



# Setting the Table

By D. E. Bentley

Life is about connections, and there is no better place to connect than around the table – in the company of family and friends during the holidays...or anytime. I recently had the opportunity to sit down and connect with Mary Ellen and Steve West at their new store, in Canandaigua, New York. Aubergine (which is French for eggplant) opened its doors to the public at the end of October. Mary Ellen’s passion and expertise when it comes to setting the table are evident, everywhere you look. Like any excellent host, her focus is on her guests—in this case customers.

Aubergine offers high-end lines of tableware and gifts, with a focus on sourcing products from socially responsible companies and countries. This is important to both Mary Ellen and Steve, who emphasized during our lengthy visit the importance of supporting sustainable production practices and, most importantly, workers’ rights globally. They carry a full line of Vietri dinnerware (mostly made in Italy), LSA (Glassware made in Poland), Nicholas Mosse Pottery (Kilkenny, Ireland), Casafina & Costa Nova (Portugal). They also offer a wide range of affordable gifts, such as cutting boards, candles and candle holders, napkins and napkin holders, seasonal items, and gifts for babies. Specialty items include Iconic Quilling Cards (Viet Nam, social good program). The couple is also expanding their selection of products from US makers.

Mary Ellen describes the store as a place to not only buy dinnerware, but also to accessorize your table. “Think of the little black dress,” she offered, “we are giving the table extra things, to play with pattern and texture, dress it up.” The couple believes that service, selection and their philosophy will differentiate them from the big box stores, just around the corner.

Continued on back



Photo by D. E. Bentley 2019

# After-Dinner Delights

*Benito’s Coquito: a bit of warmth from Puerto Rico*  
Submitted by Steve Melcher – Owl Light’s Dragonfly Tales columnist.

If you have friends or family in Puerto Rico, you may receive a bottle of ‘Coquito’ to help celebrate the holidays. After a few ‘Coquitos’ everyone seems to be in tune when singing ‘Arbolito, Arbolito. Esta noche es Nochebuena. vamos al bosque hermanitos’...or at least no one seems to notice or care if you’re out of tune.

**Ingredients:**

- 3 cups plain or vanilla Soy Milk
- 2 cups (1 15 oz can) \*cream of coconut
- ¼ tsp Turmeric
- ¼ tsp cinnamon
- grating of fresh nutmeg
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 ½ cup white rum or Cognac
- 1 tbs local maple syrup
- cinnamon sticks for garnish

**Preparation:**

Mix all ingredients in a blender at high speed. Refrigerate for a minimum of 1 hour. Shake well before serving. Serve cold or warm ( I prefer mine warm) in a small glass. Garnish with cinnamon stick and more nutmeg.

\*Like Coco Lopez - This is different from coconut milk and coconut cream.

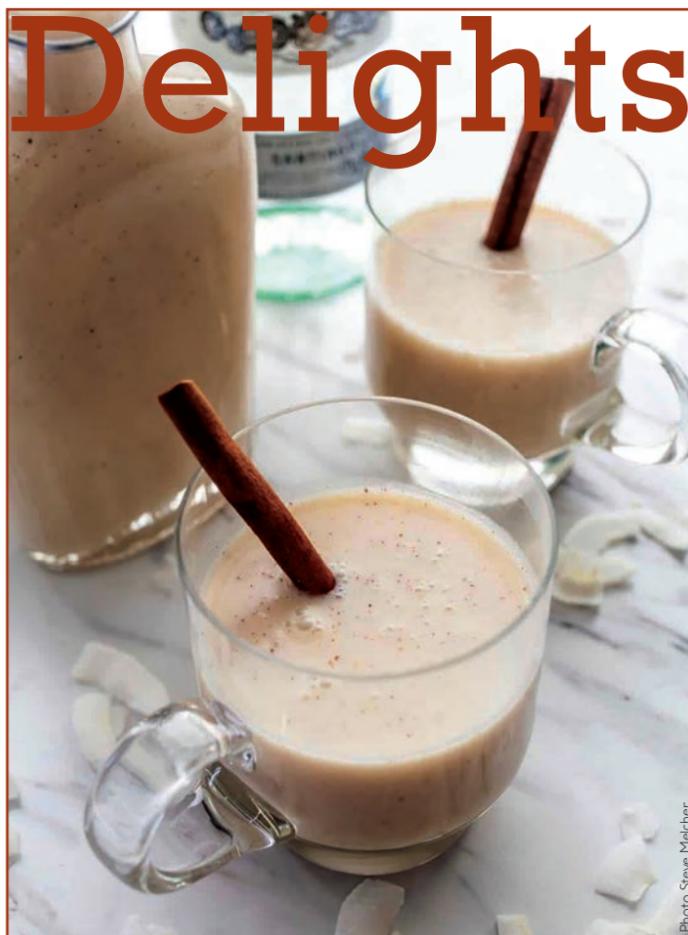


Photo: Steve Melcher

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## From the News Room

Deadline for all content for the January issue of the *Owl Light News* is December 10th!

Our pages fill up FAST!

Send content/inquiries, including advertising inquiries, to: [Editor@CanadicePress.com](mailto:Editor@CanadicePress.com)

*Owl Light News* wishes to welcome Eileen Perkins, with her monthly column, "Crafting your own Cuisine," on page 15. Gone are the days of eating without forethought. Regardless of why we choose to eat ...differently (once the holidays are behind us, that is), all of our dietary needs change over time. It is valuable to have ideas to build on. Eileen will offer us monthly ideas for eating... well.

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and contributors  
for your support in 2019!

Stop by the Canandaigua Chamber of Commerce in December and check out our *Owl Light News* window display. You can also find us at the Livingston County Chamber of Commerce, in Geneseo, NY.

### Rice Pudding - By Darlene Deats

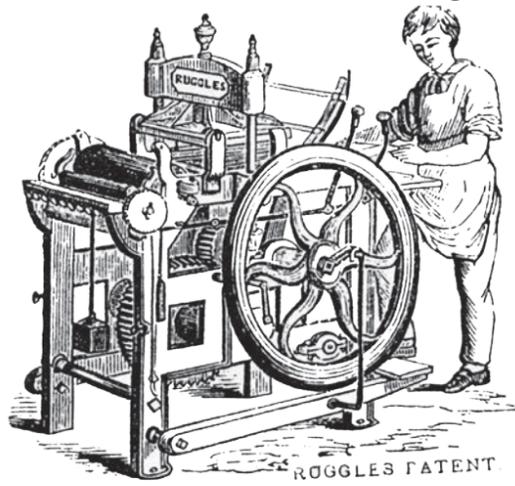
This was my mom's recipe.  
Preheat oven to 350F.

#### Preparation:

- Use any oven safe container depending on how much you want to make.
- Using your finger as a measuring stick. Pour regular rice up to the first knuckle.
- Add Raisins if you like or not
- Add about 1 cup sugar or if in a large baking dish add more, depending on how sweet you want it.
- Add vanilla and cinnamon to your taste.
- Put in one can evaporated milk.
- Fill rest up with water till one inch from top.
- Stir all together.
- Heat oven to 350F.
- Bake until water is evaporated. Depending on size of dish, one hour or longer.

Rule of thumb..if you can smell it, most likely it is done, so check. We like to rewarm before eating and serve with cold evaporated milk over it.

# PRINT



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### Owl Light Question for January:

Are urban areas exciting and energizing  
...or a bit too much to take?

Let us know your take at: [www.facebook.com/CanadicePress](http://www.facebook.com/CanadicePress)

We received one response to the *Owl Light* Question for December: Is Sting's song "Every breath you take" a great love song or a creepy song about a stalker?

So I always thought that Sting's "Every Breath You Take" was, of course, a great love song and then I watched the video. The video was kind of dark and he was all alone and I listened to the words closely. I looked at many comments and they do seem to be in unison that it is more of a creepy song about a stalker. I now am taking the side of those who think it is about a stalker, not a great love song. Things That Make You Go Hmmm... Oh no, that is just another song by a different group, "C + C Music Factory." But after watching the video and really thinking about the song, all I can say is, "things that make you go hmmm..." W.S.

Editor's opinion - It is a beautiful love song! Heh...love is blind.

My partner's take "It's definitely a stalker song!"

### Spicy and Sweet Tea Treat - The Conscious Crow

Caw! Caw! Caw!

#### Ingredients:

- Bhakti Chai Concentrate (or any chai that has enough ginger flavor)
- cardamom
- organic, good-quality heavy whipping cream
- pure vanilla extract
- nutmeg
- honey (I love a heaping amount of good quality honey; sometimes creamed)

#### Preparation:

- Put the heavy whipping cream and beaters in the freezer until ready to make fresh whipped cream.
- In a saucepan over medium, heat up the Cream or half and half, with honey and cardamom. (I never measure anything, really) In a different saucepan heat up the tea concentrate (or brew the chai tea) -I like different saucepans and combine them together afterwards.
- Beat the heavy whipping cream with Vanilla extract until whipped cream forms, and gradually add in honey for sweetener.
- In your favorite mug, pour equal amounts of warmed tea concentrate with the sweetened cream mixture, and top generously with fresh whipped cream. Sprinkle with nutmeg and VIOLA.... Sweet, spicy delight on a cold winter's night.



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[OwlLightNews.com](http://OwlLightNews.com)

[fb@Canadice Press](https://www.facebook.com/CanadicePress)

Published Monthly by Canadice Press

\*Submissions via e-mail to: [editor@canadicepress.com](mailto:editor@canadicepress.com) or - last resort - via our postal address.

5584 Canadice Lake Road, Springwater, NY 14560

Copy Edit: Emily Pecora

Subscriptions: Laurie Phillips

#### Delivery

Georgeanne Vyverberg, Honeoye Falls/Bristol/Bloomfield; Dee Sharples, Henrietta); Darlene Deats, Honeoye; Jim Shelley, Geneseo/Perry/Warsaw/Leicester/points west; Gavin Spanagel, North of Canandaigua/Geneva; Laurie Phillips, Naples/Cheshire); D.E. Bentley & Co., Points North/Keuka Lake/Canandaigua; with (1) drop in Ithaca, at Greenstar; and (1) drop in Rochester; at Starry Nites Cafe.

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## From the Editor

When we asked our contributors to share a favorite recipe with our readers, I was excited to see what came our way. Many of the recipes that came in are rooted in memories, of time shared with family and friends. I love this connection. My favorite was the simplest one, from Sam Hall, in part because it allowed me to add a favorite family recipe, Straight Dough Method White Bread from the kitchen of Grace Allen Gardner (my mother's mother) that broke my "rule," that the recipe needed to be for after dinner "owllight" time. Sam's recipe for an after-dinner treat is to simply spread honey (from his hives) onto bread. The basic bread recipe, that I have used for many years, offers the perfect substrate for honey, and turns bread into a dessert. Another simple favorite is an ice cream recipe from T. Touris (who doesn't love ice cream) and Laurie Phillip's accompanying topping suggestion (see page 5 for both).

Some of the recipes are more elaborate and in line with our changing dietary needs and food justice awareness. Others are just for fun and relaxation. All, as was our goal, help us better get to know many of the contributors who pour their hearts, souls, and time into the *Owl Light News*.

This focus on foods for the holiday also provided an opportunity to introduce our newest contributor, Eileen Perkins (see box left). It also offers a chance to remind our readers of our submission deadline for "Just De(s)erts" – our literary/arts theme for our January special issue. We will still feature our regular writers (with shorter offerings) along with a selection of theme pieces from the submissions. We have extended the deadline to December 10, 2019 at midnight (which is also the deadline for all content for the January 2020 issue of *Owl Light News*).

We hope you enjoy all that this issue has to offer, including the many recipes to use and start your own traditions with.

Happy New Year one and all from everyone at the Owl Light News & Canadice Press!

This Blue and White Lace Bowl was made by Lukacs Pottery Studios Sodus Point, NY.



This was my Grandmother's bread recipe. I use it all the time, with many modifications. My mother made this with margarine, and we would eat it hot, with margarine on top, straight out of the oven. I substitute butter (and use vegetable oil for the pan). I use brown

### Bread - Straight Dough Method from the Kitchen of Grace Gardner Makes 2 Loaves

Preheat oven to 400F.

Preparation: Measure into a large bowl 1 cup warm (not hot) water. Sprinkle or crumble 1 pkg. or 1 cake yeast (active dry or compressed). Add in 1 Tbls sugar. Stir until dissolved and let sit.

Scald 1 cup milk

Stir in:

- 2 Tbls sugar
- 2 1/5 tsp salt
- 6 Tbls Shortening

Cool to luke warm.

Stir 1 cup flour into the yeast proof, then add the luke warm milk mixture.

Gradually add 3 additional cups flour. Mix in more, as needed, until the dough can be turned out onto a lightly-floured board.

Knead until the dough becomes soft and elastic (at least 10 minutes - taking care to not fold the dough). OVER...

Submission deadline extended until  
December 10th at Midnight!  
for Owl Light's JANUARY 2020  
LITERARY/ARTS ISSUE!  
Our theme is JUST DES(S)ERTS!  
We are looking for writers  
and visual artists  
to help us keep it sweet, or not!

Be it sweet encounters or sweet revenge, you tell us. Keep it short...and sweet...(less than 500 words / less than 35 sq. inches for image print size). No politics for this one (yes, we know it *is* tempting), but we have all seen too much of that kind of news. Have fun, keep it light(ish) and irresistible. To sweeten the deal (last pun, we promise!), chosen submissions will be published in our January 2020 issue (print and online) and authors will receive a complimentary year of Owl Light News (\$25 value) delivered to their doors\*.

\*If you are already a subscriber, we will add on a year.

Guidelines: All entries must be received by December 10, 2019, midnight. Written entries (fiction, poetry, creative non-fiction) should be 500 words or less (title exempted from count) and in Times or a similar font (10-12pt) in doc. or docx. single-spaced (to fit on one page). Visual arts entries should reproduce well at 35sq. inches or less (any dimension) and should be sent as pdfs. \*Hybrid entries, including poems with creative line use, may also be sent as pdfs, to ensure accuracy.

Submission page (page 1) should be free of identifying information, as all entries will be reviewed blindly. The final page only should include: Title (and description, if applicable) name of author or artist, mailing address, e-mail address, phone, and short (50 words or less) bio.

Submit entries and information/bio page as a single attached document via e-mail to Editor@CanadicePress.com.

\*Questions? Editor@CanadicePress.com or 585-358-1065.

All entrants will be notified prior to publication. All subsequent publication rights are retained by the author/artist. Final decisions will be made by the editor & Guest Judge(s)-TBD. Mailed print subscriptions for chosen entrants will begin with the January 2020 issue of *Owl Light News*. We accept submissions of creative writing & art ongoing, for our regular issues.

Our second 2020 Literary/Arts issue will be in July 2020.

sugar and less salt. I am sure it would work equally well with coconut oil and suspect that almond milk would work. I have made this recipe with white wheat, half wheat and white, half wheat and rye, and whole wheat successfully by increasing the butter. Enjoy, D. E.

Place a damp cloth over the top of the bowl and let rise until double in bulk.

Punch down and divide in half. Let rest for 5 minutes and then place in greased loaf pans. Place in a preheated oven and reduce heat to 350 degrees F. Cook 40-50 minutes, until nicely browned and the loaf sounds hollow when knocked on.

Let sit five minutes, then turn loafs out onto racks to cool.

Wonderful fresh and hot, topped with butter, or honey.

*Modifications: use it to make long cheese loafs, by rolling it out flat on a board, adding grated cheeses with additions (minced garlic or shallots, herbs, etc) and then rolling into a loaf. It also makes an excellent pizza crust. Place slightly more than half in a loaf pan and split the remainder to make two small or one large crust by rolling it out on a floured board, rolling it onto the rolling pin and then unrolling it onto a holes-in-the-bottom pizza pan. Load and cook 15 minutes at 400 Degrees F, or until brown on the bottom and bubbly on top.*

## Improving Our Healthcare System

Opinion By Ravo Root IV Cleveland, New York

**C**urrently, there is a major topic up for debate about our healthcare system and the ways in which it should run. Many Republicans believe we need to get rid of the Affordable Care Act or it should stay the same. Many Democrats say that our healthcare system should convert to single payer or a public option system. The things you usually don't hear about are the details in which we can make healthcare a more affordable service and in the same breath not kill the industry.

One example is the QALY system which stands for Quality-adjusted life year. This is a system that determines the price of a drug by deciding how much a drug should cost based on a formula of Years of Life x Utility Value = #QALYs. The years of life, meaning how many years you live with the disease you are treating with said drug multiplied by how healthy you are on a scale level of 0.0-1.0. This will then determine the price of the drug by each unit of QALY's. This method has been proven to work and is much better than healthcare CEO's gouging working class Americans. In many other countries who use this system they see many drugs exponentially cheaper than those in America because of the QALY system. This system is non political and simply put it works.

Not only are we getting gutted by large healthcare conglomerates when it comes to the cost of drugs in which they can sell to us directly but we are also getting hurt when it comes to the cost of staying in a hospital. This is because of GPO's (Group Purchasing Organizations) who are "Not-For-Profit" purchasing agencies that are supposed to lower the cost of drugs and equipment that hospitals purchase. While the system is in place to help the hospitals and the consumers who the GPO will be purchasing for, you would think the cost would go down. The answer to that is no, GPO's do not help and they continue to award the large medical companies rather than any new innovative companies even if the new company has a better price and a better product. This then gives greater profit to large companies and limits small business growth within the medical supply market. This not only hurts our consumers pocketbooks but it also kills innovation in our hospitals along with the small businesses that could create so many good paying jobs for working class Americans. In the end, even if you are against medicare for all, a public option, or new advancements of Obamacare, don't tell me there isn't anything we can do to lessen the cost of healthcare for the family stretching pennies for their child dying of cancer.



We welcome varied views from our readers. E-mail Letters to the Editor and Opinion Pieces to [Editor@CanadicePress.com](mailto:Editor@CanadicePress.com). Please include your mailing address and any other pertinent information.

*Letters should be less than 500 words, although longer, well written opinion pieces will be considered. All published commentary must be signed (or sent via personal e-mail) and include a street address. Please focus on sound arguments, respect opposing views and avoid direct attacks. We reserve the right to edit or refuse any submitted editorial content. Opinions and letters published in Owl Light News are not necessarily the views of the Editor, Publisher, contributors or advertisers.*

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## Leathernecks Celebrate a Birthday

Opinion By Kurt Staudter Springfield, Vermont

**“**In every battle and skirmish since the birth of our corps, Marines have acquitted themselves with the greatest distinction, winning new honors on each occasion until the term “Marine” has come to signify all that is highest in military efficiency and soldierly virtue.” Major General John A. Lejeune, 13th Commandant of the Marine Corps, from the original 1921 birthday message of the Commandant - Smithfield, VA..

**“It’s because of all you men and women that we enjoy the freedoms and liberty we have today...”**

Having never served in the military myself, each year I find it important to show gratitude in this space for those that took time out of their lives and spent it in service with our armed forces. So instead of the usual Veteran's Day piece, this year I got to participate in something special – A Marine Corps Birthday Celebration.

One of my earliest memories as a child is this big furry guy with a strange symbol tattooed on his arm. That guy turned out to be my dad, and the symbol is the anchor – globe and eagle of the U.S. Marines. Living now at 88 in Virginia, he usually wears short-sleeved shirts proudly displaying that fading but still recognizable tattoo. Anywhere you go with my dad there'll be someone that'll mention the tattoo – Usually other Marines. A server at a restaurant, someone at the grocery store, or standing in line at the Post Office; someone will start a conversation with “When and where did you serve Marine?”

My dad served in Korea in 1951 and spent his time in the Marines as a crew chief on one of the first Marine transport helicopters the Sikorsky HRS-1. While in Marine Helicopter Transport Division HMR-161 he was involved in everything from transporting VIPs to rescue operations in combat zones. The military quickly embraced the versatile nature of the helicopter and found new and creative ways to use it.

On this last visit down to see my dad in Virginia we were in time for the November 10 Marine Corps Birthday celebration. Through the years I'd heard about what a big deal it is for former Marines to turn out in communities all around the world to mark the occasion of the corps creation by the Second Continental Congress on the tenth of November 1775. Although before 1921 there was no formal recognition of the Marine Corps Birthday but that changed with the 1921 order of Commandant Lejeune. Since then the annual celebrations have spread. Here in Smithfield is a gathering of Marines mostly from the Suffolk, VA area, and what started out with two high school buddies that marked the occasion of the 200th birthday in 1975 by going out to lunch together, has turned into an always growing list of over 180 that get invitation each year. Tonight there are about three dozen Marines and around 20 guests. For many of the Marines this is the highlight of their yearly social calendar.

This event is steeped in tradition: First is the social hour that brings together friends and comrades at arms. As the Marines young and old moved around the room greetings of “happy birthday” could be heard through the laughter and fun. Next comes the reading of the 1921 message from Commandant Lejeune. Then we hear from the current Commandant, General David H. Berger, and he said in part, “Every Marine trains, prepares, 24-7 to get the phone call in the middle of the night that your unit's deploying. The phone call that you weren't expecting, but you're ready for...” adding, “Once a Marine, always a Marine is not just a slogan,” Berger said. “Here's to 244 years of success as a Corps.” Then there's the cutting of the birthday cake.

Each year it's determined which Marines are the youngest and oldest at the gathering, and they're led up to the cake. A sword is given to the oldest to cut the cake, and he gives the first slice to the youngest Marine. This was the third time my father got to cut the cake. Through the years it was always a WWII Marine that cut the cake, but unfortunately fewer of those fellows get to the birthday now-a-days. After the cake is cut there is a robust singing of the Marine Corps Hymn. Fortunately for my brother Rob and I, my dad taught us the song as kids and would have us marching around the living room singing all three verses. After cutting the cake, and while still holding the sword in a somewhat menacing fashion (Perhaps so no one would stop him from having his say), he had these words for the gathering of Marines – “It's because of all you men and women that we enjoy the freedoms and liberty we have today... Thank you, Happy Birthday and Semper Fi!” Well said dad. With that he handed the sword to the young Marine.

# Pathways to Democracy

## The Christmas Truce

By Doug Garnar

Had one been a cultural historian and anthropologist from Planet Bb in the Alpha Centauri Star system, visiting the Earth to do field work in 1492, the great empires of China, the Aztecs, Incas, the Ottomans, the Safavids and the Mughals would have all looked more powerful than the over 350 political units loosely call Europe. By 1914, Europe controlled 84% of the planet. At the same time, Europe had settled down into two rival alliance groups, expecting that sooner than later a war would break out.

In 1910 Norman Angell wrote a very successful book called *The Great Illusion*. He argued that should war break out it would produce an unprecedented economic/social catastrophe. He assumed that the great statesmen of the age would not leap into the abyss, and if they did the war would be over in a short period of time.

The Germans led the Triple Alliance (Germany, Austro-Hungary, Ottomans) and they counted on the Schlieffen Plan to help win a decisive victory in the West against the French and then turn their armies to the east to defeat the Tsarist Empire of Russia should a war begin. A terrorist assassination of the heir to the Austro-Hungarian Empire started the wheels in motion for what became known as the Great War (August 4, 1914). German Kaiser Wilhelm 11 confidently assured the German people that the victorious soldiers would be home Christmas. But the Schlieffen Plan failed and by early fall a static trench front war running from Switzerland to Belgium would emerge, resulting in the deaths of millions. War was no longer politics by other means. It had become hatred by other means. Over a dozen great battles were fought between 1914-18 with little to show but unprecedented death by the “machine gun,” barbed wire, artillery shells and poison gas.

Five peace treaties, the most famous being the Versailles treaty, would conclude the war with the “Allies,” led by the United States, winning the conflict. Yet, twenty years later WW 2 would begin in Poland and go on to result in massive civilian/military casualties, exceeding

Perhaps the real meaning of the 1914 Christmas Truce is the understanding that whatever our differences are, there is an underlying fundamental common humanity.

over 55 million dead, along with victims of genocide on an unprecedented scale, some 6 million Jews and a like number of “racially” sub humans as defined by the Nazis.

A major underlying force in both wars was the power of nationalism. On its worse days nationalism in the 20th century has identified those of a different nationality as the “other” and under the right circumstances has sought to eliminate them.

Despite the carnage of the 20 century and the creation of mass weapons of destruction to this very day, there have been pockets of humanity who have, however briefly, recognized the common humanity of us all. Perhaps one of the most dramatic illustrations of this was the famous “Christmas Truce of 1914.”

On Christmas eve, 1914, German troops began decorating Christmas trees with candles around their trenches near Ypres, Belgium. While singing German Christmas carols, including “Silent Night”. British troops began to reciprocate by singing English Christmas carols. It was a star studded cold night. Troops from both sides began to meet in “No Man’s Land” exchanging small gifts, most notably whisky and cigars. Dead soldiers who had been killed in No Man’s Land days earlier were retrieved to be buried behind the trenches. Soldiers from both sides joined in paying their respects to the fallen soldiers, with some soldiers from both sides reciting the 23rd Psalm. Some soldiers wrote their families about an informal soccer game that was held, with the Germans winning 3-2. During this most unusual Christmas evening, no artillery was fired. In some areas this informal truce continued until New Years Day. An earlier call in the Fall by Pope Benedict XV for a truce went unheeded by the High commands on both sides. But for a brief moment those soldiers who were witnessing a horror beyond comprehension, took matters into their own hands albeit for a short period of time.

Two years later on the Eastern Front there was a brief truce between Russian and German troops

The commanding generals on both sides vowed this would never happen again and threatened the death sentence for any soldiers who attempted to repeat the Christmas Truce of 1914. To ensure there would be no repeat truce, artillery barrages were order for each subsequent Christmas until the end of the war.

The events of the Christmas Truce have been captured in songs such as “Snoopy and the Red Baron” and “Christmas in the Trenches.” Perhaps the best known is a book by Stanley Weintraub, *Silent Night: The Story of the World War I Christmas Truce*. A film, *Merry Christmas*, about the Christmas Truce was produced in 2005 and was nominated for the best foreign film award at the 78th Academy Awards.

The Christian symbolism of the birth of Christ, the Prince of Peace, is obvious. But in the second half of the 19th century Marx would decry Christianity as the “opiate of the people,” while Nietzsche would proclaim that “God is Dead”. Perhaps the real meaning of the 1914 Christmas Truce is the understanding that whatever our differences are, there is an underlying fundamental common humanity. Virtually all the great religious traditions speak of the need to show love, compassion and empathy to the “other”— an antidote to murderous tribal passions of the modern era.

*Shalom to all,  
Doug Garnar*



### Doug Garnar

*Doug Garnar works with the Kettering Foundation and NIFI (National Issues Forums Institute) to help citizens find “pathways to democracy.” He has taught since 1971 at SUNY Broome Community College. He lives in Binghamton, NY.  
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### No Churn Vanilla Ice Cream - By T.Touris

This is the easiest way to make ice cream you'll ever find. It is also one of the richest and creamiest.

#### Ingredients:

- 2 cups heavy whipping cream
- 14 ounces sweetened condensed milk (not evaporate milk! I've made that mistake.).
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract (better yet, paste from a couple of vanilla beans)

#### Preparation:

Pour cream into a mixing bowl and beat until stiff peaks form.

With a rubber spatula, gently fold in the condensed milk and vanilla until combined.

With the spatula transfer the mixture to a cake pan or freezer container.

Place in freezer and wait apx. 6 hours for the ice cream to firm up.

Scoop into dishes and enjoy!

Optional mix-ins: ¼ cup of honey and ½ teaspoon sea salt.



And Laurie Phillips offered this addition to this perfectly simple & wonderful treat!

#### Creme de Menthe over Ice Cream

Chocolate and/or Vanilla Ice Cream using container size and spoon to fit your mood.

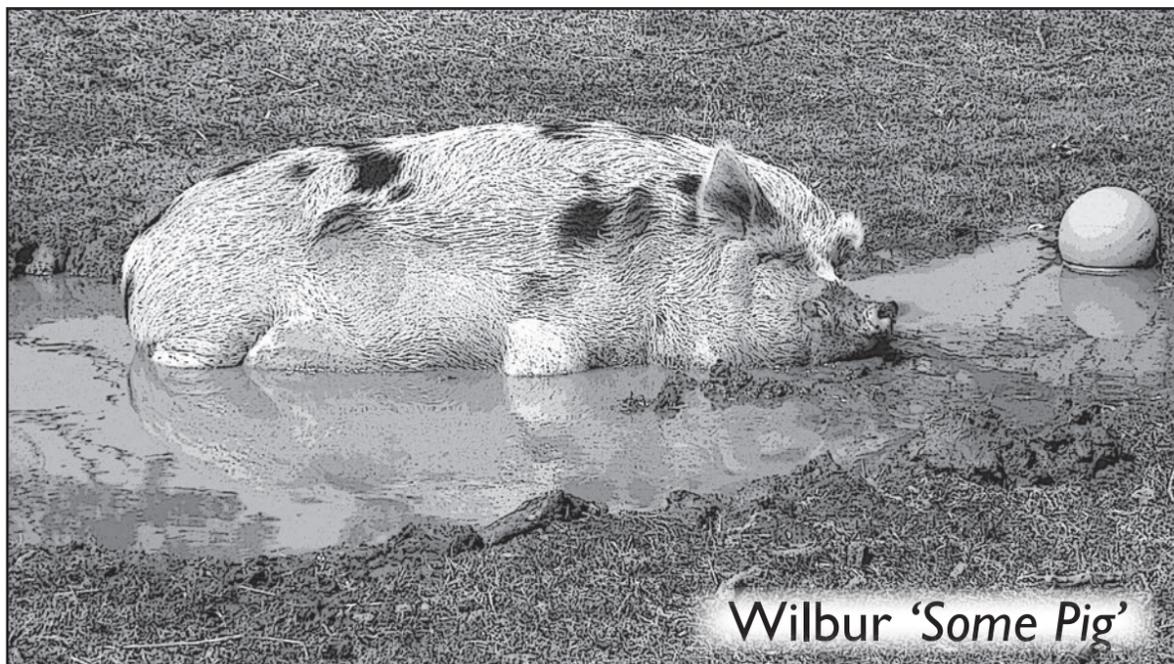
Cover ice cream with Creme de Menthe.

Enjoy!

# Dragonfly Tales

## Charlotte and Wilbur: The Odd Couple of Piggydom

by Steve Melcher



Wilbur 'Some Pig'

River Melcher

A visitor recently suggested that we train our pigs to become 'helper animals'. See above right for the requirements for a pig to become a therapy, emotional support, or service pig. Charlotte and Wilbur can do all of these. Not necessarily when anyone asks them to. They are perfectly capable of sitting and staying but seem to prefer eating and sleeping. Although the American Mini Pig Association has a rigorous training program, I think Charlotte and Wilbur are far too comfortable where they are here at Odonata Sanctuary and might not want to be sent to bovine boot camp. They seem to be perfectly happy in their porcine playground of piggy pleasures. Charlotte just turned 15 and Wilbur will be 17 in January. That's 74 and 82 in human years. These two are the most intelligent critters at the sanctuary, followed closely by Joey and my son Rowan. Maybe you can teach an old pig new tricks, but at this point in their lives, I'm just happy to see them getting up from the mud and making their way back to the barn.

### What are Mini-Pigs

Most of us have seen those cute smallish pigs with the beer belly swaying beneath them as they waddle along. Most of these pigs can be traced back to a fellow named Keith Connell who imported a few from Canada in the mid 80's. These first mini pigs were imported for zoos but soon caught the attention of folks who wanted something a little different. In America, where a buck is to be made with a buck and a doe or in this case, a sow and a boar, folks were soon breeding and selling mini porkers as quickly as Don Juan Chorizo sausages sell on a street corner in NYC. These first mini pigs were relatively large, all black, wrinkled, particularly around the face and are usually referred to as the foundation stock. Keith named them the "Con Line"; perhaps a double entendre. However, shortly after the original importation, at least two other "breed types" were brought into U.S.; the Lea Line" imported by Leavitt (gentle disposition, white and black markings, somewhat smaller) and

the Royal, imported by Espberger (mostly white, somewhat larger than the Lea Line). In fact, these pigs, Con, Lea and Royal represent most of the foundation stock found in America today. Except...in Wilbur's case. Wilbur is the result of a cross between a minipig, probably a Lea, and a regular farm pig. Farm pigs can average 500-700 lbs. The largest recorded pig, FYI, was a Poland China breed of hog that tipped the scales at 2,552 lb (1,157 kg). Luckily, Wilbur, was not bred with 'Big Bill' as he was known. But, Wilbur does come in at around 400 pounds. An average mini pig, like Wilbur's companion, Charlotte, weighs an average of 50 lbs, but may tip the scale at 200 lbs. Wilbur is not a minipig. One story that came with Wilbur, whose original name was Ludo (from Labyrinth fame), is that he was the result of a mini pig breeder who ran out of female breeder minis so she mated one of her mini-males to a full size farm sow. When folks came around to purchase the minipigs at \$200 a pop, she would keep the mama sow out in the barn and separate the piglets. No one could tell the piglets weren't minis....until a few weeks later. Most of the minipigs were living in folks homes, scratching at the door like a dog to go out and poop, being walked around like a little puppy or even attending Piggy Parties with other Pot Bellied Pigs. Wilbur, aka Ludo, was sold and lived very comfortably in a large house owned by a well known car dealer. Yes, Wilbur even appeared in a few TV commercials back in the day. But then Wilbur got to be too large for the house and would no longer fit in the car. The car dealer moved Wilbur outside to the pool house. Wilbur wouldn't eat, lost weight and became 'forlorn and lethargic'. To her credit, the car dealer, pig purchaser, found Wilbur a friend named Charlotte. Charlotte was purchased at a local 'pet store', something we discourage whether it's a pig, a pup, a python or a pallas cat. There are plenty of critters out there that need a good home, and your local humane society is a wonderful place to find someone to care for. We're glad Wilbur has Charlotte. The original owner found a nice

### Required skills:

- Sit •Come/Recall •Stay •Leave it/Out/Back •Gentle Treat Taking •Harness & Leash •Stairs/Ramps •Walking in crowds •Accepting of Touch to Body

### Other requirements:

- Your pig must be spayed/neutered.
- You must complete the course to qualify for certification. You will hold Therapy-Pet-in-Training status until you have completed all the requirements.
- Pigs under 1 year will be certified as Therapy-Pets-in-Training upon completion of the program and may resubmit at 1 year of age to become a certified Therapy Pet.

farm for the two pigs but the farmer's health soon declined and Wilbur and Charlotte needed to find a new home. The farmer offered the two to Lollypop Farm where we found them over 10 years ago. They don't get around much anymore in their golden years, but they snuggle in the Piggy Cave, thankful to have someone to spoon with on cold winter nights. They both cuddle and exchange snores under a sign that Charlotte made that says 'Some Pig'.

### Vietnamese Pot-bellied

#### *Sus scrofa domesticus*

Vietnamese Pot-bellied is the exonym for the Lon I, or I pig, an endangered traditional Vietnamese breed of small domestic pig. The Lon I pig is also known as the 'I' pig, which would make a great movie title: 'I Pig' (maybe a cross between 'I Robot' and 'Animal Farm'). The I pig is considered an invasive species in Spain. Release of the Vietnamese pot-bellied into the wild, possession, transport and commerce of the breed are forbidden. Small numbers of I pigs were exported in the 1960s to Canada and Sweden, to be kept in zoos or to be used for laboratory experiments. Within a decade, the I had spread to animal parks in other countries in Europe; a few were reared on small farms. The I entered the United States from Canada in the mid-1980s as mentioned above, and by the end of the decade the "pot-bellied pig" was being marketed as a pet. Not all of these were purebred, and some grew to considerable size; the fad was short-lived and as a result sanctuaries are filled with companionless cob rollers.

### Steve Melcher

*Steve Melcher is the primary caretaker, hoof trimmer & poop scooper at Odonata Sanctuary, Mendon. His studies included using members of the Order "Odonata," as bioindicators of freshwater ecosystems. He has written/coauthored in journals, magazines, and books re: environmental literacy and ecological issues. Steve now works with environmental and educational organizations whose goal is to have "no child left inside".*

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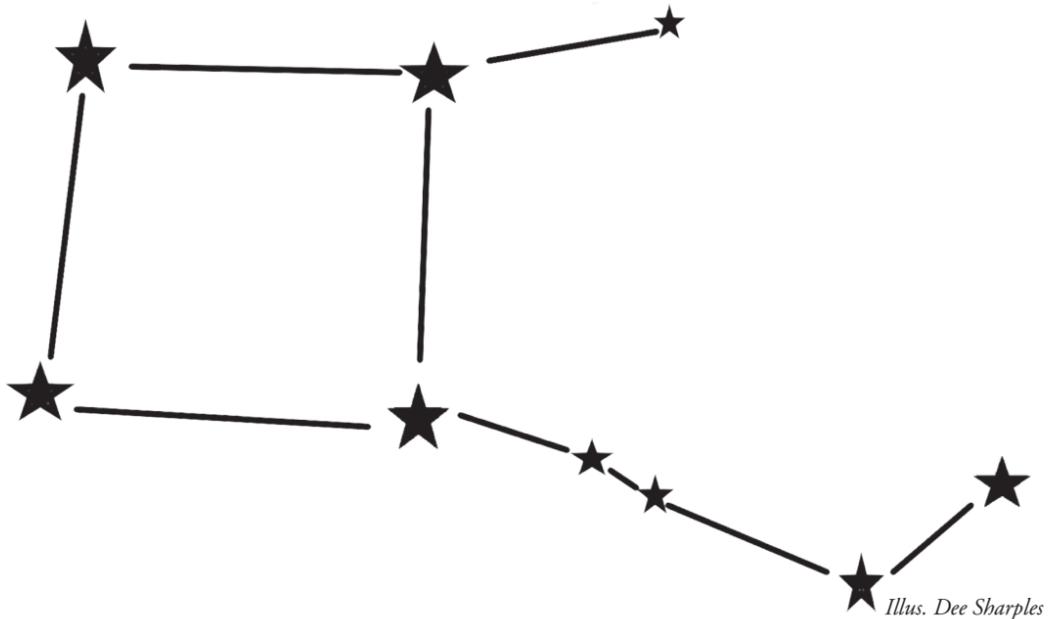
# The Night Sky - December

## Clear Sky Views and Winter Solstice



By Dee Sharples

### GREAT SQUARE OF PEGASUS



**D**arkness comes very early in December with short, often cloudy days, and cold weather. But the good news is that with less humidity in the atmosphere than in the summer, the clear night skies appear crystal clear. The colder air of winter cannot hold as much moisture as the warm air of summer. It's this moisture which interferes with the transparency of the summer night skies.

I always look forward to the winter solstice which arrives at 11:19 p.m. on December 21st. This is the moment the Earth, in its yearly trek around the sun, arrives at the point where our North Pole is tipped furthest away from the sun.

Picture a long pole going straight through the Earth from the North Pole to the South Pole. This pole isn't straight up and down but is tilted by 23.5 degrees. This represents the axis on which the Earth turns giving us day and night.

As Earth orbits the sun, the tilt of its axis always points in the same direction which means that as the days pass, different hemispheres of Earth will get the sun's direct rays.

When the Northern Hemisphere is tipped away from the sun, the sun is lower in our winter daytime sky and its rays are indirectly focused on us. Instead they're focused more directly on the Southern Hemisphere which experiences its summer. After the winter solstice, the Earth continues its journey around the sun and the Northern Hemisphere slowly begins to tilt once again toward the sun, eventually bringing us the warmer temperatures of spring.

Many people believe that Earth is closer to the sun in the summer and farther away in the winter and that's what causes our seasons. In fact, it's exactly the opposite! Distance from the sun has no influence on our seasons – it's all caused by the Earth's tilt.

On one of the crystal clear December nights we can anticipate, look for the Great Square of Pegasus halfway up from the southern horizon around 9:00 PM at the beginning of the month, 8:00 PM in the middle of the month, and 7:00 PM near the end. In Greek mythology, Pegasus was a divine winged white horse and the stars in this constellation depict

him soaring across the sky . . . up-side-down. A more modern description is that the constellation resembles a baseball diamond. It's easily recognized in the December sky and fun to point out to other people.

#### Dee Sharples

*Dee Sharples is an amateur astronomer who enjoys observing planets, star clusters and the Moon through her telescope. She is a member of ASRAS (Astronomy Section of the Rochester Academy of Science) and records "Dee's Sky This Month," describing what can be seen in the sky on the ASRAS website, rochesterastronomy.org.*





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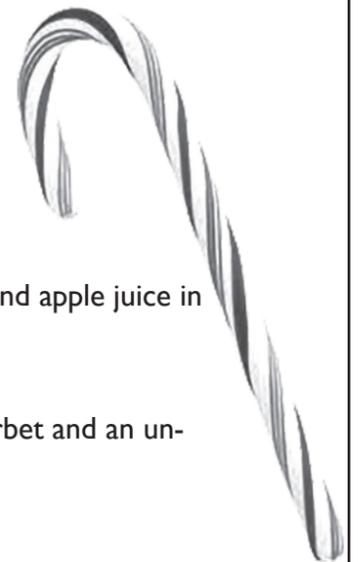
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### Raspberry Shrub - By Dee Sharples

A festive, non-alcoholic holiday beverage (Serves 4).

#### Ingredients:

- 3 cups 100% Cranberry Juice,
- 3/4 cup apple juice
- 1 pint raspberry sherbet
- Miniature candy canes



Preparation: Combine cranberry juice and apple juice in a pitcher. Stir and chill.

Pour juice into clear glasses.

Top each beverage with a scoop of sherbet and an unwrapped candy cane.

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# Bee Lines

## Winter in the Bee Yard

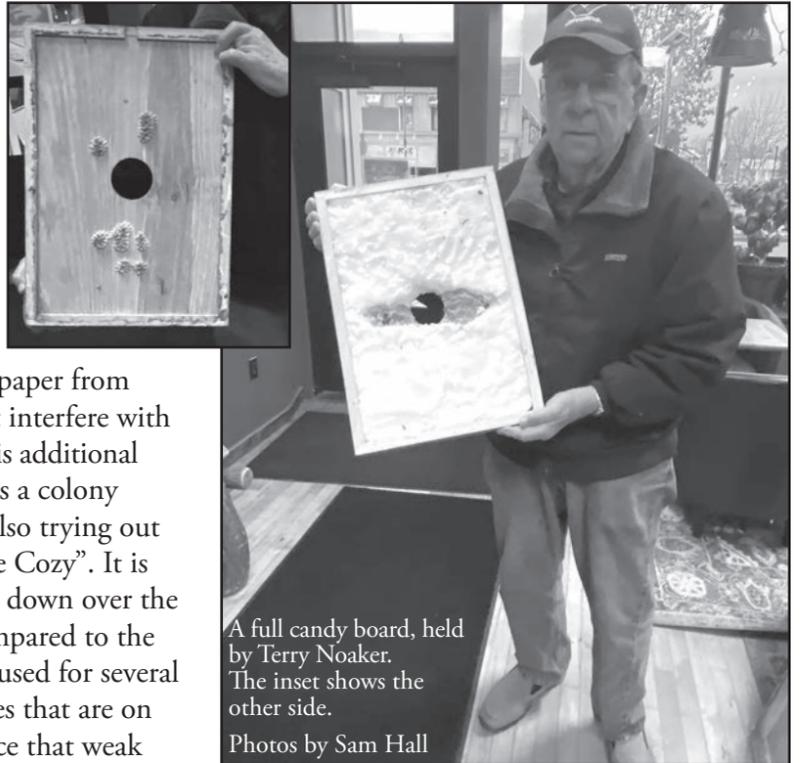
by Sam Hall



It is said that in Western New York there are really only two seasons, summer and winter. The current weather certainly seems to reaffirm that observation. I thought I had a lot of time to finish my winter preparations before we started having day after day of February temperatures. When the outside temperatures dip into the 40s most colonies will start to “cluster”. The cluster forms around the queen as she must live if the colony is to survive therefore she must be kept warm. The cluster generates heat by sort of shivering. A single bee shivering would not produce much heat but several thousand bees together shivering produces the necessary heat. The bees on the outside of the cluster are working their way inward and the bees on the inside are working their way outward so all get some cold and warmth. This is very similar to what penguins do in the Antarctic.

As a beekeeper there are a couple of things I do to help the bees through the winter. First, I try to make sure they have enough food, not only honey but pollen. Before the really freezing temperatures set in I will feed a syrup of 2 parts cane sugar to 1 part water. In the temperatures that we are experiencing now I use candy boards. A candy board is basically a wooden shim. The pictures illustrate what they look like better than I can describe them. Essentially it is an empty box on one side that you fill with a fondant or recently I have simply worked water into cane sugar so that it will set up and I also leave a space into which I put winter pollen. That is the brown substance

showing around the opening. The other side of the candy board has an outside entrance and a space for the bees to come up through and access the food on the opposite side. A full candy board is like adding a super of honey to a colony. Also I try to help exposed colonies survive by wrapping them with 15 wt. tar paper from ©Lowe’s, being sure that I don’t interfere with the bottom or top entrances. This additional edge may be the thing that helps a colony survive the cold. This year I’m also trying out a commercial wrap called a “Bee Cozy”. It is like a quilted blanket that slides down over the hive. It is quite expensive as compared to the tar paper but I’m told it can be used for several years. I also look for any colonies that are on the weak side. It is my experience that weak colonies left alone will not make it through a western New York winter, even with plenty of stores. I combine them with a stronger colony for the winter using the newspaper method. You can also use a double sided screened board to put the weaker colony atop of a strong colony for additional heat in the winter. I have on occasion successfully done this but last year I did it and lost both colonies. I will probably still do it again but will try to make sure that the bottom colony is not only strong but super strong as they are furnishing heat for two colonies.



A full candy board, held by Terry Noaker. The inset shows the other side.  
Photos by Sam Hall

It is impossible to be a beekeeper and not also be at least an amateur philosopher. Unfortunately I do not have the exact words but others do, so I end with this Arab proverb:  
"When you shoot an arrow of truth,  
dip its point in honey."

### Sam Hall

*Sam Hall is a Western NY beekeeper who first worked bees as a child growing up on a “dirt farm” in Allegany County, NY. He has kept bees for most of his adult life and believes that his mistakes “far outnumber his successes.”*

## Mbatata, a.k.a. Malawian Sweet Potato Cookies

If you have grown up since the advent of TV trays and ketchup-themed casserole dishes, then the holiday recipe for candied yam casserole is probably familiar to you: mix brown sugar, butter, a can of yams, put it all in a Pyrex dish and sprinkle mini-marshmallows on top before sticking in the oven.

Even as a child, I never really liked candied yams casserole. Its sweetness is cloying, whether it is served as a dessert or with the main course. This year, I want to educate myself on some rich traditions that predate television and food cultures that somehow found ways to make do without access to mini marshmallows.

Much of what we call “soul food” in American cuisine has roots that are deep in the African continent and go far back in time. What we know as sweet potato pie dates back to the earliest colonial days, when African-American slaves in the American south began adapting traditional African dishes. They replaced African yams with sweet potatoes.

What we call yams, and what we buy in cans that are labeled “yams,” are in fact not yams at all but North American sweet potatoes (which are not related to potatoes at all, but belong to the vining Morning Glory family.) Yams and sweet potatoes are quite different foods, from both a culinary and a horticultural point of view.

“Yam,” by the way, is an African word that means “to eat.” African yams have long been a staple root crop on that continent, storing well in root cellars when the growing season has ended. In most of Africa, including Malawi, the growing season ends during the rainy wet periods, when the ground is too saturated for anything to grow. Generally speaking, culinary traditions are ones that survive because the local culture itself has developed the wisdom and practices that allow them to survive. And yams are a remarkably nutritious food, whether eaten as a dessert or in one of the many delicious main course dishes developed in places like Nigeria and Malawi.

### Mbatata, a.k.a. Malawian Sweet Potato Cookies (pronounced “MM-ba-TA-ta”) - Submitted by Derrick Gentry

(Thanks to Sarah Ozimek at [curiouscuisinere.com](http://curiouscuisinere.com) for passing this along.)

- Ingredients:**
- 1/2 cup mashed sweet potatoes (try to get fresh ones, not canned).
  - 2 Tbsp unsalted butter, melted
  - 1/4 cup brown sugar
  - 1 cup unbleached all-purpose flour
  - 2 tsp baking powder
  - 1/4 tsp salt
  - 1 tsp cinnamon
  - 1/4 cup raisins

Preheat oven to 375°F.

**Preparation:** In a large bowl, mix mashed sweet potatoes and melted butter. Add flour, brown sugar, baking powder, and salt. Mix well until a soft dough forms.

OVER...

Add the raisins and mix into the dough.

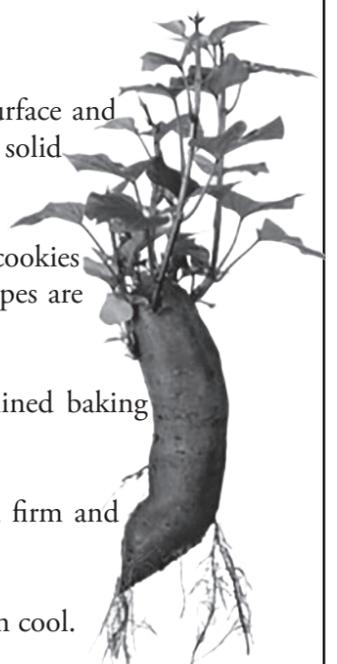
Turn the dough out onto a well-floured surface and knead it a few times until the dough is solid enough to roll out.

Roll the dough 1/2 inch thick and cut the cookies with a cookie cutter (apparently, heart shapes are traditional).

Place the cut cookies onto a parchment lined baking sheet.

Bake the cookies for 12-15 minutes, until firm and slightly springy when touched.

Remove the cookies from oven and let them cool.





# The Homestead Gardener

## Growth Mindsets and Garden Success



By Derrick Gentry

As the growing season and the calendar year both approach their end, the end-credits rolling on the former some weeks before the latter, I have been gifted some moments of leisure to reflect upon the past year and to begin drafting in my mind some resolutions for the year to come. Right now, I am thinking about the difference between having a “growth mindset” versus a “fixed mindset.”

These are concepts made famous by Carol Dweck in her 2006 book *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* (one of those books that I know a lot about second-hand, but which I have not actually read). My son, who attends elementary school, recently brought home some material indicating that he had been introduced to the growth/fixed distinction at school. I am always fascinated by what my son is learning in elementary school these days, compared with what I recall learning at that grade level. The elementary school curriculum seems far more sophisticated these days than I recall, but it is comforting to see that there is still plenty of room for glue sticks and glitter and crayons (with 120 colors still in the unabridged edition of the Crayola box).

We did not have much to say in our after-school chat about these two mindsets or why they are worth talking about. My son seems to appreciate that “growth” means something positive, and “fixed” vaguely connotes a not-so-positive limitation or shortcoming (something like flexibility versus rigidity). It’s good to get an early start thinking about such things, though of course there are further distinctions that are worth talking about if the topic ever comes up again. More is not always better, as we all know, and “growth for the sake of growth,” as Edward Abbey famously observed, “is the ideology of the cancer cell.” We also need to consider different ways of defining “success.” In spite of these possible misreadings, Dweck’s original point had nothing to do with economic growth or reckless expansion or imperialism. She was talking about mindsets: our freedom to define our own goals, and to define ourselves, based on our evolving sense of a right and successful and satisfying way to live.

And that brings me back to my end-of-year meditations. If you are gardener like I am, then you are probably thinking about supply and demand, growth and degrowth, from the practical standpoint of home economics (a subject no longer taught to schoolchildren). Growing food is easy; the real challenge is preserving it and not being overwhelmed by the sheer volume of it. It is time to take an honest look at that compost pile and take note of the food that got away from you and rotted and went to seed; time to take an honest look at those mason jars filled with uneaten food that are still sitting on the pantry shelves more than a year later. Yes, a surplus means good news, and we instinctively prefer booms to busts. But a cornucopia can also be a symbol for waste and decadence. (What did Carmen Miranda do with that hat full of fruit at the end of the work week? I hope it didn’t go straight to landfill, I would imagine a compost pile is not always nearby if you are traveling in show business.)

Two seasons ago, we dabbled in market gardening and scaled up our planting of veggies in order to sell them at a local farmers market. I remember we grew an assortment of salad greens, and every time we came back from market with loads of surplus greens submerged in cool water. The entire project soon felt like a mistake. We ate a lot of salad greens that year, and I even came to resent the rows and rows of them in staggered plantings. We were eating greens simply because we did not want them to go to waste. A good portion of the unsold and uneaten greens that we had grown and harvested became a negligible addition to our compost pile. Nothing went to “waste” as organic matter. Thinning, harvesting, washing, transporting – that, however, felt like a waste.

Whether growing for the market or growing for ourselves, the winter months are the perfect time to adjust our growth mindset in anticipation of the next growing season. It is time to think seriously about what was worth the trouble of growing at all this past year; what we want to grow more of next year; what we grew too much of and will want to grow less of next time; and to reflect upon those experiments that were worth trying once, but maybe not again. I have already made my short list based on this past season’s experience:

- Potatoes: Bring ‘em on! I cannot grow too many (though I would like to grow fewer fingerlings and more of the less exotic standbys, like plain old Kennebecs).

- Chiapas Tomatoes: These are wonderfully prolific and very tasty cherry tomatoes, and they are bred for the tiny finger of children who like candy-sweet snacking tomatoes. But there are only so many fingers to pick them, and they easily grow in excess of demand. Next year, one plant at most; replace all the others with good old Amish pastes for canning.

- Zucchini: Talk about growth for its own sake! One hill of zucchini is one hill too many. Must have at least one zucchini plant per year. Which is one too many. As usual, table this conundrum for next year’s agenda... (and plant that zucchini come June)

- Celeriac: It is a slow-growing and sometimes high-maintenance vegetable during the hot weeks of summer, but my family loves celeriac remoulade, and makes a fine soup and mixes well with mashed potatoes, and it is easy to ferment. We grew enough celeriac to give away to friends who had never tried it before ... so we will see how many “thank you” cards we receive before we grow surplus crop next year.

- Watermelon Radish: This is an aesthetically pleasing veggie, its bright red center with a mesmerizing pattern reminiscent of kiwi fruit. And it does not have the strong taste of most radishes. The problem is that its taste does not live up to its visual appeal. Watermelon radish is on the “maybe” list; we will revisit the question come August of next year, the time to seed it for the Fall.

- Malabar Spinach: What is not to love? Malabar spinach has great aesthetic beauty, it is a vining plant that fills out a trellis in a most becoming way, it has lovely flowers, and it thrives in heat and drought when the other neurotic varieties of spinach are bolting and go-

ing bitter. My family loves Saag Paneer, moreover, which requires large quantities of spinach. What is not to love? Well, there is something. Unlike Bloomsdale spinach, Malabar is unavoidably slimy when cooked, the slimy texture of okra. It took us a few seasons to fully acknowledge the situation. We really wanted to love this plant, but it is time to be honest with ourselves and with our dinner guests and grow this spinach only as an ornamental. Maybe not at all.

### Of Pilgrimage and Progress

I love the Amish way of defining a “growth mindset,” particularly with regard to economic growth and the adoption of new technologies (two closely related questions). Many of us assume that newer and bigger and faster are better, that Progress and innovation are waves that we must surf upon if we want to succeed in the world. Those with “fixed mindsets,” those who are unwilling or unable to adapt, are the ones who get left behind.

The Amish simply do not buy into that thinking. For them, growth must also be spiritual growth; we are all on a pilgrimage to heaven, all of us in transit on our way to that ultimate form of “success,” and any decisions we make along the way should be evaluated in terms of how those changes in our lives contribute to that long-term process of spiritual growth. The Amish are truly fearless and independent thinkers -- one sign of which is that Amish people seem to be immune to FOMO (“Fear Of Missing Out”).

There is obviously nothing wrong with yearning for new things, and in the Amish ritual known as “rumspringa” young people are encouraged to leave home and explore the world for themselves. One other manifestation of a growth mindset is to feel that you have outgrown your surroundings: the growth mindset known as “wanderlust.” As George Bailey says of his home of Bedford Falls: “I’m shakin’ the dust of this crummy little town off my feet, and I’m gonna’ see the world!” George Bailey was clearly not in the mood for planting a garden, at least not at that early stage of the movie.

But if you have a garden and care for lots of animals, you inevitably become rooted to a local place -- for good and for bad. Building soil is a long-term project, and most fruit trees you plant this year will not begin to bear fruit until many seasons have passed. Here, then, is another interesting thought experiment for the end of the year: When would be the ideal time to transition away from this long-term project? When would be the best (worst) time to relocate? What could we take with us, and what would we have to abandon?

The answer, of course, is that there is never a good time, and we always have to abandon and sacrifice something. That is how we measure continuity and rootedness.

I know of someone who has spent years tending to the same plot of land, patiently building soil and living life according to the rhythm of the seasons, and who must now relocate in the middle of December -- in our area, just past the deadline for planting seed garlic and shallots for the following season.

Continued page 13

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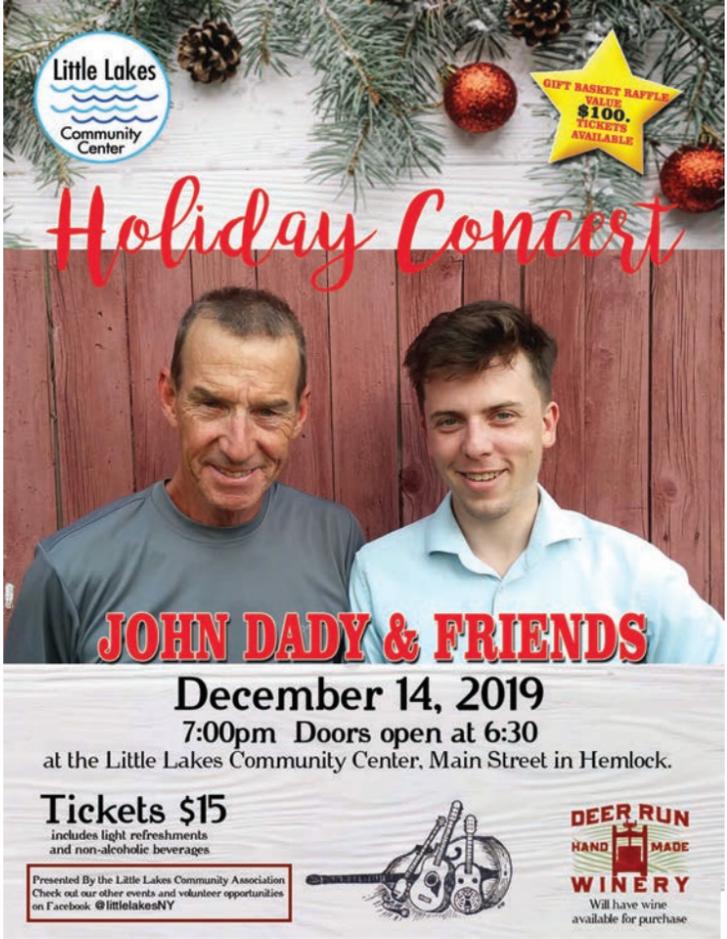

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## December Events

Deck the Walls--A Group Holiday Exhibit  
November 29, 5-8pm -West End Gallery  
12 West Market Street, Corning, NY  
[www.westendgallery.net](http://www.westendgallery.net)

Holiday Cookie Exchange - Tuesday, December 10, 6:30 pm-  
Bring 5 dozen cookies to share. Leave with 5 dozen varieties!  
Bring an ornament of a value no more than \$8 for exchange.  
Enjoy some holiday fun with friends and neighbors!  
Little Lakes Community Center, 4705 S. Main St., Hemlock

PYTCO Presents "Christmas Attitudes"  
December 14 at 2pm and 6pm - Keuka Candy Emporium  
131 Main Street, Penn Yan - \$8 General Admission  
Tickets available at [pytco.org/shows](http://pytco.org/shows) or at the door

Holiday Concert with John Dady and Friends  
Saturday, December 14, Doors open 6:30 pm. Admission \$15,  
includes light refreshments and non-alcoholic beverages.  
Tickets may be purchased at the door or at [LittleLakesNY.org](http://LittleLakesNY.org)  
Little Lakes Community Center, 4705 S. Main St., Hemlock

Ugly Christmas Sweater Murder Mystery Party  
Friday, December 20, 7-10 pm  
Interactive dinner and dancing. - Admission: \$35 inc. a variety of  
hot and cold appetizers.  
Little Lakes Community Center, 4705 S. Main St., Hemlock

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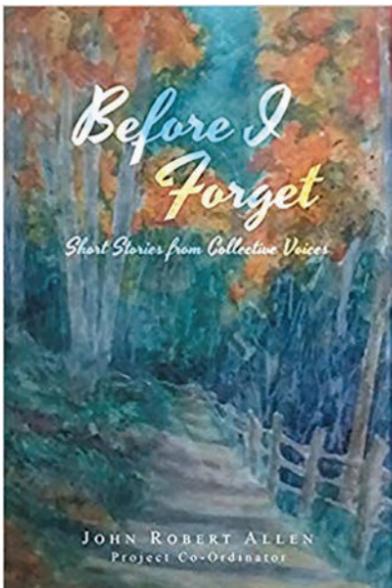
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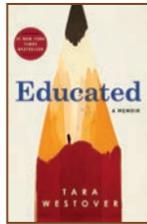


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*Educated* ~ by Tara Westover  
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Hours: Mon. & Thurs. 2-8, Tues. - 10 - 8, Sat. 9-1 [honeoye.owwl.org](http://honeoye.owwl.org)

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 \*20 Pleasant St, Canandaigua

Rising Storm Brewing - Livonia ~ every Thursday, 7-9 pm. Acoustic Open Mic Hosted by Steve West  
 ~ \*All ages and talent levels are welcome  
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The Lobby Craft Eatery - every Thursday, 6-9 pm.  
 With rotating hosts. 3530 E Lake Rd, Canandaigua  
 ~ [www.lobbycrafteatery.com](http://www.lobbycrafteatery.com)

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 Literary 157 Main St Canandaigua, NY  
 Co-hosted by Steve Lewandowski & Scott Williams. Rotating guests plus open slots each month.

Dublin Corners Farm Brewery ~ Fridays, 7-9pm!  
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 - <https://www.dublincornersfarm.com/>

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 - [info@brewandbrats.com](mailto:info@brewandbrats.com)

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## THE SKY ON A DECEMBER EVE

by William Preston

I watched the sun slide down the sky,  
and Saturn followed, by and by.  
Then Venus's crescent gleam shone bright  
until she, too, fell out of sight  
to leave a black, triumphant night  
of sparkling stars in full delight.

The Bull began the evening's show  
with clustered Pleiadean glow;  
Auriga watched the Twins at play;  
the Dogs held vernal skies at bay;  
Orion turned the black to grey  
as Mars bestrode the Milky Way.

And then I saw, in the eastern haze,  
the Lion's fixed and curving gaze  
as all the western stars took wing  
at this, the sign of lurking spring,  
though wintertime had yet to bring  
its blasts of wind and shivering.

When morning came, I realized  
that time had mimicked turns of tide:  
the sundown sky commenced with fall;  
by morning, spring had paid a call;  
and in between, and overall,  
winter had flowed through heaven's hall.

## Writing Groups

Warsaw's Write Connection  
2nd Tuesday, 6:45 PM ~ Warsaw Public Library  
For more information, contact Wendy at (585) 786-5290

Wayne Writers Group, Macedon  
2nd and 4th Tuesdays, 7-9 pm. ~ At Books ETC., by Post 494.  
Goal: To Intensify Creativity

Lakeville, NY ~ Poets' & Writers' Group  
1st and 3rd Wednesdays, 10:30-12pm  
~ Chip Holt Ctr., Vitale Park.

The Canandaigua Writers' Group  
1st Friday of the month from 10 am to 12:30 pm.  
~ Ewing Family Community Room, Wood Library ~

## Reading Groups

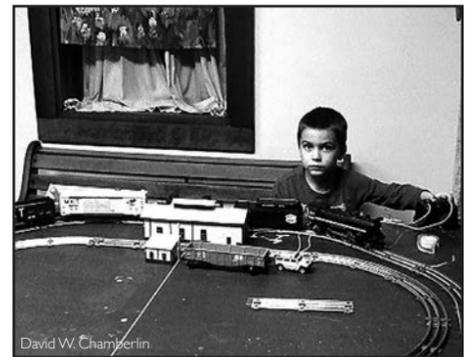
Honeoye Public Library Book Talk Group  
4th Wednesday, 5:30pm, library conference room.  
See ad page 11 for upcoming titles: or 585-229-5020

New Age Book Study  
Wednesdays at 4 pm ~ Warsaw Public Library  
Hosted by Trinity Episcopal Church.  
Find book details @ trinitywarsaw.org.

## Down by the Station

By Kate Chamberlin

“All Aboard!” I announced,  
as the morning dawned,  
walking across the broad,  
originally rough-hewn planks,  
now grey and worn smooth  
by a myriad of travelers. When  
I reached the red caboose, I  
held the side grab-bar with  
my right hand and raised the  
lit lantern in my left hand, a  
signal to the engineer that all  
was copesthetic to go.



My grandson, Connor J. Tiffany, as the conductor.

The old-fashioned little steam engine, named the Miss Udall, wasn't sleek as an eel like her modern diesel cousins, but her dependability couldn't be denied. For many decades, she hauled interesting people, fresh produce, hooved and clawed critters, and goods around the 7, 320 square mile lake.

The black coal car was the first of five behind Miss Udall. The anthracite coal fueled the boiler to make the steam that ran her powerful engines. When the engineer saw my lantern raise, he pushed the throttle forward and Miss Udall's joints shooshed streams of steam, as the steel wheels squealed and slipped until they grabbed a purchase on the steel rails to head East.

The car in front of my caboose accommodated the passengers who'd boarded at the station. As a repurposed caboose, it had many amenities for the few passengers traveling to and from the stations Miss Udall serviced.

Miles and miles of verdant green forests slipped by as Miss Udall chugged up hill and down. The logging camp located near the first cut forest was ready for us. While two loggers de-boarded, others ran the machinery to load logs onto the dark brown logging car with its verticals to hold the huge logs on the bed. Miss Udall would transport these to the lumbermill to supply pine, oak, and ash for the city folks's fine tables, chairs, and etageres.

“All aboard!” I called and raised my lantern.

At a co-op dairy on the northside of the lake, we left empty milk cans and loaded on full cans. The big silver cans clunked against each other as they slid along the slick floor of the white, insulated milk car. Fresh workers de-boarded to start their shifts, as tired workers in rumpled white work coveralls boarded, ending their shifts.

“All aboard!” I announced again, lifting my lantern.

Miss Udall's powerful engines puffed and chuffed. The engineer tooted her air horn for joy as she hauled her five cars passed small farms dotting the lush meadows with a plethora of placid cows and woolly sheep. She went up the gently rolling hills with scores of tiny wildflowers on each side of the tracks, through the tunnel that amplified her tooting horn, and over the trestle bridge.

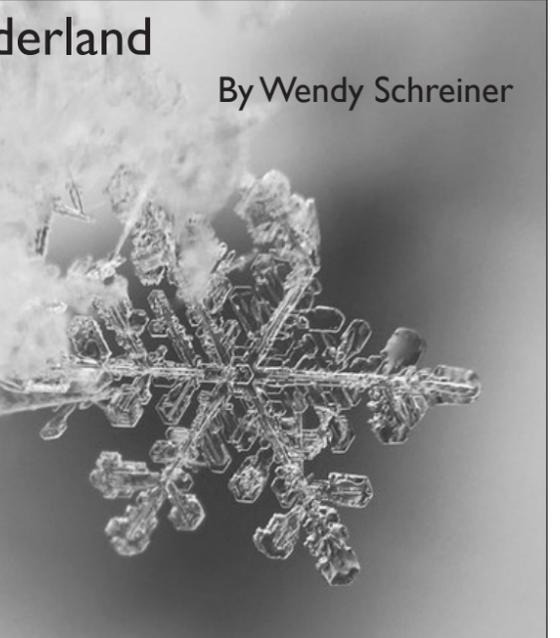
She delivered the logs to the lumber mill; the milk to the milk distribution plant; and rolled to a stop at the train's depot as the western sky blazed with hues of the setting sun one could only imagine. A day's work well done for Miss Udall and this conductor.

As my grandchildren cheered, I stood tall and proud as a statue on a plinth in the center of my HO Train's little community.

## Winter Wonderland

By Wendy Schreiner

Snow is flying  
fluttering down  
intricate patterns  
lack unique  
covering earth below  
blanketing the world  
in crystal white  
making this place  
a winter wonderland



# The Monthly Read

*If Only You Could Tell*

*The Trouble with Goats and Sheep*  
By Joanna Cannon  
368 pp (hardcover)  
Scribner (2016)



By Mary Drake

- A review of *The Trouble with Goats and Sheep*, by Joanna Cannon

Books with interesting titles always intrigue me, which may be part of the reason why I chose to read *The Trouble with Goats and Sheep*. Well, that and the fact that the protagonist of the story is only ten years old. It strikes me that although we often recall incidents from our childhood and perhaps the way we felt, still, most of us find it hard to truly remember how we looked at the world as a young child, which is why writing in the persona of a young child poses unique challenges.

The heroine of this mostly realistic story is Gracie, and her friend Tilly. If they sometimes seem a bit naive, perhaps that's because the novel takes place in an earlier time period—1976, during a great heat wave and drought that Great Britain suffered that summer. As is so often the case, the setting is like a character in itself, since the heat makes tempers flare, and the drought is perhaps a symbol of the characters' lack of awareness and failure to be compassionate.

Gracie and Tilly live on the Avenue and all the residents of the Avenue have a part to play in what happens. In fact, they're known by their address; chapters begin with titles like #4, the Avenue; #11, the Avenue, etc. Some of these residents we might even recognize from our own neighborhoods: May Roper, the busybody and domineering mother; the couple Dorothy and Harold Forbes, she the worry wort, him the know-it-all; the crazy, here represented by John Creasy, an obsessive/compulsive who counts the steps from the living room to his front door, and Margaret Creasy, his wife, whom everyone loves because she's such a good listener and so understanding.

The book begins with Margaret Creasy's disappearance, and throughout the rest of the novel Grace and Tilly are trying to find her.

Like most children, they take things literally, so when the vicar tells them that "if God exists in a community, no one will be lost," Grace and Tilly set out to find God in their neighborhood and ask that Mrs. Creasy be brought back. Unfortunately, the Bible also says that "All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left." That's where the title comes in, because the trouble with sheep and goats is that it's hard to tell the difference. Although the characters may first appear as sheep, they all have some goat-like qualities. Everyone has a dirty secret they're hiding, whether it's having starting a fire, assisting in a death, or having a teen-age abortion. And Grace and Tilly can't find God anywhere.

Yet despite all the evil that exists, and even though the girls must grow up and leave their child-like innocence behind, the novel is still hopeful. The mystery of Mrs. Creasy's disappearance drives the narrative forward, creating suspense even as the reader learns more and more about those who live on the Avenue. They all have a desperate need for community, even in the midst of their unavoidable loneliness. That is why Enid, a 93-year-old woman, dies alone and her body is not discovered until a week later. That is why Eric Lamb talks to the rocking chair where his wife used to sit when she was alive. That is why Walter Bishop, the novel's scapegoat, is so vilified, because he lives alone and has trouble getting along with people; he's outside the community. Supposedly Walter is responsible for everything bad that happens on The Avenue, and the camaraderie of neighborliness can quickly turn into vigilante violence.

In a 2016 article entitled "Meet the new

faces of fiction for 2016" from Britain's newspaper, *The Guardian*, Joanna Cannon is quoted as saying that "We need to be kinder to people who stand at the edge of the dance floor. . . . Social isolation is so damaging. The judgments we make of people aren't always right. I wanted to convey that in a story."

So is Walter Bishop an unbalanced child stealer? Did he have something to do with Margaret Creasy's disappearance? Does he know who started the fire in his home that killed his aged mother? Did he tell Margaret what he knew? And is that why she left? The book is as much a whodunit as a thoughtful examination of human nature, which is what makes it worth reading—it can be read on more than one level.

This was Joanna Cannon's debut novel, and it garnered her many prizes and awards. From there she's gone on to write *Three Things about Elsie*, a novel published in 2018, and *Breaking and Mending*, a memoir published just this year. It's not surprising that she considers the inner workings of peoples' psyches so closely, since that's her job in real life as a psychiatrist. Before that, she also listened to peoples' stories while holding down a number of unskilled jobs, such as barmaid and pizza delivery person. In a recent article from *The Guardian*, Cannon is quoted as saying the "Lives can be saved by spotting something lying hidden in a history . . . . Lives can be saved by listening to someone who has spent their entire life never being heard." Sounds to me like the kind of doctor you would like to have, and definitely an author worth reading.

Mary Drake

Mary Drake is a novelist and freelance writer living in western New York. Visit her online at [marydrake.org](http://marydrake.org) to learn more about her books

## Growth Mindsets... from 9

He is now contemplating the thought of living in exile with hundreds of locally adapted seed garlic that he has replanted in the same spot year after year. He is making arrangements with friends and family to plant them in various plots of ground, so that he can gather the seed together for a reunion planting next October. By that time, though, they will have begun to adapt to their new local conditions. He plans to leave some seed behind in the old garden bed, to be harvested by the hands of a stranger he may never meet.

Someone else I know recalls a job interview in which he decided on the spot to give an honest and unconventional answer to the question of why he wanted the job: "Because I love these parts, and I want to settle down and make a compost pile." He did get the job, thereby allowing him to put down his roots; and the compost pile he made has now been in continuous business for two decades.

There is no denying the fact that gardening is an activity meant for those who have settled down. How many times have we heard some-

one say it, or how often thought it to ourselves: "I simply don't have time to garden, with my work schedule; and I can't start a garden until I have settled down somewhere for good." Not everyone enjoys the privilege of staying in one place for more than a season, or having full stewardship rights to the land on which they live. Even fewer of us have the luxury of time outside of work to tend to our gardens and be the good stewards that we want to be. Homelessness and uprootedness are to some extent matters of degree and states of mind.

And we are all to some extent slaves to someone else's growth imperative, our goals set by others. We must go where the jobs are. Whether we stay home or go off out into the world, we all have to get with the program and at some point, like George Bailey in *It's a Wonderful Life*, we begin thinking about questions of spiritual growth and how that aligns with other metrics for success. The yearning for place and the desire to settle down are also, in their own way, products of a growth mindset. Perhaps you are reading this column because you have some faith in

that possibility of a life in which you can live in a more grounded way, putting down your roots somewhere and making your own compost pile. My thoughts and hopes are with you.

Should we think of winter, the end of the calendar year, as a death or a birth? That may sound like a Nativity-themed question. But it's actually an old question, regardless of one's faith or how one celebrates the season. Most religions have their roots in pagan rituals anyway, and those rituals have always been tied to making symbolic sense of seasonal changes. Unsubtle Spring lends itself easily to symbolism. Winter is a harder season to read. Like most things, I suppose it is whatever we make of it. The changing seasons meanwhile carry on with their own growth mindset, cycling round and moving ahead, always making something of it. Time for us to shake off the dust and start planning ahead for next year's pilgrimage.

*Peace and good will to you, dear readers.  
See you on the path...*

Derrick Gentry

Derrick Gentry lives in Canadice with his wife and son, and numerous furred and feathered friends. He teaches in the Humanities Department at Finger Lakes Community College.  
E-mail: [Derrick.Gentry@fccc.edu](mailto:Derrick.Gentry@fccc.edu).



# Simple Sustainability

## Greener Holidays



By Sky Trombly

**W**e have come around again to short days and long nights. We've cycled back to the chilly season and the need to warm our hearts with the winter holidays. Everywhere we go, from schools, town centers, neighborhoods, offices, our car's radio and even streaming on Netflix is the consistent call to: celebrate!

Nowhere is this more evident than in the stores. However, the call to celebrate is given in the common vernacular and is pronounced, most distinctly, as: "Shop!"

It is easy to get swept up in all of this, but to survive it all, with our wits in tact, we need to come at the holidays with thoughtful care. It is useful to consider: What is meaningful to us? What is meaningful to our loved ones? What just causes us stress? What unnecessary sacrifices have we made in the past?



### Prioritize & Simplify

We don't have to approach the holidays like Martha Stewart. We don't have to "do it all" or do anything "perfectly". We can, instead, focus on what we most love and what our loved ones most love.

I had my family members determine their top 3 holiday priorities. Our list ended up looking a little like this:

- Activities Done Together •Gifts •Food (especially sweets)
- Religious Observances •Visiting •Decorations •Scents •Music

The first thing brought up by most was spending time together. This could be anything, but neglecting this part diminishes the holiday like nothing else. This is where all the memories happen. Some things we like to do: bake and fry together, play games, read holiday books, watch movies, do crafts, and so on. We typically focus on one activity a night. This allows us to clean and recoup before the next activity and doing this keeps me sane. Every family has different needs and tolerance levels, obviously, but consider the pace that works for you. After we discovered what we most value, we chose to simplify in every category but we chose to pare down the most in the areas lowest on our list. Last on our list was music. We're not music haters here, but as a mother of three young children who hears Christmas music playing everywhere she goes, I know that silence can be golden. However, we do not have silent nights at our house. We have a special holiday CD in the van. That's honestly it. We can stream music online if we want to. Sometimes we get our instruments out and play or sing, but we're most likely to enjoy some conversation at home. I have a very low threshold for noise and I would rather spend my limited tolerance listening to my kids in a nurturing manner.

### The Three Biggies

#### Food

Last year, I received someone's inherited re-gift of a cookbook. It apparently has numerous elaborate Christmas recipes. I can't be certain, as I have no intention of unwrapping it from the plastic. I am fairly certain this is the tradition in my husband's family, kind of like the proverbial fruitcake, to be passed on to another hidden in wrapping paper and a bow.

Am I being unkind? I don't think so, I think we're experiencing a cultural shift. No longer do we expect the lead female of the family to spend hours on a feast enjoyed in mere minutes. As someone who doesn't enjoy cooking, I say: good riddance!

#### Why not shelter two birds with one house?

We use preparing food as a family activity. My husband makes gingerbread houses with the kids, I help them decorate menorah-shaped sugar cookies. Our kitchen usually smells like a fry joint and my younger boy will snatch raw onion from the preparation station because he's in the kitchen waiting for the next potato pancake. I'm not saying don't cook if that's your thing. I'm just saying: don't isolate yourself in the kitchen when the party is happening somewhere else.

#### Decorations

We don't go crazy with decorating our home. We have one plastic box in which we put a holiday streamers, 3 strands of lights we frame our front windows with, and a menorah. We also keep left-over candles.

To keep our collection down, we employ these rules:

Keep the collection to a box. (Or, if decorating is important to you, maybe a tote or two.) The point is to keep a literal lid on accumulation. It also makes finding decorations easier. Prefer reusable decorations over decorations intended to be thrown out. We buy very little each year to replace the consumables. Mostly, we buy candles. Avoid collections for the sake of collections. We started trying to collect tree ornaments every year for the kids. But we quickly began to feel little joy over the chore. We recognized that this habit wasn't fulfilling and ditched it. They now have a couple special ones they take to "Grandpa's" tree. Decorate "public" rooms, not private ones. You can cut down on a lot of decorations when you restrict your decorating to the living room, kitchen, and dining area. Who needs a Santa bed spread? Prefer seasonal decorations to holiday-specific ones. Not always possible, but some items, like kitchen towels with snowflakes can last all winter long.

Continued back page

### Holiday Sugar Cookies - By Sky Trombly

Some of the simplest things are the best!

#### Ingredients:

- ¾ cup Earth Balance (or other dairy-free margarine)
- ¼ tsp pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup raw sugar
- 2 ½ cups flour
- ½ cup applesauce
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp baking powder

Preparation: In a mixing bowl, cream Earth Balance and sugar together. Blend in the applesauce and vanilla. Add flour, salt, and baking powder. Combine to form dough. Cover in plastic wrap (or your favorite substitute\*) and chill about 1-2 hours.

Preheat oven to 350F.

OVER...



Roll out dough to about a quarter inch thick and use cookie cutters to form shapes.

Place cookies on a greased baking sheet and bake for 8-10 minutes or until just starting to brown. Cool completely before decorating.

Place cookies on a greased baking sheet and bake for 8-10 minutes or until just starting to brown. Cool completely before decorating.

*•I feel compelled to say that I have had great success freezing the dough in the mixing bowl covered by nothing more than a silicone cover or cloth. So if you're skipping out on plastic-wrap, this option has been tested out.*

Note: This dough is egg-less so no worries about the kids popping uncooked dough in their mouths on the sly.

# Crafting Your Own Cuisine

## Embracing Dietary Limitations

By Eileen Perkins

**M**y goal with this column is to provide people with more resources in cooking for special dietary needs. Whether reform is prompted by medical or ethical concerns, change can be challenging, over the long haul. Owing to the habits one has formed in mainstream culture, one often encounters both inner and external resistance, which might be assuaged with additional information about available resources and a dose of courage. I hope to help with that.

### Types of resources I am offering:

- Time and energy saving measures (efficiencies)
- Book references and short reviews
- New ingredient usage • Product reviews
- Favorite websites • Recipes



Photo by Eileen Perkins

### Eileen Perkins

*Eileen is a professional cook who supports a "Food-as-Medicine" model for wellness. She and her husband owned and operated "Eileen's Bakery an' Soup Kitchen" in Brockport, N.Y. and a cafe in Rochester. Her interest in special diets was reinforced while working in area natural food stores. Currently, when Eileen is not engrossed in recipe development, the preservation of food from the garden, or presenting special-needs food programs, she enjoys soaking in the quiet beauty of the woodland home she shares with her husband and pup, pursuing her Falun Gong practice, reading, and volunteering.*

### Peanut Butter Tarts (12 servings) - By Eileen Perkins

This is a no bake dessert, to be served frozen after sitting at room temp 30 minutes

#### Ingredients:

- 8 oz bag GF pretzels
- ½ cup Earth Balance Buttery Sticks, softened
- 2 Tbsp organic Sugar
- Salt, divided (1/8 tsp+3/4tsp)
- 13.5 oz. can coconut cream, refrigerated 24 hours before using. Resist temptation to shake
- 8 oz. GF DF Bittersweet or Semi-sweet chocolate, divided (4 oz.,
- 4 oz.)
- ½+ cup GF DF Almond Milk, Original, divided (2 Tbsp, 6 Tbsp)
- 4 tsp GF Vanilla Extract
- 6 Tbsp real Maple Syrup
- 12 oz. Silken Tofu, drained of excess water
- 12 4 inch tart pans, foil fine
- Finely chopped GF Salted Cocktail Peanuts (Optional)
- Grease for pans

**Preparation:** Open both ends of the can of coconut cream over a bowl and push the contents out of the can. You may encounter resistance here, but persist, careful not to get cut on the can. Scoop out a 1 cup lump of the solidified cream, selecting most firm. Refrigerate what remains for another purpose **OVER...**

\*Beet and coconut sugar and Certified U.S. Dept. of Agriculture organic sugar are are vegan friendly.

**Crust:** In food processor or blender, pulverize pretzels. Add softened Earth Balance, sugar and 1/8 tsp salt and mix completely together. Press 2 Tbsp 1 tsp of crumbs into each greased tart pan.

**Fillings:** 1) In a double boiler or microwave, carefully soften 4 oz. chocolate, stirring often. (Micro only 20-30 seconds at a time between stirring.) Stir in peanut butter. When heated through, add 2 Tbsp. almond milk stirring into a silken fudge. Quickly put some of this mixture in the bottom of each tart and refrigerate 15 min. (the chocolate doesn't need to look pretty).

2) Using blender, combine tofu, 6 Tbsp., peanut butter, maple syrup, 1 cup of prepared coconut cream solids, vanilla and ¾ tsp salt. Blend until smooth, 2-3 min., scraping sides periodically.

Remove tart crusts from refrigerator. Press down the chocolate truffle mixture so it will be submerged by the

peanut butter filling. Pour peanut butter filling into crusts equally. Dust off stray crumbs from the edges of tart pans. Refrigerate at least an hour.

**Ganache Topping:** In double boiler or microwave, carefully soften 4 oz. chocolate, stirring often, as before. Add 6 Tbsp. almond milk, stirring until smooth. Drizzle ganache on tarts. If necessary, add a little more almond milk to get a workable consistency. If it tightens up, gently reheat and restir. Garnish with nuts if desired.

Freeze your tarts overnight for best results. Remove from pans and plate while frozen. Allow to stand 10 minutes before serving. Do wash and reuse the foil pans, but if baking for someone very sensitive to gluten, reserve those pans for gluten free use only.

I designed this recipe for a small tart form. If you choose to try it as one bigger tart, I cannot vouch for it setting up properly.

# The Conscious Crow

## Gift of Breath

See Page 2 for the Crow's "Spicy and Sweet Tea Treat."

**O**ur Being and breathing is a manifestation of perfected synchronicity within the systems of our body that balance, and intricately coexist with one another. Each cell carries intelligence to bring oxygen exactly where it needs so that we may have life and remain in a consistent state of homeostasis. It is amazing that we exist without having to think about breathing, but it is when we take the time to reflect on how amazing it is that we effortlessly and consistently breathe, bringing intention to this miracle, that we emit a higher and healthier frequency, that has power to change our perspective. In any case scenario it is important to breathe, but actually doing so in a conscious way is a different step in the journey. As gifting, commotion and action take hold of our minds going forward this month- stress can easily weasel its way in. It is especially important during these times (and all times, really) in remembering to give ourselves the gift of breath.

The breath is an essential reason for our existence and is also a revered, sacred source of healing for our well-being. This invisible force-field offers incredible and mostly over-looked healing properties that can dramatically alter and adjust our Being, state of mind and energetic bodies if we utilize it. Taking the time, dedicating a moment or two and really sinking into our breath, exhaling and letting go, is simply a way to reset our system on every level. It generates positive and rewarding

results that reduce stress, anxiety and worry, while transforming and uplifting our spirits, renewing, grounding and relaxing our bodies, and centering our capacity for mental focus and awareness. Conscious breathing creates fertile grounds for a more balanced state of mind and conscious action that transmutes therefrom.

In gifting ourselves the necessary space to simply feel and release - or at least alleviate the intensity of whatever is ailing us and latching onto our mental, physical, emotional energy- we give our self the opportunity to revolutionize the current situation by changing how we relate to our breath. Consciously checking into our breathing from time to time allows for a more graceful navigation to our path in life, with a clearer and more peaceful presence. Make it the best holiday season and offer the gift of peace, balance and consciousness.



*The Conscious Crow - Reminding you to Grow*

# The Light Lens

by T.Touris

A letter to the editor

Dear Sir or Madam,

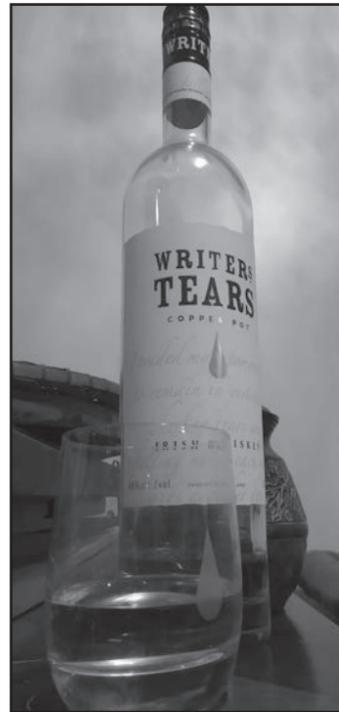
Please consider this letter my submission for the "Light Lens" upcoming December edition.

Congratulations, your constant reminders, deadline reminders, and past deadline reminders, etc., have caused me acute writer's block. Excuse me for not being more like *some Owl Light* contributors ... who seem to always have something to say.

Who do you think I am, Leo frickin' Tolstoy? Stephen King? Anyone can churn out 800 pages about killer clowns. I on the other hand, am an artist. My work is only complete when there's nothing more to take away. This letter used to be 60 pages long. If I had a few extra months, I'd give you a single sentence masterpiece. But no, you have your *all-important* deadline to consider.

Attached you'll find the photo to go with this submission. This is what your pressure tactics have driven me to.

Sincerely,  
T. Touris



**T.Touris**  
*T. Touris is a wanna-be-retired-computer-programmer. He spends his free time designing and working in wood, while dreaming up the next Light Lens.*

# Making Lemonade

Gift Giving Perplexities

By Barb Stahl

**G**ifts are interesting things. Some of the most successful ones seem of no value. Back in the early days of marriage with young children we were not financially well off. There were Christmases when it was hard to know what to give our three children born around a year apart. Early on I realized that it was often not what was in the Christmas gift box – sometimes the highlight was the box itself. I can still picture my toddler son pulling the box with the ribbon (which the cute toy or darling outfit had come in) to transport things around the house.

Another year I constructed a ranch-style house with refrigerator boxes. It had two rooms, complete with a roof and a door, with cutout windows and fancy painted curtains. The threesome enjoyed many hours using their imaginations in that cardboard house.

As finances improved, gift value improved. By the time our grandchildren came along we could afford more. I never liked to buy toys, plus I remembered that they might prefer the box! So, for many years as grandparents, we decided to set up investments for each of them. Knowing they likely wouldn't understand we gave them a child's book on money, saving, and related information. I know at first, they thought those were weird gifts, but their parents

had plenty for them to open at Christmas-time. Fortunately, their parents also approved of, and supported our decision, and "joined the chorus" explaining that someday they would really like their present. For years, a regular deposit for Christmas as well as each birthday was added into their investment accounts.

Many years later, usually as college students or just starting in their working life, they happily saw the true wisdom and value of their investments which had grown considerably. Consequently, they were able to buy such things as that desperately needed computer. One of them is continuing to substantially build his investments. The latest usage was my granddaughter's ability to buy a car when hers died while driving home for a friend's wedding. She is still a graduate student and was very excited to be able to pay most of the cost of her replacement car. On those early Christmas days neither we, nor they, knew what the investments were going to finance, but eventually we learned.

Some of my older grandchildren are now earning more than I am, and that is as it should be. Therefore, I had to get creative because the monetary gifts were no longer practical given my retirement income. My latest idea for gifts for the grandchildren, and, as it turns out, the whole family (the adults haven't traded gifts in

many years, but instead prefer to "do something together"), is to write a family history. When I realized that I was the only one who knew early-family history stories, I realized that could be a perfect gift. It also forced me to clear out hundreds of photographs. If I didn't know the people, they certainly wouldn't. I wondered if the grandchildren would think a family history was a good idea, and was extremely pleased to learn that they did indeed. In fact, they excitedly began telling memories that they wanted to be included in the book.

Speaking of Christmas and books, a recently published book, *Before I Forget; Short Stories from Collective Views*, features area "senior authors." Wouldn't that make a great gift for someone on your list? (See page 10).

Now, I really must get back to writing that family history...Christmas, as always, is coming fast!

**Barb Stahl**

*Barbara is a mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, retired school library media specialist, and a western New York/Finger Lakes area lover who did a previous column for Canandaigua Daily Messenger. She loves her family, circle of friends, reading, writing, history, music, theater, and Tarzan the cat who critiques her articles. Contact: makinglemonadeOwl@gmail.com*





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## Christmas Cookies - Submitted by Barb Stahl

This recipe has been made continually by members of my family since the 1950s. Currently my oldest daughter, Lisa, is faithfully making our classic Christmas cookies each holiday season.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Ingredients:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 cups sugar</li> <li>• 1 cup shortening</li> <li>• 2 eggs</li> <li>• 1 cup sweet milk</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 tsp baking soda</li> <li>• 2 tsp baking powder</li> <li>• 5 cups flour</li> <li>• 2 1/2 cups flour</li> <li>• 1 tsp salt</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

**Preparation:** Chill, roll out, and cut out with Christmas cookie cutters. Bake on a greased cookie sheet at 350° for 10 to 12 minutes.

**Icing:** Confectioner's sugar, 1 tablespoon margarine, add milk or cream to right consistency (hot water makes it like wedding cake frosting), flavor with vanilla, maple, lemon, or etc. Also, color with food coloring if desired.

*(No, there's nothing left out of the the icing directions. That's all that's given).*



# Richmond History

## Stepping Stones to Success



**Hugh Hamilton** (October 31, 1770 – March 1, 1851)

By Joy Lewis

**A** January thaw is not an unusual occurrence in Finger Lakes Country. Yet the particular incidence of thaw in the winter of 1811 became an obstacle to be met with perseverance – a trait much in evidence in the character of one of Richmond’s pluckiest forefathers.

Eight months earlier, in May of 1810, forty-year-old Hugh Hamilton had set out on horseback from his home in Blandford, Massachusetts, intent on discovering a new home place for himself and his family. Making his way westward as far as Erie, Pennsylvania, and not being satisfied with the lands along the shores of Lakes Ontario and Erie, he turned back to the east. He had in his mind the hills and valleys he’d earlier traversed through Ontario County. At Honeoye Lake he found just the property he was looking for.

He bought a hundred-acre parcel near the foot of the lake on the east side. It took him the better part of a month to put up a small log house. And the while, he looked about for an opportunity of making a living. He found it when Mr. David Crooks offered to sell him half-interest in a nearby grist mill.

The mill, on the south side of Mill Creek where the east branch crosses (present-day) East Lake Road, was just a bit north of Hugh’s property. Less than a decade old, the mill had been built in 1802 by Oliver Phelps, Jr. For years it was known locally as the “Phelps mill” even after it became the property of David Crooks and – in 1810 – Hugh Hamilton.

For the remainder of the year Hugh stayed in Richmond and operated the mill. In December he went back to Massachusetts where he packed up the family and all their worldly goods. Hugh and his wife Isabel Knox had six children: Justin was fifteen; Polly, twelve; and Charlotte, ten; the younger children were William, who was seven; Lucinda, five; and David, two. They said good-bye to their native country in early January. Traveling by sleigh, the trip was easy going for a good deal of the way, as there was a heavy snowpack to smooth them along. But by the time they reached Cayuga Lake the thaw had set in. The final sixty miles was an arduous slog through mud and slush.

At last they reached their destination in Richmond. In his first half-decade on his new homestead Hugh cleared the woods from the road to the lake, planted a few meager crops, and continued to operate the mill. His son William in later years wrote of his father’s work: “While father ran the old mill on the creek, all the south and east part of Richmond and West Bristol depended upon it for their grinding. It had but one small run of burrs, and when there was sufficient water, ran constantly. During the dry season it ran but little... Surplus grain was then sent to Albany to market, by wagon or sleigh.”

In 1815 Hugh sold his interest in the mill back to Mr. Crooks, with the idea of concentrating on his farm. The next few years would be difficult ones for the Hamilton family. The year of 1816 – known in upstate New York as “The Year Without a Summer” when every month saw a frost – caused hardship to all the settlers along Honeoye Lake. Hugh and his neighbors were unable to harvest a crop. Then a crippling blow struck when he was notified in a legal proceeding that the title to his hundred acres was in dispute: he’d bought it from a man who’d had no right to sell it. The Hamiltons must begin again.

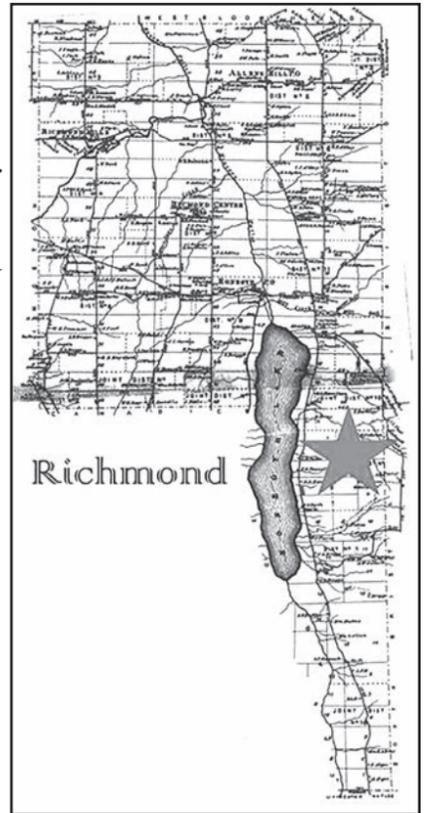
A great number of the settlers along the lakeshore decided they too must start over. Many of them entered into an arrangement with Mr. Gideon Granger of Canandaigua. Sight unseen they traded their Richmond property for land in Hardin County, Kentucky. Among the many who set out for Kentucky in the summer of 1818 was Hugh’s eldest son Justin, now a young man nearing twenty.

Hugh, however, was minded to stay at Honeoye Lake. A mile or so south of where he’d started, he found an appealing property. With help from his son William, he set in to clear the land. It would be years, he knew, before the farm would begin to pay. It was about this time that he arranged to buy John Green’s distillery. For the past decade Green had operated his whiskey works along the creek back of the Hamilton homestead (Briggs Gully), but now he was off to Kentucky.

The Hamilton family’s troubles, however, were not over with their move. Nineteen-year-old Charlotte died in their third year at the new place, and Polly a few years later. William married and took his bride to settle in Ohio. Hugh’s daughter Lucinda married Abraham Pennell and went with him to his nearby farm. This property, north of the Hamiltons’ farm, had been the place where Hugh had first settled his family.

Both Hugh and Isabel were nearing sixty, and both were in need of “looking after.” It was their youngest, David, just now coming of age, who elected to stay on the home farm and continue to build upon the foundation laid by his father. David married Laura Belle Moore at the end of November 1831 and brought his bride home to Honeoye Lake. Nine children arrived in quick succession, though not all lived to reach adulthood. Four of Hugh’s grandchildren joined his deceased daughters in the family burial ground.

Forty years after his arrival, and only five months after his wife’s death, Hugh Hamilton died. His son David carried on the work of making the farm a success. His family “was large, and both firmness of heart and steadiness of resolution were required to enable them to surmount the ills of poverty. All learned the priceless quality of frugality, and the sweat of honest, toilsome labor was no stranger to their faces.” As a result of his never-ceasing industry, David “grew in wealth, not rapidly, but by years of persevering industry” until he owned a prosperous farm of 675 acres. (History of Ontario County)



### Joy Lewis

*Joy Lewis has served as Town of Richmond, Historian since 2013. She offers reflections on the history of Richmond, NY in every other issue of Owl Light.*

### Apple Cake - By Joy Lewis

A perfect recipe for all those stored fall apples!

#### Ingredients:

##### Sauce:

- 1½ cup sugar
- 1½ cup water
- 3 Tbsp Cornstarch
- 2 tsp cinnamon

##### Crust:

- 2 cups flour
- ½ cup brown sugar
- ½ cup rolled oats
- 1 cup butter or margarine

Filling: 12 apples pared and cored.

Preheat oven to 325°.

#### Preparation:

Sauce: In 2 quart sauce pan mix together all ingredients for sauce. Bring slowly to a boil. Boil 2 minutes, or until thickened.

Set aside.

OVER...



#### Prepare crust:

In large bowl mix together flour, brown sugar, and rolled oats. Cut in butter. Remove 1½ cups of crust mixture and set aside. Press remaining crust into bottom of 13 x 9” baking pan.

Top with apple slices.

Pour sauce over apples, sprinkle on remaining crust mixture.

Bake in 325° oven for 75 minutes, or until crust is golden.



# Long-Time Hospital Volunteer Bud 'The Candy Man' Wesley Remembered by Friends of Strong



**B**ud (Leonard) Wesley, husband, grandpa, friend and longtime Strong Memorial Hospital volunteer, died peacefully Oct. 31 at the age 77 surrounded by family and friends.

A giant among his peers, Bud was well known throughout the Friends of Strong (FOS) volunteer program and the hospital's adult Intensive Care Units, serving in the program for more than 24 years, driving twice weekly from his home in Bristol to provide an

open ear to patients and families who just needed someone to talk with, as well as passing out fresh hot coffee, tea, snacks and other comfort items. In total, he's given nearly 16,000 documented hours and countless memories of his beaming smile, compassion, and exemplary dedication to our patients, families and staff.

Bud's interest in volunteering began when, only a few weeks shy of an early retirement, he found himself in an ICU waiting room with no one to talk to. His mother was a patient and he found comradery with the families of other patients—many of which shared the sentiment that

they wished there were hospital staff that could be there to help them pass the time.

Bud understood the patient perspective and sought to provide an unparalleled level of reassurance to those he'd meet. "It's a real blessing to be able to make things a little easier for families who are especially under stress or facing hard things. I guess I maybe have that grandfatherly thing. Sometimes it's just to listen, sometimes it's a shoulder to cry on, and sometimes it's to break up family feuds," he'd say with a smile.

Until just weeks ago, he'd volunteer in Patient Discharge in the morning, after which he'd bring his coffee, candy and snack cart up to families in the Intensive Care units. He took his "job" very seriously, with dedication that earned him the nicknames "the Candy Man" and "the Coffee Guy."

Bud is survived by his wife, Kay, daughter Deborah (Bobbie) Ott, son Gregory (Stacy) Wesley, six grandchildren and three great grandchildren. Bud was predeceased by his daughter Lisa Fox.

A memorial service was held on Tuesday, Nov. 5 at 7 p.m. at the United Church of Bristol, 7177 County Rd. 2, in Bloomfield.

An obituary is published on the Fuller Funeral Home website.

Submitted By Matt Ulakovic

Livonia Kevin W. Honeoye

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## Pastor Tim Hamlin Retirement Celebration

You are cordially invited  
to attend the  
Celebration of Retirement  
for Pastor Tim Hamlin  
on January 5, 2020  
from 11:30am- 1:30pm at the  
United Church of Bristol,  
7177 Co. Road 2,  
Bloomfield, NY

Find us online at [OwlLightNews.com](http://OwlLightNews.com) / Like us at [fb@Candice Press](https://www.facebook.com/CandicePress)

## Food Pantries

Naples Open Cupboard - Every Wednesdays from 11-2 Harwood Lane - basement of Village Offices.  
Serves people in Naples Sch. Dist.

Geneseo/Groveland Emergency Food Pantry  
Tuesdays/Thursdays 10-2am, Wednesdays 4-6:30 pm  
31 Center St, Geneseo (lower level CPC).  
To donate, please drop items during scheduled hours (lower level).

Springwater Food Pantry - Wednesdays 6:30 - 8pm and Saturdays 9 - 11am.\*  
South Main Street, Springwater \*Serves Springwater Canadice & Webster's Crossing area, but no one in need will be turned away!

Wayland Food Pantry - Wednesdays 4:30-6pm,  
Saturdays 9-10:30am. Serving all in Wayland- Cohocton Dist. Bread and Baked Goods may also be picked up Sundays 9:00-9:30am. Lighthouse Wesleyan Church, 101 South Lackawanna St, Wayland - 585-736-7586  
Info. [www.enjoylwc.com/food-pantry](http://www.enjoylwc.com/food-pantry)

Hemlock Food Pantry - Thursdays, 10am - 5:30pm  
Little Lakes Community Center - Around the back.. Serving people in the Hemlock area & others in need!

Honeoye Community Pantry - First Saturdays, 9-10:30 am. UCC church on 8758 Main St., Honeoye  
Info: [honeyefoodpantry@gmail.com](mailto:honeyefoodpantry@gmail.com)

Sent by RavensPantry - Saturday's 9-11am 40 Spring St, Livonia, NY

Trinity Pet Food Pantry - 1st Sundays, 12:30-1:30pm  
62 W. Buffalo St, Warsaw, NY

## Meals

Honeoye UCC Spaghetti  
1st Wednesdays, 5-7pm  
8758 Main Street, Honeoye,  
NY (except July and November).  
A portion of the profits donated to a different charity monthly.

## Community Closets

The Open Closet  
Wednesdays and Saturdays, 11-2  
Harwood Lane - basement of the  
Village Offices. Offers people in  
Naples School District quality  
clothes etc.

Honeoye Community Closet - For  
more info. contact Kelly Sacchitella,  
Box 170, Honeoye, NY 14471

## Seniors

Community Coffee Hour  
1st Wednesdays, 9:30-10:30am  
- Free coffee! 62 W. Buffalo St,  
Warsaw, NY

## Community Meetings

Little Lakes Community Center  
Open Community Meeting The first  
Monday evening-6:30-8:30pm-each  
month is dedicated to community  
input. All are welcome to join in, to  
learn about the organization and to  
ask questions and make suggestions.

Grief Share - Mondays, 5pm  
Wayland Free Library, 101 W  
Naples St, Wayland Encouragement  
after the death of a loved one  
- non-denominational

## Calling All Crafters!

Would you like to make some extra money this Holiday Season? Sign up to teach a class in our community room. Partner with Little Lakes Community Center and make Christmas merrier for yourself and fellow crafters. You have the talent! We have the space! Call 585-367-1046 for more information and to leave a message for a volunteer to return your call.

# Finger Lakes Forest Church



Caring for Our Brother and Sister Birds.  
Saturday, December 14, 10 am

Our December gathering will honor both St. Frances and the raptor stewardship practiced by Wild Wings. We will create simple bird feeders to help care for all of our bird friends during the winter months. Walk the trails at Mendon Ponds Park, and have a chance to visit some of the raptor residents of Wild Wings. Location: Wild Wings, 27 Pond Road, Honeoye Falls.

Note: While there is no admission fee for Wild Wings, donations to help their efforts are greatly appreciated. See [www.wildwingsinc.com](http://www.wildwingsinc.com) for a full donation wish list.

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## Leona J. (Gardner) Bentley

October 29, 1936-November 3, 2019



Photo by Tina Crossgrove 11/2019

“But dying’s part of the wheel,  
right there next to being born.  
You can’t pick out the pieces you like  
and leave the rest.  
Being part of the whole thing,  
that’s the blessing.”  
Natalie Babbitt, *Tuck Everlasting*



In Memoriam notices in Owl Light News are \$50.



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Help us prevent addiction, accidental poisoning & protect the environment!

**MONITOR**— count your medication regularly

**SECURE**— lock up any medication you do not want anyone to access

**DISPOSE**— drop off any unwanted/unused and expired medication to your local disposal site



### Medication Drop Box Locations:

**Bristol:**

Town Hall

**Canandaigua:**

FLCC (Keuka Wing)  
The Medicine Shoppe  
Ontario County DMV Office  
Canandaigua Police Dept.  
Thompson Hospital (lobby)  
Mental Health Clinic (County Complex)

**Geneva:**

Police Station  
North Street Pharmacy

**Richmond:**

Town Hall  
CVS Pharmacy

**Farmington:**

State Troopers

**Clifton Springs:**

Hospital (Lobby)

**East Bloomfield:**

Town Hall

**Naples:**

Village Hall

**Phelps:**

Community Center

**Rushville:**

Village Hall

**Victor:**

Meade Square Pharmacy

If you do not live in Ontario County, please contact your local law enforcement agency. Questions, please call us at 585-396-4554.



ROcovery Fitness of Southern Tier offers free events with the completion of the membership form online at [www.rocoveryfitness.org](http://www.rocoveryfitness.org) and at least 48 hours sobriety.



Cartoon by Sally Gardner  
<https://sallygardner.com/>

Nothing brings back holiday memories like...



2000 BC



Egyptians use cinnamon to embalm the dead

700 BC



Winged serpents said to protect the cinnamon supply

300 AD



11.5 oz cinnamon costs 50 months human labor

Timelessly...



Goes great on funeral pyres and pumpkin spice lattes.

© GARDNER 2019

## Setting the Table... from front

The store has wish lists, a rewards program (“where small purchases matter”) and gift registries, as well as services for wedding planning. Response so far has been overwhelmingly positive. Many people are excited about the store, and they both feel “very supported and welcomed” by the BID (especially Denise Chaapel, who was sending people their way during the recent downtown “trolley” runs) and the Canandaigua Chamber of Commerce. Many business owners have stopped in and offered support as well. They look forward to being a part of the community and will be hosting a gingerbread creation for the Habitat for Humanity’s Gingerbread House Tour, November 16th to December 28th.



Photos by D. E. Bentley 2019



Above: Aubergine offers a varied selection of unique stemware. Left: They carry table linens for all occasions, and aprons for the cook. For Mary Ellen (shown) setting the table includes adding the perfect extra touches.

Looking back to my first meeting with Steve West, in 2016, when I interviewed him for an article, I would never have imagined that, three years later, he would be a co-owner of a store. Then again, with his musical inclinations and interests, it was immediately evident from our first encounter that he enjoys being around people. Entertaining and beverage arts were also an integral part of his local up-

bringing. He was born and raised in Livonia, NY, where his grandfather owned and operated West Beer Distributors for sixty-five years. For Mary Ellen, bringing people to the table, and setting tables in finery, is a lifelong passion. From an early age, Mary Ellen would help her mother, aunt and grandmother (both her aunt and grandmother hand painted china) polish the silver and get the crystal out. For the girls in her family, getting the

first dinnerware set, something to be cherished and passed down, was a rite of passage—with a complete set assembled by the time of high school graduation (Mary Ellen’s set is Royal Albert Tea Rose). In thinking now about these disparate yet convergent histories, this new venture, together, seems like a natural destiny. For both Steve and Mary Ellen, life is about asking the big questions. Questions like: What do I really want to do with my time? And how can I make a difference in this world, to help make it a better place for all? Steve

has answered that question, in part, through his music. This newest venture for the couple, with Mary Ellen as the host, setting the table for that perfect gathering of those near and dear, is all about bringing people together.

Aubergine is located at 143 S. Main St., Canandaigua. Hours are 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Mondays Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays; 9a.m.-8p.m. on Tuesdays; and Sundays 11a.m.-8p.m.. For information, call 585-505-0001 or visit them on facebook @Aubergine Table.

## Greener Holidays... from 14

### Gifts

Gift-receiving is important for my kids. We can't blame them, though. This part of the holiday is played up in schools because it is considered non-denominational and thus fair game. Stores are also happy with this focus as it benefits the bottom line. In the past, we've followed the strategy of gifting four gifts: “something they want, something they need, something to wear, and something to read”. This put a number cap on our purchases and allowed us to feel that the shopping was done. We've since moved away from the rigid structure because the number of gifts seemed so small as compared to what they witnessed around them (on TV, in school, and at my in-laws). Now we just give them four fun things, or “wants”. We've also been playing around with cloth wrapping paper. We've wrapped some things in Furoshiki style (the Japanese art of cloth wrapping) and in reusing paper gift bags.

All this has been in an effort to break away from throwing away large quantities of single-use paper, but truth be told, we haven't been completely successful. There will always be gifts expected outside the family for which explaining that you want the wrapping back can be taken as rude. For these, we keep traditional wrapping paper, but we keep it seasonal (snowflakes, snowmen) so that we can use them universally.

### Wrapping It Up

This is the time of year where many people are prone to winter blues. Along with the darker season are the increased expectations for holiday cheer. To meet expectation with reality, I find a conscious approach works best. By favoring the things that bring joy, we won't have to fake it!

Happy (Mindful) Holidays!  
 Sky Trombly



Photo by Sky Trombly

Gift-receiving is important for kids, but there are still ways to focus more on shared time and less on things.

### Sky Trombly

*Sky has been something of a sustainability nerd for most of her life, Sky Trombly's goal is to empower herself and others to live in a way that is congruent with personal values - and intimately linked to the Earth. You can join her in her wanderings through the quagmire of sustainable living in every issue of Owl Light News, and*