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HAPPY-HAPPY-HO-HO-HO!

Merry this, and happy that! That about covers everything, right? There is so much going on at this time of year, and I have to tell you that I find the lead-up to Christmas to be a whirlwind. Maybe it doesn't help that I'm often last minute with things... yeah, that's 100% on me. But the holidays always sneak up on me! I mean, it really wasn't that long ago that the kids were just starting the school year. Oh come on, you know what I'm talking about! And yet, here we are: in December – at the end of the year – trying to get it all done before ringing in the New Year and starting fresh. Amiright, or amiright? Now, don't get me wrong, I'm not saying this in a negative or overly sarcastic way (just a little sarcasm), but it's true. I am having a really hard time believing that it is ALREADY December and that 2022 is almost over! Perhaps that's why I drag my feet with holiday preparations, because I'm just in denial. ... yeah, let's go with that: denial. That always works.

But what I have done (instead of holiday prep) is reflect on this past year. 2022 was really a fantastic year in so many ways. We met so many awesome people and were able to share their stories on the pages of this magazine. Thank you to all of our dedicated readers, to the subjects and contributors to our stories, and a big-big thank you to all of our advertising sponsors. Our advertisers make this magazine and all that we do possible! So dear reader, be sure to thank (at least) one of our advertisers if you are able, and if you want to do one better: purchase a product or service from them. Remember that we live in an awesome small community, and what goes around comes around. That's our philosophy and we love supporting local, and we always implore our friends to do the same.

As we bid farewell to 2022 we are all excited for a fresh start, because come January 1 it is time for *tabula rasa*! It's a clean, fresh slate. How many of you set New Year's resolutions? I didn't... but I always examine where I am in my life, what I want to work on, what I want to improve, and what I want to do in the coming year, whether that has to do with work or in my personal life. But regardless of what it is, I am always trying to do good, have fun, and learn new things. And for me personally, I hope that 2023 will be chock-full of fun, adventures, positivity, and good health. Perhaps I should just make that my New Year's resolution? And work every day to make sure I laughed a little harder, worked smarter, learned something new, and contributed to my community. I can get on board with that! No matter your resolution, I wish you an amazing 2023. See you in January!

– Thorunn Kristjansdottir



DECEMBER 2022

Holiday traditions and sweetness, all wrapped up in one yummy scene!

Cover photo by
Olivia Valentine

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PUBLISHER, EDITOR, ADVERTISING, WRITING, PHOTOGRAPHY, & OTHER DUTIES
Thorunn Kristjansdottir publisher, editor-in-chief, designer, etc.

Contributing writers:

Anna Martucci | Betsy Maury | Christine Bates | Dominique De Vito | Ian Strever | Jesse DeGroodt
Lorraine Alexander | Mary B. O'Neill | Olivia Valentine & Caroline Markonic | Regina Molaro | Pom Shillingford

Assistant proof-reader: Pom Shillingford. Photographers: Lazlo Gyorsok & Olivia Valentine

ADVERTISING

Ashley Kristjansson call 518 592 1135 or email info@mainstreetmag.com

CONTACT

Office 135 Rt. 44, Millerton, NY 12546 • Mailing address PO Box 165, Ancramdale, NY 12503
Phone 518 592 1135 • Email info@mainstreetmag.com • Website www.mainstreetmag.com

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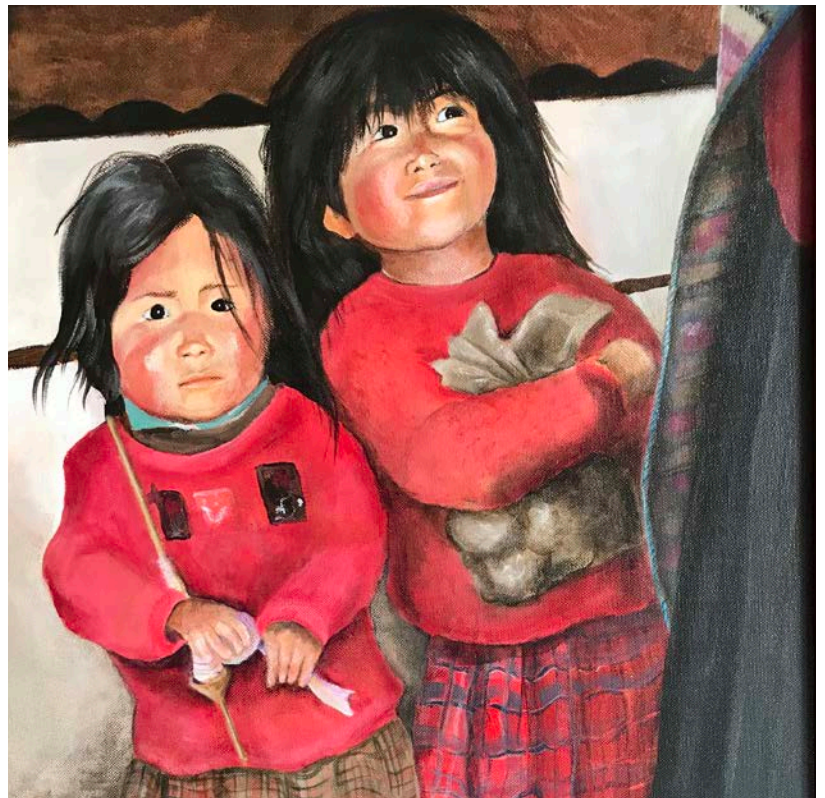
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Art exploration: mary belliveau

*By Regina Molaro
info@mainstreetmag.com*

Artist Mary Belliveau has spent the last few decades globe-trotting to destinations around the world. She arrived behind her easel for a professional career as an artist later in life, after raising her children and enjoying a career in healthcare. “I’ve always been curious. My father was a traveler,” said artist Mary Belliveau.

Her work will be on display from December 10, 2022, through January 8, 2023, at Art Gallery 71 In Rhinebeck, NY – the artist-owned and operated cooperative that is host to 23 area artists who share in the gallery expenses and management. The artists rotate and eventually each one has an opportunity to shine as the featured artist. A member of the gallery for several years, Belliveau celebrates her opening on Saturday, December 10, from 4pm to 6pm.

A reinvestment

Rather than seeking to make a profit, revenue generated from Art Gallery 71 is reinvested and becomes surplus income that gets funneled back into the gallery operation. Commissions are not imposed; rather full sale proceeds are retained by the selling artist.

“I am displaying my series taken from the Old and New Testaments of the Bible – a book whose people I

fashion to tell their unique stories,” said Belliveau. She found inspiration for this series through a recent visit to Edinburgh and its National Galleries of Scotland, which was resplendent with works created by the Renaissance painters.

About Belliveau

Through her journeys to 19 countries, Belliveau has encountered a diverse range of people who hail from all walks of life – from shamans to farmers and their wives, and children.

The talented artist gravitates toward subjects of people and animals. She enjoys painting the people she’s encountered on her many trips abroad. Belliveau strives to capture the expressions on their faces as well as the lifestyles of the locals she’s met along her travels.

Drawn to patterns and colors, Belliveau has also taken interest in the traditional attire that people don as they go about their daily routines in their home countries.

She has found each country she has been to, to be unique and interesting. “The most colorful has been Peru with the beautiful natural dyes of the clothing and the skillful weaving by the women. The countries in East Africa, though many are impoverished, their music, the colorful patterns in their clothing, and their display of genuine joy will stay with me forever,” said Belliveau.

A palette of vibrant colors and lively patterns are found in many of her works. Some of her paintings capture the busy, plaid prints that embellish the skirts of a duo of young girls in Peru while other works portray floral motifs, or the cascading robe of a man in *The Prodigal's Father*.

Ever since she can recall, Belliveau was drawn to bright colors and rich, textured patterns, like the ones featured in her artwork. She has early memories of times spent experimenting, creating art while scribbling, and learning how to remain within the lines when drawing and coloring when she was in kindergarten.

"A box of crayons was a delight for me as was my first oil paint set that my mother gave me when I was nine years old," said Belliveau.

Since drawing and painting have always been a focus, Belliveau went on to study art education at SUNY Buffalo State College in New York. However, it wasn't until much later in life that she began working behind the easel and showing her work through gallery shows.

Before immersing herself in an art career, Belliveau was busy living a rich, prolific life. Her long list of achievements includes raising five children, earning a nursing degree, and penning articles such as *Our Lost Legacy* for *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, and letters to the editors of many local newspapers.

Belliveau also co-authored *Riches*

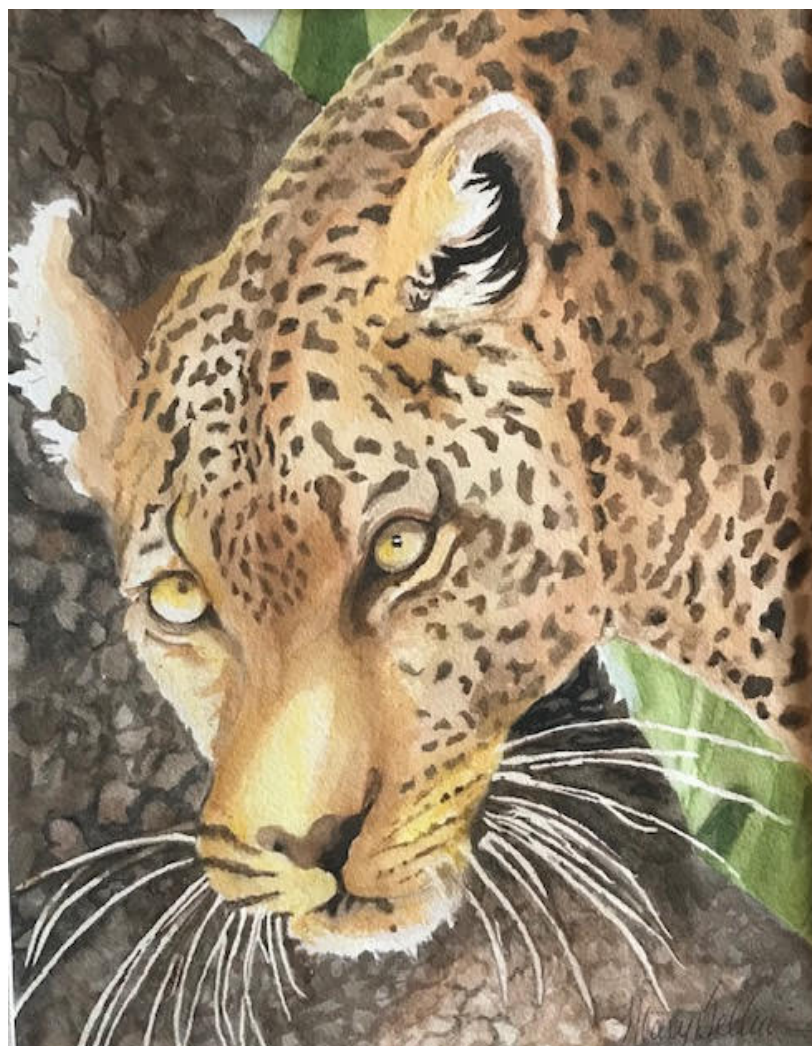
Under Your Roof—How to make your home worth thousands more (Holt, Rinehart and Winston; First Edition (1983) with James Belliveau.

She's also delved into other interesting business ventures, which relate to visual, creative industries. Among them was work with Bonnie Cloths – unique tablecloths that brought a splash of color and a ton of style to special events such as weddings, galas, and beyond. What Belliveau enjoyed most was all the colors, patterns, textures, and laces. Although the company has ceased operation, the artist recalls how much she enjoyed engaging with those exquisite fabrics. "That was the highlight," she added.

Taking off

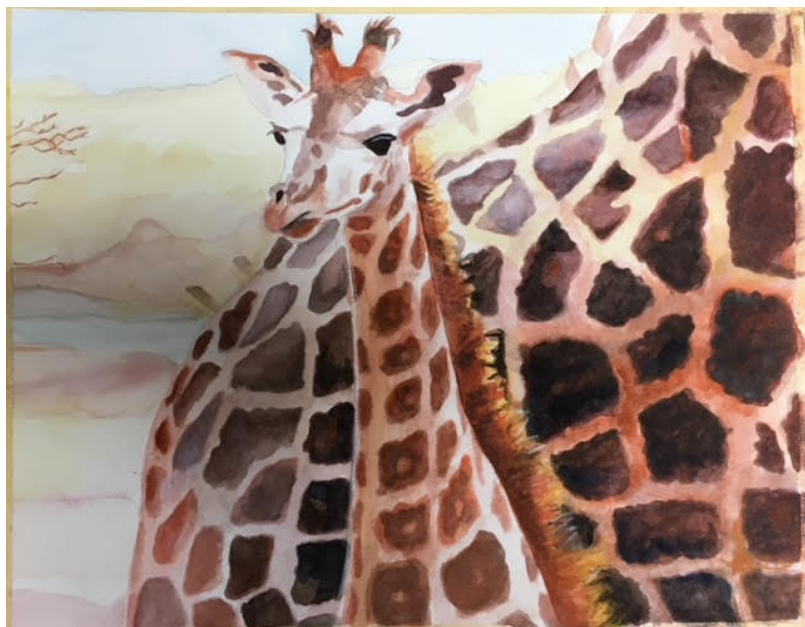
After raising her children, Belliveau had the freedom to jet-set to faraway destinations such as Peru, Israel, and Africa, as well as mission trips to the Dominican Republic and Guatemala. At that point, she had the resources and family support to travel. Her trips always served as a source of inspiration for her work.

Belliveau enjoys painting artwork that carries messages about the diversity of people and places around the world and how unique each one is. One of her paintings captures the innocent look of a Peruvian shaman's daughter while another features a guinea pig farmer's wife. A proud Maasai and his camel were the subject of yet another painting she created.



Above: *The Curious Leopard*. Below, left: *Baby Giraffe with Mother*.

Opposite page, L-R: *Nasaraya*, *The Guinea Pig Farmer's Wife*, *Peruvian Sisters*.



"Through my travels, I work to depict the qualities of the people and understand their cultures. My trip to both Peru and Africa has been with Heifer International, a non-government organization (NGO) that gives animals and training to impoverished people around the world. The colors and patterns of clothing worn by those in both countries and their facial expressions inspired me to paint portraits to share the beauty I found there, both in the people and in the animals native to their lands," said Belliveau.

More on Heifer International – the organization works to eradicate poverty and hunger through sustainable, values-based holistic community development. It works in 21 countries around the world, alongside local farmers and business owners. The organization supports farmers and

Continued on next page ...



Above top to bottom, L-R: *A Proud Maasai with his Camel, a gift from Heifer, International. A Peruvian shaman's six-year-old daughter, Nancy Noah. The Prodigal's Father.*

their communities as they mobilize and envision their futures. It also provides training so they can improve the quantity and quality of the goods they produce and makes connections to market it to increase sales and incomes.

Belliveau also found the geography of Israel to be of particular interest, as well as the people of The Holy Land. The religions of Judaism and Christianity were very inspirational and inspired Belliveau to paint the current series on display at Art Gallery 71.

Beyond people, Belliveau also has a love of animals. "Animals are beautiful. The created world is special and worthy of being acknowledged in my work," said the artist. She utilizes a variety of mediums in her works, depending on which one she feels best expresses the subject matter she is working with.

"I used to work in oils and have done some printmaking and batik but have landed in realism. I use watercolor and acrylics. I love layering and I work quickly, capturing the flow of thought as I work my images, often of people or animals. My camera also becomes a useful tool. I often work from photos taken on my travels," she added.

Through realism, Belliveau strives to offer a glimpse of "captured beauty or troubling current or past events that invite reflection."

Exposure

Belliveau has been featured in solo shows at local venues such as the Town of Esopus Library in Port Ewen and Studio KTM in Red Hook, NY, to name a few. The artist's most widely seen work was a commission created for the Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Virginia.

That work, *Preparing to Serve*, currently greets people from its home in the seminary's entrance hall. Beyond having work on display stateside, Belliveau's artwork embellished a kitchen wall in New Zealand. Another work brought color and ambiance to a stylish restaurant in New York, and of course Belliveau's artwork prominently hangs in the homes and offices of her children who are scattered around the country.

As for artists Belliveau admires, they include the painters of the Renaissance, specifically Albrecht Durer, El Greco, Raphael, Titian, and Leonardo da Vinci. She also appreciates and many contemporary realists such as Ali Cavanaugh, Jeremy Lipking, Mario Robinson, and Andrew Wyeth, among others.

Plans for the artist hopefully include more travel to places she hasn't visited before as well as more opportunities to paint and share glimpses of the world with others.

"I am blessed with a very supporting family who encourage me and who critiques my work when I place my unfinished paintings on the dining room table," concludes Belliveau. •

Art Gallery 71 is located at 71 E. Market Street in Rhinebeck, NY. Call (845) 516-4878 or visit www.artgallery71.com.

Art Gallery 71 is open every Friday through Saturday, from noon to 6pm. On Sundays and holidays that are observed on Mondays, the gallery is open from 10am to 4pm. It is also open by appointment "or chance."

Are you an artist and interested in being featured in Main Street Magazine? Send a brief bio, artist's statement, and a link to your work through the arts form on our "arts" page on our website.



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Shelby D'Armiento is a first grader in Pine Plains and a proud Red Hook Red Raiders cheerleader. She began cheerleading in the spring of 2022, and by fall cheer, she had progressed to the Pearl team. This season the Pearls have won three out of four competitions! When we asked what she likes outside of cheerleading, Shelby said, "I like drawing, playing board games, playing with my brother, and being outside." And speaking of the great outdoors, Shelby loves the seasons most: Swimming in the summer, playing in the snow in the winter, leaves falling in the fall, and flowers blooming in the spring. As for the coming new year, Shelby is looking forward to having lots of fun this winter season and come spring, she is looking forward to another season of cheer with her team! *Gooooo Red, Black and White!*



Isabella Martucci, much like her friend Shelby, is also a first grader in Pine Plains and a member of the Red Hook Red Raiders cheer squad. Isabella was on the Gem team this past year and had a terrific time cheering. "My favorite part was when we got to cheer with the big girls!" (The 'big girls' are members of the D14 squad). When it comes to school Isabella says she loves art and recess the most, "but I like learning and playing with my friends a lot, too! We have a pet turtle in our class, his name is Terry, and he's so cool!" Outside of school, Isabella says she's a "horse girl" and loves to ride her horse Fjöður, as well as groom her, clean her hooves, and feed her treats. Isabella is looking forward to learning how to ski this winter before she dives into the spring sport season with T-ball and soccer in addition to spring cheer training. *Gooooo Red, Black and White!*



The best way to describe **Ellie Kristjansson**? Four and full of energy, that's how. Ellie started Pre-K at Taconic Hills this past fall, and is loving it! She has mastered how to spell her name and is becoming a pro at recognizing her letters and numbers. In Ellie's spare time she loves to sing and dance, take care of her babydolls, and is an aspiring crazy cat lady (like her mom). When asked about what she'd like to be when she grows up, "I want to be a princess!" Ellie is super excited for Santa to come and visit. She's been a very good girl all year long, and is hoping to get a doll house from Jolly-Saint-Nick. As for the New Year, Ellie has big plans and aspirations. She's hoping to not only return to Iceland to visit her family, but she has also requested that her parents take her on a beach vacation. Maybe that should go on the top of your X-mas wish list, Ellie?



Bree Knickerbocker is not just a fourth grade student, but one of the members of the Red Raiders cheer squad that has had an incredible season! *Gooooo Red, Black and White!* When we asked Bree about her most favorite things about school she shared, "I love math because I am good at it. I am also a member of Student Council, band, and chorus." Outside of school, Bree keeps pretty busy too. "I am a Red Hook Raiders cheerleader and I love horseback riding. I live in Pine Plains, NY, and I love our town because of all of the nice people who live here." Bree elaborated by saying, "I love walking around the local towns and going into the shops." We wish your D10 squad a big congratulations for placing fourth at the recent Big East Regional Competition! *Yell it loud, yell it proud, yell 'Let's Go Raiders! Red, Black and White!'*



Kirk Kneller is the president of Kneller Insurance Agency, which is a multi-line provider of property, casualty, life, and health insurance with four locations. "I have been selling insurance since 1983 or 39 years. The industry has brought me in touch with many different and interesting clients as well as wonderful employees," Kirk shared. Outside of work, Kirk keeps pretty busy too, "My family operates a 70 head cow/calf organic farm as well as a wedding/event barn. We love working on our land and making the necessary improvements to make it productive." Kirk continued by sharing, "I was born in Portland, ME, yet spent most of my life in the West Ghent in Columbia County – the Hudson Valley is a great place to live. My business clients and employees have helped create a wonderful life for my family. We are thankful to live in such a wonderful part of the world."



Anyone from the greater Millerton area will recognize this face! **Rhiannon Leo-Jameson** is the director of the NorthEast-Millerton Library in Millerton, NY. When asked how long she has been helping library patrons in Millerton, she responded, "I will be at the library twelve years this December. I enjoy helping the people in our community the most." When asked what she enjoys outside of books and the library community, she said, "I'm currently helping the Friends of Spencer's Corners Burial Ground research the individuals buried there, the original founders of our community, to ultimately fund the restoration of the headstones." We asked then if she had familial ties to the area, but she answered, "I relocated to this area in 2006 from Long Island. I am always in awe of the natural beauty here. I would like to encourage *Main Street Magazine* readers to stop by and say hello. You might be surprised what your local library has to offer!"



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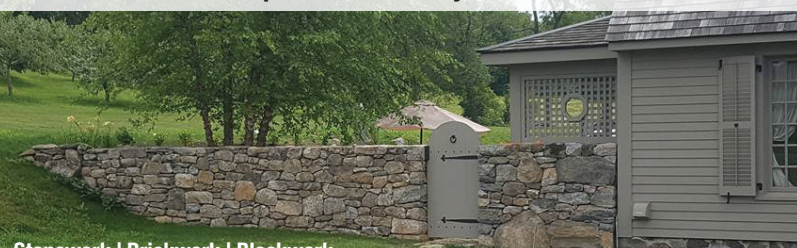
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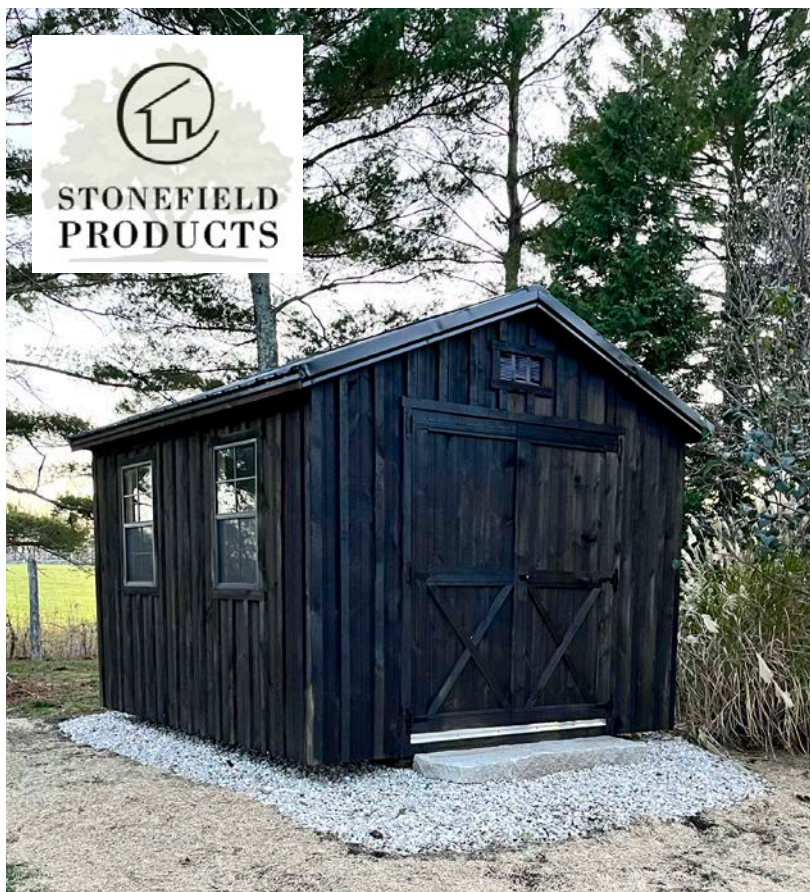
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The allure of log houses

By Christine Bates
info@mainstreetmag.com

December is a time of gatherings and celebrations and often conjures up visions of log cabins in the snow with roaring fires in a massive, stone fireplace, and flannel pajamas. Log homes' distinctive construction material can create a rustic Lincoln cabin or a grand Adirondack camp. For this holiday issue we researched the history of log homes, their presence in our region, and visit some that are available for purchase just in time for Christmas.

A very brief history of log home building

Log homes have always occupied a special place in the American psyche. They express the freedom and self-reliance of the frontier, and our beginnings as a nation. Historically logs were the preferred construction material in Scandinavia and Eastern Europe as early as the Bronze Age with log structures still standing that date before 1200 AD. In North America the earliest log buildings were built in New Sweden, a short-lived Swedish colony, in the Delaware and Brandy Wine River valleys. One of the oldest homes in the United States is a rustic log cabin built by Forest Finns in 1638 located in Greenwich, NJ. The cabin is looking for a new owner who will protect its history and is listed for sale for the seventh time since 2015 for \$475,000.

Fast forward to frontier log forts, Daniel Boone, Lincoln's log home to the "Great Camps" of the Gilded Age, and Gustaf Stickley's Arts & Craft log buildings. By the 1970s, log home manufacturers across the nation offered easy to construct, log

buildings, often for the second home market. Many of these companies are still in business while others, like New England Log Homes in Great Barrington, MA, used toxic chemicals used to treat logs and became superfund sites. Today the thriving companies offer elaborate custom designs with architects on staff, and tout their environmental sustainability and energy efficiency. There are more than 300 log home manufacturers building an estimated 25,000 customized log homes every year in the United States according to the Log Homes Council.

Local examples

Building contractors seem to be attracted to log construction when they build their own homes. Twenty-five years ago, master builder Rick McCue decided to build his own hand-hewn log home in Sharon, CT, in the Appalachian style with flat logs and dove-tailed corners. "I built so many white clapboard houses. I wanted something different for myself."

The old growth 10" timbers were harvested in Canada during the winter using horses to prevent the damage caused by the equipment of commercial loggers. McCue, his wife and an architect designed the house at their kitchen table maximizing the interior light. It took about 14 months to construct once the materials were



Above: Stunning Millbrook lodge with 75 acres is now listed for \$11,950,000. Photo courtesy of listing agent Paula Redmond of Corcoran Country Living. Below, left: This Sharon Adirondack-style log home was built by Rick McCue for himself. Photo courtesy of Rick McCue.

on site. Every six to eight years a light stain is applied to preserve the wood with a touch up on the chink joints.

The lodge pole pine logs of Jim Krissel's home were shipped from British Columbia to Montana where they were cut, pre-assembled and numbered, delivered to the Northeast corner, and finished by Whetstone Builders of Sharon in 1992. It only took a week to set the logs on a pre-poured foundation, another six weeks to put on the roof and then a year to complete the interior. The inspiration for the 6,500-square-foot house was Krissel's family vacation home in Beaver Creek Resorts in Vail, CO. Asked what he would have done differently Krissel observed that he should have made the roof overhang wider to protect the exterior from extreme weather and sheet rocked the bathrooms to make them warmer (see photo next page).

Pluses and minuses of log homes

Log homes are often touted as being energy efficient because of the insulating quality of the thick exterior wood

the materials were

Continued on next page ...



walls; however, McCue observed that current building codes which increase the required R-value of new homes makes them at least comparable to traditional log construction. Custom log homes do not cost less than a traditional “stick” built house, but manufacturers maintain that they sell for 30% to 40% more than traditional homes. This is an impossible claim to verify in our region; however, the unique appeal of log homes, just like indoor swimming pools, translates to a smaller potential buyer segment.

“In my experience most buyers seem to be looking for the quintessential traditional New England country home that evokes our local history,” observed John Harney of William Pitt Sotheby’s. “And not being in Tennessee, log cabins are not part of that equation. While they are usually well built, many times they are dark inside with lots of exposed wood. So, the buyer market is much smaller for them, which discounts their value. On the other hand, the owners that have them seem pleased, so it is a matter of taste in the end.”

“Insurance used to be a real issue with log homes ten or 15 years ago,” according to Kirk Kneller of Kneller Insurance. “There’s the same insect issue with renovated barns. You can’t see inside an old beam. If termites or powder post beetles are present, replacing a deteriorating log is difficult. Although quality has improved, some insurance companies will still not cover them and those which do may

charge higher premiums.”

Dark, woody interiors are the primary complaint about log homes, especially off the shelf cabins with small windows that are surrounded by trees. Stagers who prepare homes for listing focus on brightening up the interior space with light colored carpets and contemporary, eclectic furnishings. They draw attention to the views that log homes so often have and avoid large, dark furniture. Architect Jimmy Crisp observed that stylistically and structurally log homes can difficult to renovate or expand.

Like any home, log homes require maintenance with particular attention to refreshing the staining every five years or so to protect the wood from moisture and insects and to repair the chinking between the logs to keep out critters that want to get inside. Krissel observed that birds like nesting under the eaves, but it doesn’t bother him.

Log mansions for sale

“In my entire real estate career, I’ve never seen anything like it,” exclaimed veteran real estate broker Paula Redmond with Corcoran Country Living of her new \$11,950,000 Millbrook listing at 521 Stanford Road (see photo on previous page). It took seven years to finish building the extraordinary 11,500-square-foot Colorado lodge-style home. Constructed of standing dead timber from the West with individual logs as large as 41” in diameter, the magnificent house comes with a vaulted 32’ high



Above: This luxury Sharon, CT, log home in the Aspen-style with long views to Mudge Pond was built in the Rockies and shipped to Sharon for assembly by Rick McCue. Photo by Sonja Zinke courtesy of Liza Reiss of Elyse Harney Real Estate. Below, left: Jim Krissel’s lodge pole pine custom-designed home in Sharon, CT. Photo courtesy of Jim Krissel.

great room, a huge stone fireplace tall enough to stand up in, and five bedrooms situated on 75 acres. Redmond remarked that it is an ideal get-away for a sportsman with its professional indoor shooting range, a musician who can play in the soundproof recording studio, or a chef who likes to throw large dinner parties.

Overlooking Mudge Pond in Sharon, CT, is another log retreat built in 2004 listed for sale at just over \$2,000,000. The large 5,400 square foot hilltop home also boasts five bedrooms on 18+ acres plus another three-acre building lot. The open floor plan, great room fireplace, and views of Mudge Pond make it ideal year-round for entertaining or sharing with family and guests.

The American dream

On the East Coast, log homes are most popular in the Catskill and Adirondack mountains, ski resorts, camps and vacation home communities. New York and Colorado have the most log homes in the country, which are infrequently found in New England villages and hamlets influenced by English architectural tradition. While some people find log homes unsophisticated in this era of white walls for others log homes evoke pioneer independence and the beauty of natural materials. To build or buy a log house is a personal statement about sustainability, nature, and tradition. ●

Christine Bates is a registered real estate agent in New York and Connecticut with William Pitt Sotheby’s. She has written about real estate and business since Main Street Magazine’s first issue in 2013.



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WHITE CHOCOLATE AND RASPBERRY

Swirl cheesecake



By Olivia Valentine &
Caroline Markonic
info@mainstreetmag.com

We LOVE cheesecake, especially during the holidays. This raspberry and white chocolate cheesecake is a show-stopper and will definitely add a little pizzazz to your holiday table. People will think you slaved away making this... and they will be right!

We had mentioned back in October that we were going to take it easy on you because we wanted you to save your baking energy for the next few months. Well, you will need some time and a little energy for this one.

'Tis the season for giving... cheesecake!

If you are all about making holiday gifts, this will be a nice, sweet treat to give to someone special. Cheesecakes are always on the expensive side when buying them at the store and that's probably because cheesecake ain't cheap to make! With no flour, and lots of cream cheese, berries, and white chocolate, you might be a little shocked at the checkout when buying the ingredients. But 'tis the season for giving! And it'll be less expensive and even better than store bought. Well worth it.

Tips, tricks, and short cuts

Now we take a few shortcuts and allow room for more. You don't have to make, bake, and cool cookies for the crust; buy some chocolate wafer cookies instead. If you don't want to try making your own jam you can use store-bought. (You'll want one without seeds for the best texture). You can also use store-bought whipped cream, but by now you likely already know how we feel about that.

One thing you must pick up at the store if you don't already have it, is a springform pan. You cannot make this without one. If you're making this for Christmas, it is very easy to break up the steps. You can make the jam up to two weeks in advance and the crust up to a week in advance (both kept refrigerated). The finished cheesecake will keep well in the fridge for 3-4 days. Be sure to store it in an airtight container to prevent it from absorbing fridge odors. If you need to make it even earlier than that, you can freeze the whole thing and later, the leftover slices as well. Thaw them in the fridge for 6+ hours before serving.

Get creative

We decorated ours with our leftover jam, whipped cream, sugared raspberries, and white chocolate shavings, but you can get as cre-

ative as you wish. Throw on some dehydrated raspberries, drizzled white chocolate, crushed chocolate cookies, or pieces. The options are endless.

Cheesecake baking tips:

- All ingredients should be at room temperature (eggs, cream cheese, and sour cream)
- Don't mix the batter on a high speed. Unlike other desserts, you want to incorporate as little air as possible. If there are air bubbles, they can rise and cause it to crack. If there is too much air, it can cause the cheesecake to rise then collapse.
- Use a water bath. Boil water and pour it into the roasting pan with your cheesecake in it. I find this easiest to do after putting it in the oven. As opposed to picking up a heavy pan of boiling water praying it doesn't spill.
- Do not open the oven while it's baking, this can lead to cracking.
- Let the cheesecake cool gradually by turning off the oven after it has baked and leaving the door closed for about half an hour. Then crack the oven door for a couple of hours.

Continued on next page ...

Chocolate wafer crust ingredients

1 9oz package of Nabisco Famous Chocolate Wafers
1/4 cup melted salted butter

Raspberry jam

10oz frozen raspberries
1/2 cup water
1/3 cup of sugar or more to taste
2 tbs corn starch
1 tsp lemon juice
1 tsp lemon zest

Cheesecake

1 cup granulated sugar
32oz (4 packages cream cheese, full fat, room temperature)
2 tbs cornstarch
2 tsp vanilla extract
8oz Ghiradelli White Chocolate (or other high-quality chocolate)
1/2 cup heavy cream
1/2 cup sour cream (room temp)
4 large eggs (room temp)
1 cup raspberry jam

Whipped cream

1 cup heavy cream
1/4 – 1/3 cup of confectioners' sugar
1 tsp vanilla

Instructions, crust

Preheat your oven to 325 degrees. In a food processor blend the wafer cookies into fine crumbs. Add the melted butter and mix until combined. Press the cookie crust into your 9" springform pan. Using a flat-bottomed measuring cup work the crumbs up the sides of the pan. About an inch or so. Bake for ten minutes and then set aside to cool.

Instructions, raspberry jam

Combine all the jam ingredients in a medium size saucepan over medium heat. Stir often and while smashing/crushing the raspberries. Add more sugar if desired. Keep stirring for about ten or so minutes as it simmers gently. Once

the mixture thickens, immediately pour it through a fine mesh strainer with a bowl underneath. Stir with a rubber spatula until mostly seeds remain. Discard seeds. Store jam in the fridge until ready to use.

Instructions, cheesecake

Wrap your springform pan in heavy duty aluminum foil, place it in roasting pan and make sure your ingredients are at room temperature. (This is a good time to boil your water for the water bath).

Oven should be at 325 degrees. In a double boiler combine white chocolate and heavy cream together and stir until smooth; set aside to cool. Or use a microwave for this step. We don't have one, so aren't sure how to instruct!

Using a stand mixer, mix cream cheese and sugar until smooth; about one minute. Add cornstarch and vanilla and mix until combined. Slowly add the cooled white chocolate mixture and then the sour cream.

Add the eggs one at a time and only mix until just combined. DO NOT OVER-MIX! Pour the batter into your springform pan. Spoon dollops of jam around the top of mixture (about 1/4 cup). Use a toothpick or a long wooden skewer to swirl the jam throughout the cheesecake.

Baking the cheesecake

Place roasting pan with the cheesecake in your oven. Pour the boiling water into the roasting pan 1/3 of the way up the side of the springform pan being very careful not to splash any water on the cheesecake. Bake for 90 minutes until the edges are set and the center is slightly jiggly. Turn the oven off and let sit for half an hour. Crack the door and let sit for another 2 hours. Carefully remove from oven. Using a hot knife, go around the sides of the cheesecake to loosen it from the pan. Place the springform pan in the fridge and allow the cheesecake to cool for at least 4 hours.

Whipped cream

Add whipped cream ingredients into a mixing bowl. It helps if the bowl, beater, and heavy cream are very cold. Whisk on high for about one minute until stiff peaks form and then decorate the cheesecake!

Happy Holidays to all! ●

Olivia and Caroline are enthusiastic foodies and bakers who are constantly in the kitchen, as well as explorers who create their own adventures in our area – and did we mention they are mother and daughter? Follow Olivia on Instagram to see her many creations at @oliviauwvalentine.





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The Elephants Tusk

a Main Street boutique store offering gifts, clothing, furniture, and local artisanal items – all with a smile



By Thorunn Kristjansdottir
info@mainstreetmag.com

With the holiday season in full force, everyone is busy with the hustle and bustle as well as finding just the right gift(s) for our friends and loved ones. For those looking to shop and support local when finding that unique gift for that special someone, or maybe you're looking for a piece of furniture or household item(s), The Elephants Tusk on Main Street in Millerton, NY, might be the spot you've been waiting for. Owner Maria Tamburrino boasts a great variety of inventory and is sure to have something for everyone, including Santa himself.

What is your business, when did you start it, and where can people find you?

I officially opened the doors to The Elephants Tusk in May of 2022 at my new location at 20 Main Street in Millerton, NY, right across from the iconic and popular Oakhurst Diner. My store is essentially a secondhand store (not a thriftstore) and I offer a little bit of everything from clothing and refurbished furniture to gift items, both new and used, and I also have numerous items from local artisans like jewelry.

How did the founding of The Elephants Tusk come about – where did the idea come from, is this your first store?

I have been buying and selling for years, and I love it. The location at 20 Main Street became available earlier this year, so I ran with it and opened an official storefront. But I've been doing this for years (buying and selling items and refurbishing furniture), and I had been doing it out of my home as well as a garage space I had for storing items.

When I ran this business out of my home I would only be open on weekends, but now I'm open five days a week. I've grown a reputation over the years and I have developed a very loyal following – my customers have been wonderful and so supportive. Since opening in May, I've loved seeing my customers come into my new space and I've also loved meeting new people.

Being on Main Street has been amazing, especially because of all of the great people I've been able to meet as a result. I can't believe how many people live around here that I hadn't met yet, especially considering that I've lived here for such a long time and I thought I had met

a lot of people, but since opening in May, I've been floored to meet so many new people.

How has the business evolved and or changed since you started?

Since we opened earlier this year, we have much more inventory, and as a result we now offer a larger variety. Initially we had a lot of clothing, but now we have more variety including the furniture pieces that I refurbish as well as different types of new and old gift items some of which are made by local artisans.

Who is involved in the business? How did you decide to open a store like this?

I am the sole owner, but those closest to me are there to help when needed. I have always had an entrepreneurial spirit, which is evident in the fact that I've been running my own businesses for over 30 years. I really enjoy the thrill of buying and selling as well as helping my customers find something unique.



All images with this article showcase some of the offerings at The Elephants Tusk. Depicted directly above is owner, Maria Tamburrino.

Continued on next page ...



What types of items do you have in the store – what's your niche – what's uniquely The Elephant Tusk?

We have a little bit of everything, new and gently used clothing for the whole family to clothing for your dog! We have refurbished furniture that I enjoy putting a modern rustic spin on, essentially giving these furniture pieces a second life. We have lots of housewares and so much more. I'm really open to anything, but our shop isn't a consignment shop.

Something that is important to mention and helps set us apart is that our inventory will literally change daily! Sometimes items are gone as quickly as they arrived, but they are always replaced by another great item. To give an example, we had a beautiful chaise chair that was scooped up by a customer the same day it came in, which is obviously great, but the next day I had two people come in who wanted to buy it. I consider myself really fortunate that we have such a great turn-over of inventory, because this allows my customers to always have something fresh and exciting to choose from.

What can customers expect when they come to your store?

They can expect a variety with a fair price point, a clean atmosphere, and always a friendly face. I want my

customers to feel welcome, to feel comfortable and ask questions, and that they can take their time and shop around – you really do need to take your time when browsing!

What makes your store unique and different from your competition?

I really strive to make things accessible and affordable for everyone in the community and surrounding areas. And the fact that our inventory will change daily is also something that I feel is important and unique.

Do you have anything special for the holidays?

Yes!! Santa will be visiting the store on December 10, from 1:30–3:30pm. We also have lots of great sales and ALL furniture will be 20% off throughout the month of December.

As for our more specific holiday inventory, we have some great holiday gift items. A craftswoman out of Limerock created beautiful earrings and other jewelry pieces that arrived in the store in late November. Another craftswoman brought us a variety of crocheted items as well as soaps and candles – just to mention a few items.

Where do you get your products and/or inventory?

I utilize social media to advertise for bulk buying, I do after tag sale buyouts, clean outs, and love when people donate! I've also been networking a lot more with local artists and artisans.

How does technology play a factor in your brick and mortar business?

I use Facebook as a platform to reach out to those that are local and not local. I am also in the process of expanding to Instagram.

What have been some of the challenges that you've found and or faced in your business?

I have built a lot of momentum, and I'm grateful that business has been steady. I do worry with winter being just around the corner, but I'm hoping that business will continue to be profitable.

What's on the horizon going forward?

I'm always looking at how I can grow. I've gotten to know a lot of people and we're always expanding our inventory. I'm excited to be a part of such a wonderful business community that is supportive, and I'm excited to see what the town has to offer. I welcome everyone to come in and see what we have, whether they purchase something or not.

What advice would you have for someone looking to start their own business?

Just do it! Act now, think later! ●

To learn more about The Elephant Tusk, you can visit them at 20 Main Street in Millerton, NY. Call then at (518) 592-1046, or find them on Facebook.

Have a happy & healthy holiday!



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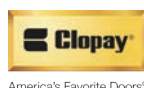
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Holiday festivities

It's easy to get into the holiday spirit at these fun and festive Berkshires and Hudson Valley museums and attractions

By Regina Molaro
info@mainstreetmag.com

Winter is such a wonderful time of year. The Hudson Valley and Berkshire region are quintessential places to celebrate all the sparkle of the season. Beyond the serenity of the nature that abounds in the region and the possibility of snowfall sprinkling our country roads and mountain tops, there are lots of quaint towns, which get decked out in holiday attire at this time of year.

Over the last few years, we've all enjoyed more subdued celebrations such as small gatherings at home and even remote events via Zoom. However, this holiday season there's more of a return to the merriment of years past. There will be lots of holiday magic to inspire us all to celebrate together in style. From Pittsfield to Stockbridge, Poughkeepsie, and beyond, there's so much to experience. Plan a road trip with the family or some friends and create some new memories.

Here are some ideas that will help you embrace all the joy of the season.

Star Light, Star Bright

This year, Berkshire Museum returns to its holiday tradition, which dates back to the 1980s. Historically, the museum always held its annual Festival of Trees celebration onsite in the museum's galleries. During the height of the pandemic, this event was re-envisioned and held in various locations throughout the greater Pittsfield area.

For Winter 2022/2023, this magical festival was reimagined once again and renamed *Winter Festival: Solstice Celebration*. A culmination of exhibitions and events, *Winter Festival: Solstice Celebration* will be held through January 8.

This tree exhibit, which will be held exclusively at the museum again, invited local businesses and institutions to sponsor and then embellish their own trees. An opening celebration kicked off on November 12 with musical artist Paul Winter – a seven time-Grammy winner whose body of work chronicles his wide-ranging experiences in the musical traditions and natural environments of the Earth.

One of the stars of this special solstice exhibit is the remarkable 15-foot holiday-themed tree, which is decorated seasonally and surrounded by the Santa Classics exhibit. Philadelphia-based artist Ed Wheeler placed Kris Kringle into this classic holiday scene. Another solstice-themed exhibit will feature a dramatic moonlit forest that twinkles with lights.

There are a host of other events, which will be held throughout the festival. On Saturday, December 3, Wingmasters' World of Owls will be on site from 11:30am to 12:15pm. Curious guests have an opportunity to meet live owls in the Berkshire Museum's theater.

Featuring a variety of live owls, this captivating and informative program shows how owls use their specialized powers of sight, hearing, and flight to survive and thrive. A wealth of facts and folklore about these masters of the dark will explain the natural and unnatural history of owls.

This educational program is presented by Wingmasters – a partnership of two licensed raptor rehabilitators dedicated to increasing public understanding and appreciation of North American birds of prey. A ticket for this program includes admission to the new exhibition *Hoot's Holiday: A Solstice Tale*. Recommended for ages 5 and up \$17 adult, \$10 child (includes museum admission); museum members \$7 adult, \$5 child.

Hoot's Holiday: A Solstice Tale is



Above: Create a new family tradition by enjoying a magical evening of lights. The Wonderland of Lights is being held at Rhinebeck's Dutchess County Fairgrounds through December 25. Photo courtesy of Dutchess County Fairgrounds.

a living storybook, which will also run through January 8. Guests have an opportunity to follow Hoot, the adorable owl through the exhibition as they travel through time, collecting artifacts historic to the Berkshires as they plan a Solstice Party. The end of *Hoot's Holiday* arrives when guests find themselves immersed in a forest under the light of Museum of the Moon, which was created by UK artist Luke Jerram.

"*Hoot's Holiday: A Solstice Tale* is a reimagined celebration of winter in the Berkshires. I had so much fun writing and learning more about Berkshire's history throughout time. It is so exciting to see pieces of the museum collection come to life in this story. I feel that anyone with a connection to the Berkshires will have a deep appreciation for the research and historic context that went into creating this exhibition. I'm thrilled to see the story come to life and to share it with the public," said Charlie Catacalos, exhibitions research and content editor, Berkshire Museum.

At 11am on New Year's Eve, December 31, there's another special event being held at the Berkshire Museum. It is entitled "Magic By George." It invites you and the wee ones to join award-winning, Boston-based magician George Saterial as he performs magic and creates astonishing illusions. This fast-paced, fan-favorite show combines Saterial's playful persona with magic, lighthearted humor, and plenty of audience participation for the young and young at heart. All ages are welcome.

Sponsors include The Feigenbaum Foundation, Greylock Federal Credit Union, The Berkshire Eagle, Mill Town Capital, and Berkshire Bank.

Exhibitions are on view through January 8, entry is granted through regular admission (\$15 for adults; \$8 for children ages 4 to 17, free for children ages 3 and under).

Continued on next page ...

Norman Rockwell Museum

Stockbridge was once home to Norman Rockwell – the iconic painter and illustrator. Although Rockwell is often regarded for paintings that addressed significant issues that were occurring during the time period in which they were created, his work also reflected his sense of humor and playfulness.

In the spirit of Rockwell, the museum is encouraging the art of play. On December 26, the Norman Rockwell Museum will host Kids & Families Activities – Prime Time Me! These activities were inspired by Eloise in Hollywood, illustrator Hilary Knight's Broadway posters, fashion designs, and beyond.

At the event, attendees have an opportunity to create their very own passports and self-portraits. Each guest is also encouraged to create their own story with poster, costumes, and props. Using colored paper cutouts and glue sticks, they can dream up their favorite character for an "I am ME! ME! ME!" photo shoot. The group will have a sweet opportunity to celebrate in style with Eloise-style "Room Service," which includes yummy holiday treats. This event will be held on December 26, 27, 29, and 30 at 11am and 2pm. The event is free for kids, teens; and members, and is included with museum admission. RSVPs are required, walk-ups will be accommodated as space permits.

To learn more about the Norman Rockwell Museum, it is located at 9 Glendale Rd/Rte 183, Stockbridge, MA. You can call them at (413) 298-4100 or visit them online at www.nrm.org.

Shine on: The Wonderland of Lights

Create a new family tradition by enjoying a magical evening of lights. The Wonderland of Lights is being held at Rhinebeck's Dutchess County Fairgrounds through December 25. Dazzling light displays will brighten and dance along the nighttime sky. This magical, festive show is ideal for

parents, kids, grandparents, and even furry friends. Tickets may be purchased online via the website or at the Fairgrounds gate. Browse the website for prices and check the calendar for availability: thewonderlandoflights.com/twol-rhinebeck-ny/

The Dutchess County Fairgrounds are located at 6636 U.S. 9, Rhinebeck, NY, or visit online at www.thewonderlandoflights.com.

Locust Grove Estate

Set on a hill overlooking the scenic Hudson River in Poughkeepsie, NY, the non-profit Locust Grove Estate includes a historic mansion, which is open for tours. It also boasts 200 acres of landscaped grounds with five miles of hiking trails. On the impressive site, there are also art galleries, classrooms for educational programs, a museum shop, and visitor welcome center.

The main house at Locust Grove is the stunning villa designed in the Italianate style in 1850 for artist and inventor, Samuel F. B. Morse. Architect Alexander Jackson Davis was at the helm of this project.

Fifty years later, the house was renovated and expanded for the mansion's new owners, William and Martha Young. Their daughter, Annette Innis Young, eventually created the non-profit educational foundation that preserves the estate as a museum today.

Initially, Morse had very clear ideas about what he yearned to have in this summer home. He and his family spent their winters in New York City, in a townhouse on 22nd Street near Fifth Avenue. For inspiration, Morse recalled the elegant villas that he had visited years earlier in the Italian countryside and he sketched towers, windows, and floor plans on scraps of paper to give to his architect for direction. Construction on the villa, sited on a dramatic bluff overlooking the Hudson River, began in 1851 and was completed the following year.

The estate opened to the public in 1979 and currently features the Young family's 15,000 piece collection of furniture, paintings, and decorative arts just as they were used in the early years of the 20th century.



Above: The drawing room at Locust Grove with a Christmas tree. Photo courtesy of Locust Grove.

Holidays at the Villa

'Tis the season for mansion tours, which will be held on weekends in December and daily from December 26 through 31. Guests have a coveted opportunity to tour the historic mansion while it is decked out in its holiday finest. While there, you'll witness trees festooned with antique ornaments in the mansion's Drawing Room and Dining Room. You can also browse a few of the special exhibits. The tours last about an hour; the cost is \$15 per person. The first tour of the day kicks off at 10:15am and the last is one starts at 3:15pm daily.

The Locust Grove Estate will also host a family-friendly Holiday Hunt on Sunday, December 11 and Sunday, December 18. The theme for 2022 is "A Visit from St. Nicholas." Scavenger hunt attendees will scout the mansion's holiday-themed rooms for sugar plums and other treats and trinkets. While there, they'll learn how the Young family celebrated the holidays years ago. They'll also have an opportunity to marvel at the 18 decorated trees on display. The scavenger hunt

tour lasts approximately 45 minutes and includes rooms on three different floors, so get ready to climb a few flights of stairs. This special Holiday Hunt is most suitable for children ages four and older and their caregivers. Tickets are required for all who are age four and up. Tickets are \$10 per person; timed entrance tickets will be offered between 12pm and 4pm.

For tickets, visit eventbrite.com/locust-grove-estate-30347364870. Otherwise, Locust Grove Estate is located at 2683 South Road, Poughkeepsie, NY. You can call (845) 454-4500 or visit online www.lgny.org.

These are just a small sampling of events happening in our area this upcoming holiday season. There is sure to be something for everyone! Happy holidays and enjoy all that our wonderful area has to offer. •

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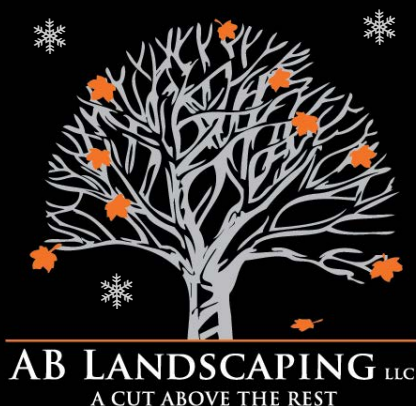
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The holidays are here again

A brief history and survival guide

By Anna Martucci
info@mainstreetmag.com

If it wasn't already apparent from the omnipresent music that began the day after Halloween, the holiday season is here again. The kickoff begins with Thanksgiving, originally created in Europe to celebrate the harvest and blessings of the previous year. In the 1600s, during the Protestant Reformation, the English brought the tradition over to America. Since then Thanksgiving has evolved into the most widely celebrated holiday in the country. Remember the "Friendsgivings" we all celebrated in our twenties? Those were ideal. Everybody bring a dish, sit on the couch, watch football, eat off a plate on your lap, drink too much wine, help clean up a bit and leave when you want. There was no obligation to even show up if you didn't feel like it.

And right after Thanksgiving...

The day after Thanksgiving we get Black Friday, which yes, is actually considered a holiday. Technically the biggest shopping day of the year, it's unclear where the term Black Friday came from. One theory is that the police originally used it in a negative context because of all the traffic jams caused by the shoppers. Today, most people agree it refers to the accounting term to describe how in one day retailers go from being in the red

(losing money) to being in the black (making money). Regardless, your best bet is to avoid it all in favor of some nature therapy.

Hanukkah is a holiday that is more than 21 centuries old with a rich history I can in no way do justice here. Briefly, it's a celebration of the people of Israel's triumphant victory over the Greeks and the miracle of the candela-bra that had only enough oil to burn for one night but lasted for eight.

There's more than just Christmas...

Christmas is rooted in biblical times and often associated with the birth of Jesus Christ. The specific reason for assigning December 25 as the birth date of Jesus is not known. One theory is that December 25 was the Christianizing of a popular holiday in the Roman Empire that celebrated the winter solstice as a symbol of the resurgence of the sun and the rebirth of spring and summer. After December 25 became the widely accepted date of the birth of Jesus, many Christian writers indeed made the connection between the rebirth of the sun and the birth of the Son.

Kwanzaa, created in 1966 by Maulana Karenga, commemorates African heritage in African-American culture. The term Kwanzaa is derived from Swahili and builds on the concept of unity and ancestry in families. Karenga says he created the holiday to give African-Americans an opportunity to celebrate their heritage outside of the dominant society's cultural practices during the holiday season.

Happy New Year!

Countries around the world all ring in the new year in different ways. But every celebration can be traced back to the original New Year's party thrown by the ancient Babylonians over 4,000 years ago. I generally don't even bother with New Years, having given it up years ago. My favorite meme, from Debi Mazar, pretty much sums it up, "I still don't know what I'm wearing to the living room New Year's Eve, I may not even go."

Continued on next page ...

Like most of us, I have a complicated relationship with the holidays. The combination of FOMO (fear of missing out), unrealistic expectations, overindulging, difficult relatives, and sheer exhaustion make for a trigger heavy few weeks. Let's call it what it is and embrace our shared pain. At least we have each other. If, by some chance you are one of those people who actually, ahem, enjoy the holidays, well, I salute you and your golden halo.

The guide:

So, here it is folks, my own personal guide to "enjoying" (maybe that's too strong of a word so feel free to replace it with "getting through"?) the holidays...

- Please, do what you can to lower your expectations. No, an attractive significant other is not going to magically appear to escort you to all the fabulous parties that you suddenly got invited to. In fact, just delete those dating apps from your phone for the entire season. These are just regular days of your life that you should be trying to enjoy and be present to no matter what is happening. As the Buddha says, "Peace begins when expectations end."

- I have found that embracing the cheesy cheeriness can actually be quite entertaining. Go to the mall and get your picture taken with Santa. Build the gingerbread house. Go ahead and wear a holiday sweater. A few years ago I even went to The Christmas Show at Radio City Music Hall with my friend Patty – she wore a Christmas tree sweater with ornaments on it that LIT UP and flashed red and green when she pulled a little string. She owned that \$%*&.



Photo: istockphoto.com
contributor RomoloTavani

- Holiday movies! *Home Alone*, *Scrooged*, *Elf*. And of course, my and my younger brother's personal favorite *A Christmas Story*. I remember being nine years old and seeing it in a theater when it first came out. I literally fell into the aisle from laughing so hard. My babysitter pulled me back into my seat and said, "I guess you really like this movie." I did. I do. I always will. And if anyone out there still has regular cable, TBS streams it on a 24-hour loop the entire week before Christmas.

- Gift giving. Admit it, we all want one. But, can we at least pretend for a moment to believe the old adage, the more you give the more you get? Yet again as the Buddha says, "Happiness is not having a lot, happiness is giving a lot." In the American version of Christmas, gift giving is clearly over-commercialized. But even more than that, and I'm not exactly sure when it started, gift givers no longer even take any responsibility for the gift itself. Instead, we have all decided that the way to make someone happy is to give them a gift they have specifically told us they want. So, get everyone a gift, and try to be at least a little thoughtful about it. I've started giving people a handwritten holiday card telling

them how much I appreciate them and including something I think they might like, even if it's as simple as an Amazon gift card. Do it for everyone. Even your sister-in-law's brother's wife.

- Try to practice some restraint, especially after you are a few days in. And I'm not talking about food and alcohol here, I'm talking about words. A few years ago, after a week of holiday celebrations with family, I was in full on eye rolling, sarcastic comment mode. A friend of mine who was visiting for the day pulled me aside and said, "Be kind to the people that love you." I mean, it's really that simple. We should all be so lucky.

- If all else fails, eat some gummies, have a glass of wine, and pop that Xanax your doctor gave you for long airplane trips. Happy holidays my friends, and thanks for reading. •



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BETTER THAN A BOTTLE: *A wine vacation*

*Y*ou can try all the wines in the world from the comfort of your home. You can research their stories and find lots of history and mystery and beautiful photos online – which is wonderful and certainly an enhancement of the experience. But there's nothing like going to the place where the wine you're drinking is made.

*By Dominique DeVito
info@mainstreetmag.com*

Many if not all of you reading this article have experienced a tasting at a winery, whether it's one close to home (and there are so many good ones within just a few hours), or one you discovered in different parts of the US or the world. What you learn when you visit a winery or several wineries in a region is that place does matter. Soils and climates and techniques all vary. When you learn about where the grapes are grown and how they're turned into wine, you learn about the place itself, and the people who are passionate about it, and you get to experience all of that in the wine. That kind of learning is far more in-depth and interesting than what any guidebook can offer. This holiday season, think beyond the bottle for that special someone in your life who's a wine enthusiast, and consider a wine vacation (or several!). The other enjoyable part is that you'll have this experience together. I've put together five suggestions – in no particular order.

Pico Island in the Azores

The Azores is an archipelago of nine islands off the coast of Portugal in the Atlantic Ocean. Flying out of JFK in New York, you can be in Ponta Delgada in less than six hours. From there, it's another hour by plane to Pico Island, the second largest of the Azores, and one of the most unique wine areas in the world. Why? Because of the influence of Punta de Pico, Portugal's tallest mountain and an active volcano.

The soil of Pico is volcanic basalt. To protect the vines from the strong winds of the Atlantic Ocean, vintners assemble what resembles a patch-work quilt of plots surrounded by five-foot high walls of basalt. They're called "currais."

Wine grapes have been planted here since the 15th century, and today there are nearly 2500 acres planted. There are 17 different varietals planted there, everything from more common Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot to Tinta Roriz and Agromonica on the red side and Pico Terrantez and Gouveio on the white side. The most prevalent varietal is Verdelho, a grape grown throughout Portugal that makes a lovely, crisp dry white and is also used to make Madeira. Not only will you be able to explore a whole new landscape of vineyards, but you'll get to try new varietals – all on this beautiful island that's a UNESCO heritage site.

The best way to experience the history of winemaking on Pico is to do the day-long Pico Wine Tour. ([www.getyourguide.com/madalena-](http://www.getyourguide.com/madalena-1127878/azores-wine-tasting-tour-on-pico-island)

1127878/azores-wine-tasting-tour-on-pico-island). It goes out of Madalena and includes three wine tastings, a visit to the wine museum, and lunch at local restaurant, all with a professional guide.

Bordeaux. Say no more.

Every wine enthusiast should visit Bordeaux, France, considered the epicenter of all things wine. To celebrate the area's contribution to the world of wine, the French built the Cite du Vin in the heart of the town of Bordeaux. Architecturally stunning – it's shaped like a fine decanter – with top-floor views of the surrounding areas, the Cite du Vin is a way to explore wine like no other. Getting to Bordeaux is easy, and once you're there you won't want to leave.

It's easy to spend the better part of a day at the Cite du Vin, and it's worth it. How can you resist an experience described as: "Through some twenty interactive spaces, you will get to fly like a bird over vineyards all over the world, go back in time in the Gallery of Civilizations, put your senses to the test in the Buffet of the Five Senses, sail across the seas of the world following the wine trade or even learn a more about the fabulous process of wine making..." You can find information about the 20 rooms at La Cite du Vin on its extensive website. I

Continued on page 35 ...



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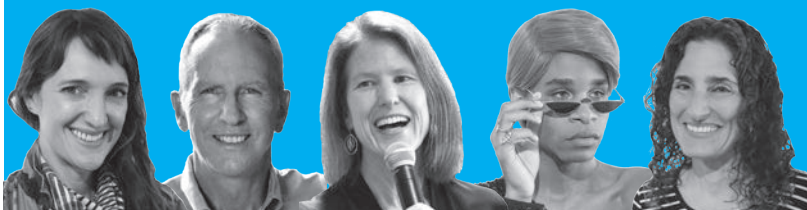
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Above: Vineyards of Saint-Émilion, Bordeaux Vineyards in France. Photo: istockphoto.com contributor samael334. Below, right: Augusta, Missouri., People eating and drinking wine on outdoor patio of Montelle Winery during Oktoberfest. Photo: istockphoto.com contributor Lana2011.

was especially drawn to “The Art of Living: Wine service from the Greeks to modern-day sommeliers;” and “Bacchus and Venus: Lay on sofas and view the wines of love on the ceiling;” and “The Epic Tale of Bordeaux: Follow a time traveler over 2,000 years of winemaking.”

And what would a visit to such a place be without the opportunity to try wines, not just from Bordeaux, but from around the world? No worries there. You can find everything from wine-tasting workshops led by sommeliers to fine dining (and wine drinking) at Restaurant Le 7 with its panoramic views.

Why stop there? You’re in Bordeaux. Get out and explore. There are over 6,000 chateaux in Bordeaux, so getting the most out of your trip can be challenging. I recommend finding a guided tour. There are many of them, each with a unique spin and itinerary. Exploring them through an online search is part of the fun of planning your trip. Do it with a glass of – what else? – Bordeaux. Salut!

Missouri: the Heartland of American Wine

Fine wine in the Midwest? If this sounds like an oxymoron, think again. The Missouri River flows between St. Louis and Kansas City, the state’s major metropolitan areas, and there are some 30 wineries dotted along its banks between these

two hubs. It’s a straight shot drive that’s less than four hours between these two cities (both worth exploring on their own), so taking a few days to explore the area is easy and eye-opening (and palate opening!).

There is a deep and rich history of winemaking in Missouri, begun by German immigrants in the mid-1800s. The area was called Rhineland at one time, and these settlers, looking to honor their roots, brought clippings from their vineyards in Germany to plant in the fertile soils along the Missouri.

It was Missouri’s first entomologist, Charles Riley, who was sent to France in the late 1800s to help identify what was eating away at France’s vineyards. It was Riley who identified the phylloxera louse, and he also found that some Native American rootstock was immune from the pest and could have French vines grafted onto them.

Prohibition decimated wine production along the Missouri and across the country, and it was a slow but steady evolution that resuscitated the area. In 1980, Augusta, Missouri, was recognized as the first US Wine District, or Viticultural Area #1, because of its “unique soil, climate, historical significance, and quality of wines produced from grapes grown in vineyards that date to the 1800’s.” (Augusta Winery) PBS recently launched a documentary called *Winemaking in Missouri: A well-cultivated history*, as part of its tasteMAKERS series. Watch it before you travel there so you better

understand the region.

Many excellent varietals thrive there even if you may have never heard of them. It’s always good to try new wines! They include Norton (a Native American grape that produces big, dry reds); Chambourcin (a French-American hybrid red wine grape); Vidal Blanc (a cold-hardy white wine grape that originated in France); and Vignoles, the state’s most popular white wine grape (another cold-hardy varietal that produces aromatic and succulent wines) – and many more.

Getting to Missouri Wine Country is easy – in or out of St. Louis or Kansas City. There are actually 11 distinct wine trails in Missouri, each with its own collection of wineries. Check them out at www.missouriwine.org. Any number of itineraries is possible, and they’re all a great way to learn more about our country’s viticultural heritage and fabulous wines.

Southern Ontario and Pelee Island Winery

If you want a spring or summer get-away that isn’t going to involve an airport, but is exotic enough that you’ll need your passport, just head west from Albany. Stay north of the Finger Lakes and head to the Lake Erie escarpment near Buffalo. You can be at the beautiful Arrowhead Spring Vineyard in less than five hours from Albany, which is a great first stop. Spend the night in the

Continued on next page ...





Above, top to bottom: Pelee Island Marina. Photo: istockphoto.com contributor SkyF. Welcome to Napa Valley, CA. Photo: istockphoto.com contributor gus-tavofrazao.

area or get back on the road, cross into Canada, and it's another four hours to Leamington, Ontario, where you'll board a ferry to cross to Pelee Island.

Little Pelee Island, just 16.14 square miles, is at the southernmost point of Canada. In fact, half of America's 50 states are north of it, and it's on same latitude as some of the best wine-growing locations in Europe. In addition to Pelee Winery's over 500 acres of vineyards, the island is home to over 10,000 unique species and is a mini paradise for nature lovers.

The Pelee Island Pavillion is a seasonal visit, April thru December, with late spring through early fall being ideal times to cross over on the ferry and explore the winery and the island. The winery offers a "Vine to Wine" seminar that takes

visitors through the winemaking process from growing grapes to making wine, with information on the history of winemaking and also the importance of corks.

Pelee Island Winery makes everything from dry reds and whites to fruit wines, sparkling wines, and ice wines. Its signature varietals include Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, and Cabernet Franc.

You'll want to stay overnight – or even a few days. Pelee.org is chock full of suggestions, enticing visitors to explore everything that makes it one of Canada's best-kept secrets.

Napa, because it's Napa

I almost didn't include the Napa Valley in California in this list because it's so touristy. But just as Bordeaux is a must-visit place for understanding and appreciating the wines of France, so Napa is the place you have to visit at least once to understand and appreciate exceptional wines from the US.

The truth is that Napa is exceptional not just for the amazing wines produced at its hundreds of wineries, but for its natural beauty and almost fairy-tale atmosphere of fine living, including its food scene. It's a place to fall in love with and in, no matter how often you go.

Napa Valley is California's first AVA (American Viticultural Area), established in 1981. (There are over 200 AVAs across the country, of which 146 are in California). While winemaking in the area dates back to the 1800s, it wasn't until the 1960s that the area started to come into its own.

Cabernet Sauvignon is its most distinguished varietal, and Napa is world-renowned for producing big, deep, elegant expressions of this grape that loves the sun and the long ripening season there.

A (very short) list of iconic wineries to visit in Napa includes Chateau Montelena (watch the movie *Bottle Shock* before visiting – or just because); Robert Mondavi; Duckhorn; Caymus; Domain Chandon; and Beringer. If you want to be dazzled, visit Darioush, founded in

1997 to bring the opulent architecture, rich culture, arts, and wines of the famed royal city of Persepolis to Napa. The setting is all royal palace and the wines are equally fabulous. You pay for it, but you won't forget it. If you want a good story, good experience, and great wines, too, check out Andretti, started by race car driver Mario Andretti. Andretti and Joe Antonini, the former CEO of K-Mart, wanted to bring the old world to the new world with great wines for a laid-back lifestyle. 'Nuf said.

You probably have some favorite Napa Valley Cabs you've tried over the years whose tasting rooms and wineries you'd like to experience. Make a list and do it! There are so many websites with so much information on what to see and do in Napa and the surrounding area. I found californiawineryadvisory.com to be an especially good one.

And so many more

When you start looking into where to go for a wine vacation you'll find, like I did, that every place looks wonderful. I didn't even get to Italy, or Spain, or Croatia, or Greece, or Israel, or Chile, or Washington, Oregon, Virginia, even our great state of New York! I discovered what looks like a magical escape just south of Charleston, SC – Deep Water Vineyard on Wadmalaw Island – but I didn't include it because, well, it's like eating potato chips. I could go on and on.

What makes a wine vacation special, no matter where you go, is wine's connection to the earth and to the people who cultivate the grapes and make the wine. It's easy to forget that EVERY bottle tells a story. Become a part of that experience in your wine education and appreciation. Visit wineries from your backyard to any part of the planet that calls you.

May the gift of wine always be one of passion. ●



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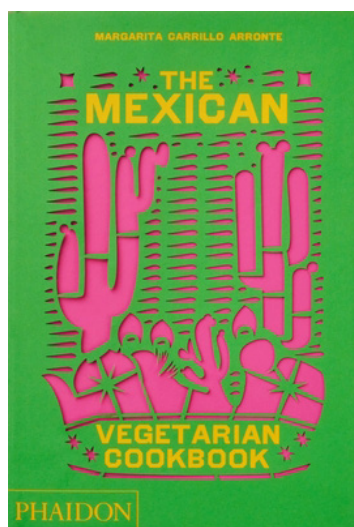
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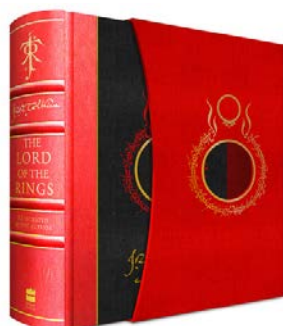
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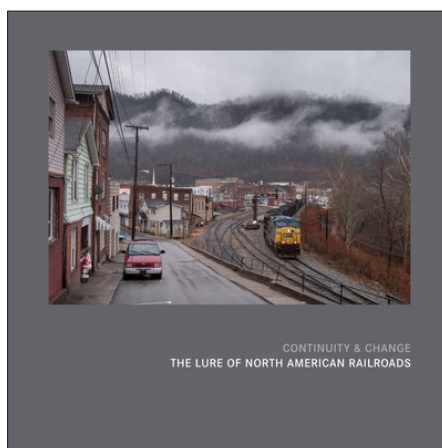
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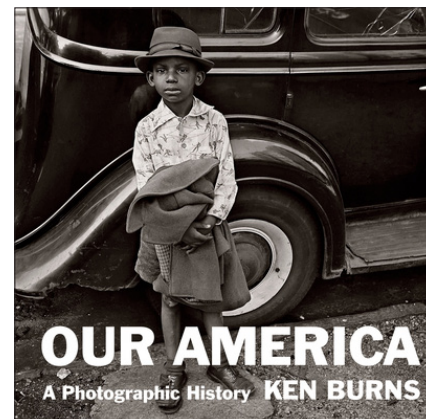
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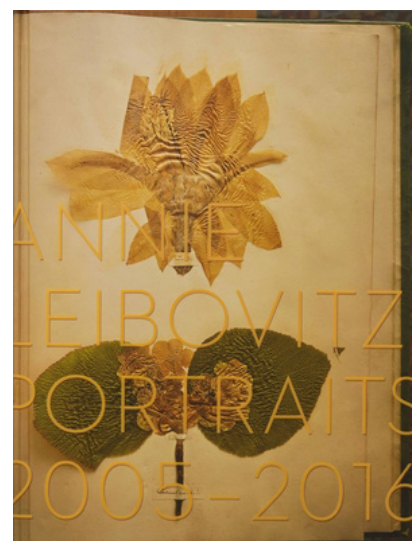
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Railroads and photography came of age together in the nineteenth century and share a dynamic relationship in the twenty-first. That relationship flows from the traditions of both commercial photography and photojournalism, and it is defined today by the paradox of continuity and change. This landmark publication explores that paradox – and the contemporary nature of the North American railroad – in more than 230 photographs and thirteen essays. They delve into a wide range of topics: railroads and nature, pathways of commerce, passenger railroading, heritage activities, workers, international connections, the allure of continent-crossing networks, and more.



Our America: A Photographic History by Ken Burns

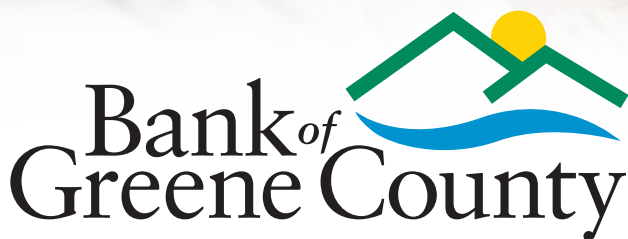
From one of our most treasured filmmakers, a pictorial history of America – a stunning and moving collection of some of Ken Burns's favorite photographs, with an introduction by Burns, and an essay by longtime MoMA photography curator Sarah Hermanson Meister.



Annie Leibovitz, Portraits 2005-2016 by Annie Leibovitz

Influential photographer Annie Leibovitz presents her remarkable portraits in this re-issue of her acclaimed and bestselling collection. With an essay by Alexandra Fuller and an afterword by Annie Leibovitz. For this collection, Leibovitz has selected the best and most representative portraits from her work between 2005 and 2016. The pictures document contemporary culture with an artist's eye, wit, and an uncanny ability to personalize even the most recognizable and distinguished figures.

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Holiday decorations



By Pom Shillingford
info@mainstreetmag.com

I have been thinking about my holiday floral decorations from the moment we had *Frostmas*. Yes, that really is a completely made-up word that otherwise seemingly grown-up sane gardeners have been littering Instagram with since early October. Coupled with my utter dislike of Halloween and the finality of the gardening season, it's no wonder fall, despite being stunningly beautiful, is far from my favorite season!

Magic month

December, on the other hand, is my magic month when pretty much all the heavy lifting of the garden clear-up is done, spring bulbs are nicely tucked in, my compost bays are at bursting point – and I get to draw breath before hands-down my favorite day of the year, Christmas Day.

So, garden down, flowers not to be seen, what are our local seasonal floral options? Not a lot you could wail. But not so! We are actually blessed with some real gems in this area. And I don't just mean in terms of Christmas tree farms and the traditional evergreen purveyors. Yes, these are important for your holiday décor but

please stretch your floral imagination beyond the pine swag!

Here's where you need to go

If the traditional red and greens are your thing, then the best source for your reds (and in fact oranges and yellows) has to be Windy Hill Farm outside of Great Barrington, MA.

At all times of year this nursery and garden shop is a mecca for landscapers, gardeners, apple and blueberry lovers, but I think their Holiday Shop is just the best. Inside it's an Aladdin's cave of baubles, trinkets, and tree decorations, ribbons, candles, table arrangements, and winter bulbs. Outside, it's your heart's desire of unique wreaths, the most beautiful selection of Christmas trees and my siren-caller, their home-grown winterberry. And I'm not talking the puny little packets that you see in the supermarket. They sell this by the bucket and up to four-foot-tall branches. If you are looking to make a floral holiday show-stopper this year, this is where you need to head.

To learn more visit them online at www.windyhillfarminc.com or in person at 686 Stockbridge Road, Great Barrington MA. You can also call them at (413) 298-3217.

No, no, no people!

Asked to think of the flower that most represents Christmas, most might say the ubiquitous poinsettia. No, no, no people, please start thinking way beyond this cliché of mass greenhouse-produced mediocrity! Easier to grow, far longer lasting and leagues more beautiful is the amaryllis. These can be bought either bare-root or planted bulbs and when in flower will produce trumpet-shaped flowers up to ten inches in diameter on two-foot stems. Colors can be red, white, pink, salmon, apricot, rose, or deep burgundy. Some are even bi-color or picotee with petals sporting a different edge color. They can also be single or

Continued on next page ...



Images that are courtesy of Windy Hill are at the top, left and center on this page, and far left and far right on previous page. The rest of the images are courtesy of Pom Shillingford.

double in form. Beat that, poinsettia, beat that!

I cannot stress how easy these are to grow yourself. Amaryllis like to be in tight-fitting pots. To avoid them overbalancing once they are in full-flower, it's a good idea to put some heavy grit in the base of the pot before adding the soil. Water sparingly and then not again until you see the green shoot appear.

The trick to getting them going is to place them in a sunny well-lit room but NOT by a draughty window. They like a bit of bottom-up heat so a shelf over a radiator should you have one to hand is perfect. Should you wish to skip this stage entirely, a great source of pre-potted ones (and very nicely potted too!) is Hudson Valley Flower Farm, who will actually deliver these within a forty-mile radius of their sustainable flower farm in Beekman, NY. Visit them online at www.hvflowerfarm.com to learn more.

So easy a five-year-old could grow it

And finally, the easiest no-brainer, no-green-fingers-required flower to grow from scratch yourself, even if you

only think about doing so a couple of weeks before the big day – the big-scented, so-easy-a-five-year-old-could-grow-them, the paperwhite narcissi.

These are so simple you don't even need soil to grow these. All you need are the bulbs, a bowl, and something to balance these on. That can be potting soil or just as easily pebbles from a beach, garden, or even gravel from your driveway.

Either way fill the bowl half full and then balance the bulbs close together across the surface. If using pebbles, fill the bowl until the water level is just touching the base of the bulbs but not submerging them. If using soil, push the bulbs down into the soil, sprinkle a little bit more on top so it comes to around halfway up the bulb, and water so the soil is damp and not water logged. You will need to keep watering these as the bulbs spring to life.

(One old wives' tale to keep your foliage from splaying everywhere once at full height is to add a splash of vodka to your water. I have no idea of the science behind this but it does help).

Once planted, place the bowl somewhere warm and sunny. Keep turning the bowl every few days towards the light to stop the bulbs leaning as they grow. In a couple of weeks you will have a delicious-smelling bowl of beauties.

Planting well beyond the holidays?

Paperwhite bulbs can be found at pretty much any horticultural outlet at the moment. I like to continuously plant these well beyond the holiday season. I buy these in bulk quantities from the ever-brilliant local mail order supplier John Scheepers in Bantam, CT. They are easily stored in a cool dark spot and can be planted even into February, so keeping us going through the darkest days of winter. Learn more at www.johnscheepers.com.

Happy holidays and happy holiday planting. ●

Pom Shillingford is an obsessive gardener originally from England and now based in Salisbury, CT. She offers seasonal cut flowers through English Garden Grown. Find her on Instagram @english_garden_grown.

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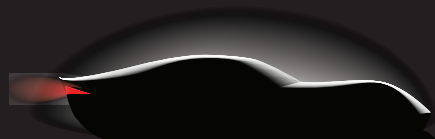
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The Housatonic Valley Regional High School International Travel Club Oh, the places you'll go!

By Ian Strever
info@mainstreetmag.com

In the city of Xian, China, a bird flits along a ten-inch wooden perch inside a mahogany-colored cage. I don't know what kind of bird it is, but the cage itself catches my attention. Cylindrical and peaked at the top and bottom, it is shaped like the buoys on the lobster traps I used to see on family trips to Gloucester, MA.

The mind works like this: we explore the world through analogy. That kindergarten teacher is like my mother. This baked sweet potato tastes like the puree I used to eat. Falling in love feels like being at the top of a roller coaster. By comparison, we translate the unfamiliar into something familiar.

Anchoring yourself amongst the unknown

Which is why, perhaps, that bird remains with me eight years after spending an afternoon in a Muslim market on the other side of the world. Underneath that cage lay a bin of dried grasshoppers, and next to it, a small basin containing five or six live turtles of alien appearance. A few stalls down, an aroma so beguiling wafted from a grill of searing meats that to this day, I don't have the words to describe it; I am not sure they exist, at least in English. On that day, I was drawn into an environment so exotic that, like that bird in its cage, I latched



onto a familiar perch to anchor myself amidst the unknown.

International travel unmoors us from our known world, yet we are usually within reach of recognizable shores: a tour guide, an all-too imminent flight home, or a congenial English-speaking stranger throws us a lifeline. But personal growth comes from those minutes spent fumbling for directions in a foreign tongue or trying to interpret a street sign. "I can do this," is the lasting impression that these experiences

leave on world travelers.

Global awareness

For this and a number of compelling reasons, most high schools endorse some form of international travel, with trips to Quebec, Spain, and France the most common destinations.

Since its founding, however, global awareness has been a cornerstone of Housatonic Valley Regional High School, beginning in the 1940s with its American Field Service program that supports international exchange programs, and now with its International Travel Club, founded in 2018, that promotes not only international trips, but works to make those trips attainable for all students through its fundraising entity, Northwest Students Without Borders.

Continued on next page ...



Above: Montserrat – A monastery in the mountains above Barcelona, Spain, dating back to the 9th century. (July 2019). Below, left: Costa Rica – Sunset on the beach in Costa Rica (December 2021).



Above, top to bottom: Greece – Travelers pose in front of The Temple of Poseidon in Greece (July 2022). Equator – At the equator in Ecuador in December, 2021. Below, right: China – A dumpling buffet in Xi'an, China in April, 2019.

In the short period of its existence, the club has sponsored trips to mainland Europe, China, and Greece, with plans in the works for trips next year to the Galapagos Islands, Japan, Ireland and Scotland. Students research potential destinations and work with teacher John Lizzi to narrow down the list to the most popular locations. Very few locations are off the list, though, and the club is currently considering trips in 2024 to such far-flung sites as Australia/New Zealand, Iceland, Belize, or Brazil.

This is a true travel club, driven by curiosity about the world instead of strictly curricular interests, an approach that opens up much more of the planet for student exploration. While most high school trips are anchored by language-learning goals, the International Travel Club operates year-round to visit locations for cultural and purely inquisitive reasons.

Fundraising

One of the other values that distinguishes the International Travel Club is its commitment to making travel accessible for all students. At their annual fundraising dinner this past fall, the club raised over \$65,000 to offset the cost of travel

for any student who wants to participate, cutting the cost of the trip by as much as 70 percent. For the past two years, the event has taken place beneath a tent on the lawn in front of Salisbury's iconic White Hart Inn. A silent auction and a live auction take place throughout the evening, and the student-travelers are required to serve as wait staff for the event to earn their share of the proceeds. In addition to this group endeavor, the travel club announces its destinations over a year in advance, allowing families ample time to save or raise funds for the balance of the expenses and any spending money they need.

Understanding the human condition

While the educational benefits of travel are evident, the ancillary activities that support the voyages are equally instructive. Margot Minton ('23) plans on traveling to Japan next spring and notes, "the HVRHS Travel Club gives us chances to raise money for our trips and provides us with skills in communication and organizing finances, skills that can help us outside of high school."

In addition to working at the dinner, students solicit local busi-

nesses to sponsor a silent auction and to act as title sponsors for the event.

The learning continues well beyond the trip itself, too. Students reflect upon their travel experiences with fellow travelers in an academic setting and frequently cite their learning from the trip in classroom settings. Visiting the UConn Human Rights course this fall, I listened as students immediately invoked their trip to Greece as a reference point in understanding the range of the human condition around the globe. Not every country is like the northwest corner of Connecticut, they realized, and as the conversation progressed, the student-travelers provided a context for their discussion that paid dividends even for those students who had not gone on the trip. As Henry Rollins once said, "The best way to learn about your country is to leave it." •

Cash or check donations to the International Travel Club can be sent to Housatonic Valley High School, 246 Warren Turnpike Road, Falls Village, CT 06031. Online donations can be made by clicking on "Sponsor/Donate" at <http://winedinnerandauction.com/>





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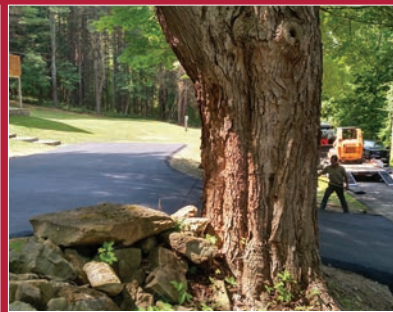
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Holiday remembrances

By Jesse DeGroodt
info@mainstreetmag.com

Can there possibly be a better age at which to head into the holiday season than seven? Okay, we can stipulate that zero through six aren't half bad, but at seven one still may not be aware of certain things such as, well, you know, while at that point you may have assembled some real clues about your surroundings and your world view likely has not been completely wrecked by things transpiring around you.

On my age seven Christmas, eighth overall, upon me was bestowed a genuine deerskin jacket and helmet with light that might seem more designed for spelunking, but was likely some sort of "Lost in Space" gizmo, back when I wanted little else than to be Will Robinson's twin brother, although having a juvenile crush on Penny didn't hurt, so perhaps that twin brother thing wouldn't've worked out.

Making memories

However, those were things. Things can be cool and we all tend to like our things. But if you take the approach that life is, in one respect, about making memories, I consider myself wildly fortunate to have many attached to this time of year, both to those formed through the fog of memory and its dissolution and reformation cycles, and others with photographic evidence (fortunately,

none of the incriminating variety), undoubtedly thanks to a relentlessly polite family that hung together for this kind of thing, including regular Sunday dinners and whatnot. And everyone seemed to like one another. One very large anachronism in many ways as seen from 2022, I am quite aware.

My maternal set of grandparents lived next door (need I outline the tremendous advantages this affords a young-un?). Prior to me figuring out, well, you know, granddaddy Don would wander down the driveway and get the day's proceedings underway by jangling the set of bells that otherwise adorned their front door during the holiday season. He would follow that up with a hearty "Ho-ho-ho!" A few minutes later, he and grandma Ida would appear for the time-honored tradition of overseeing the little ban-shee in their midst digging into his gifts.

I recall those bells and the "Ho-ho-ho" and the appearance of my grandparents with far more clarity than I do at least 99% of the gifts I've opened over the years.

Gustatory delights

As the day developed, it was time to move along up the hill to their house, where that side of the family congregated for the swapping of presents and, perhaps even better,

some seriously tasty gustatory delights. A small, cozy home, formerly a cow barn, suddenly teeming with relative humanity bearing gifts and pies and occasionally a bottle of Thunderbird, although others might opt for whatever remained of the summer's batch of



dandelion wine. And somehow we all squeezed and finagled and crammed and otherwise maneuvered our way into the dining room for a dinner that consisted of the usuals, with Oysters Rockefeller rising to the top of my list as the years sailed along, making up for what was to me the inevitable, inedible desert: pumpkin and mince pies. Yeesh.

In many ways, society and all that whatnot being what it is, this was a decidedly old school operation all the way around. Shooed out of the kitchen by the ladies, several of the menfolk would retire to the living room to squint at the little black and white set, hoping for a football game to be 1) being played on this magical day, and 2) that came in on one of the two TV channels we received, one of them well enough that constant fiddling with the rabbit ears wasn't called for. Ask me, and judging from the sounds of the gabbing and giggling going on around the kitchen area, I'm thinking that overall the ladyfolk were having a far better time.

Coming full circle

Everyone sufficiently engorged, it was time to, as best we could, assemble

around the tree, which, among other accoutrements, bore a set of blue bubble lights that never failed to entrance me, regardless my age. I can still see them. But ask me, through all those years, what gifts I might recall having come my way one of these afternoons, and I can't do it. If I thought about it for ten seconds, I'd likely have more luck remembering a gift or two received by my younger cousins.

Growing up, this was all so normal to me. As the years now speed by at the rate of a SpaceX rocket achieving escape velocity, having the opportunity to watch my little granddaughter do her thing at this special time of the year helps to continue my faith in humanity. And never fails to make me seven years old again on that Christmas morning, all decked out for a spot of outer space spelunking. ●





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Mix it up this year and do something different to celebrate 2023

NEW YEAR'S TRADITIONS AROUND THE WORLD

By Regina Molaro
info@mainstreetmag.com

For more than a century, people around the globe descend upon Manhattan's Times Square to watch the ball drop. Some history: that inaugural New Year's Eve bash, held in 1904, commemorated the official opening of the headquarters of *The New York Times*.

At midnight, there was a fireworks display to celebrate and mark the event. A few years later, the city banned the fireworks, so *The Times* arranged to have a large, illuminated iron and wood ball lowered from the tower flagpole precisely at midnight to signal the end of 1907 and the start of 1908. It became an annual tradition. Since 2000, Waterford Crystal has been fitting the Times Square Ball with brilliant crystal panels.

On the other side of the globe in Sydney, Australia, the New Year's events boast one of the world's largest, most technologically advanced displays of fireworks, lighting, and projections. Every year, more than one million spectators gather at the Sydney Harbor shoreline to watch the spectacular show, which reaches a global audience of more than 425 million.

Chances are, you may have been ringing in your New Year's Eves in similar fashion every year. Perhaps you watch the ball drop on television and call it a night.

It's almost that time of year again when we say goodbye to 2022 and usher in a new year. This year, do something different and mix it up. Try borrowing a tradition from another culture. Regardless of how you celebrate, it's easy to adapt a custom from another culture. Perhaps you can have every member of your group engage in a different ritual. Here are some ideas.

Brazil

In Brazil, people believe that donning colored undies ushers in luck in the new year. The vibrant color red, associated with love, is thought to bring passion. People who are hoping for a windfall of money wear yellow while green symbolizes good health, and white is associated with peace. In tribute to the god Oxala, everyone dons white clothing. Bay leaves, also known as the "priest's leaf" is a spiritual token believed to sharpen intuition. Many Brazilians tuck one inside a pocket in their white clothing for some extra luck.

Colombia

People in Colombia stuff their pockets with lentils in the hopes of having a bountiful year ahead. Those who yearn to travel carry a suitcase around their neighborhood. At the stroke of midnight, many Colombians set fire to a doll, which symbolizes the old year. Out with the old, in with the new.

Croatia

Croatians believe that a person's health depends on the first person they spotted on New Year's Day. There's also an old belief that everyone who travels on New Year's Day will continue to jetset in the year ahead. In Split, regardless of how cold it is, people play games in the chilly waters of the beach. They believe that bathing in a frigid sea is healthy for the body.

Denmark

The Queen's New Year's Eve speech from Fredensborg Castle signals the beginning of the celebration and symbolizes unity for the country. Every year, the Queen summarizes the year's political events, and thanks the people of Greenland and the Faroe Islands. Later, the Danish try to banish bad spirits and strengthen friendships by tossing old plates and glasses against the doors of the homes of family and friends. At midnight, they stand on



Photo: istockphoto.com
contributor vladans

chairs and jump off to "leap" into January in the hopes of bringing in good luck. Called "hoppe ind i det nye år," it translates to "to jump or leap into the new year."

Ecuador

People in Ecuador celebrate by burning paper filled scarecrows at midnight. They also burn photographs from the previous year.

Finland

Beyond the fireworks and toasts, the Finnish forecast the upcoming year by melting tin in a bucket of cold water. The resulting shape is interpreted to predict the future. A heart or ring forecasts a wedding, a ship predicts travel, and a pig declares there will be plenty of food.

France

In France, the New Year's Eve celebration is called "Le Réveillon de la Saint-Sylvestre." "La Saint-Sylvestre" is the patron saint of the New Year. "Le Réveillon" translates to "the awakening." It is marked with a night-time celebration or feast with a menu of

Continued on next page ...

rich foods. In France, kissing under the mistletoe is reserved for New Year's rather than Christmas. This tradition hails from the Druid Celts who believed mistletoe brings good luck and wards off evil spirits.

Greece

The Greeks bake a coin or trinket into a special cake that they refer to as "Vasilopita." When the cake is cut, usually right after the stroke of midnight, the first slice is "given" to God and the family eats the rest. Whoever receives the coin or trinket is believed to be lucky in the year ahead. Greeks also hang an onion outside their doors. A symbol of fertility, growth, and rebirth, it is said to bring blessings and luck.

Japan

The New Year, which is referred to as Oshogatsu, is rich in tradition. One of the first rituals in Japan is cleaning the entire home. Every member or the family pitches in for this annual event. Around midnight, Buddhist temples ring their bells. One hundred and eight strikes of the bell represent the 108 types of desires and feelings that relate to jealousy and anger. Each strike removes one of those negative emotions or feelings. The Japanese also welcome the new year by eating soba noodles. Long and thin, the noodles represent a long, healthy life. The noodles can be cut easily, which also symbolizes a wish to cut away the misfortunes of the past.

Ireland

A clean house on New Year's in Ireland symbolizes a fresh start and a clean slate. To ward off bad luck and spirits, the Irish also bang on the doors and outside walls of their homes with bread. One of the most well-known Irish traditions is setting an additional plate at the dinner table for loved ones lost in the prior year. The weather also plays a role in the celebrations. The direction of the wind

forecasts the days ahead. If the wind comes in from the west, it is believed that all of Ireland will be blessed with good fortune. If the wind blows in from the east, the opposite is true.

Scotland

Hogmanay is an end-of-year party that kicks off on December 30 and ends on New Year's Day. One of the traditions is "first-footing." It's considered unlucky for the first guest who steps foot over the threshold of a home to come empty-handed, so revelers bring shortbread, lumps of coal, and whisky to usher good luck to family, friends, and neighbors. Fire festivals are also held since it is believed that fires ward off evil spirits. People in Scotland also engage in home cleansing rituals, which include removing ashes from fires already extinguished. This signifies the "out with the old and in with the new" philosophy.

Spain

In Spain, it's customary to eat 12 lucky grapes on "Noche Vieja" or "Old Night." Each grape coincides with the strike of the clock. If all 12 grapes are gobbled up before the end of the final bell's toll at midnight, good luck will arrive in the year ahead. Each grape represents each month of the upcoming year. Those

who yearn to be lucky in love, also wear red undies on the eve. This lucky charm is believed to work only if the racy undergarment was gifted to the wearer. Before the Spanish sip their cava in celebration, they drop a shiny gold object in the glass for good luck.

India

In India, people make an effigy of an "old man," which symbolizes the old year. This effigy is burned at midnight, which symbolizes the passing of grievances from the old year and makes space for a new, happy year.

Italy

In Italy, people toss old things from the window at midnight, a ritual that symbolizes letting go and ridding yourself of evil. One of the oldest Italian customs is to observe the first person that you meet on the street on "Capodanno" or New Year's Day. If it's an old person, the new year will be full of great surprises.

Panama

To drive off evil spirits for a fresh start, people burn effigies (muñecos) of renowned people such as political figures or celebrities. These muñecos or dolls are stuffed with firecrackers and lit and beaten at the stroke of midnight. According to folklore, by beating and setting the effigies aflame, the sins and evil spirits of the old year are destroyed. Of course, this makes way for good fortune. The fire

crackers are believed to help drive evil forces away. Other traditions include putting rice in a pot, which is believed to attract wealth, and burning incense to get rid of bad energy from the old year.

Philippines

In the Philippines, round shapes represent coins and symbolize prosperity in the coming year. In response, many families display piles of fruit. Some people eat exactly 12 round fruits at midnight – grapes are popular. Many also wear polka dots for luck.

Switzerland

On New Year's Eve, the Swiss traditionally serve an alpine version of a hot pot, which consists of meats and vegetables. One of their traditions is to drop a dollop of cream or ice cream on the floor. This is believed to bring luck, wealth, and peace in the year ahead.

No matter your New Year's tradition, and whether or not you adopt a new one this year, we wish you all a happy and healthy 2023! ●



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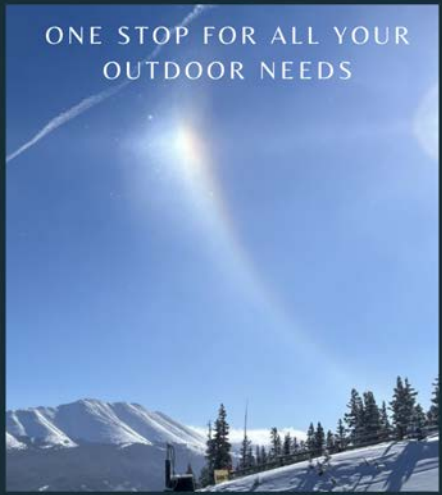
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2022

where did you go?

By Thorunn Kristjansdottir
info@mainstreetmag.com

It cannot only be me who finds themselves sitting here and realizing that 2022 is almost over – right? I’m not alone, am I? Where did this year go? Seriously! For that reason, and for feeling like this year whizzed by at the speed of light, I felt it all the more important to reflect on some of the highlights from this past year and what it has meant to me and in relation to what it has meant for us here at *Main Street*.

To begin, you’re reading this – presumably – at the very beginning of December. So if you are much like me, you feel like you are swamped with one million and one things that you have to do before the holidays really kick in. There are parties to attend, there are dinners and holiday-related feasts to plan and shop for, speaking of shopping – holiday shopping (oy!), and then there’s the decorating... well, maybe you’re more organized than I am and you’ve already done your decorating. But I digress... So due to all of the busy-busy things happening right now, isn’t this the absolutely best time to take a minute – slow down – and reflect on this past year that we’re about to close the chapter on? I think so.

Sharing stories

For those of you who know what we’re all about, we’re all about sharing good stories. And boy! Have we shared some stories this year. This issue is (obviously) our twelfth this year, but we’ve also shared countless stories through our website and even more content through our social media channels. There are so many memorable stories that have stayed with me, but instead of cherry-picking here, I’d just like to state this: I feel so honored and privileged to be able to share all of our stories with you, our readers. And I’m eternally grateful to our advertisers because without them we wouldn’t be able to give you this free magazine!

Our content covers a broad spectrum of topics and we try to have something for everyone. But beyond that, our main goal is always to tell a good, positive story. We want to uncover and share the curious, the interesting, the important, and the fun. I hope that you feel that we accomplish that every month and bring you something of interest!

Hello. Good-bye.

This past year we had some new folks join us at the magazine, perhaps you noticed? This summer we were lucky to have our talented college students back: Lindsey Clark and Caleb May brought you a few stories that were interesting, curious, informative, and well-written. They also contributed other content that they created for our socials, website, and numerous videos. They also brought us laughter, wit, and some Gen Z-related stuff that helped Ashley and me feel like we were “with it.” But I’d like to think that we were able to school them and give them a bit of musical education during their time at the office.

This summer my sister-in-law, Anna Martucci, joined our ranks. What can I say? I like to keep things in the family! But I’m so happy to have Anna’s voice join our talented writing pool. Anna’s interests are as vast as her writing has been, and who knows what interesting topics she’ll tackle in the coming months.

Around the same time that Anna joined us, Lorraine Alexander joined us too (thanks for introducing us Christine). Lorraine joined us roaring to go, with so many great ideas! And it’s been a real pleasure having her monthly articles grace our pages that have shared unique stories that were all new to me. I hope they were new to you, too.

You may have also noticed last spring that our proof-reader, Pom Shillingford, started penning a garden column for us. I consider myself a

person with not a green thumb, but a black thumb. But despite my inability to grow anything, I’ve really enjoyed Pom’s stories of gardening. And proof that her stories have been inspirational is the fact that after reading each one, I’ve had a desire to start growing myself. I haven’t done it yet, but perhaps some of you were inspired too, and unlike me, took action!

Just recently, an old colleague called me up and wanted to know if I was looking for his unique flavor of stories. I told him that of course I’d be happy to have his voice join us! And with that, you’ll find Jesse DeGroodt’s first article in this issue. I’ve known Jesse for nearly 20 years, and he’s always had a unique angle that he approaches his stories with, and so I hope that you will all enjoy his stories in the coming issues.

You may have read my editor’s note last month where I shared that our friend and long-time contributor CB Wismar will no longer be contributing. He and his wife Kathy have left our area, and sadly that means he won’t be able to contribute anymore. Although shortly after giving me the news, he shot me a message and asked if I would be open to story ideas from time-to-time if the inspiration struck him. Of course I’m open to that! So even though CB may not be one of our regular contributors, perhaps he’ll grace us with a story or two a year.

This summer, Griffin Cooper left us to help the Northeast Community Center with their ongoing efforts to help and support their community. We thank him for three years of stories that ran the gamut of topics.

I don’t want to leave out our “regular” roster of writers or other staff. Most of you will recognize Christine Bates, Mary O’Neill, Regina Molaro, Olivia Valentine, Caroline Markonic, Ian Strever, Dominique DeVito, Betsy Maury, John Torsiello, Lazlo Gyorsok, Joe Villanova, and Ashley Kristjanson. This magazine would not be

what it is without them and their incredible work.

Talkin’ moxie

Some of you might also be aware that in January of 2022 Mary and I launched a podcast: Main Street Moxie. It is very much related to this magazine, not just in the “Main Street” name, but also in the type of content we produce. With our podcast, we interview people that we feel demonstrate moxie in their lives. Our guests have really run the gamut, and for me personally, their stories and advice have been extraordinary! I have been so moved and humbled to talk with every single one of them.

The reason that I decided to launch into the podcast pool was because I felt that it was another platform and opportunity for us to share great stories. Just like with this magazine, the podcast lets us share interesting, fun, and inspirational stories – I’m all about spreading the love!

Learning the ins and outs of the podcasting world has been interesting. I’m grateful to Mary who spent countless hours learning all about the tech side of it all, and how to sound edit amongst other things. For me, the most amazing part of the experience has been learning about our guests and hearing their experiences. I’ve found a common thread between them, which is really impressive considering that our guests are literally from all walks of life and are from all over the world. I look forward to a new year of Main Street Moxie and sharing more inspirational stories.

As I finish this off, 2022 has brought me joy, excitement, adventure, inspiration, and challenges. 2023 will hopefully bring more of that! But do you know that we have a big celebration in March? In March, *Main Street Magazine* will celebrate ten years! Can you believe it? Ten years of telling amazing stories. Here’s to ten more years! ●



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The new year brings opportunities to volunteer in the Hudson Valley community

VOLUNTEER IN THE NEW YEAR

By Regina Molaro
info@mainstreetmag.com

Community is such a big part of life in the Hudson Valley. The region is a destination where people know their neighbors and enjoy supporting one another in various ways.

The Hudson Valley is home to a host of non-profit organizations linked to history, the arts, design, and other interesting areas. Many of these organizations rely on the support of the community through donations and volunteer work.

Within the last few years, we have all experienced lots of isolation. During the pandemic, many people found themselves with ample time, but they lacked structure and a sense of purpose. With businesses and organizations temporarily closed down and in-person events being canceled, there were not a lot of opportunities to volunteer.

As businesses and organizations closed, volunteerism also declined. *The Role of Volunteering in Philanthropy* journal cited that 66% of donors decreased or stopped volunteering. The pandemic also took a toll on our social wellbeing and financial matters. As society slowly returns to in-person gatherings, many local organizations could use a hand. Beyond the sense of purpose, ability to make friends, and opportunities for socializing opportunities, many organizations desperately need support.

Soul's purpose

Dan Buettner, educator, author, and National Geographic fellow, is recognized worldwide for his research

on longevity. Exposure to other cultures and their lifestyles sparked his research on regions of the world with the longest life expectancy, disability-free life expectancy, or concentration of centenarians – people who live to be over 100 years old. He reported his findings of communities with increased longevity, identified as “Blue Zones.”

The “Blue Zones” regions are identified as Okinawa, Japan; Sardinia, Italy; Nicoya, Costa Rica; Ikaria, Greece, and Loma Linda, California. Although the residents of these regions are scattered across the globe, they share several commonalities. One of them is a sense of purpose. Although the Okinawans call it “Ikigai” and the Nicoyans call it “plan de vida,” this translates to “why I wake up in the morning” or “soul’s purpose.” Knowing your own sense of purpose is worth up to seven years of extra life expectancy. Here are some ideas to keep you busy, fulfilled, healthy, and happy in the new year.

Opportunities are calling Beatrix Farrand Garden

Next year marks an exciting time to volunteer at the Beatrix Farrand Garden. A landscape gardener, Farrand’s work defined the American taste in gardens throughout the 20th century. She championed the use of perennial plants in combinations based upon color, harmony, bloom sequence, and texture.

Plans for 2023 call for the largest site project at Beatrix Farrand Garden

since a renovation that was completed in the 1990s. The upcoming Wild Garden Realization Project will complete Farrand’s original intentions for the garden that she designed in 1912. Naturalist plantings on the exterior of the garden walls will connect the site with the greater Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt Historic Site and connecting Hyde Park trails.

During the growing season, Beatrix Farrand Garden’s extraordinary group of “Gardening Angels,” also known as the “Weeders,” meet every Tuesday and on Saturday mornings from 9am to 11am in the Beatrix Farrand Garden. Under the direction of horticulturist Karen Waltuch, these volunteers maintain the beauty of the garden. Volunteering seasonally begins (weather permitting, usually around mid-April) and runs through late October. Volunteers must sign liability forms through the National Park Service (these are provided by Beatrix Farrand Garden).

Other volunteers are needed to greet visitors on Sunday afternoons; lend a hand with educational and cultural arts programs; facilitate the annual plant sale; create social media posts; and assist with mailing campaigns. Those who are interested are encouraged to contact the team at Beatrix Farrand Garden for more information.

For more information: 4097 Albany Post Rd., Hyde Park, NY. Call

(845) 444-2809, email info@Beatrix-FarrandGardenHydePark.org, or visit www.beatrixfarrandgardenhydepark.org/contact.

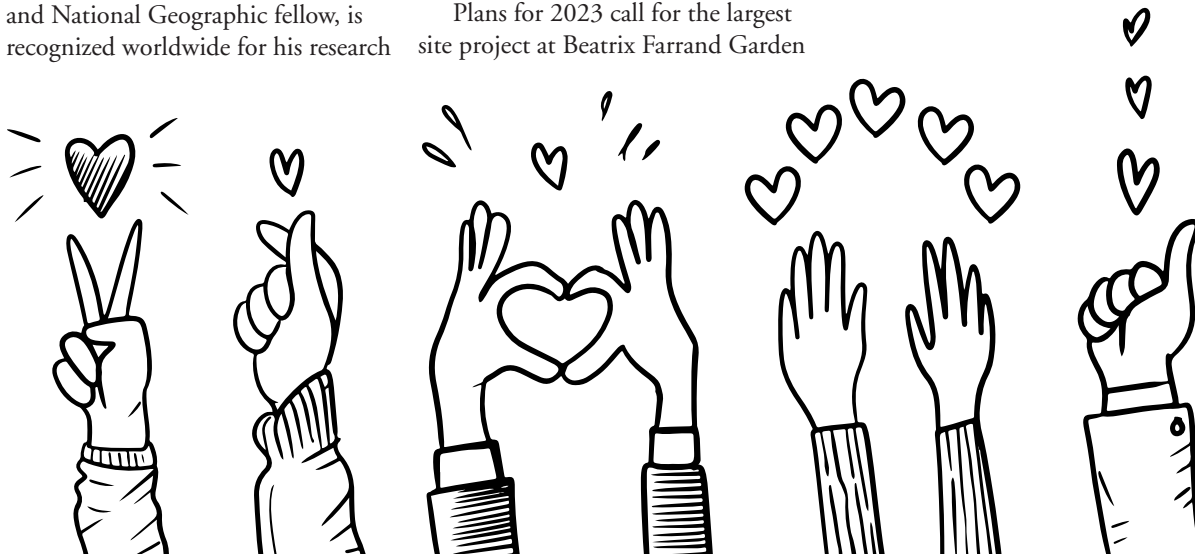
Frederick William Vanderbilt Garden Association

The volunteer workers of the Frederick William Vanderbilt Garden Association (FWVGA) have been the heart and soul of the association since the beginning. They complete a variety of tasks from working in the garden to raising funds, planning projects, and supporting the organization in other ways. While some are inspired due to a love of gardening, others pitch in to help preserve a piece of local history.

Volunteering at FWVGA provides opportunities to contribute to the local culture while learning new skills and meeting new people. Although experienced gardeners are welcome, gardening experience is not necessary. Staff will provide training and supply all tools and supplies. Those with a “brown thumb” are also welcome. There are opportunities for tasks in donor development, marketing, grant writing, and research. Training in non-profit administration is also offered regularly to people serving in board or leadership roles.

Volunteering for any FWVGA positions provides opportunities to learn new skills and develop management experience. The FWVGA regularly recognizes the contribution of volunteers based on the number of hours contributed. All volunteers are part of the National Park Service’s Volunteer-in-the-Park (VIP) program. That

Continued on next page ...



means they're eligible for discounts at the Vanderbilt gift shop and free park passes based on the number of work hours contributed.

For more, visit www.vanderbilt-garden.org/become-a-volunteer

Kingston Design Connection

Those who are interested in interior design and community collaborations are encouraged to explore volunteer opportunities at Kingston Design Connection. The non-profit organization, founded by Maryline Damour, is gearing up for its annual 2023 Kingston Design Showhouse, which will be held October 6 – 22, 2023.

The purpose of Kingston Design Showhouse is to build community through design (see our article about it in the November issue of *Main Street Magazine*). Every year, the initiative unites designers, artists, makers, contractors, and vendors who collaborate to produce something truly unique. Volunteers are needed to help develop special showhouse events; create promotional materials, and to serve as guides during showhouse hours.

To learn more, email kingston-designconnection@gmail.com.

Sinterklaas

During the darkest season of the year, the Rhinebeck community – along with revelers from near and far – gather to celebrate Sinterklaas. This holiday tradition hails from the Netherlands and pays tribute to the area's Dutch past. Each year, a crew of hard-working people dream and create together to make all the magic of Sinterklaas come to fruition.

"Sinterklaas is a mythic tradition from European mythology," says Jeanne Fleming, creator and coordinator, Sinterklaas! A graduate of Bard College, Fleming majored in medieval studies. She is also the creative director of the iconic Village Halloween Parade in Manhattan. Fleming welcomes volunteers to fulfill a host of tasks. For 2023, she is seeking artists to create signage; people to assemble

puppets; and those with construction abilities to help build the stage. Sinterklaas also needs tech people to assist with a video installation and people to animate the festive puppets that will be on display during the parade.

For more information, fill out the volunteer form at <https://sinterklaas-hudsonvalley.com/volunteer/>

Staatsburgh State Historic Site

"Volunteers are an essential and highly-valued part of the Staatsburgh team. These 'behind-the-scenes' volunteers are a very valuable asset to Staatsburgh," said Frank Pidala, historic interpreter, Staatsburgh State Historic Site. Those seeking ways to contribute to the community while learning, making friends, and having fun, should check out the opportunities at this historic site.

Volunteer tour guides – also known as docents, are needed to provide tours of the mansion to drop-in visitors, bus tour groups, and school groups. Volunteers are also needed to assist the staff that supports these groups. Before giving tours to the public, volunteers receive training, coaching, and mentoring from staff. Guides are provided with some required reading and additional elective reading. They also spend time in-house with staff to refine their presentation skills for various audiences and situations.

Living history interpreters are also needed. This role is ideal for those with a passion for history, a love of dressing up, and a talent for teaching creatively. Living history interpreters don period clothing while they interact with visitors of all ages during Staatsburgh's tours, programs, and events. The site is continually building its wardrobe of historic clothing and welcomes new participants to this program. Beyond receiving training, volunteers will be mentored by staff and will have to complete both required and elective reading.

During its open season, from April through October, Staatsburgh hosts a series of special events for the public. Volunteers pitch in to assist with setting-up, publicizing the events, greeting visitors, promoting member-

ship in the Friends of Mills Mansion, staffing activity tables, preparing refreshments, and many other fun jobs.

Friends of Mills Mansion Shop volunteers are Museum shop volunteers whose role it is to answer questions, wrap items, and assist the cashier during very busy times such as bus group tours and special programs.

General Office Volunteers are needed to stuff envelopes, enter data, send out promotional materials, and type. Finally, there's also a need for volunteers in specialty areas such as research, fundraising, cataloging, gardening, sewing, or more.

To learn more, please call (845) 889-8851 or email pam.malcolm@parks.ny.gov.

Staatsburgh State Historic Site, Taconic Region New York State Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation, PO Box 308, 75 Mills Mansion Drive, #1 Rd, Staatsburgh, NY, 12580.

Wilderstein Historic Site

Volunteers are the lifeblood of Wilderstein and serve in several vital capacities. The most pressing needs for 2023 are in support of the tour program. Greeters are needed to work in the gift shop and to welcome visitors. Docents are also needed to provide guided tours of the mansion. Wilderstein provides training for both positions. This involves learning the history of the Suckley family, understanding the architecture of the mansion, having knowledge of the landscape, and becoming familiar with the collections. The regular tour season kicks off on May 1 and runs through October 31. Tours are offered on Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from noon until 4pm.

Each volunteer is asked to commit to two days per month during the season. "This is a wonderful opportunity to spend a few hours a month in the splendor of a lovely Queen Anne Victorian mansion on the Hudson, make new friends, and do worthwhile service to a community-based private House Museum," said Katherine F. Charapko, assistant director, Wilderstein Historic Site.

For more information, email wilderstein@wilderstein.org.

Wilderstein Historic Site, PO Box

383, Rhinebeck, NY, 12572. (845) 876-4818, www.wilderstein.org.

Olana State Historic Site

Olana State is seeking volunteers to engage with visitors inside its Main House and outdoors in the sprawling, picturesque historic landscape. It's an ideal opportunity for nature, art, and history enthusiasts. Beyond helping the community, preserving history, and engaging with visitors, volunteers will learn more about Olana and artist Frederic Church.

Volunteers are needed in a variety of roles from welcoming visitors and providing basic information to answering questions about Olana and the local community, assisting with public programs, special events, administrative tasks, and sharing history about Olana's collections and exhibitions.

"Volunteering at Olana deepened my connection to the local community, the landscape, and the legacy of Church and the Hudson River School," said Mary Fichtner Lawrie, an Olana volunteer. "The staff is innovative, supportive, and extremely knowledgeable, and my fellow volunteers were welcoming and eager to answer any questions. Best of all, I am able to connect with a network of visitors and supporters who share my love for the site."

In return for their time, volunteers enjoy free landscape tours, discounts in the Olana Museum Store, invitations to lectures, volunteer field trips, and more. All volunteers will receive training to familiarize themselves with Olana State Historic Site, New York State Parks, The Olana Partnership, and the history of Frederic Church and his family.

For more information, contact Margot Isaacs, membership director and volunteer coordinator, The Olana Partnership, at (518) 751-6857 or email misaacs@olana.org. •

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Crown LP Gas Corp was founded in 1976. It then acquired Dutchess Oil & Propane of Millerton, NY, in 2013 and as a result rebranded the company to Crown Energy Corp. It was a great and natural fit, because Crown LP Gas Corp and Dutchess Oil & Propane have both operated with the small town feel and service. Crown Energy is a full-service company and provides propane, fuel oil, kerosene, diesel as well as provides a full-service department. Crown Energy proudly boasts having an outstanding, friendly and knowledgeable staff, whether they are the ones making your deliveries, doing your service, or helping you from the office. Additionally, one Crown staff member shared, "It is a great place to work, we are like a close-knit work family. We have fun together, and we pride ourselves on customer care, every customer, every time." The most rewarding part of the job for members of the Crown Energy family is when a customer needs help and they trusts Crown to be there – and Crown staff members can make their customers' day better. As for the new year and the future for Crown, they hope to see more of positive contributions that they've made to the area continue to grow as well as the differences that they have made. Additionally they strive to continue to grow the relationships that have been made throughout the years.



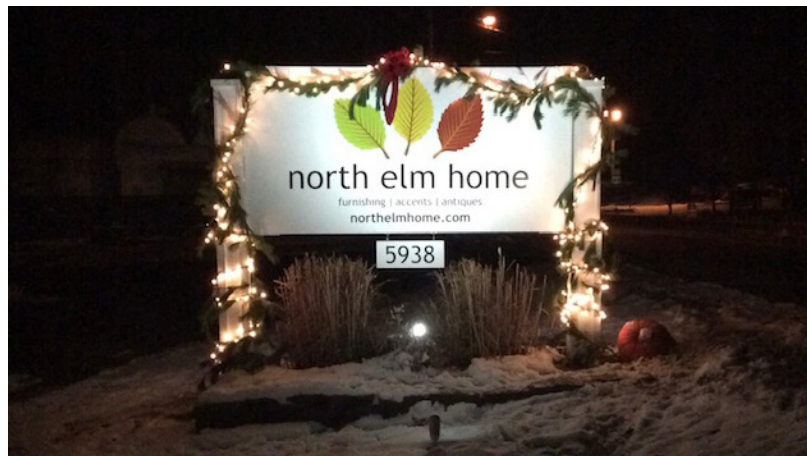
3 Guys Ski & Ride

Sales and service for biking, hiking, camping, skiing and more. 406 Sharon Goshen Turnpike, West Cornwall, CT. threeguyskiandride.com

"3 Guys Ski & Ride was started on a lark in the rental department of a local ski area in response to a growing need for a community that takes year-round outdoor sports seriously," shared Mike, one of the 3 guys. "We offer sales and service for biking, hiking, camping, skiing, glamping, snowboarding, skateboarding, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, trekking, swimming, and looking fabulous while doing all of that." But when it comes to what makes them unique and stand out from the competition? "There are no other businesses in Litchfield County in Connecticut that offer what we do. Our service is second-to-none, and once you sit for a boot fitting, you'll understand," explained Mike. When asked about the most favorite part of the job, we were told that all of the 3 Guys have always been a part of the outdoor sports community and having the opportunity to get their customers out to enjoy the beauty in this area is the most amazing part of their business. As for the future of 3 Guys, Mike shared that, "3 Guys has just begun. Come on in and browse our shop for something specific. We can help you get outfitted for every occasion, every season, and every reason."



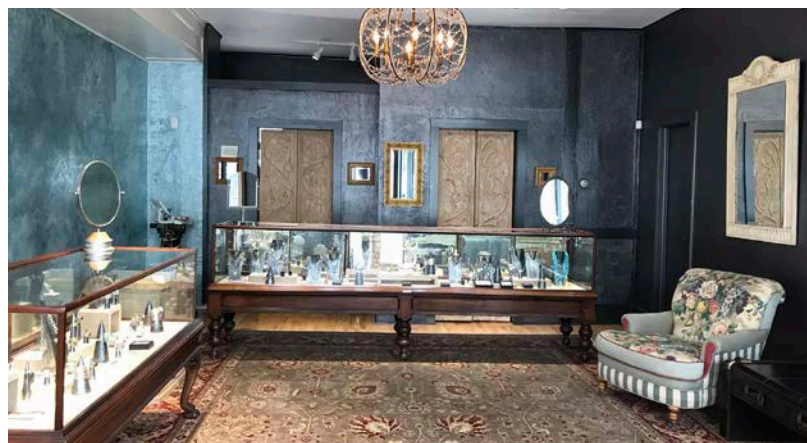
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North Elm Home

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Cindy Dunleavy and her business partner John Scuteri opened North Elm Home in 2015, "After nearly thirty years in the home furnishings business, working for my family's business, we decided to venture out on our own. We renovated the Johnson Antique's Barn – ourselves, with a lot of help from friends and family – and created North Elm Home. We offer complete home furnishings, including custom pieces. We work with our customers to find solutions to all their furniture needs be it a new mattress, or a complete re-do of an existing room(s). We're there from start to finish, including delivery." When you come into North Elm Home, you work with an owner (either Cindy or John), not a commissioned sales person. "We are a stress-free shopping experience with many years of design experience." The best part of their job? "Our showroom is a reflection of our taste and our experience in home decor – when customers come in and compliment us on our beautiful store, it's a very good feeling. That, and the praise we get when we've completed a project for our customers. Competing with the internet is challenging at times, but fortunately our customers still prefer to touch, feel, and test the quality and comfort before purchasing. People often ask if we plan to add new locations for our business... well, you'll just have to wait and see!"



Joane Cornell Fine Jewelry

Fine artisanal forged jewelry designs. 9 Main Street, Chatham, NY. joanecornellfinejewelry.com

"After leaving NYC, I opened my first brick and mortar business in Lenox, MA, in 2002, and the last 4.75 years in Chatham, NY. I've been involved in the jewelry industry in many capacities for a total of 43 years," shared Joane Cornell, the woman behind Joane Cornell Fine Jewelry where one can find fine artisanal hand forged jewelry designs. Joane shared, "What sets me apart from other businesses – whether handmade or cast designs – are my bold and lush one-of-a-kind styles, typically on a chunkier scale. I also make smaller more refined designs as well. Lots of color! Metals are 18kt/22kt gold and silver." When asked what Joane finds most rewarding about her business she shared that it is meeting some amazing people who thoroughly enjoy wearing one-of-a-kind artisanal jewelry designs. "Most of my customer base reflects strong, independent minded women that are leaders in their own realm, and require jewelry that reflects their personalities," she shared. As to what the new year and future brings, Joane stated, "Other than continuing with my passion of forging fine jewelry, I plan on incorporating at some point a line of forged table top items/accessories in silver with 18kt gold accents, candlesticks, picture frames, serving spoons, and more." We look forward to seeing these beautiful additions to your collection!

INSURING YOUR WORLD

The winter season is upon us and it is important to understand how every property insurance policy is affected by the VACANCY CLAUSE. Almost every homeowner, dwelling fire, landlord, and commercial fire policy have a vacancy clause contained within the insuring contract. This clause essentially voids coverage if a building is left vacant and unoccupied for 30 to 60 days. What constitutes vacancy is somewhat different among most carriers, yet if there are no furnishings in the dwelling or if there is no heat or utilities being used then it is safe to assume that an insurance carrier will invoke this clause. The downside of this is that if a house freezes up due to no heat, an insurance carrier has every right to disclaim, or if a dwelling is vandalized and there is no evidence of occupancy then a carrier will refute payment of such a claim. The best thing to do is let your agent/carrier know if there will be an extended time that a dwelling or building is vacant. A great example is if a relative dies and the estate takes some time to settle, the vacancy issue should be reviewed and addressed. In most cases, a carrier will agree to waive this clause for an additional premium, which will avoid any situations where a potential claim would be left unpaid. As we always say, people don't plan to fail ... they fail to plan!



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How to keep your live wreaths, swags and garlands alive through the holidays

- **Buy as fresh as possible:** The fresher your greenery is when you receive it, the longer it will last. Investigate retailers to learn where their greenery comes from, and how long it has been cut before you purchase it. If you can cut your own greenery, your results can be even better because you know just how fresh the cuttings are.
- **Soak to save greenery:** Thorough soaking to rehydrate the stems and plants before you craft decorative arrangements. Dunk the plants in cool, clean, fresh water and completely immerse them for at least 24 hours to be sure they have absorbed as much water as possible. If complete immersion is not possible, at least give all cut ends a thorough soaking.
- **Make misting a must:** Misting every 1-2 days will help keep them properly hydrated. If your home is very dry, adding a humidifier near the decorations can also help keep them moist. Remove decorative accents before misting to avoid any running colors.
- **Try anti-transparent sprays:** Anti-transparent or anti-desiccant sprays can help keep your fresh wreaths and other seasonal greenery from losing moisture. These sprays are developed to protect plants in drought-prone areas, and can be used to prolong the freshness and vibrancy of cut greenery as well. Spray the plants well before arranging them, coating the leaves, needles, and branches from every angle for the best results.
- **Keep them cool:** Cooler air will help keep your evergreen from drying out as quickly. Avoid putting these decorations in a room with an active fireplace, and avoid positioning them in direct sunlight or near heating vents. Moving the decorations outdoors or into a cooler area at night can also help them stay fresh for much longer.

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Pet in a box? NOT!

You can see many touching videos on the web of people being surprised by gift pets, but what those videos don't show is how many pets that are given as surprise gifts find themselves in shelters later on. That's because a pet is a very personal investment, and anyone who wants a pet should be allowed to choose the pet for themselves. That thrilling moment for the recipient when a puppy or kitten is released from a gift-box is actually a frightening event for the animal, who finds themselves in a strange environment full of screaming strangers. And then the thrill is over and perhaps the animal is not quite what the recipient was expecting. At Dutchess County SPCA, we recommend instead two alternatives to torturing animals by giving them as surprise gifts. Either you can get a gift card to put in the box that the recipient can then bring to the shelter to redeem for a pet of their choice, or – and this is especially exciting for children – take a mystery ride to the shelter. Tell the recipient you're going to the car wash or grocery store and then bring them to the shelter instead. All the thrill and surprise is there, and they have the freedom to choose which animal they bond best with. We have found that when children or adults can choose the pet they want, their sense of investment and responsibility endures, and the animal truly finds its forever home.

By Lynne Meloccaro,
Executive Director of Dutchess County SPCA

Dutchess County SPCA provides services to the community including affordable payment plans for veterinary care, safety-net pet housing, pet food pantries, free rabies clinics, and pet retention assistance.

For more information: www.dccspca.org



Winter Hair Care!

Winter is a favorite for many; skiing/snowboarding, holiday parties, and cozy vibes. However, one thing that doesn't favor winter so much is our hair. Just like our skin, hair gets very dry during this time of year. Here are some tips to keep your hair happy and healthy this winter!

- With winter comes hats, scarves and sweaters, and with that comes frizzy/staticky hair. An interesting trick to combat hair static is to use a dryer sheet. Putting one on your brush and brushing your hair with it will help calm the flyaways.
- Taking a trip to the salon to get a nice scalp massage and deep conditioning treatment is always a good (and relaxing) idea!
- At home hair care is also essential. It can even be fun especially on those cold gloomy winter days: washing your hair less, using conditioner and letting it sit on dry hair and using oils (such as coconut oil) on your scalp will do wonders!
- Even though we're in the season for it and love hot, steamy showers, our hair doesn't love it as much. Using a shower cap after washing your hair with warm/cool water can protect your hair while you enjoy the nice hot water.
- Certain products can also make a huge difference. Silk pillowcases for example, not only are they very beneficial for your skin/face but they also help your hair tremendously! Another plus is that they are super comfy. Investing in microfiber towels for your hair is also a great way to minimize breakage, cut down on drying time, and give your hair the gentle care it deserves.

Here's to a great winter and great hair! –By stylist Hailey Cookingham

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A family of four is walking a golden retriever on a leash along a path covered in fallen autumn leaves. The family consists of a man, a woman, and two children. The girl in the foreground is wearing a blue puffer jacket, a teal scarf, and a grey knit hat with a pom-pom. The dog is a light-colored golden retriever. The background shows more trees with colorful autumn foliage.

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