



THE ONLINE COMMUNITY FOR INTELLIGENT OPTIMISTS

Exchange



Searching for hidden America

This fall, photographers **Ross McDermott** and **Matthew Burris** will be free birds, travelling across the U.S. in search of stories and inspiration. The duo is setting out to see America's multitude of small-town festivals, travelling in an old airstream hitched to a diesel truck that runs on vegetable oil. "The festivals of America represent everyone," says 25-year-old McDermott. "They're the true story of American culture and life."

With help from Burris, his college roommate at the Pratt Institute, McDermott's vision becomes reality at their first stop: Alabama's annual Coon Dog Graveyard Celebration. Each Labor Day, hunters pay homage to the 300 or so coon dogs buried in a Tusculumbia, Alabama graveyard. The pair hopes to report from 60 festivals during their year-long stint, including the Hairy Chest, Legs and Beard Contest in Fairbanks, Alaska, and the Machine Gun Shoot in West Point, Kentucky.

McDermott and Burris plan to do odd jobs along the way to pay for the trip and sell their photos through their website, americanfestivalsproject.com. "I just want to meet all of these people from different ways of life across America and tell their stories," says Burris. "The small fests like this, this is hidden America."

ODEMAGAZINE.COM/AMERICANFESTIVAL

Blogs

Meet our blogger: Amber



Amber O'Neal is founder and CEO of the health-and-fitness company **Café Physique**. Based in Atlanta, Georgia, she conducts workshops across the U.S.

What made you want to start Café Physique?

"My greatest passion is to help ordinary people achieve healthy lifestyles with joy. Everyone knows it's not fun to be forced to eat rice cakes all day. So this is a solid alternative that helps people find their healthy selves."

What bothers you about how people normally discuss weight?

"There are so many places one can go to get regular doom-and-gloom stories, especially about obesity. I like to talk about solutions, rather than problems. **Café Physique** speaks to a wide variety of shapes and sizes and offers realistic ideas about what to do and how to do it, because there's something for everybody."

READ HER BLOG: ODEMAGAZINE.COM/AMBER

FOR EVERYTHING THE INTELLIGENT OPTIMIST NEEDS:
odemarketplace.com

(or see page 78)



Check out odemagazine.com for Web exclusives. This month, we have an interview with retired teacher **John Taylor Gatto** on education, a video of a speech by bestselling author **J.K. Rowling** on failure—and more.

People

The story of Kate Forster



Kate Forster joined the *Ode* community in August. By day, the 37-year-old Aussie is the general manager of **Dogma**, a communications agency that produces graphic design and advertising. In 2006, Forster published *Spiritual Business*, a guidebook on how to integrate spirituality into the traditional workplace rather than leaving it to the "crushed-velvet-wearing hippie crowd." Forster lives in Melbourne, Australia, with her husband David and their children Tansy and Spike.

ODEMAGAZINE.COM/PEOPLE/DREAMWEAVER

JOIN OUR COMMUNITY: ODEMAGAZINE.COM/PEOPLE

READ ODE
ONLINE

HELP US
REDUCE OUR
ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT:
SUBSCRIBE TO
THE DIGITAL
VERSION
OF ODE.

[ODEMAGAZINE.COM/
ZINIO](http://ODEMAGAZINE.COM/ZINIO)