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— for the holidays —

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# In this issue...

By **Darin J. McCann**  
Editor

The holidays — particularly at this time of year — can mean a lot of different things to a lot of different people. Or they can mean a lot of things to just one person. Or, they can mean one thing to...

But I digress.

For the sake of what we're trying to achieve with this publication, during this unique time, is to celebrate the fact that holidays can bring us together. We celebrate with family, or friends or people we just meet and forge life-long relations with,

all in the name of the holiday season.

We unite behind religious or cultural commonalities, embrace traditions that have been handed down from generation to generation or, sometimes, create new traditions that the future generations can embrace as their own.

Yes, it is the most magical time of the year, but not because of gluttonous plates of food, stacks of shiny toys under a tree or new outfits that are sure to turn heads. It's magical because we can put aside all the rancor and division we've shown each other all year and just focus on celebrating and re-uniting. Happy Holidays to all of you..

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## Home

— for the holidays —

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On the cover:

The home of Brent and Carol Hurley in Frankford is firmly in the holiday spirit, featuring both warmth and comfort.

■ Susan Lyons





# Popular toys bring old-school charm to the holidays

By **Kerin Magill**  
Staff Reporter

Screens, screens, everywhere screens.

If Christmas morning increasingly brings the opening of boxes bearing the names of top technology companies and video game manufacturers, local toy store owners may have what it takes to reset your family's holiday passwords to more "analog" toys and games. No batteries or chargers required.

Unlike the big-box stores or online purveyors, local toy shops are decidedly low-tech in their chosen inventory. Walk into any one of them and you'll find an emphasis on hands-on, family-friendly offerings.

Many of the toys you'll find there are, of course, the old standards — or new versions of those old favorites. There are also lots and lots of new offerings to check out.

"No-tech" toys tend to fall in a few specific categories, ranging from games — either board games or more active ones that

Yesterday's Fun has a wide selection of board games.

■ Photo by Kerin Magill

take their cues from full-size indoor or outdoor pursuits — to creative play. More great news: Many are so family-friendly that all ages can participate, from wee ones to grandparents.

Lori Smyth, owner of Tidepool Toys & Games in Bethany Beach and Kids Ketch Toys & Fashion in Lewes, said her stores have always focused on hands-on toys.

"We try to offer an alternative" to video games and the like, Smyth said.

With open-ended play, she said, children "learn skills they don't necessarily use on screens." In addition, such toys and games tend to engage all senses, in addition to encouraging fine-motor skills.

Craft kits, Smyth said, "are always something I love to stock up on. They offer a lot of play value," she said, including both fine motor skills and creativity. "Plus, you can share them," she said — creating crafts can be a group activity, shared with a friend.

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Tidepool Toys in Bethany Beach and Fenwick have a wide selection of non-tech toys including these musical toys.

■ Photo by Kerin Magill

Continued from page 4

They can also result in gifts that children can make and give to friends and relatives — even more bang for your buck.

Some craft kits supply what's needed for a specific craft — such as making bracelets or painted objects — and some are simply boxes filled to the brim with a large selection of craft supplies. Many of those include directions for specific crafts, “but you do not have to follow any directions,” Smyth said.

Turning to science-themed gifts, Smyth said such things are always evolving and now often include even more elements than the so-called “STEM” kits that became popular a few years ago. Now, the acronym adds a letter, and a new area of learning — STEAM adds art to the mix.

For younger children, sensory bins can be a good introduction into different textures and how things interact with each other. Things like “Sensory Sand” can also serve as a calming device, she said.

“Fidgets” are a new type of toy that have become popular in recent years. Meant to provide something to occupy one's hands, they have evolved into creative toys, such as the popular Shashibo, a shape-shifting, magnetized toy that starts as a cube, but can be twisted into new shapes with the flick of a wrist — each twist reveals a new pattern, whether it's the one printed on each side or the one being created as the shape changes. More than one Shashibo can also be combined for even more fun and endless possibilities.

Shifting gears into games, Ryan Stuckey, owner of Myriads Toys & Games in Dagsboro, said that some relatively recent innovations in board games have literally been a “game-changer” for him as far as the genre is concerned.

“Getting the most points — that just doesn't do it for me” in a game, Stuckey said, adding that he much prefers games that involve being immersed in an imaginary world.

Stuckey pointed to a few of his favorites, such as Sherlock Holmes: Consulting Detective, and Pandemic Legacy, which actually came out several years before the

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			<b>1</b> Calendars, Cookbooks & Stationery	<b>2</b> Holiday Books (Adult & Children)	<b>3</b> Puzzles	<b>4</b> Children's Books
<b>5</b> Harry Potter Books & Merchandise	<b>6</b> Adult Hardcover Fiction	<b>7</b> Coffee Table & Gift Books	<b>8</b> Adult Hardcover Non-Fiction	<b>9</b> Sidelines	<b>10</b> Middle Grade	<b>11</b> Graphic Novels
<b>12</b> Young Adult	<b>13</b> Adult Paperback Fiction	<b>14</b> Local Interest & Seashore	<b>15</b> Adult Paperback Non-Fiction	<b>16</b> Adult Puzzle Books	<b>17</b> Surprise Sale Day!	<b>18</b> Holiday Puzzles, Sidelines, & Cards
<b>19</b> Holiday Books (Adult & Children)	<b>20</b> Children's Books	<b>21</b> Puzzles	<b>22</b> Calendars, Cookbooks & Stationery	<b>23</b> Sidelines	<b>24</b> Graphic Novels	<b>25</b> CLOSED
<b>26</b> Local Interest & Seashore	<b>27</b> Adult Hardcover Fiction	<b>28</b> Sidelines & Puzzles	<b>29</b> Adult Hardcover Non-Fiction	<b>30</b> Middle Grade & Adult	<b>31</b> All Adult Paperback	



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recent global health crisis. The Sherlock Holmes games, of which there is a series, each come with an envelope filled with props and clues that players use to solve a mystery. The Pandemic Legacy game can be played by two people, but more can join in at any point, as it is a game that doesn't

A Klask game board at Yesterdays Fun.

■ Photo by Kerin Magill

have to be concluded in one sitting but builds on itself from session to session. There are also multiple "seasons" of the game so players can keep playing.

So passionate are Stuckey and his wife, Ksenia Litvinova, about making sure the games are a hit with customers, they offer a 90-day return policy — so just in case a particular game isn't a hit in your house, you won't be stuck with a box full of regret.

If you're looking for something with a broader appeal, Brendan Heneghan of Yesterdays Fun in Ocean View highly rec-

ommends a game called Pictures. The Toy of the Year for 2020, Pictures engages players in extreme "think outside the box" activity. As Heneghan explained it, in the game, "One person has three rocks and four sticks, and the other person has two shoelaces," which they use to illustrate something.

Games can be adapted, it seems, to just about every hobby. In a game called Wingspan, which Stuckey, of Myriads, said is "super, super popular" — so much so that it's now made its way to those ubiquitous screens — bird lovers and birdwatchers can create their own virtual bird sanctuary.

"There's a lot of depth in this pool," said Stuckey, who admits that's something he himself has been pleasantly surprised to discover.

Stuckey said a toy that is flying off the shelves this year is Magic Mixies, which employs "magic," as well as a little water mist, to create small stuffed toys.

Then again, Heneghan, said, the old favorites are being "rediscovered" by Millennials who want to share their childhood toys and games with their own children. He

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# Joy in the discovery

Beebe CEO recalls holidays as immigrant child, military servicemember, creating home wherever he found himself



Dr. David Tam  
■ Submitted photo

By Kerin Magill  
Staff Reporter

When David Tam was 9 years old, he moved with his parents to the United States from Japan. Settling in Southern California, the doctor and Beebe CEO and president recalled, his family had to find a way to incorporate American traditions into those from China, where his family is from.

"There was a group of families — five Chinese families — we all started hanging

out together. We did everything together," Tam said.

If one family didn't have a car, he said, others in the group would drive them where they needed to go. Gatherings often happened at the home of "Uncle Fred," who wasn't a biological uncle, but who served that role for the "Five Families" that helped to give Tam and his family roots in America.

Holiday gatherings at Uncle Fred's home, Tam said, took on a multicultural feel —

particularly when it came to food.

"I still remember the mish-mash" of traditional Chinese dishes with American ones there, he said. Along with the traditional "American turkey," there was Chinese chicken, noodles and dumplings, with apple pie for dessert, along with Chinese desserts.

The chicken, Tam said, was served, as is traditional in Asian culture, with the head on.

"It was done to honor the guests" — nothing is wasted, he said.

Noodles are served on holidays to ensure long life and prosperity, he noted.

**"There is such a feeling of closeness and unity when you are far away from home, with other people who are also far from home."**

— Dr. David Tam

"I remember that so vividly," he recalled of his first years in the United States. "It just makes me nostalgic."

Over the years, Tam's holiday celebrations have changed along with his family, and with shifts in his career.

"I've been married, divorced and re-married," he said, adding that, these days, his "blended family" has meant that holidays tend to "a transitional process." Tam added that learning "how to restructure or reinvent Christmas has been a journey of discovery and of joy.

"Many of us didn't have the traditional holiday," he said, but "we've discovered new ways to do it. "Finding out how to enjoy each other, and celebrate, is a journey — one that continues no matter where one finds oneself."

Tam recalled that, during his U.S. Navy career, he was often away from home and came to consider those with whom he served as his family.

"There is such a feeling of closeness and unity when you are far away from home, with other people who are also far from home."

He said with a laugh that, even though the holiday meals "with sliced turkey that comes from... somewhere..." weren't the same as home-cooked fare, "It was such a

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good feeling to be in a place where you know people.”

Having moved to Delaware to start his job at Beebe in March 2020, just days before Gov. John Carney called for Delawareans to stay home due to the looming COVID-19 pandemic, Tam said his first holiday season in his new home was still special, in its way.

Since all the children were doing school remotely, “They were all here,” he said. He also reconnected with some of his East Coast family, he said — particularly his godson, who was able to visit during the holidays.

One of the best parts of Christmas 2020, Tam said, was a dusting of snow that he said helped him remember that he wasn’t in California anymore.

“That’s not something that happens in Southern California,” he said.

Tam said he is looking forward to being able to enjoy the holidays this year in true Sussex County style — with most of the celebrations that were canceled or curtailed last year filling the calendar once again.

“I can’t wait to celebrate with my Beebe

family,” he said, while honoring healthcare workers who will be working to serve their communities throughout the holiday season and often miss celebrating with their own families.

During those times, he said, he will help his team members to focus on “working on a unified mission. We’re so grateful for the teamwork, and we celebrate that we are working together,” he said.

Even though Tam has settled into his Delaware life, he said the transitions continue within his own family that will make this year different from others. For one, he said, his oldest child, Johanna, won’t be with him this year. Now that she is serving in the U.S. Marines, married and “living her own life,” Tam said he will miss her presence. “Is it hard, yes. Different, yes. Bad, no,” he said.

He said he will focus on the blessings he has been given, and on the little details that make the holidays special, such as “deciding where the new Christmas tree should go, discovering new traditions.

“The journey has to be looked at in a positive way,” he said. “I thank God that we’re here together, and I continue to find joy in the discovery.”

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# Hanukkah rituals revolve around the home

By Susan Canfora  
Staff Reporter

The Jewish holiday Hanukkah is a time to reflect, to remember an important miracle of old and think about God's place in man's lives.

Observed this year from sundown on Sunday, Nov. 28, until sundown on Monday, Dec. 6 — always eight days — Hanukkah is also called the Jewish Festival of Rededication or Festival of Lights. It commemorates the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem during the second century B.C., when Jews rose against Greek-Syrian oppressors and were victorious over a king known as a tyrant.

Every evening during Hanukkah, an additional one of eight candles in the

menorah, which is a candelabra that holds nine candles, is lit. Eight candles symbolize the number of days the menorah in the Temple continued to burn, a miracle because only a tiny bit of oil was available.

The ninth candle, called the shamash, or service candle, is used to light the other eight candles.

"Hanukkah is primarily a home festival. We add certain prayers in the daily service in the synagogue, but nothing specifically is done. The activity is done at home," Rabbi Arthur Rutberg of Temple Bat Yam in Berlin, Md., explained. "You light the service candle, then you use it to light the first candle, and you watch them and they burn down. The next night, you light two candles, then three and so on. On the final night, you have nine lights lit. You light each one and let them burn as long as they last. The tradition is we are to light them and watch them burn, and not to use them for anything else. You sit and watch them burn. They burn



about 20 minutes, some others longer,” Rutberg said.

Also during the holiday, children play a game using a dreidel, a spinning top that has four sides.

“Kids play games with it. It has four letters on it to represent the first four letters of the phrase ‘A great miracle happened.’ In Israel, the letters spell out the first four letters of the phrase ‘A miracle happened here,’” the rabbi said.

Often gifts are exchanged during Hanukkah, but the rabbi said that practice is “an American adaptation to compete with Christmas.”

“The traditional understanding is to celebrate the miracle of oil, the victory of the Maccabees over the Greeks, how they fought for religious freedom and they won. You are lighting lights. You use the menorah with a special number of lights. It has eight slots for eight candles and an extra one serves as the service lighter to light the lights.

“Another tradition is, you put the menorah in the window so you are displaying the miracle. Many Jewish families don’t do it because they expose themselves as being Jewish and that



might invite unwelcome attention,” he noted.

Many of the foods eaten during the holiday are deep-fried in oil, to symbolize the miracle of the oil continuing to

Children light a Menorah.

■ Stock photo

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Rabbi Rutberg of Temple Bat Yam in Berlin, Md., explained some Jewish traditions.  
 ■ File photo

Continued from page 15

burn, and include latkes, or potato pancakes, served with applesauce, as well as jelly doughnuts and chocolate gelt, which is chocolate candy shaped like coins and wrapped in gold foil. "Gelt" is the Yiddish word for "money."

The largest attendance in the temple is on Yom Kipper, the holiest day of the year in Judaism and focusing on atonement and repentance. This year, it was on Sept. 15 and 16.

Rutberg said he doesn't believe the tradition of observing Hanukkah is dying out, although it's hard to say if most Jewish families light the candles.

"Not a strong majority. Maybe 50 percent. The affiliation rate of Jews in the synagogues is very low in the world at large, about 20 percent in any community.

"More typically, even assimilated Jewish families will have a Passover seder at the home or go to a Passover seder. That is one tradition that is still pretty strong. 'Seder' means 'order,' and the meal is a very orderly ritual meal. You say this prayer and eat this food. You say that prayer eat another food," he said.

Passover commemorates the story of the Israelites' departure from ancient Egypt, as recorded in the Biblical books of Exodus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. This year, it was from March 27 to April 4.

Observing Jewish tradition and holidays continues to be important, Rutberg said.

"The word faith is not one we use frequently, but Judaism is a whole culture, a way of life, a whole connection to our ancestors, to family. Many people make sure to have Passover seder are doing it in sense of connection to who they are as Jewish people, at large, globally speaking, and to their parents and grandparents," he said.

"The holidays are very important in that regard. It's important to maintain your connection and to remain aware of the incredible depth of the Jewish religion."

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# Bethany hosting Holiday Happenings

On Saturday, Dec. 4, the Town of Bethany Beach will host its annual Holiday Happenings. Santa will make his return to Bethany Beach Town Hall to take photos with the children from 1 to 3 p.m. Sunshine the Clown will be there, too, but instead of face-painting, she will be doing air-brush body art. There will also be hot cocoa, cookies and a station for children to write letters to Santa. Trolley rides through downtown and beach tractor rides will run from 1 to 4 p.m.

A second trolley will be available until 6 p.m. to transport attendees to and from the event at several pick-up locations: Bethany Beach Books, Grotto Pizza (next to the Bethany Beach Nature Center) and South Coastal Library.

At 5 p.m., the annual lighting of the holiday tree will take place on the bandstand plaza. Attendees can gather with friends and

family for a special concert featuring the Southern Delaware School of the Arts Show Choir. People are being encouraged to bring hats, gloves, scarves and canned goods to be donated to local charities. Those who cannot attend the event can watch it on the west-view beach-cam via the Town website.

Holiday Happenings will once again kick off "Weekend Wonderland in Bethany," a town-wide collaboration with the Bethany-Fenwick Area Chamber of Commerce and participating businesses that will offer special activities and incentives between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. on the three Saturdays leading up to Christmas: Dec. 4, 11 and 18.

Holiday Happenings is free and open to people of all ages. There is no rain date. For updates, visit [www.townofbethanybeach.com](http://www.townofbethanybeach.com), under "Activities and Events."



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# A Holly Jolly

## high-tech holiday

By M. Patricia Titus  
Digital Content Editor

There's no denying the value of classic low-tech toys and gifts with a touch of nostalgia, but the holidays are also high time for high-tech gifts, whether for a loved-one or oneself. And there is a bevy of options for 2021, ranging from home-based tech to new phones and even some toys for the kids.

A word of warning: The 2021 supply-chain crisis has made a lot of high-tech goods in even shorter supply than they usually are at this time of year. If you have a particular gift in mind for giving this winter, pick it up now if you can. A shortage of computer chips that power even some of the most basic techie gifts has been added to international shipping delays to create a near perfect storm for short supply. Plan ahead!

(1) An Apple a day — Is there ever a year when the latest Apple devices aren't at the top of many a holiday gift wishlist? Well, 2021 is no exception, with the new iPhone 13 line, new iPad tablets, a new Apple watch generation and new Macbook computers all refreshed in time for the hol-

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Right, Apple's iPhone 13 Pro Max and iPhone 13 Pro.

■ Photo courtesy Apple, Inc.

iday season.

The new iPhone 13 stands out for its Pro versions, regular and Max, which offer longer battery life, more storage and an improved operating system. But the real star of the iPhone 13 Pro line is the new cameras, which are better than ever before and considered one of the best, if not the best, camera systems ever put in a phone. A new macro lens and automatic macro mode kick in when you're less than 10 inches from your subject, offering some amazingly crisp closeups.

The Pro line also offers a new cinematic mode, which allows you to change the focus of your scene even after you've finished shooting video. It makes for some great options for the amateur (or even pro) filmmaker, with subjects in the background of the frame able to become the main focus without the need for an edit or reshoot. If you have a budding filmmaker or would-be pro photographer on your list, the iPhone Pro and Pro Max should definitely be up for consideration.

The star of the refreshed iPad line is the new iPad Mini, which shrinks the screen-surrounding bezel and offers a lot of the markers of the company's highest-end tablets at a much lower cost, including some unique fashion colors. It's also com-

Please turn to page 56



Above, Apple's new iPad mini, which features an 8.3-inch Liquid Retina Display, A15 Bionic Apple silicon chip, USB-C port and more..

■ Photo courtesy Apple, Inc.



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### Now-January 2

**Winterfest of Lights** — The 2021 Winterfest of Lights will return as a walking holiday event, with an even larger path route than before, per officials. It takes place at Northside Park, 125th Street in Ocean City, Md., from Wednesday through Sunday, 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. Admission is \$5 for guests 12 and older, and free for children 11 and younger. Pets are welcome on Wednesday evenings. For more information, call (410) 250-0125.

### November 26-28

**Holiday Shoppers Fair** — The Roland E. Powell Convention Center in Ocean City, Md., is hosting a Holiday Shoppers Fair, featuring handmade products, nautical-themed items, candles, photography, florals, jewelry, ceramics and more. There will also be children's activities and face painting. All told, there will be more than 150 vendors, a food court, free parking and door prizes. For more information, contact Melanie at (410) 723-8605, or email her at [mcollins@oceancitymd.gov](mailto:mcollins@oceancitymd.gov).

### November 27

**Town Festivities** — The Town of Ocean View will host an Old Town Holiday Market and tree-lighting at John West Park, from 1 to 6 p.m. If inclement weather arrives, this will move to Nov. 28. The tree-lighting is scheduled for dusk, and Santa Claus will arrive at that time to light the tree.

### December 1

**Tree Lighting** — The Town of Millville will host its first-ever tree lighting.



Festivities will start at 5 p.m., and the tree-lighting is scheduled for 6:15 p.m. Participants will then enjoy "Carols by Candlelight."

### December 3

**Christmas Parade** — The Town of Selbyville is presenting its 60th Annual Christmas Parade on West Church street, starting at 7 p.m. To register, or for more information, visit them online at [selbyville.delaware.gov](http://selbyville.delaware.gov).

### December 4

**Holiday Happenings** — The Town of Bethany Beach will host its annual Holiday Happenings and Annual Tree Lighting Event. Santa Claus will be at Bethany Beach Town Hall to take pho-

tos with children from 1 to 3 p.m., and Sunshine the Clown will be there, as well, doing air brush body art. There will be hot cocoa, cookies and a station for children to write letters to Santa. Trolley rides through downtown and beach tractor rides will run from 1 to 4 p.m. A second trolley will be on hand to transport attendees to and from the event at the following pick-up locations: Bethany Beach Books, Grotto Pizza and South Coastal Library until 6 p.m. The annual lighting of the holiday tree will take place on the Bandstand Plaza at 5 p.m., and there will be a special concert featuring the Southern Delaware School of the Arts Show Choir. Those who cannot attend the event may



# Happenings

watch it on the west-view beach cam on the Town's website.

**Weekend Wonderland** — The Bethany-Fenwick Area Chamber of Commerce is leading Weekend Wonderland in Bethany Beach, all day until 7 p.m. There is an Elf on the Shelf Scavenger Hunt at participating businesses. When you spot the Elf, you will receive a stamp from that business. When you hit Bingo on your card, you can submit the card for a chance to win a prize package. A winner will be announced each week on the Bandstand at 5 p.m. There will also be a Cocoa Crawl/Holiday Treat Trail from 5 to 7 p.m. Participants will get a punch card, and can visit various downtown businesses for hot choco-

late, snacks and the opportunity to explore these stores.

**Christmas Parade** — The Town of Millsboro is hosting a Christmas parade and tree-lighting event starting at 5 p.m. Spectators are reminded to bring a chair. Those interested in participating in the parade can request an application from [town@millsboro.org](mailto:town@millsboro.org).

**Tree Lighting** — The Town of Fenwick Island will hold its annual Christmas Tree Lighting from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. The lighting and Christmas carols will begin at 5:30, and there will be a potluck holiday reception following this at Fenwick Island Town Hall.

**Christmas Parade** — The Ocean City Christmas Parade will march along Coastal Highway, starting at 11 a.m.

on Old Landing Road, and will march northbound in the southbound lanes to the judges' stand at 120th Street. There will be more than 50 units, including high school bands, horses, antique cars, holiday floats and more. To participate in the parade, call the Special Events Department at (410) 250-0125. There is no charge to participate. motorists are reminded that traffic-pattern changes will begin approximately at 8 a.m. and congestion and delays should be expected.

## December 6

**Santa at the Park** — The Town of Dagsboro is hosting Santa in Katie Helm

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Continued from page 23

Park from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. This is weather-permitting.

**Hometown Christmas Parade** — The Rehoboth beach Volunteer Fire Company will be presenting the 2021 Rehoboth beach Hometown Christmas Parade at 6 p.m. More information and applications are available at their website at rehobothbeachfire.com, or you can call them at (302) 542-6802, or send them an email at christmasparade@rehobothbeachfire.com.

### December 7

**Wrappings and Fashion** — The American Cancer Society Holiday Wrappings Luncheon & Fashion Show will be held at the Roland E. Powell Convention Center in Ocean City, Md. There will be a fashion show of local retailers, appealing to women of all ages, giant auctions, a car raffle and a warm plated lunch. Pre-registration is required. Tickets cost \$50, and there are only advance sales. For more infor-

Please turn to page 30



The Dagsboro Christmas Parade.  
■ File photo by Tyler Valliant

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# Make it merry

**By Taryn King**  
Digital Content Specialist

If you skipped a lot of your favorite Christmas traditions last year due to the pandemic, you're not alone. Across the globe, people found themselves and their holiday plans affected by safety protocols and shutdown outcomes.

Putting the kibosh on large gatherings; annual Christmas markets closed altogether; tree farmers were facing labor loss (and availability by default); and chances are you gave up expecting mail-order items to arrive in any semblance of a timely manner.

That last one is without a doubt still in effect, and this year we're looking at product shortage, which means finding new and fabulous goodies for your holiday home décor might not be as easy as you'd hoped.

The good news is that most of this year's holiday trends are heavily focused on the

traditional, with accents in pattern, complementary colors and natural texture. We're also seeing a lot of DIY and vintage touches that make this crafty-vintage-lover's heart quite happy. Pop over to our favorite rabbit-hole, Pinterest, and you'll see that reuse and repurposing are also popular themes.

After scouring the big-name home designers and our favorite home glossies, here are three of our favorite holiday décor trends that will incorporate what you already have and refresh your look for a much-needed burst of Christmas cheer.

## Traditional warmth

There's something about stepping out of the early gloom of the winter season and into a home glimmering with spruce, juniper and bright berries that exudes warmth and cheer. This is the traditional aesthetic of Christmas, and many won't budge from this representa-

tion of the holidays.

To refresh and update your tried-and-true look, supplement your existing Christmas décor with thrift-store finds and handmade items, such as dark-stained or white wooden bead swags, gold painted pinecones and dried fruit slices. Tuck a mix of faux and real greenery into unexpected places (like the kitchen) to brighten up your spaces. Consider blending in non-traditional greens, such as eucalyptus and magnolia leaves.

If you want to dip a toe outside the box, incorporate the deep colors (think midnight blue and black-greens) and patterns found in tartan and plaids. Loop ribbons through your trees and wrap presents in plaid paper or fabrics.

## Natural neutrals

Let's face it, the best kind of holiday décor is one that matches your home, and





most of us don't have a red/green palette year-round. Neutral homes have been in the majority the last few years. With that said, white, cream, gray, wood-tones and even black can echo your home's aesthetic, while still pulling pops of color from natural greenery, velvet ribbons and dried citrus slices.

Limit your palette, and focus on textures. White berries, cotton sprigs and brown-paper packages tied up with string will keep things simple yet bright. Twinkle lights and warm metallic accents create that added the sparkle we all crave. Don't

forget to keep it cozy with thick blankets and a crackling fire while you sip hot cider from copper mugs!

### Vintage layers

For those of us who feel we'll crumble without a colorful Christmas but don't want to sacrifice personal style, vintage is the way to go. Time has softened the colors and created patina — particularly on glass baubles.

DIY projects lend themselves well to this aesthetic, with paper pinwheel garlands, bottle-brush trees, cardboard

houses, and lots of glass and mica glitter. Create a wreath made entirely of vintage glass balls and scatter bowls of ornaments in similar colors throughout your home.

If you're really feeling adventurous, we have one word: Tinsel.

Digging through grandma's attic and hitting your local antique stores are your best options for finding your vintage treasures. And don't forget to comb through your local social media marketplace groups or the Coastal Point classifieds to find those hidden gems and fill your home with nostalgia.



Opposite page, is an example of a natural neutral. Left, vintage layers. Above, traditional warmth.

■ Stock photos

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Continued from page 24

mation about reservations, tables, packages and scholarships, contact Dawne Pappas at (443) 880-2310 or email [dpappo@aol.com](mailto:dpappo@aol.com).

### December 8

**Pizza With Santa** — The Northside Park Recreation Complex (Ocean City, Md.) will host a Pizza Party with Santa for kids from Pre-K through Fourth Grade, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. The cost is \$10 for non-residents, \$8 for residents of Ocean City and an extra \$4 fee will gain admission into Winterfest. Pre-registration is mandatory, as space is limited. Visit them online at [ococean.com](http://ococean.com) for more information.

**Santa at the Park** — The Town of Dagsboro is hosting Santa in Katie Helm Park from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. This is weather-permitting.

### December 11

**Weekend Wonderland** — The Bethany-Fenwick Area Chamber of Commerce

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The Fenwick Island Tree Lighting.  
■ File photo by Shaun M. Lambert

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Continued from page 30

is leading Weekend Wonderland in Bethany Beach, all day until 7 p.m. There is an Elf on the Shelf Scavenger Hunt at participating businesses. When you spot the Elf, you will receive a stamp from that business. When you hit Bingo on your card, you can submit the card for a chance to win a prize package. A winner will be announced each week on the Bandstand at 5 p.m. There will also be a Cocoa Crawl/Holiday Treat Trail from 5 to 7 p.m. Participants will get a punch card, and can visit various downtown businesses for hot chocolate, snacks and the opportunity to explore these stores.

### December 11-12

**Christmas Market** — The Town of Millsboro is hosting a Christmas Market at Town Center from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. This will take place rain or shine. To request to be a vendor, contact Michelle Truitt, market manager, via email at [michellet@millsboro.org](mailto:michellet@millsboro.org), or by calling (302) 245-0440.



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Ocean City hosts the Winterfest of Lights each year at Northside Park at 125th Street in Ocean City.

■ File photo by R. Chris Clark

### December 13

**Santa at the Park** — The Town of Dagsboro is hosting Santa in Katie Helm Park from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. This is weather-permitting.

### December 14

**Christmas Parade** — The Town of Dagsboro is hosting a Christmas Parade at 7 p.m. For more information, visit [dagsboro.delaware.gov](http://dagsboro.delaware.gov).

### December 15

**Santa at the Park** — The Town of Dagsboro is hosting Santa in Katie Helm Park from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. This is weather-permitting.

### December 18

**Weekend Wonderland** — The Bethany-Fenwick Area Chamber of Commerce is leading Weekend Wonderland in Bethany Beach, all day until 7 p.m. There is an Elf on the Shelf Scavenger Hunt at participating businesses. When you spot the Elf, you will receive a stamp from that business.

Please turn to page 50

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# Local officials, pastor share their Christmas traditions

By Susan Canfora  
Staff Reporter

On his Facebook page, Gov. John Carney has pictures of Christmas decorations made from photos of his two sons when they were children, hair nicely combed, both smiling, one with a couple bottom teeth missing.

Like all families, Carney's have annual traditions that keep the jolly in the holly.

"The holidays always remind me of great memories. These are two of my favorite ornaments — photos of our boys when they were younger," Carney wrote.

As the holidays approach, the governor's staff told Coastal Point, Carney "goes to a local Christmas tree supplier, like Willey Farms in Townsend, to get the Carney family tree."

"The governor is one of nine children, so the family Christmases can be quite large. But due to the COVID-19 pandemic, celebrations were smaller last year to ensure a safe holiday."

For the Rev. Rebecca Collison, pastor at Mariner's Bethel United Methodist Church in Ocean View, Christmas traditions are divided into two categories: at home and outside of her home.

"Growing up, it was going to church on Christmas Eve, and putting milk,

cookies and carrots out for Santa and reindeer, and putting baby Jesus in the manger scene. Now, since I work every Christmas Eve at the church and don't have little ones at home, our family tradition has been our Christmas celebration at a morning

brunch from 10 to noon at our house. Parents, kids and their kids come, and we exchange a simple inexpensive silly gift each year.

"One year, we did ugly or

nary," Collison said.

Outside the home, she said, her family does something different each year, maybe adopting someone in need, taking homemade cookies to those working on Christmas Eve, or inviting someone who would otherwise be alone with a meager Christmas meal.

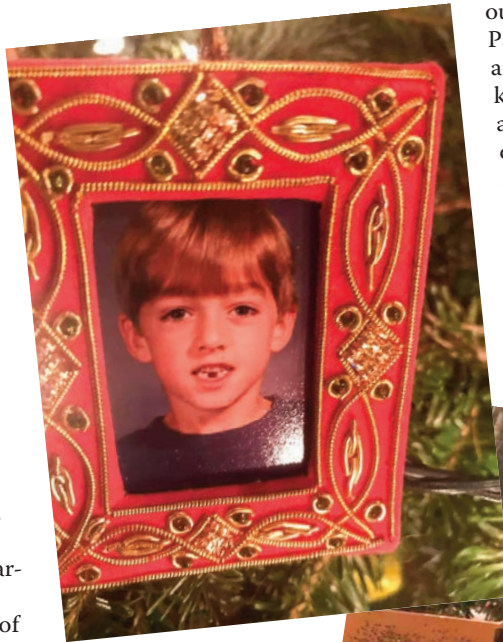
"Every year the need might look different, but this action serves to remind us that Christmas isn't about me — it's about coming together and bringing light into a dark world," she said.

Millsboro Town Manager Sheldon Hudson said his family's traditions have changed over the years, as loved ones have died and other families have grown larger. There used to be Christmas breakfast at his aunt's house. She had five children, and those children started having children, "so it got unwieldy," Hudson said.

"Now, our most longstanding tradition is my mother has a Christmas party, typically within a week of Christmas, with extended family, my immediate family, my brother, his wife, my mother's brother and his wife, their kids and my mother's cousins and her kids. It's the largest family gathering of the year and one of the ones we most look forward to as a family," he said.

The Hudsons have also traveled to Canada every other, or every three, years to visit his wife's family.

He and his children keep an advent calendar, opening the little doors to find a piece of chocolate behind them and



Ugly/unique socks, left, was one unique idea the Collision family had for a Christmas Day family event. Above and right, are two of Gov. John Carney's favorite Christmas tree decorations.

■ Submitted photos



unique socks. We always take a group shot of the gifts, then of the people — a reminder of the joy of God's gift, even when out of the ordi-

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Millsboro Town Manager Sheldon Hudson and his family.

■ Submitted photo

Continued from page 35

counting down to the big day.

Laughing, he recalled the time when his son, now 19, had given Hudson's wife a little blue teapot ornament when their son was of kindergarten age, but she wasn't fond of it. Although she never told him, she "always buried it on the tree," Hudson said.

"My son figured it out, and now it's a running joke every year that it goes in the most prominent part of the tree," Hudson said.

Ocean View Police Chief Kenneth McLaughlin recalled that when his children were young, he and his wife would instruct them to stay in their bedrooms on Christmas morning.

"They weren't allowed to come out where the Christmas tree and presents were yet. We kind of tried to hold them back there until we were ready. We got

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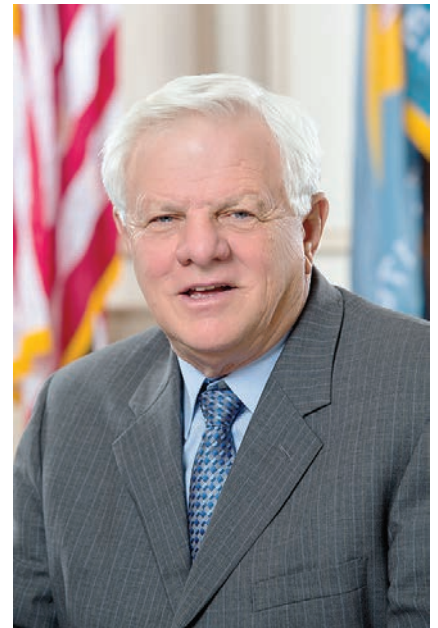


the coffee ready and made all the final touches. The kids were on pins and needles wondering if Santa came or not. Then we had in-laws or other adult family members come over, so we were waiting for everybody to get there.

"Once we were all ready to go out into the living room, we would have the kids come out together. Every year, we would have a picture of the kids walking down the hallway together coming out into the living room," McLaughlin said.

**Every Christmas we have had all of our children and grandchildren there, and I have cooked the entire breakfast for the family.**

— State Rep. Gerald Hocker



State Rep. Gerald Hocker shared some of his family's holiday traditions.

■ File photo

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After unwrapping gifts, the family joined together for a big breakfast.

Assistant Millsboro Town Manager Jamie Burk said his family attends midnight Mass on Christmas Eve, then the adults put out presents from Santa.

"Each child gets to pick one gift to open on Christmas Eve and the rest Christmas morning. Large gifts from Santa don't get placed under the tree until after the younger ones have fallen asleep Christmas Eve. My fiancée, Ali, and I have five children between us, ages 7, 11, 12, 14 and 18. The boys are the younger three of the family," Burk said.

Millsboro Police Chief Brian Calloway said he, his wife and their three daughters, 6 to 13 years old, attend Winterfest of Lights in Ocean City, Md., and go ice skating at the Carousel Hotel, also in the Maryland resort town.

"We normally do that the Sunday after Thanksgiving," he said.

State Sen. Gerald Hocker (R-20th) said he has cooked Christmas-morning breakfast for his family since he and his wife, Emily, got married 52 years ago.

"The family has grown every year to now having five children and now 13 grandchildren" — 10 boys and three

Please turn to page 40



Millsboro chief of police Brian Calloway and his family love to attend Winterfest of Lights and go ice skating at the Carousel Hotel.  
 ■ Submitted photo

**The Holiday spirit begins with Halloween. My parents loved preparing for the neighborhood children. My mother always played a guessing game and had treats.**

— State Rep. Ruth Briggs King

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girls, and the 14th grandchild is expected soon. "Every Christmas we have had all of our children and grandchildren there, and I have cooked the entire breakfast for the family. Then, after that, we all open our gifts one at a time so we can all see," Hocker said.

His breakfast menu includes ham, scrapple, melted cheese, pancakes, sticky buns, rolls, eggs and sausage. "Anything you can think of for Christmas, I make," he said.

Although his wife helps him, he said he likes everybody to stay out of the kitchen while he cooks, and he cleans as he goes.

State Rep. Ruth Briggs King (R-37th) said her family's traditions have grown and changed during the years.

"The holiday spirit begins with Halloween. My parents loved preparing for the neighborhood children. My mother always played a guessing game and had treats. My father would be spooky and scare the kids. As those kids grew up, they brought their kids to the Briggs farm. Today, we host family and friends

**As I prepare for Christmas, I take the girls for our winter adventure, where we walk the family woods for evergreens and holly. My dad did this with me every year.**

— State Rep. Ruth Briggs King

who live in the country and don't have many trick-or-treaters. The last few years, Jay Baxter brings a hayride through our neighborhood. It's a real treat for all.

"And our big family tradition? This is deer season, and a major focus is the King home. All the boys arrive the evening before and plan their early-

morning hunt," she said.

Her boys are sons Jared, who lives in Nazareth, Pa., with his wife, Noelle, and children Gabby, Colin and Ryan, and Justin, who is local. Justin and his wife, Amber, have twins Lexi and Tori and another daughter, Sawyer.

"As we prepare for Christmas, I take the girls for our winter adventure, where we walk the family woods for evergreens and holly. My dad did this with me every year. I suspect it was my mother's need to get me away from the house.

"Naturally, I have special cookies and fudge that are family favorites. I bake a special cookie recipe, sugar cakes, passed down, and my special is peanut butter fudge. And Thanksgiving is a bittersweet holiday," she said.

"My father was born on his father's birthday, Thanksgiving. My father had a life-changing event on Thanksgiving. Before my birth, my father was accidentally shot while hunting. He literally lost his right arm and learned to do everything with his left. He remained an avid hunter and safety advocate," Briggs King said.



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# Santa is a Marine!

By Mike Smith  
Staff Reporter

"Santa Claus is actually a Marine!" said Mary Kunrat, the wife of a retired sergeant-major in the U.S. Marine Corps. "You can tell because he wears Marine Corps red."

This year, the Marine Corps First State Detachment, which serves this region, will collect up to 12,000 toys through the Marine Toys for Tots campaign. Already, 5,000 toys for needy children are ready to be distributed and waiting at the First State Detachment's pavilion space. The detachment reported it has spent more than \$7,000 from cash donations for about 1,000 new toys as well.

"We want to make their Christmas Day a little brighter," said Richard "Rick" Pounsberry, who is the senior vice commandant of the USMC detachment. "I am delivering our Frankford toy boxes right now," he said of the Sussex County collection boxes.

Robert Broderick, who handles communications for the First State Detachment, said

the program will be broader and perhaps even doubled this year: "Last holiday season, 3,741 kids on the shore got gifts from the Toys for Tots program. They are getting bikes, electric cars; these are high-quality toys. For the Marine Corps local program, we identify

needy kids who may not have a Christmas."

Since 1947, the Marine Toys for Tots program has delivered more than 604 million toys to some 272 million children from infants to 12 or even 13 years old. Pounsberry said the greatest need is at the margins.

"We really need toys for babies ages zero to 2 years old," said Pounsberry, "and again at ages 11 and above," where people may forget needy pre-teens.

Both Pounsberry and Broderick said the toys are distributed through community-service organizations and churches, and this year they're involving local schools to make sure the recipients are kids who really need a toy. Last year, with the pandemic, there was a small community of children to locate for presents through traditional channels, including non-profits and faith communities.

During a recent Marine Corps League meeting in Ocean City, the marching orders were delivered. The First State detachment will deploy across the region with collection boxes and with cash

## TOYS FOR TOTS



U.S. MARINE CORPS RESERVE



boxes for donations. The senior commandant gave orders to assemble and muster on Nov. 16 from 0900 to 1400 hours for a major collection box distribution and manning the toy deposit stations. This is a Marine operation, after all!

The Coastal Point readership area is very generous, and members of the Marine Toys for Tots local campaign expressed their gratitude. The goal is to collect up to 10,000 more toys before the end of the year from local community boxes, or cash equivalents. Many will be distributed this year because of more open community centers and ability to deploy the toys to less fortunate families.

Sam Uruc is one of the most senior members of the detachment. He reported that Hocker's in Ocean View has been a big help over the years and called for additional Marine backup volunteers to work that station.

New Marine Corps League members, above, are being sworn in with an initial assignment of working the Toys for Tots collection boxes.

■ Photo by Mike Smith



The detachment reported on other area hot spots:

- The Salted Rim provides cash and has delivered more than 10 collection boxes of toys in past years;
- Tidepool Toys & Games at the Bethany boardwalk is a major donor source, since parents and shoppers can simply buy an extra toy and deposit the gift in a collection box;
- The Millville Volunteer Fire Company is a major "hot spot" for toy collection every year. This time, Gene Dankewicz of the detachment is bringing a trailer. Ad Art in Georgetown is presently "tricking out" the trailer with Marine Corps insignia and Toys for Tots designations. Dankewicz thanked Ad Art for creating a branded Toys for Tots trailer.
- Fox's Pizza locations — especially Bayside — are great Toys for Tots deposit locations;

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Rick Pounsberry Sr., vice commandant and this year's coordinator of the Marine Toys for Tots is pictured at the Marine Corps League meeting, giving his marching orders.  
 ■ Photo by Mike Smith

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Photo By: Krista Vallant





The Marine Corps' Toys for Tots program last year provided more than 3,700 toys to needy children in the area, even during the pandemic. This year, the First State Detachment hopes to double the number of children receiving presents and will provide two toys per child as it seeks to reduce a present inventory of more than 5,000 toys already collected from prior toy drives. (Marine Corps League officers stand at attention and prepare for toy drive at a recent meeting)

■ Photo by Mike Smith

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Continued from page 43

- The Country Café on Route 54 has been involved and actually collects the most bicycles for Christmas gifts every year, said the Marines detachment.

Schedules and Toys for Tots drop-boxes can be found at [www.first-statemarines.org](http://www.first-statemarines.org).

Cash and toy collections for Marine Toys for Tots can also be found at: Jolly Rogers, Fish Tales, the Green Turtle and Crab Cake Factory, and all branches of Taylor Bank will accept cash or gifts.

During the league meeting, commanders read letters and coloring-book thank-you notes and passed around photos from grateful families and toy recipients:

A youngster nicknamed Jax thanked the Marines for his “new Spiderman bike” which he said glows in the dark. It comes complete with Spiderman mask and gloves for superhero play action.

Two bikes were donated to another regional family who sent pictures of the joy their children expressed in finding a

new bike to ride.

The Marine Toys for Tots Foundation is responsible for the day-to-day operations of Marine Toys for Tots. An IRS recognized 501(c)(3) not-for-profit charity, it serves as the authorized fundraising and support organization for the Toys for Tots program. The foundation provides the leadership, funding and support needed for successful annual toy collection and distribution campaigns. To give to Toys for Tots this year visit <https://www.toysfortots.org/>.

### First State Detachment Earns Community Spirit Award

“We have over 130 USMC Marines in the First State Detachment,” said Broderick. “We also have the Semper Fi bike ride. We just raised \$10,000 for the Semper Fi in Americas foundation.”

“We have a bike raffle going on for an electric bike that has a retail value of some \$3,000,” said Broderick. “We are kicking off at the home and outdoors shows in Ocean City [Md.] Con-

vention Center.”

The American Legion Post in Ocean City is the First State home post and held its Marine Corps League membership meeting on Oct. 27th.

Additional fundraising continues throughout the year: “So we have a golf outing in June,” said Broderick. “We have Jeep Week in August. We are very active in O.C., Worchester and Sussex County.

“We were just awarded the Spirit award from Worchester County. That was a nice surprise for us,” said Broderick.

“Look around in your neighborhood for the toy collection boxes,” added Pounsberry.

### Additional First State Detachment Contact info:

Rick Pounsberry

US Marine Corps League

First State Detachment  
Senior Vice Commandant

0311Chief@gmail.com

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Continued from page 33

When you hit Bingo on your card, you can submit the card for a chance to win a prize package. A winner will be announced each week on the Bandstand at 5 p.m. There will also be a Cocoa Crawl/Holiday Treat Trail from 5 to 7 p.m. Participants will get a punch card, and can visit various downtown businesses for hot chocolate, snacks and the opportunity to explore these stores.

### December 20

**Santa at the Park** — The Town of Dagsboro is hosting Santa in Katie Helm Park from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. This is weather-permitting.

### December 22

**Santa at the Park** — The Town of Dagsboro is hosting Santa in Katie Helm Park from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. This is weather-permitting.

### December 31

**Fireworks Celebration** — The Town of Ocean City (Md.) will be hosting a New Year's Eve Fireworks Show at Northside Park to celebrate the beginning of 2022 and the 29th Annual Winterfest of Lights. The fireworks display, which will begin promptly at midnight, will be accompanied by live entertainment, warm hot chocolate and the opportunity to enjoy Winterfest.

### January 1

**Fenwick Freeze** — The Fenwick Freeze will be held at Bayard Street in Fenwick Island at the ocean, with a rain date scheduled for Jan. 2. Festivities kick off at 10 a.m., and participants are encouraged to bring a towel and hot chocolate and plunge with friends and family. T-shirts will be available for sale at 9 a.m. and all proceeds benefit the Fenwick Island Beach Patrol. For more information and registration forms, visit [fenwickisland.delaware.gov](http://fenwickisland.delaware.gov).

**Bethany New Year** — The Annual Hair of the Dog Run & Leo Brady Exercise Like the Eskimos events, hosted by the Bethany-Fenwick Area Chamber of Commerce, will take place in Bethany Beach. The race starts at 10 a.m., while the icy swim in the ocean starts at noon. For more details, visit the Chamber's website at [thequietresorts.com](http://thequietresorts.com).



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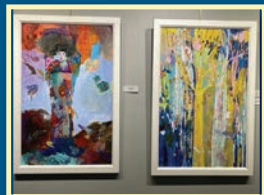
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## Millville to host tree lighting

By Kerin Magill  
Staff Reporter

Millville is preparing to host its first annual Christmas Tree Lighting festivities on Wednesday, Dec. 1, at Evans Park at Millville.

The 20-foot-tall artificial tree has arrived, and special "snowflake" lights will be installed in the park for the holidays, Town Manager Deborah Botchie said at the Tuesday, Nov. 9, town council meeting.

The Christmas Tree Lighting will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 1, at 5 p.m. at Evans Park at Millville, located on Dukes Drive. For more information, call the town hall at (302) 539-0449.

Botchie said the festivities will include candlelight caroling led by the Ocean View Church of Christ's Youth Praise Team, as well as an ornament-making activity, and Ugly Sweater and Ugly Hat contests. Food, such as soups and hot chocolate, will be available for purchase from Kristina's Kitchen and Agape Creamery.

Santa Claus will make an appearance, and there will be photo booths set up for festive picture opportunities, Botchie said. Toys for Tots will also be accepting donated toys during the evening, she said.

"I'm so excited we're finally going to be able to do something in the park," said Deputy Mayor Sharon Brienza.

Part of the expense includes the addition of a menorah — the symbol of the Jewish holiday Hannukah — to the town's holiday décor. The menorah had been requested by town residents, Botchie said. It will be installed on town hall property, Brienza said, mainly because of concerns it might be a target for vandalism if it was placed at Evans Park, especially in light of recent damage to playground equipment there.

Going forward, the Town would incur about \$4,000 each year to pay Christmas Décor for installation, removal, storage and maintenance of holiday decorations.

The lights in the park will remain until the end of January, because this coming year, it will be a location for the fifth annual Fire & Ice Festival, set for Jan. 28-30 — another first, as the event expands to include Millville's new park.

# Protect kids by steering clear of knockoff toys

In the scramble to get the toys children want this holiday season, experts warn that people should prioritize safety by sticking to age-appropriate toys and by avoiding counterfeit alternatives at all costs.

"Illicit sellers of counterfeit toys may dupe parents into thinking they're buying the real thing, or entice them with lower prices or the promise of getting the 'hot toy' of the holiday season," said Joan Lawrence, the Toy Association's "Toy Safety Mom" and senior vice president of standards and regulatory affairs.

"What's scary is that these illegitimate sellers are actually peddling fake and unsafe products that oftentimes don't comply with product safety laws. That's why we always urge parents to shop from reputable brands and sellers whose toys have been tested for

compliance with over 100 different safety standards and tests required by law."

With the shipping crisis predicted to have widespread impacts on the availability of this holiday season's most popular toys, counterfeits are likely to be even more enticing. And new research conducted by OnePoll on behalf of the Toy Association suggests that consumers are not always as vigilant as they should be, with 65 percent of parents saying they would purchase knock-off/counterfeit toys if they couldn't get their hands on the original item and 63 percent indicating they would buy counterfeits if they were cheaper. Indeed, 1 in 10 parents are not even aware that counterfeit toys can be dangerous for kids to play with.

While looking to snag a hot toy this holi-

day season, steer clear of counterfeit toys that are not safe or appropriate for a child by following these tips from PlaySafe.org:

(1) Shop only from reputable brands and sellers. Their toys have been tested for compliance with over 100 different safety standards and tests required by law.

(2) Make sure the brand you're purchasing from has a professional-looking website. Can't find a website? That may be a red flag that you are dealing with an illicit seller.

(3) If a product's reviews are negative, or if there aren't many, it's a clue the product could be a fake.

(4) Poorly photoshopped pictures, typos or spelling mistakes in the online description or packaging are other clues that the product could be illegitimate, and therefore

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unsafe.

(5) Can't find a toy on your child's wish list? Wait for a trusted retailer to restock the product. Buying fake or cheaper al-

ternatives is just not worth the risk.

In addition to avoiding knockoff toys, helping ensure a child's safety during the gift-giving season also means shopping for toys only appropriate for their age.

Safety first during the holiday season, and, really, any time of year — especially when it comes to children.

■ (c) Nattakorn Maneerat / iStock via Getty Images

According to The Toy Association survey, 76 percent of parents read age recommendations on toy packaging before purchasing. However, 40 percent admitted they view age labels on toys as suggestions instead of a warning, and 68 percent would give their child a toy recommended for older children.

Be sure to follow age recommendations on toy packaging, which are not mere suggestions but firm recommendations made by safety experts that are based on childhood developmental stages.

For more safe shopping tips, visit [www.PlaySafe.org](http://www.PlaySafe.org), a toy safety resource site.

"With your vigilance, you can keep the merriest time of year happy, healthy and joyful by ensuring your child doesn't unwrap a potential safety hazard," said Lawrence.

— Source: StatePoint

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Continued from page 21

patible with the new Apple Pen 2, with its magnetic attachment to the tablet that also allows it to recharge wirelessly.

The lingering issue with buying the Mini is that they fall into a no-man's land between today's larger phone screens and ultra-portable full-size tablets or tablet-style laptops. Consider whether your gift recipient will have use for something that is bigger than a pocketable phone but doesn't offer a full-size screen for drawing

or taking more extensive notes or watching longer videos.

The new Apple Watch 7 isn't a tremendous departure from its prior generation. A slightly larger screen offers more real estate for watch-based apps, which means the new tiny watch keypad can be used for those longer text messages or grocery lists on the fly, without the noise of transcription or the pain of handwriting recognition. But those waiting for rumored new health features should consider postponing an upgrade until the Watch 8, which could

arrive with blood-pressure sensing or even blood-sugar monitoring.

(2) For the Android fan — If Apple's devices don't float your boat, or that of your gift recipient, consider some of the new Android-based devices that feature groundbreaking folding screens. A prior iteration of the technology fell flat when



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Above, Apple's new Apple Watch Series 7.  
■ Photo courtesy Apple, Inc.



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screens broke even on early use, but the 2021 versions, such as the Samsung Galaxy Z Fold 3 and Galaxy Z Flip 3.

The Fold unfolds itself into a tablet-style device about the size of an iPad Mini, which sets the device solidly in the zone between large phone and mini-tablet, so you're not debating whether to bring along a second, or third, device. Pen support is available with the Fold, but just like with the Apple tablets, you'll have to shell out for the pen separately.

The Flip uses an even smaller form factor, and is more pocketable, but has a somewhat more prominent center crease in the screen when it's folded out. Both have a secondary screen for the most vital information to show even when they're folded. That's in contrast to Microsoft's Surface Duo 2, which uses a two-screen combined workspace instead of a foldable single screen.

Lastly, Motorola has brought back its Razr branding with the 5G, which folds down to a miniscule 3.6 by 2.9 by .63 inches, in a new take on the flip phone. This one is targeted right at the



Samsung's Galaxy Z Fold 3 might be right up your alley, if Apple devices aren't your cup of joe.

■ Photo courtesy Samsung Electronics

youth market, with the ability to fit neatly into even a small pocket, but to fold open for video shoots and streaming to social media.

(3) Video doorbells — These security/time-saving devices are becoming nearly ubiquitous, both in TV advertising and in your neighbors' homes. Amazon's Ring ecosystem offers simple video doorbells that show you who's at the door and let you talk to them, no matter where you are, as well as interior security cameras to monitor inside your home, and floodlights that turn on when motion is detected and then show you who's there. They even have a mailbox sensor to tell you when it's time to check the mailbox.

Ring cameras also integrate with several brands of remote door lock systems, so you can opt to let the pizza delivery person in to drop your pie on your entryway table and then lock up behind them once it's safely inside, all while monitoring the doorway, inside and out, via video.

A video doorbell also lets you ac-

Please turn to page 58

## MICHAEL ORHELEIN *Take a piece of the beach home with you!*



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A Ring Video Doorbell 2 was released this year and could be an excellent idea for a gift for a loved one.

■ Photo courtesy Ring

#### Continued from page 57

knowledge the UPS driver when they ring the bell and even tell them to leave a package in a certain spot outside or ask them to return with it tomorrow. It's the first stage in ensuring those "porch pirates" don't ruin your day. Consider integrating with a remote door lock system for customizable access and security options for your home.

(4) Smart appliances — Whether it's a

smart toaster oven that lets you program a cooking cycle from your sofa, a smart pressure cooker that lets you start dinner while still at work or a smart refrigerator that lets you peek inside remotely so you can ensure your grocery list is complete, smart appliances are increasingly present in the modern home. The phrase "the internet of things" is often heard when talk turns to such devices, referring to the increasing ubiquitousness of internet-inte-

grated devices in the home.

One of Amazon's first smart devices was its microwave oven, which can be told, via Alexa, to perform such tasks as reheating a cup of coffee, add time to a defrost cycle or start popping that movie-time treat while you're still cueing up that night's showing. But third-party appliances with remote feature integration now include hybrid air-

Please turn to page 60

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Continued from page 58

fryer toaster ovens and pressure cookers. And if you want to ensure your clothes are really dry, even before you get out of bed in the morning, a connected clothes dryer can run another cycle.

Some variations on smart cooking appliances come with their own food systems, with prepared meals (frozen or refrigerated) getting their own codes that are scanned into the appliances or their apps, turning out perfectly cooked food according to manufacturers' instructions. (Check out the Tovala oven and its meal service, or the Suvie systems.) Some of these devices can offer moist cooking for an entrée while cooking a crispy side air-fryer style — all at the same time, and some allow you to stick a dish in the oven in the morning and will hold it chilled until it's time to start cooking and deliver you a ready-to-eat meal at a time you select. It's the next best thing to a "Star Trek" food replicator.

And if an automated bartender is of more interest than the futuristic easy-prep food, look at the Bartesian cocktail machine, which uses your favorite brands of alcohol and drink pods to mix up the perfect adult beverage, or even a mocktail for those who prefer their liquid fun without the buzz.

(5) Digital scales with WiFi or Bluetooth connectivity — With the holidays arriving, there's also holiday eating season, to be followed by the ubiquitous weight and other health goals. Getting healthy can be much easier if you can keep track of your stats over time and quantify things such as actual body fat vs. the ballpark BMI measure, which may not accurately reflect health. When you gain those 2 pounds overnight, it helps to know that it's actually 3 pounds of muscle added from your extra workouts and one pound of fat lost because you opted for just one helping of mashed potatoes.

Compare features and reviews on different models and manufacturers. If you don't mind having to launch an app on your phone to capture today's weigh-in, versus having it automatically upload data to your health tracking apps, you can shave a good bit off the cost of one of these scales. The higher-end Withings scale is a longtime favorite of mine at around \$100, but Eufy's Smart Scale can be obtained for as little as \$30.

(6) Gametime, virtually — When we're not video-calling or TV-streaming, an-

other entertainment option is videogames. And modern video games are — literally — looking a little different from the traditional console games played at a TV. They're even going beyond the controller-based interactive games, like the Wii games we were playing 15 years ago. Today, games are going virtual. Virtual reality, that is.

Among several virtual-reality gaming devices, the Oculus Quest 2 — the latest in the Facebook-owned Oculus line of virtual reality systems — combines the portability of the first-generation Quest with the desktop computer compatibility of the Rift line. At \$300 to \$400 (plus optional computer cable for \$80), it's not an inexpensive purchase, but it can open up a wide world of experiences when many of us are still sticking close to home.

VR programs and video can transport us to exotic locales right in our living rooms, and multi-player environments can offer the chance to play and experience cooperatively, whether you're in the next room or across the country. That goes for traditional console games, many of which are available on virtual-reality platforms now, and for those that take maximum advantage today's virtual reality systems.

Check out the many exercise-focused games, from rhythm-based games such as Beat Saber and FitXR (a hybrid martial arts/rhythm game that's a personal favorite for this computer-potato) to something like Racket NX, where racquetball, pinball and a "breakout" game collide, or even take a virtual bike ride on that stationary bike with VZFit, where you can enjoy the scenery and some gamification of your exercise goals without leaving the house.

(7) Smart toys for smart kids — We've come a long way from the original generation of smart toys, with their cartridge-based games. Today's kids can get a smart watch of their own, whether a chunky big-button device by Fisher-Price designed to delight toddlers or a higher-end device that offers learning games for the 7-year-old along with a built-in camera, alarms and

more.

Vtech's KidiZoom Smartwatch DX2 is splashproof, sized for kids and can shoot videos, photos and selfies, complete with kid-focused filters, as well as offering AR (augmented reality)



For those looking for great gift for a gamer, virtual reality headsets could be worth a look at. Oculus has several options to choose from including the Oculus Rift 2, pictured above.

■ Photo courtesy Oculus

games and security features that ensure parental supervision. The PlayZoom Kids Smartwatch is another option, featuring a blinged-out style for the young glamour-girl, along with matching headphones, built-in camera, MP3 player and more than a dozen learning games.

Lego's robotics lines, including Boost, and the Cozmo, Osmo and Sphero robotics toys offer kids not only the chance to build and use a robot, but to program them for various tasks — getting even young kids involved in the future-focused skill of coding and programming. The Artie robot can even be programmed to draw shapes. The Intelino Smart Train takes the classic toy train and makes it smart, with programmable tiles to foster creative play and coding skills.

Taking off from the robotics angle, Leka

is an interactive robotic companion designed for kids on the autism spectrum, offering sensory stimulus and encouraging social interaction. Lego's Vidiyo uses AR to help kids make their own music and music videos with their Lego characters and sound effects components. And Fisher-Price's Teach 'n Tag Movie is a toy robot designed to get young kids listening and following directions.

Mario Kart Live brings the excitement of the classic video games into your living room, with physical versions of the racing games' cars, equipped with cameras for a Mario-like view and the option to compete in multi-player games.

Little Bits electronics blocks kits are moving into the true robotics genre with their Star Wars-themed R2-D2 model that can be reconfigured for new skills and customized however the kids (big or small) want to. There are also kits for the music creator and more, all offering high-tech learning options that play just like toys.

AR options for kids include the Personal Planetarium, which overlays star charts over the real-life night sky, and the Orboot Interactive AR Globe, which turns a physical globe into an educational trip around the world, featuring games, mysteries, cultural information and more. Virtual

Pong uses a simulated light to hit back and forth between two players or by a solo player, with the ultimate safe setting for the living room, since there are no physical balls.

(8) Fun for the whole family — Drones have become commonplace today, from the high-end camera-equipped ones used by photographers to the pocket-sized toys for kids. Their range of options and sizes is matched by their prices, with midrange options for amateurs going for \$500 or so, or a kids' toy, such as the Force1 UFO 4000 Mini Drone, for \$50 or less. (While the kids won't have to worry about the FAA with their toys, would-be pro-am drone flyers should make sure to check the local rules on where it's OK to fly and where it's not.)

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Continued from page 61

If your idea of family fun is a little more earthbound, look for the Xbox Series S console, which is the latest and greatest in the Xbox lineup. It's already been in high demand, even before the holiday season, so if you're looking at this one, snap it up before it's gone!

And if earthbound fun means digging in the dirt (or avoiding doing so while still reaping the rewards of a bountiful harvest), look at the various smart-gardens on the market now. You've got more than just the Aerogarden to choose from. The Personal Rise Garden connects to an app to spare even the least-green-thumbed from dead plants, notifying you when to feed and water. The Smart Garden 3 comes with nutrients right in its plant pods, and provides automated, calibrated light, water and nutrients, with more than 50 plant varieties available.

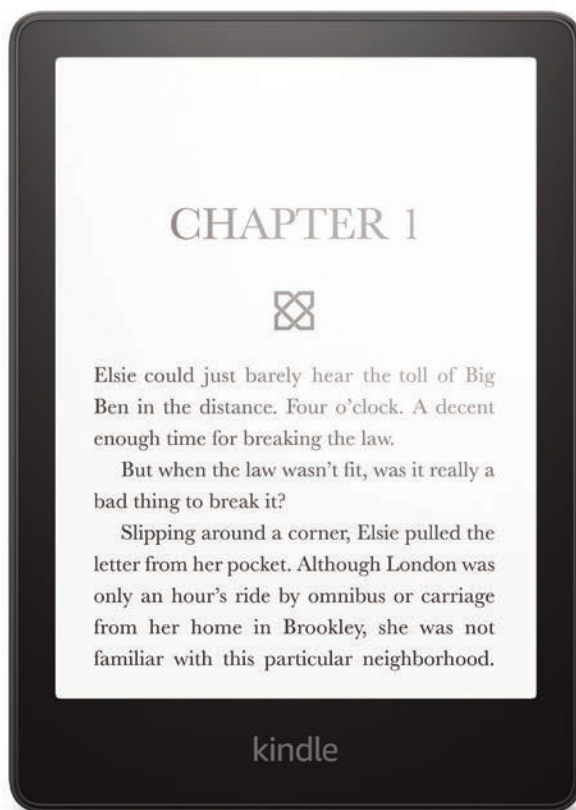
And for the fuzzy friend in the family, consider the Furbo, a com-

bination treat dispenser and video camera that lets you visit with Fido remotely and even give him a special treat, all from your phone.

Finally, if you have a big reader in your family, the latest generation of Amazon's Kindle Paperwhite e-ink reader was recently released, featuring a bigger screen, wireless Qi (Signature edition only) or wired USB-C charging (part of a wave of consolidation in charging standards), adjustable color temperature to reduce impacts from nighttime reading and more LEDs in its backlight. They're waterproof to the IPX8 standard and offer up to 32GB of storage for the ravenous bibliophile (Signature edition). And if you're looking for a bargain, snap up a 2018 model, for \$90, about half the price of the new Signature edition.

For the avid reader in your family, Amazon's Kindle Paperwhite e-ink reader might be the way to go.

■ Photo courtesy Amazon, Inc.





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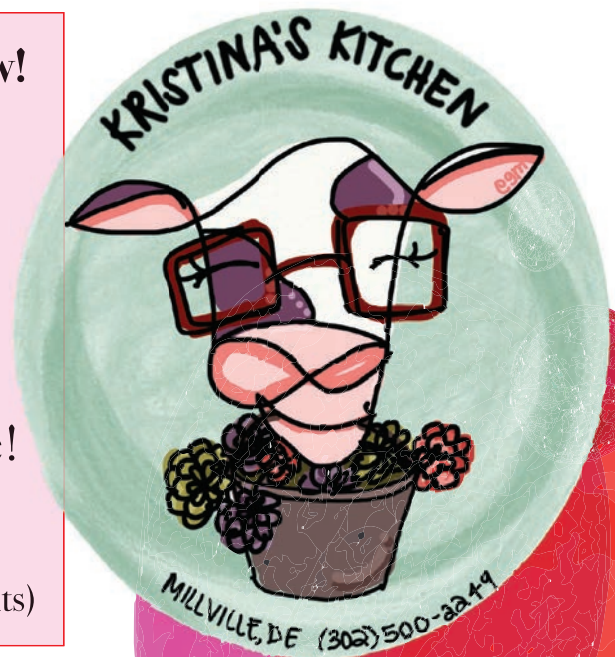
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# Help reduce screen time for kids with these tips

(BPT) Watching TV, playing video games, tapping from app to app — the pull of screen time can be irresistible for kids and creates an ongoing dilemma for many

parents. While technology is a wonderful resource for staying connected, experts agree that less is more — especially for kids.

“As the holiday season approaches, in-

stead of turning to the latest tech gifts, families have an opportunity to bond over something other than devices,” said Ginny Yurich, creator of 1,000 Hours Outside — a global movement designed to help people of all ages set aside screens and get outside.

This holiday season, Yurich teamed up with Circle Parental Controls to offer her top six gift ideas to get families outside, not to the Internet. Her number one tip:

Parental  
controls for  
your devices

“Get yourself an early present, and set up

Please turn to page 65

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Continued from page 64

a screen time management and parental controls device like Circle before the unwrapping even begins. With Circle, you can be sure screens don't get in the way of all the fun and enrichment the following gifts can provide. Circle's ability to manage every family member's device both inside and outside the home means you can spend more time being together and less time arguing over screen time."

1. Outerwear for outdoor play

Give the gift of adventure with clothing that keeps your kids warm and comfortable when they're moving outdoors. A base layer that absorbs water, such as merino wool, will help kids feel dry and warm so they can stay outside longer. We love the merino wool base layers from Chasing Windmills Kids and we've gotten a lot of use out of the mud boots from Lone Cone Shop that are made to withstand rugged childhood play throughout an entire season.

2. Miniature figurines

From animals and fairies to knights and

Please turn to page 66

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Home for the Holidays

65



Continued from page 65

dragons, TOOBS Miniature Figurines come in a wide variety of choices and make great stocking stuffers. Their small size allows for easy transport so you can always have a few toys on hand. Whether you're outdoors, at a restaurant or waiting for an appointment, your kids can make up games and play creatively.

#### 3. Puppets

Folkmanis puppets are heirloom quality puppets that you could use in a variety of settings, both indoors and outdoors. Pup-

pets help children with their dexterity as well as their social skills and imagination.

#### 4. Sand Ice Cream Set

There's something extra special about making ice cream cones out of dirt and sand and decorating them with different grasses and flowers. I'll take a double scoop of chocolate please! We love that it comes in its own little bucket, making clean-up a breeze.

#### 5. Toys Designed for Outdoor Play

Haba has a line of toys designed for outdoor play called Terra Kids. These toys are meant to let your children explore and play

by their own rules and include items like hang gliders that will soar through the air, kites, cork boats and lanterns.

#### 6. Scavenger hunt games

Who doesn't love a good scavenger hunt? Get the entire family up and moving for a short game — or stretch out your scavenger list and make an entire day of fun.

Don't let the holidays be all about the latest tech trends. Use this list — and Circle Parental Controls — to help reduce screen time and encourage your kids to pursue a variety of interests.

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# Experts advise how to manage asthma, allergies

(BPT) What's in those delicious holiday cookies? How come it's hard to breathe while decking the halls? Is that adorable puppy in the big red bow causing you to

have a big red nose?

"The holiday season is full of fun festivities and beloved traditions, many of which present unique challenges to people with

allergies or asthma," explained Dr. Mark Corbett, president of the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (ACAAI). "Fortunately, with a thoughtful mindset and proactive approach, you can enjoy a season full of merriment and good cheer."

Corbett and the experts at ACAAI share tips for managing asthma and allergy triggers throughout the winter holidays:

Don't let  
'achoo's' ruin  
your holidays

Indoor allergens are often invisible.

Please turn to page 69



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Continued from page 68

When rotating holiday decor in your home, make sure to wipe down items to remove triggers like dust and mold. Additionally, whether you're decorating for Hanukkah or Christmas, opt for allergy- and asthma-friendly decorations to set the holiday mood. Try battery-operated flameless candles rather than traditional candles which produce smoke and can cause an asthma flare.

While you can take steps to limit allergy and asthma triggers in your own home, you have less control when traveling. Whether it's an afternoon celebration or week-long escape, plan ahead by bringing everything you need, including allergy medicine and asthma inhalers. Some people opt to travel with their own allergy-proof pillow or pillow case and other personal items to ensure comfort if staying overnight.

## A paws-itivity fun holiday

Whether it's cozy snuggles, playing games or capturing a special picture, pets can help make holidays bright. However, when pets are around, dander is a concern. Even if pets spend much of their time outdoors, they may be inside more as temperatures drop, and this means increased dander throughout your home.

To help with pet allergies, try to keep your pets only in certain rooms rather than giving them access to the whole home. It can be especially effective to keep them out of bedrooms to facilitate better sleep. If you're staying at someone else's home with a pet, close the door to the room where you're sleeping. You should also be mindful of limiting how much you pet your cat or dog, and when you do, wash your hands immediately afterward.

## Food allergies don't bring good cheer

If you or a loved one has a food allergy, it's important to remain vigilant in asking about ingredients before trying foods. Never assume that just because you cook

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# Avoid the pain of shipping

Holiday plans may look different again this year. Some families will choose to host small gatherings, while others may celebrate from the comfort of home instead of traveling. For those who won't be spending the holidays with loved ones — and if this season is anything like 2020, many will stay at home — here's how to ensure a timely, damage-free arrival for those shipped gifts.

## Be aware of shipping deadlines

Each year, the United States Postal Service and other major shipping companies release deadlines to help people plan timely delivery of packages during their busiest season of the year. Whether manually shipping gifts or ordering them online, prioritizing those deadlines is key. Give shipping

ample time. Aim to have packages shipped about 10 to 12 days before the holiday. The USPS recommends no later than Dec. 15 for ground shipping.

## Invest in a quality box

While it may be tempting to use any old box that's hanging out in the garage, worn-down boxes are much more likely to crumple in transit. Additionally, if the package is too big for its contents, there's a risk of things rolling or shaking; if it's too small, there's a risk of tearing and breaking.

With this in mind, consider investing in new, quality boxes. They can be cost-effective, made from recycled, durable materials, and available in a variety of sizes to meet postal regulations, so it's possible to pick the best fit that protects from damage, while keeping shipping costs down.

## Pick proper packing tape

When investing in shipping supplies, don't forget to include a strong, easy-to-use packing tape. Lower-quality options may lead to splitting or tearing, which is a recipe for disaster when shipping holiday presents (or even for storing décor until next year). Pick a tape that offers premium quality and tough adhesion, to keep boxes and packages secure during shipping.

Stronger and more durable than ordinary tapes, a quality packing tape is designed to seal even the heaviest boxes safely and securely to help prevent items inside from being damaged during delivery.

Please turn to page 72

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It always pays to plan for the holidays, but this year probably requires more of that than most, for numerous reasons.

■ StatePoint

## Personalize the package

For those who prefer a greener option, craft paper is protective, versatile and sustainable. When made from 100 percent recycled material, shipping paper can be easily added to standard curbside recycling bins.

Plus, it makes it easy to wrap up and ship out large boxes, and can be used to fill packaging voids, so items stay in place. Or, as a fun indoor activity throughout winter, kids may enjoy using the paper to create customized, DIY wrapping paper. Other special touches to a long-distance holiday delivery could be including a thoughtful note or adding a drop of essential oil to the ribbon.

The holidays can be stressful. By planning ahead and having the proper supplies on-hand, people will be able to quickly cross “ship holiday gifts” off their to-do list and enjoy the magic of the season.

— Source: StatePoint

## Add protection

Handle fragile packages with extra care by including the all-important layer of bubble cushioning. Such cushioning easily conforms around treasured objects and helps

prevent shifts and damage during shipping. The best material maintains consistent, light-as-air cushioning while filling empty voids in boxes, so items stay put. For best protection, make sure the bubbles are facing the gift to cushion any impact.

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Continued from page 8

said Beyblade and Bakugan toys — which were under Christmas trees 15 and 20 years ago — are now hot again.

“Things come and go, and they come back again,” Heneghan said.

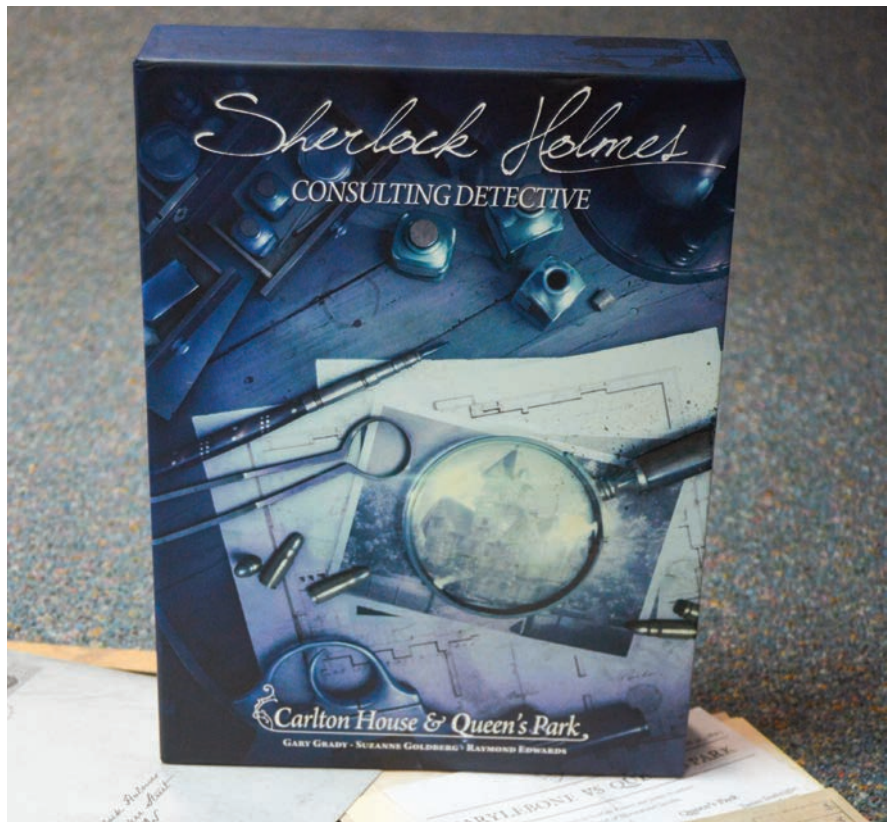
Whatever toys make it to the top of lists this year, all three toy store owners said shoppers should shop as early as they can, due to potential supply-chain issues this year. Smyth said she has been told by one manufacturer representative, for toy and puzzle maker Ravensburger, that she shouldn't expect another shipment until after the holidays.

Fortunately, there are plenty of opportunities to celebrate the holidays in the coming weeks by shopping locally — whether it be Small Business Saturday, the day after Black Friday, or Winter Wonderland, the Bethany Beach holiday celebration that offers activities and shopping opportunities throughout December.

Left, a hand puppet at Tidepool Toys.

Right, a Sherlock Holmes game, available at Myriads Toys.

■ Photos by Kerin Magill





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Continued from page 69

something without certain ingredients, other people will do the same. People with severe allergies might be sensitive to even trace amounts of certain foods, so it's important to ask. When in doubt, pass on a treat with unknown ingredients. And always carry two epinephrine auto injectors in case of an emergency.

When visiting someone's home for a gathering, make sure they are aware of your allergy so they can plan accordingly. To ease the ask, offer to bring a dish to share that you know is safe to eat. That way if options are limited, you know there is something you can enjoy. And remember, if you are hosting an event in your home, extend kindness by asking if any of your guests have allergies so you can prepare a thoughtful menu.

It's the most  
sniffle-filled  
time of year

In addition to the ongoing pandemic, the holiday season aligns with respiratory illness season. If you have asthma, it's particularly important to wash your hands regularly. The best way to eliminate germs is to wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. That's about the time it takes to sing the chorus of Jingle Bells twice.

If you haven't already, get a COVID vaccination and your annual flu vaccination. It's OK to get them at the same time, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. If you've been invited to other people's homes, you may want to ask in advance if they are vaccinated against COVID. Some people choose to wear masks indoors and at private gatherings, so continue to do this if it makes you more comfortable.



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# Entertain for less

You don't have to break the bank to enjoy the best parts of the holiday season.

■ Photo Source: (c) Deagreez / iStock via Getty Images

The holiday season brings an abundance of feelings that may include joy, comfort, gratitude, and unfortunately, stress. Don't let the task of entertaining friends and family break the bank or your back.

Instead, create memorable gatherings with loved ones while saving time and money in the process using these hosting tips from Dollar General:

## Delicate décor

Creating the right ambiance in a space is key to holiday decorating success. Begin by

Please turn to page 83



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# Preparing the home for holiday guests



Cooler temperatures, outings to the Christmas-tree farm, game nights and holi-

day feasts. Now that the holiday season is here, it's time to prep the home for seasonal

Some easy steps in prepping your home for the holidays can make things a little more functional during a busy time.

■ Submitted photo

fun! Whether hosting a big or small group of family and friends this holiday season, decorating and decluttering around the house can make party prep easier and more enjoyable for everyone. With that in mind, here are some top tips to create functional and stylish spaces that are easy to keep clean and tidy throughout the festivities.

- Delightful décor. Make any room feel warm and welcoming with removable adhesive shelf liner. Decorating with laminate is an affordable way to add pops of color to a kitchen backsplash, reading nook or old side table. Choose a print that matches the home's

Please turn to page 83



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# In the Gnome

By Susan Lyons  
Publisher

The holidays are upon us. One of the hottest decorating trends this year is the gnome. Yes, Santas and snowmen are out, and gnomes are in. We started seeing them last year, but this year they are everywhere.

The history of gnomes goes back to the ancient Romans and Greeks, where it is believed that the name came from “genomos” meaning “earth dweller.” These mythical beings were believed to come out at night to protect crops, gardens and buried treasure.

They got very popular again in the 1800s,

when a German sculptor started making gnomes out of clay. However, only the very wealthy could afford them. Again, they were placed in the garden for good luck, and to ensure a good harvest. It was at this time that they were considered magical and people believed they could also keep evil spirits away.

For several years in the 1980s gnomes became popular again, with the appearance of the “David the Gnome” cartoon show that lasted for three seasons.

You may remember the Travelocity com-

mercial where a gnome left his home to travel the world, and not too long ago the movie “Gnomeo and Juliet” came out.

Fast forward to today, when the gnome has reappeared in full force. However, today’s gnome has no smiling face, as its visage is covered by its pointy hat.

We went around town to find some of our favorite gnomes in the area so that you can enjoy a few fun facts about these round happy little guys and where you can find them to bring your own good luck to your home.



Small gnome nutcrackers found at  
Flutter By House in Frankford



Plaid hatted fabric gnomes at  
Flutter By House in Frankford



Assorted gnomes with very long legs  
available at Fish Tales in Bethany Beach



A variety of gnomes in grey, one of the most  
popular colors this year at Fish Tales in  
Bethany Beach



Handmade pottery gnomes that can even go outside found at Pottery Place in Fenwick Island



Four-foot giant gnome available at Pottery Place



Gnome dish or hand towels from Fenwick Hardware

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Continued from page 78

style and easily stick the laminate to smooth, flat surfaces for a fresh new look that will wow guests.

- Mudroom without messy floors. Preparing an area near the entryway for bags and shoes is a must when expecting visitors. If there is a bench with storage, add a machine-washable liner to the cubby to keep shelves clean and dry. Placing a liner by the entrance of the home will also offer extra space to store muddy or wet shoes and stop salt and snow from tracking in the house. When guests leave, toss the liner in the wash and reuse.

- Spotless spaces for kids. All holiday gatherings need a space for kids to have fun and play together. While setting up for arts and crafts, line the table with a clear, textured liner to prevent crayons, markers or glue from damaging surfaces. When it's time to clean up, simply wipe the liner or toss it in the dishwasher.

- Get the guest room ready. If family are staying overnight, it's time to get the guest room in shape. Dress up drawers and closet shelves with a smooth top liner. The grip bottom will keep the liner and items in place. Trendy patterns will elevate your home décor and guests will appreciate how clean and

homey the space feels during their stay.

- Bathroom basics. Once done prepping the guest room, don't forget about the guest bathroom. Keep styling stations and the bath clean and tidy with shelf liner and a bathmat. There are a variety of cushioned, machine-washable bath and shower mats for extra comfort and safety. A Clorox mat is also designed to prevent the growth of mold and mildew on the mat.

Making these small updates around the house now will keep those most-used spaces clean and tidy to ensure family and friends are comfortable and happy over the holidays.

— StatePoint

Continued from page 77

decluttering the areas of the home where you plan to entertain. Fill the extra spaces with seasonal decorations. Remember — elaborate, expensive items aren't always needed to make a home look amazing. Decorations such as small figurines, bowls filled with holiday candy or simple wreaths and garlands can do the trick of transforming a home into a winter wonderland.

## Fruitful food

With more guests comes more food, but it doesn't have to mean spending more money. Shopping at discount retailers for essentials such as milk, eggs, bread and cheese can help stretch your budget. You can also make the switch to private brand items and save even more when buying foods for overnight guests, such as granola bars, cereal and snacks.

## Supplies

Of course, to entertain, you will need supplies. Stocking up on cleaning essentials, everyday cooking ingredients and entertaining basics early in the season is a great way to have everything needed before the party begins. Consider adding items such as trash bags, cutlery, paper products, other decorations and even small gifts.

By using smart shopping strategies, you can entertain during the holidays with ease.

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# Elevate your holiday cooking

Holiday cooking and entertaining don't have to be overly complex to impress. Here are quick, simple ways to elevate meals for memorable experiences that friends and family will love.

## Seasoning

Are those go-to family recipes in need of an update? Enhance the flavor profile of savory holiday dishes by swapping out salt and pepper and instead, reaching for a seasoning salt, such as Livia's, an all-natural, pre-blended seasoning of kosher salt,

coarse-ground black pepper and garlic.

"Livia's is good on just about everything, which is why it's the not-so-secret ingredient in a lot my creations," said Peter Hoff, executive chef and partner at NOLO's Kitchen & Bar.

Seasoning salt can be used in a number of ways during meal preparation and table-side to give holiday dishes something extra:

- Add flair to appetizers by shaking it into the yolk mixture of deviled eggs or using it to season baked brie.
- Season the outside of your turkey with olive oil and a few liberal shakes, or even create your own brine that will become a treasured recipe of its own.
- Season hams and roasts with it.
- Add it to stuffing and mashed potatoes.
- Update morning egg-bake recipes to wow overnight guests.
- Include it on your holiday table so that guests can season their food to taste.

Please turn to page 93



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# An olde-fashioned Christmas

By Susan Lyons  
Publisher

Vintage holiday décor brings back memories of being at my grandmother's house on Christmas Eve. She had a tree with the multi-colored bubble lights, holiday platters, filled with goodies, that she had made in ceramics class — including a green ceramic tree that she had made herself.

There was a fire in the fireplace and Pop-Pop would be sitting in his favorite chair, smoking a pipe with cherry tobacco. I still remember that smell, and when I walk by someone smoking a pipe today, it all comes back to me.

Mom-Mom would make her special cookies,

called Russian Rocks, filled with fruit and nuts, and the name spoke for itself. They were hard as granite and barely edible, but she would make them every Christmas and I always would force one down while attempting not to break a tooth.

Over the years, I have collected vintage Christmas décor, with enough now to decorate the entire house. Little Santas and angels, candlesticks and old Fenton glassware fill every nook and cranny in my house.

Yes, it is a time of year that I thoroughly enjoy. The shopping, the decorating, the baking... although it seems that I never have enough time to do the baking. It is a good thing that my husband and daughter do quite a bit of baking, and my son now makes the family fudge recipe, so that works out just fine.

I am sure that when you see a certain holiday piece from the past it brings back a memory or a warm feeling of something special from your childhood. I went to visit



Left, vintage Christmas balls decorate Carol Hurley's main tree. Above, Lefton Holly Berry serving pieces are on display at Hudson's General Store.

■ Photos by Susan Lyons



Wanda Powell the other day, and she shared a story from her past about a special doll that now sits by her tree every year.

The doll was her mother's, given to her as a child one Christmas, and they now estimate it to be about 111 years old. There was a fire, and the only thing of hers that was saved was the doll. As she got older, the doll ended up in the attic for many years, with kids and grandkids

playing with it during visits to the attic.

Wanda and her mother, Ola Willey, found that the doll over the years had totally deteriorated, and she was devastated to see its condition.

As a surprise, Wanda snuck into the attic and found all of the parts and went in search of



Above, a bisque socketed joint doll made by Simon and Halbig in Germany is owned today by Wanda Powell. Parts gathered from the attic get ready to go to the doll hospital in Crisfield, Md. Today, the doll today sits by Wanda Powell's Christmas tree.

■ Photos courtesy Wanda Powell

Please turn to page 88

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Vintage holiday miniatures can be found at Jayne's Reliable.

■ Submitted photos

Continued from page 87

a doll hospital, which she found in Crisfield, Md. A day-trip to the hospital was arranged, and the doll was left for repair. Another day-trip to pick it back up, and then she was set to making a dress for the exact time period. Assistance from friends helped her find the correct style, and she made the dress and petticoat. The addition of earrings and her daughter's baby locket completed the ensemble.

The next Christmas, after all of the presents were opened, Wanda announced that there was just one more to be opened for her mother. Ola, who was quite a serious woman, opened that present and was thrilled. She hugged the doll with glee.

Years later, when Christmas was nearing, Miss Ola was failing and told the other children that they would not be getting presents that year, as she was unable to shop, but she wanted one present to be given from her. Wanda received that one gift — which, of course, was the doll that sits in her dining room to this day.

We all have special memories from holidays gone by, so spend a little time sitting by the tree and remember some of the special moments of your childhood.

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# Home upgrades to help you get ready for guests

(BPT) Many people are happy to welcome back friends and family in their homes again. In anticipation of the holiday season, you might consider updating your house now, so entertaining is a joy in the many months of celebration to come.

Home improvements that add function and support when entertaining are key. Whether you'll be hosting a grand holiday party with out-of-town guests or an intimate affair with local loved ones, these top improvements will prepare your home for holiday merriment.

## Refresh the fireplace

The quintessential holiday gathering al-

ways seems to be set around a warm and welcoming fireplace. If you have one in your home, consider getting maintenance done now before the holiday rush. A tune-up, chimney cleaning and glass-door cleaning will ensure your fireplace is ready to inspire guests to cozy up and create memories.

Beyond proper functioning, you can also update your fireplace to create a new aesthetic. If the surrounding brick, rock or tile is dated, consider special masonry or tile paint that can help you refresh the materials with a contemporary neutral color such as gray, beige or white. You can also paint the mantle to accent your new fireplace surround for a cohesive look that will serve as a backdrop for holiday photographs for years to come.

## Research additions

Adding a guest bathroom or wet bar is sure to impress visitors and add to your home's value. But this may seem impossible in spaces without below-floor drainage for plumbing — like a basement or garage.

A simple, affordable solution is above-floor plumbing systems from Saniflo that avoid the hassle and expense of busting through concrete to create conventional drainage or installing a sewage ejector system.

For example, the Saniaccess 2 from Saniflo is ideal for creating an additional half bathroom virtually anywhere, thanks to a

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## Stuffed pepper appetizer

Courtesy Paul Guarna

### Ingredients:

- 1 pound Italian sausage
- 8 ounces softened cream cheese
- 1 cup Parmesan cheese
- 20-24 small sweet peppers, cut in half lengthwise

### Method:

Fry sausage and drain. Mix sausage, cream cheese and Parmesan cheese together in a bowl. Stuff the peppers with the mixture. Bake at 350° for 15-20 minutes.



## Season's Greetings

During this holiday season, we wish you all the best.



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## Vietnam veterans group donates to Stockings for Soldiers

Ocean View Mayor John Reddington, left, and Dale Cooke, former mayor of Dewey Beach, right, both lifetime members of the Vietnam Veterans of America, present a check for \$300 to Danielle Briggs for Stockings for Soldiers. The money will be used to buy Christmas stockings, stuff them with gifts and send them to military servicemembers stationed overseas during the next six weeks. Stockings will be shipped to troops in the most remote parts of the world, Reddington said. In previous years they have been sent to Afghanistan, Iraq, Egypt, Israel, Qatar, Kuwait, Jordan, Kosovo, Romania, Poland, Djibouti, Chad and South Korea. Roger Rose, president of the Vietnam Veterans of America, donated the \$300 from the organization's funds, Reddington said.

■ Submitted photo

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## Chicken (or turkey) tetrazzini

Courtesy Debbie Grise

### Ingredients:

- 1 ¼ cup chopped celery
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 green pepper, chopped
- ½ cup margarine
- 2 to 4 pounds chicken or turkey, cooked and chopped
- 1 8-ounce package of spaghetti, cooked and drained
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 8-ounce can chicken broth
- 1 4-ounce can chopped mushrooms, drained
- 2 cups grated sharp cheddar cheese
- Parmesan cheese

### Method:

Saute celery, onion and green pepper in margarine in a saucepan. Add remaining ingredients, except the Parmesan cheese, and mix well. Spoon into a greased 9X13" baking dish. Sprinkle with Parmesan. Bake at 350° for 35-45 minutes, or until bubbly.

Yields six to nine servings.



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Continued from page 89

1/2-horsepower macerator pump system. Above-floor systems like this can process waste from sinks and toilets before pumping it to the nearest drain line that connects to the home's septic tank or a sewer system.

## Contemporary kitchen

The kitchen may be the heart of the home, but it's also the hub of the holiday season. From roasting that golden turkey to baking and decorating favorite holiday treats, the kitchen is a functional gathering place for your family and guests. Simple updates can make a big difference in style and functionality, such as enhancing organization and adding seating options.

If you want bigger changes without the expense of a complete remodel, consider thoughtful updates that revive your kitchen

with notable style. Painting the existing cabinets and adding new hardware provide a visual facelift that revives the room. New countertops are nice, but sometimes just adding a new backsplash transforms the space, plus makes for easy cleanup during sometimes messy holiday cooking.

You might also consider adding an island with running water and a sink. An above-floor plumbing solution, like the Sanivite from Saniflo, can create that functionality where no below-floor drain currently exists.

## Define dining areas

Whether you have an open concept home or the layout features a formal dining room, it's important to update eating spaces. After all, enjoying food together is one of the crowning events of holiday get-togethers. Painting the space in a modern hue provides a big visual impact without much cost or effort. An area rug can also redefine the dining room and pull elements together. New linens add a holiday vibe.

Continued from page 84

(For more information, visit [liviaseasoningsalt.com](http://liviaseasoningsalt.com).)

## Add pizzazz to desserts

With a few updates, give that standard dessert line-up a touch of elegance. Use fresh ginger in gingerbread cookies. Create your own crumbs for sprinkling on top of cakes. Garnish slices of pie with a mint or basil sprig or a cinnamon stick. Melt your favorite chocolate and drizzle it on anything.

## Up your game

A holiday feast is the perfect time to create a special atmosphere. And you can do so easily by breaking out your best dishes and utensils, as well as by adding a few natural elements to the tablescape, such as poinsettias, holly, evergreens and pinecones. Ditch the overhead lights and use candles or other warm lighting to create a soft, convivial glow.

You don't need to overhaul your entire menu to make your holiday feast special. Make quick, simple tweaks and additions to your existing recipes and entertaining traditions to elevate the occasion.

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## Applesauce Cake

Courtesy Carol Hurley, via her mother-in-law

### Ingredients:

- 2 cups applesauce, stirred with 2 teaspoons of baking soda
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- $\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon salt
- 2 eggs well-beaten
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup margarine
- $2\frac{1}{4}$  cup flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$  box raisins
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup walnuts

### Method:

Cook at 350° for 1 to 1  $\frac{1}{4}$  hour in a bundt pan

Cover with  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup strawberry preserves or preserved figs



## Give the Gift That Keeps On Giving!

The Delaware Botanic Gardens have some spectacular holiday gift ideas for your friends and family. We have three tremendous offerings:



### MEMBERSHIP CARD



### Gift Passes

One-day admission to the gardens



### GIFT PASS



### Gift Memberships

which provides unlimited free Garden admission for a full year, plant sale previews, discounts at the Welcome Center Gift Shop and much more.



### Benches!

Limited quantities are now available of the Horizon and Backless benches in beige and will be placed throughout the newly completed West Woodland pathways. They are available to be 'named' to honor or in memory of a loved one or to celebrate marriages, births, retirements, graduations, and many other special occasions. <http://www.delawaregardens.org/bench-orders>

The Delaware Botanic Gardens is a world-class, inspirational, educational, & sustainable public botanic garden in southern Delaware, situated on 37 acres with over 1000 feet of waterfront on Pepper Creek. In addition, the Garden Features a 2.5-acre meadow garden created by world-renowned plantsman Piet Oudolf.

Your support helps the Garden's horticultural, educational and conservation programs thrive.



DELAWARE  
BOTANIC  
GARDENS  
AT PEPPER CREEK

For more information, visit [www.delawaregardens.org](http://www.delawaregardens.org)

30220 Piney Neck Road Dagsboro, DE • Closed for the Season • Reopening in March





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# Gathering 'round for the Holidays

[A great dining area can make EVERY DAY feel like a HOLIDAY]



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