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Tips when leasing a car for the first time

Leasing a vehicle makes more sense than buying for many drivers. Lease terms typically last no more than 36 months, allowing drivers to drive a different, newer car every three years. In

addition, lease payments tend to be less than monthly payments when financing a vehicle, which makes driving a new car more affordable for buyers without much room in their monthly

budgets.

But leasing can confuse or intimidate some drivers, especially those who have never leased before. Once drivers decide that leasing is their best option, there



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are some strategies they can employ to make leasing work for them.

- Make a lower down payment. Low monthly payments make leases very attractive to many drivers, but the low payments highlighted in advertisements can overshadow the often significant initial down payments required when signing a lease agreement. Those down payments, which can be several thousand dollars, make the low monthly payments possible. But drivers may want to make a lower down payment and accept higher monthly payments, as doing so offers more of a safety net should the car be stolen or wrecked. When a car is stolen or wrecked, lessees likely won't get a refund on their down payments. By accepting a higher monthly payment, drivers are protecting themselves against theft or vehicle damage.

- Purchase gap insurance. Gap insurance protects lessees should their vehicles be stolen or wrecked before

the leases expire. Insurance company payouts may cover the value of the car if it is stolen or wrecked, but that figure may not equal what lessees still owe per the terms of the lease. In such instances, drivers have to come up with the difference on their own, unless they have gap insurance. Some lease contracts include gap insurance, while others do not. Confirm if your contract does before signing your lease, and purchase gap insurance coverage if it does not.

- Prioritize maintenance. While allowing a car to fall into disrepair is never a good idea, it's an especially poor decision if you are leasing a vehicle. Normal wear and tear may not incur any fees when you return the car once your lease expires, but damage or excessive wear and tear could cost you once you hand the keys back. Many leasing companies will assess the vehicle for lessees in the months or weeks before the

vehicle is slated to return, giving drivers time to fix any issues before the lease expires. Take advantage of this option and be sure to address each issue mentioned in the inspection report. Failing to do so could cost you a substantial amount of money.

- Don't let your lease overstay its welcome. Especially lengthy leasing agreements could negate any savings drivers get through leasing. Lease terms that are 36 months or less are most beneficial to drivers, as new vehicles likely won't encounter any significant maintenance issues during that period, and any issues that do arise will likely be covered by the manufacturer's warranty.

Leasing a vehicle is a great option for many motorists, and there are several ways drivers can make leasing even more beneficial to their bottom lines. ■

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~Benjamin Disraeli

How to handle car trouble while driving

-stay calm and carry on



Sudden car trouble is something no driver wants to experience, but many a driver has been driving down the highway only to feel his or her vehicle start to sputter. Such sputtering might indicate a car is running low on fuel, or it could be a sign of something more serious that requires motorists to think as quickly and safely as possible.

When car trouble strikes while a vehicle is on the road, the first thing many drivers do is check their fuel gauges. A car that runs out of gas is certainly inconvenient, but if you can pull over to the shoulder or make it to the nearest filling station, then this unfortunate situation can be remedied rather easily. But when a car's tank is full and it is still showing signs of trouble, drivers must take steps to protect themselves, their passengers and their vehicles. The following are a few simple tips motorists should keep in mind so they can safely handle any car trouble that may arise while they are out on the road.

- Keep a first-aid kit, spare tire and tire jack in the car at all times. Flat tires are no fun, but they are even more of a nuisance when drivers are not prepared to address them. Always keep a jack and spare tire in your car, even if the spare is a donut you can temporarily use to replace a flat tire until you make it to a filling station or automotive supply store. As an added safety measure, keep a fully stocked first aid kit in your vehicle in case you cut yourself while changing the tire or need to address another medical situa-

tion. Visit www.redcross.org for a list of items to include in your automotive emergency kit. Keep a blanket in the trunk as well so your passengers can stay warm should you experience car trouble on a cold day or night.

- Make note of your surroundings. Some car troubles can only be fixed by the professionals, so pay careful attention to your surroundings in case an issue arises and forces you to pull over and call for help. Always pay attention to mile markers and any landmarks that might help you describe where you are. Car troubles can strike at any time and anywhere, so be sure to pay special attention to your surroundings when driving in unfamiliar areas.

- Pull over: Don't panic if an issue arises suddenly. Remain calm and pull over onto the shoulder. The right shoulder is the area for pulling over on most roads, but you may also use the left shoulder on multilane highways with medians. Try to get as far away from traffic as possible without driving off of level ground, and always use your signals when pulling onto the shoulder. If the vehicle can't make it to the median, put your emergency flashers on and get out of the car, moving away from both the vehicle and traffic. Immediately call for emergency roadside assistance, alerting the authorities if need be.

- Use flares or triangles to alert other drivers. So long as you are not risking your well-being, you can place flares and/or warning triangles behind your vehicle so oncoming traffic knows to drive around it. The popular not-for-profit motor club AAA recommends placing the first flare or triangle 10 feet directly behind the side of the vehicle that is closest to the road. The second should be placed between 30 and 60 feet (increase the distances as the posted speed limit increases) behind the middle of the bumper, while the third flare or triangle

should be placed between 120 and 360 feet behind the vehicle's right side.

- Stay with the vehicle. Once you have called for help and set up flares or triangles, stay with the vehicle, though do so at a safe enough distance so you are not in harm's way.

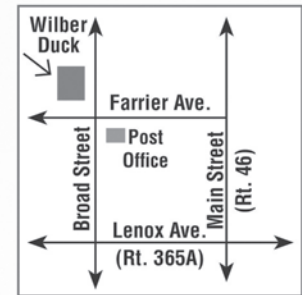
Sudden car troubles can be scary, but drivers who approach such issues calmly and quickly can reduce their risk for accident or injury. ■

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Enjoy a frugal fall road trip



Drivers can make several adjustments to make their fall road trips more affordable.

Road trips are a staple of autumn for many motorists. Fall foliage and moderate temperatures make the months of September and October ideal months to hit the open road for weekend getaways.

Fall road trips rarely take drivers too far away from home, but traveling can still be costly. Fortunately, there are many ways to make road trips more affordable without sacrificing fun.

- Explore alternatives to more traditional lodging. If your road trip includes an overnight stay, consider alternatives to traditional lodging. Hotels might stretch your budget, but depending on where you plan to go, you might have some less traditional alternatives. Airbnb.com allows homeowners and even some apartment dwellers to rent their homes and apartments to travelers, and these listings may pale in comparison to rates offered by nearby hotels. If weather permits, look for local campsites and spend your nights sleeping outdoors under the autumn stars. If you prefer hotels, look for deals on sites like Priceline.com or Hotwire.com, which may offer heavy discounts on rooms.

- Take steps to conserve fuel. Lodging might prove your biggest expense on a fall road trip, but fuel likely won't be too far behind. Drivers can cut fuel costs in several ways.

Before beginning your trip, take your car in for a tuneup so any issues that might affect fuel efficiency are addressed before you hit the open road. Poorly inflated tires force the engine to work harder and burn more fuel, so make sure tire pressure matches the levels recommended in your owner's manual before embarking on your trip and even along the way if you feel your car is not running as smoothly as it could be. Another way to conserve fuel is to remove excess items from the trunk. If you don't plan to hit the links on your trip, leave your golf clubs at home.

- Plot your route. Spontaneity may make fall road trips more fun, but drivers looking to save money should plot their routes in advance so they can avoid potentially costly problems like detours or road work that can waste fuel and lead to hours sitting in traffic. Use a GPS device during your trip so you can be alerted to any unexpected developments that might cost you time and money. Plotting your route in advance also allows you to find affordable dining and lodging options and choose roads that don't require drivers to pay tolls.

- Invite some friends and family along. Inviting friends and family on a weekend getaway can make the trip more fun and more affordable. If you have room in the car, inviting friends along allows you to split fuel costs, and you may even save on lodging if you find a hotel that won't charge for extra guests in the room. Friends and family also can help split the cost of supplies.

- Bring your own food. Food is another big expense road trippers must account for. But you can save money on food by bringing your own meals along on the trip. Prepare some sandwiches the morning that you leave and keep them fresh in a cooler so you don't have to pay for lunch. In addition, pack some snacks so you and your passengers can quickly and affordably quell any hunger pangs that arise while you're on the road. If you plan to stay in a place with its own kitchen, cook your own dinners so you don't have to spend money dining out.

Road trips are a staple of autumn, when drivers can still enjoy the open road without breaking the bank. ■

Great times of year to buy a new car



munds.com, note that certain times of the year may be best for cutting a deal.

may offer customers cash rebates to make room for the new inventory.

End of year

One of the best and most consistent times to get a great deal on a new car is the end of the year. This is when car dealerships are trying to move the greatest number of vehicles to increase unit sales and annual revenue numbers. In addition, many dealers have annual quotas and offer bonuses to salespeople who meet certain annual sales figures. If you can wait until the end of December to make your purchase, you very well may drive off the lot with a great deal.

End of design cycle

From time to time, auto manufacturers roll out a newly designed car under the same name. The older body type then becomes less desirable, and that is when drivers can get bargains on cars that may have become outdated seemingly overnight. If you're more interested in saving money than setting trends, wait until the end of a car's design cycle to buy. You can save even more if a particular model is being phased out entirely.

End of the month

Similar to end of year deals, come the end of the month, salespeople and dealers are trying to sell as many vehicles as possible in an effort to qualify for bonuses from auto manufacturers. If you can't wait until the end of the year to buy, consider the end of the month.

Save money on your next vehicle by shopping at the right times. ■

End of model year

New model year vehicles begin to arrive at dealerships sometime between the end of summer and the beginning of autumn. That means the current year models still on the lot become a lot less desirable to customers eagerly awaiting next year's vehicles. Dealerships are willing to negotiate on the older models and

Timing your new car purchase correctly can save you hundreds and sometimes thousands of dollars. Automotive information experts, such as JD Power and Associates and Ed-

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No one said it better than Barbara Weimer in her write up about The Fitness Mill's 10-year anniversary...

"A walk up the steep, winding staircase that leads to The Fitness Mill's two-floor facility on Main Street in New York Mills, leaves one breathless, speechless and/or invigorated. Breathless is the choice for those individuals in need of the many personalized fitness programs the Mill has to offer. Speechless is reserved for visitors and members who appreciate the building's historical significance and architectural integrity. Invigorated is up for grabs – either you're in great shape and are headed to the very place that helped you reach your health and fitness goals or, you're heavily panting and puddles of sweat indicate you've arrived at the right place in the nick of time!"

In October 1993 The Fitness Mill opened its doors occupying only the second floor of Mill #3. It didn't take long and the expansion began...Today the 1st floor of the 2-floor facility consists of a fully equipped 5,000 square foot weight room with power racks, smith machines, dead-lift platform, a wide variety of benches, 40ft of dumb bells, and a full array of pin and plate loaded equipment. The main floor also houses Elite Physical Therapy and Sports Training owned by Chad Cardillo, the men's and lady's locker rooms, the Spinning room and Kids Kamp (The Fitness Mill's babysitting service for children who are walking – up to age 11). Kids Kamp hours are Mon-Fri 8:30-11:30 am and Mon-Thurs 4:30-7:30 pm. Cost is only \$1 for a 90 min stay. Punch cards are also available.

The second floor houses a 12,000 square feet cardio area with approximately 50 pieces of cardio equipment, a 1/16 mile indoor walking and running track, a boxing area, 2 circuits of machines and the aerobic room. The 20+ group fitness classes scheduled weekly are included in your membership. With classes like Boot Camp, Athletic Circuit, Pilates, Zumba, Yoga, Turbo Kick and Pound, to just name a few; you are sure to find a favorite. An additional 3,000 square feet on

the second floor is now filled with Utica Combat Athletics owned by Marc Giordano.

The balance between health and fitness is successfully achieved on an individual basis according to age, sex, and percent of body fat. While many concentrate on the cardio vascular aspect of training, they fail to realize the benefits of actual weight lifting. Many are afraid to "lift weights"; they feel this action will cause them to "bulk up". However, lifting weights can help one gain lean muscle that in turn increases the body's ability to burn calories at rest. Weight lifting for senior members also aids in improving bone density.

On October 11th, owner and founder, Allen Calogero will be starting his 23rd year serving the health, wellness and fitness needs of the Mohawk Valley. The Fitness Mill, with its century old hardwood floors, 14ft high ceilings and windows galore allow those that train early in the morning to watch the sunrise and those that train later in the day, the sunset, offers a wonderful atmosphere for all ages 12-102. The Fitness Mill is a great place for people to meet and workout together. The Mill is located in a safe and convenient location. It's a nice, productive, family atmosphere where families can do something together.

The Fitness Mill, preparing to start its 23rd year on October 11th, has welcomed thousands of members at all fitness levels. Please call 315.768.1155 for information and anniversary specials or visit them on the web at www.thefitnessmillny.com. ■



Alzheimer's researchers hopeful

combat both cognitive and behavioral symptoms. According to information from the 2015 Alzheimer's Association International Conference, there is reason for optimism

cause toxic brain plaques in people, which are often associated with progressive brain disease.

Another abnormality associated with Alzheimer's is caused when a protein called tau twists into microscopic tangles, says the Mayo Clinic. Tangles collapse vital brain cell transport systems. Researchers are looking into medicines that may prevent tau from forming tangles.

In addition, researchers continue to look at anti-inflammatory drugs to help delay the progress of Alzheimer's disease, as well as how other conditions and diseases, including high blood pressure or diabetes, may impact the risk of developing Alzheimer's. ■

Alzheimer's disease has no cure, and its progression cannot be radically slowed. The Alzheimer's Association reports that every 67 seconds someone in the United States develops Alzheimer's, and around 5 million people in the country currently have the disease.

While there is no cure for Alzheimer's disease, researchers are continuing to work on both drug and nondrug treatments to

regarding Alzheimer's treatments.

Researchers now have a better understanding of how the brain changes with Alzheimer's and can fine tune medications to react with certain areas of the brain responsible for certain symptoms. For example, drug companies Eli Lilly and Biogen have been testing drugs that block beta amyloid, a protein that can



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Route 66

—The Oilfield Episode

by Terry Berkson

Back around 1960, I religiously watched the television show called "Route 66." A fine formula: two guys traveling across the country, meeting all kinds of people, trying to leave things in better shape than they found them before moving on. Martin Milner was the collegiate type; George Maharis was streetwise and a little crusty. Their Corvette, not the most practical car to go cross-country in, was a symbol of freedom and mobility with little room for emotional-type baggage

or for that matter Samsonite-type either.

These days, such heroes would travel down the road in a Jeep or a four-wheel-drive pickup. That way they'd be able to take on hitchhikers or lost dogs or whatever any particular episode's script threw at them. But not Milner and Maharis. During one show, they found themselves in an Oklahoma oil field. For lack of an alternative, they used their Corvette to power a drilling rig. They removed a rear tire from its rim and then used the mounted rim

to drive a belt that was attached to the oilrig. Simple, here was the Corvette, justifying itself, serving mankind as well as an imaginative story line.

Years later, I lived out my own "Route 66" fantasy when I got my '63 roadster. Friends and relatives criticized the car for being so impractical, which pressured me to prove the Corvette could be as useful as a four-door sedan. One time I drove home from the lumberyard with a couple of bags of cement on the front fenders. Another time I put the top down and loaded three ten-foot Lombardy poplars onto the jack storage cover behind the seats. Each burlap ball around the trees' roots weighed over forty pounds!

This evidence notwithstanding, my cousin Charlie said when I got married, "Well, I guess you'll get rid of the Corvette."

That was more than 40 years ago. Once, when my elderly Aunt Ruta came down from Richfield Springs for one of her week-long visits, I took her for a ride in the roadster. She read Star magazine and always had her eyes peeled for Burt Reynolds. She had read an article in Star telling how Doris Day managed to look so young. "She puts Vaseline all over her face before she goes to sleep," my aunt explained.

Aunt Ruta tried the Vaseline treatment for several months. The pores of her skin eventually clogged, leaving unsightly, oily blemishes that her old eyes couldn't



see. My wife Alice and I told Aunt Ruta what she was doing to her complexion and urged her to discontinue Doris Day's magic formula.

"Maybe I'll switch to Jergen's lotion," she replied.

"Let's give you a facial first," Alice suggested.

Aunt Ruta's pride kicked in, "I don't need..."

"Would you want Burt Reynolds to see you now?" That won her over.

My aunt sat on a stool in the kitchen as my wife began steaming and scrubbing her face. "We need some sort of suction," Alice said, discouraged. She was about to give up when I thought of the T junction on the vacuum advance line feeding the distributor of the Corvette. It would do the job. "Let's go out to the garage," I said with my aunt in tow.

"What for?" she said holding back. "Is this going to hurt?"

"Trust me," I said as I seated her in a chair next to my car. I cleaned a long piece of rubber vacuum hose with alcohol, cranked up the Corvette and throttled the engine up to a fast idle. At about 800-rpm the manifold produced about 22 inches of vacuum which created a suction that could be regulated by opening a bleeder in the T. "Are you crazy?" Alice said when she entered the garage.

"I know what I'm doing," I said pushing the hose towards her. Alice, in a huff, grabbed it and reluctantly went to work on Aunt Ruta who seemed to shrink in the chair. The contraption worked like a charm.

I took in the scene: Garage

doors wide open. My frail aunt leaning far back in the chair as the Corvette's engine rumbled. My wife busily vacuuming Aunt Ruta's deeply wrinkled face. A dream come true. Just like "Route 66." My Corvette had become one of life's essential daily tools. Now, Milner and Maharis weren't the only guys to have used a Corvette in an oil field.

"What do you think Charlie would say about the Corvette now?" I asked my wife.

Aunt Ruta's leg kicked as though she were having a tooth pulled. Then Alice said, "He'd say you can get just as much suction from a station wagon!" ■

Berkson is the author of the memoir *Corvette Odyssey*.

Tips for traveling with pets

Many pet owners feel vacations are more fun with their furry companions in tow. Traveling can be more complicated when pets are part of the equation, but there are ways to ensure a comfortable and safe trip.

The Humane Society of the United States says the safest and most comfortable way for pets to travel is inside a carrier or crate. Make sure the carrier is big enough so that the pet is comfortable and has some mobility, but not so big that he or she can be jostled around.

Carriers and crates should be anchored to the vehicle using a seatbelt or another device. Carriers that can move or bounce around are dangerous to the pet and the occupants of the car. Airlines and railways often insist pets travel in carriers.

The safest place for pets during a road trip is in the back seat of a car or in a rear cargo area when possible. In the event of a crash, air bag deployment can seriously injure a

pet that is riding along in the front seat.

Pet owners should put together a traveling kit that includes essential items their pets may need. Such essentials may include identification, a temporary travel tag for the collar with current contact information, vet records indicating the pet is current on its vaccinations, plastic bags, food, a favorite toy, and clean-up supplies in the event of motion sickness. Pets that drink water from an unfamiliar area may experience stomach discomfort, so bring some water along as well.

When booking your trip, seek pet-friendly hotels and accommodations. At the hotel, use white noise to keep dogs from barking at every passerby outside the room. Exercise the pet before retiring for bed so that he or she is as calm as possible before sleep.

Traveling with pets may be a choice or a necessity. Either way, pet owners should explore their options to make the experience more comfortable. ■

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Our Cover Story

JM Door & Hardware

“If opportunity doesn’t knock build a door.” ~ Milton Berle

by Al Dorantes

For the past 30 years JM Door & Hardware has been providing unparalleled garage door, entrance doors and commercial doors, frames and hardware sales and service for the Mohawk Valley. They have based their reputation on prompt and professional service, competitive pricing and quality products. JM Door is an authorized dealer of industry-leading Raynor Doors, & Chi Garage doors to name a few. JM Door Company provides expert sales and service for both commercial and residential doors as well as garage door products. They also carry; architectural hardware, panic bars, weather stripping, storm doors, raised panel systems, entrance doors, wood doors, locks, building products, and more. All this comes with the expert, experienced professionals that will make sure the job is done right the first time.

JM Door’s President, Paul Sacco explained, that his father Angelo and his mother, Juliane, started the business over 30 years ago. The Sacco’s named their overhead door business after mom, Juliane Marie. The small shop on Oriskany Street was a humble beginning. Paul Sacco reminisced that he installed garage doors and did sales and service through high school and college. He came in full time after graduating college. Paul Sacco is a graduate of St. John Fisher.

At Oriskany Street the business focused on just garage doors. The business was growing and around 1982 they went into commercial doors, frames, and hardware. They moved to their current location, on Broad Street, 25 years ago. The business then expanded 10 fold. JM Door has the biggest showroom in the Utica area. It was named best

showroom (named by Raynor - 3 times). Paul Sacco said, “We only sell doors and hardware and we’re good at it.”

The company continued selling garage doors. Looking to expand business even more JM Doors took on residential doors. Paul’s brother Rick joined the company and handles the garage door division of the company. Paul oversees the other divisions, commercial doors, frames, hardware, residential doors. In 2010, dad, Angelo, retired. Paul became President and Rick became Vice President.

Paul Sacco said, “I still love showing and selling on the showroom floor; it’s my first love.”

At their 20,000 square foot location they represent 70-100 manufacturers covering overhead garage doors, commercial doors, residential doors, and hardware. Paul Sacco said, “What makes us special is we aren’t a big box store. We are the only “real” door company in town.” JM Door has 12 employees who really care about what they do. He explained that their installation crew makes us look good on every installation.

One of their door lines, offers top quality with 100% customizability. Customers are able to choose style, color, finish, and even the species of wood the door mimics. This line offers a 10 year warranty on the finish, frame, and hardware. JM Door uses a computer aided design center to show customers exactly what their new doors will look like on their home or business.

Paul Sacco said, “Customers are happier with the end product because they’ve seen it. They see as close a representation as possible before ordering.” He added, “Your

front door and garage doors set the tone for what’s behind the door.”

JM Door is in the process of moving to a new location, 5140 Commercial Drive, Yorkville, New York. The retro futuristic architecture of the Westinghouse built building, built in 1959, will more than double the space of their current labyrinthine like facility. The new location is 50,000 square feet of fresh space. Paul Sacco is confident that the lines that they carry and that they are excited about are the ones customers love. If a client is redoing their home, there is nothing more important than “First Impressions;” they last a lifetime.

Paul Sacco explained that he is excited about new facility in the making. JM Door just closed on the building a few months ago after a lengthy environmental clean-up. The new facility should be open in late October with state of the art lighting and showroom to enhance their products. The all LED lighting will make JM Door’s doors and hardware look even better. The new facility is in the heart of the shopping corridor. The new location offers JM Door great visibility and is easy to find, across from Joe Tahan’s Furniture and between Yorkville Battery and Meelan’s Carpet One Floor & Home. The larger showroom and larger warehousing will help with residential customers as well as the commercial contractors being able to elevate lead-times and pulling from stock.

Paul Sacco and JM Door and Hardware have created their own opportunity with their new facility. For more information go to: www.jmdoor.net or follow them on Facebook: J.M. Door Co. ■

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Sahl's Glass & Glazing

by Al Dorantes

Sahl's Glass & Glazing, conveniently located at 392 Oriskany Boulevard in Whitesboro, New York, specializes in the sales, service and installation of windows, doors, mirrors and more. For the past 25 years Doug Sahl and his brother Doug have been providing glass and glazing services out of their 8,000 square foot facility in Whitesboro. Saul's Glass and Glazing started from scratch and now has 7 employees. Doug handles sales and estimating and Dan does the installing. "We know our customers and try to make them happy with every job."

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but Sahl's Glass can still take care of your old windows.

Dan Sahl explained that even glaziers are seasonal. They are installing and repairing screen doors during the summer and replacing wood stove glass during the winter. In-between Sahl's Glass is installing windows and commercial doors. For more information go to: www.sahlsglass.com ■

Creative ways to recycle leaves



Leaves cascading down from trees indicate the arrival of autumn. However, colorful and awe-inspiring autumn leaves can be a hazard if left to lie on the ground too long.

Fallen leaves form a dense insulator to protect trees' roots and prevent competing plants from growing. Decomposing leaves also provide nutrients for the tree. But wet leaves can be a safety hazard and leaves left on the lawn through the winter can pose a threat to the grass. These are just a couple of reasons why so much effort is placed on leaf clean-up in the fall. The following are some creative ways to recycle leaves that fall from your trees in the weeks to come.

- **Mulch:** Shredded leaves can make for a great amendment to fertilizer for garden beds and even the lawn. Leaves lying on the grass can be mulched into small pieces with a mulching mower so they don't choke the blades of grass. Leaves also can be broken down with a string trimmer, a leaf blower that has a vacuum function or a commercial shredder/chipper. Add the shredded leaves to a compost pile or use them to fill container plants before adding regular potting soil.
- **Insulation:** Collect leaves to mound over delicate perennial plants and shrubs. The leaves will add more warmth to the soil and may help plants make it through harsh winters. Just remove the leaves slowly when spring arrives so that the soil underneath can get the sunlight and water it needs to thrive. Leave some leaves in the yard so that animals can use them as nesting material and line their dens for the winter.

- **Stuffing:** Create whimsical scarecrows as part of your autumn decoration scheme. Gather older clothes that you no longer use and stuff the sleeves of shirts and the legs of pants with leaves, which are less expensive and easier to come by than straw. Use a few pieces of straw around the neck and hand areas of the scarecrow for visual effect. Tie off with twine and display your scarecrow.
- **Bedding:** Chicken owners can use fallen leaves as bedding in their chicken coops. Dry leaves also may create more comfortable and drier conditions for goats and other livestock. Goats may look to recently fallen leaves as a nutritious food source. Gather the leaves and let the goats munch before you further rake and compost the leaves.
- **Decorations:** Natural leaves can be used as decorations both inside and outside a home. String freshly fallen leaves together and wrap them around a grapevine wreath for a rustic door decoration. Leaves can be placed in clear vases and put on display for a cheap way to showcase some autumn color. Preserve favorite leaves with a lamination machine or by sealing them between heated sheets of waxed paper. Cut out the leaf shapes and use for hanging window decorations.
- **Recreation:** Leaves have long been favorite toys for children, who eagerly await jumping into large piles of fallen leaves. Fill paper bags with leaves and draw a target on the front. Let kids test their skill aiming for the targets. Children can camouflage their clothing with leaves and masking tape and have a more intense session of "hide and seek." ■



Keep poinsettias looking great through the holidays

Along with the fragrant evergreens and twinkling lights synonymous with the holiday season, poinsettias make up a key component of holiday decorating.

Unlike holly and some of the other greenery that is commonly associated with the holidays, poinsettias do not naturally thrive in the colder temperatures. These plants originate in southern Mexico and were considered an exotic plant when first introduced to the United States by Joel Robert Poinsett, the first American ambassador to Mexico.

Poinsettias can be fickle plants and ones that gardening novices may find challenging to maintain. The plants are comprised of green foliage, colorful (often red) flower bracts, and the actual flowers of the plants, which are the red or green buttonlike parts nestled in the center of the bracts.

Because they are a tropical plant, poinsettias can be damaged by exposure to low temperatures, even if they are only exposed for short periods of time. They should be wrapped and protected against the elements when brought home. For maximum plant life, poinsettias need to be placed near a warm, sunny window, or

another area that has ample amounts of light. They thrive in temperatures between 60 and 75 F and should be kept away from warm or cold drafts.

Water the plant whenever the surface feels dry to the touch. Water until it drains out the bottom, but don't let the plant sit in water. Over- or under-watering can cause leaves to drop prematurely and wilt. If your home lacks in humidity, you may need to water the plant more frequently. Poinsettias do not need to be fertilized while the plant is in bloom.

Contrary to popular belief, poinsettias are not poisonous to humans or animals...

The Ohio State University Extension says poinsettias can be reflowered the following Christmas, but unless a yearlong schedule of care is observed, the results usually are not good. You can speak with a gardening expert or consult online resources for the proper care schedule. Caring for a poinsettia year-round involves gradually drying out the plant and storing it in a

cool location. The plant later will be moved outdoors and then back inside and pruned to keep a full shape.

Poinsettias are short-day plants, which means they flower about 10 weeks after the daylight shortens to about 12 hours or less. Therefore, to have the plant in full flower by Christmas, it will have to be kept in complete darkness between 5 p.m. and 8 a.m. from the first part of October until Thanksgiving. Many people find the affordability of poinsettias makes it more convenient to buy new ones each year than try to foster regrowth.

Contrary to popular belief, poinsettias are not poisonous to humans or animals, but they should not be ingested due to the potential for allergic reactions. Poinsettias can help remove pollutants from indoor air, which is advantageous during the winter months when doors and windows are typically kept closed.

Select plants that have dark green foliage and no low or damaged leaves. This ensures the best success for keeping poinsettias looking healthy and vibrant throughout the holiday season. ■

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UPGRADE AT CAMELOT CROSSING

by Joan O. Scharf

It had been years of penny pinching saving, but Brent and Laci O'Brian were finally able to afford the house of their dreams. It all seemed worth it as they watched the designs and blueprints turning into reality. When the contractor promised them an occupancy date in three months, they put their present home on the market. The problem was, it sold sooner than anticipated, and now they were forced to put their furniture into storage and temporarily rent.

At first the O'Brians felt lucky to find the furnished two bedrooms upstairs flat, especially as Vernon, the landlord, lived downstairs and said he would accept a three month lease. Although they thought the rent was more than the outdated apartment warranted, the location was convenient, so they jumped at it.

It was a few days after they moved in when Brent said, "Laci, have you noticed anything strange about Vernon?"

She shrugged uncomfortably. "I thought it was just me. Yes, there is something about him that puts me on edge." She reflected. "He's really not a bad looking guy. I'd say he's about forty-five or so, wouldn't you? But there is something about his eyes. They seem flat, with no depth. Dark. Cruel." She gave a slight shudder. "He's creepy."

"And he's not very friendly," Brent said. "Once we signed the lease, it's as if we no longer matter. I've tried saying hello whenever I meet him, but he looks right through me and doesn't answer."

There was another thing about Vernon that irritated them immeasurably. It was his car. Vernon owned a dark red customized sports car, complete with dual exhausts and a fancy chrome spoiler perched on the rear. The engine emitted a deep throaty roar. Since it was Vernon's habit to repeated rev the motor in the driveway, his comings and goings at odd times during the day and night rarely afforded them a peaceful night's sleep.

Vernon drew all the blinds and secluded himself daily in the apartment, and it wasn't long before Brent and Laci jokingly made up a game of guessing his occupation.

Laci said, "I'm figuring he's a day trader and he sits in front of the computer watching the stock market."

"Day-trader? Ha!" Brent laughed. "I would say he's more like a Bookie."

"Well, since he comes and goes at all hours, perhaps he's a private detective," she said.

"No way!" Brent curled his lips back to show his teeth. "Maybe he's Vernon the Vampire. Or how about a cat burglar?" He crouched down on all fours. "Meowwwwww!"

Laci started to giggle. "His phone is



always busy whenever we've tried to call him. I'm betting he's a telemarketer."

Brent's mouth twitched. "And a nightclub bouncer at night."

"Or Vernon's Escort Service," she said. And by now they were convulsed with laughter.

A few weeks later, they had more to worry about. Vernon acquired a dog. It barked incessantly. It was an indiscriminate breed of skinny brown dog that seemed afraid of his own tail. Vernon kept him somewhere in the depths of his apartment and was occasionally seen taking him for walks.

On Wednesday evenings when Brent wheeled out the garbage can, he couldn't help but notice Vernon's overflow of un-recycled trash in careless disorder. Cans, bottles, and garbage littered the ground. Once he was walking past the open door of Vernon's apartment and he caught a glimpse of the interior as Vernon carried in a case of beer.

"Laci, you should have seen it. What a mess. Papers and junk all over the place. And I got a whiff as I walked by. Phew. Did it stink!"

Later that night they heard a woman's shrill laughter coming from Vernon's flat below. The next morning Brent was up early for his daily jog. "Guess what. Love bug must have stayed all night. That's the name on the license of her Volkswagen in the driveway."

"Yuck," Laci said. "How could she stand the smell in there. I'll be so glad to get away from all this."

With two weeks to go and their contractor's reassurance that he was still on schedule, Laci and Brent eagerly looked forward to their new community. Camelot Crossings was an upscale development with most of the properties already sold. Only those few houses built on speculation remained for sale on their street. Since this would eventually be their retirement home, Laci convinced Brent to splurge and order a custom pool with a built in hot spa installed in their back yard.

"Just think. It will be so relaxing to be in the quiet and privacy of our own pool. I know we'll love it."

The finishing touches to their new

house were finally complete and the moving van was scheduled to deliver their furniture from storage. With one day still remaining on the rental apartment lease, they meticulously scrubbed and cleaned the rooms to a condition better than they found them. On their way downstairs to drop off the key to Vernon, they were startled to meet him stomping up the steps.

"Before you people go anywhere, you're going to take a walk through this apartment with me. I want to make sure there's no damage."

He stalked from room to room on his inspection, eventually finding an embroidered sofa pillow with a seam split several inches. He held the pillow out. "See this? It's an expensive pillow that's been ripped. I'm deducting fifty dollars from your security deposit for the damage."

Laci said, "Vernon, we didn't even use that pillow. The split seam must have already been there. If you like, I can easily sew it."

"No. I don't want an amateur fooling around with it. You're lucky I'm only charging you fifty bucks. It's gonna cost more than that to replace it."

The O'Brians were silent. There was no way they were going to win. At this point all they wanted was to leave peacefully and quickly.

After they agreed to the deduction in their security deposit, Vernon suddenly became talkative. "Your apartment makes three."

Brent frowned. "What do you mean, 'makes three'?"

"Only three vacancies out of the twenty seven rentals I own. Not bad, huh? Keeps me busy with repairs and plumbing emergencies, but it sure brings in the moola!" Vernon patted the wallet in his back pocket. "And last month I got a big lawsuit settlement in my favor, so I'm ridin' high. Yesterday I hired a manager to do those pain in the butt maintenance jobs, and now I can take it easy. Yes siree! From here on in...it's party time!"

Brent and Laci left.

Camelot Crossings was eight miles from town and with each mile they put behind them, the more relaxed they became. When they passed through

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INNOCENCE



by Joan O. Scharf

They walked along the grassy path leading toward the barn; the grey haired man with a slight limp, and the little girl, her hair plaited into a single blond braid dangling down her back. The child bounced along happily, trying to keep pace with her grandfather's slower steady steps. He welcomed her chatter; the sweet music of her voice.

"It's been a long time since you've been here for a visit," he said, smiling down at her:

"Yes, we came in an air-plane that went really high, and it even had movies."

Camelot from previous...

the entrance gate into their community, they were nearly giddy with excitement.

"Laci, we're home!" Brent slipped the car around the moving van and into the driveway.

"Yes, our Home Sweet Home! Our dream come true. Oh look, Brent, the 'For Sale' signs across the street and the one beside us are both gone."

They spotted a young couple toting boxes into the house across the street, and they cheerfully exchanged waves before going inside. It was late afternoon before the moving van finished unpacking and on its way.

Brent and Laci continued to work until after dark, finally stopping for a simple meal of toasted cheese sandwiches and a salad. Rummaging around in a deep box, Laci came up with a fat white vanilla scented candle for the middle of the kitchen table. Lighting the candle and uncorking a bottle of champagne they saved for the occasion, they touched glasses.

heifers."
"What's heifers?"
"They're young cows that don't give milk yet. But they will in a year or so."

Her small legs, sticking out of knee length blue denim shorts, were now hooked over the middle bar; her hands still clasped above.

"How come almost all the cows are black and white?" she asked.

"That's because they're Holstein cows."

"How about that one over there?" She pointed toward the corner.

He shaded his eyes. "Oh, that one cow is a Jersey."

"You bought her in New Jersey? Aunt Jennifer and Uncle Scott live in New Jersey. We went there once."

He smiled. "No, I didn't buy her in New Jersey. That's just the kind of cow she is. A Jersey."

"Careful you don't fall." He reached out to steady her as she gripped the gate post, swung her leg over the top rail and pulled herself into a sitting position.

"Why are all the cows waiting here?"

"The last time you came with your Mom and Daddy you were only two years old, and you were too little to remember the cows."

"I'm not little now, I turned five. I started Kindergarten." She ran a circle around him, laughing. "We wanted to come last year, but Momma got sick and had to go to the hospital for a pendiks."

They arrived at the pasture gate, where the man rested his arms over the weathered wood of the top rail.

"Wow. You have lotsa cows, Grampa!" She planted her feet on the lower board and clung to the top one, staring at the herd.

"Yep. We have seventy two milkers and twenty four

"It's nearly milking time, and they'll be let in the barn soon. They know there's a special treat of grain waiting for them inside."

"Oh." Smiling, a dimple appeared in one cheek. She held out her arms for him to lift her down from the gate. "Know what? It's kinda stinky here." She giggled and wrinkled up her freckled nose. "Can we go in the barn to see the new kitties now?"

They started back along the path. She reached for his hand and looked back over her shoulder. "Grampa, how come that New Jersey cow is all brown, and not like the rest?"



He glanced down at her with a twinkle in his eye. "Well, we needed at least one cow that gives chocolate milk."

"Oh." Still holding his hand, she began to skip. ■

Tips for entertaining at home



Entertaining at home is a fun and convenient way to get together with friends and family. Entertaining at home is less expensive than renting out a venue or hitting the town, and party hosts know the amenities they have available to them.

Although convenient, home entertaining also requires more work on the part of the event host, including readying the house for company. But with some creative thinking and a little sweat equity, hosts can throw an enjoyable and memorable get-together from the comforts of their own homes.

Begin by going room-by-room and making note of what will need to be done. If you've entertained at home before, you may have a mental inventory of what worked and what didn't, so make changes accordingly this time around. Focus only on the spaces where guests will congregate, such as the living room, den, kitchen, and dining area.

Develop a decluttering plan to remove items from entertaining spaces and store them safely away. A little bit of clutter can make a space seem unruly and unclear. Move delicate items, such as collectibles, to a storage location, returning them to their original spaces after the party has ended. If necessary, move some furniture or take away a piece or two to free up more space. Folding chairs may be more practical than a large sofa.

Expend the bulk of your cleaning efforts on the entryway, bathrooms and living areas of the home, as guests will spend a lot of their time in these areas. Enlist the help of the household to tidy the house and then tackle deep cleaning room by room. Remove anything you do not want your guests to see. One or two inquisitive guests may check behind the shower curtain or even open up the medicine cabinet, so remove personal or potentially sensitive items.

Recruit help to ready your home or even assist you on the day of the party. A cleaning service can make fast work of scouring the house, while a waitstaff can help serve food and keep drinks refilled, enabling you to mingle with guests. If the idea of cooking for all of your guests is overwhelming, hire a caterer to provide the food.

Stock up on stain removal products to tackle the inevitable spills. While you no doubt hope to keep your house as clean as possible, expect some dropped food or spilled drinks. Keep a cleaner at the ready so you can quickly combat stains and guests can continue having a good time.

The more complicated the party is, the more time you will need to prepare your home. Afford yourself ample time to prepare so you are not feeling rushed come the day of the party. ■

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The problem with hard water



Hard water can cause scaling, deposits inside of pipes, reduced cleaning ability, and several other problems.

tered as renters. Homeowners become novice plumbers, electricians, horticulturists, and even chemists as they wade through the projects and repairs involved with owning a home.

Outside of high school chemistry class, you may never have given thought to water composition and how it changes. However, once you become a homeowner, you may have to pay special attention to the type of water bubbling out of your faucets. Hard water is a common concern, and it can affect appliances and other parts of the home.

What is hard water?

Hard water affects about 85 percent of the United States, according to the Water Quality Association. Although not harmful to human health, hard water can impact one's daily life in other ways.

Hard water is formed

when water moves through soil and rock. It dissolves very small amounts of minerals and holds them in a solution. Calcium and magnesium are the most common minerals to turn water "hard." The more magnesium and calcium water dissolves, the harder it becomes.

From nuisance to damaging

Hard water can not only be a minor headache, but also something more serious. Hard water can interfere with various cleaning tasks and also personal grooming. Clothes washed in hard water may not be fully clean and may appear dingy. Hard water can cause a film on surfaces, such as bath tiles and tubs. Some people find that their hair and skin can appear dull and sticky due to hard water.

Hard water can have other effects, too. Over time, the water can deposit miner-

als on the inside of pipes, reducing water flow. If these deposits grow thick, you may have a plumbing issue on your hands. Furthermore, mineral deposits can harm appliances, such as water heaters, washing machines and dishwashers. Eventually, hard water may render these appliances ineffective, and they will need to be replaced.

Treatment options

Considering hard water is such a common concern, a number of treatment options exist. The main types of water-softening systems use either a packaged water softener or a mechanical water-softening unit.

Packaged water softeners are chemicals that bond with the calcium and magnesium ions in the water so that they cannot interfere with cleaning efficiency. These chemicals fall into two categories: precipitating and nonprecipitating. Precipitat-

ing softeners are borax and washing soda and can affect pH levels of water and make water cloudy. Nonprecipitating softeners use phosphates. Alkalinity won't be increased, and usually there is no cloudiness or buildup. These products are typically added to laundry loads and the like and are not recommended for drinking water.

Mechanical water-softening systems are hooked up directly to the plumbing of the house. They are ion-exchange systems that will add salt to the water. Although it can be safe to drink, softened water may not be recommended for those who are on low-sodium diets.

Hard water is a problem many homeowners have to face. It can affect a home's appliances' performance and cleaning abilities. Water hardness can be managed, and it is best to consult with an expert water-softening system manufacturer about your options. ■

Home ownership opens people's eyes to many new experiences, even requiring

homeowners to familiarize themselves with certain things they never encoun-

Heating homes more efficiently

With colder weather right around the corner, many homeowners are once again giving thought to their home heating needs and if it is possible to heat their homes more efficiently.

The United States Department of Energy reports that more than half of the energy used in a typical home goes toward heating and cooling costs. With energy costs continually on the rise, many homeowners want to make the most of their heating systems and use the heat in the most efficient manner possible.

A heating system is most effective when the home is free from drafts. Before investing in a new furnace or considering other drastic changes, determine if a few simple repairs can help your heating system perform more efficiently. Check around doors and windows for drafts that could force heating systems to work harder, and seal any leaks you find. This also will help in the summer when you are trying to keep the house as cool as possible. Determine if cold air is infiltrating the home elsewhere, such as from around pipes leading to the outdoors. Caulking or foam insulation can remedy the situation.

Adding extra insulation in garages and attics also can help. The DOE says if insulation is less than R-30, the home probably can use more. If after increasing insulation your home still feels drafty, it may require additional insulation in the exterior walls.

Invest in a quality thermostat. Many modern room thermostats allow homeowners to set different temperatures for different times of day, and some even allow

homeowners to establish a different heating schedule for the weekends. Programmable thermostats allow homeowners to keep their homes cooler when unattended or during sleeping hours. The heat can be programmed to turn on or increase in temperature when residents are expected to return home after school or work.

While homeowners are improving heating efficiency, they should reverse the direction of ceiling fan blades. Having the blades spin clockwise will draw down the hot air that rises to the ceiling and allow it to better flow through the home.

In addition to these suggestions, homeowners can employ these other energy- and cost-saving measures.

- Reuse oven heat. After cooking a meal in the oven, open the oven door and let the residual heat escape into the kitchen and the rest of the house. Note, it is not safe to heat a home with the oven, and the oven should be turned off before opening the door.
- Add a little humidity. Moist air tends to hold heat better. Add some humidity to dry indoor air, particularly if the relative humidity of the home as measured with a hygrometer is below 25 percent. Houseplants and home aquariums can add some warm moisture to the air and reduce reliance on heat.
- Limit use of exhaust fans. After showering or cooking, keep the exhaust fan on for as little time as possible so that warm air is not drawn out of the home.

Heating a home efficiently means reducing drafts, programming the thermostat and making the most of other ways to warm up.



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What Would Your Mother Say????

Losing friends

By S.D. Shapiro

As you travel down the road of life you will be joined by friends and acquaintances. They make the journey pleasant and enjoyable. Along the way, you will lose some friends; time has a way of doing that. Sometimes the reason you lose those friends is a mystery.

One of the easy ways to lose a friend is to get married. If the actual commitment to the love of your life does not scare away your friend simply ask them to be part of your wedding party. Turn the pressure up by asking friends to be your best man or bridesmaid. These positions of honor usually come with a monetary investment.

Best men usually have to throw a bachelor party and bridesmaids have bridal showers, bachelorette party, and "beautiful" dresses and shoes to purchase. Have a destination wedding and never see or hear from them again. Please note, this system does not work on family; you are stuck with them.

Another way to lose friends is to ask any them to be the god parent to your child. Step one is to make sure you have a child. Next ask your friend to be the god parent. Again, responsibility will scare them away shortly after the ceremony. Responsibility tends to make friends run

for the hills.

Divorce is another friend losing



enterprise. Besides ditching your spouse, of course, some friends will be collateral damage. Some will side with your ex and some will stick with you.

At the beginning everyone tries to play Switzerland and remain neutral but it never stays that way. Eventually people choose sides. You will be surprised when old friends side with your ex.

Loaning a friend money is a surefire way to lose them. \$20 and they are gone.

They will cross the street if they see you coming. The

and workaholics. They will abandon you quicker than rats leaving a sinking ship. You will have to move on to second string friends and tertiary acquaintances to get the sofa moved. Your heavy boxes will be entrusted to some guy you just met at a church group.

Misunderstanding is a mystery that leaves friendships in its wake. You said something. They said something. You might not ever know what exactly happened. Suddenly your friend is gone. A simply apology might fix the problem but you do not even know what you did that requires an apology.

simplicity of it will leave you wondering why you did not just lend some friends a sawbuck sooner.

Another temporary trick to getting rid of friends is asking friends to help you move. Your friends who normally have open schedules will suddenly become social butterflies

When it comes down to losing a friend, it is easier than you think. Holding on to the good friends is the secret to life. Stop and think, "What would my mother say?" She would say, "Real friends don't cost a dime and are more valuable than gold."

Lesser-known information about Halloween

Halloween is a day of costumes, hijinks and an often unhealthy helping of sugary sweets. Many celebrants know that Halloween evolved from ancient Celtic festivals, such as Samhain, which marked the end of the harvest season and the dawn of winter. Celts were no longer spending long days in the pastures, and so they gathered in their homes to tell stories and wait out the winter. When Christianity spread, Halloween became intertwined with a feast day dedicated to the saints and deceased loved ones. "All Hallows Even," eventually got shortened to "Hallowe'en," and then Halloween.

Though certain parts of Halloween history are well-known, there are many additional interesting facts about this beloved holiday that are less widely known. The following are some lesser known Halloween tidbits, courtesy of the websites, The Thought & Expression Company and Random History, as well as "The Halloween Handbook" (Citadel Press) by Ed Morrow.

- The first jack-o-lanterns were made from turnips and beets. Pumpkins were used after Halloween was brought to North America.
- The word "witch" is thought to come from the Olde English word "wicce," meaning "wise woman." Witches once were held in high regard.
- Pumpkins actually are a fruit, a type of squash that is a member of the gourd family. Its cousins include cucumbers, melons, and other squashes.
- Trick-or-treating may have originated with a European custom called "souling." On All Soul's Day, early Christians would go door-to-door begging for "soul cakes," which were square pieces of bread with currants. The more cakes a person received, the more prayers he or she would promise to the dead relatives of the cake donors.
- Witches may have rubbed a sacred ointment made with a hallucinogenic herb onto their skin. This gave them a feeling of flying, and if they had been fasting, they felt even giddier. Many witches rode on horseback, but those who were poor traveled on foot and carried a broom to launch themselves over streams.
- One-quarter of all the candy sold each year is purchased



around Halloween. Halloween candy sales in the United States average about \$2 billion annually.

- Some people still celebrate the ancient Celtic customs of Samhain. Many followers of various pagan religions, such as the Druids and Wiccans, observe this day as a religious festival and a memorial day for their deceased friends. It also is a night to practice various forms of divination.
- The owl is a popular Halloween symbol. In Medieval Europe, owls were thought to be witches.
- The first-known mention of trick-or-treating was found in print in 1927 in Blackie, Alberta, Canada.
- Ireland is believed by many to be the birthplace of Halloween.
- Both Salem, Massachusetts, and Anoka, Minnesota, are the self-proclaimed Halloween capitals of the world.

Halloween is a mysterious time, born of various festivals, rituals and symbolism. Over several centuries, the celebration has evolved into a holiday enjoyed by millions, each in their own different ways. ■

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AX Tactical

by Al Dorantes

Located at 4947 Commercial Dr STE 2, Yorkville, New York, AX Tactical LLC, is a retail Firearms pro shop, custom gunsmithing, and Law Enforcement supplier. They cater to hunters, target shooters, competition shooters, and all those who take shooting seriously. AX Tactical also supplies law enforcement with firearms, LE supplies, and related services.

AX Tactical was formed by a group of defense contractors from the aerospace industry with a background in high quality engineering and design. AX Tactical has developed a team that will provide you with the optimal tactical system. Working with experienced tactical operators, gunsmiths, and competitive shooters they ensure that whether you are operating in Afghanistan, plinking at the range, patrolling the streets of Central New York, or a fierce competition shooter or hunter, AX Tactical has the firearms and accessories to fit your needs.

AX Tactical, was formed by 4 partners, Pat Baskinger, Mary Carol Chruscicki, Scott Ciufo, and Paul Fostini. With the exception Paul Fostini, the partners are engineers and government contractors from the defense industry. The partners opened AX Enterprises to provide research and development for the government. They Started AX Tactical three years ago and began by applying for the necessary licenses. Their initial focus was building AR15 platforms for public and law enforcement and military. Due to the political climate at the time, they couldn't find parts needed to manufacture their firearms. The next logical step was to take their excellent location and turn it into a retail location.

The good location on Commercial Drive combined with the Safe Act made going retail an easy decision. AX Tactical started selling NY compliant semi automatic rifles. The featureless AR15 platform has no pistol grip, no muzzle device, or bayonet lug.

The origins of Oktoberfest

Although Oktoberfest originated in Munich, Germany, Oktoberfest celebrations now take place all over the globe. They are a chance to enjoy the early autumn weather with music, food, entertainment and, of course, German beer.

Oktoberfest is a 16-day folk festival that begins at the end of September and runs through the first week of October. Roughly six million people travel to Germany each year to participate in the official Oktoberfest, while many others attend festivities closer to home. While many people are familiar with the foods, beverages and pageantry of Oktoberfest, they may not be so sure of Oktoberfest's origins.

According to History.com, the first Oktoberfest took place on October 12, 1810, when Bavarian Crown Prince Louis, later to be known as King Louis I of Bavaria, married Princess Therese von Sachsen-Hildburghausen. The citizens of Munich were invited, and the festivities were held on the fields in front of the city gates. Horse races took place and even-



Paul Fostini holds one of AX Tactical's NYS compliant AR15

Gunsmith Dom builds all of AX Tactical's firearms. The guns are all handmade, and hand finished. AX Tactical has outfitted 4+ departments with patrol rifles. They also customize a tactical shotgun. AX Tactical will customize any firearm.



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AX Tactical offers a number of services including; transfers, gunsmithing, custom firearms building, inspection

& repairs, weapon upgrades, optics & mounts, platform upgrades, lights & grips, refinishing, and Cerakote gun coating. Cerakote, is the industry leader in ceramic coatings. Cerakote is a ceramic based finish that can be applied to metals, plastics, and wood. The unique formulation enhances a number of physical performance properties including abrasion/wear resistance, corrosion resistance, chemical resistance, impact strength, and hardness. Cerakoting your firearm will add durability and will keep your gun looking sharp for years.

AX Tactical's retail shop is well lit and well stocked. They sell and service such brands as; Glock, Savage Arms, Benelli, Springfield Armory, Oriskany Arms, and more. Fostini said, "We will sell any legal firearm; from hunting to competition." AX Tactical also buys guns at their retail shop. They are part of the Glock LE/First Responder Program, among others which offers law enforcement and first responders special discounts on firearms.

AX Tactical prides itself on customer service. Their friendly, knowledgeable staff can help customers whether they are a first time gun buyer or a police department outfitting their tactical unit. Unlike many other shops they are a pro shop; AX Tactical is staffed with knowledgeable people. They have law enforcement, firefighters, marine reservist, and target shooters among their personnel. They are the only dealer in New York State with an FFL and SOT (special occupational tax) stamp. This allows AX Tactical to produce, manufacture, and sell specialized firearms to law enforcement and military.

Paul Fostini said, "We didn't invent the AR15 platform but we do make it better." For more information go to: www.axtactical.com ■

ually concluded the festivities, both at the city gates and elsewhere across Bavaria. The festival and horse races were held once again the following year, giving rise to the tradition of Oktoberfest. To increase the potential for fun and take advantage of longer days, the event was expanded from one day to a few weeks, stretching through September and into October.

The tradition-rich horse race no longer takes place and hasn't for more than 50 years. But the festive atmosphere still prevails. Huge tents are erected to accommodate the large crowds. Since 1950, the traditional festival opening has been a twelve-gun salute and the tapping of the first keg of Oktoberfest beer at 12:00 by the Mayor of Munich with the cry "O'zapft is!" ("It's tapped!").

Millions of people participate in Oktoberfest celebrations. An abundance of food and millions of liters of beer are available to enhance the fun. ■



Understanding fraud prevention technologies

FAMILY FEATURES

Data theft has become an issue that affects the lives of nearly everyone in the United States. At least six bills active in Congress this year aim to help mitigate problems with data security standards and practices. Yet, legislation is not necessary to take an immediate and giant leap forward toward better data security. Consumer credit card transactions should be much more secure — and could be today — but it continues to unnecessarily lag behind the rest of the world.

In October 2014, President Obama issued an Executive Order calling for all government-issued payment cards to be equipped with chip and PIN technology — the most secure payment system available today. Chip and PIN is the preferred security all over the world as it is used in most of Europe and Australia, as well as many parts of Africa and South America.

However, the big banks that issue major cards, credit unions and other financial institutions have not taken similar steps to protect their customers. Instead, they are replacing existing magnetic stripe cards with microchip-equipped cards that still rely on unsecure signatures as a form of verification.

“While it’s a small step in the right direction, they are consciously failing to protect their customers by not offering all of the available security measures. The PIN is a necessary element of the equation to protect consumers,” said Debra Berlyn, leader of ProtectMyData, a consumer education campaign advocating for the implementation of chip and PIN technology for credit and debit cards. “The PIN requirement adds a distinct layer of security and complexity to each transaction that dramatically reduces fraud.”

Financial information stored on existing payment cards’ magnetic stripes can be easily cloned and used to make counterfeit cards. What’s more, the signatures can be easily forged and are rarely ever used to verify the identity of someone making a transaction.

Chip and PIN cards are considerably more secure. First, an embedded microchip encrypts each transaction at point of sale and then requires a unique four-digit code to be entered to complete the transaction, similar to withdrawing money from the ATM. The microchip coupled with the PIN make tampering and counterfeiting the cards, along with stealing personal financial data, nearly impossible.

The combination of chip and PIN clearly provides American consumers the security they deserve. Now, it’s time for the banks and credit card companies to issue cards outfitted with this technology.

To learn more about efforts underway to help secure your everyday transactions, visit www.protectmydata.org.

CHIP AND PIN BEST PROTECTS CONSUMERS

47%

The U.S. accounted for 47% of worldwide payment card fraud losses recently.

2/3

Two-thirds of consumer purchases today are made with payment cards.

\$4 TRILLION

In-store transactions total over \$4 trillion in sales.

CHIP AND PIN WORKS

In-store fraud declined in countries that use chip and PIN technology.

AUSTRALIA

-30%

CANADA

-50%

UNITED KINGDOM

-70%

HOW IT WORKS

Chip and PIN cards provide **two layers of security**. The cards contain a small microchip that encrypts each transaction at the point-of-sale and then requires a PIN number to validate and complete the transaction.

Get the Facts

MYTH: Current payment security measures are keeping consumers safe.

FACT: Not really. Card fraud is still a major issue that affects millions of Americans each year. The United States accounted for 47 percent of worldwide card fraud losses according to recent reports.

MYTH: The United States is a global leader in credit card security, using the most secure and cutting-edge technology available.

FACT: The United States is lagging behind. In fact, the United States is the last G-20 nation to issue chip-equipped cards. U.S. banks and credit card companies have been slow to provide consumers with chip and PIN protections that are commonplace around the world.

MYTH: Chip-equipped cards without PIN requirements provide sufficient security.

FACT: Chip-equipped cards that rely on signature validation and not PIN technology do not fully protect consumers. Only the chip and PIN combination offers a two-step verification process that is nearly impossible to clone.

MYTH: Consumers are moving away from credit cards.

FACT: While payment alternatives like ApplePay and other mobile options are slowly entering the market, nearly three-quarters of all Americans had at least one credit card in 2014. Moreover, not every American consumer has the means to use more sophisticated mobile payment options and others — particularly consumers with more modest means — rely on paying with credit at times.

MYTH: The implementation of chip and PIN will drive hackers online, rendering in-store protections like PINs or signatures less important.

FACT: Brick and mortar stores remain a bedrock component of the American economy and the retail industry. Most Americans still rely on offline shopping for the majority of their retail purchases.



Tasty, themed treats are an important part of any Halloween party.

Halloween is a special day that delights children of all ages and helps adults feel like kids at heart. Few people want the fun to end once trick-or-treating is over. By throwing a Halloween party, revelers can continue celebrating well into the evening.

When hosting a Halloween party, it helps to determine who will be in attendance before making any plans. Parties that include children should be PG in nature, and hosts should find the right balance between scary and fun. While you want to have a certain measure of the macabre, make sure you

don't send young guests home with nightmares. Reserve gruesome decorations and details for adult-only parties.

Halloween parties do not necessarily need to be ghoulish to be fun. Try a glittery gala masquerade party or decorate exclusively in

Throw a hauntingly good Halloween party

orange and black. Classically eerie parties may feature ravens and crows, or they can be subtly spooky with red candles and heavy curtains.

Many people can't wait to dress up for a Halloween party, even picking out their costumes months in advance. Still, not everyone feels comfortable donning a costume. To welcome all guests, don't make costumes mandatory. One way around this is to set up a Halloween Disguise Table full of accessories that anyone can borrow and use to alter their appearance. Goofy glasses, strange hats, adhesive mustaches, or masks can be fun. If someone didn't feel comfortable dressing in

full costume, he or she may be more apt to pop in a set of plastic fangs or put on a spinning bow tie.

Food is an integral part of any party and can enhance Halloween soirées. Candy is a pivotal component of Halloween and you can play off that theme at your party. Set up a candy bar full of appropriately hued candies of all shapes and sizes. Put them on display in clear glass or plastic canisters so they add to your Halloween décor.

Some people like to get creative with Halloween cuisine, crafting foods into items that may look like parts of the body or other

symbols of the holiday. Cookie cutters can turn sandwiches, desserts, biscuits and many other foods into different shapes. However, foods also can be made a tad more spooky simply by renaming them or presenting them in interesting containers. Why not serve punch out of a fish aquarium? Other beverages can be housed in jugs or old bottles and labeled "potions." Use laboratory instruments, such as petri dishes, vials and beakers, to serve snacks.

A Halloween party makes for a fun night, and there is no limit to what hosts can do when planning their scary soirées. ■

How to show appreciation for military personnel

Military personnel are unsung heroes whose sacrifices for their country make it possible for hundreds of millions of people to enjoy freedoms that many people across the globe do not have. In recognition of those sacrifices, many people want to show their appreciation to both active and retired servicemen and women. Fortunately, there are many

- ways to do just that.
- Pitch in at home. According to the United States Department of Defense, the United States military currently deploys active duty personnel in nearly 150 countries. Many of those troops are separated from their families for months at a time, and that separation can make things difficult for their loved ones back home. If a neighbor's spouse is deployed overseas, offer to help around the house. Whether it's mowing their lawn, dropping their kids off at school or inviting the whole family over for dinner one night each week, such gestures can go a long way toward easing the burden faced by spouses of deployed military personnel.
 - Send gifts to active personnel. Servicemen and women on active duty do not enjoy many of the luxuries that tend to be taken for granted back home. But men and women who want to show their appreciation can send care packages to active personnel serving overseas. An organization such as Operation Gratitude (operationgratitude.com), which to date has sent nearly 1.3 million care packages to active personnel, sends care packages filled with snacks, entertainment, personal hygiene products and handmade items. This provides active personnel a taste of home while also letting them know their extraordinary efforts are appreciated and not forgotten.
 - Volunteer at a veterans hospital. Unfortunately, many servicemen and women return home from their deployments with injuries or health conditions that require long-term care. By volunteering at veteran hospitals, men and women can help veterans overcome their injuries and provide much-needed help to staff at hospitals that could use a helping hand. Visit volunteer.va.gov for more information.
 - Make a financial donation. For those who want to support servicemen and women but don't have much free time to do so, financial donations can go a long way toward improving the quality of life of active and retired military personnel. Many programs work with veterans to improve their quality of life, and such organizations rely heavily on financial donations to make their missions a reality. The Wounded Warrior Project (woundedwarriorproject.org), for example, works to honor and empower servicemen and women who incurred physical or mental injuries or illnesses on or



after September 11, 2001. The organization relies on the generosity of individuals who want to help wounded military personnel overcome their injuries and illnesses. Based on audited financial statements of the 2014 fiscal ending on September 30, 2014, 80.6 percent of total expenditures went to services and programs catering to wounded military personnel and their families, assuring prospective donors that their donations will go toward helping those in need.

There are many ways that civilians can express their gratitude to active and retired military personnel. ■




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European Deli and Food Store



European Deli, South Main Street in Herkimer

by Daniel Baldwin

We’ve all grown accustomed to the large, sometimes huge super center grocery stores of today, but there are also many small independently owned food stores still operating. Many of those take unique business tactics for attracting their customers, to offer something unique.

The European Deli and Food Store is one of those small unique food markets. It is located on S. Main St. in Herkimer. When reading their sign in front of their store, one might assume that they sell everything including meats and cold cuts that are imported from Europe. Margret, the story owner, quickly corrected me as it is illegal to sell deli products from a different country/continent; but meat is not the only product that this store has to offer. The European Deli also sells candy, packaged pasta, canned vegetable, and bottled drinks that are made and shipped from Europe and many other countries. This store even has coffee and oil preserves that are packaged and shipped from six to seven different European countries.

“All of our items, except for our meats, are from a different country,” Margret said.

The process of creating and starting this business was a big challenge for Margret and the rest of her staff, but the European Deli and Food Store finally opened its doors in December of 2014.

The company had the choice of starting up in several local communities, but Laura, a family member and supporter of the business, said that the company wanted to start their business in Herkimer in order to improve the village’s economy.

“We want Herkimer to grow, succeed and be a good town,” she said. “We had the choice to open in Mohawk

and other places, but we like Herkimer. We want to bring more life to this town, like it used to be.”

People may think that there is a vast difference between American and European food stores/markets, but they are quite similar. According to the BBC website, both sell the same original food and drink products, like chocolate, bread, sausage, and all of the dairy products although BBC also reported that European foods, which are sold in every grocery store, are made and cooked differently.

“It’s (European Foods) a different recipe and have much better quality,” Margret said. “It is a much better choice in taste.”

When asked what goals The European Deli and Food Store had, Laura said, “We want to seek and grow. We want to stay open for business and become successful. To serve people and make them happy. We want to offer a healthy and good quality product.” Be sure to stop in and support this great locally owned food store. As with any small store, their success rides on the community support they are given. The European Deli and Food Store is opened Tuesday-Friday 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. It is also open on Saturday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. ■

How to lower blood-sugar levels without medication

Diabetes is a disorder in which the body cannot properly store and use the energy found in food. To be more specific, diabetes compromises the body’s ability to use glucose.

According to MediLexicon International, type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune disease in which the body wrongly identifies and then attacks pancreatic cells, which causes little to no insulin production. Those with type 1 diabetes usually must rely on insulin shots to remain healthy.

Type 2 diabetes involves insulin resistance or insufficient insulin production and is the more common form of diabetes. The pancreas may still produce insulin, but not enough to meet the demands of the body. Insulin resistance occurs in some cases because a consistent high blood-glucose level causes cells to be overexposed to insulin and then makes cells less responsive or immune to its effects.

Diabetes treatment can include a combination of strategies, including the following nondrug remedies.

- Diet: Diabetics can work with their doctors and nutritionists to come up with a diet that will be most effective. Some advocate for eating foods that are low in carbohydrates or ones with a low glycemic index. Others say that it is more important to restrict caloric intake rather than sugar intake.

Work with a professional to create a healthy diet and follow it as closely as possible. Eat meals at the same time each day so you can better regulate blood-sugar spikes and lulls. Skipping meals may cause you to overeat later in the day, which can throw glucose levels off-kilter.

- Exercise: Many people with type 2 diabetes are carrying around extra weight. Exercise can help them shed pounds and maintain healthier weights.

But exercise does more than just help you lose weight. The Joslin Diabetes Center says strength training exercises are an important component of workouts. By maintaining lean muscle mass, you can get rid of a larger amount of glucose in the bloodstream, thus helping manage diabetes in the process. Get at least 20 to 30 minutes of moderate activity several days per week.

- Supplementation: Some people find that certain natural ingredients can help regulate blood-sugar levels. For example, pure, organic apple cider vinegar taken over time can help people with diabetes manage their blood-sugar levels more effectively.

A small amount of cinnamon per day may be able to reduce fasting glucose levels by anywhere from 18 to 29 percent, according to a study in the Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry.

Always speak with a doctor before trying any home remedies to treat diabetes or exploring any alternatives to traditional diabetes treatments. ■

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Turn apple-picking excursions into apple pies

Certain activities are unique to autumn, and apple-picking certainly falls into that category. Many families look forward to their annual trips to nearby apple orchards, where they can spend beautiful autumn afternoons picking fresh apples everyone can't wait to take a bite out of.

While fresh apples are a delight on their own, few apple aficionados can resist the temptation to make apple pie. If homemade apple pie is on your agenda this year, consider the following recipe for "French Apple Pie" from Mollie Cox Bryan's "Mrs. Rowe's Little Book of Southern Pies" (Ten Speed Press).

French Apple Pie

Makes one 9-inch pie

1 recipe Plain Pie Pastry (see below)

- Raisin Filling
- 2/3

cup

raisins
- 6

tablespoons

water
- 1/2

teaspoon

lemon juice
- 1/4

cup

light corn syrup
- 1 1/2

teaspoons

all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2

teaspoons

sugar
- 2

apples

(preferably a tart variety)
- 1/4

cup

brown sugar
- 1/2

cup

sugar
- 1/4

teaspoon

ground cinnamon
- 1/2

teaspoon

ground nutmeg
- 1 1/2

teaspoons

cornstarch

- Icing
- 1

cup

confectioners' sugar
- 2

tablespoons

water
- 1

tablespoon

butter, softened

To make the raisin filling, combine the raisins, water and lemon juice in a heavy saucepan over medium heat. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat to medium-low and cook, stirring occasionally until the raisins are plump, about 15 minutes.

Separately, combine the corn syrup, flour and sugar and mix well, then add to the raisins and continue cooking, stirring occasionally, until thick and syrupy, about 10 minutes. Remove from the heat and cool until the mixture is just warm, about 10 to 15 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 400 F. Line a 9-inch pie plate with 1 rolled-out crust.

Peel the apples, cut them into thin wedges, and put them in a large bowl. Separately, combine the sugars, cinnamon, nutmeg, and cornstarch, then add to the apples and gently stir until evenly mixed.

Spread the apple mixture in the crust in an even layer; then spread the raisin filling evenly over the apples. Brush the rim of the crust with water; cover with the second rolled-out crust, seal and flute or crimp the edges, and cut a steam vent in the center.

Bake for 40 to 50 minutes, until golden brown. Cool on a wire rack for 1 to 2 hours, until completely cool.

To make the icing, combine the sugar and water and mix well. Add the butter and mix until smooth. Brush over the top of the cooled pie before serving.

Plain Pie Pastry

Makes two 9-inch pie crusts

- 2

cups

all-purpose flour
- 1

teaspoon

salt
- 2/3

cup

vegetable shortening
- 5

to 7

tablespoons

cold milk

Sift the flour and salt into a bowl. Cut in the shortening with a pastry blender until it is the size of small peas. Sprinkle 1 tablespoon of the milk over part of the flour mixture. Gently toss with a fork and push to the side of the bowl. Sprinkle another tablespoon of milk over another dry part, toss with a fork and push to the side of the bowl. Repeat with the remaining milk until all of the flour mixture is moistened.

Press the dough together to form 2 equal balls, then flatten into disks. Roll out the crusts right away, or wrap the dough tightly, smoothing out any little wrinkles or air pockets and refrigerate for up to 2 weeks. On a lightly floured surface, roll out each ball to a thickness of 1/8 inch. Use a light touch and handle the dough as little as possible.



Get your Fall on



by Carly Proulx

I don't know about you, but tracking down a corn maze, a haunted house, diving in a pumpkin patch, and wandering through an apple orchard are four musts on my "hurry before winter arrives" list. It's a race against the clock, and there is only so much time to breathe in the fresh air without the frost bite. Many a farm has worked long and hard to make theirs a choice destination for those who like to get outside and indulge in Fall festivities, and are always in need of our support. And as luck would have it the surrounding bounty of land throughout Central New York has given those of us who savor the outdoors and tradition quite the selection in which to choose from.

porch, save the pumpkin meat for your grandmother's passed down pie recipes, or simply adorn your space all things Fall in a Martha Stewart, and or Pinterest fashion. Let us not forget if you pick a pumpkin straight from the patch your chances of developing a deep bond with your fruit are all the more likely. And something I just learned, a pumpkin is in fact a fruit belonging to the Cucurbitaceae family alongside cucumbers, melons, squash, and gourds. Trust me. If you cook and bake with this fruit it will taste better. When you admire Mr. "Jack" he will look better, and when you hold it in your arms for the first time this heavy weight will even feel better. Not to mention this is a tradition that helps to sustain farms who've worked a labor intensive season to supply their communities with sentiment, spooky



Isn't it always better to eat home cooked meals this time of year? It's a comfort like no other. Yet if you suffer from allergies of any and all things kitchen related it's not that easy to extend such repose to our loved ones. Yet there is a way to attain such satisfaction, and in the same vain a number of ways to approach pumpkins. The very best in my humble opinion being picking your own! You can scoop them out and save the seeds for roasting with a bit of salt, carve up a jack-o-lantern to light up your

entertainment, and friendly fun. Before we know it being outside will mean covering ourselves head to toe, and running in place to keep our fingers and toes from going numb. Already the temperature seems to be dropping at an eager to freeze rate. Yet it's all the more reason to indulge in this season's offerings. As there are too many hiking spots around to count with the Adirondacks an arm's reach and a short drive away now is prime time to check

out the turned leaves from on high. Make yourself some hot cider to come home to, maybe add a little swig of spirit, and you'll have had yourself an adventure to last the winter. The crackling of the leaves, and their wind conducted mid air loops won't be around for very long. Fall is one of our blink of an eye seasons, gone before it arrives. A love affair not meant to be endured like our friend Father Winter, but a train of transition to the long cold nights soon to swallow us whole. And it is transition that is at the heart of any up kept tradition. We move forward, adapting to change quick as we can to witness our kids outgrow their clothes and favorite pastimes, and assist our parents and elders adjust to the inevitable aging process. There is no button to press that will slow down or rewind life, as much as we'd all love to take a vote. And so we must keep some things alive while we have the power to do so. The legacy of family values and the foundation those values are built upon are within us all, and what better way to transition than with nature undergoing this very same thing all around you.

If you weren't as lucky as I was, a kid whose parents made sure pumpkin pie and caramel apples were a staple every Autumn than don't be afraid to begin anew, and start from scratch your own seasonal customs. And it doesn't necessarily have to be any one of the traditions I mentioned above, though I'd recommend you do each of those things at least once in your lifetime. It's mainly about



making memories, and at this time of year with the wafting of spices, stove top steam, and waves of nostalgia we should make the room to create new ones as the old ones drift away. And when you least expect it they might come back.

When you're walking by a house strewn with corn stalks and pumpkins, or when you're wrapped up in succumbing to your own seasonally festive efforts you'll see yourself twenty years ago tackling your than twice your size older brother down into a pile of multicolored leaves, and stuffing your mouth with all the caramels meant to be melted down for a bag of fresh picked apples while your mother raises her brows right before curving one side of her mouth upward in a half smile that lets you know she only half disapproves. ■



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Sophisticated outhouse lacks string

By Joe Parzych

Caitlyn Shea Butler, a civil engineering professor at the University of Massachusetts designed a better outhouse that composts human waste while generating electricity; a boon for folks in third world countries and Thoreau emulators.

The news of this outhouse brings to mind a situation that developed in Leyden, Massachusetts some time ago, when a busybody complained that Stephen Laing was vacationing for a couple of weeks in his Walden-like cabin in a remote location in the woods and—gasp—was using an outhouse!

For emulating Henry David Thoreau, who had lived year-round for over two years at Walden Pond in a cabin without electricity, indoor plumbing, or water under pressure, Laing was busted. The Leyden Board of Health, whose mission is to protect folks from themselves, condemned Laing's cabin for not meeting Minimum Standards of Fitness for Human Habitation citing not only a lack of a septic system, but an absence of electricity and "water under pressure."

Though Laing had ready access to pristine spring water; it was, alas, not under pressure. Had he kept a seltzer bottle handy, as I suggested, he could have avoided that pitfall. Now, with a sophisticated electricity producing privy invented by the UMass professor, and armed with a seltzer bottle, Laing would also be able to dodge the accusation of not having electricity, leaving him with only to deal with the lack of a proper septic system which he would not need, and

which, ironically, would percolate harmful pathogens into the groundwater; which the UMass professor pointed out, is something her privy avoids.

I felt compelled to caution Laing against rushing to build a UMass replica. A picture of the sophisticated UMass outhouse in a local newspaper clearly showed two blatant health code violations. The privy has no ramp, making it handicapped inaccessible, nor do the stairs have a handrail. It seems to me that anyone capable of slogging through the woods to this remote spot would also be able to navigate the privy's three stairs without hanging onto a handrail. Wheelchair folks would need to keep out of the woods.

I don't know if Laing ever cleared a swath of trees for a septic system and another swath through the woods to enable septic system builders access to the site and for the power company to set poles in order to bring in electricity, but it occurred to me that this super-duper electricity producing UMass outhouse might be a solution to Laing's dilemma. In one fell swoop it would provide a non-polluting outhouse as well as generate electricity. However, Laing would still need to keep a seltzer bottle handy to satisfy the "water under pressure" requirement to meet Minimum Standards of Fitness for Human Habitation strictly enforced by the Leyden Health Police.

Not long after my "Health Police at work in Leyden" article appeared in the Recorder Newspaper, a reader of my mem-

oir, Jep's Place, read about our family's outhouse and sent me this ditty:

My father was a frugal man
And wasted not a thing.
He had a corn cob in our outhouse,
Suspended upon a string.

Perhaps Professor Shea Butler might add that refinement to her privy design serving third world folks who might otherwise not have ready access to toilet tissue. ■

Parzych, author of Jep's Place, is a retired excavating contractor who had operated heavy equipment by day while writing as a free-lance writer by night. He has written for a number of publications such as Yankee Magazine, Yankee Books, New England Monthly, Berkshire Magazine and a number of Sunday, daily, and weekly newspapers, as well as writing for farming, growing, construction, mining, forestry trade publications for Lee Newspapers, Inc., The Montague Reporter, and recently for Editor. He is also working on a sequel to Jep's Place. Lacking any sort of imagination, he has named it Leaving Jep's Place, which recounts his stint as a Staff Car Driver in Washington, D.C., travels in the U.S., then as a paratrooper and public relations writer in the 11th Airborne Division of the Army of Occupation in Japan.

The Civilian Conservation Corps

By Joseph Parzych

One day, an olive green Army truck with a canvas covered body on back, like a covered wagon, pulled up to a neighbor's wood lot next to our farm. The woodlot was so overgrown with brush that it was difficult to make your way through the woods.

A dozen men hopped out of the truck and immediately began to clear brush and deadwood. The men were dressed in Army clothes, making me think they might be soldiers. They stacked brush and deadwood in a big pile and set it afire. Soon the bon fire was burning merrily. The men roamed farther and farther away gathering more brush and deadwood to feed the growing fire. Flames leaped higher and higher making me fear the flames would light a tree afire and spread across the landscape as a forest fire.

The only man not working was the one who was left with the truck. He leisurely polished and tinkered with the truck, humming a tune. He pried the horn button from the center of the steering wheel with a screwdriver and adjusted the contact prongs so the horn would sound when he pushed the button.

"Don't you have to work?" I asked.

"No, I'm the truck driver; that's my job," he said rather proudly; I have a higher rank and I get paid more." He made it sound like being a truck driver was a very good profession. Driving was fun, you didn't have to work, you stayed clean, and the pay was high. What more could you want?

When the CCC crew finished clearing the brush and raked over the dead coals of the bon fire, the woods looked like a national park. The man in charge then approached my father



about cleaning and whitewashing the interior of our cow barn. The service was free, he said. My father was all for it, but he wondered what the catch was. The foreman, who was sweet-talking my father, produced a paper for him to sign. My father, who couldn't read English, asked what was written on the paper.

"It's just says you're giving us permission to do the work and that you won't hold the CCC liable in case a window or something gets broken."

"Aha! I knew there was a catch. One of them might light a cigarette, set the hay on fire, burn the barn down, and then where would I be? I don't think I want to sign the paper; I can clean the barn, myself."

My mother, who had sent me out to the CCC crew in the woods with a tray of fresh baked buns, from time to time, was more trusting than my father, especially since her son John was also in the CCC in Maine, probably

doing the same sort of thing. I thought about my half-brother Johnnie, far from home, and I hoped he'd run into more trusting people in Maine, than my skeptical father.

The CCC had been started by Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1933 during the depression as a public works program during the Dust Bowl era. It was one of the first New Deal programs, designed to relieve unemployment among young men, get them off the streets and build good citizenship while they were focused on soil conservation and reforestation. In less than 10 years the CCC built more than 800 parks and planted nearly 3 million trees, mainly in the west, which prevented another dust bowl from occurring.

FDR was able to get the CCC off to a fast start by putting it under the Army's control. Many former Army officers were employed in supervisory roles. The CCC used WWI surplus boots, uniforms and vehicles. The whole organization operated under control of the

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The various types of RVs

Vacations are a great way to recharge and get some time away from the daily grind. While many working men and women take one or two vacations per year, recreational vehicle owners can travel more often without breaking the bank.

Recreational vehicles, or RVs, are often referred to as campers or motor homes. Equipped with many amenities, ranging from kitchens to multiple sleeping areas to entertainment spaces, RVs offer many of the comforts of home.

The Recreational Vehicle Industry Association says RV ownership is currently at an all-time high. According to Dr. Richard Curtin, RV industry analyst and director of consumer surveys at the University of Michigan, 8.9 million households now own an RV. That's up from 7.9 million in 2005.

Drivers considering buying an RV may have many questions about these increasingly popular vehicles. RVs come in two main types: motorized and towable. Understanding the differences between the two and the various subcategories of RV can help drivers make the most informed decisions when purchasing their RVs.

Motorized

Motorized RVs are broken down by class, including class A, B and C. The distinction between the classes of RV is based on size.

- Class A: This class of motor home is very large and offers all of the comforts you'd expect from home. Many people who purchase a class A RV plan to travel all year long. Slide-outs can expand the living area when parked, and full bathrooms, complete kitchens and more are the norm. Because of their size, class A RVs tend to be the most expensive and may be more vehicle than many people can afford. Their large size (many look like a bus on the road) can make them difficult to navigate for novices.
- Class B: Class B RVs are often referred to as "van conversions." Class B are the smallest, fully enclosed campers available in the motorized category. Living space is limited in these RVs, but economy and versatility make them quite popular. Usually these campers can sleep between two and four people.



- Class C: Class C RVs are a compromise between types A and B. Class C are mid-sized with a driver's compartment similar to a van and a larger box in the back for the living area. Some come with a sleeping bunk above the cab. Depending on the floor plan, class C campers can sleep up to 10 people.

Towable

- Towable RVs are another option and can be more affordable because they can be pulled behind your existing vehicle.
- Travel trailers: Travel trailers look similar to traditional mo-

torized RVs but without the driving cab. They can be hitched to the back of a vehicle. Travel trailers are popular because of their versatility. Travel trailers can be ideal for those with limited budgets but the desire to have a self-contained unit.

- Pop-up: Folding camping trailers, or pop-up trailers, are inexpensive and lightweight. They provide many of the conveniences found in a basic travel trailer but in a smaller size.
- Fifth-wheel: If you own a pickup truck, a fifth-wheel trailer may be good for you. These hitch to the top of the pickup bed and have similar features to a traditional travel trailer.

RVs make great investments for men and women who love the open road. They also are a great way to take the entire family on an affordable and memorable vacation. ■

Did You Know?

According to the Celiac Disease Foundation, gluten is the general name for proteins found in wheat, rye, barley and triticale. That's an important thing for party hosts to know, as many people now follow gluten-free diets. When planning party menus, hosts should ask guests if they adhere to gluten-free diets, as consuming gluten can trigger an abnormal immune system response in people who have Celiac disease, potentially causing damage to the small intestine. Wheat is commonly found in bread, baked

goods, pasta, and cereals, among other foods. Barley is present in food coloring, soups, malt vinegar, and beer. Rye is found in rye bread, certain beers and cereals, while triticale may be present in certain breads, pastas and cereals. If guests have gluten allergies or are suffering from Celiac disease, look for foods that are designated as gluten-free. Many grocers now offer numerous gluten-free products to cater to the growing number of individuals who no longer consume gluten.

CCC from previous

You had to be 17 to join, but as in my half-brother John's case, they sometimes bent the rules because John was only 16 which they recorded as 17. Times were tough; many young men showed up poorly clothed. Some arrived barefooted and hungry. One teenager arrived with his older brother, both barefoot and starving. He wrote home, "We didn't have anything to eat for a three days when we joined. They fed us pork chops for supper, and when I asked for another, they gave me two."

Johnny had dropped out of high school but took evening classes while in the CCC. There were also a wood-working shop where the men could learn a trade when the snow was too deep to work in the woods. Johnny brought home gifts for us that he'd made in the woodshop. He gave me a coin bank made from a section of popular tree. He'd bored out the center and put in a cap with a slot for coins, then burned MAINE into the bark. I didn't save many coins but I treasured the bank as proof that he thought warmly of me.

The CCC built their living quarters as well as over 800 state parks. They built roads and dams, assisted local fire departments during fires and stocked streams with fish. Though the CCC planted millions of trees in the West for reforestation and soil conservation, Johnny mostly cleared woods of underbrush, as the crew had done in the woodlot next to our farm.

The CCC stationed recruits at camps far from home. That way their horizons were expanded and it discouraged desertion. The recruits met girls at dances held for them in nearby towns. Many married and settled down in the communities where they were stationed, since most girls didn't want to move far from home. Johnny didn't meet a girl but he met a family and became lifelong friends with one of the boys. The family deeded John an island in Maine where he vacationed each summer for decades before he died at 47. The son, who was about Johnny's age, became a lifelong friend who also visited John on his vacations.

Enlistments were for a 6 month period, but John, like many others,

re-enlisted for another 6 month hitch. Unemployment was high until WWII when the CCC was disbanded. Many of the former CCC enlistees joined the regular Army where they adjusted well, having learned discipline and responsibility in the CCC. John had chronic ear problems and was rejected by the Army, but the CCC had a positive effect on his life. Though he hadn't graduated from high school when he joined the CCC he took evening classes, and after discharge enrolled in the Stockbridge School of Agriculture in Massachusetts. He later managed the experimental turkey farm at Cornell University where he enjoyed a comfortable residence, salary, and lifestyle as one of the faculty.

The U.S. has the largest prison population in the world, largely of young people convicted of drug related crimes. There are many who believe the CCC program should be revived to get young men off of the streets, and direct them into a productive lifestyle away from a life of crime, particularly in the inner cities. It seems like a better plan than continuing to swell our prison population. ■

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The Witch and the Spirit of Factory Hollow



By Joe Parzych

Fall River straddles Factory Hollow, delineating the boundary between Gill and Greenfield, MA. The hollow was once a hotbed of local industry. Resident witch, Old Mother Thatcher, who often dressed in a long black cloak, did not deny she was a witch. She told fortunes, and was accused of all sorts of mischief. According to local histories, Ezekiel Bascom who owned the grist mill at the falls said the witch stopped his mill wheels from turning and all efforts to get them turning, failed until the spell was lifted. In another instance, Mr. Bascom's oxen stopped in their tracks, and no amount of efforts to get them to move would budge them. Finally, a fox came running out from under his oxcart, and the oxen plodded on. Though Old Mother Thatcher was nowhere near the oxen or cart, it was plain to all that the witch was surely to blame. A woman named Dewey once became bewitched and began to sweat until she appeared soaked as if she had been immersed in the river. All these anecdotes concerning Old Mother Hubbard are recorded in the History of Greenfield.

In a History of Gill a recorded anecdote credits Old Mother Thatcher's daughter, Sally Hathaway, as replying when asked if her mother were a witch, "Lor'sy! No more'n I be," then whispered, "but she do have some witchery books."

"Old Mother Thatcher was sure to be present at all public gatherings and came in for much joshing and heckling. In the course of years she acquired the art of scolding as only an irate woman can scold who has learned the knack. On one of the annual election days she became provoked beyond all control and retaliated by pronouncing a witch's curse, on the spot, for all time."

The Lenard Wool Fulling Mill built of stone, stood on the Greenfield side where wool was beaten and fluffed to give it body. A machine shop in the same building machined parts to keep the mill in operation. A factory

weaving cloth of wool and cotton operated on the Greenfield side, along with a shoe shop that turned out shoes and boots for Civil War shoulders. A grist mill and sawmill operated on the Gill side. It took a round-about circuitous trip to get from one side of Factory Hollow to the other until the Town of Gill commissioned the building of a wooden bridge.

From a History of Gill; "On Dec. 11, a committee appointed by The Town of Gill to build a bridge across the Fall River, promised to pay Andrew Adams or order one hundred and twenty five Dollars by the first day of November next in cash or Grain pork or flax for building said Bridge the price of said grain pork & flax to be regulated by the price courant in Greenfield."

The wooden bridge was soon swept away, and several more after that, "---high water during intervening years having carried away too many bridges to enumerate," according to a history of Greenfield. In 1902, nearly a hundred years later, a steel bridge with wood planking was built and in use until 1932 when the Kelleher Corporation of Turners Falls built the French King Highway bypassing Adams Road which originally ran through Factory Hollow, forking off to a wooden bridge located further south of the Factory Hollow mills. The road once led to the Riverside section of Gill and to Turners Falls. The bridge is gone, but dry laid stone abutments of the wooden bridge still stand, but the bridge washed away, firmly believed by all to have occurred as a result of Old Mother Thatcher's cursed spell, cast "for all time."

The grist and saw mill burned, leaving just a stone tower behind. Homer LaMountain claimed he'd set fire to it. The claim had the ring of truth because Homer had torched his own house, earlier in the Great Depression. Homer had built a sumptuous home during the roaring 20's, but had fallen on hard times during the Great Depression, and he was far behind in mortgage pay-

ments. To forestall foreclosure, he torched his house by pouring kerosene on the floor and up the staircase of the nice new house, according to Homer. The road to the house was muddy. People coming to gop at the raging fire clogged the road. The only available fire truck arrived some time later from an adjoining town, but became mired in mud when the driver tried to drive around the cars. Homer had hoped to collect the insurance on the house, but when insurance investigators questioned him, he confessed to the crime and went to live in a little chicken coop on the property, basking in the warmth of his notoriety, though freezing his butt in winter for the lack of insulation. As interest in his tale of arson waned, the mill burned down, and Homer laid claim to doing it, saying he took the blame for the guilty person, though he didn't torch it. He was never charged, but never tired of reciting his tale of magnanimity in taking the blame for someone else.

The State of Massachusetts awarded the Kelleher Corporation a contract to construct a bridge of steel and concrete over the Fall River, south of the bridge iron bridge, for \$356,234. Fall River marks the border between Gill and Greenfield, so that half of the concrete bridge lies in each town. Old Mother Thatcher apparently lived on the Gill side of Factory Hollow because the following anecdote is recorded in the History of Gill 1793-1943.

Whenever a spring freshet carried away one of the early dams, or when some other catastrophic event occurred, such as when yet another bridge was swept away, residents attributed the calamity to Old Mother Thatcher's spell. The concrete and steel bridge, built in 1932 by Kelleher Corporation on the new French King Highway bypassing Factory Hollow, withstood an earthquake in 1938, as well as Old Mother Thatcher's spell, but fell victim to ice control road chemicals that caused structural damage. Northern Construction of Palmer, MA is in the process of replacing the bridge, piecemeal, while maintaining two-way traffic, as reported in an article I wrote for Hard Hat News.

There were once two men apparently destined to be acclaimed artists, both having been christened with names worthy of an artist, "Thurston Munson" and "Nord Bolen." By coincidence, both lived in a house, at different times, housing a resident spirit, rumored to be the Witch of Factory Hollow, on the Greenfield side of Factory Hollow. Prominent local artist, Thurston Munson first lived in the yellow brick house which was once a boarding house for employees of the various mills in the hollow, making uniforms and boots for the Civil War soldiers at one time.

Mr. Munson purchased the house, during the Great Depression, from Mr. Scott who lived across the road. When asked how much he wanted for the house, Mr. Scott, who was apparently mentally impaired, replied, "Would \$150 be too much?" Mr. Munson said he did not think it too much, and bought it. He constructed an artist's studio next to the house with a large north facing window to cast a consistent light suitable for painting. Mr. Munson said he had a number of encounters with benign spirits who appeared from time to time, sometimes leaving behind the odor of pipe

tobacco smoke. There is no record of Old Mother Thatcher smoking a pipe, but that practice wasn't unusual for women in early times. A second noted local artist, Nord Bolen, next lived in the house. Mr. Bolen painted and designed sterling silverware for Rogers, Lunt and Bolen. He was a partner in the original sterling silver company, but his name was deleted when the partnership was incorporated as "Lunt Silver Company" to avoid confusion with Rogers Silver Company which manufactured silver plate rather than sterling silver. From time to time, Mr. Bolen had overnight guests who sometimes experienced benign encounters with a spirit and would ask Mr. Bolen, "Who is the man who wanders about the house?"

Mr. Bolen had once painted a picture of Jep's Place, the farmhouse where I was born and raised. The picture is on the front cover of Jep's Place, a memoir I wrote. Mr. Bolen spent the better part of late summer and fall on the painting. My mother frequently went out to talk with him, offering refreshments and admiring his artwork. She asked him what he intended to do with the painting when he finished it. When he said he might sell it, she asked to buy the painting. Each time he packed up his paint, brushes, and materials, she asked if he was finished. Each time he replied, "Not yet."

At long last, he said he was done.

"Can I buy it, now?" she asked.

"Not yet," he replied.

Mr. Bolen had the painting framed and brought it to her:

"He charged me \$16," my mother said. "Did I pay too much?"

I assured her that the framing alone cost Mr. Bolen several times that much.

I was working as an excavating contractor, at the time. A short time later, Mr. Bolen hired me to do some excavating and grading at his new home, without knowing that it was my mother who had purchased his painting. When the job was complete, I thanked him for his generosity with my mother, and I adjusted the bill to compensate him for the compassion he showed towards her:

I suspected I'd been referred from one artist to another when I was contracted by one of the former residents for work around a sumptuous new home the artist had purchased, after marrying a lovely young girl of 18, late in life, whom he later suspected had apparently been smitten by the size of his bank account, which she had soon minimized during their brief marriage with continued reductions, forever after according to the rueful man, now sadder but wiser:

The present couple who occupy the former yellow brick boarding house also contracted with me for some excavating after a referral by the former owner. The couple told me they were leaving for the evening as I was completing the job. "You're welcome to go in the house to use the phone, or to get a drink," the woman said. "Don't be alarmed if a spirit appears in the house. He's harmless, and he won't hurt you."

I worked by lights far into the night. I didn't need to go into the house, but regret that I didn't afford myself an opportunity to see the spirit, or at least get a faint whiff of pipe smoke drifting about. ■

How to throw a theme party and help break the ice



Costume parties are not just for Halloween. Dressing up can be part of a themed party that entertains guests and encourages them to mingle.

Many people do not need a reason to throw a party. Although they're commonly held to mark momentous events, like birthdays, parties can be entertaining ways to get a group of people together just for the sake of being social.

Entertaining a diverse groups of friends or even family members may challenge party hosts to find methods that encourage their guests to mingle. One

of the most effective ways to break the ice is to give a party its very own theme.

Themed parties have a built-in conversation starter: the theme itself. Socializing can increase when other games or themed components are included in the festivities. Here are some ways to make a theme work for you.

- Introduce the theme with the invitations. Let guests know that there will be a

party theme by mentioning it on the invitations. The invitations also may tie into the theme. For example, palm tree invitations can indicate a Hawaiian barbecue. If costumes or specific clothing is suggested, be sure to indicate that on the invitations so guests can plan accordingly and decide whether or not to participate.

- Coordinate the music. Guests will feel more comfortable if you have a steady

amount of music playing in the background. Find music that fits with your theme, such as music from the 1970s for a disco party. Keep the volume moderate while guests are arriving and getting to know one another. Later on the volume can be turned up for dancing.

- Arrange seats for conversation. Avoid lining up a bunch of seats along a wall or in a straight line. Instead, group a few chairs around a snack table facing one another so that guests are encouraged to chat instead of spending the night as wallflowers.

- Lead by example. If you want others to get involved and have fun with the party theme, you should lead the way. Be sure you are dressed for the occasion and participate in any games or activities that you have planned. If you want guests to get up for a round of karaoke, be the first person to belt out a tune.
- Decorate the home or venue. Ensure guests know there is a specific theme by decking out the party space with the right accessories. The decor can add to the fun factor and give guests even more opportunities to converse over clever knick-knacks, signs or elaborate

backdrops.

- Don't forget the food. Tie your food choices into the party theme, offering foods that are theme-specific or renaming foods so they coordinate with the theme. Cheese-and-crackers platters can get fun makeovers if you use cookie cutters to cut the cheese into shapes. Plan cuisine that fits with the theme, such as pretzels and beer for an Oktoberfest party or milkshakes and French fries for a 50's Drive-In party. By thinking creatively, you can find even more clever ways to keep guests smiling and satiated.

Theme parties make it easy to tie various elements together and break the ice when guests are invited to mingle. ■

Dress up drab desserts

Decadent desserts are often the culmination of family meals or meaningful social occasions. Dessert signals the end of special events and lets guests know it is now acceptable for them to plan their exits.

Party hosts should not feel pressured to bake or create elaborate desserts. Some guests may even bring their own homemade desserts as tokens of appreciation to offer their hosts. However, for those who want to ensure there is dessert available in the event company does not bring a cake or box of cookies, the following are some ways to dress up store-bought treats to make them look like impressive desserts.

- Gourmet ice-cream sandwiches: Purchase ready-made cookies in your favorite varieties as well as a flavor of ice cream that coordinates with the cookies (chocolate and mint works well). Allow the ice cream to soften slightly, then spoon a bit onto one cookie and sandwich the ice cream with another cookie. Place the sandwiches back into the freezer to harden and set before serving.
- Decadent drizzle: Any dessert can look like a professionally concocted confection with a creative display. Drizzle chocolate or raspberry syrup on the plate before placing your slice of cake or pastry. Top with a dusting of confectioner's sugar.
- Shaved chocolate: Turn an ordinary brownie or sundae into something stunning with shaved chocolate. Run a vegetable peeler along the side of a favorite bar of chocolate to create a garnish.
- Warmed up: Heat any store-bought pie before serving

and top with fresh whipped cream. Your guests will swear it's homemade. ■



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Service dog volunteers needed

Service dogs provide invaluable support and assistance to people who require their services. These dogs may help guide the blind or provide emotional therapy to adults and children. Some service dogs even perform tasks around the house for

people with mobility issues.

Puppies trained for service work start out as bubbly animals just like any young dog. However, they will require additional obedience work and specialized training in preparation for their future

duties.

Service animals are in high demand, and many organizations reach out to volunteers to help foster pups who will go on to provide help to people in need. This usually occurs when the dog is between one and two years old.

Organizations like Canine Partners of the Rockies in Colorado and Susquehanna Service Dogs in Pennsylvania often place service dog puppies in homes. They may have a few dozen receiving care and training by fostering families at any given time. Anyone who has a love for animals can volunteer, and many such volunteers benefit from the knowledge that they helped contribute to the development of dogs that will go on to do so much good.

To decide if raising service dogs is something you want



to do, consider the following information.

- Puppies will need a secure environment, so homes with fenced yards that are free from hazards are ideal. Much as you would baby-proof a home, you will need to puppy-proof it, too. Puppies are curious and can get into mischief if not supervised.

- Empty nesters may be drawn to service dog training because they find they have more time on their hands than they did when children were still in the house. Puppies will need a lot of attention to be well-rounded service dogs, and they will also need to be put into different environments to learn how

to behave. Such situations may be easier to arrange in homes with fewer residents.

- Service dogs will need to have impeccable manners; therefore, you will have to enforce rules around the house that may run lax with a regular pet dog. These dogs must not jump on the furniture or other people. They will need to respond to commands well, and they should not be encouraged to chase as part of play.

- Puppies will need to be handled regularly and grow accustomed to grooming and touching. Because they will go into stores and other places regular dogs will not, a neat and clean appearance is a must.

- Socializing the puppy may include taking him or her out in public to stores, on mass transit, to parks, and even to schools. The more situations these puppies experience, the more easily they will adapt to adverse environments when they become full-time service dogs.

When fostering a service animal, remember that they are not pets and they will eventually need to leave your home. Separations can be difficult, but you can rest assured that the dog will help provide a full life to a worthy owner. Plus, if you get lonely, you can volunteer to train a new puppy for the service organization. ■

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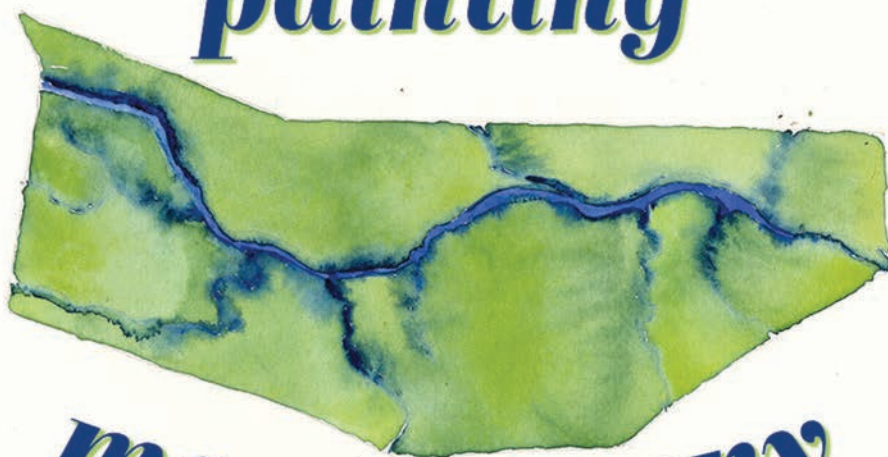
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How to soundproof your home

(MS) — What's the first step in sound proofing your home? Finding which rooms have the least amount of sound resistance.

To do this, make sure everyone is out of the house, unplug all electronics and close all doors and windows. Take a quick walk through your house and pause for a few moments in each room to evaluate which ones are the noisiest. Now consider if you're installing a media room or teenage recreational room where volumes will be blasting on TV's and stereos.

With this information, you should have a good idea of where you need to sound-proof and create barriers against noise. Here are some tips to help you achieve the optimal result of peace and quiet:

- Plant trees and hedges along the exterior of your home, perhaps along a fence. Not only do trees and hedges help with the environment and provide a good

amount of privacy, they also slow down the travel of noise from the neighborhood into your home.

- Insulate your walls and ceilings. Better insulation in your interiors and exteriors won't just drive away excess noise, it will also reduce your heating and cooling bills during the hot and cold months. For the best sound proofing and easy installation quality, a professional-grade product by ROXUL called Safe'n'Sound is very popular.

- Seal up all cracks and holes around windows and doors, and add double glazed windows to your current glass panes.

Once you've selected the best sound-proofing method, implement it and enjoy the bliss of silence throughout your home. ■

Larzelere Cabinet Company

by Al Dorantes

Today when it seems most cabinets are mass produced, made of pressed board and cheap glue, and purchased in big box stores it is refreshing to find that craftsmanship and quality is still alive and well. Brian Larzelere and Larzelere Cabinet Company are keeping the tradition of handmade, wooden cabinetry going.

Brian Larzelere was in the television industry. He worked in video editing at places like; FOX23 (master control), Time Warner (commercials), and Time Warner News (news editing). Larzelere explained that he had always worked for his father; Ray, who was a teacher and a contractor during the summer. Woodworking was a hobby. He built desks for radio studios in Albany, people saw his work, and eventually started asking him to build things. He always wanted his own business; he just went into woodworking instead of video production.

Larzelere Cabinet Company, which began in 2006, offers custom cabinetry from computer generated design based on client or contractor's measurements. Larzelere explained that they design and build cabinetry. They are focused on building cabinets. All Larzelere Cabinet Company cabinet boxes are made with prefinished birch plywood. The handmade doors are finished with the same high quality finish.

Larzelere Cabinet Company cabinets are built using solid



panel with frameless cabinets. It is also their most affordable option. The clean look offers the most space on the inside. Larzelere Cabinet Company cabinets are also available in maple, hickory, or ash. The cabinets can be stained or painted. Brian Larzelere said, "Painted white is very popular right now."

Larzelere Cabinet Company also offers a number of options if custom, handmade cabinetry is out of your budget. With lines from manufacturers such as Great northern Cab-



inetry, IKS Kitchen, and Kunal means that Larzelere Cabinet Company can offer you great quality craftsmanship, great value, and service without the custom price.

Larzelere Cabinet Company is continuing the tradition of woodworking craftsmanship. For more information on how to add Larzelere Cabinet Company's custom, handcrafted wood cabinets to your home go to: www.larzercabinet.com or find them on houzz: www.houzz.com/pro/larzercabinet/larzercabinet ■

A long awaited union: 8Th Annual Utica Music & Arts Fest



At Tiny's Grill with artist Kathy Donovan and Director and artist Steve Nyland standing in front of their shelf-oriented display.

by Carly Proulx

With a 90 band line-up, and 13 different visual artists this year's Utica Music & Arts Festival (UMAF) seemed more like the ones that are held over the hills and far away. You know, the festivals that make you reach into your wallet, and while there realize you're much too broke to buy their darn tickets and dance sun up til sun down all weekend long to your favorite bands. Fear not all you good time Charlies', UMAF has changed all that. Charging just \$10 per person UMAF bestowed upon us, the lucky ones, a colorful array of musical gifts, a relentless surge of talent and energy that for the first time in UMAF history merged with more stimulating magic in the form of visual art that hung on the walls and on display in seven different venues. A fusion of music

and art that is for music and art's sake, now hows about them fiddles folks?

With the return of bands out of NYC like Consider The Source, and Hank & Cupcakes, the crowds were out and thirsty at 5pm Friday, starting 12pm on Saturday, and going strong until 2am both nights on the weekend of Sept 11th and 12th. If they hadn't been aware before, having seen the above play at Lukin's on Varick St., as well as Nail Creek Pub they're certainly well aware now, and my guess is still super pumped about it. Roots of Creation out of Keene N.H. filled the room with their Dub Reggae Rock, and Conehead Buddha, an eight piece Ska-reggae band had their audience's shoulders and hips in sync with some heady brass and percussion. Bands like The Blind Owl Band from Saranac Lake, N.Y. and Tumbleweed Highway out of Norwich, N.Y. transported those at The Dev to Bluegrass heaven and a blissful bound marriage of Southern Rock and "Yeeehaw" Outlaw Country.

Poeina brought with her the only backup she needed at O'Donnell's Pub & Grill, and though it would've been cool to see the Lucid Dreamers pop up through the floor boards her angelic vocals and acoustic



Artists Constance Avery, Ann Marie Kovalsky, and Dawn H. Farrar with Director Steve Nyland and their work in Harlee's Pub & Grille.

guitar said it all, creating an enchanting lyrical union. 315 Bar BQ & Brew featured the band Papership, 5 guys from Syracuse N.Y. who are putting the Trash back in Pop, and the Garage back in Rock, and who just so happen to sound like a reincarnation of my very favorite 80s band The Replacements. Tiny's was packing the Jazz heat heavy with the Bob Ford Jazz Band, and the Rick Compton Smooth Jazz trio. My only regret of there having been such a kick butt selection of music is that there are too many to give proper "kudos" to, but chances are if there was a certain genre of music you were looking to boogie down to that didn't sound like Taylor Swift or the Disney Channel then the man in charge of all things UMAF music, the one and only Joe Sweet provided it.

Along with Sweet, the backbone of this entire event, there is another who worked hard to bring it all

together. All things art Steve Nyland has been the man behind the UMAF curtain since 2012. Originally from Syracuse Nyland discovered Utica, and its cry for art with Utica area artist and Pratt instructor Jenna North when together they'd lead Project-U, an artists group out of Utica. Starting off his first UMAF with a pop-up gallery show at the Radisson in addition to a live mural painting performance in the Nail Creek parking lot with the help of Utica artists' Tony Thompson and Eric Florez the years to follow proved Nyland a creative force to be reckoned with. A mural painting demo at MVCC back in 2013 was organized by Tony Thompson and Timothy Rand while Nyland maintained the overall directing. Destined to stick with Project-U in 2014 Nyland's fate was officially sealed when he took on the role of Associate Director of Visual Arts. Currently Nyland

volunteers as the Visiting Artist at the CNY Veteran's Outreach Center, maintains a studio on Genesee St., curates the art in window displays everywhere and in between the APAC Center to Oriskany St, and as well serves as the Artist in Residence & Curator at The Tech Garden, a start-up hub in downtown Syracuse. In the past three years Nyland had done a lot for Utica, and for his fellow artists, but when it came to UMAF the art had always been a starry night in a sky full of clouds, isolated from the UMAF's key ingredient.

All that would change this year upon Sweet's request for venues to host the art along with the musicians. Nylands assistant, and artist Dawn H. Farrar, director

of Studio PK101 gallery in Rome began helping Nyland arrange this year's art shows back in April, and the outcome was one of beauty and expression, an aesthetically pleasing amalgamation to say the least. Did I also mention it was the ultimate recipe for an everlasting hunger?! It seemed this chain-band, audience, the artist's paintings, they all played their part, were all essential to the success of the event as a whole. Nyland was pleased to report works sold in all 7 venues, and we can look forward to seeing more magical unions in the future of the UMAF. And this just in- live mural performance paintings to return for 2016! ■

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Youngs General Store

by Jessica Arsenault Rivenburg

In three short weeks, the community will have a new option in home improvement, pet care, outdoor and agricultural shopping. Youngs Ace is on schedule to open Oct. 19, said owner Brian Young.

Located in the former M&T Bank building on Central Avenue in Ilion, the business will be Youngs General Store, with an Ace Hardware inside, Young explained.

"We really try to bring in that country general store feel," he said of Youngs General Stores. "A Normal Rockwell feel."

The Ilion location will be Young's second store, but the third for the Young family, of Prattsville.

Youngs General Stores got its start with Brian Young's grandfather, who opened the first in Prattsville. That store was taken over by Young's father in the 1970s. In 2011, Young opened a new location in the village of Catskill.

When he decided to expand with another store, Young asked his suppliers and sales reps where they would recommend starting a small independent hardware store.

"Three out of four said this area," Young said.

Confident that his wares will be different than that of Ilion's existing True Value, and that the service and ambiance will out-do Wal-Mart and Lowe's, in Herkimer, Young feels the closest competition for his store will be Tractor Supply, which lies just 2.5 miles away.

"But I think we'll be able to offer better prices and better service," he said.

Youngs General Store will pack a lot of punch into a small area. The Ace Hardware section will take about 5,000 square



From left, Andy Merwin, Owner Brian Young and John Young.

feet, and include lawn and garden supplies, paint mixing and supplies, tools, hardware, wild bird food, plumbing, electrical and cleaning supplies, and various house wares such as vacuum bags, outdoor garbage receptacles and step ladders.

Another 1,500 square feet will be dedicated to farm animal feed, with approximately 30 tons of feed on hand at any given time, Young said.

There will be a section for outerwear, hunting and fishing gear and camping supplies. Young has also added more marine supplies than originally planned, upon the request of Ilion Marina Dockmaster Don Sterling.

There will be 44 linear feet of agricultural supplies, and another 3,000 square feet of domestic pet care items.

And it doesn't stop there. Young said they will have an area dedicated to special orders, in which they will have the ability to order some 200,000 products not regularly carried upon customer request.

And work on it all is moving along swiftly, Young said.

"It's going really well," he said with enthusiasm. "We're right



Young's General Store and ACE Hardware scheduled to open on October 19th said owner Brian Young. Ilion is the proud recipient of this great new business which promises to be a one stop shop for just about everything!

on schedule, which is amazing really because our opening date was set ambitiously and only a few months ago."

The only disappointment in progress thus far, Young said, has been a village zoning ordinance against propane sales. Young's General Stores typically offer propane filling, but that is not currently possible at the Ilion site.

"It's actually a rather big disappointment for us," he said. "We want to be a one-stop shop and that's hard to do when we can't offer something many people use and need."

"We're working on it," he assured.

Currently, the only place to get propane within the village of Ilion is at CarQuest on Pine Street.

Another item in the works is the ability to issue hunting and fishing licenses, which Young hopes to have squared away for the 2015 regular deer season, which begins October 24th. ■

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A room at the inn

By Joseph Parzych

My mother was lucky. She landed a job as a seamstress sewing bedspreads at Monument Mills despite her advanced pregnancy. Five year old Mary took care of three year old John, at home. A neighborhood child molester began trying to befriend Mary while she was home

alone with her brother. The molester terrified Mary, as he persistently coaxed her to open the door to let him in.

The kitchen coal stove heated the apartment. One day, the fire in the stove died down. The house grew cold. Mary poured kerosene on the live coals to revive the fire. The stove exploded. Stove lids flew to the ceiling. Flames and soot scorched and blackened Mary's face. After the stove explosion, my mother became beside herself with worry. She was becoming more and more desperate. She sold her remaining furniture, piece by piece, to help meet expenses. Her baby's due date loomed near, and she fretted that she could not afford a doctor. Some women in Connecticut, whom she hardly knew, took her in and assisted with a home delivery. Baby Elizabeth arrived the week before Christmas



about the McDonalds, at the Macano Inn, needing a cook. My mother went to the inn and applied for the job. She told the McDonalds that she could cook, but admitted she'd soon be homeless. The compassionate couple not only hired her, but included meals and a room on the third floor where she could live with her children. Mary, now six, resumed her job as caretaker. She heated the baby's bottle on a hot plate, fed and changed the baby, and watched over her four year brother, John, while their mother worked in the kitchen, below.

Located near a highway and a railroad station, the Macano Inn was a gathering place. It bustled with activity,

on December 20th, 1918.

When my mother returned to her apartment, there was very little furniture left to sell. She'd lost her job at Monument Mills and was nearly penniless. The child molester still lurked. The future looked increasingly bleak. She became frantic with desperation.

Then, someone told her

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Crowning Glory

by Joan O. Scharf

When Trina Shirman started high school, her mother brought her into my beauty shop for the first time. It was five years ago, but I remember it well. Trina was sulking when she came in. She wanted to be taken to the trendy new salon that recently opened, but Mrs. Shirman had been a customer of mine for years. Besides, I charged less.

Trina slouched sullenly in the chair, glaring at her mother. "I don't see why I can't go to the mall to 'Char's Cut and Curl' like my friends!"

I tried to approach the situation tactfully. "Trina, you just tell me how you want your hair to look and give me a chance, ok? What would you like?"

"I want to look different. Not like this!" She wrinkled her nose as she frowned into the mirror.

Her hair was a nondescript dull brown, bushy with natural curl and quite unsuited to her face. I looked toward her mother for guidance. She rolled her eyes and shrugged. "Do whatever you think will look good."

I gave Trina's hair streaks of blond highlights, straightened

it until it was smooth, and cut it into a becoming style that danced around her cheeks.

Mrs. Shirman was pleased with the result. Trina was exuberant. "Awesome! Just what I wanted."

When she was not pouting, she was an attractive girl, and the new hair-do provided the look she needed. Since that day, Trina has been coming to my shop every few weeks.

This morning was special. I dressed in the navy blue skirt and fresh white shirt laid out the night before. Sipping my breakfast coffee, I double checked the thumbed schedule book beside me as if didn't know well enough what was written there. Saturday was usually fully booked, but by choice, only one appointment was penciled in for today... an early one, 8:30AM. Trina Shirman was getting married this afternoon, and she wanted her hair re-colored, straightened and styled before the wedding ceremony.

I shut the door to my upstairs flat and walked down the familiar back steps to my shop, "Alice's House of Beauty." Snapping on a protective smock, I started preparations for her

appointment. Although it wasn't apparent at that very first visit, Trina turned out to be a talker. Each time she came in she would gossip nonstop about her teachers, parents, girlfriend-boyfriend problems. I heard it all, month after month, and it was always a one-sided conversation. She never bothered to ask anything about me. She didn't know that in the past my handsome young husband was killed in Viet Nam leaving me to bring up little Laurie, our only child. Having no other family, I did it alone.

Trina never even asked my last name. If she did, she would have realized that my granddaughter, Evangeline, was in her class at school. Evangeline lived with me. She had lived here all her life. A week before my daughter Laurie was to be married, her fiancé was electrocuted in a tragic work accident. A few days after the funeral Laurie found she was pregnant and moved back home with me. Together, as mother and grandmother, we raised our beautiful and kind Evangeline.

As I prepared the necessary solutions and readied the shop for today's appointment, I recalled a few

fragments of Trina's myriad conversations.

"So how do you like my new jeans? There're from the Gap. They're really expensive. My mother didn't think I needed three pair, but I got 'em anyway." Laurie and I had never bought jeans for Evangeline at the Gap. We couldn't afford it.

"I just had acrylic nails done at the mall. This flower design is way cool. Next time I'm getting the little gold stars on blue. It looked soooo neat on the chart. And I think I'll have my toes done to match." I remembered sitting on the porch giggling with Evangeline one afternoon as the two of us painted our nails a delicate shell pink.

"I don't know why, but I always get the rotten teachers. Do you know Mrs. McConner, the English teacher? Well, she gave me a D on my report card, and it's not fair! I don't know how she expects us to read all that crap she assigns! No one likes her." Evangeline never complained to me about her teachers, and I recalled her mark was A- on her last English report card.

As I had worked on Trina's hair, I would simply smile and nod as she babbled on. She didn't seem to want any

feedback.

"I think I'm getting a new boyfriend. There's this really cute guy in my class at school. He likes this other girl, but that's because I haven't tried to get him to like ME yet. She thinks she has him all to herself, but she'll find out different. She has this long dark red hair. Yuck! I hate red hair! I'd rather be bald! I'm going to get him to take me to the Senior Ball instead of her."

Trina let out a shriek. "Ouch! You pulled my hair!"

"Sorry," I said. "My hand must have slipped."

Evangeline had a date for the Senior Ball with a nice looking shy young man in her class. He was her first serious boyfriend. She was planning to wear a pale yellow silk gown with spaghetti straps. It looked lovely with her long auburn tresses, and she was as excited over the coming event as I have ever seen her.

I looked at the clock on the Beauty Shop wall. Trina would be here for her appointment soon. I unlocked the front door, turning the white cardboard sign from 'closed' to 'open.'

A lot had happened since that Senior Ball, I thought. The class graduated and Evangeline was flourishing in a college in another state. My daughter moved out to be near her, and had found a decent job and a comfortable roomy apartment.

Trina continued to date the high school boyfriend and eventually they became engaged. After dropping out of a local college, she found a job at Lucy's Lingerie in the Mall. Each time she sat down in my shop chair to have her hair done, she prattled on with her complaints and trivia. Today was no different.

"Make sure you get my hair just right today. It's my big day, you know.

I'm wearing a pearl and rhinestone crown with my veil so that's why I'm extra fussy about the way my hair looks. I want it loose and smooth around my face."

She took a breath and continued. "You should see my bridesmaid gowns. Continued on page 31

Room at Inn from previous... especially when a train arrived. At the train's departure, the inn grew a little quieter. During those lulls, my mother ran up the three flights of stairs to the third floor to check on the children, and to bring them food.

Sometime after they moved in, the McDonald's son married an attractive woman. It wasn't long before his lovely bride ran off with a traveling salesman who had stopped at the Inn. The heartbroken groom took pity on my mother living in the cramped quarters of the tiny third floor room with her three children. He gave her all of his beautiful new household furnishings, including a Tiffany lamp and a beautiful rug that she said looked as green as grass whenever she swept it. My mother never forgot his kindness in making possible a move to an apartment of her own.

She was rehired at her old job at Monument Mills. The landlady of the apartment house agreed to watch the children. But, the landlady had a drinking problem, and let neighborhood kids take baby Bessie for a ride in her carriage. One day, the kids left the carriage unattended. It rolled down a hill to the edge of the Housatonic River and toppled over. Baby Bessie was thrown out and rolled to the very brink of the river bank. Not long after rescuing Bessy, my mother had a premonition at work that something terrible was about to happen. She jumped up from her sewing machine and ran home as fast as she could. She spotted two year old Johnny sitting on a railroad track playing with the ballast stones between the ties. With the whistle shrieking, an approaching train was bearing down on him. She ran to save him but, her knees buckled. Down she went. On her hands and knees, she scrambled to snatch Johnny out of the path of disaster, seconds before the train went thundering

by. She could do nothing but hold her son for a long time before she was able to go on.

A few days later, she came home to find Mary covered with blood, her fore finger bandaged. When my mother unwrapped the bandage, half of Mary's finger was gone. Blood would not stop flowing from the severed stump.

"What happened to your finger?"

"The landlady threw it in the river, so you wouldn't notice it was gone," Mary said. "I wasn't supposed to tell, but her son told me to hold a stick of wood so he could split it. He chopped my finger off."

My mother hurried Mary to a doctor to keep her from bleeding to death. The doctor said he could re-attach the finger, but it was gone, somewhere in the Housatonic River.

It was not long after, that someone got my mother a blind date with a widower, also with three children. He proposed marriage on the first date. She accepted before he finished proposing. It was a marriage of desperation. They had 7 more children. My mother's name was Mary and his was Joseph. When I was born, it's a wonder they didn't name me Jesus.

When Mary was 86 and Elizabeth was 80, I drove them to Housatonic for lunch at the Macano Inn. It had not changed much, over the years, except for the closing of the third floor. Unfortunately, the inn's present owners were permanently closing the inn, that very day. Upon hearing the story of my mother finding a room at the inn at Christmas, the owners served lunch to my two sisters and me. Looking around at the interior of the inn as we ate, Mary, who hadn't seen the inn for 80 years, remarked, "This place was much, much bigger when we lived here." ■

EDITOR

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King Crossword

1	2	3		4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11
12				13				14				
15				16				17				
18				19								
20				21		22			23	24	25	26
				27	28			29	30			
31	32	33						34				
35					36			37				
38					39	40			41	42	43	44
				45				46		47		
48	49	50	51							52		
53						54				55		
56						57				58		

- ACROSS
- 1 Chances, for short

4 Taxi

7 Walk through mud, maybe

12 Shell game need

13 Gorilla

14 Anorak

15 Attempt

16 Greenish-blue deposit on copper

18 “— Impossible”

19 Put forth

20 Eats

22 Schedule abbr.

23 Oil job

27 Mornings (Abbr.)

29 Inspiring horror

31 Supermarket section

34 Playing marble

35 Fodders for mills
- 37 Speedometer stat

38 Apiece

39 Old card game

41 Deuce topper

45 Gls’ alarm clock

47 Ostrich’s kin

48 Perfumery fixative

52 Rotating part

53 Measure

54 Type units

55 Intention

56 U-shaped river bend

57 Witness

58 Thickness
- DOWN
- 1 Re 26-Down

2 — Amboy, N.J.

3 Permission

4 Grotto

5 Pinnacles

6 Jaunty chapeau

7 Skewer

8 Trail the pack
- 9 Hockey legend

10 Tackle moguls

11 Owns

17 Schlep

21 “America’s Most Wanted” host

23 Frivolous

24 “Born in the —”

25 Luncheonette order, for short

26 Pupil’s place

28 Citi Field athlete

30 Knock

31 Census statistic

32 Playwright Levin

33 [Uncorrected]

36 Punch

37 Illinois city

40 Fairy tale baddies

42 Summarize

43 Cyber-message
- 44 Delicious

45 Concoct

46 Being (Lat.)

48 Way back when

49 Limit, for short

50 Mac

51 Id counterpart

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Container is missing. 2. Hair is missing. 3. Belt is missing. 4. Suspenders are missing. 5. Sign is missing. 6. Cash register is missing. 7. Hair is smaller.

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

3				8	1	7		
	7			5				9
		5		3			2	
	9			7		2		
		2			8			6
4			2				5	1
	1	4	3			8		
9				4				7
	5				9		3	

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

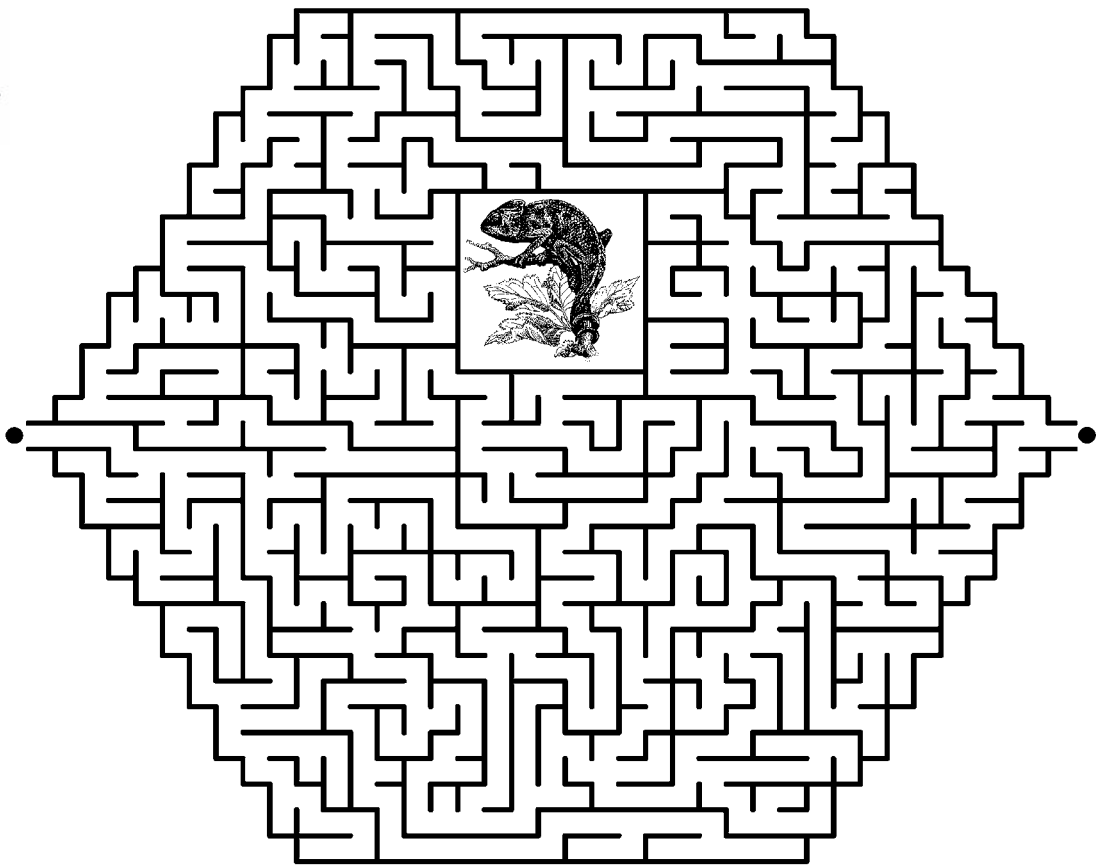
DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ★

★ Moderate ★★ Challenging
★★★ HOO BOY!

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Mega Maze

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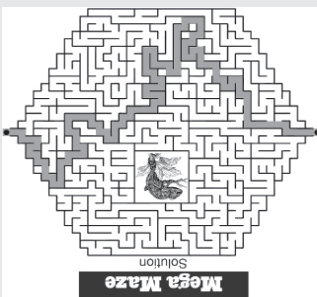


ANSWERS

4	3	9	6	1	6	7	8	5	2
7	1	5	4	2	4	8	3	8	9
2	6	8	9	5	8	7	1	4	7
1	5	6	8	9	2	2	8	7	4
9	7	4	8	6	1	2	5	3	5
3	8	2	5	7	4	4	9	6	1
8	2	1	7	3	8	6	5	4	9
6	9	3	4	5	2	4	5	7	8
5	2	9	6	8	1	7	4	3	2

Answer

Weekly SUDOKU



PLY	SEE	W	OB	X
W	GA	UE	NS	IS
AM	BE	RG	IS	GA
EM	BU	GL	EO	NS
RE	Y	LO	CH	EA
CH	ST	IS	MP	TH
AG	TE	LA	ST	IS
LY	GR	IS	LA	UB
SL	OS	HO	WA	MO
IS	EX	ER	IT	TS
SI	VE	RD	IG	RI
PA	RE	PA	KA	VA
CA	AB	SL	OS	HO

Solution time: 27 mins.

Answers

King Crossword



“I’ve learned that mistakes can often be as good a teacher as success.”

— Jack Welch

Jack Welch, former GE CEO, April 2012
by Hamilton83 // wikipedia.com

How small business owners can market their businesses



According to Forbes magazine, more than 50 percent of the working population works for a small business. The Small Business Association reports there are almost 28 million small businesses in the United States. Many small businesses are home-based and hundreds get started each month.

Despite their prevalence, only a handful of small businesses survive more than 10 years. Small business owners must learn how to properly market their businesses and garner a larger audience to stay afloat. While there's no set amount a business should devote to advertising and marketing, such expenses should be included in an organization's operational

- budget.
- Small business owners just getting started may want to consider the following tips as they attempt to market their businesses and expand their customer base.
- Create an online presence. A survey from online marketing firm Yodle found that only about half of small businesses have websites. Customers routinely go online to learn more about businesses and make purchases. Customers will visit websites to find directions to brick-and-mortar stores, find store hours and/or learn about the products or services offered by a particular firm. Small business owners should establish an online presence and ensure the site is routinely updated and modernized.
 - Sponsor local events. For a relatively small investment, small businesses can get their names out to the public by sponsoring community events. When approached by schools and other organizations, lend your help. Donate a basket of goods or a certificate for services for gift auctions. Work with organizations to donate a portion of sales to a charity or school through a specialized fundraiser. Contact a sports league to see if your company name can be printed on uniforms or used on banners around the field. Not only will this get your name out, but it also will establish a positive image of your company.
 - Establish yourself as an 'expert' Be accessible to jour-

- nalists and media outlets who may need quotes or insight when writing articles. Local papers and circulars can get your name out to the community and bring in new customers. Being quoted in print helps establish a reputation as being an authority in your field.
- Don't ignore social media. According to Adroit Digital, 75 percent of Americans who use the Internet admit that product information found on social media influences their shopping behavior and enhances brand loyalty. Social media accounts are generally free to set up and require minimal effort to maintain. Social media can help establish and maintain a brand and help you share messages and other content.
- Small business owners can enhance their marketing efforts by taking some relatively easy steps to widen their reach and get their names out to the public. ■

Crowning Glory continued from page 29

I had them custom sewn because I couldn't find anything I liked readymade. My bridesmaids are carrying wicker baskets filled with pink and white rose petals to scatter on the white carpet. And then I will walk in over the petals. Isn't that awesome? Alice, what is that smell? Why does the hair color smell different than it usually does? Are you sure you are using the right chemicals? You better not make a mistake!"

"It's exactly the same color, Trina. I bought this batch from a different supply house so it may have a different odor, but it's the same color. Trust me on that."

As the minutes crept by waiting for the color to develop, there was no break from Trina's tongue.

"Tons of people are coming to my wedding. We hired this great photographer to do the album. He said that I'll make a beautiful bride, and maybe he will use one of my pictures for his advertising. Did I tell you we are going on a cruise for our Honeymoon? It's a gift from my fiancé's parents. I really wanted a two week cruise, but they cheeped out and only paid for one week."

Finally the process was done. Her hair was carefully dried and styled. She looked at it critically from all angles. "I guess its ok. It doesn't look quite as shiny as usual though."

"I did give your hair an extra heavy coat of spray to hold it in place until the ceremony. You don't want it to frizz up, do you? Just before you put on your crown and veil this afternoon, be sure to give your hair a good brushing to remove the extra spray and bring up the highlights. Not to worry. It will come out just the way I intend. I think you're simply over excited, Trina."

As she was leaving, I tried to say "Congratulations, I hope you have a wonderful wedding," but the words stuck in my throat like shards of glass. I could only manage to mumble, "Good Luck."

After she left I turned the sign on the door back to 'closed,' and pulled down the shade. Quickly clean-

ing up what was used in the shop, I put it out in the trash for that evening's pick-up. I went back to my upstairs flat to get the suitcases standing packed and ready, and put them in the car. Tomorrow a thrift shop was coming for the furniture. I made previous arrangements to donate it all and had already given them a key. The lease on this building where I lived and worked was up at the end of the month. I was not renewing.

Driving along in my car a few hours later, I finally began to relax. I lowered the window to let the breeze ruffle my chipped grey curls. It felt good. It made me think of Evangeline's long red hair, and I smiled. I was eager to join my daughter and sweet granddaughter. It

also made me think of Trina, who said she hated red hair and would rather be bald. I looked at the clock on the dashboard and smiled again. Right about now she was getting her wish. ■

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Find the following phrase:

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*Must be at least 18 years of age to participate.
MUST BE WILLING TO HAVE YOUR PHOTO TAKEN FOR THE NEXT ISSUE

\$100 Contest Winner

You could be the next lucky reader



Our latest contest winner is Pauline Fairbrother who resides in Utica with her husband Richard. They are both retirees of the post office; Pauline with 21 years of service and her husband with 32.

Pauline usually picks up

her copy of EDITOR at Christine's Styling Shop in Marcy but this time grabbed one at Bank of Utica.

We asked her what makes her such a loyal reader of EDITOR and she quickly ran down a long list that included: the size, "It's just so easy to read!" She also said that the size and the pretty glossy cover makes them stand out well. "You see them everywhere!" She enjoys seeing all the local businesses. Many of those businesses she either had

never heard about before or had forgotten about them. "It's just so nice to be reminded of the great local places that we can eat and shop."

When asked if there was anything that we could do to make her love her EDITOR even more, she thought for a moment and said, "More recipes!" We do try to include recipes when we can Pauline, but we will keep your request in mind, especially with the holidays coming around so quickly!

Pauline is a faithful contest participant and was thrilled that her turn finally came around! Pauline calls in to our contest every issue and when we talk to her on the phone she is always so sweet and kind. The world needs more people like you, Pauline. Stay positive and bubbly. You bring joy into the lives of the people who are lucky enough to know you!

She shared with us that she had gone to Chanant-ry's Market to purchase a \$100. Children's Miracle Network ticket for her son Michael earlier that day. When she got home and heard our message on her answering machine, all she could think of was, "God is good!" Yes he is Pauline and so are our great readers! Thanks again from all of us here at EDITOR magazine for your support. We hope you continue to play and make our day brighter with your phone call!

This issue's contest clue can be found in the accompanying ad on this very page. We wish you all the best of luck! ■



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Doing away with dining rooms

Formal dining rooms are no longer as coveted as they once were. Family dinners, if they manage to be at home, are now just as likely to be served in the kitchen or in another space, such as on the patio or in the living room while watching television, as they are in formal dining rooms. Trendy homeowners have begun to ditch dining rooms in favor of using the space for other purposes. Homeowners with a passion for literature can outfit the room with floor-to-ceiling bookcases to turn one-time dining rooms into the ultimate library. Those who need a bit more family space can use a dining room as a family room, outfitting the room with all storage nooks, a flat screen TV and a comfortable couch to make it more inviting. Because dining rooms are often located next to the kitchen, the removal of walls can make expanding the kitchen even easier. If their kitchens are cramped, homeowners can look into ways to spread out into the space allotted for the dining area. There are many ways to repurpose dining rooms so they are functional to homeowners' specific needs, especially if those needs do not include formal dining areas.



It's not about the music, or is it?

-Revisiting rock concerts at age 50

By Dyann Nashton



"Eddie looked good," I told a friend. Eddie and I go way back. As a high school student with big hair and shoulder pads to match, Eddie's guitar riffs would stream off a Van Halen cassette, the soundtrack to our youth.

I have never seen, much less met, Eddie Van Halen or any other members of the rock band bearing his family name until a few weeks ago. "Yes," I said, feeling wounded, to my astonished kids, "I'm going to a rock concert."

The venue was outdoors and the thought of porta-potties didn't quite sit well (no pun intended) with me.

Sure, I would suffer them at marathon antique festivals because hand sanitizer is readily available, but I'd also go home with great bargains and treasures, not disease.

En route to the concert, we slid one Van Halen CD after another in the car's player and inventoried the beverages cooling in the trunk for the pre-concert tailgate party. It was the end of summer when sultry days could unexpectedly give way to chilly nights. We checked weather reports on our phones, a luxury that didn't exist in the '80s. But we didn't care about the weather back then. We were

young, resilient and physical comfort meant nothing.

When we approached the venue's gates, we were asked to open our handbags in the event that we were smuggling contraband. I lifted the flap back on my bag and the security guard gave it a two-handed pat. She noticed the slight bulge in the back pocket. "Wallet?" she asked. "No, socks," I replied sheepishly looking down at my polished toenails and sandals. She laughed and waved us in.

Honestly, when the median age of the audience is 50, skipping a warm-up band would be a public service. The main act wouldn't start until 9:00 p.m., when I normally would be brushing, flossing and curling up with a book in bed.

We settled into amazing ninth row seats just in time for the main act to take stage. That was the last time our lower regions rested against those pricey seats. My back could testify to that fact the following day. After the first half hour on my feet, swelling began to protest the straps on my sandals. I don't remember having these issues as a teen.

But, what a show! Eddie looked and sounded great on lead guitar. His brother didn't miss a beat behind sunglasses and expansive drum kit. Eddie's son, Wolfgang, dwarfed his father on stage and played bass deftly. His poker face only broke

occasionally with the subtle life of an eyebrow. Famous lead singer, David Lee Roth, ever the showman, strutted across the stage, dropping into the occasional split or tossing a spinning karate kick to punctuate the music. The man is 60 years old. At 12, I couldn't perform these kinds of acrobatics.

I was fascinated comparing Eddie with David. David looked slightly gaunt with thinning hair (or hair plugs, perhaps). Eddie, who overcame tongue cancer, looked fit with short salt and pepper hair and goatee.

In the end, it was just as impossible to compare the two as it had been 30 years ago. Roth's antics and theatrical expressions made for a fun show while Eddie's lightning fingers strummed and plucked. His elfish grin and accompanying twinkle in his eye left all of the women in the audience pining again for the boy next door. In one rare moment, Eddie crossed to stage right to play alongside his son and

then planted an endearing kiss on his 24-year-old son's head. During Eddie's solo, Wolfgang was up near his uncle's drum set videoing his old man on his smart phone. They must make Valerie Bertinelli, Wolfgang's mom and Eddie's ex, proud. Now, as then, I envy her.

David changed jackets and vests at least five times during the show: black tuxedo and vest with no shirt, blue sequin jacket, just the vest alone or completely bare above the waist except for his intensely-colored tattoos. The magnificent ink, itself a costume, seamlessly covered his entire back, upper arms and front torso. Only a three-inch strip down his middle remained free of color, lending a jacket-like look on his flesh.

"Hey, Ed! Come here," he said pointing to his glittering pile of castoff jackets and vests, "It looks like Elton John had a skydiving accident!"

And what that man could do with that microphone

stand! There were rhinestones affixed to the underside of the mike stand's feet making it clear it was more prop than a piece of equipment. In David's hands, it became a sledgehammer, golf club, rifle, pool stick and the baton that leads a marching band.

Occasionally, there was the odor of spilled beer, fried concession food and some other sweet, smoky scents I recognize from bygone days. Today, I'm more partial to a whiff of a campfire, good sweet Riesling and basil picked fresh from the garden.

Despite my half century physique, I had a damn good time. I waved my hands, nodded my head to the beat and sang along. After each song, feeling a bit like Thelma or Louise, I shouted, "Woohoo!"

As recommended, I danced like nobody was watching. Nobody was watching. They were all dancing, too. ■

The Harvest

by Al Dorantes

Every harvest has a beginning. This one started in early May when my 13 year old son started work on a secret project. I tried to ignore the hammering but when he asked to use the circular saw had to get involved. He was dismantling an old planter box. It was junk so I was pleased to see his willingness to do something around the house. When we were done he said, "Now I can repurpose and upcycle the wood."

"Into what I asked?" The planter box was in horrible shape thus the dismantling.

He replied, "I'm going to take the wood and make it into something that can hold dirt and I'm going to plant some stuff."

"So, you're making a planter?"

"Yep," he replied without missing a beat.

I spent the next couple of hours explaining how we wasted time taking apart the pre-existing planter to repurpose the materials into a new planter. Logic was not to be heard. Instead I got a symposium about all the vegetables he was going to plant.

We built a new planter from the stripped down carcass of the old planter. The wood was soft and uncooperative. Each place that normally would have needed one screw to hold it together needed 2 or 3. Eventually I just started using six inch deck screws. Better safe than sorry.

Next we had to fill the new planter box with dirt. At first, Alex wanted to use dirt from the lawn. He used the word repurpose again and I calmly explained that we would not be turning the yard into a topsoil production facility. We went to our local big box hardware store and selected 5 bags of
continued on page 36...

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FAVORITES

Bringing Frankenstein to Life

You can't have a mad scientist Halloween party without Frankenstein. This easy buttercream cake makes a big statement, a fantastic centerpiece for your sweets table and will make others green with envy over your decorating skills. For more Halloween party ideas and inspiration, visit wilton.com.

Frankenstein Cake

Serves: 12

- 6 cups favorite cake recipe or mix
- 4 cups Wilton White Ready-To-Use Decorator Icing (4.5-pound tub)
- Wilton Color Right Performance Color System
- Wilton Black Icing Pouch with Tips
- Wilton Large Candy Eyeballs

Tools:

- Wilton 6-by-3-inch Round Pan
- Wilton 10-by-16-inch Cooling Grid
- Cake plate
- Wilton Cake Leveler
- Wilton 13-inch Angled Spatula
- Wilton 12-inch Disposable Decorating Bags

Prepare cake according to box instructions and make two layers using 6-inch round pans. Bake and cool on cooling grid.

Prepare Spring Green icing using this color tint formula from the Color Right Performance Color System: 4 cups icing + 30 Y + 6 B. Stack layers on cake plate for a two-layer cake, using leveler as needed. Ice cake sides smooth with green icing.

Use black pouch icing without tip to cover top of cake. Use tip of spatula to create spiral effect. Use black pouch icing with star tip to pipe pull-out bangs around top edge and two hair strands on cake top.

Prepare a disposable decorating bag with green icing; cut a hole in point of bag the size of tip 3. Attach candy eyeballs with dots of green icing. Pipe green eyelids.

Use black pouch icing with round tip to pipe dot nose and neck bolts, outline mouth and stitches.



Cast a Sweet Spell

Use fresh Chilean navel oranges, mandarins and lemons to cast a spell on your frightful Halloween party goblins with Bubbling Witches Brew and Spook-tacular Fruit Cups. Looking for more festive ideas? Add orange pumpkin treats to the menu. Just peel a mandarin and insert a small piece of celery in the center for the stem.

Find these and more sweetly satisfying recipes at fruitsfromchile.com.

Bubbling Witches Brew

To make 5 cups, freshly squeeze 3 1/2 cups mandarin orange juice and 1/2 cup lemon juice. Cover and chill.

When ready to serve, pour chilled juice into punch bowl or pitcher and stir in 1 cup chilled sweet sparkling soda and ice cubes. Taste for sweetness.

Peel and slice mandarin oranges to make pinwheel shapes that resemble spider webs to garnish each drink. Use frozen red or black grapes as an additional optional garnish.

Spook-tacular Fruit Cups

Cut off top 1/5 of an orange and use paring knife to separate fruit from inside of orange, being careful not to cut through peel. It's not necessary to get all of the flesh out, just enough to fill with cut fruit.

Squeeze juice from removed fruit and add to Bubbling Witches Brew.

If necessary, shave small amount of peel off bottom so cups sit level, being careful not to create an opening in the base. Use paring knife to carve faces, and fill each cup with orange pieces, melon balls, grapes and blueberries.

How to Host the Perfect Spooky Gathering

Halloween is the perfect time to throw on a costume and act like a kid. Of course, you want friends and family there to partake in the spooky fun, too, so here are a few tips to make sure your party is remembered long after the witches put away their cauldrons:

■ **Set a festive mood:** Creepy Halloween decor, such as spider webs and Jack-O-Lanterns, can be placed around the house and yard to help get guests into the holiday spirit. Halloween-themed music, such as "Monster Mash" and movies, such as "Dracula" and "Frankenstein," can help offset any down time, as can sharing scary stories.

- **Play some ghoulish games:** Bobbing for apples is a Halloween tradition you can't leave out. Halloween bingo or a pin the tail on the donkey-type game, such as pin the nose on the skull, can also add to the fun. Or try a treasure hunt for a ghost ship's loot by scattering clues around the house that lead to ghastly goodies.
- **Vampires, ghosts and zombies, oh my:** Add a costume contest to the mix and hand out prizes to some of the best. Try breaking the contest into a few categories or by age, and awarding prizes, such as most creative, judge's choice and crowd favorite.

Harvest from page 33

their finest, top quality, planting soil and 2 bags of manure. Once we were home the kid energetically filled his new planter box and turned in the manure.

Planting was relatively easy. From a neighborhood produce stand he bought, with his own money, a bunch of started carrots and some red bell peppers plants. The 40 odd carrots were transplanted into the planter box. The bell peppers went into 4 or 5 pots he found somewhere. One pot I firmly believe he stole from the neighbor lady.

Watering the plants became an instant issue. He watered the carrots 3 or 4 times a day. After some research and some debate we managed to curtail the watering down to once a day. He managed to hydrate the carrots and peppers either in the morning or evening for almost a whole week. After that he had to be reminded, constantly. Throughout May, June, July, and August it became a daily trial to remind the kid about his responsibility and then double check that the plants were actually watered. Eventually, I just started watering them myself when I got home from work. It was easier that way.

Weeding was another task that he ne-



Alex Dorantes and his harvest.

glected and I adopted. At first the carrots' planter box was kept neat and clean and weeds were nipped out almost before they appeared. Shortly after the first time it became almost an afterthought. I would snag the weeds on the way in after work.

One day, just before Labor Day the kid was

awake and out the door before me. I asked his sister, Julie, "Where'd your brother go off to?"

"Oh, he picked some carrots and he's taking them to grandma's house." She said.

I found him 2 blocks from home walking towards his grandmother's carrying a gallon Ziplock bag full of the saddest looking carrots known to man. They were twisted and contorted. Some spiraled around like a corkscrew and some were bent over like a candy cane. One looked like a pig's tail. The kid had not taken the time to clean the carrots. They were covered with clods of mud and dirt. The green tops of the carrots stuck out the top corner of the bag.

At his grandmother's house, before morning coffee could be had, Alex spouted off at the mouth about his harvest like a proud parent. He pointed out the one that looked like a pig's tail and one that looked like the letter "L." The sheer exuberance of his excitement was contagious. I was proud of his pride and excitement. I drove off to work with a smile on my face, chuckling in my mind about the funny shaped carrots.

Later that day, after the dirt and mud was washed off the carrots we had them for dinner. Alex's face beamed as we ate the



The new repurposed upcycled planter box.

orange circles. It's funny how these weird little carrots taste so much better than store bought carrots. It is as if sweat equity is the secret ingredient; besides salt and butter. ■

Cayo Industrial Horror Realm

by Al Dorantes

During October thousands of horror fans from all over the northeast will converge on 811 Broad Street in Utica to have their wits scared out of them. Cayo Industrial Horror realm will host fright seekers on Friday - Saturdays in October.

Owner Joshua Reale started Cayo Industrial Horror

Realm in 2003. Cayo (pronounced like K O) was held at the historic Herkimer jail from 2005-2007. In 2008 Joshua Reale moved Cayo to its current location, the 25,000 square foot warehouse on Broad Street.

Reale said, "People think you throw up some walls and buy Halloween masks. It's much more involved." He added, "It's not just

October. It's a life style; a passion."

Joshua Reale makes props in the off season and keeps his morbid sensibilities on point by film making in the off season. His most recent endeavor, Necropath, a short film, has won awards at the Philadelphia International Terror Film Fest as well as the Empire State of the Dead Contest.

Cayo Industrial Horror Realm is actually 4 different horror attractions spread over 2 levels of the spacious warehouse. Cayo prefers visitors to be age 13 and up not have any heart problems. Cayo is not your typical Halloween attraction. Cayo is theme based and their scenarios scare and shock visitors. They strive to make people think after their time in the repository of terror. Reale explained that at Cayo you get the scare factor plus hopefully they keep you thinking about what you saw.

Cayo Industrial Horror Realm returns now for its 13th year with four walk through horror attractions; Biotech, Biowar, Revelation, and their brand new attraction, Archana Asylum.

Archana Asylum is described as, "A private research mental asylum discovered hidden behind a facade during reconstruc-



tion of the warehouse. The person responsible for the existence of the asylum lair was described as an industrial demonic madman. Documents lingered detailing experiments to control thoughts of mass amounts of people through airwaves, food consumption, visual media, and the air we breathe. It has been

said these documents were seized by governments assumed to be in practice today. You will walk these halls of Archana Asylum."

The Revelation attraction allows visitors to experience end of world representations of a zombie-like state of emergency in the quarantine attraction. The

Biowar attraction puts you right in the midst of war. The screams of animal and man within the machines will terrify you in the Biotech attraction. Enter each attraction for \$10 per attraction or buy 3 get 1 free with a \$30 Multipass, which grants you access to all four walk through Cayo attractions, including the all new Archana Asylum.

While Joshua Reale is focused on the gruesome vignettes of Cayo Industrial Horror Realm he also has a warm spot. If you bring a can of pet food, you receive \$1 off admission. The pet food is donated to Herkimer Country Humane Society. Reale explained that he is trying to make Cayo Industrial Horror Realm a staple for the area for the fall season, "You know, like jack-o-lanterns, cider & doughnuts, and Cayo Industrial Horror Realm," he said.

This is the 13th year for Cayo Industrial Horror Realm. The number 13 is a buzz number for fright aficionados and the walk through warehouse of horror will be filled with all manner of mind numbing macabre displays. For more information go to: www.cayoindustrial.com or follow them on Facebook: Cayo Industrial Horror Realm ■

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History in Your Backyard



In the southwestern corner of Oneida County in the Town of Agusta you will find the historical marker for Amos Parker. The marker, at the intersection of Anderson Road and Solsville Agusta Road, reads, "Amos Parker 1782-1842 tallest man in American army; saved Gen. Lafayette's life. Present at the surrender of Cornwallis. Buried here."

At a time when most American men averaged approximately five foot

six, a giant of a man fought for this country's freedom. Amos Parker fought gallantly for his new nation and was with Lafayette at Yorktown. Amos Parker purportedly saved Lafayette's life in a close combat engagement.

A 1925 newspaper reported Amos Parker's heroics almost as if it were an action movie. "General Lafayette ordered an entrenchment which was protected by palisades to

swerve. Parker who was the tallest man in the revolution put his hand to the top of the loosened post and by the strength of his brawny arm drew it from its position. He

rear. The order was not to shoot until the command was given. However, to save the life of Lafayette this was necessary. Parker did so, thereby saving the life of his beloved general. Afterward, he was tried and acquitted. He had crowned the expedition with success. In 1824 when Lafayette the "Nations' Guest," was at Utica the old soldier called at his room. Guards were disposed to admit him. He persisted and

obtained entrance. He offered his hand to Gen. Lafayette.

His old commander did not recognize him and asked Parker to relate some incident by which he might recall him. Parker related the incident of the charge and they, like Joseph and Benjamin, wept upon each other's shoulder."

Unbeknownst to him, Amos Parker's brave disobedience affected the course of the Revolutionary War. If General Lafayette had been killed during the raid on the palisades then the war could have gone in a different direction.

Lafayette made 2 trips back to France for weapons, ammunition, soldiers and supplies. Without these crucial elements the war could have resulted differently.

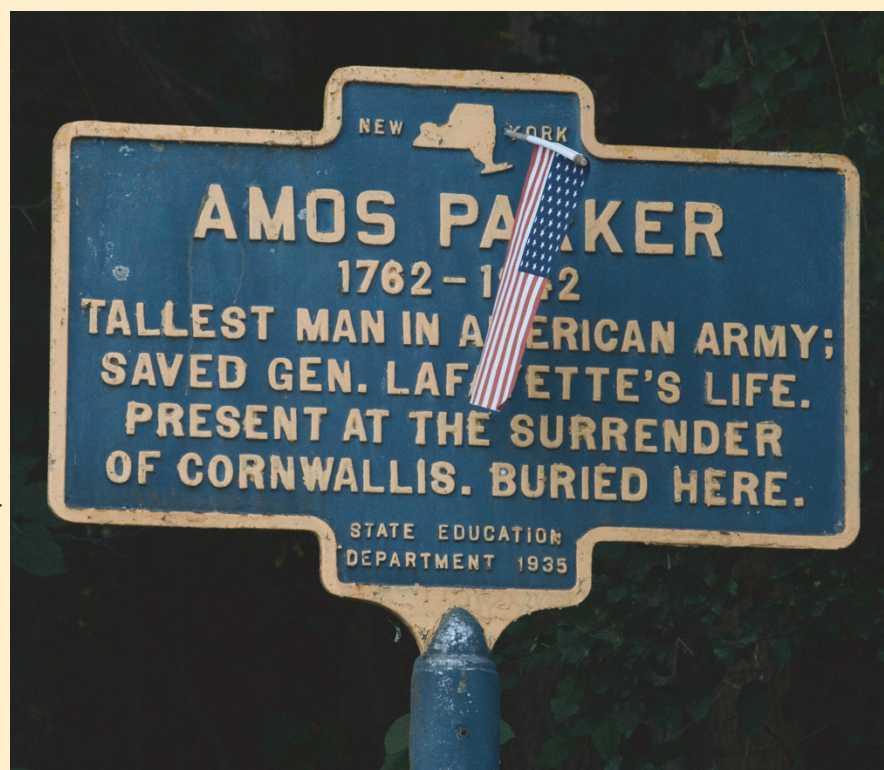
Parker's company was the Mansfield Com-

pany of the 4th Conn. Regiment. He was discharged at West Point in 1787. Amos Parker was an active and devoted Christian. He had three daughters, Amanda Hand and Cornelia Parker of Agusta and Elizabeth Wilcox of Indian Creek, Ill. His grandchildren were Erasmus Rockwood, Oswego; Mary Ann Lyan, residence unknown; Rufus and Henry Rockwood, all of Volney N.Y.

Parker was supposedly the tallest man in the army; however,

no one has his accurate height. Although an exact recording of Amos Parker's height is not available stories and legends report him to be nearly 8 feet tall. Amos Parker is buried in the South Cemetery in the southwestern part of it.

In the Revolutionary War, one of the biggest events to shape the world as we know it, it is interesting to hear the larger than life exploits of a giant of a man and who is buried here in our backyard.



be taken by storm. To do this he selected 25 men armed with muskets and axes. On this charge Amos Parker marched by Lafayette's side. They cleared the way to the Palisades. Here Parker struck two blows at one of the pickets, but it did not

then pulled down two more posts. Lafayette exclaimed, "That will do my boy." Lafayette followed by Parker passed through the opening.

Within were the enemy. Friends were pressing in from the

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Mother's recipe

—flour isn't just flour

By Joe Parzych

Rubber Donuts

- 1 cube of moist yeast or a packet of quick-acting dry yeast
- 1 cup of milk
- 1 pat of butter
- 2 to 3 cups of bread flour
- 1 egg



My mother used to make wonderfully chewy rubber donuts, with substance; not at all resembling the cake-like products available commercially.

Despite caring for kids, cats, cows and chickens, she still managed to cook and bake with meager resources, delectable bread and rolls—and those wonderfully chewy donuts. I suspect the reason for her success in producing the chewy effect was in the type of flour she used.

Flour isn't just flour. Flour mills make cake flour from soft spring wheat, and bread flour from hard winter wheat, which is planted in the fall. Winter wheat contains gluten. Manufacturers make all purpose flour by blending winter and spring wheat flours. Then there is whole wheat flour which must be mixed half and half with white flour if you ever expect it to rise even a little bit, so forget about using just plain whole wheat flour. Equal proportions of wheat flour, yeast, baking powder, and gunpowder are needed to make whole wheat dough rise. If you ever get a notion to use only whole wheat flour, lie down with a damp cloth on your forehead until the notion goes away.

Bread flour used by commercial bakeries contains conditioners and added gluten, resulting in more elastic dough which traps yeast gasses, making the dough rise well and feel fresh when it's a week, or two, old. The nearest thing to bakery flower sold in super markets is "Better for Bread" or "Bread Machine Flour." I suspect my mother used commercial bakery flour; since my father was friends with a bakery owner and the bakery dough and donuts exhibited unrivaled elasticity.

My mother melted the butter on the stove in the milk with the yeast cake, stirring to dissolve it. I'm only guessing at the amounts. (As you cook more, you measure less.) Since we made butter at home, she may have been more generous with it than the amount I listed.

Dissolving the yeast in luke-warm milk lets you know whether or not the yeast is a dud. If the mixture foams, you know the yeast is good and the dough will rise well. If you do not make a test, or proof and the yeast is a dud, and you have a painful of flat dough, and you may begin to foam, yourself.

Stir in the egg, and add flour. If the dough is too sticky, a handful of flour will cure that. Too stiff dough needs a dollop of milk. But don't get carried away; donut dough needs to be on the dry side.

Sprinkle flour on a smooth surface and knead the bread with the heel of your palm, turning and folding it, as you knead. I like to slam bread dough down, from time to time, to work out the bubbles of yeast gas and to work off any aggression I might harbor. It's good exercise and very therapeutic.

When you've sufficiently harried the dough, and it feels silky, cover it with a cloth and place it in a bowl greased with olive oil. Place it in a warm place until the dough doubles in size. By the time you feed the cows, cat, dog, chickens, and kids, as my mother did, the dough will be ready to punch down. If your husband strolls in asking what's for supper, punch him, too. Slam the dough down with a vengeance a couple of times to get rid of the big bubbles and any feelings of aggression towards your mate.

Roll the dough out on a floured cutting board and cut into a donut shape with a donut cutter. You can cut out donuts with a water glass if you don't mind them not having holes—that way you'll have dough for jelly donuts. Cover with a cloth and allow the cut dough segments to rise. Don't wander off; they'll rise faster this time. By the time you find a kettle and get vegetable oil, or lard, hot enough to deep-fat fry, spread out some paper towels, and get the cat from underfoot, they'll be risen enough to fry. Use a wooden spoon to flip or remove them. When browned on both sides, remove and place on the paper towels. When the grease has drained off, you can shake them in a paper bag with powdered sugar, or chew them plain. Either way, they are delectable. Don't fret about the fat. Fat is good, now. Turns out your brain needs fat to function. Atkins Diet calls for fatty foods. I love Atkins almost as much as rubber donuts. ■

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How to store fresh apples

Apples are a popular fruit that are grown in different places around the world. Come autumn, apples can be seen filling farm stands and supermarkets all over North America. Apples are available year-round, but many apple lovers insist there's nothing better than plucking an apple directly off the tree in the fall. Apple orchards and pick-your-own farms are visited each autumn by apple lovers anxious for apples' tart and juicy taste. Many people pick more apples than they can eat in a few days, so it pays to learn how to store apples properly so none of them go to waste.

Start by picking a variety of apple that won't go bad too quickly. Apple growers can make suggestions, but Jonathan, Rome, Fuji, and Granny Smith varieties tend to last longer than other varieties. Choose apples that are free of blemishes or soft spots. The adage that "one bad apple can spoil the whole bunch" bears some truth. Apples give off eth-

ylene gas as they decay, and a rotting apple can quickly affect nearby apples. A good place to store apples in the short-term is in the refrigerator where it is cool. Put the apples in the crisp-drawer. Do not store them with vegetables, as the apples may cause the veggies to ripen or rot prematurely. If you plan on long-term storage, a few extra steps are necessary. Apples need to be individually wrapped so they will not come in contact with other apples. Newsprint works great; just be sure to pick the pages that are done in black ink because colored ink may contain heavy metals.

Once wrapped, place each apple in a container padded with more news-paper. Store this container in a cool place, such as a garage, root cellar or screened-in porch. Apples can last a couple of months if stored in this manner. Keep apples away from potatoes, as potatoes can cause the fruit to prematurely decay.

Another way to store apples is to turn them into preserves or apple sauce. By boiling the apples and sealing them shut in canning jars, that fresh apple taste can be enjoyed long after the apples are picked. Consult with a canning expert about the right way to begin the process. Fruits are generally canned using a boiling-water canner. However, some fruits, like apples, can be canned with a pressure canner. Because apples tend to discolor when the flesh meets the air, use a little lemon juice to prevent this while canning. Turning apples into candied apples also can help them keep longer. Apples can be dipped into a sugary coating, caramel or toffee to be enjoyed later on. Of course, you always can bake apples into a pie as well, then freeze the pie for another day. Autumn would be incomplete without apples. Get ready for apple season by developing a storage plan before you visit the orchard. ■

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