

AN EXCLUSIVE MONTHLY PUBLICATION FOR THE CHANNEL ISLANDS COMMUNITY

# CHANNEL ISLANDS *Living*

MARCH 2025

*The Schmidt Family:*



## Leslie's SCAD Survival Story

Cover Photo by Jeff Tillquist  
with Coastal Photography

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# CHANNEL Living ISLANDS

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## Dear Readers,

Happy March! With spring upon us, the longer days and fresh ocean breezes remind us of the beauty of our Channel Islands community.

We're honored to introduce you to the Schmidt Family in this edition. Leslie's SCAD survival story is one of remarkable strength and determination. Her journey serves as a powerful reminder to embrace each day and the support of those around us. We hope her story resonates with you.

At the same time, our community has recently faced challenges with the fires that impacted nearby areas. These events have reminded us of the strength and compassion we share as neighbors. From first responders to volunteers and local organizations, we are so proud of how we come together during tough times. Let's continue to support one another as we rebuild and heal.

On a lighter note, March is filled with festivities and fun! St. Patrick's Day celebrations, music-centered events, and opportunities to connect with neighbors make this month an exciting time to be in our community. Be sure to get out, enjoy the fresh air, and take part in the activities that make our shores so special.

**I am on the lookout for fun & unique locations for upcoming photoshoots for our featured families that will be featured in this magazine.** Have access to a unique location you would like to see on the cover? Send me an email - let's share the beauty with our readers. I will make sure to mention the location in the publication.



Thank you for continuing to share your stories, events, photos and joy with us. Here's to a month of renewal, connection, and hope for brighter days ahead.

Warm wishes,

**KARI SORENSEN** | Content Coordinator  
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# BREAKING FREE:



## Reclaiming Our Lives from the Social Media Vortex

By Petra Beumer

In our beautiful neighborhood, it's become a common sight: people walking down the street, eyes glued to their phones, barely noticing the world around them. We've all been there, haven't we? That irresistible urge to check our notifications, scroll through our feeds, or respond to that message that probably could wait. But as we find ourselves increasingly tethered to our devices, it's worth asking: what are we missing in the present moment?

### THE SOCIAL MEDIA FATIGUE PHENOMENON

Many of us are experiencing what experts call "social media fatigue." It's that feeling of exhaustion and overwhelm that comes from constant digital engagement. The endless stream of information, the pressure to maintain an online presence, and the compulsive need to stay connected can leave us feeling drained and disconnected from the real world.

### THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE SCROLL

Our brains are wired to seek rewards, and social media platforms are designed to exploit this. Every like, comment, or share triggers a small release of dopamine, the feel-good neurotransmitter. Over time, this can lead to a cycle of addiction, where we're constantly seeking that next digital "hit."

But there's a downside to this constant stimulation. Our brains can become overwhelmed, leading to difficulty focusing, increased stress, and even symptoms of anxiety and depression when we're not engaged with our devices.

### BREAKING THE CYCLE

The good news is that we can break free from this cycle. It starts with awareness and a willingness to make small changes. Here are some strategies that can help:

1. Set boundaries: Designate specific times for checking social media, and stick to them.
2. Practice mindfulness: Take time each day to be fully present in the moment, whether you're eating, walking, or talking with a friend.
3. Engage in real-world activities: Join a local club, volunteer, or simply spend more time in nature.
4. Create phone-free zones: Make certain areas of your home, like the dining table, device free zones.
5. Use technology mindfully: There are apps designed to help you monitor and limit your screen time.

#### A REAL-WORLD EXAMPLE

Interestingly, a café in Amsterdam called The Offline Club has taken an innovative approach to this issue. They

organize events where participants lock away their phones and engage in offline activities like reading, drawing, or simply conversing with others. The concept has been so popular that it's expanding to other cities, showing that many people are craving a break from constant connectivity.

#### FINDING BALANCE IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

We don't need to travel to Amsterdam to create our own "offline club." Why not start in our own community? We could organize regular meetups in local parks or cafes where the rule is simple: leave your phone at home (or at least in your pocket). Imagine the conversations we could have, the connections we could make, and the simple joys we might rediscover when we're not distracted by our devices.

#### A COMPASSIONATE APPROACH

It's important to remember that we're all in this together. Technology has brought many benefits to our lives, and it's not about demonizing



social media or our devices. Instead, it's about finding a balance that allows us to enjoy the benefits of technology without letting it control our lives.

Let's be kind to ourselves and each other as we navigate this digital age. It's okay to slip up sometimes and find yourself lost in a scrolling session. The key is to gently bring yourself back to the present moment, to the real world around you.

By making small, intentional changes in our daily habits, we can reclaim our time, our attention, and our connection to the world around us. Our minds will thank us, our relationships will benefit, and we might just find that the present moment is far more rewarding than anything we'll find on a screen.

So, the next time you're walking down our neighborhood streets, try leaving your phone in your pocket. Look up, breathe in the fresh air, and say hello to a neighbor. You might be surprised at how good it feels to be fully present in the here and now.



# Meet The Schmidt Family:

*Resilience & Community Spirit*

By Kari Sorensen

Photos by Jeff Tillquist with Coastal Photography

**R**esiding in our vibrant community, the Schmidt family demonstrates strong values of resilience, perseverance and family strength. At the heart of this family is Leslie, a miraculous woman

who not only manages multiple responsibilities, but also survived a terrifying health condition, shortly after having her third child, that has formed her outlook on life.

Leslie and her husband Corey have created a life focused on their three children: Merrick (24), Karina (13), and Easton (10). Their tight-knit family also includes Payton, who recently married Merrick this past August; and Leslie's parents, Tony and Donna Athens. "My parents are the owners of Seaboard Marine in Oxnard and still go to work everyday at age 77! They are a great example of dedication and excellent work ethic to my children, friends and community!" Leslie remarks with great pride.

After receiving her Associates in Arts with Highest Honors and degrees in Business and Accounting from Ventura College, Leslie continues to challenge her analytical & organizational skills by managing the accounting and finances for her family's business, Seaboard Marine - which her dad started in the early 80's. "My dad has dedicated his life to support our local sport and commercial fishing industries; he's known around the world as "The Tony" because of his unique insight, engineering capabilities and by doing things The Seaboard Way. I'm very proud to be a part of something so important; I've been working for my folks for over 20 years," Leslie shares with us.

In addition, Leslie is also a licensed Realtor and is fondly known around town as the "The Property Mama", offering property management, real estate services and design support. "My grandma was a Realtor in Silverstrand and I've always had an interest in helping people. I've been managing rentals and residential improvement projects since 2002 - being a Realtor is the best way to do all of what I love at the same time."

Her husband, Corey Schmidt, is a graduate of CSUCI and came into the family business over a decade ago. His unique big-business, IT, website design and organizational skills really helped the family business flourish. By revamping the company website, learning all he can



from Tony about the marine industry, and now being Seaboard's Vice President, the family business is able to reach customers world-wide. Some day, Corey will carry the torch and continue the legacy of Seaboard Marine.

Leslie and Corey were introduced by mutual friends. In a chance break-down of her motorhome on Labor Day Weekend in 2008, Leslie's camping plans changed - instead of riding dirt bikes in Ballinger Canyon, the stars aligned and beach camping at Refugio was as far as the motorhome could go. Little did she know, she would meet the love of her life that weekend; Corey & Leslie have been together ever since.

When the family has time to themselves, they enjoy entertaining family and friends at home, traveling, camping, hiking and

fishing. Their favorite place to visit is on the Gulf Coast in Florida, where young and old alike can fish, kayak and paddleboard right in the backyard. In fact, Leslie is managing the building of their custom 3-story waterfront home, her largest project yet. "I can't wait to watch sunsets with our family and friends this summer - this home is a dream come true for our family."

During their free time, Corey coaches little league baseball and the Schmidt family actively donates to local charities including SPARC, Ventura Land Trust, Ventura Botanical Gardens, River Community Church & The City Center. They've also donated to many local community improvement projects in memory of Karin Marie Athens, Leslie's only sibling who passed away due to complications of a surgery, over 20 years ago. "Karin was a friend to all who knew her. I love getting calls and texts from people who see her name on a memorial piece around town." Projects include Serra Cross, Kimball Community Park, Arroyo Verde, and more.

Leslie and Corey are passionate about demonstrating to their children how to be active in their community and the incredible impact it makes. "There have been times in my life where I have really struggled to make ends

meet - I was a single mom for many years and know how hard it is to get back on your feet when life hits you hard. It's so important to step up, and give back to those in need. This holiday season, we're helped Tender Life Maternity Home in Ventura and Prototypes Women's Center in Oxnard. Both of these organizations make a





huge impact rebuilding the lives of local mamas and their children.”

Their children are equally spirited. Merrick, a skillful, full-time mechanic, started his journey at the age of 16 by completely rebuilding the engine of a 1990 4-Runner. Karina, formerly a competitive gymnast, now thrives in volleyball, choir, and is an amazing student. Easton is a creative soul who enjoys building Lego structures, designing stop-motion videos and loves anything to do with Star Wars. The Schmidt kids cherish their pets, including two dogs, three cats, a koi pond, and two leopard gecko lizards! “We love our family zoo!” says Leslie.

### LESLIE’S SCAD SURVIVAL STORY

In 2014, Leslie’s youngest son was born via C-section. Less than two weeks after Easton was born, she started to experience severe chest pain, initially assuming it was post-surgery discomfort. As her pain levels elevated and became unbearable, she listened to her gut feeling and knew something was wrong. “I felt severe pressure in my chest and between my shoulder blades; then there was pain in my left arm and it felt like my bones were breaking from the inside out. I thought I could be having a heart attack”, Leslie recalls.



After being rushed to the emergency room, Leslie was diagnosed with SCAD (Spontaneous Coronary Artery Dissection), a rare and often fatal condition. She underwent emergency surgery at Community Memorial Hospital in Ventura, where four stents were placed in her heart, saving her life. “I had never heard of this condition before and most of these cases are women within my age group (35-55), who are either pregnant, just had a baby, or are experiencing other significant hormonal changes,” Leslie shares.

Leslie’s recovery was a challenge, one filled with both physical and emotional pain. Not only was she healing from childbirth, taking care of a newborn, and readjusting to life with three children, she was also struggling with the simple functions of performing everyday activities.”Every time I felt a funny heartbeat or twinge of pain in my chest, I was struck with the fear of having another SCAD and not being there for my family. I know I survived for a reason and just kept on going...” Leslie shares as she recalls her early healing days.

Even though her journey through recovery has been long, marked with triumphs and some setbacks, she remains a positive warrior wanting to educate others about SCAD. “It has now been over 10 years since my SCAD; I never dreamed I’d make it this far. I was also diagnosed with



fibromyalgia 5 years after my SCAD and I feel like the two conditions could be related. I still experience good days and bad days; some days it's hard just to get out of bed and others I'm ready to take on the world. I share my story as often as I can because I was only 37 years old and had ZERO pre-existing health conditions. Research about SCAD is still on-going and can happen to anyone, especially women; I'm hoping someone will remember the details of my story and save the life of their mother, daughter, sister, or friend."

Leslie's survival continually motivates her with a heightened sense of purpose. Her passion to help others shows in her generosity to the community and her dedication to her family and friends. Her story is an inspiration to all those around her. "Now that I am a survivor, I feel the need to be the best I can be in all aspects", Leslie shares with a smile.

Leslie and her family are also CorVita Society supporters of the American Heart Association and she was named the Ventura County Woman of Impact in 2022. "I wouldn't be here today without the life-saving research of the AHA. I've been a supporter since my



first "Heart Walk" in 2016."

The Schmidt family's story is one full of perseverance, commitment, and a strong work ethic. Leslie's survival story is a reminder to live life to the fullest and spend as much time with family as possible. We are honored to have featured the Schmidt family and hope that Leslie's story helps bring more awareness to SCAD, Spontaneous Coronary Artery Dissection. She is a true testament to strength and positivity. **To read more about Leslie please visit her website [www.thepropertymama.com](http://www.thepropertymama.com)**



# LOSE THE LOVE HANDLES: QUICK AND EASY AB WORKOUTS

By Ericka Jones

Time to work those oblique muscles! These exercises will have your abs burning in no time. Work out with a partner and crank up that music!

## BICYCLE CRUNCH

Lay on the floor with your hands behind your head. Bring your elbow across your body towards the opposite knee, then repeat on the other side, essentially pedaling in the air above your core. Be sure to use your abs and not your neck!

## SIDE PLANKS

Lie on your side with your feet stacked on the floor. Use either your elbow (arm bent) or your hand (arm straight) to lift your body up off the floor into a plank. Keep your body straight from your head to your toes. For an extra challenge, put your opposite hand in the air, keeping your shoulders in line. Be sure to work both sides!

## SPIDERMAN PUSH-UPS

Start on your hands and toes like a traditional push-up. When you bend your arms to go down into the push-up, bring up one knee towards your elbow. Repeat on the other side, alternating with each push-up.

## RUSSIAN TWISTS

Sit on the floor with your knees slightly bent and your torso up off the ground. Holding a medicine ball or other weight (optional), slowly twist from side to side, working alternating muscles. You can keep your feet planted on the ground or lift them a few inches off the floor.

## SIDE JACKKNIFES

Lie on your side with your hips, knees and feet aligned. Stretch out your arm on the floor for balance and put your other hand

behind your head. Using your obliques, bring your top arm and leg together, then slowly release back down. You can use both legs or just the top one. Repeat on both sides.

## OBLIQUE TWISTS ON A DECLINE BENCH

Lie on a decline bench set at your desired angle. Sit up into a crunch and twist towards one side. Return to your starting position and repeat, twisting to the opposite side. For an extra push, increase the incline or hold a medicine ball.

## OBLIQUE CRUNCH

Lie in the crunch position and roll your hips and legs to one side, keeping your shoulders square on the ground. Crunch straight up, making sure to use your abs and not your neck. Repeat on the other side. For an extra challenge, lie on your side on an exercise ball and crunch up, bringing your elbow towards your hip. Plant your feet against a wall for extra support.

## WEIGHTED SIDE BENDS

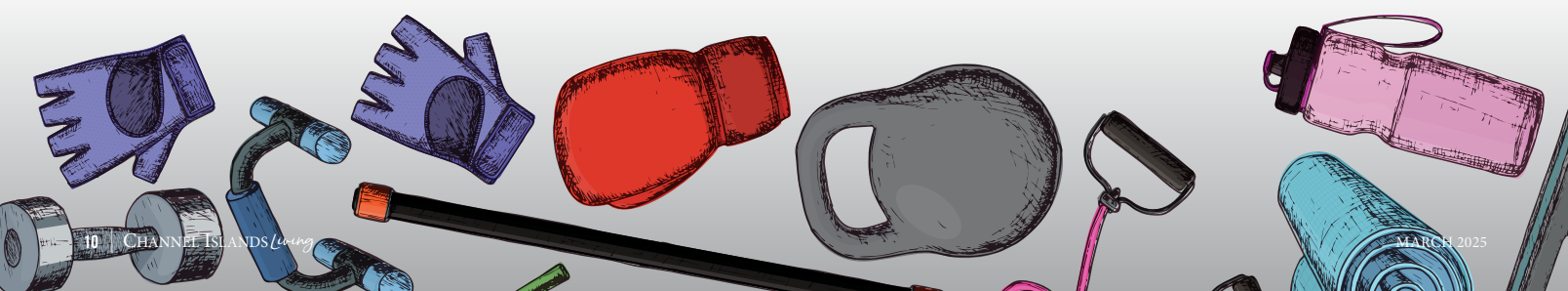
Stand with good posture holding a kettlebell or other weights in your hands. Slowly bend to one side, keeping the weight close to your body. Lift upright slowly, then repeat on the other side.

## MEDICINE BALL TWISTS (WITH A PARTNER)

Sit back-to-back with a partner. Holding a medicine ball, twist and pass the ball to one side and hand it off to your partner. Twist the other way to receive the ball back. Repeat for a few sets, then switch directions.

## HEEL TOUCHES

Lie on the ground with your knees bent like you are going to do a sit-up. Extend your arms towards your feet and rotate from side to side, trying to touch your shoes.



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# FUN FACTS ABOUT ST. PATRICK'S DAY

By Grace Schulte



St. Patrick's Day, also known as the Feast of Saint Patrick and "St. Patty's Day," is a nationally celebrated holiday that is held on March 17th each year. St. Patrick's Day is generally associated with Leprechauns, shamrocks, other good luck charms, and the color green. The holiday has an interesting history, so here are some fun historical facts!

1. March 17th was chosen as commemoration to St. Patrick's passing in the fifth century.
2. Ireland has observed this day as a religious holiday for over a millennium!
3. Saint Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland and is its national apostle. He was originally born in Roman Britain and brought to Ireland as a slave when he was a teenager. He escaped but eventually came back to Ireland, and was then credited for bringing Christianity to Ireland!
4. There is an old legend in Ireland that says St. Patrick explained Christianity's Holy Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) using the three leaves of the native Irish clover, the shamrock.
5. The first St. Patrick's Day parade actually occurred in America. It was held on March 17, 1601 in a Spanish colony in what is now known as St. Augustine, Florida.
6. In Celtic folklore, Leprechauns were actually described as being cranky souls who were responsible for fixing other fairy's shoes.
7. The original color first representative of St. Patrick's Day was actually blue, not green. When Henry VIII took the throne and declared himself "King of Ireland," making Ireland a part of England, he created a coat of arms for Ireland using blue. The people eventually rebelled and used St. Patrick's shamrock as a symbol of their identity, thus shifting the association with the color blue to green.


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# St. Patrick's Day Word Search

By Mandi Blake



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V	U	W	O	S	Z	E	B	O	T	L	R	X	P	M
K	I	C	P	Q	E	U	O	J	R	E	V	O	L	C
P	D	X	K	E	Y	F	E	S	C	I	B	N	V	B
D	X	C	S	Y	O	U	I	L	B	W	F	K	S	E
L	G	R	G	I	R	E	L	A	N	D	I	U	Y	H
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I	M	A	R	C	H	B	E	H	K	E	U	B	C	U
S	U	P	H	M	S	T	O	S	I	C	M	O	T	D
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# MARCH 2025: EVENTS *Calendar*

**SAT. & SUN., MARCH 1 & 2**

## **TROY BOND**

@Levity Live

Troy Bond is a comedian and writer based in New York, known for his sharp crowd-work skills and tongue-in-cheek Modern Seinfeld sketches that helped to build his fast-growing audience on TikTok and Instagram.

**Time: Sat. @ 6 PM & 8:30PM.**

**Sun. @ 6:00PM**

**Cost: Starts at \$31**

**www.levitylive.com/oxnard**

**SUN., MARCH 2**

## **FIREBALL TIM WHEELS & WAVES CAR-SHOW**

@Channel Islands Maritime Museum

Come over to the Channel Islands Maritime Museum first Sunday of every month to experience Wheels & Waves - IT'S BACK!!! And this new Custom Car Show Cars & Coffee (and Art) event will be better than ever!

**Time: 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM | Cost: FREE**

**www.visitoxnard.com**

**TUES., MARCH 4**

## **LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO**

@Ventura Music Hall

Featuring traditional South African songs, Ladysmith Black Mambazo is a global phenomenon, winning five GRAMMY Awards and numerous nominations, and has served as a voice of peaceful protest during the dark years of apartheid, with their music reaching the ears of Nelson Mandela

**Time: 7:30pm | Cost: See Website**

**www.venturamusic hall.com**

**SUN., MARCH 30**

## **CESAR CHAVEZ MEMORIAL MARCH**

@Del Sol Park, Oxnard

Community event honoring the legacy of civil rights leader Cesar Chavez.

**Time: 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM | Cost: Free**

**www.oxnard.gov**

**SAT. MARCH 15**

## **S.A.T.U.R.D.A.Y. NIGHT CLASSIC ROCK**

@Strey Cellars

This Rock N' Roll cover band from Los Angeles, California specializes in Rock Radio favorites from the 70's, 80's, 90's, 2000's and today. Jam out with us from Van Morrison to Van Halen, The Police to The Killers, David Bowie to Green Day and everything in between

**Time: 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM**

**Cost: No cover. Wine available by the glass & bottle only.**

**www.streycellars.com**

**SAT., MARCH 15**

## **SAINT PATRICK'S DAY PARADE**

@Main Street, Ventura

A festive parade celebrating Irish culture with the theme "Shamrocks & Shenanigans."

**10:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Cost: FREE**

**www.visitventuraca.com**

**SAT., MARCH 15**

## **OFFICIAL LUCKY'S ST PATRICK'S DAY BAR CRAWL**

@The Twist on Main, Ventura

Join us for the ultimate St Paddy's Bar Crawl in Ventura, where good vibes, green drinks, and festive fun collide this March 15th!

**Starts at 4 PM | Cost: See website**

**www.visitventuraca.com**

**MARCH 21**

## **YACHT ROCK REVUE**

@Majestic Ventura Theater

Yacht Rock Revue, hailed by Rolling Stone as the "world's premier soft-rock party band," invites listeners on a nostalgic voyage through the sun-soaked melodies of the '70s and '80s.

**Time: 08:00 PM - 11:00 PM**

**Cost: Start at \$42**

**www.venturatheater.net**

**SAT., MARCH 22**

## **BOB EUBANKS' BACKSTAGE WITH THE BEATLES & VIP GALA EVENT**

@Crowne Plaza Ventura Beach

Join us for a once-in-a-lifetime evening featuring "Backstage with the Beatles" by Bob Eubanks—producer of The Beatles' U.S. concerts—complete with untold stories, rare photos, live music by Ticket To Ride, and a VIP award dinner honoring Bob's legacy, with insights from Ivor Davis, author of \*The Beatles and Me on Tour\*, all to celebrate the Ventura Music Festival's 30th season kickoff!

**Time: 4 PM cocktail hour, 5 PM show**

**www.venturamusicfestival.org**

**FRI. & SUN., MARCH 28 & 29**

## **FRANKIE QUINONES**

@Levity Live

Frankie Quiñones is a stand-up comedian, actor, and creator, known for his character work. Frankie stars in HULU's critically acclaimed, This Fool, for which he was nominated for Best Supporting Actor in a Comedy Series at the Independent Spirit Awards.

**Time: Fri. @ 7 PM & 9:15 PM.**

**Sat. @ 6:00 PM & 8:30 PM**

**Cost: Starts at \$37**

**www.levitylive.com/oxnard**

**SAT.-SUN., MARCH 29-30, 2025**

## **CAMARILLO WEDDING EXPO**

Various locations in and around Camarillo

An expo showcasing 8 unique outdoor wedding venues with vendors and samples.

**Time: Sat. 6:30 PM - 9:30 PM.**

**Sun. 10 AM - 4 PM**

**Cost: General Admission \$15**

**www.camarilloweddingexpo.com**



# Irish Colcannon

## (Or Somethin' Like It)

By Amanda Griffin

Though today Colcannon is associated with St. Patrick's Day, its origins actually stem from an old Halloween tradition where three charms were mixed into the mash to celebrate Hallow's Eve. Whichever charm you found was considered a portent of the coming year. If you found the button (or thimble) it meant you would remain unmarried. The ring meant you would get married. The coin meant you would come into some wealth. Unmarried women would also fill a sock with some Colcannon and hang it from the handle of the front door of their home in the belief that the first man through the door would be their future husband. Today, it's just a great accompaniment to a hearty serving of corned beef washed down by your favorite Irish stout. It's also a yummy way to get kids to eat their veggies since it's not just mashed potatoes, but a rich mixture of root vegetables.

### Ingredients

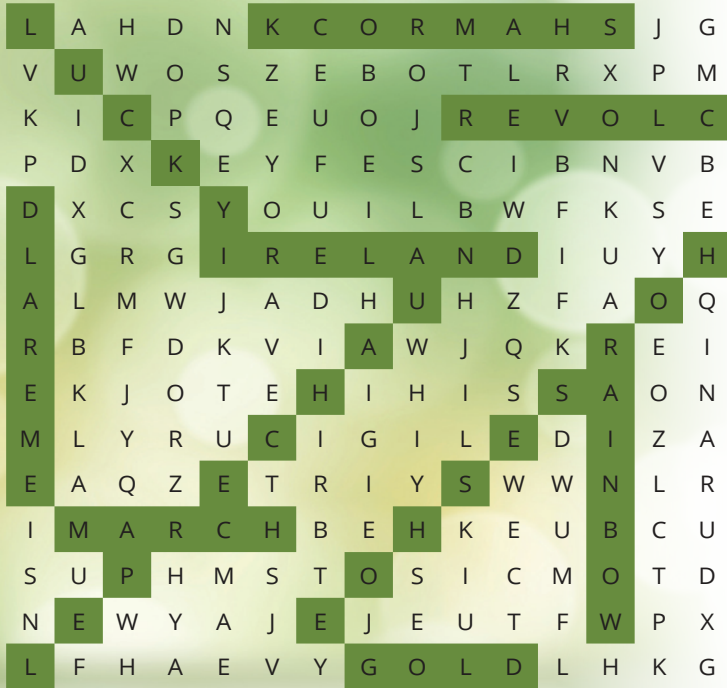
- 1 lb russet or Idaho potatoes, cubed
- 2 Yukon gold potatoes, cubed
- 2 medium parsnips, peeled and rough chopped
- 2 medium leeks, rough chopped
- 1 head cabbage, cut into wedges
- 1 cup unsweetened coconut milk
- 1/2 teaspoon garam masala
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon white pepper
- 2 tablespoons grapeseed oil (butter-flavored if you can find it)
- 1/2 stick salted butter, room temperature
- 1 small bunch fresh parsley, chopped fine
- 1 small bunch of scallions or green onions, chopped

### Directions

1. Boil all the cubed potatoes and the parsnips in lightly salted water until tender (potatoes can be peeled, but it makes a better dish if the peels are left on).
2. In a separate pot, simmer the chopped leeks in the coconut milk until soft.
3. In a separate pot, steam cabbage wedges until just past al dente, then rough chop (be careful to not overcook these; you want the cabbage to retain its shape and texture).
4. Drain the potatoes and parsnips into a mixing bowl, then season with garam masala, grapeseed oil, black and white pepper, minced garlic, and the sea salt. Beat to desired consistency.
5. Add the chopped cabbage, cooked leeks and coconut milk to the potato mixture and stir (careful not to break down the leeks too much), but do not beat.
6. Cut the butter into pats and drop around the top of the mash, allowing the butter to melt and spread.
7. Garnish with chopped parsley and scallions/green onions, and serve.

For a healthier variation, substitute cauliflower for the potatoes, though it will definitely change the overall texture.

# St. Patrick's Day Word Search ANSWER KEY



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