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Data compiled by SHOOK Research LLC based on time period 06/30/21-06/30/24. 2. Forbes Top Women Wealth Advisors (2025). Source: Forbesecon (Awarded Feb 2025). Data compiled by SHOOK Research LLC based on time period 09/30/24-09/30/24. 3. Forbes Best-in-State Wealth Advisors (2025). Source: Forbesecon (Awarded Feb 2025). Data compiled by SHOOK Research LLC based on time period 09/30/23-09/30/24. Methodology: Forbes' Top Wealth and Best-in-State Advisor rankings, developed by SHOOK Research, are based on a qualitative and quantitative algorithm evaluating securities, revenue trends, assets under management, service models, compliance records, and industry expertise. All considered advisors have a minimum of seven years' experience; portfolio performance is not a factor, and neither Forbes nor SHOOK receive a fee for inclusion. 5. The Best and Young Entrepreneur of the Year (2021). Source: ENR.com (Awarded Jul 2021). Data compiled by Enron and Young based on time period 01/01/2013-12/31/2021. Methodology: Nominations must be from a founder or executive leading a for-profit business for at least two years, co-founders and past regional winners may qualify. Judging is based on individual merit, story, and achievements using a standardized spreadsheet across industries. 6. Barron's Hall of Fame (2019). Source: Barron's.com (Awarded Oct 2019). Data compiled by Barron's based on advisors appearing in Barron's annual Top 100 Advisor rankings for 10+ years (2006-2019). Methodology: Barron's Hall of Fame honorees are selected from advisors who first pass a prequalification process, then submit a detailed survey; rankings are based on a proprietary formula that evaluates assets, revenue, and quality of practice—including client retention, growth, experience, consistency, team structure, and compliance records—verified by firms and regulatory databases. 7. ThinkAdvisor Luminary Award. ThinkAdvisor Luminary Award 2025 in the Thought Leadership & Education category for RIA's Less Than \$10 Billion (\$15M-\$25M). This award honors firms that have gone above and beyond in leading a firm that has introduced a new approach or framework to their segment of financial services, which address clients in a novel way or insights that can, ideally, be shown to have both a qualitative and quantitative impact—and can serve as a model of industry excellence and achievement. Examples include—but are not limited to—podcasts, webinars, social media campaigns, and white papers. For more information regarding this award, please visit <https://www.thinkadvisor.com/awards>. Criteria: When evaluating nominations they considered the nominee's impact on the firm, advisors, and the broader professional community and industry, including both quantitative and qualitative results such as the number of advisors affected and a clear description of the innovative ways the nominee had contributed to their program, firm, community, and industry. They also assessed the nominee's demonstrated ability to achieve goals and display integrity in various thinking and problem solving, as well as their dedication to furthering the development of advisors and the industry, particularly their ability to serve the best interests of clients. Additionally, they evaluated the nominee's personal commitment to the highest ethical standards, service, and excellence. 8. Barron's Top 100 Women Financial Advisors (2025-2025). Source: Barron's.com (Awarded Jun 2025). Data compiled by Barron's based on time period 01/1/2024-09/30/2025. Methodology: Barron's Top 100 Independent Financial Advisors (2025-2025) Source: Barron's.com (Awarded Oct 2025). Data compiled by Barron's based on time period 06/30/2024-06/30/2025. Methodology: <https://www.barrons.com/rankings/independent-financial-advisors> 09/30/24. 9. Barron's Top 100 Women. The rankings are based on qualitative criteria—professionals with a minimum of seven years financial service experience, acceptable compliance records, client retention reports and customer satisfaction reports. Advisors are quantitatively ranked based on varying types of revenues and assets advised by the financial professional, with weightings associated for each. Additional qualitative measures include: in-depth interviews and discussions with senior management, peers and customers; because individual client portfolio performance varies and is typically unshared, this ranking focused on customer satisfaction and quality of advice. Please see <https://www.barrons.com/rankings/top-100-independent-financial-advisors> for more information. 10. Barron's "Top 1200 Financial Advisors" list (2021). The ranking considered advisors with a minimum of seven years financial service experience and have been employed at their current firm for at least one year. This is a list of the top advisors in each state, with the number of ranking spots determined by each state's population and wealth. Other quantitative and qualitative measures include assets under management, revenues generated by advisors for their firms, and the quality of the advisors' practices, regulatory records, internal compliance documents, and 100-plus points of data provided by the advisors themselves. Barron's is a trademark of Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All rights reserved. Rankings and magazine lists Barron's are no guarantee of future investment success and do not ensure that a current or prospective client will experience a higher level of performance results and such rankings should not be construed as an endorsement of the advisor. Best-in-State Wealth Advisors Forbes Best-in-State Wealth Advisors (2021) Pennsylvania—East PA (High Net Worth) Source: Forbesecon (Awarded Apr 2021). Data compiled by SHOOK Research LLC, based on time period 06/30/21-06/30/24.

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NEW LISTING



### Fabulous Antique Home in Historic Area of Glen Mills

Antique home enthusiasts will love this original c.1729 Penn Land Grand farm featuring a 5 BR, 3.1 BA stone home. The farm sits on two parcels totaling 3.29 acres. The home features original flooring, several fireplaces and deep window sills. All of the bathrooms have been updated and the Kitchen allows for a spacious eat-in area off the Library/Family Room. You will love the in-ground pool and pool house, perfect for a guest or in-law suite. There is also a barn and several outbuildings.

\$1,225,000



### Historic Fairville Inn in Chadds Ford

This historic property features 10 tasteful guest rooms, eight of which have gas fireplaces. The Main House features the guest reception area, living room, after-hours sitting room, dining room, kitchen and the possibility for 5+ additional rooms. Contact us for full details about what else is possible with this gorgeous property. Price Upon Request

UNDER CONTRACT



### Superior Family Compound with Four Living Units

This fabulous c.1886 home features 3 BR, 2.1 BA, great Kitchen & a wonderful floor plan. Additionally, the property has three, one or two bedroom living units, making this an exciting opportunity for someone seeking a wonderful family compound! This 3+ acre property boasts superior amenities. Mechanical systems have been updated. Unionville Schools. Low taxes! \$1,550,000

NEW PRICE



### Overlooks French Creek Golf Club's 14th Hole

Set in Olde Bulltown Village is this charming 3BR, 2.2 BA home which combines the old with the new featuring cathedral ceilings, stunning main level primary suite, antique hardware, finished lower level and beautiful quarter sawn oak floors! The kitchen has high-end appliances and handsome cabinetry. This wonderful property must be seen to be full appreciated. \$1,498,000



### Great Property in Kennett Square

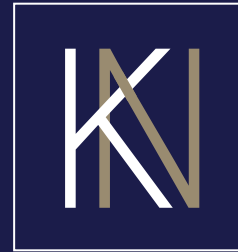
This updated 3BR, 2BA home is a "Must See"! The open floor plan features a generous living area that flows into an eat-in kitchen, complete with granite counters, white cabinets, and stainless steel appliances. The main level includes 2 BRs with hardwood flooring, updated hall BA, and a laundry/mudroom. Upstairs, the primary BR has an ensuite BA and walk-in closet. The finished attic offers flexibility for an office or storage. Unionville Schools! \$585,000



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from the  
**EDITOR**

April at last! Flowers, films, history and more. It's time to leave your treadmills, StairMasters and erg machines behind. The outdoors awaits!

Consider rowing. Envy the graceful boats, gliding on the water, powered by muscle. In "Row Your Boat ... Gently — or Madly — Down the Stream," Ed Malet introduces the sport. For next-level athletes, in "Going the Distance," Zack Malet interviews brothers whose passion is ultra-endurance sports — one running, the other cycling — as they train despite demanding real estate careers and growing families.

For a more leisurely take, Shannon Montgomery wonders how our outdoor spaces might work harder, providing both enjoyment and increased equity. In "Spring Into Outdoor Living," she asks local experts for ideas. Kim Andrews examines where the outdoors meets history in "Chester County's Revolutionary Nature," and suggests parks, preserves and more to enjoy both. Meanwhile Laurel Anderson finds "Something Old and Something New" on every visit to Lancaster County, especially for America's 250th. She reports on heritage sites, museums, theaters and more.

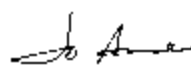
Garden fans should mark their calendars for a statewide event on June 20 and 27. Sharon Richardson, Uwchlan Garden Club, previews the highlights in "Invitation to a Garden Party Tour." For DIY gardeners, check out "Let It Grow," where Shannon Montgomery shares tips on vegetable gardening, including for beginners.

Join the "20th West Chester Film Festival" on April 24–26, which again showcases independent short films from around the world. And feel better about your next dental visit as you read how you could learn more about your health than you thought. Dr. Hardi Makadia explains in our Being Well column.

More for springtime: remember asparagus is a harbinger of the season. Brandywine Table's Liz Tarditi offers five fresh recipes in "Harvesting Spring."

As always, we've gathered the Best Local Events, with a side of Family Fun for April. Enjoy!

Thank you for reading.



Jo Anne Durako  
Editor

## COMING IN *May*



**ANNUAL EQUESTRIAN ISSUE**  
Devon Horse Show • Steeplechases  
Landscape & Garden Design  
Gallery Roundup • Home & Garden  
Dream Barns • Spritzes • Main Line Focus



## COUNTY LINES MAGAZINE

**April 2026**

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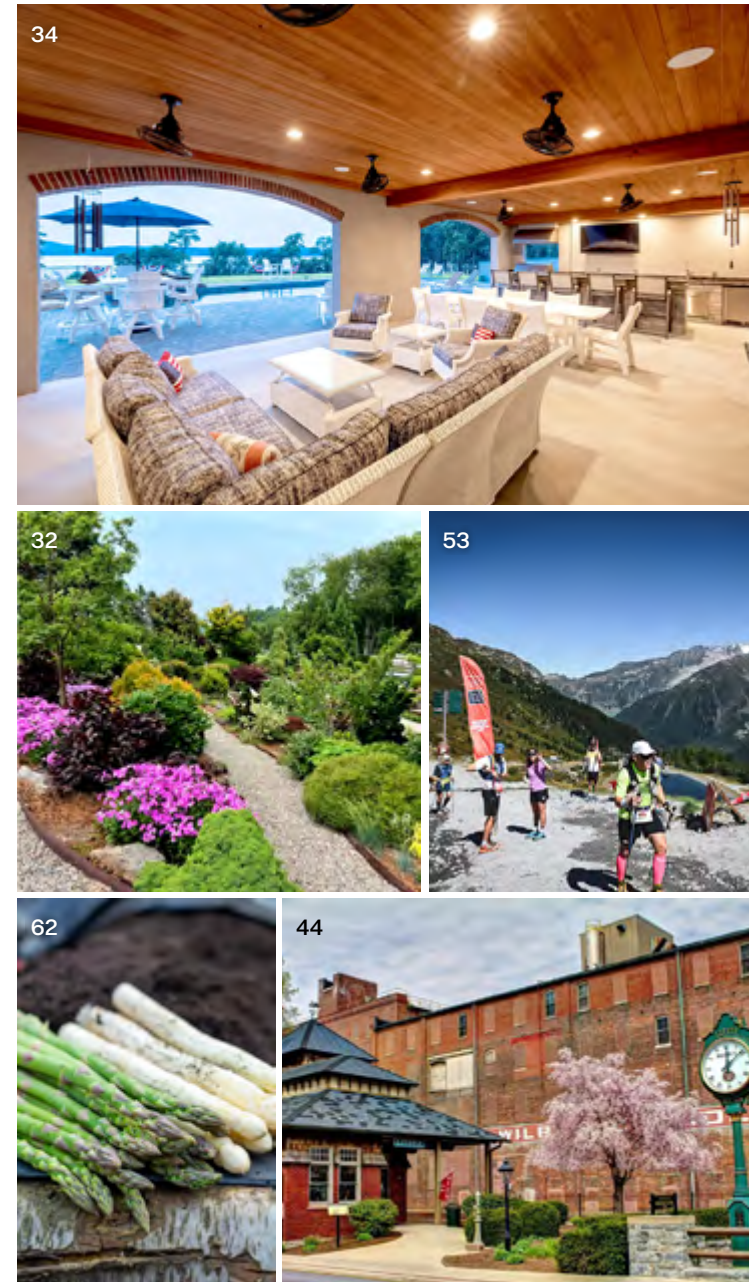


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# Your Next Dental Visit

IT COULD REVEAL MORE ABOUT YOUR HEALTH THAN YOU THINK

Dr. Hardikkumar (Hardi) Makadia

**D**ENTAL VISITS ARE TYPICALLY THOUGHT OF AS routine examinations, including cleanings, cavity checks and possibly fillings. And yet a routine dental examination involves much more than just examining your teeth. It's frequently an early warning system for your general health, providing information that extends far beyond your smile.

One of the first locations where symptoms of systemic disease manifest is the mouth because of its special connection to the rest of the body. Due to its thinness and high vascularity, the lining of the mouth is frequently where blood or immune system alterations first appear. In fact, over 90% of systemic diseases produce oral signs and symptoms.

**Importance of Regular Checkups:** Maintaining oral health requires routine dental checkups, usually every six months. Cavities, gum disease, plaque accumulation and enamel wear are common

problems that dentists and hygienists look for. But the process is more clinical than you may realize.

For example, a hygienist does *periodontal mapping* to measure "pockets" between your teeth and gums, looking for depths over 3 mm that may indicate systemic inflammation or bone loss. *Intraoral cameras and digital X-rays* done during your visit can detect infections at the root tip or problems with jawbone density not otherwise visible. *Removal of hardened plaque* during your exam also removes a haven for dangerous bacteria.

**Gum Disease and Systemic Health:** One of the most significant early warnings of health problems is periodontitis (advanced gum disease), a chronic infection that forces the entire body on high alert. *P. gingivalis* and other bacteria can move from the gums to the heart, where they may raise C-reactive protein levels, an indicator of inflammation connected to heart attacks.

In addition, untreated gum disease can cause blood sugar to spike, making diabetes more difficult to manage, and high blood sugar fuels oral bacteria. Plus oral bacteria can enter the lungs and cause pneumonia or worsen chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). And pregnancy gingivitis (bleeding gums) can develop into more severe periodontal disease if untreated.

**Inflammation, Bacteria and the Microbiome:** After the gut, your mouth's microbiome is your second largest and most varied location of bacteria. These bacteria defend us when they're in balance, but "bad" bacteria create a biofilm that sets off a long-term inflammatory reaction.

This inflammation causes the "leaky gut" equivalent in the mouth — leaky gums. Oral bacteria have a direct path to your vital organs when the barrier between your mouth and bloodstream is compromised. Your immune system's reset button requires preserving a healthy microbiome.

**What Dentists Notice:** Beyond cavities, dentists are often the first to flag these hidden conditions:

- **Pale or "Strawberry" Gums:** Pale gums may indicate anemia, while more common bright red, hyper-inflammatory tissue that's resistant to cleaning frequently indicates uncontrolled diabetes or even leukemia.
- **Breath Odors:** A metallic smell may indicate chronic kidney disease, while a fruity or acetone-like smell is a classic warning sign for diabetic ketoacidosis.

- **Unusual Enamel Erosion:** GERD (acid reflux) is characterized by thinning enamel on the tongue side of teeth, frequently detected by a dentist before a patient is aware of heartburn.
- **Attrition:** Flattening of tooth surfaces and thinning of enamel caused by grinding and clenching are often early signs of chronic stress or anxiety.

**A Holistic Approach:** Modern dental practice increasingly incorporates a holistic model of care, recognizing the mouth as the gateway to the body. Preventive dental care is no longer just "fillings and drillings." It's about lowering the overall inflammatory burden of the body. Your dentist is a specialized physician of the head and neck regions who tracks changes that may affect longevity and quality of life.

By visiting your dentist regularly, you're not only investing in a bright smile but also participating in a health screening program. Your next dental visit could be the first step in identifying and preventing health issues before they become serious. ♦

*Dr. Hardi Makadia, DMD, MPH, BDS, an international dentist, graduated from Temple University School of Dental Medicine with honors. He also completed a Master of Public Health at West Chester University, focusing on preventive care and overall wellness. He practices at Marchwood Dental Associates in Exton and is a member of the ADA. [MarchwoodDentalAssociates.com](http://MarchwoodDentalAssociates.com)*




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

**A New Chapter.** This Independent Bookstore Day (April 25) and beyond, support a new locally owned shop in the heart of Kennett Square. Opened on Valentine's Day, **Forage Books** offers a curated collection of



bestselling fiction, insightful nonfiction, local authors and children's favorites, along with gifts, cards and unique finds. A nod to Kennett's mushroom heritage, Forage invites visitors to explore and discover something new. 121 W. State St. [ForageBooksKSQ.com](http://ForageBooksKSQ.com)

**Planting History.** Celebrate America's 250th in your garden with four new seed collections from Philadelphia's **Burpee Seeds**. Thomas Jefferson's Revolutionary Garden features plants grown by Jefferson at Monticello, while Martha Washington's Kitchen Garden includes heritage vegetables grown at Mount Vernon. A Colonial Dooryard Herb Garden highlights essential herbs colonists brought to North America, and The Declaration Bouquet, created with the Museum of the American Revolution, features 1776-inspired flowers to rival any fireworks. [Burpee.com](http://Burpee.com)

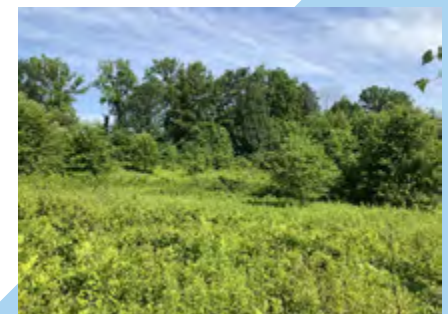


**Green Guidance.** Have a question about gardening, nutrition, home food preservation or even backyard poultry? Meet **Tilva**, a new AI assistant from Penn State Extension. Developed with the College of Agricultural Sciences, this conversational tool delivers localized, science-backed answers for farmers, producers, homeowners, educators and community leaders — anytime, day or night. Available in English and Spanish, Tilva can even identify plants, pests and diseases from photos. [AI.Extension.PSU.edu](http://AI.Extension.PSU.edu)

**Nature, Stacked.** For a unique piece of art that will brighten your home or garden, check out West Chester ceramic artist Nancy Salamon's **stacked sculptural totems**. Each 18- to 36-inch tower features playful elements — spheres, spaces, wavy platters, sculpted figures — often inspired by nature, like frogs, birds, fish and rabbits. Find them at her West Chester studio by appointment or during the Chester County Studio Tour, May 16 and 17. [ClayBornPottery.com](http://ClayBornPottery.com)



**A Lasting Landscape.** This Earth Day (April 22), celebrate another win for open space in Chester County. **The French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust** recently completed a conservation easement to permanently preserve naturalists Hugh and Sally Willig's 18-acre property along Sycamore Lane in Charlestown Township. Set within the high-quality Pickering Creek Watershed, the land protects valuable wildlife habitat — part of more than 13,700 acres the trust has preserved since 1967. [FrenchAndPickering.org](http://FrenchAndPickering.org)





# PENNSYLVANIA ANTIQUES SHOW at Valley Forge



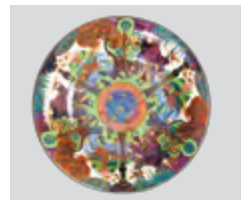
Courtesy Dixon-Hall Fine Art



Courtesy H. L. Chalfant American Fine Art and Antiques



Courtesy Jeff R. Bridgman American Antiques



Courtesy Earle D. Vandekar of Knightsbridge



Courtesy Kelly Kinzle

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## best Local Events

# April Picks

by Marci Tomassone

### 83rd Running of the Brandywine Hills Point-to-Point



**April 5**  
Celebrate one of the first races of the season with kids activities, lead line, stick pony races, Radnor Hunt foxhound parade and raffle prizes. Food available on site for

purchase. Benefits Brandywine Red Clay Alliance. *Myrick Conservation Center, 1760 Unionville-Wawaset Rd., West Chester. 11 to 3. \$40/carload. BrandywineRedClay.org*

### Earth Day Phoenixville 2026 — Our Power, Our Planet

**April 18**  
Celebrate Earth Day with music, food and community as you join in a family-friendly afternoon featuring hands-on activities for kids, local nonprofits, green businesses and food vendors. The celebration highlights simple, practical ways we can care for our environment and strengthen our community together. *Reservoir Park, Phoenixville. Noon to 4 p.m. PhoenixvilleGreenTeam.org*



### Media Spring Arts Show

**April 19**  
More than 120 artists, fine crafters and makers will showcase their original handmade works along State Street, making this a unique and artful experiences in Delaware County. Be sure to visit the independent, family-owned specialty shops and restaurants that make "Everybody's Hometown" special. Rain date, Apr. 26. *11 a.m. to 4 p.m. VisitMediaPA.com; MediaArtsCouncil.org*



### Pennsylvania Antiques Show

**April 23–26**  
A new antiques show for America's 250th is a vibrant celebration of Americana, folk art, decorative arts and design from the 17th–20th centuries. Presented by Historic Trappe, this new event brings together top dealers, emerging voices and passionate collectors to honor our nation's heritage. *Valley Forge Casino Resort, 1160 1st Ave., King of Prussia. Preview party, Thurs., 5 to 9 p.m. with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. Show hours Fri., 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sat. & Sun., 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. \$25, under 18, free. HistoricTrappe.org*



### Notable Kitchen Tour & Chefs' Tastings

**April 30**  
This popular, self-guided tour of kitchens on the western Main Line features notable local chefs serving small plates of food in each kitchen for tasting by tour guests, table designers setting elegant tables and florists providing arrangements to enhance the tablescapes. Hosted by the Main Line Committee for the Philadelphia Orchestra. *10 a.m. to 3 p.m. \$60. NotableKitchens.org*



PHOTO: DEB FUTTER PHOTOGRAPHY

# FAMILY FUN

THROUGH SEPTEMBER 7

**Universal Theme Parks: The Exhibition at The Franklin Institute.** Step inside the creative and innovative world of theme parks through the lens of Universal's attractions, including *Jaws*, *Mimions*, *Sing*, *Super Nintendo World* and more. You'll experience the creativity, artistry and innovation behind Universal's most epic attractions. 222 N. 20th St., Philadelphia. Times and tickets, [FI.edu](http://FI.edu).



APRIL 3-26

**"Tarzan" at SALT Performing Arts.** Swing into adventure with this high-energy Broadway spectacle that brings the jungle to life with breathtaking aerial choreography, heart-pounding music and a powerful story about finding where you belong. Remember to bring food donations for the Chester County Food Bank. 1645 Art School Rd., Chester Springs. Times and tickets, [SALTPA.com](http://SALTPA.com).



APRIL 8

**WCU Live! Presents Tamagawa University Taiko Drumming & Dance.** Drummers and dancers from Tamagawa University make a return to campus for an athletic and graceful appearance that includes thundering taiko drumming and Japanese folkloric dance. *Emilie K. Asplundh Concert Hall*, 700 S. High St., West Chester. 7:30 pm. \$15-\$25. [WCUA.edu/Live](http://WCUA.edu/Live)

APRIL 12

**Ryerss Farm Easter Egg Hunt.** Hunt for Easter eggs and spend time with the horses. The event will be held inside the barn,

rain or shine. Some eggs will have coupons for special prizes. Don't miss the chance to have your picture taken with the Easter Bunny. 1710 Ridge Rd., Pottstown. 10 to 12:30. \$5, pre-registration req. [RyerssFarm.org](http://RyerssFarm.org)

APRIL 18

**The Lights Festival at Plantation Field.** Ignite your personalized sky lantern and let it take flight as you connect with people and cultures from near and far in a shared celebration of unity and belonging. Enjoy food, live music, dancing and the breathtaking sight of lighting the sky with thousands of lanterns. 347 Green Valley Rd. (off of Rt. 82), Coatesville. Gates open at 2 pm. \$43-\$68, includes lantern kit. Ages 4-12 receive a Fun Kit (no lantern). \$30 parking. [TheLightsFest.com](http://TheLightsFest.com)



APRIL 18 & 19

**Annual Youth Trout Derby.** Boys and girls 5-13 are invited to fish. Trophies to those catching the 10 largest fish in each session. *Darby Creek at Saw Mill Park*, 666 Earles Ln., Newtown Square. Sat, 8 to 11 am and 4 to 7 pm; Sun, 9 am to noon. Free. Pre-register at [RadnorRecreation.com](http://RadnorRecreation.com).

APRIL 25

**The Everett Beauregard Foundation Annual Community Quest.** Family-friendly scavenger hunt highlighting points of interest around Malvern Borough. Benefits the Everett Beauregard Foundation, creating



pathways for under served teens. *Burke Community Park*, 26 S. Warren Ave., Malvern. 2 to 4 pm. Tickets, [EverettBeauregard.org](http://EverettBeauregard.org).

APRIL 26

**Wheels of Wayne Car Show.** The annual car show is in downtown Wayne with antique, classic and custom vehicles, entertainment, food and prizes. Fun for the whole family. N. Wayne & West Aves., Wayne. 12:30 to 3 pm. Free. Rain date, May 3. [Radnor.com/WOW](http://Radnor.com/WOW)



APRIL 26

**Beat Ben Fun Run.** Children focus on fitness and fun as they try to outrace founding father Ben Franklin. Other highlights include kite demonstrations, a Ben Franklin-inspired art and craft project, pictures with Ben and healthy snacks at the race's end. *East Gosben Park*, 1661 Paoli Pk., West Chester. Noon. To register, [EastGosbenPA.MyRec.com](http://EastGosbenPA.MyRec.com).

MAY 1-3

**"Willy Wonka Jr." at Uptown.** Roald Dahl's classic tale comes to life in a whimsical, family-friendly musical packed with magic, mischief and music — a treat for audiences of all ages. *Uptown Knauer Performing Arts Center*, 226 N. High St., West Chester. Fri, Sat, 7 pm; Sun, 2 pm. \$21-\$27. [UptownWestChester.org](http://UptownWestChester.org)



MAY 2

**Spring on King Festival & Concert.** Spend the afternoon strolling King Street in Malvern where you'll find a celebration with live music, food trucks, a beverage garden, local merchants, face painting, balloon artists, kids activities and more. *Festival*, noon to 6 pm, *concert in Burke Park*, Roberts Rd., Malvern at 4. [Malvern.org](http://Malvern.org)

ART, CRAFTS & ANTIQUES .....

APRIL 10-12

**Delaware Valley Art League 2026 Fine Art Sale.** Forty creative artists exhibit their work. Enjoy painting demos and live music. The Willows, 490 Darby Paoli Rd., Villanova. Fri reception open to public, 5 to 8 pm; Sat, 10 to 5; Sun, 11 to 4. [DelawareValleyArtLeague.com](http://DelawareValleyArtLeague.com)



APRIL 24-MAY 10

**53rd Annual Yellow Springs Art Show.** This show features over 4,000 works from more than 220 regional artists. Special events: opening gala, *Apr. 24*, 6 to 9 pm, \$85; Art Show Happy Hour, *May 1*, 5 to 8 pm, \$10; Art Around the Village, *May 10*, 10 to 2, free. Benefits Historic Yellow Springs. 1685 Art School Rd., Chester Springs. Daily 10 am to 4 pm. [YellowSprings.org](http://YellowSprings.org)

MAY 1

**West Chester Spring 2026 Gallery Walk.** Explore the vibrant art scene in downtown West Chester, celebrating the community of artists and galleries. Many stops will have refreshments. Free on-street parking. Presented by Founders Brewing Company and hosted by the Downtown West Chester. 4 to 8 pm. [DowntownWestChester.com](http://DowntownWestChester.com)



BOOKS.....

APRIL 1-28

**Reads & Company Book Groups.** Big Reads: *Apr. 1*, "Kin" by Tayari Jones. International Voices: *Apr. 8*, "Days Come and Go" by Hemley Boum. Kiss & Tell Romance: *Apr. 15*, "Darling Daffodils Farm" by Brittanée

13th Annual Independent Bookstore Day  
April 25, 2026



This national, one-day party celebrates independent bookstores across the country, and many local indie bookstores are participating. Through exclusive books and literary items, contests, cupcakes, and everything in between, it's a party you don't want to miss. Mark your calendar to check in with your favorite book seller to take part in all the festivities. [Bookweb.org/Independent-Bookstore-Day](http://Bookweb.org/Independent-Bookstore-Day)

Nicole. *What's the Tea?: Apr. 22*, "Hi Honey, I'm Homo!" by Matt Baume. 234 Bridge St., Phoenixville. [ReadsAndCompany.com](http://ReadsAndCompany.com)

## CHESTER COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM'S SUMMER READING PROGRAM JUNE TO AUGUST 2026

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- Earn Patch Power 2026 rewards at participating libraries by completing independent activities.
- Attend programs including group games, crafts, music, art projects, science experiments, and more!

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Paoli • Parkesburg • Phoenixville • Spring City • Tredyffrin • West Chester



[WWW.CCLS.ORG](http://WWW.CCLS.ORG)



APRIL 2-16

**Wellington Square Bookshop Book Clubs. NonFiction:** Apr. 2, "FDR's Funeral Train: A Betrayed Widow, a Soviet Spy, and a Presidency in the Balance" by Robert Klara. **Classics:** Apr. 8, "The Haunting of Hill House" by Shirley Jackson. **Fiction:** Apr. 16, "The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store" by James McBride. 549 Wellington Sq., Exton. WellingtonSquareBooks.com

APRIL 8 & 21

**Main Point Books.** Apr. 8, "The Unfinished Business of 1776: Why the American Revolu-

tion Has Never Ended" by Thomas Richards, Radnor Memorial Library, 114 W. Wayne Ave., Wayne. 7 pm. **Fiction:** Apr. 21, "The Ferryman and His Wife: A Novel" by Frode Grytten. 116 N. Wayne Ave., Wayne. MainPointBooks.com

**DANCE.....**

APRIL 18 & 19

**First State Ballet Theatre Presents "Giselle."** Experience the timeless beauty of this romantic ballet masterpiece. The Grand Wilmington, 818 N. Market St., Wilmington. Times and tickets, TheGrandWilmington.org.



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**Local Farm Markets**



**Artisan Exchange**, 208 Carter Dr. West Chester. Sat, 10 to 1. ArtisanExchange.net

**Berwyn Farmers Market**, 511 Old Lancaster Rd. Through Apr. 2nd and 4th Sun, 9 to noon. BerwynFarmersMarket.com

**Bryn Mawr Farmers Market**, Lancaster Ave. Bryn Mawr train station lot. Sat, 9 to 1. LMFarmersMarkets.org/BrynMawr

**Downingtown Farmers Market**, Kerr Park, Log House Field, 28 E. Pennsylvania Ave. Through Apr. 2nd, 4th Sat, 10 to noon. GrowingRootsPartners.com

**Eagleview Farmers Mkt.**, Eagleview Town Ctr., 570 Wellington Sq., Exton. Through Apr. 1st, 3rd Thurs, 3 to 5pm. GrowingRootsPartners.com

**Farmer Jawn Farm Store**, 1225 E. Street Rd., West Chester. Tues & Wed, 10 to 6; Thurs-Fri, 10 to 7; Sat-Sun, 9 to 5. FarmerJawn.co

**Kennett Square Farmers Mkt.**, 600 S. Broad St. Fri, 3 to 5:30. KSQFarmersMarket.com

**Lancaster County Farmers Mkt.**, 389 W. Lancaster Ave., Wayne. Wed, Fri & Sat, 6 to 4. LancasterCountyFarmersMarket.com

**Malvern Farmers Market**, Burke Park, 26 S. Warren Ave. Through Apr. 1st, 3rd Sat, 10 to noon. GrowingRootsPartners.com

**Media Farmers Market**, Edgemont St. between Front & State Sts. Through Apr. 1st and 3rd Sun of the month, 10 to noon. MediaFarmersMarket.com

**Oxford Village Market**, 193 Limestone Rd. May 7th to Oct. 22nd, Thurs, 1-6 p.m. OxfordFarmMarketPA.com

**Phoenixville Farmers Market**, 200 Mill St. Through Apr. Sat, 10 to noon. PhoenixvilleFarmersMarket.org

**Thornbury Farmers Mkt. & CSA**, 1256 Thornbury Rd., West Chester. Thurs-Fri, noon to 6; Sat, 9 to 6; Sun, 11 to 5. ThornburyFarmCSA.com

**West Chester Growers Mkt.**, Chestnut & Church Sts. Through Apr. 1st, 3rd & 5th Sat, 10 to noon. WestChesterGrowersMarket.com

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

For more visit the *Chester County Farm Guide* online, [ChesCoPlanning.org/Agriculture/FarmGuide.cfm](http://ChesCoPlanning.org/Agriculture/FarmGuide.cfm)

**EQUESTRIAN EVENTS.....**

APRIL 26

**81st Annual Kimberton Hunt Club Horse Show.** Watch competitors from the youngest on their lead line ponies to the pros jumping the highest fences. High jump competitors take turns clearing the fences, while Hunter and Jumper Stakes tune up before the Devon Horse Show. Benefits the Kimberton Hounds. Ludwig's Corner Show Grounds, 5 Nantmeal Rd., Glenmoore. Gates open at 8 am. Free. KimbertonHunt.org



**FOOD & BREWS.....**

APRIL 1-30

**KOP Cares Month.** Dine or visit your favorite King of Prussia restaurants to support Children's Hospital of Philadelphia's "I Heart CHOP" campaign. Details on website. KOPCares.com

APRIL 26

**Annual Celebrity Chefs' Brunch.** Savor gourmet tastings by top chefs, sip signature cocktails and enjoy live music in a vibrant, flavorful celebration. Benefits Meals on Wheels in Delaware. Chase Center on the Riverfront, 815 Justison St., Wilmington. 11 am. \$150-\$200. MealsOnWheelsDE.org

APRIL 26

**Brandywine Backyard BBQ Festival.** Enjoy a lively spring afternoon in the park featuring live music, local vendors, delicious BBQ, burgers, wine and beer, and sweet treats from food trucks—all in a relaxed, picnic-style setting. New Garden Township Park, 8938 Gap Newport Pk., Landenberg. Noon to 5. \$15. CCCScouting.org

**FUNDRAISERS.....**

APRIL 10

**People's Light Lights Up Event—Uncorked.** Where theater-making meets culinary craft. Tour the scene shop, explore racks of costumes and feel like a cast member in the green room, with a signature tasty treat and beverage pairing at each stop. Benefits the theater. 39 Conestoga Rd., Malvern. 6 pm. \$150. PeoplesLight.org

APRIL 17

**Canine Partners for Life Unleashed: Written in the Stars.** Enjoy food, music, live and silent auctions with CPL dogs and puppies. Benefits CPL's mission to increase the independence and quality of life of individuals with disabilities. Deerfield Golf Course, 507 Thompson Station Rd., Newark, DE. 7 to 10 pm. \$150. K94Life.org



APRIL 19

**Rescued on the Runway.** Francisvale Home for Smaller Animals and Providence Animal Center host an afternoon of fun with raffles, lunch, music and adoptable pets looking for a home. Kings Mills, 6000 Pennell Rd., Media. 12:30 pm. ProvidenceAC.org

APRIL 24

**Thorncroft's Annual Victory Gallop.** An unforgettable black-tie evening for the benefit of Thorncroft Equestrian Center. The Pump-house at the Ironworks at Pencoyd Landing, 615 Righters Ferry Rd., Bala Cynwyd. 6 pm. \$500. Thorncroft.org

APRIL 25

**The Walden School—Bid, Sip & Celebrate 2026.** Enjoy great food and cocktails, music, dancing, games and auctions to benefit The Walden School, a preschool through grade 5 independent school. The Springhaven Club, S. Providence Rd., Wallingford. 6 to 10 pm. TheWaldenSchool.org/Giving/BSC

APRIL 26

**Unite For HER—Bloom Spring Fashion Show.** View the latest spring fashions and celebrate the members of Unite for HER Wellness Program. Proceeds support local breast and ovarian cancer patients. Drexelbrook, 4700 Drexelbrook Dr., Drexel Hill. 11:30 to 2:30. \$140. UniteForHER.org

MAY 2

**Walk a Mile in Her Shoes.** Step into her shoes, spark conversation and stand for a safer community at Mental Health Fun Day at the Phoenixville Recreation Center, 501

**America250 Events**



**April 1-30, Forged in Freedom: The Land, the People and the Promise that Shaped a Nation.** A traveling exhibit that overviews the people and events that shaped Chester County. [Chesco.org/5383/Events](http://Chesco.org/5383/Events)

**April 18, 250th Revolutionary Speaker Series: Archaeology & the American Revolution.** An online and in-person discussion with archaeologist Rich Veit exploring how archaeology is reshaping Revolutionary War history. Brandywine Battlefield Park, noon to 1:30 pm. [BrandywineBattlefield.org/Events](http://BrandywineBattlefield.org/Events)

**April 30, Town Tours and Village Walks Kickoff Event.** Thomas U. Walter Courthouse, West Chester. 5:30 pm. This year's theme will be "13 Tours for 13 Colonies," with tours continuing through October. [ChesCoPlanning.org/HistoricTownTours](http://ChesCoPlanning.org/HistoricTownTours)

**April 30, Bells Across PA Unveiling Ceremony & Wish Wall.** Unveiling of a regional commemorative bell and community wish wall at Thomas U. Walter Courthouse Front Steps, West Chester. 5:15. [CCCF250.org/Bells](http://CCCF250.org/Bells)

**Keep Chester County Beautiful** Volunteer groups participate in beautification activities throughout the county. [ChesCoPlanning.org/Environmental/KCCBIA250.cfm](http://ChesCoPlanning.org/Environmental/KCCBIA250.cfm)

**Regional Meetings** Monthly Zooms provide an open forum for the community to share ideas and plans for America250 celebrations and commemorations. Visit [CCCF250.org/PlanningforDetails](http://CCCF250.org/PlanningforDetails).

- **Greater Phoenixville:** 4th Tues. monthly at 3.
- **Greater West Chester:** 4th Mon. monthly at 2.
- **Southern Ches Co:** 4th Wed. monthly at 2.
- **Main Line:** 2nd Mon. monthly at noon.
- **Coatesville:** TBD.

FranklinAve., Phoenixville. Walks are 10 am and noon. Registration, free. Donations, DVC-CCPA.org.

MAY 6 & 7

**3rd Annual Delco Gives.** Hosted by The Foundation for DE County, a community-wide celebration supports local nonprofits with events across Delaware County, from performances and open houses to walks, art shows and community gatherings. [DelcoGives.org](http://DelcoGives.org)

MAY 7

**Brandywine Zoo Guest Bartending Event.** Join guest bartenders for an evening of drinks and fun in supporting the Zoo. BBC Tavern and Grill, 4019 Kennett Pk., Greenville, DE. 6 to 9. [BrandywineZoo.org](http://BrandywineZoo.org)

**GARDENS** .....

**THROUGH APRIL**

**Spring Blooms at Longwood Gardens.** Spring bulbs bring the season to life, followed by flowering trees bursting into bloom. Visit for Tulip Tuesdays, *Apr. 21, 28, May 5*; evening hours until 9 pm, *Apr. 18, 19, 24, 25, 26, May 1-3*; Science Series: The Stories Behind our Plants, *Apr 19*; Open Air Theatre fountains return *Apr. 18*. 1001 Longwood Rd., Kennett Square. LongwoodGardens.org



**APRIL 11**

**Stoneleigh: A Natural Garden: Home & Garden Tour.** Dazzling displays of native plants, ancient trees and landscape designs are highlighted on this guided tour of Stoneleigh. The Tudor Revival Main House is included in the tour. 1829 E. County Line Rd., Villanova. 10:30 to noon. \$10-\$15. StoneleighGarden.org

**APRIL 23-26**

**Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens Plant Sale Weekend.** A large sale featuring rare and unusual rhododendrons and azaleas, plus a large selection of native trees, perennials and shrubs. Jenkins Arboretum, 631 Berwyn Baptist Rd., Devon. Thurs, opening night, 5:30 to 8; Fri-Sun, 9 to 4. JenkinsArboretum.org



**MAY 1 & 2**

**May Market in Historic New Castle.** Flowering and herb plants, indoor yard sale, arts/crafts vendors and Mother's Day gifts. Benefits Arasapha's programs. Behind New Castle Town Hall, 201 Delaware St., Historic New Castle, DE. Fri, 10 to 5; Sat, 9 to 3. Free. Arasapha.org/May-Market

**MUSEUMS** .....

**THROUGH NOVEMBER**

**Brandywine Museum of Art.** *Through May, 17*, "John Sloan's Street Theater," por-

traying the realities of modern life in New York City. *Through May 31*, "Crospey, Wyeth, and the American Landscape Tradition," a rediscovered masterpiece by Jasper Francis Crospey. *Through June 7*, "Abundance/Excess: A Contemporary Eye on Still Life." *Through November*, N.C. Wyeth Mural Experience, N.C. Wyeth Studio and Point Lookout Farm. 1 Hoffman's Mill Rd., Chadds Ford. Wed-Mon, 9:30 to 4:30. \$8-\$20. Brandywine.org

**THROUGH DECEMBER**

**Delaware Art Museum.** *Through Aug. 23*, "Living Indigenous" showcases and celebrates the creative contributions of Indigenous artists living in and connected to the Delaware community. *Through Dec.*, "Jamey Grimes: Aster" installation transforms DelArt's Fusco Hall with swirling, synthetic forms inspired by nature. 2301 Kentmere Pkwy., Wilmington. Wed-Sun, 10 to 4. \$14-\$25. DelArt.org

**MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT** .....

**APRIL 3-29**

**Uptown! Knauer Performing Arts Center.** *Apr. 3*, Fooz Fighters: A Tribute to Foo Fighters; *Apr. 11*, Rooted in Rhythm: original music by Caro Pierotto; *Apr. 12*, J2B2: John Jorgenson Blue Grass Band; *Apr. 23*, Jazz Cocktail Hour with Denise King: Songs of

Peace Hope and Healing; *Apr. 29*, Dueling Pianos with The Philly Keys. 226 N. High St., West Chester. Times and tickets, 610-356-2787; UptownWestChester.org.



**APRIL 4-25**

**At The Colonial Theatre.** *Apr. 4*, Europa: Tribute to Carlos Santana; *Apr. 10*, Mike



Doughty Solo Tour '26; *Apr. 11*, The April Fool's Comedy Show; *Apr. 11*, Broken Arrow: The Music of Neil Young; *Apr. 12*, Eddie Bruce: The Tony Bennett Centennial Celebration; *Apr. 18*, Marty Stuart and His Fabulous Superlatives; *Apr. 25*, The Launch: A Tribute to Boston, Styx and Queen. 227 Bridge St., Phoenixville. Times and tickets, TheColonialTheatre.com.

**APRIL 6-30**

**The Keswick Theatre.** *Apr. 6*, An Evening with Chris Thile; *Apr. 7*, Forever K-Pop; *Apr. 9*, Reverend Horton Heat; *Apr. 11*, All Things Equal: The Life & Trials of Ruth Bader Ginsburg; *Apr. 16*, An Evening With Fran Lebowitz; *Apr. 18*, Joe Conklin and the City Rhythm Orchestra; *Apr. 25*, Almost Queen; *Apr. 28*, John Butler with Band; *Apr. 30*, Steel Panther. 291 N. Keswick Ave., Glenside. Times and tickets, KeswickTheatre.com.

**APRIL 7**

**WCU Wells School of Music Spring Choral Festival.** Featuring the Chamber Choir, Recital Choir, Orpheus Singers, Allegro Voices and Oriana Chorale celebrating the return of spring and the emergence of light. Madeleine Wing Adler Theater, 817 S. High St., West Chester. 7:30 pm. Free. WCUA.edu/Arts/Calendar.aspx

**APRIL 9-30**

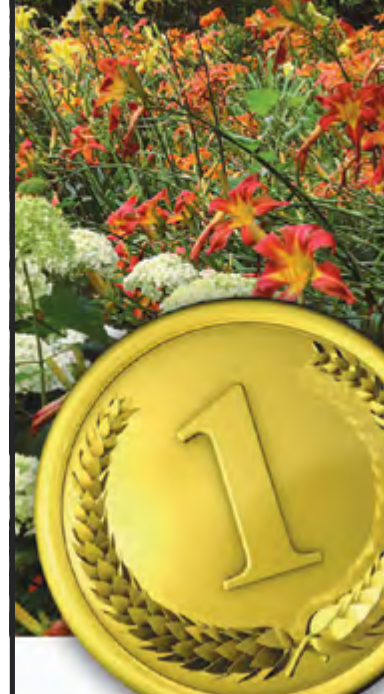
**The Grand in Wilmington.** *Apr. 9*, An Evening of Alton Brown; *Apr. 11*, BubbleMania: Comedy With a Drip; *Apr. 11*, Classic Albums Live presents Pink Floyd's "The Wall"; *Apr. 12*, The Acrobats of Cirque-Tacular; *Apr. 12*, David Sedaris; *Apr. 12*, Livingston Taylor; *Apr. 14*, Leo Kottke; *Apr. 24*, Gary Gulman's Grandiloquent; *Apr. 25*, Bored Teachers Comedy Tour: "Is It Friday Yet?"; *Apr. 30*, Ottmar Liebert and Luna Negra. 818 N. Market St., Wilmington. Times and tickets, TheGrandWilmington.org.



**APRIL 25**

**Malvern Porchfest Presents Spring Jam '26.** Come jam at the Malvern Fire Company and enjoy music, food and brews.

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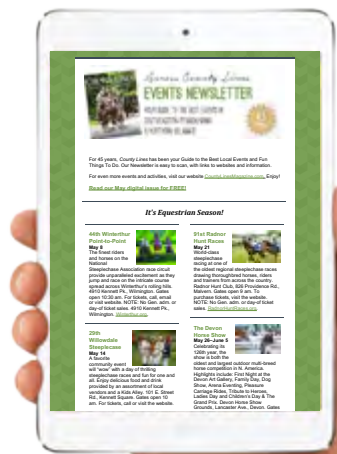
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Benefits Lending Library with Love. 424 E. King St., Malvern. 4:30 to 9 pm. \$15. MalvernPorchfest.org

APRIL 26

**Chester County Concert Band—"America's 250th Birthday!" Spring Concert.** The very patriotic program features fun music, surprises and a reading of the Declaration of Independence. Approximately 90 musicians from all over the Delaware Valley will perform. Fugett Middle School, Paoli Pk. & Ellis Ln., West Chester. 2:30 pm. \$15. CCCBand.org



### OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES .....

APRIL 18

**Ryerss Run for the Horses.** Everyone is welcome to take a 10K or 5K run or 1-mile walk on a cross country course at Ryerss Farm. Benefits the farm's retired and rescued horses. 1710 Ridge Rd., Pottstown. 1 pm. \$45. RyerssFarm.org

APRIL 19

**Delaware Marathon Running Festival.** Runners enjoy the best of Wilmington, from the views along the Riverfront and through downtown in a marathon, half marathon, 10K or 5K race. Benefits Talbot Humane and Celtic Star. Tubman Garrett Riverfront Park, 815 Justison St., Wilmington. \$50-\$125. Delaware-Marathon.org

APRIL 19

**Valley Forge Revolutionary 5-Mile Run.** Runners trek a 5-mile course that traverses the scenic Valley Forge National Historical Park. Benefits the park. To register, ValleyForge.org/Revolutionary-Run.

MAY 2

**Humane Pennsylvania's 49th Annual Walk for the Animals.** Grab your furry friends and get ready for a day filled with fun, community spirit and support for animals in need. Supports Humane PA's mission and the animals they serve. Berks Co. Fairgrounds, 1216 Hilltop Rd., Leesport. Registration, 10 am. \$12-\$60. HumanePA.org

MAY 3

**Blue Cross Broad St. Run.** Line up for a 10-mile, point-to-point course starting at Cen-

tral High School Athletic Field, Broad & Fisher Sts. in Philadelphia, and finishing inside the Navy Yard. Benefits the American Cancer Society. 7 am. \$65. BroadStreetRun.com

### THEATER .....

THROUGH APRIL 5

**"Fun Home" at Media Theatre.** When her father dies unexpectedly, a young woman dives into her past to tell the story of the one-of-a-kind man whose temperament and secrets defined her family and her life. 104 E. State St., Media. Times and tickets, 610-891-0100; MediaTheatre.org.

APRIL 15-MAY 3

**"The Chequeboard Watch" at Delaware Theatre Company.** A musical that tells the tale of a crew of sailors on a voyage aboard a 19th-century clipper ship. What begins as a smooth voyage to South Australia becomes dangerous. 200 Water St., Wilmington. Times and tickets, DelawareTheatre.org.

APRIL 30-MAY 24

**"9 to 5" at Media Theatre.** Dolly Parton's smash hit comes to Media Theatre. 104 E. State St., Media. Times and tickets, 610-891-0100; MediaTheatre.org.

APRIL 3-5

**"Jesus Christ Superstar" at The Keswick Theatre.** The rock opera that retells the last week of Jesus' life from the perspective of Judas Iscariot. Music by Andrew Lloyd Webber and lyrics by Tim Rice. 291 N. Keswick Ave., Glenside. Times and tickets, KeswickTheatre.com.

APRIL 17-19

**Uptown! Knauer Performing Arts Center presents "The Last Five Years."** A fresh take on a classic love story makes this a must-see for anyone who cherishes a deep dive into the heart of relationships. 226 N. High St., West Chester. Times and tickets, 610-356-2787; UptownWest-Chester.org.

APRIL 18

**"The Diary of Black Men: How Do You Love a Black Woman" at The Playhouse.** A thought-provoking and entertaining romantic comedy stage play that explores Black love and relationships through humor, poetry and dance. 1007 N. Market St., Wilmington. Times and tickets, TheGrandWilmington.org.

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

APRIL 11, 18, 22

That's Entertainment! A Walking Tour of

**West Chester's Musicians, Actors, Artists and More.** Join the staff of the Chester County History Center to visit the homes and locations associated with some of the most influential artists and entertainers in American history, who all happened to hail from here. 225 N. High St., West Chester. 11 am and 1:30 pm. \$16. MyCCHC.org

APRIL 18

**Migration Bird Walk at Paoli Battlefield.** Learn about spring bird migration and local bird species in one of Malvern's treasured natural areas. Paoli Battlefield Woods and Meadow, Monument and Wayne Aves., Malvern. 8:30 to 10:30 am. Free. Advance reg. is encouraged. Malvern.org ♦

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# 20th West Chester Film Festival

APRIL 24 -26, 2026

IN 2026, THE WEST CHESTER FILM Festival is celebrating its 20th festival, once again showcasing independent short films from around the world. It's a momentous anniversary for this nonprofit event, which is entirely volunteer-run and supported by the community.

"I can't believe it has been 20 years!" said Amy Theorin, film producer and WCFF Filmmaker Liaison. "The festival just keeps getting better and better, with the quality of films increasing every year. Our reputation as a film festival continues to grow, and we're excited for the amazing lineup of films, workshops and events planned for this April."

The West Chester Film Festival shows short films from around the world, including Oscar-winning documentaries, inventive animations, local dramas and gut-busting comedies. Over three days, from April 24 to 26, 2026, the Fest will show dozens of films, as well as host parties, workshops, pop-up blocks and more in downtown West Chester.

All selected films are 30 minutes or less. And each block of films includes a range of genres, subjects, languages and themes, creating a unique opportunity to explore the world and engage with fellow filmgoers throughout the weekend.

The main venue is Uptown Knauer Performing Arts Center, where the popular Opening and Closing Night Parties will be held and all the selected films will be shown on the big screen in two-hour film blocks. There will also be themed Pop-Up Blocks at venues around the downtown district and other opportunities to meet filmmakers, learn more about filmmaking, and see shorts from local young filmmakers. The full schedule is available on their website: [WestChesterFilmFestival.com](http://WestChesterFilmFestival.com).

Attending the West Chester Film Festival is more than just watching films — it's a chance to become part of the celebration. Whether you're looking for a fun date idea, a girls' night out or a full weekend experience, there's something for everyone.

See you at the Fest! ♦

~Victoria Rose



PHOTO CREDIT: ED SHIN - SHINBONE PHOTOGRAPHY

PHOTO CREDIT: JOHANNA WALSMITH-HESSER PHOTOGRAPHY



PHOTO CREDIT: ED SHIN - SHINBONE PHOTOGRAPHY

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### IF YOU GO

When: April 24–26, 2026  
Where: Main venue at Uptown Performing Arts Center, 226 N. High St., West Chester, plus other venues in the downtown district  
Tickets & Info:  
[WestChesterFilmFestival.com](http://WestChesterFilmFestival.com);  
[@WCFilmFestival](https://twitter.com/WCFilmFestival)

# Chester County's Revolutionary Nature

## WHERE THE OUTDOORS MEETS THE REVOLUTION

Kim Andrews

ON ANY GIVEN WEEKEND in Chester County, hikers lace up boots, cyclists trace winding backroads, and families spread picnic blankets beneath old trees. It's easy to think of these landscapes as purely recreational — beautiful, restorative and comfortably removed from modern life.

Yet beneath many of today's trails and meadows lies another story. During the Revolutionary War's Philadelphia Campaign of 1777–1778, these same fields, fords and farm lanes became corridors of conflict, survival and transformation.

As the nation celebrates its 250th anniversary throughout 2026, Chester County offers a powerful reminder that meaningful commemoration doesn't require distant cities or formal halls. It begins close to home, along the trails, parks and open spaces that quietly witnessed history in motion. Across the county, historic sites embedded within beloved recreation areas invite residents and

visitors alike to experience the Revolution where it unfolded.

### LOCAL GEOGRAPHY AND THE PATH OF WAR

Chester County's landscape was central to the war effort. Roads now favored by joggers once carried Continental and British troops. Creek crossings that attract anglers were strategic chokepoints. Farms that host community events today supplied grain, forage and shelter to armies on the move long ago. Chester County sat squarely in the path of the British advance toward Philadelphia, and its geography shaped decisions with consequences echoing far beyond the region.

Now known for small shops and popular dining spots like the Marshallton Inn and Four Dogs Tavern, the village of Marshallton once anchored a crossroads pulsing with wartime discussion, supply routes and decision-making. A stroll along

Strasburg Road reveals how ordinary places — taverns, shoemakers, wheelwrights and blacksmith shops — became vital nodes in a revolutionary network. The fight for independence was lived daily by civilians navigating uncertainty as much as by soldiers in uniform.

Further south, the landscapes of Kennett Square and Chadds Ford tell a story of movement and momentum. Trails and markers guide visitors through the terrain that witnessed the Battle of Brandywine, the largest land battle of the American Revolution. The scale of the conflict becomes tangible when walking or cycling these routes, revealing how fog, fields and waterways influenced the outcome.

The experience grows especially poignant at Paoli Battlefield, the site of the Paoli Massacre on September 21, 1777. Preserved open grasslands hold the memory of the nighttime attack that stunned the colonial soldiers. The quiet of the site,

particularly at dusk, invites contemplation. Nature trails and interpretive panels help visitors understand not only what happened there, but why it mattered, connecting emotion with historical insight.

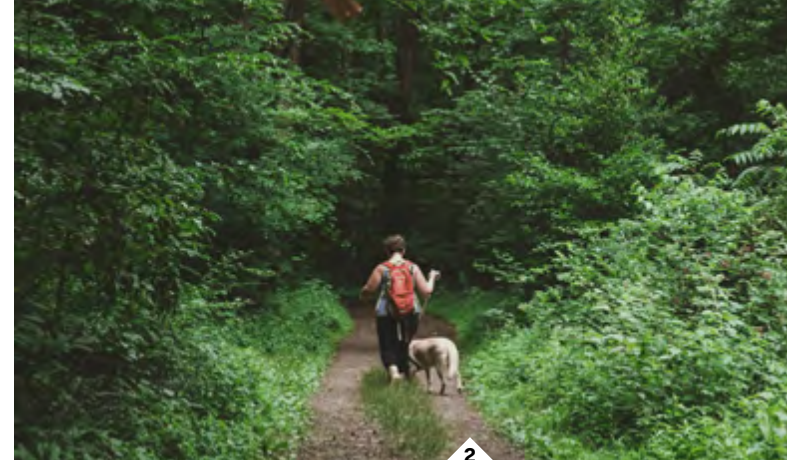
### AGRICULTURE HELPED THE WAR EFFORT

Not all Revolutionary stories center on combat. Chester County's rich soil and mills formed a vital agricultural backbone, feeding residents and sustaining the war effort. Food production was as essential to independence as muskets and cannons.

Today, visitors can still hear the creak of wooden gears and smell freshly ground cornmeal at the Mill at Anselma (1747), a working gristmill in Chester Springs that operated during the Revolutionary period. Nearby, Thornbury Farm, located within the Brandywine Battlefield, offers a powerful dual narrative: once contested ground, now productive farmland supplying fresh food while welcoming families to connect with the land.

Northern Chester County also played a critical role. At Warwick County Park, wooded trails and rolling hills now offer a peaceful escape, but this land once supplied timber and charcoal for the region's iron furnaces. Remnants of charcoal hearths remain along old cart paths, reminders that American independence was literally forged here through iron used to manufacture cannons and ammunition. Interpretive signage allows today's visitors to layer historical understanding onto a casual hike.

1. Redbud with Marshallton Inn sign  
PHOTO CREDIT: MARSHALLTON CONSERVATION TRUST
2. Hiker at Warwick County Park  
PHOTO CREDIT: CHESTER COUNTY PARKS AND CONSERVATION
3. The Village Shop (in the Blacksmith Shop in Marshallton)  
PHOTO CREDIT: FRIENDS OF MARTIN'S TAVERN



## Our Revolutionary Nature

### HIKE WHERE THEY MARCHED

- **Birmingham Hill Preserve.** 1272 Birmingham Rd., West Chester. [Brandywine.org/Conservancy](http://Brandywine.org/Conservancy)  
Site of first and second defensive lines of the Continental Army and where General Lafayette was wounded. 113-acre preserve with grass walking trail.
- **Brinton Run Preserve.** 6 Oakland Rd., Chadds Ford. [NorthAmericanLandTrust.org/Projects](http://NorthAmericanLandTrust.org/Projects)  
71-acre preserve with trails and wildlife habitats within the Brandywine Battlefield.

- **Brandywine Battlefield Park.** 1491 Baltimore Pk., Chadds Ford. [BrandywineBattlefield.org](http://BrandywineBattlefield.org)  
Museum, Washington's headquarters and walking paths.

- **Jefferis Ford Nature Area.** 35 N. Creek Rd., West Chester. [EastBradford.org](http://EastBradford.org)  
11,000 British troops crossed the Brandywine at this corner on the morning of September 11, 1777. Interpretive panels and cycling stop.

- **Sandy Hollow Heritage Park.** 1313 Birmingham Rd., West Chester. [BirminghamTownship.org/History](http://BirminghamTownship.org/History)  
Site of the second American defense during the Battle of Brandywine. 42-acre park with 1.1-mile pedestrian loop.

- **Paoli Battlefield Historical Park.** Monument Ave & Wayne Ave., Malvern. [PBFinc.org](http://PBFinc.org)  
Remember Paoli! Site where 53 American troops were killed during a nighttime surprise attack. Trails and interpretive panels.

### WANDER WHERE THEY WORKED

- **Historic Yellow Springs.** 685 Art School Rd., Chester Springs. [YellowSprings.org](http://YellowSprings.org)  
Walking tours, trails and exhibits explore America's first military hospital, the spa village and the village's role as a center for studying art, history and the environment.

- **The Mill at Anselma National Historical Landmark.** 1730 Conestoga Rd., Chester Springs. [AnselmaMill.org](http://AnselmaMill.org)  
Working c. 1747 grist mill and walking trails. Monthly milling demonstrations.

- **Thornbury Farm Market & CSA.** 1256 Thornbury Rd., West Chester. [ThornburyFarmCSA.com](http://ThornburyFarmCSA.com)  
Working farm since 1709, produce stand, events, tours of the battlefield.

- **Warwick County Park.** 191 County Park Rd., Pottstown. [ChesCo.org/4628/Warwick-County-Park](http://ChesCo.org/4628/Warwick-County-Park)  
Walking trails, remains of iron industry.

### STROLL LIKE A PATRIOT

- **Marshallton Village Heritage Center.** 1300 W. Strasburg Rd., West Chester. [MartinsTavern.org](http://MartinsTavern.org)  
Info center and kiosk shares Marshallton's village and landscape. Audio walking tour explores landmarks including Martin's Tavern (1764) and the c. 1750 Blacksmith Shop.

At Historic Yellow Springs, trails wind past the remains of America's first military hospital, commissioned by General George Washington in 1777, underscoring the region's role in sustaining the Continental Army through care and recovery as well as combat.

### EXPLORE AND REMEMBER

Together, these sites demonstrate how outdoor recreation and historical commemoration reinforce one another. Families can follow loop trails and learn about colonial industry. Cyclists can link sites across landscapes that once challenged armies on foot. History enthusiasts can plan daylong outings that combine battlefield walks with village centers and county parks.

As America marks its semiquincentennial, Chester County's outdoor spaces offer an accessible, deeply personal way to connect with the past. No tickets or timetables are required, just curiosity and a willingness to look more closely at familiar ground.

In 2026, in this countryside, a walk, ride or picnic is more than recreation, it's a journey through history. ♦

*Kim Andrews is part of the Chester County Community Foundation's America 250 initiative and a nonprofit governance consultant. She wrote this article to raise awareness of Chester County's role in our nation's fight for freedom and build engagement for 2026, the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. For more information and to get involved: America250Chesco.org or CCCF250.org*



## Let Freedom Ring! Chester County's Bells Across Pennsylvania

As part of America250PA's **Bells Across Pennsylvania** initiative, artist-designed bells are being placed in all 67 counties to mark the 250th anniversary. Chester County's bell, sponsored by the Chester County Community Foundation and designed by Chester Springs artist Ashley Kolpak, showcases local landmarks including Valley Forge National Historical Park, Longwood Gardens, Kennett Square's Mushroom Capital heritage and the American Helicopter Museum.

Unveiled in spring 2026 at the Historic Chester County Courthouse, the bell will rotate among county civic and heritage sites over the next few years, serving as a visual call to Chester County's Revolutionary roots and shared community pride.



Chester County bell in progress

PHOTO COURTESY OF ASHLEY KOLPAK

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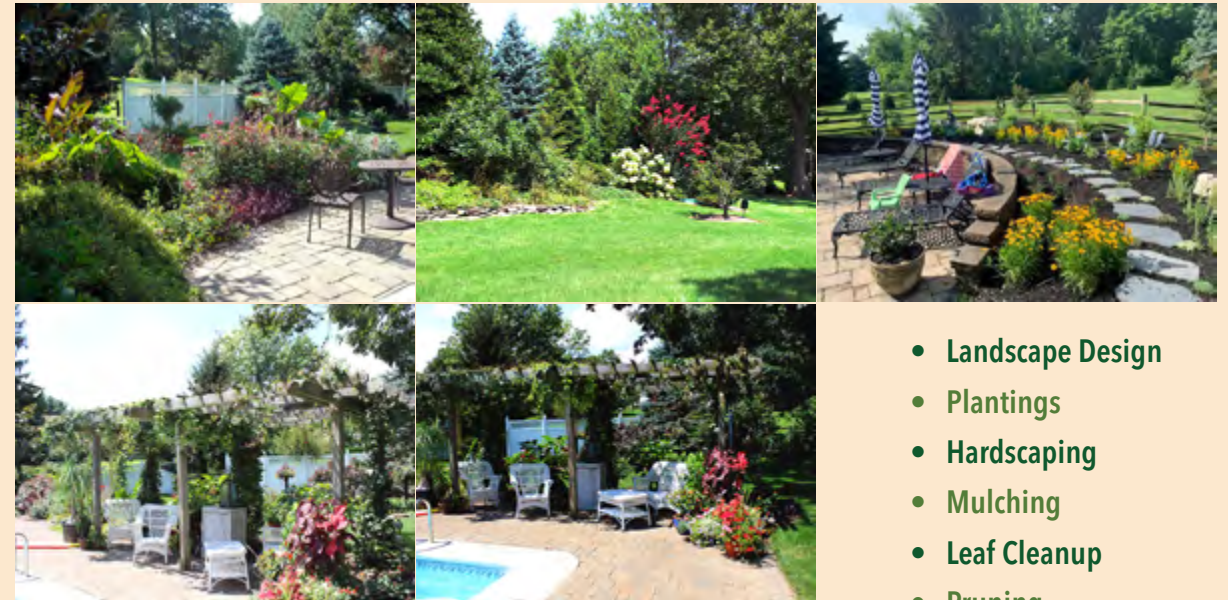


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# Invitation to a Garden Party Tour — June 20 & 27, 2026

SEE BEYOND THE GARDEN GATE ...

Sharon Richardson, Uwchlan Garden Club

IN HONOR OF OUR NATION'S semiquincentennial, the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania invites you to the first-ever Pennsylvania Garden Party, showcasing beautiful and unique public and private residential gardens across the state. For more than 95 years, the Garden Federation has been dedicated to beautifying our state — one garden, one community and one project at a time. Join the tour to see what they've accomplished.

What makes this tour special is the personal stories behind each garden. One host gardener shared, "Watching plants return each year in our woodland shade has given me a sense of purpose, quiet joy and a deeper appreciation for the beauty of living things. And, somewhere along the way, I realized that gardening doesn't just renew plants. It renews people, too." Another host loves to grow flowers to give away bouquets as random acts of kindness, as she surprises stran-

gers in Domestic Violence Center of Chester County residences and retirement communities plus delivery drivers with flowers.

The PA Garden Party will feature 90 gardens statewide on two Saturdays, June 20 and 27, 2026, from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., rain or shine. The gardens on the tour range from renowned gardens such as Barns-Brinton House, Henry Botanical Gardens and the Barnes Arboretum at St. Joseph's — offering special features for the

tour — to the many small private patio and cottage gardens, plus shade, aquatic and moon gardens. You may even spot gardens planted in red, white and blue for America's 250th.

The tour is statewide, but here's how the self-driving tour operates locally. On June 20, the Garden Clubs of Bala Cynwyd, Villanova and Springfield will be featured, including gardens on the Main Line in Montgomery County as well as in Delaware County, where you can wander the paths and meet the gardeners.

Then on June 27, Chester County will be in the spotlight, with the Spade and Trowel Club of Kennett Square (dating back to 1939) and the Uwchlan Garden Club (established in 1934) showcasing gardens in Kennett Square, West Chester and Downingtown. Also on the 27th, the Norristown Garden Club will host gardens from Ambler to Malvern. Yet another special feature, Michael Bowells, owner of Create a Scene, a garden design firm, is opening his private garden in Malvern from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. to support the initiative.

Gardens on the tour will also host local garden writers for book signings on

both Saturdays. During the tour you may encounter Pam Baxter, local garden writer, author and columnist, or Jenny Rose Carey, noted garden writer and speaker. Check the program for times and locations.

What a wonderful opportunity to join the statewide celebration and peek behind the garden gate ... ♦

*IF YOU GO: A \$25-\$30 ticket includes a full-color tour book — your admission to all participating gardens on both days. The tour book features garden descriptions, addresses, maps and more. For details, updates and ticket information, visit [PAGardenClubs.org](http://PAGardenClubs.org).*

1. Leslie Wehr's Garden: Embreeville Farm, Coatesville
2. Henry Botanical Garden
3. Pluck-Deitz pond garden
4. Barnes Arboretum
5. Hevener Garden
6. Create a Scene owner Michael Bowells' private garden



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# Spring Into Outdoor Living

IMPROVE, INVEST IN AND ENJOY YOUR OUTDOOR SPACES

Shannon Montgomery

AS SPRING ARRIVES IN earnest, April invites us to turn our attention outside — beyond the walls that surrounded us in winter. It's time to look forward to sunny afternoons on the patio, dinners on the deck and evenings gathered with family and friends under the open sky. So start thinking about how your outdoor spaces can work harder for you, turning everyday moments into something special.

Homeowners and prospective buyers are placing more value than ever on these spaces. In a national survey, 75% of home buyers reported they'd prioritize homes that have outdoor living spaces over those without, highlighting how outdoor projects enhance both lifestyle and property values.

With thoughtful upgrades — whether a full backyard transformation or well-chosen improvements — your outdoor areas can become a place to relax, entertain and invest in your home at the same time. Read on for inspiration from local experts to help you create your outdoor oasis.

## OUTDOOR LIVING

Today's homes are increasingly blurring the line between indoors and out, transforming patios, decks and backyards into stylish, functional extensions of the home. A well-designed outdoor living space can be both a place to reconnect with nature as well as an investment in your home. In fact, Realtor.com found that indoor-outdoor

spaces were the second fastest-growing home trend of 2025, with a 163% increase in listing mentions and a median listing price of \$859,000 — evidence that buyers place a premium on homes that embrace outdoor living.

“Upgrading your outdoor spaces creates the perfect blend of enjoyment and long-term value. Beautiful patios, decks, gardens and pools extend your living area, offering a place to relax, entertain and create lasting memories,” said Dewson Construction's John McMahan. “At the same time, well-executed improvements boost curb appeal and strengthen property value, making every upgrade a smart investment in both lifestyle and your home's future. Simply

put, thoughtful outdoor improvements deliver both immediate enjoyment and measurable long-term equity.”

In Landenberg, Dewson Construction created a backyard oasis that combines everyday pleasure with lasting value. Terraced flagstone on both the patios and the pool deck unifies the outdoor spaces, and a timber-framed pool cabana provides interior and exterior living areas, indoor-outdoor eating areas and seasonal storage — plus shade from the sun, of course.

Consider your outdoor spaces an extension of your home — a setting where daily rituals, from cooking and dining to relaxing with family and friends, unfold in the open air. “We believe exceptional outdoor living should feel like a natural extension of the home, not an afterthought,” said Bob McComsey of McComsey Builders. “The result is more than a backyard. It's a refined outdoor oasis that enhances lifestyle today, while strengthening long-term property value,” McComsey said.

A McComsey-built waterfront retreat at a home in Cecil County, Maryland is a perfect example. The custom pool and expansive paver terrace invite relaxation and entertainment, while the fully furnished covered living area beneath the home includes an outdoor kitchen, bar seating, dining space and comfortable lounge areas. Architectural details — warm wood ceilings, arched openings,

thoughtful lighting — add both character and year-round comfort.

“We love encouraging clients to extend their living space outdoors, creating dedicated areas for hosting, relaxing and spending quality time together,” added Seth Windle of Windle Design & Construction. “Thoughtfully designed outdoor spaces are a worthwhile investment — they not only elevate everyday living but also add long-term value to the home while making room for meaningful moments with family and friends.”

At a West Chester home, Windle Design & Construction created a dream outdoor space designed for everyday living and entertaining as part of a comprehensive first-floor renovation. They added a covered porch with an outdoor fireplace, a dedicated outdoor bar, plus a custom pool featuring a tanning deck, in-pool table and bar seating — creating a seamless transition between outdoor and indoor living.

## POOLS & POOL HOUSES

For many of us, the ultimate outdoor luxury is a pool, especially when paired with a stylish, well-appointed pool house. Imagine long afternoons spent swimming and sunbathing, then retreating to a shaded space outfitted with a kitchen, bath or even a full living space for effortless entertaining. Plus, Realtor.com reports that homes with a pool



1. Landenberg project by Dewson Construction  
PHOTO CREDIT: ANGLE EYE PHOTOGRAPHY
- 2-3. Cecil County waterfront retreat by McComsey Builders
4. Timber-framed pool cabana by Dewson Construction  
PHOTO CREDIT: ANGLE EYE PHOTOGRAPHY



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carry a 54% higher median list price than those without, making your backyard oasis a smart investment as well as a warm-weather escape.

A custom designed pool, complete with special features like waterfalls, tanning ledges and integrated spas, can turn your backyard into an at-home resort. At a property in New London, DiSabatino Inc. created a striking pool that's the perfect backdrop for a serene outdoor oasis. A raised stone water wall with warm, textured masonry anchors the space, while sculptural glass spheres atop sleek basins shimmer in the sun and reflect the cascading waterfalls.

"Together, these elements transform the pool into a living focal point — equal parts art installation and tranquil retreat," said DiSabatino's Maura Slovin. An outdoor living area and kitchen underneath a black steel pavilion add functional spaces for relaxing and entertaining by the water.

But while the pool may be the centerpiece, a luxurious pool house can elevate the entire outdoor space — adding both everyday livability and long-term value to your home. For a client with a large family and well-loved dogs, Ranieri & Kerns reimagined a Haverford home's backyard. "An existing pool and modest pool house



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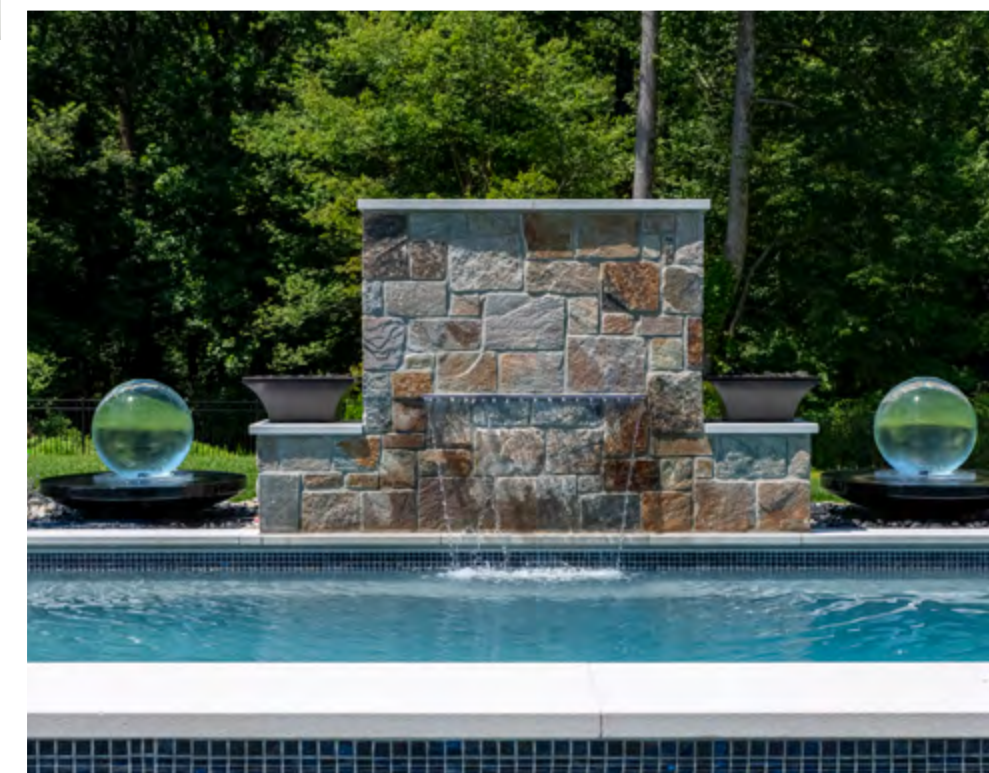
set the stage, but their vision called for something more expansive: layered outdoor living and a fully reimagined, year-round pool house designed for every season," said Thorne "Greg" Ranieri.

"This project was designed and built to endure — an investment meant to serve year after year and more," said Andrew Kerns. New hardscaping frames the fully renovated marble pool deck and restored pool. The pool house was thoughtfully designed as a four-season structure, with a full kitchen, full bath, open living and dining spaces, and dual fireplaces to anchor both indoor and outdoor living spaces.

#### MORE PROJECTS

Not every outdoor upgrade requires a major renovation. A well-chosen project or two can quickly enhance how your home looks, feels and functions — while also adding lasting value. From refreshed landscaping to architectural accents and cozy gathering spots, smaller improvements can make a big impact on how you enjoy your outdoor spaces.

One of the simplest ways to elevate both the beauty and value of your home is through landscaping. Planting shade trees and gardens,



- 5. West Chester renovation by Windle Design & Construction
- 6. New London pool and outdoor spaces by DiSabatino Inc.



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adding stone paths or installing outdoor lighting can boost curb appeal while creating your own personal sanctuary. The payoff can be significant, too. According to the National Association of Realtors, landscaping upgrades can deliver up to a 100% return on investment, making them one of the smartest home improvement projects you can do. Best of all, the transformation is immediate — no lengthy construction timeline required.

If you're looking to add structure and style, pergolas and gazebos are other appealing options. These architectural features create welcoming spots to gather, dine or simply relax in the shade. A pergola, with its open-beam roof and airy structure, is perfect for defining a patio or deck and can be enhanced with flowering vines, retractable canopies or outdoor lighting. Gazebos, typically free-standing and roofed, offer more protection from sun and rain, making them ideal for gardens or backyard retreats.

For an upgrade you can enjoy all year round, consider adding an outdoor fireplace or fire pit. "Fire is primal — it anchors us to the present moment and provides a refuge from the noise beyond the fence line. A beautifully designed outdoor fireplace transforms a backyard into a year-round living room, offering a rare balance of personal comfort and lasting property value," said Patrick Ryan of The Stove Shop Fireplace Experts. "For my own family, our fire pit keeps us outside long into the night. There's truly nothing better than sharing s'mores and conversation in the warmth of your own backyard."

Ultimately, the best outdoor spaces are the ones that invite you to slow down and savor the season. Whether it's a fully realized backyard retreat with a pool and pool house or a simple gathering spot around a fire pit, thoughtful improvements can transform your yard into a place where everyday life feels a little more special.

As the days grow longer and warmer, there's no better time to step outside, imagine the possibilities and create an outdoor space that brings beauty, enjoyment and lasting value to your home. ♦

7-8. Haverford pool and pool house by Ranieri & Kerns  
PHOTO CREDIT: MATT WARGO


9. Outdoor fireplace offered by The Stove Shop Fireplace Experts

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610-692-3388; ShellerOil.com

### Historic Preservation & Restoration Services

**Dewson Construction Co.**  
484-983-3773; DewsonConstruction.com

**King Construction Co.**  
525 Hollander Rd., New Holland  
888-354-4740; KingBarns.com

**Mountaintop Construction**  
634 Springville Rd., New Holland  
717-488-0012; MountaintopBuild.com

**Precise Buildings**  
552 Beechdale Rd., Bird-In-Hand  
717-768-3200; PreciseBuildings.com

**Stable Hollow Construction**  
1805 Mountain Rd., Manheim  
717-665-0580; StableHollow.com

**Thornbury Services**  
1256 Thornbury Rd., West Chester  
610-793-2933; ThornburyServices.com

**Windle Design & Construction**  
331 W. Miner St., West Chester  
717-578-1117; WindleDC.com

### Kitchens, Outdoor

**Main Street Cabinet**  
5064 West Chester Pk., Newtown Square  
610-325-5500; MainStreetCabinet.com  
133 E. Main St., Moorestown, NJ  
856-234-3400; MainStreetCabinet.com

### Landscape Design

**Arrowwood Landscape Design**  
739 Downingtown Pk., Unit 7, West Chester  
484-880-5059; ArrowwoodLscpe.com

**RP Nurseries**  
656 Unionville Rd., Kennett Square  
610-444-1116; RPNurseries.com

**Schnatz & Rohrer Landscaping**  
West Chester  
610-696-5108  
SchnatzAndRohrerLandscaping.com

**Thornbury Services**  
1256 Thornbury Rd., West Chester  
610-793-2933; ThornburyServices.com

### Lawn & Garden Supplies

**Tractor Supply**  
171 Mill Rd., Phoenixville  
877-718-6750; TractorSupply.com

### Masonry

**Arrowwood Landscape Design**  
739 Downingtown Pk., Unit 7, West Chester  
484-880-5059; ArrowwoodLscpe.com

**Keystone Gun-Krete Concrete Lifting**  
4435 Oregon Pk., Ephrata  
717-768-3641, opt. 3; KeystoneGun-Krete.com

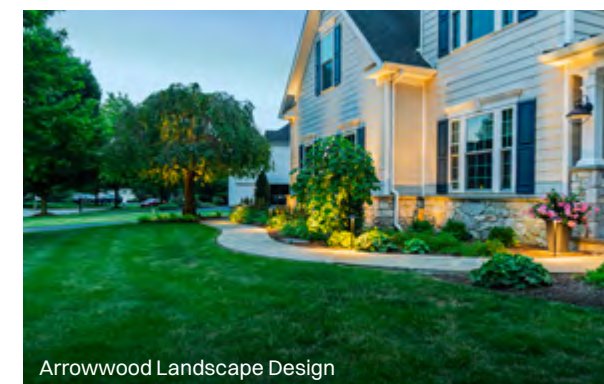
**Stable Hollow Construction**  
1805 Mountain Rd., Manheim  
717-665-0580; StableHollow.com



Level Edge Construction



Red Tail Restoration and Land Management



Arrowwood Landscape Design

### Roofing

**Level Edge Construction**  
65 Prospect Rd., Strasburg  
717-288-3980; LevelEdgeConstruction.com

**Mountaintop Construction**  
634 Springville Rd., New Holland  
717-488-0012; MountaintopBuild.com

### Swimming Pools

**DiSabatino Landscaping & Design**  
471 B&O Ln., Wilmington  
302-764-0408; DiSabatinoInc.com

**Keystone Gun-Krete Concrete Lifting**  
4435 Oregon Pk., Ephrata  
717-768-3641, opt. 3  
KeystoneGun-Krete.com ♦



Tractor Supply



Mountaintop Construction



PHOTO CREDIT: DISCOVER LANCASTER/GABE MCMULLEN



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# Something OLD and Something NEW

## HEAD FOR LANCASTER COUNTY

Laurel Anderson

THERE ARE PLENTY OF reasons to visit Lancaster County. After all, it's just a short drive west that takes you to a world offering some very different experiences. Beyond the open farmland and quaint horse-drawn buggies, there's something new to learn or enjoy on every visit.

Take a few of Lancaster County's recent accolades. TastingTable.com spotted the best pie in Pennsylvania at the **Bird-in-Hand Bakeshop**, citing its rhubarb crumble and shoofly pies, while *Cosmopolitan* magazine found the Victorian-Italianate mansion at the **Belvedere Inn** in Lancaster City to be the state's best date spot, including its romantic piano bar upstairs.

For family fun, *USA Today* put **Dutch Wonderland #6** on its list of the best theme parks for the holidays, with nearby **Hersheypark** as #9 (true, Hersheypark is in Dauphin County, but it's only 30 miles away from Dutch Wonderland).

There's more to discover, whether you want the latest cool thing or a bit of history.

### HISTORY AND HERITAGE

If you're planning heritage outings for America's 250th anniversary, head for a place that was briefly our young nation's capital. Yes, Lancaster City served as the capital for just one day when the Second Continental Congress met there on September 27, 1777, while escaping the Brit-

ish army's occupation of Philadelphia after the Battle of Brandywine. Check back for details on the annual celebration of that brief moment of glory on **Capital Day** in September.

Although Lancaster County was not the site of Revolutionary War battles like those fought across Chester County, it was affected in other ways that can be experienced during the semiquincentennial (250th). Dating back to 1729, the county has long celebrated its history and has plans for festivities in 2026.

Start by picking up your free Discover Lancaster's **America 250th Passport** at the Visitors Center (or other attractions on *DiscoverLancaster.com*) to guide you on

a yearlong journey commemorating the country's milestones as you collect unique stamps at 23 historic sites across the county. The passport is a keepsake, plus it has coupons for special offerings at local businesses to enjoy during your visit.

At the top of your list should be the new heritage site opening May 1, the **Thaddeus Stevens & Lydia Hamilton Smith Center for History and Democracy**. That long name marks an interpretive museum and education center built in Congressman Stevens's former 19th-century law office, commemorating the hard-fought struggle for freedom and equality in our country. Through exhibits, immersive experiences and programs, the lives and legacies of Stevens, his confidante Smith and their social networks of abolitionists are explored.

For a different kind of immersive experience, step back in history to April 1865, when President Lincoln's funeral train crossed through the area at **Stone Gables Estate** in Elizabethtown. This narrated living history event lets you ride aboard the newly expanded train tracks on period-correct replicas of passenger cars on the **Harrisburg, Lincoln & Lancaster Railroad**. Walk through the world's only full-scale replica of President Lincoln's Funeral Car, "United States," and visit a Civil War encampment to learn what life was like for soldiers and civilians from the presenters, reenactors and historians there on April 24 and 25. More train rides are available on other dates.

Just outside Lancaster City, **Historic Rock Ford**, former home to General

Edward Hand, adjutant general to George Washington, will be hosting lectures and special events for America 250. Programs in April include "Untold Stories of the Revolution" about women's roles on April 12, "Songs and Stories of the American Revolution" on the 19th, and "Revolutionary Lancaster" on the 20th. More programs continue throughout the year, with "What Were They Wearing? Lancastrians (and Others) at the Time of the Revolution" on May 17, highlighting fashion of the 18th and 19th centuries. Also worth a visit, the mansion is recognized as one of the most intact examples of Georgian domestic architecture remaining in Pennsylvania.

### IN THEATERS

The performing arts are rolling out the red carpet to present shows with history. The intimate venue at the **Prima Theatre** in Lancaster City presents "The Complete History of America (Abridged)," April 17 to May 3. Come for 90 minutes of fast, fearless fun as three performers bring centuries of history to life with wit, energy and nonstop laughs. From the Pilgrims to pop culture, American history gets a fast, fearless, laugh-out-loud remix in this high-octane comedy that finds the funny in our shared story. No homework, no partisan politics — just a joyful reminder that it's all one big, shared American ride.

For something more traditional, head for the **Ephrata Performing Arts Center**, July 19 through August 2, for "1776 The Musical." This award-winning musical brings America's founding to life with



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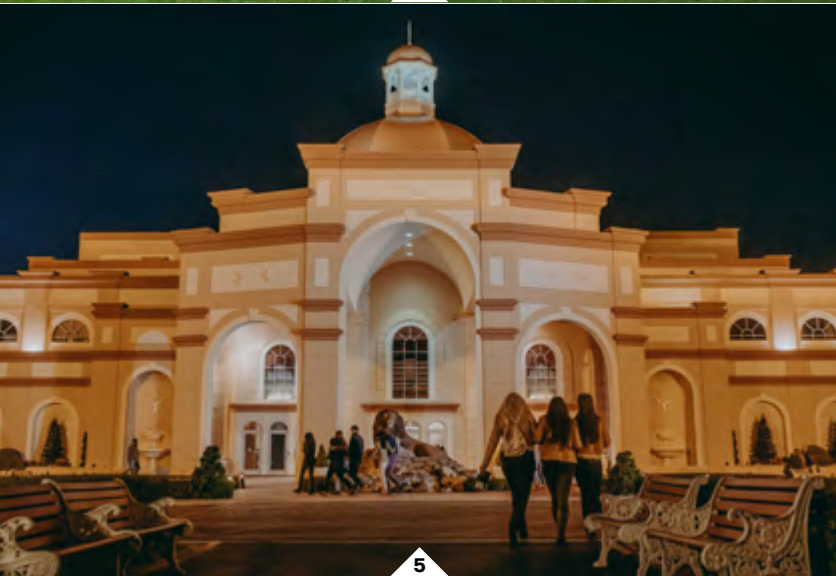
1. Discover Lancaster's America 250th Passport
2. Thaddeus Stevens & Lydia Hamilton Smith Center for History and Democracy  
PHOTO CREDIT: DISCOVER LANCASTER/LARRY LEFEVER PHOTOGRAPHY
3. Harrisburg, Lincoln & Lancaster Railroad

stirring songs and larger-than-life portraits of Revolutionary leaders. It captures the debate, doubt and determination behind the Declaration of Independence in a heart-felt, high-spirited celebration for audiences of all ages. Worth the drive!

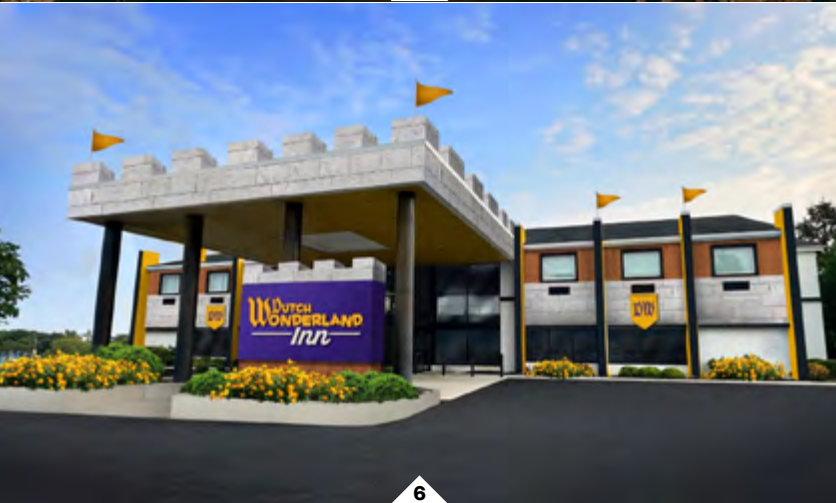
More history, but biblical history this time, is at **Sight & Sound Theatres** in Ronks, celebrating their 50-year anniversary of when a dairy farmer went from producing milk to producing live entertain-



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- 4. Historic Rock Ford  
PHOTO CREDIT: DISCOVER LANCASTER
- 5. Sight & Sound Theatres  
DISCOVER LANCASTER/GABE MCMULLEN
- 6. Dutch Wonderland Inn
- 7. Decades' Ice Cream Bar
- 8. Bird-in-Hand Family Restaurant & Smorgasbord
- 9. BJ's Pit Stop Bar & Grill
- 10. Lititz Fourth of July Celebration



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ment with a purpose. Now with two state-of-the-art theater locations, an online streaming platform and a film studio, they're presenting a new stage production through 2026. See "Joshua," the story of when Joshua was called to replace Moses as the faithful leader of the Israelites to the Promised Land.

### WHAT'S NEW?

Dutch Wonderland may have been a Lancaster attraction for 60 years, but Dutch Wonderland Inn is brand new and right next door. Enjoy fun for everyone with convenient dining, an expanded arcade, a cool pool and family accommodations for a perfect night's sleep. Plus, your favorite Dutch Wonderland characters — like Duke the Dragon and Princess Brooke — make special appearances at the Inn. Bundle park tickets with your overnight visit to double your pleasure.

Foodies will find new attractions in Lancaster City. For example, 2026 marks the first full year for Decades' new outdoor patio experience. While the indoor space is open year-round with restaurant, retro arcade, bowling alley and bar, the ice cream bar became a local favorite spot for hand-dipped flavors, classic and boozy shakes, and more.

Or head to the new Lancaster location of Fawn Grove's South County Brewing (the former Press-room location). Try their taproom/restaurant with scratch kitchen, outdoor patio, family-friendly ambiance, plus beer, spirits and merch.

Elsewhere in the county, two beloved foodie spots have returned after significant renovations: Bird-in-Hand Family Restaurant & Smorgasbord for Amish fare and Dutch comfort food along with the

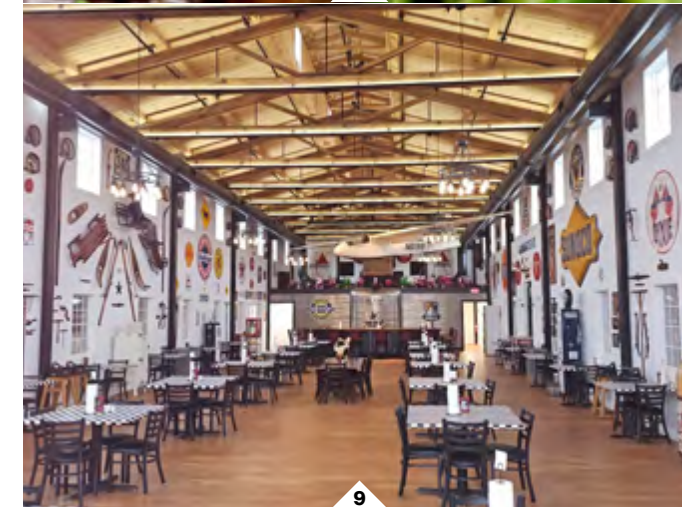
Kling House Restaurant at Kitchen Kettle Village in Intercourse, now serving lunch Monday through Saturday. Also in Intercourse, Barry's Car Barn added a restaurant on its second floor — BJ's Pit Stop Bar & Grill, combining the nostalgia of classic American cars with the comfort of traditional pub fare. And finally, there's a refreshed Strasburg Creamery in the village square, where they're crafting memories, served in a dish or a cone filled with velvety ice cream in creative flavors using the freshest local ingredients.

### ONE MORE THING

To cap off your America 250 tour, consider returning for a visit to Lititz, a gem in Lancaster County and home to one of the country's oldest continuous July 4th celebrations — the 209th in 2026! Since 1818, Lititz has hosted a full day of activities, now including the unique Grand Illumination of Candles (5,000 candles!) along Lititz Run creek followed by fireworks and laser display. All in a perfect setting of small-town America. ♦



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### Are There Mud Sales in April & May?

Yes, although best known for happening in late winter and early spring when thawing ground provides the mud, these huge fundraisers for volunteer fire companies in Amish communities — sometimes drawing 20,000 people — continue throughout most of the year.

Sales generally begin at 8 or 8:30 a.m., with activities running until mid-afternoon for those who wish to glimpse some local color and sample traditional Lancaster County fare. You'll find everything from hand-stitched quilts and locally made crafts to livestock, furniture, produce, baked goods, antiques, housewares, even the kitchen sink are up for bid.

Here are a few April and May mud sales benefiting local fire departments. Find more at [DiscoverLancaster.com](http://DiscoverLancaster.com).

- April 4: Robert Fulton Sale - 2271 Robert Fulton Hwy. (Rtes. 272 & 222), Peach Bottom. 717-548-8995
- April 10 & 11: Rawlinsville Mud Sale - 33 Martic Heights Dr., Holtwood. 717-284-3023
- April 18: Schoeneck Fire Company Mud Sale - 125 N. King St., Denver. 717-336-6767
- May 1 & 2: Fivepointville Auction - 1087 Dry Tavern Rd., Denver. 717-445-4933
- May 8 & 9: Honey Brook Quilt Sale & Consignment Auction - 679 Firehouse Ln., Honey Brook. 610-273-2688
- May 22 & 23: Weaverland Valley Mud Sale - 1030 Pre-cast Rd., New Holland. 717-445-7066



PHOTO CREDIT: DISCOVER LANCASTER



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# Events in Lancaster County

## THROUGH OCTOBER

At Mount Hope Mansion. *Through Apr.*, Murder Mystery Dinner Theater; *Apr. 25*, VolksFest 2026; *May 23 & 24*, FlavorFest at Mount Hope; *June 27–28*, Celtic Fling & Highland Games; *July 11*, 17th Annual Blues & Brews at Mount Hope; *Aug. 15–Oct. 25*, Renaissance Faire. 2775 Lebanon Rd., Manheim. Times and tickets, PARenFaire.com.

## ONGOING

American Music Theatre. Here are just a few—check the website for more: *Apr. 9*, The Temptations & The Four Tops; *Apr. 10*, An Evening with Jeff Foxworthy; *Apr. 12*, Nitty Gritty Dirt Band; *Apr. 19*, Folsom Prison Experience: A Johnny Cash Music/Dramatic Production; *Apr. 23*, One Night of Queen; *Apr. 25*, Stayin' Alive: One Night of the Bee Gees; *Apr. 26*, My Generation Tour: The Lovin Spoonful, Terry Sylvester and Gary Lewis & The Playboys. 2425 Lincoln Hwy. E., Lancaster. Times and tickets, AMTShows.com.

## THROUGH AUGUST 8

Dutch Apple Theatre. *Through May 10*, "Oklahomal;" *May 22–June 20*, "All Shook Up;" *June 26–Aug. 8*, "Mary Poppins." 510 Centerville Rd., Lancaster. Times and tickets, 717-898-1900; DutchApple.com.

## APRIL 2–OCTOBER 15

Bird-in-Hand Stage. *Apr. 2–July 25* "Ned & Nancy See America;" *Apr. 9–Oct. 15*, Ryan & Friends: Lifetime of Laughter. 2760 #A Old Philadelphia Pk., Bird-in-Hand. Times and tickets, 717-768-1568; Bird-In-Hand.com/Stage.

## APRIL 10–JULY 12

At The Fulton. *Apr. 10–May 3*, "Hairspray;" *June 12–July 12*, "West Side Story." 12 N. Prince St., Lancaster. Times and tickets, 717-397-7425; TheFulton.org.

## MAY 2

Ephrata Rhythm & Brews. Live music, craft beverages from local breweries, wineries and distilleries and food from Ephrata's favorite vendors. Thomas P. Grater Community Park, Cocalico St., Ephrata. Noon to 5. \$25. MainSpringOfEphrata.org

## MAY 8

Bridge of Hope Spring Gala. Celebrate the mission to end family homelessness. This year's theme is "Hope Can't Wait: Stories of Strength and Resilience." Doubletree, 2400 Willow Street Pk., Lancaster. BridgeOfHopeInc.org/Gala

## MAY 8 & 9

Landis Valley Museum Herb & Garden Faire. Find handmade garden decor and accessories, demonstrations and workshops, heirloom plants and live entertainment in a family-friendly atmosphere. 2451 Kissel Hill Rd., Lancaster. 9 to 5. LandisValleyMuseum.org

## MAY 15 & 16

Kitchen Kettle Village Rhubarb Festival. Rhubarb is the harbinger of spring in PA Dutch Country, and the festival offers lots of cooking, family activities and more. 3529 Old Philadelphia Pk., Intercourse. Free. KitchenKettle.com

## JUNE 5

Taste of Lititz. Block party to celebrate all the flavors of Lititz from local restaurants with live music. On Main St., Lititz. 5 to 9 pm. LititzPA.com

## JUNE 6 & 7

Lancaster VegFest. Celebrate the plant-based/vegan lifestyle and learn about vegan lifestyles. Benefits Lancaster Farm Sanctuary. Buchanan Park, 901 Buchanan Ave., Lancaster. Noon to 5. Free. PAVegFest.com

Reconnect with Nature  
Visit the Wolves of Speedwell



wolfsanctuarypa.org  
717-626-4617  
465 Speedwell Forge Rd  
Lititz, PA 17543  
Wolf Sanctuary of PA  
[extinct is forever]



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# Let It GROW

## VEGETABLE GARDENING IS TAKING ROOT ACROSS THE BRANDYWINE VALLEY

Shannon Montgomery

WITH THE SUN WARMING their backs and soil beneath their nails, aspiring gardeners across the Brandywine Valley are embracing the joy of growing their own food.

Part of the growing homesteading movement, which is focused on self-sufficiency and living off the land, vegetable gardening is on the rise. More than 55% of U.S. households now garden — that's about 71.5 million gardens nationwide. And in a 2025 national survey, 71% of Americans reported that they were planning to grow a food garden. Even celebrities are getting in on the action, from Oprah and Michelle Obama to Mindy Kaling, Kate McKinnon and even Snoop Dogg.

Ready to dig in? Read on for expert tips to help you grow your own vegetables.

### VEGGIES ON THE RISE

Maureen Dailey, leader of the Chester County Master Gardeners' hotline, said her team has noticed a surge in interest in growing your own food. "We're becoming a more educated society about what we put in our mouths," she explained. "We're presented with the basic food groups from early on, but learning how to eat safe, good foods is everywhere we look. The use of organic, pesticide-free foods is apparent to every grocer who wants to keep their customers happy."

Of course, the rising cost of groceries — food prices jumped 2.9% last year and are predicted to rise another 3.1% this year — is pushing people to start gardening as well. "Good, healthy produce costs more these days, and nothing beats the taste of a fresh, homegrown anything. It's a rewarding hobby and a good lesson about where food comes from — and a way to feel good about what we're putting in our bodies," Dailey said.





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1. Gardening has a host of benefits for both adults and children
2. Raised beds are a great option for beginner gardeners
3. A container garden is ideal for apartments and small outdoor spaces
4. Leafy greens, like kale, are considered the easiest cool-season crops to grow

Plus, gardening is simply good for you. Besides the nutritional benefits of organic, homegrown produce, the physical act of gardening can improve cardiac health, boost immunity, decrease heart rate and increase motor skills, flexibility and strength. Regular exercise — and a healthy dose of vitamin D from time spent outside — improves mental health, too, relieving stress, anxiety and depression.

All those benefits extend to kiddos, too. Gardening is an excellent way to get kids off their screens and into the fresh air, offering exercise, hands-on discovery and time together as a family. It's also a powerful learning experience, letting them see firsthand how food grows and where it comes from. In fact, one study found that children who participated in gardening projects scored higher in science than those who didn't. And with any luck, even the pickiest eater may be more willing to try a vegetable they helped grow themselves.

### PLANNING YOUR GARDEN

Thinking about growing your own vegetables? First, take some time to plan your garden. This starts with finding the right location. "Take a walk around your yard and see where the best place to put your garden would be," Dailey recommended. The ideal spot for your garden will be sunny (most veggies need 6 to 8 hours of direct sunlight), well-drained and have easy access to water.

Next, decide the size and type of garden you want. Dailey suggests starting small. "The single biggest mistake new gardeners make is going too big. What starts out as a beautiful idea can become overwhelming and so time-consuming that failure often follows," she said. "For a first-time vegetable grower, I would stay on the smaller side. The delight in seeing little plants come to life will give you the confidence to do more in the following seasons."

For beginners, Dailey recommends planting in raised beds — large, bottomless containers made of wood, stone or concrete that sit on top

of the ground. "They're easier to maintain and don't have to take up a lot of space to produce great crops," she added. Other popular methods include row gardening — traditional in-ground garden beds, planting seeds directly in the ground — and container gardening — growing plants in containers like pots, hanging baskets and grow bags, ideal for apartments and small yards.

If you're planting in raised beds, "The Old Farmer's Almanac" recommends starting with a 4-by-4-foot or 4-by-8-foot bed. You'll need to fill your beds with a good soil blend. Whether you make your own blend or buy one from a garden center, look for a mix of topsoil, compost and a mineral like perlite for structure, nutrients and good drainage.

Next, it's time to decide what to plant.

### PLANTING VEGGIES

Vegetables are divided into two main categories: cool-season and warm-season crops. Cool-season crops, as the name suggests, are best planted in fall or spring, before the last frost date — the last estimated date where temperatures drop below 32°. For West Chester, this year's last frost is May 2, but some years it can be as late as mid-May. Look up your frost dates by ZIP code at [Almanac.com/Gardening/FrostDates](http://Almanac.com/Gardening/FrostDates).

The easiest cool-season crops for beginners are leafy greens like collards, kale and mustard, all of which can be harvested multiple times before the end of their growing season. Decide whether you'll plant directly from seeds or start with seedlings from your local garden center. Seeds can be planted a few weeks before the last frost, while seedlings do best when temperatures are between 60° and 68°. "Whether you're using seeds or pre-started crops, read the tags. A wealth of information is provided as well as the proper timing to put plants outdoors," Dailey advised.

Warm-season crops, on the other hand, are planted in late spring, after the last frost. The best and easiest warm-season crops to grow in our area are cucumbers, zucchini, peppers, tomatoes and basil. Most warm-season crops — besides those in the melon and bean families — need to be



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planted as seedlings, so you'll want to head to your local nursery.

"The ability to grow seeds indoors and transplant them successfully outdoors is a skill that may frustrate beginners, so I would highly recommend your first garden begins with plants," said Dailey. "Produce can take up to 80 days or more from seed to crop, so starting with plants ensures you'll see your vegetables by early to mid-summer at the latest."

No matter what you plant, be sure to map out your garden beforehand, planning where in your beds each plant will go. Remember, less is more for beginners. "As little as one plant for each variety can produce enough food for an average family, especially if you have a small garden," Dailey said.

### CARING FOR YOUR GARDEN

Now that your veggies are planted, here's what you need to know for your garden to thrive.

The most crucial step in growing a healthy garden is watering. A general rule of thumb is that plants need 1 inch of water per week. Most plants do best when watered deeply about three times a week (including rain), while seedlings will need to be watered twice a day until they are established. If you're watering seeds, be careful not to wash them away — a mister on a hose, spray bottle or a cup with a gentle, steady hand work best.

The best time of day to water is early in the day, while dew is still on the leaves. If you

can't water in the morning, wait until evening — avoid the middle of the day, when much of your water will be lost to evaporation.

A good way to know if your plants need water is to feel the soil. If the soil sticks in your hand and you can shape it into a ball, it's moist enough. But if the soil won't stay together in your hand, or if the surface is hard, baked or cracked, it's time to water. Check if the soil is dry an inch below the surface.

Regular maintenance will keep your garden happy and healthy. Prune overcrowded plants as needed, and control weeds by laying down organic mulch, slicing or chopping weeds with a hoe and hand-pulling. It's best to start as soon as weeds appear!

You'll also need to check your garden regularly for pests. "Being diligent in checking your beds can help make you aware of their presence. Some are active in the day, while others prefer the evening. You must become a detective and look even on the underside of the leaves," said Dailey.

Different crops attract different pests, but common ones you'll find in your garden include aphids, caterpillars, slugs and beetles. "Most can be handled by manually removing them, spraying the plants with a good blast of water, putting deterrents around the plants or using products like netting to keep pests away from plants," Dailey said.

A great way to keep pests at bay is "companion planting" — planting flowers and herbs to lure harmful insects away from



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5. Tomatoes are a popular and beginner-friendly warm-season crop
6. "Companion planting" flowers and herbs in your vegetable garden can deter pests and attract beneficial insects

your veggies and attract beneficial insects to the garden. Native options include planting purple coneflower, black-eyed Susan, wild bergamot and goldenrod near your veggies. Plus, it brings a welcome boost of color and beauty to your garden!

With careful planning and diligent maintenance, you'll soon be harvesting the fruits — or rather, vegetables — of your labor. Few things compare to the flavor of produce picked fresh from your own garden, or the satisfaction of knowing exactly where your food came from. When the season winds down, clear out the garden, enrich the soil and begin dreaming about what you'll grow next year.

Happy planting! ♦

*For gardening help, reach out to your local Penn State Extension branch. For Chester County, call 610-696-3500 or email [ChesterMG@PSU.edu](mailto:ChesterMG@PSU.edu) with your questions and photos. More at [Extension.PSU.edu](http://Extension.PSU.edu).*

## Your Year in the Garden

### Early Spring:

#### Plant cool-season crops

- **Mid-March to Mid-April:** peas, fava beans, onions, leeks, garlic, greens (collards, kale, mustard, etc.), turnips, white potatoes, cabbage
- **Late March to Late April:** shallots, spinach, bok choy, parsley, cabbage family (broccoli, collards, etc.), leeks, onions
- **Late March to Mid-May:** lettuce, radishes, beets, carrots
- **Early April to Mid-June:** Swiss chard, beets
- **Mid-April to Mid-May:** celery

### Late Spring:

#### Plant warm-season crops

- **Early May to Mid-June:** watermelons, winter squash, melons, summer squash, cucumbers, pumpkins, sweet potato
- **Early May to Late June:** okra, Chinese cabbage, sweet corn, peanuts, Lima beans
- **Mid-May to Late June:** black-eyed peas, eggplant, peppers, tomato, basil, gandules (pigeon peas)
- **Mid-May to Mid-July:** beans (bush, pole, shell, dried)

### Summer and Fall:

#### Plant cool-season crops

- **Early to Mid-June:** collards, cabbage family, celery
- **Early July to Mid-August:** carrots, beets, Swiss chard, cabbage family (broccoli, etc.)
- **Mid-July to September:** radish, spinach
- **Early August to Early September:** salad greens, greens (mustard, etc.), peas
- **Early September to Early October:** garlic (for spring harvest), cover crops (hairy vetch, annual rye grass, oats)

*Adapted from Penn State Extension's "Master Gardeners Philadelphia Planting Guide." More at [Extension.PSU.edu](http://Extension.PSU.edu).*

# Going the Distance

## ULTRA-ENDURANCE IN SPORTS AND BUSINESS

Zack Malet

ON ANY GIVEN MORNING as you're out and about in Chester County, you might spot two familiar figures moving through the countryside: one running the wooded trails of a local nature preserve, the other pedaling miles of winding country roads.

This is just an ordinary day for brothers Stephen and Stewart Gross, for whom training for their ultra-endurance sports is both routine and a passion. These activities are a way of life that dates back to childhood and now persists decades later as they managed to continue putting in the miles despite demanding careers in real estate and growing families.

### BUSINESS AND TRAINING

Both brothers now work with the family business, Holly Gross Group, an established real estate firm with over four decades of experience in the Brandywine Valley and beyond. The firm has served the area since the 1980s and is known for helping buyers and sellers navigate the region's competitive market with comprehensive, personal service.

For the Gross brothers, returning home to Chester County after years of exploring the world and other pursuits — Stephen working in Europe and Asia, Stewart living the Colorado dream of snowboarding and professional mountain biking — it's the perfect fit.

They have been involved in several hundred million dollars of real estate transactions, earning reputations for persistence and professionalism in a demanding, fast-paced and often unpredictable, around-the-clock environment. Yet both have also built remarkable resumes in endurance sports, integrating their training with their work.

"It's a 24/7 job," Stewart said of real estate. "Before a 100-mile bike race, I was writing an agreement of sale at 12:30 in the morning, knowing I had to be up in four hours. You're always in the game." Stephen added, "I remember pausing on a mountaintop during a race to respond to a business text for a negotiation."



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## ROOTS IN CHESTER COUNTY

Their story begins in the heart of Chester County, where the brothers were surrounded by the landscapes that still define their training today. “We grew up in Unionville,” Stephen said. “Our parents had a horse farm that backs up to The Laurels Preserve — over 900 acres of protected land. We had mountain bikes from a young age and raced around Chester County and southeastern Pennsylvania.”

Like many local kids, their days were filled with sports and time outdoors. At Upland Country Day School, both brothers were three-sport athletes. “Sports were always part of our lives,” said Stephen, who pointed out that although he got the school’s athletic award, it was younger brother Stewart who was one of the school’s only professional athletes.

Early years cycling on dirt trails and running on footpaths across the county built the foundation for what came later: a lifelong appetite for challenge and distance. Today, the same landscape still plays a central role in their training routines. Stephen frequently runs through conserved lands that dot the county — such as The Laurels and ChesLen Preserves, both part of the vast network of protected open spaces that make our area such a remarkable place to live, exercise and enjoy the outdoors. “The great thing about Chester County is the access to open land,” Stephen said. “You can be on trails in minutes.”

## PUSHING LIMITS ON FOOT

While Stewart ultimately focused on ultra-distance cycling, Stephen found his calling in ultramarathon running. Since completing his first ultra-race along the Susquehanna in 2015, he’s finished more than a dozen races around the world, from rugged trail marathons to 15 ultramarathon courses in the U.S., Europe and Canada. His best performances include winning the Cloudsplitter 100k in Norton, Virginia and 10th place in the 100k Quebec Mega Trail.



But perhaps his most impressive accomplishment, to date, came in 2025 when he completed the legendary Ultra Trail du Mont Blanc (known as the Super Bowl of trail running). The race begins in Chamonix, France, then heads to Italy and Switzerland — a grueling 110-mile challenge with roughly 30,000 feet of climbing.

For most runners, simply finishing is the goal. But for Stephen, the deeper motivation is something more personal. “Ultra-running really self-selects for people who can endure suffering, who somehow get enjoyment from doing hard things for a long time.” Part of that drive comes from the emotional rewards that follow the physical effort. “After the Quebec Mega Trail race, I had a runner’s high for an entire week. I was on cloud nine,” he said.

## THE ENDURANCE CYCLIST

Not a fan of running, Stewart took a different route, leading him deep into the world of ultra-endurance cycling. After graduating from college in 2006, he entered a 100-mile mountain bike race called the Wilderness 101 close to State College. “I had no idea what I was doing, but I found a group playing reggae music and tried to keep up” said Stewart, who finished this first race in 14.5 hours. “I loved it! Especially the last 20 miles.”

That experience launched a long career in endurance racing, which admittedly included some “trials by failure” but ultimately led to an inspiring history of success.

Over the years, Stewart has competed in some of North America’s toughest mountain bike events and earned national rankings in the National Ultra Endurance Series as recently as 2025 when he placed 5th overall. His results include multiple top-5 finishes in 100-mile mountain bike races and victories in ultra-distance gravel race events, including the fastest known time for the 385-mile Crush the Commonwealth race (Philadelphia to Pittsburgh).

When he repeated his first ultra-distance race course, the Wilderness 101 in

2015, he cut his original time in half and finished 10th overall that year, 5th overall the next year, and 5th in 2025 when he was the oldest rider on the podium by 11 years.

Even after racing professionally, his training still revolves around well-loved roads of Chester County. Now, in addition to racing, Stewart can be found supporting the sport that’s given him such a strong sense of identity. He’s race director for a mountain bike race in French Creek State Park, coaches and sponsors the West Chester high school mountain bike team, and the family business, Holly Gross Group, is also involved and sponsors several local events, including the local race series, the Mid-Atlantic Super Series (MASS).

## THE MENTAL GAME

For both brothers, the real challenge of endurance sports isn’t mere physical strength. It’s mental resilience. “My legs cramp up so many times that they can no longer argue with me,” Stewart said of long races. That mindset has proven surprisingly useful in their professional lives as well.

“Real estate can be tough,” added Stephen. “It’s often a long slog, just like these races. The mindset you build from endurance sports carries over.” Negotiations can take longer than expected, with unanticipated variables to derail a deal. The persistence required in ultra-distance racing — continuing mile after mile when fatigue sets in — turns out to be excellent preparation for long-term deal making. “It’s probably 50% mental, 50% physical,” Stewart said. “We both definitely have that mental capability to endure.”

## BALANCE IN MOTION

Another impressive aspect of the Gross brothers’ story is their ability to balance their ultra-endurance sports and demanding professional careers

with family life. Both brothers emphasize that discipline plus their family support make everything possible.

“Training goes on the calendar like an appointment,” Stewart said. “but you still have to be willing to skip a race if your family or clients need you.” Stephen takes a similar approach, fitting runs around a constantly changing real estate schedule. “Family comes first,” he said. “Then work. Then training.”

What do their parents, Holly and Dick Gross, think about their sons’ sports? “Sometimes they think we’re total freaks and don’t know why we do it. But they’re also so proud of us. And we’re always happy to have them at the races, along with the rest of our families,” Stewart said.

## A COUNTY THAT INSPIRES

That work-life-sports balance may be easier in a place like Chester County, where the environment invites exploration and enjoyment. From wooded preserves to quiet back roads, our region offers endless opportunities to get outside.

So while you’re outside on local roads and trails this spring, watch out for Stephen and Stewart as the brothers prepare for their 2026 races. As Stephen put it, “For some people, this kind of endurance sport just clicks. Once it does, it becomes part of who you are.”

In Chester County, they’ve found the perfect place to keep going the distance. ♦

*If you’re inspired by the Gross brothers’ example, some places to start your journey include The Laurels, Stroud and ChesLen Preserves, Marsh Creek State Park, Valley Forge National Historic Park, scenic paths throughout the Brandywine Valley and countless country roads.*

*Zack Malet is County Lines’ occasional sports columnist and former Brown University Track Team member, who after completing the Philly half-marathon vowed he’d never race farther. But after interviewing the Gross brothers, he’s reconsidering.*



1. Stephen at finish line, 2025 Ultra Trail du Mont Blanc (UTMB), in Chamonix, France, with son Henry and daughter Olive.
2. Stewart leading the pack on a technical section of the Wilderness 101. Finished 10th in 2015.
3. Stephen on course, day 2 of the UTMB near Arnouva, Italy.
4. Stephen topping the final climb of the UTMB in La Flegere, France.
5. Stewart at the Marji Gesick race on Michigan’s Upper Peninsula, the world’s hardest 100-mile race. Finished 8th.
6. Stewart’s 2025 Wilderness 101 ride. Finished 5th, the oldest rider on the podium by 11 years. Sons Ryder and Van look on.

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**Row Your Boat... Gently — or Madly — Down the Stream**

SCULLING ON OUR LOCAL RIVERS  
 Edwin Malet



HERE ARE SEVERAL CERTAIN signs of spring. Warming temperatures. Blooming trees and flowers.

Birds chirping. But there's no surer sign of spring's arrival than when the ice breaks and rowers begin their strokes. The Schuylkill, Christina — and, lately, the Cooper — Rivers come alive!

Perhaps you've seen Cassatt's "The Boating Party," Monet's "The Row Boat" or Homer's "Rowing the Boat." All date to the 1800s. Yet at some level, rowing hasn't changed very much. After all, you still row backwards. But how to get into a boat, propel it, care for it, repair it and dress for a day on the water ... well, that's very different. Think closer to the movie "The Boys in the Boat" about the 1936 Olympic team. But with higher tech gear.

Here's a short introduction to the boats and equipment, clubs and regattas, and how to get started rowing.

### BOATS AND OARS

Singly or in groups of two, four or eight, the crews carry their boats (also called "shells") to the river's edge and carefully place them in the water. Some are single shells: one rower, two oars. Some are doubles, quads or octuples — two to eight rowers, with two oars per rower.

Others are equipped for "sweep rowing," usually for racing, when each rower handles just one oar. On these boats, the crews row in pairs: two, four or eight. The sweep oar is larger and longer than for sculling.

All the boats are surprisingly light for their size. A singles boat, made of carbon fiber, weighs only about 30 pounds, although it's 26–30 feet long and a foot wide. An eight-person boat — an "eight" — is about 200–250 pounds, less than two feet wide, yet 60 feet long. The eight-person scull may seem immense on land, especially compared with its smooth, sleek performance on the water.

Although the boat's weight is light, the cost is surprisingly high. A new one-person scull may run as much as \$15,000 for an elite carbon fiber boat. An eight may sell for \$70,000–\$80,000. Sadly, these beautiful

“ Acting through its oars, the rowers are, basically, a boat's entire propulsion system.

crafts are easily damaged from things like collisions with river debris, docks and other boats. Repair costs add up, so the clubs do much of their own small fixes.

### CLUBS

Most of the boats are owned by clubs such as the Whitemarsh Boat Club or Wilmington Rowing Center.

Started in 1984, the Wilmington club currently has 190 members, 51 club boats and about 35 private boats that rent space. Since 2012, the club has operated out of a 10,000-square-foot clubhouse on the Christina River.

The Whitemarsh club was started in 2005, operating out of the Hines Rowing Center in Conshohocken on the Schuylkill River. It currently has about 200 members, 57 club boats and about 45 private boats.

Standard memberships in a rowing club run about \$900 per year, more for the competitive program.

### ROWERS

Most rowers are young, broad shouldered, smaller waisted, with powerful legs. Or so they appear. Most are in their teens or 20s. They're often drawn from local high schools and colleges. Villa Maria Academy High School, Malvern Prep, Episcopal Academy, the Haverford School and Tower Hill School all have teams, as well as Villanova University and Haverford and Bryn Mawr Colleges, along with others.

Nevertheless, the rowing teams — and rowing generally — may only skew young. Onie Rollins, Membership Chair of the Wilmington club, shared that some of its 190 members are in their 80s. Although she herself once competed, she now rows "to be in good shape and be out on the water."

Marie Leonard, Administrator of the Whitemarsh club, agreed, noting that some

members are in their 70s and 80s. She emphasized that rowing is a "life sport," offering a "full-body, low-impact" exercise. Most older rowers find, even when they've been away from rowing for a while, the sport is still familiar, "like riding a bike."

### CLUBS, COMPETITION AND REGATTAS

Both Rollins and Leonard are proud of their clubs' competitive success. Leonard noted that the Whitemarsh club is one of the "top 20 in the country," typically making it to "Nationals" (USRowing RowFest National Championships), this year in Ann Arbor. Several members from its masters' program also go to the "Worlds" in Bled, Slovenia (World Rowing Championship).

But competitive rowing is not easy. In winter, there are almost daily workouts on the erg machines (short for ergometer, a specialized, high-intensity indoor rowing machine) and frigid practices on the river come spring. Spring and summer's regattas will test the athletic endurance and drive of the teams. See the sidebar.

### INSIDE THE BOAT

Acting through its oars, the rowers are, basically, a boat's entire propulsion system. Externally, the boat's "riggers" enable the oar to act as a lever. Internally, the boats are equipped with rolling, adjustable, cushioned seats designed to slide along a track with each stroke.

Let's not forget the coxswain (pronounced kok'-sun), who's responsible for steering, safety and motivating the crew. Facing forward, the coxswain sits in the rear of the boat — usually a four- or eight-seater — setting the beat (the pace) of the strokes. Years ago, coxswains communicated with the crew using a megaphone. Now, of course, modern boats are wired with speakers under each seat.

### Regattas

- **Jefferson Dad Vail Regatta.** Held on May 8 & 9, historically hosted on the Schuylkill River. With over 60 teams, it's the largest collegiate regatta in North America and key to the Nationals. For logistical and safety reasons, it was moved to the Cooper River in Pennsauken, NJ in 2023.
- **The Stotesbury Cup.** Held on May 15 & 16 on the Schuylkill River, with over 5,000 high school competitors (more than half female), the largest high school rowing regatta in the world.
- **Diamond State Masters.** Held on June 20 & 21 on the Christina River at St. Andrews School in Middletown, DE.
- **Independence Day Regatta.** Three days, July 24–26 (delayed for Philly 250 celebration and FIFA World Cup), open to all, held on the Schuylkill River.
- **Navy Day Regatta.** Held early October generally on the Schuylkill River and open to masters, open, collegiate and juniors.
- **Head of the Christina.** Held on October 4 on the Christina River, featuring juniors, high school, collegiate, open and masters.
- **Head of the Schuylkill.** Held on October 24 & 25 on the Schuylkill River, featuring juniors, high school, open, masters, college, para (for the physically, visually or intellectually impaired) and championship events.

For more, see [RegattaCentral.com](http://RegattaCentral.com).

### SCULLING ATTIRE

Scullers generally wear form-fitting, breathable, moisture-wicking, synthetic clothing, avoiding anything loose-fitting that could get caught in the sliding seat rollers. Unisuits are popular.

Footwear is complicated. On the boat, there are generally specialized shoes bolted directly to an adjustable plate called a "foot-stretcher." Moisture-wicking socks



will keep feet dry, but that, of course, is once you're in the boat. Clogs or sandals to slip out of are needed on the dock as you board, plus a shoe with a minimal cushioning for indoor practice.

### LEARNING TO ROW

Most clubs offer some type of "Learn to Row" classes. For the inexperienced, these classes are the gateway to rowing.

A beginner's course is offered at the Wilmington club. In May and June, on six consecutive days, from 6 to 8 in the morning and 6 to 8 in the evening, in classes of eight, the club offers coached classes, teaching different parts of the boat, how to take the boat down to the dock, how to set the boat properly in the water, how to get into the boat, what to do if you flip, and details on proper rowing strokes.

Similarly, at the Whitemarsh club, you can take a three-week, 10-class course. There's also a camp in the summer.

### NEXT STEPS

After completing the initial course, if you want to continue rowing — most do — you can sign up for the club's recreational program or join the competition program.

The rules vary somewhat, but recreation programs generally allow you total access to the club's boats, to reserve a boat whenever you want, subject to availability. If you want to join a crew, you'll have to find one among the members. But you can always take out a single scull.

The competitive program requires more structure, commitment and cost. Coaches assemble their teams and create a regular practice schedule. You'll need to stick to it, in part as a commitment to your team members.

Whether you choose the recreational or competitive route, you're choosing a sport that combines the brilliance of the outdoors with a driving, heart-thumping workout. Grab an oar! Stroke! ♦

*Learn more: Wilmington Rowing Club hosts open houses for tours, info and Learn to Row classes, April 11 & 12, 9 to noon. Whitemarsh Boat Club offers private tours, plus US National Learn to Row Day on June 6. Check their websites.*

## Food News

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

**Buttery Dinner.** What's better than the delish daytime dishes served up by **The Buttery** — a fave of Martha Stewart's? Enjoying them for dinner. Seasonal cooking and local sourcing continue for the new evening menu featuring hot Neapolitan pizzas, bright seasonal salads and shareable plates with polpete, PEI mussels, crispy pork belly and more (bread flights!). Initially BYOB, indoors and on the expansive patio. 233 E. King St., Malvern. [TheButteryCafe.com](http://TheButteryCafe.com)



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**LaBan Shoutout.** Celebrity chef Peter Chang — former Chinese Embassy chef and James Beard-nominated star — has brought his bold Sichuan flavors to King of Prussia. Known for spice-forward cooking, Chang serves up standout dishes like dry-fried eggplant, Peking duck and hot-and-numbing beef. Add Chinese tapas, dim sum and the signature bubble scallion pancake, and the trip to the strip mall is well worth the drive. Trust Craig, 314 Henderson Rd. Ste. C. [PeterChangKOP.com](http://PeterChangKOP.com)



**Busy Borough.** So much food news in West Chester, it's headlines only. **Steaks West Chester** gets stromboli. Great influence from its sister pizza spot. 698 E. Market St. @[SteaksWestChester.com](http://SteaksWestChester.com). **Cousin's Burger** offers beefy smash-burgers, smoothies and shakes, the latest outlet of this tri-state chain. 211 E. Market St. [CousinsBurger.com](http://CousinsBurger.com). **The Biscuit Lady** opened a second location. You know what they sell. 39 W. Gay St. [VisitTheBiscuitLady.com](http://VisitTheBiscuitLady.com)

**More Chicken.** We may not need another, but who can say no to **West Chester Chicken**? After all, they're serving fried and grilled chicken, boardwalk and loaded fries, mac 'n' cheese and Philadelphia water ice. Owner Carlos Vegas, of Kennett Chicken and Kaboburritos, expanded to a spot close to West Chester University (weekends until 2:30 a.m.) selling chicken sandwiches — OG, Nashville, Buffalo, the Club — along with boneless and bone-in wings. 34 S. High St. @[WestChesterChicken.com](http://WestChesterChicken.com)



## Harvesting Spring

### ASPARAGUS FIVE WAYS

Liz Tarditi



**B**LAME PUNXSUTAWNEY PHIL. WE WERE READY for spring weeks ago!

As we finally move out of this hard winter, this month's Brandywine Table celebrates the vegetable that most symbolizes springtime: asparagus. It erupts from the earth with a high-society pedigree. Long before it became a staple of the Brandywine lunch circuit, Roman cooks prized it so highly that Emperor Augustus coined the phrase "faster than asparagus cooks" to signal urgency.

Classical writers also credited asparagus with restorative virtues. Greek and Roman texts praised it as a tonic of vitality, and later herbalists described it as cleansing and diuretic — valued for supporting digestion and kidney health.

Its fleeting spring arrival and upright form gave rise to aphrodisiac lore as well, more symbolic than scientific but persistent across centuries. During the Middle Ages, monastery gardens helped preserve its cultivation, maintaining knowledge of perennial crops that would reemerge in European kitchens generations later.



While most of us in the Brandywine Valley favor the sun-kissed green stalks that signal spring's resurrection, our European counterparts have long elevated a paler form of asparagus. In 17th-century France, white asparagus earned the moniker "Ivory of the Garden." This variety was cultivated under mounds of soil to prevent chlorophyll from forming and was favored by King Louis XIV, who demanded it well beyond its natural season.

Producing white asparagus is significantly more labor-intensive — each spear must be carefully buried and harvested before it reaches sunlight — making it a visible marker of wealth and status. That devotion spread east. From mid-April through June 24, Germany enters *Spargel Fieber* — asparagus fever — a celebratory obsession. It is agriculture as ceremony.

Asparagus is also a lesson in engineered patience: a single bed can produce for up to 20 years, returning each spring with more vitality than the last. It isn't just a side dish. It's the soul of the spring table.

To taste that soul locally, look to local farmers markets or to historic [Thornbury Farm](#) in West Chester. Under the stewardship of Randell Spackman, this farm prioritizes natural cultivation without synthetic fertilizers or chemical sprays. Situated on the very grounds of the Battle of Brandywine, the farm is best known for its weekly CSA baskets and bustling farmstand — a perfect source for a spring menu.

From simple air-fried asparagus spears to indulgent penne with crème fraîche, smoked salmon and caviar — yes, those salt-cured salmon roe "pearls" absolutely count in our book — to a classic Gruyère quiche and a protein-packed red quinoa salad, these recipes prove spring has finally sprung. After months of root vegetables and braises, asparagus reminds us that the table, like the season, is ready to turn the page.

### Fried Parmesan Asparagus Spears with Horseradish Dipping Sauce

*Crisp, golden and impossible to stop eating, these fried asparagus spears turn spring's most elegant vegetable into a crowd-pleasing appetizer. Served with a bright horseradish dipping sauce, they deliver just enough bite to balance the richness without overpowering the asparagus itself.*



Serves 6

- 1½ lb. medium asparagus, trimmed
- ¾ C. all-purpose flour
- 3 large eggs
- 1 T. water
- 1 C. panko breadcrumbs
- ¾ C. finely grated Parmesan cheese
- ¾ tsp. kosher salt
- ½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- ¼ tsp. garlic powder
- ¾ C. neutral oil for shallow frying

#### For Horseradish Dipping Sauce:

- 1 C. sour cream
- 2–3 T. prepared horseradish, well drained
- 1 T. fresh lemon juice
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt
- ¼ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1 T. finely chopped fresh chives, optional

Pat asparagus completely dry with paper towels. Moisture prevents the coating from adhering.

Place flour in a shallow dish. In a second dish, whisk eggs with water. In a third dish, combine panko, Parmesan, salt, pepper and garlic powder.

Working in batches, lightly dredge asparagus in flour, shaking off excess. Dip into egg mixture, allowing excess to drip away. Roll in Parmesan mixture, pressing gently so coating adheres along the length of each spear. Transfer to a rack and let rest 5 minutes to help the coating set.

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat until shimmering but not smoking. Fry asparagus in batches, turning once, until golden brown and crisp, about 2 to 3 minutes per side. Do not overcrowd the pan.

Transfer to a wire rack set over a sheet pan. Season lightly with additional salt, if desired.

For the dipping sauce, stir together sour cream, horseradish, lemon juice, salt and pepper until smooth. Fold in chives if using. Refrigerate at least 15 minutes before serving to allow flavors to develop.

Serve asparagus hot with chilled horseradish sauce alongside.

### Asparagus & Gruyère Quiche

*Creamy, nutty Gruyère and sweet spring asparagus bake into a quiche that tastes far more indulgent than the effort it requires. This quiche freezes beautifully — either unbaked or fully cooked — making it a smart meal-prep staple and the kind of emergency dinner that feels effortlessly luxurious.*



Serves 6

- 1 lb. fresh asparagus, snapped and cut into 1-inch pieces, separating heads for topping
- 1 T. butter
- 6 oz. Gruyère cheese, rind trimmed, freshly shredded
- 1 C. freshly grated Parmesan
- 4 large eggs
- 1 C. heavy cream
- ¼ tsp. freshly grated nutmeg
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- ½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1, 9-inch deep dish pie crust, homemade or high-quality store-bought

Preheat oven to 375°. In a medium pan, sauté asparagus in butter in batches and season with a pinch of salt and pepper, 3 to 5 minutes, just until bright green and barely tender. Remove from heat and cool slightly.

In a bowl, whisk eggs, heavy cream, nutmeg, salt and pepper until smooth.

Follow package directions for pie crust (many do not need pre-baking for quiche and can be filled straight from the freezer). Place on a sheet pan, and layer in cut asparagus and cheeses so they're evenly distributed. Pour in custard mixture, and gently but firmly tap the quiche against the sheet pan a few times to eliminate air bubbles and ensure custard fully fills the dry ingredients. Arrange asparagus heads on top of quiche for garnish.

Bake on sheet pan for 35-40 minutes, until a knife inserted in center comes out clean. Allow to rest uncovered at room temperature for 10 minutes before cutting.

## Spring Asparagus & Cannellini Bean Salad with Lemon

*This dish is a light, elegant luncheon when garnished with edible flowers, such as local nasturtiums, violas, chive blossoms or redbud flowers. For a dense, high-protein meal, toss in some shredded chicken, shrimp, tofu or cold sliced London broil to fill a wrap or pita for a summer dinner when it's too hot to cook. Due to its high acidity, this dish holds up to seven days in the fridge, but marinate the beans alone for at least one day for best flavor and texture.*



Serves 6

Juice and zest of 4 lemons  
1 tsp. Dijon mustard  
2 T. extra virgin olive oil  
Salt and white pepper to taste  
Optional: 1 T. finely minced shallot or 1 tsp. finely minced garlic  
2, 15-oz cans cannellini beans, drained and rinsed  
2 bunches fresh asparagus, trimmed  
¼ C. chopped fresh herbs, such as flat-leaf parsley, basil, tarragon or lemon thyme

In a large bowl, whisk together lemon juice, lemon zest, Dijon and olive oil until emulsified. Season with salt and white pepper. Stir in shallot or garlic, if using.

Add cannellini beans and toss gently to coat. Cover and refrigerate at least 4 hours or overnight.

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add whole asparagus spears and blanch 2 to 3 minutes, until just bright green and crisp-tender. Transfer immediately to an ice bath. Drain well, pat dry and cut half into 1½-inch pieces, reserve the other spears whole for topping the salad.

Fold chopped asparagus and chopped herbs into marinated beans just before serving.

With a slotted spoon, plate the portions. Then gently toss the asparagus spears in the extra dressing from the bowl the beans mari-

## Be Snappy, Not Snippy!

Don't let the woody reputation of asparagus fool you into throwing away a chef's secret. The point where an asparagus spear snaps naturally is the transition from tender parenchyma to lignified fiber. This trim is essentially a sleeve of tough string surrounding a core of flavorful, sweet pith. Even if there is a "white part," it isn't unripe. It was just tucked under the soil, never developing chlorophyll.

When first learning the snapping method, cooks are often shocked by the waste. In high-end kitchens, some chefs painstakingly peel the bottom third of each stem to save every inch. However, this is incredibly labor-intensive and still results in discarded skins. Waste is simply a lack of imagination. To maximize your product without the tedious prep, embrace the snap and unlock "asparagus gold."

Asparagus stores its natural sugars at its base, making these ends surprisingly sweet — often sweeter than a Granny Smith apple! The challenge isn't the flavor, but the "hairy" fiber. To extract the essence and create a coulis, blanch and refresh those ends just as you would the tender spears. Blitz them in a high-speed blender into a vibrant, electric-green purée, then pass through a fine mesh sieve.

This removes the woody fibers leaving you with a silky, sweet concentrate. Use this waste-to-gold as a fresh sauce base, or a flavor boost for soups and risottos. It's the ultimate lesson in culinary efficiency: what looks like scrap is the soul of the dish.

nated in. Serve spears on top or alongside the bean salad. Garnish as desired. Taste and adjust seasoning, if needed.

## Warm Red Quinoa Salad with Asparagus, Beets & Goat Cheese

*The superfood red quinoa provides a sturdy, nutty base that holds its shape against the creamy chèvre and earthy beets in this dish. The addition of chickpeas transforms it into a complete, high-protein vegetarian meal. Using orange juice as part of the cooking liquid adds a subtle natural sweetness that balances the sharp white wine vinegar.*

Serves 6

**For infused cooking liquid:**  
2 C. orange juice (pulp-free)  
1¾ C. water  
¼ C. white wine vinegar  
1 tsp. kosher salt

**For the salad base:**  
2 C. dry red quinoa, well-rinsed  
1 bunch fresh asparagus, trimmed, blanched, cut into 1-inch pieces  
1, 15-oz. can chickpeas, drained and rinsed  
2 C. diced cooked red beets, roasted or steamed

4 oz. chèvre, crumbled  
Optional: ½ C. toasted walnuts or slivered almonds  
**For the extra vinaigrette (for leftovers):**  
¼ C. orange juice  
2 T. white wine vinegar  
1 tsp. Dijon mustard  
2 T. extra virgin olive oil (optional)  
Salt and pepper to taste



In a large stockpot, combine the orange juice, water, white wine vinegar and salt. Stir in the rinsed red quinoa. Then bring the mixture to a boil over medium-high heat.

Once boiling, reduce the heat to low, cover and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes until the liquid is fully absorbed. Remove from heat and let the quinoa stand, covered, for 5 minutes to allow the grains to fully bloom.

While the quinoa is still warm, gently fold in the blanched asparagus pieces and the drained chickpeas. Next, add the diced cooked red beets. (To preserve the vibrant colors, use a light touch when folding in the beets to prevent the entire salad from turning a uniform pink!)

Just before serving, gently fold in the crumbled chèvre so it softens slightly against the warmth of the quinoa. Top with toasted walnuts or slivered almonds, if using, for a final crunch.

Serve in 2-cup portions as a gluten-free protein power bowl.

**Note:** Quinoa dries out when stored, so shake the ingredients with the extra vinaigrette in a lidded jar to revive the salad when needed if not enjoying it all at one meal.

## Penne with Asparagus Crème Fraîche & Smoked Sockeye

*Prepare the asparagus coulis as directed in paragraph 3 of the sidebar, then let it shine here. The crème fraîche softens its Kermit-the-Frog green to a delicate spring shade — provided you keep the heat low and treat it gently.*

Serves 6

1 lb. penne pasta  
1½ C. prepared asparagus coulis, strained smooth  
1 C. crème fraîche

1 T. salted butter  
1 T. extra virgin olive oil  
1 T. very finely minced red onion  
½ tsp. kosher salt, plus more for pasta water  
¼ tsp. freshly ground white pepper  
1 tsp. lemon zest  
2 T. fresh lemon juice  
½ C. reserved pasta cooking water, as needed  
1 bunch fresh asparagus, blanched, chopped, divided into stems and tips  
24 oz. smoked Sockeye salmon, cut into ribbons  
3 T. capers, drained  
2 T. fresh dill, plucked for garnish  
1, 1.75-oz. jar salmon roe



Bring a large pot of generously salted water to a boil. Cook penne until al dente. Reserve ½ cup pasta water before draining.

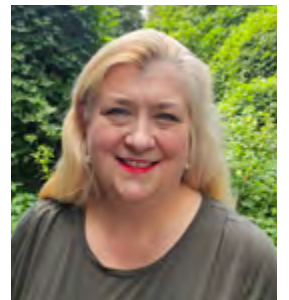
While pasta cooks, heat butter and olive oil in a large skillet over medium-low heat. Add red onion and sauté until softened and translucent, about 2 to 3 minutes. Do not brown.

Reduce heat to low. Stir in crème fraîche and warm gently until loosened. Remove pan from heat and whisk in asparagus coulis, salt, pepper, lemon zest and lemon juice. The residual heat should warm the sauce without dulling its bright green color.

Add drained pasta to the skillet and toss to coat, adding reserved pasta water a few tablespoons at a time until the sauce clings lightly. Gently fold in blanched chopped asparagus.

Plate each serving. Then arrange 4 oz. of smoked salmon ribbons in a rosette on top. Garnish with asparagus tips, capers, fresh dill and roe. Serve immediately. ♦

*Liz Tarditi is a chef and wine specialist with more than 30 years of experience in food, wine and event planning. She holds degrees from Villanova University and from a Seattle culinary arts program founded by a Certified French Master Chef, where she trained in a classic brigade-style kitchen. Liz later ran her own catering company and has worked as a wine specialist in Pennsylvania. She brings her training and lifelong passion for seasonal, approachable cooking to Brandywine Table.*



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