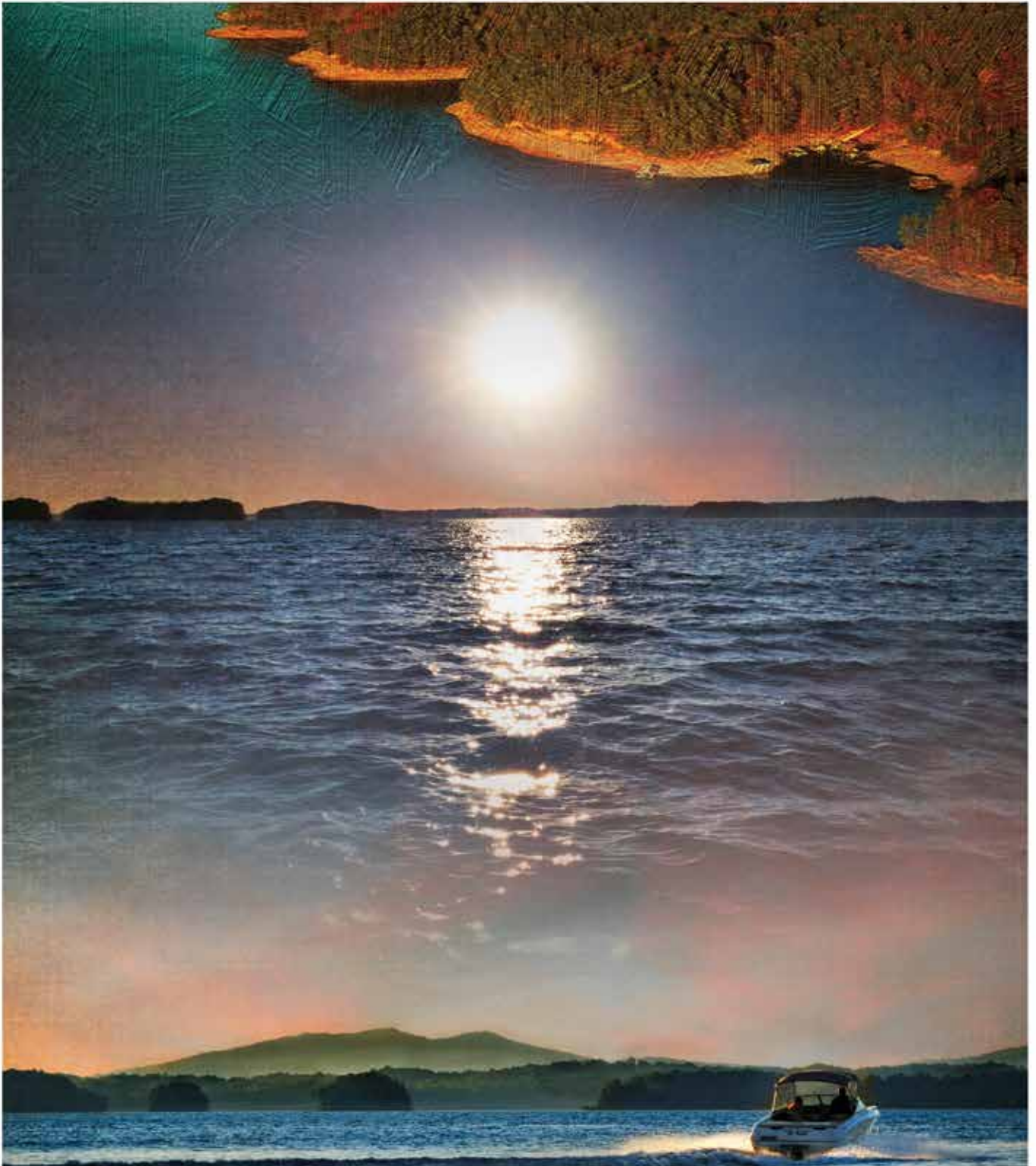


MY FORSYTH

ISSUE 2 2026 | MYFORSYTHMAG.COM



YOUR COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

NEWS AND INFORMATION ABOUT FORSYTH COUNTY, GEORGIA



MEET. **WORK.** CELEBRATE.

Whether you need a place to work for a few hours to an office, **Pop.In** has the right space for you.



COWORKING MEMBERSHIPS



CONFERENCE ROOMS



PODCAST/RECORDING STUDIO

STOP BY FOR A TOUR!

Open Mon.-Fri. 8am-5pm

431 Vision Dr.
Cumming GA 30040
www.popincumming.com

Gems in Art

JEWELRY DESIGN STUDIO

A single
necklace.
*Infinite
presence.*



COLOMBIAN TRAPICHE
EMERALD

CONTENTS

ISSUE 2 | 2026



17

COVER STORY

Local Dining:
An impact beyond economics

IN THIS ISSUE

FEATURES

- 17 LOCAL DINING:
AN IMPACT BEYOND ECONOMICS
- 30 THE SPACE BETWEEN SEASONS
- 32 THE QUEEN EMMA

LIFESTYLE

- 10 DIVORCE FOR REASONABLE PEOPLE
- 16 IN BETWEEN BITES
- 27 FORSYTH SUMMER FUN

FORSYTH FOODIE

- 12 A SMOKY SLICE OF COMFORT
- 14 FOUNTAIN'S FOOD ADVENTURES

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

- 22 NAVIGATING THE NEW LIPID GUIDELINES
- 24 SUMMER-PROOF YOUR SKIN
- 26 FOOT CARE IN THE SUMMER

FAITH

- 28 HOLY GUACAMOLE

BURGESS MUSINGS

- 32 COULD INDEPENDENT AUTO REPAIR
SHOPS DISAPPEAR?

12

FORSYTH FOODIE

A Smoky Slice of Comfort



27

LIFESTYLE

Forsyth Summer Fun

24



HEALTH & WELLNESS

Summer-Proof Your Skin

Cover picture courtesy of Bryan White Photography + Art

Ace the School Year from Day One

Get Ahead Now. Stay Ahead All Year.

With each math concept depending on the last, today's small confusion: can snowball into tomorrow's poor test scores. Invest now in math skills that will carry your child through the entire year with confidence and competence.

Experience the Mathnasium difference:

- Expert instructors that teach for comprehension
- Results that stick, not temporary fixes
- A fun environment where students actually get excited about math

Mathnasium of North Forsyth
(470) 567-MATH (6284) | mathnasium.com/northforsyth
2667 Freedom Parkway | Cumming 30041

\$100 Off Enrollment*



**BACK-TO-SCHOOL
BACK-TO-MATH**



MATHNASIUM®
The Math Learning Center

*\$100 off registration with a new 7- or 12-month enrollment. Offer valid through August 31, 2026. Cannot be combined with other offers.



Samantha Angeli is the graphic designer for My Forsyth. She may be reached at samantha.angeli74@gmail.com



Kurt Arseneau is the co-founder, Investment Adviser Representative, RFC® of Arseneau Advisory Group. He may be reached at 470-839-9001 or info@arseneauadvisory.com



Leyla Birriel is a senior at Forsyth Central High School and is currently completing her internship with My Forsyth Magazine.



Tom Burgess is the owner and operator of Christian Brothers Automotive in Cumming. Tom retired from the United States Air Force in 2009, after serving his country for over 22 years. He may be reached at Tom.Burgess@cbauto.net.



Nathan Cleaver, DO, FAAD, is a board-certified dermatologist and founder of Cleaver Dermatology & Aesthetics. He may be reached at 770-800-3456.



David Fountain is a local food enthusiast and our community's Best of Forsyth Financial Planner and Investment Advisor. You can reach him at foodie@fountainsfoodadventures.com.



Adam Johnson is the Lead Pastor at Browns Bridge Church. He may be reached at 678-965-8000.



Amy Lyle is a humor writer/author and co-host of *In The Burbs with Amy and Gina*. She may be reached at amybethlyle@gmail.com



Lindsey Mart is the co-owner of Connected Counseling and Wellness, a mental health private practice with locations in Cumming and Alpharetta. She may be reached at 470-206-8250.



Stephanie McCabe is the Business and Strategic Partnerships Manager for My Forsyth magazine. She may be reached at smccabe@onepointxl.com



Tracy Ann Moore-Grant has been practicing family law since 2002. She's a partner at Patterson Moore Butler. She may be reached at 770-889-0846.



Narendra Singh, MD, FRCP(C), FACC, FAHA is the Director of Clinical Research, Atlanta Heart Specialists LLC, Atlanta, GA. He may be reached at info@heartdrsingh.com or www.heartdrsingh.com.

ISSUE 2 2026

PUBLISHER

Market Complete LLC

julie@marketcomplete.com

678.614.8583

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Samantha Angeli

samantha.angeli74@gmail.com

770.310.4486

PHOTOGRAPHY

Adam Pendleton

678.208.7077 • www.adampendleton.com

WEB CONTENT STRATEGIST

Matt Coutu

matt@marketcomplete.com

WEB DESIGN

Kristen Smith

kristencreates@gmail.com



The mission of My Forsyth magazine, a publication of Market Complete LLC, is to provide readers with stories and information about their communities and its people. We welcome your comments, stories and advertisements. The viewpoints of the advertisers, columnists, and submissions are not necessarily those of the MarketComplete LLC. The Publisher makes no claims as to the validity of any charitable organizations mentioned. My Forsyth is not responsible for errors or omissions. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted without written permission from the Publisher. All rights reserved. ©Copyright 2026

My Forsyth

www.myforsythmag.com

678.614.8583

Modern photography and art for families and the Homes they love

Summer Dates
Now Open!
Call today for
best selection.
770 889 3202



Seniors 2021

BW BRYAN WHITE
PHOTOGRAPHY+ART



BryanWhitePhotography.Art



bryan@bryanwhitephotography.art



BryanWhitePhotography.Art



@bwphotography.art

Session Options

Urban

Most flexible & artistic option. Choose your own location,
PLUS studio indoor AND outdoor, and yearbook looks.
(around 90 minutes plus travel time) **\$249**



Artistic

One location of your choice plus yearbook looks.
(90 minutes can be at your location OR both indoor/outdoor at our studio) **\$149**



Basic

Mini session EITHER indoor OR outdoor at our studio,
plus yearbook looks. (30 minutes) **\$79**



bryanwhitephotography.art

770-889-3202

New!

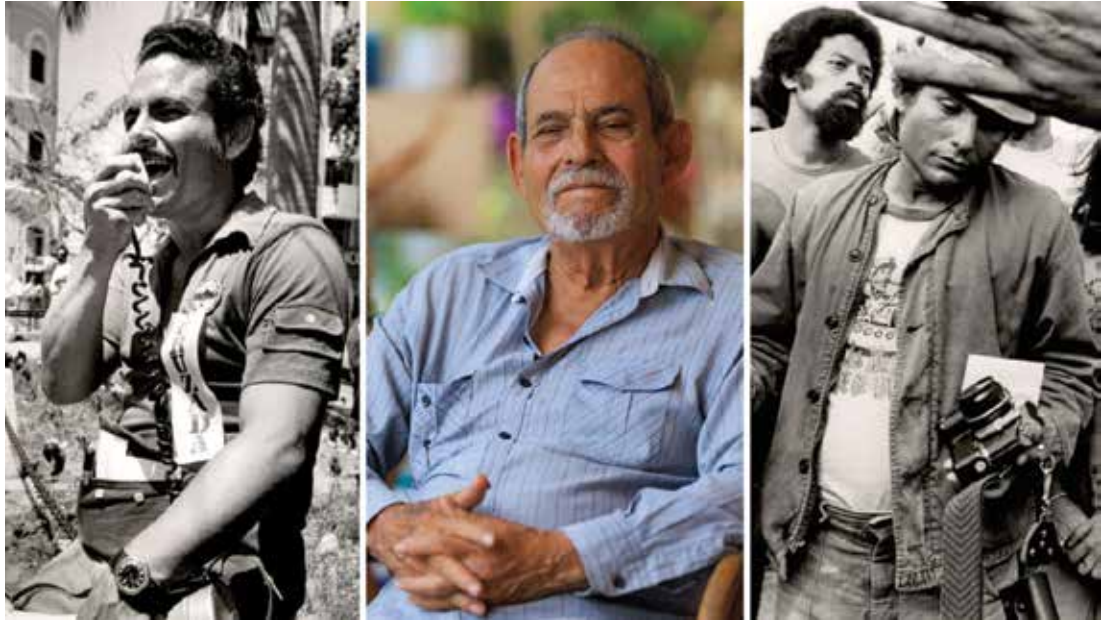
Pop Art Paintings
Exclusively by

BW
BRYAN WHITE



**Julie
Brennan**

PUBLISHER



My Farewell

I remember listening to my grandparents speak of friends who had passed—recalling their lives, the bonds they forged, and the quiet sorrow of watching them go.

In my own life, I too have known loss, as well as the joys and blessings that give those losses their weight.

The recent passing of one of my favorite teachers, and one of the most exemplary leaders I have ever known, brought all of this back to me and reminded me of the extraordinary people I have been fortunate enough to meet over the years.

Mr. Ismael Guadalupe was a force to be reckoned with—a devoted husband, father, educator, and leader who dedicated his life to the betterment of his beloved island, my home, Vieques, Puerto Rico.

At school, he was our Performing Arts teacher, though what he offered extended far beyond any syllabus. He taught us about Socrates and Albizu Campos, politics and philosophy, art and civic responsibility. Walking into his classroom was more than attending a lesson—it felt like answering a call. He challenged us to wake up, to care deeply, and to act: to think critically, to engage courageously, to defend our values, and to stand up for our community. In his presence, we felt that our voices mattered and that even a small island could shape the world around it.

He became a hero to many, and his influence reached far beyond the shores of our small Caribbean island.

His wife, Mrs. Torres, was our Spanish teacher. I often found myself wondering what conversations filled their home—what it must have been like for two remarkable, brilliant people to share a life of ideas, conviction, and service. I imagine that justice, community, and responsibility were always close at hand. Together, they embodied a partnership grounded in intellect, purpose, and a profound love for others.

As time passed, health challenges made it increasingly difficult for Mr. Guadalupe—we called him Ismael—to move through the world with the same strength, both physically and mentally. Through it all, our beloved Mrs. Torres remained by his side. Together, they were a couple we loved and admired, the kind of couple many of us hoped we might one day resemble.

I am certain there are people in your own life—teachers, friends, mentors—whose influence will endure long after they are gone. They shape us quietly and profoundly, and in ways we often only fully understand with time. Their lessons remain with us, woven into who we become.

Ismael Guadalupe was that kind of person—someone whose passing leaves an emptiness in the hearts of many, including my own.

How fortunate we are to have known him, and how enduring the gift of his example will be.



LENNYS®
GRILL & SUBS

CATERING
AVAILABLE.
★
ORDER
ONLINE.

EVERYBODY DESERVES GREAT FOOD.
Fresh. Delicious. Subs.

1040 Market Place Blvd. | Cumming GA *Next to Home Depot and Pet Smart*
678.947.0336 | Order online at lennys.com



A Premium Experience for Premium Shades

From inspiration to installation.

BOOK YOUR FREE SHADE CONSULTATION TODAY



J Ross Shutters and Blinds

1654 Market Place Blvd.
Cumming, GA 30041
(678) 429-9425
jrossshuttersandblinds.com

7768 Cumming Hwy Ste 400
Canton, GA 30115
(404) 991-4632
jrosswindowcoverings.com



HunterDouglas 

Divorce for Reasonable People:

HOW THE AMICABLE DIVORCE NETWORK IS CHANGING THE WAY FAMILIES SEPARATE



By Tracy Ann Moore-Grantt, Esquire

An international network of vetted professionals is proving that divorce doesn't have to be destructive—and that settlement, not litigation, should be the starting point.

When most people think of divorce, they picture courtrooms, adversarial attorneys, and years of costly conflict. But a growing movement—anchored by the Amicable Divorce Network (ADN)—is challenging that narrative head-on. With a trademark on the phrase “Amicable Divorce” and a mission built on resolution over litigation, ADN is quietly transforming one of life’s most difficult transitions.

What Is an “Amicable Divorce”?

At its core, an Amicable Divorce is a process in which both parties and their selected professionals commit to resolving their matter outside of court—with a focus on low conflict and efficiency. It isn’t about being best friends with your ex, and it certainly doesn’t mean you have to agree on everything from day one. It means choosing a settlement-focused process rather than litigation-focused.

“Amicable” sounds like I have to agree with my spouse,” is one of the most common misconceptions ADN addresses. The reality is that regardless of how contested or complex a case may be, 90% or more of divorces settle without a trial. Yet the traditional divorce system often profits by amplifying conflict between the parties and using antiquated discovery methods to exchange and organize information. The Amicable Divorce Process redirects that energy: parties still exchange information via an online system that syncs and pulls data from financial institutions and updates daily and utilizes mediation to resolve differences and reach resolutions. The entire framework is designed to reduce tension, length of the case and cost.

What Makes the Network Different?

The Amicable Divorce Network is the only international group of professionals who are vetted prior to membership across three pillars:

- Experience in their field
- A demonstrated resolution focus
- Fair billing practices

Members include all professionals who help people before, during or after divorce, including attorneys, mediators, mental health professionals, coaches, financial professionals, mortgage and real estate professionals, and more—each committed to helping clients divorce better. The Network spans the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada.

Is Amicable Divorce cheaper?

It is designed to be. The Amicable Divorce Process promotes settlement, is streamlined, and provides a sophisticated, cloud-based technology platform for client and professional collaboration. Fewer court appearances, less attorney time spent on procedural battles, and a structured path to resolution all contribute to lower overall costs.

Resources and How to Connect

ADN founder Tracy Ann Moore-Grantt is also the author of *Divorce Amicably: Your Roadmap to Resolution*, an Amazon bestselling guide to navigating divorce outside the traditional litigation model. It is available on Amazon and serves as a practical companion to the Network’s process.



www.corkandglass.com Xf@



Weekly Tastings



Fun & Educational
Wine Programs



Perfect Pairings

5670 ATLANTA HWY, STE A-2 | ALPHARETTA, GA 30004 | 678-694-8812



EST.

1998

Casa Nuova

ITALIAN RESTAURANT

Celebrating 27 Years

Serving the best classic, authentic
and traditional Italian cuisine since 1998

Pair your meal with a fantastic bottle of wine
from our extensive collection.



5670 ATLANTA HWY SUITE | ALPHARETTA, GA 30004
770-475-9100 | www.casanuovarestaurant.com



A Smoky Slice of Comfort in Forsyth County

Socks Love Barbecue

By Julie Brennan

At Socks Love BBQ, the smoke hits first—warm, savory, and promising. Then comes the tray: brisket with peppery bark, rich sides that taste like somebody cared, and the kind of meal that makes a small dining room feel like the center of the neighborhood.

In Forsyth County, where restaurant options continue to grow, Socks Love BBQ stands out by doing the fundamentals exceptionally well: smoked meats, satisfying sides, friendly service, and a comfortable sense of place that keeps regulars coming back.

In 2018, I visited a new local lunch spot called The Catering Kitchen. Known for its brisket, OMG mac ‘n cheese, and delicious barbecue meats, the small restaurant quickly became a go-to destination for barbecue lovers. Later, Pitmaster and owner Steven Hartsock rebranded the restaurant as Socks Love BBQ.

Now, in 2026, Socks Love BBQ is still going strong. The restaurant recently changed hands, with local restaurateur Brian Tam and his wife, Kelly, taking the helm of SLB.



The food is outstanding. From brisket and ribs to turkey, sausage, and pork, each cut is expertly seasoned and cooked. Whether you order your meat chopped or sliced, the flavors are mouthwatering. And every meal can be accompanied with a tempting selection of sides of ones choosing.

“The BBQ flavors, the tenderness of the meats, and the smokiness all come together in a way my husband and I have really grown to love,” Tiller said. “The food is great, and the staff is kind and helpful.”

“It was an opportunity I had to take,” Tam said. “I used to come to SLB regularly.”

The transition from one owner to the next was a seamless one, which made it the perfect time for another visit to Socks Love BBQ.

What some might consider minimalist décor creates the perfect setting for remarkably good barbecue. The small, no-frills restaurant seats 30, with two long family-style tables, two high-tops, and a table for two. Simple and effective.

The OMG Mac ‘n Cheese is, indeed, OMG delicious—rich, flavorful, and worthy of a second helping. The fire-roasted creamed corn offers a creative twist, blending two familiar preparations into one side dish that is sure to please even the most discerning palate.

“The collard greens are perfectly seasoned and just the way I remember my mom used to make them,” said James, a regular at SLB. “I drive over on my way home to Alpharetta just to get my collard greens.” James also enjoys the barbecue, but the collards remain his all-time favorite.



When the Tillers discovered SLB, they quickly decided it would become their go-to spot.

“The BBQ flavors, the tenderness of the meats, and the smokiness all come together in a way my husband and I have really grown to love,” Tiller said. “The food is great, and the staff is kind and helpful.”

During their most recent visit, The Tillers chose sliced barbecue turkey, accompanied by collard greens and fire-roasted creamed corn, along with a pulled pork sandwich and a side of OMG Mac ‘n Cheese.

I chose sliced brisket with sides of OMG Mac ‘n Cheese (you see the pattern, right?), corn, and cowboy beans. A few pickles and marinated onions were the perfect finishing touch to an already excellent plate.

The meal was outstanding, with plenty leftover to bring home for dinner. When good food is paired with great service, you know you’re in for a memorable meal.

Socks Love BBQ also offers catering. With the catchy slogan, “From our Pit to your Party,” the restaurant is well-positioned to elevate any gathering with serious barbecue goodness.

While enjoying my meal, I noticed several people stopping in to pick up orders, while others placed their orders and settled in at one of the tables. There was an easy, happy feeling in the room, the kind that comes when people already know they’re in for a treat. Whatever brought them through the door, they seemed to be enjoying their time at Socks Love BBQ.

That may be the real reason love is in the name. At Socks Love BBQ, the appeal goes beyond smoke and sauce. It is in the consistency, the welcome, and the care behind each plate – qualities that turn first-time visitors into regulars and a modest barbecue shop into a place worth visiting again... and again.



SOCKS' LOVE BARBECUE

1050 Buford Highway, 104 | Cumming GA
470-302-8383 | www.sockslovebrands.com

Head Chef Gerardo Pulido (left) brings a level of authenticity and pride that you can taste in every dish.

CT Cantina & Taqueria:

AUTHENTIC FLAVORS, AUTHENTIC PEOPLE

One of the things we enjoy most about writing these restaurant reviews is discovering local gems that we might have otherwise overlooked. CT Cantina & Taqueria turned out to be exactly that—a place that combines authentic Mexican cuisine, warm hospitality, and a genuine passion for serving the community.

From the moment we walked in, the atmosphere felt welcoming and energetic. While the menu is filled with traditional Mexican favorites, what truly sets CT apart is the authenticity behind the food and the people preparing it.

A highlight of our visit was meeting Head Chef Gerardo Pulido, who is originally from Veracruz, Mexico. After spending time talking with Gerardo and members of his team, it became clear that this is more than

just a restaurant. Many of the recipes and flavors are inspired by the foods they grew up enjoying, bringing a level of authenticity and pride that you can taste in every dish.

"Many of the recipes and flavors are inspired by the foods they grew up enjoying."





The food itself did not disappoint. Our favorite entrée was the empanadas—perfectly prepared, flavorful, and memorable. The soft tacos showcased fresh ingredients and traditional preparation, while the enchiladas paired with coconut rice offered a unique twist that quickly became one of our favorite combinations of the afternoon.

Another favorite was the steak sandwich and fries. The steak is marinated for two days using a pineapple-based marinade that creates exceptional tenderness and flavor.

The fresh house-made salsas deserve special mention as well. Bright, fresh, and full of character, they complemented nearly everything we sampled and reflected the care that goes into the kitchen's preparations.

The beverage program was equally impressive. Prepared with fresh fruits, coconuts, and vibrant ingredients, the drinks were refreshing, beautifully presented, and a perfect

complement to a summer lunch.

What stood out most, however, was the hospitality. Even during a busy lunch service, the staff was attentive, friendly, and genuinely enthusiastic about sharing their food and culture. The experience felt personal rather than transactional—a quality that is becoming increasingly rare.

By the end of our visit, it was easy to understand why CT Cantina & Taqueria has developed such a loyal following. Great restaurants are built on more than recipes; they are built on people, passion, and the ability to make guests feel welcome.

CT Cantina & Taqueria delivers all three. If you're looking for authentic Mexican cuisine, exceptional hospitality, and a dining experience that feels both genuine and memorable, this local favorite deserves a spot on your list.

We'll certainly be back.



MUST TRY **Empanadas**

Perfectly prepared and packed with flavor.



SURPRISE FAVORITE **Steak Sandwich**

Marinated for two days in a pineapple-based marinade, the steak is exceptionally tender and flavorful.



CT Cantina & Taqueria

6220 Town Square,
Alpharetta, GA 30005
www.cttacos.com

In Between Bites

AN INTERVIEW
WITH
LISA SHEROUSE

BY AMY LYLE



Amy Lyle and Julie Brennan enticed the busiest director in town to join them at YAVA Kitchen and Brewhouse for soup, sandwiches, and standing ovations.

AMY: In May, I was able to get the last two seats to 9 to 5, and it felt fresh while still honoring the original. Watching Violet, Doralee, Judy, and Roz on stage took me right back to being a young girl going to the movies with my mom. It felt nostalgic, familiar, funny, and comforting all at once.

When the villain, Franklin M. Hart, appeared in what looked like a sky-diving harness and was hoisted to the ceiling via the garage door opener, the crowd went bananas. I love comedy.

LISA: The audience loved that scene. It was such a perfect nod to the 1980s film. I've always been drawn to comedy because people need a break from the world, and laughter has a way of reviving the spirit and bringing people together. Comedy is one of the toughest arenas to direct. Timing is everything. I've done a lot of comedies, but even in the most intense dramas, I still like to sneak in a little humor whenever I can.

AMY: The theatre, built in 1923, holds fewer than 200 people. It's incredibly intimate. How does that closeness change the experience for you and the actors?

LISA: People are so close they feel like they can reach out and touch the actors. I often have the cast move through the audience because it creates an energy that feels immediate and alive. It can be tempting for actors to engage directly with people, but I don't always let the actors break the fourth wall.

I've made some exceptions. For Sweeney Todd, the psychopathic characters were encouraged to lock eyes with audience members, as if they were the only ones who could see them, and it added an extra layer of "Yikes."

AMY: What has been your biggest lesson as a leader?

LISA: I have to be a little guarded because I'm the boss. I want to be friends, but I also know I have to tell them what to do. Not all people can handle that. However, I have made some wonderful friends over the years, too. After more than thirty years of doing this, I see things others don't always notice, and I know the tiniest details are what make a show land. I do expect a lot from everyone.

I've been described as "a little tough," but after the production, when the cast hears the audience's feedback, they come to appreciate the direction more. I once overheard someone say she is so tough and demanding and such a perfectionist, but her shows are great, and they come back and try out again. So, I must be doing something right. In the end, they



People need a break from the world, and laughter has a way of reviving the spirit and bringing people together.

- LISA SHEROUSE

realize my job is to make them look good, and if I haven't done that, then I haven't done my job.

AMY: For someone walking into the theatre for the first time, what do you want them to feel before the curtain rises—and what do you do behind the scenes to create that experience?

LISA: Immersion. Entertainment. A quality show in a community setting. Whenever possible, I transform the theatre to reflect the world of production. For *Into the Woods*, trees hung from the beams, owls perched overhead, and the sounds of the forest replaced pre-show and intermission music, creating an immersive atmosphere from the moment the audience arrived.

I'm a producer and director, but because my company is small, I'm involved in nearly every aspect of a production, from set design concepts and costuming to helping patrons find their seats. When needed, I'll run sound or lights, and occasionally I even step onstage as an actor.

For our last production, *9 to 5*, I painted two dozen set walls and buzz cut the spines off 400 discarded books to create realistic bookcases. No fake book wallpaper for me.

During every show — and long after the curtain falls — I'm constantly thinking about what can be improved. There's always room to make the experience better. I'm in the middle of it all, and I think that hands-on involvement is what gives LCS its distinctive feel.

My team is tight knit. I love my team. They are like family to me. There are rarely understudies or extra lighting crew. If something happens, I'm running lights, stepping into a role, or saying lines, whatever it takes to keep the show going, and my team is so supportive and there for me. Loyalty! That makes a huge difference. I also have some amazing actors that come back and are reliable. I also love to give actors who are new to me an opportunity to show their abilities and shine. A great compliment was that I'm gifted at casting and bringing out the best in actors. That makes my heart happy.

AMY: How do you prepare for a production?

LISA: It always starts with auditions. There are three components: singing, dancing, and acting. Casting can be difficult sometimes, but once it's done, we begin rehearsals. We start with the music, then choreography, then direction, blocking, and characterization. Then I tie it all together. Each layer builds on the one before it, so by the time we reach staging, everything already has its rhythm and foundation.

AMY: What's next?

LISA: Our next show is *The Addams Family* musical in June, slated to premiere in September.

For tickets: <https://schoolstreetplayhouse.com/index.php/whats-on/>

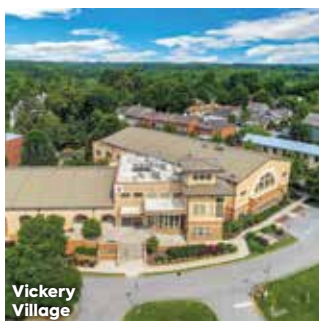
Local Dining:

An impact beyond economics

Local dining does more than satisfy an appetite; it helps shape the identity, relationships, and shared experiences that make Forsyth County feel like a true community.



CUISINE



COMMUNITY



HOSPITALITY

SUPPORTING LOCAL
RESTAURANTS
STRENGTHENS
NEIGHBORHOODS,
CREATES JOBS,
AND KEEPS OUR
COMMUNITY VIBRANT.



COVER STORY

Local restaurants, boutiques, cafés, and service providers create the connections and everyday experiences that turn a growing area into more than a collection of neighborhoods. From restaurants and coffee shops to gathering spaces woven into daily life, these local destinations help sustain both the county's economy and its sense of belonging.

"When we chose to open Casa Nuova in Forsyth County, the population was small and the area's reputation was less than stellar," recalled Maria Fundora. Along with her husband, Anthony "Tony" Fundora, the couple opened Casa Nuova Italian Restaurant in a small shopping center in what some referred to as the middle of nowhere. "We served our first customers in 1998 and never looked back."

Tony's passing in 2021 created a void in the family, but his vibrant character and love of people and service, coupled with delicious food, remained the pillar that has guided Casa Nuova and its staff over the years.

"Some of our staff members have been with us since our first day. We are family and enjoy serving our guests as family members who are coming over to share a meal," Fundora explained. "My son Pepe is now a partner in the business, while our other two kids play a vital role in our restaurant too."

“

We are family and enjoy serving our guests as family members who are coming over to share a meal

**- Maria Fundora
Casa Nuova**



That impact extends far beyond a single meal or visit. Local restaurants become gathering places, employers, traditions, and touchstones that help define the county's social fabric.

Preserving the Community Experience

As communities grow, local businesses help maintain authenticity and connection. They create spaces where residents can slow down, gather, and enjoy experiences that feel personal rather than transactional.

Brian and Kelly Tam opened Tam's Backstage in 2005.

"The historic schoolhouse that houses the restaurant was built in 1923 and is at the core of what Tam's is all about – community," stated Brian Tam. "There have been many changes throughout the 21 years since we opened, but one thing remains – the people and things that make Forsyth County a sought-after place to live."

The Tams recently became the owners of Socks Love Barbeque, a small but mighty BBQ restaurant located in Cumming. The restaurant is widely recognized as a top-rated barbecue spot in the Metro Atlanta area, celebrated for its wood fired, slow smoked meats and warm, welcoming atmosphere.

Other long-standing restaurants reinforce that same sense of continuity. Rooster's Café, known for its tasteful chicken wings and casual atmosphere since 1989, and The Station House, a community staple since 2009, show how familiar local establishments become part of residents' routines and memories.

Their value is also evident in how they respond when the community needs them most. Forsyth County businesses have supported schools, local groups, and one another through fundraisers, charitable events, awareness efforts, and even extraordinary gestures such as donating a full day's earnings to help another restaurant survive during the pandemic.

That same spirit can be seen in the county's growing number of coffee shops and cafés, which have carved out their own role as welcoming, everyday gathering places.

"Community Cup is my dream of serving more than just coffee," stated Jalyn Barr when asked about her popular spot. "We are committed to showcasing our community and its people and, as much as possible, helping organizations that are here to support of our citizenry."

Cozy and friendly are terms often used when describing Community Cup, as are supportive and giving.

From Marie's Deli, Rendezvous Café, Cherry Street Brewery Home of Rick Tanner's, Lenny's Subs, Giorgio's Italian, Nido Café, Feed the Well, and Gasthaus Tirol to favorites farther north such as Reveille Café, Brunch at Peony, and Palapas Bar and Grill, the list expands. Add Quanto Basta, Branchwater Vickery and Meadow Woodfire Grill to the mix and the choices become widespread. Together, these businesses reflect both the county's expansion and its desire to preserve places that still feel personal and locally rooted.

Community Gathering Destinations

The role of local connection extends beyond individual restaurants and cafés. It is also reflected in the broader gathering destinations that bring



variety of community gathering destinations, including The Collection Forsyth, The Shops at Brannon Crossing, and Cumming City Center.

From concerts and farmers markets to seasonal celebrations and family activities, events have played a major role in creating traditions and encouraging residents from different neighborhoods and generations to connect.

In a county experiencing rapid growth, those opportunities for community interaction matter.



We are committed to showcasing our community and its people and, as much as possible, helping organizations that are here to support our citizenry."

- Jalyn Barr, Community Cup

residents together through shared spaces, events, and neighborhood-centered design.

Completed in 2008, Vickery Village was one of the first designed live-work-play communities in the country. In 2021, Halcyon Forsyth became part of the dynamic landscape of Forsyth County.

At the heart of that idea is the enduring power of local business. When owners and staff know their customers, familiar faces, personalized service, and genuine hospitality create places where people feel welcomed and valued. Over time, those everyday interactions build trust and deepen community connection.

In addition to Vickery Village and Halcyon, Forsyth County offers a

Supportive Connections

Strong communities are built through everyday interactions — sharing meals, attending events, supporting neighbors, and gathering in familiar places. Choosing to shop and dine locally strengthens those connections and helps create the welcoming atmosphere that makes a community feel like home.

As Forsyth County continues to grow, businesses and gathering places that residents choose to support will help shape what the community becomes. Preserving those local connections means preserving the character, hospitality, and shared experiences that make Forsyth County a sought-after place to live and own a business.

Medicare Planning:

An Essential Piece of a Holistic Wealth Strategy

By Kurt Arseneau



When people think about wealth planning, they often focus on investments, retirement accounts, estate planning, and tax strategies. Yet one of the most significant financial considerations in retirement is often overlooked: healthcare.

As Americans live longer, healthcare expenses can become one of the largest costs during retirement. That's why Medicare planning should be viewed as an essential component of a comprehensive wealth management strategy rather than simply a healthcare decision.

Understanding the Financial Impact

Many retirees are surprised to learn that Medicare does not cover all healthcare expenses. Premiums, deductibles, copayments, prescription drugs, dental care, vision services, and long-term care needs can create substantial out-of-pocket costs over time.

According to numerous retirement studies, healthcare expenses can consume hundreds of thousands of dollars during retirement, making proactive planning critical to preserving retirement assets.

Timing Matters

Medicare decisions begin before retirement. Initial enrollment periods, employer-sponsored coverage transitions, and decisions about supplemental insurance all have long-term financial implications. Missing enrollment deadlines can result in permanent penalties, while selecting the wrong coverage may lead to unnecessary expenses or gaps in care.

A coordinated approach between financial advisors, Medicare specialists, and tax professionals can help retirees make informed choices that align with their overall financial goals.

Medicare and Tax Planning

Income levels can affect Medicare premiums through Income-Related

Monthly Adjustment Amounts (IRMAA). Higher-income retirees may pay additional premiums for Medicare Parts B and D.

This creates an important connection between retirement income strategies and healthcare costs. Decisions involving Roth conversions, retirement account withdrawals, capital gains, and Social Security timing can all influence Medicare expenses.

By integrating tax planning with Medicare planning, retirees may be able to manage both their tax burden and healthcare costs more effectively.

Protecting Retirement Assets

A holistic wealth plan seeks to preserve assets while providing confidence and flexibility throughout retirement. Medicare planning contributes to this objective by helping retirees anticipate healthcare expenses, evaluate supplemental coverage options, and prepare for future care needs.

Rather than reacting to healthcare costs as they arise, proactive planning allows retirees to incorporate those expenses into a broader financial strategy.

The Bigger Picture

True financial wellness extends beyond investment performance. It includes protecting your health, managing risk, and ensuring that retirement resources support the lifestyle you envision.

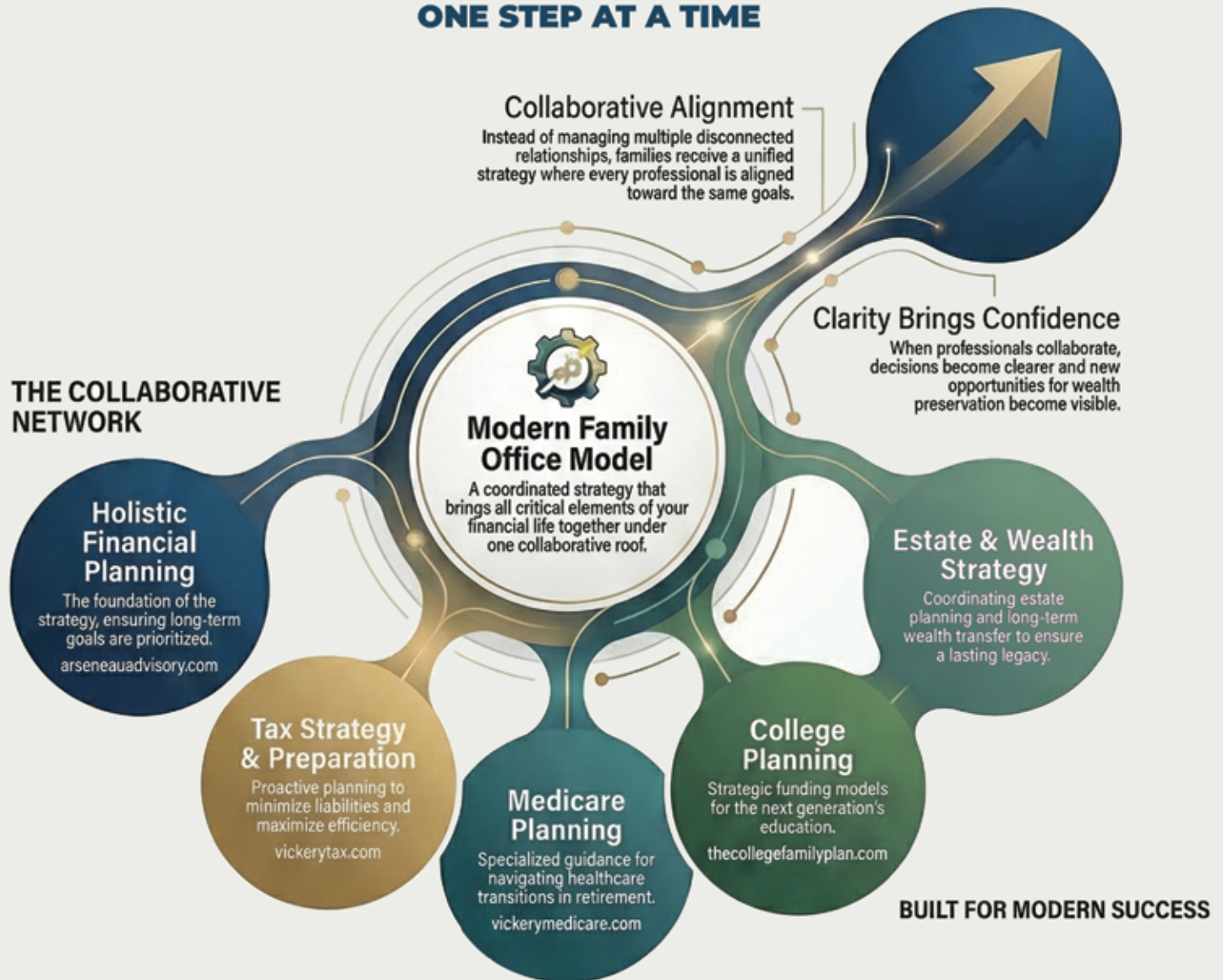
When Medicare planning is integrated with investment management, tax strategies, estate planning, and income planning, retirees are better positioned to make informed decisions and maintain financial confidence throughout retirement.

As retirement planning continues to evolve, Medicare planning is no longer a standalone healthcare conversation—it's a vital part of a holistic wealth strategy designed to help individuals and families thrive in their retirement years.

ELEVATING SUCCESS THROUGH CONNECTED GUIDANCE



**MANAGING YOUR FUTURE
ONE STEP AT A TIME**



470-839-9001



ArseneauAdvisory.com
5822 N. Vickery St.,
Cumming, GA 30040



Navigating The New Lipid Guidelines: Reintroducing Targets

BY NARENDRA SINGH, MD

Recently the American College of Cardiology, the American Heart Association, the National Lipid Association and several other national organizations jointly released new lipid guidelines. Lipids are the single most powerful risk factor for the development of coronary artery disease and although we have been treating this for a long time, advancements continue in both our understanding of risk and how best to treat it. **Below are the top 10 recommendations that I consider the most important.**

1. In addition to measuring your good cholesterol -HDL, bad cholesterol-LDL and triglycerides TG please also calculate your *non-HDL cholesterol* which is your total cholesterol minus your LDL cholesterol.
2. At least once in your lifetime adults should have their *LP(a) measured*. This lipoprotein increases the risk for the development of heart disease. Ideally levels should be less than 125 nmol/L or less than 50 mg/dL. Although at present there are no treatments available, new agents are on the horizon to help lower levels.
3. Instead of measuring LDL cholesterol, a more accurate measurement of risk comes from *measuring ApoB*, especially in individuals who have diabetes or elevated triglycerides for any reason.
4. For adults who do not have coronary artery disease, a new risk calculator has been developed called *PREVENT Equations* which will provide you with a 10-year risk of developing both cardiovascular disease and heart failure.
5. Coronary artery calcification - *CAC scoring* to identify early atherosclerosis in the heart is now recommended to help decide who needs to go on lipid-lowering therapy.
6. Measuring *hs-CRP* a marker of inflammation is recommended to determine who is at increased risk of plaque rupture which is the triggering event for a heart attack or stroke.
7. Just when you thought that your lipids were at goal, the targets have been changed and lowered. For the *low to moderate risk population* LDL should be less than 100 mg/dL, non-HDL should be less than 130 mg/dL and ApoB should be less than 90 mg/dL. For the *high-risk population* LDL should be less than 70 mg/dL, non-HDL should be less than 100 mg/dL and ApoB should be less than 80 mg/dL. For the *very high-risk population* LDL should be less than 55 mg/dL, non-HDL should be less than 85 mg/dL and ApoB should be less than 70 mg/dL. Finally for the *extremely high-risk population* LDL should be less than 40 mg/dL, non-HDL should be less than 70 mg/dL and ApoB should be less than 55 mg/dL.
8. In the past we have had limited treatment for *elevated triglycerides*. While fenofibrate will lower triglycerides they provide no cardiovascular benefit. Omega-3's and especially icosapent ethyl do provide cardiovascular benefit but lower triglycerides only a small amount. We now have powerful agents such as Olesarsen (Tryngolza) and Plozasiran (Redempro) to treat high levels especially with the familial chylomicronemia syndrome.
9. Statins remain our most important therapy to lower LDL cholesterol and do not cause dementia but can be associated with muscle aches and pains. *Multiple non-statin options* now exist including ezetimibe, bempedoic acid, monoclonal PCSK9 inhibitors and PCSK9 synthesis inhibitors. In addition, oral PCSK9 inhibitors (Enlicotide) and an oral CETP inhibitor (obicetrapib) will also soon be on the market giving patient's multiple options to help achieve the lower lipid targets
10. Finally, identifying risk early, including childhood, initiating treatment at an earlier age, and *continuing treatment for longer duration often lifetime* will help reduce the burden of heart attacks, strokes, and peripheral vascular disease.

NEW LDL-C TARGETS			
Lower targets. Greater protection.			
RISK CATEGORY	LDL-C GOAL	NON-HDL GOAL	APOB GOAL
Low-Moderate Risk	<100 mg/dL	<130 mg/dL	<90 mg/dL
High Risk	<70 mg/dL	<100 mg/dL	<80 mg/dL
Very High Risk	<55 mg/dL	<85 mg/dL	<70 mg/dL
Extremely High Risk	<40 mg/dL	<70 mg/dL	<55 mg/dL

Lowering lipids to guideline-recommended targets reduces the risk of heart attacks, strokes, and cardiovascular death.

Narendra Singh, MD

FRCPC, FCCS, FACC, FAHA

Clinical Asst Professor- Mercer University, Atlanta, GA
Director, Clinical Research, NSC Research, Atlanta, GA
Director, Collaborative CME & Research Network (CCRN)
Affiliated with Piedmont, Northside & Emory Health Systems
Recognized expert in South Asian Heart Disease.

1100 Northside Forsyth Dr, Ste. 345,
Cumming, GA, USA, 30041
Phone 678- 845-8960
5400 Laurel Springs Pkwy. Ste. 1401, Johns
Creek, GA, 30024
Phone 678- 208-0165
**Email-DrSingh@nscresearch.org or
DrSingh@nscardiology.com
www.heartdrsingh.com**



WE TAKE YOUR
CARE
TO
HEART!



Dr. Narendra Singh
MD, FRCPC, FACC, FAHA, FCCS

**WE ARE PROUD TO PROVIDE PATIENT-CENTERED CARDIAC CARE.
EVIDENCE-BASED, HOLISTIC CARE.**



Dr. Narendra Singh is a board-certified cardiologist specializing in the early detection and treatment of cardiovascular illness. Dr. Singh is the Director of NSC Research and NSC Cardiology. He has faculty professorship at Mercer University and the Medical College of Georgia. His mission is to deliver patient centered, evidence-based, holistic care.



Olivia Basile, PA-C, is a NCCPA board certified physician assistant with clinical background in urgent care and primary care. She earned her Bachelor of Science from High Point University and continued her education there, obtaining her Masters in Physician Assistant Studies. Originally from North Carolina, Olivia is excited to provide quality and compassionate care to the Georgia community.

CUMMING

1100 Northside Forsyth Dr. Suite 345
Cumming, GA 30041

JOHNS CREEK

5400 Laurel Springs Pkwy. • Suite 1401
Johns Creek GA 30024

Please call

678-208-0165

to schedule future appointments.

You can also book online through Zocdoc.com

Stay tuned for future updates!

www.heartdrsingh.com



TOP 10 IN GEORGIA



TOP DOCS IN AMERICA





Health & Wellness

SUMMER- PROOF YOUR SKIN

*Healthy Skin Never Takes a Vacation:
Your Guide to Summer Skin Health & Rejuvenation*

By Nathan Cleaver, D.O., Cleaver Dermatology and Aesthetics



Summer is a season filled with sunshine, vacations, outdoor activities, and making memories. While we all enjoy spending more time outdoors, increased sun exposure, heat, humidity, and environmental stressors can take a toll on your skin. The good news? With the right provider, proper skincare routine, and patient compliance, many aesthetic treatments can be safely performed year-round, including during the summer months.

At Cleaver Dermatology & Aesthetics, we believe healthy skin is always in season. Today's treatments focus not only on improving appearance but also on supporting long-term skin health, collagen production, and healthy aging.

Popular treatments such as Clear + Brilliant® help refresh the skin's appearance, improve texture, and support a brighter, more radiant complexion. Biostimulating treatments, including the Revision Skincare® D-E-J Biostim™ Treatment, help support the skin's natural renewal process while improving hydration and overall skin quality.



For patients seeking a healthy glow without significant downtime, No-Peel Chemical Peels can gently exfoliate the skin, revealing a smoother, more refreshed complexion. HydraFacial® and BelaMD® Facial Treatments are excellent maintenance options that cleanse, hydrate, and nourish the skin while helping to maintain treatment results throughout the year.

One of our favorite ways to elevate treatment outcomes is by incorporating INVO Solutions into customized treatment plans. INVO solutions help take your results to the next level. Formulated with growth factors, peptides, and exosomes, these advanced boosters work alongside your treatment to support healthier, brighter, and more rejuvenated-looking skin and hair. When incorporated into personalized treatment plans, they can help optimize outcomes while promoting long-term skin and scalp health. Whether paired with Microneedling, INVO Brightening Solutions, or INVO Advanced Hair Solutions, these innovative boosters help enhance results for all skin types.

Of course, professional treatments are only part of the equation. Maintaining results starts with a strong at-home skincare routine. Daily broad-spectrum SPF, antioxidants, peptides, hydration, gentle exfoliation, and targeted boosters help protect your skin from environmental damage while supporting healthy, glowing skin.

Perhaps the most important factor in successful summer treatments is communication. Always inform your provider about recent and upcoming sun exposure, vacations, outdoor activities, and tanning habits. Following post-treatment instructions, seeking shade during peak sunlight hours, wearing protective clothing, and reapplying sunscreen regularly are essential to achieving optimal results.

Healthy, glowing skin doesn't require putting your aesthetic goals on hold for the summer. With the right treatment plan, proper sun protection, and a commitment to skincare, you can safely enjoy beautiful skin all season long and beyond.



Schedule a consultation at any of our nine locations and discover how our signature TWEAKMENTS and advanced aesthetic treatments can help you maintain healthy, luminous skin for years to come.
cleaverdermatologyandaesthetics.com | 770-800-3455



DERMATOLOGY
& AESTHETICS

HEALTHY SKIN STARTS HERE



**Comprehensive dermatology for
all ages, all skin types.**

Medical Dermatology
Pain Management
Beauty + Treatments
Clinical Research

CUMMING

105 Professional Park Drive
Cumming, GA 30040

JOHNS CREEK

11315 Johns Creek Pkwy, Suite 140
Johns Creek, GA 30097

Additional locations in Canton,
Dahlonega, Dawsonville, Gainesville,
Lavonia and Toccoa

www.clevermedicalgroup.com

Don't let your feet *ruin* your day at the beach

Dr. Brian Harley, Chief of Foot and Ankle Surgery, Northside Hospital

As millions of Americans hit the beach this summer, Brian Harley, DPM, a foot and ankle surgeon in Alpharetta, Georgia, shares these safety tips from the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons.

Puncture wounds and cuts

Wear shoes to protect your feet from puncture wounds and cuts caused by sea shells, broken glass and other sharp objects. Don't go in the water if your skin gets cut – bacteria in oceans and lakes can cause infection. To avoid complications from a puncture wound, see a foot and ankle surgeon for treatment within 24 hours.

Jellyfish stings

Remember that a jellyfish washed up on the beach can still sting if you step on it. If their tentacles stick to the foot or ankle, remove them, but protect your hands from getting stung too. Vinegar, meat tenderizer or baking soda reduce pain and swelling. Most jellyfish stings heal within days, but if they don't, medical treatment is required. Sunburns: Feet get sunburn too. Rare but deadly skin cancers can occur on the foot. Don't forget to apply sunscreen to the tops and bottoms of your feet.

Burns

Sand, sidewalks and paved surfaces get hot in the summer sun. Wear shoes to protect your soles from getting burned, especially if you have diabetes.

Ankle injuries, arch and heel pain

Walking, jogging and playing sports on soft, uneven surfaces like sand frequently leads to arch pain, heel pain, ankle sprains and other injuries. Athletic shoes provide the heel cushioning and arch support that flip-flops and sandals lack. If injuries occur, use rest, ice, compression and elevation to ease pain and swelling. Any injury that does not resolve within a few days should be examined by a foot and ankle surgeon.

Diabetes risks

The 20 million Americans with diabetes face serious foot safety risks at the beach. The disease causes poor blood circulation and numbness in the feet. A diabetic may not feel pain from a cut, puncture wound or burn. Any type of skin break on a diabetic foot has the potential to get infected and ulcerate if it isn't noticed right away. Diabetics should always wear shoes to the beach, and remove them regularly to check for foreign objects like sand and shells that can cause sores, ulcers and infections.

**SOUTHERN
FOOT &
ANKLE
INSTITUTE**

For treatment of beach-related foot injuries, or any other conditions related to the feet or ankles, contact Dr. Brian Harley, DPM at (770-755-5749)

SOUTHERN FOOT & ANKLE INSTITUTE
11680 Great Oaks Way | Suite 530
Alpharetta, GA 30022



FORSYTH SUMMER FUN

Free Ways to Make the Most of Summer

By Leyla Birriel

Fun doesn't have to cost you any more than the time on your hands. In fact, don't even worry about searching for things to do! I've compiled a list of free things to keep you busy this summer and support Forsyth County at the same time!

1 FREE ENTRY TO FORSYTH PARKS
You can find free events at local parks like Central Park, Fowler Park, and Lanierland Park. These parks offer opportunities for biking, walking, skateboarding, and even playing sports like tennis and soccer. Round up some friends and prepare for friendly competition!

2 VOLUNTEER WORK
One way to keep yourself entertained and help out your community is by volunteering. Going through the Forsyth County website is always a great place to start! Senior living centers are always looking for volunteers to entertain the residents as well as opportunities for the Forsyth Parks and Recreation Center itself.

3 FORSYTH COUNTY LIBRARIES
Similarly to shopping centers and parks in Forsyth County, your local libraries also offer free events. If music and exercising isn't your forte, Forsyth's Public Libraries offers free arts and crafts, family story times, and even dinosaur presentations for the future archaeologist.

4 LAKE LANIER
Not only does this beautiful lake help drive our economy, it's also a great place to catch some rays and some fish! Some specific spots with great views are Two Mile Creek Park and Little Ridge Park. Another alternative would be camping with some friends! Despite this option not being free, splitting costs could make a sleepover with nature much easier.

5 HIKING AND NATURE
The Big Creek Greenway is a fantastic light hike with beautiful woodland. Its low elevation provides for a family outing of all ages. Despite its popularity amongst high schoolers for homecoming and prom photos, Poole's Mill Park has beautiful waterfalls, a playground, and some Native American history pertaining to our state.

6 SUMMER READING CHALLENGE
If you or your children love to read, it's never too late to join in on the literary fun by joining Forsyth Libraries Summer Reading Challenge! Depending on how much you've read, you gain points which could earn you one of their grand prizes.

7 PICNIC POTLUCK
In the previously mentioned Forsyth Parks, many also contain large fields and picnic tables. These present the perfect opportunity for a picnic with friends and family. Bringing in the summer foods like popsicles, hot dogs, fresh fruits, and hamburgers can be the best way to kick off a great summer.

8 FORSYTH SHOPPING CENTERS
You can find free events at local shopping centers like the Cumming City Center, Halcyon, Vickery Village and The Collection. Grab your friends and explore these areas! From tribute band concerts and outdoor yoga to festivals, outdoor areas and free movies, the possibilities are endless!



RESOURCES

CUMMING CITY CENTER
www.cummingcitycenter.com

FORSYTH COUNTY LIBRARIES
www.forsythpl.org

FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS
www.parks.forsythco.com

HALCYON
www.visithalcyon.com

THE COLLECTION
www.collectionforsyth.com

VICKERY VILLAGE
www.vickeryvillageshops.com



Holy Guacamole

By Adam Johnson

Last month we had thousands of students graduate from high schools throughout our community. While many of them were suffering from “senioritis” and ready to bolt the moment the bell rang on that final day, I would imagine there were also a number of meaningful conversations between teachers and students. I imagine a teacher leaning in to give one final lesson, a parting lesson, to these students they have invested so much time in during the previous years. And I imagine the students leaning in to soak up these final words out of the respect they have for this teacher who has poured so much into them.

We have a similar conversation between Jesus and his disciples documented by the Gospel writer John. It takes place the night before the crucifixion. Jesus, knowing what was in front of him over the next few hours, pauses to give them one last word picture to leave them with. “Hey, if you forget everything else, remember this....” Then he dives into a metaphor of a vine, and branches, and fruit.

The word Jesus uses over and over again is *remain*. It’s used 11 times in 16 verses in John 15. Which means it clearly was a point of emphasis for Jesus. “When I’m gone, remember this! Remain!” The translation I grew up with was *abide*. The idea is a lasting connection. Jesus is saying “If you remain connected to me, I will produce much fruit through you.” Which begs the question, *how do we abide?*

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”

John 15:5 NIV

Whenever I heard this scripture taught in youth group or college ministries the way they would explain how to abide was basically the same answer they gave to any other question in life: read your bible, go to church, and pray. But as life has gone on, I have gradually seen that as an inadequate answer. Yes, those three things are great, and I wish everyone would do them, but they don’t seem effective in keeping us abiding all the time. The challenge is that in our world today we have trouble abiding in anything. We are always off to the next thing. The



When I put guacamole on my life-giving list it changed the way I saw it.

next meeting, the next sporting event for our kids, the next house chore. It's hard to give any one thing our attention for very long. So how can we more effectively abide in Jesus?

A couple years ago I was introduced to a tool known as a "Life-giving List". It's basically a list of people, places, and activities that you delight in. The purpose of the tool is to help us see the gifts that God is surrounding us with every day. I began building mine and have added dozens of things as I have noticed them in everyday life. At some point I connected the dots between the Life-Giving List and Jesus invitation to abide in John 15. I realized that connecting everyday places and activities to the LGL gave me constant reminders of God's goodness, presence, and grace.

One specific example for me is in the area of cooking. I love to cook. Baking, smoking meats, trying new recipes...it's all a joy to me. So, of course cooking made my Life-Giving List. But then I got even more specific. One of the things I notice I was doing regularly and with great delight was making fresh guacamole. Anytime I had the ingredients I'd

whip up a bowl of it for me and the family to enjoy (or mostly me).

When I put guacamole on my life-giving list it changed the way I saw it. No longer was I just making an appetizer for us to enjoy, but I was delighting in the God of the universe at the same time. Every chop of the cilantro, every dice of the jalapeño, every peel of an avocado was...*worship*. No exaggeration. And now whenever I get a chance to make it, it's me and Jesus and the chips and guac.

And then it dawned on me, I'm now making "Holy" Guacamole.

So, what are those things for you? Who are the people that always seem to leave you refreshed and built up? What are the places you retreat to? They can be as close as a recliner in your living room, or as far as another country.

And lastly, what everyday activities would you do even if you didn't have to simply because of the delight they bring to you?

Make a list. And then allow those things to be a reminder to remain in Jesus in all you do.



VOTED #1 IN CUSTOMER SERVICE BY JD POWERS

LOCATED NEAR EXIT 13 & HIGHWAY 9

Christian Brothers
AUTOMOTIVE[®]
Nice difference.[®]
470.253.7376

- Free local shuttle service
- Locally owned & operated
- Free courtesy inspection
- Comfortable lobby with free Wi-Fi
- 3-year, 36,000 mile warranty on parts and labor

Mon - Fri: 7am - 6pm

Excellence
IN BUSINESS AWARDS GALA

Voted 'Best New Business In Forsyth County' by the Forsyth Chamber of Commerce.

FREE 79 Point Safety Inspection
Inspect all belts, hoses, fluids, brakes and more.
Must be presented at time of service. Not to be combined with other offers. One coupon per visit. Valid at Cumming location only. Expires 10/31/26

FREE Tire Rotation With Oil Change
Must be presented at time of service. Not to be combined with other offers. One coupon per visit. Valid at Cumming location only. Expires 10/31/26

\$20 OFF Any Oil Change
Excludes full synthetic and diesel. Up to 5 qts. Most vehicles.
Must be presented at time of service. Not to be combined with other offers. One coupon per visit. Valid at Cumming location only. Expires 10/31/26

REPAIR DISCOUNT
\$15 OFF \$150+
\$25 OFF \$250+
\$50 OFF \$500+
Must be presented at time of service. Not to be combined with other offers. One coupon per visit. Valid at Cumming location only. Expires 10/31/26

5960 Bethelview Road, Cumming GA 30040 • www.cbac.com/cumming



The Space Between Seasons

By Lindsey Mart

*The summers we build—ones that
smell like sunscreen and lake water
and a backyard grill—don't disappear
when the calendar turns.*

Every July our schedules are coming in hot. The heat driven perspiration on your skin the minute you walk outside, the smell of sunscreen, pool chemicals, and salt water, and all the activities that we can squeeze into the last stretch of summer - they produce a lot of joy but also a hustle that can cause stress. Joy is rarely low maintenance. Whether it's a vacation with your significant other and the kids or boating on the lake with friends, every outing holds its own enjoyment and its own unique set of challenges in making it happen. The stress of planning the trip and coordinating schedules, packing for one day or a week, bringing enough drinks and snacks for everyone - especially kids - can be weighty while also holding enough fun to solidify memories for a lifetime. The memories are worth it. The hustle - maybe not. But we do it to belong and to connect in a season of less responsibility and more sunshine.

So what happens when the summer season begins to wind down and the Target parking lot becomes a Nascar level musical chairs game with cars due to the sheer amount of school supplies that kids have to get before August 1st? Their back to school displays have been up since mid-June which, frankly, feels entirely too aggressive and causes the store to become a full contact sport arena in the weeks leading up to the first day of school. Even if you don't have children, you're dodging the parents holding lists and juggling carts and watching siblings while their kids beg for the green backpack instead of the blue one. Even for the most regulated of us, these moments can be frazzling. Add that to the job stress, financial pressures, or relationship strife that any of us could be experiencing, and you have a whole lot of people on edge.

Before you can name what's happening, your body already has. Your breath may get a little shorter, and your chest may feel a bit heavier. You could be more irritable than normal, annoyed by the dishwasher being loaded incorrectly, extremely frustrated with the slow driver in the left lane, and just plain over the group chat that dings every 30 seconds. And you feel so tired. Not the good kind of tired that comes after a great day at the pool with friends, but the tired that doesn't feel much better after sleeping. You're not getting sick or falling apart. Your nervous system is just paying attention. It notices the shift in collective energy before your conscious mind can catch up. The kids are anxious about the first day. Your coworker is nervous about the third quarter. The stranger in the Publix parking lot is running on three hours of sleep and a lukewarm latte. You feel all of it, whether you mean to or not. And the more you feel it, the more things like concentration, memory recall, and focus can be difficult.

This is called co-regulation, and it is actually a normal human process. We are designed to pick up on the vibes around us because our brains are constantly scanning for safety to keep us alive. We are literally

neurologically wired to pick up on the emotional states of people around us, and those states can impact our own. You've experienced this before – you walked into a room and something felt off before anyone said a word. You sat next to an anxious person on a plane and felt your chest get tighter. This is attunement, and you've always had it even if you didn't know it.

In the same vein, co-regulation can help you to feel better when you're overwhelmed. The same system that absorbs everyone else's stress can be soothed by a warm, firm embrace from a trusted person. If the person holds on to you long enough, it can give your nervous system time to receive it and shift back towards regulation. This is where your breathing slows – you may even feel the need to sigh – and your chest lightens. Once this happens, your brain can return to a state that allows you to feel better not just physically but also mentally.

But knowing the science behind why you feel this way isn't enough to make you feel better. Sometimes we don't need a reason, we need permission – permission to be exactly where we are without adding a layer of guilt or judgment on top of a system already on edge. Maybe one of these can be yours:

Permission Slips



I give myself permission to go at my own pace.

The season will change whether I rush it or not. I don't have to match the urgency of everyone around me. My transition is allowed to look differently than other people around me, and I don't have to compare myself to others. There is no deadline on finding my footing.



I give myself permission to get it wrong sometimes.

Transitions are hard on everyone. I will probably say something impatient. I will probably forget something important. I might handle something poorly before I handle it better. While I am still figuring things out, I can give myself the space to be human in a transitional time. The more I practice regulation, the more I can practice giving myself the grace I need to learn.



I give myself permission to notice the small things to feel the most human

I can stand in the sun with my face tilted up and breathe, noticing the warmth on my face and the sounds of nature around me. I can eat the good food slowly and actually taste it. I can stop and smell the freshly cut grass that connects me with summertime. I can look for one thing to be immensely grateful for that day. These may seem like small acts, but they are the things that will bring me back to myself when the season feels like too much.

And as we all face the upcoming transition from the summer season, here are a few things we can do with our permission slips:



Slow down and listen to your body.

Rest when you are tired. Nourish yourself when you are hungry. Take time to close your eyes and breathe deeply. Notice when your heart slows, and give gratitude that your body is taking care of you the way it is meant to.



Move your body at a pace that feels good to you. *Whether it is a walk around the neighborhood, a gentle yoga class, or a challenging hike, body movement can relieve stress and bring mental clarity. Notice that this is not punishment but a way to use your body as a regulation tool.*



Lean on your personal and professional support. *Spending time with trusted people – including a therapist – can help you feel more connected to others and therefore more regulated. Support makes you feel safe, and the safer you feel the more you are able to manage stress and the daily responsibilities of life.*

The summers we build – ones that smell like sunscreen and lake water and a backyard grill – don't disappear when the calendar turns. They live in the body the same way stress does. You get to keep them, drawing on those memories when you need them to bring you joy. The next season has its own gifts, even if it arrives wrapped in a little chaos. And if we're honest, the return of routine secretly feels like relief even

when you are dreading it.

The space between seasons is a place worth noticing and an opportunity for you to grow.

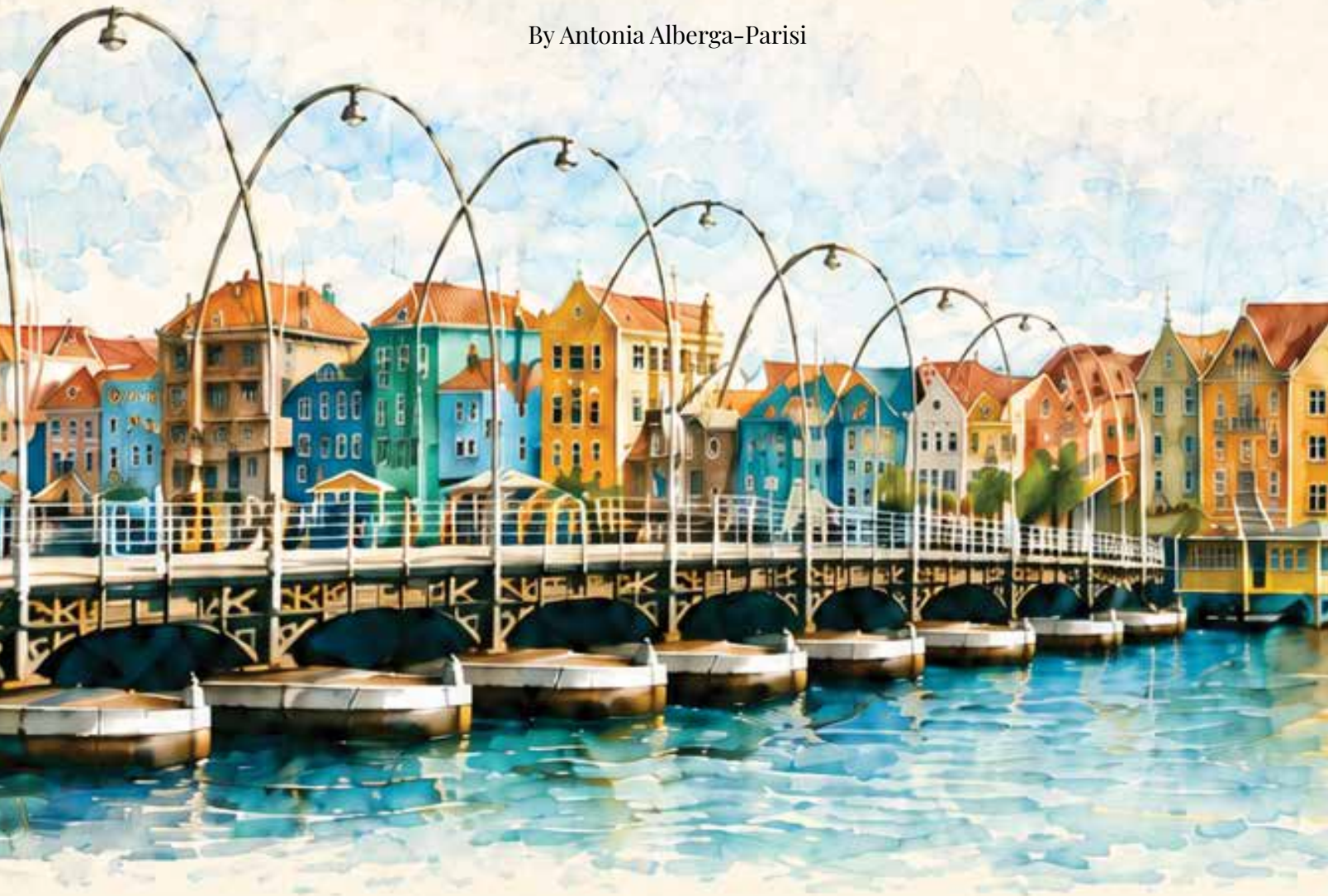
If you find yourself needing a little extra support during times of transition, reaching out to a therapist is a brave and worthwhile step. You don't have to navigate the hard seasons alone.

Lindsey Mart is the co-owner of Connected Counseling and Wellness, a mental health private practice with locations in Cumming and Alpharetta. She may be reached at 470-206-8250.

The Queen Emma Bridge:

An unexpected turn

By Antonia Alberga-Parisi



The Queen Emma Bridge is one of only twenty pontoon bridges in the world, spanning St. Anna's Bay on the Caribbean island of Curaçao. Like any queen, she is adorned with diadems—pink arches added in 1955 to honor Queen Juliana and Prince Bernhard. By night they glow against the sea's darkness, but her most

remarkable feature is hidden below: sixteen pontoons that allow her to glide aside whenever a ship must pass.

When she is closed, tourists crowd her wooden planks taking selfies, engagement photos, and family snapshots. Motorbikes are pushed respectfully across or raced over by the

impatient. No matter the level of reverence, she grants safe passage. Until the bell rings. Then the gates close, and everyone must wait while she moves.

Like most visitors, we were initially charmed by this ritual. A bridge on boats interrupting dinner plans and sightseeing felt

delightfully absurd. One afternoon, however, we found ourselves trapped behind the gates. Rather than stand there staring through the bars, I suggested we explore.

My children responded with synchronized eye rolls.

"It's going to storm," my son observed as the scent of rain mixed with the sea breeze.

"Who cares? It's hot enough," my husband replied.

To one side stretched colorful restaurants and shops we had already explored. To the other stood a quiet courtyard framed by yellow buildings, an old sculpture, and an abandoned fort.

"Let's go there."

The fort looked haunted, its broken bricks battered by centuries of wind and waves. It seemed filled with stories—old footsteps, forgotten dreams, and lives long vanished into stone. We left the crowd and headed toward the mystery.

Then we heard singing.

Quando sono solo Sogno all'orizzonte E mancan le parole

The voice seemed impossibly out of place. My husband immediately changed course and followed it. We followed him.

Within moments, Curaçao faded. The music transported us across an ocean to Italy, the birthplace of my parents, my husband, and, in many ways, our family story. The connection felt immediate and unexpected, as if roots stretched farther than distance or time.

Ahead stood a church, its doors open atop a steep staircase. A plaque identified it as the Fort Church, built in 1664. The singing continued as we climbed.

Inside, a young woman in jeans and a black top stood beside a man. Somewhere unseen, a piano accompanied them. Together they sang Andrea Bocelli and Sarah Brightman's "Time to Say Goodbye."

We slipped into a pew. Time to say goodbye.

Paesi che non ho mai Veduto e vissuto con te

The performance took my breath away. I had heard the song many times before, but never like this. In that quiet church, sung by strangers, it felt entirely new.

Why this song? It was not a hymn. No church bulletin would direct visitors to its page number. Yet somehow, we had been led there—by a passing ship, a moving bridge, and a decision to walk in a different direction.

The song spoke of journeys, farewells, light, darkness, and places waiting to be discovered.

For ten days we had enjoyed Curaçao's beaches, sunshine, and turquoise water. Yet beneath my smiles, something felt absent. A numbness had settled over me. Whether it came from age, work, or simple disenchantment, I couldn't say. I no longer laughed hard or cried deeply. Everything felt muted.

Standing in that church, listening to those voices rise toward the rafters, something shifted.

It was as though The Queen Emma herself had seen the knot I carried. She had interrupted my plans and nudged me toward a place I never intended to visit. There, I was reminded that I didn't have to stand waiting with everyone else, staring at a closed path. I could simply turn and explore another one.

When tears filled my eyes, my teenage daughter smiled knowingly.

"I knew this would make you cry."

"It's magical, isn't it?" I asked.

She laughed.

"You're so cringy. But this is pretty cool."

It did rain that afternoon. The singers continued rehearsing while thunder rolled beyond the church walls. Yet what I remember most is the feeling that returned to me—the ability to breathe fully again, as if some dulling force had finally lifted.

A bridge, a song, and an unexpected detour had given me back something I didn't realize I had lost.

The Queen Emma moved aside so a ship could pass.

And in doing so, she made room for me to move forward too.

“
A bridge
on boats
interrupting
dinner plans
and sightseeing
felt delightfully
absurd.”



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Antonia Alberga-Parisi, born and raised in Queens, New York, holds memories of sitting on her stoop and writing while waiting for rain. She is an assistant principal and a self-described forever writer.



Could Independent Auto Repair Shops Disappear?

By Tom Burgess, Owner, Christian Brothers Automotive, Cumming GA

It sounds dramatic but stick with me — this matters.

Cars today aren't just cars anymore. They're basically smartphones on wheels. The moment you turn the key (or push the button), your car is busy making all kinds of decisions: how much fuel to use, how to keep you in your lane, whether you can open a window, and a hundred other things you never think about. To do all that, your car is constantly collecting information. And here's the part most people don't realize:

Your car is sending a lot of that information straight to the manufacturer.

Your Car Knows More Than You Think

Modern vehicles can collect up to 25 gigabytes of data every hour. That's a ton. And it includes things like:

- Where you drive
- How fast you go
- How hard you brake
- How your car is running
- What maintenance it thinks you need

And soon, almost every new car will send this info to the manufacturer in real time, all day, every day.

Who Should Control That Info?

This is where things get interesting.

Do you want your car company to know everywhere you go? Should they be allowed to sell your driving habits to advertisers? Should police be able to pull your data and send you a ticket automatically?

“Without access to data, independent shops can't survive. And when competition disappears, prices go up—fast.”

And here's the big one: Should automakers get to decide who can repair your car?

Right now, manufacturers are pushing hard to keep exclusive control of all that data. If they win, they get to decide who sees it — and who doesn't.

Why This Could Hit Your Wallet

If independent repair shops can't access your car's data, they can't fix your car. It's that simple. And that means:

- **Fewer choices**
- **Higher prices**
- **Longer waits**
- **Dealerships becoming your only option**

This isn't some far off future problem. Some cars already require data access just to install a new battery. If the system isn't updated, the car may overcharge it because it thinks the old battery is still in there.

Without access to data, independent shops can't survive. And when competition disappears, prices go up — fast.



VICKERY VILLAGE

IT'S YOUR TIME!

ENJOY IT AT VICKERY VILLAGE FORSYTH.

WWW.VICKERYVILLAGESHOPS.COM
5855 SOUTH VICKERY STREET
CUMMING, GA 30040



MATILDA'S UNDER THE PINES

UPCOMING CONCERTS

JULY

- JULY 11 JAVA MONKEY
- JULY 18 HERE I COME AGAIN (DOLLY PARTON TRIBUTE)
- JULY 24 HOUSE OF HAMILL

SEPTEMBER

- SEPT. 12 SLOW PARADE
- SEPT. 19 SHAKERAG
- SEPT. 26 HARVEST MOON (CDN & Y TRIBUTE) ON THE HARVEST MOON

AUGUST

- AUG. 1 MATHEW KAHLER'S JAMES TAYLOR TRIBUTE
- AUG. 22 PIEDMONT SOUND
- AUG. 29 SURRENDER HILL

OCTOBER

- OCT. 3 SIX ONE FIVE COLLECTIVE
- OCT. 24 MICHELLE MALONE

CONCERTS 8-10 PM (JUNE-SEPT.) | CONCERTS START AT 7PM IN OCTOBER

A Stage For Unforgettable Nights

www.matildasmusicvenue.com/music

Forever and a Day
LANCE'S JEWELRY

Got

GOLD

Get Green!

WE BUY GOLD.

Honest. Fair. Local.



*Thanks for ten
years in a row*

1705 Market Place Blvd. | Cumming, GA 30041



(770) 781-5500 | www.lancesjewelry.com

