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DECEMBER 2017

# COUNTY LINES

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## Holiday Issue



## Featured Listings

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from the  
**EDITOR**

December may be the end of the year, but at *County Lines*, we're just beginning to celebrate! It's a month of festivities, good food and drink, family and friends. And don't forget gift-giving!

To start, "West Chester Is the Complete Package for the Holidays," writes Malcolm Johnstone as he highlights holiday events, new shops and, of course, the big Christmas parade on December first. Bundle up and join the crowd!

Other towns are celebrating, too! In "Hometown Sightings Bring Jolly Tidings," Kaitlin Battiste and Taylor Stenroos preview holiday fun in Malvern, Wayne, Kennett Square, Downingtown, Phoenixville and Wilmington. Whew!

For more family fun, head to the theater. People's Light hosts its annual Panto, *Aladdin* this year, while Media Theatre has *Disney's Beauty & the Beast*. Or visit a museum. At the Brandywine River Museum of Art, you'll learn about "Brandywine Critters"—handmade teal ornaments throughout the Museum and on towering trees in the three-story atrium.

This issue is packed with gift-giving help in our Holiday Style and Holiday Window Shopping sections. And in "What Do Men Want?" Mary Dolan finds that the answer depends on the man—fashion-conscious, sportsman, collector or connoisseur. Whether it's fine apparel or craft brews, make sure to shop locally. For the readers on your list, Leslie Finkel at Wellington Square Bookshop offers suggestions for every taste in "Give a Book This Christmas."

We've got a tasty answer to the age-old conundrum of whether it's better to give or receive. Throw a progressive neighborhood holiday party and accomplish both! Brandywine Table's Laura Brennan gives advice on organizing and cooking for this great way to share the fun.

If you're wondering what wine goes with each holiday—Christmas, Hannukah, Diwali, Kwanzaa, New Year's—check out Kayleigh Thompson's advice in "Wine for Every Holiday."

We hope these pages help you celebrate, and we wish the very best of the season to you and yours. Thank you for reading *County Lines* in 2017! We hope you'll keep reading!

Jo Anne Durako  
Editor

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**December 2017**

Volume XLI, Number 4

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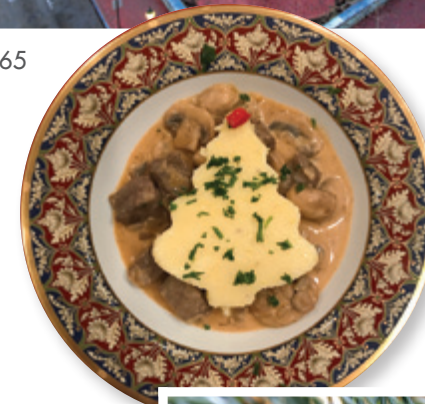
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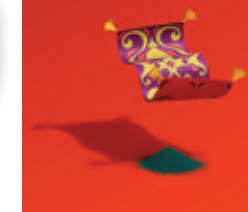


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## [Good to Know] Just a few things we'd thought you'd like to know this month



**Scrumptious Scat.** Yep, you read that right. Try a different type of delicacy this winter with edible scat! Don't worry though, this specialty, made by **Natural Lands**, is chocolate and made to mimic the poo of native animals in PA. Raccoons, wild turkeys and white-tailed deer provide a few of the lifelike scat models for these goodie boxes. Proceeds benefit the Crow's Nest Preserve summer camp scholarships. Place an order and put a surprise under the tree. Contact [KWerner@NatLands.org](mailto:KWerner@NatLands.org).

**Ski You on the Slopes.** It's almost that time of year—when temperatures drop and kids are stuck inside bouncing off the walls. This winter, embrace the cold weather and give family skiing a try! The **Pennsylvania Ski Areas Assn.** offers up to three free passes for 4th and 5th graders to ski at participating PA slopes. Nearly 10,000 kids skied last year with this program. Apply at [SkiPa.com](http://SkiPa.com).



**Bah, Humbug.** If the holidays have you stressed out—from presents that need wrapping to cookies that need decorating—December 21st might be the day for you. On **National Humbug Day**, it's okay to release your inner Scrooge and vent those holiday frustrations. Spend the day on the couch and relax watching holiday movies, drinking some hot chocolate (or something stronger) and saying Scrooge-you to all that holiday stress! More ideas at [HolidayInsights.com](http://HolidayInsights.com). But remember it's just one day!



**Digital Decorating.** Already having nightmares about spending hours putting up those forever-tangled (no matter how neatly you put them away) Christmas lights? Digital decorating company **AtmosFX** is introducing a new way to spruce up your house for the holidays—no Christmas lights required. Project fun holiday scenes—like a 3D Santa and his elves in their workshop—onto your windows or walls. Watch videos of digital decorations in action on the website and add another dimension to your holidays. [AtmosFX.com](http://AtmosFX.com).

**One Horse Open Sleigh.** Everyone knows the holiday classic "Jingle Bells," but did you know it was first performed at a Thanksgiving mass? Originally titled "One Horse Open Sleigh," this tune was created in 1856 by writer and composer James Lord Pierpont. Those attending the mass thought the song was too risqué for a church service, with Pierpont's original lyrics talking about drag racing in the



snow and a high-speed crash! Learn more "Jingle Bells" facts at [History.com](http://History.com).





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## December Picks Our Picks for top events this month

### Diamonds & Denim New Year's Eve Gala

December 31



Plan on an evening to remember with a special performance by The Resident Theatre Company and music by New Street Heat. Enjoy wonderful food, a raffle with diamond-themed items, an auction and toasting

the New Year with specialty cocktails and champagne. Reserve your seats early—last year was sold out. *Uptown! Knauer Performing Arts Center, 226 N. High St., West Chester. 7:30 p.m. to 1 a.m. \$175. 610-356-2787; UptownWestChester.org.*

### Yuletide at Winterthur

Through January 7

“Treasures of Holidays Past” is this year’s theme—an exploration of holiday traditions of the late 1800s and early 20th-century in Henry Francis du Pont’s former home. The majestic Dried Flower Christmas Tree dominates the Conservatory and others will show how lights and ornaments changed through the years. Plus a tree celebrating the exhibit “Royal Splendor: The Coronation Gown from *The Crown*.” 5105 Kennett Pk., Winterthur, DE. Tues.–Sun., 10 to 5 p.m. \$5–\$20. 800-448-3883; Winterthur.org.



### Kennett Symphony—Pops Goes The Holiday with Special Guest PHILADANCO

December 2

Festive and fun with the Kennett Symphony Children’s Chorus joining in—sure to delight and surprise audiences of all ages. Unionville High School, 750 Unionville Rd., Kennett Square. 7:30 p.m. \$10–\$58. 610-444-6363; KennettSymphony.org.



### Supermoon Night Hikes at Tyler Arboretum

December 2, January 1, February 3

Winter offers the best views of the Arboretum and night sky. Take a fast-paced hike on moderate-to-steep trails to view a series of full moon supermoons, which occur on Dec. 3, Jan. 2 and Jan. 31 (the 31st is a blue moon, the second full moon in one month!), around the time of the hikes. Suitable for teens and adults. Bring a flashlight and wear appropriate footwear. 515 Painter Rd., Media. 6 to 7:30 p.m. \$20. 610-566-9134; TylerArboretum.org.



### Delaware Children's Theatre Presents Shrek The Musical

Through December 17

Everyone’s favorite ogre is back in this hilarious stage adaptation of the award-winning film. Unlikely

hero Shrek and his sidekick Donkey set off to rescue the feisty Fiona, but there’s more to this Princess than meets the eye. *Shrek the Musical* is part fairy tale, part adventure and all fun. 1014 Delaware Ave., Wilmington. 2 p.m. \$14–\$15. 302-655-1014; DEChildrensTheatre.org.



# best Local Events

## FAMILY FUN

THROUGH DECEMBER, Tuesdays

**Wellington Square Bookshop. Children's Story Time.** Ages 2-5 listen to songs and stories. 549 Wellington Square, Exton. 10 to 11 am. 610-458-1144; WellingtonSquareBooks.com.

THROUGH DECEMBER 17

**Delaware Children's Theatre—Shrek The Musical.** See December Picks.

THROUGH DECEMBER 30

**Celebrating the Holidays in Kennett Square. Through Dec. 30,** Kennett shuttle to and from Longwood Gardens, timed tickets 1:30 to 6:30; **Dec. 2, 3, 9, 10,** Kennett Holiday Village Market, 11 to 6 at The Creamery, 401 Birch St.; **Dec. 9, 23,** Brandywine Singers caroling, 2 to 5. 610-444-8188; HistoricKennettSquare.com.



THROUGH DECEMBER 31

**Media Theatre Presents Jack Frost Saves Christmas.** The heartfelt musical all about a boy who is unique because everything he touches turns to ice. 104 E. State St., Media. Sat, 11 am; Sun, noon. \$11-\$16. 610-891-0100; MediaTheatre.org.

THROUGH JANUARY 7

**Delaware Museum of Natural History—Here Be Dragons.** The exhibit explores human/dragon cultural connections through hands-on activities and encounters with live reptiles. 4840 Kennett Pk., Wilmington. Mon-Sat, 9:30 to 4:30; Sun, noon to 4:30. \$3-\$9. 302-658-9111; DelMNH.org.

DECEMBER 1

**Phoenixville Christmas Parade.** The parade starts at 7, from the 300 block of Bridge Street, then along Bridge St. for the tree lighting at Bridge and Main Sts. at 8 pm. 610-933-8801; Phoenixville.org.

DECEMBER 1-2

**Malvern's Victorian Christmas.** Begin in Burke Park for the lighting of the tree. Then stroll King Street, and visit shops, enjoy music, children's shows, carriage rides, Santa and more through Sat. Fri, 5:45 to 9; Sat, 11 to 3. 610-296-9096; MalvernVictorianChristmas.org.

DECEMBER 1-2

**Christmas in Wayne. Dec. 1,** carriage rides, ornament making and tree lighting at 7:30 at Wayne Train Station. **Dec. 2,** Santa Parade at 10 am, meet Santa at The Wayne Hotel until 11:30 am, marching band and Elves For Shelves Run for Radnor Memorial Library at 8 am. WayneChristmas.com.



DECEMBER 2

**Coatesville Christmas Parade.** Lively event with bands, floats, cars, cartoon characters and more. Strobe Ave. to 11th St. Starts at 10 am. CoatesvilleChristmas-Parade.com.

DECEMBER 3, 27

**Holiday Events in Newtown Square. Dec. 3,** tree Lighting in St. Alban's Circle featuring Santa's arrival by fire truck, carolling and hot chocolate, off Rts. 3 & 252, 7 to 8. 484-424-6140; NSBPA.com. **Dec. 28,** Newtown Square Public Library's Ring in the New Year party with DJ, games, refreshments at Liseter, 3900 White Stone Rd., Newtown Square, 10 am to noon. 610-353-1022.

DECEMBER 6, 9, 16

**Brandywine River Museum of Art Holiday Events for Families. Dec. 6,** Christ-



mas Party with Santa and Mrs. Claus—entertainment, costumed characters, model trains, antique dolls and Cookie Land, 6 to 8 pm, \$5-\$15; **Dec. 9, 16,** Breakfast with the Trains, includes a private tour of the trains and a continental breakfast, 8:30 to 10 am, \$25. 1 Hoffman's Mill Rd., Chadds Ford. 6 to 8 pm. \$6-\$15. 610-388-2700; Brandywine-Museum.org.

DECEMBER 9

**14th Annual Firebird Festival.** Burning of the Firebird (Phoenix) will be at Friendship Field (at Franklin Ave. & Fillmore St.). The fun begins at 3, burning of the Phoenix at 8:15. 610-933-9199; FirebirdFestival.com.

DECEMBER 9

**A Sugartown Christmas.** Explore the historic village decorated for the holidays and learn about Victorian Christmas traditions. Visit with Santa, decorate cookies in the Carriage Museum and make Victorian-style ornaments. Park at 260 Spring Road, Malvern. 11 to 3. \$6. 610-640-2667; Historic-Sugartown.org.



DECEMBER 15-16

**Firebird Theatre's Holiday Musical Revue.** Two holiday-themed musical comedies include: *Annie JR* and *Twas the Week After Christmas*, performed by the local young actors of Firebird Theatre Company, ages 7-18. The Colonial Theatre, 227 Bridge St., Phoenixville. Fri, 7 pm; Sat, 1 pm. \$8-\$15. 610-917-1228; TheColonialTheatre.com.

DECEMBER 16

**Family Culinary Workshop: Holiday Cookie Tins at Wayne Art Center.** Join chef Chiwishi to decorate cookie tins for the holidays and then fill them with cookies you bake yourself. 413 Maplewood Ave., Wayne. 9:30 to noon or 1 to 3:30. \$35 for 1 adult, 1 child; \$25 ea. add'l child. Reg. req. 610-688-3553; WayneArt.org.

## HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS.....

See also: Family Fun

THROUGH DECEMBER 31

**Historic Odessa Holidays. Through Dec. 31,** "A Visit from Saint Nicholas" at The Wilson-Warner House; **Dec. 10,** Children's Tea Party at the Collins-Sharp House; **Dec. 21,** Holiday Candlelight Tour, 7 to 8:30, \$15. Tues-Sat, 10 to 4:30; Sun, 1 to 4:30. 201 Main St., Odessa, DE. 302-378-4119; HistoricOdessa.com.

THROUGH JANUARY 1

**Holidays at Hagley.** The 1803 du Pont family ancestral home, Eleutherian Mills, will feature holiday decorations and interpretation on the French traditions of holiday entertaining and the celebration of Twelfth Night. Daily 10 to 4. Twilight Tours: **Dec. 12, 13, 19, 26,** 4:30 to 7. \$10-\$14. 302-658-2400; Hagley.org.



THROUGH JANUARY 7

**Yuletide at Winterthur.** See December Picks.

THROUGH JANUARY 7

**Longwood Gardens Holiday Events. Through Dec. 21,** celebrate the season with local choirs and musicians; **through Jan. 7,** the Garden Railway, outdoor firepits, colorful fountains, holiday music, a half-million lights, strolling carolers and daily sing-along; **Dec. 31,** Open Air Theatre Fountain Shows until 10 pm. 1001 Longwood Rd., Kennett Square. Free with gardens admission, \$10-\$27. 610-388-1000; LongwoodGardens.org.



THROUGH JANUARY 7

**A Brandywine Christmas.** Enjoy a gallery filled with an expansive model train display, holiday trees decorated for the season with critter ornaments, and a wide selection of holiday events and programs. Rt. 1, Chadds Ford. 9:30 to 4:30 (closed Christmas Day). \$6-\$18. 610-388-2700; BrandywineMuseum.org.

THROUGH JANUARY 7

**Holidays at Pennypacker Mills. Through Jan.**



**7,** see how the holidays were celebrated in the early 1900s. Tours of the mansion, Tues-Sat, 10 to 4; Sun, 1 to 4. **Dec. 9,** Victorian Christmas Open House, with Santa, a bell choir, decorations, living history and clear toy candy demonstrations, 2 to 8 pm. 5 Haldeman Rd., Schwenksville. \$2 donation. 610-287-9349; MontcoPa.org.

DECEMBER 1-3

**Hay Creek Historical Assoc. Christmas at Joanna Furnace.** Enjoy the Victorian decorations in this historic building, horse-drawn carriage rides, Christmas Market, bonfire, live

# Brandywine Christmas



NOVEMBER 24 - JANUARY 7

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BRANDYWINE RIVER MUSEUM OF ART

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610.388.2700  
brandywine.org/museum

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nativity and tours. Rt. 10, 3 mi. N. of Morgantown. Fri, 5 to 9 pm; Sat–Sun, 4 to 9. \$7. 610-286-0388; HayCreek.org.

#### DECEMBER 2

**Christmas in Marshallton.** Start the day at the West Bradford Fire Department and enjoy Breakfast with Santa from 8 to 11. Then cross the street to Marshallton United Methodist Church for shopping, cookie sale, crafts, Christmas music and free Community Lunch at 11:30. Martin's Tavern Tree Lighting Ceremony starting at 4. 1282 W. Strasburg Rd., West Chester. 610-696-5247;



MarshalltonChurch.org.



#### HOLIDAY TRAINS

Several area railroads offer a series of holiday-themed rides and events. Hop on a train or stop in a museum and let your imagination soar.

**Colebrookdale Railroad.** *Through Dec. 30*, Santa's Polar Express, 'Twas the Night Before Christmas Train and the Snowflake Special. E. 3rd St., Boyertown. ColebrookdaleRailroad.com.

**National Toy Train Museum.** *Dec. 2, 9, 16*, Santa will be at the National Toy Train Museum, 300 Paradise La., Paradise. NTTMuseum.org.

**New Hope & Ivyland Railroad.** *Through Dec. 31*, Santa's Steam Spectacular and the North Pole Express. 32 W. Bridge St., New Hope. NewHopeRailroad.com.

**Railroad Museum of PA.** *Dec. 2, 9*, Christmas with the Conductor Parties on one of the historic railroad cars. 300 Gap Rd., Strasburg. RRMuseumPa.com.

**Strasburg Rail Road.** *Through Dec. 18*, Christmas Tree Train, Santa's Paradise Express and The Night Before Christmas Train. 301 Gap Rd., Ronks. StrasburgRailRoad.com.

**West Chester Railroad.** *Through Dec. 18*, Christmas Tree Train and the Santa Express. 230 E. Market St., West Chester. WestChesterRR.com.

**Wilmington & Western Railroad.** *Through Dec. 30*, Santa Claus Express and Holiday Lights Express. Greenbank Station, 2201 Newport Gap Pk., Wilmington. WWRR.com.



#### DECEMBER 2

**Scott Arboretum Selections: Holiday Sale.** Greens, holiday accents, wreaths, living gifts and fun for the whole family. Roast marshmallows and create kids nature crafts. 500 College Ave., Swarthmore. 1 to 3 pm. 610-328-8023; ScottArboretum.org.

#### DECEMBER 3

**Tree Lighting in Eagleview Town Center.** Welcome the holiday season in Wellington Square Exton. 3:30 to 5. 610-458-1900; Eagleview-TownCenter.com.

#### DECEMBER 8

**National Iron & Steel Heritage Museum Holiday Open House.** Stroll through candle-lit grounds, listen to carolers, enjoy refreshments, see a train display and give Santa your wish list. Canned goods donations are welcome. 50 S. 1st Ave., Coatesville. 5 to 8. Free. 610-384-9282; SteelMuseum.org.



#### DECEMBER 8

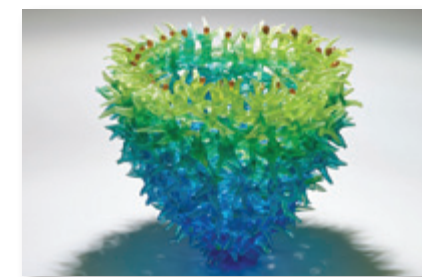
**Historic Yellow Springs Holiday Stroll.** Lots of activities including an art exhibition and sale, story time in the library, tree lighting and crafts at the Township building, refreshments and Santa. Art School Rd., Chester Springs. 5:30 to 8 pm. Free. 610-827-7414; YellowSprings.org.

#### DECEMBER 8–9

**The Mill at Anselma.** *Dec. 8*, Christmas Lantern Tours, 4:30 to 6:30 pm; *Dec. 9*, Santa visits the Mill and Mill Demonstration Day, 10 to 4. 1730 Conestoga Rd., Chester Springs. \$3–\$5. 610-827-1906; AnselmaMill.org.

#### DECEMBER 8–JANUARY 27

**2017 Craft Forms at Wayne Art Center.** An international juried exhibition of contemporary crafts and companion show, "Breaking the Glass Ceiling: Women in Glass." *Dec. 8*, Opening Gala, 6 to 10. Wayne Art Center, 413 Maplewood Ave., Wayne. Mon–Fri, 10 to 5; Sat, 10 to 4. 610-688-3553; WayneArt.org.



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DECEMBER 9

**The Spirit of Christmas in New Castle, DE.** A full day of concerts, house tours, shopping and refreshments, ending with a tree lighting. New Castle Presbyterian Church, 25 E. Second St., New Castle, DE. 9:30 to 5:30. Free. 302-328-3279; NewCastlePresChurch.org/Spirit.

DECEMBER 31

**Midnight in the Square—Kennett Square Mushroom Drop.** Kennett Square's new annual tradition has something for the whole family with activities for kids, live entertainment, a laser show, food vendors in heated



tents and more. Kick off the celebration at 6, followed by "Raising and Lighting" the mushroom between 7 and 8. Admission, non-perishable food items to support Kennett Area Community Service. MidnightInTheSquare.com.

DECEMBER 31

**New Year's Eve Community Celebration and Ball Drop in Media.** Come on out, snow or shine, to State and Jackson Sts. in Media to ring in the new year. Live entertainment 11 pm. Ball drop at midnight. VisitMediaPA.com.

#### ART, CRAFTS & ANTIQUES.....

THROUGH JANUARY 28

**Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital Art Ability Exhibit & Sale.** Artists from around the world with physical, cognitive, visual and hearing disabilities submit their work to this juried exhibition and sale. 414 Paoli Pk., Malvern. 484-596-5710; MainLineHealth.org/ArtAbility.

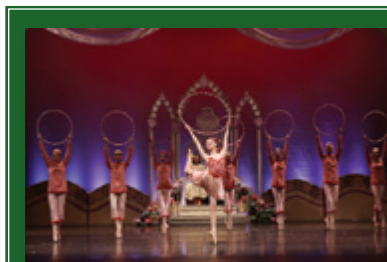
DECEMBER 1-9

**Community Arts Center's Holiday Sale.** Featuring the handcrafted work of the Potters Guild and over 30 additional local artists. **Dec. 4-8**, Holiday Happy Hour, complimentary wine, beer and refreshments while you shop, 5 to 7. 414 Plush Mill Rd., Wallingford. Mon-Fri, 10 to 8; Sat-Sun, 10 to 5. 610-566-1713; CommunityArtsCenter.org.



DECEMBER 8-9

**Winter Arts Festival at Delaware Art Museum.** Browse handmade items by diverse local artisans, tour festive works in the collection, enjoy holiday music and more. 2301 Kentmere Pkwy., Wilmington. Fri, noon to 8; Sat, 9 to 3. Free. 302-571-9590; DelArt.org.



#### THE NUTCRACKER

Here are just a few of the performances of the holiday classic you'll find in and around the area:

**Wilmington Ballet Academy of the Dance.** **Dec. 2-3**, The Playhouse on Rodney Square, 1007 N. Market St., Wilmington. Sat, 2 & 7 pm; Sun, 2 & 6 pm. \$15-\$47. TheGrandWilmington.org.

**Academy of International Ballet.** **Dec. 16**, Strath Haven Middle School, 200 S. Providence Rd., Wallingford. Noon & 4 pm. \$20. AcademyBalletRU.com.

**Brandywine Ballet.** **Dec. 8-10, 14, 16, 17**, Emilie K. Asplundh Concert Hall, 700 S. High St., West Chester. Visit website for times. \$25-\$45. BrandywineBallet.org.

**The Pennsylvania Ballet.** **Dec. 8-31**, Academy of Music, 240 S. Broad St., Phila. \$45-\$159. PaBallet.org.

**Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet.** **Dec. 16-17**, Hershey Theatre, Hershey. \$27-\$52. HersheyEntertainment.com.

**First State Ballet.** **Dec. 22-23**, The Grand, Copeland Hall, 818 N. Market St., Wilmington. 2 & 7 pm; Sun, 2 pm. \$14.99-\$50. TheGrandWilmington.org.

DECEMBER 8-10

**Main Line Art Center Holiday Craft Market: Fresh & Local.** Special events, gourmet food trucks, artisanal goods and fine crafts made locally. 746 Panmure Rd., Haverford. Kick-Off Party Fri, 5:30 to 8 pm. Sat, 10 to 5; Sun, 10 to 4. Free. 610-525-0272; MainLineArt.org.

#### BOOKS.....

DECEMBER 7, 13-14

**Wellington Square Bookshop.** Holiday party party/book exchange. Non-Fiction Club: **Dec. 7**, 7 pm; Fiction Book Club, **Dec. 13, 14**, 2 pm; **Dec. 14**, 7. 549 Wellington Square, Exton. 610-458-1144; WellingtonSquareBooks.com.

#### FUNDRAISERS.....

DECEMBER 2

**The 41st Annual Grand Gala.** The evening begins with a concert by Blood, Sweat & Tears and concludes with the Ultimate After Party at the Hotel du Pont, with live music, dancing

and eclectic fare. Benefits Arts Education at The Grand. 8 pm. Tickets \$195 and up. 302-658-7897; TheGrandWilmington.org.

DECEMBER 31

**Resident Theatre Company "Diamonds & Denim" New Year's Eve Gala.** See Dec. Picks.

#### MUSEUMS.....

THROUGH JANUARY 7

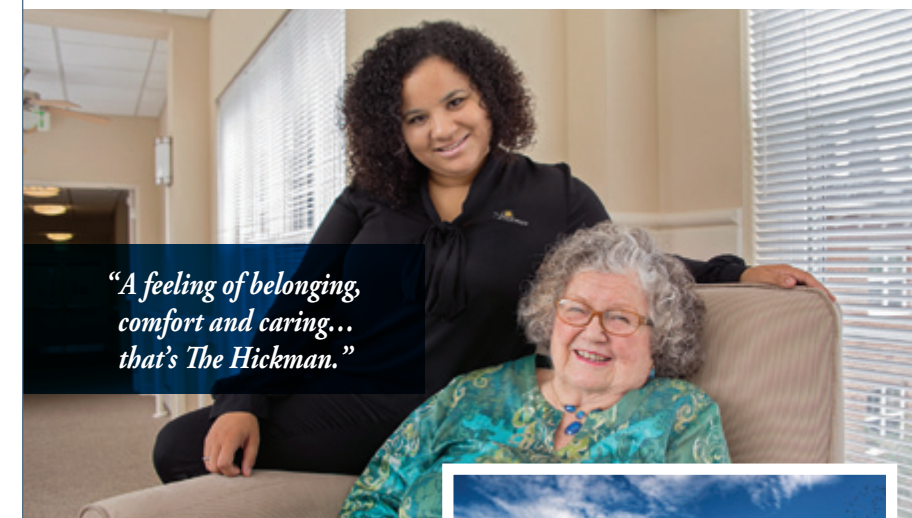
**Brandywine River Museum of Art.** "Dylan Gauthier: highwatermarks." 1 Hoffman's Mill Rd., Chadds Ford. Daily 9:30 to 5. \$6-\$18. 610-388-2700; Brandywine.org.

THROUGH JANUARY 14

**Delaware Art Museum.** **Through Jan. 7**, "Tableau: The Art of Richard Cleaver." **Through Jan. 14**, "The seeing glass." 2301 Kentmere Pkwy., Wilmington. Wed, 10 to 4; Thurs, 10 to 8, free after 4; Fri-Sun, 10 to 4. \$6-\$12, free, Sun. 302-571-9590; DelArt.org.

THROUGH JANUARY 7

**Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library.** **Through Jan. 7**, "Treasures on Trial: The Art and Science of Detecting Fakes." **Through Jan. 7**, "Royal Splendor: The Coronation Gown from the Netflix series, *The Crown*." 5105 Ken-



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nett Pk., Winterthur. Tues–Sun, 10 to 5. \$15–\$30. 302-888-4600; Winterthur.org.

## MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT.....

### DECEMBER 2

**Kennett Symphony—Pops Goes the Holiday.** See *December Picks*.

### DECEMBER 3

**Immaculata Symphony Orchestra Concert.** The Christmas Concert features the Immaculata Univ. Chorale and holiday favorites, 3 pm. 1145 King Rd., Immaculata. \$8–\$15. 610-316-1731; ImmaculataSymphony.org.

### DECEMBER 3

**Valley Forge Chorale Concerts.** Christmas Joy



## Local Farm Markets

Bryn Mawr Farmers Mkt., Lancaster Ave. at Bryn Mawr train station parking lot. *Sat., 9 am to 1 pm.* 215-733-9599; FarmToCity.org.

Downingtown Farmers Mkt., Log Cabin Field, Kerr Park, Pennsylvania Ave. *2nd & 4th Sat., 10 to noon.* 610-836-1391; GrowingRootsPartners.com.

Eagleview Farmers Mkt., Chester County Food Bank, 650 Pennsylvania Dr. *1st & 3rd Thurs., 3 to 5 pm.* 610-836-1391; GrowingRootsPartners.com.

Kennett Square Farmers Mkt., 112 S. Broad St., Kennett Square. *2nd & 3rd Fri., 3 to 6.* 610-444-8188; HistoricKennettSquare.com.

Lancaster County Farmers Mkt., 389 W. Lancaster Ave., Wayne. *Wed & Fri., 8 to 6; Sat., 8 to 4.* 610-688-9856; LancasterCountyFarmersMarket.com.

Malvern Farmers Mkt., First Baptist Church of Malvern, 146 Channing Ave. *1st & 3rd Sat., 10 to noon.* 610-836-1391; GrowingRootsPartners.com.

Phoenixville Farmers Mkt., 200 Mill St., Phoenixville. *2nd & 4th Sat., 10 to noon.* Phoenixville-FarmersMarket.org.

West Chester Growers Mkt., Chestnut & Church Sts. *1st & 3rd Sat., 10 to noon.* 610-436-9010; WestChesterGrowersMarket.com.

Westtown Amish Mkt., 1177 Wilmington Pk., West Chester. *Thurs., 9 to 6; Fri., 9 to 8; Sat., 8 to 4.* 610-492-5299; WestChesterAmishMarket.com.

Concert, 3 pm, \$15–\$25. Lower Providence Presbyterian Church, 3050 Ridge Pk., Norristown. ValleyForgeChorale.org.

### DECEMBER 3

**Delaware County Symphony Concert.** The program is called “World of Flavors” and features the music of Dukas, Fauré, Delius and Beethoven. Neumann University, Meagher Theatre, One Newmann Dr., Aston. 3 pm. \$17–\$20. 610-879-7059; DCSCMusic.org.

### DECEMBER 3–17

**Vox Ama Deus. Handel’s Messiah.** *Dec. 3,* Daylesford Abbey, 220 S. Valley Rd., Paoli. 4 pm; *Dec. 17,* St. Katharine of Siena Church, Lancaster & Aberdeen Aves., Wayne, 4 pm. **Renaissance Noël,** Renaissance Christmas music of Old Europe: *Dec. 9,* Church of



## HOLIDAY HOUSE TOURS

West Chester Public Library’s 7th Annual Holiday Home Tour. *Dec. 2, snow date Dec. 3.* The Library is proud to present the tour featuring ten homes in the southwest quadrant of the borough, all new to the tour and beautifully decorated for the holidays. 10 to 3. Tickets at the Library, 415 N. Church St. or online. \$30–\$40. 610-696-1721; WCPublicLibrary.org.



Strasburg Holiday Home Tour. *Dec. 2.* Visit decorated homes in Historic Strasburg and enjoy the Public Holiday Market from 9:30 to 3, food and a silent auction for a Colonial hearth cooked dinner for six. 10 to 4. First Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall, 101 S. Decatur St. \$20. 717-687-9039; StrasburgHeritageSociety.org.

Annual Candlelight Holiday Tour in Phoenixville. *Dec. 2.* Beautifully decorated homes and churches, crafts, music, refreshments. Benefits Ann’s Heart Code Blue Shelter and Firebird Theatre. 3 to 7 pm. Tickets available online and after 2:30 on the day of the tour at St. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church, 301 Fairview St. \$25. 610-933-9181; Phx-HolidayTour.weebly.com.



the Good Samaritan, Lancaster Ave., Paoli, 8 pm; *Dec. 10,* Thomas Great Hall, Bryn Mawr College, 256 N. Merion Ave., Bryn Mawr, 4 pm. \$10–\$25. 610-688-2800; VoxAmaDeus.org.

### DECEMBER 3–30

**Events at The Colonial Theatre.** *Dec. 3,* City Rhythm Orchestra; *Dec. 8,* The Weight Band; *Dec. 14,* Aimee Mann; *Dec. 21,* Charlie Brown Jazz; *Dec. 29,* Ben Bailey from Cash Cab; *Dec. 30,* Delbert McClinton. Check website for times and tickets. 227 Bridge St. 610-917-1228; TheColonialTheatre.com.

### DECEMBER 10

**Theatre Organ Society of the Delaware Valley’s Annual Holiday Concert.** The Colonial Theatre, 227 Bridge St. 2 pm. \$5–\$10. 610-917-1228; TOSDV.org.

### DECEMBER 10, 15

**The ChesCo Pops Orchestra Holiday Pops.** Under Joseph Gehring, the Pops performs familiar carols with sparkling new arrangements. *Dec. 10,* Immaculata University, 1145 W. King Rd., Immaculata. *Dec. 15,* Unionville High School, 750 Unionville Rd., Kennett Square. 7 pm. \$15–\$20. 610-594-9178; ChescoPops.org.



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DECEMBER 16

**The Brandywine Singers Christmas Concert.** The chamber choral ensemble performs with the Brandywine Symphonic Chorale and Brandywine Brass at the Church of the Good Samaritan, 212 W. Lancaster Ave., Paoli. 7 pm. \$10–\$20. TheBrandywineSingers.org.

#### OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES.....

DECEMBER 16

**Philadelphia Ugly Sweater Run.** Walk or run through the city in the “Merriest 5K of the Year.” Benefits One Warm Coat. Each participant

receives a custom Ugly Sweater Run knit hat, a medal and cup of cheer. Begins at 8:30 am in Fairmount Park, Philadelphia. \$30–\$50. Benefits One Warm Coat. TheUglySweaterRun.com.

#### THEATER.....

THROUGH DECEMBER 3

**Lights Out: Nat “King” Cole.** This world premiere features hits and holiday standards like “Nature Boy,” “Unforgettable” and “Joy To The World.” People’s Light, 39 Conestoga Rd., Malvern. Check website for show times and tickets. 610-644-3500; PeoplesLight.org.

THROUGH DECEMBER 24

**Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol.** Hedgerow Theatre’s annual production of the timeless classic. 64 Rose Valley Rd., Rose Valley. Check website for show times and tickets. 610-565-4211; HedgerowTheatre.org.

THROUGH DECEMBER 30

**Miracle of Christmas.** Majestic flying angels, live and animatronic animals, spectacular sets, stunning special effects and a musical score that will touch your heart. Sight & Sound Theatres, 300 Hartman Bridge Rd., Ronks. \$21–\$74; Sight-Sound.com.

THROUGH DECEMBER 30

**Our Christmas Dinner.** A hilarious look at family tradition, holiday expectations and the real meaning of Christmas. Bird-In-Hand Stage, 2760 Old Philadelphia Pk., Bird-in-Hand. 800-790-4069; Bird-in-Hand.com/Stage.

THROUGH JANUARY 7

**Aladdin: A Musical Panto.** See Theater Spotlight in this issue.

THROUGH JANUARY 14

**Disney’s Beauty and the Beast.** See Theater Spotlight in this issue.

DECEMBER 15–31

**A Christmas Carol: A Live Radio Play.** See West Chester Events.

#### TOWNS, TALKS & TOURS.....

DECEMBER 1, 9, 21

**First Fridays, Second Saturdays, Third Thursdays.** Dec. 1, First Fridays: **Kennett Square Art Stroll**, 610-444-8188; HistoricKennettSquare.com. **Lancaster City**, 717-509-ARTS; Visit-LancasterCity.com. **Oxford**, 610-998-9494; DowntownOxfordPA.org. **West Chester**, 610-738-3350; West-Chester.com. **Wilmington Art Loop**, 302-576-2135; CityFestWilm.com. Dec. 9, Second Saturday Arts Stroll: **Media**, 484-445-4161; MediaArtsCouncil.org. Dec. 21, **Malvern Stroll**, MalvernBusiness.com.

THROUGH DECEMBER 9

**Chester County’s Best Kept Secrets Tour.** Visit over 40 off-the-beaten-path businesses. Ticket includes a map, guide and coupons. \$9; \$1 of each ticket sold benefits the Good Samaritan Homeless Shelter. 717-721-9409; BestKept-SecretsTour.com. ♦

Stay in the know with everything going on in *County Lines* country. Sign up for our monthly Events Newsletter at [Newsletter@ValleyDel.com](mailto:Newsletter@ValleyDel.com)

Send a description of your activity to [Info@ValleyDel.com](mailto:Info@ValleyDel.com) by the first of the month preceding publication.

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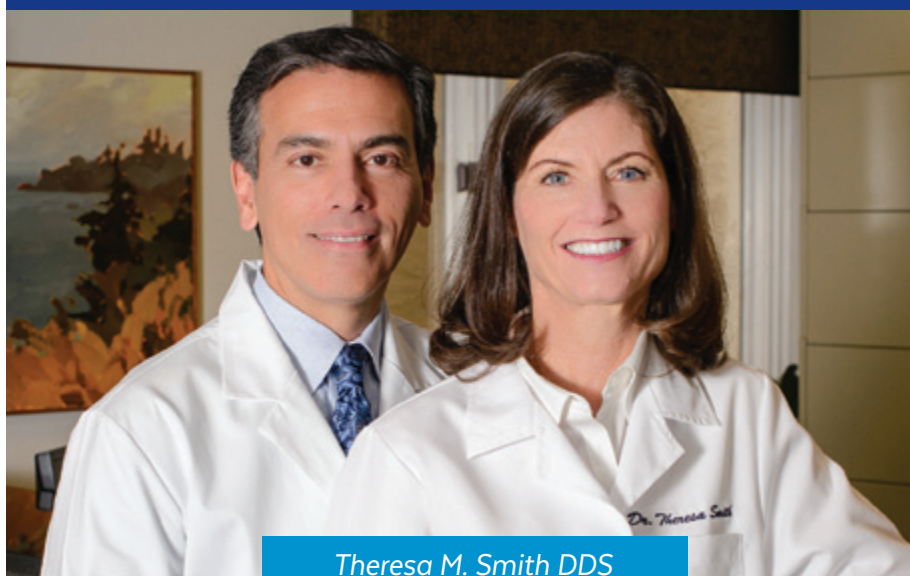
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# Disney BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

THE BROADWAY MUSICAL

© Disney

Through January 14, 2018

AT THE MEDIA THEATRE



**T**HE HOLIDAY SEASON IS APPROACHING. Bells fill the air as the night closes in, darkening, but for the twinkling of tiny bulbs. Music emanates from the historic theater, grows louder along with the bustle and noise of the gathering crowd outside. The posters whisper: *Disney's Beauty and the Beast*, a fairy tale, centuries old ...

The Beast? Once a rich, vain and arrogant prince, now hideously transformed by an enchantress for his brutish, condescending behavior. Angry and spiteful at his plight, alone in his castle, he can escape the curse only if he loves and is loved. The enchantress gave him 10 years.

Belle, the Beauty? Intelligent and adventurous, Belle goes to the Beast's castle to trade places with Maurice, Belle's absent-minded father, who was captured and imprisoned there. Later, Maurice will try to rally the town to free his daughter.

Then there's Gaston, an egotistical and manipulative man-about-town, who wants Belle for his bride, but only for her looks.

As Belle finds herself falling for the Beast, and the Beast for her—with time running out on the Beast's curse—Gaston jealously storms the castle. Gaston and the Beast duel to the death, but ...

No spoilers here! You'll have to see the show and find out for yourself.

This holiday season The Media Theatre tells a "tale as old as time." Romantic, dramatic, humorous, wonderful for children and the whole family! The original Broadway production ran for over 13 years and was nominated for 9 Tony Awards.

You'll love the music—classic songs, like "Be Our Guest," written by Alan Menken and the late Howard Ashman, along with a few new songs created for the stage version. The play is directed and choreographed by Dan Dunn, with music directed by Ben Kapilow and played by a live orchestra. Alanna Smith plays Belle; Jay Yoder, The Beast.

Enjoy this perfect family treat! ♦

## IF YOU GO:

**Where:** The Media Theatre  
104 E. State Street, Media

**When:** Through January 14th

**Tickets:** \$30 and up, available online at  
MediaTheatre.org and  
by phoning 610-891-0100

**Coming Soon:** *Next to Normal* and *If/Then*



# Aladdin: A Musical Panto

At People's Light  
Through January 7, 2018

**W**HAT DO A 9TH CENTURY Arabic text, cross-dressing and Minecraft have in common? Why, this year's Holiday Panto at People's Light, of course!

Now entering its 14th year, these original madcap musicals have become an annual holiday tradition for residents of Chester County and beyond. This season, following the British theatrical tradition of using a familiar folktale as a loose outline for dazzling songs, dance, social commentary and comedy, People's Light is putting their unique Panto spin on *Aladdin*.

In the not-so-far-away desert of Paolistein, Aladdin and his two friends—Manny the Monkey and Morris the Mantis—are budding video game designers with hopes of making better lives for themselves and their poor families, including Aladdin's put-upon mother, the great Panto Dame Widow Twankey (played by a man).

Meanwhile, Princess Mai Tai is feeling the binds of royalty and yearns for life beyond the palace walls and the reach of her well-meaning but bumbling father, the Sultan (played by a woman). But Fu, the Sultan's Royal Vizier and commercial real estate developer (or is he?), has his own evil plans to gain ultimate power.

When Mai Tai disguises herself as a man to escape the palace and discover what Fu is up to, she meets Aladdin, and both fight for their instantly forged love.

There are encounters with wondrous treasures, a flying carpet, a mysterious ring and lamp, plus send-ups of *West*

*Side Story*, *Donkey Kong*, *Star Wars*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Ninjago*, *Cyrano de Bergerac* and our online and hyper-connected world.

The tale of *Aladdin* is no stranger to adaptations. For centuries, storytellers from India, Persia and China passed along the spoken tales of Scheherazade's *One Thousand and One Nights* as they travelled along the Silk Road. The first written version of these tales was translated to Arabic around 850 A.D., but a more familiar written version of *The Story of Aladdin and the Magical Lamp* didn't appear until 1704 in a French translation of *Nights* by Antoine Galland. It quickly gained popularity, exciting the European appetite for the mysterious and exotic. Once the panto genre was firmly established in Great Britain in the mid-1800s, *Aladdin* was one of the first tales used for this holiday variety show.

At People's Light, we're having great fun making this tradition our own. Audiences are encouraged to cheer the heroes and boo the villains, as well as dance on stage and sing along with the original musical numbers in the play. There's plenty of slapstick, a "messy bit" with something gooeey or wet, comic non-sequiturs, a "candy bit" where candy is thrown into the audience, satires of local events, and even a strangely affecting journey of personal discovery.

As a broad comic form relying on jokes and satire, the Panto is in a constant state of renewal and re-invention. Driving this *Aladdin* Panto are ideas of the ever-present and quickening turnover of information and technology, trends and memes, and how to find magic that's fully human in our world of screens and mediated social interactions.

These new themes are energized by talented young actors new to the People's Light stage (Camilo Estrada, Zach

Aguilar, Peter Danelski, Samantha Funk, Nicholas L. Parker), even as our Panto veterans (Christopher Mullen, Tom Teti, Susan McKey, Kim Carson) are welcoming these newcomers into our unique Panto tradition.

But the full renewal of its comedy and hilarious antics can reach its ultimate realization only with the final magic ingredient: the audience! ♦

— Gina Pisasale

## IF YOU GO:

**Where:** Leonard C. Haas Stage  
People's Light  
39 Conestoga Rd., Malvern

**When:** Through January 7th, 2018

**Tickets:** \$42 and up, available online at [PeoplesLight.org](http://PeoplesLight.org) and at 610-644-3500

**Coming Soon:** *Morning's at Seven* and *The Diary of Anne Frank*



Photos: Mark Gavin





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# Brandywine Critters



**A** BRANDYWINE CHRISTMAS IS A TREASURED holiday tradition at the Brandywine River Museum of Art, spanning almost five decades. Each year, visitors of all ages come to enjoy the Museum decked out for the holidays, including the thousands of whimsical “Critter” ornaments displayed throughout the Museum and on towering trees soaring up through the three-story atrium.





PHOTO BY CARLOS ALEJANDRO



PHOTO BY CARLOS ALEJANDRO



Brandywine Critters are a unique tradition dating back to the Museum's founding. These delightful, distinctive ornaments are handcrafted by volunteers using only natural materials such as teasel, pine cones, acorns, egg shells, flowers and seed pods.

Critter "ingredients" are collected and grown throughout the year with teasel being a main ingredient found in most Critters due to its easily sculpted and sturdy frame. For those who don't know, teasel (or *Dipsacus sylvestris*) is found throughout the mid-Atlantic region in dry conditions, often in roadside patches.

With the aid of glue, tweezers and a lot of imagination, volunteers work year-round crafting Critters to decorate the Museum and sell to the public. Critters come in all shapes and sizes, from small animals—like reindeer, owls, bunnies, dogs—to elaborate and unique scenes featuring musicians, carolers, bicyclists and kayakers.

The inspiration for the Critters came soon after the Museum's opening in 1971 when the late George A. "Frolic" Weymouth, founder and chairman of the Brandywine Conservancy & Museum of Art, asked two volunteers to decorate a "natural Christmas tree" for the Museum's first holiday display that would complement the work of the Brandywine Conservancy. Natural materials were gathered in their raw state for decorating the tree.

The second year, additional volunteers were inspired to use natural materials to craft tiny Critter ornaments. The Critters grew in popularity—and size—and in 1984, Brandywine was asked to decorate the main Christmas tree at the White House. Over 3,000 Critter ornaments were created to decorate the White House Christmas tree, catapulting the Critters onto a national stage.

Since then, the Critter-maker team has grown to 130 volunteers, pro-

ducing over 10,000 ornaments each year to display and sell at the annual Critter Sale on the first weekend of December. Proceeds benefit the Brandywine Volunteers' Art Purchase Fund and Art Education and Programming, with more than \$1.3 million raised to date.

Do you need a Critter for your tree? ♦

~ Nicole Kindbeiter

## IF YOU GO:

**Where:** Brandywine River Museum of Art  
1 Hoffman's Mill Rd., Chadds Ford

**When:** Critter Sale, Nov. 30, 5 to 9 p.m.  
Dec. 1–3, 9:30 to 5 p.m.  
Also available in the gift shop,  
through Jan. 7, 2018

**Museum Hours:** 9:30 to 5 (except Christmas)

**Critter Pricing:** \$5 to \$35, with specialty  
items, \$50 to \$250

# THE HOLIDAYS *Re-Imagined*

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# HOMETOWN SIGHTINGS

## Bring Jolly Tidings

Kaitlin Battiste & Taylor Stenroos

'TIS THE SEASON TO VISIT SIX TOWNS FILLED WITH HOLIDAY CELEBRATION!

**J**OIN IN THE ENDLESS FUN AS AREA TOWNS transform into winter wonderlands this holiday season. As holiday cheer fills the air, experience

the unique character that each destination offers as you wander along the streets for shopping, sightseeing and more.

Entertainment, tree lightings and parades galore await—so come out and celebrate!

### O' Little Town of Malvern



**T**he holidays begin early this year in Malvern. On December 1st and 2nd, celebrate Malvern's Victorian Christmas, highlighted by the lighting of the Christmas tree in Burke Park. Visit with Santa at the Pavilion, warm up to beautiful music by the Great Valley Symphony Orchestra at the First Baptist Church of Malvern starting at 6:55 p.m., and stroll King Street to visit shops, enjoy more music, children's shows, carriage rides and more.

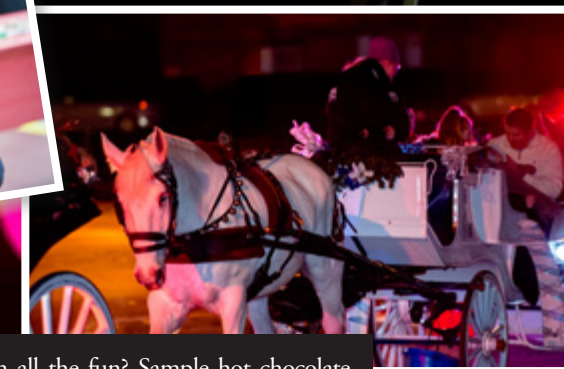
On Saturday morning, head back to King Street, taking in all that Malvern has to offer, for more shopping as you enjoy the holiday decorations and cozy up with a cup of hot chocolate on a free horse and carriage ride. To escape

the cold, grab the kids and make a gingerbread house at the Malvern Bible Chapel.

The holiday fun continues with A Sugartown Christmas outside town. Explore this timeless nearby village and learn about Victorian Christmas traditions. Decorate cookies in the Carriage Museum and make Victorian-style ornaments to put on your own Christmas tree. End your day with a visit to Santa at the 1805 William Garrett House, complete with holiday treats and cocoa.

The little town of Malvern is a perfect holiday destination!

More at [MalvernsVictorianChristmas.org](http://MalvernsVictorianChristmas.org) and [HistoricSugartown.org](http://HistoricSugartown.org).



### Stroll Down Santa Claus Lane in Wayne

**S**anta Claus is comin' to town! Yes, Santa will make his way to Wayne during the Wayne Business Association's Annual Christmas in Wayne weekend with Friday, December 1st, as day one of the fun-filled weekend. The festivities begin at 5:30 p.m. at the Radnor Fire Co., 121 S. Wayne Ave., for photos with reindeer, winter carriage rides, face painting and ornament making.

Stop by the Wayne Train Station to enjoy the Valley Forge Military Academy & College Choir as they sing

carols. Hungry from all the fun? Sample hot chocolate and goodies at Wayne Senior Center, 108 Station Rd., from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Keep your eye out for Santa, though, he'll be arriving for the tree lighting at 7:30 p.m.

On Saturday, head to the Santa Parade starting at 10 a.m. along Lancaster Avenue, ending at the Wayne Hotel. Meet with Santa on the Hotel's veranda until 11:30 a.m. Mark your calendars for holiday fun!

More at [WayneChristmas.com](http://WayneChristmas.com).



### Celebrating in Kennett Square

**H**ead south for Christmas in Kennett from November 26th to December 17th for never-ending holiday fun! Shop, dine and prance around town or stop by the Kennett Holiday Village Market at The Creamery, 401 Birch St., from 11 to 6 on December 2nd, 3rd, 9th and 10th.

Or you can catch a shuttle to A Longwood Christmas at ... you know where, November 23rd through January 7, to experience indoor French-inspired displays dazzling with wreaths, mirrors, trees in holiday hues and sparkling crystal ornaments. Step outside in the gardens to a half-million lights and watch colorful fountains dance to holiday music. See Open Air Theatre Fountain Shows until 10 p.m. on December 31st.

And the fun continues. This New Year's Eve, join the Mushroom Capital of the World for Midnight in the Square's annual Mushroom Drop! There's fun for the whole family—kids activities, guest DJs, live bands, laser show, food vendors in heated tents and more. Ranked #13 for "Weirdest things dropping on New Year's Eve" by USA TODAY, the celebration starts at 6, followed by "Raising and Lighting" the 700-pound stainless steel mushroom between 7 and 8. Bring non-perishable food items to support Kennett Area Community Service to start the New Year right.

More at [HistoricKennettSquare.com](http://HistoricKennettSquare.com), [LongwoodGardens.com](http://LongwoodGardens.com) and [MidnightInTheSquare.com](http://MidnightInTheSquare.com).





## Phoenixville Festivities

**C**elebrate Christmas in Phoenixville with the annual Christmas parade on December 1st. Starting at the 300 block of Bridge Street at 7 p.m., enjoy this hometown parade with friends and family, then head for the tree lighting at Renaissance Park.

On December 2nd, stop by Saints Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church on Fairview Street for tickets to Phoenixville's Candlelit Holiday Tour. From 3 to 7 p.m., tour beautiful homes, both historic and modern, as they show-

case bedecked Christmas trees, twinkling lights and eye-catching decorations.

The following week, head back for Phoenixville's 14th Annual Firebird Festival on December 9. The festivities begin at 3 p.m., complete with live music all day on Bridge and Main Streets. At 8:15 p.m., Friendship Field is the site for the annual burning of the Phoenix—in mythology, burning of the Phoenix symbolizes resurrection and renewal—just in time for the New Year!

More at [Phoenixville.org](http://Phoenixville.org) and [FirebirdFestival.com](http://FirebirdFestival.com).



## December in Downingtown

**V**isit Downingtown to tour the 2nd Annual Holiday Home Decorating Contest. Enjoy festive decorations and blazing lights as houses around the borough compete for the grand prize. And the best part? You get to be the judge and vote for your favorite home! The competition runs from December 9th to the 22nd, with winners announced on the 23rd.



Weekend festivities continue with the annual Downingtown Good Neighbor Christmas Parade on Saturday, December 9th, at 3 p.m., on its route along Lancaster Avenue. Make sure to stay until the end to greet Santa and Mrs. Clause as they roll by on a big float, sure to put anyone in the Christmas spirit.

More at [DrownChristmas.com](http://DrownChristmas.com).

## Dance Through December

**T**wo separate productions of this Christmas classic—*The Nutcracker*—are coming to Wilmington this month. On December 2nd and 3rd, the Wilmington Ballet Academy of the Dance will perform at the Playhouse on Rodney Square. This 51-year tradition includes a full orchestra and chorus, world-class principal dancers, young dancers and a one-horse open sleigh. Show times are Saturday, 2 & 7 p.m., and Sunday, 2 & 6 p.m.

Admission: \$15–\$47. 1007 N. Market St.

Or join the First State Ballet, December 22nd and 23rd, on a magical journey in their production of *The Nutcracker* on the main stage at The Grand Opera House. Show times are 2 & 7 p.m. Admission: \$15–\$50. Copeland Hall, 818 N. Market St.

With so many chances to enjoy this holiday magic, there's no excuse not to see at least one!

More at [TheGrandWilmington.org](http://TheGrandWilmington.org). ♦



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# WEST CHESTER *is the* COMPLETE PACKAGE! *for the Holidays*

Story by Malcolm Johnstone  
Photos by Timlyn Vaughan

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Bove Jewelers is celebrating 88 years of welcoming customers.



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**Y**OU MAY HAVE HEARD THAT SANTA VISITED West Chester early this year with the gift of the Great American Main Street Award, one of the nation's most prestigious honors. Presented last May by the National Main Street Center, this designation provides downtown West Chester with yet another reason to celebrate. The livability of the community is preserved through its historic and cultural heritage, while the downtown continues to transform itself into a shopping and dining destination.

Yes, it is the complete package!

West Chester continues to aspire to a higher standard with the opening of a new Visitors & Information Center at the corner of High & Chestnut Streets. This collaboration between the West Chester Business Improvement District and Greater West Chester Chamber of Commerce, among others, will make West Chester even more vital and attractive. The final touches are scheduled for mid-December, when the center should be up and running. Stop by and see for yourself.

## SEASONAL CELEBRATIONS

Mark you calendar now for holiday fun! The QVC West Chester Christmas Parade, downtown's grandest parade, takes place Friday,

December 1, starting at 7:15 p.m. Once again it promises to be the highlight of the winter holiday season with marching bands, cold air balloons and performance groups. Singer/songwriter Ashlee Keating will release a brand new song to kick-off the parade.

This year's Holiday Village on High Street will offer some unique experiences. Visitors can look forward to very special photo opportunities in a human-sized Snow Globe sponsored by QVC and then head for the world's largest Rocking Horse, courtesy of Wells Fargo Bank. Both stops make picture-perfect souvenirs for holiday memories.

Starting at 5 p.m., dozens of other events surround the parade, including complimentary hot chocolate from First Resource Bank. So come downtown early and immerse yourself in the glow of West Chester's Christmas spirit—all presented by the Greater West Chester Chamber of Commerce.

During the rest of December, holiday carolers will be singing seasonal favorites at several locations throughout the downtown district. Check the West Chester Christmas page at *Downtown-WestChester.com* for the best times to see—and hear—they.

Another fine tradition returns for its second year after its revival—the Chester County Historical Society Volunteer Organization's Greens Sale & Holiday Crafts. The event offers a





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The latest in men's contemporary styles are found at Phineas Gage.



From denim to dresses, Jane Chalfant/Kiki Boutique has it all.

stunning array of beautiful and affordable locally handcrafted wreaths, ornaments, garlands and floral arrangements. And for the do-it-yourselfer, there are generous bags of greens and holly.

The Historical Society volunteers will also sell luminaria kits (no sand needed) that are reusable year after year. The sale runs December 8 & 9: on Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the Chester County Historical Society, High & Chestnut Streets.

### SHOPPING SMALL IS BIG

There are more than 150 small shops and restaurants that are independently owned by friends and neighbors in downtown West Chester. Since Thanksgiving weekend, #ShopSmallWC has been encouraging patrons to shop and eat locally, where our neighbors work.

In addition to your long-time favorite shops and boutiques, there are six retail shops new to the downtown retail district offering items you won't see anywhere else.

For those looking for personal and home accessories to express their individuality, VK Veruzka's Store (113 N. High St.) is intended to enrich your lifestyle with art, style, culture and creativity. Their pieces have a worldwide influence with items created by artisans from North and South America, Asia and Africa.

Searching for something serene? Tracey Wang Stuligross was born in China where her family owned a tea house, and from their business she became an expert in all aspects of tea—from selecting the best leaves, proper brewing techniques, and the connection between tea and the Zen approach to life. Tracy now brings her love and knowledge to West Chester with the opening of TranquiLiTEA Temple (127 N. Church St.). Her shop offers tasting and a wide range of loose tea to bring comfort to a busy life.

When Bob Strehlau became the new owner of Bove Jewelers, he already had 15 years of experience with the now 88-year-old jewelry store. Even more notable, Bob's family has been in the jewelry business since 1879! Yes, Bob knows jewelry. Whether it's custom design or repair, Bove welcomes customers to their new West Chester location (113 W. Gay St.).

Walk into Modern Tribal Arts (148 W. Gay St.) and the first thing that hits you is the beauty and craftsmanship that only the highest quality luxury carpets can provide. Owner Adam Corson has developed strong relationships in the international hand-knotted rug industry. His carefully curated selection of rugs offer collections exclusive to Modern Tribal Arts such as Thibaut Van Renne, Wool and Silk Rugs, Sahar Carpets, Ariana Rugs and Paulig Teppiche. Find a magic carpet perfect for your home.

There's no question that style thrives in West Chester. So why wouldn't La Chic Boutique expand with a second location in the heart of downtown (14 W. Gay St.)? Owner Alysha Martinelli personally selects each designer item, from belts to dresses, to suit the desires of both working and trendy customers.

Looking for something that's not just American made, but West Chester made? Despite rapid growth of Tesoro, co-owners Brittany Reed and Emily Pisano chose to stay in downtown West Chester, where they design and manufacture high quality leather goods. Better still, now they have a storefront (230 W. Market St.) where you can choose hand-made leather products that never go out of style. "We believe features such as a reversible option and removable/adjustable straps will take you from the boardroom to a cocktail party," say Brit and Emily. "Style should never be sacrificed for functionality, and our bags prove that it's possible."



KALY has been carrying trendy women's casualwear, baby gifts & accessories for over 25 years.



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### FAMILY FUN

Yes, the Christmas parade is a top reason to visit West Chester for the holidays, but there are more things on the holiday fun list. The West Chester Railroad, which began running in 1858, presents Santa's Express. This popular Chester Valley excursion runs through December. Check availability at [WestChesterRR.net](http://WestChesterRR.net).

On Saturday, December 9 at 2 p.m., the wildly hilarious Story Pirates will collect audience members' ideas for an impressive improv show that validates the power of human imagination! At Madeleine Wing Adler Theater (817 S. High St.). Information at [DowntownWestChester.com](http://DowntownWestChester.com).

And finally, what's Christmas without a Charles Dickens holiday classic? *A Christmas Carol* comes to life as the Resident Theatre Company re-enacts a live 1940s radio broadcast complete with vintage commercials and live sound effects. Performances at the Uptown! Knauer Performing Arts Center (226 N. High St.), December 15–31. ♦





# Holiday Fun in WEST CHESTER

**THROUGH DECEMBER 23**  
West Chester Railroad Santa's Express. See *Best Local Events* section.

**THROUGH DECEMBER 24**  
19th Annual Miniature Show at Sunset Hill Fine Arts Gallery. Over 20 of Chester County's best artists display miniature artworks, perfect holiday gifts for art lovers. 23 N. High St. 610-692-0374; SunsetHillJewelers.com.

**DECEMBER 1-2**  
Christmas in West Chester. *Dec. 1*, Soup & Sandwich Parlor, Knights of Columbus, 5:45; Jingle Elf Run, 6:30; Christmas Parade, 7:15 pm. *Dec. 2*, Breakfast with Santa at The Chester County Historical Society, 8:30 & 10 am, \$16. For a schedule of events, GreaterWestChester.com.

**DECEMBER 1-31**  
Uptown! Events at Knauer Performing Arts Center. *Dec. 1, 3*, Uptown! Singers, Fri, 5 pm; Sun, 3 pm, \$8-\$15; *Dec. 3*, Summer Club Holiday Spectacular, 7:30 pm, \$35; *Dec. 7*, Dueling Pianos, 7:30 pm, \$20; *Dec. 21*, Family Jazz



Night featuring The Cartoon Christmas Trio, 6:30 pm, \$15-\$20; *Dec. 31*, New Year's Eve Gala, see *December Picks*. 226 N. High St. UptownWestChester.org.

**DECEMBER 2**  
West Chester Public Library's Holiday Home Tour. See *Best Local Events* section.

**DECEMBER 2**  
West Chester Charity Ball. Dinner, dancing and auction. Benefits Emergency Family Shelter, homeless prevention and outreach programs. West Chester Golf and Country Club, 111 W. Ashbridge St. 6 to 11:30 pm. \$175. 610-431-3598; Friends-Assoc.org.

**DECEMBER 3**  
Brian's Run. Started as a fundraiser for an injured 15-year-old football player. Races start at Henderson High School, 400 Montgomery Ave., Kid's race, 12:50 pm, \$5. 5-Mile, 1 pm, \$25-\$30. Sign up at Brians-Run.org.

**DECEMBER 8-9**  
Chester County Historical Society Holiday & Greens Sale. One of the area's finest traditions, offering an array of greens. Fri, 9:30 am to 8 pm; Sat, 9:30 to 3 pm. 225 N. High St. Free. 610-692-4800; ChesterCoHistorical.org.

**DECEMBER 8-10, 14-16**  
Brandywine Ballet Presents *The Nutcracker*. See *Best Local Events* section.

**DECEMBER 9**  
American Helicopter Museum Santa Fest. Santa arrives via helicopter to greet and hear the wish lists of good girls and boys. Bring your own camera for a photo in Santa's Workshop. Music, snacks, crafts and more! 1220 American Blvd. Starts at 10 am. Santa arrives at 11 am. AmericanHelicopter.museum.

**DECEMBER 9**  
WCU—Live! The Story Pirates improvisational theater, Madeleine Wing Adler Theater, 817 S. High St. 2 pm, \$7-\$10. 610-436-2266; WCUPa.edu/Live.

**DECEMBER 10**  
Holiday Festival at Oakbourne Mansion. Enjoy holiday crafts, games, music and refreshments. 1014 S. Concord Rd. 10 am to 1 pm. Free. 610-692-1930; WesttownPA.org.

**DECEMBER 15-31**  
Resident Theatre Company — *A Christmas Carol: A Live Radio Play*. Charles Dickens' holiday classic comes to life as a live 1940s radio broadcast—complete with vintage commercials and live sound effects. The Uptown! Knauer Performing Arts Center, 226 N. High St. Opening Night: \$40-\$60 includes a VIP Party with the cast after the show. Check website for show times. \$25-\$53. 610-356-2787; RTCWC.org. ♦

## DOWNTOWN WEST CHESTER



## HOLIDAY SHOPPING GUIDE

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. G-Spot Thrift Boutique                 | 23. KALY                                 |
| 2. tish Boutique                          | 23. Big Diamond Importers & Fine Jewelry |
| 3. Hybrid Cycles                          | 25. The Prana House                      |
| 4. Sunset Hill Jewelers Fine Arts Gallery | 26. TranquiliTEA                         |
| 5. La Chic Boutique                       | 27. The Antique Shop                     |
| 6. Coins of Chester County                | 28. Woman's Exchange                     |
| 7. Ruby Slippers Boutique                 | 29. Church Street Gallery                |
| 8. Phineas Gage                           | 30. Tesoro Design                        |
| 8. Emily Alice, upstairs                  | 31. Halladay Florist                     |
| 9. Art Trust Gallery at Meridian Bank     | 32. H. Rose Boutique                     |
| 10. Kati MacFloral Designs                | 33. Great Craft Works                    |
| 11. A Taste of Olive                      | 34. Rimon's Coffee & Grocery             |
| 12. Chester County Running Store          | 35. May 23 Clothing & Accessories        |
| 13. Éclat Chocolate                       | 36. Bove Jewelers                        |
| 14. VK Veruzka                            | 37. Mad Platter                          |
| 15. Jane Chalfant / Kiki Boutique         | 38. Malena's Vintage Boutique            |
| 16. Artistic Eyewear                      | 39. Taylor Music Store                   |
| 17. Chester Co. Hist. Soc.                | 40. Moonflower                           |
| 17. Paper Moon @ CCHS                     | 41. Green Eyed Lady                      |
| 18. G&G Cigars                            | 42. Blink                                |
| 19. Sabrina Ann Couture                   | 43. Modern Tribal Arts                   |
| 20. Visual Expansion Gallery              | 44. The 5 Senses                         |
| 21. WCU Ram Shop                          | 45. Mainline Custom Clothiers            |
| 22. Fairman's Skate Shop                  | 46. Old Soul Décor                       |
|   | 47. Kaplan's Fine Jewelry                |
|   | 48. Second Reading Books                 |
|   | 49. Steele House Nutrition               |

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Happy Holidays from West Chester!



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Leslie Finkel and Mike Wall, Wellington Square Bookshop

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## THE ESSEX SERPENT

Sarah Perry || LITERARY FICTION

For fiction lovers, here's Dickens with an edge. This novel is set on the sea in Essex, east of London, where "the serpent" has been reported. The author has an extraordinary ability to describe the lush and decay of the land and creates characters that appear to us out of the ether. Enjoy this combo love story and mystery—solemn and joyous at times, yet with moments that are shattering.

## A LEGACY OF SPIES

John LeCarre || THRILLER

Peter Guillam, retired from the CIA, is called back to headquarters, where pending litigation is making people nervous. His superiors wish to discuss (interrogate him about?) an intelligence operation that took place during the Cold War. Acclaimed author John Le Carre takes us back to the Cold War (have we missed it?) and reacquaints us with George Smiley, an honorable man in a dishonorable age. Clearly, if you're a Le

Carre fan, then Smiley is one of your old friends. Enjoy the ride.

## MY ABSOLUTE DARLING

Gabriel Tallent || NEW AUTHOR/INDIE PICK

We seem to live in the time of people searching out sanctuaries—physical spaces where they might be shielded from chaos. New author Tallent brings us Turtle Alveston, a 14-year-old girl living with her dangerous, survivalist father in the Northern California forest. Turtle is lonely, tough, resourceful and increasingly wary of her father's explosiveness. Finally, she must escape. In doing so she becomes a character rendered indelible in the reader's memory.

## KILLERS OF THE FLOWER MOON: THE OSAGE MURDERS AND THE BIRTH OF THE FBI

David Grann || NONFICTION

David Grann, best-selling author of *The Lost City of Z*, has written a nonfiction narrative that revisits the tragic Osage murders—from the

1920s, when there were mysterious murders of Osage Native Americans. The Osage had become wealthy from the oil found on their land. The book reads like a mystery but has undertones of greed and racism. At the same time, J. Edgar Hoover was taking over the FBI, which played a key role in tracking down some of the killers.

## THE BOOK OF JOY: LASTING HAPPINESS IN A CHANGING WORLD

The Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu || SPIRITUALITY

His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu came together to discuss something very important to them both—joy. Both winners of the Nobel Peace Prize, these spiritual icons are known for their infectious happiness. In the book, they examine their teachings, the science of joy and how joy has infused their own lives. Now in their later years, the two want to share with others. There's likely someone on your list to share this with, too.

## THE HISTORIC BARNs OF SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Gregory Huber || LOCAL INTEREST/ARCHITECTURE

Beautifully photographed, the historic barns come alive in this interesting history of the architecture and preservation of barns built in this area between 1750 and 1900. This book, from Shiffer Publishing in Atglen, would make a lovely holiday gift for those who love this part of the country—whether they have their own barn or just dream of having one.

## THE SALT LINE

Holly Goddard Jones || SCIENCE FICTION

On the surface, this dystopian nightmare is a horror story about ticks that carry a deadly disease outside the "salt line" that protects all who live within. As the story develops, another story is woven in—of greed and a conspiracy to blackmail wealthy individuals who have paid to venture beyond the salt line and experience the unknown and forbidden. The interplay of personalities, the enjambment of rich and destitute, and the excitement of the chase make this a fascinating read for fans of the genre.

## THE HOME COOK

Alex Guarnaschelli || COOKBOOK

Guarnaschelli is an accomplished chef and author, as well as daughter of the key editor of the late-20th-century classic *The Joy of Cooking*. Here she introduces 300 recipes including Glazed Five-Spice Ribs, Roasted Eggplant Dip with Garlic Butter Naan, Roasted Beef Brisket with Pastrami Rub, Fennel and Orange Salad with Walnut Pesto, Quinoa Allspice Oatmeal Cookies, and Dark Chocolate Rum Pie. This book is a worthy descendant of that kitchen bible for many of us—and that those of a certain age still have in our pantry!

## WHAT TO SAY NEXT

Julie Buxbaum || YOUNG ADULT

Buxbaum's first novel, *Tell Me Three Things*, earned her accolades and comparisons to Rainbow Rowell. This book focuses on an unlikely friendship that started when popular Kit Lowell decides, after her father's death, to sit somewhere new at lunch, where she meets introverted David Drucker. As they get to know each other, they take on finding out the mysteries of her father's car accident. A compelling young adult read.

## IMAGINE John Lennon || CHILDREN'S

For those who love this song and remember John, this beautifully illustrated children's picture book will introduce your child to universal themes of love and peace—and perhaps fill you with nostalgia. Yoko Ono has written a lovely introduction. ♦

Find the Wellington Square Bookshop on Facebook, Instagram and on Twitter at WsBookshop. The Bookshop hosts a café, monthly fiction and nonfiction book clubs, author events with book signings and an Avid Reader podcast available on Podomatic. 549 Wellington Square, Eagleview Town Center, Exton. Wellington-SquareBooks.com.



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of the many renovations that are completed. Two bedroom barn apartment within main barn has been totally refurbished. This farm has an attractive income from 1 barn and apartment with the potential for more. The property is conserved under the French & Pickering Conservancy, which does allow for construction of a 20,000 SF indoor arena, two lot property subdivision of 77 acre parcel, along with the allowance of the construction of two additional single family homes. **\*\*LOW TAXES\*\***

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# WHAT DO MEN WANT?

HOW TO FIND THE PERFECT GIFT  
FOR THE MEN IN YOUR LIFE

Mary Irene Dolan

**P**RETTY. SHINY. SPARKLY. EXPENSIVE. WE'VE ALL heard the standard advice for what women want for the holidays. But what about men?

Men's tastes may be simpler, with fewer stipulations than for women. But getting them something they'll truly love? That takes thought. Especially when the women who love them may not share the same dedicated passion for fly fishing or craft beer.

Luckily our local boutiques, shops, drinkeries and salons offer possibilities tailored to guys' many interests.

## AWESOME APPAREL

If you want to go the traditional route and upgrade your guy's wardrobe, keep a couple things in mind.

"First and foremost, know their size," says Jaime Weisbrot, owner of West Chester's Phineas Gage. You should already know their style and preferences, so staying within those boundaries makes it more likely they'll wear your gift.

"You don't want to go too far from their current style," notes Jaime. "Also have an idea of what they already have, so they don't end up with a closet full of the same color." Most men will appreciate your carefully chosen wardrobe additions—especially ones they didn't have to shop for themselves.

And remember, comfort is key! Unlike women, few men will wear something uncomfortable, even if it looks great or is the latest style. So ditch all those scratchy fabrics and stiff silhouettes—regardless of how much *you* like them—for something a bit cozier and more relaxed.

In fact, combining comfort and function is a sure winner. "Guys love technical and functional items," says Jaime. What's better than fleece-lined tailgating shorts? Fleece-lined tailgating shorts with a bottle opener in the leg, of course! "Those were a big hit this fall," she notes.

Don't forget to stock up on tried-and-true stocking stuffers while you're at it—patterned socks, shaving and hair products, and more.

## ACTIVE ENTHUSIASTS

Is your giftee the outdoorsy type who craves adventure and nature hikes?

Local specialty shops like Trail Creek Outfitters in Kennett Square are perfect for those wilderness-loving men. And it may surprise you just how much equipment those adventures require. Clothing, footwear, accessories, backpacks, sleeping bags, camping gear—you're bound to find something durable and useful that he doesn't have yet.





Phineas Gage



Trail Creek Outfitters



Crowded Castle Brewing Company

For fly-fishers and hunters, Orvis's Downingtown location expands your options further with fly rods and reels, fishing and hunting gear, a huge selection of outdoor apparel and much more.

Although everyday runners may not need as much gear as your hardcore camper or fisherman, Chester County Running Company—with locations in West Chester and Pottstown—has more than just the basics for your giftee. If you don't know their size for clothing or their favorite brand of shoes, go for accessories like watches, monitors, sunglasses, belts and water bottles that are always useful.

And if he's a diehard sports fanatic who watches the game more than he plays, Rally House Exton has merch—including jerseys, hats, tees, scarves, drinkware and flags—for every local team imaginable, from the major leagues to his alma mater.

#### COLLECTORS & HOBBYISTS

Maybe his hobbies are more on the creative or cerebral side. Is he an art lover, rare book collector or amateur musician? Or all three?

Somerville Manning Gallery in Greenville, DE is the place to go for the Wyeth-philies and art history buffs on your list. Their collection includes artists spanning the late 19th to 21st centuries—with all three generations of Wyeths—and relating to the Brandywine's cultural heritage and tradition.

For rare, antique and used books, maps and prints, look no further than Baldwin's Book Barn in West Chester. Our tip: get to know more about your bookworm's collection before you go—that way the booksellers can guide you in the right direction.

If he's been talking about taking up guitar or wants to expand his musical expertise, Taylor's Music Store in West Chester has everything from quality instruments and sheet music, to lessons for seasoned players and beginners alike. And maybe you'll get serenaded!

#### BEER & SPIRITS LOVERS

Have a craft beer aficionado on your list? According to Michele Mazza of Crowded Castle Brewing Company, you're in luck. "Honestly, beer lovers are very easy to please," she jokes. "The gift giver just needs to decide a price limit and choose accordingly."



The Ultimate Shave

And the choices are surprisingly extensive. From beer brand apparel like t-shirts, sweatshirts and hats to on-the-go growlers and always-welcome gift cards, you can find something personal or versatile, depending on the guy.

If he's hardcore and has a kegerator of his own, "a really cool, unique gift is a beer tap handle from his favorite brewery," notes Michele. Crowded Castle has plenty of options, as do the countless other breweries in our area.

Hard liquor connoisseurs make it easy for gift-givers, too. Local distilleries like Manatawny Still Works in Pottstown offer similar options and more—with apparel, glassware, limited edition craft spirits and sampler packs. They even have DIY rum and whiskey-aging kits and barrels for fans looking for the next level.

#### GUY GROOMING

Women aren't alone in wanting to look their best. Even the most low maintenance guy can appreciate a little pampering now and then.

"Most men will quickly loosen up once they're treated to an old-fashioned straight razor shave and hot towel pampering," says Sherry Varone of The Ultimate Shave in Glen Mills. And for the hardworking men in your life, there's really no more relaxing gift than the ultimate grooming experience.

Precision haircut, invigorating scalp massage, superior shave and aromatherapy treatment are just some of the services The Ultimate Shave offers. And the complimentary beverage from their bar and popcorn while watching the game are, as Sherry says, "an added bonus."

Some salons like newly opened Blue Label Men's Grooming in Phoenixville even offer customizable memberships. Check in with them to see when this option is available. That option allows your guy to pick the services he prefers and how often he wants them. Truly a gift that keeps on giving!

What men want is as diverse as their interests, but if you know him well enough, the perfect gift is closer than you think. Shop local! ♦



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# Holiday Style

Treat yourself and your loved ones to something special this holiday season!



Paraiba Tourmaline & Diamond Necklace,  
Brad Garman Designs  
**Walter J. Cook Jeweler, Paoli**



Kaleidoscope Gold Earrings with Labradorite  
& Gray Pearl Accents, Anna Biggs  
**Delaware Art Museum Winter Arts Festival,**  
Wilmington



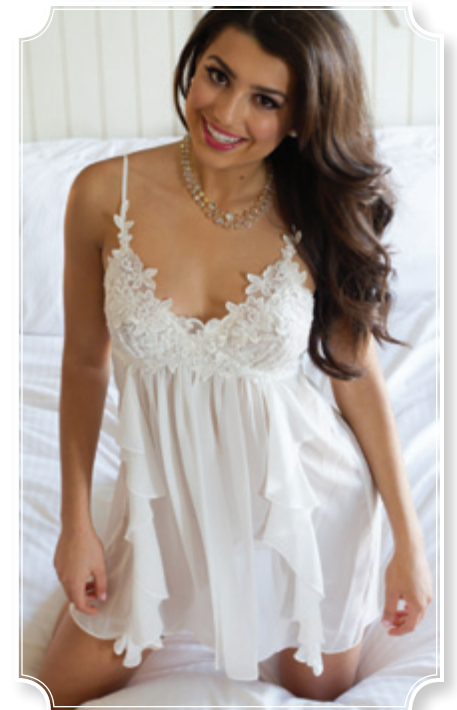
Cold Shoulder Mock Neck Velvet Dress, Tyler Boe  
**KALY, West Chester**



Maria Evening Soda Tab Bag,  
Escama Studio  
**The Merchant of Menace, West Chester**



Rose Gold & Diamond Rings, Costar  
**Big Diamond Importers & Fine Jewelry, West Chester**



Chemise Set, Jonquil  
**Gie Gie Lingerie, Paoli**



Sully 1/4 Zip Pullover, Bobby "Hangin' Out"  
Button Down & Cal Pant, Johnnie-O  
**Phineas Gage, West Chester**



Assorted Necklaces, Inspire Designs  
**Jane Chalfant/Kiki Boutique, West Chester**



Victorian Diamond Brooch, Circa 1880  
**Sunset Hill Jewelers, West Chester**



# Holiday Window Shopping

**W**ELL, IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN! The season we all look forward to, welcoming family, friends and the traditions we hold dear.

The perfect time to gather together and head to one of the many events featured in this issue or plan a day of visiting some of the unique shops you'll find right here.

We think not only the giving but the shopping itself should be a pleasure, so make a day of it. Browse the shops on these pages, stop in a museum, be inspired by the artistry of fine handcrafted furniture and accerssories and be sure to schedule in a festive lunch or dinner, too. Maybe a happy hour to celebrate the goodies you found. You'll be glad you did!

At *County Lines*, we want to convey our sincerest gratitude. To our readers and advertisers, we say a heartfelt thank you. We wish you the happiest of holidays. This season, we hope, will bring you great joy.

*Happy Holidays!*

## \* Pennsylvania \*

### AVONDALE

**Loch Nairn Golf Club** is a "Jewel In The Country." Offering fine dining in **The Farmhouse**, a charming 17th-century farmhouse featuring excellent food and service. Serving lunch on Saturdays and dinner Thursday–Sunday, including a Prix Fixe Menu each Thursday and Sunday (excluding holidays). You'll find casual fare in the **Greathouse**, including hearty comfort foods and craft beers. They have a sports bar and fireplace. Open daily for lunch and dinner. 514 McCue Rd. 610-268-2235; LochNairn.com.

### CHADDS FORD

The perfect gift awaits at the **Brandywine River Museum of Art**. Shop the unique selection of gifts inspired by art and nature, including notecards and art reproductions featuring the iconic works of the Wyeth family, handcrafted jewelry, exclusive silk scarves and accessories, toys for children, a unique selection of books and more. Don't miss the annual Critter Sale, November 30–December 3. 1 Hoffman's Mill Rd. 610-388-2700; Brandywine.org.



**Brandywine River Museum of Art**  
610.388-2700 • Brandywine.org

### CHESTER SPRINGS

**Moore's Furniture** has been helping families furnish their homes for over 54 years. They specialize in custom ordering furniture, and they offer quick delivery of stock items for every room in your home. Their knowledgeable and friendly sales associates can help you find just what you're looking for. They have two convenient locations: 90 Pottstown Pk., Chester Springs, 610-458-8001 and 3291 W. Ridge Pk., Pottstown, 610-495-5252; MooresFurniture.com.



**Moore's Furniture**  
610-495-5252 • MooresFurniture.com

### EXTON

Deck the halls this holiday season with 18th-century through Victorian era original and reproduction furniture, lighting fixtures and furniture hardware. Visit **Ball & Ball** to find unique gift ideas including candlesticks, bookends, lanterns and fireplace accessories made on premises in brass, tin, copper, pewter and hand-forged iron and bronze. All perfect gifts this holiday season. Open Monday–Friday, from 8 to 4:30; Saturday hours, October–March, 9 to 1. 463 W. Lincoln Hwy. (Rt. 30). 610-363-7300; BallAndBall.com.

There's no place like **Ron's Original Bar & Grille** this holiday season! Come and indulge in some "Real Food, for the Health of it." Offering a family atmosphere, Italian fare, live music and some of the best craft beer around, they invite you to stop in for a bite, enjoy some take-out or delivery, or call them to cater your next event! 74 E. Uwchlan Ave. 610-594-9900; RonsOriginal.com.

Celebrate the season with old world elegance at **Vickers Restaurant + The Plantation Ballroom**. Sip champagne fireside in the refurbished 1820s farmhouse and enjoy dishes like Steak Diane and Bananas Foster, flambéed tableside. Four private dining rooms are perfect for holiday celebrations. Open for lunch, dinner and happy hour and on Christmas Eve and New Years Eve. Gift certificates available online. 192 E. Welsh Pool Rd. Phone or see website for hours. 610-363-7998; VickersRestaurant.com.





**Ball & Ball**  
610.363.7300 • BallAndBall.com

## KENNETT SQUARE

Using only the finest and freshest ingredients, highlighting the northern region of Italy, **La Verona** is committed to making your meal a memorable one, with professional service in a welcoming, vibrant, social atmosphere. They have a private dining area for parties up to 65, and they invite you to join them for Happy Hour, Monday–Friday, 4 to 6. 114 E. State St. 610-444-2244; LaVeronaPA.com.

Drawing fans in Kennett since 2011 is **Lily's Asian Cuisine, Sushi & Grill**. This stylish, modern Asian restaurant serves Japanese, Chinese and Thai dishes insisting on high quality food, freshly prepared with the finest ingredients. Meet friends for lunch, have dinner with family or come for a celebration. All-you-can-eat sushi on Tuesday, with hot starters. Enjoy the comfortable ambience, delicious food and excellent service in Lily's. BYOB. 104 W. State St. 610-925-3700; LilySushiAndGrill.com.

## LANDENBERG

**Paradocx Vineyard**, a 100-acre farm nestled among the rolling hills of southern Chester County, combines current technology and handcrafted secrets to create unique wines from estate grapes and selected growers. By selecting only the finest fruit, they are able to provide their winemaker, Gabriel Rubilar, with the best start for a premium wine. Paradocx Vineyard offers four retail locations: 1833 Flint Hill Rd., Landenberg, The Market at Liberty Place, Westtown Amish Market, and Booths Corner Farmers Market. 610-255-5684; Paradocx.com.



**Paradocx Vineyard**  
610.255.5684 • Paradocx.com

## MARSHALLTON

This holiday season, why not introduce some creativity, art, innovation and fun to your gift-giving? Visit the **Merchant of Menace Re-Imaginers Gallery** and check the whimsical and inventive items that will delight everyone! Their artists see possibilities everywhere and create amazing works from a variety of reclaimed materials. Find furniture crafted from New England barn wood, animal sculptures made from antique tractor parts, jewelry created from silverware and much more! 1351 W. Strasburg Rd. 215-704-7419; TheMerchantOfMenace.net.



**The Merchant of Menace Re-Imaginers Gallery**  
215.704.7419 • TheMerchantOfMenace.net

## NEWTOWN SQUARE

Gourmet gift baskets and luscious fine chocolates are two reasons to stop at **Christopher Chocolates**, making life sweeter for more than 30 years as a family-owned and operated busi-

ness. They have a great selection of gourmet foods, candies, sugar-free items and fine chocolates for a customized gift basket to delight all on your list. Open daily from Thanksgiving to Christmas. 3519 West Chester Pk. (Rt. 3). 610-359-1669; Christopher-Chocolates.com.



**Christopher Chocolates**  
610-359-1669 • Christopher-Chocolates.com

Get your Christmas plants and flowers at **Mostardi Nursery**. Featuring distinctive plants for every season, Mostardi offers a selection that will have your home looking greener and even better than last Christmas. The Christmas Shop features trees, wreaths, poinsettias, garden accents, ornaments and accessories. Mostardi is dedicated to providing avid gardeners and homeowners with plants for every season and every reason. 4033 West Chester Pk. (Rt. 3). 610-356-8035; Mostardi.com.



**Mostardi Nursery**  
610.356.8035 • Mostardi.com

## PAOLI

This holiday season **Walter J. Cook Jeweler** has once again curated a collection of unique gems designed to fit many styles and price points—just in time for gift-giving season. Visit them for fine jewelry, artisan gifts and collectibles. With over 70 years on the Main Line, their knowledgeable staff will help you select the perfect gift for someone you love. Located in the Chestnut Village Shoppes, 36 Chestnut Rd. 610-644-5347; WalterJCookJeweler.com.



**Walter J. Cook Jeweler**  
610.644.5347 • WalterJCookJeweler.com

**Gie Gie Lingerie** supports all women, in every phase of life, to feel feminine and confident, able to experience a custom fitting in an environment where her feelings and consciousness are important. Besides their inventory, they are known for their compassionate and supportive style in helping women who are undergoing treatment for breast cancer. Their sales team provides great conversation, laughter and a refuge from the trials of everyday life. 36 Chestnut Rd. 610-296-7626; GieGieLingerie.com.

## POTTSTOWN

**Moore's Furniture** 3291 W. Ridge Pk. 610-495-5252; Moores-Furniture.com. *See their listing under Chester Springs.*

Deck your halls this holiday season with exclusive, one-of-a-kind hand-painted vintage furniture, chalk paints and trendy home decor from **Salvaged Furniture Co.** You'll find unique gifts from local artisans, from hand-lettered signs and globes to hand-crafted jewelry. They do custom work, deliver and will either provide their furniture or custom paint yours. Monday–Saturday, 11 to 6; Sunday, 11 to 3. 2311 Pottstown Pk. 484-985-8135. On Facebook, Facebook.com/SalvagedFco/.

## WALLINGFORD

Make it a handcrafted holiday. **Community Arts Center and the Potters Guild** present their Holiday Sale, featuring functional and decorative ceramic, mixed media, fiber art, jewelry, papier-maché, flowers, wood, soaps, baskets, metal and holiday décor from over 60 artists, Dec. 1–9. Special shopping events





**Salvaged Furniture Company**  
484-985-8135 • Facebook.com/SalvagedFco/  
//

include a preview party and holiday happy hours. 414 Plush Mill Rd. CACHolidaySale.org.



**Community Arts Center**  
610.356.8035 • Mostardi.com  
//

## WEST CHESTER

To add sparkle to the holidays, visit the ultimate jewelry store—**Big Diamond Importers & Fine Jewelry**, specializing in Ideal Cut Diamonds, engagement rings and wedding bands at wholesale prices. See their big and unique engagement rings and fashion jewelry collection for 2018. Italian designer jewelry is available in all price ranges. They are also a full-service jeweler, including in-house repair, custom design and appraisals. 15 W. Gay St. 610-692-7707; BigsDiamonds.com.



**Big Diamond Importers & Fine Jewelry**  
610-692-7707 • BigsDiamonds.com  
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Since 1933, the Jane Chalfant shop has provided casual fashions in a friendly atmosphere. Today, **Jane Chalfant / Kiki Boutique** features sweaters, pants and jackets for your everyday lifestyle. Everyone is pleasantly surprised by the size of the shop, which enables them to carry a great selection including fun, fashion accessories. It's worth the trip! Free parking behind the shop at 123 N. High St. 610-696-0290; JaneChalfant.com.

**KALY** is an eclectic women's boutique in beautiful, historic downtown West Chester. They focus on clothing that is unique, beautiful and made in the USA and gifts that are sustainable and produced by fair trade and environmentally conscious manufacturers. Their jewelry is created by artisans and is both high-quality and unique. Baby items are the newest addition to their wonderful mix! 37 W. Gay St. 610-436-8272; KalyClothing.com.

Stop by **The Lincoln Room** and enjoy a quiet lunch or a cozy tea for two (or more) in the lower level of the circa 1833 Lincoln Building. Select from the extensive menu of holiday or specialty teas, sweet and savory scones, quiche specialties and leave room for their signature dessert—Croissant Bread Pudding with Crème Anglaise. BYOB. Private parties, Sunday–Tuesday; lunch and Tea offered Wednesday–Saturday from 11 to 3. Reservations suggested. 28 Market St. 610-304-9576.

Visit **Matlack Florist** for all your holiday needs. Centerpieces and fresh flower arrangements make a great holiday gift. The Greenhouse is bursting with Poinsettias, Noble Trees and Holiday Garden Baskets. Fruit and Gourmet Baskets with local items are sure to please. Stop by the gift shop for a wonderful selection of home décor items, accessories and holiday giftware. Same-day local delivery is always available. 210 N. Chester Rd. 610-431-3077; MatlackFlorist.com.

Looking for the perfect gift for the men in your life? Check out **Phineas Gage**, located in downtown West Chester for a great assortment of men's contemporary clothing and accessories. They



**Matlack Florist**  
610-431-3077 • MatlackFlorist.com  
//

carry everything from outerwear, sweaters, wovens, denim to socks, belts and wallets! Let them help you pick the perfect gift to outfit your man from head to toe! 29 S. High St. 484-266-7344; Phineas-Gage.com.

Custom shutters add beauty and elegance to every home. **Shutter Tech, Inc.** has been specializing in custom interior shutters for over 40 years, built locally in their West Chester factory at direct factory prices. Give them a call or visit their showroom, Monday–Thursday, 8:30 to 4, to see the many looks you can give your home with shutters. Park Valley Corporate Center, 1155 Phoenixville Pk., Suite 105. 800-272-9934; ShutterTech.com.



**Shutter Tech, Inc.**  
800-272-9934 • ShutterTech.com  
//

Finding the perfect gift for that special someone is part of the holidays. **Sunset Hill Jewelers & Fine Arts Gallery** is ready to help with beautiful jewelry for everyone's taste and budget and an Art Gallery filled with miniature paintings of all styles by 25 area artists. A trusted jeweler in Chester County, they have a kind and knowledgeable staff with years of experience to help you make the perfect choice. 23 N. High St. 610-692-0374; SunsetHillJewelers.com.

## \* Delaware \*

### MIDDLETOWN

If you're planning a holiday get-together, or any other event, **Thousand Acre Farm**, located in tax-free Delaware, is the ideal place. With sweeping waterfront views and a convenient location, this picturesque, 110-acre farm sits near the Reedy Point Bridge and the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal. The barn seats up to 180 people inside and unlimited outside. 260 S. Reedy Point Rd. 302-893-3510; Thousand-AcreFarm.com.

### WILMINGTON

For the artsy friends and family members on your shopping list, the **Delaware Art Museum** is sure to offer something unique just for them. Browse a selection of treasures, including handcrafted jewelry, vases, ceramics, textiles and books in the Museum Store or during the Winter Arts Festival, December 8 and 9. Visit their website to find out more about festive holiday offerings, events and special exhibitions for all ages. 2301 Kentmere Pkwy. 302-571-9590; DelArt.org. ♦




**Delaware Art Museum Store**  
302.571.9590 • DelArt.org  
//



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Westtown Amish Market | 1165 Wilmington Pike, West Chester, PA  
[www.paradocx.com](http://www.paradocx.com)



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# Holiday TABLESCAPES

**D**RESSING UP THE DINING TABLE CREATES an inviting gathering space for guests to enjoy tasty food and drinks this season. And it's easy! You likely already have special holiday baubles, greenery and family momentos to create a personal holiday tablescape.

Remember that a festive table needs to be functional as well. Make sure your guests can talk at the table—no sky-high centerpieces—and there's room to pass the turkey!

We checked in with Chaney Widmer—of Mix & Match Design Co. and Philly Home Show City Studios feature designer—for some simple tablescape ideas. Just mix in some holiday-appropriate items to dress up your table for the season!

*Design and photos: Chaney Widmer; MixAndMatchDesign.com*



# Raise your glass!




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[www.MatlackFlorist.com](http://www.MatlackFlorist.com)







# Wine for every Holiday

Kayleigh Thompson

There are a great choices for every variety of celebratory meal this season.



**T**HE HOLIDAY SEASON IS A TIME FOR FRIENDS, family, fun and feasts! Whenever you get together for the holidays—Christmas, Hanukkah, Diwali, Kwanzaa—a great glass of wine can help make the most of your meal.

Whether you're hosting the event or choosing a gift, here are suggestions to bring good cheer.

## FOR CHRISTMAS

For the many traditional dishes served at Christmas dinner, each calls for a different style of wine. Ham, for example, tastes best served with wines with some sweetness, like a German Riesling. Another option is a chenin blanc from the Vouvray region of France, with its gorgeous off-dry taste. Try **Domaine Pichot Domaine Le Peu de La Moriette Vouvray 2015** (92 points *Wine Enthusiast*, \$18.99) for its lovely minerality with touches of stone fruit and ginger.

When choosing wine, remember that sweetness in food makes wine taste less sweet and more acidic, so select a wine that's sweeter than the dish. If your ham is honey-baked or brown sugar-glazed, a good choice is **Moscato d'Asti** or **Alasia Brachetto d'Acqui 2015** (\$11.99), a light red with strawberry, raspberry and white pepper flavors.

For turkey, stick with whites that match the flavors in your side dishes, such as **Neil Ellis Sauvignon Blanc Groenekloof 2015** (89 points *Wine Advocate*, \$16.99). To pair with side dishes heavy on rich spices, try **Penner-Ash Viognier Oregon 2014** (94 points *Wine Enthusiast*, \$24.99), which has exotic spice and floral accents.

If you love reds, Beaujolais is a great red wine option for ham and turkey pairings. The nouveau styles are lighter and much fruitier, while the Cru Beaujolais have more structure and finesse. **Georges Duboeuf Château de St. Amour 2015** (92 points *James Suckling*, \$21.99) is silky smooth with red fruit and wet stone on the palate.

Another go-to choice is pinot noir, especially the elegant styles from Burgundy. A great value from a very small production winery, **Domaine Frederic Esmonin Gevrey-Chambertin Clos Prieur 2015** (\$32.99) shines with berry, perfume and supple structure.

For a meal with prime rib as the main attraction, try something bold like **Les Hauts de Canon la Gaffeliere Saint Emilion 2014** (95 points *Wine Spectator*, \$42.99), a well-structured Bordeaux with plum, tobacco and blackberry flavors.

On Christmas Eve, if you're at a Feast of the Seven Fishes—an Italian-American tradition—stick with Italian wines that work with a variety of seafood dishes as well as pasta. **Le 7 Torri Fiano di Avellino 2015** (\$11.99) has good acidity and bright lemon and stone fruit notes with minerality to balance the complexity of the flavors on the table. Or choose **Cavicchioli Vigna del Cristo Lambrusco di Sorbara 2016** (\$14.99),

a refreshing, light red sparkling wine with notes of violets and red fruits that also goes well with fried fish, vegetables and heartier sauces.



## FOR HANUKKAH

And what wines for Hanukkah, the eight-day Jewish Festival of Lights, with a nightly menorah lighting, dreidel games, prayers, gift giving and food? Try **O'Dwyer's Creek Sauvignon Blanc New Zealand 2015** (\$16.99), a crisp white with tropical fruit, orange, citrus and grass hints for a great match with latkes, kugel and smoked salmon.

A single vineyard wine with dense truffle, tobacco and black currant on the palate, **Recanati Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve Series Galilee 2014** (94 points *Wine Enthusiast*, \$24.99) has the fullness to stand up to brisket.

## FOR DIWALI

An Indian holiday celebrating the triumph of good over evil, Diwali is also known as the Festival of Lights and is celebrated with games, fireworks and parties with large feasts and lots of sweets. Choose a riesling with sweetness to tame the spiciness of the meal and to match the delicious desserts. A good choice is **Joh. Jos. Prüm Riesling Spätlese Zeltinger Sonnenuhr 2015** (\$38.99), which has ripe peach and apricot flavors balanced by smokiness from the slate soil.

## FOR KWANZAA

Kwanzaa is a week-long celebration of African-American culture, where each day focuses on a virtue of the community. One day focuses on supporting African-American-owned businesses, so why not drink wines from African-American-owned wineries?

Mouton noir are unique garage-made wines from Oregon grapes sourced by André Mack. The line includes **O.P.P. (Other People's) Pinot Noir Willamette Valley 2014**, with cherry, spice and earthy notes, and **O.P.P. Pinot Gris Willamette Valley 2015** (\$19.99), bursting with apple, peach and pear.

Charles Woodson Wines come from a



retired football player who discovered his love for wine in Napa while training with the Oakland Raiders. The wines are produced from Bordeaux varietals from a vineyard in Calistoga and include **TWENTYFOUR Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley 2010** (93 points *Wine Spectator*, #58 on Top 100 of 2014, \$89.99), with dense licorice and dark berry flavors, and **TWENTYFOUR Sauvignon Blanc Napa Valley 2015** (\$24.99). As you may have guessed, 24 was Woodson's jersey number with the Raiders.

## FINALLY, FOR NEW YEAR'S EVE

New Year's Eve is a time to reflect on the past year while making resolutions for the coming one. And, on this occasion it's all about the bubbly.

For an inexpensive, dry sparkling wine, prosecco is a great way to go. Lighter than Champagne, **Bianca Vigna Prosecco di Conegliano Valdobbiadene Brut NV** (\$15.99) has a nice mix of fruitiness and minerality.

Of course, if you want to go big, there's nothing like classic Champagne. One of my favorites is **Krug Champagne Grande Cuvee NV** (96 points *James Suckling*, \$159.99), layered with complex flavors of grapefruit, pear, chalk, nuts and spiced biscuits.

Rosé sparkling wine is pretty and festive, but tends to be more expensive than white sparklers. For a great quality wine at half the price, try a crémant (a traditional-method French sparkling wine made outside Champagne). **Château du Petit Thouars Crémant de Loire Rosé NV** (\$19.99) is crisp and refreshing with subtle hints of strawberry and baked bread.

On the sweeter side, the still serious **Schramsberg Cremant Demi Sec Napa Valley 2012** (\$39.99) has delicious flavors of marzipan, white peach, baked apples and candied flowers.

In the end, no matter what holiday you're celebrating, may it be full of love, good company and great wine. Cheers! ♦

*Kayleigh Thompson has worked in the wine industry for over seven years and earned the Certified Specialist of Wine certification from the Society of Wine Educators. She works as a Wine Specialist at the Fine Wine & Good Spirits Premium Collection store in King of Prussia, on DeKalb Pike. Learn more at [FineWineAndGoodSpirits.com](http://FineWineAndGoodSpirits.com).*





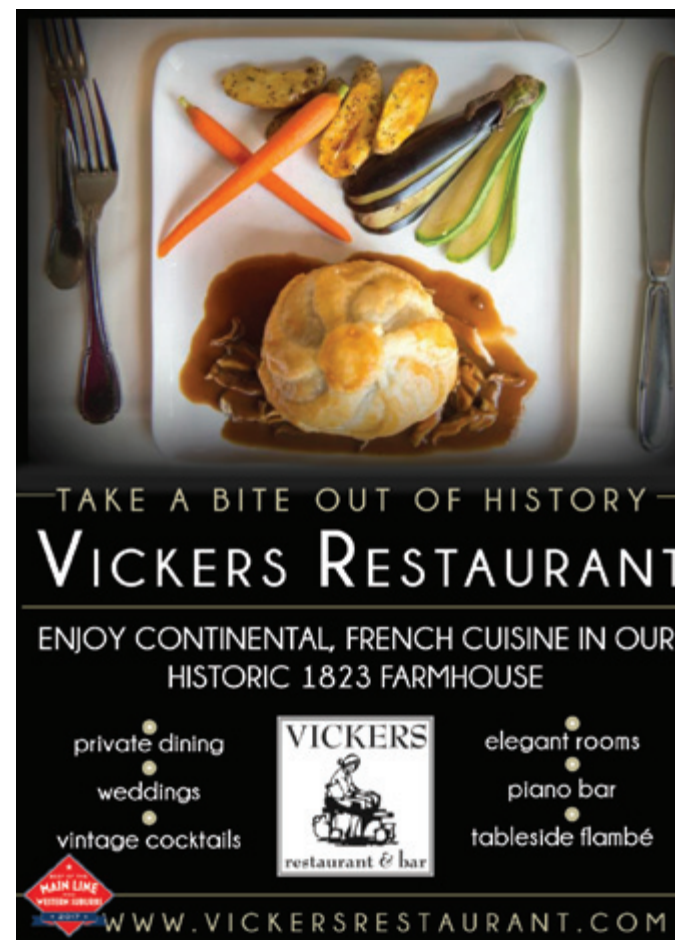


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## [Food News] *A few of our favorite things to share this month about local food and drink*

**Drink Up.** Grab your mugs and try this delicious, boozy twist on classic hot cocoa: **wine-infused hot chocolate!** Can you really combine two of the best things in the universe? The answer is yes! It may not get you buzzed, but it will give you that warm fuzzy feeling. It's simple to make, too, and you can experiment with different recipes until it's just right. Head to *Elite-Daily.com* and search "wine hot chocolate."



**Java Have It.** Give the gift of local choice this holiday season with the **AlottaJava Gift Card!** With this card, you support small businesses and boost our local economy, as 100% of its redeemed value is returned to area businesses. Recipients choose from participating coffee shops and restaurants in West Chester and Downingtown. There's no better way to spread holiday cheer than supporting local! Purchase online at [AlottaJava.com](http://AlottaJava.com).



**Give Fruitcakes a Chance.** Let's face it ... fruitcakes face lots of criticism and are notoriously re-gifted. But with December ringing in **National Fruitcake Month**—who knew?—

we'd like to change your mind. Although these desserts have a bad rap, it wasn't always so. For hundreds, maybe thousands of years, they were a popular staple around the world—from Egypt to Rome. Help fight the stigma and try Food Network's Five-star Free-range Fruitcake recipe from Alton Brown. [FoodNetwork.com/Recipes](http://FoodNetwork.com/Recipes).

**Matunda Ya Kwanzaa.** Celebrated for seven days starting December 27, **Kwanzaa** got its name from the Swahili phrase *matunda ya kwanza*, meaning "first fruits of the harvest." The table is set with symbolic foods, like *mazaa*—fruits and vegetables symbolizing the bounty of the harvest. Other staples include soul-soothing Southern foods and African flavors like Moroccan-spiced couscous dishes, collard greens and spiced yams. Food websites offer inspiration—All-Recipes, Epicurious and more. There are even Kwanzaa wines recommended in this issue's "Wines for Every Holiday."



**Philly Takes the Pie.** *The Daily Meal* has been ranking the best pizzas since 2012. This year, their "101 Best Pizzas in the Country" spans 23 states—with four pizza places in the Philly area making the cut! **Lorenzo and Sons**, known for their jumbo cheese slices, ranked number 71. Head to their West Chester location on Gay and High Streets and taste for yourself. [TheDailyMeal.com](http://TheDailyMeal.com).





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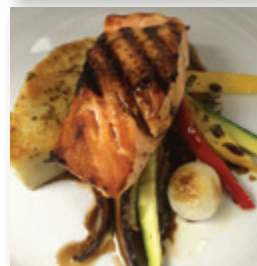
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[Brandywine Table]

## Progressive Holiday Party

SHARING THE FUN IS WHAT THE  
HOLIDAYS ARE ALL ABOUT.

Laura Muzzi Brennan

**I**S IT BETTER TO GIVE OR RECEIVE? WE KNOW WHAT we are supposed to say, especially during the holiday season. But if the prospect of preparing a holiday dinner from soup to nuts is driving you ... well, you know, why not host a progressive dinner party with friends or neighbors? You'll share the work, the cost, and better yet, the fun.

"I wanted to be at the party!" laughs caterer Katy O'Gara by way of explaining why she created **Table Tours by Town**, a progressive dinner party highlighting our region's restaurants. A Main Line native, O'Gara knows the highways and byways of the local food map. Her first job was at Bill's Fine Herbs and Spices in Wayne. Before starting her own catering company in 2005, she worked as catering manager at Morning Glory Commissary (Conshohocken) and chef at Radnor's 333 Belrose. Her goal at Table Tours is to introduce people not only to the diversity of local restaurants but to the towns she loves.

At a typical Table Tour, guests assemble for cocktails at one location, often an artist's studio or cool retail shop. Then, everyone walks to the first restaurant for appetizers, the second for entrees and the third for dessert. O'Gara wants each dish to be interesting but "not scary," and she makes sure restaurants can accommodate vegetarians and vegans.



Ben Thomas from Cerise served a  
Tomato Tart to the group from Table Tours.

At each stop, guests have a meet-and-greet with the chef or manager. Drinks—wine and cocktails for courses 1 and 2; coffee and tea for dessert—are included in the \$80+ price tag, as are taxes and gratuity.

To date, O'Gara has organized over 20 tours. At a recent tour in Bryn Mawr, guests tucked into a tomato tart at Cerise and mushroom lasagna at Frascchetta before enjoying desserts provided by Sweet Freedom. West Chester tours have featured dishes from Roots, iPasta and Split Rail Tavern. This coming spring, she's planning events in Wayne and Media. Besides public events, O'Gara organizes private tours—a great way to celebrate a birthday or engagement or just get together with friends.

With so many tours under her belt and a catering business to boot, O'Gara offers terrific advice for throwing a progressive neighborhood holiday party.

Timing is paramount, says O'Gara. On her tours, she schedules each stop one hour apart and sticks to that pace. "As a host, you should have everything ready to go when guests walk in the door," says O'Gara. "You don't want to mess up the hosts who are following you."

When picking a menu, offer dishes that are intriguing but not super spicy. Soup is a no-fuss starter, and salads with one "pop" ingredient are always a hit. If you're looking for an entree with nearly universal appeal, O'Gara recommends a white fish like striped bass. It's the new chicken! For more tips on party success, see the sidebar.

A progressive dinner party is your tasty answer to the give/receive conundrum. What a fun way to have your cake and ... well, you know.

Happy Holidays from all of us at *County Lines*!



Bruschetta from Frascchetta in Bryn Mawr





## Puree of Cauliflower Soup, with Toasted Hazelnut Brown Butter and Fried Capers

*This is one of Katy O’Gara’s favorite soups to serve. It’s warming and homey yet elegant, great for both informal and formal dinner parties.*

2 shallots  
Olive oil  
2 heads cauliflower, roughly chopped  
3 qts. veggie stock  
¼ Tb. fresh thyme  
Salt and white pepper, to taste  
1 C. heavy cream  
½ C. capers, drained and as dry as possible, while keeping them whole  
2 Tb. butter  
½ C. hazelnuts, peeled and roughly chopped

Slice the shallots thinly or chop small. Cover the bottom of a heavy soup pan with olive oil. When the oil shimmers, add the shallots and saute without allowing them to color, until they have softened. Add the cauliflower, stock, and fresh thyme. Bring to a boil, and then reduce to a simmer and cook until the cauliflower is very tender.

Using an immersion blender, puree the soup until smooth. Season with salt and white pepper. This can be made up to three days in advance.

When the time of your party has arrived, slowly reheat the soup with the heavy cream. Adjust the seasoning as needed, remembering that you will be adding brown butter and briny capers later.

Coat the bottom of a small saute pan with oil, and heat until very hot. While it’s heating, layer some paper towels for draining the capers. Add the capers to the pan in batches, removing with a strainer or slotted spoon to paper towels after they have opened up and crisped a bit.

Melt butter over medium heat in a saute pan. Add the hazelnuts and toast until they are lightly browned, along with the butter. Keep hazelnuts in the butter, on the stove but off the heat, so the butter stays warm but doesn’t continue to cook. For service, ladle soup into bowls, then drizzle with butter, hazelnuts, and fried capers.

Makes 10 servings.

## Spinach, Fennel and Grapefruit Salad

*This light, bright salad provides balance to a heavy entrée. It’s simple to make yet has layers of flavor. Loosely adapted from The Love and Lemons Cookbook.*

¼ C. champagne vinegar  
Kosher salt  
¼ C. thinly sliced shallots  
⅓ C. extra virgin olive oil  
½ tsp. sugar, plus more to taste  
2–3 small fennel bulbs, fronds removed and sliced ⅛” thick  
2 large grapefruits  
6–8 generous handfuls baby spinach  
½ C. crumbled feta cheese

## Five Ways to Put Pop in the Party

Try these ideas from Table Tours creator Katy O’Gara and the party committee at *County Lines*.

**Hit up your local dollar store.** If your guest list is long, chances are you’ll need extra utensils and serving pieces. Your closest dollar store has these and lots of fun party accessories you never even thought of! O’Gara once came home with a bagful of small vases, which she repurposed as milkshake tumblers.

**Light up the night.** Give each guest a battery-powered votive candle set into a mason jar to carry from house to house. It’s way more festive than using the flashlight app on your phone.

**Organize a kitchen Pollyanna.** Ask everyone to bring their favorite inexpensive (\$5–10) kitchen gadget, condiment or spice blend. Put the wrapped goodies in a basket and let each guest pick one during the dessert course. Even grown-ups love going home with swag.

**Keep the party moving.** Yes you can shout “It’s time to go!”, but there are more creative ways to get your guests from house A to house B. Ring a dinner bell, play a song (“Baby, it’s cold outside!”) or start a conga line. If you go for option 3, please send a photo to *County Lines Magazine*. We want it on Instagram!

**Go with the flow.** No matter how much you plan ahead, glitches happen. If your guests knock on the door while your roast is still resting, O’Gara has the easy solution: ALWAYS have drinks ready.

Whisk champagne vinegar and a generous pinch of salt together in a large bowl. Add shallots. Allow to macerate for 10–15 minutes. Whisk in olive oil and sugar. Taste and add more salt and sugar to taste. Add fennel and let sit for another 15 minutes.

Remove peel and pith from grapefruits and cut into any size pieces you desire.

To plate individual servings, place a handful of spinach on each plate, top with fennel mixture and grapefruit. Sprinkle with feta cheese. Alternatively, toss all ingredients together and allow guests to serve themselves.

Makes 6–8 servings.



## Beef Stroganoff with Polenta Christmas Trees

*You can make the components of this dish ahead of time, and simply reheat and assemble before serving. Stroganoff recipe adapted from Cook’s Illustrated Cookbook. Polenta cooking instructions adapted from Good Housekeeping Best Recipes 1998.*

*For the stroganoff:*

2½ lbs. sirloin steak tips,  
cut into a few large pieces  
4 tsp. soy sauce  
3 Tb. oil, divided  
2 medium onions, chopped fine (about 4 C.)  
2 lbs. white mushrooms, cut into ¼” slices  
2 Tb. plus 2 tsp. all-purpose flour  
4 tsp. tomato paste  
3 C. beef broth  
⅔ C. dry white wine  
2 Tb. Dijon mustard  
1 C. sour cream

*For the polenta:*

2½ C. milk  
2 C. polenta  
5 C. chicken broth

*For serving:*

Chopped parsley  
Optional: pimientos

*To make the stroganoff:*

Pierce the steak several times with a fork. Toss with soy sauce and marinate in the refrigerator for 15 minutes to 1 hour.

Pat steak dry with a paper towel. Heat 1 Tb. oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat and cook steak on both sides until medium rare. (You will probably have to work in 2 batches, adding a little more oil to the pan as needed.) Remove meat and juices from skillet and set aside, covered.

Heat 1 Tb. oil in skillet over medium-high heat. Add onions. Cook for 2–3 minutes, stirring frequently. Add mushrooms and a pinch of salt. Cook until mushrooms and onions begin to brown and mushrooms give up some juice. Sprinkle with flour and add tomato paste, stirring constantly for a minute. Add beef broth, wine and mustard and simmer until sauce begins to thicken, about 5 minutes.

As sauce thickens, slice steak into strips. Add steak and juices back into sauce and cook for a few minutes. Remove pan from heat. Stir in sour cream. If you are making the dish ahead, allow to cool, store in refrigerator and reheat on low.

*To make the polenta:*

In one large saucepan, stir milk and polenta together. In another large saucepan, heat chicken broth to boiling. Whisk broth into milk-polenta mixture one ladle at a time. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring constantly until liquid gets totally absorbed and mixture thickens, about 5–7 minutes. (Note of caution: polenta bubbles up and spatters while it cooks, so wear an oven-mitt on your stirring hand to prevent burning yourself.)

Oil two rimmed baking pans (13x9x1) and divide polenta between them. Spread evenly. Allow to cool so that polenta firms up. Place a cutting board on top of baking pan and invert pan so





polenta releases onto it. Sometimes, you need to tap the bottom of the pan or wait a few seconds for polenta to release, but don't worry, gravity is a powerful force! Cut polenta into desired shapes using large cookie cutters such as snowflakes, stars and Christmas trees.

If you want to make the polenta the day before, that's fine, too. After cooling it in the pan, cover and refrigerate. Once you've cut it into shapes, you can reheat in the microwave just before serving.

*To serve:*

Ladle beef stroganoff into bowls. Top with polenta. Sprinkle with parsley and decorate with pimentos.

Makes 10–12 servings.

### Brown Sugar Pavlova

*A pavlova is a meringue dessert named after the Russian ballerina, Anna Pavlova. Meringues can be made a day ahead and stored in a tightly lidded container with parchment paper in between layers. Keep in a cool, dry place. Moisture/humidity is the*

*enemy of the meringue! Recipe courtesy of Katy O'Gara.*

*For the pavlova:*

2 C. superfine granulated sugar

1 C. packed light brown sugar

3 Tb. cornstarch

1 Tb. pure vanilla extract

1 Tb. distilled white vinegar

1½ C. egg whites (from about a dozen large eggs) at room temp for 30 minutes  
Salt

*For fruit:*

5 C. assorted frozen berries and cherries

2 Tb. granulated sugar

2 Tb. Grand Marnier

*For cream:*

1 C. chilled heavy cream

⅓ C. chilled sour cream

Preheat oven to 275°F with rack in middle. Line 3 cookie sheets with parchment paper.

Pulse superfine sugar, brown sugar and cornstarch in a food processor until well combined.

Stir together vanilla and vinegar in a small bowl.

In another bowl, beat egg whites with a pinch of salt using an electric mixer at medium speed until they hold soft peaks. Increase speed to medium-high and add sugar mixture 1 tablespoon at a time. After all sugar has been added, beat 1 minute more. Add vinegar mixture, then beat at high speed until meringue is glossy and holds stiff peaks, about 5 minutes.

Using a spoon, shape the meringue mixture into 10 slightly concave circles about 4–5" wide.

Bake until meringues have a crisp crust and feel dry to the touch, about 1 hour. The insides will still be marshmallow-like. Turn oven off and prop door open slightly with a wooden spoon. Cool meringues in oven 1 hour. Meringues may sink slightly and crack while cooling.

Toss berries with sugar and Grand Marnier. Let stand at room temperature until ready to use, 30–60 minutes ahead of service.

Use an electric mixer to beat heavy cream with sour cream until it just holds soft peaks.

Put each meringue on a serving plate and spread a portion of whipped cream over it. Top with berries.

Makes 10 servings. ♦

*Laura traces her love of all things culinary to the first time she leafed through her mother's Betty Crocker's Cooky Book—which still occupies a place of honor among her 600+ cookbooks. A passionate supporter of local food, she co-founded a farmers market, judges area food contests, and anticipates restaurant openings with the excitement most people reserve for winning a Mega Millions jackpot.*



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