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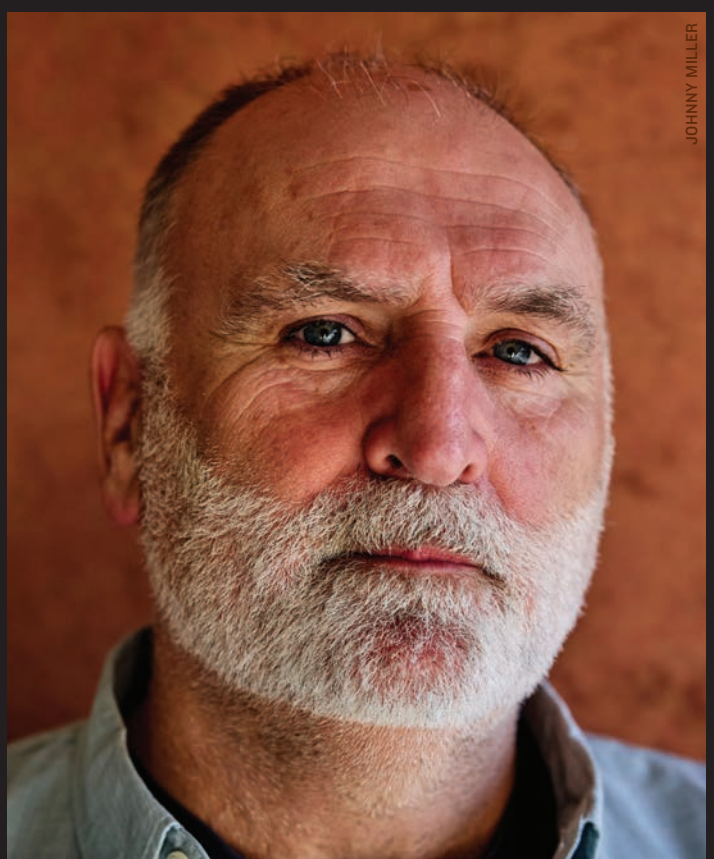
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contents

november–december 2026

winston-salem MAGAZINE
Issue 229, November–December 2026

features

Gathered Intentions 23
The impulse, order, and excitement of collecting

Deck the Halls 32
Three historic homes share their traditions

departments

Twin City Talk 11
Step Inside 14
A&E 42
Field Notes 48
Local Flavor 52
The Dish 60
Around Town 61

online exclusives

Idlewild Interiors
Crafted, captivating design

additional online extras
learn more about local artists, leaders, and winter events

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ON THE COVER
The Moravian cookie gets official state status. **page 52**
K. Scott Whitaker photo



J. Sinclair



Allison Lee Isley



J. Sinclair



André Peele

Coming in the January–February issue

Learn how to rightsize for the future and read about the path to Winston-Salem becoming a medical powerhouse.

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Making the Season Shine

"My whole life is on that tree." It's a sentence and sentiment I voice every year when I stand back and admire our main Christmas tree once it's decorated. (And yep, I wrote about it my first go-round as editor here, too.) Each ornament has its own history and backstory that ties to a person, a place, a time in my life…and put together, the tree is autobiographical, even if only I know the depth of stories the branches hold.

Given a chance, I share details. Every item opens a portal to my past, whether to childhood or adulthood. In the past several years, I've gained more family ornaments—from my parents, from Aunt Linda—and oh, how they shine with memories! For me, a part of getting in the holiday mood is showcasing a tree that puts memories and meaning on display: faith, family, friends, love, trips, passions, pastimes, talents, traditions.

Who and what makes the season for you? I'd love for you to share with us—but more important, share directly with any individuals whose names came to mind. After all, feelings and traditions are like Christmas tree ornaments: The depth of meaning isn't automatically seen…so do tell. Making sure folks know they're loved and appreciated, well, that's a most precious gift.

And here's to making sure that you know our feelings toward you, dear readers, advertisers, and everyone who has a hand in or on this issue: *We appreciate you.* Thank you for being a part of this magazine.*

Happiest holiday season to you and yours!



Emily Sarah Lineback

I joyfully overload on traditions. Our main tree is in the background, and I'm enjoying my own little lovefeast, not to be mistaken for the official Moravian Christmas Eve service. I crave the lovefeast, even now that, because I'm missing so many loved ones in the pews around me, the final words of the hymn catch in my throat as I raise my candle high. The church lights are dimmed, and our lighted candles provide a victorious glow while the pastor reminds us that Christ said, "I am the light of the world," and "You are the light…let your light so shine." Keep shining!

Emily Sarah

Emily Sarah Lineback, editor
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**Winston-Salem Magazine was honored at the 2026 North Carolina Press Association Awards, bringing home two awards—first and third place—in the editorial magazine/niche publication division. Big thanks go to all individuals associated with our publication, including previous editor Cindy Loman!*

thewaywewere



Forsyth Country Club's grand and elegant clubhouse bears little resemblance to the original rustic clubhouse with its wooden porch and shingles. Incorporated in 1913 with William Neal Reynolds as the founder and first president, the original tract of land on Lewisville Road (renamed Country Club Road) consisted of 116 acres. The interior design featured a dining room, living room, ladies' parlor and dressing room, sleeping apartments, kitchen, and baths.

Many memorable events in Winston-Salem's history took place at Forsyth Country Club. In 1916, the Rotary Club celebrated the receiving of its charter as the city's first civic luncheon club. In 1918, Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, and Harvey Firestone (Jr. and Sr.) visited Winston-Salem and enjoyed an impromptu luncheon at the club. In 1929, the North Carolina Highway Patrol paraded its new motorcycle force through Winston-Salem and stopped for lunch at Forsyth Country Club. And in 1956, the city's first Debutant Ball was held in the beautifully decorated clubhouse, adorned with flowers, trees, and a summer house.

Postcard provided and caption written by Molly Grogan Rawls, author of "Winston-Salem in Vintage Postcards," "Old Salem and Salem College" (Postcard History Series), and winstonsalemtimetraveler.com.

TANGLEWOOD FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS



Walt Unks

The steam locomotive at Tanglewood is illuminated for the Tanglewood Festival of Lights.

BY JENNIFER ATKINS BROWN

Whether it's a long-time family tradition or you are new to the area and are looking for ways to get into the holiday spirit, the 35th annual Tanglewood Festival of Lights is an event to add to your calendar. Spanning from November 13 through New Year's Day, this must-see attraction draws approximately 300,000 visitors and about 55,000 vehicles yearly.

For generations, the community has enjoyed the event, making it a fixture in local and regional holiday plans. "I've had the privilege of watching my children grow up experiencing the Festival of Lights, and now I get to see their children—my grandchildren—and the community's children and grandchildren experience and enjoy that same tradition," says Director of Forsyth County Parks & Recreation Chris Weavil.

Visitors drive through miles of holiday displays, each illuminated by more than one million LED lights. As you wind your way through the lights, you can make a stop at the gift shop, located at the Red Barn, about halfway through. Treat yourself to holiday crafts, handmade gifts by local artisans, and specialty foods, as well as an annual Festival of Lights ornament. In addition, visitors can enjoy S'moresville, a marshmallow cooking experience in the village right outside the gift shop.

Set your radio station to Magic 99.5 FM to listen to holiday music as you traverse the path. There's nothing like being serenaded by Gene Autry singing "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer" and "Frosty the Snowman" as you enjoy the lights and festivities. Horse-drawn carriage rides and tractor-pulled hayrides can also be reserved for an extra fee.

For festival admission prices and other information, visit forsyth.cc/Parks/Tanglewood/fol/#hours.



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A Conversation with Yeager Hayes Interiors

BY COY ARCHER
PHOTOS BY J. SINCLAIR

Katherine Yeager was working as an in-house designer for a custom remodeling firm when she was introduced to Melissa Hayes, a potential designer. They met over lunch in 2022 and became fast friends and collaborative colleagues.

When a passion project quickly grew into something much more, the dynamic duo decided to launch their own full-service residential design firm, Yeager Hayes Interiors. Yeager and Hayes, whose backgrounds are rooted in custom renovations and years of experience, recently sat down with us to talk design styles, trends, and current favorites.



Amber Renea Photography
Melissa Hayes (L) and Katherine Yeager of Yeager Hayes Interiors



Centered around the family's antique dining table, Yeager Hayes Interiors used layers of color, pattern, and warmth to create a dining space that feels both collected and inviting.



This jewel-box butler's pantry brings energy and personality to a practical workspace. Saturated emerald cabinetry, warm brass accents, and a botanical wallpapered ceiling transform the functional passage into an unforgettable design moment.



This Woodbridge china cabinet blends with the home's antiques while offering a contemporary accent and an elegant showcase for cherished pieces and colorful décor.



Designed for everyday living and effortless entertaining, this light-filled kitchen centers around an oversized island with generous seating. The richly stained wood and colorful patterned upholstery bring warmth and personality to the soft, neutral palette.

How would you describe your personal style?

Hayes: Timeless and functional, with a touch of the unexpected. I love incorporating meaningful family pieces, treasures collected during our travels, and an occasional element of whimsy. These personal touches give a home its character and make it feel truly lived in and loved.

Yeager: I'm transitional through and through. I love pairing timeless furnishings with color, pattern, and more contemporary accents. My goal is always to create rooms that feel fresh and current, yet collected, curated, and layered—as though they have evolved naturally over time.

What changes in style do you see in the coming year?

H: Warm tones are here to stay, and I anticipate seeing even more jewel tones, layered patterns, and expressive combinations in 2027. Homes are becoming increasingly curated and personal, with interiors that reflect the people who live in them rather than simply following a particular trend.

Y: I expect to see a continued embrace of warmth and natural materials in 2027—rich tones, wood finishes, and natural countertop materials such as quartzite and marble. These elements bring sophistication and character to a space while offering a sense of longevity. They feel elevated and current without being overly trend-driven.

What frequent mistakes do people make when decorating their homes?

H: One of the most common mistakes is choosing furnishings before considering how the room needs to function. We always



Deep blue walls and ceilings create a cozy, cinematic atmosphere in this basement media room. Comfortable seating, illuminated bookcases, and warm wood details make it an inviting destination for movie nights, game days, and relaxed family time.



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Another view of the great room that seamlessly flows into the kitchen.





Above left: Bathed in natural light, the primary suite weaves together soft florals, layered greens and blues, and inviting furnishings to create a serene, personal retreat. **Above right:** Vibrant patterned chairs contrast with the room's warm architectural details.



Designed to work beyond laundry day, this multipurpose room combines generous storage with a central worktable for folding, projects, and tasks. Rich blue cabinetry and lively botanical wallpaper elevate the space, making daily routines feel a little more joyful.

begin with the layout, flow, and intended use of a space. From there, the arrangement and scale of the furniture create the foundation for every other design decision.

Y: Scale is one of the most common challenges, whether it's choosing the right rug size, determining artwork scale and placement, or selecting a chandelier that is appropriately proportioned to a dining table. There are industry guidelines we follow, but a designer's trained eye also plays an important role in understanding what truly fits a space. Layout and flow are equally important, as are the finishing layers—drapery, pillows, accessories, and styling—that make a room feel complete. These are all areas where we help give our clients clarity and confidence.

What tips would you give those who consider themselves clueless when it comes to home decorating?

H: The best place to begin is often with one thing that inspires you. It might be a piece of art, a favorite travel destination, your grandmother's china, or even a beloved piece of jewelry or clothing. Consider exactly what draws you to it: the colors, textures, shapes, or memories it evokes. Those details can become a wonderful guide for creating a space that feels beautiful, meaningful, and uniquely yours.

Y: Start with one piece you genuinely love. The best rooms often begin with a meaningful starting point—a work of art, a beautiful fabric, or a sentimental piece of furniture—and build outward from there. My most heartfelt advice, however, is to find an interior designer whose aesthetic resonates with you and whose process and vision feel like the right fit. A good designer can help you clarify your ideas, avoid costly mistakes, and create a home that feels authentically yours.

What are you currently working on?





Above left: Bold blue wallpaper brings a playful energy to this girls' bath, while the soft blue vanity and classic white tile keep the space fresh. Warm brass details add just the right touch of sophistication. **Above right:** Yeager Hayes Interiors created a primary bath that feels both fresh and timeless, pairing Taj Mahal quartzite countertops with soft blue cabinetry and warm brass accents. Botanical wallpaper adds movement and a graceful connection to nature, completing this serene retreat.

H: We're excited to be working on several projects in Blowing Rock for some of our local clients. We're also reimagining the flow of a Buena Vista home through a kitchen renovation and thoughtful finishing touches throughout the living spaces. Our goal is to help the homeowners fall in love with a home they have struggled to make work for them, and we're confident the transformation will do exactly that.

Y: We're wrapping up a local home… featured in the [October 2026] Fall Parade of Homes. We also have several projects in Blowing Rock currently in the construction phase, along with a number of multiroom projects in the Buena Vista area. It's an exciting mix of projects, and we're looking forward to seeing each one come together.







This dramatic curved staircase anchors the foyer and is grounded by a traditional sideboard with modern accessories and painting.

Would you divulge a few of your favorite shopping spots when decorating?

H: One of my favorite destinations is Green Front Furniture, with locations in Raleigh and Farmville, Virginia. It's my not-so-secret source for one-of-a-kind rugs, and the trip to Farmville is always worth the drive—I rarely pass through without stopping. Closer to home, we love sourcing from Winston's Fabrics, a hidden gem for designer fabric remnants that we are so fortunate to have here in Winston-Salem. When I travel, you can often find me exploring consignment shops and locally owned stores in search of just the right piece. I especially love collecting work from local artists wherever we visit; each piece becomes a lasting memory that we can enjoy in our home every day.

Y: Absolutely! Elizabeth's at Hanes Park is a favorite for artwork, décor, and those special styling pieces that bring a room to life. Styled with Navy is my go-to for gorgeous designer pillows, and Pfaff's is a trusted source for one of our favorite finishes: vinyl grasscloth wallpaper.

To learn more about Yeager Hayes Interiors, visit yeagerhayesinteriors.com.

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Kim Underwood sits for a portrait surrounded by photo albums containing his collection of postcards at his home in Winston-Salem.

Allison Lee Isley

Gathered Intentions

The Impulse and Order of Collecting

BY TIM CLODFELTER

There's a special kind of enthusiasm collectors feel gathering and displaying their favorite things. Whether it be small or large items, inexpensive or pricier, there's a joy to be found in searching for and displaying rarities and interacting with fellow fans.

We talked with a few such enthusiasts for this story, and my editor found out from a mutual friend who ratted me out about a goofy but fun collection of my own, so she asked me to include it. Here are some Piedmont Triad residents who have turned their fondness for specific items into sprawling collections. There are many more and all kinds of ways to build collections.

KIM UNDERWOOD, Vintage Postcards

Kim Underwood's love of classic postcard designs dates back more than 20 years, and in that time he's accumulated multiple binders full of examples, using them as a way to look back at fond memories.

"I've always liked postcards, and at some point I started going on eBay, and I would just put in 'Winston-Salem Postcards,'" he says.

"I have three main sets of cards I collect," he shares. "There's Winston-Salem postcards, North Carolina postcards, and San Francisco postcards."

Underwood lived in San Francisco from 1974 to 1985 before moving to Winston-Salem, where he worked for many years as a popular columnist at the Winston-Salem Journal and later for the school system. Looking at old postcards from San Francisco reminded him ▶



Allison Lee Isley photos

Some of Kim Underwood's postcards that illustrate different scenes around Old Salem.



Kim Underwood points to a postcard showing the interior of a southern loose-leaf tobacco warehouse in a photo album containing his collection.

of his days there, and he became fascinated with postcards of Winston-Salem, in particular the Old Salem Coffee Pot, which proved to be an especially popular subject; he has dozens of examples of it in different styles. He also has resort postcards from Montreat, where his family visited when he was a child, among other nostalgic favorites.

"One of the things that's fun about postcard shopping is that you can just take a little break. If I need to stop what I'm doing, I just go on eBay.

"What I first started out with are linen postcards, which are the earlier postcards," he says. "They look like pieces of art….The newer postcards, they look like photographs."

Even before eBay, Underwood would occasionally find postcards in local thrift and antique stores, and started casually collecting ones that caught his fancy. With the advent of eBay, his opportunities expanded.

"I've never been willing to spend a ton of money on them, but if they were fun, and if they were cheap, then I would order them."

He's not sure how many postcards he has, but it's safe to say hundreds, many of them in folders and some in boxes. He also collects postcards showing Underwood typewriters, in keeping with his profession as a writer, and cards depicting works by early-20th-century Japanese artist Tomokichirō Tokuriki.

"I enjoy the fact that they're art, and that's also sort of an inexpensive hobby. The fact I have so many postcards means that I've spent a fair amount of money over time, but in the moment, I might spend $3 or something."





Above: One of Kim Underwood's postcards depicting the Giant Underwood Typewriter.

Left: Some of Kim Underwood's postcards illustrating different scenes around downtown Winston-Salem.

Scott Leftwich stands in the basement of his 1980s video-game-themed Airbnb rental.

Walt Unks photos

SCOTT LEFTWICH, ’80s Video Games and Pop Culture

Scott Leftwich has turned his love of 1980s video games and pop culture into a thriving career.

His home holds a basement arcade with about 150 standing arcade machines, ranging from such mainstays as Pac-Man, Space Invaders, Asteroids, and Berserk to more obscure fare. Upstairs, he also runs an ’80s-themed Airbnb that draws guests from around the world and has been featured in a TikTok video that has more than 7 million views. And he has created a popular YouTube game show devoted to video game culture.

“I was an ’80s kid, and it was just a magical time to be alive,” Leftwich says. “When I was a kid in the ’80s, I thought everything will only get better from here—music, movies, network television, video games—but it didn’t, and that’s just my opinion.

“It was a simpler time, you know. We raised ourselves, practically. We had good parents, but we had a lot of freedom as kids. We’d go out, and Mom and Dad would say ‘Come back before it gets dark, and if you don’t, I’d better get a phone call.’”

He loved that particular decade of his life so much, he says, “As time wore on, I thought, I’m going back to that. I’m not moving forward anymore, I’m going back to the ’80s, and I’m just gonna stay there.”



Scott Leftwich has amassed a collection of unique video games in the basement of his Airbnb along with a jukebox filled with 1980s hits and knick knacks.

He and his brother started collecting vintage games to relive their childhoods. “I could buy an Atari for $5 with 20 games all day long at these flea markets, and I knew if I didn’t buy this stuff, it would go to a landfill,” he says.



The Airbnb bedroom sports Star Wars draperies, Cabbage Patch Kids, Care Bears, vinyl records and posters of 1980s artists like Rick Springfield, Prince, and Thompson Twins.

Toward the end of the 1990s, nostalgia for the old games began to grow, and conventions devoted to classic games started popping up.

"So the video game console collection happened first, and in 1996 I bought my first arcade game, which was Frogger, and from '96 to 2006, nobody wanted this stuff. The arcade games, nobody wanted, it was junk. I bought a lot of games during these years, taught myself to work on them, because I wanted a man cave, and I wanted to recreate what I experienced in the '80s, just for myself and my friends."

He amassed such an impressive collection that he began opening his collection a few times a month to visitors, who, for a small fee, can spend a few hours playing their favorite games from yesteryear. Fast forward to November of 2021: He turned his 1980s collection into an Airbnb that quickly earned a cult following, drawing people from Europe, Australia, South America, Canada, China, and all over the world.

"Inside that room, you have access to every video game console ever made, and the arcade, which is massive…It's a 30-year collection, and the largest private collection on the East Coast of working golden-age '80s arcade games." The room also has magazines, board games, a VHS player with stacks of movies, and more.

After he was laid off from his job in IT, Leftwich found his arcade and Airbnb were popular enough to become a full-time job. "Sometimes people come in the door, and they start crying, because they're seeing and hearing things that are attached to a good memory, and it triggers something.

"People come from other countries just to come to Winston-Salem just to stay here," Leftwich shares. And he says he is flattered by how much they enjoy and embrace his collection.

"Hey, you're here, let's do it, we're in the '80s, let's go."

Do you want to visit? Go to longlivethe80s.com to schedule a blast to the past.



The living room area of Scott Leftwich's Airbnb rental is complete with VHS video tapes and player, video games, and knick knacks.

Walt Unks photos

Jim Taylor sits for a portrait in his 1931 Chrysler CM Roadster at the Kernersville Auto Museum in Kernersville.

Allison Lee Isley photos



1930 Ford Model A sedan hood ornament

JIM TAYLOR, Classic and Modern Cars

Jim Taylor's fascination with vintage cars dates back to when that's all he could afford.

Back in the 1950s, when he was shopping around with money he'd raised selling tobacco crops, "I didn't have but $75 to buy a car with." So he settled on a 1931 Model A Ford. "All my buddies here in the community, when I got that thing, they thought it was cool to have an old car, so they wanted one. So we went out in the countryside and started looking for Model A cars, and we found five more.

"So within about six months, there were six of us that had these cars. We would go to the mountains on a Sunday with a picnic lunch and our girlfriends, and we had our music which we took with us, a Victrola (record player). We'd wind it up and put the record on. That was our entertainment, we had a big time with them."

Adult responsibilities took Taylor away from his budding hobby for a while. "After getting married and children coming along, I had to forget about cars for quite a few years," he explains.

He started at Piedmont Aviation in 1957 towing airplanes and washing them, putting baggage on the DC3s and putting fuel in them. His job with Piedmont continued and thrived. "I had the good fortune to work in almost every department within Piedmont Aviation, and in 1980, I was promoted to vice president, and then in 1990, I became president and CEO of Piedmont Aviation."

In the mid-1980s, a business trip to London reignited his fascination with old cars. "I saw a (1934) English Austin," he says, "and just fell in love with it. I actually tried to buy it from the man, and he said 'Oh, no, it's been in our family all these years, we'd never sell it.'

"As fate would have it, two weeks later, my wife and I and a friend were up at Blowing Rock for the fall colors, and an English Austin just like the one we'd seen in London, had a for sale sign on it. Needless to say, I purchased it right away...That Model A planted a seed, and this one just germinated it a little bit, and first thing you know I was going to car shows and winning trophies. And I'd see another car that I kind of liked, and I picked it up, and it kind of got out of hand."



Allison Lee Isley photos

Jim Taylor's car collection expanded from his own vehicles to include donated and loaned cars from other collectors.

He continued his car collection and used it as the basis to start the Kernersville Auto Museum, expanding it over time with cars donated or on loan from other collectors. The museum currently has 51 cars.

"We have cars in here from seven different countries, and about 50% of the cars in here belong to the Good Lord Above, but I'm the caretaker," he says, with a laugh. "Quite a number of cars in here are on display in honor of a loved one who's passed. And some are just here for storage and display." There are also a few cars at any given time in the museum for sale.

"We don't charge an admission fee, and what we live off of are donations when people come in."

The cars on display cover a span of more than 100 years, from the early 1920s to the 2020s, most of them vintage. Almost half of the cars in the auto museum, 25 in all, are from Taylor's own collection, all started decades earlier when all he could afford was that Model A.

Visit kernersvilleautomuseum.com for details and specific weekend hours.



The cars on display at the museum cover a span of more than a century.

Allison Lee Isley photos

Tim Clodfelter and his 1970s hand puppet, one of many items within his Oscar the Grouch collection.



Tim Clodfelter operates a Fisher-Price squeeze toy.

TIM CLODFELTER, Oscar the Grouch Collectibles

And this brings us to one of probably too many collections for yours truly.

As a kid of the 1970s, I grew up in the early days of "Sesame Street," and as a child, I collected finger puppets and toys devoted to the characters from the educational TV show. My childhood favorites were Grover, a genial if unhinged monster; The Count, an exuberant vampire fond of counting numbers; and, of course, Oscar the Grouch, a grumbling but lovable trash can critter who was one of two prominent characters voiced by Caroll Spinney, one of the first puppeteers to join "Sesame Street." Spinney was also Big Bird, a full-body costume that required him to contort himself in various ways, especially when both characters shared the screen.

I had a few of those toys left over after childhood, including a Grover finger puppet that my mother had once made a felt cape for to turn him into his bumbling alter-ego Super Grover, and a Cookie Monster ceramic cookie jar that has managed to stay intact all these decades.



Tim Clodfelter's Oscar the Grouch collection is displayed on multiple shelves in "The Green Room" of his home.

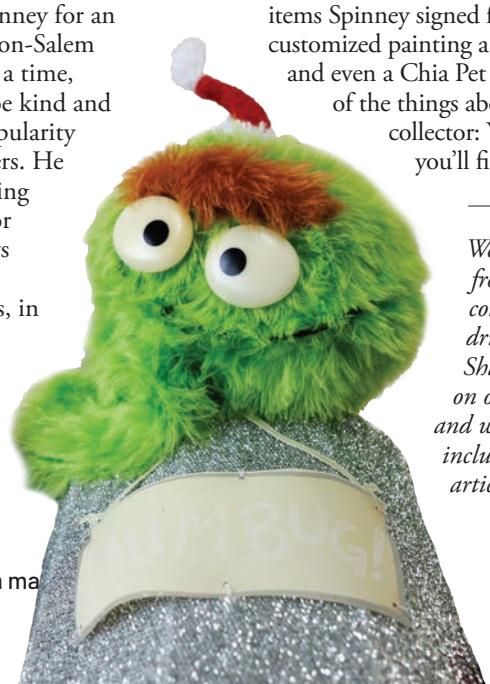
Allison Lee Isley photos

But at flea markets and yard sales, I kept running across Oscar the Grouch toys and started collecting them on a whim, eventually amassing a bookshelf full, and then a second shelf. It's fun to look for these, and I've mostly avoided the temptation to buy them off eBay since there's no sport in the hunt for those. There have been some exceptions, though. Friends often find them, but the odds of finding something I don't already have are slim at this point.

I interviewed Spinney for an article in the Winston-Salem Journal, once upon a time, and found him to be kind and humbled by the popularity of both his characters. He recorded an answering machine message for me, back in the days when people had answering machines, in the voice of Oscar: "Hi, this is Oscar the Grouch. Tim can't come to the phone right now 'cuz I won't let him! So leave a message after the tone."

Maybe a decade later, in 2018, Spinney was attending a pop culture convention in Raleigh, and I spoke to him again. He was in frail health by that point but still enjoyed meeting with his fans. I showed his wife, Debra, the photos of my shelves, and she delightedly exclaimed, "Why, you have things in there *we've* never seen!" He also got a kick out of the photos.

The collection has grown since then as more items popped up, including toys, items Spinney signed for me that day, a customized painting a fellow fan did for me, and even a Chia Pet of Oscar. That's one of the things about being a diehard collector: You never know when you'll find the next treasure.



We'd love to hear from you about your collections, and what drives you to collect. Share your own favorites on our Facebook page, and who knows, maybe we'll include you in a follow-up article in the future!



Above: A poster autographed by Caroll Spinney, the voice and puppeteer behind Oscar the Grouch, is included in Tim Clodfelter's collection.

Left: Despite the Santa hat, Oscar the Grouch exclaims "Bah Humbug!" to the holidays.



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Historic Homes Share Traditions





J. Sinclair photos

Top: Costumed interpreters carry out holiday traditions that the Reynolds family enjoyed when they called this spectacular place home. **Above:** Reynolda House Museum of American Art is decorated each year as close to what the family's first Christmas in 1917 would have looked like.

Left: The Graylyn Estate was built in 1928 by Bowman and Natalie Gray. Bowman Gray was former president and chairman of the board of R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company.

BY KAREN ALLEY

The holiday season is packed full of traditions. Some families can't wait to get their Moravian star hung on the front porch, while others might play games at Hannukah with a dreidel passed down from generations. Still others trek to the mountains each year to choose a Christmas tree fresh from the farm.

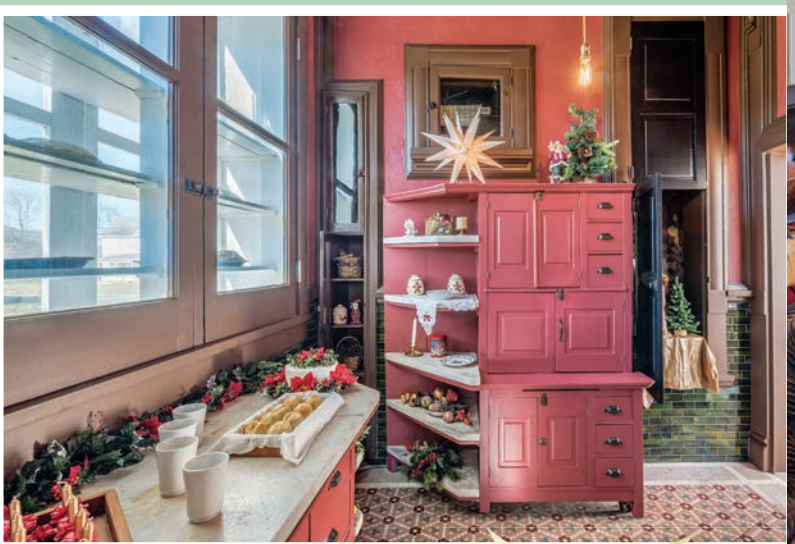
Many of the traditions that we incorporate in our holiday celebrations today actually got their start in the Victorian era. According to Brittany Hendley, community engagement manager at Körner's Folly, Queen Victoria was known to be a lavish decorator all year-round, but the holidays gave her even more of an opportunity to make things elegant.



J. Sinclair photos

Graylyn offers special holiday dining options for lunch and dinner, festive cocktails, and historic venue spaces for private holiday parties.





Left: Throughout Körner's Folly, no window or door frame is alike, ceiling heights are different, and there are even secret cubbies. **Right:** Körner's Folly is decked out for the holidays and ready to spread the joy.



J. Sinclair

This year's theme, "A Bejeweled Christmas," allows decorators to get creative with jewels and sparkles while embracing some of the Victorian flair that Körner's family loved.



Christmas at Körner's Folly takes on the unique feel of the house, with a lovely table set that's ready for guests.

Körner's Folly in Kernersville invites guests to enjoy the season.

J. Sinclair photos



She brought her love of jewels, greenery, and flowers into the holidays, including the Christmas trees that continue to be a focal point of many homes' holiday décor.

"Queen Victoria has German ancestry, so a family member suggested that she have a Christmas tree in her home, like they were doing in Germany at the time," Hendley says. "The queen was so popular that people liked to copy the things she did, and more people started incorporating trees in their holiday decorations, among other things."

Here in the Triad, we're blessed with historic homes that were built during the Victorian times or shortly thereafter. The families that lived in them followed the lead of many other British and American families by incorporating Queen Victoria's style in their homes, while putting their own stamp on the festivities. Those traditions live on today in many creative ways.

Honoring Long-Held Traditions

Walk into Reynolda House Museum of American Art during the holiday season, and you will immediately be taken by the fresh mistletoe hanging from the chandelier in the reception hall. "There are stories of staff going



J. Sinclair

Above: Reynolda Museum of American Art offers special tours and events during the holiday season. **Below:** The exterior of Reynolda Museum of American Art.





J. Sinclair

Graylyn offers a guided historic Manor House tour that includes wine and appetizers.

out to shoot down mistletoe each year, so of course we love incorporating this tradition in our decorating each year," says Bari Helms, director of Archives & Library, Reynolda House Museum of American Art.

Katherine and R.J. Reynolds moved into the house just before Christmas in 1917, and Katherine made sure to have it decorated from the very first year they celebrated the holidays in their new home. In addition to the mistletoe, two trees flanked the fireplace in the reception hall, each adorned with big bulb lights, strings of glass beads, and blown glass ornaments.

For Katherine Reynolds, Christmas meant more than just decorating and entertaining. "Thinking of others was an important part of the family's Christmas tradition," Helms says. Katherine put together boxes for doctors and nurses at the city hospitals, as well as those at the city poor house. And every person who worked at the house and farms, about 100 people including their families, received cash bonuses and presents.

In true museum fashion, Reynolda is decorated each year as close to what that Christmas in 1917 would have looked like. While none of the family's original ornaments have survived, due in part to their fragility, Reynolda was gifted a collection in 2016 by the North Carolina Museum of Art that would have been similar to what Katherine would have used.

Evergreen garlands with holly and red poinsettias fill the rooms, and wreaths are hung throughout the house. "The wreaths were hung on the inside of every window so the family could enjoy them," Helms says.

In addition to the decorations, guests can also get a glimpse of what the family was like in a collection of Christmas cards, ranging from Katherine and R.J.'s time through when Mary Reynolds Babcock made the house her home. "It's interesting to see not only how Christmas cards evolved over time, but also how they capture the personality of the families in their choices," Helms says.

Influenced by Design

Just down the road from Reynolda House sits The Graylyn Estate, built in 1928 by Bowman and Natalie Gray, former president and chairman of the board of R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company. Graylyn's Manor House was built with every room having a different influence in architecture and design. It's now a luxury hotel, and to get into the holiday spirit the staff decorates trees in different rooms with a theme that correlates to that room's particular design.

The Atlanta room, which was home to the indoor pool, has a nautical theme décor that carries over into the Christmas decorations. The tree in this room is covered in ornaments that reflect some aspect of the water, from small boats to shells.

Over in the library, that tree is decorated with flags and other

landmarks of France, England, and Italy. "The Grays loved to travel, so we use this tree to reflect the different places where they spent time," says Carrie Dupre, marketing manager at Graylyn Estate.

The largest tree on the estate can be found in The Muse, a former poultry farm that has been renovated into a conference room as well as additional guest rooms. That tree contains archival photos from Wake Forest University of the Gray family, as well as classic ornaments true to the time when The Graylyn Estate was built.

The trees aren't the only element contributing to the holiday décor. A beautiful nutcracker collection fills a table in the lobby, and hundreds of poinsettias brighten up all corners of the estate. "One of my favorite parts of the holidays is seeing our guests' faces light up when they

Enjoying a Victorian Christmas First-Hand

You can experience the lush beauty of the Christmas decorations at each of these magnificent local historic homes through a variety of events open to the public this holiday season (see sidebar). But you can also bring the beauty of the Victorian era into your own home with a few easy ideas.

- Victorians loved to use fresh greenery inside, from wrapping handrails to draping doorways and even over furniture. Hendley suggests using tension rods to wrap garland in doorways and windows, and pipe cleaners are great for hanging greenery off any available edge.
- Think of a theme or hobby that interests you and your family, and use that as the basis of your decorating. Themed trees like at Graylyn can serve as a way to tell a story while celebrating the season.
- Go simple with the wrapping. Victorians didn't have our mass-produced printed wrapping paper, so try presents wrapped in simple white or brown paper and tied with a colorful ribbon. "Often presents for the kids would be hung directly on the tree, unwrapped," Helms says. "We replicate that tradition with the décor at Reynolda today."



J. Sinclair

Graylyn's Manor House was built with every room having a different influence in architecture and design.



J. Sinclair photos

Top: Katherine and R.J. Reynolds moved into their new home just before Christmas in 1917, and the entire property was decorated for their first holiday. **Below:** Experience the magic of the season at Körner's Folly, one of the area's most iconic landmarks.

come to visit," Dupre says. "The traditions are important, especially for our guests who return year after year."

A Community Christmas

Winston-Salem's neighbor Kernersville is also home to memorable mansion, one with 22 rooms spread across three stories and seven distinct levels. This one earned the name Körner's Folly, as stories have it, because Jule Gilmer Körner built the house with each room different and unique. Throughout it, no window or door frame is alike, ceiling heights are different, and there are even secret cubbies.

Christmas at Körner's Folly takes on the unique feel of the house. While every year Körner's Folly Foundation announces an overarching theme, each room is then decorated by different people and groups from the community, each bringing their own flair to the décor.

This year's theme, "A Bejeweled Christmas," allows all of the decorators to get creative with jewels and sparkles all while embracing some of the Victorian flair that Körner's family loved. "Victorians were maximalists, and loved precious gems," Hendley says. "They not only incorporated gems in their fashion, they used lots of jewel tones, patterns, and rich decorations to fill their homes, and that's what our decorators will get to do."

For three weeks in November, the decorating teams do their work. It's like a big party, as staff brings out tubs of decorations from their own collection to the biggest room in the house, which becomes decorating headquarters. Each person or group can collect items from that pile, and many bring their own things to add to it, transforming each room into a spectacular vision of Christmas.

The decorating takes place even while the house is open to the public, creating a truly festive spirit that incorporates the community. And everyone can come see the finished product in all its glory at two special candlelight events.

"Our decorators don't hold back," Hendley says. "They create stunning displays, and it's spectacular to see how different the designs are from year to year."

—ᔕ—

These three historic homes share holiday cheer and connect the past and the present. By exploring these decorated treasures, visitors can step back in time and celebrate the enduring magic of traditions while making some of their own.

Plan to Visit

Here are a few fun holiday events at the estates. Visit their websites for more details and additional events.

Reynolda House Museum of American Art Caroling Fridays

2:30 p.m., Dec. 4, 11, 18, reception hall, historic house, 2250 Reynolda Rd., Winston-Salem. Sing along to traditional holiday songs and listen to music on the historic 1917 Aeolian organ. Included with general museum admission. Pre-registration is encouraged. reynolda.org

Körner's Folly Christmas by Candlelight

5–9 p.m., Dec. 5, Körner's Folly, 401 S. Main St., Kernersville. Tour the beautifully decorated historic home, adorned for Christmas with festive lights and holiday charm. kornersfolly.org

The Graylyn Estate Holiday Tour Pour du Jour

4–6 p.m., Dec. 6, 13, 20, The Graylyn Estate, 1900 Reynolda Rd., Winston-Salem. Guided historic Manor House tour, wine, and appetizers. Advance tickets required. graylyn.com

An Enchanted Christmas at Reynolda

5:30–8 p.m., Dec. 12 and 15, Reynolda House Museum of American Art, 2250 Reynolda Rd., Winston-Salem. Celebrate the season where the Reynolds family once made their Christmas memories. reynolda.org



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Prime of the Piedmont OPERA

Musical organization turns 50 with international celebs, rising stars, and home-grown talent

BY LYNN FELDER

Piedmont Opera is turning 50, and, from the looks of it, the company is just entering its prime.

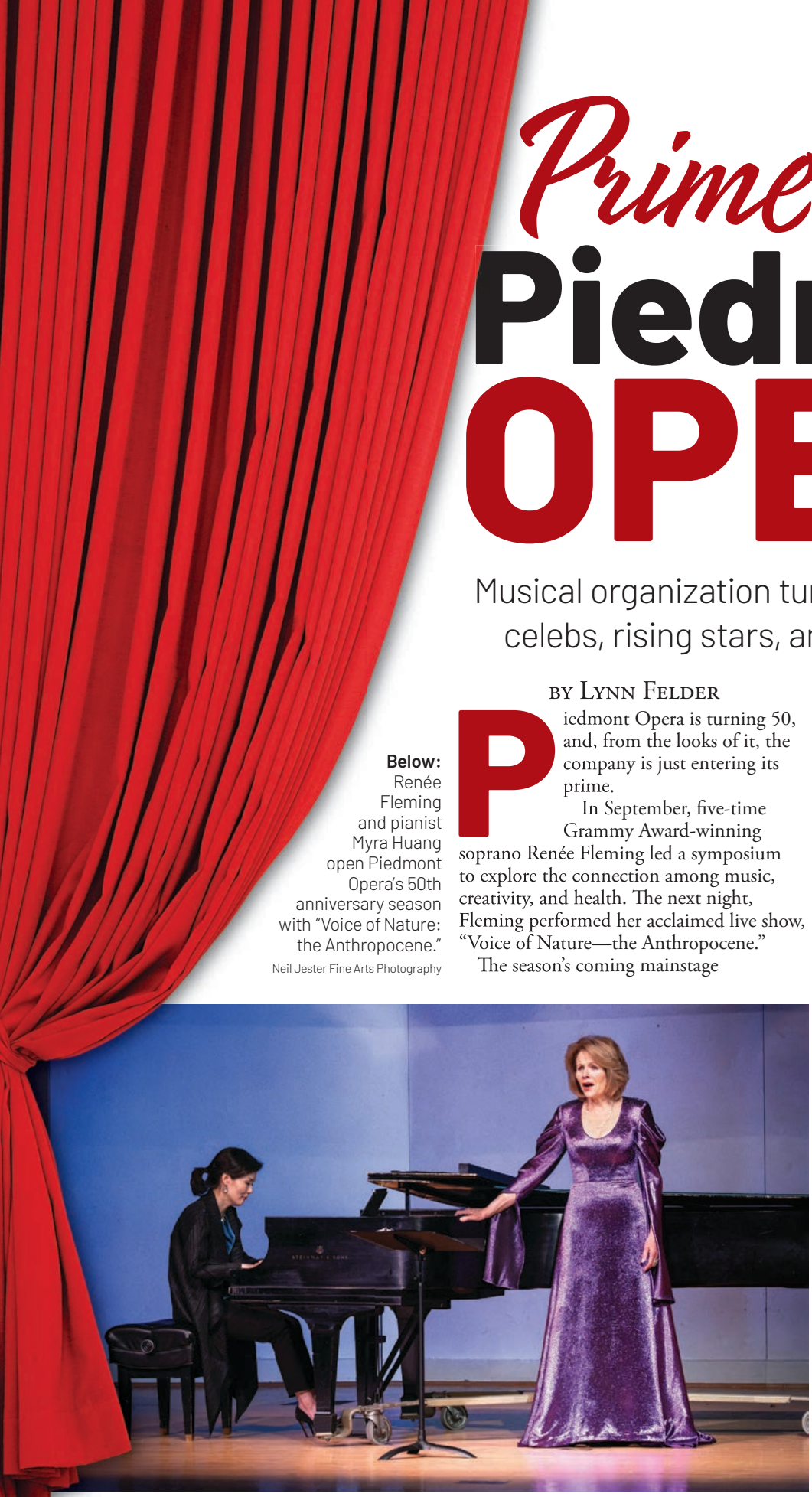
In September, five-time Grammy Award-winning soprano Renée Fleming led a symposium to explore the connection among music, creativity, and health. The next night, Fleming performed her acclaimed live show, "Voice of Nature—the Anthropocene."

The season's coming mainstage productions include the North Carolina premieres of Jake Heggie and Gene Scheer's "Another Sunrise" and "Before It All Goes Dark" in six performances from Nov. 12 to 22 at Hanesbrands Theatre, and Rossini's classic "The Barber of Seville" March 19 and 21, 2027, at High Point Theatre.

The company collaborated on the African Queens Community Concert with Triad Cultural Arts and the N.C. Black Repertory Co. to help kick off Juneteenth celebrations. Composer and former Miss America Nia Imani Franklin, soprano Sequina DuBose, N.C. Black Rep, and Joseph Mechavich, the opera's new principal conductor, partnered on a work-in-progress performance of "American Queen" during the International Black Theatre Festival in July.

The opera will partner with Camel City Jazz Orchestra to present "The Great American Songbook" on Feb. 13 and 14, 2027, at the Millennium Event Center. Opera LITE (Learn a Little, Enjoy a Lot) in Yadkinville started in May and will wrap up this season on Nov. 1. Plans for a season in Lewisville-Clemmons are under way, and a new HOPera season is being planned with musical pop-ups at local brewpubs.

In addition to a new half-century, Piedmont Opera has a new leader for the first time in 20 years. Joseph Mechavich joined the company as general manager/principal conductor on Jan. 1 after serving as interim director for 11 months and directing an exciting and accessible "Pagliacci" for the company last year.



Below: Renée Fleming and pianist Myra Huang open Piedmont Opera's 50th anniversary season with "Voice of Nature: the Anthropocene."

Neil Jester Fine Arts Photography



Neil Jester Fine Arts Photography

(L–R) Renée Fleming; Novant Health's Dr. Venkata Ravi Chivukula and Dr. Stephen Cockburn; Appalachian State University's Dr. Christine P. Leist; and Novant Health's Dr. Steven Meadows discuss the impact on music and the brain during a September 2026 Piedmont Opera symposium sponsored by Novant Health.

A little backstory

By the time Norman Johnson founded the Piedmont Opera in 1976, artistic infrastructure was in place to support its success.

Arts Council of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County, the oldest arts council in the country, was established in 1949. Little Theatre of Winston-Salem started up in 1935.

N.C. School of the Arts was founded in 1963; it joined the University of North Carolina University system in 1972, and changed its name to UNC School of the Arts in 2008. In 1968, Juilliard-trained Johnson came here to teach voice in the School of Music.

Embarking on its journey as a professional regional opera company, Piedmont Opera raised the curtain on its first performance, Verdi's "Rigoletto," in 1978, with support from the National Endowment for the Arts.

The conversion of the Carolina Theatre on Fourth Street into the Stevens Center in 1983 provided an ideal venue where the young opera company could continue to grow into a formidable regional presence.



Allen Aycock/Winston-Salem Journal file

Norman Johnson (from left), Ashton Byrum, Matilda Nickel, and Timothy Simmons rehearse "Amahl and the Night Visitors" in 1982.

Johnson died unexpectedly in 1994, and a small dedicated group of staff, donors, and volunteers kept the company moving forward.

James Allbritten, a conductor, singer, and music professor at School of the Arts became artistic director in 2004 and artistic and general director in 2016. He guided and expanded the company until his resignation in 2025. He strengthened Piedmont Opera's relationship with Fletcher Opera Institute, a graduate program for vocalists at the School of the Arts.

Allison Lee Isley

James Allbritten, artistic director, conducts the orchestra and cast member Yulia Lysenko (left) during a rehearsal of Piedmont Opera's production of "Il Trovatore" on Tuesday, Oct. 17, 2023, at the Stevens Center in Winston-Salem.

"Jamie was a huge bridge between the opera company, the School of the Arts, and the community," Miller says. "He did a phenomenal job." Allbritten also kept the opera steadily moving forward throughout the uncertainty of COVID times.

In 2008, Piedmont Opera became the first opera company to produce "Light in the Piazza," introducing the three-year-old Broadway show into the opera repertoire. Elizabeth Spencer, the N.C. author whose 1960 novella inspired the Tony Award-winning musical, attended the Piedmont Opera production.

The company produced its first Wagnerian opera, "The Flying Dutchman," in 2013. In 2017, it showed its commitment to artistic innovation with Kevin Puts' Pulitzer Prize-winning "Silent Night."

"If you look at what Piedmont Opera is able to produce and provide to our community, it is amazing," Miller says. "We are a renowned regional opera company that easily compares to much larger companies. We punch well above our weight."



Neil Jester Fine Art Photography

Bizet's "Carmen," 2026

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David Rolfe

Jane Hanes Poindexter, left, and James Allbritten prepare to cut the ribbon on the new headquarters for the Piedmont Opera at 636 Holly Ave. in downtown Winston-Salem in January 2015. Allbritten was general manager at the time, and Poindexter gave the donation to make the opera's new home possible.



courtesy Piedmont Opera

Puccini's "Madama Butterfly," 2014

Home sweet home

It's not unusual for arts organizations to rent rather than own their facilities, but that all changed for Piedmont Opera in 2015. They learned in the summer that they would have to leave their administrative offices on Cherry Street, and by December, a donor swooped in and gave them the gift of a permanent address.

Jane Hanes Poindexter, a longtime supporter, bought the fully restored Queen Anne-style house at 636 Holly Ave. for $410,000, and put it in the opera company's name.

It is still the largest donation that the opera company has received since founder Johnson endowed it with almost $1 million in 2008.

Symphony orchestras are considered the backbone of a city's musical community, and the Winston-Salem Symphony provides musicians for Piedmont Opera's productions. Michelle Merrill, the orchestra's music director, explains opera's unique place in the musical landscape.

"An opera company tells a story, from the first note of the overture up until the final bow. It is not only a story in sound but also a visual spectacle, leading to a feast for both the eyes and ears," Merrill explains. "For Winston-Salem Symphony and Piedmont Opera, the relationship is mutually enriching: Our musicians help bring the opera to life sonically, while the collaboration with opera allows our musicians to explore new creative territory, reach different audiences, and be a part of something larger than a traditional symphonic concert."

Whether it's a full mainstage performance with gorgeous sets and costumes and spectacular performers or a popup HOPera at your local brewpub, some form of operatic opportunity is coming your way during Piedmont Opera's 50th year and for many years to come.

Visit piedmontoperaat50.org or call 336-725-7101 for tickets and more info. Read more about Joseph Mechavich at winstonsalemmagazine.com.



courtesy Piedmont Opera

Ward's "The Crucible," 2012



Right: Donizetti's "Mary, Queen of Scots," 2019
courtesy Piedmont Opera

Cultivating a Christmas Classic



Shayla Bruins

BY KAREN ALLEY

From concert halls and churches to living rooms throughout Winston-Salem, poinsettias are an integral part of our holiday traditions. These sturdy plants with bright-colored bracts are most well-known for their red and white varieties, but today you can find colors ranging a spectrum from pinks and peachy tones to white with red speckles. The heartiness of the plants as well as the new varieties make them such an easy addition to any holiday décor, but the plants are part of holiday traditions, not just for their beauty but for their beautiful story.



courtesy Myers Greenhouse

For 2026, Myers Greenhouse offers 21 varieties in eight colors, with traditional favorites as well as some new options.

Coming to America

Poinsettias are not native to North America. They were first brought to our country by Joel Roberts Poinsett, who served as U.S. Ambassador to Mexico (1825–1829). He saw these beautiful plants blooming in the winter months and had some cuttings sent back to his greenhouses in South Carolina. From there, the popularity spread, as he gave plants to friends and botanical gardens.

But the story of the poinsettia goes back much further than Poinsett's discovery, before it even took his name. Legend has it that a young girl was coming to worship at Christmas, but, being poor, she had nothing to give the Christ child and felt ashamed. A wise person told her that any gift given in love would make Jesus happy. So she picked a bundle of weeds from the side of the road and laid them at the base of the nativity. They immediately burst into blooms of brilliant red. And the flowers became known as *flores de noche buena*, "flowers of the holy night."

Plant care tip

Myers and Mitchell's provide the area with gorgeous poinsettias, but once the plant leaves the greenhouse, it's up to the purchaser to keep it alive.

How do you keep your poinsettia healthy?

Feel the poinsettia daily. If it's heavy, don't water it. If it feels light, give it some water. Don't leave it in standing water though; pour off any excess water about 30 minutes after watering.

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MICHELLE MERRILL
MUSIC DIRECTOR



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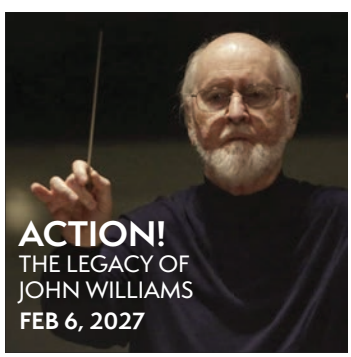
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Judy Mitchell of Mitchell's Nursery & Greenhouse prepares bows for poinsettias.

Winston-Salem's Poinsettia Legacy

Today poinsettia plants are synonymous with holiday decorations throughout the United States, and two local greenhouses provide much of the supply that adorns our local establishments. You'll find James and Teresa Myers of Myers Greenhouse on Stratford Road and Jim and Judy Mitchell of Mitchell's Nursery & Greenhouse in King busy caring for and cultivating thousands of poinsettias every year in the months leading up to Christmas.

For 2026, Myers Greenhouse offers 21 varieties in eight colors, with traditional favorites as well as some new varieties. "Our most popular are the Prestige Red and Christmas Joy," Teresa says. "But we are always adding new varieties, and some of my favorites for this year are J'adore Pink and Ice Crystals, which is a peachy color with pinks and mauves."

Over at Mitchell's, you'll find 78 varieties in all sorts of colors. And just like the Myers', customers favor the traditional colors. "Toro Red is one of our best sellers and one of my favorites," Judy says. "It has huge bracts and grows great in 10-inch pots."



courtesy Mitchell's Nursery & Greenhouse

Mitchell's Nursery & Greenhouse, located at 1088 W. Dalton Rd. in King, is overflowing with poinsettias.

Our most popular are the Prestige Red and Christmas Joy. But we are always adding new varieties, and some of my favorites for this year are J'adore Pink and Ice Crystals, which is a peachy color with pinks and mauves."

Teresa Myers of Myers Greenhouse on Stratford Road

Creating New Traditions

In addition to supplying our region with beautiful plants for the holidays, the Mitchells also help the poinsettia industry by partnering with breeders to "trial" unreleased varieties each year. (Poinsettia trials are evaluation events where universities, researchers, and commercial greenhouses grow and test up to hundreds of poinsettia varieties.) The couple got started as a trial greenhouse in 2004, after visiting the poinsettia trials at North Carolina State University. "I had worked in the trial gardens when I was a student at N.C. State, so I had some experience in the process," Judy says. "I thought it would be something we could do to help other growers, and also it's fun to have new varieties here for our customers to see different than what you find anywhere else."

As a trial nursery, the Mitchells keep track of how well the plants perform and how they hold up during the season. They also hold a public opinion poll to find out which varieties are the most popular, with visitors voting on their favorites in each color—red, white, pink, and novelties. Then they vote on the top three overall choices. "We send that information back to the breeders, and it helps them in their decisions on what to continue with in the coming years," Judy says.

Make plans soon to visit one or both greenhouses to have first dibs on the biggest selection.

Mitchell's Nursery & Greenhouse is located at 1088 W. Dalton Rd., King. Go to mitchellsnursery.com for more info. Myers Greenhouse is located at 2780 S. Stratford Rd., Winston-Salem. Visit myersgreenhouse.com for more details.



Ingredients are assembled for Moravian ginger cookies.

courtesy Old Salem Museums & Gardens



Allison Lee Isley

Chelsi Wilkerson, president of Wilkerson Bakery, holds a stack of Moravian spice cookies. Other flavors they sell include candied ginger, sugar, lemon, butter rum, and orange brandy.

The Moravian Cookie

(Official) Sweet Treat

BY JOHN SNYDER

Imagine sitting in your most comfortable chair, gazing at the warm glow of a crackling fire dancing in the fireplace across the room. The pungent scent of burning wood mingles with a hint of balsam from the evergreens nestled on the mantel, while aromatic steam rises from a cup of black coffee, carrying its robust, earthy aroma through the room. In your right hand, you delicately clutch a paper-thin Moravian cookie, its rich, spicy fragrance releasing clove, ginger, and cinnamon, with a slight whisper of nutmeg. A Christmas Eve dream? Not if you live around here!

It began in 1753, when the first Moravian settlers arrived in Bethabara, later establishing Salem in 1766. Among the many traditions they brought with them was a recipe for Moravian cookies, along with a rich culinary heritage that would become an enduring part of the region's identity.

Moravian culture profoundly shaped Winston-Salem, and few of its traditions have left quite as delicious a mark as the famously thin Moravian cookie, which has become a bite-sized symbol of nearly three centuries of history. Now, that legacy carries an even sweeter distinction: the Moravian cookie is the official state cookie of North Carolina.

Through the generations, Winston-Salem became the heart of Moravian cookie making. Not one single recipe or bakery but a network of related customs developed around the Moravian community, later commercialized by several local families and companies. The cookie's signature combination of molasses, ginger, and aromatic spices created a unique flavor. Its remarkable thinness was more than a culinary curiosity; it was practical. Rolled almost paper-thin, the cookies baked quickly and could be produced in large quantities, helping it spread from Moravian kitchens to homes far beyond Salem.

Every crisp bite tells a story, carrying the flavors of Winston-Salem's past, the spirit of a community that values tradition and enterprise, and the enthusiasm and love of Christmas: past, present, and future.

Through the years, local bakers experimented with different spice combinations and flavors, creating variations while keeping the basic characteristics of the cookie's thin and crisp texture. The original Winston-Salem Moravian cookie is highly aromatic, dark brown, and made with molasses, ginger, cloves, and cinnamon. It carries a deep, slightly bitter/smoky and caramel-like taste and is crispy and thin: roughly one millimeter thick and about two inches in diameter, often with scalloped or ridged edges. It should snap rather than bend or chew. In addition to ginger, other flavors have been established.



courtesy Dewey's Bakery, Inc.

Dewey's offers a rotating core and seasonal collection of nearly a dozen standard and seasonal Moravian cookie flavors.

Four businesses have long been the major purveyors of Moravian cookies in our area: Dewey's Bakery, Mrs. Hanes' Moravian Cookies, Wilkerson Bakery, and Winkler Bakery.



courtesy Mrs. Hanes Moravian Cookies

Mrs. Hanes' Moravian Cookies Ginger Crisps are one of six available flavors. Others are sugar, black walnut, butterscotch, chocolate, and lemon.

Dewey's Bakery

Founded by Dewey Guy Wilkerson in Winston-Salem in 1930, this hometown institution makes and sells Moravian cookies locally, nationally, online, and through major grocery chains. Wilkerson honed his baking skills at his father-in-law's Greensboro bakery and experimented with flavors and techniques, becoming known for discovering the benefits of rolling the Moravian cookie dough very thin. The business remained with the Wilkerson family for generations, with Dewey Guy Wilkerson III eventually becoming president. Dewey's was later sold, and the family left the business. Its national reputation grew, and in 2012, Oprah Winfrey selected Dewey's version of the thin, crispy treat for her "O" list. "What started as a beloved hometown treat has grown into something people across the country are discovering and falling in love with," says Scott Livengood, owner and CEO.

Dewey's Bakery has locations at Thruway Center, 262 S. Stratford Rd. and Reynolda Manor, 2876 Reynolda Rd., in Winston-Salem, and at Friendly Center, 3326 W. Friendly Ave. Suite 128 in Greensboro. Visit deweys.com for all the details.



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Winston-Salem Street School

WS Street School is designed to meet the needs of students who struggled in traditional schools due to academic or behavioral obstacles, many of whom were expelled or dropped out. The WSSS was created to target these students and offers them the chance to earn a diploma recognized by the State of North Carolina.



The Winston-Salem Street School (WSSS) is a private alternative high school serving the at-risk youth of the Greater Winston-Salem area of North Carolina.

LEARN MORE

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Wilkerson Bakery

The Wilkerson family's Moravian baking tradition began in the early 1920s with great-grandfather Dewey Guy Wilkerson. After selling Dewey's Bakery in 2011, Dewey Guy Wilkerson III and his family stepped away before returning to the craft in 2020 through popular pop-up shops. In 2021, they opened their Stratford Road bakery, now operated by Wilkerson III and his children. Open Tuesday through Saturday, it offers a drive-thru for its famously thin Moravian cookies. Wilkerson III is an expert on Moravian culture and the spices and processes behind the "original" Moravian cookie. "It's all about using quality ingredients and spices," he says. "I grind all my own spices, which I carefully select." He describes the cookie as an emotional experience tied to tradition, memories, and the warming qualities of spices. "We emphasize quality over quantity. We are small, and we want to stay that way," he adds, comparing his business model and approach to making Moravian cookies to that of a small-batch bourbon distillery.

Wilkerson Bakery is located at 593 S. Stratford Rd. in Winston-Salem. For more details, go to wilkersonbakery.com.

Mrs. Hanes' Moravian Cookies

Mrs. Hanes' Moravian Cookies traces its roots to Bertha Crouch Foltz, who began baking the thin, crisp cookies around 1920. Her daughter, Evva Hanes, learned the craft and took over in 1960. Today, the family bakery has shipped millions of cookies worldwide. "All of our cookies are handmade with a rolling pin and cookie cutter," says Mona Hanes Templin, Foltz's granddaughter. "We use approximately 100,000 pounds of dough each year, which comes out to be about 10 million cookies, all made by hand." She says the most popular flavor is ginger. "My personal favorite is the black walnut," and she says her favorite way to enjoy them is straight from the tin, tube, or bag. While they make cookies year-round, the holiday season is the busiest time. "We do 85% of our yearly business during November and December."

Mrs. Hanes' Moravian Cookies is located at 4643 Friedberg Church Rd. in Clemmons. Visit hanescookies.com for more info.

Winkler Bakery

Built by the Moravian Church in 1799, Winkler Bakery became home to Swiss-born baker Christian Winkler and his family in 1807. His descendants continued working there until the building was sold in 1926; it was restored in 1968. Located in historic Old Salem, the functioning bakery offers a living connection to Moravian heritage, including popular Moravian cookies. Open Wednesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., it's operated by Old Salem Museums & Gardens. Due to demand, the cookies are now baked at a larger off-site commercial bakery.

Winkler Bakery, part of Old Salem Museums & Gardens, is located at 529 S. Main St., in Winston-Salem. Go to oldsalem.org/winkler to learn more.



courtesy Old Salem Museums & Gardens

Old Salem's historic Winkler Bakery sells ginger, sugar, and lemon Moravian cookies.



thedish

News, notes, and findings from the local food and restaurant scene



David Wainer

Bourbon butterscotch creme brûlée at Butcher & Bull.

Butcher & Bull's new chef aims to put his own stamp on the restaurant

Butcher & Bull, the restaurant inside the Marriott downtown on Cherry Street, has a new chef, Robert Grupp, and he recently revamped the menu. As the name suggests, Butcher & Bull is sticking with the steakhouse theme, but Grupp's seasonal menu offers a little bit of everything. "We're aiming for approachability," he says. "We want to build a reputation in the community."

Grupp was most recently the corporate executive chef in Florida for Morse Restaurant Group, which operates restaurants in resort lifestyle communities. Before that, he spent about 10 years in the Virgin Islands, cooking at resorts, clubs, restaurants, and even his own taco food truck.

The menu retains a hefty amount of steaks, as one would expect for a steakhouse, but Grupp added rack of lamb, as well as a grilled cauliflower steak. Appetizers include smoked corn ribs—curled strips of corn on the cob—with a Cheerwine glaze and bacon dust, crispy shallots, scallions, and buttermilk ranch dressing.

His firecracker shrimp features the Japanese spice blend togarishi for a slightly different finish to the dish. His gazpacho features watermelon and mint. He has a 12-ounce burger that combines ground wild boar, bison, elk, and Wagyu beef with Maytag blue-cheese, veal demi-glace, and Parmesan truffle fries.

Grupp also has returned the restaurant to all house-made desserts.

continued on page 60



the Nutcracker

DECEMBER 3–6

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uncsa.edu/nutcracker

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Allison Lee Isley photos

Biscoff Cheesecake is one of 18 flavors of shakes offered at ShakeBurger in Lewisville.

ShakeBurger is officially open in Lewisville

Located at 5076 Styers Ferry Rd. (just off U.S. 421), this new 1950s-diner-inspired spot was founded by Alex Kazakos, owner of the Breakfastime chain. The restaurant features a whimsical, modern design complete with ice-cream-cone chairs and a giraffe sculpture.

Menu items include thick smash patties, such as the signature double-decker hamburger; 100% beef hot dogs; ultra-thin fries, with an option to get them "Animal Style" (caramelized onions and Shake Sauce); and 18 shake flavors, including watermelon, black-cherry compote, and Biscoff cheesecake.

The space features a drive-thru for quick takeout, plus 30 indoor and 30 outdoor seats.



Joe Maldonado, owner of Finnigan's Wake in Winston-Salem.

Small bites:

■ Finnigan's Wake 3.0 is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. Joe Maldonado now owns Winston-Salem's iconic Irish Pub downtown at 620 N. Trade St.

■ Incendiary Brewing in Winston-Salem won two Gold medals in the 2026 North Carolina Brewers Cup Competition: one for its Ofest, a German-style maerzen, and the other for its Cloak & Dagger, an amber European lager. In addition, Foothills Brewing of Winston-Salem won a Silver for its Jade IPA in the American-Style IPA category.

■ J. Butler's Bar & Grille has closed its Kernersville location at 1022-J S. Main St. J. Butler's two other locations—at 1355 Lewisville-Clemmons Rd. in Lewisville and 3030 S. Main St. in High Point/Archdale—remain open.

■ Jeffrey Adams on Fourth, a mainstay among downtown restaurants for 14 years, closed in October.

■ Zack's Famous Frozen Yogurt has closed at 305 Jonestown Rd., Winston-Salem, after 39 years in business. The owner held out the possibility that Zack's may come back in some form in the future.

■ Cactus Mexican Cuisine Bar & Grill is moving into the space at 3540 Old Salisbury Rd. in Winston-Salem where Maxburger used to be, next to Breakfastime.

■ Texas Pete's Original Hot Sauce made it to the finals in the 2026 Coolest Things Made in N.C. contest, finishing in second place in the Medium Business Category.

The Dish is compiled from reporting by Winston-Salem Journal Food Editor Michael Hastings.





Peter J. Mueller

nov. 12–15

Friends of Central Library Book Sale

2–5 p.m. Nov. 12 ($10 early bird sale), noon–5 p.m. Nov. 13, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. Nov. 14, 1–4 p.m. Nov. 15, Forsyth County Central Library, 660 W. Fifth Street, Winston-Salem. Thousands of gently used books, audio books, CDs, DVDs, etc. (Sale in basement and covered parking lot on Spring Street side of library.) forsyth.cc/library/

nov. 12–21

"Almost Famous" by Cameron Crowe and Tom Kitt

7:30 p.m. Nov. 12–14 & 19–21; 2 p.m. Nov. 15, UNC School of the Arts, 1533 S. Main St., Winston-Salem. Set in the vibrant world of 1970s rock and roll, follow young journalist William Miller as he lands a Rolling Stone assignment and tours with a rising band—discovering the chaos, camaraderie, and thrill of life on the road. purchase.uncsa.edu

nov. 12–22

Heggie's Another Sunrise & Before It All Goes Dark

7:30 p.m., Nov. 12, 14, 17, 20 & 3 p.m. Nov. 15 & 22, Hanesbrands Theatre, 209 N. Spruce St., Winston-Salem. Piedmont Opera presents the North Carolina premieres of two powerful one-act operas by Grammy Award–winning composer Jake Heggie and Pulitzer Prize–winning librettist Gene Scheer. piedmontopera.org

nov. 13–29

The Great American Trailer Park Christmas Musical

7:30 p.m. Nov. 13–14, 20–21 & 27–28; 2 p.m., Nov. 15, 22 & 29, Winston-Salem Theatre Alliance, 650 W. Sixth St., Winston-Salem. Welcome to the Christmas chaos of Armadillo Acres, where the unique residents bring the red(neck) and green to the joyous season, as they try to save their home from the clutches of an evil developer who is trying to kick them out of their homes on Christmas Eve. R-rated. theatrealliance.thundertix.com

nov. 14

Kaleidoscope Ball: Curiosity in Bloom

5:30–11:30 p.m., 120 W. Third St., Winston-Salem. The Kaleidoscope Ball helps expand access to interactive learning, creative play, and hands-on experiences for children and families across the region. VIP plated dinner by Gathering Grace, curated cocktails, live and silent auction, games of chance, dancing with Epic Proportions. facebook.com/events/2205933100202112/

nov. 14–15

Violins of Hope

7:30 p.m. Nov. 14, 3 p.m. Nov. 15, R.J. Reynolds Auditorium, 301 N. Hawthorne Rd., Winston-Salem. Remember victims of the Holocaust in a deeply musical way: by performing on surviving instruments of the Holocaust, collectively known as the Violins of Hope. Guest pianist Sara Davis Buechner also joins for UNC School of the Arts faculty composer Jared Miller's poignant work Shattered Night in remembrance of the Kristallnacht anniversary. wssymphony.my.salesforce-sites.com

nov. 15

Reynolda "On the House"

1:30 p.m., Reynolda House Museum of American Art, 2250 Reynolda Rd, Winston-Salem. Enjoy the exhibitions Flash Point: The Civil Rights Photography of Danny Lyon and Art & Democracy. Reservations are encouraged but not required. reynolda.org

nov. 19–23

Baker Street: The Musical Adventures of Sherlock Holmes

7:30 p.m. Nov. 19 & 23, 3 p.m. Nov. 21, Gray Smith Stage (outdoors), Winston-Salem Theatre Alliance, 650 W. Sixth St., Winston-Salem. Help Sherlock and Watson unlock the clues to their latest case. theatrealliance.thundertix.com

nov. 20

Art Crush

7 p.m., Downtown Winston-Salem. Features 35 curated artist spots, along with five scholarship-funded spaces for emerging artists. Live music, DJs, and performing artists round out the event. eventeny.com

nov. 22

Clemmons Farmers Market Holiday Pop Up Market

2–5 p.m., Jerry Long Family YMCA, 1150 S. Peace Haven Rd., Clemmons. Brings together the best makers, bakers, and growers in the area for your shopping pleasure. facebook.com/events/1952429902345687/

nov. 22–23

Piedmont Craftsmen's Fair 2026 (63rd Annual)

10 a.m. Nov. 22 & noon Nov. 23, Benton Convention Center, 301 W. Fifth St., Winston-Salem. Celebrate six decades of creative talent and skill with more than 100 artisans creating one-of-a-kind handmade fine crafts. PiedmontCraftsmen.org/Fair

nov. 28–29

Cirque de la Symphonie

7:30 p.m. Nov. 28, 3 p.m. Nov. 29, R.J. Reynolds Auditorium, 301 N. Hawthorne Rd., Winston-Salem. The high-flying acrobats, jugglers, and contortionists of Cirque de la Symphonie join to ring in the holiday season on this year's "A Carolina Christmas." wssymphony.my.salesforce-sites.com

Find more dates on page 66



Food & Wine Guide



LASSO GAUCHO

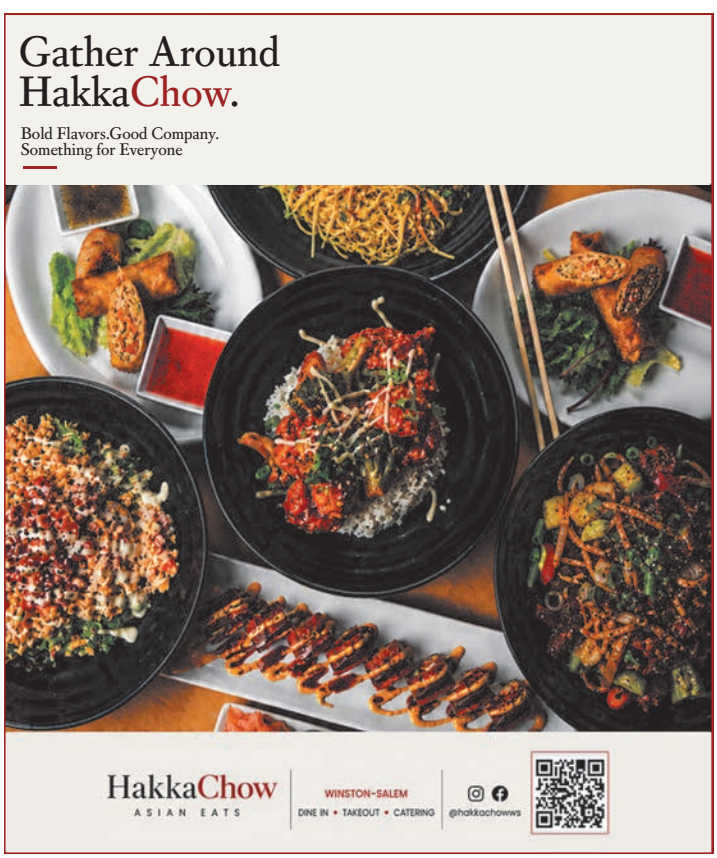
Lasso Gaucho is an award-winning "Churrascaria" specializing in meats served the Brazilian way. The restaurant offers a parade of USDA prime cuts of beef, lamb, pork, and chicken, all of which are carved tableside. Diners can also enjoy a variety of desserts, a salad bar, full bar service, and much more. lassogaucho.com

OH' CALCUTTA

Oh' Calcutta brings to life the culinary traditions of Calcutta, a city known for its joie de vivre manifested in its rich and eclectic food culture, where traditional flavors effortlessly mingle with a cosmopolitan spirit. Oh' Calcutta sheds a shining light to the increasingly diverse culinary landscape of Winston-Salem.

HAKKACHOW ASIAN EATS

We bring together the bold flavors of Chinese-American favorites, fresh sushi, savory Korean bulgogi, and aromatic Thai curries - all in one vibrant, modern dining experience. Whether you're dining in or ordering takeout, every dish is made fresh to satisfy your cravings for authentic Asian fusion. hakka-chow.com







CIBO TRATTORIA
Featuring craft cuisine from the Northern and Southern culinary traditions of Italy, Cibo Trattoria seeks to bring a unique perspective on Italian elegance and warmth to the Arts District of downtown Winston-Salem. The menu features 10 pasta dishes, three veal and chicken dishes, and two seafood entrees; all are under $30. cibotrattoriaws.com

BERNARDIN'S RESTAURANT
Bernardin's is renowned for its elegant atmosphere, impeccable service, and sophisticated, succulent cuisine. Located in the former Zevely House in downtown, Bernardin's features a private dining room for parties and a beautiful patio area. For a look at the menu, go to bernardinsfinedining.com.

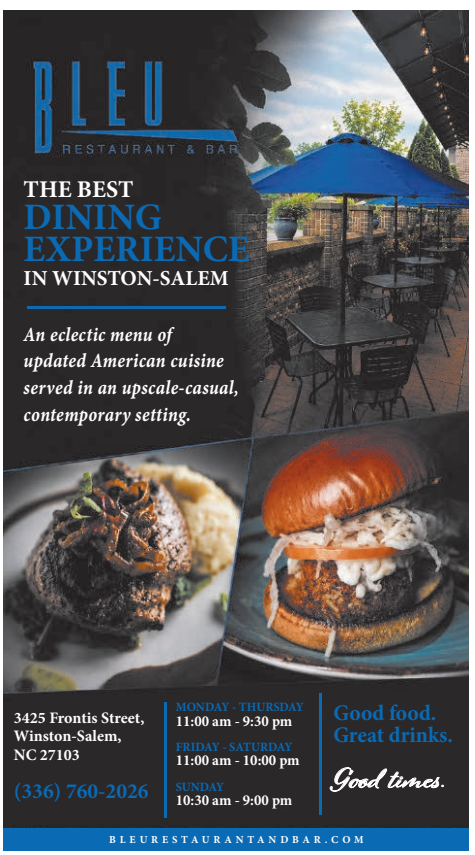
BLEU RESTAURANT & BAR
Using only the freshest ingredients, Bleu Restaurant & Bar features an eclectic menu of "inventive American" cuisine served in an upscale-casual contemporary setting. Perfect for special occasions, the restaurant is near the Stratford Road and Hanes Mall Boulevard intersection. For hours, menus, events, and more, go to bleurestaurantandbar.com.

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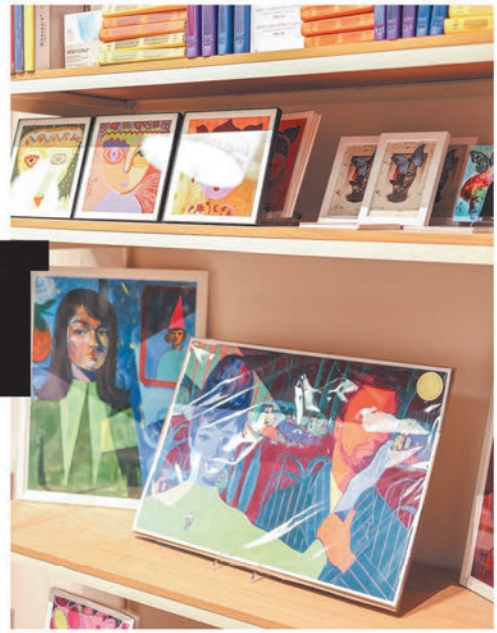






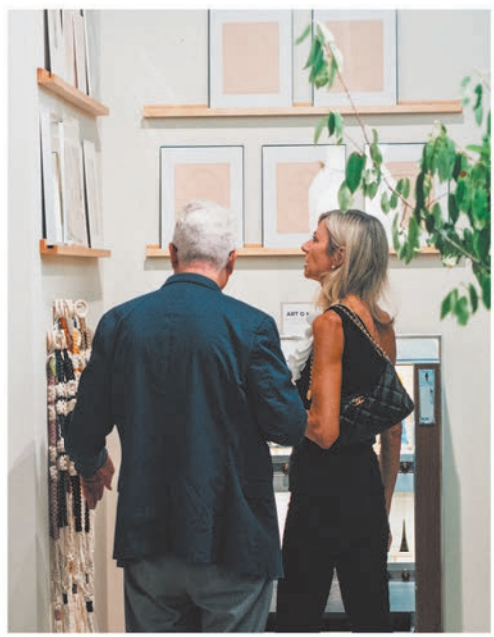


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dec. 3

WFU Face to Face Speaker Forum: Michael Scur

6–7:30 p.m., Wait Chapel, 1834 Wake Forest Rd., Winston-Salem. In partnership with the Program for Leadership and Character, Face to Face will present a special add-on event with award-winning television writer, producer, director, and actor Michael Schur, who began his career as a "Saturday Night Live" writer before gaining acclaim as a writer and producer for "Parks & Recreation" and "The Office." facetoface.wfu.edu

dec. 3–6

The Nutcracker

7:30 p.m. Dec. 3–4, 2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m. Dec. 5, 1 p.m. Dec. 6, R.J. Reynolds Auditorium, 301 N. Hawthorne Rd., Winston-Salem. Relive the magic of holidays past as "The Nutcracker" makes a triumphant return to Winston-Salem and to its original home at Reynolds High School Auditorium for the upcoming season. purchase.uncsa.edu

dec. 5

Four Christmases at Bethabara

10:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m., Historic Bethabara Park, 2147 Bethabara Rd., Winston-Salem. Experience the evolution of Moravian Christmas traditions by embarking on a journey that begins in 1753 and concludes in 1943. Free. historicbethabara.org

Kernersville's Hometown Christmas

4–8 p.m., Downtown Kernersville. Ride the Trolley around Kernersville, sponsored by Parks GMC. Free for all. Stilt walker, carolers, cookies, and hot cocoa, Christmas tree lighting, shopping, vendors, Santa's Workshop, author Nancy Naigel, and gift wrapping by Leadership Kernersville. facebook.com/events/2373203773499240/

North Carolina Brass Band: Christmas Wrapped in Brass

7:30–9:30 p.m., Brendle Recital Hall, 1775 Wake Forest Rd., Winston-Salem. Filled with festive favorites and heartwarming musical traditions, this family-friendly concert will feature the beautiful voices of the NCBB Chorale. ncbrassband.org

dec. 5–19

Frosty the Snowman

11 a.m. Dec. 5, 12 & 19, Winston-Salem Theatre Alliance, 650 W. Sixth St., Winston-Salem. Picture blustery winds and snow-kissed scenes as Frosty's charming world unfolds before your eyes, evoking all the warmth and joy of the festive spirit. theatrealliance.thundertix.com

dec. 6

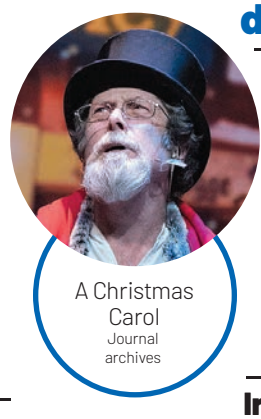
Historic West End Holiday Homes Tour

Noon–5 p.m., 480 West End Blvd., Winston-Salem. This biennial holiday event will showcase 10 to 12 historic homes or businesses in Winston-Salem's West End neighborhood, mostly dating from 1890 to the late 1920s. One ticket allows you to tour inside all the homes. historicwestend.org

dec. 8

Piedmont Wind Symphony in Residence: Moravian Holiday Brass

6 p.m., Körner's Folly, 413 S. Main St., Kernersville. Presented in collaboration with Körner's Folly, this December concert celebrates the rich heritage of Moravian holiday brass music, a tradition that dates back more than three centuries. kornersfolly.org



A Christmas Carol
Journal archives

dec. 11–20

A Christmas Carol

7:30 p.m. Dec. 11–14, 17–18 & 20; 2 p.m. Dec. 12–13 & 19–20, Reynolds Place Theatre, 251 N. Spruce St., Winston-Salem. This richly theatrical adaptation captures the wonder, warmth, and transformation at the heart of Dickens' timeless tale. intothearts.org

dec. 11–23

Irving Berlin's White Christmas

7:30 p.m. Dec. 11, 16, 17, 18, 19 & 23; 2 p.m. Dec. 13 & 20, Winston-Salem Theatre Alliance, 650 W. Sixth St., Winston-Salem. For the fourth time at Theatre Alliance, step into a winter wonderland of nostalgia and joy with Irving Berlin's "White Christmas." theatrealliance.thundertix.com

dec. 16

The Nutcracker by United European Ballet

7 p.m., R.J. Reynolds Auditorium, 301 N. Hawthorne Rd., Winston-Salem. Presented by Classical Arts Entertainment, this enchanting production features an international cast of exceptional dancers from across Europe, including leading soloists from Ukraine. facebook.com/events/1591109315313591/

dec. 19

Christmas for the City

1–6 p.m., Benton Convention Center. Local churches, organizations, and members of the arts community present this free citywide Christmas party with live music, interactive arts, original work by local artists, make-your-own toy workshop, Santa Claus and the Three Wise Men, warm drinks and desserts, and lots of interactive activities. www.christmasforthecity.com/

dec. 20

Candlelight: Christmas Carols on Strings

2:45 p.m., Millennium Event Center, 101 W. Fifth St., Winston-Salem. Candlelight concerts bring the magic of a live, multi-sensory musical experience to awe-inspiring locations like never seen before in Winston Salem. tinyurl.com/cndl-christmas-carols-on-st-21

Consciousness Raising Poetry Slam

6 p.m., 930 Burke St., Winston-Salem. Come share your poetry and your voice. facebook.com/events/1980583492818308/1980583512818306/

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