

# SALT

MILITARY PHOTOJOURNALISM  
AT NEWHOUSE  
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY | 2023



# MIPJ

**F**or 60 years, Syracuse University has hosted the Military Photojournalism program at the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications. This year, five Sailors and four Marines completed a rigorous year-long curriculum to strengthen their skills in visual storytelling and communication. Upon graduating, they will return to the fleet to teach others what they have learned, raising the standard in the process.

For this publication, each student was responsible for capturing stories in Central New York while focusing on the theme of characters and community. This issue is a culmination of their hard work and dedication.

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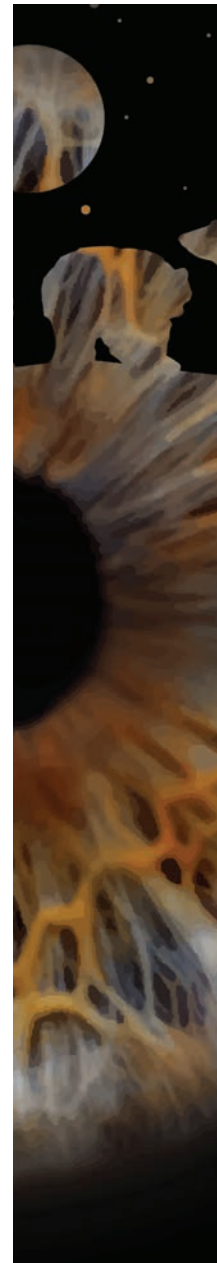
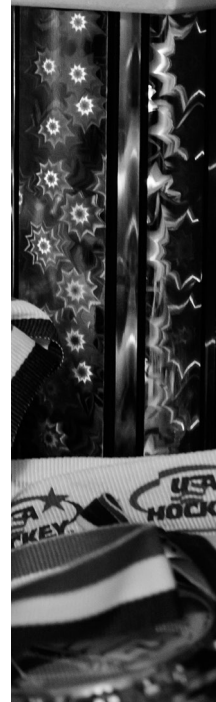


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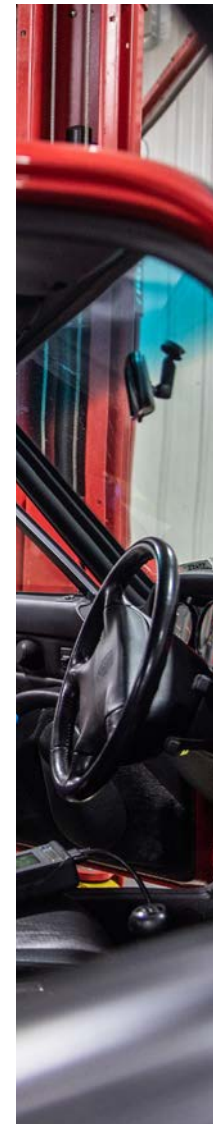


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By Kelsey Dornfeld

Fifteen years of demanding, unforgiving ballet has finally caught up to Felipe Panamá. Now that his body can no longer withstand the strain, he's taking

# A New Turn



**“Dance made me reach into corners of my emotions and corners of my fears.”** Ballet was more than a calling for Felipe Panamá — it was a way of life. He discovered dance at 17 in Guadalajara, Mexico, and his career has spanned companies and schools throughout the United States and Mexico.



**“Somedays, I’m sad my body will never be the same. Who am I if I can’t move?”** In the summer of 2022, Felipe discovered bulging disks in his back. He visits his physical therapist weekly to relieve some of the pain, but the only way to resolve his back issues is with surgery. After years of multiple injuries from forcing his body past its limits, he’s at a crossroads.



**“I want to bring the best of the dance world and mix it with this musical theatre school.”** Felipe’s injury has made him take a pause from dancing professionally with Syracuse City Ballet, his most recent company. While teaching with the department of drama, he works as a choreographer for some of the school’s productions.

**“Teaching feels like changing the world is palpable.”** The constant beating a dancer submits their body to often leads to a shortened career. He currently works as an assistant teaching professor of dance at Syracuse University, Department of Drama. He’s taught dancers from seven to 18 year of age throughout his career in Mexico, San Antonio, TX, and Syracuse, NY. Felipe cautions his students to take care of their bodies to prevent injuries like his.



**“Dancing helped me define myself.”** Hidden behind the grace he radiates on stage is the pain of countless hours of practice. Felipe spends an hour stretching and warming up his body before he dances or teaches a ballet class. Before his injury, he could warm up in as little as 10 to 20 minutes and be ready to dance.



**“Don’t get distracted by others’ pace.”** Something Felipe teaches his students is to go slowly. He constantly reminds himself of this as he adjusts to his injury and finds ways to adapt to what his body can and cannot do anymore.

**“When I’m stressed, I try to focus on a single task in front of me. I always bring it back to feeling blessed because I get to do what I love.”** Although exhaustion creeps in, Felipe manages day-to-day stressors and the new challenges of redirecting his priorities to musical theater and teaching. In one day, Felipe balances teaching ballet, choreography, helping to cast the drama department’s new play, rehearsing for upcoming musicals he’s performing in, and taking ballet classes of his own to stay in shape. In the middle of his ballet warm-up, he takes a call from the director of the show he’s choreographing.



**“I like telling stories and theater is an added layer to tell stories.”** His injury left him with no choice but to experiment with other forms of creative expression; Felipe found an outlet in musical theater. His first acting role was in Baldwinsville Theatre Guild’s production of A Chorus Line. He empathized with his character, whose dance career was also ended by an injury.



**“My heart has always been in the freedom of dancing.”** Felipe performs his monologue in A Chorus Line. He plans to expand his role in the musical theater community by directing and choreographing more shows. The freedom of dancing remains in his heart but he hopes this new path will be as fulfilling.



# Simply Anna

Photos and Story by Hailey Clay

A full-time landlord and homeschooling mother with multiple chemical sensitivity, Anna Martin redefines what it means to navigate life with this chronic environmental illness.

Anna Martin shops at the Syracuse Cooperative Market in Syracuse, NY. Martin wears a mask anywhere there might be artificial fragrances.





Martin inspects the basement of one of her rental properties in Syracuse, NY. She is a full-time landlord and owns properties in New York and Georgia. She splits her time living between the two states.



After coming into contact with artificial fragrances, Martin puts all of her clothing into labeled bins. Everything has to be laundered with fragrance-free detergent before she can wear the clothes again.

Burning hands, an itchy throat, coughing, sneezing and headaches were only the beginning of the challenges Anna Martin would face after she noticed her health declining rapidly while living in one of the rental homes she owned in Syracuse, New York. Frustrated by symptoms no other tenant had reported, she made several visits to the doctor to test for allergens and illnesses. The conclusion: She had a sensitivity to several harsh chemicals and artificial fragrances, otherwise known as multiple chemical sensitivity.

"In May of 2005, I began living in a large carport tent for 15 months because of the severity of my multiple chemical sensitivity. It was negative 15 degrees Fahrenheit some nights when we didn't have a wood stove or insulation. That year, living in the tent, was the best my lungs have ever felt and one of the happiest years of my life. Every day I felt so much joy and

appreciation for the nature and clean air that was around me, and to finally be away from the people, city and poor indoor air quality that had been poisoning me."

According to the National Library of Medicine, multiple chemical sensitivity is an acquired multifactorial syndrome characterized by a recurrent set of debilitating symptoms. In other words, MCS is a chronic allergy to artificial fragrances that varies in severity depending on the person.

The medical field — although aware that certain chemicals can cause adverse effects in people — is still debating whether MCS qualifies as an illness. Some physicians believe it to be mostly psychological, but others believe that even low doses of chemicals found in materials used daily can cause physical symptoms in certain people.

"I conducted a lot of research with

peer-reviewed research journal articles on multiple chemical sensitivity, indoor air quality, toxicant induced loss of tolerance, and how scientific data can be manipulated by chemical corporations that hire unethical doctors and researchers," recounted Martin, who holds two degrees in different areas of environmental studies from State University of New York's College of Environmental Science and Forestry.

"I've always loved science, and because of my training at SUNY ESF I was able to try and figure out why I became chemically sensitive and also try to figure out how to heal myself and help other people with MCS."

Anna became a landlord at 19 during her freshman year of college to help with the cost of tuition. In 2001, she earned a Bachelor of Science in environmental policy and management, and in 2004, earned

her Master of Professional Studies in environmental communications and participatory processes. This degree has helped her navigate MCS because it included skills and knowledge for living off-grid.

In addition to her properties in Syracuse, Martin also owns and operates Southeast Georgia Ecological Housing, and Sweet Fruition Farm, both in Brooklet, Georgia. On the farm, Martin and her family grow their produce without pesticides, ensuring it is as safe as possible for consumers. Her partner, Jeremy Moir, is a heating, ventilating and air conditioning systems specialist and helps manage her properties when they are in need of HVAC updates or repairs.

Anna and Jeremy have two children, 6-year-old Tallulah and 4-year-old Forest, both of whom take an interest in plants and the environment. No one else in the family has displayed any

adverse reactions to MCS, but Martin is adversely affected by anything from walking into a moldy basement, taking a trip to the grocery store, or even hugging someone wearing clothing washed with detergent that contains artificial fragrances or perfumes. Even second-hand exposure from contaminants carried into their home can be a problem.

When Martin goes out in public, she wears an elastomeric half-mask respirator equipped with organic vapor and high-efficiency particulate air cartridges to protect her lungs from artificial fragrances and strong chemicals that could trigger a reaction.

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, HEPA filters can remove at least 99.97% of dust, pollen, mold, bacteria and any other airborne particles. Artificial fragrances are in almost everything we use on a day-to-day basis, including

perfumes, soaps, laundry detergents, paints, cleaning supplies, candles and air fresheners.

"Multiple chemical sensitivity isn't convenient, that's for sure," explained Martin. "But it doesn't take from me. If anything, it has made me a better problem-solver, a stronger person, and gives me consistent confirmation that I really can do anything."

One of her biggest challenges was determining where to live after receiving her diagnosis. Living out of the tent long-term wasn't a viable option, but she couldn't keep living in contaminated homes or with roommates who didn't have the same fragrance-free lifestyle.

"After looking for houses to rent and buy in the area for a couple of years prior, it had become apparent that every home was contaminated with glade plug-ins, candles, perfume, air fresheners, scented detergent, dryer



Martin, her 6-year-old daughter Tallulah and her 4-year-old son Forest, shop once or twice a week at the community-owned Syracuse Cooperative Market.

sheets or other substances like furnace fuel oil to the extent that I could not tolerate. I couldn't live with that kind of long-term contamination and still maintain good mental clarity, lung function and adequate physical health. Some friends told me about the land trust, and I became committed to building a home there after touring the land and learning about how affordable, environmentally sustainable and interconnected the community was."

In the summer of 2005, Martin decided it was time to homestead and rented a plot of land from the Common Place Land Trust Cooperative in Truxton, New York. She and several other families live there, where some families choose to live completely off-grid. Martin built her tiny home from scratch in the 15 months while living in her carport tent in the woods,

and she didn't install running water or a composting toilet inside until several years after moving in. Until then, Martin and her family used an outhouse, the same one they still use today to produce compost. To mask odors and facilitate composting, they use sawdust to cover their waste, and when the bucket is full, it is transferred into a larger container to finish composting, after which it will be used as fertilizer for their produce.

Homesteading and self-sufficiency are Martin family cornerstones. Martin and Moir believe that raising children in an environment where they can learn by being outside, help their parents with household chores, and learn to cook and clean is extremely beneficial for their growth and development.

"I think it will pay off eventually, and I would prefer that my children have a humble outlook on life and live without

some comfort as they are growing up rather than have everything easy and possibly not be able to empathize for others who don't have things as good as they do.

"For instance, our cabin in New York has one solar panel and two batteries. We have never had a plugged-in refrigerator, we have two lightbulbs, and no other major electrical appliances. Heating happens only with a woodstove, and dry seasoned firewood is essential to survival there. Simple living isn't always easy, but it can give you an appreciation for the things that you do have. When we get back to Georgia, and we have regular grid-tied electricity, a refrigerator, and heating and cooling at the touch of a button, I feel like I'm living in a palace, a tiny home palace!"

Forest is homeschooled, but when Tallulah returns home from her public



Martin and her family have lived off the grid for eight years in order to better control her exposure to chemical irritants. Simplifying their lifestyle maintains her quality of life. Waste is converted to compost used to grow organic produce.

school, Martin cleans her backpack and puts her clothes in a bin outside to hand-wash later with fragrance-free detergent. Martin keeps anything that has been exposed to artificial fragrances — clothes, thermoses and other items — outside of her house to disinfect them before bringing them back in.

"Jeremy comes home from a job out in town and will strip butt-naked outside of the house, even in the winter, to prevent polluting our home with artificial fragrances and harsh chemicals. Even if it's inconvenient, he doesn't make me feel bad about it," Martin explained. "He is very supportive of me and helps me in any way he can."

"Yeah," Jeremy laughed, "it's really a humbling experience stripping naked in negative degree weather with the wind blowing just to get back into your home."

Privacy hasn't been a vital part of the Martin family structure, but Martin and Moir are excited to finally establish some after years of living together in such small spaces. The couple is currently planning to build a larger home in Brooklett, where they live for about seven or eight months of the year.

"The kids are getting older, and it's not only going to be good for them to have some privacy, but for Jeremy and I as well," she explained. "I think every relationship needs time and space to unwind, especially when you have kids. In our current situation there aren't a lot of options for either of those things. The positive part of less privacy is the education Tallulah and Forest receive by always being around Jeremy and I."

Martin, who said she appreciates being able to use her degree to teach

her children about the environment—and dangers to the environment — stresses that human bodies, the environment and all things in between are connected, and one cannot be positively or negatively affected without affecting another.

"When we are buying chemical products, those purchases are poisoning somebody not just where the product is being used, but also at the factory where people are making it, and downstream and downwind from that factory. The way we treat the planet is also how we are treating our bodies.

As consumers, we need to create a demand for natural, alternative products by purchasing them. You can be the change you wish to see in the world by simply buying different, healthier products when you go to the store."



Taking advantage of the natural sunlight, Martin helps her daughter, Tallulah, put together a dinosaur puzzle. Tallulah started first grade this year at a local school. Her brother Forest will be homeschooled until he is old enough to join her.



Martin consoles Forest after he fell and cut his hand and forehead while playing at one of her rental properties.



Tallulah is fascinated by a visiting praying mantis at their home on the Common Place Land Trust Cooperative in Truxton, NY.



“It doesn’t take from me. If anything, it has made me a better problem solver, a stronger person, and gives me consistent confirmation that I really can do anything.”

After hand-washing her clothes, Martin hangs them outside to dry in the fresh air.

# Frozen Traditions

By Benjamin Ringers

To people from warmer climates, ice fishing may seem like an odd way to spend free time, but to the people who grew up doing it, it's a tradition and a fun way to bond with people they care about.

Dave Cardamone, 74, pulls a perch up to remove the hook. Dave says he has been fishing much more often now that he has the time after retiring a couple of years ago.





Tom Snyder, 73, shows off his favorite perch lures. He says ice fishing is a nice way to clear his head before his wife wakes up.



Don Therre, 68, catches his 46th perch of the day. Don eats most of the fish he catches, but also shares some with his family and elderly neighbors.



Marcus Smith, left, Jacob Donohue and Macgregor Fox, look for a spot to set up their ice fishing equipment. The group became friends in school and now spend their free time on Oneida Lake during the Winter.

Fox, left, removes the hook from a fish caught by Smith, who is deaf, uses his phone to communicate with his friends. Many ice fishermen will go with friends to make sure they aren't alone in case they were to fall through the ice.



Shawn Kreis, 36, checks to see if his fish is large enough to keep. Fishermen will release smaller fish to make sure the local populations are not eradicated.



Josh Cooper, 33, shows his two daughters how to ice fish. Cooper says this is the second year he has taken his oldest daughter, and the first year for his youngest.



A pile of perch is laid out on the ice. Therre counts the fish and double-checks their size to make sure he is within legal limits.

Few fishermen remain as the sun begins to set. Most try to be off of the ice before it gets dark so they can see where they step as they return to shore. If they are not careful, they risk falling through the ice.







Eric Komar began arm-wrestling as a hobby in high school and entered his first competition with no experience. Though he didn't win the match, Komar's participation in the competition resulted in meeting his coach and eventually going pro.

# STRONG & LIMITLESS

A powerful and determined man, Eric Komar has been through his fair share of obstacles. Born with spina bifida, the community habilitation services receptionist lets nothing get in the way of strong-arming his challenges and living a normal life.

By J.D. Monford



During his nine years of experience, Komar has competed in an estimated 50 competitions and has landed in the top three in 30 of those — a 60% placement record.



Komar's mother, Linda, has multiple sclerosis and myeloma, a form of cancer. He cherishes moments with her, including their weekly Sunday morning breakfasts.



Komar says his inability to use his legs isn't much of an inconvenience. Although he takes a little longer to conduct normal tasks, such as putting on his pants, he is 100% independent.



Because of his disadvantages and disabilities, one quote that especially resonates with Komar comes from a Sylvester Stallone character: "The world meets nobody halfway."



Komar arrives at Ultimate Family Athletics for his regular Saturday practice to perfect his craft, never missing a day.



Now 38, Komar has had approximately 20 surgeries since the day he was born.



One side effect of Komar's condition is the disruption of his cerebral spinal fluid. Doctors installed a shunt, a tube running from his skull down to his stomach, to drain the fluid from his head through his urine.



Komar's ultimate goal is to help create opportunities for disabled athletes on par with those provided to the Michael Jordans and Derek Jeters of the world. **"It's a shame there's not enough public draw for these types of events, specifically for athletes with disabilities."**

# More than meets the Eye

Photo story by Lexie Perez

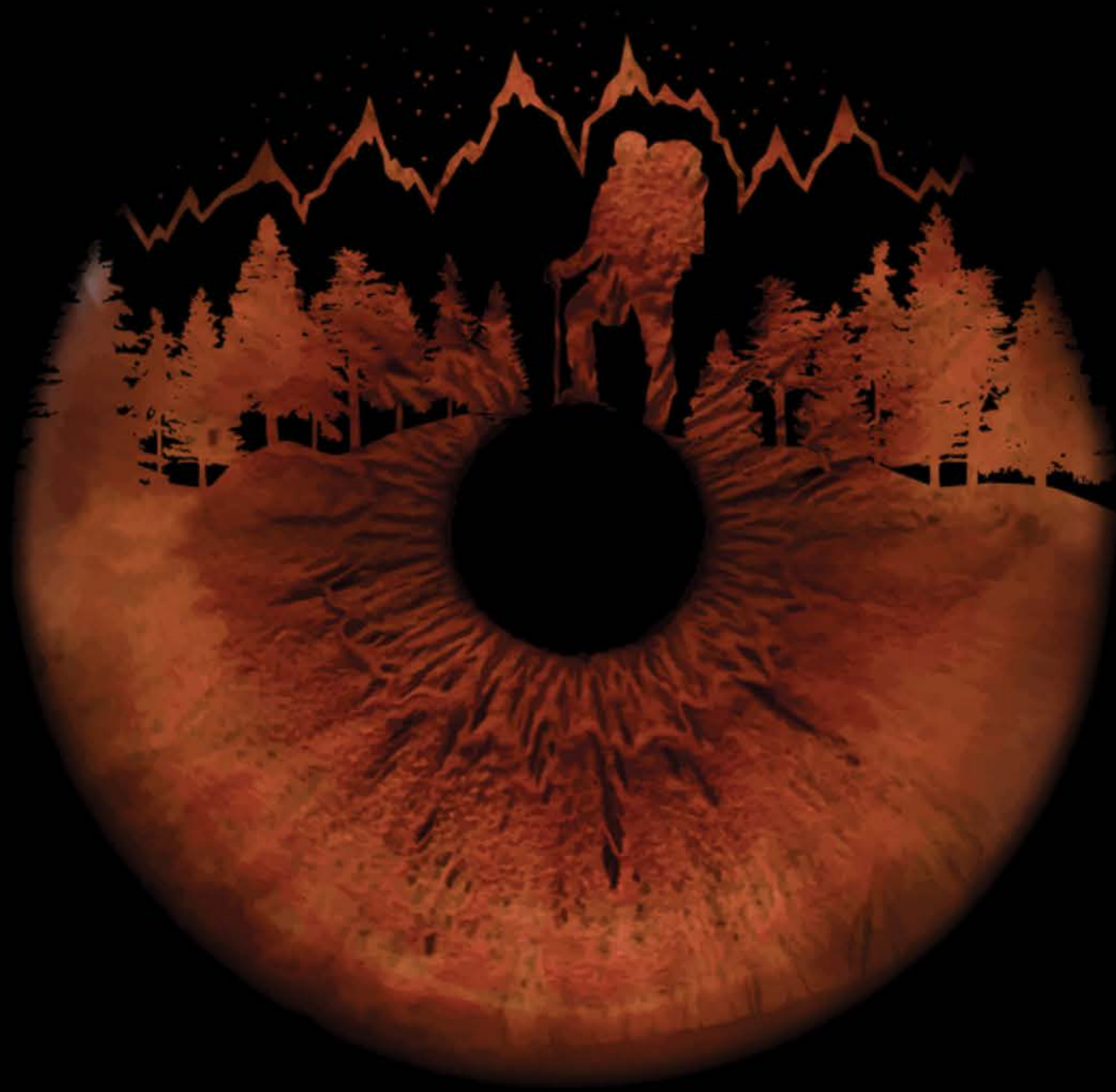
Human connection begins with the eyes, and everyone's tell a different story. In this series, service members were asked what matters to them most and what they think best represents them. These photo illustrations combine each person's unique iris and elements of their story to depict their individuality and core values.



Family  
Strength  
Adventure

## Charles Roberts

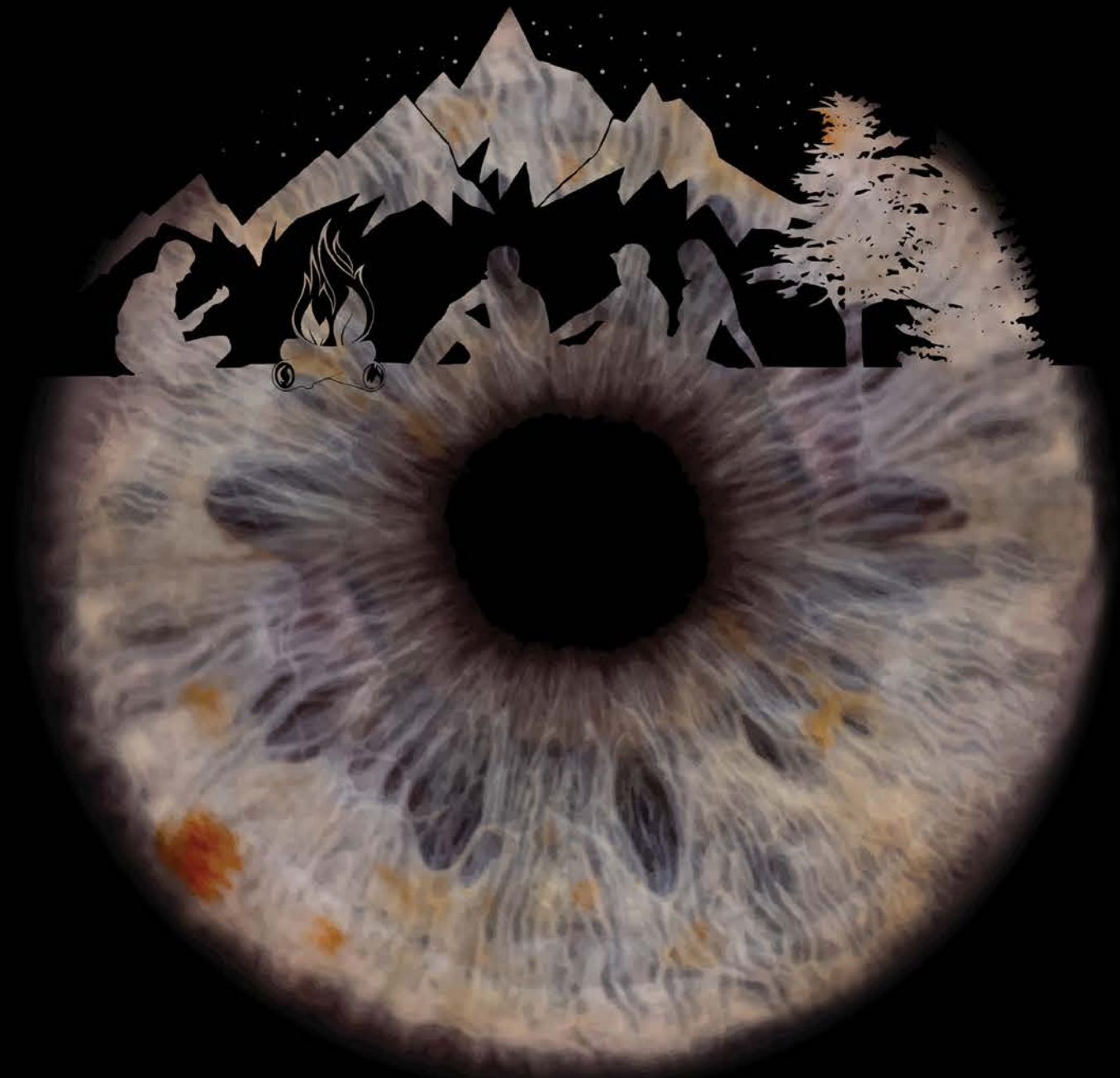
Having lived in multiple states and various countries around the world, Charles says staying true to oneself is most valuable. He said physical and mental health, family and living a full life were most important, and this is represented by the brown bear. "They're strong, extremely family oriented and live the adventurous life I strive to live." The full moon represents the wholeness he feels knowing he has stayed true to himself.



## Hiking Freedom Adventure

### Max Rosas

Max has faced many adventures, both in the Marine Corps and in his personal life. When asked what's important to him, he cited hiking and just being outside. The mountains not only represent his love for the outdoors but also the highs and lows he's overcome. "One day I just grabbed my wife, my dog, and my boots, and we just went. Hiking kept us out of the house and gave me a space to connect to the world in a different way."



## Growth Strength Friendship

### Hailey Clay

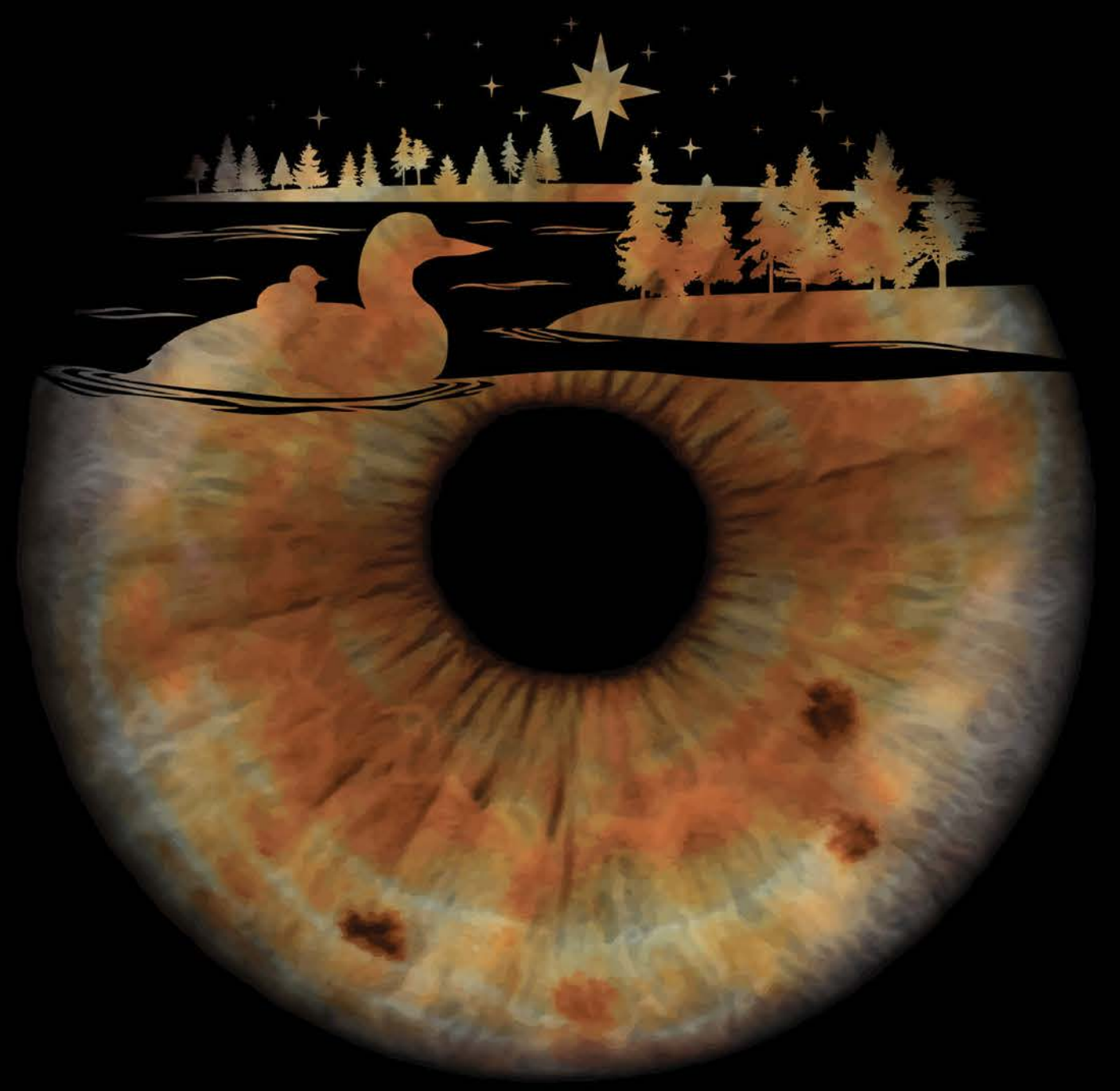
Hailey has faced many hardships but thanks to her powerful friendships, she has persevered. "My friends mean the world to me. I would literally do anything for them, and I don't know where I'd be without them. I'd be a lot less sane, that's for sure." The mountains, trees and fire represent her mental and physical strength, and the hidden leaves within the fire represent the growth she has made by overcoming the hard times in her life.



## Dogs Nature Solitude

### Hannah Mohr

Struggling with anxiety and depression is never easy for Hannah, but she powers through with the comfort of her friends and her dogs, Mowgli and Luna. "They're just always there for me. I can just talk and cry with them, and they just lay with me, keep me company and never judge me." Hannah finds relief in the solitude of the outdoors. The trees represent her love for nature but also her strength and independence.



## Family Outdoors Exploration

### Kelsey Dornfeld

Kelsey loves exploring the natural world and cherishes family. "I feel closest to my family on our camping trips in Minnesota, but I also love immersing myself in any type of nature." The common loon is the state bird of Minnesota and, depicted with its chick, represents her love for family. The star is a nod to the "North Star State," and the trees represent her love for nature and memories of camping with her family.

# PAIN, PAINT & PASSION

BY ERICKSON B. MAGNO

When he woke from a four-month coma with traumatic brain injuries affecting his speech, memories and depth perception, David Joshua Smart turned to painting and eventually started a business. Despite the pandemic and pain from a triple hernia, the former Army medic pushes through by doing what he loves most.

Staying true to its original design, Syracuse artist David Joshua Smart restores the mural on the barn at Pagoda Hill farm, an iconic landmark from his childhood in Baldwinsville.





Smart, an Army Veteran, uses painting as a form of therapy. His passion for this two-dimensional art form was born from the pain of his brain injury and seemed fitting given the loss of his depth perception.



Smart uses a variety of painting tools, including spray cans, paint markers, liquid paints and a mix of brushes.

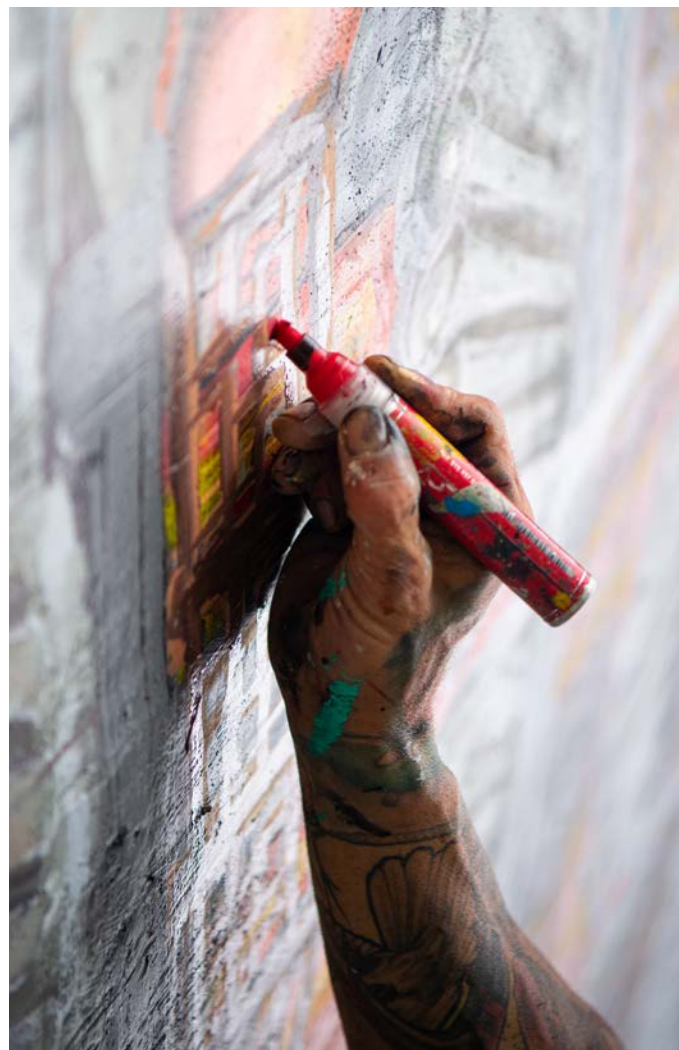
“When I woke up, my mom and my dad were right in front of me, and I knew something bad had happened.”

After Army Medic David Joshua Smart returned from his 6-month tour in Afghanistan in 2007, he began to abuse alcohol and prescription drugs to cope with the anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder he brought home with him. One year later, that depression eventually led to a suicide attempt and a four-month coma.

“I had a 10 percent chance of living,” said Smart, whose parents the Army flew into Fort Sam Houston to say goodbye to their son. “When my parents came, they were asked if they wanted to pull the plug. They decided to go through with it, but once they pulled the plug, I woke up.”

Coming out of the coma, Smart couldn’t remember anything — not even his family or his friends — and he couldn’t move or speak for months. He had suffered a traumatic brain injury that resulted in the loss of multiple cognitive functions.

With no recollection of his suicide attempt at that time, Smart says he felt happy. “I felt like I had a big reset, and it was great.”



**I had a 10 percent chance of living. When my parents came, they were asked if they wanted to pull the plug. They decided to go through with it, but once they pulled the plug, I woke up.**

After months of recovery, Smart was given a choice to leave the military, and he did. On the day of his final military processing, Smart ran into one of his former colleagues, who recounted events of that day to him for the first time.

“When I ran into my buddy Allen, he explained what happened to me. He told me, ‘If I knew you were so depressed, I wouldn’t have given you all those pills.’ As soon as he told me, I thought ‘Well, that sucks. Man, I tried to kill myself.’ After that, all those good feelings I had just disappeared.”

After his official discharge from service in 2010, Smart felt lost. Despite focusing on pre-med studies at Le Moyne College before the Army, he knew he couldn’t go back to the medical field, and he really didn’t want to because of his mental state. While speaking with his mother, a former photographer, she suggested he turn to art. According to her, he had always had an aptitude for drawing.

Painting and art became Smart’s escape, and he soon realized that working on a two-dimensional plane was an effective way to express himself despite his loss of depth perception.

“Whenever I would paint, I would cry because I felt so moved,” said Smart. “When I paint, I feel a rush through me, and everything just feels right.”

In 2017, Smart began a painting company, creating murals around town and for local businesses. One of his first was at Home Team Pub in Liverpool, and he has since painted 15 others.

“In 2016, I did a mural at a church [of] a replica of the world map, and that basically launched my desire for a painting business,” said Smart, who is self-taught and pushes himself to learn, experiment and grow. “It was my fifth big project. My jobs help me get practice.”

For years, Smart had a steady flow of customers and employed a handful of painters to assist him with larger contracts. Unfortunately, when COVID-19 hit, his business lost workers and clients. When restrictions were finally lifted, business picked up, but Smart struggled to keep up with the influx of work. Overwhelmed, he struggled with the load and his health.

“I’m actually dealing with a hernia right now, but I’m putting it off to finish a job,” said Smart, who is still awaiting surgery. “The operation would set me back about five months.”



A self-taught artist, Smart paints a mural of past Syracuse University athletes at Duskee’s bar. He first attempted to paint faces in another homage to Syracuse sports at Home Team Pub in Liverpool.



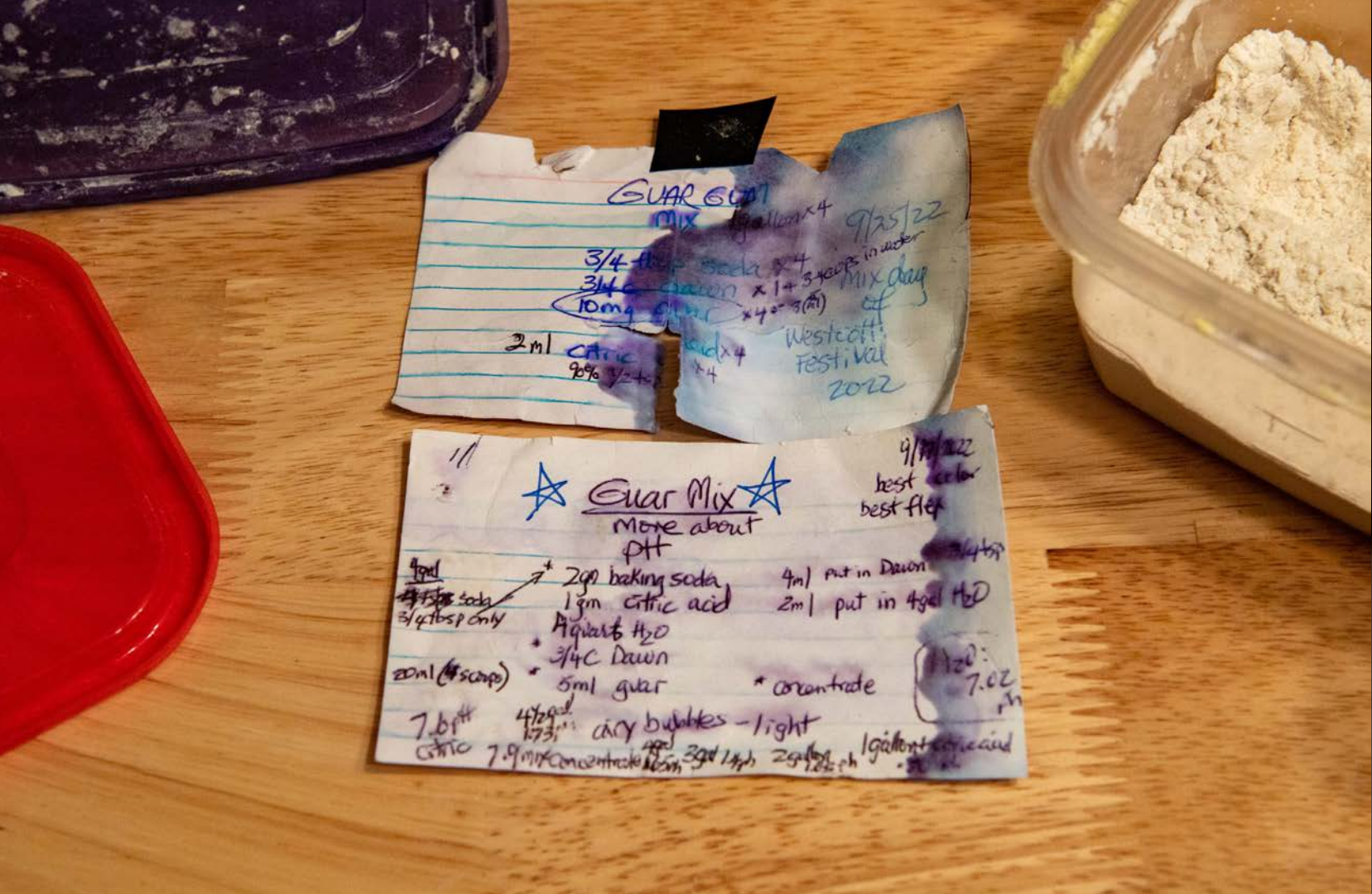
**JIM LIVI**

AKA “the Mega Bubble Man” believes bubbles can bring joy to anyone regardless of age, race, gender, religious beliefs, or moral preferences. The simple art of creating a delicate bubble will always bring a smile to anyone’s face.

# MEGA Bubble Man

An artist spreads joy through soap and laughter.

Photos by Ryan M. Breeden



**THE FORMULA** | Livi has been perfecting his formula since his interest in bubble art began. Through trial and error, he developed a recipe that creates innovative self-healing bubbles.

**HAND CRAFTED TOOLS** | As an artist in a unique field of expertise, Livi uses every tool available to maximize the effects of his bubbles. Every performance is structured as a story, taking the audience on a journey through Bubblopolis.

**THE BUBBLE SCIENTIST**

Known as the "Mega Bubble Man," Livi prepares a new batch of bubble solution in his home kitchen. He perfected the formula using ordinary ingredients so others have the opportunity to create the same lasting bubbles.



**BUBBLOPOLIS DESIGNER**

Every wand has its own story and unique personality. During his performances, Livi imagines several characters such as the Mayor of Bubblopolis, Big Brother Wand and Little Sister Wand. His character Big Bartholomew can create 30-foot bubbles with a 2-foot diameter.



"A **bubble** is a powerful tool. It has an ability to brighten anyone's day."

**THE ARTIST**

In an effort to maximize his entertainment value, Livi finds new and inventive ways to create bubble art, exploring every available tool that pushes the limits of his talent.

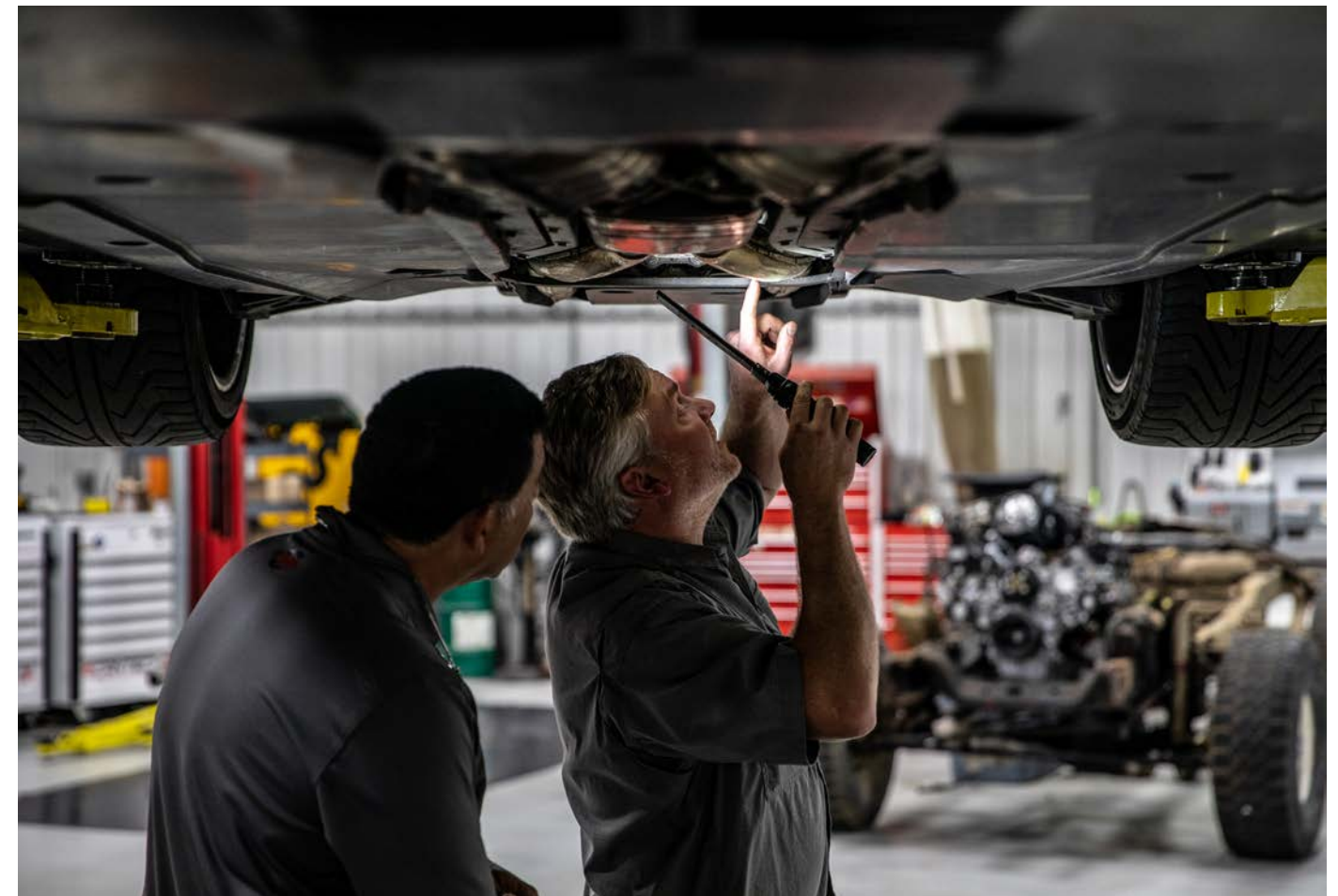


**MOTOR WORKS** / This new Ford 7.3L Godzilla engine finds a home on an older Bronco frame.

# DRIVEN

BY SAMUEL RUIZ

**M**otorsport memorabilia line the walls of Cantech Automotive while highly trained technicians modify and repair everything from air-cooled Porsches to V10 Lamborghinis and Ford Broncos. Distinguishing themselves with high-quality auto care since 1993, an impressive roster of qualified technicians provide service with state-of-the-art tools and expert know-how.



**SALT CHECK** / Ensuring that vehicles remain in pristine condition from the harsh weather and salt exposure during winter, Rocco Cannata, left, and Chad Zehr examine the undercarriage of a Ferrari for any possible buildup.

# SERVICE & REPAIR



**TROUBLESHOOTING** / "Everything about this car is just figuring out the puzzle pieces," says Carl Vakesteren as he reviews the wiring diagram for a late-model Porsche.



**SHARING KNOWLEDGE** / Vankesteren, left, explains to newly hired mechanic Preston Pierson the common motor issues of a 928 Porsche and how to repair them.



**DIAGNOSIS** / Zehr runs a diagnostics scanner on a Porsche for any fault codes that may be in the system. He has been a part of the family for over 8 years.



**CHALLENGES** / A certified technician, Zehr is a problem-solver at heart. "From McLarens to Kubotas and everything in between, I'm always up for the challenge."

# DETAILING



**POLISHING** / Michael Capria works as the lead detailer, providing hand washes and applying ceramic coatings and paint protection film.





# Unconditional

By Benjamin Ringers

Despite the difficulty of coping with her three cancer diagnoses while also caring for abused animals, former prison guards Linda and Edwin Fadden have dedicated years of their lives to give small dogs a second chance, opening their hearts, their home and Gertie's Small Dog Rescue.

Linda Fadden, 74, handles the administrative side of the rescue, while Edwin Fadden, 67, handles the physical labor of caring for the dogs. "The good side is that we save dogs and put them in good homes, we get 'em healthy. The downside is that we don't have any time for ourselves," said Edwin.



Linda says, "We say it takes three, three, and three. It takes three days for them to get used to what's going on around them, it takes three months for them to get into a routine, and it takes three more months for them to feel comfortable."



Edwin and Linda met as prison guards and say that their dogs sometimes feel like their little furry prisoners. "I use a lot of terms that I used in the jail," said Edwin, "When we get a new dog in, we put them in a room by themselves until I think they can get along in 'general population.'" They've had as many as 32 dogs in their rescue at one time. "I clean 24/7 and I try to get some other stuff done in between. Once I start in the morning, I'm goin' all day," said Edwin.



Edwin watches over the foster dogs while they play outside to make sure they don't fight. "We want them to have the best homes. I won't adopt them out unless I know their home is at least as good as ours, if not better," said Linda.

Although Edwin has difficulty caring for the dogs as he gets older, he has come around to helping Linda teach them how to trust again. "It took me two weeks," Linda said as she recalled a particularly traumatized dog. "I would go in and just sit there and just talk to her. Then I started reading to her. Then I started hand-feeding her. Then I started rubbing her nose, and then, all of a sudden, before you knew it, she was mine. She was my little sweet baby." Linda paused, "**I believe we were put here to do good.**"



The EAVES crew  
arrive at a call.  
They respond  
24 hours a day in  
East Syracuse and  
its neighboring  
communities.

# On the Call

Story & Photographs  
by Maximiliano Rosas

The nearly 50 paramedics and EMTs of the East Area Volunteer Emergency Services Inc. provide urgent care in the face of decreasing donations and increasing call volume.



Joshua Baker and Tyler Wallace, partners for the night, plan their path to the scene of a smoke inhalation.



After a call, on his way back to the station, Ryan Hines checks his messages in the back of Rig 1.

It's hour 13 of a 24-hour shift for the crews at the East Area Volunteer Emergency Services Inc. in Syracuse, New York. The communal kitchen is bustling with life as the eight emergency medical service providers on call settle in for a "family dinner." Conversation and jokes are flowing around the dinner table. The bonds cultivated over hours of hard work at EAVES are as clear as the night sky. Suddenly, the intercom comes alive, a call comes in and dinner is put on hold. The crew of Rig 1 springs to life and is en route within minutes.

Capable of providing advanced life support, the skilled paramedics and EMTs at EAVES answer a multitude of emergency calls varying in severity from a fallen senior citizen to an overdose. Created in 1973 by concerned citizens of East Syracuse, EAVES was established to decrease the time it took for emergency services to reach the suburbs. Although it's a volunteer-run, not-for-profit emergency medical service, decreased funding and few new volunteers has forced EAVES to start charging for their services.



Despite the patient refusing a ride to the hospital, Baker and Wallace make sure to check the patient's vitals and transport her back to her apartment.



Chris Greene, left, and Hines chat in the staff day room between calls. Paramedics on a 24-hour shift can experience long intervals of down time.



Baker off-loads a patient at Crouse Hospital. After three years as an EMT, Baker is a seasoned caregiver and has recently graduated to paramedic.



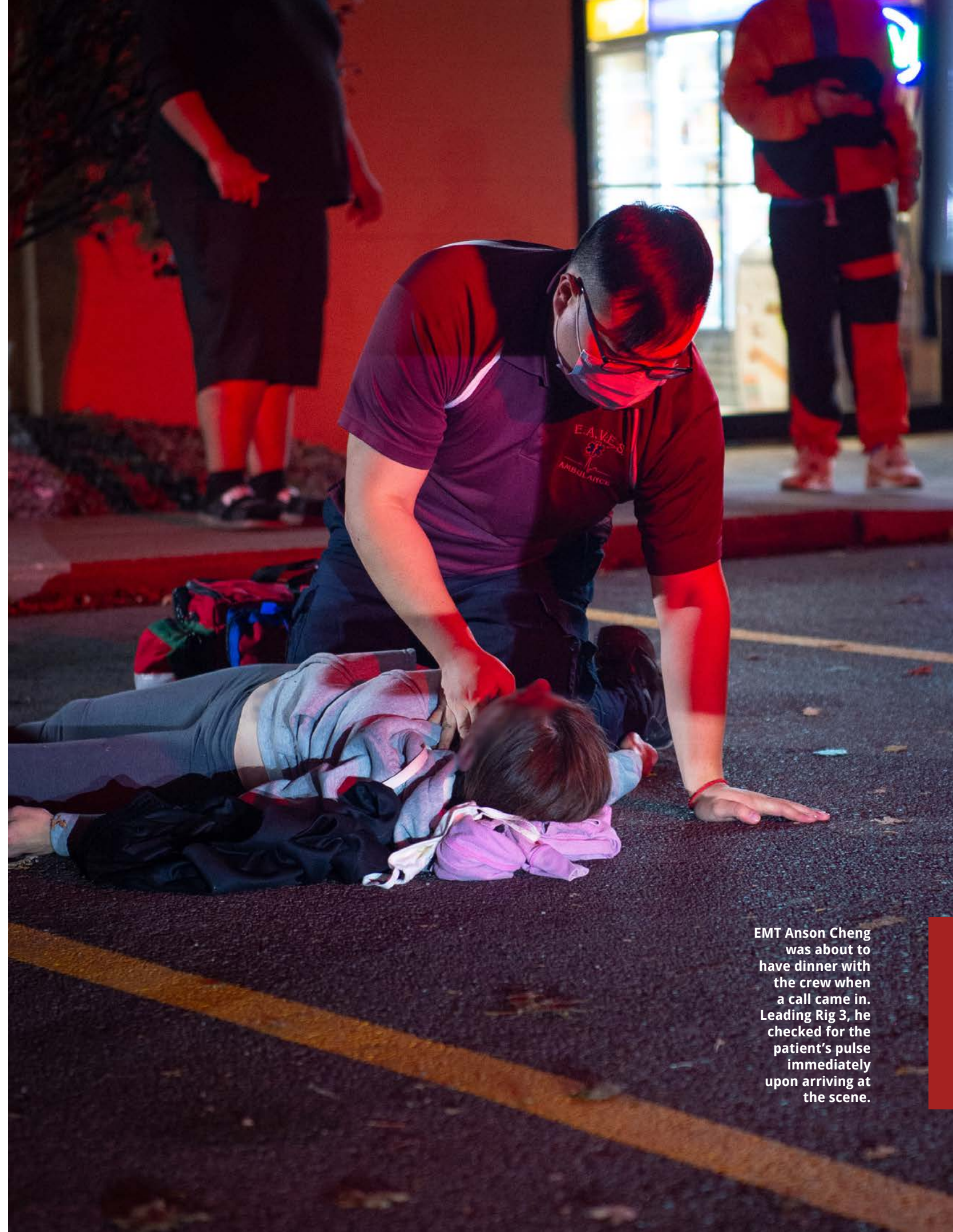
**EAVES crew members tend to a patient outside of a supermarket. The well-trained teams at EAVES lean on each other to provide essential care to the people of Syracuse.**

Despite financial setbacks, EAVES has kept a tight ship, providing high-quality services no matter the circumstance. “You rely on training. It’s a joke that we [paramedics] have T-shirts that say, ‘Don’t worry, I’ve done this on a plastic doll once!’ When you’ve done it on a doll 1,000 times, it makes it that much easier when it’s a real person,” says paramedic Baker.

“The E911 center receives 500,000 calls a year. Of that number, 80,000 are calls for an ambulance,” said Julie Corn, Commissioner of Emergency Communications for Onondaga County, during an interview with Syracuse.com. EAVES has felt the pressure, but despite the increased number of yearly calls, EMTs and paramedics take advantage of any downtime while on shift. They know that it’s in these moments of stillness that the crews of EAVES build bonds and lasting relationships which lead to higher morale among the crew and assures they’re ready for the next call.



**More often than not, the crews at EAVES are called out for routine tasks like aiding a fallen senior citizen. Baker takes great joy in his work at EAVES. “I actually like this job. Since my wife now has a very good paying one, I can focus on it.”**



**EMT Anson Cheng was about to have dinner with the crew when a call came in. Leading Rig 3, he checked for the patient’s pulse immediately upon arriving at the scene.**

**“We know that tomorrow is a new day. In the morning, we’ll put that uniform back on and head back out those doors because we wouldn’t have it any other way.”**

**Monica Hoke,  
EMT at EAVES**



Rig 4 rushes out of the EAVES base in response to a new call.



# The SOLE of SYRACUSE

By J.D. Monford

Local legend Rafaele “Ralph” Rotella has been in the shoe-cobbling business in Downtown Syracuse for more than 50 years, becoming a beloved and respected member of the community.



Ralph Rotella took over the family business after his father passed away.

Rotella makes sure that he keeps busy, maintaining a strong work ethic.



He works on many different types of shoes, including dress shoes, house shoes, boots and sneakers.



Rotella's cluttered shop is full of all sorts of items that he has accumulated over the years — giving his workspace a unique and recognizable personality.



Rotella uses vintage tools, like s-shaped hammers and shoe-cobbling pliers, that are fit to tackle any type of shoe he encounters.



Some of Rotella's regular customers come by occasionally to joke around and laugh with him, even when they don't need any work done on their shoes.

Rotella never fails to interact with people — a testament to his personality. Here he jokes with a young fan at a Syracuse Crunch game.



Rotella accepts donations of old or worn shoes, which he repairs and gives back to people in need. By the end of 2022, his business had collected and distributed more than 34,000 pairs.



Rotella conducts radio interviews with local stations each Tuesday morning, during which he promotes his business and breaks news on upcoming events.

Syracuse Mayor Ben Walsh presents Rotella with his own day, December 15, 2022, "Ralph 'The Shoe Repair Man' Rotella Day."



# BEHIND THE SCENES

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This project represents the combined efforts of the Department of Defense Visual Information specialists training at Syracuse University. The training these students received will soon be applied in support of DoD missions around the world.

