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OCTOBER 2021

Living

Cover photo submitted by Casey Passafaro

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BELMONT Living

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FEEDBACK/IDEAS/ARTICLES:

Have feedback, ideas or submissions? We are always happy to hear from you! Deadlines for Articles are the 10th of each month. Go to bestversionmedia.com and click "Submit Content." Please be sure to include *Belmont Living* in the request. You may also email your thoughts, ideas and photos to: Cathy Tulloch at ctulloch@bestversionmedia.com.

Did you know?

Best Version Media started with six magazines covering six Wisconsin neighborhoods and in just thirteen years has grown to cover over nine hundred communities throughout the US and Canada. If you or someone you know loves working with people, has a big heart for the community, and wants to be part of an innovative way to bring people together, then give us a call. Neighbors everywhere are waiting to make a BVM connection!

Letter to Residents

Autumn is a beautiful time of year—

Nature as Artist paints our landscapes full of rich warm colors—reds, oranges, yellows. And we're so fortunate to live near such beautiful, scenic areas as the Blue Ridge Mountains, Shenandoah National Park and Skyline Drive. Why not pack a lunch then pack the family in the car and head for the mountains for a day of viewing nature's tapestry along the highways. And don't forget to bring the water bowl for Fido!

No matter what your plans, though, we wish you cool, crisp weather and special gatherings with close family and friends, maybe around a campfire or a backyard fire pit. And if s'mores tend to be a little too sweet for your liking as they do for mine, why not try one of those campfire popcorn poppers? I think you can get them at Dick's or maybe even at Walmart in the camping section. All this to say, enjoy this heavenly time of year!

Blessings,

Cathy Tulloch

Publisher
Belmont Living



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Is 52:7



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VETERINARY MEDICINE
Margaret Fortier
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Dr. Fortier graduated from Michigan State University in 2004 and has been practicing veterinary medicine since that time. She had spent a year in Northern Virginia in a small-animal internship, and in this role, Dr. Fortier learned from various specialists and became familiar with a diverse clientele. Since that time, she has spent 10 years practicing in downtown Washington, D.C., and enjoying the fast-paced city life. The relationships she formed with her patients and their owners are what motivated her to become a practice owner, and today she continues to offer her specialized care and compassion to all those whom she and her staff welcome through the doors of the Goose Creek Veterinary Hospital.



DRIVER INSTRUCTION
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Lyle Tulloch founded the Ashburn Driving School with a mission to reduce new-driver accident rates by carefully adhering to all DMV regulations, by offering a personalized, professional approach to behind-the-wheel training and by emphasizing classic defensive driving skills such as off-road recovery, evasive maneuvering, and steering control. He is a native Northern Virginian, and he, his wife Cathy, and their family have lived in Ashburn for over twenty years.



EQUESTRIAN TRAINING
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Broad Shadow Farms is a private training and boarding facility located in Leesburg, Virginia. We offer private lessons with a three-star Equestrian as well as full service equestrian boarding with amenities including 12x12 stalls, hot/cold wash racks, heated tack rooms, a 100x200 outdoor arena, a full jump course, and six spacious paddocks. Broad Shadow Farms is proud to neighbor with the 200+ acres of trails of Temple Hall Farm and Fabbioni Cellars on Limestone School Road, just 11 miles from Belmont and Ashburn. We look forward to seeing you soon!



ACCOUNTING
Lori Christ, CPA
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Lori has 25 years experience as a Certified Public Accountant. A mother of six, she opened her own accounting business from home and has been self-employed for 17 years. Now two of her adult sons work with Lori in her business. Together they handle over 600 tax returns a year, many of them for small businesses. Lori works with her clients year round doing tax and small business consultation, and looks forward to helping your small business prosper!



SWIM INSTRUCTION
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GoldfishSwimSchool.com

Co-Owners Matt and Kendra Watson and Will and Sarah Alberts care deeply about the safety of children around water, and with that mission in mind and a combined 70+ years of swim experience, they founded Goldfish Swim School of Ashburn. Their unique, state-of-the-art facility is designed to enhance learning, fun and safety for children from 4 months to 12 years of age; the tropical environment and shiver-free pools create a wonderful backdrop for their award-winning swim lesson curriculum, The Science of SwimPlay®, while the air-conditioned viewing gallery creates a comfortable space for parents to relax, work, socialize, and view their swimmers.



COLLEGE CONSULTING
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Hannah Serota is the founder and CEO of Creative College Connections. She has spent the past three decades in the field of college admissions. First, at her alma mater, Oberlin College, then as the college counselor at a private high school where she honed her skills working with students with learning disabilities. In 2010 she opened her educational consulting practice, which has grown from a part-time solo operation into a thriving practice with a team of expert college admission consultants and an essay specialist, all dedicated to guiding and supporting students and their parents through the maze that is college admissions.



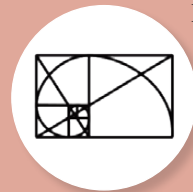
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Joseph F. Myer, CFP®, President, Chief Investment Officer, Coursier Capital Management, LLC. Joe has spent the past 21 years advising clients on one of the most important aspects of their lives: their life savings and financial well-being. Joe has earned a Master's Degree in Finance from Harvard, a Certificate of Financial Planning from Georgetown, and a Bachelor of Science from the University of Wyoming. The Coursier Capital Management, LLC process combines a comprehensive financial plan with a rigorous investment discipline. Joe and his team are dedicated to providing clients with focused, informed, and honest advice.



FOSTER PARENTING
Deborah Evans
Chief Executive
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FCSVA.org

A child's needs are best met within a caring and loving family, and with this truth in mind, For Children's Sake brings families together with children who are in need of just such love and care. Who can be a foster parent? Anyone who is 21 years of age, single or married, has a safe and clean home environment and a steady income, and has the love and patience for children in need. For information, please visit our website at FCSVA.org, watch our short informational videos, and know that someone very special is waiting to meet you.



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HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING
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Falcon Heating & Air Conditioning, Inc. was founded more than 30 years ago in Sterling, Virginia, with only a small van and two employees, Alex Hosseian and Bruce Rahmani. It was the founders' persistence and their foresight that caused Falcon to grow exponentially over the subsequent years, becoming one of the leading heating and air conditioning service providers in the Virginia, Maryland, and Washington D.C. region. In an industry with a significantly shrinking work force, Falcon is not only rapidly expanding, but also supporting the community in numerous ways, and most recently with their recent grand opening of a state-of-the-art headquarters facility and HVAC training center, a symbol of hope and opportunity for employees who are given opportunities that they may not have otherwise had. We hope you will call upon our family if you would like more information about our heating and air conditioning services or if you would like to schedule an interview with us.



AUTO DETAILING
Dillon Thompson, Owner
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REAL ESTATE
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T&G Real Estate Advisors
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Website: WadeSellsVA.com

Charles Wade is a fellow resident of Belmont and a real estate consultant with T&G, recognized by the Northern Virginia Association of Realtors as a Platinum Member and Multi-Million Dollar Sales Producer. Before becoming a realtor, Charles worked on Capitol Hill as a congressional staffer and an IT professional; he was a multi-sports collegiate athlete and continues to be an avid sports fan. He invites you to give him a call and sit down for a cup of coffee and a no-obligation chat. Charles Sells VA and looks forward to helping his Belmont neighbors do the same.



LIVE ESCAPE ADVENTURES
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Kelsey started Escape Room LoCo 5 years ago in the town of Leesburg with the passion to bring an immersive and exciting experience that challenges your mind and tests your team building skills. Escape Room LoCo has since brought you 13 different exciting challenges over the years and plans to continue making new themes and puzzles. The goal is simple yet challenging: to solve the puzzle in the allotted time! This adventure will challenge your mind and get your adrenaline pumping as you race the clock. You can only solve the puzzle if you work as a team! Escape Rooms are perfect for families, friends, and coworkers. We are offering you an experience you won't soon forget!

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THIS MONTH'S FAMILY FEATURE ARTICLE IS PROUDLY SPONSORED BY ANIMAL MEDICAL CENTERS OF LOUDOUN

By Allison Wyatt | Photos Submitted by Casey Passafaro



Meet the Passafaros: *The Most Neighborly Ninjas in NoVa*



Casey Passafaro was just two months away from graduating with her masters degree as a Nurse Practitioner when she decided it was time to get active. She joined a crossfit gym and fell quickly in love. Her friends started noticing her new hobby, and when she told one that she could do a pullup, they were quick to suggest that she try out for *American Ninja Warrior*. Fascinated, she immediately went home, found a backyard Ninja competition in North Carolina, and traveled down to give it a try... and then she failed almost every obstacle. Realizing she needed to train, she went home with a newfound passion - and she hasn't let up since. Now, her whole family has done a deep dive into being active - through both ninja and lots of other family activities.

She googled the closest Crossfit gym to practice, and discovered that it was over 2 hours away. Not one to be slowed down, she called a realtor who

found her an available warehouse in Sterling. Just 30 days after obtaining the lease, and as she learned the ropes at her first job as a nurse practitioner, she had set up her gym and was open!

Soon, members began asking if she would host ninja birthday parties for their kids. While it was not something she had initially considered, as Crossfit was her niche, she was willing to give it a try. During the first party, 8 attendees requested either a party for their own kids, or additional classes for themselves. For four years, she ran the Crossfit gym concurrently with a ninja gym, alternating schedules and routines in the same warehouse space. Finally, she closed the Crossfit space and went "full ninja." As if that didn't keep her busy enough, she was still working at the hospital full time!

Casey moved to Belmont 10 years ago, when her son Finn was about to turn one. Now, she, Finn (11), and Charlie (8) all



enjoy "doing ninja" in the house, which she has set up with ropes, pull up bars, and more. The three of them frequently sit on their deck and play chess together, and go biking as a family. (One of the reasons she chose Belmont was its proximity to local trails.) She loves team sports while they love solo activities, like reading and legos. Finn and Charlie attend a Spanish immersion school; Finn is a science lover, and Charlie loves recess. Both boys are also in the chess club at school.

When Covid hit and daycares closed, Finn and Charlie were home a lot more, and out of necessity Casey significantly decreased her hours at the hospital. That extra time at home allowed her to dedicate more hours to the gym (where her boys could join her), and she decided to open a second location just a few months ago, right in Belmont. She loves running into neighbors at the gym that she's never met and cultivating new relationships through fitness.

As Casey was planning her move to Belmont, she targeted the Meadows specifically. She appreciated that there were a finite number of townhouses with a single entrance to the subdivision, encouraging a tight knit community within the wider Belmont community.

She has had many of the same neighbors the entire time she has lived there, and they have enjoyed spending time with their kids at the playground and building a fort together in the woods. During Covid, while everyone was stuck at home, she invented "virus ball"

continued on page 8 >>>



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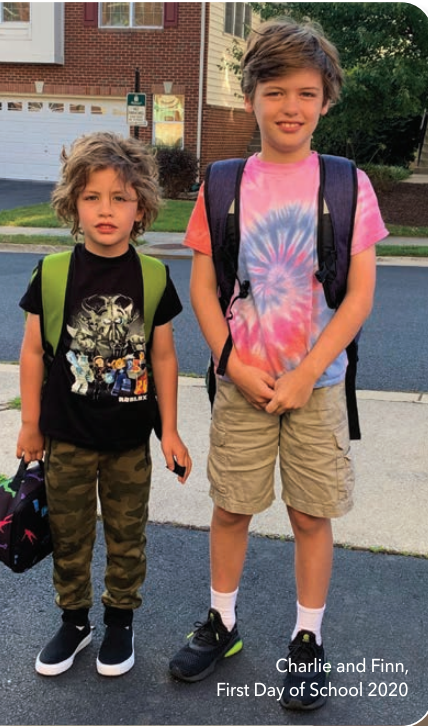
<<< resident feature

- a version of kickball where players could come and go anytime, play at a distance, and include anyone who wanted to join. They also like to meet up and do firepits in their driveways at night or chat during acoustic nights at Belmont.

During her moments alone, Casey practices the piano at least two hours a day, and recently requested that the Belmont Clubhouse piano - which originally belonged to the General Manager's grandmother - be tuned so more people could enjoy it. She has a passion for tending her collection of outdoor plants, and she cycles on her own. She is also getting back into Ninja competitions herself, rather than solely training others.



The unofficial Passafaro family motto is "When in doubt, ninja it out," meaning "Relax the talking; many frustrating or stressful moments will pass when you occupy your mind with fun and fitness." Casey encourages families to get active together and to find happiness in their family through play. "Even older kids and adults can connect through play, and I see genuine connection happening during those interactions."



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Meeting Dr. Jean-Claude Kharmouche, NOVA PERIO SPECIALISTS

By Cathy Tulloch



Many Loudoun residents may already be familiar with Dr. Kharmouche—an expert in periodontology who has been serving Northern Virginia since 1997 as a Diplomate of the American Academy of Periodontology with special interest in Periodontics and Dental Implants.

Dr. Kharmouche graduated from Boston University in 1993 and from the Department of Periodontics VCU-MC in Richmond 1997, and currently his offices can be found in Sterling (2002), Gainesville (2008), Leesburg (2016), and soon to be in South Riding/Aldie (early 2022).

On most workdays, Dr. Kharmouche works out first thing in the morning and gets ready for a nonstop day at the office. His main location is in Leesburg, and they have four periodontists to cover the three locations. “Dr. Justin Hardison and Dr. Fadi Hasan are not only my students but they are partners and excellent friends. I am so excited to work with these young progressive periodontists.” Dr. Alka Panwar joined the team in 2020, and she has already made a name for herself in Loudoun through her work on advanced gum disease and implant dentistry. The group will be welcoming a new member to their team this November, Dr. Sanaz Vahid.

Dr. Kharmouche has two children: Gabie (almost 16) and Emanuel (14). Gabie is in 10th grade and is a member of the varsity cheerleading team for

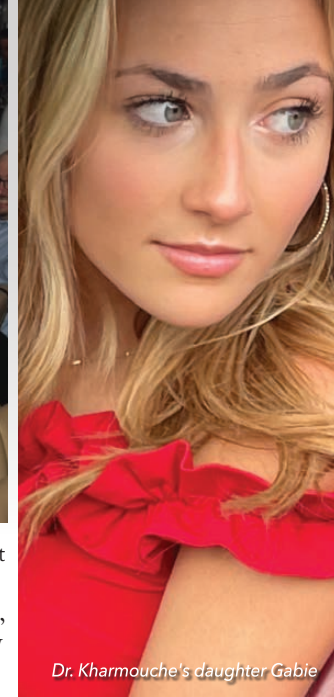
the Riverside Rams. Emanuel is in 9th grade and enjoys playing soccer at VA Revolutions Soccer Club.

When he has free time, Dr. Kharmouche enjoys traveling, working out and visiting local wineries. “Though the epidemic limited our travel experiences, I had the opportunity to visit Budapest-Hungary both as a tourist and to advance my knowledge of the field of bone augmentation and implant dentistry.” He and his family also made a couple of short trips to Kansas for a family celebration and to St. Louis to visit a friend of forty-five years. He is looking forward to a couple of educational and fun trips this fall: one to Scottsdale in October and another to Miami in November.

Dr. Kharmouche encourages anyone who may need additional dental treatment to visit his offices for a consult. “We promise you that you will be provided the most advanced, ethical, and comprehensive treatment for



Dr. Kharmouche and his son Emmanuel



Dr. Kharmouche's daughter Gabie



healthier gums, a better smile, and implant replacement of your teeth, utilizing the most respected materials available to clinicians anywhere. We are ethical and fun, we participate with many insurance companies, and my staff will work hard to make it possible and affordable for you to obtain the treatment that you have always dreamed of. We cater to you!”

 Dr. Kharmouche's Leesburg offices are located at 2 Cardinal Park Drive SE, Suite 102B, and he may be reached by calling 571-458-1320 or through his website at PerioPerio.com.



Dr. Kharmouche's staff having fun





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What is Biomechanics, AND WHY DOES IT MATTER TO YOU?

By Dr. Lisa Allen, PT

Biomechanics is a general word we use to talk about the way your body moves and the way your body is uniquely put together. It relies on pulleys and levers and engines and a special balance of forces.

Your body is both an electrical and a mechanical thing. Did you know that when you get a cut it creates a negative electrical charge? This is called "the current of injury." It is one of the ways that the area sends a message to the rest of your body that there is damage that needs to be repaired. How cool is that? Your body really is electric.

When you have a chronic wound that has stayed open for a long time, however, that negative charge dissipates, and your body no longer sees the wound as a project that needs to be handled. With physical therapy, an electrical machine can be used to imitate the current of injury in order to help chronic wounds heal.

In addition to being electrical, your body is also a marvel of machinery. Did you know that your kneecap works as a pulley? You have other little bones in your body called sesamoid bones that also act as pulleys. There is one in each foot and in each hand.

When your muscles and bones are not in the exact perfect alignment you were born with, this can put extra strain on muscles and tendons. This strain can affect your bones and cartilage in asymmetric ways and is often the reason you might develop tendonitis or arthritis.

Let's consider tendonitis. The condition can occur from overdoing a single action, but not always. If your tendon is not in the proper position with the proper tension, the misalignment can cause additional stress. Imagine breathing through a snorkel. You have to breathe with more force because you are running your breath through a tube that is twice as long as the tube you normally breathe through (your trachea). The situations are similar.

So, how do we fix it when your mechanics are off? It may be as simple as an adjustment to the way you regularly sit or use your body, such as creating an insole for your shoe.



Or there may be an intensive need to adjust your bones a little in order to recalibrate the proper stress on tendons, which is not a painful experience but feels more like the pressure from a deep massage. Furthermore, some bones are easy to move because they are floating, such as the smaller of the two bones in your lower leg and your shoulder blade bone.

Now, let's consider arthritis. When your body is not in the proper mechanical alignment it can cause your bones to abnormally bump each other, causing pain. Your joint surfaces can also wear out in a crooked way, which then makes you more and more crooked over time and causes pain.

For example, when some people have hip pain, they think it is hip joint arthritis, but it may be an alignment issue instead. Your hip bone (ilium) is a really large bone that attaches to your tailbone (sacrum), and the hip socket is located within the hip bone. If the hip bone gets twisted or tilted, the thigh bone (femur) then does not sit properly in its socket, and the hip bone can jam up against your tailbone. This causes low pain on one side of your tailbone, in your lower back or in the hip itself. Although the description may sound gruesome and scary, it is an easy problem for a therapist to fix who knows about Muscle Energy Technique (MET).

MET is very safe. It is not painful because we use your own muscles to fix the mechanics. We put you in specific positions that allow the bones to move, then we have you contract your muscles to pull them back where they belong. Voila! Your pain immediately lessens.

MET can also be used to treat back pain. Because it is a detailed approach, an MET therapist looks at each and every vertebra, your tailbone and your hip bones to see if individual bones are lacking motion and in which direction and then guides them back into place using your muscles. After treating each and every vertebra, a therapist then reevaluates to see if each is fixed properly. This process may take more time than the few minutes you spend in a typical chiropractor's office, but the detail and perfection can give you better results.

Treating pain and problems from a mechanical perspective helps more than just the symptoms. While treating symptoms and inflammation are an important part of pain, it is only one step. As we always say: we first treat the cause of the symptoms so your recovery is faster, and your problem doesn't keep coming back.

If you have had physical therapy for your back pain and were simply given exercises or a lumbar roll, you should know that there is so much more that can be done to give you relief. If MET treatment is right for you, you will know in one to three sessions.

As with everything at BioMechanic Physical Therapy, we look at the body as a mechanical unit. We offer a 15-minute free assessment where we can tell you if you are a candidate for this powerful treatment technique. Just call us at 703-723-7726 and set up an appointment, and we will take care of the rest.

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Facts and Myths ABOUT ESCAPE ROOMS



By Kelsey Mitchell, Owner, Escape Room LoCo



Escape rooms are exciting and challenging and a fairly new concept in live, interactive entertainment, and many people are curious about them. So here we'll talk about both the facts and the myths about escape rooms in general and Escape Room LoCo in particular, in hopes that it will encourage you to take that dive into this fun and fascinating world!

open the door in case of any situation.

NOT SCARY!

One of our most frequently asked questions is if our rooms are scary. We promise you that none of our rooms are scary, except when we bring our Halloween themed room each October. Even for that room, we will provide a prop that you or a young one can hold so our live actor will not scare you within the room. Our Halloween room is the only room with a live actor!



DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE

Every escape room offers a different experience when it comes to their themes. Since the beginning of Escape Room LoCo, we've built and/or operated 12 themes. From Mechanic's Garage and Detective's Office being our original designs to just opening Loco Cocoa Factory this past August 2021. We provide rooms that are great for both beginners and veterans, and also have the option to put in kids clues for most of our rooms to help the younger groups.

NOT ACTUALLY LOCKED IN

Despite what most people have heard, you're not actually locked in the room. A lot of our rooms require you to do an objective that does not require you to get out of a door, even though we have had those types of final objectives in the past. All of our doors that are "shut" have an emergency switch that will

ONLY ONE HOUR PER ROOM

Every room that we have is exactly 60 minutes in length except for our Halloween room which is 45 minutes long. In order to start you on time, we ask guests to come in about 10-15 minutes before the start of their room to go over rules, use the restrooms, play with locks in the lobby, etc. After the room is done, you're welcome to take a photo with our props in our lobby. All together, your experience might take up to an hour and a half. It'll be a quick but exciting hour of your time, so don't think you have to block off most of your day to do one.

DON'T NEED TO KNOW THE THEME

Guests do not need to know the theme of the room in order to play it. We make the rooms immersive enough for you to feel like you are part of the story, but without making you go do research on our themes. Each room is carefully crafted to tell a story that you learn along the way to your escape.

NOT A FRANCHISE

One of the biggest misconceptions about escape rooms is that most believe they are a franchise. A majority of escape rooms are actually privately owned. Escape Room LoCo has been in business since June 2016 and opened our 2nd location in March 2021. Since then, we've closed our doors to our first location and relocated all of our escape rooms to our new location due to having ample space to house a lot more rooms for you to experience.

BUILD EVERYTHING OURSELVES

A good amount of other escape rooms purchase their props, furniture, puzzles, etc. Here at Escape Room LoCo, we have a dedicated and talented team that builds everything from scratch. We love to sit down and plan for months, brainstorm ideas, and bring them all to life in order to bring you the best experience you can find in Loudoun County, VA!

LISTEN TO YOUR KIDS!

This is a big one! In most cases parents will refuse to listen to their kids when trying to solve a puzzle. Yet in fact, most kids actually have a kind of sixth sense for giving the correct answer to puzzles. Don't be afraid to listen to your little ones! They can lead you in the right direction.

ABOVE ALL, RELAX AND ENJOY THE FUN!

Escape Rooms are just a really great way for people to get together, spend time interacting, talking, thinking, and just having fun. We hope you'll try them soon!



Kelsey Mitchell, Owner

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Belmont Living is partnering with local Loudoun-based author Samuel Moore-Sobel (and son of our newest BL sponsor, Kate Moore of Moore Piano Music) to print a series of excerpts from his newly published book, *Can You See My Scars?* chronicling an accident that left him with life-threatening burns to his face, neck, and arms and set him on a journey from severe trauma to healing and recovery. We hope you will be as inspired by Samuel's journey as we are.

WHO AM I?

The bell rang. It was a hot day in June on the last day of school. They called it the bell, although it sounded more like a siren or a loud bellowing noise coming from deep within the center of the building. Masses of students were rushing past me. This was the part of the school day that I hated the most. I experienced a surge in adrenaline whenever I found myself traveling among students crowding the hallways. No matter how hard I tried to remain calm during school dismissal, I needed to find some peace and quiet during the height of the rush. I ducked into the school library. At this time of the day, it was almost deserted. I found my place among the books and magazines, picking up the most recent edition of *Time*.

Local Author Series: CAN YOU SEE MY SCARS?

By Samuel Moore-Sobel

I felt excited as I absent-mindedly flipped through the magazine.

Finals week was about to begin, which meant school would be over soon and I could finally breathe again. The school year had been exhausting as I struggled just to make it through each day. I felt like my friends from freshman year had faded away and now, by the end of sophomore year, I was wondering who my friends were. Many students seemed uncomfortable around me, averting their eyes and getting noticeably quiet whenever I approached. I was glad to escape these dynamics by entering the upcoming summer break.

"Hey, Sam!" My head turned just in time to see a teacher, Mrs. Allen, approaching. We had met several weeks before. Mrs. Allen was a history teacher in charge of distributing "Character Awards," a way for teachers to nominate students for displaying noble qualities. She had presented me with the award. Afterward, she told me that she knew of my story. I appreciated her kindness during our conversation. She was known for her bubbly personality and care for her students.

"What are you still doing here?" she said in her sing-song voice with a smile.

I told her I stayed to avoid the traffic. We exchanged small-talk before I admitted how I really felt. "It's been a hard year," I told her.

She nodded. "I know. At least the year is almost over," she said.

I agreed and walked with her through the open doors of the school, into the now mostly-empty parking lot. We talked about the accident, and she

empathized with how challenging the experience had been for me and my family.

Before we parted ways, she smiled at me and said, "It makes you who you are, right?"

Caught off guard, I tried to formulate an appropriate response. "Yes," I mumbled, nodding my head as I jumped into my car. I paused to consider her words. Maybe this does make me who I am, I thought.

But is this who I want to be?

Leaning my head out of my lowered window, I attempted to offer this response to her, but she was already gone, driving down the winding road away from the school. I was left to wrestle once again with the implications of losing my face.

I KNOW WHY

A bloodcurdling scream emerged from a brunette child with striking blue eyes. The child—one of my campers at a week-long summer camp—continued to scream relentlessly. We stood in a museum as part of a tour group arranged around a kindly docent who had just begun explaining the controls of an airplane. My camper, Bryce, continued to scream. "Ow," the docent exclaimed in response to Bryce's ill-timed disruptions. The others in our tour group looked uncomfortable.

I coaxed Bryce out of the simulated cockpit and led him toward the planes hanging in the middle of the museum, trying to quell his screams. I was Bryce's counselor for the summer camp serving children with special needs and their families. I had chosen to work at this camp as a way to give

back. I was trying to get outside of my own head after the accident by being a part of something bigger than myself.

Bryce had been diagnosed with autism, but was highly functioning and able to participate in nearly all activities successfully.

In my attempt to calm him, Bryce and I continued walking around the hanging planes. No luck. He continued to shriek, yelling his way through the museum. No words came out when he opened his mouth—he repeated his long, spine-tingling howl at an extremely high decibel.

I led him from exhibit to exhibit, hoping that the change in scenery would reorient him. His screaming continued. I tried everything in my arsenal to calm him down. I gently asked him what was wrong, trying to see if we could fix whatever it was he found so upsetting. He remained unreachable. It was as if he was inhabiting another world, the intensity of his swirling emotions blocking out all other external stimuli.

After many unsuccessful attempts to calm him down, I asked if he wanted to leave. "NO!" he screamed. By this point, we had traveled to the front of the museum, safely away from causing further disturbances to those visiting the exhibits. I leaned down to talk with him, attempting to meet him where he was. I looked deep into Bryce's eyes to see if I could detect the source of his irritation. He looked sad and a little angry. It was like he wanted to cry out to the world, letting everyone know of his internal anguish.

I knew that everywhere he went Bryce was often told to be quiet. To behave. People often responded to him with critical looks, harsh stares, and judgment. It was part of his daily experience. I wanted to act differently, to treat him with the respect and understanding he deserved; to remind him of his value and place in this world.

The discomfort of others notwithstanding, I let him scream. We walked back to the main hall and wandered through the rest of the museum, visiting whichever exhibits he wanted to view. I asked him

to lower his voice along the way and did my best to avoid security at every turn so as to avoid getting ejected from the museum.

Hours later, we left the museum, traveling to Chuck E. Cheese. Our arrival prompted a change in Bryce's behavior, and his smile reappeared as he played a myriad of games. Upon our return to camp, our exhausting day finally neared an end. Before returning inside, our group took a walk near the grounds on a path lined with trees and beautiful foliage. At first, we trekked along silently, taking in the scenery and enjoying the warm July weather. Bryce was the first to break the silence.

"Why was I screaming?" he asked.

"Well, I think you were upset about something," I answered.

A confused look came across his face. It was like the wheels of his mind started churning as he puzzled through his anger. "Well, do you know what I was angry about?" he asked me.

I thought about his question for a moment, trying to determine an appropriate answer. I couldn't pretend to understand or accurately capture the feelings he was experiencing, but my own experience came into my mind—the deep frustration I felt when others tried to tell me how to feel. I wanted to give him the answer he was looking for, an answer that could satisfy his curiosity and help him understand.

"Well, I don't think you liked the museum because there were so many people so close to you, but I think you are happier now, and maybe next time, you can tell me what is bothering you instead of screaming," I said.

Bryce nodded. My answer seemed to placate him.

"Yeah, I guess so," he replied.

Weeks later, as we neared the end of camp, the director facilitated a discussion among that summer's counselors. This served as an opportunity for us to

debrief as a staff while sharing the lessons we had learned as a result of the experience. When my turn came, I told the story of Bryce at the museum and shared my thoughts. I felt blessed by my time with Bryce. He taught me something about my own experience over the past year and about my own relationship to my memory and the memory of my trauma.

"I know why I am angry," I said to the group. "Bryce didn't know why; he was angry for reasons that were entirely not his fault." Some say that ignorance is bliss, but I saw firsthand that an inability to understand the reason behind a feeling could have a frightening effect.

For Bryce, it was a loss of control.

I had spent the last year bemoaning my memory. I had longed to forget, to be free from wrestling with the memories of my trauma. My memories had kept me up late into the night, tormented me during nearly every waking moment, and caused me to question nearly every aspect of my existence. I would have given almost anything to be able to forget, even just for a few minutes. Until spending time with Bryce helped me feel grateful again for the memory that I had once loved.

To be continued next month . . .



Samuel Moore-Sobel is an author, speaker and columnist. He lives in Northern Virginia with his wife, Megan. His debut memoir, *Can You See My Scars?* is available for purchase on Amazon. Follow Samuel on Instagram @smoore_sobel or visit him at samuelmoore-sobel.com.

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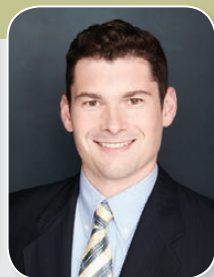
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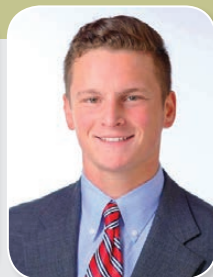
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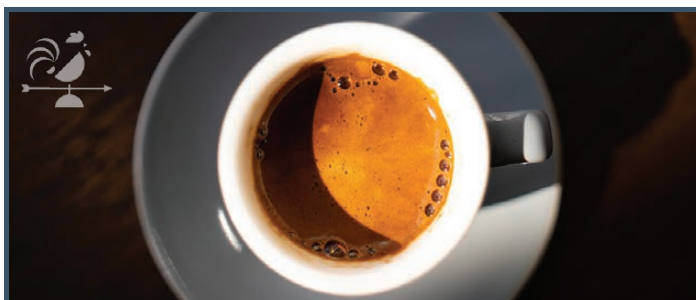
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recipe corner

Crispy Almonds

By Sally Fallon, Author, *Nourishing Traditions*

This recipe prepares almonds or other nuts through a soaking process that is similar to soaking beans. Just like for beans, soaking makes nuts more easily digested by removing the phytates which can irritate the digestive tract. Nutrients found in nuts are also made more readily available through the soaking process.

This recipe is taken from Nourishing Traditions, NewsTrendsPublishing.com. Weston Price Foundation may be contacted at (703) 820-3333 or by email at Info@WestonAPrice.org. Visit us on the web at WestonAPrice.org or WiseTraditions.org.

Makes 4 Cups **INGREDIENTS:**

- 4 cups almonds, preferably skinless
- 1 tablespoon sea salt
- Filtered water

DIRECTIONS:

1. Skinless almonds will still sprout, indicating that the process of removing their skins has not destroyed the enzymes. Skinless almonds are easier to digest and more satisfactory in many recipes. However, you may also use almonds with the skins on.
2. Mix almonds with salt and filtered water and leave in a warm place for at least 7 hours or overnight. Drain in a colander. Spread on a stainless steel baking pan and place in a warm oven (no more than 150 degrees) for 12 to 24 hours, stirring occasionally, until completely dry and crisp. Store in an airtight container.
3. This recipe can also be used to make crispy pecans, pumpkin seeds, macadamia nuts, walnuts or peanuts. Crispy nuts are great for snacking, topping a myriad of foods, and incorporating into countless recipes. Enjoy!

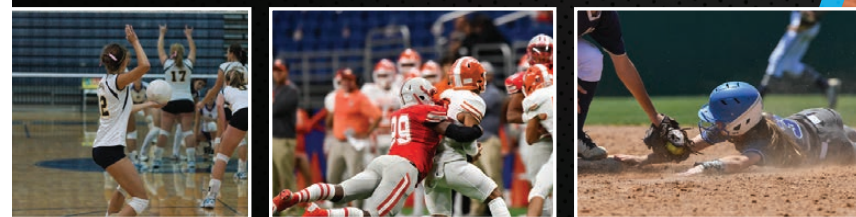
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October

October 1 - November 2

Pumpkin Fest Leesburg

@Leesburg Animal Park

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Time: 9:30 am - 5:00 pm (see website for more details)

Cost: \$13.95 and up
www.pumpkinfestleesburg.com/hours-admission/

October 16

Ashburn Village Yard Sale

@Ashburn Village

Join the neighborhood, rain or shine, for a community yard sale and find some new treasures!

Time: 8:00 am - 1:00 pm

Cost: Free
www.ashburnvillage.org/

October 16

Family Ninja Night

@NoVa Ninja

Train like a real-life Ninja warrior... with your family!

Time: 6:00 - 7:00 pm

Cost: \$30 / family
http://novaninja.com/

October 19

Line Dancing in Leesburg

@The Loudoun Kitchen and Bar

Learn new steps ranging from beginner to intermediate, then join your new friends for a

time of open dancing! Food and drinks will be available to purchase.

Time: 7:00 - 11:00 pm

Cost: Free
www.visitloudoun.org/

October 23

Ghost 5k Run

@House 6 Brewing Company

Put on your costume for a spooky 5k run! Kids can participate in a 3k beforehand. All participants receive a glow in the dark shirt, and Halloween candy of course!

Time: 4:00 pm

Cost: starts at \$25 / person
/www.visitloudoun.org/

October 30

Halloween Bark Bash

@OneLoudoun

Bring your furry friend to this 3rd annual Halloween pet event! Animal rescue businesses, an animal costume contest, and treats for all make this event a favorite for pets and their owners.

Time: 12:00 - 3:00 pm

Cost: Free, with food for purchase
www.downtownoneloudoun.com/

October 31

Love Loudoun: A Wedding Showcase

@West Belmont Place at the National Conference Center

Browse local vendors for all your wedding needs: cakes, dresses, photographers, and more!

Time: 12:00 - 4:00 pm

Cost: \$10
www.visitloudoun.org/weddings/

November 4

Wood Fired Pizza Making Class + Beer and Wine Pairing

@Wildwood Pizza

Guests 21+ can learn to make their own pizza, while enjoying a few delicious beverages.

Time: 6:00 - 7:30 pm

Cost: \$25/person
https://wildwoodpizzeria.com/

November 9

Topgolf: Half Price Tuesday

@Topgolf

Bring 5 friends along and book a bay for half the price!

Time: 10:00 am - 11:00 pm

Cost: \$13.50, \$18.50, or \$23.50 per hour per bay, dependent on time.

November 12-14

Annual Northern Virginia Christmas Market

@Dulles Expo Center

Vendors from around the country come to share food, decor, wearable art, and more.

Time: 10:00 am - 6:00 pm

Cost: \$10/adult, \$5/child
https://www.dullesexpo.com/



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Fall Family Bucket List By Nicole DeBoer

Fall is one of my favorite seasons. There are so many fun activities that the whole family can enjoy. From recipes to outdoor fun, this ultimate fall bucket list will sure keep you and your family busy this fall.

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|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go horseback riding | <input type="checkbox"/> Make Halloween cookies | <input type="checkbox"/> Make a fall wreath |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stuff a scarecrow | <input type="checkbox"/> Go sightseeing for fall foliage | <input type="checkbox"/> Make beef stew |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do an outdoor scavenger hunt | <input type="checkbox"/> Visit an apple orchard and pick some apples | <input type="checkbox"/> Go camping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visit a petting zoo | <input type="checkbox"/> Make apple cider | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Make chili | <input type="checkbox"/> Make a Halloween costume | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go trick-or-treating | <input type="checkbox"/> Make an apple recipe | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Make a campfire | <input type="checkbox"/> Go to a pumpkin patch | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Make s'mores | <input type="checkbox"/> Bake a homemade pumpkin pie | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tell ghost stories | <input type="checkbox"/> Take a foggy morning walk | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carve a pumpkin | <input type="checkbox"/> Roast pumpkin seeds | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go to a fall festival | <input type="checkbox"/> Paint pumpkins | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Make caramel apples | <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoy a hayride | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Have a Halloween movie night | <input type="checkbox"/> Jump in a giant leaf pile | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go to a farmers' market | <input type="checkbox"/> Visit a haunted house | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Craft with leaves | | |



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20555 Middlebury	Active Under Contract	\$875,000	8/26/21
20577 Triple Crown	Active Under Contract	\$699,900	8/4/21
43451 Blair Park	Active Under Contract	\$460,000	8/27/21
19948 Augusta Village	Pending	\$1,430,000	9/8/21
43067 Zander	Pending	\$375,000	8/26/21
20039 Presidents Cup	Pending	\$624,900	8/19/21
19678 Pelican Hill	Pending	\$800,000	8/20/21
20135 Valhalla	Pending	\$698,900	8/21/21
20432 Middlebury	Pending	\$650,000	8/19/21
20421 Plainfield	Pending	\$695,000	8/20/21
20469 Rolling Water	Closed	\$699,900	8/6/21
43085 Zander Unit#1506	Closed	\$450,000	8/6/21
20642 Breeders Run	Closed	\$685,000	7/8/21
42920 Brookton	Closed	\$674,900	7/29/21
20605 Preakness	Closed	\$599,000	8/13/21
20422 Homeland	Closed	\$425,000	7/15/21
20143 Desert Forest	Closed	\$995,000	7/17/21
43391 Frenchmans Creek	Closed	\$635,000	7/22/21
43025 Old Gallivan	Closed	\$365,000	7/23/21
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