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For the sportsman in your life

STORY AND PHOTOS BY ANTHONY MORGANO

Finding the perfect gift for the outdoors fan can be difficult. Whether they are a hunter or a fisherman, they typically have what they need before they leave the house.

However, there is a wide array of gifts that can make their excursions a bit more enjoyable, and they might be easier to shop for than you think.

Seat warmers, hand warmers and warm clothes are always in style during the colder months, keeping your loved ones warm while they are out enjoying the great outdoors. They might as well be comfortable if they are going to be in a tree stand or on a boat all day.

Getting a gun cleaning kit is another great choice for the hunters in your life, because taking care of their rifles is key for a successful hunt.

Seat warmers can be a great addition for a hunt.

While a new gun might be on your recipients wish list, you would have to bring the person you are shopping for into the gun shop for that kind of purchase.

Along the same stream, getting a new gun case or a new tackle box could be a great choice for equipment maintenance after years in the elements.

If you have no idea what they might need, a gift card to your local sportsman shop is also a great idea, as it supports the businesses in your community while allowing your sportsman to find what they want.

AUTUMN SCHANIL | DEMOCRAT

Established in 1928, Dette Flies is the oldest family run fly fishing shop in the Catskills stocked with everything from flies to t-shirts, and is open seven days a week 9am - 5pm.

Apparel is always in style. New boots and waders for your anglers are always a great choice.

Maybe you have a young sportsman, or someone new to the area, you can gift them a guided trip, with one of the many local guides in the county. A gift like this could create memories that will last a lifetime, and it is a great way to meet other sportsmen in the area.

Fly-fishing is a staple for a lot of the local communities, and perhaps the person you are shopping for wants to learn how to tie their own flies. Local sportsman shops have the tools they would need to craft their own flies, and you can even gift them a membership to the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum, where they offer fly tying classes duirng the spring.

There is a long list of places to do your holiday shopping in the area, finding the perfect gift for sportsmen and outdoor enthusiasts in your family.

Some of the options include: Barryville Sportsman, Sportsman's Den, American Sportsman Firearms, Ken's Gun Clinic, Triple Action Sports, Tom's Bait and Tackle, Brothers in Arms, Beaverkill Angler, Baxter House Fly Fishing Outfitters, and Trout Town Flies. You can also visit Fur, Fin and Feather, Morgan Outdoors and Dette Flies.

Sullivan County is a sportsman's paradise, so although finding the perfect gift may seem daunting, there are plenty of places to help you find what you need.

Gift Guide No. 2

'Shop Local, Support Local… Let's keep Sullivan Strong'

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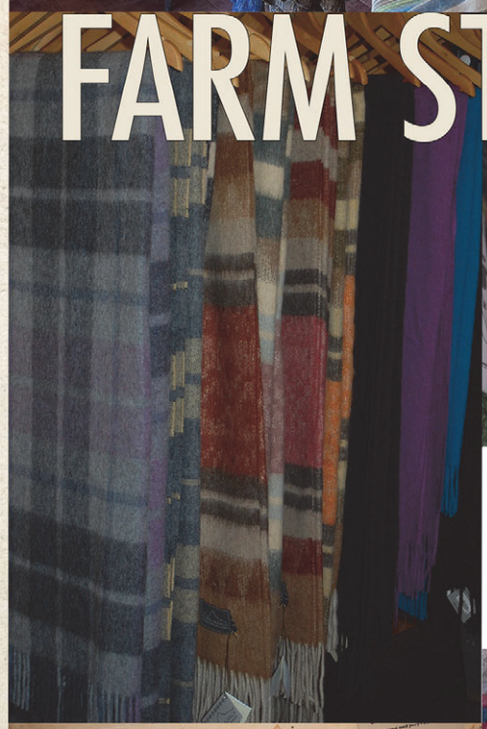

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With a focus on gifts for your pets

BY RUTH HUGGLER

One pleasing aspect of giving gifts to our pets is that they haven't been taught to expect them. Although a pile of wrapped gifts can arouse a pet's curiosity, there is no avenue to create desire for a particular product. No Saturday morning cartoon breaks or viral video streams will boost your pet's curiosity for the latest, greatest whatever.

So why give gifts to our pets? In some households, gifts to the family's dog or cat are regarded as preventive: to deter a mischievous pet from taking hold of a gift meant for a human and mangling it beyond repair. Keeping a pet busy while the rest of the family exchanges gifts seems practical. It still isn't easy to select an item that is species-appropriate, non-toxic, and that lasts as long as your pet's interest in the item. Since a choice is also affected by your budget, some pre-shopping planning is a good idea.

Animals aren't guided by advertising, but you will be. Read labels: is the manufacturer known for good-quality items? Be careful of items manufactured outside the U.S. There is no domestic oversight of pet toy manufacturing here either, but the FDA does maintain a list of recalled and withdrawn products. You may want to stick with products you have been sure about before, and check labels for a website address or manufacturer's phone number.

Clothing: For a pet whose coat is always on, clothes are not needed. Some dogs and hairless cats may welcome an extra layer, though. Taking measurements of your pet will make it easier to find a coat or harness that is fit for your pet. Fit can also affect safety: be aware of your pet's ability to move in clothing, and don't leave clothes on an unattended pet.

Furniture: There's the plush dog bed that helps save your sofa from wear and tear, the food and water bowl stand that's easier for you to fill, and stairs that help your dog to climb into the truck, saving you the heavy lifting. Cat litter boxes have reached a pinnacle in recent years where price and decor versus function are sometimes at odds. Follow your instinct: you know what your pet is likely to accept, and the cost isn't going to matter to them one bit.

Toys: If you choose catnip mice for your felines, be careful where you hide them. More than once a cat has been led by its nose to discover a fragrant stash before gifts are opened. Consider a toy's sturdiness: these items are going to be pounced upon, licked, chewed and disemboweled in range of barefoot traffic. (Move over, Lego!) At least it isn't a live mouse. For other species, the same approach applies. Look for quality and safety first, consider your budget and how long the item may last. If you have doubts about a product, check out resources like the Consumer Product Safety Commission which offers updates on recalls. (https://www.cpsc.gov/)

Finally, gifts we choose for our pets are pretty much gifts to ourselves, especially if they make our life with pets safer, easier and more fun.

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STORY AND PHOTOS BY DEREK KIRK

This holiday season, give your friends and loved ones gifts that matter from Delaware Valley Farm and Garden.

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Delaware Valley Farm and Garden has available everything you might need this season, including: Holiday themed crafts and outdoor displays, perfect for getting ready for the holidays; Space heaters and other heating applicances for those long, cold Winter nights; Boots and snow shoes for all outdoor Winter activities; and Carhartt shirts, hats, and other warm Winter clothing.

Find all this and more at the "I didn't know they had that, too" store, Delaware Valley Farm and Garden, located just off of Viaduct Road in the Hamlet of Callicoon.

They are open seven days a week with their Winter season schedule: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Sunday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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The themed tree exhibit has been going strong since 1987.

Crafty & Christmas-y

STORY AND PHOTOS
BY JOSEPH ABRAHAM

Creativity was on full display at the Sullivan County Museum and Cultural Center on Sunday. For over three decades the Sullivan County Historical Society has hosted the ever-popular annual Open House and Themed Tree exhibit.

The tradition began in 1987 as a way to bring the community together, by inviting local businesses and individuals to display decorated holiday trees in the Museum's auditorium.

Last year's lockdown kept everyone home, but organizers were happy to be back.

The event, which had live music by Little Sparrow, for the first time ever, added a Holiday Craft Fair.

The craft show featured some of Sullivan County's finest artists, including hand-painted doves by Tialisa Whipple, Jewelry by Billie Robson, and hand-carved, painted wooden flags by Matthew Lare of Patriot Art.

Along with the craft artists, two local authors were on hand selling and signing books:

Kim Simons, Sullivan County resident and award-winning author of the gluten-free cookbook "Get All Cook-Y with Kim."

Bill Fleck, who is the author of several books, including "Gimme a Show," a biography of James Pankow, trombonist and founding member of the band Chicago.

See photos for some scenes from the afternoon.

The themed tree exhibit, in addition to being a family friendly event, also provided visitors with the opportunity to look around the museum, which is a gem for

Artist Denise Cummings displayed some of her work.

those interested in local history.

The three-story former school building, owned and maintained by Sullivan County through the Department of Parks, Recreation and Beautification, is home to the Sullivan County Historical Society, the Cook Society and the Sullivan County Dramatic Workshop.

The Sullivan County Historical Society was founded in 1886 and has the primary mission of preserving and presenting the history of Sullivan County for future generations. This is accomplished by the acquisition of historical records, documents and artifacts illustrating the history of the county, with the use of temporary and permanent exhibits.

Activities of the Society include regular public meetings and discussion groups, careful preservation and maintenance of records and artifacts, scheduling of educational tours and the facilitation of archival and genealogical research.

For more information about them, visit www.scnyhistory.org.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12G

At top: Tialisa Whipple in front of doves she designs, which feature iconic Sullivan Catskills items.

Above: Buckbrook Alpacas were present at the craft fair.

FROM PAGE 11G

The event has been put on by the Sullivan County Historical Society for over three decades. Historical Society members and volunteers at last Sunday's open house are from left, Pat Burns, Judy Wolkoff, William Gronwald, Ruth Huggler, Myron Gittell, Tialisa Whipple, Aldo Troiani, Miranda Behan and Suzanne Cecil. Huggler is holding a copy of the reprinted "To The Mountains by Rail," a history of the O&W Railroad and resort industry in the Catskills by the late Manville B. Wakefield. Some of the photos used in the book came from the Sullivan County Historical Society and O&W Historical Society. Cecil will become SCHS's new president come January.

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STORY AND PHOTOS BY DEREK KIRK

This holiday season, treat yourself, friends and loved ones to a scenic excursion through the Northern Pocono Mountains aboard a modern yet traditional feeling train car on the historic Stourbridge Line.

Give the gift of warm memories and childhood nostalgia of the American locomotive on the line that generated the vibrant life of the commercial railroad in North America.

The Stourbridge Line is continuing to offer their Santa Christmas Tree Express during this holiday season on Friday, December 10 and 17 at 6 p.m., Saturday, December 11 and 18, and Sundays, December 12 and 19, at 10 a.m., 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. For both Saturday and Sunday, there is a train that departs from the Hawley station at 11:15 a.m.

Trains are also running on December 24, Christmas Eve, at 10 a.m. and noon.

When seats are available on non-sold out rides, riders have the ability to select their preferred variation of train car out of three classic options, each with their own unique style that accents the ride.

With stations located in both Honesdale and Hawley, Pennsylvania, the Stourbridge Line's railways run throughout the winter wonderland with roundtrip tickets available.

"It's a great family experience, a great way to see the Northern Poconos," Excursion Manager Tim Wright said.

The Stourbridge Line succeeds in keeping the cultural significance of the Birthplace of the American Commercial Railroad alive and well in NEPA.

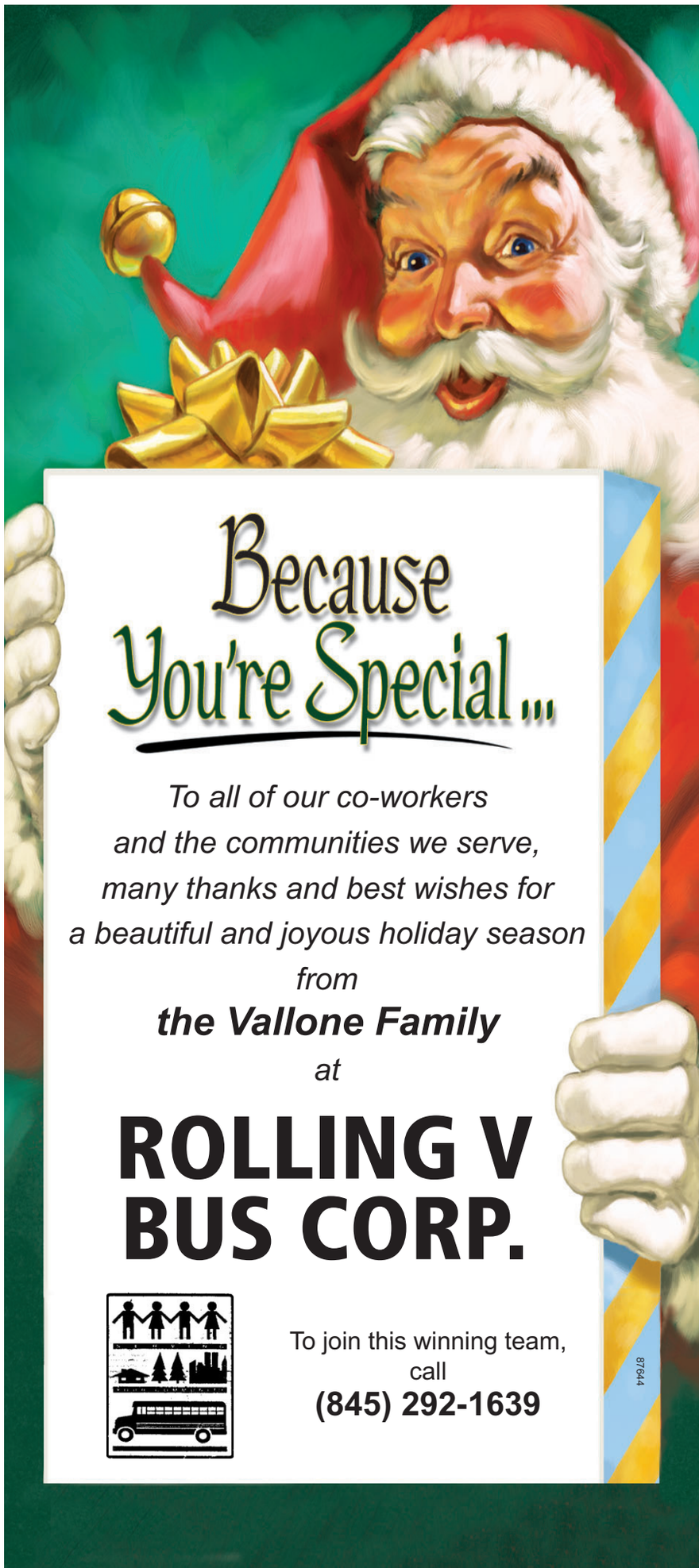
The Stourbridge Line offers gift cards and a season pass special that can be purchased at the Honesdale station or on their website, thestourbridgeline.net.

The season pass special has perks that include unlimited rides aboard scheduled "Regular Trains" for 12 months and an exclusive 20 percent discount on special event trains. These special event trains include but are not limited to Easter Bunny Trains, Pumpkin Patch Express, Ice Cream Express, and Christmas Trains.

Tickets are available for purchase online at thestourbridgeline.net, or in person at their Honesdale station located at 812 Main Street, Honesdale PA. For any questions or concerns, call the Stourbridge Line office at (570) 470-2697.

Just in front of the Honesdale station sits the boarding dock where guests can board the train.

Tickets can be purchased at the Honesdale Station, which sits just across the tracks.



The Neon Croissant

Upward Brewing Co.

The Kaatskeller

Found them in the Manor

STORY AND PHOTOS BY AUTUMN SCHANIL

The holidays are a great time to explore different areas both new and/or familiar. The hamlet of Livingston Manor, in recent years, has been bustling with activity with many interesting and one of a kind businesses to explore. Here's a look at some of the offerings in the Manor:

Van Smokey

The Neon Croissant

The Neon Croissant is fairly new in town, yet nearly sells out of their delicious namesake croissants, pastries, breads, cookies, brownies, pies, donuts, and cakes before closing time each day they're open. Do yourself a favor and get in there early to snag some goodies for the holidays: Thursday through Sunday 8am - 3pm!

The Kaatskeller

Thin-style pizza and a cocktail in a cozy bungalow lounge, party hall, or the outdoor garden. Could it get any better? Open Friday 5 - 10pm, Saturday 12pm-4pm + 5pm-9pm, Sunday 12pm-4pm + 5pm-8pm.

Main Street Farm

Main Street Farm is everything in one stop - an espresso and breakfast sandwich in the morning, a Catskill craft cider and scratch-made soup in the afternoon - and just a few steps from the cafe is their market, fully stocked with artisanal, organic, and local products to get your grocery shopping done. Open Monday through Thursday + Saturday 9am-6pm, Friday 9am-8pm and Sunday 9am-7pm.

Upstream Wine and Spirits

Upstream Wine & Spirits specializes in sustainable, organic, and biodynamic beverages - thoughtfully curated wine and spirits - that taste good. A perfect gift to bring to your holiday dinner. You can find them Wednesday + Thursday 12pm-6pm, Friday 12pm-7pm, Saturday 11am-7pm, and Sunday 12pm-5pm.

Van Smokey

At the heart of every Van Smokey product is smoke and the unmistakable flavor it adds. From the beef jerky to the bloody mary mix to their incredible hot sauces, Van Smokey isn't kidding. Every product you try is fun and exciting, hitting your taste buds with flavor and heat. So stop in and fill up your stockings - Thursday 12pm-6pm, Friday 12pm-9pm, Saturday & Sunday 11am-6pm.

Upward Brewing Co.

Upward Brewing just recently celebrated their second anniversary on the 120 acre preserve they call Beer Mountain, where they brew 'crisp, clean, highly-drinkable beers.' Check out their taproom and kitchen Tuesday through Thursday 3pm-8pm and Friday through Sunday 12pm-8pm.

The Walk In

Open Thursday through Sunday, 8am - 4pm, The Walk In sits directly across from the Neon Croissant with a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19G

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The Walk In

The Smoke Joint

Catskill Brewery

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17G

glowing sign that says 'Biscuits ya'll.' A standout on their menu, the buttermilk biscuit is crafted from a recipe passed down four generations - a must try when in the area doing some holiday shopping.

Wildlife Gift Shop

Anything from local arts and crafts to vintage collectibles to things like jams, candies and greeting cards can be found at the Wildlife Gift Shop open Monday through Saturday 10am - 5pm and Sunday 10am - 2pm.

The Smoke Joint

Although closed for the season, The Smoke Joint is a must visit of Livingston Manor with their signature BBQ platters, smoked meats, and brisket sandwiches along with their incredible side dishes like the coleslaw and collard greens. They re-open April 1st, so give someone the gift this holiday of a trip to The Smoke Joint!

Catskill Brewery

This local craft brewery not only has their one of a kind beer on tap, in bottle and can, but they've also got gift cards for the holidays and all the merch you could want - beanies, caps, tshirts, hoodies, and more. Stop by the Catskill Brewery Monday, Wednesday, or Thursday 3pm-7pm, Friday 1pm-8pm, Saturday 12pm-8pm, and Sunday 12pm-7pm.

Wildlife Gift Shop

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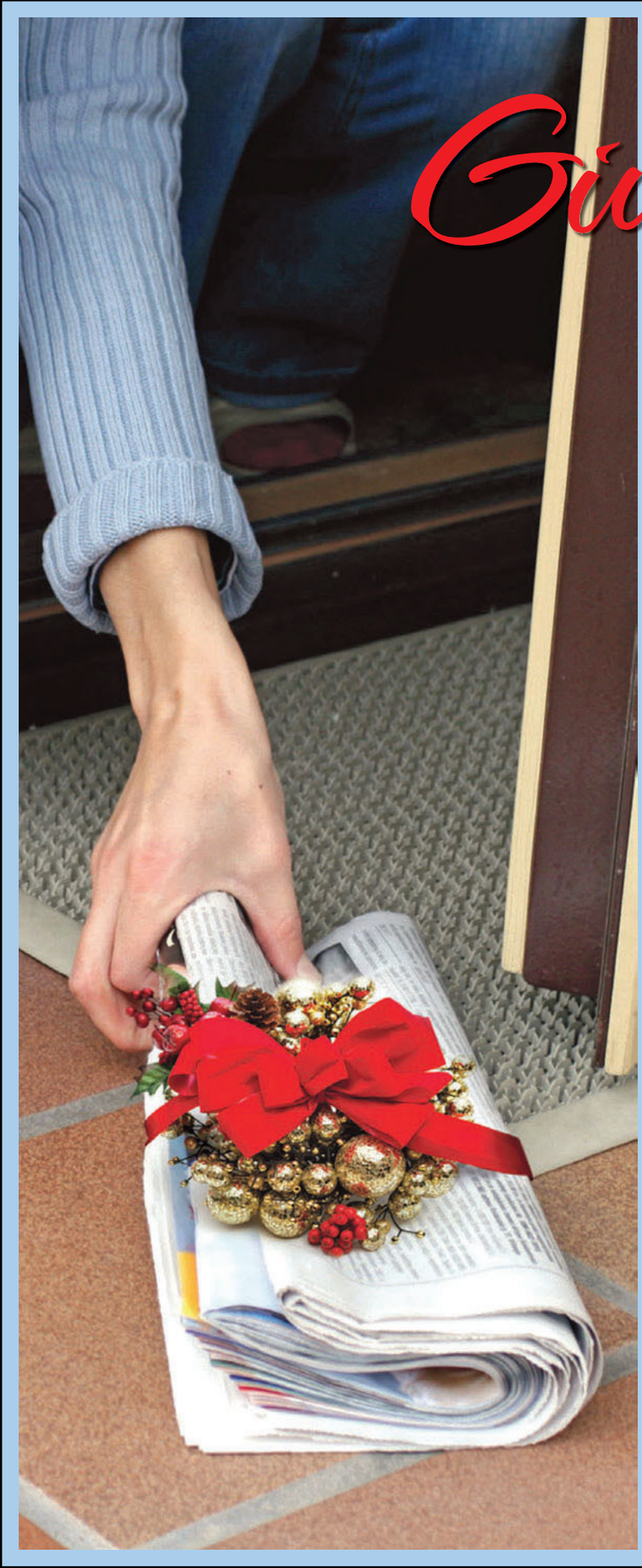

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FOOD for thought

BY JOSEPH ABRAHAM

As the adage goes, "Food is the ingredient that binds us together."

Many important memories in life are made sitting around a kitchen table or out with friends and family at a restaurant.

This is why it also makes a great gift.

If you're struggling to find the right gift for a friend or a work colleague, a gift card to a local restaurant, cidery, brewery, etc. is a win-win.

Maybe it'll provide them a good meal and a break from cooking, which can be a hassle when you're on the go. Or maybe a cocktail or two will be a nice reward after a long day at work. On the flip side, if you buy from a

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mom and pop, you're also supporting a local business, which also boosts the local economy.

Another reason why food is a great gift is that people want it.

According to a 2019 survey reported on in the New York Post, " ...the overwhelming majority of us (73 percent) would rather receive the gift of food over some type of object or thing this year."

The same article further stated that getting somebody a food gift may even score you an invitation to their home for a meal at a later date

The NY Post quoted the same survey which revealed that, " ... 53 percent of respondents say they like to enjoy the food with the person who gave it to them in the first place."

So brighten someone's holiday with the gift of food.

Also, while some of us have the means to afford gifts and a hearty meal for special occasions, there are many families struggling both locally and across the nation.

A recent United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) report says that 89.5 percent (116.7 million) of U.S. households were food secure throughout 2020.

At times during the year, these households were uncertain of having, or unable to acquire, enough food to meet the needs of all their members because they had insufficient money or other resources for food. Food-insecure households include those with low food security and very low food security.

The issue existed before a global pandemic, and has only been heightened by new challenges.

If you have the means, consider paying it forward and making a donation to an organization like the Sullivan County Federation for the Homeless, A Single Bite and the Sullivan Fresh Community Cupboard.

All three have helped to feed our neighbors. There is so much joy in helping others and giving back is what the holidays are about.

Food really does "bind us together," and everyone deserves to reap the benefits of its harvest.

Gluten Free Mint Slims

Makes 25

2 cups blanched almond flour
2 tablespoons coconut flour
1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon fine sea salt
1/4 cup maple sugar
1/4 cup light-colored raw honey
1/4 cup expeller-pressed coconut oil
2 ounces unsweetened chocolate, chopped
1/2 teaspoon pure peppermint extract

Coating

10 ounces dairy-free and soy-free semi-sweet chocolate chips
3/4 teaspoon expeller-pressed coconut oil
1/4 teaspoon pure peppermint extract

In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the beater attachment, or using a food processor, combine the almond flour, coconut flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, salt, and maple sugar and mix thoroughly on medium speed.

In a saucepan, combine the honey, coconut oil, chocolate, and peppermint extract and cook over low heat, stirring until melted. Pour the melted chocolate mixture into the dry ingredients and beat on medium speed until fully combined.

Using your hands, pack the dough firmly into two balls, then flatten each into a thick disk. Roll each disk into a 1/4-inch-thick circle on a piece of parchment paper. Stack the pieces (with parchment paper in between) on a baking sheet and refrigerate for at least 1 hour, or up to 2 days. (If chilling for more than 2 hours, cover the top piece of dough with another piece of parchment paper.)

When you're ready to bake the cookies, preheat the oven to 350 F and line two or three baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone baking mats.

Remove one of the dough pieces from the refrigerator. Use a 2-inch-round cookie cutter to cut out circles and place them on a prepared baking sheet. Repeat with the remaining dough, rerolling and cutting circles until all the dough is used.

Bake one sheet at a time for 8 minutes, rotating the sheet halfway through baking. Cool the cookies on the sheets for 5 minutes, then transfer them to a wire rack to cool completely.

To make the coating, melt the chocolate chips and oil together in a double boiler or a heatproof bowl set over a saucepan filled with about 1 inch of boiling water. Stir the mixture frequently until the chocolate melts. Stir the peppermint extract into the melted chocolate. Turn off the heat and remove the bowl from the pan.

Dip each cookie completely into the melted chocolate and use a fork to lift it out. Tap the fork gently on the side of the bowl to allow any excess chocolate to drip off. Place the dipped cookies on the prepared baking sheets, then refrigerate the cookies for 1 hour to help the chocolate set. Serve chilled.

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Swag Like Fezziwig

A seasonal Cyser punch

2 bottles (32oz) Bossfight cyser
1 bottle (12oz) ginger beer
2 cups cranberry juice
1/2 cup orange juice
1 orange and 1 apple sliced thin for garnish

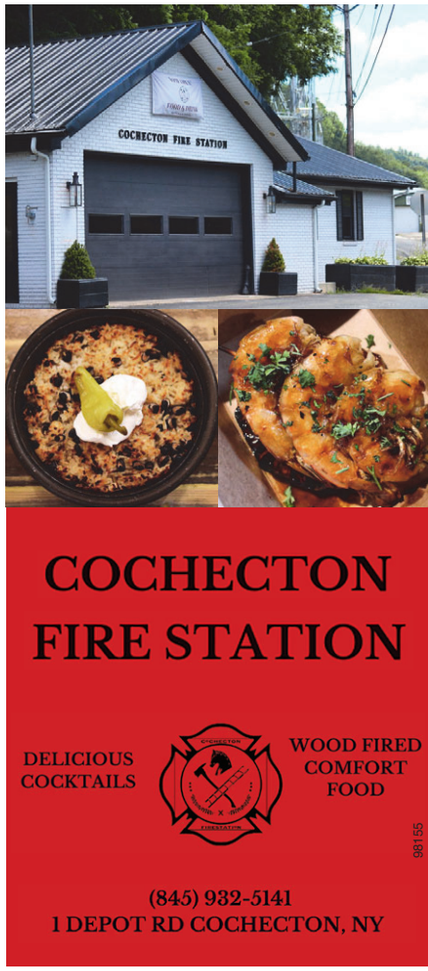
Makes 6 servings

Combine Bossfight, cranberry juice, orange juice, and garnish in a large pitcher. Stir, cover and refrigerate over night.

To serve, in highball/collins glass, add 2 ounces of ginger beer, and fill with prepared mix and garnish.

Optional: Spike this punch with 1oz of your favorite local whiskey or vodka per glass.

Recipe courtesy of Forthright Cyder & Mead Youngsville



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Where amazing gifts aren't a 'secret'

STORY AND PHOTOS
BY JOSEPH ABRAHAM

Shopping for the holidays can be stressful, especially if you have to run around to 20 different places to find the perfect gifts for the ones you love.

But one trip to the Secret Garden, located at 4917 State Route 52 in Jeffersonville will take care of most or all of your Christmas shopping list.

Peruse the spacious store and find unique gifts that your friends and family

CONTINUED ON PAGE 29G

There's no shortage of gift options. Pictured are some of the candles, holiday mugs and home decor available at the shop. Also, there are plenty of stylish bracelets and other jewelry items to choose from.

MERRY Christmas

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It's beginning to feel a lot like Christmas! Spread the holiday cheer with these delightful gingerbread houses, gnomes and themed items.

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27G

will love.

The shop offers many different stationery items, jewelry, kitchen items, puzzles, home décor, children's books, wood plaques, specialty candles, soaps and towels, and Melissa & Doug toys.

You can also spread the Christmas cheer by choosing from a number of holiday mugs, gnomes, ornaments, gingerbread houses and angels.

Secret Garden also has gift certificates available. And guess what? You can have your gifts wrapped for free!

The Secret Garden carries items of various price points, appealing to everyone by having unique, well-priced gifts for customers of all ages.

The shop maintains a relaxed, fun and friendly atmosphere where you can come in and look

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30G

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around and visit without feeling pressured to make a purchase.

Speaking of the atmosphere, the shop's design, which changes seasonally, will surely put you in the holiday spirit.

The Secret Garden is typically open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. However, from December 14-24, they'll be open everyday from 10-5 p.m. (except for Sunday, December 19 and Friday, December 24 when they'll be open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.).

For more information, call 845-482-2283 or check out Secret Garden's Facebook page.

We all need a cool mug (like these featuring animals and flowers) to enjoy our coffee, tea and hot chocolate in this time of year. Those beverages will certainly warm you up. Speaking of which, it's never a bad idea to gift a friend or loved one a hat and scarf to help them endure the elements.

Happy Holidays & Season Greetings To All!

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