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Country Editor

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DECEMBER 3, 2021

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Volume 11 Number 25

Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.
For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting, And His truth endures to all generations. Psalm 100:4-5



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Holiday recycling reminders

Between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, Americans produce an additional one million tons of waste per week. Thankfully, some of that waste is recyclable. Check out the Oneida-Herkimer Solid Waste Authority's quick list of Thanksgiving Recycling "do's and don'ts" to help make holiday recycling as easy as pie:

Cooking Oil

The authority accepts used cooking oil/kitchen grease from residents year-round at the Utica Eco-Drop Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. and Saturday from 7 a.m. - 2 p.m. Residents may deliver liquid cooking grade fats, oil and grease at no charge. The material is stored in 300-gallon plastic containers and picked up by a rendering company to be recycled into animal feed. Residents should transport used oils/fats/grease in sealed, unbreakable, leak-proof containers under five gallons in size. Restaurants and businesses should contact a rendering company for direct pick-up.

Aluminum

Aluminum foil wrap, trays and baking tins are accepted for curbside recycling year-round; however, they must be empty and rinsed before placing them in the bin. If you have aluminum foil items that are

contaminated with food that cannot be rinsed off, please place them in your regular garbage.

Refrigerated/Frozen Food Boxes

Boxes that hold soda and beer, boxes holding sticks of butter, frozen pizza boxes, boxes holding pre-made crusts and rolls, etc., are not recyclable should be placed in your regular garbage. These boxes are coated with a wet strength chemical that cannot be washed off or removed. This chemical prevents the boxes from falling apart when wet, so they will not break down into paper pulp at recycling mills. Place refrigerated and frozen food boxes in the garbage.

Cartons

Empty and rinsed milk, juice, broth and creamer cartons are accepted for curbside recycling year-round. Cartons are usually coated in a plastic or wax layer that can be removed during the recycling process, unlike the refrigerated and frozen food boxes listed above. Recycle your empty cartons.

Food Waste

If you cannot share, freeze or compost your leftover food, you may deliver it to the authority's Utica Eco-Drop where it will be recycled through the Food2Energy program. This voluntary drop-off program keeps inedible food waste out of the landfill, and through

our partnership with the Oneida County Water Pollution Control Plant, generates electricity from the material. Food waste must be delivered in a clear plastic bag. There is no requirement to remove food waste from packaging, as packaging is separated from the food waste at our facility. Food2Energy costs \$2 per 35-gallon clear bag. Cooking oil is not accepted through Food2Energy and must be delivered separately.

"Not only do we have more waste and recyclables to dispose of during the holidays, we are often handling material that we may not use or see at other times of the year. If you have items you are unsure how to dispose of, don't 'wing' it! Please contact us or visit our website," said Samantha Brown, authority recycling coordinator. "Taking care to dispose of items properly can help make this time of year a little less wasteful."

Authority facilities are open on Friday, Nov. 26 for regular business hours.

For more information on recycling and waste disposal, contact Authority Recycling Coordinator Samantha Brown at 315.733.1224 ext. 2800 or visit ohswa.org. You may also ask questions and find more information on the authority's Facebook page (Oneida-Herkimer Solid Waste Authority).

Mohawk Valley Choral Society to perform Dec. 12

After 18 months of postponement due to COVID-19, the Mohawk Valley Choral Society returns to its 40 year-long tradition of bringing exciting vocal music to the local area this December when it performs Christmas Collage, featuring songs of the Holiday

Season.

Directed by Randy Davis, the concert will feature a selection of vocal music from various cultures and will include music by composers such as Haydn, Mozart, Randall Thompson and Moses Hogan.

The concert will take place



on Sunday, Dec. 12, at 3 p.m. at the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes at 2222 Genesee St. in Utica.

Tickets for the concert are \$12 in advance and \$15 at the door. Tickets may be reserved at the advance price by emailing the Choral Society at

mail@mvchoral.org or by calling 315.826.3092.

All audience members must be vaccinated and must wear a mask throughout the concert.

The public is invited to join the Mohawk Valley Choral Society's return.

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Poland recognizes National Honor Society inductees

Poland Central School District recently officially inducted 22 students into the National Honor Society Kuyahoorra Chapter.

The students joined the National Honor Society on Tuesday, Nov. 9, by reciting the oath and participating in a candle-lighting ceremony led by the Kuyahoorra Chapter advisors, Poland Guidance Director Janice Watrous and sixth-grade Teacher Teri Zuchowski.

"Mrs. Zuchowski and I are very proud of these students and we look forward to working with them as they complete service projects for our school community and community at large," Watrous said. "They are a wonderful group of students."

The National Honor Society is for high school students who demonstrate excellence in the areas of scholarship, leadership, service and character. Those four core values are also highlighted during the induction ceremony.

Students are first eligible to be inducted at the end of 10th grade. In order to be considered for membership, students must first meet the academic criteria of a 90 percent overall cumulative grade-point average. Students then go through the application process and those that meet the annually published criteria for scholarship, character, leadership and service are inducted.

Technically, 10 students qualified for induction last school year, and 12 more qualified this school year. All 22 were officially inducted this school year.

At the induction ceremony on Tuesday, Nov. 9, National Honor Society Kuyahoorra Chapter President Sarah Zuchowski, a Poland junior, conducted the welcome. The candles were then lit and the four pillar values were described by Sarah Zuchowski and three other juniors: Treasurer Logan Cookinham, Secretary Gavin Krauciunas and Vice President Maya Virgil.

Sarah Zuchowski then announced the induction

of members, the advisors conducted the lighting of candles and Maya Virgil led the oath. Cookinham and Krauciunas presented the certificates and membership cards, and Watrous and Teri Zuchowski presented cords and tassels for graduation to seniors. Poland Principal Greg Cuthbertson closed the event by speaking to students and their families.

The students who were inducted are:

Seniors:

- Alexis Bates
- Ethan Broadbent
- Jade Cirtwell
- Brianna Comstock
- Nathan Draper
- Trista Houghtaling
- Ava Malin

- Katherine Muller
- Adam Nellis
- Caimin Roark
- Gabrielle Ross
- Emily Wood

Juniors:

- Jerry Almas
- Logan Cookinham
- Shelbi Hagues
- Natalie Hobin
- Gavin Krauciunas
- Laila Vauruk
- Maya Virgil
- Seth Walther
- Quintin Weigand
- Sarah Zuchowski



Poland Central School District students participate in a candle-lighting ceremony during the National Honor Society Kuyahoorra Chapter Induction Ceremony on Nov. 9.
Photo courtesy of Herkimer BOCES

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Poland class makes stone soup for Thanksgiving

Poland Central School District first-grade teacher Kathleen Hess continued a Thanksgiving-week tradition this year by making stone soup with her class.

Based on the story "Stone Soup," you start with a stone in water, and students each add ingredients for

the soup such as carrots and potatoes.

"It's about helping each other and working together," Hess said.

There isn't a direct connection between the book and Thanksgiving, but the story of "Stone Soup" and

Thanksgiving have a similar message, Hess said. That's why she always makes stone soup with her students near Thanksgiving – as a different twist on a Thanksgiving feast.

The ingredients that students contributed were washed, prepped and chopped using plastic knives, and the stone soup was cooked and eaten on Nov. 22.

"Stone Soup" is about two travelers who add water and a stone to a pot and convince others to contribute ingredients to the soup until everyone is able to enjoy a collaborative meal.

"It's kind of a nice story," Hess said. "It has a nice meaning."



Poland Central School District first-grade teacher Kathleen Hess and her students pose by a poster about how to make stone soup based on the "Stone Soup" book. Photo courtesy of Herkimer BOCES

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Heriker County adopts new COVID quarantine protocol

School students and staff in the Heriker County region that are placed on precautionary quarantine for an exposure to COVID-19 will soon have the option to return to school three days earlier if they test negative for COVID-19 and remain symptom-free.

The Heriker County Public Health Department has worked with Heriker-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego BOCES and schools in the region to begin allowing asymptomatic students, staff and members of the community to "test out of precautionary quarantine" due to a COVID-19 exposure beginning Wednesday, Dec. 1.

"This practice will get students and

staff who aren't infected with COVID-19 back to school sooner, so students can continue their education, while still taking the steps to keep students and staff safe," Heriker BOCES District Superintendent Sandra Sherwood said.

"This will allow an avenue for all staff and students to get back to school earlier," Heriker County Director of Public Health Christina Cain added.

The "test out of precautionary quarantine" option allows asymptomatic residents of Heriker County who were quarantined in response to a COVID-19 exposure to get tested after the fifth day of quarantine. If the lab-confirmed test result comes back negative and they

still haven't developed symptoms, they can return to school and other activities after the seventh day of quarantine. This would mean they would be in school on the eighth, ninth and 10th days of what is normally a 10-day quarantine.

Students and staff can get this testing done independently at any testing site approved by New York State. Tests also can be given by many of the schools after the fifth day of a precautionary quarantine. Families should contact their individual school districts for scheduling testing in these instances and for more information.

This option is being put in place for

all Heriker County residents including those who attend the following districts: Central Valley, Dolgeville, Frankfort-Schuyler, Heriker, Little Falls, Mount Markham, Owen D. Young, Poland, Richfield Springs, Town of Webb, West Canada Valley and Heriker BOCES programs.

"The option to 'test out of precautionary quarantine' is much more manageable and less confusing than other options and a way to fully end quarantines early," Sherwood said. "This gets students back to class three days earlier without increasing risks or putting unrealistic stresses on the ability to test students for COVID-19."

Good Housekeeping – Citrus Scallops

Lemon and lime add a boost of vitamin C to this ultra-low-fat seafood entree. For heart-healthy fiber, serve with a side of whole wheat couscous.

Ingredients:

1 lemon
1 lime
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1 1/4 pound sea scallops, rinsed

3 teaspoon olive oil
1 tablespoon finely chopped shallot

1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

1 bag (5- to 6-ounce) baby greens

1/4 cup fresh parsley leaves, chopped

Directions:

1. From lemon, grate 1/4 teaspoon peel and squeeze 2 tablespoons juice. From lime, grate 1/4 teaspoon peel and squeeze 1 tablespoon juice. Set juices aside. In small bowl, combine peels, salt and pepper.

2. Place scallops on paper-towel-lined plate; pat dry. Sprinkle with cit-

rus-peel mixture.

3. In 12-inch nonstick skillet, heat 2 teaspoons oil on medium 1 minute. Add scallops; cook 6 to 8 minutes or until opaque throughout, turning once. Remove from pan; cover.

4. To skillet, add 1 teaspoon oil and shallot; cook 3 minutes or un-

til tender. Stir in Dijon mustard and citrus juices, scraping up browned bits; cook 1 minute. Toss sauce with greens; place on plates. Top with scallops and chopped parsley, and serve with whole wheat couscous (to make couscous, follow package directions). Serves 4.

• Each serving: About

275 calories, 5g total fat (1g saturated), 47mg cholesterol, 390mg sodium, 29g carbohydrate, 4g dietary fiber, 29g protein.

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Community Foundation awards over \$50,000 locally

The Community Foundation of Herkimer and Oneida Counties based in Utica distributed \$52,795 to more than 30 local food pantries and soup kitchens the week of Thanksgiving. With Thanksgiving approaching, this contribution aimed to help those organizations providing food for individuals and families this holiday season.

"Food insecurity remains a major pain point for many in this community," said Alicia Dicks, president/CEO. "There are many groups that have stepped up to help address this issue and we hope that these funds can help these partners during some of the busiest months of the year."

"We are very glad to accept this donation from the Community Foundation," says Mary Beth Plourde, chairman of the Waterville Area Food Panty. "The funds will be used to purchase hams for our holiday food baskets. We are so grateful to help give local families a bountiful holiday meal!"

"Once again, the Community Foundation is

investing in our community by distributing much needed funds to help alleviate food insecurity," said John Madej, executive director of Hope House. "Winter is a stressful time for many and worrying about where your next meal is coming from should not be part of that stress. We thank them for their continued partnership with local pantries and soup kitchens."

The recipients include:

Angels Among Us Food Pantry
Bread of Life Community Center
Camden Area Food Pantry
Church of the Holy Family Pantry
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Dolgeville Area Food Pantry
Feed Our Vets Food Pantry
Foothills Rural Community Ministry
Frankfort Ilion Food Pantry
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Hope House

Johnson Park Center
Kuyahoorra Valley Food Pantry
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Utica Food Pantry
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Waterville Area Food Pantry
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Westminster Moriah Olivet Pantry



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

December 3 and 4

Holiday Indoor Garage Sale. Friday 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday 9 a.m.-1 p.m. At 20 N. Main Street in Dolgeville in the George Ward Memorial building to benefit the Dolgeville Forward C.A.T. Project. Each dollar raised from the Sale will be matched by The Staffworks Fund during the Save A Life Campaign. For more information, call 315.717.5823.

December 4

4petsake's Annual Chinese Auction 12-4 p.m. at Crowley-Barnum American Legion, 43 W. Main St., Mohawk. Bake Sale & 50/50 Raffle. Proceeds benefit 4PetSake Food Pantry of Mohawk's Low Cost Spay/Neuter Program.

December 5

St. Nicholas Day Noon - 3 p.m. Fort Klock, 7214 State Route 5, St. Johnsville. Call 518.568.7779.

December 6

Little Falls Community Blood Drive noon to 5 p.m. Location has been changed from the Little Falls Elks Lodge to the Holy Family Parish hall. To schedule an appointment download the free Red Cross Blood Donor App, visit redcross-blood.org or call 1.800.RED CROSS (1.800.733.2767).

December 10

Friends of German Flatts Town Park, Rt. 5S, Mohawk NY (next to

Ft. Herkimer Church) **presents Santa and Mrs. Claus** from 5-8 p.m. at the Community Center Building. Santa will have presents for the kids. Refreshments available. There will be a Christmas Basket Raffle. Door prizes. More information contact Carol Vercz at 315.866.6791 or email pvercz@twcny.rr.com

December 11

St. Nicholas Bizarre and luncheon 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Luncheon 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. at Emmanuel Episcopal Church, 594 Albany St., Little Falls. Craft vendors, raffle baskets, silent auction, homemade cookies and confections. Soups and sandwiches. Call for details 315.741.4672. Free delivery for luncheon to Herkimer and Little Falls.

Ilion First Baptist Church Holiday Craft Fair 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. at 8 Second St., Ilion. Visit from Santa 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Chinese Auction. Bake Sale. Several vendors for everyone's holiday shopping. For more info call 315.894.9041.

Christmas with Northern Grace 1 - 3 p.m. at Newport United Methodist Church, 7488 Main St. (St. Rt. 28), Newport. On Facebook @NewportNYMethodist. For more information call 314.845.8730 or 315.686.4799. There will also be a bazaar in the backroom and cookies for sale.

December 12

Brooks BBQ 1 p.m. - sold out. Herkimer Elks Lodge No. 1439, 124 Mary St., Herkimer. Half-chicken, salt potatoes, coleslaw, roll, \$13. Eat-in or takeout.

13th Annual Candlelight Memorial Service sponsored by Catholic Daughters of the Americas and Our Lady of Hope Catholic Church in Fort Plain at 6:45 p.m. at Our Lady of Hope Catholic Church, 115 Reid Street, Fort Plain. RSVP by Dec. 1 to Doris Dutcher, 52 Garfield Street, Fort Plain, or call her at 518.993.4612.

Mohawk Valley Choral Society Concert 3 p.m. at the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes at 2222 Genesee St., Utica. Tickets \$12 in advance. Tickets may be reserved by emailing the Choral Society at mail@mvchoral.org or by calling 315.826.3092. Audience members must be vaccinated and wear a mask throughout the concert

December 13

Rabies Clinic at Susquehanna SPCA 2 - 5 p.m. Register at 607.547.8111 ext 111.

December 15

Third Wednesday Night Dinners 4-6 p.m. (or sold out) at Ilion First Baptist Church, 8 Second St., Ilion. Take-outs: call 315.894.9041.

December 17 and 18

Pierogi, golumbki and bake sale featuring holiday breads from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. on Friday and 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. on Dec. 18 at St. Mary's Ukrainian Orthodox Church, 324 Moore Ave., Herkimer. Pierogi \$7 a dozen; golumbki \$26 a dozen; \$13 half dozen or three-piece \$6.50.

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GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH OF DOLGEVILLE
Pastor Len Byerly
12 Van Buren St.
Morning Worship 11-12:30 PM
Lunch 12:30-2 PM
Afternoon Worship 2-3 PM

DOLGEVILLE UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH
Rev. Anthony Bradseth
21 N. Helmer Ave.
Church Phone 429-7381
Sunday Church Service
Oppenheim @ 9:30 AM
Dolgeville @ 11 AM

DOLGEVILLE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
Pastor Marvin Isum
3 Elm St. Phone 429-8390
Sunday Worship 10:30 AM
Mid-week Service Tuesday 7 PM

UNITED LUTHERAN
PRESBYTERIAN PARISH
26 E. Faville Ave.
Worship 11 AM

ST. JOSEPH'S ROMAN
CATHOLIC CHURCH
Father Brian Slezak, Pastor
31 N. Helmer Ave.
Phone 315-823-3410
Mass 9 AM Sunday

EAST SCHUYLER
CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY OF SCHUYLER
Pastor Mark Sowersby
3659 Route 5, East Schuyler
Sunday Worship 10:30 AM
Wednesday Night 6:30 PM
Phone 315-895-0926
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414 Frankfort St., Frankfort, NY
Pastor: Father Paul Catena
Deacon: Micheal Carbone
Mass Schedule: Saturday 5:30 PM;
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Fr Vasil Dubee & Fr Dn Demetrius Richards
305 Main Rd., Herkimer
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5 PM (spring/summer months)
4 PM (fall/winter months)
Sunday Divine Liturgy 9:30 AM Sundays

TEMPLE BETH JOSEPH
327 N. Prospect St.
Phone 866-4270
Friday 7 PM

ST. FRANCIS de SALES CHURCH
Rev. Mark Cunningham, Pastor
219 N. Bellinger St.
Phone 866-4282
Saturday Vigil Mass 4 PM
Sunday Mass 8 & 10:30 AM

CHURCH OF SAINTS
ANTHONY and JOSEPH
229 S. Main St.
Phone 866-6373
Sunday Mass 10 AM
No Saturday Vigil

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Phone 792-4748
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Holy Day Liturgy 9 AM
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Pastor David Hayner
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Worship 10 AM
Wednesday Worship 6:30 PM

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Sunday School 10 AM
Morning Worship 11 AM

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Sunday School 11 AM
Shepherd's Table:
Tuesday 11-12 PM

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www.christchurchherkimer.org
Sunday Services: 10:30 AM
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CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF LITTLE FALLS
Father Brian Slezak, Pastor
763 E. Main St.
Phone 823-3410
Saturday Vigil Mass 4 PM
Sunday Mass 10:30 AM

EMMANUEL EPISCOPAL CHURCH
588-594 Albany St.
Sunday Schedule:
High Mass, Rite II 10 AM
Nursery & Sunday School 9:45 AM
(Sept.-May)
Fellowship Coffee Hour 11:15 AM
Choir Rehearsal 11:30 AM
Holy Day Masses as announced
Confessions by appointment

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Senior Pastor Timothy Parisi
559 E. Jefferson St.
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Sunday Morning All Worship 10 AM
Thursday Bible Study 6:30 PM

HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
512 E. Gansevoort St.
Sunday School 9:15 AM
Sunday Worship 9:30 AM
Wednesday Worship 11 AM & 6 PM

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Pastor Tamara Razzano
16 Jackson St.
Phone: 315-823-3004
Email ffirstpres@gmail.com
www.presbylff.org
Sunday Worship 10 AM
Sunday School 10 AM

INGHAMS MILLS BAPTIST CHURCH
Rev. Gary L. Busch, Pastor
Sunday Worship Service 10 AM
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pastormarkh@aol.com
Sunday Worship 8 AM

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Morning Worship: 11 AM
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Afternoon Bible Study: 1:30 PM
Bible Study & Prayer: Wednesday 6 PM

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Sunday Worship 10 AM
Wednesday Bible Study
& Prayer Meeting 7 PM

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Intercession - Tuesdays at 6 PM

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Sunday Worship at 9:45 AM

UNITED METHODIST
Pastor Robbin Harris • Phone 845-8730
Morning Service 11:15 AM

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Pastor Dwayne Durand
West Canada Valley
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Poland students donate to Feed Our Vets

Poland Central School District conducted a can drive in honor of Veterans Day and presented 1,016 items to Feed Our Vets on Nov. 18.

Richard Synek, the Feed Our Vets founder and executive director, picked up the items and participated in an outdoor event with Poland elementary students. Synek said Feed Our Vets fed more than 5,500 veterans and more than 12,000 people including family members in 2020 and expects to exceed that in 2021 by feeding more than 6,000 veterans and about 16,000 people including family members.

"Every can you donate to us helps us feed more and more veterans," Synek said, to Poland students. "We appreciate everything you're doing for us."

Poland Central School District has been conducting can drives for Feed Our Vets for many years. The district also usually hosts a breakfast and assembly for veterans before Veterans Day. Because of COVID-19, there wasn't a can drive or breakfast and assembly in 2020, but the can drive was brought back this year, and organizers are hoping the breakfast and assembly can return next year. A video honoring veterans in the school



Boxes filled with more than 1,000 items donated through a can drive are stacked up and ready to be loaded onto a Feed Our Vets truck.

community was created this year and shared with students and online.

The goal for this year's can drive was 800 items, and the district surpassed that with more than 1,000 items. The first can drive years ago started off closer to 200-250 items, and the initiative has gotten bigger from there, Poland Principal Greg Cuthbertson said.

"Every year, this has grown," Cuthbertson said. "It's great to see."

Cuthbertson said credit goes to teaching assistant Tracy Irwin for organizing the can drive the past several years and reading teacher Robyn Craig for working on it with Irwin. They put up posters about the can drive, make sure information and updates are included in the morning announcements and collect and count the items.

"I just think it's good for the kids to see that we can help other people – especially the veterans," Irwin said.

When the items were being given to Feed Our Vets, children could be heard saying how many cans they brought in toward the total, Craig said.

"They know that they're increasing that number, and I think that's important," Craig said.

Poland 9



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Poland from 8

Events such as the Veterans Day breakfast and assembly and this year's presentation of the donation are a chance to recognize veterans and students who have family members who are veterans, Craig said.

"It gives them a time to shine with their families and be proud of what their families are doing," he said.

During the presentation of the donation, Synek spoke about how it was an honor for him to serve in the Navy and discussed the value of the freedoms people have in the United States. He also answered questions from the elementary students such as "How long do people serve in the military?" "Where is the military located?" and "Do veterans celebrate Thanksgiving?"

Cuthbertson said Veterans Day events are valuable for students

because sometimes children take for granted the freedoms and privileges they have and the sacrifices that veterans and their families have made to make those freedoms and privileges possible. School events to

honor veterans are a way to highlight that for students, he said.

"Anytime we can do that for kids, it's a life lesson," he said.

The can drive also teaches students that

even a simple gesture can be a way to make a difference, Cuthbertson said.

"It's really showing our kids that you can help others in your community just by sharing a single food item," he said.



From right, Poland Principal Greg Cuthbertson and Feed Our Vets Founder and Executive Director Richard Synek speak to Poland Central School District elementary students outside the school during a presentation of more than 1,000 items collected through a can drive to be donated to Feed Our Vets. Photos courtesy of Herkimer BOCES.

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Should you replace a struggling apple tree?

by **Nadie VanZandt, Extension Master Gardener, UVM**

Has your apple tree looked poorly all summer and produced little or no fruit this autumn?

Although the summer's abundant rainfall may have caused stress due to overwatering, there are other reasons why your apple tree failed to thrive. These include nutrient deficiency, an unfavorable growing environment, pests, diseases and the age of the tree.

In ideal growing conditions and when

properly maintained, apple trees may remain productive for over 50 years. The bearing age – time from planting to bearing fruit – depends on the species, cultivar and whether the tree is grown on dwarf or standard-size rootstock. The average bearing age varies from three years for dwarf trees to eight to 10 for standard trees.

Apple trees prefer full, direct sunlight, which means at least six hours of daily sunlight. They require a site with good drainage and soil amended with

the highest-quality compost to improve aeration and reduce compaction.

Proper feeding, maintenance and pruning go a long way in keeping trees healthy and helping them withstand attack from pests or diseases. Trees also benefit from strategic pruning in late winter or early spring to open the canopy to air and light to reduce incidence of apple scab and other foliar fungal diseases.

Mulching and weeding under the canopy facilitate access to nutrients. Keeping the base of the tree weed-free will minimize boring pests and feeding by small vertebrates. Protecting the base with hardware cloth or mouse guards

before winter will help prevent rabbit or vole damage in years with heavy snow cover.

Low fruit production may not necessarily indicate a serious problem since apple trees normally bear heavily one year and less the following, known as biennial bearing. Thinning apples after fruit is set will help keep fruit loads more consistent.

Assuming your tree's poor health is not due to pests or diseases, it can be rescued. First, check to see if your tree is alive. Use sharp pruners to cut a small branch. Green tissue indicates that the

Should 11

Tax Town Hall will answer questions about income tax issues and free tax services

The Low Income Taxpayer Clinic at the Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York is holding a virtual Town Hall on Dec. 9 from 2 – 3 p.m. Members of the public can call in to listen to the Town Hall by phone or attend via the LASNNY Facebook page or Zoom. There is no cost to attend and pre-registration is not required.

Staff attorneys from the Clinic will answer questions about income tax issues such as stimulus payments, the new Child Tax Credit, notices from the IRS, and what you can do if you have a tax bill you cannot afford to pay. Representatives from the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA) and the Taxpayer Advocate Service will also join the Town Hall. Speakers will discuss how taxpayers can get free assistance with income tax issues including free tax preparation and e-filing services.

Attendees are invited to submit their questions about income tax issues. Questions can be left in a message at 518.462.6765 ext. 416 or emailed to townhall@lasnny.org before the Town Hall.

fore the Town Hall.

The call-in number for the Income Tax Town Hall is 646.876.9923 then enter Webinar ID: 865 7405 6065 to join by phone. To attend by Zoom, go to www.bit.ly/LASNNYtax-dec2021. To attend by Facebook Live, go to www.facebook.com/LASNNY.

If you have questions

about this or other income tax issues, the Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York's Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic (LITC) may be able to help. The Clinic's services are free of charge. You can call the LASNNY Legal Line at 833.628.0087 and ask for our LITC. The Clinic does not generally provide tax preparation services.



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Should from 10

tree is alive and worth putting in effort to improve vigor.

However, your tree may not be worth saving if it has other issues, such as large areas of dead wood, large sections of damaged bark, weeping wounds, large branches with internal rot, cankerous growth or the presence of pests or diseases. Leaf drop, shoot die-back, yellow or brown leaves in summer and small or brown fruit could signal fungal or bacterial diseases or other stress in the trees.

Removing an established apple tree is a tough decision, especially if it has sentimental value, provides structure to your garden or has produced delicious fruit in the past. But a weak tree will attract pests and diseases, further deteriorating its health. If you are not sure whether the tree should be removed, seek professional advice from a local arborist.

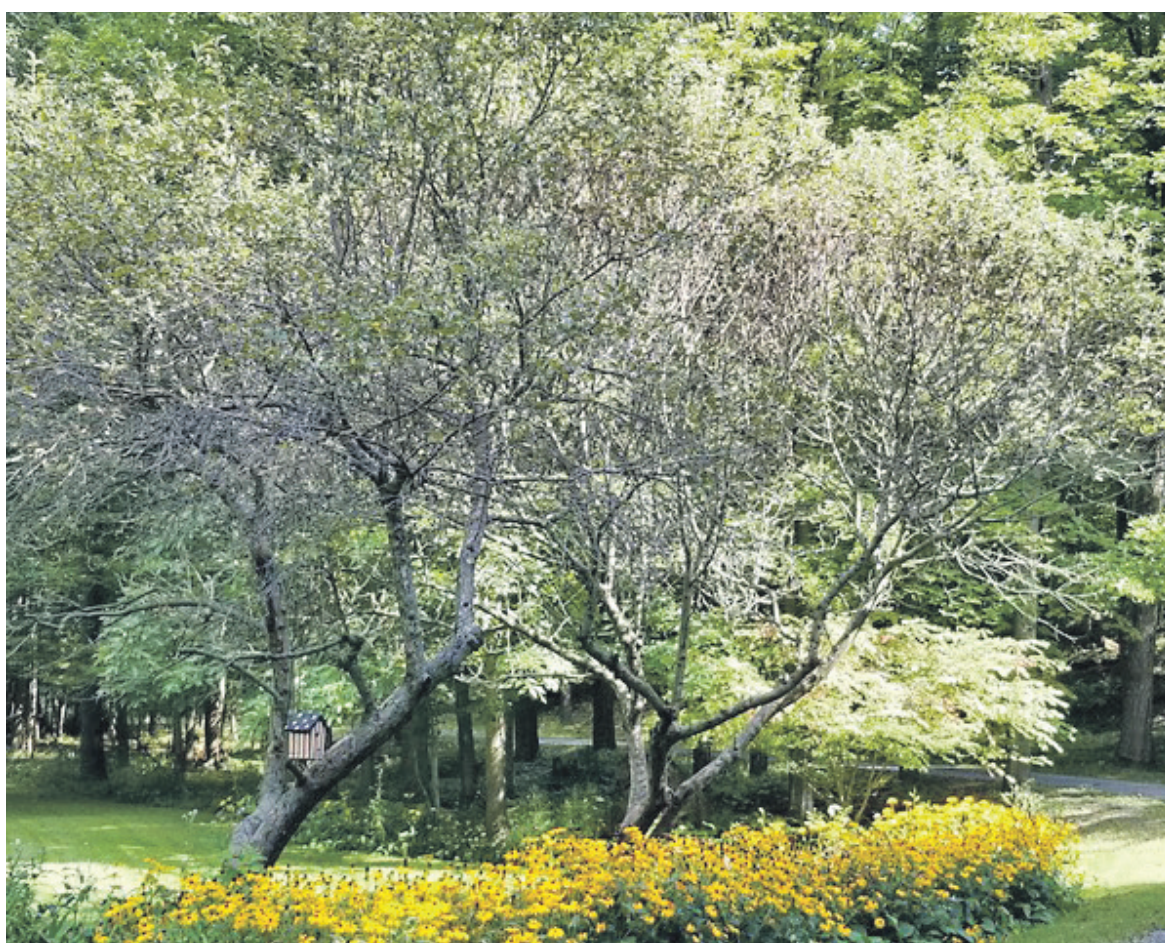
If you decide on removal, autumn is a good time for this task. While removing a young dwarf apple tree might be manageable on your own, removing

larger trees requires hiring a tree removal service that also will grind the stump and get rid of large roots.

Planting a new apple tree at the same location depends on whether the old tree was diseased. Pathogens that caused the old tree to die can survive in the soil, as well as in dead or dormant roots. This contamination could cause a condition called replant disease. If so, plant the new tree a few feet away from the original location.

Assuming the site is disease-free, you can replant a new apple tree at the same site. First, move the mulch created from grinding the stump to your compost pile. Next, replace the soil in the old planting site with quality soil, preferably from a non-orchard site, to prevent transferring soil pathogens from other fruit trees. Let the prepared site rest over winter.

When choosing the perfect apple tree to plant next spring, look for cultivars resistant to common fungal diseases, such as apple scab and cedar apple rust, suitable for your USDA plant hardiness zone. Visit planthardiness.ars.usda.gov.



Fall is the ideal time to remove apple trees that are diseased, pest-ridden or struggling to survive. Photo by Nadie VanZandt



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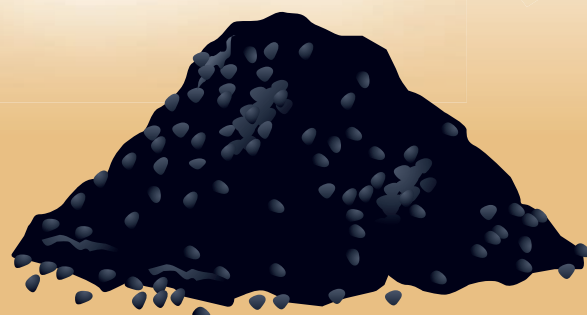
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How to help Main Street rebound from the pandemic

Main Street is the heart of many small communities. Small businesses have long been the drivers of both local and national economies.

The impact small businesses have on their communities may have been lost during the pandemic, when so many establishments were forced to close. The good news is that many small business owners were hopeful that the effects of COVID-19 would soon be a thing of the past.

Data from Bank of America, Data for Good and JPMorgan Chase indicates that 59% of entrepreneurs expect the impact of COVID-19 to affect their bottom line for two years or less. That's encouraging, but in the meantime, community leaders can take various steps to promote everything Main Street has to offer.

Create an inviting downtown atmosphere. Main Street America® is a grassroots network of small towns, mid-sized communities and urban commercial districts that work together to make downtown areas the heart of local communities. Ed McMahon, chair of the National Main Street Center Board of Directors, notes that a healthy downtown area is vital to having a healthy town. Towns and villages that want to revitalize their downtowns should aspire to create an inviting, inclusive atmosphere that celebrates the character of the town, including its history. Main Street America notes that people-centered, accessible public spaces can restore and revitalize downtowns, making them places locals and even non-locals want to visit.

Make it a partnership. Business owners in community centers and downtown areas have a

vested interest in revitalizing Main Street, but they can't go it alone. Local government officials, chambers of commerce, private sector businesses and civic organizations all have roles to play in making Main Street a

place where people want to spend their time and money. Local leaders should make a concerted effort to hear every voice as they try to revitalize Main Street.

Emphasize safety. COVID-19 changed how

many people shop and dine, and those changes must be considered as Main Street is rebuilt. The Mayo Clinic notes that outdoor fresh air is constantly moving and dispersing the type of respiratory droplets that

contain the COVID-19 virus. Because that air is constantly on the move, individuals are much less likely to get COVID-19 when spending time outdoors compared to indoors. Communities may be ready to get back to normal life, but it's important to do so safely. Many small towns closed Main Street and downtown areas to automobiles during peak shopping and dining hours, such as weekend evenings and afternoons, so local businesses could bring their offerings out-

side. Communities can keep such rules in place after the pandemic, as more outdoor seating at restaurants and less crowded walking areas proved wildly popular among consumers. In addition, communities must make a concerted effort to create and maintain a Main Street where residents and shoppers feel safe at all times of the day and night.

Communities can work together to ensure Main Street thrives as the world slowly emerges from the pandemic.



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The benefits of in person holiday shopping

The 2020 holiday season was unlike any other. The COVID-19 pandemic was still affecting daily life across the globe over the final months of 2020, prompting many families and individuals to alter holiday traditions they'd embraced for decades. That included how people shop. Many people avoided in person holiday shopping in 2020. However, the successful roll-out of various COVID-19 vaccines has made in person shopping safe again. That's good news for local businesses and great news for shoppers, who may have forgotten just how much they can benefit from shopping in person.

- In person shopping is convenient. Much is made of the convenience of online shopping. And it's undeniable that the ability to shop at all hours of the day and night is convenient. However, in person shopping, especially when shopping for others, is much more convenient than shoppers may realize. When shopping in person, shoppers can



get a feel for an item, size it up and even inspect its quality prior to purchasing it. That can save shoppers from that disappointing feeling of receiving an item in the mail only to realize it's poorly made or oddly sized and therefore unlikely to fit its eventual recipient.

- In person shopping isn't all about shipping. Shipping speed is a significant factor for online shoppers, and that may

affect just which gift they give come the holiday season. According to a Dotcom report titled "How Fast Delivery and Quality Packaging Drives Customer Loyalty," 87 percent of shoppers surveyed indicated shipping was a key factor when deciding whether to shop with an e-commerce brand again. That's an important consideration, as shoppers may be more inclined to buy an item from a

retailer simply because of their shipping speed capabilities and not because of the quality of the item and whether or not it's what they want to give to their loved one. Shopping in person removes shipping from the equation, ensuring gift givers will give a gift they truly want to give and not just the one that will arrive on time.

- In person shopping allows for more accessible browsing. Within minutes of entering a store and walking around, shoppers may see a handful of gifts that will ultimately be great for various people on their lists, even if they had no idea what to get prior to entering. That ability to browse is more difficult when shopping online, especially when buying from online retailers with massive inventories of a range of products. Such sites often require visitors to pick a category to streamline their searches. That's not always easy or enjoyable for shop-

pers who cherish the opportunity to uncover hidden gems or more unique gifts that aren't available all over the internet.

- In person shopping gets shoppers out of the house. Since the onset of the pandemic, people have spent more time than ever within the confines of their homes. The 2021 holiday shopping season provides a great opportunity to get out of the house and disconnect from devices. Shoppers can even do so alongside friends and family members they weren't able to see last holiday season.

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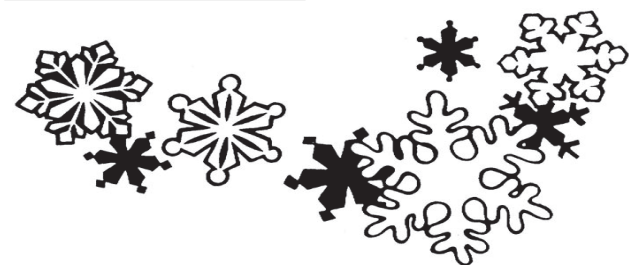
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Home Country

by Slim Randles



We almost believed we had a crime wave going on, which perplexed us all, especially since it's Christmas and all.

It all began when old man Ortega's rooster disappeared. He reported it to the police, too, who thought this neighborhood alarm clock finally met with a dissatisfied customer who was now gleefully making dump-lings.

The police said as much to Ortega, and the old man wanted to know what the police were going to do about it. Well, since it had been almost a week since they'd had a complaint come in, the chief sent young Glen around the neighborhood asking chicken questions. Everyone denied ending ol' Doodle's career... when they finished laughing. Old man Ortega got a copy of the report.

Ortega had his suspicions, of course. There was one neighbor lady who had once complained about the rooster to Ortega, and he had defended to her very face his rooster's right to crow. She then asked if he couldn't get ol' Doodle operated on, like they do to dogs and get his doodler clipped so he'd be singing blanks, as it were.

Ortega hotly replied that anyone who would deliberately maim an American rooster would steal sheep. Later on, he apologized and offered to buy her some ear plugs.

COUNTRY

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She passed on the ear plug offer but poured him a cup of coffee and that seemed to be that.

But still, ol' Doodle was gone, and there was no denying that. We finally put two and two together when another neighbor caught a coyote going over the fence with one of his hens, but we always wondered about that doodler-snipping operation. We'll have to ask Doc about it.

Quit fly fishing in winter? For shame! You didn't want the fish to get too warm before you got them home, right? Or just read "The Fly Fisherman's Bucket List" on Amazon.

A new mom plans to raise her son the same, and differently

by Christina Day, NYCAMH

November 18 was National Rural Health Day. Here, new mom Christina shares her thoughts on the subject.

Like many who grew up on a farm, I am passionate about agriculture and have a strong desire to share it with the next generation. I spent my childhood frolicking around the farm with my sisters, cuddling kittens and calves and biking the aisles of the barn while my parents milked. As I got older, I took on more responsibilities and explored my own farm projects. I am grateful for my childhood and would be happy if I could impart similar life skills and a love for agriculture to my own child.

My childhood was not without its bumps and bruises though. My father always made sure to give a safety talk before we started a task, but we still managed to need a few visits to the doctor for stitches. Sometimes we had a reality check from near misses we were lucky enough to call misses. Now, as I am navigating parenthood as a new mother, I am finding it will likely be difficult to strike a balance between the desire to provide ag-related experiences and the need to keep my child safe.

finding it will likely be difficult to strike a balance between the desire to provide ag-related experiences and the need to

keep my child safe.

For the complete story, make sure to check out countryculture.co.

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SCRAMBLERS

Today's Word

1. Tender 2. Neary!
3. Snide; 4. Inhale

Mega Maze

FOUND IN A CAN

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

Answer

A	N	T	E	D	S	T	E	F	F	I	P	S	E	U	D	O	P	U	R	R	E	D	H	E	A	T	U	P	A	C	R	E	I	N	A	E	M	A	S	A	T	E	B	B	D	I	N	T	N	I	C	E	F	O	O	T	I	N	T	H	E	D	O	O	R	T	A	X	I	E	A	R	L	N	O	G	A	G	O	C	O	A	L	L	A	V	A	R	O	O	T	E	D	L	E	E	R	E	D	E	R	E	C	T	S	I	O	D	I	N	E	E	R	E	S	A	S	S	E	T	S	R	A	T	S	O
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Solution time: 21 mins.

Answers

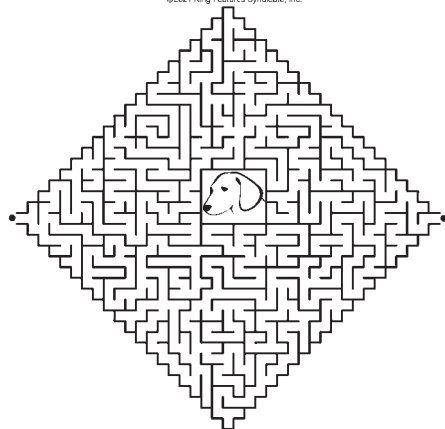
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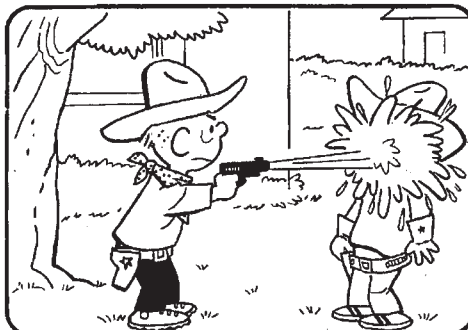
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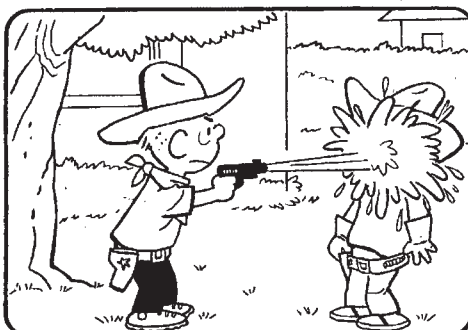
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BY
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Bandanna is different. 2. Star on glove is missing. 3. Leaves are added. 4. Sleeve is shorter. 5. Sneakers are different. 6. Hedge is taller.

Unscramble the letters within each rectangle to form four ordinary words. Then rearrange the boxed letters to form the mystery word, which will complete the gag!



"Do I think money grows on trees?"

Is this a _____?"

Dainty

RENTED

Dream

RANEY

Unkind

DINES

Sniff

HEALIN

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holiday gift guide

Toy buying tips when shopping for kids

Shopping for gifts for kids makes many shoppers nostalgic for their own childhoods. Few adults can forget the joy of finding the perfect gift under the tree on Christmas morning. Recreating that magic for a youngster can be as joyous for gift givers as it is for kids. That's especially so when shoppers make it a point to give safe, age-appropriate gifts.

Whether shopping for their own children or their grandkids, nieces or nephews, shoppers can keep these tips in mind to ensure they give toys that are as safe as they are fun.

- **Speak to Mom and Dad first.** When buying for a grandchild, niece or nephew, shoppers should first ask Mom or Dad for suggestions. Parents will know which types of toys their children like, and they'll also know the child's level of maturity. Some kids may not be mature enough to play with otherwise age-appropriate toys, while others may be mature beyond their years and enjoy more complex toys than their age would suggest. Parents will know what makes a good toy and what doesn't.

- **Learn what to look for on labels.** Toy labels are great sources of information, but shoppers must know what to look for. The American Academy of Pediatrics notes that toy labels include information about age-appropriateness (i.e., "Ages 3 & Up") as well as directions regarding how to use the toy. If the instructions seem a bit complex for the child the item will be for, look for something else. Children's toy labels also include additional information that consumers may not be familiar with. For

example, toys labeled "ASTM F963" meet the latest safety standards from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. An "ASTM D4236" label indicates the materials associated with the art toy have been reviewed and deemed safe by a toxicologist. More information about toy label requirements can be found at cpsc.gov. The AAP advises that electric toys should only be given to kids if they include the UL label. That means the toy has been certified by the global safety certification company UL, LLC.

- **Avoid certain features.** The AAP notes that toys that are loud, shoot objects into the air or contain small pieces pose a threat to children. Especially loud toys can damage children's hearing, while projectiles can increase the risk of eye injuries or choking. Toys with small pieces also pose a choking risk to young children who may try to put the pieces into their mouths.

- **Err on the side of caution.** Consumers who are uncertain about the safety of a given toy, even after reading its label, should err on the side of caution and only give toys they're confident won't pose a safety risk. Even toys that may seem safe could be dangerous to kids who might otherwise seem old enough. For example, the AAP advises against giving kids under 12 hobby kits and chemistry sets. That's because such kits may contain dangerous chemicals that even pre-adolescents are not old enough to handle safely.

Shoppers must consider a host of factors when looking for safe toys for kids this holiday season.



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Ten gift ideas for people who love to cook



Many people know someone who loves spending lots of time in the kitchen. Certain home cooks may enjoy whipping up favorite recipes, while others might get excited about experimenting with new flavors and ingredients.

A love of cooking paves the way for many different gifting opportunities. Food-related gifts also come in a wide variety of price points, making it easy for shoppers to spend as little or as much as they want. Check out these 10 gift ideas for the foodie on your holiday shopping list.

1. Sheet pans: They may not seem like the most sexy or high-tech tools of the kitchen, but sheet pans are among the most versatile. They can be used for cookies, sheet pan cakes, oven-frying cutlets or fries, or even serving as the perfect bases for candy brittles.

2. Air fryer tool set: By now many people have hopped on the air fryer bandwagon, but they may not have all of the accessories to take air frying to the next level. From

spatulas to tongs to silicone brushes, an air fryer tool set can make meals even more delicious.

3. Dutch oven: You'd be hard-pressed to find a more hard-working tool in the kitchen than a Dutch oven. These heavy, often enameled cast iron vessels come in various quart sizes. They can be used to cook stews, breads, cakes, and much more.

4. Kitchen compost bin: Home cooks who want to cut down on waste will appreciate a countertop compost bin to gather food scraps.

5. Serving board: The rise in cheese and charcuterie boards means cooks will need something attractive to serve their spreads. Wooden and stone boards are attractive when serving sliced cheeses, crackers, chutneys, and other appetizer.

6. Electric wine opener: Wine is the perfect complement to many dishes, and what easier way to open bottles than with an electric wine opener? Many are compatible with almost any bottleneck

and can open several bottles on a single charge.

7. Spiralizer: The trend for pasta alternatives continues, and having a spiralizer that can turn vegetables like zucchini into spiraled "noodles" will be handy in most kitchens.

8. Apron and accessories: Home cooks need to protect their clothing in the kitchen. A fashionable apron and matching oven mitts can make a statement and keep clothes clean.

9. Meat delivery: The number of direct-to-home meat shipping providers continues to grow. Have quality cuts of meat delivered right to a home cook's house so that he or she can cut back on trips to the store.

10. New blender: Today's blenders can crush ice, process foods, puree, and chop foods. These versatile appliances make a welcome addition to any kitchen.

Stock up on food-related gifts now for those people on your holiday shopping list who love to cook.

holiday gift guide

Tips for traveling with gifts in tow

"There's no place like home for the holidays." The popular Christmas tune says it best, and millions of people support that notion every year by heading back to their hometowns to spend the holidays with friends and family.

holidays, suitcases and other baggage tends to be filled with gifts, decorations and other items like food. Packing for travel can become a little more complicated during this time of year. But these suggestions can help ensure holiday

holiday gifts. Instead, ship gifts to their destination, trying to plan accordingly so that someone will be there to receive them when they arrive. Pick a shipping rate that fits your budget.

Make a "small gift" pact

Speak with family members and agree to a set gift size (and/or dollar value). A theme, such as limiting gifts to gift cards, perfume/cologne or food, can make this more manageable. Try to avoid delicate items which can break during transit. Small gifts are easily stashed in luggage or boxes to bring home, saving everyone a little stress.

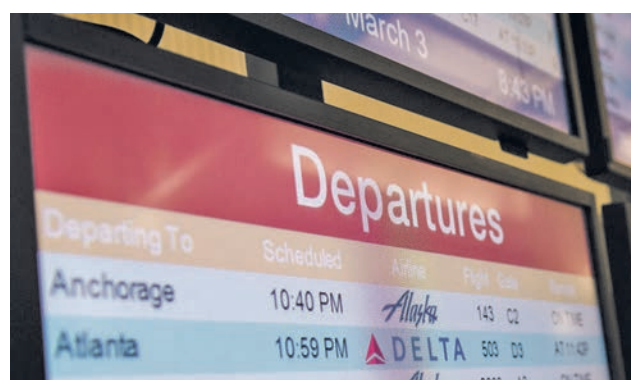
Remove packaging and wrapping

While they may not look as pristine as carefully wrapped boxes, wrap soft clothing items right in wrapping paper or tissue paper to save on space so gifts will take up less space. On the return trip home, break down clothing boxes and remove toys from their cardboard and plastic packaging to make them easier to transport.

Bring along an empty piece of luggage

Much like on vacation, you'll probably return home with a few more items than you arrived with during the holidays. Plan ahead with an empty piece of luggage for stowing the new gifts. Nest soft or foldable items into other gifts to save on space. Shirts rolled into shoes can save significant space.

Millions of people travel for the holidays. A plan to get gifts to and fro can make trips go smoothly.



The Bureau of Transportation Statistics points out that the Thanksgiving and Christmas/New Year's holiday periods are some of the busiest times for long-distance travel. Around Thanksgiving, the number of trips to and from a destination 50 miles or more away increases by 54 percent. During the December holiday period, the number rises by 23 percent.

When traveling for the

items make it there and back relatively easily.

Wrap them there

One way to preserve the integrity of holiday gifts and ensure they look attractive rather than crushed or ripped is to wrap items when you arrive. Build extra time into holiday travel so that you arrive a day or two early. Seek out a quiet spot and get your wrapping done.

Ship there or back

Depending on your mode of travel, there may be limited cargo space in the trunk or back of the SUV. Also, if you're taking a long road trip that involves rest stops or even staying over at a hotel, gifts left in a vehicle may attract the attention of thieves. Lugging them into the hotel may not be practical, either. In addition, many airlines charge fees for extra baggage, which can quickly add up with bulky

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