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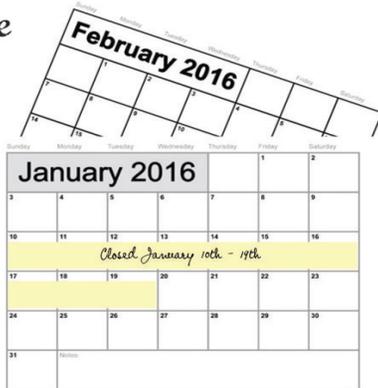
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Dr. Joe's 3 TIPS for Making Your Healthy Resolutions Stick for 2016!

By Dr. Joe Martin, PT, DPT, OCS

Did you come up short on the "eat better, exercise more, and stress less" resolutions you set last year? You CAN get it right for 2016... Here's how...

1.) Change Your Mindset:

STOP thinking that the first time you fall off IT'S OVER... You FAILED! Go into 2016 understanding that falling off is NOT failure... it is human nature and it is going to happen. Learn to recognize when you are "falling off" and immediately recognize it, accept it, and pick a "fresh start" day (2-3 days away) and STICK TO IT! Every time you accomplish this your confidence in yourself will improve and your program will last much longer throughout your year.

2.) Change Your Eating Strategy:

Instead of focusing on everything that you must drastically eliminate from your diet, put some effort towards ADDING a wide variety of new and powerful nutrients. One of the reasons that diets don't work is because humans DO NOT want to be restricted and diet = restriction to you and many other people. Look at food as fuel and the more good fuel you can give your body the younger and more vibrant you will be. Your body doesn't need to be starved it needs to be fed well and pampered. So, yes, a significant reduction of the poisons (processed foods, hydrogenated oils, excess sodium, sugar, flour, fast food, and alcohol) is still necessary. Replace everything you cut with a VARIETY of extremely nutritious foods. Go for the power foods such as Spinach, Kale, Broccoli, Swiss Chard, Collard Greens, Granny Smith Apples, Fresh Herbs, Squash, Beets, Carrots, Cantaloupe,

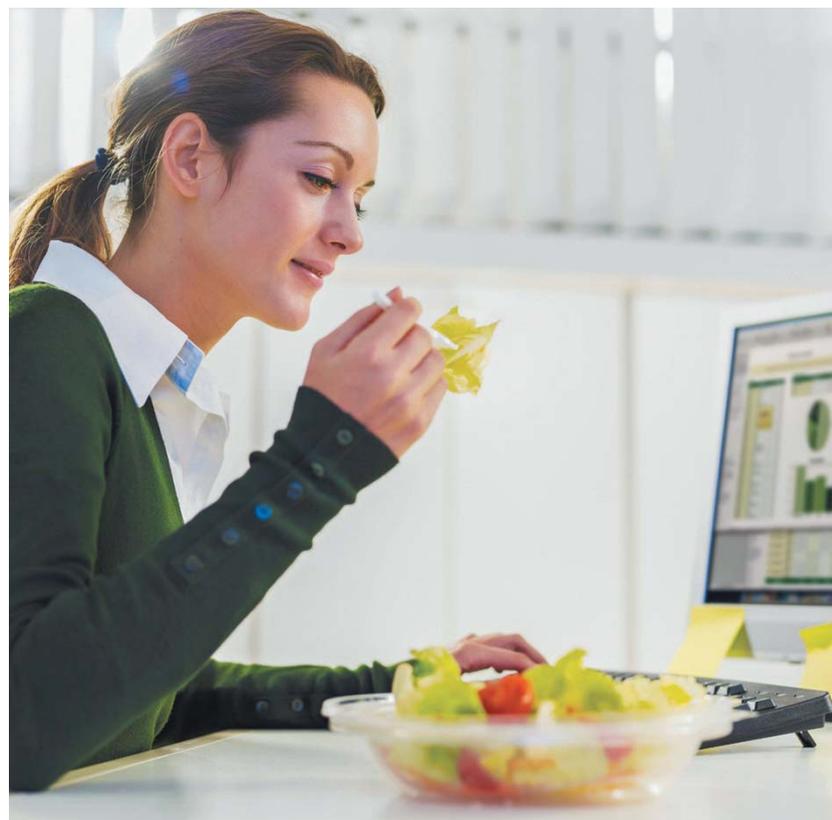
Berries, Oats, Eggs, Lean Meats without antibiotics, hormones, and nitrates, and Wild Caught Seafood to name a few. You can't just cut out the bad and expect a bundle of energy and youth; you must feed your very complex human body with the BEST nutrients available! Add 2-3 NEW foods per week and you will be amazed at how your body will change. Make an effort to get ALL of the colors of the rainbow; this is a good way to ensure a variety of vitamins and minerals.

3.) Seek Professional Advisement for Exercise:

Why do most people fail at their exercise programs?

- 1.) They are killing themselves and not seeing results.
- 2.) They went too hard and too fast and suffered an injury.

There is so much more to effective exercise than jumping on a treadmill and a bunch of weight machines. These are "devices" not techniques; You NEED techniques and strategies that will transform your body and your mind into fat burning furnaces. Start 2016 with knowledge and empowerment instead of the cheapest gym membership you can find. If you can't afford a full-time personal trainer, that's fine, but at least invest in 1-3 sessions so that you know exactly what to do for a 4-6 week period. When you approach the 4-6 week mark get another appointment and set the stage for the next 2 months. You will have much more direction and you will achieve the goals that you haven't been able to achieve on your own.



Dr. Joe Martin is a Board Certified Physical Therapist with 6 Function Better Physical Therapy and Fitness centers throughout central New York and has been a Personal Trainer since 1990. He can be reached at 315.525.6860 or joe1@functionbetter.com.

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Migrant Mother Reincarnated

by Joe Parzych

Before an important program at school, or a night out on a date, my sisters put their hair up with aluminum curlers and some sort of hair setting solution. When they ran out of wave setting solution, they resorted to curling irons heated in the coals of our wood stove. Not warm enough, the hair would not curl; too hot, and the odor of burning hair fill the air, accompanied by shrieks and tears. The singed

hair soon fell out in clumps accompanied by more tears.

A slower safer method, than the curling iron route, was pin-curls---curls wound into a disk and secured with a bobby pin. One day, the girls came home in a high state of excitement over a new method of setting pin-curls by using a longer lasting home-made hair setting solution of sugar and water. They excitedly set their hair to

dry. The solution worked! all too well. When they tried to comb out the sugar encrusted pin curls, their hair was as stiff as starched lace. It broke off in clumps. They had to shampoo the mess out of their hair and try another way.

The invention of the Home Perm was the answer to their, and every woman's, dream. True; it stunk up the house, and burned your eyes, but the results were good and the Permanent was as permanent as could be expected, reaping far better results that were longer lasting, if not exactly permanent.

Years later, when I became a management trainee for Fuller Brush, the company came out with a line of cosmetics which included a home permanent kit.

When presenting the company's products to customers, I slid over the house cleaning chemicals and cleaning brushes, to unveil the line of cosmetics. The women happily tried lipsticks, powder, and all manner of cosmetics, all guaranteed to firm and enhance the face and figure. The branch manager had a dim view of introducing something so foreign to the mundane line of cleaning supplies. Some of the older established salesmen concurred. The manager was astounded when I began to rack up record sales.

At one rural settlement, there was a house set back from the village high up on a mountaintop. It was a long ways to drive over a narrow, rutted road, so I inquired about the little house from folks living in the village, below.

"Don't even bother going up there," they all said. "She's got no money, her husband's a mean abusive logger when he's home, and she's got a passel of kids. Don't waste your time."

The road was rutted and barely passable. It took a while bouncing over ruts to make my way up to the small house which was more shanty than house. A bedraggled young woman stood in the doorway, hair askew, and a hand to her face, holding a child. She had once been pretty, it was plain to see. But with



two other dirty faced kids clinging to her skirt, her haggard appearance made her look every bit like a reincarnation of "Migrant Mother" photographed by Dorothea Lange during the Great Depression.

Not wanting to embarrass her any more than she already was; when displaying items, I put a home perm kit in with some household cleaning brushes and supplies. She immediately zeroed in on the home perm kit. I wrote up the order and gave her the choice of a free gift-- Cleaning or Cosmetic? She chose Cosmetic. I gave her a choice of lipstick, though the free gift was supposed to be a little sachet. I handed a sachet to each of the kids, much to their delight.

At the end of the week when I delivered the home perm kit, the harried young woman counted out a pile of crumpled dollar bills and a small mountain of change which she'd apparently squirreled away. I wondered how she was going to set the back of her hair: I would have volunteered to set it for her, but I probably would have put my life in jeopardy if even a fraction of the things I'd heard about her abusive husband were true.

I went on to other work and never went back to see how she looked with her hair groomed and with make-up applied. But the vision of her answering the door with a passel of kids hanging onto her like nursing kittens hanging onto a bedraggled mother cat, never left my memory. I hope and pray that her life improved over what I saw in those two visits. ■

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A Room Full Of Light

by Terry Berkson

The winter of '59 was the longest season of my life. I had left Brooklyn and come up to Richfield Springs to live with my Uncle William and Aunt Ruta and attend high school in the village. Some mornings I'd be walking to class and the thermometer would be down to 20 below zero. Because it was by the ocean, Brooklyn never suffered such extreme temperatures. It wasn't that I couldn't take the cold but the freeze was so isolating. There would be no one on the street. As a city kid, even at night, when you walked out the door something was bound to be going on below the light of the street lamps.

Now, I was under the responsibility of Uncle William who was already in his early seventies and felt he had to keep a tight rein on me. I wasn't allowed out on weeknights and if there was a dance or a party I had to be home by ten. In Brooklyn, under my father's supervision, there were no curfews and no restrictions. In Richfield, on top of being confined, snowy weeks would go by without the sun shining. It didn't take long for the ache of loneliness to get to me and sometimes I'd find ways to get out of the house to visit a friend even if I had to climb out of my second floor window.

There was a large oil painting hanging on the wall in my aunt's living room. She had brought it with her when she came to America from Poland in 1938. It must have been a good painting because her father had been a judge and had a nice home and she made a great fuss about its care when disembarking from the boat in Hoboken, New Jersey—so my father told me. The painting was a night scene of herders out on the Steppes sitting around a bright fire trading songs and stories. I used to sit in a chair and look into the scene for extended periods of time. Sometimes I'd long to be in that circle of light around the fire. You could see the cold and the lonely darkness lurking behind the profiles of tethered horses in the background. Often I felt that I was in that background with no fire to sit around.

There wasn't even a television in the faded house and my uncle was always busy pounding away at his typewriter or on the piano. The music he played was serious and heavy and unlike my dad, he didn't bother to perfect its execution. He approached music more like he was reading a book: Let's see what Rachmaninoff has to say. After supper Aunt Ruta would do the dishes and then sit at the kitchen table playing solitaire. I'd try to read a book but always felt the urge to be outside doing something with other people, young people.

One night I found myself headed for the school where some kind of a show was going on. I had asked my uncle if I could go and he said, "No." So, after a while I went up to my room, threw some shoes on the floor so it sounded like I was going to bed and climbed out the window.

At the school the lobby was almost empty and the doors to the gym that doubled as a theater were already closed. I could hear music as I dug deep into my cold pockets for the price of admission. When I entered the auditorium I was hit by the bright light on the stage. Comedic music was drowned out by laughter as telephone lineman Bill West chased a screaming damsel into the wings. I found a seat high in the bleachers noting all the warmth and energy that was in the packed house. The music changed to a slow romantic melody and dashing Dave Graveling escorted pretty brunette Barbara Strong out onto the stage where they began to dance and sing. The audience was enthralled. When the couple finished their number and faded away, the music picked up and Bill West was again in hot pursuit of the hysterical object of his desires as the audience rooted him on.

Then Buster Whipple came out with his mother Janet, and his beautiful wife Zaida who was wearing a pink dress. They sang a haunting rendition of Porgy and Bess's Summertime. Later, George Ehrmann played the horn to his mother Marguerite's piano accompaniment. Peg Reynolds, Ed Kits, Evelyn

and Ed Barron and a host of other people whose names I didn't know at the time danced or wailed like sweet coyotes in the night.

But, most memorable of all was a duet done by an earnest Ed Leslie and a buxom young lady I didn't recognize. She was sitting on a high swing that was suspended from top center stage. They were singing a love song in the spirit of Jeanette McDonald and Nelson Eddie, a song with words like "When I'm calling you ooo ooo ooo." Ed pushed the swing higher and higher as the girl's voice rose in pitch and the swing soared towards the ceiling. The music grew louder. Then, all at once the young lady's legs went straight up as she squealed. You could see her undies that sported a sign that was plastered across the bottom touting our local RUBY'S DEPARTMENT STORE! The crowd went wild with laughter, whistling and catcalls.

The sweetie on the swing turned out to be Bert Seeholzer, a guy who worked for Suburban Propane. It was the high point of the show and I was totally immersed in the burlesque atmosphere. There were more musical numbers and funny skits but soon the lights died and the show was over.

I remember heading home as the bitter wind whipped the snow around so that it looked like white tops were spinning down Main Street. I zipped up my leather jacket to hold on to the warmth I had taken in. What luck to have stumbled upon the show and the light that exuded from it. That atmosphere must have been there for all the weeks or months of rehearsal. I thought of the painting in my aunt Ruta's living room. It was as though I had been wandering out on the Steppes and was allowed to sit in on the herders' fire.

Back at the house, my hands might have felt frozen as I gripped the metal leader line to shinny back up to my bedroom window—but the warmth of that show has burned in my memory ever since. ■

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“Alley Oop” Springs Back to Life in Rome

by Pat Malin

In World War II, airmen serving in the U.S. Air Force painted certain figures, such as pinups (think movie star Betty Grable), mythological warriors, cartoon characters, or objects like lightning bolts on the plane's nose in the belief that these objects bestowed good luck on its occupants.

One popular 1940s-era character was caveman Alley Oop. The cartoon strip originated in 1932 and was syndicated in American newspapers in the 1930s. Accompanied by a stone war hammer in his right hand and riding a pet dinosaur or saber-toothed tiger, Oop was a jolly warrior at best.

In 1939, cartoonist V.T. Hamlin “invented” a time machine which transported Alley Oop into the 20th century. The prehistoric hero was able to travel back and forth in history and thus became involved in contemporary issues.

Alley Oop was a favorite of the members of the 325th Bombardment Squadron at the former Griffiss Air Force Base in Rome, where he adorned the nose of the B-36 bombers.

In 1995, at the end of the cold war, GAFB was deactivated and its military operations and personnel were transferred elsewhere. In the last 20 years, the Griffiss Business and Technology Park has sprung up. It now boasts 60 businesses, many occupying state-of-the-art buildings.

Memories of the operations at GAFB have mostly faded from view along with demolished remnants of abandoned buildings, housing and barracks, even the chapel and former hospital. Alley Oop, not nose art, but a full-blown concrete statue survived, though it remained hidden for decades.

Last summer, Alley Oop was retrieved from the weeds by a local veteran. Now with the help of the Griffiss Local Development Corporation, the World War II relic has been given a new lease on life.

Frank Sanzone, facilities manager for GLDC, and three of his staffers donated months of their time to restoring the statue. Alley Oop has now been elevated to a prominent place in the Griffiss Sculpture Park, along the hiking trail parallel to State Route 825.



Ed Wancemuice of Rome, who worked at the former Griffiss Air Force Base, stands alongside an old friend, “Alley Oop,” who has been restored following decades of neglect. The statue now occupies a prominent place in the sculpture garden at the Griffiss Business and Technology Park.

Just before Thanksgiving, the 15-foot gentle giant was installed on a new platform. He is now illuminated at night and very visible, though his unique figure is ghostly and startling to first-time visitors.

Sanzone credited 79-year-old Ed Wancemuice of Rome with rescuing the mammoth from obscurity.

“I knew the history of the base and wanted him back where he could be seen,” Wancemuice said. “It would be a shame not to have him in public. It’s a commemorative piece. It’s a link to base history just as the B-52 bomber is.” An original B-52 is also on display at Griffiss Park, farther north on Rt. 525.

Wancemuice, a native of Amsterdam, NY, worked as an aircraft mechanic at GAFB from 1970-76 and recalled seeing the statue at Griffiss. He also was a mechanic for Northrop-Grumman until the base was closed in 1995.

He stayed in Rome after his retirement, but he missed the mechanical work. He started hanging around the GLDC garage, lending an extra hand whenever Sanzone’s staff needed repair work done on equipment. GLDC is responsible for maintenance on facilities at the business park, which is owned by Oneida County.

When Wancemuice and Sanzone started collaborating on Alley Oop, they did research at the Rome Historical Society.

According to reports from the base’s defunct in-house newspaper, Mohawk Flyer and the Rome Sentinel, Alley Oop was built around 1940 by Army contractors with leftover concrete and reinforced steel bars used during the construction of the Rome Air Depot, the forerunner to Griffiss Air Force Base.

He originally stood 20-feet high with his helmet on and weighed a ton, according to the newspaper stories, but at some point he lost the lower half of his legs. Sanzone estimated the statue’s weight as 19,000



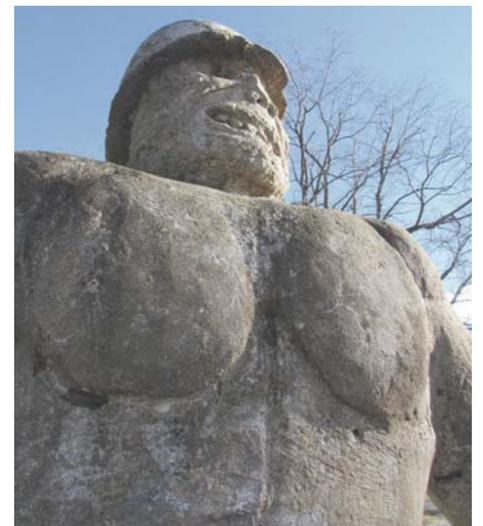
Alley Oop’s right hand originally held a Thompson machine gun. GLDC officials hope to rebuild the gun one day.

pounds now.

When the Rome Air Depot was active, Alley Oop stood guard on the hill where the former Strategic Air Command was headquartered, now occupied by the Eastern Air Defense Sector on Perimeter Road.

Back in the 1940s, he was painted in an Air Force dress blue military police uniform. He also wore an ammunition belt and possibly a parachute pack. In place of a war hammer, he carried a Thompson machine gun. Today, only the butt of the gun remains in the statue’s hand.

An undated black-and-white file photo of a military police officer (possibly taken in the 1970s) visiting the hulk appeared in the



Alley Oop’s ferocious grin.

Sentinel. It showed Alley Oop standing on a small platform with an inscription in white paint, “It’s Fight Ya Want Huh!”

Even before the base was closed, Oop had somehow fallen out of favor. He ended up in a bed of dirt and weeds by the railroad tracks and the old gym in a field off Geiger Road, just west of Rt. 825, not far from the GLDC garage. Over the ensuing decades, the cartoon warrior was alternately spotted and forgotten, his body pummeled by the harsh Upstate New York weather, that is when he wasn’t vandalized by trespassers.

Newspaper articles and photos of Alley Oop from the 1980s and even in 2000 discussed attempts to rescue the forlorn behemoth, but they never came to fruition.

Fast forward to 2015 when Wancemuice finally got him back on his feet. It took a crane and more concrete, plus the efforts of GLDC staffers Karl Baird, Eddie Arcuri Jr. and Jordan Swalgin to right Alley Oop. They volunteered for the restoration project in their own time, at no cost to the county.

“It probably would have cost \$10 million,” said Sanzone as he and Wancemuice viewed their new creation. The statue can best be seen by parking in the lot on Ellsworth Road, off the roundabout, and walking up the trail alongside Route 825.

Next spring, Alley Oop will get a formal coming out party.

“I think we’re going to give him a red belt,” said Sanzone. “We’re going to pretty him up.” ■

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by Al Dorantes

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Saved by a Bag of Chickens

by Joe Parzych

When I first started off as an excavating contractor, I worked with a landscaper from Shutesbury, MA, for nearly a year, operating under a joint venture agreement, with the idea of joining into a formal partnership, if both parties were agreeable.

In the fall, I hired another laborer. He was terrible. The guy was as slow as a sloth on valium. And since I'd hired him, it was my job to fire him. Firing someone isn't easy. On his first but final day he was putting in his time working with the landscaper, while I finished some excavating next to the Shutesbury General Store. I pondered on how to fire him.

A woman stopped by and asked if I'd do some excavating for her. She told me of her impressive plans, all requiring my services for an extended period. But first, she needed a trench dug. I started work on the trench before noon. Going back to the store for lunch, a local warned me that I'd never get paid.

"She's a deadbeat, that 'un."

When I got back to the woman's house, a flock of hens scratched in driveway. I approached the woman's house to ask about payment for the trench. A pair of denim overalls, slammed in the door, held it shut. She yanked the door open. I inquired about payment.

"I'm on welfare, and I ain't got no money," she said. "If you want, you're welcome to

them chickens-- if you can catch 'em. They ain't no good, anyhow," she cackled, sounding much like the chickens she offered me."

I left for the other job without chasing the chickens. On the way home with the laborer who I needed to fire, I stopped at the women's house. It was dusk. Chickens are night blind, and they'd gone to roost. We easily caught all four of them and put them into burlap bags; two to a bag.

When we got to the laborer's house, I couldn't think of a good way to fire him. The thought of softening the blow by offering him a couple chickens came to mind. It was close to Thanksgiving and I figured two chickens would add up to one turkey.

"Why don't you take a bag of chickens for Thanksgiving?" I said, stalling for time.

"Ain't you gonna' clean 'em?"

"I hadn't counted on it,"

The man was outraged.

"That's a hellova note!" he cried out in outrage. "I quit!" But his outrage didn't keep him from taking a bag of chickens with him.

The partnership idea soured when my prospective partner and I bid off a job removing telephone poles on a line that had been cabled and buried all the way from Montpelier to Burlington, Vt. In the mountains we cut down every other pole. I supplied a truck and equipment. He supplied his sterling character. It was in the dead of



winter; the temperature plummeted; wind howled off of Lake Champlain; lake effect snow fell every night, and we nearly froze to death. We tried to hire unemployed native Vermonters who hung around a glowing pot bellied stove at a local business, but we got laughed off.

When we completed half of the telephone job, my prospective partner picked up the check for completing that portion of the work. He left for Florida with the proceeds of the check, leaving me to finish the second half of the project in order for me to get the second half of the contract payment.

Fortunately, the devastating frigid weather abated. Upon his return, he was puzzled that I declined to enter into a formal partnership with him.

I bid off some land clearing at Westover Air Base, cleared the land with a small crew, and was hired to excavate for building foundations using the old rig pictured in the submitted Polaroid photo. I worked on the air base project for two years, leaving the job with a brand new excavator. My prospective partner, meanwhile, went bankrupt, while I prospered. It was a grand adventure. ■

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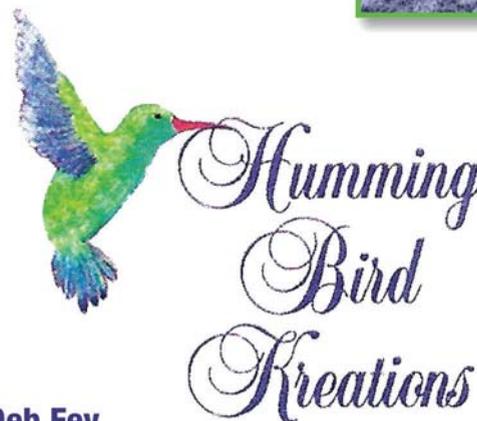


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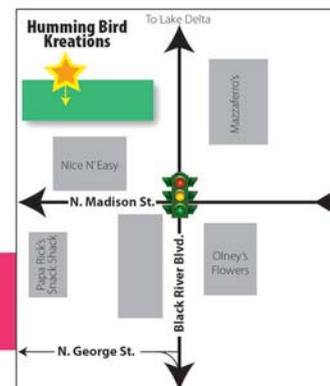
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The Root Farm

by Al Dorantes

The Root Farm is a state-of-the-art equestrian and agricultural complex which will provide unique opportunities for thousands of individuals. Located at 2860 King Road in Sauquoit, New York, the Root Farm is an innovative complex that combines therapeutic horseback riding, agriculture, and studio art to provide benefits for people of all ages and all abilities. The Root Farm celebrated their official Grand Opening on Saturday, November 14, 2015. The new facility hosted over 400 people as they checked out the new facility, met the horses, watched live demos, and more.

The Root Farm and Upstate Cerebral Palsy have a shared vision and, combined, over 80 years experience providing care to people of all ages and abilities. Their collaboration will provide services and programs to many more children and adults who would otherwise not be reached. Upstate Cerebral Palsy and the Root Farm, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, have currently developed an opportunity on over 100 acres at Camp Ronald McDonald in Sauquoit, NY. This complex includes an Equine Assisted Therapy Center and expanded vocational and recreational programs.

Equine therapy (aka equine-assisted therapy - EAT), is a treatment that includes equine activities or an equine environment to promote physical, occupational, and emotional growth. The therapy is useful for people with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), anxiety, autism, cerebral palsy, dementia, depression, developmental delay, Down's syndrome, traumatic brain injuries, behavioral issues, abuse issues, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Equine therapy can even be helpful for drug and alcohol



Ribbon cutting at the Root Farm.

addiction, and other mental health problems.

Mary Ellen Terpstra, Physical Therapist at the Root Farm said, "I manipulate equine movement to ultimately improve function in clients." Her goals are to improve function using the horses as a therapeutic tool.

The riding programs at the Root Farm include; Vaulting, Adaptive and Recreational Riding, and Hippotherapy. Vaulting is the art of gymnastics on horseback. It combines the two disciplines

in a unique way that is fun and exciting for both participants and onlookers. The benefits and challenges of the sport can be adapted to the needs of all ages and abilities. Adaptive vaulting participants are coached in compulsory and freestyle movements virtually identical to those used at the highest levels of competitive vaulting. Recreational Therapist, Jeremy Clark, is on staff as the Root Farm's vaulting instructor.

Adaptive and recreational riding include lessons that are designed to teach the most important fundamentals of horseback riding. Students learn the basics of how to turn a horse, halt, walk, trot and canter. Riders also learn how to saddle seat, a form of English Riding. Once riders have the basics, they are able to try different styles, including both English and Western.

Hippotherapy is a sensorimotor treatment strategy that involves the use of highly monitored and controlled equine movement to achieve functional outcomes for clients with sensorimotor deficits. While Hippotherapy is not a

new treatment strategy it is a well established tool that has been used by specially trained physical, occupational and speech/ language therapists as part of an integrated plan of care for decades.

Recreational Therapist, Rodger Pape, is on staff to provide English and Western style horseback riding instruction, and is Level 1 certified through the Certified Horsemanship Association. Pape explained that all riders are first assessed and then the Root Farm develops a program including the proper horse. Rodger Pape said, "We even have horses with special needs."

The agricultural side of the Root Farm has the property

bustling with activity. They have over 120 chickens that produce brown eggs that are for sale to the general community at the Utica Farmer's Market and at the Root Farm. The Root Farm also produces maple syrup. Agency individuals have been learning the entire process of making maple syrup, including preparing the site, identifying sugar maple trees, collecting wood and ultimately tapping trees to make the syrup.

Even bees are working hard at the Root Farm. Multiple hives are making honey for the Root Farm. There is a pumpkin patch at the Root Farm, maintained by agency individuals. The Horticulture Center

cont. page 35

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Our Cover Story

Exclusively Yours Wedding Warehouse

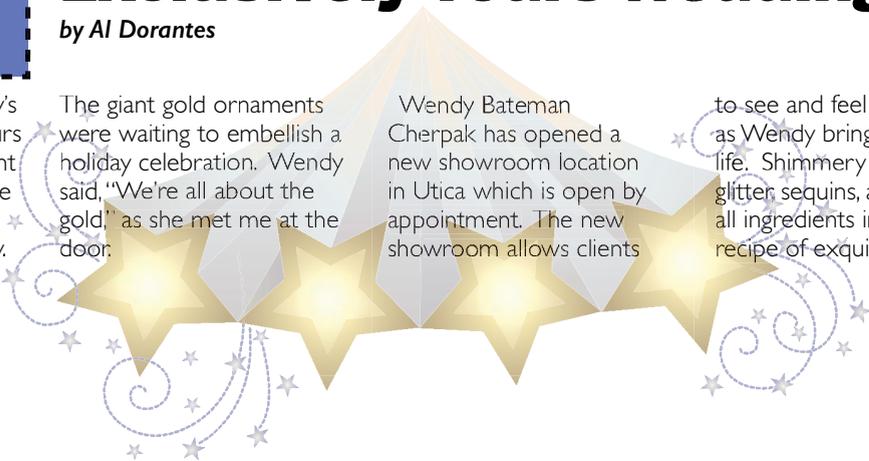
by Al Dorantes

As I walked up to Wendy's showroom, Exclusively Yours Wedding Warehouse, giant Christmas ornaments were outside being guided for an upcoming holiday party.

The giant gold ornaments were waiting to embellish a holiday celebration. Wendy said "We're all about the gold," as she met me at the door.

Wendy Bateman Cherpak has opened a new showroom location in Utica which is open by appointment. The new showroom allows clients

to see and feel their ideas as Wendy brings them to life. Shimmery gold, sparkly glitter sequins, and satin are all ingredients in Wendy's recipe of exquisiteness.



A potential client called Wendy during our interview to ask her some questions for her upcoming fall wedding. Call her to set up your appointment to see the brand new showroom in Utica! If you can dream it Wendy can make it happen... Wendy, KNOWS!

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The new location also has plenty of space for all the items Wendy uses as embellishments at events; vases, pillars, baubles, tables, chairs, and more.

Wendy said, "Every weekend I make dreams happen." She makes visions a reality. She explained that Pinterest has helped the event planning and

decorating business because brides come in with ideas. Wendy said, "I make them "Wendy." Wendy's style is fun, fabulous, and fierce.

Wendy explained that she has a great deal of experience in event planning as well as designing event decor. She has been decorating and planning events for over 17 years.

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Exclusively Yours Wedding Warehouse...

It all started with her sister's wedding. Wendy came in and made the day spectacular. Wendy said, "I have always loved decorating." Whether it is galas, fund raisers, grand openings, parties, or other events call Wendy for an instant injection of elegance. Wendy's way is as if Wendy is throwing the party.

Throughout the interview Wendy used the phrase, "Wendy knows." As we talked and chatted about decorating it became evident that Wendy does in fact, "know." She knows how to take even the most elegant party or event to the next level.

Draping a ceiling with fabric will give any room

a dramatic and romantic look. Add lights, balloons or flowers and Wendy will create a custom design that can change even the most ordinary room into the venue of your dreams. Wendy's drapery designs turn plain rooms into the space of your dreams. Wendy also uses pipe and drapery to divide a room or to make a large space appropriate for the size of your gathering.

Not satisfied with regular banquet chairs Wendy has made sure that Exclusively Yours is stocked with enough Chiarari Chairs to accommodate your event. The Chiarari Chair or Chiavarina as it is also

known was created in 1807 by a cabinetmaker from Chiavari on the northwestern Italian coast. The chair's inventor, Giuseppe Gaetano Descalzi, reworked some chairs in the French Empire style, simplifying the decorative elements and lightening the structural elements. The chair is designed with each component made for the specific stresses it will carry. The seats were traditionally made from purple willow which was connected directly to the frame using an ingenious slot system. Chiavari chairs are used in the White House State Dining Room. Exclusively Yours' Chiavari chairs are available in silver or gold finish and will add sophistication to your event.

Besides Chiavari chairs and drapery, Exclusively Yours is your source for event rentals including exclusive linens, chair covers, columns, urns, centerpieces, tea party sets, furniture, balloon arch's, arbors, Huppa, and much more. Wendy has everything your event needs to be more than a memory for your guests.

Anybody can throw a party or host an event but only Wendy can do it "Wendy's way"; fun, fabulous, and fierce!



Wendy's ALL NEW showroom in Utica is available by appointment. Full of Wendy's creations... baubles, candle holders, fabric, and so much more. You will leave with your head spinning with ideas and a wedding event planner ready to make your day spectacular!

For more information call: (315) 794-9747 or follow Wendy on Facebook: Exclusively Yours by Wendy/

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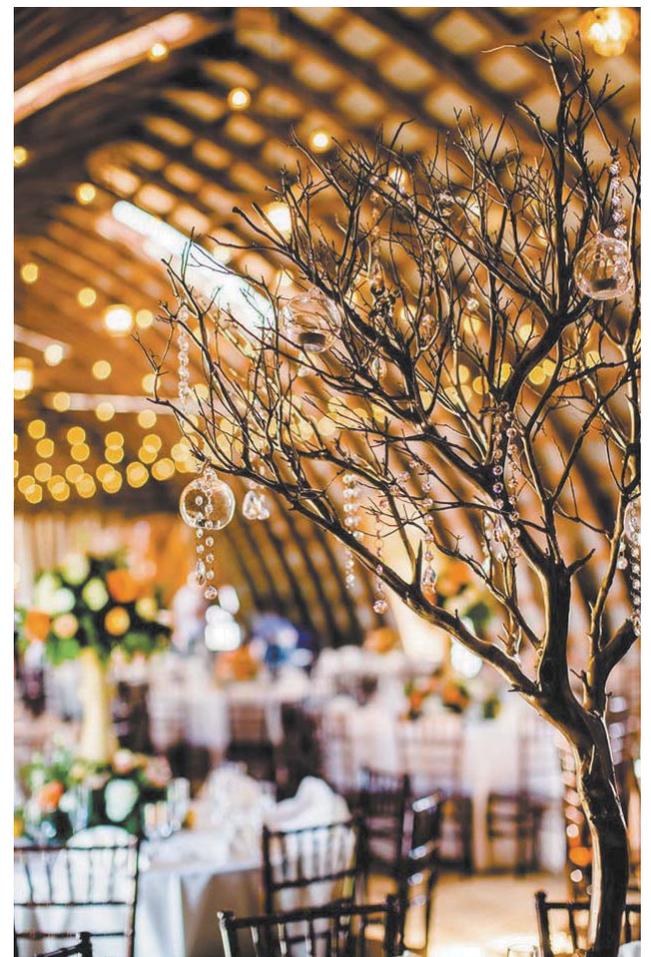
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 By **Michele**



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Wedding rings are symbolic gestures of commitment



Exchanging rings is an important wedding day tradition for many couples.

Couples adhere to many traditions on their wedding days, including the exchange of wedding rings. Wedding rings symbolize the union of two people and their pledge to remain faithful to each other.

No one is exactly sure just when the tradition of exchanging wedding rings originated, but some say it can be traced back to ancient Egypt, when the oldest recorded exchange of wedding rings was

made. Reeds growing along the Nile were twisted and braided into rings and given during betrothal ceremonies. The round ring symbolized eternity, and the hole within the center meant a gateway to things unknown. Since reeds were not very durable, soon ivory, leather and bone were used to create wedding rings.

As new lands were explored and territories expanded, traditions from one culture

were adopted and modified by other cultures. The same is true with wedding rings. According to the Diamond Source, wedding rings were adopted by Romans and incorporated into Western wedding ceremonies. Romans' rings were highly decorated, and some historians believe wedding rings were given to represent ownership over brides instead of symbolizing love. These rings were made of iron and called "Anulus Pronubus," or "betrothal ring."

Rings have been simplified since those days and ultimately made of many materials. Throughout history, wedding rings were worn on various fingers and even both hands, whereas many married people in Western cultures now wear their wedding rings on the left hand and on the fourth finger. Romans once believed that this finger contained a vein, called the "Vena Amoris," that ran directly to the heart. Though that is not true, the tradition has prevailed.

Other legends say that, when blessing a Christian marriage, priests would bind the marriage by saying, "In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit," simultaneously touching the ring to the recipient's thumb, index finger and middle finger; before

slipping it on the fourth finger while saying, "Amen."

Another theory on ring placement is that wedding rings are worn on the ring finger because that finger isn't used as much as the rest of the hand, ensuring delicate ring materials won't be damaged.

Ross Simmons Jewelry states that gold is still the most popular metal choice for wedding rings, but couples are opting for some other metals that are more durable. Platinum is popular not only because it is long-wearing, but it also tends to be the most expensive. It's also a dense metal and can feel heavy in hand. Tungsten carbide is another durable metal that has grown in popularity in recent years. These rings cannot be cut and resoldered, which means it's important to size the rings correctly the first time. Titanium is both lightweight and durable, and it's popular because it is hypo-allergenic, making it practical for those with allergies to other metals.

Wedding rings continue to serve as symbols of a couple's vows and union. Much like the marriage itself, they are designed to last the test of time. ■



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Weddings are a chance for couples tying the knot to be the center of attention. All eyes will be glued to the bride and groom on this special day, which makes it even more important for couples to look their collective best.

Brides might garner most of the attention on a couple's wedding day, but dashing grooms also will get their share of attention.

As a result, grooms must be just as diligent as their blushing brides with regard to grooming and appearance on their wedding days. To look picture-perfect, grooms may want to include these grooming tips in their wedding day preparation.

HAIR

Schedule a haircut with a professional stylist roughly a week before the wedding to get your hair shaped and trimmed. Although trendy hairstyles may show off creativity, keep in mind that photos last forever, and it's often better to stick with a classic cut. A barber or stylist may suggest styles that best suit your face shape and hair texture. Above all, the haircut should be neat. Resist the urge to wash your hair every day before the wedding. Allow some natural oils to build up and make your hair shine in a healthy way.

SHAVING

Shaving is another thing grooms must consider. If you have a beard, make sure it is clean, combed and trimmed. Men who shave the day of their weddings may find their skin is sensitive and irritated, which can lead to redness. Unless your facial hair grows especially fast, shave the evening before. This is a good time to splurge on a professional shave with a straight razor at a barber shop. A hot shave from a professional will produce a close shave with the least amount of

irritation when done correctly.

HANDS

Grooms also may want to book a manicure. Keep in mind that salons will do men's nonpolish manicures and pedicures, and they can be well worth the investment. Photos of entwined hands or close-ups of the ring exchange will have guests zeroing in on your fingers. Have hands look their best with clean, shaped fingernails and trimmed cuticles.

SKIN

Get plenty of sleep the night prior to the wedding. Being well rested will help reduce puffy eyes, dark circles and sallowness. It will also put you in a more positive mood, which can help you enjoy the day even more.

The day of the wedding, shower using water and a mild soap. Avoid any skin irritation by patting your face and body dry, rather than rubbing it with the towel. Moisturize your skin to avoid dry patches. Stores sell many moisturizers geared toward men's needs, often in unscented or more masculine fragrances.

Reducing shine is key for wedding day photos. Rely on face and hair products that will not add unnecessary sheen to your skin or hair to avoid making you look greasy. Matte hair waxes and sprays will tame tresses. Also,

ask your fiancé to pick you up a package of blotting tissues if you are prone to oily skin. These absorbent, typically rice-paper sheets will remove oil from your face and keep sheen to a minimum.

SMILE

Make sure your teeth have been thoroughly brushed and that you have used a minty mouthwash so you're primed for that first kiss. Many grooms also opt for whitening treatments prior to the wedding so they have a dazzling smile.

On their wedding days, grooms will likely be photographed more than any other time in their lives. That means putting extra effort into personal grooming to look their best. ■

“

Happy is the man who finds a true friend, and far happier is he who finds that true friend in his wife.
-Franz Schubert

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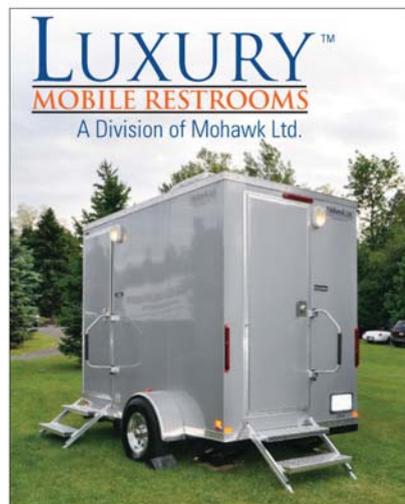
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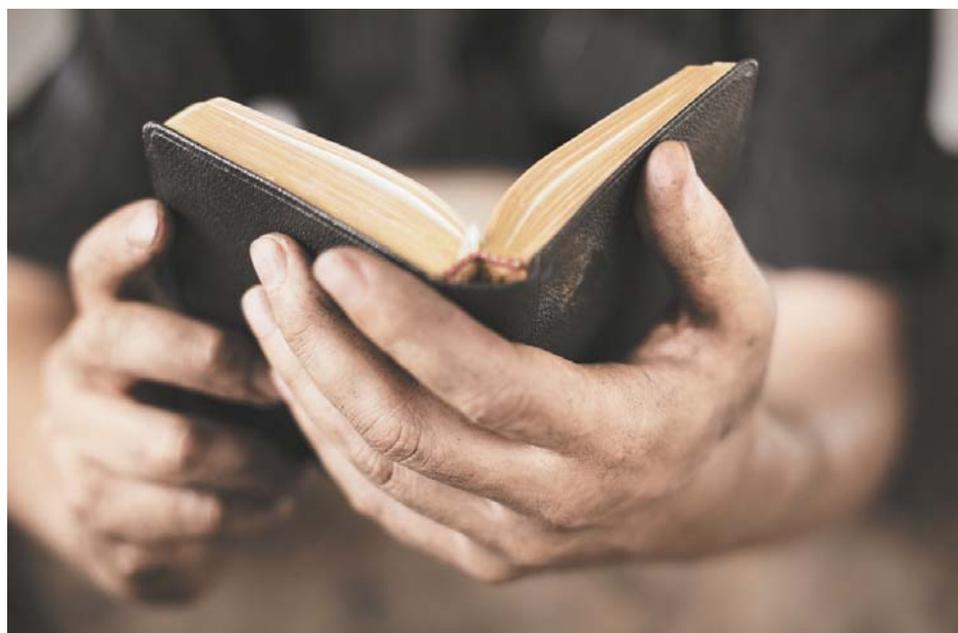
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What to expect at a religious wedding ceremony



Wedding ceremonies commonly include scripture readings, vows, rituals, and other religious traditions specified by the faith.

Weddings can be as unique and varied as the couples tying the knot. Quite often couples like to include certain twists on the ceremony and celebration to personalize their big days. But just as there are surprises at weddings, there also are many traditions that will be adhered to during ceremonies.

nies.

Couples who opt for religious wedding ceremonies often adhere to certain rules and traditions fostered by their faiths. Guests who may be unfamiliar with traditions outside of their own beliefs may not know what to expect during certain ceremonies.

Jewish celebrations

The world's Jewish population is divided among many distinctive denominations and further classifications. Although there may be subtle differences in wedding ceremonies between the sects, Jewish wedding traditions tend to be consistent

across the groups.

Conservative and Orthodox Jews may not hold weddings on the Sabbath or other holidays. Couples will sign the Ketuba, which is a marriage document affirming their connection to each other and to God.

The ceremony starts with grandparents seated first, followed by a procession of the rabbi, cantor and groomsmen. The groom and bride will be escorted by their parents. The wedding party will gather beneath the chuppah, which is a canopy that signifies a house and represents the couple's future together. A solid gold ring is given only to the bride according to Jewish law, although more liberal rabbis may allow a ring for the groom as a gift. The bridegroom smashes a wineglass with his foot after the vows have been exchanged.

Christian celebrations

Christian celebrations are similar among the vari-

ous denominations. Such ceremonies typically involve a processional, though the groom is typically not included, instead standing at the altar. Christians typically hear various scripture readings, and the officiant will explain the significance of marriage in this faith. Many Catholic weddings feature a full Mass during wedding ceremonies, and this Mass includes the transubstantiation of the Holy Eucharist.

After vows and rings are exchanged, the couple kisses and is pronounced husband and wife in the eyes of God. The bride and groom will go on to sign the marriage document with two witnesses on hand.

Hindu celebrations

A Hindu wedding celebration is an elaborate affair that includes extended family and community members. The wedding ceremony is called vivaah sanskar and can be a very colorful celebration that lasts for days. The couple and guests will be wearing traditional dress.

The bride usually wears body art produced with a mixture of henna and turmeric.

Hindu rituals may vary widely, but some key things are shared. According to the "Encyclopedia of Hinduism," many will include the Kanyadaan, or giving away of the daughter by her father; Panigrahana, or holding one's hands by a fire to signify the union; and Saptapadi, which is taking seven steps and making seven promises to each other before the fire. The couple may have their clothing tied together during the seven promises ritual to represent their lifelong bond.

Wedding ceremonies may vary depending on culture and religion, but they all share the joy of two people pledging their love and devotion to each other. ■

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Wedding good luck charms



Spiders, doves and sugar cubes all can be symbols of good luck on couples' wedding days.

Perhaps due to superstition or tradition, many couples employ some wedding day strategies to increase their good luck. The following are some of the symbols that couples may want to keep an eye out for on the day they walk down the aisle.

- It's good luck for the bride to see a dove on the way to the wedding because doves symbolize peace and prosperity. Because doves mate for life, this symbol is doubly beneficial on a couple's wedding day, as it can be a harbinger of a long, happy marriage and home.
- Some brides believe sugar cubes tucked into their wedding gloves leads to a sweet union.
- Hindu tradition states that rain on a wedding day is good luck. Rain is believed to

be a symbol of fortune and abundance, especially after times of drought. What's more, rain can foretell a strong marriage. That's because a wet knot is more difficult to untie.

- Ancient Romans were so concerned with ensuring good luck that they actually studied pig entrails to determine the luckiest time to marry. If they consulted with the English, they might determine that a wedding shouldn't take place on a Saturday, which is unlucky. English tradition states Wednesday is the best day to get married.
- In Holland, well-wishers would plant pine trees outside of newlyweds' homes as a symbol of fertility and luck.
- Grooms may want to give a coin to the first person they see on the way to their weddings. This is another symbol of good luck.
- Some couples plan to marry during a full moon, because that can symbolize good luck and good fortune.
- On a couple's wedding day, tears from a bride or a child during the ceremony is considered lucky. English folklore suggests that brides who discover spiders in their gowns are in for some good luck.
- The Chinese believe that lighting fireworks at their wedding ceremonies chases away evil spirits. A red umbrella also might be held over a Chinese bride to keep bad spirits at bay.
- Many grooms do not see their brides in their wedding gowns before their wedding ceremonies, feeling it is bad luck if they do. Many brides also do not wear their complete wedding outfits prior to their big day. ■

Wedding veils complete bridal look



The perfect dress is on the wish list of many a bride-to-be, but no bridal ensemble is truly complete until the bride chooses her veil.

Veils have been worn by brides at their weddings for centuries. Veils can be traced back to the Middle East, where veils helped protect against the weather while also preserving the modesty of the bride. In Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome, veils were used as protection against evil spirits.

According to popular wedding website The Knot.com, until Vatican II, all Catholic women were required to have their heads covered in church, including during their wedding ceremonies. Veils

were worn for this purpose, but they also symbolized trust in the groom and his love and companionship. Some Christians also see the veil as a visual representation of submission to the Church and to God. Others think of the veil as another beautiful accompaniment to their bridal gown, without attaching any additional meaning to the veil itself.

Veils come in various lengths and can complement the style of a wedding gown. They also tend to add glamour to brides' looks. Here are the types of veils from shortest to longest.

- Blusher: Blushers cover the face, though some extend only to mid-cheek on

the bride.

- Flyaway: Flyaways cover just the back of the head. Shorter veils may work better on petite women.
 - Shoulder: Shoulder veils are about 20 inches in length and will hit at the bride's shoulders or just below.
 - Waist: Waist-length veils cascade down to the middle of the bride's waist.
 - Fingertip: These veils extend down 38 to 42 inches, brushing against the bride's fingertips.
 - Waltz/Knee: For a dramatic look, many brides may opt for waltz-length veils, which fall to the back of the knees.
 - Chapel/Floor: Veils that extend to the floor may be referred to as "chapel" or "floor-length" veils. Such veils cascade slightly behind the bride.
- Veils can complete brides' wedding day looks. Shorter veils may be comfortable to wear throughout the day and evening, but brides may want to consider detachable veils if they are selecting lengthier options. ■

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FINANCIAL FOCUS

-Conversation about Finances is Important for Newlyweds

When you're getting married, you no doubt have many exciting details to discuss with your spouse-to-be. But after you get back from the honeymoon, you'll want to have another discussion — about your finances. It might not sound glamorous, but couples who quickly "get on the same page" regarding their financial situation are actually taking a step that can help them immensely as they build their lives together.

As you start talking about your finances, be sure to cover these areas:

- **Separate or joint checking/savings accounts —**

Some couples create joint checking and savings accounts, others keep everything separate and still others find a middle ground — joint accounts along with smaller, separate accounts. There's really no one "right" way for everyone, but whichever method you choose, make sure you're

both aware of where your money is, how it can be accessed, and by whom.

- **Debts —**

Both you and your spouse may be bringing in debts, such as student loans or credit cards, to the marriage. You don't necessarily have to do everything possible to get rid of these debts immediately, but you should set up reasonable payment plans that will allow you to lower your overall debt load so you can free up money to invest for the future.

- **Spending & saving-**

Newlyweds are often surprised to discover how different they are from each other in the area of spending versus saving. You don't have to try to radically change each other, but you both need to be aware that your spending and saving decisions now have greater consequences than when you were both single. To illustrate: If one of you is more of a spender

and is used to running up big credit card bills, these actions can clearly affect both of you. To avoid problems of this type, you will need to communicate clearly with each other

- **Goals —**

It's important for married couples to clearly establish their financial goals. Do you want to purchase a house? If so, when? If you're going to have children, will you want to help them pay for college? When do each of you want to retire? And what sort of retirement lifestyle do you have in mind? By answering these and other key questions, you'll be formulating a set of goals. And from there, you can devise a strategy for attaining these goals.

- **Investment styles-**

Both you and your spouse will unquestionably need to invest if you are going to achieve your goals, such as a comfortable retirement. However, each of you may

have a different investment style — for example, one of you might be an aggressive investor, willing to take more risk for the possibility of greater returns, while the other is more conservative, ready to accept lower returns in exchange for greater preservation of principal. To pursue your strategy for reaching your objectives, each of you may have to compromise somewhat on your "investment personality." To achieve this balance, you may need to consult with a financial advisor.

Finances are an important part of any marriage. By communicating regularly and working together, you and your spouse can build a solid financial foundation for your lives together.

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by Al Dorantes

At the intersection of Routes 12 and 20 (7672 State Route 20, Waterville, New York) you will find Michael's Fine Food and Spirits. Inside the building, built in 1799, you will find an eclectic atmosphere and fine dining.

Michael's offers a fresh and unique menu. Dine in warm contemporary Tuscan charm. Serving only the freshest seafood, prime beef, chops, veal, chicken, pasta, Chef Michael Larelle takes great care and attention to present great dishes to his diners. In addition to the fine dining in the restaurant they also offer a wide variety of off-premise catering services, including complete production, coordination and planning of your special event. Michaels has built a reputation for providing exquisite, flawless events.

"We catered 46 weddings this past year and no two were alike."

Owner Chef Michael Latreille is beyond passionate about food and has worked for many fine establishments, local icons, and the United States Government, before striking out on his own and establishing Latreille Catering and Michael's Fine Food & Spirits.

Many are surprised to learn Michael has a military background... Michael served eight years in the United States Army as a Sergeant E-5 Civil Affairs battalion, studying Arabic and training to become a linguist. He entered a three-month tour of duty in Tunisia at an international language academy. While in Tunisia, Michael was keen to study not only the language and culture but also the various cuisine of the region.

Michael resides in Hamilton, NY with his wife Jenn, son and best buddy, Theo, daughter Poppy, and bulldog, Steve. Michael said, "I'm blessed with good people and an amazing and supportive wife." Michael added, "My wife is a super cook at home too."

Chef Michael had been catering for about 20 years and opening Michaels Fine Food and Spirits fulfilled a dream. He said, "My true passion is catering. It's so much work on top of a restaurant but I really enjoy it."

Michael's did 46 weddings in 2015. At locations close to home all the way to camp Sagamore, Michael and his crew traveled all over Central New York. They are able to accommodate all different budgets offering food, bar service, linens, silverware, and more. It is one stop shopping for your special day.

Michael said, "I start relationships with brides a year ahead of time. I practically become part of the family. I've made a lot of good friends through the process. It's rewarding."

Michael's does not have a selection pre-packaged menus for brides to choose from. Michael tailors each menu to bride and groom. From simple Italian to food truck themed to southern style bbq to sit down surf and turf. Whatever the bride and groom want. Michael said "It makes a real difference in the final product. You don't get a photo copy of another wedding."

Coming soon Michael Latreille is embarking on a new venture which will allow him to host and seat over 200 people. The new venue is Michael's way of expanding without opening another 7 day a week restaurant.



Michael's Fine Food and Spirits is turning 11 years old on February 18, a testament to what fresh, high quality ingredients and the knowledge and care that goes into the preparation. If you are looking for a restaurant where everything is made from scratch; desserts, sauces, and syrups, then get yourself a reservation at Michael's. For more information call (315) 481-3077 or go to: www.michaelsfoodandspirits.com ■

Tame wedding day NERVES

-Make sure your lines of communication are working well



When couples tie the knot, many changes are in store, many compromises will be made and many lasting memories will be created. But in the weeks and months before their big days, couples can easily get caught up in the whirlwind of wedding planning, never taking inventory of their feelings until their wedding days have arrived.

Come their wedding days, couples should not be surprised if some nerves set in. A survey from the anxiety self-help resource The Fear Source indicated 71 percent of brides-to-be suffered from some type of nerves during the lead-up to their weddings. Ninety-two percent of brides experienced nerves on the day of the wedding or the evening before, while 66 percent reported that it affected their daily lives prior to their weddings or hampered their performance and enjoyment during the day itself.

According to Psych Central, a modern online voice for mental health information, emotional support and advocacy, pre-wedding jitters are common and can be the subconscious telling a person that something needs to be remedied. Wedding nerves do not mean a wedding is doomed; it just means certain issues may need to be worked through. The following are some ways to tame wedding day nerves.

- Keep an open dialogue. Speak with your future spouse about the things that may be causing your anxiety. Maybe you have doubts on financial choices or where you will be living after the wedding. Communicating openly and honestly is one of the foundations of a strong relationship.
- Slow down and breathe. Wedding planning involves making many decisions, and

sometimes couples move at breakneck speeds. Make slowing down a priority. Try to enjoy a quiet dinner with just the two of you. When enjoying peaceful moments, take deep breaths, which can be calming and revitalizing. If need be, consider signing up for a yoga or tai chi class to force you to slow down.

- Address performance anxiety. It's easy to build up the big day in your mind and hope that everything goes according to plan. But it's impossible to plan for each and every outcome on your wedding day. Focus on everything that can go right, rather than worrying about what might go wrong. Also, realize that your guests are your friends and family members who will be forgiving of any hiccups along the way. You're bound to recover gracefully from any mishaps.
- Work on confidence.

Wedding fears may stem from inadequate self-confidence. Give yourself a pep talk and surround yourself with positive people. Keep the worry-warts at arms' length for the time being.

- Recruit more help. Weddings are huge undertakings, so it's no surprise that couples sometimes feel overwhelmed. Ask reliable relatives or friends to double-check all of the last-minute details. This way you don't feel it is all on your shoulders.

Wedding days nerves are to be expected and often have little to do with the decision to get married. Planning such a big event can be nerve-wracking, but there are ways to combat any anxiety that builds up as the big day draws near. ■



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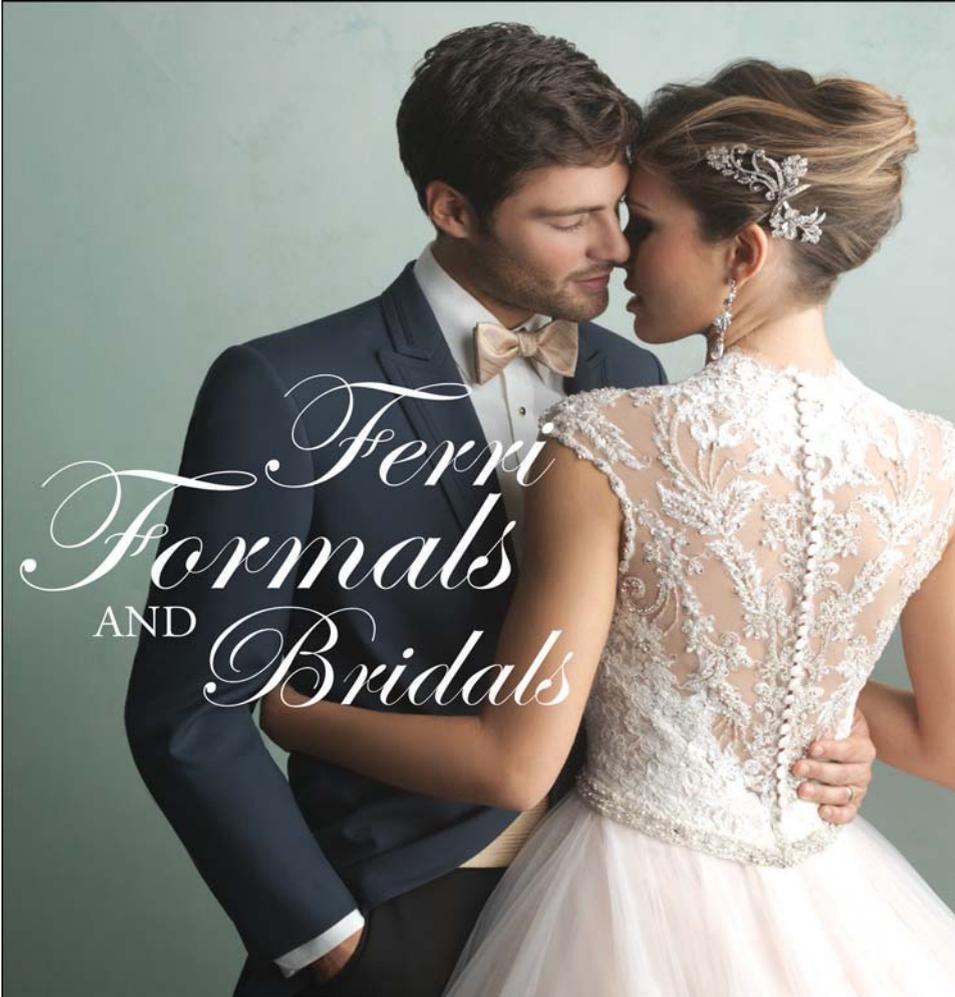


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by *Al Dorantes*

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Service is another important aspect for Maria and Valentino's. Quick and impeccable service is their goal; they strive for excellence. They pride themselves on serving guests quickly. Maria explained that

they can get a party of 300 served within 10 minutes. Maria said, "People want to get served. They don't want to wait in line, especially at the table"

This is due in part to the way the kitchen is run. Maria's husband, Charles John Moriarty is a Johnson & Wales University graduate and certified chef. He runs the kitchen like a well oiled machine so whether you are throwing a party for a few dozen or a wedding fit for a queen the kitchen at Valentino's has you covered with a menu that runs the gamut from baked ham to fillet of beef or prime rib. And all the sides you can think of too! Maria and the staff will ensure that they create a menu that suits your event.

Maria deals with brides and starts learning their dreams and ideas almost a year before the big day. She ensures that even the smallest detail is accounted for the many brides, event planners, and decor setters that work with Valentino's.

Valentino's Banquet Hall has been creating memorable weddings, graduations, and special events since July 2001. Let Maria and her staff create an event that will be unforgettable. For more information call: 315-737-9506, go to: www.valentinosbanquethall.com or follow them on Facebook: Valentino's Banquet Hall Inc. ■

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Inspiration boards

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Making the wedding of your dreams a reality may require some creativity. It can be challenging to organize all of the creative ideas swimming around in your head, but inspiration boards may be able to help.

Inspiration boards, sometimes referred to as idea boards, are commonly used by interior designers, artists, writers, and even wedding planners. Such boards can serve a great purpose when starting a new project, especially if all of your creative ideas seem to lack cohesion. Sometimes seeing things together, rather than in bits and pieces on their own, can fuel even more creativity.

Inspiration boards can include magazine clippings, photographs, fabric swatches, quotes or literary passages, and color swatches. As the idea board grows, you may find a common denominator among your inspirational elements. This can help determine a theme for your wedding or jump-start other planning.

Creative ideas also can be compiled in binders or scrapbooks, which work especially well at keeping all items organized and concise. Plus, they're portable, which means you can take a scrapbook to a meeting with a wedding vendor and show him or her your concepts for the wedding.

Later, when photographers, florists and other vendors have been booked, you can attach receipts or agreements to the inspiration board for future reference. This keeps all of your important wedding information in one

place rather than requiring you to search through different folders or files for important documents. In addition, if friends or family members ask for advice on vendors and planning their own weddings in the future, you can readily access your inspiration board.

To start building your own board or book, take clippings of photos or articles that resonate with you. As you visit bridal shops and other stores, take fabric swatches and pictures of particular looks. Attend bridal shows and take home promotional materials. Remember, inspiration may not always come from bridal-related resources. Anything you come across in your daily life — such as window-shopping at a furniture store or passing an art exhibit — may inspire some creativity.

Inspiration boards are used by top design professionals and can be a handy resource for couples planning their weddings. ■



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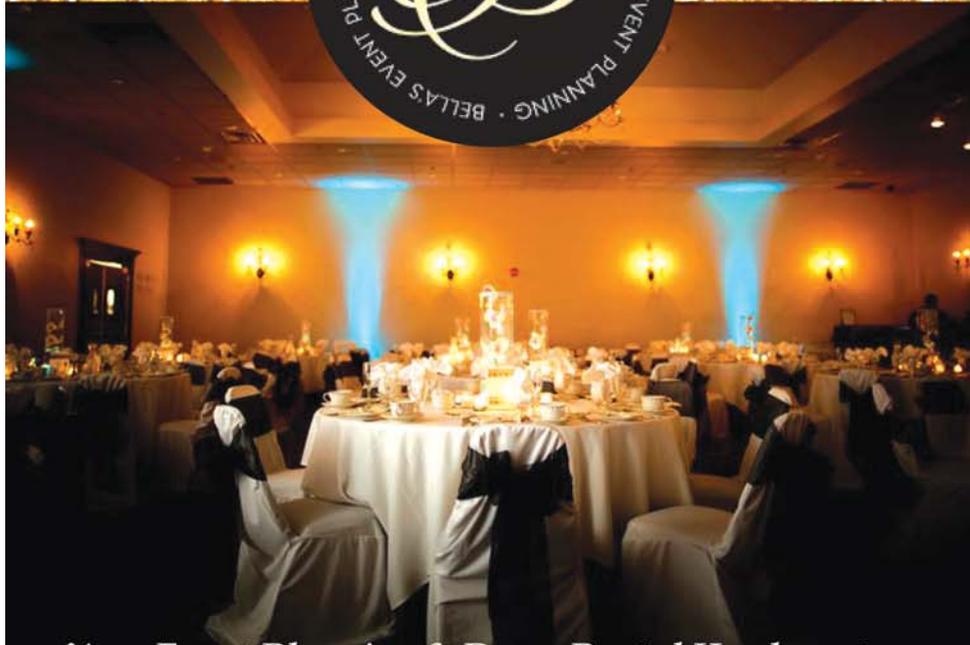
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Weddings can be even more special the second time around.

Couples planning to get married do so with the intention of spending the rest of their lives together. Few couples exchange rings thinking divorce or the loss of a spouse is in their future, but some marriages do end. Happily, that reality does not prevent many people from seeking happily ever after once again.

A recent study from the Pew Research Center found that many people who were married before are deciding to take the plunge a second time. Four in 10 new marriages in the United States

now include one partner who was married before.

The Pew study also discovered that more men than women are likely to get remarried. Around 65 percent of previously married men have a desire to remarry, compared to 43 percent of previously married women.

Men and women about to get married for a second time can consider the following tips to help make the day one to remember forever.

- Recognize that a second wedding is in no way less

important than the first. Couples should remember that this is still the first wedding for the two of them as a couple and it should be seen as just as special as any other wedding celebration. It's easy for men and women marrying for a second time to be hard on themselves, especially when thinking ahead to the gifts that were given and the money spent by guests for their first marriage. But a new relationship and love is worthy of a good party. Friends and family who are supportive of you shouldn't have reservations about helping you celebrate.

- Don't feel boxed in by old-school etiquette. Rules have relaxed with regard to weddings. Many couples put their personal imprints on their weddings and do not feel the need to conform to outdated expectations. You don't have to skip all of the frills of a first wedding the second time around or head to the local courthouse and pass on another big wedding. Do what feels comfortable to you, whether that means throwing a big party or hosting a smaller affair.

- Let past experience serve as your guide. You've been married before and can use that to your advantage. It's likely you know what worked for the wedding the first time around and which things you probably could have changed or done without. Maybe you were stressed about having everything go perfectly or feeling like you had to put on a show for guests. As a more mature person this time around, you no doubt realize that sharing this special time with the ones you love is the most important wedding component of all.

- Be open-minded with your wardrobe. Let the formality of the event and the time of day when you're getting married influence what you will be wearing instead of perceived etiquette or family notions. It's acceptable to wear white again if you so desire.

- Above all, have fun. Couples know what to expect the second time around, so stress usually doesn't stem from the unknown. You may feel more relaxed at a second wedding, so let that ensure you have a great night. ■

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Rehearsal dinner how-to



Many couples find their wedding rehearsal dinners to be relaxing respites from the whirlwind of wedding planning. Such dinners enable the happy couple to slow down and enjoy themselves in a relatively casual gathering with their closest friends and family members.

Rehearsal dinners typically take place in the night or two before the wedding. The

couple, members of their wedding party, the parents of the bride and groom and others involved in the wedding typically attend this dinner. The couple generally takes the time at the dinner to thank everyone for their contributions to the wedding and to offer some small gifts of appreciation. No rules govern rehearsal dinners, so couples have the freedom to plan the dinners

as they see fit.

Rehearsal dinners often come immediately after the ceremony rehearsal, when the wedding party and the officiant go over the timing and details of the wedding. Make arrangements with the ceremony site and officiant prior to making dinner reservations.

Parents of the groom traditionally host the re-

hearsal dinner, so they will be integral in planning the event. That means couples should keep an open and gracious mind. Remember, the rehearsal dinner doesn't have to be a lavish affair, and it can be customized to any budget or preference.

Some couples feel that hosting rehearsal dinners in casual settings can make the dinner more comfortable for members of the wedding, who can use the dinner as an opportunity to mingle and get to know one another before the wedding. This will help to tame nerves and enable the wedding party to loosen up and enjoy themselves even more. Some people may be more inclined to socialize and have fun when they're not worried about putting on airs.

Restaurants that have special meaning to the couple often make for great places to hold rehearsal dinners. The bride and groom can suggest their ideas, but ultimately it is the person handling the bill who has the final say. Couples who want greater control over the rehearsal dinner festivities can suggest hosting it themselves.

Despite its name, the rehearsal dinner doesn't actually have to be a dinner, as couples can opt for meals at a different time of the day, like brunch or lunch. An earlier occasion gives guests plenty of time to get home and rest up for the festivities of the wedding to come.

Toasts are expected at the rehearsal dinner, but they tend to be spontaneous, off-the-cuff remarks. A couple

with a good sense of humor might not mind being roasted at their rehearsal dinners. The bride and groom should expect to say a few words of thanks to all in attendance, but remarks need not be too formal.

Rehearsal dinners may even feature a little entertainment. Tech-savvy parents may put together a presentation with videos or photographs that chronicles the couple's lives separately and their life together.

Rehearsal dinners provide an opportunity for couples and their families to spend time together before the larger festivities of the wedding pull them in multiple directions. Plus, they set a fun tone for the wedding weekend to come. ■

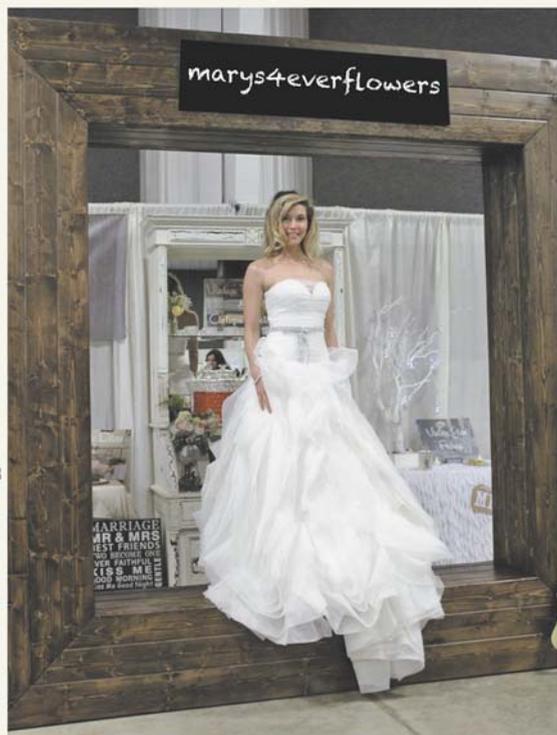
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Customize your ceremony to give it a unique touch

Steeped in tradition, weddings have featured many of the same components for centuries. Those about to tie the knot may feel somewhat limited in their ability to shape their weddings into unique celebrations of their relationships and love for one another. Although it may not seem like there are many opportunities to put your own stamp on the wedding, there are plenty of ways to do just that.

When looking to personalize your wedding ceremony, determine if there might be anything blocking you from doing so. For example, if yours will be a religious ceremony, there may be certain rites that need to be followed. Secular ceremonies may offer more opportunities to customize.

• **Vows:** Vows are one of the easiest ways to put a personal touch on your wedding. You can select the

words you want to exchange during the ceremony as well as any readings during the service. Work with your officiant to narrow down particular phrasing or sentiments that fit with your vision of the wedding and relationship.

• **Participants:** Wedding party members fulfill certain roles during the ceremony, but they are not limited to those tasks alone. Consider asking wedding

party members or other friends or family members to take on specialized roles in the wedding. They may be able to do certain readings, escort guests to their seats, light candles, or sing and participate in other ways.

• **Musical interludes:** Choose music that connects with your personalities as a couple rather than selecting standard songs merely because they are the easier route. Work with the organ-

ist or other musicians and request that they perform or play musical pieces that you enjoy.

• **Candle lighting:** Many couples like to incorporate candle-lighting components to their ceremonies. Lighting unity candles blends two families together into one in a symbolic way. Other couples choose different traditions, such as mixing two different-colored sands in a new vessel, to repre-

sent the joining of two lives together. You can consider these types of additions for your wedding ceremony or come up with your own unique tradition.

Impart a special touch to a wedding ceremony in any number of ways. Doing so will help set this special day apart in the minds of guests and make it even more memorable to look back on as a couple. ■



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Elder Care SPOTLIGHT

Tips & Information to Navigate Senior Life



Driving

For seniors one major concern for maintaining independence is driving. America has a love affair with the automobile and our seniors are head over heels into the relationship. For seniors to keep their wheels is for seniors to keep their independence.

The signs of driving and age interacting are telltale. It may appear as a little ding in the paint or it could be a scrape down the fender from backing out of the garage. Or it could be a full-fledged fender bender that starts the conversation about seniors and driving. One of the main arguments that seniors will use to defend their driving is; experience. They have likely been, driving longer than their care givers have been alive. Be prepared to hear the exact date they received their license.

New technology in cars is helping seniors every day. Back up cameras and blind spot warning lights are all helping drivers daily. Additional sensors in front and rear bumpers assist with parking. Some cars will even park themselves.

Cars are safer today as well. With countless airbags, safety belts, and cars engineered to survive crashes, cars are safer than ever. With satellite technology, some cars can offer remote diagnostics as well as emergency help in the case of an accident.

There are a few little tricks that seniors (or any drivers)

Seniors need to feel comfortable to ask for help. This will be made easier through conversation. Usually a spouse or family member is the best choice to initiate these types of conversations. It will not be easy. One should try to remain respectful. Avoid jumping to conclusions and stereotypes. These things tend to upset and offend. Another thing to avoid is, "or else" ultimatums. This usually leads to anger and fortification of their positions. Once you have started the conversation you can assess the situation and offer assistance. And in turn the senior will be more likely to ask for and accept help.

Driving is a skill that seniors can continue to improve upon throughout their golden years. As long as you know and understand senior limitations you can keep independence through driving. If the conversation leads towards no longer driving there are many options to keep seniors mobile including ride sharing, programs through service groups, family, friends and more. ■

can use to make driving easier. Always prepare for a drive. First, make sure the vehicle is in good shape. Make sure the tires are properly inflated; make sure the indicator lights are intact. Make sure that there are no leaking fluids. Next, make sure you have adjusted your mirrors. This is especially important if you are using a different car, a rental car, or a new car. Make sure that you are comfortable in the seat. Before you begin your drive check to make sure the gas tank is topped off. Asking for help is the biggest trick of all.

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Heidelberg Bread rising to the occasion of more demand

by Al Dorantes

“Good bread is the most fundamentally satisfying of all foods; and good bread with fresh butter, the greatest of feasts.” ~ James Beard

Located off Route 28 in Herkimer, NY Central New York's Heidelberg Bread, which has served most of upstate New York for nearly 30 years, is poised for expansion. The bakery, committed to using the finest, freshest ingredients, is going gangbusters selling breads in supermarkets across the State as well as in their cafe.

Heidelberg Bread began in Fly Creek, New York. The

founder and owner Boyd Easton Bissell Sr. became interested in Artisan Breads while apprenticing in some of Paris' finest bakeries. He had a vision to bake breads based on the simplicity of old world goodness.

In his twenties Bissell had the chance to learn cooking in France as an apprentice in a few grand Parisian establishments. He realized that fine bread was the key to fine dining. Nearly all breads contain all the same primary ingredients: Flour, water, yeast and salt. Authentic bread is an intricate balance of those basic ingredients. Bissell and Heidelberg Bread strive to find the balance between those basic ingredients. Heidelberg started with just

one variety. They started with several local accounts in independent markets and grew exponentially from there. To date they have expanded through the greater part of New York State.

Heidelberg Bakery offers 15 varieties of bread. Their artisan breads are all natural and made with the highest quality ingredients. Additives or preservatives are never used. Each loaf is made by hand from the mixing to the shaping to the loading the ovens and unloading of the ovens. Heidelberg breads are made with unbleached, unbromated flour, stone-ground wheat flour, water, yeast, salt and grains. Their bread varieties include; cracked wheat, rye, Ciabatta, pumpnickel, whole wheat, French peasant, sour dough, white, dinner rolls, raisin sunflower, oat bran, Biaggio Asti Italian, Jewish rye, hearty flaxseed, multi grain, and baguettes.

Bissell thought he would never outgrow their current location in Herkimer. But demand for Heidelberg's



CEO, Cheryl Phillips; Owner, Boyd Bissell; In-house Project Manager, Kevin Phillips

high quality breads has the facility maxed out in both production and storage space. They started with one oven and now have 5 deck ovens and 2 rack ovens which run 16 hours a day, 5 days a week to produce just enough bread for supermarkets and for sale at the cafe.

The new facility will be approximately 28,000 square feet; almost 4

times as big as the current location. The first beams of structural steel for the new facility went up October 22. Partnering with trusted local contractors; Charles A. Gaetano Construction

Corporation as the lead contractor; Boscar Electric, Superior Plumbing, and Central Paving handling the site work construction is scheduled to be finished in April, 2016. Heidelberg will move production to the new facility in June, 2016. Business is expected to grow exponentially at the new location and allow for even further distribution.

The Bakery on Route 28 will remain the location for the offices and café. The Café is open from 7AM to 6PM daily.

My favorite is the French Peasant Bread; their original and best seller. Enjoy it toasted, grilled, as a sandwich, or even French toast. For more information go to: <http://www.heidelbergbread.com/> or follow them on Facebook: Heidelberg Bread ■



The new facility which will be approximately 28,000 square feet, is coming along nicely. It is located in the Frankfort Business Park just off of Route 5s. Production is expected to begin at the new facility in June of 2016.

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“ Peace goes into the making of a poem as flour goes into the making of bread. -Pablo Neruda

Fighting Cabin Fever at Shawangunk Nature Preserve

by Daniel Baldwin

The cold temperatures have arrived in Central New York, which is drawing more people away from the outdoors and trapping them in their houses.

The only reason people would come out of their houses, during the wintertime, was to shovel their driveways or go sledding, skating, and skiing. Many people are less interested in hiking or camping during this time of year, whether it is in the woods or out on the streets.



Hume-Behrendt said that he is disappointed to see many Americans trapped indoors during the winter and not out enjoying the cold wilderness.

"I think people are addicted to television, sitting,

definitely affect a person's health. Hume-Behrendt said that sitting and eating during the entire winter or summer is the key ingredient towards getting diabetes and heart disease.

"They should know that people have diabetes and heart trouble from looking on their iPad," he said. "Due to the obesity problem, there's more plaque in the brain because people aren't getting out and moving. They're sitting in their chairs and getting no oxygen, and the blood system would get rid of the plaque. But if you're sitting around, it's harder for the heart to pump the blood into the brain, so you get plaque. You don't get more oxygen, so what do you get. You get Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and all these diseases that are now epidemic in our culture."

There are also some good reasons why people do not walk in the snow. Walking on nature trails or city streets during the winter

could be dangerous. Folks are going to have to look out for black ice and wear layers of clothing. They also have to put on big winter boots so that their feet could get a good grip on the ground or sidewalk.

Although, Hume-Behrendt said that no matter how cold or snowy it is outside, people should still spend at least ten minutes walking or running outdoors.

"Go out and put on your coat," he said. "Dress warm, have warm shoes, and get out and walk around. Try to find a place where you won't fall, especially when you get older. You could also put on a pair of snowshoes and hike on our preserves. You could also ski."

There are also some other alternatives of staying healthy during the winter.

"Cut down on your sugar, and fruit will begin to taste better than cake," Hume-Behrendt said. "Sugar can bring a civilization down."

The Shawangunk Nature Preserve is located on

Shawangunk Road in Cold Brook, N.Y. Hume-Behrendt said that thousands of visitors stopped by this preserve to walk on the hiking trails, camp, ride their bikes, or go for a canoe ride. The preserve also offers arts and crafts, stress management, and exercise classes. This place even has a workout shed and library.

"This area started with three-and-a-half acres of lands," Hume-Behrendt said,

"but now it encompasses 517 acres. The Shawangunk Nature Preserve is the most precious land on the planet."

Hume-Behrendt and his wife, Peggy Spencer Behrendt, do not live in this preserve all year round. The two of them head south and do not perform any classes from January through March. But the trails in this park still remain open no matter what time of the year it is. ■



The statistics do not lie as more than 70 percent of people stay indoors and are depressed by doing nothing in the winter, according to Sunbox.com. But living indoors could have a strong impact on a person's health.

Coordinator and co-founder of the Shawangunk Nature Preserve, Timothy Hume-Behrendt, currently lives at the preserve in a small house that was built out of scrap wood and uses solar energy for electrical purposes.

The nature life is wonderful for Hume-Behrendt, and it is having a positive effect on his health. He is 79-years-old, but he does not take any medications or had any health problems in the past.

"I couldn't live in a nice middle-class neighborhood," Hume-Behrendt said, "and there's nothing wrong with middle-class neighborhoods. I just like cutting my own wood, building my own house, and getting water from the stream in the preserve. I like doing it all myself plus it's good exercise."

Hume-Behrendt spends a majority of his life out in the wilderness, but he is also a health counselor. He takes the time to study and learn about certain health issues that are spreading around the U.S.

and lpad," he said. "We are addicted to sugar. I'm sorry to say this, but we have a problem with health in our country. Other people sit in their cars, go to work, and they sit there and have snacks. They sit back in their car, go home, and sit in front of the T.V. That's not a good way to stay healthy, especially during winter."

No outdoor exercise could

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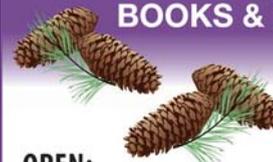
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What to look for in an investment property



Historically, the appreciation rate for real estate is very strong. Even when the housing market declines, long-term investors in real estate can rest easy knowing that property values tend to rebound rather quickly, rewarding patient investors in the process.

Looking at real estate as a long-term invest-

ment is just one way approach a potential investment property. The following are a few additional considerations prospective investors should contemplate before buying an investment property.

Location

Many people are familiar with the real estate industry axiom, "location, location, location!" When buying an investment property, location is everything. A great location should outweigh your own personal feelings about the home, especially if you do not intend to live at the property. You will likely define a great location for an investment property differently than you would a property you intend to live in, so don't let your own desires in a home cloud your judgment when choosing an investment property. Properties in safe neighborhoods that boast good schools and offer easy access to public transportation tend to make great investment properties.

Décor

Décor is another thing to consider when looking for an investment property. If you don't plan to reside in the property, your

opinion of the décor should not carry much weight. When viewing a property, try to imagine how much it might appeal to prospective tenants. Quirky properties typically do not appeal to as many prospective tenants as properties whose décor are similar to other homes in the area. Though you might find a tenant who prefers properties with unique interiors, a property that appeals to as many prospective tenants as possible often makes for a better investment and a lot less stress when the time comes to find tenants.

Condition

The condition of the property also must be considered before buying an investment property. Some investors want a fixer-upper, while others prefer turnkey properties that won't require any elbow grease. The former type of property likely won't cost as much as a fully renovated property, but those cost savings might be lost when it's time to renovate. Find a property that's in the type of condition you're comfortable with. If you decide to go with a fixer-upper, learn the cost of your potential projects before submitting an offer.

Cost

Real estate makes a great investment, but don't go overboard when buying an investment property. Before making an offer on a property, research rents in the area and the cost of insurance in that particular neighborhood. You want a property that essentially pays for itself, so make sure the rent you're likely to collect is enough to cover your monthly costs, including the mortgage on the property, insurance and the costs associated with managing and maintaining the property.

Real estate investors often reap great rewards when selling their properties. But it's still important for potential investors to consider a host of factors before investing in a property. ■

Factors to consider before renting out your home

Renting out a home is a great way for homeowners to earn some extra income. Some homeowners rent their homes in an attempt

to wait out a sagging housing market, while others see renting their homes as a long-term commitment to their financial futures.

Being a landlord has its advantages and disadvantages, and the decision to rent out a home is one that homeowners should not

take lightly. The following are a handful of factors homeowners should consider as they try to decide if renting out their homes is the right move for them.

Time

Being a landlord is a 24/7/365 commitment, as tenants will expect their landlords to be on call at all times. Tenants will call their landlords should plumbing fixtures suddenly burst in the middle of the night, and landlords must be available to answer such calls no matter how inconvenient they become. If you are not willing or able to devote the time necessary to tend to tenant needs, then being a landlord may not be for you.

Maintenance

Whereas homeowners may be able to delay making certain repairs in the homes where they lay their heads, such a luxury is not afforded when they are renting out their other properties. Repairs and maintenance of rental properties cannot be put on the back burner while you save money to fix them. In addition, if even minor repairs typically pose a problem for you, you may soon discover that hiring a handyman or discounting rent for live-in supers is cutting into your profits or making it difficult to pay bills. Before deciding to rent out your home, determine the



mortgage and bills without jeopardizing your finances. The last things first-time or even experienced landlords want are tenants who cannot pay their rent and/or those who are disrespectful of their neighbors and their landlords, so it's best to give ample consideration to your potential pool of renters before deciding to rent out your home.

Help

Many landlords work with local real estate agencies or property management firms who will do much of the legwork with regard to finding tenants and maintaining properties. Research the cost of such help to determine if you can afford it and still make renting your home financially viable.

Attorney fees are another cost prospective landlords must consider. Landlord-tenant laws can be difficult to decipher for first-time landlords, so it helps to have an attorney who can help you decipher these laws and how they should govern your actions as a landlord. But attorneys are not inexpensive, and they must be worked into your budget as well.

Renting a home is a great way to earn extra income, but homeowners must consider a host of factors before putting their homes up for rent. ■

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2 for the price of 1! Front Colonial is overflowing with charm. Gleaming hardwood floors, beautiful windows, nice large entrance hall leading to the grand staircase, LR with fireplace, DR with beautiful built in cabinets, 4BR, 1 1/2 baths, 2nd floor laundry, and so much more. Home is a package deal with a beautiful and tastefully updated 2BR 2 bath house in the back. Don't miss out!

301 Gray St, Herkimer



Cute as a button! There is so much to love in this adorable 2BR, 1 bath Cape Cod. Nice open LR & kitchen, enclosed porch, garage, hardwoods, & tons of updated mechanicals including 3 year old roof, windows, furnace, water heater. You can move right in to this one.

334 & 332 Pleasant Ave & Eureka Ave, Herkimer



Nice location for this 3BR, 1 bath village home just overflowing with potential. Includes LR, kitchen, formal DR, garage, nice corner lot. Being sold as is as seen on short sale.

9 Elm St, Ilion



Don't just drive by! Take a look and make an offer on this truly beautiful 2 family home. Spacious downstairs apartment features large LR, eat-in kitchen, 2BRs, 1 bath. Upstairs also 2BRs, 1 bath w/LR & kitchen. Parking plus TONS of updates including new flooring, replacement windows, newer roof. Call us today!

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Commercial property on busy Route 28. Start your business here or use it for an investment property. Along with the store front there are 3 apartments, 2 two BR upstairs and 1 one BR down.

Skate-A-While Roller Rink

-next skate backwards



by Al Dorantes

In an age when kids have their noses practically glued to cell phones, tablets, and video games Skate-A-While Roller Rink is a bastion of old fashioned fun. Located at 220 Ridge Street in Rome, New York Skate-A-While is retro fun that is keeping up with modern times.

The good times have been rolling at Skate-A-While since 1976. Owner, Earl Harris, explained that his father-in-law loved to skate and built the facility in order to have a place to skate. The 68 foot by x 117 foot skating area still sports its original hard maple floor. The floor was installed in 1976 and has seen thousands of skates roll across its surface. Harris explained that

they recently did a lighting upgrade and also installed a new heating system last summer.

Earl Harris has rules, all based around safety issues, to keep the roller rink rolling along smoothly. Some of those rules include: no gum, no hats on skate floor, no tag, no pushing or shoving, no foul language, and no texting on the skate floor. Harris also does not tolerate bullies. Parents can rest assured that Skate-A-While is a safe place.

Many families are exposed to skating for the first time at Skate-A-While. Harris said that parents say, "What a great place to bring the kids." Skating gets kids out of the house.

Skate -A-While follows the school calendar. They are not open during the summer but will accommodate church groups and special groups. Skate-A-While is the only recreational facility, independently owned, in city of Rome. The facility is a safe place where kids can come during the winter and burn up some energy. Harris explained that skating is seeing a comeback especially with the popularity of roller derby including junior roller derby. This is evident with the large number of skates they sold last year.

Skate-A-While's state of the art DJ booth plays all the great tunes that adults remember skating to as well as spinning some current hits. The DJ also calls out familiar commands, "Next skate backward" or "couples only." For some grownups

hearing those words is like an instant trip back in time.

Skate-A-While is a unique place to have birthday parties too. Parties include admission, skates, party table and a special announcement over the PA. They also host private parties for fun or fund raising. Book a private party for your church group, school, PTA, club, or even an office outing.

If you have a sweet tooth Skate-A-While has a fully stocked concession stand where you can purchase a myriad of snacks; from candy to nachos to ice cold soda. They also have Slush Puppies for the more discerning customers.

Skate-A-While is open Friday (8 pm-10:30 pm), Saturday (matinee 1:30 pm -4 pm - evening 8 pm -10:30 pm), Sunday (matinee 1:30 pm - 4 pm) and features a bargain night Wednesday evening (7-9). Skate-A-While has great deals on skates so get some wheels on your feet and go have some fun. For more information call: (315) 337-8744 or follow them on Facebook: Skate A While Roller Rink ■



Woods Valley Ski Area

Skiing & Snowboarding in Central NY

by Dyann Nashton

When describing Woods Valley, the phrase 'Something for everyone' is spot on. The ski area is tucked along a hillside just seven miles north of the city of Rome and offers activities for all ages, skill levels and inclinations. My inclination of late would be to sit in the Tap Room 46 with a crisp beverage while enjoying the sounds of local musical talent. Add the toasty scent of the nearby fireplace and it's pretty difficult to get me to leave.

Located in the sleepy little hamlet of Westernville on Route 46, just above Delta Lake State Park, Woods Valley has been a regional community staple since 1964 when it was built by Dave Woods at the Dopps Run site. At that time, one reached the hilltop by rope tow, T-bar or J-bar.

Today, Tim Woods, Dave's son and owner of Woods Valley, reports that the ski area boasts 21 trails, two chairlifts, a T-bar, two carpet lifts, and a carousel. CONT. on next page.

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The enhancement of snowmaking has been a focus in recent years. Woods said the emphasis has been on using low-energy systems. "Snowmaking is still a necessity, but by employing low energy technology, we are able to produce the same quantity of snow with less impact to the environment." This means that some 8,000 feet of snowmaking pipe has been installed and 40 low-energy snowmaking guns were purchased and are ready to turn slopes into a winter wonderland.

There are more options for downhill skiing and snowboarding and other winter outdoor activities than ever before, he said. Five new gladed trails

make their debut this year to provide a chance to meander at a more leisurely pace or learn to navigate around trees on a more wooded trail.

There are four terrain parks for the more adventurous skier or snowboarder. Besides snow features, there are rails, boxes and culverts. Each of the terrain parks uses National Ski Areas Association Smart Signage, a system of communicating levels of difficulty as well as safety guidelines. Participants are advised to look over the terrain parks and plan carefully to avoid injury.

Snowtubing is a popular activity that takes little to no skill – like backyard sledding, but much bigger, better and with 600 foot lanes. The tubing park is just to the right of the ski slopes and has its own snowmaking equipment and lights. With the SunKid Wonder Carpet, getting up the hill is just as easy as sliding down. Riders must be big enough to get in and out of the tube on their own, clear the base area quickly and ride the Wonder Carpet without assistance. About 42" is a recommended minimum.

Outdoor ice skating will soon become reality and plans are underway to offer an outdoor pond hockey league. Things really heat up when Woods Valley puts on its fabulous fireworks displays. Think you've enjoyed fireworks

over a summer lake? Just wait until you experience them against the backdrop of ski slopes with the light reflecting off bright, pristine snow. There's nothing like it.

All snow activities require a lift ticket. Tubes are provided by Woods Valley. Want to try skiing or snowboarding without investing in gear? Equipment can be rented in the ground floor of the Lodge. Adult and junior skis, poles, snowboards and even helmets are available.

"If you are not already a skier or rider, we've made significant investment to improve the learning experience -- A regraded learning area, carpet lift, new rental equipment and great teaching staff," said Woods. Private, two-person and group lessons are offered to adults and children by trained instructors. Lessons are an hour and 15 minutes long and lift ticket for the lesson is included in the lesson price. However, a beginner package includes lift ticket for the day, rental, and group lesson. Discounts are available when you purchase lessons in a book of five.

But, let's go back to the Tap Room 46 because the only thing better than playing in the snow is

coming in from the cold. A great place to enjoy the company of friends, this part of the lodge is perfect for a cuddly solo visit, complete with wifi access.

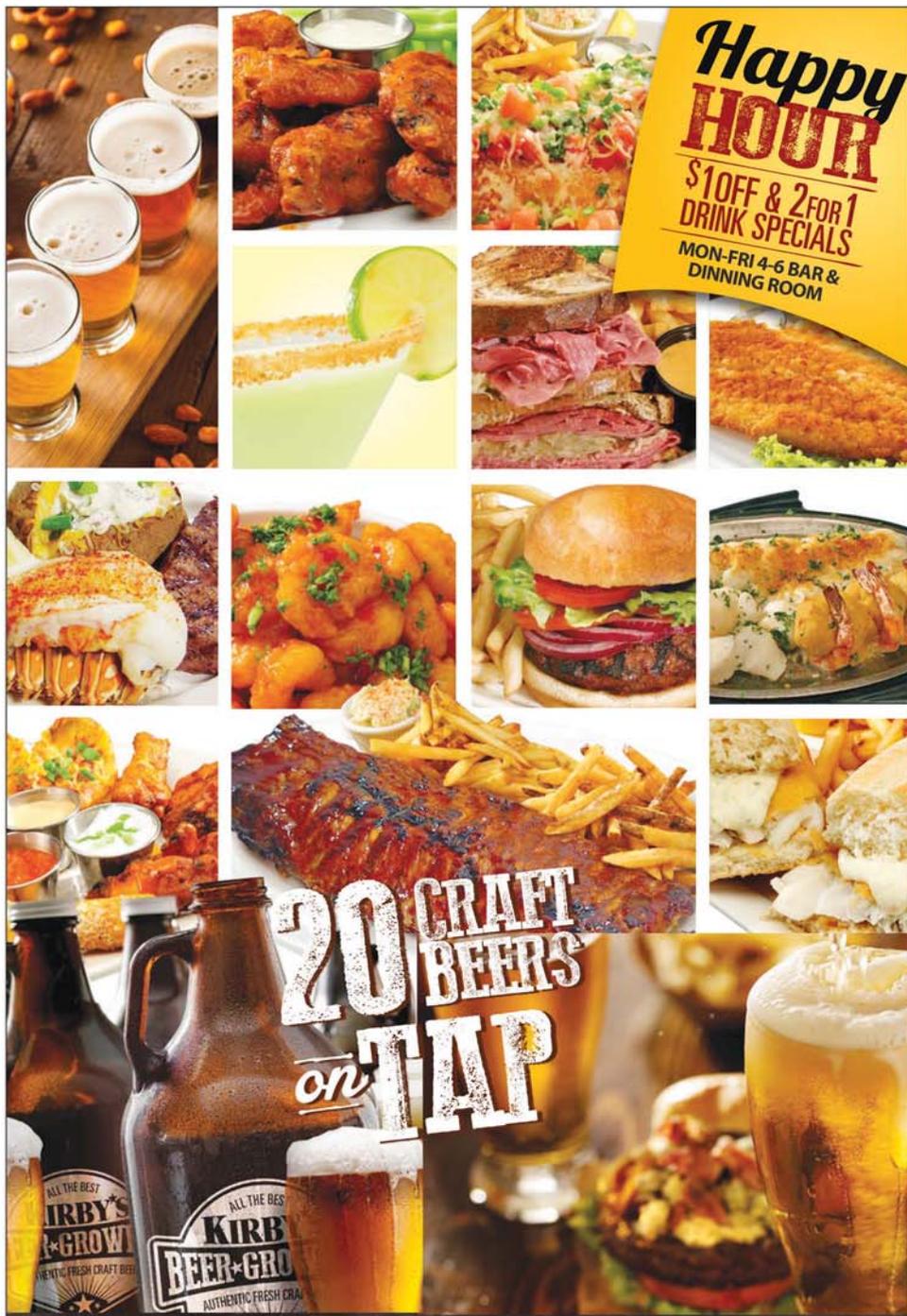
Full bar service with a variety of craft beers and an extensive menu (including pulled pork, grilled ribeye sandwiches, pizza, freshly-made wraps, homemade soups and chili) will ensure that you leave warm and content. A brand, new deck adjacent to Tap Room 46 overlooks the Learning Zone where you can watch wobbly beginners gain confidence.

Over 80 different musical acts have performed at the Tap Room 46 each season. Musicians have included The Blind Owl Band, Jason and Nick from Floodwood, and Pocket Change. Live entertainment is on tap every Friday from 7-10 p.m., Saturdays from 3-6 p.m. and 7-10 p.m. and Sundays from 1-4 p.m. Visit Woods Valley Area on Facebook to get the latest schedule of musical artists.

Woods frequently says that there aren't too many sports that families can enjoy doing together – it's multigenerational! "Celebrating winter in upstate New York is easy at Woods Valley Ski Area. We offer good clean fun in the great outdoors. And, great entertainment inside the Tap Room 46."

The fun here doesn't end when winter does. The Tap Room 46 has become a popular, scenic venue for year-round gatherings. While the live music is ongoing, there are other happenings throughout the year: weddings, fundraising events, reunions, to name a few.

For more information, visit www.woodsvalleyskiarea.com. For daily ski conditions, call the snowphone at (315) 827-4206. The ski area is generally open Wednesday through Sunday, evenings on the weekdays and all day on the weekends and on holidays. For specific days and hours of operation, click on the link "2015-2016 Calendar of Events" under the website's "Hours" tab. ■



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Enjoy a low-calorie Valentine's treat

Decadent treats have become a staple of Valentine's Day. But not all Valentine's celebrants want to indulge in high-calorie treats with their significant others. For those who want the decadence without all those extra calories, try the following low-calorie recipe for "Rockin' Red Velvet Trifle" from Lisa Lillien's "Hungry Girl 200 Under 200: Just Desserts" (St. Martin's Press).

Rockin' Red Velvet Trifle

Makes 8 servings

- 1 packet hot cocoa mix with 20 to 25 calories
- 2 tablespoons mini semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1/2 cup moist-style devil's food cake mix
- 1/2 cup moist-style yellow cake mix
- 1/4 cup fat-free liquid egg substitute
- 1/2 tablespoon red food coloring
- 1/2 Dash of salt
- 4 ounces fat-free cream cheese
- 2 tablespoons Jell-O Sugar-Free Fat-Free Vanilla Instant pudding mix
- 2 tablespoons Splenda No Calorie Sweetener (granulated)
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 8-ounce container Cool Whip (thawed)
- 4 cups chopped strawberries

Preheat oven to 350 F. Spray an 8-inch by 8-inch baking pan with nonstick spray.

Place the cocoa mix and 1 tablespoon chocolate chips in a glass. Add 1/4 cup very hot water, and stir until mostly dissolved. Add 1/3 cup cold water.

In a large bowl, combine the cake mixes, egg substitute, food coloring, and salt. Add cocoa mixture, and whisk until smooth.

Pour batter into the baking pan, and sprinkle with remaining 1 tablespoon chocolate chips.

Bake until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out mostly clean, 26 to 28 minutes.

Let cool completely, about 30 minutes in the pan and 30 minutes out of the pan on a cooling rack.

Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, stir cream cheese until smooth. In another medium bowl, combine pudding mix with Splenda. Add vanilla extract and 1/4 cup cold water, and vigorously stir until mostly smooth and slightly thickened. Add cream cheese and 1 cup Cool Whip, and stir until uniform. Cover and refrigerate.

Cut cake into 1-inch cubes.

In a large glass bowl or trifle dish, evenly layer half of the cubed cake. Spread all of the pudding mixture over the cake layer. Evenly top with half of the strawberries.

Continue layering with remaining cubed cake, Cool Whip and strawberries.



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Homemade dessert this Valentine's Day

Dessert might not be a nightly staple for many couples, but it is an indulgence couples allow themselves on special occasions, including Valentine's Day. While nice restaurants often boast impressive dessert menus,

men and women who want to go the extra mile for their significant others this Valentine's Day may want to make a homemade dessert to enjoy after dinner. If expanding your dessert horizons is on your to-do

list, then consider combining blueberries and corn in this unique yet delicious recipe for "Sweet Corn Crème Brûlée With Blueberries" courtesy of Marguerite Marceau Henderson's "Small Sweet Treats" (Gibbs Smith).

Sweet Corn Crème Brûlée With Blueberries

Makes 8 servings

Custard

2 cups fresh corn kernels, scraped from 2 ears of corn
4 tablespoons unsalted butter
3 1/2 cups half-and-half
1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
8 large egg yolks
3/4 cup sugar

Topping

1 cup fresh blueberries
1/4 cup sugar

Place the corn in a saucepan with the butter; cook for 3 to 5 minutes until corn is softened and fragrant; set aside. Heat the half-and-half, nutmeg and vanilla in a saucepan until cream is bubbling slightly. Add the cooked corn to the half-and-half

mixture and let steep for 15 to 20 minutes. Place the mixture in a blender or food processor and blend until the corn is slightly pureed but not completely liquified. Beat the egg yolks and 3/4 cup sugar in a mixer until light yellow and thickened.

Slowly add the corn mixture to the egg yolks, beating until completely mixed. Pour into eight 1-cup ramekins, filling each almost full. Place the ramekins in a baking pan. Pour hot water into the baking pan until it is halfway up the sides of the ramekins. Bake on the middle rack of the oven at 300 F for 35 to 40 minutes, until set. Cool in refrigerator for 2 to 24 hours, covered lightly with plastic wrap. When ready to serve, lightly sprinkle the tops of the custard with the remaining sugar. Heat a broiler and brown the tops of the custard for 3 to 4 minutes, just until the sugar melts and is golden. Top each with 2 tablespoons of blueberries while the sugar is still warm. Chill again for a few hours, until the sugar hardens.



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Our Time on the Ice

by Anthony Bagnick



Fortunately I was raised on a farm that borders a lake. In the summer this lake provided hours of enjoyable fishing and swimming. In the winter the lake offered ice skating for those of us who were willing to brave the cold. Whenever the ice was thick enough, my two sisters, brother, and I spent many hours skating on this lake along with many neighbor children. The children nearest our home lived on a hill across the lake. On our evening skating sessions they arrived at the lake first to get a fire going

while we on the other side of the lake finished milking our cows. We all became skating buddies during our youthful years. As long as the ice was sound, we children skated many frosty evenings and most of the winter weekends.

There were times when we played tag on skates. Other times we played "I got it." One skater would yell "I got it" and the rest of us would chase that person. If you could touch that person you would yell, "I got it," and the rest of the pack would then chase you. The good skaters would be able to keep, "I got it" longer before someone would skate near enough to touch him or her and yell, "I got it." Finally we all became so tired we would yell, "You can keep it."

We even played crack the whip on skates. The oldest or strongest skater would be at the main end of the many skaters. We then skated with all of our energy to get the line of skaters moving faster and faster. Some who could not skate well just coasted along as we all hung on to each other with outstretched arms and squeezing fingers. At the right moment the leader would try his best to stop this entire group of skaters so they would start whipping around in a circle. Our arms would stretch out like they were going to break before some of us were forced to let go of each other. A few skaters would tumble and giggle as they slid over the ice. The lucky skaters on the very end of the whip who didn't fall would go gliding a long ways over the ice, a free ride.

Evening skating was always enjoyable. A moonless night made for a dark night to skate, but yet it was surprising how far we could see when our eyes adjusted to the dark. Skating on a cloudless, full moon evening was beautiful. The ice gleamed and glistened in the moonlight and starlight sky, as we skated to and fro over the lake. We could easily have read a newspaper without a flashlight. The moon appeared so near as we stood on the ice gazing at it. We commented to each other about the features of the moon. Yet, it never occurred to us then that in our lifetime man would walk on the moon. I am certain though, that

on some of those cold bright nights, we did see green cheese on the moon.

Some winters we had little snow which meant we had weeks of good ice to skate on. Those were the winters we enjoyed. Snowy winters were a disaster for us skaters. We tried shoveling snow off the ice, but we discovered it was slow going and considerable work. When we cleaned off an area it was still too small for us. There wasn't much fun in going around and around in a small area. One time after a snowstorm, one of our school bus drivers brought his snowplow jeep to the lake to clean off a larger area so we could skate. It was ok, but

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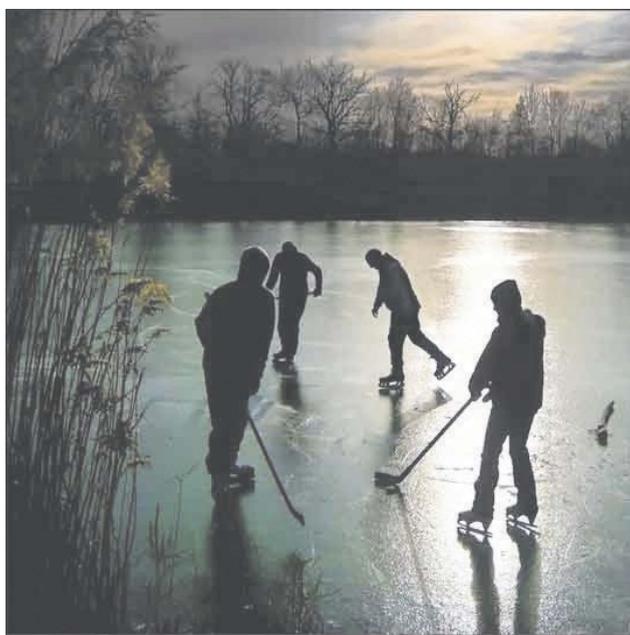
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still not like skating over the entire lake. We loved our freedom to roam the full extent of the frozen lake.

We skated on the ice when there was a two or three inch snowfall, but it was not the same as skating on smooth bare ice. The snow slowed us down considerably, so we usually gave up skating on snowy ice. Our skating ended after a big snowfall, but nature has ways of melting the snow covering the lake. It takes days but slowly the snow on the ice melts into the ice. Early ice without snow is usually clear enough to see through. Older ice, especially ice that has snow melted into the ice becomes opaque, and it usually is not

as smooth as ice formed from the lake water.

The prevailing winds blew toward our open shoreline, so it was better to have the fire on our friends' wooded side of the lake. Near an old frozen decaying log our skater friends built the fire. Near this fire we would sit on that old log to warm our freezing toes or fingers. We soon became saturated with wood smoke. It didn't matter where you stood or sat, but for some mysterious law of nature, the breeze which blew the smoke in the other direction would suddenly turn and blow smoke directly toward you. Most evenings we walked home reeking with sooty wood smoke. We crawled

into bed smelling like smoke cured meat. Our mothers put up with a lot.

On weekday evenings our skating lasted until about 9:30, because we had school the next day. On the way home as our neighbor buddies climbed their wooded hill and we climbed the hayfield on our side of the lake, we sometimes shrieked frightening sounds or else we politely yelled goodnight to each other. When we arrived home we unbundled, and then moaned as our freezing toes and fingers slowly returned to warm living flesh. Before we went to bed we ravenously ate whatever was available. Mom had crackers or cookies or bread and butter with a bowl of home canned tomatoes waiting for us. Our skating buddies did the same.

The next day on the morning school bus run we talked and giggled about our previous evening on the lake. We innocently asked if they heard strange sounds last night as we walked home in the dark, and then we all laughed. Before we left the bus on the afternoon run, we promised we would see each other that evening if it wasn't too cold. As long as decent weather prevailed we skated. At school some kids would sniff us and ask, "Do you have a wood fire in your house?" How could we explain to them that we were having such exciting

and exhilarating fun last evening on a cold lake with a smoky wood fire nearby?

We never did much figure skating, although several girls had figure skates. My youngest sister was one of those with figure skates. She would dress up neat as a pin and then she tried skating her fancy maneuvers. Figure skates were too slow for us boys. We wore hockey skates which gave us more speed. We even got so we could go along backwards almost as fast as we could skate forward. One boy had racing skates. We envied the speed he could attain with those long bladed skates.

We played hockey without knowing many rules of hockey. Actually it was our own style of hockey. We just swatted the puck, our home made puck, all over the lake. Very seldom did we have a true hockey puck. We used a chunk of wood or a chunk of ice. Our hockey sticks were mostly limbs or long sticks cut from the shoreline brush with an angle on the end so we could whack the puck. We batted a chunk of ice until it disintegrated. Then we would laugh and say, "We better go to our store for another puck." We skated near the shore of the lake and chopped another chunk of ice from the lake to use as our new puck, or else we used a chunk of wood we found.

Continued on page 38

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Black snakes on Eddy's back

by Joe Parzych

Something that happened, while I was going to a one room schoolhouse as a young boy, has stayed with me for all these many years. Miss Pogoda was our teacher, then. Eddy, an older boy lived nearby. He came to our school at noon recess, one day. He'd quit school to work on his father's farm, most likely at his father's insistence. He was a sad and lonely boy, and often came to talk to the older boys during lunch hour. We all liked Eddy and wished that he had a better life.

Eddy's father was a hard drinker, often short tempered and mean. The father first lost his right to drive shortly after getting his license. He demolished his brand new car on the first day he drove it, smashing head-on into another car while driving drunk. As soon as he got his license back, he bought another new car. He got drunk and smashed up that one, too, on the very first day he drove it, killing a woman in the other car that he'd hit, also head-on. He didn't go to jail, but he lost his license,

forever. When Eddy turned 16, his father had him get a driver's license, and bought yet a third new car so that Eddy could chauffeur him around.

The day Eddy came to our school during lunch hour, with a hurt look in his eyes. He fought back tears, as he hoarsely spoke to the older boys. He tersely said, "I got somethin' to show you," as he walked stiffly and slowly, as if in great pain. The boys followed him over a knoll, until we were out of sight of the school and our teacher, Miss Pogoda. I tagged along,

Eddy stood on a huge rock as though on a stage. We stood a little higher on the edge of the knoll. He took off his shirt while facing us. He grimaced in pain. The boys all stood together in silence looking on as he struggled with his shirt. When Eddy turned around to show his back to us, the boys let out a collective gasp.

Shiny black snakes crisscrossed Eddy's back. The snakes were fat in the middle with tails at either end. I was puzzled that the snakes had

no heads, and I wondered how Eddy held them there. I studied them in puzzlement. The older boys told me not to look, but I couldn't take my eyes away.

"The old man tied my hands to a post and horse-whipped me," Eddy said in a hoarse whisper, blinking back tears. He raised his arms to show how his father had tied his hands high. Eddy's back, lean and muscular, made the snakes appear to writhe as he raised his arms. He put his shirt back on, his eyes still harboring that hurt look. When I realized that the black snakes were welts from the whipping, my chest hurt, just to look at him.

"I'm taking off with the old man's car, tonight," he said. "You won't see me ever again."

And we never did. Eddy crashed into the rear end of a lumber truck that night, as he raced across New York State, at high speed, in the dark. Lumber that stuck out at the rear of the truck sheared off the top of the car—taking Eddy's head with it. ■

Guess Who?

I am a pop singer born in England on February 1, 1994. I have an older sister named Gemma and as a child I worked in a bakery. My band is signed to Simon Cowell's label, and we have sold millions of copies of our albums worldwide.

Answer: *Harry Styles*

French Polish Wedding

by Joe Parzych

Our young son became smitten with a sweet little gal who was a bit more experienced than he. She was considerably older, and she had a son she'd left behind when the marriage to her first husband failed. Her family was thrilled to have her re-married, and off their hands. They summoned friends and relatives from far and wide, most of whom were French.

I'm of Polish heritage, while my wife came from

English and German stock. Our oldest daughter, blessed with a good sense of humor, wrote the words to the Polish National Anthem, phonetically, and distributed copies to all the guests. Our daughter let her auntie in on the joke. My wife's sister who had no sense of humor, whatsoever, was furious, but fumed in silence.

The band leader immediately recognized the words and music, and was more than happy to play

the anthem, leading us to suspect that he, too, was of Polish descent, judging from his broad grin as he led us in song. The band also appeared to be familiar with the anthem and performed a splendid rendition surpassed only by the reception hall full of French people lustily singing away with no clue that they'd been taken in.

This marriage, also, did not last; but the reception was fun. ■

ROOT FARM from page 9



includes a working garden with flowers and vegetables that will be sold at local farmer's markets, along with the eggs, honey, and syrup

Volunteers are a huge part of daily operations at the Root Farm. As a crucial component of the riding program volunteers are used as groomers, tacking horses, side walking, helping participants with activities, and more.

Jeremy Earl, PT, Executive Director said, "It is amazing for me to see the 2 and a half years of work on this facility come to life and to envision the thousands of people we can help."

Beyond the therapeutic benefits of riding, riding is also a unique and profound activity for many people. The concentration needed to acquire riding skills and the communication between instructor, rider and horse allow people with a variety of abilities to benefit from riding. The

Root Farm started with programs in the last 2 weeks. They have already hosted over 75 sessions including 10 veterans from Ft. Drum on Friday, November 6. The construction is done. Now it's filling programs and moving forward.

Youngster Katelyn Kotary, from Rome, New York, rides once a week. Jeff Kotary, her father, and Lori, Katelyn's mother, see the benefits. "If we drive anywhere close to The Root Farm she says, "Horse! Horse! Horse!" She just loves it." Said Jeff Kotary.

Horseback riding at the Root Farm can help people with special needs including muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, amputation, paralysis, spina bifida, down syndrome, autism spectrum disorder, Parkinson's disease, developmental disorders, dyslexia and other learning abilities. For more information go to: www.rootfarm.org or call 315-520-7046 or email info@rootfarm.org. ■

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Hamlin Announces Surprise Retirement from USA Luge

–Relax Fans, It Won't Come Until 2018

by Pat Malin

USA Luge glowingly refers to Erin Hamlin as its best athlete of all time.

Yes, a world championship in 2009.

Yes, an Olympic bronze medal in 2014, which unquestionably put the glow on Hamlin's 11-year professional career on the national team.

Yes, named the Best Female Olympian by the U.S. Olympic Committee in 2014. A three-time Olympian and a four-time U.S. national champion since 2004.

In the 2015-16 season alone—which just began Nov. 30, she has earned two gold medals and three silver medals in four World Cup races.

It's not only a personal

best, but she ranks second in the world in points, trailing teammate Summer Britcher, who has had a spectacular breakout season of her own.

This is the first time in FIL luge history that U.S. singles racers have ever occupied the top two spots in the World Cup standings.

Hamlin, a native of Remsen who resides in Lake Placid at USA Luge and Olympic headquarters, is at the top of her game and loving it. But at 29, the oldest woman on the U.S. Luge Team, she might be wistfully eyeing the future and a more private life.

Following her double gold victory in Lake Placid on Dec. 5, she threw a surprise bouquet to her fans when she announced her impending retirement.

Well take a deep breath. It ain't over till it's over, as Yogi

Berra would have said. She wants to compete another two years and is aiming to close out her career in the 2018 Winter Olympics in PyeongChang, South Korea.

We can all breathe somewhat easier, although it was a bombshell at the time. Hamlin "announced" her retirement so matter of factly in a radio interview to USA Luge.

"This is the one thing I wanted to do before I retire, and on our home track," referring to the gold medal

she earned in women's singles. That was her first gold since winning the 2009 World Championship on the same track in Lake Placid.

"It could not be any more perfect, to lead an American sweep," she added, complimenting her young teammates, Emily Sweeney and Summer Britcher for their silver and bronze medals the same day, another stunning accomplishment for the entire American luge team.

"Now I know that when

I retire in two years the team will be in good hands," Hamlin continued. "It made it cool, because we are always back to back in team races all the time."

Hamlin is beginning to sound like a sentimental, elder stateswoman. "The women's program has come so far," she said in an interview with USA Luge in Calgary.

"In the past four or five years I've seen a lot of potential come up and nip at my heels. It's pushed me and made me better. We've

all pushed each other to continue improving and to now be chasing down the Germans and to be beating them, and to bring the level of the women's competition up internationally, is really exciting.

Hamlin isn't putting her future on hold while competing. She is working on a degree in sustainability management with online courses from DeVry University, a U.S. Olympic Committee sponsor. ■

FINANCIAL FOCUS

–Put Your Financial "Puzzle" Together

January 29 is National Puzzle Day, with puzzle celebrations and events taking place at museums, libraries and other venues across the country. Why this date was chosen – or why National Puzzle Day even exists – is something of a mystery. But as an investor, you can find value in the concept of a puzzle – specifically, in putting together the pieces of your

financial puzzle.

What are these pieces? Here are the essential ones:

- Growth – At different times in your life, you will have various goals – purchasing a first or second home, sending your children to college, enjoying a comfortable retirement, and so on. While these goals are diverse, they all have one thing in common: To

achieve them, you'll need some growth potential in your investment portfolio. The nature and the extent of the growth-oriented vehicles, such as stocks and stock-based instruments, in your holdings will depend on your specific goals, risk tolerance and time horizon – but growth opportunities you must have.

- Income – Income-producing investments, such as bonds and dividend-paying stocks, can help supplement your earned income during your working years and provide you with a valuable income stream when you're retired. Plus, bonds and other income-producers can help balance a portfolio that might otherwise be too heavy in growth vehicles – which, as you know, are typically higher in risk.

- Taxes – Taxes will always be part of the investment equation. Whenever possible, you'll want to take advantage of those accounts that let you make tax-deductible contributions and that provide the opportunity for tax-deferred growth, such as a traditional IRA and your 401(k) or other employer-sponsored retirement plan. You may also find that you can benefit from tax-free investments, such as some types of municipal bonds and a Roth IRA. (Your Roth IRA contributions are not tax-deductible, but your earnings grow tax free, provided you've had your account at least five years and you don't start taking withdrawals until you reach 59½.)

just invest for your future – you also have to protect it. If something were to happen to you, would your family be able to remain in your home? Would your children still be able to go to college? To help ensure continuity and security in your family's lives, you'll need to maintain adequate life and disability insurance. Also, you will need to protect your independence in your retirement years, as you no doubt would want to avoid burdening your grown children with any financial burden. To attain this type of freedom, you may have to guard against the potentially catastrophic costs of long-term care, such as an extended nursing home stay. A financial professional can suggest ways of meeting these expenses.

- Legacy – After working hard your whole life, you'd probably like to leave something behind to your children, grandchildren, other family members and possibly even charitable institutions. To create the legacy you desire, you will need to create a comprehensive estate plan. Because such a plan may involve a will, living trust and other complex legal documents, you will need to work with your legal and tax advisors.

Try to put these pieces together to help complete your financial "puzzle" – when you do, you may well like the picture that emerges.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. ■

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Leatherstocking Ballet Company



Leatherstocking Ballet dancers on the move to their new dance studio at 171 Genesee Street in downtown Utica. Photo courtesy of ADAM BROCKWAY PHOTOGRAPHY.

by Al Dorantes

Leatherstocking Ballet, Inc.'s School of Dance is located on the 3rd Floor of 171 Genesee Street in beautiful downtown Utica, New York. They are at this moment putting the finishing touches on their new facility.

The Leatherstocking Ballet, Inc. is a non-profit regional dance company with a focus to provide performance opportunities to all children ages 5 to 18 in the Mohawk Valley. These children participate in two performances per year, including The Nutcracker in December and an annual spring performance. The spring performance changes every year and this year features Alice in Wonderland the week of May 9-14

The aim of the Leatherstocking Ballet is two-fold: to attract the attention of the serious ballet student and to attract the interest of minority students of various cultural backgrounds. Their mission is dedicated to working with young dancers and bringing the excitement of dance and performance to students who have not had the opportunity to be a part of an organized production.

Jamie Sitera, lead instructor, is also the founder of the Leatherstocking Ballet, Inc. and has served as its Artistic Director since its inception 22-years ago. Ms. Sitera has a Master's Degree in Dance Education and her Certificate of Advanced Studies in Educational Leadership.

The Leatherstocking Ballet, Inc. was formed in 1994 to foster a healthy interest in and development

of the performing arts in the Mohawk Valley. The Leatherstocking Ballet, Inc. is comprised of ballet students, aged 5 to 18 years, who have auditioned to become company members. Additionally, children from Watson Williams, Roscoe Conkling, and the Mohawk Valley Refugee Center have performed alongside company members for the past 16 years in performances for the general public and area schools.

The Leatherstocking Ballet has always leased rehearsal space from other schools and studios. They have practically been nomads. During that time they were not teaching ballet classes and were only a performance entity. Now with their own space and full-fledged studio they are teaching their own students. Jamie Sitera said, "Now we are able to grow our own students to form them into the roles and ballets we want to do." The Leatherstocking Ballet is having open enrollment all January. New students will join students already training under Jamie Sitera's guidance.

In 2015 the Leatherstocking Ballet was the Partners in Prosperity grant winner. They are using the grant to build their new studio. The purchase of a multi-purpose dance floor for the new studio is due to the support and a grant from the Community Foundation of Herkimer and Oneida Counties.

Leatherstocking Ballet uses a graded system to assess and monitor their students. They are the only school in the Valley to do

so and the only school with a fully registered teacher from the Royal Academy of Dance from London

England. The Royal Academy of Dance is one of the world's most influential dance education and professional membership organizations. They set global standards for exams in classical ballet, teacher training and continuing professional development for dance. Founded in 1920 to set standards for dance teaching within the UK, today they have a presence in 83 countries, with 36 offices and over 14,000 members worldwide. Royal Academy of Dance exams are recognized as very high quality training throughout the dance community by judges at competitions, colleges, and dance companies all over the world. -The Royal Academy

of Dance's patron is Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

On January 15, 2015 the Leatherstocking Ballet will have their grand opening at 5pm at the new studio. The next day, January 16, they will host an open house from 11am - 12pm. Following the open house

they will have open auditions for their upcoming Alice in Wonderland performance. Leatherstocking Ballet is always looking for looking for volunteers and board members. For more information go to: www.leatherstockingballet.org ■

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Our Time on the Ice continued from page 34

If we broke our home made hockey stick, that didn't stop our playing. Whoever broke his stick simply went to the shoreline to find another favorable stick from the bushes.

When the ice was good on a Saturday or Sunday a group of adults and children would sometimes have a skating party. On the party day several cars would be parked in our yard and in neighbors' yards as the many people came skating. The lake became pleasantly crowded, but yet there was plenty of room for more. A fire was built on the ice near the shore. Hotdogs and potatoes were roasted for all, and we skated until it was time to milk the cows. Those who didn't have chores skated longer.

When there was a weekend skating party, we saw both new skates and old hand me down skates along with skating clothes that ranged from new spectacular warm jackets to old tattered jackets. Some of the younger boys wore hand me down sweaters

and jackets. The sleeves of those jackets were longer than the young boys' arms. We never saw their fingers, but those long sleeves were excellent for wiping runny noses.

Several times we skated when there was water on the ice. It was fun, providing you didn't fall. There was usually a winter thaw or a rainy spell even in the prime of winter when common sense tells us it should be freezing cold, but instead it melts or rains. If the ice is thick enough before the thaw or rainy spell, water on top of the ice doesn't hurt the ice unless it melts continuously for a few days. On some of those warmer days, but still with sound ice, we would continue to skate, except you were cautious not to fall. Sometimes though, our skates would sneak out from under us, and we knew an icy cold wet landing awaited us. If a skater fell and we watched him or her sliding across the wet ice on their belly or bottom, we all had a good laugh, but when it

happened to me it wasn't so funny. When the water was an inch or more deep we liked to get our speed up and then slide over the ice with our skates angled like a snowplow. The water would spray up into the air several feet. We tried to get up more speed before we angled our sliding skates to see who could make the highest and prettiest water spray. Talk about having wet pant legs!

After a warm spell the wintry cold and usually high winds would return to freeze the water on top of the ice. We hoped the wind wouldn't blow so the water would freeze smoothly, but this didn't always happen. The icy wind blew the water on top of the old ice into frozen ripples. We could skate, but the rippled ice really vibrated the tar out of us. Skating on our buddies' side of the lake had the smoothest ice because the woods shielded their side of the lake from most of the winds. Occasionally the only good ice was along their shoreline, so we were

confined to skate on that side of the lake.

While wearing our skates, we never walked on stones or dirt. If we had to, we got down on our hands and knees and held our skates up so the blades would not get nicked as we crawled a short distance over the shoreline. We inspected our blades often. If we found a nick in our blades we did our best to carefully file it off. A nicked blade bites into the ice and slows a skater down. We demanded speed so our blades had to be as perfect as we could make them. We had an apparatus--still have it-- that held a pair of skates for sharpening. With a hand held grinding stone, the skates could then be sharpened. It was a slow procedure, but we took pride in our hockey skates that gave us speed and excellent cornering when well sharpened.

On one winter in the 1950's we had a snowfall of about 8 inches and then a cold rain fell for several hours. The weather became

much colder during the night. The next morning the rain had frozen into such a strong crust that our heavy farm tractor would ride on top of this icy crust. The neighbor buddies and my youngest sister went skating over the gleaming, snow crusted hayfields. It was remarkable to see them gliding over the sloping hayfields on skates. They crawled under a barbed wire fence to get onto one neighbor's land. This neighbor's land had a long sloping hill with a much steeper rise near the top. They struggled to get to the top of this hill, but then they glided down the hill, traversing the slope to enjoy a longer ride or to turn downward to gain more speed. It was the only winter we witnessed when the crust was so thick a person could easily skate over the hayfields.

All the above information took place from 1941 to about 1960. In 1941 on December 7, when Pearl Harbor was bombed, a few of us youngsters were

skating on that Sunday afternoon. As we skated, we looked up into the sky for Jap airplanes. Little did we know then about war and how that particular December 7, drastically changed so many lives all over the world.

Today the lake is still there, but sadly quiet in the winter. The skaters and smoky fires are gone. Today's youth are of a fresh, different generation, a new time of history. They have cell phones, smart phones, I pads, computers, and a trove of other gadgets to keep them occupied. In the winter months of our youth we had ice skates, often good ice, and plenty of cold fresh air. We had years of good healthy growing up fun on the frozen lake. Today, as we live through another winter, we continue to keep in touch with our former skating buddies and reflect on our many enjoyable skating memories. We had our time on the ice. ■



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Vernon National Shooting Preserve

by Al Dorantes



Safe, convenient shooting fun can be found at Vernon National Shooting Preserve. Learn a new sport with individual instruction. Registered shooters and novices alike are always welcome, there is something for every experience level.

The area's premier pheasant hunting and target shooting venue can be found at Vernon National Shooting Preserve. Located in Vernon Center on one of the highest elevations

in Oneida county, Vernon National Shooting Preserve offers a safe, convenient, and fun setting for pheasant hunting, sporting clays, skeet shooting, wobble, rifle and pistol ranges-all with

spectacular views!

The family owned and operated facility is open to members, as well as to the public. Vernon National has a fully automated 17 station sporting clays course, a skeet range, wobble trap, covered pistol range, rifle range, as well as a spacious clubhouse and banquet area. They operate a stocked pheasant hunting operation from September 1st through the winter months. Both pistol shooting instruction and shotgun shooting instruction are available through private instructors.

Vernon National began as a family farm. It has been in the Acee family for over 20 years where they initially operated a dairy and crop business. Owner, Ron Acee, his father Sam, and their faithful dog Gus made a trip out to the Dakotas to hunt pheasants. That trip became the inspiration for the pheasant preserve.

Around 2003, a few Promatic traps replaced an old hand thrower for some family fun. After a time

friends were invited to join in the shooting and before long an area of woods was cleared for the set up of a 5 stand field. Over the course of the next few years the private little set-up grew into a busy little business. It was decided to take this to the next level and build a sporting clays course. In 2008 a new state of the art fully automated sporting clays facility with 10 stations was opened. Vernon National now has 17 stations offering a wide variety of targets, some that you will not see anywhere else. Vernon National has now become a full-fledged facility for sporting recreation. The preserve is continually growing.

Sporting clays is like golf with a shotgun and Vernon National has a world class course. Their sporting clays course is fully automated so there is no waiting for trappers- it is fun for beginners, as well as the experienced shooter. They provide instruction, ammunition and even gun rentals, making the experience the best for everyone. The target presentation on the sporting clay course is continually changing so the course is always new and challenging. The course is set on open fields, hardwoods and over deep ravines. Whether you are a Master Class NSCA registered shooter looking for competition, or just a casual shotgun shooter looking for some fun, Vernon National's sporting clay course has it all.

Another feature of Vernon National is its pistol and rifle ranges. The pistol range is an indoor/outdoor range.

There is a well ventilated, heated and lighted indoor shooting area that can be used year round. The 600 yard rifle range is adequate for target shooting and sighting in rifles of almost any caliber.

“Open to the public, come see what we’re all about.”

The jewel of Vernon National is their pheasant hunting. They offer pheasant hunting as it was back in the day of wild birds. Pheasant hunts utilize approximately 500 acres of managed terrain, with varied covers from corn, sorghum, sunflowers and natural grass to plantations of evergreens, hardwoods, extensive brush and hedgerows all offering a natural, challenging hunt. They offer private hunts, public hunts, corporate outings, and tower shoots.

Vernon National releases approximately 3,000 pheasants a year. Bring your new pup or your seasoned hunting dog to help you find those birds or book one of the many great guides the preserve has to offer. Public hunts are available seven days a week during their pheasant hunting season. Vernon National is hunting sport with a dog at its finest.

Owner Ron Acee explained, “Vernon National has to be safe, convenient, and fun; for members and guests.” To that end, Ron has a list of rules that he has implemented and strictly enforces. The number one rule is safety, and after that, being courteous and respectful to all others and to the property. All

hunters and their guests are expected to understand and abide by the rules at all times. Additional rules, by range, include, All hunters must check in prior to the hunt and check out before departure, Some blaze orange required, Safety glasses and ear protection is required, Absolutely NO alcohol prior to or during any shooting activity, Hunters and their dogs must remain in their designated area at all times, No trespassing on adjoining property or switching fields without permission, Guns must be unloaded until hunters reach their assigned area, and must be unloaded prior to leaving the area, Members are responsible for making guests aware of all club rules, safety regulations, and must make sure that a release and waiver form is signed. Sportsmanlike conduct is expected at all times. Ron reserves the right to cancel a membership or stop a hunt with no refund for any conduct deemed inappropriate. Safety is a priority at Vernon National.

Vernon National Shooting Preserve is centrally located only miles from Turning Stone Casino and Vernon Downs, offering a great selection of hotels and local entertainment. They are minutes from Cazenovia, Hamilton, Clinton, Rome, and the Valley and easily accessible from the NYS thruway. This means that anywhere in Central New York you are a quick trip away from world class and safe, convenient, shooting entertainment. For more information go to: www.vernonnational.com or call: (315) 829-2529. ■

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This Winchester M21 Trap Grade Custom Fantastic is a sample of the high quality firearms you can expect to find at Fox River Sporting.

by Al Dorantes

Fox River Sporting, located at Vernon National Shooting Preserve in Vernon Center, is your source for rare, vintage rifles, shotguns, and sporting arms from 1870 to the 1950's. Owner Tom Wyras has been collecting fine rifles and shotguns for over 30 years and puts that experience to work for collectors.

Tom began started collecting Winchesters in the 1970's with his father at the young age of 14. For the last two decades Wyras has taken a keen interest on A.H. Fox shotguns, made in

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in the early 1900's. At that time American gun companies commissioned the best illustrators of the day to create posters, calendars, and catalogs, depicting scenes of their products being used in the field. Fox River Sporting is proud to offer works by Philip Goodwin, A.B. Frost, and many others. These great pieces of sporting art give us a glimpse into the past and have become highly regarded and very collectible. Fox River Sporting's goal is to offer investment grade, high condition, sporting items of yesteryear for future

generations to appreciate and enjoy.

Fox River Sporting offers some of the finest rare, vintage rifles and shotguns available today. Besides classic firearms Tom Wyras also sells authentic gun company advertising posters, vintage calendars, and original catalogs. Antique boxed ammunition is also available, often times in obsolete calibers. Fox River Sporting's inventory of investment grade sporting items is constantly changing and while specializing in A.H. Fox shotguns they also deal in Winchester, Savage, Marlin, and Remington items as well as those by Colt, Parker, Ithaca and L.C. Smith.

An interesting facet of Fox River Sporting is that Tom Wyras is always buying vintage guns to resell. On a daily basis Wyras is looking for sellers of sporting guns. Like any hobby the prices are based on rarity and condition. Wyras said, "If you have guns in the attic I want to buy them." He is looking for any guns of high quality in high condition from 1870 to 1950's including Savage, A.H. Fox, Parker, LeFever, L.C. Smith

Shotguns, Winchester, Marlin, Remington, and Colt. Fox River Sporting also buys some military collectables.

Tom Wyras also specializes in selling rare vintage rifles, shotguns, and paraphernalia to his network of buyers across the country. Wyras said, "I have customers who want these types of guns to use and for investment. Some are local but many are all across the country. I can find good homes for high quality firearms."

Whether you are starting your collection of vintage sporting guns, looking for your "holy grail" to finish your collection, or just looking for investment grade rifles or shotguns Fox River Sporting is your go to shop. Tom Wyras points out that all state and federal laws are strictly observed.

Tom Wyras, with his years of experience, is available to appraise your collection or estate. Fox River Sporting will appraise a single item or your entire collection. You can have confidence that you will receive the most accurate and up-to-date evaluation. Confidentiality is assured and Fox River



Antique fishing equipment is a hobby unto itself. We are fortunate to acquire nice vintage fishing lures, antique fishing reels and antique fishing rods. Utica was the home of the famous Horrocks-Ibbotson (H.I.) Company for many years.

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~Jimmy Carter

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Oriskany Creek Logic



An Oriskany Creek Brown rests before being released.

by Mark Usyk

I stand in a stretch of the Oriskany Creek, staring down the Weeping Willow that's attached to the other end of my fly line, a few tugs leading to a few furious shakes, leaves falling to the water and floating on the current as I make the decision to just break off the fly. I pull the line tight, tighter still, until it finally pops... The fly falls to the water and disappears downstream with the current, my eyes follow it in both belief and disbelief at the same time. I shake my head, laugh at myself, and inspect my fly box, wondering which one I'll most likely lose next.

I tie on a black rabbit fur leech pattern and make a cast, narrowly missing the same branches that moments earlier dragged a four letter word across my lips. The fly lands against the cutout sand bank and rolls down into the water. A few seconds later the line is tight, the rod arching overhead, a fish fighting for yards like a football player making slow progress with another dragging from his leg. When the fight is over I cradle a gorgeous greenish bronze Smallmouth with the markings of a fierce jungle warrior. I remove the hook from it's mouth, admire the fish for another quick moment and then lower it back to the cool water. With a kick and a splash it glides off to deeper shadows and I'm left with water and sand speckled on my face. I figure it's like the fish saying "Here's

mud in your eye." I suppose I deserve that.

The Oriskany Creek is known as Brown Trout water, and it is. But I'm a horrible Trout fisherman, unless you're talking about the Wild Brook Trout that I hunt in remote Adirondack streams. Most haven't seen an artificial fly, they just don't know any better. But here in the Oriskany the Brown Trout seem to know when I'm here and let the Bass, the Fall Fish, and the Creek Chubs take the fall instead. I don't mind in the least. Time on the creek is time on the creek, no matter what I find at the end of my line, if I find anything at the end at all.

But I do hook a Brown every now and then to be sure. Sometimes I feel like they might feel sorry for me and reluctantly take a fly just to ease their guilt. I'll take them honest or I'll let them think they're doing me

a favor and play along with their ruse. We shake hands during the release, I make my way one direction and they swim off in another, both of us getting a glimpse of another world if for only a few seconds.

The fish and I, we have an understanding. They understand I'm trying to catch them, and I understand they don't want to be caught. Some days we balance each other out well. On many others the balance seems to be tipped in their favor. I never hold it against them. They're just fish after all, and I'm only human.

Mark Usyk of JP Ross & Company writes the Streamer Junkie blog for www.jprossflyrods.com.

JP Ross is an advocate for clean water and preservation of local wild trout habitat.



A Small Mouth Bass in full war paint.



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“

Fishing is much more than fish. It is the great occasion when we may return to the fine simplicity of our forefathers.

-Herbert Hoover

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History in Your Backyard – Savage Arms



Savage Arms' factory located just off Bleeker Street in Utica in its early years.

The history in your backyard is not always noted on a blue and yellow sign. Central New York has been home to a number of world class gun manufacturers including Remington (Ilion), LeFever (Syracuse), L.C. Smith Shotgun Company (Syracuse), and Savage Arms (Utica). Some of the gun makers are still producing firearms while some have been relegated to almost a memory. It's taken less than 60 years for Savage Arms' factory, just off Bleeker Street in Utica, to fade from memory.

Arthur W. Savage was born in Kingston, Jamaica, British West Indies on May 13, 1857. In 1888 he came to New York where he was employed by Munn & Company, publishers of scientific papers and magazines. Shortly after that, Mr. Savage moved to Utica where he became an employee of the Belt Line Railroad. After a stint in Saratoga, where he electrified the street car lines, he returned to Utica and entered his new Savage 1892 military rifle in the military trials of that year on Governor's Island.

The lever action rifle placed No. 35 and no United States contract was obtained. On February 7, 1893, he secured a patent on his rifle and organized the Savage Repeating Arms Company (1893-97). Since he did not have a factory, he arranged with John Marlin of the Marlin Firearms Company of New Haven, Connecticut, to make the first group of rifles. In 1895, Savage developed the .303 caliber lever-action rifle, and began their manufacture in a small plant on Hubbell Street, Utica. In 1897, the Savage Arms Company (1897-1917) was incorporated and a site on Tilden Avenue was purchased and buildings erected. One unique feature of the Savage rifle was the counter which displayed the number of bullets remaining in the receiver. The Model 99, as it became known, was an innovation in rifle technology. The rifle gave average people access to an affordable rifle and started a business that has stood the test of time.

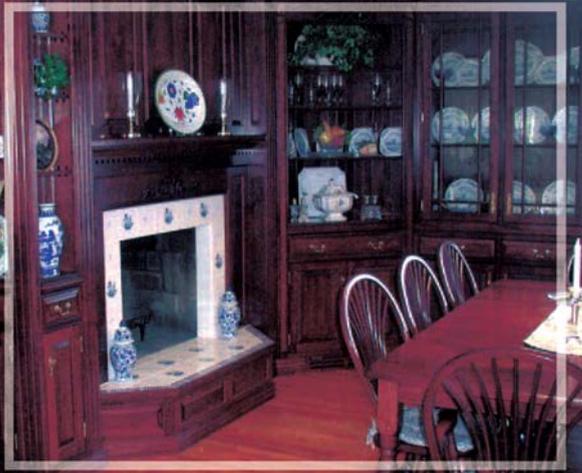
By 1919, Savage Arms was manufacturing high power rifles, 22 caliber rifles, pistols and ammunition. In 1919, Chief Lame Bear approached Arthur to purchase lever-action rifles for the Indian reservation and the two men struck a deal. The tribe would get discounted rifles and Savage would get their support and endorsement. Incidentally, Savage's Indian head logo which would garner much consternation from the political correctness police of today was a direct gift from the Chief.

During World War I Savage merged with



The original Savage Arms plant has had many changes throughout the years. The Charles Town USA mall was one of the attempts to keep the building in use.

the Driggs-Seabury Ordnance Company and produced Lewis machine guns. The Lewis machine gun has a drum mounted magazine on the top. Records from 1921 in the County Clerk's office in Utica show a mortgage securing five promissory notes, each for \$21,416, filed by the Savage Arms Corporation to purchase a "number of buildings erected by the government" during continued on next page



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Oriskany Arms

by **Al Dorantes**

The second amendment is alive and well in Oriskany, New York. Oriskany Arms is assembling high quality firearms right here in Central New York.

Oriskany Arms is an established, well-recognized firearms manufacturer with a history and experience producing precision gun components that reaches back to 1947. In 2013, they took their expertise and introduced a line of full-size, all-American made Series 1911 .45 ACP handguns.

The M1911 or 1911 as it is more commonly referred to, is a single-action, semi-automatic, magazine-fed, recoil-operated pistol chambered for the .45 ACP cartridge. The pistol served as the standard-issue sidearm for the United States Armed Forces from 1911 to 1986. It was first used in later stages of the Philippine-American War, and was widely used in World War I, World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. The 1911 was designed by John Browning. The 1911 is the best-known



The series that stated it all for Oriskany Arms, their full-size 5.00 inch barrel length 1911 hand gun.

of his designs to use the short recoil principle in its basic design. The pistol was

widely copied and is popular with civilian shooters. The 1911's compact variants are popular concealed carry weapons based on the pistol's slim lines combined with the power of the .45 ACP cartridge.

In 2016 Oriskany Arms is proud to introduce their newest carry models based on the 1911 platform. Oriskany Arm's Commander model, the "425FP" and

their Compact model, the "350FP." Both the "1911 425FP Series" and the "1911 350FP Series" are proudly and entirely machined and assembled in the USA, using only domestic-sourced materials, just like the original, full-size 1911.

Each one of Oriskany Arms' 1911 pistols is hand assembled. Chris Komorek, production manager and gunsmith said, "Our 1911s are as close to a custom gun at production gun prices." He explained that Oriskany Arms offers custom serialization on their guns which is almost like getting vanity plates at the DMV. He added, "These guns are made with attention to detail and quality in mind; they don't come back."

Oriskany Arms is producing around 300 guns a year. Nick Giotto, general sales manager, said "New products like the compacts and "Commander" and "Compact" offer many options." The multiple sizes and with multiple finishes like black oxide, boron nitride, two-tone or with Cerekote finishes, Oriskany Arms offers multiple options for personal protection, dependable security and peace of mind. If you are interested in owning a high quality 1911 made right here in Central New York with history behind it, look no further than Oriskany Arms. For more information go to: www.oriskanyarms.com or follow them on Facebook: Oriskany Arms. ■

Savage Arms ...



The machinery that once made Savage rifles has long been silenced.

buildings erected by the government" during World War I for the purpose of enlarging the output of Lewis machine guns at the plant. The buildings included two large four-story brick structures, five large storage sheds and one office building, a concrete mill building, steel storage building, power extension plant, shooting gallery and steel water tank with capacity of 100,000 gallons. The notes were due in 1927.

Arthur W. Savage died at the age of 83 in San Diego, California on September 22, 1938.

During World War II, Savage Arms turned again to military production, making heavy munitions. Savage made most of the Thompson submachine guns used in World War II. Savage also produced the British No. 4 Lee-Enfield bolt-action rifle. The rifles were marked "U.S. PROPERTY" despite the fact that the rifles were never used by the US military and were

instead sent to Britain under the Lend-Lease program.

The Savage Arms Corporation was a major supplier of arms during both World War I and World War II. During WWI Savage supplied over seventy thousand Lewis machine guns to Britain to stop the German advance. After the WWII it produced one of the first motorized lawnmowers.

In the 1950's, Sperry Univac took over the Utica facility and transformed it into the center for manufacturing operations in the Mohawk Valley. Later Charles A. Gaetano purchased the property in 1976 and by 1982 opened CharlesTown outlet mall. The factory outlet center closed in 1991, and became the CharlesTown Business Complex.

While Sperry Univac is gone from the Mohawk Valley and CharlesTown has been closed for years Savage Arms continues to manufacture firearms. It is interesting to consider that

our past is linked to the one of the firearms that helped win WWI and WWII. ■

“

A truly American sentiment recognizes the dignity of labor and the fact that honor lies in honest toil. -Grover Cleveland

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Happy Retirement to Ray & Anne Quinn !

\$100 Contest Winner

You could be the next lucky reader

Our lucky winner this month is Lloyd Miller from Floyd, NY. Lloyd is an avid reader and enjoys his copy of EDITOR every month. He told me that it reminds him of the old Grit magazine and that makes me smile! We actually used the old Grit

as somewhat of a template for EDITOR, so it's good to hear that we are on track!

Floyd grabs his copy usullay at either the Stewarts in Holland Patent or at Nassers in Floyd.

We reminiced about



the area and talked about our pups. I never miss a chance to talk about our furry family and Mr. Miller

feels the same way about his pug.

Some of the things he enjoys about reading

EDITOR is the general feel of the paper. He says, "who wants to read more bad news? It's nice to sit and read something that makes you feel good." He added, "that column, Hello Again always gives me something to think about. Now, don't get me wrong, I don't always agree with Mr. Lee, but he sure does give you something to think on!"

A lifelong resident of our beautiful area, Lloyd still lives on the farm he was born on in Floyd and he commented on how beautiful this part of the country is and how fortunate we are to live in the beauty of it all. We sure are lucky!

Thank you Mr. Miller for brightening my day and for being a faithful reader of EDITOR. You have yourself a wonderful, healthy new year!

The clue for this month's reader contest can be found in the ad on page 35 of this issue. As always we appreciate all of you faithful devoted readers. Keep those cards, letters and emails coming. We truly appreciate your kind words!

Happy reading! ■

Did you know?

Home Improvement Facts...



The home improvement market, which includes both improvements and maintenance, has rebounded considerably from its most recent low point in 2011. The Joint Center for Housing Studies (JCHS) of Harvard University indicated in early 2015 that the upcoming year would surpass the \$324 billion spent on improvements during the peak of the housing boom a decade ago. Even though homebuilding and the home industry in general is still not at complete recovery, trends within the home improvement industry do suggest that homeowners have once again become comfortable investing in their homes. ■

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Dance the Night Away

– at the Good News Center

by Dyann Nashton



Dyann and Myles Nashton practicing for the Dance the Night Away competition.

Who doesn't love ABC's hit TV show "Dancing with the Stars?" Whether you're a sports fan tuning in to see how graceful an athlete can be or a pop culture follower who wants to see if the Kardashians have two left feet, its good clean entertainment.

What could possibly be better? Perhaps watching this kind of show live with the chance of running into a celebrity dancer in the community? With the Good News Center's "Dance the Night Away" event on Sat. Feb. 13th, you now have that chance. The event will be held from 6:30-11 p.m. at Hart's Hill Inn and typically draws more than 350 people, a sellout crowd.

The unique fundraising event brings local "celebrities" together for a Central New York version of the dance competition. Some dancers are high profile community members and true local celebrities, such as bank presidents and TV newscasters.

Others are, well, not so well known ... including yours truly. I will be representing Notre Dame Schools and what Catholic education brings to our community. But my husband and dance partner Myles is a much more familiar face to people out and about. He's been a fixture in the mortgage business at AmeriCu credit union for more than 20 years. This will be a challenge for us. Myles does not like being choreographed and I have a little problem knowing my left from my right. But, it's all in good fun and for a fantastic cause.

Part of the Good News Center's mission is to serve as a resource that strengthens marriages and families through relationship education programs and retreats. Proceeds from the "Dance the Night Away" event fund these programs directly.

According to Michael Buckley, executive director and CEO, "In these times of high divorce rates and economic struggle, it is all the more important to offer resources to

families in our community ... From a firsthand viewpoint, we see the positive effect of ongoing peer support groups and programs that we offer at low or no cost." He said this is confirmed by the increased number of inquiries into The Good News Center's programs and the growing attendance at their programs.

My husband and I will be up against the likes of Spencer Davidson from News Channel 2/WKTV, Joe Steet from Steet Toyota and Rocco Arcuri from Adirondack Bank. Even the emcee and judges are local celebrities. WKTV's Kristen Copeland will be master of ceremony and Ray Durso from The Genesis Group will be critiquing from the judges panel.

Under the guidance of Gina and Luca Esposito, veteran expert dance instructors, we will all take to the dance floor to see who might be lightest on their feet. I will mention that our competitors each have the unfair advantage with a professional dance partner. I'm beginning to think we might just be the comedic relief.

"Dancing the Night Away" is celebrating its 10th anniversary by inviting back previous year's celebrities. Kathy Contino-Turner of Masonic Care Community, Paul Sacco from JM Door, and Marolyn Wilson from Holland Farms Bakery, to name just a few, will be reuniting on the floor for a group number. The Espositos will orchestrate a quick group lesson for audience members who would like to give dancing a whirl.

Tickets are \$50 per person and include a hot dinner buffet and dessert. Tickets can be purchased online at www.thegoodnewscenter.org. Click on the event calendar. Call 735-6210 for information by phone Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. ■

Don't get stuck in a rut

–you'll get bored and so will your body

Exercise is a great way to maintain a healthy mind and body. Many people begin a new year by making resolutions to lose weight or build muscle. Too often, however, men and women get stuck in an exercise rut, following the same exercise routine week after week. Not only can this be boring, fitness experts advise that it's necessary to change an exercise routine periodically to continue to see results. It's one reason why many fitness clubs unveil new classes every few weeks. Just when you master the choreogra-

phy of a class, it's time to change! With repetition, the body adapts and grows accustomed to the routine, using less energy as a result. That can affect your ability to lose weight. Changing your workout forces your body to work harder, producing better results. If you exercise with a trainer, discuss ways to modify your normal routine to surprise your body. Increased intensity, interval training, adding sprints to running, taking different classes, or even increasing the frequency of your workouts may do the trick. ■

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How to choose a resolution you can keep

—Increase your success by asking a buddy to join you



A common hurdle many people must clear when making a New Year's resolution is choosing the resolution itself. Resolving to become a millionaire in the next 12 months is likely unrealistic, as is taking on the same resolution you made last year that proved unsuccessful. Before making a New Year's resolution this year, consider the following tips aimed at helping you choose a resolution that has a chance to be successful.

* **Make it something you're likely to enjoy.** Resolving to lose weight is perhaps the most popular New Year's resolution every year. Though there's no way to measure how many people make this resolution and stick with it, it's safe to assume many people fall short of their weight-loss goal. That's because the steps people must take to lose weight are not always easy to embrace. Many people join a gym in January so they can fully commit to their resolutions

to lose weight. But joining a gym isn't always the answer, as it's easy to become intimidated at a gym where the majority of your fellow members are already in great shape. But this doesn't mean you should shy away from your resolution. Instead, look for ways to make your resolution enjoyable so you're more likely to stick with it. If you have resolved to lose weight but a gym isn't for you, sign up for a dance class or join a cycling group. There's more than one way to commit to a given resolution, and finding the most enjoyable way to tackle your resolution is often the easiest way to make it a success.

* **Make it a realistic goal.** Your resolution should be realistic. If not, the chances of being successful are slim. For example, resolving to move overseas by the end of the coming calendar year may be a great goal, but if you have no job prospects overseas or too many commitments at home, then this goal is not very realistic and you probably won't make it a successful resolution. However, this doesn't mean you have to abandon your dream of moving overseas. Instead, resolve to make changes that make your desire to live overseas more

realistic. Learn the language of a favorite country or learn about that country's job market and work toward making yourself more attractive to potential overseas employers. This is a more realistic goal than deciding to move overseas in the very near future, and it sets you up for future success should you resolve to move abroad down the road.

* **Employ the buddy system.** Resolutions don't have to be a one-man show. In fact, your resolution may prove easier to keep if you can find someone to go along for the ride with you. For instance, if you have resolved to quit smoking, find a friend who also smokes and commit to your resolution together. You can lean on each other when times get tough and serve as each other's watchdog to make sure neither one of you is straying from your goal. If you resolve to learn a foreign language in the year ahead, find a friend to enroll in a class with you. As additional motivation, commit to visiting a foreign country where this language is spoken at the end of the year if both of you have successfully fulfilled your resolutions.

* **Develop a plan before making any commitments.** Before you commit to a resolution, develop a plan as to how you're going to make that resolution a success and determine if this plan is realistic. For example, if you resolve to lose weight, part of your plan should include an exercise regimen and any dietary changes. Once you have laid out this plan, examine it to see how likely you are to stick with it. If your plan includes waking up at 6 a.m. every morning to workout and you know waking up that early is problematic for you, then you don't have to abandon the resolution, but you might want to develop a new plan that's more likely to be successful. The plan should be in place before you make your resolution. If you simply cannot map out a plan that's amenable to your schedule, then this resolution might prove very difficult to keep and you might want to explore another option.

Many people find their New Year's resolutions have fallen by the wayside come the end of January. But those serious about making a change can take steps to ensure their resolutions are a success. ■

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Thank You

by **Lisa Lauritsen**

Finally there's snow on the ground. Not yet enough for a snowshoe expedition or revving up your snowmobile, but alas the cold has called us in for peeling away thick skin of pomegranate fruit over conversation with a friend, while snowflakes paw gently at the window. And, time for quiet solitude that invites us to reflect on blessings of the previous year. A happy way to pass early winter might be to write a few letters of thanks to friends and acquaintances who've never been properly acknowledged for the ordinary gifts they bring to our lives. With all the stress of high expectations this time of year it may be the most heartfelt and welcome gift you give. Oddly, it's been confirmed over and over that expressing gratitude brings as much joy to the giver as the recipient.

Diarist Anais Nin said, "We write to taste life twice, in the moment and in retrospect." Writing letters of gratitude helps us relive our happiest moments while strengthening our bond with others. It seems we are often most comfortable praising others for tangible gifts but thanks should also be given for all the little ways those around us bring light to our lives; a presence so beautiful it changes the atmosphere of a room, a small act of kindness that that compelled us to be brave when we were weak, and yes perhaps for a thing given to us that exceeded our expectations.

If you've fallen away from the practice or need some guidance to get started here are

some ideas and formulas to get your letter ready for postage.

Begin with a simple statement of thanks, and most important of all: be sincere. Grammatical errors and awkward phrasing will go unnoticed if what you say is from the heart.

Be brave. Say what you mean in a few simple words. There's no need to be artful, just honest.

Be specific and say exactly what the person did or does and how it made or makes you feel. If it was a gift you received explain how you plan to use it.

Use ink. Everything about your hand connecting with the paper will spell authenticity even if your penmanship is near illegible.

Chose a valediction appropriate to the recipient before signing your name. For example if yours truly or love seem too intimate try signing off with something like respectfully or warmest regards.

On a final note,

Thank you, dear readers, who engage with us each month. These stories are often yours and wouldn't be possible if not for the work you do and the ideas you share that make the EDITOR worth reading. We look forward to learning more about you this year and hope you will continue to read along as we unearth the creative efforts our neighbors put forth to make our stories and interviews possible.

Sincerely,
the EDITOR staff



A winterscape photographed by John Snyder, Sales Manager of our sister publications Country Editor and the Original Valley Pennysaver.

“

Let our New Year's resolution be this: we will be there for one another as fellow members of humanity, in the finest sense of the word.

-Goran Persson

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Weigh your options

—credit and debit cards

Credit and debit cards are how many people make their purchases, both big and small. Many people would rather swipe a card at the checkout counter than count cash. These cards offer unmatched convenience and can help keep receipts organized and purchases accountable with minimal effort.

But credit cards and debit cards are not perfect. One of the biggest disadvantages to using cards to make all purchases is the tendency to lose track of your spending. When paying with cash, consumers can visibly see the money leaving their pockets and know when that money has run out. Paying by card is an abstract concept that doesn't become real until bills are received or bank statements are reviewed.

Although debit and credit cards are frequently used interchangeably, there are times when one is preferable over the other. Here's how to decide which card to use.

* Need to build credit? Use a credit card if you are trying to establish a positive credit history. However, you must pay your bill in a timely fashion, and it helps to pay the entire balance each and every billing cycle to develop a good credit score.

* Don't want a large monthly bill? Debit cards withdraw money directly from your account at the moment the transaction occurs. Much like spending with cash, debit cards let users know when they have run out of cash, as cards will be denied if the transaction is not approved. If you do not want to pay a large bill at the end of the month, debit cards are the better choice.

* Prefer greater security? Great strides

have been made to thwart would-be identity thieves and keep financial data safe. However, as was evidenced by the major data breach in Target's payment system in late 2013, when millions of credit and debit card numbers and PIN codes were hacked, no system is entirely foolproof. Credit cards offer added security because if fraudulent purchases are made, your credit card account will be quickly frozen and you will not be held accountable. When using debit cards, you are spending your own money up front. Fraudulent purchases may be fixed over time, but it could leave a deficit in your account until matters are resolved.

* Want to minimize fees? Debit cards do not charge interest or minimum charge penalties. There's no need to worry about being late for a payment and getting charged a fee, and causing your balance to skyrocket. Gas stations and other retailers that may charge more per purchase for using credit cards will treat debit cards like cash and offer the same discounts.

* Enjoy perks? Credit card companies will sell you their card over another based on various perks. In addition to competitive interest rates, perks may include being able to accumulate travel points, cash-back dollar amounts, advanced ticketing offers for shows and sporting events, discounts and coupons for certain retailers, and many other benefits.

More and more consumers are relying largely on credit cards and debit cards to make their purchases. Each type of card has its benefits and disadvantages, so consumers must weigh their options to determine which type of card works best for them. ■

Protect your sensitive information from hackers

Reports of personal data being stolen from major retailers are on the rise. Sophisticated criminals can now access information on just about anyone, as those who understand the complexities of network systems and their vulnerabilities may be able to steal personal information.

A proactive approach to safeguarding sensitive data is the best way for consumers to protect themselves from cyber criminals.

Passwords

Passwords and PIN codes are needed for so many things today. It can be tempting to use a universal password across for all of your accounts, but should someone figure out your password, he or she then has access to all of your accounts. Although it can test your memory, use separate passwords for each account. Use symbols, case changes and numbers. In addition, periodically change your passwords to further safe-

guard yourself from hackers.

Use only encrypted sites
Encryption is a computer term for protected sites that hide personal information with a cipher or code. Encrypted websites will feature a lock symbol on the address bar or have the prefix "https://" preceding the URL. Encryption reduces but does not eliminate the risk that your sensitive information will be stolen. Hackers still may find ways to circumvent encrypted sites, but such sites are still your best bet when entering sensitive personal information online.

Use credit cards when making purchases

Credit cards and debit cards make access to money quite easy. Debit cards withdraw money directly from your bank account, and hackers who gain access to your debit card and PIN can then drain your bank account before you're even aware there has been a data

breach. But when credit card data is breached, the credit card company is responsible for any losses and your money is still safe and sound in your account. Credit cards offer consumers far more protection from fraudulent purchases than debit cards, so only use credit cards when making purchases online.

Protect your sensitive information

Security breaches can occur when consumers share too much of their personal information. Never give out PIN codes or passwords to others. Do not share social security numbers or other forms of identification over the phone or in public places, and avoid sharing confidential information through email. In addition, password protect computers and other digital devices, including smartphones, to further reduce the risk that potentially sensitive information is stolen by cyber criminals. ■

FINANCIAL FOCUS

Can Investors Learn from Yoga Followers?

It's probably not on your calendar, but World Yoga Day takes place in February. As more people have discovered its healthful benefits, yoga has grown in popularity. But whether or not you practice yoga, you can apply its lessons to other areas of your life — such as investing.

Specifically, consider the following yoga-related themes and how they might translate into investment habits that may be beneficial:

• Balance — If you observe advanced yoga practitioners, you will be amazed at the balance they exhibit during certain positions. But for serious yoga students, the idea of "balance" goes beyond physical movements and extends to a concept of life that emphasizes, among other things, an avoidance of extremes. As an investor, you too need to avoid extremes, such as investing too aggressively, too conservatively or too sporadically. By building a balanced portfolio, and by investing regularly, you can help improve your chances of making progress toward your financial goals.

• Flexibility — Among its many benefits, yoga helps people increase their flexibility — and greater flexibility results in fewer injuries and an increased capacity to enjoy many physical activities. As an investor, you need to be flexible enough to adjust your portfolio as needed while still following a long-term strategy that's appropriate for your individual goals, risk tolerance and time horizon.

• Relaxation — For yoga students, proper relaxation is essential to achieving mental equanimity, emotional balance and inner strength. But relaxation doesn't always come easily — even experienced yoga practitioners need to work at it. As an investor, you also may need to train yourself to relax because, given the ups and downs of the market, it's not hard to become overwrought and make ill-advised decisions based on short-term events. Staying calm and maintaining a long-term view of things may help you make better investment decisions.



toward your financial goals difficult. But if you maintain a positive attitude, you may be more inclined to invest wisely for your future.

• Visualization — In yoga, visualization is often used to reduce stress. At any given time, you might find it difficult to relax, but you can use your imagination to see yourself — and put yourself — in a relaxed state. As an investor, you need to visualize your goals, such as a comfortable retirement, before you can define a strategy to help you work toward them. By seeing yourself where you want to be, you'll be motivated to take the actions necessary to work toward getting there.

Try putting the principles of yoga to work — they may help you become a better investor.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.

Retirement may be far off,

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You have only so many years to prepare for retirement. That's why contributing to your Individual Retirement Account (IRA) is so important. Fortunately, you still have time to maximize your 2015 IRA contribution before the April 15 deadline.

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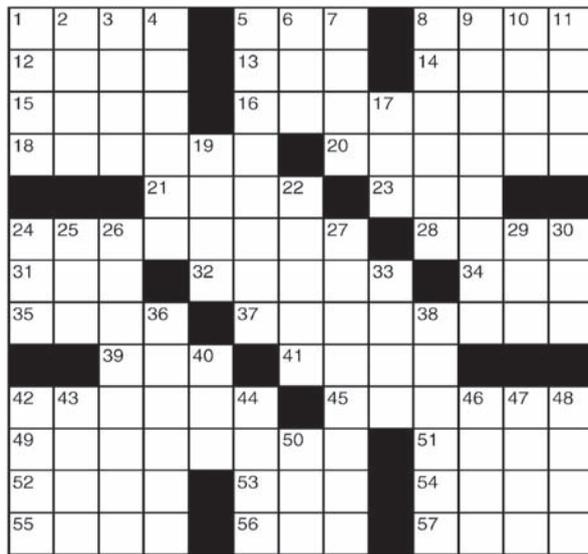


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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Lose color
- 5 Actress Lupino
- 8 Half a ticket
- 12 Not "fer"
- 13 Neither mate
- 14 Bean curd
- 15 Tin Man's problem
- 16 Carriage
- 18 Cookbook entry
- 20 Underscore
- 21 Lacks the ability
- 23 Brit. reference book
- 24 One seeking political asylum
- 28 Unaccompanied
- 31 — Khan
- 32 Doctrine
- 34 Tiny
- 35 Trumpet, e.g.
- 37 Shame
- 39 Third letter
- 41 Close up tight
- 42 Narcotic
- 45 Jackson or Johnson
- 49 Oppressive ruler
- 51 Skeleton component
- 52 October



- 9 Make less intense
- 10 Venusian vessels?
- 11 Prickly seed cases
- 17 Ike's command in WWII
- 19 Treaty
- 22 Morrison and Braxton
- 24 Doo follower
- 25 Id counterpart
- 26 Absurd
- 27 Use Wikipedia, maybe
- 29 Zodiac feline
- 30 "— the ramparts we watched ..."
- 33 Compared to
- 36 Without making a mess
- 38 Address to a bloke
- 40 Greek vowel
- 42 Smell
- 43 Meerschaum, e.g.
- 44 Sicilian spouter
- 46 Post-bout attire
- 47 Carbon compound
- 48 Cry
- 50 Out of use, as a wd.

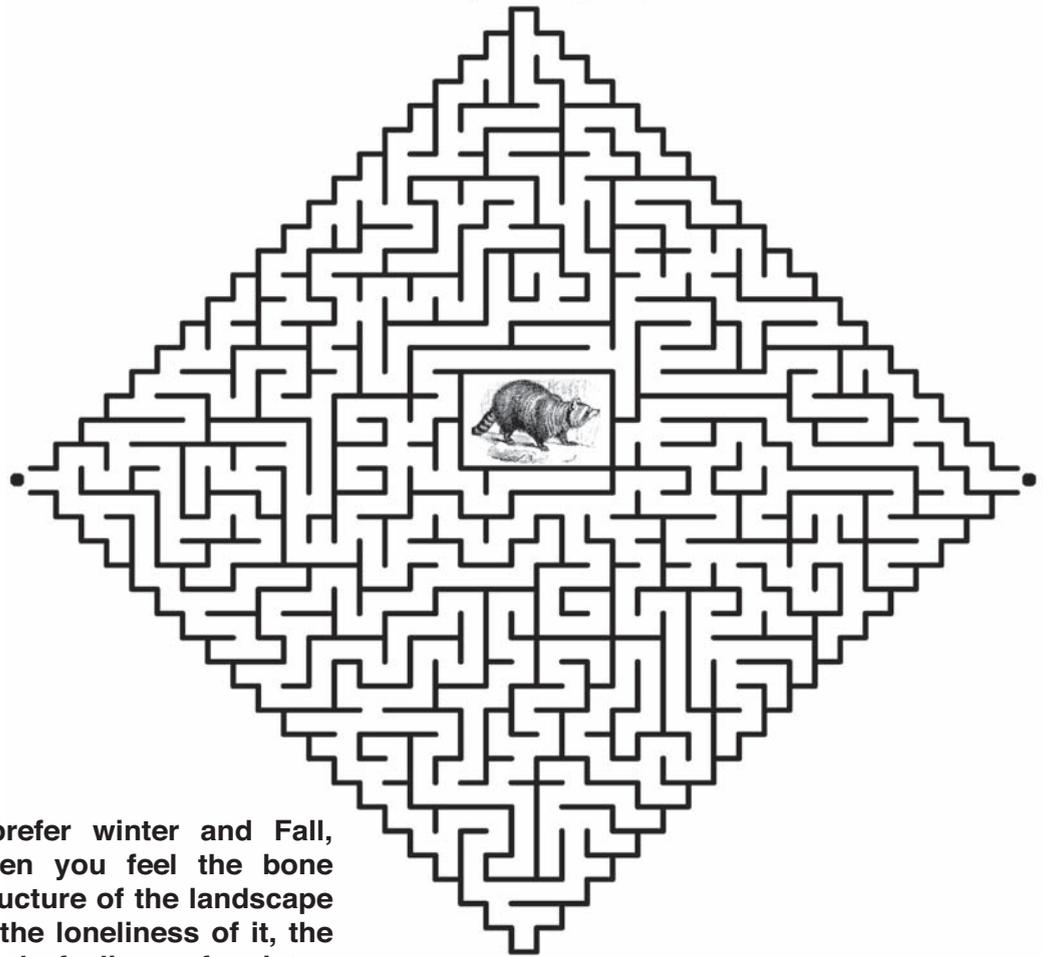
DOWN

- 1 Jamie of "M*A*S*H"
- 2 Chills and fever
- 3 Platter
- 4 Lure
- 5 Started a paragraph
- 6 Female deer
- 7 Weaponry
- 8 Gawks

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Mega Maze

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I prefer winter and Fall, when you feel the bone structure of the landscape — the loneliness of it, the dead feeling of winter. Something waits beneath it, the whole story doesn't show. ~ American Artist, Andrew Wyeth

STICKELERS [sic]

by Terry Stickels

Which of the following numbers is the odd one out?

2745 8457 4233 5519

6271 3865 4773

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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

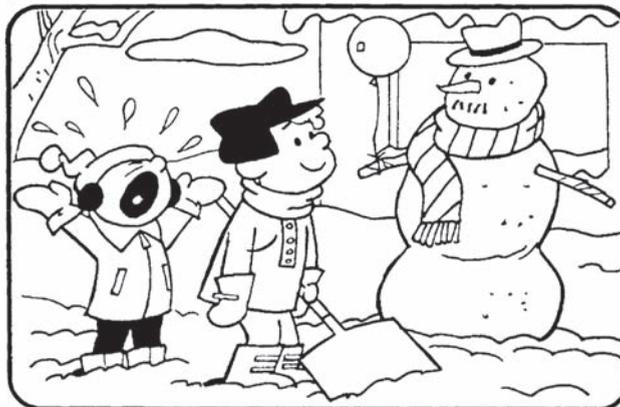
DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ★

★ Moderate ★★ Challenging
★★★ HOO BOY!

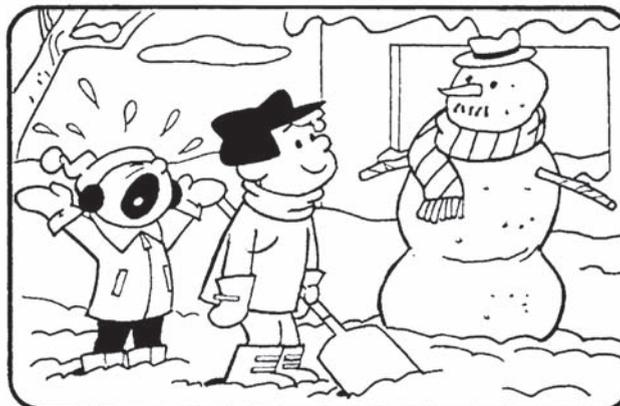
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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTIKOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Cloud is smaller. 2. Burton strip is missing. 3. Shovel is smaller. 4. Balloon is missing. 5. Scarf is shorter. 6. Hat is smaller.

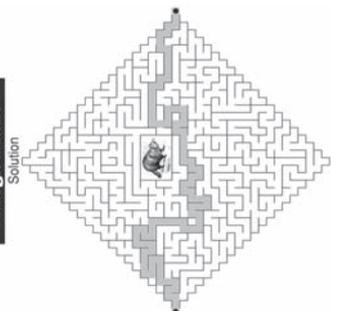
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Sticklers Answer

4773 is the odd one out. The sum of the first two digits of each number is equal to the sum of the last two digits — with the exception of 4773.

ANSWERS

Mega Maze Solution



King Crossword Answers

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

Solution time: 21 mins.

F	A	D	E	S	T	I	B	
A	G	I	N		T	O	F	U
R	U	S	T		D	E	M	E
R	E	C	I	P	E		S	T
C	A	N	T		O	E	D	
D	E	F	E	C	T	O	R	
A	G	A		T	E	N	E	T
H	O	R	N		D	I	S	H
C	E	E		S	E	A	L	
O	P	I	A	T	E		A	N
D	I	C	T	A	T	O	R	
O	P	A	L		N	B	C	
R	E	L		A	S	H		

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- 600 Health Care/Products
- 605 Heating
- 610 Help Wanted
- 653 Hotel / Motel
- 683 Jewelers
- 700 Lawn & Garden
- 711 Lessons
- 760 Lumber & Wood Products
- 790 Maple Syrup Supplies
- 805 Miscellaneous
- 810 Mobile Homes
- 811 Monuments
- 812 Multi Media
- 813 Music
- 815 Motorcycles
- 817 Nails
- 820 Nurseries
- 910 Plants
- 950 Real Estate For Sale
- 955 Real Estate Wanted
- 960 RVs & Motor Homes
- 975 Rentals
- 980 Restaurant Supplies
- 1040 Services Offered
- 1075 Snowblowers
- 1080 Snowmobiles
- 1096 Sports
- 1109 Thrift
- 1140 Trailers
- 1147 Trains
- 1148 Travel
- 1165 Trees
- 1170 Truck Parts & Equipment
- 1180 Trucks
- 1187 Vacuum
- 1190 Vegetable
- 1200 Veterinary
- 1205 Wanted

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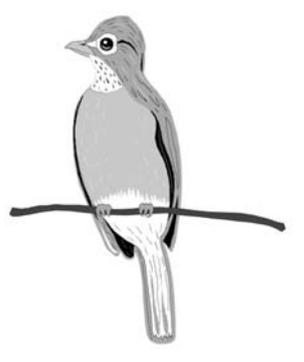
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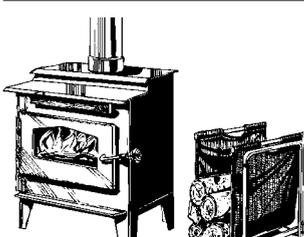
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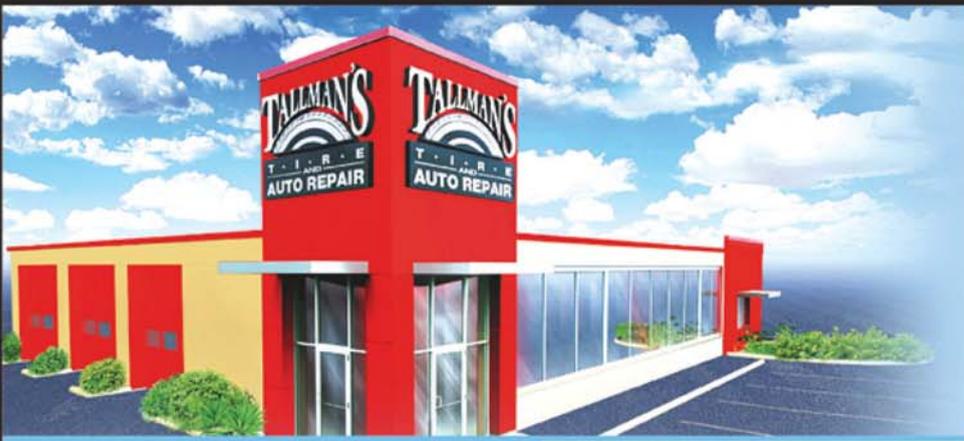
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Fatal Attraction



by Joe Parzych

My father was good friends with a nice man, a fellow immigrant from Poland. His name was spelled similar to the Polish word Tarapaty which means, trouble; predicament; or sad fix. The definitions all fit him, well. I will refer to him as Mr. Tara. He lived in the same town, East Hampton, where my father lived when he first came to America, and where they became fast friends.

Mr. Tara was a molder in a foundry and once gave me an iron savings bank he'd cast in the shape of a horse. The bank was in two pieces, held together by a screw. I took the bank apart to withdraw my savings, and lost the screw. Before I found the screw, one half of the horse disappeared, much to my sorrow, and I never found it. I'd hoped that it'd turn up, but it never did.

My father moved to another town in Massachusetts, and soon Mr. Tara also moved, but to Hartford, Connecticut, when the East Hampton foundry closed. Mr. Tara did not drive and we had no telephone at our isolated farm. So, it was a joyous occasion when Mr. Tara would arrive, unannounced, by taxi, after a railroad trip from Hartford to a railroad station in the adjoining town of Greenfield. He usually came alone, since his wife and he were not especially compatible. They did not sleep together, perhaps so that history did not repeat itself--- the daughter

from that first fatal union being a replica of her oafish mother.

Mr. Tara had met his formerly well-built wife while drinking at a tavern only to wake up next morning to find her in his bed at his side. A few months later, when her waistline showed signs of expansion, she named him as the father. Being an honorable man, Tara married her before her due date so as to not sully her reputation, such as it was. While adept at raising a glass, his bride did not excel at cooking. She did enjoy eating and the voluptuous figure that had once mesmerized Mr. Tara was soon submerged in a mountain of fat. Mr. Tara greatly enjoyed my mother's cooking, and whenever we journeyed to their home in Hartford, Mr. Tara would ask my mother to cook dinner. That did not sit well with Mrs. Tara.

We seldom traveled far, since my father viewed any destination over 10 miles away, as a journey for which he fully prepared by loading the car with a crow bar, sledge hammer, ax, shovel, pulley block, and a hank of rope to cover any eventualities that might arise. This equipment was all piled into our car, which had no trunk, into the back seat where I sat, amidst all the emergency paraphernalia. My father would have included a gun, too, had he owned one.

Cont. on page 55

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Did you know?



Motorists who still adhere to the old standard of changing their vehicles' oil every 3,000 miles are likely wasting their money. The majority of today's auto manufacturers now build vehicles that can go twice as long, if not longer, between oil changes. Many automakers now call for oil changes every 7,500 miles, and some go even further, recommending oil changes every 10,000 miles. Some vehicles can even go as long as 15,000 miles before needing an oil change. Vehicle owners should consult their owner's manuals for advice

on how often their vehicles' oil should be changed. When establishing an oil change schedule for their vehicles, many drivers are hesitant to abandon the conventional 3,000 mile interval schedule that was long espoused by the auto industry. But advancements in technology have allowed manufacturers to recommend longer intervals between oil changes, which benefits motorists' bottom lines and even the environment. Rather than needlessly wasting perfectly good oil every 3,000 miles, in many instances motorists can

now continue to use that oil twice as long, if not longer, reducing waste-oil dumping as a result. When consulting an owner's manual for recommended oil change intervals, owners should resist the temptation to follow the "severe" schedules listed in many owner's manuals. Such schedules are rarely applicable under normal circumstances, and only serve to waste drivers' money and oil ■

Fatal Attraction cont. from page 53

Hartford, some 60 miles distant was just such an epic journey, in his mind, and we set out at first light with a lunch packed and carrying far more equipment than Marco Polo had taken on his famous wanderings.

Upon our safe arrival, Mr. Tara was overjoyed to see us. He immediately asked my mother to prepare dinner. But, Mrs. Tara became miffed, and announced that she would show us that she was perfectly capable of cooking the meal. So, while Mr. Tara escorted us on a

tour of the city, his more than pleasingly plump wife prepared dinner. When we returned, Mrs. Tara proudly announced that dinner was ready and invited us to sit at the dining room table set with a fine tablecloth, cloth napkins, china, silverware, and water glasses. From all appearances, Mrs. Tara had finally mastered home making.

First, Mrs. Tara served mashed potatoes and vegetables before proudly presenting the piece de resistance, a nicely browned

roast chicken, with oohs and aahs all around. It was then that I noticed something strange. The rear of the chicken had not been cut open and laced back up. Worse yet, something was oozing out of the rear of the chicken! Others noticed it and froze. Conversation ceased. There was an awkward silence.

Mr. Tara stood up and cursed. He flung open the door to the back yard and picked the chicken up from the platter. He reared back, holding the chicken like a

football in his right hand, and hurled it like Tom Brady launching a Hail Mary pass. The brown carcass rifled perfectly through the air to the far end of the back yard. It hit the ground, startling their dog, and bounced twice before the dog recovered enough to pounce on it.

Mrs. Tara ran into the bedroom and slammed the door. Mr. Tara's demeanor was a mixture of embarrassment and outrage. The distraught man apologized profusely, poured

drinks all around, poured himself another, and offered to take us to a restaurant. My father said it was getting late and said it looked like it might storm, and we'd better be on our way, though the sun shone brightly. Mr. Tara seemed relieved to have the embarrassing situation end, and agreed that it could, indeed, storm. He offered my father another drink for the road. My father gave in to his urging, took the proffered drink, clinked glasses with Mr. Tara, downed the drink, and bid

farewell. He walked out to the car, none too steadily. On the way home, the car had a tendency to wander, and I worried that we'd need the equipment my father had stowed aboard. But, at long last, we turned down the dirt road to our isolated farm where my sisters awaited us.

Sadly, we never saw another taxi come racing down our road in a cloud of dust, bearing Mr. Tara for a surprise visit. ■

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Curb appeal

-applies to cars and trucks too

"Curb appeal" is a term often associated with selling a house. Homeowners selling their homes want to improve their home's external appearance so it creates a stronger first impression when prospective buyers first pull up to the curb for an open house or a visit with their realtor.

But while curb appeal is often uttered in real estate parlance, the term also is applicable when selling cars. Private sellers want to make their vehicles look as nice as possible, giving it

the kind of curb appeal that impresses potential buyers the moment they see the vehicle. Improving a car's curb appeal typically doesn't require as much work as doing the same for a home, but the following are a few ways sellers can improve the look of their vehicles in an attempt to impress prospective buyers.

- Give the car a good wash. The easiest way to improve how a car looks from the outside is to wash and wax it. Sellers should make this part of their

vehicle maintenance routine until the car is sold. If you're driving the car while you're attempting to sell it, wash and wax the vehicle each week. Always wash the car before a prospective buyer is scheduled to come over and take a look. Spray detailers can be used to give the car some extra sparkle.

- Don't forget the interior. While a car's exterior contributes heavily to a buyer's first impression of the vehicle, the interior also bears heavy influence on any potential buyers. Vacuum the vehicle's interior, including both the floorboards and the seats, and clean the windows and windshields from the inside. Once the cupholders have been vacuumed, clean them with a damp cloth to remove any coffee stains or spots where something may have melted. Clean the interior as necessary until the car is sold.

- Clean under the hood. While it's easy to notice the buildup of dirt and grime on the interior and exterior of the vehicle, it's not as easy to notice any such buildup under the hood. And while sellers may not see such unsightly buildup even when they open their hoods, buyers almost certainly will. A spray cleaner or detailer can remove such buildup to make what's under the hood as visually impressive as your freshly cleaned interior and exterior.

- Clear out the trunk. No buyer wants to pop the trunk and see your golf clubs, beach chairs and cooler. When selling a car, remove all of your personal items from the trunk. This shows prospective buyers how much trunk space your vehicle is equipped with. In addition, an empty trunk will make the car lighter and, as a result, more smooth to drive, something buyers are sure to notice when they take the car out for a test drive.

The term "curb appeal" is just as applicable to selling a car as it is to selling a home, and sellers can improve their chances of selling their used vehicles dramatically if they take steps to improve the curb appeal of their cars and trucks. ■

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Things to consider before buying an extended warranty

While an extended warranty is, in theory, a great idea, such extra protection is not necessarily for everyone, and there are some things car buyers should consider before buying an extended warranty.

- **Length of ownership:** If you are a driver who typically buys a new car every few years or once the odometer hits the 40,000 mile marker, then an extended warranty likely is not worth the investment. Unless you plan to put lots of miles on the car during the three years you intend to own it, then you won't need the extended warranty because you are less likely to own it by the time that warranty goes into effect. In addition, since many manufacturer warranties are in effect until the car exceeds 36,000 miles, it's probably worth the risk to avoid buying the extended warranty just so you're covered for the few thousand miles the car will no longer be under the manufacturer warranty.

- **Backer:** Who is backing the extended warranty is another factor car buyers must consider before adding the extra protection. A manufacturer-backed extended warranty is typically your safest bet, as you can take the vehicle into any of that manufacturer's dealerships across the country and have your warranty honored. A third-party warranty may insist the vehicle is taken

into the dealership where you purchased the car, a big negative for anyone who might be moving while they own the vehicle and an ever bigger cause for concern if you are not a fan of the maintenance staff where you purchased the vehicle.

- **Coverage:** All extended warranties are not the same, and it's important that you understand the differences between your options before purchasing a warranty. Many extended warranties are tiered, which means some will offer you the moon while less expensive options are far more limited in terms of what they do and do not cover. Carefully read the fine print of each extended warranty offered to you to be certain you are getting what you want for the price you want to pay.

- **Cost:** When buying a car, you don't need to buy an extended warranty from the same person who sold you the car. In fact, dealerships may compete for your extended warranty business. Ask the finance manager where you are buying the vehicle to quote you a price on their extended warranty offerings, and then take that price to the dealer's competitors until you find a better deal. You may or may not find a better deal, and if you do you can always take that deal back to the dealer who sold you the car and ask that dealership to match the

price. If they won't, simply take the best offer you found from another dealer.

- **Personal history:** Your personal history also can provide valuable insight into

whether or not an extended warranty is right for you. If you are a driver who strictly adheres to manufacturer maintenance schedules and drives defensively, then you

may not need an extended warranty since your car likely won't be in need of significant repairs. But if vehicle maintenance is not high on your priority list or if you live

in a place where traffic is often congested and your risk of accident is greater, then an extended warranty is likely a wise investment. ■



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"A manufacturer-backed extended warranty is typically your safest bet..."

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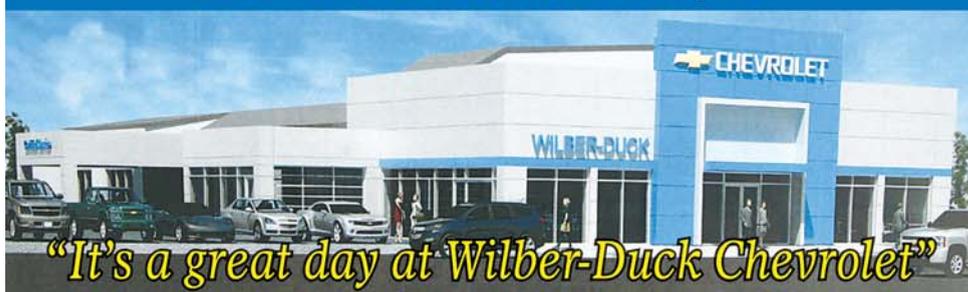
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also can provide valuable insight into whether or not an extended warranty is right for you. If you are a driver who strictly adheres to manufacturer maintenance schedules and drives defensively, then you may not need an extended warranty since your car likely won't be in need of significant repairs. But if vehicle maintenance is not high on your priority list or if you live in a place where traffic is often congested and your risk of accident is greater, then an extended warranty is likely a wise investment.

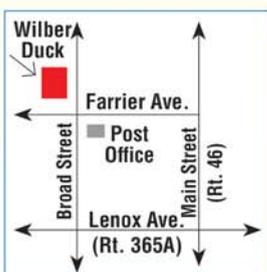
Extended warranties can provide peace of mind to motorists worried about the potentially costly expense of automotive repairs. But such extra protection is not always in a driver's best interests. ■

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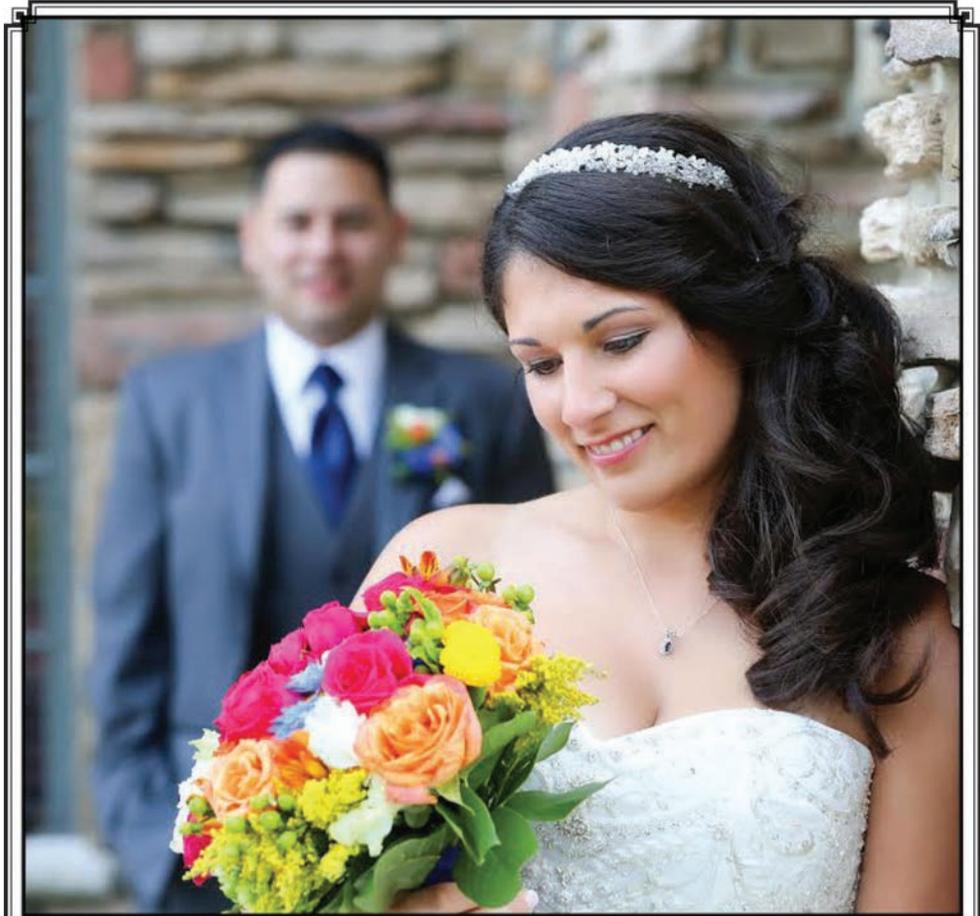
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