



Health, Wealth, Happiness & Spirit

**FREE**

## **Easter Traditions**

*Are Easter eggs all they're cracked up to be?*

## **Dyngus Day**

*Embracing the Polish capital of the world*

## **Media Corner**

*A review of the Amazon series, Reacher*

## **Financial Literacy**

*How much should I save to fund my retirement?*

**April 2022**



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## Our Mission

Your Health, Wealth, Happiness and Spirit explores the power of overall wellness. We look to push past the boundaries of physical health and explore the aspects of mental health, financial health, and health of the spirit. Our goal is to bring you information and guidance that you can use to live a happy, healthy, and spirited life. We find tips for the short term as well as more expansive information for the long term.

With the ever-expanding technology, knowledge, and evolution of the health field, there is a growing supply of data to take from. With HWHS we find the information for you and put it all in one place. Every month we bring you new articles on a wide range of topics so you can live a more fulfilled and whole life.

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*Your* HWHS **is transforming to a new brand!**

*Your* Bliss  
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Your HWHS Magazine team has gone through a rebranding process to help capture the essence of what our brand stands for. We have based our magazine on the pillars of your health, wealth, happiness and spirit to bring you information to help guide you on your journey to lead a full and enriched life.

As we thought more about what we hope to achieve it led us to consider a name that conveyed our brand philosophy. In our May issue we will be initiating our new brand. Our new name conveys the full meaning of our philosophy in one simple statement;

**"Your Bliss."**

# A Perspective on Easter Traditions

*“Are Easter Eggs All They’re Cracked up to Be?”*

*By: Caitlyn Conibear*

***I’ve always loved dyeing Easter Eggs. Every year my Nana would take my sister and me to the Dollar Store to get the classic “Paas” egg-dyeing kits and we would spend all afternoon dyeing dozens of eggs.***

So as spring started to approach, I began to think about all those eggs and wondered where this tradition of egg-dyeing started. How did we start taking seemingly boring, white eggs and turning them into bright and colorful symbols of love for friends and family? Well after some research I’ve discovered that the egg is not only a token object for Easter and Spring celebrations but they have been an instrumental part of history for centuries.

Spring is the beginning of a new season full of plants blooming and rebirth. So it is no wonder that a holiday celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ would also take place at the beginning of spring. But Christianity is not the only religion to take credit for Easter celebrations. Back in Medieval Europe, there was an early Anglo-Saxon festival “Eostre”. This celebration was in hopes to gain favor with the goddess of fertility and “the resurrection of nature after winter” stated Carole Levin, Professor of History and Director of the Medieval and Renaissance Studies Program at the University of Nebraska.

Professor Levin goes on to say that once missionaries began to make their way around the globe, most of them hoped that celebrating their Christian holy days at the same time as Pagan festivals would eventually lead to conversions to Christianity. This would be especially true if the symbols carried over and eggs happened to be a large part of both celebrations. It is said that eggs were eaten at the “Eostre” festival and even buried in the ground to encourage fertility. For early Christianity, during Lent, they were forbidden to eat animal products, including eggs. So farmers would hard-boil them for a later time.

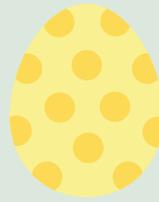
Christianity is not the only modern religion to celebrate Easter. In the Jewish tradition, the connection between Easter and Passover goes much deeper than eggs. As previously stated, the word Easter comes from the pagan festival “Eostre”, but many languages use a Passover or “Pesach”. And those classic “Paas” egg-dyeing kits I mentioned earlier were named after the Dutch word for Easter, “Pasan”. This web of origin stories reminds us that even though many associate colorful Easter Eggs with Christianity, they actually extend far beyond any one denomination. So how did we actually start coloring them? Well, historians debate that one of the earliest sights of dyed eggs was back in 1290.

In British history, the household of Edward I bought 450 eggs to be covered in gold leaf and then handed out among the fellow nobility for Easter, according to Stations of the Sun: A History of the Ritual Year in Britain by Ronald Hutton. Now by the 13th century, residents of English villages brought Easter Eggs to their landlords and churches as a special offering on Good Friday. These eggs were often colored red as a color to signify joy. In the late 19th and early 20th century is where we begin to see dyeing Easter eggs as something to give to children instead of the church. The 19th century is also where we started to see the most famous decorated eggs to date - the elaborately jeweled Faberge eggs. By the first half of the 20th century, the working class also began adopting these egg-coloring traditions as their wages increased, and here we are today, with so many different techniques to dye eggs!

***So if you plan on dyeing eggs this season just like me, check out the next page that’s full of fun techniques!***



# EASTER EGG TECHNIQUES TO DYE FOR



## COOL WHIP

USE FOOD COLORING TO CREATE A DESIGN IN COOL WHIP. THEN ROLL THE EGGS OVER THE SURFACE AND LET DRY. GENTLY CLEAN AND EAT!

## SILK TIES

BOIL PLAIN EGGS WRAPPED WITH 100% SILK TIES AND WATCH THE PATTERNS TRANSFER! FOR THE BOLDEST EGGS CHOOSE BRIGHT COLORS AND DESIGNS.



## TISSUE PAPER

AFTER DYEING THE EGGS, ADD DECORATIVE EDGES, FLORAL LOOKS OR ZIGZAGS. BRUSH A THIN COAT OF DECOUPAGE MEDIUM ON THE EGG THEN GENTLY PAT THE PAPER INTO PLACE STARTING FROM THE CENTER AND WORK YOUR WAY OUT.

## STRING WRAPPED

TIE EGGS TIGHTLY WITH STRING OR COTTON TWINE. PLUNGE INTO DYE BATH AND LET EGGS COMPLETELY DRY BEFORE REMOVING THE STRING. TO MAKE THE STRIPES DIFFERENT COLORS, YOU CAN DYE FIRST, ADD THE STRING AND DYE AGAIN



# WNY Medical

## Provider Spotlight

Chanda Sadiq is a licensed physician assistant (PA) in endocrinology and primary care at WNY Medical. She was a practicing physician in Lahore, Pakistan and has practiced in primary care and OB-GYN for many years. Sadiq has helped many patients with complicated diabetes disease

She is also WNY Medical's director of Quality Assurance. Due to her hard work and dedication, we have successfully achieved NCQA's Level 3 Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) Recognition program's highest level of achievement. PCMH was developed to identify medical practices that have invested in a model of care that puts patients at the forefront and where continuous quality improvement is a priority.



# Chanda Sadiq

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# The Health Benefits of Tea

By: Dee Barczak

People all over the world have been drinking a variety of teas for centuries for a very good reason, it has great health benefits! Studies have shown that drinking a variety of teas may boost your immune system, fight off inflammation, and even ward off cancer and heart disease. Which is really awesome! It's also beneficial to know which teas can help you with what.

While some brews provide more health advantages than others, there's plenty of evidence that regularly drinking tea can have a lasting impact on your wellness. So, get your kettle ready and enjoy a nice cup of your favorite tea and learn about how it can improve your daily life!

**White tea** comes from the *Camellia sinensis* plant that's native to China and India. It is the least processed tea variety. It also may be the most effective tea in fighting various forms of cancer thanks to its high level of antioxidants. White tea may also be good for your teeth since it contains a high source of fluoride, catechins and tannins that can strengthen teeth, fight plaque, and make it more resistant to acid and sugar. It also contains the least amount of caffeine!

**Herbal teas**, sometimes called tisanes, are very similar to white teas, but they contain a blend of herbs, spices, fruits or other plants in addition to tea leaves. Herbal teas don't contain caffeine, which is why they're known for their calming properties. There is also a wide variety of herbal teas that help with many different things.

**Chamomile tea** helps to reduce menstrual pain and muscle spasms, improves sleep and relaxation, and reduces stress. If you suffer from stress and anxiety or have a hard time sleeping at night I would definitely recommend this tea choice!

**Rooibos** helps improve blood pressure and circulation, boosts good cholesterol as well as keeps your hair strong and skin healthy, and provides relief from allergies. Which is great if you have a whole lot of pets that give you allergies like me or possible seasonal allergies, it's almost that time again!

**Peppermint** contains menthol, which can soothe an upset stomach and serve as a cure for irritable bowel syndrome also known as IBS and motion sickness, which would be great before going on a long road trip! Also, this tea variety offers pain relief from tension headaches and migraines. So, if you suffer from any of these then this is the perfect choice got you!

**Ginger** helps to fight against morning sickness for you expecting moms out there.! It can be used to treat chronic indigestion and helps to relieve joint pain caused by osteoarthritis.

**Hibiscus** lowers blood pressure and fat levels, improves overall liver health, can starve off cravings for unhealthy sweets so if you're trying to cut back on your sweets and carbs intake then this tea is perfect! and it may even help prevent the formation of kidney stones.

**Green tea** has many health benefits. Green tea originates from China, where the leaves are processed with heat using a pan-firing or roasting method and Japan, where the leaves are more commonly steamed. Green tea is exceptionally high in flavonoids that can help boost your heart health by lowering bad cholesterol and reducing blood clotting. Other research has found that green tea has a possible impact on liver, breast, prostate and colorectal cancers. This tea variety has also shown to be anti-inflammatory, which helps keep your skin clear and glowing!

**Black tea** is also a great option with some benefits. Black tea is made from the leaves of the *Camellia sinensis* plant, the same plant that's used to make green tea. However, the leaves are dried and fermented, giving black tea a darker color and richer flavor. Unlike many other varieties, black tea is caffeinated, so it's important to monitor your intake. When you do pour yourself a cup of black tea, you benefit from flavonoids that combat inflammation and support healthy immune function. It's also very interesting to know you don't have to drink black tea to benefit from its healthy properties. It can be steamed, cooled and then pressed on minor cuts, scrapes and bruises to relieve pain and reduce swelling. A black tea bath can also ease inflammation caused by skin rashes and conditions such as poison ivy. So, pack this herbal remedy on your next camping trip in the woods!



Last but not least there is **Oolong tea**. This tea is a traditional Chinese tea variety that's made from the same plant used to make green and black teas. The difference is how the tea is processed. Green tea is not allowed to oxidize much, but black tea is allowed to oxidize until it turns black. Oolong tea is somewhere in between the two, so it is partially oxidized. This tea's health benefit is l-theanine, an amino acid that reduces anxiety and increases alertness and attention. Studies have shown that because it contains l-theanine it can help prevent cognitive diseases such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases. Oolong tea is also high in polyphenols, which are linked to lowering inflammation, preventing the growth of cancers and decreasing type 2 diabetes risk.

That's a lot of great benefits from just enjoying a few cups of tea a day! Just remember that these teas come with great benefits, if you're new to the world of great teas try a new variety or two. I'm sure you'll be surprised to find these teas not only have great health benefits but are delicious as well!

# Our Lives Start At Home

*Earth Day for All!*

*By: Sara Loft*



**You are one of nearly 8 billion people that share the same home. There is no other home quite like ours; roughly 71% of our planet's surface is made of water and 29% is land. Birds, fish, insects, reptiles, amphibians, fungi, other mammals, you name it - we all live here.**

In October 1969, peace activist John McConnell was at the UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) conference held in San Francisco. He made the proposal of a global holiday for us to peacefully unite to honor our planet Earth and all that it offers us. He also wanted to raise an alarm about the threats to our ecological system - from pollution, deforestation, and other ecological threats his intent was to emphasize that mankind needs to nurture our beloved home so as to not harm trillions of species including our own.

The first celebration of Earth Day was in March 21, 1970. In June of that same year Mr. McConnell's Earth Day Proclamation, stating the principles and responsibilities to care for the Earth, was signed by 36 world leaders and other notable influencers of the day. Today, the original signed Proclamation is at the United Nations headquarters in New York City and Earth Day has been celebrated annually since 1970 at the United Nations with ringing of the UN Peace Bell.



Hello Readers! I'm Sara, a proud contributor to Your HWHS. I was born and raised in various parts of Buffalo, NY. I live by the words of Cecil B. DeMille, "creativity is a drug I cannot live without." Art is one of my biggest passions in life. I also enjoy the outdoors, being a cat Mom, going to live concerts and spending time with my loved ones.

My newest hobby has been genealogy.

I'm proud of my Native American heritage. Your HWHS has been a real life changer for me! Learning about different topics from other talented contributors has been swell.

On April 22nd each year, we all can unite on one day to reflect and review ways we can help our home, Earth. Our future and those of future generations depend on you!

Some ways to celebrate Earth Day on April 22 and every other day of the year!

**1. Be car-free.** Walk or bike to school – not only is it good for the body, it's good for the environment too!

**2. Make a bird feeder or house.** Use a milk carton, a large water or soda bottle, or a pine cone. Check online for ways to build your own bird feeder!

**3. Visit and support wildlife refuges** in your community. Visit Tiff Nature Preserve, The Botanical Gardens or Hawk Creek Wildlife Center.

**4. Create recycling bins.** Cut out pictures of plastic bottles, paper, and aluminum cans and glue them to the bins. Practice sorting together!

**5. Make positive promises.** Fill a journal with resolutions for how your family can help the Earth. Decorate it with photographs, poems, and pictures.

**6. Grow something.** Plant a seed, sprout, flower, or tree in a pot, garden, or backyard. There are many parks where you can donate to tree planting efforts. The Erie County Soil and Water Conservation District website offers tree seedlings and youth groups to promote protecting our environment for the future. ([www.ecswcd.org](http://www.ecswcd.org))

**7. Spread the love.** Make and decorate Earth Day cards using recycled materials. Include an Earth Day celebration tip, and send them to friends and family.

# How Do You Respond to Stress?

By: Lana Shapiro, Holistic Life Coach, Reiki Master & Lifepath Astrology Reader

**Stress refers to your body's response to challenges that it may face. Stressors can include anything from work, to family life, to relationships, to major life events or changes. Stress can be physical, mental or emotional.**

Let's face it, we ALL have stress in our lives on a daily basis, there is no escaping it. However, the way we perceive and respond to our stressors varies from individual to individual. There are many factors that contribute to how we respond to daily stressors:

1. Genetics - think about your family members - are they stress-resistant or stress-prone?
2. History/Environment - have you had practice handling stress throughout your life? Or did you grow up with less exposure to stress and feeling more overwhelmed by it as an adult?
3. Current stress load - is your current stress load pretty normal/average? Or do you have too much or too little stress in your life?
4. Current environment/surroundings - do you spend a lot of time outside and in nature, do you spend time with loved ones? Or are you spending most of your time cooped up inside, spending limited time with loved ones?
5. Support network - Do you have a strong and supporting tribe of people around you? Is your support network weak?
6. Coping ability - are you able to calm yourself easily when feeling overwhelmed? Or do you get easily overwhelmed by emotions?
7. Attitude - are you a "go with the flow" optimistic type of person? Or are you a pessimist who sees the worst in every situation?

What was it like for you to answer those questions? Were you surprised by any of your answers? Regardless of how you answered all of the above, the good news is that all those areas can be changed to help you better manage and respond to stress.

Now that you know which areas you tend to struggle with the most, you can prioritize where changes need to be made.

Let me start you off with some basics:

- Practice calming activities like meditation and light movement (yoga, walking)
- Organize your work and living space to be clutter-free
- Plan your schedule using a daily or weekly planner
- Prioritize your tasks and focus on one thing at a time
- Delegate tasks whenever possible when overwhelmed

If you feel like this is an area of major struggle for you and you'd like to learn better ways to cope with and manage your stressors, you can contact me to set up an initial consultation.



Lana Shapiro was born in the Soviet Union into a military family life, where she spent most of her childhood, then immigrated to the United States in 1993 at the age of 12.

Lana is a holistic mentor for awakening Starseeds, she is a practicing reiki master, astrologer, and mystic. Her work is all about mind, body and soul connection. She gained initial recognition after co-authoring a chapter in the book "Our Transformative Journey".

In the beginning, Lana studied psychology and the human mind and spent the first 16 years of her adult life providing traditional mental health counseling.

Feeling the urge to teach people the importance of connecting mind, body, and soul, she enrolled in an integrated health and nutrition program, which focused on biodiversity. During this time, she also completed her certification to become a group fitness exercise instructor.

In the second phase of her life, starting around 2017, Lana began studying energy work and delving into esoteric and mystical studies. She connected with her angels and spirit guides, as well as her past lives and the higher self.

In the third phase, beginning in late 2020, Lana began incorporating Lifepath Astrology and Tarot into her work, which led to the Starseed Mystic movement and training program for the purpose of guiding Starseeds to embrace their wholeness.

In early 2021, Lana founded the Starseed Mystic methodology and later created a movement to help awaken the Divine Feminine energy.

Lana is a community leader who is nurturing and offers understanding and intuitive guidance. She understands there are many solutions to any given problem, but bases her philosophy on a belief that "All the answers are already within you".

# The Importance of Financial Literacy

## A Q&A Session with Daniel Schlein, Financial Advisor

By: Samantha Bannon

### Q: Is it smarter to buy a home, or rent a living space?

A: The answer to this question really depends on your overall living situation and how you plan to move forward. When paying rent, it goes into utilization; you will not get that money back in the future. Renting represents a convenience factor because you have a landlord to look over your space and keep it free of damages, upon occurrence. If you plan to travel frequently, renting is the ideal living situation.

An example of an ideal renting situation is the young adult who travels around the country, even the world, looking for new cities to explore every so often. This person doesn't want much responsibility with their living space and is looking to spend less. Ultimately, this individual may want to take what they would spend on a mortgage and put it into savings for when they decide to settle.

Overall, mortgages build equity and assets within the real estate market. With buying a home, you can put your personal touch on your living environment. Unfortunately, you will likely put tens of thousands of dollars into renovations and repairs. Renters pay for the space they live in, and never see any money back from that investment. If you plan on travelling frequently, I suggest renting your living space. If you are looking to settle in one spot for a long period of time, I suggest buying a home.

### Q: How much do I need to save to fund my retirement?

A: It is best to draw this out as a physical sample. In prior generations, pensions existed. A pension is a defined-benefit plan that pays a fixed sum regularly to a person towards their retirement. Compared to the standard 401(k), pensions do not have control of investment decisions. But Pensions are generally better than a 401(k) because investment risk is on your employer, while you are guaranteed a set income for life.

**“An unmarried business professional should save 15-20% of their income for a number of years to come.”**

When saving for retirement, Social Security comes into play. Social Security is a federal program in the United States to provide financial assistance to retirees, their survivors, and workers who become disabled. As of June 2021, about 65 million people received monthly Social Security benefits. But what happens when that money runs out? This trust fund is planned to run out in 2034. It is possible that future retirees will only receive 78% of their full benefits.

Visualize your retirement as a cake. Pension is the bottom of the cake, and Social Security is a big chunk, too. 401(k) is the cherry on top, representing 5-10% of the funds. Individuals surviving in their 80s and 90s are still getting paid for living a long time, thanks to Social Security and Pensions. Today's generation has to build their own pension, being left unsure how much Social Security will be left when we retire. Ideally, an unmarried business professional should save 15-20% of their income for a number of years to come.



# Entering A New Era: The Metaverse

By: Jordan Stockwell



You may have heard the word “metaverse” floating around lately. Whether it be online or in the news. The word is currently popular among the tech, business, and finance industries. In his 1992 novel *Snow Crash*, Neal Stephenson coined the phrase to describe a virtual environment that was widely used in his envisioned future, a 21st-century dystopia. The metaverse is a virtual-reality universe presented in *Snow Crash* as a planet-encircling market where virtual real estate can be purchased and sold, and where VR (Virtual Reality) goggle-wearing users inhabit 3D avatars of their own design. Mark Zuckerberg, CEO of Facebook, recently changed the company’s name to Meta, and will start to focus on building the metaverse space.

**So, what exactly is the metaverse?** Virtual reality, which is characterized by persistent virtual environments that exist even when you’re not playing, and augmented reality, which blends features of the digital and physical worlds, are two technologies that make up the metaverse. It does not, however, necessitate that those areas be only accessible through VR or AR (Augmented Reality). Your computer, game console, and even phone can be used to access this virtual world. The metaverse also refers to a digital economy in which users can design, buy, and sell products. It also lets you move virtual objects like clothes or cars from one platform to another, under the more idealized conceptions of the metaverse. Most platforms already feature virtual avatars and inventories that are bound to a single platform, but a metaverse might allow you to establish a persona that you can take with you wherever you go, making it as easy as copying your profile image from one social network to another.

**The limitations of the metaverse:** However, there are several limitations that may be unavoidable. Cloud

infrastructure, software tools, platforms, applications, user-generated content, and hardware will all be driving forces in the metaverse. The tech industry will have to continue developing cloud infrastructure in order to hold this type of platform. When tech giants such as Microsoft and Meta (Facebook) presented fictitious renderings of their future ideas, they usually skip over how humans will interact with the metaverse. VR headsets are still large and awkward, and most individuals get motion sickness or physical pain from wearing them for extended periods of time. Augmented reality glasses face a similar dilemma. It is next to impossible to wear these types of technology in public, and not look like a giant nerd. The price of this equipment is also a contributing factor for the limits of making the metaverse a reality.

**The Future of the Metaverse:** For some, the metaverse provides new work opportunities, as huge corporations and start-ups compete for a piece of the rapidly expanding virtual world. For others, it might mean more immersing meetings or new training opportunities. Workplaces that utilize services from some of the big tech companies might get new capabilities sooner than they think, and they might not even require virtual reality to get them. However, experts say that working exclusively in the metaverse is improbable in the near future, at least based on current technologies and constraints. Anthony Georgiades, a founder of Pastel, a platform that provides blockchain infrastructure, which includes metaverse applications, believes that widespread acceptance of virtual reality will take several years. “It’s critical for businesses not to jump from zero to one hundred,” he remarked. “This may not be appropriate for everyone.”

**“However, there are several limitations that may be unavoidable. Cloud infrastructure, software tools, platforms, applications, user-generated content, and hardware will all be driving forces in the metaverse.”**



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# Business Seasons

By: Faizan Haq, Editor-in-Chief & Publisher, Your HWHS

Some businesses are seasonal. During the busy season, businesses are quite profitable, but when the season passes the sales and profits can go down.

**Let me share this secret with you. All businesses are seasonal.**

You can tell by variations in their income when there is a busy season and when there is a slow season. Just as in traditional business, conditions come during the calendar year which are conducive to that business: such as skiing in snow season, surfing in the season of high waves, the flu season in healthcare, or the tax season for accountants.

Our focus today is on the “seasons” that come into businesses due to their team leadership. The leading team of a business determines the season because of their thoughtfulness for strategy, mindfulness in handling personnel, and resourcefulness in strategy implementation.

"Strategy is Everything". The prerequisite to get the strategy right is the thoughtfulness that is required in your team doing its homework. Successful strategies include anticipating timelines and listing possible problems that may require immediate or long-term solutions. Mindfulness of human resources defines the capacity and the limits of successful business ventures, and implementing the right strategies can also highlight the areas of high risk that can undermine any success.



## Health Tips with Dr. Riffat Sadiq

President & CEO, WNY Medical, PC

### Benefits of Vitamin C

Vitamin C is an antioxidant that benefits the process of skin healing, as well as the formation of blood vessels, cartilage & muscles. It also assists the immune system with the production of white blood cells, ultimately helping cells to work properly to fight infection. Our bodies need the right vitamins and minerals to fight diseases.

Our body does not produce Vitamin C so where can we get our Vitamin C? We have many forms of access including citrus fruits, berries, potatoes, tomatoes, peppers, broccoli, and spinach. You should not have more than 2,000 mg of Vitamin C in a single day and too much Vitamin C can increase the risk of developing kidney stones. Overall, a balanced diet is key to maintaining healthy Vitamin C levels.

If you would like more information on leading a healthy lifestyle, please call to schedule an appointment with one of our medical professionals at (716) 923-4380, or visit [wnymedical.com](http://wnymedical.com).



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# Fentanyl: America's Secret Epidemic

By: Ralph Hernandez

Opioid overdose is rising in most states in the U.S., and right here in Erie County. The three most popular opioids are heroin, fentanyl, and carfentanil - a synthetic opioid that is 10,000 times more potent than morphine and 100 times more potent than fentanyl, which itself is 50 times more potent than heroin.

Most of us are familiar with heroin, an obvious enemy to public health, but fentanyl and carfentanil are much more different and dangerous as well as one of the deadliest drugs in circulation today. While a few specs of fentanyl can lead to a fatal overdose, it takes even less to die of a carfentanil overdose. Sadly, people cut street drugs with both substances and make them even more harmful and deadly to users.

Fentanyl's history began in the 1960s for an intravenous anesthetic commercially known as Sublimaze - a fentanyl injection used to relieve severe pain during and after surgery. It was modified in the 1990s to use as a pain reliever for severe pain, specifically in cancer patients. Eventually, it changed from a liquid form into an easy-to-use gel patch and lollipop form. It is FDA approved as a treatment for severe cancer pain.

Overall drug use and alcohol consumption in the United States are on the rise. According to the National Center for Drug Abuse Statistics (NCDAS), almost 32 million people (11.7% of the population) were actively using drugs as of 2021, with marijuana, prescription stimulants, and methamphetamines as the most popular drugs of choice. Add alcohol and tobacco use, and more than 60% of the U.S. population was actively using some form of substance. While recreational drug use is on the rise, the rise in the popularity of fentanyl is terrifying.

In New York State, unintentional overdose deaths involving fentanyl resulted in 68% of overdose deaths in 2019, compared with 60% of overdose deaths in 2018. One of the primary dangers of the drug is that, without the proper equipment and licensing, it is nearly impossible to tell how much of the substance you are consuming - which is why overdoses are so frequent.

The Mexican Drug Cartel in its border crossing considers their mixture of heroin and illegally produced fentanyl to be dangerous, giving it the nickname "the little devil." If you are dealing with the aftermath of a prescription drug overdose where a family or friend dies, it is advisable to seek legal help to bring justice to your loved one that has passed. Law enforcement agencies need all the help they can get to keep these drugs out of our communities.

Finally, as a preventive measure, it's essential to expand community-based naloxone (an antidote to opioid overdose) access and distribution. The speed of a fentanyl overdose (occurring within seconds to minutes) is one of the many reasons to expand that availability for people who use drugs and their peers and loved ones. It's time to get naloxone in the hands of law enforcement and paramedics.

**"According to the National Center for Drug Abuse Statistics (NCDAS), almost 32 million people (11.7% of the population) were actively using drugs as of 2021."**



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<p><b>Springtime Bluebird Walk</b> Date/Price: Saturday, April 30 / FREE Time: 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM Location: Knox Farm State Park To Register call: (716) 549- 1050 More Information at: <a href="http://parks.ny.gov/events">parks.ny.gov/events</a></p>	<p><b>Spring Colors - Flower Walk</b> Date/Price: Saturday, April 30 / FREE Time: 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM Location: DeVeaux Woods State Park To Register call: (716) 282-5154 More Information at: <a href="http://parks.ny.gov/events">parks.ny.gov/events</a></p>

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## Ramadan Kareem: A Blessed Time for Islam

By: Farina Mirza

Universally speaking, the Islamic month of Ramadan is considered as one of the most important holidays in Islam for Muslims, this holy month is mainly about connecting with Almighty God, Allah (SWT). It falls on the ninth month of the Islamic Lunar Calendar and lasts through the entire month. It's a holiday of great religious and cultural significance throughout the Muslim world. It's an opportunity for Muslims to practice fasting, between sunrise and sunset, which is one of the Five Pillars of Islam. Ramadan celebrates the prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) first revelation. Observing Ramadan requires that Muslims be mindful of their faith and participate in special rituals of fasting, praying, and donating.

Fasting not only cleanses Muslims' soul, but also teaches piety, patience, and generosity by focusing on sacrifice, discipline, and charity all during the month. At sunset, when



the fast is broken, families and communities come together to feast, pray, and offer collective prayers and perform acts of charity and service to our under-privileged brethren without regard for their religion or ethnicity. Charitable giving is a fundamental part of Islam in the form of zakat. Zakat is another one of the Five Pillars and implies that all Muslims with means, donate some of their income or wealth to the poor. Charitable giving increases during Ramadan as the minds of the devout Muslims are dedicated to religious service.

Dates are commonly eaten during these feasts, as they are of great religious significance along with other varieties of cuisines. Special religious gatherings are arranged including special night-prayers at the mosques. May this Ramadan be blessed with happiness and peace.

# NATIONAL POETRY MONTH 2022: OUR FAVORITE SUBMISSIONS

## *Four Years Later*

A long time for something so special and cute.  
A lifetime of memories locked in my mind.  
Make me laugh so hard, that I fall on my glute.  
Make me smile so bright that you go blind.

Something serious & sacred, a bond so blessed.  
Caring nurtures & endless hugs, never let go.  
Fate truly existed, who would have guessed?  
The perfect night, the perfect show.

Sometimes we know exactly what we need.  
But sometimes we're afraid of admitting it.  
Yes, oh yes! My answer indeed.  
Take this fragile being, don't let it quit.

Four years later, let's look where we are.  
United in love in the greatest of settings.  
Four years later, our bond shines like a star.  
With our cat here too, he gets all the pettings.

I love you, you love me.  
Stay with me forever more.  
Forever times two, forever times three,  
But not without a stop at the bookstore.

- Anonymous -

## *Sophisticated*

Sophisticated we are  
As we dance around too far  
We run away to come together  
And find the light tonight  
We find our true colors  
Behind the deep shades of our eyes  
Then we realize  
How we came to be in this moment  
Sophisticated we are  
As we dance around too far  
Holding onto this moment  
Afraid to lose it beneath the surface  
Stay up till the dawn  
Sun peaks from the clouds  
Have we done enough  
To etch these memories in our minds  
Sophisticated we are  
Keep dancing for me too far  
We find the truth in between  
Where our hands meet  
Never stop the sound  
Playing on repeat  
Never stop the sound  
Of your heart beat

- Megan Plevniak

## *The Elements* A Collection of Haiku Poems

Atmospheric bliss.  
Crisp like a cool, fall morning.  
Breath in, and breathe out.

Sparkling temptations.  
The smell of burning embers.  
Jumping from the pit.

Wishing and washing.  
Feet soaking in the ocean.  
Upsurging liquid.

Rustic surfaces.  
Destructive establishments.  
Terrestrial ways.

It's all around us.  
A sense of entirety.  
Zen within my soul.

- Katy Siwirski -

## *The Little Things*

A warming sunrise  
The songs of the birds  
A soft drink  
The comfy clothes  
A child's laugh  
A smile of the old  
The gentle breeze  
The purring cat  
Happy and fat  
A gorgeous song  
Held hands  
A strong hug  
A simple hello  
A wonderful scent  
The taste of something homemade  
The gentle flower  
A cheerful dog  
A comfy bed  
A nice design  
A given embrace  
A crystal filled sky  
A single snowflake  
A stupid joke  
A friendly invite  
A compliment  
A healthy meal  
A refreshing shower  
A soothing bath  
A kiss goodbye  
A silly hat  
A good book  
A deer's steps  
A happy poem

- Meghann Simpson

## *Keep Shining*

The stars,  
So bright  
So new.  
A golden shining light  
In the sky with the moon.

Looking down on me  
And the world tonight.  
We only wish on the stars that show  
Their beautiful lights.

- Teegan Barczak -

## *Disinclined*

Before I trek into the depth of the woods  
The path is bare and exposed  
I had walked this path many times  
But never so critically, I suppose  
I glance to my left over my shoulder  
The branches had decomposed  
Painted colors as bright as the sun  
A hut like structure transposed  
Normally, I'd walk inside  
But I won't this time  
For the path I am walking is glistening  
Synchronized in perfect harmony  
With the birds for which I am listening  
Carrying me along without consideration  
for the mundane  
Shifting downward a small muddy hill  
It's bitter cold  
But the creek is trickling still  
One of the many sounds  
Synchronized in perfect harmony  
Creekside for a while  
But then disinclined  
At the sudden presence of another  
individual  
Cognizance of extrinsic penetration  
Feet soaked with mud and Creekside  
residuals  
Cognizance of extrinsic penetration  
Unreserved olfaction  
driving me away  
Shifting upward the muddy hill  
The glistening path to be revealed  
Stomping heavily on the concrete  
With hopes of losing all I had gained  
Sludge falling from my boots to the ground  
Moving forward, the concrete fades away  
The wooded way is just now to be found  
Faint harmonies  
Frigid winds  
Path is no longer glistening  
Dim  
Spine-chilling  
It was then, I disinclined

- Maggie Benjamin -

# The Importance of Practical Internships

A Q&A with SunSpin Media's Spring 2022 Graphic Design Interns  
By Katy Siwirski, Creative Director, SunSpin Media



**The internship program at SunSpin Media has been helping students in need of a hands-on experience in the professional world for many semesters. I sat down with our Spring 2022 Graphic Design interns to get a feel for how their experience is going so far, the difference between school and an internship, and advice for future interns entering our program.**

**K: What has been your favorite part of the internship, so far?**

**A:** My favorite part of the internship has been coming in each morning and working on real-world projects. It has also been great to meet other graphic designers that share the same passion for design that I do. I look forward to getting as much professional experience as possible to prepare me for a career in graphic design.

**J:** My favorite part of the internship so far has been creating graphics for Your HWHS magazine. Having the ability to create something that is actually being used, while being given creative freedom with each submission is something I feel very privileged to be able to do. Not a lot of places allow you as much creative freedom in regards to the work you do.

**R:** My favorite part of the internship so far has been being able to take everything I have learned so far through college and personal interest, and getting to apply it. Seeing everything I've learned and worked on come to life in a professional

atmosphere and being put out into the public is very fulfilling. Also I have to mention the environment, being able to be surrounded by and working alongside other creative people has been a great experience.

**T:** My favorite part of the internship so far has been getting real life experience in the field of graphic design. Being able to sit in on meetings with clients in a professional setting has been one of the most beneficial aspects of this internship to me so far.

**K: What is a difference between campus education & internship education?**

**A:** The main difference between campus education and internship education is not having to juggle multiple college courses. I'm also working on real-world projects at my internship whereas at college I was working on projects that tried to mimic real-world projects. Also, there are no exams or ten page papers to write at my internship.

**J:** A difference between campus education and internship education is that the things we learned on campus helped strengthen our general understanding of how to use many different programs and art forms, and how to use them successfully, while internship education builds off the skills we were taught on campus by pinpointing specific aspects of these skills, as well as how to use these skills from a business perspective.

**R:** The main difference I find between my campus education and internship education, is the way in which projects are directed and how skills are applied. In college, projects were more often directed by learning a new skill, and being sure to apply it within the design. Versus in internship education it's more taking everything you have learned overall and applying what you feel necessary to complete your projects.

**T:** An internship education is different from a campus education because of the environment. There is more self sufficiency and time management needed with an internship education. There's also more collaboration with finishing projects in a team setting, opposed to working on your own individual projects in an academic environment. I get to take all the skills I've learned prior and fully apply them to what I'm currently working on, while having creative freedom to execute the projects.

**K If you could give advice to or feedback to incoming interns, what would it be?**

**A:** My advice to future interns would be to work on improving your skills as much as possible, even on off days. The more time you put in designing the better you will become. I would

also tell them to analyze as much of the design work around them throughout the day as possible to help develop their eye. Analyze the branding of businesses as you walk down the street or typography on the cereal box in the morning. It will help you think of ideas when you are starting new projects and help you better distinguish what is working and what isn't. From composition to typography, there is a lot to be learned from your everyday surroundings. Think of your brain as a design database. The larger that database is, the more information you'll be able to pull from it during your design process.

**J:** Never be afraid to ask for feedback on your work. Having the opportunity to get feedback on your work is important because a majority of the time, it improves the overall quality of your work. Also make sure to pace yourself while doing your work. When you rush through things, the overall quality of your work is sacrificed.

**R:** I would tell incoming interns to approach it with confidence, and do their best not to be nervous. Come in, do your best and never be ashamed to ask for help or an opinion. I also would give the advice of letting yourself get excited, getting to take this first big step into your career and away from college feels incredible.

**T:** The advice I would give to incoming interns is to be confident when coming into a new workspace. Be open to learning new skills and take on anything that seems challenging. An internship is a great space to expand your skill set while having guidance on projects and working collaboratively.



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Animesh Sinha, MD, PhD is a board-certified dermatologist and a professor in the Department of Dermatology, at The State University of New York at Buffalo. He has published over 150 peer-reviewed articles and is highly sought after as an invited speaker worldwide on a broad range of clinical and research topics.

Elena Kalabushkina is a certified Nurse Practitioner. She completed her undergraduate studies at The State University of New York at Buffalo in Biomedical Sciences and Psychology with a summa cum laude distinction. Elena speaks English and Russian fluently.

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# Media Corner: A Review of Reacher

By: Alex Tilton



Draft 7 of this review consisted, in its entirety, of one word: No. Because after the first six drafts I still didn't know how to write my evaluation of this series in a way that didn't give it more time and energy than it deserves.

Then I realized that as badly as I wanted to do something cute like that it wouldn't help to advise anyone reading the review. And I can do a better job of keeping fence sitters away from Reacher by actually doing my job.

The show is bad on every non-technical level. But the bad filmmaking isn't the real issue here. The real issue here is bad intent. While the technical aspects of the show are expertly done (cinematography, fight choreography, sound editing etc...), Reacher is essentially devoid of any attempt to create art. It is completely, unapologetically soulless.

The main character is a physically perfect, morally perfect, Ultra-All-American, highly skillful universal expert. He has no flaws of any kind, and the story makes it clear that his level of personal perfection qualifies him to kill whoever he wants. He is essentially a robot, and his only discernable personality is getting angry when people don't do exactly what he says. The only reason I can come up with for this is that they wanted this character to be a 100% pure audience surrogate. He exists solely for the male fans to project themselves into him and for no other reason. They're not telling the story of Jack Reacher, they're taking you on the Jack Reacher amusement park ride. And if that weren't bad enough (it's plenty) the show itself is a tonally schizophrenic, boring, stilted, predictable, cringy, oversimplified, boilerplate detective story.

Reacher is structured as a violent whodunit mystery. But tonally, it's a nightmare child hybrid of NCIS style schlocky police procedural, and True Detective style gritty realism. Imagine someone mixing ketchup in with your milkshake and you get

some idea of what I mean. These two things simply aren't compatible and it makes the show borderline unwatchable to anyone who cares about the craft of filmmaking.

But I do have to give it credit for novelty. Reacher is the only show I've ever seen that showed a savagely mutilated nude corpse crucified to a wall with nails, followed shortly after by one of the bad guys giving a Scooby-Do villain speech. Let that sink in for a minute. Seriously, go back and read this paragraph a couple of times because this is not an exaggeration. This actually happens in the show.

And if we were going for a horror motif (or horror comedy), or maybe an ultra-serious gritty mood, then that would work. Then it would actually add something to what was going on. But in this show I'm certain that the only reason they showed it is so that Jack Reacher can brutally kill the murderer later with a completely clean conscious. And since Jack Reacher is the audience surrogate, that means the real reason they're doing it is so that the audience can enjoy killing the murderer later. But that wasn't the point at which I turned it off. No, I stuck it out a full episode further. I turned it off, finally, after Reacher hooks up with 'the girl'. I call her that because that's why she's in the show. Technically her name is Roscoe, and there's enough going on that her character has some stuff to do, but the real reason she's there is so Reacher can hook up. And even when they do, this still isn't enough to make Ultra-Perfect-Robot-Man stop acting like an emotionless block of wood. But given how the scene is set up it's hard to blame him, or the audience, for not getting anything out of it.

The event that inspires Roscoe (not Reacher) to instigate the aforementioned hookup is Reacher having a painful phone call with his dead brother's grieving girlfriend (I know that would put me in the mood). Rosco is impressed with how he put the girlfriend's feelings above his own and talked to her even

though it was clearly the last thing on earth he wanted to do. And while this is the most emotion that Reacher has displayed, and it is at least an attempt at character development, there has been zero romantic chemistry between Reacher and Roscoe prior to this moment. They clearly like working together, but at no point prior to then did I get the impression that they were interested in each other that way. The moment wasn't built up to at all, and so it didn't mean anything when it happened. Maybe the show was trying to portray it as purely

a product of that moment, but after their awkward morning-after conversation I threw up my hands and decided to stop torturing myself. The first four episodes of this eight-episode series did everything in their power to make me not want to watch the rest and they got their wish.

Fire this one into the sun where it belongs and do your best to forget that it ever happened.



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Jazz music is considered to be a cultural icon in American history. People all over the world listen to the bebop and play on notes as they dance throughout the night. National Jazz Appreciation Month was founded by John Edward Hasse, a curator at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History in 2001. It aims to recognize the heritage and history of jazz. This month was selected because so many famous jazz performers were born during this month. Those born during this month include people such as Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, and Herbie Hancock.

Buffalo has a rich jazz history and many great artists have performed here including Billie Holiday, Dizzy Gillespie, Count Basie, Aretha Franklin.

The Colored Musicians Club & Museum is dedicated to the history of jazz in Buffalo, jazz preservation, education, and music instruction for our community. Developed from the sounds of blues and ragtime, jazz gave rise to different styles drawing from national, regional, and local musical cultures. If you're interested in seeing a live jazz performance in Buffalo checkout [point9mile.org](http://point9mile.org).



For more info: [daysoftheyear.com](http://daysoftheyear.com)  
[thecoloredmusiciansclub.com](http://thecoloredmusiciansclub.com)  
 Infographic by John Gardner

# Jazz Appreciation Month

## The History of Dyngus Day in Buffalo

By: Sue Perbody

Buffalo, NY is the Dyngus Day capital of the world and if you visit [DyngusDay.com](http://DyngusDay.com) you can learn all about the fun activities planned for this year beginning with a parade through the historic Polonia district of Buffalo on April 18, 2022. It is a fun event with prizes given for the best floats.

The Polish-American tradition of Dyngus Day celebrates the end of the Lenten period preceding Easter Sunday and culminates with the celebration traditionally held on the Monday after Easter Sunday. Dating back to 966 AD, Dyngus Day has been connected with the baptism of Prince Mieszko I. According to tradition, the Prince was baptized on Easter Monday, bringing Catholicism to Poland.

Historically, Dyngus Day is a joyful celebration oftentimes representing fertility, cleansing and purification. One may ask, why the pussy willow? Since Dyngus Day occurs the day after Easter Sunday, this means it occurs during the beginning of springtime. Branches of the plant have been used as the pussy willow is one of the first 'budding' plants of spring.

There is a cute Polish legend in reference to the name of the pussy willow, involving baby kittens chasing butterflies and falling into a raging river. The mother cat would cry for her poor

kittens, sweeping long graceful branches in the water. The kittens would secure the branches, bringing them to shore. "Every spring, from that day on, the willows sprouted fur-like buds where the tiny kittens once clung."

According to modern traditions, throwing water was brought up by boys to attract the girl of their choice. The yearly debate today is, who throws what at whom? Nowadays, it is a common practice that both males and females throw pussy willows and water at each other rather evenly. Thanks to [DyngusDay.com](http://DyngusDay.com) for this info!

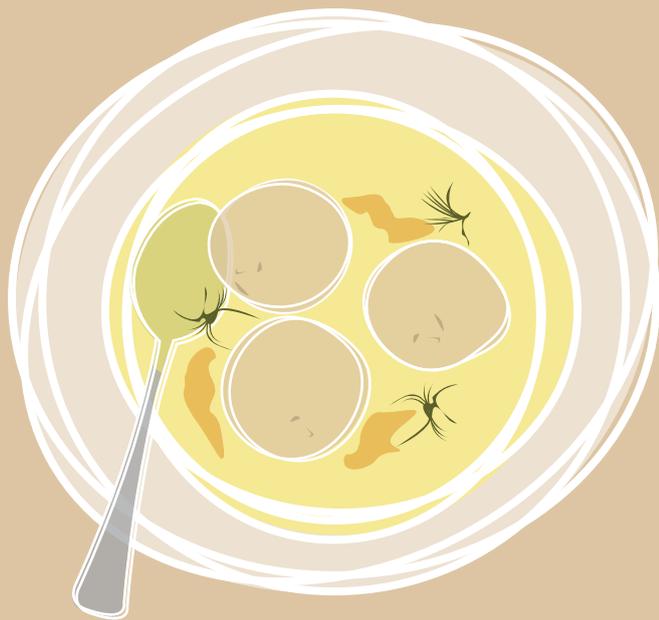


Keep up with [DyngusDay.com](http://DyngusDay.com) to stay tuned for events and plans for Dyngus Day 2022. The website creators "understand everyone's eagerness to prepare their pussy willow plan and organize their adventure so you can catch as much of the action as possible." For general inquiries on festivities, you may call (716) 833-5211, or email [DyngusDayUSA@yahoo.com](mailto:DyngusDayUSA@yahoo.com).

**"...The tradition started to catch on with younger Buffalonians who were looking to reclaim some of their Polish heritage, or just looking for an excuse to shake off the winter months with vodka and pierogies.."**  
**- WALL STREET JOURNAL**

# Matzo Ball Soup

A savory meal for a blessed Passover



## Ingredients

- 4 large eggs, beaten
- 1/4 cup seltzer or water (see note)
- 1/4 cup Schmaltz (rendered chicken fat) or neutral oil like vegetable or canola oil (see note)
- 1 cup matzo meal
- 1/8 to 1 teaspoon baking powder (optional; see note)
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt, plus more to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 3 quarts good-quality homemade chicken stock, divided
- Finely diced carrot and celery, for garnish
- 2 fresh dill sprigs, plus picked fresh dill fronds for garnish

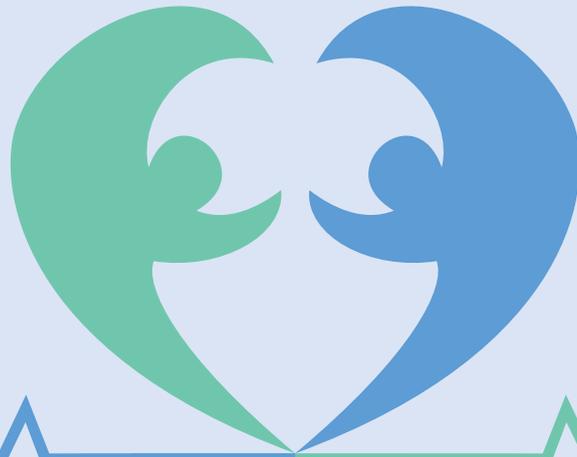
## Directions

1. In a large mixing bowl, combine eggs with seltzer, and schmaltz or oil. In a small bowl, stir together matzo meal with baking powder (if using), salt, and pepper. Add dry ingredients to wet ingredients and stir to combine thoroughly. Refrigerate uncovered for 30 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, divide stock evenly between two pots, season both with salt, and bring to a simmer. Add diced carrots and celery and dill sprigs to one pot and simmer until just tender; discard dill sprigs and keep warm.

3. Using wet hands, and re-wetting hands as necessary, form matzo-ball mixture into 1 to 1 1/2-inch balls, and add to simmering pot of stock that doesn't have the carrots and celery. When all matzo balls are added, cover and simmer until matzo balls are cooked through, 1 hour. Cooked matzo balls can be kept warm in their broth until ready to serve.

4. Using a slotted spoon, transfer matzo balls to serving bowls (you should have at least 3 per bowl); strain matzo-ball-cooking broth and save for another use. Ladle hot clear broth with carrots and celery into each bowl and garnish with dill springs. Serve.



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