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contents



Helping kids transition from summer to a new school year requires more than just rousing them out of bed the first day, and the effort parents put in now can help build routines that will help their kids succeed all year long.

Dr. Samantha Lowe, a pediatrician at White Plains Hospital Medical and Wellness in Armonk, offers invaluable advice about the four "S's"—sleep, study, schedule, and safeguards—to help ease the shift from summer days to school days, and says that for all, the most important thing in a parent's arsenal is "knowing your own child."

The Four "S's" for successfully transitioning from summer to back to school, are:

Sleep

"Creating and sticking to sleep routines is very important to ensure that children have the rest they need for both the cognitive and physical demands of their days," Dr. Lowe says. She warns against "catch up" sleep strategies—staying up late during the week (getting less than 10 hours of sleep for kids 7-12 years old and less than 9 hours for teenagers) and sleeping in on the weekend instead. This can lead to over-exhaustion and irritability and can cause a decrease in concentration and productivity. "Consult with your child and map out his/her day, after-school activities, homework time and downtime and determine what's reasonable. It's very possible that something may have to give to accommodate everything and to ensure your child is getting the rest they need."

For kids that have difficulty falling asleep, Dr. Lowe recommends avoiding sugary or caffeinated foods and drinks in the evening, shutting electronics off 30 minutes prior to bed, removing bedroom clocks, and using blackout shades or a white noise machine. For children who have difficulty waking but are getting adequate rest each night, she suggests letting natural light into their room in the morning to help regulate their circadian rhythms to improve alertness.

Study

Every child learns differently, so the best way to help your child — whether at the start of school or throughout — is to identify what works best for them. What are his/her strengths? What are his/her weaknesses? What do they get excited about? When do they hit the wall? Once parents key into their child's study and learning style, they can help create conditions where their child will thrive. Generally, Dr. Lowe advises that children should study in a comfortable, well-lit space that is free from distractions — at a mutually agreed-upon study time for maximum productivity. Parents should also encourage children to take breaks if they are feeling overwhelmed and should let them know there is nothing wrong with asking for help when needed, which can reduce stress levels.

Schedule

Some children thrive with lots of structure and activities; others need a break from constant stimulation. When children are experiencing increased levels of stress, they can seem tired, irritable, worried, sad, with-

e, worried, sad, withcontinued on page 9



At Home with Hurwitz

Back-to-School Organizing or Bust!

By Lauren Hurwitz

New Rochelle resident, Professional Organizer and Owner of Organize with GC, Giuseppina Corrado knows that organizing at back-to-school time can be a head spinner for the entire family. "When I think of this time of year, I think of routines and systems that help with the flow of getting back into the swing of things." For example, she believes there is power in routines for everything you need to help busy moms and dads keep their sanity and keep on schedule. To start the day off right, Corrado suggests having a designated basket for bookbags by the door, so that they're easy to retrieve in the

morning, consider picking out your clothes the night before, and making lunch at nighttime so that in the morning you simply grab what you need and head out the door without a scramble.

"I strongly recommend, a school desk system. Keeping things organized and labeled in a learning zone so kids can be independent as much as possible. When everything is labeled, it is much easier to find what you're looking for and to put things away. Caretakers and parents will also know exactly where to put things whether it's a homework section, paperwork that needs to be signed, labeled folders for each child, or having a dedicated bin for each child," Corrado says. Another

one of Corrado's suggestions is to have a clothing system in place by, "putting your home clothes in one area, school clothing in another, and label everything neatly so you can grab and go." Even school uniforms and sports clothing can have a designated spot so they are separate from day-to-day clothing and are easily accessible.

If everyone has a long-lasting system, it promotes a smoother routine throughout the day. But there are lots of common mistakes you can tackle from the start to make the most impact. "First, piles of paperwork cause unnecessary clutter. Paperwork comes in the door and then it piles up on a desk or kitchen counter and clients ask, What do I do with this?" according to Corrado. Her suggestion is to create an incoming, outgoing, and take-action system for paperwork.

A second point of combat is the entryway. Having a designated closet or system in the entryway or mudroom – wherever you come in and out most often - is imperative. Corrado suggests having a designated area for shoes, scarves, umbrellas, and more with labeled bins, making it easy to grab when needed. Don't have a lot of space? Not an issue! Corrado leverages vertical spaces with hooks, shelving, and other products to maximize not only the mudroom but any tight area that might initially feel a bit too cozy to organize.

When thinking of how to get out the door fast, we often forget about the bedroom, according to Corrado. Having a routine for the bedroom closet will instantly make doing laundry easier. "Maintain a system for your closet, and label everything so you're never throwing things randomly about the room. If you like shoes in your bedroom closet, that would be a designated labeled space. Then I would also label everything else such as blazers, jackets, and beyond. Literally, each space has its own spot down to your socks and underwear, and workout clothes, pajamas - everything has a home," says the organizing pro.

Corrado believes that organizing a home, "is an investment to make life easier and the day-to-day routine calmer because our physical environment connects to our mental state. A cluttered space is a cluttered mind - so when you do declutter and organize, it makes a huge difference on your emotional state." She can visit clients' homes as frequently as needed to make sure everything is running up to

"Maintain a system for your closet, and label everything so you're never throwing things randomly about the room. If you like shoes in your bedroom closet, that would be a designated labeled space."

speed whether that means weekly, monthly, or once a season ... there is always room for a bit of improvement as school gets back in session.

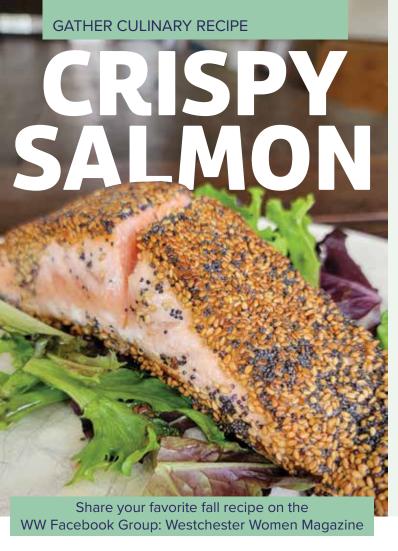
Resources

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Do you have a
Back-to-School tip
that works for you?
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Westchester Women
Magazine







HELPING KIDS TRANSITION FROM SUMMER TO BACK-TO-SCHOOL continued from page 7

drawn, nervous, and disengaged. Dr. Lowe also notes that stress can affect school performance and sleep, and that parents should continually assess their children's mood, behavior, and performance to determine if activities should be scaled back. Children today have amazing opportunities and activities at their disposal, but sometimes it's equally important to build in unscheduled downtime.

Safeguards

While peers can help motivate children to succeed, peer pressure can also foster toxic competition, or worse, can push your child towards negative and dangerous behavior. Dr. Lowe says that it is important for parents to know their children's friends and to encourage kids to engage a variety of friends across various "groups." Equally important is monitoring children's internet activity – from knowing their passwords, to insisting on "private"

The second of th

social media profiles, to scanning followers, comments, and posted photos. Parents should be on the lookout for warning signs of bullying that need immediate attention: behavioral changes, weight loss or weight gain, withdrawal, and changes in appearance (clothes, hair, etc.).

Dr. Lowe is a pediatrician with White Plains Hospital Physician Associates, with offices in Armonk. To make an appointment, call (914) 849-7900.

For a quick meal after work, this can be done in 10-15 minutes. If you want something starchy, you can add rice or try **Right Rice**, which is made from lentils and chickpeas and is much higher in protein and fiber than traditional rice.

Serves 4

For the salmon:

¼ cupsesame seeds1 tablespoonpoppy seeds1 tablespoonhemp seeds1 teaspoondried chili flakes1 teaspoonkosher salt

4 - 6 oz pieces salmon filet, (skin off, if preferred)
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, divided

2 - 5 ounce bags baby spinach

- On a plate, combine the sesame seeds, poppy seeds, hemp seeds, chili flakes, and salt.
- Brush the salmon lightly with oil and dip both sides with the seeds.
- Heat a large non-stick frying pan over medium-high heat; add 1 tablespoon of oil and when the oil shimmers, add the salmon, skin-side down, and cook for 3-4 minutes or until the skin is crispy. Turn the salmon and cook for 2–3 minutes or until cooked to your desired doneness.
- Meanwhile, heat a large saute pan over medium heat; add 1 tablespoon oil, and when the oil shimmers, add the spinach, tossing occasionally, until wilted, about 2 minutes.
- Divide the spinach among 4 bowls, and top with salmon.





Female-Led Non Profits Making a Difference in Westchester

BY LAUREN HURWITZ

Dedicating your life to a career in the not-for-profit world takes a special type of person – and lucky for Westchester residents, there's no shortage of these women here in our county.

The Sharing Shelf

One of the premiere organizations doing good locally is The Sharing Shelf, founded by New Rochelle resident, Deborah Blatt.

Deborah Blatt founded The Sharing Shelf to address clothing insecurity and meet the basic material needs of low-income children and teens in Westchester County. When her children were younger, they attended the Barnard School in New Rochelle where they met families from all over the community. There was a big spread in the socioeconomic diversity, and a social worker was tasked with integrating the student body.

Clothing is so essential to one's identity, and the goal of these Teen Boutique events is to empower them to choose their own clothing.

Deborah Blatt

Deborah felt there was a need to step up and help the general population saying, "You want to do better for somebody because they might need your help with a coat, sweater, or t-shirt, so I started bringing in my kid's hand-me-downs and noticed the social worker's office was building up with stuff. At the same time, this social worker was getting me involved in other volunteer programs in New Rochelle."

With Blatt's professional background in law and non-profit, she was thinking about where her next path in life would take her. Having been exposed to the various opportunities to help local families through her children's school, she decided there needed to be a better way to help people get the clothing they needed in a safe and efficient way, rather than leaving items in a school office.

"I talked to a friend at Family Services in Westchester, and we realized there was no one else doing this work." The Head Start program had a closet with donated clothes, but Blatt continued, "It contained only adult clothing and nothing for the children."



The Sharing Shelf was her way of creating, "a centralized location with the mission of addressing clothing insecurity

but by capturing the hand-me-downs that were naturally flowing from Westchester homes." Blatt started small by renting a basement in an office building in Rye in 2010 that was up for sale and eventually moved the growing program to a larger space in Port Chester in 2011.

Non-profits, schools, and community programs working with low-income families-in-need tap into The Sharing Shelf by filling out an application online and providing basic information about a child's age, size, and gender. The Sharing Shelf encourages helpful comments such as Jane loves unicorns, butterflies, and the color purple.

Trained volunteers at The Sharing Shelf then pack her a Wardrobe Pack which consists of one week's worth of seasonally appropriate clothing, customized for each child. In fact, the organization filled 4,365 Wardrobe Packs for children and teens in Westchester last year. Every pack also has one special item included like a khaki, dress, button-down shirt, or blazer in case they have a special occasion coming up and need to dress a bit fancier.

The Sharing Shelf expanded again earlier this year into an adjacent unit in their building. The

goal is to launch the first free store for teens in times of emergency and crisis where they can go pick out clothing for themselves called Teen Boutique in Real Life. The free store works in a similar way. The professionals apply on behalf of their teens-in-need, and then a shopping appointment is booked for that youth who can come in and pick out their own clothing.

The Sharing Shelf currently runs an off-site series of events called Teen Boutique in partnership with area community organizations and schools. At Teen Boutique, Blatt says, "The Sharing Shelf brings the store to the teens in a place they know and trust." Teens are pre-registered and then come to their school or community center to shop for free. They get a certificate allowing them to choose a wardrobe of items such as jeans, leggings, new socks and underwear, hoodies, and, in the spring, prom or graduation attire.

"Clothing is so essential to one's identity," Blatt says, "and the goal of these Teen Boutique events is to empower them to choose their own clothing. These kids walk into the event, and they're shy and guarded and don't know what to expect, and then leave when they've found things they want! It's a very empowering experience for these kids. At a recent event, it circled back because two of the girls arrived with photos to show me how they wore the outfits they chose a year earlier."

For the summer, the Sharing Shelf is hosting one of its largest programs: Backpack to School. "Last year we saw a record increase in the number of children and teens who need backpacks. We will fill the packs with school supplies. Donors and volunteers lean in and join us for 'packing day' but we also need financial support. Donating \$30 can get a child a new backpack with all the supplies they need if they're in grades pre-k to 12," says Blatt. Families who want to put together backpacks, can sign up to volunteer on Family Packing Day (August 12th) and individuals can sign up for Community Packing Day (August 21st).

Looking to get involved? The Sharing Shelf is always accepting volunteers on a daily basis at its warehouse. To donate, you can go online to their website, www.sharingshelf.org, and schedule a time to drop off your items in Port Chester, or a time for the Sharing Shelf to come to your home.

Girls Inc. Westchester

Serving girls throughout the United States and Canada and started almost 160 years ago, Girls Inc. has had a local affiliate dedicated to Westchester since 2007 and is currently led by Executive Director, Dr. Sharlise Smith-Rodriguez who says, "We work with young girls to empower and assist them in the challenges they may face in everyday life and help develop their leadership and advocacy skills for the future."

STRONG Girls Inc. Westchester works with girls ages 9 through 18 leveraging their evidence-based curriculum which is aligned to, "Our mission of Strong, Smart, and Bold!" Smith-Rodriguez says another component of the program is helping continued on the next page MART, A BOLD Young ladies at Girls Inc. Westchester

Westchester Womer

girls learn more about STEAM-related fields because not everyone has access to these programs, and they continue to be significant for girls. "Earlier this year, we conducted Operation SMART at our office to encourage girls to learn more about science, technology, engineering and mathematics. They learned how to make wind cars, hovercrafts, and squishy circuits. These activities help them connect what they're learning in school with STEAM-related careers. We teach via hands-on activities and experiments and present special guest speakers for relevancy."

Another area of focus is on financial literacy such as learning to set up and maintain a checking account, why save, and giving girls real-life scenarios that teach them how to set financial goals and how to meet them. Past guest speakers that met with the girls were from JPMorgan Chase and PCSB Bank.

Girls Inc. Westchester is currently operating in the after-school programs in Ossining, Peekskill, Port Chester, Bedford Hills, and Mount Kisco, but they do serve girls across Westchester in Yonkers, Mount Vernon, and New Rochelle with in-person and virtual programming.

Smith-Rodriguez also says, "We have in-person programming about once a month on Saturdays called the Girls Leadership Council for middle and high school students to learn different leadership skills."

A unique aspect of the organization is its hyper-local work with national companies. For example, they recently partnered with PepsiCo to address the "period poverty" crisis, where girls who don't have the finances to buy menstrual products find alternative methods to address their menstrual cycle. Girls Inc. Westchester purchased products such as sanitary napkins, tampons, small wipes, panty liners, information about periods, etc. which PepsiCo employees packaged as part of their volunteer day.

Girls Inc. Westchester is always looking for volunteers who can facilitate hands-on activities with the girls while sharing their professional expertise. And of course, financial donations, sponsorships, and donations are always welcome. Visit www.girlsincwestchester.org for more information.

Humane Society of Westchester

Lee Anne Veley serves as the first-ever Executive Director of the Humane Society of Westchester where she has been volunteering since 2002. Having worked at IBM for 31 years before retiring, it may have shocked some that her next step was in the world of animals – but not Veley, who has a long history of loving pets.

Shortly after starting her volunteer work, Veley became active on the Board and ended up working full-time at the organization once the bookkeeper left. "We were also taking on a major capital campaign at the time. I started doing financial management and bookkeeping as well as the fundraising and project management for our new building which has been up for almost two years. I was born loving animals and have always had cats and dogs — I even had a horse for about six years. When I had the opportunity to volunteer at the shelter, I took it, and it changed my life. It was so satisfying and fulfilling," Veley says.

She describes the shelter as primarily an animal control and adoption center where they hold contracts for animal control work which is required by New York State. Their contracts allow them to take in and assist stray animals from the contracted municipalities. They hold the animals for the legally

On Facebook and social media, we make our adoptable or lost pets shareable, and that is often how owners find their pets.

- Lee Ann Veley



required time and, if they aren't reclaimed during that period, the shelter can offer the animals up for adoption. "We also shelter some dogs involved in dangerous dog court cases and help with rescues of animals in physical trouble. Pets left behind in homes vacated by their people for various reasons will come to the shelter." Veley explains.

One area which has changed business for the Humane Society is the use of social media. "It's really boosted adoptions to make people aware of what pets are available. Also, when strays or found animals come in, social media helps us to reunite the animals with their families. If the pet is not microchipped or doesn't have a tag with a name and phone number, we rely heavily on social media. On Facebook, we make our posts shareable and that is often how owners find their pets." Veley says they sometimes get rabbits and guinea pigs, and the adoption process is a simple one. The shelter manages nearly 1,200 adoptions every year.

Animal lovers who want to volunteer have the opportunity to apply and attend an orientation a few times during the year, but volunteers must be at least 18 years old to be on-site. The opportunities are all related to animal care – from feeding, to cleaning, to taking dogs on walks and doing laundry. Youngsters who want to volunteer are encouraged to conduct off-site fundraising events such as virtual dog walks or a bake sale to drive financial donations or supplies to the shelter. "Sometimes children will host a supply drive where they collect items from the Shelter's Amazon wish list, the website or they'll have a birthday party and ask people to donate items."

The Humane Society of Westchester is located at 70 Portman Rd, New Rochelle. Visit them at www.humanesocietyofwestchester.org to learn more or call (914) 632-2925.

914Cares

Jessica Reinmann founded 914Cares in 2014 with a friend of hers after working in the city at a very intense job. She realized she wasn't being fulfilled and when she tried to volunteer at local organizations, she found it very challenging. "They would say, 'Why don't you come in with your religious organization or the Junior League or the PTA.' I didn't have connections to any of those things. We just wanted to volunteer so we started our own organization out of my house to do donation drives," Reinmann says.

continued on the next page



The clothing bank
distributes about 4,000
bags of clothing and
essentials each year.

-Jessica Reinmann

In 2018, 914Cares adopted a clothing bank that was being shut down by another organization. "We started as a clothing bank and [then] got funding for a baby bank. In February of 2020, we did a huge diaper drive, and then the pandemic happened, and non-profits shut down rather quickly. We had 40,000 diapers sitting there in our space and started reaching out to our community partners asking if they needed diapers. One thing led to another and by September of 2020 we were officially recognized as an official diaper bank by the National Diaper Bank Network," Reinmann says.

That network has a sister organization called the Alliance for Period Supplies and so 914Cares quickly became a period bank through them, providing tampons and sanitary napkins. Reinmann added, "From there, we kept expanding and now have six programs — a baby bank, clothing bank, period project, hygiene bank, diaper bank as well as a literacy library that distributes books to our community partners."

914Cares has two methods of distribution, both through about 80 community partners, as they don't deal directly with the public since almost every non-profit they work with is a childcare center, healthcare center, school, shelter, or food pantry. Reinmann says, "Our partners tell us what their constituents need and then we give it to them. The clothing bank distributes about 4,000 bags of clothing a year, and in those bags is a week's worth of clothing and books, and then they're able to select if they need a period kit and hygiene kit which includes shampoo, conditioner, body soap, deodorant, hand soap, a toothbrush, toothpaste and hand sanitizer." In addition, they host an essentials distribution monthly so their community partners can fill in a form and request diapers, books, and period products and get the items they need in a timely manner.

Volunteers can donate gently used clothing, books, and sneakers – everything else given out is new. One of their main points is that they offer a flexible schedule for volunteers. "We do ask them to come in for one day of training, but after that, they can sign up for as long or as short as they want. We accept donations 24 hours a day, 7 days a week." There are carts outside their door for those who want to make donations after hours. "As we head into back-to-school time, we would love donations of new or gently used girl's and boy's shoes and clothing in between newborn and men's size 18."

914Cares is located at 901 N Broadway, White Plains. Visit them at www.914cares.org for more information or call (914) 458-5220.



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Official restauranteurs and sisters, Charlotte and Carrie Denoyer, are the proud owners of Harrison's latest successful business -Café Deux – a beautiful French-American café on Halstead Avenue in downtown Harrison.

The Denoyer sisters are no strangers to the restaurant business, growing up next to their father, Jean Denoyer, who has been in the business for over 50 years in New York City.

"Neither one of us thought we would go into the restaurant business." Carrie began. But they soon decided to begin with their chocolate business, Cupped Desserts. It came about when they were sitting in their kitchen, tasting their chocolate creations and both had a "eureka moment," saying they should sell the chocolates. The dream team was born. They started off slowly with their peanut butter cups – which by the way are incredibly delicious. Slowly but surely, through word-of-mouth, emails, and social media, the sisters' business grew. As their business grew, they thought about how to expand and add different elements to their concept. "It took wind, and we established the concept for Café Deux."

They explained that the name came before they even started developing the content. They thought of how cool it would be to open a café and call it Café Deux. Charlotte shared that at the early age of five, they would watch their father closely as he paid close attention to every aspect of his restaurants. Not only was the menu important but the atmosphere and overall design were equally central to the experience his patrons felt. When they created the design of the café, Charlotte and Carrie developed an inviting atmosphere by creating a stunning, customized bar with chairs and barstools from their father's first restaurant. They carefully selected every detail of the café's vibe, an established French style with an American twist.

Opening day (March 22nd) was a complete stroke of coincidence, but perfect, nonetheless.

The Denoyer family lived and grew up in the Harrison/Rye area and NYC. Charlotte played quite a bit of tennis in the area. For this and the





The Denoyer Sisters Dream Team From Delectable Chocolates to their French-American Café in Harrison

By Lilian Peña

welcoming vibe Harrison lends, was the perfect place for them to settle in.

"Harrison is changing a lot and we wanted to be a part of that," shared Carrie. "We love being part of the community." She went on to add that they see familiar faces now, coming in for a quick bite or bag of chocolates.

Café Deux is a great place to stop by in the morning for a delicious breakfast or quickly pick up some scrumptious pastries as a surprise for a friend or the office. Their croissants are absolutely perfect, buttery and flaky, sheer heaven.

Charlotte spoke about their great team, including their Executive Chef Alex Aparicio, Executive Pastry Chef and Chocolatier Jessica Craig, as well as the various baristas, bartenders and waitstaff, and cook staff.

Much of what makes Café Deux special is the fact that Charlotte and Carrie paid close attention to empowering other female-run businesses. For example, the tile floor comes from the female-owned company Casa Blanca Tile & Stone, Inc. Some of the ale on tap is from a Brooklyn-based company, owned by a woman and much of the artwork displayed in the café is created by female artists.

Transitioning to the Back-to-School season, Café Deux will be offering their patrons a "to-go" menu. This will consist of a main course item and a choice of sides. Often, families on the go, as well as busy singles are short on time. Carrie says that this is the perfect way to have a healthy and delicious meal. It's like having your own personal chef. One of the newest items Chef Alex has added to the menu is Pulled Pork. Together with some salad and other side is a comforting Sunday dinner and perfect next-day lunch.

When asked about what advice they would give future female entrepreneurs, Charlotte said that no matter how far-fetched some people might think your idea might be, the important mindset to focus on is to persevere and not give up. Never doubt yourself and understand that your ideas take time to develop. Carrie added,

> "Don't try to go from zero to 100 fast . . . take slow steps." One of her favorite sayings holds true, "Don't put the cart before the horse. Let the horse lead you." She added that it is so important to surround yourself with people that will encourage you. They were always encouraged to make and stand by their own decisions and in that way they would feel confident and empowered themselves. Even though they shared, there have been times when they have completely disagreed with each other about a certain decision, they've been able to work out any differences and ultimately



sion. That's why they feel they are the best of business partners and sisters. Carrie said that one of the best parts about working with Charlotte is the fact that they truly want each other to be successful. In that way, Carrie said that all women should have that mindset and always be encouraging and helpful to other women entrepreneurs. Carrie also shared that every time she took a "leap of faith" in her life, there were a lot of women she looked up to and would reach out to ask their opinions. Both Carrie and Charlotte believe in listening to their customers closely as they continue to develop their own business.

Their menu is wildly popular and as the season changes to fall, Chef Alex, alongside Charlotte and Carrie are developing exciting dishes that will

A clear staple on the menu is the Escargot in parsley and garlic soup with a perfectly crusty baguette. Even for the timid, this is a must. Not to be outdone, their breakfast menu offers everything from quiche, avocado toast, and perfectly blended parfaits. Enjoy a buttery croissant with some of their seasonal house jam and French butter. How about a cocktail at Brunch or Dinner? They offer selections such as a Berry Smash (bourbon, lime, muddled strawberries with a foam top) and a Lychee Martini. While the season lasts, Café Deux offers "Spritz-O-Clock", held weekdays from 3 to 5p.m.

Whether you pop in for a quick breakfast, relax at brunch and dinner, or bring Café Deux home to the family, one thing is for sure...Charlotte and Carrie Denoyer have created one of the hottest spots in Harrison and Westchester County. Congrats to them, their chefs, their staff, and ever-growing patrons.

Check them out at 307 Halstead Avenue, Harrison. Visit their website at www.cafedeuxny. com and follow them on Instagram. For more of their story, visit www.westchester-women.com



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