

Appleton

November 2025

Monthly

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FROM
THE
EDITOR

'Tis the Season!

THE HOLIDAY TUNE DECLARES, "IT'S THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR," AND IT RINGS TRUE IN THE FOX CITIES. Sleet or snow may make the weather frightful, but "hearts will be glowing" as Downtown Appleton hangs its historic lighted angels for the 54th annual Christmas Parade, kicking off the season's hustle and bustle.

The holiday rush can turn anyone into a Grinch, but we're here to keep you on the nice list. Holiday shopping is easy — and even enjoyable — with a fine selection of local businesses to browse. I've curated a list of 50 gifts under \$50 to suit everyone, including pets.

Tim profiles Emily Schueffner, founder of Valley of Hope Counseling LLC, in a powerful story about giving help and hope to those in crisis. Jim presents the 12 Days of Christmas Concerts, a guide to all of the must-see local holiday shows. Chef Carly shares a culinary wonderland of pies, including non-traditional recipes like purple sweet potato and Dubai-style chocolate, and Phyllis offers tips for festive decor, appetizers, and sweater styles.

So, plan your holidays, go shopping, find inspiration, and enjoy every uplifting moment in these pages. In this month of gratitude, we'd like to thank our readers. This magazine thrives because of our community's support.

See you back in December for our "Merry Everything and Happy New Year" issue.

Sarah Peterson
EDITOR

sarah@appletonmonthly.com

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Jim Collar

Jim Collar is a journalist, lifelong resident of the Fox Cities and a supporter of our local music scene. He previously worked as a reporter for The Post-Crescent and The Oshkosh Northwestern. Jim contributes to Appleton Monthly with his Music Vibes article.



Carly Cerniglia

Chef/Pastry Chef Carly Cerniglia - A young chef and food photographer interested in fresh, local, and exciting food. Located in Milwaukee, Wis. Follow her culinary adventures on Instagram: @chef.carly. Carly contributes to Appleton Monthly with her recipes on Chef's Table and Carly's Pastries.



Casey Marion

Casey Marion is an aspiring author and struggling college student. She works at the Kaukauna Public Library and can always be found with a book in hand.



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Appleton Monthly Magazine

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Emily
Schueffner

Valley of Hope
Counseling, LLC

By TIM FROBERG

Let's Talk About It

CONNECTING THROUGH COUNSELING

By TIM FROBERG

Healing can take many forms.

Emily Schueffner did it as a nurse and now she's accomplishing it in the mental health field. Schueffner is a counselor and the founder of Valley of Hope Counseling LLC in Appleton. A nationally certified counselor, the Sheboygan native helps clients with a wide range of issues, from relationship and marital problems to career counseling, life transitions, and mental health disorders such as anxiety, depression, stress, trauma, anger management, and phobias.

There has been a significant spike in mental health problems throughout the country and around the globe. According to the World Health Organization, more than a billion people are living with mental health disorders. Mental health conditions affect people of all ages and income levels and sometimes lead to long-term disability. Suicide remains a devastating potential outcome for those dealing with mental health issues. Suicide rates have climbed roughly 30% in the U.S. over the past 20 years.

"Mental health issues are definitely on the rise," Schueffner said. "Part of it is that mental health issues used to be more stigmatized. We're making strides in terms of getting help and decreasing the stigmatization that comes along with seeking help."

Working with couples on relationship issues represents a large portion of Schueffner's business. She holds a Level 1 certification in the Gottman Method Couples Therapy, which seeks to improve conflicting verbal communication and increase intimacy, respect, and affection, while creating a heightened sense of empathy and understanding.

"I enjoy working with couples," Schueffner said. "It's the population I am probably the most passionate about."

HELPING TEENS THROUGH TRAUMA

Schueffner also provides counseling services for teens who are 16 and older. Depression and anxiety rates among teens have risen dramatically in recent years. The explosion of smartphones and social media has been a significant factor in that increase, leading to cyberbullying and other online-related issues.





“With the use of social media these days, teens can really struggle with face-to-face interaction with kids their age,” Schueffner said. “Social media was originally intended to bring people together. But it’s also something that has driven people apart.

“People will talk on social media, but won’t get together in person. There’s something to be said about fostering a healthy relationship where you actually get together with someone in person. In today’s society, and especially the teen world, people have a tendency to say things online they would never say face to face. They have that extra layer of protection where they feel they can just spout out whatever they want to say. That can be very hurtful.”

TALK THERAPY WORKS

Working with a skilled counselor like Schueffner can be an enormous benefit to those dealing with emotional and mental health issues. Research indicates that about 75% of people who participate in some type of talk therapy benefit in terms of well-being.

“We live in a society where we’re exposed to so many different things through channels like social media that some of it is going to have a negative impact on people,” Schueffner said. “There is just so much information available at our fingertips, and it’s information overload.”

“I look at therapy as a way of giving clients the skills they need in order to have a fulfilling and healthy life,” Schueffner said. “Therapy helps in a way where it allows individuals to make healthy, beneficial life changes, whether it’s learning to communicate more effectively or setting appropriate boundaries in their personal or professional life.”

Schueffner is part of the American Association for Christian Counseling and incorporates her strong Christian faith into her practice.

“I feel like the biggest thing that helps me be successful in what I do is my faith,” she said. “Faith is really important

to me. I lean on my faith to help me work with clients and give them the skills I feel will best serve them.”

SWITCHING LANES

Schueffner worked for seven years in the Sheboygan area as a licensed practical nurse (LPN) before shifting gears and heading back to school. She holds a bachelor’s degree in psychology from the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay and a master’s degree from Marquette University in clinical mental health counseling.

Schueffner enjoyed her work as an LPN, but felt she was meant to do something different.

“I worked in different clinical settings and specialty areas,” she said. “I did family practice, urgent care, triage, podiatry, and occupational health. But I decided to go back to school to pursue something I really loved.”

“Nursing checked off some of the boxes for me, but I didn’t feel like I was totally fulfilled in it. So I went back to the drawing board. I prayed about it. I really feel that God was leading me in the direction to switch from helping people on a physical level to helping people on an emotional level.”

Schueffner’s exceptional interpersonal skills were a major factor in her career change. She’s a people person with an outgoing personality and a strong desire to help others.

“When I was in nursing, one of the aspects I really loved was interacting with patients and having one-on-one time with them,” she said. “When I was doing triage, I really got a sense there were a lot of people out there who just wanted someone to talk to. They were looking for somebody who would listen and empathize with them through their struggles.”

“As time went on, I could see there was a growing need for individuals to get support in emotional and mental areas. I had to go back to school, and it was a lot of work, a long journey. But I’m absolutely glad that I did it.”

Listening and looking to provide solutions to the problems and frustrations of clients can be taxing for counselors like Schueffner. However, she enjoys the challenge and the internal rewards that come with helping others. She seldom has a day that could be classified as dull.

“One of the great things about my job is you never know what your day is going to be like,” she said. “There are days when I feel the sessions were really helpful to clients, and there are days that are heavy because they have a lot going on and it takes extra time and space to allow them to feel they’re getting the support they need. It’s kind of a mixed bag, but that’s what I love about it. There is so much variance in what your day is going to be like.”

SHEBOYGAN NATIVE

Schueffner was born and raised in Sheboygan and is a 2008 graduate of Sheboygan North High School. Her father, Shawn Wehner, was an electrician for many years and a long-time member of the U.S. Army National Guard. Schueffner’s mother, Shelley, works as a patient



Emily with her husband Mark, son Tucker and daughter Kylie

service representative for Aurora Health Care.

"Growing up, I wasn't exactly sure what I wanted to do, but I knew I wanted to help people," Schueffner said. "I never felt pressure from my parents. They allowed me to take my time, try different things, and explore what I wanted to do in life."

Away from the office, Schueffner enjoys family time with her husband, Mark, and their two children, Kylie, 11, and Tucker, 10.

"We love spending time outdoors," said Schueffner. "We love hiking,

biking, camping, and traveling. We have the goal to go to all 50 states as a family."

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT HER

Associates and colleagues of Schueffner spoke highly of her skills on her home page of *Psychology Today*, a leading online publication dedicated to mental health and human behavior.

"Emily embodies a genuine and sincere approach to her work with clients," said Alexis Van Eperen, a licensed professional counselor.

"She is passionate about supporting others in reaching their goals while promoting a faith-based lens in her therapeutic approach."

"Emily's dedication to her clients is incredible," added Jessica Badour, a counselor. "Her gentleness and compassion create a safe and comfortable space for every client. She is driven by the desire to help others see the beauty within themselves as they move through challenges in life. Highly recommended!"

Schueffner's office is located at 3232 N. Ballard Road, Suite 206. To contact her, visit her website at valleyofhopecounselingllc.com, or call 920-961-3978.

Seldom does a mental health issue come out of the blue.

There are usually noticeable signs, symptoms, and behaviors that can alert friends and family when an individual is struggling with mental health. If any of these behaviors are occurring, it might be wise to consult a mental health professional.

- Mood changes like depression, irritability, or dramatic shifts in emotions.
- Sudden changes in sleep or appetite.
- A decline in personal care, such as grooming or bathing, or refusing to change clothes.
- A major change in daily functioning, like missing work or school, or dropping out of activities such as sports and social clubs.
- A sudden inability or unwillingness to perform familiar tasks, or, for students, suddenly failing tests and neglecting homework.
- Trouble with concentration, memory, focus, or logical thinking.
- Apathy or loss of initiative, showing little desire to participate in any activity.
- Nervousness, irrational fears, or being suspicious of others.

Tim Froberg has worked as a reporter for the *Appleton Post-Crescent*, *Green Bay News-Chronicle*, and *Marinette EagleHerald*. He won eight Wisconsin Newspaper Association writing awards.

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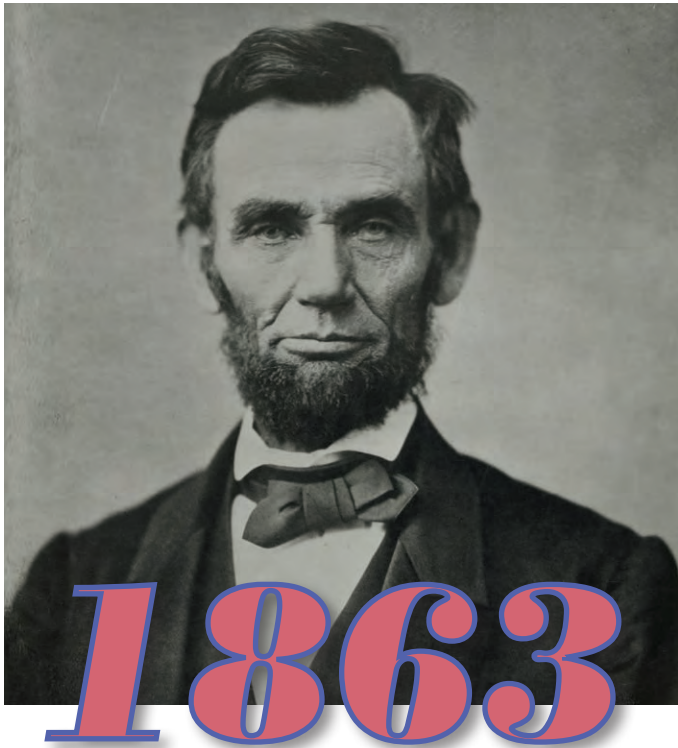
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By KELSEY WELCH



On Nov. 19, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln delivered the Gettysburg Address.



A young turkey is called a poult. An adolescent male is a jake, and an adult male is a tom. An adolescent female is a jenny, and an adult female is a hen.



November is recognized as **National Banana Pudding Lovers Month.**

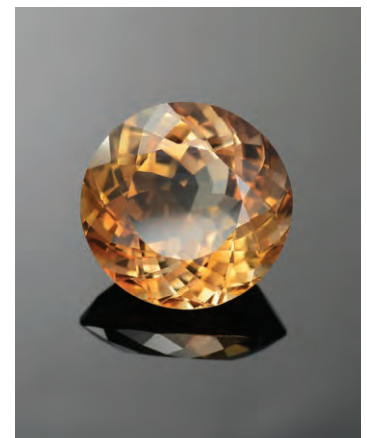
Daylight Saving Time ends, and clocks turn back one hour to make the most of November's shorter days.



Cranberries are packed with health benefits, including anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, and antioxidant properties. They are also a member of the heath (Ericaceae) family.



November's full moon is called the Beaver Moon. Beaver hunters would set their beaver traps for the final time before the lakes and water sources froze over.



Topaz is November's traditional birthstone. **The ancient Greeks believed it could make one invisible.** Topaz is a symbol of honor and strength.



Christmas Open House

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Ulbricht Signing Event:

We are pleased to host a visit by Gunther & Steffen Ulbricht on

Friday, November 14th, from 2-6pm, where they will sign nutcrackers, smokers, and ornaments from their workshops in Germany.

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PROTECT WHAT YOU'VE BUILT:

CYBERSECURITY TIPS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

By LUANN THIEL



In today's digital world, cybersecurity is a big deal for businesses of all sizes. Many small businesses operate with limited resources and rely heavily on technology, making them especially vulnerable to cyber threats. It's vital that small businesses take cybersecurity seriously, and a few smart practices can go a long way in protecting your business, customers, and reputation.

Start with Strong Passwords

Using a weak password is like hiding your house key under your welcome mat or setting your access code to "1234". Vulnerabilities like that are exactly what cybercriminals look for. Strong passwords should include a mix of letters, numbers, and special characters. Where possible, implement multi-factor authentication (MFA). It's a simple step that adds an extra layer of security by requiring a second form of verification.

Keep Software and Systems Updated

Outdated software is a favorite target for hackers. Regularly update your operating systems, antivirus

programs, and any business applications. Enable automatic updates where possible to ensure you're always protected against the latest threats.

Educate Your Team

Your employees are your first line of defense. Provide basic cybersecurity training that includes how to spot phishing emails, avoid suspicious links, and understand the importance of reporting unusual activity. Annual cybersecurity training can make a big difference.

Back Up Your Data—Regularly

Data loss can be devastating. Set up automatic backups for critical files and store them securely, preferably offsite or in the cloud. This ensures you can recover quickly in case of a cyberattack or system failure.

Limit Access to Sensitive Information

Not every employee needs access to all data. Use role-based permissions to restrict access to sensitive information. This reduces the risk of internal breaches and accidental data leaks.

Secure Your Wi-Fi Network

Make sure your business Wi-Fi is encrypted and hidden from public view. Use a strong password, and consider setting up a separate network for guests to prevent unauthorized access to your internal systems.

Have a Response Plan

If a cyber incident occurs, time is critical. Create a simple incident response plan outlining who to contact, what steps to take, and how to communicate with customers. Practice it annually so everyone knows their role.

Cybersecurity doesn't have to be complicated. With a few smart, proactive steps, small businesses can significantly reduce their risk and operate with greater confidence. Protecting your digital assets is just as important as protecting your physical ones, and it starts with awareness and action.



LuAnn, Chief Technology Officer at American National Bank Fox Cities, brings 25+ years of banking experience, managing technology and cybersecurity. As a Northeast Wisconsin native, she enjoys cheering on her Wisconsin sports teams with her family.

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WINTER PROOF YOUR HEALTH: 10 SMALL HABITS FOR STRONG IMMUNITY

By ANGELA HALDERSON

As the days grow shorter and colder, our bodies naturally face more immune challenges. By incorporating a few new daily habits, you can fortify your defenses and head into winter feeling resilient.

Here are the first five habits in your 10-part winter wellness checklist:

1. Get Serious About Vitamin D (with K2 for Balance)

One of the most overlooked aspects of winter immunity is maintaining healthy vitamin D levels. Known as the “sunshine vitamin,” vitamin D is crucial for immune cell function, inflammation regulation, and even mood balance. In northern climates, it’s impossible to make enough from sunlight during the winter months. Reach an optimal Vitamin D level (about 80ng/mL) by taking 5000 IU daily with vitamin K. Vitamin K aids in vitamin D and calcium absorption.

2. Lean on Immune-Supportive Herbs

Herbal allies have been used for centuries to help people stay strong during the colder months. A few worth mentioning are:

Echinacea: Best known for its ability to activate white blood cells and shorten the duration of colds. Take it at the very first sign of a scratchy throat or fatigue for maximum benefit.

Lemon Balm: A gentle antiviral herb that also soothes stress and improves sleep quality.

Elderberry: Rich in flavonoids and anthocyanins, elderberry has been shown to reduce the severity and duration of flu symptoms when taken consistently.

Use these as a tea, tincture, or in capsules throughout the colder seasons to help your body combat seasonal viruses.

3. Keep Your Gut Happy

Seventy percent of your immune system lives in your gut. A healthy microbiome is your first line of defense against pathogens. Simple habits make a big difference:

- Eat fermented foods daily, such as sauerkraut, yogurt, kimchi, and kefir.
- Add prebiotic fiber from onions, garlic, leeks, and asparagus.

Check out Strong Meridian’s blog for other easy-to-use prebiotics that help build a healthy biome.

4. Prioritize Sleep Like It’s Medicine

Sleep isn’t just rest—it’s when your immune system resets and repairs. Aim for 7 to 9 hours nightly with a consistent bedtime routine to increase your body’s natural killer cells.

Tips to make sleep more immune-nourishing:

- Power down blue screens an hour before bed. (TV, computers, cell

phones, etc.)

- Keep your bedroom cool and dark.
- Try calming teas such as kava kava, lemon balm, chamomile, or passionflower.

5. Move Your Body (But Don’t Overdo It)

Movement is non-negotiable for circulation, lymphatic flow, and stress reduction. But winter is a season to balance intensity. Too much strenuous exercise without recovery can actually suppress immune defenses, while gentle, consistent movement enhances them.

Aim for at least 30 minutes of activity most days, mixing moderate cardio with stretching and weight-bearing exercises. Outdoor activity is a bonus since it boosts mood and, on sunny days, gives you a small dose of natural vitamin D.

Come back next month for more ways to winter-proof your health!



Angela Halderson is the owner of Strong Meridian, a natural healthcare practice focusing on the root cause of disease. She is a dietitian trained in functional medicine, energy medicine, homeopathy and herbalism.

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UPFRONT

TRACY PLAMANN

HARBOR HOUSE CEO,
MOM, COACH

Tracy Plamann began working at Harbor House 20 years ago as an intern.

She has been so committed to the cause that she never left.

Plamann is the CEO of Harbor House, a shelter in Appleton that provides support, a place to stay, and resources to individuals impacted by domestic and sexual violence.

A University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh graduate with a bachelor's degree in human services, Plamann started at Harbor House in 2005 as part of an internship program. She proceeded to work full-time as a children's advocate, community education coordinator, and director of intervention and prevention before becoming CEO in 2024.

"I had a choice of three internships," said Plamann. "Even after all these years, I still have a strong passion for this work and the victims we work with."

When she's not tending to Harbor House matters, the Nichols native enjoys reading and spending time with her children: Victor, 20, a University of Wisconsin-Madison student, and Teagan, 17, a senior at Menasha High School.

By Tim Froberg
Photo by Ashley Schmit
Debbie Daanen Photography

DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE SUCCESS STORY?

"I remember three children clients that I was extremely concerned about. I honestly wasn't sure they were going to make it into or out of high school because of depression and mental health issues that impacted them. After going through our programs, they all graduated from high school and college, and two are married. One of them ended up going to a very prestigious college in a different state. Two got their master's and two are now in the helping profession. All three have kept in touch with me over the years."

WHAT DOES THE CURRENT NATIONAL AND LOCAL LANDSCAPE LOOK LIKE IN TERMS OF MENTAL HEALTH?

"It is really a difficult time right now because the need is more and the funding is less. Everything is more difficult because of the budget cuts at the national, state, and local level. Those cuts are really impacting us. I think the world is more violent right now. One of the reasons we have gotten busier is because of awareness. We do a better job of educating people and getting them to understand what domestic violence is. Unfortunately, we're very, very busy, and it is extremely prominent in our community."

WHAT IS THE MOST COMMON MISCONCEPTION ABOUT HARBOR HOUSE?

"The biggest is that we're just a shelter. Only about a third of the clients we serve actually need safe shelter. Two-thirds just come for help, whether it's advocating to the legal system, help with affordable housing, help with healing, or help with leaving. They need safety planning and to know they have support. I always tell people that our job is to hold people's hands and walk through the mud with them. We can't make their decisions, but we can surround them with resources, support, and care.

"The other misconception is that we only focus [on] and serve women. We serve all victims of domestic violence. We always have more kids here than adults."



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Sunday, Nov. 23	11am-4pm	\$? (come in to find out!)

Then, we close our doors for four days to reset the floor for our special
BLACK FRIDAY EVENT where everything on the floor is \$10

Friday, Nov. 28	9am-3pm	\$10
Saturday, Nov. 29	9am-3pm	\$5
Sunday, Nov. 30	11am-3pm	\$3
Monday, Dec. 1	9am-6pm	\$2
Tuesday, Dec. 2	9am-7pm	\$1
Wednesday, Dec. 3	9am-3pm	\$? (come in to find out!)

Cheap Charlie's
Bargain Bins

1216 W. Kimberly Ave., Kimberly

Your Liquidation and Discount Headquarters | Check us out on Facebook!

GOOD STUFF

By SARAH PETERSON



JOIN A PROGRAM FOR TEENS

The Appleton Public Library offers programming for teens on Tuesday nights.

Topics include:

- How to Ace a Job Interview — Nov. 4 from 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.
- Photo Fundamentals for Teens — Nov. 11 from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- Teen Ambassador Program — Nov. 18 from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- Teen Holiday Movie Night — Nov. 25 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

apl.org/calendar



LACE UP YOUR SKATES

For a Rockefeller-inspired experience, visit the ice skating rink at The Plaza in Neenah, opening mid-November (weather permitting). Enjoy skating, outdoor fire pits, hot drinks, and treats from Globe Coffee. Check their website or Facebook page for times, rental prices, class and special event offerings, and weather updates.

theplazaneenah.com

facebook.com/theplazaandglobecoffee

THE NEST



BY BIRDIE & CO.

TRY A NEW CAFE

Birdie & Co., owners of the Little Birdies Treats and Coffee mobile trailer, have opened *The Nest*, a new café and bakery in Greenville. Enjoy handcrafted coffees and lattes, fresh-baked pastries and breads with allergen-friendly options, a kid-friendly corner, and a cozy space made for community and connection.

facebook.com/littlebirdiestreats



REGISTER TO RING

The Salvation Army is seeking volunteers for its Red Kettle Campaign to support those in need of food, housing, Christmas gifts, and more. Sign up easily online as an individual, group, or “virtual ringer.” The Red Kettle funds stay local, ensuring help for those in our community during the holidays and year-round.

registertoring.org



GET MAKING

Appleton's Makerspace is a non-profit DIY workshop where members can access tools for welding, 3-D printing, woodworking, stained glass, and more. Their mission is to help makers connect, share knowledge, and learn new skills while creating handmade goods. Tours are offered during Open Make Nights, Thursdays from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

appletonmakerspace.org



BOOK AN EXPERIENCE

Evermore & Co. in Neenah offers more than unique gifts and vintage fashions — it hosts charming experiences from a collective of makers, creators, and bakers. Enjoy pop-up cottage baked goods, go on a tea adventure, or sign up for a creative, vintage-inspired workshop. Holiday offerings include *Kitschy Christmas Wreaths* (Nov. 23), and *Bloomin' Teapots Thanksgiving Edition* (Nov. 24).

Register online and explore other events at evermoreandco.com.

TODAY

MUSIC VIBES 34 | STYLE & FASHION 40 | SMILE 42 | SPORTS PAGE 46

Our Best Gift Guide Ever

Gifts for
everyone,
even your
pet!

*All
Wrapped
Up*

By SARAH PETERSON

Holiday Gift Guide

GIFTS FOR HER



1 Warmth and Light

Warm her home and her heart with Calyan Wax Co. candles made with essential oils and 100% U.S.-grown soy wax. Various scents available and 5% of revenue supports efforts to end human trafficking. \$29.99

Avenue Art

2304 W. Nordale Drive, Appleton
avenueartonline.com

2 Seasonal Sprays

Eco-friendly room and linen sprays make easy gifts for homemakers looking to freshen their home for the holidays. Fragrances are phthalate-free or essential oil blends. Festive winter scents include sleigh ride, snowflakes, eggnog, and winter wonderland. \$11

Eco Candle Company

123 E. College Ave., Appleton
ecocandleco.com

3 A Girl's Best Friend

The next best thing to diamonds? Chocolate. And not just any chocolate—Vande Walle's Chocolate Truffles with silky-smooth centers. Give these to any girl in your life and watch her melt. 4-piece box \$7.50, 15-piece box \$18

Vande Walle's Candies

400 N. Mall Drive, Appleton
vandewallescandies.com

4 Trendy Add-Ons

Accessories make an impression, and this lovely purse, cozy fair isle socks, and stylish scarf add comfort with a touch of luxury, to any outfit. Wrap one up for the fashionista in your life. Scarf \$42, purse \$48, socks \$22.50

Bill Paul Limited

112 W. Wisconsin Ave., Neenah
billpaul ltd.com

5 Custom Throw Pillows

For a personalized gift, these community definition throw pillows feature local cities and landmarks. The perfect accent for any home, these pillows blend style and sentiment by showcasing beloved places. \$38

Red Door Mercantile

130 W. Wisconsin Ave., Neenah

Follow on Facebook



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6 Time for Tea

Any tea lover would be enchanted by this glass tea-making mug. It features a removable infuser and a double-wall design that keeps drinks at the ideal temperature. Pair it with one of many book-themed varieties of organic, loose-leaf LiteraTea. Mug \$28, tea \$16

Evermore & Co
107 S. Church St.,
Neenah
evermoreandco.com

7 Charming Designs

Make this holiday memorable by adding a Christmas or winter charm to her bracelet. World-renowned for excellent craftsmanship, these charms are available in sterling silver or gold plating. Snowflake \$42.50, snowman \$42.50, peace \$37.50, bell \$44.50, candy cane \$49.50

Tennie's Jewelry
208 E. College Ave.,
Appleton
tenniesjewelry.com

8 Perfect Hostess Gift

This ready-to-gift set features a bar soap, petite hand cream, and a travel-sized candle tin, all in the elegant Frasier Fir fragrance from Thymes. It's a just-right gift for a hostess or a delightful stocking stuffer. \$37

Olive and Rose Boutique
121 E. College Ave.,
Appleton

shopoliveandrose.com

9 Thrifty Gifty

Secondhand doesn't mean second-rate, especially when it comes to wine glasses and barware. An avid thrifter would be delighted to receive a set like this one, which still shines with character and style at a fraction of the price. Set of 14, \$7.00

Fair Market Thrift Store
2130 S. Memorial Drive,
Appleton
fairmarkethriftstore.com

10 Give a Hug

Give her your heart, literally, with this 1.85-pound weighted pillow that replicates the warmth and comfort of a real hug. For the sentimental woman, this unique pillow is a thoughtful way to show love and support. Various colors available. \$45.99

St. Patrick's Gifts and Books, Northland Mall
972 W. Northland Ave.,
Appleton
stpatricksgifts.com



GIFTS FOR HER





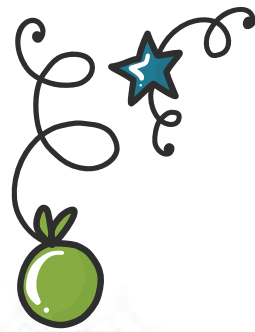
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GIFTS FOR HIM

1 Hats for the Local Guy

Show off hometown or regional roots with these classic low-profile trucker hats. A mesh back provides breathability, and a snapback closure allows an adjustable fit. Various styles and locations available. \$34

Blue Moon Emporium
227 E. College Ave., Appleton
bluemoonemporium.com

2 Smokey Bear Body Care

For the man who needs to relax, recharge, and smell like the outdoors. Lather up with this Smokey Bear-themed line of bath and body products. Made with pure essential oils and skin-loving ingredients. Soap \$12, trail soak \$18

Red Door Mercantile
130 W. Wisconsin Ave., Neenah
Follow on Facebook



3 Spice and Sauce Gift Boxes

Any home chef will savor these locally made seasonings, rubs, sauces, dressings, and marinades. Choose from a variety of flavors to fit your giftee's culinary style. No need to order ahead — just stop in, fill a box, and go. Box of five seasonings or rubs \$22.99, box of six sauces \$29.99

Jacob's Meat Market
544 N. Lawe St., Appleton
jacobsmeatmarket.com

4 Knock His Socks Off

Stylish, high-quality socks for men make excellent gifts, combining comfort, durability, and a touch of personality. Available in a variety of brands and styles. \$22- \$27

Bill Paul Limited
112 W. Wisconsin Ave., Neenah
billpaul ltd.com

3



5 Hand-burned Muddlers

For cocktail lovers and home bartenders, these rustic wooden muddlers make one-of-a-kind gifts. Created by local artist Peter Linden, these Wisconsin-themed, hand-burned designs feature the iconic old fashioned. To order, email lindenstudios1@gmail.com. \$40

Linden Studios
Appleton
lindenstudios1.my.canva.site
Follow on Facebook or Instagram

6 Kettle Grill Bird Feeder

A grill-shaped bird feeder makes a whimsical and slightly humorous gift for bird and backyard enthusiasts. More than just a decorative piece, its durability and easy-to-fill opening make it ideal for attracting various bird species in any season. \$45

Wildbird and Backyard

680 N. Westhill Blvd., Appleton

wildbirdbackyard.com

7 Wallet with a Purpose

Stylish and sturdy, this high-quality, full-grain leather wallet collection inspires with faith-based designs. Each wallet features RFID-blocking technology to keep valuables secure. \$35.99

St. Patrick's Gifts and Books, Northland Mall

972 W. Northland Ave., Appleton

stpatricksgifts.com

8 The Way to a Man's Heart

Give a culinary experience to any man who loves hearty, flavorful food and cold drinks in a laid-back atmosphere. Enjoy slow-smoked brisket,

tender ribs, pulled pork, smoked wings, crispy stone-fired pizzas, sides, and desserts. Gift cards are available in any amount.

Parker John's BBQ & Pizza

124 Main St., Menasha

2331 E. Evergreen Drive, Appleton

parkerjohns.com

9 Cheers to Wisconsin

These drinking glass sets featuring original Wisconsin-themed illustrations make unique gifts for anyone proud of the Badger State. Each glass holds 15 ounces of your favorite beverage and is made from high-quality, dishwasher-safe, frosted glass. Set of two, \$42.

The Frame Workshop

430 E. Northland Ave., Appleton

theframeworkshop.com

10 Aged to Perfection

Elevate any guy's morning ritual with bourbon barrel-aged coffee and maple syrup made locally. The coffee boasts a rich, smooth flavor with a gentle hint of bourbon. The maple syrup will add a smoky sweetness to pancakes, waffles, or

even cocktails. Coffee \$19.99, maple syrup \$16.50

Grainworks Old + New:

Local Bourbon Market

200 Main St., Neenah

Follow on Facebook or Instagram



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GIFTS FOR HIM

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1 Beloved Jellycats

Jellycats get even cuter when dressed up for the holidays, and The Lullabye Shop has them all. Perfect for stockings or under the tree, kids will find joy with a new, irresistibly soft snuggle companion. \$25 to \$50

The Lullabye Shop

2144 W. Wisconsin Ave., Appleton

lullabyeshop.com

2 Watercolor Activity Books

Young artists will learn painting skills with these delightful watercolor workbooks, which include 12 beginner-friendly designs, simple instructions, and pre-drawn sketches. Various themes available. \$24

Blue Moon Emporium

227 E. College Ave., Appleton

bluemoonemporium.com

3 Pocket Palettes

Keep kids' creativity flowing with these pocket-sized watercolor paint sets. Each tin contains 12 vibrant colors, a water brush pen, and watercolor papers. Non-toxic paints make them safe for young artists. \$16.99

Avenue Art

2304 W. Nordale Drive, Appleton

avenueartonline.com

4 Tub Time Fun

Make bath time more fun with these rubber ducks, which come in whimsical designs like unicorns, dragons, butterflies, crocodiles, peacocks, zebras, and zombies. Specially designed to stay mold-free. \$9.50

Eco Candle Company

123 E. College Ave., Appleton

ecocandleco.com

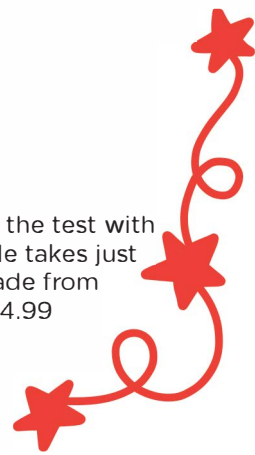
5 3-D Creatures

Kids will love putting their STEM skills to the test with these fun 3-D animal puzzles. Each puzzle takes just 10-20 minutes to create, and they are made from eco-friendly materials. Ages 6 and up. \$14.99

Wildbird and Backyard

680 N. Westhill Blvd., Appleton

wildbirdbackyard.com



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GIFTS FOR KIDS



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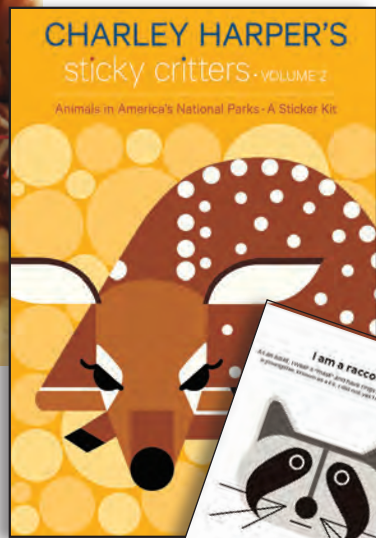
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GIFTS FOR KIDS

6 Get Sticky

This award-winning sticker kit, featuring artwork by midcentury modernist Charlie Harper, includes more than 190 reusable stickers. The kit also comes with a double-sided play-area board, and the stickers adhere to glass for hours of creative play. \$19.95

The Frame Workshop
430 E. Northland Ave., Appleton
theframeworkshop.com

7 The Gift of Experience

Experience gifts are popular this year. A gift card to Catch Fire Creations allows recipients to choose from more than 150 3-D printed designs to paint and customize in a fully equipped art studio. Gift cards are available in any amount at

catchfirecreationsllc.com.

Catch Fire Creations
230 Main St., Menasha

8 Flip, Twist and Pop

For kids who love to build, The Plip Kit is a construction set with 46 silicone pieces that connect via ball-and-socket and come apart with a fun "POP!" Kids can create endless shapes and structures. Dishwasher safe. \$34.95

The Lullabye Shop
2144 W. Wisconsin Ave., Appleton
lullabyeshop.com

9 Classic Stocking Stuffers

Nostalgic toys make a comeback with classic favorites like jump ropes, ball-and-cup games, pick-up

sticks, and jacks. \$3 to \$10

The Hearthstone Museum
625 W. Prospect Ave., Appleton
hearthstonemuseum.org

10 Whimsical Collectibles

These hand-painted figures by American folk artist Lori Mitchell make charming holiday collectibles for kids. Inspired by children's illustrations, the figures stand 6 to 10 inches tall and are made of resin. Various styles available. \$40

Cedar Harbor
611 N. Morrison St., Appleton
cedarharborwi.com



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GIFTS FOR EVERYONE



1 For Foodies

Customize a gift box of the finest ultra-premium olive oils and aged balsamic vinegars from around the world. Boxes include four 4-ounce bottles of extra virgin olive oils, balsamic vinegars, or a combination of both. Choose from a variety of exquisite flavors, then watch as they are bottled fresh for you. \$31

The Olive Cellar

277 W. Northland Ave., Appleton
theolivecellar.com

2 A Gift That Really Pops

Popcorn is a healthy and tasty snack that can add a little “pop” to any occasion. From holiday parties to at-home movie nights, Lamer’s Dairy Country Store carries a large selection of Amish Country Popcorn goods. You’ll find a variety of popcorn kernels, seasonings, poppers, and gift sets. All items in the photo are under \$50.

Lamer’s Dairy

N410 Speel School Road, Appleton
lamersdairyinc.com

3 Puzzles Galore

Puzzles are the perfect cozy winter activity and make a creative gift for all ages. Choose from a wide variety of bird and nature themes at Wildbird and Backyard or many holiday themes at The Frame Workshop. All puzzles under \$50.

Wildbird and Backyard

680 N. Westhill Blvd., Appleton
wildbirdbackyard.com

The Frame Workshop

430 E. Northland Ave., Appleton
theframeworkshop.com

4 Brew Up Some Holiday Cheer

You can’t go wrong with the gift of coffee (or at least a mug)! Acoca Coffee, Appleton’s longest-running coffee roaster, offers freshly roasted, fair-trade organic beans. Pair with one of their sturdy ceramic mugs for the perfect pick-me-up package. Bags of roasted coffee \$12 to \$25, ceramic mug \$25

Acoca Coffee

500 W. College Ave., Appleton
acocacoffee.com

5 Ornaments for All

Create cherished memories by gifting ornaments for every passion, hobby, favorite food, beloved pet, and more. Shop an impressive selection of hand-painted, blown glass ornaments made by the skilled artisans of Old World Christmas. \$17.99 to \$24.99

Kristmas Kringle Shop

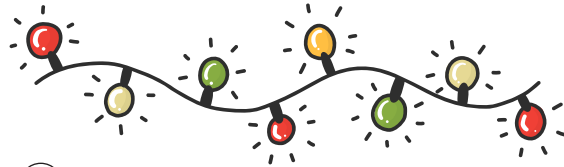
1330 S. Main St., Fond du Lac
shop.kristmaskringle.com



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GIFTS FOR PETS & PET LOVERS

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1 “Paw”fect Pet Photos

Bring your pets in for charming holiday-themed photos on November 12, 13, and 14. All pets (and their people) are welcome! Holiday and traditional background options. Call 920-739-3249 for full details and to make an appointment. Limited spots available.

Special event print & image pricing: 8x10 or a single digital image file download, just \$25. Session fee is a direct donation to your favorite local animal shelter. Single pets \$15, multiple pets and/or with people \$25.

Debbie Daanen Photography
310 W. Northland Ave., Appleton
debbiedaanen.com

2 Calm your Canine

Let your dog lick their way through this engaging silicone puzzle feeder with a built-in bowl. Paired with the LickMix for Calming spread, it becomes a soothing treat that helps keep your pup content. Puzzle feeder \$9.99, LickMix \$19.99

The Dog House
2230 W. Nordale Drive, Appleton
doghousepetcenter.net

3 Extra Loveable Plush Toys

These interactive plush toys are suitable for dogs who love to cuddle but

also play rough. Made with tough mesh fabric, interior rope structures, squeakers, and crinkle paper, they'll keep your pet entertained through the holidays. \$9.99 to \$32.99

The DePawsitory
103 E. College Ave., Appleton
Depawsitory.pet

4 Fashion Fleece for Pets

Keep your dogs (or cats) warm and comfortable year-round with these soft, stretchy pullover fleece coats. Available in a wide range of sizes and colorful designs, they are produced with environmentally friendly textiles and made in the USA. Single fleeces \$22 to \$40; double reversible fleeces \$38 to \$48

Lucy's Closet
129 W. Wisconsin Ave., Neenah
lucysclosetpetboutique.com

5 Cat & Dog Playing Cards

This beautifully packaged and illustrated set includes two decks of playing cards—a purr-fect gift for any cat or dog lover. \$16.95

Red Door Mercantile
130 W. Wisconsin Ave., Neenah
Follow on Facebook

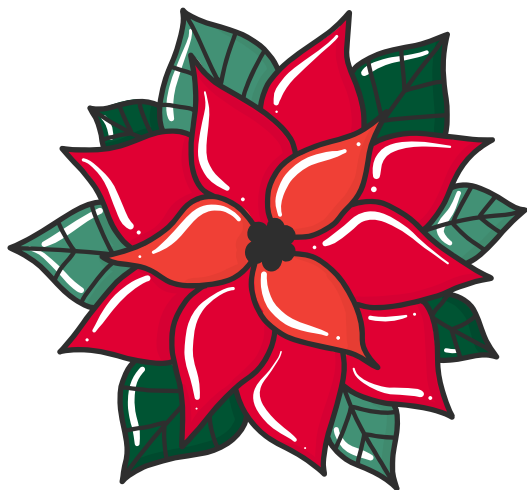


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GIFT CARDS THAT KEEP ON GIVING

Take the guesswork out of gift giving and show your thoughtfulness with a gift card or gift certificate. Gift cards make holiday shopping easy and let the recipient choose exactly what they want or need. Here are some great local businesses that offer gift cards:



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1 For the Downtown Enthusiast

Downtown Appleton Inc. offers gift certificates that are accepted at more than 150 businesses, including hotels, restaurants, bars, retail stores, and salons. Purchase one in person at 333 W. College Ave., Suite 100, or at appletondowntown.org/shop.

2 Timeless, Fine Cuisine

Gift the charm of Mark's East Side supper club, known for its German cuisine, fish fry dinners, steaks, bar, and desserts. Dine in a warm, family-friendly atmosphere. Gift cards are available in person or at markseastside.com/giftcards.

Mark's East Side

1405 E. Wisconsin Ave., Appleton
markseastside.com

3 Award Winning Prime Rib

A gift certificate from this award-winning dining destination makes an exceptional present. George's Steakhouse serves prime rib, seafood, chicken, veal, lamb, pork, fish, cocktails, wine, and desserts. Purchase a gift certificate in person or at 920-733-4939.

George's Steakhouse

2208 S. Memorial Drive., Appleton
georgessteakhouseappleton.com

4 Memorable Live Performances

Treat someone to an unforgettable experience at the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center, featuring Broadway shows, concerts, comedy, educational opportunities, and more. Gift cards can be used for tickets, valet parking, and concessions, and are available at foxcitiespac.com/events-tickets/gift-cards.

Fox Cities Performing Arts Center
400 W. College Ave., Appleton
foxcitiespac.com

5 Famous All-Day Breakfast

Angel's Restaurant, a home-style family restaurant famous for its incredible all-day breakfast, plus steak, chops, fish, pasta, homemade soups, sandwiches, and desserts. Stop by during business hours to purchase a gift card.

Angel's Restaurant
1401 E. John St., Appleton
angelsappleton.com



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6 Classic Supper Club Fare

Michiels Bar & Grill, a family-owned supper club, offers steak, seafood, burgers, Friday fish fry, and a famous salad bar. Dine in a casual, inviting atmosphere. Gift certificates are available for purchase at the restaurant.

Michiels Bar & Grill
1100 Appleton Road, Menasha
michielsbarandgrill.com

7 Fresh Margaritas Daily

El Azteca Mexican Restaurant offers festive appetizers, tasty tacos, sizzling fajitas, and fresh margaritas in a fun, colorful atmosphere. Purchase gift certificates at the counter.

El Azteca Mexican Restaurant
201 W. Northland Ave., Appleton
elaztecawi.com

8 Christmas All Year Round

Cleo's Brown Beam Tavern, an iconic Christmas-themed cocktail lounge, is known for Dirty Snowballs and a festive atmosphere with year-round twinkling lights. Purchase gift cards in person or at giftly.com

Cleo's Brown Beam Tavern
203 W. College Ave., Appleton
facebook.com/cleos.appleton

9 Taste the Holidays

Sweeten someone's season with a Dairy Queen gift card. Enjoy frosty soft serve treats or order a custom DQ cake for holiday parties. DQ Gift cards also make great stocking stuffers. Available at the counter.

Dairy Queen
2000 S. Oneida St. and 1813 N. Richmond St., Appleton
dairyqueen.com

10 Mexican Culinary Tradition with a Twist

Chicken Grill offers a vibrant dining experience blending authentic Mexican cuisine with ice cream in classic and Mexican-inspired flavors, served in freshly made waffle cones. Stop by to pick up a gift card.

Chicken Grill
1550 Appleton Road, Menasha
chickengrillmenashareviews.com

GIFT CARDS THAT KEEP ON GIVING



Share the Gift

MUSIC THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

By JIM COLLAR

We often think of gifts as boxes wrapped in colorful paper. Yet many of our most treasured gifts arrive in the special moments we share together. It's why music is so vital to the holidays. Joyful songs are tied to our traditions and provide the soundtrack to our warmest memories.

This season, share the gift of a holiday performance — or even a few — with loved ones. The schedule is as packed as Santa's sleigh. Let's walk through the highlights in what we'll call the 12 Days of Christmas Concerts.

Day 1, Nov. 13: The first day arrives with an exclamation point. **Trans-Siberian Orchestra** opens its 2025 tour at Green Bay's Resch Center with two shows. Meanwhile, Appleton will hit its soulful groove with "A Motown Christmas" at the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center.

Day 2, Nov. 15: On the second day, help combat hunger in our region. The Fox Cities P.A.C. will host **Grateful Groove**, a holiday benefit featuring Janet Planet and Pegasis.

Day 3, Nov. 30: Enjoy popular a capella act **Straight No Chaser** as they return to the Fox Cities P.A.C. on their Holiday Road tour.

Day 4, Dec. 4: Slip into your cowboy boots as **Lonestar** brings their Christmas & Hits Tour to the Oshkosh Arena. Or catch **For Kids From 1 to 92** at the Fox Cities P.A.C., an annual Christmas concert by STEEM, led by Steve March-Torme' and former Vic Ferrari frontman Michael Bailey. The title comes from "The Christmas Song," a classic penned by Steve's father, the great Mel Torme', often a highlight of the evening.

Day 5, Dec. 6: Enjoy holiday cheer from another local favorite. **Boogie and the Yo Yo'z: Christmas With You** will feature both Christmas favorites and holiday originals.

Day 6, Dec. 7: Experience **Hearts in Harmony**, a benefit for Feeding America at the Fox Cities P.A.C. It features holiday music by the Fox Valley Symphony Orchestra Brass and Percussion, Appleton Boychoir, Badger State Girl Choir, MacDowell Male Chorus, and Oshkosh Chamber Singers.

Day 7, Dec. 8: Pianist, **Lorie Line**, delivers elegant piano arrangements at The Grand in Oshkosh.



Day 8, Dec. 9: **Mannheim Steamroller** redefined Christmas music and sold millions of albums with their synth-driven, new-age sound. Enjoy it live at the Fox Cities P.A.C.

Day 9, Dec. 10: Tony and Grammy Award-winning artist **Leslie Odom, Jr.** returns to the Fox Cities P.A.C. to perform holiday classics, heartfelt originals, and songs from *Hamilton*, where he earned him a Tony for his role as Aaron Burr.

Day 10, Dec. 11: Honor the reverent side of the season as gospel music legend Bill Gaither brings the **Gaither Homecoming Christmas Tour** to the Resch Center.

Day 11, Dec. 16: Jazz up the holidays with **Matt Wilson's Christmas Tree-O** at The Weidner in Green Bay.

Day 12, Dec. 20: The Fox Valley's NewVoices choir will perform their annual **Christmas at the Chapel** concert at Lawrence Memorial Chapel. As another option, check out **Holiday Pops at The Weidner** featuring the Weidner Philharmonic and the Dudley Birder Chorale.

While these 12 days have no partridges or pear trees, they offer many opportunities to make beautiful memories. Experience the joy of a great concert this holiday season!

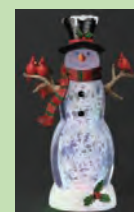
Jim Collar is a journalist, lifelong resident of the Fox Cities and a supporter of our local music scene. He previously worked as a reporter for The Post-Crescent and The Oshkosh Northwestern.

Sav-Half Greeting Cards
& 143 Expressions
Holiday Open House

November 6, 7, 8

Enter to **WIN!**

- Gift basket worth \$250.00 of gifts
- 1 of 5 \$50.00 gift certificates
- 1 of 3 swirl LED snowmen



18x 11.5

Store Locations:

- 790 Hansen Rd, Green Bay
- 1681 Lime Kiln Rd, Green Bay
- 3192 Cty. Rd KK, Appleton
- 461 N. Main, Oshkosh

Store Hours:

M-F: 9-7, Sat: 9-5, Sunday: 11-3

◆ Great selection of boxed Christmas cards ◆ Instore specials ◆ Gourmet samples

Step Into Our Winter Wonderland!

Nov. 8 & 9

Holiday Open House

Nov. 15 & 16

Kick-Off To Christmas

Nov. 22 & 23

He Hunts She Shops

Nov. 28-30

Let The Shopping Begin!

CREATING HOLIDAY MEMORIES FOR OVER 40 YEARS!



OVER 70 DECORATED TREES ON TWO FLOORS! (ELEVATOR AVAILABLE)

Kristmas Kringle Shoppe

EXIT 95 OFF HWY 41 • 1330 S. Main St., Fond du Lac • 920-922-3900
Open Sun.-Sat. 10am-5pm, Closed Thanksgiving Day • www.kristmaskringle.com



Freida McFadden
The Gift

book
of the
month

A true hidden gem in McFadden’s portfolio, *The Gift* delivers a chilling glimpse into the dangers of making deals with devils you don’t know. While McFadden is best known for her full-length thrillers, this short story proves she can pack the same suspense, atmosphere, and emotional punch into a smaller package. At the center of the story is Stella, a hardworking waitress balancing two jobs just to make ends meet. Near the end of a grueling shift, she’s approached by a mysterious customer who presents her with a tempting offer: the perfect gift for her new husband. What seems like a stroke of luck quickly takes on a darker edge, and McFadden expertly builds a sense of unease as Stella realizes every gift comes with a price.

Robin Kimmerer
Braiding Sweetgrass

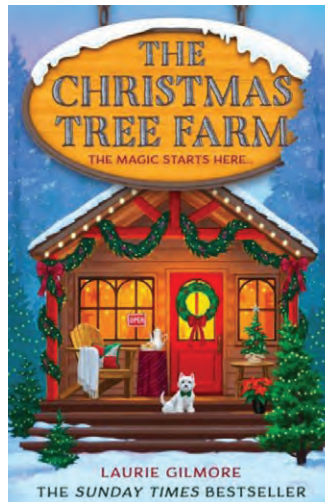
“We restore land, and the land restores us.” *Braiding Sweetgrass* is a truly inspiring read. Written by Robin Kimmerer, an indigenous botanist, this non-fiction novel tells us about our original teachers: plants and animals.

Gypsy-Rose Blanchard
My Time to Stand

Told by Gypsy-Rose Blanchard herself, this novel takes readers through the childhood of a girl who suffers at the hands of her own mother. However, one fateful night can turn a child into an accomplice. Readers beware: this book deals with heavy topics.

Leigh Bardugo
Six Of Crows

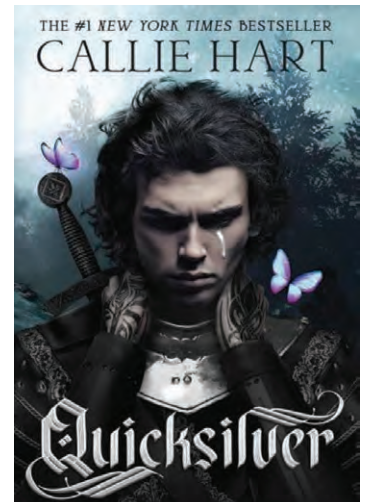
Six of Crows is a young adult fantasy novel featuring a group of eccentric (if not morally gray) characters tasked with pulling off an elaborate heist. Their lives become increasingly intertwined as power struggles, romances, and begrudging partnerships form.



Laurie Gilmore
The Christmas Tree Farm

The Christmas Tree Farm is a heartwarming, small-town romance featuring Kira, a grumpy Christmas tree farm owner, and a fix-it man named Bennet on vacation from his life in California. Together, the two of them work to bring the farm to its fullest potential in time for the holiday season. This cheesy holiday romance is perfect for anyone looking for a cozy book to curl up with during the snowy season.

Casey Marion is an aspiring author and struggling college student. She works at the Kaukauna Public Library and can always be found with a book in hand.



Callie Hart
Quicksilver

Hart’s writing instantly immerses readers in the world of Saeris Fane, a 24-year-old woman struggling to survive in the harsh desert. After a chance encounter with a dark and brooding male who goes by the name of Kingfisher, Saeris opens a portal to another realm — one of ice and snow. In this new world, Saeris finds herself bound to Kingfisher, for better or for worse, with only one chance at getting back home. Fans of Sarah J. Maas will love this feisty heroine and the relationships she forms along her journey. The second book in this series is expected to be released on Nov. 18.



CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS

WITH YOUR FOX CITIES PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

The holiday season is a time for gathering, giving, and creating cherished memories. One way to do that is through the magic of live performing arts experiences. At the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center, the joy of the season comes alive with heartwarming performances, meaningful opportunities to give back, and gift ideas that inspire long after the holidays are over. Whether you're looking for a night out, the perfect gift, or a way to share the spirit of the season with others, the Fox Cities P.A.C. has you covered.

There's something unforgettable about watching a story unfold on stage during the holidays, and this year's lineup at the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center is filled with festive favorites, bringing together holiday traditions and performances sure to delight every audience. Enjoy the soulful sounds of *A Motown Christmas* and the Grateful Groove Holiday Concert, or soak in the harmonies of Straight No Chaser's Holiday Road Tour and Hearts in Harmony. Add in the laughter of *Sister's Christmas Catechism*, the high-energy fun of local favorite Boogie and the YoYoz: Christmas With You, and the wonder of *A Magical Cirque Christmas* for a season that sparkles. And with iconic shows like Mannheim Steamroller by Chip Davis, Leslie Odom Jr.: The Christmas Tour, and *Christmas on the Avenue*, this holiday season at the Fox Cities P.A.C. is one you won't want to miss. Whether it's a beloved holiday tradition or a new discovery, live theater is a unique way to celebrate together.

Searching for just the right present for someone on your list? A Fox Cities P.A.C. gift card makes gift-giving simple while offering something memorable. Gift cards can be used for tickets, valet services, and concessions, allowing your loved ones to craft their perfect night out.

The holidays are also a season of generosity, and your support can help the Fox Cities P.A.C. continue its mission of serving the community through the arts. By contributing to the Center's Year-End Giving Campaign, you're ensuring that more people in Northeast Wisconsin — and beyond — have access to live performing arts experiences.

Every donation helps sustain community-focused programs and initiatives, from educational opportunities for students to accessibility services for all patrons. More than that, giving feels good knowing your support is the reason someone gets to discover, learn, and laugh at the Fox Cities P.A.C.

The Fox Cities P.A.C. also offers a selection of keepsakes to enjoy long after the curtain falls. Signed show posters and Ovation programs are available from a variety of memorable productions, including the recent Broadway tour of Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*. These collectibles make unique gifts for the theater-lover in your life or a special treat for yourself.

If you find yourself unable to use a ticket you've purchased, the Fox Cities P.A.C. Ticket Donation Program provides a simple and meaningful way to pass along the experience. With just a few clicks on foxcitiespac.com or through the Fox Cities P.A.C. app, you can donate your ticket to someone in the community who might not otherwise have the chance to attend. It's a small act that makes a big difference, transforming a missed evening into an unforgettable memory.

From the memorable experience of live performances to the ease of gift cards, the joy of giving back, and the chance to share the theater with others, there's truly something for everyone.

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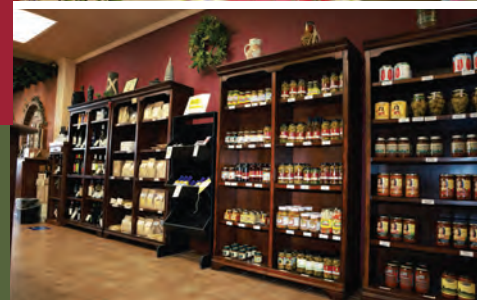
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"Sweata Weatha"

By PHYLLIS COLLAR

AS WE AWAIT THE ARRIVAL OF WINTER — SHORTER DAYS, COOLER TEMPERATURES, AND THAT WHITE FLAKY STUFF I DARE NOT SAY OUT LOUD — "SWEATA WEATHA" BECOMES THE BEST CONSOLATION. This year, sweaters are playing a leading role in outfits for both men and women. With many styles to choose from and many ways to wear them, sweaters add pizzazz to nearly any outfit, casual or formal. If you are like me and are not quite ready to let go of summer dresses and tanks, why not start with short-sleeved or lightweight knits to extend their wear? Sweaters come in long sleeves, short sleeves, pullovers, and cardigans. Colors run the gamut from classic neutral tones to bold iterations. Some have polo-style collars or zipper enclosures in lieu of buttons. Dark brown is a popular color on all the runways for fall. A chocolate brown cashmere sweater can be worn with jeans and a T-shirt, a long flowing skirt (lace skirts with sweaters are a hit), or even thrown over your favorite sweats. Choose your favorite neckline, color, and cut. The classic T-shirt shape, of course, always looks fresh and modern.



Pullover sweaters are featured with preppy collars and stripes, making the rugby shirt a thing, again. Stripes give sweaters a nautical feel, while classic patterns like fairisle and argyle have become fresh again.

I am happy to announce a resurgence of drapey knits and ponchos. (I must admit I have been wearing these for years, and now I won't be weird but stylish.) The runways are featuring sweaters with scarves and other attached details.



Vests aren't just something my dad wears. In various textiles and prints, sweater vests are all the rage on the runway. (I'm hoping to snag one of these babies for myself.) Vests can be worn both over a t-shirt or button-down, entirely on their own, or over a favorite dress.



Of course, the cardigan remains tried-and-true in varied colors, prints, and shapes — oversized and slouchy, cropped, fitted, or hourglass. One thing is for sure: sweaters are here for the taking. Remember to grab yours next time you head out into chilly weather.



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Saturday Special Events
(Saturday 11/8/25)

- ★ Holiday mini photo shoot with Erin & Dennis Photography (10a-1p)
- ★ Holiday Bingo! (2p-4p) [Ticket purchase required prior to 11/8]
- ★ Loom & Lore Bookmobile (2p-5p)
- ★ Della Jewelry & Co jewelry bar with Danielle Sweger (2p-5p)

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BY: SARAH PETERSON

Send your photo submissions to: editor@appletonmonthly.com



Tilly Peterson poses at the **Pumpkins by Heather** stand at The Plaza in downtown Neenah.



A family celebrates tradition in blue and orange at **Appleton West's Homecoming Parade**.



Kylie, Ellie, and Anna enjoy a day of shopping in downtown Neenah with a stop at **Red Door Mercantile**.



Tim Gerdin and his son, Davian, prepare for a busy weekend with their food truck, **ABC Pig Roast**, in downtown Appleton.



Sami and Emily of **Daisy's Mobile Mini Bloom Bar** fill their truck with fresh blooms to create custom bouquets during Appleton's License to Cruise.



Brian, Brooke, Bree, and Briley check out the vintage rides at **License to Cruise** in downtown Appleton.



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THE SCENE

Top 10 reasons to fill up your calendar this month

By SARAH PETERSON

1. BIRDWATCHING WORKSHOP

Join Dexter Patterson, author of *Birds of the Great Lakes*, for an inspiring session called *Birds, Joy, and Connection*: Finding Community Through Birdwatching, which will focus on how birdwatching fosters connection. Nov. 4, 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Appleton Public Library.



appleton-wi.whofi.com/calendar/event/1282738

4. LIGHT THE NIGHT MARKET

Kick off the season with the holiday edition of this popular night market. Fun for all ages, including live performances, music, food, craft



vendors, interactive activities, and, of course, dazzling lights! Nov. 15, 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Houdini Plaza in downtown Appleton.

appletondowntown.org/events/light-the-night-market-holiday-edition

7. APPLETON CHRISTMAS PARADE

Bundle up and join more than 80,000 jolly spectators at the 54th Downtown Appleton Christmas Parade. It is the largest nighttime parade in the Midwest. Come early to claim your seat. Nov. 25 at 7 p.m. in downtown Appleton.

appletonwi.gov/community/appleton_parades/christmas.php



8. FESTIVAL FOODS TURKEY TROT

Burn some calories before filling up on Thanksgiving dinner with a 2- or 5-mile run/walk course. Participants receive a long-sleeved race shirt and a pumpkin pie. Registration required. Nov. 27, 8 a.m. in Appleton.

appleton.festivalfoodsturkeytrot.com



9. FOX CITIES FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

Grab some hot chocolate and walk through a half-mile loop of lighted holiday displays. Santa will also be available for pictures. A donation of \$5 is suggested. Nov. 28 through Dec. 28, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Darboy Community Park.

fcfestivaloflights.org

2. CRAFT AND COCKTAIL

Enjoy a cocktail (or two) and self-serve s'mores while creating a festive porch pot. Tickets required. Ages 21 and up. Nov. 13, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Bubolz Nature Preserve.

bubolzpreserve.org/events/craft-cocktail-2-589

3. A MOTOWN CHRISTMAS



Be dazzled by this family-friendly show that mixes Motown's biggest songs with popular holiday music. Dance, sing, and enjoy this special holiday event in Motown style. Nov. 13, 7 p.m. at the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center.

foxcitiespac.com/event/a-motown-christmas

5. LIBRARY BOOK SALE



The Friends of the Appleton Public Library invite the public to shop for a variety of gently used books, movies, and more. Proceeds support library programs and community services. Open to the public Nov. 21 and 22, 9

a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Appleton Public Library.

appleton-wi.whofi.com/calendar/event/1291018

6. SANTA SCAMPER



Don your holiday gear and get cheered on by parade-goers while running or walking this one-mile course down College Avenue. Proceeds support the St. Joseph Food Program. Registration required. Nov. 25, 6:40 p.m. in downtown Appleton.

runawayshoes.net/content/santascamper

10. SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY

Start your holiday shopping by supporting small businesses in our area. (Check out our Holiday Gift Guide on pg. 24 for ideas!) Shoppers who get a passport

stamped at five participating businesses could win one of over \$4,000 in prizes! Nov. 29, 8 a.m. in downtown Appleton.

appletondowntown.org/events/small-business-saturday-2



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LET'S GIVE THANKS BEFORE PASSING CRANBERRIES

By TIM FROBERG

Thanksgiving may be America's greatest holiday.

We get to see our loved ones, but don't have to buy them presents. We get a day off from work. There are parades and football games, and we get a license to eat.

But before chowing down, let's express gratitude for the good things we have.

Sports are a huge part of culture in the Badger State, so here's what to be thankful for in the world of Wisconsin athletics:

- We have one of the most iconic professional sports franchises in our backyard. The Green Bay Packers, the only publicly owned team, lead the league in victories with 847 wins entering October. Only four franchises have more Super Bowl titles. If the Packers' four Super Bowl titles aren't good enough, talk to any Detroit Lions or Minnesota Vikings fan.
- Another season of Milwaukee Bucks basketball is underway, and we get to watch one of the greatest basketball players on the planet, Giannis Antetokounmpo. They say he hails from Greece, but I'm thinking Saturn.
- We have prolific Packers quarterbacks. Brett Favre and Aaron Rodgers gave the Packers 30 consecutive years of elite quarterback play. Jordan Love hasn't reached their level, but shows potential. This feels like karma for fans who endured decades of bad quarterbacking from Scott Hunter, Jerry Tagge, Jim Del Gaizo, and Randy Wright, whose quarterback ratings rivaled Bob Uecker's batting average. I'm not sure that any of them could drop a football into the Fox River from the Nitschke Bridge.
- The Milwaukee Brewers excel at developing young players, posting MLB's top regular-season record (97-65) with the fifth-youngest team and setting a franchise record for wins. They did it with emerging talent like Jackson Chourio, Isaac Collins, Brice Turang, Quinn Priester, Sal Frelick, and Jacob Misiorowski. Pat Murphy, my choice to repeat as National League Manager of the Year, could turn a stadium lawn mower into a competitive ballplayer. Milwaukee's decisions to pass on big contracts for Corbin Burnes (who will miss

much of 2026 after Tommy John surgery), Devin Williams (4.79 ERA with the New York Yankees), and Willy Adames (.225 batting average with the Giants) took some heat but proved wise.

- George Halas. Yes, George Halas. The long-time coach and owner of the Chicago Bears was actually an ally of the Packers. He helped reinstate Green Bay after a 1922 NFL scandal, fought for equal revenue sharing for small-market teams, and advocated in 1956 for a new stadium (now Lambeau Field) that kept the team from leaving Green Bay. Halas also recommended hiring Vince Lombardi as head coach in 1958.



- The Packers aren't coached by Luke Fickell. This one stumps me. Fickell was supposed to be a rising star when he joined the Badgers after revitalizing Cincinnati's stumbling program, but his offensive scheme has never taken off. He's been a downgrade from Paul Chryst, whose 67-26 record wasn't too shabby.

- Robert Redford's magnificent work in "The Natural." Redford's recent death recalled memories of his remarkable films. I would argue that Redford's best role was as Roy Hobbs, the mysterious star-crossed slugger in this 1984 film. The final scene, in which Hobbs blasts a prodigious, pennant-winning homer off the light pole, still gives me goose bumps.



Tim Froberg is a professional writer who covered the Packers Super Bowl appearances in New Orleans (1997) and San Diego (1998), and has written several feature stories for various Packers Yearbooks.

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ASK TAMMI

Got questions for Tammi?



My daughter's best friend has a cell phone, and she is begging to have one. What is an ideal age for kids to have a cell phone? — *Michelle R.*

DEAR MICHELLE: The answer to this question varies for every family. My kids got their first cell phone around the age of 13, and my daughter claimed she was the last of her friends to get one. I am not certain about that, but I am certain that the most important thing to do before your kids get a phone is to set boundaries. Will it be shared, and how will that work? When can they have the phone? What are the consequences for breaking the rules? My kids were not allowed to have their phones at meals or in their rooms at bedtime.

There are many things to consider before purchasing a phone. I would ask other parents how they manage phones with their children, and research best practices. Cell phones can bring challenges, but they can also be very useful in communicating with our kids when we are apart.



Send your questions to Tammi via email at tammi@appletonmonthly.com



My wife and I have lived in our home for over 25 years and would like to make some changes. The process seems overwhelming, do you have any tips on how to get started? — *Lucas K.*

DEAR LUCAS: That truly will depend on the changes you plan to make. For minor changes, look through magazines or websites for inspirational pictures that you both like and try to replicate them. You may want to consider contacting a local designer for help. For major changes, like taking down walls or moving doorways, I would definitely contact a carpenter to get a real idea of what it would take. In my experience, these projects always require more time and money than you think, so it is best to be prepared.



My son's family lives three states away, we feel that we miss out on quality time with our grandkids. What can we do to stay more connected with them? — *Susan P.*

DEAR Susan: This is an issue for many families. My suggestion for this is video calls like FaceTime. When I am away from my grandbabies (or even my grown children), we FaceTime frequently. It depends on the age of the little ones, but once they start to communicate, this is a great way to keep in touch. I hope that starting them young fosters this type of interaction as they grow. It makes it feel like we are together, even when we are apart.

Most recently, I have started FaceTime reading with my preschool granddaughter. I send her a copy of each book we read together. This allows her to hold the book and turn the pages, building her library and mine.



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TASTE

CHEF'S TABLE 62 | THANKSGIVING BITES 64 | BEER + BREWING 66 | FOOD & DRINK 68



Chef Carly's
Seasonal Pies

By CARLY CERNIGLIA

Seasonal Pies

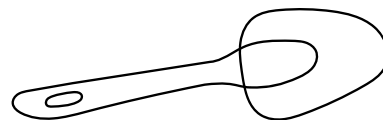
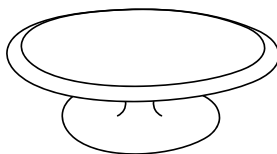
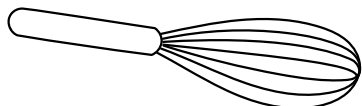
By CARLY CERNIGLIA

It's pie season, and I'm here for it. I'm happy to share with you five recipes for unbelievably delicious pies this month. From a simple classic to more technical obscurities, there's a pie in here for everyone.

On the more traditional end, I've included a shoo fly pie, a Pennsylvania Dutch classic made with rich molasses. Next, there's a spin on a sweet potato pie, using purple sweet potatoes. Coconut lovers rejoice, as I've elevated the classic coconut cream pie with a macaroon crust – pie heaven in every bite! Cranberries get upgraded from a side dish to dessert in my cranberry pie with a gingersnap crust, and then we take a trip to the Middle East with my Dubai-Style Chocolate Pie. Is your mouth watering yet?

Many of these pies are made in a deep-dish pie plate. No deep-dish pie plate? No problem. If using a standard pie plate, simply stop filling before it overflows. Save the leftover fillings for a nice sample while you wait for dessert (wink wink).

Happy Baking!
Chef Carly



Pie Crust

Makes two crusts

INGREDIENTS

2 1/2 cups flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup (2 sticks) cold butter, cubed
4-8 tablespoons ice-cold water, as needed

DIRECTIONS

1. Pulse flour, butter, and salt in a food processor until the mixture resembles sand.
2. Pulse in water 1 tablespoon at a time until the dough starts to come together.

3. Transfer into a bowl and mix until it forms a ball.

4. Divide the ball in half and flatten each into a 1-inch disk. Wrap in plastic and chill for at least 2 hours, up to 2 days, or freeze for future pies.

How To Blind Bake:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Roll out a dough disk larger than your pie plate. Place the dough on the plate and trim off excess. Crimp the edges and prick the dough all over with a fork. Crumple a piece of parchment paper the size of the plate, unwrap it, and place it over the dough. Fill with pie weights or dried beans. Bake for 10-15 minutes.

To Fully Bake:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Repeat the steps above, without the parchment or pie weights. Bake 20-25 minutes or until the crust is golden.

Sweet Potato Pie

When I shared this pie with friends, they said: "I don't understand what this is, but omg, it's the best pie ever" and "It really is absurdly delicious." So, if you'd like to confuse your friends and serve them one of the most delicious pies around, your first step is to track down some purple sweet potatoes. I found mine at my local Asian grocery store, but in fall, you can occasionally find them at your local grocery store. If you can't find them, substitute regular sweet potatoes — the pie just won't be purple.

INGREDIENTS

One blind-baked, 9-inch deep-dish pie crust

For the Filling:

Four small or two large purple sweet potatoes, peeled and diced (about 2 -2 1/2 pounds)

1/2-1 cup reserved cooking liquid from potatoes*

24 ounces pureed purple sweet potato*

1/2 cup plain Greek yogurt

3/4 cup packed brown sugar

Three eggs

10 ounces heavy cream

1 tablespoon vanilla paste

1 tablespoon bourbon

1/2 teaspoon ground ginger

1/4 teaspoon cardamom

1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

For the Marshmallow Fluff:

1/3 cup water

3/4 cup sugar

3/4 cup light corn syrup

Three egg whites

1/2 teaspoon cream of tartar

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Candied pecans, for garnish



DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 325 degrees F.
2. **For the filling:* In a large saucepan, cover diced sweet potatoes with cold water by 1-2 inches. Bring to a boil and cook until fork-tender. Reserve 2 cups of the cooking liquid and drain potatoes. Let the potatoes cool to room temperature.
3. In a food processor, blend potatoes, adding reserved cooking liquid as needed (about 1/2-1 cup) until you reach the consistency of canned pumpkin puree.
4. In a large mixing bowl, combine 24 ounces sweet potato puree with the remaining filling ingredients. Mix until fully incorporated.
5. Pour into the blind-baked crust. If you are using a standard crust, stop filling at the upper edge. Bake remaining filling in a ramekin or small baking dish with the pie.
6. Bake the pie for 75 minutes or until edges are golden, and filling is matte with a slight wobble but no ripples. Cool at room temperature and refrigerate for at least 4 hours.
7. *For the marshmallow fluff:* In a heavy-bottomed saucepan, heat water, sugar, and corn syrup to 240 degrees F without stirring.
8. Meanwhile, in a clean stand mixer bowl, whip egg whites and cream of tartar to soft peaks, about 3-4 minutes. With the mixer on medium, drizzle in the 240 degree F syrup. Whip on medium-high 7-8 minutes until stiff peaks form. Stir in vanilla.
9. Pipe fluff onto chilled pie once cool. Store leftover fluff in an airtight container at room temperature for 2 weeks or freeze for 6 months.
10. Torch the marshmallow fluff if desired, and top with candied pecans. Enjoy!
11. Store leftover pie in the refrigerator 1-3 days.



Coconut Cream Pie

A Macaroon Crust

If you despise coconut, this recipe isn't for you — feel free to turn the page. If you love coconut, then you're in for a treat. This pie ditches the typical pie crust for a giant macaroon cookie — not the cute French macaron sandwich cookie, but the classic, coconut-based macaroon. It's topped with coconut custard, whipped cream, and flaky golden coconut. It's a triple threat.

INGREDIENTS

One blind-baked, 9-inch deep-dish pie crust

For the Crust:

14-ounce bag sweetened coconut flakes
1/2 cup sweetened condensed milk
2 tablespoons butter, melted
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
Two egg whites
1/4 teaspoon salt
4-ounce white chocolate bar

For the Coconut Filling:

Four egg yolks
1/4 cup cornstarch
13.5-ounce can full-fat coconut milk
1 cup heavy cream
2/3 cup sugar
1/4 cup salt
2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons vanilla paste

For the Whipped Cream:

1 cup heavy cream
2 tablespoons powdered sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
Toasted coconut flakes, for garnish



DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 325 degrees F. Spray a 9-inch deep dish pie plate with cooking spray.
2. *For the crust:* In a large bowl, whip egg whites to stiff peaks. In a separate bowl, mix coconut, sweetened condensed milk, butter, vanilla, and salt. Fold whipped egg whites into the coconut mixture until fully incorporated. Pour into a pie plate and press evenly up the edges and over the bottom.
3. Bake the crust for 20-25 minutes, or until the coconut is starting to turn golden. Let cool.
4. Melt the white chocolate and spread it in a thin layer over the crust to form a protective barrier from the filling. Let it harden.
5. *For the filling:* In a medium saucepan, heat coconut milk, heavy cream, sugar, and salt to a simmer. In a medium bowl, whisk egg yolks and cornstarch. Slowly add half the coconut mixture into the egg yolk mixture to avoid curdling. Pour the new mixture into the remaining coconut mixture and whisk well. Return to heat and whisk until very thick, holding its shape. Stir in butter and vanilla paste. Pour into the cooled pie crust.
6. Let cool a bit, cover with plastic wrap touching the filling's surface to prevent a film, and chill 3 hours.
7. *For the whipped cream:* Once ready to serve, whip heavy cream and powdered sugar until stiff peaks form. Stir in vanilla. Dollop on pie, garnish with toasted coconut flakes, and enjoy!
8. Store leftovers in the refrigerator for 1-3 days.



Chocolate Pie

Dubai-Style

If you haven't heard of the viral Dubai chocolate bar, let me be the first to introduce you. This chocolate bar is filled with a pistachio filling with crunchy strings of kataifi, a dough resembling phyllo. The flavors and textures meld so well, I just had to make it into a pie. Its base is a delicious dark chocolate ganache that goes perfectly with the sweet pistachio filling.

INGREDIENTS

One fully baked 9-inch pie crust

For the Pistachio Cream:

2 cups shelled pistachios
3 tablespoons vegetable oil
2 tablespoons powdered sugar
4 ounces white chocolate, melted
5 tablespoons heavy cream
1/4 cup milk
Pinch of salt
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

For the Ganache:

8 ounces dark chocolate chips (about 1 heaping cup or 2/3 bag)
1 cup heavy cream
2 tablespoons salted butter
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

For the Pie:

2 cups dried kataifi, toasted*
2 cups pistachio cream



DIRECTIONS

1. Start with the ganache. In a small saucepan, heat heavy cream to just barely a simmer. Pour over chocolate chips and let sit 2 minutes. Stir until melted. Add butter and vanilla, and stir until smooth and fully incorporated. Pour all but 1/4 cup into the baked pie crust. Chill for 2 hours, or until firm.
2. Once your filling has set, make the pistachio cream (or prepare in advance). Toast pistachios at 350 degrees F for 6 minutes. Let cool.
3. In a food processor, pulse cooled pistachios to coarse crumbs, about 2-3 minutes. Add 1 tablespoon oil and process for another 2-3 minutes. Add another tablespoon of oil and repeat. Let sit for a few minutes.
4. Melt the white chocolate. Add to nuts with sugar, salt, heavy cream, and vanilla. Pulse. The mixture may form a ball or separate; this is normal. Break apart if needed, add milk, and blend until smooth, 2-5 minutes.
5. If the mixture is warm, let it cool at room temperature.
6. Mix 2 cups of pistachio cream with 2 cups of toasted kataifi. Spread evenly over the chilled ganache. Top with remaining ganache and chopped pistachios. Chill for 1 hour and enjoy!
7. Store leftover pistachio cream and pie in the refrigerator for 3-5 days.

*Note: To toast kataifi, saute in a dry pan over medium heat, stirring, until golden. Let cool.



Cranberry Pie Gingersnap Crust



This spectacular pie bursts with fall flavors. The bright, tart cranberries pair perfectly with the spicy gingersnap crust and are married by the delicately sweet meringue topping. This pie is sure to impress your guests and become a crowd favorite.

INGREDIENTS

For the Crust:

14 ounces gingersnap cookies
6 ounces butter, melted
1/3 cup brown sugar

For the Filling:

20 ounces fresh or frozen cranberries
1 cup pure cranberry juice, unsweetened
1/4 cup sugar
Pinch kosher salt
14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk
Three eggs

For the Meringue:

Four egg whites
Sugar (twice the weight of the egg whites, about 19 1/2 tablespoons)

DIRECTIONS

For the Crust:

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F.

In a food processor, pulse cookies and brown sugar until finely

crumbled. Drizzle in butter and pulse until the crumbs start to stick together and butter is incorporated. Transfer to a 9-inch deep-dish pie plate and press evenly up the sides and over the bottom. Bake for 7 minutes. Cool completely.

For the Pie:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

In a medium saucepan, cook cranberries, cranberry juice, sugar, and salt for 10 minutes, until the cranberries burst and mixture thickens. Transfer to a food processor, blender, or immersion blender to blend until smooth. If you do not have 2 cups of cranberry mixture, add extra cranberry juice until you reach 2 cups (you may not need to do this). Let cool slightly.

In a medium bowl, mix eggs and sweetened condensed milk. Slowly add 2 cups of the cranberry mixture, a little at a time, to avoid curdling the eggs. Whisk until fully incorporated. Pour into the cooled gingersnap crust. Note: If not using a deep-dish pie crust, stop filling your pie once you reach the upper edges of the crust. Bake the leftover filling in a ramekin with your pie.

Bake the pie for 30-35 minutes. The pie is done once the top looks dry matte, and the pie is set with just a few wobbles towards the center. Place the pie on a cooling rack to cool, then refrigerate for at least 4 hours.

For the Meringue:

Prepare meringue once you're ready to serve.

Place the egg whites and sugar in a medium heatproof bowl over a double boiler. Stir occasionally until no sugar crystals remain, about 174 degrees F. Remove from heat and beat with a hand or stand mixer with a whisk attachment until stiff peaks form. Smooth over the pie and torch. Enjoy!

Store leftovers in the refrigerator for 1-3 days.



Shoo Fly Pie

Is a Winner

If you're looking for a simple pie that will knock your socks off, this is the one. A traditional pie I hadn't heard of, this shoo fly pie is a winner. Made with a few simple ingredients and a lot of science, this pie is perfect for last-minute events. Molasses lovers, be warned: you'll want to eat this whole thing. Pair it with a cup of coffee and a scoop of vanilla ice cream for the perfect ending to your harvest meal.

INGREDIENTS

one pie crust, unbaked

For the Crumb:

- 1 cup flour
- 1/2 cup brown sugar, packed
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter

For the Molasses Filling:

- 1 cup blackstrap molasses
- 3/4 cup boiling water
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda

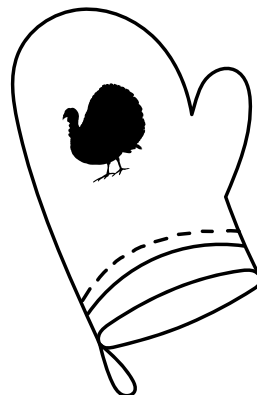
DIRECTIONS

1. Roll the pie crust and place in a 9-inch pie tin. Chill in the refrigerator.
2. Preheat the oven to 450 degrees F.
3. In a small food processor, pulse together the crumb



ingredients until they resemble wet sand.

4. In a large glass measuring cup with a spout (about 4 cups), add molasses and boiling water. Stir, then stir in baking soda and watch it foam.
5. Pour the molasses filling mixture into the chilled pie crust. Evenly spread the crumb mixture over the molasses.
6. Place a pie guard around the edge of the pie crust or cover with tinfoil, and bake for 20 minutes. Reduce the temperature to 350 degrees F and bake for an additional 10 minutes. Remove the pie guard or tinfoil and bake for another 10 minutes. Filling should be set and barely wobble.
7. Cool pie to room temperature. Store on the counter for up to 3 days, in the refrigerator for up to 5 days, or freeze for up to 3 months. Enjoy!





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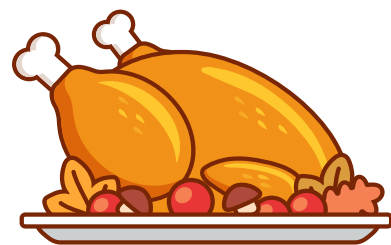
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Turkey Pot Pie

By CARLY CERNIGLIA



The perfect use for Thanksgiving leftovers, this turkey pot pie is a wonderful addition to your post-holiday meal rotation. Vegetables and sweet potatoes lend a hearty hand in making this simple dish filling and comforting. It's the perfect recipe for a busy weeknight or post-holiday lunch. Pro tip: Freeze your leftover turkey in 2-cup (about 8-ounce) portions to easily throw this pie together in a pinch.

INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoons oil
 1 cup diced onion
 1/2 cup diced carrot
 2 cups diced mushrooms
 1/2 teaspoon seasoned salt
 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
 1/4 teaspoon poultry seasoning
 Two cloves garlic, minced
 10.5-ounce can heart-healthy cream of chicken soup
 1 cup whole milk
 1/8 teaspoon garlic powder
 1/8 teaspoon onion powder
 1/8 teaspoon smoked paprika
 Six sprigs fresh thyme
 2 teaspoons cornstarch
 1 tablespoon water
 1/2 pound turkey breast, diced
 2 cups cooked, diced sweet potato
 1/4 cup frozen peas
 1/2 roll phyllo dough, thawed

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F and grease a baking dish with cooking spray.

In a large pan, heat oil over medium heat. Once hot, add onion and carrots. Cook until onions start to turn translucent and carrots begin to soften. Add mushrooms, seasoned salt, pepper, and poultry seasoning. Cook until carrots are tender and onions are cooked through. Add garlic and cook for one minute.

Stir in the cream of chicken soup, milk, garlic powder, onion powder, smoked paprika, and thyme. Bring to a bubble. Mix cornstarch and water; stir into soup mixture. Add turkey, sweet potatoes, and peas. Cook, stirring, until bubbling. Pour into the greased baking dish. Lay phyllo dough over the filling and coat with cooking spray. Sprinkle with salt, pepper, and thyme leaves for garnish.

Bake for 20-30 minutes, or until the dough is golden and the filling is bubbling. Serve hot and enjoy!



Photo by Carly Cerniglia

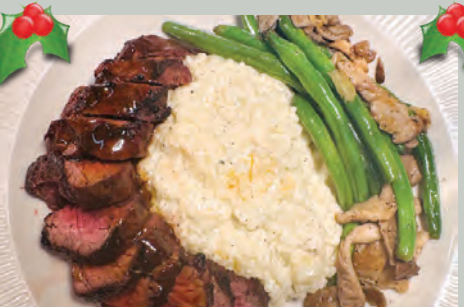
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Thanksgiving Bites

By PHYLLIS COLLAR

The holidays are upon us, again. Relatives and friends are congregating at one another's homes for all-day eating, often followed by getting drowsy in front of a football game... at least for many of you. But no matter who gathers around your holiday table, one thing is for sure, everyone has different tastes in food. Some have special diets due to medical conditions, others have restrictions due to allergies or weight loss goals, and kiddos might be picky or prefer snack-sized bites instead of a large meal. As a result, I read up on all kinds of appetizers for the holidays and curated a collection of the ones that look yummy to me, and are sure to satisfy everyone's tastes.

For Kids

Let's face it, they can be picky. But even the pickiest eaters like some kind of fruit. So, cut a variety of fruits and let the kids have fun putting their own fruit kebabs together. How about cookie-cutter pizzas? Use a festive shape such as a Christmas tree or star to cut pre-made pizza dough. Let the kids add sauce and toppings, if you can handle a little mess.

For Heart-Healthy and Calorie-Conscious Diets

Roasted Moroccan chick-peas are a healthy choice. Add spice, or roast them plain. Best heated in a skillet of oil on the stove. A raw vegetable platter with several dips is a healthy option and can accommodate most restrictions. A few dips to consider are traditional and flavored hummus, tzatziki (salted Greek yogurt with cucumber), and whipped feta or goat cheese dips.

For Decadent, Crowd-Pleasing Options

Baked brie is irresistible when paired with sweet or savory accompaniments. Festive fruit jams, like cranberry or fig, add flair, especially with chopped pecans. Deviled eggs, in various styles, are always appreciated. Buffalo cauliflower or broccoli wings, with crispy edges and tender centers, suit any palate. Swap buffalo sauce for honey mustard or teriyaki for variety.

No matter your guests this holiday season, here's hoping I've given you enough ideas to satisfy them all!

Phyllis Collar is an Appleton lover who hails from Long Island, New York. She is a fashionista and foodie, a lover of words and music, and an absolute hopeless romantic. Phyllis is delighted to share with you all things stylish. She contributes to Appleton Monthly with her Style & Fashion article as well as monthly features.



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IMPERIAL BREWS

By STEVE LONSWAY

Imperial beers can be found at almost every craft brewery at some point throughout the year. A simple walk down the beer aisle at your favorite beer depot can also offer several imperial choices. Most often, there seem to be imperial pale ales or imperial stouts, but I have seen (and tasted) imperial pilsners, reds, porters, and even pumpkin brews while traveling.

What does “imperial” mean? The short answer is higher alcohol content. Brewmasters create imperial beers by introducing additional fermentable sugars — simple sugar, honey, maple syrup, or, most commonly, extra malted barley. When using barley, malts are added to the mashing stage, and enzymes are converted to fermentable sugars. The sweet mixture, called wort, is boiled, hopped (hops added), cooled, and placed in a fermentation vessel. Yeast is added, and the magic happens. The yeast cells quickly multiply, consuming the available sugars and converting them to alcohol. The more sugar, the more alcohol. Brewers must balance the sweetness with more hops to avoid an overly sweet or syrupy beer. The final product should have a palatable balance.

Why are they called “imperial” beers? Rumors have it that in the late 17th century, Peter the Great, a member of the Russian Imperial Court, loved the malty porters of England and commissioned some to be sent to him. The 1,000-mile journey spoiled the barrels, and the English brewers had to find a solution. Their remedy was to add more hops, making the beer much stronger. The newer version was a hit, dubbed the Imperial Russian Stout, as stouts were considered stronger versions of porter.

Stronger beer styles, often called doubles, triples, or quads, are also classified as imperial. I see these mostly within the pale ale categories, due to the influence of Belgian beers on the U.S. craft beer movement.

When pairing imperial beers with food, choose hearty dishes that match their intensity. Pair imperial stouts with bourbon-maple-glazed T-bone steak, or rich double dark chocolate cake. For imperial pale ales, go with spicy dishes like Indian chicken vindaloo or baked tacos with habanero drizzle.

Steve Lonsway is the brewmaster and owner of Stone Arch Brewpub in Appleton. His passion shows in the beers he creates and in the national recognition he receives for them.



PICTURED: Stone Arch Imperial Stout

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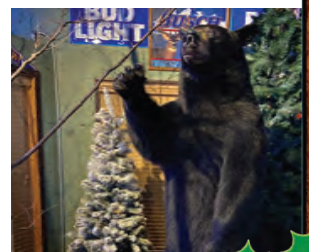
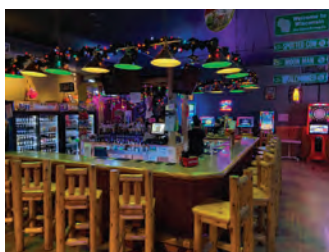
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DRINK

INGREDIENTS

- One 750-milliliter bottle of red wine
- One orange, sliced into rounds
- Six whole cloves
- Two (3-inch) cinnamon sticks
- Three star anise pods
- ½ cup brandy
- ¼ cup honey
- Garnish: oranges sliced, cinnamon sticks

DIRECTIONS

Bring wine, oranges, cloves, cinnamon, star anise, brandy, and honey to a simmer in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Do not boil. Reduce heat to medium-low for about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Pour into cups or mugs. Garnish with orange slices and cinnamon sticks. Enjoy!



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PET CARE COSTLY

By DR. JIM ZIEGLER



Fox Valley

**Humane
Association**

Caring for pets and their people



PET CARE COSTLY



By DR. JIM ZIEGLER

A common scenario is that someone acquires a new pet without fully realizing the financial investment involved in its care. The pet needs vaccines, spaying or neutering, and perhaps other basic care. The owner starts to price these services at local veterinary clinics but discovers that their current household budget won't allow for them. Surrendering the pet to a local shelter is considered, but the family is already enamored and does not like that option. The owner calls a local shelter and learns that it offers low-cost vaccine and spay/neuter services. They are ecstatic because the pet can now receive affordable, essential care and remain in the home.

The Fox Valley Humane Association (FVHA) is unique among local shelters in that it has a medical department staffed by two veterinarians, two certified veterinary technicians, and several veterinary assistants. They work in an area with a large surgery room featuring four surgical stations, a surgery prep area, two exam rooms, a dental suite, an x-ray room, and diagnostic equipment to analyze blood samples in older and sick patients.

Animals who benefit from this include in-house animals being readied for adoption, animals from other rescue organizations that need veterinary services to prepare them for adoption, and public programs that care for owned animals by providing vaccinations and spaying or neutering services. The medical department performs up to 400 surgeries and procedures each month, greatly benefiting pets and pet owners in the community. Between 4,000 and 5,000 pets receive veterinary care every year, the majority of which would not have received it without the FVHA.

Due to many factors, the cost of veterinary care has risen sharply in recent years. While many of these increases are justified, they have also created a growing gap between the number of pet owners who can afford care and those who cannot. Many of those who can afford care are scaling back on what they are willing to spend on their pets. Approximately 50% of pets in the U.S. receive no or inadequate care, and unfortunately, these numbers are rising. Sadly, this often results in pet surrender, rehoming, abandonment, and sometimes even euthanasia.

Combine this with a shortage of veterinarians, certified veterinary technicians, and support staff, and you have a perfect storm referred to as "the veterinary access to care crisis." It is an unfortunate trend that has been building for years and is not predicted to be resolved in the next decade — or beyond. This means that more pets will go without care, which is why facilities like FVHA are so vital to the communities they serve.

While some low-cost clinics in larger cities can provide a wide range of services to the public, FVHA only has the resources to provide vaccine and spay/neuter services. Even this, however, is huge when it comes to supporting local pets. The demand for care at FVHA continues to grow, with the number of animals cared for through the medical department rising by 30% in recent years.

At FVHA, surgical services are performed in what it calls a "high volume, high quality" environment. All pets undergoing surgery receive a full physical exam prior to anesthesia. The exam findings are documented and shared with the owner. Modern anesthesia techniques are used and the pets are monitored throughout the surgery and post-operative time. At the time of discharge, owners are given full instructions as to what to expect following surgery. While the pace is fast, the level of care each pet receives is exceptional.

FVHA is an important resource for the Fox Valley communities. While it cannot meet all the needs of every pet owner and pet, the impact of its work is vitally important to those it serves.





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Stress Free Holiday Decorating

By PHYLLIS COLLAR

When I was assigned an article on holiday décor, I'll admit I was a bit intimidated. I have friends who can make an item picked up off the curb look expensive, and another who puts up a tree for every holiday. I've always appreciated this sort of thing, but it has never been my strong suit. So, as we head into decorating for Thanksgiving and Christmas, I might like to try, for once, without fear. How about you? Searching for ideas, I noted a plethora of expensive items one can purchase, and time-consuming DIY projects that are more than I am willing to complete. Instead, I have gathered some understated, yet elegant decorating ideas for this holiday season that even the most unseasoned DIYer can accomplish without breaking the bank.

Real pine branches can make the house smell lovely and double as decorative trees when placed in heavy vases or mason jars. Consider arranging them on bookshelves and window ledges, and decorating them with your favorite tiny ornaments. Sprigs of berries in some water are another refined holiday display that will last for weeks.

When you hear the word "garland," what comes to mind? For me, it has always been a shaggy string of sparkling color, slightly easier to clean than tinsel. Garland made of greenery looks more rustic and can be strung through the openings of your staircase or wrapped around your framed artwork and photographs. Add some white lights for a cozy and warm feel, then hang ornaments from the garland as Christmas approaches.

Some of the things we normally purchase for the home, such as scented candles, throw pillows, or blankets, can include a few that you bring out only for the holiday season. It's a one-time investment that will pay off for holidays to come. Instead of scented candles, tie real cinnamon sticks with twine or ribbons and hang them around the house.

There were also a lot of ideas on how to adorn your holiday table. One prominent theme is laying natural items such as pumpkins, leaves, and evergreen clippings across the center of the table. Pumpkins can be painted with festive words using stencils, and wine classes can be turned upside down to double as candle holders. I liked the idea of filling the wine glasses with ornaments or pinecones as a simple way to add festive charm. Filling wide-mouthed vases with ornaments and pinecones was another variation of this idea. Add string lights and hide the battery packs behind other items and frames. A large wooden bowl of fresh fruit, like pomegranates and oranges, mimics a classic cornucopia.



I really appreciated the variety of ideas for creating your own gratitude corner, a decorative display that your guests can contribute to. Create a gratitude tree from branches and allow guests to add notes expressing what they are grateful for. Family and friends can use markers to write on leaves or even unfinished wood slices hung from twine or festive ribbons.

Decorating for the holidays may not come naturally to some of you, but I hope these ideas will encourage you to break out of your comfort zone this season. I am ready to tackle a few ideas myself.



Phyllis Collar is an Appleton lover who hails from Long Island, New York. She is a fashionista and foodie, a lover of words and music, and an absolute hopeless romantic. Phyllis is delighted to share with you all things stylish. She contributes to Appleton Monthly with her Style & Fashion article as well as monthly features.

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Animal Rescues All In The Family

By BRENDA NORDIN

What can I say? I'm a sucker for strays. My name is Brenda Nordin, and my family's stray-saving journey began in 2002 when my husband found two kittens in a hole in our yard. Those kittens soon became permanent family members, named Spooky and Lucifer. The next year, another stray kitten found his way into our yard and hearts. We named him Squirt. Our family then grew by two — humans that is — our daughter and son, Jack and Leah. After outgrowing our 800-square-foot home, we moved into a bigger home with a five-acre yard and a barn. This, of course, meant more room for strays and one more human, our daughter, Lila. From there, we adopted our first dog, Oreo, followed by Twix, Brownie, and our newest addition, Huckleberry. Spooky, Lucifer, Squirt, Twix, and Brownie have since crossed the Rainbow Bridge, and we hope to see them again someday.

With a five-acre yard and a barn, we still had plenty of room for rescues. I needed to fill the chicken coop, which came with our new house. Slowly, I adopted unwanted chickens, ducks, geese, and other fowl. In addition, through a rescue effort involving a Great Pyrenees, I unexpectedly rescued rabbits living in horrid conditions. While doing this, I quickly discovered there are not only rescues for dogs and cats, but a large rescue "world" for rabbits. Of course, when I went down to the local feed store, they had two adorable rabbits in need of rescuing — I couldn't resist. Three stray kittens, found on country roads, Leo, Stella, and Lola, also joined our family. Recently, I foster-failed a kitten, Oscar, from the Shawano Humane Society. Don't worry, all the animals live comfortably inside, while the chickens, ducks, and geese have free roam of the yard and access to a heated shed.

Of course, all responsibilities of our mini zoo are shared with my children. I want to instill in them the importance of rescue, responsibility, and treating other beings with care and compassion. I hope that they'll someday continue the tradition of rescue and spread the message of its need.

(Pictured from left to right are: Oreo and Jack, Oscar and Lila, Huck and Brenda, and Stella and Leah). Try getting four pets to sit for a photo!

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Moral Progress

By DR. JIM ZIEGLER

A famous quote by Mahatma Gandhi is "The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated."

This is a wonderful quote, but it touches on an area that is a bit of a dichotomy. Take the United States, for example. We have many laws to protect the wellbeing of our animals. Animal care through advanced veterinary care is cutting edge in our country. There are endless advocacy groups to protect almost any animal that you can think of. We have many humane societies and rescue organizations to help animals in need. As a nation, we are very concerned about the welfare of our animals. Being an animal in the U.S. is not a bad thing. At least until it is.

With the large safety net that we have for animals, how is it possible we constantly hear endless stories about animal abuse, neglect, abandonment, and more? Working in the world of animal rescue, we see daily examples



of the complete lack of compassion for animals, which certainly does not advance us on the scale to a higher level of greatness or moral progress. It can be disturbing to witness people's lack of compassion for animals and a lack of concern for their welfare. All one needs to do is to watch an ASPCA commercial with pictures of starving and neglected animals, and it will bring tears to your eyes and make you

angry at the level of animal neglect in our country.

Despite all of this, the efforts to help animals in need will never end. There are so many caring people and organizations in our world whose mission is to improve the lives of animals so that progress will be made in a positive direction. We will never reach 100%, but we will move forward. That is guaranteed.

When I left private practice to work in animal welfare, many people asked me why I made such a transition. My response was that I personally felt I could serve a higher purpose in life by serving the underserved. And you know, I have never had any regrets. Well, maybe one — that I didn't do it sooner.

Jim Ziegler DVM joined the Fox Valley Humane Association in 2021 as the Medical Director following a 34-year career in private veterinary practice.

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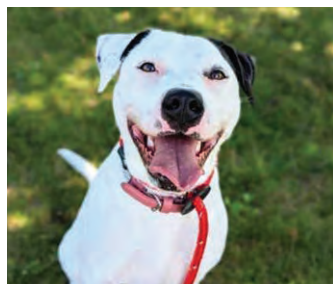
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Lucy June

Lucy June is a 4-year-old mixed breed. She is equal parts friendly and affectionate. Lucy June has proven to do well with children of all ages. She prefers human companionship and would thrive in a home without other pets.



Taco John

Taco John is a 3.5-year-old mixed breed. He is a relaxed gentleman who loves nothing more than a good nap and a snack. He has done well meeting other dogs that match his easy-going energy. He greatly enjoys meeting people and making new friends.



Coco

Coco is a strikingly handsome cat looking for someone who understands and enjoys his quirky personality. Coco loves to show affection on his terms — and he wants to often.

Bringing the *Outdoors In*

By HOLLY BOETTCHER

As the last leaves fall and a November chill settles in, I begin to miss my summer gardens — especially the feeling of soil in my hands and the sight of green plants reaching for the sun. As my garden fades into a quiet slumber, I miss that connection to nature. Over the years, I have learned that the end of the gardening season does not have to mean the end of greenery in my life. Now is the time to transform my home into a lush, living sanctuary that will carry me through the winter.

The practice of weaving natural elements into our indoor homes has a name: biophilia. Scientists have studied the powerful calming effects that plants and natural materials have on us.

Styling with Living Greenery

In my sunniest south-facing windows, I place plants that crave brightness, such as the hibiscus tree (pictured with me outside before I dug it up and brought it inside). It was on my patio this summer. (Also pictured is the escargot begonia I brought inside for winter.) Do not worry if you have low-light rooms. A “ZZ” plant with its waxy, dark green leaves is incredibly resilient and adds a touch of modern style.

A Kitchen Herb Garden

One of my greatest pleasures is having fresh herbs on hand for cooking. A simple windowsill herb garden keeps the flavors of summer alive all winter. I filled a few terracotta pots with herbs I dug up from my garden last month. The basil, mint, thyme, and rosemary are doing very well. Nothing beats snipping a few sprigs of thyme for a winter stew or some fresh mint leaves for a pot of tea on a cold winter day.

Layering an Earthy Palette

Beyond plants, I incorporate colors and textures that echo the outdoors. This helps create a grounded feeling throughout my home. Earthy tones add warmth.

I like to add some mossy greens, the rich warm red clay of terracotta, and grays. These colors serve as a calming backdrop for the vibrant greens of my plants.

Don’t forget about adding natural materials for texture. Even small details like placing a few smooth river stones in plant saucers bring a sense of the outdoors in.

A Mindful Winter Sanctuary

My indoor garden is more than just decoration; it is a source of mindfulness and a gentle focus for colder, darker months. The daily ritual of checking the soil by pushing my finger below the surface, along with watering the plants and wiping their leaves, is a therapeutic process. It forces me to slow down and pay attention to the small, beautiful details of life.

This collection of greenery, herbs, and natural textures isn’t just a substitute for my outdoor gardens; it has become its own unique space. It’s a reminder that even in the heart of winter, we can cultivate a world of life, growth, and tranquility right inside our own homes.



Try bringing the outdoors inside for the long winter ahead, and you will create your own calming space.

Holly Boettcher is a Master Gardener and an aspiring Naturalist. Her love for the outdoors and nature shines through in everything she does. Holly and her husband own Whistler's Knoll Vineyard on Highway JJ near Hortonville.

The Thing About Toys

This year's *Amazon Kids Gift Book* arrived on our porch at about 4 p.m. on Oct. 1. By 8 p.m., that pristine catalog had been ransacked by two wild-eyed little boys, dog-eared and footnoted, then double-checked for stragglers missed on the first go-round. One son had even begun the important work of signifying which items should be prioritized by Santa, who still exists in my house.

"The toys I circle twice are most important," he helpfully instructed. "Do you think Santa will understand that?" I nodded and gulped.

As with any father of modest means who steps on Legos in his leisure time, my relationship to my kids' toys is a complicated one. I sincerely enjoy spoiling them, especially at the holidays. I can also look around my home and see multiple toys that took longer to assemble than my sons have ever spent playing with them. Much like a new car depreciates the moment it leaves the lot, so too does the air go out of the balloon once a toy is opened. The fever magically breaks. It's science, probably.

Knowing this, I still fully intend to buy my sons multiple overpriced toys that, who knows, they might theoretically enjoy. Nothing is guaranteed. (I might also hedge and decide Santa really wanted the entire family to have a Switch 2.)

Okay, a *few* things are guaranteed. I can guarantee that my sons will squeal at the piles of gifts taking shape over the next eight weeks. I can guarantee that they'll be on something approaching their best behavior, so as not to run afoul of the Fat Man with the bag. And I can guarantee that they'll remember

the excitement of this whole festive ordeal, even if they don't recall a single gift received a year from now.

I guess I've decided that these are acceptable terms — that the memory of their holiday nirvana is worth the expense, basically. Because they won't



ONE MORE THING

By TYLER SJOSTROM

always be this excitable, I suppose, but also because the memory will be a warm one, even if they can't remember exactly what gift made them feel that way.

In the days since the arrival and subsequent desecration of the Kids Gift Book, my older son has been quizzing me about my holiday memories. "What was your favorite present

growing up, Dad?"

The truth is that I have no idea. I remember socks and pajamas, mostly. And I vividly recall the anticipation, which I suppose is what my parents were paying for as well.

But one gift I do remember was a watch I received from my late Grandpa Gordon when I was about 7. It featured the emblem of the Washington Huskies (note: Go Dawgs) with a spinning "W" acting as the second hand. I was so proud of that watch. I wore it for years, going through multiple batteries and replacement wristbands until I outgrew it and forgot it existed.

Then a year ago, my parents came to visit, and my dad had something he wanted to show me.

"I was going through some stuff and found your old watch. Had it fixed up, looks brand new." He was right, it did look just as I remembered it.

This Christmas, in addition to trinkets that break easily and are infuriating to assemble, I'm going to give the watch to my older son. To Ellis Gordon, also 7 years old, and named after his great-grandfather. He may not see the significance yet, but he will.

He'll remember that Mom and I were dead serious about holiday memory-making, finances be damned. He'll remember the time Dad got all emotional about a watch, of all things. He'll remember how simple it all felt.

And then he'll step on a Lego.



Tyler Sjostrom is an Appleton-based writer who will show you pictures of his kids whether you ask for them or not. Heckle him at tysjostrom@gmail.com or read more at tyler-sj.com.

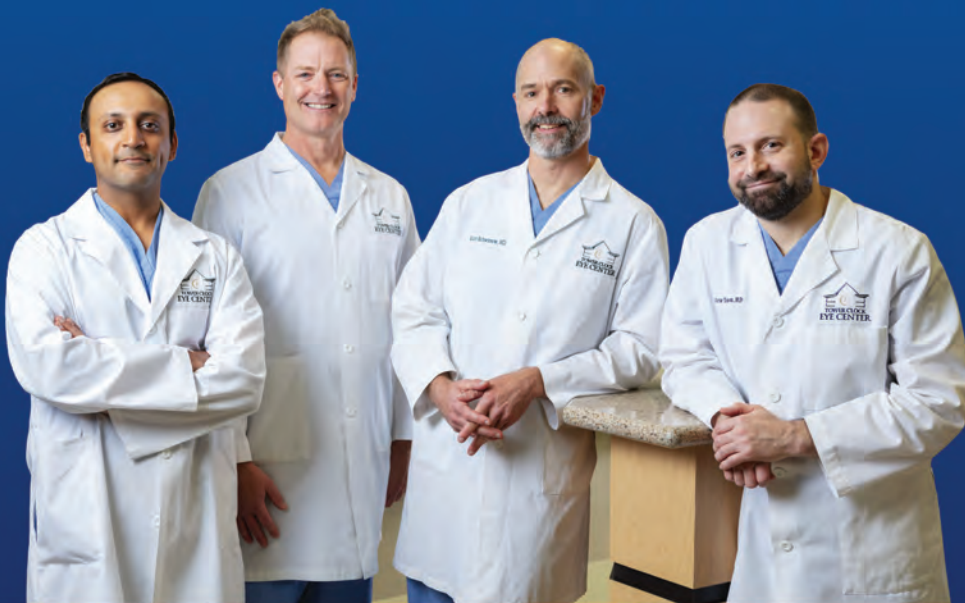
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