

Conestoga Current

July 2019

A Social Magazine for the Residents of Mondamin Farms,
Eshelman Road, Butterfield and Other Nearby Homes

A Welcome Transformation in the Village of Oregon

*Mary and Todd
Bolinger's Labor of
Love Becomes Gorgeous
Bed And Breakfast*

Photo by Beth Cardwell Photography



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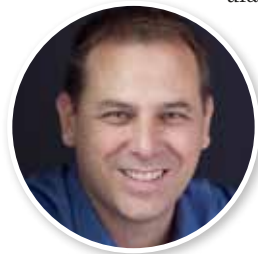
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

In recent months, we've enjoyed the columns that our Mondamin Farms neighbor Ben Webber has shared about the Conestoga River and other local subjects, and I look forward to having more of them featured in coming issues. In this issue, he is beginning a short series of columns about the villages nearby the Conestoga River and writes this month about the small village of Oregon. He highlights a few of the historic structures still in use along with some present-day photos to contrast with how they appeared perhaps 100 or more years ago. We've heard from a number of neighbors who, like me, find it fascinating to revisit a little of what life was like in this area in the early years of settlement. It's interesting to contemplate how the efforts, interests and entrepreneurial spirit of individuals who lived out their lives in our community have shaped this place and impacted the landscape and our ongoing story.

Other residents of Mondamin Farms are continuing that entrepreneurial spirit in Oregon. Mary and Todd Bolinger took a risk and put in considerable effort in renovating and revitalizing an older property in the village that had suffered from neglect in recent years. With the opening of the Olde Oregon Farmhouse, the Bologers have rescued a prominent property and given it new life. Like those in the past who creatively reused the Mill and the old Oregon Hotel (now Reflections), they have done their part to preserve, enhance and celebrate the historic nature of this particular place and of the village as a whole.



Sheldon Esch
Publisher, *Conestoga Current*

NEW to the Neighborhood?

Has Your Family Recently Moved to Our Community?

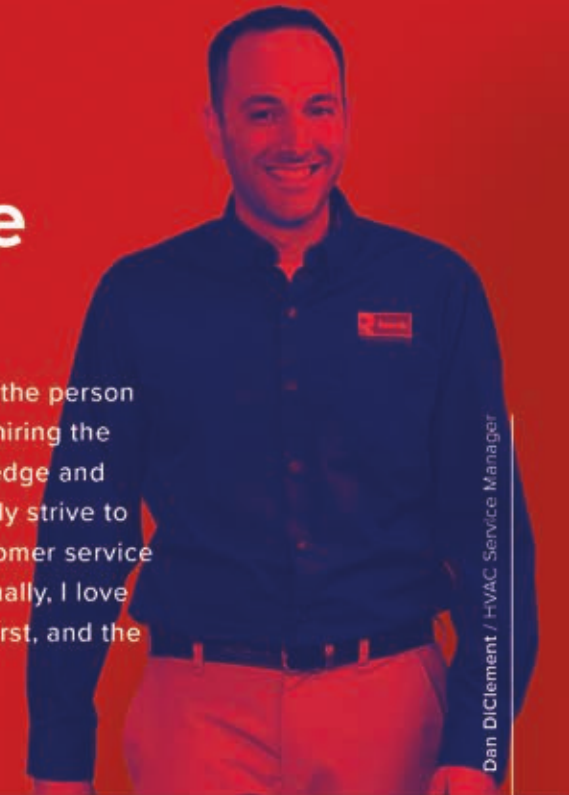


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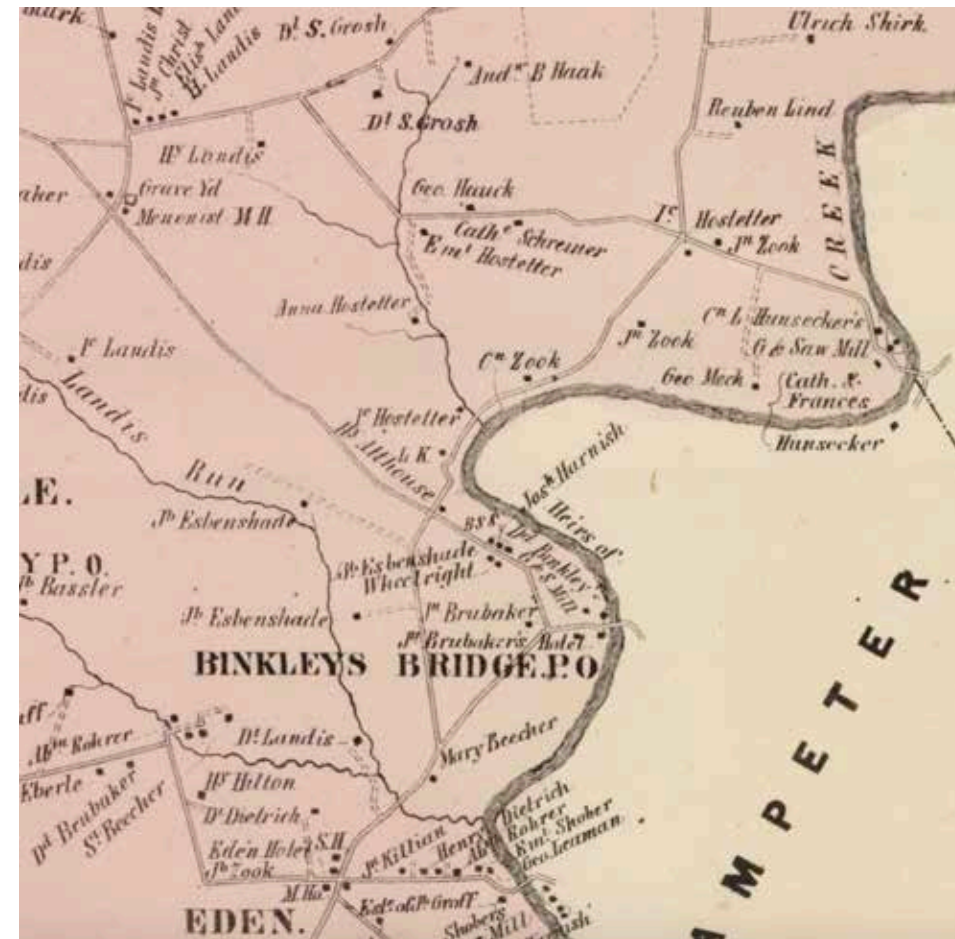
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Detail of an old Manheim Township map, showing the Mondamin Farms area

Historic Sketches

Stories to Tell!

We heard from a good number of you that you've enjoyed learning more about the rich history of this area and how the landscape has changed over the years. We wanted to make a special invitation to those of you in the community who may have stories to share with your neighbors of how things have changed, interesting historic tidbits or what you personally remember of how things used to be. Old photos and memories welcome! Please reach out to sheldon.esch@n2pub.com with your ideas and suggestions.

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Bedroom in the third-floor loft.



Creating THE OLDE OREGON FARMHOUSE

Bolingers Transform Stately Oregon Village Home Into Graceful Bed & Breakfast

resident business bio

Article by **Melissa Sauder**
Photos by **Beth Cardwell Photography**



Farmhouses are fairly common in Lancaster County, but not many are as distinctive as the stately brick house on the corner of East Oregon Road and Creek Road. Though it's known Grabill and Anna Bear built it in 1869, public records do not reveal much more than this about its history. The house's construction boasts exterior walls that are three courses thick of brick and 10-foot-high ceilings. It has a magnificent widow's walk on the roof, allowing a view of the surrounding community and farmland. The house did not have fireplaces but was heated with parlor stoves that burned coal. The addition on the back was built in the late 1800s. A rear staircase is steep and winding. The Bears left their signatures on the back of a door in an upstairs bedroom and wrote a diary on the back of another door in the kitchen, naming items that had been fixed or changed throughout the house. It appears that much care and thought was put into building this substantial home.

Most recently, however, the house was under threat of neglect because of foreclosure. Its contents sold, but, unfortunately, the

house did not. Completely gutted, with no kitchen, damaged wallpaper, and a few fixtures cut out, this once proud home now stood dark and broken. It was in need of a good cleaning, repairs, and restoration from dedicated new owners.

Enter Mondamin Farms residents Todd and Mary Bolinger, who originally had no intention of purchasing a farmhouse. However, in December of 2014, on an evening out to dinner, Mary's father mentioned to her that the house on the corner of East Oregon and Creek Roads was for sale. The next day Todd and Mary went to see it. Two weeks later they contacted the realtor and walked through the house. At their second scheduled showing, the realtor told them that they had two hours to make a decision whether they wanted the house or not, as another offer was being submitted. They decided to put in an offer, and, in a few weeks, they received the news that they had won the bid! So, during the cold of winter, the couple started on their huge endeavor. With no heat in the house and broken pipes, but with a love of historical things and a desire to maintain the integrity of the house, the Bolingers set to work restoring this local landmark. Thus began the creation of their bed and breakfast: the Olde Oregon Farmhouse.

"We are doers," Mary said of herself and husband, Todd. They had never tackled anything quite like this before, yet they themselves have completed most of the work in restoring the farmhouse, except what needed to be done by contractors. As they labored, the Bolingers kept the old charm and character of the home. As much as they could, they sought to have the interior reflect the late 1800s era, using historical reproduction and furnishings of that time period.

As it came time to decorate the house and make it feel like a home, Mary used her creativity and hands-on skills to complete the task. The furnishings



•••

throughout the house were gifted, found in flea markets or sometimes even found along the roadside. They depict Mary's love of cheery color and her eclectic, yet focused, decorating style. Nothing belongs to her personally, except for two special wedding portraits of her great, great grandparents from 1885 that grace the walls of the spacious dining room. This room is brightened by a time-accurate, reflective, tin ceiling and light streaming through the tall, aged windows. A recently hand-fashioned fireplace in the corner greets guests when they enter.

The once-empty kitchen now displays more of Mary's creativity and handiwork. She utilized the Habitat ReStore for some of the pieces and custom-built others. The kitchen island's base was a vanity, and the sink sits on an antique buffet. The coffee station is fashioned from an old piece that Todd found out in the rain but that is now completely beautiful, donning a marble top.

One of the Bolingers' newer projects has been transforming the attic into a third-floor loft. They fixed and painted the walls, and a beautiful electric fireplace was added, utilizing an antique mantel. This loft is unique to the house because it does not follow the time-period etiquette of the rest of the home but has a more modern feel. The distinctive space enchants with its exposed brick walls and slanted wood ceiling, and includes a living area, two bedrooms, a bathroom and, eventually, a kitchenette.

Following many labors of love, the Olde Oregon Farmhouse Bed and Breakfast opened in the fall of 2017. In addition to tourists, it has served as a convenient place for people to stay when visiting family in the area. Guests arriving from the eastern seaboard, Florida, Washington, and even the Netherlands have been welcomed by the charm of the 1860s and the warmth of Mary's hospitality and delicious, homemade breakfasts. Guests can choose from five cozy rooms, four of them named after the builders and previous owners of the farmhouse.

To find out more about this local treasure, go to oldeoregonfarmhouse.com. Discounts and perks with partnered local businesses are offered to guests.



Mary Bolinger



The spacious dining room.



Bathroom in the third-floor loft.



A view of the entrance from the dining room. The wedding portrait of Mary's great, great grandfather is in the upper right.

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Chad Newcomer



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Jennifer Wilkinson, Decorator and Window Treatment Specialist

last year; they have all been five-star reviews with people saying they've had a great experience with us. We do a great job matching colors, recommending product, giving tips and advice, and they say our service is above and beyond anyone else. We are also very kid-friendly, with an area for them to be occupied while parents look at products. People have told us their kids remember and ask to stop back into the store just to play."

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Andy Burkholder, owner of Burkholder Painting, is a long-time loyal customer. "As a small business owner," says Andy, "I very much appreciate Grauer's attention to detail and their outstanding customer service. They are always willing to help and go above and beyond when matching colors or giving product recommendations. It's rare to find a business that has such high integrity."

According to Chad, some customers come to them for Benjamin Moore paints because they are looking for certain colors. "They feel colors are better with Benjamin Moore, and the selection is better than other brands of paint. The Benjamin Moore product flows and covers better," he says, "and the value is

above and beyond the other brands. Better paint saves time and gives better results and lasts longer."

"Our families are proud to be there for our customers. We are hard workers, and we enjoy seeing things completed, which all comes back around to great service."

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Jennifer assists a customer with the wide array of window-treatment options available.

IT MAKES A VILLAGE – OREGON

Many of us recognize the historic structures of the villages in our area. We hear from one source or another that this building used to be something else or that there was a really neat spot where you could enjoy a lovely outing with your family. A few old photographs and maps start to help us re-connect a few of the dots to see a partial view into the past.

But what was really the history of these villages? I'm starting with Oregon. Just like Manheim, Fruitville, Lititz, and New Holland, it had a pike named for it. Those pikes were toll roads with the users paying a fee for the type of vehicle, conveyance, or freight that was involved in their travel. The 1899 map image shows the old alignment of Butter Road, leading to Oregon Pike with its Toll House close to the saw mill.

There still stands today another mill, larger and active as a mill for a longer time. The map image also shows a rather significant mill pond north of what is Oregon Road today. The structure has been repurposed, probably more than once over the years since it was a roller mill. Records indicate that it was first built in 1813 by Jacob Steman as a 40-foot-30 three-and-a-half story mill. Here's a photo from the early 1900s, looking east across the mill pond. You can see the half story at the top.

However, that wasn't the first mill. Earliest records I could find trace back to 1702 when Jacob Bear built a mill on a stream called Carter's Creek. When our County and Township were formed 17 years later, a settlement was slowly swelling around the mill and adopted the name "Bear's Mill." The mill was sold to Martin Myers in 1767, who decided to rename the area "Catfish" due to the abundance of them in the creek.



Image courtesy of LancasterHistory, Lancaster, PA

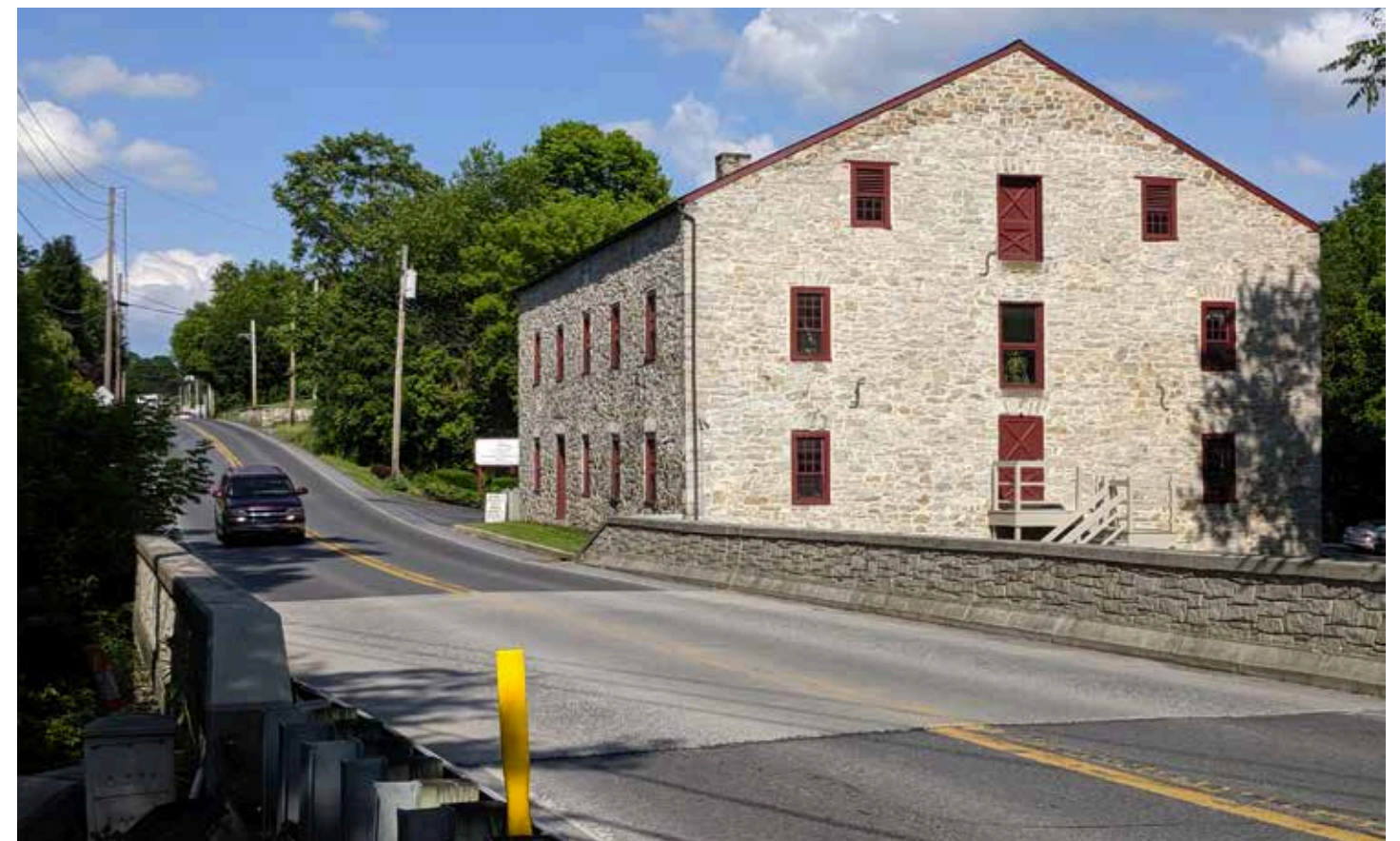


The former Oregon Hotel, now Reflections Restaurant. Photo by Ben Webber.

Fast forward to 1846, when local rifle manufacturer Henry Leman suggested a more dignified name for the town, honoring the new treaty that settled the 49th parallel as our nation's northwestern boundary and limiting the Oregon region of U.S. territory. Growth continued into 1883, when the village included roughly 30 homes, a school, a church, a dry-goods store, a coach maker and wheelwright's shop, a shoemaker, two butcher shops, and four cigar manufacturers. With all this development, the village was rewarded with its own post office.



Oregon mill from early 1900s.



Oregon mill present day. Photo by Ben Webber.

Of course, there was a hotel, built about 1735, and today widely known as the restaurant Reflections. Seen in this 1894 photo, the veranda was filled with the various patrons, passengers, drivers, and workers on hand at this stage stop, accommodation, and grocery store.

The church building today called Oregon Community United Methodist was originally built next to an existing graveyard in 1874. Since it was built cooperatively with contributions from several different types of worshipers, it was called Union

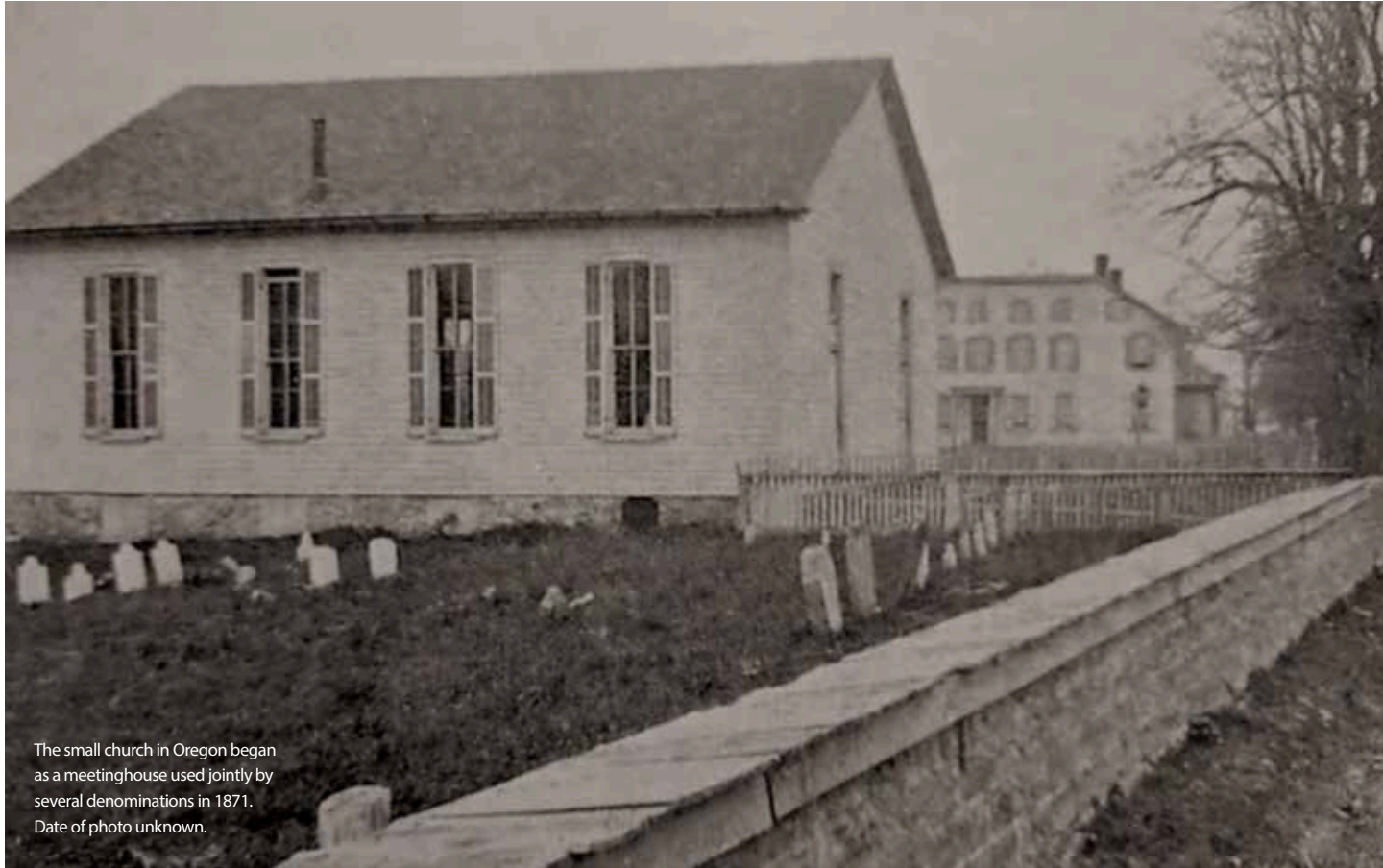


This 1899 map shows the Grist Mill location in the upper center of the image.

Church with separate services held each Sunday for the Dunkard, New Mennonite, and United Brethren congregations. All the worshipers were separated by gender as they entered and exited the church.

Perhaps more information can be found and shared about the history and importance of Oregon in a future issue. For now, readers will have to do the heavy lifting with their imagination and ponder the lives enriched by this micro-community in our neck of the woods.





The small church in Oregon began as a meetinghouse used jointly by several denominations in 1871. Date of photo unknown.



Oregon Community United Methodist church today. Photo by Ben Webber.





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meet Marianthi Saxinger



Name: Marianthi Saxinger
Age: 13
Sports: Soccer, basketball, track and field
Positions: Soccer – goalie; basketball – guard; track and field – high jump, long jump
School: Manheim Township Middle School
Parents: Michael and Stella Saxinger

featured athlete Photos by Beth Cardwell Photography

How long have you participated in sports?

I started playing soccer when I was 4 years old. I have been playing basketball for about three years, and this was my first year trying track and field.

What is your favorite coach/mentor's name, and why is he/she your favorite?

I had many coaches, and they all have helped me develop in their own individual way. My very first coach was Dimitri Papadimitriou (Lancaster Elite); he taught me how to play soccer, he made soccer fun, and to this day he still is helping me develop. Coach Dan Lefever (Lancaster Elite) helped me develop as a goalie; Coach Josh Beers (Lancaster Elite) developed me as an individual. But, Coach John Shetromph (Middle School Soccer Coach) pushed me to develop as a field player as well as a goalie.

Name a person in the sport you really admire.

Alex Morgan – she plays hard every time she steps on the field, and she always plays as a team.

Describe your team, and tell the best things about the team.

I play for the Lancaster Elite Sprinters and Manheim Twp Middle School Soccer. My team is amazing. They help build each other up to be the best they can be. Some of my best friends were made playing sports.



Have you ever participated in any special event or won any special awards?

My club soccer team “Sprinters” have won multiple tournaments and got second in the Bethasda Premier Cup in the U14 division. My school soccer team was undefeated this season.

What do you like the most about the sport?

I like how when you step out on the field or court or track, it all stops. All your worries leave, and it's just you, your team and a game to win.

Tell about the best moment that you've had playing this sport.

Probably when I was 9 or 10 in soccer. It was a shoot-out, and I was in goal. It was tied, and next shot won. I was up to shoot. It was the weakest shot ever, and then it went through the other goalie's legs!

Share one tip for someone looking to get into this sport:

Practice, and never give up!



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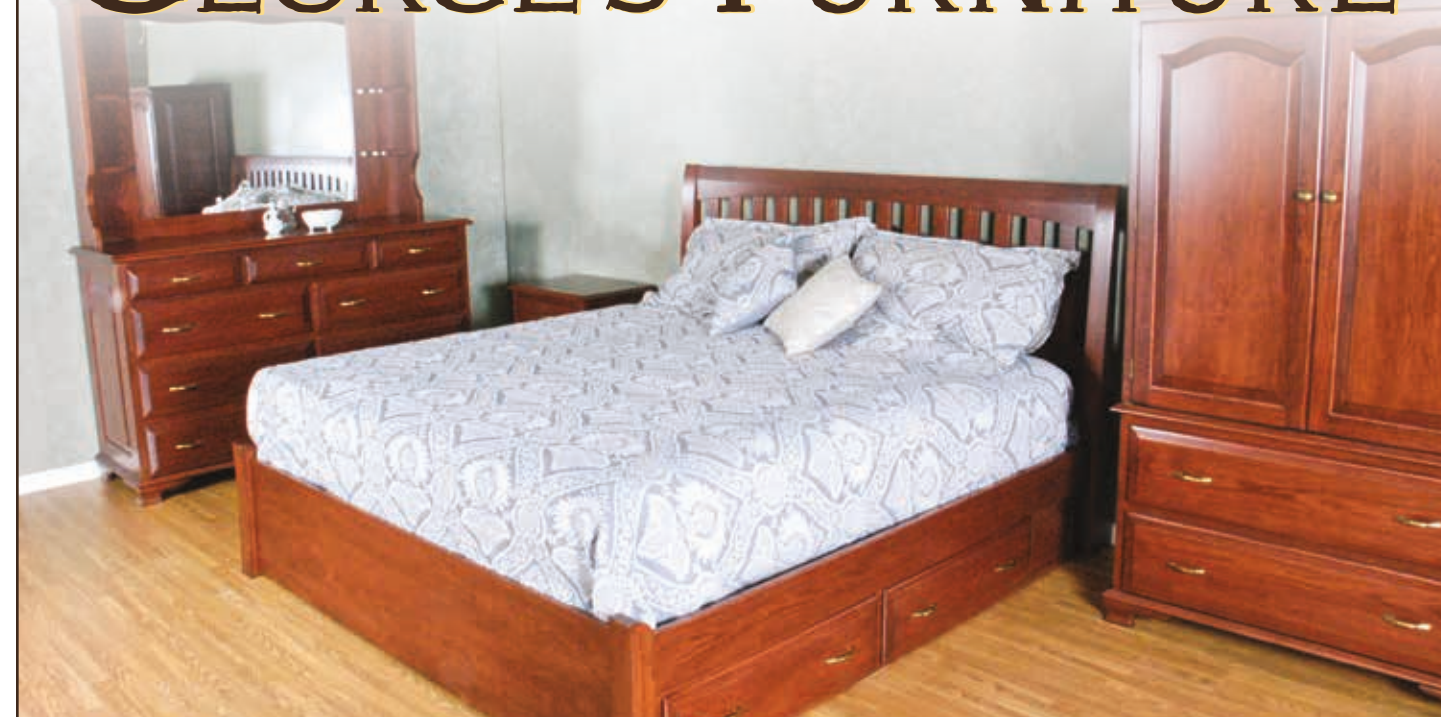
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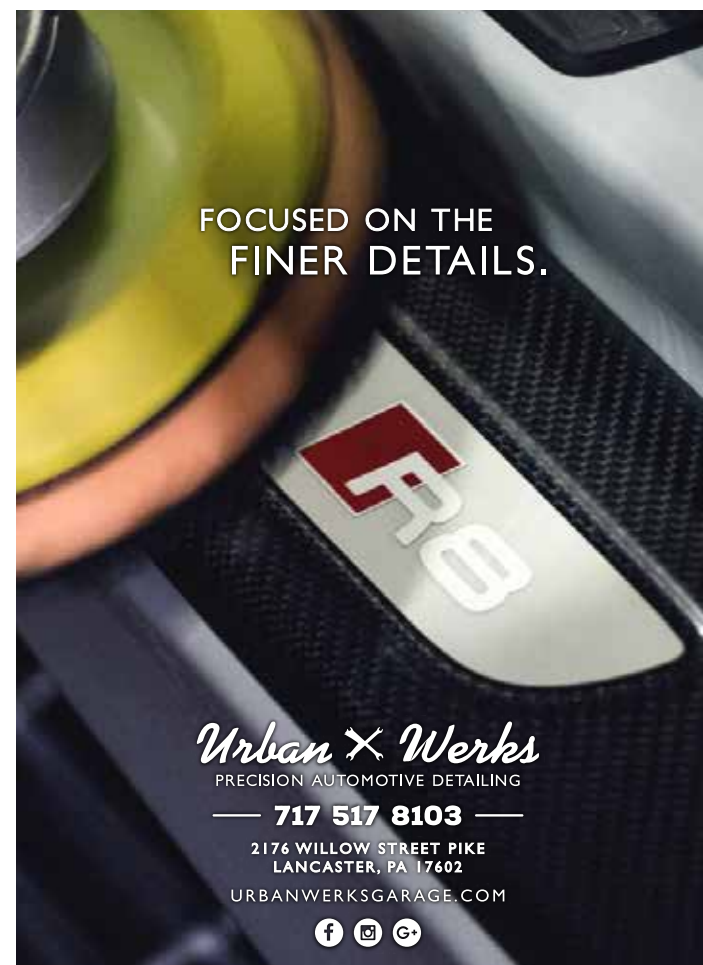
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 - In roofing materials

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Poem and photos by **Melissa Sauder**

The Refreshment **OF FRIENDSHIP**

I was tired of stale relationships,
 Was weary of being drained.
 After running empty for so long
 My heart was getting strained.
 I could hardly catch my wasting breath.
 I could barely say a word.
 None would listen to my soul,
 So desperate to be heard.
 Yet on a wing from somewhere new
 From a place I did not see,
 A steady flow of fresh, cool air
 Came rushing there to me.
 It cleared the stagnant, dingy air,
 It filled my heart with peace.
 This friendship, like the breeze of spring,
 It made my strength increase.

And when my heart was oh-so-heavy
 When the joy seemed hard to find,
 When my face was looking downward,
 When thick doubts clouded my mind.
 The sorrow of the day was close.
 Streaming tears ran down my face.
 I needed a fresh perspective
 To pull me from this place.
 Yet on a wing from somewhere new,
 From a place I did not see,

A soothing glass of burgundy wine
 It beckoned there to me.
 It understood my deepest pain
 It understood my woes.
 This friendship, like the smooth red drink,
 Was with me when so low.
 The sadness had to leave, at last,
 The dark of night be gone.
 Deep heavy clouds left from this place
 I knew I could go on.
 A beam of light to break right though,
 A bright and glorious ray.
 It shone into my aching depth
 To mark and guide my way.
 And on a wing from somewhere new,
 From a place I did not see,
 A sparkle of a glimmering hope
 Delivered straight to me.
 It gave me sight to see again

It showed me where to turn.
 This friendship, like a brightest spark,
 In my blackest night did burn.
 Fading dreams had left me dry.
 My hopes and goals had passed.
 A striving for ambitions
 Had ceased to stay or last.
 But giving up was not the end.
 Quitting was not the cure.
 My need was inspiration,
 For a mission to endure.
 On the wing from somewhere new,
 From a place I did not see,
 A life-sustaining summer rain
 Fell, there, afresh on me.
 It made the brown to green again.
 It brought the flower to grow.
 This friendship, like a soaking shower,
 Gave refreshment now to know.



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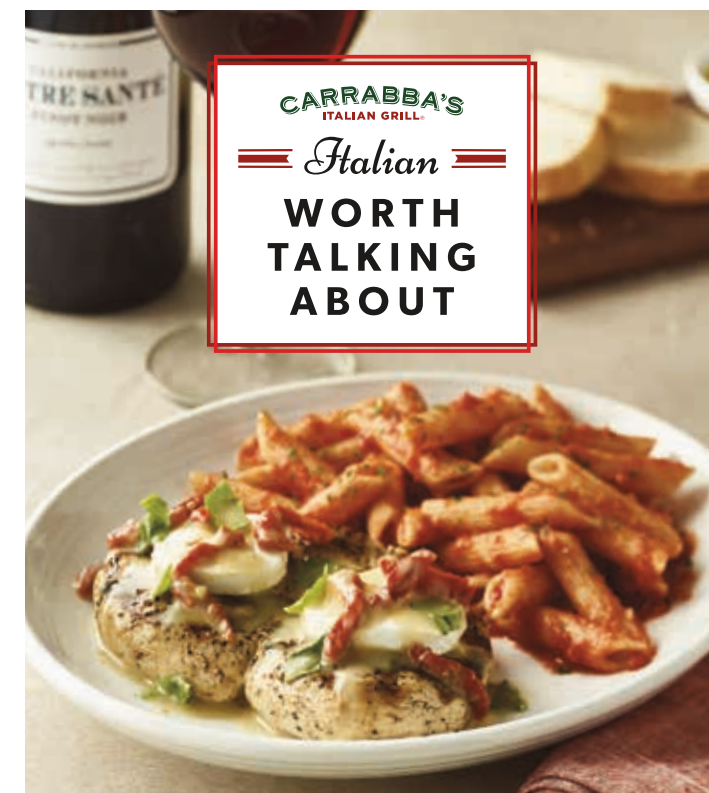
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