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# NEIGHBORS

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DECEMBER 2020

## DONNA HELENE AND MIKE JACOBS - TEMPTING TASTE BUDS FOR OVER FIFTY YEARS



Cover photo by Dan Patchin

 Best Version Media

# Welcome NEIGHBORS



As the year comes to an end, all of us at NEIGHBORS Magazine wish our readers a healthy, happy holiday season filled with family, love, hope, warmth, and good food!

Until next month,

*Amy*

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Cooking is a family matter. Patrick, Chef Mike, Donna Helene, granddaughter Sophia, Chef Ryan

## DONNA HELENE AND MIKE JACOBS – TEMPTING TASTE BUDS FOR OVER FIFTY YEARS

By Amy Sonia Richards, Content Coordinator | Photos by Dan Patchin

**D**onna Helene and Mike Jacobs have been cooking up wonderful food and hospitality in the Cleveland area for almost fifty years.

Donna began her love affair with food in high school. Born in Cleveland, she attended Notre Dame Academy. “I started to love to cook in high school when I took a class called Foods, where we cooked everything. I have loved cooking ever since,” she says.

Mike was born in Munson but moved to Chesterland at the age of 9. He went to Cathedral Latin, but it was his after-school activities that steered him toward cooking. He visited the Cleveland Museum of Art daily after school. “I wanted to be an artist. Although I made sculptures and took art in high school, I just wasn’t very good at it,” he says. “I am artistic though, so I became an artist as a chef. I put food together that not only tastes good, but looks good,” he explains.

“My mother also inspired me to become a chef. She wrote notes all over her cookbooks. There were 6 kids in our family, and our grandparents lived with us, so there was a lot of cooking. We all helped,” he says. “I wasn’t sure what to do in life,” he explains, “I was sitting at Le Petit Café with my high school friend drinking a cup of coffee and trying to decide my future. As I sat there, I felt like God told me to become a chef.” Mike never looked back. “I went to the guidance counselor the next day, and she told me to enroll at the Culinary Institute of America,” he

remembers. So, he began there in 1972. He doesn’t credit his attendance there with his success as a chef. “I attended CIA, but I ran out of money and didn’t graduate. Instead, I read *The Escoffier Cookbook* by Augustus Escoffier from cover to cover, and that taught me to be the chef that I am,” he says with a smile. That book still holds an important place in the Jacobs’ kitchen, and its well-worn cover and tattered pages show how used it has been over the years.

In 1975, after returning from CIA, Mike and Donna Helene married at St. Anselm’s in Chesterland. Their reception was in Gates Mills at the Red Fox Inn, where Mike was the assistant chef and cooked the entire meal himself. It was a marriage that was destined since high school. Donna explains with a grin, “I was friends with Mike’s sister Cindy, and she invited me over one day after school. I was a freshman. We got off of the bus, and Mike was sitting under a maple tree in the front yard. He had shoulder-length blond hair. I fell in love with him right there.”

A few years into their marriage, they began their food journey together. “Donna was always part of the whole deal. She inspired so much of what we did,” Mike says proudly. Their first project was Michael’s Lunchbox, a 13-seat diner in Playhouse Square. “We used to deliver breakfast to Jeff and Flash at WMMS every morning. They always mentioned us on air and



Donna Helene and Big Red, the giant cookie mixer

sometimes would put us on the radio,” says Mike. Their first child, Lauren, was born during that time. “We would bundle Lauren up and take her to the Lunchbox. She would sit in her little car seat in a booth, and the customers named her Lauren Lunchbox,” Donna Helene says. She adds with nostalgia in her eyes, “I wish I could step back in time and go back to the Lunchbox! It was so much fun!”



Mike always in prep mode, in the kitchen off the kitchen. Doesn't everyone have one?

Various other culinary ventures followed. They opened Michael's Catering in the Geauga Market House, catering parties for thousands of people.

Then Mike's parents and grandparents decided to move out of the home that he grew up in. “My grandparents had always said that because there was a swinging door in the kitchen, the house should be a restaurant,” Mike remembers. Michael's Country French Affair was born. Mike, Donna Helene, and the first three of their five children (Lauren, Brittany, Christopher, Ryan, and Patrick) lived above the “special occasion restaurant that specialized in roast duck.” Donna Helene reminisces, “It was difficult, but thinking back, it was wonderful. The waitresses would babysit so that I could work. When the kids napped, I came downstairs and did prep work. When the kids woke up, they would come and sit on the steps looking into the restaurant. They loved to watch the busyness of the restaurant. I have a lot of memories in that house.”



Stocking the wine shelves at Helene's

After closing Michael's Country French Affair, Mike worked as executive chef at Mario's in Aurora, the Country Club of Hudson, Walden, and for the last 21 years at the Twinsburg Hilton Garden Inn, where his son Ryan was his sous chef for the last 10 years. Mike passed on all of his expertise to Ryan, who is now the executive chef at the Hilton. Ryan took up the baton naturally. “Like my parents, I'm always trying to tweak a recipe for the better,” he says.

During this time, Donna Helene launched a successful business of her own. “I called it Helene's Cuisine. I made and delivered sandwiches to businesses in the neighborhood,” she says proudly.

Throughout their years of hard work, family time was a priority. Daughter Brittany remembers, “We always ate dinner later than other families because we waited for my dad. We would have a full spread at 10pm! It was always worth the wait.” Son Patrick says, “Family is what I remember most about growing up.” Lauren says, “One of the most important values that I learned

from my parents is enjoying meals together as a family. We always had the most amazing homecooked meals. One of our favorites was roast beef and Yorkshire pudding.” Spending time with their children and their seven grandchildren is still a priority for Mike and Donna Helene.

Mike and Donna Helene's adventure with food did not end with Mike's retirement. The pull of food and using it to make others happy was just too strong. In August, they opened Helene's Auburn Beverage drive thru on East Washington Street in Chagrin Falls. Donna Helene explains how it started: “I saw a for sale sign at Popp's Auburn Beverage, and I came home and said to Mike, ‘Why don't we open a beverage store for your retirement?’ He didn't say yes or no. He had a question mark on his face. We talked about it for a week or so and decided to do it.” The drive thru feature makes

Helene's very Covid friendly.

In addition to Donna Helene's grab and go lunches, which I hear feature a one-of-a-kind tuna salad sandwich, they have added grab and go breakfast and dinner items. They also sell a variety of beers, wines, and other beverages. When the weather cooperates, they fire up the grill outside to cook up barbecue chicken, ribs, or even muscles Provencal. Son Chris helps with the business and shares his parents' love of reaching people through food. “I love the restaurant business because I was shown from a young age how rewarding just sharing food and drink can be,” he says.

The whole family has such strong feelings toward food and its importance in creating community, something that just seems to run in their blood.



Ryan and Patrick helped their dad build his koi pond. They are all proud of it.



Chef Holly

# DEEP DARK CHOCOLATE... IT'S WHAT'S BEFORE AND AFTER DINNER!

By Chef Holly Strauch

For all of you chocolate devotees, my gift to you this holiday season is two of my many favorite chocolate recipes. Chocolate martinis are a great way to treat yourself during the holiday season. Surprise your small and safe "bubble" gathering or family with molten chocolate cakes for a memorable dessert. Each person gets their own small, decadent cake, warm from the oven. Anticipate the oohs and aahs when they take their first bite, and a pool of chocolate oozes out....need I say more?

## CHOCOLATE MARTINI *(makes 1 martini)*

This makes a great aperitif cocktail, as well as an after dinner drink.

### INGREDIENTS:

- 4 oz. chocolate liqueur, such as Godiva or Crème de Cacao
- 2 oz. vodka
- Splash of half and half, for a richer drink, if desired
- Chocolate syrup
- Real chocolate sprinkles, cocoa powder, crushed peppermint candy, to garnish as desired



### DIRECTIONS:

Mix chocolate liqueur and vodka. Add a splash of half and half if desired; shake over ice. Pour into martini glass. To embellish your cocktail, line a martini glass with chocolate syrup before adding mixture. You can also dip the rim of the glass in chocolate liqueur or chocolate syrup, and dip in sprinkles, etc., before adding the mixture.

## MOLTEN CHOCOLATE CAKES

*(makes 8 cakes)*

These are also known as chocolate lava cakes or chocolate volcano cakes. They can be made one day ahead of baking them. If you choose to make them a day ahead, bake them directly from the refrigerator. They need to be enjoyed right out of the oven to enjoy the gooey filling. Make sure to use a bittersweet chocolate baking bar instead of bittersweet chips. The chips contain emulsifiers that will affect the texture of the cakes.



### INGREDIENTS:

- 10 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 1/2-inch pieces, plus more for buttering the ramekins
- 1 1/2 cups granulated sugar, plus more for dusting the ramekins
- 8 ounces bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped
- 2 ounces unsweetened chocolate, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 3 large eggs, at room temperature
- 4 large egg yolks, at room temperature
- 2 teaspoons Grand Marnier (or other orange-flavored liqueur)
- Confectioners' sugar for dusting the cakes
- Fresh raspberries to top the cakes
- Ice cream or whipped cream for serving

### DIRECTIONS:

Lightly coat eight 4-ounce ramekins with butter. Dust with sugar, tapping out any excess; set aside.

In double boiler, melt 10 tablespoons butter and chocolates, stirring occasionally, until mixture is smooth. In large bowl, whisk 1 1/2 cups sugar and cornstarch together. Add chocolate mixture; stir to combine. Add eggs, egg yolks, and Grand Marnier; whisk until fully combined. Scoop 1/2 cup of batter into each of the prepared ramekins. If you are making these ahead of time, make sure to wrap them tightly with plastic wrap.

Adjust an oven rack to upper-middle position; heat oven to 375°F. Place filled ramekins on rimmed baking sheet; bake until tops of cakes are set, have formed shiny crusts, and are beginning to crack, 16 to 20 minutes.

Transfer ramekins to wire rack and cool for about 2 minutes. Run paring knife around edge of each cake. Using a towel to protect your hand from the hot ramekins, invert each cake onto small plate, then immediately invert again right side up onto 8 individual plates. Sift confectioners' sugar over each cake; top with fresh raspberries and serve with your favorite ice cream or fresh whipped cream.

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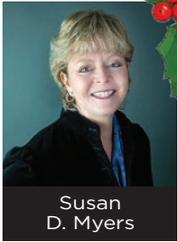
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# CELLAR NOTES

By Susan D. Myers, Publisher,  
*The Wine Buzz Magazine*

**M**y sincere hope is that your families are well and your holidays will be joyous.

The holidays and chocolate often go hand in hand. Pairing wine and chocolate can be a bit challenging. Most people I talk with say that they love a Cabernet Sauvignon with dark chocolate. I'd like to make some suggestions that may change some minds.

Both dark chocolate and red wine have one elephant-in-the-room similarity. Tannins. Tannins lead to bitterness and astringency on the palate. When pairing a very dry red like Cabernet Sauvignon with dark chocolate, both taste bitter, and the wine often tastes sour. Too much of a good thing isn't always a good thing. My suggestion would be to try wines with a hint of sweetness. It's all about balance. Try a Tawny Port or Madeira. An Amarone may also be a great choice because the grapes are left to dry in the sun, converting them to raisins. This gives the wine a concentrated, deep, rich, figgy quality that creates lush balance with dark chocolate.

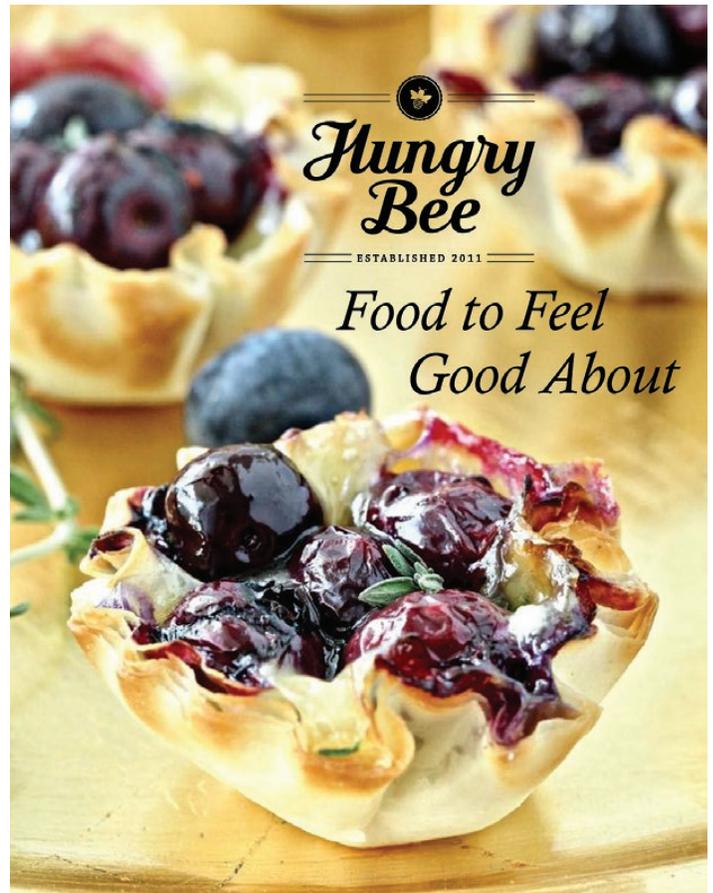
Milk chocolate, with its cream content, is easier to pair. A sparkling Brachetto is a nice companion because of its delicate sweetness and refreshing effervescence. Port-style or late-harvest reds are also a great option. I'd look for a late-harvest Syrah or Petite Sirah. Tawny Ports with their subtle acidity and gentle sweetness also pair well.

As I always say... drink what you like. These are only suggestions. I have been tasting and pairing for quite some time, but all palates are different, and I want you to be happy.

Enjoy your family and the time you spend together.

Next month I'll be bubbling over with a primer on sparkling wine!

Be well. Stay safe. Happy Holidays!



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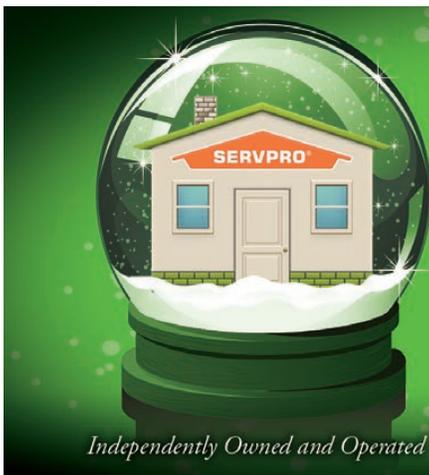
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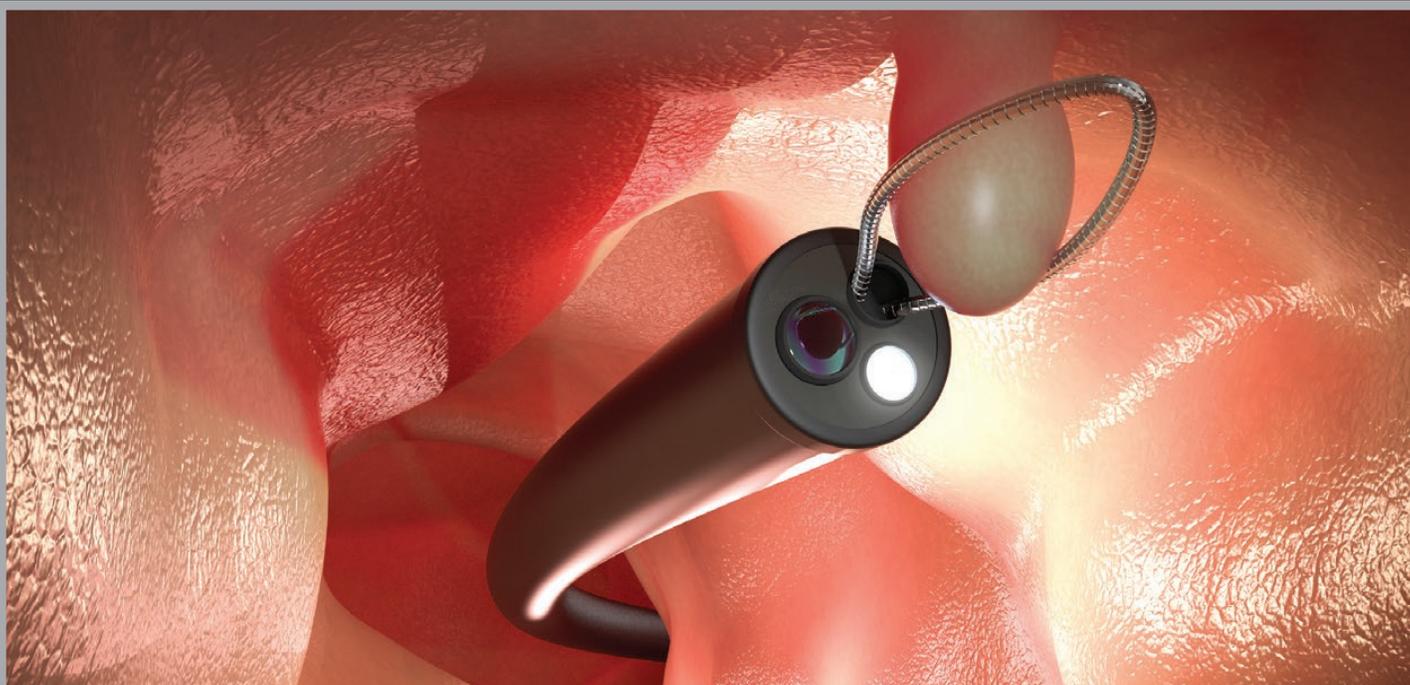
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# COLORECTAL CANCER IS PREVENTABLE: INVEST IN YOUR HEALTH FROM THE INSIDE OUT

Submitted by University Hospitals

**A**mong cancers that affect both men and women, colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States. Every year, about 140,000 Americans are diagnosed with colorectal cancer, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In addition to regular checkups with your gastroenterology provider, there are a number of ways to prevent disease entirely and stay healthy.

First and foremost, the key to cancer prevention is scheduling routine colonoscopies. Unlike other screening programs for breast and prostate cancer, colorectal cancer can be prevented by removing precancerous growths called polyps.

"We recommend patients have a colonoscopy every ten years starting at age 45," says John Dumot, DO, Director of University Hospitals Digestive Health Institute at UH Ahuja Medical Center. "More frequent testing is needed depending on a patient's genetic history, and if polyps or cancer are discovered during the screenings."

In addition to regular screenings, Dr. Dumot says it's important to be physically active, maintain a healthy diet, avoid smoking, and limit alcohol consumption in order to prevent cancer. Risk increases with age, and more than 90% of colorectal cancers occur in those 50 years old or older.

Scheduling regular screenings and seeing your gastroenterology provider is vital, as precancerous polyps and colorectal cancer don't always cause symptoms, especially at first. Symptoms overtime may include blood in or on the stool; stomach pain, aches, or cramps that do not go away; and losing weight without reason.

"I see a variety of digestive and liver disorders, such as gastroesophageal reflux, inflammatory bowel disease, celiac disease, and liver, pancreatic and colorectal cancers," says Dr. Dumot. "Our UH Digestive Health Institute is dedicated to providing high-quality digestive health services through our integrated system of academic and regional medical centers."

The UH Digestive Health Institute is a national leader in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of digestive and liver diseases, and U.S. News & World Report consistently ranks the program as one of the best in the country for treating gastrointestinal disorders.

The Institute offers direct colonoscopy scheduling for healthy individuals 45 years or older and is composed of gastroenterologists, hepatologists and surgeons working with nurses, dietitians and other providers—all committed to digestive health. Expert medical and surgical teams collaborate to provide comprehensive, compassionate care for each patient. Programs range from essential preventive screening and wellness initiatives to the most complex care for advanced diseases.

## Are there alternatives to colonoscopy?

University Hospitals Digestive Health Institute team understands that you may not want to undergo a colonoscopy at this time. We offer colorectal cancer screening tests, which can be performed in the privacy of your own home. The non-invasive options are for people without a family or personal history of polyps or cancer, or blood in the stool.

- **FIT-DNA Test (Cologuard®)** - Requires a provider order and is shipped directly to your home. Bowel cleansing is not required and requires a single stool sample. If the results are positive, a colonoscopy is necessary, which results in further costs. If the results are negative, a repeat Cologuard or screening colonoscopy is recommended in 3 years.

## • Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT)

Requires a provider order and the kit picked up at a University Hospitals Laboratory location. Bowel cleansing or special diet is not required. If the results are positive, a colonoscopy is necessary, which results in further costs. If the results are negative, a repeat FIT, Cologuard or screening colonoscopy is recommended in 1 year.

## Patient testing for colonoscopy patients:

- You will be contacted 5 to 7 days prior to your procedure to schedule COVID-19 testing that will be completed 48 to 72 hours before your test.
- This is an important way to ensure the safety of you and the health care team. To test for COVID-19, a swab (similar to a long Q-tip) will be placed in your nose to collect the test sample. The test is safe but can be uncomfortable.
- All providers, patients and visitors are also screened and temperature checked upon arrival at UH facilities.

## How UH is keeping you safe with extra safety precautions before colonoscopy:

- Our guiding principle in restoring health care services is the safety of our patients, families and caregivers.
- Teams have been working for months to develop processes and protocols to minimize the risks from the COVID-19, including: universal masking, physical distancing in waiting areas, enhanced cleaning schedules in all areas, and screening everyone for COVID-19 before entering our facilities.
- Learn more at: [www.UHhospitals.org/healthcare-update/how-uh-is-keeping-you-safe](http://www.UHhospitals.org/healthcare-update/how-uh-is-keeping-you-safe)



John Dumot,  
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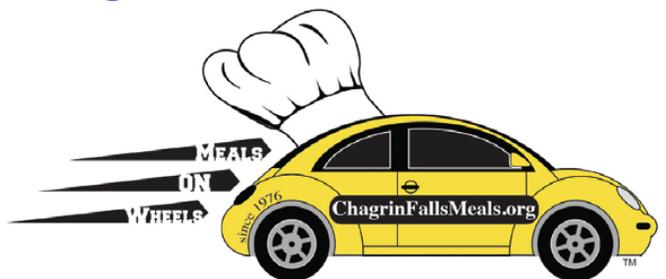
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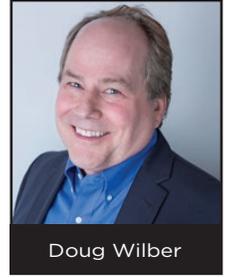
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# FOUR PRACTICAL WAYS TO SUPPORT SENIOR MENTAL FITNESS DURING COVID-19

by Doug Wilber, Owner of Cherished Companions



Doug Wilber

**C**ovid-19 has placed seniors and their families in a unique predicament. Because older people are at a higher risk of developing serious complications if they get the coronavirus, they have had to limit contact with family and friends. While this is important for health and safety, it has also taken away many of their options for social interaction and mental stimulation.

The unfortunate consequence is that elderly people may not be getting the mental exercise they need to keep their brains alert and engaged, and that could be a risk factor for dementia. However, there are some things you can do to help your loved one lower that risk. One study found that people can reduce their risk of cognitive impairment by 60% simply by participating in specific healthy behaviors like eating nutritious meals and exercising regularly.

Along with maintaining a healthy lifestyle, seniors also need to challenge their brains in order to stay mentally fit. Here's what you can do to help.

## 4 KEYS TO SENIOR MENTAL FITNESS

Mental fitness takes more than doing the Sunday crossword puzzle every week. It may come as a surprise to learn that a physically healthy body is one of the most important keys to supporting brain health. That's why it is important to take a whole-body health approach to mental fitness in addition to traditional brain activities, especially if your loved one is isolated due to Covid-19.

Even if you can't visit your elderly family member because of health restrictions, you can help him or her to create a routine that prioritizes the following keys to mental fitness:

### • Keep their brain active.

Seniors need mental stimulation just as much as they need physical care. Challenging the brain to learn something new, solve a puzzle, or do something creative can help keep your loved one sharp.

### • Engage in physical activity every day.

As the research above suggests, physical activity is one of the best ways to support optimal brain health. The CDC recommends that people over the age of 65 with no limiting health conditions should aim for 30 minutes of exercise per day at least five days each week (with a doctor's approval). Those with health conditions or physical limitations should talk to their doctor about developing a safe and effective exercise routine.

### • Prioritize good nutrition.

Feeding your brain properly is an essential part of keeping it fit and healthy. That generally means eating a variety of fruits, vegetables, and healthy protein. Your loved one's specific nutritional needs will be influenced by a variety of factors, including any related health conditions they may have.

### • Maintain social connections.

Perhaps the most difficult thing to do during the era of Covid-19 is to maintain a healthy social life for seniors who can't get out and about. Still, social connections are vital to your loved one's emotional wellbeing. If your family member does not have a smartphone or tablet, considering purchasing one and teaching him or her how to use it. Technology can open up a world of connection, including video chats with friends, family, and grandchildren, phone calls, social media platforms, and more.

## PRACTICAL WAYS SENIORS CAN KEEP THEIR BRAINS SHARP

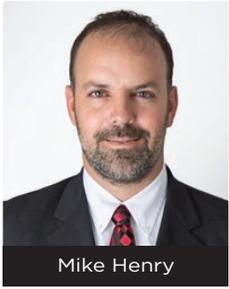
Staying mentally fit requires daily effort. Just as seniors will lose strength and mobility if they don't exercise their muscles, they will also lose mental acuity if they don't exercise their brains. Fortunately, keeping your brain sharp can be a lot of fun! Here are six ways you can help your loved one stay mentally active.

- **Reading** - Pick a favorite book and read it together. If your loved one's eyesight is limited, consider an audiobook instead. As you read, talk about the book and share thoughts, impressions, and opinions.
- **Puzzles** - Crossword or sudoku puzzles are excellent for challenging the brain. Consider buying your loved one a puzzle book to work through, and challenge them to complete a new puzzle each day.
- **Memory games** - Download some memory games to your family member's tablet or smartphone. Games that require recall, memorization, or mental math are all great ways to keep mental skills sharp.
- **Writing** - Ask your mom or dad to write their life story. Writing requires us to recall specific events and feelings, and it also helps us put those events and feelings into words. If your loved one doesn't feel comfortable writing on paper, ask them to record themselves telling stories from their past. As a bonus, these will be memories your family can treasure for years to come.
- **Learn a new skill** - Your mom or dad may enjoy learning an instrument, taking a cooking class, or trying a new hobby. How-to videos for a wide variety of activities are readily available online, and your loved one can share progress with you each week.
- **Care for a pet** - Caring for a pet brings a whole host of benefits for seniors. In addition to the mental responsibility of meeting the pet's needs each day, owning a pet also offers companionship and may encourage your loved one to stay physically active. Studies show that pet ownership can also reduce your loved one's risk of depression, lower blood pressure, reduce stress, and boost memory recall.

Even if you are unable to visit your loved one in person due to Covid-19 or other limitations, you can still help them stay mentally healthy and sharp by staying connected. Encourage them to participate in as many brain-health activities as possible, and help them interact with friends and loved ones through technology.

In-home care can also be a great help to seniors who need extra assistance or companionship. At Cherished Companions, our caregivers go above and beyond to ensure that your senior loved ones receive the highest quality care while also taking every precaution to protect them from the risk of Covid-19. Caregivers will work closely with your family to provide the support your loved one needs.

**For further questions, to request resources, or to inquire about getting or becoming a caregiver, contact Cherished Companions today through our website or call us at (440) 484-5390!**



## SMART HOME TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

By Mike Henry,  
Lead REALTOR® and President,  
HG Agents - EXP Realty

A majority of buyer clients are willing to pay more for a home with smart tech features. The most requested smart devices? Thermostats (77%), smoke detectors (75%), home security cameras (66%), and locks (63%).

**For more information about the luxury market, contact Michael Henry with HG Agents at EXP Realty 216-973-1402 or email michaelhenry@hgagents.com.**

Michael Henry, REALTOR® - Henry Group Agents  
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## DESIGN

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## 2021 INTERIOR DESIGN TRENDS

By Jessica Schultek, JLS Home Interiors



Jessica Schultek

As we say “goodbye” to a wild year, we look forward to starting fresh in 2021. For some of us that means prepping for a home renovation project or maybe just a quick room refresh! Tackling these projects can feel overwhelming due to the wide variety of options available. Here is a quick view into what we can expect to see more of as we close out 2020 and say “hello” to 2021.

**FUNCTIONALITY:** One thing we can all relate to after this year is the need for multi-use functionality in our homes. Our homes have gone from being our sanctuary and have adopted the needs for home offices, schools, and restaurants. This has created the need for beauty to meet functionality. Start with thinking about how you use your space. What do you need from it? Are you no longer using the space as you had initially intended? Just because a room served a purpose 10 years ago doesn't necessarily mean you need to keep it that way! Do you have a closet or odd nook that you don't necessarily need? Maybe this transforms into a built-in office space. Think about your needs and start from there! Also consider adding in a multi-use piece of furniture to meet several needs, such as a coffee table with storage or an island that can be used as a desk.

**PAINT :** One of the easiest ways to play with a trend is through paint! Sherwin-Williams has released their 2021 color forecast under the theme, “Rhythm of Color.” As they explain it, “Rhythm is the secret to how the natural world stays in step. The same sense of balance applies to our personal sense of nature through how we live — and how we design. Fast and slow. Quiet and expressive. Virtual and physical.” Their top 40 colors (yes, 40!) are broken

out into 4 palettes inspired by our culture, technology, and design trends. Each palette is filled with a variety of hues including warm neutrals, muted reds and greens, punchy pinks and blues, and incredible jewel tones. Expect to see their top color of the year, “Urbane Bronze,” leading many inspired designs with its deep, earthy feel.

**TEXTURES:** An interesting trend popping up for 2021 is textured walls. We have seen designers get creative with textured plasters, rustic and natural paneling (hi, Joanna!), and even textured wallpaper. If you aren't feeling ready to commit to something permanent on your wall, consider adding a tapestry or even a peel and stick wallpaper. These are easy ways to create a trendy texture without the need for a complete overhaul (just in case you change your mind!). Try adding the wallpaper as an accent wall, on the back of your bookshelves, or on the front of your dresser drawers! If you want even less commitment with your textures, consider adding a piece of furniture with some earthy elements. Rustic wood and natural stone add character and depth to your home.

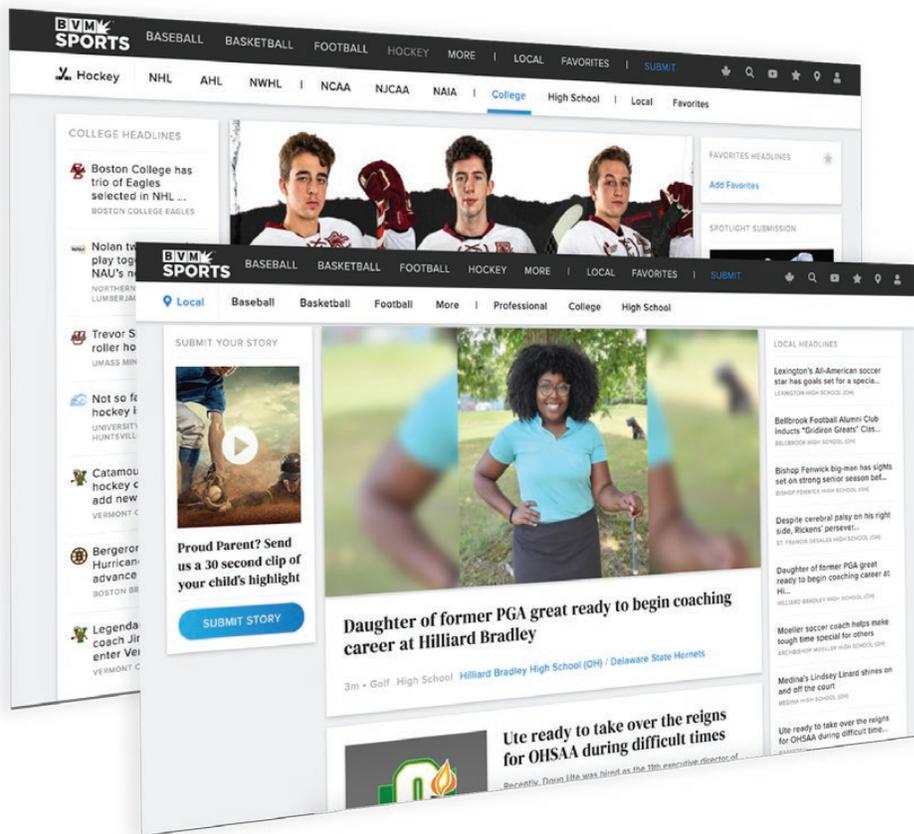
**BUYING LOCAL:** One major result of the Covid pandemic has been the drastic hit to our local vendors. We are seeing a major shift to support more local businesses. The benefits of this stretch further than just avoiding the low stock online and delayed shipping. Buying local provides you with the ability to see what you are purchasing, create custom pieces, keep our small businesses open, and really explore what our town has to offer!

These 2021 trends are a guide to help you pick and choose what you may be interested in trying. As you start working on your projects, remember that your home is YOUR sanctuary and should be a reflection of you. Don't get too stuck in the feel to do something “right or trendy.” Take some elements from the trends that you are drawn to, mix them with your style, and have fun with it!



## SHARE YOUR STORIES

Do you know any local student athletes, coaches or teams who deserve some recognition? Tell us why! Visit our website to submit your articles and videos so we can feature the go-getters and MVPs in your neighborhood.



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# DR. ROBERT HUNT NAMED 2020 OHIO SUPERINTENDENT OF THE YEAR

Submitted by Chagrin Schools

Chagrin Falls Superintendent Dr. Robert Hunt has been named the 2020 Ohio Superintendent of the Year by the Buckeye Association of School Administrators (BASA), and his application is being considered for the American Association of School Administrators National Superintendent of the Year.

"Dr. Hunt joins a very distinguished list of talented superintendents as he becomes this year's BASA Ohio Superintendent of the Year," says Deputy Executive Director David E. Axner, Ed.D., BASA. "His ability to make decisions based on what is best for students, representation of the community with grace and drive, and demonstration of a team approach to success contributed to this honor. What's more, Dr. Hunt was selected by a group of his superintendent peers, making this the most rewarding honor a superintendent can receive."

Director of Curriculum Becky Quinn nominated him on behalf of the District's central office of directors, stating, "Dr. Hunt is an incredibly talented, forward-thinking, courageous, and inspirational leader. He is a true visionary who places the needs of all students first. His commitment to moving our District forward to be a leader across the state as evidenced via achievement scores is surpassed only by his drive to provide holistic learning opportunities designed to grow, develop, and empower all students."

While Dr. Hunt's ability to lead the District staff and students and



Left Deputy Executive Director David E. Axner, Ed.D., BASA and Dr. Robert Hunt, Superintendent, Chagrin Falls Schools

collaborate with parents/guardians and the community has always been very apparent, recent challenges related to continuing instruction for all students through the COVID-19 pandemic have truly exemplified his leadership ability. Dr. Martin Luther King once said, "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy." In a time of crisis resulting from the pandemic, Dr. Hunt's outstanding leadership ability has truly been showcased.

Phil Rankin, president of the Chagrin Falls Board of Education, states, "It is no coincidence that Dr. Hunt is being recognized this year amidst all of the challenges and hurdles of 2020. He has shown particularly strong leadership as he continues to deliver educational excellence to our students. Dr. Hunt and his staff have created a learning environment where students can learn at their own pace with technology interlaced into every student's experience. His foresight, along with strong community support, enabled the students of Chagrin Falls to continue their education whether in-person or remotely at home."

"As with most recognition achieved within our School District, this is a reflection of the collaborative efforts of our students, staff and community," said Superintendent Dr. Robert Hunt, Chagrin Falls Schools. "I am fortunate to work in this School District."

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through December 15, 2020.**



## MAKING FRIENDS WITH “START WITH HELLO” CAMPAIGN Submitted by Chagrin Schools

This past Fall, Chagrin Falls Middle School and Gurney Elementary School participated in “Start With Hello Week.” Organized by Sandy Hook Promise, this week-long initiative focuses on reaching out to others, especially those who may be isolated. It encourages students to look for signs of loneliness and social isolation in their peers, and then works with them to come up with ways they can reach out — the simplest being just to say hello. It’s all about empowering students to know that they can make a difference in someone else’s life.

Chagrin Falls Middle School has been celebrating “Start With Hello Week” for the past five years. This year, the school was limited with some of its usual activities due to Covid-19. “We still wanted to find ways to encourage the message,” said Kyle Patterson, counselor at Chagrin Falls Middle School. “We organized a video presentation for students and encouraged them to reach out digitally by creating messages that are now posted around the school committing to

ways they will reach out to others; sending positive emails to other students and staff; and making cards for residents at Hamlet so the friendly initiative can extend to the community. Students and staff were also able to nominate someone who has made a difference to them by reaching out.”

“I really love this program and its message because it’s so simple yet so important,” says Patterson. “It reminds us all that we can make a difference to others through our everyday actions, sometimes just by smiling and saying hello.”

At Gurney Elementary School, this is the first year the students and staff have embraced this program. “We know how vital relationships are to students’ overall health and well-being and what a positive impact these connections have on their success,” says Assistant Principal Sarah Read. Activities in each grade level included literacy lessons, social studies activities, discussions in Morning Meetings, videos, books, and art projects.

## HELP HUMBLE DESIGN MAKE A HOME Submitted by Humble Design

When does a house become a home? It becomes a home when it’s a place that fosters joy, a place for experiencing safety, warmth, and comfort—a place of belonging and new beginnings. At Humble Design, our hearts help us do the heavy lifting by offering hope with our hands, providing a makeover for a fresh start, designing a life-changing space. We turn moving into moving forward.

Humble Design, a nonprofit that changes lives and communities by furnishing homes of families and veterans emerging from homelessness, is excited to announce that, with the help of Progressive Insurance, we have launched our fifth nationwide location in Cleveland, Ohio. Humble Design was founded in 2009 in Detroit, Michigan, to provide a fresh start for those leaving homeless shelters. Humble Design recognizes that housing is only the first hurdle to breaking the cycle of homelessness. With the help of our wonderful volunteers and staff, we transform empty houses into welcoming homes using donated furniture and

household goods. More than a makeover, it’s a start over.

Located in Solon, OH, our warehouse is taking new and gently used household items. We are looking for everything from cute throw pillows to sheets and blankets, kitchen tables and beds to pots, pans and dishes. Please check our website [www.humbledesign.org/cleveland](http://www.humbledesign.org/cleveland) for a complete list of items that we can accept.

Humble Design is thrilled to be here in the Chagrin Valley. Two of our staff members are from Bainbridge and know, firsthand, the generosity of this wonderful area. They are so honored to have played a role in bringing this amazing nonprofit to Cleveland and to the people who need help the most. Humble Design Cleveland looks forward to seeing you very soon. Feel free to contact staff at [infocle@humbledesign.org](mailto:infocle@humbledesign.org) or 844-486-2533 x5 with any questions. Happy Holidays from all of us at Humble Design Cleveland!

Follow us on Instagram @humbledesigncleveland and Facebook/Humble Design Cleveland.

### NONPROFIT



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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Now - December 24**  
**VISIT WITH MR. KRINGLE**  
**Time:** Streaming or pre-recorded  
**Location:** This is a virtual event. Have a magical holiday experience from the comfort of your own home by booking a virtual visit with Mr. Kringle! Mr. Kringle offers delightful new traditions guaranteed to make any spirit bright! Prices range from \$28-\$58. 1-855-675-7464

**Now - January 3**  
**THE BOTANICAL GARDEN’S GLOW**  
**Time:** 10am-6pm  
**Location:** Botanical Garden 11030 East Boulevard Cleveland, OH 44106 This celebrated holiday tradition shows cases plants for the holiday season including conifer trees, poinsettias, herbs we use in cooking, and fruits and vegetables we feast on. Glow transports visitors into a safe holiday wonderland outside and in. Reservations required. [cbgarden.org/glow](http://cbgarden.org/glow)

**December 10-23, 26-30**  
**DECK THE HALL 2020:**  
**A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS**  
**Time:** 5-8pm  
**Location:** Stan Hywett 714 N. Portage Path, Akron, Ohio 44303

The Manor House features a first-floor tour (one way to ensure safety). The Manor House and gardens are illuminated with more than one million holiday lights. Santa will hold socially distant visits. Reservations required. [stanhywet.org/events/deck-hall-2020-very-merry-christmas](http://stanhywet.org/events/deck-hall-2020-very-merry-christmas)

**Dec. 4, 5, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23**  
**HOLIDAY LANTERN TOURS**  
**Time:** 5:30-9pm  
**Location:** Hale Farm 2686 Oak Hill Road, Bath, Ohio 44210

Take a charming lantern-lit tour of the village and visit the historic houses beautifully decorated for the season. Tours depart every 15 minutes - lasting 90 minutes. Dress for outdoor weather. Reservations required 330-666-3711x1736, or email [ahalmes@wrhs.org](mailto:ahalmes@wrhs.org)

**December 12, 13, 19, 20**  
**ANNIE THE MUSICAL**  
**Time:** The video will be available for streaming.  
**Location:** Virtual event Chagrin Valley Little Theatre presents an online streaming encore of our 2019 winter musical “Annie.” With ticket purchase, patrons will receive password access to view the show on [cvlt.org](http://cvlt.org). Visit [cvlt.org](http://cvlt.org) for more info.

### December 11-13

#### TOUR

#### LOUIS BROMFIELD’S BIG HOUSE

**Time:** 4-8pm  
**Location:** Mohican State Park 3116 OH-3, Loudonville, Ohio 44842 Louis Bromfield’s Big House will be all decked for the holiday! Enjoy fresh baked cookies and hot cider. Buy tickets in the gift shop. 419-994-5125

### December 20

#### CHOCOLATE WINE PAIRING

**Time:** 11am-3pm  
**Location:** Gervasi Vineyard 1700 55th Street NE, Canton, OH 44721 Wine steward, Brad Preston, pairs chocolate desserts with award-winning wines. Socially distant tables sold in blocks of 6-10 tickets-prices range from \$174-\$290. [www.gervasivineyard.com/event/chocolate-wine-pairing](http://www.gervasivineyard.com/event/chocolate-wine-pairing) 330-497-1000

### January 9

#### WINTERFEST

**Time:** 8am-5pm  
**Location:** Downtown Loudonville, Main Street, Loudonville, Ohio 44842 Come and enjoy ice sculpture and carving competitions featuring award-winning ice carvers. Ice carvings are displayed throughout downtown with most of the events in Central Park. Visitors will enjoy speed carving, demonstrations and Fire Poi (Spinning) (Fire and Ice). There will also be a figure skating exhibition, carriage rides, a train expo, social media scavenger hunt, and more. Winter hikes are followed with a delicious bowl of soup to warm up afterward. Aaron Costic and his team from Elegant Ice Creations will offer six carving demonstrations Saturday at 11am, 12pm, 1 pm, 2pm, 3pm, and 4pm. The demonstrations are free and open to the public. 419-994-4789 or 419-994-2519

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