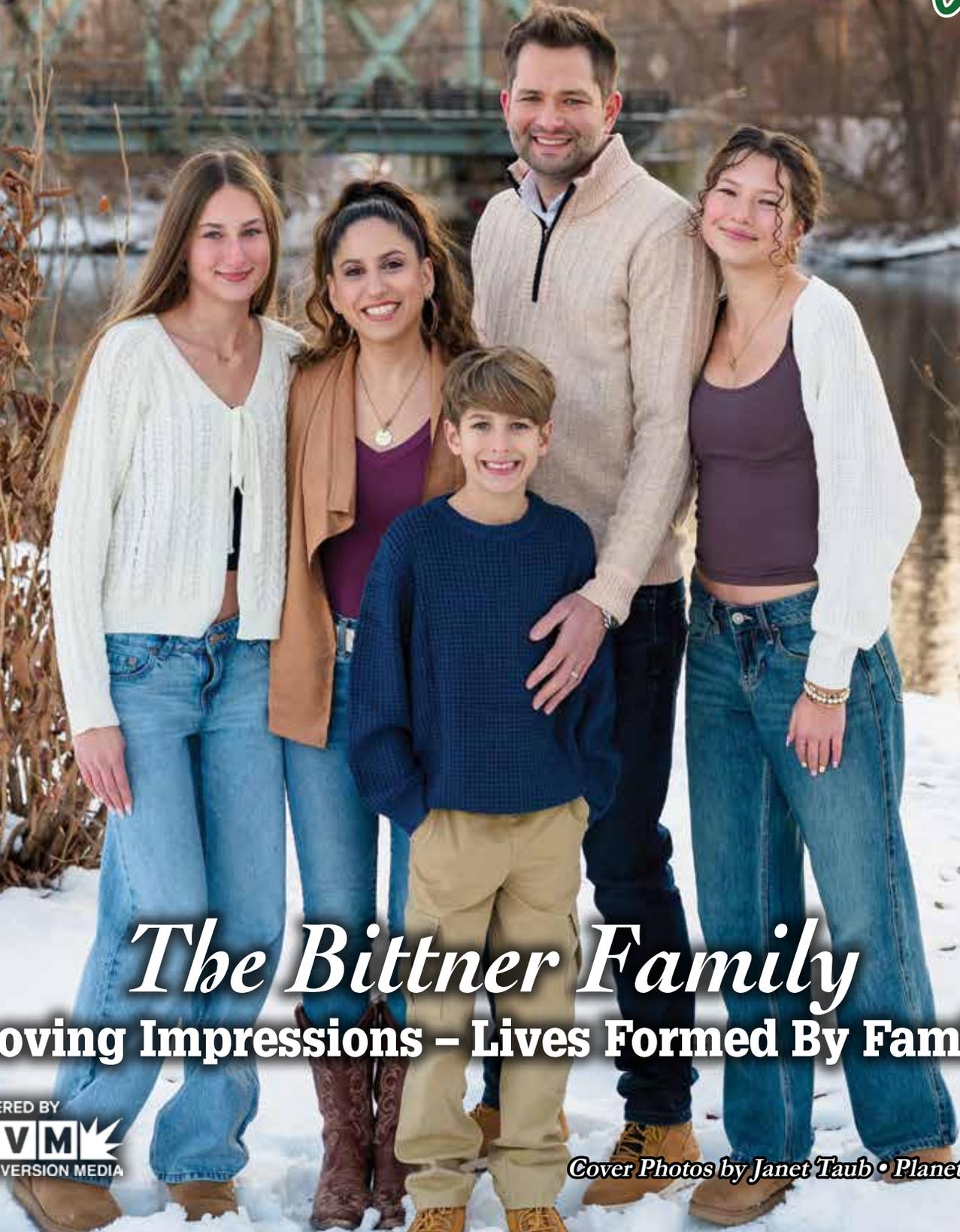


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Dear Neighbors,

This month makes it 6 years since the world as we knew it was shut down. On March 13, 2020 (Friday the 13th) it became clear that we would need to be poised for some major adjustments. But since those were unprecedented times, nobody was prepared for what would come next.

Of course, much has changed in the past 6 years. And where we stand today, is testament to the resilience of so many. I think of the small businesses that were hit so hard; but with their creativity, perseverance, sacrifice, and adjustment they have survived and are now thriving again. I am fortunate to know many of these entrepreneurs and could not be more impressed with what they have done to manage through this.

There are also many small businesses that opened during this time. How impressive and brave is that?!!

But unfortunately, some were unable to stay afloat and whether it was by choice or not, because of the time and uncertainty, we cannot pass any judgement on the reasons.

New Milford's business scene is literally comprised of 100's of small businesses and its owners. The unique pride that we all have as residents of a small town, in large part rests with these incredible people. Human nature often makes us take for granted what these great folks go through every day in providing services and goods for us.

We should all take a step back and admire the entrepreneurs of New Milford. We should all thank them. And when there is a decision on where or what to purchase, please step back again, and consider the local business community. They are here for us. I hope that after these past 6 years, we can continue to be there for them.

Dan Olson



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*Welcome from New Milford
Parks & Recreation's Denise Del Mastro*

Spring and Summer Fun with New Milford Parks & Recreation

As the frost thaws and the hills of Litchfield County begin to bloom, New Milford Parks & Recreation is ready to welcome you into a vibrant 2026 spring and summer season. Whether you are looking to sharpen a skill, dive into a new activity, or simply soak up the sun at Candlewood Lake, our upcoming programs and events offer something for everyone to enjoy.

Spring Awakening on the Green and Beyond

Spring in New Milford is synonymous with renewed energy. In April, our youth programs take center stage with programs like *For Tykes Only*, *Color Me Creative*, *Ballet Princesses*, and both piano & guitar lessons at the John Pettibone Community Center. These programs are designed to foster social and creative growth for our youngest residents. For those looking to be even more active, we offer programs for all ages that include soccer, karate, tennis, adult softball, yoga, badminton, and the increasingly popular pickleball.

Summer Camp Adventures

For many families, the hallmark of the season is our Summer Camp. Running from late June through early August 2026, our camp provides a safe, high-energy environment for children to build lifelong friendships. Held at three camp sites and including field trips to Clatter Valley and Lynn Deming parks, campers will enjoy a mix of outdoor exploration, arts, crafts, and team sports. Registration for the 2026 session began in early February and will run through Thursday, June 18th--be sure to visit the New Milford Parks & Rec website to secure your spot as camp fills up quickly. (www.NewMilfordCT.myrec.com)

Sun and Fun at Lynn Deming Park

The highlight of any New Milford summer is Lynn Deming Park. The beach season officially kicks off on May 23, 2026, and runs through Labor Day. Residents can secure season passes to enjoy swimming, kayaking, and picnicking on the shores of Candlewood Lake. To ensure safety in the water, we have lifeguards on duty from 11 AM through 6 PM and life vests available to use free of charge.

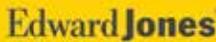
Community and Culture

Our calendar is packed with community-wide celebrations. Watch our website and your email for date announcements of our upcoming annual events including the Scavenger Egg Hunt held in downtown New Milford, Earth Day Celebrations at John Pettibone Community Center in April, Family Fun Day at Lynn Deming Park in May, our Town-wide Tag Sale in June, and our 8 Mile, 5K, and Kids Run the Green races at the end of July.

We invite you to explore the full lineup of activities and register through our online portal, NewMilfordCT.myrec.com. Whether you're a lifelong resident or a newcomer, there has never been a better time to experience New Milford Parks & Recreation.

See you at the park!

*Denise Del Mastro-Programs & Events Director | New Milford Parks & Recreation
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New Year, New You Orthodontics At Every Age

By Emily R. O'Keiff, D.D.S., M.S.



In preparation for this article, I re-read an article in the Washington Post, from March of 2025. Even though I've lived in New Milford, CT for 22 years, and practiced as an orthodontist there for twenty, I spent a fair amount of my childhood in Maryland. So, the Washington Post feels like "my" newspaper. I read it every day and regard it as the gospel on most things in life. So, the article from March entitled, "Old School Metal Braces are Making a Comeback" really piqued my interest. According to the article, metal braces have lost most of their social stigma for adults, some adults feel that removing and replacing Invisalign aligners many times a day is just too much work, and "braces are now the first choice for some orthodontic patients in their twenties and thirties."

Over the last 9 months or so, since I read that article, I've spent just a little more time discussing fixed braces than I have in the past when discussing treatment plan options with my adult patients. Historically, during an adult orthodontia discussion, we usually focus primarily on Invisalign for those that desire full treatment, night guards for grinders and clencher and those with expensive crowns and veneers, and nighttime active retainers for those who "just want it a little better and prevent it from shifting more."

But I think the article may have hit on something. It's true; I have begun more treatments recently for adult patients that have requested "regular metal braces". Approximately 1 in 4 orthodontic patients nationwide are adults. When I meet with an adult for the first time, after we've taken diagnostic records (pictures, x-ray, and a 3-D scan of their mouth), I talk about all the options that are appropriate for their case, and then we discuss the pros and cons of each option in great detail. After laying out all of the positive and negative aspects of the many options, I usually let the patient lead the conversation and help them choose the option that's the best option for their personality and lifestyle.



Sometimes, adult patients have particular dental characteristics that make one option the clear choice. For example, for patients with a significant amount of dental crowns or veneers, I would likely choose Invisalign, to prevent damaging the glaze on their porcelain restorations. If a patient had a very severe vertical overlap of the upper front teeth over the lowers, I might encourage them to at least start with braces before transitioning to Invisalign, as this is an area

where braces really excel and Invisalign sometimes struggles. But for most patients, both options (Invisalign or braces) are available, and I am open to their input. It is still true that most adults, when given a choice, ultimately choose Invisalign appliances for their comprehensive orthodontic treatment, primarily for esthetic and social reasons but also because their appointments can be made quite far apart (usually 10 weeks) compared to braces (usually 4 weeks for adults, as opposed to 6 weeks for children).

But for many patients, the final choice of braces or Invisalign comes down to personal preference. And for most adults, their choice is Invisalign, a clear, comfortable, esthetic option, but one that requires a fair amount of work on the part of the patient (removing and replacing the appliances several times a day). But for some adults, and for more than it used to be over the last 15 years or so, their first choice is to, "give me the old school ones, Doc, I want to do it right and I don't care what I look like." And for those, my goal is to give them my all, as I do for all my patients. But I have to admit, for some reason, there's just something special about using the silver brackets on an adult rather than the more traditional, clear porcelain brackets- three cheers for the young at heart, that are showing up more frequently, all across the country!

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The Bittner Family Loving Impressions

*Briella, Jessica, Joe,
Haley, and Joey*

By David Dunleavy / Photographs By Janet Taub / Planet Photo

Jessica Levitt was getting annoyed with her boyfriend Joe Bittner, who kept asking her to grab the ice cream in the freezer. “I finally told him if he wanted it that bad to go get it himself,” Jessica said. So, Joe did and then he began bugging Jessica to open the container for him.

“I must have said ‘no’ a million times,” said Jessica who remembers the 2005 moment vividly. When Joe opened the container Jessica saw a ring box on top and by then Joe was on bended knee asking for her hand in marriage. “I was surprised and I felt bad at the same time for how I acted,” said Jessica, who admits she can be a bit controlling at times. “He had scooped out the ice cream, put batteries on the bottom to give the container weight and put the ring box to top.”

The couple were married the next year and to this day, after a home purchase, three children and establishing successful careers, Jessica Bittner still has the container of Ben & Jerry’s Cherry Garcia ice cream.

“Oh yeah, it sure is my favorite ice cream,” Jessica said. “He even saved the scooped-out ice cream so we could enjoy it after he proposed.” Unusual circumstances aren’t necessarily uncommon to the Bittners. As a nine-year-old, Jessica traveled to Israel as part of a group tour with her father, Joel, her mother, Barbara and sister.

“My parents couldn’t follow the pack, of course, so we wandered off by ourselves and ended up in the desert,” says Jessica. Eventually

they came upon a man riding a camel who offered to trade the camel for Jessica and her sister. “My parents would tease my sister and me later on that maybe they didn’t make the right decision,” she said with a quick laugh.

Jessica, who grew up in Danbury and Joe, who lived in Newtown, met through separate friends, who set up a visit to the Danbury Fair Mall in early 1999 through a revolutionary communication service developed by AOL called Instant Messenger. “We met and became good friends, but we weren’t dating,” Jessica said. After high school, the two didn’t stay connected as Jessica went off to the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City, earning a bachelor’s degree in Fashion Merchandising. Joe attended Western Connecticut State University earning a degree in psychology.

Then one night the two ran into each other at Tuxedo Junction restaurant and nightclub in Danbury and began dating. Soon after, the couple bought a condominium in New Milford right out of college and life has been on the run since their marriage in 2006. Joe moved right into sales in the retail industry and then into the residential and commercial insurance industry. For the past 10 years he has worked for Total Communications in East Hartford as a major accounts manager helping businesses decide and then install what technology works best for their company.

In 2010, Jessica began working at New Milford Hospital where she upgraded an outdated boutique that became quite popular with



Rehoboth Beach



Joe and Joey:
New Milford Baseball



Briella and Haley:
NMHS Homecoming



Haley and Briella: NMHS Field Hockey

families. While working at the hospital she also opened an online jewelry store in 2014 making hand stamped jewelry.

Life was already interesting by then since Jessica had given birth in 2012 to twin daughters, Haley and Briella. The girls were born two months premature via In-Vitro Fertilization and had to spend eight weeks in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Danbury Hospital. Now 14 and healthy, Haley and Briella are freshmen and members of the New Milford High School field hockey team. Five years later, the Bittners were blessed with the birth of their son Joey, 9, and who enjoys playing youth sports including his favorite, baseball.

But Jessica knew something had to give with three children, a job and a growing online Etsy jewelry business that she worked on once the children were put to bed. So, in 2017 she decided to leave her job at the hospital and continue with her online business, called Lasting Impressions. The name has since been shortened to LICT. The business continued to grow and then COVID hit.

“The online business was going well but I missed that in-person aspect,” Jessica said. So, she purchased and revamped a minibus. The vehicle, in effect, became a travelling boutique that she took to people’s homes and assorted events, such as driveway parties, where she sold jewelry, clothing and accessories.

Since 2023, LICT has really taken off, mainly as a custom-made apparel business, catering primarily to sports leagues, schools, non-profits and small businesses. “I’m happy to work with someone who wants a particular product, say a hoodie but isn’t sure of the design they want,” said Jessica, who can create a design or use a logo, for instance, that the customer prefers for apparel or other items such as hats, tote bags, cups and tumblers. “Everything we do though is handmade.”

Located on Bennitt Street in town, Jessica plans to open a retail storefront and wholesale showroom in March. Production and shipping will continue at the back of the store.



Haley, Briella, and Joey



Jessica and Joe



Briella, Jessica, and Haley



Joe and Jessica At The Mall



Joey Joins The Family



Christmas 2025



Joe Learning It's A Boy!



Joe, Jessica With The Twins

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Jessica and Joe credit their parents for providing the fortitude and drive to overcome life's obstacles in order to be successful. Growing up, Joe spent many years biking and kayaking with his dad, Joe, who passed in 2019, and his mother, Linda. Jessica's father, Joel, the art and music coordinator in the Danbury school system was Jessica's art teacher in fifth grade. When Jessica took his art class as a high school student, she dropped it in the first week. "It was too hard. We've had a good laugh over that one through the years," she said.

Her mother, Barbara, who passed in 2024, worked at The News-Times for 20 years, becoming director of the popular Newspaper-in-Education program; collaborating with teachers to incorporate newspapers into their daily curriculum. Joe's mom, Linda and Jessica's dad, Joel, continue to be an important part of their children's lives.

"Everything Joe and I have done we've done for our children," Jessica said. "We feel it's our responsibility to teach them to be independent and to be successful as they grow."

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By Kylie Costello / Bank Street Group

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April 3-Super Mario Galaxy Movie *Sequel to Super Mario Brothers Movie*

May 22-The Mandalorian and Grogu *Part of the Star Wars franchise and continuation of the Disney + series, The Mandalorian*

June 19-Toy Story 5 *Continuation of the Pixar Toy Story franchise*

June 26-Supergirl *Adaptation of the 2021-22 comic book miniseries Supergirl: Woman of Tomorrow*



July 1-Minions 3 *Animated comedy film Sequel to Minions: The Rise of Gru*

July 10-Moana (Live-Action) *Live-Action adaptation of Disney's 2016 animated film, Moana*

July 17-The Odyssey *Epic action fantasy film written and directed by Christopher Nolan*

July 31-Spider-Man: Brand New Day *Fourth in the MCU Spider-Man film series*

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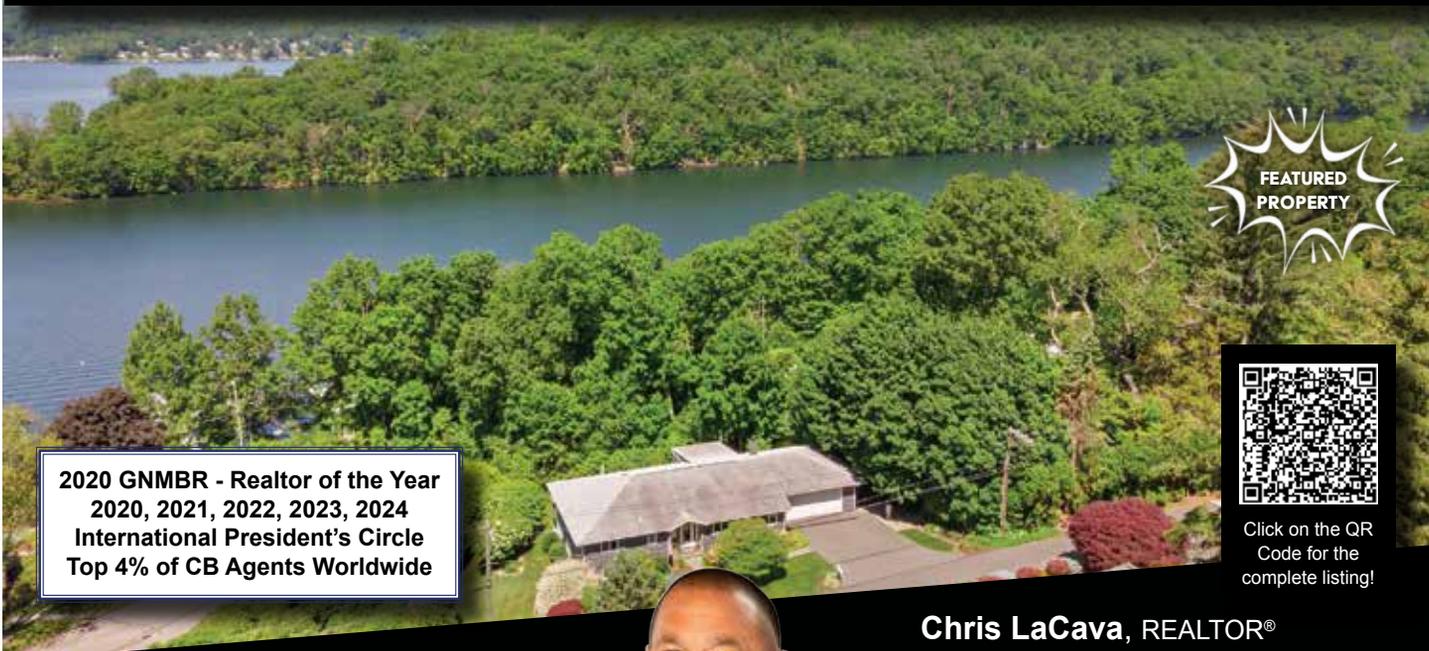
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1 LISA COURT NEW MILFORD	4,774	5	4 FULL, 1 HALF	\$849,000	CLOSED
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5 WOODLAND HILLS TERRACE BROOKFIELD	1,387	3	2 FULL	\$475,000	UNDER CONTRACT
30 SADDLE RIDGE RD NEW MILFORD	4,814	5	4 FULL, 1 HALF	\$899,000	UNDER CONTRACT
17 MEADOW LN NEW MILFORD	3,608	3	3 FULL	\$1,370,000	ACTIVE

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19 CANDLEWOOD SPRINGS NEW MILFORD	2,052	4	2 FULL, 1 HALF	\$619,000
59 CARLSON RIDGE RD NEW MILFORD	2,270	2	2 FULL, 1 HALF	\$549,000
1 CANTERBURY ARMS NEW MILFORD	860	2	1 FULL	\$209,000
60 ERICKSON RD NEW MILFORD	2,964	3	2 FULL, 1 HALF	\$690,000
7 JEFFERSON DR NEW MILFORD	1662	4	1 FULL, 1 HALF	\$455,000
8 GREGORY DR NEW MILFORD	2380	4	2 FULL	\$569,000

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Emmons Tree & Landscape 25 Years!

A Dream, Hard Work, And Community, Brings Success!

By Shawn Emmons / Owner / Emmons Tree & Landscape



2026! This year marks an important chapter for Emmons Tree Service, one that was built on a dream, hard work, a great community, and a supportive family.

Yes, this year we celebrate 25 years of business here in New Milford!

In 2001, I was encouraged to chase my dream of owning my own tree service, thus Emmons Tree service was established. After high school I attended SUNY Morrisville, where I studied landscape design and Arboriculture. Morrisville was a great school for me to go to as it was a hands-on school, I learned how to operate machinery and how to climb trees along with the science that goes with trees. I came back from school to work for a national tree company where my job was to remove and prune trees around the utility lines. I learned a great deal while working for the national company but the struggle I had was that I was a young foreman that no one wanted to listen to. Frustration led me to go out on my own.

In the early years, I was eager to work and would not shy away from any job. We did lawn mowing, mulching, snow plowing, as well as tree services. When things were slow or weather was an issue, I would work as a subcontract climber. And on weekends, I would make mulch deliveries for the local nurseries. I knew absolutely nothing about running a business, but I did know one thing, I knew how to work; and if that meant having to work 7 days a week then that was what I was going to do. During that time something special happened, that can only happen in a small town, jobs that I acquired came from word of mouth. Family friends, former teachers, local business owners all shared my name and gave me a chance. To this day, 25 years later we do limited advertising.

The most rewarding part of owning this business for me is getting to work side by side with my wife Sara and my father Rick each day. People warned me not to mix business and family, and I would be lying if I said it was always easy, but in all honesty, it has made us stronger and better because of it.

Through the years I have received tremendous support from a lot of special people in my life. When I was a teenager, I worked for Cosmo's Landscaping and Cosmo played a pivotal role in giving me guidance personally and professionally right up until his passing this year. He always believed in me and reminded me all it takes is hard work and determination.

In 2001, when I started my business, I operated out of a shed on my parents' property. As I started to acquire more trucks, zoning came along and said no more, time to move to a commercial space. This was a huge challenge for a new business that was trying to get off the ground. I owe a huge Thank You to Mr. & Mrs. Layton who took a chance on me and rented me a unit at South End Plaza. To this day I walk through the door of the shop every morning

and am grateful for them. Another person who offered unwavering support was Jeff from Meadowbrook; he encouraged me to get my arborist license and dealt with my endless questions in the process. There have been MANY people over the years that have helped shape me to who I am now, MANY! When they say it takes a village, it certainly does. I want to thank all of them for not only being supportive but also always sharing advice with no judgement through the years. The best way I can honor them is to pass on their advice to others the same way it was shared with me.

Growing, staffing and equipping a tree service is a big task! We currently employ 10 wonderful people and are looking to add to our crew this year. One of those employees, Chris DiDonato, has been with the company for 23 years and is currently studying to become a licensed arborist as well. I pride myself on my employees, their training, our equipment and the way jobs are done safely and efficiently. Including myself we have 3 licensed arborists on staff, which allows us to handle many aspects of the tree care industry. There is so much more to our industry than just dragging brush or running a chainsaw, and I love being in the field with our crews and teaching them new skills and seeing them overcome challenges.

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L to R: Darrick, Bram, Luke, Sam B., Sam S., Chris, John, and Laura



Shawn Overlooking Candlewood Lake

We certainly have had our ups and downs in 25 years; however, I have learned something new every day and that is what matters most. The most important lesson I have learned is that if you do what you love, then you will never work a day in your life. I am blessed that I get to work with a talented group of individuals day in and day out. Recently a good friend of mine asked “What will be next once you reach your dream?” I replied, I have not reached mine yet, but when I do, I will come up with another one.

We want to wish this great town a wonderful 2026! Please follow Emmons Tree Service on social media. We have a lot of wonderful things planned to celebrate our 25th anniversary this year and plan to continue our traditions of giving back to the community that has shaped us to be who we are today.



Shawn and Sara Emmons



Shawn Emmons and 23 Year Veteran Chris DiDonato



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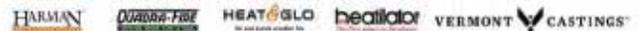


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On the New Milford Green with...

The Sarah Noble Intermediate School Walking Project

By Diane D'Isidori, MD / Founding Member SNIS Walking Project



Kathy Flynn, Tanya Herring, Kelsey Holub, Christine Zona, Diane D'Isidori, Lisa Montemurro, Michele MacDonnell, and Linnea Leclair

The Sarah Noble Walking Project, the much anticipated and beloved annual “rite of passage” for New Milford’s fifth graders, is celebrating its 20th year this Spring. The Walking Project was created in 2007 by a group of health advocates from the Healthy Community 2020 coalition to address the rising rates of childhood obesity. At the same time, the NM Public School District tasked the School Wellness Council to update its Wellness Policy to adopt wellness as the cornerstone of the district’s curriculum. In keeping with the district’s Whole Child Wellness model, the Walking Project’s goal is twofold: To teach and promote healthy lifestyle choices to the fifth grade class and their families through education and activities centered around the 4Es - Exercise, Eating well, Environmental awareness and Emotional health; And to foster community collaboration by partnering each classroom with local businesses and organizations to support the students' efforts through example, engagement, mentoring and financial sponsorship.

The idea of a project to increase students’ exercise by giving them pedometers to track their steps was presented to then SNIS Principal Ella Mae Baldelli and 5th grade teacher Lisa Montemurro and was enthusiastically accepted. A volunteer committee was formed consisting of community and school members. Community businesses and organizations were solicited to sponsor classrooms and join the students’ efforts in walking and tracking their steps over a month’s time and at the end of that inaugural project, 378 fifth grade students had clocked 51,878 miles and the Walking Project had officially been launched.

Although the month-long Walking Project’s initial focus was on Exercise, the program has expanded to incorporate 3 additional pillars of well-being: Eating well, Environmental awareness, and Emotional health, collectively known as the “4 Es”. This growth has allowed the Project to remain relevant and responsive to students’ evolving needs. These health concepts are presented to the students in relatable interactive ways by knowledgeable community volunteers and organizations. Examples include: the Pratt Nature Center enlightens students on respecting and caring for the environment. New Milford Hospital’s dietician discusses the impact of food choices on the environment and how to eat mindfully.

The Center for Empowerment and Education gives presentations on Empathy. New Milford educator Cynthia Bonnell conducts classroom yoga sessions for the students and teachers. Importantly, these presentations also demonstrate how each of the “E”s are interconnected - complementing and reinforcing one another.

To show the families of the 5th graders what the Project is about, a Family Night is held at SNIS with information, activities and demonstrations given by businesses, organizations and school staff that showcase the 4Es.

In addition to the Walking Project committee, SNIS administration, teachers and staff, the success and sustainability of the Project is largely due to the dedication and generosity of the community businesses and organizations that have sponsored it over these past 20 years, contributing the funds to purchase pedometers, T-shirts and other necessary items, and mentoring the students, walking with them and reinforcing the 4Es with their experiences and wisdom. This is truly an example of a successful community-school collaboration.

Noteworthy facts:

- On April 29, the Walking Project will begin its 20th year. Since it began, **6040 students have participated, logging 973,610 miles. We anticipate reaching the 1,000,000 mile mark this year!** It ends with a closing ceremony on May 29.
- **96 different local businesses and organizations have contributed in some way to the Walking Project:**
- 38 local businesses & organizations have been classroom sponsors - 14 for at least 10 yrs and 8 for all 19 yrs.
- 58 additional community businesses, organizations and non-profits have contributed financially, intellectually, or with products over the 19 yrs.
- Founding committee members: Diane Marandola DNP, Diane D’Isidori MD, Lisa Montemurro, Carolyn Haglund RD, Ann Hartman MPH, and Geri Rhoda RN
- Current committee members: 5th grade teachers Lisa Montemurro (co-chair), Linnea Leclair, Christine Zona, Tanya Herring & Kelsey Holub. Community members Diane D’Isidori MD (co-chair), Michele MacDonnell RD, and Kathy Flynn.
- In 2010, the Walking Project committee presented the Walking Project at the American Academy of Pediatrics National Conference in San Francisco
- During the pandemic, the Walking Project successfully continued virtually
- All the funds to run this project are received through the sponsorship of the classroom sponsors and grants from the PTO and other orgs. We also receive many in-kind and free services to help defray our costs. The United Way is our fiduciary.



Zaza's on Main The Next Big Thing

Submitted By Artie Praino / Tyrone Taylor / Owners / Zaza's on Main

New Milford has always been a town with heart—rich in history, full of charm, and fueled by community. But every so often, something arrives that feels like a spark. A place that shifts the energy, elevates the scene, and reminds everyone what dining out can truly be. Lately, you can feel that spark on Main Street the moment you walk by—the buzz, the warmth, the unmistakable sense that something new has taken hold.

On any given evening, as the lights glow along Main Street and the town settles into its familiar rhythm, one doorway stands out—alive with laughter, clinking glasses, and the irresistible pull of something fresh. That doorway belongs to Zaza's on Main, the restaurant at the center of this new excitement. Born from friendship, passion, and a shared vision for more, Zaza's is the place that signals a new chapter in New Milford's dining story.

The evolution of Zaza's on Main began with two local couples, Artie and Charleen Praino and Tyrone and Marisol Taylor, whose friendship grew during the years the Prainos owned Zaragoza on Bank Street. Over countless conversations—often centered around food, community, and the charm of their hometown—they found themselves returning to the same question. New Milford has so much to love, so why wasn't there more variety in its dining scene?

Zaza's on Main is exactly that—a collaboration between two couples who recognized a need and poured their passion into filling it. The team feels deeply honored to join the wonderful family of New Milford restaurants. This community is special: one of the largest in square mileage in the state, yet one of the closest-knit and most supportive. Being embraced by such a community is something the owners do not take lightly. Their mission is simple: to create a place where memories are made over great food, great drinks, and genuine enjoyment.

The goal was clear: create a space that feels gorgeous without feeling “fancy,” a place where everyone—from families to date-night couples to friends meeting for a late-evening drink—could feel at home. Guests can enjoy a handcrafted cocktail or a delicious glass of wine without breaking the bank. They can feed the whole family with comforting, crowd-pleasing pizzas or savor a juicy steak or perfectly prepared seafood dish for a special night out. And for those looking for a lively atmosphere after dinner, Zaza's offers an energy that keeps people coming back.

In addition to its dinner offerings, Zaza's continues to serve its weekday prix-fixe lunch menu, giving afternoon diners a delicious and approachable option during the week. The restaurant also offers its 3–6 p.m. Social Hour — the perfect mid-day pick-me-up, featuring select bites and drinks ideal for unwinding after work or meeting friends before dinner. For guests on the go, Zaza's pizzas are available for pickup or delivery through the Slice app or the Slice tab on the website—bringing the flavors of Main Street straight to your door.

One recent five-star review captured the spirit perfectly: “What an absolute gem this restaurant is! Impeccably styled with food and drinks to match... Zaza's on Main will be the next big thing in Litchfield County.”

Zaza's is now open for Sunday brunch from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., featuring a two-hour bottomless drink menu, a lineup of brunch favorites, and a DJ to elevate the vibe. And just in time for spring, the restaurant will unveil its new outdoor patio overlooking the beloved New Milford Green—and inviting space designed for warm-weather dining, cocktails, and community gathering.

To join the mailing list or make reservations, visit zazasonmain.com. A new season—and a new chapter for Zaza's—is just beginning.

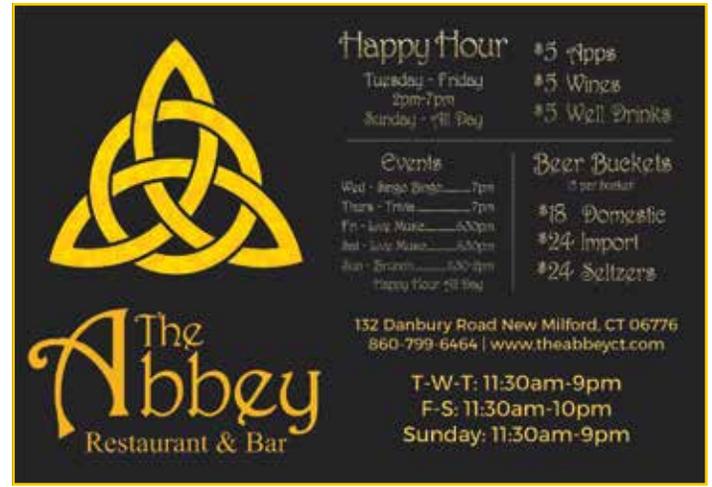


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M.O. Foss Well Drilling & Pump Service

It's All About Chemistry!

By Mick Foss / Owner / M.O. Foss Well Drilling & Pump Service



Hands down my least favorite subject in school was chemistry. Lots of math and formulas, and my seventeen-year-old self had zero interest. I phoned it in all year, barely coasting my way through. Who cares? It's not like I'm ever going to use it in real life! Well fast forward to today; I use it and I teach it every day. I've even got a little chemistry kit that I bring out on almost every job to test water.



My Chemistry Kit

Treating people's water takes up most of my time these days. Just today, I replaced a well tank that was destroyed by low pH (acidic) water. Installed a neutralizer (to raise the pH), a water softener (to strip the mineral content and pull out sodium) and a point of use reverse osmosis system for drinking water. All in one house. Tomorrow I'll be installing a filter to remediate radon in someone else's house. And it's all chemistry.



Acidic Water Damage

Water picks up the attributes of the bedrock that it flows through. Limestone creates hard water, schist has iron and manganese, granite has arsenic in it and so on and so on. Even if you're on city water, it will be hard. Municipalities treat water to be potable but that doesn't include hardness (New Milford's municipal water is about 22 grains hard).



Neutralizer & Softener

Back in the not-so-distant past, people lived with iron staining and pin holes in their plumbing, that's not necessary anymore. With modern testing and filtration, you can control that. It's important to know what is in the water that you're drinking, cooking and bathing in. You can treat your water and save thousands on fixtures, water heaters and pipes in your house. It's easy to find out and it's able to be filtered out.



Low pH (Acidic) Water Damage To Fixtures

If you have any questions about your water (and you should), please feel free to reach out. I'd be happy to show up with my little chemistry kit, take some samples and show you what's in your water.



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Body Mind Spine Chiropractic

You've Tried Everything... Now Try The Approach That Works

By Dr. Nicole Armstrong

When I opened Body Mind Spine Chiropractic in New Milford, I didn't want to create a typical chiropractic office. I wanted to build a modern, elevated space where patients feel understood, cared for, and confident in the plan, because real healing requires more than a quick adjustment. It requires time, precision, and an approach designed around results.

My commitment to this work is rooted in experience. As a U.S. Army veteran and mother of three, I understand what it's like to push through pain, normalize discomfort, and keep going even when your body is clearly asking for support. I also know how discouraging it can be to seek help and still feel unheard, still in pain, still unsure where to turn next. Many patients believe their problem is unique, when in reality they are experiencing common dysfunction patterns that simply haven't been properly addressed.

That realization became the foundation of Body Mind Spine Chiropractic: care should be strategic, comprehensive, and designed for lasting change, not temporary relief.

Many people come to our office believing they are "just getting older," that their body is breaking down, or that pain is simply the cost of a busy life. In reality, pain is rarely random. Old injuries lead to compensation. Compensation changes movement. Movement changes biomechanics. Over time, the body adapts in ways that create recurring pain and reduced performance.

At Body Mind Spine Chiropractic, we focus on identifying the true source of dysfunction and building a customized plan to restore mobility, strength, and long-term resilience. Our care is intentional, outcome-based, and designed for patients who want more than short-term relief.

Treatment often includes chiropractic adjustments, but we never treat the adjustment as the entire solution. Instead,

we integrate hands-on manual therapy, myofascial release, soft tissue work, mobility training, and corrective exercise to improve how the body moves and functions as a whole. We also offer StemWave shockwave therapy, which supports circulation and can help stubborn conditions involving tendons, muscles, joints, and fascia.

What truly sets our practice apart is the level of time and attention we provide. Patients deserve time to explain their story, understand their options, and receive treatment that matches the complexity of their body. That is why Body Mind Spine Chiropractic is built around longer, high-quality appointments with a clear strategy behind every visit.

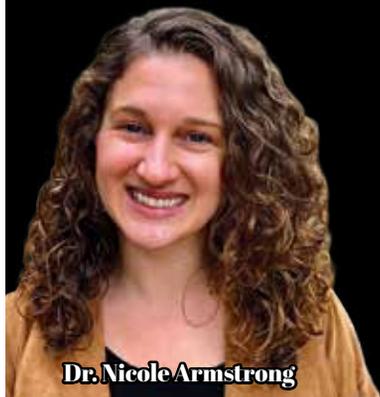
One of the most rewarding parts of my work is watching patients finally turn a corner. We frequently see people who have tried rest, stretching, medication, injections, or repetitive short appointments that never created real change. Many live with chronic pain, stiffness, repetitive strain injuries, nerve irritation, or tendon problems that have limited their lifestyle for years. Often they've been told to stop the activities they love, accept that it's "normal," or prepare for surgery.

Our clinic exists to offer a different path. The goal is not simply to reduce pain. The goal is to restore function, confidence, and capacity, so patients can return to the life they want with a body that feels stronger and more reliable.

As I look ahead, my vision is to expand Body Mind Spine Chiropractic into a trusted wellness destination for New Milford and the surrounding communities: a refined space where people come not only to recover, but to optimize, moving better, healing faster, and building long-term strength.

Body Mind Spine Chiropractic is more than a name. It's a standard of care and it's an honor to help patients experience what's possible when healthcare is done differently.

May You Be Healthy | May You Be Well | May You Be Free From Pain



Dr. Nicole Armstrong



Body Mind Spine
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STUDENT ATHLETE SPOTLIGHT NEW MILFORD GREEN WAVE

By Dan Olson

Our Student Athlete Spotlight shines this month on two veterans in their respective sports. Both have been a part of their Varsity Teams since freshman year.

John King is not only a 4-year starter on the Ice Hockey team but is also Team Captain. He pairs that with an academic record and leadership positions in several other endeavors such as Athletic Council and DECA, all the while sharing his time volunteering. His is currently planning on attending James Madison University to study Business/Finance. Post season awards have not yet been announced, but John's name is certain to be called.

Lucy Cherniske has been a standout in the pool for 4 years and has been a member of the Wrestling and Lacrosse teams. Her accomplishments at NMHS have been many, including athletics, and her active involvement in Key Club and a Wingman leader. Also, as a Black Belt in Tang Soo Do, and spending countless hours as a local volunteer, it is no wonder why she is a Team Captain in the Swim & Dive program.

John and Lucy are very deserving to be featured this month. Both have been exemplary NMHS Student Athletes, and community leaders.



JOHN KING

- NMHS Class of 2026
- Ice Hockey
- Team Captain: Ice Hockey
- 4 Year Varsity Starter
- Hobey Baker HS Character Award Nominee
- Highest Honors
- DECA
- FBLA
- Athletic Council
- Volunteer: Thrift Mart Of NM
- Volunteer: Friends Of The Lake
- College Plans: James Madison University
- Will Study Business/Finance
- Plans To Play Club Ice Hockey



LUCY CHERNISKE

- NMHS Class of 2026
- Swim & Dive, Wrestling, Lacrosse
- CIAC 2022-2023-2024-2025 Class L Championship Qualifier
- SWC 2023 Championship Qualifier
- CIAC 2023 State Open Qualifier
- Key Club
- Wingman Leader
- Black Belt: Tang Soo Do
- Lifeguard: Lynn Deming Park
- Volunteer: Loaves & Fishes and Thrift Mart Of NM
- College Plans: Undecided
- Plans To Compete Collegiately



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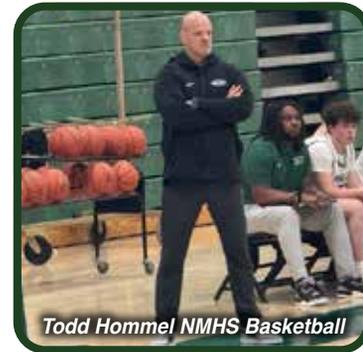
By Todd Hommel /Assistant Coach / New Milford High School Basketball



My basketball journey began in elementary school where I fell in love with the game and became what some would call a “basketball junkie.” Everything I did revolved around the game of basketball. Playing outside with my older brother, practicing drills in the rain, getting up 200 shots in my driveway prior to going to bed, every single day. These were the sounds and memories I had as a kid growing up in CT.

I wasn't blessed with great size or a forty-inch vertical, but what I did have was the will and the desire to outwork anyone in my way. Loving the game, I was devastated to learn I didn't make my high school team, but applying the will and desire I tried out for my college team and made it as a walk on. Those two characteristics are something that I hold very near and dear in everything I do in life, and those two characteristics (among others) continue to drive me in my work career, my parenting skills, my faith, and my coaching.

After my basketball career ended, I spent most of my career in sales for some of the most recognizable names in the sports world, including CBS Sports and ESPN. In the early days of my career a lot of the compensation was dependent on business you could close--I learned very quickly you work differently when you don't have a steady stream of income coming in every week. It was an adjustment period for me, but I soon figured out applying that same will and desire I had to the game of basketball to sales made an immediate impact on my success as a sales executive. In my office at ESPN, I had a sign on my wall that said, “Win Everyday!” That sign was a reminder to be the first one in the office and the last one to leave, to make more calls than anyone else, to not take no for an answer-- to not fail! I still have that same sign in my office at home and it's what drives me in everything I do. I hope I can instill that work ethic in the young men that I coach.



Todd Hommel NMHS Basketball

In 2024 my family and I moved to New Milford from Westchester County, NY where I had been coaching basketball at Iona Preparatory. Because of the distance I wasn't able to continue coaching at Iona Prep. I wanted to keep coaching at the high school level and was fortunate enough to get hired at NMHS. After meeting with the AD, Keith Lipinsky, and the Head Coach, Brice Assie', my decision was easy. Both Brice and I have the same values, philosophies, and ideas on how to foster a successful program. Some of those value and philosophies include accountability, commitment, desire, and the ability to learn and compete. It is our goal to instill those same values into our kids on the court, but much more important to instill those values off the court as well. These are characteristics that these young men will need as they compete in life and that is something we don't take lightly.

My hope is to teach our kids when things get tough, or there is a challenge before you that seems impossible--assess what that challenge is and how you are going to approach it. You can't be afraid to fail--failure is the first step to achieving success! Failure can be a great motivator, but it can also be the one thing that leads to quitting. It's much easier to quit than it is to face that challenge head on.

I have a saying with our teams- **Quitting is the easiest habit to form! Don't Quit--WIN EVERYDAY!!**



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Diana Newbert
A Tradition of Trust

A Page From My Cookbook

My Grandmother's Pasta Fagioli By Diana Newbert



There never was a shortage of good food growing up, especially during family holidays.

My Italian grandmother, Carmela Cacace, along with my mother, Sarah, and Aunt Angie Timan, produced amazing Italian dishes year in and year out. I'm not sure if I ever remember seeing them use a written recipe and maybe they did, but years of honing those culinary skills made them master their trade.



But there's no doubt Carmela was the grandmaster. To this day, I remember being in her kitchen as she began the time-consuming process of making homemade pasta and ravioli the day before Christmas. You had to know what you were doing and oh, she did. Making the pasta from scratch called for flour, eggs, a bit

of olive oil and salt and then kneading the ingredients into a mound of dough. Grandma then rolled out the dough and added a bit more flour, so the long flat layers wouldn't stick.

Now this is where the process differs, and you won't find it in any recipe book. The long sheets of pasta were then laid on a sheet. Yes, a real bed sheet, and then covered, where it dried overnight atop a bedspread in a spare room just down the hallway. By morning, the sheets of pasta, sufficiently dried, were ready to be cut into strips, boiled and served with spoonfuls of homemade tomato sauce.

A slightly different process played out in making ravioli, in which spoonfuls of ricotta were stuffed into a homemade shell, which was closed by pressing the dough with a fork around the edges. The family meals also included breaded veal cutlets, braciolo and lasagna to enjoy. Of course, there was always homemade bread on hand for dipping - fresh from the New York Bake Shop.

To this day I still haven't had meals as good as those, although I still give some of those dishes my best shot. One of my family's favorites is Pasta Fagioli! That's why Italian dishes are still some of my favorites to make for my family to enjoy. It also brings back good memories of the fantastic meals I enjoyed growing up, which made holidays so special. Oh, how I miss those days!

PASTA FAGIOLI

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb of ground beef (I use 90% lean ground beef)
- 1 small onion chopped
- 1 clove of garlic (or already chopped garlic)
- 1 bay leaf, onion powder, garlic powder, black pepper
- 2 (15 oz) Cans of dark kidney beans (do not drain). The juice from the bean adds so much flavor.
- 2 potatoes cut up into bite size pieces
- 32 oz of Beef Broth (I use low sodium) (sometime adds a couple of soft bouillon cubes if more flavor is needed)
- 1 cup tomato sauce (sometimes more)
- Ditalini Pasta
- Parmesan Cheese

DIRECTIONS

1. In an 8- or 10-quart pan add a bit of olive oil to the pan and start sautéing onions, add garlic and ground beef and cook until done.
2. Add two cans of dark kidney beans with juice. Add a can of water from each empty bean can and scrape inside of cans and add spices. (onion powder, garlic powder, 1 bay leaf and pepper to your liking) Add Parmesan Cheese. (a couple tablespoons)
3. Add potatoes and 32 oz of Beef Broth. I also add 2 cubes or so of soft beef Bouillon cubes and more water if needed.
4. 1 cup of tomato sauce. (You can add more to taste)
5. Cook over medium heat until potatoes are almost done and add a couple handfuls of Ditalini Pasta (I also make more on the side) Cook until done.
6. Serve in a bowl with Italian Bread. Sprinkle parmesan cheese on top. Enjoy!!

P.S. I never really measure!

Diana Newbert is an award-winning Realtor with William Raveis Real Estate in New Milford.

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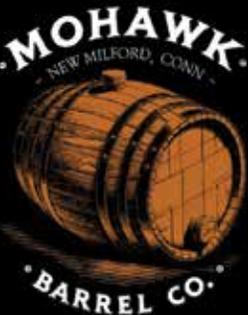
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