

Spreading gratitude, love and joy at Daily Magic

by AnnGardner Eubank

Gratitude, love and joy can be found in the little moments of the day anywhere at anytime. However, finding these moments of light and magic are simple and apparent in Irvington's newest and most charming shop, Daily Magic.

Owner, artist and curator of Daily Magic, Ally Childress, finds and creates moments of joy each day at her self-care shop at 235 Steamboat Road.

"That's my goal with this space—to carry products that facilitate having these magical moments," said Childress.

From herbal teas and tinctures, natural oils and skin care, gratitude journals and a variety of books prompting self-reflection to handmade jewelry, embroidery kits and tarot cards, Childress has curated a space to encourage self-nourishment and connectivity.

Using a ceramics degree she earned from the University of Mary Washington in 2010, Childress hand crafts all of the jewelry for sale within the store.

Jewelry making is actually how it all got started, she said.

Childress said she had spent the last several years creating her jewelry and taking it on the road to sell at a variety of different markets and pop-ups.

"Through traveling around the country, I found these communities of people making all of these amazing products," she said.

In the store, Childress said she could tell you who makes each product. Supporting other small businesses is a key component to supporting the community aspect of the space, she said.

Since opening the doors to



Ally Childress welcomes visitors to her shop. Photo by Gabriel Zakaib

Daily Magic in April, Childress said she has felt fulfilled providing folks with products and experiences that help them nourish their mind, body and spirit.

She recounted "the most rewarding experience of operating the store" that came a few months ago. On that day, a mother and her seven-year-old son came into the shop and the son was gravitating towards the gratitude journals. She watched as the mother

explained what gratitude means and the importance of being grateful.

Childress recently heard from the mother, saying that each day she and her son fill out the journal prompts together, becoming more bonded and mindful day in and day out.

"That's what Daily Magic is—it's bringing people together," Childress said.

Another portion of the space Childress is particularly proud

of is her women's health and menstrual cycle support products.

From informative books discussing the phases of a cycle and how to best treat your body throughout each phase to different teas and herbal blends to support women throughout their cycle, Childress provides resources regarding a natural human function that is often treated as taboo, often contributing to a general lack of knowledge.

While there is plenty to explore and learn about inside Daily Magic, Childress said she has three top choices she recommends to her guests.

The super berry immunity tea is her favorite superfood blended tea that promotes overall well-being and immunity. She loves the organic alcohol-free tinctures that help support quality sleep and gut health, while regulating stress. Her favorite is the Immunity which is made with echinacea, lemon peel and ginger. Childress also recommends picking up one of the prompted gratitude journals.

"It's an amazing way to reflect," she said.

As Childress continues to grow her clientele and visibility of her store, a major goal is to host and incorporate more community events at Daily Magic.

She has been offering embroidery sessions on Sundays for folks to gather and create along side one another.

Childress will host a tarot card reading pop-up from 1-4 p.m. Sunday, July 16, with Michelle Mercurio.

"Tarot is a tool to reflect on the magic we all possess and focus our attention on how to authentically move forward," said Childress.

A mushroom serving a day could keep some cancers away

by AnnGardner Eubank

Mushrooms could replace the "apple" a day that keeps the doctor away.

With many studies regarding mushroom consumption showing seemingly unbelievable benefits such as eliminating chances of developing cancers by 50%, businesses such as Rappahannock River Mushrooms have been blossoming.

Dave Boso, owner and grower of Rappahannock Mushrooms, has been busy growing and selling his product throughout the Northern Neck and Virginia.

Before moving to the Northern Neck several years ago, Boso had been working as a real estate broker in Oregon. He was looking for a new career to get into and his interest was piqued into the world of fungi after selling a property that was going to be used for mushroom growth.

When Boso decided to do his own research on growing mushrooms and their many benefits, he took it as a sign to give growing a try after discovering the author of a book he read about mushrooms had grown up in the same area as he in Ohio.

In 2020, Boso relocated to Dunnsville where he grows and operates his business. He buys liquid cultures, colonizes the cultures on whole oats to expand and grow more cultures, and gets blocks for growth once the cultures are fully colonized.

Boso said he converted a shipping container into a grow room which is fully equipped with air conditioning, heat, ventilation and humidifiers. He has to keep the moisture between 90-95% for cultivation, he said.

The entire process takes about 90 days from start to finish for most of his variations of mushrooms, with the exception of



David Boso can be found outside of Grow NNK, 84 South Main Street, Kilmarnock, every other Wednesday selling his homegrown mushrooms which are jam packed with vitamins, minerals and cancer fighting properties. Photo by AnnGardner Eubank

shiitake mushrooms which can take up to six months for full growth, he said.

Boso grows a variety of mushrooms, including blue oysters, gold oysters, Italian oysters, pink oysters, brown beach, lions mane, chestnut, chicken of the woods, shiitakes and reishi.

According to Boso in reference to a recent study published by Penn State, regular consumption of two to four ounces of mushrooms of any variety can lower the risk of developing cancer by 45%. Mushrooms are dense in properties that are anti-cancer, anti-tumor and build immunity, Boso said.

According to Boso, the properties in mushrooms help the brain replace neuron pathways which help brain function and overall brain health.

Just small portions of mushrooms pack incredible health benefits. Mushrooms grown by Boso contain protein, fiber, B-vitamins, magnesium, phos-

phorus and additional vitamins and minerals.

Properties like KS-2, alpha and beta-glucans, B 1-3 and B 1-6 gluons, gandoric acids, flammulin and lentinan are all found in the mushrooms and act as cancer inhibitors, Boso noted.

Since April, Boso has been building a strong customer base in Kilmarnock and surrounding areas from a pop-up shop in front of Grow NNK, 84 South Main Street, Kilmarnock, every other Wednesday.

Boso said he connected with Grow NNK owner, Melissa Burke, a few months ago as they both specialize in herbal and natural solutions. Burke and Boso make a strong pairing, as Boso sells his home-grown mushrooms and Burke offers different mushroom-sourced products like tinctures, herbal blends and powders.

To take in all of the benefits mushrooms offer, they must be fully cooked, he said.

There's a lot of room to get creative in mushroom consumption. From simply adding portions on top of pizza or incorporating them into pastas, there's dozens of ways to prepare mushrooms.

"One of the cool things about mushrooms is they take on the flavors of how you season them," Boso said.

Since Boso is on the Keto diet, he likes to use mushroom caps as a pasta substitute to make lasagna.

He also said using lions mane alongside seafood really enhances flavors, too.

Mushrooms are also popular meat substitutes, Boso said.

Those who don't like mushrooms typically don't because of the texture rather than the taste, Boso added.

As a solution, Boso recommends blending them in a food processor to make a powder and incorporating them into recipes almost as a "hidden ingredient."

For those who are interested in starting to incorporate mushrooms into their regular diet, Boso offered a quick guide of his own to help get beginners started.

"My personal favorite to sauté are chestnut mushrooms. I really like brown beach for their versatility and lions mane are the best for seafood. Overall, the best for cooking in general are blue oysters," he said.

To begin mitigating chances of cancer, boosting energy naturally without jitters or crashing, and to help supplement the diet with important vitamins and minerals, look for Boso with his selection of homegrown mushrooms every other Wednesday at Grow NNK. He also takes orders for pick up at his Dunnsville operation and attends various farmers markets and events throughout the state.



Guest chef Jack Kirkmyer (right) chats up “Club Vine” guests on Thursday, March 23. Photo by AnnGardner Eubank

Community chefs feed ‘Club Vine’

by AnnGardner Eubank

In the midst of dreary winter, Terri Riggs and her team at Vine began hosting a weekly guest chef experience as a means of sparking some community spirit while simultaneously giving back to the community.

As the restaurant and wine bar’s loyal customer base began coining the term “Club Vine” for each Thursday night during the series which ran from February through March, Riggs found herself with an abundance of interest for the event from its start.

According to Riggs, she figured winter would be the ideal time to try a weekly event, such as the guest chef series, to bring people together during a time the weather and early nights often keep folks at home.

“It was a very successful venture as well as building community spirit,” she said.

When Riggs provided a sign-up sheet for folks to register as the Thursday night guest chef for the two months, slots and reservations filled up practically in an instant.

“It’s been nice to showcase some of the talent within our



Jack Kirkmyer prepared pork tenderloin with a pineapple chutney along with creamy mashed potatoes and some veggies. Half the profits from the guest chefs’ dinners went to charitable organizations. Photo by AnnGardner Eubank

community. I knew we had a lot of very talented people who enjoyed cooking in our area,” she said.

With dishes such as gumbo, Mediterranean chicken, lobster rolls and pork tenderloin, there was something fresh and new each week for guests to enjoy that were prepared by their friends and neighbors.

Community members and residents who shared their

skills in the kitchen at Vine included Gary Hooper, Mark and Vivian Rawls, Mary Burgess, Laurie Wingfield, Bragg and Co., Ramona Dardin, Cay Bradley, Jack Kirkmyer and Joanna Carlington.

Guest chefs were asked to provide an ingredient list which was covered by Vine and were given time to prep in the kitchen prior to serving. The best part, however,

is the event served as an on-going charity to benefit the Town of Irvington and its organizations.

Half of the profits made each Thursday from the dish prepared by the guest chef were donated to the community in some capacity.

Donations were made to Rappahannock River Yacht Club, Steamboat Era Museum, the Village Improvement Association and White Stone Volunteer Fire Department.

“It’s very important for us to support and give back to the town. Irvington has been so loyal and supportive of the business since we first ever began and it’s important to support the town that supports us,” Riggs said.

The series was able to provide a weekly community atmosphere among neighbors, family and friends while also bringing in a new market with each guest chef, Riggs said.

The series was so enjoyed, Riggs said she has already begun to prepare for next year. Slots are already filling up to be on the guest chef list at “Club Vine.” The series is planned for January through February 2024.