

Mohawk Valley Country Editor

February 16,
2019

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014: 26 Center Street, **PALATINE BRIDGE**: This home has been totally remodeled from top to bottom, beautiful hardwood floors through-out. Large bedroom on first floor that could be made into two bedrooms or convert into a master bathroom. One full bath on 1st floor and one full bath on 2nd floor. A nice space on the second floor that can be a family room or kids play area. Located on a dead end street with a decent size back yard for the kids to play. There is a new roof, new furnace and hot water heater, brand new kitchen with granite counter tops. The house has plenty of natural light. **Asking \$134,000**



055: 154 Otsego Street, **CANAJOHARIE**: This home has been well cared for, new wood/laminate floors, new windows, new stove, many extras included. Great starter home for new family, easy to heat. Cozy screened in back porch overlooking small, but very nice backyard. Family room was used as a second bedroom, making it a possible three bedroom, one full bath home. **Asking \$79,000**



062: **NEW LISTING!!!** 0 Mapletown Road, **CANAJOHARIE**: Looking for a great location with a view of the Adirondack Mountains and enough land to raise horses or have a small farm? Then take a look at this property. If you take Rouse Road to the end, there is a road hat was put in to drive to the top of the ridge, to a location to build a home with a view. There is 34.5 acres and approximately 1750 feet of road footage along Mapletown Road and Rouse Road. **Asking \$64,000**



214: **NEW LISTING!!!** 30 Hancock Street, **FORT PLAIN**: Cute starter home priced right and very low maintenance makes for a great buy!!! Formal dining, living room and 1/2 bath on 1st floor. Large master bedroom, plus two more bedrooms and a full bath on 2nd floor. Public parking across the street. **Asking \$52,500**



290: **PRICE REDUCED!!!** 7 John Street, **ST. JOHN**: This spacious 4 bedroom, one full bath, one half bath home is filled with character and has room for the whole family! New windows, updated wiring and plumbing and a new composite deck are just a few of the many upgrades. It maintains its old charm with hardwood floors and French doors leading to your beautiful sun porch. Large rooms with a versatile floor plan. Attached garage and a full basement and attic that offer plenty of storage. The fenced in yard is great for kids or pets. **Asking \$79,900**



294: 3137 State Route 80, **FORT PLAIN**: Priced to sell!!!! This Cape Cod style home has a large yard, an above ground pool with a deck, a new septic, hardwood floors, and so much more! Three bedroom and one full and one 1/2 bath home. Location is close to Owen D. Young School, and just 20 miles from Cooperstown. Easy to Show!!!! **Asking \$59,000**



450: **NEW LISTING!!!** 00 Route 5, **PALATINE BRIDGE**: This 28 acre plus property goes from Route 5 to all the way back to the railroad tracks. Level and Rolling. **Asking \$180,000**



451: **NEW LISTING!!!** 494 Maple Hill Road, **CANAJOHARIE**: This spacious 3 bedroom, 2 full bath ranch house sits on 136 acres with the Canajoharie Creek running through the property. There are out buildings for plenty of storage. The land offers privacy and an abundance of wild life that you can enjoy all year. The porch offers a relaxing view of the Canajoharie Creek. **Asking \$359,000**



677: 640 Fords Bush Road, **FORT PLAIN**: Take a peek out of the front windows and you'll be glad you took the time to see this well cared for farmhouse. The pastoral views go for miles!!!! The updated kitchen with granite counter and stainless appliances will tempt your inner chef. The home has four bedrooms and a full bath on the second floor. The deck right out back also has views of beautiful farmland so you'll enjoy relaxing and grilling this summer. **Asking \$129,900**



955: **PRICE REDUCED!!!** 11 Lafayette Street, **PALATINE BRIDGE**: Great home in the Village of Palatine Bridge with many nice features - hardwood floors, natural woodwork, large yard and above ground pool to enjoy or relax on the open front porch watching the horses and buggies go by. Three bedrooms on 2nd floor and a full bath. Another bedroom on 3rd floor. Close to school, shopping, Arkell Museum, I-90 and walking distance to fish on the Mohawk River at Erie Canal Lock 14. **Asking \$114,900**

955: **PRICE REDUCED!!!** 11 Lafayette Street, **PALATINE BRIDGE**: Great home in the Village of Palatine Bridge with many nice features - hardwood floors, natural woodwork, large yard and above ground pool to enjoy or relax on the open front porch watching the horses and buggies go by. Three bedrooms on 2nd floor and a full bath. Another bedroom on 3rd floor. Close to school, shopping, Arkell Museum, I-90 and walking distance to fish on the Mohawk River at Erie Canal Lock 14. **Asking \$114,900**



MLS201910074: 5769 St Hwy 29, **EPHRAATAH**: Huge commercial building built well in the early 2000s. Great for storage units or auto repair shop or sales on small equipment, entertainment building, several options. Building was a store for 5 years but was too big of a building for this use because of heating and electrical. Could be cut in half for other uses. Rural area with several small hamlets around. Owner willing to lease as well. **Asking \$249,000**



MLS201911720: **NEW LISTING!!!** 12 Barber St., **FONDA**: Home is under repair. There is one bedroom and a 1/2 bath on the 1st floor and two bedrooms and a full bath on 2nd floor. Many items updated. New rugs, water pipes, laminate flooring. Water heater has new element and furnace has new mother board. New sink in upper bathroom as well as tile flooring. Septic drain has been updated and roof has new tar paper on one year ago. Workshop has electric to it. Shed on property. Enclosed porch, new sheet rock. Basement has dirt floor. View of the Village lout back windows and is located on dead end street. **Asking \$43,000**

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SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE & EVERY BUDGET!

Garden planning - help beat the winter blues

by Noah Radliff

Here it is again, the freezing hands of winter. Everything is cold and the only color is the pine trees and quick splashes of color from the birds at our bird feeders. It sometimes seems with what little sunlight we have during these shortened days that Mother Nature herself does not want to deal with the winter season either. Which brings me to a particular point... or rather a feeling - like you are "not yourself" or "feeling blue." If you have these feelings in these winter months you are not alone. It is called Seasonal Affective Disorder or SAD. We know it as "winter blues."

So what to do when you start to feel these "winter blues?" What I do early in the winter season is do the closest thing to spring and summer that I can think of - diving right into the garden planning. I compare years past and plan for the upcoming season. I feel the best when I am researching new plants to

add to the garden.

With the technology available today, you can search for your products and compare prices. Take your time, compare seed companies and read the reviews. Call, write, or e-mail seed companies with questions. Most seed companies are competitive and will send coupons and discounts through email and the post.

Research! There is a never-ending supply of information on horticulture. Cold, wintery days can be filled up by exploring horticulture trends on social media.

If you are planning on expanding your garden you can go out before planting time and do site selection.

Winter months can be long and cold but they can be utilized to get a jump start on your next season. My best recommendation during the winter is to dream big, stay optimistic and surround yourself with family and friends!



Planning for Summer when it is Winter.

14th annual Antique Show & Sale to benefit Nellis Tavern

On Saturday, March 2 from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., the Palatine Settlement Society will hold its 14th annual Antique Show & Sale at the Arkell Museum, 2 Erie Blvd., Canajoharie. All proceeds will go directly to the restoration and continued preservation of the 1747 Nellis Tavern historic site and School House #8 in St. Johnsville. The show features 25

dealers with a range of quality antiques including furniture, quilts, books, tools, postcards, paintings, toys, china, jewelry and more. An appraisal booth and light lunch will be available. Joan Draus, show manager, may be reached by text or by leaving a message at 518.894.7807. There is a \$5 admission charge.

Did you know?

Investing in a home renovation project not only requires money, but also time and patience. While contractors, architects and designers can estimate how long a project may take, it is impossible to anticipate all of the scenarios that can affect that estimated timeline.

Information from the real estate firm Keller Williams indicates an average kitchen remodel involving installation of new countertops, cabinets, appliances, and floors can take three to six months. But if ductwork, plumbing or wiring must be addressed, the job may take longer. A midline bathroom remodel may take two to three months. Adding a room to a house can take a month or two.

The home improvement resource Renovation Junkies offers similar estimates, with the average home renovation taking between four and eight months. Homeowners need to consider time when planning their home projects.

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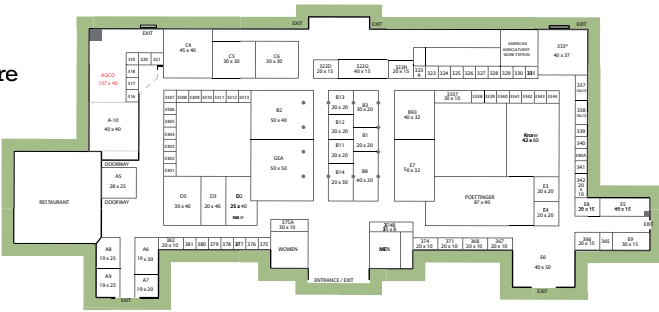
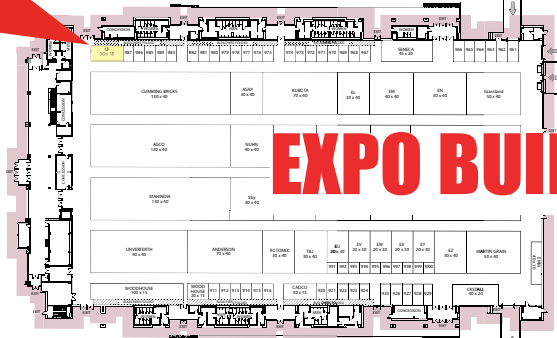


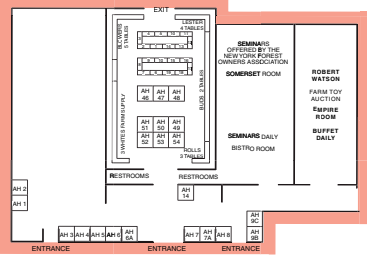
EXHIBIT LOCATOR

Exhibits are identified first by building code, followed by booth number.


AH	Art & Home Center
CP	Center of Progress
D	Dairy Building
E	Expo Building
HT	Horticulture Building
W	Winter Ag Museum

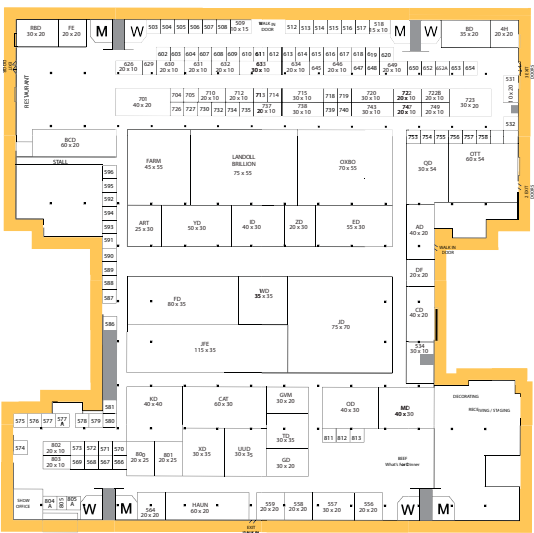


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Here's what taxpayers should consider when determining if they need to file

As people prepare to file their taxes, there are things to consider. They will want to determine if they need to file and the best way to do so.

For tax year 2018, all individual taxpayers will file using the new Form 1040. Forms 1040A and 1040EZ are no longer available. Taxpayers who previously filed these forms will now file Form 1040. The new Form 1040 uses a "building block" approach allowing individuals to add only the schedules they need to their 2018 federal tax return. Taxpayers with more complicated returns will need to complete one or more of the new Form 1040 Schedules. This group of taxpayers includes those who claim certain deductions or credits, or who owe additional taxes.

Individuals who filed their federal tax return electronically last year may not notice any changes, as the tax return preparation software will automatically use their answers to the tax questions to complete the Form 1040 and any needed schedules.

Here are three more things for people to keep in mind as they prepare to file their taxes:

Who is required to file. In most cases, income, filing status and age determine if a taxpayer must file a tax return. Other rules may apply if the taxpayer is self-employed or if they are a dependent of another person. For example, if a taxpayer is single and younger than age 65, they must file if their income was at least \$12,000. There are other instances when a taxpayer must file. Taxpayers can visit [IRS.gov/filing](https://www.irs.gov/filing) for more information.

Filing to get a refund. Even if a taxpayer doesn't have to file, they should consider filing a tax return if they can get money back. If a taxpayer answers "yes" to any of these questions, they could be due a refund:

- Did my employer withhold federal income tax from my pay?
- Did I make estimated tax payments?
- Did I overpay on my 2017 tax return and have it applied to 2018?
- Am I eligible for certain refundable credits such as, the earned income tax credit.

Taxpayers can file for free. Join the millions of Americans who safely file their taxes and save money using IRS Free File. Seventy percent of the nation's taxpayers are eligible for IRS Free File. The IRS's commercial partners offer free brand-name software to about 100 million individuals and families with incomes of \$66,000 or less. Taxpayers who earned more can use Free File Fillable Forms. This option allows taxpayers to complete IRS forms electronically. It is best for those who are comfortable doing their own taxes.

Taxpayers can also use the Interactive Tax Assistant tool on [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov) to answer many tax questions. They should look for "Do I need to file a return?" under general topics.

All taxpayers should keep a copy of their tax return. Taxpayers using a software product for the first time may need their adjusted gross income amount from their prior-year tax return to verify their identity. Taxpayers can learn more about how to verify their identity and electronically sign tax returns at Validating Your Electronically Filed Tax Return.

Source: [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov)

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Mon. Feb 18th – Normal Monday Sale & Monthly Sheep, Lamb, Goat & Pig Sale. We have a load of 10-15 butcher hogs.

Mon. Feb 25th – Normal Monday Sale & Monthly Organic Day

Mon. Mar. 4th – Normal Monday Sale & Monthly Fat Cow & Feeder Sale

Fri. March 15th – Sale held on the Farm – Annville, PA. 11:00AM Valley River Holsteins Milking Herd & Bred Heifer Dispersal. 75 Head of Registered Holsteins DHI RHA 24,302 4.1 933 3.1 745 BAA 109.9. Retirement Dispersal you don't want to miss!

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Sat. March 30th – Spring Premier All Breed Sale – 100 head of Registered All Breed Cattle Sell

Sat. April 6th – Sale on the farm – Copake, NY. 10:00AM. Hill-Over Farm Complete Machinery & Equipment Auction and Barn Equipment.

Sat. April 20th – Annual Spring Consignment Machinery Sale – Held at our Facility

Watch for 2019 Sales:
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Growing ginger and turmeric indoors

by Deborah J. Benoit, Extension Master Gardener, University of Vermont

One of the great joys of gardening (and among the most satisfying) is tasting the fruits of our labor, especially when those labors include adding herbs and spices to the garden mix. Even in climates such as ours with its short growing season and freezing winter weather, it's possible to grow tropical spices like ginger and turmeric (U.S. hardiness zones 8-10). You just need to grow them indoors.

Two spices, ginger (*Zingiber officinale*) and turmeric (*Curcuma longa*), are easy to grow in containers and adapt well to living inside although they do benefit from time outside during the warm weather months. Indoors or out, both grow best at temperatures of at least 68 degrees Fahrenheit and should not be exposed to temperatures below 50.

Both ginger and turmeric grow from a rhizome (a fleshy root) that is the edible part of the plant. The rhizomes often can be purchased through a mail-order nursery or at a grocery store. Try an organic market if you can't find these in your local supermarket.

Select one that is firm (not shriveled), several inches long and with several buds or "eyes." Cut it into 2-3 inch pieces, making sure that each piece includes at least 2-3 buds.

Choose a pot at least 12 inches in diameter. Fill the pot almost to the top with a nutrient-rich soil that will

drain well. Place the rhizome horizontally on the surface with the eyes facing up. Cover with about 2 inches of soil.

Water sparingly until sprouts appear. The soil should be moist, but never wet. Too much moisture may rot the rhizome.

Put the pot in a warm location (70-80 degrees Fahrenheit). If the room is cool, a heat mat such as those used for seed starting can be used to warm the soil. Remove from the heat mat once you see sprouts.

Now comes the most difficult part. Patience. It will take 3-8 weeks for sprouts to appear. Ginger will likely sprout sooner, turmeric later. When they do, move the pot to a sunny spot near a window. If necessary, supplement with a grow light. Water as needed to keep the soil moist (not wet), and mist often if the air is dry.

For the most part, ginger and turmeric plants are relatively care free with ginger growing 2-3 feet in height and turmeric 3-4 feet. As they mature, you'll get a lovely display of tropical foliage and perhaps a flower or two.

When the weather gets warmer, and after your plants have begun to leaf out, you can move your ginger and turmeric plants outside to benefit from the fresh air and sunshine. Daytime temperatures should be at least 68 degrees Fahrenheit, with nighttime temperatures not below 50.

Gradually introduce the plants to sunlight over the course of several days to avoid burning the foliage. When the weather begins to turn colder, or temperatures drop below 50, bring them back inside.

After 8-10 months, the foliage will begin to fade. When the plant has yellowed and dried out, it's time to harvest. Simply dig up the entire plant, brush the soil away from the rhizomes, and cut the stalk off.

Save a piece or two of the rhizomes to replant. Rinse off the rest and allow to dry. The whole rhizome can be stored in the refrigerator for up to three months, or cut in pieces and stored in the freezer for up to six months.

When one door of happiness closes,
 another opens; but often we look so long at
 the closed door that we do not see the one
 which has been opened for us.

Helen Keller

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Whatchamacallits

This whatchamacallit could very well be shared in one of our sister publications, Wine & Craft Beverage News. This old iron tool is a cork shrinker, a very important device for anyone wishing to preserve the fermenting fruits of their labor.

The corks we use stop and seal bottles are made from the bark of cork trees, almost all of which are grown and harvested in Portugal. The bark is safely harvested every nine years without harming the trees.

Correctly preparing corks for bottling is important. They need to be sanitary and softened just enough to allow a tool called a corker to put them in a bottle with ease. There are two basic ways to sterilize and soften corks. This first involves submerging the corks in a solution of sodium metabisulfite (an inorganic salt) and cold water. The second involves steaming the corks in water.

If soaking, you should let the

corks sit in water long enough to make them slightly soft – not spongy. You want them to be firm, but still have just a little give. Steaming is much quicker than soaking, but it does require



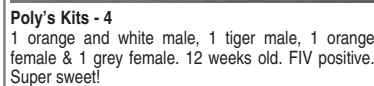
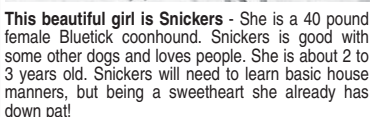
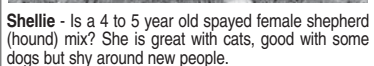
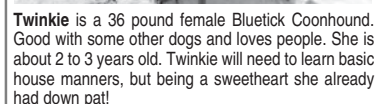
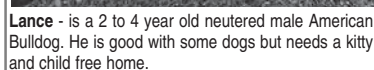
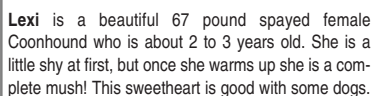
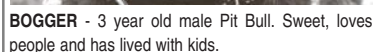
some care. It is easy to over-steam corks, making them very spongy and hard to press into the wine bottle without mangling them. Also, too much heat on the corks for too long will cause them to become brittle and crumble when they are pulled from bottles.

However, if these methods still don't get your corks to the size you need them, that's where the cork shrinker comes into play. Placing a softened cork between the two "teeth" of the tool and then pushing down slowly but firmly on the handle should make it just small enough to push into the mouth of your bottle – and safely seal the contents inside.



Do you have your own Whatchamacallit?
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Swiss Steak Skillet

I don't think there's a "meat and potatoes" man around who won't give this comforting dish two thumbs up.

- 16 ounces lean tenderized minute or cube steaks, cut into 16 pieces
- 1 1/2 cups finely sliced celery
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce
- 1 (8-ounce) can stewed tomatoes, undrained
- 1 teaspoon dried parsley flakes
- Sugar substitute to equal 1 tablespoon sugar, suitable for cooking
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper

- 3 cups hot cooked noodles, rinsed and drained
- 1. In a large skillet sprayed with butter-flavored cooking spray, saute meat, celery and onion for 10 minutes. Stir in tomato sauce, undrained stewed tomatoes, parsley flakes, sugar substitute and black pepper. Lower heat, cover and simmer for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- 2. For each serving, place 1/2 cup noodles on a plate and spoon about 1 cup meat mixture over top. Serves 6. Freezes well.
- * Each serving equals: 233 calories, 5g fat, 22g protein, 25g carb., 307mg sodium, 3g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 2 Meat, 1 1/2 Vegetable, 1 Starch.
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Calendar of events

NOTE: Calendar items must be submitted by Tuesday prior to the publication date to be included in the Calendar of Events. Entries may be emailed to cfeditor@leepub.com

Feb 20

Mar 9

June 1

Local History Round Table. 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Fort Plain Free Library, 19 Willett St., Fort Plain. Third Wednesday of each month. Contact: 518.993.4646.

Join the Mop & Bucket Company's Improv Theater Group for a night of laughs as they interact with the audience. Voted best Comedy Troupe in the Capital Region three years running. Tickets are \$25 before Feb. 25. \$35 thereafter. Includes: Cocktail Hour - 5:30-6:30 p.m. Dinner - 6:30 p.m. Show - 7:45 p.m. Contact: Steve Heiser 518.993.2111.

National Trails Day (Kayaking Tour). For more information, contact Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site.

Feb 21

June 6

Philo Cafe. Third Thursday of each month from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. The Philo Café is a respectful forum for people to share thoughts and ideas about topics determined by those in attendance. Sometimes there will be real food in addition to the food for thought. The Fort Plain Free Library is located at 19 Willett St., Fort Plain. Please call 518.993.4646.

Friends Speaker & Meeting. For more information, contact Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site, 129 Schoharie Street, Fort Hunter at 518.829.7516 or www.nysparks.com.

Putman Porch Music. June 6, 13, 20 and 27. For more information, contact Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site.

Apr 23

June 14-16

Feb 23

Tom Bergen Memorial Bowling Tournament to Benefit Arc Herkimer Autism Programs. The Bergen family of Little Falls and friends will host the third annual Tom Bergen Memorial Autism Awareness Bowling Tournament on Saturday, Feb. 23 and Sunday, Feb. 24 to benefit the autism programs at Arc Herkimer. Bowlers can call 315.823.3630 or stop in Gorge View to register. Other activities during the tournament weekend include a bake sale, prizes, 50-50 raffles, Chinese auction, and t-shirts for sale. For more information, please contact Tammy Helmer-Bergen at 315.823.1865.

Friends Speaker & Meeting. For more information, contact Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site, 129 Schoharie Street, Fort Hunter at 518.829.7516 or www.nysparks.com.

Path Through History Weekend. For more information, contact Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site.

Apr 27

June 26

Canal Clean Sweep. For more information, contact Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site.

Friends Business Meeting. For more information, contact Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site.

May 4

July 6

I Love My Park. For more information, contact Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site.

Canal Days. For more information, contact Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site.

May 18

July 10

Kids to Park Day. May 18 19. For more information, contact Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site.

Wildlife Wednesday. July 10, Aug. 7, Sept. 11. For more information, contact Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site.

May 21

July 16

Friends Speaker & Meeting. For more information, contact Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site.

FMRRRC Mule Haul. For more information, contact Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site.

May 25

July 23

Geocache Challenge Starts. May 25 19. For more information, contact Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site.

Benefit Antique Show. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Arkell Museum, 2 Erie Boulevard, Canajoharie. 14th annual Antique Show & Sale by Palatine Settlement Society will be at Arkell Museum for the benefit of 1747 Nellis Tavern in St. Johnsville. \$5 admission. Joan Draus, show manager, may be reached by text or leave message at 518.894.7807. Canajoharie-Fort Plain, NY #2621 Dinner & Comedy Show. March 9. Old Station Rd, Nelliston.

Mar 2

WANTED TO BUY... Antique 1800's Books, Ledgers, Bottles, Decorated Crocks & Jugs, Keys/Locks, Paintings, Glass Negatives/Photographs, Dolls, Tools, Lamps, Quilts, Marbles, Postcards, Hunting & Fishing. Victorian Jewelry & Watches, Buttons/Sewing, Clothing. Primitive Buckets, Barrels, Bowls, Kitchen. VINTAGE Pre-1975 Halloween, Christmas, Vending/Gumball Machines, Greeting Cards, Scrapbooks, Jadeite, New Undergarments, Hats, Hankies, Doilies, Lionel Trains, Head Vases, Radios, Railroad Items, Knives, Lawn & Garden, Travel Brochures, Rock Albums, Church Pews, Zippo Lighters, Local Dairy Bottles. Advertising Mirrors, Signs & Crates, Coke, Pepsi, Gas/Oil. Civil War, WWI, WWII Badges & Helmets. FREE House Calls... CASH PAID!!! Showcase Antiques, Little Falls, 10-5pm, 315-823-1177

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Winter storm safety



Winter may leave a beautiful wonderland, but it also creates a dangerous and hazardous environment. Winter storms can immobilize a region and disrupt power and emergency/medical services. Roofs and buildings can collapse; trees, power lines and communication towers can come down; farms can be isolated and livestock lost; essentials can be in short supply. Being prepared for severe winter weather that includes heavy snow, ice, strong winds, extreme cold and even flooding if a thaw follows is very important.

Before the storm: You can protect yourself and your family and plan for possible emergencies before the storm:

- Stay informed of the weather. Set up your phone to receive alerts for your area.
 - Have a family storm readiness plan in place. You may not all be together, so know how you will contact one another.
 - Purchase a weather radio or a radio with a battery back up. Have battery-powered flashlights and lanterns available as well as extra replacement batteries.
 - Make sure that smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms are working properly.
 - Maintain an emergency pack in your home and in your car. Include ready-to-eat food, water, a first aid kit, necessary medications, blankets or sleeping bags and extra clothing for everyone in the family.
 - Winterize your vehicle, maintain it in good repair (battery, lights, wipers and fluid, brakes) and keep your gas tank full.
 - Have cash on hand in case bank machines and electronic payment methods are not available.
 - Make sure pets and animals have sheltered areas and plenty of water and food.
- On the road:** During the storm, there are important decisions to make if you have to travel. Seventy percent of winter storm-related injuries and fatalities are the result of vehicle accidents.
- Don't drive unless it is truly necessary. If you have to be out, make sure someone knows your route and timetable. If you are out when a storm begins, get off the road as soon as possible to avoid being stranded.
 - Remove snow and ice from your vehicle as it helps to see and to be seen.
 - Warm up your vehicle to reduce moisture condensing on the inside of the windows.
 - Use extra care due to a possible reduction in tire traction from snow and ice as well as poor visibility.
 - Stay buckled and slow down. Lengthen the following distance; slippery roads may double stop time. Steel and concrete bridges are likely to be icy first as they cool down faster.
 - Be alert for black ice: it appears as shiny new asphalt. Pavement should look gray-white in winter.
 - Do not use cruise control – you must be in full control at all times.
 - Dress appropriately in multiple thin layers of clothing and warm, waterproof footwear.
 - Account for possible delays. Include in your winter driving kit bags of sand or kitty litter, snow brush and ice scraper, booster cables, warning devices, warm clothing and blankets and emergency food and water.
 - Attempting to walk in a severe winter storm can be deadly. If you become trapped in your vehicle, stay in the vehicle. Run the motor about 10 minutes each

hour. Make sure the exhaust pipe is not blocked.

At home: During the storm, stay indoors. Twenty-five percent of injuries and fatalities occur to people out on foot in a storm.

- If you are using alternate heat from a fireplace, wood stove or kerosene space heater, make sure you have proper ventilation and fire protections in place. Never use a generator, gas grill, camp stove or charcoal-burning device inside a home, garage or basement.
- Run water, even at a trickle, to prevent pipes from freezing.
- Dress warmly in multiple layers of loose fitting clothing. Outer clothing should be hooded and water repellant if you have to go outside. Mittens are warmer

than gloves. Always wear a hat. Cover your mouth and exposed skin with a scarf, neck tube or face mask if it is extremely cold.

- If you have to shovel, avoid overexertion, especially if you have prior medical conditions. Blood vessels are constricted by the cold and the heart has to work harder. The added stress of shoveling snow or walking in deep snow could trigger a heart attack or stroke.
- Keep dry and change wet clothing frequently.
- Be alert for frostbite by checking for numbness or white areas on your face and extremities.
- Help your neighbors who are elderly, people living alone or who require special assistance.
- Check on your animals and pets and bring them indoors if possible.

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Get schooled on wedding terminology

Couples about to embark on their wedding journeys will likely learn a thing or two about party planning once their engagements are over and they are newly married. Wedding planning can seem overwhelming

and a tad confusing at times, but a crash course in wedding terminology can help couples make more informed choices along the way.

- **Blusher:** A short, single-layer veil that covers the bride's face before the ceremony.
- **Boutonniere:** A single flower bud worn by the men in the bridal party.
- **Canapés:** Bite-sized appetizers served during the cocktail hour of a reception.
- **Civil ceremony:** A marriage ceremony conducted by a council official or justice of the peace at a municipal location rather than in a house of worship.
- **Cocktail hour:** Typically an hour-long interlude between the wedding ceremony and the main dinner of the reception. Guests have time to arrive and mingle before being seated.
- **Corkage fee:** A fee some establishments charge to allow guests to bring their own wine.
- **Dais:** A podium or platform raised from the floor where the bride and groom are seated.

- **Deposit:** A percentage of the total cost of service given to a vendor to secure a date for their services.
- **Dragées:** Round, small edible balls of sugar that appear on wedding cakes.
- **Escort (seating) cards:** Printed cards that direct reception guests to their seats.
- **Fondant:** A sweet, pliable product used to decoratively cover layered cakes. It can be used in lieu of straight buttercream.
- **Handle wrap:** Ribbon or fabric that wraps around the stems of a bouquet the bride and wedding party carries.
- **Maid/matron of honor:** The title given to the woman who assists the bride and stands closest to her at the altar. "Maids" are those who are unmarried, while "matrons" are women who are.
- **Master of ceremonies:** An individual who will work with the DJ or band to announce the various components of the wedding reception.
- **Nosegay:** A small bouquet or flower arrangement typically given to the mothers of the bride and groom before the ceremony.

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A crash course in wedding terminology can help couples make more informed choices along the way.

Facts and figures about modern engagements

Getting engaged has and always will be a big deal. While marriage proposals are often steeped in tradition, some facts and figures about modern day engagements, courtesy of the 2018 Newlywed Report from WeddingWire, show just how much this special moment and all that surrounds it is changing.

- The pressure to make marriage proposals extraordinary appears to be on the rise, at least for Millennials. Of the nearly 18,000 respondents who shared their stories via WeddingWire's 2017 Newlywed Survey, 72 percent of Millennials said they feel pressured to make their proposals highly unique, while only 45 percent of Gen X respondents indicated feeling such pressure.

- Proposals might be changing, but getting down on one knee appears to be an enduring tradition that Millennials plan to keep in style. Eighty-two percent of Millennials indicated they got down on one knee to propose. In addition, the tradition of asking for parents' blessing also remains popular among Millennials, 72 percent of whom sought such blessings be-

fore proposing marriage.

- The average cost of an engagement ring was \$5,000.

- The pressure to pick out the right engagement ring appears to be subsiding. That's because 50 percent of survey respondents indicated they picked out the ring together.

- Married-couples-to-be also appear to like comparison shopping in regard to engagement rings. The majority of purchasers looked at between two and seven rings before making a purchase.

- While online shopping has changed consumer behavior in myriad ways, couples still prefer brick-and-mortar stores when buying engagement rings. Thirty-one percent of purchasers bought rings online, but 63 percent made their purchases in-person at brick-and-mortar stores.

- Christmas Day is the most popular day to pop the question, followed by Valentine's Day. Christmas Eve, New Year's Day and New Year's Eve round out the top five.

- How to spread the news of an engagement is perhaps the biggest

change surrounding engagements. Engagement parties were once the go-to way to spread the good news, but just one in four couples now have engagement parties. Nowadays, 86 percent of couples spread the news via social media. In fact, 10 percent of parents find out about their children's engagements via social media.

- The days of a short engagement seem to be a thing of the past. The average engagement now lasts 13 months, and 28 percent of couples are engaged for 16 months or longer.



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thinking outside the box...



St. Johnsville Senior Saints members announce their engagement

Thirty-three St. Johnsville Seniors met Wednesday, Jan. 16 for a luncheon, a celebration and a business meeting led by President Barbara Croce. Club members Yvonne Hoyer and Ray Jennings announced their engagement to be married, which was celebrated with flowers and candy. A cake was made for them by club member Eleanor Smith, and was enjoyed by all. Yvonne and Ray stated that an early summer 2019 wedding is planned. All gave their best wishes!

Members Leonora Gutowski and Beverly Douglas won raffles.

Following the business meeting members were reminded of the upcoming pizza party to be held at Lombardo's Pizza Plus on Route 5 in St. Johnsville at 1 p.m. on Jan. 30 for club members.

The next regular meeting will be Wednesday, Feb. 13 at 1:30 p.m. February birthdays will be celebrated.



Eleanor Smith (center) presents a cake of congratulations to Yvonne Hoyer and Ray Jennings. Yvonne and Ray have announced their plans to get married this summer.

Photo courtesy of St. Johnsville Seniors





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Moments in Time The History Channel

• On Feb. 24, 1836, Texan Col. William Travis sends a desperate plea for help when the Mexican army of 5,000 soldiers badly outnumbered the several hun-

dred defenders of the Alamo. His message ended with the famous last words, "Victory or Death." "Remember the Alamo" quickly became the rallying cry for the Texas revolution.

• On Feb. 19, 1847, the first rescuers reach surviving members of the Donner Party, a group of California-bound emigrants stranded by snow in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Of the 89 original members of the Donner Party, only 45 reached California.

• On Feb. 22, 1918, swept along by hysterical fears of German spies, the Montana legislature passes a Sedition Law that severely restricts freedom of speech and assembly. The law made it illegal to criticize the federal government or the armed forces during time of war.

• On Feb. 18, 1930, Pluto is discovered at the Lowell Observatory in Arizona by astronomer Clyde W. Tombaugh. He discovered the tiny, distant planet using a new astronomic technique of photographic plates combined with a blink microscope.

• On Feb. 23, 1940, folksinger Woody Guthrie writes one of his best-known songs, "This Land is Your Land." Many of his songs reflected a strong commitment to the common working people.

• On Feb. 20, 1986, France and Britain announce the Chunnel, a tunnel to be built under the English Channel. Construction began in late 1987 and the chunnel was finally completed in 1994. Attempts to dig a channel tunnel date back to 1883, and Napoleon drew blueprints for a tunnel in 1802.

• On Feb. 21, 1994, CIA operative Aldrich Ames is arrested for selling secrets to the Soviet Union. At least 10 U.S. spies in Russia were killed after Ames revealed their identities, and more were sent to Russian gulags.

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February is Heart Month

Heart disease is America's leading cause of death. Heart disease affects both men and women, but women are more likely to die from a heart attack. Heart disease is the leading cause of death for women in the United States.

Montgomery County Public Health wants to remind individuals that during Heart Month in February it is important for everyone to think about how you can reduce your risk of death and disability from heart disease. In both men and women, the most common warning sign of a heart attack is discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. Women are more likely to experience some of the other warning signs, particularly shortness of breath, nausea and vomiting, and back or jaw pain. Women often don't recognize these symptoms as a heart attack and wait too long to seek care. Contact a doctor or call 911 immediately if you experience any of these warning signs. If you are having a heart attack, the faster you can get to the hospital, the less damage will happen to your heart.

The biggest factors that contribute to heart disease are smoking, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, family history and age. Take a moment to look at your lifestyle, family history and your general health. With this information, you and your family doctor can assess your risk and make a plan to avoid potential problems. Although you can't do much about your family history or your age, you can make lifestyle changes to avoid many of the other risk factors.

Montgomery County Public Health recommends the following preventive measures:

- Don't smoke. Smoking is a major risk factor for heart disease. If you smoke, call the New York State Smokers' Quit line at 1.866.NY.QUIT (697.8487) or visit www.nysmokefree.com.
- Control your blood pressure. Treating high blood pressure can lower your risk of heart attack

and stroke. Losing weight, being physically active and choosing foods low in saturated fat, and a low sodium diet help control high blood pressure.

- Control your cholesterol level. If you don't know your level, ask your doctor to check it. Diet and physical activity are important in lowering high cholesterol levels. However, some people may need to take medicine in addition to diet and physical activity.

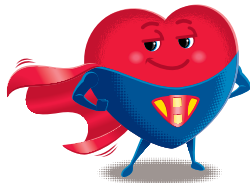
- Maintain a healthy weight. Extra weight puts strain on your heart and arteries. Physical activity and eating fewer calories can help you lose weight. Skipping the soda is an easy way to cut calories.

- Be physically active. Remember, your heart is a muscle. It needs regular exercise to stay in shape. Even moderate forms of regular physical activity, such as walking, can reduce your risk of heart disease. Try to accumulate at 150 minutes of moderate activity each week.

- Take care of diabetes. If you have diabetes, physical activity, weight control, a high fiber diet and regular doctor visits are important.

- Know your family history. Having a father or brother with heart disease before age 55, or a mother or sister with heart disease before age 65, are factors that contribute to heart disease. Inform your doctor about your family history.

- Remember to choose foods low in saturated fat



and get plenty of rest and exercise. And stay on top of your overall health by getting an annual check-up. For more information about heart disease, visit the New York State Department of Health website at www.health.ny.gov/diseases/cardiovascular/heart_disease.

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Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Lady's hat is different. 2. Boy is smiling. 3. House window is different. 4. Stone wall has become a fence. 5. Mom's collar is different. 6. Mom's nose is changed.

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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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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King Crossword

ACROSS

1 Sleuth, slangily

4 Pod dweller

7 Crafty

8 Equilibrium

10 Overuse the mirror

11 Motor

13 Fee for work done

16 Officeholders

17 Break a Commandment

18 Sphere

19 Diminish

20 Small blister

21 Milky stones

23 Young turkey

25 Profess

26 Science workshops

27 Pooch

28 Paris river

30 Cleopatra's slayer

33 Navy, with "The"

36 Seriously loyal

37 Madagascar critter

38 Surrounds

39 Thing

40 CSA boss

41 Affirmative action?

DOWN

1 Layers

2 Ht.

3 Sneeringly doubtful

4 — de Leon

5 Square dance quorum

6 Europe's neighbor

7 Small song-bird

8 Annoyance

9 Sign up

10 Greek letter

12 Heron's kin

14 Swindles

15 Recede

19 "This means —!"

20 Urban transport

21 Egg-shaped

22 Pirate costume feature

23 Sheet of glass

24 Ohio college

25 Billboards

26 Rosters

28 Sleep soundly?

29 Chopin piece

30 Picked a target

31 Pond gunk

32 Apiece

34 Satan's forte

35 Kill a bill

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Mega Maze

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Americanisms

“Love is a fire. But whether it is going to warm your hearth or burn down your house, you can never tell.”

— Joan Crawford

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“Though February is short, it is filled with lots of love and sweet surprises.”

- Charmaine J. Forde

National Children’s Dental Health Month

February is National Children’s Dental Health Month (NCDHM). Each February, the American Dental Association (ADA) sponsors National Children’s Dental Health Month to raise awareness about the importance of oral health. In Montgomery County, 27.4 percent of third grade children show evidence of untreated tooth decay. The statewide average is 24 percent. In addition, 0 percent of residents in Montgomery County are currently served by water systems that are optimally fluoridated.

Developing good habits at an early age and scheduling regular dental visits helps children to get a good start on a lifetime of healthy teeth and gums. The ADA recommends parents take children to a dentist no later than their first birthday. Parents can do several things at home to start healthy habits.

- Begin cleaning your baby’s mouth during the first few days after birth by wiping the gums with a clean, moist gauze pad or washcloth. As soon as teeth appear, decay can occur. A baby’s front four teeth usually push through the gums at about six months of age,

Good Housekeeping

Capellini Frittata

A satisfying meal made with sauteed onion and red pepper baked in an egg-and-pasta custard. If you have leftover spaghetti in the fridge, use 1 cup of it instead of the cooked capellini. Serve with a green salad, our Spicy Tomato Dressing and a chunk of hearty peasant bread.

2 ounces (about 1/2 cup) capellini or angel hair pasta, broken into pieces

2 teaspoons olive oil

1 small onion, thinly sliced

1 small red pepper, diced

6 large egg whites*

2 large eggs

1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese

1/4 cup fat-free (skim) milk

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon hot pepper sauce

1. In 2-quart saucepan, heat 3 cups water to boiling over high heat. Add pasta, and cook 2 minutes or just until tender. Drain and set aside.

2. Meanwhile, heat oven to 425°F. In nonstick 10-inch skillet with heat-safe handle, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add onion and red pepper, and cook, stirring frequently, until vegetables are tender, about 7 minutes.

3. In large bowl, with wire whisk or fork, beat egg whites, whole eggs, Parmesan, milk, salt and hot pepper sauce; stir in pasta. Pour egg mixture over onion mixture; cover, and cook 3 minutes or until set around the edge. Uncover skillet, and place in oven. Bake 6 minutes longer, or until frittata is set in center.

4. To serve, invert frittata onto serving plate and cut into wedges. Serves 4.

*Or, use powdered egg whites, reconstituted following package directions. Powdered egg whites are available in the baking section of most supermarkets.

* Each serving: 190 calories, 8g total fat (3g saturated), 113mg cholesterol, 545mg sodium, 15g total carbohydrate, 15g protein.

Spicy Tomato Dressing

Made with vegetable juice and just a bit of olive oil, it’s destined to be a new favorite.

1 can (5 1/2 ounces) spicy-hot vegetable juice

3 tablespoons red-wine vinegar

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 clove garlic, crushed with garlic press

1/2 teaspoon sugar

1/2 teaspoon dry mustard

1. Into small bowl or jar, measure all ingredients. Mix with wire whisk or fork (or cover jar and shake) until blended. Cover and refrigerate. Stir or shake before using.

* Each serving: About 15 calories, 1g total fat, 35mg sodium, 1g total carbohydrate.

For thousands of triple-tested recipes, visit our website at www.goodhousekeeping.com/recipes/.

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although some children don’t have their first tooth until 12 to 14 months.

- Until you’re comfortable that your child can brush on his or her own, continue to brush your child’s teeth twice a day with a child-size toothbrush and a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste. When your child has two teeth that touch you should begin flossing their teeth daily.
- For children younger than three years of age, caregivers should begin brushing children’s teeth as soon as they begin to come into the mouth by using fluoride toothpaste in an amount no more than a smear or the size of a grain of rice. Brush teeth thoroughly twice per

day (morning and night) or as directed by a dentist or physician. Supervise children’s brushing to ensure that they use the appropriate amount of toothpaste.

- For children three to six years of age, use a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste. Brush teeth thoroughly twice per day (morning and night) or as directed by a dentist or physician. Supervise children’s brushing and remind them not to swallow the toothpaste.

For more information on NCDHM activities that are happening in our county, feel free to contact Montgomery County Public Health at 518.853.3531 or the Bassett Healthcare Network Research Institute at 607.547.6711.

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Hidden ways you can benefit from having hobbies

Finding time for hobbies can be difficult. Commitments to work and family take up the bulk of many people's free time, making it hard to squeeze in a favorite hobby. But hobbies can

benefit people in some interesting ways. Understanding those hidden benefits may compel some people to make more time for their favorite downtime activities.

• Hobbies can improve your efficiency. Penciling more activities into your day planner may not seem like something that will help you create more time for hobbies, but it just might. For example,

if you know you have a softball game or choir practice at night, then you might waste less time surfing the internet or talking around the water cooler during the workday. In a 2017 study con-

ducted for the staffing firm OfficeTeam, researchers found that the average office employee spends about five hours per week on his or her mobile phone doing things that have nothing

to do with the job. That's five hours you could be working, opening up more time for hobbies before or after work.

• Hobbies can foster social connections. In his 2000 book, "Bowling Alone," political scientist Robert Putnam described a reduction in in-person socializing that once enriched Americans' social lives. By making more time for hobbies, particularly those that promote interaction with other adults, men and women can foster social connections that otherwise might never blossom.

• Hobbies can provide health benefits. The American Institute of Stress notes that some hobbies can help people reduce their stress. The AIS notes that some 56 million women in the United States now knit or crochet. That marks a 51 percent increase over the last decade. That revival is attributed to the stress-reducing properties of knitting and crocheting. Men and women coping with stress need not learn how to wield a sewing needle to alleviate their stress. Activities that promote slowing down and induce a relaxation response similar to knitting and crocheting can be equally beneficial.

• Hobbies can increase quality time with your children. Parents with hobbies can double dip, using the time they would ordinarily spend with their children to teach them some of their favorite hobbies. Take kids along when you go fishing or teach them how to plant flowers and tend to a garden. This is a great way to increase quality time with your children while also affording you a chance to continue engaging in your favorite hobbies.

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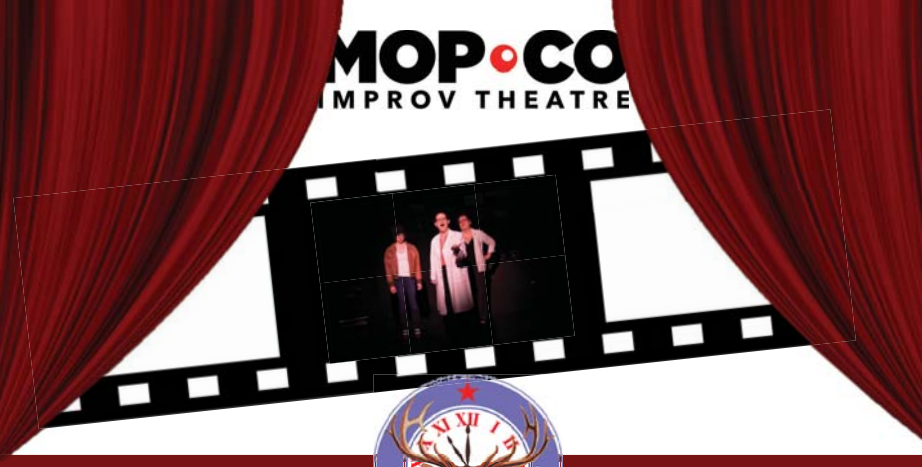
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Paw's Corner

by Sam Mazzotta
Don't fleas know it's winter?

Dear Paw's Corner: Help! It's January, and I shouldn't have fleas in my house, but they're everywhere. I don't give my dog or cat a monthly flea treatment in the winter months because usually the arrival of cold weather means no more fleas. Why are they here, now? — Scratching Madly in Springfield, MA

Dear Scratching: While cold weather does send fleas into a dormant state, it's never guaranteed that they'll disappear until spring. And a warm location like a nice-

ly heated house or apartment can keep fleas active and multiplying.

If you have an active infestation, your pets need to be treated for fleas even if you don't normally do so. Treat them with the solution you use during the summer months — whether that's a topical monthly flea treatment, a flea collar or a bath. Comb their coats daily to remove fleas, flea dust and eggs.

Likewise, your home needs to be treated for fleas. Remove your pets from the home completely, if possible, or sequester them in one section of the house. Use a

home flea treatment on the floors and furniture, paying attention to corners and crevices. Let the treatment sit for the recommended amount of time and then vacuum the room thoroughly.

To prevent another infestation, brush your pets once a day and vacuum your home twice a week throughout the winter. Continue to treat your pets with a flea repellent or preventative. It's not ideal, but by attacking the problem now, you'll be less likely go through this again next year, or even next summer.

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Senior News Line

by Matilda Charles
Seniors most likely to spread fake news

A recent study concluded that seniors over age 65 pass along fake and bogus internet news items seven times more often than young adults (18-29) and twice as often as those slightly younger (45-65). Researchers theorized that seniors don't have enough digital media literacy to figure out what's true and what isn't. They also wondered if age-related memory problems keep us from recognizing a hoax when we see it.

Specifically, this study was done during the last election by researchers at Princeton and NYU and was conducted on Facebook to see what links people passed along. They say it was done with user consent, but whether that's true or not, we need to take a step back and re-examine our internet habits.

Here is why:
• Media manipulators believe we can be targeted. If there's a chance we'll

pass along fake news, political or not, they'll be sure we see it.

• They believe we can be manipulated. If you shop for an item online and suddenly start seeing ads for it everywhere, you're being tracked.

What you can do: If you use Google or Gmail, go into your settings and block everything you can. If you don't know how, get help. Convince your senior center to hold classes on Internet safety. Use Mozilla Firefox as your Internet browser and install the uBlock ad blocker.

The big question: Are that many of us really sending out fake news links, when it's the youngest generations that basically live on their phones and computers? Per a 2018 Pew study, we use social media at half the rate of the youngest age group.

My personal opinion, which has nothing to do with this study: Get off Facebook. Just leave it behind.

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Now Here's a Tip

by JoAnn Derson

• "Kids do love their sneakers, but sometimes when a kid loves his sneakers too much and wears them every day, those sneakers don't love the family back. In short, they stink. We filled a pair of socks with a mix of the crystal kitty litter and the detergent-boosting beads that smell so good. At night, Junior takes his sneaks off and stuffs these mock socks inside. The litter absorbs moisture, and the beads leave them smelling pretty good." — D.D. in Missouri

• "For a clean look in our bathroom, we use clear pump bottles for shampoo, conditioner and body wash. I refill them as needed, and it's so much nicer than having 10 dif-

ferent partially filled bottles in the bathtub." — R.B. in North Carolina

• It's time to brush your shoes! Give white canvas shoes a makeover with a toothbrush and plain (not colored) toothpaste. Use the toothbrush to apply the toothpaste and scrub stained areas. Wait five minutes and wipe away with a damp white rag. You should see an improvement.

• We ladies don't always think to do it, but you should wipe down the exterior of your purse daily.

• To get lift and body in your hair, use a volumizing spray at the roots, and then use your brush to lift the hair up while giving it a shot with a blow dryer.

• "In cold winter

months, keep your robe (and slippers or whatever else) under the covers with you when you sleep. Pull them next to or over you a few minutes before you get up. It'll be toasty and will help make the transition into the cold a little less harsh." — B.M. in New York

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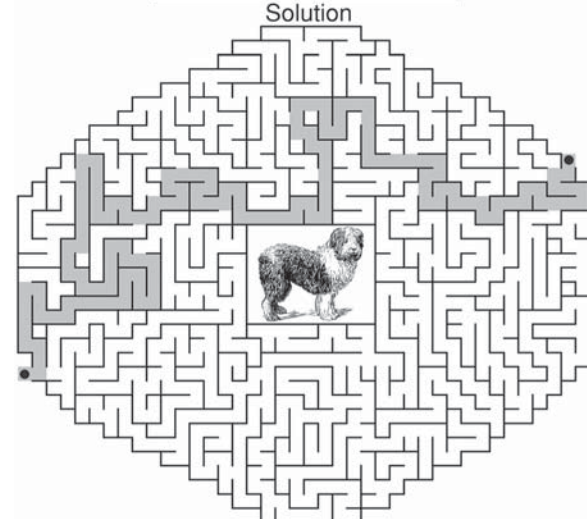
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W	I	L	Y		P	O	I	S	E			
P	R	E	E	N		E	N	G	I	N	E	
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3	8	7	1	2	9	5	4	6
4	1	5	6	7	8	2	9	3
9	2	6	4	5	3	8	1	7
8	5	3	2	9	1	7	6	4
6	4	1	7	8	5	9	3	2
7	9	2	3	4	6	1	5	8
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5	3	4	8	1	7	6	2	9
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And 'sew' it begins

Get acquainted with your sewing machine at the Fort Plain Free Library

FORT PLAIN – Does learning how to use your new or hand-me-down sewing machine have you on pins and needles? Does it have features that tie you in knots? Would you like to tailor it to meet your needs? Would you like to get the most out of it for your sewing, quilting or DIY projects?

Intermediate and advanced sewers are invited to join retired Family and Consumer Sciences teacher Pamela Boynton at the Fort Plain Free Library on Monday, Feb. 11 to brainstorm about potential classes and/or workshops they would like to see offered in a group setting related to their sewing machines, challenges, skills or techniques. Participants will plot out a workshop or series of workshops pertaining to their interests.



Pamela Boynton

Beginning sewers who own or can borrow a sewing machine are invited to take part in a four-part series at the library starting Feb. 25. During the first class, they should bring their machines, electrical cords, thread, bobbins and specialty feet plus basics like shears. There will be a brief overview of the basic parts and what the machines can do. Students will then have an opportunity to practice using the parts and sewing a straight line. During subsequent sessions on March 11, 18 and 25, beginners will make a patchwork pillow from scratch.

The adult-oriented programs are open to those 16 and up and will take place from 5:30 - 7 p.m. each night.

Boynton has taught "sewing and everything under the sun" to middle and high school students in Little Falls and St. Johnsville Central School Districts for 25 years. For more than 20 years, she owned a business creating medieval costumes,

and she also had a season's experience sewing costumes at the Sterling Renaissance Festival.

Advance registration is required as class sizes are limited. Call 518.993.4646 for more information or to sign up.

The Fort Plain Free Library is located at 19 Willett St. Follow the library on Facebook for updates.

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Local History Round Table set

FORT PLAIN – The Fort Plain Free Library will host a Local History Round Table on Wednesday, Feb. 20. Interested local history lovers are encouraged to share memories, family histories, vintage photo albums, postcards, memorabilia, scrapbooks and more during the

free, drop-in discussion group.

Facilitated by town and village historians, the forum meets at the 19 Willett St. library on the third Wednesday of each month and is open to the public. Call 518.993.4646 for information.

IRS.gov is the first place to go for tax help

Taxpayers are encouraged to visit IRS.gov for helpful tax information and tools that can make filing taxes easier. Here are some things taxpayers can do when they visit IRS.gov:

- Use IRS Free File. Taxpayers with income of \$66,000 or less can file using free brand-name tax software through IRS Free File. Those who earned more can use Free File Fillable Forms, the electronic version of IRS paper forms. Either way, everyone has a free e-file option.

- Explore other electronic filing options. IRS e-file, which includes Free File, is the easiest, safest and most popular way to file a complete and accurate tax return. The fastest way to get a refund is to combine e-file with direct deposit. On IRS.gov, taxpayers can see if they qualify for free tax preparation help by volunteers, find software options to e-file their own taxes, and find an authorized e-file provider.

- Find a tax preparer. Taxpayers can use the Directory of Tax Return Preparers tool to find tax preparers near them.

- Get answers to tax questions. The Interactive Tax Assistant tool and the IRS Tax Map answer many tax-law questions. Many IRS tools and products are also available in other languages, including Spanish.

- Check on a refund. The best way to track the status of a refund is to use

Where's My Refund? Taxpayers can check the status of their refund within 24 hours after the IRS has received the e-filed return. Those who file a paper return can check the refund status four weeks after mailing it.

- Pay taxes online. Taxpayers will find information about different ways to pay their taxes. This includes IRS Direct Pay, electronic funds withdrawal, and payment by debit or credit card.

- Use the EITC Assistant. Taxpayers who worked and earned less than \$54,884 in 2018 may be eligible for the earned income tax credit. Taxpayers can use the EITC Assistant tool to see if they qualify.

- Use Get Transcript. Taxpayers who need a copy of their original tax return information may use Get Transcript Online or Get Transcript by Mail. A transcript shows most line items from your return, which is usually all you need.

- View account information. Taxpayers can go to IRS.gov/account to securely access information about their federal tax account. They can also visit this page to access their tax records online, review the past 18 months of payment history, and view tax return information for the current year. Taxpayers can visit IRS.gov/secureaccess to review the required identity authentication process.

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