

Bringing People Together...

# DARIEN

## NEIGHBORS

APRIL 2020

**Our Town:**  
Darien  
Scouts  
Tag Sale

**Business Profile:**  
Darien  
Carpet

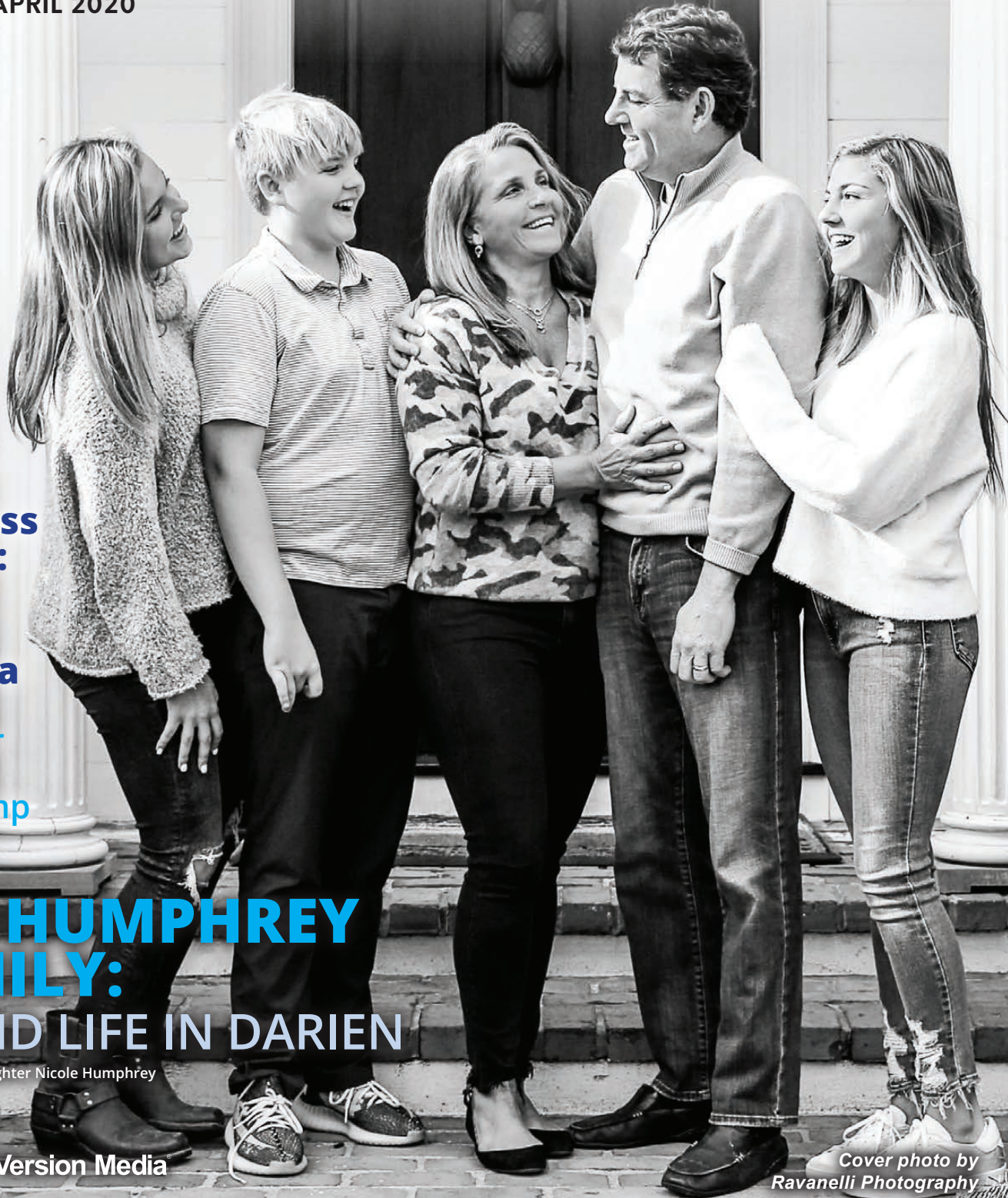
**Chelsea Piers:**  
Summer  
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### THE HUMPHREY FAMILY: ISLAND LIFE IN DARIEN

Not pictured: Daughter Nicole Humphrey

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## Bringing People Together... **DARIEN** NEIGHBORS

### In this issue...



Hi Friends and Neighbors,

Welcome to spring and the April issue of *Darien Neighbors*, loaded as it is with information and inspiration to help you greet the warming weather.

If it's April in Darien, it must be lacrosse season and what a family feature we have for you in honor of this hallowed hallmark of our town. The Humphrey girls are something to behold. Even more remarkable are the family values behind their success. We hope you enjoy it as much as we did putting it together for you.

Be sure to catch the Nielsen's piece on preparing your garden as well, and Linda Stephen's article on ways to eat healthier everyday. Chelsea Piers has contributed an informative item on the benefits of sports summer day camp ...fascinating what it can do for kids year 'round. Makes us wish they had stuff like that for grown ups too! What's not to like about Ninja camp?! We learned a lot about Darien Carpet from the profile running in this issue and hope you will too if you don't already know about this gem of a business in our midst.

And if you've got spring cleaning on your mind, check out this month's Charity Spotlight on the Darien Community Association (DCA) Thrift Shop and Rebecca Martorella's *Our Town* story on the Annual Scouts Tag Sale. Warning though: While you'll find inspired outlets for your "trash," we challenge to resist the "treasures" you're also sure to discover. With Earth Day this month on April 12th, what fitting articles these are and thanks to Carolyn Bayne for another terrific Sustainability column giving us the history of Earth Day and all it has prompted. Thanks as well to Carolyn Eddie for another scrumptious recipe. Can't wait to try the Easter sweet she's serving up this month.

We're especially pleased to welcome The Waters Edge at Giovanni's, a new partner to *Darien Neighbors* this month as it is our great local advertisers who make this magazine possible ...and give us our vibrant town. So, as always, remember to shop local. By resisting the urge to always go online, we keep our town strong and thriving.

Happy reading, happy spring!



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#### FEEDBACK/IDEAS/SUBMISSIONS:

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Linda Stephens is the owner of Linda Stephens Nutrition, LLC. Linda successfully coaches people to reach their individual health goals through a comprehensive nutritional program with strict accountability. Eating for health should be easy and tasteful. Meal plans are designed for the individual using a variety of foods for flavor that also deliver health benefits. Whether you need to lose weight, build muscle or want more energy, Linda has a proven track record in delivering results. Your health is the best gift you can give yourself. What are you waiting for? Get in touch today.

If you are interested in being an expert contributor, contact Carl Trautmann at [ctroutmann@bestversionmedia.com](mailto:ctroutmann@bestversionmedia.com)



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Helpful Town Information

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Building Official	Peter Solheim	203-656-7347	psolheim@darienct.gov
Finance	Jennifer Charneski	203-656-7334	jcharneski@darienct.gov
Fire Marshal	Robert Buch	203-656-7345	bbuch@darienct.gov
Harbor Master	Tom Bell	203-253-9519 (C)	darienharbor@darienct.gov
Planning & Zoning	Jeremy Ginsberg	203-656-7351	jginsberg@darienct.gov
Police Department	Don Anderson	203-662-5310	danderson@darienct.gov
Selectman's Office	Jayne J. Stevenson	203-656-7338	jstevenson@darienct.gov
Darien Senior Center	Elizabeth Paris	203-656-7490	eparis@darienct.gov
Human Services	Laurie Dunn	203-656-7390	ldunn@darienct.gov
Superintendent of Schools	Alan Addley	203-656-7412	aaddley@darienps.org
Tax Collector	Kathy Larkins	203-656-7314	klarkins@darienct.gov
	Town Hall 2 Renshaw Rd.	203-656-7300	

# Spring Garden Prep

CONTRIBUTED BY MICHELE BLAKESLEE, NIELSEN'S RESIDENT HORTICULTURALIST



Spring is right around the corner and it's time to start your spring preparations!

Starting one month before you plan to plant for the season, you

should be cleaning out your existing garden beds, whether vegetable or perennial. This includes removing dead plants and leaves, cutting back old perennial flower stalks and foliage and pulling out any weeds.

**PRO TIP:** Have a soil test performed with a local extension service. Here in Connecticut, we have The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station or CAES. The results usually come back within a week and can tell you the fertility, PH and texture of your soil. You can use this to adjust your soil before adding new plants.

Once you know what you'd like to adjust in your planting environment, e.g., to correct the soil's pH or fertility, you will have to wait until the soil is dry. This is very important as you do not want to further compact wet soil that will

make it difficult for plants to grow.

Now it's a waiting game! You want to wait one month after this process to plant early cold weather vegetables such as peas, radish, broccoli, cabbage or new perennials such as spring color. This gives plenty of time for the nutrients to sit in the soil and percolate.

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# Darien Carpet – They’ve Got You Covered

BY PAMELA DEY VOSSLER



Darien Carpet founder Madeline Rybrick still hard at work for her customers 40 years since starting the business

Truly, it is our local retailers that give Darien its heart. Not only do they keep our downtown vibrant (which keeps our property values strong!), they also provide us with top quality products and services along with the kind of community-building customer care that morphs into friendship more often than not.

Darien Carpet is a case in point.

Family run by the Rybrick and Dunns since opening its doors in 1970, Darien Carpet is committed to excellence in the brands they carry, in their experienced and knowledgeable salespeople and in the quality of their installations, with professionalism and a concern for customers to match.

“It is our core philosophy to treat people with respect and take a genuine interest in their projects, however large or small,” said family matriarch Madeline Rybrick who started the business with her husband, driven by a love of decorating, sales and people.

Their high standards are fueled by the kind of family pride that comes from a generations-spanning commitment and closeness to each other.



Madeline's daughter Lauri who now runs the business with her son Jimmy

“I have three children, six grandchildren and two great granddaughters,” said Madeline. “My daughter and her son, who just joined us, run the business. My husband measures jobs,” at no cost, she added. “We are a very close, happy family, and we laugh all the time. It’s fun to work with all of them,” continued Madeline.

Even when things don’t go as planned.

When asked if she had a funny story to share, Madeline replied, “I remember installing a carpet. The customer loved it.”

The thing was, the ‘customer’ had not ordered it.

“We installed in the wrong house!” laughed Madeline.

Customer satisfaction all around indeed!

And no wonder: When the inspiration behind your business is meeting and talking to people and working with your entire extended family, how could it be anything but?! ...even when unintended.

In addition to a wide variety of beautiful, durable floor covering options, including luxury vinyl floors, and installation, Darien Carpet offers rug binding, remnants, area rugs and re-stretching.

With competitive pricing, no-cost measuring, brands such as Stanton, Bellbridge, Couristan, Prestige and more, the expertise to help you select what’s best for your home and a team to whom customer satisfaction is a top priority, Darien Carpet has our area covered—they guarantee it!

For more information, visit Darien Carpet at 39 Tokeneke Road or call them at 203-655-2521.



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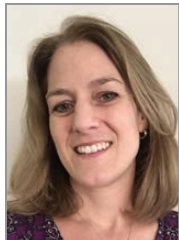
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# Sale of the Century: The Darien Scouts Tag Sale

BY REBECCA MARTORELLA



Every year, on the first Sunday in May, savvy shoppers head over to the Scout Cabin at 140 West Avenue for what has become a treasured Darien tradition ...the Darien Scouts Giant Tag Sale!

This year, the Tag Sale will be on May 3rd.

Now in its 48th year, the Darien Scouts Tag Sale is the main fundraiser for the Andrew Shaw Memorial Trust (ASMT), which sponsors Darien Scouting programs and maintains the Scout Cabin. Funds raised through the Tag Sale help subsidize Scouting programs and support Scout scholarships to keep registration fees low so cost is not a barrier to participation. Darien Scouts (formerly Darien Boy Scouts) has grown exponentially in recent years and is now comprised of three Scouts BSA troops for grades 6-12 including an all-new girls troop, four Cub Scout packs for boys and girls grades K-5, and a co-ed high school STEM Venture Crew.

The Tag Sale is also a community service, and was awarded the 2017 "Going for Green" award by the Darien Chamber of Commerce in recognition of its impactful effort to reduce, reuse and recycle.

To prepare for the sale each spring, the Scouts seek donated items from the community, clean and repair them as needed and resell these items to thousands of shoppers at the Tag Sale. After the sale, remaining items are offered to charitable organizations and any leftovers are properly sorted, donated, recycled or disposed of. From planning to clean up, it is a massive effort that requires thousands of volunteer hours from hundreds of Scouts and their families.

"We are very proud of our Scouting programs and grateful for everyone who comes together to support the tag sale," says ASMT Board President and Tag Sale Chair Leslie Pennington. "It is so much more than a fundraiser. It is an immense community recycling effort, an invaluable learning opportunity for our Scouts and a way for our Scouting community to reconnect and have fun working side-by-side for a good cause."

Many town residents now plan their spring cleaning in time to donate their extras to the sale—some even start stockpiling their donations during their holiday cleanup! Beginning in mid-April, donors can drive up to the cabin, have their cars unloaded by Scout volunteers and drive off with a tax-deductible donation receipt. Donations eagerly sought include household items, sporting goods, art & collectibles, indoor and outdoor furniture, gardening and lawn items, tools, holiday decor and more—even cars, boats and motorcycles! Donation dates and times are posted online, around town and in local media. You can visit [www.darienscouts.org](http://www.darienscouts.org) to schedule a pickup for larger items such as boats, vehicles and items too difficult to fit in your car. There is even a virtual sale for items that are



From sporting goods to artwork to musical instruments and so much more, you never know what you'll find at the annual Darien Scouts Tag Sale



To prepare for the sale each spring, the Scouts seek donated items from the community then clean and repair them as needed

too large to transport to the Scout Cabin.

Through involvement in the Tag Sale, Scouting youth learn leadership, organization, business skills and how to interact professionally with the public. Scouts also learn the rewards of hard work as they actively participate in the physical labor of raising the tents, unloading donations, sorting through items, transporting items on sale day and clean up tasks.

The Tag Sale is also a reunion of sorts for alumni Scouts and parents, many of whom enthusiastically continue to work at the sale for years after their families have graduated out of the program.

"The Tag Sale is a lot of work, but it is SO much fun to join

forces with our past Scouting friends every year, and to meet new families coming in. It's also amazing to see former Scouts return, now all grown up and wanting to give back to this organization that was so integral to their youth development," says Frank McGarey, longtime volunteer and Eagle Scout dad.

Since donations come from the community, Tag Sale inventory varies annually, and you never know what unique gems you might find. There have been many interesting donations over the years including a Japanese scroll from 1888 (now on display at Yale University Art Gallery), dozens of mini violins and accordions, valuable artwork, quirky sculptures, telescopes, a pay phone and mugs from pretty much every university.

"Many know the Tag Sale as the place to find needed household items, toys, bikes or garden tools, but they may not be aware that inside the cabin is a whole room of unique art, collectibles, and high-end pieces. We often have barely used items from Tiffany, Waterford and Wexford, along with autographed sports memorabilia, signed original artwork, high-end cameras and more," said Joellyn Gray, ASMT Trustee and Chair of the Collectibles department. There have also been heartwarming stories of people wistfully donating beloved items outgrown by their children, then happily watching other excited youngsters carry the same items up to the checkout table.

So this month, when you are looking to clear some clutter, send it to the Scouts, and let them turn your trash into another's treasure. Then, stop by the Tag Sale on May 3rd to pick up a little something for yourself!

## DARIEN SCOUT TAG SALE - BY THE NUMBERS

Active years of Darien Scouting: **105**

Number of youth currently in Scouting program: **OVER 300**

Number of Tag Sales to date: **47 (THIS YEAR IS #48!)**

Number of Scout volunteers: **OVER 350**

Number of volunteer hours worked annually: **OVER 6,300**

Number of customers annually: **OVER 2,000**

Size of sale area: **OVER 15,000 SQUARE FEET**

Amount of "clutter" recycled: **OVER 48,000 POUNDS**

Number of charities served: **15 CHARITIES**

Number of items at the tag sale: **COUNTLESS!**



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# The DCA Thrift Shop: Recycle, Repurpose, Resell ...Remarkable!

CONTRIBUTED BY THE DCA THRIFT SHOP



DCA Thrift Shop Manager Deb Danile brings extensive retail and online sales experience to the store

For over 85 years, the Darien Community Association (DCA) Thrift Shop, located at 996 Post Road, has provided a warm and vital shopping experience in downtown Darien. Proud of its history and enduring ability to adapt to the changing needs of its shoppers, it continues to be staffed by volunteers and strives to maintain its tradition of helping the entire community.

In February, the DCA Thrift Shop embarked on an exciting new initiative with the hiring of Manager Deb Danile. Deb brings extensive retail and online sales experience and has plans for new projects that will both improve the retail experience for existing shoppers and extend its appeal to an increased number of "thrifters." The shop will continue to provide an affordable



A large selection of clothing awaits enthusiastic "thrifters"

shopping experience for those in the community who are financially challenged, and it will increase its efforts to attract the "trendy thrifter" – millennials and Generation Z shoppers who love vintage items at thrift shop prices. A



larger customer base means more support for the DCA's mission and philanthropic ventures, including college scholarships for Darien High School graduates, as all proceeds are used to fund DCA programs.

As many consumers become more environmentally conscious, the DCA Thrift Shop offers a great opportunity for individuals to shop and feel good about their purchases. Our shop aims to keep items out of the landfill and in homes to be reused or repurposed. Items that cannot be sold in the shop are donated to charities such as The Open Door Shelter in Norwalk, The Veterans Association, Malta House, Norwalk Hospital, Darien Swap Shop and Pacific House. The largest charitable donation is made to Toys for Tots—11 large boxes filled with new toys in 2019. We've already started collecting for Toys for Tots for the upcoming 2020 Christmas season.

The DCA Thrift Shop is all about our wonderful volunteers. There is much to do daily including folding and hanging clothing, placing items on the tables, tidying up the shop, organizing donations, creating window displays, researching items and posting on social media. We have many long-time volunteers who give of their time because the shop is like a home away from home, an opportunity to meet new people and create new friendships, all while giving back to the community. Recently, we have had an influx of high school students who bring new life into the store. We love our high school volunteers! There is never a shortage of fun in volunteering at the DCA Thrift Shop. At any hour, you can hear laughter and harmony among both volunteers and customers over great finds and more. Dancing in the aisles is an ever-present experience.

Want to get involved with the DCA Thrift Shop? Here's how:

- The DCA Thrift Shop always needs more volunteers. Please feel free to join us! We would love to get to know you. Contact Deb Danile at [debra@dariendca.org](mailto:debra@dariendca.org).
- Keep "thrifting" or start a new trend and visit the DCA Thrift Shop today. We have something for everyone. Shopping here equals a good deed as it supports the local community.
- Check out our website at [dariendca.org/thrift-shop](http://dariendca.org/thrift-shop) for a comprehensive list of what types of items the DCA Thrift Shop accepts. Donations gladly accepted during shop hours, Tuesday through Saturday from 10am to 4pm.



The DCA Thrift Shop carries a wide variety of items from housewares to jewelry and more

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Not pictured: Daughter Nicole Humphrey

# THE HUMPHREY FAMILY

## Island Life in Darien

BY PAMELA DEY VOSSLER | PHOTOS BY RAVANELLI PHOTOGRAPHY

Where does success come from? ...the will to work, to compete, to win? ...that ability to rise from a fall, recover and return to the field—smarter, tougher, more capable—whether in sports, business or any part of life?

To the Humphrey Family in Darien, it starts with finding your passion, doing your absolute best while sidelining distractions, and then allowing the “chips to fall where they will,” truly, honestly and with no drama.

“Just play the game,” says John Humphrey, husband to Sarah and father to Nicole (19), Ashley (17), Chloe (15) and Brett (12), about maintaining the focus needed to excel. It’s what he always tells his kids, according to Ashley and Chloe.

He should know: He’s the all-time leading scorer in basketball at Middlebury College where he was recently inducted into the Sports Hall of Fame, an ardent YMCA house league youth basketball coach, a committed golfer and

a 30-year veteran of investing in the debt of distressed companies on Wall Street.

Added Sarah, who played lacrosse at Dartmouth and is a 5.0 USTA-rated tennis player, a standout athlete in her own right. “Be kind and try your hardest. As long as you’re doing that everything will fall in place. If your heart’s always in the right place and you’re doing your best then ‘it is what it is,’” she continued, quoting her mantra.

“We are strong believers in not worrying about that which you cannot change. When the kids are complaining

or worrying about something, we always ask them if they can do anything to impact it. If they say no, we say ‘Move on.’ We hate to waste time, especially thinking about things that you cannot control,” said Sarah who leans on the tenets of Buddhism for the detachment it teaches, and the peace that comes from that letting go.

You’ll know the Humphrey name if you follow women’s



From left: Brett, Ashley, Nicole and Chloe in Nantucket



Ashley during National team practice at U.S. Lacrosse headquarters in Sparks, MD

lacrosse, especially the University of North Carolina (UNC) Tarheels. That’s where you’ll find Nicole, a two-time U.S. Lacrosse All American who was selected to the U19 U.S. National Training Team. Ranked by *Inside Lacrosse* her senior year at Darien High School (DHS) as the #9 recruit in the nation in her class, she’s playing midfield as a freshman at Carolina, already scoring for the team—a heavy favorite for a national championship this year.

Ashley, a senior at DHS and a captain of the girls lacrosse team this year, committed to play the sport at Stanford University when she was in the ninth grade (before the rules changed to prohibit early recruiting). She’ll play attack there next year.

She too is a U.S. Lacrosse All American, ranked by *Inside*

Lacrosse this year as the #4 recruit in the nation in her class. She was also selected to the U19 U.S. National Training Team, as a 15-year-old.

Chloe, a freshman at DHS, shares her sisters’ passion and talent for lacrosse. Not only did she make the U15 U.S. Lacrosse National Development Team, she was also named the MVP of last summer’s NGLL National Championship Tournament (which her CT Grizzlies lacrosse team won) and MVP of the Under Armour All America Tournament for the Command division. Chloe, groomed by her sisters, by all accounts appears poised to not only follow in their footsteps but enlarge them.

While Brett, a sixth grader at New Canaan Country School, plays tennis and basketball in the YMCA house league in town, his interests are mostly outside of sports

Continued on page 14



Nicole, a freshman midfielder at UNC-Chapel Hill  
Photo courtesy of UNC Athletic Communications

# NOLA

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...learning the drums, designing computer-rendered worlds and understanding the workings of a Tesla. However, though he's the sole male child, not a lacrosse player and not yet a teenager like his sisters, he's every bit a part of this high-achieving crew.

"We place a lot of emphasis on our children supporting each other and attending each other's events," said Sarah who grew up in Basking Ridge, NJ with two older brothers. With five years between each sibling, she wanted a large family closer in age.

John, who grew up in the Boston area as the youngest of four, felt equally committed to surrounding himself with the energy of a lot of kids.

For Brett, this comes with a bunch of extra moms. "He gets a lot of grief," explained Sarah, laughing. With all those sisters, "He's got four mothers," she said. "They all feel like they have input on what he does ...what he eats, what he wears, you know, everything," she continued, still chuckling. How does he handle it? Like a pro.

"Fortunately, he's so laid back. He's just a sweet, sweet soul," said Sarah who credits Brett with grounding the family, reminding them there is more to life than sports.

"We often get carried away with our sports chatter. Brett reminds us to talk about more important things," she said.

No man is an island, as John Donne so famously wrote ...no family either where the Humphreys are concerned, especially when it comes to their own—'island' that is, the 10' x 8' oasis in the kitchen that is the true center of their home.

"We always congregate here," said Sarah. "All times of the day. If you're home and you're not doing homework, you're here. There's always energy and different iterations of which kids are interacting with each other," she continued, showing where they place the cell phone for Facetime calls with Nicole who continues to hang out with the family around the island even from UNC.

"We have a lot of space here but all we need is this. Because this is the heart of our home," said Sarah.

Sarah joined a boys' baseball team when she was just 8 years old, inspired by her brothers and father, Dartmouth Class of '58 who was drafted to the Detroit Tigers out of college. "I just wanted to be out on the field with everyone, whether I was shagging flies or whatever."

Tennis followed baseball. Lacrosse came in the eighth grade, as did soccer, field hockey and, along the way, one of her biggest life's lessons.

"It's the work ethic," said Sarah, a trusts and estates lawyer who retired as partner when her children were born, after practicing for eight years. "(Playing sports taught me) that nothing is going to just be there for you unless you work at it."

It is what she hopes her kids learn as well, "along with resiliency," said Sarah explaining how the challenges we face in sports reflect those in life.

One of Nicole's biggest sports lessons came, ironically, off the field.

Last year, as a DHS senior and a lacrosse team captain, Nicole suffered a horrific injury. While shooting, she was shoved from behind and fell. Her face connected with the bent knee of a girl on the ground below her. She shattered her cheekbone and eye socket, sidelining her for a large portion of the season.

Still, in testament to the grit developed within this family,



From left: Ashley, Nicole and Chloe at the Under Armour All America game in Maryland last summer

Nicole returned for the State Championship game against New Canaan, scoring two goals and helping Darien secure the win, with three metal plates and a wire holding her face together.

She also learned there are benefits even in the worst situations. "(Nicole) is kind of a quiet personality," said Sarah. "She told me, 'I've never been so vocal in my life. I learned how to be a sideline cheerleader and supporter for others.' Her takeaway, the lesson she learned in all of this, was how to do that and how to be happy about it," recalled Sarah.

Sarah and John feel strongly about helping their kids develop the skills they need to handle diversity themselves.

"We're not proponents of intervening," said Sarah. "We always just try to talk them through (whatever the problem is). We usually ask them to look at themselves and figure out why it's happening. (We approach it as) you're doing something that's making them do this so let's figure it out, and then maybe you can talk to them about it," she continued.

Sports are also, arguably, the source of the Humphrey family. Period.

"My best friend's husband was trying to set me up with John who went to the same gym that I did. One day, as I was stepping onto the treadmill (which happened to face the basketball court), he came up to me and said, 'Watch the guy in the red shirt—that's John—and let me know if you want to meet him,'" explained Sarah who proceeded to witness John "demolish" all the other guys during the next hour she spent running.

A year later, they were married on Nantucket where the family now has a home, a place to unwind and participate in the annual 4th of July town water fight on Main Street.

"My husband is quite possibly the most enthusiastic of the bunch," said Sarah, smiling.

The family settled in Darien on Three Wells Lane after moving from NYC to Wellesley, MA post 9-11.

"We wanted to be back in the tri-state area," said Sarah. They narrowed it down to Darien and New Canaan. The train schedule tipped the balance in favor of Darien as John, who now splits his time between NYC and Chicago, was commuting downtown at the time.

Sarah, who describes Darien as "a tremendous community to live in but especially so for sports lovers," continued, "Who could've imagined that we were going to end up with these lacrosse players and what better place to be than where Lisa Lindley is coaching lacrosse?" she said, referring to the CT Lacrosse Hall of Fame coach of the DHS girls lacrosse team.

"We really love how athletic the Darien community is and how supported all of the sports are," said Sarah.

With one possible exception.

"Since John is from Boston and is an avid sports fan, there is a lot of chatter in our household about the Patriots and the Red Sox. John would always tell the kids that they were free to wear whatever sports team gear they wanted but if it's not a Boston team, they have to sleep outside," explained Sarah, laughing.

Though it is around an island together that this family finds its way in the world as individuals, it is the interweaving of values, humor, lessons taught, lessons learned and love born of the ordinary everyday that adds up to their own brand of extraordinary, their source of success.

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# Darien Celebrates Earth Day Across the Decades

BY CAROLYN BAYNE, DARIEN RESIDENT & DARIEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABILITY MEMBER



April 22nd marks the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, the world's largest civic event. This year's theme is Climate Action—deemed by many to be the biggest challenge to the future of humanity and the life-support systems that make the world habitable.

Earth Day began with an invitation to the entire nation from Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson in the fall of 1969. The environment was in crisis: oil spills, toxic dumps, smog, endangered species and rivers so polluted they caught fire. Inspired by the success of anti-Vietnam War “teach-ins,” Nelson hoped that a large-scale, grassroots environmental demonstration would raise awareness about water and air pollution and prompt action.

Despite no social media—or internet—word spread and more than 20 million Americans took to the streets in cities across America, voicing concerns for the future of the planet and demanding action.

The effectiveness of that first Earth Day, five decades ago, was immense. It raised awareness about environmental issues and transformed public opinion leading to the passage of landmark environmental laws, including the Clean Air, Clean Water and Endangered Species Acts and creation of the Environmental Protection Agency.



At the Darien Library's All Things Green Festival in 2017, Sally Ijams, Knowledge & Learning Services Librarian, exchanges residents' incandescent light bulbs for energy-efficient LEDs, courtesy of a Bright Idea Grant awarded to the town from Eversource.

Earth Day has since evolved into a global movement, putting environmental issues on the world stage: 200 million people from 141 countries mobilized for the first international Earth Day in 1990; today that number exceeds one billion. As evidence that Earth Day holds major international significance, the United Nations chose that day in 2016 for the signing of the historic Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Diving into the archives of Darien High School's *Neirad* reveals that students in Darien heard that call to action 50 years ago, though it was observed a week early due to spring vacation. The students had two objectives: to make others aware that litter and pollution existed in Darien, and to take constructive action on those issues.

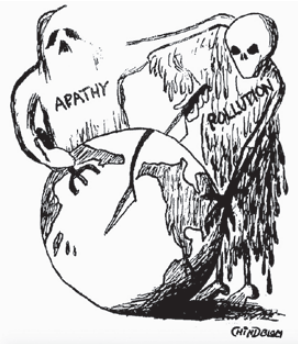
Activities planned aimed to encourage student awareness and involvement. These included an all-school assembly, seminars, posters and displays, and films shown during study halls. A cleanup of Woodland Park was organized for Saturday morning, and to focus attention on

air pollution, a date was established on which students were asked not to drive their cars to school.

Over the decades, Darien residents of all ages have continued to embrace Earth Day. The Beautification Commission sponsors a town-wide cleanup of local beaches, roadsides and parks; the Darien Nature Center and the Parks & Recreation Department have teamed up to host family fun days at Cherry Lawn Park, and the Darien Land Trust hosts an annual Trails Improvement Day at Dunlap/Selleck's Woods. The Darien Library has sponsored “All Things Green” festivals, and for more than a decade the Darien Chamber of Commerce has recognized local businesses who make “Going for Green” their way of doing business. Many other organizations celebrate Earth Day, so be on the lookout for events this month.

You have the power to change the world. Join the movement! For more information, go to [www.earthday.org](http://www.earthday.org).

50  
YEARS  
EARTH  
DAY 2020



This cartoon, featured in the April 1970 issue of *DHS Neirad*, depicts the importance of student engagement to combat the growing problem of pollution.

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## Book Review: 1919 by Eve Ewing

BY COLLEEN WOODS, DARIEN LIBRARY KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING ASSISTANT



Eve Ewing's *1919* is an award-winning collection of poems that reflects on events during the Chicago Race Riots of that year. Mingled with essay-style narratives of factual events, the poems are heartfelt and beautifully capture the mood of the time. Being a Chicago native, Ewing writes with passion and bare, naked truth as she has a story to tell that we need to hear. Her poems are varied in style and

composition which keeps the book interesting and full of color and perspective. This is a short and meaningful read that reminds us of our history and the struggles that Black Americans had to endure and overcome as citizens of Chicago. I highly recommend taking some time to appreciate the inspiring poetry written by this highly acclaimed author.

### What Darien Is Reading:

**AMERICAN DIRT**  
BY JEANINE CUMMINS

**SUCH A FUN AGE**  
BY KILEY REID

**THE SPLENDID AND THE VILE: A  
SAGA OF CHURCHILL, FAMILY AND  
DEFIANCE DURING THE BLITZ**  
BY ERIK LARSON

## Our Raves Based on Kid Faves - Part 2

BY KAITLIN FRICK, DARIEN LIBRARY CHILDREN'S LIBRARIAN,  
COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR



Last month we featured Part 1 of recommended next-reads based on **librarian** favorites. Here is Part 2.

If you like ***The Magic Tree House*** by Mary Pope Osborne...  
Kate Messner's *Ranger in Time* series – in which search-and-rescue dog Ranger is transported throughout history to aid children in need – may be a bit of a step up in reading level, but it's the perfect choice for kids who love *The Magic Tree House*.

If you like ***Smile*** by Raina Telgemeier...  
You should check out *Be Prepared* by Vera Brosgol (assuming you haven't already). A semi-autobiographic account of Brosgol's time at a Russian summer camp, *Be Prepared* is both hilarious and heartfelt.

If you like ***James and the Giant Peach*** by Roald Dahl...  
Philip and Erin Stead released a never-before-published Mark Twain children's story in 2017 that you're going to love. Originally a story Twain told his young daughters at bedtime, Twain left long-forgotten notes that Stead used to complete the story of *The Purloining of Prince Oleomargarine*.

If you like ***The Hate U Give*** by Angie Thomas...  
Mark Oshiro's debut, *Anger is a Gift*, may be for you. Not only does it deal with issues of racism and violence, the protagonist is struggling with panic attacks after the death of his father.

If you like ***A Court of Thorns and Roses*** by Sarah J. Maas...  
Less fairy tale and more steam-punk, Alisa Kwitney's *Cadaver & Queen* – a retelling of Frankenstein told partially by “the monster” and partially by the doctor – is still a must-read for Maas fans.

If you're looking for more suggestions, stop into Darien Library for great displays and librarian recommendations!



## APRIL 2020

TUES., WED., THURS., SUN., APR.

**Darien Historical Society**

@45 Old King's Highway, Darien  
The centerpiece of the museum, the 1736 Bates-Scofield Home, captures life as it was in Early American Darien. The permanent collection includes items that convey the history of early Darien and the Bates-Scofield homestead itself and date from the 18th to mid-nineteenth century. The costume collection dates from 1740 to the present. The Museum is also home to an important collection of locally made, antique quilts and coverlets.

**Time:** 11am-4pm Tues., Wed., Thurs.; noon-3pm Sun.

**Cost:** \$5 suggested donation (Adults); free for children 6 and under  
Darienhistorical.org

WED., APR.

**Coffee & Create**

@ Nielsen's Florist, 1405 Post Road, Darien  
Join Nielsen's for this exciting design series. Each week will feature different themes covering several topics: Flowers and Arrangements, Indoor Plants, Outdoor Plants/Gardening, Accents and Décor for the Home. No registration needed. Complimentary coffee and tea. Everyone who attends will enjoy 20% off storewide and 50% off cut flowers during their visit.

**Time:** 10-10:30am **Cost:** Free  
niensensflorist.com

SUN., APR. 12

**Easter Dinner**

@ Giovanni's at Water's Edge, 2748 Boston Post Road, Darien  
See the website for menus and more details, or call 203-325-9979.  
watersedgeatgiovannis.com

MON., APR. 13

**Concert: Birdland Big Band from NYC**

You won't want to miss this Music for Youth-sponsored concert! Be sure to catch a display of student work from the winners of the 2020 Music for Youth Jazz Poster, Writing and Music Composition contests which will be displayed in the lobby of the DHS auditorium.

**Time:** 7pm **Cost:** Free

TUES., APR 14

**Darien Neighbors, Global Players Series: Unfiltered...the White-Hot Intersection between Politics and the Media with SE Cupp**

@The Darien Community Association, 274 Middlesex Ave., Darien  
SE Cupp is a practical conservative with a searing honesty who brings her distinct outlook to CNN. She joined CNN as a contributor in 2013. Prior to CNN, Cupp co-hosted MSNBC's *The Cycle*. She continues to be a nationally-syndicated political columnist, culture critic and author, regularly writing for the *New York Daily*

*News, Glamour and CNN.com.*

**Time:** 7pm reception, 7:45pm presentation

For tickets and more information, dariendca.org

WED., APR 15

**The 2020 Darien Young Composers Concert**

@ Darien High School Auditorium, 80 High School Lane, Darien

Presented by the Music Department of the Darien Public Schools, this special concert will feature the works of student composers in the Darien Public Schools from the Elementary, Middle School and High School levels.

**Time:** 6:30pm

Darienps.org

MON, APR. 20

**Edible Wild Plants of the Northeast**

@Darien Library, Community Room, 1441 Post Road, Darien

Receive a comprehensive introduction to the identification and uses of wild plants for food and beverage in this presentation by John Root. He will show you the distinguishing characteristics of wild plants which are safe for consumption. Learn when different plants are available, their habitats, and how to prepare the plants for eating. Finally, Root will discuss the nutritional and medicinal value of our region's most common and appealing wild plants.

**Time:** 7-8:30pm **Cost:** Free

Darienlibrary.org

THURS., APR. 23

**Navigating Midlife: What All Women and Men Need To Know**

@Darien Library, 1441 Post Road, Darien  
Join Darien's Linda M. Stephens, M.S. Nutritionist to learn how to navigate mid-life through nutrition, supplementation and fitness. Fight the effects of aging, ward off disease and live a fulfilling healthful life.

**Time:** 7pm **Cost:** Free

www.lindamstephens.com

SAT., APR. 25

**Yacht Rock On 2020**

@The Tokeneke Club, 4 Butler's Island Road, Darien

This year's popular annual benefit on behalf of The Darien Foundation will feature a live performance by Three Sheets To The Wind | America's #1 tribute to Yacht Rock, gourmet food stations, cocktails and dancing!

**Time:** 6:30pm to 11pm

For tickets and more information, visit <https://darienfoundation.org/yacht-rock-on-2020/>

SUN., APR. 26

**The Poet's Voice: BJ Ward**

@Darien Library, Community Room, 1441 Post Road, Darien

Darien Library is pleased to present BJ

Ward as its 2020 Poet's Voice poet. BJ Ward is the author of four books of poetry, most recently *Jackleg Opera: Collected Poems 1990-2013* (North Atlantic Books), which received the Paterson Award for Literary Excellence. His poems have appeared in *Poetry*, *American Poetry Review*, *The New York Times* and *The Sun*, among others, and have been featured on NPR's *The Writer's Almanac*, and more. He is the recipient of a Pushcart Prize and two Distinguished Artist Fellowships from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

**Time:** 2-3pm **Cost:** Free

Darienlibrary.org

MON., APR. 27

**HAYVN Hatch**

@HAYVN, 320 Post Road, First Floor, Darien

A unique women-centric pitch night sponsored by Hayvn. Join us for our fifth HAYVN HATCH pitch night. We'll have wine, spirits and lite bites offered by local entrepreneurs, with networking before and after. The main event will begin at 7pm. You'll hear from 6+ women who have started businesses and are ready to grow. Must be accepted to present. For an application or tickets to attend the event, go to hayvn.com

**Time:** 6:30-9pm

hayvn.com

TUES., APR. 28

**Darien Neighbors, Global Players Series: Vineyard Vines, The Story Behind the Brand with Ian Murray**

@The Darien Community Association, 274 Middlesex Ave., Darien

Ian Murray is the Co-Founder and CEO of the lifestyle and apparel brand vineyard vines. Founded in 1998 with his brother Shep, vineyard vines products are sold nationwide in their own retail locations, through a custom and licensing division, in specialty and department stores worldwide and through their direct to customer catalog and web business.

**Time:** 7pm reception, 7:45pm presentation

For tickets and more information,

dariendca.org

SUN., MAY 3 (RAIN OR SHINE)

**Darien Scouts 48th Annual Giant Tag Sale**

@Andrew Shaw Memorial Scout Cabin, 140 West Ave., Darien

Thousands of items for sale including furniture, lawnmowers, garden tools, housewares, baby gear, bikes, toys & games, sporting goods, electronics, linens, lamps, rugs, art and collectibles, housewares, holiday items, and more!

## 16 Ways to Eat Healthier Every Day

BY LINDA M. STEPHENS, M.S. NUTRITIONIST



Please enjoy my favorite 16 quick tips listed below to ensure you're eating healthy every day. These tips will keep you on the right track as you work toward living a long, energetic and healthful life.

**1. Curb your sweet tooth** – Sugar is now recognized as a direct cause of heart disease along with diabetes and other avoidable diseases according to the American Heart Association.

**2. Start your day with breakfast** – This will keep you from over eating at later meals, supply brain power and energy the whole day through.

**3. Choose wisely when being social** – You can still eat out and enjoy restaurants, just pick clean eats. Ask for sauces on the side and food prepared steamed or grilled. Your waistline will thank you.

**4. No multi-tasking at mealtime** – Sit down and enjoy your meals. If you're busy talking and texting, you won't really be tasting and enjoying your food. This can result in over eating and weight gain.

**5. Keep healthy snacks on hand** – For those times when you're not able to eat your scheduled meal. Maybe you're stuck in traffic or running late at the office. Skipping meals only sets you up for overeating. A deficit of more than 500 calories a day can slow down your fat-burning efforts.

**6. Keep alcohol consumption minimal** – or not at all. You don't need alcohol to be social. Your body turns off fat burning when consuming alcohol. Try seltzer with sliced lemon or lime. It looks like a mixed drink and it can be your secret.

**7. Read your labels** – Take responsibility and know exactly what you're consuming. If a product has a long list of ingredients then it's probably not something you want in your cabinet. The shorter the list the better.

**8. Plan a cheat meal** – You don't have to stop living as you try to promote weight loss and healthy eating. Plan one meal a week where you can enjoy a favorite dish. Just don't let it become an eating contest. Most of all, if you fall off your regimen, don't feel guilty just get back on point at the next meal.

**9. Cut the carbs late at night** – Eat most of your food when the sun is out not when the moon is out. If you eat a big meal loaded with carbs later in the evening, insulin will cause the body to store the unused energy as fat. It will also turn off the release of growth hormone that occurs while you're sleeping. This will prohibit your cells from regenerating and healing.

**10. Eat Grains: "Feel Your Oats"** – Oatmeal is one grain that raises testosterone levels naturally, resulting in stronger and longer gym workouts. Grains like oats, rice, faro, amaranth and quinoa will elicit a feeling of satiety. This will keep you feeling fuller longer and resisting the need to snack in between meals. \*Most grains come in a gluten free version too.

**11. Consume your healthy fats** – Coconut oil, olive oil, avocado, and nuts will add flavor to your foods. If you keep your carbs low, a quality fat will keep you feeling happy while omitting carbs. According to the American College of Cardiology, consuming polyunsaturated fats like fatty fish, walnuts and sunflower oil may help reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease.

**12. Eat right for you** – Not everyone needs to avoid dairy or gluten. Keep foods in your diet that make you feel good and provide quality nutrients. What's right for you may not be right for your spouse or

best friend.

**13. Pay attention to your digestion** – If you are constantly feeling bloated, first look to see if you are chewing too much gum, eating cruciferous vegetables daily or have a dairy intolerance. Omit one trigger at a time in order to pinpoint the problem foods.

**14. Don't fall victim to fad diets** – Eating a balanced diet with lean sources of protein, healthy fats and complex carbohydrates every three to four hours per day will help boost your metabolism, stabilize energy and control appetite.

**15. Quality sleep time** – If you're consistently sleep-deprived, odds are you will crave processed and/or fast foods daily. These foods are instantly stored as fat. A restful night's sleep will have you feeling energized all day and wanting to make better food choices.

**16. Eat citrus fruits every day** – Citrus fruits like grapefruit, oranges and lemons slow the production of the stress hormone cortisol. Cortisol is responsible for storing body fat around the mid section.

Contact me for a complimentary 20-minute consultation to discuss your particular health and fitness questions. I look forward to supporting your health and wellness journey. Reach me at [lindaifbbpro@gmail.com](mailto:lindaifbbpro@gmail.com). In good health, Linda.

*Note: Catch Linda on April 23rd at 7pm at the Darien Library where she will be discussing "Navigating Midlife: What All Women and Men Need to Know" to fight the effects of aging, ward off disease and live a fulfilling, healthful life. It's free to all Darien residents and non-residents.*

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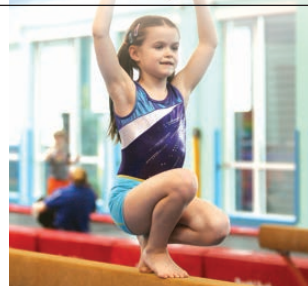
t @Lindaifbbpro





# Summer Sports Day Camp: A Great Thing For Your Child Year 'Round

BY RICHARD GRUNDY, DIRECTOR OF CAMPS, CHELSEA PIERS CONNECTICUT



Summer camp can be one of the most amazing experiences in a child's life. But how to choose the right one? As a parent, you know there's no shortage of options: outdoor, indoor, special interest, academic, religious—the list is endless. But one of the first decisions you must make is this: day or sleep away camp?

Lots of kids (and parents!) are overwhelmed by the separation required of sleep away camps. Those long days apart can be tough on the whole family. Day camps are a measured and valuable first step toward independence: Kids get a sense of being away while still returning daily for family dinner. Day camps are also flexible. If you have a family vacation planned, you can enroll your child for just the weeks that work for you.

A summer sports day camp has even more benefits, ones that pay dividends year 'round, long after summer is over. Here's why.

## 1. Mind / Body Health For Life

Physical activity is critical to a child's development. It helps lay the foundation for an active lifestyle which leads to long-term physical health and mental well-being. Sports are a great way to show our kids that exercise can be fun too, especially for those not as inclined to be physically active.

## 2. Exercise in Strategic Thinking

Summer sports day camps offer much more than ways to get sweaty and kick, catch or hit a few balls. Sports exercise the brain as well as the body, in ways that reading, writing and drawing do not. Anticipating an opponent's moves and finding a way around them, and calculating the best way to score constitute a basic introduction to strategic thinking. This grows as children age and progress, and translates to problem solving outside of sports. Learning the rules of various games strengthens cognitive function. The rules of these games are easily applied to life, and contribute to the building blocks children need to draw their own conclusions, on and off the field.

## 3. Lasting Friendships

We make lots of friends over the course of our lives, but the ones we make at camp hold a special place in our



hearts. Summer sports day camps help children bond through shared interests and the camaraderie that comes from pursuing common goals. Being on a team is a perfect way for any child, no matter how shy, to develop friendships. Teammates build character by facing challenges together. They learn to trust and depend on each other.

## 4. A Break from Technology

Let's face it: kids love their screens. Many are more comfortable playing video games, watching TV or tablets and staring at mobile phones than they are on a court or field. At a summer sports day camp, kids are freed from all things technology while getting some much-needed exercise and interaction with others. They grow as athletes and as people. Sports also give kids an outlet for the parts of their mind that are often stimulated by video games.

## 5. A Confidence Builder

Since nearly all sports are goal-oriented, a summer sports day camp is a great place for kids to learn about setting and achieving goals. Children at all levels can thrive. With drills and new skills development, kids need not score the winning point to learn about perseverance and feel good about their progress. Nailing a new move in gymnastics or mastering a dribbling technique can boost their confidence in so many ways. By trying new things and taking risks, children also build character. Plus, they'll be able to come home and tell you about it that night!

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# Easter Egg Rocky Road

BY CAROLYN EDDIE, DARIEN RESIDENT & OWNER, CAROLYN'S ABSOLUTELY FABULOUS EVENTS



May I present the perfect Easter (no-bake) traybake, a variation on Nigella Lawson's Christmas Rocky Road, and a nod to my chocolate-filled youth.

Eggs and rabbits have long been associated with Easter, symbols of fertility and rebirth. I think chocolate may be a more recent addition.

When I was growing up in the Northeast of Scotland, we were not visited by the Easter bunny. No filled plastic eggs hidden in our gardens (insert sad face). But there were plenty of other eggs. As children, we did our fair share of dyeing hard-boiled eggs, which were rolled down our local hill, or brae, on Easter Sunday.

Truthfully, however, Easter was really all about chocolate eggs. In the U.K., all the confectionary companies—Cadburys, Mars, Thornton's—sell large, hollow chocolate eggs, each filled with miniature candies (sweeties) such as chocolate buttons or mini flakes. You really had to wait until Easter Sunday before you could break into the big eggs. In the lead up, however, you could eat as many foil-wrapped Cadbury cream-eggs or bags of mini eggs as you wanted. And I did!

## INGREDIENTS

- 8 ounces/225g dark or bittersweet chocolate
- 6 ounces/175g milk chocolate

- 1 and 1/2 sticks butter
- 4 Tablespoons of golden syrup or light corn syrup/light syrup
- 7 ounces/200g Amaretti cookies or sweet biscuits (cookies) - one pack
- 1 cup brazil nuts, cut into small pieces
- 1 cup mini marshmallows
- 1 pack mini Cadbury's eggs
- Confectioners' sugar

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Melt the chocolate, butter and syrup in a large bowl over a pan of simmering water.
2. Tip the amaretto cookies into a freezer bag, and bash them with a rolling pin. Leave some slightly bigger pieces to add texture.
3. Chop half of the eggs into slightly smaller pieces. Ditto with the brazil nuts.
4. When the chocolate is fully melted, take the pan off the heat and stir well to combine all the ingredients.
5. Add the cookies, nuts, marshmallows and eggs to the chocolate and combine well. If, like me, you are not too fond of Brazil nuts, add more marshmallows and eggs.
6. Place in a quarter sheet cookie tray lined with cling film.
7. Leave to set in the fridge for about an hour, dust with the confectioners' sugar and cut into small squares.



## SOURCING INGREDIENTS

Rocky Road only involves melting chocolate, butter and Lyle's Golden Syrup. At a pinch, you could substitute light corn syrup for the golden syrup. In Darien, you can buy Lyle's at Whole Foods and Palmer's. Palmer's stock Amaretti cookies, but a sweet digestive or rich tea 'biscuit' would be perfectly acceptable as well.

My chocolate, as ever, comes from Trader Joe's, the large Belgium Bars are brilliant for this sort of thing. For ease, I have added a cup of both brazil nuts and mini marshmallows and a full bag of mini eggs, please do not be constrained by these amounts and proportions.

For more of my recipes, check out [www.carolynsabsolutelyfabulousevents.com](http://www.carolynsabsolutelyfabulousevents.com) and remember to tag me on Instagram @carolynsfabfoods.

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# "April hath put a spirit of youth in everything." - William Shakespeare

BY CARL TRAUTMANN, PUBLISHER



Hi Friends and Neighbors,

In keeping with Darien's bicentennial, did you know: The Siwanoy tribe ("south people") originally occupied what is now much of the Bronx, Westchester and the Connecticut coast to Norwalk (most golfers know Siwanoy Country Club in Bronxville). The original "planters," as they were called, took ownership in 1640 from the Roaton (sub) tribe for the price of four coats and some tobacco. This land included much of what is now Rowayton (derived from Roaton "the creek almost dry at low tide") and Tokeneke, a name adopted by developers in the early 1900's after an early local tribal chief.

Darien was originally part of Stamford, called Middlesex Parish (1737). Early Stamford was known as Rippowam but soon changed for its namesake in Lincolnshire, England. When Darien was incorporated in 1820, there apparently was much disagreement among residents on the town name, many argued for their own family names. While no definitive answer, a strong theory is that "Darien" was decided upon after hearing a sailor recount his travels to Darien, Panama! If you're interested in local history, visit **The Darien Historical Society:** [www.darienhistorical.org](http://www.darienhistorical.org)

More recently, on the music scene: The **Funky Dawgz** (all UConn grads), including **Colin Walters** (on sabbatical from Darien school music dept. doing graduate work at Julliard) killed it at **Darien High School! Awards** were given to our talented Darien "young composers." **Darien Music for Youth** featured the famous **Birdland Big Band from NYC** visiting all our schools—with the finale **High School** show this April 13th. **Theatre 308's spring show, "Godspell,"** was a big hit!

JoAnn at The Waters Edge @ Giovanni's has a



special dining experience planned for **Easter Sunday:** [watersedgeatgiovannis.com](http://watersedgeatgiovannis.com)

**Palmer's Market** won **Progressive Grocer's** national award for **Outstanding Deli & Prepared Foods!**

**Aldo** at **Heights Pizza**, at their new location downtown, introduced me to his "Grandma's Pizza." Wow!

We wish **Johnny** and "Lou" of **Johnny's & Co.** much happiness in their **retirement** after over **50 years (!)** in Darien.

**Darien Neighbors Magazine** enjoyed the **Darien Chamber of Commerce's Chowder Fest.** All Recipes: [darienctchamber.com](http://darienctchamber.com). Our recipe is on our Facebook page, please give it a "Like" @**Darien Neighbors - Best Version Media.**

Cheers,  
Carl



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