

# Out & About

Recorder Community Newspapers

GUIDE TO THE ARTS AND LEISURE • THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2019

## PARTY LIKE IT'S 2020

Popular First Night Morris returns for 28th year with 16 venues, 44 events

Tuesday, Dec. 31 marks the 28th year of New Jersey's biggest First Night – First Night Morris, a New Year's Eve family-friendly, alcohol-free celebration of the arts with more than 100 artists, 44 events in 16 venues representing dance, theater, music, world cultures, visual arts and children's programs.

For all 28 years, Morris Arts has been First Night Morris' artistic programmer, securing talents from throughout the state and beyond. More than half of the program features new artists or artists returning after several years, many of whom have won international recognition, performed on national radio/TV, in major films and collaborated with stars of performing arts.

On that night, one can experience everything from Korean drum dancers, a visit with "Mark Twain" and a mind-reading mentalist, to award-winning jazz pianists, topflight comedians, virtuoso Chinese instrumentalists, adventures with a pirate queen and even a live reptile show.

On the Rock/R&B/Drum front, The Tones deliver a blend of classic Rock, R&B and "Three Chords and the Truth," re-crafting the music they love as they draw on music by the Eagles, Van Morrison, the Beatles, Rolling Stones, Tom Petty, Ray Charles and the Allman Brothers.

Dana McCurdy's Community In Rhythm Drum Circle will channel one's inner beat with this participatory drum circle.

First Night Morris brings the trio of Ben Rosenblum, an impressive, award-winning jazz pianist from New York City who has already soloed at Carnegie Hall, performed at Lincoln Center, California's Kuumbwa Jazz Center, the Library of Congress and other top venues. Regularly honored by Downbeat, he and his trio tour throughout USA, Canada, Europe and Japan.

First Night would not be complete without Morristown jazz pianist, Rio Clemente, the "Bishop of Jazz."

For folk music, catch Lara Herscovitch, former Connecticut State Troubadour, who performed on *Prairie Home Companion*, NPR and tours from Maine to Miami. Informed by decades of international humanitarian work, she blends modern folk, blues, jazz and pop in songs that entertain and uplift audiences with a voice "like expensive liquor," according to "Performer Magazine."

Another treat will be Mike Agranoff, a category-defying folksinger/humorist whose repertoire encompasses traditional ballads, fiddle tunes, Tin Pan Alley and his own songs.

With a skilled hand on guitar and concertina, he delivers stories, parodies and spoken word pieces.

First Night's Classical offerings include the artistry of Harmonium Choral Society. From a Renaissance processional to the rich romanticism of Bruckner and the mysticism of Erik Esenwalds, Harmonium's offers diverse programming with high artistic level.

Under the direction of Anne Matlack, Harmonium will also highlight gender equity, featuring works by multiple outstanding women composers.

For those more instrumentally inclined, the award-winning Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey will be on hand to explore great orchestral works from the 17th through the 21st centuries under the baton of conductor/artistic director Robert Butts.

First Night's rich sampling of World Cultures includes the virtuosic, all-female multinational ensemble, the Asaran Earth Trio, whose repertoire ranges from



Photo by James Lent

Kids surround Bob Lisaius of Dinoman Dinosaurs, peppering him with questions after his show involving paleontological discussions and inflatable dinosaurs at First Night Morris in 2018.

PLEASE SEE FIRST, PAGE 2



# FIRST: Fun ranges from kids activities to global musicians

FROM PAGE 1

13th century Sephardic music to Hungarian folk songs and includes contemporary and original works. Their arrangements for voice and percussion, colored by improvisation and contemporary harmonies, honor their varied roots of Brazil, Hungary and Italy.

Fascination abounds with Korean Traditional Dance of Choomnoori, whose elegant costumes, disciplined dance formations and intricate drumming techniques showcase the rich traditions of Korean drum dancing.

Audiences will delight in Music From China, an outstanding New York City ensemble which has performed at the Library of Congress, Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Smithsonian, festivals/residencies across the country, with major symphonies, chamber groups and such jazz greats as Ornette Coleman. Hailed by the N.Y. Times and Washington Post for their artistry, they perform on traditional instruments a hauntingly lovely and exciting program of classical and folk arrangements of Chinese music.

In the category of Dance, First Night offers not only the chance to watch the fascinating drum dancing of Korean Traditional Dance of Choomnoori, but also the opportunity to participate in dancing with reels, line, circle and square dancing to western, jazz and Broadway tunes.

Neither experience nor partner is needed to participate in Square Dancing with caller, Mary Moody.

Those looking for theater or comedy can laugh their way into the New Year with the wit and wry humor of comedy stars Andy Pitz and musician/comedian Rob Paravonian. A talented regular at NYC's top comedy clubs, Pitz has appeared on the Late Show with David Letterman, The Late Late Show with Craig Ferguson, Gotham Comedy Live as a winner on Star Search (CBS) and with national acts in Atlantic City and Las Vegas.

Paravonian blends the mind of a comedian with the soul of a musician, showcasing his unique music-infused humor at top Chicago clubs, on Dr. Demento's Funny Five, entertaining troops in Afghanistan, opening for Lily Tomlin and performing throughout 49 states.

For young and old alike, Kit's Interactive Theatre features Kitty Jones as Grace, the Pirate and casts the audience right into the show, as part of her pirate crew.

Featuring circus magic, Benjamin Lipman's Comedy Cascade combines circus arts, vaudeville and humor with juggling, mime and magic while Mentalist Eric Walton, an international award-winning showman, raconteur and mind reader will read



The Tones will perform at First Night Morris on Tuesday Dec. 31 recrafting music by the Eagles, Van Morrison, The Beatles, Rolling Stones, Tom Petty, Ray Charles and the Allman Brothers.

minds, identify hidden objects, predict future events and challenge conventional ideas about the limits of human perception.

Time travel back a century as Christine De Leon brings back the Roaring 20s through the songs and dances of the 1920s.

The Mark Twain Experience explores the legendary writer, humorist, author, riverboat pilot, inventor and genuine American genius. With 40 years of research and performances as "Mark Twain," Alan Kitty captures the wit and wisdom of this iconic figure and makes audiences wonder if the real Twain is still among us.

## Children's Family Programs

During the early session for younger children from 4:45 to 6:45 p.m. audience members will be encased in giant bubbles, bubble volcanoes, smoke filled bubbles and other bubble tricks with OMG Bubbles.

Artist Samantha "Sam" Matthews' Art 4 Kids offers "Fun with LEGOs."

For a taste of the exotic, check out the elegant, intricate drumming and dancing of the Korean Traditional Dance of Choomnoori, join the crew of the Pirate Queen Grace O'Malley with Kit's Interactive Theatre or the ever popular Rizzo's Reptile/Wildlife Discovery which showcases live reptiles and other animals under the watchful eye of a seasoned animal handler.

Juggles the Clown and face painting and glitter tattoos with Gina's Facetag at The Children's Fun Festival will also grace Morris First Night.

To check out the full lineup of artists, visit: [www.firstnightmorris.com](http://www.firstnightmorris.com).

One admission is \$20/ticket; \$17.50 for four or more before Saturday, Dec. 21.

Every venue is indoors and a free shuttle goes to nearly all locations.



Alborada Spanish Dance Theater performed in the Morristown High School gymnasium Monday at First Night Morris in 2018.

# Out & About

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NEW JERSEY HILLS MEDIA GROUP

## • WHAT'S INSIDE •

Art . . . . .	11
Campus . . . . .	14
Kids . . . . .	13
Music . . . . .	15
Potpourri . . . . .	12
Theater . . . . .	15
Travel . . . . .	8
Wine . . . . .	11

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To be considered for Out & About, please send information by Tuesday, the week before the publication date.



# Solo art show on view in Chatham Township

"Tribute to Nature," a solo show of paintings by Chatham Township artist Celeste Fondaco of Shunpike Road, is open for viewing at the Chatham Township municipal building at 58 Meyersville Road.

The featured artist also is a Chatham Township Committeewoman-elect, having won a three-year term on the governing body as a Democratic candidate in the Nov. 5 general election.

Her solo show coincides with the the "Winter, Friends and Family" exhibit by members of the Art League of the Chathams, also on view at the municipal building.

Fondaco has been painting her entire life, but her active participation in the art



**CELESTE FONDACO**

community began with her retirement from the corporate world in 1999. She was a programmer and worked in various computer-based positions. Afterwards, she went on to earn an associate degree in fine arts from the County College of Morris in Randolph Township, graduating summa cum laude, and a bachelor's degree in fine arts from Fairleigh Dickinson University, graduating magna cum laude.

She is a past president of the Art League of the Chathams and has been president of the Drew Art Association for more than 10

years.

Most of Fondaco's paintings are large florals and tributes to the Great Swamp. Many hang in private collections throughout the tri-state area.

Fondaco enjoys the outdoors and has been a beekeeper for more than a decade. She is a member of the Morris and Somerset County Beekeepers Association, based in the Basking Ridge section of Bernards Township. Other outdoor activities included running 70 marathons and ultra-marathons.

## Winter Art Show

In addition to Fondaco's solo show, members of the Art League of the Chathams

are displaying their work in the municipal building's strolling Lundt-Glover Gallery, the popular wall of 6-inch by 6-inch small pieces, which are for sale, affording the public an opportunity to buy a small piece of art by their favorite artist at a modest price.

The Art League's "Winter, Friends and Family" show will run through mid-March, 2020, during the municipal building's normal business hours. Art is available for sale. For information, call (973) 635-0845.

The municipal building is accessible to the handicapped, and the art exhibit is free and open to the public. For information about the Art League of the Chathams, visit [www.artleagueofthechathams.org](http://www.artleagueofthechathams.org).

# Morristown Winter Farmers' Market open Sundays

The Winter Market, formerly the Morris County Winters' Farmers Market, has returned to Alexander Hamilton School at 24 Mills St. in Morristown.

The market began its seventh season on Sunday, Dec. 1 and will be open every Sunday except Dec. 29 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. until March 29, 2020.

This year, Grow It Green Morristown, a local nonprofit, will run and also expand the market with more vendors and a renewed focus on fresh local food.

"Grow It Green continuously strives to strengthen the market's roots within the

community and foster greater relationships and visibility within the county," said Lisa Alexander, Grow It Green's executive director.

"Grow It Green has been a vendor in the market since its inception, and we are pleased to make this opportunity to support local farmers and vendors possible.

"We're excited to connect more people to fresh, local food," said farmer Shaun Ananko, director of agriculture and education for Grow It Green.

This year the Winter Market will offer a wide range of unique selections from

pasture-raised meat to artisanal cheese, honey, prepared foods, nuts and grains, baked goods, artisan breads, eggs, winter produce and more.

## Vendors

The following vendors will be at the market on a weekly basis:

Chickadee Creek Farm, Glenmalure Farm, the Pastoral Pig, Supiciche Bakery, Gourmet Nuts and Dried Fruits, Goat Hill Farm, Pickle Licious, Paolo's

Kitchen, Jersey Girl Cheese, Trufalla, Local 130 Seafood and PK's Four Brothers Farm.

The market will be supplemented each week with additional specialty vendors and community building activities.

Information about the market can be found at [growitgreenmorristown.org/wintermarket](http://growitgreenmorristown.org/wintermarket) for vendor schedules and more information.

Parking is free in the Alexander Hamilton school lot and there is no entry fee.



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# 'The Irishman:' The slow road to perdition

By **MICHAEL S. GOLDBERGER**  
FILM CRITIC

For those still wondering whether to attempt the movie-going version of crossing the Great Plains by covered wagon, Director Martin Scorsese's "The Irishman," an encyclopedic buffet of things Wise Guys is pretty good but not necessarily great.

However, for those who simply can't get enough gangland jargon, non-stop mob hits and the recitation of Cosa Nostra doctrine and who would like a respite from constantly re-running "Goodfellas" (1990) and all three "Godfather" films, the 3-hour, 29-minute film is a competent addendum. The length and violently charged breadth of this blood-stained extravaganza in the hands of a lesser director would have doubtlessly proved an unwieldy mish-mash.

We first meet Robert De Niro's Frank Sheeran, hitman/Teamster boss, at a ripe

## >> 'THE IRISHMAN'

**Rated R**, is a Netflix release directed by Martin Scorsese and stars Robert De Niro, Joe Pesci and Al Pacino. Running time: 209 minutes

★★★★☆

old age in a nursing facility from whence he relates his life's tale to nurses' aides, visiting FBI agents and sometimes just us.

Expertly shuffled flashbacks aided by a terrific switching of period-correct art direction and hi-tech enhanced makeup draw us into this sordid tale of tarnished majesty. It's ugly, controversial and, we unfortunately suspect, an educative window into that part of our nature we've been trying to purge ever since Oog clobbered Eek on the head for that wooly mammoth he then dragged to his cave.

Indeed, fans of the brand, admittedly or not, become at least temporarily enamored

of this parallel civilization that thumbs its broken nose at what normal society calls the straight and narrow. The organized mobster rationalizes that the above-ground world is a con and weighted against his ilk whereas, in the agency of the Mafia, the playing field is evened.

But unlike most permutations of this evil culture, Scorsese's take this go-round has deflated the air of any romanticization. While De Niro's assassin is full-bodied, he is sociopathically bereft of any true humanity. Like his mentor, Joe Pesci's fantastically drawn bigwig, Russell Bufalino, he is merely a butchering automaton,

his movements and decisions geared to prevailing in the hideous, kill or be killed chess game in which he is a zealous participant.

Pending a rather fatalistic, philosophical wrap-up in the last half hour, Scorsese whimsically counterpunches the perpetrated bravado with brief, printed overlays identifying a character and informing when and if they were ultimately rubbed out or sent to the pokey. It's a reminder that, for all the glorification rendered these cold-blooded murderers in the service of our guilty thrills, crime usually doesn't pay. These are bad men who "don't need no stinkin'" rationale.

The question is, do you want to immerse yourself in this lengthy albeit expertly crafted iteration of the infernal underground where "The Irishman" wreaks his iniquities? Setting my own personal record, I didn't leave my seat once, if that helps you.

# 'Ford v Ferrari:' A real David and Goliath tale

By **MICHAEL S. GOLDBERGER**  
FILM CRITIC

The red-blooded American portion of me, the part that in my youth soaked up John Wayne movies, was gratified by the spirit of director James Mangold's studiously executed "Ford v Ferrari." Ferrari had been dominating world auto racing and its reign might have gone on for a bit longer had it not been for il Commendatore's dissing of the Deuce – that's car enthusiast colloquium for Enzo Ferrari and Henry Ford, II. Mr. Ferrari added insult to industry when he not only rebuffed the Detroit magnate's attempt to buy his Prancing Horse magnificence, but also called him fat. In return, Ford screamed bloody revenge and swore he would beat Ferrari at the 24 Hours of Le Mans.

Following America's show of interna-

## >> 'FORD V FERRARI'

**Rated PG**, is a Twentieth Century Fox release directed by James Mangold and stars Matt Damon, Christian Bale and Caitriona Balfe. Running time: 152 minutes.

★★★★☆

tional might in WWII, it is both the illustrative model and postscript to that grand, swaggering flourish of what we Yanks can do when we toss enough money, determination and moxie at something.

But I must come clean. I am a Tifosi. While a general term for a supporter of a team, Tifosi has come to more specifically mean an ardent devotee of Scuderia Ferrari, the Ferrari racing team. Nevertheless, I think I can offer a fair judgement of the account in question, here magisterially authored with just the right amount of rough

and tumble action by Jez Butterworth, John-Henry Butterworth and Jason Keller.

Without doubt, "Ford v Ferrari" is the most authentically realized car movie since "Grand Prix" (1966). It is to Mr. Mangold's credit, with the thespic help of Matt Damon as famed racecar builder Carroll Shelby and Christian Bale as racecar driver extraordinaire Ken Miles that the storied Goliath versus David saga is made exciting, car nut or not. Riding in tandem with scintillating racing scenes doubtlessly supercharged by computer magic is the en-

nobling camaraderie between Shelby and Miles, a smattering of mechanics' jargon for oil-soaked enthusiasts, and a more than subtextual, Plato-worthy meditation on the group vs. the individual.

As reputedly told here with little Hollywoodization, including the internecine warfare among the suits, replete with a snide, detractive villain hell bent on stealing the glory from Messrs. Shelby and Miles, the incorporated, truth telling backstory openly contradicts the propaganda. For all the publicity extolling the virtues of Ford, the fact is that while the GT40 did use a homegrown V8, the chassis was designed and built in England, based on the British Lola Mk6. While Ford's bankrolling was indispensable, 'twas the blood, sweat and racing ingenuity of two car pals that suggest the film might have been more properly titled "Shelby & Miles v Ferrari."

## 2-day Winter Camp coming to Bernardsville library Dec. 26 and 27

The Bernardsville Public Library, 1 Anderson Hill Road, Bernardsville, offers the following will offer a free two-day Winter Camp on Thursday, Dec. 26 and Friday, Dec. 27.

The camp kicks off from 10:30 a.m. to

noon on Boxing Day, Thursday, Dec. 26. Children ages 2 and up can play with empty boxes of all sizes and shapes.

At 3 p.m. that day, children 3 and up can make a winter craft.

That is followed at a 7 p.m., when chil-

dren 5 and over can meet wolf-dogs from Howling Woods Farm.

The camp continues with a science fair held 1 from 3 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 27. Presented by Mad Science, children can enjoy numerous experiments that involve

electricity, dry ice, slimy science, chemistry and bouncy balls.

Caregivers are required to remain at all events, and no registration is needed. For more information, call the library at (908) 766-0118.



## Learn all about maple sugaring here

The trees are tapped and the firewood is chopped – it's maple sugaring season at the Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center in Chatham Township.

Visitors can join hour-long, maple sugaring demonstrations on Fridays and Saturdays this January, February and March at 1 and 2:30 p.m. on the following dates: Jan. 18, 19, 25, 26, Feb. 1, 2, 8, 9, 15, 16, 22, 23, 29, March 1, 7 and 8 with a special Maple Sugar Festival on Saturday, March 14.

The entire process from tree to pancake-topping treat can be viewed as staff identifies and taps maple trees and collects the flowing sap.

Syrup will be made over a wood-fired evaporator. Tastes tests will be available of the Great Swamp's own home-made syrup.

Visitors can learn to appreciate the quality differences and the process that is required to make maple syrup.

Admission is \$4 per person. No registration is required, but it is first come, first served seating. All demonstrations are held rain or shine.

### Maple Sugar Festival

The peak of maple sugaring season can be experienced at the annual Maple Sugar Festival held from noon to 4 p.m. on Saturday, March 14 at the Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center.

A wide variety of activities will be on hand, including tree tapping demonstrations, maple cream, eating a snow cone and more.

A guided tour, "Hike Through Maple Sugaring History" will let guests discover how sugaring has changed since it was started by the Native Americans hundreds of years ago. Taste test a variety of syrups, and learn about the evaporation process on an authentic wood-burning maple evaporator.

If interested in making syrup at home, tap splies will be on sale along with easy instructions on how to get started. A maple sugar farmer will also on hand selling fresh syrup products.

Admission is \$5 per person and the festival is held rain or shine.

For more information and directions to the Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center, visit [morrisparks.net](http://morrisparks.net) or call 973-635-6629.

## Menorah lightings planned in Warren, Watchung

The Chabad Jewish Center at Basking Ridge will host menorah lightings for residents of both Warren Township and Watchung.

The Warren Township menorah lighting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on the second night

of Hannukah, Monday, Dec. 23, at Flag Plaza, 61B Mountain Blvd., Warren. Attendees are asked to park at Arch Plaza across the street.

The Watchung menorah lighting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on the fifth night of Hannukah, Thursday, Dec. 26, on the Watchung

Circle. Both events will feature latkes, hot cider, music, gelt, dreidels and Hannukah fun. All are invited to attend.

To learn more about the Chabad Jewish Center at Basking Ridge, visit [www.chabadcentral.org](http://www.chabadcentral.org).

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# Meteor showers just keep going...and going...

Boy oh boy, this is a month of meteor showers, although the Quantarids show is probably better than all the others combined. Still, let's list in order of the day they begin. If I have a peak date that they build to I will add that, although many of these showers are really not very large at all, having a peak of maybe one per hour – call these more light dews than showers.

Up first are the Leonis Minorids, which run now through Tuesday, Feb. 4, 2020. At their peak on Friday, Dec. 20, there may be five per hour.

The next shower of Coma Berenicids runs now through Thursday, Jan. 23, 2020, peaking through Monday, Jan. 6 at five per hour, making for a very long time to peak.

Next up, The Delta Cancrids go from now through Tuesday, Feb. 4, peaking on Wednesday, Jan. 1 at four per hour.

**Warren Westura**

**ASTRO NOTES**



The writer is a member of the Sheep Hill Astronomy Association and a representative to and former trustee of the United Astronomy Clubs of New Jersey in Jenny Jump State Park. He has been fascinated by astronomy since he was old enough to look up and has navigated naval vessels by the stars when he was an active duty naval officer. To reach him, email [wwestura@optonline.net](mailto:wwestura@optonline.net)

The Rho Geminids run from Saturday, Dec. 28 through Tuesday, Jan. 28, peaking Wednesday, Jan. 8 and Thursday, Jan. 9.

The best one of the month, and probably the entire year, is the Quantarids, also known as the Bootids. They run from Saturday, Dec. 28 to Sunday, Jan. 12, and the peak on Friday, Jan. 3 and Saturday, Jan. 4 is sharp and worth waiting for, as it runs about 120 per hour. It is best seen in the hours just before dawn, and is one of the two highest rated meteor showers of the year, the other being the Geminids in

mid-December. You will have about a half moon to contend with.

The Gamma Velids shower runs from Wednesday, Jan. 1 to Friday, Jan., 17, peaking Sunday, Jan. 5 and Wednesday, Jan. 8 at two per hour. The Alpha Crucids, running from Monday, Jan. 6 through Tuesday, Jan. 28, peak at three per hour on Wednesday, Jan. 15.

The Nu Andromedids, start on Monday, Jan. 6 (no more information is available).

The conga line of showers continue with the Draconids, starting on Friday, Jan. 10 and run through Friday, Jan. 24, peaking from Monday, Jan. 13 through Thursday, Jan. 16.

The Eta Craterids follow from Jan. 11 through Jan. 22, peaking Thursday, Jan. 16 and Friday, Jan. 17.

The Alpha Hydrids run Wednesday, Jan. 15 through Thursday, Jan. 30, peaking Monday, Jan. 20 and Tuesday, Jan. 21.

The Upsilon Eridanids are a one-night show on Thursday, Jan. 16, as are the Northern Delta Cancrids also on that day. The Lambda Bootids stick around for two nights only on Friday, Jan. 17 and Friday, Jan. 18.

The Delta Velids start on Wednesday, Jan. 22, and last until Friday, Feb. 21, not peaking until Wednesday, Feb. 5. One per hour.

And still, the showers keep coming. The Theta Centarids start Thursday, Jan. 23 and last through Thursday, March 12, peaking on Friday, Feb. 21 with four per hour.

The Alpha Centaurids barely squeak by starting Wednesday, Jan. 29 through Friday, Feb. 21, peaking on Friday, Feb. 7 at seven per hour, making it perhaps the second most prolific shower of the month.

Finally, the Omicron Centaurids start Friday, Jan. 31 and end Wednesday, Feb. 19,

peaking on Tuesday, Feb. 11 at two per hour.

## Other Events

Meanwhile, other visitors are around, so keep looking up. There are two comets in January, according to the Observer's Handbook 2020. The first is 101P/Chernykh on Monday, Jan. 13 with an OK return. Peaking the next day, Tuesday, Jan. 14, is 114P/Wiseman-Skiff with a good return at perihelion.

**The Planets:** The moon is in a penumbral (that is, partial) eclipse on Friday, Jan. 10, but will not be visible in North America. Meanwhile, **Mercury** is too close to the sun to see for most of the month. **Venus**, on the other hand, is near the moon on Monday, Jan. 27 and Tuesday, Jan. 28, and it's the best placement for seeing since 2012. **Mars** is a really nice sight in the morning sky, passing close to the star Antares on Friday, Jan. 17, putting the two reddish objects near each other; and on Monday, Jan. 20 the moon passes two degrees to the North of it. **Jupiter** emerges in the second half of the month low in the morning southeast sky. **Saturn** is too close to the sun for viewing. **Uranus** is visible to the naked eye on clear, moonless nights. **Neptune** will be in the evening sky, but you'll need a good scope to spot it.

## Mission Updates

Not a whole lot of really new stuff this month. Voyagers 1 and 2 just keep going and going and going. The next Mars Rover, Mars 2020, is scheduled to launch later in 2020.

Meanwhile, aboard the International Space Station, six astronauts celebrated Thanksgiving – there is a nice group photo of them on [www.nasa.gov](http://www.nasa.gov).

## And Keep In Mind...

A suicide satellite is reportedly being developed to grab onto a failed or dead satellite and drag it down into the atmosphere to burn up. We'll be watching that with interest.

## 'Snowflake Party' offered in Basking Ridge Dec. 22

A "Snowflake Party" will be offered from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 22, at the Somerset County Park Commission's Environmental Education Center (EEC), 190 Lord Stirling Road, Basking Ridge.

Family and friends can come prepare for the inevitable snow by making giant snowflake decorations for display at the

EEC and some to take home.

Attendees can come any time during the party and spend as much time as they desire.

The program is free and there is no need to register.

For more information, visit [www.somersetcountyparks.org](http://www.somersetcountyparks.org) or call (908) 722-1200, ext. 5002.

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# Clinton Parks & Recreation to offer these nature programs in the coming new year

The Hunterdon County Division of Parks & Recreation will host a number of nature programs in the new year.

## The Raptor Trust

The division will host a van trip and hike to The Raptor Trust and Lord Stirling Park in Somerset County from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 11, with a snow date of Saturday, Jan. 18.

The trip will leave from the Arboretum at 1020 Route 31 North in Clinton Township. It is for adults, at a cost of \$33 per person.

Senior Park Naturalist Laura Bush will meet the group at the Arboretum where it will take a county van to Lord Stirling Park in Somerset County for a winter hike of about an hour, with about two miles of hiking required. The group will then visit The Raptor Trust, a bird rehabilitation facility in Millington that has 50 non-releasable birds of prey on display. At the Raptor Trust, the group will meet a live bird and enjoy a PowerPoint presentation titled "Sharing the World with Raptors." The group will then have time to explore the display birds on its own. Attendees should dress to be outside and should feel free to bring lunch or snacks to enjoy in the van on the way home.

## Planetarium offers sensory-friendly shows

The Raritan Valley Community College Planetarium, 118 Lamington Road, Branchburg, will present the sensory-friendly astronomy and music show, "The Sky Above," at 5 p.m. Saturdays, Jan. 4 and Feb. 1.

With a run time of about 45 minutes, the show is specially designed for families with children on the Autism spectrum or those with developmental disabilities. Neurotypical children are welcome as well.

The program, which is presented on a kindergarten level, is appropriate for audiences of all ages. During the show, the doors will remain open so children may freely leave and return if they choose. The show will include music, laser lights, stories, and information about the planets, the Moon and constellations. Admission is \$10 per person. Seating is limited and reservations are suggested.

For more information, call (908) 231-8805 or visit [www.raritanval.edu/planetarium](http://www.raritanval.edu/planetarium).

## Learns About Lichens

Guest presenter Dennis Waters will lead a program on lichens, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 15, with a snow date of Wednesday, Jan. 22, at the Arboretum.

The program tells all about lichens, both plants and fungi at the same time. Lichens are everywhere, and they are as fascinating as they are ubiquitous. Lichenologist Dennis Waters will teach the attendees about these remarkable botanical partnerships — how they work and how they have grown to be so dependent on each other. Guests will enjoy a slideshow, and then look at some local samples, and are welcome to bring along lichens they have found to have them identified. The program for ages 12 through adults costs \$3 per person.

## Woodpeckers of New Jersey

The Woodpeckers of New Jersey program for ages 8 through adult will take place from 7 to 8 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 27, at

the Arboretum, for a cost of \$3 per person.

Woodpeckers have a variety of adaptations that make them great at pecking wood. They have a tongue that is so long that they must store it behind their skull when it is not in use. They have spongy tissue in their skull to absorb shock. Their feet have two toes pointed backwards to help them grip vertically on trees. Through the use of a PowerPoint presentation and the division's taxidermied collection of the seven New Jersey woodpeckers, the group will learn all about these unique birds.

## Tot Walks

Tot Walks run on various days depending on the topic, for ages 2 to 3 years old with an adult, at Echo Hill on Lilac Drive. Each walk costs \$3 per child, with accompanying adults attending for free.

Senior Park Naturalist Laura Bush will lead the group on these early adventures to discover nature at a local park. Guests

can leave the strollers behind as they take a walk outside to see plants and animals all around. The group will use its senses to focus on each theme. Each one-hour program will include a walk and an indoor time of a story and craft.

The Animal Tracks Tot Walks will take place from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, Jan. 16, from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. on Friday, Jan. 17, and from 11 a.m. to noon on Friday, Jan. 17, all at Echo Hill.

The Patterns Tot Walks will take place from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, Feb. 20, from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. on Friday, Feb. 21, and from 11 a.m. to noon on Friday, Feb. 21, all at Echo Hill.

All programs require preregistration. To download a registration form, visit [www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/depts/parks/parks.htm](http://www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/depts/parks/parks.htm).

For more information, call us at (908) 782-1158 or email [parks@co.hunterdon.nj.us](mailto:parks@co.hunterdon.nj.us).

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## JANUARY MUSIC FEST



**Rodney Marsalis**  
Philadelphia Big Brass  
Jan 11 – 8 PM

Classical, big band jazz and New Orleans swing, led by trumpeter Rodney Marsalis who learned from his cousin, Wynton. Join this dream team of brass players for some swinging January sounds!



**Diego Figueiredo & Ken Peplowski**  
Jan. 18 – 8 PM

Diego Figueiredo one of the greatest guitarist, together with Ken Peplowski the greatest living jazz clarinetist bring the music of the famous album *Jazz Samba* that launched the Brazilian Bossa Nova craze in North America.



**Sam Reider**  
and the Human Hands  
Jan. 25 – 8 PM

A "staggeringly virtuosic band" of bluegrass and jazz musicians based in Brooklyn. Irresistible melodies, fiery improvisation and other worldly sounds collide in a "mash-up of the the Klezmatics, Quintette du Hot Club de France and the Punch Brothers."

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**Left:** Hot air balloons rise in the blue Cappadocia sky, a region that has become famous for this airborne activity. **Right:** Wares are on display at Kapadokya Seramik, an institution that maintains the Turkish standard of excellence in pottery-making, which is an historic pastime in the country.

# Go Up, Up And Away In Turkey’s Cappadocia

By **KATHERINE PARKER-MAGYAR**  
TRAVEL WRITER

Though the islands may remain an eternally appealing proposition for weary would-be travelers, worn down by the ice and snow of the daily commute, we suggest heading east this year instead of south, to the breathtakingly beautiful countryside of Cappadocia, Turkey.

Though the breathtaking terrain is one of the greatest natural wonders in Turkey, and was originally created three million years ago by volcanic eruptions, the destination has become more popular in recent years, thanks to—what else?—Instagram.

Indeed, you may recognize the dramatic landscape from your social media feed, the colorful hot air balloons floating above the volcanic valleys, suspended in mid-air below a turquoise sky.

And, while the warmer months may be the more frequently documented (and frequently visited) travel period for Cappadocia, winter is one of the best times to visit this beautiful region in the Turkish countryside.

Though the hot air balloons remain just as packed in the wintertime as they ascend into the sky above every morning at dawn, the rest of the sites are far less

crowded—and, overall, the region benefits from the lack of selfie-wielding tourists. Read on for your perfect itinerary while exploring the magnificent destination within the Turkish heartland.

Upon arrival, check in at the Ariana Sustainable Luxury Lodge, a boutique hotel offering spectacular views of the hot air balloons rising above the valley at sunrise.

Speaking of which, a hot air balloon ride should be your first order of business upon arriving in Cappadocia, though it should be booked well in advance of your arrival in Turkey.

The volatility of the black market for hot air ballooning in Cappadocia is not to be underestimated—particularly when the loser in such a miscalculation is most likely your bank account.

We recommend booking a trip with Royal Balloon: Not only does the company offer a full refund, it also provides the best in-air entertainment. Request Captain Tolga Eke—his narration of your time in the sky is well worth the price of admission—not just aboard the hot air balloon, but aboard your transatlantic flight as well.

Our next recommendation, a visit to the Kaymakli Underground City, benefits immensely from the relatively diminished

lack of tourists in the wintertime. Though Cappadocia has recently gained notoriety for its activities in the sky, there are 36 underground cities in Cappadocia, of which Kaymakli is the largest.

The endless attractions and curiosities that define this region’s appeal in Central Anatolia are blissfully less crowded in the colder months, allowing you to explore the caves without suffering from a sudden-onslaught of claustrophobia. (When you’re hunched over beneath the stone ceiling of a darkened cave, stuck behind a stagnant line of tourists, it is almost too easy to imagine what life was like for cave-dwellers thousands of years ago.)

Afterwards, explore the majestic rock formations that you witnessed from the sky on horseback with a sunset ride at Cemal Ranch. The Turks invented horseback riding and one blissful trail ride through the volcanic desert at dusk will have you convinced the primary purpose of this historic innovation was mainly to appreciate the view. Who’s to say they, too, didn’t appreciate leisurely evening rides and sundowners? (Both of which are available to guests at Cemal Ranch.)

Spend your next day exploring the cultural heritage of Cappadocia by visiting Kapadokya Seramik. Meet the family of artisans behind this impressive collection

of ornately decorated treasures, and don’t even bother trying to resist the colorful display of wares in the gift shop.

There’s no better souvenir to bring home from your journey than a hand-painted (and hand-crafted) miniature replica of one of the region’s famed hot air balloons. You may not be able to relive that majestic experience upon your return back to the states, but you can remember it with said trinket of your travels.

Rug-making is also another historic pastime in Cappadocia, and the skill of its modern-day practitioners is best appreciated at the world-renowned Kapadokya 54. Request a magic carpet display—you won’t be disappointed.

Would-be visitors weary of organizing this culturally immersive Cappadocia tour on their own can turn to the knowledge and skill of Travel Atelier, a luxury travel agency that specializes in bespoke experiences in Turkey, Greece, and Finland.

For the ultimate guide to Cappadocia’s history, be sure to request Faruk Basibuyuk; a man as knowledgeable about present-day Turkey as he is about every nuance of the Ottoman Empire—making for a very entertaining and insightful conversationalist. And isn’t that what ev-

eryone is looking for when meeting their guide to a foreign country?

Finally, we’ve already established that winter is an underrated time of year to visit the Turkish wonderland, but if it’s too short notice for you to travel to Asia Minor in the next few months, there is of course, always spring—and, this year April showers won’t only bring May flowers, but (potentially) May flight deals.

Though Turkish Airlines already operates out of JFK, readers of this newspaper can rejoice in the news that the airline is expanding its service to the (much-closer) hub of Newark within the coming year—and potentially as early as May.

Show their New Jersey expansion some love, and plan ahead for a weekend in the desert. The good news is—as we know

from their busy activity even in the colder, snowier months—that hot air balloons fly all year-round in Cappadocia. New York may be the city that never sleeps, but Cappadocia is the city that flies high all year-round.

And, regardless of the time of year of your visit, be sure to enjoy a stopover in Istanbul via Turkish Airlines on your way home—not only to prolong your stay in this magical country, but to explore another exquisite destination. Though Istanbul is far more urbane than Cappadocia, it is equally historic. And arrive early at the Istanbul Airport—the luxurious amenities of the new Turkish Airlines Business

Class lounge is reason enough for even the most frugal of travelers to splurge for first class.



**Left:** This is the Turkish Airlines Business Class lounge in Istanbul, where travelers can enjoy a stopover program before their flight home. **Right:** The author engages in a traditional Turkish pastime: horseback riding.



# AND AWAY IN TURKEY'S CAPPADOCIA

region benefiting from a lack of tourists in the wintertime. Though Cappadocia has recently gained notoriety for its activities in the sky, there are 36 underground cities in Cappadocia, of which Kaymakli is the largest.

At the Ariana boutique hotels, though it's a valley at sunset, the hot air balloon

ride of business is a chance of your

market for Cappadocia is not particularly when the relation is most

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a, a visit to the benefits diminished

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Left: This is the Turkish Airlines Business Class lounge in Istanbul, where travelers can enjoy a stopover program before their flight home. Right: The author engages in a traditional Turkish pastime: horseback riding.



• POETS CORNER •

# Christmas Eve when I was 12...

Christmas Eve Midnight Mass When I Was Twelve  
Drift of incense,  
boughs of simple fir  
bowed in satin – white and red,  
tall white candles  
eight feet high  
fill a winter chapel  
in my mind.  
Ring of censer chains  
toll the midnight churches  
into echoings of Latin chant  
and choir’s sweet response  
of ancient songs we used to sing  
and did not understand for years to come;  
a close communion with a Church of Strangers once a year.  
All heads bowed in quaint  
December candle light.  
Gold reflecting in the haze,  
rolling, curling vapors  
ascend the high pendentive  
cast of stone  
to disappear within the silent dome.  
Gentle murmurings here below

run in waves across the aisles  
like urges of unspent love.  
The women pray –  
the women pray so delicately.  
One head is covered with a glove.  
She nods her forehead to her  
praying fingertips and – hush.  
Is it faith that she desires,  
or some old passion,  
or father’s fire,  
old voices,  
or old bride’s smiles  
now gone by?  
Should I – Could I seek  
a return to fire  
in this golden candled reverie?  
What is this huge and cold stone place  
with lights turned out like  
shameful needs until tomorrow?  
How my head-tones fill this place  
on other Christmas eves.  
Surplice and cassocked –  
white on black,  
I marched my medieval pageant,  
my nostrils full and heart

about to break with balsam magic.  
The usher whispered, “please,  
good sisters – take the first four rows.”  
They roused us with their eyes  
when we would doze on choir bench.  
“Masters Forssberg, Keelan sit up  
straight;  
Master Murray just you wait,” snapped  
Sister Julianno guarding at altar gate.  
A fortress they were  
draped in black  
one by one and all alike  
and thick.  
But Sister Jean in the second row  
was young and thin  
and smiled as gorgeous as  
Madonna on the wall.  
And she was favored by them all.  
And she was all perfection for me,  
and I held her secret in my heart  
When sanctus rang;  
and I prayed for martyrdom  
That she would love me too.  
Can I make one more visit  
to say my ten thousand, “Hail Marys”

One more time?  
Mea culpa – mea culpa  
Do they all believe in God?  
I’ll believe if she believes.  
My turn to serve Christmas  
morning mass at five a.m.  
A child again.  
I sang the mass last night.  
I light the church  
around and near the altar  
and the first five rows;  
turn up the heat  
and wait for Father Burke  
to come and say the mass.  
My breath is white before my face;  
my footsteps echo through this place.  
Far back in the shadows of the nave  
kneeling near the door,  
a drunk old man weeps into his hands  
muttering some old woman’s name.  
I am, I am  
a child again, a child again.  
  
- TOM MURRAY  
Chester

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

	8				2		9	3
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5			1					7
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Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging  
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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## 3 holiday poems

### My Christmas Reflection

For my life of good and plenty I’m as grateful as can be,  
sitting home in silent solitude beneath the angel atop my tree.  
It’s Christmas Eve and I believe,  
she’s come again to herald God’s healthy healing fire,  
the love He kindles high above, and gifts to we His folks who live good lives pure and absent ire.  
She speaks of my found fortune which reminds me where I’d been,  
confronting life’s obdurate obstacles while working not alone,  
for with loving folks I’ve conquered them and so see next,  
my loving message in this poem – portrayed for you in its plain and simple text :  
“ When sitting with your Christmas angel, reflect on those whom once or more, helped your heart to its sickened health restore, by their sharing with you love,  
“and for their heartfelt doing so, your Christmas Angel quick entreat and bid she go, and fleetly fly, your thanks to Him

that reigns most high, above, in Heaven’s sky.”

### Snowflakes

Snowflakes fall and come and go, not one the same in nature’s show,  
That sometimes come to light on me, when beauty’s warmed to water be.  
And as I see thru a snow filled sky, pondering reasons snowflakes fly,  
And why they fall and come and go? I’m most amazed and feeling awed,  
By how unique and how unflawed, each snowflake’s beauty soothes my soul, when thru my eyes. It’s while watching, feeling, sensing snowflakes free and windblown reeling, I sense God’s white beauty fall to me from high in Heaven’s skies.

### Ole’ Bushy Bones’ Christmas

Awakened by bells Ole’ Bushy Bones peeps, from his treetop high nest,  
located in my park where in winter he sleeps, beneath stars burning bright,

o’er snow mirroring moonlight, that lights good his glimpse  
Of the bells as they fly, rung by eight tiny reindeer hoofing hard tonight’s sky.  
Hitched ‘fore his sleek sleigh the deer draw with delight, for Santa their driver ,  
This clear Christmas Night. His sleigh’s laden with presents – some I hope bound for me, and Bones’ brood of squirrels, asleep high in their tree.  
And what for Ole’ Bushy and his brood will he bring? Perhaps acorns and nuts  
And cheerful notes of Spring songs that only good squirrels sing . So when winter wastes on yielding start up of Spring, when Bushy from slumber and his brood slow should arise, Santa’s present’s they’ll then sing me, bringing tears to my eyes .

- JOHN BURNS  
Basking Ridge

Poems found in “ Lifebeats” -A Collection of poems by John J. Burns ( Copyright 2009- Available from Amazon. Com)



# Wine etiquette tips for holiday entertaining

Nothing comes close to the fragrance of Christmas tree pine and the warm embers of firewood Christmas morning. The sensory experience of a crackling fire, the string of lights, the Vienna Boy's Choir and the skyline of gift boxes under the tree all make for a perfect setting for a palette warmer.

Egg nog? It is not for this Grinch. Champagne, wine and warm Brandy are. The kindred burden that the host inherits to deliver this experience seamlessly and in balance is indeed the difference between another Saturday dinner hosting and a joyous holiday party. My wife, Mariette, and I and now, my adult children Alexandra and Julian, gang up like eager graduates at Cordon Bleu, each holding on to their respective sheet music for the grand orchestration. There is no doubt that the guest expectations for this team's libations suite is overwhelming. The Rajans blossom under pressure, not from the heavy lifting that comes from a holiday inspired beverage service, but from being offered another canvas to brush stroke our favorite colors of white and red.

Here's the foundation that got us there with many speed-bumps and faux pas on the way. The Art of Wow is not for the meek! Some sound-bites first:

- Tasting, Pairing, Curation, The Master Class and Blending are, in my belief, the progressive sequences in wine interfaces for the really serious wine lover and wine-host. Tasting-centric parties are blah. They are saturated and overdone and they all feel the same. Pairing fine wine with a variety of foods and having your guests verbally joust their opinions is fun. The curation, a host-driven exercise of carefully assembling wines to a specific theme or region or occasion is an inspired rendition. The blending parties are a riot but are distracting on a holiday and best done by a small group of wine snobs like my Tasting Council. The Master Class is academic and best for serious learners only and not for festive celebrations.

- Be a disrupter. Summers, move away

**Ash Rajan**

READ BETWEEN  
THE WINES



The writer is a French-certified Maitre Du Vin Du Bordeaux from the Ecole Du Vin in France. While his hobby passion is wine, Ash, a former Wall Street strategist, is currently a V.P. Investments at Janney Montgomery Scott. Contact him at [arajan@janney.com](mailto:arajan@janney.com)

from the predictable comfort of Chardonnays and Pinot Grigio to Albarinos, Non-Provencal Roses, Grower Champagnes, Vouvrays and Cote Du Rhone Whites, all available quite easily. And in winter bring on the Red Disrupters: Mix up the Cabs and Pinots to Priorat, Barbaresco, French Pinot Noirs, French Malbecs and Cote Du Rotie. Varietal disruption as in trying wines out of your comfort zone builds palette character.

- All this with the Perfect Wine Goblet: Indulge, if not just for the holiday season, a Riedel for Cabs, a Zalto for Burgundy and Whites. Baccarat, Lalique and St. Louis for cognacs and brandies. The vessel is as precious as the liquid velvet inside.

- Mix up Champagne service between Flutes, coupes or a Zalto Universal goblet. Flute dictatorship is worthy of a coupe (pun intended) and to offer your guests bubbly vessel options will elevate your EQ – Entertaining Quotient – to the max.

- The Perfect Hold: Make a pistol with your hand. Slide the two index fingers as the base of the goblet and use your thumb as a lock. Google winery sites and see the winemaker's hold. Hand etiquette for wines, champagnes and brandies are each different (come to my Master Class if you want to learn) and elevate the aesthetic in the service.

- The Tasting Sequence is indeed a sequence and while it seems antiseptic and academic, it gets imbibed into your muscle memory and the sequence becomes a quiet but rapid and barely noticeable chain-drive of minuscule actions. Only the drinker is involved. If there is spectatorship, it is accidental or just vain. The sequence below is

mine, adapted from many an observation in my travels but you can mix and match your own sequence.

- Aerial dance while standing or table dance while sitting. Both dances, i.e. the twirling of the juice in your glass, clockwise and anti-clockwise, are your first interactions with the wine. It becomes seamless after a while and agitates older wines to release their fruit or softens harsh tannins.

- Visual Declaration: This is for detecting color and legs in the wine. Color declaration borders on silly. How clever is calling Red wine Red? Haha, I am looking for garnet, ruby, aubergine, ink, sienna, straw, dirty blonde. Stop me before I embark on my daughter's lipstick hues: One called Tuscan Aubergine cracks me up. But your radar is also out for "legs" as in the thin streaks of gelatin that are cascading down the inner sides of your glass, a measure of a rich, unctuous wine. Finally you are looking for the amber rim on the wine surface, indication of an older vintage that is showing some barrel oak.

- Declaring The Nose (don't say it smells like wine). Duh! Declaration can be mental or a soft dialog between the pourer and the poured. Flower, fruit, nut, earth, minerals and balsamic fragrances offer a wide gamut to choose from.

- The Mouth Swirl and Tasting Notes: Don't try it if you have a face like mine; grimace during Christmas is best left to the Grinch. The swirl floods your upper palette, your tongue, your mouth as it makes its way to one final check-post, a nerve ending that profiles the signals of the wine to your nose and the brain. Are you tasting aubergine?

leather/ Tobacco? Cocoa?

- The Verdict. Alas finally. If it's great, megaphone it to lift your host's heart. If it ain't that great, take the high road and be diplomatic. It's Christmas.

Again, the tasting sequence, after a while becomes a quiet, rapid and personal exercise. Not for a wine snob wannabe to hold court at a party. Unless asked.

Here are a few more best practices that go behind the hosting.

- Reds not to be served in mythical "room temperature" but between 55 and 60 degrees. Not all whites are to be chilled, especially well-structured vintage French Burgundy whites.

- Whites before Reds? No rules, but works well most of the time.

- White with fish, red with meat? Not necessarily, although try light reds like Burgundy and Pinotage with spicy fish, and whites with Asian spices.

- Champagne? Maisons are your regular champagne houses but the esoteric cool bubbly, a small batch, artisanal Grower Champagne

- Port for a Dessert wine? Not necessarily. Try it as an aperitif at the very beginning of the meal or as an intermezzo, or with a cheese service. But not with dessert. Too syrupy sweet.

The real message of all of this is that there are no rules or even an attempt at synthetic decorum for celebrating the season. Warm milk and cookies by the fire will deliver the same heart-felt cozy that the soul beckons during the holidays. Perhaps a sequence on sharing affection, goodwill and genuine warmth with your family and loved ones is more telling than a wine tasting sequence as will the cordial notes of unfiltered friendship shared with your guests.

So this holiday season, don't say "Bah, humbug." Try "Bah, Aubergine."

## • ART CALENDAR •

### **AEROSAL**

"Aerosol: Graffiti, Street Art, New Jersey," through Sunday, March 15, The Morris Museum, 6 Normandy Heights Road, Morristown. New Jersey, uniquely positioned between Philadelphia and New York City, the two historic centers of graffiti

and street art, plays a vital role in the ever-evolving aerosol art narrative, according to museum representatives.

### **FALL EXHIBITS**

"Janet Ruttenberg: Beholder,"

through Sunday, Dec. 29, The ArtYard, 62A Trenton Ave, Frenchtown. Gallery hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday.

"Tribute to Nature," the Chatham Township municipal building at 58 Meyersville Road.

**The New Jersey Art Association Show,** the Library of the Chatham at 214 Main St. in Chatham. The show may be viewed during regular library hours through the month: from 9:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday; from 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday; from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, and from 2 to 5 p.m. Sunday.



# • POTPOURRI •

## BENEFITS

**"Night At the Races – A Kentucky Derby Fundraiser,"** 7 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 25, Rutherford Hall 1686 Route 517, Allamuchy. Admission \$50, with additional sponsorships available for \$50. For more information, call (908)852-1894, ext. 338. The event benefits the museum.

## DINNERS

**St. Mary Slavic Dinner:** St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church will host a Slavic Dinner from 4 to 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 8 in the St. Mary Parish Center, 1900 Brooks Boulevard, Hillsborough. The cost is \$15 for adults (ages 9 and up) and \$5 for children (8 and under) and includes all you can eat pierogies, stuffed cabbage, kielbasa and sauerkraut, mashed potatoes, salad, dessert and beverage. Dinners are held on the second Wednesday of every month throughout the year. Orders to go are available. For more information contact St. Mary's at (908) 725-0615.

## HOLIDAY FUN

**High Bridge Main Street Christmas Party:** The Main Street Christmas Party is hosted by Scout's Coffee Bar + Mercantile and The High Bridge Neighborhood from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 22, on Main Street. All are invited to come out for a special shopping event in High Bridge. The Main Street businesses have all come together to coordinate a street-long Christmas Party consisting of Maker Pop-Ups, Live Music, Libations, Food, gifts, and more. Bounce around Main Street, have a few drinks, and say hello.

## MUSEUM EXHIBITS

**"Working the Land: Life, Family and Change in Early 1800s New Jersey,"** The Museum of Early Trades and Crafts, 9 Main St. at Green Village Road in Madison. "Working the Land" is the first new permanent installation at the museum since 1997, according to Executive Director Deborah Farrar Starker. It relates the stories of those men and women who lived in New Jersey during the mid-1800s, exploring the tools and strategies that helped people of the time meet the challenges of working the land. One of the focal points in the new exhibit are discussions about "moments of change" which include new technologies, innovations, adaptations and breakthrough inventions that would eventually alter

people's lives. The Museum of Early Trades and Crafts is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, and noon to 5 p.m., and is closed on Monday and major holidays. Admission is \$5 for adults; \$3 for seniors citizens, students and children 6 and older, and free for museum members and children 5 and younger, with a maximum family admission of \$15. Information about becoming a member of the museum is available by visiting [www.metc.org](http://www.metc.org) or emailing [operations@metc.org](mailto:operations@metc.org).

**"Sweet Treats: Desserts and Delicacies from the Garden State,"** now on display at the Museum of Early Trades and Crafts, 9 Main St., Madison. The exhibit features historic cookware and draws from local recipes to help shape our understanding of the expertise and artisanship involved in creating these special dishes, many of which continue to be enjoyed today. Regular METC admission is \$5 for adults, \$3 seniors, students and children 6 and older, and free for members and children under 6. Family maximum admission \$15. Museum hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, and noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday. For more information, call the museum at (973) 377-2982 or visit [metc.org](http://metc.org).

**"W. Parsons Todd's Collection of Ceramics and other Elegant Breakables,"** through Feb. 9, 2020, Schoolroom Gallery, Macculloch Hall Historical Museum, 45 Macculloch Ave., Morristown. Macculloch Hall Historical Museum's founder W. Parsons Todd (1877-1976) collected porcelain made in China, England, France, Germany, Japan, and the Netherlands. Some of the objects he acquired, like the Meissen Birdcage vases dating to 1730, are very rare. He also collected porcelain that celebrated United States Presidential history. Museum hours are 1 to 4 p.m. Sundays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. For more information, visit <https://maccullochhall.org>.

**"All the Creatures Were Stirring, Even the Mouse! Thomas Nast's Furry Christmas,"** through Jan. 12, Macculloch Hall Historical Museum, 45 Macculloch Ave., Morristown. Thomas Nast (1840-1902) illustrated the figure of Santa Claus and Christmas images throughout his career. Nast was inspired by the famous poem, "A Visit from Saint Nicholas," popularly known as "'Twas The Night Before Christmas," written by Clement Clarke Moore in 1822. Nast included many elements from Moore's poem in his illustrations. Through a selection of the artist's work, this exhibition explores how Nast developed the image of Santa Claus as a jolly, round-bellied, white-bearded, gnome-like figure that immediately cap-

tured the imagination of both children and adults throughout the United States when first published and that continue to delight audiences to this day. Admission is \$8 adults, \$6 seniors and students, \$4 children under 11 – 6, and free for members and children 5 and younger. Museum hours are 1 to 4 p.m. Sundays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. For more information, visit <https://maccullochhall.org>.

**"Columbia: Thomas Nast Illustrates the Moral Conscience of the United States,"** February – July, 2020, Macculloch Hall Historical Museum, 45 Macculloch Ave., Morristown. Thomas Nast (1840-1902) is credited with popularizing the image of Columbia, the allegorical female embodiment of the United States and the Moral Conscience of the nation. Nast portrayed Columbia as a strong female symbol of the United States. While artists often depicted Columbia's male counterpart with flaws of the everyman, Columbia was always illustrated as a strong protector of the country. This exhibition explores Nast's images of Columbia as the champion of American ideals through a selection of original engravings. Admission is \$8 adults, \$6 seniors and students, \$4 children under 11 – 6, and free for members and children 5 and younger. Museum hours are 1 to 4 p.m. Sundays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. For more information, visit <https://maccullochhall.org>.

## OUTDOORS

**Monthly guided bird walks** are held at 8:30 a.m. on the first Friday of each month at Somerset Hills Memorial Park, 95 Mt. Airy Road in the Basking Ridge section of Bernards Township. Local bird expert Randy Little will guide tours to spot the birds who make their home at Somerset Hills Memorial Park. Attendees should meet at the office at 8:30 a.m. Coffee and breakfast treats will be provided. Call (908) 766-0522 or visit [www.shmpcemetry.com](http://www.shmpcemetry.com)

**Winter Solstice Celebration,** 7 to 8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 20, Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center, 247 Southern Blvd., Chatham Township. Join a woodland gathering around a campfire to experience the historical and ceremonial aspects of the solstice. Listen to storytellers, enjoy hot cider and roasted marshmallows. Cost is \$8 per person. To register, call (973) 635-6629.

**Maple Sugaring,** 1 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 25, Echo Hill Playground, Clinton Township. Hosted by Hunterdon Parks & Recreation. Program is for ages 3 to adult, and costs \$3. Anyone who has come to the Maple Sugaring program in March and wondered

how exactly to tap the trees, or where the Echo Hill sugar bush is can find out by attending this program. The group will meet at the playground and walk to the sugar bush (about five to ten minutes). Then, Recreation Leader Patrick Eckard will demonstrate how to tap a maple tree and participants will collectively tap about 30 trees. Pre-registration required. Visit [www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/depts/parks/programs.html](http://www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/depts/parks/programs.html) or call (908) 782-1158 for more information.

**Maple sugaring demonstrations,** 1 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. Jan. 18, 19, 25 and 26; Feb. 1, 2, 8, 9, 15, 16, 22, 23 and 29; and March 1, 7 and 8, Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center, 247 Southern Blvd., Chatham Township. Admission is \$4 per person. Demonstrations are held rain or shine. For more information and directions to the Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center, visit [morrisparks.net](http://morrisparks.net) or call (973) 635-6629.

**Snowshoe Sundays at Pyramid Mountain Natural Historical Area,** 1 p.m. Sundays, Jan. 5 through March 8, Pyramid Mountain, 472 Boonton Ave., Montville Township. Enjoy a guided trek exploring the beautiful winter scenery and looking for signs of wildlife. No experience is necessary. The program cost is \$5 per person for trek only; \$15 for trek and snowshoe rental if needed. To register and for weather conditions, call (973) 334-3130. Pyramid Mountain is located at the intersection of Mars Court and Boonton Avenue.

**Clinton Town Singles Walk:** The Hunterdon Walking & Social Club will enjoy a Clinton Town Walk at 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 22 after meeting at the North County Library, 65 Halstead St., Clinton in the left side parking lot. The group will walk through town to see the decorations and get in the holiday spirit. The group will then socialize at 4:15 p.m. at Riley and Jakes Restaurant on Route 31 South just before turnoff for High Bridge, rain or shine. The club is for 45+ singles and meets every Sunday afternoon for a walk and talk at parks and trails throughout the county, followed by a gathering at a local restaurant. For info, call (908) 788-7072 or visit [www.angelfire.com/trek.hwsc](http://www.angelfire.com/trek.hwsc).

**Giving Pond Singles Walk:** The Hunterdon Walking & Social Club will walk around the Giving Pond at 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 29 on Route 32 in Tinicum, Pa., just north of Frenchtown on the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware River. Meet in the parking lot just before the Frenchtown bridge to

## • POTPOURRI •

FROM PAGE 13

Pennsylvania in Frenchtown – a left turn between Bridge Café and the bridge. Since The Giving Pond is a relatively new walk, the group will follow the short distance to Delaware Canal State Park in Pennsylvania. Turn right after bridge, go about one mile to the park entrance on the left. Park in second parking lot before the road to boat ramp. Do not go directly to Giving Pond in case we have to substitute a walk along river path from Frenchtown due to poor conditions around the pond. Socialize at Kasey's on the Delaware at 4:15 p.m. BYOB at 971-999 River Road, Route 32, Erwinna, Pa. The club is for 45+ singles and meets every Sunday afternoon for a walk and talk at parks and trails throughout the county, followed by a gathering at a local restaurant. For info, call (908) 788-7072 or visit [www.angel-fire.com/trek.hwsc](http://www.angel-fire.com/trek.hwsc).

**Maple Sugaring:** Hunterdon Parks & Rec will host a program explaining its March Maple Sugaring event from 1 to 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 25 at Echo Hill Playground in Clinton Township. Program is for ages 3 to adult, and costs \$3. Anyone who has come to the Maple Sugaring program in March and wondered how exactly to tap the trees, or where the Echo Hill sugar bush is can find out by attending this program. The group will meet at the playground and walk to the sugar bush (about five to ten minutes). Then, Recreation Leader Patrick Eckard will demonstrate how to tap a maple tree and participants will collectively tap about 30 trees. Pre-registration required. Visit [www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/depts/parks/programs.html](http://www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/depts/parks/programs.html) or call (908) 782-1158 for more information.

### WORKSHOPS

**Digital editing photography workshop,** 1 to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 11, 2020, Scherman Hoffman Wildlife Sanctuary, 11 Hardscrabble Road Bernardsville. Associate naturalists Phil Witt, David DesRochers and Jack Moskowitz will discuss advance editing procedures, including layer masks. Participants should bring images on flash drives for editing demonstrations. The cost is \$12 NJ Audubon members and \$25 non-members. To register, call (908) 396-6386.

**Birding and wildlife digital photography workshop,** 1 to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 8, 2020, Scherman Hoffman Wildlife Sanctuary, 11 Hardscrabble Road, Bernardsville. Besides reviewing equipment selection and use, NJ Audubon associate naturalist Phil Witt will cover topics including weather, composition, lighting, and best times to day to shoot. Students will also learn about exposure and shutter speed. The cost is \$12 NJ Audubon members and \$25 non-members. To register, call (908) 396-6386.

## • KIDS CALENDAR •

### CRAFTS

**Origami Snowflakes,** 4 to 5 p.m. Monday, Dec. 23, Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center, 247 Southern Blvd., Chatham Township. For ages 7 and up. Learn about the amazing properties of snowflake crystals, and take home a sparkling snowflake. The cost is \$5 per person. To register, call (973) 635-6629.

**"Snowflake Party,"** from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 22, at the Somerset County Park Commission's Environmental Education Center (EEC), 190 Lord Stirling Road, Basking Ridge. Family and friends can come prepare for the inevitable snow by making giant snowflake decorations for display at the EEC and some to take home. Attendees can come any time during the party and spend as much time as they desire. The program is free and there is no need to register. For more information, visit [www.somersetcountyparks.org](http://www.somersetcountyparks.org) or call (908) 722-1200, ext. 5002.

**Ring in the New Year with Thomas Nast,** 2 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 26 and Sunday, Dec. 29, Macculloch Hall Historical Museum, 45 Macculloch Ave., Morristown. In this event, children can make a Thomas Nast-inspired calendar for 2020. The event is free with museum admission, which is \$8 adults, \$6 seniors and students, \$4 children under 11 – 6, and free for members and children 5 and younger. For more information, call (973) 538-2404.

**President's Day Drop-in Crafts,** 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 17, Museum of Early Trade and Crafts, 9 Main St., Madison. Have fun exploring the museum's "Surveying the New Jersey Landscape" exhibit. Discover mapping techniques, sketch

a landscape or create the state's official symbol. Cost is \$5 per participant. For more information, visit [www.metc.org](http://www.metc.org).

### HOLIDAY FUN

**The Chester Lions Club invites area children to the annual "Lunch with Santa"** at the Highlands Barn at 100 North Road, Chester on Saturday, Dec. 21. Seatings are at 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. Children will enjoy a free pizza lunch, games, music, crafts, cookies and a visit with Santa Claus. Parents should bring camera and smart phones for pictures with Santa and his elves. The event is for children 11 and under. Children should bring a nonperishable food item to be donated to the Chester Food Pantry. Register in advance at <http://www.chesterlionsclubnj.com/lunch-with-santa/>. For information email [chesterlionsclub@gmail.com](mailto:chesterlionsclub@gmail.com) or visit [chesterlionsclubnj.com](http://chesterlionsclubnj.com).

### LIBRARY FUN

**Mr. Ray will perform a family-friendly concert** from 10:30 to 11:15 a.m. on Saturday, Jan. 4, at the Bernards Township Library, 32 South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge. Registration is not required. For more information, visit [BernardsLibrary.org](http://BernardsLibrary.org) or call (908) 204-3031, ext. 116.

### MINI-CAMPS

**Wild About Winter Mini-Camp,** 9:30 a.m. to noon, Friday, Dec. 27 – Tuesday, Dec. 31, Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center, 247 Southern Blvd., Chatham

Township. For ages 5 – 8. Discover the things wildlife does to survive the winter cold. Cost is \$16 per child per day. To register, call (973) 635-6628.

### MUSEUM SESSIONS

**"NJ Animals & Endangered Species,"** noon to 1 p.m. Wednesdays, Jan. 8, 15, 22 and 29, Museum of Early Crafts and Trades, 9 Main St., Madison. An METC Homeschool Session. Explore how native animals in New Jersey have changed over 200 years. Cost is \$40 for the 4-week session. To register, visit [www.metc.org](http://www.metc.org).

**"NJ Animals from Past to Present,"** 1 to 1:45 p.m. Jan. 27, Museum of Early Crafts and Trades, 9 Main St., Madison. Join a museum educator to explore animals that roamed the state 200 years and today. For ages 3 – 5. The cost is \$10. To register, visit [www.metc.org](http://www.metc.org).

### OUTDOORS


**Winter Solstice Celebration,** 7 to 8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 20, Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center, 247 Southern Blvd., Chatham Township. Join a woodland gathering around a campfire to experience the historical and ceremonial aspects of the solstice. Listen to storytellers, enjoy hot cider and roasted marshmallows. Cost is \$8 per person. To register, call (973) 635-6629.

**Winter Break Family Photo Scavenger Hunt,** anytime between 9 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Saturday Dec. 21 – Tuesday, Dec. 31, Frelinghuysen Arboretum, 353 E. Hanover Ave., Morris Township. Take

PLEASE SEE KIDS, PAGE 14

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## · COMING UP ON CAMPUS ·

### **RARITAN VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

118 Lamington Road, Branchburg. For further information, visit [www.raritanval.edu](http://www.raritanval.edu).

#### **The Theater at RVCC**

**“Doktor Kaboom and The Wheel of Science,”** 10 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 15, 2020. Doktor Kaboom is having trouble selecting his favorite science demonstrations, so he’s bringing them all to the theater. Unfortunately, there are way too many demos for one show. The solution: The Wheel of Science, a huge spinning wheel labeled with everything from optical illusions to chemical reactions to a homemade hovercraft. Wherever the wheel stops, that’s which demonstration will be presented. Will we turn a water bottle into a rocket, or catapult bananas across the stage? Electrocute a pickle, or create artificial gravity? The wheel will be spun, and all will be amazed and entertained. Recommended for grades 3 and older.

**“Wilde Creatures (Tall Stories),”** 10 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 28, 2020. Once upon a time there was a town that was dark and gray, and the town square held an empty platform where the statue of the Happy Prince once stood. Now, a new statue is planned—but of whom? A motley crew of storytelling musicians brings Oscar Wilde’s classic fairy tales to life in this magical new show. Characters from The Devoted Friend, The Nightingale and the Rose and The Birthday of the Infanta compete to become the new town statue, and the audience votes on whose values deserve to be celebrated. These hauntingly beautiful tales are told with original live music, imaginative storytelling and a generous dash of comedy. Rec-

ommended for grades 1 and older.

Tickets in the School-Time series cost \$10 each; \$8 per ticket for groups of 100 or more. One chaperone ticket is provided free of charge for each 15 tickets purchased.

To purchase tickets or for more information about any Theatre at RVCC production, call the Box Office, (908) 725-3420, or order online at [www.rvccArts.org](http://www.rvccArts.org). Subscribers’ packages are available. Senior citizen, student and group discounts are also available for most performances.

#### **The RVCC Planetarium**

Unless specified otherwise, all programs are \$10 for one show, \$18 for two shows on the same day. For reservations and information, call 908-231-8805. For additional information, visit [www.raritanval.edu/planetarium](http://www.raritanval.edu/planetarium).

The Raritan Valley Community College Planetarium, 118 Lamington Road, Branchburg, offers the following laser concerts

- **“The Alien Who Stole Christmas,”** 3 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 21. Discover the starts visible in the winter sky, then follow Santa on a trip through the solar system when a friendly alien kidnaps him. (Recommended for ages 6 – 10.)
- **Winter Wonder Lights,** 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 21. Listen to holiday hits. (Recommended for ages 6 – 10.)
- **“Mystery at the North Pole,”** 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 21. Santa is sick to deliver presents. Who would want to sabotage Christmas? (Recommended for ages 6 to adults.)
- **“Magic Tree House: Space Mission,”** 3 p.m. Saturdays, Jan. 4, 11, and 18, 2020.

## · KIDS CALENDAR ·

FROM PAGE 13

a photo of every item and receive a prize while discovering the beauty of the winter garden. The cost is \$10 per family. For more information, call (973) 326-7601.

**End of Year Hike,** 1 – 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 29, Pyramid Mountain Natural Historic Area, 472 Boonton Ave., Montville Township. Take a moderate hike to Lucy’s Overlook. Cost is \$1 per person; suitable for children 7 and up. To register, call (973) 334-3130.

**“Animals in Winter,”** a program for children ages infant to 5 with a parent, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. on Friday, Dec. 20, at the Somerset County Park Commission’s Environmental Education Center (EEC), 190 Lord Stirling Road, Basking Ridge. Attendees will join a naturalist to talk about animals and how they survive the winter cold. The hour will include games, crafts and stories. Fee is \$10 per pair and \$5 per additional child. Advance payment is required. Register online at [www.somersetcountyparks.org](http://www.somersetcountyparks.org) or call (908) 722-1200, ext. 5002.

Join Jack and Annie as they discover the secrets of the Sun, Moon, planets, space travel, and more. Who can help them answer the questions left for them by the mysterious “M”? The show is based on the same-titled, best-selling series of novels. (Recommended for ages 5 and older)

- **“Kids Jam” laser concert,** 4 p.m. Saturdays, Jan. 4, 11, and 18, 2020. Enjoy a new mix of music featuring a song list to entertain kids and kids at heart while lasers “dance” on the dome overhead. Songs include “Bright,” by Echosmith, “YMCA” by the Village People, “Mia” by Bad Bunny, and “Waka Waka” by Shakira. (Recommended for ages 6-12)
- **Astronomy Tonight,** 7 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 4, 2020. Using the Planetarium’s DigitalSky digital theater, experience a guided tour of the night sky. Learn about some of the popular constellations visible from sunset to sunrise, as well as the stories behind them. Hear about how and where in the sky to find the brightest planets. Weather permitting, the 3M Observatory will be open after the show. (Recommended for ages 8-adult)
- **Laser Beatles,** 8 p.m. Saturdays, January 4 and 11, 2020. Listen to The Fab Four’s hits from their long career, including “Twist and Shout,” “Revolution,” and “Get Back,” while lasers animate the songs on the dome overhead. (Recommended for ages 10-adult)
- **First and Farthest,** 7 p.m. Saturdays, Jan. 11, 18, and 25. From the first rockets to the first man on the Moon, “First and Farthest” celebrates humanity’s great accomplishments in the Space Race. The show may bring back memories for those who experienced the Space Race, and inspire new generations to keep exploring the universe. With its discussion of science, technology, engineering and mathematical concepts,

“First and Farthest” supports a STEM-focused pursuit of knowledge. The presentation is made possible with a grant from NASA’s New Jersey Space Grant Consortium. Weather permitting, the 3M Observatory will be open after the show. (Recommended for ages 10-adult)

- **Best of Pink Floyd laser concert,** 8 p.m. Saturdays, Jan. 18 and 25, 2020. Lasers dance across the Planetarium dome while audience members listen to such Pink Floyd songs as “Comfortably Numb,” “Another Brick in the Wall, part 2,” and “Money.” (Recommended for ages 10-adult)
- **Rockin’ Rocket Ride,** 3 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 25, 2020. Put on your space suit and blast-off into outer space to visit the Moon, Sun and planets. A lively experience for young people, the show offers selected music from “Journey Into Space” by Jane Murphy. (Recommended for ages 3-8)
- **Storybooks in Space,** 4 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 25, 2020. Enjoy story time in the Planetarium. Pages from books are projected onto the dome overhead while we read the stories aloud. Each story then leads us to learn about a different space topic: the planets, our Moon, and the stars in the night sky. Participants are invited to bring stuffed animal friends—at no extra charge, of course! (Recommended for ages 4-8)
- **“Romancing the Stars,”** 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 14. It’s date night at the Planetarium and stars, constellations, songs, and stories all celebrate love. For ages 16 and older.
- **“Laser Love,”** 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 14. This laser concert celebrates love with songs that include “Perfect” by Ed Sheeran, “I Got You Babe” by Sonny and Cher, and “Tale as Old as Time” from “Beauty and the Beast.” This is for adult couples 16 years and older.

#### **STORY-TIME**

**“Storytime in the Trees,”** 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 21, at the Somerset County Park Commission’s Environmental Education Center (EEC), 190 Lord Stirling Road, Basking Ridge. Participants will join a naturalist amid the lights of the Festival of Trees holiday display for seasonal stories of mystery, adventure and good will. The program is free and registration is not required. For more information, visit [www.somersetcountyparks.org](http://www.somersetcountyparks.org) or call (908) 722-1200, ext. 5002.

#### **THEATER**

**The Trilogy Repertory Company** will present “Treasure Island—Live Theater!” at 10:30 a.m., 1 and 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 25 at the Bernards Township Library, 32 South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge. Free tickets are available at the children’s desk. This event is sponsored by The Friends of the Bernards Township Library. For more information, visit [BernardsLibrary.org](http://BernardsLibrary.org) or call (908) 204-3031, ext. 116.



## • THEATER CALENDAR •

### AUDITION

**Brundage Park Playhouse,** Carrell Road, Randolph, is still in need of cast members for its upcoming production of "The Wizard of Oz (Royal Shakespeare Company version)," so it will hold a second audition from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 21 and Sunday, Dec. 22. Munchkins are needed, preferably 12 and older. Also needed are a Tinman, Scarecrow, Wicked Witch and adults for ensemble. All auditioners ages 12 and up should be prepared to sing a song from the show and read from sides, provide a headshot and resume if available. Photos will be taken at the audition for those performers without headshots. All auditioners must be available for rehearsals during tech week, and for all performance dates, which are 8 p.m. Feb. 7, 8, 14, 15, 21 and 22, and 2 p.m. Feb. 9 and 16. Directed by Mark Carovale, this production is based upon the Classical Motion Picture owned by Turner Entertainment Co. and distributed in all media by Warner Bros. Music and lyrics are by Harold Arden and E. Y. Harburg, with background music by Herbert Stothart. Dance and vocal arrangements are by Peter Howard. For more information, visit [brundageparkplayhouse.org](http://brundageparkplayhouse.org).

### HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT

**"The Nutcracker" as presented by the New Jersey Civic Youth Ballet,** 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 20; noon and 5 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 21; and 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 22, The Sit-

nik Theatre of The Lackland Performing Arts Center, 715 Grand Ave., Hackettstown. The Nutcracker is a classic production for all ages as presented by the New Jersey Civic Youth Ballet, Warren County's only non-profit ballet company, and featuring professional dancers from around the world. For ticket information, call (908) 979-0900 or visit [centenarystageco.org](http://centenarystageco.org).

**"Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol,"** through Dec. 29, the Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, The F.M. Kirby Shakespeare Theatre, 30 Madison Ave., Madison. Adapted for the stage by Neil Bartlett Directed by Brian B. Crowe. This version uses a small ensemble of actors to bring an abundance of animate and inanimate characters to life, as the despicable Ebenezer Scrooge encounters the haunting spirits of Christmas Past, Present and Yet to Come. Performance times are 8 p.m. Thursdays, Dec. 19 and Dec. 26; Fridays, Dec. 20 and Dec. 27 and Saturdays, Dec. 21 and Dec. 28; 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 21, Sunday, Dec. 22, Thursday, Dec. 26, Saturday, Dec. 28 and Sunday, Dec. 29; and 7:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 23 and Sunday, Dec. 29. For tickets and more information, visit [shakespearenj.org](http://shakespearenj.org).

### DRAMA

**"Midwives,"** by Chris Bohjalian, directed by David Saint, Jan. 21 — Feb. 16, 2020, George Street Playhouse, New Brunswick Performing Arts Center, 7 Livingston Ave., New Brunswick. When a major snowstorm breaks out

during a routine at-home birth, cutting off all communication with the outside world, midwife Sibyl Danforth is forced to make an impossible decision. This world premiere play is adapted by the author from his bestselling novel of the same name — an early selection of Oprah's Book Club. For ticket information call the box office at (732) 246-7717 or buy online at [www.GeorgeStreetPlayhouse.org](http://www.GeorgeStreetPlayhouse.org).

**"Conscience,"** by Joe DiPietro, directed by David Saint, March 3 — March 29, 2020, George Street Playhouse, the New Brunswick Performing Arts Center, 7 Livingston Ave., New Brunswick.. Senator Margaret Chase Smith is one of the first to stand up against Joseph McCarthy in this drama inspired by real events. This world premiere historical drama set during the American Red Scare marks the latest work by George Street Playhouse favorite DiPietro ("The Second Mrs. Wilson," "Toxic Avenger," "I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change," "Clever Little Lies"). For ticket information call the box office at (732) 246-7717 or buy online at [www.GeorgeStreetPlayhouse.org](http://www.GeorgeStreetPlayhouse.org).

### MUSICALS

Centenary Stage Company presents the Young Performers Workshop Winter Festival of Shows from through Sunday, Dec. 22 at the Little Theatre, 400 Jefferson St., Hackettstown. The workshop is a professional musical theatre training program for young people ages 8-18. The program is one of the

few in the state that offers both formal training and production experience for young people. This years productions include "Anything Goes," 5 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 21 and 4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 22, "George M," 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 21, and 5 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 22, and "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying," 5 p.m., 8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 20, 8 p.m. 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 21 and 7 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 22. Tickets are \$12.50 adults and \$10 children under 12. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit [centenarystageco.org](http://centenarystageco.org) or call the Centenary Stage Company box office at (908) 979-0900.

**"A Walk on the Moon,"** April 21 — May 17, 2020, George Street Playhouse, New Brunswick Performing Arts Center, 7 Livingston Ave., New Brunswick.. Book by Pamela Gray, music and lyrics by Paul Scott Goodman and additional lyrics by Pamela Gray; based on the Miramax & Village Roadshow Pictures motion picture by Pamela Gray. Directed by Sheryl Kaller with choreography by Josh Prince. In this new musical adaptation of the award-winning film, housewife Pearl Kantowitz, sensing that change is in the air, begins a fling with a free-spirited traveling salesman while summering with her family in the Catskills in the summer of 1969. Their whirlwind romance, set against the backdrop of man's first walk on the moon, takes audiences on a nostalgic journey through an iconic moment in American history. For ticket information call the box office at (732) 246-7717 or buy online at [www.GeorgeStreetPlayhouse.org](http://www.GeorgeStreetPlayhouse.org).

## • MUSIC CALENDAR •

### BLUEGRASS

**Tony Trischka,** 8 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 18, Watchung Arts Center, 18 Stirling Road, Watchung. Tickets \$20 in advance, \$25 at door for non-members and \$22 members. To purchase, visit [watchungartscenter.eventbrite.com](http://watchungartscenter.eventbrite.com), call (908) 753-0190 or email [wacenter@optonline.net](mailto:wacenter@optonline.net).

### FOLK

**"Gathering Time with Terry Kitchen & Mara Levine,"** 7:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 27, Morristown Unitarian Fellowship, 21 Normandy Heights Road, Morristown. Suggested donation is \$10. For more information, visit [www.folkproject.org](http://www.folkproject.org).

**Toby Walker with Matt Arons,** 7:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 3, Morristown Unitarian Fellowship, 21 Normandy Heights Road, Morristown. Suggested donation is \$10. For more

information, visit [www.folkproject.org](http://www.folkproject.org).

### HOLIDAY MUSIC

**Fred Miller American Christmas,** 2 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 19, Hunterdon County Library, 314 Route 12, Raritan Township. Singer/pianist/narrator Fred Miller performs sacred and secular favorites, inspirational readings with a mammoth sing-a-long for the holidays, sponsored by the Friends of the Hunterdon County Library at Library Headquarters, 314 Route 12 in Raritan Twp. To register, visit the Events Calendar at [www.hclibrary.us](http://www.hclibrary.us) or call (908) 788-1434.

**Tibetan Singing Bowls,** 5 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 21, Echo Hill, Lilac Drive, Clinton Township. Hosted by Hunterdon Parks & Recreation and led by instructor Lisa Perry. Cost is \$12 per session for ages 13 through adult. Relax and absorb the healing vibrations from crystal and Tibetan singing bowls.

As sunset approaches, everyone is invited to participate in a singing bowl circle. Bring a mat or towel to lie or sit on, a flashlight, and a singing bowl (optional). If it is raining, the group will hold the meditation in the main lodge. Pre-registration is required. Visit [www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/depts/parks/programs.html](http://www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/depts/parks/programs.html) or call (908) 782-1158 for more information.

**Guitarist and singer-songwriter** Peter Mayer of Jimmy Buffett's Coral Reefer Band and the Peter Mayer Group will perform his "Stars and Promises" Christmas tour, "Echoes of The Seasons, A 20th Anniversary Celebration" at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 20, at United Reformed Church, 100 W. Main St., Somerville. Doors will open at 6:30 P.M. The Somerville High School Chamber Choir will also perform. Tickets are \$35 each and are available at [www.tickets.com/events/436198](http://www.tickets.com/events/436198). For more information, visit [www.petermayer.com](http://www.petermayer.com).

**Basking Ridge singer Brynne Stanley** brings her latest collection of holiday songs to several area concerts, starting with two performances at 6:15 p.m. and 8:45 p.m. Friday, Dec. 20, Shanghai Jazz in Madison. No cover charge or tickets required. She'll then perform from 9 p.m. to midnight on Saturday, Dec. 28 at Rod's Steakhouse in Morristown and at the 90 Acres restaurant at Natirar in Peapack on New Year's Eve, Tuesday, Dec. 31. There are two seatings, the first at 6:30 p.m. Reservations are required.

**2019 Holiday Benefit Concert,** 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 20, Morristown Unitarian Fellowship, 21 Normandy Heights Road, Morristown. Performers include The Kitchen Girls, The Mother Pluckers, The One Uke Wonders, and more. Minimum suggested donation is \$15; free for children under 12 provided they are accompanied by an adult. The evening benefits the fellowship. For more information, visit [www.folkproject.org](http://www.folkproject.org).



# YOUR TABLE IS READY

By Deb McCoy

*'Tis the Season at the Grain House Restaurant!*

This is the season to be jolly, and the Grain House offers holiday events every week of December. Events for December 2019 started with the Grain House Cookies + Kindness Brunch on December 15th. Customers enjoyed their Sunday Brunch and then decorated Christmas cookies. The restaurant supplied the cookies and decorating extras, but customers brought imagination, making a great family activity.

For the week of December 16th -22nd, the Grain House offers the Holiday Buffet Brunch, providing an opportunity to get together with friends, family or colleagues for a midday festivity. The buffet will be available from 11:30 am – 2:30 pm and the cost is \$25.00 per person (does not include beverages, tax or gratuity). Reservations are recommended.

On Sunday, December 22nd, the Grain House Holiday Music Brunch will feature a strolling guitarist, Matty D., an exciting musician based in the New York City and Miami-Dade area. He creates a fun-loving atmosphere that pleases all audiences. Matty D. has performed as an opening act for Dwight Yoakum, Steve Moakler, Blues Traveler and Lone Star. The cost for the Holiday Music Brunch is \$29.95 for adults, and \$12.00 for children 4-10 years of age.

On Christmas Eve, the Grain House features a special buffet that has become a family tradition. The buffet includes a Raw Seafood Bar with Shrimp Cocktail, Seafood Salad and Smoked Salmon. There will be an Antipasto Table, as well as a wide variety of items, including Prince Edward Island Mussels, Herb-Roasted Chicken, Honey-Lacquered Pit Ham, Cauliflower Gratin, some "Kids Corner" items and a varied dessert selection. The cost for the buffet is \$52.95 for adults and \$24.95 for children 4-10 (does not include beverages, tax or gratuity).

On New Year's Eve, the Grain House will offer specials that include an 8 oz. Prime Filet Mignon and Butter Poached Lobster Tail, or Sautéed East Coast Halibut, in addition to the regular dinner menu. Find details at [OldeMillInn.com](http://OldeMillInn.com).

The Grain House Restaurant at the Olde Mill Inn is a Central Jersey landmark in a building dating back to 1768. It is located at 225 Hwy 202, Basking Ridge, NJ (I-287 Exit 30B). Lunch and Dinner are served daily, with an à la carte Saturday Brunch/Lunch (11am-4pm) and a large Sunday Buffet Brunch (10am-2pm) that can also accommodate groups. The restaurant offers American cuisine with unique variations from Executive Chef John Benjamin. The focus of the menus is on organic, natural and locally sourced ingredients wherever possible. The Coppertop Pub features 12 beers on tap and an excellent selection of wines plus special cocktails. The restaurant offers fireside dining in all dining areas and is decorated for the holiday season. Reservations are available at 908-221-1150 or on [OpenTable.com](http://OpenTable.com).



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