

# Ann authors book

WTNH anchor Nyberg channels Auntie Mame in 'Slice of Life' and boutique

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**MADISON** » Ann Nyberg, the longest continuously running anchor and reporter in Connecticut television history, is on a crusade: to tell the stories that need to be told, and aren't.

"I've lived the last 30 years on deadline," the slender, animated 57-year old said on a recent afternoon at Annie Mame, her vintage-style boutique in Madison. "And I'm not about to slow down."

Understand. This is a woman voted "Best News Anchor" for a decade in Connecticut Magazine's reader's poll; who's interviewed Walter Cronkite, Barbara Walters, and Julie Andrews, among others; and traveled to Cuba before restrictions were lifted and to the Vatican to cover Pope John Paul II.

This same woman devotes an entire chapter of her first book, "Slices of Life: A Storyteller's Diary" (Homebound Publications 2015), to a waitress.

The self-proclaimed diner aficionado sought out the waitress for the inside story on why she does what she does. The waitress has worked at a shoreline diner since 1973, she tells us. She knows there won't be any pension or bonus waiting for her at the end of her career, but she wouldn't do anything else.

"She has had a chance to live vicariously through her customers' lives," Nyberg writes. "That has enriched hers."

Step inside the mellow-lit Annie Mame, a shop within Domestic Possessions, and you'll



PHOTOS BY ARNOLD GOLD — NEW HAVEN REGISTER

Ann Nyberg hangs a tutu made by a mother of four children in Trumbull at her boutique, Annie Mame, inside Domestic Possessions in Madison.

begin to understand how the multiple Emmy-Award nominee, who's anchored WTNH-TV's nightly newscasts for the last 27 years, has made a day job of feeding the same insatiable curiosity that impelled her to question the waitress.

First there's the name. "Auntie Mame is my kindred spirit," said the Madison resident, of the character played by Rosalind Russell in the 1958 movie. "She's a whimsical, fun-loving person who collects people and things and is a friend to all types."

Now watch the seemingly indefatigable mother of three grown daughters (including a set of twins) engage her customers in lively conversation about

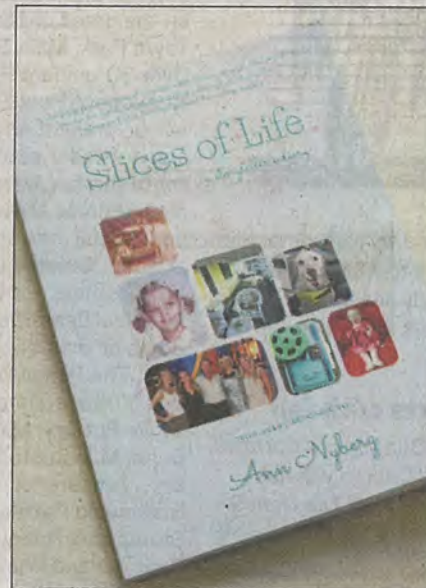
where they're from and what they've been up to.

Observe her enthusing, Auntie-Mame-style, about the sea-glass jewelry from Fairfield, the handcrafted scented wax candles from Deep River, the tutus made by the Trumbull mother of four, among the eclectic assortment of items from artisans throughout the state.

Listen to her rave about the vintage industrial furniture and lighting company started by an Irish immigrant furniture maker in Watertown spotlighted on "Nyberg," a long-format online conversation she started in 2012 to re-introduce in-depth reporting.

And about Brother Mike's in

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Cards by Hartford Prints are displayed at the boutique.



Children's books made into clocks are popular at Annie Mame.

Ann Nyberg in her boutique, Annie Mame, inside Domestic Possessions in Madison.

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# Nyberg

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Madison, the new restaurant and sports bar Nyberg spotlighted on Network-Connecticut.com, a website she founded in 2010 in the midst of the recession to “drive business to people’s small businesses,” according to the daughter of an Air Force-veteran dentist and a homemaker mother who “could find a four leaf clover like a heat-seeking missile can find its target,” as she writes in “Slices of Life.”

“Ann has a unique voice after so many years on the air in Connecticut and she’s unique also in her willingness to use that voice with every form of social media at her disposal,” said Brett Ellis, executive director of the Katharine Hepburn Cultural Arts Center, on which Nyberg has served on the board since its inception.

“She’s a big reason The Kate is thriving in this climate. Because the people who follow her, and there are quite a few, know she pushes strongly for what she believes in.”

The common theme: “the people, places, and things in our state that are not being covered enough,” she said, her blue eyes aglow with missionary zeal as big band music played on an endless loop and customers threaded through



Signs made by Lisa Fatone of Westbrook and hand-cut paper designs inside repurposed frames are displayed at Nyberg's boutique in Madison.

her shop.

“There are so many wonderful stories out there and I’m determined to do everything I can to make sure as many as possible don’t fly under the radar.”

Which is not unlike the purpose — and essence — of “Slices of Life.” It’s not just an account of Nyberg’s modest upbringing in South Bend, Indiana — her first crush (in kin-

dergarten); the games she and her three sisters and brothers invented in the backyard; the “delectable” baked goods her shy Swedish grandmother would share to make connections with others.

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— Ann Nyberg

Like the mismatched dishes at her family’s lake cottage —her other grandmother, she writes, was in this way “an early Martha Stewart”— like the pieces in her shop, the book is also a hodgepodge of lessons she’s collected along the way: that people need and want respect; that a little black skirt can go a long way; that older people are among our most precious resources.

And, not least, a series of challenges to the reader. She dares us to buy a cup

of coffee for the next person in line, to hold the door for people coming in and out of stores and, above all, to “make your life count now,” she writes. “This is not a dress rehearsal.”

Though it’s not officially out until October, the slim volume may be pre-ordered from Homebound Publications, according to publisher Leslie Browning. Lucky for everyone. Because the casual front-porch tone and homespun sensibility may well make “Slices of Life” the perfect summer read.

Particularly, perhaps, for those hitting the dating circuit. Thanks to her interest in what made the shoreline waitress tick, Nyberg came away from the diner with, well, a slice of wisdom.

“Never go on a second date with a man who was rude to a waitress,” she said.

“Slices of Life: A Storyteller’s Diary” can be pre-ordered exclusively at <http://homeboundpublications.com>.