

# Astor

VOL 7, ISSUE 2-AUTUMN 2018

## 7 THINGS EVERY PARENT SHOULD KNOW ABOUT TEACHERS

## A YOUNG BOARD MEMBER GIVING BACK

## #feelingblessed THE EMOTIONAL ASPECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

## T-SPOON DESSERTS

*Stirs Things Up*

*Celebrating*  
**65 YEARS**  
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# Astor

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# Contributor

## LAURA DECKER

Laura Decker has been teaching at Astor for nearly 19 years. She is certified to teach students with special needs in grades K-12. She possesses a Masters degree in Community Psychology and Counseling. She enjoys challenging her students with new and creative lessons and likes to use humor to make learning enjoyable.

## LORI PETRAMALE-OZORES

Lori has recently joined the staff in Development and Public Relations as the new Development Coordinator at Astor. She is a lifetime resident of the Hudson Valley, where she resides with her husband Richard and her furry child, Bella Mia the cat.

**Join us!** If you are interested in being a contributor to Astor magazine as a writer or photographer, please email Kim McGrath [kmcgrath@astorservices.org](mailto:kmcgrath@astorservices.org).

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## Astor... Changing Lives Since 1953

**I**t is hard to believe it is autumn—back to school time! For many children, that means new clothes, new routines, new subjects, making new friends, and creating new goals and dreams. These are milestones we sometimes take for granted for children who may not share the challenges that others do—like the children of Astor, who struggle daily with educational, mental and behavioral issues. Now in its 65th year, Astor Services for Children & Families celebrates six and a half decades of promoting the well-being of children and their families, helping to ensure that all children share in the many, wonderful milestones of childhood.

I became aware of and involved with Astor in 2011 through the organization's Adopt-A-Family program that provides holiday gifts to families in need. Having young children at the time, I felt a connection to the program and wanted to give back and help in my community. Not to my surprise, what I gave of my time and donations, I received tenfold back in praise and an abundance of hope for Astor's children. I am part of just one helping family—imagine what a whole town or city could contribute!

I then joined the Astor Magazine team as a feature editor and can say with a full heart, that I am now also a Foundation Board member and active on the External Relations and Families for Astor committees. The dedicated staff and volunteers, willing donors, and passionate board members all contribute to the dreams of Astor's families; the dreams many of us take for granted in our daily lives, such as the unimpeded development of our children. Being a board member allows me to have a deeper understanding of the impact each of us has in the communities we serve. I see firsthand the successes of our treatment programs and donations raised to renovate the residences of our children, but I also am not hidden from the challenges Astor faces with the rise of teen suicides and mental depression that inflicts our nation. Even as we work to meet and overcome these challenges to serve more children and more communities in need, it never seems to be enough.

I hope you are moved to help Astor and learn more about the life-changing work this organization does for children by scheduling a tour or reaching out to volunteer. Get involved; get your children involved!

Here's to wishing the children and families of Astor a great start to the school year and to another 65 years of support from our loving community to ensure that dreams live on in the hearts of Astor's children.



Kim McConville

The Children's Foundation of Astor Board Member  
Edgewood Club of Tivoli, Vice President

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### PUBLISHER

**Sonia Barnes-Moorhead**  
smoorhead@astorservices.org  
Astor Services for Children & Families

### MANAGING EDITOR

**Kimberley McGrath**  
kmcgrath@astorservices.org

### CONSULTANT

**Moonah Ellison**  
Publisher|Editor, New York Moves Magazine  
Children's Foundation of Astor Board Member

### ART DIRECTOR & DESIGN

**Amy Joy Scheinert**  
ascheinert@astorservices.org

### COPY EDITOR

**Karen Shan**  
prwithimpact.com  
Impact Public Relations



**ASTOR**  
SERVICES FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES  
6339 Mill Street  
Rhinebeck, NY 12572  
(845) 871-1000  
www.astorservices.org

Astor magazine furthers the mission of Astor Services for Children & Families. The unique combination of services Astor provides to its clients is the basis for a publication with two goals: to use Astor's experience with children and families under stress as guidelines to benefit all the families in the region facing the challenges of raising children; and to draw upon the great strengths and assets of the region (i.e., Hudson Valley, New York City, etc.) to help families fully realize their values and goals. This free publication is distributed throughout the Hudson Valley (Dutchess, Ulster and Orange counties) and the Bronx at thousands of locations including doctor's offices, schools, libraries, retail locations, corporations, Astor's 33 locations, etc. The magazine reaches over 10,000 readers each issue.

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# Letter to the Editor

## Dear Editor,

A few weeks ago a friend handed me a copy of *Astor Family Magazine*. It was great reading about Mr. TJ Hessler, who exemplifies the hallmark of what Astor Home is all about.

Between the years 1953 - 54, I became a resident of Astor. What I can say is that Astor was a great and rewarding experience, which made it

so gratifying to read about Mr. Hessler.

I think it says something about Astor and the dedication of its staff, that he has remained at Astor for so long. Both staff and children have become a fraternity.

Respectfully,  
Paul Dordal



We would like to receive your feedback & suggestions.  
Please e-mail letters to Sonia Barnes-Moorhead, Publisher, Astor Magazine.  
E-mail: [smoorhead@astorservices.org](mailto:smoorhead@astorservices.org)

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## SOCIAL MEDIA EMOTIONS

As I lie in bed each night, I practice my nightly ritual of pulling out my phone and going through Instagram, Facebook and Snapchat, which I repeat in a loop until I doze off into a slumber.

*By Maliha Khan*

But as I'm scrolling and swiping, I sometimes wonder, is everyone else on social media happier than I am? I see my friends or old roommates posting stories about their world travels or selfies with celebrities, while here I am, falling down the rabbit hole as I count how many hours I have left until I have to wake up for work.

Like me, I'm sure you have that friend that travels the world. Not just travels, but travels the world in style. He or she will be in Bali one month holding up a tiger cub in an animal sanctuary, dipping their perfectly pedicured toes into the South Pacific from a water bungalow in Fiji the next. Some will be in South Africa posting selfies in front of colorful buildings where we common people were once only privy to such wonders via the Travel Channel. Oh, and don't forget those friends who love to post at least one photo a day of themselves either working on their already toned bodies or preparing an unappetizing looking vegan meal.

So, if you've spent any time on social media, there's little doubt that you've seen all of this and then some. Pictures of people having a better time than you are, followed by the hashtag #blessed or #livingmybestlife. Pop culture tells us that people like posting this stuff to show off.

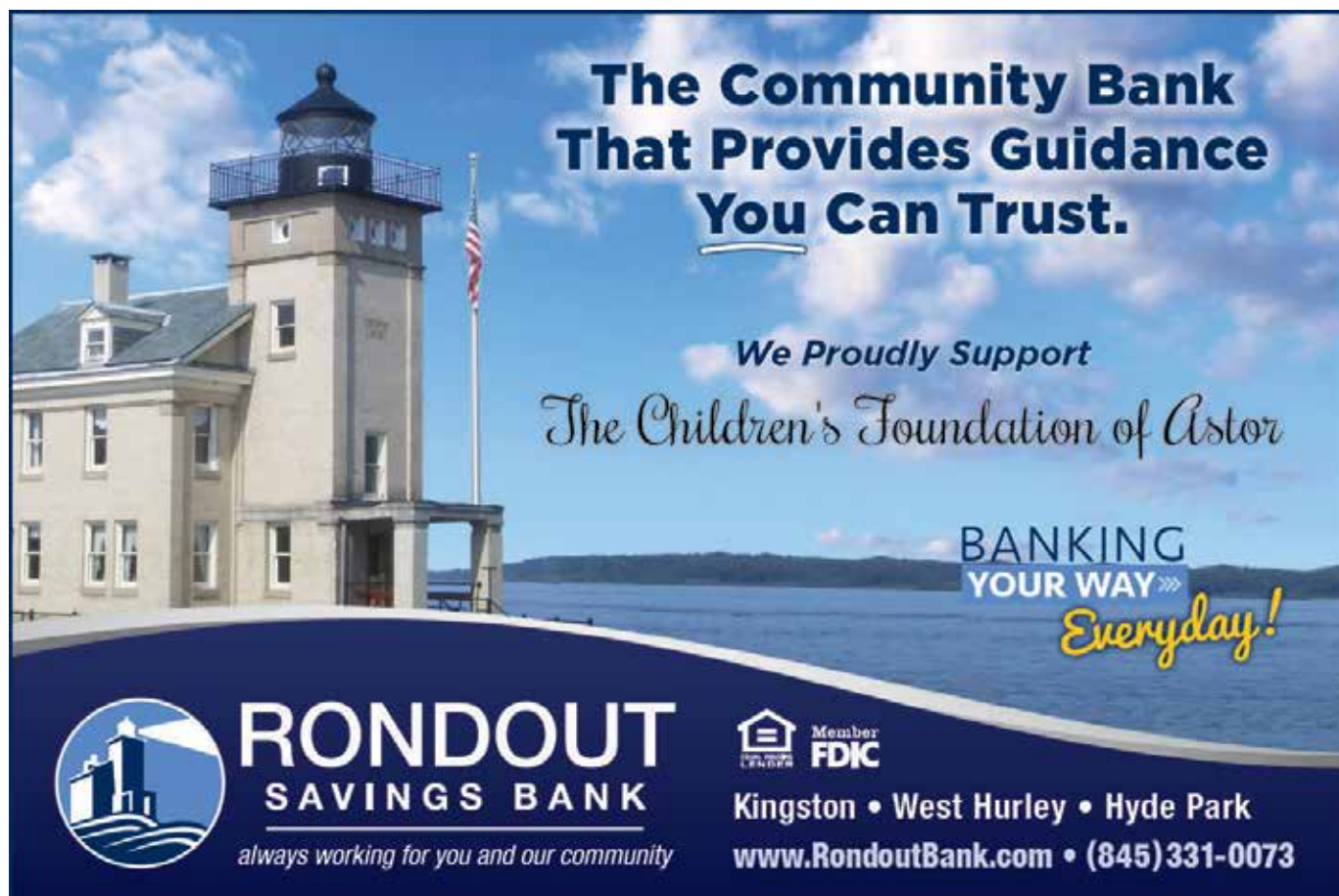






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## But it's more complicated than that,

says Dr. Brian Primack, director of the Center for Research on Media, Technology and Health at the University of Pittsburgh.

"People who feel socially isolated may be reaching out on social media, on some level, to self-medicate," he says. Primack suspects that people who are depressed often post photos and messages to reach out and feel like they are participating in the fun. Often, the more "likes" they receive, the more validated they feel.

Primack's findings focus on adults ages 19-32. He says part of the problem is that on one level,

viewers know posts are filtered, curated photos. But on social media, viewers also know "these are real people, so you feel like this is very much real life. You know it's not a Jose Cuervo ad, where the people are getting paid to put on smiles. These are people that you actually know."

In other words, it's a happiness that, even if it is closely curated, feels more attainable. If your college roommate is living it up on a yacht off the coast of Ibiza, why aren't you?

But we shouldn't write off social media completely, even those sensational posts. Honestly, social media still is a great way to share things with friends and family that we otherwise wouldn't or couldn't—like a funny Kermit and Miss Piggy

meme or a video of a baby panda rolling down a hill. Posts like these typically elicit positive emotions from users, rather than envy.

Still, countless studies are being done relating to the effects of social media. The medium is fairly new, and its full effects on people won't be known for years. Will we still have these positive and negative feelings while viewing these posts down the road? How will the medium change us and the way we process these feelings? Because this all is still new to all of us, we won't know for a long time.

In the meantime, I'll continue to scroll though these posts, double tap and comment with lots of heart emojis, and live vicariously through all of them until I doze off into my nightly slumber.



# T-SPOON DESSERTS

## *Stirs Things Up*

Go ahead! Indulge in some sweet treats from T-Spoon Desserts.

*By Lori Petramale-Ozores*

As I met with Terese Fantasia, baker and owner of T-Spoon Desserts, I discovered that her story was far more than one about another food truck in the Hudson Valley. What I found instead, was a story about layers of love. Love of family, love of life and a love and passion for her work.

Terese's eyes lit up when I first asked her about her craft. I could feel her excitement when she told me about her many culinary creations, but that exuberance paled in comparison to when she spoke of her favorite creations. "My daughters Parker (12) and Ainsley (15), and an 18 year marriage to husband, Scott Dutton."

Terese explained, "My Dad used to make homemade pasta and I remember him hanging it around the house to dry, while my Mom created her traditional Hungarian dishes... all from scratch." With her early family training, Terese took to scratch baking wholesome and healthy desserts, using the best of ingredients always.

While she taught in Elementary school for a while, and then a career in Human Resources, Terese switched gears once her girls were born. T-Spoon Desserts started





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humbly in 2001. “I would bake for my girls, and always try to find reasons to bring goodies to birthday parties they attended, their school functions – or any charity that needed a donation,” she laughed.

While her girls were at school, Terese baked for Mother Earth’s Storehouse, producing a variety of desserts, including vegan and gluten-free selections. “As much as I loved my time there and the friends I made, I really wanted to spend more time with my family.”

Terese would eventually merge her love of baking with her love of family by starting T-Spoon desserts. “I was able to spend more time with my family. As my reputation grew for having delicious, healthy baked items like, muffins, scones and biscuits, so did my business.”

Terese expanded to a commercial kitchen in Red Hook, NY, last summer, where she

now has the space to create and produce the volume of product that enables her to accommodate her ever growing demand.

Terese also acquired a delivery truck which she had converted into a food truck, and has taken her act on the road. “Primarily the food truck is saved for my catering events, weddings, parties and special requests. I let the customer choose the items they want... and I bring the desserts right to their venue.”

Sitting at her kitchen table having coffee, I asked her about where she sees herself in five years? She simply said, “Baking... it’s what I love.”

For more information on T-Spoon Desserts, please call: Terese Fantasia at 914-388-7921, visit her on Facebook (T-Spoon Desserts) and Instagram (tspoondesserts).









# 7 THINGS EVERY PARENT SHOULD KNOW ABOUT TEACHERS

By Laura Decker

## 1 WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER.

The best way to help your child learn is by parents and teachers having a relationship in which they can discuss both concerns and achievements. Let us know when your child is struggling with homework, or if he or she has a change at home that could be affecting him or her. Also, let us know about things that really excite your child as well, so we can use that information to help connect with them. As a teacher, I will always try to share positive events as well as concerns about your child.

## 2 E-MAIL IS AWESOME.

If you need to contact a teacher please e-mail. Calling the classroom (except in extreme emergencies) can be very disruptive to the students' day. It pulls us away from instruction and can lead to hurried responses as well as stressed out kiddos wondering if the call was from their parent. I check my e-mail at the beginning and end of the day. I will always try to respond in that time as well or at least by the next day.



### 3 CONFERENCE DAYS AREN'T JUST A DAY OFF FOR US.

To maintain certification and high professional standards, teachers are required to complete so many hours of training per year. Plus we really like to learn new ways to engage and help your child.

### 4 COMMON CORE, UGH!

Thankfully, New York has come to its senses and has chosen to return to revised NYS Learning Standards referred to as the Next Generation (must be some Star Trek fans in the

group). These revised standards combine old standards with a more streamlined and simplified version of the Common Core. I am pretty sure we were all frustrated with multiplying multiple digit numbers in reverse.

### 5 SUPPLY LISTS, WHILE ANNOYING, ARE IMPORTANT.

We get it. It stinks when you have to search for Ticonderoga pencils, a pencil case measuring 8 inches by 2 inches by 1 inch, and a half inch yellow binder. I have let out groans when getting my child's supply list. These specific items can help us teach your child to organize and help supplement items that run out quickly. Trust me, I don't





go swimming through Crayola markers like Scrooge McDuck in his vault. We spend a large part of our own earnings on supplies to create fun and engaging lessons that will make your child want to participate in learning.

## 6 WE LOSE SLEEP OVER YOUR CHILD.

Even after completing the work and plans I have brought home with me, I should be sleeping but I am still thinking of new seating charts; how to help Bobby tell his B's and D's apart; how to help Susie make friends; or how to challenge Jaeden who is bored and tuning out.

## 7 WE LOVE YOUR CHILD.

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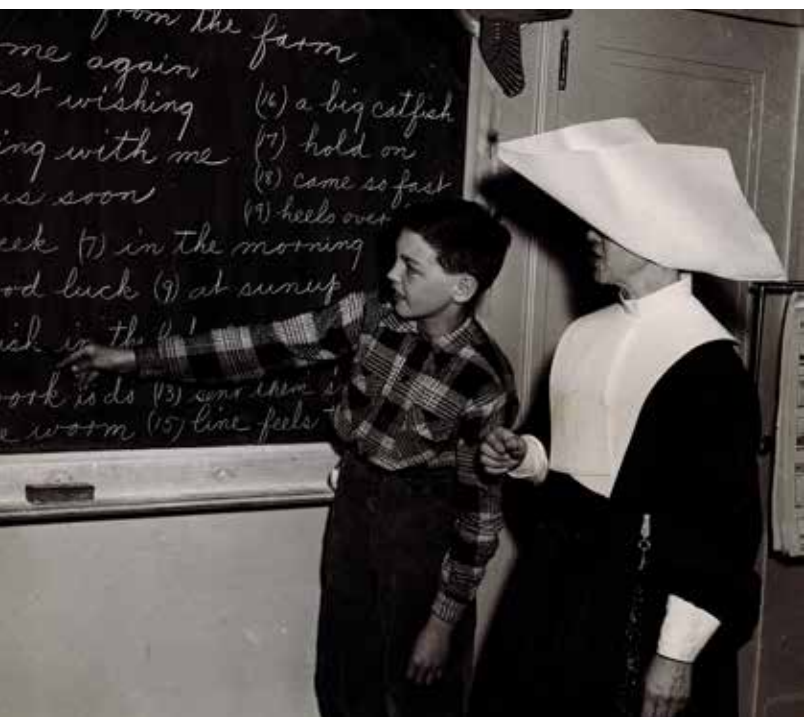
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-Tamara Rodriguez Resident at Astor







# Astor's 65<sup>th</sup>

## OUGH THE YEARS

their staff, I finally had found a place  
**this place so close to my heart.**

or in Rhinebeck during the 1980's.





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Story of  
a Young  
Board  
member

Stephanie  
Dameshghi

# Growing Up & Giving Back

When she was young, Stephanie Dameshghi moved with her mother and siblings to her mother's home of Ireland, which is where Stephanie's interest in helping others began.

Now an attorney and in her third year as a member of Astor's Young Professionals Board, she shared some highlights on her road to philanthropy.

## What is your first memory of fundraising?

My first memory of fundraising was from when I lived in Ireland. There really aren't bag packers at grocery stores, so I was part of group that fundraised by packing groceries and collecting spare change from the customers when done bagging. We also collected change in buckets in return for things like bunches of clover during St. Patrick's Day. This was, of course, in the rain most of the time, as the rain falls 364 days of the year in Ireland.



Young Professionals  
Gala Reception

### What were you fundraising for at that point?

The group I worked for was part of an anti-bullying campaign. We supported an effort to educate people about bullying, as well as the general welfare of less fortunate children.

### You were a child yourself. It's unusual for someone so young to be fundraising for other children, no?

I've always felt compelled to give back. I didn't come from a wealthy family, and I didn't feel any more or less privileged than anyone else, but I still always felt a desire to help others.

### Do you come from a legacy of fundraising in your family?

My father used to own a construction company, and I recall one day that my mother told me how he built houses for families of disabled children without any cost to the families. I remember being so proud of that. This may have been the kernel of something in me.

### How did you end up on the Young Professionals Board at Astor?

I worked with one of Astor's main Board of Directors, James Vitiello. As he shared a story about Astor and the good work that the organization does for children with mental health challenges, I could literally feel his passion. At this meeting, we first discussed the potential of a Young Professionals Board of Directors. It was explained that Astor was interested in adding more diversity in terms of age and geography amongst its board representatives. I was involved from the earliest days.



### You're a young professional--do you have a lot of friends who also sit on boards?

As a matter of fact, I didn't know anyone who was on a board when I first joined Astor's Young Professionals Board. I wasn't at all sure of what I could bring to the table. Having just returned to the US six months prior, I had no network and not much money.



Young Professionals  
Board Orientation





Young Professionals  
Board Cocktail  
Reception

What I found was that giving my time was the answer. I am the first one to jump in and lend a hand organizing, creating or whatever else needs to be done to make a project happen.

### After three years on Astor's Young Professionals Board, what is your impression of this experience?

It's great to work with people who have a passion in what they do. I particularly love that Astor is doing work on behalf of children who truly need the organization's help. It hasn't always been easy, and we have had a learning curve on our board, but we are in a groove now. I have gained so many skills, like grant writing, large-scale event planning and community contact. On top of all that, our board loves to hang out together. It truly has been an experience that I would recommend to others, and I do.

If you would like to learn more about Astor's Young Professionals Board of Directors, contact Maliha Khan at [mkhan@astorservices.org](mailto:mkhan@astorservices.org).

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## Delightful Lee

OIL ON CANVAS 2018

### By Kevin Rifenburg

As a young boy, Kevin spent much of his idle time drawing and coloring with his brother. Kevin went on to study at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Bard College, and Lesley University College of Art and Design where he learned the fundamental principles of art. Kevin's desire to create comes from within. His art is inspired by things he grew up watching and listening to such as John Wayne westerns, sports, and fly fishing. An avid Jazz aficionado, Kevin often paints portraits of jazz musicians, and is inspired by the splendor of the Hudson Valley. Kevin works with Astor's children in the Expressive Arts Program.



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The W.B. Mason logo features a circular portrait of a man with a mustache, wearing a suit and tie. The portrait is flanked by two American flags. Above the portrait, the text "WHO BUT" is written in a stylized font, followed by "W.B. MASON" in large, bold, red letters. Below the portrait, a banner reads "W.B. MASON". To the right of the portrait, the text "SINCE 1898" is written. Below the portrait, there is a logo for Astor Services for Children & Families, which depicts a family of four (two adults and two children) holding hands under a house. The background of the advertisement is yellow at the top and blue at the bottom.

# KIDS' CORNER

**Hey, Kids! This section is for you!** Look closely! These pictures may look the same, but look again! Hidden inside are 10 subtle differences. Feel free to ask your friends if you get stuck – it's more fun that way. Good luck!



Original photo



Can you spot 10 subtle differences?

**Answer Key:** 1. Boy is missing orange ribbon on backpack; 2. Boy's backpack is missing black tags; 3. Boy is missing black strap around his waist; 4. Yellow stripe on boy's shirt is missing; 5. Teacher's ring is missing; 6. Girl in foreground has no roses on her pants; 7. No rips on girl's jeans; 8. No rivets on girl's jeans. 9. No blue ribbons on girl's backpack; 10. Girl's folder has no label.

## Astor's Photo Hunt

The following images appear somewhere in the magazine. Can you find them?



A) \_\_\_\_\_



B) \_\_\_\_\_



C) \_\_\_\_\_



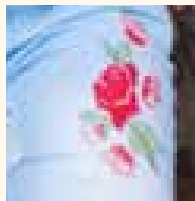
D) \_\_\_\_\_



E) \_\_\_\_\_



F) \_\_\_\_\_



G) \_\_\_\_\_



H) \_\_\_\_\_



I) \_\_\_\_\_



J) \_\_\_\_\_

**Enter to win!** The first 5 correct photo hunt identifications submitted to [kmcgrath@astorservices.org](mailto:kmcgrath@astorservices.org) will win an Astor 65th Anniversary coffee mug! Please use the subject line "Astor Puzzle Contest" on your email and send your answers listing the photo letter and the corresponding page number where that photo appears for each of the photos above.



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