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DR. LEVI J. YOUNG

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Photo by Sam Atagana Photography

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INSPIRATIONS

Kameryn Furman: “Synchronized ice skaters are elite athletes!”

Ice skating is one of the most challenging sports, yet its beauty can mesmerize spectators into forgetting how difficult it can be. Add an entire team performing together and you have the breathtaking sport of synchronized ice skating. Coach Kameryn Furman is working hard to bring a national title to Kansas City.



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SPORTS: TEACHING LIFE LESSONS

Photography by Amber J Deery



There was never a dull moment in our house growing up. My sister, brother and I all did sports and rarely the same sport. We kept our mom busy every day of the week, shuffling us to and from practices in opposite directions and our mom and dad dividing and conquering different cities most weekends for meets or tournaments. I never once thought about how much time they spent or how they logistically got us all to everything, and on time. Now that we are doing it, I appreciate it so much more.

My husband and I now are playing the divide and conquer game to get our boys to various practices and games. There are some days that I don't know how we would do it if we didn't have the help of carpool as well. Some days are spent running around the house trying to get the boys fed, uniforms found, and sports gear loaded in the car with little to no time. I wouldn't change it for the world because, like me, they are growing up loving sports.

As parents, we will do almost anything to spend time with our kids. In our house, it tends to be finding activities and things to do to get them away from their Xbox or Oculus. We find ways to engage

with them, something that seems to get harder as they get older. We try to play basketball and baseball with our boys and that is something that gets harder as we get older!

I always dreaded that a drum set might be a gift to one of the boys. Yep, we got one of those and it was as bad as I could have imagined, but they loved it. I

wasn't too disappointed when we got to hand that down. Recently, we one-upped the drum set by putting a basketball goal in Quade's room. The dribbling and feet pounding are worse than the beating of the drums ever was, especially considering my home office is right below! It drives me nuts and makes it hard to focus, but I must remind myself that at least they are doing something together, exerting some energy and not on electronics.

Whether we are balancing games and practice schedules or listening to the aggravating noises of balls being thrown or bounced, memories are being made and life lessons are being learned regardless of the sport or games our boys are playing.

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Tammy

TAMMY CRYSTAL MCDONALD



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THE COLORS OF *Springtime*

BY ABBY WOOD

Spring has sprung, thank goodness, and the world appears to be returning to normal.



It is time to recharge your life and refresh your wardrobe. And what better way to freshen up your wardrobe than the addition of color? If you know me, then you know that black is my go-to color. But, for the first time in years I'm excited to add a little pop of color into my wardrobe, especially since I am in love with this

year's Pantone color of the year, Very Peri. This color is taking spring by the horns, and you are going to be seeing it everywhere.

I rounded up some of my favorite ways to add periwinkle to your own closet. From casual T-shirts to dresses to shoes and accessories, there is a little periwinkle out there for everyone. Happy spring! ♦



Abby Wood is a wardrobe stylist and style blogger in Kansas City, and her education in design plus retail experience make her an expert in fit, fabric, style and trends. Her professional experience in fashion began with an apprenticeship with a bridal designer, shifted to creating and showing her own line, moving up to management and training at a retail level and now professional styling as an independent consultant. Abby loves to help individuals develop and evolve their own sense of style.

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"Our mission is to heal and empower others by building self-confidence through loving the skin you are in," states Adriane Ritchie, owner of Advanced Aesthetics Medical Spa and Adriane Advanced Skincare.

Advanced Aesthetics Medical Spa has you covered in all areas. Not only is Advanced Aesthetics Medical Spa celebrating 12 years; they have been voted the #1 Medical Spa in Overland Park the last four years in a row! They are known for continuously bringing first-to-the-Midwest technology, using top-ranked, cutting-edge technology and their team of advanced skin care specialists. The elite customer service, expert skill level and unique customized approach are truly unparalleled. They continue to be industry leaders while constantly evolving in the medical aesthetic industry.

Their team specializes in developing customized, results-oriented skin health programs for the face and body. Your plan will be created with consideration of your goals, timeline, beauty budget and lifestyle. They customize every single treatment and every single program to provide real results, catering to men, women and teens.

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-Adriane

Adriane Ritchie, LE, PSC, CLT, owner and founder of Advanced Aesthetics Medical Spa and Adriane Advanced Skincare Line, area skin health expert, visionary and award-winning business and skincare line entrepreneur.

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CLIMB ANY MOUNTAIN! TIPS FOR HIKING FOR HEALTH

BY LISA BUTLER

Need a little more adventure? What about hiking? It can be relaxed and refreshing or strenuous and demanding. Depending on your needs, a good hike can put you in touch with nature or in touch with an elevated heart rate.

Taking a trek on the trails is more popular than ever since the pandemic; according to AllTrails, the largest hiking navigation app, the number of individual hikers in 2020 increased 134.7 percent compared to 2019. Hikes per user also increased by over 52 percent in 2020, compared to all the hikes logged from 2016 through 2019.

It's no wonder people are drawn toward the trails. Not only is hiking good for the body, but it's beneficial for the soul. The mental advantages of hiking include everyday stress reduction, a calming of anxiety and a lower risk of depression long-term. Physical benefits are plentiful as well. Hikers may feel more balanced and stronger while experiencing some weight loss. Regular treks in nature can also decrease the risk of heart disease, hypertension and diabetes. Whether you prefer to check out local paths or go somewhere away from it all,



getting started is easier than you might think.

GEAR

Companies are stepping up when it comes to producing hiking clothes that are high-performance and eco-friendly. Recycled fibers and newly engineered, natural materials are becoming mainstream in the exercise world, so hikers can rejoice. You can choose from many colors and prints, including those made with organic cotton, bamboo, hemp and more.

FOOD

If you plan on hiking less than an hour, you may not need to take food. But walking any longer may require some snacks to stay steady on the trails. Good options include dried fruit, nut butter, nuts, seeds, granola bars and other easy-to-pack favorites. Apples, bananas and string cheese are convenient, fairly durable and stay fresh.

After a lengthy or strenuous hike, a general rule is to refuel with protein. This is best consumed about 20 to 60 minutes after a workout or strenuous hike because it will help repair and grow muscles. Finding what works best for your body may take some time.

CHOOSING A TRAIL

If you're a newbie to hiking, finding paths close to your home may be the best option at first. After a few treks, you can search for different or more strenuous trails by checking options in your community or where you might be visiting. Look online for resources such as local parks and recreation, stores that sell hiking and recreational equipment, and hiking websites.

Hiking websites can be a wealth of information including if the path you're taking is easy, moderate or difficult. Some sites will also note how long the trail generally takes to finish, the best way to access it, where to park and more. This information will not only help plan the hike, but could also help organize the entire day. When choosing where to wander, planning is essential.

CONSIDERATIONS

How long will you hike and how far will you go? What's your fitness level? Check the information about the path. Is it doable? Too hard? Too easy, or like Goldilocks, just right?

The weather can make or break a trek if you haven't planned well. Know the forecast, temps and weather possibilities. Be prepared for just about anything with food, clothing and gear.

Know your trail! Awareness of the trail length, incline, difficulty

level and the type of terrain can help hikers feel prepared and confident. Making note of how far the path is from where you are staying is also important. If you're hiking with a group, it's a good idea to highlight these things with them, as well as where the restrooms are located.

Hiking can be exactly what you want it to be. Some hikes are suitable for family fun, while others can take your breath away in more ways than one! Put your trail shoes on and tackle hills and valleys to work those glutes and hamstrings or just be closer to nature. The paths and choices are endless. ♦

SOURCES: *koa.com and backpacker.com.*

GOALS FOR IT!

For any activity or exercise, goal setting is a process. Setting S.M.A.R.T goals is just as important for people on the trail as it is for those in the gym.

Specific: Make sure your goal is not too general.

Measurable: How many miles? How much speed?

Attainable: A smart goal should be achievable. The more you hike, the more your goals may change.

Relevant: Ask yourself why the goal is important to you and how it will contribute toward your long-term goals, such as a big hike.

Timely: Aim for a time period in which one hike or a certain number of hikes will be accomplished.

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With over 12 years of nursing experience in multiple fields, Mindy utilizes both traditional western medicines and non-traditional therapies like yoga, breathing techniques, meditation and supplements to optimize and balance hormones.



VEIN HEALTH, THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS HEALTH SYSTEM

BY DR. JENNY CHO

Q

What are spider veins?

A

Spider veins are dilated vessels within the skin that appear as clusters of fine red, blue or purple veins. These clusters most commonly appear in the skin of the legs, ankles and feet. Spider veins are often hereditary. In some people, spider veins can cause burning, itching and bleeding of the skin. Often, they don't cause any symptoms; however, cosmetic improvement in the appearance of the skin is desired. Sclerotherapy is the most effective initial treatment for spider veins. This treatment includes tiny injections of medication into the veins to make them seal closed and the color fade with time. It often takes a few treatments for the best cosmetic result.

Q

Are varicose veins a common problem?

A

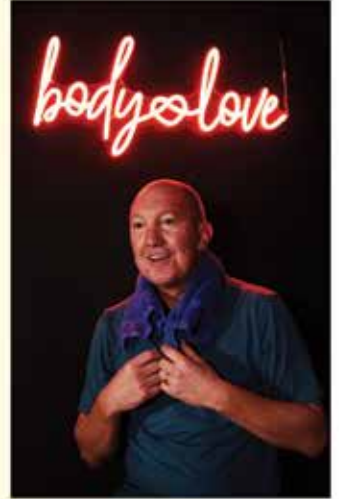
Varicose veins are a common problem affecting up to 25 percent of the population. Venous disease is often hereditary and slightly more common in women. They can develop during teenage years and are often a life long problem. Varicose veins are amenable to treatment to both visually improve appearance and help symptoms such as achiness, heaviness and swelling of the legs. Varicose veins are treated with minimally invasive procedures performed in a comfortable setting at our Center for Advanced Vascular Care. ♦



Dr. Jenny Cho is a vascular surgeon at The University of Kansas Health System. She earned her medical degree from the University of Cincinnati and completed general surgery residency at Good Samaritan Hospital in Cincinnati. She then completed a vascular surgery fellowship at Indiana University. In practice since 2010, Dr. Cho is certified in vascular surgery through the American Board of Surgery. She is also certified in vascular ultrasound interpretation by The Registered Physician in Vascular Interpretation. She is co-director of vein services at the Center for Advanced Vascular Care and medical director of Vascular Surgery Ultrasound at The University of Kansas Health System. Dr. Cho has special interest and expertise in the diagnosis and treatment of venous disease, arterial disease and bypass surgery.

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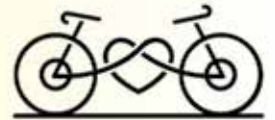
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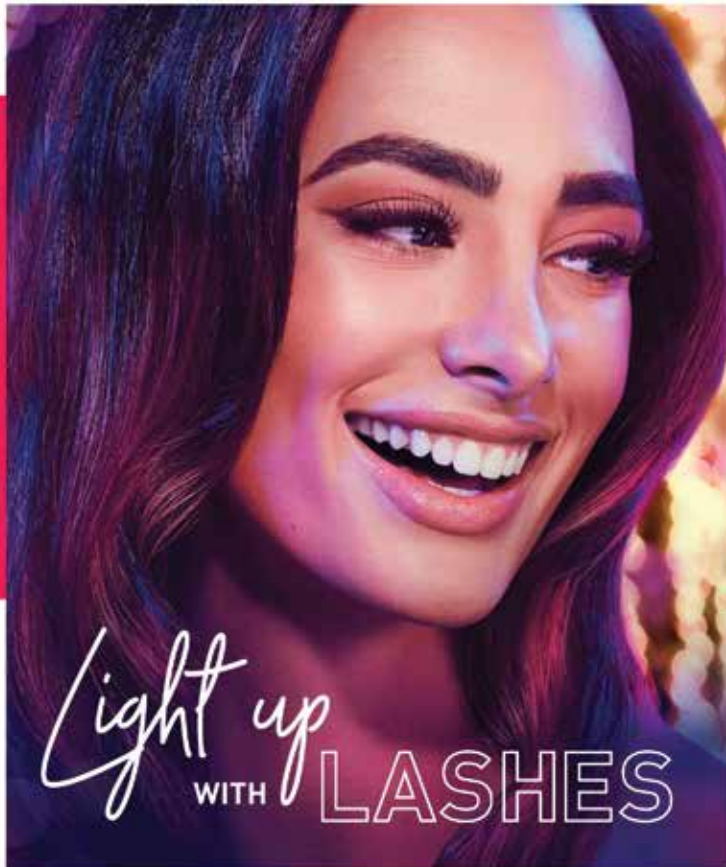


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FEELING BETTER IN YOUR OWN SKIN: MANAGING ECZEMA

BY LISA BUTLER

Laura's ongoing battle with eczema has been tumultuous at times. At the peak of her pain, she recalls how her whole body felt like it was on fire as she sat for over eight hours, in the same chair, trying to refrain from scratching her body.

A few weeks before, Laura had accepted a different position at her company and was in the process of adjusting to her new job and hours. While she was excited about the opportunity, she felt the extra stress. The anxiety, change of environment and having to adapt to a new lifestyle caused an extreme eczema flare-up, something she had dealt with for over ten years. While she did everything she could to avoid irritating her skin, such as wearing cotton, hydrating, trying not to sweat, she often felt hopeless. The scratching left her self-conscious and irritable. The trauma was taking a toll.

Laura's story is like that of many people. According to the National Eczema Association, 31.6 million people in the U.S. have some form of eczema. About one in ten individuals will develop eczema during their lifetime, with most of the occurrences peaking in early childhood.

WHAT IS ECZEMA?

Eczema, also known as atopic dermatitis, is an inflammatory skin condition that causes itching and skin irritation. Scratching the affected areas may injure the skin and raise the risk of skin infection. The condition may also negatively affect a person's mental health and quality of life.

Although there's currently no cure for eczema, early diagnosis and treatment may help limit symptoms, prevent complications and improve daily functioning. While eczema can appear at any age, it typically develops in early childhood; the condition may resolve with age for some.

TRIGGERS

Scientists believe eczema is caused by a combination of the



environment and genetics, but some triggers can make symptoms worse. When an irritant or an allergen from outside or inside the body "switches on" the immune system, it produces inflammation on the surface of the skin. This inflammation causes the main symptoms of eczema. Heredity also plays a role in eczema. A protein called filaggrin helps people maintain moisture in their

skin. If a person has a filaggrin deficiency, this may lead to drier, itchier skin or eczema.

Often, common household items are potential environmental irritants and will cause allergic reactions leading to an eczema flare. Additional common triggers of eczema may include extended exposure to dry air, extreme heat or cold; stress; ingredients in soap, shampoo, bubble bath, body wash or facial cleansers; laundry products; certain fabrics such as wool or polyester. Other irritants include surface cleaners and disinfectants, fragrances in candles and metals, especially nickel, in jewelry or utensils.

DEALING WITH ECZEMA

The best way to find out if you have eczema is to consult with a dermatologist or other healthcare provider that has experience diagnosing and treating it. While there is no cure for eczema, there are helpful treatments that can make a world of difference in daily life. Some are medical grade moisturizing creams; prescriptions, including topical, injectable and oral; over-the-counter products; phototherapy or light therapy; and natural and alternative treatments such as cryotherapy, or cooling the surface of the skin, and acupuncture.

For most people, knowing their own body can help control flare-ups. Understanding triggers and avoiding exposure are important, while being consistent in bathing and moisturizing habits is also helpful. In addition, using prescription medication and over-the-

counter creams as prescribed will keep eczema flare-ups in check. Experts also note that everyone is different, so one person's symptoms or triggers may not look like someone else's.

NEW HOPE FOR ECZEMA SUFFERERS

In January 2022, the Food and Drug Administration approved new drugs from Pfizer and AbbVie for treating patients with moderate to severe atopic dermatitis, or eczema, who do not respond to other treatments or when the use of other treatments is not recommended. Both drugs belong to a class called JAK inhibitors, which block inflammation-causing enzymes.

Late last year, the FDA also approved a new topical cream, Opzelura™, for the short-term and noncontinuous treatment of mild to moderate atopic dermatitis in patients age 12 years and older. A clinical trial used as the basis for FDA approval found that almost 54 percent of the teens and adults with atopic dermatitis who used the cream had clearer skin after eight weeks, compared with 15.1 percent of those who used a nonmedicated placebo cream.

Along with a doctor's advice and consistent skin care, some people may find inspiration by following eczema influencers on social media who share useful tips and ideas. Getting plenty of sleep and addressing stress can also help. Until there's a cure, managing eczema is the goal so we can feel better in the skin we're in every day. ♦

SOURCES: *nationaleczema.org, metro.co.uk, healthline.com and everydayhealth.com.*

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FACES WITH CARE

Passion. That is what Dax McLoughlin and Madison Jones have for their art, the art of permanent makeup for brows, eyeliner, lips and lashes, and the wide variety of luxurious facial procedures they offer, including dermaplaning waxes and masks. And the duo has fun in the hip, welcoming spa locale in the Crossroads. McLoughlin discovered it simply by driving around, and she loves being downtown.

**BY JUDY GOPPERT
PHOTOGRAPHY BY NICOLE
FIAMMETTA PHOTOGRAPHY**



She has plans to move, expand, and definitely stay in the Crossroads, where the spa has been for almost three years. “You want to come see us because we’re really fun!” Dax smiled. “The environment at Luxury Brow is open. We don’t have private rooms and that was done intentionally. I wanted everyone to participate in conversation, even with women they don’t know. Sometimes we get a little rowdy, but we absolutely love it!” Their target clientele is all women, from preteens and teens to seniors, and everyone in between.

THE BROW EXPERTS

Dax explains it was by happenstance that she entered this cosmetic industry. “About 15 years ago, I had my brows permanently done and I was so happy with the results and the time it saved me in the morning, I decided to become licensed in both aesthetics and permanent makeup shortly after that,” she noted. “I am originally from the Republic of Panama and moved to the United States when I was 16 years old. I’ve been back in Kansas City for almost three years and now KC cannot get rid of me. I absolutely love it here!”

Before moving back to Kansas City, McLoughlin lived in Western Kansas, where she owned a med spa for ten years. That is where she met Madison Jones, who became a client when Jones was in high school. “She nannied my four children for a few summers. When I moved to Kansas City, Madison was living here when I arrived, and she waited oh-so patiently while I built a clientele,” she asserted. “After a year at Luxury Brow, Madison has been able to leave her full-time nanny position after six years with the same family.”

Madison decided to go to aesthetics school several years ago and has actively been a makeup artist in Kansas City. She has a passion, like Dax, for beauty, and the positive relationship the women had made it a natural idea for the two to work together. Dax stays busy doing permanent makeup, while Madison focuses on brow laminations and facials. “We are definitely known for our brows and Saturday mimosas!” Dax smiled.

“Madison and I make it a priority to stay very involved in the community with our pop-up brow bar,” she continued. “Businesses all over Kansas City have invited us to their events with our pop-up! It’s such a great opportunity to talk to women and give them a small service.”

STAYING IN TOUCH

Although the pandemic was hard on many businesses, they used the opportunity to stay active on social media. Both understood that people were home staring at themselves on Zoom, and looking at their brows over their masks, so Luxury Brow KC was able to maintain their clientele.

“Madison and I make it a priority to stay very involved in the community with our pop-up brow bar,” she continued. “Businesses all over Kansas City have invited us to their events with our pop-up! It’s such a great opportunity to talk to women and give them a small service.”

It is fun to see a pair of ladies doing what they love and spreading positivity to all the women they meet, not to mention making their faces a little brighter, which makes smiles a little wider. ♦

Luxury Brow KC is located at 620 E. 18th St., Suite 202, Kansas City, Missouri. For more information, visit luxurybrowco.com, or call them at 913-222-4519. Follow them on Facebook and Instagram.

SUPPORTING NEURODIVERSITY: ADVICE FROM EXPERTS

BY MARILYN ISAMINGER

It's a concept that Dr. Temple Grandin and Dr. Debra Moore have studied the major part of their lives and careers. In a new collaboration, both professionals draw on their experience working with individuals on the autism spectrum.

The experts state in the introduction to *Navigating Autism*, "When you accept, embrace and foster the uniqueness of each child you encounter, you shift that child's sense of themselves. When you stay focused on strengths, passions and possibilities, then they, and everyone around them, can, too." In this guide for parents, professionals, family members and anyone who has contact with a person with autism, nine mindsets are introduced.



vises parents to maintain organized records of evaluations and assessments so that complete information is available to professionals working with the child.

PARENTS ARE EQUAL TEAM MEMBERS.

"It felt like you're being taken to the edge of a cliff. You've been given a diagnosis, you got shoved off the end, and then it was, 'Oh, by the way, we haven't got the parachute. You'll need to get that for yourself,'" said a parent who participated in interviews with researchers interested in

EVERY CHILD IS MORE THAN AUTISM.

We live in a world of labels. "The problem with the label of autism is you've got a spectrum that ranges from Einstein to someone with no language and with intellectual disability," Dr. Grandin says. The wise parent, clinician or educator must appreciate all aspects of the child to help them develop a full identity. "An accurate view of any child's personality includes their talents and strengths. Their personality is not defined by autism."

WHOLE CHILD EVALUATIONS ARE VITAL.

Testing and evaluation may be routine for the evaluator, but they are new, stressful and anxiety-provoking for families and children. "The best professionals are the ones who get all the details about a child and then put those details into context. The earlier a child is assessed, the better," Dr. Grandin notes. "Every professional working with a child should make sure others are putting eyes on the kid as well. They might catch something the first professional doesn't see, because there are so many functions impacted by autism." She ad-

vises parents to maintain organized records of evaluations and assessments so that complete information is available to professionals working with the child. The partnership between parents and providers. Professionals are advised to acknowledge the emotions parents may experience after a diagnosis; some feel relief, some grieve, many feel helpless and afraid. "Of all the basic information a parent needs, most sorely need to hear this: your child is capable of loving you."

MEDICAL CONDITIONS MAY BE UNTREATED.

Language, sensory and perceptual differences can interfere with a child's getting appropriate help for medical or psychiatric problems. If the child does not know how to ask for help, she's unlikely to reach out to a caregiver or provider for assistance with a physical ailment. The most common medical issues are pain, gastrointestinal disorders, seizures and sleep disorders, which can cause changes in mood, social behavior and activity level.

A SECONDARY PSYCHIATRIC DIAGNOSIS MAY BE PRESENT.

Rates of co-occurring autism and attention deficit disorder

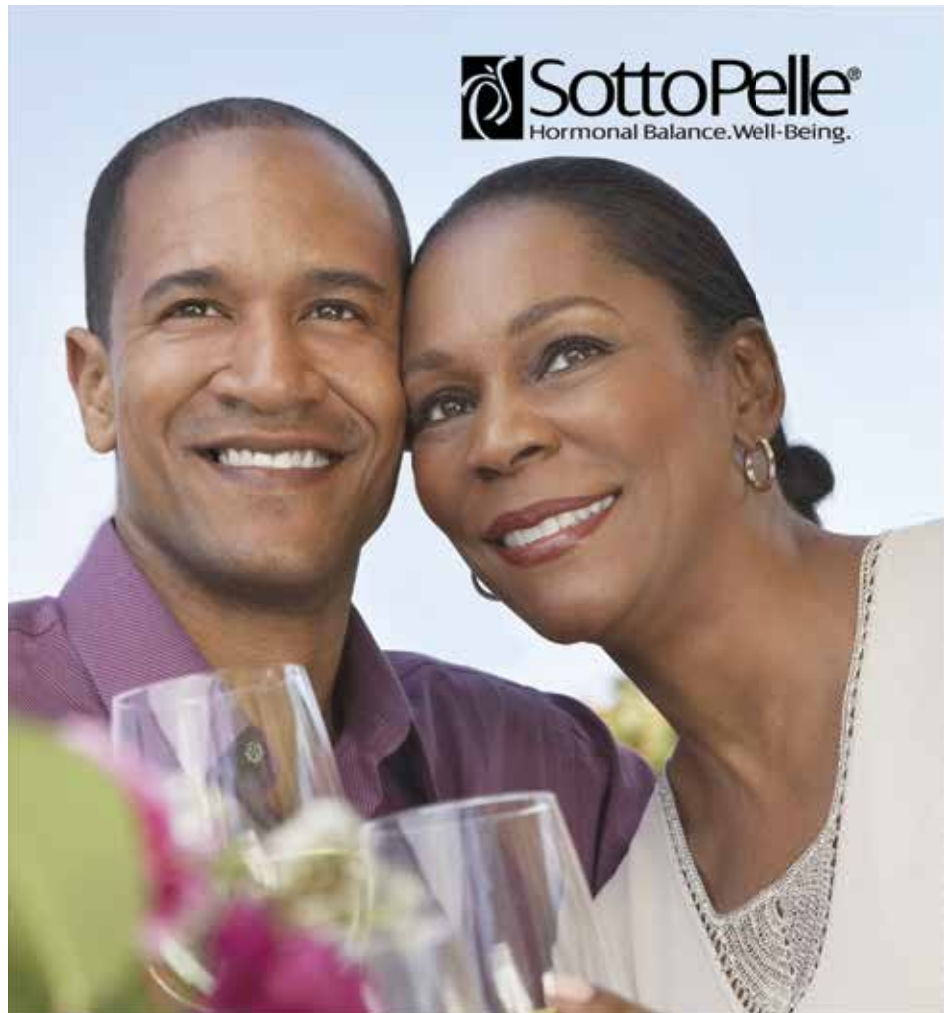
are striking. Some reviews note that the co-occurrence of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder is as high as 65 percent. These co-occurrences can greatly impact the daily quality of a child's life if they go unrecognized and untreated. Depression, anxiety, trauma and other emotional disturbances make social and academic success more difficult for children with autism. Children with autism are also more prone to adverse experiences from neighborhood violence, parental divorce, mental illness and substance abuse, according to Drs. Grandin and Moore. "Autistic kids are bullied all the time. Teachers can help by talking to kids in the classroom and explaining how Johnny is different in some ways but mainly just a regular kid," Dr. Grandin notes.

PREPARE KIDS FOR THE REAL WORLD.

As with typical children, parents and professionals must think ahead with atypical children about the life stage of adulthood. Basic competencies such as communication, particularly for nonverbal children, personal hygiene and self-presentation can be incorporated into routines and skill development. Skills such as safety, home living, transportation, even driving, recreation, leisure and hobby development can build an individual's independence and confidence. It's important to recognize a child's innate skills and keep her vocational future in mind with all interventions.

ENVISION A SUCCESSFUL ADULTHOOD.

Jeremy loved taking things apart and putting them back together, and he loved trains. His father, a self-taught handyman, began having his son help him on small projects as a pre-teen, teaching the use of tools, how to measure, how to understand instruments such as pressure gauges. He also found a local railroad club, and the older, retired men welcomed Jeremy. Through a volunteer job with Habitat for Humanity, Jeremy observed electricians at work, was able to tag along and be a helper. Jeremy merged both interests, put together a portfolio of his work and successfully competed for and secured a good job! ♦



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KAMERYN FURMAN

“Synchronized ice skaters are elite athletes!”

BY CINDY MCDERMOTT | PHOTOGRAPHY BY AMBER J DEERY
SHOT ON LOCATION AT LINE CREEK COMMUNITY CENTER AND ICE ARENA

It is a team sport that demands absolute individual power and accuracy that combine into precise lines and figures. Synchronized ice skating requires 38 blades gliding atop a frozen stage in perfect harmony. This sport holds a life-long passion for Kameryn Furman, Raymore, Missouri, who is now coaching the Kansas City Illusion; she guided the team to its first adult national competition in the USFS Synchronized Championship Events, March 2 through 6, 2022, in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

“ describe synchronized ice skating as a marching band on ice, between 12 and 20 athletes creating different formations and shapes while doing steps in unison to music,” explained Kameryn. “The scoring is at different levels for each of the shapes you make. You’re trying to get them ‘called,’ which means the technical panel says that, yes, they did all of the criteria and got the level that they’re going for in that element. Then there’s a judging panel that grades how good it was, not how hard it was, but how good it was. It’s the combination of those that give your overall score. There are five main element shapes: circle, wheel, straight line, block or multiple lines of people and intersection. To transition to those shapes, you might make another shape to get to those main five.”

HISTORY OF THE SPORT

According to U.S. Figure Skating, the national governing body for the sport of figure skating in the United States, synchronized skating offers athletes the chance to compete with a team and learn the value of teamwork and camaraderie. Dr. Richard Porter established the sport in 1956, although it was called “precision skating” for the intricate moves skaters perform on the ice together. U.S. Figure Skating held the first U.S. Synchronized Skating Championships in 1984 and the first World Synchronized Skating Championships in 2000. Today, nearly 600 teams are registered synchronized teams in the United States. Teams of 8 to 20 skaters perform impressive formations and step sequences together. Competitions use the same judging system as singles, pairs and

ice dance. All teams perform a free skate with required elements, and junior- and senior-level teams also perform a short program.

Kameryn began her love of ice skating as a toddler when she followed her older brother, who was playing hockey in St. Louis, onto the rink. “When you’re at the rink all the time with a sibling, you wind up on the ice. My parents put me on the ice and I loved skating with a team. I started when I was three and skated with the synchronized skating team in St. Louis called the St. Louis Synergy and stayed 16 seasons. I also coached a junior-level team, Team USA, representing the United States at international competitions. I got to coach them for two years and then I moved to Kansas City.”

She took a job as a mechanical engineer with Burns and McDonnell, and with the

“Skating is a passion. For anybody who starts it and falls in love with it, it becomes a life-long sport. It fills my joy jar to give some of that joy to other skaters. It’s my passion and escape as well,” Kameryn said. “We tell our skaters that they should leave their real-world problems at the door and just skate. You’re out there without any connection to the world and you’re just skating.”





2021-2022 Team: *Becky Adler, Lauren Ashton, Chelsea Candanedo, Stacy Friling, Kameryn Furman, Kaitlyn Jondahl, Lisa Jordan, Rylie Kever, Sara Lane, Cristi Lewis, Julie Marasco, Brooke Martin, Maureen McAnarney, Madeline Mudd, Shannon Palumbo, Crystal Richardson, Madison Saverino, Shelby Smith and Rachel Vanderweel*
Photo by Sam Atagana Photography



encouragement of her husband, Nick, she continued skating. A few years later, she took on the role of coach for the adult team in the Kansas City Illusion synchronized ice skating group. Kansas City Illusion is made up of seven teams, offering opportunities for three- to five-year-olds up to the oldest skaters in their 60s. All teams compete in USFS Synchronized Championship Events and travel around the Midwest to compete. The adult team that Kameryn coaches qualified for nationals this year for the first time, boasting a ranking of the top 13 adult teams in the nation.

“It’s been our goal for six years to make the national synchronized skating nationals. We’ve had three skaters who have been to nationals, but this has been a long-time dream for many on our team,” shared Kameryn. “They’re really excited to hit their goal and to experience it.” Kameryn adds she has been to nationals five times as a team member and five times as a coach.

Synchronized skating teams such as the Kansas City Illusion and all other levels can receive a national ranking against other synchronized skating athletes or teams from across the country at the National Synchronized Skating Series. Competitive levels are juvenile, intermediate, novice, junior, senior, collegiate, adult and masters. Kameryn has coached the adult Kansas City Illusion team through several sectional championships to qualify for the U.S. Synchronized Skating Championships.

“What keeps me going is knowing that all of these athletes, whether they’re 3 or 60, are learning to set goals and reach them. What is particularly impressive for this team is that they set a goal and worked toward it for six years,” noted Kameryn. “That’s what keeps me going because they are working as hard as they can to achieve this goal. Even through the pandemic, they stayed with it.”

ESTABLISHING OBJECTIVES; MAKING THEM

Engineers are known for setting goals, measurements of success and strategies to achieve those objectives. Kameryn does this every day in her role at Burns and McDonnell. But she has also successfully transitioned that skill set to the ice and has established a two-pronged effort to grow the sport that she loves on a local and national basis with far-reaching competitive targets.

“My goal was to be on or coach Team USA in some way. Being

able to do that in college as a coach was incredible. Now my goal is to expand synchronized skating where it’s not big. Most of the leaders are in major hubs such as Chicago, New York or Boston. In the Midwest, it’s not as big,” she commented.

“So being able to expand this program and find skaters in the area that want to start at age three and go through the program and graduate from it is huge.”

Not only does she have big dreams for synchronized ice skating in the Kansas City metro, but she also has lofty dreams for the sport on an international level. Kameryn is on the ground floor of guiding synchronized ice skating to become an Olympic sport. “We’ve been trying to get the sport into the Olympics since 1986. We’re still on the Olympic ballot and we’re hopeful in 2026 to be an Olympic sport,” she remarked. “All clubs of any size are helping to promote the sport to be an Olympic sport.”

As for her personal goals for the future, Kameryn plans to keep working with these teams to see the club grow to be a top contender in multiple divisions. She wants the team qualifying for nationals more years than they do not. Right now, Kansas City Illusion has 70 athletes and her goal is to see that number over 100 because it is a tipping point for clubs to become highly competitive. She looks forward to many more years of coaching and continuing to support this team as it attains even more lofty goals.

“Anybody can do this sport. We have levels for adult, brand-new skaters through those experienced who have skated or coached Team USA in the Kansas City area. We have levels for everybody,” she advised. “It’s 19 skaters that are working women. One is retired, but everyone else works full time. We’re nurses, digital marketers, a power tool salesperson, engineers and more. We have this whole





breadth of working women who also have a passion for skating that brings these people together. We're also the first team from Kansas City to qualify for nationals."

ANYONE CAN GLIDE ON THE ICE

Kameryn describes her team as a cross-section of American women, although she's quick to point out that synchronized ice skaters are elite athletes, making up just .003 percent of the population. When you examine the numbers even further, the makeup of her team is varied, from a 20-year-old Mizzou student to women in their 50s. But her message remains constant: synchronized iced skating is one sport that can be welcoming to all who want to try.

"To begin, you have to find people, at least 12 willing to skate on a team. After that, it's hours of practice. We meet weekly and then skaters practice individually as well. Going to competitions, we learn from our opponents and that helps fix our issues," she said. "Over the last four years, we've missed going to nationals by just one placement. But we learned what was preventing

us from qualifying and we fixed it. We did not grow up skating together. We came from different teams and different walks of life. We had to figure out what our skating style is and what we look like as a team."

When we visualize ice skaters in our minds, we probably see figures gliding effortlessly and gracefully across a frozen stadium. Yet beneath that incredible beauty, hours of intense practice, observation and learning go into making skating appear so fluent. Kameryn describes it as a penetrating enthusiasm toward a goal and a compelling desire to seemingly float on the ice.

"Skating is a passion. For anybody who starts it and falls in love with it, it becomes a life-long sport. It fills my joy jar to give some of that joy to other skaters. It's my passion and escape as well," Kameryn said. "We tell our skaters that they should leave their real-world problems at the door and just skate. You're out there without any connection to the world and you're just skating." ♦

EXPERT TIPS FOR WINE-TASTING ETIQUETTE!

BY MELISSA HAINES LAVIN

Golf, formal dinners, weddings and wine tasting all have something important in common: etiquette. Whether you're in a large international brand winery or a small boutique tasting room, there are things to keep in mind for a successful experience for both sides of the tasting bar.

Tasting rooms are workplaces for the owners, wine-makers and tasting room staff, who strive to provide guests with a quality experience in a well-designed environment. You may find table seating, tasting bars or communal tasting tables. Regardless of the layout, etiquette helps you and everyone else enjoy the experience to the fullest.

ARE YOU VISITING A NEW WINERY?

Most wineries and tasting rooms have an online or social media presence that reveals hours of operation and general guidelines. Some locations do not permit dogs, for example, a good thing to know before hauling little Fluffy along to watch you taste delicious wines.



is credited back to your purchase, so your \$30 bottle of wine is reduced. The tasting menu may offer choices of “complimentary” and “reserve” selections, indicating a tasting fee for the reserve offerings only.

STAY SCENT FREE

Our daily rituals often include adding a spritz of cologne or perfume. Because there are so many layers of florals, fruit, woods, grass, oak and spice in each taste of wine, even deodorants and hair products can act as a barrier when combined with your favorite scent. Being mindful of this is helpful so that we don't distract other guests accidentally. Additionally, refraining from cigar and cigarette use can allow wine sensory experiences to be pleasant for everyone.

WHAT ABOUT TASTING FEES?

Tasting fees and menus are generally the first business aspect of the wine tasting experience. Tasting fees range from \$5 to \$25 or more, depending on the winery, and help offset the business costs of running a winery with knowledgeable staff. Many times, the fee

DON'T GO HUNGRY

Wine tasting can be an appetite stimulant, and it's a good idea to enjoy some nourishment along the way. A small shoulder tote or picnic basket is the perfect pairing. The winery may have a policy regarding eating at the tasting room bar, however. Without meaning

any harm, that saucy meatball sandwich could easily slide down the bar or splash on another guest.

ACCESSORIZE APPROPRIATELY

The perfect wine-tasting attire for men and women would include comfortable shoes for gravel walkways and uneven surfaces and handbags that are small to medium in size. It's a shame when your perfect glass of rich Zinfandel spills because another guest bumped you with her huge purse. Use the hook under the bar for personal items.

RESPECTFUL QUIET

Is that noise in your chardonnay? There's no need for library silence, but all the senses are used in wine tasting and noise definitely takes away from appreciating what the wine staff is sharing with you. Your questions may not be heard if the folks next to you are yelling over the music or boisterous.

ANIMAL CONTROL

As much as you may enjoy traveling with your canines, you're not in control of the environment, and allergens abound. Angry dogs, fearful children, fallen food and people allergic to animal dander aren't a good pairing with award winning wines. It may be best to enjoy your tasting outdoors, where leashes and collection bags are appreciated.

AGE APPROPRIATE TASTERS

Wine tasting rooms serve those 21 years of age or older. If you

take your children, please plan something to keep them occupied. Broken cookies, crayons or Lego pieces on the floor around adults who have been tasting wine could be a dangerous combination.

ENJOY AND SHARE!

If you have a group of six or more, call ahead or ask the staff if there's a separate area for groups. Many small tasting rooms can best provide excellent service when they can schedule additional staffing. Having a great time? Consider adding a tip for the special accommodation your group received, or purchase a bottle for the house to share with all the other guests who enjoyed meeting your group!

All these aspects of wine tasting etiquette add to the goal to have fun, enjoy wine and meet new people. ♦

EIGHT TIPS FOR ENSURING TASTING SUCCESS

1. Eat before you go wine tasting (and after).
2. Drink water, lots of it, between every tasting.
3. Pack an empty, chilled cooler in the trunk for your purchases.
4. Take a light wrap for drafty cellars or to cover outdoor seats.
5. Bring small items such as nuts and cheese sticks.
6. Be patient. It can get busy behind the bar.
7. Ask staff where you should go next based on what you enjoyed.
8. Join their mailing list or wine club when you appreciate their hospitality and wine!

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HOTEL KANSAS CITY EVENTS AND HOSPITALITY

GORGEOUS EVENT SPACES & CUSTOMIZED MENUS

WRITTEN BY MEGAN NEHER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY AMBER DEERY

Perfected custom gourmet menus aren't a result of an epicurean menu alone. And, the chefs at the Hotel Kansas City know gourmet, high-end event menus. Instead, it takes what I call the trifecta of events and hospitality. It requires gorgeous event spaces, beautifully constructed cuisine and, most importantly, incredible-tasting food.

Botanical Halibut
*Botanical crusted halibut,
succotash couscous, peaches,
calabrian honey*

From the servers to the event managers to the chefs, everyone at Hotel Kansas City understands that consistently delicious and memorable events are what makes a successful guest experience. Events at Hotel Kansas City inside the former historical Kansas City Club in downtown Kansas City, Missouri, cover the gamut. Weddings, corporate events, reunions, parties, galas and so much more schedule at Hotel Kansas City for its unique



Chef Cobb developed the botanical spice over the winter for a drink and it was adapted for the halibut.



Mojito Prawns
Rum, mint & pineapple
marinated grilled prawns,
pineapple relish



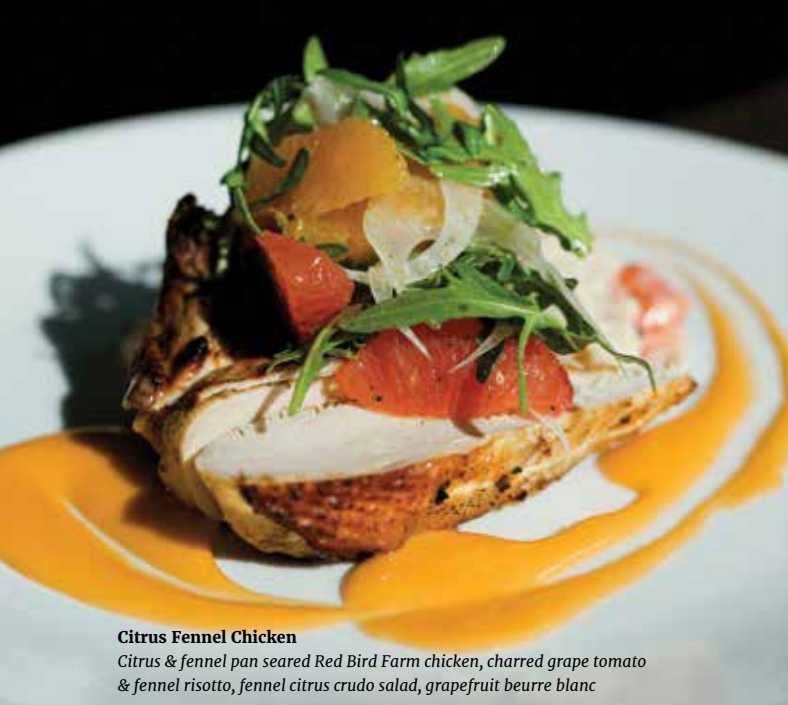
Pinot Lamb
Pinot noir marinated grilled
lamb chop, smoked fingerlings,
asparagus, pinot lamb jus

and outstanding event spaces, exceptionally beautiful and creative cuisine and unbelievably delicious food that they know will stand out to their guests.

Executive chef of events Donald Cobb, originally from Vermont, focuses his curated event menus on locally sourced, sustainable quality food and even customizes each menu. Chef Cobb, who arrived in KC just in time for the hotel's grand opening in fall 2020, was impressed with the attention to detail regarding the history of the more-than-100-year-old building as well as the hotel's extraordinary culinary team. "I was able to make the catering menu my own when I arrived in town, and I always like to infuse some ingredients I know work well from the Pacific Northwest and other things from my past that have been successful, but my biggest culinary guideline is that I work to



Cherry Duck
Cherry soy glazed duck breast,
miso butternut squash puree,
ginger rice cake, pickled radishes



Citrus Fennel Chicken

Citrus & fennel pan seared Red Bird Farm chicken, charred grape tomato & fennel risotto, fennel citrus crudo salad, grapefruit beurre blanc



Strawberry Gazpacho
Strawberry, cucumber, olio verde, brioche

carrots, spring mix of different-colored endive, arugula and fennel, topped with feta and a lemon herb buttermilk dressing. “I selected this one because it highlights our local spring vegetables. Then as summer comes along, we’ll change out the veggies, making it a versatile salad all spring and summer,” he said.

It was time for the entrées and my mouth was watering; again, seafood was headed my way. This beautiful **Botanical Halibut** is so light, colorful and full of flavor. The bar developed the botanical spice over the winter for a drink and it was adapted for the halibut. The dish is first plated with an Israeli succotash couscous, then the seared halibut, and finally grilled peaches are placed on top and finished with botanicals, parsley and a spiced Calabrian honey. It’s beautifully constructed, springy and delicious.

Another spring menu item that stood out was the **Citrus Fennel Chicken**. The chicken comes from Red Bird Farms in Colorado, where all meat is antibiotic free, cage free, hormone and steroid free. The chicken is brined overnight and pan seared. Making the house-made charred grape tomato and fennel risotto is a time-consuming, multi-step process, but so worth it! It’s finally covered with imaginative grapefruit beurre blanc. The flavors in this entree meld together, accomplishing a lively, savory and sweet main dish.

After a sampling of the beautiful and amazingly delicious food, the next decision is where to host the event inside the hotel. From historic and traditional to modern and unconventional, the versatility in the spaces provides a backdrop for a range of festivities. The meeting and event spaces are illuminated through hand-hewn walnut, carved stone, stained glass and gilded plaster, preserving their originality from the early 1900s.

Let’s start with the most dramatic, at 6,000 square feet on the hotel’s rooftop. The former Starlight Restaurant on the 15th floor has been transformed to Kansas City’s only rooftop indoor-outdoor dining space. With capacity of 35 to 275, the **Starlight Ballroom’s** sleek design provides breathtaking views of the Kansas City skyline.

I love the **Tudor Ballroom** because of the eye-catching two-story stained-glass mural. This room has a capacity of 40 to 550 and just emanates history. Follow the wood detail up to the second story balcony that overlooks the main floor for more room to dine and entertain guests. ♦

Hotel Kansas City features four other equally unique event spaces for small and large events. Visit hotelkc.com for photos and contact information.



Beef Tartare
Creekstone Farms beef tenderloin, shallots, capers

keep it simple. Guests appreciate the simplicity of quality ingredients that taste great,” he said.

Wedding Guests are asked if they want to complete a questionnaire regarding their likes and dislikes, giving the hotel chefs ideas for how to customize the menu, including dietary restrictions. “We had a wedding recently where the groom was of Lebanese descent, and the bride had an Italian background. They both liked Japanese food. We found a variety of food from their tasting that fit both of their liking and worked very well on a menu together,” Chef Cobb said.

Each menu item is developed by Chef Cobb and his team with special care. Our tasting started with the **Beef Tartare** made with Creekstone Farms beef tenderloin, shallots, capers, Russian dressing, cornichons, cured egg yolk and crispy potato. While on a culinary trip to Denver, Chef Cobb sampled bison tartare and wanted to make a similar bite-sized creation using beef for his menu. The result looks as good as it tastes!

Shrimp are one of my favorite foods, so I was excited to see the **Mojito Prawns** as an appetizer. With all of my favorite flavors in one bite, this did not disappoint. In fact, if I were planning a wedding, this would be a must have. These prawns are first marinated with rum, mint and pineapple, then grilled and topped with pineapple relish.

Salad is always one of my favorite foods, so when I heard chef describing the **Spring Panzanella**, I knew it was going to be delightful and a fav. It’s Farm to Market grilled sourdough bread with vegetables from local farm partners, with cucumbers, radishes, scallions, peas,



Journalist-turned-PR-professional Megan Neher has never forgotten her true first love: writing. Today, Megan owns her own PR firm, Megan Neher Public Relations; she’s a wife, mom, marketer, student and spends a lot of time cleaning up after her four pets and two teenagers. Her dream is to live on a tropical beach somewhere where she can stroll barefoot to a nearby grass hut for a fish taco and margarita.

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BEFORE



AFTER



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30-MINUTE CREAMY LEMON CHICKEN

RECIPE & PHOTOS BY LAUREN LANE | LAUREN-LANE.COM



INGREDIENTS

4 thin-sliced chicken breasts or two large boneless skinless chicken breasts
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 Ground pepper
 1/4 cup flour
 3 tablespoons butter
 4 cloves garlic (minced)
 1 tablespoon dried oregano or Italian seasoning
 1 cup heavy cream
 1 lemon, zested, and a squeeze of lemon juice to finish dish
 1/4 cup fresh grated Parmesan-Reggiano cheese
 1/4 cup finely chopped parsley, optional
 Pinch crushed red pepper, optional

DIRECTIONS

If using large chicken breasts, slice chicken breast horizontally to create two thin steaks; you will have four thin steaks in total. Sprinkle each side generously with salt and pepper, then dredge with flour, shaking off excess. Melt butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Cook chicken for about 2-3 minutes on each side until golden and crispy, then remove onto a plate. For the sauce, add a bit more butter if the pan looks dry. Add the garlic and oregano and cook for just under a minute. Add heavy cream, lemon zest, parmesan cheese and red pepper if using; stir to combine. Return chicken to the pan and simmer 3-4 minutes or until the sauce has thickened slightly. Taste and adjust salt and pepper if needed. Add a squeeze of lemon if you'd like it more lemony, and sprinkle with parsley if using. Serve with crusty bread or over pasta, rice or mashed potatoes. ♦

NOTE...

Use thin-cut chicken breasts or 2 large breasts split in half horizontally. This will ensure the chicken cooks evenly and quickly.

OPTIONAL ADD-INS...

Mushrooms: Add when you add the garlic.

Asparagus: 1/2-1 lb. stalks trimmed and cut into 1- or 2-inch pieces. Sauté in the pan before you add the garlic.

Shallots: Add 1/4 cup minced shallots with the garlic.

Olives: Add 1/3 cup sliced kalamata olives with cream.

1 can drained artichokes: Add with the cream.

Pine nuts: Add 1/4 cup toasted pine nuts on top right before serving.



After 25 years in creative design and management with Hallmark Cards, Lauren Lane quit to pursue her lifelong passion for food and entertaining. Lauren has reinvented herself at 50 and now pursues her dream of teaching others how to cook easily and entertain effortlessly. Follow her on Instagram, Facebook and her blog so you don't miss any of her recipes and cooking tips and tricks.

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THE BEST BIKE FOR YOU

BY LINDA R. PRICE

Cycling, or biking, is one of the most popular leisure sports in the world. In the United States, only one in four cyclists is a woman. Annually, Americans spend \$81 billion on biking, which includes retail bike sales, parts and accessories as well as bicycle tourism, events and programs.



Mountain bikes are designed for off-road use on trails or tracks and in dirt, sand and snow. They're designed for the thrill seeker who doesn't mind getting dirty. The bike is stout and has an upright frame. The tires on a mountain bike are wide and knobby to increase their grip on rocks and dirt. The suspension absorbs shocks from riding on bumpy grounds. Handle bars are flat and wide.

TYPES OF MOUNTAIN BIKES

Cross-country bikes are the most popular, designed to ride trails for longer periods of time. Trail mountain bikes are for the rider who rides trails and tracks. Downhill mountain bikes are designed for rough terrain and challenging obstacles.

Mountain bikes can be purchased for around \$800 at big box stores. They are generally weighty and made from cheap components. If you are seriously into the sport, a high-end, competitive mountain bike goes for around \$16,000.

Bikes are the sum of their parts, and the price difference is in the materials used to make the bike. The best ones use high-quality parts and advanced technology. Low-end bikes are made of steel, which is strong and durable, but steel is heavy and rusts. The most popular material for mountain bikes is aluminum, light-weight, rust-proof and relatively strong. Aluminum will break over time when stressed.

Carbon fiber is the next material upgrade, light-weight, rust-proof and very strong, but breakable. The best material is titanium, extremely light and exceedingly strong. It's a great choice for heavy riders. Serious bikers opt for carbon fiber and titanium, but for casual hobbyists, steel or aluminum bikes can be a good choice.

Road bikes are made for paved roads and riding longer distances at higher speeds. They are lighter and require the rider to bend over the handle bars to improve aerodynamics and transfer more power to the pedals. The tires are slimmer than the fat, knobby mountain bike tires. The handlebars on road bikes are dropped and narrower. Most road bikes lack suspension to absorb road shocks, making the ride harder.

TYPES OF ROAD BIKES

Racing bikes are designed to be aerodynamic. They are stripped down, light with stiffer frames and have large, thin tires. Gravel bikes or adventure bikes are for riding both off-road and on trails at a decent speed. Riders of these bikes often go bike packing or traveling. Touring bikes are for traveling long distances with a comfortable ride. The bike has strong frames and various points at which accessories such as fenders, racks, water bottles and lights can be added.

Hybrid bikes are popular in the U.S with about 24 percent of riders, just behind mountain bikes at 25 percent. Hybrids, or fitness bikes, are general-purpose bikes suitable for most terrains, making

them popular for commuting. In general, hybrids retain the sleek frame and fast rolling wheels with a slightly wider tire than road bikes and incorporate the upright handle bars and suspension of mountain bikes.

E-bikes, or electric bikes, are increasingly popular as the price drops and the range of bikes increases. E-bikes amplify pedaling power and provide an extra boost for the rider. All come with an electric motor and a battery and are available in a wide range of types.

When you're ready to ride, visit your local bike shop to pick their brains before making an investment. The best choice is the one that's right for you and that you will enjoy riding. ♦

SOURCES: *statista.com, bicycle-guider.com, bikinguniverse.com, liveabout.com, lemonbin.com, bikesreviewed.com/brands, bicycling.com and bikeradar.com.*

BETTER-KNOWN BIKE BRANDS

- *Trek Bicycle Corporation was founded in 1976 with the idea of building mid-range to high-end bikes in the United States.*
- *Cannondale Bikes have been manufactured in the U.S. for nearly 40 years. A recent road bike innovation is rear-facing radar and integrated lights.*
- *Santa Cruz Bicycles, manufactured in California, started in 1994 with an innovative dual suspension mountain bike, the Tazmon. Their sister brand, Juliana, is the original women's mountain bike.*
- *Specialized Bicycles, Morgan Hills, California, began in 1974. Their Stumpjumper was the first mass-produced mountain bike.*
- *Bianchi started manufacturing bikes around 1899. Their bikes come in a wide range of sizes and type. The bikes are easily recognizable for their turquoise Bianchi Celeste color.*
- *Scott began innovating bicycle components in 1989 and is a leading producer of all types of bikes today.*
- *Giant, founded in 1982, is the world's largest bike manufacturer. Giant makes many different types of bikes and is a consistent winner in international competitions.*



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ASKING FOR WHAT YOU DESERVE: A RAISE

BY TINA V. SAVAS

A few years ago, the CEO of a major corporation created a firestorm when he said that women don't need to ask for a raise and should trust that the system will compensate them appropriately in the end. He said women should trust "karma" instead of asking for pay raises.

Needless to say, he apologized the next day and said he was "completely wrong." He went on to say, "Our industry must close the gender pay gap so a raise is not needed because of a bias." He told his staff they should just ask if they think they deserve a raise.

BUT IS IT THAT EASY?

Facebook Chief Operating Officer Sheryl Sandberg discussed the issue of a gender pay gap in her book, *Lean In*, where she points out that women who ask for a higher salary are typically viewed as more demanding than men who do the same things.

So apparently, it isn't an easy task for some women to simply "ask for a raise."

There is a glaring wage gap between men and women doing the same job, and women are confused about how to get even. It's a serious issue that has gained public notice, causing companies such as Google to publicize the gender balance of its workforce and vow to improve. Other large tech companies have followed suit. Even Harvard Business School admitted the school has not been considerate of women, and publicized their efforts to improve in a front page *New York Times* article some time ago.

It's clearly a business problem and change is obviously needed to improve the wage gap, but in the meantime, what is the best strategy for a woman to ask for a raise?



Experts believe the first step should be getting into the right mindset. Instead of worrying you will be punished because of your gender or thought of as selfish or greedy, keep in mind that your boss is expecting you to ask for a raise or negotiate for a higher salary at some point. You are a value to the company; therefore, you are worth it.

Talk up your accomplishments; if you finish a big project or close a deal, consider that as a good time for a salary discussion with

your boss. Timing is important, too. If you built up brownie points for your boss after successfully landing a new client, that may be the best time to ask for a raise.

Cultivating relationships within your company and industry go a long way. Studies show that women typically form relationships that are less "up" than "across or down." In other words, they are friendlier with the assistants than with upper management. It is wise to note that some women in management may be harder to befriend because they feel as if younger women should pay their dues as they had to do on their way up the ladder. Still, don't discount the importance of this step.

Be aware of your company's goals and gather information before your pitch. Find out a fair salary for someone at your level. Knowledge is power in this situation. Use Google; ask around. Find out what the men in your position make.

Keep in mind there is more to compensation than pure money. Be ready if you hear “no” to a salary bump. What about vacation time, flex time, cell phone or computer, expense account or a company car? If you aren’t ready with those suggestions, you could miss out. If you are shot down, don’t let that be the end of the conversation. Ask how you can achieve a raise and at what point.

Of course, sticking to this advice will not guarantee you a raise. Unfortunately, you can’t assume that being a perfect employee is going to get you fair compensation. The most important point is to keep trying for wage equality.

In *Women Don’t Ask: Negotiation and the Gender Divide* by Linda Babcock and Sara Laschever, the authors show that women negotiate 30 percent less often than men, and when they do, they ask for up to \$16,000 less.

The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act was the first law President Obama signed as president in 2009. Forty-nine states now have fair pay legislation, and the state of California is now enforcing its own Fair Pay Act that allows for the conversation about salary to be open and fluid by female workers among their counterparts without employer retaliation.

Women must continue to build confidence about their abilities and value. Experience, education and job performance are all necessary to the future of any company’s success, whether you are a man or a woman. So, until the wage gap is abolished, you just have to keep plugging. ♦

SOURCES: forbes.com, huffingtonpost.com, leanin.org and nytimes.com.

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JUST SAYIN'

BY Q104 PERSONALITY JENNY MATTHEWS
PHOTO BY LAUREN FRISCH PUSATERI

In the early days after I had my first child, Jules, I remember thinking that I was the busiest human on the planet. All of the sudden, I was responsible for another person other than myself! I was more than ready for the challenge, as I waited a long time to become a mama. But I definitely remember feeling very overwhelmed and busy.

Today that baby girl is 11 and I have a nine-year-old son. I reflect on their younger years and I see that I was overwhelmed and busy, no doubt about that. But then I laugh a little to myself as I look at where we are today and I'm pretty sure it's even more chaotic! Once homework, activities and sports entered the picture, the game changed. No pun intended.

I was a cheerleader in high school, but I never played any sports like my kids do. They both play year-round soccer and basketball in the winter. We are always shuffling them to practice, a game or a tournament. I wouldn't have it any other way. I absolutely love watching them learn, grow, play hard and win awards.

Sometimes I secretly get very happy when, during a crazy week, a practice gets cancelled; please tell me I'm not the only one. Some-

times I long for a weekend when we can sleep in and stay in PJs all day. But recently, we had a game-free Saturday and, to be totally honest, we didn't know what to do with ourselves!

I saw this on social media and I took a screenshot to remind myself to enjoy and treasure these days. It's all going fast, too fast.

"To the sports parents spending your weekend carting your players from arena to arena, making sure no uniform gets forgotten, and cheering from the stands for hours, take a few minutes to pause. Between all the chaos, soak it all in. Pay attention to the little details. Savor these days when your young athlete still needs you. Before you know it, your weekends will be your own again and I promise you'll miss the chaos." ~ @changingperspectivesblog ♦

Jenny Matthews co-hosts *The Morning Drive* with Mike Kellar + Jenny Matthews on Q104 New Hit Country, weekday mornings from 6 - 10am. Connect at www.jennymatthewsonair.com and check out *The Morning After* with Mike Kellar + Jenny Matthews podcast!

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Jenny Matthews



Jenny Matthews

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GIRLS ON THE RUN: EMPOWERING GIRLS FOR THE FUTURE

BY EMILY IMO | PHOTOS COURTESY OF GOTRKC



All girls are powerful, intelligent and capable of doing anything they set their mind to. Unfortunately, social pressures and conflicting messages about how girls should act and who they should be exist. According to recent studies, these pressures cause girls' confidence levels to drop two times more than that of boys by adolescence. These alarming statistics are why girls need Girls on the Run now more than ever.

Girls on the Run is a nonprofit organization that uses a physical activity-based program to provide girls in third through eighth grade with the proper tools and skills to be joyful, healthy and confident. To accomplish this goal, Girls on the Run uses an eight-week curriculum containing research-based lessons that incorporate accessible physical activity. Throughout the eight weeks, girls are taught intentional life skills and mental health education, all while creating a positive relationship with physical fitness. At the end of each season, the girls complete a non-competitive 5K to celebrate their hard work and dedication.

Since 2012, Girls on the Run Serving Greater Kansas City has been a part of elementary schools, middle schools and community centers across 18 counties in Kansas and Missouri. With that reach, Girls on the Run has served more than 32,000 girls and counting.

Each Girls on the Run team is led by volunteer coaches who are positive, enthusiastic and committed to empowering girls with valuable life lessons. Coaches follow Girls on the Run's curriculum and



guide girls through three distinct stages of programs: girls learn to recognize their personal strengths, navigate relationships

and a team environment and understand their individual and collective roles in their community. Girls on the Run coaches create safe and welcoming environments for girls to embrace change and growth. One of the program's goals is to help each girl develop an individual connection between mind and body through their own perspectives, beliefs and experiences.

The addition of engaging running games and physical activity to each lesson helps girls develop a lifetime appreciation for fitness and healthy habits. It is also a large factor in the lasting impact Girls on the Run has on girls' self-confidence, character and relationships. It creates a pathway for physical activity to be a healthy outlet in times of stress and frustration. As the 5K approaches toward the end of the season, each girl has gone through training, both physically and mentally. Once girls complete the race, they are shown that they can accomplish any goal they set their minds to. ♦

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21

J. Mullin Apparel Co.

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Enjoy wine, champagne and hors d'oeuvres in a posh dressing room setting and see J. Mullin Apparel's debut collection of handmade one-of-a-kind luxury kimonos and scarves by Kansas City designer Joanne Mullin. Reserve tickets at eventbrite.com.



BRA COUTURE KC
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22

Bra Couture KC

DOWNTOWN AIRPORT

This annual event raises funds for uninsured/underinsured cancer patients in the greater KC area who cannot pay for their cancer supplies such as cancer medication, transportation to treatment, prosthetics, wigs, surgical supplies, lymphedema services and garments, and their basic life expenses during treatment. The top 14 couture-designed bras are modeled live on the runway by cancer survivors and are auctioned live. Every designed bra comes with an amazing package that includes such things as trips, jewelry, a KC night out and more. Info at bracouturekc.com.

23

Downtown Wine Walk

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CAPRICORN
(DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

The planets are all moving into the lower sector of your chart, meaning that this is a great time for some mental and spiritual housekeeping. This is not the time to move forward on the career front, but rather to focus on those you love.



TAURUS
(APR. 20-MAY 20)

With the planets at their maximum position, you are going to find it easier to live life by design, rather than by default. April 10 through 25 will be good days for starting new projects, and you will have the energy to make it happen. With Mercury in Pisces, your financial instincts are spot on, so trust your little voice when it tells you not to buy those shoes.



VIRGO
(AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

The alignment of the planets has combined to produce a powerful magnetism in your life. This can manifest in many ways. For many, it will mean a more active sex life, while for others it may mean coming to terms with those things that you've been trying to put off dealing with.



AQUARIUS
(JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

Change is the name of the game this month. You are likely to experience some shifts on all fronts, and you may really feel stretched thin. Be careful of mental overload, as otherwise you may have some burnout.



GEMINI
(MAY 21-JUN. 20)

You hit the ground running at the beginning of the year and by now you may be feeling a little wrung out. It is okay to slow down and indulge yourself. There may be job changes on the horizon, so make sure that you have your resume up to date. However, the planets are on your side in almost all aspects, so you can literally name your desire and sit back to watch it take shape.



LIBRA
(SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

Love is still in the air for you, and hasn't stopped since Valentine's Day. Make sure that your rose-colored glasses aren't keeping you from seeing the real picture, especially in the financial department. Take a quick inventory and get real with yourself. You'll be glad you did.

STAR JOURNEYS

BY MELODY BUSSEY

This month's planetary journeys are about communication and connecting with others. When the energy is right, life will seem magical. Take this opportunity to determine the course of your life, putting yourself in the driver's seat rather than letting life drive you. In the end, you will benefit from taking charge of your life, reaching out to others on your own terms, and contributing to the greater human experience.



PISCES
(FEB. 19-MAR. 20)

This month will be one that is populated with highs and lows, with no middles. You will experience financial strength, while your beliefs are being challenged on the other hand. This may bring a crisis of faith and of deep soul searching.



CANCER
(JUN. 21-JUL. 23)

The planetary shift to the East is going to put cosmic wind in your sails. A new level of confidence and independence will find you trying new things and having a satisfying month in all of the areas of your life. The lunar eclipse on the 15th will mean that your considerable talents for being warm and nurturing to other signs will come into play.



SCORPIO
(OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

If something seems too good to be true this month, it probably is. Work conflicts may occur; do your best to smooth them over. Emotionally, you may want to "nest." It's okay to do so, as that's the best use of that energy.



ARIES
(MAR. 21-APR. 19)

The sun is your friend, Aries, and has been since last month, giving you tremendous energy. Opportunities seem to find you without your even trying, and the tendency will be to judge those whose lives don't seem to be as sun-kissed. Be particularly observant on the 9th, as Venus may bring an unexpected love interest your way. Patience is a virtue, and if you aren't careful you could end up alienating the very people you care about the most.



LEO
(JUL. 24-AUG. 22)

The universe seems to be offering you a cosmic "do-over" this month. You may feel as if you are finally moving forward and enjoying some momentum in your career and family life. If you are single, this is the time to get out there. Those in relationships are going to find love blossoming, again.



SAGITTARIUS
(NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Jupiter is in your seventh house of love, which means that those complications that were plaguing your relationships will lift. Plan to do something special with your significant other or family members this month.



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