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**DECEMBER 20, 2022**



**IN THIS ISSUE:**

- AUTOMOTIVE
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- HOME IMPROVEMENT • HUNTING

*While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. Luke:6-8*



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# BUSINESS FOCUS

## Upstate Artisans

Buying local isn't a fad, it's a way of life. Taking the time to visit a Mom & Pop store ensures customers are supporting not just their communities at large but the neighbors they know as well. Still, one-stop shopping is convenient. That's great news for those running Upstate Artisans, a shop that caters to local artists looking to sell their wares and customers looking for one-of-a-kind items.

Upstate Artisans has been open for just over a year, first opening up its shop on Nov. 25, 2021. Jan Williams and her husband Ray Williams Jr. run the shop with their children lending a hand when they host large events. Jan had worked at Lexington Center for years, and at Crum Creek Day Care too. She had been a stay at home mom with her three children for several years. "Though I loved those jobs and they were very rewarding, I love making things and wanted to pursue that as a career," she said.

Jan said she's always been a "crafty person" but five years ago she started to get serious and began attending craft shows. "After speaking with a lot of other crafters, I realized that there weren't any other options for selling year-round," she said. "We thought we could provide an opportunity to showcase and sell items that were handmade by a variety of local talented and creative artisans."

Upstate Artisans was headquarters in Fort Plain because Jan said it was a busy and vibrant village when she was a child. She and her husband have always lived there and wanted to bring something back to their community. In addition to the shop, the Williamses host craft shows in town throughout the year and offer a variety of interesting craft classes for children and adults.

Jan said they try not to have the shop overcrowded with too much product, and they also try to make available a large variety of items that will appeal to almost anyone. They only allow handcrafted items in the shop with very

few exceptions.

"We think you will be impressed with the quality and assortment of items that we offer," Jan added.

Upstate Artisans joined with the Fort Plain Community Activities Council to organize the 4th on the Weekend and the Fall Festival – both popular community events. As for the future, they are hoping for success for the community, for the artisans and for themselves.

"They say the first five years are the toughest. But with community support, we know we are all up for the challenge," Jan said.

That community spirit is strong. Jan suggested you visit her shop after getting your beverage from Highwheeler Coffee or a massage from the Lotus Center, which are both located nearby.

Upstate Artisans is located at 81 Canal St. in Fort Plain, under the town clock. They are open Wednesday - Friday from 8 a.m. - 3:30 p.m., Saturday from 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Follow them on Facebook @upstateNYartisans for all events, photographs of new items for sale and any updates.



Jan Williams with Rylie and Jaxton at Upstate Artisans.

The shop is located under the town clock on Canal Street in Fort Plain.



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## SNOWMOBILE TRAILS

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The Montgomery County Sheriff's Department would like to remind the public that all snowmobile trails are closed through Jan. 2, 2023 due to the DEC extended hunting season. This includes the Erie Canalway.

## Eggnog is a classic for holiday celebrations

No beverage is more associated with holiday cocktail parties than eggnog, which is a beloved beverage come the holiday season.

While it's perfectly acceptable to purchase store-bought eggnog in the dairy case and dress it up with a favorite spirit, most eggnog recipes only feature a handful of ingredients and are quite easy to make at home.

Rum, whiskey and brandy are customary liquors to use in eggnog recipes. However, The Spruce: Eats has taste-tested them all and believes brandy tops the others for the perfect finished product. Enjoy their version of "Quick Brandy Eggnog" below.

### Quick Brandy Eggnog

- 1 cocktail
- 1 ounce brandy
- 1 ¼ ounces milk

- ½ ounce simple syrup
- 1 egg yolk
- Grated nutmeg or cinnamon for garnish

In a cocktail shaker, combine the brandy, milk, simple syrup and egg yolk. Dry shake without ice.

Fill shaker with ice, then shake vigorously for about 30 seconds to ensure the egg is well mixed. Strain into an old-fashioned or cocktail glass. Add a dash of grated nutmeg or cinnamon as a garnish.

Note: Only use a fresh egg. Test the egg's freshness by placing it in a glass of water. If the egg floats, discard it, as this indicates the egg is too old. Only use eggs that rest on the bottom of the glass. This will ensure the most flavorful drink and helps to reduce the risk of salmonella.



While it's perfectly acceptable to purchase store-bought eggnog in the dairy case and dress it up with a favorite spirit, most eggnog recipes only feature a handful of ingredients and are quite easy to make at home.

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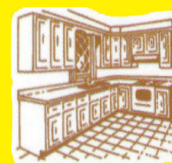
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## SQSPCA adds clearing of shelter to 'Promise for Parkie Challenge' goal

COOPERSTOWN – The Susquehanna Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SQSPCA) has set two ambitious year-end goals, and they now need support from the public in order to meet those targets.

The "Promise for Parkie Challenge" has been underway since Giving Tuesday, Nov. 29. If the SQSPCA can raise \$100,000 by end of day Dec. 31, challenge sponsors Beth and Gary Glynn will give the shelter an additional \$25,000. Totals as of mid-month are about half-way to the \$100,000 goal.

As if the bar had not been set high enough, SQSPCA Executive Director Stacie Haynes has announced a second challenge in conjunction with "Promise for Parkie," whereby community members are asked to help clear the shelter for the holidays.

"We are calling on folks to help animals currently at the shelter – including mice, rabbits, a pot-bellied pig, cats, kit-

tens and dogs of all shapes and sizes – by getting them out of their kennels for Christmas," Haynes said. "Please consider adopting if you can, or being a temporary foster if you can't adopt."

Adoption fees will be waived from Tuesday, December 20 through Christmas Eve, December 24, for those hoping to find a new four-legged family member; adoptions are subject to approval and additional fees may apply. Fostering is also encouraged during this "Kennel-Free Christmas" initiative.

"With so many people taking time off from their busy schedules to stay home for the holidays, it's a great opportunity to foster an animal for a few days," Haynes added. "Snoozing on a couch while listening to Christmas carols, curling up in a lap after dinner, playing outside in the snow with the kids – these are all far better ways for our animals to spend the holidays than alone in the shelter."

If adopting or fostering are simply not options at this time, supporters of the SQSPCA and its mission can still make a significant impact this holiday season by donating as part of the "Promise for Parkie" year-end campaign.

"We still have a way to go to meet the Glynn's challenge and earn that additional \$25,000. Contributions can be made safely and securely through Saturday, Dec. 31 online at [www.sqspca.org/donate/](http://www.sqspca.org/donate/), by mail at 5082-5088 State Highway 28, Cooperstown, NY 13326, or in person," Haynes said.

The SQSPCA, located at 5082-5088 State Highway 28, Cooperstown, is open Tuesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. with new evening hours on Thursdays from 5-7 p.m. Appointments to meet animals are advised to avoid wait times by calling 607.547.8111, but walk-ins are always welcome. Available animals can be viewed online at [www.sqspca.org/available-animals/](http://www.sqspca.org/available-animals/).

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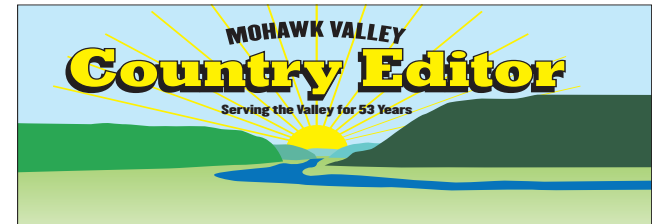


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# Fourteen facts about the winter solstice

The winter solstice occurs each year during the month of December in the northern hemisphere. In 2022, the winter solstice will take place on Dec. 21 at 4:48 p.m.

Solstices are significant events that occur twice per year. One occurs in winter and one in summer. The winter solstice also is known as the first day of winter and occurs when the Earth's pole reaches its maximum tilt away from the sun. During the winter solstice, people in the northern hemisphere will experience the shortest period of daylight and the longest period of nighttime of the year. Here are 14 fascinating facts about the winter solstice:

1. Depending on the hemisphere, the north or south pole will experience continuous darkness or twilight around its winter solstice.
2. The winter solstice sometimes is referred to by the term midwinter.
3. Even though the solstice is marked by a whole day on the calendar, it's actually just the brief moment of time when the sun is exactly over the Tropic of Capricorn.
4. The word "solstice" can be translated from Latin and means "sun stand still."
5. The Tropic of Capricorn is located at 23.5° south of the equator.
6. Tourists flock to Stonehenge to track the movement of the sun. The stones will frame the sunset on the winter solstice and the sunrise on the summer solstice.
7. Ancient cultures viewed the winter solstice as a time of death and rebirth.
8. Important events in history have taken place on winter solstices. The Apollo 8 spacecraft launched on the solstice in 1968. Pilgrims also arrived at Plymouth on the winter solstice in 1620.
9. Each planet in Earth's solar system has its own solstices and equinoxes.



This year, the winter solstice took place on Dec. 21 at 4:48 p.m.

10. The southern hemisphere experiences the winter solstice in June each year.

11. A full moon on a solstice is even more rare than a blue moon. The last full moon to occur on the winter solstice was in 2010 and the next one won't happen until 2094.

12. Earth is closer to the sun around the winter solstice in December. However, the northern hemisphere receives less sunlight and has cooler temperatures because it is tilted away from the sun during winter.

13. Even though the winter solstice features the shortest amount of daylight of any day during the year, it does not have

the earliest sunset. That takes place roughly two weeks prior. In 2021 in New York, the winter solstice took place on Dec. 21, but the earliest sunset occurred on Dec. 7 at 4:28 p.m.

14. Meteorological winter begins on Dec. 1 rather than Dec. 21.

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Worship 9-10AM

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Sunday In Person Worship 9 AM;  
email for link  
office@stjm-canajoharie.org  
518-673-2224

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Pastors Richard & Denise Allen  
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Worship Service 11:30 AM  
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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  
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Pastor Robert Brent  
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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  
pastormarkh@aol.com  
Sunday Worship 10 AM  
Thursday Bible Study 6 PM

**SLOANVILLE 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  
Paster 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,  
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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  
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Pastor: Steve Adamoschek  
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7690 Rt. 80, Springfield Center  
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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. JOHN'SVILLE 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

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32 W. Main St.,  
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518-568-3007 Church  
518-568-2405 Parsonage  
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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

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Pastor Michael Torres  
20 Center St., St. Johnsville, NY 13452  
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## Tradition a major component of Chanukah celebrations

Tradition is a major component of the Jewish faith, so it's no surprise that tradition plays such a central role during the celebration of Chanukah.

Although some are quick to note Chanukah is not one of the major Jewish holidays, Chanukah is celebrated in a very public fashion. Chanukah celebrants make the holiday more high profile by displaying their menorahs in prominent locations and participating in holiday meals.

Like other Jewish holidays, Chanukah is shrouded in tradition. Chanukah means "dedication" or "induction" in Hebrew. The holiday begins on the 25th of Kislev and can occur in either November or December. Also known as the Festival of Lights, Chanukah includes menorah displays, traditional foods and games and songs.

Chanukah rose to prominence thanks in part to the story of faith and miracle behind its inception. Antiochus IV was a Greek sovereign in control of the region of Syria, Egypt and Palestine, where many Jews resided. Antiochus began to oppress the Jews, prohibiting the practice of the Jewish religion and desecrating the Jewish Temple. Opposition to Antiochus grew, and a group led by Mattathias the Hasmonean and his son, Judah Maccabee, took on the Syrian army. They were successful in their efforts to combat religious oppression, and the Temple was subsequently rededicated. The Talmud states that, at the time of the rededication, there was very little oil left that had not been defiled by the Greeks. This posed a problem because oil was needed to burn the Temple menorah throughout the night every night. However, there was only enough left for one night's illumination. Miraculously, that oil burned for eight nights, leading to the development of an eight-day festival to commemorate this miracle.

Because Chanukah is about the miracle of the oil and the lasting flame, oil and candles factor heavily in the holiday. A nine-armed menorah called the hanukiah is lit, and one candle is lit on each of the eight nights of the celebration. The last branch of the candelabra holds the shamash (servant) candle. The organization Reform Judaism says the traditional song "Ma'oz Tzur (Rock of Ages)" is sung after the lighting of the candles each night and at other times throughout the holiday. Foods fried in oil, including latkes and jelly doughnuts, are consumed as well.

Celebrants play games with a dreidel, a German-based spinning top, and giving to charity is encouraged. Chanukah is one of the few times of the year when rabbis permit games of chance. The letters atop the dreidel stand for the first letter of each word in the Hebrew statement "Neis gadol hayah sham," which translates to "A great miracle happened there," and refers to the defeat of the Syrian army and the rededication of the Temple.



Chanukah 2022 will begin in the evening of Dec. 18 and ends in the evening of Dec. 26.

# 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 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. Take-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.

**Old Fashioned Candlelight Christmas Eve Service** at 7 p.m. at Grace Christian Church, 20 Center St., St. Johnsville. Join us for singing Christmas Carols, Choir performances and traditional scripture readings in an old-fashioned candle lit service. Call 518.774.2033.

### 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.

### DECEMBER 31

**Utica Zoo Noon Year's Eve Celebration** 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Reflect on the past year of fun at the Utica Zoo and celebrate the upcoming New Year Zoo-style with your entire family for NOON Year's. Includes special enrichment "ball drop" at the Lion habitat at noon. For more information, visit UticaZoo.org.

### JANUARY 7, 2023

**Sacandaga Sportsmen's Day** 9:45 a.m. - 5 p.m. at Sacandaga Bible Conference, 191 Lakeview Rd., Broadalbin. Tickets are \$20. For more information, call Sacandaga Bible Conference at 518.883.3713 or e-mail Dave at director@sacandagabibleconference.com

### 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@mvl.info, or visit the website at fortplainfreelibrary.org.

### JANUARY 19, 2023

**Chicken and Biscuit dinner** 4-7 p.m. or sold out at Emmanuel Episcopal Church, 594 Albany St., Little Falls. \$12. Eat in and take out. Call 315.741.4672 to reserve your dinner. Free delivery.

### 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 .

To promote your event, please contact us at [cfeditor@leepub.com](mailto:cfeditor@leepub.com) or 518.673.0143.



# Herkimer sixth grader receives Red Cross Youth Good Samaritan Award for fire safety efforts

As Herkimer Central School District sixth grader Brett Saunders recently walked in a procession of American Red Cross Real Heroes Celebration award winners, his thoughts were elsewhere.

Brett, 11, was receiving a Youth Good Samaritan Award for his efforts to provide smoke alarms to students and their families. He and the other winners were following behind a bagpiper as they made their way to the front of a large crowd at the Marriott in downtown Syracuse.

His mind, however, was still thinking of the friend he lost in a fire that set him on this path.

"This is for you," Brett said, of what he was thinking toward his friend. "And his brothers too."

The American Red Cross Real Heroes Celebration took place on Dec. 7. The Central and Northern New York Chapter of the American Red Cross states that it puts on the annual Real Heroes Celebration "to pay tribute to individuals and community organizations who have demonstrated acts of heroism, courage, kindness and unselfish character."

Brett was recognized for helping with the donation of almost 1,500 smoke alarms to local elementary students and the Herkimer Fire Department's launching of the Brett Saunders Fire Safety Program.

After a 2019 house fire in the community claimed the life of Brett's friend and two of the friend's brothers, Brett wanted to find a way to make a difference. For his birthday party, he asked his friends to bring donations to the Herkimer Fire Department instead of presents.

"I figured I would take a tragedy and turn it into something good," he said.

The Herkimer Fire Department matched Brett's donation and reached out to local businesses such as Hummel's Office Plus in Herkimer and PAR in New Hartford for further donations, along with donations from the Guardian smoke detector company. This led to the Herkimer Fire Department giving out 610 smoke alarms to Herkimer Elementary School students in 2019.

The Herkimer Fire Department also put on an assembly at Herkimer Elementary and named it the Brett Saunders Fire Safety Program. Brett was surprised and happy to have the program named after him.

"It's really cool because I know it will go on for a long time," he said.

The Brett Saunders Fire Safety Program has continued at the Herkimer Elementary each year, and smoke alarms are still given out every year as well.

In 2020, the Herkimer Fire Department used leftover smoke alarms and a generous donation from Brett's aunt Amy Spytko of Mohawk to give out 700 more smoke alarms. These were given out to a combination of Herkimer Elementary School kindergarteners and the whole Benton Hall Academy in Little Falls.

Due to COVID-19, donation collections were more challenging after that for a couple of years, but the efforts continued anyway, and more will be done going forward, said Brett and his mother Amanda Saunders, a licensed teaching assistant at Herkimer Central School District.

In 2021, 80 more smoke alarms were distributed to Herkimer Elementary kindergarteners. In 2022, 55 smoke alarms were given to students at the St. Francis de Sales Early Childhood Learning Center in Herkimer.

"I'm going to try to do it every year," Brett said, of distributing smoke alarms. "Hopefully it keeps going."

The current plan is to provide smoke alarms to every incoming kindergarten class at Herkimer Elementary resuming next year and each year after, Amanda Saunders said.

Wegmans was the sponsor for the Youth Good Samaritan Award Brett won and expressed interest in donating and the Red Cross expressed interest in working with Brett as part of the Red Cross Sound the Alarm program, Amanda said.

Being recognized with the award from the Red Cross felt good, Brett said. "Really good," he said. "Rewarding and special."

Amanda also appreciated seeing her son receive the award and all that he has done.

"I'm a proud mother," she said. "You teach your children to do good things in the world and he's certainly changing the world. A simple act of kindness has gone a long way. It really has. It has blown us all away."

When Brett first chose to collect donations for his birthday, he thought maybe the Herkimer Fire Department would just use the money to purchase some supplies for families such as blankets and pillows.

"I didn't know it was going to become this big," he said. "It turned out to be really big."

If you would like to donate to Brett and the fire department's fire safety efforts, contact Amanda at [asaunders@herkimercsd.org](mailto:asaunders@herkimercsd.org) or Herkimer Fire Chief Michael Moody at 315.866.2242.



Herkimer Central School District sixth grader Brett Saunders poses with firefighters after receiving the Youth Good Samaritan Award at the American Red Cross Real Heroes Celebration. (L - R) Former Herkimer firefighter Tejay Chilluffo who worked closely with Brett, Herkimer Fire Chief Michael Moody, Brett and Herkimer firefighter Dan Mabbett.

Photos courtesy of Herkimer BOCES



Brett holds his Youth Good Samaritan Award and medal that he received at the American Red Cross Real Heroes

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# AUTOMOTIVE

## Tips for first-time electric car buyers

Electric vehicles are widely touted as the vehicles of the future. Despite the growing availability of such cars in the present day, for many drivers EVs remain a novelty. That means buying an EV for the first time is a wholly new and unique experience.

Tesla EVs might be the most visible electric cars on the road today, but most major auto manufacturers, including Nissan and Chevrolet, produce EVs as well. That means auto buyers have more EV options now than ever before, which can make the process of buying such a car more exciting, but also more difficult. Narrowing down a growing number of options may not come easy to first-time EV buyers, who can keep these tips in mind as they begin this exciting journey.

- Get an idea of the accessibility of charging stations around your home. The number of public charging stations is on the rise, but there's still a lot of work to be done in this area. In fact, research from McKinsey & Company indicates that nearly half of consumers in the U.S. indicate that battery or charging issues are their foremost concerns about buying EVs. The automotive resource Auto Trader



notes that most EVs have enough battery range to cover more than the average daily commute in America. But drivers who hope to use their EVs as their everyday cars that take them to work and help them run errands and get around town should confirm there are enough public charging stations to make that possible.

- Look into subsidies. The Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy notes that all-electric and plug-in hybrid cars purchased new in or after 2010 may be eligible for a federal income tax credit that could be as high as \$7,500. State and/or local incentives also may apply. These subsidies can help bring the cost of EV ownership down by a significant amount and are worth exploring as drivers decide which electric car or truck to buy.

- Consider your parking situation. Homeowners who own single-family homes with a garage that can accommodate at least one vehicle can easily charge their EVs so long as they clear space in the garage where the car can be parked. Auto Trader notes that some garages may need to be upgraded with a level two charger, and that can be expensive. Drivers who must park their EVs outdoors overnight should know that this, too, may require some additional funds for electric vehicle service equipment (EVSE). Local building codes may govern the installation of such equipment, which is best performed by an electrician. These are some additional costs of EV ownership that first-time buyers must consider and research before they switch to an electric car or truck.

EVs may become the new normal over the next several decades. But before that day arrives, first-time EV buyers must consider a host of factors as they shop around for an electric car or truck.

## Ring in the new year at the Utica Zoo Noon Year's Eve Celebration

Reflect on the past year of fun at the Utica Zoo and celebrate the upcoming New Year zoo-style with your entire family for Noon Year's Eve Saturday on Dec. 31 from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

The event will feature animal enrichment activities, campfires with marshmallow roasting, a champagne bottle-shaped bubble toast and a countdown to the new year with a special enrichment "ball drop" at the lion habitat at noon.

Education stations will be located within the zoo with various bio-facts, crafts and information on how you can include conservation efforts in your New Year's re-zoo-lution.

"There are so many fun activities to do around New Year's Eve but we recognized how hard it is for little ones to stay up until midnight. The goal of the Noon Year's Eve Celebration is to create an event for everyone to participate in," said Allie Snyder, Utica Zoo marketing and community engagement man-

ager. "By doing a countdown to the new year at noon, the entire family can join and we hope this becomes a fun tradition for families of all ages."

All event activities are included with admission to the zoo on Dec. 31. This event will take place outdoors in the Rotary Pavilion area and throughout the zoo - dress accordingly. Some animals may not be out because of the cold weather.

The Utica Zoo will close at 3 p.m. on Dec.

31 and will re-open for their regular hours on Jan. 1.

The Utica Zoo creates unique experiences and promotes public appreciation of wildlife through education, conservation and recreation and is home to over 200 exotic and domestic animals, welcoming over 100,000 visitors annually.

For more information, visit [UticaZoo.org](http://UticaZoo.org) or follow the zoo on Facebook, Instagram and @UticaZoo.

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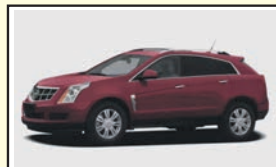
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7 Pass., nice family auto, very clean  
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**2014 Ford Focus**  
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**2012 Jeep Compass Limited**  
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# AUTOMOTIVE

## What are certified preowned vehicles?

The days when buying a used car was akin to a game of chance are largely a relic of the past. Though it's still possible that used car buyers

could end up with a lemon, the preowned vehicle market has changed dramatically and for the better over the last couple of decades.

One of the more notable changes surrounding used vehicles over the last 20 years is the rise of certified preowned cars and trucks, or CPOs. The pandemic affected sales of CPOs in 2020, but the vehicle transaction experts at Cox Automotive™ report that more than a quarter million CPOs were sold in May 2019.

First-time car buyers or those accustomed to purchasing new vehicles can learn more about CPOs before buying their next cars or trucks. Such knowledge may help them make the most informed decision possible before they sign on the dotted line and drive their next vehicle off the lot.

### What Sets CPOs Apart From Other Used Cars?

The auto industry data aggregator Black Book notes that CPOs tend to have low mileage and clean accident histories. It's possible, though unlikely, that vehicles that don't meet such criteria could be designated as CPOs.

Another significant difference between CPOs and more traditional used cars is that the former tend to be sold with extended manufacturers' warranties. Certified preowned vehicle buyers also may be offered perks similar to those offered to new car buyers, such as free roadside assistance or complementary satellite radio service, for a predetermined period of time.

While it may seem like a no brainer for used car buyers to purchase CPOs, the consumer advocacy experts at Consumer Reports suggest that the decision is more complicated.

Analysts at CR have suggested that the biggest advantage to CPOs is their extended warranties, which can be expensive. Having a vehicle inspected by a private mechanic that consumers trust prior to purchase may be a better way for budget-conscious car buyers to allocate their funds than purchasing a CPO simply because of its extended warranty. If the mechanic gives the vehicle a clean bill of health, consumers can then rest easy knowing they exercised their due diligence and did so without having to pay for a potentially costly extended warranty. Ultimately, the decision is up to buyers, who can conduct a cost analysis to determine just how much they might save (or not save) when purchasing a CPO or a noncertified used vehicle.

Certified preowned vehicles are an option that car buyers can consider prior to purchasing their next car or truck.



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30,859 Miles, Stock # CN170915T



2016 Chevrolet Traverse LTZ  
93,203 Miles, Stock # AM138500P



2019 MINI Cooper Classic  
28,219 Miles, Stock # AMH91038K



2019 Ford Escape SEL  
13,836 Miles, Stock # AMA33443P



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42,313 Miles, Stock # CN372832K



2019 Jeep Grand Cherokee Limited  
58,720 Miles, Stock # AM730666K



2019 Ram 1500 Big Horn/Lone Star  
49,615 Miles, Stock # AM817328T



2019 Ram 3500 Tradesman  
42,313 miles, Stock # AM533616T



2019 Dodge Grand Caravan SXT  
61453 Miles, Stock # AM724716R



2020 Ford Escape SEL  
21,061 Miles, Stock # FNB54257T



2020 Ford Explorer XLT  
33,250 Miles, Stock # FNC38891T



2020 Ford Fusion SEL  
61,271 Miles, Stock # FN115801R



2015 Chevrolet Equinox LT 1LT  
68,914 Miles, Stock # FN124239T



2020 Chevrolet Malibu LT  
Grand Sport 3LT  
56,999 Miles, Stock # AM094037R



2020 Ford Fusion SE  
51 Miles, Stock # AM172732R



2017 Ford F-150 XLT  
84,375 Miles, Stock # AMC2863T



2018 Chevrolet Corvette Grand Sport 3LT  
52,254 Miles, Stock # AM300586P



2018 Ram 1500 Sport  
59,294 Miles, Stock # CN158892P



2020 Hyundai Santa Fe SEL 2.4  
16,204 Miles, Stock # CN230510R



2019 Ford Edge SEL  
55,244 Miles, Stock # FNC56718T



2014 Chevrolet Impala LT 2LT  
108,409 Miles, Stock # CN106819T

## Tips for a safe New Year's Eve

New Year's Eve is one of the most festive nights of the year. Despite its reputation for revelry, New Year's Eve also can be dangerous, which underscores the need to celebrate responsibly when ringing in a new year.

American Addiction Centers surveyed 1,000 Americans regarding their alcohol consumption habits on certain holidays. The survey found that the average person consumes 4.4 alcoholic

drinks on New Year's Eve, making the holiday second only to Mardi Gras in terms of drinks consumed. Alcohol lowers individuals' inhibitions and adversely affects their judgment, which could make them vulnerable to criminals and more likely to make bad decisions, including driving after a few drinks. In fact, the National Safety Council estimates that 427 people may die on U.S. roads during the 2022 New Year's holiday pe-

riod.

A new year is worthy of celebration, and the festivities can be even more enjoyable when individuals take these safety tips to heart.

- Recognize the risks. Recognition of the potentially serious threats that can be lurking on New Year's Eve is vital to celebrating safely. A 2011 report from the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research in the U.S. noted a significant spike in the rate

of assaults, murders, sexual assaults and robberies on New Year's Eve, linking that increase to higher levels of alcohol consumption. Individuals who recognize how vulnerable overconsumption of alcohol can make them may be less inclined to overdo it this year.

- Avoid the roads. Data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration indicate that 68% of drunk driving traffic fatalities on New Year's 2016 involved drivers with a high blood alcohol concentration. One of the safest things individuals can do on New Year's Eve is to avoid the roads. Consider celebrating at home or staying in a hotel or the home of a loved one. If you must be on the road, call a cab or book an Uber when you need to get to and from a party.

- Be careful even if you're hosting. New Year's Eve celebrants also must be vigilant if they're hosting a gathering at home. Laws vary, but social host liability laws generally hold hosts who serve alcohol responsible for the actions of their guests after they leave their homes. So hosts could conceivably be

vulnerable to criminal or civil proceedings if they serve alcohol to guests who are then involved in traffic accidents or other incidents after they leave hosts' homes.

New Year's Eve is a time for celebration. Taking steps to ensure celebrations are safe can make the night even more fun.



A new year is worthy of celebration, and the festivities can be even more enjoyable when done safely.



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**Mon. Dec. 26th** – Normal Monday Sale & Monthly Organic Day.

**Mon. Jan. 2nd** – Normal Monday Sale & Monthly Fat Cow & Feeder Sale.

**Mon. Jan. 9th** – Normal Monday Sale & Monthly Heifer Sale.

**Mon. Jan. 16th** – Normal Monday Sale & Monthly Sheep, Lamb, Goat & Pig Sale.

**Mon. Jan. 23rd** – Normal Monday Sale & Monthly Organic Day.

**Mon. Jan. 30th** – Normal Monday Sale.

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## Career possibilities explored by Herkimer Elementary students

Herkimer Central School District students in fourth and fifth grade recently heard from local professionals and older students from four different fields during Herkimer Elementary School's Career Day.



Herkimer Elementary School students visit with Amanda Mroz, a veterinary technician at Herkimer Veterinary Associates, and a dog during the school's Career Day. Photos courtesy of Herkimer BOCES

Sara Lamanna, school counselor at Herkimer Elementary School, said it's helpful for students to be exposed to career opportunities at a young age.

"When students make the connection between why students need to come to school and the actions students must take in the future to help them reach the possibility of achieving their aspirations, they will have a much better chance at success," Lamanna said.

The Herkimer Elementary School Career Day took place on Nov. 16 during National Career Development Month. It was the first time this event was held. There is hope to make it an annual occurrence.

- The guest speakers were:
- Amanda Leskovar, ICON Laboratory Services director of project management
  - Ryan Grogan (a Herkimer Central School District graduate), an environmental conservation officer in Oswego County for the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
  - Amanda Mroz, a veterinary technician at Herkimer Veterinary Associates
  - Kaylee Beam and Jenna Buttacaroli, Central Valley Academy students in the Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego BOCES Cosmetology program.

Jennifer Olds, Herkimer Elementary School library media specialist, also exposed students to a variety of jobs during their library class on Career Day. She put together a window display and showcased career books for students to check out.

Lamanna said she wanted to organize the Career Day because school counselors work to create a future world where all students thrive. Along with a school counselor's duties of teaching kids to recognize and manage emotions, understand others, build healthy relationships and make good decisions, a school counselor also plays a critical role in students' career development, she said.

"Career awareness and exploration provide opportunities for students to explore how their interests can relate to a career and learn about potential careers," Lamanna said. "My motto is 'School is practice for life.' School helps teach us essential skills that we all need to be successful in life and a career."



Herkimer Elementary students look at items brought in for a Career Day by Ryan Grogan, a Herkimer Central School District graduate and an environmental conservation officer in Oswego County for NYS DEC.

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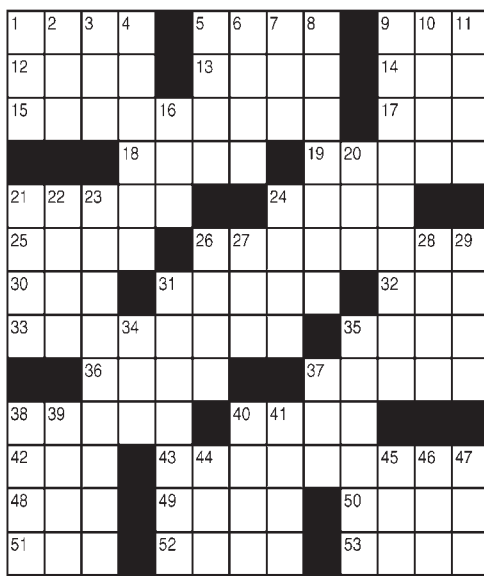
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# King Crossword

- ACROSS**
- 1 Slightly wet
  - 5 Wild canine
  - 9 Yoga pad
  - 12 Close
  - 13 Actress  
Perlman
  - 14 Green prefix
  - 15 Requiring low temperatures
  - 17 Moo — pork
  - 18 Boy, in  
Barcelona
  - 19 Big name in racing
  - 21 Antlered animals
  - 24 Jubilation
  - 25 Billions of years
  - 26 German
  - 30 Aachen article
  - 31 Postpone
  - 32 Wildebeest
  - 33 Romance-free, as a relationship
  - 35 Head, to  
Henri
  - 36 Sweet wine
  - 37 King of Judea
  - 38 Snapshot
  - 40 Graceful bird
  - 42 Slithery fish
  - 43 Looking good on the tube, say
  - 48 Part of TNT
  - 49 Lettuce unit
- DOWN**
- 1 Org. for a major party
  - 2 — Lingus
  - 3 Spring month
  - 4 Plug parts
  - 5 Wee songbird
  - 6 "It can't be!"
  - 7 Floral neckline
  - 8 Teaching staff
  - 9 Courier
  - 10 Dull pain
  - 11 Go sightseeing
  - 16 USO patrons
  - 20 Ultramodernist
  - 21 Leak out slowly
  - 22 Work hard
  - 23 Maryland's capital
  - 24 Avocado dip, for short
  - 26 Camp shelter
  - 27 Peyton's brother
  - 28 Grooving on
  - 29 Prompted
  - 31 Girl in "The Wizard of Oz"
  - 34 Nanny's charge
  - 35 Beliefs
  - 37 Crone
  - 38 Anti-fur org.
  - 39 Cattle group
  - 40 Cabbage salad
  - 41 Marries
  - 44 Shoe width
  - 45 Dianist Anais
  - 46 — tizzy
  - 47 Bottle top



- 50 Turner or Fey
- 51 Billboards
- 52 Evergreens
- 53 Crisp cookie

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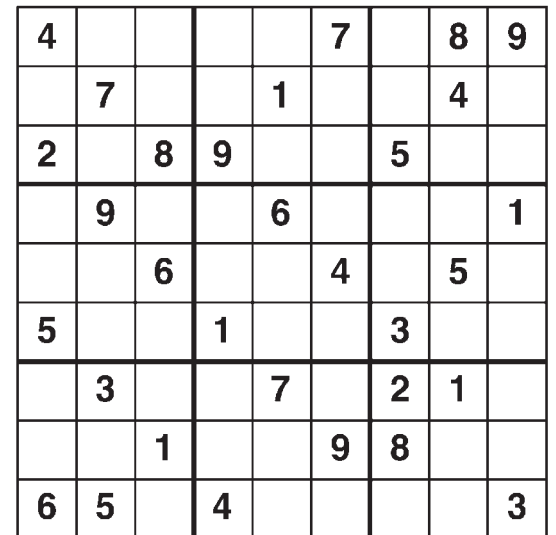
Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally  
 Unlisted clue hint: DERIVED FROM THE SUN

Battery	Coke	Fuel cell	Peak oil
Carbon	Crude oil	Grid	Renewable
Climate change	Fossil fuel	Nuclear	Wind farm
Coal	Fracking	Oil rig	

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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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<p><b>Multi Line New Tire Dealer</b></p> <p><b>Tire Repair</b></p> <p><b>Oil Changes</b></p> <p><b>Custom Wheels</b></p> <p><b>Auto Accessories</b></p> <p><b>Interstate Batteries</b></p> <p><b>Century Pickup Truck Caps</b></p> <p><b>Lawn and Garden Tires</b></p> <p><b>ATV &amp; UTV Tires</b></p> <p><b>Semi-Tractor &amp; Trailer Tire Service</b></p> <p><b>Semi-Tractor &amp; Trailer Computer</b></p>	<p><b>Spin Balancing</b></p> <p><b>Semi-Tractor &amp; Trailer Recapping Available</b></p> <p><b>Goodyear National Accounts</b></p> <p><b>NYS Contract Pricing</b></p> <p><b>OTR Tires</b></p> <p><b>Log Skidder Tires</b></p> <p><b>Agricultural Tires</b></p> <p><b>Tire Chains</b></p> <p><b>Ag-Bags</b></p> <p><b>Net Wrap</b></p> <p><b>Bale Wrap</b></p>
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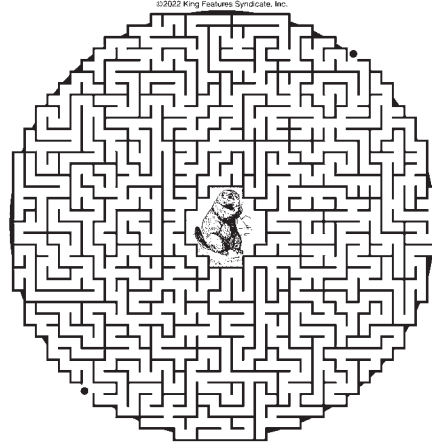
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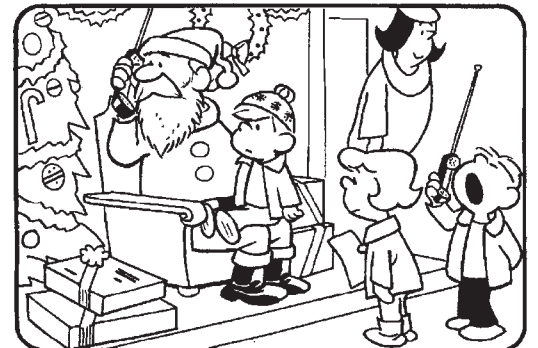
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### Mega Maze



### HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Cane is different. 2. Chair back is missing. 3. Cap is different. 4. List is smaller. 5. Hair is smaller. 6. Antenna is smaller.



"It looks like Santa Claus but it sounds like \_\_\_\_\_."

### 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!

Lore  
**GLEND**

Pierce  
**REAPS**

Belief  
**AIDE**

Place  
**RESTIN**

TODAY'S WORD

# Keeping your Christmas tree fresh through December

**F**or many families, picking out the perfect Christmas tree is an annual tradition. But there are a few things you should keep in mind about your real Christmas tree to help keep it fresh through the holiday season.

**Trim the trunk** - Make a fresh cut across the bottom of the trunk. I know it seems odd since you just cut down the tree, but it's necessary.

When the tree is first cut, sap rushes to close the gap and seal the bottom. That prevents the tree from absorbing water. Adding a fresh cut at the bottom before you place the tree in water will help it take in the water and stay fresh through December.

It's also recommended to put up the tree the same day you bring it home. But if you can't, you should store

the tree in a cool place with water until you're ready and able to set it up.

**Buy a big enough stand** - Make sure your tree stand is big enough for the tree and the water it will need.

**Water, water, water** - Always keep fresh-cut trees in water.

Don't add sugar, Sprite or any other additives, according to longtime Christmas tree farmer Damian Prause.

He recommends watering trees twice a day, and even more often than that, in the beginning if you notice the tree drinking more water.

**Choose an appropriate location** - Location is key. Don't place your tree in a window where it will get full sun. That will dry out the tree faster.

Also consider foot traffic and if any young or elderly family members or friends

could trip and stumble over the tree.

**Be cautious of heat sources** - This goes back to location. Make sure your tree isn't near a heater, fireplace or other heating and cooling sources. Those can dry out the tree or cause it to catch fire.

**Check your lights** - Before decking your tree, check your lights. Make sure there aren't any exposed wires or missing bulbs. Smaller lights produce less heat, which is beneficial with fresh-cut trees.

Don't leave your tree lit if you won't be in the same room or at home with it. Real trees, especially if they are starting to dry, can catch fire. It's important to follow general fire safety tips when you have a real Christmas tree indoors.

**Check water levels daily** - There's the water thing again. Make sure you check the water level in your tree's stand daily to ensure the water isn't below the bottom of the trunk. If it becomes very dry, it can become a fire and safety hazard.

# Around the Kitchen Table: Superpowers and other gifts

by Tamra M. Bolton

**D**id you know the minute you turn 50 you acquire a superpower? You automatically become invisible to anyone under the age of 30. I discovered my new superpower on a recent shopping trip with my daughter. My dryer was near its last tumble and I told my husband that's what I wanted for Christmas. Not being much of a shopper, he deferred to our 25-year-old and let her go instead.

When we walked into the store, several older female employees in Santa hats smiled and nodded as we made our way to the appliance section. We began looking over the models on display. A salesperson spied us and approached with a look of anticipation. Even though I spoke first, he looked right past me and zeroed in on my daughter. I guess we inherit another superpower at 50 - not only are we invisible, but we also speak at a decibel level only audible to dogs and small children.

He grinned and stuck out his hand to my daughter. She glanced at me before shaking his hand, slightly flustered at his behavior. Trying to steer the conversation back to me, she stated our quest for a dryer. He continued to ignore me, even though I was a mere three feet away.

Apparently, this invisibility superpower is very strong, especially in the presence

of young males. At first, I was perturbed, then amused, as I waited to see what he would do when "no one" was around but my daughter. I wished I'd had this superpower when I was a kid. It would've come in handy on several occasions.

The young man continued to chatter, asking sincere sales rep questions, offering plenty of advice as he touched each dryer in turn. Moving down the row, opening and closing doors, he extolled the features of each model. I watched my daughter make several attempts to shift his attention to me without success. She even turned toward me in desperation and asked, "What do you think?" He must have thought she was a half-bubble off plumb, talking to herself that way.

Finally, after about 10 minutes of listening to his salesmense and not making any headway in turning the conversation, she looked straight at him and said, "I'm not buying anything. It is my mother who has the money. She," and she pointed to me, "wants to buy a dryer."

Looking as if he had taken hold of a live wire, the young man suddenly came to himself and my spell was broken. He could see me. Somehow, it made me a little sad to know something so base could render my superpower useless.

Did I buy a dryer? Yes, but not from him.

The nice older gentleman at the next store could see me just fine.

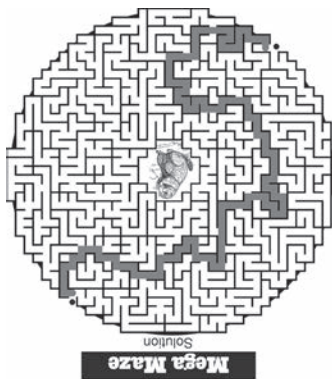
My other superpower? Cookies. Yep. My grandkids think my cookies are the best. Never mind that every other kid in America thinks the same about their grandma. Mine are convinced I have some sort of "cookie magic." Who am I to argue?

I usually don't share family secrets, but this recipe from my sister is just too good to keep to myself. It makes a huge batch, so it's perfect to make at Christmas. There's always plenty for eating and for gifting. You can use sugar in Christmas colors to sprinkle them before baking and make them in all the holiday shapes - kids love 'em!

Aunt Mel's Sugar Cookies

- 1 ½ cups sugar
- 1 ½ cups brown sugar
- 2 ½ cups shortening
- 3 eggs
- 3 teaspoons vanilla
- 1 teaspoon lemon extract
- 5 ½ cups flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons soda
- 3 teaspoons cream of tartar
- 3 teaspoons baking powder

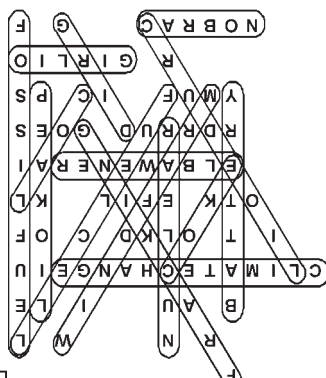
Cream sugars and shortening. Add eggs and extracts. Mix well. Sift dry ingredients together. Add to creamed mixture and mix well. Form dough into walnut-sized balls and roll in sugar. Place on parchment paper-lined cookie sheet. Press each ball with bottom of glass to flatten. Bake at 350° for 10 to 12 minutes. Cool on rack. Store in airtight container.



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

Answer

Weekly Sudoku



ENERGY TERMS

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

Solution time: 23 mins.

Answers

King Crossword

SCRAMBLERS

GRANDPA  
Today's Word  
1. Legend 2. Spear  
3. Idea; 4. Insert

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  - 1040 Services Offered
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  - 1080 Snowmobiles
  - 1096 Sports
  - 1109 Thrift
  - 1140 Trailers
  - 1147 Trains
  - 1148 Travel
  - 1165 Trees
  - 1170 Truck Parts & Equipment
  - 1180 Trucks
  - 1187 Vacuum
  - 1190 Vegetable
  - 1200 Veterinary
  - 1205 Wanted

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# HOME IMPROVEMENT

## Low-cost ways to revamp living areas

Home improvement projects require substantial financial investment. But just because a homeowner wants to bring a fresh look indoors doesn't mean they have to break the bank along the way.

Living rooms are some of the most frequently used spaces in a home, and they can use an update from time to time to stay on trend or to make the area more functional for a changing family dynamic. Here are some budget-friendly ideas for breathing new life into living room designs.

- Establish the budget. Homeowners should figure out how many dollars they can designate to a living room makeover before purchasing supplies or hiring out the work. Figure out the scope of the remodel, visit stores or suppliers to price out materials, get estimates from contractors and then plan for some unforeseen circumstances along the way to determine if this type of renovation is affordable. If not, scale things back until the project more closely aligns with your budget.

- Change the paint color. Lighter and brighter colors are on trend. A can or two of paint can do wonders for updating a space without a large financial commitment. Pair that new paint color with new window coverings and complementary throw pillows to pull the theme together with minimal expense.

- Update the flooring. Tired, outdated carpeting or other flooring can use an overhaul. While solid hardwood flooring may be preferable, there are many types of laminate flooring that mimic the looks of popular wood colors and styles for a fraction of the cost. Plus, many are sold at home improvement retailers and even at warehouse clubs or online for reasonable prices. Laminate flooring also may be a potential DIY job for a skilled homeowner, saving even more money.

- Introduce a fireplace. Fireplaces were once hot commodities, but that popularity waned in the 1970s and 1980s. Homeowners with chimneys may discover a fireplace was boarded over and the bare bones still exist that can be renovated to bring back character. There also are ventless freestanding units that are quite affordable that can mimic the look of a built-in fireplace.

- Reupholster instead of replace furniture. There's no need to throw away quality furniture if the fabric is the only thing impeding design. New upholstery or even a slipcover can update designs.

- Conquer clutter. Rather than adding something to the living room, remove clutter to give the room a more airy feel. This can instantly change the look of the room. Use cord covers to

tame plugs for electronics and remove unnecessary furniture from the room.

- Improve lighting. Another easy and often inexpensive fix is to change lighting fixtures, including using brighter, more energy efficient LED bulbs and to assess lighting needs to eliminate dark corners of rooms that can make the space seem drab.

Living room spaces in need of an update often can benefit from improvements that go easy on the wallet.



## Jump into adventurous resolution ideas

Individuals looking for a little more excitement and adventure in their lives can think about making New Year's resolutions that align with their adventurous goals. These adventurous ideas can serve as inspiration for anyone who wants to be a little more daring with this year's resolutions.

### Try a New Outdoor Activity

The great outdoors consistently beckons. Answer the call by engaging in a new outdoor activity. Any activity can be adventurous if it's new to you. Start off small and get more into it as your skills improve. Consider kayaking, surfing, mountain biking, rock climbing or anything else that presents a thrill.

### Get Creative in the Kitchen

Being adventurous can extend to any aspect of life, including dining. Expand your culinary horizons by trying new flavor profiles and recipes inspired by global cuisine. This may include ingredients you deem to be "exotic" but are customary in other parts of the world.

### Sleep Outdoors

Adventures do not have to be large and time-consuming. In fact, the term "microadventure" was dubbed by Alastair Humphreys, an adventurer and speaker, as a way to squeeze more gutsy activity into anyone's schedule. One way to do so is to resolve to sleep outdoors in a new place once a month. Shaking off the creature comforts of home enables you to adapt and embrace new experiences.

### Aim to Be More Sustainable

Active lifestyles often involve exploring natural landscapes. These areas can be affected by trash, which also can impact wildlife in negative ways. Resolve to keep parks, trails, rivers, lakes, forests and other outdoor areas clean and beautiful. Various organizations spearhead these types of efforts, but you can work independently as well. Always practice a "carry in, carry out" policy when hiking or enjoying nature.

Individuals can ponder the many ways to embrace more adventurous resolutions in the year ahead.



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# HOLIDAY HEADQUARTERS

## Deck the halls with DIY decor

Decorating is one of the joys of the holiday season. Families often decorate together, and such traditions may include dressing the Christmas tree and hanging holiday lights around the house.

A day spent making homemade ornaments is another great way to decorate and spend quality time together as a family during the holiday season. Though families can let their imaginations run wild when making ornaments at home, the following are some great starting points that can serve as springboards for holiday crafting sessions.

• **Snowmen:** The holiday season simply wouldn't be the same without snowmen. Homemade snowmen can be made out of ping pong balls, which are the ideal size when making ornaments for the Christmas tree. Those who want to go a little bigger can glue

whiffle balls or large polystyrene balls together or create their own papier mâché snowmen to display on mantles or on console tables in a foyer or hallway.

• **Santa Claus:** Another staple of holiday decor, Santa Claus has inspired many a DIY holiday ornament over the years. A paper plate Santa Claus with a cotton ball beard glued on can make for a fun Christmas craft, especially for young children who can't wait for the big guy to appear on Christmas Eve.

• **Penguins:** Though they might not have a direct link to the holiday season, penguins evoke feelings of cold weather, making them an ideal addition to holiday decor schemes. Make your own penguin family using polystyrene craft balls in assorted sizes and then hang them on the tree or place them around the house.

• **Reindeer:** Santa would not be able to get the job done each Christmas Eve without his trustworthy team of reindeer. Popsicle stick reindeer projects can be fun for kids of all ages and a great way for youngsters to recognize the efforts of Dasher, Dancer, Comet, Cupid and, of course, Rudolph, among others.

• **Cookie cutters:** Family baking sessions are a holiday tradition for millions of people. Though that often leads to batches upon batches of tasty cookies, it also means families tend to have a surplus of holiday cookie cutters around the house. Surplus cookie cutters tend to be discarded or relegated to the miscellaneous items drawer in kitchens, but a more awe-inspiring fate can await them. A coat of paint, some glitter and a little bit of string or twine is all families need to transform their extra cookie cutters into colorful tree ornaments.

Holiday decorating sessions can be made even more fun when families take time to craft some DIY decorations together.



## The origins of the 12 Days of Christmas

Christmas carols can be heard far and wide from Thanksgiving weekend through Christmas Day.

"The 12 Days of Christmas" is one of the most recognizable carols, and for good reason, as the popular song can trace its history back several centuries. Researchers have traced the earliest printed version of the poem on which the song is based all the way back to 1780. That's three years before the signing of the Treaty of Paris, which officially ended the American Revolutionary War.

The song has long been suspected to have been a way for Catholics in Britain to teach their children the catechism, as the 1700s was a controversial period for Catholicism in the country. However, no documentary evidence exists in support of that theory, and many historians feel it is inaccurate. Others indicate that, while 1780 is likely the first time the poem was printed, the poem is likely much older than that, with origins potentially in France or Scotland.

What is known is that the version many people recognize today, namely in song form, can be traced to the early 20th century, when English singer and composer Frederic Austin first popularized the melody for the song. Austin performed that version of the song beginning in 1905, and it was first published in 1909.



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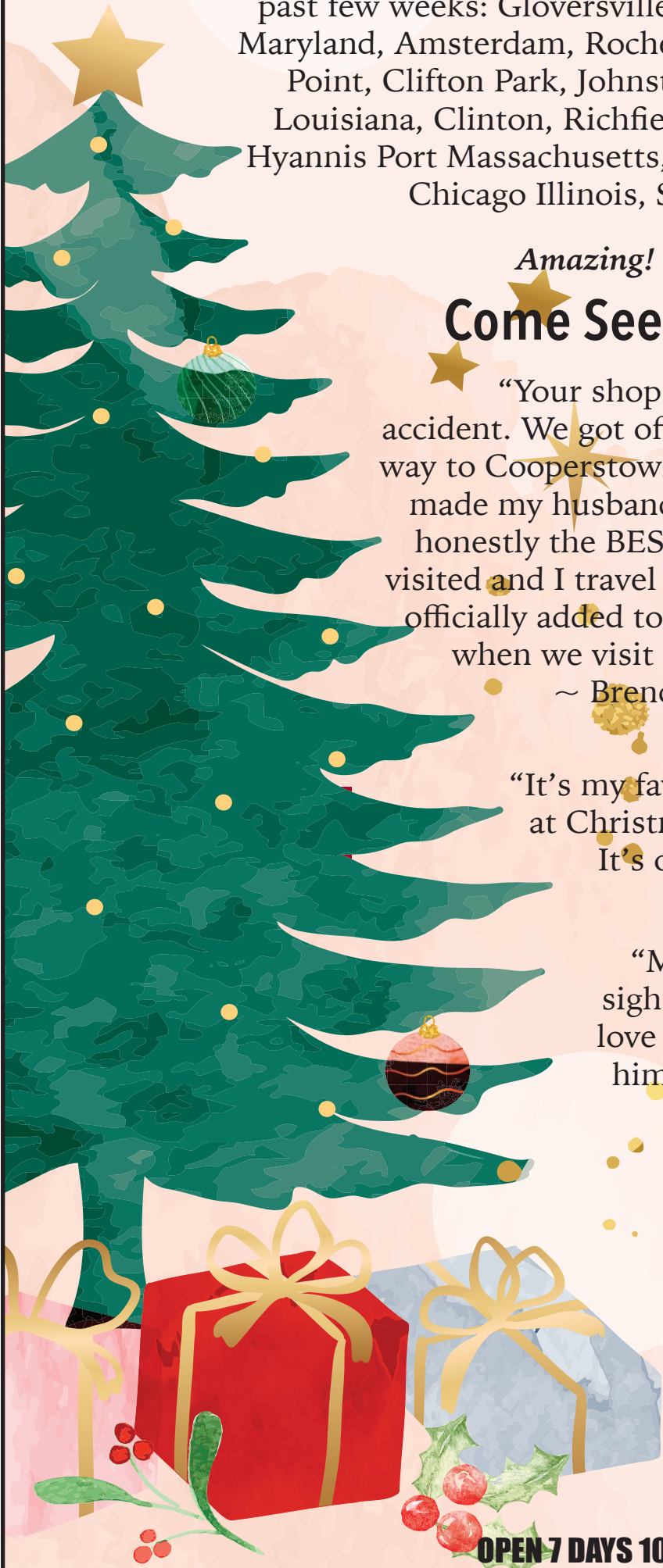
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## New Year's traditions around the world

Each Dec. 31, people anxiously await and count down to the arrival of the new year. January 1 often is a time for reflection and for making future plans. It also is a holiday full of tradition.

Notable New Year's traditions include toasting champagne beneath skies lit up by fireworks, kissing one's sweetheart at midnight and making resolutions to better oneself in the year ahead.

New Year's Eve and New Year's Day traditions vary across the globe. The following is a look at the unique ways people ring in the new year throughout the world.

- Filipinos embrace round fruits for the new year. The custom includes gathering 12 different round fruits for each month of the year. The round shape symbolizes wealth and prosperity.

- Around Stonehaven, Scotland, people wield large fireballs for the Hogmanay festival on New Year's Eve. The idea is to ward off evil spirits by swinging balls of fires over the heads of trained

professionals and then tossing them into the sea. The tradition has endured for more than 100 years.

- In the Eastern Orthodox Greek Church, Christmas isn't celebrated until Jan. 7. Aghios Vassilis, the Greek Santa Claus, makes his rounds on New Year's Day.

- Chilean families celebrate the arrival of the new year by commemorating deceased friends and family members. It is common for those in Chile to set up chairs next to graves in the cemetery.

- Burmese people end the Thingyan water festival on New Year's Day. Since April, they have celebrated the arrival of Thagyamin, a celestial Buddhist figure, with the firing of water cannons. The water-logged revelry ends with the new year.

- Siberians celebrate the new year with the planting of the "New Year's Tree" underneath frozen lakes. This "yolka" is said to symbolize the coming of Father Frost, but also represents starting

over.

- Grapes are a hallmark of Spanish new year's celebrations. Throughout Spain, revelers gobble a grape per second as they count down the last 12 seconds of the year. Each grape corresponds to good luck for the 12 months of the new year.

- In Denmark, residents break old dishes on the doorsteps of family and friends on New Year's Day. The bigger the pile, the more friends and good will in the new year.

- In China, where the new year is celebrated on Feb. 5 this year according to the lunar calendar, celebrants paint their doors red or hang red curtains or cutouts on windows to symbolize good luck.



New Year's Eve and New Year's Day traditions vary across the globe.

## Up on the housetop

Images of Santa Claus excite children across the globe each holiday season. Some such images appear on television, in stores or in the front yards of homes decked out for the holidays, while others are elicited through songs like "Up on the Housetop." Hollywood legend Gene Autry's mid-20th century version of "Up on the Housetop" might be the most widely recognized version of the song, but the tune actually dates back to 1864, making it the second oldest secular Christmas song ("Jingle Bells" was written in 1857).

### "Up on the Housetop"

Up on the housetop reindeer paws,  
 Out jumps good old Santa Claus  
 Down through the chimney with lots of toys  
 All for the little ones, Christmas joys  
 Ho, ho ho! Who wouldn't go?  
 Ho, ho ho! Who wouldn't go?  
 Up on the housetop, click, click, click  
 Down through the chimney with old Saint Nick  
 First comes the stocking of little Nell  
 Oh, dear Santa, fill it well  
 Give her a dolly that laughs and cries  
 One that can open and shut her eyes  
 Ho, ho, ho! Who wouldn't go?  
 Ho, ho, ho! Who wouldn't go?  
 Up on the housetop, click, click, click  
 Down through the chimney with good Saint Nick  
 Look in the stocking of little Bill  
 Oh, just see what a glorious fill  
 Here's a hammer and lots of tacks  
 Whistling ball and a whip that cracks  
 Ho, ho ho! Who wouldn't go?  
 Ho, ho, ho! Who wouldn't go?  
 Up on the housetop, click, click, click  
 Down through the chimney with good Saint Nick  
*Lyrics written by Benjamin Hanby  
 Lyrics courtesy of Lyrics.com*



# Happy Holidays

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## The perennial poinsettia

by Deborah J. Benoit, Extension Master Gardener, UVM

During the holidays, poinsettias show off in shades of red, pink and cream. They've been hybridized to decorate our homes during a season when the garden outdoors is fast asleep. Most people treat them as a holiday plant to be enjoyed for a limited time then disposed of, but that doesn't have to be.

Poinsettias are a perennial. That means that they can live long after the holiday season is over. In their native habitat of Mexico and Central America, they are large shrubs standing up to 10 - 15 feet tall, reblooming year after year. Because poinsettias are hardy in USDA plant hardiness zones 9 - 11, they will not survive outdoors year-round in the Northeast. However, they will make a fine houseplant.

Poinsettias prefer bright light, temperatures between 65° and 80° F, free of cold or hot drafts, and moist (but not wet) soil. The first thing to do when you bring home a poinsettia is to remove the foil covering on the pot.

Place the pot in either a saucer or decorative cachepot where you can see and remove any standing water. Thoroughly water when the soil feels dry.

Allow any excess water to drain away, then empty it from the saucer or cachepot. Never let it sit in water. Soggy soil will cause the roots to rot and leaves to curl and fall off.

Place the poinsettia near a window, but don't let the leaves touch the glass. Avoid cold and hot drafts. With a little care, your poinsettia will be happy and healthy through the holidays and beyond. And while the green foliage is lovely on its own, with the right con-

ditions, your poinsettia can bloom again.

In January, you may notice some leaf drop, and the remaining colored leaves (called bracts) will turn green. At this point, you have a choice. You can either treat the poinsettia as you do your other houseplants and let nature take its course, or you can intervene to force it to bloom during the next holiday season.

In nature, as daylight hours grow shorter, the poinsettia's bloom cycle begins. While the colored bracts of a poinsettia appear to be the plant's flower, they serve a special purpose – to attract pollinators to the tiny yellow flowers at their center.

Popular recommendations to force a poinsettia to rebloom include cutting back on watering and pruning the poinsettia to six to eight inches high when leaves begin to fall after the holidays and keeping it in a cool location (around 60°). When new growth appears, return to watering as usual and fertilize according to package instructions.

As autumn approaches, the tricky part begins. Make sure the plant receives at least 14 hours of total darkness by either covering it or moving it to a closet during those hours. When the bracts begin turning color, return the plant to a window where it can receive bright light.

A far easier method is to treat the poinsettia like any other houseplant. Place it in a south, east or west window. Care for it by watering as needed throughout the year.

Like any other flowering houseplant, your poinsettia will benefit from fertilizer. Apply it according to package directions.

As the days begin to shorten, the bracts will begin to change color. The change from

green to red (or whatever the color for that particular plant) will progress without any special treatment. Buds will form at the center of the bracts and the poinsettia will flower.

In short, this year's poinsettia can take its place among your other houseplants, and with a little TLC, next holiday season, it can celebrate the holiday with you again.



The author's poinsettia, which she placed in a west-facing window last January, watered regularly and did not fertilize, is in the process of reblooming with the bracts changing color from green to pink. Photos courtesy of Deborah J. Benoit

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# Chanukah foods steeped in tradition

Chanukah, which roughly translates to “dedication” or “in-duction,” is a Jewish holiday celebrated each year in November and/or December, depending on the Jewish calendar. Although it may not hold the same level of spiritual significance as some other holidays of the religion, Chanukah is a highly anticipated and popular holiday among people who practice Judaism.

Two miracles are celebrated on Chanukah. One of them is a victory by a small number of Jews known as the Maccabees, who defeated the Greek army occupying the Holy Land. The other miracle occurred when the Maccabees liberated their Temple from the Greeks. They only discovered a single night’s worth of oil to light the menorah. However, that oil managed to burn for eight days and nights.

Chanukah celebrations include various traditions that commemorate these miracles. Many celebrations focus around food and fun. It’s common to find similar foods in Jewish households during the eight days of Chanukah. Here’s a look at some of the more common foods and their significance.

- **Latkes:** Latkes have different names among the sects of Judaism, but they’re essentially fried potato pancakes. Different fried foods, like latkes, are eaten during Chanukah to

honor the miracle of the oil that burned for eight days. Other fried foods include jelly-filled doughnuts called “sufganiyot.”

- **Loukoumades:** These deep-fried puffs dipped in honey or sugar are treats used to represent the cake eaten by the Maccabees.

- **Dairy:** Dairy was not always included in Chanukah traditions, but cheese, blintzes and cheesecakes emerged to symbolize the story of Judith. Legend says Judith was a beautiful woman who saved her village from attacking Babylonians. Judith was able to enter the enemy camp thanks to her beauty, charm and a basket of wine and cheese she brought along. She fed the enemy general, Holofernes, who consumed lots of salty cheese and wine and passed out. Judith killed the general, and the Babylonians left shortly thereafter.

- **Brisket and tongue:** Although these foods are not tied to a particular Chanukah story, they have grown quite popular as traditional Chanukah meals. Beef brisket pairs well with potato latkes, and beef or veal tongue also may be served.

- **Kugel:** Potatoes are often baked, along with other hearty vegetables, into casseroles called “kugels.”

- **Challah:** Challah is a leavened bread traditionally baked and served on the Sabbath and Jewish holidays. The braided

white bread is both attractive to look at and tasty to eat.

Food plays a big role in many Chanukah traditions, as there are various delicious dishes steeped in historical significance.



Fried jelly doughnuts are a treat enjoyed on Chanukah.

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## Did you know?

Historians believe New Year’s resolutions can be traced back thousands of years to the ancient Babylonians, who lived in a region of Mesopotamia now known as Iraq. At the dawn of a new year, the Babylonians would promise their gods that they would return objects they did not repay in the previous year. Babylonians believed keeping these promises would bring them the gods’ favor in the year ahead.

beginnings and endings, that they would conduct themselves well in the coming year. Depictions of Janus typically include two faces, which are meant to symbolize his link to both the past (looking back) and the future (looking ahead).

Romans later adopted a similar practice, promising Janus, their god of

Early Christians also had a tradition similar to New Year’s resolutions, as they would spend the first day of the new year reflecting on mistakes they made in the past and resolving to improve themselves and avoid making such mistakes in the new year.



## Put the finishing touch on Chanukah celebrations

Challah is a special bread within Jewish households that is cooked to herald the Sabbath and celebrate various holidays. Jewish scholars indicate that the history of challah can be traced to the scripture story of manna, or bread, that God sent to the Israelites in the wilderness. Also, during the days of the Temple in Jerusalem, Jews presented dough as an offering to priests, who used it to bake their own bread.

Challah can be sweet or savory, and leftovers can make for a delicious French toast base for breakfasts and brunches. Anyone can learn how to make challah for their holiday celebrations. Traditional challah is made with eggs and a shiny egg wash, but this plant-based version uses potato water starch in the recipe. Bake up a loaf or two with this recipe, courtesy of "Plant-Based Gourmet: Vegan Cuisine for the Home Chef" (Apollo Publishers) by chef Suzi Gerber.

### Challah

Makes 2 loaves

- 3 Yukon Gold potatoes or other butter potatoes (about 1 1/2 pounds), peeled and cubed
  - 1/3 cup safflower oil or avocado oil
  - 1/3 cup sugar
  - 5 cups all-purpose flour or gluten-free all-purpose flour
  - 1 tablespoon cornstarch
  - 1 teaspoon kala namak (Indian black salt)
  - 1 teaspoon turmeric powder
  - 1 teaspoon sea salt
  - 1 packet active instant dry yeast (approximately 1/4 ounce)
  - 1/2 cup Homemade Butter (see below), softened and cut into cubes
  - 1/3 cup oat milk
1. To make "potato water," combine the potatoes with 3 1/2 cups cold water in a large pot, bring to a boil, and keep at a boil for 20 minutes, uncovered. The liquid level should reduce



Challah can be sweet or savory, and leftovers can make for a delicious French toast base for breakfasts and brunches.

to about 2 cups.

2. Drain the potatoes and reserve the liquid.
3. Combine 1 1/2 cups of the potato water with the safflower oil and sugar in a mixing bowl or a large measuring cup with a pour spout (reserve the remaining potato water). Whisk until sugar is completely dissolved.
4. Combine the flour, cornstarch, kala namak, turmeric and sea salt in a stand mixer and whisk to combine. Make sure there are no salt clusters for the yeast to come in contact with, then slowly add the yeast.

5. Change the mixer attachment to a dough hook, and slowly add the potato-water mixture to the dry ingredients while mixing. This slow pour should take about a minute.
6. Add in the softened butter, 1 cube at a time, until fully incorporated.
7. Knead the dough hook on medium-high (number 6 on standard home machines) for 10 minutes, keeping an eye on the elasticity of the dough. Pinch and pull the dough to check its elasticity: When ready, it should stretch like a rubber band and reach about 10 inches without

breaking.

8. Let the dough rise, covered, for 45 minutes at room temperature. It should double in size.
9. Portion the dough into 2 equal blocks. Divide each block into thirds to form a traditional straight braid, or into 4 sections to form a round braid. Roll the pieces into equal-sized ribbons that are at least 18 inches long. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and braid the ribbons directly on the parchment, tucking the ends under and pinching them together.
10. Cover again and let rise a second time, for 30 to 45 minutes. The dough should dramatically increase in size, eliminating any gaps in the braid.
11. Preheat the oven to 375° F.
12. While the bread rises, combine the remaining potato water (about 1/2 cup) with the cornstarch in a small saucepan. Bring to a simmer, whisk often until a thick gel forms, and then remove from the heat.
13. Slowly add the oat milk to the gel, whisking until the gel is thin enough to paint.
14. Brush a generous and even amount of the starch-and-oat-milk wash onto the risen bread right before placing in the oven.
15. Bake for 40 to 45 minutes, rotating once halfway through. Remove once the crust is smooth and dark and the bottom is strong. When you thump the bottom with your finger, it should sound hollow. The internal temperature should be 190° to 200°.
16. Paint the loaves again with more of the wash and let cool. Store in zip-top bags. Keep for three to five days (if they last you that long!) at room temperature, or up to six months if frozen.

Put B7

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**Put from B6**

17. If you over-proof or let the finished loaves sit out uncovered or past five days and they get hard, it's French toast time.

**Homemade Butter**

Makes approximately 2 1/2 cups  
1 cup hempseed milk or full-fat canned

coconut milk  
1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 3/4 cups melted refined coconut oil (the kind that is solid at room temperature)  
3 tablespoons safflower oil, avocado oil or sunflower oil  
1 tablespoon sunflower lecithin powder or 1

1/2 teaspoons liquid lecithin  
1/2 teaspoon arrowroot powder  
1. Combine the hempseed milk, apple cider vinegar, and salt and stir. Allow to curdle for 5 - 10 minutes.  
2. In a blender or food processor, combine the milk mixture with the remaining ingredients and blend for two minutes on high.

3. Pour the mixture into a stick mold or any shape tub and freeze for at least three hours.  
4. Keeps for up to one month in the fridge or up to six months in the freezer.  
Tip: Use the boiled potatoes from making the potato water and turn into mashed potatoes or potato pancakes.

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*Dinner With Santa*

December 23rd  
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Trinity Lutheran Church  
(A Historic 18th Century Church)  
Stone Arabia - Rt 10N  
Palatine Bridge

*Christmas Eve Candlelight Service*

December 24 • 4:30PM and 7PM  
Reformed Church of Canajoharie

*Old Fashioned Candlelight Service*

December 24th • 7PM  
Grace Christian Church  
20 Center Street, St. Johnsville

*Christmas Eve Service*

December 24 • 5-6PM  
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# Holiday baking gets even sweeter with brownies

What would the holidays be without delicious foods to share with loved ones? In fact, crafting elaborate meals and baking goodies is par for the course once the weather begins to cool and decorations turn up on businesses and homes.

Many people have tried-and-true recipes they rely on each year, but there's always the possibility to give new tasty tidbits a try. There are so many tantalizing desserts to tickle the tongue, but this recipe for "Rocky Recchiuti Brownies" from "Chocolate Obsession" (Stewart, Tabori & Chang) by Michael Recchiuti and Fran Gage yields rich and chewy brownies that no holiday celebrant will be able to resist.

### Rocky Recchiuti Brownies

Makes 16 brownies  
5 1/2 ounces 100% unsweetened

chocolate, coarsely chopped, divided

10 tablespoons (5 ounces) unsalted butter with 82% butterfat, cut into 1-inch slices.

2/3 cup (3 1/2 ounces) unbleached all-purpose flour

1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

3 extra-large eggs, at room temperature

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1 1/3 cups granulated cane sugar

1/3 cup walnut halves, roasted and roughly chopped

6 Tahitian Vanilla Bean Marshmallows, each 1 1/2 inches square, cut into quarters (see recipe below)

Preheat the oven to 325° F. Line the bottom of an 8-inch square baking pan with parchment paper and liberally coat the paper and the pan

sides with flavorless vegetable oil.

Put 3 ounces of the chocolate and the butter in a medium stainless-steel bowl and set over a pot of simmering water. Heat, stirring occasionally, until the chocolate and butter melt and are fully combined and the mixture is smooth. Lift the bowl from the pot. Set aside.

Sift the flour and salt together into a bowl. In another bowl, combine the eggs and vanilla extract and whisk together by hand until blended. Whisk in the sugar.

Whisk the egg mixture into the chocolate. Add the flour and the remaining 2 1/2 ounces chocolate to the batter and, using a rubber spatula, mix well. Then mix in the walnuts.

Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Spread it evenly with a small offset spatula. Scatter the marshmallow pieces evenly over the surface and push them halfway into the batter. The tops should remain uncovered.

Bake on the middle shelf of the oven until the marshmallows are browned and a skewer inserted into the center of the brownie sheet comes out with some batter clinging to it, about 45 minutes. Let cool completely in the pan on a wire rack, then cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate until cold.

Run a table knife around the edge of the pan to loosen the sides of the brownie, and then slide the brownie, still on the paper, onto a work surface. Using a ruler to guide you and a sharp knife, cut into sixteen 2-inch squares.

### Tahitian Vanilla Bean Marshmallows

About 40 marshmallows  
Flavorless vegetable oil for the pan

3 3/4 teaspoons unflavored gelatin  
3 tablespoons water

2 cups granulated cane sugar, divided into halves

1 1/2 cups light corn syrup  
4 extra-large egg whites, at room temperature

1 Tahitian vanilla bean, split horizontally

About 3 cups powdered cane sugar for finishing

Line the bottom of an 8-by-12-inch sheet pan with parchment paper and lightly coat the paper and the pan sides with flavorless vegetable oil. Put the gelatin in a small bowl. Add the water and stir. Set aside to soften.

Combine 1 cup of the sugar with the corn syrup in a large, heavy-bottomed pot. Use an unlined copper pot if you have one. Place over medium heat and cook, stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon, until the sugar melts. Then continue to cook, without stirring, until the mixture reaches 230° F on a candy thermometer. If any crystals form on the sides of the pan and the mixture heats, wash them down with a wet pastry brush.

Meanwhile, put the egg whites in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whip attachment. Scrape the seeds from the vanilla bean into the bowl.

When the sugar syrup reaches 240°, start to beat the egg whites on medium speed. When the whites form very soft peaks, add the remaining 1 cup sugar and continue beating.

When the sugar syrup reaches 250°, remove it from the heat and stir in the softened gelatin. The syrup will foam up and triple in volume.

Switch the mixer to high speed and slowly pour the syrup into the beaten egg whites, aiming for the side of the bowl. The whites will almost double in volume. Reduce the speed to medium-high and beat until the whites (not the outside of the bowl) are lukewarm to the touch, about 114°, about 15 minutes.

Scrape the marshmallow mixture into the prepared pan and, using a small offset spatula, spread it evenly to the sides. Let cool completely at room temperature.

To cut the marshmallows, sift about 1/2 cup of the powdered sugar onto a work surface in a rectangle the size of a sheet pan. Sift another 2 cups powdered sugar into a large bowl. Run a thin-bladed knife around the edge of the pan to loosen the marshmallow. Invert the pan onto the sugared surface to unmold, then lift off the pan and peel off the parchment paper. Sift about 1/2 cup powdered sugar evenly over the top. Using a ruler to guide you and a lightly oiled sharp knife, cut the marshmallow sheet into 1 1/2-inch squares. It is easier if you use a pressing motion, rather than pull the knife. After cutting, toss the marshmallows, a few at a time, in the bowl of powdered sugar, coating them lightly.



What would the holidays be without delicious foods and sweets to share with loved ones?

## Guess who?

I am an elf who is teased by other elves because of my desire to pursue a career in dentistry as opposed to being a toymaker for Santa Claus. One of my best friends ends up being a four-legged fellow with a glowing red nose.

Answer:  
Hemey the Misfit Elf



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## How to involve kids with holiday baking

The holiday season is steeped in tradition. Many holiday traditions are centered around food, with much of the focus on all of the decadent treats and desserts taking center stage at many family gatherings.

Many parents hope to involve their children in as many family holiday traditions as they can. Holiday baking is one kid-friendly tradition, and parents can make it even more so by taking a few simple steps before they get started.

- Purchase kid-friendly baking equipment. Bakers rely on lots of tools to make cookies, cakes and other delicacies. That equipment

is even available in kids' sizes. Kids may be more excited about baking if they have their own equipment, and such gear also can make it easier for them to lend a hand. A spatula made for youngsters can make it easier for kids to move cookies from a baking sheet to a platter, while colorful measuring cups and their own whisk can excite youngsters about baking.

- Plan ahead. Seasoned bakers know that it's imperative to have the right supplies, including ingredients, on hand before beginning a baking session. That's even more necessary when baking with kids, who might not be as

patient as moms and dads hope if a baking session has to be paused to run to the store for a missing ingredient or to dig out some tools from the back of the pantry. Plan ahead by setting everything out and assembling all the necessary ingredients the night before you plan to bake.

- Delegate wisely. Young kids may want to do everything Mom and Dad do, but baking is

a delicate science that requires careful attention to detail and a strict adherence to recipes. So it's important that parents delegate wisely when involving children in holiday baking. Whisking, stirring and topping off cookies with frosting and sprinkles are fun, kid-friendly tasks.

- Add some fun foods to the menu. If you plan to bake holiday cookies, purchase kid-friendly holiday cookie cutters before your baking session so youngsters have as much fun as possible. Kids may have more fun if they get to make Santa Claus, Frosty or Rudolph cookies.

- Make a mess. Don't be afraid to get a little messy when baking with children. Moms and dads may love a clean kitchen, but kids tend to have more fun in the kitchen when things get a little messy. Douse each other with a little flour and make a joke of things if some ingredients find their way onto the counter or the floor instead of into your mixing bowl.

Parents can make the holiday baking that much more fun by letting their kids pitch in this year.



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Lexi Mann pondering over everything that is good to eat at Christmas time.



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# New Year's resolutions for seniors

Resolutions can be made at any age. Seniors who may feel that they are past the point in life where trying something new or setting goals is relevant to them can reconsider, as it's never too late in life to have aspirations big or small.

The golden years may be different from any other period in a person's life, but seniors can still embrace making positive changes. In fact, according to studies by Rush University, people who view life with a sense of purpose are two to four times less likely to develop Alzheimer's disease. The following are some potential resolutions for seniors.

• Focus on safety. Aging sparks certain changes to the body and mind. Recognizing that you can't do all of the things you did when you were younger doesn't mean there aren't ways to improve upon those things you can do, especially if you make some safety-minded tweaks. Resolve to improve home safety, such as removing tripping hazards, installing grab bars, checking smoke alarms and installing a security system.

• Find new and enjoyable workouts. The exercise routines you engaged in just a few years ago may no longer suit your physical abilities or interests. Investigate new fitness regimens or methods of movement. Tai chi, yoga, water aerobics, walking clubs and more can be

incorporated into your daily habits.

• Organize medical records. Seeing health pictured systematically and clearly can help you stay on top of appointments and wellness measures. There are many different organizing systems to embrace; find one that works for your needs.

• Declutter your home. Resolve to get rid of extraneous items that are no longer serving a purpose beyond collecting dust. Having more room to move around can be safer, particularly if you need a cane or another assistive device and there will be less to clean if you remove some clutter. If you plan to downsize soon, clearing clutter can make the move easier.

• Learn something new. A language, skill or hobby are all within reach when you map out the steps to achieving your goal.

• Make new social connections. Caring Places senior communities indicates socially active older adults have better cognition and lower risks for depression than those who do not consistently reach out to friends. Aspire to make some new companions or to get back in touch with those you haven't spoken to in some time.

Seniors can focus on key resolutions to make positive changes for the future.



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# DINING & ENTERTAINMENT

## Miller family sends thanks

The family of Sandra S. Miller would like to thank everyone who sent cards or gave words of kindness and condolences in her passing. A special thank you goes to Pastor Aurand and Chris Hanley who helped us through our loss of our dear wife and sister.

## Sacandaga Sportsmen's Day set for Jan. 7

Sacandaga Sportsmen's Day is set for Jan. 7 from 9:45 a.m. - 5 p.m. at Sacandaga Bible Conference, 191 Lakeview Rd., Broadalbin. Tickets are available for \$20, which include admission to all exhibits, seminars, door prizes, the keynote presentation, the Wild Game Buffet and eligibility for the grand prize drawings. Tickets are available now through Sacandaga Bible Conference.

Seminars during the day will include

workshops presented by area and regional experts covering a range of topics on hunting and fishing.

The featured presenter of the day will be guest speaker Brad Clay. Clay founded Final Descent Outdoors (final-descentoutdoors.com) and it grew from that into a national TV show that airs on the Pursuit Channel and is in 40 million homes in North America. The program can also be found on @FinalDescent-

Outdoors on YouTube.

A highlight of Sacandaga's event is the Sportsmen's Wild Game Buffet. This buffet is worth the admission cost alone. This year the buffet will include a selection of dishes with elk, venison, boar, bear and catfish.

For more information, call Sacandaga Bible Conference at 518.883.3713 or email Dave at director@sacandagabible-conference.com.

## Pitfalls to avoid when making resolutions this year

Estimates vary depending on the year and scope of the study, but research into New Year's resolutions has generally found that fewer than 10% of people who make resolutions each year stay the course until they've accomplished their goal. In fact, a 2020 poll conducted by OnePoll in conjunction with Crispy Green found that the average person has abandoned their resolution by Feb. 1.

No two people are the same, but resolutions could fall victim to various pitfalls that can affect anyone. Recognition of these pitfalls when making a resolution may improve your chances of being successful in the year ahead.

- Lack of specificity: When making a resolution, be as specific as possible. If you want to read more, resolve to read two books per month (or however many books you feel you can reasonably read in a month). If you want to lose weight, speak to your physician to help you set a specific weight loss goal you can meet without compromising your overall health.

- No measuring stick to track progress: Specificity is

important, but it's not the only tool you can use to stay the course with a resolution. Maintain a resolution journal or blog that allows you to gauge your performance. This can help you engage more fully in your resolution efforts, providing an outlet you can use to explore your successes and failures. The more engaged you are in your resolution efforts, the more likely those efforts will prove successful.

- Going it alone: The buddy system works when pursuing various goals, and New Year's resolutions are no exception. A friend or family member along for the resolution journey can make it easier to maintain your motivation. For example, anyone who wants to read more can join a book club, which can provide the motivation to finish books or excerpts before a weekly discussion.

- Biting off more than you can chew: Small resolutions may not seem like much, but minor efforts can serve as the steppingstones to realizing larger goals. If your goals are too ambitious at the outset, you're more likely to give up at the first setback.

- Not anticipating setbacks: Setbacks will happen, and as noted, it's easy to let them derail your efforts when they first appear. Recognize that there will be bumps in the road but that these bumps should in no way end your journey. Take setbacks as the valuable lessons that they can be and use them as an opportunity to examine what you did that didn't work and what you can do to avoid future setbacks.

**PANCAKE BREAKFASTS**  
**ARE BACK!!**  
**AT THE EPHRATAH ROD & GUN CLUB**

**Save The Dates:**

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 15, 2023**

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2023**

**SUNDAY, MARCH 19, 2023**

**SERVING**  
**7AM - NOON**






**I like big bucks  
and I  
cannot lie**



Thomas Parrino secured this lady in Palatine Bridge.



Ryan Macek of Glen with a Kansas whitetail.



Jonah Buley from Ames with his recent deer take.



Kyle Kretser with his turkey take.

**“In a civilized and cultivated country wild animals only continue to exist at all when preserved by sportsmen. The excellent people who protest against all hunting, and consider sportsmen as enemies of wildlife, are ignorant of the fact that in reality the genuine sportsman is by all odds the most important factor in keeping the larger and more valuable wild creatures from total extermination.”**  
- Theodore Roosevelt, 26th U.S. President



Seventeen-year-old Myatt Mitchell from Canajoharie.



Gage Parrino from Rural Grove with his squirrels.

**WE ARE MOVING!**

**The Sportsman's Den & D&D's Pet Supplies**

EST 2011

Currently Located at 36 Canal St., Fort Plain

We will be **CLOSED** the week of Dec. 26 to Jan. 1 to move to our **NEW** location,

**37 Main St., Fort Plain**

**WE WILL RE-OPEN MONDAY, JAN. 2, AT 10 AM AT 37 MAIN ST, FORT PLAIN**

**ALL THE SAME GREAT PRODUCTS AND THE SAME GREAT PRICES WITH A WHOLE NEW LAYOUT!**

- ALL used aquariums, with filters, lids, rocks, air stones, **MUST GO!**
- Priced to move, need gone!
- Anyone with some free time that week, any help would be great!

**LOOKING FORWARD TO STARTING FRESH IN A NEW SPOT.**

## A perfect dish for a New Year's Day brunch

The late-night revelry of New Year's Eve has made New Year's Day brunch a go-to tradition for millions of people. Staying up until the calendar officially turns from one year to the next at the stroke of midnight can make it harder to get out of bed on the morning of Jan. 1, so there may be no better day to plan a brunch than the first day of the calendar year.

Many restaurants offer brunch specials on New Year's Day, but people need not leave home to ensure their first meal of the new year is delicious. This recipe for "Pan-Fried Eggs and Mixed Mushroom Sauté on Toasted Sourdough Slices" from "Sunday Brunch" (Chronicle Books) by Betty Rosbottom can be just the dish to begin a new year.

### Pan-Fried Eggs & Mixed Mushroom Sauté on Toasted Sourdough Slices

Serves 4

#### Mushroom Sauté

- 1 ¼ ounces mixed dried mushrooms
- 1 ½ cups boiling water
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 8 ounces sliced brown mushrooms
- 2 teaspoons minced garlic
- 1 teaspoon dried crushed rosemary (see tip)

#### Kosher salt

Freshly ground black pepper

#### Toast and Eggs

4 half-inch thick sourdough slices

#### Olive oil

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

4 eggs

#### Kosher salt

Freshly ground black pepper

Rosemary sprigs for garnish (optional)

1. For the mushroom sauté: Place the dried mushrooms in a medium bowl and cover with the boiling water. Let stand until softened, 20 minutes. Strain in a sieve lined with a double thickness of paper towels and reserve the soaking liquid. Coarsely chop the mushrooms.

2. Heat the olive oil in a medium, heavy frying pan set over medium heat. When hot, add the brown mushrooms and sauté, stirring often, for 6 minutes. Add the reserved mushrooms, garlic, rosemary, and ½ teaspoon salt; stir for 1 minute. Add the mushroom liquid and cook, stirring, until it has evaporated, 4 to 7 minutes. Season with salt and several grinds of pepper. Remove the frying pan from the heat and cover with foil to keep warm. (The mushrooms can be prepared a day ahead; cool, cover and refrigerate. Reheat, stirring, over medium heat.)

3. For the toast and eggs: Brush both sides of the bread slices generously with olive oil. Set a 10- to 11-inch nonstick frying pan over medium-high heat, and, when hot, add the bread and cook until lightly browned, about 2 minutes per side. Remove the toast and cover loosely with foil. When pan is cool enough to handle, wipe it out with clean paper towels.

4. Add the butter to the frying pan and set it over medium heat. When the butter starts to foam, break an egg into a saucer and gently slide it into the frying pan. Repeat with the remaining eggs. Immediately reduce the heat to low and cook, basting the eggs with some of the butter in the pan frequently, until the whites are firm and the yolks are still soft and runny, 3 minutes.

5. While the eggs are cooking, arrange a toasted bread slice on each of four plates. Mound the mushrooms evenly over the toast.

6. Remove each egg with a spatula and arrange on top of the mushrooms. Season with salt and pepper and, if desired, garnish each serving with a rosemary sprig. Serve immediately.

Tip: If you can't find dried crushed rosemary, crush regular dried rosemary in an electric spice mill, or place it in a self-sealing plastic bag and roll over it with a rolling pin.



Many restaurants offer brunch specials on New Year's Day, but people need not leave home to ensure their first meal of the new year is delicious. "Pan-Fried Eggs and Mixed Mushroom Sauté on Toasted Sourdough Slices" can be just the dish to begin a new year at home.



# Holland Heights



## Golf Course

1228 Steuben Hill Road, Herkimer, NY 13350  
315-866-8716

**2023 Season Passes On Sale Now  
Until December 31st**

**Buy One for \$600 • Get One FREE! (That's Only \$300 Each)**

**Our Two Full Swing Golf Simulators Are Open for the Season  
So Call For a Tee Time!!**

**GIFT CERTIFICATES ALSO AVAILABLE**

# Want to Spread Holiday Cheer?

The following locations are accepting donations

## TOYS FOR TOTS

### ST. JOHNSVILLE

- Bridge Street Diner
- Ephratah Fire Department

### BROADALBIN

- American Legion Post #337
- Veteran's Hemp Market

### FONDA

- On Track Nutrition

### JOHNSTOWN

- Westmeadow Creamery
  - Main Motorcar
  - Coldwell Banker

### DUANESBURG

- NBT Bank

### AMSTERDAM

- Legacy Nutrition
- Gloss Aesthetics
- New Dimensions Health Care

## Toy Drive

Palatine Bridge Dollar General  
(in partnership with  
St. Johnsville Benefit Club)

## Stuff the Bus for Veterans and their families

Tues-Sun 3-8PM  
until December 9th

AMVETS Post 2000 in Canajoharie  
\*New Items Only\* • 518-384-5592

## Little Falls Lumber

Accepting donations for  
local teens

\*Hygiene products & toiletries,  
winter necessities, \$5-\$10 gift cards\*  
Until December 2nd  
315-823-2470

## Herkimer County Office of the Aging

Benefiting the 60+ population  
Accepting grocery store gift cards,  
or you can sponsor an older adult by  
picking up a gift tag  
November 14 - December 12  
109 Mary St. #1101, Herkimer  
315-867-1124

## St. Paul's Lutheran Church Mitten Tree

\*NEW\* Hats, Gloves, Mittens, Scarves, etc.  
63 Lydius St., Fort Plain

