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With nearly six decades of combined experience in the real estate business, Kevin Hopkins and Greg Shahan knew they could create a better way of connecting homeowners and buyers. Twelve years ago, the pair formed 395 Realty and transformed the selling and buying process for their clients who pocketed thousands of dollars in savings with this innovative business model.

“It was truly a move to advocate for the consumer,” Greg said. “We chose to create a competitive fee structure that is fair and reasonable for both seller and buyer, and at the same time provide everything a full-service real estate brokerage does.”

The 395 Realty business model is based on doing a higher volume of business at a lower rate vs being focused on the more traditional 6% model. Clients are delighted with the thousands of dollars that stay in their pockets.

“We offer a Basic Listing for \$995 and a Full Service Listing for 1/2* percent to list your home, we will be your full-service brokerage,” Kevin affirmed. “We go over pricing reports with you. We provide high-quality photography of your property and staging consultations to make your home the one that catches the buyer’s eye. We list your home on the Multiple Listing Service, which gives thousands of potential buyers access to

it, and we work with feedback services to make sure your property is getting the attention it deserves. We handle all contracts, documents and details regarding the transaction, all the way to closing. Again, we are a full-service real estate brokerage.”

Changing the Real Estate Marketplace

The internet has transformed the process of selling in the real estate market, allowing Kevin and Greg to offer the 395 Realty concept to homeowners. Most clients turn to the internet and the convenience of their desktop

the listing agent—and the agent representing the buyer.

“For example, a commission of six percent, three percent goes to the listing agent and three goes to the buyer’s agent and many sellers are beginning to ask, ‘Why should I pay three percent to my listing agent and also three percent to the buyer’s agent, especially if the buyer has already agreed to pay the buyer’s agent themselves,’” Kevin explained. “For a \$400,000 home, that’s \$12,000 the seller would normally pay their agent and \$12,000 to the buyer’s agent. With 395 Realty’s model, a seller would pay only \$995 or 1/2 percent and the buyer agent’s commission is negotiable.

While 395 Realty passes these dollars on to the client, the services you receive aren’t shortchanged. When you work with Kevin and

Greg, rest assured you’re receiving the best real estate experience, knowledge and tools available in the KC-metro.

“We are consumer advocates working to offer a good service at a fair and reasonable price. That’s it,” Kevin stated. “At 395 Realty, we’ve created a fee structure that’s fair and reasonable for both parties. It’s not a gimmick; it’s not intended to be some type of a discount service. It’s a full-service listing real estate company with fees and structure based on what is fair and reasonable for the consumer and our company.” •

“We chose to create a competitive fee structure that is fair and reasonable for both seller and buyer, and at the same time provide everything a full-service real estate brokerage does.”

or phone to review homes in the KC-metro. Much of the work that years ago was completed by an agent is now done by the buyer. Also in the past, a large portion of the cost of selling a home went to an advertising budget for newspaper ads, brochures and more. Kevin and Greg claim that as most of those expenses have been eliminated, the savings are largely not passed on to the customer.

Currently, in most transactions with the traditional percentage-based model, the home’s seller pays a five percent to six percent commission that is split between their agent—

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INSPIRATIONS

Anna Alessi and Talia Pernice: Building Strong Minds, Bodies and Spirits for Clients

What do grit and cycling have in common? Anna Alessi and Talia Pernice, friends for years, combined their approaches to health and fitness a few months ago to offer both challenge and change to clients. It's a partnership with a common goal and a message: "When you feel like quitting, remember why you started."



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SPORTS: PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

Photography by Amber J Deery



I have been involved in sports for as long as I can remember. Growing up, I spent as many hours in the gym at gymnastics practice as the majority of adults work in a week. After injury followed by injury, I turned the only passion I knew into another sport. Then, I spent as much time in a pool as I did out. After I stopped diving in college, I continued my love for sports by choosing my undergraduate and graduate degrees to follow what I knew best.

Obviously, I love sports, always have, always will. Now that we have kids participating in sports and on multiple teams, I appreciate them, and all that comes with it, more than I ever could have imagined. I know I enjoy sports differently. It is no longer my physical exertion that creates results. I am no longer mentally tested and feeling the stress of performing at my physical best. I now get to witness my kids succeed and fail through their love of sports.

I am equally as proud of our boys whether they win or lose,



or don't make a team. They may get down and feel defeated when they don't come out on top, but I know that they will probably learn as much, if not more, from those moments. I know they don't see that yet, but one day they will.

As a parent, I want what is best for my children. I want them to succeed, but most importantly I want them to learn and grow from everything that they do, on and off the field. Recently, both of our boys have become more interested in golf. One of the best things about this, they even like to play together; well, not every time! It is still an amazing sight to see them playing a round of golf together and then talking about it afterwards.

Anna and Talia, this month's cover feature, are inspirational examples of how sports and fitness go hand in hand. We may not all be athletes anymore, but most of us wish we could feel like we did in our younger, more athletic days. They motivate me to focus more on my fitness and stop daydreaming about how limber and strong I used to be. There's no time like the present!

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noun. A global volunteer organization that provides women and girls with access to the education and training they need to achieve economic empowerment.



Our name means "best for women." And that's what we strive to be — women at our best, investing in other women and girls to be their best.

Empowering Women and Girls

BY KAY STEWART

Soroptimist International of Kansas City, or SIKC, is a club of resolute women who volunteer to make a difference for women and girls in our community. And we have been loving doing it for 98 years! We were founded in 1926 with 100 of Kansas City's top professional women who were tired of being turned away from men's clubs and told to join a sewing circle. SIKC is made up of women of all ages, professions and ethnicities. We enjoy each other and have made lifelong friendships as a result.

We support women and girls through education, grants and encouragement. Throughout the years we've provided financial assistance and support when organizations such as Ronald McDonald House and KC Shepherd's Center were launched. One of our members founded Safehome in Overland Park. Our club worked hard to make sure it succeeded.

Each year, Soroptimist Kansas City Foundation, a part of SIKC, grants funds to nonprofit organizations that have projects to help and support women and/or girls in the community. Most nonprofits can manage the capital campaigns and day-to-day finances. But there always seems to be some small project that is shifted to the bottom of the list to be addressed later. That is where SIKC comes in. We give small amounts ranging from \$500 to \$10,000 for these projects. Last May we distributed almost \$100,000 to 21 nonprofits that aid women and girls. Since our foundation was established in 1954, we have given out over \$1,200,000 in grants.

Soroptimist International of Kansas City also does hands-on

service in our community. We served monthly Sunday night suppers to Ronald McDonald House families for 25 years. We make blankets for families at Safehome. We collect toiletries, school supplies and anything else women may need and donate them to various organizations.

We provided funds to a Soroptimist Club in Harare, Zimbabwe, to help buy school supplies for an orphanage and to dig a well. We have helped them establish sustainable farming for residents at a nursing home called the Society of Destitute Aged that has no other financial support.

And we have fun! Monthly meetings always include social time, dinner, and an engaging speaker.

If you are a woman who enjoys volunteering in a worthwhile way, you are invited to join us. Please check out our website, kcsoroptimist.org or contact us at info@kcsoroptimist.org. ♦



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Customers lined up before 9:00 a.m. to celebrate 14 years with their Clothes Mentor family! Swag bags greeted the first 25 in line, all filled with gifts from business neighbors in the strip mall plus earrings and coupons to shop at Clothes Mentor. Gift cards were distributed each hour to those who traveled the farthest, to the first in line, to nurses, teachers and moms! Finally, three gift cards were awarded at the end of the day. Everyone had lots of fun shopping for hundreds of new arrivals, eating snacks and celebrating together. Clothes Mentor is thankful for each and every customer who came in and shopped that day. ♦

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A Beautiful Result!

BY MARLEE VOLK

Each woman who is considering a breast augmentation has concerns. Typically, recovery time from the surgery is a concern discussed with Dr. Levi Young, Advanced Cosmetic Surgery, prior to the procedure.

“Each patient is different and recovery time can vary depending on several factors such as implant size and placement. For the first few days, patients will experience tightness in their chest, fatigue, loss of sensation to breast or even hypersensitivity,” Dr. Young describes. “In the weeks following surgery it is important to limit heavy lifting, some physical activity and follow the restrictions you are given while your implants are settling.” Typically, patients fully recover from discomfort and limitations in six weeks. Your results will still continue to evolve over the next couple of months, appearing and feeling more natural over time.

During your breast augmentation consultation, Dr. Young will discuss implant sizes with you and develop an individualized plan

to help you reach your desired look and feel. “We have a sizing appointment where you can try implants with varying volume to get an even better idea of what we can accomplish with your breast augmentation procedure. This will provide the results you are looking for,” Dr. Young affirmed.

One concern is how long breast implants last. “Breast implants are long-lasting and safe but are not considered ‘lifetime devices,’” Dr. Young continued. “Today’s breast implants can remain in good shape for 20 years or more; however, the older your implants, the greater your risk of rupture or other complications. Some complications that can affect needing to remove or replace your implants would include capsular contracture, rippling, changes in implant position, or simply wanting a change in size.”

Visit Dr. Young for a consultation if you’re considering breast augmentation, during which you will learn all of the potential options for creating results you love. ♦



Dr. Levi Young, board certified in plastic surgery, offers an extensive array of body contouring procedures and facial plastic surgery procedures, and focuses on building an individualized treatment plan for every patient. Contact Advanced Cosmetic Surgery at 913-341-2188 to schedule a free consultation.

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TAKE THE PLUNGE: WHY COLD PLUNGES ARE HOT!

BY LISA BUTLER

Maybe you've seen it on TV or in a viral Tik Tok. Your favorite NFL star takes a dip in a huge vat of ice water after a big game, or perhaps your coworker takes cold, short baths a few times a week. It's called a cold plunge and its gained a big following. Cold plunging is sweeping tubs, buckets and showers all over the country and people are touting the results. Here's the tea on this cold-water immersion kick and why people are diving into the trend.

A cold plunge, known as cold therapy or cold-water immersion, is just what it sounds like, an ice bath, very cold bath or open water, around 50 to 60 degrees Fahrenheit in which you purposefully submerge yourself for a set period of time. Followers say “plunges” can stimulate hormesis, or positive stressors that cause the body to push beyond its comfort level and adapt both physically and mentally. These short bursts of cold may actually prompt a domino effect of the body's cell recovery to improve overall health and make our bodies and minds more resilient to future stress. Intriguingly, it's also one of the most researched areas of longevity happening right now.

BENEFITS OF PLUNGING

When our body is shocked by an extreme temperature change, our brain gives a signal to the body that it's under stress and needs to respond. When done safely, in a controlled environment for a set



period of time, immersing the body in an ice bath can achieve possible benefits.

EASE SORE MUSCLES

The simplest idea behind cold plunging is to help the body feel good after a good workout. The cold water constricts the blood vessels, slows the blood flow and allows some soreness and swelling to dissipate.

REDUCE SWELLING

For some, the same constriction of blood vessels with cold water may also decrease inflammation that causes swelling in the body. For others, however, heat may be more beneficial. It can depend on the area where the

inflammation originates and what method best works for that person in particular.

LOWER CORE BODY TEMPERATURE

After a serious workout session, an icy dip is a quick way to cool down. When our body is hot from exercise, cold water brings our core temperature back down quickly.

INCREASE IMMUNITY

Regular cold exposure has been shown to boost levels of certain immune cells such as white blood cells that play a role in fighting off infection and sometimes even cancer.

DECREASE STRESS

A recent study in *Explore: Journal of Science & Healing* notes plunging or cold-water baths can lower stress levels. The same study also suggests that participants who cold bathe feel a heightened sense of understanding their overall health versus those who do not plunge.

ELEVATE MOOD

Another study published in *Biology Journal* found that when the body endures cold, it triggers neurotransmitters and brain chemicals such as dopamine that help regulate emotions and lower stress afterward, sometimes for hours. And it's not proven, but many plungers say the cold burns calories.

PROTECT YOUR PLUNGE!

Most experts agree more research is needed to prove cold plunging is pertinent, safe and beneficial. As with any new body venture, talk to a doctor to weigh the possible benefits and dangers for you. People with heart conditions, older adults or those who take certain medications are at risk for medical issues. It's best to be informed, knowing that everyone's body response can be different.

Although research continues, cold plunging may be a powerful tool for improving physical and mental health. Before any cold dipping occurs, it's a good idea to be prepared, know possible benefits and consider the risks. Maybe it's worth it for you! ♦

SOURCES: clevelandclinic.org, mindbodygreen.com and eatingwell.com.

If you're ready for the arctic dip, here are a few ideas to stay safe.

PREP THE BODY

Avoid cold shock and build tolerance by gradually decreasing the temperature of a shower 30 to 60 seconds at a time. This allows the body to get used to the cold. Just like training for a race, our body should be prepared.

NOT SO FAST

Slowly submerge the body into the cold, and always keep the head above water.

LISTEN TO YOUR BODY

The University of Utah College of Health says to look out for chest pain or discomfort and an increase in breathing or irregular breathing. Don't stay in the water for too long; feeling lightheaded, dizzy or seeing changes in finger or toe color are signs of hypothermia or frostbite.

RECOVER AND HYDRATE

Cold water can be taxing on the body, so it's important to hydrate after plunging to replace any fluids lost during the dip. Consider drinking a warm beverage to help raise the body temperature.

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Financially Savvy Fashionistas Shop Clothes Mentor

BY CHRIS WESTWATER | PHOTOGRAPHY BY AMBER DEERY

If you love to purchase trending apparel and accessories at discounted prices, Clothes Mentor is for you. “Our resale boutique is clean and well organized, inviting you to browse our racks and try something on,” said Lee-Anne Hamilton, owner of Clothes Mentor in Overland Park. “We rely on our wonderful customers, who have great fashion sense, to sell us their on-trend clothes, shoes, purses, jewelry and other items. We take items based on style and condition. In fact, we get a lot of products with tags on them that people never wore.”



Lee-Anne invites you to visit Clothes Mentor in Overland Park to experience the great selection of women's clothing from athleticwear to party dresses, from accessories to fragrances, from shoes to purses and everything in between. "Our staff loves to help other women find that perfect thing," she continued, so check out Clothes Mentor today to find the perfect outfit for you.

NEW INVENTORY EVERY DAY

"We have over 20,000 revolving items in our store," Lee-Anne said. "We update our inventory daily." Stephanie Hamilton, Lee-Anne's daughter and Clothes Mentor Overland Park's Online Director, added, "Much of our inventory can be found on our online store that we update hourly throughout the business day. I love this job because it's



new and exciting every single day with the quantity of quality items that come through our door. Plus, it's a great way to keep up with my own personal trends by watching what women wear and what they search for in the boutique and online."

Clothes Mentor carries women's apparel sizes XXS to 4XL, shoe sizes from 6 to 12, and a wide variety of accessories that appeal to women ages 15 to 95. "Everything is organized by category, color, size and sleeve length," said Lee-Anne. "We want you to easily find whatever you're looking for."

Clothes Mentor purchases their inventory from customers like you. "We pay cash on the spot or store credit, which earns 25 percent more toward future purchases," Lee-Anne said. Clothes Mentor also offers a free Personal Shopper experience; just fill out the online form. Additionally, "You can

schedule a free retail therapy party for you and up to 12 friends for two hours after the store closes. You can bring snacks and drinks and have fun shopping with the store to yourselves."

GET ACTIVE WITH LULULEMON, ATHLETA AND MORE

April is *HERLIFE* Magazine's Sports issue and Clothes Mentor has you covered with their selection of athleticwear. "We have Nike, Adidas, Old Navy athletic, Joy Lab from Target, Varley, Sweaty Betty, Alo Yoga and many other brands," Lee-Anne described. Stephanie added, "We have our top two athletic brands, Lululemon and Athleta, separate from our other athleticwear because a majority of our customers are looking for these premium brands and we want to make it easy to shop." In addition to a great



selection of athletic clothing, Clothes Mentor often carries trending athletic shoes and even sports bras. If you're in the market for your favorite Kansas City sports team clothes, you can often find Chiefs, Royals, Sporting KC or KC Current gear on the racks in addition to KU and K-State apparel.

SUPPORT LOCAL, CELEBRATE EARTH DAY

Clothes Mentor in Overland Park is family owned and run. Shopping in the store or purchasing online supports a local business and even helps the environment. "Consumers' demands are shifting; they want more sustainability. Reselling items keeps clothes out of landfills and shares items with others who appreciate them," Lee-Anne said. In honor of Earth Day, Clothes Mentor will have a 25 percent off sale for online purchases, so be sure to check it out.

Clothes Mentor Overland Park supports three local charity organizations. The newest event donates a percentage of sales to the Jared Coons Memorial Pumpkin Run that supports cancer research and families impacted by cancer. This event takes place one Saturday in October. Clothes Mentor Overland Park is also a donation drop-off site for Hold 'Em Up for Care, which takes new underwear and new and gently used bras and distributes them to women in need in Kansas City; and No Shame KC, which provides feminine hygiene and menstrual products. Feel free to drop off any of these items on your next visit to Clothes Mentor.

SHOP CLOTHES MENTOR TODAY

Clothes Mentor is conveniently located at Quivira Road and 135th Street in Overland Park. They're open Monday to Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Sunday noon to 5:00 p.m. Also check their website for up-to-date product listings. You can have your online purchases held for you at the store or shipped for a small fee. If you have items to sell, see the website for more information. When you're ready to find that perfect outfit, it's Clothes Mentor. ♦

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LASER DERM MED SPA

Have the Skin
You Deserve

BY ERIC LEIKER



Q

How does laser hair removal work? Am I a good candidate?

A

The darker and coarser your hair is, the more effective the treatment will be. The dark pigment, or melanin, in the hair follicle absorbs the laser (light) energy and is converted to heat that destroys the hair follicle. This is why we have our patients shave four to twenty-four hours prior to treatment, so the laser energy is absorbed at the root of the hair follicle, rather than above the skin.

At any given time, about 15 percent of your hairs are actively growing and can be targeted by the laser. Because your hairs grow in cycles, it typically takes five to eight sessions to get the best result. Depending on the area being treated, we suggest spacing the treatments four to eight weeks apart.

As far as which skin tones can be treated, advanced clinics such as ours have lasers for all types of skin, including Alexandrite and Diode lasers for lighter and medium skin tones and YAG lasers for darker complexions.

Q

Okay, be honest. How bad does it hurt?

A

Let's start this answer with the obvious yet fair point that all of us have different pain tolerances. So, to help us answer this question better for our own patients, we have done surveys of hundreds of past patients, and the average is always about a three or four out of ten level of discomfort.

Speaking of our patients, of the tens of thousands we've treated, virtually every single one says it's considerably more comfortable than waxing and much quicker, as well. But to be fair, laser has come a long way in the last 20-plus years! So, if you know someone who has done a treatment in the past, it's very possible that it really was quite painful.

Most older lasers do not have built-in cooling technologies. However, all the lasers we use at our office have a cooling system built into the laser itself and/or include a device that blows cold air continuously onto the skin before, during and after every single laser pulse. Fortunately, these new technologies not only make for more comfortable treatments, they also are safer and more effective. ♦



Laser Derm Med Spa owner Eric Leiker is one of the most experienced laser hair removal providers in the country. He's personally performed more than 100,000 treatments over the course of nearly 20 years. Eric's depth of knowledge has allowed him to implement countless safety and quality-improvement protocols establishing a record of excellence in patient safety and satisfaction and allowing Laser Derm to grow to a team of 27 staff members who are literally laser focused on laser hair removal. Laser Derm has more Cynosure Vectus lasers under one roof than anywhere in the world. They now have more than 10 top-of-the-line lasers designed specifically for performing laser hair removal as safely and effectively as possible.

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MK SALON ESSENTIALS

NEW UNIQUE
BOUTIQUE WITH
METAL ART, TOO!



BY CHRIS WESTWATER | PHOTOGRAPHY BY AMBER DEERY

The team at MK Salon Essentials invites you to visit their convenient location off Pflumm Road and 127th Street in Overland Park to shop in their salon and new unique specialty shop. “We’ve expanded into a boutique where we sell MK Metal Art, which consists of Chiefs-themed metal artwork,” said Krissy Dechant, co-owner and lead stylist of MK Salon Essentials.

“We’re also proud to announce that we’ve been voted the best of top five salons by *Shawnee Mission Post* readers and we’re in the *Best of Kansas City Magazine’s* top five salons.” Krissy credits her team and their MK Salon Essentials clients with this honor. “We’re constantly getting referrals. Our salon is growing, my staff are great and experienced, and when somebody comes in, they usually pre-book their next appointment, then tell their friends about us.” Now clients have even more to share because of the unique variety of the MK Salon Essentials store.

NEW BOUTIQUE

In addition to custom hair and skin care products created exclusively for MK Salon Essentials and Krissy’s Dechant Sheer Minerals cosmetic line, the store also boasts Krissy’s latest brand addition of MK Metal Art, a variety of Chiefs-themed metalwork, clothes, pins and other products for local sports teams such as the

Royals, KU and K-State. “We wanted something else that our clients could shop and buy, so we decided on MK Metal Art. They’re Kansas City Chiefs yard art items, all made of metal, and they come in various sizes. You can put it in your yard, and some people put it inside their home,” Krissy said. “We also carry some of Taylor Swift’s cosmetic bags when they’re not sold out. We have sweatshirts and T-shirts of Swifties and Kansas City Chiefs as well. We also carry a nice selection of earrings, bracelets and pins.” They offer 14K gold and pure silver permanent jewelry, too.

Another reason to shop MK Salon Essentials? The great hair care, skin care and cosmetic products. “Our MK Salon Essentials exclusive, custom-made hair care products are sulfate-free, vegan, plant-based and paraben-free, and leave your hair looking and feeling wonderful,” said Krissy. “Dechant Sheer Minerals, my cosmetic line, is made in the U.S. according to European standards. We do not have ingredients such as aluminum starch, corn starch or bismuth chloride. Our minerals include Vitamins A, C, E and green tea extract and are a higher grade



that helps treat your skin while you're wearing it." The MK Salon Essentials Facebook page describes what the store offers.

THE MK SALON ESSENTIALS STORY CONTINUES

Marion Martinez, the M in the MK Salon Essentials name, sent a Facebook wave to Krissy, the K in the salon and boutique's name, in November 2020. The two immediately hit it off and ultimately decided to open their own salon. "We created a custom hair care product line and opened MK Salon Essentials on May 23, 2022," Krissy said. Marion chimed in, "And I proposed on Valentine's Day this year." "The wedding will be in November," Krissy added with a smile. It looks like this successful partnership, in business and in love, is reaching new heights. Congratulations to Krissy and Marion on their engagement and their upcoming nuptials.

Visit the salon and boutique on May 23 to help Krissy, Marion and the MK Salon



Essentials' team celebrate their two-year anniversary and check their Facebook page for updates on events and sales.

ADVANCED STYLISTS AND HAPPY CUSTOMERS

"All our stylists are advanced stylists and have been in the industry from 15 to 30 years," Krissy said. "I've been in it for 34 years! So, we're all pretty experienced." They also stay up to date on hair styling trends. "What I'm seeing now is women

wanting hair extensions that don't match their hair. They're making it more of a balayage look. They're ordering pieces that may highlight their hair, especially if their hair is dark, or they may choose to add some red. Clients like this because they don't have to damage their own hair by using lightener or dyes."

As important as your hair, nail and facial wax service is, Krissy, Marion and the MK Salons Essentials team place client happiness at the top of their priority list. "What makes me feel good is making you feel good. Sometimes that means giving a hug or a smile. It's whatever it takes to make your day feel better," said Krissy. "We want you to leave our salon and boutique looking and feeling your best." Stop in today to shop at the boutique and don't forget to schedule an appointment with one of MK Salon Essentials' advanced stylists. ♦

Visit mksalonessentials.com for more information.

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Anna Alessi + Talia Pernice

*Building Strong Minds,
Bodies and Spirits for Clients*

BY CINDY MCDERMOTT | PHOTOGRAPHY BY AMBER DEERY
HAIR AND MAKEUP BY JENNIFER CONROY
SHOT ON LOCATION AT GRIT FIT KC

Two Hearts, One Mind could be the name of the business partnership in which Anna Alessi and Talia Pernice have created a welcoming spot for those wanting to improve their lives and invest in their health through cycling, personal training or even both.

"One of the things that makes us different and unique at Cycle of Heart is that it's not your traditional workout. It's not just about building muscle and resistance," shared Anna. "It's basically creating a pure heart because it's the condition of your heart that is the lens you view the world through. And so, it's really that inner connection. Our logo shows three sections of that heart, which are mind, body and community, and we really view that as the secret sauce, the activation of your own heartbeat."

"I took my first spin class shortly after Anna opened Cycle of Heart in October 2019, and I fell in love with it," recalled Talia. "At that point I'd been a self-employed personal trainer for eight years. I wanted to be part of this community and reach more people. I approached Anna with the idea and she said, 'Let's do it.' So I got my Schwinn certification and I started coaching for Cycle of Heart in December 2019."

Talia and Anna have known each other since high school days when they worked at Beauty Brands together. Both women have had a life-long passion for athletics and fit-

ness, and although their paths to this partnership have differed, they share the same mission: to empower and inspire others not just physically but mentally and emotionally as well.

Cycle of Heart

Cycle of Heart was established five years ago with Anna at the helm, but the dream began many years before the business opened. She had a successful sales career and family, but something was missing for her. She longed for a try at a cycling gym because of her life-long love of athletics, especially cycling, but self-doubt clouded her dreams. She says her epiphany came one evening after putting her daughter in her crib. Looking at her, she recognized she wanted something better for herself and her daughter. She knew it was time to make the dream a reality. Anna shared her thoughts with her husband, Scott. She expected to hear the reasons this was a bad idea, but he wholeheartedly supported her initiative and suggested she prepare her business plan to get things spinning.

"Cycle of Heart was born out of the desire to create a space that welcomes all bod-

ies in all stages. We believe that a pant size doesn't warrant the ability to find joy in the vessel that God has provided for you. We believe in sparking joy through moving our bodies. We don't use any mirrors, we don't use any metrics," remarked Anna. "We exercise with dim lighting so we don't create an environment of comparison. It's about creating an environment that lets you activate the warrior inside of you. We also believe pushing into the resistance as you apply it onto the flywheel of the bike allows you really to speak to your own personal hills and your own personal mountains. We believe that when you have an authentic voice throughout the workout, it makes it easier to talk to those true mountain voices, that criticism, the comparison. It's about being able to close your eyes and activate the voice within."

Grit Fit KC

The same positivity is reflected in the goals held by Grit Fit KC. Talia Pernice has been a personal trainer now for 13 years and opened Grit Fit KC in Gladstone, Missouri, in May 2022; it had been a lifelong dream. "Fitness is my passion and Grit Fit KC was



“Cycle of Heart was born out of the desire to create a space that welcomes all bodies in all stages. We believe that a pant size doesn’t warrant the ability to find joy in the vessel that God has provided for you. We believe in sparking joy through moving our bodies.”

- Anna

built on the foundation of living a healthy and balanced life, and to coach my clients to love the body that God gave them and take care of it. I encourage them to be grateful and empowered by what their mind, body and spirit can do when they work in sync together and believe in themselves. Body and spirit are exact when they believe in themselves. I have always labeled myself as ‘your every day LIFE trainer.’ Grit Fit KC doesn’t have a specific weight or body type that labels you as strong.

“Grit Fit KC stands for the grit that’s foundational to my coaching message for my clients. G: Growth. R: Resilience. I: Inspire. T: Transform. These four qualities and more are also my foundation, growing through the work, the blood, sweat and tears and refusing to quit, creating transformation from the inside out. Grit is what evolves you on the daily, not just physically, but mentally and emo-

tionally. My motto is Can't Stop Won't Stop. GRIT Fit KC is about being strong in mind, body and spirit.”

Growing Up With Sports

The partners each enjoyed sports as young adults, which enhanced their lives. But even with the bolster of self-esteem that athletics can bring, negativity also crowded into the picture. “I was an athlete my whole life and always felt like I was bigger in size and trying to constantly put myself in that comparison mode,” noted Anna. “So, as far as my body came, I never really felt comfortable and good in my own skin.”

“I was an athlete all my life but lost my way in my late teens and early 20s,” Talia recounted. “At 21, I weighed 187 lbs. and came to the harsh reality that it was time to make a change—a big one. My personal weight loss

journey led me to be a trainer. My journey was long and hard but it sparked a desire in my heart to help others on their journeys, to be a support and let them know they are not alone and that they can do anything they set their mind to.”

Over the next 13 years, Talia served as a trainer at many facilities, creating an impressive roster of clients, many carrying special needs with them into training sessions. The hope was that they could improve their lives. “The unique thing about Grit Fit KC is it’s a private studio. My clients range from their mid-90s to their teenage years and the services they focus on are not only physical fitness; some seek rehabilitation from life-altering health conditions,” she noted. “I train clients who have had strokes and are learning how to walk again and balance. I’ve trained clients who are fighting cancer. I’ve trained amputees. When my clients come in to train, it’s just me and them and the weights. And that is what enables me to make their experience truly personal.” She also shows her versatility by teaching two cycling classes during the week.

“I come from a big, close-knit Italian family that means everything to me. My parents raised me to put God first and to trust Him in all things, to be strong, hardworking, to have a servant heart, and to always be kind to others,” Talia continued. “I wouldn’t be



Cycle of heart
INDOOR SPIN STUDIO







“Grit Fit KC stands for the grit that’s foundational to my coaching message for my clients. G: Growth. R: Resilience. I: Inspire. T: Transform. These four qualities and more are also my foundation, growing through the work, the blood, sweat and tears and refusing to quit, creating transformation from the inside out.”

– Talia

the woman I am today without them and the morals they instilled in me since I was a little girl.” She and her boyfriend, Josh, reside in Parkville, Missouri, and are parents to three dogs, Brutus, Hank and Charleigh. “I love my family very deeply. I am blessed with the best.”

Positive Choices

Cycle of Heart and Grit Fit KC, located in the heart of the northland, Gladstone, Missouri, offer a unique experience for their clients. The staff focuses not only on the outside but the inside as well.

“Each coach has their own style. We all have our specialty, our missions, and that helps us to reach so many more people because our clients are not getting a cookie-cutter experience that you find elsewhere,” commented Anna. “Here, your coach really speaks to you. This is not a traditional corporate gym. It’s really about the character of each coach and letting them develop their own language with the community. Our clients say this is a great opportunity to connect with a coach who’s completely different, with a completely different experience.”

“My focus on my clients enables me to make their experience truly personal. It’s more than just the physical workout. It’s therapy for the mind, body and heart. We laugh; we cry; we talk about life. My goal is for every client to leave with their cup a little fuller than when they walked in. You can’t find that kind of experience, in my opinion, anywhere else. We don’t have to work around people because this gym is truly private,” noted Talia. “People may think that they don’t need a personal trainer, but I have found that it is worth the investment if you’re going to take this seriously and really do a good job with trying to navigate your health journey.”

These two ladies, successful in solo careers and now co-partnering in a business, offer encouragement for those looking for a life-changing path. “For me, it’s believing in yourself and standing firm in what you built your business on. Never lose your fire and stay humble. A big thing for me and my business is to take time to truly get to know the people who come in and support me in my business. Listen and learn from your client base and make them feel like more than a dollar sign to you,” Talia advised.

“I agree wholeheartedly with Talia. Not losing sight of your customer, what are their goals, what are their desires. Then keep going back and measuring your business, customers and clients,” Anna shared. “As a business owner, it can get really lonely. It’s good to have a group of other entrepreneurs who you trust and you can bounce ideas off. You can call them and ask what they’re doing for social media or what’s working for them. It’s even more impactful in a group of entrepreneurs.” ♦

SLOW COOKER PARMESAN CHICKEN SOUP

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



INGREDIENTS

3 carrots, sliced 1/3-inch thick
 4 celery stalks, sliced 1/3-inch thick
 1 small onion, peeled, chopped
 5 large sprigs fresh thyme
 Kosher salt
 2 pounds bone-in, skin on chicken breasts or skin-on chicken thighs
 8 cups chicken, stock, broth or water (see tip)
 6 ounces dried pasta of your choice (Cervasi soup shells, orzo, spaghetti or elbow macaroni)
 Freshly ground black pepper
 1 bay leaf (optional)
 1 parmesan rind (optional)
 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese, plus extra for serving (the real stuff)
 1/2 cup thyme leaves or parsley for garnish (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Toss the carrots, celery, onion, bay leaf, thyme and parmesan rind together in the slow cooker and add 1/2 teaspoon salt. Season the chicken generously with salt and pepper and place on top of the vegetables. Add the chicken broth or water. Cover and cook on low for 8 hours or high for 4 hours. Carefully remove the chicken to a cutting board. Remove and discard the thyme stems and parmesan rind if used. Add the pasta to the slow cooker. Discard the chicken skin and bones and shred the chicken; it will mostly fall apart on its own. Add the chicken back to the slow cooker and simmer until heated through and the pasta is cooked. Remove from the heat and stir in the parmesan if using. Taste the soup and re-season with additional salt and pepper if needed. Ladle into bowls and garnish with additional parmesan and thyme leaves if desired. ♦

TIPS

1: If using water instead of broth, you will need to re-season the soup with salt after adding the parmesan and before serving. The soup will not have its true flavor until it is properly salted.

2: You can also use shredded rotisserie chicken. But use chicken broth if you go this route..



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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DEWEY'S PIZZA

A WINNING COMBINATION

Artisan Pizza and Commitment to Community



The Harvest salad is offered between September and February.



BY SHERYL HAMMONTREE
PHOTOGRAPHY BY AMBER DEERY

Whether we're celebrating an event or chilling after a long day, pizza is what we want! You know it's true, you simply cannot be sad or mad while eating pizza!

May I introduce you to Dewey's Pizza—a destination for pizza enthusiasts seeking an unforgettable dining experience. Founded in 1998 by a passionate musician turned chef, Dewey's, located at 95th & Mission Road in Ranch Mart, has become a cornerstone of the community, renowned for its delectable pizzas and their community-centered mission.

At the heart of Dewey's mission is a commitment to serving the very best to its guests. Stepping through the door, you're greeted with a smile and the aroma of freshly baked crust and simmering toppings. A quick look left through the large kitchen window provides a peek at the craftsmanship that goes into every pie, calzone and salad.

What sets Dewey's apart is not just its artisan pizzas but also its dedication to the community it serves. During their Giveback Night events, Dewey's donates a portion of sales to support programs within our local schools and nonprofits. Most recently, their contributions were directed toward supporting Literacy KC. In addition, Dewey's hosts Pizza School, an annual event in which 100 pizza-loving participants practice the art of dough tossing and pizza topping before coming together in the dining area to enjoy their creations. Proceeds from this event are also donated to support a local charity.

Whether you choose to dine in or carry out, you'll find yourself embraced by the warm hospitality of the Dewey's team. They work as



a team to transform a meal into a dining experience, one that keeps patrons coming back time and time again. General manager Michael Simpson knows they make the best tasting pizza but is quick to say, "We are also in the business of hospitality. Servers that smile, remember your name and buy in to our mission are just as important as our food."



LET'S DIVE INTO DEWEY'S MENU...

Dewey's is dedicated to delivering top-notch food and crafting an exceptional dining experience for everyone. If you have been missing out on pizza due to dietary restrictions, Dewey's is ready to serve you gluten-free crust, vegan cheese and a range of delicious vegetarian dishes to ensure that everyone can indulge.

Are you a purist who prefers the classic meat lovers pizza? You must order the Don Corleone. Piled high with Genoa salami, Capicola ham and pepperoni plus plenty of melty mozzarella, this is a carnivore's dream. If that sounds good but you prefer a few more toppings, order up the Bronx Bomber where you'll enjoy mushrooms, onions, green bell peppers and black olives with plenty of pepperoni and sausage.

Mark your calendar! On Cinco de Mayo, Dewey's will bring back

the Tito Santana Pizza. Think about combining everyone's two favorite things to eat, pizza and tacos, and now imagine sharing this with friends and an ice-cold cerveza. I may see you there!

If you're ready to craft your own Signature Specialty Pizza, Dewey's offers an extensive array of toppings on their Create Your Own menu. Choose from a selection of ten meats, eight cheeses and over 20 veggie options, including unique items such as house-pickled jalapeños and black bean-corn salsa.

For the more adventurous palate, I highly recommend trying my personal favorite, the Porky Fig Pizza. This creation is truly a must-try. Combining the richness of caramelized onions and fig jam with melty mozzarella cheese, prosciutto and the distinctive tang of gorgonzola, this pizza defies description. It's a flavor experience unlike any other, leaving you craving more with each and every bite.



Do you color outside the lines and defy the ordinary? Allow me to introduce the Dr. Dre pizza! Named after its creator, Dewey's chef, Andre Howard, this pizza defies all expectations! The crust is brushed with a baste of garlic-infused olive oil and while mozzarella, green bell peppers, red onions, tomatoes, all-natural chicken and bacon may sound familiar, this masterpiece takes it a step further with a post-bake drizzle of Dewey's house-made ranch dressing! Don't second guess this. Just order it!

Now, on to salads. You won't be disappointed with the classic Caesar, and feel free

to add all-natural chicken! The House salad is a generous bowl of field greens topped with toasted pine nuts, dried cranberries, goat cheese and balsamic vinaigrette. While undeniably delicious, it leans a bit toward the sweet side for my palate. I prefer something with a savory kick, which is why my top pick is the Peppercorn Ranch salad. After all, who can resist bacon and shaved Parmesan? And a note for the future, between September and February, you'll want to order the Harvest salad pictured on page 39. Figs, toasted pumpkin seeds, applewood smoked bacon, Boursin cheese—need I say more?

Of course, no visit to Dewey's would be complete without exploring their carefully curated beer and wine selection. Far from ordinary, the lineup features a diverse array of brews and vintages handpicked by the discerning palate of Will Male. He's passionate and very particular about what is served at their bar; he's also ready and excited to suggest the perfect pairing, whether it's a crisp white wine to complement the delicate flavors of the Porky Fig pizza or the DewBrew pilsner to offset the richness of his favorite pizza, Socrates' Revenge.

Save room for dessert! In keeping with their commitment to community, their cakes come from Dolce Bakery in Prairie Village and those unbelievable chocolate chip cookies are delivered from a local baker, Outliers Baked Goods.

Dewey's is more than just a place to grab a slice—it's a destination where food, community and creativity converge to create an experience unlike any other. Come for the pizza, stay for the hospitality, and leave with a new favorite or two. ♦

Visit deweyspizza.com for menu previews and more information.



Art director, illustrator and entrepreneur Sheryl Hammontree is happiest when creating. As a freelancer, she creates visual styling and targeted messaging to strategically solve challenges for clients. As the owner of Thoughtful Threads, she creates expressive apparel to empower people and build a community of kindness. Sheryl heads outside to find energy, inspiration and calm, whether in the garden or on a trail, her soul is fed by creating memories with her husband, Joel, family and friends.

A PIG'S HERITAGE

BY LINDA R. PRICE

Heritage pork is a culinary delight. The term “heritage” means “practices or characteristics that are passed down through the years, from one generation to the next,” according to Oxford Languages. So, how does that relate to heritage pork mentioned on restaurant menus?



In the United States, according to the Livestock Conservancy, only the Ossabaw Island and the Berkshire breeds are considered heritage swine breeds. In addition, crossbreeds bred from these two purebred lines may also be considered heritage swine.

The Ossabaw Island pigs are descendants of the Spanish Iberico pigs imported by Hernando De Soto, who brought 13 pigs to Tampa Bay, Florida, in 1539. The conditions in the new world were so favorable to the pigs that the herd reached 700 by 1542.

The purebred Berkshire, often considered the world's best pig, was imported into the U. S. in 1823 from England. The pigs were discovered by Oliver Cromwell's soldiers at Reading, in the shire of Berk, over 300 years ago. Their fame as pork of high quality and flavor caused their spread around the world.

Heritage pork is typically raised on small, independent farms. The animals are free to forage and often provided with comfortable barns for brutal winters and cool shade in hot months. Some specialty farmers feed their pigs with proprietary food to supplement their natural diet and give the meat an enhanced flavor.

The pigs are bred for sturdiness, lean and flavorful meat and market viability. This means just the opposite of mass-produced pork that may contain antibiotics, ste-

roids, hormones and be fed GMO grains and fodder. For many small farmers, high costs and a labor-intensive work make raising heritage swine a work of love more than a high-income venture. In most cases, the pork is costlier than mass-produced pigs.

Is the extra cost worth it? Many say yes, because the meat has more fat, which makes the meat more tender, moist and flavorful. The

flavor of heritage pork is also enhanced because of the free range the pigs frequently enjoy. By foraging, the pigs are able to add variety to their diet, naturally enhancing the flavor of their flesh.

DUROC

The Duroc is another pig preferred by connoisseurs. The origin of Duroc swine is somewhat muddy, but modern Durocs were developed from the Jersey Red of New Jersey and the Red Duroc of New York. They are prized for their heavy marbling and darker meat that's more tender, tastier and juicier than other swine breeds.

Duroc pork products are often difficult to find. The pigs require special care, are few and far between, and have rigorous standards for their production. These conditions make them exclusive and alluring to those who seek a rare gourmet treat.

A major producer of pork products in the United States, Smithfield Foods, Smithfield, Virginia, uses Duroc pigs in their breeding program. The pigs are a cross between a male Duroc and a 50-50 cross between Landrace and Large White female hogs.

At Smithfield Foods, hogs may be fed grains that are GMO modified. However, Smithfield is quick to point out that many regulatory agencies, including the U. S. Food and Drug Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency have not found adverse effects from either humans or animals consuming these grains.

COMMERCIALY PRODUCED PORK

Americans love their pork. In 2021, the per capita consumption was 51.1 pounds, and America's farmers are providing for an expand-

ing market. The largest pork farming operations in the United States are in Iowa, which raised approximately 23.5 million head, followed by Minnesota, with 9 million, and North Carolina, with 8 million in 2022. The United States exported around 7 billion pounds of pork in 2022 while importing about 1.3 billion pounds. Although China is by far the leading producer of pork in the world, followed by the European Union and the United States, little pork is exported from China to the United States.

The hog industry has changed drastically from the farrow-to-finishing operations of 50 years ago. The United States imports different-aged pigs and the different farming operations concentrate on a specific age group and their needs in the modern hog industry. For example, in 2022, the United States imported about 6.5 million live hogs for finishing operations from Canada, or about 5 percent of the federally inspected hogs slaughtered that year.

With millions of head of swine moving among the United States, the European Union and Canada, it is difficult for consumers to keep up with the genetics of each pork selection they make. Gourmets are particular about where their food was sourced, and when paying for a premium meal or cut of meat, the consumer has every right to demand this information, especially if it is fine heritage pork. ♦

SOURCES: feastandfield.net, bonappetit.com, cotton-cattle-co.myshopify.com, eatberkshirepork.com, dpi.nsw.gov.au, choplocal.com, smithfield-foods.com, statista.com and ers.usda.gov.



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NOT MISSING A BEAT: CHILD ATHLETES AND CARDIOVASCULAR ISSUES

BY LISA BUTLER

Kids and sports, sports and kids; in many homes, it's the norm. While almost all kids can participate in sports or run and play with friends without the thought of any heart problems, a small percentage of young people may have a known or unknown heart condition. Because athletes are often regarded as very healthy, if a child experiences sudden cardiac arrest or even death, it can lead to fear and confusion about how safe it is to participate in sports.



Estimates vary, but some reports suggest that about 1 in 50,000 to 1 in 80,000 young athletes die of sudden cardiac death each year. In comparison, the occurrence of sudden cardiac arrest in the general population is about 1 in 1,000 yearly.

While it seems illogical, some of the strongest, fittest and youngest among us may be susceptible to a life-threatening heart event. The challenging part is that it's often hard to know if children and teens have a severe heart issue. It can be something they were born with that wasn't noticed, or something that was acquired more recently.

Regular, day-to-day activity may not necessarily cause symptoms, but problems may show up for young athletes during extreme exercise or sports, when the heart is under more stress. A heart con-

dition can stay dormant until heavy exertion triggers it.

A genetic heart defect can trigger a cardiac event, including the most common, hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, in which gene mutations in the heart muscle cause the walls of the heart chambers to become thick. The heart becomes stiff, reducing the amount of blood pumped, taxing the body during

strenuous exercise.

Of course, we all know physical activity is beneficial in many ways. Exercise reduces the risk of chronic disease, improves balance and coordination, helps with weight management and boosts self-esteem. Highly strenuous physical activities, however, can potentially put uncertain stress on the heart, especially for those with heart conditions. In addition to hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, other conditions

can also lead to sudden cardiac arrest in young people.

CONGENITAL HEART DEFECTS

Some people are born with heart and blood vessel changes that can reduce blood flow and lead to sudden cardiac arrest. Defects can result from faulty embryo development, structures that don't develop properly and misplaced structures.

HEART RHYTHM DISORDERS

One example is Long QT syndrome, a condition that can cause fast, chaotic heartbeats linked to fainting and sudden death, especially in young people. Another is supraventricular tachycardia, or SVT, in which electrical signals in the heart's upper chambers travel abnormally in the heart.

BLUNT CHEST INJURY

A blow to the chest that causes sudden cardiac death is called commotio cordis, which can occur in athletes hit hard in the chest by sports equipment or another player. A recent example is NFL player Damar Hamlin, who received a hard blow to the left side of his chest during a tackle. A recent study noted 94 percent of victims of commotio cordis were male, and their average age was 19. A little less than two-thirds of the cases involved sports, and most of those involved a projectile of some sort, such as a baseball, softball or hockey puck.

WORRIED? DON'T PANIC

Parents and coaches might be concerned about a young athlete's possibility of cardiac arrest. Experts generally agree it's good to be aware but not overly concerned, as very rare and unusual circumstances cause cardiac arrest. Prevention is possible. Young athletes should visit their pediatrician for a full physical and be screened for cardiac irregularities before participating in a competitive sport. Each athlete should have a yearly examination performed by a trained practitioner using currently recommended guidelines. Experts say this is an important first step in identifying at-risk individuals.

The American Heart Association and American College of Cardiology also recommend a 14-point screening questionnaire performed by a health care professional to evaluate a young athlete's heart risks. Athletes with positive findings should be referred for further evaluation and testing. However, both the organizations do not endorse mandatory electrocardiograms for everyone, though, as mass testing of symptomless athletes can possibly hurt more than help. The tests are prone to false positives, which can stress parents needlessly and put young people at risk of being exposed to unwarranted testing and unnecessary procedures while preventing them from playing.

Sudden death in youth is rare, but any amount of prevention is worth it. Even though a youth's heart issue could pose a risk during intense exertion, it doesn't prevent them from playing sports altogether. Current medical knowledge now weighs risks to the individual patient versus the many benefits of participation, making every effort to keep kids playing their sports.

Cardiovascular exercise is beneficial and encouraged for a child's overall health. Whether they can safely participate in exercise or sports depends on their specific condition and doctor's advice. ♦

SOURCES: mayoclinichealthsystem.org, heart.org, chla.org and acc.org.



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MAY 5  — 12:00 PM —	MAY 8  — 9:00 PM —	MAY 12  — 5:00 PM —	MAY 18  — 8:30 PM —	MAY 25  — 9:00 PM —	JUN. 9  — 5:00 PM —
JUN. 14  — 7:00 PM —	JUN. 23  — 3:00 PM —	JUN. 28  — 7:00 PM —	JUL. 6  — 6:30 PM —	AUG. 25  — 11:00 AM —	SEP. 1  — 1:00 PM —
SEP. 7  — 6:30 PM —	SEP. 13  — 6:00 PM —	SEP. 20  — 7:00 PM —	SEP. 28  — 12:00 PM —	OCT. 5  — 6:30 PM —	OCT. 12  — 9:00 PM —
OCT. 19  — 12:00 PM —	NOV. 3  — 2:00 PM —				

WIN FOR KC

The Women's Intersport Network for Kansas City (WIN for KC) was established in 1994 to empower the lives of girls and women through advocating and promoting the lifetime value of sports and fitness, while providing opportunities for participation and leadership development.

WIN for KC exists because its volunteers and contributors believe in the physical and emotional well-being of females through involvement in sports and fitness. WIN for KC events and programs include participation and networking opportunities, leadership seminars, and promotions of women's events. WIN for KC also recognizes girls and women's contributions to sport and advocates for equal opportunities. Visit sportkc.org/win-for-kc for more information.



Photos courtesy of WIN for KC

Be part of the first-ever WIN for KC Pickleball Clinic & Speaker Series held in partnership with Chicken N Pickle! The series consists of three remaining dates:

Wednesday, May 22, 2024
Tuesday, August 27, 2024
Tuesday, December 3, 2024

Each clinic will include one hour of instruction from Chicken N Pickle professionals and one hour featuring high-profile female speakers along with appetizers, cocktails and networking. The fourth and final clinic date will be a pickleball tournament.

Visit sportkc.org/winpickleball for more information.

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Visit sportkc.org/win-for-kc/camp-win for more information.

THE FREEDOM OF TWO WHEELS: LUXURY MOTORCYCLES FOR LADIES

BY LINDA R. PRICE

Women are riding motorcycles more than ever. Women riders currently equal 20 percent of all riders nationally, is nearly double the female riders of ten years ago. Millennials make up 26 percent of women riders! In Gen X, 22 percent are female.



What do women want in a bike? Most women like their creature comforts and are willing to spend more for them, citing such items as a comfortable seat, a low-to-the-ground cycle and lighter bikes than those more suitable to a taller, heftier man. Women riders value aesthetics, cost-efficiency, reliability and comfort.

As the women's share of the motorcycle market is increasing, manufacturers are paying more attention to the aesthetics of motorcycle design. Metallic colors, sleek design and modern technology make motorcycles more attractive than ever to the woman rider.

If you are a new rider, a good choice is a smaller bike until you learn how to ride. Bikes with a 250cc- to 500cc-sized engine are lightweight and easy to handle. Used bikes are suggested for novices until they learn to handle a motorcycle; there's a high likelihood of dropping

the bike once or twice during the learning process. Cost efficiency is important to riders; initial price, gas mileage and upkeep are considerations when selecting your bike. Be sure to factor in the cost of good protective gear, too.

For most, choosing among the scooter, the dirt bike, the city bike, the cruiser and the touring bike is a simple choice, but there are some

crucial differences to be aware of.

Scooters are considered a type of motorcycle. They have upright seating and are ideal for city traffic. Dirt bikes are used off road in all kinds of terrain. They are not street legal, and therefore, not the bike for city life. The city bike, on the other hand, is designed for short commutes and getting around in heavy traffic. They can be used for long-distance travel but probably won't be as comfortable as a touring bike. Cruisers are easily customizable and perfect for leisure road trips. They have a relaxed leg position and sit lower to the ground than standard motorcycles. Touring bikes are big and heavy! They have more fairing and windshields that offer a high degree of weather and wind protection, larger luggage compartments and tech features such as heated seats and built-in audio systems.

Once the decision is made about which motorcycle is ideal for your needs, it's time to go shopping. The major brands all have bikes appropriate for the female rider; usually it's a matter of the rider's choice. Here are a few!

One of the best bikes for the novice rider is the Kawasaki Ninja 250. The bike is affordable, lightweight and easily adapted for the smaller rider. The bike is easy to maintain and find parts for. A pair of good bikes for the beginning rider is the Triumph Bonneville and Triumph Street Twin. They are similar, comfortable, timeless British classics yet are powerful enough to satisfy the woman who wants a robust bike.

For the shorter woman, seat heights between 25.5" and 31.7" are ideal. The Indian Scout Bobber has one of the lowest seat heights, but the rider should always sit on the motorcycle for a good period of time

to see if it's comfortable. Another popular model for shorter women is the Honda Rebel 500. The bike is well made, fun and one of the most affordable bikes available.

In the medium-size range, 750cc to 1100cc, motorcycles have so many more features that the less-experienced rider is no longer limited by the engine size. These bikes have technological upgrades that make them safer and more enjoyable to ride. The Suzuki V-STROM 800DE and the Suzuki V-STROM 850DE are adventure bikes with enough power to satisfy most riders looking for power and modern technology. Features include higher clearance, wide handlebars, two-inch front wheel, and other features to customize the ride to your specifications.

The Indian Pursuit Limited is the epitome of a luxury motorcycle. The Pursuit comes with a 1768cc liquid-cooled engine and a six-speed V-twin with 122 horsepower. It's a heavy machine with lots of storage space including a topcase and chassis-mounted fairing to deflect wind and airborne objects for safer touring. The Harley-Davidson Street Glide is a sleek, modern touring motorcycle. The iconic batwing fairing, integrated LED lighting, plush seats and powerful engine make it an excellent choice.

Is riding for you? You never know until you try it! You might like to check out one of the women-only riding clubs such as Motor Maids, Inc., Leather & Lace MC or Tenacious Dames to see if a riding club is for you. If not, you can always enjoy the freedom of the open road—alone! ♦

SOURCES: lawtigers.com, twistedroad.com, womenridersnow.com, cardosystems.com, topspeed.com, progressive.com and cycletraders.com.



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NO, YOU CAN'T HAVE THIS! SORRY!

BY MARILYN ISAMINGER

He looks up at me while I'm finishing a salad with avocados. Or perhaps he smells the delicious fragrance of that brownie with ice cream. "Please!" he asks. Nope. You'll be sorry and so will I, I reassure him.

It's a responsibility I signed on to when my furry canine boy came home with me. It's for his long-term health as well as the costs of veterinary visits. So we keep a mental list of what can't go in his food bowl or slipped from a plate of leftovers. Many foods not harmful to humans can cause a serious health crisis when ingested by pets.

ALCOHOL

Dogs metabolize alcohol differently than humans, and ingredients such as xylitol, chocolate, coffee and spices commonly found in alcoholic beverages compound the danger. Symptoms of alcohol poisoning in animals, including dogs, are similar to symptoms in people, including vomiting, breathing problems, coma and in severe cases, death. Even small amounts of alcohol can lead to heart arrhythmias and dangerously low blood pressure.

AVOCADOS

Avocados contain persin, a fungicidal toxin. Small amounts are generally not a problem, but the high fat content can lead to health problems. Persin can cause vomiting and diarrhea and may also trigger fluid accumulation in the lungs and chest. This can lead to difficulty breathing and death from oxygen deprivation.

CANDY

Sugary and high-fat candy must be avoided. Treats containing xylitol or chocolate are particularly dangerous, potentially leading to



serious health issues or even fatal outcomes.

CHOCOLATE

The presence of theobromine and caffeine makes chocolate toxic to dogs. The type and amount of chocolate ingested determine the severity of the reaction, ranging from mild to life-threatening. The Merck Veterinary Manual lists, from highest to lowest of the amount of toxic substances they contain, dry cocoa powder, unsweetened chocolate, cocoa bean hulls, semisweet chocolate, sweet dark chocolate and milk chocolate. White chocolate contains insignificant amounts of theobromine and caffeine.

COFFEE

If your dog ingests coffee grounds or any drink that is high in caffeine, it can be serious. Caffeine contains methylxanthines, which can cause potentially fatal diarrhea, vomiting, seizures, irregular heartbeats, tremors, arrhythmias, difficulty breathing and other symptoms. An overdose of caffeine can cause rapid or irregular heartbeats leading to hospitalization or death.

DAIRY PRODUCTS

Lactose intolerance makes dairy products a source of food intolerance. While small amounts may be tolerable for some dogs, why take the risk? A little bit of cheese is okay, but too much can lead to weight gain.

FATTY FOODS

Pancreatitis can be the result of a diet high in fat and rich foods. A

surge of cases usually occurs around holidays such as Thanksgiving. So, keep that turkey skin away from your pet!

Turkey bones and cooked bones of any kind should be avoided, too. Bone shards can be sharp and cause damage to the mucosal walls of the stomach and intestines, possibly perforating the lining of these organs and causing a life-threatening abdominal infection.

GARLIC, ONIONS, LEEKS, CHIVES

Members of the Allium family contain compounds such as n-propyl disulfides and thiosulfates, which can damage a dog's red blood cells, leading to poisoning and potential fatality. Onion and garlic powders can be found in many foods, so read labels and avoid feeding your dog products that contain them.

GRAPES.

Small amounts of grapes or grape products can induce kidney failure in dogs. Avoid grape-related products, including raisins and juice.

NUTS

Peanuts are safe in moderation; others, such as macadamia nuts, can cause vomiting, tremors and increased body temperature. The American Kennel Club emphasizes that all nuts pose a choking hazard and can contribute to weight gain and pancreatic issues.

RAW BREAD DOUGH

Uncooked yeasted dough can ferment in a dog's stomach, leading to alcohol poisoning and aspiration. Immediate veterinary attention is

required to address these potentially life-threatening complications.

STONE FRUITS

While fruits such as peaches and nectarines aren't toxic, their pits present a choking hazard and contain a compound that turns into cyanide when digested. Opting for safer fruits like apples, bananas and blueberries is advisable.

TEA

Tea contains caffeine, which can raise a dog's blood pressure and cause heart arrhythmias and seizures. Again, it's necessary to keep dogs from caffeinated beverages.

XYLITOL

The sugar substitute xylitol, found in various sugar-free products, can lead to a rapid and life-threatening release of insulin in dogs that can lead to liver failure. Avoid items such as gum, mints, desserts, purchased baked goods, vitamins, cough syrup and toothpaste that may contain xylitol. Dog poisoning cases involving xylitol are increasing; the xylitol in five pieces of sugar-free gum can kill a 65-pound dog.

If you suspect your dog has ingested any of these substances, prompt action is crucial. Contact your local vet, an emergency clinic or the ASPCA's Animal Poison Control Center at 888-426-4435 for timely guidance to mitigate potential health complications or fatalities. ♦

SOURCES: everydaycheapskate.com, petsbest.com and merckvetmanual.com.



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KC'S FIRST DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL



BY JENNIFER JOHNSON AND HEATHER SEBEL
PHOTOS COURTESY OF KC PINK WARRIORS DRAGON BOAT TEAM

Hey Kansas City, are you ready to be bitten by the dragon? What began in 2019 as a group of cancer survivors learning the art of dragon boat paddling while sitting on boxes in a gym has grown into a team of more than 40 athletes gliding across the waters of Wyandotte County Lake in their very own dragon boats. After bringing home five gold medals in 2023, the KC Pink Warriors are now realizing their dream of bringing a Major League Dragon Boat Festival to Kansas City!

KC Pink Warriors, the first full-time dragon boat team in Missouri and Kansas, is a community of female cancer survivors who inspire, restore and empower through dragon boat competition and team connection. They are partnering with Great White North Dragon Boat to introduce our already iconic sports city to dragon boat paddling, racing and culture.

On Saturday, September 28, spectators and dragon boat enthusiasts from across the country will converge at Shawnee Mission Park Lake for a day of thrilling races, competitive spirit and a celebration of the vibrant dragon boat community.

Dragon Boat is the world's fastest-growing water sport. It consists of 20 team members paddling in unison in a 40-foot canoe-style boat. Fun for all ages, shapes, sizes and skill levels, it is the perfect setting for team building.



COMPETITORS

Teams from all skill levels and backgrounds are invited to participate in this inaugural event. Whether you're a seasoned dragon boat racer or a first-time paddler, there is an opportunity for everyone. Register as a team or as a solo paddler to be matched with a team.

SPONSORS

Join us in supporting this landmark event. Showcase your brand to a diverse and engaged audience and contribute to the success of Major League Dragon Boat in Kansas City.

SPECTATORS

The community is invited to experience the thrill of dragon boat racing while they cheer on the teams, enjoy local food trucks, shop local vendors, and enjoy the health and wellness village. ♦

To find out more, visit kcpinkwarriors.org/kc-festival.

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APRIL 2024

APRIL 2-7

Clue – The Musical

MURIEL KAUFFMAN THEATRE

Murder and blackmail are on the menu when six mysterious guests assemble at Boddy Manor for a night they'll never forget! *Clue* is the ultimate whodunit that will leave you dying of laughter and keep you guessing until the final twist.



APRIL 6

Harlem Globetrotters

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The world-famous Harlem Globetrotters make their triumphant return to KC! Fans can witness the record-breaking stars of basketball live as they bring an unforgettable blend of dribbling, spinning and dunking to the court, taking on their fierce rivals, the Washington Generals.

APRIL 11, 12, 14

Kansas City Symphony: Harry Potter and The Deathly Hallows Part 2

Harry's last year at Hogwarts is here, part one of the epic finale *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* in concert! With the full film set to your Kansas City Symphony performing live, the final battle for Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry has never been so emotional.

APRIL 18

Wine Tasting on The Terrace: Sip for a Cause, Toast for Tomorrow

OVERLAND PARK ARBORETUM & BOTANICAL GARDENS

Wine tasting on the terrace is a vital fundraiser for Friends of the Arboretum as we raise our glasses to a brighter future with exquisite wines and culinary harmony provided this month by White Tail Run Winery and Terrace Catering.

APRIL 19

Bra Couture KC

GRAND BALLROOM DOWNTOWN KC

The "Top 14" couture-designed bras are modeled live on the runway by cancer survivors and are auctioned live by a professional auctioneer. Every couture-designed fashion, many by fashion designers from the Kansas City fashion community, comes with an amazing package that includes trips to great destinations and packages for the Royals and Chiefs. A silent auction will feature designer purses (one holding a surprise of \$500 cash!); artwork by local artists; and sports memorabilia from the Royals and Chiefs.

APRIL 27

Barnyard Babies Family Festival

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Experience life on the farm with so much to see and do for all ages! Meet some new furry friends and get reacquainted with your barnyard favorites—cows, sheep, pigs, goats, alpacas, horses, rabbits, chickens—a barnyard menagerie, train rides, pony rides, learn how to milk a cow and harvest honey.



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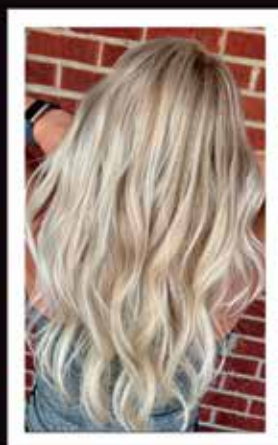
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- Donate items for auction packages

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APRIL 19, 2024 – 6:00 p.m.

GRAND BALLROOM DOWNTOWN KC

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CAPRICORN
(DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

There is much going on now in your life, so many opportunities and possibilities you're aware of. This can make it very hard to choose. Don't worry, though, for it seems that whatever you choose there will be the possibility of changing your mind later if you need to. There's not going to be much you lose this month, and whatever you lose you probably didn't need anyway.



TAURUS
(APR. 20-MAY 20)

Get back to basics now. Lay solid and sure foundations for yourself. Come back to reality in a clear way and it will positively reinforce all you're trying to do. Make sure you let things stabilize before moving forward too fast. Carefully listen to your own desires and cravings, for they're letting you know what kind of nourishment you need.



VIRGO
(AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

You may have to wing it now, to play the tunes of life by ear. As a Virgo, you want to have all your ducks in a row and your facts in place, but that's just now the name of the game at this time. Maintain a calm poise and go with your gut feelings; things can turn out beautifully, for you truly do know what you're doing, though maybe not consciously. This is a time for developing your self-confidence.



AQUARIUS
(JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

If there are missing pieces in your life you might try just making something up to see how it fits. There can be some abrupt changes in your life now that are caused by suddenly seeing situations in a new way. You may feel yourself going from one extreme to the other, but don't worry about this. It's probably a necessary part of finally getting into a balanced state.



GEMINI
(MAY 21-JUN. 20)

It's good now to be acutely aware of the agendas of others and how they think. This will help you to communicate with them in such a way that you can both work together more effectively. Many little problems can crop up now, but you can be amazingly resourceful in finding ways to solve each and every one. Take it as it comes and keep your attention on what's in front of you.



LIBRA
(SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

You have a great ability now for putting things together, for finding just the right blend that is going to work. Your imagination is very strong now, but your logical abilities not so much. So let your vision shine forth; do things with panache and let your style be your message. It's very much now about how you do things rather than what you do.

STAR JOURNEYS

BY JOHN SANDBACH

We're all aware now of what isn't working in our lives and need to restructure what we're doing. When things go wrong, they're trying to teach us something, and the more receptive to learning we are, the happier we will be. The best thing you can do this April is access your own inner wisdom and know that you have everything you need to meet the tasks at hand.



PISCES
(FEB. 19-MAR. 20)

If you've been overextending yourself, now's the time to relax and to take care of basics. Simplicity can be of tremendous benefit now, so if you're feeling overwhelmed, don't allow those feelings to coerce you into action. Take your time in dealing with important things, and if you need to stop and take a breather, do so. Simple pleasures now can be so nourishing and comforting and can bring you back to the business of living with newfound energy.



CANCER
(JUN. 21-JUL. 23)

Don't focus on the obvious now; you already know about that. Look at what's hidden beneath the obvious and go with what your inner eye is seeing. If you find your mind going in many different directions at once, don't get caught up in the chaos of it all. Ask yourself, "What's at the core of all this?" and then listen to what your intuition tells you.



SCORPIO
(OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

There can be so much whirling around you now, and much of it is other people's stuff. Stay at the center of it now for in the eye of the hurricane is peace. Don't get caught up in the negative dramas of others. If you keep looking inside you will see that you're very certain of what you know, and that is what you need to guide you. You have your way of doing things; don't let anyone talk you out of it.



ARIES
(MAR. 21-APR. 19)

You're tuned in to patterns now, and you can clearly see how things are going to play out in the future. It's as if you've used a powerful eyewash that allows you to view your life with a new clarity. It can be difficult to make decisions now, and when needed, be arbitrary in doing so, which is much better than not deciding.



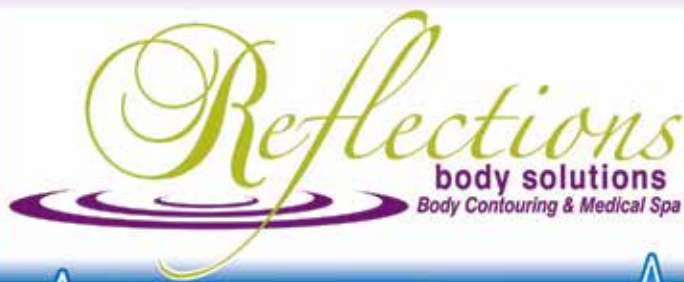
LEO
(JUL. 24-AUG. 22)

The labels we put on things can have a powerful effect on how we see and handle those things. You need now to put a positive spin on whatever you're doing. You need to redefine your world, sometimes in small ways, maybe also in big ways. The way a problem is stated can be a key to how it is solved. Think big and optimistically, and the forces around you will reach out to you generously.



SAGITTARIUS
(NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Things can come together in very strange ways now, so your life is anything but dull. New elements can suddenly be added to situations that change them completely and create a need to rethink your strategies. You need to be very open-minded and not allow your expectations to limit you. There can be reversals of fortune now that are downright funny as well as ironic, and that can relieve you of burdens.



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