

Next Month:  
Summer Reads,  
Getaways, and More!

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"Where Healthcare Marketers Connect"

Vol. 30, No. 5  
JUNE 2021

## Reunited

### AND IT FEELS SO GOOD!



#### Seeing Mom In Person Again

*Ivette McFarland*

#### Reunited and It Feels so Good

*Brandon Buttrey, Al Lucchesi, Michelle Perkel*

#### Pickleball – An Emerging Phenomena

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## Dear Healthcare Marketer,

**R**eunited and it feels so good! I feel the energy, don't you? Hopefully, you're vaccinated and on your way to being reunited with family and friends and once again experiencing your favorite activities now that things are opening up. I certainly won't take for granted the ability to gather freely with loved ones in restaurants and bars, coffee shops, homes...any of it again.

After all of us in the family were vaccinated, we thought it was time to reunite with family in Naples, Florida. You may remember my great nephew Jayden had open-heart surgery a few years ago at six months old. I was missing him, his sister Mila, and, of course, my nephews Ryan, Morgan and his wife Miriam, and my brother Mike. FaceTime wasn't cutting it anymore. I needed that hug and boy did it feel good...even though I am not usually a hugger lol. I have to say I was a little scared boarding the plane but we had our gear – masks, shields, and sanitizers. We booked seats straight across.

We stayed at an Airbnb – my first time. It felt safer than a big hotel, and it was such a great experience. The place had a pool, it was centrally located, and very clean. I have to say Florida felt much more normal than back home in Jersey. I kept up my guard, but it felt so good to be free. The sunshine, the ease of walking around in the warm air – I wondered why I didn't pack up the family and move here during the pandemic. Who knew? But wait...Katie has a job here in the Northeast at NBC and goes in every day, Dad is 94 and can't make the trip, and what about my PITA pups? Oh well, you can dream.

The only crazy thing was renting a car from the airport. It was so busy that the cost for four days was going to be \$1300. We needed to find an alternative. Someone at my nail salon suggested taking an Uber from the airport at Fort Myers to Naples, and then renting the car once we got to Naples. Can you believe I saved \$800 doing that? That's a tip to put in your back pocket!

Speaking of Uber, this issue will inspire you to reconnect to those you love and focus on some fun times out and about this summer. We're delighted to share **Ivette McFarland's** beautiful story of spending time with her mom and family in Florida after way too long. **Randy Doerr** takes us to the Jersey Shore, home of inspiration to get healthy and enjoy happy times at an annual summer share house. Have you tried pickleball yet? I am addicted, although I'm not quite ready to compete, maybe you are. Whether you're curious or almost a pro, you'll enjoy **John R. Clay's** article about the latest rage – and maybe even sign up for a tournament! If running or biking is more your thing, **Steve Tauber's** got you covered as he shares his racing experiences. So you have a few new ideas for how you might take advantage of newfound freedom this summer, **Al Lucchesi**, **Brandon Buttrey**, and **Michelle Perkel** give us the scoop on some fabulous food finds. Wrapping up the issue is **Jeff Greene** who's featured in this month's *Personal Exchange*.

What have you done and who have you connected with in person now that things are opening up? Tell us about your reunion stories. Whether they're about work, family, friends, or an activity you've been able to return to, we'd love to hear. Spread the love!

*Here's to a summer of  
reuniting and feeling good,*

Katie and the kids.

*Nancy*



Family reuniting in Naples, Florida.



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## REUNITED AND IT FEELS SO GOOD!

Now that we're all getting vaccinated we want to hear about your awesome reunion stories with family, friends, or a place like your favorite bar, restaurant, or vacation spot.

- How was your reunion with parents, grandchildren, siblings?
- What was the first gathering with your besties, book club, or dinner friends like?
- How was it to return to your fave bar, restaurant, coffee shop?

**Where have you gone and what was it like?**

Go to [www.hmexchange.com/contests.html](http://www.hmexchange.com/contests.html) or contact Nancy at [NALeonard@HMExchange.com](mailto:NALeonard@HMExchange.com). All participants will be entered into a drawing for a \$100 OpenTable Gift Card.

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Send your submissions to Nancy at [NALeonard@HMExchange.com](mailto:NALeonard@HMExchange.com) or call 973-744-9505 to discuss.

Submit through our website at [www.hmexchange.com/contests.html](http://www.hmexchange.com/contests.html)

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## ONWARD & UPWARD

promotions • additions

**AbbVie** has announced the appointment of **William Veltre** as Product Director. He can be reached at [bill.veltre@abbvie.com](mailto:bill.veltre@abbvie.com).

**AbelsonTaylor** has announced the appointment of **Mike Czuba** as Vice President, Insights Innovation. He can be reached at [mike.czuba@abelsontaylor.com](mailto:mike.czuba@abelsontaylor.com). Promoted at the company were **Amy Restko** to Associate Planning Director and **Jimmy Slovitt** to Associate Account Director.

**Alexion Pharmaceuticals, Inc.**, has announced the appointment of **LaTatia Colbert-Reed** as Senior Manager, U.S. Marketing, Neurology. She can be reached at [Lcolbert.reed@gmail.com](mailto:Lcolbert.reed@gmail.com).

**Bayer** has announced the promotion of **Nelson Ambrogio** to Senior Vice President, General Manager of Oncology, and **John Berrios** to Senior Vice President, General Manager, of Women's Healthcare.

**BGB Group** has announced the promotion of **Ian Purcell** to Vice President, Group Account Supervisor. He can be reached at [ipurcell@bgbgroup.com](mailto:ipurcell@bgbgroup.com).

**Boehringer-Ingelheim** has announced the appointment of **Michael D. Penn** as Biopharmaceutical and Healthcare Technology Policy, Market Strategy Leader. He can be reached at [Michael.penn@boehringer-ingelheim.com](mailto:Michael.penn@boehringer-ingelheim.com).

**BulletinHealthcare** has announced the appointment of **Jessica Hill** as Head of Marketing and Operations. She can be reached at [jhill@bulletinhealthcare.com](mailto:jhill@bulletinhealthcare.com).

**CMI Media Group** and **Compas** have announced the following appointments: **Alec Maksymowych** as Associate Analyst, Social Media, **Charles Tran** as Director, Search Engine Optimization, **Danielle Garcia** as Associate Director, Social Media, **Elie Pena** as Senior Analyst, Data Analytics, **Hayden Christ** as Associate Analyst, SEM and Emerging Media, **Jess Redmon** as Director, Social Media, **Kolade Bomodeoku** as Associate Analyst, Programmatic Media Buying, **Laurie Roma** as Director, Social Media, **Lavonne Sadler** as I.T. Administrative Specialist, **Matthew Capritta** as Manager, Business Insights, **Megan Whitehouse** as Associate Digital Ad Operations Specialist, **Nicole Dylinski** as Associate Analyst, SEM and Emerging Media, **Reepika Bhati** as Recruiter, **Samantha Schwartz** as Associate Analyst, Programmatic Media Buying, **Sarah Kalvaitis** as Senior Analyst, Social Media, **Serena Law** as Associate Analyst, Data Analytics, **Staphany Lee** as Senior Media Planner, **Taylor Ebert** as Associate Analyst, Data Analytics, and **Tim Angyal** as Associate Analyst, Social Media.

**ConnectiveRx** has announced the promotion of **Frank Dana** to President and Chief Commercial Officer. He can be reached at [Frank.Dana@connectiverx.com](mailto:Frank.Dana@connectiverx.com).

**Evoke** has announced the appointment of **Chris Cahill** as Director, Talent Acquisition. He can be reached at [chris.cahill@evokegroup.com](mailto:chris.cahill@evokegroup.com).

**FCBCURE** has announced the appointment of **Debra Polkes** as Creative Partner and Co-Managing Director.

**FCB Health** has announced the appointment of **Steven Underweiser** as Media Director. He can be reached at [steven.underweiser@solved.health](mailto:steven.underweiser@solved.health). Also, **Salvatore Diana** has been appointed Executive Vice President, Executive Creative Director. He can be reached at [Salvatore.diana@fcb.com](mailto:Salvatore.diana@fcb.com).

**Fingerpaint** has announced the appointment of **Pete Irizarry** as Head of Account Service in the Saratoga Springs, NY, office.

**Gilead Sciences** has announced the appointment of **Flavius Martin** as its Head of Research Organization. **William Lee**, who previously held the position, is retiring.

**Jobson Medical Information/WebMD** has announced the appointment of **Samantha Armstrong** as Regional Sales Manager at **Jobson Optical Group**. She can be reached at [sarmstrong@jobson.com](mailto:sarmstrong@jobson.com).

**Klick Health** has announced the appointment of **Ludovic Moulin** as Senior Vice President, Executive Creative Director, **John Hastings** as Vice President, Group Creative Director, **Krista Holmstrom** as Vice President, Group Creative Director, **Andria Minott** as Senior Producer, Content and

Broadcast, **Megan Waychison** as Senior Producer, Broadcast, and **Bridget Narh** as Production Operations Lead.

**MERGE** has announced the appointment of **Nick Jones** as Chief Client Officer. Also joining the company is **Candace Graham** as Lead U.S. West Business Development and Strategic Growth.

**Ogilvy Cambridge** has announced the promotion of **Ashley Scholten** to Account Executive. She can be reached at [ashley.scholten@ogilvy.com](mailto:ashley.scholten@ogilvy.com).

**Ogilvy Health** has announced the appointment of **Bonnie Greenberg** and **Corina Kellam** as Senior Vice Presidents, Strategy, and **Renee Stewart** as Account Supervisor.

**Publicis Health Media** has announced the appointment of **Gillian Bailey** as Media Supervisor. She can be reached at [gillian.bailey@publicishealthmedia.com](mailto:gillian.bailey@publicishealthmedia.com).

**Sanofi Pasteur Vaccines** has announced the promotion of **Kelly Rebmann Shepperson** to Head, Global Medical Education. She can be reached at [kelly.rebmann@sanofi.com](mailto:kelly.rebmann@sanofi.com).

**SSCG Media Group** has announced the promotions of **Anne (Danielle) Beck** to Group Supervisor, Multichannel Media, at [Abeck@sscgmedia.com](mailto:Abeck@sscgmedia.com); **Claudia Beguiristain** to Senior Media Planner at [cbeguiristain@sscgmedia.com](mailto:cbeguiristain@sscgmedia.com); **Mandy Graziani** to Vice President, Associate Director, Multichannel Media at [mgraziani@sscgmedia.com](mailto:mgraziani@sscgmedia.com); **Sandra Parrelli Knight** to Vice President, Director, Research and Strategy, at [sparrelli@sscgmedia.com](mailto:sparrelli@sscgmedia.com); and **Amy (Veress) Winters** to Senior Media Planner at [awinters@sscgmedia.com](mailto:awinters@sscgmedia.com). **Kevin Ciemniecki** has joined the company as Group Supervisor, Multichannel Media, at [kevin.ciemniecki@sscgmedia.com](mailto:kevin.ciemniecki@sscgmedia.com); and **Shannon Doyle** as Senior Multichannel Media Planner at [shannon.doyle@sscgmedia.com](mailto:shannon.doyle@sscgmedia.com).

**TBWA\Chiat\Day New York** has announced the promotion of **Nancy Reyes** to Chief Executive Officer.

**Teva Pharmaceuticals** has announced the appointment of **Rebecca Weiss** as Manager, Multichannel Marketing. She can be reached at [Rebecca.weiss@tevapharm.com](mailto:Rebecca.weiss@tevapharm.com).

**21GRAMS** has announced the promotion of **Janine Del Giorno** to Senior Vice President, Group Account Director. She can be reached at [jdelgiorno@21gramsny.com](mailto:jdelgiorno@21gramsny.com).

**Veeva Systems** has announced the appointment of **John Michael Skoyles** as U.S. Account Director. He can be reached at [john.skoyles@veeva.com](mailto:john.skoyles@veeva.com).

**WebMD** has announced the appointment of **Colleen Fedorowicz** as Senior Manager, Strategic Accounts. She can be reached at [cfedorowicz@webmd.net](mailto:cfedorowicz@webmd.net).

**Wunderman Thompson Health** has announced the appointment of **Nicholas Sherwin** as Senior Vice President, Account Director. He can be reached at [nicholas.sherwin@wundermanthompson.com](mailto:nicholas.sherwin@wundermanthompson.com).

## NEW & NOTEWORTHY

awards • mergers • approvals

**Calcium** has announced the opening of its fourth office in Miami. **Julie Tripi**, Senior Vice President, Global Client Lead, is relocating to oversee the new office. Chief Executive Officer, **Steven Michaelson**, will also be relocating to this office.

**GlaxoSmithKline, plc**, has received U.S. FDA approval of JEMPERLI (dostarlimab-gxly), a programmed death receptor-1 (PD-1) blocking antibody, based on the company's Biologics License Application. JEMPERLI is indicated for the treatment of adult patients with mismatch repair-deficient (dMMR) recurrent or advanced endometrial cancer, as determined by an FDA-approved test, who have progressed on or following prior treatment with a platinum-containing regimen.

**Pfizer, Inc.**, has acquired **Amplix Pharmaceuticals**, which is developing a new treatment for drug-resistant "superbug" fungal infections in patients with compromised immune systems. If approved, **Amplix's** lead drug fosmanogepix would be the first new class of antifungal treatment in 20 years.

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# Seeing Mom In Person Again

BY IVETTE MCFARLAND

When my family first moved down to Miami, Florida, almost 30 years ago, I was excited to visit and spend time down there. Several visits later, the novelty had worn off and going down became just another trip. While I love my family and always look forward to seeing and spending time with them, I did not consider this a vacation – but something for which I always needed to (begrudgingly) set aside some paid-time-off days.

My family (mom, sister/brother-in-law/niece) now live in Naples, Florida. I will admit I have enjoyed visiting them there so much more than in Miami over the past several years. But again, I did not approach these trips with the same enthusiasm as I would had I been heading over to say...Hawaii!

## MISSING MOM

Fast-forward to March 2021. After a year of sheltering in place and not being able to see loved ones in person, I had a renewed appreciation for the little things. I was reminded of what we all missed out on and the time we lost. Seeing hints of light at the end of the tunnel early in the year, the urge to visit my mom kicked in. I was torn. On the one hand, I realized it was not the most responsible decision to get on a plane when I'd not yet been vaccinated. On the other hand, my mom, a recent widow, had been alone for much of the year despite family and many friends living nearby. I could sense it was beginning to wear on her, and I was concerned.

## PROCEEDING WITH CAUTION

I approached this trip with a renewed sense of enthusiasm. So instead of the usual "long weekend" of maybe four days, I scheduled 10 days. After being home for so long, I needed the change of scenery. Plus, I knew my mom



Mom and me at the Ritz for Happy Hour.

would appreciate the extra time. When booking my flight, I noticed middle seats were once again bookable, so I tried to be strategic about my selection. I chose the window seat, which would allow me to face away from anyone sitting next to me. I double-masked and wore clear goggles to protect my eyes.



Dinner at Bravo with mom's buddies.

Overall, I felt pretty safe and confident that I would be fine – but there was always that nagging little voice asking, "What if...?" The flight was crowded as it was around spring break/Passover/Easter. Yes, I picked the BEST time to fly for the first time (insert eye-rolling emoji)! The flight was uneventful. Everyone was pleasant and cooperative. I always worry I'll be on the flight that becomes a story on the evening news. You know, some-

one refuses to wear a mask, makes a scene, they're thrown off the plane, and now your flight is delayed by hours? I KNOW people who have experienced this!

## A SWEET REUNION

Upon landing and retrieving my luggage, the moment of truth had arrived. My mom was waiting outside for me and I got to give her the biggest hug ever! I won't lie, I got a little emotional. She was beside herself with excitement, wearing the biggest grin I've seen in quite a while. We had the best visit – hung out at her pool (I got sunburned on the

*(Continued on page 9)*



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# PICKLEBALL

## AN EMERGING PHENOMENA

BY JOHN R. CLAY

**P**ickleball is growing at a staggering rate but still a relatively unknown sport to many. For the yet uninitiated or those very new to pickleball, let's take a look at its beginning and evolution.

The game began as a fluke in 1965, in Seattle, Washington. Joel Pritchard, William Bell, and Barney McCallum (three congressmen) were together enjoying a Sunday afternoon with their families, and found their kids were bored. In an attempt to entertain the kids, they improvised a game using table tennis paddles and a wiffle ball, and they lowered the net on the badminton court. Family and friends came to genuinely enjoy this new game. Formal rules of play were established. Pickleball was born.

### IT'S ALL IN THE NAME

There are differing accounts of the origin of the name. One account credits Pritchard's wife. Believers say the combination of different sports (ping pong, tennis, badminton) reminded her of the "pickle" boat in crew where oarsmen were chosen from the leftovers of other boats. According to McCallum, the game was officially named after the Pritchard's dog (Pickles), who would chase after the ball and run off with it. The debate among players is ongoing, and many believe that both accounts may be true. True or not, the dog story makes me feel good.

### A LITTLE HISTORY

The early demographics of the sport were dominated by a senior population. Many of these mature players came from racquetball and/or tennis backgrounds. Pickleball offered a competitive option that was much more forgiving on maturing bones. As the sport continues to evolve, it is as inviting to the novice player with little to no racquet sport experience as it is to those with more accomplished athletic ability.

### MAKING PICKLEBALL OFFICIAL

Pickleball, as we know it today, took rise nationally in 1972. Recent data has over two million players in the U.S. alone, and this number is expected to continue to grow exponentially. USA Pickleball was established in 2003. This organization created a national database of locations to play and tournaments to enter, a formal rules committee, and a national ranking system for tournament players.

The first formal tournament was in 2009 and hosted 400 players from 46 states. Today, there are several hundred tournaments across the U.S., hosting entries from 100 to 1000+ players. There are three national tournaments, each drawing more than 2000 players from all over the world. Players compete based on their earned skill level – 1.0 (beginner) to 5.5 (professional). Still predominately a doubles game (men's, women's,



U.S. Open Pickleball Tournament.

mixed), the growing pro-level division does feature a singles game.

### BASICS

Comparatively, pickleball is a relatively inexpensive sport to enjoy. Most social play is through the park system and court time is free. Indoor options can come with a fee of \$12-20/hour of play, a reasonable cost split between four players. Beginner paddles range from \$30-60; the more serious and professional players will invest \$150-200 for a paddle. A package of 12 balls is about \$12. Playing apparel is your most comfortable athletic gear and running shoes.

### PERSONAL CONNECTION

My introduction to pickleball was somewhat circuitous. Enjoying a great retirement and leisurely engaging in my son Jonathan's racquetball business (Rollout), I was

having all the fun and none of the responsibility – a great retirement gig. A professional racquetball player, my son began playing in undergraduate school. By the time he finished grad school, he had developed a dominant presence in the business side of the sport. Rollout organizes and develops tournaments across the country; sponsors a network of 60 accomplished amateur and professional players that represent the brand in tournament play; and is the largest apparel company dedicated to the sport of racquetball in the world.

**FROM RACQUETBALL TO PICKLEBALL**

In 2015, my son announced an expansion into a new sport, Pickleball. I never heard of and knew absolutely nothing about this sport. He was asked to partner with the then newly created U.S. Open Pickleball Championships, as the official apparel provider. His newest company, Kitch Pickleball, was formed. Since inception, this tournament has grown from a seven-day event with 800 players, to a 10-day event in 2021 with over 2000 registered players.

Since the partnership, Kitch has grown substantially, serving the apparel needs of several hundred tournaments across the U.S., as well as the individual apparel needs of thousands of private players. A mobile store is shipped to a number of tournaments across the country for on-site



Jonathan Clay and John R. Clay.

sales. I have been recruited to be on site for many of these tournaments, actively involved in the marketing and merchandising of the Kitch brand. What better way to spend a retirement than bonding with my son?

In 2019, Kitch created the first New Jersey Open Pickleball Championships. This year, the tournament is scheduled for August 12-15, 2021, at Veterans Park in Hamilton, NJ, the first pro pickleball event ever held in the state. For more tournament details, visit the website – [kitchpickleball.com](http://kitchpickleball.com).

The tournament will host all skill divisions. Whether you are a beginner, serious amateur, or pro, or just want to have a fun day and watch the fastest growing paddle sport in the country, mark your calendar for a day of pickleball fun. Hope to see some of my old pharma friends.

Check the Internet or go to <https://www.places2play.org/> to find out about pickleball in your area.



**John R. Clay** is former President of Strategic Healthcare Alliance – a medical education/communications company. Now retired and living in NJ, he travels extensively, with active involvement nationally in racquetball and pickleball. He can be reached at [john.r.clay@outlook.com](mailto:john.r.clay@outlook.com) or 732-615-8628.

**Seeing Mom** (Continued from page 6)

very first day – apparently, I’ve forgotten how to properly apply sunscreen!), went to the beach, pot-luck dinners with her condo friends, dinner out with her buddies, happy hours, a little bit of binge-watching, did some shopping, and had a brief visit with my sister and her family. My sister was still being cautious as I’d not yet been vaccinated, so I totally understood.



My beautiful niece Olivia.

I helped my mom organize closets, and she cooked some of my favorite meals. We stayed up late talking about life, family, and future plans. I went with her for her second COVID vaccine shot and took care of her the next day when she felt awful.

Having the luxury of a longer stay allowed me to have a good mix of fun, going-out time, relaxation, and helping my mother with a few things around her place that she can’t handle alone. I felt totally refreshed and ready to come back to work with renewed energy.



A night out on the town with Mom.

While I was sad to leave my mom, I left feeling hopeful that we had turned a corner. We can once again make travel plans to see our loved ones. Within a week of returning home, I booked my next flight to Florida to be with Mom for Mother’s Day (I will have been fully vaccinated by then). If 2020 – the year that

never was – has taught me anything, it’s that anytime we are able to have with our loved ones is time well spent. My visit with Mom was full of reminders of what so many of us have missed out on.



**Ivette McFarland** is Vice President, Group Supervisor, Multichannel Media, SSCG Media Group, 220 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017. She can be reached at [imcfarland@sscgmmedia.com](mailto:imcfarland@sscgmmedia.com).



# Reunited

## AND IT FEELS SO GOOD

### Family Movies and a Great Date Night

BY BRANDON BUTTREY

My family and I can't wait to begin going back to movie theaters. We miss the fun of grabbing snacks and heading into the big screen to laugh and enjoy time together. It's not been the same doing movies just in our home...we all love watching those fun animated films and having bags of popcorn.



Also, my wife and I are excited to get back to going to restaurants... we love being able to cruise the town and restaurant-hop through several courses during our night. The perfect date would be the Red Feather restaurant for appetizers, Boca for an entree, and La Grassa for a fun ice cream dessert. Nothing like hopping around Cincinnati to grab fun foods and try new things.

#### THE PERFECT MEAL IN CINCINNATI

- Red Feather: Fried Zucchini
- Boca: Cowboy Steak
- La Grassa: Mocha Chip Gelato



**Brandon Buttrey** is New Business Director, Underscore Marketing, LLC, 17 State Street, Suite 1910, New York, NY 10004. He can be reached at [brandon.buttrey@underscoremarketing.com](mailto:brandon.buttrey@underscoremarketing.com) or 646-442-4481.

### Atlantic City Pizza

BY MICHELLE PERKEL

My favorite pizza place is Tony's Baltimore Grill in Atlantic City. It is a dive a few blocks off the boardwalk, and has a fantastic thin crust pizza. Not only is it delicious, it's been a family favorite for multiple decades.



Our musts on the menu... We always order the cheese pie per family tradition. My husband and I split a side of sausage and a side of meatballs. We also order a loaf of the famous AC bread.



**Michelle Perkel** is Associate Media Director, McCann Health Engagement, 622 3rd Avenue, New York, NY 10017. She can be reached at [michelle.perkel@mccann.com](mailto:michelle.perkel@mccann.com) or 973-917-6447.

### Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana: Coal Fired Pizza

BY AL LUCCHESI

When the moon whits your eye like a big pizza pie you have to come to one of the many Frank Pepe's coal-fired pizza restaurants in Connecticut. I



think the only reason people live in Connecticut is so they can enjoy their fresh tomato pizza. There are many more varieties. Just google their menu and I'm sure your mouth will start to water.

#### A LITTLE UPDATE

We moved to Southbury, Connecticut, three years ago to be close to our lovely granddaughter. Up until the quarantine, we went to the senior center for exercise programs and various intellectual programs. Now we are doing everything on Zoom. I have also been writing the history of our Italian family that came to America in 1930. My lovely wife Adele and I will celebrate our 59th wedding anniversary this year and plan to get back to Italy after the quarantine. God bless all of my former acquaintances for it was my pleasure to know all of you.



**Al Lucchesi** last worked in advertising sales for a neurology publication at Wolters Kluwer. He can be reached at [Lucchesi.aj@gmail.com](mailto:Lucchesi.aj@gmail.com).



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# How Regrets Led Me to Fitness Success

BY RANDY DOERR

“It was the best month of my entire life,” I declared while my father drove me and my roommate home from the little chunk of paradise that is Manasquan, New Jersey. It was the Tuesday after Labor Day 2019.

After spending my childhood summers at my family beach house in Normandy Beach, NJ (30 minutes south of Manasquan), a group of high school friends decided to lease a share house. As someone who had started his first “real job” as a media buyer a year earlier and had real money for the first time in his life, I didn’t have to be asked twice! Also, for what it’s worth, my parents happened to meet at a Jersey Shore share house, so maybe I would have the same luck.

## GROWING PAINS

Unfortunately for me, there was one major issue that would unintentionally cut this magical experience short – I was the heaviest I had ever been. I had always been a bigger guy – tall for my age (until I stopped growing the day I hit six feet), with broad shoulders. I was a decent athlete my entire life, playing soccer, basketball, and baseball up until high school, when I made the transition to football. Playing these sports kept my weight at reasonable levels despite my refusal to eat anything healthy. Once football ended my senior year and I knew I would never be a competitive athlete again, I really started to lose control. This led to crazy weight fluctuations throughout college and post-graduation as well, resulting in me being on the very edge of 300 pounds heading into our share house that summer of 2019.

## DOUBTING MYSELF

As I mentioned before, I was an athlete in high school and this was a house with mostly high school friends who were also athletes. However, after high school, these gentlemen took a FAR different path than I did. By that I mean there were roughly 10 college athletes and two or three former professional athletes all living under one roof for the summer. As Memorial Day Weekend quickly approached, I started to have some real self-doubt. I even started to think these guys wouldn’t want me to go out with them, since I



was looking like an overstuffed sausage at that point.

## A HEART-TO-HEART CONVERSATION

Obviously, these misgivings would turn out to be ridiculous, but for the months of June and July my time in Manasquan was incredibly limited. Eventually, I would take the plunge and fully embrace the house, basically living there for the month of August and having the greatest month of my life. Yet, as my dad drove me home on that Tuesday, the regret began to set in. I had wasted most of the summer because of my stupid weight. It was time to do something. In a moment that would reaffirm anyone’s belief in a higher power, just as I was having these thoughts, my dad decided to have a deeply heartfelt and honest conversation with me. He talked about how I had let my weight get out of control and said, to fully enjoy my mid-20s, I

really needed to do something about it. So, I did.

## KETO SUCCESS

The very next day I began to change my life with the goal of going from 297 to 199 pounds. As I mentioned before, healthy eating was never something that came easy



Golfing with Travis, a Manasquan friend who became family (August 2020).

to me, so I decided to commit to a hardcore, carb-free keto diet. What followed were very bland days filled with tons of grilled chicken, spicy Italian sausage, and occasionally some cheese. I could feel my body changing and the results were there.

## TIME TO RUN

After four months of keto, I had lost 50 pounds and was feeling better than I had felt in a very long time. As diet-only weight loss started to slow down, I decided I was

*(Continued on page 13)*



# Finishing the Race on Foot, Then by Bike

BY STEVE TAUBER

I have been an athlete most of my life, at least I like to think so, or make believe. It all started back in high school when, at the tender age of 14, I accidentally discovered I was good at running. I was a member of both the track and cross-country teams. During my senior year, we won the championships in both sports. Truth be told, I really enjoyed cross-country and running in the woods and I hated running around in circles on the track. But, in life, we do a lot of things we don't want to (especially if your coach tells you that you have to). I have always had a passion for running and being fit and this continued into college. Unfortunately, as a Freshman in college, I began experiencing some nagging injuries and temporarily gave up running.

## RUNNING THROUGH LIFE

I resumed running in my 30s and ran two marathons in my mid-40s. At 45, I qualified to run in the Boston Marathon by running a sub 3:30 marathon. I remember qualifying vividly. Pain has a long memory. I was sprinting for the finish during the Baltimore Marathon and I could see the clock in the distance ticking away and closing in on the elusive 3:30 time. I sprinted for it, as every muscle in my body cramped, and I crossed the finish line in 3:24. This qualified me for the Boston Marathon. As fortune (or misfortune really) would have it, I experienced another injury and was unable to participate. I eventually had knee surgery and continued running into my 50s.

## TRANSITIONING TO CYCLING

However, about five years ago, I realized I had to find a sport or hobby that would result in less impact on my bones and joints, so I became a cyclist. I have since learned

that this is often a natural progression for runners. After cycling for about two years, I allowed myself to be convinced to join a bike racing team (conveniently sponsored by a local brewery, which had nothing to do with me signing up) and I started racing my bike(s). Most of the races I participate in are road races. For some reason, I am particularly good at time-trialing. This is the most difficult type of bike race, as you go as fast as you can, a race against the clock, until you cross the finish line or die trying. My fastest time

trial is an average pace of 25.7 mph over a 25-mile course.

## ONTO MOUNTAIN BIKE COMPETITIONS

I stepped even further outside of my comfort zone by participating in a mountain bike race (see pictures). The reason this is such a stretch for me is because I am vertically challenged on a road bike, as I have had more than my share of crashes on the road.

Last spring, I crashed during a weekend group ride and fractured my scapula (that hurt a little). However, I am competitive to a fault and I had a couple of races scheduled in the weeks after the crash. One was a time-trial in New Jersey, in which I took third place in my race (two weeks post-crash). The other one was a local Duathlon (run-bike-run) where I took second overall and first in the bike leg. (Did I mention how big of a kick I get out of beating guys who are less than half my age?)

My proudest accomplishments on my bike were my third-place age group finish in Gran Fondo Maryland in 2019, and my first-place age group (fifth overall) finish in 2020. This race, which is part of a national race series, is 100 miles long with 10,000 feet of climbing and four timed seg-



Trying to stay upright.



Trying not to drown.

ments. I would have finished third overall if it hadn't been for...Wait for it...A crash!

So needless to say, it took a lot of conniving to convince me to participate in a mountain bike race (the race itself was



Where is everybody?

only the third time I rode my mountain bike this year). In preparation, three days before the race, I crashed (yep, are you noticing a pattern here?), spraining my left thumb and creating a significant purple blotch on my inner thigh (which is still a constant reminder that I need to learn how to ride a bike). Ironically, I know how to ride a unicycle and I almost never crash when riding it.

Fortunately, I stayed upright in my first-ever mountain bike race and finished sixth overall in a very crowded field. Pushing my luck to the limit and significantly challenging my vertical skills, I had two more races scheduled before the end of 2020. There was a gravel race, which I won, in Category C. The Cyclocross Race was cancelled due to COVID.

**BALANCING WORKOUTS AND NUTRITION**

The keys to my success have always been my relentless drive to succeed, to never give up, and put in the time and effort required to achieve my goals. My routine includes 30 minutes of core work, five days a week; weight-lifting, one hour per day four days per week; and biking, five days per week, with two very intense workouts out of the five and averaging over 150 miles per week.



Trying to finish strong.

The biggest challenge for me is my diet. In reality, I've lost about 20 pounds since I began cycling and my waist size is the same as it was during my first year of college. Because I can eat and drink whatever I want, sometimes I do, as I have a weakness for cookies, cakes, chips, and sweets. However, typically, if I cheat one day, I make up for it the next. Still, eating healthy is the most difficult part of my daily routine. For me, it's even more challenging than remaining upright on my bike.



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# Fitness Success *(Continued from page 11)*



Spring 2019 with my brother, mom, and dad – Likely the heaviest I ever was...or will be.

going to force myself to become a runner. Running is something I had always had trouble with. However, I absolutely envied people who could run for miles with no effort and seemed to genuinely enjoy it. So, I joined the gym closest to my office, started running every day, and worked my way up from almost dying after a mile to running five to six miles comfortably. This helped re-accelerate my weight loss and I was down nearly 75 pounds by March, looking and feeling better than I ever had.

**GETTING TO THE FINISH LINE**

As the world entered the pandemic, my gym closed down and I lost some motivation as I was very comfortable where I was with my weight. For the next several months, I managed to maintain my weight and have an incredible summer living nearly full time in Manasquan. The friends that had become family the previous August could not have been prouder of me. We made the best out of the situation around us, but obviously the summer fun just wasn't the same. In an almost poetic way, I decided to get myself back into gear the same week we committed to signing the house for our third summer. I have been grinding ever since to finish the job I started.

**MANASQUAN TRANSFORMATION**

As the Manasquan gang gets older and approaches their late 20s more quickly than we ever could have imagined, there will always be speculation about whether this summer will be our last summer together in Manasquan. However, with the world rapidly reopening and nearly all Covid restrictions lifted in NJ by Memorial Day Weekend, the core crew that has become a family could not be more excited to welcome brand-new faces and start to return to normalcy. If the last 14 months has taught me (and many people) anything, it is truly how precious both time and normalcy are. With that being said, I am not going to take a single thing for granted. I'll work harder than I ever have before to get where I want to be. Regardless of what happens down the line, I will be forever grateful for the memories I have made and how 'Squan changed my life forever.



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# Jeff Greene

**Birthplace:** Edison, NJ  
**Marital Status:** Married  
**Children:** 2  
**Job Title:** Vice President, Strategic Planning,  
 Intouch Group  
**Years in Industry:** 23 (12 in pharma)  
**College:** Rutgers University

*"Do or do not.  
 There is no try."*

— Yoda



## WHAT ARE TWO THINGS ON YOUR BUCKET LIST?

I would love to visit Thailand. Author Eric Weiner spent time in the kingdom, which he chronicled in his book *The Geography of Bliss – One Grump's Search for the Happiest Place in the World*. It seems to be a place that has figured out the way to contentment through a mix of ancient Buddhist practices and more modern pursuits. The natural scenery looks beautiful, especially the beaches of Phuket. I'm sure the food is amazing. The other item on my bucket list is to perform stand-up comedy. One day I'll get some material together and do an open-mic night.

## WHAT IS THE BIGGEST OBSTACLE YOU HAVE OVERCOME?

When you go through anxiety and panic disorder, a tendency is to blame yourself. Getting past that self-blame is the biggest obstacle, but once you do it, you can start working on solutions. I've learned a lot about myself in the process of dealing with anxiety, and a lot about other people, so in a very real way it's been both an obstacle and a source of personal growth.

## WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST JOB?

My first full-time job was Online Editor for the Asbury Park Press newspaper. I was a webmaster, but the web was still new and people didn't know what to call me. I was responsible for updating the paper's website with news filed in the Harris publishing system, which was a complicated process. I also wrote some business and feature articles. There were only 15 other online newspapers at the time; at least that's how many were listed in the Yahoo! directory. After two years, I left to join a digital consultancy. Turned out to be a pretty good career move.

## IF YOU COULD DO A GUEST ROLE ON A TV SHOW, WHICH ONE WOULD IT BE?

*Stranger Things*, hands down. This is not only one of the best-scripted streaming shows, but also one of the most nostalgic for '80s kids like me. It's Stephen King, Steven Spielberg, and Scooby Doo all wrapped up together.

## WHO DO YOU MOST ADMIRE FOR THEIR HUMANITARIAN OR CHARITABLE EFFORTS?

Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter. He's been one of our country's greatest negotiators, forging peace efforts between Egypt and Israel (famously). After he left office, he mediated disputes involving North Korea, Libya, and Haiti, among many others. He and his wife Rosalynn continue donating time

to Habitat for Humanity. And his Carter Center has been a primary driver behind education efforts to eradicate Guinea worm disease, which has been eliminated in 17 countries.

## WHAT IS THE LAST GOOD BOOK YOU'VE READ?

*A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles. What if you were confined to a single hotel room for the rest of your life? Would it change who you are? There is solace here for those struggling with our current quarantine situation. It's a beautifully told story.

## DO YOU HAVE ANY HOBBIES?

About a year ago, I found my old baseball cards I collected as a kid. I meant to sell them all on eBay and ended up rediscovering the hobby. It's as strong as ever. Modern cards are selling out at Target and Walmart. Thanks to Facebook groups and demographics, there are probably tens of thousands of former collectors like me who are all reconnecting online in search of favorite players and sets. I picked up some Dwight Gooden and Darryl Strawberry autographed cards recently. They were my baseball heroes.

## WHAT IS YOUR PET PEEVE?

When people type "your," but mean "you're." Come on, you learned possessives and contractions in grade school! Didn't you?

## HAVE YOU EVER HAD A BRUSH WITH FAME?

Once I held the door for Bruce Springsteen. It was at Federici's Family Restaurant in Freehold, NJ. Walking out with my pizza, I noticed everyone's eyes widening as I passed each table. He was right behind me, with his kids in tow. It's not uncommon – Bruce and his family regularly visit the local restaurants in his hometown.

## IF YOU COULD SEE ANYONE IN CONCERT, WHO WOULD IT BE?

One of my only regrets is not seeing R.E.M. live when they were together. They were great songwriters and probably inspired half the bands that made it big in the 1990s.

## WHAT DO YOU KNOW FOR SURE?

Time is precious.  
 Life is suffering, and also beautiful.  
 Chocolate chip cookies are delicious.

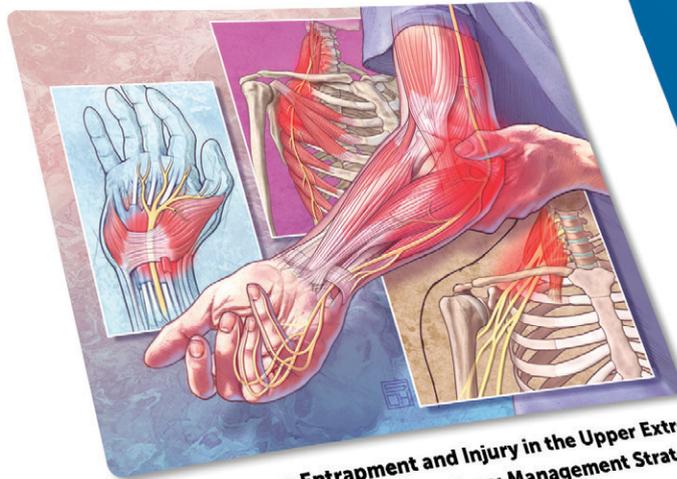


Jeff and his wife Ella on the Hanapepe Swinging Bridge in Kauai, 2016.

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<sup>1</sup> The Essential Journal Study for Primary Care, The Matalia Group, 2019

<sup>2</sup> KANTAR Medical/Surgical Media Measurement, Fall 2020 Primary Care, Tables 402, 403 and 404

<sup>3</sup> KANTAR Medical/Surgical Media Measurement, Fall 2020 Primary Care, Table 201

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\*Source: Kantar, Medical/Surgical Media Measurement, Fall 2020.

