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ONE FREE

# HEALTH & WELLNESS

setting  
achievable  
goals

page 6

# Garnet Health offers tips to stay healthy by being Heart Smart in 2024

Just over one year ago, Garnet Health's award-winning Peter Frommer, M.D. Heart Center announced the opening of their new open-heart surgery program, in partnership with NewYork-Presbyterian/Columbia University Irving Medical Center. It's the first program of its kind in Orange County, and the service has exceeded expectations. Garnet Health provides lifesaving complex cardiothoracic procedures locally, so Hudson Valley residents can receive expert heart-surgery care without the stress of traveling to New York City and being away from their loved ones.

As we look to a new year and approach American Heart Month in February, let's take a moment to remember the American Heart Association's Essential 8 ways we

can take care of our heart and step into a healthier lifestyle in 2024:

- **Eat better.** The American Heart Association (AHA) recommends a healthy diet that includes whole foods, fruits, vegetables, lean protein, nuts and seeds, as well as cooking with nontropical oils like olive and canola.

- **Get active.** Adults should get 150 minutes a week of moderate aerobic activity, like walking, taking a bike ride, doing water aerobics or gardening, or 75 minutes a week of vigorous activity, like running, spinning or swimming laps. Or do a combination of both!

- **Quit smoking.** The AHA offers many resources to help, starting with their Quitline: 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

- **Get healthy sleep.** Most adults need seven to nine hours of sleep each night. According to the



Keeping track of your blood pressure is important to good health.

AHA, adequate sleep promotes healing, improves brain function and reduces the risk for chronic diseases. Garnet Health offers sleep studies to help diagnose

and treat a wide variety of sleep disorders.

- **Manage your weight.** Understanding your BMI, journaling your food intake and

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A healthy diet - including fruits and vegetables - is important to good nutrition.

Learning portion control are just a few tips. If you require more specialized help, the bariatric specialists at Garnet Health can discuss weight loss options with

you.  
 • Manage your blood sugar. Knowing and understanding your blood sugar levels is important to maintaining good health and

preventing the risk of diabetes, which can lead to heart disease or stroke. Garnet Health's free diabetes prevention program, for qualified participants, can help evaluate your risk. They also offer a diabetes treatment center for those who require diabetes care.

- Manage your blood pressure. Keeping your blood pressure at a normal range can keep you healthier longer!
- Control your cholesterol. High levels of "bad" cholesterol can lead to an increased risk of heart disease.

Garnet Health offers the Know Your Numbers Program, a free mobile screening service that determines your risk of heart disease or stroke. If you're interested in learning more, call 845-333-2632.

Unfortunately, heart disease is still a leading cause of death in both Orange and Sullivan counties. Knowing this, we should all understand how to identify a cardiac arrest and a heart attack, which—despite the terms being

used interchangeably—are not the same thing.

**Cardiac Arrest**

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a cardiac arrest occurs when the heart suddenly and unexpectedly stops beating. This malfunction causes the blood to stop flowing to the rest of the body. Signs of cardiac arrest include:

- Collapsing suddenly and passing out
- Not breathing; gasping for air
- Not responding to shouting or shaking
- Not having a pulse

Cardiac arrest is a leading cause of death, and fast action can save lives. Call 9-1-1 immediately and start CPR right away.

**Heart Attack**

A heart attack occurs when blood flow to the heart is blocked. The more time that passes without treatment, the more damage to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4H

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METRO CREATIVE SERVICES PHOTOS

Being able to keep track of your heart rate offers a great advantage.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3H

the heart. The signs and symptoms of a heart attack can differ for men and women, but the CDC describes these as major symptoms:

- Chest pain or discomfort. Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center or left side of the chest that lasts for more than a few minutes or that goes away and comes back. The discomfort can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness, or pain.
- Feeling weak or lightheaded, or fainting. You may also break out into a cold sweat.
- Pain or discomfort in the jaw, neck or back.
- Pain or discomfort in one or both arms or shoulders.
- Shortness of breath.

Tiredness, nausea, and vomiting can also occur, although these symptoms are more common in women.

In some cases, a heart attack can lead to a cardiac arrest. If you experience any of these symptoms yourself or notice them in a loved one, call 9-1-1 immediately.

Despite our best efforts, some things like our genetics, age and ethnicity increase the risk of heart disease. In an

effort to further improve and expand our care for patients with advanced cardiovascular disease, Garnet Health recently cut the ribbon on a new hybrid surgical suite located at Garnet Health Medical Center in Middletown. They now have two state-of-the-art cardiac OR suites. Combined with the expert surgeons from Columbia University Irving Medical Center, Garnet Health now offers the most advanced technology and expertise to perform even more lifesaving open-heart surgeries as well as critical non-invasive cardiac procedures.

Should you need to see a specialist about a heart condition, Garnet Health offers Sullivan County residents the very best in heart care. Throughout our health system, we have comprehensive heart care services—from diagnosis to treatment and rehabilitation—and we're proud to be a cardiovascular health leader in the region.

For more information on Garnet Health's cardiac services, visit [garnethealth.org/heartcare](http://garnethealth.org/heartcare) or call (845) 333-8909 to make an appointment with a cardiologist. To schedule a visit with a primary care provider, call (845) 333-6500.



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# Setting effective and obtainable goals for 2024

BY DEBORAH WORDEN,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
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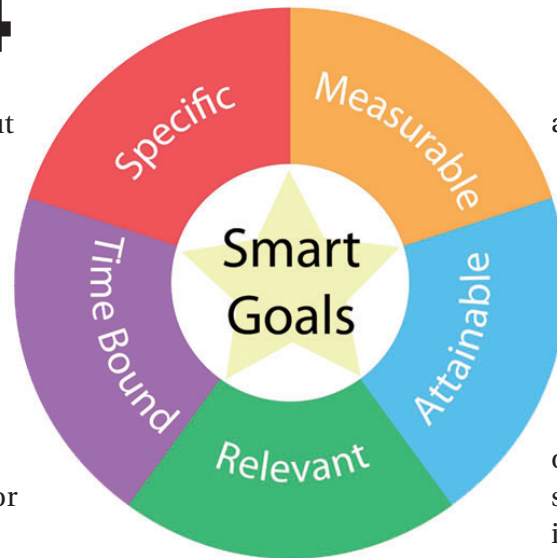
**W**hen we think about healthy habits, especially during January, we often defer to an infamous New Year's resolution. How many of us have made a resolution to go to the gym or promise ourselves that we will exercise every single day? Perhaps your resolution was to go on a diet or to quit smoking or to take up a new hobby.

No matter the resolution, of those of us who make them, which is actually over one-third of our population, we start off with the best of intentions. We promise ourselves, sometimes including our friends and loved ones, that we are going to be make these various positive changes in our lives.

In the latest survey in Forbes Health, almost half of the respondents say improving fitness is a top priority, and over a third cited improving mental health, making them the top resolutions.

Considering the fact that research from Ohio State University suggests "... only nine percent of Americans that make resolutions complete them," the odds are not really in our favor. OSU's results continued: "research goes on to show that 23 percent of people quit their resolution by the end of the first week, and 43 percent quit by the end of January."

These are definitely sad statistics. There is hope, however, and there are many ways to better your chances of being successful:



- **Set your goals:** With any task, there needs to be an objective to know if we are being effective. The number one rule of making a goal is that it needs to be realistic. Even the smallest change can impact your health. It could be something like "My goal is to walk a few minutes after a meal," or "to make a doctor's appointment for my annual checkup," or "to get caught up on my vaccines." Any goal pertaining to improving your health is prized, no matter how small.

- **Make yourself accountable.** Studies have shown that people can increase the likelihood of achieving their goal by 42 percent simply by writing it down. When you write them down you can ask yourself: Are you really able to go to the gym every day? Are you able to sustain a strict diet for months on end? Are your goals realistic and obtainable?

- **Goals for Mental Health:** Social engagement is one of the top factors related to our mental health. Consider joining a group, club or civic organization. Local libraries have

amazing events and programs that are extremely valuable and absolutely free.

- **Volunteer:** One great way to keep yourself fit and socially engaged is to volunteer. Anyone, regardless of their abilities and/or disabilities, can be involved with a community organization. Studies show significant health benefits for individuals who volunteer.

A good friend, local community organizer, Liberty resident and hyper-involved activist, Dorothy Shapiro once said to me, when I was lamenting about a project, "Yard by yard – life is hard. But inch by inch – life's a cinch."

Dorothy taught me that it's okay to look at something and take on the small tasks first. Then things don't seem so overwhelming and nearly impossible to accomplish.

Just making small changes adds up to better health.



# Educating children about firearms safety CAN make a difference!

Firearms are a reality in our lives, and the possibility of our children encountering one can be a frightening thought.

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# Volunteer with us!

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# Food Bank initiates push for a new Distribution Center

The Food Bank of the Hudson Valley, a distribution location of the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York, has launched a capital campaign to construct a new 40,000-square-foot distribution center in the Village of Montgomery. The campaign aims to raise funds and support from the community to build a state-of-the-art facility that will significantly expand the organization's capacity to combat food insecurity and alleviate hunger. The Food Bank of the Hudson Valley serves six Hudson Valley counties including Orange, Ulster, Dutchess, Rockland, Sullivan, and Putnam.

The food bank's current distribution facility is located in Cornwall-on-Hudson and

has been operating since 1996. With the growing demand and the changing landscape of food insecurity, the need for a larger, more modern facility has become essential to meet the escalated challenges faced by the community. In collaboration with the Town of Montgomery, the project has been awarded a \$10.7 million Community Development Block Grant. The new 40,000-square-foot building will provide increased capacity to obtain, sort, store, and distribute food donations in the region.

The capital campaign, named "Growing to Feed Our Community," seeks to raise \$6.5 million over the next several months. These funds will be utilized to construct a state-of-the-art distribution center that

CONTRIBUTED IMAGE

Architectural rendering of the new Food Bank of the Hudson Valley Distribution Center.



*The campaign, seeks to raise \$6.5 million over the next several months.*

will revolutionize the way the food bank addresses hunger.

The food bank is seeking support from individuals, businesses, and philanthropic organizations who share the same passion for making a difference in our community. Every contribution, big or small, will have a significant impact on the lives of our neighbors in need. John Rath, EVP & Chief Lending Officer at Lakeland Bank and a long-time supporter and advisory board member of the food bank is chairing the capital campaign committee. Rath is joined by other business and community leaders with deep ties throughout the Hudson Valley.

"I have been proud of my long association with and support for the Food Bank of the Hudson Valley to help alleviate hunger in our communities," said Rath. "We have thousands of children, seniors, and people in need of healthy and nourishing food in the Hudson Valley and this new facility is greatly needed to meet the demand. Over 150,000 people

are served by the Food Bank in the Hudson Valley each month and this facility will allow them to source more local food, including food from farmers and local retail stores, and build even better partnerships with local agencies and programs to distribute that food to people in need."

Regional Food Bank CEO Tom Nardacci expressed his enthusiasm for the campaign and talked about the reason why this new distribution facility is needed, stating, "The Regional Food Bank distributes 20 million pounds annually in these six Hudson Valley counties and there is a strong need for more. Unfortunately, our current facility simply cannot satisfy this demand and we actually distribute 12 of the 20 million pounds from our main facility in Albany County." He continued, "Right now, we need to do more as a society to alleviate hunger. The Regional Food Bank is committed to addressing the meal gap that exists in all 23 counties in our service area, and to distribute food equitably."

To make a donation or learn more about the campaign, interested parties can contact the Food Bank of the Hudson Valley at [capitalcampaign@regionalfoodbank.net](mailto:capitalcampaign@regionalfoodbank.net).

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# How to tell if it's a cold, the flu, COVID-19 or RSV

There's much to look forward to at the start of winter. The holiday season starts winter off with a bang, while outdoor enthusiasts know their chances to hit the slopes and ski and snowboard are just beginning. Sports fans know January marks the return of the National Football League playoffs, while travelers who need a little winter warmth often designate February as a month to soak up some sun in a faraway locale.

With so much to do each winter, it's especially problematic when you come down with a cold. However, winter tends to be cold and flu season in many areas, as viruses tend to spread more easily when people spend more time indoors. This winter, people may wonder

if their sniffles indicate they have a cold, the flu or a sign of something more serious, such as COVID-19 or respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). Anyone unsure of what's behind a cold-like illness is urged to speak with their physician. In addition, the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases notes that the common cold, the flu, COVID-19, and RSV present some similar symptoms, but also some unique ones. Though each illness is complex, the frequency with which some symptoms present may indicate which issue a person is dealing with. Knowledge of those symptoms and their frequency can help people determine if the culprit behind their winter illness is a cold, the flu, COVID-19, or RSV.

## Cold

- Aches: Sometimes
- Difficulty breathing: Rarely
- Fatigue: Sometimes
- Fever: Rarely
- Loss of taste or smell: Rarely
- Sore throat: Often
- Wheezing: Rarely

## Flu

- Aches: Often
- Difficulty breathing: Rarely
- Fatigue: Often
- Fever: Often
- Loss of taste or smell: Rarely
- Sore throat: Sometimes
- Wheezing: Rarely

## COVID-19

- Aches: Sometimes
- Difficulty breathing: Often
- Fatigue: Often
- Fever: Sometimes
- Loss of taste or smell:

## Sometimes

- Sore throat: Often
- Wheezing: Rarely

## RSV

- Aches: Rarely
- Difficulty breathing: Sometimes
- Fatigue: Rarely
- Fever: Sometimes
- Loss of taste or smell: Rarely
- Sore throat: Rarely
- Wheezing: Often

Individuals who are concerned by the presence of cold- or flu-like symptoms are urged to speak with their physicians. Though many instances of cold, flu, COVID-19, and RSV will go away without medical intervention, each condition can pose a significant health risk in certain situations.



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The great outdoors beckons millions of people each spring, summer and fall, but far fewer individuals spend as much time outside in winter. However, spending time outdoors can help to improve mood just as much when the mercury drops as it can when temperatures are warm. The United Kingdom-based Mental Health Foundation reports that nature helps to generate positive emotions such as calmness, joy and creativity. The MHF also notes that connectedness with nature has been linked to lower levels of poor mental health, particularly depression and anxiety.



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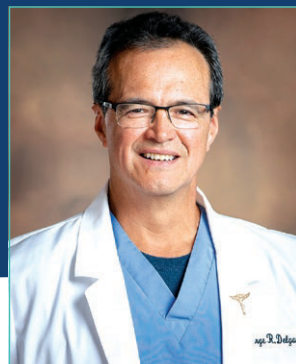
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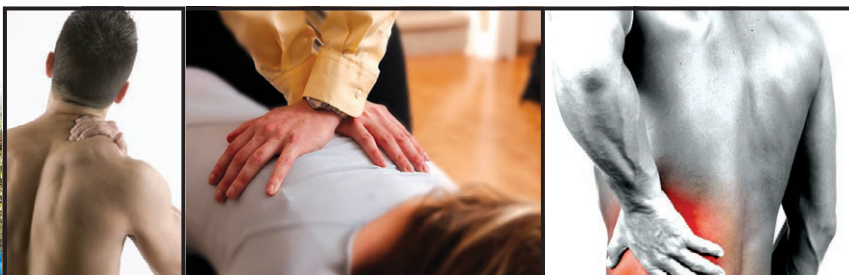
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# Does tea have medicinal properties?

The common cold can strike at any time of year, but most people likely associate colds with winter. Colds tend to spread more easily in winter, when people typically spend more time indoors with windows closed, thus making it easier for colds and other viruses to spread.

Many people have their own remedies when it comes to treating colds, and those strategies may include a daily glass of tea. Tea has been a beloved beverage for quite some time. According to the UK Tea & Infusions Association, tea can be traced all the way back to 2737 B.C. in China. As the legend has it, Chinese Emperor Shen Nung was sitting beneath a tree when some leaves blew into some boiled drinking water his servant had been preparing for him. The emperor tried the concoction and the rest is history.

Since tea was first (accidentally) consumed, it has become an integral part of many peo-

ple's daily lives. That's even more so when people feel a little under the weather, which might



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leaves or leaf buds of tea plants. Herbal teas are in fact made from tisanes, which are blends or infusions of dried fruits, flowers, spices, or herbs. Harvard Medical School advises speaking with a physician prior to drinking herbal teas, as they can cause problems among individuals with certain medical conditions. If a doctor gives the green light for herbal teas, people may be happy to learn that they've been linked to a host of health benefits, including improved sleep, reduced stress and lower blood pressure, among others.

## Green tea

Penn Medicine notes that green tea is high in flavonoids, which are a type of metabolite found in plants. Flavonoids have been linked to improved heart health because they can help to lower levels of bad cholesterol and reduce blood clotting. In addition, a 2014 study published in the European Journal of Nutrition concluded that green tea and its catechins can help to improve blood pressure.

## Should certain teas be avoided?

Though white tea, herbal tea, green tea, and other forms of the popular beverage have been linked to various health benefits, Penn Medicine notes other types of tea are best avoided. For example, detox teas, which Penn Medicine notes are often laced with laxatives, can be harmful to overall health. Bubble teas also tend to be high in sugar and calories. In general, it's best to discuss tea with a physician before making it a part of your daily routine.

Tea can provide a host of health benefits, and individuals are urged to discuss those properties with a physician as they look to turn over a healthier leaf.

prompt some to wonder if tea actually boasts any medicinal properties or if it's all just legend. According to Penn Medicine, various types of tea do, in fact, provide some notable health benefits.

## White tea

A comparative study published in the Journal of Food Science in 2010 found that white tea might be the most effective cancer-fighting tea thanks to its robust antioxidant content. Penn Medicine also notes white tea is a source of fluoride, catechins and tannins, which means it could help to strengthen teeth and fight plaque.

## Herbal tea

Harvard Medical School notes the curious distinction that herbal teas are not technically tea, as they typically lack the

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## NEWS NOTES IN HEALTHCARE

# Urogynecologist Barbara Plucknett, MD joins Wayne Memorial

Lackawanna-county based physician Barbara Plucknett, MD, FACOG officially became part of the Wayne Memorial Hospital family of physician specialists at the end of 2023. Dr. Plucknett, who specializes in urogynecology, will continue to practice in her South Abington office with future plans to also see patients in the Honesdale, Wayne County area.

Dr. Plucknett has been practicing medicine for more than 30 years. After completing her undergraduate studies at Temple University in Philadelphia, Dr. Plucknett received her Doctor in Medicine degree in 1991 from the Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine. A residency in Obstetrics/Gynecology at the Medical Center of Delaware was followed by fellowships in Urogynecology and Female Pelvic Medicine at the Greater Baltimore Medical Center and the University

of Maryland Medical System.

Dr. Plucknett is board certified in Ob/Gyn and is a member of the American Urogynecologic Society. Urogynecology deals with the diagnosis and management of disorders of the muscular pelvic floor in women. Dr. Plucknett has extensive training in surgical and nonsurgical management of conditions such as bladder and prolapse related symptoms. In addition, she has many years of experience in hormonal therapy, helping individuals find relief from imbalances related to menopause, adrenal fatigue and thyroid disorders. Dr. Plucknett is an active member of BodyLogic MD, a network of physicians who specialize in Natural Bioidentical Hormone Therapy. She is also a member of the American Academy for Anti-Aging Medicine.

"I am committed to helping women heal and maintain healthy bodies throughout every stage of



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Barbara Plucknett

their life," says Dr. Plucknett, "and my new partnership with Wayne Memorial will help me reach even more women."

Dr. Plucknett's staff includes two certified registered nurse practitioners, Amanda Kubilus and Ashley Ruane.

"We are more than pleased that

Dr. Plucknett, Amanda and Ashley are joining our medical staff," said Wayne Memorial CEO James Pettinato, BSN, MHSA, CCRN-K. Noting that Dr. Plucknett has a "huge following" in both Wayne and Lackawanna counties, Pettinato added, "Wayne Memorial has every intention of respecting the wishes of Dr. Plucknett's patients. We will help her maintain her office in South Abington Township, so her existing Lackawanna patients can continue to see her there. Her Wayne area patients will have an option for visits here at the hospital in the near future."

Dr. Plucknett sees female patients, age 14 and older. Pettinato said she will soon be able to perform some procedures at Wayne Memorial, including robotic surgery which she anticipates will be launched at the hospital in spring, 2024.

To make an appointment with Dr. Plucknett, her office number remains the same: 570-344-9997.

## 2024 Catholic Charities Caritas honorees announced

Catholic Charities of Orange, Sullivan & Ulster is excited to announce the names of the 2024 Caritas Award honorees. The awards will be presented at the 18th annual Catholic Charities Celebration of Charity dinner on Thursday, March 21, 2024, at The Kartrite Resort in Monticello.

The 2024 Caritas Award honorees are:

- Fr. Bob Porpora, of St. Peter's Parish, Monticello
- ShopRite Supermarkets
- Ulster Savings Bank
- Chief William Worden, Port Jervis Police Department
- Sacred Heart Parish, Highland Falls

The Caritas Awards are presented by Catholic Charities of Orange, Sullivan & Ulster each year to people and organizations who exemplify the agency's mission to provide help and create hope.

"Outstanding community

partners, like this year's honorees, are essential to the success of the programs and services we provide. By sharing in the commitment to our mission to provide help and create hope and embodying the spirit of Caritas, we are working together to create brighter futures for the most marginalized and vulnerable members of our community," said Shannon Kelly, CEO, Catholic Charities of Orange, Sullivan & Ulster.

Each day, Catholic Charities touches the lives of those in need of care, hope and help. Programs include prevention and education to prevent youth substance use, as well as treatment and recovery support for those struggling with the disease of addiction. Emergency food and shelter assistance and other social safety-net supports help individuals and families with basic necessities of life. Christmas Giving Programs

make the holiday happier for hundreds of children. Counseling and bereavement support groups help those who have lost loved ones or are coping with other life challenges. Each year, Catholic Charities assists thousands of individuals and families, regardless of religion or ability to pay. Detailed program information is available at [www.cccsos.org](http://www.cccsos.org).

"We are grateful for the generosity and spirit of collaboration exhibited by our 2024 Caritas honorees," said Ms. Kelly. "We look forward to returning to The Kartrite Resort this spring to celebrate their many contributions to the well-being of the people who live in the communities we serve. It's my pleasure to invite friends, colleagues and supporters of both Catholic Charities and our honorees to join us in congratulating these deserving

award recipients."

The 18th annual Celebration of Charity and Caritas Awards Dinner will be held Thursday, March 21, 2024, at The Kartrite Resort in Monticello (located at 555 Resorts World Drive). The event starts at 5:30 p.m. with a social hour and silent auction, followed by a sit-down dinner and awards ceremony. Tickets are \$175 per person, or \$1,650 for a table of 10.

A variety of sponsorship and journal ad opportunities are available to recognize the 2024 Caritas Award honorees and support Catholic Charities. The funds raised from this event stay local to support Catholic Charities' programs in the community. For more information, to join the event as a sponsor or advertiser, or to purchase tickets, contact Kristin Jensen, at 845-294-5124 x1005 or [kristin.jensen@cccsos.org](mailto:kristin.jensen@cccsos.org).

NEWS  NOTES IN HEALTHCARE

# Chuck Petersheim provides a celebration of giving

Nine area nonprofits each received an early Christmas present this year in the form of a generous grant from the Petersheim Fund, a donor-advised fund established in 2019 at the Greater Pike Community Foundation.

Chuck Petersheim, a Pike County resident, set up the fund with a goal, "...to make the annual round of giving more like a celebration of well deserving entities and not an exercise of check writing" and no one can argue he hasn't met that goal with great success.

Petersheim, whose company, Catskill Farms, designs and builds homes in the Catskills, has supported food pantries, emergency services, animal rescue, health services, educational and environmental causes and more.

"We're proud to support these hard-working institutions.... and give back to the community," Petersheim said. He underscored



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Nonprofit representatives gather with Greater Pike Board Chair Gail Shuttleworth (second from left) and Chuck Petersheim (center, second row).

the importance of a commitment to generosity and gave a nod to Greater Pike for helping to develop a community of givers.

The generosity hasn't gone unrecognized.

Pike County Emergency Management Director Tim Knapp said, "The grant allows us to take somebody who otherwise couldn't afford to become an emergency medical technician and help them."

But that's not all, Knapp pointed out. "There will be stable jobs in the community and our children can work here."

Other grantees from the Petersheim Fund include the Milford Enhancement Committee Endowment Fund; Delaware Valley Educational Foundation; Farm Arts Collective; A Single Bite Food Pantry; Ecumenical Food Pantry; Tamerlaine Sanctuary & Preserve;

Bashakill Area Association; and GAIT Therapeutic Riding Center.

Charitable grants from donor-advised funds are made to a variety of nonprofit organizations, which can change each year. Donors specify the types of programs or charities they wish their funds to support and may be eligible for a tax deduction for the initial donation, which could be in the form of various assets including but not limited to bonds, securities and mutual fund shares.

Online donations to the Petersheim Fund can be made at [https://greaterpike.org/fund\\_list/](https://greaterpike.org/fund_list/). Scroll down to the fund name for the link.

Greater Pike helps individuals, families, and local businesses to provide a permanent and personal way to give back to the community. For more information visit [www.greaterpike.org](http://www.greaterpike.org), [Facebook.com/GreaterPike](https://www.facebook.com/GreaterPike) and [Instagram.com/GreaterPikeCF](https://www.instagram.com/GreaterPikeCF).

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