

Emmitsburg NEWS-JOURNAL

EXULTING THE IMPORTANCE OF IDEAS AND INFORMATION —EDWARD R. MURROW

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NEWS

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Repairs on Reid's Bridge, which has been closed since April, should be completed this month. **Page 3**

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With all the anticipated church events, there seems to be no room for a "Silent Night" during this buzzing Christmas season. **Page 14**

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December 1915 - the Allied Southern Front collapses and the war grinds on. **Page 26**

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Our four intrepid students write about their top choices for Christmas charities. **Page 34**

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Luke 2:8-14



The staff of the Emmitsburg News-Journal wishes all our readers the merriest of Christmases — Angela, Kathryn, Susan, Sarah, Brian, Sharon, Shannon, Ralph, Bill, Lindsay, Bill, Michael, Tim, Jack, Maryann, Kim, Jennifer, John, Mary, Brooke, Kathy, Katie, Lynn, Elizabeth, Sarah, Leeanne, Katie, Valerie, Lydia, Jack, Michael, Brian, Renee, Linda, Wayne, Ayse, Mike, and Julianna.

Got gingerbread?

The 6th Annual Gingerbread Fest and Holiday Mart will kick off the Christmas season on Friday, Dec. 4, from noon to 7 p.m. and Saturday, Dec. 5, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Harrisburg Area Community College's (HACC) Gettysburg campus. This year's Gingerbread celebration features handcrafted houses, people and other artistic creations by the young and old alike. Categories include Business Challenge, School Challenge, Family and School Age, Amateur Baker and Individual Cookies. People come from near and far for the friendly competition and to vote for their favorites with quarters.

The Adams County Art Council and the YWCA Gettysburg will present "Holiday Stories from Around the World" in the Fireplace Room from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Stories will be presented every 15 minutes. There will be numerous photos of holiday clothing, food, and traditions from all across the globe for families to view.

A selected group of gingerbread houses will go to live auction on Friday evening along with the phenomenal "Ugly Sweater" contest - the winner of that competi-

tion will receive a \$100 gift card from Scott & Co. Fine Jewelers. As well, the silent auction will continue both days, and Kitchen Craft Cookware will again be providing cooking demos throughout the day on Friday and Saturday. Light refreshments and cider will be available along with the holiday mart arts and crafts vendors.

Santa Claus will settle in to have lively conversations with one and all on Saturday along with games and activities for the kids. There will be a wide array of arts and crafts vendors to choose from for those special holiday shopping needs. The voting will continue for the People's Choice award - so don't forget to bring your quarters!

Adams County Arts Council Executive Director Chris Glatfelter said that a mother and daughter recently came into the Arts Education Center a few days ago to pick up an entry form - "They were so excited, talking about what they wanted to do differently this year with their gingerbread house. A local business owner called to say that she and her staff were full of ideas for their first-time entry. There's a lot of excitement building as this event draws



Gingerbread creations of all shapes and sizes will be on display at this year's Gingerbread Fest in Gettysburg.

closer. We're pleased to invite the community, free of charge, to enjoy the houses and Holiday Mart and all the other activities we're offering. And, we're certainly thankful for the volunteer committee, led by Beverly Grazulewicz and Lolly Polvinale, who are coordinating the event which will help support the Arts Council's classes and programs at our center."

All proceeds from this two-day event will benefit the non-prof-

it Adams Council Arts Council, with a generous contribution to HACC's Student Emergency Assistance Fund. The Gingerbread Fest is generously sponsored by Kennie's Market; all children's activities are organized by "Just Kids" at Gettysburg Dental Associates; and Goin' Postal of Gettysburg sponsoring the Holiday Mart. For more information go to www.adamsarts.org or like us on Facebook.

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NEWS

Letter to the Editor

It is with gratefulness and deep appreciation that I regularly receive and read your outstanding Emmitsburg News-Journal newspaper. Remarkable is the thorough, in-depth variety of educative and informative articles that I highly value and find in every edition. Besides your very relevant news articles, I appreciate, enjoy

and save articles and items of topical interest to me - especially historical and "how to" information. Being gardeners, political buffs, followers of the arts, my family and I easily find in each edition topics that importantly "hit home" with us: history, art, politics, health, hobbies, etc. Many of your educative articles regularly serve to fill in

what I missed in my high school, college and graduate level education. I am especially thankful for the printed space in your commentary section where, penning our opinions, we readers can exercise our blessed freedom of speech.

Please continue your great, successful service to the entire community.

Gratefully,
Vincent J. Perticone
Taneytown

Comprehensive plan approved

Emmitsburg approved the town's new comprehensive plan at the November 16 town meeting. The plan covers Emmitsburg's goals for the future and the success the town has already had in economic development, sustainable efforts, connectivity, and infrastructure improvements.

The new plan is the first revision of the plan since 2009. The final revised version of the plan includes a description of actions taken to achieve the goals that were set in the original 2009 plan, and the addition of new goals to be achieved in the next 20 to 25 years.

The focus of new goals is on the broader aspects of the town. These include land use, water resources, transportation, community facilities and services, sensitive environmental areas, in-

frastructure capability, municipal revitalization and growth, fiscal health, and quality of life.

One of the key goals of the new version of the plan involves re-zoning in a residential area of town. The goal of the re-zoning is to change four residential properties in the East Main Street area of Emmitsburg from R-1 Residential Properties to B-1 Neighborhood Commercial properties. This change would allow the residents of said properties to open small businesses within property lines.

The plan also identifies three projects to enhance existing pedestrian routes. These projects consist of the replacement of the Flat Run Bridge on East Main Street, scheduled to begin in the spring of 2016; the Square reconstruction, scheduled to begin in the spring of 2017; and, the re-

pair/replacement of the sidewalks on Main Street, scheduled to begin the spring of 2016.

In the comprehensive plan, the relationship between local and regional factors that affect the local economic and community development is discussed. The new plan fuses efforts adopted by the region to improve resources and apply those ideas to the goals for the town. For example, the town's plan now incorporates elements of the Frederick County's Scenic byway plan for U.S. 15. The Catoctin Mountain National Scenic Byway Corridor allows municipalities and the county to apply for grants to maintain and promote U.S. 15 corridor. Frederick County adopted this plan back in 2004.

The document can be used by the town as a resource when applying for grants and other ben-

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Letters to the Editor, notice of upcoming events, news stories, and interesting and creative articles are welcome and may be submitted via regular U.S. Mail to P.O. Box 543, Emmitsburg, MD 21727, or by email to editor@emmitsburg.com.

Official efforts for the town. The plan is designed to be used as a basis for the town when it comes to

changes in zoning as well as other regulations that impact land use and infrastructure changes.

Emmitsburg news brief . . .

Citizens Advisory Committee
Town Commissioner Joe Ritz, who serves as the town liaison to the Citizens Advisory Committee of Emmitsburg presented some of the committee's recommendations on opportunities to improve the quality of town

life at last month's Town Council meeting.

Recommendations include controlling after-hour activity at the ball fields near Southgate; improving the communication of election date (this year's turnout for town council election was ex-

ceptionally low and it causes concern for the elections that are to come in future years.)

The committee also advised that Emmitsburg look into becoming a Main Street Community. A Main Street Manager would help bring events and business to the town and help determine what type of businesses should be in the town. Main Street Managers from both Taneytown and Thurmont said they would be willing to give a presentation at a future town meeting to explain the program and its benefits.

One of the concerns raised by the committee was the loss of businesses in the Town Square area. The committee proposed that some types of businesses would be beneficial additions

to the town. A ski shop, for instance, with the town's close location to Ski Liberty and the traffic that comes through the town during ski season would be ideal. A bike shop; with the opening of the new trails near Mount St. Mary's University it seems fitting to add this type of shop to the community.

In addition, members of the committee proposed the town to consider a Sister City. Suggested cities included Eppelheim, Germany and the city where the Emmits came from, in Scotland.

Seton Center changes name

In a recent survey, Seton Center Thrift Shop customers overwhelmingly voted to choose a new name for the center - "Seton Family Store". Store customers also said they'd appreciate

more convenient store hours. So the center has expanded its store hours to: Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday, 10 AM to 4 PM and Thursday & Friday, 10 AM to 5 PM.

Gift cards are now available at Seton Family Store. Don't know what to buy that person who has everything? Want to set a spending limit? Stop by and ask our cashier about purchasing a reloadable gift card, in amounts from \$5-\$500. What an easy and convenient way to give for the holidays, a birthday or as congratulations on a job well done.

Santa will visit Seton Family Store on Saturday, December 5th from 10 AM to 1 PM. Bring your children and grandchildren by to see Santa, take your own holiday pictures by the hearth and receive a goody bag.

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Bus driver retires after 50 years

Driving a school bus for 50 years would make many people question their sanity, but not 77 year-old Steve Jacobs. He recently retired from school bus driving at the end of last year. In November, he was honored with a retirement party at Iron Springs Brethren in Christ Church. Jacobs happily drove school buses for the district for 50 years, 45 of them as owner of S&N Bus Line. "There was never a time I didn't want to drive bus," Jacobs said. "The kids is what it was all

about, adding "that's what I'm going to miss - that and my bus drivers."

Jacobs was raised in Gettysburg and graduated from Delone Catholic High School, he later moved to Fairfield, where he took a job as a school bus driver. In 1961, he married Noma McCleaf, whom he had met when she worked for the Adams County Farm Bureau Coop. Jacobs said that 50 years ago, being a school bus driver meant being a counselor to students of all grades

from kindergarten through high school.

One girl came up to me, she was getting off the bus, she said, 'I'll be 16, I'm gonna quit, get a job, drink beer Friday evening, and so forth. She wasn't going to graduate. "She got on the bus the next day I just simply said, 'I want you to do something for me. I want you to think about what you told me last night. It wasn't a week she came back to me and said she decided to change her mind, she was staying in school,

graduating," he said. "Those are the kind of things that I enjoyed knowing happened."

Jacobs also talked about bullying, saying that said such incidents happened once or twice a year. He talked about a student being picked on because he lived in a mobile home instead of a house. I told the kids on the bus, "You know we all can't be the same, live in the same - that's his home. 'You need to understand that,' and they quit picking on him."

Jacobs said his favorite part of bus driving was taking different classes on field trips to places like the National Radio Tower

in W.Va. and the annual flower show in Philadelphia. Upon arrival to their destination, he would park the bus and go on the tours and investigations with the students.

When not driving a school bus, Jacobs was running a farm off of Bullfrog Road. He and his wife grew 80 acres of corn and fed 95 head of steers. His wife, Norma said "We had 1,800 chickens at one time," Reflecting, Jacobs said that driving a bus was like a break in the farm work. After feeding the livestock, and tending equipment, "I'd go to bed and get up and drive a bus, - it was a great job."

Hamiltonban news briefs . . .

Reids Bridge is moving quickly toward replacement, according to a schedule released by the Hamiltonban Supervisors. The bridge, which carries Mount Hope Road traffic over Tom's Creek at Gum Springs Road, has been closed since mid-April, when the township Roadmaster discovered several of the support beams had been rusted away. "We're still on track for completion by the end of December," said Board of Supervisors Chairman Robert Gordon. Construction workers were slated to begin prep work of the existing bridge in November.

A precast box and wing walls, which will act as support for the new bridge and channel Tom's Creek, is scheduled for installation by early December. Guardrails will be installed right after Christmas. Between the listed steps, workers will provide erosion control, clear brush and waterproof the installed portions.

It should be noted that until the bridge is replaced, drivers, including school buses and trash collectors, must detour approximately 11 miles via Mount Hope and Iron Springs roads.

In other news, the two state-funded grants that were submitted in early spring have gone

dormant for the proposed joint Hamiltonban-Fairfield playground. Hamiltonban's Parks and Recreation Commission Chairman Terry Scripture suggested that because of the current budget impasse between the governor and the legislature, the grant applications have basically taken a back seat. Scripture said, "We anticipated knowing about both of them by now, but unfortunately this impasse is stalling their approval."

In limbo are a \$53,000 grant from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and a \$90,000 grant from the Department of Communi-

ty and Economic Development. Scripture said money from the township capital reserve fund would be used to jump start the project, with that money being replaced by cash from area organizations and private donors. An application for a \$33,000 grant from Wellspan could be submitted in April.

In November, Hamiltonban supervisors approved advertising the proposed 2016 township budget. The final budget is slated for approval at the Dec. 1 supervisors' regular meeting. The general fund budget has been "in the neighborhood of \$600,000 for a long time," Supervisor Robert Gordon pointed out. "There've been no tax

increases in nine years." This year the general fund is balanced at \$604,216 income and expenses. "The majority of the money comes in from real estate taxes, per capita taxes and earned income taxes," Gordon explained.

Other items on the budget include loans and grants for such projects as road maintenance and other capital improvements, as well as revenues such as sewer fees. The proposed budget may be viewed online at <http://www.hamiltonban.com/> or at the township office at 23 Carroll's Tract Road. Office hours are Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Carroll Valley news briefs . . .

After rejecting all of the previous bids in October, Carroll Valley Borough will be putting its municipal building project back out to bid after the first of the year, according borough officials.

Borough Manager Dave Hazlett said after the board voted at last month's meeting to reject several project bids from contractors who responded to the board's request for proposal (RFP) for the new building, "the borough continues to work with the project architect to come up with a list of options to reduce the scope of the work in an effort to procure bids at a lower cost than we had initially received."

With only a handful of bids received for the building project, the highest bid coming in at \$4.4 million and the lowest being just over \$3.8 million. Both bids were much higher than the board's had estimated and rejected all of them. "Right now, we feel like the best course of action is to put the project back out for bid around the first of the year," Hazlett said, going on to say, "that seems to be one of the best times of the year to bid a project. So that's our short-term goal."

In the planning stages for years, the new building will replace the tired structure that will include the mayor's office, the borough offices, Carroll Valley Police Department, at least two conference rooms, a meeting room, a space for a branch

of the Adams County Library, and an outdoor stage.

In other news, two of the borough's newest officials were in attendance at the November borough council meeting. Councilman-elect Bruce Carr, who won a seat on the borough council with a total of 172 votes as a write-in candidate in the Novem-

ber elections and Constable-elect Tyler Hollinger, who won his six-year term with a total of 116 write-in votes, were both present at the meeting.

Carr, who ran on a platform of bringing public information to the residents of Carroll Valley in a timely manner and protecting Carroll Valley's beauty against cluster

housing said "I resisted running for a number of years, but I think it was time for me to step up and do something."

Carr intends "to get the people of the borough informed on a regular basis. People don't know what ordinances are for, and I want to get that out on social media so people can start to learn. I want to provide good services for valued money," he added. "Basically, I just want to be in service."

Hollinger said he was "ecstatic" to have won his position as constable, particularly because of his age. "Younger people aren't volunteering because they're too busy driving out of the county for work," he commented. "I've only been in Adams County for three years, so I don't know a lot of people, so it was surprising that I won, but I'm glad they elected me. I'm looking forward to dealing with what comes with the job."



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NEWS

Alcohol use questioned on town-owned properties

The Thurmont board of commissioners has decided to consider making changes to the town code regarding alcohol consumption in town owned properties.

This decision comes after a discussion on the issue at the November 3rd town meeting. The issue was brought to the board's attention after alcohol was served at the Think Pink Paint night in October which was held at the new Main Street Center on Water Street. At the event guests

were able to enjoy wine. The center plans to serve wine again at the upcoming gallery walk.

The town's current policy is that alcohol should not be consumed on town owned properties. These include the town parks, town owned and leased properties.

At the town meeting on the 3rd the board discussed allowing the consumption of alcohol at town properties such as the Main Street Center and the Senior Center.

According to Mayor Kinnaird the original town policy states

"that alcohol not be served in any parks in Thurmont, and by extension to town owned properties." This includes several buildings in the area.

Mayor Kinnaird requested that the topic be discussed at the meeting in October. He felt uncomfortable with alcohol being served at the Paint Night event before there was a formal discussion held by the board. Kinnaird concerns were focused on liability issues arising. It was discovered that the Main Street Organization had let

their liability policy lapse. The organization was able to get that taken care of and is now insured for liability on the property. With the liability policy the organization is responsible for anything that happens on the property.

The town attorney provided the board with a list of do's and don'ts when it comes to serving alcohol in town owned locations. In the list of do's and don'ts the attorney made it clear that if it is an event where participants are required to pay a ticket fee or make a dona-

tion the regulations are different. According to the attorney the organization would need a liquor license if they intended to charge participants for the alcohol. Since the Paint with Laura event did not charge for the wine that did not put them in that category.

The board discussed the issue and contemplated the idea of having alcohol consumption allowed in certain areas on a case-by-case basis. The cases will have to be reviewed and approved by the board of commissioners.

Thurmont hosts Fall Art and Wine Walk

Thurmont Main Street hosted their annual Fall Art and Wine Walk on November 13th.

Residents and visitors enjoyed beautiful art, wine tasting, and music as local businesses on Main Street opened their doors for the event.

The new Main Street Center was among the businesses that participated in the event. Local artist, Rebecca Pearl displayed her work at the center including here well-known Elizabeth Ann Seton painting. As residents browsed the art work in the cen-

ter they were treated to music and wine. Main Street Manager, Vickie Grinder, handed out tote bags to those who visited the center.

Attendants were able to purchase the art displayed at the center. They offered small prints, canvas paintings, and framed canvas paintings.

Thurmont Bar and Grill hosted local design shop, Gnarly Artly. Those who stopped by the grill were able to take part in a figure drawing session. Participants got to try their hand in drawing

Shadiyah, a belly dancer.

Guests at the event could find something interesting on each street in Main Street. Local artist Steve Newman displayed his leather art at the location, along with art from the Catocin Forrest Alliance. Those who stopped by Hobbs Hardware could see Nancy and Joann from the Thurmont Lions Club who were displaying the Mural Project Memorabilia done by local artist Yemi.

It wasn't just local artists and photographers that were able to

show visitors their talents on the walk. Local nail artists and musicians shared their talents on the walk. Local musician Paul Zelenka filled the Thurmont Eye Care Center with the sound of his guitar. Claire Bennett Nail Art set up at Gateway Orthodontics along with Renovations Salon and Day Spa.

Local restaurants were present on the walk. Local favorite, Mountain Gate Restaurant offered guests a variety of different cheeses while at Timeless Trends Boutique local catering compa-

ny Celebrations Catering offered their delicious chicken salad with almonds on bread. Those who stopped by Thurmont's Kountry Kitchen could enjoy a sweet treat to go with their wine, the restaurant offered cupcakes for just \$1!

At ESP dance studio people filled the studios seats and poured out onto the sidewalk to watch as the studios students showed off their moves. Local dancer Jack Estep performed a beautiful solo while his older sister Josie Estep participated in a group dance.

The walk was a successful display of what the town has to offer.

Thurmont news briefs . . .

Main Street Beautification

Three members of the Board of Commissioners and Mayor Kinnaird approved, with little discussion, the second phase of the Main Street Beautification.

The second phase includes the town applying for a grant from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. The grant is for the amount of \$7,683.

If the town receives the grant it will be used to for five new benches, two bike racks and two new trash receptacles in the downtown area.

Phase one of this project was for the same items according to Town Chief Administrative Officer, Jim Hummerick. The difference between the stages is the locations. In phase 1 the items were placed on East Main Street, West Main Street, and North Church Street.

The board approved the resolution for the beautification of Main Street, unanimously. Commissioner Martin Burns was not in attendance for the meeting on Nov. 3rd.

Thurmont Business Bucks

The Board also approved mea-

asures to upgrade the Thurmont Business Bucks Program. The board voted 3 to 1 to approve the upgrade. The town will be applying for a \$3,225 grant from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. Humerick explains that the grant will be used to create a new professional package for the program. The funds will be used for the design and printing of the professional brochure and envelopes that will be used to advertise the program.

The program is a coupon program that allows coupon holders to visit Thurmont Businesses to redeem their coupons. For three years the program has been allowing customers to purchase \$25 to \$50 gift cards that are valid in participating businesses. Cur-

rently there around 29 businesses that have signed on to participate with the program. The program is a year-round program.

Thurmont's Main Street Manager, Vickie Grinder spoke to the board at the November 3rd meeting about the program. Grinder informed the board and the mayor that this program was designed to keep some of the local dollars in the community.

Mayor Kinnaird voted against the proposed project saying he did not feel that the program was the best use of \$3,000 of the town's money considering the low sales in the past.

Commissioner Wayne Hooper was in support of the project, saying he felt it was a good way to boost the economic development of the town.



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<p>Shock Top, Bud Light Lime, Bud Light Platinum, Beck's, Michelob Ultra Light, Land Shark</p> <p>4 PAK 16 OZ. CANS \$4⁴⁹</p>	<p>Paul's Pit Stop DISCOUNT BEER, WINE & LIQUOR Website: m.paulspitstop.net</p> <p>150 S. Seton Ave., Emmitsburg, MD 21727 301-447-6262</p> <p>Monday-Thursday 9 am-10 pm, Friday & Saturday 9 am-11 pm, Sunday 11-8 pm</p>		<p>Captain Morgan Cannon Blast Whiskey</p> <p>750 ML \$14⁹⁹</p>
			<p>Platinum 7X Vodka</p> <p>1.75 Liter \$13⁹⁹</p>

100 years ago this month

December 3

Deaths

Ms. Mary Zacharias Troxell, wife of the late James Troxell, died at her home near Emmitsburg on Thursday morning after suffering an illness for two weeks. She lived in the vicinity of Emmitsburg her entire life and was in her 75th year. She is survived by her two brothers, Mr. William Zacharias of Chambersburg and Mr. C.T. Zacharias of this place.

Andrew Annan, one of the most prominent citizens of Emmitsburg, died at his home on West Main Street on Monday morning of heart trouble; he was 76. Mr. Annan was a lifelong resident of Emmitsburg and although of a retiring disposition, he took much interest in the affairs of his hometown and was well known throughout the county. He was until a few years ago a member of the banking firm of Annan, Horner & Co. and was regarded as the professor of good business ability. Mr. Annan was a veteran of the Civil War, having served three years in Cole's Cavalry. He was always a staunch Republican and an ardent advocate of the principles of that party. He was a member of the legislature from Frederick County, having served two terms in the House of Delegates in 1884 and 1894. He was a graduate of Lafayette College, Class of 1861.

Samuel Weybright, a well known retired farmer, died at his home near Detour last Friday morning after suffering a month-long illness. He was 76 years old on November 16 last. Mr. Weybright resided in Detour all his life and his death cast a gloom over that section. He was a loyal member of the Church of the Brethren. In politics, he was a staunch Republican but he never held any public position. He was always interested in any move for the uplift of humanity and the progress of his section.

Watermelon for Thanksgiving

While husking corn for Mr. Weybright of near Harney last week, Mr. Reifsnider and son, John, found a number of watermelons bound under shocks of corn. On Thanksgiving Day, a 17-pound melon was eaten at noon.

December 10

Crushed Beneath a Tree

Struck by a falling tree that pinned him beneath it and caused his death a few moments later, Charles Domer of Cotoctin Furnace and a lumberman met with a most unfortunate accident Wednesday afternoon. Domer was helping to cut down trees for telephone poles, and the last one he cut lodged in the branches of another tree. Before he was aware, the branches of the tree broke and sent the cut tree to the ground. Domer ran, but unfortunately in the wrong direction. He was caught and pinned beneath the tree. The other workmen immediately removed the huge tree from his body, but he was miserably crushed. He survived about four minutes. Domer was 23 years of age. Domer lived near Blue Mountain Station, between Thurmont and Cotoctin. He leaves a wife and a small child.

Christmas Fund Checks Mailed

There will be lots of money in circulation in Emmitsburg during the Christmas holidays this year. The Emmitsburg Savings Bank will mail to the members of the Christmas Savings Club, which it inaugurated last year, checks amounting to \$6,000. As an index of the thrifty habit, the amount of savings places Emmitsburg, in proportion to its population, in the front ranks of towns having such clubs. The pouring of this sum of money into the pockets of people who are just now in a purchasing mood should prove an impetus to local businesses.

Flinch and Five Hundred

For the benefit of the Emmitsburg library there will be a Flinch and Five Hundred

matinee on Tuesday, December 28. Souvenirs will be given and light refreshments served. All patrons of the library and all who are interested in the good work the library is doing are earnestly asked to show their goodwill by their presence on this occasion.

Pupils Being Examined

All the pupils in the public schools of Frederick County are undergoing a mental and physical examination. The superintendent of schools stated that he was very much impressed with the manner in which the medical survey for the government is conducted, and that the county would profit a great deal by the examination. Today the doctors expect to finish examining the pupils of the Emmitsburg High and grade school, and thus far, they are very much pleased with the health of each pupil.

December 17

Ice

During the past two weeks, skating has been the chief attraction for the young people of Emmitsburg. Ice has also been cut during the past week and measures six inches in thickness.

Dwelling Burned With All Contents

Fire of unknown origin was discovered around nine o'clock Monday morning, totally destroying the dwelling house on the farm of Joseph Kemper in Liberty Township, together with the greater part of the contents, including all the clothing of the family.

The home of Mr. Kemper is located about three miles from Emmitsburg. At the time the blaze was discovered, no one was home but Mrs. Kemper and several of the children. Her husband had left early in the morning for the home of a neighbor to aid with the butchering and did not know of the fire until it had already destroyed his home.

The members of the family were on the first floor when Mrs. Kemper detected the smell of smoke. She opened the door of the stairway leading to the second floor and found that the fire had gained such headway that it was impossible to go to the second story to save any of its contents. They removed the articles they could until they were driven from the structure by the smoke. Neighbors were soon attracted to the place but there was little they could do. It is supposed the fire caught from a defective flue.

December 24

Christmas Caroling

Tonight, following the custom of former years, Christmas carols will be sung on the streets of Emmitsburg from 11 o'clock until midnight.

Buys Power Farm Outfit

Owing to the scarcity and high price of labor, Mr. John Hollinger, of near Emmitsburg, has purchased from Boyle Brothers, of Emmitsburg, a very fine and complete outfit consisting of an international Mongol, 8-16 gasoline traction engine, a two-fourteen inch bottom gang plow, and a large corn and cotton mill. Mr. Hollinger expects to do all of his heavy farm work with this engine, such as spraying his orchards, plowing, harrowing, harvesting, hauling hay, manuring, grinding seeds, etc. In fact, all heavy and hard work was usually done by horses on the farm.

Fire Destroys Barn

Sparks from a threshing engine are thought to have caused the fire that destroyed the barn on the farm of Isaiah Knouse, near the Frederick County line beyond Emmitsburg. Together with the structure were burned a carriage shed, chicken house, and farm stock, including two horses, one cow, two hogs and about 50 chickens. All the wagons and vehicles, as well as all the crops in the barn, were reduced to ashes.

A number of times during when the fire the house was ablaze, neighbors formed a bucket brigade to save the structure. When the fire was discovered it was impossible to get any of the stock out; one cow, very badly burned, ran from the building, while others in the barnyard broke down a fence to escape to an adjoining field.

December 31

Christmas Caroling

About twice as many as usual took part in the singing of Christmas carols on the eve of Christmas. The carolers sang on Main Street beginning at the lower end of town at 11 o'clock. The last number was sung just on the stroke of 12, midnight. Emmitsburg was gai-



Prohibition in a Nutshell

WHAT prohibition really prohibits is beer, a true temperance drink, wholesome, nourishing, containing about 3% of alcohol. Beer can't be secretly produced. It can be shipped only in large receptacles but cannot be privately preserved without artificial cooling.

Prohibition does not and can not prohibit ardent stimulants or drinks containing from 40% to 60% of alcohol, producible with ease by one man's work in the smallest back yard of a private dwelling and shipped in small vessels.

There is prohibition in a nutshell. The vilest of adulterations containing 60% of alcohol taking the place in popular consumption of mild beer and sold in secret blind pigs where beer—teaching its lesson of moderation—owing to its greater bulk, cannot elude the eyes of the authorities.

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ly decorated during the holidays. The houses were brilliantly lighted and at many residences, Christmas trees decorated the entrances.

Community Christmas Tree

Through the efforts of the principal of Emmitsburg High School, Emmitsburg enjoyed its first community Christmas tree on Thursday evening, December 23.

An elaborate Christmas program was ably rendered by the pupils of the high and grade schools in the afternoon, and in the evening at seven o'clock the community tree exercises began. The big fir tree was gaily and artistically decorated with multiple colored electric lights and serviceable gifts arranged beneath. Christmas carols were sung by the large audience that had assembled and Santa Claus himself presented the gifts.

The true Christmas spirit was much in evidence throughout the evening, and especially was this noticeable among the children, who, filled with glee, shouted aloud for joy when old St. Nick came in his sled, drawn by six boys, arrayed like reindeers. The scene, the large tree, the happy crowd gathered around it, the children occupying

a row nearest the tree, Santa Claus on his sled with a sack full of gifts over his shoulder, in addition to the singing of carols, was in every way highly typical of the real joys of Christmas time, and it presented a spectacle not soon to be forgotten by those who had the pleasure to be present. Emmitsburg is to be complimented for a celebration of this kind. The teachers of the school are to be congratulated.

Christmas Night Wind Damage

On Christmas night, a high wind and rain storm broke down fences and displaced bricks off of not a few chimneys in town. A freakish turn in a high wind broke a large jardinière at the home of Mrs. Annan. The current in the chimney of their dwelling room blew over the pedestal on which the jardinière rested with the results that the latter was broken in into the proverbial "thousand pieces." The wind temporarily also shut down the electric current Saturday evening, disappointing a large movie audience at St. Euphemia's Hall.

To read past editions of 100 Year Ago this Month visit the History section of Emmitsburg.net.

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Merry Christmas & Best Wishes For The New Year!

FROM THE DESK OF . . .

County Councilman Kirby Delauter

Our County Executive Jan Gardner said in her previous ENJ article that her campaign promise was to “restore trust in government and protect taxpayers”. As far as trust in government, there are more back room deals today within Winchester Hall, than during prohibition in the 20’s. Ask Aurora holdings about trust in County government after the eminent domain shakedown they went through with the Citizens Nursing home debacle.

Ask the former ethics commission members who had their vote overridden by CE Gardner with her Executive Order powers. Ask the owner of South Mountain Creamery, a farmer that has been trying to get a building approved so he can automate and milk more cows to produce more product and pay his bills.

Ask the Beshers family who watched Council President Bud Otis overturn the favorable 4-3 vote to allow them to hook up to public sewer on their own property!

The head spinning issue with this vote to overturn the Beshers sewer connection is that they will now build the homes with a septic system within a few hundred feet of Linganore Creek. Council Member Jerry Donald voted to deny access to the hookup to the public sewer line, thus increasing the likelihood over time, of sewage entering Linganore Creek. Yes,

this is the same Council Member Jerry Donald that is introducing increased regulations on private landowners for stream buffers to (get this) . . . help keep our streams cleaner. Council member Donald, here’s a news flash, not building septic systems next to a creek is far better practice to keep our streams clean, than your land grabbing water buffoon bill.

On to school construction issues. Our County Executive wrote last month about this as well. She writes about residential development paying its fair share, and you know what, I agree with her. Let’s start with Spring Ridge development on route 144 east of Frederick. CE Gardner lives in this development of 1,900 homes and some of these residents paid \$0 impact fees for schools and most paid as little as \$2,000.

Let’s do the math, 1,900 homes that pay an impact fee of \$12,000, (the current fee of \$14,000 – the \$2,000 they paid) this would come to \$22.8 million. I have proposed that we issue a bond for this amount and do a 30-year assessment on those homes, and over thirty years, they would pay \$400 annually to pay their fair share, just as our CE Gardner claimed. The first thing that was brought out against this method by the four Democrats on the Council was to say that they would not recommend doing a retroactive impact fee. Why not? They

voted to retroactively breach a contract with Aurora and take back a Nursing Home?

The County Executive, Jan Gardner is racking her brain to find ways to fund schools. My question is simple, she ran for office with a platform of schools, schools, schools and you won. Now one year into your term she readily admits she has no clue how to fix the problem. She is proposing the same tired argument that developers are evil and they don’t pay their fair share. The same solutions she propose today, she proposed 20 years ago when she was first elected and look at what we have today . . . school funding issues. Obviously Jan Gardner has no plan to fix the problem because as long as there’s a problem, she remains relevant. She wants to increase impact fees, which will actually get her \$0 to work with, this is not a solution, it’s a campaign promise, and a bad one to boot.

She did take one giant step into solving FCPS issues, she hired a person to be the FCPS liaison for a \$50,000 salary. Her sole purpose is to find solutions for FCPS issues. I asked a few weeks ago what her plan was to fix these problems, still waiting on that answer.

If there’s one person in the room that has less of a clue how to fix the problem than you do, it’s her. My method is different, I actually want to solve the problem. As shown

above, this one simple solution would build an elementary school. Here’s the rest of what I would do and the dollars they will generate.

Spring Ridge Impact fee fairness bill - \$22.8 million.

A blue light special on impact fees for builders that apply and pay up front between now and June 1, 2016. Make it a 30% discount which would yield approx. \$10,000 per fee, assume 1,000 permits are issued under this, the yield is \$10 million.

Have contractors / Engineers / Architects value engineer Frederick High School. Approx. Savings per some contractors I’ve spoken to is \$15 million.

Do a pilot program on Frederick High School to relax Storm water regulations, approx. savings - \$5 million.

Use standard market driven wage rates in lieu of prevailing wage rates, approx. savings - \$10 million.

Remove the synthetic fields from Frederick High School, use plain turf fields. Approx. Savings - \$1 million.

Use a public/private partnership to have the private sector build the school and the BoE lease the school back. We should be in the education business, not the building or building maintenance business. This would allow more dollars to go to Teacher salaries than CIP programs.

As you can see, my plan yields

\$63M as is, and there is more if we can utilize public private partnerships to our advantage. Sometimes the answer is right under your nose, staring you in the face. We can’t continue to say that this is the way we’ve always done it. That’s not good enough; we need to think outside the box. When problems come up in construction of new schools, we try to define the problem, and then go for the solution. Sometimes the answer, it’s right in front of you.

The County Executive held a round table to learn some reason as to why school construction costs are skyrocketing, but didn’t hear many solutions on how to fix the problem.

Similar to when NASA when they asked: “How do we get an ink pen to write in space?” They were trying to solve the issue of having an ink pen to write in zero gravity in space, time after time it failed. Finally they spent a lot of money to solve the problem of having the ink pen write in space. Tax dollars spent, problem solved.

The Russians on the other hand looked at the problem from a totally different angle, they simply asked, “How can we write in space?” The answer was right in front of them . . . a # 2 pencil.

School construction is no different. We can keep spending hundreds of millions on new schools (the ink pen in space) or we can look at the answers right under our noses and make it as simple as the # 2 pencil . . . and implement them.

County Councilman Billy Shreve

December will be 1 year. Year 1 of a County Council (CC) and County Exec (CE). Supposedly, mo’ better. In reality not so much. I never was a fan of Charter Government and certainly have lived the reasons why it was a bad idea. Read on . . . You may agree.

I tell everyone who wants to run for office the same thing . . . Pay your \$25 and sign. Any idiot can get elected. It never ceases to

amaze me how many smart people have lost elections and how many others won. Another scenario is sometimes lots of good people win and are collectively dysfunctional. I know one thing for sure . . . Americans are fed up with politicians, especially those that were elected and bring nothing to the table . . . The stuffed suits, liars, power hungry, etc., Next Time around . . . pay attention . . . “Make America Great Again”.

Year 1 – My take . . . We have really accomplished nothing. Zero – Goose Egg – Nada – Nothing!

Ok, nothing is strong. We now have a civility code, and 3 Dems and a DUD voted repeal the Ordinance that made English the Official Language of Frederick County. There was a plan to add shoulders to all of the roads in Frederick County so people would have a place to ride their bicycles but Luckily that didn’t happen. Saved Millions on that one. \$\$\$\$. Wait there’s more. The CE did spend over \$300,000 of taxpayer money (still Going Up) on fancy Lawyers to force the sale of a Frederick County business. On her watch that same business previously lost over \$50 million of your hard earned cash. CE Remodeled the former Commissioner’s offices for her staff and moved the Coun-

cil into a newly built space on the First Floor . . . price tag ~\$1M taxpayer dollars. And add another \$1M to salaries for additions to her staff. These numbers don’t include all the Swanky back room Tasting Room Dinners and the \$350/night Suites in Ocean City. We will save those for another day.

One Huge Accomplishment: Without a Doubt Bud Otis has proven he is by far the worst President of any Government to take a seat in Winchester Hall. Watch the meetings on Comcast Channel 19 or click on the video archives and see for yourself. It’s pathetic. If I had to choose between Barack Obama and Bud Otis I honestly don’t know who I would choose.

On Bud’s watch he has failed to hire a Budget Director, Eliminated 75% of all opportunities for

the Public and Council to Speak during meetings, and had 100% of the 3 Administrative Assistants leave within 6 months of becoming Council Employees. Two AA’s were life employees.

His answer to everything . . . “I’m working on it”. Coming from guy who can’t run a meeting with a written agenda that’s in front of him . . . That he supposedly wrote . . . I have my doubts. The Deputy Secretary of Planning for the State of Maryland has tried for 2 months to schedule a meeting with the Council and still no meeting time. Bud controls the schedule.

This Thanksgiving I’m thankful for 1 thing for sure . . . Only 3 more years. Hopefully less under this President. Everyone who deals with him is at the end of their rope. Ask anyone.

Let’s make America great again. Pay attention. Voice your opinion and concerns.

People constantly ask me “why I’m doing this?” Why I’m in politics. I’m not a politician. I’m not politically correct. I tell it like it is. At some point you may not like what I say, at other times you may love everything I do. After all . . . I’m mostly charming.

I’m not here for me, I’m here for you. If you have a question or need help make the call. -Billy

Billy Shreve can be reached at billy@FrederickCountyMD.gov or 301-639-4763.

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GOVERNMENT—SOUTH OF THE MASON-DIXON LINE

County Executive Jan Gardner

County Celebrates a Year of People and Prosperity

On December 1, we celebrate one year of charter government in Frederick County. And what a year it has been! We have ushered in a new era of county government focused on people and prosperity.

Job #1 was to restore trust in government. Citizens have a right to know what their government is doing and to be assured that decisions are being made in the best interest of the public good. To accomplish trust in government, I pledged to advance stronger ethics laws and to ensure open and transparent government.

I appointed an Ethics Task Force, comprised of 15 citizens with various backgrounds and expertise to recommend ways to strengthen our ethics laws. These recommendations were drafted into legislation that the County Council took to public hearing. The Council is currently considering the proposed changes.

I believe that nothing is more important than making sure people can participate in government and make a difference. Under Charter government, public participation has grown exponentially with many citizens getting involved and volunteering to serve on leadership teams and steering committees focused on solid waste disposal, senior initiatives, jobs, and land use planning to ensure a Livable Frederick.

I have also hosted numerous town hall meetings covering topics such as school construction, affordable housing, and the county budget. I hold weekly press briefings to keep people informed and hold "Talk of the Town" meetings around the county where citizens can come and talk to me about any topic. And, I attend many community events to keep in touch with people where they are.

The tone of county government has changed. The County is headed in the right direction without all the acrimony and contention seen in the past. We are all working together!

During the campaign, I pledged not only to engage citizens but to treat county employees with dignity and respect. These employ-

ees – your friends and neighbors – dedicate themselves to providing essential services to Frederick County residents whether it is answering calls for help at 9-1-1, clearing our roads of snow, taking care of our community's trash, or driving a TransIt bus.

In our first few months in office, Council President Bud Otis and I visited employees in every area of county government to express appreciation for their good work and dedication to serving the public. I made sure that all employees were treated equally and fairly in terms of pay and benefits and advanced changes to the personnel rules to restore tuition assistance and floating holidays. And we restored the annual employee picnic. All successful businesses value their employees – the people who do the work!

Frederick County has a burgeoning senior population! I appointed a Seniors First! team to determine what priorities should be advanced to serve our seniors. A top priority was to expand the Meals on Wheels program so no senior would go hungry. Routes have been added in Middletown, Lewistown, and New Market. A new transportation option actually begins this week allowing TransIt Plus members (seniors and people with disabilities) to use the Taxi Access Program to get rides at reduced rates. The taxi access program will provide services on evenings and weekends when other transportation options are not available. This program is county-wide – in both rural and urban areas. We have added staff to help evaluate and assist seniors in their home and to connect seniors to the services they need.

One of the most significant accomplishments in the past year is the County retaining ownership of Citizens Nursing and Rehabilitation Center and the Montevue Home. Once again, Frederick County will proudly take care of our own, keep our promise to our seniors, and honor the original deed on the land. In addition, I have protected taxpayers from an incredibly bad financial deal to sell these facilities at a huge cost to taxpayers. Few people realize that to sell these assets required

the county to bring millions of dollars to the table since the proceeds would not pay the mortgage on the building. The prior commissioners also took \$2.8 million from a Citizens and Montevue fund and spent it elsewhere.

Another priority was to create jobs and ensure a vibrant economy. Under my administration, Frederick County means business! We know that a job is fundamental to a high quality of life. I immediately decided to have Economic Development report directly to the County Executive and created a Business and Industry Cabinet to stay connected to what's happening in business. To create jobs, I have successfully introduced a business and commercial tax credit for large manufacturers, supported a 300 employee job expansion at AstraZeneca, and advanced legislation through our state delegation to improve our small business tax credit. We have coordinated marketing with our municipal Main Street Programs, initiated a minority business outreach effort, introduced a small business loan guarantee program with local banks, and hired an Agricultural Economic Development Specialist to support our traditional agriculture industry. A new IT tech incubator is also in the works to complement our biotech incubator that has successfully supported the creation of over 300 jobs.

My passion has always been public education and I've been a relentless advocate for our community's children. In my first budget, passed by the county council, we invested in our future by including \$4.2 million above the minimum level required by law. This is the first increase above minimum in 5 years. We broke ground on a long awaited new Frederick High School. And just last month we brought the state's top expert on school construction to the county for a roundtable discussion.

My focus is on people and making sure prosperity includes everyone. To that end, we re-established and strengthened our partnerships with our nonprofit human service agencies. Later this month, I'll be announcing



It's now been over 165 days since Emmitsburg's beloved World War One Doughboy statue was knocked off the pedestal it had stood on since 1927.

Now it stands next to trash and discarded refuse at the town's waste water treatment.

At the rate the 'repairs' are going, it looks like it will take longer than the time the citizens of the area took in 1927 to raise the funds for the statue and have it erected in the first place.

awards through our new Community Partnership Grants. By assisting the county's human service nonprofits, we can leverage our investments, avoid duplication of effort, and provide more effective services to the people who need them. Another great partnership is the sale to Interfaith Housing Alliance of a vacant county-owned building which will be transformed to affordable workforce rental apartments, adding people and activity to a neighborhood near downtown Frederick.

We know Frederick County will continue to grow but it should grow well and protect those things we love about Frederick Coun-

ty – our agricultural heritage and our historic and cultural assets. I pledged to manage that growth responsibly. That's why I created a steering committee to guide the comprehensive plan update called Livable Frederick. This process is a new and dynamic approach to long-range planning. We will have to plan differently to accommodate seniors and to keep our young people living in Frederick County. This is essential to our long term prosperity.

Join us in celebrating our one year anniversary of People and Prosperity by viewing our video at this link: <http://tinyurl.com/CE-Gardner>. Working together, our best days are ahead!

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FROM THE DESK OF...

Carroll Valley Mayor Ron Harris

On Tuesday, November 10th, the Borough Council met and approved the advertisement of the proposed 2016 Budget. This action made the proposed 2016 Budget available for residents review prior to its final adoption at the December 15th Council meeting. The 2016 Budget is the end-product of a three step review process over a three month period. The first review was performed by the Borough Manager when analyzing the Borough Department submissions. The second review was performed by the Finance Committee. The third review was performed by the Borough Council during their Budget Workshop.

At the November meeting, the public was given the opportunity to review the proposed budget. The tentative budget is based on a millage rate of 2.45 mills that is 24.5 cents on each one hundred dollars of assessed valuation which means there will be no Carroll Valley Borough tax increase for 2016. The Borough, County and Fire Taxes are remaining at the same level as last year. The distribution of the total tax paid approximately breaks down as follows: Carroll Valley is 15.02%,

Fire Tax is 1.53% Adams County is 24.03% and Fairfield School District is 59.41%. The proposed budget can be reviewed at the Borough office or at www.carrollvalley.org for the online version.

It is unfortunate but please keep in mind that house break-ins spike during November through January, the holiday season. There is a lot of information on the internet on how to prevent this from happening. However, maybe the approach should be doing those things that reduce the risk of a burglary. Let's review some facts: (1) Break-in occurs when no one is home; (2) Entry is by a basement/first level window/patio door; (3) Burglary occurs during the day because the criminal can use the daylight to determine whether someone is at home and/or able to look into the house to determine whether it is worth the gamble; and (4) the Burglar wants to be in and out in the shortest period of time, probably about 5-6 minutes.

If these are the facts, some things to consider: (1) Do those things to give the impression there is someone at home; (2) Landscape around your house in such a way to make it difficult for someone to

gain entry into the house through basement/first level windows. One suggestion, place thorny rose bushes under windows which may make thieves think twice before going in that way. Also, trim bushes so no one can use them as a concealment cover when casing the house; (3) Do not leave valuables (laptops, tablets, etc.) in plain view of a window or patio door (use sheer curtains that let in light but block the view); and (4) Place your valuables in places that will take time to find. Remember, reduce the risk.

The Toys for Tots program is an annual toy drive sponsored by the United States Marine Corp. The goal of this program is to make sure every child has a present on Christmas morning. If you want to help to bring a smile to a child, please consider donating a new unwrapped toy. For more information or have any questions, please call Gayle Marthers at 717-752-0063. You also can go to the website: www.toysfortots.org. Thank those in our community for their support of the Toys for Tots Program.

The Snowflakes & Snowmen Dinner Dance will be held by

the Carroll Valley Citizens Association (CVCA) on December 11th (Friday) from 6:30 pm until 11:00 pm. This special dinner dance event will be held in the new HIGHLAND LODGE at Liberty Mountain Resort. Cost will be \$30 per person for the sumptuous buffet; a cash bar will be available; and the event will be held in "The Overlook Room" which faces west looking across the ongoing improved golf course and the beautiful adjacent South Mountains. CVCA has been given one of the first opportunities to enjoy this beautiful Resort addition to the community.

Hopefully, the Dinner Dance attendees will be given a tour of the newly built convention facility; which is quite a big addition to the golf & ski complex as known in the past years. Check on details about this Dinner Dance in posters around town; calls and invitations received from friends and neighbors; and for the techie people on web pages, in Facebook postings, and in emails. You really do not want to miss this chance to enjoy an evening of fun with friends or the preview of the new building. Contact Marie (642-

8343) or Mary (642-6654) for tickets and/or more information. Tickets are also available at Jesters Computers, Mountain View Realty Office and the Borough Office.

This Dinner Dance will also provide an opportunity to join the revitalized CVCA group and pay your dues, volunteer to help with other events and programs, and share your ideas to enhance and enrich life in our beautiful Valley Home Area. Breakfast with Santa will be held on Saturday, December 12th from 8 am to 11 am. I have been told by an air traffic controller that Santa plans to arrive at 9 am. If you plan to attend and bring a new, unwrapped toy for the Toys for Tots program, you will eat for free. As always, there will be lots of fun for the kids.

Borough meetings December are: Planning Commission (Dec 7th), Public Safety Committee (Dec 14th), Borough Council (Dec 15th), and Parks/Recreation Committee (Dec 16th). The Borough Office will be closed on Dec 24th and Dec 25th.

If you have any questions call me at 301-606-2021 or email at MayorRonHarris@comcast.net. Happy Holidays and I wish you and your family good health and happiness topped with loads of good fortune in 2016. Happy New Year!

From the Desk of Representative Dan Moul

As state legislators, we do not always see the direct benefits of the laws we work to pass. In fact, many of the bills that improve people's lives go virtually unnoticed by the general public. However, late last week, I was surprised and pleased to learn that one of the bills I sponsored, which became law two years ago, is having a positive impact on the lives of displaced children.

House Bill 1075, now Act 55 of 2013, requires county social service agencies or their contracted providers to conduct on-going efforts to locate relatives of children who have been removed from their homes and/or are accepted for services by county Children and Youth agencies.

While placement facilities and foster care provide a lifeline for children with nowhere to go, the goal of my legislation is to get children into loving homes with

family members who would take a special interest in them. Such placements have proven to create better, more stable outcomes for children, and they save taxpayer money that would be spent on institutionalizing these children.

Statistics provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services show that about two-thirds of Pennsylvania counties have experienced a decline in the number of children in state care since my family finding legislation became law.

As vice chairman of the House Children and Youth Committee, I have been actively engaged in efforts to protect the welfare of children – whether from abuse and neglect or to address their basic needs. When it came to displaced children, I could see that our laws did not go far enough in attempting to unite these children with family. I know of heart-wrench-

ing cases where children have grown up in orphanages or in foster care and it was later learned that they had relatives who would have been willing to take them in if they had just known about them.

The Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children, which endorsed my legislation, maintained that identifying extended family at the time a child is accepted for services helps agencies to avoid placing children in institutions or foster care. Previously, the law only required notification of family members or kin within 30 days of a child entering foster care. My family finding legislation requires the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services and county Children and Youth Services agencies to actively search for family members on an on-going basis.

In Adams County, the number of children in foster care has been

steadily declining over the past decade. In fact, in 2006, 129 Adams County children were in foster care. By 2012, the number had fallen to 74, and since my bill became law, that number has dropped to its current level of 40. While I believe 40 is still too high, we have made significant progress toward normalizing the living situation for many displaced children, and this new law ensures that we will not give up on those who remain or any future children in the system.

I am hopeful that another bill, which complements my family finding legislation, will also make it through the Legislature and to the governor's desk. House Bill 1350 would offer family members of displaced children the opportunity to engage in family conferencing and planning sessions to chart a course for the care and welfare of the child.

In many cases, solutions to concerns for a child's safety, permanency and well-being are dictated by government caseworkers. Family conferencing would provide an avenue for families to find their own solutions. At a family conference, facilitated by a Children and Youth agency, a family would gather to create a service plan to address concerns that caused the family to become involved in the child welfare system. Once approved by the county Children and Youth Agency or a court, the family would take an active role in carrying out its plan.

No child should grow up without the love and support of family. The new family finding law helps to make the connections necessary to place children with family and give them the greatest opportunity for adjustment, happiness and success.

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GOVERNMENT—NORTH OF THE MASON-DIXON LINE

County Commissioner Marty Qually

Over the past four years I have done my best as County Commissioner to serve the people of Adams County. It is an honor to be re-elected for another four years to serve this great county. This victory is a tribute to the hard work of my campaign team and community members willing to spread the truth about my stances on the issues facing our county. Now that the election is over, it is time to move forward and begin looking at our goals for the next four years.

Looking forward in a deliberate fashion means outlining immediate, mid term and long term goals. In the near term the county is about to release for public review a draft 2016 budget. In the near term I need to meet with staff and community leaders to outline our community goals for the coming year. And lastly we must begin to outline long term goals for the future uses of the old Saint Francis School and Herff Jones properties. After my first four years in office, I have lost my naivete that substantial government projects can be achieved by simply adding a new Board of Commissioners. By outlining our goals and the timeline to complete each goal, I will be in a better position to obtain timely public input and allocate the necessary

resources to successfully reach these goals.

The number one priority in the coming weeks is the presentation and approval of the 2016 budget. In a year where revenue projections were at best flat, county staff did an excellent job of curbing expenses. So good that we are projecting a budget surplus for 2015. By keeping health care costs low and continuing to be frugal, county staff have put the finishing touches on a great 2015 and a better plan for 2016 than I thought possible only a few months ago. That coupled with increases in state funding for emergency services and our own reducing of county rents are resulting in a balanced budget with no tax increase. We will be able to fill needed staff positions, which have been left vacant, adequately pay county staff to prevent increasing turnover and new employee training expenses, and continue to modernize our IT infrastructure to better serve the public. I wish that I could take credit for many of these savings, but the truth is while we can give direction and challenge staff, they did the hard work of answering the challenge. By the time this article goes to press, we should already have the draft budget ready for public review. Please take the time to

visit our website, www.adamscounty.us, to begin reviewing and commenting on this budget.

In mid-November 2015 we were visited by one of our major financial institutions to discuss the general financial health of the county. They were extremely impressed that we have been able to keep our health insurance premiums level for three years and with our overall fiscal stability. However, their only negative comment was that Adams County lacks the economic growth to support a stronger tax base. We quickly told them that “economic stimulation and growth” have been and will continue to be an administrative priority. Over the past year I have learned that terms like economic “stimulus”, “growth”, or “development” mean different things to different people. In fact while I know that economic development means improving our farm and tourism businesses, many people instantly equate development with big box stores or “smoke stack” industries. While we may all differ on what is best economically for the future of Adams County, we all should agree that agriculture and tourism are our current strengths and should be improved. That too is economic develop-

ment. Over the next four years I want to continue the discussion about what kinds of economic development are best for our communities.

With the purchase of the old Herff Jones property (Human Services Building) and the previous purchase of the old Saint Francis properties (High Street Complex) Adams County is poised to have the resources to adequately address future governmental growth. To be crystal clear, if I felt that current and future services to our residents could be served without these properties, Herff Jones would never have been purchased and the Saint Francis properties would be up for sale already. That is not the case. As our population increases, our need for services and additional office space increases.

My job as an elected official is to be responsible and fiscally prudent with our planning for inevitable future growth. I believe that these two properties are the most cost effective way to plan for this future. As we begin to design the Human Services Building, we will not only have space for existing rented offices, but we should be able to relocate archived records and maintenance storage out of the High Street Complex, thus freeing

up space better utilized as office space. Furthermore, the additional space at the Human Services Building may provide for joint equipment and supply purchasing, thus enabling the county and potentially other local governments to save funds through bulk purchasing. While I can try to outline all of the “potential” uses of each property, we will only know the best uses after thorough reviews by architectural and engineering experts. Once a plan is developed, we will be able to begin budgeting for these changes and over the next ten years deliberately renovate or build the space Adams County government needs to effectively deliver services to our residents.

Over the past four years I have done my best to serve the people of Adams County. With your input I will continue to do the same for the next four years. As we begin reviewing next year’s budget, work towards economic success, and plan for future county office space I will need your advice. If you have any concerns or would like to help move Adams County forward please join me on my facebook page at Marty Qually for Adams County Commissioner, email me at martyqually@gmail.com, or call my personal cellphone at 717-339-6514. For the next four year I work for you. Let’s make it another great four year.

Senator Richard Alloway

Governor Wolf’s recent announcement that Pennsylvania will continue to accept refugees from Syria has ignited a firestorm of controversy in communities throughout the state. Numerous local residents have contacted me to express serious concerns regarding the federal government’s ability to properly vet refugees and protect our nation against the threat of terrorist attacks. These concerns are well-founded and should not be taken lightly, as the safety and security of our nation hinges on how we address this problem.

The overwhelming majority of those seeking refugee status in the United States from Syria hold no animosity toward our country. These refugees, many of whom are women and children whose homes have

been compromised or destroyed, are fleeing the same kind of butchers and madmen that carried out the deplorable terror attacks in Paris, Beirut and Egypt in recent weeks. We need to explore every avenue to help these vulnerable families in their time of greatest need. However, we risk grave consequences in our own communities if we fail to identify those who seek to take advantage of this crisis in order to gain access to our country to do us harm.

It is critical to provide necessary safeguards to protect Pennsylvania communities. In the interest of public safety and national security, I am calling on Governor Wolf to reevaluate Pennsylvania’s position in relation to accepting refugees from the violence in Syria, with special

consideration given to the process by which potential refugees are evaluated. A single mistake in this process could lead to catastrophic consequences, so we must ensure the vetting process is secure.

As we continue to promote an open and honest dialogue regarding the Commonwealth’s role in federal efforts to relocate refugees, it is equally important to discuss ways for the state to effectively partner with federal officials to deal with individuals who come to Pennsylvania with ill intent. This includes working to ensure coordination between law enforcement agencies at all levels of government.

In current practice, many municipalities fail to honor detainer requests from federal officials when dangerous criminals are apprehended by local authori-

ties. At a time when radical militants are desperately seeking entry into our country to commit acts of terror, it makes little sense for local authorities to thumb their collective noses at federal immigration officials when a potential danger is identified. The need for coopera-

tion between state and local officials has never been greater, and I am hopeful that the current conversation about the treatment of refugees can be broadened to include a discussion of how we can best protect our communities from all potential threats.

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The Borough of Carroll Valley is accepting resumes for a working Supervisor of the Roads Department. This individual will oversee plowing, road construction and repair, culvert repair and installation, equipment maintenance and roadside mowing among other duties. Successful candidate must have: computer skills, excellent communication skills, advanced mechanical skills, valid Class B CDL driver’s license and motivated toward service and teamwork. Applicant should submit a resume and a completed application to the attention of “Municipal Services Supervisor Search.” Applications are available at www.carrollvalley.org or at the office, 5685 Fairfield Road, Carroll Valley, PA 17320 and will be accepted until December 14, 2015. For more information call 717-642-8269. EOE.

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May Peace be your gift at Christmas and your Blessing through the coming New Year!

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COMMENTARY

Words from Winterbilt

Peace on Earth and the Christmas gift?

Shannon Bohrer

Christmas is coming and that's a good thing. It is a magical time of the year when we celebrate the birth of Jesus. Christmas can be uplifting and inspirational; peace on earth and good will toward man - sounds like such a noble cause. Of course we also see family and friends, sometimes family that we only see because they are family. Sometime we also eat and drink too much and we don't follow our healthy diets and exercise routines. Even when we don't have healthy diets and exercise routines, we sometimes think we do so we over look our indulgences as temporary. Of course all of this helps with our choice(s) for New Year resolutions. With everything going on our holiday spirit can sometimes be confusing, losing sight of the meaning of Christmas - and that's wrong.

While Peace on earth is a noble thought during the holidays, it is rarely talked about or discussed during the rest of the year. The fact that it seems to fit with Christmas probably adds to our good thoughts. Just the idea that it could even be possible should give us both hope and inspiration. I say that because history tells us that real peace on earth

is a very rare event. World history, on the topic of peace on earth is just depressing. Between 3500 BC and 2015, we have had about 300 years of peace. That is not a good record and it also means that during most of the Christmas celebrations wars were being waged somewhere in the world. Of course if your country or state is under threat or is attacked, is defending yourself unethical?

Throughout recorded history many of the conflicts have been related to religious beliefs. And yet war in the name of God, does not fit with the name of God. During our civil war, President Lincoln said the both sides were praying to the same God for victory. I wonder how many other wars occurred where both sides prayed to the same God for victory.

Presently, during our involvements in the Middle East for the last 14 years, the "Arab Spring" occurred. While the term the "Arab Spring" sounds like a good thing, it really means conflict and war has broken out - in multiple countries. It also means that individuals and groups are fighting on multiple sides, hoping to be on the winning side. For the United States it means we have politicians and talking heads; the experts, telling us who we should support in the conflicts.

Currently we have US Military troops in Afghanistan (and Iraq and Syria, but not that many) and several other potential hot spots. And if some had their way we would have more troops in Afghanistan and we would be sending troops to Libya, more back to Iraq, to Yemen and to several African nations. And that is not counting the troops we have in the Baltic countries conducting NATO training. Remember, Crimea - which was part of Ukraine!

Our politicians, many of which are running for President, have told us that we left Iraq too early allowing ISIS to flourish. They say we need to support the moderate rebels in Syria and we also need a no-fly zone. They also reason there is so much conflict in Libya is because we did not send in the troops. And now they believe we need to go back because President Putin is interfering and it's embarrassing. It was bad enough that we allowed Putin to take Crimea (as if we really had a choice). They allege that our friends no longer trust us and we have emboldened our enemies.

Repeating the same interventions over and over will resolve the issues, it will make us safer and it will bring peace on earth. Yea, sure it will. Of course it also makes us look strong, at least to ourselves. Maybe the world sees it differently? Maybe we

should rethink our involvements.

In the Middle East we have been in Afghanistan the longest. We went to war in Afghanistan because the groups that attacked us on 9/11 resided and operated there. Afghanistan was not their country; they just operated there without any governmental interference, possibly because there was no centralized government. We all know the history since our initial entrance, our enemies moved, migrated, emigrated and evolved or morphed into other groups. Currently we have been at war in the Middle East for over fourteen years and there does not seem to be an end in sight. The questions we might want to ask; is what can we do that we have not done in the first fourteen years and are we really safer?

It also should be repeated that the talking heads and politicians often tell us that after we fight and defeat the insurgency; we will be spreading democracy. I am not a world historian, but when did the United States ever engage in defeating an insurgency and it worked the way we expected? Our military is the best and they can best any other military, but an insurgency is not a military. Insurgencies are ideologies that can just keep recruiting, moving and just changing. The accepted strategy to defeat an ideology is to change the government. We did that in Iraq, but I don't think it worked. When citizens in northern Iraq say they are more afraid of the Iraqi Government

than ISIS - that is a clue. When the government of Saudi Arabia say they are more afraid of Iran than ISIS - that is another clue.

If we could build democracies as good as we defeat armies, I don't think we would still be in the Middle East. If anything, we have demonstrated that after winning the battle, we should just leave. Literally, we don't seem to have any idea of how to teach people to govern their own country. And now our historical enemy; Russia, had entered Syria and is fully engaged with troops and equipment. It would appear that President Putin plans on staying a long time. If you recall, before we went to Afghanistan it was Russia that was in Afghanistan for over 9 years. I wonder how that worked?

Maybe we should view Putin's move into the Middle East as a Christmas Gift. As long as a world power is in Syria keeping the peace, maybe we should just leave. If we stay, does anyone really think anything would change? History may say that with great intentions we just overreached. And just maybe history would say that instead of staying and embracing our past errors, we changed directions. There may not be peace in the world this Christmas, but it does not mean that we have to be at war.

Merry Christmas.

To read past editions of Words from Winterbilt visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.

Common Cents

Neo Ottomans

Ralph F. Murphy

The West Asian nation of Turkey which also attaches geographically to Europe has just witnessed its second Parliamentary election since June of this year. This "snap poll" was needed because no single, political party was able to establish a majority. All 550 seats of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey were at stake and the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) moved from 258 seats to 316. They needed 276 seats for a ruling majority.

Incumbent Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu and President Recep Erdogan of the AKP will now have a clear mandate to promote their vision of Turkey's role for the future. Unfortunately, because of their platform and much of their actions, they are likely to slip back into the past decade dealing as Islamist and authoritarian.

Turkey is in a region of great turmoil- largely due to the Syrian civil war. They have taken in the most refugees- an estimated 1 million, and they are having problems housing and feeding them. Violence has erupted along its southern borders. A Kurdish region of varied ethnic, Muslim peoples, who are still Sunnis and mostly Turks that have been drained of resources and suffered much damage. This includes polit-

ical bombings as well as cross border attacks of Peshmerga targets in Kurdistan Iraq.

The country has a long and fabled history dating back to 1299 AD as the Ottoman Empire. It was renamed Turkey in 1923 with post World War 1 allied impetus and aid. Prime Minister Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's political platform was radical for its day as he tried to dissuade Quran teachings or Caliphate interpretations to influence society at all levels. This included passing stringent laws banning customs such as face veils for women. However, his politics were left of center and his political legacy in the Republican People's Party (CHP) reflected that position often causing resentment among friends and domestic parties who otherwise often agreed with the push to modernize.

The CHP dominated political life in Turkey from the 1920's through to 1960. That year a bloody coup d'etat was staged which killed the Prime Minister and his staff, as he reportedly had sought closer links with Soviet Moscow. There were 4 coups between 1960 to 1997 and they were mostly about economic issues or religion. The Turkish military until very recently considered itself the key "defenders of the (secular) Constitution". That was before Erdogan, a moderate Islamist, attempted to maintain or enhance Islamic culture there.

He even managed to reverse some of Ataturk's secular measures and almost impossibly - the military's role. The military has since been forced to "go along" with the Islamist agenda.

Turkey is probably the best example of the difficulty when implementing an Arab Spring in other Muslim nations as they seek plurality and secular inclusion. The Quran has interwoven political, economic, and religious institutions which are (or ideally should be) kept separate when introducing western ideas. The result has been a complex mixture of laws and social standards that are aggressive when applied and promote hostility and often violence that is supported by the regional Caliphates or political - religious leaders. The west doesn't have an equivalent. It is similar to having a radicalized church leader who is running both the City Council and the Chamber of Commerce.

Following the 1997 coup, then Istanbul Mayor Recep Erdogan became radicalized and was jailed for anti secular activities. He was later banned from politics altogether in 1998. A member of the Welfare Party - he joined forces with fellow Islamist Abdullah Gul to found the Virtue Party which split into hard and moderate religious factions. Gul and Erdogan projected the latter's interests, but remained at odds with the military who continued to

want politics devoid of direct theocracy. The moderate faction became the AKP in 2001.

Gul gained power as Prime Minister in 2002 and served until 2003 when Erdogan's ban from politics was lifted and he assumed the Prime Minister's post. He remained in office through the 2007 and 2011 polls as Gul moved to a largely ceremonial, Presidential position. A key issue in his rise to power was his desire for European Union (EU) membership. The EU viewed Turkey as a non-European power even though they were members of the NATO and OSCE security alliances. Nevertheless, Turkey "kept trying" for membership. The EU, however, wanted social reforms that were at odds with the Quran and Erdogan couldn't deliver.

Whether by chance or remarkable political savvy, Erdogan effectively redesigned the nation's National Security Council which then controlled the military and much of their intelligence to the apparent applause of the EU. Media purges, judicial and police reforms as well as curbed human rights "demeaned the rule of law", but were relatively minor issues compared to the effective neutralization of the military's secular goals in politics. Erdogan's Islamist agenda went forward after military operations "Sledgehammer" and "Ergenkon" to allegedly foment unrest then restore order were exposed in 2003. Erdogan and the AKP looked victimized and they consolidated power that they have retained until this past Autumn.

Gul was President until the 2014 election when Prime Minister Erdogan stepped down after a 12 year reign. He moved to the President's post last year and AKP's Davutoglu, an affable former Foreign Minister, assumed the Prime Minister's post. Erdogan appears to have moved considerable power from the Prime Minister's office to his own. Especially Cabinet positions that were formerly ceremonial in nature. He now has a 5 year term but can only serve two. The Prime Minister has a 4 year term, but as the "snap election" on 1 November shows, the time length can be altered if the Parliament desires its review.

Self proclaimed Neo Ottoman Erdogan has a political mandate for the AKP party as it retains the Presidency, Prime Minister as well as Speaker posts, but he really doesn't have the military. This is a historic precedent that could prove costly if the military chooses to restore their role as a Constitutional and secular safeguard. The way forward to a stable Turkish social structure may well be the CHP secular platform with AKP private market advocacy, but it may take another coup and subsequent party reformation to accomplish it. The Muslim direction is also routinely pernicious and emotional in effect so that a key source of concern as well. Stability might happen through political reformulation, but it is not the standard in Turkey- despite wishful thinking that it could be.

To read past editions of Common Cents visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.

The American Mind

Keeping your kids off the evening news

William Hillman

Respect. Aretha Franklin sang for it. Muhammad Ali fought for it. And today we don't have enough of it.

Recently there was a video making the rounds on all the news stations. In this video, a girl is forcibly dragged out of her school desk by a security guard. This sent the country into tremors once again with the allegations of police brutality, racism, profiling, etc.

One commentator made the point that the system was rigged and had failed this girl. I agree, the system has failed her. Before I go into why on my thoughts on it, let me say I don't know this girl. I don't know anything about her background or where she is from. All I know is what was on the video. Therefore, my comments are limited to what I saw on the video. I'll also make some assumptions about her background and if these assumptions are wrong, I apologize.

It was not the security guard's fault. He was dealing with the situation that presented itself the best way he knew. First, the teacher could not deal with the situation and called the principal. The principal could not get the girl to comply and called the security guard. The security guard made her comply.

According to google, the average US salary of a teacher is \$45,000. The average salary of a principal is

\$92,000. The average salary of a security guard is \$24,000. Who are these teachers and principals that we entrust with our kids, yet, have no control over them? The teacher and the principal were incapable of performing their job. And with great protest we blame the situation on the security guard. As we know, blame always rolls downhill.

But the real blame doesn't lie with the teachers, the principal, or the security guard. This is a situation where the girl in question appears to have no respect for anyone. Lack of respect starts at home.

Respect is something that should be instilled in children, with love, starting at a young age. If they don't learn it from their parents and family, they might end up learning it from the end of a stick later in life.

Teaching your children to be respectful is not an easy thing. Trust me, I know this. Children are basically feral animals whose natural desire is to stay wild. And they will fight you every step of the way.

My oldest child, who today is mostly civilized, has a very hard time accepting the fact that he is a child and therefore of a different class than adults. When told it's bedtime he says, "It's not fair, you get to stay up and I have to go to bed!"

In this age, it's not easy to be a parent fighting this battle. All the signals children get are the opposite of respect. In many of the TV shows geared towards children, adults

play the fools. In school, many of their peer's parents have given up on teaching respect or never started. I can't tell you how it kills me when a kid walks up and addresses me by my first name. Or when my children's mate's parents insist my child calls them by their first name. What is going on with these parents? Don't get me started on "please" and "thank you."

Our job is not to be friends with our children, but to raise them to respect others and themselves. If we are successful, you will have more than a friend, you will have someone who loves and respects you. Otherwise, they still will not be your friend because they will never respect you.

Honestly, it's not very difficult to raise your children to be good people. All the studies and books that have ever been written on the subject can be summed up in a few rules of thumb. You want to give your child a shot at a happy life, then here you go. Just a warning, many of these rules are very politically incorrect:

Children need a father and mother- This may seem like common sense, but today more than half of children are born into a single-parent family. Boys especially need fathers. If you want to read more on this topic, go to the library and find an old book called "Iron John."

Have a religion- Children who grow up believing in nothing will turn into adults who believe in anything. Religion is a very powerful



social binding. Believing in a higher power brings humility and hope. Your kids might not be very religious as they grow older, but having that religious card in their back pocket when life look hopeless, may just save their lives.

Have a meal together as a family several times a week, if not every night- And keep the TV off. This point cannot be emphasized enough. Kids whose families regularly eat together on average do better in school, and are less likely to get involved in drugs. There's a reason why sharing meals is so important in many religions. This is a time when bonds are created. Stories and the day's events are shared, and most importantly, are listened to. At no other point will you spend as much direct-interaction time with your children and spouse as at the dining table.

Have your child involved in some sort of team or regular group activities- They don't have to be the best or the star player. They don't even have to be good. They

do need to learn to be a member of the team. They also need to learn how to win, and more importantly how to lose. While on the subject, coaches, please don't give out those God-awful participation trophies. Trophies are for winning. If you want to give the kids something, give them the practice balls they used during the season, or maybe a hat with the league name on it, but can we just please do away with the participation trophies?

Insist on good manners and proper respect for others- The best way to teach manners and respect is by example.

Know who your children are hanging out with - Their peers can have a lot of influence on them.

I give no guarantee, but these simple rules will help to give our children a fighting chance of staying off the evening news.

To read past editions of *The American Mind* visit the Authors' section of Emmitsburg.net.

Down Under

Civil Liberties

Submitted by Lindsay!
Melbourne, Australia

They that give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety. —Benjamin Franklin

The horrific bombings in Paris on November fourteen are the continuation of a campaign to punish America and all who have sided with her. It has put the cause of civilization, freedom, community, and peace back decades, and the whole world will never be the same again. Terrorists have one aim – to induce terror into the hearts of others so that they will capitulate. They aim to disrupt any society that dares stand in its way, and have the ability to use every piece of modern technology and publicity with a sophistication that is dumbfounding.

Isis and related groups are not disaffected groups of citizens; they are not breakaway political parties, persecuted minorities, or gung ho militias. They are smart, informed and angry people who do not care for anything or anybody who disagrees with them. Their roots can be traced back

over 1000 years, yet it is only in the past 30 years that the resentments, injustices and humiliations they have suffered over that millennium have boiled over into madness.

This anger has been presented as a rallying point for young Muslims who have either experienced similar injustices, or have graphically been told of them by relatives, teachers or mullahs. Their slogans have been based on distorted interpretations of the Koran, and their appeal has been sufficiently powerful that the inhumanity of their aims is overlooked and ignored. Self sacrifice has been embraced as the glorious price to be paid; attacks by their enemies are touted as proof of persecution, and every death a victory.

There are a multitude of factors behind this, but one – and only one – stands out as the primary source of their hatred: American interference into the affairs of other nations, especially those in the middle east. Their hatred is based not on just the overt interference, but the ethos on which it thrives. Contrary to what you at home may believe, America is centred on producing only one outcome: The furtherance of its own inter-

ests. Nothing stands in the way of that, and the means by which this is achieved are many, devious, and without regard for international law, codes of conduct, or the welfare of the citizens.

It's tempting to give a summary of those means, but it is so painful to think about that the best I can do is to say that you are all in the grip of the greatest illusion ever staged. If I were to ask you which is the greatest country on earth, the one with greatest freedoms, success, power, resources and culture I have no doubt you would unanimously reply "Why, ours!"

And you would be telling the truth from your perspective, because you live in a world bounded by mirrors that reflect back your society. "Yes", you might add, "we know things are not perfect, there are too many poor, too much crime, too many struggling, but we are still the top nation, the only one worth that title." And who can blame you? It's what you are told every day in every way, but the price of living in this paradise is that of your freedom. Freedom from the truth, freedom of being allowed to care for the fate and condition of foreigners, freedom from the ability to open the box of secrets that govern your lives, freedom from compassion.

Would you agree that the overall aim of America as a nation is

to make the rest of the world indistinguishable from it? That everyone should be like Americans, like you, with a few minor differences to show they were once some other nation with different cultures, beliefs and ways? I would hope not, yet that is the aim..

Isis et al cannot see that individually you are great folk, caring, generous and kind. They can only see what your conception of supreme America has pushed their faces into: the mire of exploitation, the horror of uncaring attacks, the humiliation of religious denigration. And the real problem you all face is that you cannot see it either. Life is too cozy, your safety is constantly guaranteed, the major press is informed with truth and reality, your leaders of all kinds are so trustworthy, and you believe you live in the greatest nation on earth. What you also see is that the only way to deal with terrorism is to bomb it into oblivion, not that it is much too late to deal with it that way. That the way was lost when you embarked on hegemony and subjugation of those who stood in the path to world supremacy.

And most of the the rest of the world has been dragged into it. We all have, at best, a love-hate relationship with you. We have to kowtow or be put on your hit list. We do not want \$9,000,000,000

worth of more useless aircraft, but are stuck with getting them. Many of us are sick of that, and wish to preserve our long and wonderful heritages, our ways of life, and to not surrender our freedoms for the pottage you offer. France is suffering, we have and will suffer, those you have raped still suffer, while your five billion dollars an hour keeps the bad guys at bay. I wonder how China views all this? What do you think?

Of course many of you have never fallen into the trap of megalomania, you cherish your civil liberties above all else, and are appalled at the way your governments behave. You will not give up one iota of freedom for the sake of security, for you know you finish up with neither.

Christmas will be with us soon, and the very name in that word has come to mean love and care for all. I would like to propose that we unite in the promotion of real freedom – to respect and value the people of other lands, to let them show us their culture and care for us, and to subvert the message of imperial America.

Time for a truly happy, forgiving Christmas, one full of civil liberty for all.

Lindsay, Melbourne

To read past editions of *Down Under* visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.

THE PASTOR'S DESK

Silent Night?

Pastor John Talcott
Christ Community Church

Pastor Chris Spruill Incarnation United Church of Christ

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear? O Little Town of Bethlehem? Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer?? Almost every person has one. That one special Christmas song that, once they hear it, means the Christmas season has officially begun. As of this writing there are, of course, already decorations and other holiday ware appearing in local stores. Cities and towns are beginning to string lights and hang banners and build manger scenes and decorate pine trees. Businesses are planning Christmas and Holiday parties. Plans are being made for special trips to see special people.

But the holiday season isn't easy or fun or festive for everyone. Imagine if you could not afford to buy any Christmas presents for your children or your spouse. What if you didn't have a home to decorate? You probably wouldn't feel much like singing, even your favorite Christmas songs. However, there are ways we can help. There are wonderful opportunities that we can help to provide for any and all of our most vulnerable neighbors.

One way that we can help is

to become involved in the invaluable work being done at the Seton Center. The Seton Center is a local non-profit, located right here in Emmitsburg, where the most basic human needs can be met. Their work with area homeless and those less fortunate has provided a beacon of light in the bleak mid-winter. There are countless ways in which anyone can become involved in helping out. You can volunteer to help at the Center by offering hospitality, staffing the store or helping to sort donated items. Find out ways you can help by accessing their website at www.setoncenterinc.org. You can also call the Center at 301-447-6102.

Another local charity that is doing wonderful work in the lives of those in our area that are struggling is the Frederick Rescue Mission. Through their Adopt-a-Resident program you can provide gifts for a family in transition or a family that has been touched by chemical addiction. Santa's Work Shop provides the opportunity to provide toys to children for Christmas gifts that their families would otherwise not be able to afford. They also sponsor an annual Christmas Turkey Give Away in which you can provide turkeys that will go to needy families. For more information on how you can help, please visit their



website at www.therescuemission.org or you can call the office at 301-695-6633.

One great way that you can help this holiday season is to become involved in providing monetary support to the mission and outreach funds available at most of our local area Emmitsburg churches. You are probably already aware of what your church is doing to help out this year, but if you don't have a church home, I encourage you to visit any one of our downtown churches to find out what is going on to provide light to chase away the darkness in the lives of the less fortunate.

Another problem that comes about during the holiday season is an increase in seasonal depression. Perhaps because of the shorter days or the lack of sunlight, but mostly because of some type of change that has occurred in the life of an individual in the past year, the Christmas season can be an especially difficult time of the year. It's not always easy for us to identify ways in which our friends and family members are suffering, especially when we are so focused on our own holiday stress, but some of the signs of seasonal de-

pression are easy to spot. Has a family member pulled away inexplicably from the usual family hub-bub around holiday preparations? Do you have a neighbor who normally has their house decorated before Thanksgiving but they've been slow to put out the Santa or the manger scene this year? Is one of your friends less talkative than usual? These are all signs that seasonal depression has set in. Also, if you know that someone has had a life-altering change in the past year, it's always a good idea to check up on them during the holiday season.

If you know someone who has lost a loved-one in 2015, this will be their first Christmas without that special person. If you are aware that a family member has dealt with an uncommon amount of stress this year, they are a likely candidate for seasonal depression. Make sure to check in with your loved ones so that we can keep an eye on our community members who might be suffering more than they are willing to share. If you find yourself suffering from unexpected sadness or ennui, talk to a friend or family member and let them know you are hurting.

We can all get so caught up in the season that it is easy to miss some of the most obvious signs of seasonal depression even in those close to us.

I would like to take the opportunity to wish all of you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. If you celebrate from another faith tradition, please accept this as a sincere wish that you have the Happiest of Holiday Seasons. Please take the opportunity this month to take part in the Advent preparations going on with our local churches and don't sit at home alone on Christmas Eve. Find a local congregation with whom you can celebrate the Light that chases away all darkness!

Not part of a church? Then Incarnation United Church of Christ invites you to join them for their Christmas Eve service is scheduled for 7PM on the 24th. The Church will be celebrating Advent preparation each Sunday in December prior to Christmas.

Incarnation United Church of Christ is located at 124 West Main Street, Emmitsburg.

To read past editions of *The Pastor's Desk* visit the *Authors* section of Emmitsburg.net.

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OF CHRIST

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www.emmitsburgcommunitybiblechurch.com

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Pastor Walter Barlow • bodyofchristministries@live.com



Sir Isaac Newton and the apple



The Christmas-day of 1642 was marked by the birth of one of the world's greatest men—one who effected more than any other person in rendering the world familiar to us, in an astronomical point of view. During his long and invaluable life, which extended to the 20th of March 1727 his researches extended over an illimitable domain of science, and are imperishably written on the page of philosophy.

One or two incidents connected with his life will be found narrated in a previous article; but we may suitably notice, in this place, the remarkable way in which the grandest and most sublime of all his discoveries has become popularly associated with a very trivial circumstance—the fall of an apple.

It is curious to trace the manner in which this apple-story has been told by different writers, and the different opinions formed concerning it. Pemberton, who received from Newton himself the history of his first ideas of gravitation, does not mention the apple, but speaks simply of the idea having occurred to the philosopher 'as he sat alone in a garden.'

Voltaire says: 'One day, in the year 1666, Newton went into the country, and seeing fruit fall from a tree (as his niece, Madame Conduit, has informed me), entered into a profound train of thought as to the causes which could lead to such a drawing-together or attraction.' Hegel, referring to this subject, alludes contemptuously to the story of the apple, as a modern version of the history of the tree of knowledge, with whose fruit the serpent beguiled Eve.

Sir. David Brewster, in his *Life of Newton*, does not expressly declare either his acceptance or rejection of the apple-legend; but his tone denotes the former rather than the latter. He considers the date to have been more probably 1665 than 1666, when the apple is said to have fallen from the tree at Woolsthorpe, and suggested to Newton the idea of gravity.

When sitting alone in the garden, and speculating on the power of gravity, it occurred to him that as the same power by which the apple fell to the ground was not sensibly diminished at the greatest distance from the centre of the earth to which we can reach, neither

at the summits of the loftiest spires, nor on the tops of the highest mountains, it might extend to the moon and retain her in her orbit, in the same manner as it bends into a curve a stone or a cannon ball, when projected in a straight line from the surface of the earth. If the moon was thus kept in her orbit by gravitation to the earth, or, in other words, its attraction, it was equally probable, he thought, that the planets were kept in their orbits by gravitating towards the sun.

Kepler had discovered the great law of the planetary motions, that the squares of their periodic times were as the cubes of their distances from the sun; and hence Newton drew the important conclusion, that the force of gravity or attraction, by which the planets were retained in their orbits, varies as the square of their distances from the sun. Knowing the force of gravity at the earth's surface, he was, therefore, led to compare it with the force exhibited in the actual motion of the moon, in a circular orbit; but having assumed that the distance of the moon from the earth was equal to sixty of the earth's semi-diameters, he found that the force by which the moon was drawn from its rectilinear path in a second of time was only 13.9 feet, whereas, at the surface of the earth it was 16.1 feet. This great discrepancy between his theory and what he then considered to be the fact, induced him to abandon the subject, and pursue other subjects with which he had been previously occupied.'

Mr. De Morgan believes that the current story grew out of a conversation, magnified in the way of which we have such a multitude of instances. Sir. Isaac, in casual talk with his niece, may have mentioned the fall of some fruit as having once struck his mind, when he was pondering on the moon's motion; and she, without any intention of deceiving, may have retailed this conversation in a way calculated to give too much importance to it.

'The story of the apple is pleasant enough, and would need no serious discussion, if it were not connected with a remarkable misapprehension. As told, the myth is made to convey the idea that the fall of an apple put into Newton's mind what had never entered

into the mind of any one before him—namely, the same kind of attraction between several bodies as exists between an apple and the earth. In this way, the real glory of such men as Newton is lowered.'

It should be known that the idea had been for many years floating before the minds of physical inquirers, in order that a proper estimate may be formed of the way in which Newton's power cleared away the confusion, and vanquished the difficulties which had prevented very able men from proceeding beyond conjecture.'

Mr. De Morgan proceeds to shew that Kepler, Bouillard, and Huyghens, had all made discoveries, or put forth speculations, relating to the probable law by which the heavenly bodies attract each other; and that Newton, comparing those partial results, and bringing his own idea of universal gravitation to bear upon them, arrived at his important conclusions, without needing any such aid as the fall of an apple.

We may expect, in spite of all the arguments of the sages, that the story of the apple will continue in favour. In the beautiful new museum at Ox-

ford, the statue of Newton is sculptured with the renowned pippin at the philosopher's feet.

To read other selections for Robert Chambers' *Book of Days* visit www.thebookofdays.com.

History and character of December

December, like the three preceding months, derives its name from the place which it held in the old Roman calendar, where the year was divided, nominally, only into ten months, with the insertion of supplementary days, to complete the period required for a revolution of the earth round the sun.

In allusion to the practice of lighting fires in this month for the purpose of warmth, and the consequent inconveniences which resulted, Martial applies to it the epithet of *fumosus* or smoky. He also characterises it as *canus* or hoary, from the snows which then overspread the high grounds.

By the ancient Saxons, December was styled *Winter-monat*

or winter month; a term which, after their conversion to Christianity, was changed to *Heligh-monat* or holy month from the anniversary, which occurs in it, of the birth of Christ. Among the modern Germans, December is still, from this circumstance, distinguished by the epithet of *Christmonat*.

On the 22nd of December, the sun enters the sign of Capricornus or the Goat. The idea thus allegorized by a climbing animal is said to be the ascent of the sun, which, after reaching its lowest declination at the winter-solstice, on the 21st of this month, recommences its upward path, and continues to do so from that date till it attains its highest altitude at the summer-solstice, on the 21st of June.



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CHRISTMAS IN OUR COMMUNITY

Christmas services and activities

Michael Kenney Jr.
MSM Class of 2019

With all the anticipated church events, there seems to be no room for a "Silent Night" during this buzzing Christmas season. From amiable community dinners to charming candlelit services, churches all over the area have been working hard to provide a host of community events in honor of a celebratory Christmas Day. While each event carries a distinctive flavor, many of the longstanding church events hold great historic significance.

In addition to their Christmas Eve liturgies at 7:30 p.m., St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Shrine invites all to experience their candlelit museum tours and caroling event on December 12. With over 1,000 candles illuminating the shrine's campus, guests will experience a twist in time as they tour Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton's seventeenth and eighteenth century homes. Visiting choirs will lead Christmas caroling at 7 p.m. in the Shrine's basilica. The shrine is located at 339 South Seton Ave, Emmitsburg.

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church invites all to attend A Candlelight Christmas Concert on Decem-

ber 13 at 3 p.m. Traditional Christmas carols will be orchestrated by organist Cathy Elkiss, guest violinist Dale Elkiss, and the Trinity JuBELLation Handbell Choir. Singing will be led by members of several community choirs including the Trinity Lutheran Church's Luther Choir, Taneytown Community Chorus, and Senior Singers of Carroll County. While the event is free, guests are encouraged to bring a canned food item for the Taneytown Caring and Sharing Food Bank.

On December 24, Trinity Evangelical Lutheran will be hosting three Christmas Eve services at 4 p.m., 7:30 p.m., and 11:00 p.m. The 4 p.m. service is called "The Children's Christmas" and will suit all children and their families. While music for "A Family Christmas Eve Service" will begin at 7 p.m., the service will formally begin at 7:30 p.m. and will include scripture, stories, carols, and the sacrament of Holy Communion. Music at 10:30 p.m. will precede the closing service called "A Candlelight Midnight Service." The service will officially begin at 11 p.m. and will include scripture readings, carols, and the sacrament of Holy Communion. Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

is located at 38 W. Baltimore Street, Taneytown.

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Creagerstown invites all visitors to swing by the church on December 20 for a special Christmas harp concert featuring harpists Sally Lay and Elizabeth Allen. Refreshments will be provided. Later, on December 24, St. John's offers two Christmas Eve services. The 5 p.m. celebration will include a chicken and ham dinner, and the 7:30 p.m. service will be a traditional worship service with Communion. St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Creagerstown is located at 8619 Black's Mill Road Thurmont.

On December 20, Liberty Worship Center in Fairfield will host a Christmas themed human video. Ever since the early 1990s, Protestant churches all over the nation have performed human videos as a form of praise and worship. These live productions fuse Christian music with interpretive dance, modern dance, and miming. The performers at the Liberty Worship Center range from middle school to adulthood. The production will take place during the regular 10 a.m. service. On Christmas Eve night, Liberty Worship Center will host two candlelit services at 7 and 11 p.m. Member Jason Paul comments that Liberty Worship Center is "a community place of worship where all are welcome." Liberty Worship Center is located at 213 W Main St, Fairfield.

The historic Grace United Church of Christ will be hosting a series of events during this Christmas season. On December 12, there will be a Live Nativity showing in the front lawn of the Church. On December 19, Grace Community Church will be hosting a Blue Christmas Service. While open to everyone in the community, this service is particularly designed for people who may be grieving during

this Christmas season. Later, on December 20, the Grace United Church of Christ Youth Group will be Christmas caroling. Christmas Eve services will include a 4:30 p.m. service for families and a 10:45 p.m. traditional service. For more information, call the church office at (410) 756-2302. Grace United Methodist Church of Christ is located at 49 W. Baltimore Street Taneytown.

On December 5, come get some of your Christmas shopping done at the fourth annual Christmas Bazaar hosted by Christ's Community Church. This bazaar will have gifts available for everyone on your list as there will be a variety of vendors, a silent auction, food and baked goods, and free pictures with St. Nicholas. The event will run from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., and fun childcare services will be available. Later, on Wednesday, December 23, people of all backgrounds are invited to come and learn about Jesus -- the reason for the Christmas season! Starting at 7 p.m., Christ's Community Church will take an in-depth look at the Book of Revelations. A children's program will be available during the bible study. Christ's Community Church is located at 303 W Lincoln Ave, in Emmitsburg.

Trinity United Methodist Church in Emmitsburg will host its annual Christmas Eve Candlelight Festival of Carols and Readings. This service is loosely designed off of the original Candlelight Festival of Carols and Readings, which took place at Cambridge University in the early 20th century. Just a month after World War I concluded, former army chaplain and Dean of King's College Eric Milner-White organized the service as a way of inspiring hope and creativity in an afflicted nation. Ever since, Christmas Eve Candlelight Festivals of Carols and Readings have brought awe-inspiring beauty to people all over the English-speaking world. The service at Trinity United Methodist Church takes place at 7 p.m. Candles and refreshments will be provided. Trinity United Methodist Church is located at 313 W Main St, Emmitsburg.

Christmas Eve services at Eyer's Valley Chapel never fall short of breathtaking. Perched on a wooded hill, the intimate chapel remains in the same historic condition since its founding in 1857. Eyer's annual Christmas Eve services pinnacle the chapel's picturesque beauty as the entire chapel radiates with dozens of candles and resounds with Christmas hymns. Evening services will take place at 5, 6:30, 8, 9:30, and 11 p.m. The services will include carols, prayer time, an offering for needs, and a speech. Various speakers will be in attendance, including a missionary pastor from Ohio. Visitors are advised to dress warmly and consider bringing a flashlight and blankets. Eyer's Valley Chapel is located on Eyer's Valley Road just outside of in Emmitsburg.

Moravian Lovefeast and Candlelight Services have drawn widespread appeal for centuries. For over two hundred years, the historic Grace

Moravian Church in Thurmont has orchestrated their own Lovefeast and Candlelight Service. As with Moravian Lovefeasts around the world, guests at the Graceham service will enjoy Christmas carols, customary Moravian sugar cakes, and enriching fellowship. This year, services will begin with a special children's message at 5 p.m. and will continue with traditional services at 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. Music will be led by visiting organist James Fugate and his son, violinist Joshua Fugate. Pastor Sue Koenig invites all to "share in the special celebration of the Savior's birth." Graceham Moravian Church is located at 8231 Rocky Ridge Rd, Thurmont.

Harriet Episcopal Church invites people of all backgrounds to celebrate Christmas Eve with caroling and candlelit services. Christmas caroling beginning at 7 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. precedes both of the 7:30 p.m. and 11 p.m. candlelight services. Communion will be offered at each service. Harriet Episcopal Church is located at 12625 Catocin Furnace Rd.

Thurmont United Methodist Church on Long Rd. will host three distinctive Christmas Eve celebrations at 5:30, 7:30, and 9:30 p.m. The 5:30 p.m. celebration offers an appealing experience for children and their parents. While it is not a Christmas pageant, the first celebration will bring to life the Nativity story with vibrant storytelling and interactive elements. Reverend Robert Hunter advises celebrants to come early to the 7:30 p.m. service in order to secure a seat and enjoy music beginning at 7 p.m. This family-oriented celebration will offer candle lighting and traditional carols with a contemporary flare. Rounding off the Christmas Eve services, the 9:30 p.m. celebration will interweave traditional Christmas carols with timeless Bible lessons. An intimate candle lighting circle will conclude the celebration. Thurmont United Methodist Church is located at 13880 Long Rd, Thurmont.

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thurmont invites all to participate in their Christmas Eve celebrations. The family worship service and pageant will start at 7 p.m., followed by a candlelight service at 10 p.m. St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thurmont is located next to the firehouse on 15 North Church Street, Thurmont.

Tom's Creek United Methodist Church will host three Christmas Eve services. The 3:30 p.m. celebration will be geared towards children and families, and the 7 p.m. will be a traditional candlelit service. The final service at 11 p.m. will include candlelight and Holy Communion. Tom's Creek United Methodist Church is located at 10926 Simmons Rd, Emmitsburg.

The historic Elias Lutheran Church invites all families to their traditional Christmas Eve service. The candlelit service will begin at 7 p.m., and Holy Communion will be provided. A light reception will follow the service. Elias Lutheran Church is located at 100 W. North Ave., Emmitsburg.

Come celebrate the birth of Jesus with us!

3 Christmas Eve services for your family & friends!

5:30 pm - FAMILY SERVICE
For everyone but geared more toward children with a surprise "light" to use and take home!

7:30 pm - CANDLELIGHT SERVICE
Lots of different styles of music, powerpoint, the story of Jesus foretold, fulfilled and revealed with candle lighting at the end. (Come early for closer parking & seating)

9:30 pm - OLD FASHIONED LESSONS
The story of Jesus told in seven short bible readings, singing of Christmas Carols and candle lighting at the end.

We look forward to having you with us!

Thurmont United Methodist Church
13880 Long Rd., Thurmont, MD
www.thurmontchurch.org
www.facebook.com/thurmontchurch



Come celebrate the birth of Jesus with us!

Trinity United Methodist Church
313 West Main Street
Emmitsburg, MD
Rev. Dr. Collin A. Phillips
may be contacted at 443-834-5540

*Worship during Advent season with
the lighting of the Advent Candles
Sundays beginning November 29th
at 9:00 am*

*Christmas Eve Service with
Communion and Candlelight
7:00 pm*



CHRISTMAS IN OUR COMMUNITY

Local options for holiday gifts

Angela Smith
Managing Editor

We have now entered into the season of giving: the time to show gratitude and love for the special people in our lives through sincere, thought-out gifts. But have you taken into account the impact that your purchases make on the world around you?

Anna Lappe, an author and sustainability advocate, has some food for thought on the matter, "Every time you spend money, you are casting a vote for the kind of world you want."

So instead of taking to department stores and big businesses for Christmas gifts, why not invest in your own community this holiday season?

Several studies have shown that there are many different benefits from shopping at local companies, rather than nationally owned businesses. To start, more money from your purchases will remain in the community, which will benefit local owners, service providers, and farmers. Investing in the community through your purchases puts your tax dollars to good use, creates more local jobs, and reduces environmental impact. Chances are, you will be able to find unique and higher quality goods from local and artisanal producers than at any store in the mall.

Here are eleven locally owned and operated options for holiday gifts for everyone on your Christmas list:

Zoe's Chocolate Company

This local, award-winning chocolate shop sells boxes, individual treats, and seasonal favorites. There are also unique, Mediterranean-inspired flavors that will excite your favorite chocolate, including Aegean pistachio, baklava, and orange flower. Zoe's has two locations, one in Frederick and the other in Waynesboro.

Seton Family Center (Thrift Shop)

You never know what kinds of treasures you will find at the thrift shop! You can find quality clothing, home goods, and books at low prices and at a convenient location. It is a great place to start your holiday shopping. All proceeds from thrift shop sales are used to support Seton Center's outreach programs, which benefit community members. Seton Center can be found at 16840 South Seton Avenue in Emmitsburg.

Timeless Trends Boutique

This boutique specializes in one-of-a-kind furniture, antiques, local art, pottery, and jewelry. Look for vintage and eclectic pieces at 21 East Main Street in Thurmont.

Monocacy Brewing Company

This local brewery, crafts unique, full-flavored ales and lagers out of the old Ebert's Ice Cream plant in historic Downtown Frederick. Check out the tasting room to decide on which brew would make the best gift.

Sunrise Soap Company

Located at 7 Chambersburg Street, in nearby Gettysburg, this company prides itself in making "skin-healthy"

soaps in small batches, by using the highest quality ingredients; pure vegetable, coconut and olive oil, shea butter, cocoa butter, and castor oil. Sunrise offers a huge variety of fragrances, so you will sure enough find the perfect gift, just by using your nose.

Catoctin Mountain Orchard

Right along Route 15, this market features fresh, local produce along with a bakery full of delectable pies that are a great way to finish any holiday meal. Grab one on the way to your holiday celebration for a last minute, freshly made dessert. The orchard is located at 15036 North Franklinville Road in Thurmont, and will be open until the end of January.

Dublin Roasters Coffee

This café and roasting facility is a great stop to find the right gift for the coffee-lover in your life. With over 80 different varieties of coffee, roasted in small batches and organic, fair trade options, you are likely to fall in love with something for yourself as well! Visit Dublin Roasters at 1780 N. Market Street in Frederick.

Serv Outlet Store

Serv is a local nonprofit organization that works to eradicate poverty through supporting artisans and farmers worldwide. You will be able to find something for each person on your holiday list, among their collection of fair-trade products, from jewelry to spices. Getting a unique, handmade gift for a loved one while supporting individuals at small organizations and cooperatives in Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and here in the United States just cannot be beat! The outlet shop is located on the grounds of the Brethren Service Center, at 500 Main Street, in New Windsor and you can also order online at <http://www.serv.org/>

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THE (retired) ECOLOGIST

When ecesis is over, life goes on

Bill Meredith

"When a tree falls in a forest you may not hear it, but it still leaves a mess to be cleaned up."

—Marquis de Lafayette, 1839-1921.

My grandchildren named the wooded area behind our house "The Great Forest" when they were small, and I suppose they probably thought it had been there forever. Truth is, though, that area was a hay field when we bought the place 47 years ago. I had already been studying ecology for 20 years then, but even I was surprised at the speed with which the area changed. The rate has slowed a bit lately, but change is still going on.

Ecologists use the term "ecesis" (pronounced "e-KEY-sis") for the process by which a new community of plants establishes itself. It comes from an ancient Greek word, oikos, which meant "to inhabit" or "to establish a dwelling," and that is exactly what happened in my field. It was a meadow, but when it was no longer mowed annually, it changed from a habitat of grass, which supported field mice, rabbits, weasels and pheas-

ants to a woodlot that now supports trees, deer, raccoons, possums, skunks, foxes and hawks. I didn't literally see the beginning of it, but I know what happened.

One day a bird... probably a robin... had a large serving of mulberries for breakfast, and as it flew over my field a few hours later, it dropped a load of mulberry seeds in the grass. Most of the seeds were eaten by field mice and sparrows, but by chance one was missed. It germinated and produced a seedling which likewise escaped being eaten by rabbits and groundhogs, and within the next two years grew to a height that became visible above the surrounding grass. Once above the grass, since there were no larger trees to shade it out, it grew faster; and by 1984 when my first grandson was born it was 25 or 30 feet tall, and was surrounded by other saplings of various species but similar age and size. Ecesis was successfully achieved, and the Great Forest was on its way.

So far, so good. But at that point, the geologic history of the area began to exert its effect. The soil in the area is red clay that was formed by weathering of a shale deposit formed about 200 mil-

lion years ago. The actual soil is only a few feet thick; below it is the hard shale bedrock. In wet weather the bedrock prevents water from soaking deeper; it is absorbed by the clay, which becomes a soft mud. In dry weather it becomes very hard. So as my juvenile mulberry tree grew, it found it could not develop a deep supporting root system. Instead, its roots spread out laterally, absorbing the nearby moisture and minerals, and crowding out any smaller trees within its reach. For a while, it flourished, but each year it grew taller, and as it passed 40 feet it began to be top-heavy. Eventually its root system couldn't support it. So it came to pass that on June 27 this summer we had over 3 inches of rain in 24 hours, the soil softened, a gust of wind came through from the west... and the tree fell over.

If it had been further down in the field, I would not have cared, and even might not have noticed it. But from where it was, it fell into my back yard, and sadly mangled an apple tree that I had been nursing along for the past 15 years. I went and surveyed the damage, and decided that the apple tree could survive for a while; so, since the garden was consuming all of my available energy just then, I went back to the house and took a nap. By the time I finally got around to dealing with the tree, November was half gone.

When you reach a certain age you become aware that you can't lift as much or work as long as you used to, and you adjust your work schedule accordingly. However, in my case I did not realize that the tools I had accumulated over the years were also ageing and not able to work as they once had done. My chainsaw has been used less frequently each year since I retired, and in its old age it has become temperamental. It refuses to start until I take it apart and re-set the carburetor screw; then, it starts grudgingly, after at least 30 or 40 pulls on the cord. Once started, it refuses to idle; it goes full blast or not at all. The last time I used it was a year ago when a locust tree fell on our yard



Seeds gobbled by birds and dispersed across the landscape have a better chance of surviving than those that fall near parent plants where seed-hungry predators and pathogens are more concentrated.

fence; then, it was working fine until it stopped, half-way through the trunk, and refused to go on. I re-set the carburetor, cleaned the air filter, checked the oil, cleaned the spark plug, and pulled the cord until I could no longer lift my arm... and finally realized that the reason it wouldn't start was that it was out of gas. Sic semper incompetens!

The mulberry tree, of course, is just one example of the effects of ecesis. I have found at least 15 other species of trees growing in my five-acre lot; most of them are about the same size, and they got started in much the same way. There were a lot more of them 20 years ago; they grew so close together that you couldn't see through the area. But as their crowns grew together they blocked the sunlight, making it hard for new ones to grow; and as their roots spread through the shallow soil, they had to compete for nutrients. So now the smaller, weaker ones have died, and the forest has become more open. Change goes on, unchangingly.

Before the mulberry tree fell over, it was 43 feet high and 13 inches in diameter at the base of its trunk. To date, I have got

the main limbs off the trunk and away from the apple tree without losing any body parts in the process; I expect to get the rest cut up and moved out of the lawn before spring. The apple tree is leaning over at an angle of 60 degrees or so, and has several broken branches; but that can be corrected when I get around to it. In the meantime, as I write this, Thanksgiving is approaching, and I can be thankful that the tree was not close enough to fall on our house. And then Christmas will be here, and when my grandchildren come to visit I will burn some of the dead branches from the mulberry tree in the fireplace. And when things quiet down I will sit by the fire and think of my Dad, who taught me to be careful when cutting trees, and the stories he told about his grandfather, Marquis deLafayette Meredith, who taught him. Between the three of us, we have spent the last 176 years learning from trees. In a world as messy as the one we now live in, it's good to have things like that to remember.

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IN THE COUNTRY

I'm dreaming of a white-tailed Christmas

Tim Iverson
Naturalist

*Twas a month long of Christmas,
and all through the land,*

*One creature was stirring, a beast
called man.*

*He was preoccupied with gifts all cov-
ered in bows*

*and a large furry cervidae with a
strange red nose.*

*In the fairest of lands, donned after
Queen Mary*

*Herein a species airing white on it's
derry.*

*Nigh draws the season for Santa and
sleigh,*

*but here you won't find reindeer,
much to your dismay.*

*We hunt them in droves, no preda-
tors are near.*

*No wolves or lions on the mountains
'round here.*

*They'll eat fruits, and acorns, and
shoots, and all berries.*

*When young their antlers grow quite
hairly.*

*Off guilty of spreading lyme via a
tick,*

*A wasting disease can make them
quite sick.*

*What should you do if you see fawns
alone?*

*Simply nothing is what most biolo-
gists condone.*

*When grown bucks and does will go
into rut,*

*In November they'll mate to excess
and glut.*

*Throughout the year wandering near
and far,*

*Their main predator is most proba-
bly your car.*

*They can't fly, or can they? They must!
Through the field, to the forest! As
quick as a gust!*

*It's at this point the author will leave
you with prose.*

*He's no more to say on deer with a
red nose.*

December conjures imagery of a winter wonderland and provides some of the warmest memories during one of the coldest times of the year. Santa and his reindeer are as deeply embedded into the modern tradition as trees and nativity scenes are. Maryland doesn't feature reindeer as part of our wildlife. We do have two types of deer that call Maryland home, the White-tailed Deer and the Sika Deer. The White-tailed Deer is native to North America, while Sika Deer hail from Japan. In Maryland Sika Deer can be found almost exclusively on the eastern shore, whereas White-tailed Deer can be found abundantly throughout the entire state.

The White-tailed deer is a highly adaptable generalist. Usually preferring dense woodland, which pro-

vides ample food and shelter, these deer have increasingly carved out a niche within urban areas. During the early part of the 20th century White-tailed Deer were heavily exploited and their populations fell to critical levels. Through the lobbying efforts of hunting and environmental groups strict regulations were put into place to encourage the success of the species. By 1930 the total U.S. population was estimated at approximately 250,000 - 300,000. Deer were hunted so aggressively in the previous two centuries that they were brought to the brink of extinction, which seems unfathomable when considering their present conservation status. Today some estimates put the national population between 30 - 45 million. The National Institutes of Health campus in Bethesda, MD has such an overcrowding problem they recently began a sterilization program to curb population growth on their campus.

Without natural predators helping to thin the herd a number of ecological side effects have emerged. Car impacts and collisions are the most immediate and direct ways high populations affect people. Both West Virginia and Pennsylvania rank within the national top 5 deer collisions per capita, according to State Farm Insurance. They also have more subtle effects on the world at large though. Regionally high populations have caused documented change to forest ecologies. Biodiversity has in some cases been altered by the ripple effect of decades of rising populations and their browsing, or eating, habits. By eating popular foods for some bird species, these species will relocate to where there is an available food source. Understory growth has also been under transformation. Their eating habits help shape tree, bush, grass, fern, and other plant species found in the forest. In addition to eating shoots and berries White-tails eat acorns and seeds. By eating these seeds and excreting them in other locations they have assisted in the relocation and expansion of territory of both native and invasive species of plants and trees. With more

deer this process covers more ground at a faster rate.

White-tail Deer have long been known as a vector-borne transmitter of lymes disease. Deer Ticks or Black Legged Ticks transmit Lymes disease through a bite, and will often hitch rides with deer and other mammals. While deer are not guilty of direct transmission they are guilty by association. Deer have also been confronted with another more serious illness in recent years called Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). The Maryland Department of Natural Resources states, "CWD is classified as a transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE) and attacks the brain of cervids [deer, moose, elk], producing small lesions that eventually result in death." Basically, this type of disease attacks the brain by creating lesions or holes in the brain which gradually turn the brain into swiss cheese and is progressively degenerative. CWD functions the same way Mad Cow Disease does, with the exception that there has never been a documented case that CWD has been transmissible to humans. MD DNR has randomly tested over 8,000 deer since 2002, and since then only 6 have ever tested positive for CWD. While not transmissible to humans certain precautions are recommended when handling, dressing, and processing venison. Legal measures have also been put into effect to help prevent the spread of CWD outside known affected areas, which to date is exclusively Alleghany County located in western Maryland.

People often wonder if they find a deer alone in the wild if something is wrong or if it has been abandoned. Generally, this is not the case. Early in a fawn's life the mother actually leaves newborns completely alone.



Her presence can attract predators. This is a biological adaptation, and the fawn is well camouflaged from potential threats. If you do happen to find one, while not recommended, touching it will not cause the mother to abandon her fawn due to human odors. Feeding it or touching it can be dangerous for both parties though. Fawns have specific diets and feeding it something outside of that menu can cause larger health problems and cause them to become accustomed to humans, which can be problematic for survival. The best thing to do is just admire the fawn from a distance, and if several days go by without any notice of an attending doe a wildlife rehabilitator may need to be called.

The rut, or mating season, occurs from October to December. Fawns are born in May, and will hide in seclusion for the first few weeks of its life. The doe will attend to her fawn a few times a day to nurse, and only once the fawn is strong enough to stand and run will they follow her. After approximately two to three months fawns can take care of themselves and may separate from their mothers. Bucks lead solitary lives, except during mating season when several may join together to form bachelor bands to attract mates. Does will typically join or remain parts of small packs. Together they can forage for berries, plant stems, leaves, grasses, and planted crops. Their white tails will raise to signal danger to others, and white-tailed deer have been recorded at speeds as fast as 45 mph. Only bucks will grow antlers, which they'll use to defend themselves and establish dominance over other males. Antlers fall off and regrow every year. Growth begins in late spring, and are at first covered in soft tissues called velvet.

Whether a hunter or an animal admirer these cousins of Christmas celebrities are here in full force. They've battled back from the edge and found ways to adapt and survive in the modern world. Remember to watch the roads for twitterpated Bambi's during this White-tailed Christmas.

To read past articles by Tim Iverson visit the Authors' section of Emmitsburg.net.

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REAL SCIENCE

Friendly sources of energy

Michael Rosenthal

A few weeks ago, there was a knock on my door. The visitor was a gentleman selling solar panels for houses to produce electricity from the sun, replacing or supplementing the electricity provided by our local power company. As much as I admire and support the use of solar energy, I don't have the expertise to know whether this is a good idea for a house built without consideration of the factors that would make this change effective. It would have been, I think, excellent if the developer had made this option available to home builders and buyers by planning for it, offering the option, and incorporating the cost into the home purchase price. The risk seemed too great for me to gamble on.

Solar energy is becoming more widespread on a commercial basis. There are several large solar farms within driving distance of Emmitsburg. I would like to see some government support for solar energy use all over the country, but particularly in parts of the country that have a great deal of sunlight year-round.

The Kiplinger Letter in March 2015 reported good news on this topic. It reports that the use of solar power was up 100% in 2014 from the year before. It states that equipment and installation costs have fallen and will continue to fall, and that government subsidies are appearing on both federal and state levels. I think we will be seeing more and more use of solar power, and that's a good thing.

Nuclear power is a topic that continues to be controversial. There are about 100 nuclear plants in the United States, and they provide a significant portion of the nation's energy needs. They release no greenhouse gases, and so they do not contribute to global warming. But those of us who remember the Three Mile Island event recognize that nuclear power is sometimes very scary.

I was living in the Hudson Valley of New York when the Three Miles Island scare took place on March 28, 1979. The Three Mile Island Unit 2, in Middletown, PA, on the Susquehanna River south of Harrisburg, had the most serious accident in U.S. commercial nuclear power operating history. The accident that occurred was a loss-of-coolant event, causing a reactor core to overheat. Fortunately, the containment building remained intact, and no radioactive material escaped the building. This was in contrast to the nuclear plant accidents at Chernobyl and Fukushima where much nuclear material was released to the environment. As a precaution, pre-school age children and pregnant women within a five-mile radius of the Three Mile Island plant were advised to leave the area by

the governor of Pennsylvania and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) chairman.

The melting radioactive fuel, caused by overheating, created a hydrogen gas bubble in the dome of the pressure vessel. The NRC officials worried that the hydrogen bubble (hydrogen gas, H₂, is extremely flammable and explosive) might burn or explode, and rupture the pressure vessel. This might cause a complete collapse of the building and the release of large amounts of radioactive substances to the surrounding community.

The good news is that within 48 hours it was determined the bubble would not explode, due to lack of oxygen, and the greatest danger was over.

I was active in community environmental work at the time, and one of my closest associates called me and told me that he had determined an evacuation route for our families which was least likely to be affected by airborne radioactive material. It was really scary!

The Three Mile Island event led to permanent changes in procedures in the nuclear industry and the NRC, reducing the risk to the public; however, the American public never quite felt the same about nuclear power reactors and living near them. The reactor in which the accident occurred was shut down. The second TMI reactor is still operating.

There are many nuclear power plants still operating in America, some in highly populated areas, but no other serious incidents have occurred. There is a nuclear power plant in the highly populated area of the New York Hudson Valley in Buchanan, NY, called Indian Point. This is a three unit nuclear power plant only 25 miles north of New York City. Not surprisingly, there has been a great deal of pressure to close this plant, whose licensing period ends soon. It is not yet clear if a new license will be issued by the NRC.

Finally, during this same period, when my family and I were living in the Hudson Valley, Consolidated Edison Power Company expressed interest in building a nuclear power plant only a few miles from Bard College, where we lived and worked. That plan was not carried out (whew!). There is a nuclear power plant at Calvert Cliffs in southern Maryland, near where I and my family lived when I worked at St. Mary's College of Maryland. To my knowledge they have not had any serious incidents.

Another issue with nuclear power is what do you do with nuclear waste, which remains dangerously radioactive for very long periods of time. We look for radioactive disposal sites in remote areas, but these materials remain dangerous for thousands of years. Is this a responsible thing to do?

Nuclear Power has many ad-



The Ivanpah solar power facility is the largest in the world. It covers over 4,000 acres yet only produces enough power for 80,000 homes – but only in good weather and only during the day. This raises the question of where these homes get their power at night and in bad weather.

vantages as long as nothing goes wrong. The potential for disaster is there, due to the danger that radioactive material might be released to the air and water, such as we saw at Chernobyl and Fukushima. Thus, production of solar power looks better and better! So what do we conclude? The least environmentally impacting source of power is the sun. Therefore, we should be using solar generated power wherever we can.

Now for a bit of pseudoscience. Lutein is a chemical found in green leafy vegetables and is obtained by animals in their foods. It does seem to support good vision and eye health and offers support in discouraging age-related macular degeneration and perhaps cataract development as the eyes grow older. So, lutein is not a quack-invented invention made to make money.

However, an advertisement I saw recently in a magazine promotes a product that is a supplement containing this substance and claims it makes dramatic impact upon aging eyes. I recently had cataract surgery to reduce the effects of glare in night driving. This ad suggests that I could have done just as well taking large doses of this drug that includes lutein among "17 powerful nutrients." So, for \$34.99 one can get a 30 day supply of this drug that, they assert, will solve one's aging eye problems.

Editor's note: I make a point of not commenting on articles, but as Nuclear Engineer who ran a reactor in a nuclear submarine, worked at TMI after the accident, and served as Inspector for

the NRC at the India Point reactor, I can't help myself in this case. I feel quite comfortable with nuclear power – especially given all the downsides of all the other forms of power. And while I second the author's support for solar power – the reality is you can't power a city on solar power. And for the record, when Indian Point was built, it was 'out in the country.' The people that live around it now moved their fully knowing that the reactor was there. Unfortunately you just can pick up and move a nuclear power plant just because people move next to it ... Someday, when time permits, I'll write the inside story of nuclear power that you'll never read in the main stream media.

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“Merry Christmas”

Jack Deatherage, Jr.

Every time I think I've settled on some philosophy, or Way, some godlet sends a “kick in the head” to disturb what little peace I've found. Often the kick is delivered by some Jew; either a friend, or one I've encountered online, or the author of a book I've stupidly begun reading.

The latest Jew to overturn my uncomfortable hammock is Rabbi Jonathan Sacks with his accursed book “The Great Partnership: Science, Religion and the Search for Meaning”. BAH! Why do I constantly fall into these Hebrew traps? I suppose I get caught because I've found brilliance among the Jews I've read? Such as the one who couldn't understand hating people because of their color, race, creed or whatever. He had found getting to know an individual on a personal level, and finding real reasons to hate them, infinitely more satisfying. (The idea appeals to me, maturing curmudgeon that I am.)

Sacks hooks me with the first line in his introduction. Hell, I didn't make it to the first chapter before I was netted and landed.

“If the new atheists are right, you would have to be sad, mad or bad to believe in God and practice a religious faith.”

I've eagerly looked into atheism hoping to find some proof of no god, but the arguments always fall short of convincing me no matter how desperately I want them to be true. Knowing the atheists are wrong I can't help but read on.

“... Religion has inspired individuals to moral greatness, consecrated their love and helped them build communities where individuals are cherished and great works of loving kindness are preformed.”

How did I miss this when growing up Roman Catholic? Was I not paying attention, or were the teachers of that religion more focused on telling me what I could and couldn't do, male beast that I was/am?

Having had what little understanding of the RC religion I'd managed gain torn away from me by Vatican II, I decided the best thing for me to believe was I'd have another beer. Beer, and the occasional fifth of whiskey, and the rare hit or two from a pot pipe filled the hole for a decade or so before I clued in on the drugs killing me, but not quickly enough. Onto something else.

The Pagans were an enlightenment. Yet standing outside their sacred circles and struggling to understand them I realized they were lacking something I needed. Evidently more than one of the couple hundred I sat among saw that I wasn't getting it, whatever it was.

“You need to go back to the RCs.” Several Pagans gently told me.

“You're joking?” I was more than a little surprised. I'd met some Pagans with serious hostility for the RC church, though not as serious as the hatred I've found among other Xians who view RCs as worse than Satanists. (God, save me from your “true” believers.)

“No. You need to understand what you left and deal with the why of your leaving. We'll be here if what you need is among us. And you and yours are always welcome to feast with us whether you return to the RCs or not.”

Arrogant, ignorant ass that I am, I decided I'd be a Pagan of my own making. One who does not recognize, let alone worship the godlet of the Jews, the Xians or the Mohammedans. I'd settle for the gods I could prove with my limited thinking abilities and get on with my life. Except this Rabbi Sacks happened along.

To my delight, the rabbi makes a connection with me, though I doubt he was aiming at such when he wrote the book. Much of what I feel is wrong with The Holy Bible, and the churches spawned from it, he confirms and provides proofs for me to grasp and consider. Primarily, the bibles I have access to are translations from Hebrew into Greek and Greek into English. The Greeks got it wrong and the English compounds the mistakes. (If nothing else, I owe the rabbi the price of his book for saving me the misery of reading a bible I knew was flawed to begin with.)

Beyond that, his god does NOT require my acknowledgement of itself. I'll be used as the god wills, not unlike the habits of my own gods. Gods I now have to rethink.

For a brief moment the rabbi had me considering learning to read Hebrew so I could read the books of the Jews and better grasp what they believe. Two things occurred to me, I

haven't learned English so I'd never learn Hebrew, and the old joke among Jews, “Two Jews, three opinions.” If the Jews can't agree on what their book says, what chance would I have of puzzling it out? I'll take the lazy way and follow the rabbi's interpretations.

Halfway through “The Great Partnership” I learn that Rabbi Sacks has a newer book, “Not in God's Name, confronting religious violence”. Idiot that I am, I get hold of a copy of that one and begin reading before I finish the first one. The rabbi opens with a quote from Blaise Pascal, whoever he is. (Another freaking thinker I'm going to have to read I guess.) “Men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from religious conviction.” Amen brother.

The rabbi begins, “When religion turns men into murders, God weeps.”

Gal! I feel another hook sink deep. I'm caught, and searching online bookstores so I can purchase both books and read them while pondering each paragraph, probably each sentence, Ha! each word, at my slow pace (much slower than the library copies I have will allow.)

The rabbi writes so's I stand a slim chance of understanding what points he tries to make. At last, a teacher able to dumb it down for the likes of me! He does toss in the occasional Latin phrase, as if the average ape still knows any Latin. Luckily, I got Google “search” handy as I read so I can usually follow the “once upon a time” educated's tongue.



Having foolishly peeked behind the Judean curtain I no longer have the excuse of ignorance to shield me from thinking about the godlet the Jews, Xians and Mohammedans claim to follow. It puzzles me that as much as some of them study their godlet they fail to understand his will and their purpose in it. The rabbi addresses that, though I've only begun to ponder his or his god's reasons for it.

In spite of my being dragged closer to acknowledging the rabbi's god, I refuse to walk about at Xmas time wishing people a merry Christmas. There are things a self-deluding cur-

mudgeon cannot do. Amazingly, according to the rabbi, his god allows me that option, holding it against me not at all. Sadly, the people claiming to follow said god tend to get hostile when I grumble a “bah” in response to their “Merry Christmas”.

Maybe someday the Xians and Mohammedans will learn to read Hebrew and discover what their shared god actually wants them to do? Now that I could get into the spirit of!

To read past editions of the Village Idiot visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.



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A PRICELESS CHRISTMAS GIFT

We had such a great response from our holiday photos last year and the folks at the Emmitsburg News-Journal are so awesome that we're doing it again! These are just a few of the sweethearts hoping to find a home for the holidays at the Cumberland Valley Animal Shelter. If the time isn't right for you to adopt, please still take a minute to look over these adorable faces and keep them in mind for friends and family. Talk these babies up! If you can't adopt, you could always donate items on our wish list, which can be found at www.cvas-pets.org under donations. Giving supplies to help these babies makes sure they'll be comfortable while they wait for their forever homes. Please know that none of these animals are in any danger. CVAS is a low-kill facility and once an animal reaches the adoption kennels, he or she is typically there until adoption. I cannot adequately express what a privilege it has been to work with the Emmitsburg Journal and its readers. I wish you all the happiest of holidays and be sure to give your four-legged friends a kiss for me!

For more information about adopting one of these pets, please call the Cumberland Valley Animal Shelter at 717-263-5791 or visit their website at www.cvas-pets.org. The Adams County Animals Shelter is always looking for humans seeking canine or feline companionship. You can contact them at 717-334-8876 or visit them on-line at www.adamscountypca.org. And you can never go wrong dropping by the Frederick County Animal Shelter. Visit them on-line at www.frederickcountymd.gov/FCAC or call them at 301-600-1546.



MoMo is an 8-month-old boy who has tons of energy. When you get him out of his cage, he literally jumps in your arms. He's got long, black-and-white hair, so his new owners will have to realize he'll need grooming to keep his fur free of mats. MoMo will spice up anyone's life.



Loki is one cool character. This 2-year-old grey-and-white boy is laid-back and suave. He didn't even get up when his picture was taken - he just stretched out and posed. If you're looking for an awesome companion, Loki could be your guy.



Smokey Mechu was surrendered to the shelter and he was already neutered. Now this sweet boy just needs a forever home. Smokey Mechu is a 2-year-old, very loving fellow who's a pale grey in color (even his nose!). If you have a place where he can snuggle, please come meet him.



Amanda is a 1-year-old gray tabby girl with a whole lot of spunk and personality. This little stinker jumps onto shoulders when you open her cage door. She likes to explore all her surroundings, but will still come over for a scratch and a pat. If you're looking for a feline companion, Amanda just might be your girl!



Nealee is a sweet, 2-year-old grey tabby with white hair. She came into the shelter pregnant and had her litter, and went into foster care soon after giving birth. Nealee is now ready to find the perfect forever home.



Lena is a 3-year-old girl who is incredibly sweet and has a great personality. She's a grey tabby with some white and will make someone a wonderful companion. Please come out and meet her!

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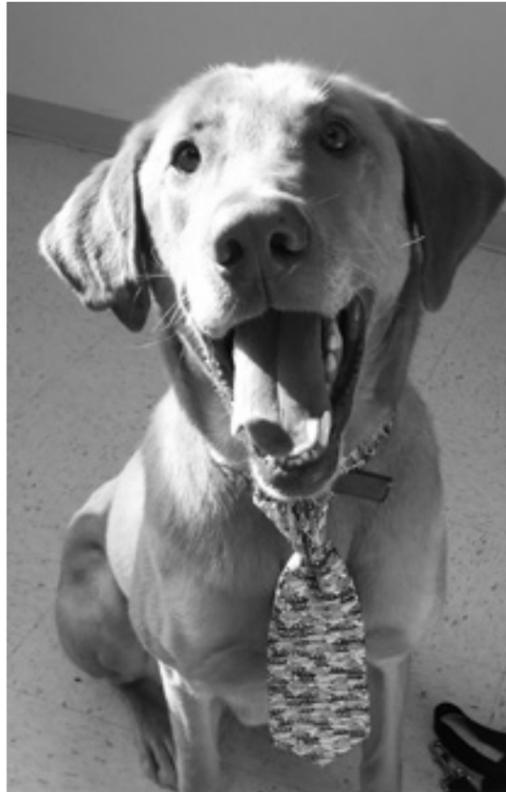


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Angel has a tail that never stops wagging! This 1-year-old terrier mix loves just about every person she meets. She gives kisses and loves to sit on laps- even though she's a bit big for that! Angel's been having some issues with certain other dogs, so that will have to be taken into consideration. Because of her size and energy level, she would likely do best in a home with children older than 8. If you've got the right spot for Angel, come out and say hello.



Larry was left in our drop off kennel as a stray and we think he's about 3 years old. He is a really super sweet dog, but due to his large size any activity could be a lot to handle. He does need some work on a leash (harness or any no-pull type leash would be best). He seems to have no prior training, but is quite treat motivated. Larry may be too much for small children so we recommend children older than 5. Come love on Larry!



Zorro was found running at large and took a little time to settle in. He's a 1-year-old flat coated retriever who has done really well at the shelter, but will need to work on his manners. He seems to have had some training in the past, but because we don't know his history, it is preferable that the children be 6 years old or older or have had experience with larger dogs before. He is a really sweet boy who is looking for a wonderful home!



Yep, we named a dog Purple. Fun, right? This 2-year-old pitbull mix is a real sweet girl who will need some work on her manners. She's got that face that just gets you. Those eyes! Because of her energy level we recommend she goes to a home with children older than 8. Can you help Purple out?

Right: King is a gentle giant, but he can be strong when he is on a leash. He does not seem to have had much past training, but he is food motivated so that would be helpful with working on manners. He is a very sweet 6-year-old dog and loves to be near you! Due to no history of being with children we recommend a home with children that are older than 8. King will make a great companion.



Madeline is a sweet older girl, but has lots of life in her! This 6-year-old definitely has the beagle behavior -- she can be vocal when she is excited and she loves to sing! Doing research on hounds and the beagle breed would be a good idea for potential adopters. Do you have the right spot for Madeline?



Before humans die, they write their last Will & Testament, give their home & all they have, to those they leave behind. If, with my paws, I could do the same, this is what I'd ask...

To a poor and lonely stray I'd give:

- My happy home.
- My bowl & cozy bed, soft pillows and all my toys.
- The lap, which I loved so much.
- The hand that stroked my fur & the sweet voice which spoke my name.

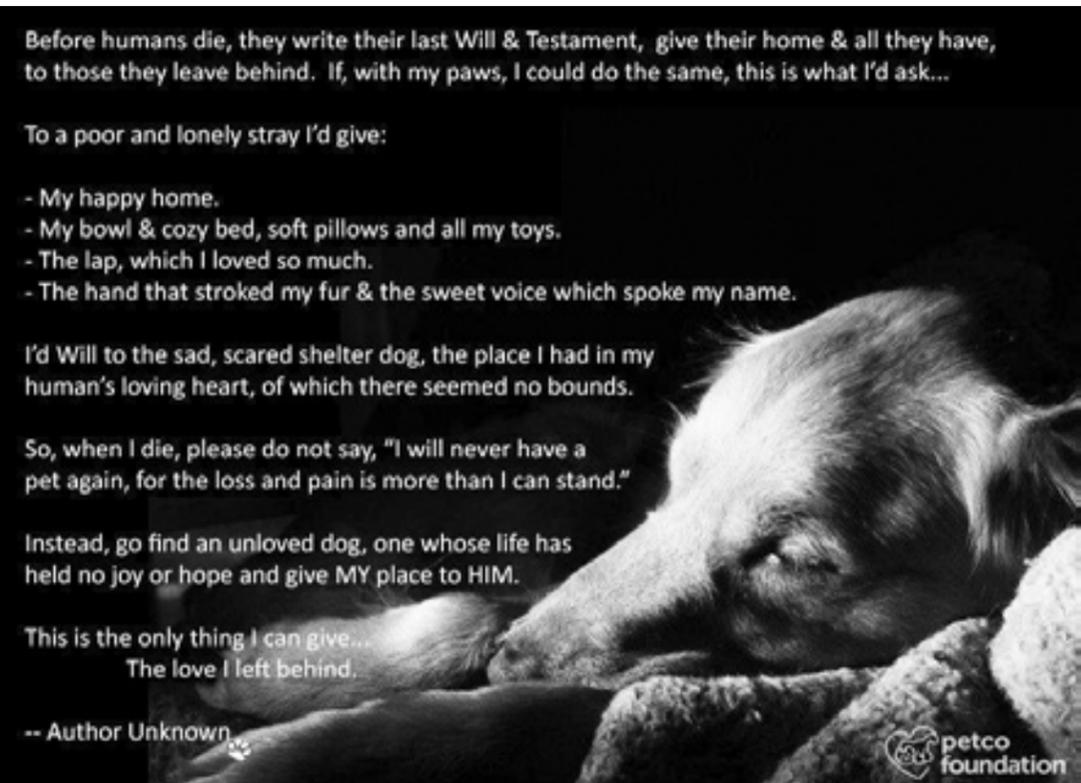
I'd Will to the sad, scared shelter dog, the place I had in my human's loving heart, of which there seemed no bounds.

So, when I die, please do not say, "I will never have a pet again, for the loss and pain is more than I can stand."

Instead, go find an unloved dog, one whose life has held no joy or hope and give MY place to HIM.

This is the only thing I can give...
The love I left behind.

-- Author Unknown



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THE MASTER GARDENER

Christmas tree selection

Mary Ann Ryan
High Priestess of Frigga
Adams County Master Gardener

It's time to buy a Christmas tree! What kind of tree will you buy? What is best for your home and family schedule?

Selection of a Christmas tree is an annual tradition for some families. Many families, like mine, enjoy the experience of going to a tree farm and tromping around in the cold – and if it's snowy, that's even better. We usually bring some kind of ribbon with us so we can go back to a tree and re-evaluate the shape and size before making the final decision. Before you know it, an hour or so has passed, we've jumped through snow, or trampled through water puddles (you can never pick out a tree on a warm, dry afternoon) and agreed on the perfect tree to cut and drag home. Cut your own trees, like this, are the freshest you can get!

However, this is not always the best way for you to choose

a Christmas tree. The length of time you wish your tree to be in the house will determine what kind of tree you will buy. If, for instance, you keep your tree up for more than three weeks, an artificial tree is for you! Many sizes, shapes and varieties are available at your local retail stores or garden centers.

If you keep your tree in your house for less than three weeks, a fresh cut tree may be your choice. Time is often limited during the holiday season. Taking a day to cut your own tree may not be the way to go. However, a cut, fresh tree purchased from a tree lot may be a great choice. Many garden and retail centers sell cut trees as well as Boy Scouts, civic clubs or school/church groups that often sell trees as fundraisers for their organizations. This is a great way to support them.

Remember when choosing from a retail lot to check the tree for freshness. Smell the tree for its fragrance, as the fresher the tree, the more fragrant it is. Also

shake the tree to determine how many needles have dropped. If the weather is warm, and the tree has been cut for some time, many, many needles will drop - a good indication of a not-so-fresh tree.

Tree selection becomes a bit easier if you know the difference between the kinds of trees grown in our area as Christmas trees which are firs, spruce and pines. Firs and spruce needles are attached to twigs individually, while the pines have clusters of needles attached to the twigs. The following are some of the most commonly grown Christmas trees in our area.

The Fraser Fir is native to the high elevations of the southern Appalachian Mountains. It has easily adapted to our climate if you're considering a living tree. It has excellent needle retention with wonderful fragrance. It has dark green foliage with silver on the underside of the needles, and the twigs are relatively firm for an easy to decorate tree.

Douglas Fir is a very popular



This year, consider selecting a 'live' Christmas tree. It will provide you years of pleasure, shade, and refuge for your winged feather friends.

Christmas tree. This tree is native to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, and has also adapted well to our weather conditions. It has a natural pyramidal shape, fra-

grant, with somewhat drooping branches. The needles are a medium green color about 1 – 1 1/2" long. This tree has good needle retention and relatively easy to decorate. In the landscape, it serves as a great screen planting when mixed with other evergreen trees.

Balsam Fir is a long lasting, fragrant fir. This evergreen is native to northeastern US and Canada. It likes cold winter temperatures and cool summer temperatures. It has nice, dark green foliage and one of the common Christmas trees in the US. It has good needle retention and strong twigs for an easy to decorate tree. This tree resembles the Fraser fir in looks and endurance, but may not be the best choice for a live tree as our summers are too hot.

Canaan Fir, a variety of the balsam fir, is better adapted to our climate. Native to isolated pockets of West Virginia and Virginia, Canaan fir is better adapted to our summers than the Balsam Fir. Good needle retention and nice green color makes it a good option for both a cut tree and a live tree.

Concolor Fir has longer needles than the other common fir trees, getting up to 1 1/2" in length. It has a good fragrance and needle retention. The blue-green foliage makes it an interesting and attractive color for a Christmas tree. It is native to the west coast, but has adapted to our environment quite well.

Colorado Blue Spruce is a nicely shaped tree with silvery-blue color. The needles are pointy, making it rather prickly to decorate, but it does have good needle retention if kept watered. These trees are symmetrical by nature, and have strong limbs for heavy ornaments. The blue spruce works well in the landscape as a screen planting.

White Spruce has short, stiff needles with a blunt tip, making them less prickly than the blue spruce. The branches are stiff as well, making it a good choice

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THE MASTER GARDENER

Small Town Gardener

Barn coat: Zhivago-style

Marianne Willburn

There is nothing attractive about a woman who has utilized every piece of warm clothing in her closet to keep Jack Frost as far as possible from a square inch of bare flesh. Hipster jeans and loose weave sweaters that epitomized the au courant styles of autumn have now been roughly tossed aside in favor of high-waisted flannel-lined jeans and Under Armour stolen from my son. If there were such a thing as a comfortable woolen bra, I'd be the first in line.

Hairstyle is a fine concept – but one best suited to spring, summer and autumn. Winter hair is abused hair: under-washed and under-dressed and forced to spend weeks at a time tucked under a non-descript, vaguely masculine hat. When the cap is finally removed in mid-March there is much sighing and gnashing of teeth at the [yet further] loss of sun-kissed tresses, but until then, warm ears are my priority.

For the most part, I try and keep this kind of dishabille safely within the confines of my property. No one needs to see what winter can do to a woman who once prided herself on wearing lined trousers and floor-length woolen coats amongst the sweatpants and piercings of 8am undergraduates; and chickens don't care what you look like as long as you come bearing feed and a stick strong enough to break the ice on the water trough.

However, though my hat is shabby and my unmentionables thoroughly unmentionable, when it comes to an outer layer, I'm willing to bet that no one within 25 square miles is wearing vintage blue fox as a barn coat.

It's not something I would have chosen for myself. Upon the installation of a beloved aunt into a home for downsizing octogenarians, a box was affectionately dispatched across the country with curious contents: One Turkish condiment caddy, one Russian bearskin rug, and one blue fox fur coat, country of origin unknown, possibly brutal, definitely cold.

I tried to wear it to an autumn party, as casually as if I were wearing a ratty Boho gilet. All it took was one exclamation from a wicked friend of "Darling! WHO are you wearing?" to see it thrown back in the closet to be fought over by my heirs or enemies at some undetermined point in the future. There would it have remained, had my daughter not stolen my good L.L. Bean barn coat in order to line the cat's bed, and left me with precious little alternatives at 6:30 on a frozen morning. The fur was donned, the front door was opened; and there upon the threshold stood a genuine snow-bunny ready for morning chores.

As the wind whistled through the barn doors and the chickens huddled together for moral support, I had the incredulous

sensation that I was actually warm – indeed, that I couldn't feel the Hebridian wind so obviously pummeling the heck out of everything around me.

The next morning I wore it again. I had deer cages to set up on a couple willow trees and the day promised further Siberian nonsense. And again, apart from cold hands and a red nose, my core temperature remained temperate, and my mood remained stable. I was sold.

There are repercussions of course. Although my little town would seem to exist in a halcyon age of rural farms and rural people, as thoroughly disconnected from the high society of nearby D.C as chalk is from cheese, Loudoun County nonetheless sports the highest median income in the United States. Wearing a flamboyant fur coat on one's morning walk does not exactly endear one to one's homesteading neighbors, although it does go a great way towards inspiring the inner-Bolshevik in frozen road crews, whose egalitarian looks of disgust yesterday forced me to plaintively yell "It was a gift!" over the hum of the road grader.

Bolshevik or Bourgeoisie – fur keeps the elements at bay, and I am willing to endure much in the way of mocking to remain wrapped in its warm embrace. Thankfully, at 6:30 in the morning on this particular Animal Farm, the only one with vocal cords and a strong stick is me.

Marianne is a Master Gardener who writes from Lovettsville, VA. You can read more at www.small-towngardener.com or follow The Small Town Gardener on Facebook.

for heavy ornaments. Needle retention is good, probably better than other spruce trees. However, when the needles are crushed, they have an unpleasant odor.

Norway Spruce has a nice dark green color but poor needle retention. It is conical by nature, and open in appearance if not sheared heavily. It has good stiff branches, making it easy to decorate. If choosing this variety, be sure to keep it well watered in a cool room and do not keep it in the house for more than two weeks.

Scotch Pine is a common Christmas tree in the US. It was imported from Europe by the early European settlers. It has longer needles, about 1"-3" in length. The needles are in clusters and a medium green color. It has fairly good needle retention when it is kept watered. It also is a very easy tree to transplant if you are considering a living tree.

White Pine is a native evergreen. It has long, clustered needles and good needle retention. It is very soft to the touch and has flexible branches, making it a tree that cannot handle heavy ornaments. It has little fragrance, but nice blue green color.

After getting your cut tree home, proper care should be taken for a safe holiday. Make a fresh cut about one inch above the already cut base. Put your tree in water right away, even if you will not be bringing it into the house immediately. Don't let the tree dry out. Treat it as you would a fresh bouquet of flowers.

Locate the tree by a wall or corner where it's not going to be knocked over. Keep the tree away from heat sources, such as fireplaces, wood stoves and heat ducts.

Another option is a live tree. A living Christmas tree should be in the house for no more than 10 days. Before entering the house, it should be conditioned first. Keep the tree in an unheated, protected location for a few days before

bringing it inside. During this conditioning period, be sure the root ball is watered. If the ball dries out, roots will die, lessening the survival rate of that tree.

"Choose a manageable size - root balls are heavy - which usually means 3 to 4 feet. Remember that the indoor height will include the root ball and a container for watering. Make sure that it will fit into your landscape, too. Most trees used as Christmas tree choices will eventually reach heights of 40-60 feet." (Carol Kagan, Franklin County Master Gardener)

After you are finished with the tree indoors - and remember, no more than 10 days so it does not break dormancy - you'll need to re-condition it to the outdoors. Place the tree in an unheated, protected location for a few days, and then it should be ready to plant.

Hopefully, the ground won't be frozen when you're ready to plant the tree. Prepare for this possibility ahead of time by digging the hole before the holidays and storing the soil in an unheated garage or storage shed. When you're ready to plant, the hole will already be there, and you won't have frozen ground to use as backfill. If, however, the hole is not dug and the ground is frozen, place your tree in a sheltered area and mulch the root ball heavily. Keep the soil ball moist until the ground is workable.

After planting the tree, water it well and mulch it. This will protect the root ball through the rest of the winter months. The tree should remain dormant until spring.

Just purchasing a Christmas tree is full of decisions! Kids and adults can share in the fun of tree shopping! Don't stress, make educated decisions, and enjoy the holidays!

To read other gardening articles visit the Gardening section of Emmitsburg.net.

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The Word did not become a philosophy, a theory, or a concept to be discussed, debated, or pondered. The Word became a person to be followed, enjoyed and loved!

The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory.

John 1:14

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HEALTH NOTES

Pediatric care at FMH

Where kids are priority one

Kelsey Shupe

Fortunately, Frederick parents whose little ones are ill or injured don't have to go far to find emergency care that's geared toward the special needs of children. FMH has a 23-bed Pediatric Emergency Department staffed by an entire team of board-certified pediatric hospitalists from some of the best training programs in the country. Led by Dr. Robert Wack, these pediatric hospitalists are on site, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, to care for patients from infancy through 17 years of age. And because the traditional ER can be an intimidating place for kids, in most cases, you'll be escorted directly to the Pediatric Emergency Department's kid-friendly environment for assessment and care.

When a child must stay overnight for treatment or observation, there is an inpatient unit—also designed and staffed especially for kids—right across the hall from the Pediatric Emergency Department. Because they are located so close together, the same team of pediatric specialists

who see children in the emergency setting can continue taking care of them should they require admission to the hospital. A consistent care team ensures coordinated, quality pediatric care, and provides the soothing reassurance of familiar faces that is very comforting—especially for our pediatric patients.

According to Chief Pediatric Hospitalist Dr. Robert Wack, the hospital's approach to comprehensive pediatric care has been very well received. "The local physician

community is pleased that we offer a program staffed round-the-clock by pediatric specialists," he says. "And nearly 99 out of a hundred past patients tell us they would recommend us to a friend."

"That's very rewarding," he says. "I think it's fair to say that this program is a win for everyone."

The most common reasons for bringing children to the Emergency Department include car accidents, falls, prolonged high fevers, persistent vomiting and diarrhea that has led to dehydration, accidental poisonings, and seizures.

In addition, says FMH Chief Pediatric Hospitalist Dr. Robert Wack, severe asthma attacks are also one of the most common reasons that parents seek emergency care for their kids.

"Asthma is a chronic inflammatory condition that results in narrowed airways, swelling of the lining of the lungs, tightening of the



This past October, the FMH Pediatric Emergency Department and Inpatient Unit marked five years of service to the Frederick community's youngest patients. Since its opening in 2010, the Pediatric wing has served between 14,000-16,000 patients each year.

muscles, and increased secretion of mucus in the airway," says Dr. Wack. "It's those narrowed airways that make it difficult to breathe and result in that "wheezing" noise. It can be a life-threatening disease if not properly managed."

One of the most common chronic disorders in childhood, asthma currently affects more than 7 million children under the age of 18. Of the 500,000 hospitalizations last year from asthma-related complications, almost 35 percent of these occurred in patients younger than 18, making it the third leading cause of pediatric hospitalizations nationwide.

According to Katherine Murray, Director of Mother-Baby Services at FMH, the hospital has a certified program in place to provide the most up-to-date, evidence-based care to children with asthma.

"Our pediatric unit has been recognized by the Joint Commission for our disease-specific certification in asthma," says Murray. "Children seen at FMH for asthma-related episodes receive treatment based on the standards recommended by the National Institute of Health, including daily asthma education from their nurse. They leave the hospital with a home management plan of care specifically designed to manage their unique situation, and receive follow-up care from a member of our multidisciplinary, Pediatric Asthma Care team."

Members of the Pediatric Asthma Care team stay in touch with patients to ensure that they are adhering to their home management plans of care, following up with their primary care providers, and remaining healthy enough to attend school."

"We are committed to working with asthmatic patients and their families to stabilize their conditions and keep them healthier," says Murray. "This program strengthens community confidence in the quality of care they receive here at FMH, and provides consistent standards for the medical management of patients with asthma."

"Having the Pediatric Emergency Department and Pediatric Inpatient Unit side by side makes continuity of care much easier. The same care team who works with patients who are admitted through the Pediatric ED can follow them into the inpatient setting if that becomes necessary." — Christie Busard, Pediatric Nurse Manager FMH Pediatrics

Pediatric Emergency?

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Children needing emergency care have unique needs—especially if it involves a serious or life-threatening condition. That's why Frederick Memorial Hospital established a full-service emergency department just for kids, five years ago.

Today, our Pediatric Emergency Department (ED), open 24-7, cares for more than 14,000 children every year—care provided by a team of board-certified pediatricians and pediatric-trained nurses who are specialists when it comes to kids.

We meet the urgent and critical medical needs of pediatric patients and their families in a kid-friendly environment that is quiet, calm and secure. Plus, our Pediatric ED is located next to our Pediatric Inpatient Unit, enabling us to provide a level of care not often found in a community hospital. That means the same team of pediatricians who see children in the emergency setting continue taking care of them should they require admission to the hospital.

FMH has also been designated a Pediatric Asthma Center of Excellence, further evidence of our commitment to providing these pediatric patients with the most up-to-date, research-proven care.

To learn more, call 240-566-3470 or visit fmh.org/peds.



Dr. Robert Wack
Medical Director
FMH Pediatric Unit



Camp Eder Christmas Tree Festival

Alan Patterson

With one of the warmest Novembers in the region anyone can remember, it might feel counterintuitive to be anticipating Christmas trees, hot cocoa, freshly baked cookies. At Camp Eder, that is precisely what the staff and volunteers are doing. They are busy elves working hard to prepare for the 5th Annual Christmas Tree Festival, a community event that celebrates the birth of Christ.

The camp, located on Mt. Hope Rd in Fairfield, warmly invites neighbors, friends, and families to join in the festivities December 11-13, 5 pm - 8:30 pm each evening. Some new features for this gathering include a horse-drawn carriage, a special presentation by a chalk artist during Friday and Saturday's outdoor candlelight nativity vigil, and several new musical guests.

Themed Christmas Trees will be on display all over the property, along with a luminary memorial garden, children's crafts and stories, and a home-cooked full turkey dinner with all the fixings available each evening. Cookie Camp, held at Camp Eder one week earlier, will prepare approximately 300 dozen cookies to serve and sell at the festival. The cookies are always packaged for gift-giving, and of course, eating!

Other activities held each year are fireside seating, light refreshments, carol sing-alongs, a miniature running model train set, and a collection of nativity sets from around the world featured throughout the rooms. Camp also boasts beautiful walking creekside trails for those who want to take the celebration out of doors. Each evening, guests will hear the bell ring at 8pm, signaling the start of a serene candlelight service in a semi-shelter outdoor pavilion. The service closes with an A Capella "Silent Night."

Feel even more a part of the event by donating new or gently used children's clothing for newborn to 6 years old to God's Closet, a clothing pantry run by Children's Aid Society of New Oxford. Also, guests can bring non-perishable food items for the Fairfield Food Pantry at the Fairfield Mennonite Church. Children's clothing and canned goods can be delivered at any time during the Christmas Tree Festival (December 11 - 13, 5 pm - 8:30 pm), or arrangements can be made at the Camp office to drop off items at any other time.

Throughout the year, Camp Eder offers a number of events that welcome the local commu-

nity. Winter and Summer camp programs for all school-aged children and persons with special needs, Fall Festival every third Saturday of October, Senior Citizen Days featuring special programs and a catered meal, and camping or retreat options for individuals, families, civic organizations, churches, and businesses with a wide assortment of available overnight accommodations in covered wagons, long huts, cabins, and both dormitory and motel-style lodges.

Camp Eder Christmas Tree Festival is a delightful way to celebrate the true meaning of Christmas and is open to people of all ages. Mark your calendar now and plan to come to Camp Eder 5 pm

- 8:30 pm on one, two, or all three evenings, December 11 -13. Grab a hot cup of Camp Eder cocoa, find a cozy spot by the fire, listen to Christmas carols and stories, take in the wonders and beauty, reminisce with friends, and recall the birth of Christ, the true meaning of Christmas.

Camp Eder is found at 914 Mount Hope Road, Fairfield; additional information can be obtained from www.campeder.org or you may reach the Camp Eder office at 717-642-8256, Tuesdays - Saturdays 9 am - 4 pm. Experience the joy, peace, and hope that can be found in Jesus Christ, God's gift to the world, whose birth we celebrate at Christmas Tree Festival.



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WWI NEWS REPORTS FROM THE FRONT

The Allied southern front collapses



While the battle for Warsaw was finishing, the battle for life during the cold winter of 1915-16 was just beginning for innocent civilians.

December 3

Famine in Warsaw

Hundreds of thousands of civilians in Warsaw are suffering from want of food. A considerable percentage of this number still are homeless, living in huts, caves and abandoned trenches. The situation is more serious because of the immense number of persons thrown out of work by the almost complete paralysis of Polish industries.

Such flour as is now on hand is being distributed by the Germans under the bread card system, but only potatoes are available in quantities, while there is an acute shortage of dried vegetables, meat fats and condensed milk. Prices all over Poland have risen to unprecedented heights.

Suffering especially is acute among the families of Russian reservists, who formally received regular payments from the government. Pensioners now are cut off from their former income.

The country districts of Poland from one end to the other our battle scarred and fire swept. In the Warsaw district alone it is estimated that 4,000 villages were burned by the Russians. Many of the inhabitants who at first fled with the Russians later returned and threw themselves upon the mercy of the Germans.

Thousands already have died of starvation and disease. Mothers are so undernourished they cannot feed their children. In Warsaw, women now rise at two o'clock in the morning to get good places in the bread lines.

Churchill to be made general

Winston Spencer Churchill, who resigned as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster to join Great Britain's forces

in the field, is marked for early promotion to rank of general, with the command of a brigade.

When Mr. Churchill joined the Grenadiers he found himself in a fireless dugout and supplied with ordinary army ration. He did not grumble, but entered cheerfully upon his task.

An officer in the same command, writing to a friend about Mr. Churchill's experiences, said: "The first night he shivered visibly, and it was some time before we were able to warm him up, but after partaking of several portions of 'agricultural laborer's rations' he thawed out and talked in an interesting way for an hour. He was taken for a round of the trenches until two o'clock in the morning, but in spite of hard grueling, never complained. He was called again at four o'clock, and the next night, after the usual cold dinner, he took charge of his company, which his very presence has energized.

Germans stop peace efforts

Closely following the visit of Emperor William to Vienna comes the news that three members of the Austrian cabinet have resigned. The resignations and the German emperor's visit have given rise to speculation as to the present state of affairs in Austria, particularly as to whether the resignations have any connection with rumored peace moves by Austria, or to concessions that might be desired of her with a view to the maintenance of Romanian neutrality.

It is declared that Emperor William's visit to Vienna was to put a stop to efforts Austria is making, by means of negotiations through the Vatican, for a separate peace with the Allies.

Vienna and Berlin disagree on the question of peace. Berlin desires to treat

separately with each of the Allies; so as to break up the quadruple entente and then to crush England, but Vienna desires a real and lasting peace to the war, which rapidly is becoming too great for Austria to bear.

The Romanian premiere is reported to have assured the Germans that the benevolent neutrality of Romania could be counted upon if Germany could induce Austria to cede Transylvania to Romania. The Germans have been endeavoring to induce Austria to consent to the sacrifice of Transylvania, upon the understanding that Germany will return to Austria the province of Silesia that was annexed to Prussia in 1866.

Central Powers declare end of Serbian campaign

Military events in the Balkans are apparently in a transitory stage which may preface another German offensive, but whether this will be made against the Franco-British troops, which hold all that remains of Serbia, or against the Russians should they launch an attack against Bulgaria, the present situation gives no indication.

Both the Austro-Germans and the Bulgarians have formally announced the completion of their Serbian campaign. Vienna officially estimates the capture of more than 60,000 Serbians during the month of November alone. Moreover it seems certain that the Serbians in their retreat over Albanian mountain passes, encumbered by civilian refugees and made more difficult by wintry weather, were forced to leave behind them a large part of their equipment, including most of their heavy artillery, motor cars and other transports.

Austria, with the assistance of some German troops, continues her operations against Montenegro, the frontier of which have been crossed, but not without considerable opposition from the Montenegrins, who are masters in mountain warfare and who have been joined by some portions of the Serbian armies which succeeded in escaping from the invaders of their country.

December 10

Allied troops operate freely in Greece

A feeling of optimism seems to be growing here that diplomatic negotiations in Greece seem to be progressing favorably. Greece has virtually turned over Grecian Macedonia as a base of operations to the Allies, besides giving them free use of the railroad and the harbors on the Aegean Sea.

Serbian soldiers who fell back into Greek territory were not disarmed, but were treated with notable consideration. Greece declines, however, to disarm troops of the Central Powers if they pursue allied troops on Grecian territory.

The Central Powers meanwhile have offered Greece southern Albania and islands in the Aegean on condition that she decline to grant certain demands of the Allies and remain neutral.

Romania plays both sides

Romania looms unusually large on the Balkan horizon, and that country is

generally accredited with the intention either of joining the Allies or at least stretching her neutrality to the point of allowing the passage of Russian troops.

The Romanian government has decided to close all foreign navigation on the part of the Danube which flows through Romanian territory. In addition, the Romanian military have announced that all steamships, barges, tugs and other craft anchored in Romanian ports belonging to foreign or private Romanian companies will be commandeered "in the interest of national defense."

Allies continue retreat

The Anglo-French expedition in the Balkans has continued its retreat and has now entirely evacuated Serbian territory.

According to a statement issued from the French general staff: "We, the French and British, are retiring for reasons easy to understand. In view of the fact that the Serbian army for the moment is out of the reckoning, our presence in Serbian territory is no longer necessary. Bulgarian successes amount to an occupation of territory no longer disputed by us."

The French retirement from the Serbia must be regarded as a purely strategical move. After a desperate effort by the French to establish a connection with the Serbian forces, which lack of time and resources made impossible, the French were compelled to readjust their lines with a view to shortening their front and taking up winter quarters more easily supplied and less exposed to the inclemency of the weather. The French having retired southward, their new position is now closely connected with the strong positions held by the British.

With the campaign against the main Serbian armies having been closed, it is expected that German forces, will join the Bulgarians in Macedonia in an effort to crush the French and British armies before they become much stronger.

However, the constant arrival of fresh forces and war materials at Saloniki give evidence that the Allies have no intention of abandoning their efforts in this region.

December 17

Allies complete retreat

The retirement of the Anglo-French forces in the Balkans has ended. The Allies now occupy strong positions north of Saloniki, where thus far their opponents have made no effort to disturb them. The allied front extends about twenty-five miles north of Saloniki.

The retreat of the British and French expedition in Serbia was conducted with great difficulty, according to the Germans. The Allies main force was unable to disengage itself and retreat unhampered. Bulgarian and Teuton troops maintained the closest touch with their retiring foe, who was therefore forced to retire fighting at every step.

Notwithstanding the difficulties of retreat and the determined attack of superior forces of Bulgarians, the Allies saved virtually all their ammunition and other supplies and suffered comparatively small losses.

The principal reason for the retreat was that the Balkan expedition, which was to aid the Serbians, no longer existed. Once entrenched at Saloniki, the Allies can await in virtually complete security for reinforcements, as well as a better opportunity to resume operations.

The Allies, notwithstanding the Teutonic sweep through Serbia and their recent retreat to a line near the Greek border, are not going to abandon their campaign in the Balkans.

This decision was reached at the war conference that has been in progress in Paris between the French war minister and the British foreign and war secretaries. Although British and French troops are being withdrawn from Serbia, the conferees approved the maintenance of French and British troops at Saloniki. Measures of a military nature



The Greek port of Saloniki was the life line to all Allied troops on the Balkan Front, and a center of controversy as Greece was supposedly neutral.



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DECEMBER, 1915



While American's celebrate Christmas in relative prosperity, the same could not be said for their European counterparts.

have been taken to insure the security of the expeditionary force and when conditions seem to indicate that the time is ripe the offensive will be assumed with adequate forces.

In military circles, it is of primary importance that Saloniki be retained as a base for future operations, even though the allied troops are forced to take shelter under the guns of the fleet. It is generally conceded the present forces of the Allies are inadequate to cope with Bulgaria and the Central Powers, whose armies now number 1,000,000 men.

Greek neutrality questioned

Virtually all of Greek Eastern Macedonia has now been abandoned to the French and British forces, in accordance with the agreement reached with the Greek government.

Germany, it is said, already has asked Greece whether Greek neutrality has been compromised by the new facilities accorded the Allies. Germany apparently has no intention of permitting Greece to grant any further concessions to the Allies without a vehement protest.

The Greek government officially denied that Bulgarians have entered Greek territory, and it is considered in competent quarters here that an entrance of the Bulgarians into Greek Macedonia is improbable. The presence of Bulgarians in Greek Macedonia would arouse national indignation.

The Bulgarian minister has made public a reassuring statement dwelling upon Bulgaria's friendly attitude toward Greece. The Greek government now seems to be satisfied that there will be no Bulgarian incursion on Greek territory.

December 24

Invasion of Greece imminent

The Germans threat that they will be compelled to take action to drive out the Allies at Saloniki if the fortification of that base continues, brings the Balkan development a step nearer a crisis.

How soon the Austro-Germans cross the Greek frontier will apparently depend upon how soon they are able to

collect sufficient troops. The fact that an attack upon Saloniki has not yet begun is attributed to the necessity in which the Germans find themselves concentrating sufficient forces, repairing communications destroyed by the Anglo-French and Serbians, and the bringing up of sufficient supplies of munitions, but the moment they have made the preparations the attack will be begun and pushed home.

Whether the Bulgarians also cross the border is a vital question to the Greeks. It is believed a Bulgarian advance would rekindle old enmities and might draw the Greek people into the conflict on the side of the Allies. The Greek Premier rejoined that in no case would Greece allow Bulgarian troops to set foot on Greek soil.

The Bulgarian premier however said that the demarkation of a neutral zone on the Serbian-Greek frontier is making good its promises and that whenever parties of Bulgarian and Greek troops meet the relations are most friendly. He added that the Bulgarians would only fight against the entente Allies on Greek territory with the guarantee to Greece that the Bulgarians would not occupy Saloniki, but would withdraw behind the Bulgarian frontier after accomplishing their task of driving the Allies out of Greece.

If an offensive movement toward Saloniki is undertaken it is hardly likely Greece will interfere seriously, as she must grant the same facilities to the Central Powers as she accorded the entente Allies if the present policy of neu-

trality prevails.

According to official reports from Greece, King Constantine recognizes that the Central Powers may be forced by military expediency to attempt to expel the Allies, and has cautioned the Allies that they cannot expect the Central Power's respect for Greek neutrality will last forever.

Greeks protest allied presence

Private reports from Saloniki indicate that a state of panic reigns there. The Greeks are hostile to the English, who behave arrogantly. The French and British are on bad terms, each blaming the other for the failure of their failed Balkan expedition.

To add insult to injury, nearly fifty members of the Serbian parliament are living in a hotel in Saloniki. They have formed a provisional parliament and play cards during the night while Serbian and Greek refugees are starving in the streets.

German war plans

The Germans appear to be preparing offensive movements in all directions, in Belgium and France, in Greece, against Egypt, on the Russian front, and in Galicia.

British military critics believe, however, that the Central Powers have not enough available reserves for an offensive movement on more than one front. In fact, it is frequently argued in England that the Central Powers are approaching the last stratum of reserves in men, and must make a determined effort to obtain a victory over one of their enemies.

December 31

Peace on Earth finds no echo on battle lines

Peace on earth, goodwill towards men, that sentiment enunciated to the shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem and announcing that onto the world Christ was born; that sentiment which during the ages has been the light and inspiration of civilization today, finds no echo on the great battlefields of Europe, where, in lust for blood that victory may be achieved countless thousands of soldiers continue the struggle.

From the northern plains of Flanders to the mountains separating France and Germany, from the Gulf of Riga to the Austrian frontier to Saloniki and in the districts of the near East, where Muhammad in military strength is pitted against Christians, the tremendous booming of heavy guns continues, and men are being sacrificed to the war God that their bones and sinew may be



As 1915 ended, the prospect for a peaceful resolution of the war seemed more distant than ever.

molded into that intangible something recognized as triumphant success.

True, the fighting being engaged in by the belligerent forces on the various fronts is not of a determined offensive character, but the men are there and as far as it is possible under the present strategic conditions they are continuing fighting.

No advance on Saloniki

Dispatches from the continent project the holiday lull will be broken on the Balkan front, where Greek observers believe the Central Powers are preparing a huge army for operations directed against the Allies. Whether this will take the form of an actual attack on Saloniki or merely an advanced into Greece for the purpose of seizing strategic defensive points is a matter of keen speculation in Athens.

According to one correspondent the Greek government has definitely decided not to permit the Central Powers to penetrate Greek territory unless they specifically guarantee that Greek territory will not be endangered.

The Central Power operations however

may possibly not be resumed. Some German observers believe Saloniki has no strategic importance. So long as the Central Powers are able to defend southern Bulgaria the occupation of Saloniki by the Allies is not looked upon as a menace to any of the interests of the Central Powers.

It is argued the allied forces are operating at the end of the longest, the most hazardous and most expensive supply line of the war, while the Bulgarian army, constituting the major part of the force barring the allied route through Serbia, has the advantage of very short communications.

Therefore it is considered that an offensive against Saloniki would be a political rather than a military measure, and from the political standpoint, it is pointed out the value of such would be highly problematic offensive since the occupation, even temporarily of Greek territory, would involve only embarrassments and no advantages.

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HISTORY

Rediscovering Colonial America

Forbes' Campaign for Fort Duquesne

John Miller
Emmitsburg Historical Society

Part 2

In 1758, Brigadier General John Forbes was given the opportunity to command a major campaign to take Fort Duquesne that would shape North America. He remained in New York until April, when he moved to Philadelphia. Brigadier General Forbes remained in Philadelphia for several weeks gaining financial support, supplies, and recruits for the campaign. While there, his second in command, Colonel Henry Bouquet led the main portion of Forbes' army to Ray's Town, to establish a forward depot for supplies that would be sent from Philadelphia. Ray's Town also served as a training ground, and a concentration point before pushing across the mountains to Fort Duquesne.

About thirty-five miles to the south

of Ray's Town was Fort Cumberland, where Colonel George Washington was ordered to cut a road connecting the two forts. Fort Cumberland was located along the Braddock Road where Major General Edward Braddock led his command to Fort Duquesne. The question was, how to proceed to lay siege to Fort Duquesne? From Ray's Town, Brig. Gen. Forbes could march his army west across the mountains, using some of the established paths, and then cut a new road to Fort Duquesne. From Ray's Town to Fort Duquesne was about ninety miles. Moving west, the British army would march through a wilderness with no major river crossings. The three main ridges of the Allegheny, Laurel and Chestnut mountains would be the only natural obstacles to cut through.

Or, Brig. Gen. Forbes could move south from Ray's Town to Fort Cumberland, where the Braddock Road

was established. However, three years of growth would have made the road difficult to travel upon. Secondly, the Braddock Road was the same road that many Indians used to launch raids into Pennsylvania, Virginia and Maryland, so a surprise attack could be compromised. Thirdly, several major river crossings could slow the advance down, and Brig. Gen. Forbes could miss his November deadline of attack. Finally, the route was over one hundred sixty miles, and supplies would take longer to arrive for the advance of the British army.

The decision was made to construct about fifty miles of new road from Ray's Town to Loyalhanna. On August 10, British Major James Grant would move westward from Ray's Town, across the Allegheny Mountain and Laurel Ridge to Loyalhanna Creek, building a road. As Major Grant moved, small working details began to cut a new road. These smaller work details would move along at a faster pace by not getting in the way of one another, as Braddock had during the construction of his road.

On August 15, Colonel Bouquet ordered Ensign Charles Rohr to select a location for a storehouse at Loyalhanna. Loyalhanna would become yet another concentration point for the British army. It would also serve as a training ground to those units and volunteers that would join up with Forbes' army. On August 20, Colonel Bouquet ordered Colonel James Burd, Major James Grant, and about 1,500 to begin building the future fort.

While the army was in west-



Crossed pickets in front of and on top of fort walls were effective in breaking up frontal assaults by massed troops during the French and Indian War.

ern Pennsylvania, Brig. Gen. Forbes stayed behind at Philadelphia, taking care of administrative problems. By early July, Brig. Gen. Forbes began moving to catch up with the army. He would set up his headquarters at Carlisle, and remain there for several weeks before moving to Shippensburg. He was battling his illness of what many today feel was stomach cancer. He was typically transported from place to place on a stretcher or litter. By early September, Brig. Gen. Forbes was at Fort Loudoun, just west of Chambersburg. By September 15, Brig. Gen. Forbes made it to Ray's Town, where, for several weeks, he would establish his headquarters.

On August 21, the location of a fort had been chosen, and the next day Colonel Bouquet ordered 1,500 men, supported by artillery, to move to Loyalhanna to begin construction of a storehouse and hospital. Troops first reached the area at the end of August to begin working on entrenchments. With a chain of forts support-

ing the encampment at Loyalhanna, Forbes' army would be better protected and not as exposed as Maj. Gen. Braddock's army was when they attempted to take Fort Duquesne.

On the evening of September 2, although some sources state September 3, Colonel James Burd arrived at Loyalhanna, and began establishing camp. Most of the army wagon trains would begin arriving the next day. Just as they were during Maj. Gen. Braddock's campaign, the wagon trains were a plague moving across the mountains. The wagon trains travelled very slowly along the new road.

Colonel Burd began studying the area to gain knowledge. He quickly laid out plans for an entrenchment of a fort. Following Colonel Bouquet's instructions, a storehouse was built and stockades quickly went up. Fort Ligonier was to be the name of this new fortification.

The fort was set up on a high piece of ground that would become heavily armed, and became the forward supply depot for the British army. The east and west faces of the fort would feature heavy redoubts for artillery batteries. A wooden stockade surrounded the fort, with moats located at various points. Logs with wooden spikes lodged through the beam called Chevaux de fries would dot the landscape leading to the fort, serving as obstacles in case of a major attack.

Quartermaster stores, officers' quarters, hospital, smokehouse and ovens were all built. The interior also featured a parade ground. A powder magazine was also built using earth. A blacksmith shop and sawmill were located on site. The army could sustain itself for weeks or months if it had to.

If the campaign looked as though the French would attack the British, they now had a closer fall back position than what Braddock did at Fort Cumberland. From Fort Ligonier, Fort Duquesne was only a few days march. To cover the British army's rearguard, and keep supplies moving forward to the outposts, 1,200 British soldiers were needed to stay at the various networks of forts.

Brigadier General Forbes had about 100 men stationed at Carlisle, and at Forts Morris, Loudoun, Littleton, Juniata and Frederick. At Fort Cumberland and Ray's Town, Brig. Gen. Forbes had about 200 men stationed. The future fort at Loyalhan-

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HISTORY

na would see about 300 men to garrison the fort, as the British army moved out to attack the French at Fort Duquesne.

During the construction of Fort Ligonier, the British soldiers were subjected to French and Indian raiding parties, who harassed the soldiers. On

September 9, Colonel Bouquet ordered 100 men to entrench an area west of Fort Ligonier, near modern day Latrobe, which was nicknamed "Grant's Paradise." As the skirmishes occurred, Colonel Bouquet would be forced to answer back. It was no secret that the French were well aware

of the British location, and this would play a role that would be played out in two months during the climax of the campaign.

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1:30 p.m.— Fiery Artillery Demonstration - Followed by
5:30 p.m.— *Buford Holds the Line* - The Black Hats Arrive

SATURDAY, JULY 2ND

12:00 p.m.— *Clash at Fairfield* - (Cavalry Battle)

5:00 p.m.— *East Cemetery Hill* - The Push is on

SUNDAY, JULY 3RD

11:00 a.m.— *Custer Attacks Stuart* - (Cavalry Battle)

2:30 p.m.— *Cushing's Brave Stand* - (Segment of Pickett's Charge)

— Note: All battles take place at 965 Pumping Station Road —

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MOM'S TIME OUT

Frazzled

Mary Angel

It absolutely can't be December already. I haven't even begun to think Christmas. I am stilling reeling over Thanksgiving and all of the preparation, cleaning and family that I had to get ready for. It is really strange since I am usually that overly Christmas-ready individual. So what is going on?

By the first week in October I have usually taken my girls (used to be all four kids when they were younger) to Toys R Us to make a digital copy of their Christmas list. We would linger in almost every aisle and I would take pictures of every item they wanted with their face and the label of the item included in the picture. Then I would go home and make a spread sheet of the items, their cost and eventually who got

what for whom. This year the beginning of October came and went, along with the beginning and middle of November. At that point I went into a little panic and took my youngest since I had to go to Frederick for an errand. She had a blast and we took quite a few pictures.

When we got home I didn't make the spreadsheet. I have gotten quite a bit of grief from my eleven year old concerning the fact that there doesn't seem to be any time to take her to Toys R Us. After another week plus, we stopped in several mini toy stores or department stores with toy departments and compiled an admirable list for her this year as well. I have also requested lists from both of my boys. Although at this point had not received any thing.

The week before Thanksgiving and the Grandmas start to ask for

ideas for gifts to give the kids. After the third time of being quizzed I go into a little panic and explain to the boys that if I didn't get a list by the end of the day I was going to tell anyone who asked for ideas to just get whatever they saw. I don't know if it was the fear of Grandma picking anything she saw or the fear of Meme ordering something off of an infomercial that motivated them. By supper time I had a list from both of them.

Suddenly it is a few days before Thanksgiving and I have the pictures and the lists but no spreadsheet. Every year we have a tradition of going on a girls shopping weekend starting on Black Friday! No spreadsheet means that I would spend money I didn't have on things I didn't need, things the kids wouldn't want or possibly already have. I also came to the conclusion that the spreadsheet was somehow the reason I got so much shopping done before Black Friday. I resign myself to the fact that I may be pulling an all-nighter to get the spreadsheet done and be ready for some serious shopping.

So is my Christmas-readiness really thrown off just because of a spreadsheet, maybe? It might also be be-



cause I started a part time job and one of the kids went back to public school. I had no idea how disruptive it would be to figure in another school start and end time and 24 hours a week for a job. I have had to rearrange many of my routines for the day. Before my daughter went back to middle school I was already struggling to come up with a regu-

lar schedule for my 24 hours and still have a regular schedule for homeschooling. When she went back to school it just got that much harder. I felt like I was finally getting into a routine and she started back to a school that had a start time the same time as our homeschool day. This meant that I had to adjust yet again.

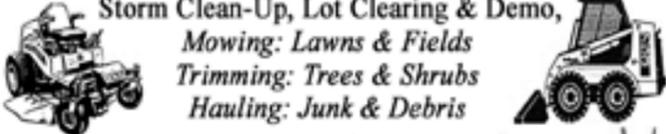
Then my husband unexpectedly had to go out of town for business 8 out of 10 days in a row. Although he works a lot and therefore isn't always available to help, he is still an integral part of the family complex. There are times when I have two kids that need to go in two different directions, actually frequent times. So on top of all of the changes and adjustments, now I had to be in two places at once.

So to answer the question I posed earlier the answer would be no it isn't just the spreadsheet to blame. The truth is that life is full of the snowball effect. I took the part time job and things had to change. Then my preteen started back to school and things had to adjust again. Add to that my husband's absenteeism. All of this happened when I normally would have taken the girls to make their lists and asked the boys to make theirs, then I would have sat down and asked them to pick their favorites for their actual list for Santa. After this tedious process there still would have been plenty of time for the making of a spreadsheet and all would have been bliss. However, with all of the chaos none of that happened and so here I am, disorganized and unprepared for the holidays.

Could you hear the BUT coming. But, none of that matters. I still love the holidays and they will come whether I am prepared or not. So I have decided to just do the best I can and wing it. All of this has made me realize how much I like being in control and how much I maybe need to let go a little more. If you take anything from my holiday rambblings I hope it is that you should enjoy the holidays with your friends and family and not worry so much about the small stuff. The small stuff really will take care of itself. Merry Christmas and relax!!!!

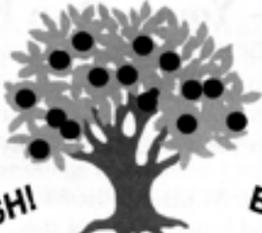
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Holiday treats!

Brooke Hagerty
AKA The Food Chick

December means treats, treats and more treats. Now, you can take the easy way out and buy store bought or even attend your local holiday bazaar and buy someone else's homemade. But why do that when you can spend just one afternoon doing it yourself. The satisfaction you will feel coupled with the joy of the recipient will amaze you! These surprisingly simple little treats are sure to delight everyone on your holiday gift-giving list. And just to be sure we are going to cover some sweet and savory ideas!

First up, the sweets! Fudge is a family favorite of mine and very easy to make. Also easy to make are Chocolate Peanut Nut Clusters and White Chocolate Peppermint Bark.

Anyone with a sweet tooth will appreciate this yummy fudge and how easy it is to make. It's a breeze to make on your own and it's also a great activity if you've got little hands helping you! We decided to add a little more vanilla for some extra kick and some sea salt to cut the sweetness, but it's your fudge, your rules—anything goes with this one!

Sea Salt Chocolate Fudge

Ingredients
2 cups (12 oz bag) semi-sweet chocolate chips
1 can (14 oz) sweetened condensed milk
1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1/4 teaspoon sea salt

Directions
Line a 9-inch square baking dish with aluminum foil.

In a medium saucepan, combine chocolate chips and condensed milk over low heat. Stir until chocolate is melted and smooth.

Once smooth, take off heat and stir in vanilla and salt.

Pour into baking dish and refrigerate for at least 2 hours. (Optional: sprinkle sea salt over the top.)

Pull foil out, cut fudge into pieces and enjoy!

Chocolate Peanut Clusters

Ingredients
1 cup Roasted Salted Peanuts or your choice of nuts (salt is optional)
2 cups Semi-sweet chocolate

Directions
In a double boiler slowly melt chocolate chips (be sure the boiling water is a slow boil and does not touch the top pot). Do not let water get into the chocolate. Once chips start to loosen stir until creamy. Once chocolate is melted add your nut of choice and stir to combine. Remove from heat. On a parchment paper lined sheet tray, using a small melon baller scoop out and place on tray. Once the tray is full move to the refrigerator to set for approximately one hour. Package is colored plastic wrap, in decorative jars or tins.

White Chocolate Bark

Ingredients
4 cups white chocolate
1 cup crushed peppermint

Directions
In a double boiler slowly melt chocolate chips (be sure the boiling water is a slow boil and does not touch the top pot). Do not let water get into the chocolate. Once chips start to loosen stir until creamy. Once chocolate is melted add peppermint and stir until combined. Remove from heat and spread on a parchment lined sheet tray to desired thickness. Place in refrigerator and allow to set for at least one hour. Break into pieces and package as desired

And now for the savory treats that are again very easy but pack a lot of flavor punch and are lovely hostess gifts this holiday season. Butter is a favorite and flavored butter is even better. Just wait until you see how easy this delectable treat can be! And what's butter without homemade biscuits? Just package the dry ingredients and your hostess should will only have to add water and shortening to make fresh biscuits on Christmas morning!

Honey Butter

Ingredients
1/2 cup unsalted butter
1/4 cup honey

Directions
Mix the butter and the honey using a standing or hand mixer. Spoon onto a sheet of plastic wrap in a lump and roll into a log. (use the plastic wrap to help you form the log so your hands are not covered in butter). Store in refrigerator and until solid and then slice to desired length.

this recipe can easily be doubled, tripled or quadrupled

Biscuits

Ingredients
8 cups flour
1-1/4 cups nonfat dry milk powder
1/4 cup baking powder
1 tablespoon salt
2 cups solid shortening

Directions
Combine all ingredients except shortening into a Mason Jar and attach the following directions
In a food processor with a large



bowl, place the dry ingredients. Process the ingredients to mix. Add the shortening a few scoops at a time. Process until the mixture resembles small peas. Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Measure Homemade Biscuit Mix into bowl. Add 2/3 cup cold water. Stir just to blend. Turn into floured surface. Sprinkle with flour. Knead 5 times with floured hands. Roll-out dough into 3/4-inch. Dip a 2-inch cutter into flour. Cut biscuits. Do not twist cutter. This will seal the edges. Place biscuits onto baking sheet. Bake for 12-14 minutes.

Makes - one dozen 2-inch biscuits.
And if none of these gift items tickle your fancy but you still want to give the gift of food you can always call me, The Food Chick! My services include personal chef, in home cook-

ing classes, kitchen reorganization and grocery store tours and shopping. When it comes to food the sky is the limit as to what I can do. Gift certificates are available in any denomination. Still looking for something a little different? You can purchase a gift certificate to my husband's restaurant, Bud's at Silver Run, voted Carroll County's Best Restaurant in 2014 and 2015.

As always, should you have a question, an idea for an article or are in need of my personal chef/catering services please contact me at brooke@thefoodchick.biz. Be sure to check out my website, www.thefoodchick.biz or "like" me on Facebook at www.facebook.com/theoriginalfoodchick.

Until next month, Happy Eating!!

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SCHOOL AND LIBRARY NEWS

What's new at the library

Linda Frydl
Frederick County
Public Libraries

This winter we are challenging you to read by joining our Winter Book Bingo: A Reading Challenge for Adults. Come into the Emmitsburg or Thurmont branch to pick up a bingo card. Complete one horizontal, vertical or diagonal line and choose a prize book (one per customer). Complete all 25 squares to be entered into the drawing to win a tote bag full of goodies for readers. Completed bingo cards must be received by Monday, February 29th. Drawing will be held on Tuesday, March 1.

Meet Author Jan Brett at Rose Hill Manor Park & Children's Museum - Frederick County Public Libraries teams up with Rose Hill Manor Park & Children's Museum for a free event in conjunction with the museum's

Jan Brett Exhibit. Meet author Jan Brett, see original copies of her artwork, listen to stories told by FCPL staff, and tour the children's museum. This event is free, but participants will have the opportunity to purchase books for signing. Contact Rose Hill at 301-600-1650 to be added to their list of interested attendees. Tuesday, December 1, 5 pm at Rose Hill Manor Park.

Holiday Happenings at the Emmitsburg Library

Junior Gardener Program: Holiday Centerpieces. Join the Silver Fancy Garden Club Saturday, December 5 at 10 am to create beautiful tea cup centerpieces just right for the holiday season. Ages 6-14. Registration required. Register online at fcpl.org, or call 301-600-6331.

Children's Holiday Tea Party hosted at the Emmitsburg Senior Center by the Friends of the Emmitsburg Li-

brary Saturday, December 12 at 1:30 pm. All ages with an adult. Registration required. Register online at fcpl.org, or call 301-600-6331.

Symphony Storytime with Frederick Symphony Orchestra! -Symphony Storytime gives your budding music-lover the chance to explore music through highly engaging and interactive live performances. Each storytime features the musical talents of FSO musicians performing classical and children's songs to develop musicality, creativity, coordination and literacy. And after the stories are performed, audience members can take a closer peek at an instrument petting zoo provided by the music specialty store Music & Arts! This program is best appreciated by children ages 2-6 and their caregivers, but is open to all ages. Thursday, December 10, 10:30am.

Teen Program: Mini Cupcake

Wars - Design and decorate your own mini cupcakes. They will be judged and prizes awarded. For grades 6 and up. Tuesday, December 15, 4-5 pm. Register online at fcpl.org, or call 301-600-6331.

Drop in for a Play Date! Every Monday drop in for a special playgroup. We'll start off with a fun story. Afterwards, you can meet new friends, read books, and play with toys. For ages 0-5. Mondays, 10:30am - 11 am.

LEGO® and Mega Blok Party -

Join us for an afternoon of LEGO® and Mega Blok fun! Build tall buildings, create mysterious scenes and have an endless amount of STEM fun with LEGO® bricks at the library! Best for ages 2 and up with an adult. Tuesday, December 8, 3:30-6 pm.

Full "Steam" Ahead - Play, Learn, and Explore at our pop-up "STEAM" lab. A variety of activities will be available. Try one or all. Tuesday, December 29, 4-6 pm.

All Frederick County Public Libraries will be closed Thursday and Friday, December 24 & 25, and closing at 5 pm on Thursday, December 31. We will also be closed Friday, January 1.

Events at Blue Ridge Summit Library

Every Monday is Lego Night from 3:30 - 7:30 p.m. For 'tweens and 'tweens at heart. Show your creative side!

Every Wednesday is "coffee club night" from 3:30 - 5 p.m. Coffee, tea, snacks, puzzles, cards, good conversation, and so much more.

Every Thursday is teen night, from 3:30- 5p.m. The community room is yours! We've got Wii, board games, music, food, etc.....

Dec 5th: Story hour at 11 a.m. is "Little Tree" by E. E.

Cummings.

Dec. 8th: Free family holiday movie! We will be showing "The Muppets Christmas Carol", rated G. Show time is 6 p.m. Bring your pillows!

Dec. 12th: Story hour is "The Wild Christmas Reindeer" by Jan Brett. Starts at 11a.m.

Dec. 17th: Free holiday movie "The Nightmare Before Christmas", rated PG. Starts at 6 p.m.

Dec 19th: Story hour will "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" by Dr. Seuss, starting at 11 a.m.

Dec 19th: Free holiday open

house from 4 - 6 p.m. Caroling, carriage rides, tree lighting, kids' crafts, fire truck rides, visit with Santa, live music, door prizes, hot chocolate, cookies, etc. Special showing of the animated classic "How The Grinch Stole Christmas" at 4, 4:45 & 5:30 p.m.

Dec 26th: Story hour will be "The Three Snow Bears" by Jan Brett. Starting at 11 a.m.

Dec. 29th: Free family movie presentation of Walt Disney's "Cinderella", rated PG. Starts at 6 p.m. Bring those pillows!

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SCHOOL AND LIBRARY NEWS

Merry Christmas from MSS

Lynn Tayler

Oh by gosh, by golly. Is it already time for mistletoe and holly? The surprise heat waves we keep experiencing make it hard to believe that Christmas is upon us, but it must be that time already because I have a stack of letters to Santa waiting to be stamped and mailed. I carefully pry them open, peek at what my children are asking the Big Man for, and glue them shut again, of course. There's only a few years left of believing in the magic of Santa for my little ones. I know my oldest knows the truth and I think my second oldest does, as well.

They'll get the chance to meet Kris Kringle in person at Mother Seton School and so will you! The annual Breakfast with Santa and Christmas Bazaar happens December 5th, from 8:00 a.m. to Noon. Pancakes, bacon, photos with Santa, unique gifts from local crafters and vendors...it's one of the best parts of the season, in my very humble opinion. There's something about spending an eternity standing in line at the mall to see Santa, and then having to spend an obscene amount of money for a single photo,

that takes the joy right out of the season. Events like Breakfast with Santa add to the magic of this time of year instead of detracting from it. Maybe we'll see you there. We'll be the ones holding up the line while my second-grader interrogates Santa to see if he's the real one or just a helper.

I have to confess—I'm prolonging their belief for my own benefit, as well. There's really no better way to get into the Christmas spirit than by seeing the holiday through the eyes of the children. The way their faces light up when they see Santa, the pure happiness that radiates from them as they sing along to every Christmas carol on the radio (and I do mean every Christmas carol), and their eyes filled with wonder as they decorate the tree. Greg Lake once sang about this wonderment and described it best: "The peal of a bell, and that Christmas tree smell, and eyes full of tinsel and fire."

I also have the privilege of experiencing Advent not only through my own children's eyes, but through the eyes of our students at MSS. As a private, Catholic school, MSS is able to turn the students' focus to "the rea-

son for the season"—the celebration of the birth of Jesus. We are called to make preparations in anticipation of the arrival of the Savior, and encouraged to spend these weeks in prayer and reflection. It's a welcome refuge and redirection for the children, who are bombarded with the message that they must have the newest, biggest, best toy/gadget out there. And if you think experiencing Christmas through the eyes of a child is magical, try looking at Advent and the stories surrounding the birth of Jesus from their perspective. Their awe of that miracle, and their little hearts so open to the mysteries of Faith, are enough to feed your soul and fill your own heart to overflowing.

My hope for you this season is that you may experience the same joy and wonderment as a child this Christmas. If you need a little help, we invite you to join us for our Christmas Program on December 18th, at 10:00 a.m. and again at 7:00 p.m., where not only can you hear our talented chorus perform, but you can experience the joyful performances of our younger students. The enthusiasm and glee they put into perform-



Don't miss the Mother Seton School Christmas Program, December 14, 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. Snow date is December 18. Come celebrate the joy of Christmas with us! The program will include choral performances from the Mother Seton School Chorus as well as from individual classes, our award-winning band, and a student-produced Christmas play.

ing their songs is contagious. I dare you to come to the program and not leave with a smile on your face and a little more lightness in your step, and maybe, just maybe, a little more faith in your heart.

For a child is born to us, a son is given to us; upon his shoulder domin-

ion rests. They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace. (Is 9:6)

From all of us at Mother Seton School, have a joyful Advent, the Merriest of Christmases, and a Happy New Year. May 2016 bring you only blessings and good will!

2016 legislative principles

Katie Groth
Frederick County School Board

Every year, the legislative season in Annapolis brings its share of surprises. It also brings successes and often failures, depending on what various advocacy groups bring to their elected representatives. Of course, "what is needed" depends on one's point of view.

The Board of Education of Frederick County has a strong presence during the legislative session. Joy Schaefer, our legislative liaison, is also the chair of the prestigious legislative committee of the Maryland Association of Boards of Education. She is our person in Annapolis and she frequently testifies on bills. Many of the issues she covers are state wide issues—such as funding equity, testing policy, and school funding. There are other issues, too, that may be of interest to a specific group of people, such as voting laws, transportation funding, and diabetes education.

With the help of members of the education community, the Board of Education has drawn up a set of legislative principles for the 2016 session. These are the principles for which we plan to advocate as the legislative session gets under way in January. We will be presenting this set of principles to the members of the Frederick County delegation to the Maryland General Assembly on December 2. Here is the list of principles we will present to them and which we will lobby for once the session begins (edited for brevity).

We support funding for education that is adequate and equitable.

With this, we support and aggressive level of school funding in the FY

2017 state budget. Maryland public schools have always been among the top school systems in the US. We need adequate funding to keep us there even as we take on significant challenges requiring specialized programs for critical needs. Readiness for college and careers is something Maryland residents demand for our students. We oppose laws called "unfunded mandates," that is, new initiatives in law which require local boards to provide programs or services without accompanying funding.

We support adequate funding to improve school facilities and create needed capacity in our schools. We are committed to utilizing resources strategically and responsibly to ensure

optimal learning environments and provide good stewardship of our public facilities. This year we are supporting a funding level of \$350 million for school facilities in Maryland. We oppose any law mandating school size for elementary and secondary schools, and we oppose competitive grants that would compete with or replace funding for the current state public school construction program.

We support continued governance and authority for local boards of education in Maryland. We support strong, local governance for public education in Maryland. Local control of public education is a tradition in Maryland history and a responsibility of local com-

munities. We oppose any legislation or regulation that would have the effect of reducing local board governance, oversight or budgetary authority. The Board supports local decision-making in developing curriculum and assessments in conjunction with the Maryland State Board of Education. The Board opposes any effort to legislate school calendars, school start times, and any effort to limit the authority of local school administrators in ensuring the safety of all staff and students. The Board also opposes any mandates that are unfunded or underfunded which limit the school system's ability to meet the needs of all the students and families it serves.

We support locally developed policies and the allocation of adequate resources to provide improvements in student mental and physical health and well-being. We oppose any unfunded man-

dates for physical or health instruction and/or physical, health, or mental health requirements. We also oppose any "one-size-fits-all" approaches that would dictate or limit the local board's ability to meet the needs of local students and families.

Local boards of education, through public meetings and other engagement with communities they serve, provide the venue for meaningful public dialog about goals and expectations for local public schools, their students and families. The Board of Education of Frederick County appreciates and values when legislators consider the role of the school boards when deliberating on or enacting any legislation, policy or reform relative to our local public schools. Through attendance at various scheduled public hearings and through contact with BOE members, all citizens have the right and the responsibility to become involved in their local schools. Great American public schools are the foundation of our communities and the backbone of our democracy.

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FOUR YEARS AT THE MOUNT

This month, as our writers head home for winter break to celebrate the holidays, we asked them to reflect on a holiday charity that is close to their hearts. We hope to ignite your desire to help your community with our unique community service experiences.

Freshman Year

Children Deserve a Chance Foundation

Elizabeth Veronis
MSM Class of 2019

I have always been a sucker for a good come-from-behind, David beats Goliath, rags-to-riches story. I root for the underdog. Come March Madness, I celebrate every Cinderella team that upsets a top seed. Perhaps that's why one of my favorite holiday shows is A Charlie Brown Christmas. Like Charlie Brown, I see the potential in that sad sapling that no one else wants. My heart positively swells as that straggly tree is loved back to life by a Peanuts Gang that is finally reminded of the true meaning of Christmas, when Linus recites the annunciation to the shepherds from the Gospel of Luke.

It is easy to become cynical about the over-commercialization and secularization of Christmas. The Halloween candy barely clears the shelves before shoppers are prodded into a getting a jump on Black Friday. Fortunately, my hometown of Lancaster, PA, takes a collective

breath in advance of the holidays for a day of charitable giving. It is called the Extraordinary Give and it is a 24-hour event that benefits some 300 foundations, non-profits, and service organizations in my community. Last year, \$4.5 million was pledged in a single day. One of the beneficiaries is the Children Deserve a Chance Foundation. It happens to be my favorite!

The CDCF was established in 2004 to provide mentoring and college preparation to at-risk kids. It was founded by Jordan Steffy, who was once assisted by a mentor who intervened precisely when it mattered most. As he recounts his story, Steffy was making bad choices in middle school; hanging with the wrong crowd, unfocused in school, and not thinking much about his own future. He was also a stellar athlete, a highly recruited quarterback who wound up playing for the University of Maryland. Recently, he earned an MBA from Columbia University. His turnaround – from flailing teenager to Ivy Leaguer, in-

spired him to give back to similarly situated kids.

The success of this foundation is truly inspiring. Almost all of the program participants will be the first in their families to graduate from college. Most never dreamed this was possible, prior to getting involved with the foundation. They simply didn't see the path forward, for there were so many stumbling blocks ahead of them.

Getting into the foundation's college prep program, known as Atollo, is not a walk in the park either. The students have to endure six weeks of training on the pillars of the program – strong mind, competition, resiliency, accountability, sacrifice, and finishing strong. The training begins at 5:30 a.m. There are no acceptable excuses for being late. They come because they embrace the program's mantra: "I AM MORE!" They certainly are, on so many levels. But, first and foremost, they are more than the stereotypes of inner-city youth that many people hold.

By the time these kids graduate from Atollo, they will have had access to the very tools usually reserved for the wealthiest among us: top-notch SAT preparation, individual tutoring, assistance on the college application process,

and mentoring from some of the area's brightest and most successful entrepreneurs and businesspeople. They will also have walked the campuses of more than a dozen universities during summer college tours. As they walk across the quads of some of our nation's best schools, these Atollo Scholars can see a changing future. They begin to believe.

Because my father serves on the board of directors for this foundation, I have had the privilege to meet many of the participants, some of whom attended my own high school. As I first learned their stories, I was struck by how different our backgrounds were. But as time passed, I was more struck by how similar our hopes are. We all want meaningful careers. We all wish to contribute to our communities. We all hope to make our families proud. At our core, we all believe that, given the right opportunities and the right resources, we can achieve most anything we desire. Unfortunately, far too many low-income children are never afforded the same opportunities as their more affluent peers.

I have been thinking a great deal about the growing gap between the haves and the have-nots. In fact, I am researching it for a class I am taking at the Mount. The social and economic

ramifications of a divided society should alarm us all. The poor have lower life expectancies, less access to health care, and fewer opportunities to shape the political process. More than at any time in recent history, they have less opportunity to move out of the class into which they were born. That seems to go against the most American of ideals: upward mobility and equal opportunity. Even President Obama has identified this as "the defining challenge of our time."

Like the Atollo Scholars, we need to believe that we can be more: more compassionate and more committed to addressing the problems that leave too many with too little to succeed. The Christmas season provides an ideal occasion to give a helping hand to those who need one. Consider donating to the Children Deserve a Chance Foundation in Lancaster, PA. Or find the children who deserve a chance in your own community. Like Charlie Brown, see the potential in someone who just needs a little more love to thrive. Better yet, see the potential in yourself to be the change you want to see in your community.

To read other articles by Elizabeth visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.

Sophomore Year

I'll be home for Christmas...

Sarah Muir
MSM Class of 2018

It was warm and comfortable inside, a sharp contrast to the icy rain and bone-chilling winds that buffeted the small car. The woman inside hummed softly to the song on the radio, careful not to wake her passenger. She looked in her rearview mirror and smiled at the small five-year old boy, asleep in the back. He was slumped in his car-seat, a green tissue paper crown from a Christmas cracker falling over his eyes, all tucked out from a day of excitement.

It was, overall, an almost-perfect Christmas Eve. Everyone was smiling and laughing, eating copious amounts of food from the table that was practically groaning under the weight of turkey and ham, stuffing and mashed potatoes, green beans and fresh bread. The house seemed to radiate warmth and light and smelled like pine, apples, and turkey. The tree was huge and over-laden with sparkling lights and ornaments. Everyone was there, enjoying each other's company and basking in the warm glow that the season seems to exude. Well, almost everyone. There was a place set at the table that lay empty, waiting for an occupant that would not be coming.

She frowned slightly at the memory, he was far away from home, doing God knows what, and though she knew it was silly, all she could think about was that he would have Christmas without a tree, or stockings and be far away from family. She knew it was going to be difficult tomorrow. Being woken by an eager five-year old who wants, more than

anything, to know where his daddy is and wondering why he is not there on Christmas. She sighed, as she pulled into the driveway, not realizing it had started snowing. She sat in the car for a few moments, thinking about the look on her son's face when he finds out his father could not come home for Christmas. She thought of what she would have to say: Well, daddy is far away, you see? He is protecting a lot of people. He loves you so much, darling, and he will come home, just not today.

She blinked away the moisture gathering in her eyes and stepped out of the car. She unbuckled her son, who was still out like a light. Adjusting the tissue paper crown so it would not fall, she picked him up, carried him inside the house, and got him ready for bed. He woke up just enough to ask for a story and she obliged him. He fell asleep sometime after the narrator's eyes, full of wonder, saw the eight tiny reindeer.

She finished the story and silently left his room. She started to head towards her room when the lights on the Christmas tree distracted her, and she went to turn them off before going to bed. Then what before her wondering eyes should appear, but a deep green duffle bag under the lowest boughs of the tree. A soft cough came from behind her and she turned to face the beatific smile and warm eyes that she missed so much. "I told you I'd be home for Christmas..."

Merry Christmas! It's the time of year for family and friends to gather round the yule log and relish in each other's company. It is also the season for people to start looking outside of themselves

to help other and to bring a bit more light into the world. Our troops, both at home and overseas, protect our country every day, sometimes at the cost of their own lives.

There are many foundations that help our troops and their families. Wounded Warriors, for instance, is an organization, founded in 2003, that helps to provide aid and encouragement to certain members of the service who have experienced physical or mental injuries, illness, or wounds. They are always looking for volunteers to help and donations.

The Red Cross is a well-known organization that works closely with Veterans Administration (VA) and military hospitals nationwide. They provide relief to service women and men across the country and those overseas.

Despite the somewhat Hallmark ending to my story, the truth is, not everyone can come home for the holidays. Because of this, many foundations have taken it upon themselves to donate their time to writing Christmas cards or assembling care-packages that provide a bit of home to soldiers that are so far away from theirs. Soldier's Angels is one such organization. They send Christmas cards to soldiers overseas and aid to military families through their "Adopt-a-family" program, which allows people to sponsor a family to help them afford Christmas celebrations from a holiday dinner to presents for the children. Soldier's Angels also bring assistance to homeless veterans in the community through their "No-Sew Blanket Drive" that provides warm blankets to veterans during these cold winter days.

I understand that this season is filled with worries. You have gifts to buy, trees to find, homes to decorate, in-laws to handle, and so many other things that need to be checked off

your seemingly endless holiday to-do list. Nevertheless, I ask you to take the time to help those who have given so much for our safety and our country and those that will not be coming home for Christmas. I am not asking you to ignore your "to-do" list and volunteer all your time or do-

nate hundreds of dollars. I am asking that you simply do what you can to help those who proudly serve (or have served) our country. Little is left to be said, except, maybe, Merry Christmas!

To read other articles by Sarah visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.



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WORTHY CHARITIES

Junior Year Christmas Charities

Leeanne Leary
MSM Class of 2017

Between the Salvation Army volunteers dressed as Santa Claus outside of stores, to the option to add a dollar to your total for charity inside the store, to the massive increase in soup kitchen volunteers and toy drives, the holiday season seems to bring out an unreal amount of opportunities to both volunteer and donate. So much so that it can actually become overwhelming at times.

It is truly beautiful, but I think the reason it can seem like so much is because of the stark contrast between the time of mid-November to late-December and the other 10 and a half months of the year. It is natural, and we can see it all around us as spirits rise around the holidays. Families are reunited, soldiers come home, employees get holiday leave and bonuses, and children's moods generally improve as they await Christmas and a break from school. Naturally, people feel more inclined to give and a heavier weight of obligation during these times. It's impossible to forget those who may not experience the same holiday joy, and it is clear how important the holidays are to us as a nation by the way we rally in hopes of sharing our holiday joy and privileges with everybody.

I work at a store called Justice. If you don't know, it's a clothing store aimed

at pre-teen girls; the new Limited Too. Every year at Christmastime we, along with hundreds of other stores, offer an option at the end of each transaction for the customer to add a dollar, five, or ten, that will go directly to St. Jude's Children's hospital. Some decline, but many participate and it is breathtaking to see the weekly and monthly totals of how much can be raised through this very simple question I ask each customer at the end of each transaction. There is no volunteering in this method, there's no extra work besides an extra three clicks on the screen; it is just the customers purely giving.

What is so fascinating to me about these holiday charities and opportunities is how much more willing people as a whole are to participate during this month and a half. Don't get me wrong, I don't think it's a bad thing. Sure this spirit would be an incredible thing to see year round and so much good could come, if even half of these charities persisted year round, but this is an entirely different kind of atmosphere. What is incredible about the pure joy surrounding the holidays and the willingness to participate is how it radiates throughout entire communities and how, for a month and a half, humanity can be viewed a little more positively.

There's so much going on in the world right now that I almost can't ignore it even in this short article. We are just a short time out from the hor-

rific Paris attacks and in the midst of an absolute uproar and debate concerning Syrian Refugees being resettled in America. This may seem like a strange connection to make—the state of our world and Christmas charities – but I don't know that it is as strange as it may seem.

The joyful giving nature of our holiday season is something truly incredible and a phenomenon that sheds light on humanity each year. I think this spirit and unification of people all around the world, but specifically in our country, is just what we need. Now I'm not proposing that our Christmas joy is the solution to every problem. I am, however, suggesting that maybe the unification of humanity and the giving, selfless, loving, nature of people during this time of year is what needs to be transferred and cross-applied to our everyday dealing with the tragedies in our world. Maybe the Christmas charity we need to add to our list this year is applying the natural rejuvenation of our humanity to our current human situation.

The giving and receiving we experience in this time is beautiful, as is the general atmosphere of joy and love. There has to be room, not only to direct that towards our favorite local charities, but also to feel it and remember it in all of our interactions. We may not be able to do much individually, but there is a lot we can do as a whole. We can add the extra dollar at the end of our transaction on Black Friday, we can drop our change in every donation can we see, we can give our time through volunteering with soup kitchens or shoveling. We can cause change on a large scale if



Emmitsburg's Fire & Rescue Museum will once again serve as the local focal point for the popular U. S. Marine Corps Toys for Tots program. The Toys for Tots initiative collects new, unwrapped toys during each year and distributes them to children that are less fortunate. The primary goal of Toys for Tots is to deliver a message of hope to the less fortunate and help to develop a desire to become a responsible, productive, patriotic citizen. A uniformed Marine will be present December 12 from noon to 5 at the museum to accept toys.

we all keep this joy, gratitude, and giving nature in our everyday exchanges from speaking to our families to discussing and considering matters of the world.

There truly is no better way to spend the season than capitalizing on our abnormally positive atmosphere and selves. Although it is hard to forget when we are surrounded by it all, we should work hard to keep this in mind. Every opportunity to volunteer, every extra dollar, and every charity is another chance to express to everyone around us how important it is to value the season and give back so that all can experience it in the similar ways.

I may have gotten a little off-top-ic as usual here. My hope is that we all see how the holiday season brings out

a beautiful side of humanity that may be somewhat dormant throughout the year. This spirit shouldn't only be enjoyed, but should be spread in ways that may not be as obvious as the ringing bell and Santa Claus at the Wal-Mart entrance.

We have a real opportunity to do more than add the extra dollar; we can implement every component of our rejuvenated state into our everyday dealings and considerations leading every interaction in a new direction. Our Christmas Charities are the result of our Christmas spirit, and it's incredible to see what this spirit can do.

To read other articles by Leanne visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.

Senior Year

Adopt a Family

Katie Powell
MSM Class of 2016

As you may know, I am a division I athlete. I am also the president of the Mount St. Mary's University Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC), and last year, I was the Community Service Committee Chair. As such, there are many demands placed on me time-wise, as well as physically, mentally, and financially.

Many of the things we do as student athletes are tiring and push us to our limits, but are very rewarding. Early morning practices, classes all day followed by a second practice, games on the weekends, away trips that we must miss classes for; they all cause a great deal of stress, but also give us great rewards in the end. However, the most rewarding thing we do as student athletes has nothing to do with practices, games, personal records, wins, or even our sports at all.

Community service, by far, gives us the greatest joy at the end of the day. It allows us to give back to the communities that have helped us grow in to the successful young people that we are. It is a chance for us to help others to also be the best people that they can be.

We always do community service initiatives with our specific teams, but there are special occasions when we come together as "The Mount"

to make an even greater difference. For example, each year, SAAC hosts clothing and food drives for athletes to donate, as teams we volunteer our time at soup kitchens and working with children, showing them the sport we love. The holiday season is one of our most involved times, and is also home to my favorite holiday charity we do, Adopt a Family.

Adopt a Family is a nation-wide and very well known charity that assigns families to groups or other families who want to take part, and that group buys the gifts that the family asks for. The student athletic advisory committee works closely with a local church that puts a special twist on the classic Adopt a Family tradition.

We assign each team to a different age group, and they donate those toys to the church. The families then get to come to the church and "shop" for the toys that they want for their kids. It allows the families to remain anonymous, but also allows them to keep the job of getting the toys for their children. Last year, the swim team had the category of boys aged 6-8, and we were able to donate the most toys of the entire student athlete population. As a student-athlete body, we were able to donate over \$1000 worth of toys to local families in need.

This year, as the holiday season yet again kicks off, we started our charity work with a clothing drive in October. Following

that, we held a weeklong can drive before Thanksgiving to help struggling families celebrate one of the most important family nights of the year, country-wide. Finally, we spread holiday cheer throughout the month of December by running the annual Adopt a Family toy drive with joy and passion in our hearts. We hope to exceed our donation totals from last year and put smiles on even more young faces when the time comes.

I know that the holidays mean a great deal to many people, in many different ways. However one of the greatest things to me about the holiday season in general is the ability to tell our loved ones how we feel about them, and I think that is why I feel so strongly about our Adopt a Family adaptation here at the Mount. Community is one of our four pillars for several reasons. One of those reasons is that we are a fantastic community in ourselves, helping each other toward success. The other is that, as a whole, we reach out to those around us to further our nation.

The magic in a child's eyes when she opens a gift that you got her that says "from Santa Claus" is something that should never be taken away. It may sound cliché, but children are the future and deserve to grow in a loving and special environment. I think that for parents, knowing that their children won't have that must be devastating. I cannot help but put myself in their shoes and imagine how I would feel, and I would hope that in that case, someone would reach out and help

me. I imagine that there is a great loss of dignity in not being able to provide for one's family, and I like to believe that we can help give that back, even if it is only through our small donations.

The holiday season is a time for giving, a time for love, and a time to spread cheer. This season, help spread those happy feelings to someone around you who is in need. There are people in our very neighborhood that will be struggling this year to put food on the table, provide their families with warm cloth-

ing, or try to give their children a "normal" Christmas. However, they don't have to be.

This holiday season is the time to donate or volunteer with whatever charity it is that speaks to you. Whether it be through Adopt a Family, a soup kitchen, a canned food drive, or an old coat drive, there is a way for you to help change the way your community celebrate the holidays!

To read other articles by Katie visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.

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FASHION

What to wear to the holiday party

Valerie McPhail
MSM Class of 2015

The holiday season is upon us. This is a time of the year designed for extravagance, classic joy and celebration. It is as season meant for ice-skating with friends, enjoying hot chocolate after going to see a film in theaters (all the Oscar-nominated films are starting to premiere) and then rushing to travel home, just in time for Christmas.

In every event there is little care for what outfit to wear: the focus is staying warm with the company you share. One keeps merry and bright under three layers of clothing, wrapped in check-printed scarves that match your pair of gloves and fuzzy earmuffs. Part of the fun might even be the chase for keeping cozy. Sweaters and down jackets layered over thermal vests and turtlenecks are typical ways to keep toasty in this season's unpredictable weather.

Without a care for fashion or trends, the thought of what to wear to a holiday party can hit you like a snowball. It is short-coming, unexpected, and a surprise to say the least. There are too many stressors at the sake of the jolliness of this season, so worry not; your holiday wardrobe is covered.

The following are the fashionable pieces that will not only get you dressed up for a holiday party, but will put you in the spirit to celebrate as well:

For the life of the party:

Women's fashion is concerned with options. This gives ready-to-wear and couture fashion its appeal: there is an inter-

est in the trendy styles of the moment. For the 2015 Holiday Season, embrace pieces that will bring attention. Glittery dresses, embellished accessories and baroque prints won't hide when layered underneath the season's coat. These are the items that will let your personality sparkle and shine at any party.

Glitter and Sparkles

For the perfect party dress, view the decorated holiday windows along 5th Avenue. The festive windows gush with inspiration. This year clothing and accessories are sparkling in sequins and diamonds. Bergdorf & Goodman's Holiday window display this year showcase this trend. The Fifth Avenue windows are decorated with Swarovski crystals. Glittery dresses, accessories, shoes and pants are all ways to wear some sparkle when celebrating this holiday season.

To experiment with this trend, begin with accessories. Shoes, small clutch handbags and embellishments on shirts and dresses are simple ways to start. Such types of decorations bring cheer to an outfit. The sight of sparkle on clothes promotes celebration. When picking an outfit for New Years, consider adding some sparkle and shine; I know I will. What is more fun wearing clothes that vitalize celebration?

Faux (fake) fur

We have officially reached the season of warm, furry fashion. The faux fur coat is the first sight of a fashionable outfit this 2015 Fall/Winter season. Browse the many options of shopping this trend — whether it be a stole, vest or full coat. The

styles and colors are plentiful! This trend speaks fashion.

Fur outerwear elevates the appearance of an ordinary coat or vest. My thoughts on this trend are inseparable from the thought of my twin sister's obsession over her vintage find. She discovered her coat in a local pawnshop in her college town. The rust brown coat has reinvented the cool within the aged sophisticated staples. This season, the fur coat marks a fashionable personality. Following the likeness of the Fall 2015 from Altuzarra, Rachel Comey and Thakoon, those who wear the fur coat are trendy. This piece makes a statement: it evokes glamour and expects attention.

Baroque prints

With a 1600s European reference, this print shows that fashion and good style may come from an image of the past. Although not remotely outdated, there is a sophistication of its nature. Valentino is a brand that best represents the vision of this print. Lead designer, Maria Grazia Chiuri has communicated a romance through the art of design. Paired with lace and long gown silhouettes, baroque is the final element that carries the brand's feminine perspective.

Valentino has proven a strong treatment of this print: the subdued tone and bold prints presents the strength of delicate eveningwear. Wear a baroque print on a special night: it is best experienced in gowns that show off its artistic print. In such settings, break out a baroque printed dress to make a statement: old fashion glamour is never going out of style.



Baroque featured in Valentino's Fall 2015 Ad Campaign

For a suave look:

It is a very exciting time in the menswear industry. Designers are taking risks by elevating the appearance of the basic items that navigate its business. Take this holiday season to be adventurous and cheer to the advancements of style!

Printed sweaters

The Ugly Christmas sweater is much appreciated. It is a phenomenon developed among teenagers who fashion the vintage sweaters they scouted at thrift stores. In the last few years, the unfashionable item has become a trend and it is now a uniform to holiday looks. However, if a gingerbread man or comical Christmas phrases on your clothing deem too much of a bold move to wear, opt for a printed sweater.

Offered in a variety of colors and prints — Aztec, stripes and snowflakes — this is the opportunity to easily shop and test the trend out for yourself. Nautica and

the Gap are retailers of such trend spotters. Essentially they are modernizing the traditional childhood attire. The printed sweater shows off some personality; it is expressive, blatantly communicating a perspective of fashion not taken too seriously. Shop this style when you want to be the life of the party; you will be sure to strike up conversation without concern.

Jeans

Denim will always be an item of style. My jeans are a piece of my wardrobe that I cannot live without. It is an item I wear almost every day from fall through the winter season. As I reconsider my previous holiday attire, denim remains a staple.

Furthermore, it seems my appreciation is compatible to the interest of jeans for men. Brands such as H&M and Baldwin worked with their denim throughout their fall and winter 2015 collections. Their incorporation of denim has not gone unnoticed. With the popularity of denim brands — including 34 Heritage, Levi and J Brand — fashion has invested in denim. But for a good reason, denim is a foundation piece. I personally am a denim fanatic, a jean queen because I appreciate the practicality of its design. Wear denim from day to night, dress it up and down: it remains an integral part of my wardrobe. Its functionality is even better with comfort. I invest in jeans that are comfortable; I purchase jeans I feel good wearing. In the journey for personal style, fashion's craze over denim rests in its nature of effortless comfort. This holiday season, denim is a fashion that insinuates jolly. Its comfort is the key.

Velvet blazer

The Velvet jacket accents an outfit. The jacket is a popular piece of the holiday season. Whether it be the jean jacket, full length overcoat or the velvet blazer, the jacket is the menswear piece of the season. The velvet blazer will jazz up any outfit. Wear this piece knowing that this look is suave. It has the power to complement a night out. For a simple way to break out this sophisticated item, take inspiration from Guess's fall/winter 2015 collection. The outfits on the men who modeled the velvet blazer in the ad campaign looked cool as midnight, going to show that the velvet blazers elevates the typical jacket.

Do not be concerned with holiday attire this Christmas. Rather, take inspiration from these uniform pieces so that you can focus on the joy of season. When it comes to celebrating, fashion can help play the part only as long as comfort leads the night. Have fun with fashion this holiday season!



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Scatter out your crumbs

Lydia Olsen
MSM Class of 2016

*Amidst the freezing sleet and snow,
The timid robin comes;
In pity drive him not away,
But scatter out your crumbs.*

Lewis stepped outside and breathed in the frigid air. He hadn't been out since the morning, and was surprised to see how the snow had accumulated on the roofs of the cars that overflowed from the parking lot. "Great," he thought to himself as he sighed with frustration, "can't wait to get home and have to shovel for hours."

Lewis kicked the snow around under his black boots until he could see the sidewalk beneath. It was December 23rd. Two days before Christmas.

"And this is the way I am spending it," he grunted to himself, bitterly. By now it was nearly dinnertime and his stomach grumbled impatiently. He had been working all day long at the mall. Of course, it was extra busy today so he had barely gotten to have lunch. Even worse was that by the time he was able to take his break, the diner with the coffee he liked had closed. So there he was, hungry and un-caffeinated with a quickly decreasing tolerance for nonsense.

It got old pretty quick. Just sitting there and waiting for the next child to come and sit on your lap. Then having your picture taken and trying to act jollier than you actually are. And then, of course, the dreaded fear of blinking during the flash of the camera, which required you to have to wait even longer for another picture. In theory, it sounded fun but it turned into more of a task than a moment of happiness with each passing family.

He didn't even want this job. He was perfectly content sitting at home in his recliner, watching mindless TV for hours. Unfortunately his wife, Ruth, had gotten ahold of a newspaper ad looking for individuals to act as Santa Claus in a holiday exhibit at the mall. She encouraged him to the point where he couldn't exactly decline. So there he was, working every day as a Santa Claus for minimum wage. At least it had gotten Ruth to let up about keeping him on a diet. And even better than that, he had been getting away with not having to trim his beard. That aside, he wasn't exactly seeing the point to it all.

"Why, why, why??" he thought to himself as he put the red hat onto his head again and walked back inside. His five-minute break was over and he was trying his best to channel his inner "jolly" side but was having a difficult time finding it.

*And leave your door upon the latch
For whosoever comes;
The poorer they, more welcome give,
And scatter out your crumbs.*

He walked through the sliding

doors and turned left at the corner. It didn't take long before he heard his pseudo-name being called. "Ho, Ho, Ho," he chuckled in his best impersonation. He walked towards the "North Pole," passed through the candy-cane gates and climbed up the stairs covered in fake snow and glitter to his chair. He plopped down onto the red pillow and straightened his suit as he took another moment to mentally prepare himself for the last few hours of the night.

At the edge of the gate stood Santa's "elves." In reality, they were just a bunch of high school students trying to earn a bit of extra money for the holiday season.

"Oh to be young again," Lewis thought to himself as he watched them interacting with the children. The teenagers seemed to have as much, if not more, energy than the children themselves. "But they are all corrupted generations anyways," he sighed as he watched the babies in their strollers playing on iPads.

"You ready, Santa?" said an approaching voice. Lewis looked up from putting on his gloves to see a young lady named Kate standing in front of him. Kate was a senior in high school and had been working as an elf every holiday season for the past four years. She always seemed so full of light and genuinely happy.

"Doing my best to hang in there," Lewis replied with a grunt and a sigh. "Well, I know sometimes I need a little bit of liquid motivation and I thought maybe you could use some too," Kate said as she held out a cup of coffee towards Lewis. "I wasn't sure if you took it with cream and sugar so I figured black would be the safest bet. I hope that's alright," Kate said, with a hesitant smile.

Lewis was taken aback. This was the last thing he was expecting. Never being the best at expressing his gratitude, he held out his hand, took the coffee and thanked her politely. He sat in his chair and took a sip. He was beside himself at Kate's selflessness and thoughtfulness. "Just maybe," Lewis pondered, "Maybe they aren't all corrupted."

*All have to spare, none are too poor,
When want with winter comes;
The loaf is never all your own,
Then scatter out the crumbs.*

The children came and sat upon his lap. Some nervous with tears, some giddy with joy. "Ho, Ho, Ho," and "What are you asking Santa for this year?" Lewis said without even thinking. He was used to the typical responses these days. Maybe an iPad or some video game, maybe some Legos. The occasional child was super ambitious, maybe asking for a pony or a puppy. There were also practical children, asking for new reading books or colored pencils. And then there was the handful that stuck in your mind forever.

He walked up alone as his mother waited by the gates with a sleeping baby in a stroller. Quietly and calmly he sat on Lewis' lap. "Hi Santa, my

name is Patrick," the little boy said shyly.

"Well hello there, Patrick. What are you asking Santa for this year?" Lewis replied. Patrick looked at him with his soft brown eyes and began speaking with wisdom beyond his years.

"Santa, I've been waiting a long time to see you. Mom didn't want to wait because my baby sister is getting hungry but I just had to talk to you before Christmas. You see, I didn't get a chance to send you a letter this year because I couldn't figure out what I wanted to ask for. I've thought about it and thought about it and last night, when I was going to bed, I finally decided. I know this may sound silly to you, but what I really wish for this Christmas is a pair of pajamas to wear to bed. Mine have grown too small now and have gotten too many holes. They don't keep the warmth in anymore and sometimes I shiver and it wakes my baby sister."

Lewis looked at the boy and was filled with compassion. His request was so well thought out and evident of his family's challenges that Lewis felt moved with mercy, though he could not break character. "Well, Patrick, I am sure that you have been a very good boy this year and I think your wish is something that Santa is going to be able to fulfill."

Patrick wrapped his arms around Lewis' neck and thanked him sweetly before heading back to the gate and meeting his mother. They walked off together towards the exit. Lewis finished out the evening. Seeing dozens of children and hearing their Christmas wishes but none stuck in his mind the way that Patrick did.

"Lord," he prayed, "Please give me a chance to make this boy's wish come true."

By the time the night had ended, Lewis was exhausted—even with the cup of coffee Kate had bought him. He helped clean up and then changed back into his normal clothing. He walked out into the parking lot. The snow was still falling slowly and softly. He shuffled to his car, being careful not to slip. In the process, he heard voices coming from another car in the parking lot and looked over to see the little boy, Patrick and his mother and sister.

Lewis approached them tenderly. "Excuse me, do you need help with something?" Lewis asked politely. "I, uh, yeah, I can't seem to get my car to start. I'm not sure what's wrong. It may just need to be jumped," the woman replied, startled but receptive.

"Let me help you with that," Lewis mentioned as he went to get his car. He pulled up in front of her and opened both of the hoods to their cars and then connected the wires here and there. Soon enough, the car was running once again. The woman thanked him sweetly as the children slept in the back seat. She got into her car ready to leave.

"Um, I'm sorry, excuse me, miss?" Lewis said. "Would it be possible for



you to wait here for just a few minutes? I have something I want to give you."

Lewis didn't even wait for a reply. He was off, rushing back inside the mall and going into the first department store he could find realizing this was the opportunity he had asked for. He grabbed a few pairs of fleece pajamas in multiple sizes, some for Patrick and some for his sister. He went to the check out line and grabbed a gift card, paid, and then headed back out into the parking lot. Much to his surprise, the woman had waited. Lewis approached the car again with a bag full of pajamas and with the gift card in hand.

He leaned forward and whispered as to not wake the children, "Please tell them these are from Santa. There are pajamas for them to grown into as well." Tears filled the woman's eyes as she took Lewis' hands in hers. "You have made their Christmas dreams come true," she said with a soft smile.

They drove off and Lewis watched them fade into the snowy distance. He reached into his pocket and pulled out his cellphone, dialing his house's phone number. Ruth answered.

"Ruth," Lewis said, "I need you to get ready. I will be coming home soon and I will need your assistance. Can you please print out a list of all

of the assistance shelters, orphanages, and transitional homes within the area? I think there is a need for cozy pajamas."

Lewis went back inside and cleared out sections of pajamas in all sizes across the department store. He swung by his house and picked up Ruth. They spent the rest of the evening traveling to various locations and passing out pajamas to men, women, and children.

When morning came, Lewis was off to work again. When he entered the mall, he was already in his Santa attire and carrying boxes of hot chocolate, coffee, donuts, and bagels.

Kate approached him with a smile across her face. "Mr. Lewis" she said "what finally got you into the holiday spirit?" He looked up at her, filled with his own sense of jolliness. "It took me sometime but I learned from others that the holidays are about compassion and ultimately, about scattering your crumbs."

*Soon winter falls upon your life,
The day of reckoning comes:
Against your sins, by high decree,
Are weighed those scattered crumbs.
-Alfred Crowquill*

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ARTS

Jingles the Elf

The Way Off Broadway Dinner Theatre, the Frederick area's only year-round producing theatre, will add a new holiday production to its Children's Theatre collection this year with the premiere of the musical comedy *The Great Elf Adventure*. Over the years, many adaptations of holiday stories have appeared on the WOB stage including Mr. Willowby's Christmas Tree, *Frosty the Snowman*, 'Twas the Night Before Christmas, and *Clara and the Nutcracker Prince*. *The Great Elf Adventure* is a brand new, entirely original production based on one of the most popular characters to appear at the theatre, *Jingles the Elf*.

For thirteen years, the most popular annual event at Way Off

Broadway has been *Breakfast with Santa* (and Mrs. Claus). For thirteen years, *Jingles the Elf* has always made an appearance becoming an audience favorite. For the 2015 Christmas season, the theatre's producers decided it was finally time for *Jingles* to have a show all of his own.

In *The Great Elf Adventure*, when the mischievous *Jingles the Elf* misses his sleigh ride back to the North Pole on Christmas Eve, he finds himself stranded and looking for a way home. Along the way, he meets characters that neither he, nor the audience, will ever forget in this hilarious holiday MIS-adventure.

"Year after year, people call and ask if *Jingles* will be at *Breakfast with Santa*," says Justin M. Kiska, the theatre's President and Man-

aging Director, and the creator of *The Great Elf Adventure*. "He has become a holiday staple here at Way Off Broadway. Last year, we decided to write an entire show based on *Jingles* and the trouble he gets into."

The Great Elf Adventure runs from November 21st – December 27th, with performances every Saturday afternoon and the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month. Doors open each day at 11:30 a.m. for lunch with the show beginning at 12:30 p.m. All tickets are \$17 per person and include lunch and the show.

For additional information about any of Way Off Broadway's productions or events, visit www.wayoffbroadway.com. To purchase tickets, contact the theatre's Box Office at 301.662.6600.

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Smoke on the Mountain



Cast of *Smoke on the Mountain* - (standing from left to right) Norm Gibat, Joshua Flanick, Anne Perry, Steve Hess, Annabelle Perry, (seated from left to right) Kathy Jenkins, Travis Sanders, Harriette Matthews. Missing from our picture is Lori Hockley.

**Kelli Donaghue
Thurmont Thespians**

Some sequels really are as good as the first, and this is one of them. Well, we surely hope you agree! The entire cast of *Smoke on the Mountain*, performed in April 2014 by the Thurmont Thespians, has come together to perform its sequel, *The Sanders Family Christmas*, written by Connie Ray & conceived by Alan Bailey. Please pass the word all around the town as we prepare to do something that hasn't been done in a while -- perform the show in the sanctuary of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, 15 N. Church St., Thurmont.

The Thurmont Thespians have been using the American Legion Auditorium, on Park Lane, for their main stage productions for many years now. The earliest shows, however, were done in the church where they practice, as Thurmont Thespians is an outreach ministry of St. John's. "It just makes sense to give it a whirl and hold this show in the church. We don't have to build sets, change sets, and best of all, we don't have to tear down sets when it closes." "Thurmont Thespians, has been my church since 2007 when I happened upon their NUNSENSE audition and was cast as Sr. Robert Anne," says Kelli Donaghue, the show's director. "When many decisions in life can be tough, this was not. Let's hold it in the church." The cast had been asking Kelli on a very, VERY regular basis, as to when they could do another "Smoke" show.

Donaghue met with friend and mentor Beth Royer Watson, President & Founder of TT, as she does quite routinely. At the end of August, an email was sent to "the SMOKERS" about

all their questioning. At the end of September, the meeting was held, wherein Marrie Sanders was signed on as Co-Director. Practices have been running rather smoothly ever since October 1.

The doors of St. John's Lutheran swing wide on open hinges, just like those at Mt. Pleasant Baptist, just west of Hickory, NC where this story takes place. Pastor Oglethorpe has invited the Sanders family to his church hoping to bring his tiny congregation a bit into the "modern world". Mt. Pleasant's principal industries are farming and pickle production --everyone and everything smell of vinegar and dill.

We will entertain the congregation with some simple & simply great, toe-tapping, foot stomping bluegrass/gospel mix of music. We tell the story of The Sanders Family Singers as they meet with their friend, Pastor Oglethorpe on Christmas Eve, 1941, just eighteen days after Pearl Harbor & FDR's declaration of the war. The Sanders family has been given two gifts - music & witness. According to some, they like to talk -- a lot! And, just like now, with wartime issues at hand, Christmastime has the ability to bring kinfolk together.

The shows will be held the first 2 weekends in December; December 4, 5, 6 & December 11, 12, 13. Friday & Saturday evening shows will be at 7:30pm & Sunday shows will be matinees at 2pm.

Season ticket holders will be gifted this show with their membership and will have first choice of seating. All other tickets are only \$15 each and are general seating. No reservations taken and cash/check payment only please. In all the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, we hope that you can take a bit of time to join us, sit back, relax and enjoy a good-old fashioned sing-fest. We think you'll be tickled & "pickled" that you did.

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Christmas inspiration

Jack Williams
MSM Class of 2017

What a month! This past November did not have a week without a local art-related activity. This speaks to how much our community values the importance of art, and creative expression. I certainly did not expect this commitment when I first took this job; but from talking with some of you, and hearing your impetus for engaging in captivating art, I feel incredibly grateful for this opportunity. Gratitude is a hallmark emotion of the Christmas season, as well as feelings of inspiration.

This month, I would like to try something different. There are even more local art events which celebrate the spirit of the season, and I will give you all the background information needed for each one. But I would also like to give attention to events that are not art-related. Why? Even in these types of events, we can find the inspiration needed to create our own artwork, or reinvigorate the occasionally banal moments of our everyday lives. Whether you are an artist, or an everyday go-getter looking for local Christmas events for your own entertainment, this article is for you.

It would be unfair, however, if I did not congratulate the successes of the groups I spoke about last month. The Thurmont Thespians put on a widely loved rendition of God's Favorite, and I am grateful it was received so warmly. The Thespians put an incredible amount of effort into this show. They have an upcoming Christmas special as well! I will offer more details on that in the later part of the article.

The Mount St. Mary's Fall Showcase was also a huge hit, with university and non-university crowds alike. The three part event featured a night of grand opera, a wind ensemble concert, and the stage show, Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind. If you would like a more in-depth look into this showcase, feel free to read my coverage of the event on the Emmitsburg Arts Scene website. You can find the URL at the end of the article.

For those of you looking for some art-related events to get into the Christmas spirit, there is no better place to start than A Christmas Carol. A Christmas Carol is arguably the go-to Christmas tale, the go-to Christmas work of art. There are other great ones, of course, but this is the Christmas story against which all others are compared. I read a commentary on Charles Dickens back at my old college, and I remember two interesting tidbits about A Christmas Carol that might interest you.

The first was that this story was written incredibly quickly, by the

standards of other classical novels and novellas. For context, Vladimir Nabokov's Lolita, one of the most beautifully written books I have read, took him five years to create. But A Christmas Carol? Only two months. Dickens began working on the manuscript in October, finished it in late November, and published it a week before Christmas. And speaking of publishing, Dickens received no financial help from his any of his publishers. They were skeptical of investing in this book, so Dickens wrote, edited and published A Christmas Carol all on his own.

If you're interested in seeing A Christmas Carol during this month, apart from the 1951 Scrooge (which is the best film adaptation of the story), I would highly recommend heading to the Majestic Theatre in Gettysburg. The Totem Pole Playhouse, the group responsible for this year's showing, has been performing A Christmas Carol since 1987. They returned from hiatus last year, putting on a remarkable display of acting skill and dramatic tension. You can expect an absolutely excellent performance from this group.

There will be shows every day between December 10 and December 20. On the weekdays, and on Sundays, there is one showing at 2:00 p.m. On the Fridays and Saturdays between these dates, shows begin at 8 p.m. And on Saturday, December 19, there will be two showings, one at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. respectively.

If you are looking for a different play besides A Christmas Carol, head on over to St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thurmont for the Sanders Family Christmas special, put on by the Thurmont Thespians. This play is a follow-up from the pop-

ular play Smoke on the Mountain, and what you will find in this one is a play which incorporates Southern Gospel Christmas songs. I have not seen this play myself, but knowing the Thespians, you can expect this play to be worth your time.

The Thespians will be showing this exhibition during the first two weekends of December, the dates being the 4-6th and the 11-13th. Showtimes are 7:30 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, and 2 p.m. on Sunday.

St. John's Church, additionally, has a harp concert, open to all, scheduled on Sunday December 20. Expect to hear some fantastic Christmas music performed by harpists Sally Lay and Elizabeth Allen. Best of all, it's free for everyone. To those of you who don't know, St. John's Lutheran Church is located at 8619 Blacks Mills Road in Thurmont.

Another concert locally available is the Maryland Symphony Orchestra's "Home for the Holidays" event. Music director Elizabeth Schulze will be leading the orchestra, and welcoming special guests Candice Mowbray on guitar, the vocalist Raychel Harvey-Jones, Hagerstown Choral Arts and the Williamsport High School Choir for an evening of wonderful symphonies and music applicable to all. If you would like to attend this event, expect such highlights as White Christmas, It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year, Gloria, and What Child is This. This event will take place on Saturday, December 12 at 7 p.m., and December 13 at 3 p.m., both of which will be held 30 West Washington Street in Hagerstown.

There are other Christmas events which could offer you all some much needed inspiration this time of year. Sticking with



Thurmont for a moment, there is a whole Christmas extravaganza scheduled for Saturday, December 5 starting at 10 a.m. This is a fantastic event for the whole family; Santa will be stopping by, so make sure your children have their wish lists ready! This entire day has just about every single thing you would associate with a small town Christmas celebration: Santa, caroling, grand prizes, hot cider and cookies, and tree lightings. ESP Performing Company, located out of Thurmont, will also be putting on a show for attendees. It is a great way to celebrate with the community, and support local businesses who help put on the event.

The highlight for all the kids of all ages in Emmitsburg is the 27th Annual Evening of Christmas Spirit. Lighting on the town Christmas Tree takes place on the Square at 6 pm followed 2 hours of Christmas music, complementary food, hayrides and a live nativity at the Carriage House Inn.

If you are looking to mix up your regular routine around this time of year, why not stop by The Monterey Pass Battlefield Park & Museum in Waynesboro? They will be celebrating the season in an interesting, educational, family friendly way. Take your children to an educational Christmas celebration, activities of which include children's craft corner, Christmas storytelling, Victorian Era Christmas music, refreshments, and the history of Santa Claus. The whole museum will be decorated in the Victorian Era fashion of Christmas. Best of all, the event is free and open to the public!

I hope that this variety of options to celebrate the Christmas season will help instill the feelings of inspiration and gratitude that this day brings. Merry Christmas everyone!

To read other articles by Jack Williams visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net, or emmitsburgartscene.wordpress.com.

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SPORTS

Catoctin women's soccer

Michael Donahue

It may not feel like it yet, however the fall has come to an end. Sadly, with a quick end to the season, both the ladies' and the men's soccer teams went down in the first round of the playoffs. The Lady Cougars traveled down route 140 to North Carroll for what could be described as a revenge game.

Earlier in the season, North Carroll had made a two goal comeback to tie the game before scoring on a last-second penalty kick to steal the game from the Cougars, just seconds before the match ended. Now, with a chance for redemption, Catoctin took on the opportunity with their heads held high. However, on a fairly warm night for November, the Cougars struggled. They could not push the pace down the wings and North Carroll was able to strike on the counter attacks. The Lady Cougars were not able to generate enough for a win. Taylor Crum was the main striker and was trying her heart out. Every time the ball passed midfield, she was on attack. However, the offense could only muster one goal when Kristen Fox scored. The Lady Cougars fell short 3-1.

Looking at the season as a whole, the Cougars were able to accomplish a

few of their goals. While they fell short of a 500% record, they were extremely close in a few matchups. The Oakdale game was a match in particular where the Cougars played extremely well against a 3A school. While they did not get the result they may have hoped for, the Cougars learned from this game and showed their newfound knowledge throughout the remainder of the season. It will also continue to show next year when these women continue grow as a team.

The same holds true with the men. While one may look just at their winless record and judge them, I would ask they understand the facts first. Catoctin this season was extremely young. They had a sophomore captain and a few freshman or first year players on the varsity roster. Obviously, this formula is going to bring a few growing pains. If this team can stay together, it has the potential to be great a few years down the line. Currently, the goal was and still should be growth. Every practice and match has a lesson. Learn from them and grow as a team, a unit. We will see Catoctin as a fitter and stronger team on the pitch next year.

Now, it is time to look ahead to the winter. Both the women and the

men will be headed from the pitch to the court for the winter season. The women will look to grow this season after an impressive year which was cut short with a first round playoff exit. In an interview with Amy Entwistle, the coach for the Catoctin Lady Cougars, she spoke highly of her team. She has aspirations of "shocking the county" and building on last year's success. However, the Lady Cougars understand Rome was not built in a day and they recognize their first step is to build through practice.

"Our practices are intense and we expect hard work," said Entwistle while she talked about her admiration for her team. "The first few weeks are great; I love them. It is a time to go back to the basics and fundamentals. Every girl is working for their spot on the team." Catoctin has tremendous depth this season in each position on the floor. There is a possibility the starting five will change with every start.

This year will also be one of the few times where the Cougars will be able to play two true forwards with height. This height will add to their half-court offense when the Cougars need to slow the game down. Currently, the game plan for the Lady Cougars is to push the pace on offense and have an attitude on defense. Entwistle spoke of her game plan "we want to play tenacious defense. We are going to put our hands in their pockets and force turnovers." From there, the Lady Cougars hope to score quickly on the break. On offense, they want the easy points in transition.

On the floor for the Cougars, Hannah Gray, a 5'10 senior, will look to continue her dominance in the paint. Last season, Gray was a huge component to the Cougars inside offense. Most games, she led the team in scoring as well as rebounds. This coming year, she will be able to open up more offensively with the help of a few quick guards and fresh height besides her in the paint.

One guard, Taylor Crum, the same woman who played so well for the women's soccer team, will hopefully bring her speed and offensive prowess from the pitch to the court. While the Cougars do not have a true starting five set for the season at the time of print, one thing is for sure. The Lady Cougars will be putting their hardest working and most tenacious players on the floor for the tip-off.

The first month, as well as the entire season, will be a tough one for the Cougars because they have moved to the CMC (Central Maryland County). They open against Williamsport, a team who had their number last season and the opponent who eliminated the Cougars from the playoffs, as well as two 3A teams. Boonsboro, who beat the Cougars 45-44 when a buzzer beater failed to fall for the



The Catoctin women's soccer team celebrates the end of what all considered to be an excellent season.

Cougars, is also an opponent.

"As a coach, this is great," continued Amy Entwistle, "each game is a chance to test ourselves." However, Catoctin still needs your encouragement. Come out and support the team. The Lady Cougars open their season against Williamsport on December 8 and play Linganore on the 11 and Boonsboro on the 22.

The men will be looking to grow from last year. They struggled throughout the season and things will remain just as tough with the move to the CMC. The men will start the season the same night as the women when they head east to take on the FSK Eagles. Catoctin will start with a hard stretch of games throughout December. Similar to the women, they will matchup against two 3A teams. However, Catoctin will also see some fresh faces throughout December. Last season, they did not play their first four opponents. Boonsboro, the first common opponent between the two seasons, will be a true test for the Cougars. They lost to Boonsboro 47-42 at home, however, this time they will travel to Warrior county.

The women and men are both primed and ready to head into opening day. It will be interesting, as it always is, to see how the new faces can mix with the varsity veterans and how the teams will fare over the year. Well, I will you see you courtside, December 8th, for the ladies' matchup with Williamsport.

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MOUNTS SPORTS

Mayhem in December

Brian Vogelgesang
MSM Class of 2016

The month of December is jam-packed with exciting sports events. It is truly the season to be jolly and that includes getting revved up for Mount sports. Mount St. Mary's University is bringing forth their very best in the month of December. Whether it is men's basketball or women's swimming, the Mount is surely going to rock the competition.

Women's swimming is creating a whirlpool of success as their program proceeds to the Franklin and Marshall Invitational with a record of 4-1. This is the most success Mount swimming has seen in a while as a whole unit. The ladies set a new standard for future seasons by dominating the first four weeks of their schedule undefeated.

When asked about their recent success head coach Neil Yost attributed some of the success to the team's depth this year saying, "the new depth has brought a variety of talents that we can use in different ways. We are now more competitive in events we already found success in, and in addition to the continuing progress in previously successful events, have gained some strength in events such as the breaststroke and freestyle. Our returning swimmers have also stepped up their game this year to add to the victorious start to this season."

One particular standout swimmer has been Amanda Moore. Moore, a junior at MSMU, commented on what has given the swim team the power needed to propel forward as a dominating squad, "The whole team mentality has changed. Two key factors to create this change have been the practices and strength-training program. The new strength coach has really helped improve our team this year."

Mount St. Mary's University women's swimming is beginning to realize their full potential as the season progresses. With each win, the ladies seem to gain an increase in confidence and continue to strive for their very best. Though the team does not have any meets during December, they just competed in a tough Franklin and Marshall Invitational and will resume their swim season on January 16 at Duquesne.

One aspect of all Mount sports is their Catholic identity. Coach Yost hinted to the swim team's strong faith when saying, "We are lucky and blessed for each success we earn throughout the season."

The Catholic identity of the team can be seen in all of the sports teams at the Mount. The teams embrace the privilege of competing at such high level with a strong and humble faith in God. Mount St. Mary's swimming absolutely reveals this Catholic identity when competing in their events. The Mount swim team is also accompanied, faithfully, this winter season by a stellar men's basketball program.

Men's Basketball is lacing up their shoes for what it is expected to be a tough start to their 2015-2016 season. The Mountaineers face some great competition in the upcoming weeks. Some of these big name schools include James Madison, Bucknell, and

Lehigh. Though these teams are difficult opponents, the players and coaches remain optimistic. Mount men's basketball is always striving to compete at their highest level of basketball. This constant pursuit of greatness is what helps to define Mount St. Mary's men's basketball. The players are coached to be excellent at what they do.

Head coach Jamion Christian stated in an interview, "We always want to remain reaching our full potential, doing everything we are capable of doing." With this philosophy, Coach Christian intends to lead the mountaineers step by step to the Big Dance. With this ambitious goal set, the men's basketball team has a steady focus on the next game. It is this mentality that will lead them in meeting their goals.

The Mountaineers pursue their season with confidence. The men's basketball team has made some adjustments since last year, such as their focus on the offensive part of the game. Coach Christian explained that though this may allow for some points to be scored against the Mount's defense, what they hope is that offense will be able to score that much more.

Some nice additions have been made to the team within the past year. Eli Long, a freshman from John Carroll high school, is expected to have a noticeable impact. Along with Long, some returning players have significantly improved since last year such as Will Miller and Brian Ash. Coach Christian commented that these two players are "in their prime." He also explained "we haven't seen the best from Greg Graves and Taylor Danaher." The impact the players have will definitely be seen in the upcoming games.

In the beginning of December, the Mount has two major conference games against American and Loyola. The first game against American, on December 1, will be a great game to watch. The Mountaineers lost to American last year with of 46-45. The team is hungry for the win after losing such a close game. The men are also in pursuit of Loyola when they play them on December 5. Though unlike American, the Mount beat Loyola last year and hopes to continue their success this year.

The game does not just stop with the men. Mount St. Mary's University women's basketball has a month filled with action as they prepare to play to big games against Virginia Tech, Pittsburgh, and Loyola. Loyola, being a conference game, should be expected to bring the heat. The Mountaineers lost to the LU Wolves last year with a final score of 56-49. Though this loss was tough to swallow, the ladies have been training hard and are prepared to take on this tough Loyola team. The game will be played on December 5. In addition to the game against Loyola, the Mountaineers will play Howard (December 12) and Niagara (December 29). Both of these games will be played at home in the PNC Arena.

In addition to the upcoming games in December, the Mount men's rugby just won their conference tournament, propelling them forward in pursuit of the National Championship.

Nick Maffei, a junior prop, spoke of the tourney, "Mount St. Mary's men's rugby competed in the Potomac Rugby Conference tournament this weekend. On Saturday, #1 Mount faced #4 American University, who MSMU had beaten in their previous encounter 66-5. The match began slowly for the Mount but they found their groove to the tune of the final score line of 73-1."

"On Sunday morning, the Mount faced a tough, physical Catholic team who tested them all throughout the park, but the Mount found the resilience to end up on top to the tune of 41-21, which allowed the Mount rugby to take the tournament."

Tito Miranda, C'15, commented on the match against American, "I thought we started out a bit flat against American U, and really began to find our rhythm the second half. When we got the ball to the outside, we scored every time. I was able to poach the ball from the ruck twice with support from my teammates and created turnovers that helped lead us to tries. It was a great feeling to be able to get over their rucks and win us great turnover ball."

The team has fought hard the entire fall season to achieve this title. The strength of Mount rugby was expressed well by senior Travis Bewley, as he spoke of the game against Catholic University in the conference tourney, "we faced a physical Catholic U side who was extremely motivated to take it to us. We came out a bit flat-footed and it was close at first. There were a series of yellow cards and at one point, we were down two men, playing 13 on 15 rugby. We had to come together as a team and really persevere against adversity. We scored three back-to-back tries to start the second half. I thought Catholic had tested us beyond what we had seen so far this season in all aspects, but we found a way to win and win convincingly."

This is men's rugby's third year reaching this point in competition and they are very excited to continue the success in the spring. The men's rugby program along with the rest of Mount sports strive for excellence, something that is embraced by the whole Mount community.

Excellence is something that every athlete strives for and has been displayed throughout all the teams listed here. Rugby and swimming authenticate this through their play which shown by their impressive records. The Mount basketball programs especially show these strives for excellence as they, a small college team, compete in the highest division in college basketball.

The Mount sports community pours their hearts and souls into what they do and always appreciate the opportunity to perform and display their pursuit for greatness. The Mount's 4 pillars of faith, leadership, discovery, and community that which the people of the Mount strive to uphold throughout their daily lives embrace this journey towards excellence. This excellence is seen in Mount athletics and it reflects the excellence that Mount St. Mary's University as a whole institution hopes to share with its surrounding communities.



BK Ash goes up for a dunk against Maryland on Nov. 17.



Junior Robinson dribbles the ball down the court while playing Maryland at the Xfinity Center in College Park.

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COMPLEMENTARY CORNER

Faith

Renee Lehman

Last month's article dealt with how the world can distract us with fear, anger, hostility, and anguish; yet it is our job to quiet our fearful mind and listen to what our Heart is saying about loving. We must remember to always send ourselves a positive message and keep our Heart clear and loving. The possibilities are endless when we come from a place of unconditional love.

Then recently there have been multiple terrorist attacks. How, you may say, can you keep your Heart open to love? How can you have hope for the future and positive possibilities? By having FAITH! Faith in something bigger than yourself, and that there is a spiritual purpose for all things.

First, let's differentiate between belief and faith. Merriam-Webster's dictionary defines Belief as a conviction of the truth of some statement or the reality of some being or phenomenon especially when based on examination of evidence. Whereas, Faith is defined as a firm belief in something for which there is no proof or complete trust.

To further differentiate belief from faith, belief is a product of our mind. Our beliefs are usually deeply rooted in our culture and upbringing. Our beliefs can also be narrowly focused,

based on our life experiences. And a belief, just because it has been handed down to us from our elders, is not necessarily true even though we think it is. Or more noticeably, a belief is not necessarily the only truth.

Changing our minds means changing at least some aspect of our beliefs. As Rea Nolan Martin stated in an article about Belief and Faith, "Beliefs are a product of the mind, but faith is not. Faith is a product of the spirit. The mind interferes in the process of faith more than it contributes to it. To have faith in the worst of times will no doubt require us to silence, or at least quiet, the mind. Faith is what happens when our beliefs run aground. The spirit can be buoyed by our beliefs, but can also be brought down by them when they prove inadequate, as they most certainly will at some point in the journey. Even the beliefs humans have held most closely have come and gone over the course of a lifetime or a millennium. Think of Galileo."

So, beliefs come and go. Faith does not. Faith is a way of being. Faith is similar to love in that it is an act. It involves trusting something unseen, and trusting beyond all rational reason. It is best achieved when you are actively demonstrating it. Historically, we humans have been given many opportunities to demonstrate our faith!

From a Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) perspective, belief is a product of the rational Mind. The rational Mind has desires and inten-

tions. It creates thoughts (through your beliefs) which create emotions. Faith is a product of our intuitive Mind. The intuitive Mind is meant to be our primary source for guidance. Faith is our path to the Heavens and to the Universe! What do I mean by this?

In a TCM perspective, at the highest level (spiritual level), everything happens for a reason. Secondly, everything is for good. We are all born children of the Universe. We were born into today's society, not hundreds of years ago. Inside each one of us is the strength to handle everything that comes into our lives. The secret to living fully and fearlessly in our society is FAITH! Each of us must have faith that we are children of the Universe and that we have the ability to handle anything!

For example, I think that farmers exhibit great amounts of faith. They plant a seed, and have faith that there will be enough rain, sun, and warmth for the crop to grow so that they can sell it to provide a living for their families. Could you, would you, have the faith it takes to be a farmer?

When we are in the middle of a life crisis, it is impossible to KNOW with our rational Mind what God and/or Universe is really asking of us. The truth is, our rational Mind doesn't have to know! It doesn't matter. Our intuitive Mind, which is where faith comes from, will help us to stay open and teachable. Faith is an act of accepting "not-knowing." As Rea No-



lan Martin once said, "Knowing does not create faith. Unknowing does."

So, when it comes to recent life events, evaluate your beliefs. What are these beliefs based upon? Are they really true? Is it possible to change the angle from which you are viewing these events? Can you attach no positive or negative meaning to this event? Have Faith that whatever is happening has a purpose. Keep fear out by allowing Faith to fill in the cracks of your understanding of the situation. Remember that Faith is an act of ac-

cepting that you do not "KNOW" the purpose of the situation. In time, the purpose will be made clear. It may not be in your lifetime, but have Faith that at some point in time, the situation will be clearly understood.

Finally, with regard to recent events, as Susan L. Taylor said, "Seeds of faith are always within us; sometimes it takes a crisis to nourish and encourage their growth." Also, as Mahatma Gandhi stated, "You must not lose faith in humanity. Humanity is an ocean; if a few drops of the ocean are dirty, the ocean does not become dirty."

More quotes about faith:

"Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase."

Martin Luther King, Jr.

"Faith is an oasis in the heart which will never be reached by the caravan of thinking."

Khalil Gibran

"Faith consists in believing when it is beyond the power of reason to believe."

Voltaire

"Faith Is Seeing Light With Your Heart When All Your Eyes See Is Darkness."

Unknown

Renee Lehman is a licensed acupuncturist and physical therapist with over 25 years of health care experience. Her office is located at 249B York Street in Gettysburg. She can be reached at 717-752-5728.

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FITNESS AND HEALTH

Keep moving Thanksgiving and Christmas temptations

Linda Stultz
Certified Fitness Trainer/
Fitness Therapist

It seems that everywhere you go over the holidays there is some type of candy, baked goods or some new food item that is just calling out your name. I don't want you to be so self-conscious or anxious about trying new things or eating too much that you don't enjoy the festive season but the thing to be aware of is how often you are eating and how much you are sampling. If you know you will be attending an event that will be well stocked with tempting treats think ahead about having a little healthy snack before you go and be selective about what you try at the event.

Maybe, if the host is a friend or family member, you could ask for a sample to take home if there is something you really want to try but you know you have already over tried your limit. If you don't feel comfortable asking for a sample you could ask for the recipe. People are always flattered if someone thinks their dish is worth getting the recipe. Another idea is to take a walk or do a little extra time on the bike or treadmill if you know you will be tempted to overeat later that day or even workout for a few days if you will be attending a family dinner that you always need to loosen your belt after eating.

Don't be fooled by thinking that an extra mile or two or an extra fifteen minutes will burn up all the calories you may be consuming. I don't want to discourage you from doing a little extra but those calories accumulate a lot faster than they burn off. I always tell my clients that the weight gained after a big meal at a special event or holiday is not true weight gain. You gained a few pounds because you are eating different types and amounts of food than you usually consume. Get right back on your regular eating and exercising schedule and you will drop those extra pounds quickly.

I am also not telling you to just eat whatever you want if you do some extra exercise because that will only result in upset later when you get on the scale, get dressed or go to the doctor in January and he tells you that you may want to lose a few pounds. Keeping an eye on your eating and exercise habits is always important but I am trying to give you a heads up that the holidays are always a little overwhelming and I want you to be right back on track when the new year starts that way your New Year's Resolution will be easier to reach in a short

amount of time.

While preparing your own treats you may want to check into exchanges and lower fat and sugar ingredients to use and still maintain that great taste that your family is expecting. Everyone will appreciate you trying to keep the old recipe's taste while trying to watch out for their health and waistline. One thing to remember is many people have allergies to certain foods or especially to sweeteners. Please remember to tell them what you substituted or changed so they will be

able to make the right choice for them.

Remember to Keep Moving and the holidays will not be so hard to get through. If you have any questions or ideas that I can share for the upcoming issues that will help make the holidays healthier please let me know. Gift certificates are a great gift for that special someone or even for you. Please contact me at 717-334-6009 with any questions or requests for help or in giving someone in your lift the gift of health for the New Year.

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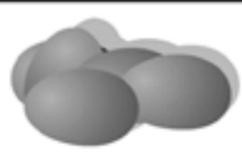
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ASTRONOMY

The night sky of December

Professor Wayne Wooten

For December, the Moon will be last quarter on December 3rd. The waning crescent moon passes two degrees south of Jupiter in the morning sky on December 4th, and occults Mars for southern hemisphere viewers on December 6th. It passes a degree north of Venus on the morning of December 7th. New moon is December 11th, and the waxing crescent moon will be setting about three hours after sunset on December 14th, not a problem for observing the best meteor shower of the year, the Geminids, peaking the following morning.

The first quarter moon is December 18th. The winter solstice occurs at 10:48 p.m. on December 21st, and winter begins on the shortest day of the year. The full moon occurs on Christmas Day, and is the “long night moon”, staying up 14 hours as opposed to the ten hours of daylight we now get. If you stay up to welcome 2016, check out the waning gibbous moon rising 2 degrees north of Jupiter, both rising just before midnight. Great way to ring in 2016.

While the naked eye, dark adapted by several minutes away from any bright lights, is a wonderful instrument to stare up into deep space, far beyond our own Milky Way, binoculars are better for spotting specific deep sky objects. For a detailed map of northern hemisphere skies, about November 30th visit the www.sky-

maps.com website and download the map for December; it will have a more extensive calendar, and list of best objects for the naked eyes, binoculars, and scopes on the back of the map.

Mercury makes an appearance in the evening sky at the end of December, reaching greatest eastern elongation, 20 degrees behind the Sun on December 29. Because it is so far south, it will be hard to spot in the SW evening twilight this time, however. Venus dominates the dawn, with the bright side of the crescent moon passing in front of Venus in the daytime sky, starting at 11:30 a.m. on December 7th, and Venus coming out from behind the dark side of the moon about 1:02 p.m. If you know where to look, this can be observed in broad daylight with the naked eyes and binoculars, and should make for some good telescopic photography.

Mars remains in the morning sky this month, with the moon passing close to it on December 6th. Jupiter has moved into eastern Leo now, and rises about midnight at midmonth. Saturn is lost in the sun's glare all month, to reappear in the dawn sky by January 2016.

The square of Pegasus dominates the western sky. The constellation Cassiopeia makes a striking W in the NW. She contains many nice star clusters for binocular users in her outer arm of our Milky Way, extending to the NE now. Her daughter, An-



On December 14 the Geminids will deliver one of the best meteor showers of the year. You can expect to see as many as 60 meteors per hour, many of them bright.

dromeda, starts with the NE corner star of Pegasus' Square, and goes NE with two more bright stars in a row.

It is from the middle star, beta Andromeda, that we proceed about a quarter the way to the top star in the W of Cassiopeia, and look for a faint blur with the naked eye. M-31, the Andromeda Galaxy, is the most distant object visible with the naked eye, lying about 2.5 million light years distant. Overhead is Andromeda's hero, Perseus, rises. Between him and Cassiopeia is the fine Double Cluster, faintly visible with the naked eye and two fine binocular objects in the same field. Perseus contains the famed eclipsing binary star Algol, where the Arabs imagined the eye of the gorgon Medusa would lie. It fades to a third its normal brightness for six out of every 70 hours, as a

larger but cooler orange giant covers about 80% of the smaller but hotter and thus brighter companion as seen from Earth.

Look at Perseus' feet for the famed Pleiades cluster; they lie about 400 light years distant, and over 250 stars are members of this fine group. East of the seven sisters is the V of stars marking the face of Taurus the Bull, with bright orange Aldebaran as his eye. The V of stars is the Hyades cluster, older than the blue Pleiades, but about half their distance. Their appearance in November in classical times was associated with the stormy season, when frail sailing ships stayed in port. Aldebaran is not a member of the Hyades, but about twice as close as the Hyades; distances in astronomy can be deceiving.

Yellow Capella, a giant star the

same temperature and color as our much smaller Sun, dominates the overhead sky. It is part of the pentagon on stars making up Auriga, the Charioteer (think Ben Hur). Several nice binocular Messier open clusters are found in the winter milky way here. East of Auriga, the twins, Castor and Pollux highlight the Gemini. You can associate the pair with Jason and the Golden Fleece legend, for they were the first two Argonauts to sign up on his crew of adventurers.

South of Gemini, Orion is the most familiar winter constellation, dominating the eastern sky at dusk. The reddish supergiant Betelgeuse marks his eastern shoulder, while blue-white supergiant Rigel stands opposite on his west knee. Just south of the belt, hanging like a sword downward, is M-42, the Great Nebula of Orion, an outstanding binocular and telescopic stellar nursery. It is part of a huge spiral arm gas cloud, with active starbirth all over the place.

Last but certainly not least, in the east rise the hunter's two faithful companions, Canis major and minor. Procyon is the bright star in the little dog, and rises minutes before Sirius, the brightest star in the sky. Sirius dominates the SE sky by 7 p.m., and as it rises, the turbulent winter air causes it to sparkle with shafts of spectral fire. Beautiful as the twinkling appears to the naked eye, for astronomers this means the image is blurry; only in space can we truly see “clearly now”. At 8 light years distance, Sirius is the closest star we can easily see with the naked eye. Below Sirius in binoculars is another fine open cluster, M-41, a fitting dessert for New Year's sky feast.

Meteor Showers in December

- December 10** - Monocerotids: Radiant-- near Gemini. 12 per hour.
- December 11** - Sigma Hydrids: Radiant--near Head. 12 per hour, fast.
- December 14** - Geminids: Radiant--near Castor. 60 per hour, many bright, white but few trails.
- December 14** - Leo Minorids: 10 per hour, somewhat faint.
- December 20** - Delta Arietids: 12 per hour, must view in early evening, before radiant sets.

Farmers' Almanac

“Christmas is the season for kindling the fire of hospitality in the hall, the genial flame of charity in the heart”

—Washington Irving (1783-1859)

Mid-Atlantic Weather Watch: Fair and windy (1, 2, 3, 4) with light snow, some rain in the south (5, 6); fair and very cold (7, 8, 9) with Nor'easter and heavy snow (10, 11) turning fair but rather cold (12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22). More heavy snow in the north (23, 24, 25) returning to fair weather and very cold temperatures (26, 27, 28) and heavy snow (29, 30) fair and rather cold (31).

Full Moon: December's Full Moon occurs on Christmas Day, Friday, December 25th. Many Native Americans referred to it as Cold Moon for obvious reasons! Many other tribes called it Beaver Moon because beavers are most active, scurrying to finish build-

ing their dams and lodges and Ice-Forming Moon when lakes and ponds begin to ice over in most areas during the month.

Special Notes: The Hagerstown Town and Country Almanack wishes everyone the happiest of holidays! As in past years, we thank everyone for their continued support and with that support, The Almanack will surely be there to inform, inspire, and entertain for many years to come. The Almanack makes a great gift for anyone and is a gift that keeps giving throughout the New Year. Simply go to www.almanack.com/order and order a holiday copy or two today to ensure delivery before Christmas. This year, consider volunteering at a local hospital, nursing home, or community shelter. The small gift of your time and attention to those often forgotten during the holidays will be most appreciated.

Holidays: Celebrate Christmas on Friday, December 25th. Plan festi-

ities with family and friends but also plan to keep that joyful and giving spirit alive throughout the coming year. New Year's Eve is Thursday, December 31st. This year, make plans to attend a First Night Celebration and enjoy a safe, family-oriented evening of fun, food, and entertainment on the very first night of the year. Look online at www.firstnight.com/cities to find a celebration nearest you.

The Garden: Rake up all remaining leaves and place them on a compost heap. If left on paths they become a hazard when the colder weather comes. Focus on houseplants this month. Consider starting a really nice indoor herb garden. Mulch perennials for winter. Use herbicide for winter weed when lawns are dormant.

J. Gruber's Thought For Today's Living

“The thought that goes into the giving of a gift to a friend or loved one is so much more important than the value of the gift itself”

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COMPUTER Q&A

Holiday gadget buying guide

Ayse Stenabaugh
Jester's Computer Services

Holidays are stressful enough without having to worry about getting the right gift so we have put together a few tips and tricks to make buying this holiday easier. Don't know what to get the techie that has everything? - we have a few ideas for buying for those who have virtually everything!

Computers

When purchasing a computer this holiday you will want to determine the habits of the person you are seeking a gift for. Are they a gamer? Microsoft Office user? Or just a basic web browser? Determining the gift receiver's needs will help you to choose a computer that will do more than just get them by. Gamers are going to require a higher end video card while Office users are going to need access to their software (Microsoft Office does NOT come with new computers - and must be purchased separately!). Those who are basic browsers won't need much in the way of extras but it's important to be mindful of the processor speed and the amount of memory on any new computer. Be wary of budget computers with Celeron or Atom processors else you may leave your gift recipient wishing that they unwrapped socks instead!

Tablets

When considering purchasing a tablet as a gift ensure that it will meet the needs you are trying to fulfill. Unless you are purchasing a Windows tablet such as a Microsoft Surface it's unlikely that it will perform all of the same functions as a computer. Many budget tablets are available today that lack quality so it's recommended to refer to reviews to determine if the price is worth the potential sacrifice. Another thing to consider is what operating system the tablet should run on. If the gift is for an iPhone user, you will probably want to stick with an iPad so that they can sync their apps and data seamlessly. The same holds true for Android users who will likely appreciate an Android tablet. Windows tablets and Amazon's Kindle are a great option for those who aren't familiar with iOS or Android devices. Ensure that whatever device you choose has enough storage capacity, some devices have the ability to expand with external storage such as SD cards, other devices don't allow you to increase storage space so choose wisely!

Smartphones

Similar to tablets you should try to identify whether the user will find an iPhone, Android or Windows Phone more useful. In fact, its recommend that you determine exactly which phone the user will want prior to purchasing or setting up a new phone since many companies have semi-strict return policies on

new devices. There are lots of new devices on the market all with varying features and storage capacities. Ensure that you are choosing a data plan to go with the phone that will provide enough data to cover the gift receiver's usage!

Tech gift ideas for the person who has everything

So what do you get for the person who seems to have everything? There are lots of new and innovative tech gifts emerging so check out some of the unique gift ideas below.

For the iPad Artist check out Pencil by Fifty Three. This unique stylus works great with the free paper app and many others and is a necessity for any aspiring iPad artist!

For the fitness lover investigate Fitbit or one of the many wearable watches that feature heart rate monitors and sleep trackers!

What about the person who constantly misplaces their gadgets? Checkout Bluetooth tracking devices such as Tile so they can find their devices with ease!

The media lover will enjoy Roku or Amazon Fire Stick which allows users stream internet content to their TV without needing to connect their computer!

For the beginner who has gadgets but doesn't know how to use them yet consider a gift certificate to Jester's Computers for a one-on-one technology class! Classes are available by appointment only and are just \$25 for a one hour session! Call 717-642-6611 to order a gift certificate.

As always for computer repair service and technology advice you can trust contact Jester's Computer Services at 717-642-6611 or visit us on the web at www.jesterscomputers.com



A multi device charging station is perfect for that person who is always connected - especially for those who tend to lose their chargers!

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UPCOMING EVENTS

December 4, 5, 11, & 12
Willow Valley Farm Market's 1st annual Christmas Craft Bazaar.

December 4 & 5
Sixth Annual Gingerbread Celebration and Holiday Mart at HACC's Gettysburg Campus. Enjoy a gallery of gingerbread creations, holiday art mart and activities for families. Bring plenty of quarters to vote for your favorite or bid to take home one of the gingerbread creations. , 731 Old Harrisburg Road, Gettysburg.

December 5
Mother Seton School Breakfast with Santa and Christmas Bazaar. Fill your belly with a delicious pancake breakfast, then walk over to the Christmas Bazaar to shop our crafters and vendors for that unique holiday gift. Santa Claus will be there to take photos with your children, so skip the mall lines and see him here! Admission to the Bazaar is free. For more information call 301-447-3161.

Fourth annual Christmas bazaar at Christ's Community Church. We are located at 303 W. Lincoln Ave., Emmitsburg. The bazaar will have vendors, a silent auction, food and baked goods, free pictures with St. Nick, childcare, and fun for the kids.

St. John's Lutheran Church's Christmas Bazaar and Large Indoor Yard Sale. Join us for delicious soups and sandwiches from our kitchen, you can eat in or carry out...Find many Christmas Gifts and Goodies by the Pound, Cobblers, Candy, Holiday Breads, Pies and Cakes. 8619 Black's Mill Road, Creagerstown. For more information please call 301-898-5167.

St. Mary's Catholic Church's (Fairfield, PA) Old-Fashioned Christmas Bazaar. There will be a huge bake sale, quilt raffle and gifts for all including wreaths, ceramics, stocking stuffers, jewelry, books and authors, framed photography, religious items, handmade purses and activities for children in a Wonderland Vil-

lage. Also Christmas tree sales will take place at the Fairfield Fire house.

Christmas in Thurmont! We will start with a ribbon cutting ceremony at 10am, followed by the arrival of Santa! We will have live entertainment by ESP Performing Company, hot cider, and cookies along with photos with Santa for all ages! Christmas in Thurmont includes the business map stamping activity for adults, grand prize giveaways, caroling, lighting of Lions Club Remembrance Tree, and the lighting of the Town's Christmas Tree!

Elias Lutheran Church's Annual Ham, Turkey and Roast Beef Supper with Christmas Yard Sale & Bazaar. The Supper includes: Filling, gravy, mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, coleslaw, stewed tomatoes, green beans, applesauce and cake. 100 W. North Ave., Emmitsburg, 301-447-6239.

December 5 & 6
The Thurmont Historical Society's

Christmas House Tour - We have four wonderful homes and two churches for a new lower price of \$15. Tickets and information are available at Hobbs' Hardware and Brown's Jewelry.

December 7
Emmitsburg's 27th Annual An Evening of Christmas Spirit.

December 11
20th Annual Gettysburg Tuba Carol Fest. Tuba players from everywhere playing Christmas Carols on "historic" Lincoln Square in Gettysburg. The rain site will be the Prince of Peace Episcopal Church. Lincoln Square. For more information call 717-334-7719.

December 11, 12 & 13
Camp Eder's 5th Annual Christmas Tree Festival. Some new features for this gathering include a horse-drawn carriage, a special presentation by a chalk artist during Friday and Saturday's outdoor candlelight nativity vigil, and several new musical guests. Themed Christmas Trees will be on display all over the property, along with a luminary memorial garden, children's crafts and stories, and a home-cooked full turkey dinner with all the fixings available each evening. Cookie Camp, held at Camp Eder one week earlier, will prepare approximately 300 dozen cookies to serve and sell at the festival. The cookies are always packaged for gift-giving, and of



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Don't Leave town to buy a Christmas gift - Purchase Thurmont Business Bucks!

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2. Purchase a \$25 or \$50 Gift Certificate good in over 30 local businesses!
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Thurmont Business Bucks!
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CHRISTMAS IN THURMONT - Saturday, December 5th starting at 10:00am

TOWN TREE LIGHTING - In Mechanicstown Park, December 5th at 6:30pm

THURMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY HOUSE TOUR

Saturday, December 5th

(Tickets and information available at Hobbs' Hardware and Brown's Jewelry)





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Dec. 5th - 9am to 5pm

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For Tickets Call: Bob Rosensteel at 301-401-7287

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NEW YEAR'S EVE BINGO

Thursday, December 31, 2015

NEW MIDWAY VOL. FIRE CO.

Doors Open at 5:00 PM
Buffet at 6:00 PM - Play Starts at 8:00 PM

Meal Includes: Turkey, Shrimp, Mashed Potatoes & Gravy, Dressing, Green Beans, Coleslaw, Rolls & Butter, Coffee, Tea And Dessert!

30 Games (\$100 Minimum) **Jackpot** (\$1,000)
Tickets: \$45 (In Advance) **\$50** (At The Door)

12019 Woodsboro Pike, New Midway, MD 21775
(On Route 194)

For more info or advance tickets call: Mary or Joe Lenhart
301-898-9161 or 301-898-7985

Proceeds Benefit The New Midway Vol. Fire Company

UPCOMING EVENTS

course, eating! Camp Eder is located on Mt. Hope Rd in Fairfield.

December 12

Catoctin Furnace Historical Society's Christmas at the Furnace. Learn about the tradition of Kris Kringling, who danced, sang, and ate from house to house throughout this ironworkers' village. See the circa 1810 Collier's Log House adorned with natural decorations. Children are invited to make old-fashioned crafts. Sample hot mulled cider and baked treats made with heritage recipes. 12607 Catoctin Hollow Road, Thurmont.

December 13

Sixth Annual Candlelight Christmas

Concert at Trinity Lutheran in Taneytown. A program of music for the Christmas season presented within the beautiful candlelit sanctuary of historic Trinity Lutheran in downtown Taneytown, featuring the members and soloists of the Trinity Lutheran Church Choir, the Senior Singers of Carroll County, the Taneytown Community Chorus, the Trinity hand bell choir. For more information call 410-756-6626.

December 14

Mother Seton School Christmas Program. Come celebrate the joy of Christmas with us! The program will include choral performances from the Mother Seton School Chorus and from indi-

vidual classes, our award-winning band, and a student-produced Christmas play. Call 301-447-3161 or visit www.mothersetonschool.org for more information.

December 19

"Christmas at the Pass" at the Monterey Pass Battlefield Park & Museum located at 14325 Buchanan Trail East, Waynes-

boro. This event is free and is open to the public. We encourage you to bring the whole family! Activities include children's craft corner, Christmas storytelling, Victorian Era Christmas music, refreshments, and the history of Santa Claus. Our museum will be decorated in Victorian Era fashion of Christmas. Outside the museum, on the park grounds, there will be living history vignettes of Civil War soldiers. Be sure to talk with them about what it was like to be away from home and at war during Christmas! New this year is our fruit press, come try your hand and pressing apples to make cider, and for your efforts enjoy a nice mug of warm cider by the fire. We look forward to sharing our Victorian Christmas with you! For more information visit www.monterey-passbattlefield.org.

December 24

Elias Candlelight Christmas Eve Service. Bring the whole family for this traditional Christmas Eve service with hymns and Holy Communion. A cookies and punch reception will follow. This historic Elias church is located at 100 W. North Ave., Emmitsburg. Toms Creek United Methodist Church's Christmas Eve Service. Traditional candlelight service at 7 pm. Traditional candlelight with communion at 11pm.

St. John's Lutheran Church of Creagerstown's Traditional Christmas Eve Worship Service with Communion.

December 31

Gettysburg's New Year's Eve Celebration Entertainment at downtown venues, fireworks and party in Lincoln Square. Lincoln Square, Gettysburg. For more information call 717-334-5006 or visit www.adamsarts.org.

Christmas in Thurmont - Saturday, December 5th

10am: Arrival of Santa at Mechanicstown Park.

10am - 3pm: Pick Up Your Stamping Map on the Square at Mechanicstown Park & visit all businesses to have them stamp your map.

10am - 7pm: Visit The Main Street Center for the Festival of Trees.

Noon: ESP Dance Performance at Studio 15 Water Street.

10am - 1pm: Thurmont Regional Library's annual Holly Jolly Celebration. Enjoy a vintage Santa display, make & take a holiday craft and more. Also a special visit from Mr. & Mrs. Clause at 1 pm!

5pm: Lighting of Thurmont Lions Club Tree.

5:30pm: Prize Drawings at Hobbs Hardware - Caroling and lighting of the Thurmont Town Christmas Tree.

27th Annual
An Evening of Christmas Spirit
Monday December 7th 6:00-9:00

Schedule of Events:

6:00pm - Emmitsburg Tree Lighting Ceremony on the square in Historic Emmitsburg with Santa. Join local Choirs in caroling and Mayor Briggs in the lighting of the town Christmas tree.

6:30pm - Santa Arrives at The Carriage House Inn

7:00 - 9:00pm - Entertainment at Carriage House. Local choirs and vocalists will be featured in Joann's Ballroom. Complimentary hot dogs, cookies, live Nativity, entertainment, & hayrides.

****Canned goods and donations accepted for the Emmitsburg Lions Club Christmas Food Drive.****

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December 2, 7:30 p.m.

Horning Theater, Delaplaine Fine Arts Center

Join our talented music students for a year-end concert of masterworks.

✱

Advent at the Basilica

December 6, 4 p.m.

National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, Emmitsburg

Join the Mount St. Mary's University Chorale as they perform a concert for Advent. Featured on the program is the *Misa Criolla* of Ariel Ramirez, a setting of the mass in Spanish with music inspired by South American folksong.

Also on the program is Benjamin Britten's "Te Deum in C" and Nathaniel Dett's "Ave Maria," as well as an appearance by the MSMU Chamber Singers.

Free admission. For more information call 301-447-5308.

✱

Seminary Open House

December 6, 2-4 p.m. McSweeney Hall, patio entrance

Tours every 20 minutes, light refreshments

Holy Hour: 3-4 p.m.

Advent Lessons and Carols: 4:30-5:30 p.m.

Chapel of the Immaculate Conception

✱

Mass at the National Shrine Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes

December 6, 13, 20, 27, Noon

No Christmas Day Mass

Grotto grounds are open Dec. 25; visitor center, St. Bernadette's Shoppe and chapel are closed.



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www.msmary.edu