

# RSWLIVING

REGIONAL SOUTHWEST FLORIDA'S LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

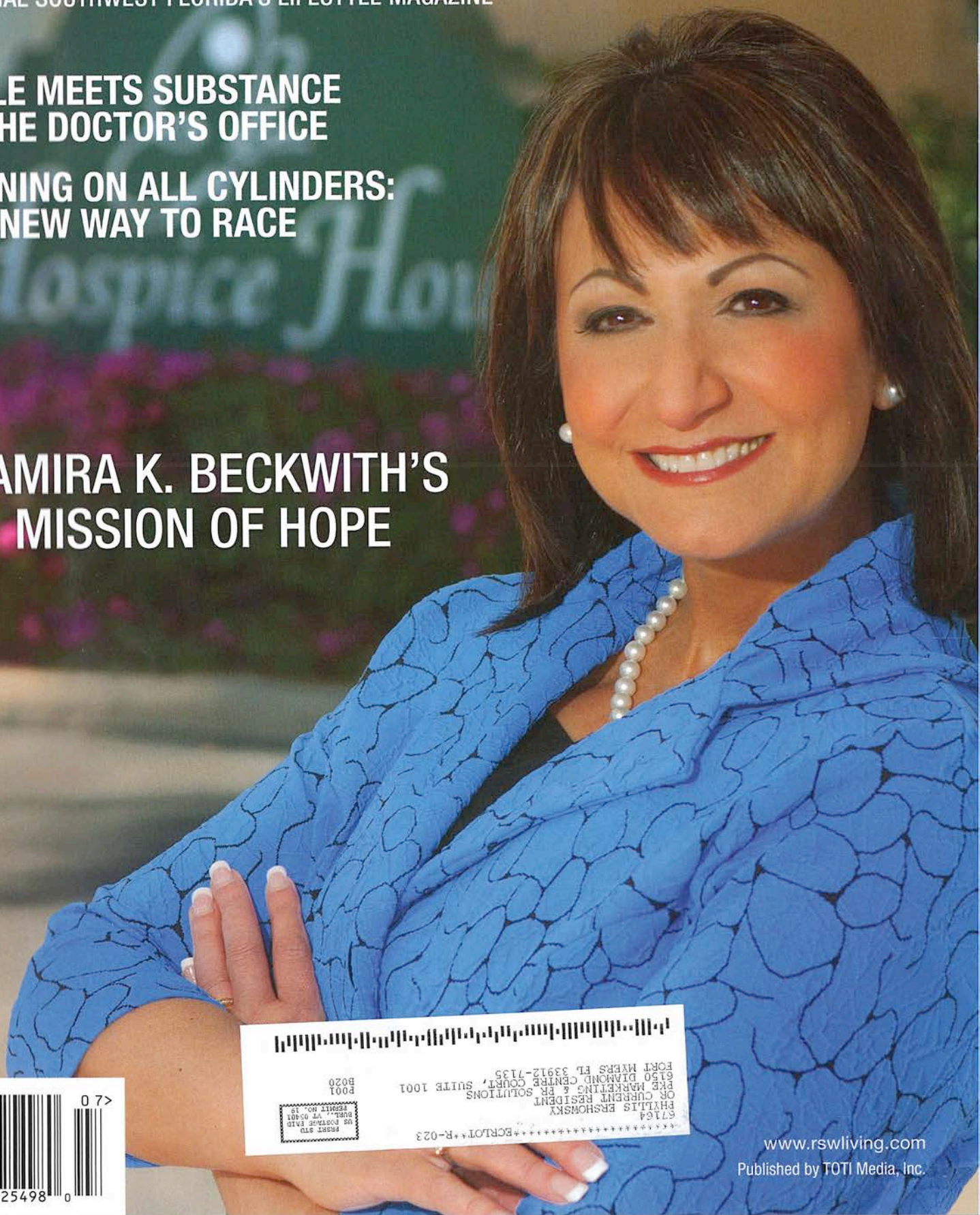
JULY/AUG  
2013

VOL. 6 NO. 4  
U.S. \$4.95

**STYLE MEETS SUBSTANCE  
AT THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE**

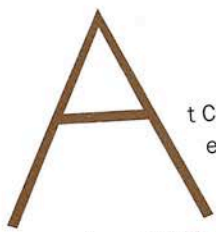
**RUNNING ON ALL CYLINDERS:  
THE NEW WAY TO RACE**

**SAMIRA K. BECKWITH'S  
MISSION OF HOPE**



[www.rswliving.com](http://www.rswliving.com)  
Published by TOTI Media, Inc.





At Cape Coral Hospital, you'll encounter expected elements like gurneys, wheelchairs, and plenty of state-of-the-art medical equipment. But you'll also find things like birds in flight in a stairwell, kites and hot-air balloons painted on ceiling tiles, and colorful quilts hanging on the walls of the maternity ward.

Some sections of the hospital boast newer flooring and fresh coats of paint in soothing shades of green, yellow, and purple. "We are constantly evolving and changing," says Scott Kashman, chief administrative officer of Cape Coral Hospital, which is part of the Lee Memorial Health System. "People already expect that we're going to provide great clinical care. But they want to see that we're continuing to evolve our campus. I think the environment plays a big part in whether people feel good about their hospital stay. If you're not going to keep an updated-looking facility and take pride in yourself, are you showing pride in the care you provide?"

"They've got to create an atmosphere that patients want to go to. The patient has a choice between going to an office that hasn't been touched in fifteen or twenty years and a state-of-the-art office that is clean, contemporary, and new."

A visit to the former might lead to a lot of questions. "The patient might say to himself, 'I wonder if this office is really clean, because it hasn't been updated in a while,'" says Potts. "That could lead to, 'I wonder if the medical equipment the doctor is using is going to be really old. If they don't care about the office and how that looks, do they care about investing in state-of-the-art medical equipment?'"

First impressions matter, especially when your well-being is in another person's hands. That's why many medical facilities are borrowing elements from both the spa and hospitality industries, utilizing things like natural materials and textures, contemporary furnishings and wood tones, and tranquil color palettes featuring hues like

"A lot of what we're trying to create are those spaces where people can catch their breath and take a break. If you come to a health-care organization and it seems hectic and stressful, that can have an impact on the patient."

—Scott Kashman, chief administrative officer of Cape Coral Hospital

That kind of power of perception factors into the way doctors' offices and other medical facilities are designed these days. Gone are the totally sterile, harshly lit environments devoid of any decoration or sense of style. In their place are spaces that seek to calm, soothe, heal, and provide a sense of the mission of the doctors and other staff who work in them. While quality medical care and cutting-edge equipment are still what draw patients in, looks do matter.

"The competition among doctors is out there," says Fort Myers-based interior designer Lora Potts, who's currently working on designs for medical facilities in Fort Myers and Tampa.

soft blues and greens. "That kind of design works well in health environments," says Lori Wegman, principal of Naples-based Wegman Design Group, which has done work for a number of local medical facilities. "It helps to counterbalance all of the technology."

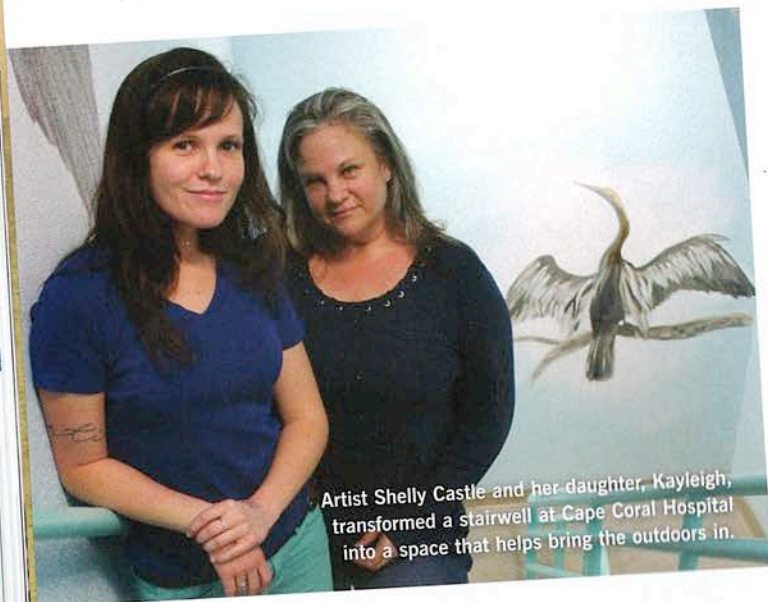
Take the new Center for Healthy Living at Moorings Park in Naples, which Wegman Design Group worked on. Though the senior-focused center will embrace the latest in technology—exam rooms will all be paperless, for example—it will also include touches like clothing valets in each exam room, where patients can hang their clothes (instead of throwing them on a chair) and don a robe (instead of an uncomfortable gown).

"Their personal belongings will be tucked away and taken care of," says Wegman. "It's the kind of thing they might do at a very upscale spa."

A soothing setting can benefit both the patients and those taking care of them. "It promotes visual and physical comfort," says Potts. "Patients have less anxiety and less stress. And the employees are less stressed if it's a calming and well-designed environment. If the employees are stressed out and nothing is organized, it speaks pretty loudly to the patient."

Cape Coral Hospital constantly looks for ways the facility can care for its caregivers. "Just as important as providing that environment for our patients is providing that environment for the people who are providing the care," says Kashman. "A lot of what we're trying to create are those spaces where people can catch their breath and take a break."

That might be a window-lined hallway near the surgery center or a planned healing garden outside the women's health area. "If you come to a health-care organization and it seems hectic and stres



Artist Shelly Castle and her daughter, Kayleigh, transformed a stairwell at Cape Coral Hospital into a space that helps bring the outdoors in.

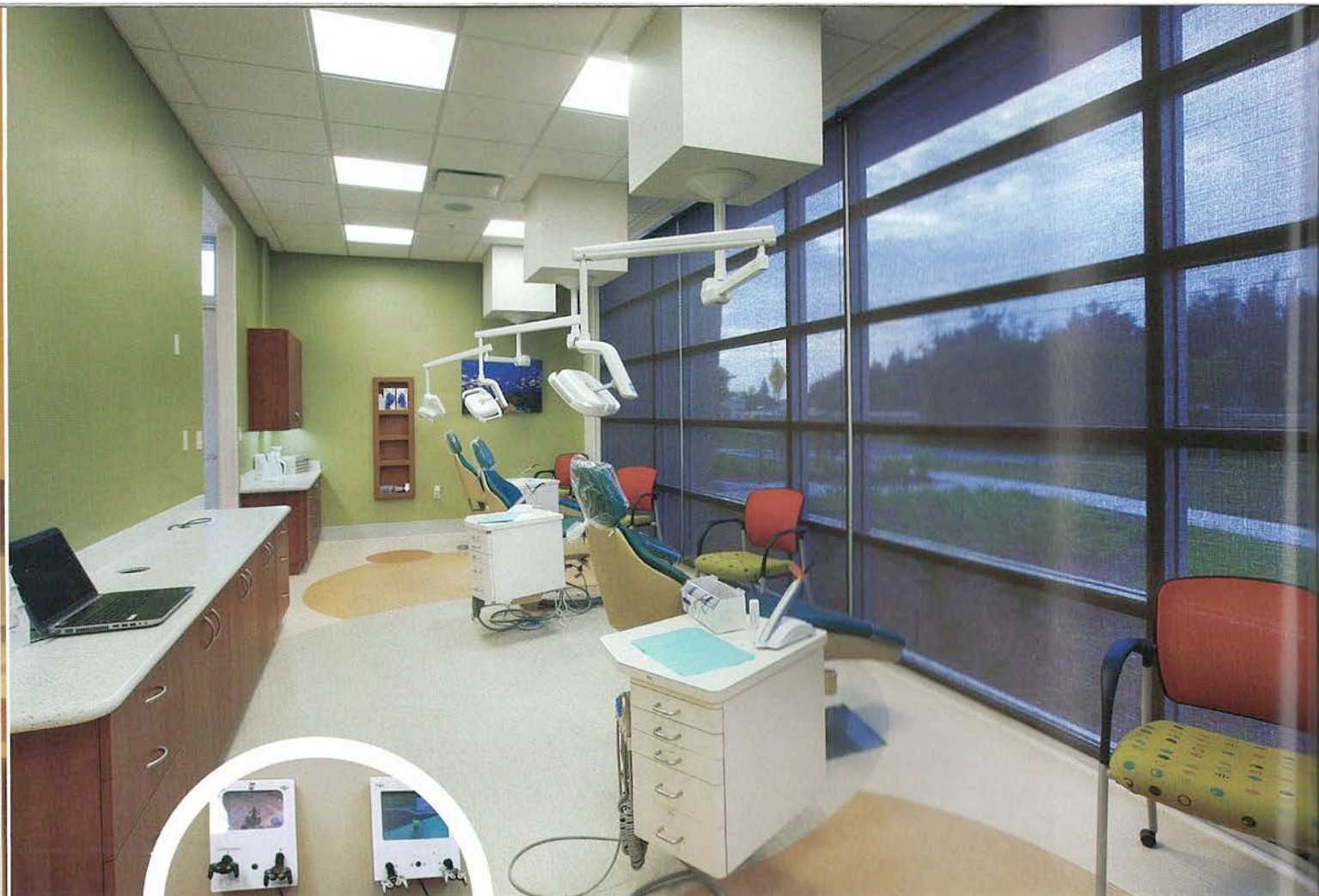




Colorful, handmade quilts hang on the walls of the Center for Women and Children at Cape Coral Hospital; flooring that evokes flowing water and a nurse's station resembling a sandcastle add playful elements to an oncology unit at Golisano Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida (below).







The office of Lakes Park Children's Dentistry & Orthodontics is both a spa-like and kid-friendly space.



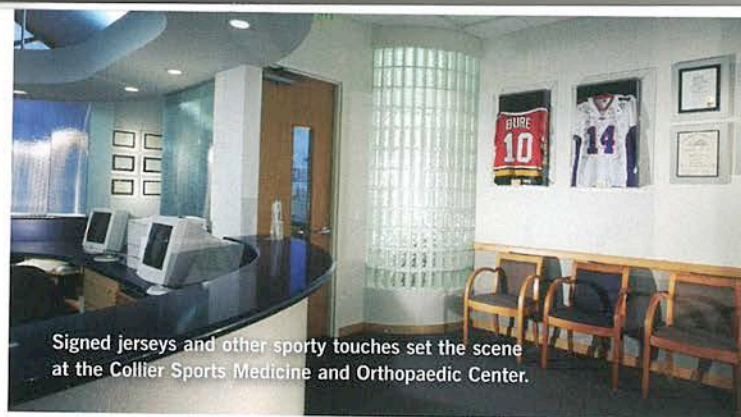
ful, that can have an impact on the patient," says Kashman.

The stairwell near the hospital's public elevators was recently transformed by local artist Shelly Castle and her daughter, Kayleigh. Native Florida birds in flight now cover the sky-blue walls of the staircase, which also features aqua-hued railings.

"We wanted to bring the outside all the way up and promote wellness by encouraging people to use the stairs," says Sandra Raak, coordinator of interior design for Lee Memorial Health System. So a hospital employee or patient family member who doesn't have time to pop outside can get the calming sensation of doing so while also engaging in an activity that's good for their own well-being. Similar stairwell projects are in the early stages at other facilities in the Lee Memorial Health System.

Other aesthetic efforts speak more squarely to patient comfort and well-being. Patients in Cape Coral Hospital's intensive-care unit can look above their beds and find colorful ceiling tiles painted by Florida Gulf Coast University student Melissa Sower. Kites, palm trees, and hot-air balloons might show up in the images, along with infinity signs representing the infinite potential of both patients and their caregivers.

Handmade quilts hang on the walls of the hospital's Center for Women and Children. A gift of the Cape Coral Quilters' Guild, they add a lively touch to the unit and provide comfort to those who



Signed jerseys and other sporty touches set the scene at the Collier Sports Medicine and Orthopaedic Center.

And it reflects our environment here in Naples, with the sea being so ever-present."

A similar approach can be found at the Chrissy Brown Inpatient Hematology/Oncology Unit at Lee Memorial Health System's Golisano Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida, which is currently located inside the HealthPark Medical Center. There, young patients find a nurses' station that looks like a sandcastle and flooring that evokes flowing water. "Things come to life, and the kids can relate to this area," says Raak.

Wegman mixed posh and playful in the design for Lakes Park Children's Dentistry & Orthodontics, the practice of Dr. Oliver Favalli in Fort Myers. "Our concept was spa meets kids' dentist," she says. "It's really light and airy but appropriate for kids. It's got brighter colors, but it's not frenetic."

**"The competition among doctors is out there. They've got to create an atmosphere that patients want to go to."**

—Fort Myers-based interior designer Lora Potts

see them. Sometimes literally, like when they're given away to patients in need of some extra TLC.

Adding homey elements can help patients feel relaxed, whether that's softer, more natural lighting or furnishings that would fit just as well in a living room as a waiting room. "You're most comfortable in your own residence," says Potts. "When you go to a medical facility and it's bare and stark and white, that creates a lot of anxiety."

Lee Memorial Health System uses an upholstery material called Crypton, which is available in colors, patterns, and textures similar to what you would find in a home but can stand up to a lot of wear and tear. "It looks like fabric but is really very durable," says Raak. "It acts like a vinyl in that moisture cannot get through."

Often the way a doctor's office or medical facility is designed can speak volumes about the patients it serves and the work being done there. Consider the Robert and Mariann MacDonald SeaCAREium in-patient pediatric unit at the NCH Healthcare System's North Naples Hospital campus.

Wegman Design Group created an environment that would appeal to children of all ages, whether they're two or twelve years old. Hallways look as if you're strolling under the sea, and each of the patient rooms is themed around a particular sea creature.

"It takes away from that institutional feeling," says Pat Read, administrative director of the NCH Healthcare System. "Being away from home can be a rather traumatic experience for children. We wanted something bright, cheery, fun, and distracting.

A calming vibe pervades the Birth Place at NCH Healthcare System's North Naples Hospital campus, which features soft blue and green hues, nature-inspired artwork, and streamlined furnishings that would look right at home in a hotel. "When someone is going through the process of childbirth, there are a lot of emotions around all of that," says Read. "We didn't want the environment to conflict with that. We just wanted to make it very soothing and relaxing."

But that same kind of ambience wouldn't work for Collier Sports Medicine and Orthopaedic Center, the practice of Dr. James J. Guerra in Naples. Instead of zen-like artwork, Wegman Design Group hung signed athletic jerseys on the walls to help give the office a sporty feel. "It gives Dr. Guerra real credibility and lends an air of authority and confidence to the physician," says Wegman. "Patients will think, 'If he's qualified to handle professional athletes, then he's qualified to work on my knee.'"

A design that ties into a medical facility's mission and specialty can help everyone feel good about being there, whether it's a patient, nurse, or the doctors themselves. "If you create a space that relates to the purpose of the medical facility, it helps the staff relate to the place where they work and creates a sense of belonging," says Wegman. "Every physician has a different story to tell, and they can really use that to create an experience."

*An editor for TOTI Media, Beth Luberecki is a Venice, Florida-based freelance writer. Learn more about her at [bethluberecki.com](http://bethluberecki.com).*