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MAY 2023



— MAY 29 —

MEMORIAL DAY

...HONORING ALL WHO SERVED...

A TIME AND A PLACE

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Gretchen Balcom
PUBLISHER



Are you all out of Mother's Day gift ideas?

You can give your favorite moms something unique and different with these original gift ideas.

Unique flowers - Flower bouquets are old news. Instead, why not visit a local garden center and pick some varieties you can plant together?

Something personal - Pick out your best family photos and make a unique photo collage. Make fun drink coasters and or bookmarks she'll treasure.

Local products - Create a gift box filled with some of the amazing local products offered here in the Catskills: handmade soaps, craft beers, cured meats, spirits, body lotion, jams, clothing, candles or anything you think your mom might like. It'll give you a chance to hit the local markets and discover some new local artisans.

Art - If you have a decent budget, consider a piece of art from a local painter, sculptor or photographer. Choose something to match the decor in her home or which holds a special meaning.

A DIY kit - Is she crafty, or the hands-on type? Gift her a DIY kit so she can make something useful, such as a candle, wool blanket or terrarium. If she's a foodie, gift her a DIY cheese or bread kit.

Accessories or beauty products - Is your daughter a mother? Busy moms might appreciate an upgraded hair dryer or flat iron, or gift personalized products based on her age and skincare needs. For example, collagen facial oil, lip care, brightening serum, foot cream, perfume and makeup are great options.

You know what else mom's appreciate? A little peace and quiet with a good book.



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Hanford Mills Museum opens for 50th Anniversary Season and plans Exploration Days

Hanford Mills Museum will open for its 2023 season on Wednesday, May 17. The museum will be open Wednesdays through Sundays 10am until 5pm through October 15. Guided tours of the water powered sawmill, gristmill, and woodworking machines will be offered each day at 10:30am, 12pm, 1:30pm and 3pm. Reserve your tour ahead of time by visiting www.hanfordmills.org or calling 607-278-5744.

Throughout the 2023 season, Hanford Mills Museum will again be hosting several Exploration Days. In 2022, Exploration Days were successful in allowing visitors to explore the mill and hear from Hanford Mills staff members and local presenters about a variety of topics ranging from music to coopering and blacksmithing. Last year's presenters at Exploration Days included musician Tim Iversen, cooper Bob Allers, and artist Lisa Tessier.

The first Exploration Day of 2023 will take place on June 17 and will focus on science and technology. Other topics spotlighted at Exploration Days throughout the 2023 season will include the sustainable use of metals and lumber.

"We are delighted to welcome visitors back to Hanford Mills for our 50th anniversary season," said Kajsja Harley, Executive Director. "We look forward to expanding our Exploration Days again in 2023 and

bringing back some visitor favorites, including our Metal at the Mill Exploration Day that will feature the Dan Rion Memorial Antique Engine Jamboree. Hanford Mills will also highlight its 50th anniversary as a museum with an exhibit and a celebration later in the season."

Check the Hanford Mills website at www.hanfordmills.org and our social media channels for details about the Exploration Days and other events at Hanford Mills Museum in 2023.

About Hanford Mills Museum

Hanford Mills Museum operates an authentic water- and steam-powered historic site, which includes a sawmill, gristmill, and woodworking shop. The mission of Hanford Mills Museum is to inspire audiences of all ages to explore connections among energy, technology, natural resources, and entrepreneurship in rural communities with a focus on sustainable choices. The museum is listed on the National and New York State Registers of Historic Places.

Hanford Mills is located at 51 County Highway 12 in East Meredith, at the intersection of Delaware County Routes 10 & 12, just 10 miles from Oneonta, and 15 miles from Delhi. For more information, visit www.hanfordmills.org or call 607-278-5744.

How longshot Lincoln made history

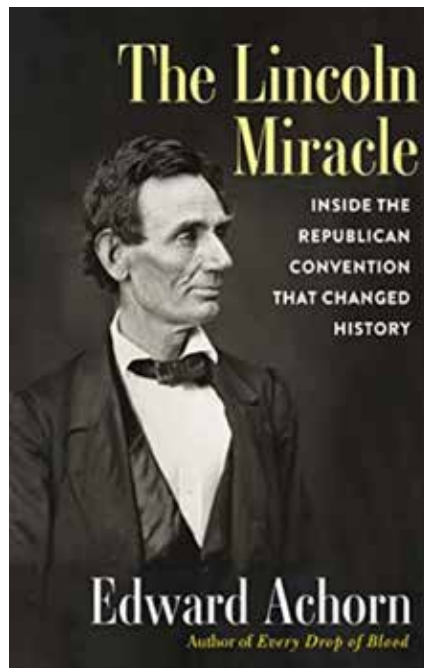
Join author Edward Achorn at the Greene County Historical Society on Wednesday, May 17 for a fascinating discussion and booksigning of his new release *"The Lincoln Miracle."*

The Lincoln Miracle tells the gripping story of the political maneuvers and psychological tricks during one week in 1860 that propelled Abraham Lincoln from defeat and obscurity to prominence and power on the eve of the nation's greatest crisis.

In honor of a famous son of Greene County, Achorn will also talk about Thurlow Weed, the brilliant political strategist who gave his all to make his friend William Seward president, only to weep on the floor of the convention when Lincoln won.

Edward Achorn is the author of four critically acclaimed books about American history. A journalist for 41 years, he is the former Vice President and Editorial Pages Editor of The Providence Journal. He was a Pulitzer Prize finalist for Commentary and won the Yankee Quill Award for distinguished lifetime service to journalism.

The lecture will take place on Wednesday, May 17 at 7pm in the Reading Room of the Vedder Research Library on the grounds of the Bronck Museum located just off US 9W 1.5 miles south of the intersection of routes 9W, 385 and 81 south of Coxsackie.



The Lincoln Miracle — an in-depth examination of Abraham Lincoln's successful quest for the Republican presidential nomination at the convention of 1860 — is beautifully written, filled with vivid and easily digested prose. (Review by The Guardian)

This program is free and open to the general public, but donations would be appreciated in support of the Beecher Scholarship — a \$1,000 annual scholarship awarded to a Greene County senior high school student who writes a paper related to Greene County history. For more information call 518-731-6490 or www.gchistory.org.

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DINE



The restaurant's interior features a cozy fireplace, ample seating and artwork created by local artists.

Things are heating up in Walton thanks to the menu at Packin' Heat, West Street's bar and grill. Jalapeno poppers, the double heat burger and spicy grilled cheeses are just a few of the mouthwatering items that have been available since Packin' Heat's opening in July 2021. Jake and Lisa Davies created the concept of their restaurant while sitting in their living room one night. The couple wanted to integrate their hobby of shooting, Jake's service in the United States Marine Corps and their desire to offer unique options to the community.

As the name implies, customers can "pack in" heat to anything on the menu with additions like signature sauces and dry rubs that are made in-house. Those daring enough to try the .38 special, .458 socom or .50 cal rubs can then choose to cool off at the bar stocked with handcrafted original cocktails and a selection of 35 different bourbons – some of which can be smoked table-side.

If you can't take the heat, don't fear their kitchen! Packin' Heat's thermostat can be dialed down to meet everyone's satisfaction. Other well-known

specialties include American Wagyu steaks, brisket salads/ sandwiches/ entrees, burgers and Sunday brunch charcuterie boards.

The restaurant recently rolled out their "Spicing Up Thursdays" which includes bike night on the first Thursday, ladies' night on the second Thursday, trivia night on the third Thursday and game night on the fourth Thursday of every month. Food and drink specials, dancing, door prizes and 50/50 raffles are among the Spicing Up Thursdays events.

The Davies kick it up another notch by offering catering and event services, hosting local benefits and contributing donations back into the community.

Veterans receive a discount year round and have been offered free burgers and fries on past Veterans Days.

If their "his and hers" motorcycles are parked outside of the restaurant, Jake is likely inside making his rounds through the tables, offering friendly conversation to patrons as Lisa is behind the kitchen doors spicing things up.

Packin Heat Bar & Grill

38 West Street
Walton, NY 13856

(607) 510-4056
www.packinheat
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Lisa and Jake Davies in Packin Heat's newly remodeled entryway

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Kitten Chronicles: A Guide to Understanding Kitten Growth and Gender

Spring and summer bring an abundance of kittens into the world and into the local shelters. When people call us to make an appointment to bring in kittens, one question we always ask is: how old do you think they are? Knowing the approximate size and age of kittens coming to us is extremely helpful. This information helps to determine where we can house the kittens, how many we can keep together, whether they need a foster home, whether they can be tested and vaccinated yet, and so forth. We would like to offer some tips on aging and sexing young kittens, in case you come across any that need your help this season.

Vet techs learn how to age kittens by their teeth, which is the best way to do it. There are times kittens are very large or very small for their ages, and aging by size/weight or appearance won't be accurate. According to ASPCApro, baby teeth start coming in at about 3 weeks of age, with adult teeth coming in at 3-4 months of age. Baby teeth are also smaller and pointier, whereas the adult teeth are wider with a flatter appearance. If a kitten is still small but seems to have a mouth full of little sharp baby teeth, you can assume the kitten is about 6-8 weeks old. You can also assume a kitten that weighs about 1 pound is about 4 weeks old, and a kitten that weighs about 3 pounds is around 12 weeks old.

However, there are lots of other little signs of age that we have learned from working with and fostering kittens for many years. For instance, kittens open their eyes at about 10 days old. Kittens that are newborn to 3 weeks old don't move around a whole lot. Kittens

will begin walking around unsteadily at about 3 weeks old, and at that age they will usually still have what we call "cubby bear ears," which means their ears are still slightly rounded and haven't popped up into full kitten ears yet.

At 4 weeks of age kittens normally start playing and running around, and their ears have emerged and are more pointed. Orphaned kittens will often start to be interested in canned food mixed with warm water or kitten milk replacement (only use lactose free milk replacement) out of a dish at about 4 weeks old. Kittens with a mom will often not be interested in eating out of a dish until they are starting to wean at about 6 weeks of age, because they have constant access to mama's milk bar!

continued...

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Aging is important, because kittens shouldn't receive their first distemper vaccine until they are at least 6 weeks of age, and they should not get their rabies vaccine until 12 weeks of age. They should also not receive certain other medications or de-wormers if they are too young.

Sexing kittens is not an exact science in some cases, but generally, female kittens pee hole is much closer to the anus, and their genitalia has a flatter appearance. Little boy kittens can sometimes trick you, but their pee hole is placed farther away from the anus, and sometimes you will see a slight bulge where the testicles will be, even in newborns. In other males, that bulge won't develop until they are several weeks old, so sometimes it is difficult to



know for sure when male kittens are very young. You can always ask someone more kitten savvy or your vet office if you aren't sure.

We hope this helps you feel a little more comfortable with aging and sexing young kittens if you come across any this season, and if your local shelter asks *'how old do you think they are,'* you will be able to answer with confidence!

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Fifi Dupree and Neil O'Fortune present

PLAY

Kittens in the Catskills

BURLESQUE

The uninhibited atmosphere of American burlesque — the bawdy comedy and variety shows featuring female striptease — made this irreverent entertainment popular from the 1860s to the 1940s. Prohibition was a serious blow and New York Mayor, Fiorello H. La Guardia, clamped down on burlesque, effectively putting it out of business in the early 1940s. Fast forward fifty years, and in the 1990s burlesque began to enjoy a resurgence in popularity.

Keeping alive the great Borscht Belt stage tradition of bawdy, hilarious and musical entertainment, Catskills-based entertainers Fifi Dupree and Neil O'Fortune bring us *Kittens in the Catskills Burlesque!* The latest in a series of sold-out shows that the duo has produced, showcasing world-class burlesque entertainers, live music, games, raffle prizes and more. This is their first production to take place onstage at the newly-renovated Phoenicia Playhouse.

A night of grown-up entertainment and a perfect introduction to the art of burlesque, Neil and Fifi's shows emphasize old-school striptease with a modern twist and the *oomph* is on the "tease."



We know what you're thinking... "This is a family publication. My mother will find this offensive!" These shows are fun and sexy without being explicit. They're a great night out for men and women alike, a perfect date night or group outing for anyone 18 to 80. And your mom probably already has tickets. We're told that the shows are wildly popular with seniors. All of their audiences have had a night to remember, and it's unlike anything else the Catskills has to offer.



Dolly Would, performing in a 2022 Kittens show.

On May 13, the cast will include true superstars of the art form, including performers who have won the highest honors at the Burlesque Hall of Fame in Las Vegas, competed on "America's Got Talent," and graced stages all over the world: Boo Boo Darlin', the Evil Hate Monkey, Fifi Dupree, Mistress Elura and Ruby Valentine. You'll enjoy Neil O'Fortune as your master of ceremonies and live music by Woodstock's own Briana DeVol.

Neil O'Fortune has been called a "nightlife impresario" and "NYC Culturemaker" by *Time Out New York* magazine. His partner Fifi Dupree, known as the Fast Girl with the Slow Roll, is one of New York's favorite old-school burlesque performers. They've been producing and performing in burlesque, and live game show and nightlife events around the

country for nearly two decades. The press calls their shows "fun-loving, accessible and unpretentious," "a blast," and "damn hot!"

Do you enjoy comically inappropriate, irreverent humor? Do you like to laugh and have a good time? Then get your tickets now... before your granny grabs the last one!

Kittens in the Catskills Burlesque

Saturday, May 13th, 2023

Showtime: 8:00 PM

The Phoenicia Playhouse
10 Church Street, Phoenicia

Tickets: \$25 General Admission

Link for purchase:

<https://kittensinthecatskills-may.eventbrite.com/>

More information:

Brett Rollins (aka Neil O'Fortune) neilofortune@gmail.com or 646-280-8436

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CELEBRATE

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PLAY

Take to the streets Memorial Day Weekend

Nothing says summer in the Catskills like the annual Fleischmanns Memorial Day Weekend Street Fair. In it's 15th year, with average attendance of around a thousand, the "first of the season" street fair is in everyone's plans.

Stroll the street

Sunday, May 28 from 10am to 4pm, Main Street in Fleischmanns will be lined with fun and unique vendors offering collectibles, antiques, jewelry, woodworking, clothing, artwork, and arts and crafts.

Food vendors offer a worldwide culinary experience including BBQ, Mexican and Peruvian cuisine, fish and clams, and much more.

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Country Express is back providing musical entertainment throughout the day. Kids will have a blast in the Bounce House. Street performers will delight attendees, and catch the free outdoor performance by Callie Mackenzie, 12 to 1:30pm at the River Run Bed & Breakfast.

Join your friends and family at the Fleischmanns Memorial Day Weekend Street Fair this year — and every year! Have fun, eat good food, support your local artisans and good causes, and most important of all... make memories!



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JUN 25	v. Polecats Base Ball Club of Delhi – Fleischmanns – 2pm
JUL 22	v. Kingston Guards ('95) – 1pm
AUG 12	v. Saugerties Base Ball Club ('64 Doubleheader) – 2pm
	Fleischmanns Volunteer Fire Department Chicken BBQ
SEP 09	v. Bovina Dairyman ('95) – 12pm

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THE NUDE PARTY

at the West Kortright Centre
Saturday, May 27 at 4:00pm



DO



A septet formed at Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina, The Nude Party plays electropop and stripped down country. Paste Magazine says they're known for their "energy and irreverent wit... and a musical and lyrical ambition that makes them one of the best under-30 rock bands around."

The Nude Party has performed with Orville Peck, Jack White, and Arctic Monkeys. They have given concerts at Bonnaroo, Lollapalooza, Shaky Knees and Newport Folk Festival. Their Communal Catskills studio is not far from the West Kortright Centre and the centre is excited to have them perform here as the last concert on their Spring tour.

Doors open an hour before the performance starts. This is an outdoor concert, bring your own lawn seating. Tickets are \$25 general admission, 10% off for members. Kids 12 and under are free. Visit www.westkc.org to purchase tickets.

Tiny's will serve hot sandwiches and drinks are available from the concession stand starting at 3pm.

Event schedules and guidelines are subject to change. Call (607) 278-5454 or contact info@westkc.org with any questions.

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27th Summer Season opens with comedy "*Good People*"

The Franklin Stage Company, Delaware County's renowned classical summer theater, announces their 27th season, from June 30 through August 20.

"We're thrilled to bring this fantastic season of performance to the Western Catskills" said Patricia Buckley, Artistic Director. "We've got some returning favorites and some completely new and exciting programming."

The season opens with David Lindsay-Abaire's comedy *Good People*, a funny and powerful play about trying to make the American dream a reality. "It's a tale about scrappy characters trying to get out of difficult circumstances, and the results can be very funny," said Buckley, "but it's also a heartfelt story of the little guy." *Good People* runs June 30--July 16 with 5 shows per week.

Then on July 21-23, FSC presents A Palo Seco Flamenco Dance Company, directed by Rebeca Tomás. "People loved Rebeca's work last year with Flamenco Vivo Carlota Santana," said Buckley, "and when we found out she had her own company performing modern, contemporary flamenco, we just knew we had to get her back." Founded in 2010, A Palo Seco has performed their "lightning fast footwork" throughout the US at such prestigious venues as Jacob's Pillow.

The next weekend, July 28-30, FSC will feature a return engagement of Julian Fleisher and Band. Fleisher, an FSC audience favorite, brings his 4-piece band who perform both original tunes and classics from the Great American Songbook.

FSC's final production of the season is a world premiere play by Kyle Bass, which FSC commissioned in 2022. Set at the start of the American Civil War, *Toliver and Wakeman* dramatizes the experiences of two actual historic characters who lived locally. Toliver Holmes was a young black man born into slavery in Virginia who escaped to New York, changed his name to avoid capture, and mustered into the Union Army's 26th Regiment of Colored Troops (NY), later settling in Delhi, NY. He is also the playwright's great-great grandfather. Sarah Rosetta Wakeman, a young woman born in Bainbridge, New York, disguised herself as a man and mustered into the

Rebeca Tomás brings her dance company, A Palo Seco Flamenco, to the Franklin Stage Company as part of their 2023 Summer Season.

PHOTO CREDIT: MALY BLOMBERG

STRANGE BUT TRUE

by Lucie Winborne

- Chicago was raised over 4 feet with screw jacks in the 19th century in order to install the U.S.'s first sewer system.
- Pixar required its entire staff to take a graduate-level ichthyology (the branch of zoology that studies fish) class to help improve the authenticity of "Finding Nemo."
- A 20-year-old gallon of McDonald's McJordan BBQ Sauce sold for \$10,000 simply because it had Michael Jordan's name on it.
- Queen is the only band in which each member individually wrote more than one No. 1 hit.
- When Joseph Stalin's first wife died, he said: "This creature softened my heart of stone. She died, and with her died my last warm feelings for humanity." He would go on to execute her brother, her sister and her cousin.
- No one actually "won" the war of 1812.
- Seventy-five percent of all sesame seeds grown in Mexico wind up on McDonald's hamburger buns.
- Earthworms in the northern part of North America are a non-native, invasive species and a major factor in forest deterioration.
- Brazil has the largest Japanese community outside of Japan.
- A city in Sweden uses light therapy in bus stops to combat depression during the winter when 19 hours of the day are darkness.
- Astronomers have discovered a cloud of fiery gas about 3,000,000 light years across that reaches temperatures in the tens of millions of degrees and gobbles entire galaxies as it moves along.
- An anonymous Middle Eastern prince donated \$500,000 for Hurricane Sandy relief in exchange for a 15-minute meeting with actress Kristen Stewart.

Union Army—the 153rd New York State Volunteers—using the alias Lyons Wakeman.

Franklin Stage Company's 27th Season runs from June 30 through August 20

Chapel Hall, 25 Institute Street in Franklin

Curtain time for all evening shows 7:30pm

Sunday shows are at 5:00 pm.

Good People & Toliver and Wakeman will also have 3:00pm Saturday Matinees

— GENERAL SEATING —

Admission is free

Suggested donation is \$25 per person

Audiences are not required, but always encouraged, to wear masks. Any updates to FSC Covid policy can be found on the website.

— FOR RESERVATIONS —

www.franklinstagecompany.org
607-829-3700

Programming at the Franklin Stage Company is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature.

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The Catskills ***An Alphabet Acrostic Story***

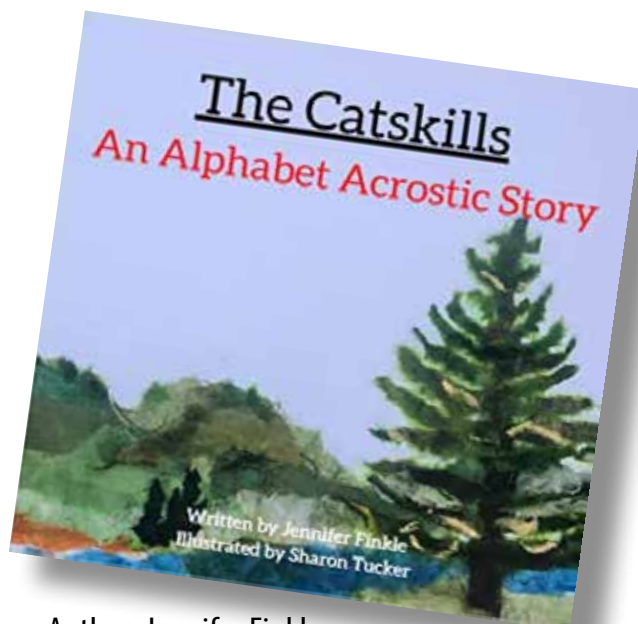
Me: Quickly looking up the word, acrostic. An acrostic poem is a poem in which the first letter of each line spells out a word when read vertically. Also me, giving it a try.

*Arranging words vertically
Creates an acrostic poem.
Reading across
Or up and down
Shows the theme.
The truth is, I'm terrible.
Instead read the
Catskills book by Jennifer.*

The Catskills — An Alphabet Acrostic Story, is a unique children's picture book written by Jennifer Finkle. It is uncommon to find a book that delights both children and adults. Finkle's poetry is delicate and picturesque with just enough challenge, naturally allowing a child to learn new vocabulary words. Children caught in the intrigue of the acrostic pattern will want to try the artistic poem structure for themselves and ahem, do a better job than I did. It is harder than it looks.

Finkle's poems are fresh as a flower and roam over hill and dale of the Catskills. Everything from animals and seasons, to jam and kite flying are formed into acrostic poetry by the author's whimsical, magical mind. This book would be a valuable addition to school and public libraries in the Catskills.

Finkle's words stand alone but it is the confluence of the author with illustrator, Sharon Tucker that make this book a masterpiece. The combined merit of both



Author: Jennifer Finkle
Illustrator: Sharon Tucker
ISBN# 9798464524750

the writer and the artist make this book not only important for libraries but as a coffee table book too. It should grace every Airbnb in the area. Tucker illustrates each poem with torn paper images that are so detailed that it looks like you could reach out and feel the fuzziness of feathers or the veins of a leaf. But wait, there's more, she doesn't just arrange torn paper into pleasing patterns, she handmakes the paper itself. If you are wondering how this duo knows what works best to simultaneously entertain while educating children, it is because they are both teachers
continued...

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HERE'S A TIP by JoAnn Derson

- To re-whiten socks or washcloths, try boiling a pot of water and adding a sliced, juiced lemon. Soak the items for at least an hour. Pick out the lemon and add the items — water and all — to a load of wash.
- If there are crushed cookies in a pack I purchase, I set them aside in a plastic baggie in the freezer to use on ice cream. Yummy! — *R.L. in Alberta, Canada*
- Wintergreen oil makes a lovely room freshener. Put two drops on a cotton ball and tuck it into the cushions of your couch, or hide it under a lamp pedestal... anywhere out of the way. The scent drifts over a week or so. — *G.T. in Delaware*
- Rub your hands and nails with lemon slices to get rid of onion or fish smells. Afterward, you can put the lemon slices down your garbage disposal unit with a few ice cubes to get rid of smells there, too.
- Reduce your energy costs of drying clothes by hanging heavy items (think towels, throw blankets, jeans, sweats) for a few hours to air dry before popping them in the dryer. You can cut the drying time by as much as two-thirds, and still get that tumble-dried softness. — *M.N. in Missouri*
- Painting season is in full swing at my house, and here are my two favorite painting tips: One is to lightly soap the windows (glass only) and let it dry. Any paint splatters will land on the soap, which can be easily wiped away when the paint is all dry. The other is to give locks, hinges and doorknobs a light coat of petroleum jelly. It works the same way, and when polished away, it leaves a nice shine to hardware.
- Press the plastic top of a pop bottle into a wet bar of soap. Set the bar down in your soap dish with the plastic top on the bottom. This way, the bar doesn't sit in water and turn into goopy mush. The plastic top comes out easily if you need to remove it. — *Y.P. in Illinois*
- For scratch paper, we use the back side of my kids' art pages. We choose the best to display, then they chop up the rest into small booklets and staple at the top. And we have notepads! -- *M.L. in Iowa*

in the Andes NY School district, with Tucker as the art teacher. It is in their souls to know and they have left a piece of their souls in the pages of, *The Catskills*.

Available at these fine places: Russell's Store in Bovina, Tremperskill Store in Andes, Diamond Hollow Books in Andes and Amazon.



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Why you should avoid potholes on the road

It can become tiresome to steer around potholes every spring. However, driving through them can severely damage your car. Here are the areas of your vehicle most susceptible to pothole damage.

- **Tires.** Driving through deep potholes can lead to a blowout or flat tire. It can also cause your tire to bulge and inflict premature wear, shortening your tire's lifespan.

- **Wheels.** Hitting a pothole can cause bends, dents and cracks in the wheel where the rim meets the tire. Driving on a compromised wheel is dangerous.

- **Suspension.** Ramming a pothole can hurt your suspension, causing your vehicle to pull to one side. This can drastically shorten the lifespan of your suspension. If you notice your car pulling to one side, take it to one of our local mechanics as soon as possible.

- **Steering.** A pothole can knock your steering mechanisms out of place, causing your steering wheel to vibrate and make your car more difficult to control.

- **Exhaust.** If you hit a deep pothole and bottom out, you can damage the exhaust pipes, muffler or catalytic converter, causing your car to make dreadful noises and release harmful pollution into the air.

Avoid potholes when you can; your car will thank you. If you hit a sharp and deep pothole, visit our local auto repair shops for a check-up.

"A road trip is a way for the whole family to spend time together and annoy each other in interesting and new places."

— Tom Lichtenheld



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As winter gives way to spring wanderlust, your plans turn to sunny days on the open road. Before mapping your course, make these checks to ensure your car is highway ready.

- **Check performance with a tune-up.** Have your vehicle professionally inspected. They'll check all essential operating systems, so the only surprises on your travels will be fun ones. Visit carcare.org for helpful resources on year-round vehicle maintenance.

- **Wash your car, inside and out.** A clean interior helps gives you clean, healthy air to breathe and keeps your spirits high when the drive feels long. A tidy console eliminates dangerous distractions and makes maps, mobile phones and tasty milkshakes more accessible.

- **Stock up on emergency essentials.** Put together the gear you'll need in case of a breakdown: spare tire, blankets, flashlights, water, and nonperishable food. Inspect your first aid kit and replace any outdated or missing items.

- **Drive in air-conditioned comfort.** If you haven't used your car's cooling system for several months, give it a go before hitting the road. If it's not working as well as you remember, have your refrigerant topped up or replaced.

- **Back up your GPS with analog maps.** Be prepared for off-grid detours or loss of mobile service. Keep a selection of paper maps in the glove box in case you must do some old-school navigation.

Finally, don't forget the fun stuff. Stock up on snacks, compile your playlists and keep a few car-friendly games within easy reach.



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DINE



Ancient Grains at Middle Brook Mill and Bakery

by Suzanne M. Walsh

PHOTO CREDIT SUZANNE M. WALSH

Lana, one of the trio of women owner-operators at Middle Brook Mill, removes a hot tray of specialty cookies baked under her brand, '607 Sweets'

"Here. Try this—"

Those three words were my first-time introduction into the current world of ancient and heritage grains curated by four quiet-spoken, hardworking and creative women — Lana, Dee, Donna, and Carol — owners and operators of the new Middle Brook Mill and bakery on 170 Main Street in Jefferson, Schoharie County.

"It's a delicate balance..." Lana says, freeing leftover pieces of dough from her fingers and settling down to talk about aspects of Middle Brook Mill's mission. "We create our bakery goods recognizing what the modern palate is familiar with, while at the same time presenting the often unfamiliar, delicious tastes of our ancient and heritage grains in their unique totality."

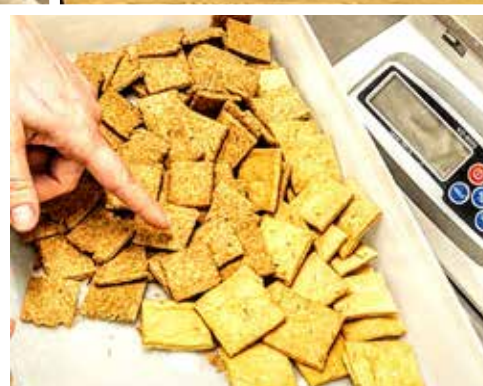
That's a balance these delightful, flour-flecked women seem to have achieved, which I will vouch for because I returned to Jefferson the following Monday — the day of the week when the bakery is currently open to the public for breakfast from 7am to noon. Delectable, mouth-watering enticements were up on their menu board, each one being described with some less-than-familiar ingredients. This is where an explanation of those “ancient and heritage grains” comes in handy: many of the things found at Middle Brook Mill are made with grains whose names, while maybe unfamiliar to most, have been around for at least 10,000 years.

Einkorn, spelt, red fife and more—these were woven in and around the menu board describing the ingredients of Middle Brook's breakfast choices. French toast was up there stuffed with orange-flavored whipped cream cheese topped with local fruit compote and maple syrup from neighboring Buck Hill Farm, along with the likes of breakfast pizza with egg on top, heritage oat cup parfait topped with fresh fruits, Caprese egg sandwich, avocado toast, and breakfast tacos, to name only a mouth-watering few creation with more to come.

Most all of the organic grains used in Middle Brook's products are sourced from New York State farms, which is another aspect of their mission. Regional farmers were located — many from Amish communities — who've been stewarding the tradition of growing the same ancient and heritage strains grown for thousands of years, though all but nearly forgotten during the food production transformation during the twentieth century. These very grains may be the ancestors of the same grains that sustained Washington's army during the Revolution, incorporated in the ingredients of their “hardtack”, a rich source of protein with disease-fighting properties, phytochemicals, fiber, vitamins and minerals. The Continental Army lived on such rations.



PHOTOS CREDIT:
SUZANNE M. WALSH



ABOVE: "George Washington heavily depended on the ancient and heritage grains grown in the Schoharie Valley for the 'hardtack' needed to feed his Continental Army. The ancient grain crackers produced at Middle Brook Mill contain some of the same flours milled from those heritage grains.

TOP: "Lana (right) displays a package of one of the uniquely flavored granolas produced at Middle Brook Mill while Donna looks on. The women are two of the three owners and operators of the new bakery in Jefferson.

LEFT: Lana explains the operation of whole grains being ground into flour in the stone mill on site and then put through the sifter next to it depending on the subtlety of taste and texture wanted.

Following the food industry's revolution in the last century, it's taken the turn of another century for more farmers, bakers and consumers to reawaken to the long-lost flavors and textures of these storied heritage grains.

And does the food made with these ancient grains taste good? Yes, it does — *outstandingly so!*

The underlying taste and texture of these various grains is the basis of everything made at Middle Brook Mill, lending not only the dark, nutty, nutrient-rich flavor as the hallmark of their products, but also imparting a satisfying feeling of sustenance and contentment to both palate and body. Even the gluten seems to be more easily digestible, and each mouthful becomes a fresh reminder of the land, the people who work it and those who craft its delicious, life-sustaining products with the natural result being that you become one with it all.

And this dovetails with the overall aim of the mission at Middle Brook Mill whose incarnation is not just only that of a stone mill, bakery and small café in upstate New York, but also an idea held by these women and their customers who strongly believe in the healing power of ancient grains and the promise in reimagined agricultural practices supporting rural economies and, in turn, strengthening community. The owners of Middle Brook Mill continue to actively encourage those local farmers no longer owning dairy herds to consider converting their idle pastures over to the cultivation of ancient grains. It's a good idea--good for the soil, good for health, and good for the revitalization of rural economy.

Seen from the outside, the bakery's backstory can be read within its beautifully repurposed 1860 setting. The elegance of the Greek Revival homestead standing at the gateway of a small village is an impressive testament to the community's commitment to honor and preserve Jefferson's found, lost, and found again 19th century charm and heritage. It also doubles as a history lesson learned through the retelling of how the building was rescued from imminent demolition back in 2019.

Open seven days a week, Middle Brook Mill does both wholesale, retail and walk-in business where patrons can purchase a variety of creatively flavored granolas, crackers, convenience mixes and

flours milled on the premises along with kitchen-crafted grain breads, baguettes and morning treats. In addition, Lana has available her own brand of uniquely flavored, organically sourced cookies and scones. These are the "607 Sweets" being heard and seen more and more around the region at outlets featuring products sponsored by "Taste NY", the official eat-local, drink-local program encouraging New York State production celebrating its tenth year.

It seems New York State has an abundance of wonderful experiences found nowhere else, and the products, as well as the aproned women who bake these products in the kitchen at Middle Brook Mill, definitely offer some of the most gratifying and enjoyable ones.

Middle Brook Mill and Bakery

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Caesar Pasta Salad

A divine twist on a classic salad.

INGREDIENTS (SERVES 4)

SALAD:

1 box (16 ounces) Campanella (or other short pasta of your choice), cooked and drained

2 cups romaine lettuce, torn

16 cherry tomatoes, halved

1 cup store-bought croutons

2 chicken breasts, cooked and diced

Grated Parmesan cheese, for garnish

DRESSING

1/4 cup mayonnaise

1/4 cup plain Greek yogurt

1 clove of garlic, minced

1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

2 tablespoons Dijon mustard

2 tablespoons olive oil

2 tablespoons lemon juice

Salt and pepper, to taste



DIRECTIONS

Combine pasta, lettuce, cherry tomatoes, croutons and chicken in a large bowl.

In a separate bowl, whisk together the dressing ingredients. Pour dressing over pasta and toss well.

Add salt and pepper to taste.

Arrange salad in serving bowls and top with grated Parmesan cheese.

Rum Slush

Chill out over the holiday weekend!

INGREDIENTS

24 oz. grapefruit juice

24 oz. pineapple juice

12 oz. can frozen orange juice, thawed

12 oz. can frozen lemonade, thawed

1/2 cup granulated sugar

6 cups cold water

16 oz. white rum

7-Up or Sprite for serving

INSTRUCTIONS:

Combine grapefruit juice, pineapple juice, thawed orange juice, thawed lemonade, and sugar in a large freezer-safe sealable container. Stir until sugar dissolves. Add water and rum, and stir to combine.

Cover and freeze overnight.

To serve, use an icecream scoop to fill a glass 1/2- to 3/4-full with slush and fill the remainder of the glass with chilled 7-Up or Sprite. Serve with a straw.



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Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain 2023

Headwaters Arts Center will host a five-day drawing workshop from May 15-19 at Headwaters Arts Center, 66 Main Street in Stamford, NY. Lisbeth Firmin will be using Dr. Betty Edwards' techniques from her book, *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain*, combined with her own drawing skills, to encourage both professional and beginning students to find their unique ways of seeing. This workshop will feature a combination of lectures, demonstrations and studio exercises over the five days. There is a \$240 fee for this workshop which includes a copy of the workbook. Pre-registration is required. For complete details, and to register, visit roxburyartsgroup.org or call 607.214.6040.

Lisbeth Firmin is a full-time painter and printmaker known for her urban landscapes. She teaches painting and printmaking at various art institutes, universities, schools, and artist residencies around the United States. She is the recipient of many awards, grants, and fellowships, including a Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant, a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship for Printmaking (Lily Auchincloss Fellow), and full fellowships to the MacDowell Colony, National Seashore Cape Cod Dune Shack Residency, Vermont Studio Center, and Saltonstall Arts Colony.

Firmin is an accredited teacher of *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain*, was trained by Dr. Betty Edwards and has been teaching this for more than 25 years.

For more information about the *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain* workshop taking place from May 15-19, connect with Headwaters Arts Center at 607.214.6040, headwaters@roxburyartsgroup.org. Registration details are available at roxburyartsgroup.org.



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History of Our Hamlets

*Photos and recollections courtesy of Diane Galusha,
Historical Society of the Town of Middletown*

This was the Pink Street School, District 9 on Denver Road (County Route 36 between Kelly Corners and Denver), jointly operated by Middletown and Roxbury.



The unusual interior photo (above) is undated, as is the image of the students posing outside the school, (left) probably pre-1910.

The school operated until the early 1940s when the building was sold and the students were bussed to Roxbury Central School. The building was converted to a residence and still stands.

"The roots of education are bitter, but the fruit is sweet."

– Aristotle



10 fun facts about bumble bees

Bumble bees are large yellow and black flying insects that harvest nectar and pollen from flowering plants. They play an important role in keeping the world's ecosystems healthy. Here are 10 interesting facts about this hardworking insect.

1. Bumble bees have extremely fast metabolisms and must eat almost continuously.
2. Bumble bees use buzz pollination. They place their upper body close to the inside of the flower and rapidly vibrate their flight muscles, producing a strong vibration. This shakes the pollen free.
3. Bumble bees have two stomachs: one for eating and one for storing nectar.
4. Unlike honey bees, bumble bees can sting more than once because their stinger is smooth, not barbed. But they rarely sting, and only female bumblebees (queens and workers) have a stinger.
5. Bumble bees have five eyes: two large eyes on either side of their heads and three eyes on the top of their heads.
6. Except for new queens, which hibernate underground over the winter, bumble bee colonies die in late fall.
7. Bumble bees beat their wings 130 or more times per second.
8. Bumble bees get their name from the word bumble, which means to buzz, hum or move about awkwardly.
9. Bumble bees are covered in a layer of oil that makes them resistant to water.
10. The largest bumblebee species can grow to an inch and a half in length.



Find out how to attract bumble bees into your yard to see these insects up close. Check out how to grow a pollinator garden at the Natural Resources Defense Council's website: www.nrdc.org

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