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*Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves.
Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.
Matthew 10:16*

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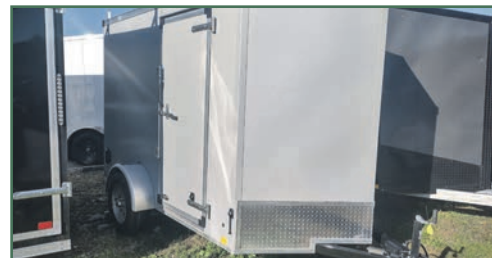
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Salute to Outstanding Women nomination deadline extended

Nominations for YWCA Mohawk Valley's (YWCA MV's) Salute to Outstanding Women awards have been extended by one week and will now close on Dec. 16. To make your nomination, visit ywcamv.org/Salute.

"This is an exciting time of year for us, getting to hear about all the wonderful, outstanding women in our community," said YWCA MV CEO Dianne Stancato. "We want to make sure everyone has more than enough time to recognize the women in their lives and we want to meet them all."

Salute to Outstanding Women honors eight women from the Mohawk Valley who uplift and empower their community. One honoree is selected in each of eight unique categories:

Business and Industry: employees of all levels in any profession, business or industry; examples include accounting, construction, law, marketing, trade skills, etc.

Education: teachers, administrators, community educators, coaches, mentors, professors, librarians, tutors, etc.

Entrepreneur: someone who has started their own business: large or small, storefront or online

Healthcare: physicians, nurses, opticians, dentists, therapists in any specialty, pharmacists, healthcare professional

and aides, etc.

Human & Public Service: law enforcement, EMT, fire department, armed forces, social workers, nonprofit employees, etc.

Outstanding Youth: young women age 17 and under who deserve recognition for their volunteer work, school-related involvement and/or academic achievements

Social Justice: an unsung hero in the community whose efforts truly embody YWCA MV's mission to eliminate racism, empower women and promote peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all

STEAM: someone who works to promote Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and/or Math in any field

The honorees are selected by a panel of independent judges. They will be recognized at the Salute to Outstanding Women luncheon on March 30 at Hart's Hill Inn in Whitesboro.

Nominees must be 18 years of age or older, live and/or work in Oneida or Herkimer counties and must have demonstrated excellence and leadership in the workplace and/or community. Youth nominees must be 17 years of age or

younger and live, work or attend school in Oneida or Herkimer counties. Nominees cannot be past Salute honorees, current YWCA MV board members or current YWCA MV staff.

This celebration of local leaders has brought together dedicated women from across the Mohawk Valley. Now numbering 273 members, the Salute Academy has served as a testament to YWCA MV's mission since the first Salute ceremony in 1989. Salute 2023 is presented by Bank of Utica.

All proceeds from Salute to Outstanding Women directly benefit YWCA MV's 24-hour free and confidential domestic violence services, including emergency shelter, transitional housing programs, crisis hotlines, advocacy and accompaniment and more.

YWCA MV is available for anyone experiencing domestic and/or sexual violence via free and confidential 24-hour hotline services. Visit ywcamv.org/Chat to reach an advocate directly through their private, secure server. In Oneida County, call or text 315.797.7740 for domestic and sexual violence crisis services. In Herkimer County, call 315.866.4120 for child advocacy and adult sexual violence crisis services. For more information about YWCA MV, visit ywcamv.org.

Adirondack League Club awards over \$115,000 to area nonprofits

The Adirondack League Club Community Fund at the Community Foundation of Herkimer and Oneida Counties awarded more than \$118,000 to support over 20 area nonprofits in the third quarter of 2022.

Recipients received grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$15,000 to support a wide range of programs and services: Adirondack Experience, Adirondack Foothills Trails Alliance, Big Moose Fire Company, Dodge Pratt Northam Art & Community Center, Forestport

Fire Department, Friends of the Polar Bears, Fulton Chain of Lakes Performing Arts Council, Home Aide Service of the Central Adirondacks, Inlet Area Community Task Force, Inlet Volunteer Emergency Services, Kiwanis Club Foundation of Central Adirondacks, LivingADK, Mercy Flight Central, Nicolls Memorial Presbyterian Church, North Country Life Flight, Old Forge Library, Old Forge Volunteer Ambulance Corps, Old Forge Volunteer Fire Department, Sagamore Institute, the Kinderwood

Program, Town of Webb Health Center Fund, Town of Webb Historical Association, View and Woodgate Free Library.

"The support from Adirondack League Club to active nonprofits in our two-county community will help strengthen them and take their success to the next level," said Alicia Dicks, president/CEO of the Community Foundation. "The grants encourage nonprofits to continue the important work they do and meet the needs of those they serve."



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Tricks to trim your utility bill

A rapid rise in the cost of living will undoubtedly prove to be one of the major stories of 2022. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, energy prices rose by 41.6 percent in the 12-month period that ended in June 2022, marking the highest 12-month increase since April 1980.

The significant spike in energy costs is somewhat misleading, as the BLS considers motor fuel prices, which rose more than 60 percent in the 12-month period ending in June 2022, part of the energy category.

However, during that same period, electricity prices rose by nearly 14 percent while natural gas prices increased by 38 percent. Both of those increases were more significant than the more publicized rise in food prices, which rose by right around 10 percent.

Families need to eat and many professionals now must return to in-person work after years of pandemic-related remote working, which means they must confront higher fuel costs. That leaves little room to save money in those areas. However, there are ways for

families to reduce home energy costs without adversely affecting their quality of life.

- Run appliances during off-peak hours. According to the U.S. Department of Energy and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the best time to use appliances in a home is when overall electricity use is low. Though this time changes depending on the season and can vary based on geography, the DOE and the EPA both note that after 9 p.m. and before 9 a.m. are generally the off-peak hours in most areas.

- Strategically use your shades and blinds. The energy providers at ConEd estimate that about 40 percent of unwanted heat comes through windows. Strategic use of curtains, shades and blinds can keep heat out on hot days, thus allowing homeowners to turn the thermostat up on their air conditioning units in summer. Opening curtains, blinds and shades on winter mornings and afternoons will allow more sunlight in, allowing homeowners to control heating costs more effectively.

- Reorganize your refrigerator. There are plenty of contradictory strategies regarding how best to store foods in a refrigerator, so the unit consumes as little energy as possible while still keeping foods fresh and chilled. But various energy providers including ConEd recommend that consumers avoid packing a fridge too tightly. By

allowing cold air to circulate within the refrigerator, the refrigerator won't need to work as hard, and thus consume as much energy, to keep foods cool. It's important to note that the opposite should govern how the freezer is packed. Packing frozen items tightly in the freezer will help the refrigerator work a little less hard.

- Turn off the lights. Estimates from the U.S. Energy Information Administration indicate that electricity for lighting accounts for around 10 percent of electricity consumption in homes. A concerted effort to turn off lights in rooms that aren't being used can help consumers save money.

Rising utility bills are compelling millions of people to seek ways to trim their energy consumption. Thankfully, there are many ways to do that without upsetting daily routines.



Strategic use of appliances in a home can help consumers reduce their energy bills by a significant amount.

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Winter tailgating tips

Winter may chill things down, but tailgating season is still hot. While the National Football League season gets started when the leaves still haven't changed colors, it runs through the heart of the winter, with the season culminating on Feb. 13. But that's not the only professional sports schedule that dominates the season. Hockey drops the puck in October and the season extends into the first week of summer. College and professional basketball also are games to catch during the winter months. With so much sporting action to enjoy, tailgating season likely won't stop just because the mercury has dropped.

Tailgating typically takes place in the parking lots of sports arenas and sta-

diums before and after big games. Even though weather starts out perfect for tailgating events, snow, ice and freezing temperatures may make their presence felt throughout the winter tailgating season. Tailgating doesn't necessarily have to end when Mother Nature cools things down. These winter tailgating tips can keep the fun flowing well into winter.

- Don warm gear. Body heat can escape through the head, hands, feet, and face. Pay attention to these areas in particular

when bundling up, donning heavy gloves, thick socks, a hat, a scarf and insulated boots when tailgating. Warming gear can serve double-duty when it's emblazoned with team colors and logos.

- Bring a tent. A camping tent or canopy can block wind and offer protection against precipitation. Secure it with bricks or tie it down to something heavy so it won't blow away.

- Create a barrier. Styrofoam takeout containers or even broken-down cardboard boxes can be

placed underfoot and prevent cold from seeping up through shoes from the chilly ground.

- Snuggle next to the fire. A propane fire can or a fire pit (if permitted) can provide the added warmth needed when temperatures plummet. These also can be places to gather around to toast hot dogs or sausages on sticks when the main grill is occupied.

- Use heated accessories. Electric or chemical hand warmers can provide extra warmth, as can blankets, heated camping chairs and other items.

Tailgating is a popular activity during sports games, concerts and other group events. Winter weather doesn't have to dampen tailgating efforts when there's a focus on warmth along with camaraderie.



It may be getting cold, but tailgating season is just heating up.

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Herkimer College Generals Men's Soccer players named to national team

Ali Somow of Utica and Jack Bowden of Aberdeen, Scotland, were named to the United Soccer Coaches Junior College All-America teams. Somow is Herkimer's first three-time All-American due to the extra COVID season. Somow, a sophomore and general studies major, was named to the NJCAA Division III Men's Soccer National Championship All-Tournament team. He was ninth in the nation in goals and total points and sixth in the nation in game winning goals with four points.

Bowden, a freshman majoring in business administration, led a defense that only allowed four goals the entire season.

Both players were also named to the first team All-Region III team. Both helped lead the Generals to a national third place finish. Somow and Bowden will receive their awards along with other high school and college all-American honorees on Jan. 14 at the United Soccer Coaches national ceremony and reception in Philadelphia.

"Both Ali and Jack are class acts both on and off the field," Herkimer Generals men's soccer coach Pepe Aragon said. "They truly deserve this prestigious award."

Somow was also selected as first team NJCAA Division III Men's Soccer All-American. He shares that distinction with Cathal Carney of Springfield, MA.

Carney, a freshman and general studies major, led the Generals to a third place finish at the NJCAA Division III Men's Soccer National Championship Tournament. He led the nation in wins, save percentage and goals-against average.

"Both Ali and Cathal are truly deserving of this prestigious award," Aragon said. "Both are great young men with a bright future ahead of them."



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 Sunday, 9:30 AM;
 Confessions: Sat. 3 & by appointment
 Please call parish office for Holy Day schedule

FREYSBUSH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
 Freysbush Rd., Fort Plain
 518-429-9936 or 518-424-8488
 Worship 9 AM,
 Sunday School 10 AM
 ALL ARE WELCOME

FRANKFORT
OUR LADY QUEEN OF APOSTLES
 414 Frankfort St., Frankfort, NY
 Pastor: Father Paul Catena
 Deacon: Micheal Carbone
 Mass Schedule:
 Saturday 4 PM (May - October);
 Sunday 9 AM; Tuesday & Thursday 9 AM

FULTONVILLE
FONDA FULTONVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
 Pastor Kathy Reese
 Sunday worship and
 Sunday school 10AM
 Outdoor service: 11 Montgomery Street,
 Fultonville, May-Early Sept. (byo - chair)
 Indoor service:
 Winter and inclement weather
 Glen Town Hall, 7 Erie Street, Fultonville
 Community Outreach is very important to us
518 853-3311

FULTONVILLE REFORMED CHURCH
 Corner of 5S & 30
 Pastor Jane Hubschmitt
 Sunday School 10 AM
 Family Worship 10:30 AM

GLEN
GLEN REFORMED CHURCH
 State Hwy 161 in the Hamlet of Glen
 4 miles South of Fultonville
 glenreformed@nycap.rr.com
 Sunday Worship at 9. Sunday School immediately following Children's Message

HERKIMER
SS PETER and PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH
 Fr Vasil Dubea
 & Fr Dn Demetrius Richards
 305 Main Rd., Herkimer
 Phone 315-866-3272
 Saturday Vespers -
 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 AM

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

REDEEMER CHURCH
 Pastor Michael Servello
 931 Herkimer Rd., Utica, NY 13503
 Phone 792-4748
 Saturday 6 PM • Sunday 9 & 11 AM

OAK RIDGE FREE METHODIST CHURCH
 Pastor Chris Schumske
 838 W. German St.
 Worship Service for adults & children
 8:30 AM & 10:30 AM
 with Ridgekids for the children
 (0-5th grade)
 Phone 866-0575

UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF ST. MARY'S PROTECTRESS
 326 Moore Ave.
 Sunday Divine Liturgy 10 AM
 Holy Day Liturgy 9 AM
 Phone 866-1336

NEW LIFE CHURCH
 Pastor David Hayner
 337 Protection Ave.
 Phone 866-1164 • www.nlc-mc.org
 Worship 10 AM
 Wednesday Worship 6:30 PM

THE SALVATION ARMY
 Lieutenants Derrick and Heather Purvis
 431 N. Prospect St.
 Phone 866-1240
 Facebook.com/TheSalvationArmyHerkimer
 Sunday School 10 AM
 Morning Worship 11 AM

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF HERKIMER AND LITTLE FALLS
 Pastor Joelle Faulks
 Prospect St & Park Ave.
 Sunday Worship and Sunday School 9 AM

HERKIMER REFORMED CHURCH
 102 Church St.
 Phone 866-1523
 Worship 9:30 AM
 Shepherd's Table: Tuesday 11:30-12 PM

TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
 Corner of West German & Henry Streets
 Phone 315-866-6474
 Sunday Worship Services
 10 AM in person and virtually on Zoom,
 YouTube & Facebook
 Bible Studies
 Thursday mornings 10 AM on Facebook

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
 317 Gros Blvd., East Herkimer
 315-866-8095
 Sunday Sacrament Meeting 10 AM
 Sunday School/Primary 11 AM
 - Visitors welcome -
 Family History Center,
 open by appointment

ILION
ILION COMMUNITY CHURCH
 Pastor Dean Mabry
 44 Central Plaza
 Sunday Worship 10 AM
 Child Care/Kids Church Available
 ilionchurch.com

SAINT AUGUSTINE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
 78 2nd Street
 Phone: 680-322-1034
 or 315-895-0363
 Email: staugustine3@gmail.com
 Sunday Services at 10 AM

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
 90 Morgan St., Ilion, NY, 13357
 Reverend Richard Riggle
 Bible Study 9:30 AM
 Church Service 10:30 AM
 315-894-2070

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
 8 Second Street
 Reverend John Partise
 Wednesday Mid Week Service 7 PM
 Sunday Morning 11 AM

JESUS NEVER FAILS COMMUNITY CHURCH
 Reverend Hans Drews
 1161 Elizabethtown Rd., Ilion, NY 13357
 518-568-7983
 hansandrosaline@yahoo.com
 Sunday Service 11 AM

MORNING STAR UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
 36 Second Street
 Pastor Joelle Faulks
 Sunday Worship 10:30 AM
 November 1 - May 1
 4224 Acme Rd, Frankfort
 May 1 - November 1
 36 Second Street, Ilion

ANNUNCIATION CHURCH
 109 West Street, Ilion, NY
 Pastor: Father Paul Catena
 Deacon: Micheal Carbone
 Mass Schedule:
 Saturday 4 PM (November - April);
 Sunday 11:30 AM;
 Monday & Wednesday 9 AM

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 Professional Memorial Cleaning
 Specialty Sandblast & Etching
 315-866-4471
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315-429-9761

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 6500 St. Rt. 5, Little Falls, NY 13365
 Thomas C. Whitcomb, Owner
 Phone 315-823-1320
 www.whitcombautosales.com

CHURCH SERVICE DIRECTORY

JOHNSTOWN
CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE
 3316 St. Rt. 29 W,
 Johnstown, NY 12095
 Offices: 518-762-2982
 Cell: 857-523-8417
 Pastor, Rev. Mark Fowler
 Sunday Morning Service 11 AM
 Sunday School for All Ages 10 AM

JOHNSTOWN FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
 37 South Market St.
 Johnstown, NY 12095
 518-762-8263
 office@johnstownpresbyterian.org
 Pastor George W. 'Blake' Blakesley
 Church Service 10:30 AM in person,
 Zoom and Facebook
 Please call for more information about
 our free community lunch, thrift store &
 personal care shelf.

LASSELLSVILLE
LASSELLSVILLE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
 State Hwy. 29
 Pastor Robert A. Lindsay
 Worship: Sunday 9:30 AM
 Sunday School to start soon

LITTLE FALLS
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
 555 Albany St.
 315-823-3392
 Morning Worship 9:45 AM
 Rev. Chris J. Wintermute, Lead Pastor
 Rev. William Whalen, Associate Pastor
 Nursery (infants through age 4)
 Meet and Greet Sunday at 8:00 AM
 Sunday School Classes 8:30 AM
 (nursery through adult)
 **Our Service is aired on 100.3 FM,
 91.1 FM & 88.7 FM on Sundays from
 11-12 with a 1 week delay.
 **LIVE on Facebook: "gingerleecase"
 account- 9:45 am on Sundays

ST. PAUL'S UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH
 Minister Jeffrey J. Frank
 Mark Bunce, Organist
 565 Albany St., Little Falls, NY
 Phone 315-823-2284
 Sunday Service & Religious Education
 10 AM

FIRST ASSEMBLY OF GOD
 Senior Pastor Timothy Parisi
 559 E. Jefferson St.
 Phone 823-4043 • firstaglf@gmail.com
 Sunday Morning All Worship 10 AM
 Thursday Bible Study 6:30 PM

HOLY FAMILY PARISH OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF LITTLE FALLS
 Father Brian Slezak
 763 E. Main St., Little Falls, NY
 Phone 315-823-3410
 Saturday Vigil Mass 4 PM
 Sunday Mass 10:30 AM

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

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

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
 Pastor Tamara Razzano
 16 Jackson St.
 Phone: 315-823-3004
 Email lfirstpres@gmail.com
 www.presbylf.org
 Sunday Worship 10 AM
 Sunday School 10 AM

INGHAMS MILLS BAPTIST CHURCH
 Rev. Gary L. Busch, Pastor
 Sunday Worship Service 10 AM
 443 Inghams Mills Rd.
 Little Falls, NY 13365
 Pastor's Phone (315) 717-9936

THE HOLY SPIRIT POLISH NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH
 618 E. Gansvoort St., Little Falls, NY
 315-823-0793
 Father Rafal Dadello
 Mass at 11 AM on Sunday
 www.holyspiritpncc.org

MARSHVILLE
MARSHVILLE EVANGELICAL CHURCH
 Route 10 South
 Pastor Mark Fowler
 Worship Sunday 9 AM

MIDDLEVILLE
MIDDLEVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
 24 Fairfield St.
 Sunday Worship 9:30 AM

MOHAWK DENNISON CORNERS COMMUNITY CHURCH
 Pastor Donald King
 219 Robinson Rd. • Phone 866-5215
 Sunday:
 Sunday School 9:45 AM
 Morning Worship 11 AM
 Evening Worship 6 PM
 Wednesday Prayer 7 PM

MOHAWK REFORMED CHURCH
 Rev. Brian Engel, Pastor
 20 S. Otsego St.
 Phone 866-4292
 Email mohawkpastor@verizon.net
 Follow us on Facebook
 Morning Worship:
 10:30 AM Sept. - June • 9:30 AM July-Aug.
 Youth Sunday School (Pre-K - Sr. High)
 9 AM
 Adult Sunday School (Men, Women
 & Couples) 9:30 AM
 September - June

EMMANUEL BIBLE CHURCH
 Pastor Gary Wilcox
 54 W. Main St. • Phone 717-3011
 Worship and Word: Sunday 10:30 AM
 Fellowship Lunch: 12:30 PM
 Discipleship Hour: Sunday 1:30 PM
 Bible Study & Prayer: Wednesday 6 PM

CHURCH OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT
 Sr. Mary Jo Tallman, CSJ,
 Parish Life Director
 Rev. Leo Potvin,
 Sacramental Minister
 71 E. Main St.
 Phone 866-1752
 Sunday Mass 9:30 AM

CHRISTIAN BIBLE CHURCH
 H. Ed Reed, Pastor/Teacher
 167 Ward Rd. • Phone 858-1282
 www.christianbiblechurch.us
 Sunday School 9 AM
 Sunday Worship 10 AM
 Wednesday Bible Study
 & Prayer Meeting 7 PM

THE WORD CHRISTIAN CENTER
 Pastor Dan Annutto
 27 E. Main St. • Phone (315) 985-3596
 Sunday Services at 10 AM
 Intercession - Tuesdays at 6 PM

NELLISTON VALLEY ALLIANCE CHURCH
 85 E. Main St., Nelliston
 518-993-3458
 Pastor Ken Gies
 Sunday School (all ages) 9:15 AM,
 Sunday Worship 10:30 AM,
 Wed. Praise & Prayer 7 PM,
 Fri. Youth Group 7 PM (7-12th grade)

NEWPORT
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF NEWPORT
 7497 Main Street
 Pastor's Phone 315-790-1877
 Sunday Worship at 9:45 AM

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

KUYAHOORA COMMUNITY CHURCH
 Pastor Dwayne Durand
 West Canada Valley
 High School Auditorium
 5447 St. Rt. 28
 Mailing Address PO Box 50
 Middleville, NY 13406
 Phone 315-292-1303
 www.kuyahorracc.org
 Weekly Service Sunday 10:08 AM

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC CHURCH
 St. John the Baptist Parish
 7516 N. Main St. • Phone 845-8017
 Saturday Vigil 4 PM
 Sunday Mass 8:30 AM

OPPENHEIM
OPPENHEIM
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
 Route 29
 Pastor Matt Worley
 315-429-7381
 Worship 10 AM Sundays,
 Totally Awesome God-TAG time 6:30 PM
 Wednesdays beginning in Oct.,
 Sunday School 9 AM beginning
 September 18th

PAINES HOLLOW
PAINES HOLLOW
UNITED METHODIST
 Lay Servant Gregg Sponburgh
 Rtes. 167 & 168 • 315-866-1128
 Worship 9-10AM

PALATINE BRIDGE
TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF STONE ARABIA
 5430 St. Hwy. 10, Palatine Bridge, NY
 Pastor A. Elisabeth Aurand
 Sunday In Person Worship 9 AM;
 email for link
 office@stjm-canajoharie.org
 518-673-2224

THE HOUSE OF ZION, INC.
 580 Dillenbeck Rd., Palatine Bridge
 518-577-3069
 Pastors Richard & Denise Allen
 Saturday Morning
 Worship Service 11:30 AM
 Listen to UMT on live radio 97.5FM
 the 1st Sunday of every month 3-4 PM

RANDALL
RANDALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY CHURCH
 NY Rte. 5S
 Sunday Service 10:30 AM
 Worship Leader Darlene Spaulding

RICHFIELD SPRINGS
CHURCH OF CHRIST UNITING
 PO Box 896, Richfield Springs, NY 13439
 Rev. Casey Bradley • 315-858-1553
 Service: Sunday 9:15 AM
 Church School: Sunday 9:30 AM

RICHFIELD SPRINGS BIBLE CHURCH
 19 Church St.,
 Richfield Springs, NY 13439
 Rev. David Tosi • 315-858-0564
 Sunday School (all ages) 10 AM Wor-
 ship Service 11 AM & 7 PM Wednesday
 - Prayer & Praise
 Call for info on various
 Youth Ministries
 www.richfieldspringsbiblechurch.org

SALISBURY CENTER
FULL GOSPEL ASSEMBLY OF GOD
 Pastor Robert Brent
 106 Plant Road
 Sunday Worship 11 AM with Children's
 Church offered during the service

SALISBURY CENTER
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
 2545 State Route 29
 Pastor Mark Hediger, 315-429-9085
 pastormark@aol.com
 Sunday Worship 10 AM
 Thursday Bible Study 6 PM

SLOANSVILLE
SCHOHARIE VALLEY GOSPEL CHURCH
 Pastor Pat Andreoli
 133 Sprakers Rd., Sloansville, NY
 518-864-5397
 svgchurch@gmail.com
 Wednesday Prayer 6 PM; Sunday
 Morning Bible Study 9:45 AM; Worship
 Service Sunday Morning 10:30 AM

SPRAKERS
CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF CHARLESTON FOUR CORNERS
 1380 E. Lykers Rd., Sprakers
 518-922-9088
 Pastor Brett Popp
 Sunday School (ages 3-adult) 9:45 AM
 Worship 11 AM
 Sunday Prayer Meeting 5:30 PM
 Thu. Evening of Encouragement &
 Community Kid's Bible Club 6:30 PM

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF RURAL GROVE
 170 Rural Grove Rd.,
 Sprakers, NY 12166
 518-922-7831
 Pastor Joshua Fetterhoff
 pastorjosh@ruralgrovechurch.org
 Sunday School (all ages) 9:45 AM,
 Morning Service 11 AM,
 Eve. Service 6 PM,
 Wed.-Family Night 7 PM,
 "Where Bible Teaching is Fundamental"

REFORMED CHURCH OF SPRAKERS
 112 Sprakers Hill Rd.
 Rev. Nancy Ryan
 Worship ~ 9 AM
 All Welcome!!!

CURRYTOWN REFORMED CHURCH
 829 St. Hwy. 162, Sprakers
 518-922-8422
 Rev. Donald Hoaglander
 Visiting Pastor Jane Hubschmitt
 518-705-2201
 Sunday School 9:15 AM
 Worship Service 10 AM

RIVER OF JUBILEE CHURCH
 5057 St. Hwy. 5 S, Sprakers, NY 12166
 Pastor: Gail Adamoschek
 Pastor: Steve Adamoschek
 518-322-1427 / 518-224-4455 Sunday
 Service 10 AM
 Children's Church Available
 Other Learning Opportunities Available
 Visit us on Facebook

SPRINGFIELD CENTER
ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
 7690 Rt. 80, Springfield Center
 315-858-4016
 Fr. Kyle Grennen, Priest-in-Charge
 Sunday Eucharist, 9:30 AM
 Coffee - Fellowship follows service Holy
 Days - as announced

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
 Springfield Center, NY
 Rev. Terence Brant
 607-264-3035
 Sunday School 10 AM
 Morning Worship 11 AM
 Wed. night Bible Study 7 PM

ST. JOHNSTOWN
BETHESDA FELLOWSHIP
 34 S. Division St.,
 St. Johnsville, NY 13452
 518-568-2678
 Summer Schedule
 Sunday Worship 10 AM
 Wed. Worship and Prayer 6 PM

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
 32 W. Main St.,
 St. Johnsville, NY (next to NBT Bank)
 518-568-3007 Church
 518-568-2405 Parsonage
 Rev. David Johnson
 Sunday Worship 10:30 AM,
 Tues. Bible Bungee-Jumping 7 PM,
 "Bible Study" that actually makes sense!
 A Vibrant, Welcoming
 Community of Faith & Vision

SEEKER'S FELLOWSHIP
 14 Park Place, St. Johnsville, NY 13452
 518-568-7700 • Pastor Mike Yeziarski
 Sunday Worship 6 PM, Tues. Prayer 7 PM,
 Bible Study 7 PM (Wed., Thurs. & Fri.)
 We teach the fullness of God's Word,
 a life of holiness for the believer,
 and salvation for all who trust
 in Christ's sacrifice.

JOY FELLOWSHIP
 296 Co. Hwy. 119, St. Johnsville, NY 13452
 518-568-3217 • William Hayes, Pastor
 Joyce Loughran, Assistant Pastor
 Sunday School 9 AM,
 Morning Worship 9:30 AM
 Wednesday Evening Worship 6:30 PM

ST. JOHNSTOWN METHODIST CHURCH
 7 East Main St., St. Johnsville, NY 13452
 Pastor Corey Jones
 518-568-7983 • 315-866-8626
 Worship Sunday 3 PM

EVERLASTING JOY BELIEVERS FELLOWSHIP
 14 Park Place (in with Seekers Fellowship)
 St. Johnsville, NY 13452
 315-858-2112 • Pastor Carolee Coye
 Sunday Service 10 AM

ST. JOHN'S REFORMED CHURCH
 68 W. Main St., St. Johnsville
 518-568-7396
 Faithfully Following Jesus Christ
 Sunday Worship 10:30 AM

GRACE CHRISTIAN CHURCH
 Pastor Michael Torres
 20 Center St., St. Johnsville, NY 13452
 518-775-0366
 Email gccpastor2021@gmail.com

STRATFORD
STRATFORD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
 1511 State Route 29A
 Sunday Worship 8:30 AM
 Broadcast on 95.9 FM within
 2 miles of church
 Pastor Matt Worley

LIGHTHOUSE BAPTIST CHURCH
 1524 St. Rt. 29A, PO Box 114
 Stratford, NY 13470-0114
 315-429-8854 • Pastor Martin Smith
 Sunday Morning Worship 10:30 AM;
 Wed. Eve. Prayer Meeting 6 PM;
 2nd & 4th Sunday Dinner following
 Morning Service with Afternoon Service
 following dinner
 "Old-Fashioned Bible Preaching"

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 111 3rd Ave., Tribes Hill
 518-829-7301
 Mass Saturday 4 PM



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 WWW.SHULTSAGENCY.COM
 MAIL@SHULTSAGENCY.COM



12 Willett St.,
 Ft. Plain, NY 13339
518-993-3834

Community Calendar

December 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Holidays
 18th - Hanukkah Begins in the evening
 21st - Winter Begins
 25th - Christmas

DECEMBER 13

Dream Catchers performing at 2 p.m. at Arkell Center in Canajoharie.

DECEMBER 16

Pierogi and Golumbki Sale on 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at St. Mary's Ukrainian Church, 324 Moore Ave., Herkimer. Pierogi sell for \$8 a dozen and golumbki \$15 a half dozen or 3-piece for \$7.50. Also, assorted baked goods will be available.

DECEMBER 17

Pierogi and Golumbki Sale 9:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. at St. Mary's Ukrainian Church, 324 Moore Ave., Herkimer. Pierogi sell for \$8 a dozen and golumbki \$15 a half dozen or 3-piece for \$7.50. Also, assorted baked goods will be available.

Cookie and Book Sale 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Ilion First Baptist Church, 8 Second St., Ilion. Lunch is available. For more information contact the church office at 315.894.9041.

Second Annual Cookie Sale 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Herkimer County Historical Society, 400 N. Main St., Herkimer. With a visit from Santa until noon. Santa arriving by Fire Truck. Get your picture with Santa. One free picture per family. Purchase three more for \$10. Cookies \$15 per package. Activities for kids of all ages.

DECEMBER 20

Canajoharie Middle School Orchestra performance at 1:30 p.m. at Arkell Center. The orchestra is directed by Leo Milman.

DECEMBER 21

Third Wednesday Night Dinners-Barbecue Chicken Dinner 4-6 p.m. or sold out at Ilion First Baptist Church, 8 Second St., Ilion. Delivery or take-outs only. Takes-outs may be ordered ahead by calling 315.894.9041. \$12 per dinner. For more information contact the Church Office at 315.894.9041.

DECEMBER 22

Canajoharie "Company of Song" 1:30 p.m. at Arkell Center in Canajoharie. "Company of Song" is directed by Nicholas Anker. This is the annual holiday performance.

DECEMBER 23

Pierogi and Golumbki Sale on 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at St. Mary's Ukrainian Church, 324 Moore Ave., Herkimer. Pierogi sell for \$8 a dozen and golumbki \$15 a half dozen or 3-piece for \$7.50. Also, assorted baked goods will be available.

DECEMBER 24

Pierogi and Golumbki Sale 9:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. at St. Mary's Ukrainian Church, 324 Moore Ave., Herkimer. Pierogi sell for \$8 a dozen and golumbki \$15 a half dozen or 3-piece for \$7.50. Also, assorted baked goods will be available.

DECEMBER 25

Annual Christmas Dinner noon-2 p.m. at First United Methodist Church in Herkimer. Reservations are not necessary. All are welcome. For shut-in delivery call 315.867.1204 by Dec. 21. Deliveries made primarily in Herkimer, Mohawk and downtown Ilion. Volunteers are needed. To volunteer, call Toby at 315.868.5560.



DECEMBER 29

Canajoharie High School Cover Band will perform at 2 p.m. at Arkell Center in Canajoharie. Contact Joan Cimino at 518.673.4408.

JANUARY 12, 2023

Town of Webb Herkimer County Public Health Office Hours 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. in the board room at 3140 State Route 28, Old Forge. For further information call Public Health at 315.867.1176 or visit herkimercounty.org or fb.me/HerkimerCountyPublicHealth .

JANUARY 13, 2023

Herkimer College New Student Registration Day. Appointments are available for 9 a.m. or 1 p.m. To make an appointment, visit herkimer.edu/register. For more information, call 315.574.4028 or email admissions@herkimer.edu.

JANUARY 18, 2023

Local History Round Table at Fort Plain Free Library. For more information, call 518.993.4646, email fpfl@mvls.info, or visit the website at fortplainfreelibrary.org.

FEBRUARY 9, 2023

Town of Webb Herkimer County Public Health Office Hours 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. in the board room at 3140 State Route 28, Old Forge. For further information call Public Health at 315.867.1176 or visit herkimercounty.org or fb.me/HerkimerCountyPublicHealth .

MARCH 9, 2023

Town of Webb Herkimer County Public Health Office Hours 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. in the board room at 3140 State Route 28, Old Forge. For further information call Public Health at 315.867.1176 or visit herkimercounty.org or fb.me/HerkimerCountyPublicHealth .

APRIL 13, 2023

Town of Webb Herkimer County Public Health Office Hours 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. in the board room at 3140 State Route 28, Old Forge. For further information call Public Health at 315.867.1176 or visit herkimercounty.org or fb.me/HerkimerCountyPublicHealth .

Basketball: From small town to big time

When the weather cools, the action heats up on basketball courts across the country. Basketball is a popular winter sport that has been ingrained in North American culture since its inception in the late 19th century.

Basketball is believed to have originated at Springfield College (once known as the International YMCA Training School) in Massachusetts. Male students were restless once football season ended and needed a sport that could provide exercise and help them work off steam. A physical activity instructor named James Naismith was tasked with coming up with a game that students could play indoors under artificial light without the roughness of football, soccer or rugby.

Naismith came up with a game that employed peach baskets nailed to the lower rail of the gymnasium balcony - one at each end. He then came up with the initial 13 rules of moving a ball across the court and getting the ball in the baskets and what constituted fouls, according to Springfield College.

The first game consisted of nine players on each team because Naismith's class included just 18 students. The final score of the inaugural basketball game was just 1-0, but over time players began to excel at basketball, and the game gradually became more popular.

Basketball is now popular across the globe. The National Basketball Association has opened 12 international offices and has started broadcasting games to more than 200 countries and territories. NBA Commissioner Adam Silver said that he believes that basketball can be the No. 1 sport in the world (soccer currently holds that ranking). Young people are increasingly playing the sport, and rapid growth in China and India also has fueled basketball's popularity.

Total NBA revenue hit \$8 billion last season, according to Forbes, and it shows no signs of slowing down. Little did James Naismith know when he put up peach baskets and tossed a soccer ball that his sport would one day become a global phenomenon.



Country Chuckles by Jonny Hawkins



To promote your event, please contact us at cfeditor@leepub.com or 518.673.0143.

A Q&A about retirement planning

Individuals need not look very far to be reminded of the importance of planning for retirement. Television ad campaigns touting the need to plan for retirement have been front and center for many years. Banks also heavily promote their retirement planning services to account holders. The emphasis financial firms and banks place on retirement planning underscores just how important it is for individuals from all walks of life to prioritize securing their financial futures.

Ad campaigns can make saving for retirement seem simple, but plenty of people may have questions about how to save for the days when they are no longer working.

Why and when should I begin investing to build my retirement savings?

It's never too early to start saving for retirement. Young professionals may not be anywhere close to retirement, but that doesn't mean they can afford to put off saving for the

day when they call it a career. Much of that has to do with inflation. The rate of inflation varies, but it's fair to assume that your cost of living will rise dramatically between your 23rd birthday and your 70th birthday. If you choose to simply save as opposed to investing that money, your money will not grow at a rate necessary to overcome inflation.

Though there's no guarantees with investing, traditional retirement investment vehicles have a proven track record of outpacing inflation. For example, Standard & Poor's 500® (S&P 500) reports that individual retirement accounts (IRAs) grew by an average of 10.8% between 1971 and 2020. Over that same period, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that the dollar had an average rate of inflation of 3.99%.

How can I save for retirement?

Various investment vehicles can help people save for retirement. Many people utilize employer-sponsored 401(k)

retirement plans. These allow individuals to deposit money via pre-tax contributions deducted from their paycheck. For young people, enrolling in these plans as soon as they're eligible can be a great way to begin building their retirement savings, and since many people contribute between 6% and 10% of their pre-tax earnings, their take-home pay will not be significantly different once they enroll. IRAs, pension plans, certain life insurance policies, and regular contributions to personal savings accounts are some additional ways to save for retirement.

How much will I need to save for retirement?

No two people are the same, so there's no simple answer to this question. Estimates about how much people will need in retirement range from 60% to 80% of their yearly income the year they stopped working full-time. A financial advisor can be a useful ally as people try to calculate how much they will need to save for retirement. However, the simplest answer to this common question is that there's no such thing as saving too much money for retirement so long as saving does not adversely affect other areas of your life.

What if I need money before retirement?

No law prohibits people from withdrawing funds from designated retirement accounts before they retire. However, there may be significant financial penalties and tax consequences if you do so. For example, the IRS allows penalty-free withdrawals from a 401(k) after an account holder turns 59.5. Withdrawals made before then could be subject to federal and state income tax and a 10% penalty of withdrawn funds. Individuals are urged to speak with a financial advisor about withdrawal guidelines and penalties prior to opening a retirement account.

Saving for retirement is vital and it's never too early to begin investing in your financial future.

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"What do you call a person who is

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Tips to help student-athletes prepare for winter sports season

Winter sports season is wildly popular. Sports such as basketball, hockey, swimming, and track and field attract talented student-athletes each winter, making the season one of the most fun times of year for kids, their families and their classmates.

As the winter sports season approaches and begins, student-athletes can take various steps to ensure they're ready to compete.

- Ensure your academics are in order. Students must maintain a minimum grade point average to be eligible to compete. The winter sports season tends to overlap semesters in many school districts, so students preparing for the coming season must make sure their grades are good enough to allow them to compete, even if their sport begins mid- to late-semester. Students can work with teachers, coach-

es and academic advisors to ensure their grades won't compromise their eligibility.

- Schedule your physical. A preseason physical exam is mandatory to compete in may scholastic sports, so student-athletes or their parents should schedule their exams early so they can compete for a spot on the team and, if they make the team, play once the season begins. Physical exams also can shed light on any issues that may require medical treatment prior to the start of the season, so the earlier students get their exams, the more quickly they can address any issues that may compromise their ability to compete.

- Speak with the coaching staff. Coaches may or may not conduct exit interviews upon the completion of a season. Such interviews can be a great chance for stu-

dent-athletes to learn about what they can do to improve during the offseason. Student-athletes who didn't get an exit interview or those who simply want a refresher can contact their coaches in advance of the season to discuss what they need to do to make the team and/or improve on last season's performance.

- Get in shape. Multi-sport athletes may already be in shape to compete, which can ensure the transition from fall to winter sports season goes smoothly. Student-athletes who don't compete in fall sports can use fall as a time to get back in game shape. Start gradually to reduce your risk of injury, ramping up as the body reacclimates itself to physical activity.



Public Notice:

A joint hearing of the Village of Canajoharie Board of Trustees and the Village of Canajoharie Planning Board will be conducted at 5:30 p.m. local time on Jan. 3, 2023 in the Fire Hall (upstairs), 75 Erie Boulevard, Canajoharie, at which time all those wishing to be heard regarding the site plan for a Cannabis Cultivation and Manufacturing Facility proposed by E-29 Labs, Inc. on the former Beech-Nut property located at 91 East Main Street. The project includes repurposing of an existing 63,000 sf building into a processing/manufacturing building and construction of a new 50,000 sf cultivation building together with a 3-acre solar array as well as connections to the Village's water and sewer systems.

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12/3 Issue Deadline 11/25

12/10 Issue Deadline 12/2

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AUTOMOTIVE

Tech that makes it easier to take to the road

Gadgets and cars have seemingly always had a symbiotic relationship. As cars have evolved, so, too, have the gadgets that make driving more enjoyable.

The connection between cars and gadgets has become even stronger in recent decades, a time marked by rapid technological advancements and one in which car buyers increasingly look for tech-friendly cars and trucks. Buyers in the market for new automobiles may be surprised by some of these innovations that have changed driving.

- **Remote start:** No one enjoys enduring frigid winter mornings or suffocating summer heat as they sit in their cars waiting for their engines to warm up or for their windshields to defrost. Innovation has made such unpleasantities a thing of the past thanks to remote start technology, which allows drivers to use their smartphones to start their vehicles from inside their homes.

- **Bluetooth connectivity:** Bluetooth

connectivity has been around for years, and this advancement has made staying connected while behind the wheel more convenient and more safe. All it takes is connecting your smartphone to your vehicle's bluetooth. Once that connection is made, drivers can play music, accept phone calls and even receive text messages while keeping their hands on the wheel and their eyes on the road the entire time.

- **Self-parking:** Drivers who never mastered the art of parallel parking need not avoid cities any longer. Some cars now come with self-parking features that drivers simply turn on. Once the feature is enabled, the car will parallel park itself.

- **Blindspot monitoring:** Aging drivers who haven't purchased a new car in a while but are in the market may be thrilled to learn that blind spots have become a thing of the past. Blindspot monitoring systems alert drivers of approaching cars via a light on their



sideview mirrors and/or a sound as drivers attempt to change lanes. This can make it easier for aging drivers with flexibility issues to avoid accidents when changing lanes. Anti-collision warning systems operate in a similar fashion, alerting motorists, and potentially even applying the brakes, if the system suspects the car is about to hit something.

- **Massaging seats:** Many tech products in vehicles are designed to make driving

safer, while others are all about comfort. Massaging seats falls into the latter category. Such seats make it easy for drivers who like long road trips to get through trips without succumbing to the aches and pains that can develop when sitting behind the wheel for long stretches.

Modern vehicles are technological marvels that can make taking to the open road easier and more enjoyable than ever.

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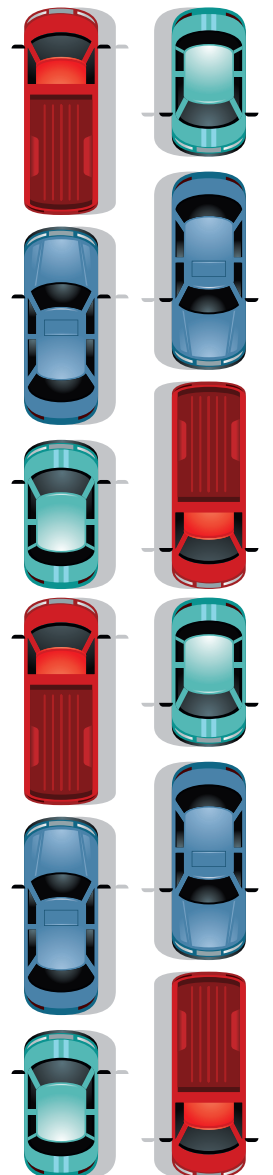
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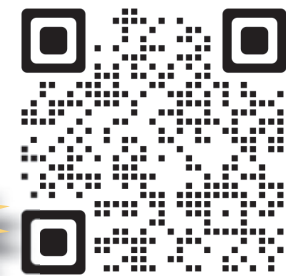
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2016 Jeep Renegade Trailhawk
97,097 Miles, Stock # CND51483P



2018 Chrysler Pacifica Touring L
133,032 Miles, Stock # CN141616T

Town of Webb hosting county Public Health office hours

The Town of Webb has been hosting Herkimer County Public Health (HCPH) office hours since November. The visits take place once a month at the Town of Webb Office Building. HCPH office hours will be located in the board room at 3140 State Route 28, Old Forge, on the second Thursday of each month from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Upcoming HCPH office hours in 2023 will be Jan. 12, Feb. 9, March 9 and April 13.

Come learn more about the programs Herkimer County has to offer. Informational material and educational material will be on hand to facilitate connecting your community to

needed services and assistance. HCPH programs and services can be further explored during in depth conversations with our department's onsite program experts.

HCPH programs include adult and child immunizations, rabies prevention, lead poisoning and prevention, early childhood intervention, communicable disease and maternal child health.

For further information call Public Health at 315.867.1176. You can also find additional information at herkimercounty.org and on Facebook at fb.me/HerkimerCountyPublicHealth.

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- Johnny Carson -



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Happy Birthday!

Happy Birthday, Michael!
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Love, Becky

Freddy Bear winners

Christine Arenburg of Fort Plain won the Freddy Bear riddle contest for the Dec. 3 issue with her correct answer of "snow" for the riddle "What falls in the winter but never gets hurt?" She won a \$20 gift card to Fell Off the Truck Deals in Canajoharie.

The winner of the Nov. 26 issue is Ryan Kietzmann (and daughter Ava) with the answer "drumstick" to "What is the most musical part of a turkey?"



Freddy Bear winner Ryan Kietzmann and his daughter Ava with their award.

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BUSINESS FOCUS

Mattice Mechanical LLC

The entrepreneurial spirit is strong with Justin Mattice. He began his own business in 2004 at just the age of 26. His determination is also strong, as at the same time he was getting Mattice Mechanical up and running, he and his wife Trish were having a baby girl – who was followed 16 months later with a baby boy. “This was a chaotic time for us,” he admitted.

The family endured, however. Justin admitted they’ve had their ups and downs through the years. The 2008 recession had a hard impact on Mattice, and they had to downsize from eight employees at the time to five, including Justin and Trish. They had to leave the building they were operating from (an old bus garage) and moved up on the hill, which is now his home on Oswegatchie Road.

Promoted as “Your indoor comfort controller,” Mattice Mechanical isn’t Justin’s first rodeo. Prior to starting his own business, he worked for two HVAC companies in Fulton County. “At the first company, I learned sheet metal fabrication/tin knocker,” he said. “The second, I was the lead foreman for an install crew, which was when I decided to venture out

on my own and start my own business.”

Approximately eight months after starting Mattice, he hired his first employee and within the following year and a half he had hired five more – including his father, who has been a master plumber since 1989, and his grandfather, who had previously retired from Agway Energy Corp. This created three generations of mechanical contracting experience in one company.

“This whole time, Trish was along for the adventure while we were raising our kids together,” Justin said. Mattice is truly a family affair.

He’s always looking for skilled people to join his team – the right person to add to his already excellent lineup.

As the economy moved forward and the business started to flourish again, Justin decided to give another shot at operating a storefront and purchased his existing location on Route 5. They started with a wooded lot and did all of the site work and the building themselves with the help of close friends.

Today, Mattice has a fully equipped custom sheet metal shop, a full line of sewer cleaning and inspecting equipment and a large inventory of plumbing and HVAC installation and maintenance materials. A full line of water softening equipment is available too. They have also hired an electrician and now offer full installations of electrical



work from the street pole to wall outlets.

Not enough? You’re in luck! Mattice also carries a full line of fireplace inserts, wood and coal heating equipment. “And our most important asset is our 24-hour emergency service program that is aimed at keeping the community warm and dry 24/7,” Justin said.

For your indoor comfort, consider contacting Mattice. They are located at 6054 State Route 5 in Palatine Bridge. Their phone number is 518.673.2925 (and the emergency number is 518.441.0142). Find Mattice online at mattice-mechanical.com.

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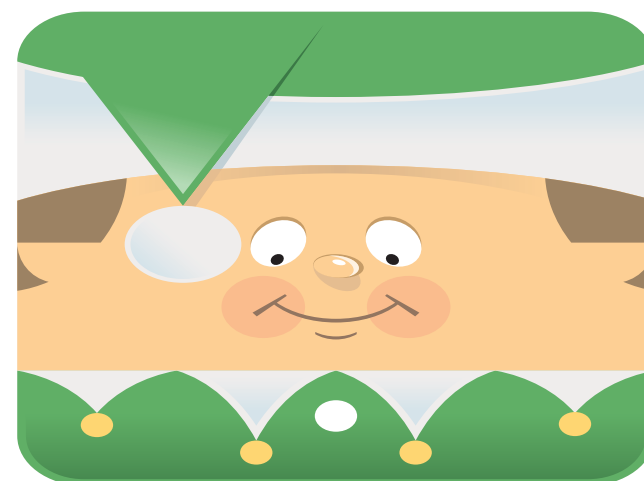
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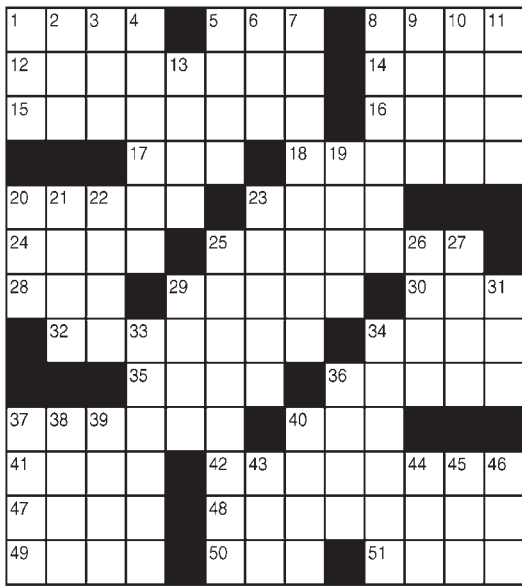
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King Crossword

- ACROSS**
 1 Singer Lovett
 5 "Ben-Hur" studio
 8 Beans
 12 "Madam Secretary" actress
 14 Opposite of "sans"
 15 Very hungry
 16 Gambling city
 17 Coq au —
 18 Painter Georges
 20 Watched surreptitiously
 23 Pot covers
 24 Any time now
 25 Stuffed Italian pasta
 28 Boy king
 29 Doctrine
 30 NYPD alert
 32 Gulches
 34 Potter's medium
 35 New newts
 36 Tint
 37 Import duty
 40 JFK info
 41 Portent
 42 Enraptured
 47 Theater award
 48 Eternally
 49 Variety
 50 Still, in verse
- DOWN**
 1 USPS delivery
 2 Pro vote
 3 Restroom, for short
 4 Football team
 5 Earth cirler
 6 Bearded beast
 7 Written messages
 8 Tenor Enrico
 9 Say it's so
 10 Elizabeth of "Jacob's Ladder"
 11 Highlander
 13 Oklahoma city
 19 Redact
 20 Retired jet
 21 Serve coffee
 22 Greek vowel
 23 Highway divisions
 25 Cheap way to live
 26 Chorus syllables
 27 Apple tablet
 29 Squabble
 31 "See ya!"
 33 Like marble
 34 Great divides
 36 Commotion
 37 Grabbed
 38 Both (Pref.)
 39 Check
 40 Divisible by two
 43 St. crosser
 44 Weed whacker
 45 Notable time
 46 Lair



- 51 Playwright O'Casey
 10 Elizabeth of "Jacob's Ladder"
 27 Apple tablet
 29 Squabble
 31 "See ya!"
 33 Like marble
 34 Great divides
 36 Commotion
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MAGIC MAZE • FAR AND WIDE

F A X W V S Q F N K I F D A X
 V D T I Q O A M J S H F C A D
 Y Y A D A R A F W U E R D P E
 N L J E M Y H F D N L R R K H
 B O Z S R X D V T E G R A Q C
 O M G C K P I O H P N W Y F T
 F D B R Z Y S N B O A L M W E
 V T R E A Q O E N E E C R A F
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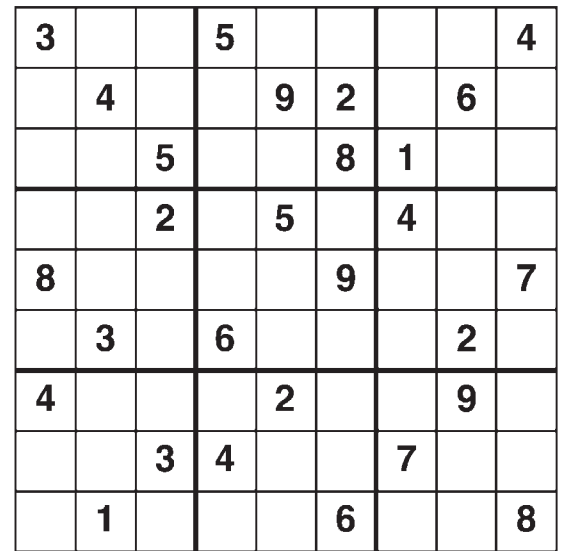
Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally
 Unlisted clue hint: **Largest City in North Dakota**

- Farad Faraday Farce Fares
 Far-fetched Farms Farmyard Wide-angle
 Wide awake Wide-body Wide-open Widely
 Widen Widescreen Widespread

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle



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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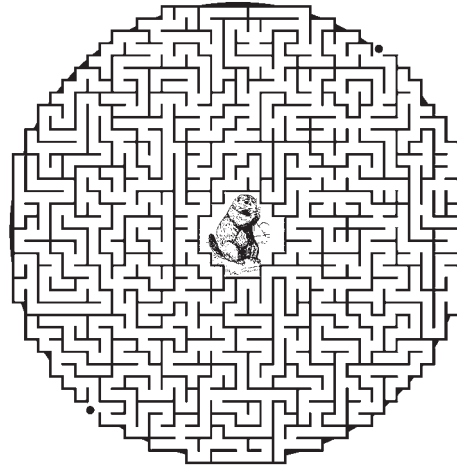
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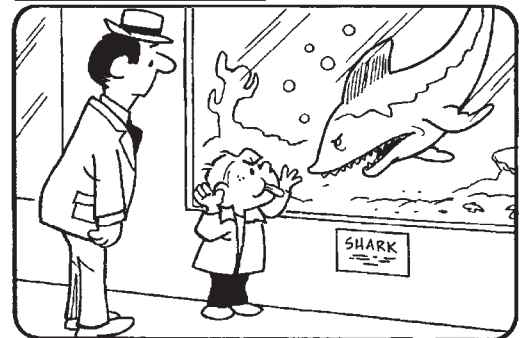
Mega Maze

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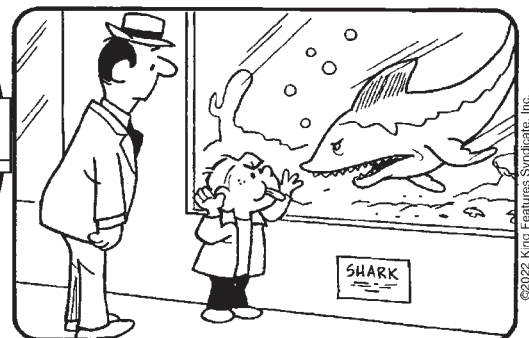


HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Hair is different. 2. Pocket is missing. 3. Coral is different. 4. Jacket is opened. 5. Shark is moved. 6. Sign is moved.

SCRAMBLERS

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!



"I understand they're _____ for company."

- Chirp BAWLER [] []
 Mean DINES [] []
 Subtle INFAT [] []
 Assist VERSE [] []

TODAY'S WORD

[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []

Home Country

Slim Randles

Dud was awfully quiet all through the daily dissemination of anything on page one of the Valley Weekly Miracle, which wasn't like him at all. Just sucked down caffeine and silently shook his head now and then.

"Anita okay, Dud?"

"Oh... sure, Doc."

"You okay?"

He nodded, then looked up with a wistful, philosophical look that our guys don't usually get until after the buttered toast. "Sometimes," he said, "I think it's pearls before swine, that's all."

We waited.

"Music, I mean. You know how you practice and practice and then you get good enough to actually do something? Well, I took the accordion and went to the accordion festival to compete... well, you know I'm not really that bad any more..."

"You're getting pretty darn good on that thing, Dud."

"Thanks, Steve. Well, we drove down to the capital and I got in the competition and did okay. Placed third in polka. I played that new piece. It's kinda hard because it has those minor bass buttons in it and it took me forever to learn not to miss them.

"It was after that. You see, I put the accordion back in the car and we went in for a lunch they gave everyone."

"What's wrong with that?"

"I forgot to lock the car. We were halfway through lunch

when Anita asked me if I'd locked the car and then it hit me that I might not have locked it. She insisted I run right out and check and that's what I did. And that's when I lost my faith in human beings."

"Oh, Dud," Doc said, "someone stole your accordion?"

"No, it was still there in the back seat. But someone had put two more in there with it."

He shook his head. "Pearls before swine."

Fans of the late Max Evans should check out Ol' Max Evans' letters to Jim Bob Swafford and family at Amazon.com. Jim Bob is Max's cousin.

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What's Pocillovy?

by Terry and Kim Kovel

You've heard of philately (stamp collecting) and numismatics (collecting currency and medals), but what about pocillovy?

Derived from the Latin words for "little cup" and "egg," pocillovy is the word for collecting eggcups. Eggcups are said to have originated in France. King Louis XV (1715-1774) made them popular.

Later, they made their way into Victorian dinner services, where nearly every type of food had its own specialized dish and utensils.

British manufacturers quickly realized that these small ceramic cups would make excellent souvenirs,

and people started collecting them.

This eggcup with a stylized chicken's head, wings and tail, called "Coquetier Poule," sold for \$2,080 at Palm Beach Modern Auctions in Florida. It was designed by Francois-Xavier Lalanne, a 20th century French sculptor, whose designs were often made to look like animals. His playful, modernist style is seen in the plain white color and stylized features of the eggcup.

Q: About 20 years ago, my wife and I inherited a grandfather clock. It's about 7 1/2 feet tall. Part of the upper face of the clock rotates around with different scenes as the time



Francois-Xavier Lalanne often used animal motifs in his minimalist sculptures. His porcelain eggcup with a chicken's head, wings and tail sold for \$2,080 at Palm Beach Modern Auctions.

Photo courtesy of Kovel.com

to be wound once a week and keeps pretty good time. Its gongs match each hour. Can you give us any information on this clock?

A: Three generations of the Willard family made clocks. Benjamin Willard learned how to make clocks and opened a workshop on his farm in Massachusetts in the 1740s, where his four sons, Benjamin Jr., Simon, Aaron and Ephraim, learned clockmaking. The three older brothers opened shops in Boston: Benjamin Jr. in 1770, Aaron in 1785 and Simon in 1788. Simon was the most well-known and patented several inventions, including the banjo clock.

Aaron, the maker of your clock, made hundreds of banjo clocks, shelf clocks and tall case clocks. They sell at auctions for a few hundred to several thousand dollars. If you're thinking of selling your clock, you should contact an auction house that sells grandfather clocks or a shop that sells expensive clocks. The rotating dial with scenes adds extra value, so your clock should sell for a high price.

Tip: Tradition says the best place in a home for a grandfather clock is where it can be seen as soon as you enter the house.

Current Prices

- Christmas ornament,

snowman, holding black raven on shoulder, plush mohair, black metal saucepan hat, ear button marked Steiff, Germany, original box, 8 inches, \$100.

- Trunk, wood, domed hinged lid, iron straps, side handles and lock, original green paint, marked on inside, Martin Fischer, 1868, 24 x 33 inches, \$330.

- Royal Copenhagen platter, Flora Danica pattern, botanical design, gilt notched rim, marked & numbered, c. 1965, 16 x 12 1/4 inches, \$2,125.

For more collecting news, tips and resources, visit Kovel.com

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ticks off. At the very top of the face are the words "A. Willard Boston." The clock is wound with a key that raises two weights. It needs

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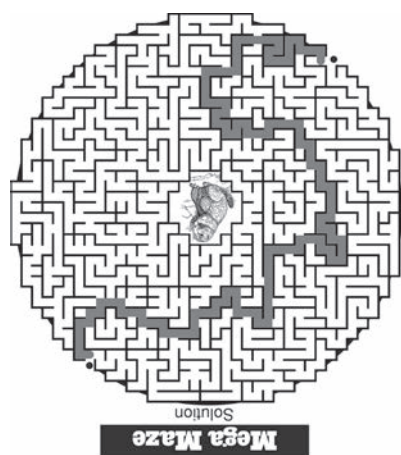
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8	4	2	6	3	9	7	5	1	7	5
6	7	5	8	1	4	3	9	2	6	3
1	9	3	5	2	7	6	8	4	8	6
5	2	8	4	7	6	9	3	1	3	9
7	6	3	7	9	4	2	1	8	5	4
9	4	1	3	5	8	2	7	6	7	2
2	7	8	1	4	3	5	6	9	4	8
3	6	3	2	5	1	9	8	7	4	8
4	8	9	7	6	5	1	2	3	4	8

Answer

Weekly Sudoku



Mega Maze

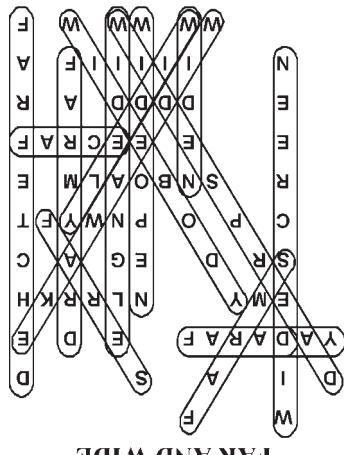
SCRAMBLERS
Solution
1. Warble 2. Snide
3. Faint 4. Serve
Today's Word
STARVED

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

Solution time: 22 mins.

Answers

King Crossword



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 - 812 Multi Media
 - 813 Music
 - 815 Motorcycles
 - 817 Nails
 - 820 Nurseries
 - 910 Plants
 - 950 Real Estate For Sale
 - 955 Real Estate Wanted
 - 960 RVs & Motor Homes
 - 975 Rentals
 - 980 Restaurant Supplies
 - 1040 Services Offered
 - 1075 Snowblowers
 - 1080 Snowmobiles
 - 1096 Sports
 - 1109 Thrift
 - 1140 Trailers
 - 1147 Trains
 - 1148 Travel
 - 1165 Trees
 - 1170 Truck Parts & Equipment
 - 1180 Trucks
 - 1187 Vacuum
 - 1190 Vegetable
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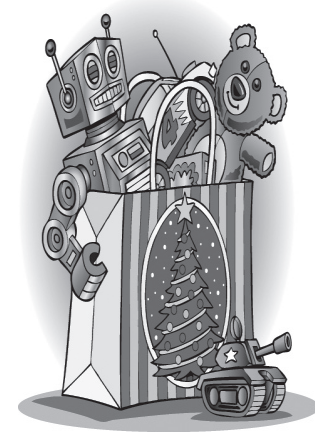
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FARM, HOME & GARDEN

Soil health in raised beds

by Nadie VanZandt,
Extension Master
Gardener, UVM

For many home gardeners, raised beds offer better soil conditions, better drainage and aeration than in-ground gardens. They also extend the growing season by warming the soil earlier and, not least, they are easier on the body. Autumn is a good time to start thinking about your raised beds for next year.

Did you know that the composition of the soil in raised beds is vital to their success? Amending soil with compost is a major factor in promoting soil health but, when applied in excess, compost can be detrimental.

A fertile soil is made up of 45% minerals, 5% organic matter, 25% water and 25% air. These percentages translate into a growing medium of 70% essential minerals from soil and 30% compost, taking into consideration that water and air are present in both soil and compost. For raised beds, this corresponds to no more than a one- to two-inch layer of compost mixed into a six-inch layer of soil.

Minerals in soils are inorganic materials derived from a parent material, usually local geological bedrock. They are a crucial source of nutrients for plants and are essential for plant structure and resistance to disease. They also impart better flavor and quality to the fruits and vegetables that we need for a healthy diet.

Organic materials found in soils are living organisms like microbes, bacteria, fun-

gi, large and small insects and carbon-based materials from compost. They deliver important nutrients to plants. In addition, plants use carbon as a main source of energy to build plant tissues.

Products labeled as garden soil, potting soil and topsoil are often exclusively organic material. When sourcing soil for your raised bed, seek a quality mineral-based soil from a reputable vendor who can back their product with a soil test report and/or detailed content. The product should have a significant amount of mineral materials.

At first, growing in raised beds filled largely with compost will yield good results because plant nutrients are readily available. But as compost ages, decomposition slows and the release of nutrients decreases. Eventually, plant

growth, flowering and fruit production diminishes, leading gardeners to apply additional compost or fertilizers to boost the supply of nutrients.

Continued application of compost, particularly those that are manure-based,

can be detrimental to your plants as a surplus of compost can create a build-up of phosphorus and ammonium.

Phosphorus in excess can adversely affect your plants' ability to absorb iron and zinc and excess

ammonium can result in excess soluble salts, which can burn plant roots and impact the ability of the plant to develop flowers or fruit. Excess nitrogen and phosphorus are also readily

Soil A21

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• The Teepee
• Tryon Inn

Dolgeville
• Big M • Chester's Sunoco
• Dolgeville Public Library
• George Lumber
• Southern Girl Diner • Stewart's

East Springfield
• Kelly's Deli • Turnpike Auto Sales

Ephratah
• Brittany's Diner
• Granny's Ice Cream (seasonal)

Esperance
• Dollar General • Hannaford
• Iroquois Museum
• Stewart's

Fonda
• Cumberland Farms
• Dollar General • Fairway Oil
• Frothingham Free Library
• Fulton-Montgomery CCE
• Kateri Shrine
• Stewart's • Winner's Circle

Fort Plain
• Big E's Feed & Seed (formerly Fort Plain Agway)
• Dutch Country Market
• Dutchman Enterprises • 5S Diner
• Esther's Budget Shop
• Fort Plain Public Library
• Pickle Hill Produce & Bulk
• 7M Supply • Save A Lot
• Sheila's Hair Salon
• Sleepy Forest Bakery
• Sportsman's Den • Stewart's (Both)
• The Rustic Crow
• True Value
• Mohawk Valley Produce Auction

Frankfort
• ADK Food & Fuel • Country Farms
• Dollar General
• Melrose Grocery

Fultonville
• Fultonville Redemption Center
• McDonald's
• Michael's Diner
• Orno Travel Plaza
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• TA Travel Center • United Ag & Turf

Glen
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• Glen Country Store
• LJ Hand Farm Center

Gloversville
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• Country Farms • Gulf • Hannaford
• House of Pizza • Naif's
• Price Chopper • Stewart's (3)

Herkimer
• Citgo • Dick's Wheel Shop
• Empire Diner • Fastrac • Fat Cats
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• Stewart's

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• Cliff's • Colonial Laundromat
• 4 Seasons Tire
• Dollar General • Lombardos
• Sorrento's • Stewart's

Johnstown
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• Harvey's Pet
• Miss Johnstown Diner
• Price Chopper
• Stewart's (3)
• Super 8 • Whitey's
• Wemple & Edick's

Little Falls
• Ace Hardware
• Ann Street Restaurant & Deli
• Bonitas
• Café at Stone Mill
• Circle K/Nice N Easy
• Dollar General • George Lumber
• Keep Making Suds Laundromat
• Kinney Drugs
• Little Falls Antique Center
• Little Falls Library
• Little Falls Lumber
• Mangia Macrinas
• Paca Gardens • Price Chopper
• RD's Redemption • Runway Sunoco
• Sam's Deli • Showcase Antiques
• Charles Stahl
• Stewart's • Travelodge

Mayfield
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Middleville
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• Tractor Supply

Poland
• Circle K Nice N Easy
• Poland Library • Stewart's

Richfield Springs
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More, please: Propagating houseplants

by Deborah J. Benoit,
Extension Master Gardener, UVM

There are many reasons to propagate your houseplants. Maybe you want to share with a friend. Maybe your plant has gotten too large and you'd like to replace it with one of a more manageable size.

Or sadly it's taken a turn for the worst and you want to be sure you have another if it doesn't recover. Whatever the reason with a little patience you can grow new plants from houseplants you already own.

It all begins with taking a three- to six-inch cutting from the tip of a healthy stem being sure to include several leaf nodes. A node is the bump where the leaf meets the stem. In the case of holiday cactus, take a cutting that includes several

segments.

There are two basic ways to root a cutting in water or in soil. Which one you choose is a matter of personal preference. Rooting in water allows you to watch the roots develop. Rooting in soil avoids the need to transplant the cutting from water into soil once the cutting has rooted.

Vining plants such as jasmin³, English ivy, pothos and inch plant, as well as many houseplants and even holiday cactus, are easy to root in water.

Take your cutting and remove the leaves from one to two nodes at the bottom of the cutting. Place the cutting in a container of room temperature water and put it in indirect light. Be sure no leaves are below the surface of the water.

If the water begins to become cloudy, replace it with fresh room temperature water. It can take days or weeks or sometimes months for roots to form. As long as the cutting looks healthy, be patient and you should be rewarded with the development of tiny roots. When they have grown to more than two to three inches you can pot-up the cutting in a container with a soil mix appropriate for the type of plant.

If you prefer you can root cuttings directly in soil. While not necessary rooting hormone available where garden supplies are sold can be applied to the base of the cutting according to package directions. Fill a small container with moistened potting mix. Be sure it has drainage holes. A larger pot or tray can be used to accommodate multiple cuttings.

Make a hole in the soil using a pencil. Put the cutting into

the hole and gently firm the soil around the cutting. Water lightly. Cover the pot with a large, inverted jar, plastic bag or a humidity dome to retain moisture while the cutting is rooting. If the moisture begins to drip from the cover, open it to allow air circulation.

Check periodically to be sure the soil is moist not wet. Water as needed. Do not let the cutting dry out. If you see new growth, roots have likely formed. You can test this by gently tugging on the cutting. If there is resistance, roots are growing.

When propagating houseplants, don't be discouraged if it takes longer than expected to produce roots. The timeframe will vary depending on the type of plant, the amount of light and the method you choose. But with patience, you'll enjoy an interesting indoor gardening project for times you can't be outside in the garden.



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Soil from A20



Soil composition is key to growing vegetables successfully in raised beds with a growing medium of 70% essential minerals from soil and 30% from compost as the ideal mix. Photo courtesy of Local Food Initiative via Flickr



Before putting raised beds to rest this fall, gardeners should consider ordering a soil test to analyze the soil to better plan soil amendment strategies for next spring. Photo by Deb Heleba/UVM Extension Master Gardener Program

leached into groundwater and can cause a serious environmental problem as it creates toxic algae blooms in lakes and ponds.

Compost is not a long-term source of potassium. Found in soluble form in compost, potassium is easily lost through leaching. During drought conditions, compost dries out and repels rather than absorbs water, leading to runoff.

Over time, compost alone will lose its structure and volume. Without the necessary mineral material, compost will form a thick non-porous layer that inhibits drainage, reduces soil aeration and promotes disease. Most importantly, many vital minerals are not present in compost in significant amounts to ensure optimal plant health.

This autumn, before putting your raised beds to rest, consider ordering a soil test to analyze your soil. Kits are available through the University of Vermont Agricultural and Environmental Testing Lab at pss.uvm.edu/ag_testing. Be sure to mark on your kit that this is for raised beds, since the lab runs a different analysis better suited for this situation.

You'll have all winter to plan soil amendment strategies. Meanwhile, prevent leaching and loss of nutrients by covering your raised beds with leaf mulch or straw instead of compost.



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HOLIDAY HEADQUARTERS

Gifts to excite the family athlete this holiday season

Holiday shoppers know that few things can match the joy of finding the perfect gift for a loved one. Whether that loved one is a tiny tot who can't wait to unwrap this year's must-have toy or an adult hoping to find the latest gadget under the tree on Christmas morning, the thrill of giving a great gift is part of what makes the holiday season so enjoyable.

Friends and family members may fall into certain categories, and that can make holiday shopping a little easier. For example,



loved ones who can't wait to sit down with a good book would no doubt appreciate a new e-reader or the latest bestseller. When it comes to gifting the family athlete, the following ideas can provide the inspiration shoppers need to put a smile on the face of fitness-minded friends and family members.

- **Weighted vest:** Weighted vests have gained popularity in recent years. Available from a variety of manufacturers and for athletes of varying skill levels, weighted vests can be ideal for athletes who want to burn more calories and build strength during their workouts. This can be an especially useful gift for endurance athletes who want their training sessions to mimic the challenges posed by nature or difficult competitive terrains.

- **Noise-canceling headphones or earbuds:** Many athletes relish their workouts not only as opportunities to zero in on their fitness goals, but also as chances to block out distractions and clear their heads for an hour or two each day. Noise-cancelling headphones or earbuds effectively block out external noises, allowing athletes to direct all of their focus on their workouts and training sessions.

- **Energy drinks:** Though it might not seem like the most exciting gift to unwrap

on Christmas morning, energy drinks are vital to many fitness enthusiasts' athletic endeavors. For example, endurance athletes may appreciate a tub of Osimo Active Hydration Performance Drink Mix, which contains an optimal ratio of sucrose, glucose and electrolytes, helping athletes improve their endurance and power while reducing instances of cramping and fatigue. Energy drinks make for a perfect stocking stuffer.

- **Home gym equipment:** Pandemic-related gym closures turned athletes into their own personal trainers, and some may not want to return to local fitness facilities even now that they've safely reopened. Home gym equipment can help athletes continue to build their own private home gyms, making items like kettle bells, dumbbells, weight benches and resistance bands great items to put under the tree this holiday season.

It's never been easier to shop for the family athlete during the holiday season. A heightened focus on fitness ensures there's something for every type of athlete on your holiday shopping list.

Home gym equipment can make for a great gift this holiday season.



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Bake up a sweet holiday treat

Entertaining is a big part of the holiday season. Calendars are packed this time of year with gatherings with friends, family and professional colleagues.

Entertaining requires keeping plenty of refreshments on hand to ensure guests maintain their holiday spirit. Dessert is no stranger to the season, with office break rooms, dining tables and buffet stations brimming with sweet treats to tempt celebrants' palates. Everyone should have a go-to dessert to bring along to a holiday party or to offer guests when hosting their own fêtes. Cookies are a standard due to their versatility and portability.

Festive "Sour Cream Cookies" provide all of the holiday feels and can be customized in color to reflect celebrations of Christmas, Chanukah, Kwanzaa or New Year's. Bake up a batch, courtesy of "Live Well Bake Cookies" by Danielle Rye.

Sour Cream Cookies

Makes 22 cookies

- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour, spooned and leveled
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 large egg, at room temperature
- 1 1/2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup sour cream, at room temperature

Vanilla Buttercream Frosting

- 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened
- 1
- 1/2 cups powdered sugar

- 1 tablespoon heavy whipping cream or milk
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- Gel food coloring (optional)

1. To make the cookies: Preheat the oven to 350° F. Line two large baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone baking mats and set aside.

2. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder and salt until well combined. Set aside.

3. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment or in a large mixing bowl using a handheld mixer, beat the butter and granulated sugar together for 1 to 2 minutes, or until well combined.

4. Mix in the egg and vanilla extract until fully combined, making sure to stop and scrape down the sides of the bowl as needed.

5. Mix in the dry ingredients in two additions, alternating with the sour cream. Make sure to mix in each addition until just combined, and be careful not to overmix the batter.

6. Using a 1 1/2-tablespoon cookie scoop, scoop the cookie dough onto the prepared baking sheets, making sure to leave a little room between each one.

7. Bake for 14 to 16 minutes, or until the tops of the cookies are set and spring back when touched lightly. Remove from the oven, and allow to cool on the baking sheets for 10 minutes, then carefully transfer the cookies to a wire rack to cool completely.

8. To make the vanilla buttercream frosting: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment or in a large mixing bowl using a handheld mixer, beat the butter for 1 to 2 minutes, or until smooth. Add the powdered sugar, 1/2 cup at a time, mixing in each addition until well combined.

9. Add the heavy whipping cream, vanilla extract, and gel food coloring (if using), and continue mixing until fully combined.

10. Once the cookies have cooled completely, spread the frosting on top of the cookies.

11. Store the cookies in an airtight container at room temperature or in the refrigerator for up to 4 days.



HOLIDAY
HEADQUARTERS

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Movies that are perfect for families this holiday season

Various traditions take center stage during the holiday season. One of those traditions may be sitting down and enjoying any of a number of timeless Christmas movies or even newer holiday films that are quickly becoming favorites.

Film fans have their own ideas about the best films to watch during the holidays, but the following movies are some kids and adults can enjoy together.

- "The Polar Express" (2004): A young boy enjoys a magical adventure to the North Pole aboard the Polar Express train. He learns about the true spirit of the holidays and the value of bravery and friendship along the way.

- "The Muppet Christmas Carol" (1992): Charles Dickens' classic story about a bitter miser might be a little frightening for young children to enjoy in its more theatrical offerings. However, when the Muppet characters tell their version of the classic tale, the story becomes much more family-friendly.

- "A Boy Called Christmas" (2021): Based on the book by Matt Haig, this movie is a reimagined take on Father Christmas. It focuses on Nikolas as he goes on an adventure to find a magical town called Elfhelm.

- "Jack Frost" (1998): When a father dies in a car accident, he comes back to life as a snow-

man in his son's front yard. Jack learns to keep his promises and make things right with his son – things he wasn't capable of doing as a human.

- "Christmas with the Kranks" (2004): The Kranks decide to forgo their annual Christmas party and plan a vacation since their daughter will be out of town. But when said daughter decides to come home after all, chaos sets in as the couple tries to figure out how to put together an extravaganza at the last minute.

- "Beauty and the Beast: The Enchanted Christmas" (1997): The Beast does not favor the holiday season, so Belle must change his mind on the matter in this animated Disney offering.

- "Elf" (2003): As a youngster, Buddy was magically transported to the North Pole and raised by Santa's elves. As an adult, he's determined to find his real dad in New York City and uncover a way to fit in.

- "Santa Hunters" (2014): A young boy teams up with his sibling and cousins to try to capture new footage of Santa in action and prove that the man in red truly exists.

- "The Nutcracker and the Four Realms" (2018): This is a newer take on the classic Nutcracker tale. This adventure sees Clara defending the Land of Sweets from the evil Mother Ginger.



HOLIDAY HEADQUARTERS



"Never worry about the size of your Christmas tree. In the eyes of children, they are all 30 feet tall."
 - Larry Wilde -



Popular songs to stream this holiday season

The holiday season is steeped in tradition. One of the most popular traditions is playing holiday music, which many retailers begin to broadcast over their PA systems shortly after people put their Halloween costumes in storage. The popular music streaming platform Spotify tracks the most popular holiday songs each year, and 2021 featured a mix of some newer songs and some all-time classics. According to Spotify, these five songs were the most streamed holiday tunes on the platform between Nov. 1 and Dec. 9, 2021.

1. "All I Want for Christmas Is You" – Mariah Carey
2. "Last Christmas" – Wham!
3. "It's Beginning to Look A Lot Like Christmas" – Michael Bublé
4. "Jingle Bell Rock" – Bobby Helms
5. "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" – Brenda Lee

Individuals who want to stream something a little more contemporary this holiday season can consider these songs which Spotify reports are the five most-streamed holiday songs that were released over the last half decade.

1. "Snowman" – Sia
2. "White Christmas" – Amy Grant
3. "Santa's Coming for Us" – Sia
4. "Hallelujah" – Pentatonix
5. "Merry Christmas" – Ed Sheeran and Elton John

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How to make Christmas Eve special for kids

Christmas Eve is viewed differently by different people, even those who live under the same Santa-ready roof. Adults may see Christmas Eve as crunch time when they must prepare food for the next day or set up presents for their children to open in the morning. Children, on the other hand, are focused on Santa's visit and little else.

Parents naturally want to make Christmastime as special as possible for their children, and that may involve ensuring that Christmas Eve is just as memorable as Christmas Day. The following are some ways to impart more magic into Christmas Eve celebrations.

Attend Mass at midnight

Practicing Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ on Christmas. On Christmas Eve, churches often hold celebrations that may include late-evening or

midnight masses that celebrate the birth of Christ when the calendar switches over to December 25. While it does make for a late night, it can be thought-provoking for kids and a unique experience unlike any other.

Bake fresh cookies

Children like to leave out a plate of cookies and a glass of milk for Santa. That makes Christmas Eve a perfect time to whip up a fresh batch of cookies. Explore different recipes to come up with a unique offering each year.

Read a Christmas story

Watching television or looking at a tablet or mobile phone before bed can be too stimulating when it's time for children to wind down for bed. Choose a holiday tale or tales that can be read as a Christmas Eve bedtime story. Reciting the poem "A Visit from St. Nicholas ('Twas

the Night Before Christmas)" is a great way to set the Christmas Eve mood.

Make a batch of 'reindeer dust'

Why should Santa's reindeer be left out when it comes to receiving treats? Reindeer dust, made from a combination of oatmeal, rice cereal, dried fruits, and glitter (if desired), is purported to attract Santa's reindeer and provide them a nibble at the same time. Plus, it's generally safe for other animals in the yard to eat.

Go caroling

Caroling may not be the norm, but some families may want to revive it. Close-knit communities can organize family-centric caroling opportunities and roam the cul-de-sacs and other pedestrian-friendly areas singing popular songs.

Christmas Eve is a great time to embrace various traditions that help to make the season even more special.



On Christmas Eve, children are focused on Santa's visit and little else.

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Christmas tree tips and tricks

Christmas trees are an iconic symbol of the holiday season. Whether they are personal trees nestled in the corner of a living room for families to enjoy or towering evergreens serving as the focal point of a town square, Christmas trees are a wonder to behold.

Many people have fond memories of time spent around the Christmas tree sharing gifts and family traditions. Live trees and their pine-like aroma can be especially nostalgic trees to include in holiday plans. The National Christmas Tree Association says that approximately 25 to 30 million real Christmas trees are sold in the United States every year. North American trees hail from all 50 states and areas of Canada.

While freshly cut trees can be particularly beautiful and aromatic additions to the season, they require a bit more work than artificial trees in order to remain beautiful and thrive throughout the holiday season. Maintenance can help keep Christmas trees as perfect as possible.

- Even though it is tempting to buy a real tree as early as possible, their shelf life is limited even with the best care. Dural Christmas Tree Farm advises that, under the best conditions, a real tree should last up to four weeks before drying out.

- Consider the needles when looking for a real tree. Pull your hand toward your body along the branches. If many needles fall off, the tree is past its peak.

- Think about the room in which the tree will be located. Leave at least 6 inches between the tip of the tree and the ceiling, accounting for the height of the tree stand as well.

- If needle retention is a goal, the Scotch pine variety has the best needle retention and a high survival rate, lending to its popularity, offers Precision Tree and Landscape. Douglas fir and balsam fir are other durable trees.

- If possible, buy a freshly cut tree from a reputable nursery or tree farm, advises The Old Farmer's Almanac. Many pre-cut trees sold elsewhere were likely cut weeks before and may not be fresh.

- Cut the bottom of the tree trunk before bringing it home to facilitate the uptake of fresh water daily. Trees can absorb as much as a gallon of water in a day, so make sure the tree gets fresh water every day.

- Keep trees away from as many heat sources as possible and away from direct sunlight to prolong longevity.

- According to Karabin Farms in Connecticut, to make a Christmas tree last longer, boil a gallon of water and then dissolve one cup of sugar in the water. Allow to cool. After freshly cutting the trunk, pour in the warm sugar water. Continue to add fresh, cool, plain water to the tree stand afterward.

Once needles begin to fall off with frequency, the tree is reaching its prime. Remove it so it does not become a fire hazard.



HOLIDAY

HEADQUARTERS

History of Trinity Lutheran Church

Trinity Lutheran Church of Stone Arabia, Route 10N, Palatine Bridge, was founded by the early Palatines fleeing Germany for liberty and freedom of worship. The pioneer settlers built the first log church in 1729. It was burned by the Tories and Indians on Oct. 19, 1780. In 1792, a new wooden church was erected. This is the church the congregation worships in today.

The early Palatine emigrants had first settled in London around 1700.

1709: The Journey Begins

By 1709, several thousand Palatines had reached England and were being cared for by the English government. However, not wanting to be a burden to the country that had befriended them, the Palatines decided to go to America.

Arrival in America

With the English government acting as sponsors, several ships set sail in the winter of 1709-1710. They arrived in June and July at Nuttens Island (now Governor's Island). Many died during the trip and because of sickness; the remainder

were detained there until October. Those in good health left the island to find work at tar camps along the Hudson River. However, the tar and pitch they made could not be used by the British so the "Poor Palatines" found themselves ill-clad, ill fed and living in huts. The promises for a better life had not been realized.

The Palatines Find a Home in Stone Arabia

In spring 1712, several families journeyed to Schoharie County to settle on land promised by the Native Americans. However, they were again plagued with problems. Clear land titles were unobtainable, and much controversy arose over the ownership of the land. So the Palatines began a trek to find a land of their own. On Oct. 19, 1723, Governor Burnet issued the Stone Arabia Patent to 28 of these men. They soon brought their families from Schoharie and settled the area. They were finally home.

Homes and barns were built. In 1729, William Coppemoll sold 50 acres of land to the settlers upon which to

build a church.

Names found among the early trustees and founders included Martines Dillenbeck, John Keiser, Harris Empe, John Schuls, Nicholas Stemfell and William Nellis. It is likely these people had worshiped somewhere else in the previous six years, but any date earlier than June 2, 1729 cannot be confirmed.

First Church Made of Logs

The two denominations of settlers, Lutherans and Reforms, worked together to erect a log church. They worshipped there for about four years. As more land was cleared and more families came to the valley, a larger church was needed. Construction started about 250 feet from the log building, but after the foundation had been laid, a dispute arose as

to the naming of the congregation.

An agreement could not be reached, and the Lutherans withdrew across the creek and continued to worship in the log church. In one of the last battles of the Revolutionary War, the log church was destroyed in a fire during a raid on Stone Arabia led by Sir John Johnson. For 12 years the congregation worshipped in homes or buildings and "at the Fall" (Palatine Church, daughter of Trinity Lutheran Church).

1792 Brings a New Church Worshipped in Today

In 1792, a new wooden church was erected under the guidance of Pastor Philip Grotz. This is the church worshipped in today. It is almost as if these pioneers, after all their sacrifices and hardships, had found their "promised land" and built a monument to God. It is not unusual on a Sunday morning

History B7



Trinity Lutheran Church of Stone Arabia, Route 10N, Palatine Bridge, was erected in 1792.

HOLIDAY HEADQUARTERS

Please join us for an old fashioned candle light **Christmas Eve Service** at a historic 1700's church

Trinity Lutheran Church founded in 1729 Stone Arabia, NY

December 24th at 7pm
Trinity Lutheran Church
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History from B6

today to see descendants (ninth and 10th generations) of these early settlers attending this very same church.

The Palatines came and helped to build a new country, surely with the hope that their children would preserve what they had fought and died for. Some of this determination has been instilled in their descendants. We have an active congregation with regular and special services and organizations.

It can truly be said that Trinity is the "Mother of Lutheranism" in the Mohawk Valley.

Pastors Who Have Served Our Church

- Dominie John Jacob Ehle: 1729-1733
- Wilhelm Christopher Berkenmeyer: 1734-1743
- Peter Nicolas Sommer: 1743-1751
- Johan Friederick Ries: 1751-1761, 1783-1788
- Theophilus England: 1768-1773
- Philipp Jacob Grotz: 1774-1775
- Carol Friederick Salomo Frideric: 1777-1780
- Philipp Jacob Grotz: 1788-1809
- Peter Wilhelm Domeier: 1810-1826
- John Depeyster Lawyer: 1827-1830
- Charles A. Smith: 1830-1839

- Martin Stover: 1839-1844
- Henry I. Smith: 1844-1845
- Anton Fredrick Adolphus Rumpff: 1845-1854
- Slyvander Curtis: 1854-1856
- Anton Fredrick Adolphus Rumpff: 1857-1865
- Nicolas Wirt: 1865-1877
- WW Gulick: 1877-1887
- Bryon E. Fake, D.D. 1888-1892
- Federick Moot: 1892-1895
- W.E. Whittaker: 1895-1899
- L. Belden Dutcher: 1899-1911
- Delbert Wright: 1911-1915
- F. Louis Wagschal: 1915-1919
- J.C. Fassold, Ph.D: 1920-1923
- Stanley Haverly: 1923-1954
- Andrew L. Dillenbeck: 1954-1956
- Theodore E. Hammer, DMin.: 1956-1986
- R. Devie Ellis: 1986-1993
- Elaine C. Quincey: 1993-1994
- John E. Omans: 1994-2000
- Gail R. Wolling: 2000-2008
- Elaine Berg: 2008-2009
- R. Zachary Labagh: 2010-2017
- Pamela J. Hoh: 2018-2019
- Jeffrey Kane: 2019-2020
- A. Elisabeth Aurand: 2020-present

How to Contact Trinity Lutheran Church

Write to P.O. Box 238, 5430 State Highway 10, Palatine Bridge, NY 13428. Call the church office at 518.673.2224, Chris Nellis at 518.461.7444 or Kathy Schlotzauer at 518.673.5443. You can also visit trinitystonearcadia.org.

HOLIDAY HEADQUARTERS

Safety first when buying toys for children this holiday season

December is a special time of year for children, millions of whom await the arrival of Santa Claus and the bounty of toys he delivers each year. When buying holiday gifts for youngsters, adults must consider safety. According to the Alliance for Children and Families, approximately 217,000 children are treated at hospital emergency rooms for toy-related injuries each year. Holiday shoppers are urged to stick to age-related recommendations on product packaging and avoid toys that do not contain the ATSM (American Society for Testing and Materials) label.



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Lesser known Chanukah traditions

Chanukah is a relatively modern holiday in regard to the Hebrew calendar. Unlike Yom Kippur or Passover, which are steeped in rich traditions, there are few Chanukah customs.

Chanukah celebrants still participate in various customs each year, some of which are customized according to family preferences. While some traditions, such as the lighting of the Chanukah menorah, are familiar, others may not be as widely known – especially to those outside of the faith. Here's a look at a select few.

- Saying the Shehechyanu blessing: Traditionally, there are two blessings that some people say each night while lighting the candles. The first is recited while holding the lit shamash, and the second is said while lighting the candles. Another blessing, known as the "Shehechyanu," is said the first night. According to 18Doors, a resource on the Jewish faith, it's the same blessing traditionally said on the first night of all Jewish holidays and other special occasions.

- Display or use of the shofar: A shofar is a type of instrument made from a ram's horn. It is a symbol of the ram that Abraham offered as a sacrifice in place of his son Isaac, exemplifying heroic faith of the fathers of the



Jewish people. The shofar also serves as a reminder of the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, and calls people to strive for Israel's renewal and fellowship with God.

- Singing "Ma'oz Tzur": Chanukah songs may not be as numerous or as widely sung as Christmas carols during the holiday season, but there are a select few that are part of the festivities. "Oh Chanukah Oh Chanukah" and "The Dreidl Song" are some of the most widely known songs, but some peo-

ple also follow the custom of singing "Ma'oz Tzur (Rock of Ages)" around the menorah. The words were composed in the 13th century, and the song summarizes historical challenges faced by the Jewish people that were overcome with God's help.

- Use of oil in Chanukah feasts: It's well known that latkes, or fried potato pancakes, are served around Chanukah. The reason is due to the oil used to fry them, which traditionally is olive oil. Fried foods call to mind a specific Chanu-

kah miracle. After the Greeks destroyed the sanctuary and defiled what was thought to be all of the oil, one jug sealed with the imprint of the High Priest was found. That one jug managed to keep the Temple's menorah lit for eight days, despite it being insufficient to handle this task. This was considered a miracle and celebrated in subsequent years.

Chanukah is a relatively modern holiday with few traditions. However, the customs associated with this holiday are held dear.



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HOLIDAY HEADQUARTERS

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Great gifts for physical fitness buffs

Holiday shopping is a fun way to show loved ones just how much they're appreciated. Though it's not always so easy finding the right gift, identifying a passion of each person on your holiday shopping list can make finding the perfect present that much easier.

No two families are exactly the same, but that doesn't mean they don't share similar characteristics and personalities. For example, many families have at least one person who qualifies as a physical fitness buff. A passion for fitness can serve as a great starting point when shopping for a loved one who can't wait to exercise each day. This holiday season, shoppers can stoke that passion for exercise with some gifts designed to help people reach their fitness goals.

- **Insulated water bottle:** On the surface, a new water bottle might not seem like the most impressive gift. However, fitness buffs know just how much water bottles have changed in recent years and how invaluable it can be to have a good one at the ready. A high-quality insulated water bottle can keep water cold for hours, ensuring endurance athletes accustomed to long runs or cycling sessions won't need to hydrate with warm drinks no matter how long it's been since they started their workouts.

- **Fitness trackers:** Fitness trackers run the gamut from low-cost options with useful yet limited capabilities to more expensive items that can seemingly give athletes all the information

they need about variables such as their heart rate and performance metrics. If the fitness buff on your list has his or her heart set on an expensive device, speak to other family members about pooling your resources.

- **Fitness app subscription/gift card:** The popularity of various exercise apps spiked dramatically during the COVID-19 pandemic because they made it easy to get professional fitness instruction at home. A subscription to a service like ClassPass ([classpass.com](https://www.classpass.com)) provides access to classes at thousands of top-rated gyms, fitness studios, salons, and spas across the globe. This can help fitness buffs find new exercises if their existing routines have grown stale or simply stay in shape even if they don't always have time to get to the gym.

- **Home exercise equipment:** Though the darkest days of the pandemic might be in the rearview mirror, the world has grown accustomed to periodic spikes that could compromise workout routines. That needn't be the base for fitness buffs who keep some simple exercise equipment at home. A set of dumbbells, a new weight bench or even a new yoga mat can ensure fitness buffs won't miss a workout even if they can't get out of the house.

Exercise is an essential part of fitness buffs' daily routines. Holiday shoppers can keep that in mind as they look for gifts to make this season even more special for their fitness-focused family members.



Fitness trackers run the gamut from low-cost options with useful yet limited capabilities to more expensive items that can seemingly give athletes all the information they need about variables such as their heart rate and performance metrics.



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DINING & ENTERTAINMENT

Simple ways to involve kids in holiday decorating

Millions of people across the globe feel that the holiday season is a magical time of year. Though those people come from all walks of life, it's likely that no group is as taken by the unique spirit of the holiday season as much as children.

Whether they're looking forward to Santa's arrival or preparing for a school holiday pageant, kids have much to be excited about come December. Parents can channel that enthusiasm by involving kids when decorating around the house this holiday season.

• Make homemade ornaments. The options are limitless when making holiday ornaments with children. From simple ornaments made from pinecones picked up outside to more complex projects designed for children nearing adolescence, parents can look to the internet to find design ideas and directions

for hundreds of ornaments.

• Let kids lead the way when decorating the tree. Families that celebrate Christmas can let kids lead the way when decorating their Christmas tree. Kids are likely to spend the time leading up to Santa's arrival gazing in awe at the tree and knowing they decided where to place the various ornaments on it might make the season even more special for youngsters.

• Take kids along when choosing lawn ornaments. It's not safe to involve children when installing lighting displays, but kids will get a kick out of choosing inflatable lawn decorations and other items to place around the yard. Take kids along when buying new items and then seek their input when placing Frosty, Santa and his reindeer friends around the yard.

• Include kids in culinary decor. Many celebrants cannot imagine a holiday season without gingerbread houses and cookies. These traditions provide another great opportunity to involve children in holiday decorating. Set aside some time to make homemade gingerbread houses, which can be used as decorations before they're ultimately eaten. Cookies may not have the shelf life of a typical gin-

gerbread house, but kids can pitch in and decorate cookies prior to a holiday party or family meal.

The spirit of the holiday season can be seen on the faces of children each December. Inviting kids to pitch in when decorating for the holidays can make the season even more special for its youngest celebrants.

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HOME IMPROVEMENT

When it can be smart to hire a painting pro



Few things can revitalize a home more readily than a fresh coat of paint.

Thanks in part to the affordability of paint and its ease of application, painting is something that even novice DIYers can typically handle. According to the marketing advice guru Brandon Gaille, it is estimated that residential interior paint only lasts around three years before it needs to be updated. Exterior paint can fade, chip and peel due to various environmental factors. As a result, many homes can likely use a fresh coat of paint in at least one room.

As DIY-friendly as painting can be, when attempting to paint the interior or exterior of their homes, homeowners may learn that some painting projects are best left to the professionals. Painting requires skill, patience and a knowledge of how various paints – including finishes for particular applications – will hold up. Novice painters may do more harm than good by dripping paint on expensive carpeting or floors or fail to recognize the nuances that indicate a spot-on painting job.

Professional painters have spent hours upon hours learning the ropes of what works – and what does not. Painters often understand that painstaking preparatory work is crucial to getting pristine finished results. Walls and ceilings must be properly repaired and prepared even before a base coat is applied.

Professional painters also have an eye for details. And because professional painters make a business out of doing interior and exterior surfaces, they understand which techniques can im-

prove efficiency. That means a professional job can typically be completed much more quickly than a DIY project.

Even though some people think they'll save money by painting their own homes, that's not necessarily true. Professionals already have all the equipment necessary, unlike novices who may need to make repeated and potentially costly trips to the hardware store for supplies. Plus, if mistakes happen, DIYers have to spend additional time and money fixing them.

Safety can be a large motivator for turning painting over to a pro. Navigating exterior areas or tall interior ceilings

can be challenging and may require scaffolding or tall ladders DIYers do not have. Risk of falls or other injuries increase with lack of experience.

Painting can give a home a facelift, and oftentimes it is smart to turn the work over to professionals to ensure the job is done just right.



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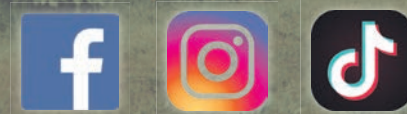
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HOME IMPROVEMENT

Improve storage at home

Homes are getting bigger, but it seems like people are still lamenting a lack of storage space.

National Public Radio says the average American home has nearly tripled in size during the last 50 years. Despite that, 10 percent of Americans still need to rent off-site storage, according to a report in the New York Times Magazine. Self-storage facilities are one of the fastest-growing commercial real estate segments, and the Self Storage Association says there are more than 50,000 storage facilities in the U.S. alone. The commercial real estate company CBRE, Ltd., says there are roughly 3,000 self-storage facilities across Canada, and 65 to 85 percent of self-storage tenants are residential users.

Improving storage at home can be a cost-effective alternative to renting storage space. With these easy tips, homeowners can maximize space immediately.

Utilize track storage systems

Closets may be plentiful, but if not efficiently utilized, space may still seem lacking. Track closet storage systems often make greater use of closet space than traditional shelf and hanging rod systems. Customizing closets using track systems or other modifications can improve utility of all closets in the house.

Invest in storage beds

Storage beds typically feature cubbies or drawers within a platform-style bed frame. It's a practical home storage solution, and does not require any building.

Think vertically

Maximize spaces by looking up and down for storage possibilities. Items that are not used frequently, such as seasonal decorations or travel suitcases, can be stored in high spaces. Shelving on walls can go as high as necessary and be put to use in awkward wall areas, such as in corners or under eaves.

Invest in storage benches/ottomans

A stopping area inside the front door replete with a storage bench can house shoes, umbrellas, hats, backpacks and other items, keeping them tidy and out of sight. In living rooms, look for chests or ottomans that are decorative and functional. Store throw blankets or board games inside.

Recess drawers or shelves

Gain more storage by recessing a chest of drawers into what is called the "knee wall" of homes that have sloped ceilings in attics and upstairs bedrooms. Utilize these short walls in an efficient manner by sinking drawers or shelves into them, without taking up floor space.

Rafter shelving

While in the attic (or a garage), add hanging shelves to rafters or exposed beams to create off-the-floor storage as well.

These are just a few of the handy ways to improve the interior storage space in a home.



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HOME IMPROVEMENT

Steps for hanging holiday lights outdoors

It begins to look a lot like Christmas when twinkling lights brighten up homes inside and out. Few things liven up the season more than holiday decorations, particularly clear and colored lights.

Prior to taking out the lights, ladder and thermos of coffee to get you through the job, it's important to note that there are right and wrong ways to hang holiday lights.

- Sketch out your plan. Start by taking a few photos of your home from various vantage points. Print out the photos on regular paper so that you can draw your lighting arrangement and decoration placement right on the photos to see how things will look.

- Measure the area. Use a measuring tape to roughly measure the width and height of eaves or other areas of the home where you plan to hang light strands. Calculate how much overall footage you will need so you can purchase all of the lights in one shopping trip.

- Test the lights first. Plug in the lights to be sure all strands are operational.

- Begin where the lights will be plugged in. Start where the lights will be plugged in and then work your way around the house.

- Add to shrubs and trees. Lights also can adorn shrubs

and trees. A good rule of thumb is 100 lights for every 1 1/2-feet of tree or shrub to cover. A 6-foot evergreen needs at least 400 lights for a basic level of lighting.

- Exercise extreme caution. Accidents can happen when stringing lights. While many professionals use harnesses, homeowners are not always so cautious. Utilize a spotter to hold the ladder and make sure things are safe. Never set foot on a wet or icy roof. Do not attempt to string lights in inclement weather.

- Know the wattage. Each outlet can generally hold about 17 amps or 1,870 watts if the lights are not sharing a circuit with another outlet. Plan accordingly to ensure you have enough power to handle your lights.

- Use plastic clips. Plastic light clips hang strands along eaves and gables. They're specially designed for hanging lights over the gutters. Some slip under the edges of roof shingles. Lights can be hung without staples or nails, which can damage exterior surfaces. Plastic zip-ties or deck clips also can attach lights along a handrail.

- Use only outdoor extension cords. Be sure the extension cords you use are designed specifically for outdoor use.

- Use a timer. Timers can make sure the lights turn on and off even if homeowners forget.

Once lights have been safely strung, sit back and enjoy the splendor of a well-decorated house.



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Rising utility costs

Much like the cost of a loaf of bread or a carton of eggs now costs consumers considerably more than it did a couple of years ago, the price to heat and cool a home has risen considerably. Various factors, from climate-related events to supply chain issues to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, have been cited as contributors to the rise in utility costs, which is not just a North American problem. Following pandemic-induced lows in 2020, natural gas prices have risen consistently, even during off-peak months, over the last year-plus. The cost of natural gas that's delivered through pipes was up 24 percent in February from the year prior. Electricity has gone up as well. According to Choose Energy, an energy reporting resource, electricity rates have risen across the 50 states in 2022 by anywhere from 1.7 percent over 2021 (Alaska) to 46.1 percent (Maine). The

national average increase is 11.3 percent. CBS News reported in 2019 that Americans are paying up to 30 percent more on water and wastewater bills in less than a decade. Water and sewer bills are rising faster than inflation rates, having increased for an eighth consecutive year in a study of the country's 50 largest metropolitan regions. People concerned with the rising costs of utilities may have to be creative. Running appliances during off-peak hours; turning off lights and unplugging devices when not in use; investigating solar power; and investing in water-saving faucets, shower heads and toilets can help individuals curtail their energy consumption.

The price to heat and cool a home has risen considerably in recent years.



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The effects of infrequent driving on vehicle performance

Driving puts a certain measure of wear and tear on a vehicle. Whether a vehicle is used primarily for commuting or as a vessel to take travelers to parts unknown, wear and tear is inevitable.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, individuals may not realize that failing to drive their vehicles regularly also can affect performance. Here's a closer look at what can happen when vehicles sit idle for lengthy periods of time.

- Battery loses its charge. The battery in a vehicle is still being used even if the car isn't running. Batteries power various components in a car, such as the vehicle computer, phone chargers and more. If the engine does not turn over and help to recharge the battery, the battery will eventually die. People who drive infrequently may want to consider a trickle charger that's plugged in during periods of non-use.

- Tire rot can set in. Dry tire rot is deterioration that sets into the rubber. The material dries out and becomes brittle, causing splits and cracks to

form. Driving with tire rot can cause tires to deflate.

- Rust and corrosion can occur. There is still plenty of metal in modern vehicles. A vehicle that has been exposed to salt or rain or one that is stored in a moist climate can be susceptible to undercarriage or engine rust. This may cause damage that's not easily repaired.

- Damage from sap or droppings. A vehicle parked in one location for a long time could be a target for bird droppings, fallen berries, sap, and other substances that are potentially harmful to the paint job. Leaving the car or truck out in the sun also means UV rays can cause clear coat over the paint to oxidize and begin to fail, which can produce blotchy or peeling spots.

- Poor brake performance. When vehicles are left to sit, corrosion could build up on the rotors and the brake pads may become less flexible. Moisture also may seep into brake lines, causing issues with pressurization of brake fluid. Each of these factors adds up to brakes that do not work properly—which is a big safety hazard.

- Formation of tire flat spots. When tires are not used frequently, the weight of the car can continually put pressure on the same parts of the tires, leading to flat spots. Tires also can lose pressure if they sit too long.

- Oil and other fluids may lose efficacy. Various fluids can go stale in a vehicle if it isn't regularly driven. Gasoline also may develop condensation, which can reduce efficiency and performance. Taking short trips helps avoid this issue.

Infrequent driving can cause damage to a car or truck. But many potential issues can be avoided by driving vehicles more often.

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