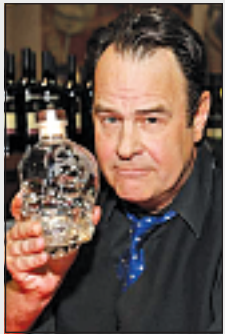


## WHAT'S NEW

### » CELEBRITIES

#### Aykroyd in town to introduce vodka line

Dan Aykroyd holds a lot of titles – actor, musician and writer. Add distiller to his list of accomplishments. He won't be singing the blues during his visit today to Total Wine & More at 691 Naamans Road, Claymont, from 4 to 6 p.m. He'll be signing bottles of his Crystal Head Vodka. You have to purchase one of the skull-shaped bottles first to get an autograph. Prices range from \$8.99 (50 ml) to \$99.99 (1.75 liters). Aykroyd, perhaps best known for his work on "Saturday Night Live" and in films "Ghostbusters" and "Driving Miss Daisy," has been involved with producing and distributing wine and spirits for nine years.



Dan Aykroyd

He created Crystal Head Vodka as a result of his fascination with the supernatural.

Aykroyd didn't just play a Ghostbuster on the big screen, according to his Crystal Head vodka website,

"he's a believer in what he calls the 'invisible world' where otherworldly presences are a 'form of reality as valid as our normal reality.'"

So what's with the crystal head? OK, stay with us, because this gets a little Indiana Jonesish. Crystal skulls are 13 hardstone carvings, in the shape of human skulls, that are made of clear or milky rock. The skulls have been found all over the world. They may be pre-Columbian in origin, but that hasn't been authenticated, or the skulls could have been made in the 19th century.

New Agers believe that they offer spiritual power and enlightenment to those who possess them. (And I'm guessing the ones with vodka inside offer the start of a pretty darn good martini and some tipsiness.)

Aykroyd's super-premium vodka is made with water from an aquifer in Newfoundland, Canada.

The taste is said to be creamy with a slightly sweet finish. The vodka is filtered through Herkimer diamonds, which, according to New Age belief systems, embody positive energy and goodwill.

In 2011, the vodka bested 200 other brands and won a Double Gold Award at the San Francisco World Spirits Competition.

— Patricia Talorico



### » REALITY TV

#### Casting call in Philly for 'Extreme Makeover'

The third season of ABC's "Extreme Makeover: Weight Loss Edition" is coming to Philadelphia for the first time on Feb. 18 for a casting call.

They've been receiving submissions from all over Delaware and casting director D.J. Feldman says he wants people to know they're going to be at Dave and Buster's at 325 N. Columbus Blvd. from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

"Extreme Makeover: Weight Loss Edition" is a non-competitive show that documents obese people over a year as they set out to safely lose half of their body weight.

For information about how to apply, go to [www.extrememakeovercasting.com](http://www.extrememakeovercasting.com).

## FILM

# Chronicle of a battle with cancer

What does a photographer do when he is stricken with a serious illness? He picks up his camera and gets to work, of course

By GARY SOULSMAN  
The News Journal

Wilmington native John Kaplan is an accomplished photographer, so it's no surprise that his film "Not As I Pictured" is loaded with 35 mm stills.

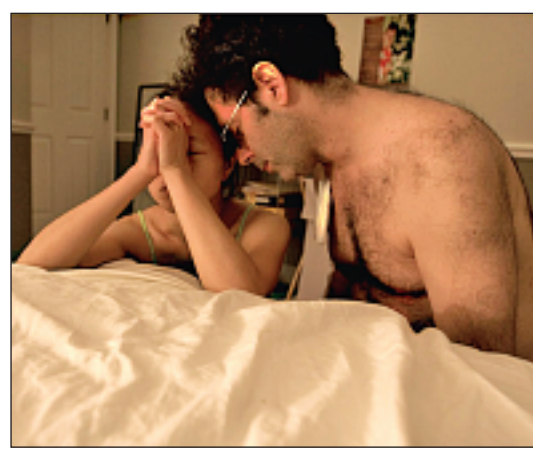
"Not As I Pictured" is Kaplan's documentary of his life after 2008, when he was diagnosed with two non-Hodgkin's lymphomas – one in his bone marrow, another in his abdomen.

His 54-minute film is a diary of his treatments and

family life, a visual record. He says the photos – and the making of the film – were his way of coping.

"For me, initially, this was a way to handle my fear," he says. "Some people write a journal. I began taking pictures."

Now the film, which has been shown on public TV stations around the country, has led to an exhibit of Kaplan's photos. It debuts Friday at Wilmington's Gallery 919 Market (at 919 N. Market St.) from 4:30 to 8 p.m.



John Kaplan with his daughter in "Not As I Pictured." [WWW.NOTASIPICTURED.ORG](http://WWW.NOTASIPICTURED.ORG)

See FILM, Page B7

## CLASSICAL MUSIC

# MUSIC, TWEET MUSIC

Serafin String Quartet puts a digital spin on its performances

From right, clockwise: Serafin String Quartet members Lawrence Stromberg, cello; Kate Ransom, violin; Molly Carr, viola; and Timothy Schwarz, violin.



By PETER BOTHUM  
The News Journal

There's the guy who posts Facebook photos during a concert, and therefore misses the concert. There's the annoying fan who tweets up-to-the-minute setlist updates in an attempt to make their friends jealous.

Now we've got the performer who sends out messages on Twitter while he's playing in the actual concert.

But what cellist Larry Stomberg did on Dec. 11 was not a concert violation like the above offenses – his tweets between songs were actually part of the show when he and the Serafin String Quartet performed at World Cafe Live at the Queen.

Stomberg's idea, which will be used again during the quartet's "Romp Through Romanticism" concert Sunday at the Queen, was inspired by a student who encouraged people to tweet

with a hashtag pegged to her recital to enhance the experience. "I pitched it to the group. I think they were a little baffled at first – why I would want to do that?" said Stomberg, who is an associate professor of cello at the University of Delaware. "We figured as long as I have time to collect my wits to be able to play, we would be OK."

See MUSIC, Page B7

### IF YOU GO

**WHAT:** Collage Concert: "Romp Through Romanticism," by the Serafin String Quartet, featuring works by Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Ravel and Dvorak.  
**WHEN:** Noon Sunday (doors open at 11 a.m.)  
**WHERE:** World Cafe Live at the Queen, 500 N. Market St., Wilmington  
**TICKETS:** \$20, \$15 with student ID  
**INFORMATION:** 994-1400 or [queen.worldcafe-live.com](http://queen.worldcafe-live.com)

## FASHION

# In Brazil, bikinis aren't just for skinny girls

Manufacturers reaching out to plus-size crowd

By JENNY BARCHFIELD  
Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO — Tall and tan and young and ... chunky? The Girl From Ipanema has put on a few pounds, and for many sunbathers on Brazil's beaches the country's iconic itty-bitsy, teeny-weeny bikini just doesn't suffice anymore.

A growing number of bikini manufacturers have woken up to Brazil's thickening waistline and are reaching out to the ever-expanding ranks of heavy women with new plus-size lines.

That's nothing short of a revolution in this most body-conscious of nations, where overweight ladies long had little choice but to hit the beach in comely ensembles of oversized T-shirts and biker shorts.

"It used to be bikinis were only in tiny sizes that only skinny girls could fit into. But not everyone is built like a model," said Elisangela Inez Soares as she sunbathed on Copacabana beach, her oiled-up curves packed into a black size 12 bikini.

"Finally, it seems like people are



Women sunbathe in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. A growing number of bikini manufacturers are reaching out to the ever-expanding ranks of heavy women with new plus-size lines. AP/PELPE DANA

See BIKINI, Page B7

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# Music: Many tweets were scripted, but some were spontaneous

Continued from Page B5

The social media experiment was deployed during the group's "String Quartet Time Machine - Haydn to Higdon" concert, one of three Collage Concerts at the Queen presented by Live Connections, an organization that aims to expose classical music to new and younger audiences. The quartet performed a movement from a larger piece, and then members would stop to discuss historical or technical aspects of what they just played. During that break, Stomberg would pop up and tap away on his phone.

One tweet read: "Not a bad first effort, this Beethoven Quartet, huh? And, yes, I do think it sounds a little like the Mexican Hat Dance! #bueno #SSQatWCL." Another: "Sort of feel like Curly of the 3 Stooges here, not speaking while my 4tet mates do. But I don't think Curly tweeted on an iPhone. #SSQatWCL"

"It felt a little weird. It just felt strange playing with my phone onstage in front of an audience," Stomberg said. "We made sure to tell them what I was doing so it didn't look like I was checking out and not being part of the festivities."

Stomberg admitted that many of the tweets were scripted, but some were spontaneous, including this one: "Yep, Kate's socks are pretty cool, indeed. #SSQatWCL." That comment al-

luded to the colorful, paisley-patterned socks worn by violinist Kate Ransom during the concert.

"I like really decorative socks," Ransom said. "And normally I can't wear those in a traditional formal concert. I felt like, OK, this is a format where I can wear my wild and crazy socks."

The chance to show off fancy footwear was just one aspect that Ransom enjoyed about the more adventurous environment at that first Collage Concert show. In addition to Stomberg's tweets, the concert also featured a collage-like set pegged to a theme - on Dec. 11 it was the beginnings of string quartet music - stocked with movements ranging from three to eight minutes in length as opposed to full works by composers. On Sunday, the "Romp Through Romanticism" concert will spotlight works by Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Ravel and Dvorak, who flourished during the romantic period.

"There is nothing like presenting an entire artwork as it's intended to be heard," said Ransom, who is also president of the Music School of Delaware. "That being said, that is a tall order for a lot of listeners. Even very seasoned listeners can be challenged by listening to 30 to 40 minutes of material."

David Saunders of Newark attended the Dec. 11 concert and, despite being a computer science



Larry Stromberg is an associate professor of cello at the University of Delaware.

professor and owning an Android phone, he isn't much for social media. But the in-show tweeting did nudge him slightly, and he really enjoyed the between-song remarks from Stomberg, Ransom, violinist Timothy Schwarz and viola player Molly Carr.

"I was skeptical beforehand," Saunders said. "I wanted to enjoy the music, was my attitude. But it was interesting to hear, giving you some sense of the real trials and tribulations of (the composer's) lives."

Saunders is one of the regulars at Serafin shows, the kind of fan who would more likely be at their concert Saturday at First & Central Presbyterian Church in Wilmington, when the quartet will perform works by Martinu, Ravel and Mendelssohn. Stomberg and Ransom both said they're looking forward to a weekend where they'll get to shift between something they've done countless times since the quartet formed in 2002 and the fresher Collage Concerts.

The Collage Concert series is just one of the programs to sprout from Live Connections' ClassicalAlive! initiative, which tries to break boundaries of what classical music is about, said Melinda Steff, general manager of Live Connections. Another twist they've rolled out is a slate of shows where a string quartet pairs up with a singer-songwriter for a concert alternating between traditional string quartet music and songs the artist wrote that employs a string quartet. One such show will take place March 25 at the World Cafe Live in Philadelphia when folk-rockers Andrew Lipke teams up with the Ohio-based Carpe Diem String Quartet.

The World Cafe locations in Philadelphia and Wilmington weren't selected just because World Cafe founder Hal Real also launched Live Connections. Steff said the ability to serve food and

drink during shows made them ideal. For example, the audience enjoyed brunch during the Serafin String Quartet's first Collage Concert, yet another side element that might have helped a classical newbie to get through a first concert.

"It's really a different experience of the music when you're eating and drinking at the same time, which takes a bit of getting used to," Steff said. "It makes you pay attention in a different way."

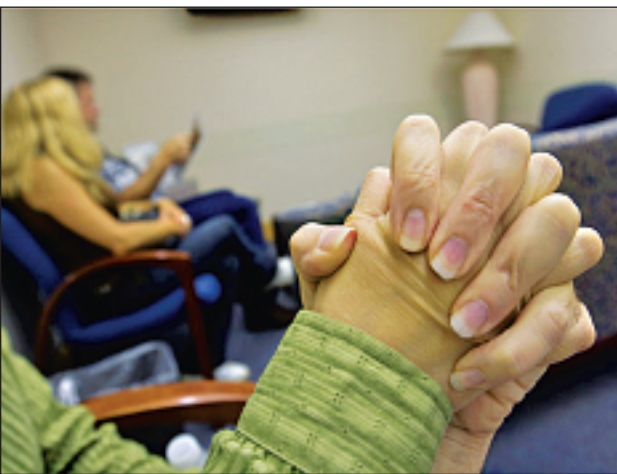
Stomberg said that, like the involvement of Twitter, the brunch enhanced the concert.

"Even though the brunch was fantastic, the people were there to hear music," he said. "We didn't feel at all that we were background to the brunch."

The quartet is also hoping they won't have to be background to the Super Bowl festivities that will be going on throughout the day, just about everywhere, on Sunday. Ransom said she thinks the noon show will be early enough for folks to take in a concert before the game gets underway.

"It's going to appeal to somebody who's interested in the listening experience," Ransom said. "If they want to try something a little different, or if they're a music listener but haven't done much classical listening and they want to go further into that experience, they'll come out for that."

Contact Peter Bothum at 324-2885 or pbothum@delawareonline.com.



Some of photographer John Kaplan's work from "Not As Pictured." Kaplan was 48 when he was diagnosed with cancer in 2008. WWW.NOTASPICTURED.ORG

## Film: Photographer chronicled his struggle over eight months

Continued from Page B5

The opening is part of the monthly art loop. The exhibit is a collaboration between Jerry Bilton, who curates the gallery; Kaplan; Canon USA; and the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of Delaware.

To benefit the society, Kaplan, who'll be on hand at Gallery 919, is donating a landscape painting to be auctioned at the opening.

Kaplan, who was 48 when he was diagnosed with cancer, grew up in Brandywine Hundred and graduated from Mount Pleasant High School in 1977. He went on to become a photographer, and in 1989 was named newspaper photographer of the year by Nikon and the University of Missouri.

Three years later he won the Pulitzer Prize for a series documenting the

lives of 21-year-olds. He was also a Fulbright Scholar and his work is exhibited at museums and galleries worldwide. Today he is a professor of journalism and design at the University of Florida.

For the documentary, Kaplan photographed his life over eight months - enjoying a birthday with his children, teaching at the university, receiving chemo and losing patches of hair.

"The dreaded news of cancer is certainly no fun, but you can make it through to the other side, back to health and the joy of every day," Kaplan told The News Journal last year.

After the February show at Gallery 919, the show moves to the University of Kentucky.

Contact Gary Soulsman at 324-2893 or gsoulsman@delawareonline.com.

## Bikini: Company offers bright, bold patterns

Continued from Page B5

beginning to realize that we're not all Gisele," said the 38-year-old mother of four, referring to willowy Brazilian supermodel Gisele Bundchen.

Clothing designer Clarice Rebelatto said her own swimwear-hunting travails prompted her to found Lehona, an exclusively plus-size beachwear line.

"Honestly, the problem went way beyond just bikinis. In Brazil, it used to be that if you were even a little chunky, finding any kind of clothes in the right size was a real problem," said Rebelatto, herself a size 10. "And I thought, 'I'm actually not even that big compared to a lot of women out there, so if I have problems, what are they doing?'"

Since its launch in 2010, the line has become a hit.

In brash leopard spots and flower prints not meant for wallflowers, the label's 14 bikini styles aren't what you'd normally associate with plus-size swimsuits. The necklines plunge dramatically. Straps are mere strings. And while the bottoms provide too much coverage to qualify for the famed "fio dental" or "dental floss" category of Brazilian string bikinis, they're significantly more audacious than the standard U.S. cut.

"We're working from the principle that bigger women are just like everyone else: They don't want to look like old ladies, wearing these very modest, very covering swimsuits in just black," said Luiz Rebelatto, Clarice's son and director of Lehona.

He said that recent publicity of the brand and several other new swimwear lines catering to plus sizes has triggered an overwhelming number of calls and e-mails from would-be customers.

"They're all excited and they say, 'I've been looking everywhere for a bikini like that. Where can I get one?'" said Rebelatto.

Lehona is currently sold exclusively at big and tall specialty stores throughout Brazil. Its bikinis retail for about 130 reais or \$75 - a relatively high price-point here, but



Sunbathers rinse off at the showers at Piscinao de Ramos, an artificial lake in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. AP/FELIPE DANA

Rebelatto said sales have grown at a galloping pace, though he did not provide any figures.

It's the same story at Acqua Rosa, a conventional swimwear label that added a plus-size line in 2008. Now, plus-size purchases account for more than 70 percent of the brand's total sales, said director Joao Macedo.

It makes sense. For centuries, large swaths of Brazil were beset by malnutrition, and in 1970, nearly 10 percent of the population in the country's poor, rural northeast region was considered underweight, according to Brazil's national statistics institute.

But the phenomenal economic boom that has lifted tens of millions out of poverty and into the burgeoning middle class over the past decade has also changed the nation's once-svelte physique: A 2010 study by the statistics institute showed that 48 percent of adult women and 50 percent of men are now overweight. In 1985 those figures were 29 percent for women and 18 percent for men.

(Still, there's been no rash of plus-size male swimwear lines, as men here wear Speedo-style suits that don't impinge on big guts.)

Analysts attribute Brazil's rapidly widening

girth to changes in nutrition, with chips, processed meats and sugary soft drinks replacing staples like rice, beans and vegetables.

And while the country's elite are widely known to be fitness freaks - and also among the world's top consumers of cosmetic surgery - those recently lifted out of poverty and manual labor are becoming increasingly sedentary. A 2008 study showed that barely 10 percent of Brazilian teens and adults exercise regularly.

Still, despite their growing numbers, not everyone is eager to embrace "gordinhas" - or "little fatties," as chunky women are affectionately known here.

Many high-end bikini-makers have turned a seemingly deliberately blind eye to the burgeon-

ing plus-size market. Rio-based upmarket brand Salinas, for example, offers five sizes, from extra-small through extra-large. But their sizing runs notoriously small and it's hard to imagine anyone over a size 6 actually managing to fit into any of the brand's minuscule two-pieces.

"It used to be that people would stare at me," said Soares, the voluptuous sun-worshiper on Copacabana beach. "Now when I come to the beach I see women who are much bigger than me - and lots of them are wearing bikinis - so I'm not self-conscious any more."

"God makes some people thin but he made me like this," she said, rubbing down the well-oiled bulge of her stomach and thighs. "So who am I to think that he was wrong?"

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