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*Photo by Janet Lee Stanley*

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## The Lights are on Design Studio



By Al Dorantes

Ken Thibado and his The Lights are on Design Studio are located at 3003 Route 28 in Old Forge, New York. Creating jewelry tailored to fit you, Thibado's studio is open most days Noonish - 5ish, and



when the lights are on.

Thibado refers to himself as "an artist in the genre of jewelry and a classically trained master goldsmith." He has 18 years behind his bench. Prior to that his artistic journey began at Munson Williams Proctor Arts Institute and then Maine College of Art. Afterward, he was a window goldsmith, the guy who toils away in a jewelry store while patrons watch. Next he started doing wholesale repair for Bill Allen. He went on his own in 2011 and moved back to his hometown of Old Forge and opened his store with retail and gallery space.

Ken takes his inspiration from nature and memory and his work has an organic feel. His subjects include leaves and bullet shells and gears and cogs that he salvages from all manner of machines. It's

unwanted, broken, scraps of jewelry and transform it into something new and beautiful, custom tailored to your tastes. If you're divorced, take your ring to the Lights are on Design Studio and Ken can turn it into something brand new.

Another service that Ken offers is custom design. Ken will take your idea and your best description and put that idea on paper. After the design is approved it's off to the bench where your imagination will come to life under Ken's skilled hands. He can work within your budget with the starting baseline for a custom project of \$300.

Thibado was one of those guys in the back of a big box jewelry store before he broke free. He said, "Learn how to do it yourself and take it on your own path." For more information, go to: [www.kenthibado.com](http://www.kenthibado.com), follow him on Facebook: The Lights Are On Design Studio, or call: (315) 527-2398 E

Ken's use of these items and their juxtaposition with other elements that creates the art. Ken's organic inspiration carries over to his production lines. Ken is ready to go with leaves, paddles, and fish hooks. Ken said, "The leaves are really moving."

One of Ken Thibado's specialties is redesign. He can take your old,



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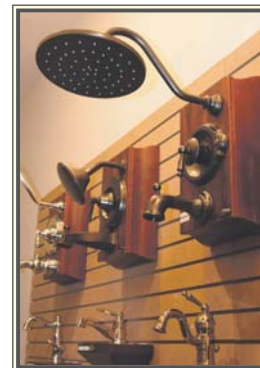
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## Roasting Pan Dilemma

By Joe Parzych

As a starving college student, I was always thankful for game birds that a hunter gave me after a hunt. I usually dressed and boiled them with carrots, celery, onions and spices to make soup. But, one day, when I got at ride while hitch-hiking, I told the motherly-looking woman, sitting beside the driver, that I would like to roast some of the pheasants and quail that my friend often gave me, but lacked a roaster.

She said, "That's easy; just use a depression-era method that folks used in those hard times.

Get a big paper grocery bag and smear it with lard. For some reason, instead of making it more flammable, it seems to prevent it. I still use that method for a better flavor."

The next time my hunter friend came by, he had a pheasant and two quail. I cleaned and dressed them, stuffed the pheas-



ant, and laid the two smaller quails next to it in the greased bag, tying it tight. Even though it was a gas oven, the bag did not burst into flame, as I'd feared, and the results were unbelievably delicious.

The next time I was the recipient of such largess, I added carrots, potatoes, celery, and onions to the game birds. The results were delectable. I offered the hunter a part in the feast, but he said, "I don't eat 'em; I just shoot 'em."

When first married, we had no roasting pan. At Thanksgiving Time, we couldn't afford a turkey. We were lucky to be able to afford a chicken. My wife's culinary attributes were not what attracted me to her, so I did most of the cooking at the beginning of our marriage.

When I put the dressed chicken into the greased paper bag, along with assorted root vegetables, with the stated intention of roasting the whole mess, she thought I'd taken leave of my senses, fearing it would all burst into flame. But, again, the greased bag worked great. Tying off the bag seals in the flavors and juices.



My new bride was impressed with the results. I didn't tell her that it was not my original idea but that of a motherly-looking woman who learned it from a tramp. When we could afford to buy a roasting pan, it turned out that chicken or turkey, roasted in a fancy stainless steel roasting pan, did not compare in gourmet taste to the bag-roasted birds. **E**

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# Milk Pickup



Fred and Joyce Williams

By Troy Bishopp

Pause for a moment today and remember the first time you encountered your soulmate. Was it at a church function, the grocery store, a party, or some other random meeting place? One of the more unique places has to be how Fred and Joyce Williams connected over fresh, frothy cans of milk at the ole, iconic Hinman Farm Products Plant in Deansboro, N.Y. To say milk brought love may be the next great marketing campaign.

Back before bulk tanks and tractor-trailers, Joyce

and her sister, Judy, would bring in a half a dozen milk cans for their dad, Harold ("Kirky") Kirk on the bed of the pickup and wait in line at the milk station to offload onto the outside conveyor rack. Young Mr. Williams just so happened to be the "can dumper" and was quite smitten every time Joyce would show up. One could only imagine what his opening milk pickup line might have been. Suffice it to say, the "really cute" farm girl gave Fred, known locally as the "Cookie Monster", a chance and they have been married for 47 years.

Where is all this romanticism going you may ask? If you live in Central New York, you'll know Fred and Joyce as the daily, dairy farm milk pickup specialists for Richard Obreza Trucking in Mohawk, N.Y. and Queensboro Farm Products in Canastota, N.Y.

It's a tale honoring two unsung heroes of the dairy industry for whom we count on to get our milk to the processor, so we can enjoy our favorite touchdown taco dip. The Postman's creed of "Neither rain nor snow, nor sleet nor dark of night shall stay these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds", has nothing on these young people hauling 80,000 pounds of sloshing milk and navigating hills, weather events, distracted drivers and the occasional grumpy dog.

This life-long passion for the dairy business started in 1962 when Fred took a job with the then, Grove and Claude Hinman, who took in milk from surrounding farms and processed it at their plant in Deansboro, N.Y. ([www.marshallhistoc.org/milkplant](http://www.marshallhistoc.org/milkplant)) and shipped to the New York City market. Under the direction of Plant Manager, Don Risley, Fred and five employees received 3500 cans per day. Fred's nose was the first quality control measure. "I smelt every can that was opened, said Williams. I could tell if there were cooling problems, mastitis or some other abnormality in the milk." It's been said, Fred's nose "knows", even today.

In 1971, the federal government phased out the milk-can transport system in favor of bulk tanks at the farm

and everyone in the community had to make the tough decision to go bulk, including the milk plant. With Claude's daughters, Dorothy and Phyllis and Fred's Dad, Charlie Williams, Fred started driving an International ten-wheeler and doing farm pickups for the company and hauling it back to their storage silos. "In those early years we had 32 farms and 32 stops. Nowadays we only have 4 to 9 farm stops as one big farm ate up a lot of smaller farms to fill a tractor trailer," said Williams.



Fred and Joyce have been hauling milk to Queensboro for over 30 years.

The William's started a family, (Dean and Lori) in the seventies, with Joyce enjoying her career as a "domestic engineer". That was until Fred sprained his ankle one day and she became his partner in doing paperwork, managing milk routes and helping on the truck. As Hinman Farm Products closed its business in April of 1983 after serving the area farmers for 50 years, Joyce's participation became an integral part of the team as they transitioned to driving for C&D Vanhorn Trucking and delivering milk to Queensboro Farm Products in Canastota, NY and doing transport runs to New Jersey and Vermont Plants.

It was during this time she got her milk receivership license and rode "shotgun" with her husband daily collecting milk weights, milk sampling and loading the truck while also being able to test milk at home for

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Ryan Connor

Harvest Moon Glass & Jewelry in Little Falls, New York is the dynamic duo of husband and wife Ryan and Erin Connor. From their glass studio they are pumping out hand blown glass, custom jewelry, and Herkimer diamonds.

Ryan explained that his interest in glass piqued after he read a magazine article back in 1997. He began about 3 years ago and seriously got into creating art. His art starts with clear tubes of glass. He adds a bubble of heated glass. From there more colored glass is added creating color, dots, and swirls that are the hallmark of blown glass.

He said, “It takes 2 to 3 hours to make a simple marble.” He also explained that glass actually wants to be round.

Ryan likes to work in multi-colors. He uses oxygen and propane torches in creating the glasswork. He explained, that oxygen changes the temperature of the glass and that change in temperature helps him get the colors he wants. “I’m always playing with temperature to get the glass to do what I want. Different flames will do different things. I add silver and gold to add even more depth and color.”

Ryan said, “I start to think about glass as soon as I get up in the morning.”

Besides traditional blown glass standbys like

pipes and marbles, Ryan also makes pendants. He specialized in Herkimer Diamond trap pendants. The trap pendants have a have an interesting finial atop a tube of glass that holds a cache of Herkimer diamonds. The trap pendants are unique, each one is like a snowflake.

Recently Ryan found himself making a lot of turtles. The turtles appear very terrapin but when you gaze into their shell or underbody you’ll

*Staring at the turtle you find the swirling, colorful galaxy,*



find the swirling, colorful galaxies.

The couple also digs Herkimer Diamonds from a secret location that’s been in the family for years. Erin Connor has a great connection with the doubly terminated quartz crystal and sells the gems individually as well as turning them into stunning pieces of jewelry. She said, “The whole family loved digging Herkimers.”

Harvest Moon Glass & Jewelry takes custom orders, makes pet memorial pendants

Christmas ornaments, and Ryan even has Christmas turtles ready for you to take home. For more information, follow them on Facebook: Harvest Moon Glass & Jewelry

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farm customers and keeping the household running smoothly. “It was really his love affair and I was the grunt”, quipped Joyce.

This ride along adventure in a big rig between school hours hasn’t been all roses. “I distinctly remember the winter storm in 71’ when Dean Edwards pulled us up the hill on Champion Road with a bulldozer to get to the farm. The snow was so high it hit the truck mir-

rors, said Joyce. We were pumping milk on a hot summer morning at Darrell Masker’s farm in Madison, NY when a micro-burst took the barn roof and buried our truck in shingles so bad we needed a plow to get out! At times we really needed our heads examined for the kinds of adversity we’ve been through.”

In 1996 they joined the Obreza Trucking team and have been with them ever since. Fred says he’s part of the “70 Club” (4 drivers over 70 year’s young still hauling milk). “The milk trucking business needs the next generation of drivers to take the helm, said Williams. Farm pickup and hauling is not quite as good as freight hauling, who get paid by the loaded mile, but your home every night and there are other personal attributes that make it rewarding.”

“After 54 years in the milk receiving business, I still love my job and the relationships we have with farmers. It’s like being with family, said Fred. In the warmer months, Dee Dee Brady, from Brady Farms in Clinton, N.Y. brings us warm cookies or brownies every pickup. How could you not love these families? That’s the type of folks we get to work with every day. Farmers are the salt of the earth.”

“We have serviced the community so long we are now seeing the 3rd and 4th generations involved with the farms. It’s exciting to be a part of their lives and watch them grow,” as Joyce feeds the barn cats a treat or gives the younger children Christmas gifts on their daily route.

This daily routine and tradition of supporting the dairy industry is like clockwork for the stalwart men and women behind the wheel delivering nutrition to today’s families. If you happen to see Fred and Joyce in their big red truck stopped for coffee at the Deansboro Superette, Nassimo’s Co-op Gas or the A&W Convenience Store in Madison, give them a hearty thank-you for their dedication to local agriculture. If you want to make Joyce smile, buy her favorite peanut M&Ms candy which will prompt her to comment that----she really does work for peanuts.

bob the squirrel by frank page

bobthesquirrel.com • squirrelosophy.com • email: btsquirrel@gmail.com

Panel 1: A squirrel sits at a table with a bowl of Halloween candy. Speech bubble: "AH, LEFTOVER HALLOWEEN CANDY IN THE MIDDLE OF NOVEMBER..."

Panel 2: The squirrel looks at the candy. Speech bubble: "IT'S IRONIC... THE STUFF THAT NO ONE WANTS IS WHAT LASTS THE LONGEST..."

Panel 3: The squirrel is now holding a bag of M&M's. Speech bubble: "YOU WIN AND LOSE AT THE SAME TIME MR. GOODBAR..."

Panel 4: The squirrel is lying on the ground, looking exhausted. Speech bubble: "IF I HAD WINGS..."

Panel 5: The squirrel is lying on the ground, looking exhausted. Speech bubble: "...I'D WANT CELERY AND BLEU CHEESE TOO..."

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# Farmhouse Rules

–Ali-Linz in Clinton hosts Nancy Fuller’s philosophy, and cookbook

By Carly Proulx

*“You can’t just eat good food. You’ve got to talk about it too. And you’ve got to talk about it to somebody who understands that kind of food.”*  
~Kurt Vonnegut, *Jailbird*

On October 8th Ali-Linz Home & Accessories, the eclectic gift shop located at 3 W Park Row in Clinton, NY hosted the book signing of Food Network star Nancy Fuller. Ali-Linz owner Bobbie Pavarati was delighted to welcome special guest Fuller to the shop, along with a long line of local residents, not to mention the out of town foodie fans who went the distance to get their copies of her cookbook *Farmhouse Rules* signed, and meet the warmhearted TV host in person.



On left- Nancy Fuller, host of Food Network *Farmhouse Rules* at Ali-linz Home & Accessories in Clinton, NY with store owner Bobbie Pavarati on right.

*Farmhouse Rules*, an American reality based cooking series with the main focus on cooking with farm, based ingredients aired its seventh season October 31st. The show has been an ongoing #1 hit on the Food Network, and takes place in Fuller, and husband David Ginsberg’s 17th century home, as well as their farm in the Hudson Valley. When Fuller doesn’t have her hands full of vegetables, and minerals on the show you can still spot her on screen Sunday nights at 9 pm judging the Food Network competition Holiday Baking Championship. *Farmhouse Rules* the cookbook, and its namesake, the Food Network TV series have definite parallels. The two are a treasure trove of simple, and seasonal recipes encompassing the support of farming, and the importance of growing, cooking, and eating local, seasonal foods.

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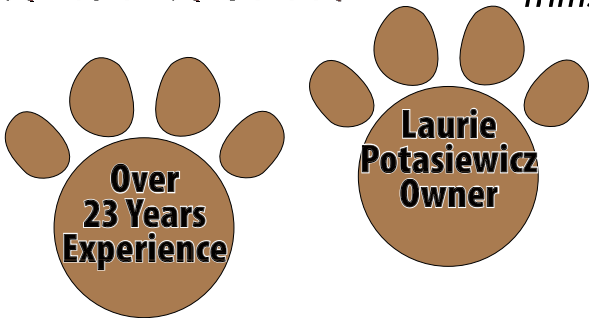
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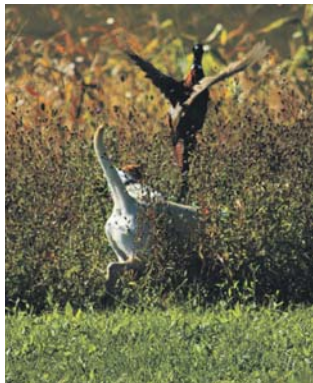




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The product of 12 generations of farmers Fuller was born and raised a farmer in Columbia County, N.Y. Yet to take her hands out of the dirt the mother of six, and grandmother of 13 spends her time instilling the integrity of a farmer's work ethic in her own family, and teaching future generations a thing or two about digging up your own potatoes. The idea that cooking can be simple really takes the pressure off, and Fuller's hands-on farm food recipes certainly support this. I nod my head in agreement when Fuller says "It's a lost art." Fuller wanted her grandchildren, as well as the rest of us to know that corn does not come in a can on a shelf at the supermarket. Luckily, her mantra is helpful. "Get off the couch. Take an hour. Go to the farmer's market." What just so happens to be Fuller's on the show catch phrase "Chop, chop. In the pot" is the last, but

not the least of all steps in incorporating what to day many of us 21st century convenience addicts can claim lazy ownership of avoiding, healthy and sustainable living.

A lover of all things forgotten Fuller is by nature an antiquer. Using her grandparents vintage pieces to cook with on the show, along with the sprucing up of old family recipes Fuller has achieved a consistent aim in keeping her roots while laying the ground rules for all the foodies out there who strive for that authentic farm to table lifestyle. If anyone gets the point across that where there's a farm, there's a way it's Nancy Fuller. At 66 Fuller is the glue holding her family together, and at Thanksgiving that means a real big table, a few extra tables, a whole dining halls worth of chairs, and a 32 lb. Turkey. Farm-house Rules is Fuller's first cookbook, but there's plenty hints from the

farmer herself that a second one is in our future.



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*Ali-Linz should be on your list of local shops to venture out to this holiday season.*

Owner of Ali-Linz Bobbie Paravati celebrated the stores 9th year in September. Having browsed the stores classy yet homey entrails for an hour I was by no means taken aback to learn Paravati is also an interior decorator. The variety of lines carried at Ali-Linz is just one of its complementary charms. If on the hunt for the perfect rug for your kitchen, or early Christmas gifts for loved ones this is one gift shop which appeals to a variety of folks. Carrying everything from Ana Candles, J.K. Adams cutting boards, bedding, jewelry, furniture pieces and much more it poses a challenge to walk in there, and whether it's practical or purely decorative, not walk out with something. Here is your today's to-do list folks: check out what's new at Ali-Linz on their Facebook page and see the ad in the shoppers' guide inside this issue, catch host Nancy Fuller on Food Network Saturdays at 11:30 am, and buy a copy of the talented chef's cookbook Farm-house Rules on-line, or at your local book store. **E**



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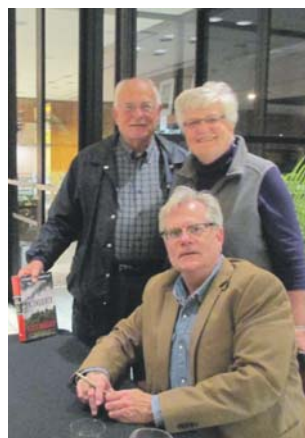
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## Scott Wallace

– The Imperative to Explore

By Pat Malin



Wallace, a native of New Hartford, did a book signing at Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute. Wallace, seated, with a couple of fans.

It was just a coincidence that well-known, independent journalist-photographer Scott Wallace, author of a new book, *The Imperative to Explore*, gave his presentation at Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute in Utica on October 13, a day after Columbus Day.

Christopher Columbus “discovered” the New World on Oct. 12, 1492, though in the politically-correct spotlight of the 21st century, his exploits are more commonly reviled. Columbus shouldn’t be faulted for sparking later voyages that united the East with the West; obviously, we wouldn’t be here without

him.

For the last 30 years, Wallace, 62—a native of New Hartford—has crafted a career out of his own journeys to distant corners of the globe, covering civil wars, revolutionaries and child soldiers; embedded with the U.S. Army in Iraq; admiring the perseverance of the nomads above the Arctic Circle; surviving oppressive conditions and seeking to uncover the primitive culture of the Amazon jungle.

“It’s a natural human trait to explore...to reach beyond the horizon,” he asserted. Travel is born out of curiosity. Not only is it necessary, but it’s beneficial in bringing human beings closer to understanding our diverse cultures.

The most fascinating part of Wallace’s presentation was based on his 2003 book, *The Unconquered: In Search of the Amazon’s Last Uncontacted Tribes*.

It’s an account of his harrowing three-month, 250-mile expedition to the Amazon River basin in 2002 with Brazilian explorer Sydney Possuelo, a man who is honestly concerned with the welfare of the indigenous tribe known as the “People of the Arrow,” yet determined not to risk contacting them directly.

That was the first of

Wallace’s five assignments for National Geographic about the rain forest. He will venture back there again this month.

The noble attempt to track these “stone-age” people is fraught with hardships, disease, near-famine, danger and endless controversy. For a century or more, explorers, scientists and anthropologists have worked to win the trust of the inhabitants of the forest.

Some natives act as guides and put the explorers in touch with other indigenous tribes who have, in a measure of self-preservation, learned to mistrust outsiders and resisted efforts to be discovered.

It’s not hard to think history is repeating itself. Columbus and the later Spanish conquistadors are blamed for introducing disease into Mexico, Latin and South America, inflicting violence, uprooting and enslaving the native Indians, and stripping their lands of their natural resources. Nor is American history exempt from similar atrocities.

In an interview after his presentation, Wallace said his book is not encouraging outsiders to beat a path to the door of these natives on the border of Peru and Brazil. In fact, these territories

*continued on page 10*

## Beating unemployment

By Joe Parzych

When Stanley couldn’t find a job in Louisiana, he rented an empty store front, then toured the city ahead of the rubbish trucks in better neighborhoods, each day, picking up saleable furniture and other items to sell in his second hand store. He also bought goods from a cleanout crew getting rid of household items of houses they were getting ready for sale. When working as a foreman on construction at various locations, he’d take a quick tour ahead of the rubbish trucks on pickup day on his way to the job, then sell most of the salvaged items to the workmen on the job. The rest, he’d sell at his second-hand store.

Stanley was a wiz at living by his wits. He didn’t do so well with women. He met his first wife while driving cab. After they married, she liked to throw parties while he worked far into the night. When he complained about their new furniture getting trashed during her parties, she threw a chair at him,

nearly putting out his remaining eye. That ended their super short marriage. His next wife, ran into her long lost brother, who came to live with them. Her “brother” turned out to be her former husband.

She bought a large insurance policy on Stanley with who else but her as the beneficiary. When she staged an “accident” in an effort to cash in, he headed out to safer territory, and consulted a lawyer, again. He married a third time to a good woman with not-so-good relatives who free-loaded on them.

I think he died in self-defense. **E**



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## The Perfect Memory

By Joan O. Scharf

It is a crisp sunny autumn day, --the kind of day when fallen leaves crunch like cornflakes underfoot, and the sky, scattered with buttermilk clouds, is noticeably blue. I am standing on the back steps of our house to check on our four children playing in the field near the evergreen and maple fringe of the shallow woods.

I wrap my arms around myself against the chill and watch their brightly colored jackets and knit caps bob up and down in play. I listen with a moth-

er's love to their laughter as they call to each other in their pretend games. They are happy and carefree and innocent, soon to come home with reddened cheeks, runny noses and wide eyed stories of treasures found among rocks and logs and pines. I am flooded with the intense joy of the moment, wanting to remember it always, preserved like a scene in the globe of a Hallmark ornament.

Continuing to watch them, prisms of tears blur my vision. I know waiting in the all too soon

future will come turbulent teenage worries and difficult decisions with angers, sorrows, and separations to bear.

If I cling to the perfect moment long and hard enough, in the coming years I can go back to revisit this sweet picture on my memory shelf and once again be standing on these back steps seeing their happiness...and feeling my own. **E**



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## Wallace from 9

have been plundered since the 19th century.

Trespassers have slashed and burned the forest to extract its treasures, from rubber, to gold, oil, and lumber, while the government encourages farming. Drug smugglers and poachers use the forest as cover for illicit activities.

The tribes, who have only bows and sharp, poisoned arrows as a defense, have been powerless to stop the encroachment. In recent years, though, Wallace has reported on alarming incidents in which the arrow people have gone on the offensive, allegedly attacking or killing loggers, cattle farmers, environmentalists and unwelcome visitors, also raiding nearby villages for food.

"The isolated peoples of the Amazon (many different tribes) are showing different responses to the growing pressures on the lands around them," Wallace said in a later email.

"Some have recently made the choice of seeking out contact with people passing on the rivers in boats. Others have retreated deeper into the forests. They have no idea that someone like Possuelo -- who looks after their rights and interests -- exists."

Scientists, even government officials in Peru and Brazil, are conflicted about

their roles. The economic benefits of harvesting the forest can raise the standard of living for the population, but at what sacrifice to the ecology? Should they intervene to save the natives, who number only in the handfuls, if they can even establish their whereabouts?

Brazil has gone to the extent of setting up an agency and supplying guards to protect the tribes. One designated safe zone in the forest consists of just 31 miles and is deemed necessary to save the life of a solitary individual identified as "the man in the hole."

Wallace's opinion is that not even so-called "controlled contact" is helpful. "In many cases, the mortality rate is up to 90 percent after contact," he explained in an interview in the New York Post in September.

"Time is running out for these groups," he added. "But that doesn't mean it's still not our responsibility to try to protect their land and to protect them."

Wallace said he considers himself an "ambassador" for the U.S. and he encouraged the rest of us to travel for enlightenment. Yes, Americans are stereotyped, so "I try to explain to them who we are," he said.

He ended his talk by telling the crowd, "The world is not a dangerous place," although some of his travels certainly betray his confidence. **E**



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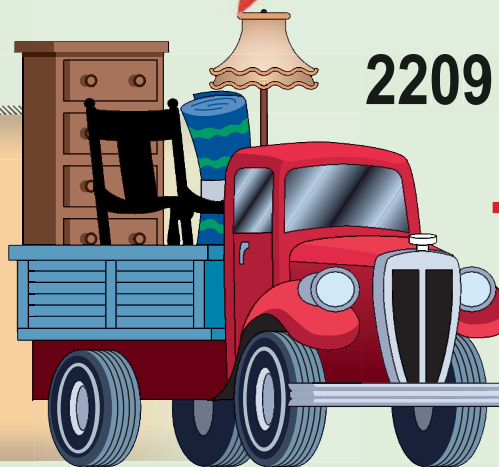
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## OUR COVER STORY

# Massoud's Tree Farm

## – A Holiday Tradition

The holidays are based in tradition and there's no bigger holiday tradition than getting the family Christmas tree. There's also no better place to find the perfect family Christmas tree than Massoud's Tree Farm. Located at 9716 Roberts Road in Sauquoit, New York, you'll find your perfect tree, handmade wreaths, and more.

Owner, Omar Massoud, explained the history behind the tree farm. It all started with the family business, a banquet hall. Omar was running the restaurant

when he married his wife Judy in 1967. Around the same time they bought the property the tree farm is located on; 140 acres. In 1970 the happy couple's first son, John, was born. Omar said, "I thought it would be a good idea to plant some trees to grow along with him." Omar planted a grove of about 4,000 conifers for his son.



*Josh Orsino is assembling one of the staples in Aunt Edna's Gift Shop, the birch reindeer. Josh has worked for the Massoud family for about 10 years.*

Shortly thereafter Maggie, then Matthew, and finally Andrew were born.

Omar planted trees for them too.

The Colorado Blue Spruce, Norway Spruce, Balsam Fir, Fraser Fir, Douglas Fir, White Pine, Red Pine, and Austrian Pine all started as seedlings, about 10 inches high. That was the start. The trees matured to 7 to 10 feet in height, perfect for Christmas trees. Friends and relatives were invited to come help themselves to a Christmas tree. Omar would give them a ride out to the groves with the tractor and wagon. He was just having fun.

Before he knew it, the friends brought their friends and more people were getting their trees at Massoud's Tree Farm. It went on like that for about three years. In the 1986 family decided to retire from the restaurant business and Omar found himself a full-time tree guy. He thought, "Why not market these Christmas trees?" He put some trees out in the yard and sold them. "As I sold trees I cut more from the field. We do the same thing today, only on a larger scale." Omar explained that he sold approximately 50 trees the first year.

With about 150 pre-cut trees indoors in the barn, customers can pick their perfect tree in the comfort of the



*Son, John and his wife Christina have twin boys and daughters Kennedy, left, and Madelyn. The girls have already become expert wreath decorators and love to help their grandparents on the family farm.*

barn even if it's cold and rainy. Omar said, "Until they get home customers don't have to touch the tree. We service everything; wrap the tree, carry it to the car, and tie it on the car. We base our business on our service."

Their "Cut your own" Christmas trees starts with a hayride out to the grove. Massoud's provides customers with a saw and the whole the experience of picking, cutting, and dragging the tree to transport wagon. It's agritourism at its best.

Approximately 25-30 million real Christmas trees are sold each year in the United States. Most of these trees come from Christmas tree farms.

Omar explained that there is a trend moving from artificial trees back to real trees.

Omar said, "You can only plant the number of trees you can care for. They have to be pruned and sheered. That's the hard part. You work 11 months for that one month." He's planted trees for his grandchildren; Kennedy, Madeline, Nicholas, Caleb, Tressa, Max (aka Sticker), and Abigail. That's 7 more plantations. Abigail's will be planted in the spring as she's only 3-months old.

He added, "Not every tree makes it to market. Not everybody likes a Charlie Brown tree." Unsatisfactory trees are removed, and culled. Omar figured out how to make wreaths from the boughs of the culled trees.

Family has always been a big part of Massoud's Tree Farm's success. The whole team started with Omar's brother John, better known as Uncle J (Uncle J, a WWII veteran has spent 26 years with Omar in the restaurant business and another 30 years on the farm), brother George, brother Joe, wife Judy and last but not least sister Edna.

Judy and Edna decorated wreaths with bows and accoutrements. Putting in long hours, Edna always brought a kettle of soup or something to eat and it went right on the wood stove. Aunt Edna's gift shop named in memory of Aunt Edna.



*The Massoud's named the gift shop in memory of Omar and J's sister, Edna. Judy, Omar's wife, and sister in law, Edna spent many years together creating bows and decorating 100's of wreaths per season.*

The new team is still family with the addition of daughters-in-law and their families, grandkids and their friends, and volunteers. Omar's son, John's wife, Christina, and son Andrew's wife, Erin, make up the nucleus of the new generation. Omar mentioned, "They're very particular about our products." Erin brings her Aunt Sally and Sally never comes empty-handed and always brings pizza or something to share.

Massouds was a team then and they succeed as a team now. The team of 30 workers plus volunteers bring Christmas spirit in full force.

Omar said "The family farm is the backbone of America. We're fortunate to have a family farm and it

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Brother, John, better known as Uncle J, has been decorating wreaths for 30 year. J, who will turn 90 in a couple of months is a proud WWII Veteran. Happy Veteran’s Day, Uncle J! He was just 17 when he left high school to join the Navy. He proudly told me that he graduated from high school when he was 75 years old under the Veteran’s House Bill allowing schools to award diplomas to veterans who left high school after the attacks on Pearl Harbor to defend our country. I asked him if he was going to apply to any colleges any time soon and he said, “I don’t know about that!”

brings you closer to God.” He added, “There is also no substitute for hard work.”

One of Massoud’s hallmarks is handmade wreaths. The custom decorated wreaths are built to customer



Daughter-in-law, Christina enjoys making bows. She has worked at the farm with her husband, John Massoud and family, for many years.

specifications and range from 6 inches across to 10 feet wide. The labor-intensive process takes boughs of pine (specifically gathered from culled trees) and using a specialized machine they are bound together in the traditional shape we’re accustomed to. Uncle J said, “Making wreaths is not easy. Some people can’t get the knack of it.”



Tressa, daughter of son, Andrew and his wife Erin, is already learning the ropes. With her step stool and work gloves, Tressa was ready to demonstrate her wreath decorating skills to me while Aunt Christina was on hand to help. I was duly impressed!

Massoud’s receives many inquiries from nonprofits for wreaths. They use the wreaths as fundraisers. When the holiday season is in full-gear the shop is cranking out wreaths at a breakneck speed. They



Son, Andrew works in the educational field by day and in the agricultural field on weekends for the family farm. Here he is preparing branches for the garland making process.



Omar demonstrated the garland making process. The branches are prepared in useful sized pieces, mostly from culls, then they are assembled by feeding them through this specialized piece of equipmnet. The smells inside their workshop transported me back to many of my own wonderful Christmas memories.

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have 2 shifts of wreath making.

Eventually customers asked, "Can you mail a wreath to a friend out of town?" That simple question started a mail order operation for Massoud's. They make and ship their traditional Christmas wreaths all over the country.

Omar said proudly, "My granddaughters Kennedy (age 14) and Madelyn (age 12) decorate wreaths with the best of 'em."

Massoud's Tree Farm



**Andrew and Josh demonstrated the pruning process. It's not just putting seedlings in the ground and walking away for 7 years... there is a lot of maintenance necessary to shape and keep the trees healthy.**

has expanded over the years based on outstanding service. Omar

explained, "A customer asks, "Do you have a stand for this Christmas

tree?" then you have to have stands." The gift shop at Massoud's has tree stands, disposal bags, ornaments, decorations, and more.

Massoud's Tree Farm will open their Choose & Cut Field Thanksgiving weekend on Black Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 9 am - 4 pm and they will be open Saturday and Sunday, 9 am - 4 pm every weekend in December. Continue your holiday tradition or start a new one with Massoud's. For more information, follow them on Facebook: Massoud's Tree Farm or call: (315) 737-5011.

Pre-cut trees are available weekdays 9 am - 8 pm and weekends 9 am - 6 pm. In addition to trees, Massoud's has branched out to add a pumpkin patch, complete with a hay ride, pick your own pumpkins, and a corn maze. They are also growing hops and establishing a pick your own apple orchard. Massoud's is also known for their

commercial tree farm which they supply trees to landscapers across the Mohawk Valley and the country. Massoud's Tree Farm has you covered for the holidays and all year 'round. a mail order operation for Massoud's. They make and ship their traditional Christmas wreaths all over the country.

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From our cover from left: John Massoud and family- daughter, Kennedy, his wife Christina, son-Nicholas, daughter-Madelyn and son-Caleb. Upper row, Josh Orsino, Omar and Judy Massoud with grand daughter Tressa - the camera shy one, Daughter-in-law, Erin with newest Massoud, Abigail all bundled in pink, son Andrew holding his Max, aka Sticker and Uncle !!

Massoud's cover story by Al Dorantes, Editor. Photos and captions by Janet Lee Stanley.

"Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before! What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store. What if Christmas...perhaps...means a little bit more!"  
-Dr. Seuss, How the Grinch Stole Christmas!

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## Memory

# Elder Care SPOTLIGHT

Tips & Information to Navigate Senior Life

As we age they say, “Memory is the first thing to go. The second thing to go is memory.” But, aging and memory loss are no longer intricately linked. Staying mentally active after 50 can have amazing brain benefits and could reduce the risk of dementia.

No one, regardless of age, is immune to random bouts of memory loss; senior moments as they’re often referred to. Misplacing car keys or forgetting items on your grocery list are nothing to get worked up over. Many seniors over 50 worry about memory lapses, especially when they start to occur with more frequency. While memory loss might be quickly associated with aging, increased forgetfulness is not an inevitable side effect of getting older, a fact that those at or approaching retirement age should find comforting.

When we look at memory and aging, it’s important that seniors recognize the distinction between memory lapses and dementia, as the two are not one and the same. As a person ages, their hippocampus, the region of the brain involved in the formation and retrieval of memories, often deteriorates. This can affect how long it takes to learn and recall information. Because this process is slower does not mean it’s a warning sign of dementia, which is the loss of certain mental functions, including memory. Taking longer to recall information can be frustrating but many people still retain their ability to recall information.

One secret to keeping memory sharp is to start playing games. Games that test the mind have long been believed to benefit the



brain. A University of Iowa study funded by the National Institute on Aging found that brain games may in fact pay numerous and long-term dividends. In the study, 681 healthy volunteers over the age of 40 were divided into four groups. One group played computerized crossword puzzles, and three other groups played a brain training video game from Posit Science designed specifically to enhance the speed and accuracy of visual processing. The volunteers showed less decline in visual processing as well as in other tests that measured concentration, memory and the ability to shift quickly between tasks, and the benefits from the training games lasted up to seven years after training. Brain games are now more accessible than ever before, as players can access such games on their smartphones, tablets, e-readers, and computers. And in addition to being effective, the games also provide entertainment value.

Researchers at the University of California, San Francisco, also found that a three-dimensional video game can help older people reverse age-related decline in memory and

focus. The researchers found that after four weeks of training, some of the participants in their 80’s beat untrained 20-year-olds and kept up their skills for six months without practice.

For the study, UCSF researchers first tested 30 participants – ranging in age from their 20’s to their 70’s – and confirmed, not surprisingly, that the older subjects didn’t multi-task in the game as well as the younger volunteers. Next, they recruited 46 study participants -ranging in age from 60 to 85 – and put them through a four-week training period with a car-racing game called NeuroRacer.

While the subjects played, the researchers recorded their brain activity and watched areas of the brain light up that are responsible for helping maintain tasks. They found that as the older players became more adept at the challenges of the game, their brain waves began to resemble those of young adults.

In the game, players steer a car along a winding, hilly road with their left hand and look for colored signs to shoot for with their right hand. Gazzaley

says the game challenges the brain to focus attention, switch tasks and use working memory – all skills crucial to the real-life multi-tasking that helps us

function better in the real world

Although commercial companies have claimed for years that computer games can help improve brain skills and function in older people, many scientists have questioned whether improving gaming skills leads to improved skills in everyday life. There was no evidence that winning a car race in a video game improved memory, focus or even

driving ability.

Some scientists are now saying this study confirms earlier research that shows brain training can reverse some of the age-related decline that all of us want to avoid.

Playing games isn’t a magic bullet for your memory or brain health. With games as another instrument in the toolbox today’s seniors can keep their brains healthy and their memory sharp. ■



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# How to manage credit this holiday season

**H**oliday shopping takes up a considerable amount of time between Thanksgiving and Christmas Day. Shoppers who scour in-store and online retailers in the hunt for the perfect gift annually spend hundreds of billions of dollars during such pursuits, and what they swipe when making purchases could go a long way toward how their new years begin.

Overreliance on credit cards to make holiday purchases can prove crippling once the calendar turns to January. According to an analysis of statistics from the Federal Reserve, the average household consumer debt in the United States was more than \$15,700 as of June of 2015. That's roughly one-tenth the average mortgage debt, suggesting that many consumers are relying too heavily on credit cards when making their purchases.

This holiday season, consumers concerned about swiping their credit cards too often can take the following steps to more effectively manage their credit.

- Know what you can afford. Swiping now and dealing with the consequences in January is a recipe for a rocky new year. In some cases, it can benefit consumers to make purchases with their credit cards as opposed to their debit cards. For instance, when making purchases online, it's often safer to use a credit card rather than a debit card linked to your checking and savings accounts, as using the latter can make your life's savings vulnerable to hackers. But don't start swiping your credit cards until you know what you can afford. Examine your finances and only use your credit card if you know you can repay the balance before it incurs any interest. If you can't pay the balance in full at the time the payment is due, use a debit card so you are only spending money you already have and not taking out what amounts to a high-interest loan on your holiday purchases.

- Resist retailer cards. When making in-store purchases, chances are the cashier will invite you to sign up for a retailer credit card, even offering an immediate discount if you do so at the registers. While this discount may seem too tempting to ignore, keep in mind



that many retailer credit cards come with considerably higher interest fees on balances that are not paid off in full. So that discount at the register may end up costing you more money if you get to January and can't pay the balance in its entirety.

- Try not to juggle cards. Many shoppers juggle multiple cards to avoid building up too big a balance on one particular card during the holiday season. But that's an easy way to lose track of how much you have spent. Rather than juggling cards, use only the one with the lowest interest rate.

- Monitor your balances. Swiping a credit card is easy and hassle-free, and many retailers both big and small now accept various types of cards. Keep a close eye on your balances, checking them online after each shopping trip. This can help you control your spending and also can alert you to any fraudulent activity.

Shoppers who must use their credit cards this holiday season can employ several strategies to ensure they don't dig themselves into a financial hole by the end of December. **E**

# Hold on to wrapping supplies



**I**n addition to the billions of dollars shoppers spend each year on holiday gifts, quite a lot of money is spent on the bags, boxes and paper

used to wrap those gifts. Unity Marketing says the average person spends between \$70 and \$100 on wrapping supplies during the holiday season. While

it is nice to add some new items to the wrapping mix each year, collecting and conserving bags and tissue is a wise and eco-friendly, cost-saving measure. For those hosting the holidays this year, set up two storage bins in the room where you and your loved ones will be unwrapping presents. One bin can be used to collect clothing boxes that are in good shape, while the other can be used to organize gift bags and bows. Encourage guests to take some of the used wrapping paper to use again next year. **E**

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I am an attorney who has represented thousands of Central New York workers, and their families since 1984. I have represented many of our neighbors with regard to disability benefits under both the Social Security Act and the Worker's Compensation Law. I also focus my practice on Special Education Law to assure that local school districts provide proper services to special needs kids.

Please respect my rights, as I have respected and protected the rights of my many clients. Many of my clients do not share my political preferences, but I respect and defend their rights all the same. And please do not hesitate to call if I can be of assistance.

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# Dressing a Turkey Naked

By Joe Parzych

One thanksgiving an employee of a neighboring turkey farm came to our door with a freshly killed turkey. My mother and sister Irene were working for the farmer that holiday to get a rush order ready for market. It was not uncommon for the farmer to present us with a turkey. Whenever a turkey appeared ailing or a bit droopy, the farmer would curse and kill it, immediately, to prevent any suspected illness from spreading. He did not market these suspect birds, not wanting to risk having a customer get sick. Knowing that, I always had mixed feelings about the farmer presenting us with this bounty even though we never suffered any ill effects from eating the suspect turkeys.



The large feathers on our thanksgiving gift were removed, but the tiny pin feathers remained--loads of them. Pulling out pin feathers is an art that neither I, nor my father, ever mastered. It is tedious time-consuming work. We were each using a paring knife to help get a grip on the pin feather, taking care not to cut or break off the pin feather. That makes a mess and the pin feather stub is extremely difficult to remove. We had more than a few of those disasters.

We worked together in silence with little progress. The only sounds were sighs of impatience and boredom. My father began tugging at the still elastic skin. It stretched out like the rubber of a deflated balloon. He smiled, deftly slit the skin of the turkey up the middle, and slipped off the skin like he was taking off a coat. In a few minutes the turkey lay on the table, stark naked.

We slathered the bare bird with butter and basted it, often, as it roasted in the wood stove. By the time my mother and Irene came home for supper, the turkey was nicely browned, cooked to perfection, crisp and tasty on the outside but moist and juicy inside. I was most thankful that Thanksgiving that I did not have to endure any more pin feathering. **E**

# Thanksgiving Day Quiz

It is once again time to talk turkey, stuffing and all of the trimmings. Thanksgiving is a time to be thankful for the blessings in one's life and enjoy the company of family and friends during a special meal. Although people celebrate Thanksgiving each and every year, they may not be aware of some of its interesting history. Test your knowledge of gobblers and general trivia with this quiz.

1. Despite competing historical claims, the story most people associate with the first American Thanksgiving took place in a colony in this modern-day state?

a. Pennsylvania  
b. New Jersey  
c. Massachusetts  
d. Delaware
2. Pilgrims from Europe associated with Thanksgiving are purported to have sailed across the Atlantic to reach North American on which ship?

a. Daisy  
b. Mayflower  
c. Santa Maria  
d. Roseflower
4. Which tribe of Native Americans taught Pilgrims how to cultivate the land, contributing to the first Thanksgiving?

a. Algonquin  
b. Lenape  
c. Shoshone  
d. Wampanoag
5. Three different deboned types of poultry go into this Thanksgiving meal alternative?

a. Orange duck  
b. Turducken  
c. Turkey chowmein  
d. Chixturck
6. In what year did Congress make Thanksgiving an official national holiday in the United States?

a. 1932  
b. 1939  
c. 1941  
d. 1946
7. Twenty percent of the overall consumption of this type of fruit is done on Thanksgiving.

a. apples  
b. cranberries  
c. cherries  
d. grapes
8. Canadians sometimes call the Thanksgiving holiday in the United States by this name to distinguish it from their own Thanksgiving celebration.

a. Yanksgiving  
b. Amerigiving  
c. Turmerica  
d. USthanks

Answers: 1. c 2. b 4. d 5. b 6. c 7. b 8. a

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## Holidays potentially hazardous to pets



The holiday season is full of joy. But in the midst of decorating and socializing, pet owners may overlook the needs of their pets. Hectic schedules and homes full of unusual

décor can throw pets off-kilter.

No pet owner wants their pet to feel uncomfortable or suffer any injuries, so it's important that owners exercise caution with the following items come the holiday season.

- **Bones:** Is turkey on the menu for the family feast? If so, resist the urge to toss some bones and scraps to dogs or cats. Small bones or bone chips can become lodged in the digestive tracts of pets and cause serious injury. If you want to provide your pet with a holiday treat, choose a safer, store-bought bone.

- **Aromatic oils:** The holidays are not the same without the familiar scent of mint, cinnamon or pine. Some people resort to scented candles or aromatherapy oils to create the perfect holiday ambiance. But some synthetic aromas or even natural extracts can be toxic to cats and dogs. Stick to nontoxic items and keep them well out of the pet's reach.

- **Chocolate and other sweets:** An abundance of treats seems to be par for the course during the holiday season. Dogs should avoid all chocolate, but dark chocolate poses a particularly serious

threat. Chocolate can cause agitation, elevated heart rate, diarrhea, vomiting, seizures, and even death. In addition, candy or cookies sweetened with the artificial sweetener xylitol can cause a dangerous drop in blood pressure for dogs.

- **Pine needles and trees:** When ingested, pine needles can puncture the intestines of pets. In search of an easy drink, dogs and cats may be drawn to the fresh water reservoir of live trees, increasing the likelihood that they knock over a Christmas tree, injuring themselves and causing damage around the house. Trees should be properly secured, and fallen needles should be promptly discarded.

- **Tinsel and decorations:** Skip the tinsel if you have a cat. Felines are likely to mistake tinsel for a toy. Eating tinsel can cause severe damage to a cat's intestinal tract, as it may get caught in the stomach while the rest of it continues to pass through the intestines. Tinsel also may wrap around the tongue, increasing the cat's risk of choking. Ornaments also are tempting playthings. Cats may

pounce on glass ornaments, breaking them and suffering injury. Keep pets in mind when selecting tree ornaments, and opt for unbreakable ornaments when possible.

- **Electrical cords:** The American Animal Hospital Association says holiday lights mean more electrical cords for kittens and puppies to chew. Secure all cords and keep them out of reach of pets.

- **Candles:** The subtle flicker of a lit candle can add ambiance to a space. But all it takes is the swish of a tail or the pat of a paw to knock over a candle and spark a fire. Never leave lit candles unattended. If you have boisterous pets, opt for LED simulated candles instead.

- **Alcohol:** Spirits are sometimes a part of celebrations, but alcoholic beverages should be kept out of reach of pets. Alcohol suppresses the immune system, and it can result in significant health issues for pets who consume it.

The holiday season is a time for celebration. Ensure that these festivities are as safe for pets as they are enjoyable. **E**

## How to find a qualified, compassionate pet sitter



More and more pet owners are taking their four-legged friends with them when they travel. But some vacations or business trips are not pet-friendly, and such excursions may require pet owners to enlist the services of professional pet sitters.

Friends and family members may be able to look after pets when their owners are away for a few days. But when no one is close by to check in on or foster a pet, pet sitters and animal boarding facilities may be the only option available to pet owners. Pet sitters also may be able to step in when owners' last-minute plans interfere with their ability to care for their pets.

Finding the right facility or individual pet sitter requires a little work. Here are some ways to weed out the qualified and professional pet sitters from those who might not be the best fit.

- **Ask for recommendations.** Seek advice from friends or family members who have used pet sitters in the past. If that does not prove fruitful, speak with your veterinarian. He or she may have a relationship with an animal boarder or a pet-sitting service. Some veterinarians also have employees on staff who provide this kind of service, and such situations can be especially beneficial for owners of older or special-needs pets. An alternative to personal and professional recommendations is to employ a certified pet sitter from either The National Association of Professional Pet Sitters or Pet Sitters International.

- **Get a feel for the sitter's personality.** It can be beneficial to find a sitter whose energy levels and temperament are a good match with your pet. A young, boisterous puppy may not be a good match for an older sitter. Sitters who understand

an animal's specific needs and how to cater to those needs may perform their duties more effectively than less experienced sitters.

- **Compile a questionnaire.** The Humane Society of the United States has a comprehensive list of qualifications you can use to screen potential pet sitters. These should include questions about liability insurance coverage and if companies that employ pet sitters are bonded to protect against theft. Pet sitters also should provide references.

- **Maintain the pet's normal routine.** According to pet expert Cesar Millan, it's best to have the pet watched in his or her natural surroundings so they have a level of familiarity with their surroundings and schedules. When this is not possible, boarders should try to keep the same walking, play and feeding schedules.

- **Spell out all the details.** Before hiring a sitter, make a list of requirements and make sure they are discussed and included in signed contracts.

- **Employ trial and error.** Sometimes you have to take a chance and give a pet sitter an opportunity to prove his or her merit. Afford the pet sitter some time to meet your pet in your presence and watch for how your pet reacts

to the sitter. After the sitter's first day on the job, look for indicators that may suggest the experience was not the right fit for your pet. Fearfulness

in the pet, signs or smells that accidents occurred, property damage, or injuries to an animal may be evidence of a poor pet sitter.

Pet owners sometimes require the service of pet sitters who can help them feel at ease when they need to leave home for business or pleasure. **E**

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# HISTORY in your backyard

## Our Military Relics

Most of us drive by military relics daily. Sometimes it seems as if they blend into the back-grounds of our lives.

At the American Legion in New Hartford, New York (8616 Clinton Street), an AH-1 Cobra helicopter sits perched, almost ready to take flight and attack. The attack helicopter was built by Bell Helicopters in Texas and was purchased in 2002 from the military surplus at Fort Drum. Later in 2011 the Cobra was refurbished.

As we zip back and forth on NY 69 in Oriskany, New York we pass by a giant chunk of grey steel surrounded by 44 American flags. That's the anchor of the USS Oriskany CV/CVA-34 aircraft carrier. Weighing in at 15 tons with another ton of anchor chain, the anchor is a stoic memorial.

The USS Oriskany, nicknamed Mighty O, was one of the few Essex-class aircraft carriers completed after World War II for the United States Navy. The ship was named for the Battle of Oriskany during the Revolutionary War. The Oriskany was laid down on May 1, 1944 by the New York Naval Shipyard (NYNSY), launched on October 13, 1945, and sponsored by Mrs. Clarence Cannon. Construction was suspended on August 22, 1946, when the ship was approximately 85% complete. Oriskany was redesigned as the prototype for the SCB-27 modernization program beginning on August 8, 1947, and torn down to



M3A1- Stuart Light Tank, Rome, NY

60% complete. To handle the new generation of carrier aircraft, the flight deck structure was massively reinforced. Stronger elevators, more powerful hydraulic catapults, and new arresting gear were installed. The island structure was rebuilt, the anti-aircraft turrets were removed, and blisters were added to the hull. Blistering the hull (also known as adding bulges) increases the cross-sectional area of a ship's hull, thereby increasing its buoyancy and stability. It also provides



AH-1 Cobra helicopter, New Hartford, NY

increased bunker volume. In the case of Oriskany, this would have been for aviation fuel. These features would have been crucial to a ship that had so much topside weight added after its original design. Oriskany was commissioned in the New York Naval Shipyard on September 25, 1950, Captain Percy H. Lyon in command.

The Mighty O operated primarily in the Pacific into the 1970's and received two battle stars for Korean War service and ten for Vietnam War service.

On October 26, 1966 while operating in the Gulf of Tonkin in Southeast Asia, a magnesium parachute flare ignited a fire onboard. Before the fires were completely under control, 44 sailors had

died (43 from asphyxiation and one from burns) and 156 had been injured. At the Oriskany Memorial, the walkway and anchor are lined with the plaques of the men who lost their lives on October 26, 1966.



The Legion post in Vernon, New York proudly displays a M5 Stuart tank.

Most recently the Oriskany has taken on an interesting assignment. After years of back and forth being sold as scrap and then reclaimed, the Navy had a new mission for the carrier. On May 17, 2006 Navy divers blew holes in the retired aircraft carrier and sent the 888-foot USS Oriskany to the bottom of the sea forming the world's largest deliberately created artificial reef. The USS Oriskany Dive Site, aka the great carrier reef, went down in 212 feet of water, about 24 miles off

Pensacola Beach. It has been called, "Most Iconic Sites" as reported in SCUBA Diving magazine, May 2011.

Tanks are a popular relic and Central New York has its own battalion (albeit in different locations). The Waterville American Legion has a modern M1 Abrams tank. The Legion post in Vernon, New York has a nice M5 Stuart tank standing guard. In Rome, NY a M3 Stuart sits in front of American

Legion Post 24. The M3 Stuarts were the first American-crewed tanks in World War II to engage the enemy in tank versus tank combat

These are just a few of the military relics right in our backyard. As you speed by on your way to work or picking kids up from practice take a moment, bring them to the forefront of your mind, and remember the men and women who have fought and sacrificed for our country. **E**



The Oriskany Memorial, the walkway and anchor are lined with the plaques of the men who lost their lives on October 26, 1966.

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## Roman Emporium



By Pat Malin

Twenty-year-old entrepreneur Jeremiah MacGaffick of Rome, NY, is riding the Internet wave and loving it.

He hung out the shingle on his new business, Roman Emporium, last June 1 and two days later rang up his first sale. Not bad for a business that has no street presence.

In lieu of bricks and mortar, Roman Emporium is an e-commerce business that operates in cyberspace at MacGaffick's home. It's as if he's your local branch of Amazon.com, only better.

Maybe you're doing some online shopping for Christmas gifts. You, the customer, browse the site ([www.romanemporium.com](http://www.romanemporium.com)) and place your order online with a credit card or PayPal, and then it gets shipped effortlessly to your home via Shopify, an e-commerce site that helps vendors manage orders, accept credit cards and mail merchandise.

MacGaffick, who describes himself as a "one-man show," has no hesitation about competing with Internet giants like Amazon. Even Walmart made news recently by jumping into the e-commerce pond while it plans to close some of its unprofitable (aka old-fashioned) brick and mortar stores.

He said his advantage is that he can offer the goods to the customers at a lower price than Amazon.

"If (Amazon) tells you a price, they have to cover their cost for selling, let's say jeans, plus double the amount to cover their profit," he said. "I found out that manufacturers will sell to wholesale vendors (like him) at an online price. I have an algorithm in my database and I'll determine what fair market cost is."

According to his website, he is also willing to negotiate on price to attract customers. "Tell us the price you are willing to pay and we accept, reject

or counter the offer," he said.

Last spring, MacGaffick spent a few months researching a number of businesses before he settled on Roman Emporium, which was named after the marketplace in ancient Rome, Italy.

Just in the past few months, he has built up a virtual inventory of 36,500 items, ranging from apparel, jewelry, furniture, household furnishings, beauty products, small appliances and electronics to fragrances.

"Not only will Roman Emporium be selling brand-name products," he wrote on his website. "We will also sell products made right here in Rome, New York."

He's closely evaluating sales and will continue to add or subtract items depending on their popularity. "I'm in a waiting period right now," he said. "I'll see what's selling, what's not. I might get into wedding apparel or seasonal items like snowblowers or lawnmowers, etc."

Unlike Amazon, which

gives you "free" two-day shipping for a \$99 membership fee, Roman Emporium provides totally-free shipping within the U.S. and to U.S. military bases around the world, no strings attached.

MacGaffick, the son of a career Air Force officer, so Rome is his adopted home. His father, John MacGaffick put in 25 years and five months of service. When he retired in 2010 after over 25 years of service. The elder MacGaffick he was stationed at the former Griffiss Air Force Base in Rome.

The younger MacGaffick attended Rome Catholic Academy for three years and graduated from Holy Cross Academy in Oneida. Since then, Jeremiah has been taking college courses (online, of course). He's studying public affairs/government administration at Empire State College and hopes to graduate this spring.

For more information, go to: [www.romanemporium.com](http://www.romanemporium.com) or call: (315) 664-9203. **E**

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## Victory helps to create small miracles within the Rome community

By Carly Proulx

Paul J. Uvanni is President, and owner of Victory Chrysler Dodge Jeep RAM located at 5827 Rome-Taberg Road in Rome, New York. Open Monday-Thursday 9 am – 8 pm, Friday 9 am – 6 pm, and Saturday 9 am – 5 pm, Victory Chrysler Dodge Jeep RAM and the staff, some of which have been with the company since its inception are dedicated not only to the customers walking in the door, but to those outside it in the community.

This year, victory is participating in the Rome Police Department's 2016 Shop with a Cop program. This will make Victory's third community support program within the last two years. Having raised \$22,000 just last year for the Rome city Police Department for additional surveillance in the city of Rome, Victory is on a roll with no signs of stopping. Three security cameras were installed, and Rome is a safer city because of it. Victory is currently also raising funds for the Rome Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Victory first opened its doors as a new car dealership in Camden in 2002, featuring Chrysler Dodge Jeep & Ram vehicles. The dealership moved to its present location in Rome in 2007. Paul Uvanni, and the Victory staff alike understand the importance of helping-out the community. Linda Carlson, advertising and marketing coordinator at Victory



states "the growth of our business depends on the community." Carlson also expressed the main message underlying with raising money for these programs is "to encourage people to think beyond themselves."

In the months of November, and December Victory will raise money for kids whose families otherwise can't afford to celebrate Christmas. From November 9th-December 7th Victory will donate \$25.00 to the Shop with a Cop program for every person who comes in, and takes a test drive. Approximately 80 young children in the community will be chosen, and each child receives a budget to go shopping with a police officer. The schools in the area will provide the names of these children, who best fit the candidate profile. Whether they want toys, clothing, or a gift for their family, one to two children will be assigned an officer to hit the aisles before Santa's sleigh bells ring. A cop shared one little boy's touching story from last

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# How giving back can be so good



Charitable endeavors made by celebrities and other prominent people often make the news. However, millions of regular people across the country and out of the limelight also do their share to help the various groups fighting for good causes.

People have various reasons for getting involved in philanthropic efforts. A Gallup survey on volunteering in the United States found that more than half of volunteers do it because they like helping others. Just about 40 percent said they volunteer to feel good about themselves.

As many volunteers already know, people who give get something in return. Here are just a few ways why giving back can be good for you.

- Volunteer work broadens your skills. Volunteer work allows many people to learn entirely new sets of skills. New opportunities may present problem-solving challenges, and you can discover new ways to think about issues and causes that are dear to you. Volunteering may feel good, but it also can boost your résumé. The experience you gain working with a charity can help you in future professional endeavors.

- Philanthropy produces a “helper’s high.” Volunteer work produces a natural feeling of euphoria that’s measurable and can produce some positive side effects. Boston College researchers discovered that the joy from helping others can be seen on MRI scans. This euphoria can help decrease chronic pain, depression and disability.

## Victory from previous

year when he’d taken him shopping, and the boy refused to buy anything for himself. He wanted only to give members of his family presents.

Linda Carlson and Rome Chief of Police Kevin Beach recently participated in the WKAL Morning Program to talk about the 2016 Shop with a Cop program, and past programs that aided the community. Uvanni, and the Victory staff believe in the future of Rome, and will continue to fight for the health, and wellbeing of its community members. This Christmas you can give back, and help ensure these kids have at least one thing under the tree. Stop by the dealership, take a test drive, and help provide a few smiles for some of the youth in the Rome community. Visit

and like their Facebook page for more information “Victory Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram”. Every little bit helps over the Holidays, and there are those in need of yours. **E**

- Giving back boosts longevity. A 1999 study out of University of California, Berkeley, found that elderly people who volunteered for two or more organizations were 44 percent less likely to die over a five-year period than those who did not volunteer, even after adjusting for a person’s age, exercise habits, general health, and negative habits like smoking. More recent studies have uncovered similar results. People who give help rather than just receiving it can prolong their lives.

- Charity work can keep you connected. Volunteering is a great way to get out and meet new people who share similar goals and interests. People who are new to an area or are recent retirees may find that volunteering helps them make new friends, alleviating feelings of isolation. Volunteer work also provides a great way to network for business contacts or to find out what’s newsworthy in the community.

- Volunteerism boosts self-esteem. Working with a nonprofit or charitable group often provides immediate results. In turn, this immediate gratification can show you that you have a purpose and are assisting others who need a helping hand. Volunteer work can help you become more confident and assertive and provide you with a greater sense of self-worth.

- Giving can inspire others. Many researchers have

determined that giving can be contagious. For example, a study by James Fowler of the University of California, San Diego, and Nicholas Christakis of Harvard that was published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Science found that giving can have a trickle-down effect. Much like the “pay it forward” movement, those who observe charitable efforts are more likely to give to or help different people down the road.

Charitable work can benefit the people on the receiving end of efforts, but it also is beneficial to the person doing the giving. **E**



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## The War Club Paintball Park



Family fun, birthday parties, stress relief, team building... all great reasons to give the paint ball park a try.

Paintball is the #1 extreme sport in the United States with about 10 million people participating. Central New York's premier paintball facility, The War Club Paintball Park, is located 7624 Watson Hollow Road in Rome, New York.

Owner Matt Viscosi explained that they started the War Club in 1996 because of their passion for paintball. The War Club has grown to be the largest paintball park in Central New York. Viscosi said, "Most of the family has moved on to other endeavors but I hope to hold on until my kids can take over. We're open all year; seven days a week. People don't realize the time and effort it takes. It's not a hobby for me. It's a lifestyle." He added, "The big payoff is seeing families come up and enjoy the park."

Viscosi said, "We have all the equipment you need, from novice to expert, to get you out there." Or you can bring your own paintball equipment if you want to. Their rentals include guns, masks, all-day air, and all-day play.

The War Club is the perfect venue for parties. They are fully equipped for any type of party; birthday party to bachelor party to graduation parties and more. They have great group rates and the 12 fields will make your party unique and memorable.

Birthday parties at the War Club give you an opportunity to spend time with family and friends bonding and making memories. Party guests will have access to all 12 fields in the massive playground. You'll be able to enjoy a full day of paintballing fun. You're

guaranteed to have fun no matter your age.

If you want a different way to spend your last night as a single man, why not try paintballing? It's something fun you and your buddies can do while staying out of trouble with your soon-to-be bride. Paintball is good clean fun on the day before your wedding and you won't have to deal with a nasty hangover the next day like most grooms.

After countless hours studying and stressing about tests, and now you've finally graduated. Celebrate with paintball. Give your guests a safe alternative and avoid a traditional graduation party that could involve drinking and possible problems.

Tired of the same team-building and retreat activities you're used to? Try paintball at the War Club. With room for up to 1,000 players you can use the paintball courses as an opportunity for team-building and problem-solving activities. Sometimes an outing together is all you need to start working as a real team. Team build and increase problem solving skills, leadership skills, and creative thinking.

This is your one opportunity to shoot paintballs your co-workers. Line your boss up in the cross hairs and blow off a little steam.

With their tag line, "Helping you hurt each other safely since 1996," safety is priority number 1 at the War Club. The Family-owned and operated business takes safety seriously. They have a trained EMT on staff to ensure immediate reaction time should it be necessary. They also have referees and monitors for an added layer of control during the game. The referees give players as much freedom as possible until they can't handle it.

With affordable rates for rental and play the War Club is the perfect place for you to become part of the fastest growing action sport in America. For more information, go to: www.thewarclub.com or follow them on Facebook: The War Club Paintball Park. E

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# Woods Valley

-Catering to families and snow enthusiasts since the 60's

By Carly Proulx

Out on 9100 State Route 46 in Westernville, New York, Woods Valley Ski Area, Tim and Nuala Woods are hands on owners and operators, anxiously awaiting the season's beginning. Just north of Lake Delta Woods Valley has for years been home to skiers, snowboarders, and now tubers alike in Rome, Utica, Camden, Trenton and surrounding towns. Whether you're seeking beginner, novice, or expert trails Woods Valley has everything to offer in culminating this year's outdoor winter experience.

Tim Woods described it best when he said "We can offer a 'Big Mountain Resort' experience without needing big vertical drop." Current Woods owners husband Tim, and wife, Nuala, have added new upgrades in anticipation for a cold, and snowy winter. January will mark 53 years since Dave, and Joan Woods first paved the way for the Woods Valley we have today. Preceding the 1964 birth of today's ski area, a bit before Dave caught up with it the land had been leased from a local farmer by a group of winter loving folk. These same enthusiasts would install a rope tow, and a simple warming hut known then as Dopp's Run. Dopp's Run ran for a few winters back in the mid-40's on the lower portions of what is now the ski slope called Broadway.

Though only temporary, after 24 years of Dave's hard work, and dedication

to all things ski related would end for the Woods family with the founding father's passing in 1988. Dave and Joan's 4 kids were still young at the time, and it was agreed upon to sell the ski area to close friends of the family, the Olney's, who successfully operated the ski area for the next 23 seasons. It wasn't until 2011 when Dave's son, and current owner Tim Woods, would buy back the family born business.

Woods Valley is where you come if you want to have a more relaxed, and dare I say romantic winter experience. Yet the improvements the Woods's have made since back on the ski scene have certainly enhanced all things edgy for the pros, however tame enough for the beginner skier, and snowboarder. For example, the new Sun Kid Wonder Carpet (conveyor lift) in the Woods Valley Learning Zone provides the extra comfort, and security for your willingness to get in the zone. Massive upgrades to snowmaking, and the new Snow Tubing Park equipped with a carpet lift, and food concession are some other exciting additions to name just a few. Let's not forget the Carpet Lift, and Car-ousel for the beginner

area. With the expansion of specialized terrain offering features for all levels of skill, new gladed areas, and new rental equipment it's no secret the Woods haven't any plans for a near future hibernation, and are fully focused on creating the best possible solution to this year's cabin fever.

Woods Valley is host to local charity events such as Rome Hospital Brew Ha-Ha, and the Rome Clean and Green Wine and Art CHAIRity auction and dinner. The 'non-ski' offerings such as their upgrade from a beer and wine to full service bar at Tap Room 46 elevates every weekend of featured live music acts all winter long. Along with snowmobile hill climb events, fireworks during the Woods Valley birthday celebration in January, pond skimming, big air events, and local and regional alpine races Woods Valley is the happening place to be for all you winter junkies out there. Check out their websites at [www.woodsvalleyskiarea.com](http://www.woodsvalleyskiarea.com), and [www.facebook.com/woodsvalley](http://www.facebook.com/woodsvalley) to find out Woods Valley's official opening date, details on lessons for beginners, as well as upcoming live music, and events.

With a welcoming atmosphere, rustic setting, and a newly renovated lodge that captures all those white, sparkling sunny afternoons Woods Valley wins this year's top choice for winter activity. Step in those skis, and strap on those snowboards folks. Make sure to relax on the way up, as it's all down-hill from here! **E**

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## The many benefits of family meals

Families who resolve to spend more time together may reap a host of benefits. One of the easiest ways to enjoy family company is to dine together — with researchers saying it's one of the most important things parents and other caregivers can do for children.

Hectic schedules have made it commonplace for many families to grab meals on the go, whether on the ride to school or during the commute home from work. Family meals may also play second fiddle to sports practices, extra hours at the office and trips to the gym. However, sitting down for a nightly meal is great for the brain, the body and the spirit.

According to a study from researchers Sandra L. Hofferth and John F. Sandberg titled "How American Children Spend Their Time," which appeared in the Journal of Marriage and Family, family meals are linked to fewer behavior problems, as measured by a child's score on the Behavior Problems Index. And that is not the only advantage to family meals.

- A 2000 survey from the Obesity Prevention Program at Harvard Medical School found that the nine- to 14-year-old children who ate dinner with their families most frequently ate more fruits and vegetables and consumed less soda and fried foods.

- Conversations around the dinner table provide an opportunity for children to expand their vocabulary and knowledge about key issues. A 2006 article in

New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development found dinnertime conversation boosts vocabulary even more than being read to. Young kids learned 1,000 rare words at the dinner table, compared to only 143 from parents reading storybooks aloud. At the family dinner table, parents can teach their kids how to speak well when among other adults and children without the distractions of television, phones and other electronic devices drawing kids' attention away.

- Family dinners can help expand palates and get children to try new things.

- Experts in the Department of Child Development and Family Science at North Dakota State University say family meals help provide a regular, consistent opportunity to create an environment of inclusion for everyone in the family. Family meals also become a way to carry on family traditions and instill a sense of family unity.

- Eating together may help prevent certain poor adolescent behaviors. Teens who have fewer than three family dinners a week are 3.5 times more likely to abuse prescription drugs and to use illegal drugs other than marijuana; three times more likely to use marijuana; more than 2.5 times more likely to smoke cigarettes; and 1.5 times more likely to try alcohol, according to Court Appointed Special Advocate reports.

Family meals are more than just a chance to enjoy good food together. Such meals may benefit children for years to come. **E**

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# Easy 'green' Thanksgiving ideas



**T**hanksgiving is a holiday to give thanks and share special moments with family and friends. While the original Thanksgiving might have taken place during a time when food was sparse, nowadays Thanksgiving often involves excessive amounts of food, with more food ending up in the garbage than in celebrants' bellies.

The United States Department of Agriculture projects that Americans will throw away more than 200 million pounds of edible turkey meat this Thanksgiving holiday. And Thanksgiving typically ushers in a period of wastefulness, as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says American households produce roughly 25 percent more trash between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day than during the rest of the year.

Reducing waste is a worthy goal year-round, but especially so during the holiday season. And accomplishing that goal can be done without sacrificing holiday traditions.

- Use fine china when serving meals. Thanksgiving provides an opportunity to serve meals on fine china and use the silverware that has gone unused instead of disposable plates and utensils. In addition to adding a touch of elegance to meals, reusable china and silverware is less wasteful than paper plates and plastic utensils. Cloth napkins and other table linens are also more eco-friendly than paper napkins.

- Decorate using natural items. Scour the great outdoors for all-natural centerpiece materials or other items that can be turned into wreaths and garlands. Vases filled with pine cones and acorns make for beautiful, inexpensive and festive decorations.

- Shop locally and organically. When shopping for Thanksgiving dinner, choose local produce, poultry and grains whenever possible. Resist the urge to buy more than you need as well. Skip some of the less-popular dishes that are used only to make the table seem full. Buy a small turkey or think about only serving turkey breasts, which tend to be the most popular cuts of the bird. Use reusable shopping bags to carry items home and reduce waste even further.

- Light candles and reduce energy consumption. During the meal, eat by candlelight and turn off lights in other areas of the home that are not in use. Rather than turning on the television, take the party outdoors and play a game of football on the front lawn.

- Have a local Thanksgiving. Start a new tradition and invite nearby friends and family over for the holiday instead of traveling long distances. According to Use Less Stuff, a resource for eco-conscious men and women, if each family reduced gasoline consumption by one gallon (roughly 20 miles), they could reduce greenhouse gas emissions by one million tons.

- Send home the left-

overs. Send each guest home with some leftovers if you have any. This way the refrigerator isn't left full of items that will end up uneaten. Otherwise, donate uncooked food to a local food bank. Use any scraps of vegetables in a compost pile.

- Don't let recycling fall by the wayside. Remember to recycle all applicable items. Just because

it's a holiday doesn't mean recycling habits should be forgotten. Encourage guests to pitch in by clearly marking recycling bins.

Thanksgiving can be less wasteful without detracting from the enjoyment and true meaning of the holiday. **E**



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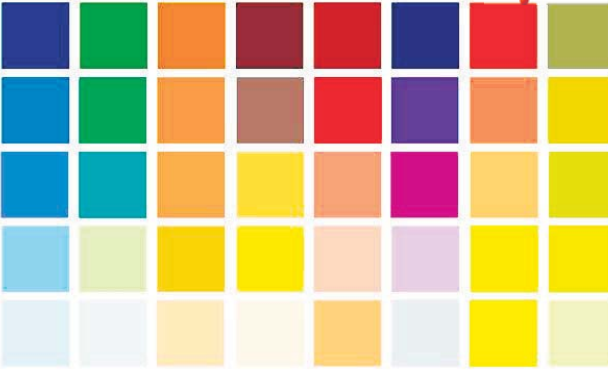



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## ITEMIZED DEDUCTION OVERVIEW

**It is impossible to condense every deduction out there.** Here are some general guidelines!

A good number of taxpayers chose to itemize deductions instead of choosing the standard deduction. It is often difficult to meet the income criteria for allowable medical expense. We all know things like insurance premiums, co-pays, medications, mileage etc. are allowed. Dental expenses such as dentures or braces also count. Stop smoking programs, certain weight loss expenses and acupuncture all qualify if your MD prescribes it to you.

Did you know that certain capital expenses or improvements to your home for medical care also qualify? Removal of lead based paint qualifies. You may also claim the expense associated with a qualified service animal that aides the blind, deaf, disabled or emotional support of an individual.. including training and veterinary costs.

Deductible taxes include state, local and foreign INCOME taxes, state and local SALES taxes, real estate taxes and personal property taxes. Often a client buys a new car and is told he can claim the sales tax paid as a deduction. You can claim general sales taxes instead of income taxes (*income taxes are the state and local withholdings on your W-2*) **BUT YOU CANNOT CLAIM BOTH.**

Mortgage interest, points and insurance premiums for qualified mortgages are all deductible if you meet the requirements.

Charitable contributions are deductible. Your donation must be made to an organization and not to a specific person in order to qualify. Always keep a list of the organization, date and amount of donation along with a receipt. You may also deduct for donations of non cash items such as clothing, household goods and so forth. For donations in excess a qualified appraisal is generally required.

Miscellaneous expenses that are deductible include unreimbursed employee expenses, tax prep fees and

other expenses. Further information can be found in IRS Publication 529.

If you are self employed or an employee working from home you may be able to deduct certain expenses for the part of your home used exclusively for business. There are two options for utilizing this deduction. The REGULAR method where you allocate the total expenses of your home to the percentage of the floor space used for business, or the SIMPLIFIED method where you use \$5.00 per square foot up to a max of 300 sq feet as your business usage of home space. In my experience most people prefer the REGULAR method.

Business Travel Expenses are ORDINARY and NECESSARY expenses of traveling for your job, profession or business. These expenses cannot be extravagant or for personal use. These expenses can include air fare to dry cleaning and most things in between. You can deduct entertainment expense if it's directly related to the business at hand. Employee business expenses must also be ORDINARY and NECESSARY.

Education expenses like books, tuition and supplies along with other costs can be a deductible if it improves your job skills or maintains them or if your employer or law requires you to do so for any purpose. This is A DEDUCTION, not to be confused with the credits for higher education.

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*Alicia Cashman*  
Tax Preparer/Owner



## Great gifts for seniors

Every holiday shopper ends up with at least one loved one on their shopping list who they can't seem to find anything for. Some people seem to have it all, while others may be less than forthcoming with regard to items they may need or want.

Many seniors tend to fall into the latter category. Shopping for holiday gifts for seniors can be difficult if shoppers don't know what seniors want. But the following are a handful of gift ideas that might make this holiday season that much more special for seniors.



### Books

A 2015 survey from the Pew Research Center found that 69 percent of adults age 65 and over acknowledged reading

at least one book in the previous 12 months. That makes books a good bet for shoppers who don't know what to get their 65-and-over loved ones this holiday season. But shoppers might want to opt for more traditional print books rather than e-books, as the survey found that only 15 percent of readers age 65 and over had read an e-book in the previous 12 months.

### Gym membership

According to the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, more than 80 percent of adults do not meet the guidelines for aerobic and muscle-strengthening activities. That can be especially troubling for seniors, who are at greater risk for osteoporosis, a medical condition in which age-related tissue loss contributes to brittle, fragile bones. Physical activity, including muscle-strengthening activities like weight training, can help combat osteoporosis. Family members stuck on what

to get aging loved ones may want to consider gifting a membership to a local gym. Many gyms offer heavily discounted memberships to seniors, and such gyms may even offer senior fitness classes at no additional cost.

### Travel gifts

Many retirees love to travel, but not every senior has the means to take off for parts unknown. A 2013 survey from the Transamerica Center for Retirement Studies® found that 25 percent of retirees admitted they wished they would have saved more for retirement travel. Holiday shoppers can light up seniors' smiles by gifting travel gifts this holiday season. One idea is to transfer airline miles to an elderly loved one so he or she can get a free or discounted flight. If that's not a possibility, some new luggage or a Global Hotel Card™ sponsored by Orbitz®, a gift card that can be redeemed at 70,000 hotels across the globe, is sure to please.

### Family time

Shoppers who are especially stuck on what to get seniors for Christmas can just resolve to spend more time with their elderly loved ones. Many seniors genuinely have everything they need, and such men and women may only want to spend more time with their children and grandchildren. Make a New Year's resolution to spend more time with the special seniors in your life if the perfect gift is eluding you. **E**

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## DID YOU KNOW?

According to a 2015 study from researchers at the University of Georgia, in 2010 alone, between four and 12 million metric tons of plastic trash found its way into the oceans from coastal countries. That was the first estimate of how much plastic enters the ocean in a year since 1975. In that 1975 study, researchers working with the National Academy of Sciences estimated that 0.1 percent of global plastic production found its way into the oceans. But the 2015 study examined the volume of plastic waste produced by every coastal country in the world before estimating how much of that waste could wash into the oceans due to littering, open dumps or landfill leaks. The study's authors determined that roughly 15 to 40 percent of plastic litter or waste enters the ocean each year. Where that waste ultimately ends up, and the impact that it has on marine life and human food supply, remains a mystery. In addition, the study's authors predict the amount of plastic waste entering the oceans will double in the next decade. **E**



# Local Man hikes the Pacific Crest Trail

By Jessica Arsenault Rivenburg

I lion-native Jason Cristman and Emily Keddie, of Fredonia, quickly became known as Crispy and Pancake on their hike across the Pacific Crest Trail.

“On the trail, no one calls you by your real name,” Cristman said. “I was Crispy, and Em was Pancake.”

Those names, Cristman explained, came from a morning he and his girlfriend decided to make pancakes for themselves and all the hikers that came through while they cooked. Not having the typical wares and ingredients for normal pancakes, the pair’s breakfast came out crispy and delicious and became all the rage among their fellow-hikers. Thus, they became known as Crispy and Pancake.

The pair recently returned to Central New York after a 6-month hike from Mexico to Canada via the Pacific Crest Trail.

It was a trip that took much forethought and planning.

“I’ve been hiking my whole life,” said Cristman, a 1997 Ilion High School graduate. “I found out about the Pacific Trail about four years ago, before (the movie) ‘Wild’ (featuring Reese Witherspoon as hiker on the trail). I was very interested in it and I have a lot of friends out west. I had never been out there but always wanted to.”

While some of his friends made plans to hike the shorter Appalachian Trail up the East Coast, Cristman and his girlfriend Keddie made plans to tackle the Pacific Crest Trail instead.

“It’s a lot cooler than the Appalachian Trail,” Cristman said. “It pretty much has every climate change along the trail – desert, mountain, rainforest in Washington. The Appalachian Trail is pretty much just forest the whole way.”

After reading books and trail guides, planning routes, stops and food drops for themselves, packing up an array of gear including a water purification system and Jetboil cooking system, Cristman and Keddie flew into San Diego, California, on March 31. After spending a night with Ilion-native Ashley (Day) McDonald, the pair set out from Campo, Califor-

nia, for their first day of hiking at 9:30 am on April 2. They walked 12 miles their first day.

“There’s really no way to train for that kind of trip,” Cristman said. “Your body slowly gets used to it.”

Cristman said that once they got into the groove of hiking every day, he and Keddie worked their way up to an average of 20 miles a day, with their highest mileage day reaching 34.8 miles.

The first stretch of the trip being dessert, water was a main concern for the hikers.

“Walking through the desert, you need a lot of water,” Cristman said. “When we started out, we had too much equipment. More than we needed. A couple times we had to drop stuff because we just couldn’t carry it all, especially when we were carrying liters of water as well. It’s amazing what you don’t actually need.”

The pair timed their hike just right to coincide with a rare desert bloom, which happens only once every 10 years or so. The event is so rare and unique, that Fox News ran a piece on the “super bloom.” (<http://www.foxnews.com/travel/2016/03/08/death-valley-in-bloom-rare-flowers-appear-once-every-10-years.html>)

“It was absolutely incredible,” Cristman said. “You think of a desert being dry and brown and nothing much growing, but it was actually lush and full of color.”

Along with the desert came dozens of mountain peaks, from Mt. San Jacinto, which stands 10,500 feet tall and is a 28-mile hike from top to bottom, Big Bear Mountain and Mt. Whitney, one of Cristman’s personal highlights

of the trip, to Mt. Shasta and Mt. Rainier toward the end of their journey.

Cristman trekked through a total of six national parks, including Yosemite, Sequoia, and Lassen. He experienced crystal clear lakes, including the three deepest lakes in the United States, waterfalls with cave tunnels behind, volcanoes and Northwest rainforests.

“Everything was completely covered in moss,” Cristman described the rainforest. “The trees, the forest floor, all moss. About 150 miles into Washington, I could see Mt. Rainier, that was one of my favorite parts of the trail. It was absolutely stunning.”

Stunning vistas were not the only thing to impress and inspire the hikers. Dozens of volunteers known as “Trail Angels,” help hikers along their way by providing a place to rest and do laundry, eat a home cooked meal, get a ride into town and have an opportunity to relax and meet other hikers.

“The generosity of these people is absolutely

unbelievable,” Cristman raved. “Bringing you into their homes, doing your laundry, feeding you, all on a donation basis. It’s just incredible.”

Two that stuck out in Cristman’s mind included one in Agua Dulce, California, where hikers were given a community kitchen, movies, beds, a fire pit and a postal service stop right at the pit stop, and one in Whitewater, California, run by “Ziggy and the Bear.”

“When you’ve been out hiking for days on end, these people are like rock stars to you,” he said.

Finally, on October 5, after six months and three days of hiking, and covering a total of 2,683 miles, Cristman and Keddie reached the Canadian border.

“I’ll tell you, I lost 33 pounds and am in the best shape of my life right now,” Cristman said with a laugh.

“Everything went completely flawless really,” he continued. “I met tons of people and it’s overwhelming how incredible people are. There are still so many good people out there. So giving and nice.

I can’t wait to pay that forward. I think that’s the biggest thing I took away from the trip. It was definitely a life-changing experience.”

Now, back home, Crist-

man says it’s good to be with family again, but there is also a sadness that the trip is over, which leaves him itching to return out west and tackle another hike in the future.

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## The history of holiday lights



Holiday celebrants employ holiday lights in various ways. Certain individuals may be content to hang lights on their Christmas trees and call their decorating complete. Others may get their holiday jollies by making sure each square inch of their home is covered in twinkling lights. Still, other people prefer the more subdued effect of lights framing one picture window of the house.

The tradition of Christmas lights stretches back to early modern Germany when people used candles to decorate Christmas trees in Christian homes. Those candles were harbingers of what would come when electric lights replaced gas and other open flame illuminating devices that were commonplace prior to the 20th century.

Thomas Edison, the inventor of the first successful practical light bulb, also created the first strand of electric lights that would be used in holiday decorating. By 1880, Edison had standard incandescent light bulbs well sorted out and desired a way to better advertise his invention, so he decided to make the most of the holiday season and put his light bulbs on display. According to a 2003 article in American Heritage magazine titled "The Wizard of Your Christmas Tree," Edison strung incandescent bulbs all around the compound of his

Menlo Park, NJ, laboratory. Edison constructed an eight-mile underground wiring system in order to power this grand light display. Because the laboratory was situated along the railroad that passed between Manhattan and Philadelphia, thousands of people were able to see the display.

The concept of electric holiday lights took a bit of time to catch on. Edison's friend and associate Edward Johnson was tasked with stringing together colored lights in 1882 and placing them on an evergreen tree. Johnson hand-wired 80 red, white and blue light bulbs. In 1895, President Grover Cleveland requested the White House family Christmas tree be illuminated by multi-colored electric light bulbs.

In 1903, when General Electric began to offer pre-assembled kits of holiday lights, strung lights were reserved for the wealthy and electrically savvy. For example, in 1903 a single string of electric lights cost \$12, or around \$300 today.

It would take several more years before holiday lights became a national tradition. On Christmas Eve 1923, President Calvin Coolidge began the country's celebration of Christmas by lighting the National Christmas Tree on the Ellipse located south of the White House with 3,000 electric lights.

Today, illuminated strands of lights have become a large part of holiday celebrations and have even been adopted for use during various year-round events. Such lights can be a beautiful and festive addition to many celebrations. **E**

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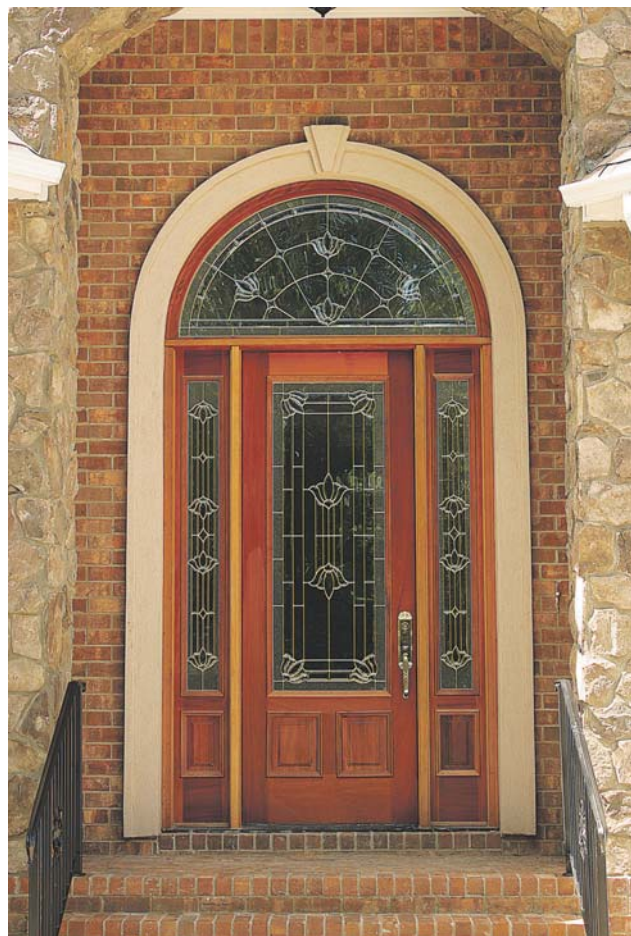
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# Add curb appeal to your property



*An inviting entryway free of clutter can add substantial curb appeal to a property.*

Many people are familiar with the idea that a strong first impression can go a long way. While that idea is most often referenced in regard to personal interactions, it's also applicable to real estate.

When selling a home, homeowners who emphasize curb appeal may find it far easier to sell their homes. Curb appeal refers to the impression a

home's exterior makes on people seeing the home for the first time. In 2014, the online real estate database Zillow® surveyed real estate agents and found that curb appeal was one of the five most important factors when selling a home.

Projects that improve curb appeal can be vast undertakings or simpler projects, and the following are a handful of projects to improve a home's

curb appeal that run the gamut from simple to complex.

- Clean up the yard. Cleaning up the yard is among the simpler yet most effective projects to improve a home's curb appeal. When selling their homes, homeowners should clear the yard of any clutter, including kids' toys, grass clippings or items that might be scattered throughout the yard. A cluttered yard suggests homeowners do not care much about their home's appearance, and that may lead buyers to think that indifference extended to maintaining the home's interior as well. Many buyers will ignore properties without any external aesthetic appeal, but cleaning up the yard does not require much effort or expense on the part of sellers.

- Make the main entryway more inviting. Creating a more inviting entryway won't be as simple as cleaning up the yard, but it can help create a strong first impression without breaking the bank. To begin, remove plants and furniture from the front porch or area surrounding the doorway, as such items can create a cluttered feel. If the front door is old, replace it. Custom doors may be expensive, but they might add the wow factor buyers are looking for. If a new door is beyond your means or just unnecessary, repaint the door, ideally in a color that complements the color of your home and the surrounding landscape.

- Address pavement problems. Paving problems are not necessarily an expensive fix, but the cost of repairing driveways and walkways can add up if it's been awhile since these areas were refurbished. Still, one of the first things buyers will notice when getting out of their cars is the ground they're walking on, so patch and repair or even replace driveways and walkways that have fallen into disrepair.

- Add or upgrade outdoor living spaces. Outdoor living spaces also can set a property apart from others on the market. A recent study from the National Association of Realtors found that buyers would not hesitate to pay asking price for homes with outdoor living spaces. When adding or upgrading outdoor living spaces, try to depersonalize the spaces as much as possible, as buyers want to

picture themselves, and not the sellers, enjoying these areas. Include some comfortable furniture, adequate lighting and a dining area in your outdoor living space as well.

Curb appeal can add a lot to a home, while lack of such appeal can make a home difficult to sell. Homeowners who want to sell their properties for asking price or more should address curb appeal before putting their homes on the market. **E**

## Top ways you might be wasting your money

(MS) — Many consumers waste money every day without even noticing it. Yet, rethinking our habits could provide savings that add up quickly over time. Here is a list of the top ways we waste money. Are there any areas where you could improve?

Paying credit card interest — Always aim to pay off credit card debt as soon as possible. Consider moving balances from high interest credit cards to one with a lower interest rate. This will allow you to pay off debt faster.

Wasting food — The average household throws out about \$600 worth of food each year. Meal planning and budgeting for food can reduce waste significantly.

Wasting energy — Every month, many homeowners throw money out their doors and windows through energy loss attributed to poorly insulated or maintained homes. Combat the problem easily for instant savings. Top up attic insulation with an easy-to-install batt product, like Roxul Comfortbatt,

which can also be used to insulate crawl spaces, basement headers and walls for greater energy efficiency. Caulk cracks and crevices around doors and windows and invest in a programmable thermostat.

Choosing the wrong plan, option or service provider — Many of us overspend on our phone, cable and even our mortgage. Have you stayed with the status quo for convenience? It might be time to rethink your options. Right-size your phone plan — perhaps an unlimited plan is unnecessary — to reflect actual usage and shrink monthly bills. Consider alternate sources for television and movie viewing. Always shop around for mortgage or car insurance and consider using a broker who has access to dozens of potential lenders/insurers.

Impulse buying — A little self-control can go a long way to lining your wallet. Become a smart shopper by researching prices and options before making significant purchases. **E**

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## Heating homes more efficiently



*It is time to switch to a programmable thermostat to heat a home more efficiently.*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- **Reuse oven heat.** After cooking a meal in the oven, open the oven door and let the residual heat escape into the kitchen and the rest of the house. Note, it is not safe to heat a home with the oven, and the oven should be turned off before opening the door.

- **Add a little humidity.** Moist air tends to hold heat better. Add some humidity to dry indoor air, particularly if the relative humidity of the home as measured with a hygrometer is below 25 percent. Houseplants and home aquariums can add some warm moisture to the air and reduce reliance on heat.

- **Limit use of exhaust fans.** After showering or cooking, keep the exhaust fan on for as little time as possible so that warm air is not drawn out of the home.

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

## Power tool safety tips... Here are just a few

- Read all manufacturers' instructions and guidelines before use.
- Keep your tools clean and in proper operating condition.
- Use the right tool for the job.
- Always wear eye protection, such as safety glasses or goggles.
- Wear standard cotton or leather work gloves to protect hands.
- Consider the use of earplugs or earmuffs with loud power tools.
- Don't use power tools in proximity to flammable vapors, dust or construction materials.
- Always check that wires are kept away from blades.
- Maintain a tight grip on a tool.
- Do not overreach when using tools, and maintain balance.
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## Tips to finding the right contractor

—cheapest is not necessarily the best way to choose



Take time to ask for references and then make sure you call and ask questions. Your peers are one of your best sources of good advice when choosing a contractor comes into play.

Home improvement projects tend to be costly. Because of the considerable financial investment homeowners must make when improving their homes, it's important to find a contractor you can trust and feel comfortable with.

The vast majority of professional contractors are trustworthy and willing to work with homeowners to help them design the homes of their dreams. But there are still some tips homeowners can keep in mind as they begin their search for a contractor.

- Work only with licensed contractors.

Licensed contractors have been verified as legitimate by your local governing body, removing much of the fears homeowners have with regard to finding trustworthy contractors. Unlicensed contractors may not be insured or bonded, and their estimates may be lower than their licensed competitors' because they do not contribute to unemployment. Licensed contractors often are subjected to criminal background checks as well, calming homeowners' fears about inviting strangers into their homes.

- Ask for recommendations. Word-of-mouth is

great when looking for contractors. Oftentimes, a contractor's best friends are his past clients. Ask friends or neighbors for recommendations on local contractors, inquiring about prices as well as each particular contractor's demeanor and openness to suggestions. Contact your local Office of Consumer Affairs to check each contractor's complaint history.

- Get written estimates. Before hiring a particular firm, get written estimates from several contractors. Some contractors will charge fees for the estimate, but they must inform you of those fees before the estimates

are provided. Compare estimates so you can get a better grasp of how much your project will cost. While cost is important, try to avoid choosing a contractor based on cost alone, as a good rapport with a contractor who may be more expensive might make spending a little more money worth it.

- Make sure the contract is specific. When you choose a contractor, make sure the contract he or she provides is very specific, going into great detail about the specifics of the project. This contract should spell out the materials and equipment that will be used, as well as the final cost of the project, the payment schedules while the project is ongoing and the work schedule.

- Keep track of all paperwork and pay by check. Once you sign the contract, create a folder where you can store all paperwork. Scan each document so you can store them on your computer as well. When payments must be made, never pay in cash. Pay by check and do not pay for the entirety of the project upfront, opting instead to pay at predetermined intervals spelled out in your contract.

Nerves often come into play when hiring a home contractor, but homeowners who take a careful approach to the hiring

process will likely end up hiring a trustworthy con-

tractor who does great work. **E**

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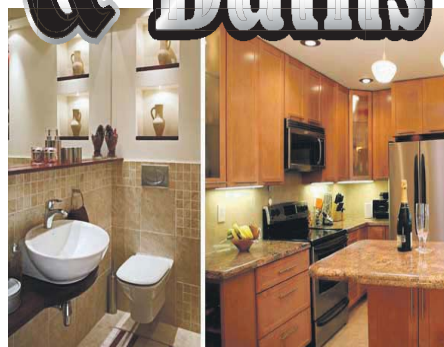
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## Common mistakes made on home renovation projects

Home improvement projects can turn a house into a home. Homeowners plan scores of renovations to transform living spaces into rooms that reflect their personal tastes and comforts.

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Homeowners going it alone may find things do not always go as planned. In fact, a Harris Interactive study found that 85 percent of homeowners say remodeling is a more stressful undertaking than buying a home. But homeowners about to embark on home improvement projects can make the process go more smoothly by avoiding these common pitfalls.

### Failing to understand the scope of the project

Some homeowners don't realize just how big a commitment they have made until they get their hands dirty. But understanding the scope of the project, including how much demolition and reconstruction is involved and how much time a project will take can help homeowners avoid some of the stress that comes with renovation projects. For example, a bathroom renovation may require the removal of drywall, reinforcement of flooring to accommodate a new bathtub or shower enclosure and the installation of new plumbing and wiring behind walls. So such a renovation is far more detailed than simply replacing faucets.

## Things to consider when renovating a vacation home

Vacation homes may seem like a luxury only the very wealthy can afford, but many people purchase vacation homes as investments. Vacation homes give families a place to escape to where they can spend time together each summer or winter, but such homes also help homeowners generate income, and some homeowners even find the height of vacation season generates enough rental income to pay for the second home year-round.

Personal style goes a long way toward determining how to renovate a primary residence. But men and women who own vacation homes they hope to rent out should not allow their own personal styles to dictate a vacation home renovation project. The following are some additional things homeowners should consider before renovating their vacation homes.

- Curb appeal: When

renovating a vacation property, relatively minor updates can dramatically improve curb appeal, which may bear more weight with prospective renters than it would prospective buyers. Potential buyers are making a substantial financial commitment when they buy a home, so they will go over a home with a fine tooth comb. But vacation renters are making a much smaller financial commitment, so curb appeal can go a long way toward encouraging vacationers to rent your property. Repaint a home in a more vibrant color or replace old siding with newer material. Hire a local landscaping service to tend to the property throughout vacation season, and be sure to include updated photos of your property with online listings.

- Connectivity: While vacation was once a respite from all aspects of our everyday lives, nowadays

### Not establishing a budget

Homeowners must develop a project budget to ensure their projects do not drain their finances. If your budget is so inflexible that you can't afford the materials you prefer, you may want to postpone the project and save more money so you can eventually afford to do it right.

Without a budget in place, it is easy to overspend, and that can put you in financial peril down the line. Worrying about coming up with money to pay for materials and labor also can induce stress. Avoid the anxiety by setting a firm budget.

### Making trendy or overpersonal improvements

Homeowners who plan to stay in their homes for the long run have more free reign when it comes to renovating their homes. Such homeowners can create a billiards room or paint a room hot pink if they so prefer. However, if the goal is to make improvements in order to sell a property, overly personal touches may make a property less appealing to prospective buyers. Trends come and go, and improvements can be expensive. If your ultimate goal is to sell your home, opt for renovations that will look beautiful through the ages and avoid bold choices that may only appeal to a select few buyers.

### Forgetting to properly vet all workers

It is important to vet your contractor, but don't forget to vet potential subcontractors as well. Failing to do so can prove a costly mistake. Contractors often look to subcontractors to perform certain parts of a job, and it is the responsibility of homeowners to vet these workers.

### Expecting everything

to go as planned

Optimism is great, but you also should be a realist. Knowing what potentially could go wrong puts you in a better position to handle any problems should they arise. The project might go off without a hitch, but plan for a few hiccups along the way.

### Overestimating DIY abilities

Overzealous homeowners may see a renovation project in a magazine or on television and immediately think they can do the work themselves. Unless you have the tools and the skills necessary to do the work, tackling too much can be problematic. In the long run, leaving the work to a professional may save you money.

Home improvements can be stressful, but homeowners can lessen that stress by avoiding common renovation mistakes. **E**

vacationers want to maintain at least some connection to the outside world. If your vacation home is not up-to-date with its wireless technology, upgrade to a faster network that offers high speed Internet. Such connectivity can and likely will prove attractive to prospective renters who have grown accustomed to relying on the Internet, even when they are on vacation.

- Appliances: A vacation rental may not need the latest and greatest appliances, but homeowners may find it easier to attract renters (and charge more in rent) if the home is not filled with outdated appliances reminiscent of a long forgotten era. Upgrade especially outdated appliances, but make sure any upgrades fit with the theme of your rental. For example, stainless steel appliances may look great in your primary residence, but such appliances are costly and may not be what renters hoping to find a beachside bungalow are looking for.

- Accessibility: Some people want a vacation home far off the beaten path, but that does not mean the home has to be inaccessible. If your vacation home is in a wooded area far off the road, consider paving the access road prospective renters will use to get to and from the property. This relatively small touch may appeal to potential renters who want some seclusion but don't want to put their vehicles through the ringer every time they leave the property.

Renovating a vacation home is a great way to generate extra rental income from the property, and there are several ways homeowners can make their vacation homes more attractive to renters without breaking the bank. **E**

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Rather than looking for a new home, some homeowners consider expansion. Expanding a living space can be expensive, and a more affordable option may be converting existing basement or garage space into something more livable. Garages al-

Before beginning the renovation, homeowners should consider the benefits versus the cost of converting the garage. For those who are planning to grow old in a house, a garage conversion can be a worthy investment. But those who intend to sell their homes rather than retire in them may learn that a converted garage

Always apply for the proper permits and learn the zoning laws to see if a garage conversion is acceptable in your town or city. It's best to go by the book so that work can be done in a proper manner and be inspected for safety.

Many homeowners hope their garage-conversion projects will make their garages seem like a seamless part of the rest of the house. To do so, you will need to remove evidence the space was once a garage. Slab floor will need to be raised and insulated. Walls also will need to be insulated and finished to improve comfort and soundproofing. Many garages do not

One of the biggest transformations will come by way of modifying the garage door entry. Some homeowners prefer to leave the existing door so that the home still has the appearance of a garage from the curb, while others remove the garage door and rebuild the exterior wall so that it has a window or another architectural element. An architect can help suggest design elements that will camouflage the original garage look and make the space seem like it was always part of the main living area of the home.

Landscaping work also can minimize the appearance of an old garage. Rather than having the driveway end at the wall of a home, shrubbery, pavers and other techniques can blend the garage renovation into the rest of the yard design.

tor and follow the municipal guidelines for modifying the space to ensure the job is done right. **E**

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- Have reasonable expectations. A renovation project may exceed its budget and take longer than initially expected.

A home that is undergoing a remodel can be a less than comfortable environment. But homeowners who have never before lived through a renovation project can take several steps to make the process go as smoothly as possible. **E**



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# Confessions of a Liar

By Joe Parzych

My brother Stanley left home before finishing grammar school. My father had assigned him some chores to do before he went to work on the night shift at the paper mill. But Stanley got an offer of a paying job, from a neighbor, taking wood away from a saw rig. Stanley took the job which paid 50 cents for the day.

“In the morning before Pa got home”, Stanley said, “I threw some clothes in a bran sack feed bag and left home. It’d snowed that night, and the road was filled with a foot of snow that got into my shoes. I didn’t know where to go, but I wasn’t going to stay around for another whipping.”

Stanley got a job with a dairy farmer who was down to one cow, having drunk away his money and his herd plus three other farms he’d inherited from relatives who died during the flu epidemic. At a doctor’s appointment for a hoarse throat, the doctor said he didn’t see anything. “You better look, again; there’s three farms down there.”

Stanley’s job was “hired man” to milk and take care of the remaining cow in exchange for room and board, but his main job was keeping the drunken farmer company. During the day, Stanley looked for a paying job, and to get away from the babbling drunk. One night, he got back late to stumble in the dark over the farmer’s body; the result of several drinks too many.

Stanley next found a job dismantling cars in a junk yard. He was 15. The job was piecework. It was during the Great Depression. He got 25 cents for removing the car body and 50 cents for taking out the engine and smashing it to pieces with a sledge hammer. One day a particle of metal flew into his eye. He’d blinked, but the particle pierced his eyelid and lodged in his eye. The junk yard owner sent him to the company doctor. The doctor said, “I see the hole in your eyelid, but I don’t see anything in your eye. It must have fallen out. Go home and get some rest.”

A day or two later, our brother Walter found Stanley

in bed with his eye swollen the size of a golf ball. He took Stanley to our sister Helen, who drove him to Massachusetts Eye and Ear in Boston where they removed his infected eye and replaced it with a glass eye. Since he was working piecework, the junk yard owner claimed Stanley was an independent contractor and the junk yard was not liable for his injuries. Stanley didn’t consult a lawyer and never collected a dime of compensation or even his medical expenses.

Stanley drove a car for a year or two without a driver’s license. One day a policeman stopped him for speeding. The policeman let him go on condition he get a license. Stanley faked the eye test by peeking through his fingers and memorizing the eye chart with his good eye. He always made sure to renew his license so that he wouldn’t have to take another eye test. He got a second license in Louisiana which required no testing. He kept that license paid up, too.

Stanley drove cars, trucks, and motorcycles for many years; once even owning and driving a taxi-cab. He moved back to Louisiana, still driving despite a cataract over his remaining eye. He drove back to visit folks in Massachusetts, once, and backed over a lilac bush as he turned around to leave. He drove for a couple more years before he died of lung congestion caused by years of heavy smoking. I called him shortly before he died.

“Why are you calling; what do you want?, he asked. “Nothing; I just wanted to know how you were doing?” Stanley was so overcome that I was concerned over him that he broke into tears. He then said it was the first time anyone had ever called to see how he was doing. He then asked me, “Did they ever wish I’d come home, after I ran away?”

“Yes”, I lied, “they often did.” Stanley called from time to time, to ask that same question, and I continued to lie to him, figuring that God would forgive me for giving Stanley some comfort in his wretched life. **E**

# Another Day



By Joan O. Scharf

She fussed with her hair, tweaking a strand this way or that before spritzing it with a gel spray. Ivory blush foundation evened the color of her face, and brown pencil shaped her brows. Mascara strokes to the lashes, a few dabs of lipstick and...done.

Crystal picked up the hand mirror to check her reflection from the back when the cell phone beside her played its sum-moning ring.

“Hello?” “Hey there. I’m calling to see if the Birthday Girl would like to go out to dinner tonight?”

Pleased to know that Rocco remembered, Crystal pressed the phone closer to her ear. “Yes, the Birthday Girl would be most happy to accompany you. I can be ready by six. Will that be ok?”

“Works for me. I’ll be there to pick you up at six.”

Crystal went back to examining her reflection in the mirror. Not bad for turning fifty seven. Most of her friends the same age looked older, she thought.

She checked her watch. There was still plenty of time to shop for a new outfit to wear tonight. Crystal often stressed about her clothes, make-

up, diet, and exercise. After all these years she finally connected with someone suitable and didn’t want him to lose interest. Rocco was six years younger than she, and although he said it didn’t matter to him, it was a source of constant concern for Crystal. She felt she had to keep herself current.

In the dressing room of the third store, Crystal decided on a red dress with a plunging neckline. The red color made her look younger, she thought, and the cut of the dress slimmed her hips. Overly pricey, but

after all, it was her birth-day.

Feeling good about herself and looking forward to her celebration tonight, she carried it to the check-out counter. The attractive young girl reached for the tag. “Are you all set? Pretty dress!”

Crystal dug in her purse for her credit card and smiled. “It’s more than I anticipated paying, but it’s a special day.”

The girl smiled back. “Yes, you’re lucky. Today is Wednesday, and you get the senior citizen discount.” **E**



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# The Eclectic Chic redefines shopping

By Carly Proulx



Valerie Pollack (right) and Diane Miller make business fun at Eclectic Chic in Wampsville, New York.

First opening its doors on August 1st the Eclectic Chic brings all things unique under the roof of a charming old school house on 101 Genesee Street in Wampsville, New York. Store hours are Monday through Thursday from 10 am to 6 pm, and Friday through Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm. Owners Valerie Pollack, and Dianne Miller are longtime friends, and

as it turns out the perfect partners in spotlighting the eclectic side of life.

The name says it all. Pollack, and Miller first met years back at a multi-vendor store. Coming full circle once both retired by opening up their own one of a kind co-op shopping experience they're giving great exposure to both first time vendors, and those who've been around the vending machine, and back. "We love to

under one roof surpasses just about all I've set foot in. Eclectic Chic has everything from homemade soaps to fine antiques, beautifully blown glass, vintage clothing, and homemade light fixtures.

Creating a warm, yet vibrant atmosphere is not just in what's for sale, but how well Pollack, and Miller have optimized the store space for displaying the talent, and products of their vendors. Currently that number is



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You know you are in a different kind of multi vendor shop the minute you open the door.

see people succeed," says Pollack. Both Miller, and Pollack expresses "What sets us apart from other multi-vendor stores is that we're selective in who we pick, and when."

at 31. Ever notice how overwhelming it can be when you peruse through an antique store, nearly tripping across the room to get to that 18th century fruit bowl that's caught



I couldn't agree more. As far as multi-vendor co-ops go the measure of variety, diversity, and quality

your eye? The Eclectic Chic seems to have an eye for arranging, and hanging that makes the atmosphere one of less claustrophobia, and more an enchanting browsing experience filled with ease, oooos, and awe. Make sure you stop in around the Holidays for Eclectic Chic's Stocking Stuffing Central with the added bonus of witnessing their giant Christmas tree adorned with vintage ornaments. Did I forget to mention the birthday club? Simply stop in during your birthday month, and receive 20% off one item.

On October 22nd Eclectic Chic's fine antiques dealer, Terry McKay, and partner Mary Greenfield

set up a one day Antique & Diamond Jewelry Extravaganza of costume jewelry, fine diamonds, precious stones, and gold. The Eclectic Chic is home to quite a bit of their collection of vintage

fundraising weekend for the Wampsville Volunteer Fire Department where 10% of all proceeds were donated to the fire dept. Be sure to stop in on Military Mondays, and Vintage People Thursdays



tools, antique furniture, and antique prints. McKay's been doing this sort of thing for 20 years, and confessed, "This is the nicest shop I'm in." At most other co-ops vendors have to pay fees. Vendors at Eclectic Chic are charged for sale space only, and don't have to work. Pollack, and Miller have thus far succeeded in steering clear of the bland, and boring. They

where the above get a 10% discount.

It's plain to see how Eclectic Chic has built a customer base in such a short time. Now I'm no clairvoyant, but I'm doubtful this building to cease anytime soon. Stay tuned via the Eclectic Chic Facebook page for upcoming events such as their participation in the Wicked Holiday Hunt, and upcoming ugly



Local artisan hand blown pieces

like to keep it fun, but more than that they thrive on giving back to the local community. Eclectic Chic has already hosted a few charities since their grand opening such as their October 15th on site adoptions with Paws for the Cause, and their November 5th & 6th

sweater Christmas party. Get to Eclectic Chic, meet the friendly Chic owners and their resident rescue cat Bella, enjoy some coffee and refreshments while spying your entire Christmas wish list, and most importantly have some good old heart, and soul shopping fun! **E**

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## Kids Oneida Prepares to Help Hundreds of Local Families & Children at the Holidays



Brandi Candido, project manager for Kid's Oneida.

By Pat Malin

The holidays can be a joyful time, but not all families in Oneida and Herkimer counties are fortunate enough to be able to celebrate.

Whether it's due to financial stress or physical and emotional problems in the home, Kids Oneida can extend a helping hand to hurting families.

Headquartered at 301 Main Street in Utica, Kids Oneida has announced the start of its annual Adopt a Family campaign and asks that the public become a "holiday angel" for a family in need.

"Tis the season to remember those who do not have the resources to do so for their own family," explained Brandi Candido, project manager for Kid's Oneida satellite office in Herkimer County and chair of the Adopt A Family committee. "Let the Kids Oneida's Adopt a Family Program be your way to spread holiday joy."

"The Adopt A Family program began in 2001, basically to provide cheer to our families in need at the holiday season," Candido pointed out.

That first year, the program provided gifts and food to almost 30 families, with just over 70 children.

"Last year, we supported 200 families and 600 children, our most ever," she said.

Kids Oneida (KO) is a not-for-profit program that will celebrate its 20th anniversary in 2017. Its mission is to keep children with high-risk needs and behavioral problems in their homes and provide support, training and counseling for their families. KO has also helped families in securing housing, clothing and appliances.

It also expanded to Thanksgiving with a turkey drive. KO requests a \$25 donation to cover the purchase of an entire Thanksgiving meal, and many businesses and individuals have stepped in to help.

Among the individual donors are families who are blessed with enough resources of their own, but still want to help the less fortunate.

KO will soon announce the selection of this year's adopt-a-family.

"Sometimes we get wish lists from our families, for example for toys and hygiene items," Candido explained, "and then we send out the lists to our sponsors and donors."

Donors can choose to play Santa and pick out gifts for the families from the wish list. KO requests that donors pur-

chase three small items per child. Gifts can be dropped off at Kids Oneida in downtown Utica, opposite the Children's Museum.

Anyone can make a tax-deductible donation online to the Adopt a Family Program. Go to [www.kidsoneida.org](http://www.kidsoneida.org) and fill out the form. Volunteers will buy and wrap the gifts and deliver them to KO families for the holidays. The deadline for donations is mid-December.

Businesses can adopt an entire family. Many companies will equal an employee's financial contribution to KO if it has a matching gifts program.

She stressed that all donations stay local. "We want to get the community involved."

The Kids Oneida community covers a wide swath of upstate New York besides Oneida County. Community and social service leaders from throughout the state and even from out-of-state, have come knocking on KO's door asking how they can help families and children in their communities.

Kids Oneida, a 501(c)3 not-for-profit agency, operates with a full-service coordination division. It has 150 providers in seven counties, Delaware, Herkimer, Madison, Montgomery, Oneida, Otsego and Oswego. This growth has allowed Kids Oneida to better serve high risk children with multi-system needs.

For more information on how to help local families, contact Kid's Oneida at 301 Main Street, Utica, NY, 13501, phone (315) 794-3561 or visit [www.kidsoneida.org](http://www.kidsoneida.org). **E**

## How to teach kids to be philanthropic

Open a dialogue: Simply talking to children about giving increases the likelihood that children will give by 20 percent. Being specific makes a difference in getting the message out there. For example, rather than mentioning we have to give because it makes the world a better place, explain how donating food will help feed the less fortunate who cannot afford to feed themselves.

Look for easy ways to give: Charity doesn't require a large amount of money or substantial effort, and starting with something simple can make for a great introduction to charity. Begin with small projects kids can embrace and understand. Spend time going through clothes that no longer fit and make a trip to a charitable clothing drive or collec-

tion bin.

Help out neighbors: Being charitable doesn't have to mean spending tons of money or even putting together material things. It can involve donating time to others who may need assistance.

Get involved with pets: Animals and children seem a perfect match, and one charitable effort kids may embrace is helping animals. Bring food or pet supplies to a shelter or the local humane society. Allow children to interact with the animals they are helping.

There are many ways to acclimate children to charitable living, and doing so may lay the foundation for a rewarding life. **E**

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# BOCES Literacy Programs

## Where has the GED gone?

For nearly 70 years, New York State adults without a high school diploma relied on the GED test to earn their high school equivalency (HSE) diploma. Although there are still over two (2) million adults in New York State without a high school credential, the GED test has

gone away. This has led to some confusion about how to earn a high school equivalency diploma in New York State.

### Where has the GED gone?

In 2013, it was announced the GED test that had been offered through a not-for-profit

organization throughout its history was transitioning to the for-profit testing corporation, Pearson Education Corporation. This change brought with it new costs, policies and procedures that conflicted with New York States commitment to adults without a high school diploma. In order to ensure a test was being utilized in New York that was fair and available to all adults without a high school diploma, and was fiscally responsible, New York State sought an alternative to the GED test.

### What is the TASC test?

On January 1, 2014, New York State began offering the Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC). This exam took the place of the GED as the official assessment for earning your high school equivalency diploma in New York State. Like the GED, the TASC tests in five (5) content areas; Reading, Writing, Math, Science, and Social Studies. An examinee must earn a score of at least 500 in all five content areas (as well as earn a 2 on their essay) in order to earn their high school equivalency diploma. If an examinee were to not pass all 5 content areas, they must retest only in

the content area(s) they did not pass. The TASC test is available at public testing locations throughout New York State as either a paper-based test or a computer-based test and is free to all adults who wish to take it.

### What has been the effect of the transition to the TASC test?

Like many transitions, the transition to the TASC test has not been easy. One of the greatest challenges has been in educating the public about the change from the GED test to the TASC. For over 70 years, GED had been synonymous with high school equivalency diploma. It has been difficult to help the public understand the GED is no longer an option in New York State. It makes it even more difficult because the GED is still used in many other states across the country, so while a web search will help adults find information on the GED test, it adds to the confusion surrounding the new TASC test. As a result of this, there has been a drastic decrease in the number of testers since New York began using the TASC. While GED statistics show more than 56,000 New York adults took the GED in 2013, TASC reports indicate only a little more than 26,000 New York adults took the TASC test in 2014. The more rigorous, Common Core aligned

TASC test has also been more difficult for adults to pass in its entirety as 2014 statistics indicate around 49.4% of test takers passed the entire test to earn their high school equivalency diploma.

### How can BOCES help?

The BOCES Consortium of Continuing Education (BOCES) plays two main roles in regard to the TASC test. First, BOCES is the main public TASC test administrator for Herkimer, Oneida and Madison counties. We offer both paper-based and computer-based testing on a regular basis at multiple locations in the Mohawk Valley. We have accommodated the needs of TASC testers from all over New York State. The TASC test typically takes two days to complete, and within about three weeks TASC testers should have their results.

At the BOCES, we also offer free classes to any adult who needs help preparing for the TASC test. We have dedicated teachers who utilize materials designed for TASC success. We focus on benchmarks designed to maximize the TASC tester's chances of success. While in 2014 TASC reported a 49.4% pass rate in New York State, adults who met our benchmarks prior to testing had a success rate of over 80%.

If you or somebody you know is looking for the opportunity to take the TASC test and earn a high school equivalency diploma, the BOCES Consortium of Continuing Education is the place to start. We can answer any questions you may have about the TASC test, help you prepare for the TASC test, or get you signed up to take the TASC test. For more information about the TASC test (schedule, forms, etc.) or our literacy classes designed for TASC test success, visit <http://www.moboces.org/domain/27>.

BOCES Consortium of Continuing Education is a partnership between Madison-Oneida BOCES and Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES. This partnership is committed to Promoting Lifelong Learning to Achieve Lifelong Success.

For more information, visit [www.moboces.org/adulted](http://www.moboces.org/adulted) or call (315) 361-5800. **E**

Decoding dysgraphia, a lesser-known learning disability

Many people are familiar with or have at least heard of dyslexia, a condition that can affect a person's ability to read and comprehend the written word. Few may be as knowledgeable about dysgraphia, another learning disability that can affect language skills.

Dysgraphia is a deficiency in the ability to write. While dysgraphia is mostly associated with impaired handwriting, it also can involve an inability to store and process written words and then elicit the proper finger sequences and muscle movement to actually write words down on paper.

The word "dysgraphia" comes from the Greek words "dys," meaning "impaired," and "graphia," meaning "writing by hand." The Learning Disabilities Association of America says a person with dysgraphia may have problems with inconsistent spacing, poor spatial planning on paper, poor spelling, and difficulty writing, as well as thinking and writing at the same time.

Experts aren't sure what causes dysgraphia. There might be a delay in the retrieval of information from short- or long-term memory and organizational abilities before beginning to write. A genetic component also may come into play.

This specific learning disorder may appear separately or occur in conjunction with dyslexia and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Whether or not dysgraphia is accompanied by other learning disabilities may determine the types of presentation.

- **Dyslexic:** Those with dyslexic dysgraphia produce illegible, spontaneously written work. They may be able to copy work well, but not write legibly on their own.

- **Motor:** A person with motor dysgraphia has poor fine motor skills, poor dexterity and poor muscle tone. Letter formation may be fine in short writing samples, but that formation deteriorates when asked to write lengthier assignments. Motor dysgraphia can cause arthritis-like tensing of the hand. This type of dysgraphia typi-

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# Why dental hygiene is essential for overall health



The importance of maintaining clean teeth and healthy gums goes beyond having fresh breath and a white smile. Many people are surprised to discover that oral hygiene plays an integral role in overall health. Research indicates that oral health mirrors the condition of the body as a whole. Also, regular dental visits can alert dentists about overall health and pinpoint if a person is at a risk for chronic disease. An oral health check-up also may be the first indication of a potential health issue not yet evident to a general medical doctor.

### Heart disease

According to the Academy of General Dentistry, there is a distinct relationship between periodontal disease and conditions such as heart disease and stroke. Joint teams at the University of Bristol in the United Kingdom and the Royal College of Surgeons in Dublin, Ireland, found that people with bleeding gums from poor dental hygiene could have an increased risk of heart disease. Bacteria from the mouth is able to enter the bloodstream when bleeding gums are present. That bacteria can stick to platelets and subsequently form blood clots. This interrupts the flow of blood to the heart and may trigger a heart attack. Brushing and flossing twice daily and rinsing with mouthwash can remove bacteria and keep gums healthy.

### Facial pain

The Office of the Surgeon General says infections of the gums that support the teeth can lead to facial and oral pain. Gingivitis, which is an early stage of gum disease, as well as advanced gum

### Decoding dysgraphia

cally stems from problems with fine motor skills.

- **Spatial:** An individual with spatial dysgraphia cannot understand space well. Written work may be improperly spaced and illegible. Drawing abilities also may be compromised.

Certain indications of dysgraphia may become evident when a child begins to learn how to read and write. This is when the condition may first be noticed, but it could be mistaken for another issue unless educators and doctors are knowledge-

able about dysgraphia. Some signs to look out for include:

- illegible printing and cursive writing;
- unfinished words or letters;
- omitted words in writing assignments;
- inconsistent spacing between words and letters;
- inconsistencies in writing style, including mixtures of print and cursive letters, upper and lower case words, and irregular shapes or slants of letters;
- difficulty visualizing letter formation prior to

disease, affects more than 75 percent of the American population.

Dental decay can lead to its own share of pain. Maintaining a healthy mouth can fend off decay and infections, thereby preventing pain.

### Pancreatic cancer

In 2007, the Harvard School of Public Health reported a link between gum disease and pancreatic cancer. In the ongoing study, 51,000 men were followed and data was collected beginning in 1986. The Harvard researchers found that men with a history of gum disease had a 64 percent increased risk of pancreatic cancer compared with men who had never had gum disease. The greatest risk for pancreatic cancer among this group was in men with recent tooth loss. However, the study was unable to find links between other types of oral health problems, such as tooth decay, and pancreatic cancer.

### Alzheimer's disease

Various health ailments, including poor oral health, have been linked to a greater risk of developing Alzheimer's disease. In 2010, after reviewing 20 years' worth of data, researchers from New York University concluded that there is a link between gum inflammation and Alzheimer's disease. Follow-up studies from researchers at the University of Central Lancashire in the United Kingdom compared brain samples from 10 living patients with Alzheimer's to samples from 10 people who did not have the disease. Data indicated that a bacterium — *Porphyromonas gingivalis* — was present in the Alzheimer's brain samples but not in the samples from the brains of people who did not have Alzheimer's. *P. gingivalis* is usually associated with chronic gum disease. As a result of the study, experts think that the bacteria can move via nerves in the roots of teeth that connect directly with the brain or through bleeding gums.

These health conditions are just a sampling of the relationship between oral health and overall health. Additional connections also have been made and continue to be studied. ■

writing; and

- strange wrist, body or paper positions

Parents, therapists and educators must work together to accommodate the needs of a student with dysgraphia. Reducing copying aspects of work, allowing recorders or note takers and having students take oral exams can help. An increase in the use of tablets and laptops in the classroom also may assist those with dysgraphia, as such assignments have reduced reliance on written work. ■

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## Guess House of Wings

The Buffalo chicken wing was invented 3 hours west of Utica. For the best wings around you don't have to drive

that far. Just a few minutes away you'll find Guess House of Wings at 1207 Park Ave in Utica, New York.

Owner, Vernon Paterson, explained that the name came from his brother who passed away from Hodgkin's disease 2-years ago. His nickname was Guess and Vernon named his restaurant in his honor.

Vernon came into the wing game as he was trying to decide what to do as an option for his day job, asbestos remediation. He decided on a wing joint. Vernon said, "It's an adjustment, it's a different ball game from asbestos removal. But running a restaurant is no joke either."

Guess House of Wings has been serving up chicken wings for 4 years now. They opened in November 2012 and will



celebrate their anniversary on November 26, 2016. Vernon started right off the bat with 15-17 flavors. Mild, medium, hot, bbq, everything sauce, Sticky Island Sauce, and more. The Sticky Island sauce is Vernon's signature sauce. It's sweet with a kick.

"It's good on anything."

Vernon's wings are seasoned and marinated. They're cooked through and made fresh to order. He said, "If you want them crispy then we cook them crispy. They're made the way you want."

There's more than just wings at the House of Wings. Vernon is cooking up stewed chicken and curry chicken. He makes 20 to 30 pounds of it every day. There's also jerked chicken. After Vernon rubs the chicken with his jerk blend it's onto the grill. Vernon said confidently, "I have the best jerk chicken in town."

There's mac & cheese Wednesday through Saturday and Vernon also makes a mean curried

oxtail and curried goat. Each entree comes with his coconut rice and cabbage. He said, "I try to give a large portion of rice so people get their money's worth."

Vernon is thinking about adding breakfast to his repertoire. "Try to change it up a little bit."

Vernon explained that Guess House is low key. It has a laid back feel. People come in and play chess. With room for 20-30 people it's a place to check out.

Guess House of Wings is open Monday through Saturday, noon to 9 pm. For the best wings around, take-out, eat in, or even delivery call Vernon at (315) 790-1307

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## Meyers Chocolates

Nothing puts a smile on your face like chocolate. Meyers Chocolates has been providing customers with the finest hand crafted chocolate confections and putting a lot of smiles on faces.

They make their chocolates in small batches using a special blend of premium grade chocolate, nuts, and other fine ingredients to ensure a fresh, rich flavor.

Meyers Chocolates is family owned and operated, providing customers with the finest quality hand-crafted chocolates since 1983. Meyers Chocolates started in the home of Donald and Agnes Meyers in the village of Camden, New York. Donald began creating his own chocolate recipes, initially to make chocolate bunnies and eggs for his grandchildren at Easter. News of Donald's chocolates spread quickly, and neighbors were eager to purchase these hand-crafted confections right out of the Meyers' home, especially during the holidays. It seems that Meyers Chocolates was a hit from the start.

In 1983, Donald and Agnes opened the doors to their first store also located Camden, New York. In 2003, they expanded to a second store in Oneida, NY, owned by their daughter, Mary Meyers Calogero, and son-in-law, Peter Calogero. Peter and Mary moved their store to Clinton, New York. Meyers Chocolates offers delicious chocolate blends and confections for chocolateolics around the world. Every piece of chocolate is hand-molded and hand-dipped by their chocolatiers.

Exciting things are happening at Meyers Chocolates. They are moving their Clinton store to the Orchard in New Hartford. According to Peter Calogero, the new address will be 11 Ellinwood Drive - Unit 8 (just behind



GREAT things come in small packages at Meyers Chocolates!

The busy season for Meyers Chocolates is coming up with the holidays nearly upon us. And there is a quick turn around with Valentine's day right around the corner. Calogero explained that their assorted 1 lb and 2 lb boxes are the big sellers. They also have gift baskets too.

Peter said that he loves making the pecan turtles and that Meyers Chocolates' fudge and chocolate are always fresh. Calogero said, "The chocolate has a shelf life of 9 months but it never lasts that long." He added, "If there's something you've had or seen then let us know and we'll see if we can fulfill an order for you."

Stop in to Meyers chocolates in Camden or at their new location in the

Uno Pizzeria & Grill). The new Orchard location means that Meyers Chocolates will have bigger foot print which Calogero hopes equates to more sales. Peter said, "We're opening as soon as I can get set up." The bigger and better store will allow Calogero to have more creativity so expect bigger and better chocolates and more smiles.



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# Chanatry's

## – Your Hometown Market

By Al Dorantes

When you think of a supermarket look no further than Chanatry's. Chanatry's has been an originator and innovator in the supermarket business since 1938. Your hometown market, Chanatry's, the finest supermarket in the area, can be found at 485 French Road in Utica, New York.

William "Bill" Chanatry, owner with his son Mark, now CEO, explained the history of Chanatry's. Michael, Raymond, and Rocky Chanatry immigrated to the United States in 1912 fleeing from persecution and oppression of the Ottoman Empire. This was a time when the Ottoman's had control of Aleppo, Syria, seizing Christian and Jewish men off the streets and forcing them into military service.

America's streets were paved in gold and these young immigrants fashioned a new life for their families. They started selling produce and foods from push carts until they could open a storefront. Soon Chanatry's opened on Blecker Street. Hard work allowed the business to prosper and soon they occupied larger quarters.

In 1938 plans were made to build a 6,000-square foot "Super Food Market." It was one of the nation's first supermarkets, although the word had not yet become common place. It was Utica's first such food store and involved drastic changes in a way a grocery store was organized.

Raymond Chanatry, acknowledged as a man ahead of his time by others in his business, trusted his instincts. Accordingly, he became a consultant for other grocers who wished to follow.

In the mid 1940's the trend to make supermarkets completely self-service affected the produce and meat departments. And by the 1950's major regional and national food grocery chains became dominant in the food business. Independent grocers like Chanatry's needed something that would set themselves apart from their challengers. Chanatry's took a firm hold on the competition by continuing to provide personal customer service and customer choice in its meats and produce departments and of course quality, always quality and they are continually reinventing themselves; to this day.

In the Mid 1950's, urban renewal was forcing the relocation for Blecker Street businesses. Elias Chanatry, a previous co-owner retired because of other interests. As Edward, Nellie, and Bill assumed full ownership, with George Chanatry as key manager.

Another Chanatry's Market was also affected by urban renewal. It made good sense at that time to open two supermarkets simultaneously. One in East Utica and one at French Road, Utica, the current



location. The East Utica store, now closed was managed by Louis Chanatry (Little Louie), Raymond's son and his brothers, Alfred, Albert, and sister Elvira. The French Road store was managed by Michael's son Edward, George Chanatry, and sister Nellie.

In 1975, due to illness, Edward and Nellie sold their interests to John, Louis and George Jweid and Pierre and Joe Kawam with Bill Chanatry as president of the business. Although the names are not all Chanatry, it remains a family business. All owners were either brothers or brothers-in-law.

In 1988, Chanatry's built a brand new 30,000 square foot supermarket next to its previous store on French Road. With this store was added a scratch in-store bakery department, largely expanded meat and produce and a largely expanded deli with hot foods. The new superstore continued to give quality personal service and grew Chanatry's reputation for it's great meats and produce. The store was soon in need of expansion to accommodate the rising volume.

In 1998 Bill Chanatry bought all the partners' interests and with his son, Mark, now president, started on an improvement program. They expanded the store to 50,000 square feet and 100 percent remodeled the store inside and out with all new state of the art fixtures. This new renovation turned the store into a Plaza.

Chanatry's has been voted #1 grocery store by consumers in the Mohawk Valley year after year. The new French Road store has kept a dominant stake in Utica's grocery business against larger grocery chain stores in the area. Chanatry's is now considered "the David among the Goliaths."

They take great pride in their store, as they believe their founders and predecessors would also be proud of the business they toiled for and loved. Chanatry's continues this tradition with the best meats in town.

Select from a choice of the best cuts and our full-service meat counter. The full-service meat department is a throwback to yesteryear when customer service matched the quality products sold there. It's staffed with highly experienced meat cutters and counter help with personal service.

Chanatry's reputation for the best meats in town ensures you get the freshest variety of premium quality cuts of beef, pork, chicken, lamb, veal and more at the best prices. Chanatry's sausage is the Mohawk Valley's 1st Choice. They make their own sausage, in-house. The brand-new self-service meat center offers freshly cut and packaged meats daily, for your convenience, with unbeatable prices including "Certified Angus" Beef and specialty cuts of meat just a request away.

Bill Chanatry said, "We will not compromise quality for a fast buck. Haven't done it in the past and not going to do it in the future."

Chanatry's newly expanded produce department has the freshest produce and always the lowest prices. All fruits and vegetables are inspected by their produce manager to ensure only the freshest produce makes it to the cases. With their low prices, your money goes the farthest but still stays at home because much of their produce comes from local farms. Chanatry's makes fruit baskets to order so you're able to share the freshness of the season with friends and family.

The supermarket is ready for all your holiday needs too. Featuring Honeysuckle White turkeys, they've again put quality first. Honeysuckle White is honest, simple turkey raised by over 700 independent family farmers without growth-promoting antibiotics. Chanatry's fresh bread and rolls baked in their in-store bakery will compliment any meal. Top it off with a pastry; fresh donuts, muffins, Danish, or croissants, pies, and cakes.

Chanatry's strong points, as Bill Chanatry explained, continue to be their meat counter; their gemstone featuring 60 feet of service meat with butchers and another 60 feet of multi deck product. Chanatry said, "None of it is worth anything without quality." He added, "Quality shines through; that goes for personal service too."

Bill Chanatry said, "We were in business when the Titanic sank. We're shooting for another hundred years." For more information, go to: [www.chanatrys.com](http://www.chanatrys.com) or follow them on Facebook: Chanatry's Hometown Market. See their advertisement on page 15 of this issue. ■

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# Evoke sweeter times at So Sweet Candy Café



By Carly Proulx

Margaret Rienzo opened up So Sweet Candy Cafe back in May. A floral designer for 30 years, about 10 years ago Rienzo decided it was time to share with the world her knack for all things sweet, and began making homemade fudge, and candy at home to sell to craft fairs. After a while of setting up, and taking down her candy stand three times a week Rienzo realized she was finally ready to dig her heels in solid ground.

It started with Rienzo making candy

with her mom as a kid, and from there, ever so sweetly her craft would progress. She began baking, and decorating cakes in her early teens, and never really took off the apron. Located on 531 Varick Street in Utica, New York, and open Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Fridays 8 am - 5:30 pm, Saturdays and Sundays 8 am - 2 pm the community has had nothing but positive feedback, and is grateful for the establishment of a new, and deliciously sweet business in the area. With a sizable array of penny candy, homemade baked goods, fudge, and candy, chocolate truffles, and much

more So Sweet's custom gift baskets make for an inspiring option.

Rienzo's husband Roy makes the fudge at home with their fudge kettle that's currently too big to move on premises. Eventually, Rienzo predicts, it will move so they can make the fudge on site. With the vision of an old fashioned candy store in mind, like the one she recalls stopping into as a kid when her family would take trips to in Old Forge, Rienzo modeled So Sweet in the same vein, or tooth rather. Born in Rome, Rienzo has lived in Utica for 32 years, and wanted to bring a niche to the area, one that played rag time music, and had old fashioned white painted tin ceilings like the one from her childhood. It's Rienzo's hope that the upcoming opening of the Irish Cultural Center on the So Sweet side of Varick Street will help to develop the end of Varick that is lacking a brewery, several bars, and part time eatery's. Though it's already become a place to satisfy your sugar cravings. Rienzo informs "many will grab a bite at Zienia's, and come here for desert."

The deserts here are a temptation not even the most extreme of dieters can resist. With Rienzo's homemade treats such as the caramel sea salt chocolate covered Oreo's, toasted coconut patties, chocolate covered Nutter Butter cookies, chocolate covered pretzels, French macaroons, chocolate chip cookie mousse parfait, and mini cheesecakes you might as well leave all delusions of will power at home. There are consistently several

different freshly baked cookies to choose from, and the flavors of the French Macaroons, and homemade fudge changes up weekly.



The goodies here certainly give Willy Wonka a run for his money, though nobody can quite sprinkle it with dew like the candy man can, Rienzo has an amazing variety of oldies but goodies. Stop in, and fulfill the void of sweet in your life. Where else can you choose from various flavors of cotton candy by the pint? Pair a scrumptious cookie, or delectable hand sculpted truffle with a hot cup of Utica Coffee, or hot cider. If you were anything like me as a kid, making the local mini mart your first stop after school to stock up on Bazooka bubble gum, Astro pops, and Candy Mega Buttons then entering So Sweet is sure to extract a few memories from childhood, and activate that sweet tooth you almost succeeded in convincing yourself a thing of the past. For more information follow them on Facebook: So Sweet Candy Cafe. See their ad in our Shoppers' Guide in this issue. ■

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# How to handle holiday hosting



*Hiring a bartender or wait staff for a holiday party frees up more time to socialize with your friends and family members.*

**H**oliday revelers tend to be busy with social engagements — from corporate parties to cocktails with close friends — between Thanksgiving and New Year’s Day. Chances are, many people will be attending a party and/or hosting their own this holiday season.

While attending a party requires little of celebrants other than a willingness to have a good time, hosting a holiday get-together can be hard work. But hosts can heed a few time-tested strategies to ensure they and their guests make the most of their time together this holiday season.

### Forget perfection

Television, movies and advertisements paint an unrealistic picture of what the holidays should be. Don’t get down if a holiday party that would make Norman Rockwell proud is beyond your capa-

bilities. Rather than trying to plan a picture-perfect holiday party, channel your energy into what you do best. Cook up a holiday feast if you love being in the kitchen, or decorate till you drop if you love to deck the halls. The point of the party is to gather with family and friends, so no need to worry about throwing a perfect party.

### Enlist helpers

Ask others to contribute to the party so all of the work is not on your shoulders. A potluck party is a great way to encourage participation. When everyone brings something along and helps, it frees up time to spend together rather than worrying about what needs cooking in the kitchen or whether a last-minute trip to the store is in order.

### Downsize

Festive feelings may inspire you to expand your guest list. Social people understandably want to invite all of their circles of friends, but an overwhelming guest list can make hosting more difficult. If you have trouble paring down the guest list, consider hosting separate parties, designating one for family and another for friends.

You can even downsize your offerings to lessen some your load. Rather than spending days in the kitchen making unique apps, stock up on chips, snacks and premade appetizers so you have enough food. If you want to make one or two appetizers from scratch, stick to a handful of tried-and-true recipes and convenience items so you’re not worry-

ing about kitchen-testing new things.

### Hire professionals

If you’re simply too busy to handle hosting but still want to invite loved ones, hire some professional help. Hire wait staff to tend to guests during the party, and book a cleaning service to clean your home in the days before the party. Don’t hesitate to have the party catered if you prefer your gathering not be potluck.

Holiday hosting can be a big time commitment, but there are ways to make hosting easier regardless of how busy you are. **E**



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## Host a turkey-free Thanksgiving

—And other ideas inspired by the first Thanksgiving

**L**ow in fat, high in protein and an inexpensive source of iron, zinc, potassium and B vitamins, turkey makes a healthy addition to a person's diet. Turkey also tends to be the star of the show on Thanksgiving and other holidays. Even

though turkey can be a delicious addition to any holiday table, some people prefer to buck Thanksgiving tradition from time to time and divert focus from the golden gobbler.

Even though turkey may be synonymous with Thanksgiving, hosts and hostesses should not shy

away from serving something different. In fact, turkey may not even have been on the menu for the first Thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving dates back to New England in November 1621, when newly arrived Pilgrims and the Wampanoag Indians gathered for an autumn harvest celebration. It's reported that pilgrims went on a "fowling" mission in preparation for the three-day feast. Although wild turkey was plentiful in the region, ducks, geese, passenger pigeons, and swans were commonly consumed. Historians at Smithsonian say documents refer to wildfowl and venison as foods appearing at the first Thanksgiving, but turkey was not mentioned.

Home chefs can take a cue from those first pilgrims and choose less traditional offerings this Thanksgiving. The following are some ideas that are reminiscent of the first Thanksgiving.

- If the flavor is more palatable, don't hesitate to select another bird to grace the Thanksgiving table, such as a goose or even a chicken.

- Don't overlook the possibility of serving fish and other seafood. Colonists and the Wampanoag probably ate eel, lobster, clams, and mussels.

- Forests provided chestnuts, beechnuts and walnuts, so a platter of nuts paired with cheese or fruit also can make a welcome addition to the table.

- Pumpkin and squash were plentiful in colonial times, and this is why these gourds are often included in Thanksgiving meals and decor. The flesh of a pumpkin or squash can be turned into casseroles or used to make quiche.

The average Thanksgiving dinner table today looks quite different from the one the Wampanoag Indians and Pilgrims gathered around centuries ago.

Families can stick closer to history and tailor their meals for a touch of something different this year. **E**

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## How to get Black Friday deals



Score deep discounts during Black Friday sales.

As Thanksgiving draws near, retailers begin dropping hints about their Black Friday promotions. Some stores have begun to open their doors on Thanksgiving evening, after many people have filled up on turkey and trimmings.

Smart shoppers recognize that Black Friday is a great time to find deals on holiday gifts, and following these tips can help

shoppers save even more.

- Begin researching early. Since many retailers begin posting information online or send out advertisements about sale items far in advance of Black Friday, shoppers should pay attention to each retailer's offerings so they can better coordinate their shopping efforts. Cross-reference prices against other stores, including both online retailers and tradi-

tional brick-and-mortar stores.

- Establish a shopping budget. It's tempting to go out shopping with credit cards blazing, but that may lead to overspending. Determine what you can afford and set a budget for Black Friday shopping. Establishing a budget can help you avoid impulse purchases as well.

- Look for extra discounts. The early bird often gets the worm, but late shoppers also may benefit on Black Friday. Determine which times of the day stores are offering their biggest discounts. Doorbuster sales tend to start very early, but such sales might be irrelevant if only items you do not need are being discounted. Determine if there are any additional sales that extend throughout the day.

- Divide and conquer. Split up the shopping responsibilities so you and your family can get your shopping done quickly. The divide and conquer approach allows you to cover more ground

and ensures someone will be there to claim the best deals from various retailers.

- Dress comfortably for shopping. Malls and department stores may be crowded and can be warm, so dress in layers so you can remove clothing if you get hot. You'll probably do a good deal of walking on Black Friday, so make sure to wear comfortable shoes.

- Have discount codes at the ready. Many retailers now use digital apps or emails to keep in touch with customers. These same apps may enable smartphone users to search for discount codes and other coupons. Keep digital coupons handy so they can be presented quickly at checkout.

Black Friday is one of the best days of the year to land steep discounts on a variety of merchandise and services. Make the shopping trip even more successful this time around. **E**

## Keep poinsettias looking great through the holidays

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



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

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

Because they are a tropical plant, poinsettias can be damaged by exposure to low temperatures, even if they are only exposed for short periods of time. They should be wrapped and protected against the elements when brought home. For maximum plant life, poinsettias need to be placed near a warm, sunny window, or another area that has ample amounts of light. They thrive in temperatures between 60 and 75 F and should be kept away from warm or cold drafts.

Water the plant whenever the surface feels dry to the touch. Water until it drains out the bottom, but don't

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## Tips for getting greeting cards out on time



Millions of greeting cards are sent out each holiday season. Estimates suggest that 85 percent of the United States population, or roughly

250 million people, mails out greeting cards. That adds up to billions of cards going through the postal system -- and all in a relatively short period of time.

Men and women who hope to send holiday greeting cards must purchase, prepare and mail the cards early enough so they are received prior to the holiday. It is never too early to begin greeting card preparation and assembly.

The majority of cards are bought in boxed packages or groupings of photo cards. Gone are the days of hand-picking individual greeting cards for every recipient. This trend toward general-theme cards has streamlined the process and can help senders start their tasks earlier than ever before. Some

people like to take advantage of post-holiday sales to stock up on greeting cards for the following year at a deep discount. This means they can write the cards out at their leisure and then simply toss them into the mailbox at the appropriate time.

Much in the way people begin their holiday shopping or decorating right after the Thanksgiving turkey leftovers have been stored away, a good majority of people also begin their greeting card writing after Thanksgiving as well. Those who want their cards to arrive first will mail them within a few days of Thanksgiving. When sent domestically, it is safe to

assume that cards mailed out up to 2 weeks before Christmas will arrive on time. After that point, you may be risking lateness, particularly for rural delivery addresses unless cards are sent priority. For those who need to mail cards internationally, sticking close to the end of November will ensure they arrive in a timely manner.

People who want to make a statement and not have their greeting cards get lost in the crowd may intentionally mail them late and lean toward wishing health and prosperity for the new year, rather than sending a card tied to a specific holiday. This gives extra time for mailing and will

set cards apart from the many others.

Postage is another thing that will have to be considered when mailing out cards. While many cards fall under the weight and size limits of a regular first class postage stamp, unusually shaped envelopes or heavy greeting cards may cost more. Rather than have them returned, it is a good idea to have at least one card weighed at the post office to ensure the right amount of postage is affixed.

Greeting cards are an important component of the holiday season. Ensuring they arrive on time requires planning and sending them out with ample time to spare. **E**

## Poinsettias

let the plant sit in water. Over- or under-watering can cause leaves to drop prematurely and wilt. If your home lacks in humidity, you may need to water the plant more frequently. Poinsettias do not need to be fertilized while the plant is in bloom.

The Ohio State University Extension says poinsettias can be reflowered the following

Christmas, but unless a year-long schedule of care is observed, the results usually are not good. You can speak with a gardening expert or consult online resources for the proper care schedule. Caring for a poinsettia year-round involves gradually drying out the plant and storing it in a cool location. The plant later will be moved outdoors and then back inside

and pruned to keep a full shape.

Poinsettias are short-day plants, which means they flower about 10 weeks after the daylight shortens to about 12 hours or less. Therefore, to have the plant in full flower by Christmas, it will have to be kept in complete darkness between 5 p.m. and 8 a.m. from the first part of October until Thanksgiving. Many people

find the affordability of poinsettias makes it more convenient to buy new ones each year than try to foster regrowth.

Contrary to popular belief, poinsettias are not poisonous to humans or animals, but they should not be ingested due to the potential for allergic reactions. Poinsettias can help remove pollutants from indoor air, which is advantageous

during the winter months when doors and windows are typically kept closed.

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

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# Healthy holiday dessert option

A certain measure of overindulgence is anticipated during the holiday season. Rich foods and desserts are served, and parties are plentiful. However, those who plan to stick to their healthy eating plans can still enjoy tastes of the season without compromising their fitness or dietary goals.

Many recipes can be made healthier with some simple substitutions, and that even includes decadent desserts. Take, for example, “Wickedly Decadent Deep Chocolate Truffles” from “Low Fat for Life,” (DK) by Sue Krietzman. This low-fat version of a high-fat classic will taste delicious without being too sinful.

## Wickedly Decadent Deep Chocolate Truffles

Makes 24

- 6 ounces semisweet chocolate
- 6 ounces very low-fat fromage frais
- 2 tablespoons confectioners' sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 ounces semisweet chocolate, grated



1. Break the chocolate into a bowl over a pan of simmering water. Let it melt, stirring occasionally.
  2. In a separate bowl, whisk together the fromage frais and sugar. Whisk in the vanilla.
  3. When the chocolate is melted and smooth, remove from the heat and allow to cool slightly. Slowly whisk the chocolate into the fromage frais mixture, using a rubber spatula to incorporate every bit of chocolate. Cover with plastic wrap and chill for an hour.
  4. Line a baking sheet with waxed paper. Scatter the grated chocolate on a plate. Scoop out the chilled chocolate mixture in teaspoonfuls, roll into balls, then roll the balls in the grated chocolate and put on the prepared baking sheet. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate until firm.
  5. Put the truffles in small paper cases. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator until ready to use.
- Per truffle: Total fat: 2 g; saturated fat: 1 g; unsaturated fat: 1 g; cholesterol: 1 mg; sodium: 3 mg; calories: 52.

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## What Would Your Mother Say???? TV Dinner Thanksgiving

By S.D. Shapiro

*In the fast paced 21st century we've traded common sense for the ability to quickly look up information on the internet. We've forgotten our manners and civility. How do we get back to our roots? Can we get back? Food for thought...*

With Thanksgiving right around the corner our collective minds tend to veer towards the gastronomic gluttonous meal; turkey, mashed potatoes, dressing, green bean casserole, and all the trimmings. And pie. Always pie.

We gather as families and we have traditions. Watch the parade, baste the turkey, turn on the football game, eat, eat some more, and then pie. It's these traditions that bind us all together. One of my traditions is spending the day at my mother's house and enjoying family, friends, and food.

Last year my tradition got all boggled up. Mom got the flu. She was so sick she couldn't prepare the bird and all the fixings. That's where I stepped in. I mean, I've watched her do it for years. I can cook. Shouldn't be a problem.

I put the bird in, per Mom's instructions, early in the morning

and basted it throughout the day. Following the family recipe located on the back of the soup can, I made the green bean casserole and proceeded to burn it. The mashed potatoes were lumpy. The gravy went from too thin to a paste like consistency in the blink of an eye. When we cut into the bird it was drier than the Sahara Desert and chewy like 3-day old bubble gum. Mom's was always fork tender while I managed to produce a turkey that was imperious to even our best steak knives.

We tossed it all into the trash, set the oven to 425 degrees, and stacked the range full of TV Dinners.

The TV dinner was born from a mistake too. When Swanson found themselves with a huge supply of frozen turkeys, in a holding pattern in refrigerated railroad cars



circling the country, they had to figure out something to do with them. In 1953 the first Swanson-brand TV Dinner was produced and consisted of a Thanksgiving meal of turkey, cornbread dressing, frozen peas and sweet potatoes packaged in a tray like those used at the time for airline food service. Each item was placed in its own compartment. The trays proved to be useful: the entire dinner could be removed from the outer packaging as a unit; the aluminum tray could be heated directly in the oven without any extra dishes; and one could eat the meal directly from the same tray. The product was cooked for 25 minutes at 425 degrees and fit nicely on a TV tray table. The original TV Dinner sold for 98 cents, and they made about 5,000 dinners for the first year.

We sat there, around the television, with our aluminum trays on TV stands (as they were intended to be eaten) and we had one of the best Thanksgiving dinners. We were all together. There was no talk of politics or religion. Some of us traded buttered peas for the stuffing. Everybody ate their cobbler. And then we ate the pies that Mom had made before she got sick. There's always pie.

When it comes down to Thanksgiving dinner almost any dinner will do. It's more about gathering around a meal and giving thanks than the actual food. Stop and think, "What would my mother say?" She would say, "Next time, can I get the Salisbury steak?" **E**



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# Celebrate and stay true to your budget this holiday season



Families do not have to stretch their budgets to enjoy a festive and memorable holiday season.

Travel and shopping tend to do the most damage to budgets come the holiday season, when people hit the road to see family and friends, often with numerous gifts in tow. But the holiday season does not have to be so harsh on personal budgets, especially for those men and women who employ a few tricks of the trade to lighten their financial burdens during this festive time of year.

\* Set spending limits. Many families, especially those that are very large, establish spending limits with regard to how much each person can spend on gifts for their loved ones. Such limits still allow holiday celebrants to exchange gifts with their family members, but limits help celebrants reign in their holiday spending as well. No one wants to begin the new year with heaps of debt or an empty bank account, so don't be afraid to propose such spending limits to your relatives.

\* Share hosting duties. In addition to travel and shopping, hosting holiday parties requires a considerable financial commitment on the part of the host. Rather than forcing holiday hosts to shoulder that burden on their own, families can share the hosting duties, even if the party is still slated to take place at one person's home. Make the holiday dinner a potluck affair so holiday hosts don't have to assume the cost of the entire meal on their own. Request family members bring certain items, asking

The holiday season is a joyous time of year dominated by family reunions and seasonal soirees. And while kindness is a theme of the holiday season, this time of year can be especially unkind to personal budgets, many of which get stretched thin in the weeks between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day.

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<h4>SPECIALTY PIZZA</h4> <p>ONE Specialty PIZZA <small>for only</small> <b>\$12<sup>99</sup></b></p> <p><small>Offer good for a limited time at participating Papa John's restaurants only. Additional toppings extra. Limited delivery area, charges may apply. Customer responsible for all applicable taxes.</small></p>	<h4>UP TO 3 TOPPINGS</h4> <p>1 Large up to 3 Toppings PIZZA <small>for only</small> <b>\$10<sup>00</sup></b></p> <p><small>Offer good for a limited time at participating Papa John's restaurants only. Additional toppings extra. Limited delivery area, charges may apply. Customer responsible for all applicable taxes.</small></p>



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# HAPPY THANKSGIVING

## Budget from previous

one person to provide beverages for the night while another takes care of dessert. Sharing such duties makes the cost of hosting a large holiday dinner much more manageable while freeing up time that holiday hosts can spend with their loved ones.

\* Make your own decorations. Holiday decorations go a long way toward feeding the festive atmosphere of the season. But store-bought decorations can be expensive. Instead of outsourcing your holiday decorating, make homemade decorations with materials purchased at a nearby arts and crafts store. Gather the family together for a crafts night and enjoy this time spent together during what's typically a hectic time of year. Homemade decorations also create lasting memories, as you and your family can enjoy reflecting on the fruits of your labors every holiday season for years to come.

\* Start shopping early. One way to stretch your holiday shopping budget is to start shopping early. Though many holiday shoppers have been given such advice, very few take it to heart. Shopping early affords you more time to find deals and comparison shop, and beginning your search for gifts early allows you to patiently wait for sales or other discounts that might not be available once the holiday season hits full swing. If you plan to purchase any big-ticket items well in advance of the holiday season, first confirm the return policy, specifically how long you have to return the gift, as you don't want your loved one to end up with a gift they can't return if necessary.

The holiday season finds many people stretching their budgets. But men and women can employ several strategies to save money while still enjoying a memorable and festive holiday season. **E**

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# Streamer JUNKIE

By Mark Usyk

## Lessons on the fly



*All you need to be taught in life can be taught right here.*

The angler was casting up stream and across, tight loops in the air and a dry fly that couldn't be registered by the human eye from this distance resting on a current, carrying it towards a decent sized rock mid-stream. Beyond the rock, between it and the scrubby far bank, I pointed out the light splashes to my son. The trout taking insects from the surface. There looked to be two or three of them working close to the bank but the angler couldn't seem to find the right trajectory to land his dry fly and then mend his line to get the perfect drift, the drift that would fool the fish. My son's voice raised from a whisper to an elevated and excited one as he saw three good rises all about the same time. Then we saw the rise of the fish that was in front of the rock, less than twenty feet from the angler. The angler adjusted his footing on the gravel bottom, twisted his torso and lifted the line off the water and with one fluid movement shot fly line, leader, and dry fly forward and upstream of the spot the fish rose last.

From our perch on the bridge we couldn't tell still where the dry fly was, but when the fish rose again in the same spot and the angler hadn't lifted his rod tip we knew that the trick had failed. With the lift of the rod the line was once again shot forward and upstream for another drift through the feeding trout's water, and two more times the fish splashed but the line didn't go tight. Now whether these were

last second refusals of the fly or absolute indifference to it, the fish taking the real deal somewhere close in proximity we couldn't tell, but I explained to Jacob how a trout will sometimes rise to a fisherman's fly only to taunt them but never actually take the fake. That a trout, as small of a brain as they have, has an instinct engrained in it over thousands of years that tells it somehow that something isn't right. Sometimes you can find the fault in the drag of the fly line across a different current pulling the fly unnaturally on top, sometimes you can blame the pattern for being the wrong one, the wrong color, maybe the wrong size, and sometimes it's just a fish that won't fall for it.

I've got to believe that fly fishing has a



*Persistence pays off- sometimes.*

lot to teach. That in today's world where every kid gets a trophy, and every kid makes the team, fly fishing can teach the lessons of losing better than many other things that kill time and bring parents and children together. In fly fishing, there's a needed focus to both master

the cast and to understand the situation at hand. And the fact that you could have everything perfect, just so, and still fail is a lesson that too many people deny our youth today. Some days it's just not going to come together, it's just not going to end in your favor, and you have to deal with it. It's not that you didn't try hard enough, you just got beat. You have to keep casting, like a little leaguer in a slump of losses you just have to keep swinging for the fence.

After about five or six casts there was a splash, and the angler lifted his rod. The rod bent and danced a happy dance, and a small wild brook trout swam circles in front of the fisherman as he brought it in closer and closer. We crashed down

the bank from the bridge and my son got a good look at the fish just as it was being released, his smile as big as the man who'd just done the catching. And there's the final lesson.

No matter how much of a slump you may be in, no matter how the odds may be stacked against you, and no matter how many times you might fail, eventually you'll find yourself with a fish in hand, or with a baseball sailing through the air following the crack of the bat. I think if more kids fished, life would become clearer earlier on. You can't win them all. But that's no reason not to make the cast. In fly fishing not everyone gets a trophy. You just keep casting. **E**

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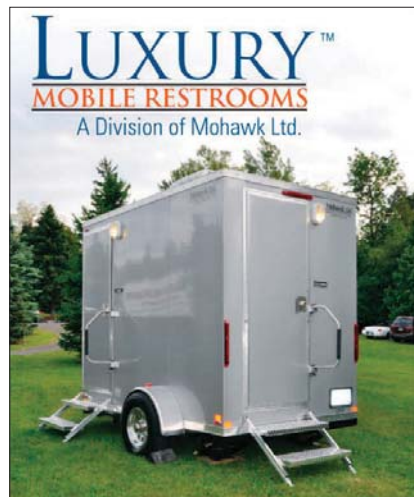
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## Contest Winner



**Diane Phillips, our contest winner from our October issue. Congratulations Diane.. keep on playing!**

This month's reader contest winner was Diane Phillips of Clinton. Diane has been reading EDITOR since moving to Clinton about 6 months ago when she started receiving it in her mailbox every month. "That's very convenient. I just love seeing it in my mail!" said Diane. She says that she love the articles about local businesses. "Some of them are old and familiar, and some

are brand new to me even though they have been here for a long time." said Diane.

The October cover which was Jennifer Scharman, owner of the Gingham Patch primitive shop in Bouckville, really attracted Diane as she loves crafts and the country/primitive look.

Diane works in the banking industry along with a part time job. She

said that with Christmas so close, the \$100 prize will come in very handy! "I have 5 grand children so this will be handy with Christmas right around the corner."

Thank you Diane for being a faithful reader. We sure do appreciate your kind words and wish you and your family a wonderful holiday season!

Keep on reading and playing. You can win more than once... we've had several come within one number of winning again! This month's clue can be found in the ad on page 29. Good luck to all of you.

All of us at the EDITOR office wish you and yours a blessed Thanksgiving. May each and every one of you take time to think of all those things you are thankful for and remember there is always something to be thankful for. We are thankful for each and every one of you! **E**

## Making new friends after a move or other life event



Downsizing and other life changes often find seniors leaving their comfort zones to move to new neighborhoods or regions of the country. It can be difficult to leave those comfort zones behind, especially when it means saying goodbye to close friends or family members. Establishing new social circles as a senior can be challenging. But with a little effort and the right attitude, seniors can meet new people and enjoy the excitement that comes with new friendships.

• Join a club. If you have a particular hobby or interest, rekindle it in your new location. Find a local gardening club, church-sponsored organization or fitness center where you can meet like-minded men and women. Ask the real estate agent who helped you relocate to make suggestions on where to find community information and read community notices in the local newspaper.

• Get a dog. Dogs make great companions inside of the house and also serve as an ice breaker when you are outdoors. Take plenty of walks and take advantage of opportunities for conversation when people come up to you to

inquire about your dog. Explain your situation and you may make some new friends along the way.

• Volunteer your time. Many people make new friends through volunteering. Volunteer and you're likely to meet people who share the same interests as you. Sign up with a favorite charity or volunteer at nonprofit events and look for familiar faces. Start talking to those people you meet again and again.

• Participate in church events. Places of religious worship are often cornerstones of a community, and they frequently host different events to get parishioners or members together. Read the bulletin and get involved in pot lucks, retreats, movie nights, and other church-sponsored events.

• Work at a school. Schools also serve as hubs of community activity. Volunteer or work for a local school and you will soon find yourself immersed in your community's weekday hustle and bustle. This is a great way to meet people and learn more about your new neighborhood in the process.

• Host your own party. Go out on a limb and plan a "new to the neighborhood" party. Put invitations in neighbors' mailboxes and invite everyone over for snacks and cocktails. Remember, neighbors may be just as nervous about new faces as you are, and a party is a great way to break the ice.

Change can be hard for people seniors starting out in new communities. With some gumption and a few strategies to get started, anyone can expand their circle of friends. **E**

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

by Terry Stickels

The letters on the vertices of the triangles below form a logical pattern to help you determine what letter goes where the question mark is.

What is the missing letter?

W

T

O

A

W

A

H

Y

S

R

U

S

N

?

E

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King Crossword

ACROSS

1 High point

5 Dance syllable

8 Flabbergast

12 Fly high

13 Fond du —

14 Sea eagle

15 Multi-Grammy-winning gospel singer

17 Helps

18 Faux —

19 Inquire

20 Snob

21 With it

22 "Unh-unh"

23 Threw a party for

26 Kingston's island

30 Prayer ending

31 Space

32 Thy

33 Commemorative coin, maybe

35 Doctrine

36 Thanksgiving veggie

37 Two, in Tijuana

38 Capital letter key

41 Zodiac cat

42 Ernesto Guevara

45 Novice

46 "Lord of the Rings" cast member

48 Small

49 Blackbird

50 Franc

51 Hang in the balance

52 Solidify

53 Marries

DOWN

1 Now, on a memo

2 Prolonged sleep

3 Baseball's "Say Hey Kid"

4 Work unit

5 Necklace fastener

6 Yarn bundle

7 Performance

8 "Will & Grace" actor

9 Small combo

10 Loosen

11 Egg container?

16 Incursion

20 Muppet eagle

21 Founder of a major auto company

22 Siesta

23 Online help page

24 Ostrich's cousin

25 Afternoon social

26 Cookie holder

27 Charged bit

28 Pool stick

29 Illustrations

31 Jewel

34 Tit for —

35 Hit the horn

37 Beelzebub

38 Put an end to

39 Stevenson villain

40 Decrease?

41 Queue

42 Hint

43 Group of cattle

44 Cupid's alias

46 Trail the pack

47 Evergreen type

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Mega Maze

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Thank a Veteran for your freedom.

Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas

Puzzles4Kids

Answer

Why is a tree like a big dog?  
Because they both have a lot of bark.

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

FOOD-RELATED SURNAMES

ANSWERS

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

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Sticklers Answer

The missing letter is "R." Starting with the "W" at the top of the first triangle, the letters spell "WHAT'S YOUR ANSWER?"

Differences: 1. Trash can is missing. 2. Letter is missing. 3. Curfews are missing. 4. Curfews are missing. 5. House is smaller. 6. Sign is missing.

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Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend

THE CAT'S "MEOW" PUZZLE!

You'll be sitting in the "catbird seat" if you finish this one. To the left is a stack of eight words; each of which begins with the word "cat." Using the following hints, see if you can catch them in less than five minutes.

1 CAT

2 CAT

3 CAT

4 CAT

5 CAT

6 CAT

7 CAT

8 CAT

1. An easily remembered tune.

2. A short rest.

3. A tomato favorite. (Var.)

4. A disapproving whistle.

5. Found at big parties.

6. Found in swamps.

7. Great for moving heavy objects.

8. A well-known slogan.

ANSWERS

1. Catapult 2. Catnap 3. Catnip 4. Catcall 5. Catfish 6. Catwalk 7. Catapult 8. Catnap



Above all, we must realize that no arsenal, or no weapon in the arsenals of the world, is so formidable as the will and moral courage of free men and women. It is a weapon our adversaries in today's world do not have. ~ Ronald Reagan

Puzzles4Kids

by Helene Hovanec

CODED RIDDLE

Change each letter to the one that comes immediately BEFORE it in the alphabet to find a riddle and its answer.

Here's a copy of the alphabet to guide you:

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

XIZ JT B USFF MJLF B CJH EPH?

CFDBVTF UIFZ CPUJ IBWF B MPU

PG CBSL.

MAGIC MAZE • FOOD-RELATED SURNAMES

Y V S S P L I E B Y V R O L I

F R C Z E W T B Q N K I F R C

Z W R U R L P U M J H E C E Z

X U S E Q N K T H L J G E G C

N O C A B Z F C S X V E T R R

C U R R Y W R H I P L N L U J

H E C A A D A E F P N A E B Y

W V T R G P N R P N O L K K I

G E C B Z U K A T P M X L W U

S R P O M L S J C S E C I R I

G E D B A Y X W U T L P M S Q

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Apple

Bacon

Bean

Butcher

Candy

Curry

Fish

Franks

Lemon

Milk

Pepper

Pickles

Rice

Strawberry

Sugar

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# Last-Minute Shopper's Guide

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## What are the differences between sparkling wines?

As midnight approaches on New Year's Eve, revelers anxiously anticipate toasting the arrival of a new year with a glass of something bubbly. Once the cork is popped and the drinks are poured, the party can truly begin. Although revelers may assume any fizzy beverage they are served is champagne, by the true definition of the word, they actually may be drinking something else — one of many varieties of sparkling wine.

### True champagne

Authentic champagne is named after Champagne, France, the region where the grapes used to make it are grown, fermented and bottled. According to European law, the only labels that are allowed to include the name "Champagne" must be bottled within 100 miles of this region, which is close to Paris.

The taste of champagne is unique thanks to the soil in which the grapes are grown. It is a mineral-rich soil and imparts

that flavor into the beverage. Champagne is made from a unique base of grapes that include Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier and Chardonnay grapes. Experts with Wine Country also say that roughly 90 percent of all blended champagnes use a ratio of 2/3 red and 1/3 Chardonnay mixes.

Another component that sets champagne apart is the process by which it is made. It is strictly controlled by the Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée. This certification dictates how a producer may grow the grapes and how the grapes can be harvested and processed. Champagne is produced by méthode champenoise, a process that is said to have been invented by a monk named Dom Perignon. This procedure involves double fermentation in bottles and creates an earthy, yeasty flavor.

### Sparkling wines

Champagne is sparkling wine, but not all sparkling wines are champagne. Other notable types of sparkling wine

include Italian Prosecco and Spanish Cava. Sparkling wine is produced in regions of France as well as in the United States and Canada. But sparkling wine can be made just about anywhere grapes are grown. Sparkling wines are often double-fermented in steel containers instead of bottles.

People are drawn to other sparkling wines besides champagne for various reasons. For some, cost is a heavy consideration, as authentic champagne can be considerably more expensive than sparkling wine. In addition, some people find less expensive champagnes are not as palate-pleasing as sparkling wines.

Few things are more universally associated with celebrations than a bottle of bubbly. Subtle differences set sparkling wines apart from champagne, but personal preference is oftentimes the deciding factor when choosing which beverage to choose for a special occasion. **E**

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## 8 factors that can affect auto insurance premiums

Auto insurance is a necessity for drivers in many localities. But while local laws may

mandate drivers have insurance, no such laws mandate how much drivers must pay to insure

their vehicles. Certain factors can influence just how much drivers will pay for their auto insurance policies.

### 1. Complacency:

Doing nothing at all may find you spending too much on auto insurance. Many drivers fail to routinely shop around for coverage, and that can be costing them money. In its 2013 Insurance Shopping Study, the research firm J.D. Power found that only 23 percent of auto insurance customers shopped their policies in the past 12 months. Shopping around for a better rate can save drivers considerable amounts of



money, and the Internet has made comparison shopping easier than ever before.

### 2. Coverage and deductibles:

The type

of coverage you choose, as well as the amount of your deductible, will affect the cost of your policy. Choosing a higher deductible (the amount you pay out of pocket before insurance will start to pay) usually leads to a lower monthly payment. Full coverage may not be necessary if you own your car or the car is old and not worth that much.

**3. Location:** Where you live can affect the cost of your insurance premiums. Since most traffic accidents occur close to home, the area where you live factors heavily in the cost of your

policy. Densely populated neighborhoods with more cars mean you could be at a higher risk of accident, theft and injury. Plus, costs for repairs may be higher in these areas. Moving to a less populated area can reduce insurance costs.

**4. Age/gender:** A person cannot change his or her age, but it's wise to realize that age and gender can affect costs. Young men typically incur higher rates than young women. Understanding your potential insurance costs can help you when choosing a vehicle.

**5. Vehicle type:** According to State Farm, some insurance companies increase premiums for cars deemed more likely to be damaged or stolen. A vehicle that scores high in independent safety ratings may be cheaper to insure than vehicles that scored low on safety tests.

**6. Credit score:** Raise your credit score and you may be able to lower your car insurance costs. According to the research firm Conning & Co., roughly 92 percent of insurers use your credit information as a factor to determine rates. Studies show that people with bad credit tend to file more and higher claims.

**7. Marital status:** Statistics show that people who have tied the knot are involved in fewer accidents and given fewer tickets than people who are single. Getting married can reduce insurance premiums, as can combining or bundling policies with your spouse.

**8. Driving history:** A driving history full of accidents and tickets can affect your insurance rates. However, many tickets and accidents that do not involve injuries stop affecting insurance rates after three years. Driving safely and biding your time until your tickets and accidents no longer influence your rates can save you money.

Drivers have control over how much they spend on auto insurance. Safe driving habits, the right choice of vehicle and where drivers choose to live can influence the cost of their auto insurance policies. **E**

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# Ridesharing safety tips



Ridesharing is a growing trend among travelers from all walks of life. Some proponents of ridesharing support the concept because they feel it's an eco-friendly means of traveling, while others find it's a great way to save money. Still others employ third-party ridesharing services as a responsible, affordable way to travel when going out for a night on the town.

With a greater number of people sharing rides and interacting with strangers than ever before, safety while ridesharing is an issue to take seriously. While ridesharing trips often occur without incident, there have been some instances of violent altercations involving drivers and passengers. For example, in February 2016, a driver from Kalamazoo, Mich., while working for a popular ridesharing service, admitted to killing six people after going on a shooting rampage.

According to the Taxicab, Limousine and Paratransit Association, ridesharing companies use a background check service to confirm criminal convictions and to make sure drivers are legally able to drive. However, these services may not perform FBI fingerprinting checks conducted by law enforcement officials, whereas taxi drivers are subjected to fingerprinting. So some ridesharing drivers who have committed crimes in the past but have never been caught may pass ridesharing background checks, but they might not pass tests that taxi companies would insist they submit to, such as fingerprinting tests.

While ridesharing, whether it entails carpooling or using an established ridesharing service, can be convenient, passengers must take steps to ensure their own safety when sharing rides.

- Confirm insurance coverage. All drivers need to be insured in case of an accident. Passengers are well within their rights to request proof of current insurance before agreeing to carpool.

- Confirm vehicle maintenance and inspections. Private individuals and some smaller ridesharing services drive fewer hours per week than many taxi companies. That means personal vehicles may be in better shape than taxis. Drivers must maintain their vehicles and have them inspected according to local regulations. Passengers can ask to see service records and should only accept rides in vehicles that appear to be in good repair.

- Confirm the driver and car before traveling. Before accepting a ride from a ridesharing service, passengers should confirm that the driver, vehicle and license plate number matches the notification that has been sent through the service's app. Passengers also can track the progress of the car's arrival. All details should be verified before stepping into the ridesharing vehicle.

- Ride in the back seat. Many of the criminal incidents associated with ridesharing have involved passengers riding in the front seat next to the driver. Maintain a safe distance by riding in the

back, which enables passengers to exit the vehicle more readily.

- Ride with a friend. Safety comes in numbers, so don't hesitate to share rides with friends or close colleagues if you are worried about riding alone.

- Avoid cash exchanges. Many ridesharing services automatically charge rides to passengers' credit cards. Chip-in arrangements for other carpooling can be made via PayPal or other methods that do not involve cash. Avoid getting in a car with a driver who asks to be paid in cash. **E**



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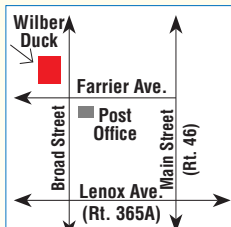
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## The benefits of umbrella insurance

Insurance policies come in various forms. There is a type of insurance to cover everything from motor vehicles to personal health to apartment dwellings. While the majority of people understand the importance of insuring their homes and cars, many may not explore the benefits of a different type of insurance: umbrella coverage.

Unlike other types of insurance that only offer one specific coverage, umbrella insurance is a single policy that

covers various aspects of a person's life. An umbrella policy can fill in the gaps where liability limits come into play with other insurance policies, keeping a person protected regardless of deductibles and other assets.

According to the financial resource Money Crashers, umbrella insurance is a type of liability insurance. Its main purpose is to protect policy holders in the event of lawsuits. The umbrella policy will provide additional coverage

can prevent financial ruin in the case of an accident.

The amount of umbrella coverage a person may need depends on how much that person is worth. Prospective policy holders can calculate their total assets and then take out policies in that amount or more to protect their net worth. Depending on the insurance company, umbrella policies range anywhere from \$1 to \$10 million. Coverage typically starts in the range of \$150 to \$200 for a \$1 million policy. What's more, some insurance companies will not issue an umbrella policy unless the insured already has an automotive or home policy with them — and one that maintains the standard amount of liability in those other policies.

When reviewing umbrella policies, it's also wise to think ahead to future income and how one's assets may grow. Adjust policies to account for inferred earnings or other expected assets.

Learn more about umbrella policies that can offer above-and-beyond protection by speaking with a trusted insurance agent. ■



against bodily injury liability claims and property damage liability claims. These policies also provide broader forms of coverage and can help cover some legal fees, if necessary.

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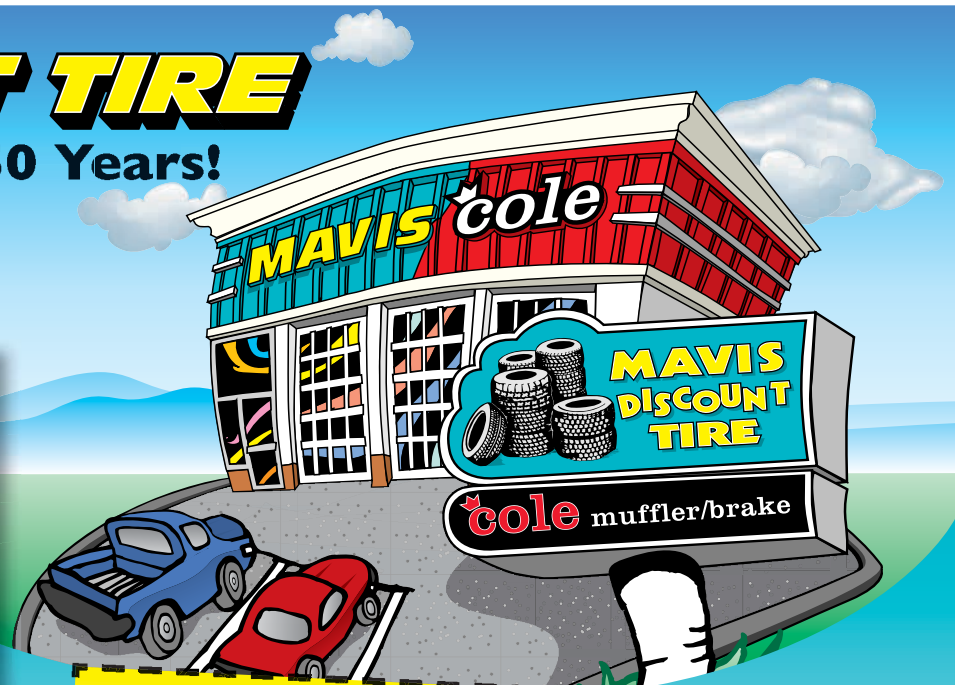
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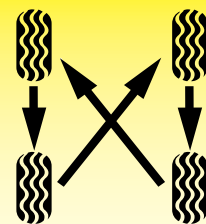
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# Shoppers' Guide

November 2016

A Special Supplement to

**EDITOR**  
Just Good Reading.com

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holiday  
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SHOP  
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& SHOP  
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Where to **find unique  
gifts** this holiday season

Clinton's  
**Shoppers'  
Stroll**

Friday and  
Saturday  
November  
25 & 26

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Saturday, November 26th



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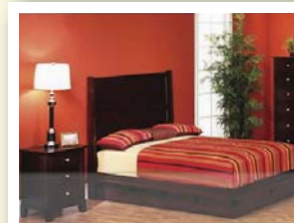
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## Stocking stuffers for athletes and sports enthusiasts



Gifts come in all shapes and sizes, and sometimes the best gifts are those that come in small packages. Though some people pore over their holiday shopping lists for weeks, it's not uncommon for even the most devoted holiday shopper to overlook stocking stuffers, which can be just as difficult to find as larger gifts.

When shopping for stocking stuffers, consider the recipient's interests. For example, athletes and sports enthusiasts would undoubtedly love a gift that reflects their loyalty to a favorite team or their devotion to a particular sport. Holiday shoppers who have a sports-crazed superfan or accomplished athlete on their shopping lists may want to consider the following items when looking for stocking stuffers this holiday season.

- Sports memorabilia: Sports fanatics sometimes double as collectors who are always on the lookout for new memorabilia to display. Such collectibles may include bobbleheads, cards, ticket stubs and signed photographs or equipment. Rare memorabilia may be beyond many gift-givers' means, but there are still plenty of impressive items that can fit into any holiday gifting budget.

- Game tickets: Give sports fans a chance to cheer on their favorite teams in person. Find a home game that will not require the recipient to travel too far, or if you want to splurge, include transportation with the tickets to an away game. Secondary market ticket-seller StubHub is a reliable resource that guarantees tickets sold on its site are legitimate, removing any doubt ticket market buyers may have.

- Fan gear: Sports fans can never have enough gear to show off their team pride. Everything from mugs to hats to authentic team jerseys makes for great stocking stuffers. In addition, look for pennants or t-shirts that feature team names or logos. Today just about any item comes emblazoned with sports team names. If you can't find a particular item, it may be possible to order it directly from a team or retailer or have it customized.

- Sports equipment: Athletes may benefit from updated equipment. Determine if the athletes on your gift list have any gear that needs replacing. Parents, coaches or even teammates may offer recommendations regarding which equipment your loved one needs. If you don't know a catcher's mitt from a tennis racket, stuff the stocking with a gift card to a sporting goods store.

- Magazine subscription: Sports fans often enjoy reading up on their favorite players and keeping abreast of team or industry news. Magazine subscriptions are generally inexpensive and new subscriptions often come with free gifts as well. **GG**

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Did You Know?



As holiday shopping season kicks into high gear, retailers who use apps and mobile responsive websites to reach more customers may benefit by making a concerted effort

to reach older shoppers. According to Nielsen's Mobile Measurement, 26 percent of the more than 100 million mobile shoppers are 55 and older, while an additional 40 percent are between the ages of 25 and 44. Those figures might surprise some retailers who are quick to associate mobile shopping with digital-native Millennials. Nielsen's Fourth-Quarter Mobile Multicultural Insights report even noted that

Hispanics are more inclined to shop via mobile than non-Hispanic, white smartphone owners. Retailers may also be interested to know that more and more shoppers are turning to apps instead of websites to do their shopping. Between the fourth quarter, Nielsen reports that 101.4 million smartphone users accessed a shopping app. By the fourth quarter of 2015, that figure had risen to 109.9 million users. **GG**



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*What's on your wish list this year?*

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\* Limit 5 per customer, must purchase in person at spa during advertised hours only, gift certificates for spa services only, products are excluded.



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## Make holiday shopping excursions special

As they fulfill the social obligations of the holiday season, many people find themselves spending less time at home.

One way to tackle holiday shopping without sacrificing time with family and friends is to make holiday shopping a social event.

- Invite friends or family along. Recreate the days of your youth when it was fun to meet friends at your favorite local shops. Plan a meeting location and have an itinerary in

place. Divide shopping lists so that everyone shares the task of shopping and fatigue doesn't set in prematurely.

- Make lunch or dinner part of the day. Incorporate refueling into your shopping plans. Failure to eat or drink can lead to hunger pangs and test shoppers' patience, two factors that are seldom conducive to successful shopping. Having an end goal to meet friends or family at a nearby restaurant. Reward yourself

for a job well done over a tasty meal and maybe a cocktail. Just be sure to indulge responsibly.

- Break up the day with a flick. Plan your shopping around the movie schedule so you can take a two-hour break to rest and relax in the theater. Chances are you'll come out of the film relaxed, refreshed and ready to tackle the rest of your shopping list.

- Make it a date night. The thought of shopping may not conjure up ideas



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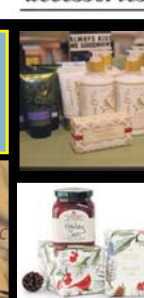


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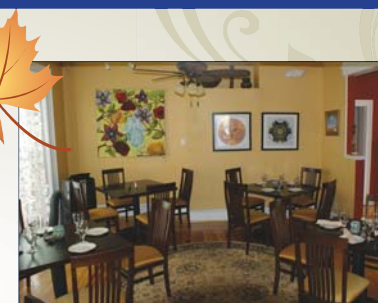
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Holiday shopping can be even more fun with a group of girlfriends.

of romance, but if time is short, couples can use

shopping excursions as an opportunity to spend

time together. Visit a coffee shop or a bar for a nightcap afterward and enjoy some one-on-one time.

Parents can enlist the help of a babysitter to keep children entertained while they enjoy some uninterrupted time with each other.

Shopping fills the days leading to the holidays. Make the most of such excursions by inviting friends and family along. **GG**

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SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY - 11/26



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Select educational gifts for children



When shopping for holiday gifts for children, shoppers can easily be overwhelmed by the many toys, electronics, apparel and other items available for kids. Those who may not be up-to-date on the latest trends may even find shopping for kids a bit like solving a difficult puzzle.

While some shoppers may want to get kids the flashiest toy, others may prefer gifts that are both fun and mentally stimulating. Developmental toys and educational games for kids make for popular gifts. Toy and game manufacturers continue to develop products that integrate logic, reasoning, language

stimulation, and motor skill development. Shoppers looking for fun, educational toys and games for the kids on their shopping lists have a host of items to choose from.

- **Building blocks:** Blocks that enable children to design and construct are popular among youngsters of various ages. Blocks come in many different forms, from early education wooden blocks that fill nursery floors to the more intricate, interlocking building sets that are coveted by older children.
- **STEM toys:** Some of the latest trends in children’s toys veer away from regular video games and apps and cater to

the rising interest in STEM. STEM is an acronym for science, technology and math. Early introduction to STEM-related skills can pay dividends later in life, considering students who have an emphasis on STEM knowledge are highly coveted among employers. STEM toys may include robot-building kits, toys that help young learners test the boundaries of physics, apps that help kids learn computer programing, and even scientific experiment kits that illustrate cause and effect.

- **Sensory toys:** Young children can benefit from toys that stimulate the senses. Items to consider include water

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25% OFF

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## Ideas to jump-start holiday gift shopping



(MS) — The holiday shopping season is upon us, and shoppers everywhere are on the lookout for the perfect gifts for their loved ones. While some people are easy to shop for, others might be more difficult. Fortunately, shoppers have many options when it comes to finding gifts for those friends and relatives who are passionate about do-it-yourself projects, improving their homes and woodworking.

### Cleanup and Storage

• The Karcher WD5/P Wet/Dry Shop Vacuum is 6.6 gallon vac with an 1,800-watt, variable-speed motor. The vacuum can be used for general cleanup indoors and outdoors, to blow dirt if necessary, to vacuum small or large amounts of water, and to clean up after

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renovation work. An on-board power outlet allows users to turn the Karcher and a power tool on and off simultaneously.

- The Tanos T-Loc SYS-Sort IV/3 systainer has three levels of parts and tool storage. Each drawer opens within the stack for easy access. Drawers can be customized with bins or the optional drawer accessory pack (both sold separately). Connect by the T-LOC to other systainer products.

#### Home project helpers

- The DIY Project Kit from Kreg® Tool combines three tools for creating custom home projects that help users keep their homes organized. Using these three tools with a drill and circular saw, users can build high-quality projects for their homes easily and economically.

- Users can cut, grind, sand, carve and polish efficiently with the Dremel 3000 Rotary Tool that is compatible with all existing Dremel accessories and most attachments.

- The multifunction PULY 3.6 V Lithium-Ion Cordless Screwdriver Kit is designed to tackle multiple household applications. It comes with right angle and offset chuck heads.

- The 50" WoodRiver® Clamp Guide combines a rigid guide rail with an

internal clamp eliminating the need for C-clamps or hold-downs. Users can use the guide with a circular saw to cut sheet goods to a manageable size, guide routers for dadoes, or as a fence for a bandsaw, drill press or router table.

- Users can finesse trim (miters and back bevels, for example) with the WoodRiver® Low Angle Block Plane with Adjustable Mouth, which can also be used to remove a controlled amount of material (trim molding, doors, shims and more).

The 11/2-lb. WoodRiver® Small Chisel Plane is the perfect size (4 1/2" x 13 1/2" wide) for cleaning up glue lines and light trimming duties such as smoothing out pocket-hole plugs.

- The 26" long M1 Tape Measure features a patented Sight Scribe that allows users to measure and mark without using a pencil, while the double-sided tape and hooks allow measuring from either side

- Woodcraft Magazine publishes six issues a year and includes articles about woodworking projects, techniques and tools, and related topics.

#### Sharpening, shop and more

- Work Sharp has partnered with legendary

hall of fame knife maker Ken Onion to develop a new, improved Work Sharp® Knife and Tool Sharpener. It features a fully adjustable (15° to 30°) precision sharpening guide, is variable-speed (1200 SFM to 2800 SFM), and has wide, flexible, premium abrasive belts to sharpen pocket, hunting, serrated, kitchen and any other shape or type of knife blade.

- The M. Power 5N1 Double-Sided Diamond File with Handle features Diamond Cross™ technology. The 1" x 5" long double-sided 300/600-grit stone can sharpen scissors, garden shears, knives, circular saw blades and lawn mower blades.

- Height adjustment for the WoodRiver® Adjustable Height Shop Stool is 19" to 25", and it comes with both flat feet and casters that users can customize.

- QuikBENCH™ Portable Workbench is a lightweight, portable workbench that holds up to 300 lbs. Convert two benches to sawhorses, and together they will hold up to 2,000 lbs. Work surface measures 30" x 24", and height is 32".

- WoodRiver® Cheese Slicer Hardware Kits include the hardware, handle and wire necessary to complete a cheese slicer. The board can be made from a Woodcraft Cutting Board Kit, bamboo, or polymer cutting board material.

- Woodcraft Cutting Board Kit No 2 includes enough exotic and domestic hardwood to complete a cutting board approximately 3/4" x 5" x 16" or two 5" x 8" cheese boards. Just arrange the wood, glue, clamp and sand.

- For family and friends who present a special shopping challenge, consider a Woodcraft Gift Card.

To learn more about these products and others, visit your local Woodcraft store, call (800) 535-4482 or visit [www.woodcraft.com](http://www.woodcraft.com). GG

“

Our hearts grow tender with childhood memories and love of kindred, and we are better throughout the year for having, in spirit, become a child again at Christmas-time.

-Laura Ingalls Wilder

## Holiday Portraits



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## The benefits to buying local this holiday season

Holiday shopping dominates many people's free time between the day after Thanksgiving and the final days before Christmas. While many people may shop 'til they drop on Black Friday and Cyber Monday, those days still account for a relatively small amount of the hundreds of billions of dollars that are spent each holiday season.

• Buying local benefits your local economy. Studies from Civic Economics, an economics and strategies planning firm, found that independent, locally-owned retailers return a far greater percentage of their revenue into their local economies than national chain stores. One such study examined the disparity between revenue recirculation among independent, locally-owned businesses in Raleigh, North Carolina, versus four major national chains in the city. The former recirculated 51.1 percent of revenue into the local economy, while the latter recirculated less than 14 percent. Similar results were discovered in many cities, indicating that buying local not only benefits local business owners, but also the communities those owners and their customers call home.

• Buying local creates jobs in your community. One of the biggest ways local business owners in Raleigh recirculated their revenue in the local economy was job creation. While national chains also create jobs, such jobs only benefit your community if the chains are located within your community. If your local mall is a considerable drive away, chances are the chains within that mall are not employing many of your fellow community members. Local businesses in your community are more likely to employ residents of your town.

• Shopping local may provide access to more unique gifts. In addition to the economic benefits of buying local, shoppers may find merchandise made by local craftsmen is more unique than mass-produced items found on the shelves of national retailers. Recip-

local page 14

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Local from page 13

ients may cherish more unique items that they cannot find on their own, and that appreciation may even spur them to visit more

local retailers after the holiday season has come and gone, benefiting their own communities in so doing.



Buying local not only benefits small business owners, but it also pays dividends for their customers and the communities they call home.

• Local business may provide a more personal touch. Buying from national chains has its advantages, but customer service is not always one of them. Should your loved ones encounter problems with their gift that requires assistance, they might be forced to wait on the phone for extended periods of time as they and thousands of others wait for customer service representatives to answer their calls. Local businesses do not deal with nearly the volume of customers as national retailers and, therefore, are capable of addressing concerns more quickly and personally than large chains. **GG**

## Celebrate the holidays

Holiday celebrations include big family gatherings and maybe even some impromptu visits from close friends. During this season of merrymaking, having a few quick snacks and drinks up your sleeve can make it easier to entertain guests. Christmas cookies are a popular treat, but for those who want to skip the baking, that holiday cookie flavor can still be enjoyed in a delicious mixed cocktail.

Try "Christmas Cookie," courtesy of Mix That Drink, for a sweet and minty take on the holiday season.

- 1 ounce peppermint schnapps
- 1 ounce Kahlua
- 1 ounce Irish Cream liqueur

Combine the ingredients in a shaker with ice. Shake and strain the drink into a martini glass. Garnish with a peppermint stick, if desired. **GG**

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## Coloring a popular adult hobby

Coloring books are no longer just child's play. In recent years, adult coloring books have flown off the shelves at craft retailers and bookstores, turning what was once a niche hobby into a popular and lucrative trend.

Studies show that coloring can have calming and therapeutic effects. In fact, researchers at Johns Hopkins University suggest coloring as an alternative to meditation. This form of art therapy can relax the mind and help a person learn more about oneself in the process.

All types of coloring can stimulate a person's creative juices while simultaneously strengthening his or her mental well-being. Experts who study the impact coloring has on adults have found coloring involves both logic and creativity. This activates the areas of the cerebral cortex in the brain involved in vision and fine motor skills. The relaxation that coloring provides lowers the activity of the amygdala, the part of the brain that controls emotions.

Participants who color can find tranquility quite easily.

Adults interested in coloring have a substantial catalog of adult coloring books at their disposal. Start with something relatively easily by coloring mandalas, or circles filled with other geometric shapes. Intricate designs are hallmarks of adult coloring books, including fine art and design-themed coloring books. Therefore, it's best to invest in a quality set of colored pencils for a greater level of precision.

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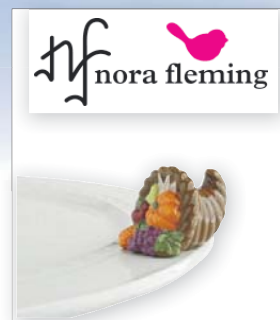
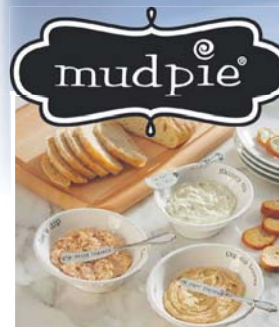
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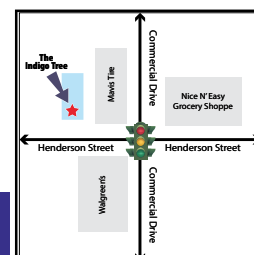
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