Grand Traverse WOMAN
northern michigan’s network for women • JAN/FEB ’16

THE TRANSFORMATION & fitness ISSUE

Free
Make your bonus and tax refund work harder for you with CD rates as high as **1.76% APY***

Open a CD and start saving today!

Visit us online at cuone.org or stop by our **Traverse City Branch** at 1407 S. Division St. to get started today!

*APY=Annual Percentage Yield. CD=Certificate of Deposit. Rate accurate as of December 8, 2015. Minimum balance and deposit required to earn the APY is $2,500, maximum is $250,000. 1.76% APY is at the 36 month term. APY is based on an assumption that interest will remain in the account until maturity. A penalty will be imposed for early withdrawal. Withdrawals and fees may reduce earnings. See the Truth in Savings disclosure for early withdrawal penalties.

Federally Insured by NCUA
New Year Flooring Sale

A Fresh New Look for the New Year

Let us help make your New Year happy! Come in for storewide savings on select floors, with 0% financing for 12 months for qualified buyers. And as a member of Carpet One Floor & Home®, we provide the best Guarantee imaginable. On select Carpet One products, if you are not happy with your flooring selection, we’ll replace it. Free! That includes your carpet or hard surface flooring… even the labor! That’s our Beautiful Guarantee®, see store for details.

— Miriam Pico’ Spokesperson

Traverse City & Acme • 231.941.4700 • Floorcoveringbrokers.com
WE HAD OUR OWN PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION in October. Our kids begged us to do “Screams in the Dark,” a huge attraction of haunted houses out at the Northwest Michigan Fairgrounds.

Kandy's answer was immediate: “I'll wait in the car.”

Kerry, however, made a play for Cool Mom: “Let's ALL go!”

“Really?” Kandy seethed.

“Really!” Kerry answered with too much gusto.

But when the night arrived, there was a problem. The guys were out of town. This meant we would have to be the frontrunners on this one, the brave ones, the fearless leaders. We’d have to be, gulp, the adults.

At the front

Kerry volunteered to take the lead on our walks (runs) through the haunted houses. And, Kandy, of course, could bring up the rear. One of us would fend off the incoming zombies, the other could screech while being chased by them. Between us, the kids could enjoy a comfort zone of terror.

The start was a haunted hayride back to the barns.

“Kids' stuff,” Kandy mused to the group at large, warming to the idea at least a little.

But when the lady in charge reached to check for her armband, Kandy yelped in fear at the sudden movement. The group murmured happily. They had ferreted out the scammer. The result was a calm coming over the group, everyone braver than that girl. Also known as “Kandy.”

During the hayride, flames shot out of barrels, headless men jumped out of trees and werewolves loped after the wagon. Kandy had the luck of being at the back of the ride, her shoulder against the ground, and everyone in line cheered in appreciation at her brave show. The kids were laughing hysterically. What cool moms they had!

“Easy now!” she told him. To this, he backed her up a little. Next year, we would bring strong, burly men and find someone else to glory in her face.

“He's my guy,” Kandy said to the group at large, warming to the idea of their Cool Moms. Our transformation was complete.

At the haunted house, things got serious. We were standing outside the barn, waiting in line with a bunch of other senseless people, when a man approached us. He was dressed in shredded dark clothing with a half-destroyed face mask and green skin. He was doing a lot of growling.

“Don't make eye contact with him!” Kandy warned the children. This made him zero in on her with a ferocious thirst. He wasn't speaking. He was just growling.

“Oohmygod, oohmygod, oohmygod,” is all she said to him and kept trying to turn away. He followed her, growling in her face.

“Easy now!” she told him. To this, he backed her up against the barn, let out a howl and PUNCHED THE WALL NEXT TO HER FACE.

Imagine what a crowd-pleaser that was. Kandy screamed and dissolved into a puddle on the ground, and everyone in line cheered in appreciation at the show. The kids were laughing hysterically. What cool moms they had!

There were still two more haunted houses to endure. By the time we got out, we were feeling a little wiser and many years older. We couldn't wait to make an exit and find someone else to adult for a while.

Back in the parking lot, a confession was made: Kerry peed her pants about 10 yards into the first barn (“only a little”). Next year, we would bring strong, burly men to guard the front and back of the mothers.

And the kids and their brilliant idea? Not a one of them would admit to being scared. However, ALL of them wanted to sleep together that night, within sight of their Cool Moms. Our transformation was complete. And with this issue, our “Transformation” issue, we hope you'll push yourself to try something just as crazy!
Here’s to a more confident SMILE

Take steps now for a beautiful smile in your child’s future!

Contact Dr. Lints and his team to learn more about options in orthodontics to fit your child’s needs.

• Friendly, Experienced Staff, 3D Dental CT
• American Board Certified Doctor
• Payment Options for Parents/Delta Dental Participant

231-922-7210

Ronald R. Lints, DDS, MS
4020 Copper View, Suite 240 • Traverse City, Michigan
www.drlints.com
TRAVERSE CITY • ELK RAPIDS • SUTTONS BAY
“COULD YOU take a special project in New York City for 9 months?”

I always said that I’d only move to New York if someone paid me a lot of money. Well, Anne, here you go! I was making a great salary and they would pay my rent in the city.

As icing on the cake, I found the project (launching a new fitness program) exciting. If successful, it would be a financial windfall for my company. It was like a red carpet rolled out in front of me, leading the way to this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

My path seemed clear. Everything I knew about who I was said, “Yes.”

“When do I leave?”

Finding my groove

I was no stranger to change. I had spent my life adapting to different schools, countries, jobs and lifestyles. After more than 8 years with sports apparel giant Under Armour in various roles in sales, event planning and brand management I was ready for a change.

During this time I found out that Les Mills East Coast, a fitness company whose product and culture I loved, was headquartered near my home in Baltimore.

In an uncharacteristically bold move, I called the CEO one day and said, “Hi, I’m Anne Bonney and I want to work for you.” A few interviews later, I walked into their office as the new director of instructor experience.

The culture was everything I hoped it would be! Everyone was energized by the mission, the products and the momentum of this fast-growing company. My team of nine and I were challenged, and did whatever needed to be done. We improved key metrics during two years of growth and change. I was very happy, and was looking forward to a long career there.

Then the New York project came up, and I jumped on it. It was really exciting to help the company launch a huge client all by myself, and it was a huge success.

While I was in New York, Les Mills East Coast merged with the West Coast office. My former role as director of instructor experience turned into a vice president position. I applied for the job, but it was given to an external candidate.

The person they hired had a long history of high-level executive experience with one of the largest gym chains in the U.S. I was disappointed, but I trusted the decision of the CEO. I was confident that this new hire was the best fit for the job.

I was also confident that they would find an even better-fitting role for me within the company.

The new VP offered me a project manager role, but that was a step back that I didn’t feel like I needed to take. The newly merged U.S. organization didn’t have any other available jobs. I watched my old team’s morale dissolving under the leadership of the new VP.

In the midst of all of this, I received an amazing offer from the New York client to jump ship and join their company as the senior director of their group exercise program. It was a huge opportunity that I declined without hesitation.

As my internal job search resulted in dead end after dead end, and the N.Y. project started drawing to a close, I was deeply depressed by the sudden thought that my company didn’t care about me.

I immediately chastised myself for the thought. “It’s a business,” I said to myself. “It doesn’t need to care about you. It’s here to make a profit and it pays you for your hard work. Get over it.”

Changing my track

A powerful lesson in leadership dawned on me. I realized that my above-and-beyond devotion, and tirelessly endless hours of hard work were mostly motivated by the firm belief that my superiors and the company cared about me as much as I cared about them.

I poured my heart and soul into every task because of that connection, and got astounding results for them. But as I felt that connection fading, I found myself lacking that extra drive.

It finally entered my mind that maybe I should consider leaving Les Mills.

What I was clinging to was the old Les Mills. While I was in New York, things changed back in Baltimore. I wanted the old culture and my old team. I desperately wanted something that didn’t exist anymore.

This realization hit hard. I was a lifelong gypsy. Letting go of the past and moving forward was never a problem for me. I was a champ when it came to evolving and thriving through change. Why was it so difficult this time?

The final straw took place during a martini-assisted reality check from a friend. She challenged my internal change champion when she

Need a switch-up?

Here are Anne’s Tips for Change

- Look at all of your options. All of them! Write down the crazy ones too, and seriously think about the possibilities. They may not be right, but thinking about them could clarify the direction you want to take.

- Talk it out. Talking to a friend, family member, counselor or coach can help bring to light things that you might not be seeing. Pick someone open minded!

- Reflect and adjust. Don’t fall in love with a plan, because as you navigate change, the plan will inevitably need adjustments. Reflect on successes and challenges and tweak the plan as needed.

- Accept personal evolution. “But I’m _______” or “I’d never _______” are limiting statements and often not true. Maybe 10 years ago it might have been true, but you’re a very different person today. It’s ok to be different than you used to be.

- Get ok with being scared. It’s an unavoidable part of growth and change. Grab it by the hand and run with it, because if you want to thrive during change, fear is going to be there. Might as well embrace it.

- Inhabit a positive attitude. It’s the one thing you’re in full control of, so choose to be positive!
told me I was emotionally stuck in the past, and I had to unstick or I might miss an amazing opportunity. I needed to accept my new reality.

That night, I sent an e-mail to the New York client asking to be reconsidered for the senior director role.

Once I took that step, a myriad of other options came into view. Many people in my network were thrilled to help me find a place where I could commit my energy, passion and talent. I ended up taking the senior director role with the New York client, got an incredible promotion, a huge raise and the opportunity to be a real, full-time resident of the Big Apple.

It was the right decision, and an invaluable lesson for myself. Yes, life changes, people change, jobs change, circumstances change. Heck, the only constant in life is change. Though it can be difficult, I needed to give myself permission to evolve and be someone different than the person I always thought I was.

Even though I think I’m the change ninja, even I can be emotionally trapped by a beautiful past, and miss out on an amazing future.

Anne Bonney is a speaker, trainer and coach specializing in empowerment and leadership topics. She brings 20 years of education and leadership experience to her fun and accessible style to help individuals and groups find more fulfillment and success in their lives. She can be reached at www.AnneBonney.com or by e-mailing abonney123@gmail.com.
HAPPY NEW YEAR BEAUTIES! This is the time of year when life coaches and personal-development bloggers share loads of tips and ideas about how to strut your stuff and live your best life in the new year. With the new year comes a clean slate. A blank page. The chance to begin again.

If you want to improve the quality of your life, you will likely set your resolutions now and begin to make changes in January. Yet for most of us, the comfortable pull of “the way things have always been” will start to sabotage our best intentions and can often overpower newly minted resolutions before they have a chance to germinate. Feeling defeated, we often give up on resolutions to transform our lives.

I choose to live in a resolution-free zone. I prefer to evolve and improve my life with incremental steps toward profound change. Reflecting on my successes and shortfalls in 2015 helped define my personal intentions for this new year. While I have lofty intentions and enormous dreams, I expect occasional setbacks. I believe you can correct your course of action if you’re ready to make some changes, check in with how you feel about the following areas of your life to determine which areas need the most attention.

• SELF-CARE • CAREER • RELATIONSHIPS
• FINANCES • HEALTH • SPIRITUALITY

Once you’ve identified the areas you wish to improve, you can brainstorm ideas about moving forward.

When I look at each area of my life, I see that improving my health and wellbeing is most important. And while I improved my nutrition in 2015 with whole foods, super foods and healthy tonics, I let my physical activity falter AGAIN. This is not a new experience for me. I’ve played tug-of-war with regular exercise for years. It seems my never-ending project list, self-sabotage and getting away from the habit of moving my body each day led me here. Can you relate?

Here’s what I know. When I regularly move my body, I am a much happier and healthier version of myself. I know how great I feel after practicing yoga, dancing, taking a brisk walk or going a few rounds with my heavy bag. I intend to move my ass a lot more in 2016.

To stay active, I will walk, practice yoga and ride my new stationary bike. I will inevitably fall off the wagon, pick myself up, dust myself off and begin again. This time I will begin again more often than I did in 2015. It’s more than a resolution. It’s a way of life.

One of my favorite clients decided she is ready for a career change after working in a high-powered job for the same company for 15 years. She has been polishing her résumé and researching new opportunities for the last three months.

As each new desirable position becomes available, she panics and is overwhelmed by fear-based scenarios. Leaving a job with excellent pay and medical benefits for a new position without tenure and vacation time weighs heavily on her mind. She retreats from taking action by sabotaging her transition to a new place of employment.

We discussed what was happening as each new opportunity came up. It was clear that her thoughts were a form of self-sabotage. I reminded her the human ego doesn’t like change and these voices in our heads—or inner critics—can really mess with our life choices.

This was the perfect time to help identify whose voice she was really hearing. In this case, her inner voice was parroting her father: “You have a good job. You should just keep your head down and stay where you are. There is no guarantee that you will find a better opportunity. It would be a shame to lose all of your tenure.”

Once we identified the mental saboteur, I helped this woman remember why she was ready to leave her long-time career in the first place. We revisited her valuable professional experience and identified how moving forward would help her grow and transform her life.

In both of these examples, you can see how easily it would be to settle for staying with the way things are. To think, Oh well, my resolution for the year failed. Back to the status quo. Transformation takes energy and commitment. I will be successful when I recommit every day to becoming a healthier version of me. My client will enjoy a new career when she commits to letting go of the past to forge a new path. The trick is to keep at it and to remember why we want to change our lives in the first place.

HERE IS AN EASY-TO-REMEMBER EQUATION FOR POSITIVE CHANGE IN THE NEW YEAR: Awareness + Action + Beginning Again (& Again) = Successful Transformation

CONSIDER THESE STEPS AS YOU PROGRESS & EVOLVE:

1. Identify what you wish to change.
2. Honor where you are right now.
3. Set your intentions and begin taking action. Remember, baby steps count!
4. When inner criticism strikes, remind yourself why you are making the choice to change.
5. If you falter, simply begin again as often as you need to until you manifest what you desire.

You can create a new daily practice to get from where you are today to where you want to be in the future. This year I plan to RECEIVE what my body, mind and soul need to function with more clarity and creativity. I intend to move my body in some way every day and be mindful of my tendency to make excuses.

Which areas of your precious life need the most attention right now? Make “intentions” for 2016. Not resolutions. It’s not about deadlines. It’s about allowing yourself to begin again as long as it takes to realize your goals and dreams.

Shann Vander Leek lives in Suttons Bay with her husband, Thomas, and teenage daughter, Marin. Shann is a Transformation Goddess, celebrated teacher, award-winning podcaster and voice-over talent. She is the author of Life on Your Terms, and co-author of six more best-selling books for women. She produces the Goddess Talk Sessions event, Divine Feminine Spotlight podcast, and co-hosts the Anxiety Slayer podcast with over 2.5 million listeners. Shann loves to teach women to walk in beauty with the strength, courage and pleasure of reclaiming their feminine sovereignty. Learn more at www.TransformationGoddess.com.
YOUR PATHWAY
TO A BETTER FUTURE

COMPLETE YOUR MASTER’S DEGREE IN TRAVERSE CITY!

- Education – Master’s degree options include master of educational leadership; M.Ed. in instruction and curriculum, early childhood education (ECE), or general and special education; or special education with emphasis in cognitive impairment.
- Occupational Therapy – Online classes with one weekend a month in Grand Rapids.
- Physician Assistant Studies – Prepare for a rewarding career as a physician assistant.
- Public Health – Coming Fall 2016 in Traverse City.
- Social Work – Application deadline for the next cohort is June 30. To learn more, attend an information session on Wednesday, February 10 at 5 p.m. or Tuesday, February 23 at noon in the NMC University Center, Room 13.

FIND OUT MORE!
(231) 995-1785 | (888) 922-1785 | gvsu.edu/traverse

- Small class sizes mean personalized attention
- Classes close to where you work and live
- Evening, hybrid, and online courses
- Start fresh or use previously earned college credits

If you take action now, you will help you get where you want to be.

Grand Valley State University in Traverse City

- Online classes with one weekend a month in Grand Rapids.
- Prepare for a rewarding career as a physician assistant.
- Complete your master’s degree in Traverse City – 20% off designer eyewear for a limited time!

New or Pre-Owned...
Needs - Car, Truck or SUV, For All Your Automotive Needs - Car, Truck or SUV, New or Pre-Owned...

I Can Help!

Gretchen Keith
Vehicle Sales Consultant
(231) 922-2000
gftford.com
US-31 South, Traverse City, MI
Mindfulness
GET OUT OF AUTOPILOT AND BACK INTO THE DRIVER’S SEAT OF LIFE
BY STEPHANIE BERGER

AS A BUSINESS OWNER, private-practice therapist, wife and mother of four daughters ages 15 months to 16 years, I can attest to feeling overwhelmed at times while managing the activities of a busy life. But I have found that when I take time to stop and consciously slow down, take some deep breaths and focus on the moment at hand—techniques that are part of practicing “mindfulness”—I am able to re-group and better handle the next situation.

These days, one can hardly pick up a magazine or newspaper, or scroll through a social media newsfeed without seeing some mention of mindfulness. But mindfulness is not just a fad. I have studied and taught mindfulness for five years and can attest that it has real, proven, researched, long-term benefits when used to cope with challenges of daily life, such as depression, anxiety, stress-management, impulsivity control, PTSD and trauma.

Research findings in the field of neuroscience, neuroplasticity and mindfulness consistently reaffirm the virtues of this practice.

Mindfulness is a meditation technique that has been practiced in Eastern contemplative traditions for thousands of years. Simply put, mindfulness calls forth three very important ideas: attention, awareness and presence. It is learning how to place your attention on the present moment, and learning how to observe, describe and participate with what is happening in the here and now.

Mindfulness is the opposite of autopilot or cruise control. It places you back in the driver’s seat of your life. It creates a subtle shift that helps you to be aware of the world you live in and allows you to feel connected to the current moment. It is being awake and self-aware.

Mindfulness, however, is not magic. It will not remove barriers and obstacles in your life. This technique will not take away painful experiences and emotions. But, after time and practice, living in the moment will help you to be far less influenced by the past. You will be able to feel your emotions in a healthy way instead of being a slave to them.

In the spirit of the new year, here are five practical tips for developing a more mindful lifestyle and a greater sense of well-being.

1. Start small
When people first picture formal mindfulness meditation, the image usually centers on someone sitting for long stretches of quiet time. However, when beginning this practice, start small. Set aside five minutes to sit quietly, close your eyes and try to think only of your breath slowly going in and out, in and out. When your mind fills with thoughts of daily life and to-do lists, re-focus on your breath and ignore the mental intrusions. At first, five minutes may seem long. You will feel fidgety, but always return to your breath.

There are great resources on the web. One of my favorites is a one-moment mindfulness instructional available at www.onemomentmeditation.com.

2. Select a mindful task
One can develop many “informal” mindfulness practices throughout the day. Pick one task like walking or washing dishes, and focus on that task “one-mindfully.” Start by describing the experience to yourself using simple details and words. For example: “I notice the feeling of my feet making contact with the earth… I notice the temperature of the water is hot… I notice the soap forming white bubbles.” By utilizing these little daily activities you begin to reap the rewards of mindfulness.

3. Be patient
Developing a mindful lifestyle takes time and effort. You are training your mental muscle much like a runner trains for a marathon. You are not going to wake up tomorrow and be totally in control of every aspect of your life. The goal is learning how to be aware of all states of mind and being. Cultivate the practice of using mindfulness to slow down, notice and accept your feelings. Then describe your experience by putting words to it. Describing your feelings is an essential part of mindfulness practice.

4. Listen
Purposefully, and with intention, create one opportunity per day to engage with a spouse, child, partner, friend or coworker in a more mindful manner. That means listening. It has become a bad habit for us to multitask when the people in our lives are asking for our attention. Set aside your gadget, make eye contact, exhibit positive body language. Let them know you are present in the experience with them. The key here is to do this fully and all the way.

5. Mindful eating
Sit down (notice I said “sit”; do not stand at your counter shoveling food) and enjoy a meal. Simply eat. Tune-in to the food. Engage all your senses. How does it smell? How does it look? How does it taste? Do not counter shoveling food) and enjoy a meal. Simply eat. Tune-in to the food. Engage all your senses. How does it smell? How does it look? How does it taste? Do not answer a text message or respond to email. Just eat. Take the time to enjoy your food and immerse yourself into the moment.

As I said, mindfulness is much more than a trend. It is a way of life that brings many positive benefits. What better way to start out the new year than to incorporate mindfulness into your life?

Stephanie Berger (right), with her business partners Linda Smith (left) and Earlene Blevins (center).

Stephanie Berger, LMSW, is a clinical therapist and a partner with Earlene Blevins, LPC, and Linda Smith, LMSW, at Mindful Life Practice, a counseling and rejuvenation center in the Traverse City warehouse district. For information about individual counseling and group workshops for children, teens and adults visit www.mindfullifepracticetc.com or call 231.486.0805.
Wednesday, Mar 9  - The mixx & mingle

Wednesday, Jan 27 - Pilates & Pinot

UPCOMING OPEN HOUSE DATES

JAN 9, FEB 13 & MAR 12

CLUB ONE WILL BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC DURING BUSINESS HOURS WITH MEMBERSHIP SPECIALS, A FUN CLASS SCHEDULE AND MUCH MORE.

1209 SOUTH GARFIELD AVE. | TRAVERSE CITY, MI 49686
(231) 995-0920 | WWW.CLUBONETC.COM | INFO@CLUBONETC.COM
I Grew up in an old-fashioned Italian household where people ate anything and everything. No one ever exercised; the television blared all day.

I noticed this at a very young age and was afraid to be like my family. I didn’t want to be overweight or unhealthy. It scared me that every one of my immediate relatives suffered from serious medical issues. At meals, I would always ask for something different to eat.

By the time I was in high school I started exercising as much as I could. Terrified of becoming heavy, I was anorexic by the time I was a senior.

I eventually turned my life around. I got married at 21, which led to a wonderful event: the birth of my daughter. It was the best thing that had ever happened to me. I was determined to set a healthy example for her no matter what.

When Elaina was only 3 weeks old, our little family of three moved to Houston. I didn’t know a soul; we could only afford to have one car. We lived in a large apartment complex that had a gym with a small, unused classroom. I started taking my daughter there. While she slept in her stroller, I worked out. Soon I got to know other women who stayed home with their kids.

When these women learned that I brought my daughter, they asked if they could join me. I started leading exercise classes for them while our babies slept or played in the same room. That’s where it all began.

Two years later, we moved back to Michigan. For two hours each day, I worked out at World Gym. One time an instructor had to leave for an emergency and she asked me to lead a class. I told her I had no qualifications… but she didn’t mind! Before long, I was teaching that class and every one of the instructor’s other classes after that. I loved how it felt to help motivate my students.
When my daughter started preschool I got a degree in exercise science along with other certifications. Being an instructor made it possible for me to be a stay-at-home mom and work at the same time.

Not too long after, I set a goal to work for Life Time Fitness, which was the very best health club in my area. I was so afraid I wasn’t good enough to work there. I auditioned—worried that it was terrible—but I was hired!

I loved that gym. And it was good to me in return. While going through a divorce, my boss knew I needed extra hours and asked me to clean the studio, which I gladly did. My work ethic was noticed. By the time my daughter was in first grade, I had been promoted.

I was very excited about the promotion but unwilling to put my daughter in any type of daycare. Luckily, the company made the position flexible around my schedule, for which I was grateful. I had my own office with a window, where my daughter could color and watch me teach.

As I dove into my new responsibilities, I began taking initiatives regarding the cleanliness of our clubs. People tell me I am obsessive/compulsive, which I probably am. But in this case it helped me get ahead!

I provided disinfectant wipes in each studio and separate bins for used and un-used towels for members. These extra measures sound commonplace now, but they certainly weren’t 15 years ago. I also went above and beyond: having water dispensaries and cups, ear plugs for people who thought the music was too loud and comment cards for the members to give their feedback.

To keep the studio looking perfect at all times, I started doing things that no other department heads were doing. I came up with specific cleaning instruction charts for each instructor to follow after his or her classes.

The owner noticed. Each year, he made it a point to visit all 80 of his clubs. He came to Michigan after I had only been in my position for a few months. He was in awe of how perfect my studios were and loved everything I had done. He not only implemented my cleaning protocol nationally, but he also offered me a position as the national operations manager for group fitness.

I told him I didn’t think I could take that position because it meant I had to travel to all the grand openings and to corporate meetings out of state, taking me away from my daughter. To my surprise, the owner worked it out for me to travel only when my daughter was with her dad. Perfect!

Shortly afterward, I met my husband, who lived in Big Rapids, where I decided to move. Since there were no Life Time Fitness clubs in the area, I told my boss (who was like a sister to me) that I would have to step down.

Fortunately, she had just launched EMPOWER! Fitness Events and asked me to join her in educating instructors all over the United States. Now I am the EMPOWER! registration manager as well as the national group fitness education coordinator for Life Time Fitness. I work out of my house and travel once a month to various conferences. I feel truly lucky.

This past summer, my husband and I—now in the empty nest phase—moved to Traverse City, which had been our plan for many years. It makes me so happy to be in a city I love, doing what I love, and knowing I’ll be here for the rest of my journey.

For me to find a life and a career I love meant an early transformation, deciding from a young age that I wanted a healthier future for myself. Since that switch, I have never looked back.

After settling in Traverse City, Angela Hayes began teaching at Yin Yoga and YMCA. She was recently hired by Club One Health Club to direct the Group Fitness Department. To learn more, contact her at Angelahayes1@live.com.
“How cool is that?” I said to myself when I first heard about Ski for Light, an international week-long event—in a different U.S. city each year—that matches visually and physically impaired classic cross country skiers with experienced sighted guides. “I enjoy skiing, traveling and socializing… this must be for me!”

I was all set to attend the SFL in Alaska in 2014 with friends. But then life happened. My beloved dad developed lymphoma. My need to be with him far outweighed my need to be skiing and I was blessed to be with him when he died.

The next year I rallied my friends again to go to SFL in Granby, Colo. This time, life happened to them. One by one they dropped out. There I was, all set to go and no one to go with. If only I could see enough to travel by myself again like I used to when my vision was better. Now I clutch my white cane and cling to my husband.

Since the age of 7, I have been legally blind due to a rare retinal degenerative disease called Stargardt’s Disease. Legally blind is a category that means someone’s visual acuity is less than 20/200, and that they have limited field of vision. My visual impairment consists of blind spots in my retina, mostly in the center of my vision. I have some vision in my peripheral line of sight, which helps me detect larger objects and varying shades, but does not help with fine-tune vision for tasks such as reading or driving.

Despite my condition, I have enjoyed both cross-country and downhill skiing my whole life. But going on a ski trip alone seemed impossible. “What a shame that I cannot go,” I thought. “Or can I?”

What did that SFL flyer say about accomplishing things you never thought were possible? What about my self-confidence and...
Race day dawned. I could not understand why everyone was so hyped up! Skiers were contemplating what to have for breakfast, how much water to drink or not drink, and my guide kept telling me to stay calm. I had not realized that I was apparently supposed to be nervous! The atmosphere was different than other days. Local residents had gathered to watch. Families had flown in from afar to witness. When my guide put a race number vest around my neck, I knew this was serious business.

Instead of everyone taking off at their own pace, today we lined up two by two, just like Noah’s Ark. There we were...hundreds of people all on skis...no leader dogs, no white canes, no wheelchairs, just people sharing an amazing sport to wrap up a week of indescribable camaraderie.

The loudspeaker crackled. As if the crowd was not emotional enough, they played the national anthems of each country represented. That’s when I lost it: “How am I supposed to ski when I am crying?”

My husband and daughter were at the start cheering me on. I was concentrating on their voices and missed when the loudspeaker shouted, “Number 45...Melinda Hollands...from Traverse City, Michigan!”

We were off! Soon we were beyond the noise and into the valley. Water stops were short, but necessary, as the warm Colorado sun shone bright and strong in the 9,000-foot altitude of the Rockies.

At one point there came a big downhill with the sharp right curve at the bottom where I had fallen a few days before. Bob reminded me of the sharp right curve at the bottom where I had fallen a few days before. Bob reminded me...no leader dogs, no White canes and guide dogs to the group of SFL participants. A van ride took us to our resort, where another volunteer led me to my room...where I had two messages on my room phone...where another volunteer led me to my room...

Finally, it was time for my trip. My husband, Ian, guided me to the plane gateway, and then handed me off to a flight attendant. Flying alone was simple—I was like a baton in a relay, just handed off from person to person until I got where I was going.

At Denver International airport a volunteer led me to baggage claim. We followed white canes and guide dogs to the group of SFL participants. A van ride took us to our resort, where another volunteer led me to my room...where I had two messages on my room phone already! I was invited to two parties before dinner!

There was socializing in the hot tub and evening entertainment. But most of all, there was skiing. The groomers at the resort made two parallel tracks in the snow, one for skiers and one for guides. Skier and guides were carefully matched based on levels of experience.

My guide, Bob, had been attending SFL for 22 years. His challenge was to manage skiing up and down hills, while still monitoring my safety. The relationship between guides and skiers cannot be described in words, but only in an amazing bond of mutual respect and appreciation.

Though I’d come just for the experience, my competitive edge emerged and I signed up for the 10K race on the last day. I had never raced that distance before.

“THERE WE WERE...HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE ALL ON SKIS...NO LEADER DOGS, NO WHITE CANES, NO WHEELCHAIRS, JUST PEOPLE SHARING AN AMAZING SPORT TO WRAP UP A WEEK OF INDESCRIBABLE CAMARADERIE.”

Start creating the smile of your dreams today!

Traverse City  231-929-3200
Charlevoix   231-237-0955
www.schulzortho.com

Forever Fit Classes
For all ages and fitness levels

• TOTAL Barre™
• Step Aerobics
• Fitness Ball
• Weight Strengthening
• Aerobic Dance
• Gentle Pilates

Classes Begin Jan. 11
Sign-up Today!

NMC Extended Education
231.995.1700
nmc.edu/fitness

NEWS LEADER

STATION OF THE YEAR!
Motherhood and Entrepreneurship

One CAN be a successful business woman and Mother, however it’s not always black and white. For Dr. Heather Rassel, it is about being intentional with her desires, creative, and patient.

Dr. Rassel once owned and operated a chiropractic office with her former husband, which was extremely convenient having four young children. They could job share and balance family time as well.

In 2011 Dr. Rassel realized her life was headed in a different direction and so was her practice style. She visualized a new type of office that was low stress, simple, and reflected her style, at the same time providing local families with affordable regular chiropractic care, despite costly changes in health insurance. Pure Chiropractic was conceived! Within a matter of three months, Heather opened in the Grand Traverse Mall.

It was very important for Dr. Rassel to keep the part-time schedule her and the children were accustomed to yet stay congruent with her practice values. Being brand new, however, that wasn’t easy to do. Having a creative practice model, keeping a low overhead and networking allowed her to do that. Dr. Rassel has a “membership” style practice, which runs similar to any yoga studio or gym. The client joins for the year and pays a flat affordable monthly rate and can receive regular chiropractic adjustments as needed. No insurance is accepted and there are pay per visit and discount punchcards options too.

When Dr. Rassel was building Pure Chiropractic in her mind, she planned on adding another female chiropractor, that shared her same practice style, sometime in 2016. It came earlier then expected! Heather crossed paths with Dr. Meghan Costello who recently had her first baby. She was looking to cut back on practice hours, where she had been full time at East Bay Chiropractic for the past two years. After meeting, they soon both realized how similar they ran their practices and even adjusting technique! Dr. Costello joined Pure Chiropractic in October. EVERYONE is happy about it. Current clients love that they can come in anytime during office hours, 6 days a week, which is convenient with the walk-in only policy. Both doctors get to spend time in motherhood as well!

Anything is possible, in Dr. Rassel’s opinion, especially if you are clear with your intentions and listen to your hearts desires.

Pure Chiropractic is entering it’s 5th year at the Grand Traverse Mall and preparing to move January 4th, just 2 doors down (between Zale’s & Jonathon B. Pub) to make room for the new Dick’s Sporting Goods store. Accepting new patient’s with an affordable rate of $20 for first time clients. On Facebook and www.purechirotc.com

A Sign of Confidence

When the most respected brand in the world Berkshire Hathaway puts its name on a real estate sign, that’s a good sign for the market and a great sign for you.

Announcing our newest location in the heart of downtown Traverse City!

630 E. Front Street | Traverse City | 231.632.5105

45 offices across Michigan and Northern Indiana.
What’s to embrace?

neighbors are asking: “Have you booked your driving is a challenge. Your mind and your falling down from the almost-always dark skies, With ice, sleet and almost 200 inches of snow on the 45th parallel is hard, I’ll give you that. whole life in northern climates. I know winter Michigan for almost 17 years and have spent my campaign to encourage everyone to get out and enjoy the season. I’ve lived in Northern north. Embrace it! Don’t escape winter in Northern Michigan this year. Embrace it! When winter finally gets here, you’ll probably have an overwhelming urge to curl up in a cozy blanket, throw back a few hot toddies and wake up in the spring with the crocus. I hear you, but wait. Let’s rewrite this story. Don’t escape winter in Northern Michigan this year. Embrace it! Join me - I’ve started a “Best Winter Ever!” campaign to encourage everyone to get out and enjoy the season. I’ve lived in Northern Michigan for almost 17 years and have spent my whole life in northern climates. I know winter on the 45th parallel is hard. I’ll give you that. With ice, sleet and almost 200 inches of snow falling down from the almost-always dark skies, driving is a challenge. Your mind and your neighbors are asking: “Have you booked your flight to Florida yet?” So what’s so great about Up North winters? What’s to embrace?

Beauty

Northern Michiganders, call yourselves blessed. We get to live in an incredibly beautiful place and not just in the summer, my dear snowbirds. Early on, before the snow has arrived, there are endless hills and miles of shoreline to roam. Later, there’s almost nothing I enjoy more than exploring the winter woods of Northern Michigan, blanketed in snow and quiet. I feel most alive when I am moving and sweating on a crisp, clear, crunchy-snow, noticing-my-breath day. Every single limb of the bare trees blanketed in white. The kids are running, knocking snow off the trees with sticks just to see and feel more snow falling. It’s magical.

Community

There used to be a time when there wasn’t all that much to do in Northern Michigan in the winter months. Shops closed up, business owners headed south while the rest of us “poor souls stuck here” holed up in our homes and waited for the melt. Now with events every weekend winter is no longer a social quiet time. There are opportunities to be with your fellow beings around every corner: polar bear dips, ski races, brew and comedy festivals and lessons in all winter sports. Celebrations stretch from the solstice all the way until the wild and crazy spring fling ski events where you have the opportunity to ski half naked down some almost-spring slopes. Or try fat-tire biking this year, the newest way to get out and explore the trails, shores and frozen water of Northern Michigan. My cup of tea is, following an afternoon with family and friends outside in the white, fluffy stuff, gathering around candles for cozy sips and eats. Mmm, homemade togetherness. Invite friends over, throw on a big pot of soup and embrace the "cozy" during the storm.

Physical Health

My personal scientific study of Northern Michigan discovered that your winter satisfaction will be 150 percent better if you find at least one active thing that you like to do OUTSIDE in the winter. If you haven’t already found your winter activity of choice, try a bunch! Here are some easy options to test out and you don’t even have to buy equipment yet, just rent from one of our local shops or borrow from a friend: snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, downhill skiing, snowboarding, ice skating, sledding, fat-tire biking, tubing, jumping from hot tub to snow pile and back, ice fishing, winter camping and the list goes on. You might be cold for about the first five minutes until you get moving and then you’ll probably be sweating and stripping those wooly layers.

Mental Health

The blues are real. Some 60 to 90 percent of women suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). Making a conscious effort to get outside during the day, even just for a walk through a snowy neighborhood, will help you make strides toward winter wellness. Reaching out to others is another surefire mood booster. Help out a neighbor; we’re all in this together, right? Dust off their windshield, shovel a walkway, bring a meal to the homeless shelter, buy the woman behind you in line a mocha. Share the love of winter with others and feel uplifted in return.

Economy

Having a hard time embracing winter for your own wellness? Then try seeing it as an investment in the health of our local economy and the strength of community. Buy some winter gear for you and your family and support a local business in the process. You know the saying... “There is no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothing.” Be prepared. Think in layers and choose local to help you gear up. I don’t know about your family, but I expect my kids to lose at least one or two mittens every winter. Buy some back-ups. Gearing up your kids in appropriate clothing will go a long way to ensuring their happiness—and yours because we all know that we’re only as happy as our unhappiest child.

I firmly believe multiple-mittened hands make light work. Let’s embrace this season together. Take the pledge. For you, your children, your community. Make it your best winter ever!

The author’s daughter Phoebe.

When winter finally gets here, you’ll probably have an overwhelming urge to curl up in a cozy blanket, throw back a few hot toddies and wake up in the spring with the crocus.

Embrace it! When winter finally gets here, you’ll probably have an overwhelming urge to curl up in a cozy blanket, throw back a few hot toddies and wake up in the spring with the crocus. I hear you, but wait. Let’s rewrite this story. Don’t escape winter in Northern Michigan this year. Embrace it! Join me - I’ve started a “Best Winter Ever!” campaign to encourage everyone to get out and enjoy the season. I’ve lived in Northern Michigan for almost 17 years and have spent my whole life in northern climates. I know winter on the 45th parallel is hard, I’ll give you that. With ice, sleet and almost 200 inches of snow falling down from the almost-always dark skies, driving is a challenge. Your mind and your neighbors are asking: “Have you booked your flight to Florida yet?” So what’s so great about Up North winters? What’s to embrace?

Beauty

Northern Michiganders, call yourselves blessed. We get to live in an incredibly beautiful place and not just in the summer, my dear snowbirds.

Early on, before the snow has arrived, there are endless hills and miles of shoreline to roam. Later, there’s almost nothing I enjoy more than exploring the winter woods of Northern Michigan, blanketed in snow and quiet. I feel most alive when I am moving and sweating on a crisp, clear, crunchy-snow, noticing-my-breath day. Every single limb of the bare trees blanketed in white. The kids are running, knocking snow off the trees with sticks just to see and feel more snow falling. It’s magical.

Community

There used to be a time when there wasn’t all that much to do in Northern Michigan in the winter months. Shops closed up, business owners headed south while the rest of us “poor souls stuck here” holed up in our homes and waited for the melt. Now with events every weekend winter is no longer a social quiet time. There are opportunities to be with your
Because “just a kid” and “all grown up” are a world apart...

Traverse Area Pediatric & Adolescent Clinic
4020 W. Royal Dr. TC • (231) 421-8099 • www.tapactc.com

Drs. Mulder, Schell, Labian, Smith and Stilwill
Providing Innovative, Experienced and Compassionate Care

PraiseMoves
Bayview Wesleyan Church
720 Wayne St., Traverse City, MI.

CLASSES:
Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays at 9:30 -10:30am
Tuesdays, Thursdays at 6:30 - 7:30pm

$5 a class or $30 for 30 days

Certified PraiseMoves Instructor, Trisha Lardie
trishalardie@gmail.com
www.praisemoves.com 231-357-5610

Pamper yourself...

With one of our winter inspired treatments or packages, designed to hydrate dry winter skin. From manicures to massages, facials to hairstyling and so much more, Spa Grand Traverse has everything you need to relax and unwind. As a part of your Spa experience, enjoy our indoor pools, hot tubs, sauna, and fitness classes.

* Certain restrictions may apply.
231-534-6750 | grandtraverseresort.com | Owned & Operated by the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians
Is there anything more terrifying than creating something completely new and then releasing it out into the world for strangers to judge? I thought so. For a long time my biggest ideas stayed safely tucked inside my imagination. But last year I got brave and decided to put myself out there creatively.

After working as a nutrition journalist for more than a decade, I decided to publish a children’s book. *Squash Boom Beet: an Alphabet for Healthy, Adventurous Eaters*, introduces little ones to “cool” vegetables and features food from more than 50 Northern Michigan farms and gardens.

I want kids everywhere to discover the amazing colors, unique textures and wild names of vegetables. My hope is that they will identify healthy food, they’d be more likely to get excited about buying, preparing and eating it too.

As the book hits stores this winter, I’m reflecting on the epic journey of getting this idea out of my head and onto paper, literally. Along the way, I learned the answer to my question: There IS something more terrifying than putting your creation out into the world…wishing you had.

Here’s how I got my mind into shape for this major undertaking and how I’ve been transformed by the process.

**Timing isn’t everything**

I’ve been a professional magazine writer for 17 years and always knew I wanted to write a children’s book. But it never seemed to be the right time to take on a side project of this size. Year after year I gave myself different excuses: I’m already working full-time… I have a newborn and am barely sleeping… I’m busy volunteering to build a school float for the Cherry Festival parade!

I finally realized that there was never going to be some magical, perfect time. I just needed to start.

My three young sons were also motivators. I wanted them to have this book now, not when they were already grown. More importantly, I wanted to teach them that they could have a big idea and work hard to achieve it.

So I committed to working on my book every Wednesday and Saturday morning, buying farm-fresh foods and photographing them during the growing and harvesting seasons. I started with asparagus in May and ended with pumpkins in October.

Oddly enough, I realized I had time in my schedule all along. We always do for the things we care about. That didn’t mean it always went smoothly. The day I was shooting countless little peas laid out in a specific pattern on a cutting board on the floor is also the day my toddler decided he didn’t want to nap. I had to get the perfect shot fast before his little fingers snatched too many peas!

Another realization: I’m done complaining about being busy. Being busy is boring. Now my goal is to make sure my busy-ness has meaning: that my work, my volunteering, my kids’ activities serve a bigger purpose than just filling time. They need to feel fulfilling.

**Follow the inspiration**

I have lots of book ideas, so why write about vegetables? I’m a foodie, but with three kids I had fallen into the rut of eating too many frozen pizzas on the way to t-ball games.

There I was, a health writer, not feeding my family as well as I should. I didn’t want my kids to become disconnected with what real food looked like or to think carrots only came washed and peeled in a plastic bag.

The book helped me get back to nature and back to eating more local, healthy produce that we’re so lucky to have sprouting all around us here. I’m not perfect, but at least I have more green stuff in my fridge now.

Plus, I suffer from some minor autoimmune conditions so I knew eating more plants would be key to staying strong for my family. I can honestly say we ate more veggies this past summer than ever before. Call it research for the book. Every meal we experimented with something new: kohlrabi fritters, beet chips, romanesco tortillas.

My kids loved the idea of trying something as daring as dragon tongue beans and green tiger zucchini. I mean, eating something called fairytale eggplant has to be an adventure, right? Even my picky eater was won over once or twice.

**Try to make a difference**

From the very beginning I knew this book needed real photography to teach kids how to recognize healthy food. No cartoon tap-dancing turnips for this one! But I never considered relying on generic stock photos. From day one, I wanted to buy and photograph the local food from area farms.

As a fifth generation native of Traverse City, I’m so thankful for the farmers who work hard to grow food for this area. In a way,
my book is a thank-you letter to them. I even discovered a network of new friends by becoming a regular at local farm stands and farmers' markets. (Even the ones who thought I was "a little crazy" for asking so many questions about the tomatoes.) I learned to think about how my work and choices affect and benefit my community.

Support is invaluable

It's scary taking on a major endeavor like writing a book alone. So it helped to be surrounded by amazing support. My husband, Matt, would scout out farms for me. He was a great sounding board for book ideas. My kids would rate every draft page in the book with either a thumbs up or a thumbs down. Sometimes they were tough critiques, but they made me better.

Also, I'm part of a group of seven female entrepreneurs—we call ourselves "Women in Business"—who meet once a month to talk about our work challenges and successes. Having to show up each month and prove what I'd accomplished since the last meeting really forced me to keep pushing forward.

It was like attending a Weight Watchers meeting and having to weigh in and be accountable to the group. I don't know if I would have finished this book if it weren't for all this support. Simply talking out loud about a goal helped make it more real.

Learn new tricks

This project really forced me to hone new skills. I wanted to have full ownership of this book, which meant doing the photography, not just the writing. I'm a self-taught photographer. It has always been a hobby. As an art history major in college I admired the photos of Cindy Sherman. And then, while working in New York City for years, I was able to attend many professional photo shoots where I learned how food stylists did their magic.

Most of the photos in my book were taken in a little studio that I set up in the corner of my son's nursery, where I found the best natural light. I used props from my house and raided my mom's sewing closet for vivid fabrics to use as backdrops.

Photographing was so much fun, even the frustrating days—like when the red cabbage wouldn't stay put and kept rolling off the table and staining my white curtains. And don't get me started about trying to get the perfect drop of beet juice captured on camera.

Looking back, I used to tell people: "If I weren't a writer, I would have been a photographer." Luckily, through this project, I realized I didn't have to choose. I could do both writing and photography.

Lisa Maxbauer Price writes for national magazines and is the assistant editor at Grand Traverse Woman. She is also the author and photographer behind the new children's book Squash Boom Beet, introducing kids to healthy vegetables grown on Northern Michigan Farms. GTWoman's graphic designer, Bethany Gulde, designed the book. To learn more about the book, including ordering information and availability, visit www.squashboombeet.com. Lisa can be reached at lisam@grandtraversewoman.com.
Women make decisions based on relationships.

Women emphasize relationship building as well as fact-gathering and consult with experts and business owners they know.

Call today to get your ad space reserved by Feb 15th

(231) 276-5105

Email Kerry@GrandTraverseWoman.com • Capture the attention of 10,000 women!
Life changes, people change, jobs change, circumstances change, relationships change. Heck, the only constant in life is change. We all know this, but sometimes giving ourselves permission to evolve and be someone different than the person we always thought we were is difficult. As an expert in navigating personal change, Anne will leave the audience with some tools to really look at who they are RIGHT NOW, and paint a new picture that doesn’t include the stuff that is no longer working.

Who is Anne Bonney?
Anne Bonney is a motivational speaker and coach. She grew up all over the world. Her philosophy is, “make your own rules, just don’t be a jerk!” She believes that there is not one right way to lead a life, but there is a right way for you right now. She’s a firm believer that just because something was right for you in the past, doesn’t mean it’s right in the present. Identities shift and lives change. Embrace that and enjoy the ride.

Anne has an unbelievable amount of energy and passion, and she puts that into her interactions with everyone she meets. She loves to have fun, and believes that happy people are productive people. Helping people achieve great things for themselves feeds her energy and passion, which is why she’s made it her career.

Bottom line, she’s fun, she’ll make you feel energized and ready to take on the world with YOUR ideas and YOUR plans, being fed from YOUR strengths. So what are you waiting for? Join us for lunch! We loved Anne the minute we met her and you will too! Visit www.AnneBonney.com for more information.
We will select three of our GtWoman readers to participate in a free 8-week weight-loss program from March 12 to May 7.

That’s right, gals, it’s time to make that change you’ve been wanting for so long. If you’ve got at least 20 lbs. to lose, are able to commit to an intense 8-week program and have the all-important "sass" factor, apply today! This will be our 7th year doing the program and over the years our Janes have lost over 500 lbs. total. Can you handle the spotlight? The sweat? The success? If so, visit www.grandtraversewoman.com and put your name in the hat for this opportunity to make a big change with GtWoman!

The Sweat

Our 3 Janes will take part in an 8-week program at our sponsor, Fit For You Health Club in Traverse City. The program includes:

- 16 fat-blasting body transformation coaching sessions with the Jane team
- 8 confidence building group challenges
- 4 educational seminars
- 8 week Fit For You membership
- Done-for-you meal plan
- Nutrition and exercise journal
- Ongoing nutritional counseling
- Unlimited email coaching and more!

The Sweet

Our additional sponsors will offer:

- GTOC: Skin care for the Janes, plus eyewear
- Impres Salon Spa: Hair color & cut, manicure, make-up and blow out
- Sarah Brown Photography: Before & After photos of each Jane
- Werthmann Life Coaching: One life-coaching journal/workspace per Jane
- A 45 minute one-on-one discovery session
- Bi-monthly 1-hour group sessions (every other week starting the week they are chosen till program ends)

At Your Service Cleaning

1 house cleaning for each Jane

The Start

Applicants must fill out a 1-page application and send us that “before” picture you want to say goodbye to! The program runs March 12 - May 7, 2016. Janes will be featured in three issues of GtWoman as their progress unfolds, as well as be celebrated at a Jane Finale party May 11th.

Download the application at:
www.grandtraversewoman.com
This is a Word document - type in your answers, snap a quick photo and email both today! All photos and applications are confidential. Fit For You makes final Jane selections.

Apply by: Friday, Jan. 22, 2016
Proven Results ~ for 10 years!

With pinpoint accuracy - The Metacheck™ system aids our trainers in customizing an exercise and nutritional program specific to YOUR individual needs.

Metacheck™ is an exclusive analysis system only offered at FIT FOR YOU

~ 10 minute resting metabolic rate measurement ~
~ oxygen concentration correlates to calories burned ~

Call today for your appointment
1226 S Garfield Ave, Traverse City
Go to www.FITFORYOU.info
231.922.7285

SAY HELLO TO YOUR BEAUTIFUL NEW BRAND.

Design and branding flourish in the right hands. I’m here to help you create something that looks and feels simply irresistible.

erinwaineodesign.com // 231 342 9731 // TRAVERSE CITY

Tune in to the WTCM Morning Show and listen to Jamie Kramer! She’s playing Nashville’s hottest music to start your day off right.

Jan/Feb '16 | 25
When you stop and think about the last trip you made to your local grocery store, many things may come to your mind. You might recall what you purchased, what amazing deal you got or whom you ran into there. When I recall going, I experience anxiety: racing heart, foggy head, numb and tingly hands.

I would quickly get the items on my list and check out, leaving the store before I had a heart attack right there in one of the aisles. As soon as I was in the parking lot, I would sit in my car and try to pull myself together. With lots of slow, deep breaths I would convince myself I would be fine; it’s just another anxiety attack like I’ve had many times before.

Whenever I was not at home or going out of town, the thought of the hospital nearest to my destination would cross my mind, just in case my heart gave out—my kids’ sporting events, church, family outings and just about anytime I was with a large group. Death crossed my mind many times day and night.

How does a movie and dinner date with your husband and children sound? Fear ran through my mind. Am I too large to fit in the theater seat? Will I be forced to stand in the back?

Dinner out at a restaurant sounds great too. But what if there were no tables available? Would I be able to squeeze tightly into the booth where the waitress seats us? The sheer stress made me opt for drive-thru.

Many women enjoy shopping for new clothes. I was not a fan. Because I wore a size 6X shirt and size 30/32 women’s pants, it was hard to find clothes to fit me. A lot of my clothes shopping was done in the men’s big and tall department. I am only 5 feet 2 inches tall so the arm and leg lengths of men’s clothes were always way too long, but I settled because the clothing fit around my large body.

Swinging on a park swing with my children meant thighs pinching from the metal and chains rubbing. Painting my own toenails was not an option. I was too large to bend down even to trim my own nails. Walks with the husband and children meant stopping after a few steps to catch my breath and back, feet and knee pain. Exercise was out of the question.

I know most people don’t like the thought of having to do dishes
Depression caused me to sleep a lot. I was not happy with myself and the way I looked and felt. Life was very dark and negative. I was miserable.

Sleep was the only thing that helped me cope and it took away the pain for a while. As soon as my children were on the bus for school, I would slip back into bed and sleep another six to seven hours, getting up just in time to take a shower and do a few household chores before my husband came home from work and my children from school. I was finding myself sleeping an average of 14 to 15 hours a day, some days more. Sleep made days go by quickly.

My 30th birthday

In November of 2012, I found myself looking at photographs of my 30th birthday. I could not believe my eyes. Who was this person I was becoming?

That following Tuesday I walked into my family doctor’s office and asked if I could use their scale. I never owned a scale large enough to weigh myself. I learned I was an unbelievable 325 pounds.

What a wake-up call. I came to realize I was an addict. Food was my addiction and it was going to kill me, leaving my husband and children all alone. I wanted to be here to care for them, love them and create amazing memories with them. Instead, I was allowing my food addiction to take over my body and control me. I had to do something and I had to do something NOW!

A simple diet was not going to fix my problems. I knew I had to make an entire lifestyle change and stick with it. I accepted that it took time to put the weight on, and it would take time to take the weight off.

So I pushed ahead, one step at a time. These are the steps that worked for me.

Step 1: Becoming aware

The nutrition label you find on food packages became my new best friend, a scary friend, but a truthful friend. I was determined my new best friend was going to help me through this transformation.

Measuring out foods and beverages for the first time was a shock. I could not believe my eyes. A true, actual serving seemed so small. All these years I could have easily eaten five or more servings of cereal in one sitting. I was clueless for many years.

Suddenly, being aware of the servings that I was consuming daily, drinking plenty of water and eating a well-balanced diet became my mission every day. It worked.

When I was still feeling hungry after meals, I would drink some water and, if the signs of hunger went away, I knew I was only thirsty. If not, I knew I had to get something small to eat: a healthy snack like a 100-calorie bar or some fresh veggies or a few almonds.

Step 2: Exercising daily

Moving more was something I knew I had to do if I wanted to lose weight and take back my life. If I was going to eat, I needed to burn off some of those calories. It was all about give and take.

I would get on my shoes and start out the door. I would walk slowly until I felt pain and discomfort in my breathing. I would stop, look back and see how far I had gone. Then, I would head back home. That was enough for one day.

The following days, weeks and months I would continue to walk some more, stop, look back and think, Wow, look how far I am from the couch now. I fought through the pain and kept on going. One step at a time.

Failure was not an option. I was going to beat this. Finally, when I could make it up our very long, steep driveway without stopping several times, I knew I was making progress.

After about four months, I found myself walking all the way to the town nearest my home—Comins, five miles round trip from my house!

During the winter months when the Michigan weather was bitter cold outside you could still find me outside walking, bundled up in my hat, gloves and coat. If the outdoor temperature was too hard to handle I would turn on my iPod, put my earbuds in and just start walking.

Step 3: Setting challenges

Before long I found I was pushing myself. I looked for the steeper hill or more steps to climb. I was up for anything. Everything was a challenge between obesity and me now. I found myself jogging during daily walks. There was no more stopping or taking breaks to catch my breath. I could walk for hours. It is so peaceful and the cost for the physical exercise is free.

“Want to do a 5k?” Before, I would have looked at you and thought you were crazy. Now, each July my husband and I organize a 5k run/walk, donating all the proceeds to our local women and children homeless shelter.

Step 4: Being accountable

Every Tuesday morning I would enter my family doctor’s office so one of the nurses could weigh me. This was the first time in my life I was actually thrilled to step on the scale. Imagine leaving the scale with tears of joy and not sadness like in the past.

Each week I knew where I was in my “weight lost” journey, and so did the nurses, staff and doctor. They were all very supportive and encouraging. They kept me motivated.

Each week I also logged my weight lost in a journal to keep track. Being able to look back on it helped to keep me moving forward. Seeing my weekly progress made me want to step up my game as I looked forward to the next Tuesday.
Step 5: Seeking support

I also shared my weight lost weekly on Facebook with friends and family. Encouragement and support were everywhere I turned. I soon realized I was not just accountable to myself but I was accountable to many people: my friends, husband and family. They looked forward to my weekly updates and were excited to see the new lifestyle I had built for myself. I was not going to let myself or them down. And in the end, I didn’t!

Three years later

When starting my new journey in life I had to squeeze into a size 30/32 women’s pants and now, three years later, I can wear a women’s size 0/2 pants. No more lying on the bed to zip and button them. That’s 16 pants sizes I have dropped. Wow!

In the beginning, weighing 325 pounds, I found myself stretching a 6x shirt in order to make it fit. I currently wear a size X5 shirt. Yes. I’m 10 shirt sizes down!

Now, after losing 207 pounds, I’ve experienced a change in myself physically, but also mentally. I have learned and discovered a lot about myself and the world around me. I am taking back my life day-by-day, step-by-step and meal-by-meal.

A dream of mine was to fly in an airplane. But I always worried about fitting in the seat when I boarded the plane. In August 2013, thanks to a very dear friend, I had the opportunity to fly in a plane. The view was absolutely breathtaking. (Simply being able to cross my legs is an amazing feeling.)

It may sound crazy but I now enjoy doing dishes and household chores. It was so painful in the past. Now, doing housework brings a feeling of accomplishment. Clipping and painting my own toenails is a pleasure. I can actually see my toes now when standing up. They sure are beautiful!

I have more confidence. I now look at myself as being a laid-back person instead of sweating the small stuff. Life’s too short for that. These days, when faced with struggles in life, I take them on full force, determined everything will work out. If there is a will, there is a way; anything is possible through determination and willpower. There is always room for change.

I dedicate this story to my amazing, supportive husband who has been there for me since day one. Thank you for loving me unconditionally and helping me discover the true me that has been buried deep down for many years.

I also dedicate this to my amazing children, Nicholas, Joshua and Victoria, who bring joy and happiness to my life each and every day. Nicholas, you have taught me that failure is not an option and to keep moving forward. Joshua, you have taught me to dig deep and not to look back, that everything will work out one way or another. Victoria, you have been my rock, always there to support me and remind me: “Mom, you can do this.” Because of that, I will continue to move forward in life and not look back.

Violet Kalbfleisch lives in Fairview, with her husband, Kenton, and three children. She is a kitchen assistant at Mio AuSable School. She can be reached at violetkalbfleisch82@gmail.com.
HOME & BUSINESS MOVES

Did you know?

TWO MEN AND A TRUCK is a Michigan-based company. It started in the early 1980s in Okemos, Mich.

We offer a full line of moving-related services that can be customized to fit your needs.
- Packing and unpacking services
- Senior facility moves
- Boxes and packing supplies
- Fully insured and bonded

Mara Crofoot, President

TWO MEN AND A TRUCK
“Movers Who Care.”
www.TwoMenNorthernMichigan.com

1348 S. West Silver Lake Rd., Traverse City, MI 49685
(231) 947-8880

Each franchise independently owned and operated. • USDOT 1469296 MPSC 32908

Did you know?

TWO MEN AND A TRUCK is a Michigan-based company. It started in the early 1980s in Okemos, Mich.

We offer a full line of moving-related services that can be customized to fit your needs.
- Packing and unpacking services
- Senior facility moves
- Boxes and packing supplies
- Fully insured and bonded

Mara Crofoot, President

TWO MEN AND A TRUCK
“Movers Who Care.”
www.TwoMenNorthernMichigan.com

1348 S. West Silver Lake Rd., Traverse City, MI 49685
(231) 947-8880

Each franchise independently owned and operated. • USDOT 1469296 MPSC 32908
Before this, I had completely accepted that I would be overweight my entire life. Weight would be my insurmountable problem until it killed me at a young age. Maybe there was a part of me that didn't think I deserved to lose the weight and feel comfortable in my body. For those four years I stayed trapped in a body that was more like a jail cell, not knowing what I was missing out on. When I would daydream and look at wedding dresses online, I only searched for plus-size dresses, not believing I could ever fit into a regular size.

So, when I lost 40 pounds in about two and half months, I was amazed. I didn't believe that was even possible.

I kept working and broke boundary after boundary. When I came up against a challenge I would initially still have the mentality of a much larger version of myself. My habit was to think, I can't do that. But Zach, my personal trainer, reminded me, “You are not that girl anymore. You can do it.” He was right every time. In a little over nine months, I lost 101 pounds.

Today, my knees don’t hurt anymore, but most importantly, I have found a community of supportive people. I learned I don’t have one single support; I have hundreds (maybe more)!

People always talk about “self care” but I never practiced it myself. I tended to care for others and ignore my own needs. But, when I admitted to my family and friends that I needed their help, they all came to my rescue to cheer me on, hold me up and keep me going with each small battle that I fought on my way to greatness. Pretty much every person I knew wanted to help. I didn’t have to do it alone.

As I continued to reach my weight-loss goals my self-confidence grew, creating positive effects in all other areas of my life. I am better at everything I do now because I know that I am stronger than I ever believed I could be.

I am capable of things I was not capable of before, like climbing incredibly high sand dunes with friends. I have taken chances, like driving across the country by myself to meet my half brother, Derek, for the very first time. I knew I would have been too afraid before.

My hard work has really paid off. This has been an extremely rewarding and healing experience in many, many ways. My mental state when I weighed 311 pounds was pretty bleak. Now things are completely different.

I’m currently in grad school for marriage, couple and family therapy. In my counseling classes we read a lot about the mind-body connection. What your mind feels, your body has a physical reaction to. My stress, anxiety, fear, sadness, loneliness, hurt and pain significantly influenced the way my body gained fat. Now I can use the mind-body connection for my benefit. I can use my body to heal what is going on in my mind. I can counteract stress with exercise. I can control anxiety with plenty of sleep and healthy eating. And, most importantly, I can fight loneliness by going to the gym where I have met some of the most amazing people!

**Megan Morrissey is currently a master’s student at Western Michigan University. She works at Third Level Crisis Center and Fit For You Health Club, and volunteers at the Grand Traverse Women's Resource Center. She lives with her grandmother and her grandmother’s dog, Murphy. She can be contacted at morrmega@mail.gvsu.edu.**
A professional DJ makes all the difference in creating the perfect atmosphere. Call Avatar Media today to get a quote.*

* Mention you saw him in GTWoman Magazine or at a GTW Event to get a discount!

AvatarMedia@charter.net 231.409.6697
AvatarMediaProductions.com
PEDIATRIC DENTISTS

BECAUSE WE SPECIALIZE IN CHILDREN, WE TREAT CHILDREN SPECIAL!

• Complete Oral Care from Birth to Age 18
• New & Modern Equipment to Increase Children’s Comfort Level
• Treatment for Children with Special Needs
• Hospital Sedation
• Trauma Management
• FUN and exploratory atmosphere

“Dr. Matt”
Matthew C. Mandeville, DDS

“Dr. Jamie”
James M. Van Wingen, DDS, MS

THIRLBY CLINIC, PLC
3537 West Front Street, Suite I
Traverse City, MI 49684
231-935-8950
8am-5pm, Monday through Friday

NORTHERN MICHIGAN
PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

1241 E 8th Street | Traverse City | MI 49686
231.947.4566

Both Doctors are Diplomates of the American Board of Pediatric Dentistry
I AM A PLANNER. In elementary school I knew that I wanted to be an elementary school teacher. And in high school I made the plan to go to college and get married as soon as I graduated. I even declared during my senior year that 27 was a good age to become a mom.

So, according to plan, I went to college and became a licensed elementary-school teacher. I graduated in December and was married the following July. And, lo and behold, we had a daughter when I was 27.

But in December 2008, my world was shattered and I learned that sometimes life cannot be planned.

My marriage was rocky that fall. I thought my husband, Len, was suffering from depression. I encouraged counseling, but things hit rock bottom and I asked him to move out. I did not ask this with the plan to end our marriage, but with the hope to save our marriage. I wanted him to see what he was losing and seek help. During our separation, we spent a lot of time together and things were good. In fact, our last day was a very good one.

We worked together at a boarding school: my husband was the director of residential life and I was a teacher and dorm parent. We had a faculty meeting in the auditorium that last afternoon and he actually sought me out to sit with me.

After the meeting I was going to Walt Disney World for the weekend to meet up with some college friends. My husband drove me to the airport with our daughter. I remember we sang along to “Elmo’s Song” on repeat.

Len gave me a lingering hug at drop-off. After I checked in, I texted him: “You know how I am weird about flying. I just need you and Morgan to know that I love you.” He responded: “We love you, too.” This was the first time in many months that I heard those words. I got on that plane with you, too.” This was the first time in many months to know that I love you.” He responded: “We love you, too.”

That’s when my mom told me: Len had died by suicide. As much as that night and the days after are a blur, I still remember them as if they were yesterday.

In the blink of an eye I went from hopeful that my family of three would remain intact, to becoming a widowed mom of a 22 month old.

An hour after I learned of Len’s death, a deputy called to tell me that my husband was having an affair with an insubordinate and that the school was about to confront him on it.

Life as I had known it for the past two years was a lie. I finally had answers to what was happening in my marriage, but I had no one to confront. I had no closure to the emotional turmoil that I had been through. What’s worse: I was about to go through a whole lot more.

One month after Len’s death, I left work. Since it was a boarding school, I not only left a job, but I left my home and my friends who were more like family than coworkers, since we all lived there together.

That place was so full of memories of my husband and it was the only place where he and I had shared friends—friends I could reminisce with. With my move, however, I lost those shared memories too.

I was fortunate to have a month to wallow. My daughter and I moved in with my parents and they gave me time and space to grieve. I was only 29. What was I going to do now? The life my husband and I had planned had suddenly all disappeared. I sought counseling and attended a support group for suicide survivors through hospice in Petoskey.

Slowly, unexpected things happened. That spring, I met a man and his 2-year-old daughter. My daughter and I hit it off with them immediately. It wasn’t planned, but it was just right. Our family was married five months and one day after that first meeting.

My new husband, Paul, embraced not only my family, but my late husband’s family. They have embraced him and his daughter as well. In January 2014 our family welcomed another daughter into the mix to complete our “his, mine and ours” family.

And last January, my husband adopted my older daughter to make his place official in her life. I had never expected to cope with these types of changes, but I’m doing well.

Professionally, I have had to learn to cope with change, too. I originally thought that I would find a position and stay in it until retirement, but that hasn’t happened. I began as an elementary-school teacher in Minnesota but was a casualty of budget cuts. Because of this, however, I have been fortunate to find new educational passions and paths. I went from being an elementary-school teacher to becoming a learning specialist, working with middle- and high-school students.

After many years of working in this position, I decided to pursue a dream and start my own tutoring business. It has been a leap of faith, but life has taught me that I will land on my feet no matter the obstacle. I guess that’s the only thing I can plan on!

Stefanie Tschirhart-Baldwin lives in Lake Ann with her little blended family and is the owner of Mixed Blessings Tutoring in Traverse City. She can be contacted at mixedblessingtutoring@gmail.com.
Winter feet snagging your sheets?
Come get a spa pedicure with Stacey, Cindy, or Megan for $34! ($57 value)

Special pricing available through 2.29.16
imprés salon spa • 901 w. front street
941.9094 • impressalon.com

The Tibetan Word for meditation is “Shamata,” which means “peaceful abiding,” to sit long enough to watch thoughts come and go, understanding that our thoughts are not who we really are; to sit long enough to get comfortable with all parts of ourselves, the good, the bad and the ugly.

I was a long way from peaceful abiding when my seemingly perfect marriage of 20 years came to a surprising and painful end. Everything I relied on shattered like a stained glass window that had been hit by a wrecking ball. I looked down at the colorful shards of broken glass at my feet right before the ground gave away.

It was at that particular juncture that my meditation instructor recommended I sit my first Datun, a 30-day silent meditation retreat. Since I had lived nearly all of my life “out loud,” my closest friends looked at me in amusement and disbelief when I told them my plans. I assured them that I could be quiet for that long.

The retreat was scheduled from mid-December to mid-January. I was relieved to avoid my first Christmas and New Years as a recently divorced person and thought the peace and quiet of retreat would help heal my battered heart and soul.

It was at that particular juncture that my meditation instructor recommended I sit my first Datun, a 30-day silent meditation retreat. Since I had lived nearly all of my life “out loud,” my closest friends looked at me in amusement and disbelief when I told them my plans. I assured them that I could be quiet for that long.

The retreat was scheduled from mid-December to mid-January. I was relieved to avoid my first Christmas and New Years as a recently divorced person and thought the peace and quiet of retreat would help heal my battered heart and soul.

On Dec. 13, 80 people converged on Shambhala Mountain Center in Colorado, all hauling in their own baggage. After three days of orientation, our teacher put us into what is referred to as “Noble Silence.” That night, a foot of snow fell in the mountains.
We sat knee-to-knee on assigned cushions in the shrine room for twelve hours of meditation each day marked only by the sound of gongs for waking, meals and sleep but I soon realized that the shrine room was anything but quiet.

Not only was there the constant chatter of my own thoughts, but three rows behind me was a woman I internally referred to as the “throat clearer.” I started timing my breaths between her repeated attempts at bronchial clarity.

An older gentleman with back problems meditated from a reclining lawn chair at the rear of the shrine room and serenaded us with rhythmic snoring after meals.

In the morning the “giggler” would start to chuckle uncontrollably, sending ripples of laughter through the shrine room and in front of her was a middle-aged man who sobbed. We offered him Kleenex and hugs, our silent recognition of his pain and sadness.

I became obsessed with watching a giant icicle form outside the shrine room window until it reached from roof to ground. Later in the month, the sun melted the icicle one drip at a time until one day I looked up and it was gone.

We served each other meals in silence but the meal crew was allowed to write directions for each other on whiteboards. One day, a man named Hans wrote me a message that said, “You’re too loud!” In writing, I asked if he was showing this message to everyone on meal crew. His reply said, “No, just you!” I was struck by the raw truth of my true nature. Even in silence, I was too loud.

My roommate was a 20-year-old “dharma brat” raised by western Buddhist parents. She shared her daily sentiments by placing notes on a stuffed gorilla she had brought with her on retreat, “Need Chocolate!” “Need Sleep,” “Miss boyfriend.”

Each morning, I set my alarm for 5 a.m. to claim one precious hour for myself. One day I returned from a walk to find that my alarm clock had been smashed by a rock now tied to the hand of the gorilla. His note said, “Noble Silence.”

On Christmas Eve, our teacher came into the shrine room with a red Santa hat draped over a silver tray. The teaching that night was about something in Buddhism called Maitri which translates to “unconditional friendliness towards ourselves.” Our true nature is basically good and we have to have loving kindness for ourselves before we can extend the same to others. What better metaphor for loving kindness than the mythical gift-giver, Santa Claus.

On most days I woke up crying like I was leaking from some deep well of sadness that needed to be drained. One dark morning, I was staring out the kitchen window, leaking into a cup of coffee when Hans came to me.

He turned me around, gave me a hug and motioned, “What?” with his hands. I wrote on the whiteboard, “There’s too much of me.” He wrote back, “Maybe, but you are much quieter now.”

During the first week of the new year I took Buddhist vows and received a Tibetan Buddhist name from my teacher. He had chosen the name Chime Lhaga, which means “deathless, divine joy.” He could see my true nature. It was time for me to embrace the idea of Maitri.

I believe that our true nature is basically good. Things happen in our lives that are neither good nor bad. Our job is to be a good observer. Everything is in a constant state of change and we are always in transition. We serve as reflections for each other and cannot escape ourselves but there is a meditation practice called Shamata that provides a way to abide peacefully and get comfortable with all parts of ourselves.
The day my life transformed forever was Thanksgiving Day 2008. My husband, Thomas, and I had been married for five years when I discovered that I was pregnant with our first child. At the time we were both attending college and living in Dewitt. Since it was the holiday weekend, we made the three-hour drive up north to spend it with our loving families. We also wanted to make our big announcement.

A positive pregnancy test sparked a light inside me that I had never felt before. A light of excitement, filled with the hopes and dreams of raising our own family. I came to find out that as quickly as that light entered, it could be extinguished.

That cold Thanksgiving Day started joyfully with telling family of our great news and slowly turned as sad as the darkness that filled the night sky. As I sat around the table to eat, I began to notice something was wrong. My husband and I went to the hospital. The doctor’s words rang slowly and loudly in my ears like a ship horn on a foggy night trying to avoid the jagged rocks. We were miscarrying.

Two years went by before we tried again. My heart was so broken from the first miscarriage that I was not sure if I could go through a loss like that again. When I felt ready, however, our second pregnancy happened quickly. It was 2010 and I had become pregnant for the second time within the first month of trying. I was more guarded. I could not handle dealing with another letdown. And from the beginning, I knew something was not right. I cannot explain it; call it a mother’s intuition or knowing your body, I just knew.

Weeks went by and all my blood work looked great. The doctors told me not to worry. We decided it would be all right for my husband to leave with my brother for a diving trip they had been planning. We were living on a piece of farmland that I currently use as my photography studio. We had a hammock in the back of the house between two trees.

It was a warm sunny July evening and I sat in the hammock alone just swaying back and forth with tears running down my cheeks. I would like to think that it was my time with God when we came to an understanding. My body just couldn’t seem to stay pregnant. I knew that He was using this situation to mold me into the stronger person He wanted me to become. While I was sad, I was not angry anymore, at least not with God.

It was hours after that moment that I had to be rushed to the hospital and into emergency surgery to remove an ectopic pregnancy, which had completely ruptured my fallopian tube. My tube had to be removed.

Questions and doubt began to control my thoughts regularly. I struggled with seeing pregnant friends and family members. The pain of day-to-day life was overwhelming.
After that, my husband and I kept trying to get pregnant for about a year with no success. Fertility medications did not work, and I was becoming anxious. We then decided to try in vitro fertilization (IVF).

There were countless medications, shots, blood work, surgeries and prayers. We finally became pregnant again. The doctor told us that it looked like the two embryos that were placed had implanted, but that the second looked like it might be absorbed. I was just thankful to have one healthy baby.

A few days went by and I began to show signs of miscarriage again. My heart sank and I was terrified. My doctor called for another ultrasound because at this point the heart should be beating. Minutes felt like hours as the ultrasound technician scanned and looked through all of the pictures.

“WELL, I SEE TWO,” SHE SAID.

“TWO WHAT?” I ASKED.

SHE WENT ON TO SAY, “TWO HEARTBEATS.”

I immediately started yelling, “WHAT? WHAT? WHAT?” and the tears came out uncontrollably. I was in shock; there was just no way that this blessing was happening to me. I remembered everything we had been through in the past four years trying to get to this point.

I gave birth to healthy twin girls at 37 weeks!

Two years went by and my husband and I decided to use our last remaining embryos from our IVF. But unfortunately not one embryo took. It was disappointing to put my body through all of that for no reward.

But to our surprise, one month after the IVF procedure, we became pregnant on our own. Naturally, I was wary but I had a strange peace come over me shortly after the positive pregnancy test.

At our 20-week ultrasound we learned the gender. “Well, it looks like you are having a boy!”

My husband yelled out at the top of his lungs, “YES!” I am certain that the whole building heard his cry. I gave birth to a perfectly healthy boy on New Years Eve 2014. He completed our family.

I’ve learned life-changing transformations can come in many different ways. There are people who intentionally set out to create physical or spiritual changes. For me, something drastic forced me to transform and accept I wasn’t always in control.

With every disappointment I tried to look at the positives and let it fuel me to the next challenge. This journey has been one of the most emotional, painful, exhausting and challenging battles I have ever had to face. Yet, I learned I was never going to give up on my dreams of becoming a mother.

That is my wish for every woman who is struggling with something that causes her to question herself. Focus on the positives and keep moving forward. My grandmother always said, “This too shall pass.” She’s right. The struggles are only temporary, but the rewards are great.

Annelise Sophiea is a wife and mother of three children. She is owner of Annelise Nicole Photography, LLC, focusing on fine art child portraiture, ages newborn to 18 years old. Email her at Annelsenicolephotography@gmail.com or visit her website at www.annelisenicolephotography.com.
2015-16 Performing Arts Series

FEBRUARY
Richard Goode, Piano
February 9
WINTERLOCHEN with Mucca Pazza
February 20

MARCH
Interlochen Arts Academy Winter Dance Performance
March 4 & 5

APRIL
“The Eccentricities of a Nightingale”
April 15 & 16
Composers In Context
April 22, 23 and 29

MAY
“Rent”
May 13 & 14
Get out your ratting combs and big hair for the Jan. 13th Network Nite at Salon 804. The theme is 1980s Big Hair and we expect you to channel your inner Madonna with big bangs & neon accessories! Enjoy a girls night out of food, wine and laughter. Come ready to make new friends and catch up with old ones. It will be a winning combination: neon everything, big hair, adult beverages, Cake by Aunt B, photos by Northern Art Photography and DJ tunes by Executive Sounds.

LOCATION
SPONSOR:
Salon 804
805 W Front St,
Traverse City
www.salon804tc.com

Register at www.grandtraversewoman.com today!

TICKETS $15 OR 2 FOR $20

Salon 804 will give away a $200 Grand Prize!

We will also give a prize for best dressed (Girls Just Wanna Have Fun) Attendees are also welcome to donate a prize. Put a face to the name of your business! Limited to 10 women. To be on the giveaway list, email kandace@grandtraversewoman.com.

PRIZES:

SPONSORS

Three Women Owned Businesses... All working in one dynamic space to enhance the Greater Grand Traverse community.

Bright BloomsKinder Play
Creative Indoor Play Space that Sparks Creativity and Imagination
- 231-299-5980
- Perfect for playdates, birthday parties, and field trips
- brightbloomssstudios@gmail.com
- www.musicwithmelinda.yourvirtuoso.com

Mixed Blessings Tutoring
Tutoring and Home School Services
- 231-534-4571
- mixedblessingstutoring@gmail.com
- www.mixedblessingstutoring.com

Parachute Social Media, LLC
Full Range of Marketing Services
- 808-348-3839
- Specialize in Women Owned Businesses
- Websites, logos, social media
- sara@parachutesocialmedia.com

SoulWays
BODY-MIND THERAPY & INTEGRATIVE ENERGYWORK

Providing an integrative approach to personal growth and healing, incorporating energywork, verbal dialogue, and a range of holistic therapeutic modalities.

INTRODUCTORY OFFER:
90-minute sessions for only $60
Available for up to three sessions. Regularly $90.

Lee Edwards, RPP, BCST
(231) 421-3120 • Traverse City, MI
NEW

The board of directors of the Cherryland Humane Society (CHS) has elected the following officers, who will serve during 2016: Karen Kuehlhorn, president; Bill Maier, vice president; Betsy VanWesten, secretary; and Linda Burka, treasurer. Other board members are: Kimberli Bindschatel, Amber Elliott and Dr. David Burke. CHS has also announced the launch of their new website, www.cherrylandhumanesociety.org. Cherryland Humane Society is an independent 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that depends solely upon donations, fundraising activities, planned giving, memorials and grants for operation. 231.946.5116, cherrylandhumanesociety.org

TBA Credit Union announces the launch of its brand new department, the Service Center. Staffed with TBA CU employees from their local branches, this new department will offer another level of convenience and flexibility. Members will be greeted by a Service Center Representative who can help them with anything from answering basic account questions or opening membership accounts, to processing loan requests, all over the phone. Cindy Lardie has been selected as the new Service Center supervisor. Holding a bachelor’s degree from Western Michigan University and a Master’s Degree in Curriculum and Teaching from Michigan State University, Lardie previously served as the marketing and education coordinator. Julia Morse joins the new Service Center as a Service Center specialist. She previously served as a member service specialist at the South Airport branch. In her new role, Morse will provide support for online banking, process consumer loans and address credit card requests. 231.946.7090 thauc.com

The Bay Area Transportation Authority (BATA) announces the hiring of Mary Marois to its leadership team as interim executive director. Marois brings more than 40 years of community and organizational experience with her to BATA, most recently retired as director of the Grand Traverse/Leelanau Department of Human Services in 2008. Marois currently is a member of the Board of Directors for Northern Lakes Community Mental Health.

White Tiger Martial Arts has expanded to a larger studio located behind its former location. The new studio in Suite A at 1238 S. Garfield Rd., off Boone Street, has doubled the size of White Tiger’s former space. “We now have a much more user-friendly location,” said Sara Adkins, co-owner with husband, Jim. White Tiger Martial Arts offers classes for students of all ages, teaching Authentic Tai Chi and Shaolin KUNG FU American Kenpo self-defense, and Ninjutsu.

At Honor Bank: Shannon Mallek has been promoted to the position of controller at Honor Bank, headquartered in Honor. Mallek has been with the bank since 2013 and was most recently in the role of portfolio manager. Prior to Honor Bank, she served with Isabella Bank Corporation in Mount Pleasant. She is a graduate of Saginaw Valley State University, where she earned a Bachelor’s Degree in Business Administration: Finance.

Michelle King has been promoted to the position of BSA/CRA Officer. King has been with Honor Bank since May of 2014, serving as the BSA Coordinator. Prior to coming to Honor Bank, Ms. King had over 5 years of banking experience at PNC and Northwestern Bank, in a variety of roles, including, financial services, commercial loan, and security and fraud prevention. She is a graduate of Western Michigan University, with a Bachelor of Arts in Public Relations.

Hannah Davis has joined the Traverse Area District Library (TADL) administrative team as the new business manager. Prior to coming to TADL, Davis served as payroll and benefits specialist for Bay Area Transportation Authority (BATA). She is certified as a Professional in Human Resources (PHR) and earned her MBA from Davenport University in Human Resources Management. At TADL, Davis will be responsible for payroll, accounts payable and receivable, and financial reports, as well as managing hiring processes and coordinating employee benefits.

KUDOS

CENTURY 21 NORTHLAND congratulates Carolyn Collins and Kellie Sergent on their election to the 2016 Traverse Area Association of Realtors (TAAR) Board of Directors. A TAAR member for 14 years, Collins is a licensed Broker Realtor based in Century 21 Northland’s downtown Traverse City office. Sergent is currently finishing up her third year in real estate with Century 21 Northland, serving from the company’s Elk Rapids office. She is currently vice president of the Elk Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce and the reverse mentor on the TAAR board. 231.929.7900, www.c21northland.com

Jungle Journey: grieving and remembering Eleanor the elephant by Barbara Bethker McIntyre and illustrated by Michael Henderson (both Traverse City residents) will be translated into French, Portuguese and Swahili for use in grief groups in 13 African countries. McIntyre was contacted by a group in southern Africa which has used the book for six-week grief groups for youth who have experienced the death of their parents. The book is sold nationally through Barnes and Noble and locally at Horizon bookstore. McIntyre is a board-certified art therapist and licensed professional counselor who has worked for more than 30 years specializing in grief, loss and trauma issues. McIntyre can be reached at artists@freeway.net.

Grand Traverse Pavilions congratulates employees Chrissy Iverson and Jamie Wilson on being awarded 2015 Michigan Medical Care Facilities Council Scholarships. Iverson and Wilson will each receive $1,000 toward their education. She works as a certified nursing assistant in the Aspen Pavilion.

The American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA) recently installed Freda Miller, CMA (AAMA) as the 2015–2017 AAMA secretary-treasurer. In this capacity, Miller, a resident of Cedar, represents medical assistants across the nation. Medical assisting is an allied health profession whose practitioners function as members of the health care delivery team and perform administrative and clinical procedures. Miller has worked in pediatrics, urgent care, lab and x-ray and oncology for more than 15 years. Miller has owned a health care consulting company since 2001.

EVENTS

The 2016 Home EXPO sponsored by the Home Builders Association of the Grand Traverse Area, will be held at the Grand Traverse Resort and Spa in Acme on Feb. 20-21. Hours of the show are Saturday 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sunday 11 a.m.-3 p.m. The EXPO will feature exhibits of more than 130 building contractors, remodelers, landscapers, financiers and other businesses related to the region’s construction and remodeling industry. Information for interested vendors, exhibitors and patrons is available at www.hbaga.com or 231.946.2305.

Dance Battle 4 The Cure will take place Feb. 20 at Lars Hockstad Auditorium in Central Grade School, at 301 W. Seventh St., in Traverse City. The show starts at 6 p.m. with doors opening at 5. Proceeds from the $5 admission fee will go to The American Cancer Society. Watch Northern Michigan dance crews perform choreographed routines alongside freestyle dance moves. Concessions will be available from A. Papano’s Pizza and Pepsi Cola. Peruse the silent auction. To remember those who are battling cancer or who have passed away, bring a photo for display. $10 to display a photo, $5 for name only. http://dancebattle4thecure.weebly.com
Don’t just say embroidery, say...

EmbroidMe.

The world’s largest full service embroidery retailer!

Screen Printing • Embroidery • Promotional Products

Sandi Pascarelli
Co-owner

956 South Airport Road West,
Suite A, Traverse City, MI 49686
231.932.0688

$25 OFF your next order of $200 or more.

One-time use only. Limit one offer per customer. Not valid for previous purchases or in conjunction with any other offer.

Executive Sounds
“The Executive Choice for DJ Entertainment”
Cell: (231) 218-1004 • Tim Davis

• wedding receptions
• school dances
• holiday parties
• graduation parties
• reunions
• business events
• expos
• and more!

www.exsounds.com

Serving Northern and Central Michigan

Better Songs For A Better Workday!

Listen on the radio at 96.3 FM. Online at lite96.com.

www.sarahbrown-photography.com

231.883.7481

www.lite96.com
GTW Network Nite
Wednesday, Jan. 13
I ♥ the 80s / Big Hair Night
Get out your ratting combs and big hair for the Jan. 13th Network Nite at Salon 804. Enjoy a girls’ night out of food, wine and laughter. Come ready to make new friends and catch up with old ones. It will be a winning combination: neon everything, big hair, adult beverages, a gorgeous cake from Aunt B, DJ Tim Davis with Executive Sounds spinning 1980s tunes & delish appetizers. L.Mawby and Ciccone Vineyard and Winery will provide wine for the evening.

WEAR: The theme is 1980s Big Hair and we expect you to channel your inner Madonna with big bangs & neon accessories! Our photographer for the evening is Andrea Bogard with Northern Art Photography. She will capture all the fun!

PRIZES: Salon 804 will give away a $200 Grand Prize. We will also give a prize for best dressed (Girls Just Wanna Have Fun!). Attendees are also welcome to donate a prize. Put a face to the name of your business. Limited to 10 women. To be on the giveaway list, email kandace@grandtraversewoman.com.

LOCATION: Salon 804, 805 W. Front St., Traverse City

TICKETS: Your ticket includes wine, food and laughter. Tickets are $15 each or 2/$20. Thank you to our Corporate Sponsor Credit Union One and Supporting Sponsors Precision Plumbing & Heating, The Spa at the Inn at Bay Harbor, 293 and TV 7&4. Visit www.grandtraversewoman.com

GTWoman Luncheon
Wednesday, Feb. 10th
“Navigating Personal Change”
Speaker: Anne Bonney

Life changes, people change, jobs change, circumstances change, relationships change. Heck, the only constant in life is change. We all know this, but sometimes giving ourselves permission to evolve and be someone different than the person we always thought we were is difficult. As an expert in navigating personal change, Anne will leave the audience with some tools to really look at who they are RIGHT NOW, and paint a new picture that doesn’t include the stuff that is no longer working.

Anne Bonney is a motivational speaker and coach. She grew up all over the world. Her philosophy is, “make your own rules, just don’t be a jerk!” She believes that there is not one right way to lead a life, but there is a right way for you right now. She’s a firm believer that just because something was right for you in the past, doesn’t mean it’s right in the present. Identities shift and lives change. Embrace that and enjoy the ride.

Anne has an unbelievable amount of energy and passion, and she puts that into her interactions with everyone she meets. She loves to have fun, and believes that happy people are productive people. Helping people achieve great things for themselves feeds her energy and passion, which is why she’s made it her career.

Bottom line, she’s fun, she’ll make you feel energized and ready to take on the world with YOUR ideas and YOUR plans, being fed from YOUR strengths. So what are you waiting for? Join us for lunch! We loved Anne the minute we met her and you will too! (Visit www.AnneBonney.com for more information on Anne.)

The Luncheon is 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Hagerty Center in Traverse City. We also have vendor booths available at the event for $185 (includes 2 lunch tix). Thank you to our series sponsors TBA Credit Union and GTOC and our supporting sponsors TV 7&4, Lite 96, Fox Grand Traverse, Northwood Animal Hospital, Sarah Brown Photography and SCORE.

Lunch tickets are $25 or 2 for $45. Visit www.grandtraversewoman.com for tickets and to sign up to be a vendor.
I'M A LOCAL

BETHANY DESIGN

A very local neighborhood designer.

Bethany Gulde | 231.645.1072
www.bethanydesignntc.com | bethany.gulde@gmail.com

**NEED DESIGN WORK?**
**SHOP LOCAL.**

**HINT:**

**BETHANY DESIGN**

**I'M A LOCAL**

Grand Traverse Woman

---

**10th Annual GTWoman**

**CHICAGO**

Only 30 seats left!

**Road Trip**

**November 11-13, 2016**

IT'S OUR 10TH ANNUAL ROAD TRIP TO CHICAGO!

Join us for a 3-day, 2-night trip to the Windy City. Grab your girlfriends, mom, daughter, aunt & cousins - join us for a girls-only trip that will be unforgettable fun.

**HOTEL:**
Courtyard Chicago Downtown Magnificent Mile. This hotel will be completely renovated by the time we arrive in 2016! It is about 1 block from the Magnificent Mile.

www.courtyardchicago.com

**SHOW:**
The Second City. It will be the Nov. 11, 2016, 8 p.m. show. This is a world-famous comedy club that has seen the likes of Jim Belushi, Steve Carell, Stephen Colbert, Chris Farley, Joan Rivers, Martin Short, Amy Sedaris, Jerry Stiller, Amy Poehler and Bill Murray.

www.secondcity.com

**COST:**
Quad: $349 ea, Triple: $399 ea, Double: $449 ea
Includes 2 nights lodging in downtown Chicago, motorcoach transportation, 1 show ticket, wine on the way down, and other goodies.

**REGISTER:**
Please email kandace@grandtraversewoman.com to confirm we have seats available and to register. Your entire group must put down a $100 deposit each to hold your room & seats.

**JOIN US:**
All 3 buses are almost full - only 30 seats remaining!

---

**The Second City**

**Road Trip**

**November 11-13, 2016**

IT'S OUR 10TH ANNUAL ROAD TRIP TO CHICAGO!

Join us for a 3-day, 2-night trip to the Windy City. Grab your girlfriends, mom, daughter, aunt & cousins - join us for a girls-only trip that will be unforgettable fun.

**HOTEL:**
Courtyard Chicago Downtown Magnificent Mile. This hotel will be completely renovated by the time we arrive in 2016! It is about 1 block from the Magnificent Mile.

www.courtyardchicago.com

**SHOW:**
The Second City. It will be the Nov. 11, 2016, 8 p.m. show. This is a world-famous comedy club that has seen the likes of Jim Belushi, Steve Carell, Stephen Colbert, Chris Farley, Joan Rivers, Martin Short, Amy Sedaris, Jerry Stiller, Amy Poehler and Bill Murray.

www.secondcity.com

**COST:**
Quad: $349 ea, Triple: $399 ea, Double: $449 ea
Includes 2 nights lodging in downtown Chicago, motorcoach transportation, 1 show ticket, wine on the way down, and other goodies.

**REGISTER:**
Please email kandace@grandtraversewoman.com to confirm we have seats available and to register. Your entire group must put down a $100 deposit each to hold your room & seats.

**JOIN US:**
All 3 buses are almost full - only 30 seats remaining!

---

**Services**

- GENERAL CLEANING
- OFFICE CLEANING
- POST CONSTRUCTION
- PARTY PREPPING
- MOVE IN - MOVE OUT CLEANINGS
- BUDGET CLEANING
- VACATION RENTALS & REAL ESTATE
- HOME STAGING
- COMMERCIAL CLEANING

**At Your Service Cleaning**

www.aysupnorth.com • 231-735-1094

Proudly serving the communities of: Traverse City, Glen Arbor, Cedar, Frankfort, Suttons Bay, Kalkaska, Kingsley and the counties of: Leelanau, Grand Traverse, Benzie & Antrim

---

**Grand Traverse Woman**

Brought to you by:

Sister Sponsors:

**The Second City**

**Road Trip**

**November 11-13, 2016**

IT'S OUR 10TH ANNUAL ROAD TRIP TO CHICAGO!

Join us for a 3-day, 2-night trip to the Windy City. Grab your girlfriends, mom, daughter, aunt & cousins - join us for a girls-only trip that will be unforgettable fun.

**HOTEL:**
Courtyard Chicago Downtown Magnificent Mile. This hotel will be completely renovated by the time we arrive in 2016! It is about 1 block from the Magnificent Mile.

www.courtyardchicago.com

**SHOW:**
The Second City. It will be the Nov. 11, 2016, 8 p.m. show. This is a world-famous comedy club that has seen the likes of Jim Belushi, Steve Carell, Stephen Colbert, Chris Farley, Joan Rivers, Martin Short, Amy Sedaris, Jerry Stiller, Amy Poehler and Bill Murray.

www.secondcity.com

**COST:**
Quad: $349 ea, Triple: $399 ea, Double: $449 ea
Includes 2 nights lodging in downtown Chicago, motorcoach transportation, 1 show ticket, wine on the way down, and other goodies.

**REGISTER:**
Please email kandace@grandtraversewoman.com to confirm we have seats available and to register. Your entire group must put down a $100 deposit each to hold your room & seats.

**JOIN US:**
All 3 buses are almost full - only 30 seats remaining!
THE TRIP TO BRONNER’S was a long time coming. We had talked about taking the boys to “The World’s Largest Christmas Store” in Frankenmuth since they were born. Now, with the oldest 13, we finally made the trip.

But our foray into the Christmas wonderland was not without a few mishaps. First, we were forced to make our jolly way downstate, a full three hours, through glorious sunshine and balmy temperatures, not exactly the weather that gets you into the holiday spirit. The kids wore shorts, while I led some front-seat caroling.

We had booked a room at Zehnder’s Splash Village Hotel and Indoor Waterpark. This, upon our arrival, made the trip feel even more like a true summer getaway, complete with swimming, humidity and my too-tight swimsuit.

But the town, bedecked in its Christmas attire, was beautiful. I couldn’t wait until dark, when we could pretend it was actually December.

We hit the waterpark first, and that’s where the trouble started. There was a drop slide—a six-story-high slide that drops, if you haven’t guessed, straight down. You stand in a clear capsule, with your arms hugged around you, looking out into the sky through the glass ceiling. It looks like the capsule could either launch up, to the stars, or down, to certain death. Then the floor drops out of the contraption, plunging the adventure seeker into the slide.

We sent the boys up to give it a go. Tim and I stood at the bottom, waiting. Finally, Kendall shot out of the waterslide and stumbled to his feet. The first thing he said (caught on camera): “DO NOT LET NELSON DO THAT! I ALMOST DIED!”

Just then, we saw Nelson coming down the steps. Yes, he was walking back down six flights of stairs, dry. I felt a mixture of pride (he’d never jump off a building just because his friends were doing it!) and dread (we were only five minutes into this trip).

We quickly rebounded by offering to ride the also six-story-high family raft ride with him.

Mistake.

You’d think a family raft ride would imply niceties such as mom-sized drops and baby-sized splashes.

Wrong.

Tim and I climbed onto the four-person tube with the boys and were sent down a tunnel of madness. I screamed and whimpered and cried. We were tossed up on the side and held in place for a few terrifying moments before being dropped back down into the flow of water.

It was over in 30 seconds. Nelson was now happy but, guess what, Tim was now sick. The ride had been terrifying enough to knock the stomach out of a man over six feet tall in steel-toed boots.

More pride arrived: I was not sick. Little, ol’ scaredy-cat mom. I sauntered around that park like I owned it while Tim nursed himself back to health at the snack bar.

After an hour, it was time to hit Bronner’s. The place was amazing. I was thinking we’d pick out one ornament each. But I wasn’t even all the way into the store before I’d picked out an ornament for the cat. It looked just like her.

Things progressed like that for the next hour. We picked out ornaments of: chess pieces (Kendall), trains (Nelson), golden retrievers (Cookie), bow, arrow and deer skull (Tim. Yes, a skull is now hanging on our tree), angels (for my mom!).

And, because why stop now, a Snoopy Christmas nightlight for my children who no longer use a nightlight.

Next, I put a hat on every one of my boys and wrangled them into one tiny iPhone square for a picture. They looked so cute! When I turned to show everyone, they’d already thrown their hats back on the pile and scamp- pered off, done with my idea of fun.

Then we headed to Zehnder’s Restaurant for their “world-famous chicken dinner.” It’s served family style, all you can eat. This was a first for our family.

One plate after another arrived at the table. First bread, then cranberry sauce, chicken, mashed potatoes, gravy and more. (The only misstep: liver pâté, which no one touched.)

We were overflowing with the bounty of good food and tired family.

“It’s like we’re rich!” Kendall said. And it was. Usually we split a club sandwich, forced the tweens to order off the kids’ menu and drank tap water. We were blowing the bank during our Christmas weekend getaway.

Which is when Tim, feeling benevolent, said, “Nelson, I’ll give you $5 if you can eat all that chicken.”

He didn’t flinch: “Deal.”

I screeched in protest: “That much will make you sick!”

Tim produced a $5 bill for effect.

I upped the ante: “I’ll give you $6 not to eat it.”

But there was no glory in that. So we watched Nelson eat his way gleefully through his plate.

Back at the hotel, we settled into bed.

And, at about 4 a.m., the chicken was back on the scene.

“I told you!” I said, as I got the ice bucket by the light of Snoopy.

By morning, we were all ready to head home, having had our fill of the Christmas wonderland. And then some. Ahem.
I had the fun of breaking-in my daughter for her first Black Friday shopping excursion this past season.

Brook had witnessed the buzz of excitement when the adults (mostly female!) got the Thanksgiving Day sale flyers. She’d see us tuck in after the turkey dinner with our permanent makers, hushed whispers and giggles, circling mysterious gifts in the ads with the absolute certainty that these were the best deals of the year. Plus, there was the fun of getting up early to make Christmas surprises happen.

I decided Brook was finally old enough to join in the festivities. Unfortunately she’d missed the heyday of 4 a.m. alarms since now those spoilsport retailers open up Thursday evenings. But, still, I set the stage with a 5 a.m. wakeup call… then a 5:30 reminder. Then a 6:00 sharp: “You’d better get in the car, I’m leaving!” wake-up alarm. Finally, at 6:14 we were on the road to the first stop that Brook had chosen… Petsmart.

Brook had her own list of loved ones to shop for—her cats and dog, Bobby. When we first hit the store, she stopped in her tracks at the long line at the register. She asked, “Why do all these people have six boxes of cat litter in their carts?!” Duh, they are half price, Brook! (She had a long way to go in getting this Black Friday thing down.)

First on the list: The cats. Brook found a few good deals on toys. Then Brook spent several minutes trying to negotiate with me on a cat tower that was 25 percent off. This was nowhere on the list and, let’s face it, 25 percent off is amateur on Black Friday, so the answer was a firm “No.”

We moved on. Next, Brook decided Bobby needed the world’s cutest sweater at 60 percent off. Okay, I admit I was swayed by this. Add in PetPerks savings card and we scored an XL pink fluffy sweater for the dog for $8. Although I’m guessing Bobby will be (under)joyed with the present.

The real motherlode came when we rounded the corner and unexpectedly found the aquarium display. It was exactly what her brother, Max, had wanted for three years, but it had never materialized for a number of reasons… until now.

The aquarium was the right size (small enough to fit in his room, please not the living room), with a fully outfitted heater and filter kit (no thinking involved for all the right pieces at 6:30 a.m.) and finally, finally priced right (50% off!). I looked at Brook; she looked at me. And then she started jumping up and down in pure excitement.

Brook got what it felt like to surprise someone else with a gift he will love. That feeling was the crux of a Black Friday score: the squeeze of excitement and anticipation of Christmas morning surprises.

We circled the display, considering it, marveling at it. Then we got our heads on straight and loaded it in our cart before someone else nabbed it!

We spent the rest of our morning mentally revisiting that find over and over, giggling and imagining Max’s look of surprise and delight. When we met Aunt Lori and cousin Abby for breakfast/lunch/rest, it was the first burst out of Brook’s mouth. And when we got home, she ran ahead to tell Max to cover his eyes and leave the room so we could unpack.

So Brook had the best first taste of Black Friday I could give her. Next year I betcha she sets the alarm a little earlier and wakes up a little easier, eager to find that year’s big surprise!
BAD BREATH is NOT normal...

...it’s a sign of disease!

Does your pet have...
- Bad breath
- Yellow or brown discolored teeth
- Red inflamed gums
- Loose or missing teeth
- Loss of appetite or loss of weight
- Drooling or dropping food

Did You Know?
Dental disease stresses your pet’s liver, kidneys and heart; lessening your pet’s quality of life and shortening their life expectancy on average 2 to 5 years.

Pets can’t tell you when they hurt. If your pet shows any of these symptoms, they may be suffering from painful dental disease. Our doctor and staff can give an accurate assessment of your pet’s health.

Dental disease is the most common illness encountered in veterinary medicine today and affects 8 out of 10 pets.

Pets often go for years with painful gingivitis, fractured teeth or severe tooth root abscesses without noticeable signs to owners.

0% interest payment plans
50% off new patient exam

Northwood ANIMAL HOSPITAL
Jennifer Klabunde, DVM, CVCP
Hannah Vanos, DVM, MPH
231.276.6361
7966 US HWY 31, Traverse City, MI 49637
northwoodpet.com

www.grandtraversegazette.com
“On Oct 12th my family and I were in a horrible 3 car accident. My mother and I each had surgeries and had to go into a Nursing Facility. We chose to come to Orchard Creek for our rehab. The staff here is great, they really care and give 110% to each and every one of us. They attend to every need we have no matter what it is. The therapy department is excellent and we have excelled with their help. The food is really good as well. We have been treated with respect and like we are family. I proudly recommend Orchard Creek to everyone.”

- Laura Lucas, Resident Nov 2015
The Enduring Beauty of Carpet by Karastan

Value you can believe in
Enjoy real savings of 15% to 25% when you take advantage of our exclusive free premium cushion offer. This comfortable, durable memory foam pad with Spillguard technology will enhance your experience for years to come – free with purchase of any Karastan Carpet now thru the end of February.

Feel the softness
Karastan fiber technology produces an unbelievable touch while creating carpet that stands up to today’s toughest environments like never before.

Appreciate the choices
Karastan’s designers use the most advanced power looms in the industry to create the widest range of patterns and textures—ready to enhance any interior decorating scheme.

Trust in quality
Since 1928 Karastan has been the industry leader in producing quality carpet for your home and office. In addition, we are committed to maintaining the highest installation standards in the industry. We back that up with our Lifetime Installation Warranty.

Carpet Galleria
Helping You Create Beautiful Floors
One year interest-free financing available with approved credit

1035 S. Garfield Avenue, Traverse City
231-947-4808 • carpetgalleria.com