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Wednesday, Oct. 13th, 12 pm
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Thursday, Oct. 21st, 2 pm
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Fox Hill Farm | East Marlborough Township

Fox Hill Farm is set on 80.2 bucolic acres complete with a fabulous house, pool, pond, tennis court, barn, indoor and outdoor arenas plus a dressage ring, and cross-country course. The Archer & Buchanan designed home of 10,000 square feet represents the epitome of gracious country living. The 7 bedroom, 5.4 bath stone home features rare details like Italian marble floors and 200 year old wood floors from a French chateau. The workmanship in this home is spectacular! The large Kitchen features high-end appliances and marble counters. The Master Suite is really special! The Lower Level has a large Wine Cellar, Exercise Room, Theater, and Game Room. The Barn and Indoor Arena offer 27 stalls. Great equestrian community and located in the nationally ranked Unionville-Chadds Ford School District!

\$6,875,000



Bittersweet Drive | Pocopson Township

Set on 7.3 exceedingly private acres in Pocopson Township, sits this spectacular 18,000 square foot, tutor style home featuring a spectacular main level Master Suite with "His" and "Her" bathrooms, Walk-in Closets, a private Office, and a large Bedroom. The home boasts 5 Bedrooms, 8.3 Bathrooms plus a four room guest/in-law suite easily accessed by way of the home's three level elevator. The main level Living Room, Dining Room, incredible Kitchen, and stellar Family Room must be seen to be appreciated! All of the Bedrooms enjoy En-Suite Bathrooms. The Lower Level features an amazing Wine Cellar, Theater, Game Room and second Family Room. This fabulous property is located with easy access to Wilmington plus set in the nationally ranked Unionville-Chadds Ford School District!

\$4,995,000



COMING SOON



East Marlborough Township

Investors and buyers who love a little challenge in their life must look at this property set in a highly sought-after community! Comprised of a three bedroom home, one bedroom cottage, detached Garage, an aluminum greenhouse which needs work, and a spacious warehouse which also needs some TLC - all sitting on a level 2.8 acre lot. Located in the award winning Unionville-Chadds Ford School District, this property is full of potential.

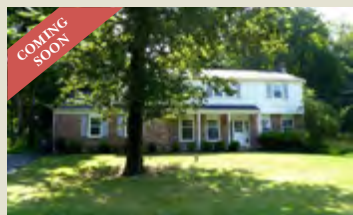
\$585,000



East Bradford Township

You must see these 23.1 beautiful acres that are perfect for an investor or someone seeking to build their dream home or farm! The land is high, level, open ground close to the Borough of West Chester. The property could be divided into a possibility of seven attractive lots. West Chester School District and convenient to shopping and major commuting routes. Please call us for a additional details.

\$1,085,000



COMING SOON



West Goshen Township

Located in a great community on a quiet road near West Chester University's south campus sits this charming four bedroom, two full and one half bath home that has been freshly painted, features all energy-efficient replacement windows, hardwood floors, and low taxes! The home is "move-in" ready! Close to major commuter routes and West Chester's restaurant scene, the property is located in the soughtafter West Chester School District.

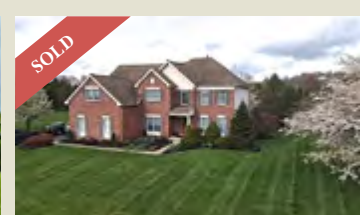
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from the EDITOR

What's not to love about October? The weather? Kids in school? The new October issue of *County Lines*?

October is the kind of month that makes you want to be outside. So, we visit a half dozen towns with Madison Meinel in "Across County Lines." Tour from Chester County to the Main Line to Delco to Wilmington, crossing several county lines on the trip.

That circuit didn't include one of our favorite towns because Emily Hart takes us there in "Popping Up in Phoenixville." She stops at old favorites (Steel City), new discoveries (Avlos), plus several flower farms. Perhaps her most charming discovery is the street art of David Gerbstadt. Decide for yourself.

And since it's harvest time, we pulled together prime apple and pumpkin picking spots in "Apple-Solutely Top Picks" by Lauren Durante and Gabriella Ruggirello and "Give 'Em Pumpkin to Talk About" by Rachel Thompson. PYO, try a corn maze and enjoy the fall festivals, but make sure you come home with a bushel and a peck.

With the start of another school year, parents are wondering what 2021–2022 will bring. See what schools are doing in "Parent Engagement at Independent Schools." We've also included a "Guide to Private Schools" with more about area schools.

"Yes, The Local Real Estate Market Is Still Going Strong," writes Cindy Walker. Read what local agents predict. But if you're staying put and tending your garden, see what Chris Fehlhaber of Chanticleer recommends in "Garden Sanctuary."

In Brandywine Table, Alyssa Thayer checks in at the new Di Bruno Bros. location in Wayne for antipasto 101. She shares recipes that will whet—then quench—your appetite.

Finally, find reasons to spend time in the golden October sunlight in our Best Local Events column, filled with family fun, festivals, fairs, food, fundraisers and, of course, the 80th Chester County Day Tour, always on the first Saturday of October.

Thank you for reading.

Jo Anne Durako
Editor



COMING IN November

GET HOLIDAY READY

Southern Brandywine Valley Focus
Local Holiday Shopping • Local Hero
55+ and Retirement Communities
Kids and Nature • Brandywine Table



COUNTY LINES MAGAZINE

October 2021

Volumes XLV Number 2

PUBLISHER
Edwin Malet

EDITOR
Jo Anne Durako

ART DIRECTOR
Harvey Walls

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Marci Tomassone

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Madison Meinel

FOOD EDITOR
Alyssa Thayer

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES
Susan Gillespie
Kim Ross

BUSINESS MANAGER
Debra M. French

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Laurel Anderson
George Fitzpatrick / Matt Freeman
Emily Hart / Carol Metzker
Jessica Roberts / Cindy Walker

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS
Brenda Carpenter
Wil Moore / Timlyn Vaughan

INTERNS
Lauren Durante
Gabriella Ruggirello

CONTACT US AT
ValleyDel Publications, Inc.
515 S. Franklin St., Ste. 100
West Chester, PA 19382.
610-918-9300. Info@ValleyDel.com
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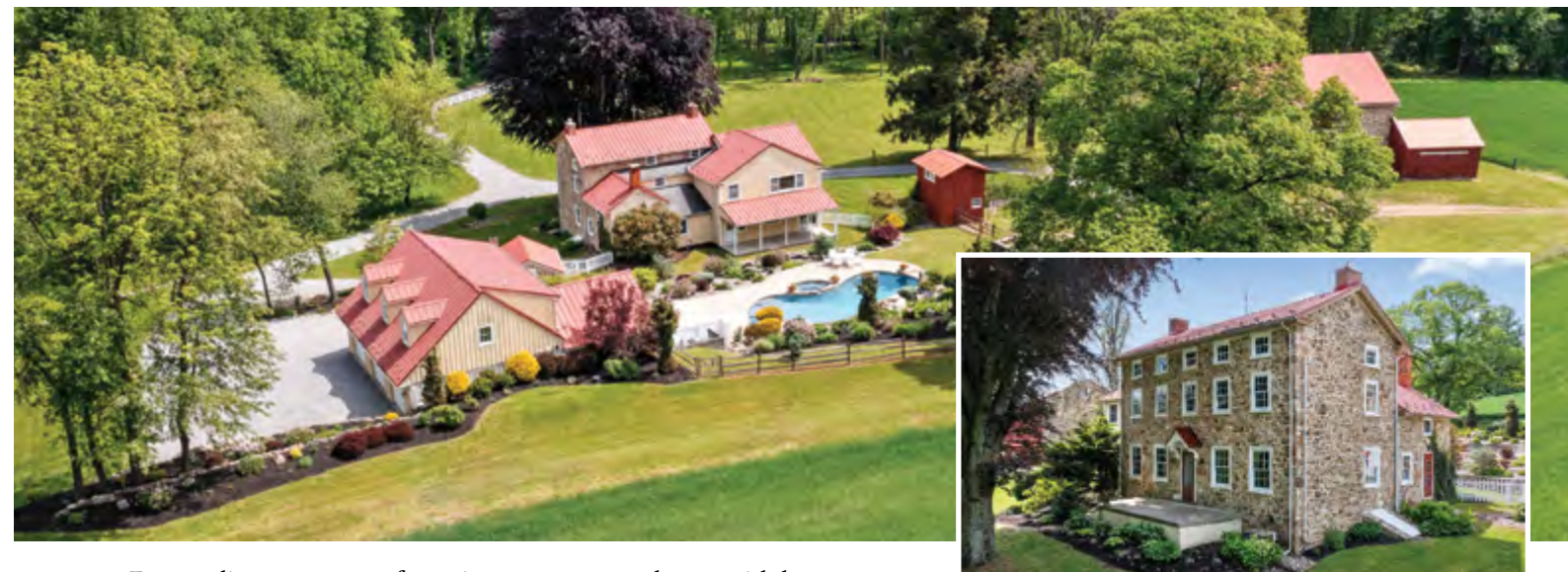
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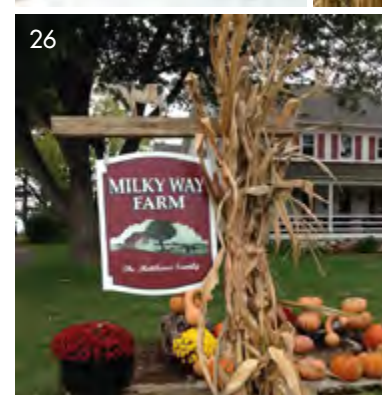
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Living to the Power of You



SAGELIFE disrupts the negative paradigms around aging; outdated mindsets that have been barriers to recognizing community living as an aspirational move; as the wisest choice for aging well.

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[Good to Know]

Just a few things we'd thought you'd like to know this month

A Golden (Rams) History. On September 25, 1871, 130 students arrived for the first day of classes at West Chester Normal School. And now **West Chester University is celebrating 150 years** of history and heritage with year-long festivities. Take part in this landmark occasion by visiting the campus for the newly opened History & Heritage



Museum Exhibition, participate in the 150th Anniversary 5K run in spring 2022 or check out the campus-wide ses- quicentennial expo- sition in April. Rams up! WCUPA.com.

Flower Power. Brighten up your home with fresh cut flowers from Chester County's newest flower farm— **Wildflower Farm**. Owners, Ryan and Lori Heenan run the small-scale flower farm on their Malvern property and offer a wide variety of seasonal flowers from dahlias to inca zinnias. Stop by the farm on Saturday during the growing season (through November) and build your own bouquet with pre-cut flowers, order custom bouquets or even rent their mobile flower truck for your own event! **8 Castlebar Ln., Malvern.** WildFlowerFarm.com.



Bitts of Delaware. Explore hidden gems of the Brandywine Valley with Greater Wilmington CVB's new self-produced video series, **Bitts & Bites**. Enjoy mini-adventures as host Jessica Bittman dives into the best local attrac- tions, events and restaurants. Join Bittman's journeys on YouTube or follow the GWCVB on Instagram and Facebook for fun pictures, videos and reels. Check out a recent video visit to Liquid Alchemy Beverages and get the latest on local ciders and meads. Cheers! VisitWilmingtonDE.com.

Book Talks. Chester County native and award-winning author Bruce Mowday recently released his latest book **Lafayette at Brandywine: The Making of an American Hero**. Take



a deep dive into the Battle of Brandywine and learn even more about Lafayette and his many accomplish- ments. History buffs will enjoy Mowday's book tour across the county. Visit one of the book talks at spots like Avon Grove Library and Ken- nett Library. More info at Mowday.com.

Parents as Piggy Banks. Halloween may leave some scared of ghosts, but **National Transfer Money to Your Daughter's Account Day**,

October 6th, will have parents shaking in their boots. (Sons have their own day on October 13th.) Perfect timing for college students to call home to reconnect, express their love and, of course, ask for their hol- iday bonus. Technology has made this easier than ever, giving parents paper and digital options— Venmo, bank EFT—to fill their kids' piggy banks. NationalToday.com.





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[October Picks] Our Picks for top events this month

Van Gogh: The Immersive Experience

Through February 22, 2022

Experience a 360-degree "art event" that explores the life and works of the Dutch genius, combining digital art, didactic



information and virtual reality. Sixty projectors bring 200 of Van Gogh's masterpieces to life with projections that animate the floor and walls around visitors, creating an immersive experience. Tower Theater, S. 69th & Ludlow Sts., Upper Darby.

Mon., Wed.-Fri., 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Sat., Sun. and holidays, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Tickets \$19.90-\$54.50. VanGoghExpo.com.

The Lights Festival at Plantation Field

October 2

Ignite your personalized sky lantern and let it take flight. Enjoy food, live music, dancing and the sight of the sky lit with thousands of lanterns. 1547 W. Doe Run Rd., Kennett Square. Gates open at 4 p.m. \$35 includes lantern kit. Ages 4-12 receive a Fun Kit (no lantern). \$10 parking. TheLightsFest.com.



Home and Garden Tour at Stoneleigh: A Natural Garden

October 9

Dazzling displays of native plants, ancient trees, landscape designs and myriad habitats are highlighted on this guided tour. Don't miss this opportunity for a peek inside the spectacular Tudor Revival Main House, usually open only for special events. 1829 E. County Line Rd., Villanova. 10:30 a.m. to noon. Registration required. 610-353-5587 ext. 221 or visit NatLands.org.

The Great Pumpkin Carve is Back!

October 14-16

A three-day Chadds Ford tradition where over 70 giant, native pumpkins (grown by SIW Vegetables, a local historic farm)



are carved by local artists on Thursday, to be lit and displayed on Friday and Saturday. All three nights enjoy a kid-friendly Haunted Trail, raffle prizes and live music. Food, local craft beer and wine are available for purchase. Chadds Ford Historical Society, 1736 Creek Rd., Chadds Ford.

Thurs. & Fri., 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.; Sat., 3 to 9 p.m. \$5-\$15. 610-388-7376; GreatPumpkinCarve.com.

10th Anniversary of the West Chester Historic Preservation Awards

October 21

The Awards Program recognizes projects and individuals who have worked to maintain the historic character and preserve the historic integrity of the Borough of West Chester. Winners

announced at the Chester County History Center. 225 N. High St., West Chester. Hors d'oeuvres and a light buffet with beer and wine will be served. 5:30 p.m. \$25. For tickets, WCDF.org.



best Things To Do

Many events are coming back this fall, so take out your calendar and fill it in with fun. Please be sure to check websites often for the latest updates and for COVID protocols.

FAMILY FUN

THROUGH OCTOBER 11

Garden Railway at Morris Arboretum. Model trains zip around an outdoor track that's surrounded by miniature replicas of "Wonders of the World." See the Eiffel Tower, Hagia Sophia, the Egyptian Pyramids, the Great Wall of China and more.

100 E. Northwestern Ave., Philadelphia. Mon–Fri, 10 to 5; Sat–Sun, 9 to 5. \$10–\$20. 215-247-5777; MorrisArboretum.org.



THROUGH OCTOBER 31

Brandywine Valley Adventure Pass. The Greater Wilmington Convention & Visitors Bureau offers a pass enabling visitors to create their own itinerary and gain admission at a discount to the attractions they select. VisitWilmingtonDE.com.

THROUGH DECEMBER

Science Saturdays at Hagley Museum & Library. Visitors of all ages are invited to discover solutions to science and engineering challenges. Science Saturdays are drop-in activities, so stop by during the event hours. 298 Buck Rd., Wilmington. Noon to 4. \$5–\$9. 302-658-2400; Hagley.org.

ONGOING

Behind the Steam: A Collection Exploration Speaker Series at Marshall Steam Museum. Monthly virtual event taking a close look at a special item in the collection and then Zoom out for a larger discussion with experts and enthusiasts. 3000 Creek Rd., Yorklyn, DE. 7 pm. \$5; \$30 for the year. 302-239-2385; AuburnHeights.org.

OCTOBER 1–3

97th Annual Unionville Community Fair. Family activities, contests, music, live animal exhibits, food, beer and wine garden, hayrides, mechanical bull riding and much more. Land-

hope Farms, 101 E. Street Rd., Kennett Square. Fri, 2 to 6; Sat, 10 to 6; Sun, 10 to 4. \$5 per person, \$10 per car. UCFairInc.org.

OCTOBER 1–3, 7–30

Autumn Moon Hayrides at Linvilla Orchards. A wagon ride that's perfect for families to enjoy. The hayride will end with a campfire marshmallow roast and a sample of apple cider. 137 W. Knowlton Rd., Media. 6 to 8 pm. Pre-purchase tickets, \$7–\$9. 610-876-7116; Linvilla.com.

OCTOBER 2

Truck & Tractor Day at Winterthur Museum of Art. Get up close to trucks and tractors, check out other vehicles and equipment, suit up in firefighter gear, take a hayride, and even milk a mechanical cow. 5105 Kennett Pk., Winterthur, DE. 10 to 4. \$6–\$20. 800-448-3883; Winterthur.org.



OCTOBER 3

Explorers Day at Dressage at Devon. Kids make, decorate and ride their own stick horse which they can take home with them. Then attend a tea party, selfie scavenger hunt and a meet-and-greet with the Silver Moon Vaulters. Devon Horse Show Grounds, 23 Dorset Rd., Devon. Visit website for times, tickets. DressageatDevon.org.

OCTOBER 3–NOVEMBER 7

West Chester Railroad. Fall Foliage Express: Oct. 3, 10, 17, Nov. 7—enjoy a brisk fall afternoon ride along the picturesque Chester Creek Valley. **Trick or Treat Special:** Oct. 23, 24, 30, 31—a family friendly Halloween train ride. Wear your favorite costume, ride to the Glen Mills station and collect a few treats. Trains depart the station at 203 E. Market St., West Chester. Noon and 2 pm. \$8–\$20. 610-430-2233; WestChesterRR.net.

OCTOBER 9

Upper Main Line Rotary Oktoberfest Main

Line. Games, pumpkin decorating, face painting, live music, dancing, German food and a great beer selection all under a huge tent. Rain or shine. Church of the Good Samaritan, 212 W. Lancaster Ave., Paoli. Noon to 7:30. Adults, \$10. UMLRotary.org.

OCTOBER 9–10, 16–17, 23–24

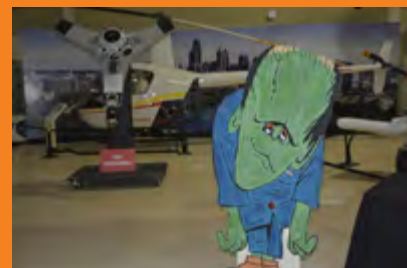
Hagley Events. Oct. 9–10, 16–17, 23–24, **Hayrides at Hagley:** Take a hayride along the Brandywine to experience the beautiful fall foliage in the Powder Yard. Guests can create fall-themed crafts, then see a gunpowder explosion, roll mill in action and working 19th century machines, 11:30 to 4. Oct. 30–31, **Halloween at Hagley:** children are invited to come in costume and visit stations for treats, 10 to 4. 200 Hagley Creek Rd., Wilmington. 302-658-2400; Hagley.org.

OCTOBER 10

Radnor Fall Harvest & Great Pumpkin Patch. Tractor and pony rides, pumpkin patches and painting, hayrides, music and moon bounces. The Willows, 490 Darby-Paoli Rd., Radnor. 1 to 4. Free. Rain date, Oct. 13. 610-688-5600; Radnor.com.

OCTOBER 23–24, 30

American Helicopter Museum Events. Oct. 23–24, **FamilyFest:** Food, fun and family with a car show on Sat, 10 to 5, and helicopter rides and exhibits on Sun, noon to 5. Oct. 30, **Haunted Helicopters:** Come in costume and enjoy activities and treats at the museum. 5:30 to 7:30. \$10; 12 and under free. 1220 American Blvd., West Chester. 610-436-9600; AmericanHelicopterMuseum.



OCTOBER 27

Trunk-n-Treat in West Chester. Over 15 local groups and businesses decorate their vehicles for families to come through and get treats. West Chester Municipal Bldg, rear parking lot (401 E. Gay St.), West Chester. 6 to 8 pm. Free. 610-436-9010; West-Chester.com.

ART, CRAFTS & ANTIQUES

OCTOBER 1

West Chester Autumn Gallery Walk. Six galleries combine with additional "one-night-only" venues throughout the downtown area to showcase Chester County artists. 5 to 9. Free. 610-738-3350; DowntownWestChester.com.

OCTOBER 2

22nd Annual Artisans' Porch Walk in Lititz. More than 45 talented artisans in ceramics, decor, fiber arts, jewelry, painting, drawing and woodworking exhibit at Lititz Springs Park, 24 N. Broad St., Lititz. A silent auction of individual pieces will be held at the Moravian Manor, 300 W. Lemon St., Lititz. 9 to 4. Free. LititzPorchWalk.com.



OCTOBER 2–9

Delco Arts Week. Delaware County will host more than 60 events from concerts, film and dance, to exhibitions, festivals, theater, kids' activities and more. For details, including a regularly updated schedule of events, visit DelcoArts.org.

OCTOBER 13–25

Kutztown Folk Festival. This folklife festival is an insight into the traditions of the Pennsylvania Dutch and their way of life. Join in an old-fashioned cake walk, square dancing, a comedy show and more. Kutztown Fairgrounds, 450 Wentz St., Kutztown. Daily, 9 to 6. \$5–\$14; under 12, free. KutztownFestival.com.

OCTOBER 19 & 20

Hagley Craft Fair. Artisans from the Mid-Atlantic area will display and sell their fine arts, crafts and gourmet items. Hagley Museum & Library, 298 Buck Rd., Wilmington. Sat, 10 to 5; Sun, 10 to 4. \$5. 302-658-2400; Hagley.org.

OCTOBER 23

Palette to Palate. Local artists paint the landscape of Willistown and Chester County, offer demonstrations and tours. Ticket holders will receive an Appreciation Bag with local food products, notecards and other special surprises. Benefits Willistown Conservation Trust. Goshen Hill Farm, Malvern. 10 to 5:30. \$50. Visit website for details. LandArtEvents.com.

NOVEMBER 4–7

Winterthur's 57th Annual Delaware Antiques Show. The in-person show features more than 60 distinguished dealers in American antiques and decorative arts. Preview Party, Thurs, 5 to 9, tickets start at \$125. Chase Center, 815 Justison St., Wilmington. Fri–Sat, 11 to 6; Sun, 11 to 5. \$25. 302-888-4803; Winterthur.org.

BOOKS

OCTOBER 6 & 7

Wellington Square Bookshop. Classics Book

Club: Oct. 6, "The Beautiful and Damned" by F. Scott Fitzgerald. **NonFiction Book Club:** Oct. 7, "Talking About Detective Fiction," by P. D. James. 549 Wellington Sq., Exton. 610-458-1144; WellingtonSquareBooks.com.

OCTOBER 19 & 28

Main Point Books. Fiction Book Club: Oct. 19, "The Djinn Patrol on the Purple Line" by Deepa Anappara. **NonFiction Book Club:** Oct. 28, "Crossing the Line" by Kareem Rosser. 116 N. Wayne Ave., Wayne. 484-580-6978; MainPointBooks.com.



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See Phoenixville article in this issue for events happening there.

EQUESTRIAN.....

NOVEMBER 7

87th Running of the Pennsylvania Hunt Cup.

A timber steeplechase race with a distance of 4 miles and 22 fences. Enjoy vendors, a carriage parade, and, new this year, tailgating under tents. North of Rt. 926 and Newark Rd., Unionville. Gates open, 10:30. \$75 in advance (visit website); \$100 on the day. Benefits Chester Co. Food Bank. 610-220-3742; PaHuntCup.org.

FESTIVALS & FAIRS.....

THROUGH OCTOBER 31

Pennsylvania Renaissance Faire. A cast of hundreds fill the shire. Visit the website for themed weekends. Mt. Hope Estate, 2775 Lebanon Rd., Manheim. Sat–Sun, 11 to 8. \$15.95–\$30.95. 717-665-7021; PAREnFaire.com.

OCTOBER 2

170th Annual St. David's Country Fair. A fun-filled day for the whole family with flea market, food booths, antiques, games and more. Benefits the church's 30+ outreach partners. 763 S. Valley Forge Rd., Wayne. 10 to 4. \$2–\$10. 610-688-7947; StDavidsChurch.org/Fair.

OCTOBER 2

Delaware Nature Society Harvest Moon Festival. Children's activities and crafts, hayrides, music, live animal photo booth, food, and wagon and pony rides. Coverdale Farm, 543 Way Rd., Greenville, DE. No dogs. Rain date, Oct. 6. 10 to 5. \$10. 302-239-2334; DelawareNatureSociety.org.

OCTOBER 2

Newlin Grist Mill Fall Harvest Festival. The theme this year, "Food Traditions Past and Present," includes cooks, bakers and beverage experts. 19 Cheyney Rd., Glen Mills. 10 to 4; Food Festival, 11 to 7. Free. \$5 parking. 610-459-2359; NewlinGristMill.org.



OCTOBER 8–10

Greater Philadelphia Pet Expo. You'll enjoy Gail Mirabella and The Dynamo Dogs, The International Cat Assoc. Cat Show, Reptile Shows, an Alpaca Ranch and more. The Greater Philadelphia Expo Center, 100 Station Ave.,

Oaks. Fri, 3 to 8; Sat, 10 to 7; Sun, 10 to 5. Visit wesite for tickets. FamilyPetShows.com.

OCTOBER 10

Westtown Day 2021. Carnival games, petting zoo, food trucks, live bands, Civil and Revolutionary War reenactors, vendors, crafts and more. Tour the historic Oakbourne Mansion. Let the kids "dig" for archaeological artifacts. Explore a police cruiser, ambulance, fire truck. Oakbourne Park, 1014 S. Concord Rd., West Chester. 11 to 3. Westtownpa.org.

FILM

OCTOBER 2, 9, 16

West Goshen Township Park and Recreation Department's Fall Movie Series. Watch from your own car and listen on your radio. West Goshen Shopping Ctr., 909 Paoli Pk., West Chester. 7:30. Free. Visit website or phone for movies. 610-696-5266; WestGoshen.org.

OCTOBER 8–30

Parking Lot Theaters Movie Events. A haunted drive-through cinema with Halloween movies for all ages. Exton Square Mall, 260 Exton Square Pkwy., Exton. Visit website for times and tickets. ParkingLotTheaters.com.

FOOD & BREWS.....

THROUGH OCTOBER

Crush Cancer Wine Tour of Chester County. Organized by the Women's Auxiliary to Chester County Hospital, a month-long tour of local wineries, breweries, distilleries and dining spots throughout Chester County. Benefits Abramson Cancer Center at Chester County Hospital. \$25 per week. Visit 2CrushCancer.com.

THROUGH OCTOBER

Food Truck Tuesdays in King of Prussia. This roving food truck series features live music, games and food trucks offering great lunch items. Locations TBA. 11:30 to 1:30. See website for details. VisitKOP.com.

OCTOBER 2

Historic Kennett Brewfest. The brewfest is back! Enjoy live music, tastings from over 70 breweries, food trucks and special vendors. 600 S. Broad



Local Farm Markets

Artisan Exchange, 208 Carter Dr. Unit 13 B, West Chester. Sat, 10 to 1. ArtisanExchange.net.

Bryn Mawr Farmers Market, Lancaster Ave. Bryn Mawr train station lot. Sat, 9 to 1. FarmToCity.org.

Devon Yard Farmers Market, 25 S. Waterloo Rd., Devon. Wed, 11 to 2 from May 12. GrowingRootsPartners.com.

Downingtown Farmers Market, Kerr Park next to Veteran's Memorial, Pennsylvania Ave. Sat, 9 to noon. 610-836-1391; GrowingRootsPartners.com.

Eagleview Farmers Market, Eagleview Town Center, Exton. Thurs, 3 to 6. 610-836-1391; GrowingRootsPartners.com.

Kennett Square Farmers Market, The Creamery, 401 Birch St. Fri, 3 to 6. 610-444-8188; KSQFarmersMarket.com.

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

Malvern Farmers Market, Warren Ave. & Roberts Rd. Sat, 9 to noon. 610-836-1391; 610-836-1391; GrowingRootsPartners.com.

Pete's Produce Farm, 1225 E. Street Rd., West Chester. Daily 9 to 5. Curbside pick-up, order by Wed, pick-up Thurs. 610-399-3711; PetesProduceFarm.com.

Phoenixville Farmers Market, 200 Mill St. Sat, 10 to noon; seniors, 9–9:30. Curbside pick-up, if req. by Fri, noon. PhoenixvilleFarmersMarket.org.

Pottstown Farmers Mkt., 100 E. High St. Opening every other Sat, from May 15, 9–1. 484-948-6061; PottstownFarm.org.

Swarthmore Farmers Market, 121 Park Ave. Sat, 9 to noon. 215-733-9599; SwarthmoreFarmersMarket.org.

Thornbury Farmers Mkt. & CSA, 1256 Thornbury Rd. Fri–Sat, 9–5; Sun, 11–5. ThornburyFarmCSA.com.

Thornton Farmers Mkt., 330 Glen Mills Rd. Sat, 10 to 1. Facebook.com/ThorntonFarmersMarket.

West Chester Growers Market, Chestnut & Church Sts. Sat, 9 to 1. Can pre-order. 610-436-9010; WestChesterGrowersMarket.com.

Westtown Amish Market, 1165 Wilmington Pk., West Chester. Thur, 9 to 6; Fri, 9 to 7; Sat, 8 to 4. 610-492-5700; WestChesterAmishMarket.com.

St., Kennett Square. Connoisseur session noon to 1:30, \$85; regular session 1:30 to 5, \$55. 610-444-8188; KennettBrewfest.com.

OCTOBER 7 & 9

King of Prussia Beerfest Royale. Over 50 craft and international brewers, 100+ beers and area restaurants in an outdoor beer garden and live music. **Oct. 7,** The King's Plate,, 5:30 to 9, \$70–\$75; **Oct. 9,** the Main Event, VIP, 3:30 to 8:30, \$60; general admission 4:30 to 8:30, \$45. Designated driver, \$15. KOPBeerfest.com.

OCTOBER 14, 28

Hagley Alfresco. A new series of outdoor dining and entertainment featuring local restaurants and live music. 298 Buck Rd., Wilmington. 5 to 7:30. Tickets \$30, includes food and one alcoholic beverage. 302-658-2400; Hagley.org.

NOVEMBER 6

Murder Mystery Dinner at The American Helicopter Museum. Dress the part as you're taken back to 1930 as a flapper or gangster and solve a murder. 1220 American Blvd., West Chester. 7 pm. \$35–\$55. Adv. registration req. 610-436-9600; AmericanHelicopter.Museum.

FUNDRAISERS

OCTOBER 2

Willows Park Preserve Fall Fundraiser. Wil-

lows Park Preserve is Creating Community Connections through live music, silent auction and delicious food. 490 Darby Paoli Rd., Villanova. 5 to 7 pm. \$100. For more information and tickets, visit WillowsParkPreserve.org.

OCTOBER 4

People's Light 19th Annual Golf Classic. This tradition benefits theater education programs for young people. Waynesborough Country Club, Darby Paoli Rd., Paoli. 10 to 7. For tickets and to register, visit PeoplesLight.org.

OCTOBER 10

Thorncroft Equestrian Center's Lobstah Bake. Returning with an option to take your Lobstahs and BBQ to go! Or dine on-site at the Jimmy Moran North Arena, 190 Line Rd., Malvern. 4 pm. Tickets \$95 and up. Reservations a must. 610-644-1963; Thorncroft.org/Lobster-Bake-Fundraiser.



OCTOBER 15

The 2021 Gravediggers' Ball. Fundraiser of the Friends of Laurel Hill and West Laurel Hill Cemeteries. Enjoy open bar, great food, music and auction items. Black-tie, costume or masquerade attire requested. Univ. of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 3260 South St., Philadelphia. 6 pm. \$250 and up. 215-228-8200; GravediggersBall.org.



OCTOBER 16

Annual Gala at The American Helicopter Museum. Museum fundraiser with open bar, hors d'oeuvres, dinner, great music and more. 1220 American Blvd., West Chester. 6 to 10. Visit website for tickets. 610-436-9600; AmericanHelicopter.Museum.

NOVEMBER 4

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virtually this year and features Tabletop Art via Facebook. Designers offer useful tips and visuals for setting beautiful casual and formal tables. Benefits The Philadelphia Orchestra Donation requested. Goes online Nov. 4 and will stay up to be viewed at will. NotableKitchens.com.



NOVEMBER 6
39th Annual French & Pickering's Annual Auction Party. Enjoy cocktails, auctions and delicious food. Benefits French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust. Stonewall Golf Club, Bulltown Rd., Elverson. 6 pm. Tickets \$125 and up. 610-933-7577; FrenchAndPickering.org.

GARDENS
OCTOBER 2
Delaware Nature Society Fall Native Plant Sale. Purchases support diversity in your garden and proceeds support conservation and protection of waterways. Coverdale Farm Preserve, 543 Way Rd., Greenville, DE. 9 to 3. Free. 302-239-2334; DelNature.org.

OCTOBER 23
Longwood Gardens Fireworks & Fountains Show—"Start Me Up." Rock along with The Rolling Stones at a tribute to this larger-than-life rock band during the final Fireworks & Fountains Show of the season. 1001 Longwood Rd., Kennett Square. 8:15. \$25–\$53. 610-388-1000; LongwoodGardens.org.



MUSEUMS
THROUGH NOVEMBER 7
Art Meets Nature at the Brandywine River Museum of Art. Queen Anne's Lace Pod is a temporary, site-specific installation by artist Ian Stabler. Made of natural materials gathered and found on-site. 1 Hoffman's Mill Rd., Chadds Ford. \$6–\$18. 610-388-2700; Brandywine.org.

OCTOBER 2–FEBRUARY 6
Delaware Art Museum. "I Sit and Sew: Tracing Alice Dunbar-Nelson." 2301 Kentmere Pkwy., Wilmington. Wed, 10 to 4; Thurs, 10 to 8; Fri–Sun, 10 to 4. \$6–\$12, Sun, free. 302-571-9590; DelArt.org.

MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT
OCTOBER 1–NOVEMBER 5
Uptown! at Knauer Performing Arts Center. *Oct. 1*, Jingo—The Santana Tribute; *Oct. 2*, Eaglemania—The World's Greatest Eagles Tribute Band; *Oct. 8*, Back In Black: ACDC; *Oct. 9*, The Bill Withers Project: Re-Imagined; *Oct. 16*, Studio Two—Early Beatles Tribute; *Oct. 22*, Kun-Yang Lin/Dancers; *Oct. 23*, Comedy For A Cause Featuring Better Than Bacon Improv; *Oct. 29*, Unchained, The Ultimate Johnny Cash Tribute; *Oct. 30*, Light My Fire: Doors Tribute; *Oct. 31*, "Rocky Horror Picture Show;" *Nov. 5*, Cherry Cherry—Neil Diamond Tribute. For tickets and times, UptownWestChester.org.

OCTOBER 1–NOVEMBER 5
Kennett Flash. *Oct. 1*, Proud Monkey—A Tribute to Dave Matthews Band; *Oct. 9*, David Wilcox; *Oct. 10*, Tony Vacca's World Rhythms Ensemble at Anson B. Nixon Park; *Oct. 14*, Sideline; *Oct. 20*, Robbie Fulks; *Oct. 22*, The Numbers 2021 Reunion Show; *Oct. 23*, Brand X; *Oct. 31*, Rocky Horror Picture Show, movie screening and live stage show; *Nov. 5*, Sean Rowe. 102 Sycamore Alley, Kennett Square. For times and tickets, 484-732-8295; KennettFlash.org.

OCTOBER 2
Sips & Sculptures at Delaware Art Museum. Roam the sculpture garden while enjoying tastings of 24 different wines. Wines will be paired with unique characteristics of the beautiful sculptures. Cheese board and souvenir wine glass included. Rain date, Oct. 3. 2301 Kentmere Pkwy., Wilmington. 3 to 5 pm. \$65. 302-351-8538; DelArt.org.

OCTOBER 8
Sounds of Summer Music Series in Coatesville. An evening of music—jazz, R&B—fresh air, great food and community spirit. Victor Abdala Park, 851 Olive St., Coatesville. 5:30 to 9:30. Free. 610-384-0300; Coatesville.org.

OCTOBER 8–23
The Grand is Back! The Grand Opera House announces its first batch of indoor shows. *Oct. 8*, Theo Von; *Oct. 9*, Lewis Black; *Oct. 15*, David Sedaris; *Oct. 21*, Southside Johnny & The Asbury Dukes; *Oct. 23*, Post Modern Jukebox. St., Wilmington. For times and tickets, 302-652-5577; TheGrandWilmington.org.

OCTOBER 15 & 16
Lancaster Symphony Orchestra Masterworks Concert. Performing the music of Sibelius, James MacMillan and Mozart. First Presbyterian Church, 140 E. Orange St., Lancaster. Fri 7:30; Sat, 3 & 8 pm. \$36–\$77. 717-291-6440; LancasterSymphony.org.

OCTOBER 17 & 31
Delaware County Concerts. Symphony Concert: *Oct. 17*, featuring the music of Bach, Beethoven and Brahms. Chamber Concert: *Oct. 31*, Musical Haunts. Neumann University, Meagher Theatre, 1 Neumann Dr., Aston. 3 pm. \$10–\$20. 610-879-7059; DCSMusic.org.

OCTOBER 31
Delaware County Symphony Concert. Featuring the music of Stanley Grill, Beethoven and Dvorak. Neumann University, Meagher Theatre, 1 Neumann Dr., Aston. 3 pm. \$15. 610-879-7059; DCSMusic.org.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES
OCTOBER 2 & 9
Sunset and S'mores at Mt. Cuba Center. Bring the family out for a scenic hayride through Mt. Cuba's natural lands. Arrive at a bonfire where you can relax or explore your surroundings and enjoy fireside snacks, s'mores and adult and family-friendly beverages while the sun sets. 3120 Barkey Mill Rd., Hockessin, DE. 5 to 7. \$8–\$19. 302-239-4244; MtCubaCenter.org.



OCTOBER 3
To Love A Canine Rescue Event—Miles for Mutts. Join TLC Rescue and adoptable dogs for a fun 5K race and 1-mile fun walk raising money for veterinary care for rescue dogs. In person or online (virtual dates Sept. 19–Oct. 3). Wilson Farm Park, 500 Lee Rd., Wayne. 8 am to noon. \$15–\$30. 610-908-2855; TLCRescuePA.com.

OCTOBER 10
CCDSIG Buddy Walk and Family Run &

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

OCTOBER 2–17
Susan G. Komen Philadelphia 3-Day. Take on 60 miles to end breast cancer or register as a one-day, 20-mile participant. Visit The3Day.org.

OCTOBER 15
PA Breast Cancer Coalition 2021 Conference. Held virtually this year, with a full day of workshops, awards ceremony, scholarship recipients, exhibits and luncheon. \$25. Register online. 800-377-8828; PABreastCancer.org.

OCTOBER 23
2021 Komen National More Than Pink Walk. Join online for the virtual opening ceremony and Race/Walk celebration. Then walk all day long on the treadmill, your neighborhood sidewalk or the paths of your favorite park or trail. 215-238-8900; KomenPhiladelphia.org.



OCTOBER 24
Making Strides Against Breast Cancer of Wilmington. Walk to raise awareness and funds to save lives from breast cancer. Bellevue State Park, 800 Carr Rd., Wilmington. To register, 302-669-6323; MakingStrides.ACSEvents.org.

OCTOBER 28
Unite for Her Harvest Chef & Wine Tasting Event and Virtual Fundraiser. Purchase a locally sourced crate containing dinner from the region's top chefs, wine pairings and tune in for live entertainment and a virtual fundraiser to support Unite for HER, a nonprofit organization. Visit UniteForHer.org/Harvest.

NOVEMBER 13
Living Beyond Breast Cancer's Annual Black-tie Gala—The Butterfly Ball. One of LBBC's most important events. Loews Philadelphia Hotel, 1200 Market St., Philadelphia. 6:30 to midnight. Tickets \$400 and up. 484-708-1804; LBBC.org.

Fun Day. The Chester County Down Syndrome Interest Group holds a 5K, Buddy Walk and Fun Run and Dash for kids. West Goshen Park, Five Points & Fern Hill Rds., West Chester. 8 to 2. \$10–\$30. CCDSIG.org/Buddy-Walk.

OCTOBER 31
44th Annual Radnor Run. Register to be an in-person or virtual participant in the 5-Mile Race, 2-Mile Trail Walk, or ½ Mile Kids Fun Run. Benefits the American Lung Association. Radnor Township Building, Encke Park, 301 Iven Ave., Radnor. Reg, 7 am, race, 8:30. \$30–\$40. 800-LUNG-USA; Lung.org/RadnorRun.

THEATER
THROUGH OCTOBER 9
Ryan & Friends: Comedy Calamity Show at Bird-in-Hand Stage. A comedy routine and song parodies. 2760 Old Philadelphia Pk., Bird-in-Hand. \$14–\$49. Check website for times. 800-790-4069; Bird-in-Hand.com/Stage.

THROUGH OCTOBER 17
Fun Home at The Fulton Theatre. Based on the real-life story of cartoonist Alison Bechdel. 12 N. Prince St., Lancaster. Phone or visit website for times and tickets. 717-397-7425; TheFulton.org.

OCTOBER 2–24
Disney's Frozen Jr. at Media Theatre. Based on the 2018 Broadway musical and brings Elsa, Anna and the land of Arendelle to life onstage. 104 E. State St., Media. Sat, 11 am; Sun, noon. \$17–\$22. 610-891-0100; MediaTheatre.org.

OCTOBER 6–17
Tommy And Me at Delaware Theatre Co. Philly sports commentator Ray Didinger's autobiographical show about Eagles' Hall of Famer Tommy McDonald. For tickets and times, 302-594-1100; DelawareTheatre.org.

OCTOBER 7–8
OperaDelaware Presents Don Pasquale in Concert. An abridged concert performance of this beloved bel canto comedy performed in Italian with English subtitles. 4 S. Poplar St., Wilmington. 7 pm. \$40. 302-442-7807; OperaDe.org.

TOWNS, TALKS & TOURS
THROUGH NOVEMBER 29
Open-Air Set-Ups in Phoenixville. Businesses set up in the closed areas between 100–200 blocks of Bridge St. Fri, 4 to 11; Sat–Sun, 7 am to 11 pm. Main and Bridge Street parking lot closed for the duration of the road closure. PhoenixvilleFirst.org.

OCTOBER 1, 9, 21
1st Fridays, 2nd Saturdays, 3rd Thursdays. First Fridays: *Oct. 1, Lancaster City*, 717-509-

ARTS; VisitLancasterCity.com. *Oxford*, 610-998-9494; DowntownOxfordPA.org. *Phoenixville*, 610-933-3253; PhoenixvilleFirst.org. *West Chester*, 610-738-3350; DowntownWestChester.com. *Wilmington Art Loop*, 302-576-2135; CityFestWilm.com. *Second Saturday Virtual Arts Stroll: Oct. 9*, Media, 484-445-4161; MediaArtsCouncil.org. *Third Thursday Malvern Stroll: Oct. 21*, MalvernBusiness.com.

OCTOBER 2
80th Annual Chester County Day Tour. This year's self-driving tour celebrates the southwestern quadrant of the county, with a walking tour in West Chester Borough. The Hunt takes place at Mr. Stewart's Foxhounds, 1549 Doe Run Rd., Coatesville. Tour, \$50. Pre-purchased boxed lunches: \$15–\$20. Benefits The Women's Auxiliary to Chester Co. Hospital's pledge towards the advancement of Breast Health. ChesterCountyDay.com.

OCTOBER 2 & 23
Paoli Battlefield Paranormal Tour. The Malvern Paranormal Society and Tri-County Paranormal lead visitors on a paranormal investigation of the Paoli Battlefield. Bring flashlights and cameras. Monument & Wayne Aves., Malvern. 6 to 11 pm. \$40. Visit website for info and waiver. PBPGLnc.org.

OCTOBER 16 & 23
Ghost Tours at Colonial Pennsylvania Plantation. The haunted property invites you to an evening of ghostly stories, scary and true tales of terror. Follow the torch-lit path and discover the strange ways that colonists treated their dead. 3900 N. Sandy Flash Dr., Newtown Square. 6 to 10 pm. \$6–\$10. 610-566-1725; ColonialPlantation.org.

OCTOBER 17
Kennett Underground Railroad Bus Tours. Visit documented Underground Railroad sites, historic homes and Quaker Meetinghouses while learning about local abolitionists and anti-slavery activity. Begin: Brandywine Valley Tourist Information Center, 300 Greenwood Rd., Kennett Square. 1:30. \$23. KennettUndergroundRR.org. ♦

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Garden Sanctuary

TAKE THESE SIMPLE STEPS TO CREATE A WILDLIFE HABITAT IN YOUR HOME GARDEN.

Chris Fehlhaber, Chanticleer

MANY OF US TURN TO OUR GARDENS as places of sanctuary—to escape from daily stresses, relax and reconnect with the natural world.

Chanticleer and the other 37 public gardens in Philadelphia, America's Garden Capital, provide escape for millions of guests annually. These gardens also provide sanctuary of another sort, habitat for the wildlife that enriches all our gardens and lives.

For much of our recent gardening history, we have primarily gardened for ourselves, often unknowingly at the expense of wildlife. But if we're to have the pollinators, birds and other creatures we hold dear, we must consider their needs as well as our own and create a home for them in our gardens.

Here are some simple steps to take to help that cause.

PROVIDING HABITAT

The hallmarks of a healthy habitat are food, water and shelter, and all should be present in your home garden.

A top source of food for insects comes in the form of native plants. Native plants are essential as they provide a larval food source for native caterpillars. These caterpillars, in turn, provide a food source for birds and other wildlife. Non-invasive, non-native plants may provide nectar for generalist pollinators, but very rarely do these plants act as larval food sources. Native plants are a better choice for your garden.

Water, particularly a consistent source of running water, is also essential for birds and wildlife throughout the year, whether during a summer drought or winter freeze. A simple heated birdbath with a bubbler added to your garden can meet the needs of countless animals.

Shelter comes in many forms—from leaves to deadwood. A simple pile of brush provides nesting opportunities for insects and subsequently food and cover for the birds that eat them. Salamanders also appreciate this type of cover during the winter.

Standing deadwood provides many benefits especially for saproxylic insects—those that require deadwood to complete their life cycle.

Birds and bats will also seek shelter in soft standing deadwood. The pileated woodpecker (the large bird with the famously red head), for instance, requires standing deadwood as part of its habitat.

Thinking of your garden in layers is a great way to maximize the habitat it can provide. Layers include, starting from the top, the canopy, understory trees and shrubs, lower perennials and grasses, and finally a groundcover layer comprised of sedges, other shade tolerant plants and spring plants.

GARDENING PRACTICES

"Cleanliness is next to godliness" is a phrase many gardeners take to heart. Throughout the year we rake, prune, trim, mow and blow to tidy up what we mistakenly refer to as "yard waste." Nature, however, does not create waste, only opportunity and abundance.

Plants have evolved to live in their own litter. Consequently, leaves and debris from prior seasons act as a natural fertilizer for the plant and provide habitat for insects and birds that have all co-evolved together.

So, take a break from some of your gardening chores.

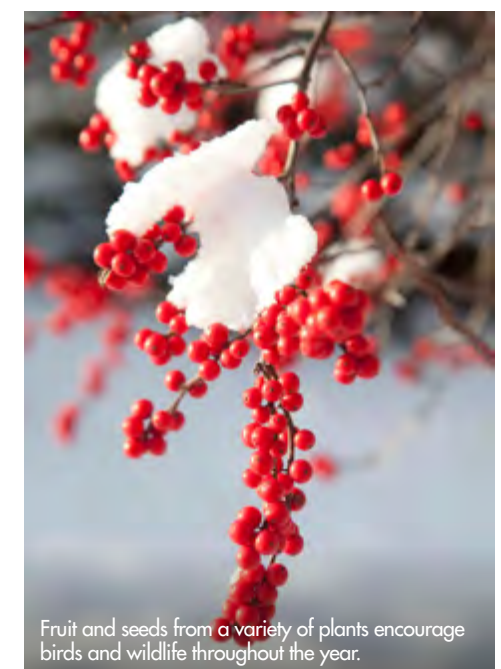
LEAVE THE LEAVES

Despite the term "leaf litter," leaves are not litter in a conventional sense, but an invaluable resource for gardens and wildlife. Many pollinators, beneficial insects, reptiles and amphibians use the leaf layer for hibernation and overwintering as the layer of leaves protect and insulate the soil from



Fallen leaves protect and enrich the soil while also providing valuable habitat for overwintering insects.

Despite the term 'leaf litter,' leaves are not litter in a conventional sense, but an invaluable resource for gardens and wildlife.



Fruit and seeds from a variety of plants encourage birds and wildlife throughout the year.

Perennials and grasses with hollow stems—such as asters, coneflowers and goldenrods—allow many insects to overwinter inside them.



Larval plants are essential food sources for caterpillars like this black swallowtail.



Spring ephemerals are beautiful, provide nectar for early season pollinators and add an additional layer to the landscape.



Standing deadwood is an essential resource for many insects and birds including the pileated woodpecker.

winter weather, along with providing camouflaging cover through the cooler months.

Most butterflies and moths overwinter under the leaf layer. Swallowtails and Luna moths overwinter as chrysalides disguised as or wrapped in leaves, while morning cloak butterflies hibernate under the leaf layer as adults.

Many beneficial insects including ladybugs, assassin bugs, firefly larvae and many native bees also overwinter in the leaf layer or soil burrows, making their homes with frogs, toads and salamanders.

CUT BACK ON THE CUTBACK

Leaving plants partially or fully up over the winter provides food and habitat for insects and other animals plus beautiful structure for your garden design. Resist the urge to cut back all spent plants at the end of their blooming season.

Perennials with persistent seeds feed overwintering birds, such as chickadees. Perennials and grasses with hollow stems—such as asters, coneflowers and goldenrods—allow many insects to overwinter inside them.

Partially cutting back such plants to one to two feet tall in the fall allows access to the hollow pith for beneficial insects including native bees, to overwinter as eggs, pupae or adults.

PATIENCE

Patience is one of the top lessons in gardening.

As spring awakes, we're all eager to get back into our gardens. Yet much of the overwintering wildlife has yet to wake up. Cutting back the remaining plants too early removes overwintering insects. Spreading fresh mulch in your garden can smother wildlife overwintering in the soil or under the leaf layer.

Like us, wildlife wants to wait until the weather becomes more favorable to start the new season. It's best to wait until daytime temperatures are consistently above 50 degrees before starting your spring cleanup and gardening.

Maximizing the diversity in your home garden creates more opportunities for wildlife. It also enhances functional diversity, providing a variety of sources for food, water and shelter throughout the year so the needs of wildlife are always met.

With a little thought and practice we may create gardens that are sanctuaries for all. ♦

PHOTOS BY CHRIS FEHLHABER AND LISA ROPER

Chanticleer has been called the most romantic, imaginative and exciting public garden in America. It's a garden of pleasure and learning, relaxing yet filled with ideas to take home. The staff welcomes visitors to observe the garden and ask questions when they see someone tending an the garden. Open through October 31st, Wed.—Sun., 10 to 5, reopening March 30, 2022. 786 Church Rd., Wayne. Learn more at ChanticleerGarden.org.

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Have each family member pick out their favorite pumpkin.



Pumpkin bowl at Glen Run Valley View Farm or try the DIY version at home

ALL IS HERE IN *COUNTY LINES* COUNTRY, AND nothing captures the season like picking out that perfect plump pumpkin! Continue the tradition of pumpkin picking with your little ones this year and add something new with pumpkin games and an unexpected recipe to enjoy.

Head to your local farm or farm market, pick your pumpkin and get ready for endless possibilities.

PICK IT OUT

Pay a visit to an area farm to scout out that perfect pumpkin. And while you're there, grab a cup of cider, run through a corn maze, or take a leisurely hayride.

Here are a few of our favorites to visit for fall fun.

Celebrate everything pumpkins have to offer at [Glen Run Valley View](#) in Arglen. Kids can head for the playground or play pumpkin-themed games like pumpkin putt-putt, Jack Slide and Ring-a-Pumpkin. Come back in November for the annual Pumpkin Olympics, Nov. 2. 280 Lenover Rd., Atglen. 610-593-5656; [GlenRunValleyViewFarm](#).

You might have to go to the Milky Way to find your perfect pumpkin—[Milky Way Farm](#) in Chester Springs, that is! Jump on a hayride to the pumpkin patch, or take the road less traveled on the walking path. Visit nearby Chester Springs Creamery for ice cream made with farm-fresh milk and try fall flavors like Apple Cinnamon and Maple Walnut. 521 E. Uwchlan Ave., Chester Springs. 610-827-1484; [MilkyWayFarm.com](#)

[Sugartown Strawberries](#) in Malvern is as sweet a spot as can be. Snap the perfect Instagram as you pumpkin-pick on 200+ acres of gorgeous farmland. Stock up at the Country Store with honey harvested from Sugartown hives, local smoked meats and cheeses, and, of course, Sugartown strawberry preserves. 640 Sugartown Rd., Malvern. 610-647-0711. [SugartownStrawberries.com](#).

With over 100 tons of harvest fun on display, Pumpkinland is open until November to pick and play at [Linvilla Orchards](#). Climb on a hayride, take a train ride, or test your navigation skills in the straw bale and cornfield mazes. Just make sure you pick out your pumpkin in-between all the fun. 137 W. Knowlton Rd., Media. 610-876-7116; [Linvilla.com](#).

Come to pick, stay to eat and drink at [Highland Orchards](#) in West Chester. Fall festival weekends feature pumpkin picking, food trucks, a face painter and more. Don't stop at picking pumpkins. Grab some homemade apple cider and apple cider donuts at the bakery. 1000 Marshallton-Thorndale Rd., West Chester. 610-269-3494; [HighlandOrchards.com](#).

Family-owned since the days of William Penn, [Yeager's Farm](#) in Phoenixville has a long history of autumn traditions. Stroll through the decorated greenhouse and pick up colorful mums to take home. Then sip cider as you search the pumpkin patches for your jack-o-lantern candidate. 1015 Pike Springs Rd., Phoenixville. 610-935-8244; [YeagersFarm.com](#).

PLAY AROUND

After you've found your pumpkin, keep the fun going with pumpkin games that are sure to keep the whole family entertained.

- [Pumpkin Carving Contest](#). Kids and adults can participate together, working as a team to create the best carved pumpkin within a time limit. Use categories like funniest, spookiest and most creative, with prizes for each winner. Got young kids? Have a pumpkin painting contest instead—no knives!

- [Musical Pumpkin Pass](#). Think of it as a seasonal hot potato. Have the players sit on the floor in a circle and pass the pumpkin as the music plays. Whenever the music stops, whoever is holding the pumpkin is out until the last player is left. The winner gets a candy prize.

- [Pumpkin Bowling](#). Paint 6 or 10 empty plastic bottles or paper towel rolls with orange paint. Line them up like bowling pins and have kids roll a small pumpkin like a bowling ball to knock them down. To make the pumpkin roll more easily, you may have to remove the stem.

EAT UP

Skip the traditional pumpkin bread and pureed pumpkin soup this year and try something new. This pumpkin sage gnocchi is filled with the perfect combination of fall flavors. *Recipe adapted from Delish.com.*

Pumpkin Sage Gnocchi

2 (17.5-oz.) packages of gnocchi
3 Tb. extra-virgin olive oil
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 Tb. tomato paste
1½ C. pumpkin puree
1½ Tb. fresh sage, chopped
2 Tb. heavy cream
Kosher salt and ground pepper to taste
Freshly grated Parmesan, for serving
Finely chopped chives, for serving

In a large pot of boiling, salted water, cook gnocchi per package instructions until al dente. Drain.

In a large skillet over medium heat, heat oil. Add garlic and cook, stirring for about 1 minute. Add tomato paste and cook, stirring 1 minute more.

Whisk in chicken broth, pumpkin puree and sage, and bring to a boil. Season with salt and pepper. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer until slightly thickened, for about 7 minutes.

Stir the gnocchi and heavy cream into the skillet and cook, tossing until coated, for about 2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

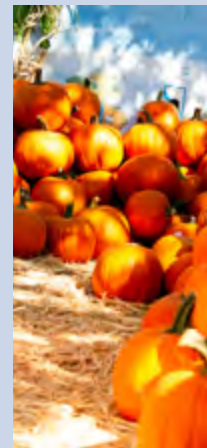
Remove from heat and garnish with Parmesan, black pepper and chives. Serves 8. ♦



Glen Run Valley View Farm



Taste the fall flavors in the pumpkin sage gnocchi





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Apple-solutely TOP PICKS

SWEET, TART, JUICY, CRUNCHY ... WE'VE FOUND THEM ALL!

Lauren Durante and Gabriella Ruggirello

GREEN, YELLOW, RED—AND THAT'S JUST THE leaves! So much to learn about apples. Like, if an apple a day keeps the doctor away ... what happens if you have a bushel?

Apple picking can be another fun way for the whole family to enjoy these healthy treats. Head out and enjoy the crisp autumn air as you pick juicy Honeycrisp apples, or bring Grandma along in search of the perfect Granny Smith.

Here are some of our favorite orchards for a perfect day of PYO apple picking.*

Barnard Orchard Greenhouse. This fourth-generation orchard considers its community and customers its most prized resources. Pluck plump apples in their orchard for your homemade pies, and if you're lucky there may be time to pick other seasonal fruits and vegetables. 1079 Wawaset Rd., Kennett Square. [Facebook.com/Barnard-Orchards](https://www.facebook.com/Barnard-Orchards).

Frecon Farms. Head to this orchard to pick pears, pumpkins and apples to prepare tasty fall dishes. When you're done, reward yourself by heading to the cider and espresso bar and listen to live music. Growing fruit since 1944. Orchard at Poplar Rd. & Edgehill Rd., Farm Market & Bakery at 501 S. Reading Ave., Boyertown. [FreconFarms.com](https://www.freconfarms.com).

Glen Willow Orchard. With 15 different varieties of apples to pick from, your family can showcase cooking and baking skills like the pros! After autumn passes and you've filled your bellies with apple treats, come back to find your fresh Christmas tree here. 1657 Glen Willow Rd., Avondale. [GlenWillowOrchards.com](https://www.glenwilloworchards.com).

Indian Orchards. Pick your peck of apples from the orchard, and then take a break to enjoy the view while sipping some steaming hot cider. Extend the fun and stay for a weekend at the Inn at Indian Orchards, the farmhouse B&B on the grounds. 29 Copes Ln., Media. [IndianOrchardsFarm.com](https://www.IndianOrchardsFarm.com).

Mariner Farms. Start your picking at Mariner Farms with a tractor ride out to the orchard. If your recipe calls for other fruits and veggies, keep searching for a bushel and a peck of other sustainably raised seasonal produce in the field. 1594 Broad Run Rd., Downingtown. [MarinerFarmsLLC.com](https://www.marinerfarmsllc.com).

North Star Orchard. Variety is the spice of life, so let the 200+ types of apples (including heritage varieties) add something extra to yours. Get an "Apple Passport" to make tasting notes on your flavor adventures throughout the apple season. Plus on-site cooking classes and an art gallery. 3232 Limestone Rd., Cochranville. [NorthstarOrchard.com](https://www.northstarorchard.com).

Shady Brook Farm. Enjoy the apples, flowers and fruit Shady Brook has to offer. After your personal harvest in the orchard, refuel at the deli or rest your legs at the Stone's Throw Pub. Plenty of activities for the kiddos—corn maze, bonfires and fallfest. 931 Stony Hill Rd., Yardley. [ShopShadyBrookFarm.com](https://www.shopshadybrookfarm.com).

Weaver's Orchard. Open year round, Weaver's Farm Market offers fresh-grown produce and fruit, local dairy products and meats, plus a bakery. This orchard is a child's dream, filled with farm-themed rides and face painting to keep the little ones happy. Cap the day with a visit to the café. 40 Fruit Ln., Morgantown. [WeaversOrchard.com](https://www.weaversorchard.com). ♦

*Check websites for peak varieties, check-in locations and COVID protocols.



Across County Lines

TAKE A DRIVE AND ‘FALL’ IN LOVE WITH THE CHARMING TOWNS AND STUNNING LANDSCAPES ACROSS OUR COUNTY.

Madison Meinel

FALL IS TAKING CENTER STAGE, AND THERE’S no better place to be than right here in our area. Embrace the season of changing leaves and golden light brushing the rolling hills with a drive through the many charming towns we call home. Gather up the family and make a trip to your neighboring town for dining, shopping, shows and more. Just remember to take the back roads and appreciate the autumn splendor!

As health guidelines continue to evolve, check websites before attending events or visiting local restaurants and shops.

WEST CHESTER

First stop is the Great American Main Street Award-winner and top shopping and dining destination—West Chester. Stroll the downtown district and admire Greek Revival architecture accented by charming shops and tempting restaurants lining the streets.

The restaurant scene continues to grow with newcomers, including [Greystone Oyster Bar](#) on North Church Street, plus [Sedona Taphouse](#) and [Stove & Tap](#), both on West Gay Street. Other popular spots include [Mae’s West Chester](#) with farm-to-

table meals, [Side Bar’s](#) American fare and craft cocktails, and [Iron Hill Brewery’s](#) classic burgers and brews.

After dinner, it’s time for a show. [Uptown! Knauer Performing Arts Center](#) is raising its curtain this season with concerts, comedy shows and special performances. Visit the website for tickets to current performances: [Jingo—The Santana Tribute](#) or [Eaglemania—the World’s Greatest Eagles Tribute Band](#).

Remember to stop and shop on your visit. Find the latest fashion at [Jane Chalfant](#), something sparkly at [Sunset Hill Jewelers](#) and

beautiful flowers for your home at [Matlack Florist](#) (a bit outside town). To avoid supply chain surprises later this year, you can get a head start on your Christmas shopping now.

For those looking forward to Christmas, the Borough will be bright for the holidays. Make plans to join the [Chester County Hospital Lights Up Holiday Weekends](#). This month-long celebration will include themed weekends, like an [Old-Fashioned Holiday](#), complete with a tree-lighting ceremony, and [’Twas the Weekend Before Christmas](#), for last-minute shopping, gingerbread

1

Dine out at Stove & Tap’s newest location

2

Catch a show at Uptown! Knauer Performing Arts Center



cookie creations and holiday music. The traditional Christmas Parade is postponed, but there are still plenty of great reasons to visit West Chester!

DOWNINGTOWN & EXTON

Located just five miles apart, Downingtown and Exton make the perfect pair of towns for a day trip.

Start in Downingtown and explore an area offering more than just top-rated public schools. Spend Saturday morning browsing the Downingtown Farmer's Market for locally grown seasonal fruits and veggies. Then embrace your creative side at the new

DIY studio, Board and Brush, and make home décor items like wood signs, backyard games and personalized glassware.

Next get your Oktoberfest fix at local breweries and taphouses including Downingtown's own Victory Brewing Company, celebrating their 25th anniversary. Enjoy brews like the classic Sour Monkey with fruit notes from imported Belgium yeast. Find even more to drink at East Branch Brewing Company and Station Taproom with their adjoining Bottle Room.

When in Exton, head to Iron Hill's first full-scale production brewery and taphouse.

Sample casual fare like nachos and wings while sipping craft brews from their extensive beer selection.

Looking for a full dinner? Try Downingtown newcomer La Sponda Italian Restaurant & Wine Bar overlooking Brandywine Creek. With early rave reviews, this is a must-stop for entrees like grilled whole branzino in a lemon white wine sauce or butternut squash agnolotti with a Parmesan cream.

Exton has its fair share of favorites including Ron's Original Bar & Grill for even more Italian specialties, plus Appetites on Main for handheld entrees like their

Italian Market Sandwich or their Mac & Cheese burger, also available on their pet-friendly patio.

THE MAIN LINE

Another driving option, head to the Lancaster Avenue corridor (a.k.a. Route 30) along the Main Line and marvel at the neighborhoods of gorgeous homes and "lost mansions," plus non-stop shops and restaurants to help fill your day (and stomach).

The dining scene is exploding with the new star, Lola's Garden in Suburban Square, full of Instagramable décor, food and handcrafted cocktails. Moving in next

door, popular Taiwanese restaurant DanDan is adding a new location to the Main Line scene (also in Devon).

And there's more! While Wayne boasts top-tier dining like Rosalie's Italian soul food, The Great American Pub is introducing a new rooftop bar and The Blue Elephant's Asian cuisine is coming soon to its second area location (also in Pottstown).

Visit the long-awaited Di Bruno Bros. Wayne location that opened in March and for gourmet goodies. Gather up specialty cheeses and meats, then flip to our Brandywine Table column in this issue for Di Bruno antipasto recipes.

Ready for a drink? Visit Locust Lane Brewery to wet your whistle or sample local spirits at Pennsylvania Distilling Company, both in Malvern.

Then it's time to explore. For history buffs, the Paoli Battlefield is a must-see. Take a self-guided tour, pack a picnic or simply walk through the grounds and admire the pristine Revolutionary War battlefield. For an extra dimension of fun, plan your trip around the Paoli Battlefield Paranormal Tour on October 2nd and 23rd.

And we're excited to see People's Light launch their 2021–2022 theater season. Check their website for updates.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Stop by Appetites on Main for burgers and sandwiches	Create home decor pieces at Board & Brush	Enjoy dinner on La Sponda's patio	Drink up at Iron Hill's Taphouse in Exton	Sample specialty cheese at Di Bruno Bros.	Dine out with friends at Lola's Garden	Order a drink at Rosalie's bar	The Blue Elephant is coming soon	Grab a bite to eat at the newly renovated Towne House	Get your fall garden ready at Mostardi Nursery	Pick up Halloween goodies at Christopher Chocolates	Dig into craft burgers at Brick and Brew



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DELAWARE COUNTY

Delaware County had its moment in the pop culture spotlight with HBO's series "Mare of Easttown," but for this trip we're leaving those neighborhoods behind and heading to Newtown Square.

There you can celebrate fall by picking up autumn treats and Halloween sweets for the trick-or-treaters at Christopher Chocolates and prep your fall garden with mums from Mostardi Nursery.

Looking for a scare? Head to Colonial Pennsylvania Plantation, one of the most haunted properties in the area, for their Lantern

Ghost Tours on October 16th and 23rd. Dare to take on their walking tour and experience a true Halloween thrill.

In Media, make plans for dinner and a show. Visit The Media Theatre and catch Disney's Frozen Jr., October 1–24, Joe Conklin and The City Rhythm Orchestra on November 6th, and Mamma Mia! starting November 17th.

For dinner options, try the *Philly Mag* Best-Of pick, Media's Towne House. Newly restored and updated, it has unique dining rooms ranging from open-air courtyard and traditional Irish pub

to modern farm-to-table and sophisticated cocktail lounge. Or enjoy a full Italian dinner at Spasso's Italian Grill or craft burgers and a, well, beer at Brick and Brew.

SOUTHERN CHESTER COUNTY

Travel to Southern Chester County for Longwood Gardens Autumn's Colors, October 2nd to November 14th—a top pick on everyone's fall to-do list. Marvel at their painted vistas, stroll through the picturesque Meadow Garden and end with family fun at the whimsical Garden Railway and Pumpkin Playground.

While in Kennett Square, stop in town and check out the dining options lining State Street. Plan a meal at favorites like La Verona for classic Italian entrees, Verbena for upscale American cuisine and Talula's Table for a sought-after Farm Table dinner (need reservations way ahead for this one).

Support the new dining spots, like The Naked Olive, a family-owned BYOB serving a Mediterranean infused menu. For a meal in a historic setting, stop by Letty's Tavern (previously the Kennett Square Inn) with over 186 years of hospitality. And we're so happy that Sovana Bistro is back and ready to welcome the community into their new space.

Next head to Chadds Ford to tour the Brandywine River Museum, where you'll find exhibits highlighting famed Chester County artist Andrew Wyeth along with family members N.C. Wyeth, Jamie Wyeth and Ann Wyeth McCoy.

Cap your tour by sipping wine at one of the local wineries. Check out Penns Woods Winery in Chadds Ford and sample their award-winning 2017 Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve or their 2020 Sauvignon Blanc (both winners of the 2021 PA Sommelier Judgement). Try them out, pick your favorite, then buy a bottle to take home.

WILMINGTON

Cross the state line on scenic Route 52 for a daytrip into northern Delaware, with plenty to do, see and eat, all close by.

For seasonal family fun, visit the Wilmington Western Railroad. Surround yourself with the splendor of fall colors during the Autumn Leaf Special ride or take a trip alongside witches, ghosts and goblins (all friendly, of course) during the Halloween Express, both in October.

Afterwards hit The Grand Wilmington for live performances from comedian Lewis Black on October 9th, author

David Sedaris on October 15th and The Temptations on October 27th.

A trip to Delaware isn't complete without checking out some of the many museums in the area. Stop by the Delaware Art Museum, Winterthur Museum and Hagley Museum for art, antiques, and beautiful gardens. Make sure to plan a visit to the Hagley Craft Fair, October 16 & 17, featuring fine arts, crafts and gourmet goodies.

There are plenty of dining options to explore, too. Head to historic Columbus Inn for their brunch favorites—Philly omelet and eggs Chesapeake. Or dine at legendary Buckley's Tavern for all things comfort like mac 'n' cheese, burgers, crab cakes and meatloaf.

Round out your trip with an upscale dining experience. Make reservations at Le Cavalier at the Green Room, a neo-French brasserie in the Hotel Dupont serving French food with North African influences. Savor dishes like pork porterhouse or gnocchi Parisienne with caviar and jumbo lump crab.

Jot down your top spots, jump into the car and get ready to explore all the Brandywine Valley has to offer this season! ♦

1

Try mushroom soup at Letty's Tavern

2

Enjoy vineyard views at Penns Woods Winery

3

Sovana Bistro is back and open for business

4

Taste fresh farm-to-table dinners at Talula's Table

5

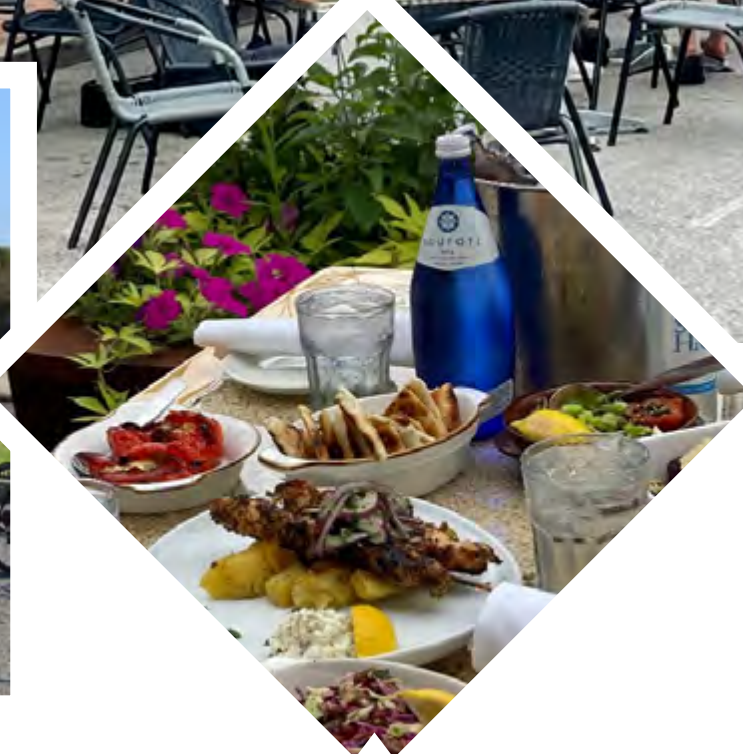
Take a ride on the Wilmington Western Railroad

6

Dine at historic Columbus Inn for brunch, lunch or dinner

7

Go upscale with dinner at Le Cavalier at the Green Room



PoppingUp *in Phoenixville*

STILL PLENTY TO SEE AND DO

Emily Hart

THE SUN IS SHINING AND THE coffee is rich. Outdoor tables, including ours at Steel City, line Bridge Street—on the blocks closed to traffic until winter sets in. People stroll, shop and stop to chat while their pups drink from bowls of water at stores.

A stranger walks by our table, says hello and tells us a silly joke that would bring a smile to a seven- or 70-year-old. He wishes us good day and continues up the sidewalk where flowers spill over raised beds and David Gerbstadt's street artwork spreads messages of kindness. There's merchandise on stands, music and the feel of community in Phoenixville's air. That spirit keeps the phoenix hovering above the pandemic and other workaday worries.

SENSE OF COMMUNITY

This year, the town's hub and coffeehouse, Steel City, celebrates five years under the ownership of Ed Simpson and Laura Verno-

la-Simpson, and 25 years total. "If Steel City weren't in Phoenixville, it probably wouldn't still exist," says Laura. "But the borough stepped in to close the streets. The Phoenixville Chamber of Commerce supported us as we filled out grant applications. Businesses stuck together. One day Bill Rutter, owner of Your Mom's Place—known for its great breakfasts—brought us flowers. The community came out to help us stay open—providing donations and buying a little extra online. We faced reality together."

Consequently, Steel City continues to serve up daily beverages, pastries and more. It hosts weekly Open Mic nights, ukulele jam sessions and Sean Cephas's Saturday morning record swaps that keep friends old and new connected.

In Phoenixville, as in every other town worldwide, the recent years have been rough. "But while lives, jobs and ways of living were lost, people found new hobbies and creative outlets," Laura continues.

1. Schuylkill River Trail
2. Avlós
3. Steel City
4. Paloma's
5. Lock 29 Mont Clare

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6. Reads & Company

7. Front Porch Flowers

8. Hickory Grove Gardens

“When we re-opened, they came back in-person to Steel City and other shops.”

In fact, contrary to dreaded scenes of dark storefronts and empty sidewalks, new businesses have popped up in Phoenixville since January 2020. Four are restaurants: Avlos, Dim Sum Court, Paloma's and Lock 29.

The borough is still busy on weekends—from bicyclists on the Schuylkill River Trail pausing at one of the town's eateries or Twisted Cog bike shop to neighbors from nearby lifestyle and luxury apartments as well as from other corners of Chester County.

MORE THAN A MEAL

Early on a Saturday evening, I return to Phoenixville with friends and end up with a memorable dinner that doubles as a refreshing vacation. Thanks to two Greek sisters, Katerina and Nikoleta Skartsilas who opened Avlós in January 2020, we experience friendly hospitality, a rejuvenating atmosphere and a Greek meal that's unparalleled.

Under a dusky sky, sidewalk tables topped with tiny white stones and covered by white umbrellas evoke images of warm sands at a Greek island.

We're fully transported when our feast arrives, starting with morsels of flavorful *Loukaniko* sausage and *Dakos*—thick chunks of

satisfying barley rusk (bread) with feta and capers. We dig into each others' *Agganarés Politikes*—a vegan entrée of artichokes, peas and carrots—and *Kota Souvlaki*—skewered chicken with *kopanisti* cheese that has a little kick, alongside heavenly potatoes. We finish with *Karidopita Poutiga*—delectable cake of spices, honey, walnuts and sweet creamy frosting fit for a Greek god or goddess.

Just steps away, enter Dim Sum Court to find a simple interior with dark wood paneling and a graceful orchid on the counter. A pot of green ivy rests on a wrought iron shelf above wooden tables and chairs where patrons enjoy, well, dim sum—steamed buns and dumplings—in addition to soups, noodles and bubble tea. Across from the Colonial Theatre, the eatery that opened this summer is great for a meal before a night's entertainment.

On the east end of Bridge Street, Executive Chef Chris Siropaides, a native of neighboring Montgomery County and graduate of Culinary Institute of America, dishes up European cocktails and cuisine at the new Paloma's restaurant and market.

The menu lists Crab and Spinach Crepe Florentine, Taco Fresco and an item called “Love Your Food?” with the following description: “Buy the kitchen a Round of Beer (Gin and Tonic for Chef Chris.)”

Open since July, Lock 29 Mont Clare is so far east on Bridge Street it's actually in the neighboring town of Mont Clare. With indoor or outdoor seating along the canal, it's great for a brew and a bite while watching the water or bicycles and joggers along the path.

Whether you opt for a vegetarian snack, panini, wings—including truffle garlic Parmesan or Cajun dry rub—or a signature Lock 29 Burger stacked with pepper relish, crispy prosciutto and more, you're in for some good food to accompany craft cocktails and rotating beer selections from Rebel Hill and other brewers.

The perfect pairing with your food and drink is a book to read at an outdoor table or to take home. Reads & Company makes it easy to purchase a mystery or novel for an evening of cozy reading or a mental getaway when picking up take-out meals and curbside cocktails. Their virtual events with big name authors from around the world expand our horizons and spark new ideas.

DAZZLING DAHLIAS, MARVELOUS MUMS

Local flower farms are brightening fall days with dahlias and mums that love cooler temperatures. The blooms shaped like starbursts, fireworks, pompoms or spi-



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Near the heart of town, discover the Front Porch Flower Farm. Four years ago Rob and Jen Jones turned a third of an acre into a flourishing, pesticide-free, flower micro-farm. In season, the Joneses cut stems from their backyard where a pear tree holds a hammock and a family of entertaining ducks eats slugs that would otherwise damage or devour seedlings. In October, customers—also their neighbors—often arrive on foot or by bike to pick up weekly bunches of picture-perfect dahlias from their front porch.

To score spectacular heirloom chrysanthemums from Hickory Grove Gardens' hoop house, head to the Phoenixville Farm Market or the seasonal stand in front of Seven Stars Farm. Julia Bull grows sprays of brilliant orange Honeyglows, dusky purple to lavender Moira mums with curled petals, Apricot Courtiers—lush mums the color of golden peaches—and more.

Julia also offers dried florals. Just some of the flowers in her everlasting bouquets and wreaths are fuzzy celosia, colorful straw-flowers, ruffly marigolds, colorful statice and craspedia—whimsical little yellow balls that could have been invented by Dr. Seuss. Blooms start out in the fields, then end up drying anywhere there's space: hanging upside down from strings in the barn or wooden clothes racks in her office.

For flower fans looking for a lovely drive, the trip to the year-round market at Seven Stars Farm is an added bonus. Wend your way past backroad signs for Hare's Hill and Deer Run roads. Pass the charming Kimberton Inn. Go through the white covered bridge to find a vast sky, fields with grazing cows and, between a barn and silos, the small, friendly market where the farm's yogurt, cheeses and meat are ready for your table at home.

A CLUB WITH A KICK

Looking for outdoor action and excitement? Phoenixville has a semi-pro women's rugby "team"—the White Horse Rugby Club. Who knew?



9



10

9. White Horse Rugby Club

10. David Gerbstadt's street artwork

Founded by Angela Johnson in 2014, the club is one of the top competitors locally at matches and tournaments on fall weekends. Over the past seven years, nearby businesses have supported team members—financial donations and space for after-match gatherings at St. Mike's Social Club, swag and beverages from Levante Brewing Company, rugby-viewing parties at Molly Macguire's Irish Restaurant and Pub, workout space at Iron Cross Athletics and transportation to attend the 2019 playoffs from Phoenix Karate. Turning the tables, rugby players volunteer at community events; they also give the borough something else to cheer about!

White Horse welcomes new fans and potential players. They invite spectators to free events: a friendly match on Saturday, October 23, at West Chester University and to a spirited home conference match against Doylestown on Saturday, October 30, at Friendship Field in Phoenixville.

SIGNS FOR THE TIMES

If you're lucky, on a walk around Phoenixville you'll spy irresistible, soul-cap-

turing messages in art on found objects—a window pane, discarded pieces of wood or sheets of brown cardboard. Loved from Phoenixville and his hometown, Berwyn, to Manhattan, San Francisco, Mexico and Europe, David Gerbstadt's street artwork of marvelous monsters encourages: "Never Give Up" and "Be Kind."

Sometimes his paintings or sculptures of quirky, lovable creatures pop up at a storefront or intersection, then disappear in minutes ... by design. Since 1994 Gerbstadt has been making art accessible to people. He leaves work on a street for the purpose of delighting discoverers and being taken home. The least amount of time for a sign to be scooped up was less than a minute. Placing artwork one day at the bridge over the train tracks, Gerbstadt turned to grab his camera and the sign was gone. A fan with gusto had seen him get out of his car and stopped to acquire it.

There's more to find. Pop on over—Phoenixville is waiting for you. ♦

Learn more at PhoenixvilleFirst.org and Phoenixville.org.

Phoenixville Events

First Fridays in Phoenixville are Back

October 1, November 5

First Fridays will operate within the weekly Bridge Street open-air closure to create the feel of a night market there. 5:30 to 8:30. Phoenixville.org.

The Colonial Theatre

October 1–November 13

Oct. 1, Five For Fighting With String Quartet; **Oct. 14**, An Evening with Gaelic Storm; **Oct. 21**, An Evening with Judy Collins; **Oct. 23**, The Sixties Show; **Nov. 10**, Psychedelic Furs—Made Of Rain Tour with Royston Langdon; **Nov. 13**, Kenny Wayne Shepherd Band. 227 Bridge St. TheColonialTheatre.com.

Shoes 'n' Brews Marathon

October 3

This race on the Schuylkill River Trail takes you from Conshohocken to an afterparty at the Main Street/Foundry Trailhead on Bridge St. Race begins at: 739 E. Elm St., Conshohocken. 8 am. \$15–\$75. Phoenixville.org.

Phoenixville Jaycees Movie in the Park

October 9

Movie to be shown, TBD. Reeves Park, 2nd Ave. & Main St. 7:30 pm. Phoenixville.org.

24th Annual FirstGlance Film Festival

October 15–17

Philadelphia's Independent Film Festival returns to the Colonial Theatre with red carpet interviews, live awards ceremony, parties at official festival bars and restaurants, networking with filmmakers and film lovers. 227 Bridge St. \$15–\$20. FirstGlanceFilms.com.

A Whole Lot of Lulu

October 23

Outdoor bi-annual flea market with local vendors selling handmade crafts, vintage items and more. Live music and kids' activities. 10 Main St. PhoenixvilleFirst.org/AWholeLotOfLulu.



35th Annual Phoenixville Run

October 23

This is an in-person and virtual event. A 5K and 10K with free post-race refreshments for runners. Benefits Citizen Advocacy of Chester County. Reeves Park, 2nd Ave. & Main St. 8:30 am. \$35. Phoenixville.org.

Theatre Organ Society of DE Valley Presents "The Phantom of the Opera" with Live Theatre Organ Accompaniment

October 24

The Colonial Theatre, 227 Bridge St. 2 pm. \$7–\$12. 610-917-1228; TOSDV.org.

Phoenixville Harvest Festival

October 28–31

Fun all weekend: night market on Thursday, then a craft carnival, movie in Reeves Park, haunted tours, beer garden, pet parade and pet day, and more. Held throughout town. Info at PhoenixvilleHarvestFestival.com.

Fall Festival

October 30

A safe and family-friendly event with Trunk or Treat, costume contest,

health fair and live music in Reeves Park, 2nd Ave. & Main St. Noon to 4. Phoenixville.org.

4th Annual Phoenixville Bed Races

November 6

Teams build a bed on wheels and race down 3rd Ave. to win the title of "Fastest Bed," raising funds and awareness for organizations that provide a bed for the homeless: Ann's Heart, Good Samaritan Services and Phoenixville Women's Outreach. Start at Reeves Park, 2nd Ave. & Main St. 8:30 to 3. Phoenixville.org.



Phoenixville Chamber of Commerce Charity Gala, "A Night in the Big Easy"

November 20

Dinner, dancing and silent auction with great items. Rivercrest Golf Club & Preserve, 100 Golf Club Dr. 5:30. \$125. Visit website to register. PhoenixvilleChamber.org.

Burn Off the Bird 5K

November 27

Held annually on the Saturday after Thanksgiving, the Jaycees 5K Race & 1-mile Fun Run begin and end at Franklin Commons, 400 Franklin Ave. benefits the Phoenixville Jaycees Foundation to fund community events. 9 to 10:30 am. Phoenixville.org.

Annual Candlelight Holiday Tour

December 4

Decorated homes and churches, crafts, music, refreshments. Benefits Ann's Heart Blue, The Clinic, Phoenixville Area Senior Center, Firebird Children's Theatre and Phoenixville Children's Library. \$25. 4 to 8. 610-933-9181; PhxHolidayTour.weebly.com.

Luminaria Shopping Night

December 8

A night of shopping illuminated by the soft glow of holiday luminaria. PhoenixvilleFirst.org.



18th Firebird Festival

December 11

Burning of the Firebird at Veteran's Park, 192 Mowere Rd. 5 to 10 pm. \$30–\$140. FirebirdFestival.com.

"A Taste of Phoenixville"

January 2022

A premier food, wine, beer event. Live music. Benefits the Good Samaritan Shelter. Franklin Commons, 400 Franklin Ave. 6 to 10. 610-933-9305; TasteOfPhoenixville.com.



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Open House

Sunday, October 24th

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Scholarship/ Entrance Exam

Saturday, November 13th

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or

Sunday, November 14th

12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

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Parent Engagement at Independent Schools

WHAT TO EXPECT

Edwin Malet

PARENT-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION HAS TAKEN on new importance during the pandemic. Long touted as a major reason to send your children to an independent school, the quality of how schools communicate, what they communicate, and how effectively they listen to parents—particularly over the last 18 months—have all become even more pressing parental concerns.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIONS AT THE CROSSROADS

School administrators and staff have stood squarely in the crossroads of the communication network. For the most part, independent schools opened on schedule this past school year, and stayed open. This did require installing special safety protocols relating to vaccinations, masks, hand-washing, social distancing, class size, remote learning, sports and other extracurricular activities' adjustments.

As of early summer 2021, schools had hoped this September would be back to normal. As schools opened, however, it sometimes seemed like a rerun of 2020, though perhaps with the benefit of some lessons learned.

Parents, for their part, have also had to make judgments: basically, whether to trust their schools. In general, they did. Their kids finished the 2020–21 school year without a major outbreak of the virus. For 2021–22, it seems the trust will continue.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

If there is one factor on which that trust has been founded, schools credit the parent communities they've built and sustained. For example, Michele Godin, Communication Director at *Episcopal Academy*, spoke of the school's continued focus on keeping its parents "just as connected with the school as their children are."



‘The more engaged the parent is, the more successful the child is going to be.’

– Brad Catts



Education Director Brad Catts, at **Augustine Hills** in Wilmington, tied parent engagement with educational success: “The more engaged the parent is, the more successful the child is going to be.”

At **Wilmington Friends School**, Margaretta Kroeger, Constituent Resource Manager, reports a host of activities that the school supports to build its community: parent education lectures, discussions on race, outdoor “lawn chats,” movie nights, yoga sessions, cooking nights plus lunches and snacks for teachers and administrative staff.

Tom McManus, Head of School at the **Montgomery School**, described the parents’ support for the school’s teachers as “absolutely incredible.” Its parent group has organized coffees with leadership, a wine-tasting, a “trick-or-trunk” Halloween event and a cornhole tournament. He also points to the school’s ample use of “classroom parents” and volunteers to integrate parents into its community.

The parents of **Upland Country Day School** have also been “trusting” and “supportive,” according to Head of School Dan Hickey. The parents chose to send their kids to Upland because they value education generally and the school’s flexibility. The school, he says, is “tuned in to the community.”

At **Kimberton Waldorf School**, Brad Kershner, Head of School, emphasized that the relation of school to parents as “important, really important.” Together, they address the “big picture”: in particular, conflict, change and challenge.

PARENT ASSOCIATIONS

All of the schools we talked with have long had active parent associations.

For example, a parent at **Sacred Heart Academy**, Chris Corcoran, says “some of the highest levels of parent engagement come during our volunteer opportunities.” He says, “Our parents love working side by side with their daughters serving the community and making memories. Those experiences are essential in raising confident young women who know they are supported by adults in their life.”

At **Wilmington Friends**, there’s a Home & School Association, maintaining an online resource board and a Facebook page to inform parents about events and to build a sense of community.

Jubin Kwon, Director of Marketing and Communications at **Agnes Irwin School**, mentions a Parents Council, with its own monthly newsletter. **Archmere Academy**, according to Marketing and Communications Director Gina Dzielak, has its Mothers Guild and Father’s Club. And **Montgomery School** has a Community Association, meeting monthly.

At each school, these organizations enjoy broad support for their work and offer a wide menu of initiatives.

EMAIL AND NEWSLETTERS

It turns out that technology has, more or less, saved parent engagement in schools. Gone are the days when a parent heard from the school only through a quarterly report card, a sudden expression of concern

from the principal, or some random comment by another parent. Computers and cell phones changed how we received information, and altered what we expected from important partners in our children’s education.

Schools now rely on email and newsletters to announce their plans, their schedules, their concerns. Most schools now plan a weekly newsletter, primarily aimed at parents but also including students. Often, these newsletters are used to announce upcoming events, review sports schedules, orchestra and band performances, contests in art, science, math and other subjects.

If anything, parents now report that they’re inundated with information. Agnes Irwin School, for instance, actively looks to “simplify” its communications. At **Kimberton Waldorf School**, there’s a mandate to simplify. At **Episcopal Academy**, the staff constantly worry there’s “too much communication,” while noting parents “crave more” but focused on their own children.

SURVEYS AND FOCUS GROUPS

Independent schools have found some subjects require a broader and more comprehensive approach to their investigations. **Archmere Academy**, for example, used a survey, oral and written, to ask how the school could become “more inclusive and more equitable.” The survey was addressed to students, parents, faculty and staff and was followed with focus groups to improve the school’s response.

Michael Benner, Assistant Head of School at **Wilmington Friends**, says the school “routinely uses parent surveys when seeking specific feedback.”

Whitney Ebmeyer, a parent at **Episcopal Academy**, believes the school uses surveys and focus groups because it’s “always looking for ways to get even better, whether in the way they teach, structure curricula, support students, or engage the community. They’re really modeling lifelong learning for students by constantly learning and growing themselves.”

NEW TO SCHOOL

For many parents, their child had a first day at an independent school in September. The school, its staff, faculty and other parents



A survey, oral and written, can ask how a school could become ‘more inclusive and more equitable.’





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greeted the new student warmly. It is, after all, Day One. And your tuition check has bought you a welcoming introduction.

Page McConnell, **Tatnall School's** Director of Marketing and Communications, looks forward each year to meeting the new families. She tells them about the Home and School Association, which “really stepped up in supporting faculty and staff,” about the Teacher Appreciation lunches, the Winter Fundraiser, their open-house, counseling resources, and how the parents support the school's sports teams and other activities.

“Friendship Families” is a new program at the **Haverford School** that connects new families with existing families as they transition to the school. The program also helps families learn about volunteer opportunities and the school's culture.

The introductory program at **Church Farm School** is called SOAR—Student Orientation and Academic Readiness—and kicks off with a full day of orientation activities. Families take campus tours, attend Chapel, eat in the Dining Center, meet with cottage faculty and ask questions about life at CFS. Parents continue to receive at least weekly communications from the school and can attend monthly Parents' Association meetings via Zoom. Many of the school's major events are livestreamed for families, who often live at a distance from campus. In mid-October, CFS will host Parents' Weekend so that families can check in on their sons' progress.

Parents, in other words, are as engaged and as involved as they want to be at our local independent schools. Despite the challenges of COVID, schools have gone to extraordinary lengths to stay in touch with parents, taking advantage of electronic media, benefitting from their strong networks of parent communities, and building on long histories of established trust. Most importantly, parents will find comfort knowing their children are safe and secure. ♦



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Guide to PRIVATE SCHOOLS

PENNSYLVANIA

Bryn Mawr

Sacred Heart Academy Bryn Mawr
480 S. Bryn Mawr Ave., 610-527-3915; SHABrynMawr.org
Established in 1865, Sacred Heart Academy (SHA) is an international, independent, all-girls, K-12 Catholic school on the Main Line. SHA is a proud member of the International Network of Sacred Heart Schools. The school has been committed for over 150 years to educating girls through faith, intellect, service, community and personal growth. SHA is fully accredited with the Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools. Register online for visit days.
Open House: Sept. 29, 6 pm; Oct. 6, 9:30 am; Oct. 20, 6 pm
Parent Visit Days: Sept. 24, Oct. 1, Oct. 15, Nov. 5, Dec. 10



Chester Springs

Montgomery School
1141 Kimberton Rd.; 610-827-7222; MontgomerySchool.org
At Montgomery School, every day presents new opportunities for discovery, exploration and growth, where students and faculty have the freedom to push academic boundaries. Small class sizes within an expansive 60-acre campus create a rich and challenging academic environment that builds confident learners and leaders from the earliest ages. Montgomery School is a place of joy and community, inspiring a lifelong love of learning. Contact them for a private tour




Crum Lynne

The Pennsylvania Cyber Charter School
Phila. Area Regional Office, 1553 Chester Pk., Ste. 103
888-722-9237; PACyber.org
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Online Info Sessions: Visit PACyber.org/Session




Kennett Square

Upland Country Day School
420 W. Street Rd., 610-444-3035; UplandCDS.org
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Guide to PRIVATE SCHOOLS

King of Prussia

Agora Cyber Charter School

1018 W. 8th Ave. 844-462-4672; Agora.org



Agora Cyber Charter School, established in 2005, is an online public school for Pennsylvania students K-12. A rigorous curriculum is taught live by PA-certified teachers and focuses on providing all students the educational resources and skills needed to become successful lifelong learners. An extensive variety of extracurricular activities guarantees an enriching assortment of social opportunities providing students with a well-rounded educational experience. Public School Tuition Paid By PA Taxpayers

Open House: Visit Agora.org/Virtual-Open-House



Villa Maria Academy High School

370 Central Ave. 610-644-2551; VMAHS.org



Villa Maria Academy is a girls' Catholic college preparatory high school educating young women to be critical thinkers, creative problem solvers and collaborative citizens with strong communication skills. Rigorous academics, combined with innovative real-world experiences and extensive extracurricular opportunities, prepare young women with the skills and the confidence they need to meet the challenges of the future.

Open House: Oct. 3, 10 am & 11:30 am. Register online.

Entrance/Scholarship Exam: Oct. 17, Oct. 23



Media

Media-Providence Friends School

125 W. Third St. 610-565-1960; MPFS.org

A Quaker school for students age 3-Gr. 8 that awakens the passion and potential of all, within a welcoming, diverse community led by Quaker values. Data-based mitigation strategies, combined with the faculty's flexibility and care, allowed in-person learning to continue throughout the pandemic with zero days of learning missed. Their academic curriculum centers on a whole-child approach, inspiring students to explore, question and create.

Virtual Open House: Oct. 29, Dec. 10, Feb. 25, Apr. 22, May 20.

RSVP to a Virtual Open House at MPFS.org/rsvp.



Malvern

Malvern Preparatory School

418 S. Warren Ave.

484-595-1100; MalvernPrep.org



Malvern Preparatory School is an independent Augustinian school for young men in grades 6 through 12. Malvern Prep offers its students a nurturing, Catholic community in which they can grow and become the best possible version of themselves. The curriculum balances rigorous academics, extracurricular commitment, spiritual development and Christian service, providing an experience that places students at the center of learning.

Open House: Oct. 16, 9 am. Register: MalvernPrep.org/OpenHouse

Entrance Exams: Oct. 23, Oct. 31, Nov. 13, Dec. 5



Newtown Square

Episcopal Academy

1785 Bishop White Dr.

484-424-1400; EpiscopalAcademy.org

Episcopal Academy, a Pre-K–12, coeducational, independent day school, offers a classical yet innovative academic program, renowned for excellence in the humanities and sciences and focused on social responsibility and ethical leadership. Episcopal's commitment to individual attention and to building an engaging, supportive school experience builds self-confidence and fosters a love of learning in all students.

Lower School Open House: Oct. 16

Middle & Upper School Open House: Oct. 17

Register at EpiscopalAcademy.org/Events



Phoenixville

Kimberton Waldorf School

410 W. Seven Stars Rd.

610-933-3635; Kimberton.org

Kimberton Waldorf School, founded in 1941, is the second-oldest Waldorf School in North America. Located on 430 acres in Chester County, the school serves students from parent-child classes and early childhood through grade 12. KWS creates a curriculum that intentionally and carefully aligns creative developmental activities with emerging cognitive, emotional and physical stages of growth.

For tours and more information, contact: admissions@kimberton.org



Wynnewood

Friends' Central School

(Gr. 6–12), 1101 City Ave.; (Nursery–Gr. 5), 228 Old Gulph Rd. 610-649-7440; FriendsCentral.org

Guided by Quaker values since 1845, Friends' Central School is an independent, coeducational, college-preparatory day school for students in Nursery–Gr. 12. Located on 41 acres across two campuses, Friends' Central cultivates the intellectual, spiritual and ethical promise of students. They go further. Their graduates pursue their passions at top colleges and universities. Alumni/ae report that they are well prepared to excel academically, to lead and to problem solve.

Lower School Open House: Nursery–Gr. 5, Virtual: Oct. 4, 9:30 am;

Oct. 27, 5:30 pm

Fall Open House: Gr. 6–12, Oct. 6, Oct. 27, 9 am



Villanova

Academy of Notre Dame de Namur

560 Sproul Rd.; 610-971-0498; NDAPA.org

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Fall Open House: Sept. 26

Entrance Exams: Gr. 9: Oct. 16, 23, 24; Gr. 6: Oct. 24



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302-798-6632; ArchmereAcademy.com

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Open House: Oct. 24, program begins promptly at 1 pm

Gr. 7: Apr. 28, program begins promptly at 6 pm



WILMINGTON

Tatnall School

1501 Barley Mill Rd.,
302-998-2292; Tatnall.org

Students in Pre-K-12 experience a transformative education on a gorgeous 100-acre campus. The school prioritizes the balance between rigor and the freedom to explore, sparking in students the confidence to approach old challenges in new ways and cultivating a lifelong love of learning. Tatnall's caring, dedicated teachers are at the heart of what makes Tatnall extraordinary. The deep, authentic relationships built there provide the ideal environment to foster students' growth and achievement.

Call or visit their website to schedule your personal tour



Wilmington Friends School

101 School Rd. (Rts. 202 & 95)
302-576-2900; WilmingtonFriends.org

A great place to grow up. They offer an unsurpassed academic program with depth, asking students to question, collaborate, be creative and take risks, all within a caring community that balances focus on the individual with responsibility to the common good. Reggio Emilia inspired preschool, 1:1 laptop/iPad program for Preschool-Gr. 12, STEM Labs and programming, and International Baccalaureate program.

Open House: Check their website.



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PENNSYLVANIA

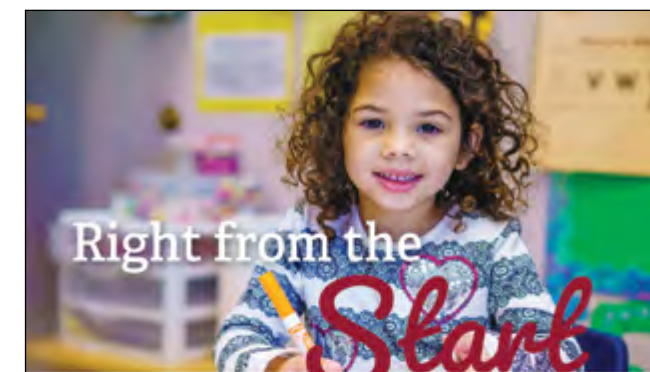
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2450 Hamilton Ave.
215-657-2200; CenterSchoolPA.org

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UPPER SCHOOL
VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSE
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Wed. Oct. 6 | 9:30 a.m.
Registration Required.

PARENT CAMPUS VISIT DAYS
ALL GRADES
9-11 a.m. | FRIDAYS
Sept. 24, Oct. 1 and 15,
Nov. 5, Dec. 10

9th Grade Scholarship Exam, Event Details
and Registration at SHAbrynmaur.org

www.SHAbrynmaur.org | Grades K-12

Conshohocken

AIM Academy

1200 River Rd.; 215-483-2461; AIMPA.org

AIM provides extraordinary educational opportunities through a rigorous college-preparatory curriculum to children in Gr. 1–12. AIM is the Philadelphia area's largest school for children with language-based learning differences such as dyslexia, dysgraphia and dyscalculia. Students experience a rich, research-based curriculum and a range of elective and extracurricular arts, music, club and athletic opportunities. Discover AIM for Innovative Teaching and Fearless Learning.

Open House: Sept. 24, Oct. 8, Nov. 5, Dec. 10, Jan. 21, Feb. 18,

Mar. 18, Apr. 22, May 20, 9 am

Oct. 20, Nov. 17, Jan. 5, Feb. 2, Mar. 2, Apr. 6, May 4, 6 pm



Paoli

Delaware Valley Friends School

19 E. Central Ave.

610-640-4150; DVFS.org

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Yes, The Local Real Estate Market Is Still Going Strong.

WHO KNEW 2021 COULD GET EVEN BETTER?

Cindy Walker

RESTAURANTS, THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR AND many services were slammed last year with lockdowns, social distancing and staying at home ruling the days for most of us. Yet many realtors reported being in overdrive with a booming local market.

Although things do slow down during August vacations and September school-prep, the fall real estate season generally shifts into a new gear later in the year. We wanted to check in to see if the record-setting level of activity was sustainable.

A BUSY SUMMER

After the constraints of 2020, buyers, sellers and their agents learned how to do business under new conditions—no big open houses, all masked visits, remote document signing. The real estate business found a way forward.

“By 2021, there was another year’s worth of pent-up demand,” says Amy McKenna, of Country Properties, Berkshire Hathaway. “Those buyers who waited to see what would happen in 2020 joined the search for a new home to meet their expanding lifestyle

and work needs. And with a refocus on home and hearth, the pool of buyers got even bigger, adding to the demand.” In short, more people wanted to move.

Add to that, continued low interest rates and ongoing interest in the Brandywine Valley as a place to live—with low taxes and high quality of life.

“To our surprise, 2021 has been an even stronger year for home sales in our area,” says Holly Gross, of the Holly Gross Group. “We were very fortunate to have such a good year in 2020, so it’s gratifying that 2021 is exceeding our expectations. We’re continuing to see interest from outside our immediate area—from New York state as well as New York City. This has made even higher-end properties attractive, including raw acreage.”

While most of Chester County is desirable, West Chester, Downingtown and Unionville have been particularly active. “One of our recent listings in West Chester had 15 showings on its first day on the market,” says Stephen Gross, of the Holly Gross Group. “There were multiple offers and the sales price set a record in the Borough of \$2 million!”



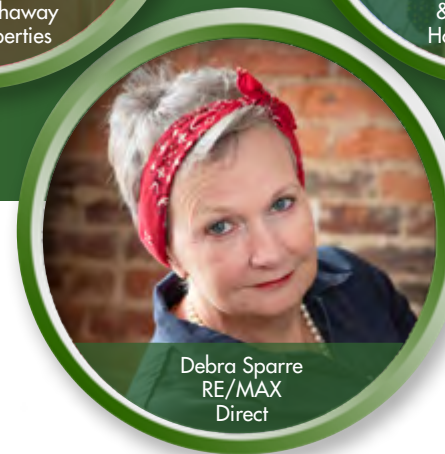
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Berkshire Hathaway
Country Properties



Stephen, Holly
& Stewart Gross,
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Karen Nader
Brandywine Fine
Properties

“There’s another side to those multiple offers, though,” says Missy Schwartz of Berkshire Hathaway. For every happy new homeowner, there may be 14 unhappy potential buyers who didn’t get that dream house, along with their 14 busy agents who wrote up 14 offers that were not accepted.

“Some folks forget there are two sides to the sales transaction. Buyers’ agents are very busy writing up multiple offers for their clients. I’ve had buyers who’ve made 8 or 9 unsuccessful offers. That’s heartbreaking ... for everyone,” says Debra Sparre of RE/MAX Direct. Searching for the right home and closing the deal take plenty of patience and energy all around.

Some believe that rationality is beginning to temper an overheated market. “Recently, we’re seeing less overbidding, fewer inspections waived, fewer all-cash offers. More buyers are thinking about the value of their new lifestyle,” says McKenna. “For example, if you’re buying a farm, it’s not an impulse purchase. You’re buying a lifestyle, and you need to find the *right* farm.”

EDUCATING THE BUYERS ... AND SELLERS

Realtors are busy educating their clients on the realities of today’s changing market. “Unlike earlier in the real estate market, buyers shouldn’t make a low offer and expect to negotiate upward from there,” says Sparre. “Conditions are very different now, and buyers need to understand that. Too many properties sell for over the asking price for buyers to bid low and expect to be in the running.”

More buyers are doing preliminary searches online, so agents spend less time driving them to tour a wide variety of properties to

get a sense of the market. “The process is more streamlined now,” says Schwartz. “Buyers need to be pre-qualified for financing to act quickly. And if there are aspects of the property they need to know about—like being close to a busy road—they need to think about that *before* visiting,” says Schwartz. Reviewing videos of home tours online also helps buyers triage their house hunting.

“Sellers also need to understand the new market realities,” says Stewart Gross, of Holly Gross Group. “Knowing that it’s a seller’s markets makes some want to price their homes above a fair market value. When that happens, the property may get limited interest.”

Several realtors shared the seemingly paradoxical experience that when a house is priced competitively it will more likely be bid up by multiple offers, often substantially above asking price. Meanwhile, even in a sellers’ market, a similar property priced too high won’t get a nibble. Apparently buyers don’t want to feel taken advantage of. “The fundamentals still apply: the higher the price, the fewer qualified buyers,” says Sparre.

And knowing the realities of the market—not just what a home in the neighborhood sold for—is part of the value added by an experienced realtor to ultimately get a better price for the property. “Helping those who have been planning to retire for years get their property ready to sell is what full-service realtors do,” says Stephen Gross.

PREP FOR SELLERS

Beyond realistic pricing, sellers must also prepare their properties, even in these days of low inventory. “Declutter, purge, paint,” says Karen Nader of Brandywine Fine Properties. “Decluttering is

prepping for moving, which sellers need to do anyway. Decide if it's DIY, hire a service, or rent a POD for temporary storage."

Painting is also recommended if the owners haven't repainted recently. "New paint makes everything look fresh and new—even in historic homes," says Nader. That bright orange bathroom or dusky earth colors will have narrower appeal than a neutral Chantilly Lace white paint job that opens and brightens the interior space.

Staging is the next issue for sellers, again with a range of options. Experienced agents can help owners arrange their pared-down belongings to create appealing rooms. Renting a few pieces to elevate the look of a room or suggest a home office space also works. (Home offices are still among the most desirable amenities.)

"We've used virtual staging to help buyers envision the space to their tastes, like redoing an outdated kitchen. Sotheby's Curate app allows us to quickly transform a room using a variety of interior design styles—traditional, contemporary, farmhouse—right from photos from a phone," says Nader. "One buyer looking for a modern chef's kitchen sees one version, while another looking for a farmhouse feel can see a different staging."

For those of us with limited imagination, virtual staging is extremely helpful. Buyers can appreciate what a vacant house looks like furnished. Virtual images do need to be identified, so buyers aren't surprised when they visit a home in real life!

WHAT'S A BUYER TO DO?

Beyond being willing to pay top dollar for a home—and some buyers use escalation clauses to top competing offers—how can buyers make their offers attractive?

"Figure out what else the seller wants, in addition to price," says Sparre. "Some sellers appreciate the option to stay in the home after closing to move out at a more comfortable pace." Other sellers need time to find their next home in this busy market.

Buyers may offer to pay more of the closing costs or repairs needed after an inspection, says Schwartz. If the sellers didn't do a pre-sale inspection, they may be sadly surprised to learn of unanticipated costs decreasing their profit.

And so-called "buyers' love letters" are falling out of fashion as a way to get offers accepted. Some buyers would attempt to make their offer more attractive by explaining their love for the property and how much their family would like to live in this special home. Increasingly sellers' agents make clear they won't accept these letters, which can raise fair housing concerns.

While more buyers are searching for their best life in a new home, the bottom line for sellers is that it's essentially a financial decision.

But there is hope for buyers. A recent report from a senior economist with *Realtor.com* said the market in Philadelphia is migrating toward normalization. Perhaps a bit of that will flow out our way.

We'll have to wait and see. ♦



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

Bring on the Bourbon. The bourbon bar, that is. West Chester welcomes its own **Bourbon Bar by Bar Avalon**, with a separate seating area and exclusive bourbon list. It will be the place to try a fabled brand neat (we're thinking Pappy Van Winkle), something new on the rocks (a special Blanton's, perhaps), or to go old-fashioned with a whiskey smash or classic Manhattan to test drive the bartender (this one's stirred, never shaken, Mr. Bond). *116 E. Gay St. AvalonRestaurant.net.*

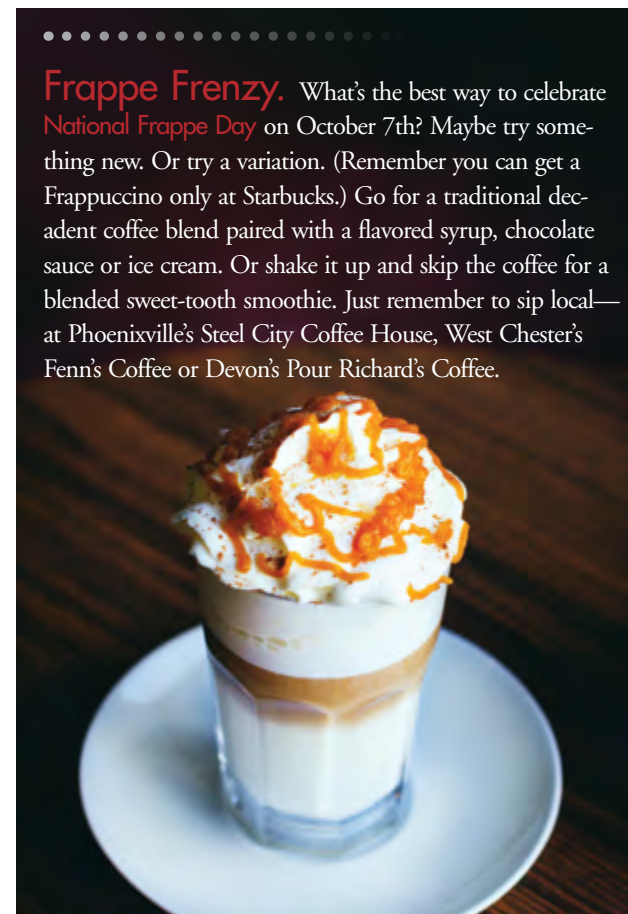


Sweet Treats. West Chester is about to get a whole lot sweeter. **Kilwins**, an ice cream and chocolate shop franchise, is opening a location on North Church Street. Dessert connoisseurs can wax nostalgic and indulge in candies made using original recipes dating back to 1947. Satisfy your sweet tooth with Mackinac Island fudge flavors like traditional chocolate, turtle with caramel and nuts, and the top seller, sea salt caramel. Visit the website for grand opening updates. *1 N. Church St., West Chester. Kilwins.com.*



New Brews. Looking for something new to sip? **Normandy Farm Hotel** and **Blue Bell Country Club** partnered with **Workhorse Brewing Company** in King of Prussia to produce two new brews. Try Reap What You Sow at the Farmer's Daughter Restaurant at Normandy Farm and enjoy a juicy hop-centric ale with a tropical, fruity character. Or visit Blue Bell Country Club for The Blue Bell IPA, a New England IPA with citrus tang. *1401 Morris Rd., Blue Bell. NormandyFarm.com. 1800 Tournament Dr., Blue Bell. BlueBellCC.com.*

Frappe Frenzy. What's the best way to celebrate **National Frappe Day** on October 7th? Maybe try something new. Or try a variation. (Remember you can get a Frappuccino only at Starbucks.) Go for a traditional decadent coffee blend paired with a flavored syrup, chocolate sauce or ice cream. Or shake it up and skip the coffee for a blended sweet-tooth smoothie. Just remember to sip local—at Phoenixville's Steel City Coffee House, West Chester's Fenn's Coffee or Devon's Pour Richard's Coffee.



Open for Business. The wait is over! **Wyebrook Farm** has re-opened for business and is providing local, sustainable meat to our area. The farm raises purebred Black Angus beef and heritage breed Berkshire cross pork, without using preventative antibiotics or growth hormones. Visit their online butcher shop to place an order for delivery or stop by your local farmer's market to pick up your next meal. Perfect for late season grilling! *WyebrookFarm.com.*



Savored Starts

THE TIMELESS TASTES AND TRADITIONS BEHIND ITALIAN ANTIPASTI

Alyssa Thayer

IN CULTURES AROUND THE WORLD FAMILY AND friends gather ahead of the main meal noshing, relaxing and sharing. These communal pastimes span the globe, varying only in ingredients and name. One can enjoy mezze in Turkey, zakuski in Russia, tapas in Spain, yet nowhere is the tradition more alive than in the antipasti of Italy.

Antipasti literally translates to “before the meal” and is a compilation of savory bites that can include cured meats, cheeses, smoked fish, marinated olives or grilled vegetables. It’s often served family-style on a large platter and may be accompanied by a glass of wine.

“That’s the beauty of antipasti—you can really make it with anything,” says Emilio Mignucci, third-generation owner and Vice President of Culinary Pioneering of iconic specialty food market **Di Bruno Bros.** He recalls frequently going over to his grandparents’ house growing up, and each time they’d whip up something simple, delicious and healthy from whatever was available.

“It was actually pretty strategic,” he says with a chuckle. “You’d have food and drink, relax and suddenly you’re sharing things . . . even things we didn’t plan on telling our parents.” Emilio admits he and his wife still use that technique with his kids years later.

Di Bruno Bros. was first opened in 1939 by brothers Danny and Joe Di Bruno as a small grocery store in the heart of Philadelphia’s famed Italian Market. In 1965, the brother’s made the decision to focus on cheeses and other specialty imports to set themselves apart. They never looked back.



Danny and Joe Di Bruno opened the first Di Bruno Bros. in 1939 in Philadelphia’s Italian Market.



Third-generation cousins Bill Mignucci, Bill Mignucci Jr. and Emilio Mignucci took over the business from their grandparents in 1990.

In 1990 third-generation cousins Emilio, Billy Jr. and Bill took over the business pledging to keep the family legacy alive. Since then, the company has grown to six retail locations and numerous bottle shops. Fortunately for us, they have found their way out into our neck of the woods.

The new Wayne location opened in spring of 2021 with all their standard best-in-class offerings along with Cafe Di Bruno, a coffee and pastry bar, and Bar Alimentari, which serves Roman-style pizzas and antipasti-style small plates.

When shopping for your own antipasti components, Emilio suggests heading to the store with a general plan, sampling and tasting your way through, and leaning on the expertise of cheesemongers and others.

Emilio acknowledges their antipasti selections—whether imported prosciutto or specialty cheeses—often carry a higher price tag, but for good reason. “It’s the best you can get,” he says proudly. “You don’t need much, a few ounces of each cheese or meat and a few spoonfuls of marinated olives go a long way.”

The best news about antipasti—you can’t mess it up. Select an assortment of tasty ingredients, tailor it to your preferences, arrange it in a grazing-friendly way, and presto—it’s ready. Whether you’re hosting a gathering or grazing through dinner, we hope you’ll give the antipasti route a try. Buon appetito!



Di Bruno Bros. continues to expand its offerings and locations, opening its 6th retail location in Wayne.

Recipes

The grazing-style antipasti course welcomes guests in a more informal and familial way—as if to say come enjoy, relax and savor. We’ve put together some simple recipes to get you started on your antipasto journey. Take a look, get inspired, and as always, make them your own.

Marinated Feta & Olives

This simple dish is a guaranteed crowd-pleaser. The briny olives and salty feta merge and come to life in the rich grassy notes of olive oil.



- 4 oz. feta, cubed
- 2 oz. castelvetrano olives, pitted and halved
- ½ C. extra virgin olive oil
- ½ tsp. fresh ground black pepper

Place feta in an airtight container. Add olives, olive oil and pepper. Close lid and marinate for at least an hour before serving.

Serve with crusty bread or crostini.

Serves 3–4.

Prosciutto With Brie and Apple

Who doesn’t love the tried and true brie and apple combo, especially this time of year? Add the smokey salty layers of prosciutto and sweet and crunchy toppings, and we have ourselves a true winner.



- 1 baguette, sliced
- 8 oz. of brie, sliced
- 1 sweet apple, cored and sliced
- 8 slices of prosciutto
- 2 oz. candied pecans, chopped (such as DiBruno Cinnful Cocoa Pecans)
- 2 Tb. honey

Lay slices of baguette out on a tray and begin adding toppings, starting with brie then apple and finally prosciutto. Top with pecans and a drizzle of honey.

Serves 4.

Antipasti 101

Although antipasti feels and sounds fancy, it couldn’t be simpler to put together. There are common ingredients, but no hard and fast rules. It can (and should) be shaped by what’s fresh, available and favored by those enjoying it.

Here are a few tips and tricks to get you started.

Lingo Lesson – “Antipasto” and “antipasti” are actually the same thing: “antipasti” is just the plural version. The word antipasti is sometimes mistranslated to “before the pasta,” but it actually has a much broader meaning of “before the meal.” It’s meant to wet your whistle for the tasty feast ahead.

Ask Questions – When shopping for ingredients, make sure to take advantage of the knowledgeable butchers and cheesemongers. They can give you the inside scoop on what’s fresh and best. Don’t be shy—ask for recommendations, serving sizes and pairing ideas!

Taste Often – With all of these expensive and quality ingredients, it’s important to love what you’re buying and get only what you need. The beauty of somewhere like Di Bruno Bros. is that they’ll let you sample just about anything.

Less Is More – Another perk of a specialty market is they will literally sell you any quantity. “Don’t feel bad about asking for little amounts. We don’t want you to waste it. We’d rather you come back more often,” says Emilio.

Beautiful Bites – We eat with our eyes first. Take the time to artfully arrange the items on the platter/cutting board. The end result feels more special and delicious. Start with a platter or cutting board that’s big enough to hold everything but small enough to make it feel abundant. Next add your largest items, including ramekins or bowls, and finish by layering in the finger foods all around them.

Five Senses Feast – Antipasto should have a variety of different tastes and textures. Take it up a notch with a little heat (chili oil/flakes) or sweet (honey and cheese are a match made in heaven), and add in a good crunch factor (toasted nuts, crisp vegetables or crackers do the trick).

Make It Yours – Don’t like blue cheese? Leave it out! Love olives? Add a few varieties, maybe a tapenade. Serving a pescatarian? Add a nice tinned fish and some marinated shellfish. The world is your oyster (pun intended).

Keep It Simple – Unlike fancy coursed dinners or composed appetizers, these platters are meant to be simple and communal. The goal is for you as the host to enjoy them with your guests, not be holed up in the kitchen.

Sweet and Spicy Stuffed Peppadews

This sweet and slightly spicy flavor combo is complemented and cooled by the tangy fresh goat cheese filling.

- 10 pickled peppadew peppers, deseeded
- ½ lb. fresh goat cheese
- 1 Tb. Mike’s Hot Honey (make your own, note below)
- ⅓ C. candied nuts, chopped (such as Di Bruno Bros Black Lava Cashews)

Use a small spoon or spatula to stuff peppers with cheese. Arrange peppers on a plate. Drizzle hot honey over peppers and sprinkle generously with nuts.

Serves 4–5.



****Note:** DIY Hot Honey: Heat 1 C. honey with 2 tsp. chili flakes or 1 fresh hot chili of your choosing, sliced. Simmer for 5 minutes (being careful not to allow it to burn), and strain and cool for use. Keeps in an air-tight container in the refrigerator for 3–4 weeks.

Saffron White Bean Dip

This white bean dip is an easy and completely satisfying addition to any antipasti spread. We recommend serving alongside crispy thin crackers or spears of fresh veggies.



- 2 C. cannellini beans, cooked
 - 2 Tb. fresh lemon juice (½ lemon approx.)
 - 2 cloves garlic, minced
 - ½ tsp. saffron threads (such as Diaspora brand)
 - ½ tsp. sea salt
 - 3 Tb. extra virgin olive oil (such as Sicilian Evoo)
- Serve with flatbread crisps (such as Toketti brand)
- Blend all dip ingredients together in a food processor. Serve in a bowl with extra olive oil on top and a sprinkle of saffron.
- Makes 2 cups.

Roasted Beet and Goat Cheese Tartine

These tartines are the perfect way to dress up some leftover roasted root vegetables. This recipe can be customized to whatever roasted vegetables and fresh cheeses you happen to adore.

- 2 thick slices of sourdough bread
 - 2 oz. fresh goat cheese
 - 1 C. roasted beets, cubed
 - 2 Tb. pepitas (substitute with any chopped nut)
 - 1 Tb. olive oil (we love yuzu olive oil for its bright citrus notes)
- Toast sourdough. Spread goat cheese evenly on each piece of toast. Top with beets and pepitas, drizzle with olive oil.
- Serves 2.



Spanish Conservas

Sometimes (or perhaps usually) the best things are the simplest things. Thanks to the salt of the sardines, the fat of the butter and the brightness of the citrus ... this recipe serves up the perfect balance of flavors.

- 1 baguette, sliced and toasted
 - 2 Tb. butter
 - 6–8 oz. sardine filets (try Geuyu Mar or Ortiz)
 - 1 lemon, juiced
- Spread butter over toasted bread, top with sardines and drizzle with lemon juice. Serve along with olives, chorizo and Iberico ham.
- Serves 4.



Roasted Delicata Squash and Parm

- Roasted and grilled vegetables are a huge part of the Italian diet. Since it's fall, we like to add roasted hard squash to our antipasto spreads.*
- 2 Delicata squash, seeded and cut into half-inch rings
 - 1 Tb. olive oil (such as DB Classico)
 - ¼ tsp. fine sea salt
 - Cracked black pepper
 - 5 oz. Parmigiano Reggiano
 - 5 oz. pistachios, roughly chopped



- Preheat the oven to 425°.
- Cut both ends off the squash. Cut it crosswise through the middle. Scoop out the seeds from each half (Try using a serrated grapefruit spoon).
- Slice the two halves into ½-inch rings.
- Toss the rings in a bowl with olive oil, salt and a few grinds of cracked black pepper.
- Arrange the rings on a parchment-lined baking sheet and roast in the preheated oven for 22 minutes total, flipping halfway through. Sprinkle Parmigiano Reggiano and pistachios over top and serve.
- Serves 4.

Bloody Mary Salad with Grilled Flank Steak

Although Worcestershire sauce is not traditionally Italian, Emilio says he swears by adding a little for a little depth of flavor. This dish uses the lesser-known method of cooking the meat and marinating after. The result is extremely flavorful and moist.



- 16 oz. flank steak
- 2 Tb. red wine vinegar
- 2 Tb. lemon juice
- 2 Tb. olive brine
- 1 Tb. prepared horseradish
- 1 garlic clove, grated
- 1 Tb. Worcestershire sauce
- 4 Tb. extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ C. chopped olives
- ¾ C. dill pickles, sliced
- ½ red onion, thinly sliced
- ¾ C. roasted red peppers, sliced
- 1 C. celery stem and leaves, sliced
- 1 pt. cherry tomatoes, halved
- 4 oz. blue cheese, crumbled
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 8 oz. salad greens

In a pan over high heat or on the grill, sear the unseasoned steak until browned well on both sides and cooked to medium-rare or desired temperature, about 2 to 3 minutes on each side. Allow the steak to rest while you prepare the other ingredients.

- In a large bowl, whisk vinegar, lemon juice, horseradish, Worcestershire sauce, and olive brine. Then add the red onion, celery, pickles, olives, peppers and tomatoes. Grind a good amount of black pepper over top and stir to combine.
- Slice the meat into ½-inch slices across the grain and add to the mixture. Mix again and allow to marinate for at least 30 minutes for the flavors to meld.
- Serve over a mix of salad greens. Top with crumbles of cheese and reserved celery leaves.
- Serves 4.

Heirloom Tomatoes with Burrata and Pesto

If you're still lucky enough to find them, heirloom tomatoes are great.



- 4 Tb. pesto
 - 2 Tb. extra virgin olive oil
 - 3–4 large heirloom tomatoes, thickly sliced
 - 2 burrata balls
 - ½ tsp. fresh ground black pepper
 - Pinch of flaky salt (try Maldon)
- Mix together pesto and olive oil in a small bowl so that the consistency is drizzly. Tile slices of tomato on a large serving dish. Place burrata on top of tomatoes—either whole or torn and dispersed. Drizzle pesto generously over top of tomatoes and burrata. Season with fresh ground black pepper and Maldon salt.
- Serves 4. ♦

Alyssa Thayer found her love of food at an early age, frolicking around her mother's organic farm and eating her weight in berries and snap peas each summer. She is a self-proclaimed urban farm girl, whose mission is to bring inspired ideas to life, passionate people together, and good food to every table.



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☆☆ CAPTURING CHESTER COUNTY ☆☆☆
DEADLINE October 11

Do your trees need to be pruned?



Fall is for Tree Care!

Call or Text 610-265-6004

