

Next Month:  
Summer Fun

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"Where Healthcare Marketers Connect"

Vol. 32, No. 5  
JUNE 2023

## Celebrating Life

### **Enjoying a Lifetime of Song**

Dick Barnett

### **Celebrating and Giving Thanks for a Life**

Jeff Forster

### **Max Emiliano: The Greatest Gift and Joy of Fatherhood**

Fabrizio Gambino

### **PDQ - Celebrating 20 Years**

Mary Jane Garvey

### **20 Years and Counting!**

Amanda Preto

### **Celebrating the Big 50**

Alya Sherman



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## Dear Healthcare Marketer,

I've always liked this saying by Maya Angelou...

"Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away."

I've been blessed with many moments in my life that have taken my breath away. Some are unbelievably happy and some are incredibly sad. One of my greatest memories was seeing Bruce Springsteen at Madison Square Garden on September 21, 1979, with my BFF Lisa. Artists Jackson Browne, James Taylor, and Carly Simon also performed. It was such a highlight that I'm definitely still chasing. My daughters and I will be going to London to see Bruce this summer. I'm so excited to share this with them, as I feel this is probably Bruce's last tour. The extra-nice part about it is Katie's godfather lives in London. The last time we were there was for his wedding, which was one of those magical moments with fascinators!

Also, under the "happy moments" umbrella is a big milestone for Maddie. This month she will be turning 21 years old. We are still working on how we will be celebrating!

Of course, the longer you live, the more moments you have, both happy and sad. One of the downsides of getting older is there is a lot more grief. If only we had the knowledge we have now when we were younger...I don't think we'd take life so seriously. We wouldn't worry about things that don't really matter in the bigger picture.

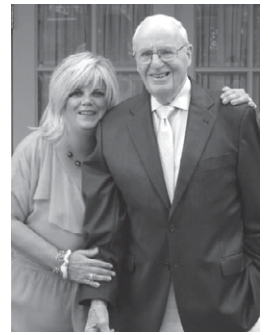
This Father's Day will be difficult as we will be celebrating without my dad for the first time. Since his passing in December, it's truly been a journey of firsts without him. I plan on eating some of his favorite foods, including London broil, baked potatoes, onions and mushrooms, and pineapple upside-down cake, and watching the U.S. Open Golf Tournament as we always did together. It's my way of celebrating Dad's life. And that's what this issue is all about...Celebrating Life.

Alya Sherman is no stranger to celebrations. She was determined to make her "year of turning 50" an epic adventure. Spoiler alert – She succeeded! How about an office trip to Antigua? Mary Jane Garvey tells about the trip she and cofounder Joanne Andre took their team on to celebrate 20 years of PDQ Communications success. Amanda Preto has loved the past 20 years being a part of Compas and the CMI Media Group and all the ways they have grown her and supported her professionally and personally. Dick Barnett shares his journey of self-expression and celebration through singing, starting in his youth through today. Fabrizio Gambino will have you smiling along as he celebrates his son and all the tremendous life-changing joys of becoming a father. And Jeff Forster writes about the trend that seems to be gaining momentum – a Celebration of Life in lieu of a funeral. He gives us a moving account of the unique Celebration of Life he and his family shared to remember his brother Gary.

In the mix of all in life that can be stressful and challenging, there is beauty. That's worth celebrating!

Happy Father's Day to all the dads out there,

*Nancy*



Missing you, Dad.

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# ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Alexion Pharmaceuticals, Inc.**, has announced the appointment of **Mark Arrigan** as Head of Global Market Insights – Market Research and Competitive Intelligence.

**Brainlabs** has announced the appointment of **Adam Potashnick** as Chief Executive Officer, North America. He can be reached at [Adam.Potashnick@brainlabsdigital.com](mailto:Adam.Potashnick@brainlabsdigital.com).

**Bristol Myers Squibb** has announced the appointment of **Chris Boerner** as the next Chief Executive Officer. He will succeed **Giovanni Caforio** who retires in November.

**Butler/Till** has announced the promotion of **Allana Robinson** to Senior Publisher Direct Specialist.

**CMI Media Group** has announced the following appointments: **Felicia Thompson** as Senior Analyst, Paid Social; **Ryan Fisher** as Senior Analyst, SEM; **Emma Troxell** as Analyst, SEO; **Alexa Briggs** and **Nicole Milkovich** as Managers, Business Insights; **Derek Pehlman** as Vice President, SEM; **Jeremy Hart** as Supervisor, Social Engagement; **Melanie Lysaght** and **Casey Cronin** as Directors, Innovation; **Marissa Spangler** as Director, Project Management; **Danny Schmidt** as Supervisor, Media; **Lindsey Melnyk** as Associate Director, Media; **Ryan Blinderman** as Associate Media Planner; **Daniel Winter** as Vice President, Product Strategy; **Ifgenia Kumar** as Analyst, SEM; **Mike D'Angelo** as Associate Director, SEM; and **Bill Rowland** as Vice President, SEO.

**Compas** has announced the appointment of **Marc Seibert** as Account Coordinator, Buying Services and Deliverables.

**Doximity** has announced the appointment of **Erika Bastien** as Senior Director, Client Success.

**EVERSANA** has announced the promotion of **Jennifer Dooley** to Senior Client Engagement Manager. She can be reached at [Jennifer.dooley@eversana.com](mailto:Jennifer.dooley@eversana.com).

**Evoke** has announced the promotion of **Sydney Wilcox** to Senior Account Director.

**Evoke MicroMass** has announced the promotion of **Andi Weiss** to Vice President, Behavioral Services. She can be reached at [andi.weiss@evokegroup.com](mailto:andi.weiss@evokegroup.com).

**FCB Health New York** has announced the appointment of **Elizabeth Cassata** as Vice President, Account Director. She can be reached at [ecassata@gmail.com](mailto:ecassata@gmail.com). Promoted at the company was **Jessica Proffitt** to Vice President, Management Director. She can be reached at [jessica.proffitt@fcbhealth.com](mailto:jessica.proffitt@fcbhealth.com).

**Ferring Pharmaceuticals** has announced the appointment of **Hannah McRoberts** as Marketing Services Specialist.

**Fingerprint** has announced the appointment of **Jennifer Talley** as Vice President, Group Account Director.

**Good Apple** has announced the promotion of **Julia Constantine** to Senior Account Manager. She can be reached at [julia@goodapple.com](mailto:julia@goodapple.com). Joining the company is **Carolyn Davis** as Associate Media Director.

**Harmelin Media** has announced the promotion of **Mark Murphy** to Director, Digital Planning. He can be reached at [mmurphy@harmelin.com](mailto:mmurphy@harmelin.com).

**Havas** has announced the appointment of **Stephanie Torres** as Associate Director, Paid Search.

**Havas Village X** has announced the promotion of **Tim O'Grady** to Managing Director.

**Healio** has announced the promotion of **Matthew Holland** to Chief Operating Officer. He can be reached at [mholland@healio.com](mailto:mholland@healio.com).

**Healio Strategic Solutions** has announced the promotions of **Christine Martynick** to Senior Vice President, Advertising Solutions and Agency Partnerships, and **Matt Dechen** to Senior Vice President, Deep Engagement and Custom Solutions. He can be reached at [mdechen@healiohss.com](mailto:mdechen@healiohss.com).

**Hill Holliday Health**, an **IPG Health Company**, has announced the appointment of **Neil Rubenstein** as Vice President, Engagement Strategy Director.

**Horizon Media** has announced the appointment of **Jaeda McPherson** as Senior Planner, Paid Social Media.

**Initiative** has announced the promotion of **Carolina Lavorato** to Manager, Communications Design. Joining the company is **Marina Zupko** as Senior Negotiator, **Marisa Cutaia** as Communications Designer, and **Ruben A. Ramirez** as Associate Director, Communication Designs.

**IQVIA** has announced the appointment of **Zanaya Wagner** as Talent Acquisition Manager.

**Kantar Media Healthcare** has announced the appointment of **Brittany Drake** to Client Delivery Manager. She can be reached at [Brittany.drake@kantar.com](mailto:Brittany.drake@kantar.com).

**Klick** has announced the appointment of **Logan O'Riley** as Senior Account Director.

**Merck** has announced the appointment of **Lane Lehigh** as Associate Director, Campaign Development Lead.

**MERGE** has announced the appointments of **Libby Morgan** as Chief Digital Business Officer and **Stacey Hawes** as Chief Performance and Data Officer.

**NEJM Group** has announced the appointment of **Linsey Rosenthal** as Regional Media Sales Director. She can be reached at [Lrosenthal@nejm.org](mailto:Lrosenthal@nejm.org).

**Novartis** has announced the appointment of **Adrian Charbin, Ph.D.**, as Executive Director, Solid Tumor Strategy. He can be reached at [charbin@novartis.com](mailto:charbin@novartis.com).

**Novo Nordisk** has announced the appointment of **Andre (AJ) Dopwell, Jr.**, as Associate Brand Director, Obesity Marketing.

**OMD USA** has announced the appointment of **Arielle Chavkin** as Executive Director, Digital Activation. She can be reached at [arielle.chavkin@omd.com](mailto:arielle.chavkin@omd.com).

**PatientPoint** has announced the appointment of **Elizabeth Hall** as Director, POC Advertising and Brand Messaging Solutions.

**Pfizer** has announced the appointment of **Dan Sorine** as Director, GI Marketing. He can be reached at [Dan.Sorine44@gmail.com](mailto:Dan.Sorine44@gmail.com). Promoted at the company was **Jessica D'Amico Cirigliano** to Marketing Execution Director/Team Lead Oncology, Multiple Myeloma.

**Precision Value & Health** has announced the appointment of **Carolyn Morgan** as Chief Growth Officer. She can be reached at [Carolyn.morgan@precisionvh.com](mailto:Carolyn.morgan@precisionvh.com).

**Publicis Health Media** has announced the appointment of **Marissa Speroni** as Media Supervisor of Investments. She can be reached at [marissa.speroni@publicishealthmedia.com](mailto:marissa.speroni@publicishealthmedia.com). Also joining the company is **Julian Giacobbo** as Paid Social Associate.

**Real Chemistry** has announced the appointment of **Christiana Pascale** as Group Director.

**Sanofi Genzyme** has announced the appointment of **Burc Tuncay** as Associate Vice President, Global Brand Lead, Fabry.

**Sermo** has announced the appointment of **Kaitlin O'Hara** as Senior Marketing Director.

**Swoop** has announced the appointment of **Matthew Baffa** as Managing Sales Director. He can be reached at [mbaffa@swoop.com](mailto:mbaffa@swoop.com).

**Syneos Health** has announced the promotion of **Shauna Keough** to President of U.S. Public Relations and the appointment of **Michael Bonello** as Chief Financial Officer.

**Terraboost Media** has announced the appointment of **Peter Messina** as Senior Director, National Media Sales. He can be reached at [pmessina@terraboost.biz](mailto:pmessina@terraboost.biz).

**The Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies of Johnson & Johnson** have announced the appointment of **Leal Morehouse** as Senior Manager, Product Communications and Public Affairs.



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**Meg Ainley**

See the event recap at [AMMOnline.org](http://AMMOnline.org)

## Celebrating the Big 50

BY ALYA SHERMAN

It's no secret that I love celebrating my birthday with #TheMonthOfAlya. As I reflect on the year I turned 50, I can't help but feel grateful for all of the amazing experiences and adventures I had with family and friends. Leading up to #TheYearOfAlya, I was determined to make it an epic one with a mix of reliving old favorite travel spots and experiencing brand-new ones. It took a bit of pre-planning...well, a lot, truth be told, but August 2021 through August 2022 didn't disappoint. My goal was to have one new experience per month. This led to a whirlwind of a year, full of highs and lows, with each experience teaching me something valuable, further proving you're never too old to learn something new. So, allow me to take you on a journey that I hope entertains and inspires you to #CarpeDiem.

### FIRST STOP – FRANCE

The official celebration started in **August**, as I said Bonjour to the big 50 with my husband Phil and son Jacob in France – Paris, Cannes, St. Tropez, and Nice. I had been to



Celebrating my birthday at the legendary Le Club 55 in St. Tropez with my boys.

all of these places before and there was nothing I wanted more than to kick off the birthday trip in my favorite city, Paris, and end it ON my birthday in my favorite town, St. Tropez. With a few travel hiccups – like missing the ferry from Cannes to St. Tropez – the trip was all that I had imagined and more! Hint: Uber in the South of France is not as reliable as it is in many other parts of the world,

### FALL FUN

All of the women in my family are 20 years apart. So, in **September**, it was time to celebrate Baba Alla's 90th. Yes, my grandma is 90 and by far the most stylish and coolest person I know! Also in September, we attended my favorite sporting event, the US Open in New York, suite-style.

I've been attending the US Open for years, getting hooked when the bad boy of tennis John McEnroe and his band the **Johnny Smyth Band** headlined a party I attended as a young media professional. If I'm being honest, however, I now go for tennis...a little and the honey deuce cocktail... mostly. Yes, it's that good and makes tennis that much more fun.

### ART AND FOODIE FUN

The month of **October** was a mix of culture with Van Gogh: The Immersive Experience with my mom and girlfriends, and trying new things like silver hair extensions. They were fun while they lasted, but boy am I glad they are out. I did take them to NYC for a fun weekend with the hubs where we dined at Dirty French and Kochi. Opened in 2019, one Michelin-starred Kochi, meaning skewer, is Chef Shim's first solo project and is a must-try. Be sure to sit at the bar for the full foodie experience.

**DINING, SHOPPING...AND BRACES**

In **November**, I won the foodie lottery, aka reservation, at my all-time favorite Philadelphia restaurant, Zahav. If you haven't been, go, and when you go, get the pomegranate lamb shoulder. You can thank me later, or now at @AlyaBuzz. Yes, I could have been satisfied right then and there, but this was #TheYearOfAlya after all. In my book, this meant an epic travel experience. So on a shopping trip to Milan, Italy, with my girlfriends I went. Milan was fashion fantasy but even more memorable was reuniting with my Italian sister, Simona in Bologna. Simona and I met when we participated in a high school exchange, during which I traveled to Sienna for two weeks to "study." Then she came to the U.S. to do the same. Some friendships stand the test of time and this one I will cherish forever!

### DINING, SHOPPING...AND BRACES

This is certainly not a highlight, but at the ripe age of 50, I got braces. Yes, the teenage metal mouth kind. In retrospect, it was a wise decision but there were days, many days, I regretted it.



Celebrating Baba Alla's 90th birthday with my favorite ladies. We are all 20 years apart!



# CELEBRATING LIFE



## WINTER WONDERS

As **December** rolled around, I reconnected with my MOMentum Sisters for a fun weekend in AC. Not to cheat and include my life-changing trip to Israel in July, but that was certainly a bucket list experience that will stay with me forever. Think birthright for moms, MOMentum is a year-long journey that starts with a weeklong exploration of Israel and continues with monthly learnings that aim to empower women to change the world through Jewish values that transform ourselves, our families, and our communities. From overcoming epic travel restrictions due to COVID and being the first group to enter Israel in over one year to creating lifelong friendships, my 10-day adventure to the Holy Land is one for the books and helped inspire my year of celebrating.

Mid-month, we celebrated my papa's birthday. Then, we jetted off to Mexico for winter break at Xcaret, one of our favorite resorts. We rarely return to the same place more than once, but Xcaret is special. I highly recommend it if you're a travel sloth or an adventure junkie! In **January**, we celebrated my mama's birthday.

## HEART, BODY, MIND

What would **February** be without the celebration of love? If you're a fan of Galentine's Day, a Drag Brunch at Fabrika in Philadelphia is a must! Back to NY, only this time we stayed in Brooklyn at the cooler-than-cool William Vale in Williamsburg. This jaunt included the Christian Dior Designer of Dreams exhibit at the Brooklyn Museum and dinner at 12 Chairs to celebrate our dateiversary. Nothing does the heart better than physical activity, however. So it's only fitting that I rounded out February with a yoga/pilates Pure Bliss Retreat in Jamaica for self-care with some pretty fabulous and fit ladies.

## SPRING TREKS

Jacob's spring break started at the end of **March** as we headed to Arizona to tour colleges...gulp, eat our faces off, and hike...a lot. In **April**, my boy turned 17 – what!?! Also



Spreading peace in the heart of Jerusalem during MOMentum trip in July.

worth mentioning is that, after many months of remote work, I got to see my colleagues IRL for the first time since the pandemic during PHM's Health-Front in NYC.

What got me through the pandemic you may ask? Well, alcohol, yes but also, listening to HAUSER of 2Cellos. During COVID, he performed a special concert in his hometown in the iconic Arena Pula, Croatia. And in April, my dream of seeing him live finally came true when 2Cellos performed in Virginia.

Dearest gentle reader, in **May** we celebrated Mother's Day, which was quickly eclipsed by the *Bridgerton Experience* with my mama as we joined in the Queen's

Ball for a night of fashion, food, and fun!

## FULL CIRCLE

In **June**, we celebrated our 22nd wedding anniversary. On the same day, June 24, I left my groom to board a flight to Paris again with my BFFs and their daughters for one amazing week back in my favorite city, Paris!

## THAT'S A WRAP

If there was ever a silver lining to the pandemic, it was more time spent with loved ones in our favorite places doing the things we enjoy most. So, I took the month of **July** to reflect on the epic year-that-was while planning how to bookend #TheYearOfAlya. In **August**, as I was getting ready to say au revoir to 50 and doing everything I wanted, an intimate birthday dinner with my family was just what I needed.

*I hope my journey around the sun inspires you to:*

- #1 Celebrate your accomplishments and milestones with the people who matter most.
- #2 Treat yourself to new experiences. It's a great way to reward yourself for your hard work and indulge in some much-needed relaxation and self-care.
- #3 Explore and appreciate art, culture, and travel, as it has the power to inspire and transform.
- #4 It's never too late to try new things and work to improve yourself.
- #5 Surround yourself with people who love you and will support you to be you!



Practicing self-care and mindfulness at the Pure Bliss Retreat in Treasure Beach, Jamaica.



*Alya Sherman is Group Vice President, Media and Investments, Publicis Health Media. She can be reached at 856-237-4465 or [alya.sherman@publicishealthmedia.com](mailto:alya.sherman@publicishealthmedia.com).*

## Max Emiliano: The Greatest Gift and Joy of Fatherhood

BY FABRIZIO GAMBINO

Life seemed to be moving at a steady pace before Max's arrival, but little did we know that our world was about to change forever. Tess and I spent months preparing for his arrival, from decorating the nursery and stocking up on baby essentials to reading every parenting book we could get our hands on. But nothing we did could have truly prepared me for the moment he was born.

As I held Max in my arms for the first time, I felt a surge of emotions I had never experienced before.

From that moment on, my life changed in ways I couldn't have imagined. My goals, once solely focused on my



Welcome home, Max.

own personal achievements, now centered on providing the best possible life for my family. And while it may sound like a cliché, the birth of Max truly was the greatest moment of my life.

As a father, there are so many moments that stand out to me. I am amazed by the new kind of love I am experiencing. It is like discovering a new color in the color palette, one that is brighter and more vibrant than anything I have ever seen before. Max is a bundle of energy and has a curious mind that is always eager to explore. He already loves rolling around and getting into mischief. I have lost count of the number of times he has managed to get his hands on



One-month-old Max on Thanksgiving.

ing journey. Being a father has challenged me in ways I never thought possible, but it has also brought me more joy than I ever could have imagined. Every moment with Max is a gift, and I cherish each and every one. Max has changed my life in so many ways, and I am grateful for every moment we share together. He has taught me the true meaning of unconditional love and has given me a newfound appreciation for the little things in life. I am honored to be his father, and I can't wait to see what the future holds for us as a family.



Party time for six-month-old Max.



*Fabrizio Gambino is President and Chief Commercial Officer at RPM Healthcare. He can be reached at [FabrizioG@rpmhealthcare.com](mailto:FabrizioG@rpmhealthcare.com).*



## PDQ – Celebrating 20 Years

BY MARY JANE GARVEY

**PDQ** Communications reached an important milestone in 2023, our 20th year in business! Although it has never been an easy road, I am still surprised by how quickly the time has gone by. With that in mind, our cofounder Joanne Andre and I felt like the celebration should be something extra special. I'm not sure how we did it, but PDQ has had a unique ability to attract experienced professionals and keep them with the team for many years. Most of the team members that joined us on the trip have been with PDQ for over a decade and they are the reason we have come this far.

### WHERE TO?

I thought long and hard about where the celebration trip might take place. We had been fortunate to be able to take several trips in the past to destinations like Cozumel, Cancun, and last year to Aruba. Unlike those trips, where we worked each day until lunchtime, this trip was going to be purely relaxation and fun. After a fair amount of deliberation, we decided on the Royalton Resort in Antigua in the Caribbean's West Indies. I love packing for a warm weather vacation during the dead of January Long Island winter!

### SETTLING IN

After a four-hour flight to Antigua's capital of Saint John and a gut-busting airport shuttle to the resort, we all quickly started to fall into island mode. It didn't hurt that we were greeted at the Royalton with sweet, fruity cocktails and views of the emerald waters. After a quick tour of the property, we all checked into our rooms, unpacked, and prepared for the three-day adventure. We had attempted to schedule the getaway so everyone had plenty of time for beachside relaxation, evening dining/dancing, and one slightly more adventurous outing.

### FUN, FOOD, AND MORE FUN

The perfect setting and outstanding weather allowed everyone to de-stress almost immediately. We spent hours on the sugar sand beach, waded into the cool waters, and swam up to the pool bar for adult refreshments. It was so great to watch our team hanging together for once where our only goal was fun and laughs. We enjoyed team dinners

in the resort's restaurants, including our second night when we had a seven-course gastronomic feast at the beautiful Chef's Table. The next morning, we jumped on a shuttle to the other side of the island where we boarded a catamaran for a half-day excursion. The idyllic outing included stops at a private beach and the option of snorkeling in the crystal waters to a sunken ship.



PDQ celebrates its 20th anniversary with a lavish meal at the Chef's Table, Royalton Antigua.



An impromptu PDQ company meeting in the emerald waters of Antigua.

### PDQ PIPS?

Our PDQ team has been working together toward common goals for many years. So, you wouldn't think there would be much about them I didn't already know. But our final night in one of the resort's bars revealed to me that more than half of our group had been hiding their obvious musical talents. The PDQ Pips signed up to sing on the karaoke stage and, when the MC finally called them up for their big chance, they knocked it out of the park in an unforgiveable, I mean unforgettable performance. It was an absolute hoot.

### HAPPY ENDING

We packed up and headed back to the airport where we had one final group meal at the airport restaurant before boarding. We were recharged for sure and so happy for the time to simply enjoy each other's company.

Such a great way to thank the team for their efforts and to celebrate our 20th anniversary.

Twenty years after its founding, PDQ now includes my son Tom and Joanne's son Danny in our ranks. Between us, Joanne and I now have nine grandchildren. I am so proud of our entire PDQ team and had an absolute blast celebrating this occasion with them.

*PDQ Communications is a 20-year-old, women-owned small business. The company is focused on providing e-mail and direct mail solutions that allow pharma marketers to reach targeted healthcare providers quickly and effectively.*



Mary Jane Garvey is CEO, PDQ Communications, P.O. Box 191, Carle Place, NY 11514. She can be reached at 516-354-7469, 516-318-3311 (c), or [mjgarvey@pdqcom.com](mailto:mjgarvey@pdqcom.com).

## 20 Years and Counting!

BY AMANDA PRETO

I'm writing this just as I've hung up with a mom-neighbor-friend who is about to head back into the workforce full time after 10 years. She's in complete panic-mode. There are tears, real worries, and words that sting me a little even though I know they aren't meant to. "What am I doing?" she asks me. "I'm not sure I can do this to my kids, to my family. Will I be messing up their entire well-being?!"

I answer her with a question. "Do you think that's what I'm doing?" And she answers by saying of course not, and that it seems like I have it all figured out. Ha!

Well, I don't have it all figured out. But what I do know is that after 20 years with CMI Media Group and Compas, I found myself telling my mom-neighbor-friend all the things that our agency has built that have allowed me to have what matters most to me – a career I'm proud of and the freedom to be the best parent I can be.

### ELEMENTS OF LOVING MY 20 YEARS

After we talked about the fears, the balance, and all the parenting hacks I could think of, I found myself telling her about what has kept me loving my job for nearly half of my life. I love that I work for an organization that has both changed and stayed the same for decades. Leadership has continued to value each and every one of our now 1,000 employees and, at the same time, has grown in size, revenue, and vision. I love that we have internal networks that support the individualism of our people, flexibility with alternative working arrangements, and parties! I told her that I love being somewhere that is always in motion and stable all at once, knowing that we're



The company picnic, when we were just babies with our new babies.

constantly thinking big and that there is support along the way to make those big ideas happen.

### THE JOURNEY

And after all of that, I was reminded that my first day on the job was June 2, 2003 – just a beat after my college graduation – as a Premiums Coordinator. I was so appreciative for the opportunity to "help out" on the marketing team (I'm looking at you, Nicole Woodland-DeVan). This led to the creation of a new role, a full team that paired me up with Carly Kuper and has continued to grow. Ultimate-

ly, this has become my dream job and work-family for my entire career.

### BALANCE AND BETTERMENT

I'm about to celebrate my 20-year anniversary with CMI Media Group and Compas this summer. We celebrate milestone employees (5, 10, 15, 20, and so on) with an acknowledgement in our All Staff monthly meeting called Bell Ringer. And with a gift!

I laugh every time I say the number "20," because it feels too long to be true. I'm in awe of and grateful for what I've been able to build here. My family life is appropriately interwoven with my work life. My kids know all of my "work friends" by name, even the head of our company Stan Woodland himself – and they think I'm cool!

Years ago, my son described what we do as "helping people feel better." I'm thankful that my 20-year career has impacted not only me, but my family and now my mom-neighbor-friend in such a positive way. It's amazing the ripple effect an amazing company full of amazing people can have.



A night celebrating our philanthropic partner.

### In 20 years, here are a few things I've learned:

**Lean In** – If you want changes made, sometimes you have to speak up. Be vocal with the leadership you trust, including but not limited to your HR team, about the support you need.

**Lean Out** – It's just as important to take time for yourself. Use your vacation days and find your support systems!

**Mentor** – This doesn't have to be "official," but take time to reach out to those following in your footsteps (like the new parent on your team) to offer advice and support.

**Get Involved** – Find those intercompany groups, ERGs (Employee Resource Groups), and committees, and spend some time on passion projects. You'll also connect with other team members you may not otherwise get to know.

**Assume Positive Intent** – It's very unlikely that someone is out to ruin your day. It's very likely it was all a misunderstanding.

**Be Thankful** – Take a moment here and there to remind yourself of all the good. It's probably more than you realize.

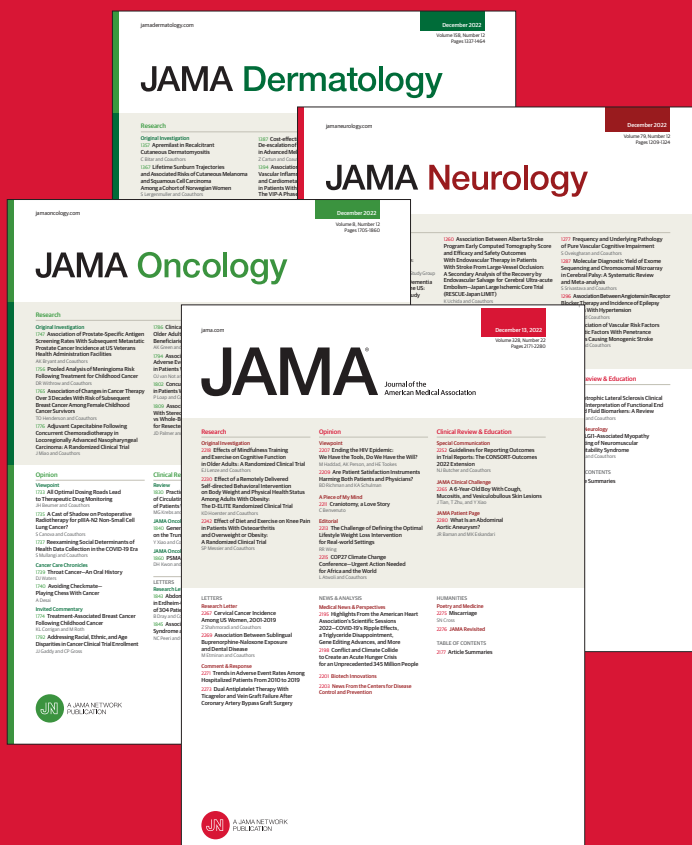


Amanda with son Frankie and daughter Melaina.



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## Celebrating and Giving Thanks for a Life

BY JEFF FORSTER

**F**unerals and wakes are out. Celebrations of Life are in. Eulogies are out. Fond remembrances and stories are in.

That's an overstatement, of course, and it's not meant to be flippant or irreverent.

At age 74 (how did that happen?), I have attended more memorial services lately than I care to count. Yet I am reassured by the growing desire to find a wave of joy amid a sea of grief, to smile through the tears, to express gratitude for a meaningful life while accepting the reality of death.

### HONORING GARY

That's how most of us in the family felt after Gary – my one and only brother – died of prostate cancer last summer at the age of 69. We wanted to celebrate and pay our proper respects to everything that made him special. His first career, as an environmental engineer, was laudable. But his second chapter, as Pop-Pop to his three young grandsons, proved to be his natural calling.

Those boys were so important to him that he uprooted himself from his native Pennsylvania and moved 600 miles down the Eastern seaboard to South Carolina eight years ago. He wanted to be there for them, and indeed he was, giving of himself unsparingly, even after falling ill and enduring two-and-a-half years of grueling chemo and radiation for metastatic disease.

### FAREWELLS WITH A PERSONAL FLAIR

Celebrating a life is simply the natural flip side of mourning a death. The announcement of a recent service for one man in our hometown of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, promised “an uplifting gathering.” At the retirement community where he had lived, attendees were invited to a “casual and fun event to celebrate John’s 91 years of life with funny stories, memories, music, food, drink, and friendship.”

Another Lancaster man arranged in advance for his Celebration to take place during Indigenous People’s Day weekend in October. The venue was a forgotten Native



Gary.

American gravesite from the 1700s that he had discovered, restored, and tended for many years.

A dear colleague of mine wore a bright red dress as she delivered a loving remembrance of her 99-year-old mother at a Catholic funeral mass.

A coworker’s family paid homage to his creative talent by taking over the Princeton Club in Manhattan. They staged an upbeat revue of songs he had written, performed by his daughters, Princeton pals, and colleagues in the music industry. Brad’s gift to all of us: a CD of his greatest hits.

### UNIQUELY GARY TOUCHES

Gary’s son Ben and daughter Lauren took responsibility for planning our own Celebration of Life. They decided on a picnic table pavilion at a golf course in Lancaster County – a nice touch, as Gary had a sweet swing and once lived just down the road from the clubhouse.

As for the ambience, “The feeling will be more ‘cabaret’ than ‘church service,’” some suggested. Well, perhaps the pendulum need not swing quite that far. My sister Laurie – the spiritual North Star of the family, who

spent a week providing 24/7 TLC to Gary in his final days – made sure to add a scripture reading and prayer to the agenda, along with the food and drink.

The event took place on a classically crisp, blue-sky day in October. Along with photo displays and memorabilia, Ben and Lauren added another thoughtful touch, a tableful of books from Gary’s eclectic library of fiction, historical and political nonfiction, and humor. Everyone was invited to take home a book or two or three – along with a commemorative bookmark – and to leave behind a memory of Gary on a note card to the family.

Ben emceed and shared recollections of family and friends, describing a man “who was always available for us at any time of day or night, at any point in our lives, always willing to give whatever he had.” Ben also light-

*(Continued on page 14)*



Nieces and nephews (and grandsons) from everywhere.



## ENJOYING A LIFETIME OF SONG

BY DICK BARNETT

I guess you could say my vocation as a writer and an editor is one way I've expressed myself in my career. But over the past slew of decades, this Jewish fellow from Brooklyn has also happily celebrated life by developing his avocation, which is singing. And it's been the kind of dream "job" many of us have had in the rearview mirrors of our minds if we had not become what we did become. *(Lyrics in caps invite my reader to sing along, making this article a multimedia event. In fact, why not sing aloud while you're reading – that should be fun!)*

That mode of self-expression was nearly shattered early on, though, when I auditioned for the talent show at my local day camp.

I BELIEVE FOR EVERY DROP OF RAIN THAT FALLS, A FLOWER GROWS....

Well, I didn't get a singing part in the show but was given master of ceremonies duties – not terrible, but not what I really wanted.

### KEEP ON SINGING

To take a page from the Mitch McConnell-Elizabeth Warren kerfuffle, however, I persisted.

In fifth grade, I joined the Boys' Chorus and my 10-year-old self sang the at-that-time meaningless words from *South Pacific*: THERE IS NOTHING LIKE A DAME, NOTHING IN THE WORLD. THERE IS NOTHING YOU CAN NAME THAT IS ANYTHING LIKE A DAME....

Somehow or other, I don't recall much about my high school days in the Glee Club, so it might have just been unenjoyable.

In the 1970s, when I was married to a Catholic woman, the two of us in our 20s, we joined the Queen of Peace Church in Queens, NY. There, I was a member of my smallest choir, singing on Christmas Eve and other relevant holidays: ADORAMUS TE, CHRISTE, ET BENEDICIMUS TIBI....

As the marriage disintegrated, I left the choir and stopped accompanying my then-wife to church, never converting during that eight-year period.

### THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

Twelve years later, I married again to the woman I call my current wife – now 33 years in – and to paraphrase folk singer Janis Ian who sang many moons ago, I STUCK TO MY OWN KIND....

Through a friend at our Teaneck, NJ, synagogue at that

time (which didn't have a choir), I learned of The Blue Chip Chorus of Bergen County, a very mixed group of guys who met every Wednesday night for three long hours to sing barbershop music. C'MON AND HEAR, C'MON AND HEAR, ALEXANDER'S RAGTIME BAND. C'MON AND HEAR, C'MON AND HEAR, IT'S THE BEST BAND IN THE LAND....



At Temple Emeth in Teaneck, NJ, I joined choristers past (me) and present at a celebratory concert. I'm two behind the bespectacled kid with the bowtie and his hands in his pockets.

Two years later, I realized that barbershop music was not really my shaving mug of music and left the chorus.

Maybe my subsequent synagogue's choir was right for me, I thought, and stayed on board for some 13 years, very often not understanding what I was singing in Hebrew....

MI SHEBEIRACH AVOTEINU, M'KOR HAB'RACHA L'IMOTEINU

When I left Teaneck and moved to Fort Lee, NJ, in 2014, the schlep to and from Teaneck for rehearsal seemed ominous. (I know, 20 minutes.)

### ONTO BROADWAY

Then a local buddy hipped me to an Englewood, NJ, chorus that sang Broadway, Gospel, rock, and other types of music, so I gave it a try beginning sometime in 2015.

The SESCIL (Southeast Senior Center for Independent Living) Singers have sung for various senior groups, includ-

*(Continued on page 14)*

## Celebrating Life *(Continued from page 12)*



Gary and family (Including Blue Man son Ben).

ened things up by sharing “Gary’s three most annoying habits,” which were also his most endearing – most memorably his impatience with slow drivers and slow waiters, muttering curse words that grandson Cam could mimic perfectly.

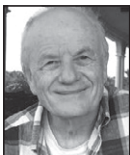
After Laurie’s scripture reading and beautiful prayer, I told a few family stories, drawing on recollections of sisters Laurie, Lynn, and Gail. I also dug into a treasure trove of letters our dad had written to his mother in Indiana, pounding away on his manual typewriter every Sunday night for 30 years in the era of black-and-white TV.

### GENERATIONS OF MEMORIES AND MINGLING

We kept the service short so people could linger throughout the afternoon, exchanging smiles and stories. Family and friends across three generations converged on the scene from near and far – our daughter Meredith and her boyfriend Eric flying in from California, daughter Hilary and husband Jon driving up from Virginia, my wife Cynthia and I doing the turnpike to turnpike trek from NJ to PA. Old high school friends and work colleagues of Gary’s materialized from the local landscape.

Simply put, we wanted to emphasize not what we’d lost but what we’d gained throughout a lifetime of living and loving. The warmth and togetherness generated and shared that day remains in our hearts and provides abiding comfort.

At Christmas, Hilary gave me a book called *Finding Meaning: The Sixth Stage of Grief*, by David Kessler, who worked with Elisabeth Kubler-Ross on the classic five stages of death and dying. It was a perfectly thoughtful gift. We recommend it to anyone who is hurting from the loss of a loved one.



*Jeff Forster is a quasi-retired medical writer and editor living in New Milford, NJ. You can reach him at [jeff.forster@haymarketmedical.com](mailto:jeff.forster@haymarketmedical.com).*

## Enjoying Song *(Continued from page 13)*

ing war veterans and others in nursing homes and assisted-living setups.

Last June, before some 100 folks at the First Presbyterian Church in Englewood, NJ, a group of us sang over a dozen songs from the show *South Pacific* – I can’t seem to get away from that musical. And my duet, of course, was “There Is Nothing Like a Dame.”

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THIS SUMMER, WE’RE PUTTING TOGETHER AN ALL-BROADWAY SHOW, AND I’M PART OF A TRIO AND A DUET AND WORKING ON A SOLO. THE ALL-MALE TRIO WILL BE SINGING “TEN MINUTES AGO” FROM *CINDERELLA*.

---

THERE AIN’T A THING THAT’S WRONG WITH ANY MAN HERE THAT CAN’T BE CURED BY PUTTING HIM NEAR A GIRLY WOMANLY FEMALE FEMININE DAME....

I seem to understand the lyrics much better nowadays than I did at age 10.

This summer, we’re putting together an all-Broadway show, and I’m part of a trio and a duet and working on a solo. The all-male trio will be singing “Ten Minutes Ago” from *Cinderella*.

MY HEAD STARTED REELING, YOU GAVE ME THE FEELING, THE ROOM HAD NO CEILING OR FLOOR.

The duet, appropriately with a female, is “Tonight” from *West Side Story*.

TONIGHT, TONIGHT, I’LL SEE MY LOVE TONIGHT. AND FOR US STARS WILL STOP WHERE THEY ARE!

And I’ll be up there all alone, singing *The Impossible Dream*, the powerhouse showstopper from *Man of La Mancha*.

TO FIGHT FOR THE RIGHT WITHOUT QUESTION OR PAUSE. TO BE WILLING TO MARCH INTO HELL FOR A HEAVENLY CAUSE!

### WISH ME LUCK!

So self-expression through singing has actually been something I’ve been pursuing for about a quarter of my life, even though I never got a penny for following that star. It’s a form of self-expression that helps me celebrate life with or without an audience.



*Dick Barnett has over 30 years of freelance med-pharma copyediting-proofreading experience with dozens of firms in the field. He can be reached at [barnettia10@hotmail.com](mailto:barnettia10@hotmail.com).*



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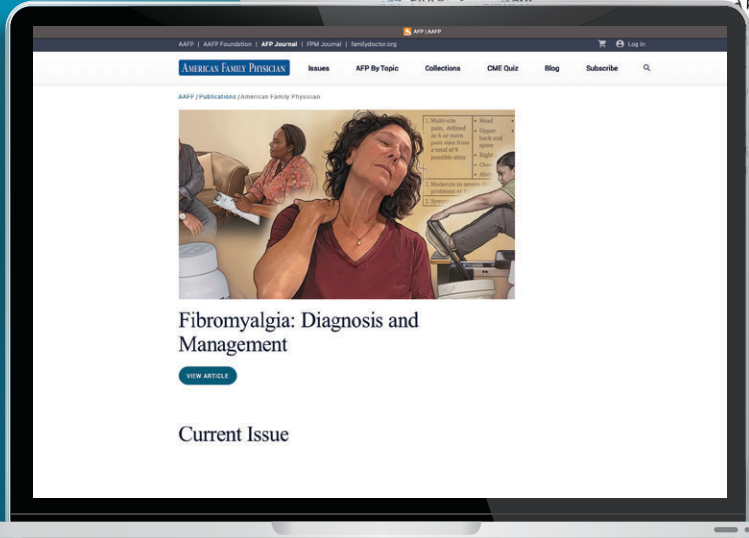
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