

MARCH 2020

# Montford & North Asheville *Neighbors*



*The Schrank Family*  
*Never Giving Up in North Asheville*



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# Publisher's Message



## Happy March!

March has always been an exciting month. Spring sports begin! Registration for kids Soccer Teams. Baseball & Softball tryouts. Lacrosse too. We see the determination in our X-country athletes running around Asheville. It's exciting, breaking out all that new gear from the sporting goods store. New cleats, sneakers, & that hot new bat you can finally get around on the ball with.

Becoming an athlete, especially at a young age, builds skills to apply to the rest of your life. Hard work & commitment create positive results when you *always give 100% in everything you do whether it be making your bed or climbing a mountain.* When kids play sports they build confidence, motivation, & set goals. Being disciplined & reaching your goal is empowering. Your Team—those players who have your back, support you & challenge you, are going to be the kind of people you surround yourself with throughout your life.

It doesn't matter your age, sports tend to teach us about life. We learn to *celebrate wins graciously & lose with dignity.* Learning from our failures makes the sweetness of success that much better. Not to mention, that repetition & muscle memory, not only work for our bodies but for our minds.

As a business owner in Asheville & Softball Coach, I can not tell you how many times, skills I use on the field, make my days that much better. *"If it was easy, everyone would do it!"*, *"Why give 100% when you are capable of 120%?"*, *"Communication is just another skill you put in your tool box."* & my all time favorite - You got this!! So Spring is on the way. Get your kids out on the court, on a team, or in the pool. Join them or push yourself to try something new! Its all about challenging yourself. Body & Mind to.....  
*Be The Best Version of Yourself!*

Happy March to My Friends & Neighbors!

*Christine Priola*

Publisher & Your Neighbor

## Become a Sponsor • Build Your Brand

As a local Asheville business owner, YOU have the opportunity to make personal connections with our upscale neighbors. Bringing our Asheville Community closer together is powerful! There are many amazing local people & beautiful stories we are excited to share with you.

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Contact Christine Priola



# The Shrank Family

## Never Giving Up in North Asheville

By Christine Priola • Photos by FastCat Photography

Alexandra & Curt Schrank are beautiful people with beautiful hearts. Years ago they would never have pictured themselves in Asheville getting this much out of life. Curt expresses, “If you asked me years ago if I ever saw myself with a beautiful family & where I am today ...no way. I never thought life could be this good.” Both have overcome losses no one deserves to face.

In East Charlotte, Alexandra was raised by her Grandmama & Granddaddy. Nice memories of vacationing in Black Mountain when she was a little girl may have been why Asheville is now her home. Alex was her Grandmama’s “Little Helper” She

had to grow up too quickly, with a grandmother who needed her to cook, clean, & do more than any 10-year old should. She loved her grandparents very much. Sadly, her Grandmother had arthritis & lung cancer & Grandfather, Alzheimer’s Disease. One day, checking on her Grandmama in the bathroom, she found her on the shower floor. At 11yrs old Alexandra called 911.

Losing her mother figure was an emotional time. At 15 Alexandra’s Mom passed from a drug overdose. A good woman who made some bad choices. Sometimes people have a tougher time navigating life’s bumps in the road than others. Alex

learned “it’s all about the path you take.” Without any support system, moving from house to house, she quit school in 9th grade. She needed someone’s support to help her focus on making good choices. Remembering her mother’s words -” You are the person you surround yourself with.. make good choices... don’t ever give up...you need to graduate.” With a strong will to succeed, Alexandra turned to her Aunt for support and guidance. Motivated, she enrolled in an Alternative School. She worked hard to graduate Valedictorian & started taking college courses, thanks to Pell Grants, Scholarships, & guidance counselors along the way, Alex was “learning that life is all about choices,” & to “let go of things that are out of our control.”

In 2010 Alexandra moved to Asheville ready to work on her BA in Business at UNCA. Alexandra was the first person in her family to attend college and receive a degree. Moving into her first apartment in North Asheville, Alex, on the first day, seeing her first neighbor-met Curt. Within 2 weeks they started dating. Growing up in Muskego, Wisconsin. (right near Milwaukee), Curt is the youngest of 6 kids. A large family with traditions of lake houses & bonfires, water skiing & tubing. Curt’s Dad has a rule. Everyone staying at the Lake House has to learn to waterski! The Schrank family visit’s each summer. Something they “really look forward to!” This is where Alex learned to waterski with Curt.

One of the many new things they do together.

Curt moved to Asheville in 2009, “to get back on track & have a fresh start.” Dealing with substance abuse, he too hit some bumps in the road. He was ready to change the direction of his journey & work the program. But 6 days in, only a year after Curt & Alex met, he experienced a horrific event. April 2, 2011, Curt was riding with friends off Gorman Bridge Rd, the car crashed, flipped & hit an embankment. Curt was thrown out of the car. Landing on his back & looking up at the sky, he felt like it was a dream. In tremendous pain, unable to move, with ambulance lights bouncing through the air, he was told that some of his buddies had died. Curt was one of the survivors. With a broken back, many broken ribs, Curt mourned the loss of his friends. He went on to question “Why me? Why am I still alive?” He began a long road to recovery with 2 rods & 8 screws in his back. Curt had the support system of friends at *Real Recovery* & Alexandra to help him through. He is now thankfully, a very active person. Curt plays defense on *AAI Soccer league*, basketball at *UNCA*, works out at *CrossFit Pisgah* & is constantly on the go with activities for the children.

Together Alex & Curt love to travel! On their honeymoon,






rafting, hiking, biking, mountain climbing... Curt understood that young people feel their life is over before it even begins so he showed them how fulfilling it can be. Building trust & respect, they knew that good or bad, they had a “sober fraternity” of guys that we're there for them 24/7. *Real Recovery* helped many people get their lives back. With great respect for their model, in 2016 *Real Recovery* sold to a healthcare company. Curt was doing what he loved, helping people. Currently, he coaches clients with mental illness & substance abuse.

I met the Schranks at *Deluxe Café*, a new tapas spot in North Asheville. Great food & an artistic flair. Out of the car jumps Curtis Jr. excited & 6 years old & Jeric, a giggling 4-year-old. In the arms of Alexandra is 1yr old Marvin with the best chubby cheeks. He “loves


they explored South Africa- hiking mountains & Victoria Falls. Alex & Curt believe in giving back. Curt did so by partnering up with *Real Recovery* to help the business reach more people & grow to new heights. “Different than the industry standard, *Real Recovery* made being sober fun, creating, “a life worth living.” They helped men under 30 to change their perception of what a good time really can be when sober.” He helped people learn to take responsibility for their lives. Building a support system in their program, he knew everyone needed to stay active & sober. “All that Asheville has to offer made that easy,” Whitewater

being in the middle of the action.” When asking Alex & Curt about their dreams they agree “we both always wanted a family of our own.” Watching the 3 boys hang out in the grass, catching whiffle balls together, their dream is real. The older brothers look out for each other & love on their baby brother, Marvin. Curtis Jr. tells me all about his football team & shows me his touchdown dance. Jeric at 4, a little shy is trying everything. This family all believe in staying healthy, active, & date night. Fridays they have been snow skiing together at *Cataloochi* in



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Haywood County. As a couple, they like to learn new things – whether dancing classes at *AB Tech* or exploring new hikes. Alex taught Curt to cook too! The Schrank's teach their kids “that life is about choices”. Teaching them healthy choices now will empower them as they grow. The Schrank's motto is “*Never Give Up!*” and they apply it to everything they do.

After earning her BA in Business Alexandra found a career she loves. While pregnant with her 2nd son, she went to Real Estate school & joined the **RE/MAX** family. Her mission statement is “using my talents to help others.” Alex takes care of each client like family. Finding great success in our real estate market, she partnered up with Heather Hines & formed The **Mountain Star Team**. “We are top sellers in town & our culture of helping others keeps us motivated to work hard & build relationships in our community.” In the process of helping others, they work with builders & developers who focus on affordable housing in Asheville. Alex is looking to help out *UMOJA*, a non-profit that needs to lease space right now (*any lead, please reach out.*) Also a supporter of *Attic Salt Theatre*, a community theatre in North Asheville, she tells me, growing up she would have loved to take acting classes. Being involved now and donating to *Attic Salt* is just the beginning of the support Alex gives. *Big Brothers & Big Sisters & Mountain Child Advocacy Center* are other groups Alex & Curt give back to. The Schrank's love the feel of both living in the mountains & the city. They

found each other at just the right time in their lives, to make a difference. May it be hard work, good choices, or both. The way Curt & Alexander support each other, well the possibilities for their family to soar are endless. You can feel the love as Dad, Curtis, Jeric, & baby Marvin hold each other tight with hugs & kisses for Mom. As parents, the Schrank's will give their boys endless love, guidance &.... they will learn to never give up.

*Thanks to Matt Rook - RoostHomeWatch for nominating the Shrank Family. Also thanks to Kevin, Owner of Deluxe Cafe • Woodfin, for welcoming us into his new amazing restaurant.*

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# Focus *and* FLOW

Discover How Manageable  
Life Can Become with  
Focus & Martial Arts



By GrandMaster Tony Morris Sun Soo Martial Arts • Photo FastCatPhotography

We've all seen the action scenes in martial arts movies – body after body with an assortment of objects flying at the hero – one after another, in rapid succession & sometimes all at once! Meanwhile, the hero, as if by some magical power, seems to see it all – every

threatening move which he successfully blocks or avoids – as well as every open opportunity presenting itself in the flurry – which he exploits with precision, speed and power!!

Okay, okay, so these scenes are extreme -- exaggerated with the aid of props and extensive choreography, multiple scene takes, and speed manipulation of the final film. In actuality though, real martial artists develop these types of skills for real life. And while practicing martial artists might not be able to handle fifteen attackers simultaneously, while dodging spinning stars, they do develop amazing abilities to be aware of and appropriately handle a multitude of stimuli.

Martial artists are presented with a wide array of opportunities within an authentic practice to develop & sharpen

their skills of awareness and focus. The “zone”, is that place, that state, that Neo reached in the “Matrix” when he seemed transfixed in such hyper-presence that he was able to move effortlessly in the midst of a seemingly overwhelming onslaught.

Day to day, each and every one of us are also juggling, what looks and feels to most of us, like an unmanageable quantity of influential factors. With to-do lists a mile long, kids to take care of, bills to pay, relationships to nurture, a body to nourish, deadlines to meet, classes to take, etc.,... not only does there

seem insufficient time & energy to manage all of it, but to manage everything and have time for personal acknowledgement & pleasure seems entirely impossible – a conceptual fantasy. We generally race from one thing to the next with severe imbalances: doing fantastic in the

workplace, but never making time to exercise – or - running an efficient household, but neglecting relationships into the ground – or - completing the to-do list, but going to sleep still empty & un-fulfilled. There seem to be simply too many items to be aware of and deal with at once.

So how is it that martial artists can handle so much “coming at them?” The secret is in the focus. And like any skill, the more

**The real magic in focus is the clarity that it brings. The clearer things are, the easier they are to handle.**



they practice with the intention of increasing focus, the greater the ability to focus becomes. The real magic in focus is the clarity that it brings. The clearer things are, the easier they are to handle. To illustrate and experience this point try this simple exercise: Turn your head to the right and quickly dart your eyes all over the place for about 3 seconds. Now close your eyes & do your best to recall all that you noticed. Now turn your head to the left & gaze at one specific point. While gazing at this point for about the same 3 seconds, allow yourself to notice all that you notice (including peripheral information). Now close your eyes again & this time notice how much more you can recall.

The key is in the focus. And with focus comes clarity. And with clarity you can flow! So focus and you will flow...life will flow... focus – and -- flow...& discover how manageable & fun life can be! And in the process, you will discover the martial artist in you!

Tony Morris is an 8th degree grandmaster instructor and co-owner of Asheville Sun Soo Martial Arts, WNC's # 1 martial arts school. Grandmaster Morris is acclaimed in the martial arts for his unique and innovative approach to both practice and instruction. He is additionally accomplished as an architect, nationally renowned portrait artist, certified life coach, trainer and motivational speaker.

Contact GrandMaster Tony @ 828.505.4309  
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# New Hobby or... Passion Strength Sports

By Courtney Kelly



Over 30? We think you should consider strength sports. Even if you're a woman. Actually, especially if you're a woman. We get that this might catch you off guard. After all, when we say "strength sports," many people immediately envision goliath men with massive beards hauling airplanes down runways. And it's not exactly that you'd be wrong. Strongman is definitely one strength sport. But there are others. And the people that compete in them include representatives from every age group, gender identity, & body type you can think of.

Here are 2:

## Olympic Weightlifting Athletes/Weightlifters & Powerlifting

Olympic Weightlifting  
Athletes/Weightlifters

- Compete in 2 Movements •

### THE SNATCH

*consists of pulling a barbell off the ground*

- launching it upwards and catching it overhead
- efficiently and quickly as possible

### THE CLEAN & JERK

*consists of pulling a barbell off the ground*

- launching it upwards
- catching it across your shoulders
- standing up
- then launching it from your shoulders overhead
- efficiently and quickly as possible.

**\*\*Important note: Despite the name, majority of athletes who compete do not have olympic aspirations.**



# Powerlifters

• Compete in 3 Movements •

## THE BACKSQUAT

consists of holding the barbell across your back  
- squatting down until your hips are below your knees  
- standing back up

## THE BENCHPRESS

consists of laying on a bench  
- holding a barbell out in front of you  
- bringing it to your chest  
- pressing it back up

## THE DEADLIFT

consists of picking a barbell off the ground  
- standing up  
- putting it back down

Words don't do these movements much justice, & we understand, if after reading the descriptions above, you can't imagine finding **Strength Sports** engaging, let alone rewarding. But we promise you, they are.

"Weightlifting is one of those addictions that gets deep in you," says Master Athlete, LawOffice Admin, Paralegal, & Mom • Joan S. "There's timing & technique & the grind... all things this girl loves."

Over the years, we have trained hundreds of strength sport athletes, many of whom are 30 years of age or older. And the benefits these individuals experience, across all levels of involvement, are profound.

**Improves Physical Health** -- let's start there. The scientific evidence is conclusive: **Strength Training** promotes metabolic health, musculo-skeletal health, cognitive health and overall longevity. Of course, this is true only if the strength training under discussion is performed with proper technique, appropriate loads/weights, calculated volume/repetitions, and careful movement progressions.

"On the recommendation of a friend, I tried olympic weightlifting" explains Christina S., Financial Advisor & Mom of 2 "I feel better physically than I

# "There's timing, technique & the grind.....all things this girl loves!"

- Joan S. Master Athlete, Paralegal, & Mom

from feeling like an old, broken 38 year old, to believing I could compete again in my 40s....The community, friendships, and the encouraging environment are what has helped me stay disciplined. My time [training] at Strength Ratio is one of the purest forms of joy in my life."

In strength sport communities, people celebrate one another for their personal successes; they praise one another for what they can do, not for what they look like. This may be the single most important reason I urge women to get involved with strength sports.

Kim E., business owner & property manager, describes the impact that powerlifting has had on her life: "At 48, my world was consumed with getting

smaller at any cost. [When I started powerlifting], I began the task of healing myself. It was scary [at first] -- no more pills, no more crazy diets or incessant cardio...Soon, I learned to love and appreciate what my body can do. I [now] hold National Powerlifting records...in the squat at 303 lbs, deadlift 397 lbs & total of 854 lbs. I am currently ranked 2nd in the world!"

There's nothing better than meeting the swell of your teammates' cheers when you walk out onto the competition platform. There's nothing more rewarding than that high five from your coach after a long Saturday workout. There's nothing more satisfying than looking age, size, and gender-based stereotypes dead in the eye & declaring, "You are wrong about me." And that's why we think you should consider strength sports.

Courtney Kelly, Strength Trainer & Local Business Owner of Strength Ratio on Broadway, inspires women to be the best version of themselves everyday! A place where she trains anyone interested -to build confidence, a healthy mind & body & a positive outlook on life. We would like to welcome her to North Asheville & thank her for all the great work we know she will do for women in our community.

Check out Courtney's work & her new business @ [www.strengthratiohq.com](http://www.strengthratiohq.com)



ever have."

For athletes who compete in strength sports, training means performing a much wider variety of movements than those two or three featured in competition. It also means regular conditioning. The combination of cardiovascular & strength training is ideal for overall health & longevity. And a healthy athlete is a happy athlete. The next **Strength Sport** benefit - **Improved Mental Health**. More & more studies are emerging that show a direct correlation between strength training, improved mood, resilience, & stress management. Beyond that, mastering the skills that strength sports require fosters self efficacy that athletes can carry into every aspect of life. It's not uncommon for those who've begun weightlifting or powerlifting to grow more confident in their careers and relationships as they grow more confident with a barbell.

**Strength Sports** not only build strong bodies & minds, they also build strong communities. Says Josh S., Store Leader/Manager, of his experience training alongside other strength sport athletes: "I went

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# So, Tell us About Your Favorite Sport? How Did Your Experience Influence Your Life Today?

By Our Friends & Neighbors • Photos By Rusty Jones - KineticPhoto

*Sports & being active are all about practicing Self-Care. Not only do you carry on the conviction you feel when striving to be your best, you nurture your mental & physical health. Learned at a young age, you carry these tools with you the rest of your life!*



"I played Soccer when I was younger. Since then- I'm always active - gym, hiking.....Especially when my pup is hanging out with me."  
- Phil



**"Football was my thing. Hanging out with my buddies, muddin' it up! Being part of that team taught me the importance of teamwork & having each others' back. Owning a local business - I realize I use these team skills in the kitchen each day."**

- Dustin • Pro Kitchens



**"Years of Softball training year round, has taught me how to make a team into a family & that working hard brings amazing victories. "**

- Jackie P.



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*"Swimming has taught me how to focus and work on goals whether in or out of the pool & has also taught me that there is always room for improvement & you can always get better at what you do." - Timmy C*

*"Growing up playing Soccer, I knew I loved being active & healthy. Now I still play soccer but I also hike, climb, play basketball .....being active is what we do as a family." - Curtis S.*

*"Growing up doing Competitive Dance has helped me learn the meaning of discipline and time management while also helping me understand my true self through a creative outlet." - Ariana R.*



*"Our favorite sport is Football. I love getting touchdowns & doing my end zone dance! We also like Basketball. And ....we like Baseball. And.....we like to try new stuff too!" - C.J. S. & Jeric S. Our Cover RockStars*



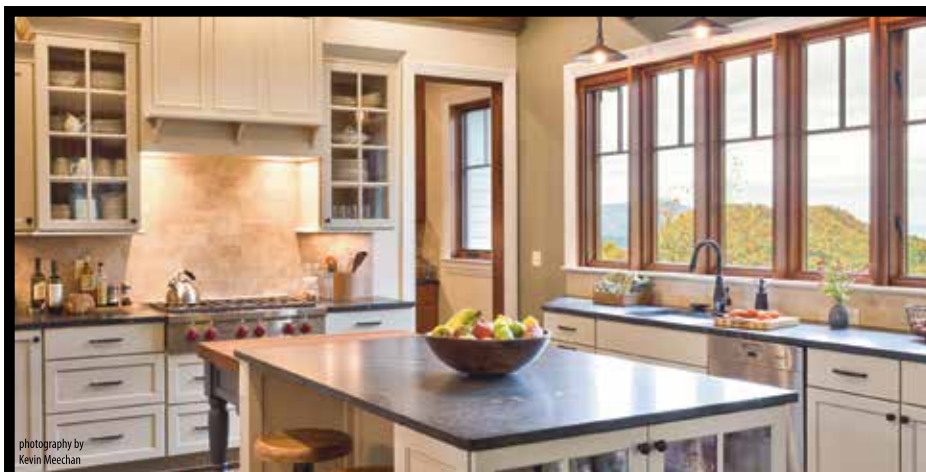
*" Competitive Dance Team & Cheerleading was my thing when I was younger. It taught me to have courage to get out there & try new things . Now I learned to ski, play soccer, piano ....Working as a team now inspires me to help others succeed." - Alexandra S.*



*"The importance of Dance in my life has allowed me to stay healthy and aware of my body and mind while being a very helpful relief of stress and creativity." - Abbey H.*

*"Growing up, I liked to Ice Skate. It was hard work & took commitment & lots of practice to be a successful Skater. Years later I commit to my business & work hard for that same amazing results." - Katherine M.*

*Rusty Jones has been a Photojournalist for over 32 years. He is currently a Freelance Photographer covering sports & news throughout NC & SC. His work has appeared in NYT • Wall Street Journal • Sporting News • Washington Post • The AP & numerous publications around the world. Rusty is also a contract photographer for Zuma Press. [www.thekineticphoto.com](http://www.thekineticphoto.com)*



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# Calendar of Events

## March

### Montford Park Players Pave the Way to a New Future

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## March & Beyond.

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## March

### Rock Academy Rock Academy & Music Academy Camp Registration @ Rock Academy & Online

Summer Experience • June 14-19  
String Revolution • June 29-July 3  
Roots Acoustic Camp • July 13-17

Rockin Girls Camp • July 27 - 31  
Opening Act Grade 4-6 • Aug 3 - 7  
Opening Act Grade 1-3 • Aug 10-14

[www.rockacademync.com](http://www.rockacademync.com)

## March

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## March 1 -9th

### NAHS Community Sidewalk Chalk Competition on 3/22 Small Local Business & Neighbor Sponsorships/Donations @ Asheville High School Art Dept

Please donate prizes for the winning teams of 6-9 Artists.  
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## March 12 • 3-6pm

### CSA FAir

### @ New Belgium Brewing Co.

### Presented by Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project

FREE Family Event

Meet local farmers & learn about Community Supported Agriculture. Discuss fresh produce available for pick up, CSA Memberships, & how to be involved.

[www.asapconnections.org](http://www.asapconnections.org)

## March 14 • 7:30-10:30am

### 14th Annual Shamrock Fun Run • 5K & 10K

### @ Asheville Catholic School

Run through the beautiful streets of North Asheville.

Benefitting the O'Brien & William Edward Gibbs Memorial Scholarship Fund.

Additional Race Details - <http://bit.ly/avlshamrock>

## March 15 & 29 • 1:30 -3:00

### Asheville Greenworks

### Bee City USA

### Volunteers to Stop Invaders of our Pollinator Meadow

### @ Elisha Mitchell Audoban Sanctuary

Please wear long pants, closed toe shoes & bring garden tools if you have them.

Register @ <http://bit.ly/weedingthepollinatoremeadow>

## March 16 • 4-6:30

### Hickory Nut Gap Farm

### Whole Hog Butchery Class

### @ Hickory Nut Gap Farm

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Learn about how our hogs are raised, the health benefits & the quality of each cut by butcher Brian Bermingham. Enjoy a beautiful meal with local craft beer.

[www.hickorynutgap.com](http://www.hickorynutgap.com)

**March 19 • 6-9pm**  
**Asheville Brewers Supply**  
**Brewers Social**  
**@Asheville Brewers Supply**

Brewers & beer enthusiasts gathering. Free Pizza. BYOB to share optional.

[www.ashevillebrewers.com](http://www.ashevillebrewers.com)

**March 21 • 6-10pm**  
**Sun Soo Martial Arts**  
**Kids Night Out**  
**@ Sun Soo Martial Arts**

Kids have a great night while parents get to have some fun too!

[www.sunsoomartialartsasheville.com](http://www.sunsoomartialartsasheville.com)

**March 20 & 21 • 10am-5:30pm**  
**Groewood Gallery**  
**Sip & Shop**  
**@ Groewood Gallery**

Celebrate Spring with 2 days of Artists demos, refreshments, & 10% discounts.

[www.groewood.com](http://www.groewood.com)

**March 21 • 8:30-10pm**  
**Hickory Nut Gap Farms**  
**Spring Equinox Stargazing**  
**@Hickory Nut Gap Farms**

Enjoy the welcoming of our Spring Stars during this time of equal day & night.

[www.hickorynutgap.com](http://www.hickorynutgap.com)

**March 22 • 1:30**  
**AHS - National Art Honor Society**  
**Community Sidewalk Chalk**  
**Competition**  
**@Asheville High School Courtyard**

Students, community members, teachers and anyone else join together to bring our creative community together & beautify our AHS Campus. Teams of Artists can show their artistic skills & have fun while fundraising for the AHS Art Dept.

[kristina.shriver@acsgmail.net](mailto:kristina.shriver@acsgmail.net)

**March 23 • 4pm-6:30**  
**Hickory Nut Gap Farms**  
**DIY Sausage Making Classes**  
**@Hickory Nut Gap Farms**

Learn from Professional Butchers the Art of Sausage making.

[www.hickorynutgap.com](http://www.hickorynutgap.com)

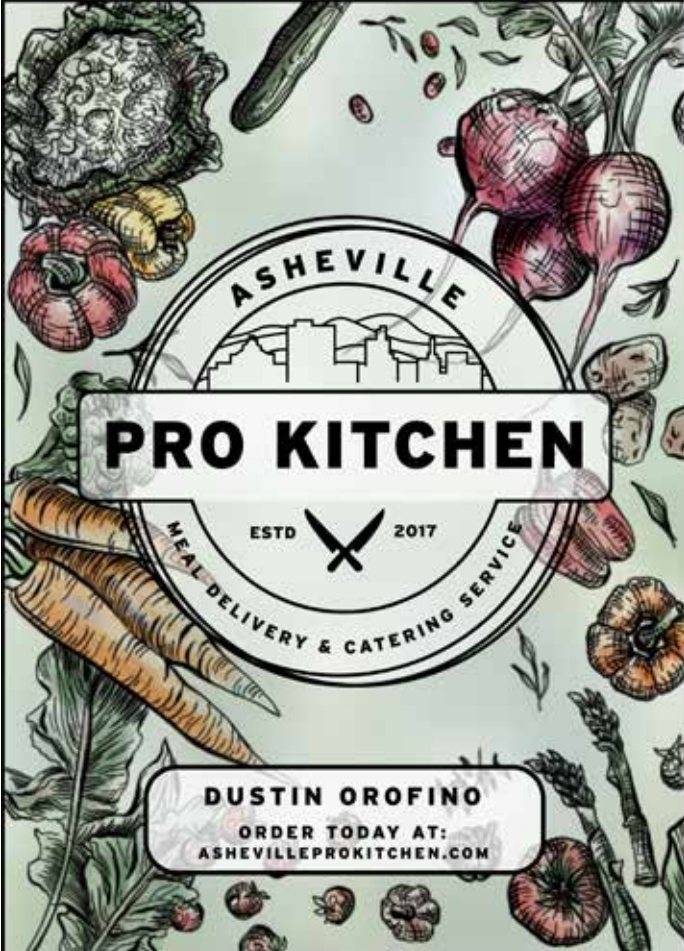


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