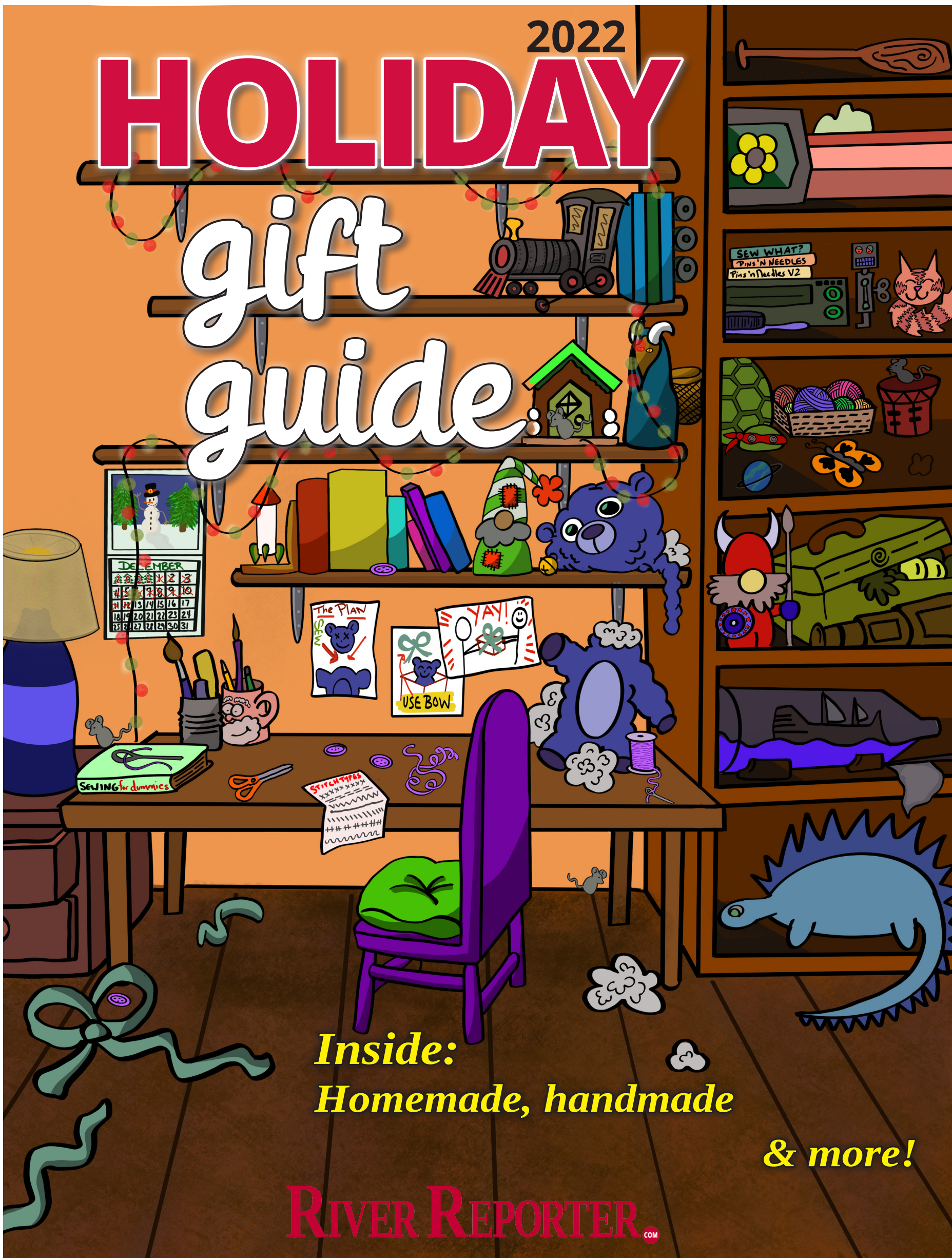


2022

# HOLIDAY

# gift guide



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# Editor's letter:

## Welcome back

Dear Readers,  
It's the holiday season! Shops are open, the streets are packed, and there are events aplenty for all to enjoy.

We can reconnect.  
Families are gathering. Places of worship are welcoming their people home.

Calling myself the editor of the Holiday Gift Guide this year implies that I had a lot to do with it. No. The pages before you are—more than usual—a production of the staff and writers at the River Reporter.

Many thanks to Amanda Reed for her brilliant work, performed under pressure, creating a clever cover and excellent, eye-catching layout. Thanks as well to staff member Leanna Ballester, whose terrific ideas got the magazine moving. To the sales staff, who worked hard to make it happen at all.

And then, of course, the writers. Mark McLaren highlights the importance of shopping local—you're helping your neighbor's business, you're keeping money in the community—and he provides a list of

holiday-gift destinations. New writer Emily Herrick reminds us that if finances are a challenge, you can give in other ways and make the recipients just as happy. Tina Spangler offers her favorite holiday films to brighten your season.

And then we have local makers. Jacqueline Herman talked to artist Ellany Gable about the potter's work and showcases her beautiful art, available right here. New writer Meredith Moyer talked to a different sort of artist, Sharon Daniel of Forkin' Good Nuts, about her products, which are made lovingly by hand right here in the Upper Delaware.

Laurie Stuart added her story about coming back after a tragedy, and how she recovered recipes that were lost. Hunter Hill, of The Way Out Here fame, lets us into his family's holidays. They may not be Norman Rockwell-esque, but they are about what truly matters: love, family and joy.

May your holidays be full of joy as well.

Annemarie Schuetz  
Section editor

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Cover illustration by Amanda Reed

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Mailing Address:  
PO Box 150, Narrowsburg, NY 12764  
Phone: 845/252-7414 • Fax: 845/252-3298

Have a comment or idea for the magazine?  
Contact: Annemarie Schuetz at 845/252-7414, ext. 129 or [copyeditor@riverreporter.com](mailto:copyeditor@riverreporter.com)

Publisher: Rev. Laurie Stuart  
Section Editor: Annemarie Schuetz  
Production Manager: Amanda Reed

Ad Sales Associates:  
Barbara Winfield, ext. 121, [barbara@riverreporter.com](mailto:barbara@riverreporter.com)  
Leanna Ballester, [leanna@riverreporter.com](mailto:leanna@riverreporter.com)

Sales Administrative Assistant:  
Kathlyn Leggio ext. 134: [sales@riverreporter.com](mailto:sales@riverreporter.com)

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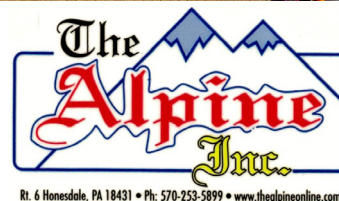
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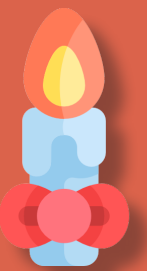
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# More meaning, *less stuff*

*A conscious  
consumer's guide  
to giving gifts  
that keep giving*



**OPEN  
ME**

By EMILY HERRICK

In the age of digital wishlists, global shipping and everything on-demand, has your holiday gift-giving become more transactional than meaningful?

Perhaps the kids (or adults) in your life already have rooms overflowing with everything they could possibly need.

America is no stranger to the desire for stuff. In 2021, in the month of November alone, U.S. consumers spent \$109.8 billion online, up 11.9 percent compared to 2020. And I get it—what is better than opening up a gift and seeing the flashiest new gadget?

**Have you been **Naughty or Nice?****  
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**STUFF** - Page 5

But from my vantage point, it will be weeks, if not days, before this once-most-desired item ends up tucked in the closet or gathering dust in a basement.

To combat our increasing mountains of stuff, in the last few years, I have tried to think about gift-giving more broadly than the giving of “stuff.” In doing so, I have found that as you move away from thinking about gifts in terms of things, you move toward giving thoughtful and “creatively-you” presents—conveying more meaning than just picking something off someone’s Amazon wishlist.

Giving experiences doesn’t have to be expensive or time-consuming, all it takes is a little intentionality and a bit of bravery to think outside the box. Last year, for example, I sent my niece and nephew all around our house searching for clues that led them to (a mostly secondhand) box of holiday “treasure” that they talked about for weeks.

Creating and giving experiences are two great ways to re-infuse meaning into your gift-giving.

**Create an experience**

For little ones in particular, you can extend the shelf life of any gift by giving an activity.

**Holiday game day:** Instead of presents as the main event this year, try planning a way to get your loved ones laughing together, perhaps with a competitive edge.

Split into teams (or compete individually) in a holiday Olympics with games like paper airplane-throwing contest, indoor bowling and a living room pillowcase race. Or thrift a collection of vintage costumes, stage props and decorations to host a holiday karaoke night.

**How to give it:** The best part of gift-giving is the big reveal, so think through how you want to welcome your group to whatever shared event your preparing. For example, keep your plans a surprise until your guests arrive, and share an official invitation or present the first clue, tucked into an envelope, when you are all together.

**Craft kit:** Create a “kit of parts” for a craft project, and spend some time creating together. For example, build a holiday nature-walk kit by including a few toilet paper tubes—for a set of binoculars, of course—and an assortment of small cardboard boxes to construct nature-display case for treasures found along the way.

For something more indoors, repurpose an old egg carton, a few worn holiday socks and some decorations to create a cast of holiday puppets and put on a show for any unsuspecting guests!

**How to give it:** A craft kit is a great surprise for the end of a scavenger hunt, but it’s easy enough to wrap the supplies in a decorative gift box to make it feel special. Make sure you provide a picture or example of what the kit will make as inspiration.

**Gift an experience**

**Embrace the gift certificate:** Buying a gift certificate for a local experience is a great gesture, but planning meaningful time to explore the local area together as part of your gift will brighten the dark days of winter with conversation and shared experiences.

**How to give it:** Purchase any needed admission tickets in advance, if possible, and tuck them in an envelope with a little note. If you’re clever, this can be a riddle, but a few simple words telling them why you want to take them out, when it is happening, and anything they should know, will do just fine.

Looking for some ideas to start with? Here’s a list of some local experiences that might do the trick:

**Stourbridge Line**

Take your loved one on a half-day tour of the Pocono Mountains with an old-fashioned train ride. Winter-themed tours, wine nights and kid-friendly fun can be booked at [thestourbridgeline.net](http://thestourbridgeline.net). Find the train at 812 Main St., Honesdale, PA.

**Grey Towers National Historic Site**

Book a tour of the ancestral home and gardens of Gifford Pinchot, first director of the United States Forest Service, for your favorite nature-lover. Weekend tours and seasonal events are offered via their website, and those events include a reading of “A Christmas Carol” Friday, December 2 to Sunday, December 4.

Find Grey Towers at 122 Old Owego Tpk. in Milford, PA. Visit [greytowers.org](http://greytowers.org).

**Apple Day Spa**

Book a sinus-relief facial massage or a luxury lie-down pedicure for a little winter relief for your collective faces and toes.

The spa is located at 152 Grandview Ave in Honesdale, or visit [appledayspa.com](http://appledayspa.com).

**Utopia Day Spa**

Indulge together in some Reiki energy healing or in a hot stone massage to warm inside and out. The spa is located at 2557 Rte. 6 in Hawley, PA. Learn more at [utopiaahawley.com](http://utopiaahawley.com).

**Chi Hive**

Plan a full day of wellness by starting with a morning yoga class, followed by a chakra healing sound bath.

The Chi Hive is located at 22 Main St. in Narrowsburg. Learn more at [www.thechihive.com](http://www.thechihive.com).

**Bodhi Tree Art Studio**

The studio offers both kids’ classes, like “Create Your Own Monster,” and beginner adult classes. Those include classes like the basics of acrylic painting, and help a loved one pick up a new creative hobby.

Bodhi Tree is located at 214 6th St., Ste. B in Honesdale. Learn more at [bodhitreeartstudio.com](http://bodhitreeartstudio.com).

**The Art Factory**

For the more mature artist, book a class in printmaking with the masters, or simply plan a day out to tour the gallery and artist store.

The Art Factory is located at 736 Texas Palmyra Hwy. in White Mills, PA. Learn more at [theartfactoryofwhitemills.com/classes](http://theartfactoryofwhitemills.com/classes).

**Skytown Adventure Lodge**

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It’s located at 1 Skytop Dr #2, in Skytop, PA. Learn more at [skytop.com/activities](http://skytop.com/activities).

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# MOVIES

## *that put me in the holiday spirit*

By TINA SPANGLER

Each year in mid-November, I start feeling the first whispers of yuletide spirit, and before I know it, I want to cuddle up with a holiday movie. But with so many to choose from, where to begin? Personally, I'm drawn to holiday stories about complicated family relationships, 19th-century life, and heartwarming plotlines that can make me laugh and cry at the same time. So I wanted to share a few of my favorites, some of which are bona fide holiday movies, and some of which have just a scene or two set at this time of year.

One features a resident of Sullivan County, two feature the actor Clare Danes, and all are perfect to kick off your own holiday season.

### **"Home for the Holidays"**

(1995, director Jodie Foster)

When Chicago art restorer Claudia (Holly Hunter) spends Thanksgiving at home with her aging parents, she and her adult siblings (Robert Downey Jr., Cynthia Stevenson) fight the urge to revert to their childhood selves. Director Jodie Foster has a keen eye for the subtleties of this very American family celebration.

Fun fact: Aunt Gladys is played by Geraldine Chaplin, the daughter of Charlie Chaplin.

Where to watch: STARZ

Bonus viewing: Also starring Robert Downey Jr.,

**"Less Than Zero"** is the intense story of a college freshman returning home for the holidays to discover that his best friend has become an addict.



### **"Little Women" (1994, director Gillian Armstrong)**

With their father fighting in the American Civil War, Jo (Winona Ryder) and her three sisters are holding down the homestead with their mother (Susan Sarandon), and trying to find their place in the world. Based on Louisa May Alcott's autobiographical account of her life in 1860s Massachusetts, "Little Women" is a story about family love, with two of the film's biggest scenes taking place during the Christmas season. The warm glow of 19th-century New England, complete with pine wreaths and ice skating ponds, instantly puts me in the mood for Christmas carols and mulled wine.

Fun fact: This was Clare Danes' feature film debut.

Where to watch: HBO Max

Bonus viewing: Equally excellent and steeped in old-fashioned Christmas sumptuousness is the 2019 "Little Women" directed by Greta Gerwig and starring Saoirse Ronan.

## MOVIES → Page 10

**“Elf”** (2003, director Jon Favreau)

A human raised by elves at the North Pole, Buddy (Will Ferrell) is all grown up, and travels to New York City to meet his biological father (James Caan). In the process, he brings a much-needed dose of Christmas spirit to the Big Apple. This smart family comedy is a love letter to Christmastime in New York, featuring such iconic locations as the Rockefeller Center Christmas tree and ice skating rink.

**Fun fact:** The elf Ming Ming, who appears early in the film, is played by Peter Billingsley, who starred as Ralphie in “A Christmas Story.”

**Where to watch:** HBO Max

**Bonus viewing:** The classic 1964 stop-motion **“Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer”** was a stylistic inspiration for the elf costumes and North Pole sets.



**“Christmas at Plum Creek”** (1974, director William F. Claxton)

For their first Christmas in Walnut Grove, everyone in the Ingalls family secretly plans what to get each other – and how to afford it. Laura (Melissa Gilbert) selflessly trades her beloved pony for a present for her mother, while the rest of the family also finds creative ways to give gifts from the heart. Watching this episode from the first season of “Little House on the Prairie” with my kids and parents has become an annual tradition. And now that Melissa Gilbert lives in our community, we have even more reason to enjoy it.

**Fun fact:** This episode originally aired on Christmas Day in 1974.

**Where to watch:** Amazon Prime Video

**Bonus viewing:** If you want more Christmas on the prairie, check out the episode **“The Blizzard”** from Season 3 of “Little House.”

**“Our Vines Have Tender Grapes”** (1945, Roy Rowland)

Set in an agricultural community in Wisconsin, this film chronicles a year in the life of a Norwegian farmer (Edward G. Robinson) lovingly raising his seven-year-old daughter Selma (Margaret O’Brien). Watch for Selma’s speech at the church Christmas program. This simple story has a special place in my heart, as a Scandinavian cheesehead myself.

**Fun fact:** Selma’s mother is played by Agnes Moorhead, whose final screen role was as Endora on the 1970s television show “Bewitched.”

**Where to watch:** Available for purchase on Amazon.

**Bonus viewing:** Produced three years later in 1948, **“10th Avenue Angel”** centers around a poor family in Hell’s Kitchen at Christmastime. Like “Our Vines,” it was directed by Roy Rowland and stars Margaret O’Brien.



**“Holiday Affair”** (1949, director Don Hartman)

Just before Christmas, a single mom (Janet Leigh) is torn between her boring attorney boyfriend (Wendell Corey) and a charming but penniless department store clerk (Robert Mitchum). In this non-traditional holiday film, the acting style is toned down and the plotline is believable. Only 22 years old at the time, Leigh is well-cast in the role of a young widow balancing life as a mom and a woman.

**Fun fact:** In 1949, Janet Leigh had starring roles in six other films, including “Little Women,” in which she plays Meg (and Margaret O’Brien plays Beth).

**Where to watch:** Turner Classic Movies

**Bonus viewing:** Another Christmas story about a single working mom in a New York City department store, the 1947 **“A Miracle on 34th Street,”** starring Maureen O’Hara and Natalie Wood, would make a great double feature.

**“How the Grinch Stole Christmas”** (1966, directors Chuck Jones and Ben Washam)

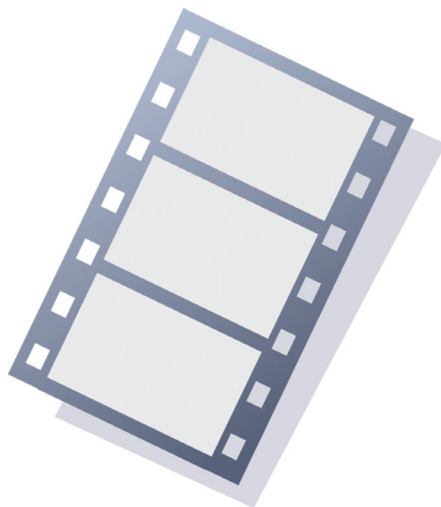
In this movie, which is based on the Dr. Seuss book of the same name, a grumpy hermit hatches a plan to steal Christmas from the Whos of Whoville. I watched this 26-minute TV special every year as a kid. But I think I love it even more as an adult. Boris Karloff is perfect as the voice of the Grinch.

**Fun fact:** The book’s drawings are in black and white, so it was here that the Grinch was given his signature green color for the first time.

**Where to watch:** Available for purchase on Amazon.

**Bonus viewing:** The 1965 TV special **“A Charlie Brown Christmas”** makes the perfect nostalgic companion.

**Note:** there are some gold-standard classics—namely **“It’s a Wonderful Life”** (1946), **“White Christmas”** (1954), and **“A Christmas Story”** (1983)—that I deliberately left off this list. Each year, I save these for later in December, once I’m in full Christmas mode.



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# When life gets nuts

*Forkin' Good Nuts offers flavored snacks with a strong local focus*

By MEREDITH MOYER

WAYNE COUNTY, PA—At a beer tasting one night at Shohola restaurant The Fork at Twin Lakes, Sharon Daniel decided to make spiced peanuts as an amuse-bouche. That little snack—which eventually turned into Forkin' Good Nuts—has been popular for 10 years.

Sharon and Peter Daniel closed the Fork at Twin Lakes in 2018 after 32 years, and focused on nuts.

“Once I saw how much my customers enjoyed the spiced nuts,” she said, “the idea grew to create a new business.”

They now have eight flavors of nuts at Forkin' Good Nuts. The newest flavor is called “Hopanero,” and is a collaboration with Hop Barons, a craft spice-and-BBQ-

rub company based in Honesdale.

The first time Sharon Daniel met the folks at Hop Barons, they started talking, and decided to work together.

Her previous flavor creation also came from an in-person meeting. While sitting with people from Tree Juice, a maple syrup company, she decided to make smoked maple-bacon peanuts.

Forty-four batches later, the couple was completely happy with the flavor.

Like all of these meetings, Forkin' Good Nuts is local and in-person. Sharon Daniel delivers the nuts herself, since most of what she sells is packaged in glass jars. Peter Daniel helps make the flavors, but Sharon does the rest.

“After running our restaurant for 32 years,

I continue to enjoy baking and creating new flavors, but also enjoy the experience of working alone in the kitchen,” she said. “I go into a Zen mode, and listen to music or podcasts while baking, jarring, labeling and packing.”

The nuts are available at Pecks Market in Livingston Manor, NY, and soon will be in the Callicoon, NY Pecks, as well as in specialty food and gift shops in the Upper Delaware Region.

“Going to local markets and collaborating and delivering to local businesses has given me an opportunity to meet and explore so many different parts of where we live, that I never had time to do before,” she said. “I meet and chat with other business owners, and everyone I meet is always eager to share



RR photo by Laurie Stuart  
Sharon Daniel makes and sells spiced peanuts.

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new opportunities for product placements and growth opportunities.”

Sharon Daniel is also planning on creating flavors with almonds in the near future.

But her work—and mission—aren’t just about creating snacks.

She went back to school, studying mental health, and now works with a nonprofit called CHOW, which stands for “Culinary Hospitality Outreach and Wellness.”

CHOW’s goal, according to its mission statement, is to “support wellness within the hospitality industry and to improve the lives of our community through shared stories, skills, and resources.”

CHOW is currently only based in Colorado, but the plan is to spread across the country.

“Being a part of CHOW gives me a place to share my experience in the hospitality industry, and the fields of mental health and recovery,” she said, “and bring awareness to the struggles associated with the industry, as well as to help make it a safer and healthier place to work.”

If you want to meet Sharon Daniel, or try some Forkin' Good Nuts, you can find her at the Barryville Farmers' Market every Saturday during the season. You can also order online at [forkingoodnuts.com](http://forkingoodnuts.com).





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# THE TRANSFORMATION OF CLAY

*Beauty and magic found at Honey Hill Pottery*



By JACQUELINE HERMAN

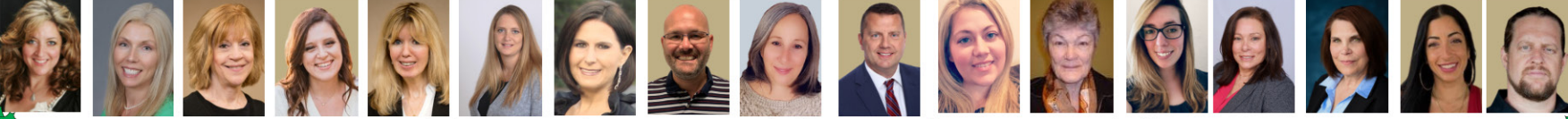
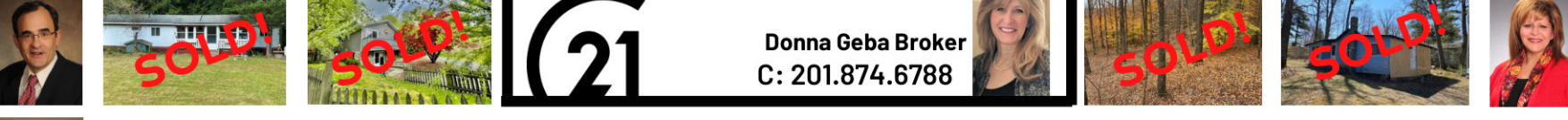
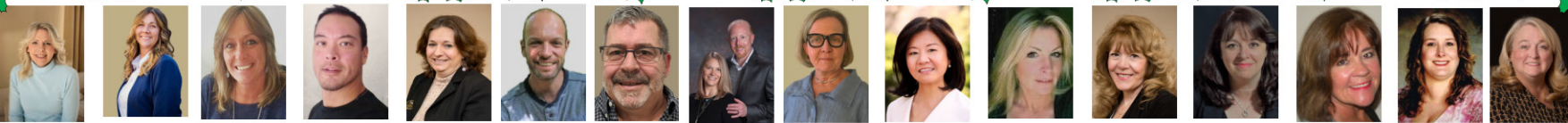
CALLICOON, NY — Ellany Gable, the owner of Honey Hill Pottery, got her start in New York City, where she earned her bachelor's degree in ceramics at Hunter College. "When I was in my first class, the professor demonstrated the making of a bowl. He had a lump of clay that turned instantaneously into a big bowl. I was so taken by the transformation that the hairs on the back of my neck stood up! From that time forward, I knew in my heart that this was the chosen path for me."

Her working friend, Sharon Froelich, earned her bachelor's degree in Ceramics at Sacramento State University in 2008. Rose Biondi, a student helper, comes once or twice a week. The studio is located in the midst of dairy farms and mountains outside Callicoon. Gable has been creating pottery here for 30 years, and earns half of her

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Hand-built, super-lightweight holiday ornaments.

Contributed photo



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## CLAY - Page 15

income as a piano tuner. Her love, though, is the studio. “With pottery, it’s all about timing, and you have to be in a relationship with the clay: how dry it is, how wet it is... because there is a moment when you have to work on it. Intricate carvings or joining pieces together, such as a spout or a handle, have to be done when it’s leather-hard.”

She uses four types of clay: porcelain; and white, black and buff stoneware. It is purchased in Kingston or Highland Mills, and comes in 50-pound packages. She has six wheels, each of which have speed adjustments and an accelerator pedal.

After the clay is basically formed on the wheel, it is “greenware.” When the shape is leather-hard, it is turned upside down and a bottom rim is shaped. It can be glazed at this point, prior to putting it in the kiln, or afterward. The glaze is chosen from several colors, and is applied by dipping, brush or glaze trailer, which is done by pouring it into a squeeze bottle with a fine tip.

Another material, “slip,” is a colored liquid clay that can be applied before the kiln firing. The kiln can hold up to 40 average-size pots, and it is initially set at 1,650 degrees Fahrenheit.

After the kiln, it is “bisque.” Later, it goes into the kiln again, this time at 2,300 degrees Fahrenheit to produce the final work.

“I like doing one-of-a-kind pieces, and really don’t do much production work. Each one is a work of art.”

Gable also makes Raku, a style of pottery that uses a Japanese firing technique. “Once the glaze is melted, it is pulled from the kiln in a red-hot state. It is then lifted with tongs and placed in a metal barrel or hole in the ground with combustibles—paper or leaves—and covered with a metal lid. When the fire has gone out it is rinsed with water and scrubbed. The glazed part remains shiny and the other portions have absorbed a gray tone from the ash,” she said.

A display of bowls with a wide brown border and grooved vertical stripes caught my eye. She explains the design as “terra sigillata,” or “sealed earth,” made with fine clay slip and pigments. The pieces are burnished by quick rubbing, and grooves are made prior to glazing. “In this studio, we don’t use lead-based glazes. Everything is food and dishwasher safe, and microwaveable.”

There are several dozen coffee mugs or tumblers for sale, meant for hot or cold beverages. Fifty percent of the proceeds is donated to the Ukrainian Global Crisis Relief Fund.

Recently formed is a nonprofit organization, the Callicoon Clay Co-operative LLC, which provides classes to underserved children and families.

There is a range of prices, and most customers are likely aware of the expertise and ingredients that go into the creation of each piece.

Initially, Gable ran ads on WJFF and local newspapers, plus flyers. Ten to 15 years ago, she held single-woman shows at the Catskill Arts Space and at the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance, which also provided her with a grant. Private donors and a growing public response have led to her success.



Decorative bowl.

RR photos by Jacqueline Herman



A piggy bank in the gallery.

Her pieces can be found online at [honeyhillpottery.com](http://honeyhillpottery.com), and orders can also be placed by phone at 845/807-2988. Orders are wrapped, cushioned and double-boxed, and shipped by UPS, Fedex or U.S. mail. Payments are through Paypal or Venmo or by credit card.

Honey Hill Pottery is located at 119 Diehl Rd. in Callicoon.

The gallery is open Saturday and Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., or by appointment. A sale and open gallery, “Holiday Handmade 2022,” will be held on Friday, November 25, from 12 noon to 6 p.m., and on Saturdays and Sundays, December 3, 4, 10 and 11, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. There will be a raffle and refreshments.

Gable can be reached at [ellanygable@yahoo.com](mailto:ellanygable@yahoo.com), on Instagram at [honey\\_hill\\_pot](https://www.instagram.com/honey_hill_pot) and on Facebook at Honey Hill Pottery.



A decorative piece in the gallery.



# RECIPES *passed on*

By LAURIE STUART

When my house burned down in the summer of 1986, the one thing that I realized was irreplaceable was the old Woman's Day magazine that Lillian Hector had given to me. In it was a delightful recipe for crème de menthe bars, a three-layer holiday bar consisting of dense chocolate cake, mint frosting and a thick glaze of chocolate on top.

When I first met Claude and Lillian, they lived above the print shop in the Delaware Publications building, the original newspaper building in Narrowsburg, where the **River Reporter** now has its office. Lillian was a retired kindergarten teacher, and Claude ran the print shop, having sold the letterpress paper, the Delaware Valley News, in 1974. Upon selling the building and the businesses to the next owner, George and Gloria Krause, Claude and Lillian retired to a home in Beach Lake, PA. I was there on a Saturday morning when Lillian gave me the magazine and a clump of lamb's ear flowers to plant in my front flowerbed.

When my house burned, the recipe and that magazine were gone. I had only made it once or twice, and I hadn't committed it, in any way, to memory. It was truly lost.

Until, in 1996, I went to a caroling party at my friend Karen MacIntyre's house in Yulan. We would traditionally gather there, have a few snacks and go caroling on River Road in Barryville.

Following the spreading of good cheer and returning to the house for more snacks and cookies, I was delighted to see a plate of crème de menthe bars on the buffet. Mary Greene had that same recipe somehow. The recipe came back to me. It had been lost for 10 years.

Since then, those bars have been a large part of my Christmas baking.

Another one-of-a-kind recipe that I lost to the fire was for oatmeal chocolate-chip cake. I acquired it following a very odd and disconcerting time hiking with a male companion over Easter vacation when I was in college. We were hiking in numerous western national parks. Durango, Arches. Halfway through, there had been a misunderstanding, and we both couldn't get back to Denver fast enough. On the day before I was to leave, finally ending this horrendous trip, a party was held and this cake was served. I had never tasted such an amazingly dense, moist cake, interspersed with chocolate chips, with more chips and nuts on the top.

I made that cake a lot and brought it often to potlucks and served it to friends.

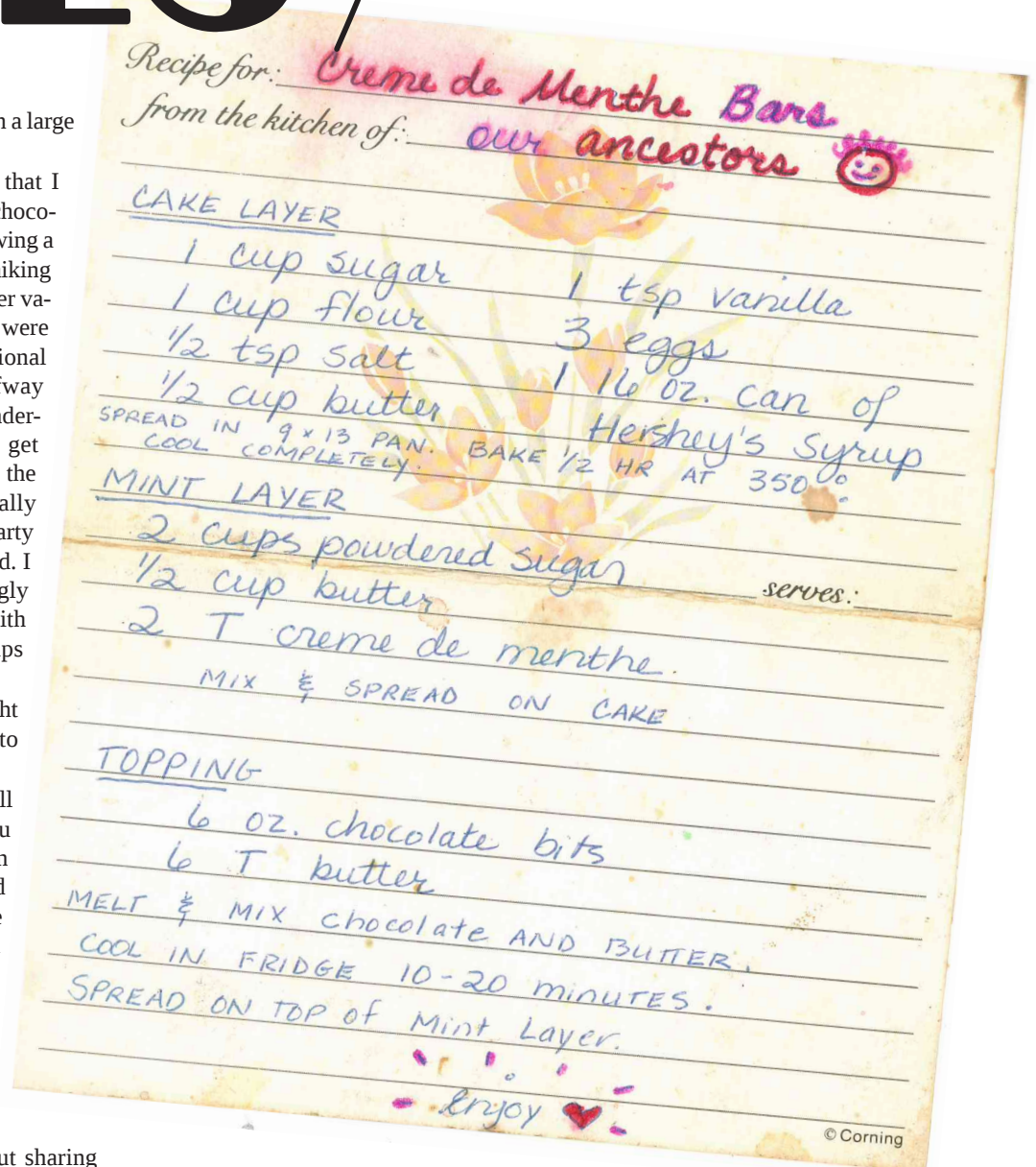
It was so popular that when Jill Padua was designing her menu for the Chatterbox Cafe on Main Street in the 1990s, she wanted to include it, and asked for the recipe. When the house burned down, that recipe was not lost, because I had given it to Jill.

The holiday season is about giving.

The holiday season is about connecting with others.

The holiday season is all about sharing the stories of our lives and absolutely wonderful sweets that are impressive, tasty and amazingly simple.

Yay for a good recipe!



## Crème de menthe bars

### Cake layer

- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 3 eggs
- 1 16 oz. can of Hershey's syrup.

Mix ingredients together. Spread in greased or parchment-lined 9"x13" baking pan. Bake 30 minutes at 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Cool completely.

### Mint layer

- 2 cups powdered sugar
  - 1/2 cup butter
  - 2 tablespoons crème de menthe
- Cream butter, add sugar and crème de menthe. Beat until light and fluffy.

### Topping

- 6 ounces chocolate bits or chips (approximately 1 cup)
  - 6 tablespoons butter
- Melt and mix chocolate and butter. Cool in fridge 10-20 minutes. Spread on top of mint layer. Cool completely. Cut in small squares and transfer to cookie tin. (These are very rich!) Store cookie tin in fridge.



RR photo by Laurie Stuart

Each of the layers—rich chocolate cake, mint icing, and chocolate glaze—are fairly simple to prepare. And the resulting bar is a delicious confection that is universally enjoyed.



RR photo by Laurie Stuart

A box of homemade goodies is a lovely way of letting neighbors and co-workers know that you appreciate them. My go-tos are bars or moist cake that I can make in large quantities, without having to fuss much.

### Oatmeal chocolate chip cake

- 1 3/4 cups boiling water
- 1 cup uncooked oatmeal
- 1 cup lightly packed brown sugar
- 1 cup white sugar (I used a little less)
- 8 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 3 large eggs
- 1 3/4 cups unsifted flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon cocoa
- 6 ounces (approximately 1 cup) chocolate chips
- 3/4 cup chopped walnuts

Place oatmeal and butter in large mixing bowl. Pour boiling water into bowl and let stand for 10 minutes. Add brown sugar, white sugar and eggs.

Sift flour, soda, salt and cocoa. Add flour to oatmeal mixture and stir well.

Add about half the chocolate chips to the batter. Pour into greased and floured 9" x 13" pan. Sprinkle walnuts and remaining chips on top. Bake at 350 degrees Fahrenheit for 40 minutes.

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# Before Cyber Monday arrives, shop local!

By MARK MCLAREN

UPPER DELAWARE REGION — Millions of Americans will rush to their computers for post-Thanksgiving Cyber Monday deals. But before you start online holiday purchasing, close up the laptop and shop local during National Small Business Day on Saturday, November 26.

Because when you shop local for your holiday gifts, your entire community joins your gift list.

“Do you know what brings visitors to our area? Our fantastic local shops, our delicious farmers’ markets, our farm destinations, our artists, our artisans, our crafts people,” said Sullivan Catskills Visitors Association president Roberta Byron-Lockwood.

“Our visitors crave what is so unique to us. They want a charming, safe Main Street to explore. They want one-of-a-kind items from our potters and our woodworkers. They go to our distilleries, they drink our locally roasted coffees, taste our cheeses, maple syrups, fresh vegetables, all of the wonderful foods that we produce here. They taste and they take that taste home with them. Then they come back for more.”

According to the U.S. Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, small businesses account for 53 percent of all New York employment, and businesses with fewer than 20 workers employ 1.5 million New Yorkers, 180,000 of those in retail.

“When I speak with customers at my store, I hear how I am just one stop on a full day of local exploration,” says Cindy Herbert, whose Gardner & Co. General Store opened in Hortonville this past July.

“I love to give my guests ideas of where to grab a bite to eat, maybe an attraction or outing that they haven’t thought of. So, as well as promoting the wonderful artists and artisans that stock Gardner & Co., I love promoting the other businesses in the area. I love being a part of that local business



The Town of Fallsburgh General Store

Photo by Laurence Braun for the Sullivan County Visitors Association

community that makes our upstate region so special.”

Research demonstrates the powerful effect on a local economy of actions such as Herbert’s. According to the Andersonville Study of Retail Economics, \$68 of every \$100 spent on a local business stays within the community, compared to \$43 spent at a national chain. Local businesses contribute 250 percent more to community causes than do national chains. And shopping local reduces carbon emissions associated with product shipping, which accounts for 25

percent of all U.S. carbon emissions.

Local retail shops go a long way in nurturing the artistic and cultural resources of the area. “Spruce Home Goods carries my pottery,” said artist Carolyn Duke. “I couldn’t be happier leaving the marketing and advertising to David and Lori. They are experts at what they do, and their work leaves me much more time to devote to my work, more time to devote to my art.”

“When a business is owned by an individual, rather than a corporation, the community gets something unique, something with

its own personality, something you can’t get anywhere else,” said Lauren Seikaly, whose Jeffersonville Bake Shop serves as a refuge and community clubhouse for residents and travelers. “It makes people want to take a special trip.”

“Folks want a good story,” added Byron-Lockwood. “They come here to the Sullivan Catskills for a good story. This is exactly what I’m talking about. That’s our story. That’s our good story.”

So go find the local story this holiday. Then gift it. Gift our good story.

## Shop Local Guide

### Callicoon/Jeffersonville

Callicoon’s vibrant restaurant and bar scene only add to the town’s appeal as a shopping destination.

Start at the **Callicoon Marketplace** (43 Lower Main St.) and find within small shops with goods for the home, original wood kitchen and décor selections, repurposed items, knitting essentials and cookery. The **Callicoon Pantry** boasts sustainable grocery made easy.

Well-curated antiques and second-life abound as you make your way south on Main Street to **Lee Hartwell Antiques** (21 Lower Main St.), rich with mid-century items and strong on art pottery and jewelry.

On your way to the **Wine Merchant** (30 A. Dorrer Dr.) for not-your-mother’s wine selection, you’ll pass **Spruce Home Goods** (35 Lower Main St.), a source for lovely home and kitchen wares, charcuterie and cupboard staples.

Head across the tracks to **Catskill Provisions** (16 Upper Main St.) for the gift of local (Long Eddy) spirits and self-gift with a pleasant shopping break.

East of Callicoon, you’ll find Hortonville’s new **Gardner & Co. General Store** (131 County Rd. 121) and a rich selection of locally produced pottery, paintings, housewares, home and kitchen textiles, winter wear and traditional antiques. Enjoy **Ri’s ice cream** (Jeffersonville) while you shop and grab tomorrow’s coffee and tea.

If antiques and collectibles top a wish list, Jeffersonville’s **Vintage House** (4910 Main St./State Rte. 52) should top your list of destinations, with its eclectic and swiftly rotating consignment. Head east on Main Street to the recently opened **Catskill Outdoorsman** (4882 Main St.) for all things outdoors, including archery, kayak, hiking and camping equipment. On the way you’ll pass **Brigantine Goods** (4917 Main St.) with a collection of contemporary art and leatherwork. And **Dalisay Daughters** (4919 Main St.) for dresses, knitwear and accessories sewn on-premises.

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Photo by the Sullivan County Visitors Association

An alpaca checks out the camera at Buck Brook Alpacas.

**LOCAL** - Page 20

Heading further east, don't miss **Domesticities** and the **Cutting Garden** (4055 State Rte. 52) in Youngsville for locally made furniture, pottery, soft goods and art. If contemporary sculpture satisfies, visit the work of Youngsville artist **Zac Shavrick** (zacmax.com).

**Narrowsburg and Pennsylvania**

Narrowsburg, long a destination for great dining, abounds in local shopping pitched high above the Delaware River. **Catskill Curated** (7 Erie Ave.) is devoted entirely to Catskills-produced products, including an eclectic selection of skincare, food and pantry, and wood and ceramic housewares.

Main Street offers one-stop shopping with every gift category imaginable. After a caffeine dose at the **Tusten Cup** (8 Main St.), head south on Main Street for **River Gallery** (8), **Tinker and Nidge** antiques (15), **Nest** home goods (15), **Tess** clothing (25), **Narrowsburg Proper** (44), **Sunny's Pop** home goods (76), **One Grand Books** (60), and **Dyberry Weaver** (101). **Delaware Valley Arts Alliance** (37 Main St.) is a must-see nonprofit stop for a rich and fast-changing selection of locally-created art, ceramics, jewelry and textiles.

Drive 25 minutes, and you're in Hawley PA, for **Hawley Antique Exchange** (209 Bellemonte Ave.) and its art, antiques and collectibles. More antiques are found at **Time Machine** (229 Main) and **Miss Elly's** (518 Church St.). Art lovers should stop by **Art on the Edge** (8 Silk Mill Dr.) and other shops at **The Silk Mill**.

If fine art is on your list of holiday gifts, Pennsylvania's Milford is your new best friend. **Old Lumberyard Antiques** (113 7th St.) houses a nice selection of antique oils and other paintings. Next visit **Artery Gallery** (210 Broad St.) for paintings, photography, sculpture, ceramics and jewelry. And while in Milford, visit **Willow** (317 Broad St.) and **Changes by Robin** (101 W. Hartford St.) for quality clothing.

**Points north**

If you're holiday shopping for an outdoor sports person, you're going to want to visit Stewart Avenue in Roscoe for **Baxter House Outfitters** (47 Stewart Ave.), **Beaverkill Angler** (64) and **Trout Town Flies** (66). Alpaca wool products are available aplenty at the very popular **Buck Brook Alpacas** (99 Bestenheider Rd.).

Any Roscoe visit includes Livingston Manor's **Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum** (1031 Old Route 17) for a review of the art—historic and contemporary—of fly fishing. The Manor is also home to **DROOZ + Company**, a modern-day general store (16 Pearl St.), **Life Repurposed** (62 Main St.), and is home to **B. Cronk** (bcrankceramics.com) and **Jenny Gill** (jennygillceramics.com) ceramics studios.

Don't forget food products in your holiday giving. Many locally grown and prepared products are available at farmers' markets (callicoonfarmersmarket.org and narrowsburgfarmersmarket.org), in local groceries, and directly from local farms and producers (sullivancatskills.com -> catskill-icious -> agri-tourism).

Another local resource that might be off your radar is the local hardware or farm supply store, many of which source products locally.

Everyone loves a nice night out. Gift certificates to the hundreds of local restaurants, from diners to farm-to-table places, will please even the toughest gift recipient. Visit sullivancatskills.com -> catskill-icious -> restaurants for a list of what's out there.

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# Dashing through the sno... dinners

By HUNTER HILL

Picture the iconic family dinner, sitting down around a well-dressed table, compliments of the matriarch, while the patriarch honorably heads the end of the feast with gilded leadership and paternal pride. Everyone is well dressed and the meal is laid out with as much care as a photo shoot for an HGTV cooking show.

Perhaps the scene rings with the reminiscence of Norman Rockwell's "Freedom from Want" painting. It depicts the family sitting down to a Thanksgiving meal, as Mother delivers the turkey in front of Father, and smiles are exchanged all around.

For most families, this is the goal, but as I can attest from many a holiday flurry, the cookie-cutter dinner scene, while idyllic, isn't the make-or-break achievement of these reunions.

Perhaps this sounds a little more familiar to you. It's 9 a.m., and you're already late. Lunch doesn't start until 12 noon, but you have to get the kids in the car and attempt to carry out a hot Crock Pot to the car without slipping on the ice. Even if you make it to the vehicle, you still have to carefully balance it between your feet or on your lap until you reach the first of many destinations.

While wrangling urchins, a shoe falls off outside the car, but your hands are full, and the younger one already in the car has begun to cry for no apparent reason.

Fast forward to your arrival at stop number one. You screech to a halt in the driveway and reverse the painful process that has just occurred, pointing your holiday-crazed hooligans in the direction of like-minded cousins, or perhaps an immature uncle to keep them occupied.

You deliver your contribution to the food crew, be it in the kitchen or dining area, before realizing that you forgot something at home that feels far more important in that moment than it might be in reality.

In comes kid number one, crying because of a minor injury or major injustice that has just accosted them in the course of roughhousing and instigating with their kin in the next room.

Dinner has yet to start when you pause to realize that you have to do all this again in a couple of hours with the other half of the family. Or, depending on your situation, as many as two or three more times over the course of that day and even the next.

Christmas, and even Thanksgiving for our family, has been this way. Fewer childhood shenanigans as of yet, but more running around. It also doesn't hurt that we love food, and thus feel responsible for sharing some of that love with each family faction that we visit, so as not to create the appearance of valuing one more than the other. For example, if Grandma gets a pumpkin roll, everybody gets a pumpkin roll.

Regardless, we've always fooled ourselves into believing that we will simply have to become the primary patriarch and matriarch of our own family branch. Then we can be the lamp that draws all of our little ones back home once we get too old and tired of making multiple holiday stops.

I say this while smiling through the delusions I know this holds. We know full well that any number of factors can upset this, and we can be just as easily cursed to roam for all time from dinner to dinner each Christmas.

On the other hand, there are perks to multiple stops for lunch, dinner, and in my favorite case, breakfast. Many, many choices of goodies to sample. The only disappoint-

ment comes when someone who typically brings a family-renowned dish decides to take a year off.

When it comes to breakfast, we typically provide this if not in whole, then in part, and are never disappointed. This last year, for example, my wife and I whipped up a spread of waffles and pancakes and French toast and sticky buns and eggs and bacon and sausage and more as we had the

unique opportunity to spend Christmas morning at home. Our second son had just been born a week or two prior and we had the best excuse in the world not to travel all over the countryside.

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I joke, but it really was a nice reprieve. The only consistent problem with bouncing from meal to meal and house to house is that it becomes very difficult to maintain an appetite after the first meal or two. You want to enjoy each one, because of their unique treats and special savory bites, but when it becomes an endurance race reminiscent of an eating contest, the best of attitudes are tested.

What's more, you begin to fade into the comforting embrace of each location's most comfortable lounge areas. I believe my grandfather and I started a snore circle in the living room of my mother's house two years ago, joined soon after by an uncle and a cousin. I promise it wasn't a tactic to avoid cleaning dishes.

The way our here families do it differently, sometimes by tradition, and other times by necessity, to get a chance to see everyone you wanted to on or around the day of celebration. In any case, I find that good rest and fasting up front help, but with kids in the mix, the only easy part of that is fasting. In that case, I recommend coffee. Just keep a steady supply going, from whenever you get off work until you make it successfully through the gauntlet of dinner visits.

And remember, use whatever card God gives you to make it easier. If you just had a baby, make everyone come to you; if you are cooking the main portion of the meal, same thing. If you aren't cooking and don't have kids, by golly you get in that car and make the rounds, because there's an oven-baked breaded crab dip with oyster crackers waiting somewhere with your name on it, and the early bird gets the worm.

Happy holidays from The Way Out Here, and from my family to yours. Enjoy the food, but most importantly, enjoy each other.



Norman Rockwell, public domain, via Wikimedia Commons  
Norman Rockwell's "Freedom from Want" depicts the idyllic holiday gathering.



Contributed photo

The post-dinner nap is nothing new, but I'll have to talk to Grandpa about copyrighting the term "snore circle." My son had the hang of it from a young age.

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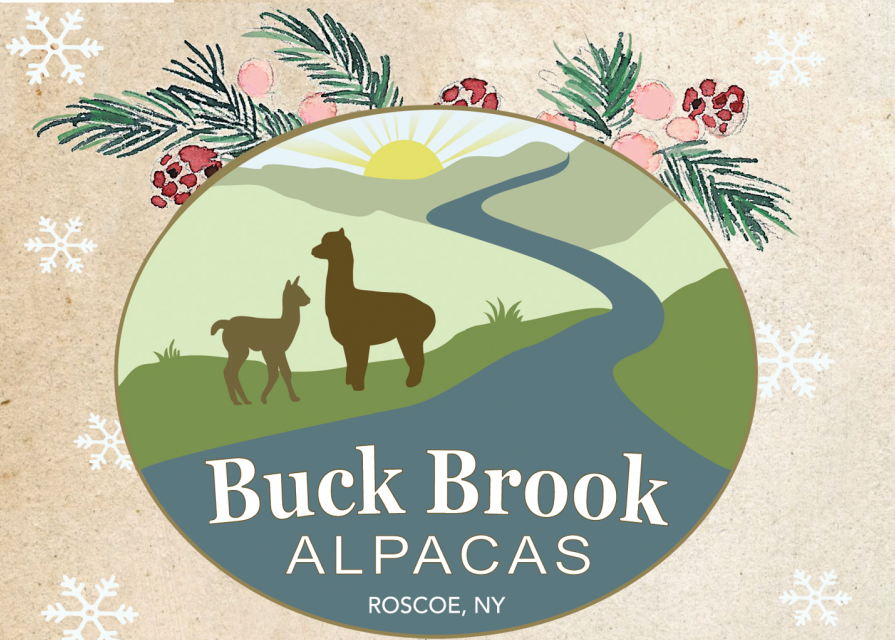
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