionate to your body and gives you a general guide for protein, vegetables, starchy carbohydrates and fats.

- A serving of protein = palm of your hand
- A serving of vegetables = one fist
- A serving of carbohydrates = one cupped hand
- A serving of fats = one thumb



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EAT BEFORE YOU EAT

If you know you’ll be tempted by the sugar and spreads, simply don’t arrive hungry. Eating before the party will set you up for success by ensuring you get in a healthy meal which will limit your desire to pick later. Even better, show up generous and bring food that you know will satisfy you. Chicken kabobs or this nutrient-rich fall salad are easy to bring and appreciated by all:

- Mixed Greens
- Farro (Cook and cool completely before adding to your salad)
- Butternut Squash (Cook and cool completely before adding to your salad)
- Pumpkin Seeds/Pepitas
- Pomegranates
- Diced Apples
- Apple Cider Vinaigrette
- Optional: Chicken Breast

Note: This is not gluten-free. Swap farro for quinoa, if needed.

CHOOSE YOUR SUGAR

Be disciplined, not deprived. You can make good progress by choosing between alcohol and dessert at your next social gathering. Have a plan and stick with it. Sugar will not only hinder results, but it will make your body feel lethargic, create more sugar cravings, and (negatively) shift your mindset.

Tips: Pour sparkling water into a wine glass with a splash of flavoring. Wine substitute — no problem! Opting for dessert, grab a baby spoon. You’ll be surprised at how much slower and more fulfilled you are by eating less!

FIND A BUDDY

If you know you are someone who struggles with the holidays, find a buddy. Chances are, you are not alone. Keep each other accountable and focused on your goals without losing the social interaction that makes the holidays so enjoyable. Go for a walk (even better, Burn Boot Camp), share a mocktail, split dessert and celebrate each other’s wins! This built-in support will get you closer to your goals.

DON’T STRESS.

One party, one meal, or one day isn’t going to ruin your progress. Staying in a state of stress will only increase cortisol levels and further hinder progress. Stay realistic. Success is less about what you eat on Thanksgiving and more about your habits and consistency every other day of the year.



Chelsea Theodoropoulos is a resident of Forest Hills and the Owner of Burn Boot Camp in St. Louis. Through her gym communities, blog, and live events, she is committed to unlocking the potential in others for a healthier, purpose-driven life. For additional guidance or ideas on how to get started, email connect@chelseatheo.com or visit chelseatheo.com.

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CAPTAIN AUGGIE

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Hello, my name is August Beste. Everyone calls me “Auggie”! I go to Ascension Catholic School. I’ve been playing ice hockey since 2019. I play for the Chesterfield Falcons, and my position is right wing. My proudest moment is the first tournament my team won in Michigan during the 2019-20 season. The next season my team won a tournament in Louisville!

I also play soccer and flag football, but I like hockey best because it moves fast, it’s more physical, and I think it takes more skill than some other sports. My advice for younger kids is you have to work hard. If you want something, it takes a lot of work.

My goal is to play college hockey and move on to the National Hockey League!

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Early in October, Dr. Ryan Hewkin of Excelsior Chiropractic and his wife, Abbie Hewkin, held the first event with their newly founded charitable organization, The Excelsior Foundation. It was a perfect fall evening for a cocktail and hors d'oeuvres event at Wild Crush Wine Bar(n) to bring light and awareness to the darkness of child sex trafficking. Laura Baker of The Covering House presented, and Tom Ackerman of KMOX hosted a live auction. Proceeds from auctioned items and donations benefitted The Covering House. It was a wonderful evening and time well spent for an important cause.



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