

# January/ February



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*"A woman  
is the full circle.  
Within her is the power  
to create, nurture  
and transform."*

*~Diane Mariechild*

## ***Joslyn Wolfe, Publisher***

*Deep down beyond the surface of self deception, prescribed roles and false expectations, lies a great gift—an opportunity to open ourselves up to an oasis of life's unyielding counsel. Going within, lends us pause to purge ourselves of hurtful situations and painful memories. By getting in touch with our inner core, we examine our successes our failures, and our motivators. Without trepidation, or hesitation, through further self-examination, we allow ourselves to fully embrace the instructional fluidity of the stream of human experiences. Ones that challenges us and those that fortify us. Indeed through this process, we value and become our true selves. To our readers, supporters and advertisers, may you all find the inner core that guides your lives towards greater purpose, service and meaning to yourselves and the world around us. Happy New Year!*

***All the best,  
Joslyn***

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nicbri@focusonwomenmagazine.net

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**Publisher:** Joslyn Wolfe

**Editor:** Kathy Pettway

**Design/Production:**

Susan Robinson/Fishbyte Design  
fishbytedesigntreasures@gmail.com

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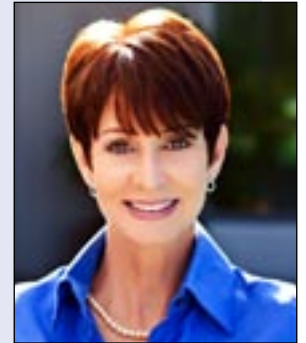
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## Happy New Year! Setting Goals for 2012

### Where did this year go?

By Marta Perrone

It just seems as though each passing year is going faster and faster. Since I was a little girl, I have set goals for myself...they were of course a lot simpler at age 13, but the list always included ways that I could improve myself. Some call this “making resolutions” but for me it was more “setting goals”. No matter how many years experience we may have in our fields and at what levels we work, there is always room for improvement. Even after owning an domestic agency for 22 years, there are still and always will be ways that I can improve my service and dedication to clients and candidates. Over the course of the last 10 years, much of my work has been directed toward creating training materials and cleaning systems which now are incorporated into seminars and other products available to homeowners and domestic workers. We are all capable of doing so much more than we realize. Our potential is never fully reached. So here are some thoughts that may help you as you consider your own list:



Marta Perrone

**Goals for Domestic Workers:** Education and training is the only thing that distinguishes you from another person working in the same capacity. In a competitive market, you need to stand out more than ever. Now is the time to analyze your skills and see how you can improve yourself to make you more marketable. Also keep in mind your level of professionalism, and what you can do to improve your employment relationships. Think about this past year and other times where you may have not handled a situation the best way possible. Consider new approaches on how you can become more efficient. Consider learning new skills that can help you expand your job opportunities.

**Goals for Domestic Agency Owners:** Faced with job listing sites that make it easy to match employees and employers, we need to find ways to set our services above and beyond the norm so that clients see the value in using an agency. I believe what interests a client more than anything is continued support well after the placement has been made. Employment relations always have their honeymoon period, but then issues come up that often both parties are unable to resolve. Maintain continued close contact with your candidates and clients. Offer continued training and support to your candidates to help them become better workers and more skilled professionals.

A few on my list include:

- ▲ Launching and marketing a bilingual learning tool called “El Ama de Casa Bilingue” that teaches the Hispanic domestic worker housekeeping, laundry, kitchen and cooking essentials and childcare basics AND English for the household and job.
- ▲ January 21st, The Professional Housekeeper training seminar will take place in Austin. I will continue doing local and out of state seminars and workshops teaching nannies, housekeepers and household managers professional development and all other household skills needed in their jobs.
- ▲ Introduce to the market our new product “Clean in Time” that assesses every object/surface in a home and creates a manual showing: a) how to clean, b) how much time it should take, and c) how many staff workers are needed to complete the job. Take a moment and make out a list for yourself. Keep it handy in a place where you can see it daily. Remind yourself of what you must do to obtain these goals, and make sure that at the end of the year some are checked off.

***Happy New Year to all and may 2012 be a healthy and prosperous year that is fulfilling both personally and professionally!***

# Stay Warm and Cozy with an Energy Efficiency Plan this Winter

With a tough economy looming like the Grinch over this year's holiday season, many people are looking for ways to save money through energy efficiency. Better Business Bureau is offering a checklist for homeowners to safely prepare their homes for the cold winter months, and perhaps save a few dollars in the process.

According to the Energy Information Administration, home heating costs this winter are expected to rise by 10.2 percent for homeowners who rely on heating oil. Luckily, homeowners can fend off some of the rising energy costs by winterizing their home before the harshest weather takes hold.

"Even though cold weather is just beginning, consumers have been researching contractors since early fall," said Angie Barnett, BBB | Greater Maryland, president/CEO. "For example, BBB has already provided over 5,000 Business Reviews on heating contractors and almost 2,000 on chimney cleaners since September 1. Taking the time to winterize your home and make needed repairs gives you the peace of mind that you will not only save money, but be energy efficient as well."

## The following is a BBB home winterizing checklist for consumers to consult when preparing for the cold months ahead:

✓ **Furnace.** Furnaces older than 15 years might be due for a replacement. For newer furnaces, BBB recommends making sure the furnace filter is clean, the thermostat is working properly and the pilot light is functioning. Homeowners can also hire an inspector to do the job and make sure the furnace is in safe working order.

✓ **Chimney.** Before lighting up the fireplace, homeowners should have the chimney inspected for animals, debris and leaves that may have fallen in. BBB also recommends installing a screen over the chimney opening.

✓ **Gutters and ridge vents.** Gutters should be cleaned to prevent any clogs that would cause rainwater to back up and freeze, making the gutters expand and crack. The ridge vents need to be cleaned as well in order to allow the house to "breathe" correctly. Otherwise, air will stagnate and create an unhealthy environment.

✓ **Smoke alarm and carbon monoxide detectors.** BBB recommends testing smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors and installing fresh batteries.



Homeowners should consider replacing smoke alarms older than 10 years.

✓ **Caulking and Weather Stripping.** To prevent leaks, homeowners should inspect the caulking around windows and doors and check for cracking and peeling. In addition, BBB recommends ensuring that doors and windows shut tightly and no cold air is coming in due to worn weather stripping.

✓ **Seasonal equipment.** Homeowners won't need their spring and summer

equipment for a few months, so BBB recommends draining the water from garden hoses and air conditioner pipes, and the gasoline from the lawnmower and other garden tools. It's also time to pull out the snow shovels and plows and ensure they are in good repair.

✓ **Emergency kit.** When a winter storm strikes, an emergency kit should have all essential materials in one handy place. An emergency kit should include flashlights, candles and matches, a first aid kit, bottled water, non-perishable food and a battery-powered radio. BBB recommends creating the same emergency kit for the car as well, including a couple blankets.

■ For more consumer tips this holiday season, visit [www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org) ■



## About BBB of Greater Maryland

Headquartered in Baltimore, BBB | Greater Maryland is a non-profit organization that was established in 1922. It serves 18 Maryland counties and Baltimore City. In 2010, BBB provided over 1,302,000 Reliability Reports on businesses and handled over 12,500 marketplace disputes. BBB is supported by Accredited Businesses that have passed a comprehensive review, met BBB's Standards for Trust and agreed to the organization's Code of Business Practices governing sound advertising, selling and customer service practices that enhance customer trust and confidence in business. For more information please contact your BBB at 410-347-3990 or visit [bbb.org](http://bbb.org).

# Who Can Solve the Financial Illiteracy Problem in Our Youth? *You!*

By Nancy Phillips

Now more than ever it is blatantly clear how important financial skills are to the well-being of everyone in our society. Problem is, many kids are still not learning about it. Financial knowledge and confidence can transform a child's life, your child's life. You are, and always will be, your child's most influential financial teacher. Why? Because they begin learning about money by watching your actions with it from the time they are toddlers. Your belief system and actions with money are what form your child's mental "money blueprint" according to T. Harv Eker, best-selling author of *Secrets of the Millionaire Mind*.

Are you ready to hear some good news? The steps you need to take to help your children learn financial responsibility are not complicated and no, you don't have to be a math whiz. Because financial skills are just that, skills, they need to be practiced and built upon. Then the level of the skill practiced can be advanced, just like learning a sport – you start with the basics.

**So where do you start?** Here are a few tips:

■ Talk about money on a regular basis in an objective way and on a daily basis. The lessons don't have to be long, just relevant and consistent. You can talk about the what you're planning to buy, the cost of things, why you're choosing one item over another or the difference between a need and a want. The key is to discuss things so your child learns to think through decisions and how to make priorities. Tell stories to make the lesson more memorable.

■ Let your child handle money so they can learn to manage it and so they have the opportunity to learn from the consequences of their decisions, whether good or

bad. This is what will help them learn to handle their money more effectively over time and build their confidence. It's far better for them to go through these first experiences when they are a young child and using small amounts of money than to make devastating mistakes with large amounts of money when they are out on their own. An allowance is the most common way for young children to gain the opportunity to manage their own money on a weekly basis.

■ Show your child how to divide all income into four categories – give, invest, save and spend. I call this the GISS method of money management and it is one of the most powerful concepts for building wealth. The framework helps children learn how to manage money and begin to set goals. The practice is excellent for their numeracy skills and it's a wonderful time for you to really connect with them and hear what they are planning for. (If you want to do the GISS method yourself simply open several sub-accounts at your bank and have your pay check, income tax check, bonus check etc. automatically divided into the sub-accounts).

■ Helping your child develop good basic financial skills is one of the most important life lessons you can give them. Your involvement in making this a priority will significantly change their life and future financial success. Keep it simple, relate the topics to everyday life and keep it fun and light. **You can do it!**



Nancy Phillips

## President's Message

### BBB Two-Year Strategic Direction



For the next two years, BBB | Greater Maryland has committed to a strategic plan designed to increase the value of accreditation and strengthen resources for our accredited businesses and the customers they serve.

#### To achieve this goal we will:

Identify traditional and digital marketing opportunities designed to grow the number of customers choosing trustworthy businesses. Thus far, we have tapped into search engine optimization, iPhone application and QR codes. Expect increased visibility of BBB Accredited Business through multiple channels including web, mobile and traditional media.

Create a toolkit with resources to assist BBB Accredited Businesses better distinguish themselves from their

competitors through accreditation and their commitment to the Standards for Trust.

Foster sponsorships and grants to expand customer engagement. As revenue streams increase, expand local Charity Review and Military Line programs for the benefit of individual and corporate donors, service members and their families.

Safeguard the privacy and integrity of our information and operating systems and maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of operations through policies and procedures.

By holding accredited businesses, operating procedures and staff to high standards, we will work to provide measurable return in your investment in BBB. We strive to exceed our internal metrics and earn national recognition as a "best practice" BBB.

*Nadine Lajoie is a Motorcycle Racing Champion, author of a best-selling book, and an international motivational speaker. She is also the proud owner of a non-profit organization, "Keep Dreaming, Keep Living", where the main objective is to help people live life to the fullest, overcome hopelessness and enjoy life in the light with hope and fearlessness. The techniques used for inspiration in the organization are based on joy, fun and excitement. Whoever experiences Keep Dreaming, Keep Living, comes away renewed, light-hearted and full of spirit.*



Nadine Lajoie

## The Journey From Hopelessness to Fearlessness

The main reason why we as humans do not live life to the fullest, is that we don't trust ourselves and fear the unknown. We are always consumed with worry about what will happen if we take a step, and because of this fear, never enjoy life's delights. This fear and hopelessness are better explained if I relate it to my personal story, making me the ideal person to comment on hopelessness.

I had a negative attitude all my life and at the age of 25 I caught pneumonia.

I became so ill that I lost 18 pounds, and I totally gave up on life, as I was nowhere in terms of my career and my personal life. I contemplated committing suicide and while I was planning how to do it, I thought about giving one last call to my mother, and when I spoke with her and then cried my heart out, I felt lighter and regained the spirit to start my life again.

The other bold action I took, which to a normal and sensible person would seem rather insane, was when I sold my Mercedes and my home, bought a caravan and decided to take a road trip to the United States. To make my dream real, I sacrificed a great amount, including sleeping in the back of my office, but I did make the trip and it was worth all the sacrifices.

Now, if you feel hopeless, then you must contemplate these two inspiring teachings. If you are facing a situation



where life has no meaning, then believe that in this utter darkness there is a ray of hope; it is your guardian angel protecting you and you just need to believe in it. Moreover, if you don't find any hope from the people or things around you, then you don't need to worry,

because the main source of hope lies within you. It's your soul that is the nucleus of hope, so turn towards it and find inspiration within. Mother Nature is around you and your "IN-Power" resides within you so trust yourself. As Ralph Waldo Emerson says in his essay Self-reliance:

***"Trust thyself - Every heart vibrates to that iron string"***

You always have the string of Mother Nature in your heart, you just need to turn towards it and it will guide you towards your success and make you fearless in life.

Dear Readers, if a person like me who was on the verge of committing suicide, can find hope and live life to the fullest, then you are no different and you can do the same. I was a Top 10 Canadian volleyball player, a motorcycle racing champion at 180MPH, and I am also a successful owner of 4 businesses and a non-profit. Therefore, if I can survive such negative thoughts, so can you and if you need any help, then "Keep Dreaming, Keep Living" will always welcome you with open arms.



The holidays have come and gone, and the new year will bring exciting developments in the Maryland wine industry, including more new wineries, exciting new events to highlight our wines, and the debut of excellent 2010 reds and 2011 whites.

*We're Ready for a Great Year*

Keep buying local (not just wine, of course!) and help us spread the word about the incredible wines, meat, cheese, veggies and fruit being grown and produced throughout the state.

# Explore the Richmond Region's Rich African-American Heritage during Black History Month

*Special exhibits and unique tours offer visitors a memorable experience*

The African-American story in the Richmond Region is one of struggle, strength, courage and determination. From the slave markets in Shockoe Bottom to the battlefields of the Civil War, and from arts and entrepreneurship in the Jackson Ward neighborhood to Civil Rights protests downtown,

## Black History Month in Richmond Region

African-Americans have made their mark in all corners of the Richmond Region. Visitors are invited to learn about the African-American experience in Central Virginia at a number of special Black History Month events, exhibits and tours throughout February.

For an authentic experience like no other, visitors can take part in a guided tour of the **Richmond Slave Trail** that chronicles Richmond's role in the slave trade as the largest exporter of enslaved Africans on the East Coast in pre-Civil



**Torch-Lit Tour  
Richmond Slave Trail**

War America. Led by **The Elegba Folklore Society**, the walk takes participants past significant landmarks such as the Manchester Docks, a major port in the massive downriver slave trade; the site of the former slave markets of Richmond; the Richmond Slavery Reconciliation Statue commemorating the international triangular slave trade; Lumpkin's Jail; the Negro Burial Ground; and the First African Baptist Church, a center of African-American life in pre-Civil War Richmond. New interpretive signage along the trail offers a self-guided option. **Call (804) 646-8911 to arrange a guided tour.**

During **Black History Month**, the elegant **Victorian Maymont Mansion** will host "Upstairs/Downstairs" to explore the juxtaposition between the home's upstairs elegance and the downstairs employee quarters. The tour is led through the eyes of the employees, many of whom were African American, who toiled behind the scenes to maintain a millionaire couple's home in turn-of-the-20th-century Richmond.

**Saturdays, February 4-25, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.**  
**Call (804) 358-7166, ext. 329.**

**February 6-24**, Richmond Region's Henrico County will host an extraordinary quilt exhibit "**Each Quilt, A Story**" by the Sisters of the Yam African-American Quilters Guild. Guests will enjoy the art and craftsmanship of beautiful quilts and learn about their history and culture with demonstrations and displays at Walkerton Tavern.  
**Call (804) 501-5134 or (804) 261-6898.**

**The Virginia Historical Society (VHS)** is presenting a number of events for Black History Month.

**Call (804) 358-4901 for details and registration.**

**February 5, 11 a.m.** - Presentation about the **Unknown No Longer** project, a new database containing numerous accounts that collectively help tell the stories of African Americans who have lived in Virginia.

**February 15, Noon** - "**Slavery in Virginia**" gallery walk

**February 16, 6 p.m.** - "**The Civil Rights Movement in Virginia**" gallery walk

**February 23, Noon** - Lecture about "**The Bicentennial of John Jasper**"

**Stories at the Museum** - VHS staff will read children's books related to **Black History Month** and then lead an activity related to the story.

**February 4 and 18, 11 a.m.** - **Henry's Freedom Box: A True Story from the Underground Railroad** by Ellen Levine.

**February 9 and 23, 5 p.m.** - **A Sweet Smell of Roses** by Angela Johnson.

**Chesterfield County Library** will also hold a number of events to recognize Black History Month.

**Call (804) 530-3403 for details and registration.**

**February 27, 11a.m.** - **Chester Library: Dr. Wyatt Tee Walker, Sr.** will talk about his participation in the June 1961 Freedom Rides, his relationship with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his incredible life experiences.

**Various dates, times and locations throughout the month:**

- Experience the rhythm and movement of African dance with the Sankofa Dance Theatre from Virginia State University. Other musical events will teach participants about Latin and Caribbean rhythms, African music and blues.
- Storyteller Fred Motley will share African-American stories. Throughout 2012, **Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Church** will celebrate the bi-centennial of the birth of Reverend John Jasper (1812-1901). John Jasper, a former slave and nationally celebrated preacher best known for his 1878 sermon "De Sun Do Move, organized the Jackson Ward church in 1867.

The Richmond Region's **Black History Museum & Cultural Center of Virginia** showcases artifacts and objects that illustrate the history of African-Americans with a focus on Virginia. In the neighboring **Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site**, visitors learn about this impressive daughter of a former slave who later achieved success as a businesswoman and community leader. The **American Civil War Center at Historic Tredegar** is the first museum of its kind to explore the war through three interwoven perspectives: Union, Confederate and African-American.

Check out the **Footprints in Time** itinerary for more information on African-American Heritage in the Richmond Region. The Richmond Region offers visitors a range of accommodation options from five-star, five-diamond hotels to charming Bed & Breakfasts. Visit [VisitRichmondVA.com/Packages](http://VisitRichmondVA.com/Packages) for information about special rates and packages.

*You are invited to our fourth annual  
Howard County Office on Aging*



*an interactive day designed to inspire women  
to live more balanced, healthy, and fulfilled lives.*

*Saturday, June 16, 2012*

Howard County Office on Aging invites you to exhibit at our fourth annual **WomenFest** event to be held on Saturday, June 16, 2012. Please note the change to a Saturday in response to consumer demand. You are invited to join us from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm at the Gary J. Arthur Community Center (formerly the Glenwood Community Center), 2400 Route 97, Cooksville, MD.

**WomenFest** is an interactive day focusing on health, wellness, fashion, and beauty. It is designed to inspire women to live more balanced, healthy, and fulfilled lives. In addition to exhibits, **WomenFest** includes timely seminars, and health screenings. We strive to increase our audience, including boomers, and to provide fresh possibilities in the changing economy.

Exhibit placements are made in order of receipt of applications. We have also created several sponsorship opportunities to help you increase your visibility at **WomenFest**.

Please note that you may submit your application prior to payment. The deadline for application is Friday, April 13, 2012. Updates will be available on our website: [www.howardcountyyaging.org/womenfest](http://www.howardcountyyaging.org/womenfest)

We look forward to your participation in **WomenFest**, and we will do everything we can to help you to showcase your business or organization at the event. If you would like any additional information on sponsorships or have any further questions, please call Courtney Barkley at (410) 313-5957 or e-mail [cbarkley@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:cbarkley@howardcountymd.gov).



*spirits of Mt. Vernon*



**10% off All Wine on Tuesdays!  
Wine Tasting Every Friday from 5pm - 8pm  
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# Great Luxury Gift Ideas for Him & Her

*Love is in the air yet again as we start to think about what to give our loved ones this Valentine's Day.*

This year, take it up a notch and steer clear of the usual, clichéd bouquet of flowers or oversized box of chocolates with a more thoughtful, luxurious gift to show how much you care.

## 2012 Valentine's Day Gift Guide

We know this isn't always easy (especially for men who are renowned for struggling with getting her the right Valentine's gift) so we've taken the pressure off with some great gift ideas. Though Valentine's Day is traditionally a holiday designed for the girl, don't let men fool you - they love getting gifts just as much as the ladies do! So spoil your partner rotten this year with these gifts that you both can benefit from.

### Create perfect harmony with Kat Burki's Cosmos Collection of candles

Love is in the air on Valentine's Day, not only figuratively but, with Kat Burki's Cosmos Collection Candles (\$24.00, 24 oz.), it's there literally too! Not just another candle, Kat Burki's Cosmos Collection Candles are made from 100% natural soy wax and are inspired by astrology and the idea that people under different signs of the Zodiac are naturally drawn towards certain scents, which will bring them calm and serenity. Why not get his and her Cosmo Candles to find harmony between the two of you this Valentine's Day?

Available at [www.KatBurki.com](http://www.KatBurki.com)



### Turn her dreams of royalty into reality with a Young&ng headpiece

For those who want to go over the top this Valentine's Day and make their sweetheart feel like a real life princess, the Young&ng Rose Gold

Heart Crown (\$520) is the perfect piece, indulgent and a little decadent without being too OTT. This gorgeous heart crown is sure to express just how much you adore her and just how highly you think of her and besides, who says Kate Middleton is the only girl who should feel like a princess!

Available at [www.YoungandNg.com](http://www.YoungandNg.com)



### Set the mood with a sensual massage using Jiva Apoha's love blend

Really indulge and pamper your loved one with a massage they won't forget this Valentine's Day using Jiva Apoha's specially created Kama (Love) Body Oil. Blended with 100% pure essential oils, Jiva Apoha Body Blends are natural, balancing, loaded with nourishing anti-oxidants and each blended to create different therapeutic benefits for the mind and body. The Kama (Love) body oil (\$75.00 for 8 fl.oz), made from all natural sesame and sunflower oils with 100% pure essential Water Lily, Lotus, Ylang Ylang & Black Musk oils, is designed to bring calm, tranquility, joy and, most importantly, love.

Available at [www.JivaApoha.com](http://www.JivaApoha.com)



### Get warm with your snuggle buddy with Luxor Linens Sheets



Enjoy the end of winter with your sweetheart this February with the Valentino 1200 Thread Count Sheet Set (\$423.00) from luxury Egyptian Cotton bedding line, Luxor Linens. These irresistibly

soft sheets come in nine elegant colors, but given the occasion we suggest the rich wine color (pictured) which is just the right shade to set the romantic mood (any excuse to spend longer in bed together!) What's more, you can go even further and make it personal with signature monogramming - sure to gain extra brownie points! The sheet set includes two pillow cases, one fitted sheet, and one flat sheet. The Valentino Sheets can also be custom tailored upon request to ensure ultimate comfort.

Available at [luxorlinens.com](http://luxorlinens.com)

### Recreate the spa experience in your own home with a personalized Spa Robe from Luxor Linens



Why go out this Valentine's Day when you can create romance and comfort without the hassle and stress by staying in? Take a vacation in your own home this Valentine's Day with Luxor Linen's St. Tropez Signature Spa Robe (\$206.67) which brings the essence of decadence and relaxation the

second you wrap yourself in the robe and is perfect for creating the spa experience in your own home. Even better, you can show your thoughtful side with customized matching monograms or Luxor Linen's cute Valentine's Day monograms! Available at [www.LuxorLinens.com](http://www.LuxorLinens.com)



# A Sweet Escape for Valentine's Day

## Indulge in the "Art of Chocolate" at New York's Mohonk Mountain House Victorian Castle Resort Hosts Chocolate Weekend, February 10 -12

Think outside the box (of chocolates) this Valentine's Day! Join Mohonk Mountain House <<http://btcm.pr-optout.com/Url.aspx?514015x363089x673519>>, a National Historic Landmark resort located 90 miles north of New York City, for its much-anticipated "Art of Chocolate" theme program. Held Friday, February 10 through Sunday, February 12, 2012, the weekend is an extraordinary opportunity for chocolate lovers to discover the best recipes, advice, and samplings from those who have made their chocolate passion a lifetime pursuit.

### Highlights of Mohonk Mountain House's "Art of Chocolate" Weekend Include:

- ◆ Embark on a voyage into the world of chocolate with Rodolfo Espinal of MarieBelle New York Chocolates <<http://btcm.pr-optout.com/Url.aspx?514015x363088x161726>>. This award-winning New York City-based chocolatier will discuss how chocolate goes from bean to bar, while attendees taste a variety of chocolates from around the world with varying cacao percentages and flavors, including passion fruit ganache and cardamom. Then, learn to pair chocolate with beverages such as port wine, prosecco, and cognac.
- ◆ Milk or dark? Crunchy or smooth? Create a personalized chocolate bar from a myriad of delectable ingredients with Laura Brody, best-selling cookbook author of *Growing Up On The Chocolate Diet and Chocolate American Style*.
- ◆ Experience cooking demonstrations and tastings, and learn how to use chocolate to enhance dishes. Featured recipes include Mohonk Executive Pastry Chef Eric Smith's Ultimate Chocolate Obsession Sundae; and Mohonk Executive Chef Jim Palmeri's Encacahuatado, braised chicken with Mexican chocolate and peanuts.

Overnight rates for the Art of Chocolate weekend at Mohonk Mountain House start at \$236 per person, per night, based on double occupancy (taxes and gratuity additional). Rates include charming accommodations, three meals daily prepared by award-winning chefs, Afternoon Tea and Cookies, and most resort activities. To book the Art of Chocolate package, please call 800.772.6646 or visit [www.mohonk.com](http://www.mohonk.com) <<http://btcm.pr-optout.com/Url.aspx?514015x363087x527035>>.

Overnight guests of the National Historic Landmark resort delight in complimentary activities such as ice-skating, along with cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and snow tubing (weather permitting). The award-winning Spa at Mohonk Mountain house offers seasonal treatments, a yoga/motion

studio, comprehensive fitness facility, and indoor heated swimming pool with underwater sound system.

Mohonk Mountain House is a National Historic Landmark resort and Historic Hotel of America located in New York's Hudson Valley, just 90 miles north of New York City. Owned and operated by the Smiley Family since its founding in 1869, the resort has provided guests with recreation and renewal of body, mind, and spirit in a beautiful natural setting for 142 years. The Victorian Castle resort is honored on the 2011 Condé Nast Traveler Gold List, along with being one of the Top 20 U.S. resorts in Condé Nast Traveler's Readers' Choice Awards, and one of Travel + Leisure's "World's Best Hotels

### 2012 Valentine's Day Gift Ideas



for Families. "The 30,000-square-foot Spa wing at Mohonk Mountain House, recognized as the #3 Hotel Spa in Travel + Leisure's World's Best Awards, has 16 treatment rooms, a solarium, an outdoor heated mineral pool, an indoor heated pool, comprehensive fitness center, and yoga/motion studio. The eco-friendly Spa is heated and cooled by a geo-thermal system and features a

"green roof." A wealth of year-round recreation includes a spectacular Skating Pavilion, rock climbing, and 85 miles of trails for seasonal hiking, mountain biking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. The grounds feature exquisite gardens, a nine-hole golf course, tennis courts, and stables for horseback riding and horse-drawn carriage rides. The glacial-formed Lake Mohonk is ideal for boating, fishing, and swimming. The Mohonk Kids' Club is lauded by Travel + Leisure as one of the Best Hotel Kids' Programs nationally. Mohonk Mountain House's longtime stewardship efforts include composting, recycling, and nature interpretation programs. Over 40 theme programs are presented annually, including culinary classes, gardening workshops, music festivals and nature programs. Overnight rates at Mohonk Mountain House include charming accommodations, breakfast, lunch, dinner, Afternoon Tea and Cookies, and most resort activities. For additional information, please call 800.772.6646 or visit [www.mohonk.com](http://www.mohonk.com) <<http://btcm.pr-optout.com/Url.aspx?514015x363086x15241>>. Become a Facebook fan at [www.facebook.com/mohonk](http://www.facebook.com/mohonk) <<http://btcm.pr-optout.com/Url.aspx?514015x363085x380547>>.

# 6 Tips for Choosing a Birthplace

*Mothers Can Improve Their Chances of Having a Safe, Healthy Birth by Considering These Factors When Choosing a Birthplace*

While nearly every movie or sitcom dramatization of childbirth features the obligatory frantic drive to the hospital, a growing number of women are reconsidering the hospital option altogether. Why? Many mothers-to-be are re-evaluating their options and considering birth centers or



homebirth because of concerns about hospital practices that are not based on the best evidence and because more information is available about the safety of out-of-hospital births for most women.

*“A mother’s choice of a birthplace is one of the most critical decisions she will make during her pregnancy,”* said Michele Deck, President of Lamaze International. *“It’s important for mothers to take the time to consider what environment will improve their chances of receiving evidence-based birth practices that are safest for their babies.”*

Maternity care advocates have long recognized a gap between the care provided in some settings and the practices research has shown to benefit laboring mothers and their babies.

Reflecting the growing trend among mothers, a recent meeting of midwives, doctors, childbirth educators and many other stakeholders in the maternity health community provided a platform for discussion on how best to meet the evolving needs of mothers and babies. The Home Birth Consensus Summit marked a turning point in the intensifying debate over safe and appropriate birthplaces and the decision-making power women should have. In fact, the summit was recognized during a speech in the U.S. House of Representatives by Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA), who cited it as an important step in improving maternal health in the United States. Following are six tips that will help mothers find the birth setting that’s right for them:

## 1. Choose a birthplace that allows you to be comfortable and secure.

The environment should enhance, rather than disrupt, labor and birth. Research has shown that birth is easier when you can freely move and change position in labor. Certain comfort methods, like activity and rest, eating and drinking, and bathing are more available to women who give birth outside of the hospital and/or are attended by midwives. Visit your prospective birth setting to get a feel for your comfort level.

## 2. Look for a caregiver whose philosophy about birth matches your own.

Places of birth and caregivers often go hand in hand. In making your choice, look for a caregiver who helps you feel confident and supported through pregnancy, labor and birth. Whether an obstetrician, a family doctor or a midwife, it’s important that your caregiver listens, respects your ideas and questions and encourages you to make informed decisions.

## 3. Find a birthplace where you are comfortable with the labor and birth practices.

Birthplaces follow different care practices during labor and birth. Taking a tour of the facility, and/or discussing the birth process with the caregiver, can help to ensure your needs are met by the birthplace and caregiver. Specifically, you should ask about common birth interventions, how facilities and caregivers address pain during delivery (drugs vs. non-drug coping measures) and opportunities for skin-to-skin contact and breastfeeding following birth. If you are considering a homebirth with a midwife, ask her about any special equipment that may be required and the protocols in case any issues arise.

## 4. Choose a birthplace that allows you to have the people you need by your side.

Every pregnant woman has her own preferences for who she’d like with her during labor and birth, whether it’s the baby’s father, other family members, friends, a doula and/or a midwife. Research shows that having continuous support from a loved one, friend or doula can help labor progress. Each birthplace has its own policies about who can be in the room during labor and birth, and it’s important to explore those policies and options before deciding on a birthplace.

## 5. If you choose an out-of-hospital birth, remember that hospital care is still available if needed.

Women who want to birth at home or at a birth center may worry about what would happen if they experienced complications. Mostly importantly, mothers-to-be should know that the vast majority of pregnancies are normal – 85 to 95 percent, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). For women birthing outside a hospital setting, a skilled midwife will closely monitor the laboring mother for any sign of complications.

Most problems can be managed outside of a hospital, but if not, the woman can be transferred to a hospital for additional care. While there is an unfortunate lack of coordination in the United States between hospital-based and out-of-hospital care providers (one of the issues that the Home Birth Summit sought to address), every safe birth plan should include a physician and hospital backup.

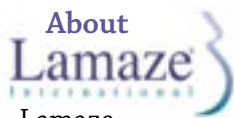
**6** Check with your health insurer to determine which birthplace options are covered by your insurance.

Birthplace can be expensive and it's important to find out what your insurance will cover before choosing a birthplace. Make sure to ask specific questions about the birth locations you are considering, including what you will have to pay in out-of-pocket costs.

Women can learn more about selecting a birthplace through Lamaze childbirth education classes. More information is available at [www.lamaze.org](http://www.lamaze.org).



Michele Peck  
President



Lamaze International promotes a natural, healthy and safe approach to pregnancy, childbirth and early parenting practices.

Knowing that pregnancy and childbirth can be demanding on a woman's body and mind, Lamaze serves as a resource for information about what to expect and what choices are available during the childbearing years. Lamaze education and practices are based on the best and most current medical evidence available. Working closely with their families, health care providers and Lamaze educators, millions of pregnant women have achieved their desired childbirth outcomes using Lamaze practices. The best way to learn about Lamaze's steps to a safe and healthy birth is to take a class with a Lamaze certified instructor.

## ~ Mother, Grandmother and Great Grandmother Teaches Life Lessons and Shares Experiences Through Poetry ~

*If just for one day man could live  
without doubt or fear  
It would strengthen him and mankind  
for that day and all the year.  
But time waits not for anyone  
who has by fate come 'long  
While it buries the weak in sorrow  
The strong continue to roam.*

### *The Lament*

By *Ercell H. Hoffman*

The above excerpt is from one of Ms. Hoffman's favorite poems, "Untitled." Exploring the glory of love and painful possibilities, *The Lament* is her collection of poems and prose that dives into the power of raw emotions: hope, love, faith, pain, loss and loneliness – written as a personal therapeutic aide while rediscovering the passion of life and love and finding a true sense of purpose in life.

*The Lament* captures the full range of emotions that whirl around human relationships, offering a balanced and intense poetic examination of the human experience. The dozens of poems included in the collection examine the profound joy of those deeply in love, the incredible longing of the separated partner, the intense loneliness of modern working life and the indisputable human need to connect with others.



*Ercell H. Hoffman*

Readers will connect with:

- The search for purpose in life – how we're all searching for something whether we realize it or not
- Lonely, painful moments of working through depression
- The unsettling, heartbreaking realization that you're not where you want to be or should be
- The distinctly human capacity for feeling, love and empathy
- Relationships, finding and keeping love, obeying your inner truth

*Come, be part of a story — one that will not repel you,  
but one that will compel you.*

*A story that will repair, not despair.*

*A story that will help weave a tapestry of hope.*

*The women in Afghanistan face the unthinkable:*

*Imprisoned for being raped*

*Mutilated for leaving abusive spouses*

*In some cases set afire and abused by family or community members*

*Marginalized from the marketplace*

*Psychologically scarred from centuries of war*

*and being persecuted over centuries.*

*Be part of the story — to help these women  
move towards a life of self sufficiency and hope.*

*Support the Focus on Women Magazine Afghan Women's Craft Project.*

*Purchase their goods.*

*This is a Fair Trade Project*



# *Focus on Women Magazine*

*is a proud sponsor of the  
Women Can Change Afghanistan Craft Project.*

**N**umerous Afghan Women are abused. Most recently, according to a recent CNN report, a woman named Aisha who was considered to have “shamed” her family, ran away from an abusive spouse. Her husband, a Talib, was instructed to exact the penalty of mutilation.

Aisha suffered having her nose and ears cut. Left for dead, she survived the attack.

She is now seeking plastic surgery in the United States. Other women are setting themselves afire or are targets of such acts. Others face abandonment from their families and are otherwise throwaways and outcasts. And there are many other, both told and untold, stories that make up this tragic tapestry. If we don't act, then who? If not now then when?



## *How we can help?*

Support the Women Can Change Afghanistan Project sponsored by Focus on Women Magazine. Support their economic initiatives by purchasing Women Can Change Afghanistan Project crafts so that they can rebuild their lives and work towards self sufficiency.

For further information contact:  
[nicbri@focusonwomenmagazine.net](mailto:nicbri@focusonwomenmagazine.net) or call  
(410) 294-2932.

*Follow us on facebook for further information  
on our speakers series, Mavens and Mimosas!*

# ASPCA Teams Up With WEBTHRIFTSTORE.COM to Help Turn Unneeded Goods into Cash for Animals in Need

## *New online thrift store provides an innovative way to help non-profits*

The ASPCA® (The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals®) today announced that it has teamed up with WebThriftStore.com to launch an online thrift store where its supporters can sell unneeded goods on behalf of the ASPCA, which will receive 80 percent of the sales proceeds. The ASPCA's web thrift store is open to anyone – whether they're just cleaning out their closets, prefer to donate items instead of cash, looking for a tax deduction or seeking bargains – at <http://aspcawebthriftstore.com>. “The creation of this online thrift store gives our supporters a unique new way to make a valuable contribution to our cause,” said Jim Echikson, senior director of corporate partnerships for the ASPCA. “In lieu of making a monetary contribution

items into the hands of people who want them, while at the same time helping causes which are important to them.

“We are honored that the ASPCA has chosen to join us as one of our first charity partners,” said WebThriftStore.com Founder and CEO Douglas Krugman. “WebThriftStore.com enables the ASPCA and its supporters to get all the benefits of running a national network of thrift stores without the costs and risks of creating one with bricks-and-mortar. It makes sense for everyone – charities, donors and shoppers – and it's something everyone can feel good about.”

Prices on WebThriftStore.com are set by donors, and once items are sold, donors receive acknowledgement letters to substantiate 100 percent of their value as charitable contributions

for tax purposes. Donors also receive free, prepaid mailing labels online, to print and affix to packages shipped via The United States Postal Service (USPS) or they can arrange local delivery of purchases directly with buyers. Shipping supplies are available free of charge. All purchases are backed by WebThriftStore.com's 30-Day Buyer Assurance

Guarantee. WebThriftStore.com's free online platform is open to all registered 501(c)(3) organizations, enabling them to solicit in-kind donations from supporters and receive cash from their sale.

leading voice for animal welfare. More than one million supporters strong, the ASPCA's mission is to provide effective means for the prevention of cruelty to animals throughout the United States. As a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation, the ASPCA is a national leader in the areas of anti-cruelty, community outreach and animal health services. The ASPCA, which is headquartered in New York City, offers a wide range of programs, including a mobile clinic outreach initiative, its own humane law enforcement team, and a groundbreaking veterinary forensics team and mobile animal CSI unit. For more information, please visit [www.aspcawebthriftstore.com](http://www.aspcawebthriftstore.com). To become a fan of the ASPCA on Facebook, go to [www.facebook.com/aspcawebthriftstore.com](http://www.facebook.com/aspcawebthriftstore.com). To follow the ASPCA on Twitter, go to [www.twitter.com/aspcawebthriftstore.com](http://www.twitter.com/aspcawebthriftstore.com).

### *About WebThriftStore.com*

WebThriftStore.com enables any registered charity to create an online thrift store to which supporters, from the comfort of their homes, can list items for sale to benefit the charity. Buyers can shop for great bargains knowing that their payment goes to charity and all items carry a 30-Day Buyer Assurance Guarantee. Donors receive a tax receipt for 100 percent of the value of their item, prepaid shipping labels, free shipping supplies, and free pickup from USPS. Any registered 501(c)(3) charity can partner with WTS to open its own dedicated web thrift store, with no upfront fees or subscription fees. Founded in 2010 by Douglas Krugman, the company is headquartered in New York City. For more information visit: [www.WebThriftStore.com](http://www.WebThriftStore.com).



– which can be tough for some in this economy – the public can now finally get around to cleaning out their garages, attics, and storage lockers and help animals in need across the country at the same time.”

According to NPD Research, there is an estimated \$700 billion of stuff cluttering homes and costing people money in storage facilities throughout the United States. WebThriftStore.com offers a simple way to help the public quickly and easily get these

### *About the ASPCA®*

Founded in 1866, the ASPCA® (The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals®) is the first humane organization established in the Americas and serves as the nation's





# OTIS HPV Vaccine and Pregnancy Study

If you are pregnant and have received the HPV vaccine sometime in the past 18 months, you may want to participate in the OTIS HPV Vaccine and Pregnancy Study.



It's completely observational, which means you'll never be asked to take any medications, vaccinations, or change what you would normally do.

If you choose to participate, we will make sure you receive a copy of the results of the study; all free! You can help other moms just like you by taking part today!

## Participation includes:

- Between one and three phone interviews during pregnancy
- One phone interview after delivery
- Release of medical records relating to pregnancy
- \$50 compensation for time spent participating in the study

If you are pregnant and have received the HPV vaccine sometime in the past 18 months, and/or you are interested in learning more, please contact OTIS toll-FREE at:

**(877) 311-8972**

**[www.otispregnancy.org](http://www.otispregnancy.org)**



**Follow us!**



# *This is a Great Time to be a Girl Scout!*

I am thrilled to be a leader in an organization that, for 100 years, has been dedicated to the well-being and empowerment of millions of girls and young women. When Girl Scouts Founder Juliette Gordon Low began the organization she had a vision for girls. She believed that girls and young women were capable—capable of being successful outside of the home and capable of being leaders. A century later, the Girl Scout Movement is the pre-eminent leadership development organization for girls—empowering them to think big and equipping them with the courage, confidence and character they need to achieve their dreams.

Throughout 2012 we will be celebrating the vision and legacy of our illustrious Founder and the positive impact Girl Scouting has had on millions of girls and women—all of whom benefit from the principles she established – and the goals she had for girls, that are in many ways still being carried out today. We will also be celebrating 2012 as The Year of the Girl. This Anniversary Year – 2012 – will be a year like none other for Girl Scouts young and old, past and present. The organization will work with business leaders, elected officials, financial institutions and other gatekeepers to ensure that going forth, girls will experience a new and vastly different world—a world that welcomes them into a myriad of leadership roles where they will lead with character and courage to make the world a better place.

We are determined to break down societal barriers that hinder girls from leading and achieving success in

everything from technology and science to business and industry.

As part of the Year of the Girl celebration, I encourage mothers, fathers, adults, corporations, members of government, other nonprofits and YOU to help girls reach their leadership potential. I ask that everyone support our efforts to prepare every girl for leadership in their homes, schools, neighborhoods and communities. We are empowering girls to be ready to lead at any moment—anywhere. But in order to develop successful leaders, we need your support to ensure that we can offer our girls the resources, training, experiences and leadership development tools that will prepare them for their roles as leaders now and in the future. We need your support because when girls succeed, so does society, and we all can play a role in making that happen.



**Traci A. Barnett, M.B.A.**  
*is CEO of Girl Scouts of  
Central Maryland*

This is the time for girls; this is their moment! The statistics have been given time and again about the impact that women have when they are a part of executive decision-making for corporations and non-profit organizations. Girls, women and society cannot sit and wait for the change to come, the time for change has come and we invite you to help us make the world better for your daughters, granddaughters and yourselves. If not us, who? If not now, when? **2012 is The Year of the Girl**—today’s girl and the generations that follow.

This year we can make a change that will have a lasting positive impact for generations to come.

## *Do You Feel as Though Something is Missing in Your Life?*

How can I be happy when I don't have enough love in my life? How can I be happy when I don't have enough good health in my life? How can I be happy when I don't have enough money? When I don't have enough friends? Enough time? These are some of the hardest questions to answer in life; River Smith provides his readers with the guidance that they need in **Conspiracy to Love: Living a Life of Joy, Generosity, and Power**.

Smith offers quotable maxims and sound advice for readers who, no doubt, can identify things that are lacking in their lives. Rather than thinking about what is missing, Smith suggests; “As we think of what’s missing... in that same moment, there will also always be something we have, something we possess, and the good news is that we have the choice to center ourselves on either what we don't have or on what is actually there, actually present for us in that moment.”

People often say, “If anything could go wrong, it has gone wrong,” yet they fail to consider the flipside to that statement, its counterpart: “What could have gone wrong that didn't.” Instead

of dwelling on the negative aspects of day-to-day life, center on the positive by always considering what could have gone wrong and didn't. Life is full of positives and Smith directs readers' attention toward the things in our lives that give reason to rejoice. He offers helpful strategies for finding and listing the good rather than the bad.

When times are difficult, rather than dwelling on what is going wrong, make a list of the things in life for which you are thankful. Often after this list is made, you realize things are not all bad in your life and the good often outweighs the bad. River Smith replaces his readers' attitudes of negativity with ones of positivity, giving them the ability to look at the glass as half full rather than half empty.

**Contact: River Smith - librew2@aol.com**





# Sisters Helping Sisters



*SisSLE The Sister Study*



## SisSLE

### Sisters of Women with Systemic Lupus Erythematosus Research Study

**Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE)** affects about 1.5 million people in the United States, a vast majority of who are young women. The SisSLE research study will engage the help of sister pairs, one affected by SLE and one unaffected, and follow them for several years to learn more about why women are affected more than men. It will also help answer important questions about how and why lupus develops.

#### *Who should join the SisSLE study?*

We are enrolling blood-related sisters: one sister with a confirmed diagnosis of lupus and one sister that does not have lupus. If there is more than one sister without lupus, all may participate.

#### *What are participants asked to do?*

The sister with lupus will be asked to answer a one-time health survey and provide a one-time blood sample. The sisters that do not have lupus will be asked to answer a health survey twice a year and provide a blood sample once a year. *The sister's participation is for two years and possibly longer.* If you choose to take part in the research study, you can change your mind about your participation at any time. The blood sample may be collected at The Feinstein Institute for Medical Research in Manhasset, NY, at a laboratory near your home, or by your personal physician. There is no cost to participate in the research study.

*This study is funded by The National Institutes of Health.*

#### Criteria for sister WITH lupus:

- Confirmed diagnosis of SLE before the age of 41.

#### Criteria for sister(s) WITHOUT lupus:

- Currently age 10 to 45 years old

**For more information, please  
contact a research nurse at:**

**1-877-698-9467**

**SisSLE@nshs.edu**

The Feinstein Institute  
for Medical Research North  
Shore LIJ

Art: M Lee  
North Shore-LIJ Art Dept  
12704-11-09

# New Year's Resolutions You Can Keep – Guaranteed!

## 6 Simple Shortcuts for a Stress Free 2012

By Ashley Davis Bush, LCSW

Every year at this time, we go through the same process: make a resolution, break it by February. The problem is that most of us create lofty goals that require unsustainable lifestyle changes.

**But not this year!** This year you will have 'Resolution Success' with six simple Shortcuts that are easy to integrate throughout any day of the week because they're triggered by ordinary daily events and experiences. Not only will these tools make your life more peaceful and less stressed, they're a breeze to implement.

### 1. CATCH AND RELEASE

**Trigger:** When you're taking a shower in the morning

**Tool:** Think of your three top worries—the things that stress you or that you're dreading. "Catch" each negative thought, name it as a worry, fear, judgment, or complaint, and imagine it in the suds. "Release" each one into the water and down the drain. Say, for example, "I release and wash away my fear of a bad performance review at work today," or "I release and wash away my worry about my daughter driving." Release it to the current of life and trust it to go with the flow.

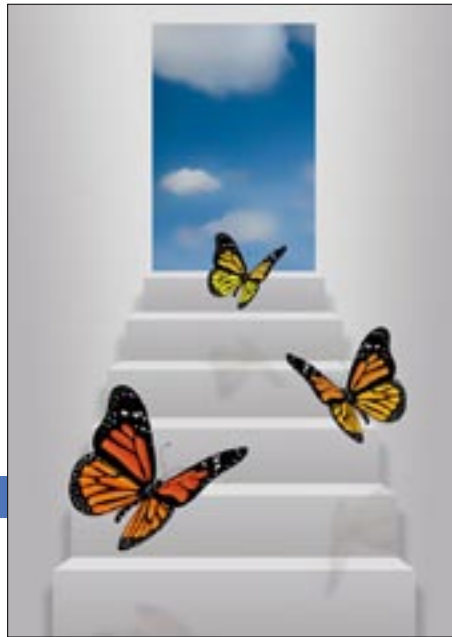
**Purpose:** As you increase your awareness of your stressful thoughts, they begin to lose their strength. When you let go of negative energy that occupies the mind and spirit, you restore yourself to a state of calm.

### 2. FREEZE FRAME

**Trigger:** When you drink your first morning beverage, such as coffee or tea

**Tool:** As you take your first sip, stop for a moment, take a deep breath, freeze the frame (make a mental or audible camera click sound), and think, Life is good. As you take your first sip of that morning drink, create the habit of stopping to take a mental snapshot. Feel the liquid going down your throat. Notice, breathe, absorb, and savor the tastes as well as the moment. Imprint on your mind the happiness habit of noting to yourself, Ah, this is a good moment.

**Purpose:** This tool helps train your mind to focus on a moment of simple pleasure. It identifies a happy moment and holds it in your consciousness, creating an imprint of positive experience. It cultivates gratitude, a quality highly correlated with peacefulness. Finally, it creates a "pause" which momentarily stops the physical and emotional spiral of the day.



### 3. OUTSTANDING

**Trigger:** When you're out during the day and someone asks, "How are you?"

**Tool:** Most people expect the standard answer of "Fine". Instead, try answering with a "Fantastic," "Outstanding," "Superb," or "Awesome." It doesn't matter if these superlatives don't actually match your current mood. Focus on simple basics in your life that you can truly appreciate—like good health, a sunny day, safe children, living in a non-war-torn country. Answer the question with a descriptive stronger than "Fine" and notice other people's responses. Watch how your mood begins to shift.

**Purpose:** When you find small ways to be grateful, you train your mind to

focus on life as a daily gift and to spread that awareness to others. Using these turbo-charged "happy" words creates an opening in your life for more optimism and gratitude. Watch – it will affect the mood of others around you as well.

### 4. GO WITH THE FLOW

**Trigger:** When washing your hands – you can do this one all day long!

**Tool:** Whenever you're at a sink and touch water, let the stream of warm liquid cue you to say, "I go with the flow" or "I trust the universe" or "I have faith in the flow of what is." This exercise reminds you to let go and flow with the current of life.

**Purpose:** Swimming upstream is not only exhausting but usually futile as well. There is a wonderful feeling of alignment when you give up resistance and let the current carry you. When you focus for a moment on water and your hands, you create a space within which resistance can dissipate. And warm water actually calms your body. This tool reminds you of the peaceful power of acceptance.

### 5. STOP, DROP, AND ROLL

**Trigger:** When stopped at a red light on your way home

**Tool:** "Stop," "drop" down into your heart, and "roll" out a little goodwill to your fellow travelers. Look at the people in other cars in front of you, behind you, passing around you, and recognize that each one of them is just like you: They want happiness and they want to be free from stress. To each person you focus on say or think something like:

*May you know happiness.  
May you be free from stress.  
Peace be with you.  
I hope you have a nice day.*

**Purpose:** This tool “quenches the fire” of road rage by getting you out of your own little world. Commuting for many people can be the most stressful time in their days. Actively using this Shortcut gives you another way to be in the car. Opening your heart with compassion, you experience a deeper sense of inner peace.

## 6. REST IN PEACE

**Trigger:** When your head rests on the pillow at night

**Tool:** As you are in bed starting to fall asleep, review your day and list three things that happened for which you are grateful. Don't just vaguely remember each instance, but actively recall it and re-create the experience of it. Hold the feeling and think of yourself as a sponge, absorbing the memory in your body.

**Purpose:** This tool is a way of focusing your mind on positive emotions. By reflecting on moments of joy during your days, a habit of positivity grows, and you become increasingly more joyful and more peaceful. Cultivating this evening gratitude practice will definitely help you sleep better.

With the ‘tools linked to trigger’ system, you can easily weave these new healthy habits into your life. They will help you cultivate a spirit of peacefulness, gratitude, and relaxation. Yes, it's going to be a very happy new year!

*Ashley Davis Bush, LCSW is a psychotherapist in southern New Hampshire and a self-help author. Her most recent book is **Shortcuts to Inner Peace: 70 Simple Paths to Everyday Serenity** (Berkley Books). For more resources, visit her website at [www.ashleydavisbush.com](http://www.ashleydavisbush.com).*

## Women Sailors Unite to Learn: SCYA Sailing Convention February 4th, 2012

The premier sailing convention for women will take place on Saturday, February 4th at the Bahia Corinthian Yacht Club in Corona del Mar, California. Boat Owners Association of The United States (BoatUS) is primary sponsor of the Southern California Yachting Association's (SCYA) 23rd Annual Women's Sailing Convention.

The event, centered around a series of on-and-off-the-water educational workshops, is open to all women sailors from novices to experts. Workshop topics include: Welcome Aboard (for beginners); Diesels; Hints & Hazards of World Wide Cruising; Pirates and the Cruising Sailor; Dinghy Do's and Don'ts; Introduction to Racing; Tactics; Docking; Overboard Procedures; Suddenly Singlehanded Interactive; Weather; Sail Trim; Basic Navigation; Spinnaker Rigging; Offshore Cruising; and, Introduction to Sailing; and more. Top women sailors from all over Southern California; many of them US Coast Guard-licensed captains; present all of the workshops.

“This event gives women an opportunity to meet many other women sailors, find out about existing women's sailing organizations in their area, instructional women's sailing programs available, and many other areas of interest for those who would like to do more - racing, cruising and day sailing,” said Gail Hine, the event's organizer. “We'll have something meaningful for everyone. For those who are already involved but desire more, we will offer some new

areas of inspiration and instruction along with excellent networking opportunities.”

The featured dinner guest speaker will be world-class sailor, instructor and delivery Captain Diane DeWitte who has made her passion - sailing - her living. At the tender age of seven, DeWitte helped her older brother sew sails on his home-built sailboat in upstate New

York. Later, after graduating college with a business degree, she left New York City and moved to the Fiji Islands for three years. A 21-day delivery cruise to Sydney, Australia, with three other sailors aboard a 36-foot sloop shaped the rest of her life, which has brought her to ports and waterways of the Far East, Southeast Asia, Europe, Africa, Alaska, British Columbia, and Baja Mexico. De Witte has cruised for the last two years with her six-year old daughter, traveling half way around the world with her.



*Noted cruiser and sailing instructor Diane DeWitte will be speaking at the 23rd Annual Women's Sailing Convention in Corona del Mar, CA.*

Prepaid registration is required as space is limited and the event is an annual sell-out. A registration form is available at <http://smtp.boatus.net/t?r=5&c=15178&l=1217&ctl=21021C:03CBB74E007AAB56E949C6E1552A5204&> or by contacting Gail Hine, SCYA Women's Sailing Convention, at [hine@scya.org](mailto:hine@scya.org), 951-677-8121. The convention fee of \$175.00 includes workshops, breakfast, lunch, dinner, souvenir and handouts. Join the online discussion on the Convention Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/pages/Womens-Sailing-Convention/188874971193589](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Womens-Sailing-Convention/188874971193589). Additional events for women can be found at the BoatUS Women in Boating website at [www.BoatUS.com/women](http://www.BoatUS.com/women).

# Pregnant? Breastfeeding?

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- Can I take my asthma medication while breastfeeding?
- I had the HPV vaccine and recently found out I was pregnant. Should I be concerned?



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# *New Year* *To-Do-List*

*The holiday hype has wound down and it's time to get back to business. With the New Year, many executives are brainstorming ways to improve services and make their business more marketable. Therefore, BBB is handing you a few reminders on how your accreditation can help!*

## **Claim your Business Review**

Consumers are overwhelmed with choices and unsure about where to find reliable, unbiased information. BBB Business Reviews helps your company stand out from the online competition. Highlight your earned trust by updating your Review with product information, hours of operation, photos, videos and more! To get started:

- ◆ Visit [bbb.org/reviews](http://bbb.org/reviews)
- ◆ Enter your company's name and zip code
- ◆ Hit Enter
- ◆ Click on your business name
- ◆ Hover the mouse cursor over "For Business"
- ◆ Click edit & follow instructions to register

## **BBB's Dynamic Seal**

The new seal may look familiar, but its added features boost your company's online visibility. Dynamic features include:

- ◆ A direct hyperlink to your BBB Business Review
- ◆ New customization options that allow you to choose layout, size and display
- ◆ The option to include your BBB rating and/or the text "Click for Review"
- ◆ Improved search engine results

To download the seal to your web page, you will need your Business ID. Contact 410-400-4BBB for assistance. Once your seal is added, don't forget to display it on Facebook.

## **Check your Complaint Status**

Check the status of any pending complaints. After all, no one wants to start the New Year with unhappy customers.

Even if your business has never received a BBB complaint, make sure we have the appropriate contact person on file. This helps ease the process of forwarding and resolving complaints in a timely manner.

## **Sometimes Two Venues Are Better Than One!**



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# L'Auberge Chez François

## Voted One of the Top 100 Restaurants of 2011 by OpenTable Diners

Landmark Restaurant also Voted #1 in Best Overall Restaurant in Virginia/DC Area Diner Choice Awards

L'Auberge Chez François announced today that it has been named a winner of OpenTable Diners' Choice Awards for the top 100 best restaurants in the United States. The list of winners is derived from more than 10 million reviews submitted by OpenTable diners for more than 12,000 restaurants in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. This is the second year L'Auberge Chez François has received this honor from OpenTable diners. The restaurant was also named the #1 Best Overall Restaurant in the Virginia/DC suburbs Diner Choice Awards.

"We are very pleased by this acknowledgment from OpenTable diners," said Jacques Haeringer, chef and owner of L'Auberge Chez François. "We are proud to know that

these diners thoroughly enjoyed their overall experience at our restaurant and gave us such high marks. My father, François, who founded the restaurant in 1954,

always said his keys to success were simply 'stick to the basics; good food, good ambience and good service.' Dining should be a total experience, from the service to the setting. This is a tradition that has lived on at the restaurant for more the 60 years and is something we pride ourselves on,"

"With so many thousands of restaurants in contention, earning a spot on this list is anything but easy," said Caroline Potter, OpenTable's Chief Dining Officer. "These winners have proven they are at the top of their game every day, making certain that every aspect of a guest's visit is both delicious and divine."



Jacques Haeringer  
Chef and Owner

### Lobster and Asparagus Salad with Vanilla Vinaigrette

(Serves 2)

#### Lobster

- 1 - 1 pound lobster
- 1 quart court bouillon

#### Vanilla Vinaigrette

- 2 vanilla beans
- 1/3 cup champagne or white wine vinegar
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1/4 teaspoon finely minced shallots
- Sea salt
- Freshly ground pepper
- Pinch of evaporated cane juice (optional)

#### Salad

- 8 - 10 stalks of lightly steamed asparagus
- 2 ounces (2 cups) mesclun salad, mixed baby lettuce

#### Prepare the Asparagus and Lobster:

Fill a pot fitted with a steamer top with salted water and bring up to a boil. Steam the asparagus to al dente, remove and allow to cool. Place the lobster in the steamer, cover, and cook for approximately 8 -10 minutes until the lobster is just cooked through. Remove and allow to cool.

Crack the claws to remove the meat. With a pair of heavy kitchen scissors, cut the shell around the lobster tail down the center to remove the tail whole. Cut the tail into 4 medallions and reserve with the lobster claws.

#### Prepare the Vinaigrette:

Split the vanilla bean in half lengthwise and scrape the seeds from the insides of the pod. Combine the split beans, vanilla seeds, and vinegar in a small saucepan and bring to a boil. Immediately, remove pan from heat and allow to steep for 5 minutes. Remove the split beans from the pan.

Combine the oil and shallots in a small mixing bowl and whisk in the vinegar from the saucepan. Scrape the pan with a rubber spatula to retrieve all of the vanilla seeds.

Season with sea salt, freshly ground pepper, and a pinch of sweetener, if desired. The sweetener enhances the flavor of the vanilla.

#### To assemble the Salad:

Divide the well-drained and cooled asparagus between two serving plates. Place the washed and well -drained salad in a mixing bowl, add 1/2 of the vinaigrette and toss. Divide the salad between the two servings of asparagus. Cover the stems but leave the asparagus tips exposed.

Divide the lobster medallions and claws between the two salads placing them on top of the salad greens.

Spoon the remaining vinaigrette over the lobster and asparagus tips.

**Hint:** A neutral vegetable oil is preferred for the taste, as a scented oil such as extra virgin olive oil tends to overwhelm the vanilla. A cold pressed oil is preferred for your health. Health and taste do occasionally conflict!



## About L'Auberge Chez François:

Creating a calm and relaxing atmosphere among the towering trees and rolling hills of Virginia, L'Auberge Chez François brings the Alsatian countryside to America. For Alsations, great food should be served in an intimate setting along with beautiful scenery. The restaurant's sylvan backdrop makes a drink or meal under the stars a special occasion and the perfect summer setting for any event. Guests are served in a warm, congenial and inviting atmosphere reminiscent of the little family inns—or auberge—that dot the Alsatian countryside. The menu changes with the seasons, using the best ingredients available.

In 2010, Chef Jacques launched "Jacques' Brasserie at L'Auberge Chez François," a collection of bistro-style, traditional Alsatian dishes. In May 2011, the a la carte brasserie moved to its permanent home in a newly remodeled downstairs dining room. In the region of Alsace this type of dining is known

as a winstub, where diners enjoy traditional Alsatian meals accompanied by a local wine, in a casual, more relaxed atmosphere. "When Papa first opened Chez François in 1954, the menu was very much in this winstub style. I wanted to bring this dining experience back to Northern Virginia. Many of the dishes we serve come from a handwritten notebook of recipes my father brought with him when he came to the United States after World War II."

The restaurant regularly receives numerous awards such as AAA's Four Diamond Award for their outstanding service and quality and is featured often in magazines such as Bon Appetit, Gourmet and Wine Spectator, and regularly holds a top spot in Zagat's Survey.



## Crabmeat in a Potato Crust

### Crab

6 ounces jumbo lump crabmeat  
2 tablespoons unsalted butter  
1 teaspoon finely minced shallots  
1/2 teaspoon finely chopped dill  
1/2 teaspoon lemon juice  
Sea salt and freshly ground pepper

### Crust (see note):

1 large Russet potato, peeled  
1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil  
Sea salt and freshly ground pepper

### Coulis (puree):

1 large red or yellow bell pepper  
1/2 teaspoon olive oil  
Sea salt and freshly ground pepper



### Prepare the crabmeat:

Carefully remove any pieces of shell. Melt the butter in a small sauté pan. When it begins to brown, add the shallots, cook a few seconds, then add the crabmeat and a pinch of salt and pepper. Toss gently and add the dill and lemon juice. Set aside and cool.

### Prepare the crust:

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Lightly coat the bottom of a cookie sheet with some of the olive oil. Line a plate with paper towels.

Using a very sharp knife or vegetable slicer, cut 8 to 10 paper-thin lengthwise slices of potato. Reserve the remaining potato for another use. Place the slices on the prepared cookie sheet and brush them generously with the olive oil, leaving a spoonful for oiling the ramekins.

Bake in the preheated oven for 3 to 4 minutes, until the slices are translucent. Using a spatula, carefully transfer the potato slices onto the paper towels to drain. Season with salt and pepper and set aside. Set the oiled baking sheet aside as well, you will use it again. Increase the oven heat to 400 degrees.

Brush two (6 ounces) ramekins with the remaining olive oil and line each with 4 or 5 of the potato slices. The slices must overlap and extend over the edge of the molds.

Fill each prepared ramekin with the seasoned crabmeat, and fold the potatoes over the top to make a closed crust. Bake for 10 minutes. Remove from the oven and invert the ramekins onto the oiled baking sheet. Bake for 8 to 10 more minutes, until golden brown.



*L'Auberge Chez François was voted one of the top 50 Best Restaurants in the United States for 2010 by OpenTable.com diners. Readers of Washingtonian magazine have voted L'Auberge Chez François as their favorite restaurant for over 22 years and the magazine recently named the restaurant one of their Top 50 Best for 2011.*

*L'Auberge Chez François is open for lunch Tuesday through Saturday, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., and Sunday from noon until 3:00 p.m. The restaurant is open for dinner Tuesday through Friday starting at 5:00 p.m., Saturday at 4:30 p.m., and Sunday noon to 7:30 p.m. Jacques' Brasserie is open for dinner Tuesday through Saturday starting at 5:00 p.m. and Sunday at 3:00 p.m.*

# KEEPING KIDS HOOKED ON READING

by Eileen Wacker

Developing a love of reading in our four children is of paramount importance to us and is critical to most parents. But “how to” is very elusive. Why doesn’t my second child love to read when it seems everyone else’s children are avid and engaged readers?

When my son was two, he would grab his favorite book (“We’re Going on a Bear Hunt”) and jump on my lap. We read it in silly voices and never skipped a word or missed a page. It was memorized and cherished and I felt happy at the prospect of having a good reader on my hands. But when he went to kindergarten and was asked to read every night -- he started to protest! And, when he went to second grade and was asked to keep a reading journal, he became a “short-cut taker”. As parents, we needed a strategy! How could we get our son back to being hooked on reading?

As children grow, there is a critical step that occurs. The step is when the child switches from “learning to read” to “reading to learn”. This is why, as parents, we strive to create a love of reading and a core competence in reading in our kids. When children are “learning to read” it can be a wonderful journey with their excited teachers and parents. When they begin to have Science and other subjects (starting in around 2nd grade), kids have to use their reading skills to understand directions, read materials and complete work. So how can we grow engaged readers who can later become great learners?

My husband and I had an idea. Our kids are addicted to electronic devices and have been since they could ask for a DS. Every gift list now includes a request for a kindle, an ipad, an itouch, or an iphone. We say no to many of these gift requests as electronic devices are expensive. And, we worry that when our kids are on their electronics, they do not glance at the scenery from a car window, engage in table conversation or even utter complete sentences. But what if instead of being the “electronics police”, we could use them toward scholastic achievement, most specifically reading?

We started to research and found the digital revolution offers even more than we hoped to get our kids hooked back on reading. All children excel and struggle in different areas. They learn differently and they may need to read differently to increase their satisfaction and confidence. Children usually like what they are good at and do not like what they struggle with. Today’s children feel very comfortable with technology, especially their hand held electronics. And, the biggest trend in building reading skills and reading comprehension in the best schools is using a multi media approach. At more and more schools, using the computer and increasingly electronic tablets in addition to

traditional books is a core piece of the reading curriculum.

So how can we use this multi media reading approach at home? We still sit on the bed and read an “ink” copy of a book with our child or let them can read it independently. But now the tablet market is coming to life and kids are going to soak up reading on

their brand new devices. We’re betting big on ebooks coming to the ipad just as my kids have their music on the ipods. Children’s books with illustrations are making their way quickly onto these emerging platforms. These are populations that are still “learning to read”.

We are embracing the content on new

technologies as well. We look for children’s series with multiple books and multimedia choices. For example, we are exploring animated books for one of our children who loves cartoons, so he can watch the stories unfold and follow the words as he goes along. The dynamic nature of animated books motivates him to read more and content can be downloaded immediately. The NOW factor is huge – if our child wants to continue reading or find the next book in the series, we can capitalize on it, buy it and tell him he has it ready for tomorrow.





A very good friend said, "I just got this Kindle and I am not sharing it. It will get ruined by smudgy hands." I responded, "but you just said you are concerned with your daughter's poor grades on her book reports – what if letting her read on your Kindle would motivate her?" She let her use the kindle for the next book report and her grade rose dramatically. As all our children are asking for ipods, itouch and other devices, we need to take the opportunity to insist the device is used for reading as well. Insert the content that you know they need.

As parents, we have to look at reading as two things – a gift and a tool. My oldest loves to read on her Kindle, a beloved Christmas gift. These tablets are the reading devices of the future. Adult books have been moved and consumed at an alarming speed and young adult content is following rapidly. These populations are reading for enjoyment and some read to learn as well. As the devices are able to handle color and illustrations, this market will explode with demand for children.

Ink books will always have a place in our hearts as the classic way to read and bond with our kids. But in 2011, we must also embrace technology and use multi-media approaches to keep our kids hooked into reading.

## ABOUT EILEEN WACKER

Eileen Wacker, a Harvard Business School graduate, lived and worked in seven different countries, including the United States. Wacker now resides in Honolulu, Hawaii, with her husband and four children, one of whom is a daughter adopted from China. She is the author of the new children's book, *Silent Samurai* and the *Magnificent Rescue*, the third installment of the *Mom's Choice Award Winning Fujimini Adventure Series*.

## Consumer Wellness Center Invests in the Nutritional Future of Children through Cash Awards from its 2012 Nutrition Education Grant Program

*The Consumer Wellness Center (CWC), a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting nutrition as a way to prevent disease and enhance human health and longevity, is pleased to announce the recipients of this year's 2012 Nutrition Education Grant Program.*

Consumer Wellness Center invests in the nutritional future of children through cash awards from its 2012 Nutrition Education Grant Program.

Each year, CWC chooses recipients from among the best and brightest in the fields of medicine, education, community service, and local outreach. These are folks that are making a big difference in their local communities by educating the public, especially pregnant mothers and young children, about the importance of good nutrition.

Having doubled the individual award amount for this year's recipients from \$1,000 to \$2,000, CWC is excited to see how the recipients will use these extra funds to expand their nutrition education programs. Their programs are truly inspiring and, with the help of these added funds, are sure to have an even larger impact in the years to come.

"This is the fourth year that CWC has been able to support the efforts of individuals and organizations around the world that are promoting better health through nutrition," said Mike Adams, editor-in-chief of NaturalNews.com, and Executive Director of CWC. "I'm excited to be a part of this important work, and I look forward to seeing how these grants will shape the face of nutrition education in the future."

For the second year in a row, Project Colors, a grassroots humanitarian aid program in South Africa, is the recipient of a CWC grant. The group will use this \$2,000 grant to further expand its Tiny Tummies program, which includes feeding at least 100 poor children per week in tuberculosis-ridden areas food that is rich in vitamins and minerals, as well as teaching them about nutrition and proper sanitation (<http://www.projectcolors.com/>).

For the third year in a row, Pennsylvania's Neshaminy School District has been awarded a CWC grant. After successfully expanding its nutrition education curriculum with previous award funds, the district plans to use this year's \$2,000 grant to produce school-wide commercials about nutrition, invite popular speakers to teach children about nutrition, take field trips to local farms and fresh food markets, and purchase a plant-growing lamp for the classroom herb garden (<http://neshaminy.k12.pa.us/>).

The Corvallis Environmental Center (CEC) in Oregon is also a third-time grant recipient, having used its previous awards to fund its "Farm to School Program," which brings local produce samples into schools for tastings, and teaches students about food and nutrition. CEC will use this year's grant to continue the program, as well as offer farm field trips and after-school cooking clubs to younger students. Visit our website for more information. <http://corvallisenvironmental.wordpress.com/>



## About the Consumer Wellness Center

The Consumer Wellness Center (<http://www.ConsumerWellness.org>) is a 501(c)3 non-profit focused on educational initiatives that empower consumers with knowledge and wisdom on disease prevention, nutrition, peak mental and physical health and natural health modalities. The center sells no vitamins, supplements, foods or medical products, and earns no commissions from the sale of such products.

*To learn more about the Consumer Wellness Center, visit <http://www.ConsumerWellness.org>.*

## Hello Again from Annapolis to All of You Back Home

It is a cold day here in Maryland's capital on the third day of the 2012 Legislative Session of the Maryland General Assembly. I am looking out of my office window at the beautifully restored dome of our beautiful historic State House.

The legislature convened on January 11 with words from the Governor and Speaker of the House on the major issues before us this year. Our task is a large one which calls for the participation of all of the people, because in a democracy, the people are not separate from their government, they are an integral part of it.

Vaclav Havel, former President of Czechoslovakia and leader of that nation's Velvet Revolution, who died last year, was a visionary for peace with the courage to act on his vision. I find his words below to be very appropriate to what we on this planet are facing today, and I intend to keep them in mind particularly through the next months until the legislative session adjourns on April 9th.

*"Hope is a state of mind, not of the world. Either we have hope or we don't; it is a dimension of the soul, and it's not essentially dependent on some particular observation of the world or estimate of the situation. Hope is not prognostication. It is an orientation of the spirit, and orientation of the heart; it transcends the world that is immediately experienced, and is anchored somewhere beyond its horizon...Hope, in this deep and powerful sense, is not the same as joy that things are going well, or willingness to invest in enterprises that are obviously heading for success, but rather an ability to work for something because it is good, not just because it stands a chance to succeed. The more propitious the situation in which we demonstrate hope, the deeper the hope is. Hope is definitely not the same thing as optimism. It is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out."*

Of the twelve issues they feature, four of them will be dealt with by the Environmental Matters Committee: the flush tax related to environmentally sound septic systems, ground rent (a somewhat unique real estate

practice in parts of Maryland), lead paint (there remains very serious and numerous cases of lead paint poisoning among Maryland children), and traffic. It may seem odd that ground rent is among the Environmental Matters Committee's issues. All issues related to housing, including mortgage foreclosure, are assigned to our committee, as are all motor vehicle issues.

I want to comment on the transportation fund item in the Sun article, even though it does not come to my committee. We still do not have either the wisdom or the will in Maryland to realize that until we start doing more for mass transit, congestion on our roads and highways will continue to worsen until it reaches an unbearable state. Hopefully this will be the year when we see this more clearly and acknowledge it.

We have a great deal of work ahead of us which will call for sound reasoning and a firm grasp of reality. Please keep in touch with me as we work our way through all of these issues.



Elizabeth Delegate Bobo

### Environmental Matters Committee

I will continue to serve as a member of the Environmental Matters Committee and as Chairperson of its Subcommittee on Land Use and Ethics. I also serve on the Joint Legislative Committee on Program Open Space.

The major issues before our committee during this session will be include mortgage foreclosure, septic systems, solid waste disposal, smart growth, and clean streams and rivers.

Since we will not begin the actual legislative bill hearing until the end of January, the first weeks will be dedicated to briefings on some of these major issues in House Office Building Room 251. Times vary as the meetings begin immediately after the daily legislative session, approximately 10:30 to 11, and are open to the public. If you decide to attend any of these briefings, stop in to see me in Room 214 of the same building.

### Briefings for the week beginning January 16, 2012

**Wednesday, January 18th** - Lead paint -Foreclosure

**Thursday, January 19th** - State of the Bay-Oyster Depletion-Total Maximum Daily Load-Watershed Implementation Plans (a major factor for our precious Chesapeake Bay)

# Announcement

## Focus on Women Magazine

presents the  
Women to Women show  
on Saturday, January 28th at 3pm  
Please join us as we host,  
**Dr. LeslieBeth Wish**,  
world renowned therapist and  
relationship counselor as she  
discusses the implications of  
Post Traumatic Stress Disorder  
for women, symptoms  
and forms of treatment.

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PI David Ford, MD, MPH  
Application #: NA\_00016408





## *Finest Awards*

*Focus on Women Magazine's is the Proud Presenter of the Following Nominees for the 2011 Focus on Women Finest Awards:*

*Lynn's Day Spa for Finest Spa Award*

*Better Best Rest for the Finest Non Profit Helping Women on Bedrest Award*

*Baltimore Hebrew Congregation for the Finest Outreach Program Award*

*Jep Girls of Maryland for the Finest Big Sister Program Award*

*Associated Black Charities for the Finest Women's Network Award*

*Basignani Vineyards for the Finest Wine Vineyard Award*

*The Columbia Foundation for the Finest Non Profit Award*

*Casey Cares Foundation for the Finest Children's Charity Award*

*The United Way of Central Maryland for the Finest Award for Addressing Hunger Award*

*Cafe De Paris for the Finest French Ambiance Award*

*Girl Scouts of Central Maryland for the Finest Celebrate Women Award*

*The Better Business Bureau for the Finest Business Support and Networking Award*

*Please join us as we applaud these noteworthy organizations and businesses.*

### *The Finalists are:*

*The United Way of Central Maryland*

*Better Best Rest*

*Girl Scouts of Central Maryland*

*Casey Cares Foundation*

*Howard Hospital Foundation*

## *The Columbia Inn Hotel and Conference Center at Peralynna*



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# The (Frustrating) Quest for Gender Diversity: *Awareness May Be the Key*

By Caroline Turner

*Author of Difference Works:*

*Improving Retention, Productivity and Profitability through Inclusion*

**A**lthough women have made much progress in reaching the leadership levels of business, the progress is disappointing—and stalled. What is so stubborn about this issue? Why aren't more women making it to (and staying at) the top? The answer may be in becoming more aware of why women leave and of what they bring to the table.

Women now represent about half of the hiring pipeline, entry-level positions and total workforce. But at each level of management, women represent a lower percentage. According to Catalyst, while women represent 47.6% of today's workforce, in the Fortune 500 in 2011 they represent only 14.4% of executive officers, 7.6% of top earners and 3.2% of CEO's. The professions reflect the same pattern. Catalyst reports, for example, that in law firms women make up about 45% of associates but only 19% of partners.

Where do women go between the entry and upper levels? They leave. Research confirms that women have higher attrition rates than men. Even if women don't literally leave, they dis-engage, stall out or just quit climbing. "Leave" is shorthand for all of that. And, when they literally leave, few drop out of the workforce; most go to another employer or start their own businesses.

There is lots of focus on the issue. Last spring the WSJ devoted several pages of ink to the question, "Where are all the senior level women?"

A new Catalyst research report observes that the problem is not that women aren't doing the right things to get promoted. Those who do still lag behind men. A recent article in McKinsey Quarterly concludes that the problem lingers because it arises from "invisible mind-sets." I agree.



*Caroline Turner*

The "quit rate" of women is hardly a reason not to hire and support women. It is a reason to try to keep them. The business case for gender diversity in leadership is compelling. Companies with a balance of men and women leaders do better on most

financial measures—return on equity, return to shareholders, stock price, etc. They tap into a huge women's market. They attract the best talent from the gender-diverse talent pipeline. Gender diversity is simply good business.

To increase retention rates of women, business leaders need to understand why women "leave." The first cause people tend to name is "work-life balance"—the fact that women generally spend more hours a week caring for children and aging parents. This factor is obviously real. But it is overblown. First, not wanting to burn bridges when they depart, smart women often use the common and acceptable reason, they "want to spend more time with family," rather than talk about other factors. Second, research shows that "work-life balance" becomes less tolerable when there are other factors at play.

*What are those other factors?*

They are factors that lower the engagement of women, which lowers retention—and bottom line results. Both Catalyst and the Center for Work Life Policy divide the causes of women leaving the business world into "pull factors" (like family care) and "push factors," negative elements about the work environment or job. Two major push factors involve:

- **Acceptance**—women not feeling fully valued or accepted, and
- **Advancement**—women feeling they can't advance or succeed.

There are two drivers of these feelings:

- The "comfort principle"
- An unconscious preference for how leadership and excellence look.

Neither is malicious, intentional or usually even conscious. But they create barriers for women. Making them conscious can cause barriers to fall.

## **The Comfort Principle**

Access to informal networks is key to getting great work assignments and therefore great experience and exposure that lead to promotions. The "comfort principle" can create a barrier to full access for women. It is a natural phenomenon; we like to spend time with people like ourselves. Speaking personally, given a choice, I'd prefer to go shopping or share a bottle of wine with my women friends than play golf or hang out in a cigar bar with men. I don't judge men for preferring to hang out with men more than with me. Gender differences at work can create discomfort rather than comfort.

But "hanging out" enables the development of trust and relationship. The people who come to mind when we are handing out great assignment or giving our time as a mentor are

naturally those with whom we are most comfortable. We can't (and shouldn't) legislate away the comfort principle. What we can do is bring it to the conscious level. Leaders can pause and monitor whether the comfort principle is influencing to whom they give assignments, whom they mentor and to whom they give a second chance when things don't go perfectly. Then they can balance the benefit of diversity to their team and organization with their own comfort. In other words, awareness can assure that the comfort principle doesn't result in less access for some groups.

### **An Unconscious Preference**

The builders of American business were primarily men. They got there first. It is natural that ideas of leadership and excellence have a more masculine than feminine flavor. Studies show that "leadership" is associated with words that are characteristic of men more often than women. In fact, when women exhibit some of these traits, they are not favorably received. In evaluating a woman, men may find her approach unfamiliar and may judge her style rather than focus on the results she delivers. Leaders can stop and notice whether previously unconscious preferences are influencing how they evaluate a woman. They can take the time to understand differences in masculine and feminine approaches, and the strengths and limitations of each. Then they can appreciate and value both.

Both the comfort principle and unconscious preferences are part of the "invisible mind-sets" named by McKinsey. The starting point for removing these mind-sets and the barriers they cause is awareness. By becoming aware of the barriers and of the strengths of both masculine and feminine approaches to work, leaders can assure that women and men feel accepted and valued and feel they can succeed. The result will be higher engagement, higher retention and a better bottom line.

## *The Single Gal's Guide to Valentine's Day*

*By Patricia Leavy, PhD*



*Patricia Leavy, PhD*

Valentine's Day can feel more like D-Day for single women. This Hallmark-holiday pushes coupledness in our faces and turns our world into a pink and red advertisement for romance. When you're single sometimes all of the cupid's arrows feel more like daggers.

To get through it, those who are presently unattached may throw themselves a pity party. Parties have themes, even pity parties. One version of this is to crawl into bed until the day passes. A more dangerous pitfall is to start romanticizing a relationship past—mentally digging up the buried remains of a relationship that is over, and probably for a good reason.

This Valentine's Day avoid the pitfalls of low-fat love, don't dream of settling for less and pretending it's more, and don't try to cope by avoiding life. You're not alone, you're with yourself so make the most of it. To begin with, buy yourself a bouquet of your favorite flowers—you deserve something beautiful in your home. Then, have a fun night. Here are my top tips for enjoying Valentine's Day with your single girlfriends or on your own.

- ▶ **Have a girlfriend get-together at your place.** If you're with your friends I recommend staying in—restaurants and bars will look like Bubble Gum exploded everywhere—a self-esteem no-no for singles, especially romantics. Avoid the paper cupids and kissing couples, grab your girlfriends and stay in.
- ▶ **Host a finger food party.** Have each guest bring an appetizer and a bite-size dessert. These fun foods can be passed around all night or set up on a buffet. You can munch throughout the evening as you talk, drink and laugh. This will be less work than serving a traditional dinner and a lot more fun.
- ▶ **Have a classic movie marathon.** Pick up a set of classic mysteries (like Hitchcock) or have a horror film festival. Avoid anything sappy, like dramas and romantic comedies. Pop a few batches of popcorn (you can add fun flavors to them to make it more festive) and ask each of your friends to bring a bag of their favorite fun-size candies/chocolates. Create a little movie buffet, sit down and have some fun. Incidentally, this movie night can just as easily be adapted for one. Don't skimp on yourself—do up the popcorn and candy and see some of the movies that have always been on your "list."
- ▶ **Make your own spa night.** Stop at your local beauty supply store and splurge on some relaxing spa treatments: bubble bath, a body exfoliator, a face mask and some luxurious lotion. Follow-up with a do-it-yourself manicure and pedicure in a cheerful color that embraces the day. Remember, it is your job to take care of yourself so treat yourself well and have a wonderful Valentine's Day!

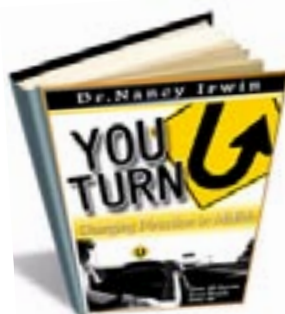
*Patricia Leavy, PhD, is an acclaimed pop-feminist author and expert commentator as well as a leading qualitative and arts-based researcher. She is also the author of the new book, **Low-Fat Love**. For more information, please visit [www.patricialeavy.com](http://www.patricialeavy.com)*

## Sexual Abuse Specialist Dr. Nancy Irwin Featured on Anderson Show

**Dr. Nancy Irwin** made an appearance on Anderson Cooper's daytime talk show on Fox, October 20 & 21, 2011 to discuss child beauty pageants. The show focused on the affect that entering beauty contests at any early age could have on a child. Are these pageants a positive thing in a young girl's life? Some say "yes." In any case, such pageants can potentially change the course of their lives, as they grow older.

Dr. Nancy Irwin is a pre-licensed psychologist and therapeutic hypnotherapist from Los Angeles. She believes that by clearing away negative programming and undesirable habits, we can free ourselves of any negativity in our day-to-day lives. She specializes in sexual abuse recovery and prevention, fears and phobias, weight management and smoking cessation, among other life changes.

Her book, **You-Turn: Changing Direction in Midlife**, is a collection of the stories of 43 real people who have started to go down a new path in midlife, or even older. This book discusses in detail the changes that people from all walks of life have decided to make, offering



encouragement and motivation and is an inspiration to those wishing to do the same.

**You-Turn** is written in a manner that is accessible to all readers and offers insights that are easily applicable within their lives. These stories are significant in the current economy and job market, which has led many people to reinvent themselves as the job market has become increasingly difficult and a lifestyle change has become a survival tactic. If your life is not how you envisioned it would be, take comfort in knowing that you, and only you, have the capability to change your life in a positive manner. Dr. Irwin believes it is never too late to pursue a different course in your life. She says: "Change is inevitable: either effect it or accept it."

## *They Are Not All Monsters*



**Dr. Nancy B. Irwin**  
PsyD, C.Ht.

**W**hile many are still reeling from the recent painful Penn State scandal, I fervently hope that this will be a tremendous learning lesson for our society. As a treatment professional of sex offenders as well as victims, I would like to address some dynamics of perpetrators and witnesses that the public in general is perhaps unaware of.

### **What do child molesters look like?**

Your grandfather, your brother, your aunt, your employee, and yes, brilliant college football coaches. No one is all good or all bad; and sex offenders are no exception. They may be

extremely talented, intelligent, successful, good-looking, blessed with beautiful families and "normal" sexual outlets. They cover all walks of life: early 20's through 70's, all ethnicities, races, religions, IQ levels, education, sexual orientations, and all socioeconomic strata. They don't all look like "perverts." There is no typical profile.

In psychology, there is a basic belief that "What is beautiful is good." "Therefore, if someone who is beautiful (or does beautiful things) does something bad, it creates cognitive dissonance, a confused state of being that can block comprehension and appropriate action. It is fairly easy for us to believe that an unattractive, low-achiever could commit sex crimes against children, and we then vilify the "pervert," even after he/she admits it and works to control it.

Many child molesters and pedophiles actually hate themselves for what they consider uncontrollable urges and would get help if they knew where to turn. Sadly, the global belief is that they cannot be helped, and most reoffend. Fortunately, this is completely false. With treatment, the recidivism rate is between 5%-

***They Are Not All Monsters, (Continued on page 35)***



## ***They Are Not All Monsters, (Continued from page 34)***

13%, much lower than for non-sex crimes (US Dept. of Justice; Bureau of Statistics). While there is no cure for an attraction to children, it can be managed much like substance addictions. Again, therapy and support are crucial to success.

Adults fail to intervene and report abuse for a variety of reasons, one of the most salient being denial or minimization of the offense. This is enabling, and enablers are more culpable than offenders, who can be “crippled” by their disorder. Enablers do not want the offense to be a reality, and keenly hope that it will just “go away,” particularly if it involves a celebrity or someone we really admire. The American culture all but deifies sports figures. We want heroes, and athletes and coaches bespeak health, fitness, confidence, winning, and an all-American wholesomeness that blinds some of us to their blemishes or weaknesses. While not excusing their response to the recent accusations at Penn State, Joe Paterno, Mike McQueary,

Spanier, et al, I believe, were caught in this immobilizing, enabling position. While it appears that they put football before the wellbeing of children, potentially what was occurring was their inability to comprehend the severity of the crime and respond appropriately. Their actions may have been completely different and appropriate if the perpetrator were a stranger and not part of the success machine of Penn State Football.

Let us all use this tragedy as an opportunity to learn proper protocol for reporting abuse, even when an abuser attempts to exploit his/her position. Sexual abuse affects us all. This is a public health issue that can be resolved when the media and public move beyond sensationalism. Let’s offer help not only to the victims, but also to the abusers, for the best way to help victims is to help abusers. Let’s focus on accountability, responsibility, solutions, and management vs. blame, demonizing, and retribution.

The Registry list is useless to the public in protecting people if it’s so broad that we can’t tell who is a real threat and who is not.

# Refusing to Be Held Down

## ***Member of Ugandan Parliament Reveals Abusive Marriage***

In this part of the world, it’s something that just isn’t talked about. Women feel shamed by domestic violence and often have no support from families.

Some men view women as just another possession. Beatrice Kiraso suffered emotional and physical abuse in her marriage. But, she found her strength and thinks others in similar relationships can find their strength too.

In her new book, ***Making a Difference***, Kiraso discusses a problem that exists mostly behind closed doors. She says, like many victims of abuse, she was scared to speak out and didn’t know where to turn for help.

“Even with an abusive demeaning marriage, I was able to jump out and still feel I was a winner,” says Kiraso. “It’s about balancing interests between what is important to your family and would otherwise make you happier.”

In ***Making a Difference***, Kiraso says no matter what has happened in her life, her kids came first.

“I could have re-married or even enjoyed affairs or filled my closet with the most modern clothes, but I did not,” Kiraso says. “I have principles I hold

dear. Most people don’t try hard enough to examine choices, especially in hard times.”

***Making a Difference*** is a story of one woman who

has studied, worked, married, had children, divorced and moved on. She has experienced love from childhood, and has loved back, been hurt but forgave, by so doing, reaped a lot of happiness. More importantly, she has laughed, and continues to laugh.

### ***About the Author ~***

*Beatrice Birungi Kiraso earned a Bachelor’s of Economics from Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda and of Masters in Public Administration from Harvard University, Kennedy school of*

*government. Her career includes private sector consultancy, public service and an elected Member of Parliament in Uganda. She has worked with the World Bank, USAID and State University of New York on public finance management, procurement, parliamentary practice and social development. Currently, Kiraso is the Deputy Secretary General at the East African Community, an inter-governmental organization of five countries. She is a proud mother of two, Eva and Joshua, the closest people to her in life.*



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# January News and Happenings at *Basignani*

## Happy New Year!



**W**e may not have tossed any old possessions out of the windows to symbolize our readiness for the new year, but like our Italian cousins we brought out the bubbly - our very own Basignani Brut!

It's January now and the weather is finally starting to feel like winter - we've even had a dusting of snow. Don't let the cold fool you - we're still toasty warm in the tasting room, and planning to get toastier with our Souper Saturdays. But more about that later.

**F.Y.I.** January is National Soup Month, celebrated annually in the United States. Approximately ten billion bowls of soup are consumed by Americans every year. Soup has been popular from its beginning in Greece in 600 B.C. So, how do we at Basignani celebrate National Soup Month? Just keep reading!

We've combined National Soup Month with wine to give our customers a warm and delicious alternative to a cold January Saturday.

*So, fight the chill this January . . . . .  
 . . . . .with our Souper Saturdays!*

**Every Saturday in January from 12-5**, join us for homemade soups and wine tasting. What could be better than hot soup expertly paired with delicious wines on a cold January day?

For \$10 person, Souper Saturdays include a souvenir glass, wine tasting, and samples of two different soups.

Try some homemade soup of your own this January!

### Winter Veggie Bisque

Serves 6

- 1 large onion, halved
- 1 apple, peeled
- 3 carrots, peeled
- 2 tbsp. butter
- 3 c. vegetable broth
- 2 tbsp. brown sugar
- 2 pkgs. frozen squash, thawed  
(Or roast two butternut squash at 400 for an hour the night before and scraped it out of the shell. Store in the fridge for up to two days.)
- 1 tsp. ground ginger
- 3/4 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp. cayenne pepper
- 1/2 c. heavy cream

1. Shred onion, apple and carrots in food processor with shredding blade or using a box grater. Heat butter in large pot over medium heat. Add shredded veggies. Cook 7 minutes, until softened.
2. Stir in squash, broth and spices. Bring to boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer 5 minutes.
3. Transfer mixture to blender, puree until smooth (may take several batches). Return to pot, stir in heavy cream. Gently heat through.

## Fresh & Easy Kosher Cooking: Ordinary Ingredients, Extraordinary Meals

*International food writer Leah Schapira*

*cooks up simple and delicious mealtime solutions for every kitchen.*

### Sweetheart Salad

Makes 4 -5 Servings  
Parve

A slightly tart dressing complements the sweet ingredients in this salad. It's named after my sweetheart sister-in-law who shared this recipe with me.



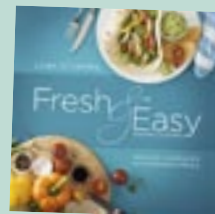
#### Salad

- 1 head romaine lettuce, chopped
- 1 cup pineapple, fresh, cubed
- 1/4 cup dried apricots, chopped
- 1/4 cup dried cranberries
- 1/4 cup roasted almonds
- 1 green apple

#### Dressing

- 3 tbsp.... lemon juice
- 2 tbsp. oil
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1 tbsp. sugar

1. In a large bowl, combine lettuce, pineapple, apricots, cranberries, and almonds.
2. Combine dressing ingredients.
3. Right before serving, core and slice the apple, with peel on, add to salad, and toss with dressing.



Recipes from **FRESH & EASY KOSHER COOKING:  
 Ordinary Ingredients, Extraordinary Meals**

*By Leah Schapira/November 2011*

# ZPass+™ Tells Parents When and Where Their Child Gets On or Off the School Bus

While school buses are the safest way to transport children to school, children are lost every year after missing the bus or exiting at the wrong stop. Zonar's new ZPass+ provides parents a new level of comfort and assurance through instant notifications when their child boards and exits the school bus.

Zonar, provider of electronic fleet inspection, tracking and operations technology, designed ZPass+ to coincide with its award-winning, patented ZPass™ solution. With ZPass, students are issued a unique RFID identification card. As the student passes the ZPass reader upon boarding and exiting the bus, the time, date and location are transmitted to a secure database.

ZPass integrates with Zonar's HD-GPS technology that captures data in four dimensions including latitude, longitude, time, and speed at every data collection point. This provides administrators with a clear view of the bus' path, each stop and start, and even the time, date, and location at which the door was opened. School districts access the vehicle and ridership data via a secure web browser connection to ensure the safety of bus-riding students.

ZPass+ now provides specific student rider information to parents through a password protected website. After setting up an account, parents can create notification preferences by cell phone text message and email. Freeport School District #145 in Freeport, IL was part of a pilot program for ZPass+ and is offering the service to parents.

"ZPass+ is an excellent tool for parents. Calls to the transportation department are no longer necessary, because parents have that information on their cell phones," said Dallas Rackow, director of transportation for Freeport School District. "Student ridership tracking with ZPass provides us with a level of security and confidence we didn't know was

possible. It has eliminated the anxiety associated with locating a child that didn't get off the bus."

This new technology is especially useful for children walking to and from a bus stop and for special needs children. Parents can now better coordinate pick up and drop off knowing precisely when the bus has arrived.

Earlier in 2011, ZPass was recognized with the internationally-known Edison Best New Product Award in the Innovative Services for Health, Wellness and Safety category. "We are excited to extend the information and value provided through ZPass to parents with the

new ZPass+," said Chris Oliver, Zonar's V.P. of Sales & Marketing. "Throughout the past decade, Zonar has innovated technology to increase fleet safety and efficiency. ZPass+ is a significant milestone as parents not only have greater peace-of-mind, but can also use the information to more efficiently coordinate their child's school transportation."

Parents can access ZPass+ only if the school district offers the program. When a school participates, parents visit [www.zpassplus.com](http://www.zpassplus.com) to set up an account using their child's ZPass card number.

## ■ About Zonar

Zonar helps public and private fleet managers improve CSA compliance, increase fleet efficiency and improve safety through an expansive set of inspection, diagnostic

and GPS solutions. In 2001, Zonar released its patented Electronic Vehicle Inspection Report (EVIR) system to standardize the pre- and post-trip inspection process and ensure compliance with state and federal law. Through a unique "Inspect, Track, Know" approach, Zonar also developed the V2J telematics platform and the web-based Ground Traffic Control fleet management portal. Zonar's newest product, Z-Pass+ provides parents with student bus ridership information. Learn more about Zonar at [www.zonarsystems.com](http://www.zonarsystems.com).

