

NEIGHBOURS OF

FEBRUARY 2021

# ST. ANDREWS

AN EXCLUSIVE MAGAZINE DELIVERED TO HOMES IN ST. ANDREWS & LOCKPORT



LOVE YOUR

*Life*

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BY BRANDI JOHNSON **PHOTOS BY** ENVISION PHOTOGRAPHY



**T**his issue's cover story is one of deep love. I mean come on; it IS February after all. But perhaps not the predictable sort you'd find on a big screen rom com or the typical romance novel. This month I sat down with fitness coach, Julie Germaine. She's a single mom to daughter Amelia. And the love I'm referring to is two-fold; first, for the sacred relationship with child and second, that as a parent.

Now before you go Googling Julie, let me remind you that abs aren't an accident. They come from a dedicated lifestyle and a tremendous amount of discipline. Not to mention forgiveness and compassion. Because we all have days when we aren't always as dedicated, don't make the best choices, but in the end, what matters most is that you keep trying; keep moving the needle towards a better life. That's where you'll find your strongest self.

"I live in St. Andrews," she tells me. I was writing from the lake and she at home – all thanks to the pandemic of course – and as we corresponded, I found myself thinking more about acceptance of where I'm at with that aspect of my life. "I am a single mom to a toddler. My daughter, Amelia, is two and a half. I grew up in this area where my parents have lived on their ten-acre property for forty years. They purchased an open lot when I was a baby, built their dream home, and planted every beautiful tree in their private, scenic yard."

If this were a work of fiction, I'd take you on a long stroll around their land, admiring the setting sun, the beauty of nature.

"I moved back to Manitoba after having my baby in another province. I wanted to raise Amelia closer to my family. It was an excellent choice. After living in Quebec and Nova Scotia, it quickly came back to me, all the reasons why I truly love our community, and the amazing things this province has to offer."

Julie is an online personal trainer, and has had her own business since 2005, which makes her location flexible, and her optimism a perfect fit for her personality. "I love the ability to work from home and set my own hours, which gives my daughter and I the freedom to take advantage of nice days, playing outside in the winter and rollerblading or biking in the summer."

We all agree that living in St. Andrews affords a great quality of life. "I especially love the bike paths, and every day I appreciate all the gorgeous houses and well-kept yards, as I incorporate fitness into my days. Even better is seeing people take pride in their homes, and their openness to smile and wave as you pass. It's so nice to be greeted by friendly faces in our rural community, and it's so accessible to Selkirk and Winnipeg for shopping, events and resources for my daughter."

Love is feeling at home in another person's company, in your family unit, or in your

surroundings. But it's also a feeling of gratitude. It's seeking out the good, and looking for moments and folds to swell one's heart. I believe love and gratitude are close cousins. You can love yourself and your life more fully when you appreciate what you have.

"My daughter is such a happy little girl! We spend all our time together. She loves riding behind my bike in the summer, or in our sport stroller that my cousin graciously handed down to me, while I rollerblade around the parks of Manitoba with her. We participate in plenty of mommy and me classes - always in matching attire!" She laughs. "Whether swimming, in dance class or reading and rhyming groups,

Amelia already has quite a few friends and is a very out-going and active little munchkin. She is very much my mini-me." Julie confesses, they also both love to draw and never turn down chocolate!

In speaking with Julie, I learned that we



strategy for

"I do try to come up with an annual 'motto' that sets the tone for my year," she shares. "Last year it was 'Show up Every Day' as a reminder to myself to work hard and give my best - every day. Now that



not only share a deep appreciation for life and chocolate, we have a tremendous amount of adoration for our roles as mommas in common, and that every year, we each try to develop a tagline or the upcoming year.

being said, 100% isn't always possible, but I simply did the most I could do every day. This year, my motto is 'Exceed Expectations,' which applies to every area of my life. I want to exceed the expectations of my clients, friends, family, associates - and myself! I want to build a life where Amelia can grow and be happy, kind and filled with joy."

She admits she gets satisfaction helping others max out on potential, and is inspired by others who work hard and chase their dreams regardless of what they are. "Being passionate about SOMETHING gives life meaning. I think it's so important to set goals for yourself, to have purpose and even better...to achieve them."

Like most coaches in the fitness industry, Julie feels great satisfaction helping people get into their desired shape, and learn how to incorporate healthy foods into their busy lives to lose weight and increase energy.

"Quality of life improves when you have the support of a virtual coach to guide your health and body transformation," she says. This was especially important this year, when so many of us were stuck at home, eating more, cooking and baking more, but moving less. "Exercise is a great stress relief, and knowing how to incorporate movement during quarantine - sometimes when it was the last thing we felt like doing - was key for many of my clients."



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RESIDENT **FEATURE**

When she isn't motivating others, she gets in weight training, rollerblading and bike riding for her own mental health; a spin class when they're available and casual swimming at the Birds Hill Park beach with Amelia. "I also love to listen to audiobooks, travel and see the world through Amelia's eyes."

This month, when we may still be reeling from the impacts of 2020, perhaps take a page from Julie's playbook and move. Exceed your own expectations or go inward and discover what makes you feel amazing. Love looks different to all of us – whether that's loving the way you feel or loving the gift of being able to care for others.

For Amelia's sake and all our little St. Andrews residents, here's to giving and receiving more love.



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