



Alexis Joel with Dr. Tamer Seckin, who diagnosed her endometriosis. Joel detailed her medical journey on her husband's Instagram to help raise awareness of disorder.

## Joel's wife raises awareness

Reveals medical journey that led to endometriosis diagnosis

BY FRANK LOVECE  
Special to Newsday

**Alexis Joel**, wife of Hicksville-raised Rock & Roll Hall of Famer **Billy Joel**, says she endured “excruciating pain” as multiple doctors misdiagnosed her endometriosis before finally having it identified and treated.

“We all have war stories, and I am no different: years of pain, misdiagnosis, failed surgeries, followed by internal bleeding, and most importantly, Doctor after Doctor telling me I was fine,” Alexis Joel, 43, wrote Wednesday on her husband’s social media, tied to Endometriosis Awareness Month. “I ran the gamut from ‘it’s all in your head’ to ‘just get a hysterectomy.’”

Then, “A year ago, I met my earth angel. His name is Dr. **Tamer Seckin**,” an OB/GYN affiliated with Northwell Health in Manhattan and a clinical professor at the **Donald and Barbara Zucker** School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell. Seckin is also co-founder, with food maven **Padma Lakshmi**, of the New York City-based Endometriosis Foundation of America.

“I had gone to my third ER out of excruciating pain,” recalled Joel, who lives in Centre Island with her husband and their daughters, **Della Rose**, 9, and **Remy Anne**, 7. “I was non-functional. This was the moment I just started researching specialists and everything pointed me to him.”

Endometriosis is a chronic disorder in which tissue like that which normally grows inside the uterus also grows outside it. Endometriosis often affects a woman’s ovaries, fallopian tubes and pelvic tissue, with symptoms including pain, fatigue and excessive bleeding during menstruation, according to the Mayo

Clinic. Treatment ranges from medicine and hormone therapy to, as in Joel’s case, laparoscopic surgery.

“One surgery later, 27 [lesions] removed, one less appendix and my entire abdominal cavity rid of this horrible disease,” Joel wrote. “I am forever grateful. The work he does with The Endometriosis Foundation of America is so important to this battle. They work to raise awareness, implement teaching in schools, and continue his research for the next generation.”

She added, “Our family has privately supported this work, but in honor of March being Endometriosis Awareness Month, I wanted to do my part to help others who are unheard. It is a tough road but believe in yourself and find your earth angel — they are out there!”

Seckin, 70, not speaking about Joel specifically, told Newsday Thursday, “You can really understand how pathetic the medical community is when there’s such a prevalent disease that they could miss it. It’s like every specialist has tunnel vision.”

Often, he says, the common symptoms lead sufferers to a gastroenterologist, “who starts naming this IBS [irritable bowel syndrome] or maybe leaky gut syndrome.” But whatever specialist one starts with, he said, “Once there’s a misdiagnosis it can linger for years, and it’s hard to come out from that rabbit hole.” Additionally, “There’s a huge pre-opinionated, prejudiced approach that when women have pain, it’s in their head. . . . So that’s the heart of the problem.”

Billy Joel, 75, also has suffered from a recent health issue. The five-time Grammy Award winner announced on his website March 11 that he was postponing his current tour for four months following surgery and physical therapy for an unspecified medical condition, and that he expects to make a full recovery.

## Great South Bay Fest’s final day to showcase new wave, yacht rock

BY DAVID J. CRIBLEZ  
david.criblez@newsday.com

This year’s Great South Bay Music Festival will feature its most diverse roster to date. The event, which is scheduled for July 24-27 at Shorefront Park in Patchogue, has announced its closing day lineup: Men at Work, Naked Eyes, Ambrosia, Yacht Rock Revue and Strangelove — the Depeche Mode Experience. On a day usually reserved for classic rock, this year the festival is blending new wave with yacht rock.

“We wanted to go in a different direction. The late ’70s, ’80s and ’90s music is having a resurgence and that’s where people’s heads are at,” says founder and

promoter **Jim Faith**. “In the past, we’ve missed the demographic. But it’s something people have asked for over the years and we wanted to dive into it.”

Fans of the legendary Long Island radio station WLIR might feel some strong nostalgic vibes with Australian band Men at Work (“Down Under,” “Who Can It Be Now?”), which hasn’t played Long Island in 24 years, and Britain’s Naked Eyes (“Always Something There to Remind Me,” “Promises, Promises”), which last performed here seven years ago.

“I think it will bring the WLIR crowd,” says Faith. “We are even going to have former WLIR DJ/current SiriusXM DJ **Larry “The Duck” Dunn** serve as host of the day. I’m excited about it.”

The yacht rock craze has increased the popularity of Ambrosia, known for hits like “Biggest Part of Me,” “How Much I Feel” and “Holdin’ on to Yesterday.” Meanwhile Yacht Rock Revue pays tribute to the genre.

“Typically, we wouldn’t put on a cover band, but Yacht Rock Revue are well loved and they do a great job,” says Faith. “I think it will be more fun and a party. That’s the kind of groove we are trying to set up.”

Previously announced line-ups include: Long Island’s own Taking Back Sunday, Say Anything, Gym Class Heroes and Head Automatica on July 24. Rock-



Men at Work plays festival on July 27.

reggae rules July 25 with **Damian and Stephen Marley**, sons of late reggae icon **Bob Marley**, plus the Elovaters, **J Boog** and local band Oogee Wawa. Jam Band Day is July 26 with moe., Umphrey’s McGee, Pigeons Playing Ping Pong and Eggy.

“The festival began with blues and rock then started to move into other genres,” says Faith. “This year there is something for everybody and it’s all good music.”

For tickets (general admission: \$62-\$69.50) or more information, visit: [greatsouthbaymusicfestival.com](http://greatsouthbaymusicfestival.com). Prices will go up as the festival draws closer.

hot  
date

APRIL 17



CBS’ ‘Matlock,’ starring Oscar- and Emmy-winning actor Kathy Bates, will conclude its first season with a special two-hour episode.