Ashley Kendrick Kennedy

CASE STUDY PORTFOLIO SUBMISSION

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The July–August 2026 cover showcases the brand's style and core values, featuring Lady Lancaster's Elizabeth Leaman, her wearable art, and the historic Rock Ford grounds. Photography by Kelsey Renee Photography.

MULTI-CHANNEL BRAND CAMPAIGN

Lancaster County Magazine Branding and Implementation

Role: Art Direction & Design

After more than 30 years in print and ever-shifting logo and branding designs, *Lancaster County Magazine* was ready for a new look that felt both contemporary and timeless while working effectively across print and digital platforms.

I began by researching the history of the magazine, the publishing industry, and the magazine's core mission of celebrating the heritage, style, and point of view of Lancaster County. I met with the editor, publisher, and other contributors to better understand what the magazine meant to them and to collaborate on the overall approach.

Throughout those conversations, I noticed that no one referred to the magazine by its full name – everyone simply called it *LCM*. That insight became the foundation for the new identity. I developed the logo around the initials while keeping the full name as part of the mark to maintain recognition and continuity.

Another word that kept coming up throughout the process was "timeless." The three dots at the center of the logo represent the past, present, and future of the magazine's legacy.



The September–October 2025 cover showcases the interior, atmosphere, and team behind local restaurant Passerine. Photography by Nick Gould.



The March–April 2025 cover features a stunning kitchen remodel and interior design project. Photography by Jordan Bush.





With the new identity established, I led the implementation across print and digital platforms, creating a cohesive brand experience for readers, advertisers, and the broader community. This included print and digital promotions, subscription campaigns, media kits, business-to-business collateral, social media, and advertising opportunities.

The relationship between the magazine and its readers was always at the forefront of the process. To support that connection, I created style guides and rotating color schemes that kept the publication feeling fresh while maintaining a recognizable visual identity across print and digital products. I also regularly audited the brand's visual language, making thoughtful adjustments as design trends and audience expectations evolved.

Equally important was the relationship with the advertisers

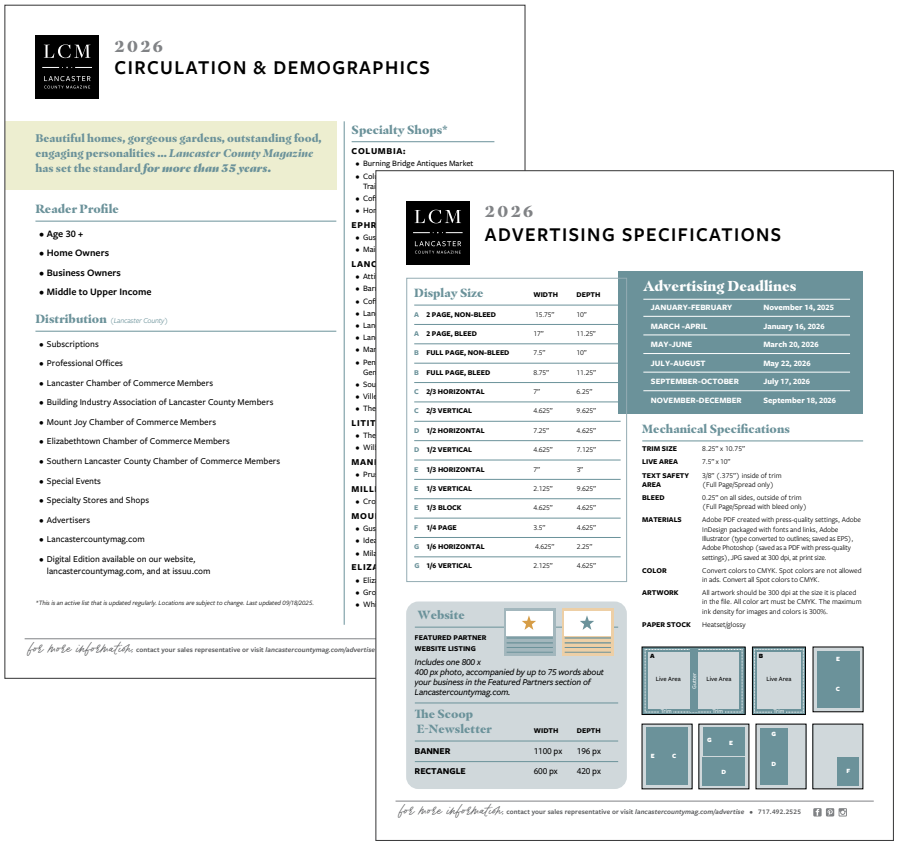
Above, left to right:

Direct mail postcard promoting magazine subscriptions, featuring a collage of sourced illustrations.

Full-page print advertisement promoting magazine subscriptions.



Branded media kit collateral designed to communicate advertising opportunities, specifications, circulation details, and readership insights to current and prospective advertisers. Photography by Nick Gould and Jordan Bush.



who invest in the magazine to represent their businesses to the community. I carried the updated branding through the annual media kit and promotional materials, creating a consistent experience for both readers and advertising partners.

The response to the rebrand was immediate and overwhelmingly positive. We received emails from readers, and even long-time subscribers called the office to share how much they loved the new look.

Since the launch, readership has continued to grow in print as well as across digital platforms, including the digital edition, website articles, and social media. Advertiser investment and reader trust have remained strong, helping the magazine continue to thrive despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and the broader changes facing the print industry.





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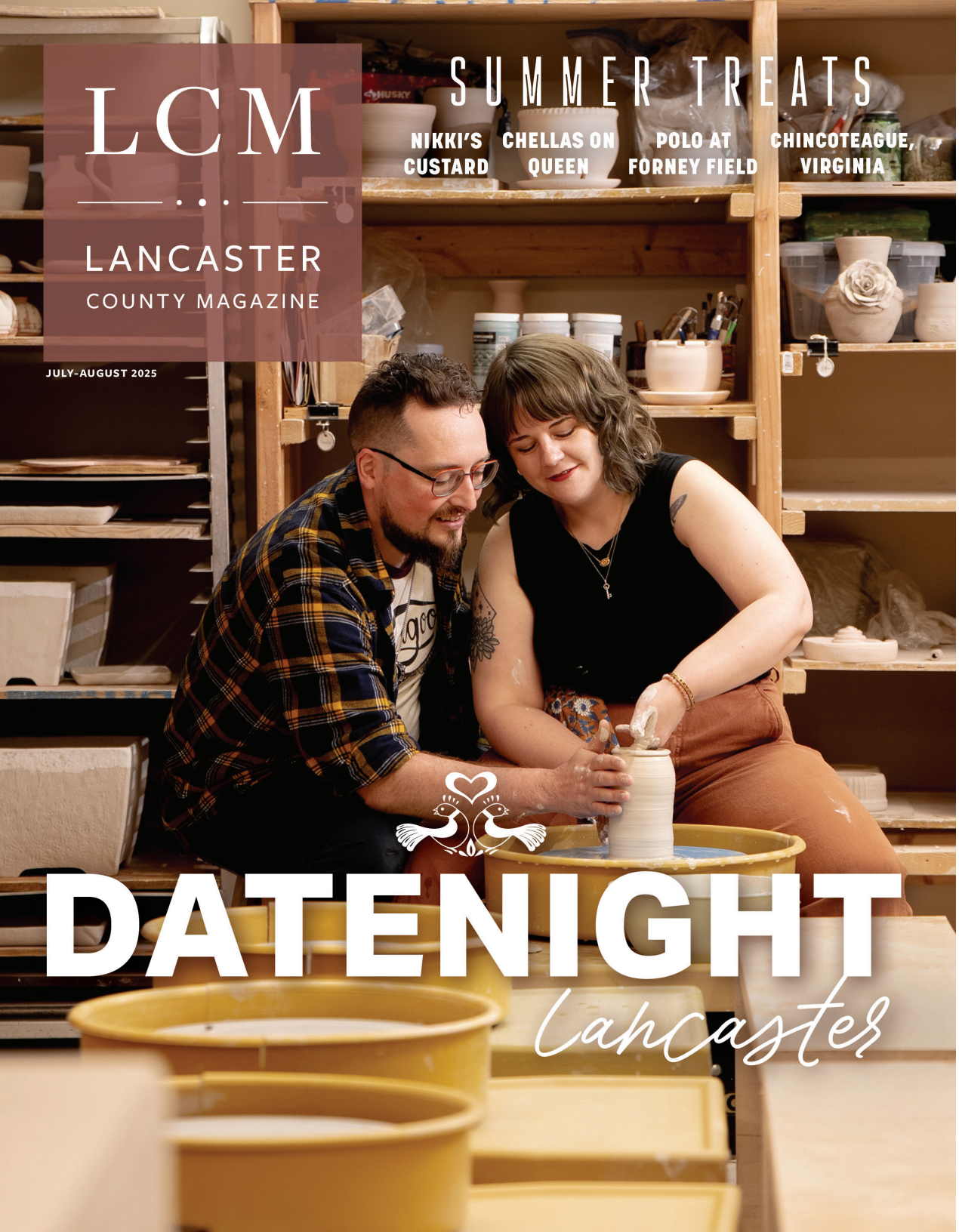
Business-to-business full-page print advertisement targeting building industry professionals and encouraging editorial feature opportunities.

Print subscription promotion half-page advertisement targeting family publication readers.

Digital advertising banners designed to engage and reach readers across online platforms.







COMPLEX INFORMATION DESIGN/PUBLICATION LAYOUT

LCM Print Feature

Role: Art Direction & Design

This feature article by editor Sue Long showcases opportunities throughout Lancaster County for couples to enjoy activities and experiences that go beyond the traditional "dinner and a movie" date night.

The biggest challenge came just before the cover shoot when the couple we had scheduled unexpectedly came down with the flu and had to cancel. With production deadlines approaching, there wasn't time to postpone or start over.

Editor Sue Long asked if my husband, Sean, and I would step in for an impromptu pottery date at Nate Nixdorf's studio in Lititz with photographer Nick Gould. We gladly agreed, and it turned into a memorable experience. It was a unique opportunity to art direct from the other side of the camera while learning the mechanics of the pottery wheel.

I combined photography from the shoot with image assets provided by the featured businesses and carefully sourced stock photography to create a cohesive visual story. Because the article highlighted a variety of destinations, I developed a flexible layout system that gave each location its own personality while maintaining a consistent visual rhythm, unified by an aesthetic inspired by fun summer nights.

The issue was well received as a seasonal guide to local date experiences. Social media engagement was especially positive, and the featured businesses expressed appreciation for the exposure and collaboration.

The July–August 2025 issue of *Lancaster County Magazine* features a pottery date night with Ashley Kendrick Kennedy and Sean Kennedy at Nate Nixdorf's Lititz, PA studio. Photography by Nick Gould.

DATE NIGHT

Lancaster

BY SUE LONG



THREE THINGS THAT EMERGED FROM THE PANDEMIC

1. **A fascination with stargazing.**
2. **Date Night (especially for married couples).**
3. **An obsession with true-crime movies, books, podcasts and television shows like the long-running NBC series, *Dateline*, which began airing in 1992. According to the polling service, Civic Science, "true crime has taken the entertainment world by storm" and is especially popular with GenXers, Millennials and Baby Boomers.**

If you've checked out upcoming events being held in Lancaster, you've likely noticed the many Date Night opportunities that businesses, art studios, venues and organizations are including on their calendars. Apparently the phenomenon, which is sweeping the nation, is one positive thing to emerge from the pandemic.

LANCASTER COUNTY MAGAZINE, FACEBOOK AND STOCK PHOTOS.

Ah, date night. Most people, whether they're in the beginning of a relationship or have been married for decades, find that planning "dates" can be a challenge. After all, the old standby, dinner-and-a-movie, can even lose its luster after a period of time. Now, thanks to destinations such as Zest Cooking School, the Strasburg Rail Road, Conestoga House & Gardens, Lititz Clay Studio, Lancaster Creative Factory and many more, you can let the planning to them! In addition, there are plenty of summer events that easily fit the mold of Date Night.

What's the connection between Date Night and Covid? Actually, they are connected in two ways. First, because we were homebound for so long, couples found themselves reconnecting through cooking together, conducting wine tastings for two, playing board games, putting puzzles together, gardening, taking walks, etc. Even Zoom came into play, as social-distancing couples used the service to share dinner and have long conversations over their computer screens. Couples in those two camps enjoyed the one-on-one time so much that they vowed to "make a date" to keep the fun – and more importantly, the communication – flowing.

On the flip side, working parents found themselves challenged and, in some cases, overwhelmed, by not only working from home, but having to monitor their children's school work and take care of their usual household responsibilities. As a result, their relationships suffered. Fortunately, many of them recognized the damage Covid had done, which prompted them to made a commitment to spend more one-on-one time together.

STUDIES SHOW ...

In 2023, the National Marriage Project (NMP), which was founded at Rutgers University in 1997 and moved to the University of Virginia (UVA) in 2009, released a report that substantiated the importance of date nights as being a way for couples to share some much-needed alone time. The NMP, which studies and reports on the health of marriage, pointed to the success of Date Night activities that began popping up across the country in 2022-23, spearheaded by "a range of civic, corporate and religious organizations." Titled *The Date Night Opportunity*, the report's co-authors were W. Bradford Wilcox, director of the National Marriage Project and a sociology professor at UVA, and Jeffrey Dew, a faculty fellow of the project who now teaches at Brigham Young University.

As part of the report, 2,000 married men and women were asked, How often do you do the following: Go on date nights where you have the chance to talk, catch up and do something fun with your spouse?

The results: 52% of the respondents said the frequency ranged from never to a few times per year. Of those respondents 68% of women and 70% of men described themselves as being "very happy" in their marriages. As for the remaining 48%, they reported having date nights at least once or twice a month. Of these respondents, the "very happy" statistics grew to 83% (women) and 84% (men).

BENEFITS OF DATE NIGHTS

The report listed a number of ways in which Date Night can strengthen a marriage or relationship. One points to the fact that date nights are "valuable for their novelty." The report noted that "couples who engage in novel activities that are fun, active or otherwise arousing – from hiking to dancing to travel to card games – enjoy higher levels of relationship quality." The report also pointed out that "date nights may strengthen or rekindle that romantic spark." Date nights are also a way to relieve stress, as they allow a couple "to enjoy time with one another apart from the pressing concerns of their ordinary life." (Some savvy couples even devise parameters as to what can and cannot be discussed during the date.)

In an article that appeared in *The Washington Post*, it was noted that marriage counselors have begun to "prescribe" Date Night to couples.

As for the group concept of dating that younger generations embraced, that appears to be losing favor. Even Yelp has noticed it and reports that reservations for tables for two were up 30% in 2024.

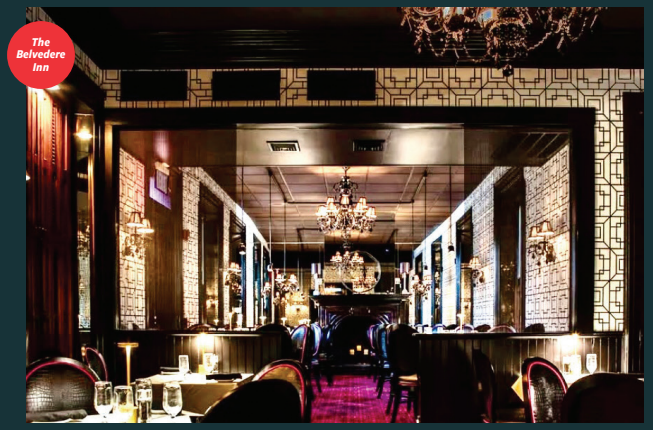
Through compiling our monthly Event-Full column and To-Do blogs, I began to notice the variety of Date Night events being held in Lancaster County. Who knew! So, if you're in need of some ideas, follow along.

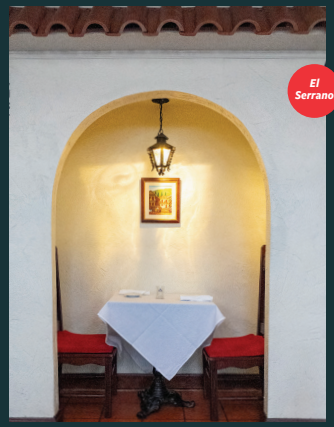


DINING ... TASTE THE WORLD

While dining out is the obvious and tried-and-true Date Night option, you could put a spin on it. How about infusing your dates with international flavor? On each of your outings you could sample a different restaurant that offers a taste of another part of the world. Some that come to mind include **Flora's** (Latin America); **Issei Noodle** (Asian); **Himalayan Curry & Grill** (Nepalese and Indian); **Diyo Fusion** (Nepalese); **Cocina Mexicana** (Mexican), **Yorgos** (Greek specialties), **Callaloo** (modern Caribbean), **Lombardo's** (Italian), **Chellas Arepa Kitchen** (South American) and **Annie Bailey's** (Irish Pub). For one-stop global dining, head for **Southern Market**, a food hall that is filled with an array of vendors. All the above are located in Lancaster City.

The burbs also offer possibilities, including Lititz, where you'll find **Brazilian Table** (South American),


The Belvedere Inn


El Serrano


The Barn at Paradise Station


Zoetropolis

Piccolo Eatery (Italian), **Beccafico** (Southern Italian) and **Chilangos Authentic Mexican Restaurante** (Mexican).

Chinese? Head for **Hong Kong Garden** on Columbia Avenue. A taste of Egypt? **Koshary Station** in Millersville.

At **Columbia Market House**, vendors such as **George Christopher's Greek Cuisine** and **Momma Son's** (Cambodian) host special after-hours dinners on occasion.

A LITTLE ROMANCE

You can't beat a romantic night out and Lancaster has quite a few restaurants that fit the bill. At the top of the list is **The Belevdere Inn**, which, earlier this year, was named as one of the most romantic restaurants in the *country* by Open Table. You also can't go wrong with **Josephine's Downtown** or **401 Prime** (both in Lancaster City), **The Log Cabin** (Leola), the **Railroad House Inn** (Marietta) and **John Wright Restaurant** (Wrightsville), which offers a view of the river. At **El Serrano** (Lancaster), you'll find tables for two that are tucked into private alcoves. The outdoor areas are also swoon-worthy.

1906 NIGHTS

Speaking of a romantic night out, **Longwood Gardens**' new restaurant, 1906, is offering special evening dining hours (4-8 p.m.) that enable guests to experience the restaurant's adventuresome menu and become acquainted with the new *Longwood Reimagined* gardens. These special dining hours are offered most Friday and Saturday evenings, and often coincide with music, dance and theatre events. **Information:** *Longwoodgardens.org*

JAZZ UP DINNER

Jazz on the Patio is back for another summer at The Barn at Paradise Station in Ronks. Guests can enjoy the talents of Lancaster's best jazz groups while they enjoy drinks and dinner on the blue flagstone patio that overlooks the Strasburg Rail Road and the countryside. Food, wine, beer and specialty drinks are available for purchase. The series continues Thursdays, July 10 through August 28. **Information:** *Barnatparadisestation.com*

IF YOU MUST ...

Go the dinner-and-a-movie route, consider **Zoetropolis** in Lancaster, which is one part restaurant, one part bar/distillery and one part movie theatre that specializes in Indie films, documentaries, classic movies, live music, art and crafts, trivia and more. In May, the theatre hosted a *Pitch-A-Friend* singles event that enabled people to take the stage and extol the redeeming qualities of a friend (power-point style) in hopes of fixing them up with a date. **Information:** *Zoetropolis.com*


Decades


Meduseld Meadery


Craft & Cork Trail


Conestoga House & Gardens


SNHA

GO OLD SCHOOL

You could go bowling at **Decades** in Lancaster City, which is home to what might be one of the most beautiful bowling alleys in the country, thanks to the chandeliers that came courtesy of the Netflix series, *House of Cards*. Ah, but there's more, including vintage video and arcade games, a fun menu and tasty cocktails. **Information:** *Decadeslancaster.com*

GET ADVENTUROUS

Have you ever tasted mead? If not, it's high time you did! Head for **Meduseld Meadery** in Lancaster to sample tasty meads with names like How to Choke Your Dragon, Just Honey and Cunning. You can also engage in axe-throwing ... there's nothing like throwing an axe to unwind! Or, travel to Meduseld's sister location, **Artifice Ales & Mead** in Manheim, for food, mead, beer, trivia, live music, karaoke and more. **Information:** *Meduseldmeadery.com* and *Artificeales.com*

HIT THE TRAIL!

The **Craft & Cork Trail**, which is spearheaded by **Discover Lancaster,** will be in operation through October 31. With over 40 participating breweries, wineries and distilleries, you'll have no problem finding a Date Night destination. The Craft & Cork Trail is a free mobile passport that allows you to check in at participating businesses to redeem special offers and earn points towards prizes. If beer isn't your thing, Discover Lancaster's new version of its popular **Ice Cream Trail** is up and running. **Information:** *Discoverlancaster.com* for details about both trails.

The **Lancaster County Brewers Guild** also operates an **Ale Trail** that is passport driven and awards prizes. More than two dozen breweries participate. **Information:** *Lancasterbreweries.org*

TIP TOE THROUGH THE TULIPS

Conestoga House & Gardens offers *Date Night in the Gardens* on designated Thursdays (5-8 p.m.); upcoming dates include July 17, August 21 and September 18. Enjoy the beautiful gardens, stroll the grounds, listen to live music and BYO picnic/wine or pre-order wine and food that's being provided by Proof of Lancaster. Another date-friendly event at Conestoga House is *Music on the Lawn*. Held on Fridays (5-9 p.m.), dates include July 11, August 8, September 12 and October 10. Same format as *Date Night* re food and drink. **Information:** *Conestogahouse.com*

TAKE A CRUISE

The **Susquehanna National Heritage Area** (SNHA) is home to a 112-year-old yacht that was once owned by Adolphous Busch, the co-founder of Anheuser-Busch. Now restored, the Chief Uncas is used to acquaint visitors with the many unique aspects of the Susquehanna River. The *River Discovery Tours* include *Date Night* and *Sunset* cruises. Guests are welcome to BYO food and beverages for the cruises that depart from the Zimmerman Center for Heritage in Long Level, York County. Afterwards, head for **John Wright**'s fun Pizza Patio. **Information:** *Susqnha.org*

RIDE THE RAILS

The **Strasburg Rail Road** has joined the Date Night phenomenon by offering events such as the *Wine &*











In helping photographer Nick Gould establish a shot, Nate Nixdorf, the owner of Lititz Clay Studio, took a seat at the wheel and created a work of art. While he can't guarantee you'll leave with a masterpiece, he's confident you'll have fun at the *Date Night* events he hosts. And, yes, he finds that everyone wants to recreate the *Ghost* shot at the start of the evening, adding that he notices 20-somethings seem to be in the dark and have no clue what it references.



Cheese Train that entails seating in a First Class car, wine from Waltz Vineyards and select cheeses and other accompaniments. The trains operate late afternoons/early evenings on weekends. Other possibilities include dinner events (held in First Class cars); *Whiskey on the Rails* (with Stoll & Wolfe) on August 30, October 25 and November 8; and packing a picnic and riding the train to Groff's Picnic Grove, where picnic tables, charcoal grills and other amenities are available. **Information:** *Strasburgrailroad.com*

TAKE A COOKING CLASS

It's probably fair to say that Sharon Landis, the owner of **Zest!** and the **Zest Cooking School** in Lititz, is the godmother of Date Night in Lancaster County. When she began holding classes in 2018, she noticed that the classes involved more than learning to cook. "There's a relaxing quality to them, people have fun, they mix and mingle. It's a pressure-free environment," she notes. Those qualities provided the perfect ingredients for *Date Night*, which is typically held twice a month on a Friday night and invites attendees to BYOB. "The rule is, bottles can be opened only after the knives are put away," Sharon says. Helen Chudakova-Sanya, who manages the cooking school and is one of the instructors, says, "Date Nights are so much fun!" She estimates that attendees consist of 50% married couples, 25% dating and 25% friends, parents, children or siblings.

How popular are Zest's *Date Night* cooking classes? They fill very quickly. May 3's *Cinco de Mayo* event had already sold out by mid-February. Next up is *A Taste of Cape Cod* with chef Joe Hall on July 18; *Summer Focaccia and Tiramisu* with chef Stephanie Willette on August 1; and a *Luau Party* with instructor Cat Alwine on August 6. **Information:** *Zestchef.com*

MAKE SOMETHING ... A LA GHOST

Thirty-five years after making its debut, the movie *Ghost* still renders visions of the scene in which Demi Moore and Patrick Swayze share a very romantic interlude while making pottery to the music of *Unchained Melody*. (FYI: Demi Moore still has the pieces she and Swayze made during filming.) That enduring scene has no doubt impacted the continuing popularity of Date Night at local pottery studios.



Nate Nixdorf is always surprised by how fast the *Date Night* sessions he offers at Lititz Clay Studio sell out.



LITITZ CLAY STUDIO

Nate Nixdorf, who has operated Lititz Clay Studio since 2017, offers *Date Night* on a semi-regular basis. "I try to have two to three each month, as I like to also leave room for private parties, which are like *Date Night*, but everyone knows each other. I would offer more date nights," he says of their popularity, "but I teach at Warwick fulltime, and have two young kiddos at home." Nate, who has been teaching ceramics for nearly 20 years and markets his work through local shops, galleries and online, says the idea for *Date Night* was inspired by the fact that "working on the pottery wheel is more fun with friends! The pottery wheel is a lot harder than it looks, so *Date Night* provides the opportunity to try it with a friend or significant other for two hours in a laid-back atmosphere. I ensure that everyone has something to keep at the end of the night, and participants are always excited to pick up their pieces once they are fired." **Information:** *Lititzclaystudio.com*

Date Night with the Kennedys

Ashley Kendrick Kennedy and Sean Kennedy, who both grew up in Northeast Philadelphia, met as children through a youth group. The longtime friends officially began dating the summer before their senior year of high school. Ashley went on to graduate from the Tyler School of Art (fine art and graphic design), while Sean is an alumnus of Temple University (biology).

Sean ended up in Lancaster by mistake. One of his teaching mentors told him he had an interview for a teaching position lined up for him in Langhorne, when, in reality it was in Lancaster. Sean kept the appointment anyway, was hired and taught for 11 years. He is now the director of Esports at the Lancaster Recreation Commission, plus teaches Esports on occasion at PCA&D.

Meanwhile, Ashley was working in Philly and sharing a house with seven roommates. She liked visiting Sean in laid-back Lancaster and when he encouraged her to move here, she agreed to try it for a year. She secured a graphic design position at Engle Printing & Publishing in 2014 and became *Lancaster County Magazine*'s art director four years later.

The city dwellers were married in June 2018. Because of their busy schedules, date nights are important to them. Most recently, they celebrated Ashley's birthday by attending a *Date Night* activity at the Lancaster Creative Factory. Sean's birthday was celebrated at Meduseld Meadery (with axe throwing). They also enjoy taking in music events, art exhibits and sampling the area's pizza offerings. "Lancaster offers a good cross-section of art, music and dining," Ashley notes, adding they also like the walkability of the city.

LANCASTER CREATIVE FACTORY

Date Night is very popular at this studio that was once the home of Posey Iron Works. Operated by multi-media artist Kevin Lehman, the enterprise offers classes and workshops that are taught by Kevin and other artists. Kevin explains that *Date Night* at Lancaster Creative Factory began as an experiment. "We heard about *Date Night* events being held at Goggleworks in Reading and how successful they were, so we decided to try it." That was five years ago and since making its debut, *Date Night* has grown into a multifaceted event that extends to pottery, glass and painting. "It lets people come in and try something new," Kevin says. "A lot of people taking our classes were introduced to us through *Date Night*." Stacy Martin, Kevin's life partner, enjoys helping with *Date Night* events. "The energy is always upbeat," she says. "I think people are excited to be doing something special and unusual for a date night." Just recently, one young man got extra creative during a

Paint Your Partner Date Night and used the moment and his canvas to propose.

The offerings include *Date Night Wheel Class*, which allows twosomes to throw a pottery piece, choose a glaze and LCF takes care of the rest. Taught by Carlo Jury, it's offered Saturdays at 6 p.m. *Date Night Glass Class*, which is held April-June and resumes October-December, is led by Kevin on Fridays at 6 p.m. Basically an intro to glass-blowing, students create flowers during the class. *Paint Your Partner* is a class in which partners paint each other's portraits, using 16x20-inch canvases. Instructor Lauren Terry leads the classes on Saturdays at 6 p.m. *Adult Paint Date Night*, which is also led by Lauren Terry, offers a different theme for students to tackle each week. It's offered Saturdays at 6 p.m. **Information:** *Lancastercreativefactory.org*

INSPIRE POTTERY STUDIO

Owned by Joel Hildebrand and his uncle, Matthew Hildebrand, the studio makes its home in a barn in Denver, where 12 wheels and three kilns are in operation. Matthew brings 40+ years of experience (and renown) to the studio. The Hildebrands opened the studio as a way to connect to the community and help budding artists take their talents to the next level.

Date Night at Inspire is held Fridays (6:30 p.m.) and Saturdays (2 and 6:30 p.m.). The two-hour classes, which are led by an instructor, include a snack break. Inspire's website notes that *Date Night* provides the perfect opportunity to take a beginner's lesson and determine if you'd like to advance. **Information:** *Inspirepotterystudio.com*

GO FOR A BIKE RIDE

Lancaster County has become a mecca for rail-trail enthusiasts and bike shops are answering the call for renting bikes (including E-bikes) to those who want to see the sights. Lancaster's **Let's Roll Electric Bike Shop** has expanded to Columbia, where it maintains a presence that's in close proximity to the Northwest Lancaster County Rail Trail. Take a test ride or rent a bike for a two- or four-hour (or longer) period of time. The shop also provides shuttle service to the Enola Low Grade Trail at Turkey Hill. **Information:** *Letsrolllancaster.com*

Bikeworks in Lititz offers rentals (including E-bikes) through its Rock Lititz store. Rentals include helmets and maps of routes that are deemed safe and scenic, including the Warwick-to-Ephrata Rail Trail. Another option is Bikeworks' bike-share program that has locations along the trail in both Lititz and Ephrata and allows riders to gain access to bikes through a text message. **Information:** *Lititzbikeworks.com*

GO FOR A JOY RIDE

Strasburg Scooters offers a *Date Night in Amish Country Tour* that provides couples with a guided tour of the backroads around Strasburg and Ronks. Guests have the choice of tooling around in a two-seater coupe or on a double-seat Honda PCX. In addition to the (up to) two-hour tour, guests have the choice of selecting passes to Village Greens for a round of mini-golf and ice cream, or $25 gift cards to Fireside Tavern or Bespoke Brewing. Tours are offered Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings (6 p.m.) through September 30. **Information:** *Strasburgscooters.com*

GO STARGAZING

Stargazing became hugely popular during the pandemic, which led to Hallmark incorporating it (and the Northern Lights) into quite a few of their movies as a Date Night activity. Did you know that you can get a beautiful view of the night skies during events that are held at the **Ryan Observatory,** which is located at Muddy Run Park in Holtwood? The observatory is a public outreach facility whose educational programs are provided by Rittenhouse Astronomical Society under contract with Constellation Energy. The observatory is open to the public for monthly stargazing and presentations. During the Open House events (July 12 and August 9), you can visit the observatories, attend an indoor program and visit the outdoor amphitheater. Those attending are encouraged to bring binoculars to see deep sky sights. **Information:** *Ryanobservatory.com*

GO DANCING

Speaking of the stars, **Nissley Vineyards** will again be hosting *Music in the Vineyards* on Saturday evenings, July 12 through August 30. Bring your own dinner/snacks or purchase items from the food trucks that will be onsite. Wine, craft beer, wine slushies and zero-alcohol beverages can be purchased, as well. Music will be provided by Central PA's top bands including Maxwell Project, Central City Orchestra and Jess Zimmerman. 5:30-10 p.m. **Information:** *Nissleywine.com*

CONNECT WITH NATURE

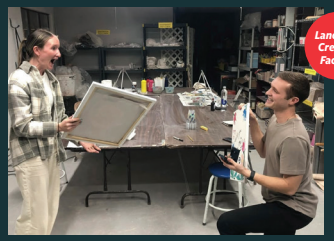
Experience nature with certified nature- and forest-therapy guide Elizabeth Mills, who is the founder of Willow Street-based **One With Nature**. Here's an opportunity to slow down, relax and form a connection to nature and each other. Such therapy benefits the body, mind and spirit, which is why nature is being prescribed by the Mayo Clinic and other physicians around the world. It is not about hiking a long distance or exercising. It's about reconnecting through walking in nature. For twosomes, Elizabeth offers a *Partners Nature Experience*, with the goal being to relax, have fun and reconnect with nature ... and each other. The walk concludes with a traditional tea ceremony and light refreshments. Destinations vary. **Information:** *Restawhile.us*

PLAY GOLF

Blue Collar Restaurant is partnering with **Four Seasons Golf Course** to help you end each of the summer months on a fun note by playing nine holes of golf in late afternoon and then relaxing over dinner in Blue Collar's fireplace lounge area, where a special menu will be available. The *Nine & Dine* promotion is being offered on the last Friday of each month, i.e., July 25, August 29 and September 26. **Information:** *Bluecollarlanc.com*

GET LOST

Cherry Crest Adventure Farm isn't just for kids! The 5-acre corn maze, with its 2.5 miles of paths, would make for a fun Date Night, especially on weekends in September and October, when visitors can negotiate the maze in the dark with the aid of flashlights. There's plenty of food available and a brewery and winery are onsite most weekends. **Information:** *Cherrycrestfarm.com*


Lancaster Creative Factory





Inspire Pottery Studio



Blue Collar Restaurant


Cherry Crest Adventure Farm


Let's Roll Electric Bikes


Strasburg Scooters


One With Nature


Nissley Vineyards


Ryan Observatory



The September 2022 *Lancaster County Magazine* cover features three chefs from Southern Market, celebrating the faces behind the diverse cultural cuisine and unique dining experiences found within the market.

COMPLEX INFORMATION DESIGN/PUBLICATION LAYOUT

LCM Print Feature

Role: Art Direction & Design

The talented chefs, beautiful and delicious dishes, and unique architecture of Southern Market came together to create a dynamic feature highlighting one of Lancaster's most vibrant gathering places.

The primary design challenge was showcasing each individual restaurant so that every business had its own moment in the spotlight while reinforcing Southern Market as the destination that brings them all together.

I incorporated visual elements inspired by the architecture and atmosphere of the space to create a cohesive layout system. Those design cues unified each restaurant's space while allowing the personality of its cuisine and brand to shine through.

The feature was well received and helped strengthen the magazine's relationship with Southern Market, leading to continued collaboration and increased advertising investment. It also sparked a follow-up feature by freelancer Jordan Bush on Flavors of Morocco chef and owner Bushra Fakkier's alfresco dinners, hosted on her property.

Southern Market Comes Full Circle



Southern Market's food station proprietors include: (kneeling) Bushra Fakier (Flavors of Morocco) and Jonathan Forbes (X Marks the Spot). Standing left to right are Jen Splain (Bar 1888), Trang Vu (Pho Life), Mohammad Khilo (Layali El Sham), Jessie Tuno (Butter and Bean), Matt Shultz (Pizzeria 211), Eddy Rodriguez (4E's Latin Cuisine) and Steve Wood (Bar 1888). The backdrop is composed of preserved mosses.

The iconic market house that once served generations of shoppers has returned to its roots and has been transformed into a modern-day food hall whose vendors provide visitors with a taste of the world. But it hasn't entirely moved away from being an office building, as its upper mezzanine offers space and amenities to small businesses and nonprofits.

BY SUE LONG
PHOTOGRAPHY BY NICK GOULD

Food halls are making an impact on the culinary landscape across America. Large cities such as New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., and Seattle are each home to more than a dozen food halls. Some of the more well-known are Chelsea Market in New York, Revival Food Hall in Chicago, Union Market in D.C., and Reading Terminal Market and The Bourse in Philly.

Now the phenomenon is making inroads in smaller cities. Morgan Street Food Hall in Raleigh, North Carolina, for example, is garnering huge attention and great reviews. Lancaster, of course, put its name on the food-hall map with the opening of Southern Market in January.

FOOD HALLS ARE NOT to be confused with food courts. Unlike food courts, which are mostly located in shopping centers and malls and are defined by fast food and eat-and-run schedules, the vendors in food halls specialize in artisanal cuisine that is made to order and, in most cases, is healthy to boot. Trend watchers attribute the growing popularity of food halls to the fact that they attract the blue chip of consumers – the younger, more adventurous generations who love to sample international food and socialize while they do it.

The selection that is available is prompting food halls to be seen as a new version of smorgasbords: I dare you to order from just one food station! It's impossible to do! Multiply that by the number of people in your party and you have a modern-day grazing station on your table that encourages sharing. Morgan Street refers to the phenomenon as "cross-ordering."

The allure of food halls is also defined by ambiance. Many have infused abandoned warehouses and other under-utilized buildings whose uses have fallen by the wayside with a new purpose in life, thus serving as prime examples of adaptive reuse.

Finally, food halls strive to be social hubs where visitors can meet up with friends old



Chris Ballentine, who is the community relations manager for Willow Valley Communities, has an office at Southern Market and is on the premises two or three days a week.



Shared spaces such as this meeting room fill the private-access mezzanine area that is home to 19 offices and other common spaces.



Brittnie Jones, owner of Savoy Truffle, is the first proprietor to leave the nest, as she has taken over an empty space at Champion Forge Center on Harrisburg Avenue. (A late August opening was her goal.) A self-taught baker, Brittnie and her family made the move to her husband's hometown of Lancaster. "It's a family affair," she says of her business. In her new location, Brittnie will offer her signature cupcakes, pies, macarons and cakes, as well as grilled cheese, loaded hot dogs and more.



Southern Market is located at 100 S. Queen St. in Lancaster. Food Hall hours are Wednesday and Thursday, 11:30 a.m.–8 p.m., Friday and Saturday, 11:30 a.m.–9 p.m., and Sunday, 11 a.m.–6 p.m. Butter and Bean, Pizzeria 211 and Bar 1888 maintain extended hours. For details, visit southernmarketlancaster.com.

Food stations surround the 250-capacity seating area that is anchored by Bar 1888. The market house, which was designed by C. Emlen Urban, also offers mezzanine-level office space and areas that can be reserved for private social events that are catered by the food-station proprietors.

and new. In the opinion of architect Pieter Berger and developer Mark Manguera, who have designed and developed food halls in Southern California, the definitive food hall entails "inspiring food, design and architecture." How fortunate is Lancaster to have a food hall that hits on all three of those attributes? The food is simply delicious and the surroundings are inspiring. Best of all, Southern Market is serving as an "incubator" that is providing the proprietors of the food stations with an opportunity to "get a taste" of what being the owner of a small business entails.

Historic

Southern Market is historic simply because of the architect – C. Emlen Urban – who designed it. Only 23 at the time he was assigned the project in January 1888, he was already being lauded for his work. Southern Market would be his most ambitious project to date. Cost estimates came in at $75,000, which according to a story in *LNP*, would equate to $2.2 million today. By April of 1888, most buildings had been removed from the site and construction progressed so rapidly that a grand opening was held September 23-24; 123 stands filled the market.

Urban's timeless design was only altered in 1931, when plumbing and lighting upgrades were made and restrooms were added. Five years later, a heating system was installed.

THE RISE OF the age of automobiles and the expansion of suburban areas in the post-war years nearly caused the demise of Southern Market. Shoppers coming into town from outlying areas began to complain about the lack of parking in the vicinity of the market. A 55-car parking lot that was established across Vine Street from the market did little to resolve the situation.

The issue came to a head in 1950, when the city announced plans to purchase the market and convert it into a parking garage or even tear it down. A petition circulated by a standholder successfully thwarted the plans but by 1952, a similar proposal was introduced. Mayor Howard Bare ultimately announced the plan was a go and standholders would be moving to Central Market, where they would maintain Wednesday and Saturday hours in the shared space. The closing was announced for April 15, 1953.

Once again, however, Southern Market would get a reprieve. City Council members recommended that a referendum on the fate of the market should be placed on the primary ballot. Voters stymied the planned closure by a two to one margin. Despite their support via the ballot box, shoppers continued to avoid the market.

A decade later, the Lancaster Planning Commission called for the closure of the market. City Council again came to its rescue and invested more than $90,000 for upgrades.

BY 1975, STANDHOLDERS from both markets saw the writing on the wall and petitioned the city to consolidate the markets. A competing petition successfully kept Southern Market from closing. It was back to the drawing board. More money was invested in the market. In 1977, the roof was replaced and the basement was renovated to create space for the Conestoga Valley chapter of the Pennsylvania Guild of Craftsmen to set up shop. Nevertheless, attendance waned and a regulation regarding bus parking only compounded the situation.

By the 1980s, 50% of stands at the market were not open on Saturdays. Mayor Art Morris approved expenditures for a study that would provide guidance for resolving the issues facing Southern Market. The results of the study (1984) suggested the two markets be consolidated and the building be adapted to serve as perhaps a visitor's center, a police station or a recreation center. A year later, the consolidation of the two markets was made official. Central Market would be open Tuesday, Friday and Saturday. Southern Market was slated to become the home of the Lancaster Chamber of Commerce & Industry, city offices/council chambers and a visitor's center.

Yet another petition was circulated, but this time more than a dozen of the largest standholders deemed it was time to move on. The market closed its doors on April 26, 1986, after 98 years of continuous operation. The conversion to office space commenced in 1988.

Yet another chapter in Southern Market's history was written in the last decade, when the city relocated its offices in 2014, followed by the Chamber in 2017.

The Dawn of a New Southern Market

With Southern Market standing nearly empty, new ideas emerged on how it could be utilized to bring increased foot traffic to the southern edge of Downtown Lancaster. Two new players emerged with viable ideas. One was Lancaster Equity, a community-development corporation whose aim is to substantially reduce poverty in the city over the next 10 years through entrepreneurial programs and ensuring people earn a living wage and have access to affordable housing. They saw Southern Market as an avenue to help people achieve those goals through introducing the food-hall concept to Lancaster. ASSETS, a nonprofit organization that assists budding entrepreneurs and whose office was located inside the market, saw a similar path.

The strategy was nearly derailed when a Maryland-based company submitted plans that would have transformed the building into a home-improvement store. When potential tenants backed out, the company withdrew the plan.

Lancaster Equity then submitted a plan that included a proposed food hall and was successfully able to purchase the building from the city. Lancaster Equity and ASSETS both had big dreams but feared a lack of funding going forward would not allow the project to reach its full potential.

Fortunately, a new player entered the picture. Willow Valley Communities had announced plans for a new venture that will be located just across Vine Street from the market. Mosaic, a 20-story high-rise that is slated to welcome residents in late 2025, will provide Willow Valley Communities with an urban option for potential residents.

The team from Willow Valley Communities was interested in learning more about Southern Market. They saw the possibilities that collaborating with Lancaster Equity and ASSETS on this unique project would bring to Lancaster. Willow Valley Communities, with its extensive food-service experience, proved to be the missing part of the puzzle. "The ironic thing is that the Thomas family had a stand at Southern Market," says Chris Ballentine, Willow Valley Communities' community relations manager, referring to the founders of the 55-plus community. "With food as its centerpiece once again, the market was coming full circle."

The Work Begins

As project developer, Willow Valley Communities brought in Willow Street-based CCS Building Group, whose expertise centers on creating "highly intentional spaces" and extends to both new commercial and residential construction and historic/adaptive reuse. "Willow Valley Communities has a long-standing history with CCS Building Group," says Maureen Leader, Willow Valley Communities' public relations and communications manager.

Chris notes that visitors who frequented Southern Market when it was essentially an office building, immediately comment on the bright and airy atmosphere that now exists.



Flavors of Morocco

Bushra Fakier arrived in Lancaster – via Morocco and Canada – in 2014 with her husband, Feizel Fakier. Bushra, who has a PhD in physics, always enjoyed cooking and launched a business at Lancaster Marketplace. When the pandemic put Lancaster Marketplace on pause, requests for her food prompted Bushra to install a commercial kitchen in her home to meet the demand for catering and to-go food. She also began hosting impromptu – and very popular – pop-up dinners. Bushra's food is not only delicious and beautiful, but it's healthy, as she pairs fresh local ingredients with authentic spices, herbs and rubs from her native Morocco. Her menu offers everything from appetizers to desserts.

Pictured is chicken tagine, which is made with chicken, saffron and olives and is served over rice. The salad combo is comprised of beets, carrots and cucumbers.



Butter and Bean

Jessie Tuno calls coffee her passion. She brings 20-plus years of experience in the hospitality industry to Southern Market. Her charming café is the perfect place to indulge in one of her trademark coffee or espresso works of art – made with Latin American coffee beans – and enjoy a delicious pastry (made in-house). Specialty syrups are made in-house, as well. The menu also features cold brews, lattes, frappes and smoothies.

Pictured are a breakfast sandwich that is filled with bacon, eggs and cheddar, and an artful cup of butter latte.

4E's Latin Cuisine

Eddy Rodriguez, who hails from the Dominican Republic and moved to New York as a teen, brings industry experience to his eatery. Prior to Southern Market, he managed the kitchen and food services for SACA (Spanish American Civic Association) in Lancaster and operated a catering service. The "E" in the name of his eatery refers to himself and three other family members. His food, which includes hand-helds such as Cuban sandwiches and empanadas, blends the flavors of the Caribbean with the farm-fresh products of Lancaster County. He calls his new enterprise a "Healthy Life Hospitality Company."

Pictured are maple BBQ ribs, roasted potatoes and black bean salad.



X Marks the Spot

Owner Jonathan Forbes, who grew up in Lancaster, has been cooking for as long as he can remember and determined as a teen that a career in food would figure into his future endeavors. His career stops included two private clubs (including a five-star premium club) and operating a catering business. At Southern Market, the menu focuses on Southern soul food and offers such classics as fried chicken and fish, cornbread, sides such as collards and green beans, rice pilaf and a beverage called church punch.

Pictured are fried chicken, collard greens, mac-n-cheese and sweet potatoes.





Layali El Sham

"Cooking from the heart" is one of the main ingredients in the food that the Khilo family prepares at their food station. They also take pride in the fact that they can share the "magical flavors from the crossroads of civilization" – their native Syria – with visitors to Southern Market.

Pictured are chicken shawarma (seen here as a wrap but it is available as an entrée) that entails marinated meat (chicken in this case) and special seasonings. It is accompanied by hummus and tabbouleh, which is made from cracked wheat, tomatoes, cucumber, fresh herbs, lemon juice and olive oil.



Pho Life

Owner Trang Vu and her business partner, Davaun Dorsey, are acquainting Lancaster with this traditional noodle soup that is made from rice noodles, broth, cilantro and green and white onions. Pho, which is considered to be Vietnam's official dish, is versatile – a hearty comfort food for winter but light enough for summer's hot weather. The menu also features noodle salads, egg rolls and drinks such as Vietnamese iced coffee.

Pictured is a traditional vegetable pho noodle soup that is made with tofu.

Akhi Sushi

Owner Sai Nu, who emigrated from Myanmar in 2012, is Southern Market's newest vendor. Formerly a social worker, he perfected his skills at making Japanese and Burmese-inspired sushi through working at restaurants owned by friends in Lancaster. Now he has taken the next step and is operating his own food station at Southern Market, where the extensive menu includes poke bowls, cooked and raw maki and sushi combos. Sai Nu is happy to be a business owner and is thankful that he now has a way to "pay back the community that has helped me and my family."

Pictured is crunchy crab sushi.





Pizzeria 211

Matt Shultz made a life-changing career move when he turned 40. While Matt had spent his career in the jewelry industry, what really dazzled him was pizza. In fact, he loved making pizza so much that he occasionally worked part-time in Philadelphia-area pizza restaurants. The milestone birthday convinced him to follow his dreams and with the support of his family, Matt moved back to his hometown of Lancaster. Now he is sharing his culinary gems – Detroit-style pizza, sandwiches, cheesesteaks, chicken parm and and salads – with visitors to Southern Market.

Pictured is Matt's version of Detroit-style pizza.

"It used to be very dark in here," he says, referring to the dark wood that once defined the interior spaces and the fact that a second floor that had been installed to accommodate the Lancaster Chamber, essentially keeping light from the windows along the roofline from reaching the ground floor. "When the Chamber's staff visited for the first time, they could not get over how different the building now looks. They kept commenting on how bright the interior is," Chris says.

Office space still exists – now 19 such spaces are found on the mezzanine level that was created by eliminating the second floor. Consultants and podcasters are represented among the small businesses, while nonprofits such as ASSETS and a theatre company work out of the private-access offices and share common spaces such as meeting rooms, a kitchen and restrooms. Chris has an office in the building and is on-site two or three days of the week. He remarks that between the quietude, the architecture and a view of the food hall, it makes for an inspiring place to work.

Community spaces are another element of the makeover. Such spaces can be rented for purposes such as meetings and social events, with catering supplied by the market's vendors.

Construction, restoration and remodeling got underway in 2020; Southern Market's public opening took place on January 27, 2022.

A Taste Sensation

Of course, the main attraction of a food hall is the variety of cuisine that is available. In addition to the worldwide choices, all food is prepared on-site, fresh by each of the chef vendors in the shared commercial kitchen. Southern Market's concept is based on an incubator approach. "The goal is to help folks who want to establish a successful and viable business," says Maureen. The food stations at the market are operated by vendors whose experience in the industry is just as diverse as the food they offer. Vendors applied to become a part of Southern Market through the market's website and were connected with ASSETS, which has launched a Food Industry Lab to work with individuals interested in the industry and specifically with vendors who are chosen to take a space in the food hall.

Inside the market, there is space for a total of 10 food stations. As of mid-July, the market was searching for a replacement for one vendor who will be opening a brick-and-mortar location, as well as for one that will fill the last space at the front of the building. "The first thing that needs to be established is whether a prospective vendor is a good fit," says Sharon Habanec, who is Willow Valley Communities' senior vice president of culinary services and is on-site several days a week to work with the vendors.

"The 'fit' addresses both the culinary offerings and the quality of the products, as well as adding menu items that provide new and unique offerings of the food hall," she explains. A diverse menu, of course, helps to entice visitors.

A camaraderie factor ensures the food hall runs smoothly. "Because everyone has varying degrees of experience, we are seeing that they all are helping each other," Sharon notes. "Everyone seems to really get along well."

NINE MONTHS IN, Sharon is noticing that several vendors are weighing their options and are realizing that operating a full-fledged restaurant may not suit their personal goals and circumstances. Some have shared that being at Southern Market is satisfying their dreams and even taking them in other directions such as catering and operating a food truck.

Another element of the food hall – Bar 1888 – has proven to be very popular with visitors. Headed by mixologist Steve Wood, the cocktail menu is unique in that it offers new twists on the classics, as well as innovative drinks that complement the wide-ranging culinary choices.

A Learning Process

Just as the vendors are navigating their way, the Southern Market team is as well. Prepping for large downtown events like July's Roots & Blues Festival is critical. "We were packed for that," says Sharon. First Fridays also bring in additional traffic. Sundays see an uptick in business due in part to the fact that St. Mary's Catholic Church is Southern Market's neighbor.

Sharon notes that while locals are flocking to Southern Market, tourists are discovering it, as well. The return of conventions and other events at the Marriott is already generating traffic to Southern Market. It's also become a favorite destination for residents of Willow Valley Communities. "I see a lot of familiar faces," Sharon adds. Maureen notes that shuttle service between Willow Valley Communities and Downtown Lancaster is encouraging residents to pay a visit to Southern Market. "It's just another way Willow Valley Communities is supporting the city," she says of residents who attend cultural events, shop and volunteer with nonprofit organizations and schools.

Tweaking opening hours has resulted in an increase of lunch traffic. Outdoor dining was added at the front of the building and is proving to be popular. Trivia contests are held Wednesday evenings (on a Wednesday in mid-July, a record 26 teams competed), while Thursday nights are devoted to Music Trivioke. Live music is offered on weekends. "Southern Market is also getting lots of inquiries about renting the community event spaces," Maureen adds.

Chris is excited by the fact that Southern Market will create a new hub on the southern edge of downtown. "Between Mosaic and the work that LancasterHistory is doing on the other corner [at the Stevens & Smith Center], this end of downtown is primed to become a destination," he points out. "It's exciting to be a part of something that is only getting started."

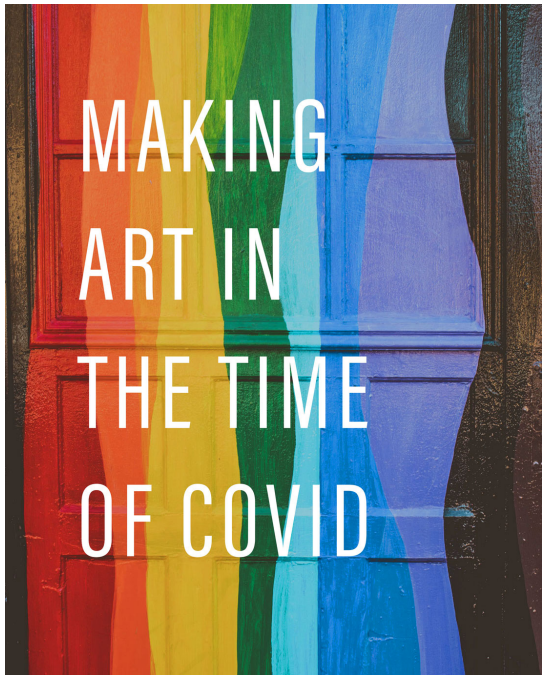


Bar 1888

A menu created by mixologist Steve Wood entails a mix of locally sourced ingredients and a globally influenced cocktail culture. Here you'll find classics that have been tweaked to bring a modern spin to the renowned cocktails of the past. Unique cocktails inspired by the offerings at the various food stations also set the tone at Bar 1888. Microbrews and wine are also served.

Pictured left to right are Strong-armed Old Fashioned, A Peeling Compromise (topped with a brûléed banana) and French Linen, which is enhanced by a mist of rose water.







Three social media graphics created to promote an open call for artist submissions. The campaign generated submissions that evolved into a three-part blog series and eventual *Lancaster County Magazine* print feature celebrating local artists.

ART DIRECTION AND VISUAL STORYTELLING

LCM Print Feature, Blog Series, Call for Art

Role: Writer, Art Curator, Art Direction & Design

This feature from August 2020 began as an open call for artwork created during the COVID-19 lockdown. Inspired by my own experience finding refuge in art during an uncertain time, as well as the online community of local artists and makers continuing to create, I wanted to find a way to celebrate and support the creative community.

At a time when many artists were facing economic uncertainty and fewer opportunities to sell their work, I developed a platform to help share their creations with a wider audience. I created a submission form on the *Lancaster County Magazine* website where artists could share their work, artist statements, and contact information for potential buyers.

We promoted the open call through social media campaigns, and submissions quickly poured in. I curated the artwork into a three-part blog series, which the team later transformed into a print feature showcasing 19 local artists.

The most meaningful part of the process was personally mailing copies of the magazine to each featured artist with a note thanking them for sharing their work with our community. This project was a reminder of the role storytelling and design can play in creating connection, support, and opportunity during challenging times.



There is an old adage that art cannot be made in a vacuum; however, Lancaster's art community has been proving that it can, in fact, be made in both quarantine and protest. In an era imprinted by both solitude and solidarity, many makers have been finding solace and connection through the work of creating.

PRODUCED BY ASHLEY KENDRICK KENNEDY.

It can be easy, at least for me, to become stoic and focused on pragmatism in times of stress or struggle. However, I also believe it's important to keep connecting, creating and communicating through art, especially now.

Art should not be viewed as a frill but as a necessity for the human spirit, a part of life – whether in creating, viewership or patronage. Picking up a brush, pencil, camera, pen or sewing needle in times of struggle is both a time-honored artistic tradition as well as a newfound outlet for many folks.

Those who make a living through the creative arts have been especially challenged over the past five months. With classes, shows, festivals, exhibits and special events such as Spring Art Walk canceled, they have lost the personal connection and feedback that a live audience provides. They've also been deprived of that special Friday magic that exists in Lancaster, Lititz, Columbia, Elizabethtown and Mount Joy each month.

The pandemic will no doubt have a rippling effect throughout the coming months and years.

However, that's not to say a void exists. In a show of resiliency, career artists, hobbyists and novices alike have come together digitally in this time of social dichotomies – distancing and camaraderie – to share their work with their communities. Thanks to their efforts, they are making the world look a bit brighter and keeping us connected through trying times.

1. KEISHA FINNIE

"Nurture Your Mind" – PSA Temporary Mural for Lancaster Public Art


Photo by Lunga Bechtel

The purpose of public art is to express community values, enhance the environment, transform landscapes, heighten our awareness or question our assumptions. Placed in public sites, such art is made available to everyone and serves as a form of collective community expression. Public art is a reflection of how we see the world – the artist's response to our time and place combined with our own sense of who we are. (Source: Association of Public Art).

The art we see around Lancaster City fits this criteria and exists because Lancaster saw fit to develop the Office of Public Art, which is headed by Joanna Davis and includes an advisory board of diverse talents who are passionate about art and culture.

When it became evident that Lancaster would be impacted by COVID-19, Lancaster Public Art, in partnership with Two Dudes Painting Company, formulated an ambitious project that would deliver health-related messages to neighborhoods across the city via art. Ten artists were chosen to create murals that would convey COVID-19 messages. From the initial planning stage to the installation of the murals, the challenge was to complete the project in a matter of 30 days.

Keisha Finnie was one of the artists selected for the project. Her mural, which addresses the mental health aspect of coping with the coronavirus, features the legend, "Nurture Your Mind." It's accompanied by the image of a Black woman whose head is encircled with a vivid display of flowers. The mural essentially captures Keisha's interests and view of life. She says the inspiration for her art comes from "living life and being a woman of color." It's also borne out of "a love for nature, vibrant color, texture and the female form."

Keisha is proud of the fact that her mural is displayed on fencing on the grounds of George Ross Elementary School on North Queen Street. The school is where her artistic talents took wing as a kindergarten student and progressed through art classes at J.P. McCaskey High School. Now, she experiments in all media, with henna being a newfound talent. Her bold art also decorates T-shirts and baseball caps.

She says the mural is her largest piece of art to date. In order to meet the tight timeline, she often painted through the night. To capture the vivid colors, she mixed her own paint. She views the mural as a "reminder to nurture your mind and take care of yourself during these times. With all of the things that are taking place, we can forget to relax and take a day to really ask ourselves how our hearts and minds are. Suffering from mental health myself, I wanted to remind others that they are not alone."

For more information, visit lancasterpublicart.com and keishafinnie.bigcartel.com. Follow Keisha on Instagram @KeishaFinnie

2. STEPHEN GAMBONE

"HOPE FOR TOMORROW"

www.ETSY.com/shop/FusionARToriginals
Instagram.com/Stephen_Gambone_artist
Facebook.com/FusionArtOriginals

3. DAVID BERK

Facebook.com/stuffdavesaw
Instagram: @dave_berk & @dave.berk.portrait
Email: daveberk50@gmail.com







11. METTLE_FLECHE_

"star dreams" – a mix of analog and digital collage

Note from the artist: Personally, the two edges of this COVID-shaped sword are that I have lost some opportunities I'll never get back; however, due to being unemployed, I've gained the time and energy to create something new. My collage work is on Instagram as @mettle_fleche_ and I'm so excited to see where this creative outlet takes me.

Follow them on Instagram to see more of their work. High-quality prints are available for sale.

Instagram.com/mettle_fleche_



12. ANTOINETTE SAPONE-MCMILLAN

Note from the artist: This piece is 10x20 acrylic on canvas, titled "Wild Daisies of Inishbofin." I spent two weeks in Ireland last summer, a lot of my current pieces are inspired from the trip. I also did two series on paper based on my interpretation of the stones that appear all along the shore of Inishbofin Island, Ireland. Those can be found on my Facebook and Instagram pages.

Facebook: Facebook.com/AESMArtWork
Instagram: Instagram.com/a_sapone_mcmillan

13. NICK STEHMAN

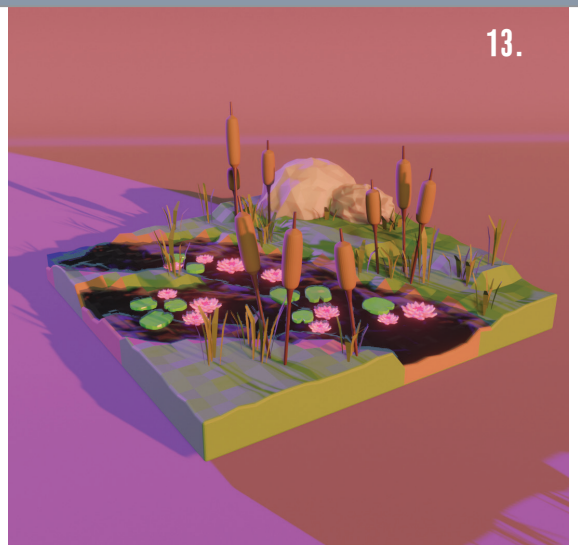
Note from the artist: This is one of my 3D modeling projects. I started a deep dive into 3D modeling at the start of the COVID-19 shutdown. My goal is to create my own cartoon/game/toy collection. Prior to the shutdown, I hadn't had much extra time to learn this software, so progress was slow. Now that I'm getting the hang of it, I'm learning in leaps and bounds. I use a free software called BLENDER. It is a cutting-edge tool that is free and accessible to anyone with a computer. I'm having lots of fun and learning a lot and my goal is to submit some animated shorts to some film festivals this fall. I hope you enjoy.

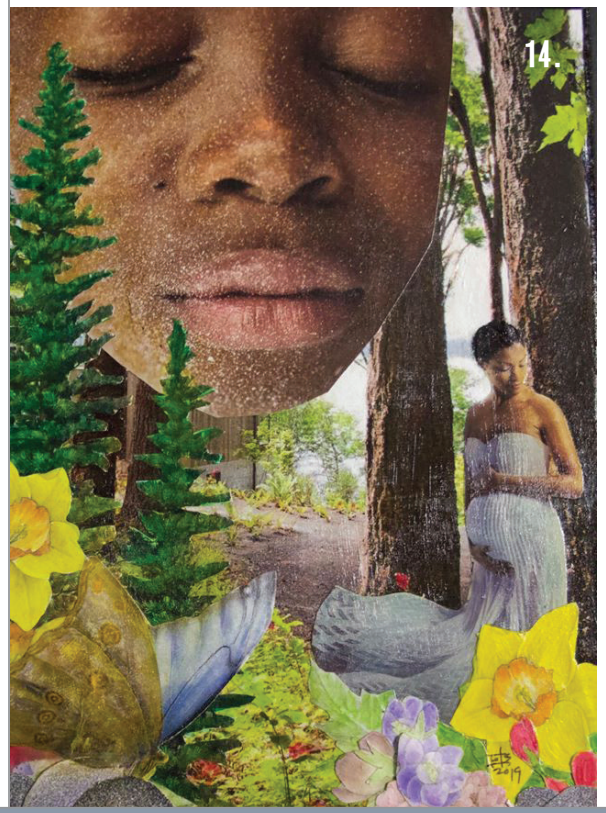
Instagram.com/nicksterkingcool

14. LOURDES E. TORRES-SHEPARD

"Great Expectations" – Mixed Media Collage

Facebook.com/LULISART









15. HOLLACE KUTAY

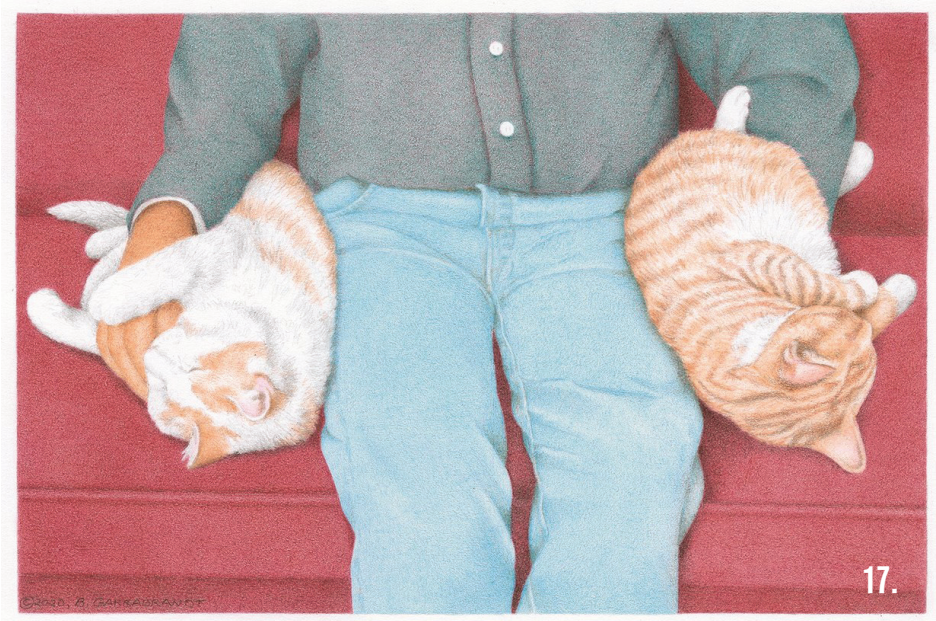
Note from the artist: During the pandemic I have been working from my home studio, a studio that also houses the space of the Ceramic Art and Culture Institute, a 501c3 which I founded. The hope of the Institute is that, once it is safe to have students back in session, we will be able to get high school students back on track with the in-class ceramic time they missed. Personally, I have been able to continue my art practice and have been busy creating new and exciting pieces. I recently opened an Etsy shop and am excited for the opportunity to share my work with the public.

www.etsy.com/shop/HollaceKutayCreation
Hollacekutay.com
Ceramicartandcultureinstitute.org

16. THOMAS VALENTINE

Note from the artist: I'm really enjoying seeing work from artists who normally don't have the time to create as often as they would like to.

Instagram.com/kingdomofwhat
Facebook.com/artbythomasvalentine





17. BRUCE GARRABRANDT

Note from the artist: "Social Distancing Exclusions" is my latest colored pencil drawing, featuring my friends Jack and Buddy – who refuse to abide by the six-foot distancing guidelines.

Artbybruce.com/the-art/collection-of-cats.

18. MICHELLE JOHNSEN

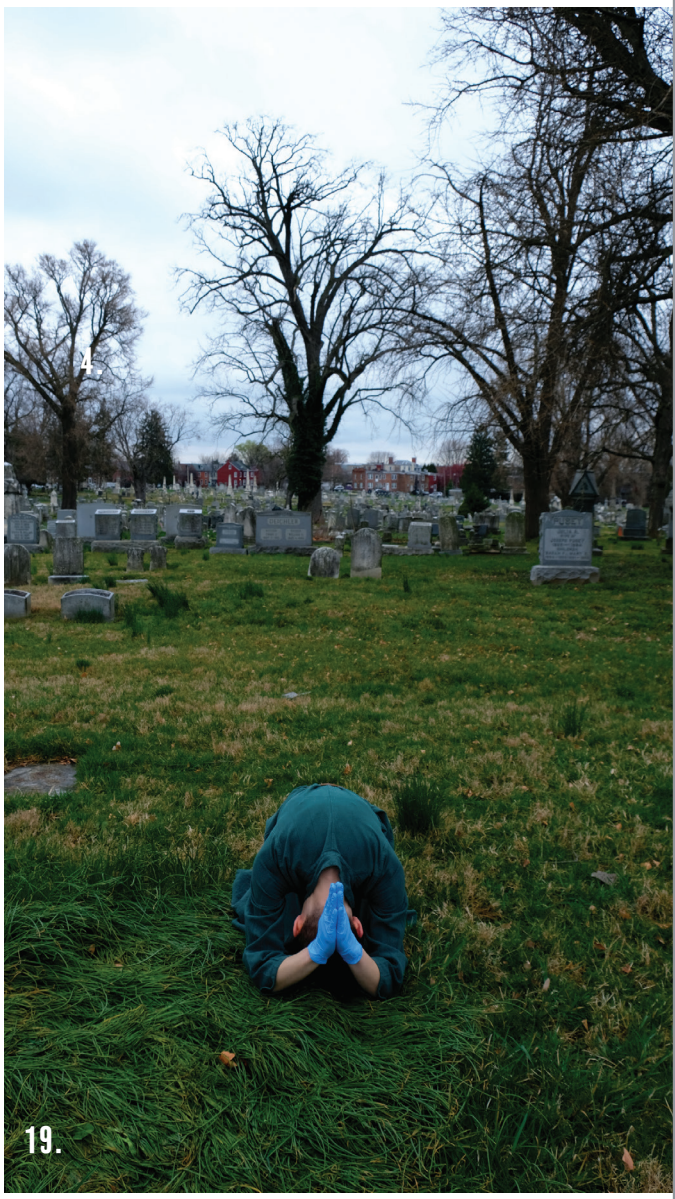
In addition to Michelle's creative photography, she has also been working on her online photojournalism gallery, which is an ongoing documentation of Lancaster during this time.

Lancasterphotocollective.com/michellejohnsenphotography

19. MEGAN WHITNEY

"Praying in a Graveyard" - Digital Photo

Note from the artist: My name is Megan Whitney and I teach 5th and 6th grade art. For the past several years I have spent most of my time guiding my students through the process of creating. When the pandemic hit, I was suddenly aware of how little time I had given myself to make anything on my own. Drawing and photography very quickly became a coping mechanism for me. I transferred all of my fear and anxiety into my pen, pencil and camera. Allowing my emotions to guide my creation process gave them a place to go instead of them staying cooped up in isolation with me. Looking at my work I know it reads as dark and hopeless but at this point in time, who isn't?



ART DIRECTION AND VISUAL STORYTELLING

EPC 70th Anniversary Legacy & Innovation Mural Project

Role: Art Director, Contributing Artist

During an EPC anniversary planning committee meeting, I had the idea to transform a large 30 x 10 foot gray cinderblock wall that employees passed by many times a day into a mural celebrating the company's 70th anniversary. The idea immediately received enthusiasm and support.

An interdepartmental mural committee, led by the creative department, was formed to develop the concept, plan the execution, and bring the artwork to life. The committee brought together 12 team members from three departments who collaborated through brainstorming sessions, planning meetings, and behind-the-scenes design work to create the final artwork.

The large-scale mural celebrates print, the local community, EPC's team members, and the many people behind the company's work. The final concept highlights the many parts of the printing and publishing process, the people who make it possible, and EPC's connection to the Lancaster community. An interactive whiteboard element was also incorporated at the request of the Human Resources department to support team-building activities and company announcements.

Still in progress, the mural has already become a touchstone for employees across departments, creating opportunities for collaboration and strengthening relationships between teams that have historically worked more independently.



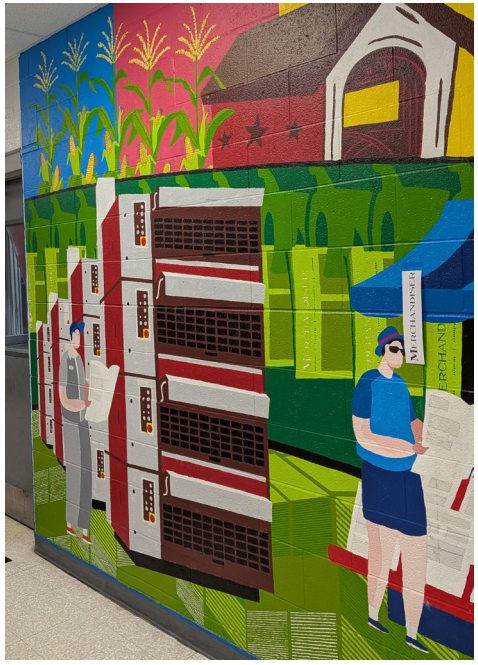


The mural artwork combines original and adapted sourced vector illustrations to celebrate the people and processes behind EPC's work. Press machinery, readers, publications, creative teams, account representatives, and distribution trucks are woven into a landscape inspired by the local area. The CMYK-inspired sky references the color matrix used in print registration.











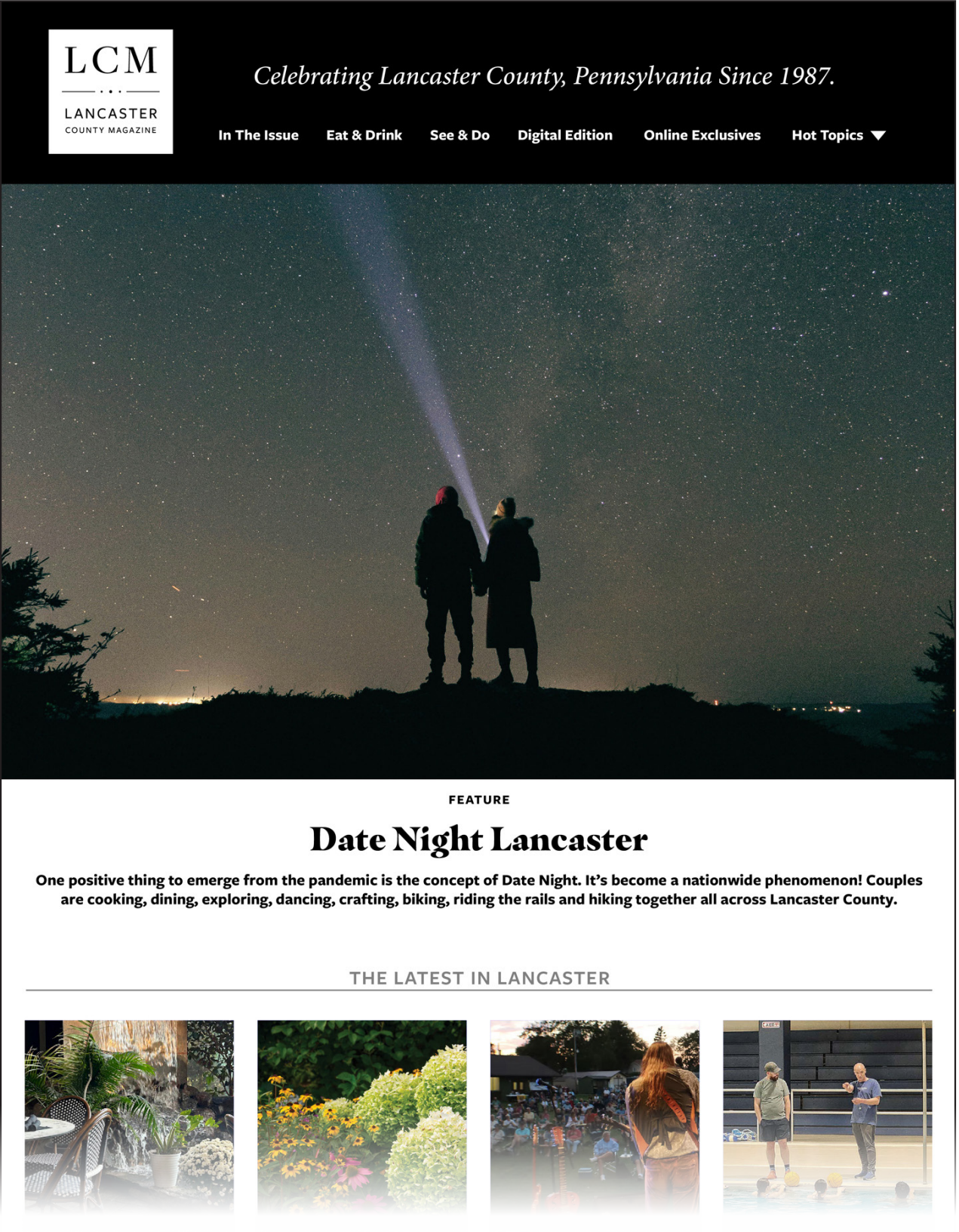


The mural in progress, translating the digital illustration into a large-scale hand-painted installation through projected pencil outlines and painted details. Final touches and whiteboard installation remain.

Artist credit belongs to the entire EPC creative department and the multi-team mural planning committee.



A fortuitous opportunity arose to repurpose the mural illustrations for the cover of a special anniversary publication celebrating the legacies and innovations of EPC and other local businesses. Extending the artwork into this piece allowed us to further highlight EPC's role within the industry, community, and broader local business landscape.



DIGITAL AND UX/UI WORK

LCM Website and E-Newsletter

Role: Art Direction & Design, Wire Framing

With a catalog spanning 35 years of print editions and 10 years of digital content, the *Lancaster County Magazine* website had grown into a valuable resource with a vast breadth of content. During a strategic planning session, the team identified that the site's visual experience no longer reflected the aesthetic of the magazine and that it was time for an update.

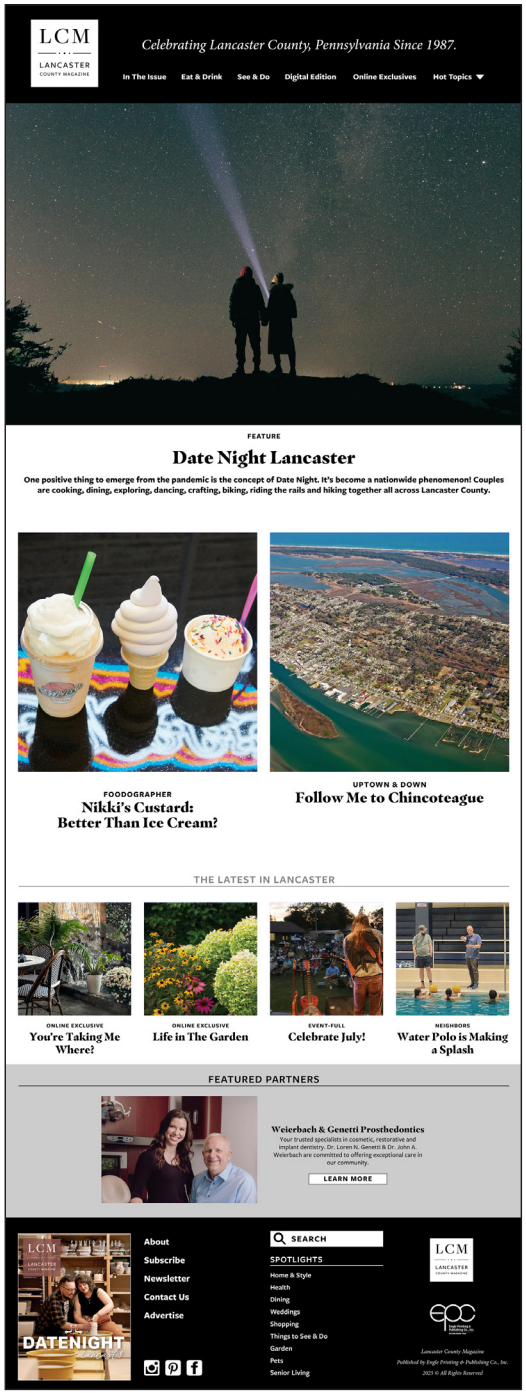
Through collaborative brainstorming sessions, we determined the focus should be creating an upscale, engaging experience with a contemporary – but not overly trendy – look and feel that reflected the publication's brand while improving the reader experience.

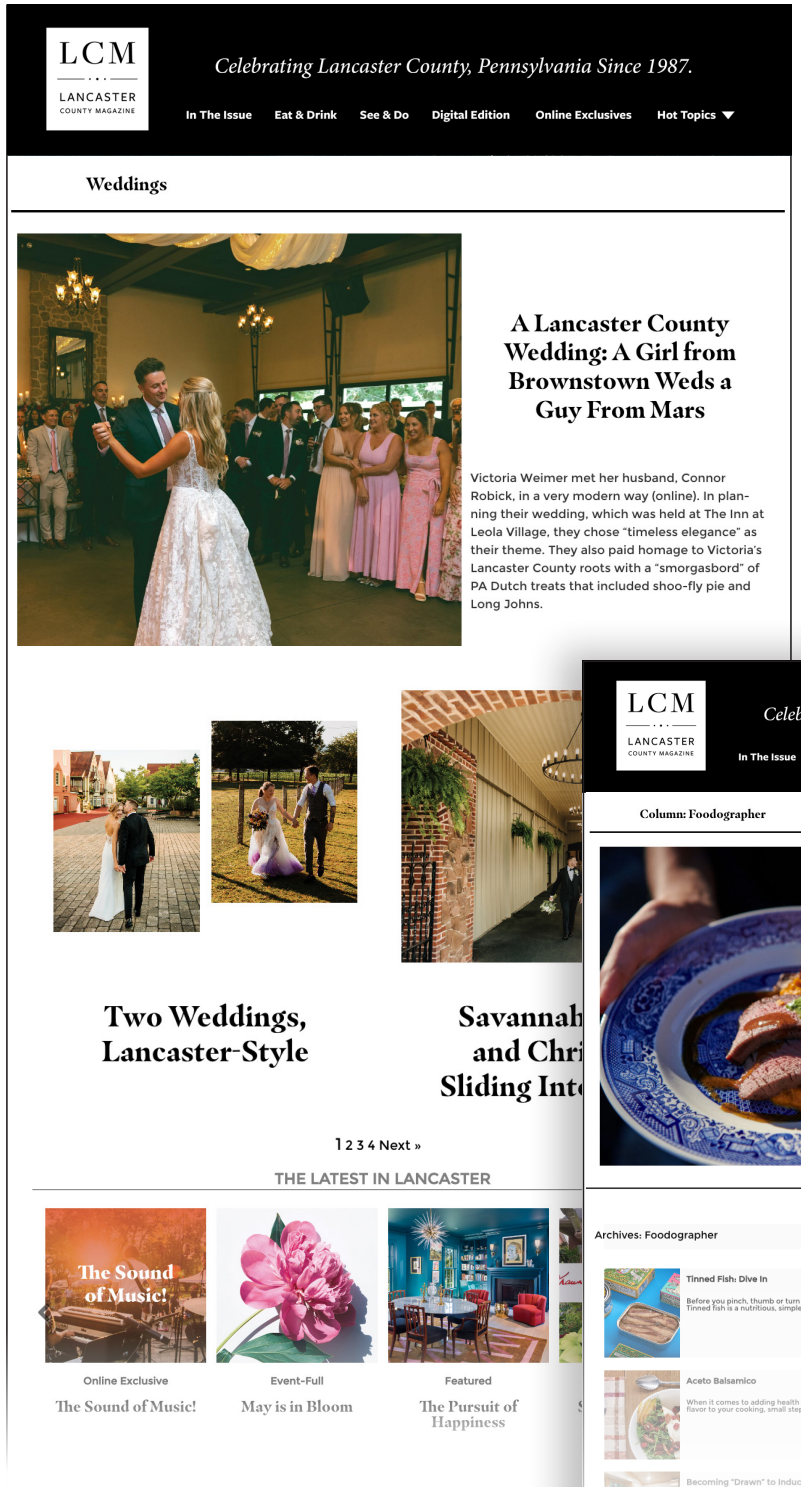
I began with an audit of the site's functionality and user experience, identifying what was working well and what areas felt dated or less intuitive. From there, I researched other industry magazine websites to explore possibilities and identify opportunities to elevate the digital experience.

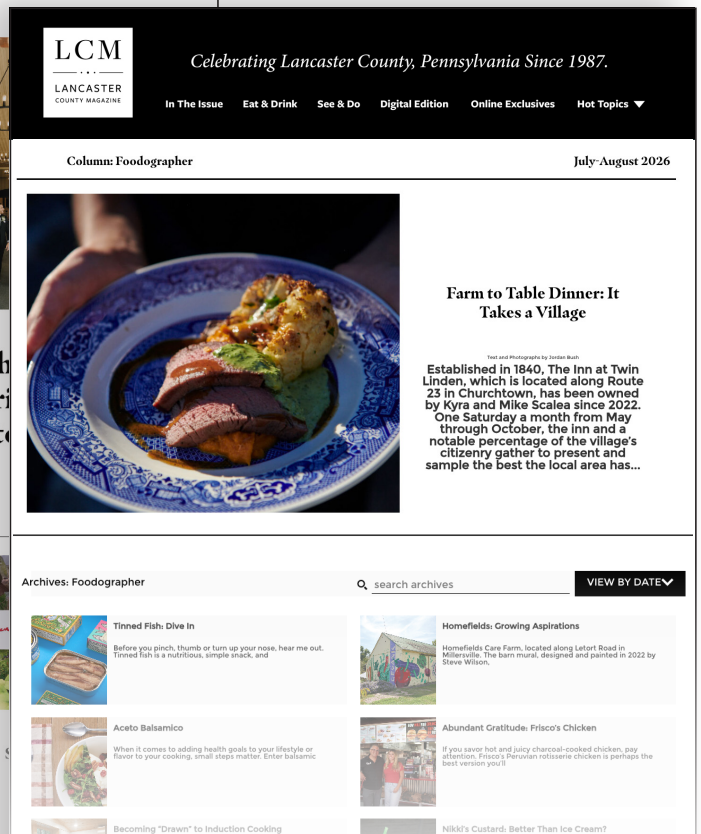
After developing initial sketches and concepts, I collaborated with the web development team to create wireframes and visual site mockups that guided the build process. Through multiple rounds of review, feedback, and usability adjustments, we launched the redesigned site in time to support the release of new issue content in its updated digital home.

I carried the refreshed digital look and feel into the redesign of The Scoop, *Lancaster County Magazine*'s weekly e-newsletter, creating a more cohesive experience across platforms.

Since launch, website visits and user engagement have increased and remained consistently strong, creating a more seamless connection between the magazine's print, website, and email experiences.







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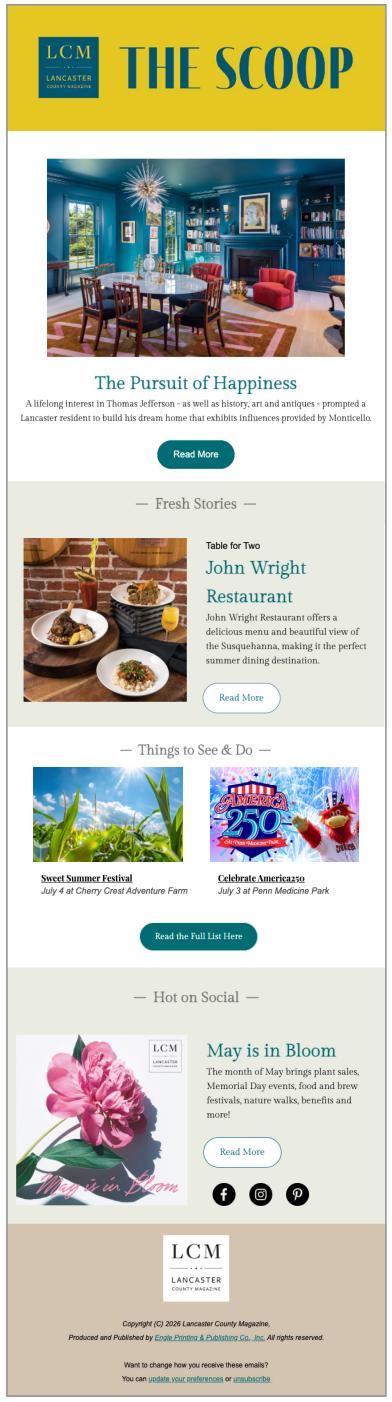
The redesigned homepage was created to showcase the magazine's photography and emulate the immersive experience of its print layouts. Large feature images, intentional use of negative space, and thoughtful spacing enhance the overall user experience.

Dedicated spotlight topic pages provide convenient, organized resources for users exploring specific interests. The "Latest in Lancaster" section offers a scrollable collection of recent posts to encourage discovery.

Each regular column has its own dedicated space highlighting current issue content while providing access to an archive of previous articles.









LCM's The Scoop e-newsletter is published weekly and shares highlights of featured articles, local stories, and upcoming community events. Each issue is paired with a special "Sneak Peek" edition published ahead of print distribution, giving subscribers a first look at upcoming magazine content.



HOME ABOUT WHAT'S FOR DINNER? LOCAL GUIDES DIGITAL EDITION ONLINE EXCLUSIVES RESTAURANT GUIDE



2026-2027

The Main Event

The concept of a main course is rooted in ancient civilizations whose meals were often simple and consisted of a...

May 19, 2026



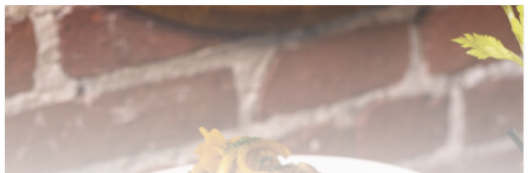
2026-2027

Classic American Steakhouse

401 Prime Sink into a velvet banquette and place your order for a thick steak or a juicy burger with...

May 19, 2026





DIGITAL AND UX/UI WORK

Dining in Lancaster County Magazine Website

Role: Art Direction & Design, Wordpress Developer

When I was assigned the *Dining in Lancaster County Magazine* project, the first gap I identified was the need for a stronger digital presence. With the local food scene becoming increasingly connected through blogs and social media, I saw an opportunity to extend the publication's reach beyond print.

A backlog in the web development department meant a redesign would likely have to wait until the following year's issue. With previous experience maintaining websites and approval from leadership, I took the initiative to learn how to build a website from the ground up using WordPress.

I drew inspiration from the strong legacy of the print publication and designed the site to showcase the beautiful, immersive photography that brings the dining experience to life. I also prioritized user experience through thoughtful organization, dedicated spaces for local guides, and deeper editorial content.

Whether visitors were looking for a place to grab lunch or wanted to explore the story behind a local chef or restaurant, the site was designed to create an intuitive starting point for discovering Lancaster's food community.

The landing page features a large-scale immersive image from the magazine's print cover, creating an immediate connection between the print publication and the digital experience.



LOCAL GUIDES

Cheers!

May 21, 2026 by Sue Long in Local Guides · Local Libations

Lancaster's once-heralded brewing tradition has made a strong comeback, paving the way for businesses to range in scope from small taprooms to large venules that offer everything from beer-friendly snacks to wide-ranging menus. Our wineries are top notch, as well. Newer to the scene are meaderies, cideries and distillers.



Lancaster Craft Beerfest

August 22

Ewell Plaza/Binn's Park

Sponsored by Joycat Events, the event features live music, food trucks/vendors and beer samplings provides by dozens of breweries. Two sessions: 12-3 p.m. and 4-7 p.m. Tickets required. 21+ only. 100 block of N. Queen Street in Lancaster. **Information:** *Lancastercraftbeerfest.com*

Prev: For BBQ Lovers

Next: A Taste of the Sea

RELATED ARTICLES







HOME ABOUT WHAT'S FOR DINNER? LOCAL GUIDES DIGITAL EDITION ONLINE EXCLUSIVES RESTAURANT GUIDE



2026-2027 FARM-TO-TABLE

Farm-to-Table With Global Accents

May 19, 2026 by Sue Long and Photography by Nick Gould in 2026-2027 · Farm-to-Table

Passerine

Imagine going to bed one night and questioning whether your restaurant will succeed, only to wake up the next morning to find your phone is blowing up with texts and emails congratulating you for being named to the "50 Favorite Restaurants" list by *The New York Times*. Kyle Sollenberger, the co-owner of Passerine, experienced such a scenario two years ago.

Indeed, Passerine has managed to carve out a niche in a city that is brimming with restaurants. "Lancaster has become a world-class destination," he says of the attention that is being paid to the culturally diverse restaurants and the farm-to-table philosophy that keeps menus evolving. Passerine has managed to put the two together and offer guests a small but adventurous menu that infuses farm-to-table with global influences.

Kyle, who partnered on the project with Dr. Jonathan Shirey, was drawn to the character of the historic building that houses Passerine, as well as the cozy indoor spaces it offers. (A new outdoor dining area debuted this spring.) "It's a great location," he says of its proximity to Gallery Row and downtown.







Left to right:

Local guide article featuring breweries, distilleries, cideries, and beverage festivals throughout the year. Each article includes related content recommendations to encourage users to continue exploring the site and increase engagement.

Featured article on Passerine highlighting the stories of the chef, owner, and the history behind menu items.

Sample spread from the print magazine version of the same feature. One of the challenges of publication websites is translating the visual storytelling and immersive experience of print into a digital format. A thoughtful balance of imagery, content, and minimalism is essential for web readability while maintaining a cohesive experience across stories.



Thanks for your time, folks!

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AshleyKendrickDesign.com