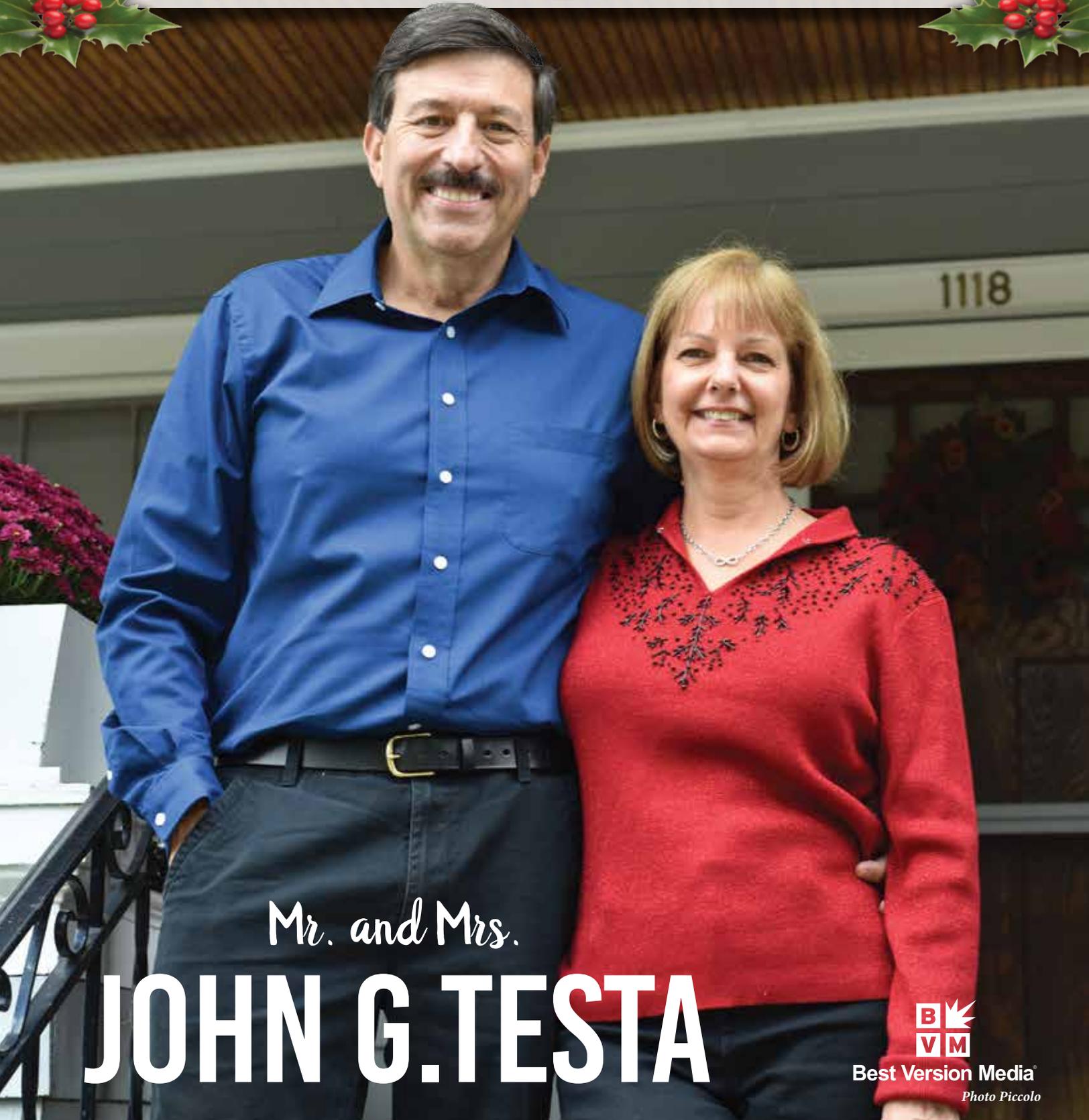


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# Dear Residents,

What an honor to have Mr. and Mrs. John G. Testa on our cover this month. I met John Testa during the winter of 2014. Does anyone else remember how crazy the snow was? I could not believe my luck when, as I was snowed in my office making calls, I haphazardly found a listing for the Lincoln Depot Museum in Peekskill, and John Testa returned my phone call. I learned that he had been a teacher in this area for many years, and also the former Mayor of Peekskill. When I asked him what he thought of the idea of a local print magazine, his words were encouraging. He said, "At the end of the day, people just want something they can hold in their hands." I have to say that I whole-heartedly agree with this sentiment!

Our "Charity Spotlight" this month is on the "This Is Me" Foundation. Lauren and Caitlyn Brady are the founders of this charitable organization that supports persons dealing with the effects of alopecia, as well as any sort of adversity in life. Refer to the article for information on their "Polar Plunge" this January! I met Lauren Brady at the office of the Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce's office, where she is the events manager. Her sisters Caitlyn and Jessica also happen to work at the lifestyle center of the Chapel Hill Development in Peekskill, where I live. Please enjoy the article and consider braving the icy waters this New Year's Day for a great cause.

For our monthly business profile, James at Raga Indian Cuisine in Croton-on-Hudson will delight you with his restaurant's wonderful cuisine and ambiance.

Also, please enjoy some photos from a groundbreaking event at the future (2018) location of Cortlandt Crossings. (across from Cortlandt Town Center on route 6)

As always, The Town of Cortlandt organizes wonderful community events and enjoys getting our youth involved. Please read the article on the Cortlandt Youth Breast Cancer Stompers!

And of course, we've got "Local Artist Buzz" Meeting so many local artists has quickly become one of my favorite things about living here! As always, please send your photos, contributions, and suggestions to: [sgarber@bestversionmedia.com](mailto:sgarber@bestversionmedia.com).

Thank you for reading and please have a wonderful and joyous holiday.

Sincerely,

Sonia Lee Garber

Publisher and Editor, *Cortlandt Living*



Photo credit: Sharon Irving  
Professional make-up service: Kerry Kourie of Stirranted Spa in Peekskill



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# THIS IS ME FOUNDATION

By Bruce Apar

## THE 'THIS IS ME' FOUNDATION LIFTS SPIRITS

**O**n any New Year's Day since 2013, if you happened to be at Riverfront Green in Peekskill, looking toward the Hudson River, you might think you hadn't fully recovered from the prior evening's festivities and were hallucinating.

Yet, even stone cold sober, your eyes wouldn't be deceiving you. Yes, that really was a large throng of people running into the frigid winter water in their bathing suits. They're not only fearless for doing that; they are charitable.

They are participants in the annual Polar Plunge, diving into its fifth straight year. It is the creation of the This Is Me Foundation, which raises money for college scholarships. This Is Me is an inspiring example of how a grassroots charity rallies people around it to lift spirits and raise money to benefit worthy individuals.

At the center of This Is Me are sisters Lauren and Caitlin Brady. Their story is powerful and instructive in how it demonstrates that from an unfortunate twist of fate can emerge hope and help for others.

While still in high school, the sisters were diagnosed with an autoimmune disease that causes hair loss. It is called Alopecia Areata.

On their website ([ThisIsMeFoundation.com](http://ThisIsMeFoundation.com)), there are stories from others affected by the condition who live as far away as California and North Carolina.

Those living with Alopecia write on the website of their respective situations and how they have learned to cope.

In one case, a 12-year-old boy discovers patches of baldness and becomes too embarrassed to go to school without wearing a cap all the time. Ultimately, he adjusts and perseveres. A varsity cheerleading captain says she shares the condition with her father, and endured the extreme discomfort of dull needles poking her scalp during treatment.

Although Alopecia Areata is "often a struggle to deal with," as the This Is Me Foundation's website says, Caitlin and Lauren Brady had the wherewithal to stay positive about it during their high school years. At the same time, they never saw a particular reason to openly discuss their condition outside the family.

That all changed in January 2011. While watching a nationally televised beauty pageant, the siblings were thunderstruck by the sight of one contestant, Miss Delaware Kayla Martell, removing her wig in front of an audience of millions. Ms. Martell announced right then and there that she had Alopecia, and intended to compete in the 2011 Miss America pageant wearing a wig.

That's all the motivation Lauren Caitlin needed. Their future mission was decided: Use the role model of Kayla Martell to in turn motivate and reward others. They are succeeding famously in that quest.



L-R, Lauren Brady, Samantha Tiley, Cait Brady

Within less than a month of watching the pageant, the sisters produced a 2-1/2-minute public service announcement (PSA) that they posted on YouTube. "The video was created to not only raise awareness about Alopecia," say Lauren and Caitlin, "but to try and inspire anyone who faces any adversity."

The video shows a sequence of upbeat, thoughtful young people speaking directly to the audience in rapid-fire vignettes. They identify a particular characteristic about themselves that may seem out of the ordinary, and express heartfelt sentiments that emphasize how important it is to not let any kind of abnormality

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get you down or get in your way.

“Love yourself first,” says one young woman, “and the rest will follow.” As Lauren Brady says at the end of the video, after taking off her wig, “We’re all different, and we’re all beautiful.”

Lauren Brady’s high energy, smile, wit and winning personality are irresistible, all of which carries over to the foundation’s work and its ever-broadening appeal. Her sister Caitlin, 26, is a dancer and teacher at Hudson Dance and Tumble Center in Montrose. She also is a freelance choreographer.

Their two other sisters are Kris Ann, who lives in New York City, and Nikki, a senior at Iona College.

Parents Ann and Joe Brady, Peekskill residents for 32 years, are well known and respected throughout the community for their selfless and endless volunteer work. Clearly, their children learned a lot growing up about faith, hope and charity. In January 2012, the Brady sisters began awarding scholarships through “This Is Me”, which is the only organization in America that gives scholarships for Alopecia. The college students who receive the financial support are “local high school alumni who have displayed leadership skills while having faced adversity of any kind or helped others through adversity.” Other scholarships are given to college students anywhere in the United States who have experienced Alopecia.

The scholarships are presented in honor of the Brady’s dear friends Ryan Risco (Peekskill High Class of 2002) and Cait Chivonne Polhill (Walter Panas High Class of 2001), “who left this world far too soon, but forever instilled in us their support and friendship.”

The biggest source of funding each year for This Is Me is the New Year’s Day Polar Plunge at Riverfront Green. It occurs at 12 Noon sharp on Jan. 1, 2017. The Plunge is sponsored by The Quiet Man Public House, courtesy of Chuck McGreal. Participants are required to register by emailing polarplunge@thisismefoundation.com. For more information and to donate to the event, visit [www.newyearsplunge.org](http://www.newyearsplunge.org).

Even if you don’t take the plunge yourself, spectators are enthusiastically welcome to watch the fun and cheer on the “brrrrave” bathers, chattering teeth and all. The This Is Me Foundation has a strong presence on social media, including the following: [facebook.com/thisismefoundation](https://facebook.com/thisismefoundation); [instagram.com/thisismefndn](https://instagram.com/thisismefndn); [twitter.com/thisismefndn](https://twitter.com/thisismefndn); [youtube.com/lmbent](https://youtube.com/lmbent).



2016 Polar Plunge – photo taken by Kristin D’Aliso Photography

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(l-r) John G. Testa, Matt Harrison, John Swagerty, Deb Milone, Linda Puglisi and Chris Conlon. Photo credit: Howard Copeland



(l-r) John G. Testa, Deb Milone, Linda Puglisi, and Chris Conlan break ground. Photo credit: Howard Copeland

## ACADIA REALTY TRUST BREAKS GROUND AT CORTLANDT CROSSING SHOPPING CENTER

Completion Slated for Late 2018. ShopRite Signs an Approximate 65,000-Square-Foot Lease and Serves as the Center's First Tenant

**N**EW YORK, NY – OCT. 24, 2016 – Acadia Realty Trust, a New York-based real estate investment trust, today announced that they have broken ground at its 130,000-square-foot Cortlandt Crossing Shopping Center, located at 3144 East Main Street. Marking Acadia's second shopping center in the town, Acadia, along with Cortlandt's Town Supervisor, Linda Puglisi, hosted a groundbreaking ceremony last Friday, Oct. 21 where guests learned that the estimated date of completion of the shopping center will be in 2018.



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“We welcome the new Cortlandt Crossing Shopping Center on Cortlandt Boulevard (Route 6),” says Puglisi. “It will provide more jobs, additional revenue for the town, school district and the County. Also, as part of the approved site plan, Acadia will construct a new traffic signal by Baker Street off Route 6 and will add other amenities, such as a sidewalk and decorative lighting.”

Located at 3144 East Main Street in Mohegan Lake, an enclave of Cortlandt, Cortlandt Crossing is situated on the north side of Route 6, approximately three miles west of the Taconic State Parkway and across from Cortlandt Town Center, the other Acadia-owned power center that includes retailers such as Walmart, Marshalls, PetSmart, Barnes & Noble and Best Buy. Expected to offer approximately 10 separate storefronts in total, ranging from 1,000 to 15,000 square feet each, noted features at Cortlandt Crossing include 816 parking spaces and extensive landscaping and hardscape, creating a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere for shoppers.

“Westchester County remains a vibrant and thriving part of the fabric of New York State, home to several local and nationally recognized retail brands,” stated Christopher Conlon, Executive Vice President and COO of Acadia. “Located only one hour outside of New York City, Cortlandt has evolved into a viable suburban development hub for Acadia’s growing retail portfolio. We’re familiar with the buying preferences and retail activity of our neighbors here in the Town of Cortlandt and look forward to providing a new destination to serve the needs of this community.”

What’s more, Acadia also recently signed an approximate 65,000-square-foot lease with ShopRite Supermarkets, Inc., a

wholly owned subsidiary of Wakefern Food Corp., the largest retailer-owned supermarket cooperative in the United States with more than 260 locations throughout the northeast in New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland and Pennsylvania.

“We are excited to announce the new ShopRite of Cortlandt at Cortlandt Crossing,” said Tom Urtz, Vice President of Operations of ShopRite. “We look forward to enhancing the overall shopping experience by providing our customers in Cortlandt and beyond with new updates and expanded product and service offerings, while continuing to provide the outstanding customer service, variety, value, low prices and convenient amenities ShopRite is known for. We also want to thank Acadia for their support.

Acadia was represented internally by Karalynn Holbrook for the lease transaction for ShopRite’s Cortlandt Crossing location.

For more information on leasing opportunities at Cortlandt Crossing, please contact Karalynn Holbrook of Acadia at kholbrook@acadiarealtytrust.com or by calling 914-288-8118.



(l-r) Sonia Lee Garber, Linda Puglisi, and Deb Milone hold up the November 2016 issue of Cortlandt Living magazine. Photo credit: Howard Copeland

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## JOHN TESTA STANDS THE TEST OF TIME

By Bruce Apar



One of Mr. Testa's classroom presentations discussing the Revolutionary War Soldier



On January 15, 2016 John G. Testa stops by Lakeland High School along with State Senator Murphy and Yorktown Supervisor Grace to personally congratulate the Lakeland High School State Champion Field Hockey Team



At the 2015 Yorktown Annual Electric Lights Parade. L-R: Kelly Slater, Santa Supervisor, Michael Grace, John G. Testa, Mary Capoccia, Matt Slater.



With Mr. Lincoln (Michael Griest) at the 2015 Annual February Lincoln Remembrance Day event held at the Lincoln Depot Museum.

John Testa wears many hats in his busy life, and he wears them all well. Don't worry. Nancy Testa, his spouse of 33 years, is well aware of it, and approves heartily. While making his mark with an impressive tenure as a Peekskill High School educator for more than three decades – he is in the school's Hall of Honor -- the proud Peekskill native also got himself elected – repeatedly – to a series of high-profile positions, including City of Peekskill councilman, three-term mayor of Peekskill, and Westchester County District 1 legislator, where he is in his fourth term, and holds the prestigious and influential position of minority leader. In addition to his personal history as an eminently electable official, he is well known in the community as a proud curator of American history, especially as it pertains to his home base. Around Peekskill and Cortlandt, John Testa is synonymous with history. That extends to the proud annals of his family, which has deep roots in the City of Peekskill that date more than 100 years to the dawn of the 20th Century. Renowned as a leading Lincoln aficionado, during his time as Peekskill mayor, he led efforts to preserve Lincoln Depot, Peekskill's original train station where President-elect Abraham Lincoln in 1861 stopped to address the community. He also is president of the Lincoln Depot Museum board of directors. Under his leadership, the United States Department of the Interior declared Peekskill a "Preserve America Community." Legislator Testa for 45 years has been a Revolutionary War re-enactor and member of The Brigade of the American Revolution. In that role, he lectures at schools and organizations.



John G. Testa and his family take a group photo with the Castlebar Government.

Even when traveling, the Testas pursue their passion for the rich legacy of Americana. They recently visited sites in historic Wilmington, North Carolina, and in South Carolina. In 2006, they travelled the west coast region of Ireland. On that sojourn, John Testa made his own history by becoming the first and only Mayor of Peekskill to make an official visit to Castlebar in County Mayo. He was reciprocating the annual visit to Peekskill every St. Patrick's Day by officials of Castlebar, which became Peekskill's twin city in 2000. The Testas met as students at SUNY Oswego. Nancy, who grew up in West Nyack, has worked at Field Library since 1998, first in circulation, and currently in technical services. Prior to that, she was at IBM in East Fishkill for 10 years.

Mr. Testa's forebears settled in Peekskill in 1900 on South Street. The house he and Nancy have lived in for 32 years has been in the Testa family since 1940. And the couple's not going anywhere: "We have restored the entire structure, inside and out and continue to do so," he says. "We were honored to receive a City of Peekskill Historic Preservation Plaque for the restoration work we have done and proudly display the plaque on the front of our home."

The house is located directly across from 200-acre Depew Park, which "adds a special touch to our daily living," enthuses John. "I grew up only two blocks away, so it was wonderful to see my children get to experience the park while growing up, as I did." John, Jr. is an electrical engineer in Nyack. Daughter Kathryn (Katy) is a bank teller in Glens Falls (N.Y.). John, Sr. and Nancy look with filial pride and anticipation to Katy's wedding in October 2017. For 17 years, the Testa family included Cinnamon the cat, which died in 2015. Now, says John, "We are true empty nesters."

He grew up two blocks from their current home, and couldn't be more comfortable in the surroundings: "Our neighborhood maintains the small-town feel, with friendly and considerate neighbors."

The energetic public servant also has coached soccer, golf and little league. What about civic organizations, you ask? Well, name one. Better yet, you can name almost all of them. Chances

are John Testa once was or now is a member, from the Elks, (where John's grandfather also belonged), to the Lincoln Society (John is a past president), to Peekskill Fire Patrol, to Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce, to Peekskill Museum, to Christopher Columbus Society, where his great-grandfather was a founding member. He also was a 14-year trustee for Westchester Community College, during which time he helped expand the satellite campus in Peekskill. Mr. Testa is a longtime advocate for the arts in Westchester, earning him an award for "Advancing the Arts in Westchester" in 2004 from the Westchester Arts Council (now ArtsWestchester). Among the local landmarks that came to life through his advocacy are Peekskill Stadium, Peekskill Art Lofts, Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art, and Paramount Center for the Arts' \$1 million restoration.

For more information on Westchester County Legislator John Testa, visit [JohnGTesta.com](http://JohnGTesta.com).



John G. Testa Presents the Mayor of Castlebar, County Mayo, Ireland a photo of the Peekskill Riverfront.



Teaming up with a bi-partisan group of colleagues from the region against the proposed Coast Guard Barge Anchorage project.



Presenting Ray Blue of the Cross Cultural Connection organization a proclamation celebrating their 10th Anniversary in 2015.

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# RAGA: INDIAN CUISINE SPICES UP CROTON

By Bruce Apar

“If music be the food of love, play on!” That Shakespeare guy sure knew how to cook up some juicy dialogue. At Raga Indian Cuisine, Croton’s first Indian restaurant, the aromatic spices and symphony of flavors blend in perfect harmony to orchestrate mouth-watering meals for patrons. Raga’s extensive menu of authentic Indian cuisine encompasses spicy, sweet, and every flavor in between. “Raga refers to a pattern of notes, accompanied by all the intervals, rhythms, and embellishments that fuse into music,” explains the restaurant’s owner James Kadavil. “Most often, raga is used in reference to improvisation. Indian food is a lot like that – it’s all about going against the grain and finding the perfect blend of spices and flavors for each dish.”

He goes on to say that, “At Raga, we want to go above and beyond the classic motifs of Indian food and get creative, whether that be with halwa-and- rasmalai birthday cakes, strawberry-and-mango lassis, or customer favorite chick tikka masala, hariyali kabab, or our special tandoori lamb chops.”

Music is more than merely a metaphor for food at Raga. Classical Indian music, featuring instruments like the sitar and veena, can be heard in the dining room, enhancing the authentic atmosphere. At times, the kitchen might be filled with the sounds of more mainstream, Bollywood music. “Altogether,” says James, “it creates a bit of a medley. The rhythms make the day go by faster and with more fun.”



Mr. Kadavil has been in the Indian culinary business for 13 years, and says, “Through all the ups and downs, I love the experiences it has given me.”

Before Raga, he owned India House Restaurant in Montrose. The move a few miles south to Croton resulted from what he calls “some issues beyond our control,” plus the fact that many of his



loyal customers live in Croton.

“We have always been a family-run and family-centered business,” says James, “and believe in creating a comfortable atmosphere for everyone.”

His wife Agnes typically is behind the bar or in the kitchen



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**Raga**  
Indian Cuisine

handling take-out orders. Their 18-year-old daughter Raina likes to tease, “We all now smell permanently like Indian food.”

She is a student at Boston University. “We miss her,” says James. “When we visit, she’s always asking us to bring her her favorite chicken vindaloo, chana masala with extra spice, and an extra-large mango lassi.”

From the time she was six, Raina grew up surrounded by the business. She always sat at a designated table at India House Restaurant coloring and reading or doing homework, which led to her making friends who come in even now asking for her. “We like to joke that the only reason she has friends,” says James, “is because she bribes them to our house with Indian food.”

He says the restaurant has become like a member of the family, “from the take-out containers stacked in the basement to the paintings added to our walls when we cycle them out for new ones every few months. We also had a cat named Harry Potter until very recently, who had a special love for tandoori chicken and, after a year or so of pampering, refused to eat any meat that wasn’t spiced.”

James Kadavil radiates enthusiasm and joy for what he does. “There are two things absolutely wonderful about running a restaurant. One is that over the last 13 years, I went from being focused on the logistical aspect of the business to learning how to cook most of the dishes we serve.

“Over the years, we’ve had many, many chefs working for us with different ideas, tastes, and specialties, and different methods of getting each unique dish to your table, and I’ve been able to pick up tips and tricks from each of them. Sometimes, in a pinch, I’m even able to step into the kitchen, throw on an apron, and have a little fun myself.

“The second thing I love about this business are the people. You see countless kids grow up, celebrate birthdays, go to college, get jobs, get married, and have kids of their own. Sometimes you get a glimpse of someone’s life – from their pet iguana to the indoor pool they built and painted themselves.”

Couples dine at Raga to celebrate their 10th, 20th or 35th wedding anniversary. It has become a home not only for birthdays but for team celebrations, book club discussions, anniversaries of all kinds, or just to enjoy comfort food after a long day. Raga is conveniently located near the train station. In addition to seated dining, it provides both pick-up and delivery services for take-out orders. It serves a daily lunch buffet, and a special brunch buffet on Saturdays and Sundays, all set in a very family-friendly environment.

The Kadavil family thanks their customers, “the reason for our success,” especially those who stayed with them through the transition to Raga from India House. James wants everyone to know: “We love you for everything you’ve done for us, and here’s to many more years of delicious lunches and dinners with you! The only thing we love more than our food is our customers!”

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# LOCAL ARTIST BUZZ— MARGARET STEELE

By Sonia Lee Garber

**M**argaret Steele takes a multi-disciplinarian approach to tackling life's obstacles. In her "former life" Margaret Steele worked as a Juilliard, symphony trained, classical oboist living in Manhattan. When I asked her with wide doe-eyes what it was like to live and work as a professional musician in New York City, she giggled a bit and said, "Wow, that's a big question to answer briefly!" Ms. Steele performed in three to four different Broadway shows a week and toured all over the world with numerous performing groups. She also performed with symphony orchestras as a free-lancer. Margaret retired from her music profession in 2008, and, subsequently, moved to Peekskill in 2010. She goes on to explain that playing the oboe instrument

professionally is very physically demanding. (reeds, posture, breath, etc.) She also was not sheepish about admitting to the financial difficulties a musician can face, especially in this day and age, as "more and more scores have become digitized", she says. But she also adds that "classical music is so great that it will never die. It's just experiencing an ebb right now."

Currently, Margaret Steele is a licensed acupuncturist and Qigong instructor. She describes Qigong as (in addition to acupuncture), an ancient Chinese healing method that integrates and syncs the mind-body-spirit connection.



Margaret Steele during her magic act, adorning a blue costume by couture designer Jane-Wilson Marquis.

Acupuncture and Qigong are self-care methods I've not yet tried but am curious; the energy-cleansing nature of these practices intrigue me, and I enjoy listening to Margaret talk on these disciplines. When I asked Margaret how she would assuage any anxieties a newbie to acupuncture treatment may be having, she explains that she gives a demonstration beforehand to ease such qualms and that Chinese alternative medicine is a 2000 year-old clinical study; which "legitimizes" it in comparison to some of the more esoteric forms of alternative healing practices. On a side note, Margaret Steele's acupuncture clinic smells like aromatherapy heaven to boot! Call Margaret Steele today for any ailments you may be experiencing in regards to your mind, body, and/or spirit, and hear what she has to say.

What's a perfect complement to a thriving acupuncture practice, you ask? Well silly, it's magic, of course! In addition to working as an acupuncturist, Margaret Steele is a wonderfully talented magician and performer and has been working as such for over 25 years, having traveled the world with her magic act as well, just like with her music career. She's been busy- In December alone, she will be performing 16 solo shows at "SPARKLE" at Boscobel. <https://www.boscobel.org/event-registration>. She explains that her main client base with magic consists of children and family shows. I can assure you, however, that by having witnessed some of Margaret's beautiful magic-making abilities, hers is no ordinary kid's show! You will be transformed to a level of intrigue and wonder, and marvel at Margaret Steele's beauty and grace onstage.

Margaret Steele also writes and partakes in a weekly Improv class. She is a co-founder of the "EMBARC Embeccles" – EMBARK PEEKSKILL's Improv troupe that was formed just earlier this year. EMBARK PEEKSKILL is a 501c3 nonprofit organization based in Peekskill that was named: "Best Avant Garde Community Arts Organization" by Westchester Magazine in 2016. Margaret Steele was the executive producer of



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EMBARC's Halloween comedy variety show, and she wrote and performed in several of the sketches as well. She's also a member of the Peekskill Arts Alliance, Peekskill Rotary, and the Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce.

Margaret Steele gushes about Peekskill as a place that offers just as much as New York City, but with a close-knit and incredibly supportive community. What brought her to Peekskill was the artist live-work artist loft initiative; Peekskill has been home to her ever since.

Margaret Steele's proudest accomplishment is that since the year 2000, she has been studying and performing a tribute act based on the world's first great female magician, Madame Adelaide Herrmann (1853-1932), and in 2011 she published the (first ever) book on Madame Herrmann, entitled, "Adelaide Herrmann Queen of Magic".

I have really been enjoying getting to know Margaret, and feel that I can relate to her full story in many ways. In the end, she says, when discussing her entrepreneurial career paths, "I'm a survivor."

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# THE TOWN OF CORTLANDT YOUTH & RECREATION CENTER'S PARTICIPANTS ARE FUNDRAISING FOR BREAST CANCER AWARENESS & CURE!

A community submission submitted by the Town of Cortlandt



**T**he Town of Cortlandt Youth and Recreation Center's A.S.A.P. (Always Striving; Always Positive)

Leadership Club members and friends have been busy fundraising for the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer of Westchester Walk which is took place this Sunday, October 16 at Manhattanville College in Purchase, N.Y. Over 20 youth in grades 6th -9th from five different schools have been collaborating this past autumn to raise awareness and meet their fundraising goal of \$3,000! The youth knew that in order to reach & hopefully surpass their fundraising goal, they would have to get the community involved. They quickly went to work and came up with a slogan, "Stomp Out Breast Cancer", which gave them their team name "The Cortlandt YC Cancer Stompers", which in turn helped them to create their two logos (see attached). The logos were illustrated by A.S.A.P. Member Jacob Klein, of Cortlandt Manor. The logos were used for all marketing pieces, their team t-shirts and hand-made coasters. A.S.A.P. Member Kayla Campos of Croton-on-Hudson came up with the idea for the coaster which her family donated the materials for.

The next phase included developing fundraising events, collecting donations and selling breast cancer merchandise at Town Sponsored Events as well as outreach to the local businesses for store fronts to hang their flyer, counters to leave a donation bin on and gift certificates to use as raffle prizes. Together they were able to secure over 20 businesses to sponsor their efforts! (To view a list of all of our sponsors please go to [www.townofcortlandt.com/yc](http://www.townofcortlandt.com/yc)) The youth didn't stop there; they also created their own music video to spread awareness and continue their fundraising efforts! The lyrics were written and sung by A.S.A.P. Member Alex Turk, of Cortlandt Manor. Alex also did the beatboxing which provided the background music to the video. To view the video go to <https://youtu.be/tHRvUQayPL0>.

In addition to the team effort, some have also taken on the task of fundraising individually as many of them, like many of us, have a personal connection to this disease. A.S.A.P. Member Gabriel

Ardito of Croton-on-Hudson is one of several youth who has been sharing his story. "My reason for walking in the Making Strides event is to raise money in memory of my babysitter Mena. Mena took care of me when I was just a little dude. She died of cancer and I want to remember her by walking in this event." To date Gabriel has surpassed his individual fundraising goal of \$1,500!" With the event just days away the YC Youth have raised over \$4,000; surpassing their goal of \$3,000 and are still going strong! They are now hoping to reach a new goal of \$5,000 by this Sunday's event! The Town of Cortlandt Youth & Recreation Center is committed to providing youth with a variety of programs which are social, educational and fun! It is located at 3 Memorial Drive, Croton, next to the Cortlandt Train Station. For more information log on to [www.townofcortlandt.com/yc](http://www.townofcortlandt.com/yc), call 914-736-0498 or email the Director, Katherine Sclafani at [katherines@townofcortlandt.com](mailto:katherines@townofcortlandt.com) or Assistant Director, Offutt Porter, at [offuttp@townofcortlandt.com](mailto:offuttp@townofcortlandt.com).

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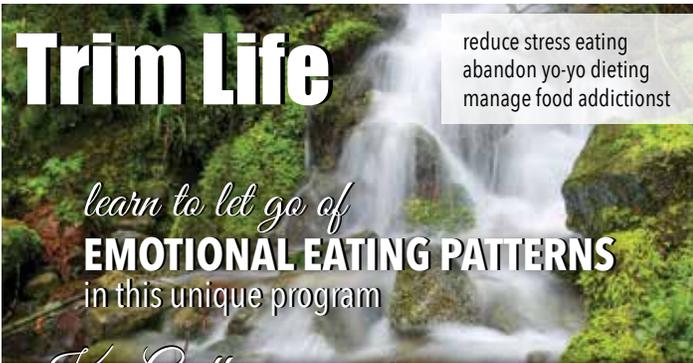
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