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the BIG SQUEEZE

How to cope when downsizing means saying
goodbye to your oversized furniture

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Distilling the details of an old whiskey's new popularity

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A high-concept lookbook examines the XXL T-shirt

Editor's Note

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**SUNDAY
MAGAZINE**

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HEARST CONNECTICUT MEDIA GROUP



Christopher Setter / For Hearst Connecticut Media

The essence of Sunday

“S” stands for Sunday, that one day of the week many of us still reserve for reading. We may even indulge the luxury of thinking — not about work stress or mounting debt or fraught relationships (all that weekday stuff), but about art, ideas, an interesting meal, a provocative film or a museum we’ve always meant to visit. It’s a day to wander, linger, stumble upon a surprising conversation, have a good laugh. The essence of Sunday is what S Magazine is all about.

In this, the inaugural issue of Hearst Connecticut’s new arts and lifestyle publication, we’ve tried to capture the eclectic nature of the place we inhabit. It’s New England, yes, but it’s also New York City metro. It’s congested and dense and built, yet its natural landscape is breathlessly beautiful. It’s parochial and small, but also provocative and cosmopolitan.

We care a great deal about “local” here —

local schools, local sports, local business, local news and information. But we hail from around the globe. Have you been to Greenwich Avenue lately, or Main Street in Danbury? The array of languages literally speaks to the polyglot nature of who we are.

And so you will find in these pages a first-person piece by humorist Mitch Broder, an accomplished author and a man whose sartorial taste he describes as “baggy.” We took one look at him and decided he’d be the perfect candidate for a fashion makeover. He resisted. We insisted. He lost his heart to a pair of Ferragamo loafers. For fashion with a devilish twist, you’ll meet Emily Larned, a Bridgeport artist who created 54 ways to style a plain white T-shirt and then arranged them in an ironic “lookbook.” You’ll go to Ridgefield for a taste of artisanal bourbons, and to Stamford for the first meeting of our new film club, appropriately dubbed “Movie & A Martini.” After watching a documentary on the legendary verbal showdowns between Gore Vidal

and William F. Buckley Jr., our volunteer filmmakers got together to — what else — discuss.

There’s much more to S, including an excerpt from a new novel by Westport writer Jane Green. There aren’t too many newspapers publishing fiction these days. But then there aren’t too many places teeming with fiction writers. We’re grateful to have them in our midst, and honored to share their work.

S Magazine is the product of creative minds from throughout Southwest Connecticut. In addition to a handful of staffers, we’ve assembled a raucous crew of freelance journalists, photographers, illustrators and first-time writers to give our magazine a rare verve. Features Editor Eileen Fischer and Creative Director Lee Steele recently gathered us for an afternoon of noshing and drinking. We had a ball. We hope you will too.

Cheers,
Barbara T. Roessner
EXECUTIVE EDITOR
HEARST CONNECTICUT MEDIA GROUP

Charles Harold Davis
(1856–1933):

Mystic Impressionist

September 26, 2015–January 3, 2016

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Charles Harold Davis (American, 1856–1933), *Blythe June* (detail), 1921,
Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 in., Joel B. Garzoli Fine Art



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— Lee Steele



Movie & A Martini

Joe Meyers

A battle of wits: Vidal vs. Buckley

The legendary verbal sparring matches between William F. Buckley Jr. and Gore Vidal are what the new documentary "Best of Enemies" is all about.

Happily, I didn't have to pull anyone apart after the recent "Movie & A Martini" screening of the film at the Avon Theatre in Stamford — the first of our new weekly S magazine get-togethers celebrating film and good talk.

Our meet-up group loved "Best of Enemies" — not a single thumbs-down — and then hung out afterward for a lively but civil discussion of the documentary.

"I think it showed a more human side of Buckley," one audience member said of the way the longtime Stamford resident regretted losing his cool in his nightly debates with Vidal during the two national conventions in 1968.

Vidal called Buckley a "crypto-Nazi" and I for one was grateful to the woman who explained that crypto means "hidden."

Everyone agreed that the confrontation between the two celebrated writers seemed rather tame when compared with the level of discourse these days on Fox News, CNN and the other 24/7 cable TV outlets.

"I thought it was fascinating to see that we're facing the same questions now," another woman said of the "law and order" debates on police behavior in 1968, the question of whether or not the country could move past its racist heritage and Vidal's belief that the country and the political parties were run by a wealthy elite.



Contributed photo

"And we're still not united," she added.

An audience member talked about working with Buckley during his 1965 campaign for mayor of New York City. He said that riding around Queens in a limousine with the pundit was still one of his most memorable experiences.

Each week, we will be meeting at a theater in one of our four newspapers' coverage areas to see something new and interesting, and then adjourn to hash over the pros and cons of the movie in question. I'm sharing hosting duties with my friend Susan Granger, a veteran film critic who is one of the most knowledgeable movie people I know. She grew up in Hollywood and sees films from a uniquely informed perspective.

The next "Movie & A Martini" meet-up will be Thursday, Oct. 1, at 6:45 p.m. at the Criterion Cinemas, 2 Railroad Ave., Greenwich, where we will see the new Robert DeNiro-Anne Hathaway film, "The Intern." Just buy your ticket and meet me in the lobby. Afterwards we'll adjourn to a local watering hole. For more information or to share thoughts on movies, drop me a line at jmeyers@hearthmediact.com.



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Shared Dish
Eileen Fischer
 & *Lee Steele*

Learning Japanese

SIDE-STEPPING
 BARBECUED EEL
 FOR PEEKYTOE
 CRAB, GYOZA

Eileen Fischer: I was a little hesitant about going to a Japanese restaurant. I don't know a thing about Japanese food except sushi, rice and sake. It would be a surprise, I thought, a little like this column.

Lee Steele: I know what you mean. I'm always Googling instructions on the proper way to eat sushi. And I'm never as clever with chopsticks as I think I am.

E.F.: So we took a trip to Kawa Ni (Japanese for "on the river") in Westport for lunch on an extremely hot and humid afternoon.

L.S.: It's a tiny hole-in-the-wall. When we parked in the rustic little plaza where the restaurant is, I almost missed it. The only sign, in English, is on the door, which was propped open. I almost yelled at my GPS for driving us to the wrong place.

E.F.: Opened about a year ago by chef Bill Taibe (owner of The Whelk and Le-Farm, also both in Westport), the unassuming little spot near the Saugatuck River was jumping, but the knowledgeable servers were very attentive, juggling menus,



Shaved broccoli and miso, Benton's ham, ra-yu and honey at Kawa Ni in Westport.

squeezing by chairs, cleaning off tables and describing all the dishes starting with guests' favorites.

L.S.: It's only 42 seats and modeled on a Japanese pub, or an izakaya, the type you might visit after work. In the center of the room is a problematic "communal table," for larger groups of people in party mode, sitting on stools and laughing hysterically when you're trying to have a conversation.

E.F.: You're getting grumpier with time. Small plates is the way to go so we picked some of the top-sellers: pork gyoza (dumplings) with red cabbage, salted peanuts and sesame (\$14); shaved broccoli and miso with Benton's ham (\$14), a dish highly recommended by the waiter.

L.S.: We leaned on the waiter to suggest dishes that would complement each other. The menu changes with what's available locally, so we can't count on any of these things to be on the menu if we return. We also ordered chicken meatballs in eel sauce (\$12) and fried chicken wings with honey-gochujang and sesame, similar to those Korean chicken wings invented in Queens, N.Y. (\$14). You didn't give me much of a fight when it came to sharing those dishes.

E.F.: I was too busy piling extra servings onto my plate from the rice-ball dome



Pork gyoza with red cabbage tsukemono, salted peanuts and sesame.

brown exterior and layers of flavor on the inside that are difficult to describe. The farm greens inside were seasonal; another time there might be crab or kimchi.

E.F.: Gyoza, the pork dumplings, were perfection, firm and flavorful, especially with the accent of the pickled red cabbage.

L.S.: We ordered only four of the 22 "share plates" on the menu. Neither of us had the nerve to order the blowfish tail with yuzu-brown butter, shishito and yard beans (\$15); or the barbecued eel with kyuri asazuke, eel sauce, celariac and black garlic (\$16) — an item the New York Times raved about earlier this year. The menu seemed a little hipster-ish in spots, but I'd come back in a flash and lay down \$12 to try the Padron no yaki with yuzu aioli, roe, lime and ramp tsukemono. If you suspect I'm just typing words from the menu, you're right. I'm way out of my league here.

E.F.: An order of peekytoe crab fried rice with bacon, a lively hint of dill, roasted corn cut from the cob and topped with a fried egg was a meal in itself. There was a splash of spice that I loved, too. I don't know why, but the spiciness of the food was a surprise to me, pleasant yet not overwhelming.

L.S.: I was more struck by the sweetness of the chicken wings and the cashews on the rice ball, which seemed candied. The sweetness was tempered by one noodle dish I tried, the intense flavors of the brisket mazemen with chile sofrito, contrasting with the bright relief of a hard-boiled shoyu egg, over tonkatsu noodles. It's the least soupy of the seven noodle dishes on the menu. The dish introduced new flavors to my tongue, but was strangely comforting. It was as if Mom had made brisket mazemen for me as a child. But I can tell you with certainty, she didn't.

Kawa Ni, 19 Bridge Square, Westport. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays. 203-557-8775.



A rice ball with pickled farm greens, pickled peanuts and cashews.

sitting in the middle of the table. It was so complex and delicious it was our hands-down favorite dish.

L.S.: I've had rice balls in the Italian or Latin-American tradition, so it was interesting to taste a Japanese-inspired version, onigiri, with a pleasingly crispy-



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Fashion



Mike Ross / For Hearst Connecticut Media

The author ups his game at Richards of Greenwich, where some subtle changes went a long way. Below, a professional shopper picks out some looks for autumn.

OH, THOSE FERRAGAMO LOAFERS

Clothes make the man



IN MY NEW CLOTHES I FELT LIKE I HAD POWER. OR AT LEAST MORE POWER THAN A GUY IN A BAGGY-IN-GENERAL SHIRT.



By Mitch Broder

I knew I shouldn't wear my favorite shirt to the makeover, because I knew it would get its feelings hurt, which it quickly did.

"The first thing I'd do is give you a new shirt," said my makeover consultant, Sarah Butterfield, as if the old shirt weren't in the room. "This is much too big for you. It's coming off your shoulders. It's baggy in general." She was not appeased by its festive blue and green stripes.

Butterfield is the man-dresser at Richards of Greenwich. Richards is a store for people who are serious about dressing. And at Richards Butterfield does what we'd all like to be able to do, which is to tell everyone what's wrong with what they have on, without risking a poke in the eye.

I met with Butterfield because it was time for me to get a new look, since every day is time for me to get a new look. I have pants that have outlived their pockets. I have belts on their last buckle notch. I have shirts that have gone out of style, come back in and gone back out.

Butterfield could tell that my favorite shirt had spanned two centuries, and she didn't much care how dashing it had been when too-big was in style. She did, however, compliment me for wearing my flat-front pants instead of the pleated ones whose feelings I had wisely protected.

She understood me. She recognized that there was just so far I could travel from a blue, green or blue-and-green-stripe top, paired with black khakis. "I can dress you," she said, "but if you're not comfortable in it, you're never going to wear it." She got that right. Just ask my Qiana shirts.

In the time it took me to vogue for my "before" photograph, Butterfield laid out an entire wardrobe for me on a display table. The clothes were my sizes, which I had not told her and which she had not asked. And they were things I could wear without feeling like knocking on neighbors' doors for candy.

Richards is a world populated by names like Ermenegildo Zegna. There's no problem here finding a shirt for \$500 or a suit for \$5,000. I never paid prices like that for my clothes, not that I'd remember. But I wanted a high-class makeover whether I could afford it or not.

My first look combined gray wool pants, which I never would have considered, a blue-check shirt, which I also never would have considered, and a baby-blue half-zip wool sweater, which I certainly never would have considered. Everything felt peculiar, probably because it fit.

Yet somehow the clothes made me over. All at once I was natty. Butterfield seemed to be seeing me for the first time, except in a good way. I was still in blue, but now it wasn't coming off my shoulders. People smiled as if to tell me they were waiting for the three-way mirror.

So I changed into blue wool pants, a plum-and-teal-check shirt and a plum half-zip sweater. I felt like a Thanksgiving centerpiece. But I like hiding behind dark colors, and I especially liked the shoes, which were Salvatore Ferragamo loafers that felt like they were socks.

For an evening out, Butterfield put me back in gray pants, added a gray-and-blue-stripe shirt and a blue windowpane sports coat. The coat was marked \$2,295, but as Butterfield pointed out it was a year-round weight, which meant I could wear it for \$191.25 a month.

Butterfield also picked out a navy suit with a textured white shirt and a burgundy tie with stripes of navy and light blue. "The suit is a frame," she explained. "Your personality will come in with the shirts and the ties. I happen to love red. Red is power. I don't necessarily see you in red."

Nevertheless, in my new clothes I felt like I had power. Or at least more power than a guy in a baggy-in-general shirt. But for the whole wardrobe, I'd have had to lay

out \$10,500, plus \$6,865 more if I wanted a really neat Brunello Cucinelli bomber jacket.

I asked Butterfield what to do, briefly imagining she'd say, "It's all yours!" Instead she said, "Start with one thing you love. You really loved the Ferragamo loafers, so start with them." Starting with them would run \$480, which could buy the first shirt and sweater combined.

There was irony in Butterfield's suggestion, since I was assigned to get a makeover directly after the editors got a look at me in my favorite shoes. But not enough irony, I guessed, for them to buy me my Ferragamos. Besides, I had dressed for failure, and it had paid off.

So I draped myself in my favorite shirt, which now felt like a laundry sack, and left to ponder just how much I should invest in a new me.

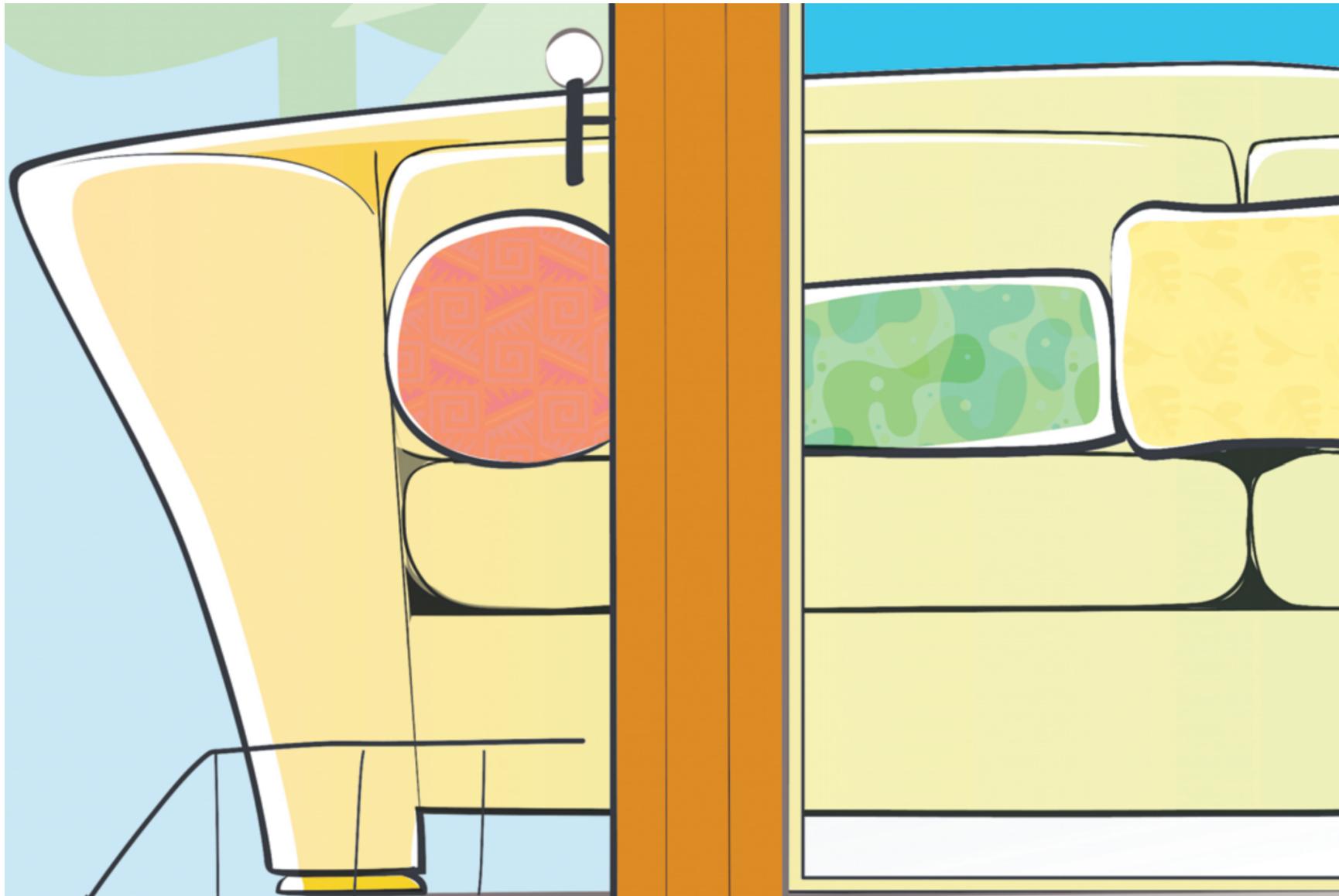
I would daydream about silky Italian leather nuzzling my feet. And I would daydream about Butterfield's silky summation: "I loved you in the baby-blue."

Mitch Broder is the author of two books, including his latest, "New York's One-Food Wonders."



The author reluctantly agreed to change his look.

Home



Christopher Brown/For Hearst Connecticut Media

Boomers and Millennials have a dilemma in common:
Finding stylish furniture that fits

Living small

By Christina Hennessy

It was a week before move-in day when Jennifer Bangser, her husband and her teenaged daughter would see whether their measurements and planning would translate to a rented living space that was clean, simple and cozy, instead of busy, cluttered and cramped. Downsizing from a four-bedroom home in the suburbs to one of the airy apartment complexes recently built in Norwalk, she knew it was going to be a challenge.

"The sofa is the key thing," Bangser was thinking about the 6-foot long, 1925 antique couch that had once been her grandmother's.

Since she was working with about 1,600 square feet, about half the square footage she once had, Bangser, who is in her 50s, already had pared down her possessions — her great-grandmother's Victorian wood bed was headed to storage, along with an antique desk, a family heirloom. "A student desk is going to become the family desk, in a way. You start to look at your children's furniture in a different way when you have to downsize. You think, 'What a lovely piece that is.'"

Bangser's dilemma isn't unique. In the last five years across lower Fairfield County, about 6,400 apartment units have been built, with about 1,000 more on the way, according to CoStar Group Inc., a Washington, D.C.-based commercial real estate research and analysis information firm. In Stamford alone, projects in the pipeline are expected to bring about 800 units to the downtown. Some newer developments include The Waypointe in Norwalk and Abbey Woods in Danbury, the latter developed by Stamford-based Building and Land Technology, which has dotted Stamford's skyline with new residential towers during the past several years.

Ranging from 580-square-foot studios to three-bedroom units close to 2,000 square feet, these units attract empty-nesters, young couples and families who can afford the high-end construction and amenities many offer.

For these new urban spaces, said Lynn Hoffman, a Stamford-based interior designer, clients want scaled-down pieces with simple lines that are relatively easy to move. There are more options now, since furniture design is becoming more contemporary and modern. "It is still traditional furniture ... but we are not as fuddy-duddy as we used to be," she said.

Oversized, overstuffed pieces that were de rigeur for furnishing the once ubiquitous McMansions only make today's scaled-down homes feel smaller, said interior designer Marcia Harris, who is working on a New York City hotel project where rooms are as little as 80 square feet.



Contributed photos

In this 750-square-foot apartment in New York, Norwalk's Itsy Bitsy Ritzy furniture line includes the kitchen table, above, which proportionately matches the counter height with the tall ceilings. Above that, a bed with drawers below ensures no space is wasted.

"People want furniture that makes their space look bigger. I work to make sure that every piece works visually and with functionality. I want people to love their spaces," Harris said.

After her own frustrating search for smaller-scaled furniture, Harris and her husband Dean launched an online custom-furniture retail company, The Itsy Bitsy Ritzy Shop, in Norwalk in 2012. Their line is made in America at various locations, including the former Singer Sewing Machine Plant in Bridgeport. Each piece is thought out for its style and functionality — a tufted ottoman can be used as a storage bin, coffee table and extra seating, while a sleeper chair takes the place of a bulky sofa bed. All the furniture is made to squeeze through a 36-inch door frame, so there is no need to chop up a couch or scratch a dresser.

At Design Within Reach in Stamford, a modern, midcentury look runs through the store's collections. The Bilsby sofas and chairs have detachable arms and backs to get through narrow hallways and staircases. The Sapien Bookcase, with its 14-inch footprint, can be tucked just about anywhere. A 3-D planner on the DWR website allows users to test out arrangements before committing to a design.

But now the big question — after moving in, does the smaller space feel like home to the Bangsers?

Sure, there are familiar pieces, such as the dining room table, which has survived a fire and a pre-teen girls' painting party, the antique couch and, in the loft, the student desk and a second couch that helps make the space feel like home. "It's cozy, a nice little getaway," Jennifer Bangser said of the loft. But some new pieces may eventually replace the familiar favorites. "As we get more settled, we'll figure out what our real needs are and get a sense of what we need for the space."

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Food & Drink



Christopher Setter / For Hearst Connecticut Media

Bailey's Backyard in Ridgefield offers artisanal bourbons and creative cocktails that bring out the whiskey's best qualities.

Spirit of the moment

Tapping into growing preference for 'local' and 'authentic,' small-batch bourbons proliferate

By Joel Lang

So a guy walks into Bailey's Backyard in Ridgefield looking for the bar because he's there to talk about bourbon, which happens to be one of Bailey's signature libations.

Except the joke's on him because there is no bar, just two cozy dining rooms, and the bourbons are not only kept out of sight, they are not familiar brands like Maker's Mark or Jim Beam.

There isn't a bartender either, but luckily there is a beverage manager, Jessica Schroeder, who brings out an amber array of the corn-based whiskeys being newly discovered at Bailey's and elsewhere.

There's Woodford Reserve and Blanton's, which are predictably from Kentucky, bourbon's traditional birthplace. But there's also Hudson's Baby Bourbon from the Tuthilltown Distillery not too far away in Gardiner, N.Y., and Berkshire bourbon from the Berkshire Mountain Distillery in Sheffield, Mass.

Schroeder pulls the stopper from the Hudson's bottle, which at a squat 375 milliliters has half the volume of the ordinary whiskey bottle. She takes a quick sniff.

"Some people compare it to saddle leather," Schroeder says of the sweet smell, adding that the Hudson's distillery is the first to open in New York State since the repeal of Prohibition. On her iPad, she plays a video that shows how the distillery booms heavy rap music from loud speakers to agitate the bourbon as it ages in oak barrels.

Next up is Blanton's, a personal favorite with what Schroeder discerns as a fruity and oaky taste. The Blanton's bottle is octagonal and is further distinguished by its stopper that bears the figurine of a jockey atop a

racehorse. More significant is the handwritten label bearing the date the bottle was filled, the identity of the warehouse where it was aged and the barrel it was drawn from.

Such particularity is the distilled explanation of why bourbon has become the spirit of the moment, and why it goes down well at a place like Bailey's, where the dining menu focuses on locally grown food.

"It's farm-to-table friendly," Schroeder says, comparing the bourbon burst to that of craft-beers (which Bailey's also features).

"These are niche products that are personally paid attention to. Every barrel has a story behind it."

This is almost literally true. The Hudson's Baby Bourbon distiller says it is made from a strain of locally grown, heritage corn. And part of Blanton's story is that the long-ago eponymous owner decided the best bourbon came from barrels stored in the center of Warehouse H, which happened to have been built in a rush after Prohibition.

Blanton deduced that the warehouse's metal walls allowed greater variations in temperature that in turn promoted blending of the bourbon with the charcoal interior of its host barrel. (Warehouse H thus was an accidental forerunner to the Hudson distillery's "sonic maturation.") Warehouse and barrel, though, do not tell the whole story of bourbon's surge. A 2014 article in Atlantic magazine reported the number of craft distilleries in the U.S. had increased almost ten-fold over the previous decade to more than 600, tapping into Gen-Xers' and Millennials' preference for the "local" and "authentic."

Articles in various trade publications cite complementary factors, like the



Bailey's Backyard's cocktail menu includes the Mark Twain, left, with house-infused vanilla bourbon, cinnamon simple syrup, maple syrup and black walnut bitters; the Black Beauty, with ruby port, Woodford Reserve, orange bitters and black cherry; and the Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, which includes chai tea and vanilla bourbon. Below, on the porch at Bailey's in Ridgefield.



earlier popularity of single-malt scotch, the emergence of the "casual dining" and "craft cocktail cultures." Then there are resonating images from such television series as "Mad Men," where the drinks, if not the drinking, are beautifully filmed. Blanton's website boasts cameo appearances on "House of Cards" and "Gone Girl."

At Bailey's, a drink called the Black Beauty was one of the featured cocktails. Its base was Woodford Reserve bourbon mixed with ruby port, orange bitters and black cherry. Schroeder mixed one and served it in a cylindrical glass with a single extra-large ice cube. The large cube cools the drink without diluting it, she said, adding that cocktails often are the way patrons discover bourbon.

Bailey's stocks only a half dozen craft bourbons (along with other kinds of craft whiskeys), a fraction of the variety to be found at eateries like Walrus + Carpenter in the Bridgeport's Black Rock section that have secondary identities as "bourbon bars."

Its drink menu lists more than two dozen craft bourbons and a slightly smaller number of craft ryes, single malt whiskeys, vodkas and gins. Single-shot bourbon prices range from \$10 for a 10-year-old Bulleit Frontier to \$46 for a 23-year-old, single-barrel Elijah Craig.

Vanessa Young, the bartender on duty one afternoon, pours a shot of one of Walrus + Carpenter's newly added bourbons, Buffalo Trace, into a glass over two large ice cubes. Two quick sips confirms that part of bourbon's appeal is that it is smoother and sweeter than other whiskeys.

Buffalo Trace doesn't come from a single barrel. But its label does boast it comes from the similarly named distillery located at one of Kentucky's oldest active distilling sites, where the combination of limestone-cleansed water and grains grown in rich river soil give the whiskey its special flavor.

Young volunteers to pour a finger of Buffalo Trace, straight, for herself.

"You want to smell it first," she says, lifting the glass to her nose. "I definitely get some caramel right off the bat."

She takes a sip. "It's a little smoky. You get a little bit of vanilla." Then she takes a second sniff, detecting a complex aroma she describes as floral and what else? After a pause, she settles on something like sweet curd and looks as though she surprised herself.

Young seconds Schroeder's analysis: saying that the appetite for craft bourbons springs from the same place as that for micro-brewed beers or even wines and coffees. But among whiskeys, bourbon has an especially strong appeal because of its frontier heritage, she says. It is the whiskey of pioneers.

"It kind of goes hand-in-hand with supporting local, supporting sustainability and supporting America," Young says.

Joel Lang is an award-winning Connecticut journalist.

Arts



XXL ETC.

Emily Larned's lookbook explores the endless possibilities of an oversized T-shirt and some office supplies. What is the artist and graphics instructor trying to tell us?

By Joe Meyers

Hidden away in a studio on the gritty East Side of Bridgeport is an unlikely intersection of art and fashion.

A visit to Emily Larned's industrial workspace involves driving down some mean streets, but after you walk up three flights in the former American Fabrics factory to her studio, you step into a place where everyday objects are seen in a fresh light.

The old factory that has been repurposed into a haven for artists seems like the perfect spot for a woman who believes we should try to find new uses for old things before we toss them away.

"Saving. Economizing. Reusing. Multipurposes for things. I've always been interested in that," Larned said of salvaging the archaic printing presses and antique type fonts with which she creates beautiful handmade, limited-edition books.

The artist likes to think her way out of challenges of all kinds without buying new tools or admitting she might have made a mistake with a too-hasty purchase.

Which brings us to one of Larned's most interesting and most widely displayed projects, a book she made showing herself modeling 54 different uses for one large white T-shirt.

"I've always been interested in clothing and personal style. You'll find me at thrift stores and estate sales," she said.

On one of those thrift shop rambles, Larned grabbed a dress she knew might be the wrong size.

"The dress was too big, but I saw that I could use it," the

artist said of cinching and styling the piece in a way the original wearer never could have imagined.

Larned began thinking about what she might be able to do with a classic piece of clothing that is as American as apple pie — the simple white T-shirt. Affordable and never

out of fashion, the plain cotton garment has always been as chic as any high-fashion creation from Paris or Milan, Italy.

"I wanted to see how many different ways a T-shirt could be used," Larned said of venturing to Jimmy's clothing store in downtown Bridgeport to buy an item she would transform into art.

"When you start thinking

about it, it's amazing what you can do. Wear it very loose and it's hip-hop. Wear it tight, with a pack of cigarettes rolled up in the sleeve, and you've got that classic 1950s look," she said.

As part of the artistic experiment, Larned decided to set strict parameters on what she could do with the T-shirt.

No color. No silk screening. No felt letters. Just whatever changes could be made with basic office supplies (mostly tape).

The artist went into a studio with a photographer friend and she started messing around with various permutations of the tee.

"It's always fun to collaborate and this was like a tongue-in-cheek fashion shoot. I went into the studio with ideas for five (variations), but the energy was there that made me keep on trying new versions."

By the end of the day, Larned had assembled a lookbook of 60 different ways to wear a T-shirt.

The Flashdance.

The Gladiator.

And the artist's personal favorite — The Martini — a zany style that involves wearing the shirt upside down with the sleeves used as pockets.

"We decided to cut it down to 54 pictures for the book. I thought that had a good ring to it, stirring up thoughts of Studio 54," she

said, grinning.

A limited edition of the T-shirt book has sold well in such edgy and sophisticated New York City shops as Printed Matter in Chelsea and at Booklyn in Brooklyn.

Parsons the New School for Design in Lower Manhattan has the T-shirt manifesto in its permanent collection.

When I asked Larned what's next on her agenda, she smiled and said, "Oh, my gosh," before leading me on a tour of an awesome array of works in progress, most of which involve refurbishing old things for new viewers.

The factory studio seems like a slice of Brooklyn circa 2000, which is where Larned and her artist husband lived before studies at Yale and a teaching position at the University of Bridgeport brought them to the Park City's East Side in 2005.

"Obviously, there are things I miss about New York — the hustle and the bustle — but it's less distracting here. You need to devote huge head space to the financial challenges of New York because it is so expensive to live there. It boils down to: Is the most important thing to make money so you can stay there, or do you find another place where you can afford to make art?"

jmeayers@bearstmediact.com; Twitter: @joesview



Contributed photos

Larned's endless variations on the plain, white T-shirt are offbeat and imaginative.

Wellbeing

THROW ME A BONE

Why a simple broth may be the thinking person's answer to Red Bull

By Christina Hennessy

After handing over \$5.95 for a pint, I got ready to enjoy something I have only ever slurped out of the bottom of a bowl. On this morning, I was treating it like a cup of joe.

I can't say there was an immediate experience of well-being, or an intrinsic sense that I was repairing myself from the inside out, but the bone broth from Greenwich's Aux Delices was tasty, a bit salty and soothing in the way a blanket is cozy. The smell of this long-simmered mix of beef, duck and chicken bones, as well as the old standbys of celery, carrots, onions and salt, brought me back to the time when someone else would have made me soup and all I had to do was eat it.

Bone broth, also known as stock or bouillon, has been growing in popularity among commoners to celebrities, most notably the Los Angeles Lakers' Kobe Bryant. Advocates say this long-simmered treat helps skin become more supple, improves joint function and helps with digestion, all because of the minerals, collagen and amino acids that are drawn out of the bones as they steep.

The epicenter for the growing interest on the East Coast, as is often the case, is New York City, where companies such as Bone Deep & Harmony have sold bone broth for years and chef Marco Canora of Hearth restaurant opened the first bone broth bar. Recently, this warm refreshment has made inroads into



Getty Images

Don't call it bouillon. Bone broth is gaining fans.

ALL THE STUFF
TO HELP SKIN
BECOME
MORE SUPPLE

Fairfield County.

"I liked (bone broth) not just for the health benefits, but also from an alternate nutritional beverage point of view," said Debra Ponzek, who, along with her husband Gregory Addonizio, owns Aux Delices. "It's nice if you are hungry and it's just before dinner. It allows you to fill up

without unhealthy snacking.

"Certainly, people who read up on what the new trends are — in terms of health and nutrition — are more familiar with something like bone broth," Ponzek said. "I think we definitely have people looking for something with relatively low calories and filling as an alternative to

that third cup of coffee."

Is this the next magic bullet for better health, following in the fad footsteps of green tea, juicing and coconut milk?

Bone broth has several things going for it. It has tracked the popularity of the Paleo Diet that has us eating like our Stone Age ancestors. It hews to the idea of nose-to-tail eating. It's a known commodity that's been around forever.

Mike Geller, who runs Mike's Organic delivery service, carries Bone Deep & Harmony products. His customers are as choosy about ingredients as they are about taste, he said, so they like knowing how the broth is brewed — bones from locally raised, grass-fed beef, filtered water and organic vegetables and spices.

Geller, who grew up in Greenwich and now lives in Stamford, doesn't know whether this will be an enduring dietary shift or not, but he knows he likes the taste. "It's good, really good. I typically have a warm glass of it in the afternoon or evening."

There is no definitive research or studies that suggest bone broth is a panacea for physical ailments, as Michele Smalldige, a registered dietitian with the Western Connecticut Health Network, said. While bone broth may be tasty, it's not necessarily an elixir.

"It boils down to being a personal preference," Smalldige said. "But it is not a magic cure."

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Above, Nevy Vatachka, of Stamford. Right, from left, Blanca Galindo, of Greenwich, and Kayleen Lugo, of White Plains, N.Y.



TODD TRACY / FOR HEARST CONNECTICUT MEDIA

Far left, Andrea Oltjen, of New York City. Immediate left, Jacob Shotmeyer, of Franklin Lakes, N.J., and his sister Kara Shotmeyer.

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take a break

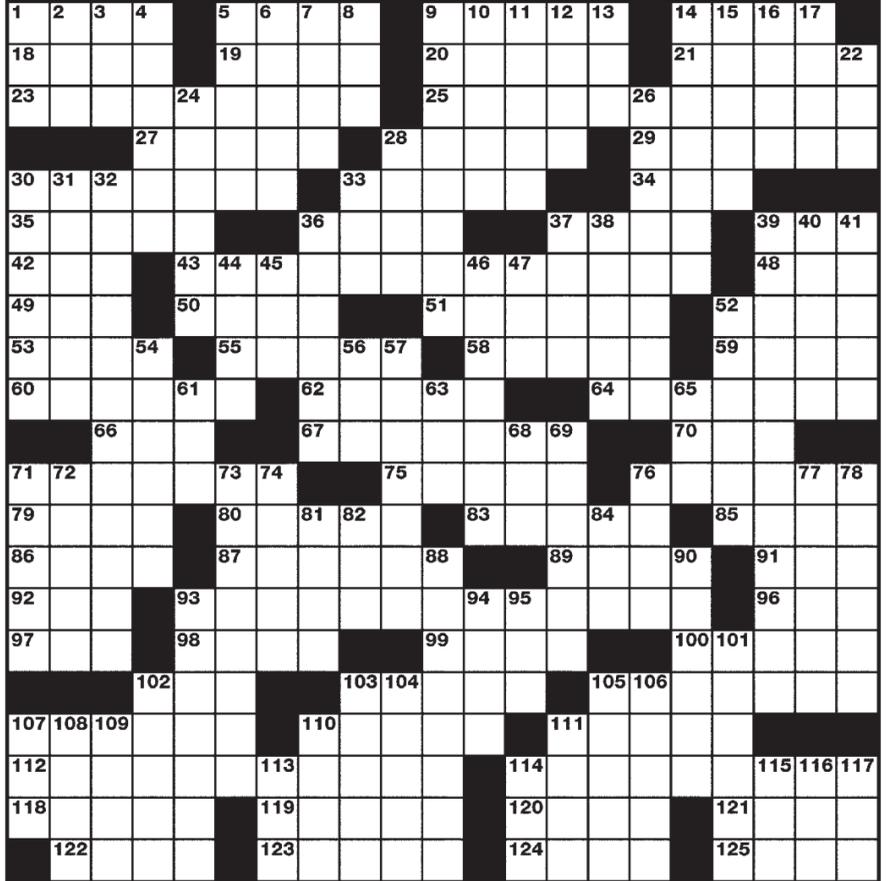
THE NEWSDAY CROSSWORD

Edited by Stanley Newman (www.StanXwords.com)
THIS WON'T HURT: Despite what you may hear
 by Gail Grabowski

- ACROSS**
- 1 Toy with a spool
 - 5 Criticize harshly
 - 9 Thespian's whisper
 - 14 Water-skiing locale
 - 18 "Buzz off!"
 - 19 Angelic instrument
 - 20 Transportation charges
 - 21 Full of energy
 - 23 Indiscreet person
 - 25 Hippie-era slogan
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 - 28 Isn't caught off guard
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 - 30 Withdraws officially
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 - 35 Greeted the day
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 - 50 Small jazz group
 - 51 Comic Judy
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 - 53 Light-tube gas
 - 55 Unhappy spectator
 - 58 Mathematical subgroup
 - 59 USMC truant
 - 60 NASA attire
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 - 64 Loosen up between lines, perhaps
 - 66 Hoop group
 - 67 Two or three
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 - 71 Eternal
 - 75 Chopin piece
 - 76 "See, I was right!"
 - 79 ___ of the above
 - 80 Bat again
 - 83 Tennis contest
 - 85 Some Wall St. recruits
 - 86 Possible race pace
 - 87 More absurd
 - 89 Blood-bank supply
 - 91 Neighbor of Mich.
 - 92 Aussie bird
 - 93 Struggle clumsily along
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 - 97 Campaigned
 - 98 Rank above viscount
 - 99 Innermost part
 - 100 Copier powder
 - 102 Solo of *Star Wars*
 - 103 Swindler
 - 105 Make happy
 - 107 Stop up again, as a wine bottle
 - 110 Courtroom worker
 - 111 Early spring flowers
 - 112 Be silly
 - 114 Glutton
 - 118 Brazilian novelist Jorge
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 - 120 Do roadwork
 - 121 *Exodus* author
 - 122 Keycard receiver
 - 123 Stun gun
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 - 15 In the course of
 - 16 Fuzzy fruit
 - 17 Deadlocked
 - 22 Suffix for ranch
 - 24 Far from boastful
 - 26 Strike a chord (with)
 - 28 It's north of Chile
 - 30 Proverb
 - 31 Wipes clean
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 - 33 Egg ___ yung
 - 36 Bunches of Brownies
 - 37 Promises to pay
 - 38 More adorable
 - 39 Leaving port
 - 40 Part of PGA: Abbr.
 - 41 Tale with a moral
 - 44 Metro regions
 - 45 Ipanema's city
 - 46 Propriety
 - 47 ___Caps (candy brand)
 - 52 Flamethrower compound
 - 54 Corn kernel
 - 56 Poetic preposition
 - 57 Firmly fastened
 - 61 ___ kwon do
 - 63 Was introduced to
 - 65 W. Coast airport
 - 68 City in Oklahoma
 - 69 Leaves alone
 - 5 Reinforce, with "up"
 - 6 Heaps praise on
 - 7 Creative pursuits
 - 8 Dashboard abbr.
 - 9 Prosperous
 - 10 Light lunch, perhaps
 - 11 Fairway clubs
 - 12 Morning moistures
 - 13 Jargon suffix
 - 14 Region of northern Finland

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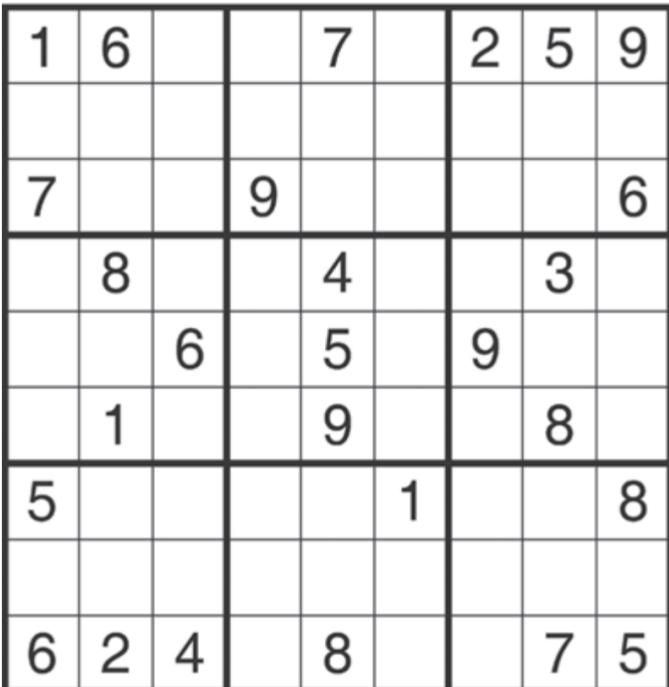
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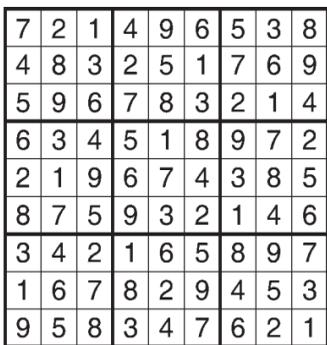
- 71 Walk inside
- 72 Designer Kamali
- 73 Where Sinhalese is spoken
- 74 Tijuana title
- 76 Drive-___ window
- 77 DiMaggio or Jeter
- 78 Nautical direction
- 81 Drag along
- 82 Vacation stop
- 84 Tim Cook's title
- 88 Airplane's black box
- 90 Send with an email
- 93 Biblical words of comfort
- 94 Swindle
- 95 Old Testament sanctuary
- 101 Detestable
- 102 Folksy greeting
- 103 Trumps, at times
- 104 Zellweger of *Chicago*
- 105 Orchard
- 106 Farther down
- 107 HDTV brand
- 108 Shade trees
- 109 Fossil fuel
- 110 Common mixer
- 111 Cartoonist Addams
- 113 Chinese zodiac animal
- 114 PC component
- 115 Sch. with a Providence campus
- 116 Nothing at all
- 117 Summer hrs.

sudoku MICHAEL MEPHAM

Level: 1 2 3 4



Last week's Sudoku



Last week's Crossword



chess

SHELBY LYMAN

For most of his two-year reign as World Chess Champion, Magnus Carlsen has been King Kong — towering above all others, out of reach.

But, almost overnight, he has been brought back to earth. Two months ago, he failed dismally in an elite tournament in his native Norway — losing three games and finishing near the bottom of the field.

More recently, he tied for second with four others in another fiercely competitive tournament in St. Louis. Again, he did not display his customary superiority.

Magnus, it seems, has been brought back down to earth where he is being vigorously pursued by a pack of gifted young players attempting to close the existing but narrowing gap.

The list is extensive: Hikaru Nakamura, Fabiano Caruana, Anish Giri, Liren Ling, Li Chao, Wesley So, Sergei Karjakin and Yi Wei.

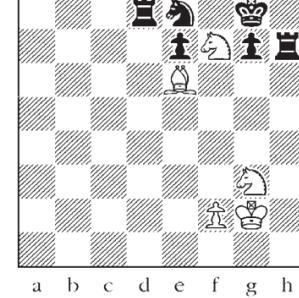
All of them are near him in years, some even younger. The advantage of precocious youth is no longer exclusively his.

The situation is a product of the Computer Age. Chess is inexpensive and easily available. New talent abounds — constantly and even exponentially increasing.

But Carlsen's intuitive grasp of the game and competitive toughness are formidable obstacles for any would-be successor.

Below is a win by Gadir Guseinov against Maxim Matlakov from the FIDE World Cup in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Beginner's Corner



Hint: Better than Nxd8ch
 Solution: 1. Ne5ch! Kf8 (or ... Kh8)
 2. Ng6 mate!

SOLVE-IT

after 23. Rxd7

Matlakov



Guseinov
 BLACK TO PLAY
 Guseinov.....Matlakov

- 1. e4 c5
- 2. Nf3 e6
- 3. Nc3 a6
- 4. d4 cxd4
- 5. Nxd4 b5
- 6. Bd3 Qb6
- 7. Nf3 Nc6
- 8. O-O Qb8
- 9. Re1 Bb7
- 10. Bg5 Bd6
- 11. Qd2 h6
- 12. Bh4 N(g)e7
- 13. Bg3 Ng6
- 14. a4 b4
- 15. Nd5 exd5
- 16. exd5ch N(c)e7
- 17. Bxg6 fxg6
- 18. Qd4 Rg8
- 19. Ne5 Qa7
- 20. Qxa7 Rxa7
- 21. Nc6 Bxg3
- 22. Rxe7ch Kf8
- 23. Rxd7 Black resigns

bridge

FRANK STEWART

Better to delay

My friend the English professor says that if college students had compiled the Bible, God wouldn't have created the world in seven days. He would have waited until right before it was due and pulled an all-nighter.

"Not only that," the prof told me, "they would have the Tower of Babel blamed for the undergraduate language requirement."

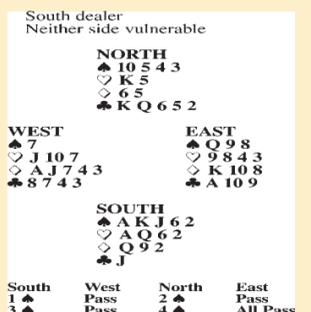
Sometimes it's better to put things off. At today's four spades, South won the first heart with the king and took the A-K of trumps. When West discarded, declarer cashed the A-Q of hearts to discard a diamond from dummy and then led the jack of clubs.

East took his ace, cashed his high queen of trumps and led a diamond. West won, but South ruffed the next diamond in dummy and threw his last diamond and last heart on the K-Q of clubs. Making four.

East misdefended. By taking the ace of clubs, he set up two winners in dummy. If instead he lets the jack of clubs win, the best South can do is lead his last heart, planning to pitch dummy's last diamond if West follows. But as the cards lie, East can get in to cash his queen of trumps and then lead a diamond, forcing out dummy's last trump. South will go down one.

South is always safe if he puts off drawing trumps. He can cash the ace but should next take the A-Q of hearts to pitch a diamond from dummy.

South then leads the jack of clubs. If East ducks, South still can't afford to cash the king of trumps. He leads a red card, setting up a cross-ruff, and is sure of 10 tricks against any defense.



Opening lead — ♠ J
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horoscope HOLIDAY MATHIS

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY

(Sept. 27): The role you play in your immediate circle has provided you with a strong identity, though it's not the entirety of YOU. Your lucky numbers are: 4, 30, 22, 24 and 15.

ARIES (March 21-April 19):

You'll set a firm intention. What you intend may not always be the way it turns out, but things will always turn out differently because of your intention.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20):

The technology that's supposed to be helping you might actually be causing you anxiety. The best connections will be the ones you make in person. There is no substitute for supportive human contact.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21):

Because it comes so easily to you to be warm with others, you may underestimate the value of your smile. It is a value that will tip the scales in today's situation.

CANCER (June 22-July 22):

It won't serve you to count on popular support. Anyway, you're more likely to get the support just as soon as they sense you don't need it.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):

There are many opportunities in danger of being lost to the mind's clever rumination trap. There's a time for all that, and this isn't it.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):

While looking for signs of an indifferent universe, you'll find plenty of evidence. While

dreaming that the fates favor you, you'll get evidence of that, too.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23):

Wherever you go, you want to be there fully. Of course, this is harder when you get roped into going places you had no intention or desire to see in the first place.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21):

For some, anger is an addiction. This type tends to either actively seek or unwittingly attract the circumstances that will facilitate the angry rush and the release that comes with it.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):

Most crimes are mistakes. Most mistakes are not crimes. The tendency today is to make too big of a

deal over the small infractions. Be the exception.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):

Today you're wondering how far you should pursue justice. Confucius suggested that before you embark on a journey of revenge, you dig two graves.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):

Some people have trouble matching their tone to the level of seriousness of what's being discussed or executed. You'll help the ones struggling to get it right.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):

Just because you don't know the answer to the question doesn't mean you don't know the answer to the question behind the question.

What Took Me So Long?

Answering the train whistle's call

By Christina Hennessy

The blast of a horn from a faraway train as it rumbles across the tracks never fails to intrigue me. It speaks to a wanderlust I rarely indulge.

But that is exactly what I did on a recent late-summer afternoon, since a three-day holiday weekend gave me permission to put off laundry and household chores for another day. I had a whole railway yard of train cars I had been meaning to see in Danbury and it was the perfect time to put my trip into motion.

A scenic and soothing (yes, soothing) ride up Route 7 was the bonus before arriving at the Danbury Railway Museum, and the subsequent three-hour stop at one of the city's top attractions was the reward.

I began with a quick trip by train around the yard on the weekend-only "Rail Yard Local" train tour. I sat in a caboose, way up in the cupola — a perch from which conductors once peered out to check for problems. I found myself in several cabooses that day, ranging in age from 1940 to 1977. I had only seen them in Western movies or cartoons. It turned out that in real life, they were not just the setting for fights between virtuous and villainous cowboys, but, actually, were rolling apartments, with a place for the conductor and rear-end brakemen to eat, do paperwork and sleep.

Technological advancements have made them an anachronism. Instead,



A 1960 locomotive sits next to a caboose from the early 1900s. The romance of the old cars is palpable during a walk around the rail yard at the Danbury Railway Museum.

workers ride in a Flashing Rear End Device, simply referred to as FRED. According to a handout, it "monitors brake line pressure and accidental train separation by sending telemetry to the locomotive cab." Don't get me wrong, any kind of telemetry or what-have-you that makes sure a train stays together while traveling 100 miles an hour is a good thing; it just seems some of the romance is gone.

Those kinds of tidbits are sprinkled about by volunteers strolling the yard, sitting aboard train cars or working on tracks. The people who run the place are like automobile

enthusiasts who keep those mid-century muscle cars revving into the 21st century.

That requires volunteers and visitors, and while families with young children, photography enthusiasts looking for some old-timey subjects, history buffs, travel nuts and the occasional solo visitor such as myself keep the place going, there appeared to be concern that volunteers were becoming scarce and teen train buffs preferred to explore railway history digitally, rather than on actual tracks.

As one longtime engineer and volunteer told me: "The computer is our com-

petition today. Let's say you are a 14- or 15-year-old and you love trains, and someone says let's go to the museum. They just say, 'I'll just look it up on the computer.' They are losing the physical touch."

And there is plenty of that to find. Although I didn't reach out and touch the weathered slats on the 1924 Rutland wooden boxcar — my favorite car in the yard — I got a sense of its age and history that was far richer than the picture on the museum's website. To sit in some of the cars, on seats that still held their shape and provided comfort, was distinctly different than a video tour. Al-



though there weren't any "Shining"-esque moments of passengers from yesteryear shimmering into existence, the experience brought to mind the many travelers who hopped aboard for industry or pleasure over the decades, from the early 1900s to the 1970s. Another on-site-only thrill is a slow spin on the 90-foot-long operating turntable, one of the stops on the "local," which costs \$3 (in addition to general admission).

This is a small museum and it's easy for little ones to race through the exhibits, rides, open rail cars and equipment like a speeding locomotive. It might be best

to team it with other area attractions, or come on the days of popular events, such as the "Pumpkin Patch" (Oct. 10-25), or Santa's Special Train Rides, beginning weekends Dec. 6.

By the way, there were plenty of horn blasts that day and clangs of antique bells to soothe my restless spirit.

Danbury Railway Museum, 120 White St., Danbury. September through May: Wednesday-Saturday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday: noon-4p.m. 203-778-8337, www.danburyrail.org

chennessy@bearstmediact.com; Twitter: @xtinabhennessy

Fiction

Summer Secrets

AN EXCERPT FROM THE NEW NOVEL
BY WESTPORT WRITER JANE GREEN

London, 1998

For as long as I can remember, I have always had the feeling of not quite fitting in, not being the same as everyone else.

I'm certain that is why I became a writer. Even as a toddler, at nursery school, junior school, I was friendly with everyone, without ever being part of the group. Standing on the outside, watching. Always watching. I noticed everything: how a sideways glance with narrowed eyes could say so much more than words ever could; how a whisper behind a delicate hand had the ability to destroy you for the week; how an outstretched hand from the right girl, at the right time, would see your heart soar for hours, sometimes days.

I knew I was different. The older I grew, the more that difference felt like inadequacy; I wasn't pretty enough, or thin enough, or simply *enough*. I couldn't have put words to it, certainly not when I was very young, other than looking at those tiny, perfect, popular girls and wanting, so desperately, to be on the inside, to be the girl that was always picked first for sports teams, rather than the one left until last.

When adolescence hit, I became the friend the boys all wanted to talk to, to confide in, to find out how they could possibly make my best friend, Olivia, interested in them.

I was such a good friend, even though I fell head over heels for every last one of them. Adam Barrett afforded me two months' worth of daydreams about how he would realize, as we were sitting on the floor in my bedroom, the Police playing on my record player in the background, that Olivia was not the answer to his dreams after all; he would suddenly notice the silkiness of my hair (always far silkier in my daydreams), the green of my eyes, the fullness of my mouth, as he woke up to the fact that I was so spectacularly beautiful (which I wasn't), how had he not noticed that before?

After Adam Barrett it was Danny Curran, then Rob Palliser, and of course, Ian Owens. None of my daydreams came true, and at fourteen I finally discovered a great way of

easing the pain of all those unfulfilled dreams, those unfulfilled longings, those misplaced hopes.

Gary Scott was having a party at his house. It was a sleepover, the boys sleeping on one side of the giant loft, the girls on the other. Everyone was ridiculously excited, this being the first mixed sleepover. Looking back, I can't quite believe the parents allowed it, given the raging hormones of fourteen- and fifteen-year-old teenagers, but I suppose they thought we were good kids, or that they had it under control.

The parents were there, of course. They were having a small gathering of their own; the laughter of the grown-ups and the clinking of their glasses made its way over to us, at the back of the garden with a record player and a trestle table stocked with popcorn, plastic cups, and lemonade.

Ian Owens was my crush at the time. He had become my very good friend, naturally, in a bid to get close to Olivia, who was, on that night, standing under the tree with Paul Johnson, her head cocked to one side, her sheaf of newly highlighted blond hair hanging like a curtain of gold over her right shoulder, looking up at Paul with those spectacular blue eyes. Everyone in that garden knew it was only a matter of time before he kissed her.

Ian was devastated. I was sitting on the grass talking to him quietly, reassuring him, praying that I might be second choice, praying that he might lean his head toward mine, might brush my lips gently with his, spend the rest of the night holding me tightly in his arms.

"I took this," he said, gesturing to his side, where a bottle of vodka was nestling under his thigh.

"What? What do you mean, you took it? From where?"

"I found it in the garage. Don't worry, there's tons more. No one will notice. Want to?" He nodded his head in the shade of the



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trees, to a private corner where we wouldn't be seen.

Of course I wanted to. I would have done anything to keep Ian Owens by my side a little longer, to give him more time to change his mind about Olivia and fall in love with me.

I got up, brushing the pine needles from my jeans, aware that there was a damp patch from the grass. I was in my new 501s. Olivia and I bought them together and went back to her house to shrink them in the bath. Hers were tiny, and looked amazing when we were done, drainpiping down her legs. Mine flapped around my ankles like sails in the wind. I had a small waist but great big thighs, so I had to get a big size to fit, which meant they had to be cinched in at the waist with a tight belt and were huge all the way down.

I never looked the way I wanted to look in clothes. I had a new plaid shirt from Camden Market that I really liked, and had smudged black kohl underneath my eyes. Peering from beneath my new fringe — I had cut it two days ago — my eyes looked smoky and sultry, the green sparkling through the kohl. I liked the way I looked, which wasn't something that happened often.

Maybe tonight was going to be a first for me. Maybe Ian would like the way I looked too.

I followed him into the small copse of trees at the end of the garden, as he gripped the bottle out and took the first swig, grimacing as he sputtered, then spat it all out. "Christ, that's disgusting." He passed the

bottle to me.

Of course I didn't want to do it. Watching the look on his face, how could I ever have wanted to taste something so vile, but how could I back down? I gingerly took the bottle, swigged it back, felt the burning going down my throat, then swigged it back twice more.

"Wow!" Impressed, he took the bottle back, this time managing to swallow.

Within minutes, I felt like a different person. Gone was the shy, awkward, ungainly adolescent, and in her place a sexy siren. Suddenly the curves I had always hated so much became sexiness personified, my new fringe a sultry curtain from behind which I could peer with bedroom eyes.

The warmth in my body spread out to my fingers and toes, a delicious tingling as I lost my inhibitions and flirted with Ian, stunned that he responded, that we moved from awkwardly standing next to each other to lying on the ground, heads resting on our elbows, my hair dropped over one shoulder in what I hoped was a pretty good imitation of Olivia, both of us giggling as we passed the bottle back and forth.

"You're really pretty," he said suddenly, the smile sliding off his face, the bottle sliding to the ground as he leaned his head forward, his lips inching closer to mine, his eyes starting to close, my own eyes closing in tandem. And there we were, kissing, as my heart threatened to explode.

It was everything I had dreamed of, his hands snaking through my hair, my own wrapped around his back, unable to believe I had been given license to touch this boy I had loved for so long, license to hold him, to slip my tongue in his mouth, listen to him sigh with pleasure. He pushed me onto my back, lay on top of me, kissing my neck as I looked at the stars, knowing that if I were to die tonight, I would finally die happy. I would have done anything in my power to make that moment last all night.

We heard a noise, someone coming, and he jumped off me as if stung by an electric shock, refusing to even look at me, pretending we had just been out there drinking, nothing more. The disappointment was like a dagger, which twisted and turned as the evening progressed and he didn't come near me again.

What could I do other than pretend I was having a great time, and how could I not have a great time with my new best friend, vodka, when vodka had made me feel so good? Maybe vodka would take away this searing pain, make me feel beautiful again.

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