

 **Whirl With Merle** Merle Exit 

# IT'S JUST ONE OF THOSE WEEKS

I'm thankful for the invention of **Topricin**, an anti-inflammatory pain relief and healing cream. Stress, age, being overweight, as well as taking a fall can take a toll on one's body. Lower back pain doesn't exactly help in the situation. I probably should have picked a mess of Comfrey from my garden and wrap it around my body, particularly my arms. That's what I used to block the fall.

For those of you who haven't tried **Topricin**, ([www.topicalbiomedics.com](http://www.topicalbiomedics.com)) the cream is used for pain associated with: arthritis, lower back pain, carpal tunnel, muscle spasms and sports injury traumas. Yes, I did give some to the New York Sharks to use. Got great feedback (vs. quarterback). Not that I'm surprised. There are no side effects, either. I woke up the other day with lower back pain and was tempted to tack some Ibuprofen. Instead, I rubbed the cream and the pain like immediately disappeared. No kidding. I'm going to test it out on an area near my hip that hurts when I walk. Could be arthritic. Who knows? I'll let you know.

I'm going to Santa Barbara (hoping that the fire won't go that far up the coast), so just to be safe I went to Joan Jacobs, my chiro, and got cleared out. As it turns out that she uses Topricin as well. I'll be riding a Segway, going on a glider plane and taking a cooking class.

Speaking of food, I went to a pre-opening party at a new restaurant called **Irving Mill** on E. 16th Street, around Union Square. Cocktails and canapés. I must say that if the canapés are any indication of how the rest of the menu will be, I'm going back to sample the menu (twist my arm) and report back

Another pre-opening party was

at **The Speakeasy**, located at 132 Greene Avenue in the Fort Greene/Clinton Hill section of Brooklyn. There was a ribbon cutting ceremony in the afternoon at which time Brooklyn Boro President Marty Markowitz made an appearance not only to help in cutting the ribbon, but delivering a proclamation to owner Deborah Wright, General Manager Crystal Turpin, Executive Chef Josie Smith-Malave and Manager Monir Gamany.

Yes, there's also a restaurant in Queens that opened. I received an email about **Athens Tavern**. "Many other restaurants in NYC are Greek American. Unlike such, Athens Tavern will feature a menu that boasts current up to the moment fare from Athens; not classical Greek. The menu will be ingredient driven and value driven using the freshest ingredients available including, of course. Even whole fish will be sold at a fixed price, not by the pound and none over 22." The restaurant is located in Astoria (as if you didn't guess) at 23-01 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue. If you dine there before I do, let me know. I'll most likely make my way there in a week or two.

Since I love new kitchen products, I tested out a soy milk maker called **Soyabella**. Easier than I thought. Soak the soybeans, place water in the main container, put the soy beans in the cup with the itty bitty holes and turn it on. It first goes through a stage of grinding the beans, having the "milk of it" go into the water and heat it up. 15 minutes later, I'm not a drinker of soy milk so I can only say that it tasted "fresh". I added some sugar and it seemed fine. However, I was then able to put the soymilk into a pot and add something to "curdle" it, sort of...the way lemon curdles milk. Tofu. Yes, I got a soft tofu

and placed it in a little box lined with cheesecloth. Placed a weight on top and let it drain in the fridge. Fresh tofu! [www.soyabella.com](http://www.soyabella.com).

Oh yeah, Bonnie Low-Kramen's book, *Be The Ultimate Assistant*. Bonnie is Olympia Dukakis' Assistant. The book isn't one that sports celebrity secrets, but the secret to management. How many of us wish we could hire someone to manage our life.

Bonnie lists "tricks of the trade": great organizational skills; creative problem solving and resourcefulness; responsibility; detail-oriented; great memory; ability to think on your feet and react quickly and calmly to most situations; having a sense of humor; being even-tempered; being self-motivated; flexibility; ability to put people at ease around your employer; sensitivity to other people; the ability to multi-task; and the ability to sublimate your ego.

On the other side so far as keeping the perfect assistant Bonnie lists the following suggestions: Try to be clear about your needs; If someone else is screening resumes before you get to see either the resume of the candidate, brief that person well; Be clear and realistic about your expectations; Be prepared to get what you pay for; Interview your potential assistants and present realistic scenarios of your work together; Take all personal recommendations for assistants with a grain of salt; Communicate regularly and listen, especially in the first few weeks; Behaving irrationally and unreasonably does not serve you; Two heads are better than one; Ongoing communication is the key; and Be a good person. So, do you think you can either be a good assistant or hire one?

