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Gift Guide

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A RIVER REPORTER LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

PUBLICATION DATE: November 20, 2014

THE RIVER REPORTER

Stuart Communications
Creative Services
FULL-SERVICE MARKETING SOLUTIONS

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Holiday Gift Guide

a special publication of

The River Reporter, is published by
Stuart Communications, Inc.

Entire contents ©2013

by Stuart Communications, Inc.

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Handmade and homemade holidays

Handmade and homemade gifts are a labor of love, and giving them says to the receiver, "You are someone special. I made this just for you." But that's only half the story; making gifts with your own hands can be just plain fun. And what better way to get into the spirit of the season than by starting well in advance with your gift-making projects?

In addition making these one-of-a-kind gifts may save you money. But that's not the point, is it? If you're looking for a bargain, you could just as well go to the dollar store to shop.

Remember, too, that handmade and homemade includes not only the gifts you can make yourself, but also items made locally by the countless artisans and entrepreneurs who live and work in the Upper Delaware River valley. You will find the gift items they offer for sale

in many locations and venues throughout our region this time of year. (See our list of some of the holiday artisan sales along with many of the season's events on page 20.)

In this issue of our **Holiday Gift Guide**, we present you with some creative ideas to try yourself and we introduce you to a few local artisans whose creativity shines through in the handmade gifts they have to offer.

Finally, as we approach this sometimes all-too-busy season, we at **The River Reporter** hope you will take time to enjoy it. We wish you peace and joy for the holidays.

Jane Bollinger

Section editor

Holiday Gift Guide

Letter from the Editor



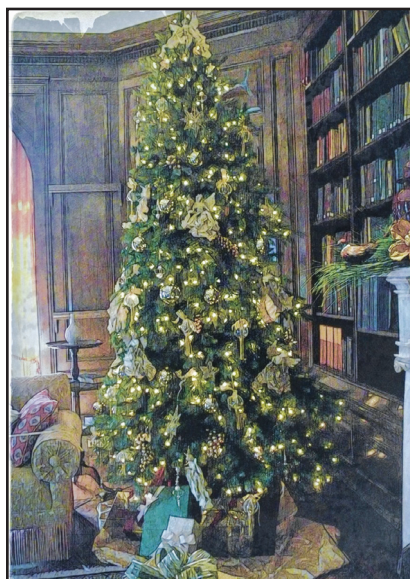
Jane Bollinger

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The Jewish holiday of Chanukkah, the Festival of Lights, begins at sundown on Tuesday, December 16.

Whether you observe Chanukkah, Christmas, or your own personal holiday this time of year, we at **The River Reporter** wish all of our readers and friends the happiest of holidays.



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Creating recycled wreaths

Local artist uses vintage holiday ornaments

By JANE BOLLINGER

Photographer and artist Brandi Merola is a collector of everything vintage. On the top of her list are vintage Christmas tree balls from the 1930s through the 1970s, which she has collected for 25 years, stashing them in her attic for decades. And then three years ago, she decided to start recycling those brightly colored ornaments into shiny, shimmering wreaths for display during the holiday season. When she offered them for sale, they were a big hit.

Amazingly, each wreath contains between 70 and 100 Christmas tree balls affixed to a ring of foam core that Merola cuts by hand. "It's a great way to display historic ornaments," she explained. Although they look similar in many ways, every handmade, 15-inch circle is different, because other vintage holiday treasures from her collection—Santa Claus figures, reindeer, angels, or cute little pixies, elves and knee huggers—also find their way into these colorful and playful wreaths.

"I was always attracted to these holiday ornaments because they are so beautiful and shiny," Merola said. "I just love them as objects—their color, texture and their history."



In all likelihood, this angel came from a yard sale, one of Merola's favorite summer pastimes; she's always on the look for more treasures.



Photos by Brandi Merola

Among artist Brandi Merola's favorite vintage collectables are knee huggers. The elfin toy that graces this holiday wreath gives it a playful theme. Merola, a talented photographer, also sells knee hugger holiday greeting cards, which can be found at Heirloom Acres on Narrowsburg's Main Street.

She told how she once "went all out" at a yard sale and spent \$3 on a holiday ornament. Only later on eBay did she discover what she had: an old German ornament worth \$125.

Merola spends the summer months haunting yard sales in Sullivan County, NY and Wayne County, PA in search of vintage holiday riches. "On average, I can go to eight yard sales a day," she reported. "I'm really committed to going to yard sales. I get up super early and go. It's fun. There are a lot of people



An amazing accumulation of Christmas tree balls collected over decades awaits placement on the artist's holiday wreaths.

who do this. There's a whole (yard sale) culture around here that's fun for a lot of people."

"Anyway, I just keep buying more (ornaments) and making more wreaths. I'm especially in love with knee huggers. I look all year 'round for them. It's an obsession of sorts," she laughed.

In addition to yard sales, "sometimes people give me Christmas balls after they see my wreaths," she said. "They say, 'Here, these were my grandmother's.' There's a certain



Each wreath contains between 70 and 100 Christmas tree balls plus other little figures affixed to a ring of foam core.

sentimentality with these wreaths that people connect with."

Having her customers take care of her wreaths is important to Merola, and so this year she's improved the packaging her wreaths come in with a more substantial box. "If you take care of them, they last forever," she said, adding a special tip about storage: "Don't store them in a very hot or very cold environment. Under the bed in the box is ideal," she added. "And (of course), don't bash it around." (As if!)

Interestingly, Merola doesn't decorate a Christmas tree at home. Instead she puts out a living-room display of Santa Clauses from her collection.

Merola's wreaths can be found in two Narrowsburg locations—at the Valley Artists' Holiday Sale at the Delaware Arts Center's Alliance Gallery, 37 Main St., now through December 23 and at Heirloom Acres at 23 Main St.

(For those interested in Merola's other artwork, which also makes use of her vintage figurine collection, check out her website (www.scenesfromtheattic.com; click on "portfolio"). There you will find photographs of figurines she has posed to tell a story. "I really do see this as recycling," Merola says.)



Merola's wreaths are on sale at the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance in Narrowsburg, NY through December 23.

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Evergreens, ribbons and holiday decorations

Wreath-making sisters uphold a family tradition

By JANE BOLLINGER

Geri Neumann and her sister Barbi Neumann Marty are already immersed in the holiday season, busy making wreaths from freshly cut greenery for their dozens of customers. Their small business, Wreaths by Geri and Barbi, sells the traditional evergreen kind of decoration to hang outside the front door to welcome holiday guests, or perhaps to bring indoors where everyone can enjoy their piney scent and appreciate their addition to a home's seasonal décor.

"Barbi and I got started making wreaths about 10 years ago," Geri explained recently, "when we needed a little Christmas cash. It's a family tradition. When we were little, our mother, Ellen Kreiter Neumann, used to make wreaths and sell them in New York City or in Monticello or in Parksville. It was something she learned from her mother, Alice Dillon Kreiter."

"At the beginning, we started out working in Barbi's basement, just making them for friends and family," Geri recalled. "Barbi, who worked at a school back then, would sell them there." Today, the sisters work mostly in Geri's kitchen, and they still sell their wreaths relying mostly on word of mouth and repeat customers. Last year for the first time, they sold wreaths at the SUNY Sullivan Holiday Arts and Crafts Fair, which they considered to be a big success.

"These days, we make anywhere between 40 and 60 during 'wreathing season,'" Geri said. "It's a lot of work." She estimates it takes an hour of work to complete each wreath—from picking the greenery to putting on the finishing decorating



Contributed photos
Red and green, the colors of Christmas, grace this one-of-a-kind handmade swag. The Neumann sisters make wreaths, swags and cemetery blankets for sale this time of year.

touches.

For now their business is about as big as they want it to grow, because "we do it all ourselves. It's a specialty thing that can only be done by hand. Everything's handmade, even the bows," she emphasized, adding, "I have a special way that I make them."

Around Halloween, Geri started picking greenery, clipping large and small pieces of hemlock harvested from trees on wooded property owned by their family. Each large construction bag she fills is enough to make four to six wreaths. By the second week of November, the sisters are deep into the wreath-making process. Together they attach bunches of greenery to wire coat hangers until they fill out the wreath's base. ("We're always looking for those old heavier-metal coat hangers," Geri added as an aside.) Once this foundation is done, Geri takes over most of the decorating and Barbi takes on the task of "delivery girl," as she put it. "One of our best sellers is if I add cranberries," Geri observed. Burlap bows are also popular, giving a wreath a rustic, country look.

For the Neumann sisters, there's a lot of work, jammed into a short "wreathing season." Most people buy their wreaths by Thanksgiving or early

December. Geri confessed that they "burn the midnight oil or wake up really early" to accomplish the work. "By the first week in December, I am toast," she reported.

Barbi and Geri consider an important part of their own holiday observance to include decorating family cemetery plots. "We have a great-great-great-uncle buried in Liberty," Geri said, "and we always put a wreath on his grave." The pair also donates a number of wreaths to clubs and organizations for fund raising projects during the holiday season.

Once Christmas has come and gone, work for next year starts with buying decorations at the end-of-Christmas sales. In addition, as Geri traverses the highways and byways of the Upper Delaware River Valley throughout the year, she's always on the lookout for new inspiration. "In my head, I'm always thinking about what would look great on a wreath. I'll drive by a bunch of trees, or come across something that will give me a new idea."

"I look forward to this season every year. There's such pleasure to see what each wreath finally looks like. It feels good when somebody receives it and can't wait to give to their mother or to hang on their house."

Passing the family tradition along, Geri reported that her own two children are learning some of the ropes. It's gift-giving season after all.

(For more information about Wreaths by Geri and Barbi, email twomeow@aol.com.)



Geri Neumann and Barbi Neumann Marty have followed in their mother's and grandmother's footsteps, making and selling elaborately decorated wreaths for the holiday season.



This blue and silver wreath would make a suitable gift for someone's front door to mark either Chanukkah or Christmas.



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Wrap it up

By LAURA SILVERMAN

In this era of mass production, malls and mail order, a gift of something homemade and delicious really stands out. With just a little planning and a few quality ingredients, you can surprise and delight your friends and family. And it's surprisingly satisfying to give something that you've made with your own two hands and with love.

Although cookies are holiday classics, I prefer to make gifts of food that have a slightly longer shelf life. That way, they can still be enjoyed once all the tinsel has been put away. I've got lots of ideas, so without further ado, let me inspire you.*

Caramels

Does candy-making seem way too daunting? Here's a little secret: all it takes is a clip-on thermometer and a tireless stirring arm. (Doesn't even need to be yours!) Sweets are especially popular at this time of year, and caramels seem to be universally loved. I've been using the best butter, cream and organic corn syrup to make mine for almost two decades. Though the flavor possibilities are endless, I have settled on golden vanilla and chocolate chili. I finish both of them with a sprinkling of flaky sea salt that really takes it over the top. I've also been known to roll a select few in chopped black walnuts. I wrap them in pre-cut wrappers (available on, you guessed it, Amazon) and pack them in paper coffee bags that I buy from a wonderful online source for packaging of every kind, www.nashville-wraps.com.

Fruit leather

For something sweet without all the sugar, try making your own fruit leather. Friends wax poetic about the little rolls I give away, wrapped in parchment paper and tied up with a bit of kitchen twine. You can make a puree of almost any fruit, fresh or dried, and flavor it with spices and



Photos by Laura Silverman

Caramels, pictured above, and wrapped individually, at right, are a traditional holiday gift prepared by the author in her home kitchen.

Turn almost any pureed fruit into intensely flavored fruit leather, pictured below. Just add spices and follow a simple drying procedure.



aromatics. Sometimes a little honey is called for. Spread the fruit puree in a thin layer on a baking sheet and dry it in your oven on its lowest setting. (If you have a dehydrator, even better.) Check it regularly until it achieves the desired leathery consistency. Some of my favorite flavor combinations include plum-&-cardamom, apple-&-chili and dried-apricot-&-vanilla.

Crack

The name of this snack should give you an indication of how irresistible it is. Big crunchy mounds of buttery popcorn are stuck together with maple syrup, spiked with cayenne and studded with toasted pecans and tart dried cranberries. It hits that addictive trifecta of sweet, salty and spicy—and it's somewhat good for you. Or it would be, if you could stop yourself from eating the entire batch. It's best to pack it into tins or wax baggies tied with ribbon and give it away.

Marshmallows

Making your own marshmallows is a lot easier than you might think. It's just sugar, gelatin and a whole lot of whipping. You can infuse them with interesting flavors—cinnamon, peppermint, once I even made them with carrots—and a single batch makes about 100 delectable, pillowy squares. A clear cellophane bag containing just a few along with a tin of cocoa is a gift that keeps on giving.

Savory granola

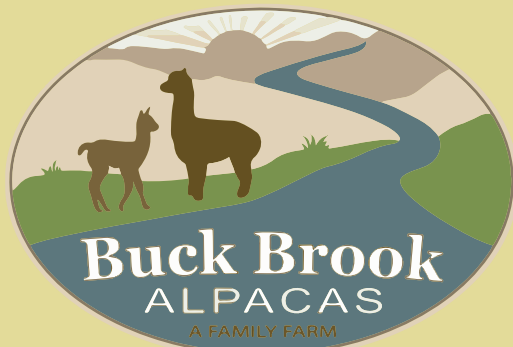
People love granola and they go crazy for my savory version, which truly is healthy. It's loaded with nutritious grains, nuts and seeds. Lemon zest, maple syrup and a mix of warming spices elevate this into a great snack on its own, but it also adds a

Continued on page 10



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toasty crunch to everything from yogurt and oatmeal to soups and salads. Again, those paper coffee bags make the perfect package. I usually write the name and ingredients on the outside in my fanciest cursive.

Salts

I can't say enough about concocting your own flavored finishing salts. They are a quick and easy way to transform any dish or even a cocktail, adding a wonderful crunch and a pure burst of flavor that dissolves on the tongue. Salt can be a vehicle for whatever you love best—cumin, saffron, lemon, chocolate, rosemary, pink peppercorns... All you do is grind your element of choice with a good quality sea salt. (I use my coffee grinder; after you wipe it out, grind some raw rice to neutralize any remaining odors.) Toast spices first to bring out a warm intensity. I love cumin salt on lamb, cacao salt on mashed potatoes and chili salt on the rim of my margarita. These salts make wonderful

gifts packed into little glass jars (available at www.uline.com).

Pickled cauliflower

I can do lots of jams and chutneys over the summer, but it's not too late to put up something even now that the cold weather has arrived. The voluptuous cauliflowers you can still find at farmers' markets make a terrific pickle. I tweaked a recipe from Kevin West's cookbook "Saving the Season," which calls for a vinegar brine infused with a pinch of saffron and some curry spices. You can ad lib with the spices, but don't leave out the raisins, which add a welcome note of sweetness. Crunchy, tart and intriguingly spiced, this versatile golden pickle emerges from the jar ready to eat with cheese, with Indian food, with roast chicken. And it looks gorgeous in the jar. What more could you want in a gift?

*For additional recipes, please visit my blog, www.gluttonforlife.com.



Raisins add a welcome note of sweetness to crunchy, tart and intriguingly spiced pickle. Cauliflower is readily available in most grocery stores even when the weather turns cold.

Curried Cauliflower Pickle

Yields 4 pints

- 1 large cauliflower (about 2 pounds)
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt, plus more for blanching water
- 2 cups white wine vinegar
- 2 cups water
- 5 tablespoons sugar
- 4 teaspoons hot curry powder (or 2 teaspoons a mild curry powder and a couple of crushed dried red chilies)
- 24 saffron threads
- 4 green cardamom pods, crushed
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled and split
- 4 teaspoons black sesame seeds
- 2 teaspoons nigella (black onion) seeds
- 1/2 cup golden raisins
- 4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil



Popcorn, butter, maple syrup and chopped nuts form the basis for a tempting concoction called Crack. Tart dried cranberries add a touch of red in this irresistible holiday treat.

Crack

Serves 8-10 (ha!)

- 8 cups plain popped popcorn
- 1 cup pecans, toasted and coarsely chopped
- 1 cup dried cranberries
- 3/4 stick salted butter
- 1 1/2 cups pure maple syrup
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt, or to taste
- 1/2 teaspoon cayenne, or to taste
- Coarse sea salt for finishing, optional

Toss popcorn, pecans and cranberries in a large bowl.

Line bottom of two baking pans with foil and lightly oil. Melt butter in a medium heavy saucepan over medium heat. Add maple syrup, salt and cayenne and boil (still over medium heat), without stirring, until candy thermometer registers 300°, about 20 minutes or more.

Pour syrup over popcorn mix and quickly stir with a silicone spatula to coat. Divide immediately between baking sheets, spreading in a single layer. I like to sprinkle a bit of coarse sea salt on at this point. Cool completely, and then break into bite-size pieces. Store in an airtight container for up to a week.



Wash and drain the cauliflower head, then cut the florets from the stem with a paring knife, starting at the base. Try to keep the pieces more or less the same size.

Working in batches, blanch the cauliflower florets in heavily salted boiling water for 2 minutes. Drain.

Combine the salt, vinegar, 2 cups water, sugar, curry, saffron and cardamom in a saucepan, and bring to a boil. Remove from the heat and allow to steep for 15 minutes; then bring the syrup back to a boil.

Evenly divide the garlic, sesame seeds and nigella seeds among 4 prepared pint jars. Pack the cauliflower into the jars and layer the raisins throughout. Ladle the hot syrup over the top, leaving 3/4" headspace. Pour 1 tablespoon olive oil into each jar, seal and process in a boiling water bath for 10 minutes. Allow to cure for at least one week before opening.

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Ramona's

DIY house of cards

By RAMONA JAN

Some of us have a hard time throwing out any or all of the beautiful Christmas cards we receive throughout the years. I do—and subsequently I have stock-piled them. I've even added to my already fat collection by buying other people's vintage holiday cards as well as miscellaneous playing cards depicting not only yuletide gala but other brightly colored themes. (I'm not a hoarder! Well, maybe just a paper hoarder.) This year I decided to do something with my card collection—dare to send back to the people (from whom I received these paper treasures) an upcycled version of their own card in the shape of an architectural ornament. (Also, I must confess I always wanted a paper village just like the one my mother used to make—therefore, you might not get your ornament this year! However, if you follow this DIY with greeting and/or playing cards, you can make these little gems yourself while waiting for your upcycled jewel to arrive in the mail. (I probably won't send them next year either so don't hold your breath! I want to enjoy the village for a spell. Hmmm, maybe I'll never send them—Grinch that I am! So here are the tricks...)

Upcycling greeting cards



1 Using a paper cutter or other cutting device such as scissors, separate the face from the back of the greeting card. Don't worry about making a clean cut because further alterations are in order. (My favorite cards are the ones that already have houses drawn on them although any and all cards will work).



3 Fold the card into equal thirds as pictured. Tip: Use a popsicle stick to firmly press the crease. Let's call this the 'front box' since it contains both the front and sides of the 'house.'



5 The back panel should measure in width the same as the front of the card (the one you've already folded into thirds) PLUS a quarter inch on each side. (BTW, although the back panel must be the same width as the front, it doesn't have to be the same height). On both sides, fold the excess quarter inch down (as pictured), and apply glue or double-sided sticky tape to each quarter inch flap. Tip: If you decide to use glue, choose a tacky fast-drying type such as Glue Stick or Fabri-Tac. You can get Multi-Grip (same as Fabri-Tac) at some of our local hardware stores.



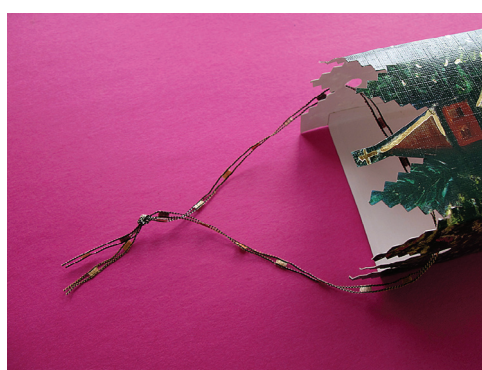
2 Using pinking shears, craft scissors or just plain scissors, I loosely cut around the tops of the trees. Tips: Go for asymmetrical. It doesn't have to be perfect.



4 Pick a complimentary card for the back panel. Tip: stay in the same color family.



6 Join the back panel by pressing the glue-laden flaps to the front box. Tip: Since I wanted my flaps to be hidden, I tucked them inside as opposed to gluing them on the outside of the front box.



7 To make your village home into a Christmas ornament, punch a hole on the left and right sides of the front box and simply attach some kind of fancy string.



8 Placed upright, your house should stand on its own. (With this particular ornament, I could have created working doors by using an exacto knife and cutting along the lines of the doors already drawn. However, I liked the lopsided way in which they were painted so I chose to leave them. Besides, I cut plenty of doors and windows in some of the other miniatures.)

Tip: For extra strength and added interest, you can line your greeting cards with pages from old calendars before you cut into them.

Upcycling playing cards



1 Choose 5 playing cards with a similar color scheme. Don't worry too much about theme. Designate one card as the front, two cards as the sides, one card as the back and one for the roof.



2 Fold the roof card perfectly in half.



4 Make a door and then add this card to the left of your row by taping it securely.



5 Tape both ends together from the inside. Now you should have a shape that will stand on its own. Don't worry that it's wobbly. The roof will render that situation.



6 Use tacky glue to attach the roof as pictured.



7 Windows and doors can be any size or shape, and the tops of walls can be cut into random curves and/or points. Any "card house" can be made into an ornament with strategically placed holes for a ribbon or decorative string.



8 When the walls are asymmetrically shaped disallowing a balanced roof, use the roof card as a support system inside the house instead!



Happy Holidays!

A homemade holiday party

By ISABEL BRAVERMAN

When I was younger, I would throw a New Year's Eve party each year. I felt like such a grown-up, playing hostess to my group of friends making sure they were having a good time. Can I get you some more potato chips? Your glass looks empty; may I refill it with some Coke? Ok, well, I'm not sure if I was that gracious as a 12 year old, but I tried. The festivities included lots of candy and games, including charades, the Park Bench game and, since my friends and I had recently watched and were obsessed with the movie "Zoolander" (the one where Ben Stiller plays a male model), a "walk off"—two of us face off against each other and do our best runway model walk (you should try it sometime).

My parties enjoyed a span of a few years or so and then we got older and realized it was "so lame." Now, as an adult, I think about what a good homemade holiday party looks like. Below are steps to throw your own party at your house along with a timeline of when each step should occur.

Location (30 days before party)

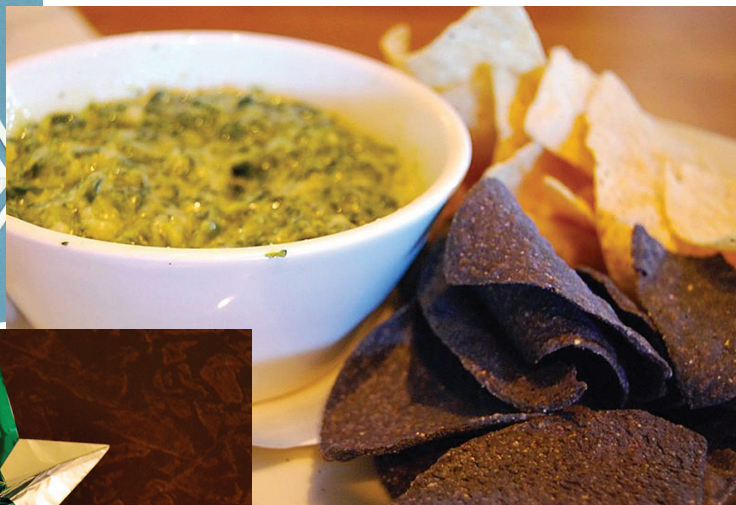
The problem with throwing a holiday party at your house is that you don't want your house to be ruined. Spilled wine, crumbs in the carpet, broken furniture, oh no! Then there's the worry of the cost, whom to invite, and loud music possibly annoying your neighbors. But then, there's the comfort of a homey atmosphere, of welcoming friends inside and not having to venture out into the cold (you could even stay in your pajamas if you really wanted to). You probably spend time and money in making your house look good, so this is the perfect time to show it off. Plus, your friends will appreciate not having to pay for drinks and food.

Guest list (25 days before party)

First, you have to decide what kind of party you want. A small, intimate gathering? A party for your co-workers, or some other social circle? An all-out rager? Once you decide, that will give you an idea of how many people to invite: 10 friends, you're 30-person office, or all of your Facebook friends. Remember, don't leave anyone out.



When I was a kid I threw infamous New Year's Eve parties and always made paper snowflakes and hung them from the ceiling. For directions on how to make paper snowflakes, go to www.marthastewart.com/276331/how-to-make-paper-snowflakes.



Photos from Wikimedia Commons

No party is complete without chips and dip. For a recipe for spinach and artichoke dip, go to www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/alton-brown/hot-spinach-and-artichoke-dip-recipe.html.

Origami stars are a festive and bright decoration to hang or display. For instructions on how to make paper stars, go to www.origami-instructions.com/origami-stars.html.



Invitations (20 days before party)

With modern technology, there are so many ways to invite people to a party. You could do it the modern way and make a Facebook event (but make sure to make it private). You could send an online invitation using websites such as Paperless Post or Evite. Or, go old-school and send out real tangible homemade invitations through the mail (what's that again?).

Entertainment (10 days before party)

The entertainment can be anything, and you have to decide if you want to make it the main focus of the party. If it is, book a local band or DJ; maybe get a piano player or jazz singer, or cello player. Or, make a homemade playlist. One of my favorite things to do is make playlists (it should be my job). Make a holiday-themed or winter-themed playlist. Decide the direction you want to go with the many versions of holiday songs: classic, jazz, pop, instrumental, techno? My favorite is the Sufjan Stevens holiday album; seriously, check it out.

Food and drink

(8 days before)

Next, decide on the food. Homemade food is easy to do and less expensive than catering. Some ideas: bruschetta, hummus, pesto dip, spinach and artichoke dip, caramelized onion dip, pretty much lots of dip. If you are doing a dinner party, the best advice I have is to make a dish you know is your best. Or, you could do what my friends' hippie parents do: make it a potluck.

In terms of drinks, the question is alcohol or no alcohol. Let me settle it for you: alcohol (although I do agree that you should offer a non-alcoholic option). The holidays are the time of warm alcoholic drinks like eggnog, cider, buttered rum, etc. I would also have wine and beer. Or maybe you are a cocktail aficionado. Set up a homemade bar and get someone to play bartender. And, no holiday party is complete without dessert; cookies are a holiday favorite. Let me settle something else for you: no one likes fruit-cake.

Decorations (5 days before)

The good thing about a house party is that it is most likely already comfortable, no hard wooden bar stools there. Up the ante by adding comfy pillows on the couch and maybe even the floor, a warm crackling fireplace (if you have one) and lots and lots of twinkling lights and candles (pine scented anyone?). Then, add in homemade decorations like wreaths, tinsel, garlands, and my favorite from my past New Year's parties—homemade paper snowflakes hung from the ceiling. Basically, your house should look like Christmas exploded on it.

Day of the party

On the day of the party, the most important thing to remember is: relax! Give yourself ample time to get ready, so you aren't rushed and stressed. When the guests arrive greet them warmly and make them feel comfortable, then lead them to where to put their coats and the food and drinks. Introduce people who don't know each other. Then mingle, laugh, and have a great time.

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It's in the cards

By JANE BOLLINGER

The theme of this year's **Holiday Gift Guide**—handmade and homemade—doesn't necessarily mean you have to do it yourself. We are blessed to live in an area with so many artists and artisans who, in pursuit of their passion, also sell their handmade works to be enjoyed by others.

Such is the case with a number of artists who make and sell greeting cards, and we set out to find a couple who do so for the holiday season.

Greeting cards for the holiday season

Helena Clare Pittman began making greeting cards 17 years ago, when she moved into what had been her sister's house in Liberty, NY. She recalled her first year of being without a teaching job and her search for something to work on. "That first autumn the porch was covered with beautiful leaves. People were making a lot of money back then with studio sales where I came from on Long Island. So I took myself by the hand and said, 'Helena, you're going to have to do this,' and I committed myself to doing what a good friend was doing."

At the end of her weekends in the Upper Delaware River Valley, Pittman took bags of colorful autumn leaves back with her to Long Island, where she bought card stock, envelopes and glue sticks. "At first, I was in a state of magical grace. I just loved the process of gluing down these leaves. I made hundreds of cards." She sold them at studio sales in Huntington, NY. "I sold almost all of them. They just flew away."

"Every year it got more elaborate. Then, I couldn't do leaves anymore; the magic had gone out of that." Next she started producing her own illustrations and watercolor flowers, and after that a series she called "Random Acts" in which she started cutting up her own artwork and gluing down the scraps, and finally she created cards with cats on them.

Holiday cards are what Pittman is working on right now. "In the past, I've done a watercolor series of poinsettia and holly." About five years ago, she started making dove cards for the holidays, cutting them out of paper and making collages mounted on cardstock. "I like to say that I don't print the cards themselves. I print the images with a very fine color copier, and then I cut out and paste them and hand make the card... I really get into it," she said. "I love it."

Pittman also teaches this technique at the library



Doves with hearts, poinsettias and a cat under a Christmas tree are among the holiday greeting cards artist Helena Clare Pittman has been making this holiday season.



TRR photos by Fritz Mayer



Seen here at work in her studio, Pittman will offer two classes in small-format watercolor and watercolor collage, as well as mixed media, for holiday card-making at the Catskill Art Society in Livingston Manor on Saturday, November 22 and Saturday, December 6 from 2 to 5 p.m. The fee for these two classes is classes \$75 for CAS members, \$80 for non-members. Contact 845/436-4227 for information.

Continued on page 18

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It's in the cards

Continued from page 16

in Grahamsville, NY, working with a group at the Daniel Pierce Open Artists Workshop, which formed three years ago. "We make art that doesn't require drawing," she explained.

This year, Pittman will again sell her holiday cards at the Valley Artists' Holiday Sale at the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance, 37 Main St., Narrowsburg, and this year she's considering opening her studio for a studio sale.

"They make a perfect house gift to give when you visit someone," she said in closing.

(Helena Clare Pittman painted the mural, which features 250 characters from children's books, in the children's room at the Daniel Pierce Library in Grahamsville, NY, where she also teaches children's classes. She is the author and illustrator of 17 children's books written since 1986 when her first book was published. That story, told in "A Grain of Rice," weaves in an explanation of arithmetic progression, and it is used as part of curriculum in fourth and fifth grade classes in New York City schools, as well as in other school districts around the

country. It has been in print for 28 years, and will be offered for sale at the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance, 37 Main St., Narrowsburg now through December 23, along with Pittman's holiday cards.)



Pittman's watercolor series of holiday greeting cards includes holly and poinsettia paintings. Her dove cards (see page 16) are collages in which she cut the figures out of paper and pastes them on cardstock.

Making holiday cards for charity

Linda Cobb's handmade holiday cards come with a story. Cobb and her childhood friend Linda Halvorsen (they're both retired schoolteachers, now neighbors in Damascus Township, PA) create Zentangle® holiday cards to raise money for a charity of special importance to them. Halvorsen's son Dan has a rare disease called Paroxysmal Nocturnal Hemoglobinuria (PNH). It was diagnosed when he was a junior at Honesdale High School. (Today he is a medical school student. All proceeds from each year's special card project go directly to the PNH Research and Support

Foundation (www.pnhfoundation.org/about_pnh). As Cobb who is Dan's godmother explains it, "It's a one in a million bone marrow disorder... We take any opportunity to raise money for this cause," she explained. "This is one of those projects."

The art method Cobb and Halvorsen have been using for these special cards for the last several years is called Zentangle (www.zentangle.com) in which the artist (reportedly anyone can do it) produces structured patterns called tangles, which grow organically as you, the artist, make each pen stroke. Zentangle designs can be done on

many surfaces including, but not limited to fabric, glass, wood and ceramics. The designs are not limited to little pieces of paper. The Zentangle art form was created by Rick Roberts and Maria Thomas.

The two Lindas are a creative pair. One year they use Cobb's design, the next year Halvorsen's design. Once they've chosen the design, they make a master and have the cards printed.

Some years they produce pieced paper cards, individually made, but this year again they will do a Zentangle. "Last year was a wreath; the year before was a Christmas tree."

There is a caveat to this story. For the one year in which their friend commissions holiday cards, "we don't sell that design to anybody else." They are, however, happy to sell cards from previous years, or accept a commission, but for that year, that design is set aside to raise funds for PNH.

The two Lindas do not have a commercial outlet to sell their cards, but can be reached at fallsdalstudios@yahoo.com. Cobb asks that any email messages contain "River Reporter Zentangle" on the memo line. Checks are made payable to PNH.

As for Dan in medical school, "We're all rooting for him," Cobb said.

(Linda Cobb is a retired school teacher. Greeting cards are just one of the creative projects she takes on, living here in the Upper Delaware River Valley.)



Contributed photos

Linda Cobb and Linda Halvorsen make holiday greeting cards to raise money to fund research for a rare disease. In 2013, their holiday card was a wreath and in 2012, a Christmas tree.

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Holiday Happenings

Fri., Nov. 21

Holiday Shop-around

HONESDALE — More than a dozen local vendors offer holiday gift items at Central United Methodist Church, Wesley Room, 205 11th St. Donation at the door, \$3, benefits Bethany Public Library. 6-9pm.

Sat. Nov. 22

Christmas Bazaar

WHITE LAKE — A Christmas Bazaar at Faith Hall, 6 Mattison Rd. (across from Bethel Medical on Rt. 17 B), 10am-3pm. Check out items that would make affordable Christmas gifts, decorations and all kinds of wares.

St. Joseph's Holiday Bazaar

MATAMORAS — St. Joseph's Holiday Bazaar at St. Joseph's Church, 307 Ave. F, 9am-3pm. Many craft vendors, bake sale and flea market. Raffle drawing for grand prize of \$500, 2nd prize of \$100 and 3rd prize of \$50. Breakfast and lunch concessions available. 845/856-8549.

Fri., Nov. 28

Santa parade (rain date Sat., Nov. 29)

HONESDALE — Parade line-up 5pm at Top Notch parking area, Fourth Street. Parade starts 6pm & proceeds up Main Street to Central Park for annual tree lighting ceremony. Businesses, community groups, school groups and non-profit or musical groups may march or enter a float Contact Gail Tucker at 570/253-5492 or email ghp@visithonesdalepa.com.

Sat., Nov. 29

Christmas Bells & Brass

MILFORD — The Delaware Valley Choral Society's concert at United Methodist Church, 204 East Ann St., 2:30pm. Will feature familiar carols arranged for English hand bells, brass, and organ in addition to major works by Daniel Pinkham (Christmas Cantata) and John Rutter (Gloria). Tickets: adults \$15, students \$10. 845/856-5696.

Holiday open house at Wayne County Historical Society

HONESDALE — Holiday Open House at the museum, 810 Main St., 4-7pm.

St. Nicholas Faire

HONESDALE — St. Nicholas Faire at Grace Episcopal Church, 827 Church St., 9am-3pm. Includes kids' activities, cookies and sweets, luncheon, soups to go, inspirational items, holiday merchandise, collectible dolls, baskets, more. Proceeds benefit church outreach. 570/253-2760.

The Nutcracker ballet

MILFORD — The Delaware Valley Dance Company puts on a production of "The Nutcracker" at the Delaware Valley High School auditorium at 12 noon and 7pm. Tickets in advance: \$12 for adults, \$8 for seniors and children. Tickets at the door: \$14 for adults, \$10 for seniors and children. 845/856-3373.

Trains on Main

LIVINGSTON MANOR — Trains on Main pulls into Livingston Manor for its 7th year. Grand opening party at the CAS Arts Center, 2-4pm. You can see the trains up close, talk to the model builders, listen to live music, and get your photo taken with Santa.

Sun., Nov. 30

Artisan Holiday Craft Boutique

CUDDEBACKVILLE — D&H Canal Visitors Center, 58 Hoag Rd., 10am-3pm. Hand-crafted items, primitive & folk art, handmade soaps & candles, jewelry, holiday ornaments and more; many items under \$5. Benefits Neversink Valley Museum. (845) 754-8870 or www/facebopl/cp/pages/The-Neversink-Valley-Museum-of-History-Innovation.

Christkindmarkt with Santa Express

PORT JERVIS — Nearly 100 vendors feature handcrafted gifts and holiday treats in this traditional German Christkindlemarkt, downtown near Erie Trackside on Jersey Avenue, 10am-6pm. Live entertainment. www.facebook.com/ChristkindmarktPortJervisNY.

'Noel! Noel!'—Wayne Choralaires Christmas concert

HONESDALE — Wayne Choralaires Christmas concert at Central United Methodist Church, Church Street. Two performances: 2:30pm & 7pm.

Santa Express

PORT JERVIS — Santa Express arrives Front Street, 5pm near Christkindmarkt. Info at www.facebook.com/santaexpress, 845/557-3321, or email santaexpress@hvc.rr.com.

Thurs., Dec. 4

'Noel! Noel!'—Wayne Choralaires Christmas concert

CARBONDALE — Wayne Choralaires Christmas concert at St. Rose of Lima Church, Church Street. 7pm.

Fri., Dec. 5

Holiday Open House

MILFORD — Pike County Developmental Center (PCDC) Holiday Open House at the PCDC Craft Store, 107 West Ann St. Hand-crafted gifts for all occasions. Complimentary tea, coffee and desserts will be served. Proceeds benefit adults with disabilities. 570/296-6319.

Sat., Dec. 6

Christmas in Callicoon (snow date Dec. 7)

CALLICOON — "Dickens on the Delaware" theme showcasing art, music and retail locations. Townsfolk in Victorian garb and carolers stroll thru town. Local crafters sell wares in a pop-up store. Visit the gift-wrapping station, a Victorian pastry station, a holiday portrait station, a holiday card station, a hot chocolate station and more. 2-8pm. E-mail:callicoontrading@gmail.com or call 845/887-9017.

Santa Express

ELDRED — Santa Express arrives 5pm at Corner Piazza at Eldred's Four Corners

GLEN SPEY — Santa Express arrives 6pm at Circle Park

BARRYVILLE — Santa Express arrives 6:45pm at Barryville's Four Corners

YULAN — Santa Express arrives 7:30pm at Konrads Kitchen

NARROWSBURG — Santa Express arrives 8:15pm at 7 Erie Ave.

Info for Santa Express: www.facebook.com/santaexpress, 845/557-3321, or email santaexpress@hvc.rr.com.

'Sing With the Angels'

LIBERTY — The Transformation Choir will present the Christmas cantata "Sing With the Angels" by Joel Raney at the Liberty Methodist Church on North Main St., 7pm. Other seasonal music will also be included. The concert is free. Donations will be greatly appreciated to benefit the Youth Economic Group (YEG). 845/887-434.

Sun., Dec. 7

Santa Express

MILFORD — Santa Express arrives 5pm at Luhrs Tru Value, 300 W., Hartford St. Info for Santa Express: www.facebook.com/santaexpress, 845/557-3321, or email santaexpress@hvc.rr.com.

'Sing With the Angels'

LAKE HUNTINGTON — The Transformation Choir will present the Christmas Cantata "Sing With the Angels" by Joel Raney at the Lake Huntington Presbyterian Church, 2pm. Other holiday music will be included. It's a free concert with donations to benefit area food pantries. Refreshments will follow.

Advent & Christmas Concert

SHOHOLA — Christmas music concert at St. Jacobi Lutheran Church on Route 434, 3pm. Area church musicians will participate. Free will offering for local food pantries. Refreshments served afterwards. 570/559-7676.

Free Family Holiday Social

DINGMANS FERRY — Free Family Holiday Social at the Dingmans Ferry United Methodist Church, 115 Myck Rd., 12 noon-3pm. There will be carols, live nativity, trim the tree, crafts, soup/salad and cookies. This event is sponsored by the Family Ministries Committee.

'Noel! Noel!'—Wayne Choralaires Christmas concert

HAWLEY — Wayne Choralaires Christmas concert at Blessed Virgin Mary Queen of Peace Church, Church Street 2pm.

Sat., Dec. 13

Kris Kringle 5k fun run & walk

MATAMORAS — Registration \$20 if postmarked on or before Dec. 1; \$25 on day of race. Registration 7:30-8:45am at Matamoras Airport Park; race starts at 9am. Sponsored by Knights of Columbus Council #13935 to benefit Children's Disabilities Development Ctr. & other local charities. For details, call 570/445 9551 or email Bill at wdg2001@gmail.com.

Santa Express

KAUNEONGA LAKE — Santa Express arrives 5:30pm at Bethel Veterans Park

LIBERTY — Santa Express arrives 7pm on Liberty Main Street

Info for Santa Express: www.facebook.com/santaexpress, 845/557-3321, or email santaexpress@hvc.rr.com.

Sun., Dec. 14

Holiday Artisans Market at The Cooperage

HONESDALE — Over two dozen regional artisans selling handcrafted gift items, art and food. Materials sourced locally and recycled when possible: Includes porcelain, pottery, baskets, furniture, felted bags, artist prints & photos, dog coats, dried flowers, Yule logs, maple syrup, candy & chocolates, breads & pastries, and more. 11am-5pm. 570.253.2020 or www.thecooperageproject.org

Monticello Holiday Celebration & Santa Express

MONTICELLO — Village of Monticello and Boys & Girls Clubs host a holiday celebration 2:30-4:30pm at Ted Stroebele Community Center on Jefferson Street. Following the celebration, at 5pm Santa Express arrives at the courthouse on Broadway. For info, call the village clerk at 845/794-6130, ext. 305.

Santa Express

SOUTH FALLSBURG — Santa Express arrives 6:30pm at Brian Ingber Park. Info for Santa Express: www.facebook.com/santaexpress, 845/557-3321, or email santaexpress@hvc.rr.com.

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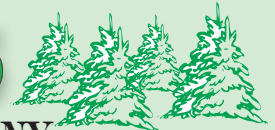
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There is a Christmas Tree in the Pecks market in Narrowsburg you can take a tag and return an unwrapped gift to Pecks. There will also be donations boxes in the local churches.

All Toys collected go to local children
For more information or to make a donation call
Eileen Hennessy 845-252-3568

Alternative giving: Gifts that give back

By ISABEL BRAVERMAN

The definition of alternative giving is "a form of gift giving in which the giver makes a donation to a charitable organization on the gift recipient's behalf, rather than giving them an item." The whole notion is to "pay it forward." This form of giving is often used as an alternative to consumerism and to mitigate the impact of gift-giving on the environment. At this time of year, consider some of these ideas of alternative giving and gifts for your family and friends. There are other ideas besides making a charitable donation.

Charities

Of course, there are so many charities to choose from. When you make a donation to a charity as a gift, usually that charity will send a card or certificate to the person you donated on behalf of, describing the donation and how it will be used. Some charities have a more hands-on approach, rather than only a monetary contribution. One such organization is Heifer International (www.heifer.org). Its mission is to "work with communities to end world hunger and poverty and to care for the Earth." Heifer distributes animals, along with agricultural and values-based training, to families in need around the world as a means of providing self-sufficiency.

Handmade gifts

Make a mix of your favorite seasonal music on a CD, a classic and timeless gift for music lovers or friends who share the same taste in music. Make a holiday-themed CD with rare or unknown versions of holiday songs. As a stand-alone gift or to accompany another gift, you can make a homemade card. Not an illustrator? Make a collage by cutting out pictures from magazines and gluing them to paper. Another classic holiday gift is a handmade scarf, sweater, mittens, or a blanket.

The gift of time and service

Sometimes the best kind of gift is not tangible. You can offer services like babysitting, housework, or handyman work. Everyone would appreciate that. If you know a particular skill, offer lessons, like music, art, or dance lessons. Or a lesson in how to make something, like carpentry, gardening, or sewing.

Handmade coupons

You can make coupons to offer a service or that offer to pay for something. Ideas could be a coupon for a massage, or a movie ticket or a free meal, either home cooked or at the person's favorite restaurant. Make the coupons on pretty paper and write the offer in interesting hand writing with a special design.

Collection of memories

There are many ways to give a meaningful gift to someone with whom you spend a lot of time. You could make a handmade book of photos; there are even websites that will make it for you, such as www.shutterfly.com. You could also make a calendar with photos or a cookbook of family recipes. One time, my friend gave me a list of "60 Things I Like About You;" you could do something similar, like write a poem for someone or write down your wedding vows and frame them.

Jumble exchange

Organize a group of friends for a "jumble exchange." Everyone brings items that they no longer want and you throw them into a big pile, then everyone digs in and picks out items they want. Any unwanted items can be donated or recycled.

Specialty wrapping

A good way to cut down on paper waste and make presents look unique is to wrap them in unconventional materials. Try newspaper, recycled paper, burlap, scarves, or fabric. Tie them up in recycled ribbon, twine, strips of fabric, or yarn. Write directly on the wrapping instead of using tags. You can also put gifts inside mason jars, tins, wooden boxes, or pretty bags.



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Honesdale for the Holidays November 28 & 29

FRIDAY - Holiday Music under the Fred Miller Pavilion sponsored by RE/MAX WAYNE & Meagher Insurance & Financial Services
Santa Parade on Main Street at 6:00 PM
Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony in Central Park following Parade
Visit with Santa after Tree Lighting

SATURDAY - Free Shoppers Trolley & Local History Tours - 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM
Many Holiday Open House Celebrations
Victorian Strollers • Shopping • Vendors • Strolling Holiday Characters
Stourbridge Model Railroad Club Open House— *Grace Episcopal Church, 827 Church Street*
Holiday Music under the Fred Miller Pavilion sponsored by RE/MAX WAYNE & Meagher Insurance & Financial Services
Wayne County Historical Society & Museum Open House 4:00 - 7:00 PM

MANY CONTINUING EVENTS THROUGHOUT DECEMBER!
Watch for the Honesdale for the Holidays Tabloid in many local papers for more information & a detailed schedule or contact the Greater Honesdale Partnership

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The River Reporter's 19th Annual 2014 READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

THE BEST BALLOT IS BACK!

We have revamped our ballot and it's better than ever! We ask that you simply vote for the people, places or businesses that you think are the BEST. Thank you for your participation and we look forward to receiving your votes. If there is a category that we are missing, let us know!

We will publish our 2014 WINNERS in our annual Readers' Choice Awards "BEST" supplement in January 2015.

Good Luck to all!

BEST PLACES FOR FOOD & DRINK

Appetizers _____	Ice Cream Parlor _____
Authentic Meal _____	Italian Restaurant _____
Bagels _____	Locally-Sourced Menu _____
Bakery _____	Local Watering Hole _____
Barbeque _____	Lunch _____
Beer Selection _____	Martinis _____
Breakfast _____	Menu _____
Brunch _____	New Restaurant _____
Budget-friendly _____	Pasta Dish _____
Buffet _____	Pizza _____
Candy Shop _____	Off The Beaten Path _____
Cheesesteak Sandwich _____	Outdoor Dining _____
Chinese Restaurant _____	Overall Restaurant _____
Coffeehouse _____	- Delaware County _____
Deli _____	- Orange County _____
Desserts _____	- Pike County _____
Diner _____	- Sullivan County _____
Dinner _____	-Wayne County _____
Dinner Specials _____	-Region _____
Early Bird Specials _____	Ribs _____
Family Restaurant _____	Romantic Restaurant _____
French Fries _____	Salad _____
Gourmet Restaurant _____	Sandwiches _____
Grocery Store /Supermarket _____	Seafood _____
Hamburgers _____	Soups _____
Happy Hour _____	Steakhouse _____
Health Food Store _____	Vegetarian Food Restaurant _____
Home Cooking Restaurant _____	Wine Selection _____
Hot Dogs _____	Wings _____

BEST PLACES TO SHOP

Antique Store _____	Jewelry Store _____
Auto Parts Store _____	Knit Shop _____
Baby/Kids Store _____	Liquor Store _____
Boat Dealer/Rental _____	Locally-made products _____
Bookstore _____	Lumberyard _____
Car Dealership _____	Medical Equipment _____
Clothing Store _____	Motorcycle Shop _____
Collectibles Store _____	Music Store _____
Consignment Shop _____	Novelty Shop _____
Electronics _____	Outdoor Recreational Vehicles _____
Farm Equipment Retailer _____	Pet Store _____
Flooring Store _____	Place to Buy Art _____
Florist _____	Pottery Studio _____
Furniture Store _____	Specialty Store _____
General Store _____	Sporting Goods Shop _____
Gift Shop _____	Tattoo/Ear Piercing Shop _____
Hardware Store _____	Vintage Shop _____
Home Décor _____	

BEST BUSINESSES & SERVICES

Auto Service Station _____	New Business of the Year _____
Bank _____	Pet Boarding/Pampering _____
Child Care Provider _____	Pet Grooming /Groomer _____
Christmas Tree Farm _____	Pharmacy _____
Eye Care Center _____	Photography Studio _____
Elder Care Facility _____	Plumbing & Heating Supply _____
Emergency Room _____	Rehabilitation Services _____
Engaging Facebook Page _____	Recycle & Transfer Station _____
Fitness Center _____	Rental Center _____
Funeral Home _____	Real Estate Office _____
Green Business _____	Salvage Company _____
Hair & Nail Salon _____	Septic Service _____
Heating Fuel Company _____	Spa or Personal Pampering _____
Home & Garden Store _____	Storage Center _____
Hospital/ Medical Facility _____	Towing Service _____
Insurance Agency _____	Truck Center _____
Kid's Camp _____	Tuxedo Rentals _____
Kitchen & Bath Store _____	Veterinarian Clinic _____
Maternity Unit _____	Well Driller _____
Modular Homes _____	Women's Health Center _____
Mortgage Company _____	

BEST OF OUR COMMUNITY

Ambulance Squad _____	- Golf Pro _____
Amusement/ Fun Park _____	- Musician/Band _____
Animal Shelter _____	- Photographer _____
Art Gallery _____	- Potter _____
Atmosphere _____	Local Products:
Bed & Breakfast _____	- Beer / Spirits _____
Bowling Lanes _____	- Cheese _____
Canoe Livery _____	- Eggs _____
Campground _____	- Meats _____
Chamber of Commerce _____	- Maple Syrup _____
Chicken BBQ (Volunteer) _____	- Wine _____
Cider Mill _____	Meditation Center _____
Civic Club or Organization _____	Movie Theatre _____
College _____	Museum _____
Community Festival or Street Fair _____	Neighborhood _____
Conference Center _____	Pancake Breakfast _____
Dance Studio _____	Parade _____
Day Trip _____	Penny Social _____
Fair _____	Place to Hold a Prom _____
Family Night Out _____	Places to Play Bingo _____
Farm Market _____	Place to Take out of town guests _____
Fire Department _____	Place to Take the kids _____
Golf Course _____	Playhouse Theatre _____
Historic Site _____	Post Office _____
Horseback Riding _____	Private School _____
Hotel _____	Radio Station _____
Law Office _____	Resort _____
Library _____	Shopping Area _____
Live Music Venue _____	Ski Lodge _____
Local _____	Special Area Attraction _____
- Artist _____	Sullivan Renaissance Project _____
- Author _____	Wedding Reception Location _____
- Celebrity _____	Winery _____
- Farm _____	Youth Center _____
- Getaway _____	Youth Program _____

BEST PEOPLE

Accountant _____	Green Developer _____
Architect _____	High School Athlete _____
Auto Mechanic _____	Holistic Practitioner _____
Baker/ Specialty Cakes _____	Interior Decorator _____
Bank Teller _____	Landscaper _____
Barber _____	Lawyer _____
Bartender _____	Law Enforcement Officer _____
Builder _____	Local Hero _____
Butcher _____	Massage Therapist _____
Caterer _____	Medical Specialist _____
Carpenter _____	Painter _____
Car Salesman _____	Pediatrician _____
Chef _____	Plumber _____
Chiropractor _____	Politician _____
Clergy _____	Postmaster _____
Coach _____	Radio Personality _____
Custom Cabinetry _____	Real Estate Agent _____
Dentist _____	Roofer _____
Doctor _____	Teacher _____
Electrician _____	Veterinarian _____
Event Planner _____	Waiter/Waitress _____
Excavator _____	Web Designer _____
Friendly Staff _____	Yoga Teacher _____

HOW TO VOTE: Please print clearly your choices for "THE BEST" from the categories listed. Best choices are limited to Delaware, Orange, Pike, Sullivan and Wayne counties. You may also VOTE ONLINE: www.RiverReporter.com/BEST

HOW TO ENTER: NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Additional ballots are available at **The River Reporter** office at 93 Erie Ave, Narrowsburg, NY. Ballots MUST be complete and include full name, address and phone number of voter. All ballots must be received by December 18, 2014. Employees of **The River Reporter** and **Stuart Communications** are permitted to vote but not eligible to win prizes. Entries that are late, damaged, illegible or missing voter's name will not be eligible. One entry per person. Mechanically reproduced or Photocopied entries are not eligible. A business, organization or person may win no more than three (3) categories. Winners will be chosen based on the number of votes received by December 18th, 2014.

HOW TO WIN PRIZES: All ballots will be included in a random drawing for prizes. Drawing will be held in January 2015. No duplicate winners. BEST Winners will be notified in January 2015.

OFFICIAL "BEST" BALLOT ENTRY FORM

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

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