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Morgan's True Value



by Al Dorantes

Located at 108 Main Street in the heart of beautiful, downtown Waterville, New York, F. P. Morgan's True Value is an old fashioned hardware store. Opened in 1930, by Frank P. Morgan as an old fashioned hardware store. They sold everything you might need for various household projects. They even sold John Deere parts during the 1930-1940's. The store has seen 3 generations of Morgan's and in 1973, Frank's son, Jim Morgan, the owner at that time, took on the True Value franchise.

Current owner, third generation Morgan, Tom Morgan explained that they have a great customer base that is very understanding from the surrounding community. He said, "Big box stores and internet have buried a lot of small town hardware stores. Our personal touch keeps us in the fight." With a staff of 7, the experience and customer service will take you back to a time before big box hardware stores; a time when you had to know the products you were selling.

Morgan's True Value Hardware is a full service hardware store. Whether you are looking for paint (you can choose from their full line of Benjamin Moore paints) or if you are picking up the last items to finish up your "honey do list" Morgan's fully stocked shelves have what you need. If you need pipe cut and threaded, they do that

in-house. They have you covered in the glass department. They cut glass and plexi glass and will even repair windows for you. The full service hardware dealer will deliver items like water softener salt.

Morgan's has been selling furniture since the 1980's. They offer mattresses by Restonic, made in Buffalo, New York, and Amish made Ort recliners made in Ohio. In the gift shop you will find a selection of Leanin' Tree gift cards for almost any occasion. They also sell a large variety of New York State made products such as pickles, pickled vegetables, spreads and much more. Great for hostess gifts around the holidays! The outdoorsy theme rolls into the many tin signs that are available as well as inspirational gifts.

Tom Morgan explained that over the years the hardware store has received some odd requests. Most recently he was asked about "up flush toilets." The call came in from Kansas last week. Frank gave them the price quote and is waiting to hear back.

That is what old fashioned customer service and experience will get you; satisfaction. Whether you are buying a single nut or bolt to repair something or if you need gallons of paint the friendly and experienced staff at Morgan's True Value will help you out. For more information go to: www.truevalue.com/morgans or call 315-841-4103 ■

Totally U Hair Designs

by Al Dorantes

If you are looking for a place to get your locks clipped or your tresses trimmed then look no further than Totally U Hair Designs. Located at 103 East Main Street in Waterville, New York

Owner Kimberly S. Holc opened the salon in 1988. She has been in her current location for 15 years and has been cutting hair for 37 years. Kim has seen trends come and go.

Totally U Hair Designs offers many services to suit all likes.....highlights, lowlights, cuts, makeovers, facials, waxing, perms, up dos, down dos, consultations, and more. Men, women, and children of all ages are welcome. Kim even has toys to occupy the little ones.

Kim explained that she specializes in up dos, putting up hair for weddings, proms, semi formals, holidays, and all occasions. She also perms hair which she explained seems to be making a bit of a comeback. Kim had 6 girls in their 20's in the past 2 weeks have ask about perming their hair.

Kim said, "I love it all. I love to color hair."

Mondays are men's hair day. Men who stop in on Mondays receive a \$2 discount.

Totally U offers a full line of Goldwell, KMS, Paul Mitchell, Biologie and Fairy Tales. Fairy Tales repel lice, black flies & mosquitoes. Fairy Tales is the first line of natural hair care products proven to help prevent head lice using



Owner, stylist, Kim Holc LOVES to do color! Whether you want a subtle touch up or a FUN VIBRANT new look, Kim is the gal for you!

organic herbs. Kim said, "I don't use anything here that I don't believe in."

Totally U Hair Designs is open Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday 11-9, Tuesday

11-2, Friday 11-5, and Saturday by appointment. For more information follow her on Facebook: Totally - U - Hair Designs ■

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Professional Help for Pelvic Pain —beyond Medication

by Dr. Joe Martin, PT, DPT, OCS

Many women experience pelvic floor inadequacies that can present as pain during sex, sexual dysfunction, urinary and fecal urgency or incontinence, hip pain, groin pain, and constipation to name a few. Perhaps some are experiencing pelvic organ descent or prolapse, irritable bowel syndrome, or abdominal wall weakness.

Who Knew? Who knew that a significantly specialized, very skilled component of the physical therapy profession could give hope.....could restore happiness.....could reduce pain..... could improve the lives of so many women. (and men too by the way). Who knew?

These issues are some of the most sensitive issues in the medical community to discuss and it requires a very personal and trusting relationship with a compassionate and knowledgeable team of providers; Primary Care Providers, OBGYN Experts, Urologists, Gastroenterologists, and Licensed Physical Therapists who have undergone advanced training in Pelvic Floor and Urogynecological Rehabilitation.

In the absence of knowledge, in regards to pathology and pain, people feel hopeless and it has such a negative impact on many aspects of their lives. Pelvic floor dysfunction specifically, can be heartbreaking during the most intimate times in a loving relationship, or troubling while shopping or enjoying recreational activities out in the community. Neither of these scenarios necessarily need to be that way or stay that way; People must inquire and seek to empower themselves; Ask questions, research what is being done in bigger metropolitan areas, stay determined to overcome!

Dr. Joe Martin, PT, DPT, OCS is a Board Certified Orthope-



dic Clinical Specialist and the Founder of Six (6) Outpatient Physical Therapy Centers throughout Central New York. His Pelvic Floor Specialty Practice is located 3900 Oneida Street in New Hartford and Pamela Giruzzi Zegarelli, PT is the Treating Specialist. Dr. Joe can be reached by email joe1@functionbetter.com ■

How to improve relationships

Relationships can bring out the best in people, especially when couples share similar interests and goals. But even the most solid relationships can be put to the test by those bumps in the road that everyone faces from time to time.

Just as men and women must work to build strong physiques in the gym, they also must put forth effort to strengthen their relationships. People who aspire to strengthen communication with their partners and improve conflict resolution can benefit from a number of strategies.

- Don't expect a mind reader. Do not wait for your partner to spell out how he or she is feeling, or you may never get to the root of a given issue. You must start the conversation before real change can begin. Find a time when you are both rested, well fed and not distracted by any other responsibilities. Allow your

partner to express his or her feelings, and then explain your needs as well.

- Curtail criticism and blaming. According to experts at The Family & Marriage Counseling Directory™, criticizing is the adult version of crying. It's a method of relieving stress and showing distress. But inflicting pain on others will not get them to bend to your wishes.

- Keep outside interests a priority. Your spouse, boyfriend or girlfriend cannot provide for all of your needs. Expecting him or her to fill every role can lead to tension. Having outside friends, interests and a social network is a healthy idea. Just try to find a balance between that world and the world inside your home.

- Spend quality time together. As relationships evolve and jobs, children and other influences are mixed in, it can be challenging to find the time to spend with

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About our Pelvic Floor Specialized Provider:

Pamela Giruzzi Zegarelli, PT has over 30 years experience as a Physical Therapist and has attended Upstate Medical University in Syracuse for her Doctoral Studies. Her advanced training for Pelvic Floor rehabilitation and Urogynecologic specialization was pursued through the Herman & Wallace Pelvic Rehabilitation Institute. Pamela has traveled all over the country to fulfill her passion as a Pelvic Rehabilitation Practitioner.

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Image House Productions

– Like Father like Son



Brian Ure, co-creator of Image House Productions with his son Aaron Ure, owner of the business.

by Carly Proulx

Owner of Image House Productions Aaron Ure, and his father co-creator Brian Ure know, perhaps better than the rest of us that it takes a lot more than downloading apps on your computer, and knowing when to turn the flash on to carry the title professional photographer: Brian has been snapping shots for over 30 years, and like many a seasoned photographer has spent a considerable amount of his career in a dark room. When I asked Brian if he missed being undercover in darkness half the day, he didn't hesitate to divulge the frustrations of the past and all its gambles developing film. "I like being out in the field. Besides, you never knew if you got the right shot." Image House Productions is a studio on 8211 State RT 12 in Barneveld NY. Looking to expand their horizons and professional opportunities the Ure's opened the studio in 2007, and have since exceeded in making good on their intended business expectations and creative ventures.

I wondered how it was for Aaron to work in a partnership with his dad,

and the like, Brian with his son. Both having confirmed my suspicions Aaron replied, "It works. And it's a plus being that we're from different generations. He sees some things I'd never see, and in the same light my eyes are drawn in another direction catching what he's missed."

Approaching the 9th year IHP studio and editing suite has reigned a spectrum of success for the father son duo, and though they've provided a much needed service to the Central NY area, their rural bound location doesn't hold them back from "going where the job leads," which just happens to be IHP's M.O. IHP offers everything from a full line of commercial and individual photography, graphic design, photo restoration, image banks to aerial photography. And if that wasn't already enough to impress an extensive array of video productions from but not limited to wedding videos, documentaries, music videos, and television commercials are added to the repertoire as well. The real question has proved to be, "what doesn't IHP do?"

What I can tell you is what IHP has done thus

far. Besides the countless memories they've created for newlyweds Brian and Aaron have captured a handful of worldwide and local celebrities from Aretha Franklin at the 2007 Syracuse Jazz fest to U.S. representative and Utica native Richard Hanna when he first ran for election in 2008. And in 2006 when the Stanley Theater in Utica underwent a \$20 million expansion project the Ure's were there to document the renovations and transformation in a still of the Stanley. They've as well

filmed the documentary on CNY Conservancy of Munson Williams Proctor Arts Institute.

You could just go to their website www.imagehouseproductions.com and see the amazing artistry for yourself. Though they may be impressive professionals they're aware this isn't the big market of NYC and keep affordability yet quality in mind. You can't go wrong with IHP. And in the words of the expert Aaron Ure "It's about being able to tell the story without being a part of the story." ■

Relationships cont.

- each other and no one else. Make this a priority, as The HelpGuide.com team, a group of seasoned mental health professionals and writers, says time spent together is critical for your relationship. Without quality time your ability to communicate may begin to erode.
- Consider professional help. Seeking the advice of a counselor, whether a licensed social worker or physiologist, is not a sign of weakness. It just means you are willing to do whatever you need to foster a strong relationship. A therapist may suggest strategies you never thought of, which can be useful for growing closer and/or resolving problems.
 - Laugh whenever possible. Try to put a positive spin on anything. Jokes and laughter (not snarkiness) can diffuse tense situations. Look to laughter as a way to bond with your partner.
 - Focus on being caring. Do nice things for your partner without requiring anything in return. Remember what your partner likes and begin doing those things again. ■

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Mohawk Valley Center for the Arts Benefit Concert

by Lisa Lauritsen

Join the Mohawk Valley Center for the Arts this Saturday, December 12, in welcoming Dmitri Levkovich, renowned classical pianist and composer. Praised for "artistic sophistication far above the ordinary" by Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, and the recipient of seventeen top prizes at International Piano Competitions; he has performed for audiences throughout the world in places that including Carnegie Hall, Beijing's National Center for the Performing Arts, Theatre des Champs Elysees, the Great Hall of Moscow Conservatory, and now here in Little Falls, at Benton Hall Academy, while visiting his sister Yulia, an equally passionate and talented member of our local community. Tickets for this event can be purchased at MVCA. brownpapertickets.com, at the door or at the Mohawk Valley Center for the Arts. In typical fashion the Art Center of Little Falls brings this event to you at a very affordable price to include all who are interested, in a central location that is more intimate than any place a performer of Dmitri's credentials will be found. An additional ticket may be purchased for dinner at Canal Side Inn with the artist.

The Art Center, under the direction of Kevin Mihaly has been instrumental in providing experiences like this one among many others that make Little Falls a great place to live and to visit. In the course of just a few short years Kevin and members of the board have



Dmitri Levkovich, renowned classical pianist and composer

expanded their efforts in a unique ways that go well beyond the gallery and Selective Eye gift shop, to share the gifts of art and wellness of all ages and abilities. Outreach programs like the ones they've created at the Alpine nursing and Rehabilitation center where residents take harmonica classes to increase lung capacity and Tai Chi and meditation to improve focus are just a few. "We believe the arts are more than the conventional arts," says Kevin, "that everyone's life is a creative process; how you think, what

you believe, how you live your life. Tai Chi and other practices help you think more clearly and gives people a sense of creative focus."

The Arts Center also helped save the local cinema when they were struggling to convert from traditional forms to digital, as all theaters are being forced to change. The bigger chains had it easier with the help of corporate funding, but smaller theaters like Valley Cinema have been forced to find more creative ways to raise necessary funds, or buckle. As a team the two entities, and the community, were successful in raising 80,000 dollars to modernize technology and beautify the facility. Beyond the typical Hollywood releases, experimental films made by students at the local college and an ongoing film series of offbeat movies are regularly enjoyed.

There are so many reasons to become a member of the Mohawk Valley Center for the Arts. For one you don't want to miss events like seeing Dmitri Levkovich in a small intimate setting, when normally you'd have to travel to a larger city and pay exponentially more to hear him from a seat on the roof. A membership not only keeps you in the know but you'll get a discount on a full catalogue of art lessons and wellness classes to stimulate and improve focus. You'll be participating in a creative community of people determined to live fully, wholly, and with creativity. ■

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 carry-



ing around extra weight. Exercise can help them shed pounds and maintain healthier weights.

- **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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Our Cover Story

Village Florals and Gifts

by Al Dorantes

Village Florals, located 27 Genesee Street in New Hartford, New York, designs beautiful, quality arrangements, and provides reliable New Hartford floral delivery. Whether it is a single rose, a big bouquet, or corporate arrangements Village Florals should be your destination for flowers or gifts.

The store began life in New York Mills with original owners Denis and Marilyn Ciecko. They moved to their current location, added a 2nd floor, renovated and have been a New Hartford cornerstone for 40 years. Denis and Marilyn retired 3 years ago in April. New owners Cyndi LaCelle and her husband Phil took over after having worked for Denis and Marilyn for 20 years. Incidentally, the majority of Village Florals employees have been with the shop 15 plus years.

Village Floral has floral arrangements and gift baskets to fit your needs. Their expert florists can also create personalized gifts to make any occasion extra special. Village Floral provides flower delivery service to the following areas New Hartford, Cassville, Chadwicks, Clark Mills, Clinton, Marcy, New York Mills, Oriskany, Utica, Washington Mills, Westmoreland and Whitesboro.

Another thing that Village Florals delivers is Christmas. Up in their second floor workshop, like a couple of Santa's elves, Cyndi and David Briend, who has worked at Village Floral for 30 years, create all manner of Christmas accoutrements. From lighted wreaths to garlands to holiday centerpieces. Attention to detail is paramount for Village Florals. The right bit of flocking combines with the appropriate Christmas bulb or a bit of holly to create a decoration that is sure to become a longtime holiday memory.

Village Florals offers holiday home interior decoration. Cyndi LaCelle explained, customers who retain them for house decorating are people who want a new



An eye for the extraordinary, that's how I would describe the creations that come out of the Village Florals and Gift s Shop. Make your holiday magical with an arrangement for your home or for someone special on your list.

look or a change. She explained that the holiday decorating season is a blur. Everything blends from the time Halloween rolls

around straight through to New Years when they start getting ready for Valentines day.

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Their holiday home decorating covers the inside or outside of your house or business. Lights, wreaths, garlands and ornaments in traditional red, white, green, and gold accentuate your house and add holiday spirit. Whether the wreaths and garlands are lit or unlit, whether they are fresh assorted greens or artificial, Village Florals can turn your home, or business into a virtual Christmas card.

Village Florals will come to your home or business and will measure for decorations. After the scope of the project is determined, where, how many rooms, how many lights, Cyndi and her designers will create a plan and come up with an estimate. Budgets are the name of the game and Village Florals does their best to accommodate budgets of all sizes; from small to large. They will use home-owner's decorations or they will search out new decorations that will have your home or business singing with Christmas spirit in no time. Cyndi explained that Village Florals tries to shop local and buy local. They make a concerted effort to shop in the valley and keep the money in the US.

Village Florals is responsible for decorating local television stations, WKTV and WUTR. Their tight schedules are put to the test because they must be



The shop is alive with Christmas and holiday decorations and gifts. When you walk through the front door, you can smell the greens, you see the beautiful colors of the season and can't help but feel like a kid again with the wonderment of it all!

completed on Black Friday.

Hot glue is a staple as well as holly, flocking (fake snow) and, of course glitter. Cyndi LaCelle said, "Glitter; it's everywhere. You go to bed with it and you wake up with it."

Another way Village Florals helps to spread holiday cheer is through their Christmas windows. The panes of glass are like a portal to a holiday

wonderland. They create new displays every year. Cyndi LaCelle said, "People come every year to look at the window displays." They have been doing the displays for years. This year's windows include; "Christmas frustration" which features a mannequin dealing with a ball of tangled lights, there is a traditional fireplace scene, and an arctic scene complete with polar bears, penguins, and owls. Start a new holiday tradition, stop by, and travel to a winter wonderland through their windows.

Their shop is jammed packed with floral arrangements and gifts. Whether you are looking for something for mom or grandma, a teacher, or just a trinket to say, "I love you," Village Florals can accommodate. They also take custom orders. Their skilled designers can take your idea and make it a reality.

Cyndi LaCelle explained that the holidays bring 14-15 hour work days to Village Florals. But, like Santa's helpers they are dedicated to Christmas. Village Florals is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday and from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Saturday. The shop is closed on Sundays. For more information go to: www.villageflorals.net or call: (315) 797-7700 ■

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The Museum Shop

—Munson William Proctor Art Institute



Lisa Mumpton of Rome admires hand made scarves following a visit to the Monet to Matisse exhibit at the Museum Shop at Munson Williams Proctor Arts Institute in Utica.

by Dyann Nashton

There is no place better to find a unique gift for the person who has everything and needs nothing than

The Museum Shop at Munson William Proctor Art Institute. Located just inside the main entrance on Genesee Street in Utica, the shop packs a delightful array of items for those who

tastes run from the classic to the eclectic, especially where it comes to art-inspired gifts.

According to Jennifer Sorrell, assistant retail manager, the shop is one

of Utica's best-kept secrets. In fact, she said customers hesitate to tell others where they find their gift items in order to prevent others from discovering this "diamond in the rough."

Upon entrance to MWPAI and just to the left, the shop does glitter like a little gem with welcoming glass cases displaying handcrafted jewelry of all shapes, sizes and materials. This is set against a backdrop of tall display shelves and racks of vibrant, silky scarves. More than 100 different consigning area artists display their work at the Museum Shop. "It's a place for people who like to find the unusual," Sorrell said.

Specifically during the holidays, she said, seasonal items such as ornaments, advent calendars and boxed note cards are popular. "We don't get a lot of them in but those we do get appeal to people seeking out fun stuff," she added.

The Landmarks Society

of Greater Utica's annual commemorative collector's ornaments sell for \$23 each. This year's ornament depicts the Utica Memorial Auditorium, appropriately timed with the popularity of the Utica Comets hockey team. Ornaments are etched and finished in 24kt gold. The ornaments are designed and manufactured in the USA by the same company that makes the ornaments for the White House.

There is a wide assortment of books catering to readers of all ages, including children, throughout the space. There are also toys and unusual stocking stuffers like little paint brushes that attach to tiny fingertips or interesting flip books reflecting the early days of animation.

Sorrell noted that very often merchandise will tie in to happenings at the art institute. She noted that the recent Monet to Matisse: The Age of French Impressionism exhibit

provided an opportunity to bring in dozens of items that speak to the style of art and the time period. Similarly, she added, sales follow popular trends and current events. After the Paris bombings, they had difficulty keeping anything Eiffel Tower on the shelves of the shop.

Sorrell said staff works hard to rotate merchandise throughout the store. "It's important to keep things looking fresh and to bring different items to the forefront," she said, "especially for our regular customers."

The Museum Shop at MWPAI is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Friday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Sunday 1 -5 p.m. The building is handicapped accessible with plenty of parking. Free gift wrapping is included with purchases. Gift cards are available for any amount over \$5.00. ■

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A Room at the Inn

by Joe Parzych

My mother, Mary, migrated to the U.S. with her parents when she was 11. They decided to return to Poland, but allowed Mary to stay in America with family friends. Later, she married at 16 and had a baby she named Mary. That was in 1912. She soon packed up the infant and left for Poland to show her parents her baby. All went well. She and baby Mary arrived safe in the mountain

hamlet of Bialka, Poland to the delight of her family. But, soon, fighting broke out in Europe. She told her parents that she wanted to return to her husband in the U.S.

"Stay, stay," her mother said. "It's just a little border shooting. Soon, 'twill be over."

So, my mother stayed. But WWI began in earnest, and dragged on and on.

"Russians coming from one side; Germans coming from the other. Makes me decide to go back to America; war or no war."

Her parents tried to persuade her not to attempt the journey. Her father, believing she and little Mary would surely be killed, refused to come out of the house to bid her farewell. She never saw her father or her mother, ever, again.

With civilian rail travel suspended, my mother hitched a ride on a train carrying Polish troops to the front, in hope of getting to Holland's seaport at Rotterdam, for a voyage home on the Lusitania, not

knowing the Lusitania already rested at the bottom of the ocean. The soldiers treated mother and daughter well, sharing food and blankets. "The soldiers, mostly young," she said. "Everyone wants to hold Mary. They show photographs of their children at home. Such nice boys. War is crazy, I tell you. I never forget those nice young men."

Once, the train arrived at the front, my mother hired a man to guide them across the Polish trenches, through No Man's Land, and over to the German side. They didn't realize that Germans had begun to use poison gas, but it was enough that they were pinned down by artillery fire. When the barrage let up, the guide headed back, urging her to follow, but she was determined to return to the U.S. Before he left them, the guide cautioned my mother not to crouch, nor to run, but to walk upright. "Or else you be shot, for sure."

My mother stood as tall as she could, trying not to

run, carrying a bundle with each hand. Three year old Mary clung to her skirts. My mother expected them to be cut down by bullets at any moment. But the amazed German soldiers held their fire. They could only stare in disbelief as mother and daughter approached their trenches. The soldiers then helped them cross the trenches to German-held territory. On the German side, buildings were in shambles. Once, when a column of marching soldiers approached, they hid in the cellar of a bombed out house. "The soldier's boots make a scary sound as they marched by, and we watched from the cellar."

Once mother and daughter arrived on foot at a railroad station, they rode on a German troop train taking wounded soldiers away from battle. "German soldiers treat us as good as Polish soldiers; they show pictures of their family, too. They are just as kind as Polish soldiers. Poor fellas' fighting and killing each

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other..." she shook her head when telling us the stories of when she was young and foolish, but full of determination.

A wounded soldier on the train spoke English. He also had been caught in Europe by the war on a visit to his parents. He'd left his wife and children behind in New York City. He said he had no desire to fight. But, since he was still a German citizen, the German government drafted him into their Army. The German gave my mother his wife's New York address, asking her to let his wife know that he was alive and well. My mother lost the address and always regretted that she wasn't able to notify the wounded soldier's wife that he was safe.

My mother continued by train to the port of Rotterdam, only to find civilian travel had ended on the high seas. Undaunted, she bribed a Dutch sailor to stow them away aboard the *Nieuw Amsterdam, a freighter bound for New York. Far out to sea, they were discovered. The Silvio Conte Archives in Pittsfield, MA, have microfilm of the ship's manifest showing that the Ship's Master charged my mother \$8 for ship fare, leaving her a remaining \$12. Mary had sailed across the Atlantic for free.

The ship did not stop at Ellis Island, since it was a freight vessel. The Dutch sailor hid them from New York customs inspectors. Mother and daughter slipped off the ship that night, but were spotted by a reporter. My mother told the reporter all about her perilous journey. He said, "Wait right here. I'm going to get a photographer. This is a great story."

As soon as he turned the corner, my mother rushed to the train station where she bought tickets to Housatonic. By the time she got home, she had only one dollar remaining of the emergency money that her husband had given her in a little pouch to pin inside her corset when she had set off for Poland. No one answered the door when she got to their apartment. The landlady answered her door, but immediately slammed it shut, screaming "Ghost, ghost!" Everyone had read of the enormous casualties of the war, and had given up mother and daughter for dead. It turned out that her husband was at a tavern drowning his sorrows. When a messenger told him his wife and daughter were home, the husband became outraged that anyone could play such a dirty trick on a grieving husband and father. When the tavern closed and the husband came home, there was a joyful re-union.

Within a year after my mother rejoined her husband, the happy couple had a son, John. But their happiness was short lived. Her husband became sick with the fast acting flu while working as a volunteer administering to those stricken during the Great Flu Pandemic of 1918. Within three days of

falling ill, he was dead. My mother was left with two young children, and pregnant with a third. There was no Welfare, no Social Security, or even a family member to help her. Jobs were scarce, and the country was sliding into recession. The words of the song, "You picked a fine time to leave me," fit the situation, rather well.

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 Mary's face, black. 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 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, not knowing where to turn.

Then, someone told her 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 her 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, especially when a train arrived. At the train's departure, the inn grew 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 lady. 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 woman had a drinking problem, and let neighborhood kids take baby Bessie for a ride in her carriage. 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 that, 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 run. She spotted two year old Johnny sitting on a railroad track playing with the 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, and down she went. On her hands and knees, she scrambled to snatch Johnny out of the path of disaster; just 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 with a dirty rag. When my mother

unwrapped the bandage, half of Mary's finger was gone. Blood would not stop flowing from the severed stump.

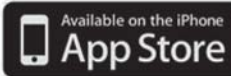
"What happened to your finger?" "The landlady threw it in the river; so you wouldn't know it was gone," Mary told her mother. "I wasn't supposed to tell, but her son had me hold a stick of wood so he could split it. But he chopped my finger off, instead."

My mother rushed Mary to a doctor to keep her from bleeding to death. The doctor said he could re-attach the finger, but it was at the bottom of the Housatonic River.

It was not long after, that someone got my mother a blind date with a widower, who also had three children. He proposed marriage on the first date. She accepted before he finished asking. It was a marriage of desperation for both of them. 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 on Christmas eve, the owners put together a lunch for my two sisters and me. Looking around at the interior of the inn as we ate, Mary shook her head slowly from side to side and remarked, "This place was much, much bigger when we lived here." ■

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The Tree

– a blessing to mourning family

by Anthony Bagnick

Mary was having a rough time, especially now during the Christmas season. Last July on a Friday her husband Bill was coming home from work when a truck plowed head on into his car. She managed to cope with his funeral, but the emptiness of living without her husband pained her constantly. With three children to raise, and now during the Christmas season, it was a struggle to cope with everything. How she wished Bill were still here with her.

She told her children that they will not put up their artificial tree this year. The three kids were dismayed, but they understood. They knew their mom was grieving and hurting. They lost their daddy too and missed him dearly, but the resilience of youth within them sparked their young bodies to face the future without their dad. They didn't protest, but they quietly wished their mom would let them have a tree, a real tree at that, not that artificial tree.

On the evening of the twenty-first of December, before it became dark, Mark,

her oldest child, all of ten plus, bright and with many of his dad's good ways, was outside doing some chores when he came running indoors and said, "Mom look out across the road. There is a Christmas tree in the ditch. It must have fallen off someone's car. Mom, please, can we take it?"

Mom answered, "No, I said we aren't going to have a tree this year and besides, someone lost it. It doesn't belong to us. I am sure they will look for it tonight or tomorrow and take it."

Anne, her eight year old daughter and Lila, her four year tyke kept peeking out the window at that tree, wishing it were theirs. Secretly they wished nobody would take the tree. They wanted to claim it. Mark too, took an occasional glance as he tried to think of a way to convince his mom to let them have the tree.

On Saturday morning, the twenty-second, a wet snow began to fall. The snowplow made several passes on their rural road, throwing slush and cinders over the tree still lying in the ditch. The three children, especially the two girls, kept a constant vigil on that forlorn tree. Anne said,

"That tree feels so sad and lonely, and it is getting so dirty. Nobody wants it."

Her mother said, "Daughter, it is just a tree. It was cut from the stump a few days ago and it doesn't have feelings. I am sure the owner will pick it up soon."

Little Lila spoke up, "Yes it does have feelings. Trees have feelings like everyone does. I know it does. It is lonely and it feels cold out there. I think daddy wants us to take the tree."

Mark just sat thinking--- How can I persuade mom to say it is ok for us to take the tree. Anne spoke again, "That poor tree is taking a beating from all that slush. I wish we could make a home for it." She said it just loud enough for her mom to hear.

Mom had already stepped into the kitchen to get supper ready for her tribe. She heard every word Anne spoke. She was doing some serious thinking as she prepared this evening meal. She was hurting terribly from the loss of her husband but she also knew she must go on. Her three wonderful children deserve a good Christmas. Her husband Bill would want that; he loved his children so. She thought of last Christmas when Bill went overboard on buying gifts for his three kids. She smiled as she remembered the startling remark he made to her when they were shopping last Christmas. He said, "Honey, I spent so much on the kids I don't have any money left to get you a gift, but--- you always have me."

They made small talk as they ate. A few times, Lila with a mouthful, would scamper to the picture window to see if anyone took the tree. While they were eating Mary observed each of her precious kids and thought---I got to go on and do what is right. We should have a Christmas tree. Bill would want that. So she said, as the kids were gobbling the last of their desert, "Gang, I got something to say. Don't get your hopes up too much, but if nobody takes that tree by tomorrow afternoon I

will let you put it into our home."

The three children burst into exuberance. Mark and Anne said, "Thanks mom." Lila ran to her mom and gave her a big hug. The three children declared they will bring the tree into the house tomorrow. Their mom told them to hold on. It is not our tree yet. The owner of that tree has first rights to it.

Late afternoon on the twenty third Mark and his sister Anne tussled the 5 foot tree from the ditch and brought it up by the house. Mark said, "Look how dirty it is from laying in the ditch. The snowplow did a job on it. I will get the hose out and wash it off."

After Mark put the hose away, brother and sister looked over the dripping, cleaned tree. Anne said, "It is so scrawny. No wonder somebody threw it away."

Mark replied, "That is ok. It is our real tree, our orphan tree, and we are going to make a happy Christmas for this tree and us. The next day, the twenty fourth, Mark took it into the living room from the enclosed porch where it dried off from the hosing Mark gave it yesterday. He mounted the tree into a pail full of small rocks so the tree stood tall and straight. Anne and Lila eagerly decorated it. Mark helped some too, but Anne said, "Brother, you just don't know where to hang the ornaments, but we will let you place the star on the top."

Mark said, "No, I will let Lila do it. I will hold her up and she will put the star on the top." He lifted her. She eagerly placed the star on the top of the main stem. It was a bit crooked, but later Mark reached up and straightened it.

Lila beamed and pranced around near the tree. She exclaimed, "The tree is so pretty. Mommy, I am so glad we made a home for this orphan tree. I know this tree feels happy now like I do. I think daddy is with us too. He is in the tree."

The roads drifted terribly on Christmas Eve. Grandpa



and grandma and other relatives couldn't make it for the special Christmas Eve dinner. Their mom exclaimed that we will have our Christmas Eve dinner on Christmas when grandpa and grandma and some relatives can make it. On this Christmas Eve their mom fixed an ordinary meal and allowed them to nibble on some Christmas cookies.

Their mother brought a large bag into the room with some of their gifts that she had hidden in her upstairs bedroom closet [the three kids knew all about it right along]. She said, "I will put these gifts under the tree now. We will open them in the morning." In unison they protested. They wanted to open them now on Christmas Eve. Mom continued, "We will open our gifts on Christmas morn like we did when your daddy was here. Now let us all get upstairs to bed so we can get up early. Tonight

Santa might just bring some more gifts too."

They all climbed the stairs together with the two girls leading and Mark last in line. Mark suddenly exclaimed, "Look! Mom look. The tree-- it moved!"

They all stopped on the stairway and looked toward the tree which was in front of the picture window. Their mom noticed the star moving slightly to and fro. She thought, "How odd. What made it move?"

Lila whispered, "Daddy made the tree move... I told you mommy that he is here with us for Christmas. He is in the tree." Anne nodded in agreement.

Mark, her alert young son, remarked, "This tree was meant for us. I don't think anyone lost it. This tree was meant for us. Daddy's spirit is in the tree. He is here with us." ■



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Communities can celebrate local businesses

Owning a business is the goal of many would-be entrepreneurs. Being your own boss has certain perks, including making your own hours and not having to report to anyone but yourself.

But owning a business is a lot of work, especially for new business owners trying to get their businesses off the ground.

Local businesses face an uphill battle to survive, but there are many things residents can do to support these valuable additions to their communities.

- Shop locally. Shopping locally not only supports local businesses, but it also contributes to the local economy. Shopping locally keeps money in the community, which can benefit everyone. Shopping locally produces a trickle-down effect, as local businesses that are thriving may patronize other local businesses, and so on. This, in turn, helps grow other businesses in the community, making it a nicer place to live and work.

- Spread the word. Word-

of-mouth advertising is effective. A respected member of the community who shares a good experience with a local business may propel others to patronize the business. Speak up when you feel a business owner has provided an exceptional level of service. Recommend a company to friends and neighbors. You also may want to review a business via online rating websites such as Yelp or Angie's List.

- Attend grand openings. Each community is unique,

and often the vibe of a community is defined by the businesses that call that community home. Attend grand openings to show you are invested in the quality and vitality of your community. When others see a business doing well, they may be more inclined to shop there as well.

- Apply for work. Another way to support a local business is to work for one. Small local businesses employ millions of people across the country, and

many foster great working environments. In addition, small businesses are known for their customer service, and employees often become experts in their products and services because of the hands-on experience they gain while working for small businesses.

Supporting and celebrating local businesses can instill a sense of community pride and benefit the local economy in a myriad of ways. ■



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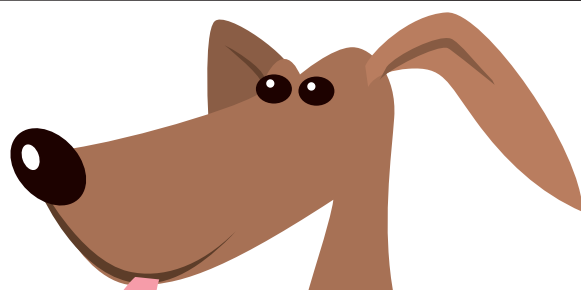
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settle down. The ASPCA survey also found that a greater percentage of lost dogs are recovered (93 percent) than lost cats (74 percent). This is likely due to the fact that dogs are more likely to wear identification tags and have tracking microchips installed on their bodies than cats. It's important for pet owners to begin searching for missing pets immediately. If a pet is not found, ask around on social media or visit a local shelter as soon as possible to increase your chances of recovering your pet. Proper identification and microchipping can help reunite lost pets with their owners. ■

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Seasons greetings



by Joan O. Scharf

Christmas Eve didn't start out as a good day for Tricia. The early morning sky looked dismally grey and heavy with snow. During her shower the hot water suddenly turned into icy prickles and she found to her dismay it was as she suspected; the hot water heater, already on its last legs had given up. And there was still that pile of gifts to be wrapped...the same pile she postponed time after time since last month.

Since Jim died two and a half years ago, Christmas seemed more like a chore than a joyous occasion. For Tricia, the holidays weren't the same anymore without him. Nothing was.

Still clad in her frayed blue chenille bathrobe, she took a sip of breakfast coffee and morosely unfolded the morning newspaper. Featured on the front page was a colorful photograph of a couple strolling hand in hand through a gaily decorated mall clutching festive shopping bags and smiling happily. She and Jim were once like that, she thought, but the sudden heart attack when he was only fifty-three took it all away. They would never be able to enjoy their retirement years together. The travel plans

they had dreamed about were now dust. Life was so unfair.

As she abruptly flipped to another page her hand bumped against the yellow ceramic mug and a splash of coffee spilled onto the newspaper. Hastily dabbing at the spots with a paper napkin, she noticed the stains were spattered directly over her horoscope reading for the day.

'Sign of Aquarius: A positive attitude always works wonders, especially if you've been down lately. There's a strong possibility you will receive a message from your true love today.'

Tricia stared at the words. Tears of sorrow mixed with anger and frustration slid down her face leaving tell-tale lines in their wake. Jim, her true love was gone. She would never hear from him again. Why had she even bothered to read that fakery. False hope only nailed the pain deeper into her heart.

Determinedly wiping her eyes, she turned to the next sheet. On a double page spread in front of her was a listing of the various churches and time schedules of Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services throughout the area. She'd attended church only once since Jim's funeral. Angry with God, she blamed him for the loss in her life. As she stared at the newspaper, resentment began ballooning up inside her

"God, it's all your fault." Startled, Tricia realized she had spoken aloud. Strengthened and encouraged by the sound of her voice, she continued, escalating in volume. "Do you hear me? God? Are you listening? Why did you take my Jim?" Recalling the day's horoscope, she began to shout and pound on the maplewood table, the ends of her still damp hair quivering with bottled up emotion. "God, if you're supposed to be so great, let Jim talk to me! Today! Do you hear me? I said let Jim talk to me!"

Her voice cracked and she sobbed into her crumpled coffee stained napkin.

continued on page 19

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hello AGAIN

thoughts from our publisher, Fred Lee

Hello Again,

Can you imagine what would happen if we learned that our famous American apple pie, which is prepared – baked – packaged and enjoyed nation wide was in fact made from artificial man-made apples? Phony – counterfeit apple pie! I can hear it now. Folks who do not even know the name of our Governor would be up in arms over that. By the way, what is his name? Oh ya. He is the man who says apple orchard owners should pay apple pickers \$15.00 per hour plus 20%. Orchardists won't have to pay \$15.00 per hour, as apple pie lovers will not be able to afford apple pies. So no apple pie – no apple cider, no apple sauce – no apple pickers. Do you think that money trees will take the place of apple trees?

Now maybe I am beginning to see the light that our President, Mrs. Clinton and their fellow socialist politicians are following. They do believe in big cities – big governments. (Which means socialist). Do they believe

that big government should kill the apple tree industry and groves or orchards of money trees will take their place?

If all of the fruit pickers are already being handed all of the fruit free without working who will pick the money off the money trees.

Should the following be held as a news flash? The great Hershey candy company without really meaning to confess that their famous well-loved candy kisses were cooked with artificial vanilla flavoring, actually did confess when they simply stated Hershey candy kisses will NOW be flavored with real vanilla. Should or can we ever muster up enough forgiveness to forgive Hershey for causing us to participate in phony – artificial kisses. I'm sure I cannot speak for you but when it comes to kisses I want the real McCoy.

Can you imagine sealing wedding vows with an artificial kiss? What's next almond milk, soft butter like spread, eggs without yolks, man made motor



oil? Employment by the government without a pay-check – merely government handouts. Next they will try to tell me that Roy Rogers and Gene Autrey were not real cowboys or that Marian Morrison's real name was not John Wayne.

On the other hand can you imagine what our beautiful New York State would look like if God forgot to create new leaves and flowers and left it up to the non God believing intellectuals to decorate our hills and valleys. On the other hand socialism is an artificial man made form of government, which should be flushed out of our Government. How do we do that – by doing a form of nothing? Do

not vote for socialists to lead our government, big government advocates are socialists. What does Webster dictionary say about socialism? socialist = public (government) ownership of the means of production (factories – farms, etc.) Socialize = put under public ownership.

News by T.V. Is referring to JIHADI. What does Jihadi mean or rather what is Jihadi?

Jihadi = Is an Islamic term referring to the religious duty of Muslims to maintain the religion. Even Muslim scholars say it is an outer physical struggle against the enemies of Islam, which may take a violent form. Some

deny this but in fact Jihadi's practice killing those who resist their Muslim faith. Would it be ok for Christians to kill Muslims because they resist Christians or Jewish Faith?

There is an active effort in this country and worldwide to reach the young people for support and fighters.

On twitter a Virginia – USA teenager pumped out more than 7000 tweets he heralded their organization's "upcoming conquest of America".

Within three months he had 4,000 American youth followers. This was a big

deal for a high school student in Suburban America. He was arrested and will serve 11 years in prison with a \$100,000 fine.

Next week we will discuss ISIS – should we Americans be concerned about ISIS? The answer is, ISIS may be the most sinful, dangerous movement Christianity and Democracy will ever face, it could destroy our entire way of life.

Thanksgiving

The meaning of three words used in our daily English language, Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving tugs on the heartstrings of Americans. Each word – as a single word never requires explanation as to its meaning or intent to express.

I feel that all three of these words are derived from a common basis, a belief in our creator and heavenly father. If a person's mind attempts to say there is no God, his heart will come to his rescue by letting him know there is a God.

Let's join together in one common heart expressive prayer, "Thank you dear heavenly father for the depth of beauty and privilege we share in celebrating your gift – Thanksgiving Day" Fred Lee

Season's Greetings continued from page 17

The day passed, and there was no miracle.

Late that afternoon, Tricia began wrapping the gifts that had waited so long. There was no Holiday spirit in her action, no pleasure to go along with the bright red and green paper and shimmery ribbon.

Keeping track of time on the kitchen wall clock, she noted it was nearly 4PM and if she didn't hurry, she would be late. Her daughter was expecting her for Christmas Eve dinner tonight. Margaret and her husband lived in a suburb nearby, and Tricia was fortunate to be able to see her only grandchild, an energetic brown eyed two year old, as often as she wished. Eric James was her happiness and delight in life. If Jim could only have had the chance to hold him and feel Eric's small warm arms clasped around his neck; to give him piggy back rides up and down the back yard; to take him fishing by the little waterfalls at Cedarville Pond....

Tricia pulled her errant thoughts back to the job at hand, and with a

brief sigh looked down at the last gift. Eric's flannel pajamas needed to be wrapped. She remembered she had been thinking of Jim when she picked out the pattern of tiny carpenter tools against the light green background. Jim used to be so handy around the house. He could fix almost anything. There was that time when a pipe sprung a sudden leak under the bathroom sink and squirted a fine spray of water in his face as he opened the cabinet door. How they both had laughed as he.... Ahh, there she was again, thinking of what used to be.... Resolutely she focused on what remained to be done.

She realized there was no box for the pajamas in her hand, and her eyebrows dipped in annoyance. In the basement, among the clutter of odds and ends there was an accumulation of clean previously used boxes. It meant a trip down the stairs to rummage around. She had intended to sort things out after Jim died, but there were times, like now, when she was glad she hadn't. With a surge of relief she quickly found

a box about the right size and hurried back upstairs. She glanced at the clock to check the time. Still a few minutes to spare.

Satisfied to see neat looking tissue paper still in the box, she started to fold Eric's pajamas inside when she noticed a scrap of something tucked inside the tissue. Pulling out a white tag decorated with a tiny gold angel, she read the message.

"Merry Christmas, Tricia. With all my love, Jim."

Her hand trembled, and a bright spiral of joy curled warmly around her. Somehow, Jim had found a way through time and space to send her a communication on Christmas Eve. It was more than a message; it was a precious gift.

Clutching the tag against her chest, Tricia closed her eyes in a grateful prayer. She was thinking perhaps she would get out the newspaper and look up the schedule of church services after all. ■

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FREE YOURSELF FROM THE FLU

Preventive steps to protect your home and business



Photos courtesy of Getty Images

FAMILY FEATURES

With flu season approaching, parents may be bracing for an outbreak at their children's schools, but adults are also highly susceptible at work and in other public places. Now is the time for families and businesses to take steps to prevent and protect against the flu.

With workers missing as much as a week after falling ill with the flu, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services attributes as much as \$7 billion in losses for U.S. businesses each year as a result of workers' sick days and lost productivity. Combine that with lost wages, missed school and sporting events, and the overall hit to your personal health, and the toll is higher yet.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates between 3,000 and 49,000 deaths and more than 200,000 hospitalizations each year depending upon the severity of the flu season. People at high risk for developing flu-related complications include children under 5, adults 65 or older, pregnant women, residents of nursing homes and other long-term care centers, and people who have medical conditions such as asthma, chronic lung disease, heart disease and blood disorders.

"Influenza is a serious viral infection, and the toll on public health each year related to influenza is significant," said Dr. John Hanlin, vice president of public health and food safety at Ecolab. "Fortunately, there are a number of important measures that you, your family and your business colleagues can take to reduce the risk of influenza."

Getting a flu vaccine and taking anti-viral medications as prescribed if you do contract the flu are two ways the CDC advocates stopping the spread of flu germs. Another vital factor in protecting yourself from the flu is preventing its spread.

The flu is a respiratory infection accompanied by fever and often respiratory complications that is transmitted from person to person, either through personal contact, or through contact with a contaminated surface. Individuals who have contracted the virus are contagious at least one day prior to displaying symptoms, and up to seven days after they first appear.

In addition, the flu virus can survive up to 48 hours on stainless steel and plastic surfaces, and up to 12 hours on cloth, paper and tissues. Properly cleaning and disinfecting can minimize the chances of individuals contracting the virus from a contaminated surface.

Prevent contamination

To properly clean, disinfect and protect your environment, know that you should:

- Clean any visible soil from surfaces before disinfecting. When cleaning and disinfecting, work from top to bottom and from cleaner to more heavily soiled surfaces.
- Thoroughly wet the surface with a U.S. EPA registered disinfectant and follow label instructions. Choose disinfectants effective against the flu virus, such as Ecolab's line of disinfectant

products, which are available for institutional and industrial use.

- Disinfect frequently touched hard surfaces often, including tables, chairs, light switches, door handles and restroom facilities.
- Give special attention to frequently touched surfaces in food preparation areas, as well as the restroom, including light and air control switches, faucets, toilet flush levers, door knobs and handrails.
- Avoid touching public items that sustain heavy use, such as elevator buttons and push plates on doors, with your hands.

Proper hand hygiene

Hand-washing is also essential to preventing an influenza contamination. Proper hand-washing helps remove most bacteria, viruses and other pathogens, so they can't be spread to others. The CDC recommends these steps:

- Wet hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap and apply soap.
- Rub hands together to lather the soap. Clean the backs of hands, between fingers and under nails.
- Scrub for at least 20 seconds.
- Rinse well under clean, running water.
- Dry with a clean towel or air dry.
- Before using hand sanitizer, remove any dirt from hands with soap and water. Apply product to palm and rub hands together until it disappears (15-20 seconds).

Education is the first step in promoting effective hand hygiene. But the real challenge is motivating others to wash frequently and follow protocols day in and day out.

- Use soaps that are gentle on hands. Formulations that irritate skin may dissuade even the most dedicated hand-washer.
- Be a role model and wash your hands following the same high standard you set for your family and coworkers.
- Continuously reinforce that protection starts with prevention, and hand-washing is critical to prevention.

Extra care in the kitchen

Because flu and cold viruses can spread easily to foods and beverages, it's especially important to promote hand-washing in the kitchen. The Food and Drug Administration suggests:

- Plan food preparation activities to reduce the number of times hands need to be washed.
- Use soap and water, which is more effective in removing foodborne pathogens than hand sanitizers.

For additional information on how Ecolab can help you and your business prepare for the flu season, visit ecolab.com/pages/flu.

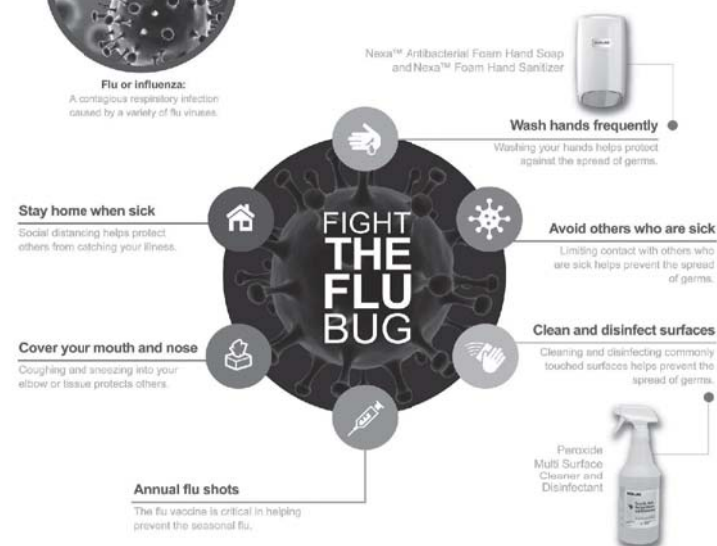
ECOLAB

HUMAN INFLUENZA VIRUS



Flu or influenza:
A contagious respiratory infection caused by a variety of flu viruses.

Protection starts with prevention



The 2015-2016 influenza vaccine protects against these three flu viruses:

Type A

California 2009
(H1N1)-like Virus

Type A

Switzerland 2013
(H3N2)-like Virus

Type B

Phuket 2013
Yamagata Lineage Virus

Groups most susceptible to influenza:

CHILDREN UNDER 5 YEARS

Children are more likely to get the flu or have flu-related complications because their immune systems are still developing.

Chronic health conditions further increase the risk of flu complications for children between 2 months and 5 years of age:

- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Asthma

Children account for:

90%

OF FLU-RELATED
PEDIATRIC DEATHS WERE
NOT VACCINATED

20,000

OF FLU-RELATED
HOSPITALIZATIONS

ADULTS OVER 65

A weakened immune system makes flu a more serious problem for this group.

Chronic health conditions further increase the risk of flu complications:

- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Lung disease

65+ account for:

90%

OF FLU-RELATED
DEATHS

60%

OF FLU-RELATED
HOSPITALIZATIONS

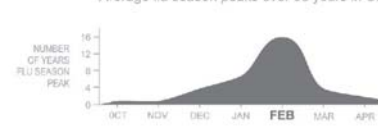
The effects of influenza nationally:

Up to
66 million

Americans get the flu each year



Average flu season peaks over 35 years in U.S.



Approximately 200K are hospitalized annually



200 million+

days of diminished productivity

Impact on workers:

Spends 2.4 days in bed

Misses 2.8 days of work

Struggles for 2.4 days upon return



Days of work absences:

111
million

Cost from flu:

\$7
billion

sick days and lost productivity

The influenza A virus can survive on hard surfaces up to 48 hours or more.



Flu is spread by droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze or talk.



Flu viruses enter the body through your nose, eyes and mouth.



Keep hands germ-free with frequent and thorough hand washing.

The advantages of last-minute holiday shopping



Shopping late in the season may be advantageous for some people.

Tackling tasks well in advance has many advantages, and often it is in one's best interest to be ahead of the game, including when the game at hand is holiday shopping.

But men and women who simply can't get a head start on their holiday shopping need not fear, as waiting until the eleventh hour to do the bulk of your shopping can have some distinct advantages, too.

Consumer Reports' 2012 Holiday Poll found 9 percent of shoppers — an estimated 17 million people — planned to shop in stores on Christmas Eve in 2012. Many stores are still open on Christmas Eve, even if the doors are only unlocked for a limited number of hours. That gives shoppers one last

chance to find the perfect presents. In addition to having more time to decide on gifts, here are some other benefits to shopping later in the season.

- **Smaller crowds:** As the holiday season winds down, many shoppers have already completed their shopping. Fewer people tend to be in stores in the final days before Christmas, as they are readying their homes for company or making travel plans. This can be a prime time for shopping and getting through malls or other retailers in less time.

- **Discounted prices:** Anxious to reduce inventory and make the most of end-

of-the-year profits, stores may discount merchandise even further for fast sale. Shoppers anxious to save a little bit more or come in under budget may find waiting to shop is to their financial advantage.

- **Lower chance of discovery:** One difficulty of shopping early is keeping all of the gifts hidden for the duration of the month. Waiting until later to shop means only having to camouflage gifts for a few days. When you wait, curious kids are less likely to find their gifts before the big day.

- **Last-minute specials:** Some online retailers offer "doorbuster" sales at various

times during the holiday shopping season. These sales may offer additional discounts or even free shipping. Just be sure to balance the benefits of the discount against the shipping price. If it means having to pay a premium for overnight shipping, it may not be worth the investment.

- **More time to plan:** By the end of the holiday season you may have a better idea of what you need to purchase. You also may have polled others regarding what they are giving, reducing the chances of giving duplicate gifts.

- **Gift cards galore:** Some people prefer to give gift cards, which are available all season long. Consumer Reports says 62 percent of last-minute shoppers grab gift cards. If you fall into that category, waiting to buy the cards won't be an issue so long as you make it to the stores before they close.

Last-minute shopping has its advantages. If time is ticking away, there are still deals to be had. ■

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Holiday travel tips

- **Bring along your own sustenance.** Hunger pangs are sure to arise during your holiday travels. Packing your own meals and snacks saves you money and, if you're driving, time.

- **Ship gifts.** Shipping holiday gifts is another way to simplify holiday travel and save money.

- **Switch up your travel schedule.** If possible, take an extra day or two off during the holidays so you aren't forced to travel on the busiest travel days, which tend to be the days.

There are many ways for travelers to make their trips less hectic this year.

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With so much on our plates between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, the holiday season can be hectic. Fortunately, there are many ways to save time and make the holiday season more manageable.

- If you don't have plastic clips to hang lights around windows and to the eaves of your home, inexpensive clothespins will work just as well. If you're concerned about the color of the wooden clips, paint them holiday hues before stringing the lights.

- Put a bath mat, rug-side down and rubber-side up, beneath your Christmas tree stand. This allows you to spin the tree as you hang lights and ornaments without damaging the floor underneath. It also makes it simple to undress the tree once the season is over. Use a tree skirt to hide the mat.

- Squeeze artificial tree portions into concrete form tubes. First wrap the tree portions in twine and then slip them into the concrete

sleeves. Each tube can be stowed in attic or garage rafters, freeing up precious space.

- Use empty squirt bottles to make baking and cooking easier. Pancake and cookie batters can be squirted from the containers for less mess.

- Store one or two strings of lights in a plastic shopping bag to keep the strands from getting tangled. Hang the bags from a hook in a garage or stack them in a storage bin.

- Use plastic zip ties to attach garland and lights to bannisters. They're easy to assemble and will not damage the bannisters.

- A paper towel holder can be screwed to the wall in a craft room to neatly hold spools of ribbon. Simply pull the length you need from the spool and cut for easy decorating.

- Mount a tree stand to a piece of wood with screws or glue. This prevents spills from reaching the floor while stabilizing the tree.

- Old maps make interesting gift wrap and are a nice change of pace from commercially produced paper or newsprint.

- Wrap duct tape or another type of sticky tape around your hand. Pat over fallen pine needles that accumulate around the tree. In hard-to-reach areas, wrap the tape around a broom or a floor sweeper.

- When traveling for the holidays, use a brightly colored suitcase or flashy tape to make your suitcase stand out from others at the airport.



A few simple strategies can help you save time and reduce stress this holiday season.

- Place hardened brown sugar in a baking dish, cover it with a moist paper towel and either microwave it on high for 20-second intervals or place it in a 300 F oven for five minutes. This will soften the sugar, making it easier to use the sugar to prepare your favorite holiday cookie recipes.

- Save plastic bread ties, which can be used to make tags for the wires on certain devices. Such ties also can be used to organize decorating components and to keep your place on a roll of tape.

- Measure the inside of your picture window and construct a wooden frame to its dimensions. Staple holiday lights to the frame and then easily slip the frame in

and out of place each year.

- Hang a live wreath or some boughs of evergreen in your home to give it that fresh pine scent if you have an artificial tree.

- Color-code storage containers so you can easily find holiday decorations in the attic or basement.

- Pack for a holiday excursion using a collapsible clothing storage hanger for closets. Fold clothes on each fabric shelf and then collapse it into your suitcase. When you get to your destination, unfold and hang it in a closet so all of your clothes will be at the ready.

Make the holidays even more enjoyable with a variety of timesavers and clever tips. ■

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Don't forget to gift holiday hosts

Millions of people will travel this holiday season, and many of them will lay their heads to rest in the homes of family and friends. Hosting guests come the holiday season can make this time of year that much more special, but hosting also is a significant undertaking that asks a lot of the men and women who open their homes to loved ones.

Guests who want to express their gratitude for their holiday hosts can do so in any number of ways, and the following are a handful of ideas that would surely please your hosts this holiday season.



Cooking breakfast for your holiday hosts throughout the duration of your stay is a nice gesture busy hosts will surely appreciate.

appreciate them by paying for a night out on the town. Babysit hosts' kids so mom and dad can enjoy a night out together, or take the whole family out and foot the bill. A night out can be enjoyable for all involved, and it gives hosts the night off from cooking dinner.

Cater a meal

If your family is too big to take out or if the family simply prefers to stay in and enjoy one another's company, pay for a catered meal to be delivered to your hosts' home. This can be a great way to catch up, and hosts can join in the fun because they won't be busy preparing dinner in the kitchen.

Wine rack

Men and women who offer to host for the holidays likely don't mind hosting at other times of the year as well. A brand new wine rack can make for a great gift for your friend or relative who loves to host dinner parties throughout the year. Stock the rack with a couple of bottles of wine and crack one open to celebrate your loved one's new toy.

Linens

If you want to give your holiday hosts something practical, then some linens they can use right away make great gifts. Quality bed sheets, some warm blankets and some soft, high-quality towels can help hosts replenish their linen closets, and they might appreciate using these new items once the holiday season has come and gone.

Cook breakfast

Another great way to show your appreciation to your holiday hosts is to make breakfast for everyone each morning during your stay. Let your hosts relax with a cup of coffee while you prepare breakfast each morning for everyone staying at the house. Hosts will no doubt appreciate the hassle-free mornings, and a fresh, home-cooked meal is a great way to express your own appreciation for their hospitality.

Holiday hosts accept a lot of responsibility when welcoming guests into their homes. Guests can show their appreciation for this hospitality in numerous ways. ■

Night out on the town

Holiday hosts have a lot on their plates. Before guests arrive, hosts clean their homes top to bottom and may even rearrange rooms in their homes to accommodate overnight guests. Once the guests arrive, hosts work to cater to their guests' needs. Guests can show their hosts how much they

Learn something new today

- Learn a new language. If you have always dreamed of traveling internationally and speaking in a country's native tongue, begin taking lessons. In addition to private tutors or classes at nearby community colleges, make use of foreign language apps and computer programs, which allow you to practice in the comforts of home. Depending on how much time you can devote to studying, it may be just a matter of a few months before you have mastered a new language. How quickly you pick up a new language may be affected by

your knowledge of other languages. For example, if you already speak Spanish, learning French or Italian maybe easier because of similarities between these widely spoken romance languages.

- Take up a new sport or hobby. Hobbies and sports appeal to all types of people. Adults who never participated in sports as a child may find their interest piqued upon joining an adult league. Don't underestimate your potential abilities on the playing fields or with regard to certain hobbies. Give

painting, woodworking, papercrafting, and other hands-on hobbies a go and you may be surprised to discover the talent lies within.

- Go back to school. Even if you already have a degree, don't be hesitant to pursue additional education. Many local colleges and universities offer distance learning or adult education programs. Speak with a curriculum advisor about a particular school's offerings and find out if you're eligible for reduced tuition or financial aid. ■

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Get a head-start on tax season



The dawn of a new calendar year often marks the end of the sometimes hectic holiday season. This time of year marks a return to normalcy for many families, as the kids go back to school

and parents return to work.

The beginning of January also serves as a great time to start preparing for tax season. While the deadline to file returns may be

several months away, getting a head-start allows men and women the chance to organize their tax documents so they aren't racing against a deadline come April. The following are a handful of

ways to start preparing for your returns now.

- Find last year's return. You will need information from last year's return in order to file this year, so find last year's return and print it out if you plan to hire a professional to work on your return.
- Gather dependents' information. While you might know your own Social Security number by heart, if you have dependents, you're going to need their information as well. New parents or adults who started serving as their elderly parents' primary caretakers over the last year will need their kids' and their folks' social security numbers. If you do not have these numbers upon filing, your return will likely be delayed and you might even be denied potentially substantial tax credits.
- Gather your year-end financial statements. If you spent the last year investing,

then you will have to pay taxes on any interest earned. Interest earned on the majority of savings accounts is also taxable, so gather all of your year-end financial statements from your assorted accounts in one place. Doing so will make filing your return, whether you do it yourself or work with a professional, go more quickly.

- Speak with your mortgage lender. Homeowners should receive forms documenting their mortgage interest payments for the last year, as the money paid in interest on your home or homes is tax deductible. If these forms are not received in a timely manner, speak with your lender. You might even be able to download them from your lender's secure website.
- Make a list of your charitable contributions. Charitable contributions, no matter how small, are tax deductible. While it's easiest

to maintain a list of all charitable donations you make as the year goes on, if you have not done that, then you can make one now. Look for receipts of all contributions, contacting any charities you donated to if you misplaced any receipts.

- Book an appointment with your tax preparation specialist now. As April 15 draws closer, tax preparers' schedules get busier and busier. The earlier you book your appointment, the more likely you are to get a favorable time for that meeting. In addition, if you have gathered all of the information you need by early February, then booking your appointment early means you can file earlier and receive any return you might be eligible for that much quicker.

Tax season might not be right around the corner, but it's never too early to start preparing your return. ■

Protect your identity and save money



Identity theft is a pervasive problem. According to figures from the Bureau of Justice Statistics, an estimated 17.6 million people, or about 7 percent of U.S. residents age 16 or older, were victims of at least one incident of identity theft in 2014. Identity theft is not just a problem within U.S. borders, either. Each month, Equifax and TransUnion credit bureaus report that more than 1,800 identity theft complaints are lodged by Canadian residents.

Victims may be subjected to various types of identity theft. Attempted misuse of an existing account is the prime complaint. This account can be a credit card, bank account or phone or utility account. No matter the type of fraud perpetrated, many identity theft victims endure a direct financial loss as a result.

Sometimes individuals do not find out they've been the victim of identity theft until they are notified by a financial institution — or even after filing their taxes — when money already has been lost. People may invest in expensive services to protect their identities, but Consumer Reports notes this tactic is not always necessary. There are other, less expensive ways for men and women to protect them-

selves from identity theft.

- Guard personal information. Do not share your personal information over the Internet unless you are on a secured site. This will be identified by the https:// preceding the rest of the URL. Sometimes a padlock symbol will appear somewhere on the page. Also, do not provide any personal information over the phone, such as tax identification numbers, bank account information or your maiden name. Personal data should be shared only with trusted companies whose authenticity you can verify.
- Watch your wallet. Do not leave your wallet or purse unattended. Keep the bare minimum in a wallet so a thief does not have access to all of your personal information if the wallet is lost or stolen. Keep your Social Security card and rarely used credit cards at home.
- Sign up for alerts. Many financial institutions will offer free online or mobile alerts to warn of suspicious activity on your account. Take advantage of this service.
- Lock down devices. Make

sure computers and mobile devices are secured with a password, and only use secured networks when going online. Select strong passwords that include a combination of numbers, letters and symbols, as well as case changes so they will be more difficult to crack.

- Get off of credit-card

offer lists. You can stop credit bureaus from selling your name to lenders by going to www.optoutprescreen.com or calling 888-567-8688. Opting out should prevent the majority of offers from coming your way. Many identity theft cases can be linked to crooks stealing credit card preapprovals from mailboxes. Similarly,

you can put a security freeze on credit reports, so that lenders will not be able to access credit reports and issue new credit.

Identity theft can lead to plenty of paperwork hassle and loss of funds. Preventing it from happening is easier than you might think. ■

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SMART *Holiday* INDULGENCE

FAMILY FEATURES

With all the hustle and bustle of the holidays, great tasting foods that feature healthy ingredients, such as whole fruits and vegetables prepared in unique and interesting ways, can help deliver healthful indulgence fit for a celebration. Grapes from California are naturally beautiful and come in three vibrant colors that add a pleasing crunch and light touch of sweetness to main dishes, sides, salads and desserts. The recipes included here showcase the unique way in which fresh grapes can help create palate-pleasing dishes. Heart-healthy grapes are also an ideal snack on their own and a refreshing break from the indulgent holiday fare present at many celebrations. California grapes are available throughout the holiday season and into January. For more delicious grape recipes, visit GrapesfromCalifornia.com.

Feta Stuffed Chicken Breasts with Grape-Port Sauce

- Servings: 4
- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves (about 6 ounces each)
 - 1/2 cup (2 ounces) crumbled feta cheese
 - 4 teaspoons olive oil, divided
 - 1/4 teaspoon salt
 - 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
 - 1/2 cup reduced-sodium chicken broth, divided
 - 1 cup thinly sliced onion
 - 2 cups red California grapes
 - 1/4 cup port wine
 - 2 teaspoons red wine vinegar
 - 1 teaspoon chopped fresh rosemary

Make pocket in each chicken breast by cutting horizontally from thickest side almost to opposite side. Spoon cheese into each pocket. Secure pockets with wooden skewers, if desired. Brush chicken pieces on both sides with 1 teaspoon olive oil. Sprinkle with salt and red pepper flakes.

In large nonstick skillet, heat 2 teaspoons of remaining oil over medium heat. Add chicken. Cook uncovered for 12 minutes, turning once. Carefully add 1/4 cup chicken broth to skillet. Cook covered for 3-5 minutes more or until chicken is no longer pink. Remove chicken from skillet. Cover chicken to keep warm. If any liquid remains in skillet, gently boil until liquid evaporates.

Carefully add remaining 1 teaspoon oil to skillet. Stir in onion. Cook uncovered over medium-high heat until onion is soft. Add grapes. Continue cooking, stirring occasionally, about 3 minutes or until grapes begin to split. Remove and set aside about 3/4 of grape-onion solids, leaving liquid and remaining grape-onion mixture in skillet.

Stir remaining 1/4 cup chicken broth, port wine and vinegar into grape mixture in skillet. Bring to boil, then reduce heat and simmer uncovered 3-5 minutes or until liquid portion is reduced to about 1/3 cup. Stir in reserved grape-onion solids.

To serve, remove wooden skewers from chicken, if using. Place chicken on serving plates and spoon grape mixture over chicken. Garnish with rosemary.

Nutrition information per serving: 368 calories (28% calories from fat); 11 g total fat (3 g saturated fat); 42 g protein; 20 g carbohydrate; 2 g fiber; 108 mg cholesterol; 378 mg sodium.



Fresh Fruit Pizza Tart

- Servings: 10
- 16.5 ounces sugar cookie dough, prepared
 - 4 ounces nonfat cream cheese, softened
 - 1/4 cup low-fat sour cream
 - 3 tablespoons granulated sugar
 - 1 1/4 cups black California grapes
 - 1/2 cup red California grapes
 - 2 kiwifruit, pared and sliced

Heat oven to 350 F. Pat cookie dough into bottom of greased 10-inch tart pan. Bake for 10-12 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool completely.

In electric mixer, beat cream cheese and sour cream. Gradually add sugar; beat until completely mixed and fluffy. Spread mixture over entire surface of each pan of baked cookie dough.

Arrange grapes and other fruit as desired, covering entire surface with fruit; press gently. Refrigerate until chilled.

Nutrition information per serving: 275 calories (35% calories from fat); 11 g total fat (3 g saturated fat); 4 g protein; 41 g carbohydrate; < 1 g fiber; 20 mg cholesterol; 214 mg sodium.

Roasted Squash and Grape Salad with Tahini

- Servings: 4
- 1 medium butternut squash (about 2 pounds), peeled, seeded and cut into 1/2-inch-thick slices
 - 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
 - salt and freshly ground black pepper
 - 2 tablespoons sesame tahini
 - 1 small clove garlic, minced
 - 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 - 2 1/2 tablespoons hot water
 - pinch of cayenne pepper
 - 1 cup halved red California grapes
 - 1/2 teaspoon za'atar spice blend

Heat oven to 475 F. Toss squash with oil and spread on baking sheet lined with foil or parchment. Sprinkle with salt and pepper, and roast until squash is tender, about 20 minutes. Transfer to platter.

In small bowl, whisk together tahini, garlic, lemon, water, cayenne pepper, salt and pepper, to taste. Sprinkle grapes over squash and drizzle with tahini sauce. Sprinkle with za'atar and serve.

Nutrition information per serving: 225 calories (44% calories from fat); 11 g total fat (1.6 g saturated fat); 4 g protein;



Beets, Grapes and Walnut Salad

- Servings: 4
- 6 small beets (a mix of red, Chioggia and golden), washed well
 - 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil, divided
 - salt and freshly ground black pepper
 - 1 small clove garlic, minced
 - 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
 - 1 teaspoon tamarind concentrate
 - 3 tablespoons walnut oil
 - 3 cups arugula
 - 1 cup halved green California grapes
 - 1/4 cup toasted walnuts

Heat oven to 400 F.

keeping red and yellow beets separate. Place beets on foil- or parchment-lined baking sheet. Roast until sharp knife pierces beets easily, about 35-40 minutes. Let cool.

While beets are roasting, whisk together garlic, vinegar, tamarind, walnut oil, salt and pepper, to taste. Toss beets with some dressing. Divide arugula among 4 serving plates and top with beets. Sprinkle with grapes, drizzle with more dressing, sprinkle with walnuts and serve.

Nutrition information per serving: 257 calories (63% calories from fat); 19 g total fat (2 g saturated fat); 4 g protein; 21 g carbohydrate; 4.5 g fiber;



Healthy Holiday Snacking Tips

Take a practical approach to your holiday munching to keep over-indulging in check.

- Focus on people first, food second.
- Have a healthy snack before the party, so you don't arrive hungry. Fresh grapes and cheese, or hummus are tried and true options.
- Be picky. Choose only the indulgences that are truly worth it or special to you.
- Contribute a simple, but healthy item to the holiday table. Fresh grapes are an easy choice: they are lovely to look at and sweetly satisfying.

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• **New Anolon Advanced Umber 12-Inch Covered Deep Skillet** — A versatile heavy-duty pan, snug-fitting lid and flared sides to prevent drips, this skillet is beautifully crafted/ rich bronze nonstick finish inside and out (\$49.99).

• **New Circulon Momentum 18-inch by 10-inch Double Burner Griddle** — Flip pancakes, grilled cheese sandwiches, burgers and more, just like a short order cook. This spacious griddle features a durable, metal-utensil-safe nonstick cooking surface, plus a corner pour spout to easily drain fats and other liquids (\$49.99).

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• **New Circulon Symmetry Chocolate 5-Piece Bakeware Set** — Whether for sweet or savory baking, this comprehensive set of carbon steel nonstick bakeware includes a 10-inch by 15-inch Cookie Pan, two 9-inch Round Cake Pans, a 9-inch by 5-inch Loaf Pan, and a 9-inch by 13-inch Rectangular Cake Pan (\$39.99).

• **New Anolon 4-Piece Steak Knife Set** — Meat lovers will appreciate the sleek styling and razor-sharp serrated blades of this well-priced cutlery set, which is made of high quality Japanese stainless steel. The dual-riveted black handles are molded for exceptional comfort (\$39.99).

• **New Rachael Ray 2-Piece Crisper Pan Set** — Use the 10-inch by 15-inch Cookie Pan on its own to bake cookies or roast vegetables, then add the perforated metal insert to prepare crispy bacon, oven fries, chicken wings, and more. The pan's wide rims with silicone inserts make it much easier to lift out of a hot oven (\$19.99).

• **New SilverStone Ceramic 9-inch by 13-inch Covered Cake Pan** — Perfect for potlucks, bake sales, reunions, and other festivities, the translucent plastic lid snaps tightly on the cake pan. Available in Chili Red and Marine Blue, the pan is crafted from solid carbon steel and has an advanced nonstick surface made of PTFE-free and PFOA-free ceramic (\$19.99).

• **Cake Boss "Mini Cakes" Cake Carrier** — Avid bakers and dessert lovers won't be able to resist this vintage-style carrier made of durable yet lightweight tin-plated steel. The tall lid locks on both sides of the base for secure transport of cakes, pies, tarts, and other sweets (\$39.99).

• **Anolon Universal Steamer** — Designed to work with multiple size pots, including 2-, 3- and 4-quart sizes, this space-saving, stainless steel steamer is extra deep to hold a generous amount of vegetables, fish, and other ingredients. Comes with a snug-fitting

A tasty treat for holiday guests

Aunt Luverta's Dr. Pepper Cake

Makes one 9- by 13-inch cake

Cake

- 2 cups all-purpose flour, sifted
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter
- 1 1/2 cups miniature marshmallows
- 3 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 cup Dr. Pepper
- 2 eggs
- 1 1/2 cups buttermilk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Dr. Pepper Frosting

- 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened
- 6 tablespoons Dr. Pepper
- 3 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 1-pound box confectioners' sugar, sifted
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup chopped pecans



Preheat the oven to 350 F.

Grease, but do not flour, a 9- by 13-inch pan. Set it aside.

To make the cake, in a large bowl, sift together the flour and baking soda. Gradually stir in the sugar. Set aside.

In a saucepan, heat the butter, marshmallows, cocoa, and Dr. Pepper. Stir constantly until the butter and the marshmallows are melted. Do not allow the mixture to boil. Pour the marshmallow mixture over the flour mixture. Beat well. Set aside. In another bowl, beat the eggs until they are light and fluffy. Stir in the buttermilk and vanilla extract. Mix well. Beat the egg mixture into the flour mixture until well blended and the batter is smooth. Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Bake for 50 to 55 minutes, or until the center of cake springs back when lightly touched. Let the cake cool on a rack for 10 minutes.

To make the frosting, in a saucepan, combine the butter, Dr. Pepper and cocoa powder. Bring the mixture to a boil over low heat, stirring constantly. Remove the pan from the heat. Gradually stir in the confectioners' sugar until the mixture is smooth, then fold in the vanilla extract and pecans. Spread over the warm cake. ■



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Host friends for a fun game night

According to the Consumer Electronics Association, the average American household spends between \$1,300 and \$1,500 on consumer electronics each year. This accounts for the nearly 500 million electronics sold annually according to the Environmental Protection Agency. Nielsen's Total Audience Report says Americans aged 18 and older spend more than 11 hours a day watching television, listening to the radio or using smartphones and other electronic devices.

While gadgets can be fun,

many people want to curtail their use of electronic media. One way to do so is to get reacquainted with board games and other activities that foster greater social interaction.

Inviting friends and family members over for a game night can be an entertaining and device-free way to enjoy some time together. The following are some game ideas for hosts looking to disconnect from their devices.

- Lip sync competition: Made popular by Jimmy Fal-

lon and his late-night guests, as well as the viral sensation "Lip Sync Battle," participants compete against each other by lip syncing to songs and putting on impressive performances. The party host can serve as judge and may allow guests to choose their own songs in advance or make them perform at the mercy of random picks.

- Guess the picture: Separate the crowd into two teams. Participants must pick a word out of a bowl and then illustrate that word on a large piece of paper. Choose a theme that fits

with the party, such as holiday songs, favorite books or popular movie releases.

- Bingo: Turn a classic into something all of your guests can enjoy. Have prizes for the winners or ask all participants to bring a small gift with them that will serve as the prizes for each round won. Take turns calling the numbers so everyone gets a chance to win.

- Brain games: Games that challenge guests to use their brains can be a big hit. Whether it's trivia, Scrabble® or figuring out "who-dunnit," classic board games never go out of style.

- 'Wheel' at home: Viewers have been tuning into Wheel of Fortune® for decades. Purchase a licensed board game based on the popular show or recreate the magic



at home by creating your own puzzles and offering your own prizes.

Adults and children can

enjoy game nights to reconnect with one another and take a break from their electronic devices. ■

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The history behind some beloved Christmas songs

- "Silent Night": One of the most rerecorded songs in history (733 versions since 1978), "Silent Night," was composed in 1818 by Franz Xaver Gruber and put to lyrics by Joseph Mohr. It was first performed on Christmas Eve at St. Nicholas parish church in Oberndorf, a village in Austria. Today's version is a slow lullaby, but it's believed the original was a dance-like tune in 6/8 time.

- "O Holy Night": This popular song was composed by Adolphe Adam in 1847 to a French poem titled, "Minuit, chrétiens (Midnight, Christians)."

- "Silver Bells": Now a Christmas classic, "Silver Bells" originally was written for the Bob Hope film, "The Lemon Drop Kid." Songwriter Jay Livingston wanted to title the song "Tinkle Bell," but his wife dissuaded him from using the word "tinkle."

- "White Christmas": Irving Berlin believed his song "White Christmas" would be an instant hit. His prediction was correct, especially after singer Bing Crosby recorded it.

- "Jingle Bells": Although it has become one of the more popular Christmas songs, "Jingle Bells" really was written for Thanksgiving. It's also one of the oldest holiday songs of Amer-

ican origin. James Lord Pierpont, the song's author, was inspired by the famous sleigh races of Medford, Massachusetts.

- "Do You Hear What I Hear": Noel Regney wrote this song as a call to peace during the Cuban Missile Crisis. The original context has long been forgotten, and "Do You Hear What I Hear" is now a staple of holiday celebrations.

- "Santa Claus is Coming to Town": James Gillespie wrote this tune while riding a subway and reminiscing about his childhood with his brother. It became a hit after being performed at the famed Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

- "The Christmas Song": This classic was written in 1944 by Bob Wells and Mel Tormé. It's usually subtitled "Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire." The song was written during a heat wave as a way to think cool thoughts. ■

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Stock up on supplies before your next shindig



Before hosting a formal dinner party, hosts should make sure their dining room tables can accommodate all of their guests.

Hosting a party is no small task. Hosts must tend to a slew of responsibilities when inviting friends and family to their homes, and one of the biggest is stocking up on party supplies.

The supplies necessary for hosting a party depend on the type of party hosts are throwing. For example, the supplies necessary for a formal dinner with friends will differ from those needed for a child's birthday party. Breaking your supply needs down into categories can make it easier to guarantee you get everything you need to throw a successful and fun party.

Furniture

Depending on the size of your guest list, you may need to buy some extra furniture so everyone has a place to sit during the festivities. When throwing

a backyard barbecue, stock up on extra patio furniture or ask guests to bring beach or camping chairs so no one has to stand while eating. If you are hosting a party at home for the big game, purchase some folding chairs and consider moving armchairs or office chairs from around the house into the room where everyone will be watching the game. If you are throwing a formal dinner party and are worried your existing dining room table can't accommodate all of your guests, consider purchasing a new table that features extensions you can remove or install depending on the size of your party.

you are throwing, offering kid-friendly fare like pizza and macaroni and cheese when hosting children's birthday parties and a more sophisticated menu when inviting professional colleagues over for dinner. Asks guests if they have any specific allergies or dietary restrictions, and do your best to cater to those needs. If hosting a less formal affair like a game watch, have snacks on hand when guests arrive and then order some pizzas once everyone has shown up. This allows everyone to pitch in and ensures hosts aren't missing any of the action while preparing food.

Food

No matter which type of party you will be hosting, guests will expect to be fed. Plan a menu that suits the type of party

Beverages

Beverages also must be offered when hosting a party. Offer juice, water, coffee, tea, and soft drinks to your guests regardless of which type of party you're hosting.

If hosting an adult-only or more formal affair, have some alcoholic beverages on hand but be careful that guests don't have too much to drink. Prepare tea and coffee after the meal to help guests digest their meals and relax.

per are left in a visible spot in the restroom, and keep paper towels alongside any

buffet-style offerings so guests can quickly address any spills. ■

Servingware

If your guest list is small, chances are you won't need to buy extra plates, utensils or glasses. But you likely will need to stock up on servingware when hosting larger soirées. Purchase reusable items so you won't have to stock up come your next party. Reusable items also reduce the carbon footprint of your party, which can be considerable when using disposable servingware.

Miscellaneous

In the days leading up to the party, be sure to stock up on miscellaneous items like paper towels, napkins, toilet tissue, and hand soap for the restrooms. Make sure extra rolls of toilet pa-

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“Children see magic because they look for it.”
-Christopher Moore

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Has gift wrapping become a lost art?



Have we become a society that is too busy for gift wrap? When a birthday arrives or the holidays come around in full force, where do most people turn? To the ultra-convenient gift bag, that's where.

Gift bags have largely taken over the party aisles at most stores, where rows and rows of gift bags in all shapes and sizes are not uncommon. If you're trying to find a roll of wrapping paper, good luck.

But there are plenty of people who feel that the elimination of intricately wrapped presents takes some of the magic out of the holidays. Carefully wrapped gifts show that a person put in time and effort to present a gift in a

way that is sentimental and personal. Although it may take mere minutes to pry away the paper and find a treasure inside, there's something to be said for paper-wrapped gifts. It means the gift-giver sat down, pondered the paper design and carefully chose the bow or ribbon with the recipient in mind.

Before you eschew wrapping paper for a gift bag this holiday season, think about all of the advantages to spending some time and reacquainting yourself with the art of gift wrapping. Here are some reasons to save the gift bag for another time.

* Wrapping can be green, too. Wrapping paper can

be reused if it is carefully removed from a gift. You also can create your own wrapping paper by decorating brown postal paper with a rubber stamp or having children color their own special murals. Don't overlook newsprint as wrapping as well.

* Paper is more cost-effective. You are bound to get more bang for your wrapping buck by choosing wrapping paper. Although there are scores of discount stores that sell low-priced gift bags, often the quality isn't the same, and the handles could tear after one or two uses. Wrapping paper per inch is definitely more affordable than gift bags, particularly when purchased on sale.

* Wrapping paper lets you be creative. Cover a box with a patchwork of different paper scraps, choose to stagger colors of paper with boxes towered one on top of another or tie on the biggest bow you can find.

* Paper is traditional. Look back to the classic stories of yuletide and you are bound to find images of Santa Claus pulling wrapped boxes out of his enormous gift sack. Also think about how department stores used to (and some still do) offer complimentary gift wrapping.

* Wrapped gifts travel better. When carrying your bounty of gifts to friends and family, carefully wrapped boxes tend to stand up to travel better than gift bags. No one wants to receive a gift bag that has been wrinkled and crushed into some amorphous shape. Plus, wilted tissue paper can be off-putting.

* There's something magical about wrapping paper. The anticipation, the drama, the build-up to peeling aside wrapping paper and revealing the gift has brought smiles to children's (and adults') faces for generations. It is hard to improve on something that has been successful for years and years.

Although the public may be swept up in rushing from here to there, there are traditionalists who appreciate sitting down and spending time creating holiday magic by way of beautifully wrapped gifts. ■

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History in Your Backyard

– George Eastman



Birthplace of George Eastman, Waterville NY

We take for granted the ease with which we take photos today. Most people do not have cameras, they're just part of our cellular phones and everyone has a cell phone. The evolution of the camera and what we take for granted today can be directly attributed to George Eastman.

The youngest of three children, George Eastman was born to Maria Kilbourn and George Washington Eastman on July 12, 1854 in the village of Waterville, New York. When he was 5 years old his family moved to Rochester, New York

George Eastman was judged "not especially gifted" when measured against the academic standards of the day. He took it upon himself to support his widowed mother and two sisters, one who had polio. Eastman started his business career as an insurance office boy at the age of 14. Before long he was writing his own policies. His ability to overcome financial adversity, his gift for organization and management

made him a successful entrepreneur by his mid-twenties, and enabled him to direct his Eastman Kodak Company to the forefront of American industry.

Eastman had a goal to make photography "as convenient as the pencil." In 1900, the Kodak Brownie Camera brought photography within financial reach of the masses. The camera sold for \$1 and film was 15 cents a roll. Introduced in 1935, Kodachrome Film became the first commercially successful amateur color film. Initially offered in 16 mm format for motion pictures, formats for 35 mm slides and 8 mm home movies followed in 1936. Kodak introduced



Eastman's boyhood home now located in Mumford.

uncountable advances in photographic innovation. From film cameras to printing and publishing to motion pictures Kodak made innovation its stock in trade.

Kodak began to struggle financially in the late 1990's. This financial struggle can be attributed to the decline in sales of photographic film and Kodak's slowness in transitioning to digital photography even though they invented the core technology used in current digital cameras. In 2012 Kodak entered Chapter 11 reorganization and embarked on a series of changes to focus the company on commercial



Eastman Kodak no. 1 Brownie model.

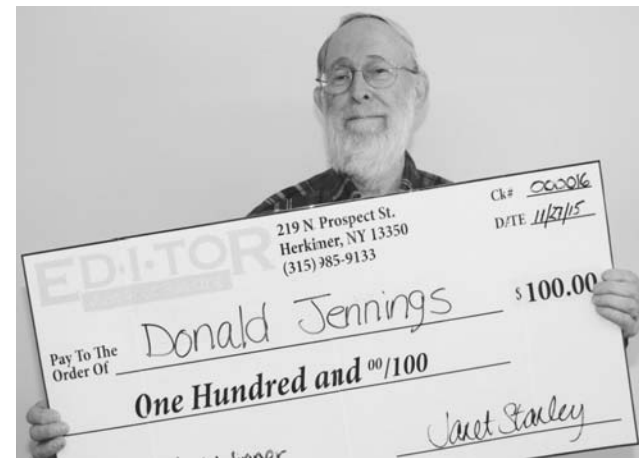
markets. The changes included phasing out the digital capture business, and selling assets. Toward year's end, the company announced agreements that would bring it approximately \$525 million for sale of its digital imaging patents. On January 8, 2014 Kodak was delisted on the New York Stock Exchange.

In his final two years, Eastman was in intense pain caused by a spinal disorder. He had trouble standing. His walk became a slow shuffle. With the help of modern technology Eastman's condition might have been diagnosed as a form of degenerative disease like a herniated disc or spinal stenosis, a narrowing of the spinal canal caused by calcification in the vertebrae. Eastman grew increasingly depressed due to his pain, reduced ability to function, and also since he had witnessed his mother's suffering from pain. On March 14, 1932, Eastman committed suicide with a single gunshot through the heart, leaving a note which read, "To my friends, my work is done – Why wait? GE."

The house on the old Eastman homestead, where his father was born and where George spent his early years, has since been moved to the Genesee Country Village and Museum in Mumford, New York, outside of Rochester. Go visit the home where the camera was practically born. Remember to take lots of pictures. ■

\$100 Contest Winner

You could be the next lucky reader



Our lucky winner this month is Donald Jennings from Lairdsville. Born and raised in the little hamlet of Lairdsville, Don reminisced about the beauty of being part of such a small close knit community.

He and his wife Charlene live on one end of Lairdsville and their daughter on the far end and Don joked that they only live a half mile apart!

There is nothing wrong with small towns! Lairdsville is one of those places

if you yawn while driving through, you might just miss it. But as Don and Charlene said, "it was a great place to grow up and bring up our family."

Don said that he used to have to grab his copy of EDITOR in one of our local stores who carry it but was thrilled that he now gets it in his mail box.

A favorite of his is seeing the local advertisers. "It's nice being able to support them and seeing their ads all together is great." Don stated. He also said the light hearted ready is great. He really enjoys reading it and Charlene piped in with,

"maybe you could put in something about knitting and crocheting. That might be nice to see." I will see what I can do Charlene.

We appreciate your participation, Don and thank you for being a reader.

We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Thank you all for reading and for your nice comments. We truly appreciate you! ■

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As Time Goes By

–Dove Eye Center

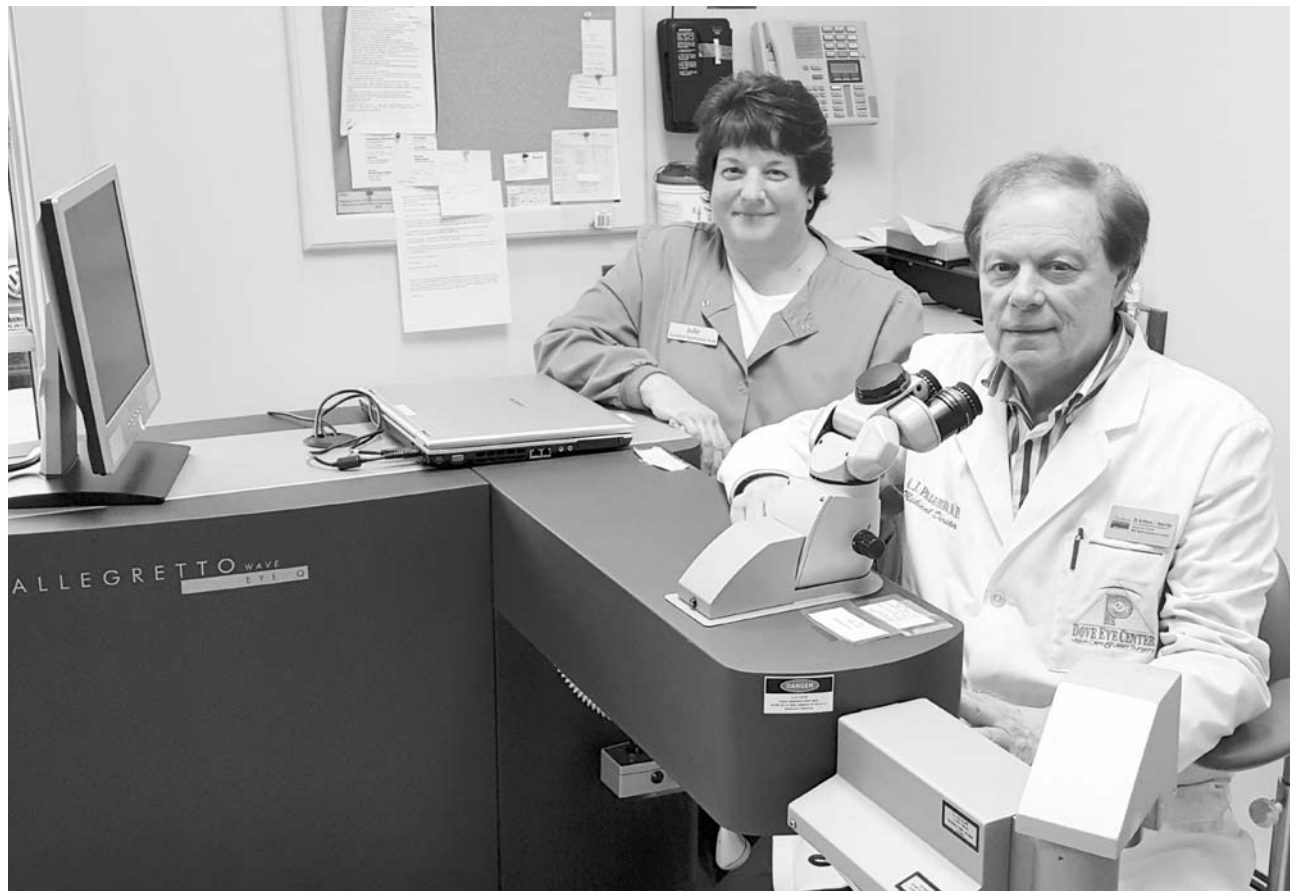
by **Anthony J. Palumbo, M.D.**

Recently I woke up and said to myself, “WOW, we have been performing LASIK Surgery for 20 years! Where did this time go?” I reflected on those fleeting years which included my time as a young man in the US Navy where I served as an engineering officer on a mine sweeper. The precious memories associated with the many events – our goals, other’s expectations, patient personalities, the future, etc. How were these challenges met, and what were the resultant opportunities derived from this new direction? At the center of this mission was the sharing of a life-altering experience with others. Reminded of John F. Kennedy’s powerful message, “Those who have much, much is expected.” Subconsciously, this message appeals to one’s inner beliefs. To be blessed is to be shared. The LASIK story is the vehicle to share one’s blessings.

The acronym LASIK is (Laser-Assisted In Situ Keratomileusis) more commonly referred to as Laser Vision correction (LVC). It is refractive surgery to correct myopia, hyperopia, and astigmatism performed by an Ophthalmologist (M.D.) with a specific Excimer Laser. Technically, the Excimer Gas Laser operates within the UV spectrum at 193nm. Argon gas is at the heart of transmitted energy. In the form of a dedicated beam of light energy, it is delivered to the corneal surface, reshapes the surface according to desired parameters, and ultimately provides a point of focus, which results in vision. From the studies of the Apollo space program, M.I.T. researchers pioneered the entry into the LVC arena. Stephen Trokel, M.D., and his team, is credited with the adaption of this phenomenon to modern day LASIK. Since FDA approval, in October 1995, millions of people have undergone LVC surgery with a high degree of success and inherent satisfaction. And, as time goes by, progress continues, results are heightened and patient expectations are clearly accomplished.

The LASIK experience is only part of my personal big picture. My mission into the field of medicine is a journey of service. Someday, this story will be the subject of shared satisfaction with patients, family, and friends. The inspiration behind this journey was born from my parents’ dreams. From a modest background, their celestial goals – similar to many of their generation – were to provide their children with essential wisdom of helping others to find a better tomorrow. (i.e., Dad was a police officer and Mom worked at Broadacres as a nurses’ aid.) Changing the face of humanity, one person at a time, was the quintessential dream of our parents. LASIK for me was their voice from heaven. And, this timeless dream was to become a reality for me and my patients – as time continues to go by.

Shortly after my Mother’s passing in 1990, an opportunity presented itself when Summit Technology of Waltham, MA embarked on a very ambitious pathway attempting to eliminate the burden of myopia. This opportunity was to become part of a 30 person team of United States Ophthalmologists excited to study with Dr. John Marshall, a renowned research biomedical scientist in England. His team was charged with the responsibility to insure the safety and accuracy of this evolving, life-altering experience. His published works were the basis for refinement



Doctor Anthony J. Palumbo and office manager Julie Smith pictured at their Allegretto Wave Eye-Q laser.

of the Art and Science of LaserVision Correction by PRK (Photorefractive Keratectomy). Travels to learn from scientists abroad, Switzerland and Germany, soon followed. Later, opportunities embraced from gifted surgeons, Drs. Puliafito and Steinert of Boston, provided the essential protocol for the FDA approval process. On October 20, 1995, The Dove Eye Center set in motion the initial pathway for LaserVision Correction surgery. In concert with Focus Eye Center, of Canada, shared patient surgeries were performed. “Glitches” were corrected and hesitation in treatment was reduced. The experience gained with Focus Eye – always patient-centered – was impressive. For the most part, patient goals were met and satisfaction ultimately was achieved. Transformation from a visually restricted life to eventually find timeless freedom from spectacles was a tantamount accomplishment. Imagine waking in the morning free from spectacles, and experience the joy of seeing the bedside clock – or to witness a beautiful sunrise on a new dawn. For some, it was a personal victory; for me, it was a joy to share my parents’ dream with others. Without equal, this is a life-altering experience; a sense of Renaissance. But more importantly, it became an indelible achievement on one’s personal bucket list.

Many patients along this historic journey have expressed appreciation and respect to applaud those dedicated scientists who have transformed their lives by virtue of the Gift of Sight. These patients defied convention in search of the Impossible Dream. Incentivized by their accomplishments, they succeeded in their own lives, more importantly, they “passed the baton” to transform the lives, of others by simply defining a better tomorrow. Raising the bar is a clear expression of giving. And by giving, a sense of euphoria is experienced. Universally, the melody resonates, “The Beat Goes On.”

LASIK is the pivotal instrument, which sets in motion the realization of others’ dreams. We are all thankful to our parents, unconditionally, as am I. Providing my brother and sister with the essential wisdom, in a small part, the face of humanity had been changed. Today, we experience an enhancement for a better tomorrow. For some, 20 years represents a significant period of time. Given perspective, this period is only one timeless star collectively in an immense celestial galaxy. History will repeat this story in many ways, by many people for much in the same sharing manner. Clearly, Dr. Trokel’s hard work, hope, and dreams have succeeded in giving us a better tomorrow.

Respectfully, I often reflect on the brilliance of Louis Armstrong – - -

“I see trees of green, red roses too

I see them bloom, for me and you

And I think to myself

What a Wonderful World”

Yes, personally, it is a wonderful journey – The fruition of a dream from long ago by caring parents

And yes, it is a Wonderful World – - -

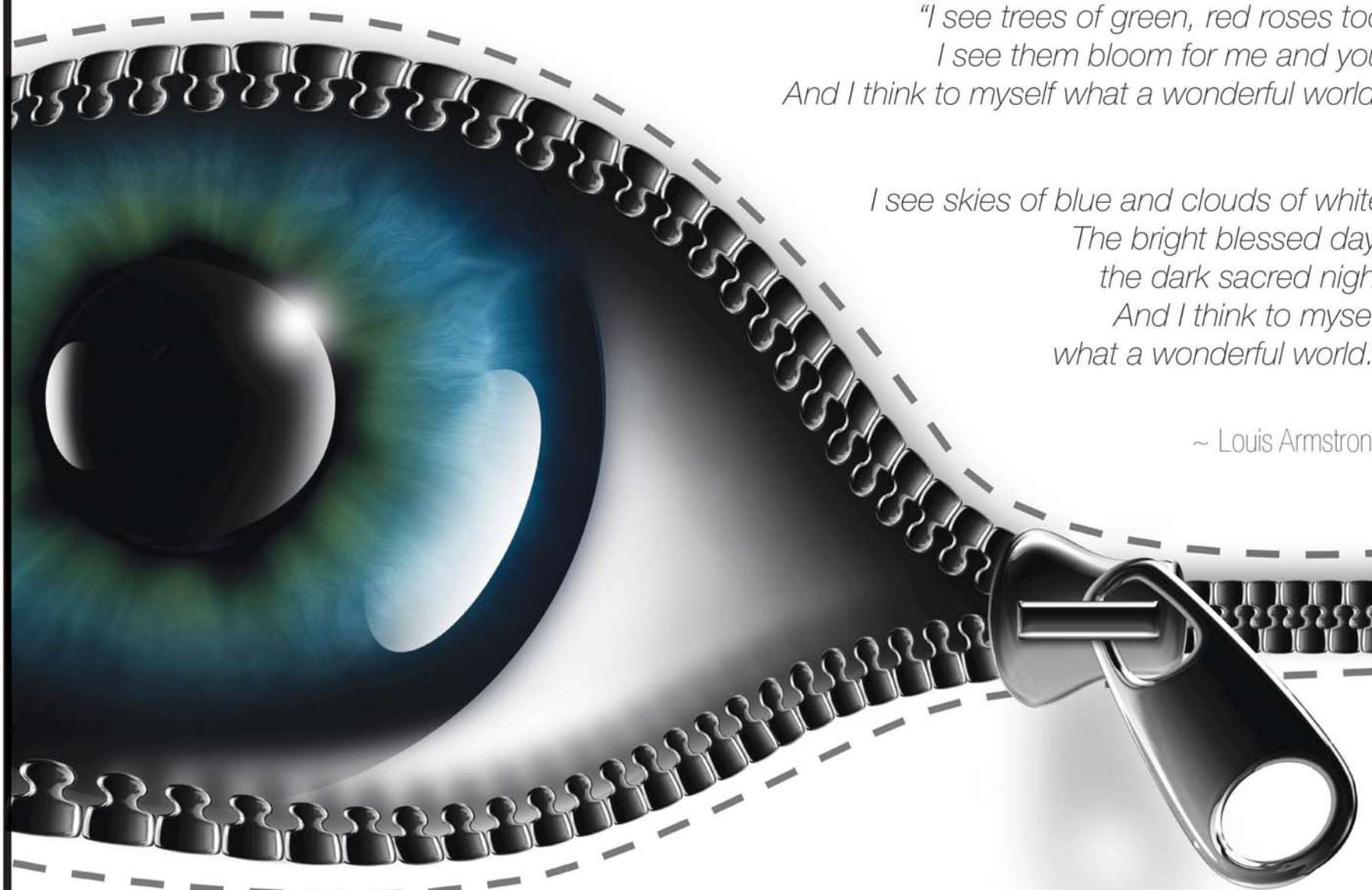
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*"I see trees of green, red roses too
I see them bloom for me and you
And I think to myself what a wonderful world.*

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And I think to myself
what a wonderful world."*

~ Louis Armstrong



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Joe's Jerky

by Al Dorantes

Whether you keep a package of beef jerky in your desk for a mid afternoon snack or it is in your back pack for a hiking trek, beef jerky has made the

transition from traditional necessity to an everyday staple. Joe's Jerky, located at 190 E. State Street in Sherrill in the Old Gingerbread House, makes the finest jerky around.

Joe's Jerky started 3 years ago in a 900 square foot storefront. Joe's Jerky is the creation of Jodie Lynn Patla and her father, Joe Robinson. Joe took a friend's recipe and expanded it to make it shelf stable. Joe has been a butcher and meat cutter since he was 14; he has been cutting meat for 50 years.

The jerky process is as simple as the methods our ancestors used; drying out meat. But Joe's Jerky has modern technology and modern equipment to help him out. The meat, all natural Angus bottom round flats, arrives at the shop. The beef is trimmed and then sliced. Next comes the process of separating each piece of meat by hand so it can be marinated. The meat slices are tumbled in Joe's Jerky's secret spices

and then they take a rest in the cooler for 24 hours. Each piece is put on racks where they are smoked and dehydrated in Joe's giant walk in smoker. Once the slices of meat reach the appropriate humidity they are removed from the racks and bagged by hand.

The jerky is available in 8 different flavors including: Original, Teriyaki, Hot Teriyaki, Hot, Sizzlin' Hot, Buffalo Style Chicken, Peppered, and Hillbilly Peppered. You can find Joe's Jerky at over 100 different locations; from wineries to fruit stands, at Joe's Jerky and on the internet.

Joe's Jerky is more than just beef jerky. They are a market featuring an old fashioned meat market. They make their own hamburger patties, sausage, and custom cuts. They are an old fashioned butcher featuring Boar's Head deli meat.



Famous for their beef jerky... and also for thier Jerky Treats for your furry family members. Grab a package for your best friend's Christmas stocking!

preservatives Joe's Jerky uses the same ingredients you would use at home. They even sell crock pots!

of local tastes, and old fashioned candy too!

Joe's Jerky is expanding and growing. They are open



Joe's Jerky features an old fashioned meat market and butcher shop. Meat packages are available to meet your family's needs. Always fresh. Their deli features Boar's Head meats.

An innovative product they have cooked up at Joe's Jerky is crock pot meals. The all natural, homemade meals are a convenient supper just waiting for you. You simply pop the contents in your crock pot and the crock pot does the work. With no

Their bakery churns out pies with homemade crusts, cheese cakes, Italian cookies, and more. They make sub sandwiches and fresh soups. If you are hungry Joe's Jerky has something that will hit the spot for you; jerky, deli meats, subs, crock pot meals, soup, pies, a multitude

7 days a week working hard to make sure you have a wide variety of quality items made locally. And great jerky too! For more information go to: www.jerkyworks.net or follow them on Facebook: Joes Jerky ■

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Libbey's Good News Gift Shop and Sew Blessed



Libbey's is located right on Route 5 in Sherrill.

by Al Dorantes

A stitch in time saves 9. If you miss that opportunity then bring your sewing or mending to Libbey's Good News Gift Shop and Sew Blessed. Libbey's is located at 77 East State Street (Route 5) in Sherrill, New York. The gift shop has been open for 16 years and Libbey has been sewing professionally for 9 years.

Libbey started with SMC, a giftware and general merchandise marketer. She would buy merchandise

so people could see the items. It got to the point where in order to bring in new merchandise boxes and boxes of old stuff would have to go. She started going to farmers markets and shows to sell merchandise. In 1998 her husband, Paul, prompted Libbey to open a shop for her birthday in Oneida. She bought their current location 7 years ago. The gift shop was slow at times, in-between customers she started sewing for her granddaughters. When

people saw her sewing skills and complimented her she thought she should add sewing to the business.

Libbey will sew anything. From buttons to wedding gowns. She also does repairs. She will put in new zippers and sew on buttons. She creates dance and skate costumes and even does upholstery, if you can bring it into the store. Libbey will shorten or lengthen or take in or let out as needed. She explained that she has sewn for many weddings; bridal gowns and bridesmaids. Libbey has also created First Communion gowns, baptismal gowns, and men's suits. Libbey is also equipped to make leather repairs, do quilting and embroidery.

Libbey explained that she has been sewing since she was a kid. She said, "When I was a little girl I was tall. My mother sewed clothes for me. When I was 7 my sister had a 'my first Singer' sewing machine. I went and got a piece of fabric and made my own handkerchief. It just came naturally. I used to stitch doll clothes; you name it."

Libbey also gives sewing lessons. Choose from private lessons or group classes. Group lessons will begin in January. Classes are one night per week with the course lasting 4-6 lessons. Each lesson lasts 1 and a half hours. Students will start at the beginning; you will pick a pattern, pick the fabric, fit the pattern, and learn to sew. Students will learn on Libbey's sewing machines. If you want to learn on your own machine she suggests private lessons.

Libbey explained that every group of lessons involves making a pattern or students will receive a pattern. It is something they will learn to make.

Libbey's gift shop is the Sherrill area's only Christian gift shop. From bibles to gift and cards, you can find all your inspirational items

at Libbey's Good News Gift Shop and Sew Blessed. Crosses, nativities, and candles can all be had at great deals.



Make sure you save your buttons and bring any of your sewing, mending, and tailoring to Libbey. For more information go to: www.mysewblessed.com or follow her on facebook: Libbey's Good News Gift Shop & Sew Blessed ■

“

How many observe Christ's birthday!
How few, His precepts!”

-Benjamin Franklin

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The only Christian gift shop in the Sherrill area, Libbey's also has a nice selection of greeting cards for all occasions.

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—chosen as one of the elite for the new “American Restoration” series coming in early ‘16

by Al Dorantes

The American hot rod is part of the American fabric like baseball and apple pie. On the sweeping curve of Route 5S between Schuyler and Utica is Steve's Restorations and Hot Rods. Inside the pristine shop Steve Hale and his crew build hot rods and will soon be featured on HISTORY's show “American Restoration.”

Steve's Restorations and Hot Rods specializes in high quality antique restorations, redesigns and creating one of a kind vehicles and motorcycles. Owner Steve Hale is considered by many to be an industry prodigy, having been in the restoration business since he was 16 years old painting hot rods in his garage. Steve and his guys breathe new life into pieces of Americana that no one would ever think could possibly live again.

For Steve Hale it began with bodywork when he was around 16 years old. He wanted to restore a car, a 1950's Chevy. He called on a classified ad but missed out on the Chevy. The guy said “I have a 60's Jaguar.” Steve bought it, a 1960 Mark One in rough shape, brought it back



Owner, Steve Hale, right, with part of his amazing crew: center, Peter Wilcox and left, Keith Williams. Front and center, Wylee, Steve's German Shepherd who as Steve says, “is really the star of the show!” Watch your local TV listings for the airing of “American Restoration” which will feature Steve's Restorations & Hot Rods early in 2016!

home, restored it, and made himself a nice ride. That was the beginning of his automotive adventure.

As the years passed Steve restored more and more projects. He explained that he has a great relationship with PPG, it has really helped take his paint work to the next level. He eventually began doing big car shows. Steve made contacts at the SEMA show in Las Vegas, one of the largest shows.

SEMA features after-market manufacturers, original equipment manufacturers, media, car dealers, specialty equipment distributors,

the “American Restoration” show. The new direction of the show would take a different look into other shops. “American

restore pieces of America's history, but also create new and awe re-purposed items of the past. Steve said, “The show will show a small town group of guys doing what they love and hopefully we can inspire others.”

With all the hot rods, cars, and projects in the shop it is hard to pick something to highlight without giving away “American Restoration” spoilers. One item that does stand out is a classic 1980's Mr. Muscle arm wrestling machine by Zamperla. For a quarter challengers can arm wrestle Mr. Muscle and test their strength. The bulging biceps of Mr. Muscle seldom lose. Zamperla made 2 other strength testing games around the same time as Mr. Muscle; K.O. Punch ball which measured how hard you punched and El Toro Strength Tester which measured your strength by squeezing the horns of a bull. Steve explained that the Mr. Muscle game was a really cool project done for a friend and customer who is an arm wrestling champion.

Another item in the menagerie of Steve's shop is the fearsome lion drinking fountain from the Utica Zoo. Steve and his crew restored the fountain to its current

condition and Steve stores the lion at the shop during the winter season. The tawny yellow lion sparkles as he waits for spring to return to the zoo.

Steve Hale explained that every project is important to them. He said, “A piece of us leaves the shop with every project.” He went on to explain that he has been working hard the last couple of months (the last 10 years actually) with a great group of guys in the shop. Steve has not let the show business side of things affect him. He still welds and paints. “If I put my stamp of approval on it I want to be involved.”

While all the welding, fabricating, wiring, painting and design done at Steve's Restorations and Hot Rods make filming “American Restoration” easy the real star of the show is Wylee, Steve's German Shepherd. Wylee has free reign of the shop and is the top dog. HISTORY plans on airing the rebooted “American Restoration” in early 2016. Check your local listings and tune in.

Be sure to like his page on facebook too: <https://www.facebook.com/stevesrestorations> ■



The fierce lion drinking fountain which is a part of the Utica Zoo's history is lovingly being restored by the crew at Steve's Restorations and Hot Rods. Expect to see him roaring again this spring.



Mr. Muscle, arm wrestling machine is one of Steve's pet projects that he restored for a friend and arm wrestling champion.

installers, retailers and restoration specialists.

One day the production company called. They were revamping and rebooting

Restoration” follows five of the best restoration shops in the United States as the owners and their incredibly talented teams not only

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HIGH-TECH CLOTHING HELPS OVERCOME HIGH STRESS



FAMILY FEATURES

Athletic styling continues to increase its influence on casual clothing – often referred to as “athleisure” apparel – with innovative fabric treatments associated with high-performance activewear making their way into basic apparel; even underwear.

Temperature-control and wicking technology that draws moisture away from skin, initially developed to keep athletes dryer and more comfortable while training and competing, can now be found in items we wear every day, including T-shirts, underwear and socks.

“Comfort is the biggest factor when choosing basic clothing, so it’s little surprise the technology that makes high-performance sportswear so appealing to athletes is being well received in casual, everyday apparel,” said Jay Turner, president of underwear, panties and socks at HanesBrands, which has introduced X-Temp, a dynamic temperature control and cooling technology, to its product lineup. “There is no such thing as too much comfort in underwear.”

After all, the gym is hardly the only place where temperatures rise and perspiration follows. Sometimes life sets the thermostat to “really uncomfortable,” especially with normal workday pressures. From interviewing for a new job, making a big presentation or dealing with a demanding boss, there are countless scenarios in the workplace that call for keeping your cool.

Fit meets function

Athletic apparel was once only worn for specific athletic activities, but now demand has inspired manufacturers to deliver the same style and comfort in more affordable, everyday apparel. One of the key components of comfort is temperature regulation, and a high-tech Swiss company, HeiQ, developed the Adaptive technology that actually responds to body temperature changes by turning moisture wicking on or off, much like the skin does naturally. You want more evaporation to keep you feeling cooler when the body is warmer and less evaporation when you are chilled.

Top brands are now incorporating this technology into their collections. For example, Champion PowerTrain T-shirts, hoodies and training pants (look for “Vapor” on the label) are made from virtually weightless fast-drying fabric that wicks moisture for sweat-free comfort, no matter what else you’re wearing and what you’re doing.

Underneath it all

When things heat up, keeping your cool depends on that first layer of fabric against your skin. That’s why it’s important to choose undergarments designed to respond to your body temperature. By incorporating the same cooling technology used in active apparel, Hanes has introduced X-Temp undershirts, socks and men’s and women’s underwear that wick moisture away from consumers when warm. Soon you will even be able to find bras that incorporate the technology.

“Technology continues to migrate from athletic wear to underwear as part of the athleisure trend,” Turner said. “For consumers, comfort is 24-7 and knows no boundaries.”

To learn more about comfortable, casual clothing with the technology to meet your lifestyle needs, visit hanes.com.

Comfort that Fits

When you’re comfortable, you’re better prepared to handle whatever life throws your way. Stay cool when things get sticky with these tips from the experts at Hanes:

- Find clothes that let you feel confident. From the style to the fit, if you’re not comfortable, it will show. Look for attire that lets you downplay any sign you’re not on top of your game, such as moisture-wicking garments that keep stickiness and sweat at bay.

- Take control of your temperature by wearing layers. If things heat up, you can discard a layer to quickly adjust your personal comfort.
- Buy the right size. Clothing that doesn’t fit properly tends to cling, making you more prone to sweat and discomfort.
- To look good, you need to feel good. Avoid rough, scratchy materials that will irritate your skin and opt instead for soft cotton blends.



Twomey Construction and Interior

by Daniel Baldwin

Renovating an old home may be the toughest job for many residents who do not have construction or renovating experience. But fortunately there is a local construction

company that does this sort of work. Twomey Construction and Interiors does basement and house renovations. They replace house siding, tiles, and windows. The company even builds houses from the ground up.

“Basically we build houses,” President and CEO of the company Jim Twomey said. “We do siding, replace a lot of windows, renovations. We do everything from the ground up.”

Twomey Construction and Interiors has had a great deal of business success. The company’s craftsmanship and skill, during every remodeling project, has earned them the Remodeler Project of the Quarter award from CertainTeed Corp. Twomey said that the business has done 80-to-120 projects per year.

Their headquarters is located on Doyle Rd. in Utica, and they have been around since the late 1980s, according to Twomey.

“We started part-time,” Twomey said, “then gradually we got so busy and had a lot of customers that we decided to go full-time. We started out with Twomey Home Improvement, and then we decided to incorporate and change the name to Twomey Construction and Interiors Inc.”

Twenty-three years ago, this company started doing small construction projects as well as painting. “Way long ago a \$4,000 job was big,” Twomey said again, “We did a lot more smaller jobs than we’re doing today. We did a lot of paneling and painting apartments. We never really forgot where we started.”

Twomey said that his team has all the tools and equipment to get the job done at a fast pace. “Before we start the job, everything is already picked out,” he said. “So we were able to really get the job done in a timely manner because we are not waiting for (paint) colors. We are not waiting for



window sizes. Everything is picked out before we start the job, and that enables us to go in and get it done.”

The company today still has all the tools, window sizes, colors, tiles, and panels to complete projects as soon as possible. In order to make every house or indoor renovation look amazing, Twomey Construction uses siding and other products that are built and shipped from CertainTeed Corp. Twomey has a trailer that contains all the tools that the company needs to do this sort of work; from saws to hammers, and wrenches to nail guns.

Building, renovating, and craftsmanship are the company’s goals, but it is not the only one. Twomey said that his team is also focused on helping the local area and making residents happy.

“We just want our customers to be happy, and we enjoy what we do. It’s just a good feeling when the homeowner comes home and they got a new room or kitchen, and we just want to make them happy. We really enjoy working with the people here.”

After receiving national recognition, from Certain Teed, for their outstanding remodeling projects, Twomey said that his construction team has high hopes for next year.

“We look forward towards another good year next year,” Twomey said. “Working alongside everybody else, and just trying to get out a good product.” ■

“There are only the pursued, the pursuing, the busy and the tired.”
-F. Scott Fitzgerald, The Great Gatsby

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Creative ways to ring in the new year

Counting down the hours until the new year can be exciting, as the world anxiously anticipates the adventures in store for the

months ahead.

Celebrating the new year dates back thousands of years to the ancient Babylonians, who celebrated

a new year come the first full moon after the spring equinox. The new year is now commemorated in various ways across the globe. According to History.com, one million people gather in New York City's Time

Square to watch the famed crystal ball drop each year. Across the pond in London, celebrants watch thousands of individual fireworks launch over the Thames River. In Sydney, Australia, roughly one million people



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line the shoreline each year to watch a fireworks show over the famed harbor.

To match the excitement of New Year's festivities, each year party hosts and hostesses are on the lookout for innovative ways to entertain and ensure everyone has a blast. The following are a few ways to do just that as you and your guests prepare to close the book on 2015 and usher in 2016.

- Go bowling. New Year's Eve probably isn't a big league night, so it's likely you can reserve a number of

lanes. Book in advance to take advantage of affordable food and drink packages. Some alleys now offer more than just bowling, with live music or deejay entertainment as well. You do not have to be a professional bowler; either, as the goal of bowling with friends is to simply have some fun and make some lasting memories.

- Try a "first". There is a first time for everything, and why not try something you have been thinking about doing for some time on the first day of the new year? Maybe you're ready to tap into your adventurous side and try skydiving. Or, you may be looking to travel abroad to experience something you have longed to see, such as the Egyptian pyramids or the city lights in the romantic city of Paris.

- Cheer for every time zone. Thanks to the various time zones across the globe, "Happy New Year" is shouted multiple times throughout the night on New Year's Eve. Time-and-Date.com notes that, depending on how you define the time zone and if you include the International Date Line, there are 24 or 25 standard time zones. That gives revelers 25 opportunities to usher in the new year. Choose a country in each time zone, and then employ that country's cultural traditions to celebrate the new year.

- Design a scavenger hunt. A fun activity for both adults and children, scavenger hunts can send guests in search of clues and answers based on things that happened over the previous 12 months. Include photos and other mementos when preparing clues. ■

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- Celebrating 50 years with 3 generations of family members

The Parkway Drugs family from left: Founder Rock Femia Sr., Rocco Femia, Vin Chiffy, Tony Chiffy Jr., Joe Chiffy. Missing from photo is Jim Femia.

by Al Dorantes

November marks the 50th Anniversary of Parkway Drugs. Utica's home town drug store has been focused on customer satisfaction and continues to service the community, providing that hometown feel that you just do not get from a big box chain.

In 1965, Rocco Femia and Anthony Chiffy, longtime friends, brothers-in-law and pharmacists, opened their first store on the corner of Culver and Albany streets. Today, 3 generations of family members are involved in the business with Anthony Chiffy III attending Albany College of

Pharmacy.

Taking a look at Parkway Drugs by the numbers and you cannot help but be impressed. Parkway Drugs opened their first store, at the corner of Culver Avenue and Albany Street on November 3, 1965. In 1989 they opened the 2nd Parkway Drugs location on French Road in the Chanatry's Plaza. 2008 saw their third store open in the "Big Lots Plaza" in North Utica.

Parkway Drugs does a large volume of prescriptions per week and has 9 delivery cars delivering 7 days a week. The Albany Street and French Road stores are now open 9am-

10pm; 7 days a week. You can count on an owner being at one of the stores. Parkway Drugs started in 1965, with Tony and Rock plus 4 employees and now has over 160 people employed including 16 pharmacists at their Albany Street, French Road, and North Utica stores combined.

What really is amazing is that from just 2 high school buddies turned Pharmacists, with 9 children between the 2 of them, that 6 of them became pharmacists. Now their families together have a total 11 licensed pharmacists and 1 future pharmacist to carry on the legacy of Parkway Drugs. All those numbers plus the goal of commitment to customer service equals 50 years of success.

Now their families together have a total eleven licensed pharmacists and one future pharmacist...

Parkway Drugs owes its success to family. Along with the numerous pharmacists ready to help you, their commitment to customer service, the parents instilled family oriented values to serve the community. Parkway Drugs supports many local efforts and they donate a great deal to local charities. To celebrate their 50th Anniversary, Parkway Drugs gave away 3-50" flat screen TV's, 2- iPads, 1-Apple TV and many other prizes. 50 years is only the beginning for the family of pharmacists at Parkway Drugs. The real prize is their dedication to customer service and the community. ■

“
The only rock I know that stays steady, the only institution I know that works, is the family.
-Lee Iacocca

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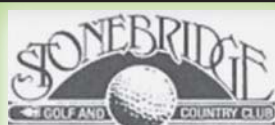
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by Carly Proulx

Yuletide has ties going back to the religious festivals of the Germanic historic peoples, and scholars found its connection with the Wild Hunt, an ancient folk myth prevalent across Northern, Western and Central Europe. As a kid I

went caroling with a group of kids from my school, and when I'd sing out loud the lyrics "Troll the ancient Yuletide carol, Fa la la la, la la la la. See the blazing Yule before us, Fa la la la, la la la la," from the song Deck the Halls it never occurred to me to ask what in Santa's reindeers was the meaning of Yule. I suppose I thought it meant spreading the Christmas spirit, as this is the message in most any and all Christmas songs. This year on December 10, 2015 from 6pm-8pm in Little Falls, NY however, Yuletide will come to mean a 1st year feast celebration at the D. H. Burrell Overlook Mansion.

A great way for the new managers of the Overlook,

A Yuletide Dinner

Michael and Margaret Robertson, to meet, greet, and rejoice with the folks of Little Falls this Holiday season. The menu is spot on festive, and seems a real treat for those who haven't yet taken up fowl for Christmas. A Farm to Table event has been lost on the map of our small city, and we're all extremely grateful to the new management for finally finding it its rightful place. The dinner menu will be featuring roast goose, turkey, and duck. Other exciting menu items are sweet potatoes, roasted fingerling potatoes, seasonal vegetables, and fall salad greens. And let us not forget locally ground coffee, apple crisp, pumpkin pie, and locally made gelato to reign it all in on a pallet cleansing sweet note.

A 6pm a wine and cheese tasting with local wines and cheese will begin the evening to be followed by a buffet dinner at 6:30pm. Ending the evening on a Yuletide note will be the

choral presentation of seasonal music. I sure do miss the piano in our old house where my great great grandma Grace would sit and play Silent Night and other such fashionably seasonal tunes, and being a kid, along with all my school pals running the streets in merry song. This night seems a perfect way to get in touch with the Christmas spirit, keep it in your heart year round, and embrace the first year ever Farm to Table feast at the Mansion. Featuring products from Lamb's Ear Acres, Jones Family Farm, Bouchard Farm II, Gaia's Breath Farm, and a few others the whole event is a local foodie's dream come true. You get to taste what surrounds you, the fascinating products people are creating, and will come to know your options for shopping locally in the future.

New owners Michael and Margaret Robertson, prior to undertaking the Overlook, owned and ran a

greenhouse operation and produce farm called M&M Robertson Farms, LLC in western PA. Moving with their two children, ages 7 and 10 to the area over this past summer they began taking over the Overlook operations this last mid-October, 2015. All four have found Little Falls to be a warm and welcoming community, and after 17 years on their former farm Michael and Margaret are ready to embrace the wonderful change of this small city, and the open doors of opportunity provided by the new venue at the Overlook Mansion. After having spent a good amount of time on one side of the farming fence the new management have admitted that they look forward to working on the other side of the local foods system, and will remain a huge supporter of sustaining Farm to Table dinners inside their new community.

Continued on page 46

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FAMILY FEATURES

Making a New Year's resolution? Don't forget salt. Most Americans consume about a 1,000 milligrams of sodium over the amount recommended by nutrition and health experts. New research shows cooking with spices and herbs could help you ditch the salt shaker and meet sodium recommendations.

Keeping a resolution to cut salt from your diet is easy. Use simple spice swaps to create tasty, low-sodium meals. From seasoning eggs with basil instead of salt to adding spices and herbs to no-salt tomato sauce, the McCormick Kitchens offer these easy tips and recipes to make low-sodium meals full of flavor:

- Beat 1/8 teaspoon herb instead of salt into 2 eggs before scrambling.
- Add oregano, garlic powder and red pepper to no-salt added tomato sauce for a tasty, low-sodium pasta dinner.
- Try making Citrus Herbed Chicken with Asparagus, Fiesta Citrus Salmon or Tuscan Pasta. These dishes don't call for any salt. Instead, they swap in basil, garlic powder and oregano.

For more low-sodium tips and recipes – such as shaved vegetable salad with Italian herb vinaigrette – visit McCormick.com/recipes/low-sodium to keep your New Year's resolutions on track. To see the full Anderson study, which examined the effects of a behavioral intervention that emphasized spice and herbs, and how it impacts sodium intake, visit McCormickScienceInstitute.com.



Fiesta Citrus Salmon

Prep time: 5 minutes
Cook time: 15 minutes
Serves: 4

- 1/4 cup orange juice
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons McCormick Perfect Pinch Salt-Free Fiesta Citrus Seasoning, divided
- 2 tablespoons packed brown sugar, divided
- 1 pound salmon fillets

In small bowl, mix juice, oil and 1 tablespoon each seasoning and sugar. Place salmon in large resealable plastic bag or glass dish. Add marinade; turn to coat well. Refrigerate 30 minutes, or longer for extra flavor.

In another small bowl, mix remaining seasoning and sugar. Remove salmon from marinade. Discard any remaining marinade. Rub salmon evenly with seasoning mixture.

Tuscan Pasta

Prep time: 15 minutes
Cook time: 25 minutes
Serves: 6

- 1 can (28 ounces) diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 can (8 ounces) no-salt added tomato sauce
- 1 tablespoon sugar (optional)
- 2 tablespoons packed brown sugar, divided
- 2 teaspoons McCormick Garlic Powder
- 2 teaspoons McCormick Perfect Pinch Italian Seasoning
- 1/2 teaspoon McCormick Black Pepper, ground
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 pound zucchini, sliced

- 1 package (8 ounces) sliced mushrooms
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 6 ounces pasta, such as spaghetti or linguine

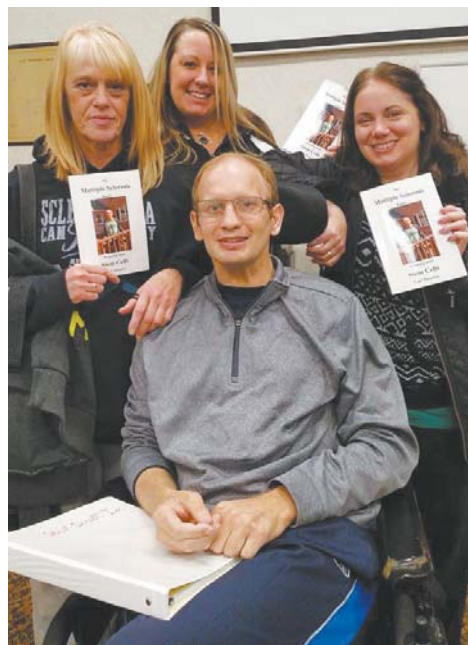
In medium saucepan, mix tomatoes, tomato sauce, sugar and seasonings. Bring to boil on medium heat. Reduce heat to low; cover and simmer 20 minutes.

In large skillet, heat oil on medium-high heat. Add zucchini, mushrooms and onion; cook and stir 4 minutes or until vegetables are tender-crisp. Stir tomato sauce into vegetables.

Meanwhile, cook pasta as directed on package. Drain well. Place pasta in serving bowl. Add vegetable mixture; toss well.

Carl Nicastro

- My MS Battle



Carl Nicastro with some happy book buyers!

by Al Dorantes

Multiple Sclerosis is like a brick wall, unforgiving and predictable in its pattern. Carl Nicastro was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis and he has been battling MS for 20 years. He made progress with stem cell treatments and wrote a book about it. Hoping to inspire and also raise awareness of stem cell research and stem cell treatments he penned, "My MS Battle - Winning With Stem Cells."

What is MS? Multiple sclerosis (MS) is an immune-mediated process in which an abnormal response of the body's immune system is directed against the central nervous system (CNS), which is made up of the brain, spinal cord and optic nerves. Within the CNS, the immune system attacks myelin, the fatty substance that surrounds and insulates the nerve fibers as well as the nerve fibers themselves. The damaged myelin forms scar tissue (sclerosis), which gives the disease its name. When any part of the myelin sheath or nerve fiber

is damaged or destroyed, nerve impulses traveling to and from the brain and spinal cord are distorted or interrupted, producing a wide variety of symptoms. The disease is thought to be triggered in a genetically susceptible individual by a combination of one or more environmental factors. Symptoms of MS, which vary from one person to another and over time for any given individual, depending on where the damage occurs.

StemGenex, a stem cell treatment center, took the stem cells from Carl's belly fat. Once the cells are extracted they are mixed with platelets that have previously been separated from his own blood. That mixture is then injected back into Carl's body. The stem cells then repair any damage that's been done. Carl saw almost instantaneous results. His vision returned and he saw more and more improvements every day.

Carl Nicastro has received 2 stem cell treatments thus far. Carl said, "And I'm going to do it again. I just have to sell these books." He explained that the results of stem cell research are sitting right here. Carl is facing different challenges every day and is trying to get the word out to sell his book to raise funds for more stem cell treatments.

Carl Nicastro said, "I never thought I would write a book. But, I had a story to tell. I was down to where I couldn't even brush my teeth, I could hardly talk. After the stem cell treatment I am improving every day."

"My MS Battle - Winning With Stem Cells" retails for \$14.95 and can be purchased via Carl's Facebook page, <https://bookblues.com/biographies/99-my-multiple-sclerosis-battle-winning-with-stem-cells-9780692560.html>. The book can also be purchased at Fratello's Pizza in Frankfort. He is having a book signing at the St. Francis club in Frankfort on Sunday, December 20th at 2:00 pm. Carl Nicastro has a post on his Facebook page where he reached out to Ellen DeGeneres. Carl wants to go on Ellen's show and dance with her. Stop by Carl's Facebook page and share the post. ■

“

We are constituted so that simple acts of kindness, such as giving to charity or expressing gratitude, have a positive effect on our long-term moods.

The key to the happy life, it seems, is the good life: a life with sustained relationships, challenging work, and connections to community.

-Paul Bloom

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Snoezelen

by Al Dorantes

On October 8, 2015 the Masonic Care Community unveiled its Snoezelen Room. The room, located in the Health Pavilion is a dark room except for the lights coming from the huge bubble tubes and fiber optics. There are comfy chairs, images can be projected on the walls, and there is aromatherapy. This new alternative therapy is made possible by a donation from Andrew and Mary Hendry and will help seniors with memory loss, dementia, and Alzheimer's.

Snoezelen is a therapy for people with autism and other developmental disabilities, dementia or brain injury. It consists of placing the person in a soothing and stimulating environment, called a "Snoezelen room." These rooms are specially designed to deliver stimuli to various senses, using lighting effects, color, sounds, music, scents, etc. The combination of different materials on a wall may be explored using tactile senses, and the floor may be adjusted to stimulate the sense of balance. The person is generally accompanied by an aide or therapist. The therapy was originally developed in the Netherlands in the 1970's. Snoezelen rooms have been established in institutions all over the world and are especially common in Germany, where more than 1,200 exist.

Administrator of the Health Pavilion Tammy Wheeler explained that dementia residents do not process sensory stimulation in the same way as other residents. She said, "Snoezelen allows the residents to individualize what works for them."

The Snoezelen Room is a non-directive therapy, controlled by the resident, not the care giver. It can be staged to provide a multi-sensory experience or a single sensory



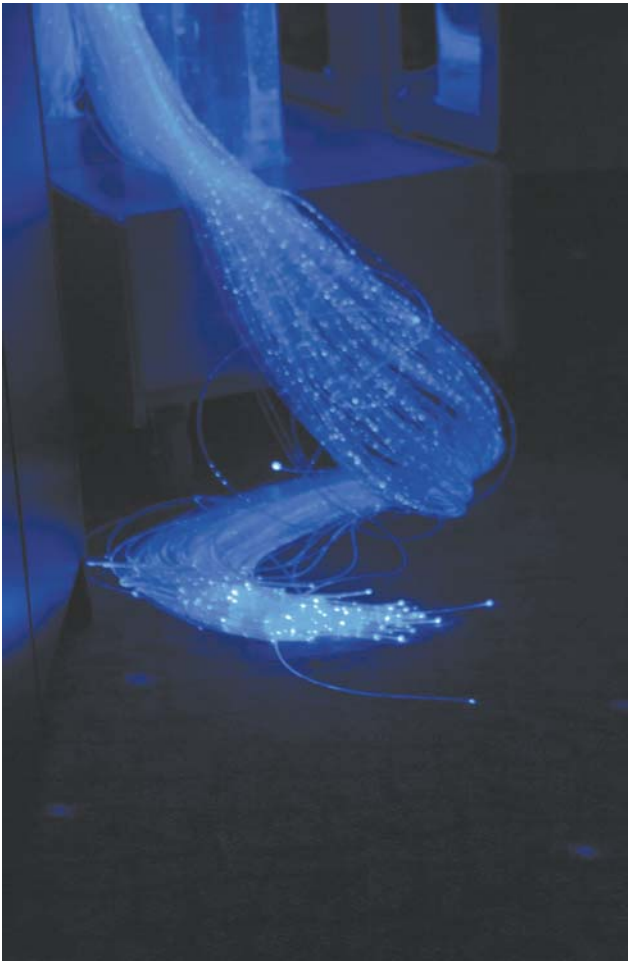
Ms Ada Ruhm taps her toes in the Masonic Care Community's Snoezelen room.

focus, simply by adapting the lighting, atmosphere, sounds, and textures to the specific needs of the individual. There is no formal focus on therapeutic outcomes. The focus is to assist users to gain the maxim pleasure from the experience. Another advantage of the Snoezelen Room; it does not rely on verbal communication and may provide stimulation to seniors who might be difficult to reach and have not been able to express themselves through other methods.

The Masonic Care Community has been caring for people since 1893 and is proud to offer Snoezelen Room as an alternative therapy. For more information go to: www.mccny.com. ■



Huge bubble tubes and fiber optics are all a part of the new Snoezelen room at the Masonic Care Community.



Lighting and color effects are used to stimulate people with autism and other developmental disabilities such as demementia or even a brain injury.

“You’ve gotta dance like there’s nobody watching,
Love like you’ll never be hurt,
Sing like there’s nobody listening,
And live like it’s heaven on earth.”
-William W. Purkey

Overlook Mansion Yuletide Dinner continued from page 42

Michael was quoted in a recent press release “We are pleased to be showcasing local farms for our inaugural event, and look forward to doing many more events with the community in the future.” And so it's safe to say these two have every intention of sticking around for the Yuletide's to come, and have a free and wide range of gifts to offer our community as well as the gorgeous center piece of this city that is the Overlook Mansion. What better way to extend our appreciation to our new friends in the community than to attend this one of a kind, and first of its kind in the area, Yuletide dinner. To start this holiday season off right, meaning a full belly and a warm heart, reserve your place at the table today and purchase tickets online at <http://overlook.brownpapertickets.com> or contact Event Coordinator, Jessica Pettengill, at 315-868-8304 or Events@Overlookmansion.com. ■



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Utica Comets improving the city's economy

by Daniel Baldwin

Another Utica Comets hockey season is underway. Comets' players are back out on the ice to battle upcoming opponents. Comets fans are going back to the Utica Aud., the Utica Comets' home arena, to watch and support their home team, and restaurants around the Aud. are packed with hockey fans once again.

The Utica hockey team had a phenomenal ride last season. They won the AHL, American Hockey League, Western Conference and had the chance to play in the Calder Cup Final. The team fell shy of winning the cup, but fans were still proud of the team's effort throughout the season.

In the past two seasons, the Comets have transformed from an average team to championship contending AHL hockey team. The same is said for the city of Utica. The city's businesses were struggling before the development of this team. There were many vacant buildings in downtown Utica, and businesses around the area were shutting down. The Utica Auditorium was



The Comets caused a total of 26 sellouts at the Utica Auditorium during the 2014-15 season. Enjoying a face lift, the Utica Aud LED panels are almost completed in this shot and are now up and running!

born in the summer of 2013, the city's businesses boomed. Utica's downtown area wasn't that abandoned or quiet any more. Many local restaurants and businesses purchased the abandoned downtown buildings and opened its doors.

Tony's AUDelicious Sports Bar, which is located right behind the Utica Aud., was one of the first restaurants to come to downtown Utica following the Comets. The sports bar opened during the Utica Comet's first AHL season in March, 2014.

Then came Utica Bread,

with the amount of hockey fans that come before, during, and after every Utica Comets game.

"You can always tell people who are going to the games and coming from the games," Pezzolanella said. "We typically see people, fans, before and after the games. I think that the economy has been improving in Utica. I can definitely say that the Comets have had a very positive effect on the economy here. Whether or not they're the driving force, I cannot say that, but I think they're helping the economy."

The Utica Comets players themselves are also visiting these local restaurants. Beverly Esche is the owner of the American-Italian eatery Aqua Vino, and she said that her restaurant is the one place where Comets' players come down to eat, drink, and talk to fans.

"We did have Comet players today (Oct. 30)," Esche said. "We also get a lot of Comets fans, and when they know that the players are here they come down even more."

Tiny's Grill has been a downtown Utica destination since the 1930s, according to the restaurant's owner Joanne Gerace. Gerace said this grill has a strong economic connection with the Utica Comets, and it has shown the most support to the team's fans.

"We've always been a big sponsor of a lot of events at the auditorium and the Comets especially," she said. "We run food and drink specials before and after the games. We have nice happy hours before the games. We're now going to be doing a Saturday promotion

where we are going to have a happy hour pre-game party here, and we're also going to be offering complementary rides down at the Aud. and back."

The city of Utica also experienced a growth in hotels. One mile away from the Aud. is a Holiday Inn Express that opened in 2012, one year prior to the creation of the Utica Comets. Another hotel (Fairfield Inn) is also being built right next to the

Holiday Inn Express and it's scheduled to open later in the fall.

Hotel Utica has been a downtown landmark for many years, but hockey fans never came here before the creation of this team. Jessica Shumway, sales director for this hotel, said that these types of fans are now staying at this hotel.

"We have seen more hockey fans come in," she said. "They'll stay with us because we're conveniently located just two blocks away from the Aud. You can stay here and just walk over instead of trying to go over there and find parking. We have our restaurant here, so they can come down and eat dinner and hang out at the bar before and after the game."

The arena itself received the biggest economic benefit from the economic growth around the Utica Aud. Tickets were sold out before the start of the first ever Comets home game at the Aud. in October of 2013. It is not the only time that

the Aud. has faced a sellout crowd during Comets games. According to the team's website, Uticacomets.com, the arena had a total of 26 sellouts during the 2014-15 Comets season.

Suites were already built inside the stadium before the Comets' 2014-15 season, and today construction workers are almost done putting new LED panels around the arena's exterior.

With the new restaurants and businesses coming to downtown Utica, the new renovations at the Aud., and the Utica Comets, many local residents said that the city could be in for a brighter future thanks to these resources.

"We're getting back to the old days," Utica resident Joe Decola said, "when everybody came downtown because there were a lot of stores here. Now we might be like a big city and compete with Syracuse. The Comets have re-energized the city." ■



Ocean Blue is just one of the local businesses who feels the economic impact of the Comets' arrival to town.

more of an entertainment arena and less of a sports stadium. It has hosted every Utica College Pioneers men's hockey game, but all other events at the Aud. were mainly driven on music and amusement.

"Utica has been down for the last couple of decades," Utica resident and Comets fan Bryan Ingalls said.

When this AHL team was

a bakery on Genesee St. that opened last July, and Ocean Blue, a seafood restaurant on the top floor of the Landmarc Building in downtown Utica, that opened on Oct. 1, 2015.

Ocean Blue has been in the Utica area for only a few weeks, but the owner of the restaurant, Francis Pezzolanella, said that its business is already increasing

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In order to facilitate the process of donating larger items, many charities will pick up any items donors cannot bring in on their own. Many organizations even advertise when a van or truck will be in given neighborhoods to collect items, making the donation process that much easier for donors.

When donating a car, truck, motorcycle, or boat, donors may need to go to greater lengths than they would if they were donating clothes or other less significant items. Titles will need to be transferred over to the charity, and ideally the vehicle should be formally retitled in the charity's name. Organizations like the American Cancer Society require that the title be sent to a processing center, and only upon receiving the title will the organization pick up the vehicle.

Nonprofit organizations typically produce donation receipts as confirmation of the pickup, and these receipts may include an approximation of the donated vehicle's value. Keep these receipts so you can claim tax deductions when filing

returns in April. It's also a good idea to keep a detailed inventory of any items you donated. Include photos of the items and their respective values so you can back up your income tax return claims in the event of an audit. It is best to consult with your tax preparer and/or the charity you're working with to determine the value of donated items.

Comply with the rules the charity sets forth regarding item pickup. Label boxes or bags accordingly, and let the organization know if you're donating any especially heavy items so they can arrange for enough staff members to pick the items up. These organizations often rely on volunteers to do pickups, so you want to make the process as easy as possible. Be sure to leave items outside your door by the specified pickup time.

Many charitable groups accept donations of vehicles and large household items. Making such donations can be more complicated, but these items may go to needy individuals or be sold to fund other projects, making the process well worth any extra effort donors might have to put forth. ■

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Transporting holiday gifts



Learn how to pack or ship gifts safely to minimize inconveniences and ensure they arrive on time.

Items that will be shipped internationally should include a detailed description as well as the value of the package. Presents under a certain value may be duty-free or tax-exempt. Check with customs to get a better idea of the shipping regulations.

Plane ride

Airlines have specific regulations in place regarding which items can and cannot be brought on planes, at least inside of the cabin. Thanks to increased security measures, restrictions are greater than they

once were. Transportation Security Administration officers may have to inspect items for safety purposes. It may be better to leave gifts unwrapped and then wrap them after the flight to avoid hassles during the screening process. Liquids, including foods, may need to be put in a checked bag if they exceed 3.4 ounces. Consider shipping delicate items ahead of time if you are concerned about breakage.

Packing the car

If a holiday road trip is in your future, space constraints may require you to be a little creative when packing the car. Shop for smaller gifts, including gift cards, which are easier to transport. Heed safety precautions and do not obscure driver visibility in the car by stacking presents too high. Also, secure boxes and packages in the car so they do not slide or move

around. Anything that is not secured can become airborne in the event of a collision, increasing the risk for injury. Items placed on roof racks should be tightly secured so they don't fall off and present a hazard.

Those who will be traveling for the holidays should plan how to transport any gifts they will be bringing along long before the day comes to hit the road. ■

As families spread out across the country and even across the globe, the holidays can become a little more difficult to navigate. According to AAA, a federation of motor clubs throughout the United States, roughly 90 million Americans will travel 50 miles or more for year-end holidays.

Families that are spread out must decide where to spend the holidays together. But in some cases, families can't all be together, so celebrations must be handled remotely and gifts shipped to waiting recipients.

Shopping for gifts may have taken some time, but now you will have to figure out how to get those gifts where they need to go. The following are some pointers for holiday celebrants who are driving, flying, taking a bus, or shipping gifts.

Shipping dates

If the goal is to purchase and ship gifts near and far, starting early has its advantages. Thousands upon thousands of cards and packages are shipped each day during the holiday season. In 2013, shipping giant UPS projected 132 million deliveries during the last week before Christmas, and actual figures exceeded those expectations.

Many shipping services will get packages to recipients on time, but customers can help them along by sending them several weeks before the holidays. Shipping later in the season may incur additional fees for priority shipping. Always check sellers' "purchase by" dates to ensure items will arrive on time.

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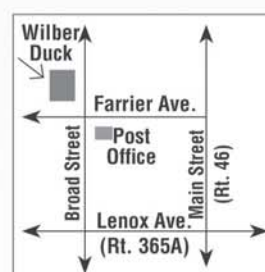
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Safe school carpooling

Students have a few different options to get to and from school. In areas where school bus service is provided, children have an easy way to get to class each day.

Busy parents frequently ban together to form carpooling teams to ensure students get to school on time. Carpooling is eco-friendly, convenient and can foster stronger relationships between students and the parents of those students. Sharing rides also can be fun for kids and motivate them to get out the door so they can see their friends.

Safety should be a priority for carpoolers, and drivers can take the following steps to ensure kids get to school safely.

- Know the laws regarding safety seats as they pertain to age, weight and height.
- Each child will need to ride in a seat that is appropriate and shortcuts should not be taken. If there isn't room in the vehicle to sit all children comfortably and in the proper restraint, then you must reduce the

number of passengers in your vehicle.

- Children should ride in the backseat of the vehicle as a priority. Many kids can be safely moved to the front seat around age 13.
- Instruct children to re-

main in their seats until the car has come to a complete stop. Only then should they remove their seatbelts.

- Make sure students enter and exit the vehicle on the curb side instead of on the street side.

- Instruct passengers to keep their hands and heads inside of the vehicle. If necessary, engage child locks on doors and windows.
- Do not leave a child alone at an empty home in the afternoon. Wait until you

see a child go inside his or her home before you drive away.

- Keep the radio low and minimize distractions while

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215/70-15	SK	\$112 ⁹⁹	\$84 ⁷⁴
205/70-15	SK	\$119 ⁹⁹	\$89 ⁹⁹
205/65-15	SK	\$112 ⁹⁹	\$84 ⁷⁴
185/60-15	SK	\$112 ⁹⁹	\$84 ⁷⁴
205/60-16	SK	\$125 ⁹⁹	\$94 ⁴⁹
225/60-16	SK	\$125 ⁹⁹	\$94 ⁴⁹
205/55-16	SK	\$119 ⁹⁹	\$89 ⁹⁹

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235/70-16	SK	\$152 ⁹⁹	\$114 ⁷⁴
245/70-16	SK	\$152 ⁹⁹	\$114 ⁷⁴
265/70-16	S	\$172 ⁹⁹	\$129 ⁷⁴
265/70-17	S	\$192 ⁹⁹	\$144 ⁷⁴
LT225/75R16	S	\$159 ⁹⁹	\$119 ⁹⁹
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S = Starfire Tires (Made by Cooper) K = Kelly Tires Edge A/S™ (Made by Goodyear)

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195/65-15

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185/70-14	\$69 ⁹⁹
195/70-14	\$69 ⁹⁹
205/70-15	\$57 ⁹⁹
175/65-14	\$69 ⁹⁹
185/65-15	\$69 ⁹⁹
205/65-16	\$94 ⁹⁹
215/65-16	\$94 ⁹⁹
225/65-16	\$94 ⁹⁹

PERFORMANCE
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195/60-15

215/60-16	\$73 ⁹⁹
215/55-16	\$84 ⁹⁹
215/55-17	\$94 ⁹⁹
225/55-17	\$94 ⁹⁹
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215/50-17	\$84 ⁹⁹
225/50-17	\$89 ⁹⁹
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225/45-17	\$89 ⁹⁹

SUV & LT
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215/70-16

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235/65-17	\$104 ⁹⁹
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