

Our 36th Year Serving Troy's Business Community Every Monday

Monday, Nov. 30, 2015
Vol. 36, No. 12

Don't Miss the Troy Holiday Tree Lighting at City Hall

You will want to be in front of City Hall on Wednesday, Dec. 2, from 7 - 8:30 p.m. for the annual HOLIDAY TREE LIGHTING. Children are invited to visit with Santa Claus after he lights our Christmas Tree. The Troy Colt Drumline will march in with Santa Claus. The Athens High School Choirs (Magic! and Concert Choir) directed by Michele Marszalkowski, will lead the caroling.

Enjoy hot cocoa & holiday sweets. Sponsored by Genisys Credit Union.

Troy Community Concert Has Holiday Spirit This Week

The Troy Community Chorus, under the direction of Mimi Gass and accompanied by Min Sook Chung, will present their holiday concert, "Gloria" on Friday, December 4, 2015 at 8 pm at Athens High School.

Advance tickets are \$10 for patrons ages 6-61, \$8 for seniors 62 and older and children 5 and under are admitted free.

All tickets will be \$15 at the door. To order tickets by phone, contact Linda Irlbacher at 248-953-6195 or by email to loubirdlinda@gmail.com.

Stage Nature Society Needs a Few Helpers

Volunteers are needed to assist with programs and activities offered at the Stage Nature Center. Volunteer assignments include front desk reception, educational program assistant, trail maintenance, fund-raising assistant, administrative support and various other activities. The nature center is operated by the Troy Nature Society. Please visit www.stagenaturecenter.org for more information or call 248-688-9703.

Gift Guide pg. 7

2015
HOLIDAY
GIFT GUIDE



THIS HOLIDAY SEASON AT MEADOW BROOK HALL, on the campus of Oakland University, features the art of gracious living as practiced by Matilda Dodge Wilson. Pictured at a holiday table set for guests is Meadow Brook's Director of Marketing and Community Relations Shannon O'Berski. The annual walk is now underway and you'll see many examples of how the Wilson family entertained guests during the holiday season.

Meadow Brook Walk Shows Us How to Celebrate

Matilda Dodge Wilson certainly new how to entertain guests. Whether it was a simple gathering or a gala event, the table was always perfect. You'll be able to see how perfect at Meadow Brook Hall's 44th annual Holiday Walk, which runs November 27 through December 23.

Visitors can tour the elegant rooms decorated for the holidays which feature special exhibits that celebrate the era of etiquette and decorum at the Grand Manor. Presenting sponsor for the 2015 event is the Oakland University Credit Union.

From a perfectly executed dinner party of ceremonial formality to a fun informal sleigh party where guests were served mulled cider and Matilda's Christmas cake, this year's Holiday Walk will showcase tablescapes set with the Wilson family's collection of rarely-seen china, glassware, linens and silver. Guests will learn the proper etiquette and protocol of hosting a gathering and gain insight into a lifestyle where entertaining appropriately was of great importance.

New this year, visitors can walk inside the Wilsons' china vault filled with thousands of pieces of original dinnerware. Guests will also see a

selection of gowns and dinner attire worn by the family from The Hall's costume collection.

Kids can follow the path to Knole Cottage for a "Wizard of Oz" adventure, and then enjoy treasure and treats at Danny's Cabin decorated in the theme of the storybook classic "Treasure Island." Throughout the Holiday Walk children of all ages can play teddy bear hide-and-seek while touring the mansion. The mischievous bears have escaped from the nursery. Kids can help locate them hidden in the rooms – and receive a prize if they find them all.

Just as Frances Dodge drove a sleigh filled with presents to Meadow Brook's front gate every Christmas, guests will have the opportunity to leave their own presents at The Hall through December 14 for the Salvation Army's Red Kettle Campaign.

Meadow Brook Hall's 2015 Holiday Walk includes several special events: a free visit with Santa at Danny's Cabin, December 12 and 13, Holiday Tea, December 9 and 16 and the Starlight Stroll, December 17. The Starlight Stroll is an elegant evening of holiday entertainment, live music, strolling dinner, cocktails and more.

The cost for the Holiday Tea is \$50

per person. Cost to attend the Starlight Stroll is \$75 per person. Reservations are required for all Holiday Walk special events, excluding the free visit with Santa. To make a reservation call 248-364-6252 or purchase tickets online at www.meadowbrookhall.org.

City Asks the Experts Why Big Beaver Is Not Growing As Planned

By 2003 Big Beaver Road certainly had earned the designation of Golden Corridor. Businesses were still booming, but what about the future? That's when the city did the Futures Report. In the report they envisioned high rise buildings with multiple kinds of tenants and public spaces along the corridor. For a few years it seemed like those ideas would come to fruition.

Those visions were encompassed in the 2008 Master Plan.

Potential developments like the Monarch high rise, the Pavilion on the Kmart site and the Sterling Bank project near I-75 were unveiled. But none were actually developed.

As if that wasn't bad enough, the economy crashed. But times are better and Troy is seeing developers come to Troy, but not for high rises or greater density.

What's a city to do?

At last Monday's joint meeting of the City Council and Planning Commission, they decided to ask some experts what they advised.

The city wanted to know:

- Why are we not seeing the development type envisioned for Big Beaver?

See BIG BEAVER, page 3

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Computer Club Has the Answers You Need

The Sterling Heights Computer Club will hold its monthly meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 1, starting at 6:30 p.m. (The time has been changed from 7:30 p.m. for previous meetings.)

The meeting location is the Macomb Community College South Campus, in the John Lewis Community Center (Building K) at 14500 East 12 Mile

Road in Warren.

You can get more information about the club at its web page at: www.SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org.

For further information, call 586-268-6586 (ask for Phil), write to P.O. Box 385, Sterling Heights, MI 48311, or send an e-mail to the club at: info@SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org.



Troy Fire Women's Auxiliary and Firefighter's Park

This story is by Loraine Campbell and Fred Barnard, 2009

The Troy Fire Women's Auxiliary was established in 1977. They provided water, coffee, and donuts to the firefighters at the scene of a fire, if the men requested it. They also supplied emergency food, shelter, and clothing to fire victims and raised funds for burn clinics and camps and education programs for fire safety. "Rita Hennessey, whose husband was at Station 5, organized

the group," explained Gerry Young, a charter member. "Women knew the wives of firefighters at the stations where their husbands served. However through the Auxiliary they met wives from other stations."

The women held bake sales, auctions, and social gatherings to raise money. Their major fundraiser each year was a fashion show. "The event, held at the San Marino Club, generated about \$4,000 annually," Gerry explained. "Every year we donated the funds we raised to the burn clinics, Children's Hospital, and to education programs. We kept some money to assist families and to make up Care Kits for fire victims."

Gerry Young also suggested to the City that a park be named for the firefighters and that trees might be planted in the park as memorials for deceased firefighters. When she submitted the idea

on behalf of the Auxiliary, City Manager Gerstenecker responded, "Why didn't we think of that?"

The City established Firefighter's Park and continues to support Memorials at the park by buying the trees planted there. The first ceremony was held in 1991 when a tree was planted in memory of Romeo Marceau, a charter member of Station 2.

The Troy Historic Village is publishing a different story each day in 2015 that highlights a person, discovery, or event that occurred locally, regionally, or nationally between 1955 and 2015 that helped shape our community. The Somerset Gazette is pleased to reprint our favorite story each week. Find all the stories at www.troyhistoricvillage.org

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A simple \$5 donation can help support the future of a child aged 6-18 that walks through our doors every

day. Just \$5 can provide up to an hour of programming in one of our five (yes, five) core areas of development: Character and Leadership; Education and Career; Health and Life Skills; Sports, Fitness and Recreation; and the Arts.

You may not think that a \$5 donation can make a difference. But even running a marathon begins with a single step. And if we all take those steps together, imagine the impact we can have.

They can keep another child safe after school. They can help more kids with their homework. They can give our youth a positive place to be themselves, make friends, play, learn and grow.

That's an accomplishment worth celebrating, isn't it?

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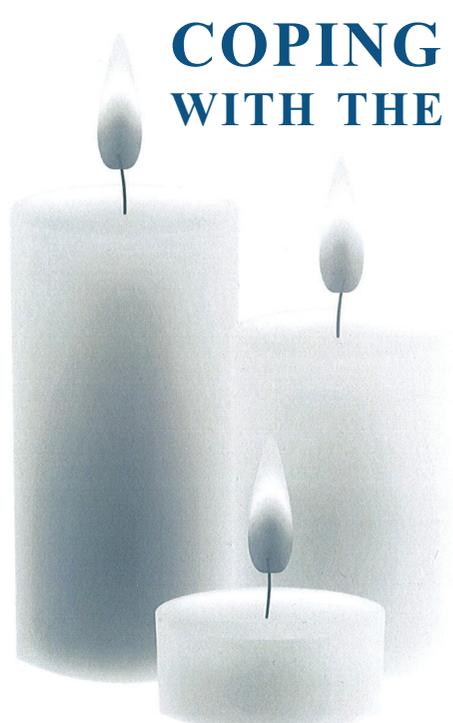
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Experts Offer Ideas on Big Beaver's Future

BIG BEAVER, From page 1

• How do we promote or encourage: Density? Mixed Use? Higher Quality?

• What happens to the market if City requires multi-story minimum?

And, interestingly, city residents have changing, dare we say aging demographics, and no long want the traditional single family, two-story colonial home.

On hand to address the issues were:

• Matthew J. Ferrell, CCIM, Principal/Board Member/Partner, CORE Partners

• Ryan Marsh, Principal, T.H. Marsh Construction Company

• Amanda Uffelman, VP, Relationship Manager, CRE Midwest, Comerica Bank

• Harvey Weiss, The Development Alliance, Weiss Properties & Samona Properties

They have all been active in the Troy marketplace, developing and managing commercial property.

Ferrell, who developed the Galleria plaza (Bonfish), pointed out that Troy has a 21.5 percent office vacancy rate. (Take off 4.5 percent for Kmart). He noted that it used to be 250 square feet per employee. Today, businesses only want about 150 square feet per person.

Marsh, who developed and constructed the Kilmer and Big Beaver project with the condos in the back of it, added, "If you have office going away, you need residents to increase." He observed that all the new restaurants are serving our daytime population. "I'd like to see chucks of Big Beaver slowed down," he said, "like Old Woodward."

Troy, it seems, needs to become an 18-hour a day town to prosper.

To make that happen will take incentives.

It's always been said, banks won't lend for high rises and mixed use development, but Comerica's Uffelman observed, "We follow good developers who come to us...A horizontal approach is preferred." Going up has different building regulations, she noted.

"I think it's achievable to see more density," added Weiss, who built Bahama Breeze and the strip with Potbelly. "The big concern with mixed use is how to compete with all the office space available." He point out that new construction is expensive and it will take incentives to make it happen.

Weiss also noted the walkability issue.

Questions remain: What kind of incentives City Manager Brian

Kischnick asked. No answers were forthcoming, but there will be talks.

In the meantime, Troy is sending off "Three Men and a Truck" to see what other cities are doing. Assistant City Manager Mark Miller, Planning Director Brent Savidant and Economic Development Director Glenn Lapin will head out on December 15, 16 and 17 seeking answers.

They'll be off to Dublin, Ohio, near Columbus. Lapin said they will be visiting suburban areas that are somewhat comparable to Troy in the Indianapolis area, like Fishers and Carmel, Indiana They'll meet with the local planning and redevelopment professionals, and finance pros to learn what developers are working in those areas and what attracted them. A joint meeting will follow.

Library to Host a Winter Wonderland

The first snow has come and gone and it's getting the gang the Troy Public Library ready for this year's Winter Wonderland! Join them on Friday, Dec. 11 for this annual after-hours event. From 6:30-8:30 p.m., enjoy a night of winter fun with guests such as Santa Clause, a reindeer, elves and more! Bring the entire family.

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“Childhood is the fiery furnace in which we are melted down to essentials and that essential shaped for good.” —Katherine Anne Porter



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Loss Prevention Has a Busy Week At Local Retail Outlets

POLICE PATROL



by CYNTHIA KMETT

■ **Were these pills for sale or personal use?** A 43-year-old male from Detroit, came to the department store and attempted to steal \$563 worth of merchandise before being stopped by Loss Prevention. He was arrested and while being searched, the responding officers found him to be in possession of four Carisoprodol pills and 12 Alprazolam pills. He was charged with Retail Fraud – 1st Degree and Possession of a Controlled Substance.

■ **Oops, you forgot something.** An unknown male, came to a department store and attempted to steal \$220 worth of merchandise before being stopped by Loss Prevention. He refused to come back into the store and gave the stolen merchandise back which was a jacket he had been wearing. Found inside the jacket pocket was some of the suspect's cash. He was described as a male approximately 20 years old.

■ **This makes it hard to earn a living.** This victim is allowed to park his White 2003 Ford F250 Pick-up with attached Stealth Titan Trailer in the rear of the remodeling business parking lot on Rankin. When he returned to the business, the truck and trailer were missing. The vehicle was located in Detroit with the steering column, dashboard, and

ignition damaged. Victim is unable to provide any suspects.

■ **Think this thief is coming back to rob the house and steal the car?** A Dickens Dr. resident reports someone entered his unlocked blue 2006 Hummer parked in his driveway to steal two sets of keys, a football, and a football helmet from inside the vehicle. Probably time to call a locksmith.

■ **All the better to haul away other stolen goods.** An East Maple firm reports unknown suspect(s) stole his black 2005 Hydra Lift Two Axel Dump Trailer while it was stored at the complex parking lot. The trailer was loaded with cardboard.

■ **I think they've found the guilty party, sort of.** The Human Resources Director of a Bellingham firm reports several thefts have occurred at the business over the past two months. Employees have had items missing from their workplaces, their purses, and their desks including gift cards (\$200 and \$250), cash and change, a brand new HP laptop, a watch, and 4 Samsung Phones. The recently terminated cleaning company who started on August 30, 2015 is suspected.

■ **It is not necessary to have your phone out while you shop, or eat for that matter.** This victim reports accidentally leaving her Apple iPhone 6 in the shoe department. When she returned, it was gone. She was able to track the phone and discovered it to be southbound on Interstate 75 at Rochester, which was basically just outside the door where it was stolen. She is unable to provide any suspect(s).

■ **Here's a job opening.** Business Regional Investigator for this department store was conducting an investigation of an employee, a 20-year-old female from Sterling Heights. The employee was using her discount to purchase store items and then return them, causing a loss to the business. On six occasions, the employee conducted these transactions for a loss of \$1,339.90 to the company. When called into Loss Prevention, she admitted to her theft. The responding officer arrested her, charging her with Embezzlement Over \$100.

■ **It's the holidays, so watch for counterfeit bills.** Manager of the Biggby Coffee shop on Long Lake reports a nervous customer came into the business and purchased a drink. The customer paid with a \$50 bill and was given his change. The bill was then checked and the manager determined it to be counterfeit. The customer, who was waiting for his drink, was advised of such and he told the employee he would go to his car to get a credit card. The customer then left the business and never came back. The manager is unable to provide a vehicle description the customer left in but describes him as a 25-year-old male.

Note: If you have any information on the aforementioned crimes, or any other offenses, please call the Troy Police Department at 248-524-3477.

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The New Holiday Season Movies Feature Holiday Season Themes

MOVIE SHOW PLUS



by GREG RUSSELL

We are now into the holiday season and the seasonal movies are all set to hit the big screen. Here's a peek at some of the movies opening this week.

CHRISTMAS EVE. The title says it all about what day this movie takes place. Six sets of New Yorkers get stuck in elevators during a power outage the day before Christmas. The magic of the holiday provides the stranded bunch with laughter, romance, and a little holiday magic that will change their lives in unexpected ways. This is a fun movie that just gets you in the mood for the holiday. The ensemble cast includes Patrick Stewart, Gary Cole, Jon Heder and Cheryl Hines. Christmas Eve is rated PG.

KRAMPUS. This is a Christmas story with a twist. A family that just can't get it together for Christmas winds up making their child turn his back on the holiday. When young Max, played by Emjay Anthony, does this he unleashes the wrath of Krampus: a demonic force of ancient evil intent on punishing non-believers. Other holiday icons join with him to battle the family in hopes of getting them back into the spirit of the holiday. The family must band together to fight the evil, which, of course, draws them closer together and gives them a better understanding of the Christmas spirit. This film is a combination of horror and comedy. You'll also find yourself saying the line "Release the Krampus" at least once. This movie also stars Adam Scott, Toni Collette, and David Koehn. Krampus is rated PG-13.

Coming out this week on Blu-Ray and DVD are two documentaries for music lover.

AMY. This documentary tells the story of Amy Winehouse - in her own words. Featuring archive footage and previously unheard tracks, this film shows us the rarely seen live of this tremendous talent. Her huge success also resulted in her downfall. Amy Winehouse died from alcohol poisoning in July 2011 at the age of 27. This film is rated-R because of language.

Roger Waters The Wall. This documentary takes you behind the scenes of one of the biggest concert tours ever. Named after the 1979 Pink Floyd album, you get to see Roger Waters on stage perform and back stage reminiscing, rehearsing and responding to fans and the media. Pink Floyd fans will especially enjoy

this film. This movie is rated R for language.

There we go. Have a great week and enjoy a movie.

Greg Russell, has joined the Troy Somerset Gazette as our Movie and Entertainment columnist. Greg's weekly column will not only pre-view and review the new movies on the big screen, he will also take readers behind the scenes in Hollywood with fun and celebrity interviews.



EMJAY ANTHONY as Max in Legendary Pictures' "Krampus", a darkly festive tale of a yuletide ghoul that reveals an irreverently twisted side to the holiday.

**CITY OF TROY
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

The City of Troy Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing at City Hall in the Council Chamber, 500 W. Big Beaver Road, Troy, Michigan, on Tuesday, December 15, at 7:30 p.m. to consider the following:
In order to construct a detached garage, a 5 foot variance to the requirement that the garage be set back at least 10 feet from the house.

LOCATION: 1834 Kirkton
ZONING ORDINANCE SECTION: 7.03 B (2) (d)
APPLICANT: Anthony Strussione
PROPERTY OWNER: Strussione Family Trust

The application on file can be viewed and/or copies can be purchased at the Planning Department, City of Troy, 500 W. Big Beaver Road, Troy, Michigan 48084.

Comments can be expressed at the Public Hearing, or written comments can be directed to the attention of the Planning Department at the above noted address, or by email to planning@troymi.gov no later than 3:00 p.m. on the date of the meeting. If you have questions, you may contact the Planning Department by email or by phone at (248) 524-3364.

Notices and information for public hearings will also be posted on the City website at <http://troymi.gov/Government/PublicHearings>.

M. Aileen Dickson, CMC, CMMC
City Clerk

NOTICE: Persons with disabilities needing accommodations for effective participation in this meeting should contact the City Clerk by e-mail at clerk@troymi.gov or by calling (248) 524-3317 at least two working days in advance of the meeting. An attempt will be made to make reasonable accommodations.

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Birmingham Concert Band Presents a Magical Holiday Concert — Peace On Earth

A Musical Celebration of the Holidays will be performed by the Birmingham Concert Band at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 6th, at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 1800 W Maple Rd in Birmingham.

Admission: donations gratefully accepted all proceeds benefit the BCB scholarship Fund. For details, www.birminghamconcertband.com.



Local Troy Potter to be Featured at The 40th Annual Potters Market

Zabel Belian, owner of the Belian Art Center in Troy, shows off some beautiful pieces of her own handcrafted pottery that she has for sale at her studio. She will be one of the featured potters at The 40th Annual Potter's Market to be held next weekend, December 4-6, in the beautiful 17,000 sq.ft. Southfield Pavilion at 26000 Evergreen Rd. There will be 130 potters on hand selling their wares. This is the areas largest pottery show of the year and one you won't want to miss to buy a special piece for yourself or that someone special on your holiday gift list. Admission and parking are FREE. For more information visit www.thepottersmarket.com

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- ✓ Covered by insurance
- ✓ Fast return to activities

**CITY OF TROY
MICHIGAN
PUBLIC NOTICE
CITY COUNCIL 2016 REGULAR MEETINGS**

In accordance with the provisions of the Michigan State Law, Notice is hereby given that the City Council of the City of Troy will hold Public Meetings in the City Hall, 500 West Big Beaver Road, Troy, Michigan, (248) 524-3300, on the following dates:

Regular City Council Meeting Dates:		
Monday,	January	11 & 25
Monday,	February	8 & 22
Monday,	March	14 & 21
Monday,	April	4 & 18
Monday,	May	9 & 23
Monday,	June	13 & 27
Monday,	July	11 & 25
Monday,	August	8 & 22
Monday,	September	19 & 26
Monday,	October	10 & 24
Monday,	November	14 & 21
Monday,	December	5 & 9

Liquor Violation Hearing Meeting Dates:		
Monday,	February	22
Monday,	March	14

Special Study Session (Budget Discussions) Dates (6:00 PM in Council Board Room):		
Monday,	April	20
Wednesday,	April	25

Special Joint Study Session Meeting Dates (6:00 PM in Council Board Room):		
Monday,	January	25 Troy City Council/Troy Downtown Development Authority
Monday,	April	18 Troy City Council/Troy Planning Commission
Monday,	July	11 Troy City Council/Troy Chamber
Monday,	August	8 Troy City Council/Troy School Board
Monday,	October	24 Troy City Council/Troy Planning Commission

City Council/Staff Retreat:		
Friday,	February	26 Kresge Foundation, 3215 W. Big Beaver Road
Saturday,	February	27 Walsh College, Barry Center, 3838 Livernois Road

Special meetings may be scheduled as needed.

Unless indicated otherwise, all of the above meetings shall be held in the City Council Chambers at 7:30 PM and are open to the public.

M. Aileen Dickson, CMC, CMMC
City Clerk

PUBLISH: November 30, 2015
December 7, 2015
December 14, 2015

POSTED: November 16, 2015

NOTICE: Persons with disabilities needing accommodations for effective participation in this meeting should contact the City Clerk (248) 524-3317 at least two working days in advance of the meeting. An attempt will be made to make reasonable accommodations.

2015 HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

Shop Local for Gifts This Year!

Batteries Plus Bulbs

34164 Woodward Ave., Birmingham
248-644-0666 • www.batteriesplus.com

Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30 a.m. - 9 p.m.,
Sat 9 a.m. - 8 p.m., Sun 11 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Gift Certificates Available

We sell Batteries for everything that uses one such as hearing aids, watches, flashlights, cellphones, computers, cars, lawnmowers and boats. The same goes for Lightbulbs! Huge assortment of Flashlights and other great Stocking Stuffer ideas. We also repair cellphones.

Bloomfield Nails & Spa of Troy

2012 W. Big Beaver, Troy
248-822-9998 • www.bloomfieldnail.com

Hours: Mon-Fri 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.,
Sat 10 a.m. - 7 p.m., Sun 12 - 6 p.m.

Gift Certificates Available

Elegant Nail Salon in the heart of downtown Troy. We offer a full line of Nail Services including Manicures, Pedicures, Artificial Nails and Waxing. Host a Party here for any occasion.

Edible Arrangements

52 W. Square Lake at Livernois, Troy 248-879-9300

www.ediblearrangements.com

Hours: Mon-Fri 8 a.m. - 7 p.m., Sat 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.,
Sun 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Gift Certificates Available

Delicious gift baskets of edible fruit cutouts on a stick in cute reusable ceramic containers. We also offer Chocolate dipped fruit in gift boxes. Our Fruit Bouquets make the perfect gift for any occasion or centerpiece.

See GIFT GUIDE LISTING, page 8

Support Small Businesses During the Upcoming Holiday Season

Throughout the year, the Michigan Historic Preservation Network joins communities in encouraging that shopping dollars stay close to home. That simple act energizes local businesses, creates jobs, and supports the local tax base. This is never more important than at holiday time when, according to the National Retail Federation, 41% of Americans begin their shopping in

November for Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, and Christmas.

So here's your creative Game Plan for "Shop Small Saturday" on November 28. Okay, if you missed it, just go back this week and next to help your city grow and stay healthy.

Don't go to the mall. Instead, spend your dollars in your towns shopping districts. Park your car once and walk

around. Spend the day. Many of the Shop Small settings are inviting because they're rich with historic buildings that have benefitted from local preservation efforts.

Please consider giving a small donation as a holiday gift to the MHPN! For info on how to give visit www.mhpn.org/ Happy Holidays!

LIONEL®

SETS STARTING AT

\$99.99



EMPIRE TRAINS AND HOBBIES

Train Sets • Slot Cars • Models • Science Kits • Rockets • Kites
Puzzles • Hobby Tools & Supplies • Entry-Level RC • Games • Die-Cast
Telescopes • Collectible Toys • Games-Workshop • Coin Supplies
Games • Doll House Miniatures • Train Repair & Parts

Hours: Tues.-Fri. 11 am-7 pm • Sat. 11am-6 pm
Open Sunday Noon-5 pm from Thanksgiving thru Christmas
3278 Rochester Rd. • Troy • 4 Blocks North of Big Beaver

 **248.680.6500** 



MIDTOWN PIC-A-DELI

3381 Rochester Rd • Troy
248.689.3354 • Fax: 248-689-4250
www.midtownpic-a-deli.com

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 7 am-2 pm, Saturday by advanced order, Sunday closed

Let us "Cater" to You

Plan Your Holiday Parties With Us!

We Specialize In Corporate Catering

TRAYS: Breakfast, Sandwich, Roll-ups, Deli, Veggie, Fruit, Cheese & Crackers, Dessert

ASSORTED SALADS: Including Our *Famous Chicken Pasta Salad!*

BOX LUNCHES



Our Gift To You This Holiday Season

Buy One Sandwich Get One FREE!

Pickup only. With coupon. One coupon per person. No photo copies. Expires 12-23-15

THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON

DIPPING



IT'S BETTER TO GIVE AND RECEIVE!



Buy \$100, Get \$100

Through December 31, when you purchase \$100 in gift cards from The Troy Melting Pot, you'll receive a \$100 in four \$25 bonus certificates.*

*Offer is NOT applicable to the purchase of gift cards online. Offer valid at The Melting Pot of Troy only. \$100 Bonus certificates are presented in \$25 increments valid: Jan-Mar, Apr-Jun, Jul-Sep, & Oct-Dec 2016. Not valid for gratuity, tax, alcoholic beverages or gift cards. They are not gift cards, have no cash value and are not valid on holidays or special events.

Reservations Recommended (248) 362-2221 | meltingpot.com/troy
888 W. Big Beaver Road | Troy

2015 HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

It's a Ladies Night Out Shopping Event at Troy Historic Village!

Ladies, gather your friends together and come out to Troy Historic Village on Friday, December 11 from 5-8 p.m. - 60 W. Wattles at Livernois - for an evening of shopping, drinks and appetizers, and so much more! With Christmas just around the corner, you deserve a fun and stress-free evening of shopping and relaxing

with friends in the Pioneer Room.

The Gift Shop is always fully stocked with a fantastic selection of items for everyone on your gift list, Christmas themed gifts and more special products made right here in Michigan.

And for this one time only, the Village is also offering a special discount

on your entire purchase (25% for members / 20% for non-members), Free Gift Wrapping, and a Free Christmas CD with your \$25 purchase!

All proceeds from the shopping event will benefit the Troy Historical Society which operates the Troy Historic Village.

Shop Local for Gifts This Year!

GIFT GUIDE LISTING, From page 7

Imagine Theatres

Birmingham, Canton, Macomb, Novi, Rochester Hills, Royal Oak & Woodhaven
1-888-319-FILM

www.EmagineEntertainment.com

Our Gift Cards Make the Perfect Gift!

Empire Trains and Hobbies

3278 Rochester Rd., Troy
248-680-6500 • Visit us on Facebook

Hours: Tues-Fri 11 a.m. - 7 p.m., Sat 11 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Sun 12 - 5 p.m. (starting Nov. 29)

Gift Certificates Available

We carry a complete selection of Trains and Railroad Supplies as well as Slot Cars, Models, Science Kits, Rockets, Telescopes, Hobby Tools & Supplies, Doll House Miniatures, Coin Supplies, Puzzles, Entry Level RC & More!

Granite City Food & Brewery

699 W. Big Beaver Rd., Troy
248-519-1040 • www.gcfb.com

Hours: Mon-Thurs 11 a.m. - midnight,
Fri & Sat 11 a.m. - 1 a.m., Sun 10 a.m. - 10 p.m.
Gift Card Promotion thru 12-31-15 - "Receive a \$5 Bonus Card for Every \$25 Gift Card Purchased". Casual American Restaurant serving great comfort food such Mac N Cheese, BBQ Ribs, Burgers, Flatbreads, Seafood, Steaks and Delicious Salads. Our Signature Craft Brews are made on-site with Seasonal Brews featured throughout the year. A great place to meet after work or take the family for Sunday Brunch.

Ice Pix Shoes & Clothing Boutique

202 W. 11 Mile Rd. at Center St.
734-516-4038

www.royaloakdressboutique.com

Hours: Tues-Sat noon - 7 p.m.,
Sun & Mon by appointment only.

Gift Certificates Available

Great selection of Sweaters, Ponchos, Dresses and boots including the BEARPAW brand.

Kona Grill

30 E. Big Beaver Rd. at Livernois, Troy
248-619-9060 • www.konagrill.com

Hours: Mon-Thurs 11 a.m. - 11 p.m., Fri & Sat 11 a.m. - 12 a.m., Sun 11 a.m. - 10 p.m.
Gift Card Promotion - Black Friday Only "Buy One Gift Card Get One 1/2 Off" Gift Card Promotion thru 12-3-15 - Free \$20 Gift Card with Every \$100 Gift Card purchased thru 12-31-15.

Best Sushi Bar and Happy Hour in Troy! Fresh Seafood and Sushi daily, Steak, Chicken, Pasta Dishes and a Fantastic Salad selection.

Lakes Restaurant

5500 Crooks Rd. Troy • 248-646-7900

www.thepictureangroup.com

Gift Certificates Available
Holiday Promotion: \$25 Bonus Gift Card with every purchase of \$100 Gift Card. Lakes offers a combination of fine and casual dining in an elegant ambience which was once the home of Charlie's Crab. The menu offers a variety of fresh seafood selections including all you can eat snow crab. The pub has a great Happy Hour Tuesday thru Saturday 4pm - close.

Loving Health Chiropractic

1065 E. Long Lake Rd., Troy
248-524-2223

www.lovinghealthchiro.com

Hours: Mon & Wed 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. &
3 p.m. - 7:30 p.m., Tues, Thurs-Sat 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Gift Certificates Available

Celebrating 25 Years in practice providing the finest quality of Chiropractic Care and enhancing the optimal health & wellness of all our patients. In addition we offer Therapeutic massage.

Melting Pot of Troy

888 W. Big Beaver Rd., Troy • 248-362-2221
www.meltingpot.com

Hours: Sun-Thurs 11:30 a.m. - 10 p.m.,
Fri & Sat 11:30 - 11 p.m.

Gift Card Promotion thru 12-31-15 - "Buy \$100 Gift Card Get \$100 in Bonus Certificates"

The area's Premier Fondue Restaurant serving an assortment of unique cheese fondues paired with a variety of veggies, meat, poultry and shell fish combinations. You must try the Chocolate fondue dipped Strawberries for dessert! Wine Enthusiasts will love the 400+ wine list.

Midtown Pic-A-Deli

3381 Rochester Rd., Troy
248-689-3354 • Fax 248-689-4250
www.midtownpic-a-deli.com

Hours: Mon-Fri 7 a.m. - 2 p.m. for orders and pickup.
Saturday by advanced order. Closed Sunday

Gift Certificates Available

Best Handmade Sandwiches in town! Whether you are a party of 5 or 150 we can help you plan your perfect Holiday Menu! We specialize in Corporate Catering but also welcome individual orders and Walk-ins.

Picano's Italian Grille

3775 Rochester Rd., Troy
248-689-8050 • www.picanos.com

Hours: Mon-Thurs 11 a.m. - 10 p.m., Fri 11 a.m. - 11 p.m.,
Sat Noon - 11 p.m. & Sun Noon - 9 p.m.

Gift Certificates Available

Picanos serves delicious, authentic Italian cuisine made from family recipes. Picano's Italian Grille can accommodate your holiday party in their banquet facilities or cater an event at your home or office.

Rising Phoenix Archery

3863 Rochester Rd., Troy • 586-770-1859
www.MichiganArchery.net

Hours: Tues-Fri 11 a.m. - 10 p.m., Sat 9 a.m. - 10 p.m.,
Sun 9 a.m. - 6 p.m., Closed Monday

Gift Certificates Available

Archery Classes for every age and skill level. Recreational and Competitive Leagues. Open Range. Private Lessons. Great place to host parties for Birthdays, Holidays or the Office.

Troy Jewelers

3495 Rochester Rd., Troy • 248-528-0962
www.troydiamonds.com

Hours: Mon & Fri 10:30 a.m. - 8 p.m.,

See GIFT GUIDE LISTING, page 9

gift cards

from kona grill make the holidays shimmer



receive a \$20 bonus for every \$100 you spend on gift cards offer available november 16 - december 31

KONA GRILL
kitchen • sushi • cocktails

troy, mi
30 e. big beaver rd
troy, mi 48083
248-619-9060 • www.konagrill.com

*may not be redeemed day of purchase. bonus cards valid 1/1/16

www.TroyDiamonds.com

ANGELICA
expressions of the mind, heart and soul

Buy 5 Get 1 FREE



Family Rings & Pendants



\$249
reg. \$500

14KT. Yellow or White Gold



Holiday Hours:
Mon-Fri 10:30am-8pm
Sat 10:30am-6pm
Sun (Last 2 in Dec)
Noon-5pm



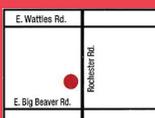
TROY JEWELERS



Repair & Custom Designing



248.528.0962 • 3495 Rochester Rd • Troy



FREE Jewelry Cleaning

WATCH BATTERIES \$3.99
Reg. \$6.99
Limit 1. Most Watches.
Exp. 12-31-15 TSG

2015 HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

Shop Local for Gifts This Year!

GIFT GUIDE LISTING, From page 8

Tue-Thurs 10:30 a.m. - 6 p.m., Sat. 10:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.,
Sun Noon - 5 p.m. (12-13 & 12-20 only)

Gift Certificates Available

Fine Jeweler since 1987 carrying a large assortment of
Diamonds & Engagement Rings, Bracelets, Necklaces,
Watches and Monogram Jewelry. We are committed to
providing the highest level of customer service.

Uncle Luke's Feed Store

6691 Livernois, Troy • 248-879-4796
Find us on Facebook

Hours: Mon-Fri 9 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.,
Sat 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. & Sun 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Gift Certificates Available

Visit us for all of your fresh, green holiday decor.

Our store features a large selection of gifts for any nature
lover. Ranging from wild bird supplies and feed, to
anything that the avid gardener could ever need.
We have gifts for your furry friends too!

Val's Polish Kitchen

**224 E. Auburn Rd. by Meijer, Rochester
Hills • 248-293-2660 • Find us on
Facebook**

Hours: Tues-Sun 8 a.m. - 8 p.m., Closed Monday
Gift Certificates Available

Homecooked Authentic Polish dishes. Rave reviews on
the Stuffed Cabbage, Pierogis, Potato Pancakes, City
Chicken and Hungarian Goulash. Hearty Breakfast offer-
ings too! If you're hungry for a burger, sandwich or
salad we've got that too!

Give the Gift of Comfort, Community & Conversation

Holidays are a special challenge for people who have lost a loved one. Grief intensifies as people struggle with how to cope with the holidays and traditions they shared with loved ones.

Dr. Miles, a psychiatrist, knows firsthand the trail of grief that follows the loss of a loved one. He and his wife, Michele, a pathologist, had relocated to Michigan. Their lives changed overnight when Michele was diagnosed with cancer; she died within three months. He found himself suddenly alone in a new city with no support system.

Including the holidays.

Dr. Miles and Mary Jamerino, LMSW, ACSW, grief expert and bereavement counselor, will discuss Coping with the Holidays and helpful tips at a special free community presentation on Thursday, Dec. 3 beginning at 7 p.m. at A. J. Desmond & Sons Funeral Home, 2600 Crooks Road in Troy.

Reservations are recommended but not required. Call: 248-362-2500 or email: Crooksrdr@ajdesmond.com.

Jamerino counsels people like Miles to talk openly about their loss and create a path that is personally helpful for their individual needs.

Here are some five helpful tips for handling grief during the holidays.

- Talk openly and honestly about your feelings, memories and the happy times. Sometimes, you need to initiate the conversation.

- Communicate with each other. Sometimes a hug is all that is needed.

- Simplify the holiday season. Avoid planning every detail.

- Remember: time does heal. Others have successfully rebuilt their lives after a loss, and although it is never easy, you can too.

- Be thankful for the blessings of family and friends.

Jamerino offers this advice for others wanting to comfort someone that is grieving:

- Call them. Leave a message saying that you are thinking of them and ready

to help them with their holiday traditions such as shopping or preparing a special dish.

- Send a card and/or flowers, letting them know you care about them.

- This holiday season some families – from the young grandchildren to the older parents and friends – will write down and then share memories of the deceased making sure that their loved one always has a place in their minds and hearts.

To register for Coping with the Holidays call A. J. Desmond & Sons Funeral Directors at 248-362-2500 or crooksrdr@ajdesmond.com. For information, visit www.AJDesmond.com.



CELEBRATE NEW YEAR'S EVE

SEATINGS AT 5:30 AND 8:30

SEVEN COURSE PRIX FIXE MENU / \$75 A PERSON

VEGETARIAN MENU OPTIONS AVAILABLE
PLEASE CALL AHEAD TO ORDER

MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS TODAY! ☎ 248.646.7900

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PRIX FIXE MENU**
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☎ 248.646.7900 ≡ LAKES_TROY



THE BIG SALAD

738 E. Big Beaver Rd • TROY
(248) 250-9899
Order online at Thebigsalad.net

The Big Salad of Troy Invites You in to Try a Fresh
New Approach at Eating. Lettuce Get Fresh With You!

When you choose The Big Salad for your catering needs, you're guaranteed to enjoy exceptional service and the absolute freshest ingredients.



**Holiday parties are
around the corner....**
10% OFF
**any catering order
plus FREE Delivery**

Expires 12/31/2015
Valid at Troy location only

15% OFF
your entire order
At the Big Salad of Troy

Expires 12/31/2015
Valid at Troy location only

Kids Eat Free
on Sunday

Choose from a cup of fresh
soup, or ½ turkey or ham
sandwich with chips. All
meals include a kid drink.

One free kid's meal with each adult
entrée purchased. Expires 12/31/2015
Valid at Troy location only

**\$7 Dinner
Deal**

Enjoy any 2 of the following:
3 topping salad, half
sandwich or cup of soup

Monday-Saturday 5pm-8pm
Expires 12/31/2015
Valid at Troy location only

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

15 words for \$12.00, each additional word 25¢ • Call Our Classified Hotline at 248-524-4868 or fax to 248-524-9140

Phone numbers and hyphenations count as 2 words, abbreviations count as 1 word. • Payable by mailing a check with ad copy to GAZETTE CLASSIFIEDS, P.O. Box 482, Troy, MI 48099

The publisher of the Troy-Somerset Gazette reserves the right to revise, classify, or reject, in whole or in part, any advertisement in this newspaper.

Ads received after the 4:00 p.m. Wednesday deadline will be published the following week. NOTE: Errors must be reported on first week of publication.

Single line of caps 75¢ • Bold single line of caps \$1.00 • Double line of caps \$1.50 • Bold double line of caps \$2.00

HELP WANTED

NOW HIRING

Picano's Restaurant is hiring:

- Experienced Line Cooks
- Dishwashers
- Experienced Waitstaff, Hostess & Bussers.

Apply by email to office@picanos.com or in person:

Picano's Italian Grille
3775 Rochester Rd. • Troy

HELP WANTED

Drivers: CO & O\Op's: Earn great money Running Dedicated! Great Hometown and Benefits. Monthly Bonuses. Drive Newer Equipment! 855-582-2265 1/

Lead Maintenance Tech: Great Pay/Benefits. APPLY www.durham-schoolservices.com 24661 Lahser Road, Southfield, MI 48033. (248) 352-8755 2/2

SNOW REMOVAL

Residential Snow Plowing Seasonal Rates Starting at \$225 Call Dave (248) 828-0055 t/f

HOME IMPROVEMENT

Carpets Re-stretched, repaired and installed. Vinyl floors repaired too! Lifetime guarantee. 32 years experience. Call Steve, (248) 585-2650. 51/52

CLASSIFIEDS WORK

CRAFT SHOW

BAZAAR

December 5th, 10 am-4 pm. Gifts/Crafts galore. Clawson Manor 255 W. 14 Mile Rd. 2 blocks west of Main St. 2/2

Selling Your House? Want Full Market Value?
Local Company Is Buying Houses
No Concessions - No Commissions - No Fees
Call To See If Your House Qualifies
248.301.1267

LOOKING TO ADOPT A PET?



FOSTER HOMES & DONATIONS NEEDED!
FIDOANDFLUFFYSRESCUE@YAHOO.COM
586-530-2221
Fido & Fluffy's Rescue Inc.
PO Box 29
Armada, MI 48005
Find us on Facebook!

Looking For Love:

♥ DOLLY ♥

Dolly is grinning ear to ear because she knows her forever family is out there somewhere, waiting to meet her! This 1-year-old Lab/Hound mix can be a little shy and would prefer a quiet home. She loves to snuggle and give kisses too! The adoption fee includes sterilization, age-appropriate vaccinations, the MHS Adoption Guarantee and much more. **For more information, visit or call the MHS Rochester Hills Center for Animal Care at (248) 852-7420 and provide the pet ID number, 818794**



Michigan Humane Society Rochester Hills adoption hours:
Monday - Saturday, Noon - 4 p.m.
Wednesday, Noon - 6 p.m.
Visit www.michiganhumane.org for pictures and descriptions of many available pets!



SOMEBODY HERE NEEDS YOU.

APRIL'S PROFESSIONAL PET SITTING

References Available!



Dogs • Cats • Birds
Small Animals & Horses

Call 765-623-4446

or email: indiana_purple@yahoo.com

Winter ASTROLOGY PSYCHIC FAIR

RICH MILOSTAN, Director
ASTROLOGERS/PSYCHICS
CARD READERS/PALMISTRY

Troy Masonic Center
1032 Hartland Dr., Troy
2 blocks N. of Big Beaver Rd. E. off Rochester Rd
Saturday, December. 5th • 10am-4pm

Admission \$5
Special Readings \$25
Full Readings \$35

Rich is Also Available
For Parties & Private
Consultation

Call For Info
1-248-528-2610

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Please put one word per box. Phone numbers and hyphenated words count as two words.

PLACE AD UNDER:

				\$12.00
\$12.25	\$12.50	\$12.75	\$13.00	\$13.25

Novena's \$17.00 each

A novena is a nine-day period of private or public prayer to obtain special graces, to implore special favors, or to make special petitions. (Novena is derived from the Latin "novem", meaning nine.) As the definition suggests, the novena has always had more of a sense of urgency and neediness.

Name _____ Ph. # _____

Visa/MC/AE Charge#: _____ Exp. _____

Call and Charge by phone: 248-524-4868 or Mail Check or Money Order to:



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ATTN: CLASSIFIED SECTION • P.O. BOX 482 • TROY, MI 48099

2015 HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

The Big Salad Features Healthy, Fresh & Delicious

Healthy eating is a habit many of us are trying to achieve. Consuming more fruits and vegetables is definitely part of that agenda. Big Salad, on

staff will toss or chop any salad for you. And, all salads can be wrapped or stuffed into a sandwich.

Heading into cold weather a Big



THE BIG SALAD on Big Beaver Rd. strives to serve salad, sandwiches and soup to please every taste says new owner (above) Jimmy Haddad.

Big Beaver Rd. just west of Rochester Rd., is a tasty way to accomplish that goal.

New owner Jimmy Haddad says that a healthy lifestyle was part of the motivation for buying the restaurant.

"It was natural progression," mentions Haddad. "At home we have salad at every meal. This was a good fit for my lifestyle and my ambition."

At Big Salad the choice is yours. Choose from one of their 12 popular gourmet pre-designed combinations like the California, featuring artichoke hearts, mushrooms, red onions, garbanzo beans, tomatoes, carrots and dried cranberries, tossed with spinach and romaine mixed in fat-free raspberry vinaigrette. Yum!

Maybe the classic Maurice is more to your liking with iceberg lettuce, turkey, ham and provolone cheese topped with Big Salad's special Maurice dressing.

Having trouble deciding? The Chicken Caesar, the absolute Big Salad favorite, is always a good choice. And remember, the Big Salad staff is happy to honor your substitutions.

However, if you're feeling creative or have a taste for something special, build your own masterpiece.

"Our huge selection of produce is fresh daily. Add a meat, a cheese, a crunchy topping, dried fruit or nuts; top it off with one of our 27 dressings and you have a satisfying, healthy meal," says Haddad.

He comments 22 of those dressing selections are gluten-free and gluten free bread is also available. Haddad wants to remind you that the Big Salad

Salad soup is an ideal pairing with a salad or sandwich. Broccoli Cheddar, Tomato Basil Bisque and White Bean Chicken Chili are the standard favorites and there is always a soup-of-the-day.

In a rush? Order and pay online (thebigsalad.net) and your meal will be ready to go at your convenience.

For catering an office luncheon or special event, Haddad says their packages and boxed luncheons offer a variety that everyone will appreciate at an affordable price. See the Big Salad website for complete details.

When you're in the mood for fresh food, whether you keep it slim and simple or load on the croutons and Bleu Cheese dressing, Big Salad is the choice for a healthy, satisfying and delicious meal.

Big Salad is located at 738 E. Big Beaver Rd., just west of Rochester rd. For more information, see their website www.TheBigSalad.net, or call 248-250-9899.

The Michigan Accordion Society Hosting Monthly Music and Special Holiday Event

The Michigan Accordion Society is hosting our monthly music and special holiday event on Tuesday, December 8th at Crispelli's bakery and Pizzeria in Berkley, Mi. which is located at 28939 Woodward Ave.

(near 12 Mile Rd.)

Event admission is \$10 for members and \$15 for non-members and our events are always open to the public! www.michiganaccordion.org

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

Sunday, December 13th
10 am - 2 pm

CALL FOR
RESERVATIONS
248.519.1040

GRANITE CITY
FOOD & BEVERAGE

Celebrate by Giving and Receiving
this holiday season!

\$5 BONUS CARD FOR
EVERY \$25 GIFT CARD
PURCHASE

\$17⁹⁵ Adults

\$6⁹⁵ Children 7-12

Children 6 & Under FREE

Reservations Are Encouraged!

Santa will be at Granite City
from 10 am-2 pm!

food & brewery

Make your reservations today!

248.519.1040

699 West Big Beaver Road • Troy

WHERE FOOD & BEER IS
MORE THAN A CRAFT

It's an art

No one stacks up to

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- FREE vehicle battery & alternator check
- We repair smartphone, tablet, & MP3 screens
- Huge selection of batteries, bulbs & flashlights!

34164 Woodward Ave.
Birmingham
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(East side of Woodward,
N. of Lincoln, under the flag)
Mon-Fri 8:30 - 9, Sat 9 - 8, Sun 11 - 6
www.batteriesplus.com

Lifetime Warranty on Most
Cell Phone Batteries

\$4.99 Watch Battery & Installation

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The Beginning of the Thanksmas Season

PERSPECTIVES



by
PETER MAURER

I don't know exactly when the line between holidays became blurred, but I know at some point in the past, Christmas would show up as early as August, as various department stores would start to set up their aisles of Christmas trees.

I have to admit to a certain bitter-sweet moment when I saw the nascent beginning of a holiday display, as I am torn between my love for Christmas and all that it stands for, along with dismay that we hadn't even yet celebrated Labor Day, Halloween, or Thanksgiving.

Add to those early holiday displays the fact that radio stations, both terrestrial and satellite, start playing Christmas music on November first, and you have the makings for a good ol' fashioned American retail feeding frenzy.

And today, even though it seems that the mania surrounding Black Friday is beginning to turn around somewhat and allow a few more retail employees to be with their families on Thanksgiving, we still live at a time when Christmas just can't wait to arrive, seeming to leapfrog over several other holidays.

I think I can remember the moment in my youth when that line between Thanksgiving and Christmas, although tenuous even then, finally made the leap to Thanksmas, that transition time from Thanksgiving to Christmas.

In the early 1970s, I worked at a garden nursery in Saginaw whose owner was the son of one of dad's best friends, and a fiery Irishman to boot. Knowing that I was working my way through college, he would often give me work hours above and beyond others to try to give me a little extra tuition money.

In 1972, during his annual and famous holiday staff meeting, during which he would hold up a shiny new American dollar coin – our commission for the sale of any artificial Christmas tree six feet or taller, the owner told us that we would be assembling our Aisles of Christmas Trees a little early that year, starting several weeks before Thanksgiving.

And true to his word, his wife and daughters, along with several other women from the gift department, spent the weeks prior to Thanksgiving decorating several dozen trees, and then give them a nice name, convenient when people would ask for that particular tree or an ornament on it.

Those were unusual weeks, as I was still busy selling winter-ready lawn fertilizer and anti-desiccants for fragile shrubbery, while a few aisles over, a forest of Christmas trees was going up faster than a modular home.

Between customers, I would often sneak over to the aisle of trees, just to behold the splendor that was building minute by minute, day by day. I also have to admit to sniffing the trees that had been outfitted with artificial scent devices, spraying out their miniscule amounts of fir or balsam fragrance periodically.

And as Thanksgiving week arrived, the Aisle of Christmas Trees was ready. Every one of the trees was decorated by theme, color, light density, and virtually any other category you can imagine. A veritable forest of

Christmas splendiferous lay before me, with all the magic – and retail dollars – of the season.

As we left the store Wednesday evening, wishing each other 'Happy Thanksgiving', we all knew that when we came back early Friday morning, we would – OFFICIALLY – be in the Christmas season, a time during which it is totally acceptable to hum along to the canned Christmas music blaring over the speakers and wishing everyone "Merry Christmas".

But all of that was only possible AFTER we'd had our fill of turkey drumsticks, stuffing, and of course, pumpkin pie.

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