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Your Guide to Tri-State Events

Aug. 27-Sept. 2, 2020

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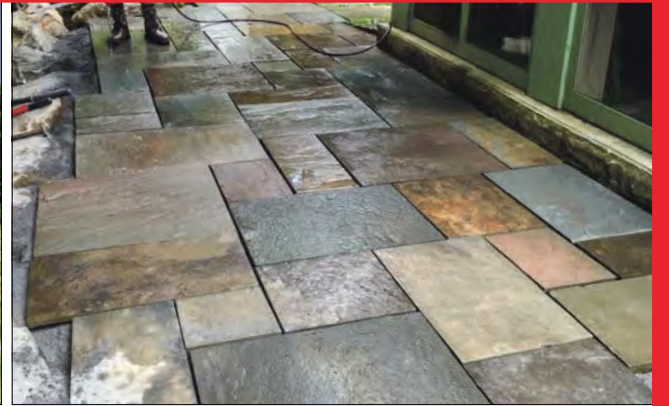
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PHOTO BY ALISON KIST

Interior designer Alison Kist mixes horizontal and vertical lines with her books, and makes sure to leave some open space.

DECORATING: JENNY HANSELL

Decorating By the Book

I bought a house last November. I love this house, and I want it to be my sanctuary: peaceful, harmonious, interesting. But I have always felt insecure about my home decorating skills; I sometimes think they haven't evolved much beyond Dorm Room Chic, or Frazzled Parent Modern.

But I'm decades past the dorm room and my frazzled parent days are (mostly) over, so I am determined to make this the most beautiful house I've ever lived in.

I got off to a great start: I bought a pretty rug and painted a room a gorgeous shade of deep blue. My dad offered me the simple maple chair that was in his childhood bedroom and that otherwise would be headed to Goodwill. I put it in my own very bare bedroom, draped a blanket on it and put a big plant next to it and — voila! One room is done.

Now what? I felt a bit paralyzed, and the advent of COVID-19 didn't help. I subscribed to stacks of magazines — House Beautiful and Elle Decor and others — but found them overwhelming. I don't even open them when they come now.

I decided my next focus would be my books. Though I gave away dozens of boxes of books when I moved, I still have plenty, and my swaybacked and crooked Ikea Billy shelves, which I've moved from home to home for over 20 years, just won't cut it anymore. So I hired a local handyman to build a wall of bookshelves.

But how to arrange the books? Could I make the shelves look intentional and elegant?

One of my friends arranged all her books by color — ROY G BIV and all. But that didn't suit me, and ostentatious coffee table books didn't seem

Oblong Books & Music

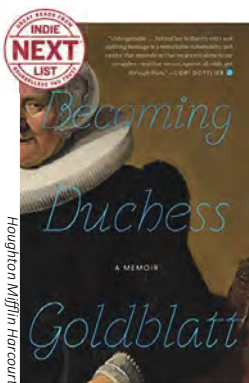
Great Summer Reads for Adults and Kids!



Abrams Books

The Lost Family
by Libby Copeland

A deeply reported look at the rise of home genetic testing and the seismic shock it has had on individual lives.



Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

Becoming Duchess Goldblatt: A Memoir
by Duchess Goldblatt

A tale of real-life writer who created a fictional character with a social media following out of loneliness & thin air.



Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

Faster
by Neal Bascomb
How a Jewish driver, an American heiress, and a legendary car beat Hitler's best. Perfect for fans of *The Boys in the Boat* and *In the Garden of Beasts*.



Chronicle Books

Like the Moon Loves the Sky
by Hena Khan, illustrated by Saffa Khan
A sweet and lovely bedtime book to help let children know they are loved and precious.
Ages 3-5



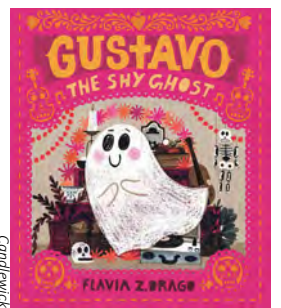
Abrams Books

Raybearer
by Jordan Ifueko
An epic YA fantasy from an incredible new talent — perfect for fans of Tomi Adeyemi and Sabaa Tahir.
Ages 12+



Candlewick

The Mermaid, the Witch, and the Sea
by Maggie Tokuda-Hall
A sweeping fantasy, full of stolen memories, double agents, and haunting mythical creatures.
Ages 14+



Candlewick

Gustavo, the Shy Ghost
by Flavia Z. Drago
This winning picture book about finding the courage to make friends is perfect for the spooky season — or anytime.
Ages 3-7.

right either (I need room on my coffee table for bowls of popcorn and, well, my feet), so I reached out to some experts for advice.

IT'S ALL IN THE MIX

Dana Kraus, who sells luxury vintage jewelry and has worked at some of the top design magazines, started with what's most important: "Books give a house a soul."

The book collection at her home in Sharon, Conn., is both beautiful and functional: It includes childhood favorites as well as reference books for her various projects, and incorporates books that are pleasing visually, first editions and ones with rich bindings, interspersed with objects that are beautiful and relevant to her work: fossils, sketches, catalogs, ammonites.

"Magically, it all works because it's reflective of our tastes and style," she said.

In other words, mix books that you love but make sure that mix includes tomes that are esthetically gorgeous. They will enhance the plainer books that are (also) important to you.

BOOKS TELL YOUR OWN STORY

Still unsure about my own taste or style, I made another call.

Interior designer Alison Kist of New York City and Lakeville, Conn., spent 9 years living in London, where she visited many homes with old English libraries. "I just was drawn to these libraries: The books bring a warmth, texture, a sense of history."

When she's decorating a home, her approach is to "shop the house" of

her clients, starting with what they already have.

"I like incorporating the owners' own things. It makes the space much more personal, as opposed to starting over all new."

She'll go to tag sales to find things that have a story to them. "Whether you learn that story or not, it's lived a life somewhere, so it seems more interesting," she said.

HOW TO STACK

She suggests stacking books horizontally, to break up the vertical lines of the room, so the shelves are not just rows and rows of books.

"That stack is also a great place to display a little object on top," Kist added.

I don't collect anything (having disposed of my previous collections of Party Goody Bag Trinkets and Decapitated Cat Toys) but I found some Harney & Sons Tea tins that remind me of my years in Millerton, N.Y., and a pretty vase. I stacked a few books sideways and put the tins on top, the vase next to them. Not bad, at least until my bedside stack of books gets too tall and tips over and I need to add them to the shelf.

LIKE PROUST'S MADELEINE

Finally, I spent a mesmerizing hour with designer Matthew Patrick Smyth in his simply decorated retreat in Salisbury, Conn. Each space he showed me was filled with books that have a personal meaning for him — with the author, with the subject, with the day he bought it or received it as a gift from a

Continued on page 6



PHOTO BY JOHN GRUEN

For interior designer Matthew Patrick Smyth, more is more on the bookshelves in his workspace in Salisbury. The vertical lines of the books are broken up by beloved decorative objects, photos, ceramics.

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PHOTO BY DANA KRAUS

“I try to stick to subjects that interest me,” said Dana Kraus of the books on her shelves. “In addition to garden books and decorative art books, I collect beautiful bindings.”

... decorating

continued from page 5

now-departed friend. How they looked on the shelf was unimportant; what he cared about was the memories, the feelings each book evoked. Together, his books told a story of a fascinating and well-lived life.

My books do say something about my life. There are feminist favorites, books by friends, nonprofit management tomes, parenting advice, my husband’s huge collection of bird guides, memoirs from people who have lived fascinating and inspiring lives, and lots and lots of fiction — great stories about worlds and experiences far away from my own.

Some I’ve read 10 times, others I’ve meant to read but never got around to. They aren’t bound in leather, and I

probably bought most of them either at library book sales or on the internet; I don’t have a lot of interesting stories about them.

That’s OK, though: as Dana Kraus told me, “Books are to be used and enjoyed every day.”

The other day, having given up on trying to make the shelves look any kind of way, I ran my hand over the titles and stopped on a battered copy of Jane Austen’s “Mansfield Park,” my book club’s pick for next month. I pulled it out and started reading the familiar words about the most fortunate Miss Maria Ward of Huntingdon.

I settled into my dad’s maple chair, pulled the blanket around me, and began to read.

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PASTIMES: PATRICK L. SULLIVAN

How To Stay Sane During a Pandemic

Feeling a little jittery? Have the couch cushions settled irrevocably into the shape of your personal rear end-type area? Has the excitement of binge-watching season 7 of “Home Boyz from Outer Space” faded?

I have two suggestions.

The first is a streaming channel called “The Great Courses.” The offerings are a real grab bag. I concentrated on history, starting with Amanda Podanyi, who in addition to knowing everything there is to know about ancient Mesopotamia, was the bass player in the band that became The Bangles.

Then I moved on to ancient Mesoamerica, a subject I knew very little about other than a vague idea that they played something like basketball, and of course knowledge gleaned from the classic 1964 film “The Wrestling Women vs. the Aztec Mummy.”

A foray into Gnosticism made me understand why the early Christian church wanted to stamp this stuff out, and did you know the Etruscans invented pizza?

The beauty of these programs, which are essentially lectures with two camera angles and maybe some slides, is you can fall asleep during them and rewind if you're feeling ambitious.

But I was tired of staring at screens. So, well ahead of schedule I started my usual summer program of rereading old favorites.

I highly recommend an old Eric Ambler omnibus, “Intrigue.” It contains four novels: “A Coffin for Dimitrios,” “Journey Into Fear,” “Cause for Alarm” and “Background to Danger” — plus, in the edition I own, a forward by Alfred Hitchcock.

You will not be disappointed. As Hitchcock points out, the heroes are very ordinary people who get tangled up in extraordinary circumstances. Not a lot of gadgetry and fight scenes, just slowly mounting tension, economically described.

Then I moved on to ancient Mesoamerica, a subject I knew very little about other than a vague idea that they played something like basketball.

I always reread the Bertie Wooster novels by P.G. Wodehouse in the summer. I always find something new, even though I have read them dozens of times.

In “The Code of the Woosters,” Bertie is discussing the personality of his friend Gussie Fink-Nottle with the latter's fiancée, the soupy Madeline Bassett.

Bertie refers to Gussie as “a sensitive plant.”

Madeline replies: “Exactly. You know your Shelley, Bertie.”

“Oh, am I?”

I don't know how I missed that in the first 47 readings of “Code.”

The other writer I revisit every year is Robert B. Parker, best known as the author of the Spenser detective novels.

What's fun here, besides devastating descriptions of university faculty, extremists and poetry readings, is how over the course of 47 Spenser novels Parker moved from fairly lengthy exposition to a style almost completely dependent on dialogue, as with this scene from “Small Vices”:

“You ever wanted kids?” I said to Hawk.

“I like them a little older,” Hawk said.

“No, you animal, I meant have you ever wanted to be a father?”

“Not lately,” Hawk said

So put down the remote (unless you are watching a ferociously academic lecture series) and dig out an old favorite book.

The couch isn't going anywhere, and neither are you.



PHOTOS BY PATRICK L. SULLIVAN

The author demonstrates how to watch serious educational television during a pandemic.



The author demonstrates how to reread P.G. Wodehouse during a pandemic.

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PHOTOS BY ALEXANDER WILBURN

Board games like Catan, purchased at Oblong Books and Music at the start of quarantine, helped break up the tension with a little healthy competition.



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People who I know that are in their 20s and 30s, corporate assistants in Boston, fashion writers in New York, tech managers in San Francisco, had all been playing Catan long before the pandemic struck.

GAMES: ALEXANDER WILBURN

Never Too Bored For Board Game Night

During quarantine I have mostly learned to surrender to the unexpected. The days are long, the news cycle dreary and the future unknowable. In a time of powerlessness, the one thing I have power over is a cardboard island called Catan. Let me explain.

Settlers of Catan, developed by German board game designer Klaus Teuber in the mid 1990s, pits players against each other as they race to build and develop properties, all while sabotaging and stealing from their opponents.

There are elements of Hasbro's classic Monopoly, but Catan trades the robber baron imagery of industrialist Manhattan for the pastoral life of feudal farming. There's no money to obtain. Instead, resources such as wheat, sheep and lumber make up the currency; and the game encourages open dialogue in an ever-moving free market where players can hawk amenities like vendors selling knock-off handbags on Canal Street.

"I've got two sheep for a brick. Any one got a brick? I'll give you two sheep. Or I could do three sheep and a lumber if you've got two bricks?"

While staying indoors, Catan has been a nightly ritual in my household this year, splayed out across the dining room table with a few glasses of wine. Since purchasing the board game in April I have won 45 times. My father has won 14. You can understand the pressure this has put on the relationship. I have briefly considered purposefully losing, gracefully flubbing my strategies in order to create a more egalitarian, albeit fictional, sense of

play.

Except that by its nature, Teuber's game seems to plunge players into a ruthless preoccupation with seizing dominance. Monopoly, whose lengthy runtime puts middle school children into a near coma by the second hour, can largely be played with decorum.

But Catan's combination of chance, bartering and quick maneuvering requires a steady flow of vocal participation. Which is why my family can now be regularly heard saying things like: "How could you do this to me?" "You've ruined everything I've built!" and "If I do nothing else, I'm going to make sure I destroy you."

In short, we have all become Joan Collins on "Dynasty."

The game was first introduced to me by my sister (a banker in New York City) and her fiancé. I thought of it as a novelty item, an odd hobby that they picked up at some retro parlor game party. As it turns out, the more that I mentioned the game to my friends, the more I realized I had been living under a rock. People who I know that are in their 20s and 30s, corporate assistants in Boston, fashion writers in New York, tech managers in San Francisco, had all been playing Catan long before the pandemic struck. They were as likely to be "trading brick for lumber" over Thanksgiving with their parents as they were to be hosting their own weekend game nights with their friends. So what is it about viciously collecting and trading sheep that resonates?

Perhaps the biggest reason old-fashioned board games are still alive and well, even with the younger crowd,



Originally created as a German language game, Catan has become an international success.

even with screens of all sizes chirping for our attention, is that they force us to really acknowledge each other. If you're like me, I'm sure you've felt a monotony set in through these last five months. "Did you read in the Times...?" "Yes, I saw that column," my father and I say as we unpack another carton of eggs and put them into the refrigerator. I call my sister and she says, "You know, I'm busy and not busy." "What are you up to?" "I might take the dog for a walk." "Talk to you later."

But for an hour of Catan, even when I lay down my trap card, and my father has to turn over all his sheep to me, and he's waving his hands in the air bemoaning, "You don't know what I

had planned for those sheep!" — well, we're sitting at a table really looking at each other.

Competition is one of the oldest forms of social connection, and as it turns out, Catan's ability to bring out the conniving side of its players is exactly what makes it such an addictive social space. When it's easy to feel like you've lost an entire year to COVID-19, there's comfort to sitting down at a game, picking up your cards and thinking, "OK, how can I win?"

Catan can be purchased at Oblong Books and Music in Millerton, N.Y., at www.oblongbooks.com; or at Tom's Toys in Great Barrington, Mass., at www.tomstoy.com.

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PHOTO BY LANS CHRISTENSEN

Flocks of tree swallows can look like clouds of smoke, swirling over marshes in the evening.

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PASSAGES: FRED BAUMGARTEN

Meditations On Migration And Summer's End

For most of us, the Dog Days of summer have just passed. They get their name from the "Dog Star," Sirius, in the constellation Canis Major — the Big Dog — which is in line with our sun in the noontday sky. Apparently the ancients, whoever they may have been, believed the Dog Star added to the sun's heat, resulting in Dog Days.

Speaking of ancient portents, the Great Comet of 2020, Comet NEO-WISE — the worst-named but most spectacular comet since 1997's Hale-Bopp — will be receding from view as it leaves the solar system. I hope you had a chance to see this brilliant celestial visitor in the northwest sky.

Back on solid ground, the ebb and flow of the seasons continues as it always has. For most migratory birds, August heralds the irresistible urge to go south. The young have left the nest, and it's time to think about fueling up for the journey. The first chill nights of late August will stir their wanderlust.

Hummingbirds are among the earlier birds to commence preparations for their departure. At this time of year, a patch of jewelweed flowers or a simple home nectar feeder can attract anywhere from a few to a dozen hungry hummers. Come September, most of our resident species, the ruby-throated hummingbird, will make their way to Mexico and Central America, with some overwintering in Florida.

The farther the journey, the more important the fuel. Tiny blackpoll

warblers, which leave later in September and fly nonstop from the Northeast over the ocean to South America, must double their body weight in fat before their epic flight.

Flocking is another feature of the pre-migration rush. Swallows — especially tree swallows — come together around now in enormous flocks. In the late afternoon and evening, you can see them swirling around marshes like clouds of smoke before disappearing into the reeds to roost. Similarly, "funnel clouds" of chimney swifts descend into chimneys to spend the night.

Most songbirds, such as warblers and thrushes, migrate after dark. Come fall, one of the best ways to enjoy migrating birds is simply to listen at night to the sounds of the voyagers as they pass overhead. You can't see them, but you can hear their tiny calls, "sips" and "seeps," as they follow the stars and the earth's magnetic field. I let my imagination fly with them.

Nighthawks are among my favorite birds — acrobatic migrants that flock up in late afternoon and at dusk over fields and ponds to hawk insects before gradually heading south. Catching sight of one of these silent nighthawk feeding frenzies is a real treat.

Not all migratory or resident birds are looking ahead. For some, summer lives on. Goldfinches are raising their families in August, perfectly timed to the ripening of seeds. Robins and other birds are having their second, third or fourth broods.

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Come fall, one of the best ways to enjoy migrating birds is simply to listen at night to the sounds of the voyagers as they pass overhead. You can't see them, but you can hear their tiny calls, "sips" and "seeps."



You can easily attract pre-migration hummingbirds with jewelweed or nectar.

PHOTO BY JAMES H. CLARK

And not only birds. Quite a few species of dragonflies and butterflies migrate as well. Among the former, green darners and black saddlebags are probably the largest and most recognizable. Monarch butterflies stage perhaps the best known migration among the lepidoptera, making their way to the forests of Oaxaca in southern Mexico, where they roost among the trees in the millions.

As for me, I relish the first cool, crisp nights of the advancing autumn, the crystalline stars, the Andromeda galaxy rising behind Pegasus, the flying horse, the croaking katydids, and the hint of excitement in the air. Maybe it's some remnant of the schoolboy in me, but fall feels like the season of renewal and rebirth in my bones, full of possibility.

Even now, as we shelter in place weathering the storm of infection and uncertainty, nature continues on, the seasons come and go, and love lingers.

Fred Baumgarten is a regular contributor to Compass on music, culture and nature.



PHOTO BY DEBRA A. ALEKSINAS

Monarch butterflies have perhaps the most famous southward migration of all the winged creatures.



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The Best in Cu



PHOTO COURTESY NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE

The interior of Springwood, the former home of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, is being renovated this year, but visitors can still walk the magnificent grounds of the estate.

DAYDREAMING AND DAY TRIPS: JEFFREY SEITZ

The Splendor of the Hudson River Valley

New York's Hudson Valley is thick with historical sites, gorgeous estates and important landmarks, many of them near to or overlooking the glorious Hudson River.

Many are beginning to open again to the public, although often with COVID-19 social distance restrictions. But the grounds of many of the estates remained open even during the pandemic. Even if you can't enter the houses, the sprawling landscapes usually have hiking trails and exquisitely manicured gardens. And admission is generally free.

Here are four estates in the Hudson Valley with grounds that will be well worth a day trip.

VANDERBILT MANSION NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

One of the region's oldest estates, the Vanderbilt Mansion towers visually over the nearby Hudson River. Visitors will be surrounded by nature as they explore outdoor exhibits including the White Bridge and formal gardens with

a European touch.

The estate is on the Albany Post Road in Hyde Park, N.Y. For more information and directions, go to www.nps.gov/vama/index.htm.

HOME OF FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

The 32nd president's home in Hyde Park, Springwood, is closed not only for COVID-19 but also for restoration work, but the magnificent grounds and trails remain open. You can combine your visit here with your trip to the Vanderbilt mansion, which is about 10 minutes away by car.

For more information and directions, go to www.nps.gov/hofr/index.htm.

STAATSBURG (MILLS MAN- SION) STATE HISTORIC SITE

Sometimes referred to as a "hidden gem," the estate of turn-of-the-last-century financier Ogden Mills descends gracefully to the Hudson River.

The Gilded Age mansion has 65

rooms and 16 bathrooms, but the grounds are even grander and serve as a perfect spot for a picnic. Of the estate's original 1,600 acres, the state site still has 192, ample space to spread out and be socially distant.

Outdoor programming has been offered through August and will likely continue into the early fall. The Friends of Mills at Staatsburg also are planning a Gilded Christmas celebration Dec. 4.

For information, go to www.eventbrite.com/o/staatsburgh-state-historic-site-30613960064.

To learn more about the estate and to get directions, go to www.mills-friends.org. The estate is near the Old Post Road in Staatsburg, N.Y.

LOCUST GROVE ESTATE

The home of code creator Samuel F. B. Morse, this Italianate mansion on Route 9 in Poughkeepsie offers less grandeur than the other properties on this list but it has 5 miles of former carriage roads that are now walking trails. The 200-acre property has grand trees,

lofty hills and views down onto the Hudson River. For directions and more information, go to www.lgny.org.

This is just a small taste of the bounty of beautiful manors and properties in nearby New York State. Better-known nearby properties include painter Frederic Church's magnificent Olana on Route 9G in Hudson (www.olana.org); Montgomery Place in Red Hook, with its impressive orchards and which is now part of Bard College (www.bard.edu/montgomeryplace/visiting); and Boscobel in Hudson, which is offering outdoor activities including Ascend Yoga in its West Meadow (www.boscobel.org).

For a more extensive list of Hudson Valley estates, many of them along Route 9, go to www.hudsonriver.com/history/great-estates-hudson-valley.

Jeffrey Seitz recently completed his Master's Degree in English at the State University of New York at New Paltz.



PHOTO COURTESY NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE

Like many Hudson Valley estates, the Vanderbilt Mansion is closed for indoor tours this year, but visitors are welcome to walk the grounds, which overlook the Hudson River and include formal gardens and a historic bridge.

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PHOTOS BY HUNTER O. LYLE

Emeric Harney worked out his shoulders with free weights during a morning circuit at Studio Lakeville in Lakeville, Conn.

“I think the heightened activity at the gym makes [the stay-at-home clients] uncomfortable to be there. Whereas they have confidence in how I conduct myself, and they feel confident I won’t bring COVID-19 into their homes.”

FITNESS: HUNTER O. LYLE

Spartan Racer Finds Alternative Training During Quarantine

To many, living through the COVID-19 pandemic has seemed like a watered-down version of what reality should be. The virus has brought everyday life practically to a standstill, with many of the usual aspects and activities deemed unsafe.

This is particularly true for people focused on fitness.

For the first four months of the coronavirus, many outlets for exercising saw restrictions or limitations. Basketball courts sat rimless, gyms had closed their doors and, for children, the majority of summer camps were canceled.

With the traditional routes of exercise in question, fitness buffs were looking for ways to stay active. Emeric Harney was one of those people.

Before the pandemic, Harney, 33, was on top of his game, working out Monday through Friday at 6 a.m. weekly. As a personal trainer at Studio Lakeville in Lakeville, Conn., being in shape was part of his job.

But in addition to his occupation, Harney is also a fitness fanatic who has competed in more than 25 Spartan Races, a series of intense obstacle courses that combine speed with physical ability and strength.

Before the lockdown, Harney had planned to compete in a Spartan Race each month from March to November. With gyms closed across Connecticut

and New York, he had to find new ways to effectively train — and new challenges with which to motivate himself.

“One of the pieces of equipment I use is sandbags,” he said. “While I do use dumbbells and barbells and free weights and things like that, the sandbag is usually in two to three of my workouts a week.”

Without access to a full gym, he said, “I was able to pivot from using both free weights and sandbags and all my tools, to just creating workouts around my sandbags.”

Using 65- and 90-pound sandbags for strength training, Harney said he also started running outdoors, in places like Macedonia Brook State Park in Kent, Conn., for cardio workouts instead of running on a treadmill.

In late June, Studio Lakeville reopened in a limited fashion, allowing patrons to access the gym once again (with COVID-19 restrictions and safeguards in place).

Harney wanted to get back to work as a personal trainer and also get back to his own training regimen.

“I had a mild amount of anxiety [about returning to a gym during the pandemic],” Harney said. “But not a lot.”

Since the gym reopened, Harney has returned to his role as a personal trainer, taking on eight clients a week for one-one-one sessions at Studio Lakeville, while also visiting clients



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who have opted to stay at home.

“I think the heightened activity at the gym makes [the stay-at-home clients] uncomfortable to be there,” Harney said, “whereas they have confidence in how I conduct myself, and they feel confident I won’t bring COVID-19 into their homes.”

Encouraged by his clients, Harney also ran a training camp in Cannon Park in Lakeville (across the street from Studio Lakeville) for children between the ages of 13 and 17. Over four weeks starting in early July, the camp would meet twice a week and train with plyometrics and sprints, as well as playing safe games like water balloon dodgeball with biodegradable balloons.

“Being able to train clients, especially young children, on proper form and technique is super important,” Harney said. “I want to leave my clients — these kids — with the knowledge of how to live a healthy lifestyle in the long run.”



Brian Weinstein, one of Emeric Harney’s clients, worked out in a private training session using a 65-pound sandbag.



Harney trains for the grueling challenges of the Spartan Races with the help of a weight vest.

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PHOTO BY PAUL SZETO

The roots of the author's interest in France and the French language began at a young age, while riding a carousel in Paris.

TRAVEL: LENA SZETO

Language as a Portal To Another Culture

Bonjour, ceci est votre phrase française du jour.
Good morning, this is your French sentence of the day.

Reading these words is how my mornings have started since the COVID-19 lockdown.

I've always wanted to learn French and when I told my boyfriend (who is from Paris), he happily came up with the idea of sending me French sentences everyday — and, after I insisted, audio recordings too.

This is my favorite way to learn, but I admit I am a bit biased. For those who don't have a French *petit ami* to help them, here are other resources that I've found to be helpful. Many of them have equivalent programs in other languages as well.

Pamela Rose Haze's "French Made Simple" is my main study workbook. Each chapter starts out with a dialogue in French, and then asks questions based on the dialogue and teaches grammar points. It also has pictures, guidelines on pronunciation, and a dictionary in the back. I bought it on Amazon for \$14 but a Kindle version is available for \$7.

Rosetta Stone is the first runner-up. It's convenient to use whenever you choose to, and it works on your oral and listening skills. It teaches mainly through realistic photos, and the accents in the app are very good.



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PHOTO BY MICHELLE ALFANDARI

Carousels are just a memory in Paris for now — but photos of them can evoke powerful memories.

Rosetta Stone also offers interactive learning and live, group tutoring sessions focusing on particular subject areas. I’ve only tried a few live sessions and haven’t been disappointed yet. It’s a bit more costly, but I’ve found it to be worth the money. The different subscription options are as follows: three months for \$36, 12 months for \$180, 24 months for \$250 or a lifetime package for \$300.

I sometimes use iTalki, a website that allows you to connect to a native speaker via video chat for a very small fee (I paid \$16 for an hour). On the website at www.italki.com you’re able to choose your teacher by watching a recorded video of the instructor, which allows you to listen to their accent and check out their lesson plan. This platform is especially great during COVID-19 because you get to have a safe, one-on-one social interaction even if you’re chatting with someone who is halfway around the globe.

Speaking of social interactions, my neighbors in Salisbury, Conn., (who have much more experience in French than I) organized some weekly socially distanced French soirées.

One out of the five of us picked a topic each week for discussion. The subjects could range from an article in *Le Monde* (the French equivalent to the *New York Times*) to a music video. We would translate it and then talk about it in French.

From time to time I also like to watch French television shows or listen to French audiobooks —I mean, who doesn’t like to “Netflix and Chill”? When you’re doing that in a new language, it suddenly feels productive! I’ve been watching “Call My Agent” and “A Very Secret Service” on Netflix with English subtitles.

The next learning tool I would like to try is looking up a recipe in French and actually cooking it. Learning new words while doing an activity is the best way to learn. And, hey, if I don’t remember the words at least I’ll be able to (hopefully) eat whatever dish I make.

Lena Szeto, 24, from New York City but currently residing in her Salisbury home, is a Bates College graduate. She is excited to be writing for The Lakeville Journal again after interning for two summers at the paper while in high school.

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FAMILY

Four Brothers Drive-in Theatre, 4957 Route 22, Amenia, N.Y. www.playeatdrink.com
 “Minions,” 10:20 a.m., “Jurassic World,” 12:35 p.m. and “The Mummy,” 8:20 p.m., all on Aug. 27; “The New Mutants,” 10 a.m. and “Kung Fu Panda,” 8:15 p.m., both from Aug. 28 to Sept. 2.

Center for Performing Arts at Rhinebeck, 661 Route 308, Rhinebeck, N.Y. www.centerforperformingarts.org
 “Clue, The Movie,” drive-in, Aug. 28, 8 p.m.; “Summer Suite: Music of Latin America,” Aug. 30, 7 p.m.; “Dancing Among the Elements,” Aug. 29 and Aug. 30, 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Mahaiwe Drive-in, Daniel Arts Center parking lot at Bard College at Simon’s Rock, 84 Alford Road, Great Barrington, Mass. www.mahaiwe.org/Mahaiwe Drive-in
 “Little Shop of Horrors,” Aug. 27, 9 p.m.; “Mary Poppins,” Aug. 28 and 29, 9 p.m.

Sharon Playhouse, 49 Amenia Road, Sharon, Conn. www.sharonplayhouse.org
 “Motown Under the Stars,” Aug. 29, 8 p.m.; “The Perfect Fit,” Sept. 5, 8 p.m.; “Ivy Stand-Up,” Sept. 12, 8 p.m.

YOUTH

David M. Hunt Library, 63 Main St., Falls Village, Conn. www.huntlibrary.org
 Outdoor Story Time with Rita, Aug. 27, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Fellowship of the Books: Five Libraries, www.facebook.com/fellowshipofthebooksny
 Toddler Jam with Jonny G, Thursdays, 11 to 11:45 a.m. (online); Take A Storywalk, every day 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (in person at various venues). Historical program: Quack or Fact?, Aug. 28, 7 to 8 p.m. (online).

Hotchkiss Library of Sharon, 10 Upper Main St., Sharon, Conn. www.hotchkisslibrary.org
 Story Time Outside! - Back to School Stories, Aug. 29, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.; Story time! Cats!, Sept. 1, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Kent Memorial Library, 32 N. Main St., Kent, Conn. www.kentmemoriallibrary.org
 STEAM: Leaf Labs!, Sept. 11, 3:30 p.m. (online); Zine Workshop: Pre-Recorded Facebook Video & Challenge, Sept. 14, 3:30 p.m. (online).


Norfolk Library, 9 Greenwoods Road East, Norfolk, Conn. www.norfolklibrary.org
 Page-turners (grades 4-6), email efitzgibbons@biblio.org if your child would like to join the book discussion group online.

Norman Rockwell Museum, 9 Glendale Road/Route 183, Stockbridge, Mass., www.nrm.org
 Around the World with Ted and Betsy Lewin, Sept. 19, 10 to 11:30 a.m. (online).

Oblong Books & Music, 6422 Montgomery St., Rhinebeck, N.Y., www.oblongbooks.com
 Independent Bookstore Day 2020!, Aug. 29, 11 a.m.; Hudson Valley YA Society: Kelly Jensen & Friends — “BODY TALK: 37 Voices Explore Our Radical Anatomy,” Sept. 3, 7 p.m. (online).

Pine Plains Free Library, 7775 South Main, Pine Plains, N.Y. www.pineplainslibrary.org
 Online Teen Writing Club, Fridays, 3 to 4:30 p.m. (online).

Roeliff Jansen Community Library, 9091 New York Route 22, Hillsdale, N.Y. www.roeljanlibrary.org
 Story Hour: Eels! A Hudson River Fish & How We Can Save Them, Sept. 11, 10 to 11 a.m. (online).



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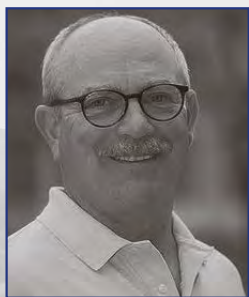
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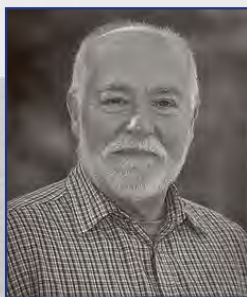
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FOOD: CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

Summer Is the Time To Learn How To Make An Easy Pie Crust

If all goes right, this is the time of year when you should have an abundance of summer fruits that want you to make them into pies.

I'm thinking of peaches, plums, blueberries and even tomatoes (yes, pizza is a pie).

Pie crust is intimidating and very few people claim to make it well. I can make a decent pie crust but I can make a fantastic pate brisée pastry dough that, in my opinion, is tastier, more buttery and much easier to work with than a traditional pie crust.

You can find a good pate brisée recipe almost anywhere, from the internet to print classics such as "The Joy of Cooking" and of course the always

dependable Ina Garten. I often use one from Jacques Pepin that was published in 1994 in Food and Wine magazine; and I often use one from the website Joy of Baking.

One of the nice things with a pate brisée is that it's sturdy enough to handle very wet ingredients, from drippy fruit to a pumpkin custard.

Here are some tips to make pie crust easier (especially if you use a pate brisée crust):

- Use cold butter
- When the recipe calls for ice water, use actual ice in your water; if small bits of ice get into your dough, that's just fine. They'll melt and help create layers. Add half as much water as you



PHOTOS BY CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

A pate brisée crust is sturdy enough that it can be folded into a galette.

think you'll need during the mixing process and then add the rest of the water little by little. With practice you'll start to see that often you don't need as much water as you think (or as much as the recipe calls for).

- Chill your dough in the refrigerator for a half hour before you try to roll it out. This helps keep it from getting sticky when you roll it out.

- Roll your dough out between sheets of plastic wrap; it's less messy, it's easier to work with, and it eliminates the need to add flour (which can make your crust tough).

You can use pate bris e in a traditional pie pan but you can also roll it out into a big circle and drop your fruit in the center, then roll the edges of the dough up and over the outer two or three inches of your fruit circle. This is called a galette.

If you make a galette, first line a cookie sheet with parchment paper. Roll out your dough between sheets of plastic wrap, then peel the wrap off the top of the dough and slide your hand under the plastic wrap beneath

the dough and flip your dough onto the parchment paper.

Ideally with a fruit filling, you want to cook the fruit down and add some tapioca that's been dissolved in water for 30 minutes. This keeps the juices from leaking, and breaking your crust.

Add a few pats of butter (always!) and maybe cinnamon and orange zest.

I use pate bris e to make pizza crust, too, and people love it. No one has ever complained to me that it's not a classic yeast-based dough.

For pizza, I pre-bake the dough on parchment paper on a cookie sheet, with pie weights or beans to keep it from bubbling up and getting lumpy. When it's lightly brown, I take it out of the oven and add my pizza toppings, then bake it until the cheese melts

This recipe is from Jacques Pepin but the technique is from years of practice, with a tip I learned from Carla Lalli Music in a video on the Bon Appetit YouTube channel. She recommends cutting your dough into quarters, stacking them and rolling them out; this gives your crust a nice flakiness.

JACQUES PEPIN'S PATE BRISEE

Adapted from Food & Wine, September 1994

- 1 1/2 cups of all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 sticks of cold unsalted butter, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/3 cup ice water

You can do this by hand, of course, but it's so much easier in a food processor, which also keeps you from warming up the cold butter with your hot hands.

In the food processor, combine the flour and salt (I usually add a tablespoon of sugar as well), pulse it a few times, and then add the cold butter. You want to run the food processor as briefly as possible; within seconds you will see that the butter and flour are pretty much combined into a nice sandy mix.

Turn on the food processor and slowly add the ice water. Very quickly the dough will separate from the sides of the food processor and clump

together into a ball. As soon as this happens, stop adding water and turn off the food processor.

Dump the dough out onto a nice big sheet of plastic wrap (I usually use two long sheets, one on top of the other, so I have more space to work). Squish your dough into a ball quickly; then cut it into quarters and stack the quarters on top of each other and squash them down again into a disc.

Wrap this all up and put it in the fridge for a half hour while you prepare your fruit and preheat the oven to 400 degrees (or you can leave the dough in your refrigerator for two or three days).

When you're ready, fill your dough (or pre-bake it, for pizza).

Bake it at 400 for as long as it takes to get toasty brown, which should be about 30 minutes, depending on your oven and how thick you made the dough.



A peach galette with a flaky and delicious pate bris e crust can be a little slice of summer heaven.

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PHOTO BY CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

Locked room mysteries are perhaps the most perfect type of tale to read during a quarantine.



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BOOKS: KATE HOCHSWENDER

For Connoisseurs Of the Mystery Genre: The Locked Room Tale

For the avid detective fiction fan, there is no puzzle more alluring than a locked room mystery. In its simplest form, it is a crime (usually a murder) that has been committed in a room sealed from the inside with no way out (and in theory, no way in).

How did the perpetrator enter and escape? Solving the mystery now becomes not only a whodunnit but a howdunnit.

“Locked room” is a term that is often used not just for crimes committed in a literal locked room but also for any crime done under seemingly impossible circumstances, where it appears the criminal had no way of leaving the scene (or entering it).

For example: A dead body is found outside in the snow. There is no weapon near the body and no footsteps can be seen anywhere around it.

This could be considered a “locked room” murder, even though it does not take place in a room at all, because there appears to be no way for the crime to have been committed without the criminal vanishing into thin air afterward.

Like the armchair sleuth, the murder (or theft)-at-a-manor-party, or the inheritance-hungry family, the locked room mystery is one of the many tropes that furnishes detective fiction. They have a long and resplendent history within the genre — with “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” by Edgar Allan Poe often credited as the first murder mystery novel, as well as a locked room tale.

It’s a plot device that has been used by writers around the world, by Japanese crime writers (“The Tattoo Murder Case” by Akimitsu Takagi and “Murder in the Crooked House” by Soji Shimada), Scandinavian writers (“The Locked Room” by Maj Sjöwall) as well as by Agatha Christie in England (“The Murder of Roger Ackroyd”) and Ellery Queen in America (look for “The King Is Dead”), with the acknowledged master of the sub-genre being John Dickson Carr, who

is famous for his tricky “howdunnits” (look for “The Hollow Man” if you’d like to try one).

Mystery fans love them because it’s always more satisfying to solve a puzzle that looks impossible — but isn’t.

An important aspect of the locked room mystery is that it has to be solvable with a rational solution. Mystery fans will give thumbs down to any tale that ends with the perpetrator having the ability to walk through walls using magic or something like that.

The most ingenious mystery authors have found lots of different ways that these seemingly impossible crimes could be achieved — mechanical traps, hidden entrances, delayed deaths, suicides made to look like murders.

And the greatest of them will provide you with all the clues you need — and then still deliver an ending you never saw coming.

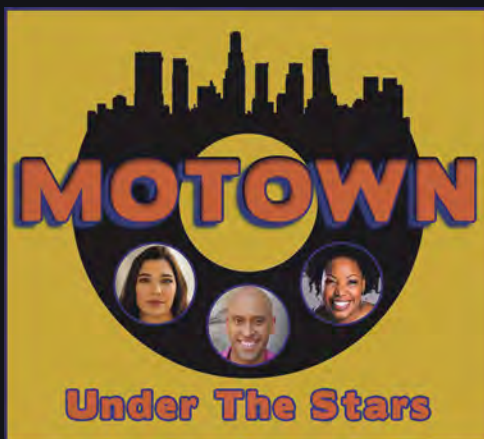
Many of the greatest locked room mysteries were written in the Golden Age of Crime Fiction, which roughly includes the 1920s and 1930s. Picking up a vintage paperback mystery can provide not only the fun of solving a crime in the safety of one’s home; it can also transport you to another era.

Another way to enjoy good old-fashioned crime fiction in the safety of your favorite armchair: Radio theater from The Two Of Us Productions in Copake, N.Y., which presents thrillers by golden age writers in an old-time radio format. The theater will sometimes dramatize John Dickson Carr tales. So far the schedule for this autumn includes The Shadow in “The Case of The River of Eternal Woe,” and “My Dear Niece,” both on Sept. 5; “Acting Like A Forger,” a Dragnet police story, is on Oct. 3. Additional tales are expected to be added to the schedule.

For information on the tales, and to find out how to tune in, go to www.thetwoofusproductions.org.

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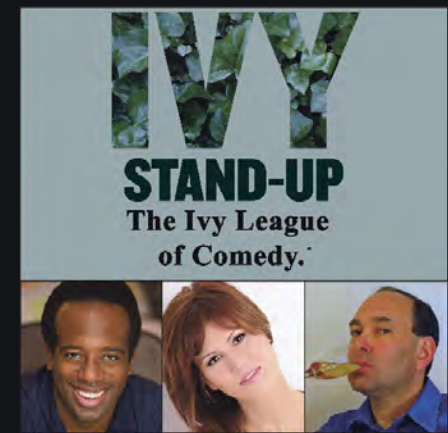
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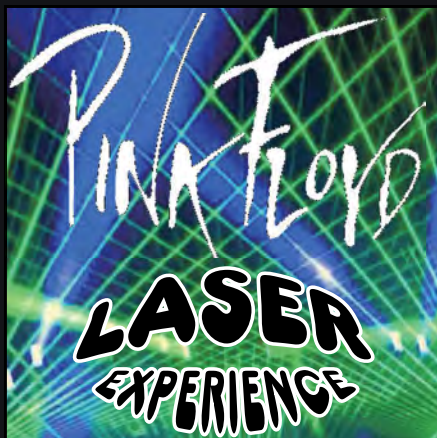
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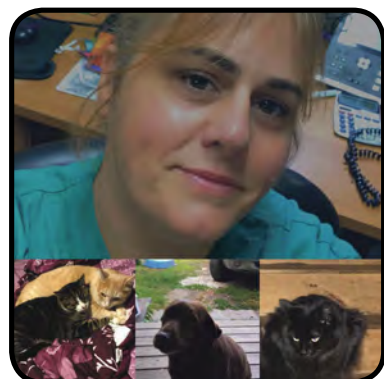
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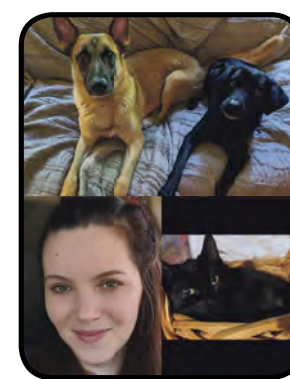
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