

BEDFORD

OCTOBER
2020

Living

A MAGAZINE WRITTEN BY AND FOR
THE HOMEOWNERS OF BEDFORD.



**Meet The Bedford Foodies As They
Unveil Their Favorite Dishes- Page 26.**

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BEDFORD LIVING MAGAZINE

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publisher's note



Food, Glorious Food!

If there's one thing that is getting me through COVID, it's food. For better or worse, I think most of us have relied on this as a crutch to help us get through this 2020 Lemon Fest.

So, this month, we'd love to introduce you to the talented foodies that live in town. We are very fortunate to have so many neighbors that have turned their passion into some great restaurants. Needless to say, with COVID here, it has been a tough year for them. Let's give them a boost, Bedford. We decided the best way to do this was to discover what their favorite cuisine was at their restaurants. What better way to encourage you to go out and try something new from these great local places.

Not all of your neighborhood restaurateurs were able to join in our cover shoot, but we tried to include them in the article. If

you own a restaurant and didn't know about this article, please email us. We will be happy to feature you in a future issue. We try to collect suggestions through our *Bedford Living* magazine Facebook page, so please feel free to join us.

Please note that our cover photographer's main objective was to get everyone on the cover while social distancing. She did a masterful job by superimposing two photos and spray painting each person's spot 6 feet away from one another. Thank you, Joanne Smith, for your professionalism and for following the CDC guidelines, so everyone stays safe.

Since we are talking about food, we want to remind everyone that if you have extra food in your pantry, it can be shared at the Bedford Community Food Pantry, which seeks to provide access to healthy food for families and individuals.

Food insecurity is a growing concern across the nation, including here in our own backyard. In Bedford, nearly 500 of our neighbors are living below the poverty line. In addition, nearly 300 adults and children qualify for food stamps, and more than 160 families meet the income standards for the government's free school lunch program. The Bedford Community Food Pantry is a program of the Bedford Lions Club. Their charitable foundation is recognized as a nonprofit organization by the IRS. If you can help them, please visit their website at www.bedfordnhfoodpantry.org to see how to donate, start a food drive, or how to volunteer.

A **huge shout out** to all of the businesses that sponsor *Bedford Living*. They are the reason we can share all of this information. Please be sure to use their products or services should you need help. They love the Bedford community and want to help share to bring the community together.

Enjoy,

Lynn

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welcome to bedford

By Resident **Stacy Norris**

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Jess Glenn and AnnMarie Reebenacker



Madonna Lovett Repeta

our town

By resident **Madonna Lovett Repeta**

Sue Marden

BEDFORD FIRE DEPARTMENT

I am married. My husband's name is Mike. We have two children, Sammi and Bryan. I am a firefighter/advanced EMT with the Bedford Fire Department. I have been with the Bedford Fire Department for 10 years. I wanted to do this job since I was around 3 years old. My uncle Dick was a firefighter in Lynn, Mass. He used to take my cousin Tammy and me to watch structure fires when we were little. I knew I was hooked the first time I saw the action and teamwork of a fire department. I also grew up watching *Emergency* on TV, which just fed my desire. It was all I ever wanted to do. Though I was intensely passionate about this career from an early age, it took me a while to achieve this goal because I just did not know how to go about doing it. I was a kindergarten (and college) teacher after college, but I never lost the thirst to be a firefighter. When my mom passed away at the age of 55, she reminded me that life is short and I should try to approach life so I won't look back with regrets. I stayed home for a few years to raise my kids, and when I was ready to return to the full-time workforce, I decided that I was not going to let anything stop me from becoming a career firefighter.

There are so many highlights from this job. I hate that bad things happen to people, but it is an awesome feeling to be able to help. Some of my greatest memories from this job are the conversations I have been able to have with people in the back of an ambulance. I enjoy meeting people and learning about their life journeys. I really love doing calls and training that offer an adrenaline rush. This job is also filled with tragedy, but I am very fortunate to have a great group of guys on my shift, and my friends and family offer me a wonderful balance and perspective.

I think the most obvious thing that makes me unique in my profession is that I am a female. There are so few females in this line of work around the world. I think there are still places that do not really provide a good culture for women, but that is changing. The industry used to be sort of a "frat house" mentality, but the changes in workplace behavioral expectations and the challenges that all of the first females have overcome have created a much more professional industry. See below for the latest statistics.

- National Fire Protection Association estimates there were an estimated 1,115,000 career and volunteer firefighters in the United States in 2018. Of the total number of firefighters, 370,000 (33%) were career firefighters and 745,000 (67%) were volunteer firefighters.
- In 2018, 93,700 (8%) of the firefighters were female. Of the career firefighters, 15,200 (4%) were female firefighters. There were 78,500 volunteer firefighters who were female, which was 11% of the total number of volunteer firefighters.

I love to travel. My husband and I just went to Iceland with a group of friends. Our son just started college in Australia, so we hope to get there soon. I also like to do home projects (build a deck, etc.). I always have to have some projects in the works. I am not good at just sitting and relaxing. I also love to read and work out. My husband and I do yoga together and enjoy getting together with our friends.

I feel that I am fortunate to have accomplished the entire bucket list I created when I graduated from high school. I still set goals for myself, but I have completed the top things I wanted to accomplish in my lifetime. I have gone skydiving, ran a marathon, played softball at a nationally ranked college, earned a master's degree, bought a home and had a family, traveled to every place in the U.S. that I wanted, and obviously, have become a firefighter.

My mom is most definitely the person I admire the most. She taught me so much about life before she passed away from cancer. She was a manager in an aerospace company throughout the '70s, '80s, and '90s. She was a woman in a predominately male industry and her challenges were enormous. She developed strength from her obstacles and was a tremendous role model for me. I carry a picture of her in my gear to remind me about perseverance and the value of being kind to people. She was able to change the culture in a Fortune 500 company because of her ability to value the building custodian just as much as the company CEO. Her ability to work with people helped the company rewrite policies and redefine the expectations of their leaders. She raised 4 kids on her own and really just modeled a healthy balance of life. I miss her every minute.

This is the greatest job in the world. I am so blessed to be a part of it. The people who are happiest in this job are those who do it because they like to help people. When I go to work, I feel like a kid who has really cool toys. I love driving the fire truck and every other aspect of this job. If anyone thinks they might have the slightest interest, I would encourage her/him to call or stop into BFD and ask questions. We are very welcoming towards the community and enjoying sharing the joy we get from our jobs.



Firefighter Sue Marden
Photo Credit: Madonna Lovett Repeta

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Bedford real estate expert
Darlene Wills

ask the expert

By Resident **Darlene Wills**

IS THIS A GOOD TIME to sell my house in Bedford?

Question: Is this a good time to sell my house in Bedford?

Absolutely! I don't believe there has ever been a better time to sell than right now. Though residents have all been dealing with a strange summer due to the continued threat of the coronavirus and even the uncertainty it brings to our fall market, the data on home sales tells a different and upbeat story about why the market is moving strongly in favor of home-selling for the rest of the year.

In the spring, when Covid-19 had spurred our governor to enforce a quarantine and ban open houses, home selling went dormant, but only for a short time. Once lockdown restrictions loosened up here in New Hampshire, home buyers were out with a renewed zeal and many of them are eager to make up for lost time and to take advantage of historically low interest rates, the lowest we have seen in 50 years. In September, typically the real estate market slows with schools reopening and the end of summer. Right now, we are going at about 100 miles an hour. We can't bring homes to market as fast as people are coming in and buying them.

With fewer homes for sale and demand going up, I would encourage any household that is on the fence about whether to sell this year or next, to seriously consider utilizing this market to their financial advantage. I want my friends and neighbors to know that the average median sale price is up 13.8% over last year and sales prices are running at a 2.2% average over list price. This is exciting real estate news for any family in Bedford who has spent time over the last few months rethinking their living space. After

navigating virtual education for our children, adapting to working remotely from a home office, or having contemplated generation-al living to care for returning college students or the needs of our elderly parents, I hear from many families that their *home* is even more important than ever before.

With our town's total inventory of properties down from 77 homes to 41 homes from last year at this time, residents wanting to relocate within the town are having a harder time finding an available property. Yet, encouraged by the Federal Reserve's intention to keep rates at these historic lows for the remainder of the year, buyers are ready to *move*. And, if over the last few months, you have been one of the many homeowners remodeling your indoor and outdoor spaces to ride out this health crisis more comfortably, then you are already better prepared and ready for putting your house on the market. This fall is a great time for me to help you get you the maximum price for your home. Please feel free to reach out to me if you are interested in knowing what the value is of your home in today's market. I'm happy to help you.

Darlene Wills at Coldwell Banker Bedford

Email Darlene.Wills@NEMoves.com

Phone (603) 321-5237 mobile

• (603) 471-0777 office

• (603) 310-9473 direct

Office 166 Route 101, Bedford, NH 03110



Are you an expert in your field? Learn more about this column at bedfordlivingnh@gmail.com.

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“We were so impressed with Darlene's willingness to go the extra mile to ensure we had a fighting chance to get the house we fell in love with. She paid close attention to every detail to ensure total success for us. We couldn't have asked for a more smooth and positive buying and selling experience and would highly recommend Darlene. She goes above and beyond!”



bedford's etsy artist extraordinaire

By Resident **Shana Chauvin**

Meet Shana Chauvin

WILD CRAFTS, CREATIVITY, AND YOGA ARE HER SPECIALTIES

Hi neighbors, I'm Shana. New Hampshire born and raised, my husband, Justin, and I have lived in Bedford with our Boston terrier, Mia, for more than five years now. I'm the owner of Wild-Craft Co. and a registered yoga teacher and group fitness instructor, although I like to consider myself a modern womanpreneur! I divide my time between teaching yoga, meditation, and mindfulness classes, all while running my newest endeavor, WildCraft Co. NH, which was established in 2019.

WildCraft Co. is sustainable, handmade modern macrame decor and creations. I create wall decor, plant hangers, jewelry, all-natural baby products, and other fun accessories and gifts such as macrame car essential oil diffusers and yoga mat straps. Some decor pieces are boho-inspired, while some are more modern and chic with a nautical feel. My goal is to create aesthetically pleasing products that simply bring happiness and high vibes into your heart and your home. I sell my work on Etsy and in local boutiques and take commissions for customers with special requests to bring their ideas to life. I am vested in lessening my footprint on Mama Earth; therefore, all the rope/cord/fibers I use are researched and chosen with sustainability and supporting other small businesses in mind. You will see this in everything from the packaging to the shipping materials.

Health and wellness are a passion of mine. In 2016, I left the medical field after more than a decade of surgical assisting to pursue a future as a yoga, fitness, meditation, and mindfulness teacher. I wanted to share with the community the gifts and benefits of self-care with a holistic approach. Several years later, while on my own wellness journey, I felt a constant pull to be creating. Creating yoga sequences and workshops is awesome; however, my creative side needed something more. So, I turned my attention inward. For me, meditation brings clarity at times I need it most.

After meditating, my mind would flow with all sorts of creative ideas and I'd immediately write them down in my journal. Wild-Craft Co. was born. The process has freed my mind and cracked my heart wide open, spilling out more creativity than I could have ever imagined. As soon as I get my hands on the rope and begin knotting away, my breath becomes smooth, my body relaxes and while my hands go to work, my mind goes on "chill mode." Creating is a meditative process for me. My work has come full circle.

Not only is this a gift in itself, but I am endlessly grateful to connect with the community in these ways. Many of my yoga clients have become my customers and vice versa. I've had the pleasure of meeting and working with many other local small business owners. I hope to help others find their spark or simply soothe their soul. Whether that's by way of guiding you on your yoga mat or designing a wall hanging for that family gallery wall you're working on.

When I'm not creating macrame or teaching yoga, I enjoy all things summer -- staying active, hiking, gardening, reading, a good glass of wine, time well spent with family and friends. I credit my love for the ocean at pointing me in the direction of using rope as my creative medium. I also dabble in writing and keep a blog on my website, which is a collection of authentic thoughts and heartfelt stories, healthy recipes, wellness, fitness, and soul seeking tips and advice. I look forward to connecting!

www.shanachauvin.com



If you have a unique story to tell, share it with us at kim.houghton@n2pub.com.

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sponsor of the month

The Alapage team of stylists

Alapage

AN UPGRADE WOMEN'S
CLOTHING, ACCESSORIES,
AND GIFT BOUTIQUE

By Bedford Living and Alapage Owner and Founder Lisa Gavin



Left to right: Alapage managers Kim Bantham and Jen Chiesa



Alapage owner and founder Lisa Gavin

Alapage is a trendy women's clothing, jewelry, accessories, and gift boutique in Bedford. Celebrating 31 years in business, Alapage is heading into the second half of 2020 with an upbeat optimism and a stronger following than ever before. Lisa Gavin is the owner of Alapage and talks about her store's history and the new landscape of retailing in 2020.

What inspired you to open a women's clothing boutique?

I have wanted to be in the fashion world since I was a little girl. My mom worked for a fashion magazine in New York City in the 1950s, and her love of fashion surrounded me in my childhood. After a brief stint in the health field after college, I decided to follow in my mother's footsteps and create what I had dreamed about for years...owning my own boutique. I opened my first boutique in Brentwood, NH in 1989. Two years later, I moved the store to the Bedford Mall, and in 2005, I tripled the size of my store and moved to our current location at Bedford Square. We also created our first website for the store about 10 years ago and now have a very active shopping site.

What do you like most about the work you do?

After 31 years in retail, I am still very passionate about Alapage. I love the excitement of the ever-changing fashion world and that each season is a new beginning. My employees and I usually make numerous trips to New York, Atlanta, and Los Angeles to visit showrooms and scour trade shows for the latest trends. It's a wonderful feeling to find things that you love and then be able to offer them to other people who love them.

How has 2020 affected your business?

2020 has definitely thrown us some curves, but we have been able to quickly pivot and keep our business going throughout these past months. With an amazing staff and our many loyal customers, we have found new ways to sell to and service our customers...Zoom, Facetime, Instagram, Facebook, curbside pick-up...we've done it all. And our website is busier than ever with orders coming in from around the country and across the globe. The unexpected silver lining is that through our own hard work and innovation, we will likely come out of this stronger than ever.

What do you sell at Alapage?

Alapage began as an accessories boutique but quickly grew into so much more. Women's clothing, denim, jewelry, and accessories are a large part of the store now, but we also carry cards, gifts, baby gifts, and shoes. We really are a one-stop shopping boutique.

What sets Alapage apart from other boutiques?

The merchandise at Alapage is always truly special. We receive so many compliments about our unique mix of wearable fashion and trends which usually can't be found anywhere else in the area. We also have a wonderful team of fashion stylists who love to assist and wardrobe our customers, many of whom have shopped at my store for decades and have become a special part of our Alapage family.

We also have a very active website where customers can shop from the safety of their home 24/7. We offer free shipping over \$25 or free curbside pick-up at the store. Need help finding a gift or something amazing for yourself? Our Stylists are magical at putting together items for you whether it's shopping in our store or through a phone call or a Facetime shopping appointment.

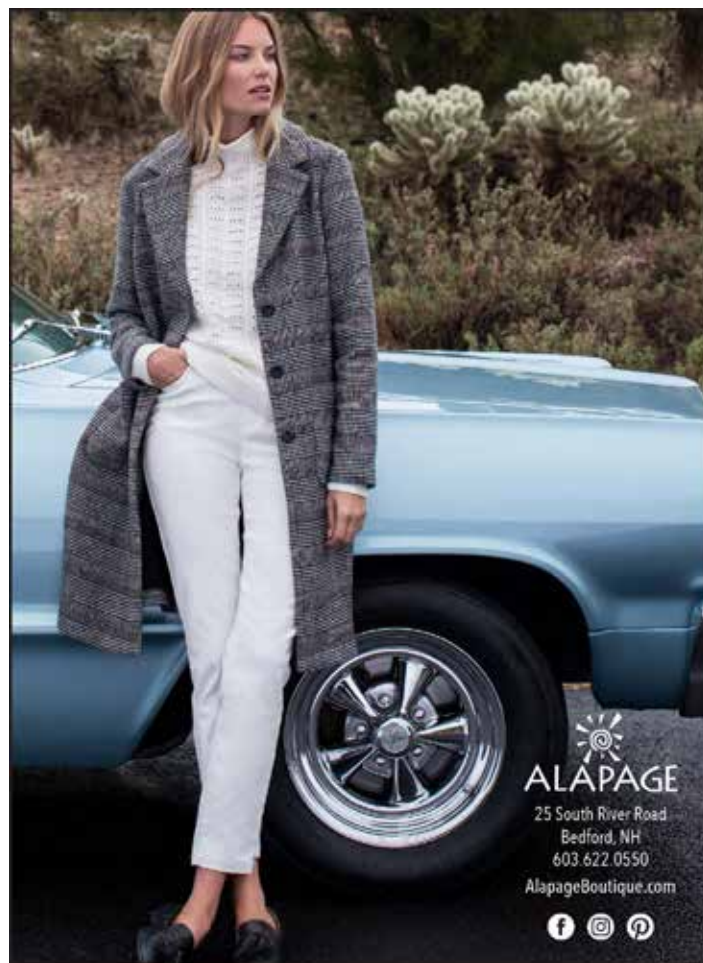
Visit our website at www.alapageboutique.com to see our latest arrivals, updated store hours, and our in-store safe shopping protocols.

A very special thank you to the Bedford community for not only being wonderful customers all these years but for showing us love and support these past few months. We are so thankful and forever grateful for each and every one of you.

Alapage Boutique
Bedford Square
25 S River Rd. #301, Bedford
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Are you interested in learning more about this column? Reach out at bedfordlivingnh@gmail.com.



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precious pets By resident Susan Zawodniak

Lucy is the top dog!

A THERAPY POOCH UNLIKE ALL OTHERS



Lucy with her mom, Susan Zawodniak, and brother, Krys.

Hi, I'm Lucy, and I'm honored to have been elected Bedford's *Top Dog for 2020* by the town employees. I live in Bedford, of course, with my human mom, Susan. I am a 4-year-old Cockapoo, born in Rochester, NH, at Dutch Haven Dogs. Susan has

raised me since I was 8 weeks old. (She has always worked from home, so I am happy to have her around most of the time.)

After we went through a bunch of dog behavior classes at American K9 Country in Amherst, my mom and I trained for Pet Partners®, and we became a registered therapy team in 2018. I love our therapy gigs! We have been regulars at the Bedford Public Library to support the Read with Me program, and the children read books to me, and then I do tricks for them! I'm really a ham at heart, and they especially like when I walk on my hind legs and then do a pirouette. My mom shows them the commands, and I will perform for anyone that offers me a treat! We have also visited St. Anselm's, Manchester Community College, and Rivier University to help those students relax a little during their exam weeks. And a couple of times, Bedford High School and Nashua South High School for their special pet therapy events. Oh yes, and even Fidelity Investments in Merrimack (we got *really* good treats there...). And we have a couple of special people that we visit as part of the VNA Hospice volunteer program at Hillsborough County Nursing Home.

Other than my therapy gigs, I really am a tomboy that loves to be active! There is, of course, the everyday walk in the woods and fetching (balls, sticks, Frisbees, whatever), but I really get excited whenever we go kayaking because I also love to dive into the water and show off my retrieving and swimming skills. And I love to travel – anywhere, anytime – especially the beach or a pool!

Oh yes, I must mention the rest of my pack: my brother Krys, who lives now in Boston, and my mom's friend Paul who loves to play, hike and kayak with me. I also want to thank Dr. Komma at Bedford Veterinary Medical Center, Kristina at D'Tails Dog Grooming, Lindy at Oliver's Twist Doggy Daycare, and all of the restaurants who permit me to sit with my family outdoors; I love meeting new people and hope to meet you around town soon!


Hope you enjoyed my story, Lucy!





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CARRIE CARIELLO, HELPING TO EDUCATE OTHERS ABOUT AUTISM

Jack. Maybe you’ve seen him!

Hi. My name is Carrie. I am married to a man named Joe, and we have five kids.

Our second son has autism. His name is Jack. Our family moved to Bedford in 2007. Jack was three. At the time, he was unable to string a sentence together. He ran away from me in stores, and he never slept longer than two hours at a time. If you asked him what the word *town* meant, he would have stared at you blankly.

Perhaps you’ve seen him, this boy of mine? He has blue eyes. He wears glasses. He jumps a lot and rubs his hands together like he is standing in front of a campfire. He is usually wearing something blue because blue is his favorite color.

In third grade, he had Mrs. Brennan for a teacher. If you asked him then what the word *town* meant, he might have outlined the basics—the roads and the shops and the pizza place in the plaza on Route 101.

Maybe you’ve seen him once or twice, in the library, or ordering a waffle cone at The Inside Scoop. Maybe you were in Target the day he filled the entire cart with tubes of anti-fungal cream while I chatted with a neighbor.



Author Carrie Cariello



The Cariello children: Joseph, 17, Jack, 16, Charlie, 14, Rose, 13, and Henry, 11. (Vanessa Lyn Photography)

You may have watched my husband chase him through the parking lot at the Little League Complex, or maybe you were sitting in the McKelvie cafeteria during the 2016 talent show when Jack stood up and yelled *F&^%* at the top of his lungs, and I knocked over a chair trying to steer him out the door.

We have not always been our best selves. In fact, it is possible you’ve witnessed a few of our worst moments—a family on the brink of the panic, and frustration, and sleeplessness that often accompanies a complicated child. The truth is, we are an ordinary family. We play games, we argue, we make jokes, we eat dinner. We advocate for a boy whose voice is quiet, and often unheard. We hope lightly and love fiercely.

Maybe you’ve seen us, as we chase and steer and wish and listen. And if you have, maybe—just maybe—you see a piece of your own story written somewhere upon our faces.

Jack is 16 now. He is six-feet, three inches tall. He works as a dishwasher at Table 8 Pasta and sets up chairs for banquets and weddings at LaBelle Winery. He loves s’mores. He has come a very long way, this boy of mine. And you, the people of Bedford, have been by our side every step of the way.

Thank you for the small smiles across the baseball field and for the waffle cones piled high with chocolate ice cream. Thank you for the space to grow and breathe and learn as a family. Mostly, thank you for giving my son a chance.

Hey, Jack-a-boo? What does a town mean to you?

For me. A town is smaller than a city. It is bigger than a village. It is a place where we get to know each other. We say hello in the store.

We are friends.



If you know a resident who deserves a little spotlight, please nominate them at kim.houghton@n2pub.com.



Jack Cariello (Vanessa Lyn Photography)

the cover
shoot
process

By resident **Joanne
Smith of Headshots
Photography**



Group one standing 6 feet apart



Group two

GROUP PHOTOS

with **social
distancing**

Covid-19 has changed many aspects of our everyday life, and photography is no exception. The need for masks, social distancing, and the use of outdoor locations has made portraits more of a challenge but still very doable. When it comes to a large group portrait, featuring a large business group, it gets really challenging. How do you make a good group shot, with safe social distancing?

With this cover shot of Bedford resident restaurant owners, I needed to have them appear to be close together and not wearing a mask but also safe. By shooting outside at Benedictine Park, I was able to use lots of space to set up the shot. We divided the group of 22 into two separate groups, and using marks on the grass, we set up the shot in two parts in order for people to remain six feet apart.

Once the first group was photographed, we switched around and the second group stood on the alternate marks for their photo.

The rest was achieved with Photoshop, where the two groups were composited together to make it appear as if it were one big group. Not perfect (as the light changed slightly between the two shots) but close enough and done safely. The result was the October cover. Let me know if you have a group you need to be photographed in a safe way!

www.headshotsphoto.com



Joanne setting up the cover shoot at Benedictine Park in Bedford.



YOUR WINE CONNOISSEUR AND FOODIE NEIGHBORS

Eat and drink your hearts out

By Bedford Resident Restaurant Owners and Wine Distributor

Let's dig in and see what's cooking in NH! Our neighbors' restaurants need our support, and we need to eat. It's a win-win. We hope you enjoy learning about their businesses and what they love to eat. If we could include all of the wonderful restaurants in Bedford, we would have, but the mission of *Bedford Living* is that the articles are written by the residents for the residents, so we are highlighting the restaurant owners who live in town. Also, since you'll hopefully be eating out or doing take-out a little bit more, remember that you can donate to or volunteer at the Bedford Community Food Pantry. Learn more at www.bedfordnhfoodpantry.org.



(photo: Jodie Andruskevich, of Andruskevich Photography)

Dianne Carter
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www.uncorkedne.com
Email:
dianne@uncorkedne.com

I am Dianne Carter, owner of Uncorked Wine and Spirits Distributors of New England. I started this company nearly eight years ago, and I have lived in Bedford for more than 20 years now.



It's hard to imagine having to choose a favorite wine from my portfolio. We currently have more than 370 wines and we love them all, but if I had to choose one, I would likely tell you the wine that was my inspiration in quitting my day job and starting Uncorked (formerly New England Uncorked). That wine, which was the beginning of a wonderful adventure, was the Gewürztraminer from Jonathan Edwards Winery in North Stonington Connecticut. It is a beautiful wine that is grown, produced, and bottled right here in New England.

Dianne Carter of Uncorked showcases one of her favorite wines: the Gewürztraminer, located at the NH Wine and Liquor Outlet. This is a very drinkable wine on its own or paired with any number of dishes. It is perfect with Thanksgiving dinner.

I also love to cook, so often you'll find me on social media pairing a dish I have concocted with a wine from our portfolio. That being said, sometimes social media is the best way to reach out to me, or you can send me an email. You can purchase our wines at the NH Wine and Liquor Outlet or find out more on my website. Cheers!



Alyssa and Eric Zink of The Puritan Backroom in Manchester.

Alyssa and Eric Zink
The Puritan Backroom
245 Hooksett Rd., Manchester
(603) 669-6890
www.puritanbackroom.com

The Puritan's history spans over 100 years. Arthur Pappas and Louis Canotas opened the first Puritan in 1917, and it remains in the family to this day. The restaurant is currently owned and operated by Arthur Pappas, Eric Zink (Arthur's son-in-law), and Chris Pappas. Chris and Eric are the fourth generation to own the Puritan, and you can also now find 14-year-old Charlie Zink, the fifth generation, busing tables. It is known for chicken tenders, Greek salads, mudslides, and homemade ice cream. Rumor has it, The Puritan has been credited as the inventor of the chicken tender. The story is that back in 1974, they were serving boneless breasts, which involved trimming down whole breasts and leaving them with a pile of strips. The solution was to marinate and fry these, and they were quickly added to the menu and became a runaway success. In 2019, The Puritan received the incredible honor of winning the James Beard American Classics Award.



Eric Zink's favorite at The Puritan: BBQ lamb kabob, boasting a savory crust with a tender interior, placed on a bed of yellow rice.



Only the finest Greek salad from Manchester's Puritan Backroom.



The self-indulgent, signature Puritan Backroom Peanut Butter Mudslide. Kids come for homemade ice cream, adults come for a mudslide!



Alyssa Zink's go-to: The refreshing and subtle Cajun grilled salmon from The Puritan Backroom.



Scott Forrester of bluAqua Restrobar in Manchester.



bluAqua Restrobar's quintessential southern gumbo, owner Scott Forrester's favorite. A welcomed addition to NH.



Scott Forrester's wife, Ann-Marie, loves to treat herself to bluAqua's delicate and tangy lemon basil martini, a bluAqua crowd pleaser.

Scott Forrester
bluAqua Restrobar
930 Elm St., Manchester
603-836-3970
bluAquaRestrobar.com

bluAqua Restrobar just opened in January 2020 in the former Ted Herbert's Music Hall in downtown Manchester. I lived in Bedford in 1984-1989 and moved back with my wife and have been here for the past 17 years. We are raising our daughters here. We offer great American cuisine with a lil' bit of a Southern twist. I have always loved the gastropub concept. This, to me, is a neighborhood place that focuses on quality food and cocktails but has a fun and diverse atmosphere. I also find that a lot of people really like to sit at a nice bar and eat dinner nowadays. Yes, we have great wings, salads, sandwiches, steak, and fish, but I do not believe you are going to find a place anywhere else around here where you can have fried green tomatoes, shrimp and cheddar grits, jambalaya, or Nashville hot chicken. My favorite dish is the gumbo! Come by and introduce yourself. We hope to see you soon.

Amber and Joshua Enright
Roots Café and Catering
9 Riverside St., Hooksett
(603) 485-7761
rootsatrobies.com



Josh and Amber Enright of Roots Café & Catering in Hooksett.



An impressive display of fresh, tasteful lunchtime wraps from Roots Catering & Cafe at the Historical Robie's Country Store in Hooksett.

We have lived in Bedford for the past five years. We started Roots in 2016. Located in Robie's Country Store in Hooksett, NH, this small business provides local foods, gifts, and full-service catering of all sizes. We have been in the restaurant business since 2002, owning other successful cafés such as The Seedling in Nashua and Jewell and The Beanstalk in Manchester. We really enjoy the Hooksett community. Roots features wraps, salads, soups, local coffee, and teas, as well. The Elm Wrap is probably the most popular lunch choice with

...

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fresh roasted turkey, avocado, Applewood smoked bacon, red onion, and cheddar cheese. All sandwiches are hearty and come with a healthy veggie side or house fries or chips. My favorite is a turkey sandwich with bacon and avocado. Mayo is a must!

For breakfast, guests can choose from skilletts, benny’s, scrambles, or griddle selections like pancakes and French toast specials. Monthly upscale dinners are a favorite of Roots guests and staff alike. We love to make delicious food and see people really enjoy their experience. The atmosphere and artistic catering displays make this location a perfect spot for your next event. We travel to you too!



Caroline Arend of Caroline's Fine Foods in Bedford.



Caroline's Fine Foods' passed hors-d'oeuvres include the tempting and toothsome chicken satay with peanut dipping sauce.



Caroline's Fine Foods' passed hors-d'oeuvres featuring the signature Lemongrass Shrimp: both refreshing and perfected.

Caroline Arend
Caroline's Fine Foods
132 Bedford Center Road,
Bedford (off of route 101)
(603) 637-1615
Business email is info@
carolinesfood.com
www.carolinesfood.com

I have lived in Bedford for the past 18 years. We are a full-service catering company with a storefront that sells prepared meals to go and a variety of artisan sandwiches and paninis. My personal favorite type of dish is passed appetizers because they allow guests to enjoy a myriad of flavors and cuisines. I also love the fact that I can pop over to Cupcakes 101 right next door and pick up my favorite sweet treat -- their tiramisu cupcakes! We are also thrilled to welcome our newest team member and catering director, Laurie Comp. She brings a wealth of industry experience, passion, and we are ecstatic to have her.



Jorge Gómez of Puerto Vallarta Mexican Grill and Nuevo Vallarta Mexican Restaurant.



Jorge is loving the flavorsome carne asada made with the freshest ingredients at Puerto Vallarta Mexican Grill.

Jorge is loving the flavorsome carne asada made with the freshest ingredients at Puerto Vallarta Mexican Grill.



Andrea and Jack Carnevale of The Bedford Village Inn & The Grand at the Bedford Village Inn.

Jorge Gómez
Nuevo Vallarta Mexican Restaurant
791 Second St., Manchester
(603) 782-8762
www.vallartamexicannh.com

Puerto Vallarta Mexican Grill
865 Second St., Manchester
(603) 935-9182
www.vallartamexicannh.com

I have lived in Bedford since the summer of 2018. I moved from Nashua where I had a start in the restaurant business with a small taco restaurant. After selling the Nashua location, I ended up opening a small restaurant in Manchester. This started off slow but ended up getting very popular. I then expanded Puerto Vallarta and also opened another location, Nuevo Vallarta, on the next block over. My favorite dish from my restaurant is the Carne Asada. This is an amazing steak dish served with rice, beans, pico de gallo, and corn tortillas. Both restaurants only use fresh ingredients of the highest quality. The head cook is Jorge Hernández -- he's been with us since the first day we opened Puerto Vallarta, and his brother is the head cook at Nuevo Vallarta. They are from Guerrero Mexico.

Jack and Andrea Carnevale
The Bedford Village Inn
The Grande at Bedford Village Inn
Two Olde Bedford Way,
Bedford
603-472-2001
bedfordvillageinn.com

Andrea and I have lived in Bedford for the past 30 years and have raised our only son, Jon, here in Bedford along with our favorite breed of dogs PBGV, currently Ethel, sister of the late Lucy, and brother Buster. It is very hard to think about life before the BVI, I guess because the time has flown by so quickly as we have not let a lot of grass grow beneath our feet



Jack Carnevale's perfected pick and work of art: Atlantic salmon at the Bedford Village Inn.



The Carnevales' go-to dessert: The exclusive and decadent chocolate bag at Bedford Village Inn.



Patchara Smith, owner of Hana Japanese Cuisine and Sweet Ginger in Merrimack.



Patchura recommends the appetizing and agreeable chicken lo mein krapow at Sweet Ginger in Merrimack.



Patchara Smith's world-class Zesty Tuna Appetizer at Hana Japanese Cuisine in Merrimack.

with the ever-evolving projects and expansions. I guess you could call Andrea and me “restaurant brats” since we have enjoyed restaurant cuisine almost nightly here at the BVI. I like to think it is quality control. Since there are so many outlets here including the Tavern, Corks, The Dining Rooms, and the Lobby Bar, we both have our favorites within the various themes, including our luscious blueberry pancakes, our Bamboo Steamer, and most favorite on the dining room menu is the Atlantic Salmon followed by our exclusive chocolate bag. But our favorite is the loyal customer base that continues to support us.

Patchara Smith
Sweet Ginger Thai Restaurant
6 Dobson Way, Merrimack
(603) 424-8035
www.sweetgingerthai.com

Hana Japanese Cuisine
7 Continental Blvd, Merrimack
(603) 377-7253
www.hanamerrimack.com

Hello, Bedford! We have been living in our wonderful Bedford community since 2014. At Sweet Ginger, my favorite dish is chicken lo mein krapow, which is a stir fry with fresh chilis, garlic, red pepper, onion, and basil leaves. For Hana, my favorite dish is the Zesty Tuna, which is jalapeños stuffed with spicy tuna, spicy mayo, and cream cheese, then fried in a tempura batter. I make all of my own sauces daily for consistency. I am here every day and oversee everything from our traditional Thai recipes to my own recipes with easy and fast results for my diners. We have been living in southern NH since 1991 and we love it here. Lastly, we would like to thank Cobblestone Crafts, also from Bedford, for the masks that we are using every day.



Tom Boucher, CEO-Owner Great NH Restaurants T-BONE'S | CJ's | Cactus Jack's | Copper Door



Tom Boucher's classic and flavorsome pick: Luncheon Cedar Plank Salmon at The Copper Door.



A Tom Boucher tempting favorite: Bedford T-Bones' signature buffalo wings served with a homemade bleu cheese dressing. A Bedford classic for 25 years.



Manchester's Cactus Jack's serves up a heavenly Cajun-seared bacon-wrapped shrimp served with homemade chipotle bleu cheese dressing.

Manchester's Cactus Jack's serves up a heavenly Cajun-seared bacon-wrapped shrimp served with homemade chipotle bleu cheese dressing.

It's hard to believe we'll be celebrating our ninth anniversary this year at Copper Door® in Bedford. We had a vision in mind to create a big city feel restaurant that was classy but not pretentious. We wanted a warm and inviting atmosphere

Tom Boucher
Copper Door
15 Leavy Dr., Bedford
(603) 488-2677
copperdoor.com

T-Bones Great American Eatery
25 S River Rd., Bedford
(603) 641-6100
t-bones.com

CJ's Great West Grill
782 S Willow St., Manchester
(603) 627-8600
cactusjacksnh.com

I've lived in Bedford with my wife Dana and multiple furry friends for 20 years. When I graduated from Merrimack College with a bachelor's degree in 1987 I earned a full academic scholarship to attend Villanova University but forwent this opportunity because I fell in love with the restaurant business. I worked my way up through T-Bones from a food server to finally the general manager at the Bedford T-Bones in 1992. In 1995, I was brought on as a founding partner of Cactus Jack's in Manchester. I held the store's general manager position until 1998, when I took on additional responsibilities as the director of marketing and subsequently director of operations for T-Bones and Cactus Jack's.

In 2004, I became CEO, guiding four restaurant brands (T-Bones, CJ's, Cactus Jack's, and Copper Door), totaling 10 restaurants to their current success. Most recently, I've broadened my business approach by opening T-Bones Meats, Sweets, and Catering, www.WeCaterGreater.com, www.DingDongDeliver.com delivery service,



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delivering chef-inspired “Approachable New American and Upscale Comfort Foods.” Guests at the Copper Door® enjoy wide-ranging, exciting, and inventive combinations of tastes featuring local sources: New England seafood, classic yet creative stone oven pizzas, hand-cut reserve premium steaks, unique salads, and house specialties that personify Copper Door’s passion and respect of excellent food and classic culinary technique.

My absolute favorite dish is the Luncheon Cedar Plank Salmon, cooked at 500° in our stone oven. The light, smoky, cedar-flavored fresh salmon is placed atop a tasty, warm quinoa salad with heirloom tomatoes, feta cheese, sliced kalamata olives, finished with a honey shallot sauce and topped with tomato pesto.

T-Bones Great American Eatery and CJ’s Great West Grill have different and distinct vibes but both are casual dining appealing to families and seniors, serving a broad range of made-from-scratch menu items. T-Bones has more of an American fare where you can find comfort food ranging from our fresh ground sirloin burgers to a New England favorite, baked stuffed haddock. One of our more popular, and my favorite item to order, is our signature Buffalo wings served with our homemade bleu cheese dressing. This item and unique recipe has been on the T-Bones menu for 25 years!

CJ’s Great West Grill celebrated its 25th anniversary this past February. It has an authentic South Western, old town feel, featuring made-from-scratch smoked BBQ, Tex-Mex, and other regional American favorites including Cajun-inspired dishes. Speaking of Cajun, my absolute favorite item at CJ’s is our Cajun seared Bacon Wrapped Shrimp served with homemade chipotle bleu cheese dressing. In total, we serve over 2 million guests per year and look forward to serving millions and millions more for many, many years.



Olivia and Jon Carnevale from Shorty’s Mexican Roadhouse in Manchester and Nashua.

Jon and Olivia Carnevale
Shorty’s Mexican Roadhouse
1050 Bicentennial Dr.,
Manchester
(603) 625-1730
48 Gusabel Ave., Nashua
(603) 882-4070
www.shortysmex.com

We have been in Bedford for over 25 years. Our favorite dish at Shorty’s has to be the espinaca because it’s a staple and we just wouldn’t want to be without it. It’s been an honor to be a part of the community, and we are looking forward to continuing to grow and be a part of the rebound from this tough time. We are also thankful to all our loyal and hard-working staff who make Shorty’s what it is and keep having fun, day in and day out no matter what the challenge.



Jon Carnevale’s flavorful and fresh Mexican pick at Shorty’s: Espinaca (spinach and white cheese dip served with fresh chips). A Mexican classic and must.



Stacey DeBonville of Table 8 Pasta in Bedford.



Stacey DeBonville’s favorite crave-worthy pick at Table 8: TBL8 sauce with campanelli pasta.

Mitch and Stacey DeBonville
Table 8
254 Wallace Rd., Bedford
(603) 488-2463
www.table8pasta.com

Mitch and I moved to Bedford 10 years ago from Montreal, Quebec with our two boys, Lucas and Logan, who are now 19 and 17. Both went through the Bedford school system, playing varsity hockey. Lucas graduated in 2019 and is now in college, and Logan is a senior set to graduate in 2021. Both are stellar TBL8 employees! My favorite dish at Table 8 Pasta is the TBL8 sauce with Campanelli. This is a recipe we created long ago and have been making at home with our kids for years. It starts with our house-made marinara sauce, and then we add a splash of cream, pancetta, and

mushrooms and finish it off with a touch of Parmesan cheese. One of the beautiful things about our menu is the ability for guests to customize each sauce to their liking. For example, I like to add chicken to my TBL8 sauce and spinach and olives to my alfredo.

If you also love the TBL8 sauce (or any sauce!), you can feed the whole gang with a family-style meal. Half-trays and full-trays are always available. These are a big hit whether you have a busy sport scheduled family on the go or just don’t feel like cooking! Add some garlic bread and a salad to make a complete, fresh, and delicious meal for the whole family. Speaking of salad, did you know that at Table 8 we make our own Caesar and balsamic dressings? Talk about fresh and delicious. We look forward to seeing you soon.



Antonio, Catherine and Judy Bruno of Luna Caprese Italian Ristorante in Merrimack.

Antonio, Judy
and Catherine Bruno
Luna Caprese Italian Ristorante
75 Daniel Webster Highway,
Merrimack
(603) 578-9950
reservations@lunacaprese.biz

Chef Antonio earned his culinary degree from Scuola Alberghiera Statale in Capri, Italy, and has been a corporate and executive chef in addition to owning restaurants in England, Bermuda, and New York before moving to Bedford in 2006. It is a truly family-owned and -operated business and a great place to enjoy a relaxing meal with family and friends. One of our most popular dishes and our favorite is our veal Capri: veal cutlets with basil, fresh tomatoes, and olive oil, topped with mozzarella and garlic

...



The Bruno family's favorite: The ever popular and flavorful veal Capri made with the homemade family limoncello recipe from Luna Caprese Italian Ristorante in Merrimack.



Steven Clutter, owner of Hanover Street Chophouse and The Crown Tavern in Manchester.



The refreshing and stunning Seafood Tower at Hanover Street Chophouse includes the best of NH oysters.



Steven Clutter's favorite: The Hanover Street Chophouse's perfected Dijon and herb crusted Colorado Rack of Lamb.

in a homemade limoncello sauce, delicious with garlic knots and a glass of wine followed by freshly prepared cappuccino and dessert. We pride ourselves on serving the freshest ingredients, including seafood, homemade pasta, and sauces, as well as chicken and veal. Our meals are prepared to order and our menus are quite flexible and include gluten-free options, a children's menu, delicious homemade desserts, and limoncello made from our family recipe. For more information about our menus, private function room, or catering, please view our website at www.lunacaprese.biz.

Steven Clutter
Hanover Street Chophouse
149 Hanover St., Manchester
(603) 644-2467
www.hanoverstreetchophouse.com

The Crown Tavern
99 Hanover St, Manchester
(603) 218-3132
www.thecrownonhanover.com

We moved to Bedford back in 1999, knowing that raising our two kids in a small community in New Hampshire was the right move. Working in NYC, I was commuting door to door on a good day 2 hours and 15 minutes. This left little time for family, and moving closer to the city was unaffordable. Today, my commute is 4.9 miles from Bedford to The Chophouse (almost too close, haha!). I can honestly say that I am so glad we chose Bedford and my two now-adult children are all the better for it!

The Hanover Street Chophouse celebrates our 15th anniversary this year in December, and The Crown is 3 years old this month. The best part about owning two restaurants is the walking distance between the two. It's about 200 yards in all. But they come with big differences. The Chophouse is our version of fine dining and steakhouse. My favorite dish on the



An easy favorite go-to: The Crown Tavern Pizza.



A savory and sweet Crown Tavern Pizza.

The same clientele who entertain and celebrate special occasions at The Chophouse is hanging out on the patio at The Crown on their days off, as well. We enjoy the neighborhood vibe and focus on the same high-quality approach as The Chophouse. Our pizzas tend to sell the most. We bought the pizza oven out in Seattle and created our four-day ferment on the pizza dough around the oven. The best part of them both is working a busy shift at The Chophouse and then walking down the alley and grabbing Manchester's best pizza to take home for dinner.



Claudia Barrett, owner of Flight Coffee Co. in Bedford.



Claudia's favorite: Flight Coffee Co.'s freshly baked rosemary and sea salt bagel alongside a honey processed coffee from the Yirgacheffe region of Ethiopia.

ourselves. Everybody out there has a coffee journey to take, and it is a stairway to heaven. We will help you get to that rainbow of absolute kaleidoscopic flavors. Company philosophy: doing well in a community means you must also do good in the community and

menu is the Shellfish Tower, where we use all New Hampshire oysters as much as possible. It's hard to choose my favorite so I'm just letting you know about the Colorado rack of lamb, too. It is the best domestic lamb you can buy and eats more like a tender steak than a chop. So The Chophouse in my eyes is an urban fine dining restaurant where we like to offer more than just steaks.

The Crown was built to be where I and the management team at The Chophouse like to eat on our days off!

Claudia Barrett
Flight Coffee Co.
30 Harvey Rd.
Moving into the Harvest Plaza Late Fall
(603) 836-6228
www.flightcoffeeco.com

I have lived in Bedford for 12 years with my husband, kids, and five rescue pets. Flight Coffee Co. is an award-winning coffee company, and we are located on Harvey Rd. Nationally recognized in specialty coffee, the 9-year-old company has won many diverse coffee awards and is regionally recognized. We roast our own top lots of coffee, we are trained in specialty tea, and just recently we have opened a scratch kitchen off our satellite cafe. Our hand-rolled, slow rise NYC-style bagels and cronuts are loved by many. Specialty coffee is a science and we take it very seriously, but what we do not take seriously is

to leave people feeling happier than they were before. Claudia's favorite drink: single-origin coffees perfectly extracted and brewed, sipped slowly over a 20-minute pleasure trip.

Eric Roberts



Sonia and Eric Roberts of Nashua's Lui Lui Italian Restaurant.



Eric Robert's favorite: The classic and tasty, tried and true chicken piccata from Lui Lui.

pasta. It is a family-friendly restaurant and great for takeout or patio dining. In addition to its Nashua location, it has a second location in the Dartmouth Lake Sunapee Region at 8 Glen Road Powerhouse Mall in West Lebanon.



Keith Murphy



Here, we have the tempting and tasty spicy tuna appetizer at Murphy's Taproom & Carriage House in Bedford.

Lui Lui Italian Restaurant
259 Daniel Webster Hwy, Nashua
(603) 888-2588
www.luilui.com

Lui Lui is a family-owned and -operated wood-fired pizza and pasta restaurant. Eric has lived in Bedford since 1999. One of his favorite dishes at Lui Lui is their popular chicken piccata. Lui Lui is known for its award-winning wood-fired pizza and fresh

Keith Murphy
Murphy's Taproom and Carriage House
393 NH-101, Bedford
(603) 488-5975
www.murphystaproom.com/bedford/bedford-reservations

Murphy's Taproom
494 Elm St., Manchester
(603) 644-3535
www.murphystaproom.com

Murphy's Diner
516 Elm St., Manchester
603-792-4004
www.murphysdiner.com

I've lived in Bedford since 2009 with my three children Lexi, Aidan, and Finn. Our restaurant includes a huge outdoor patio featuring live music daily, 240-person function facility, main bar and dining room, and



Keith Murphy's inviting combination and popular pick: Blackberry Roasted Duck at his Murphy's Taproom & Carriage House.

food menu, with something for every palate. My favorite foods at the Taproom and Carriage house in Bedford include our spicy tuna appetizer, made gluten-free, seared with chipotle spices and served with an orange-pineapple ponzu and wonton crisps. For an entree, I love our ever-popular Blackberry Roasted Duck, cooked sous vide and served with our blackberry dijon glaze, braised Brussel sprouts, and basmati rice. Our kitchen is led by Executive Chef Todd Lytle, with desserts all prepared in-house by Sous Chef Andrew Freni.



Alexa Firman is owner and head baker at Simply Delicious Baking Co. in Bedford.



A few of Alexa Firman's breakfast favorites at Simply Delicious Baking Co. include a mug of her house blend coffee, a cinnamon scone, and a seasonal fruit and oat bar. Truly, a melt in your mouth experience!

an iced maple oat milk latte refresh me in the warmer months, yet a simple medium roast, house blend coffee I sip on in the early snowy mornings brings me simple joy. The staple items for both baked and sipping treats I have on my menu are always being changed with the seasons, so I welcome you to visit and give them a try.

several private dining rooms with individually-controlled televisions and sound. Whether it's a family dinner out or a once-in-a-lifetime special occasion, a casual after-work gathering, or making s'mores around our seasonal fire pits, we pride ourselves on exceeding your every expectation. Our 32 draft beers and extensive cocktail offerings complement our broad

Alexa Firman
Simply Delicious Baking Co.
176 NH-101, in the Village Shoppes Bedford
(603) 488-1988
www.simplydeliciousbakingco.com

I grew up in Bedford and then lived in NY, TN, and AK for a short time but moved back to NH and continue to reside in Bedford. It is hard for me to say that I have a favorite baked good or beverage here at Simply Delicious Baking Co. The reason is that I am always compelled to the ever-changing seasonal favorites. I keep seasonal and local ingredients at the forefront of my menu and the moods that shift our taste buds from season to season here in New England. Anything blueberry, such as blueberry oat bars or blueberry crumb pie, would be my top pick in the summer. However, warm spices complementing pumpkin such as pumpkin scones scattered with cinnamon and maple glaze call my name in the fall. When it comes to a beverage, a lavender iced tea or



DeeDee Vasilopoulos of Pizza Bella in Bedford.



These Pizza Bella specialties make us crave a few slices weekly!

Dee Dee Vasilopoulos
Pizza Bella
178 NH-101, in the Village Shoppes
Bedford
(603) 472-8560
www.pizzabellabedford.com

My name is Deedee and I have lived in Bedford for the past 17 years but have had Pizza Bella for nearly 30. My favorite dish is all in the name Pizza Bella, a great pizza. Not to be “cheesy” but I really do love pizza and even order it when I travel or make it at home on the grill with our own ingredients from Pizza Bella. I’m a people pleaser and I think pizza does just that; you can put something on it for everyone.



Louis Ryland of 1750 Taphouse, The Seabasket and Wildcat Pizza.



Delicious pizza options located right at 1750 Taphouse in Bedford.

Louis Rylant
1750 Taphouse
170 NH-101, Bedford
(603) 488-2573
www.1750taphouse.com

I own the 1750 Taphouse in Bedford, as well as The Seabasket in Wiscasset, Maine, and Wildcat Pizza in Durham. My favorite food at 1750



Louis Ryland’s restaurant, The Seabasket in Wiscasset, Maine, offers his favorite, a classic and fresh mixed seafood platter. What more do we need from Maine?!

Taphouse is the pizza, and my favorite food at The Seabasket is the mixed seafood platter. The Buffalo chicken calzone is one of my top picks at Wildcat Pizza. I have lived in Bedford for more than 15 years, and in addition to being a restaurant entrepreneur, I am also the general sales manager at Boch Toyota.



Andreas Lympers, owner of Yianni's Pizza in Bedford.

Andreas Lympers
Yianni's Pizza
410 S. River Road (next to the Land Rover dealership)
Bedford
(603) 624-5700
www.yiannispizzanh.com

I’ve lived in Bedford since 2018. My favorite dish from the restaurant is pizza, of course, and I especially love the chicken pesto pizza along with all the normal favorites like the Yianni’s Special or the Meatlovers. Another favorite of mine is our steak and cheese subs, which are very delicious. We have our own special recipes for our grilled chicken marinade and the steak tips, which are our customers’ favorites. We try to find the freshest produce for our salads so our customers can taste the difference. Here at Yianni’s we make fresh dough daily and try to provide the best quality possible. We have also intensified our sanitary procedures because we take Covid-19 very seriously. We’ve incorporated curbside pickup, no contact deliveries, and safety glass for in-person pickups. All our employees wear gloves, especially if they’re interacting with food.



Here, we have Yianni’s appetizing and mouthwatering pizza.



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By resident **Yvonne Jaffe**

PARENTING THROUGH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Learning that patience is key



From left, Kaitlyn Jaffe and her younger sister, Melea Jaffe, enjoy a moment in their neighborhood after Kaitlyn put the finishing touches on her prom gown. (courtesy)



From left, Melea and Kaitlyn Jaffe share a comical moment while dining out this summer.

March 13, 2020. The abrupt last day of school and the beginning of quarantine. It was such a strange time with a new virus floating around, and the thought of being stuck at home with two teenage daughters was just as scary. At the time our oldest, Kaitlyn, was a junior in high school and Melea was an eighth-grader. Quarantine was the beginning of many lessons for us. It was a time for patience – a lot of it.

Lesson #1: adjusting to remote learning as a family. My junior chose her bedroom as her study area, which coincidentally became the temporary residence for our collection of drinking glasses. Apparently remote learning made her very thirsty. Deep breaths. Inhale, exhale.

My eighth-grader preferred studying at our kitchen table -- smack dab in the middle of our open living space. That resulted in a lot of death stare “shushing” because I was either chewing too loud...or the dog was barking too much at UPS. Neither area was ideal but our daughters were comfortable with their choice so we managed and tried to avoid creating more stress to an already stressful situation beyond our control. We recovered all of our glasses, and my chewing eventually became a non-issue.

As we navigated through the joys of remote learning, we experienced some personal goals. Melea has an impressive talent for baking. Her delicious creations and attention to detail made it more challenging to avoid gaining the “COVID 15.” Her enjoyment for baking was flourishing...until we couldn’t find flour. “Wait, Mom, are you serious?” How am I supposed to bake, what am I going to do?” We couldn’t let her down. Bisquick is a great alternative, and she made it work.

Kaitlyn focused on completing her prom dress from scratch since it was a personal project she started at the beginning of the year. Even

when the event was canceled she finished it, anyway. On the day of prom, we decided to do a photoshoot because it was a perfect sunny day – too beautiful to go to waste. We didn’t see the finished gown until she arrived at the bottom of the stairs. I held back tears.

The bright red and gold dress was just as radiant as her smile from ear to ear. It proved how much her confidence increased by accomplishing her goal. She didn’t let quarantine bring her down.

My husband Brett and I gained something, too. With TikTok being such a staple during this strange time, we decided to embrace it, and our girls taught us one of the dances. I kind of feel like a cool mom now. It was fun. Am I a savage? No, but I like being classy and sometimes bougie.

We had some fun family moments, too. An epic Monopoly match resulted in Melea and Brett being the last ones standing, with her begging and pleading with her dad not to take her last dollar and real estate property. There were tears. There was laughter. He is competitive, though. Sorry, kid, but Dad shows no mercy when it comes to Monopoly.

So what’s the take away from this? When it comes to situations beyond our control, embrace and recognize the positive aspects within your reach, choose your battles wisely, ignore your phone, and enjoy some laughs with your family. Use your time to accomplish goals because you never know what you’re capable of.

And, don’t be afraid to learn a TikTok dance.



If you have a story to share, please let us know by emailing kim.houghton@n2pub.com.



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**43 Colonel Daniels Drive	\$825,000	\$825,000	8/14/2020	0	4	4	3,940	2000
*30 Polly Peabody Road	\$319,000	\$320,000	8/31/2020	2	4	2	2,064	1975
*19 Baileys Green	\$549,900	\$535,000	8/6/2020	52	4	3	2,541	2010
*29 Summit Road	\$599,900	\$600,000	8/25/2020	9	4	3	2,912	2004
*10 Three Corners Road	\$525,000	\$565,000	8/27/2020	5	4	4	2,899	1996
*214 Joppa Hill Road	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	8/13/2020	87	4	4	4,689	1979
*8 Blueberry Lane	\$449,000	\$395,000	8/18/2020	99	4	3	2,937	1964
*6 Seabee Street	\$409,900	\$405,000	8/28/2020	22	3	3	2,593	1957
2 Belmont Court	\$270,000	\$285,000	8/28/2020	4	3	2	1,356	1986
1 Constance Street	\$250,000	\$235,000	8/21/2020	9	3	1	816	1951
6 Arbor Lane	\$420,000	\$421,000	8/28/2020	3	3	3	1,800	1984
6 Davies Street	\$299,900	\$299,900	8/13/2020	27	3	2	1,800	1953
12 Circle Drive	\$379,900	\$389,000	8/5/2020	30	3	3	2,824	1962
67 Wendover Way	\$719,900	\$710,000	8/21/2020	26	5	3	4,366	1987
42 Cortland Drive	\$699,000	\$682,500	8/28/2020	8	5	4	3,530	1992
14 Belmont Court	\$270,000	\$270,000	8/31/2020	18	2	2	1,050	1986
128 Jenkins Road	\$469,000	\$460,000	8/24/2020	62	3	3	2,580	2001
58 Jenkins Road	\$475,000	\$475,000	8/31/2020	34	4	2	2,920	1985
79 New Boston Road	\$579,900	\$570,000	8/14/2020	292	4	3	2,500	2019

** Fine Homes Group * KW Metropolitan Other agencies no *



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