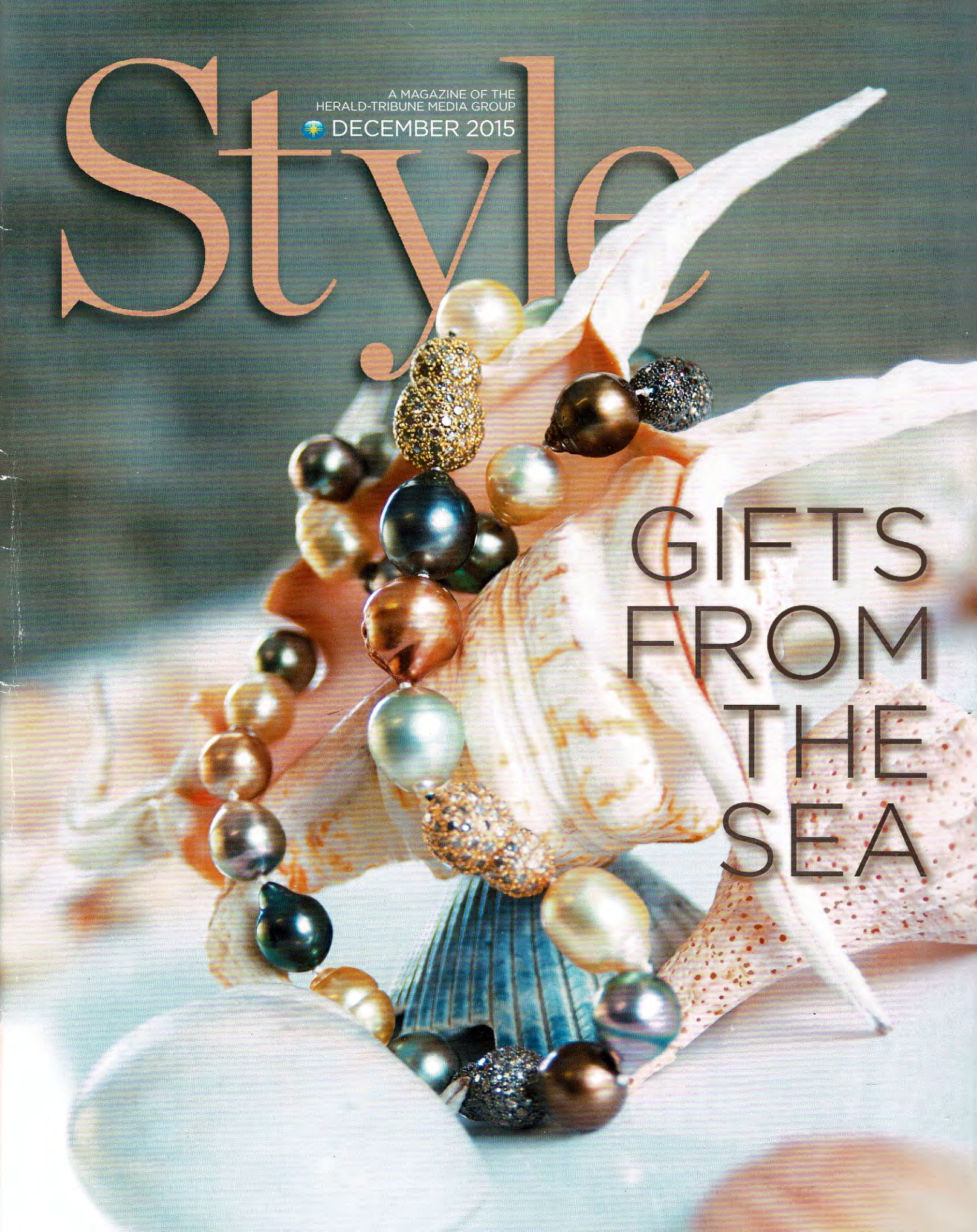


Style

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GIFTS
FROM
THE
SEA

In the bag



There are bags, then there are bags and then there are O Bags. O Bag fans know this chic, Italian-designed handbag and shoulder bag line is waterproof, lightweight and tactile — good for shopping, travel, workout gear and even nights out on the town. Shelley Kyser and Leslie Power are partners in the new Bag Factory in downtown Sarasota, a shop chock full of all things O — including bags,

watches and bracelets. “The O Bag is great for most occasions because you can dress it up or down with interchangeable handles and accessories,” says Kyser. What about color? Power laughs. “I don’t think there’s a color an O Bag doesn’t come in — from lime green, shocking orange, chartreuse and violet to more demure colors such as smoky pink and sophisticated gray.” Both partners want Style readers to know that an important part of their raison d’être includes giving back to the community. “We’re seeking worthy nonprofit groups and schools to partner with. For us, giving back to the community is as chic and stylish as our line of O products,” says Kyser. 1416 State St., Sarasota; 366-2447; bagfactoryusa.com.

Brush with greatness

As artist, author and jazz musician Bill Buchman describes it, Zen Sumi-e painting is all about being in the moment. The artist’s mind and hand are at one with brush and paper. The image simply flows. The artist discovers it in the act of creating it. Of course, that doesn’t happen with a poorly made Sumi brush, as Buchman discovered. He began searching for the perfect line of Sumi brushes. When he couldn’t find one, he created his own. His new business, sumibrushes.com, offers Japanese and Chinese brushes, reed pens and instructional DVDs. (You’ll also find Buchman’s book, “Expressive Figure Drawing,” featuring the classic fundamentals of this genre, but with a distinctly contemporary twist.) As Buchman describes it, these brushes are made by master craftsmen in Japan and are well-suited to be used by calligraphers, watercolorists, ink-painters, experimental artists and all who wish to experience the joys of the Sumi brush. “An artist is only as good as his instrument,” says Buchman. “That’s true in music and visual art as well.” Available at sumibrushes.com and amazon.com.

The journey to fabulous

Mary Pallante Verville and Viktoria Banka, owners of the new Elizabeth Viktoria Salon and Spa, share a common business principle. “No two clients are the same,” says Banka. “You look fabulous when you truly look like you. That’s the secret!” Pallante adds that the journey begins with a consultation exploring the client’s hair texture, bone structure, eye color and skin tone. “That conversation allows us to cater to each individual’s unique needs and expectations,” she says. “It helps us create the perfect cut and color.” The salon, which features Kérastase/L’Oreal products, also offers skin-care treatments and massage treatments. Elizabeth Viktoria Salon and Spa also welcomes bridal parties, proms and other groups, and offers services for both men and women. “Our clients feel warm and welcome the moment they walk through our doors,” says Banka. “They look their absolute best when they walk out.” 8274 Bee Ridge Road, Sarasota; 378-3425; ElizabethViktoria.com.

MaryAnne Young

New College Foundation

MaryAnne Young enjoyed more than 30 years at Mount Holyoke College, most recently as its vice president of advancement. Her accomplishments there included directing a \$305 million philanthropy campaign in 2013. In 2012, she and her husband, Bliss Young, bought a vacation home in Sarasota, thinking they’d settle into it when they retired. But that changed when New College President Donal O’Shea asked Young if she would be interested in serving as New College Foundation’s new vice president of advancement and executive director. Young had worked with O’Shea for 20 years at Mount Holyoke and didn’t have to think twice. Today, she’s happily not retired in Sarasota. And she was happy to tell us why.



Why does New College fundraising make such a difference?

New College is the honors college for Florida. We attract smart students and a stellar faculty who provide an intellectually rigorous education. Students work with faculty to design their curriculum in a collaborative environment, where they are encouraged to delve deeply into their interests. This empowers creative thinkers and problem solvers who are dedicated to making change in the world. In the past 10 years, we’ve had more than 100 Fulbright scholars. It’s one of the many examples of my personal philosophy: Invest in a student, change a life.

Do you encourage younger alumni to participate in New College fundraising?

Yes, we do! A young alum once told me, “I give because it’s my vote for alma mater.” That sums it up beautifully.

What’s the secret to being a good fundraiser?

Be a really good listener. Care deeply about your organization and help donors understand the impact their support will have.

Why does fundraising for New College inspire you?

Well, New College’s students inspire me. They’re brilliant, optimistic, they’re going to make the world a better place after they graduate. Once you’ve interacted with our faculty and students, asking for support is easy. As our tagline says: “Brilliantly (U)nique; (U)niquely Brilliant.” It’s so true.

Do you have any heroes in the fundraising/philanthropy world?

I know it sounds a little corny, but Bill and Melinda Gates put their remarkable resources to good purpose. An alumna and her husband are role models from Mount Holyoke. They’re also doing really important work.

What do you do for fun when you’re not working?

I love being with family and friends and cooking a good meal for all. Being near the water is restorative so I like long walks on the beach and kayaking. Reading is another great pleasure. I’m also a complete Francophile. I speak French, love the food, culture and people. So, I enjoy finding people and places locally where I can keep up with the language and live a little vicariously.