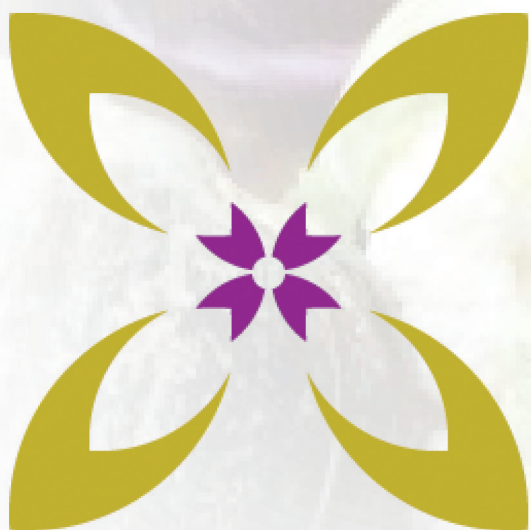


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Inspirational Speaker Doug Vincent to Speak at Battenkill Conservancy's November 5th Annual Meeting

The Battenkill Conservancy (or BkC) is proud to announce that Doug Vincent, an inspirational speaker and river enthusiast who has lived and worked in the Capital District for more than twenty years, will be our featured speaker on Sunday, Nov 5 beginning at 2pm. Vincent will offer a talk and slide show presentation about his 28 day canoe trip down the Hudson.

Beginning near Lake Tear of the Clouds, Vincent and a colleague paddled continuously along vast stretches of the river before ending 180 miles down river at Manhattan's Battery Park City and within sight of the Statue of Liberty. The presentation is part of BkC's annual public meeting held to update as well as collect feedback from the community on its the current activities, past successes and future plans for the Battenkill watershed and beyond. The talk will be held at the newly formed Fort Miller Meetinghouse located at 1239 Fort Miller Road in Fort Edward, NY. The Meetinghouse is part of the historic Fort Miller Reformed Church complex that sits between the Hudson River and the NYS Canal System just off Route 4.

Vincent is a licensed clinical social worker with a Masters in Social Work from Rutgers Graduate School of Social Work. He has worked in both private practice and for the not for profit Samaritan Counseling Center in Scotia focusing on outpatient counseling services. His time spent at the New Brunswick Theological Seminary in New Jersey accounts for his activities in the area churches as a well known and in demand preacher. A gifted speaker, Vincent is noted for his well researched, historically based and topically relevant sermons.

However it is Vincent's love for outdoor activities and canoeing that lead him to plan a "Journey Down the Hudson" in 2008. A break in his work schedule and a change in his personal situation provided a kind of sabbatical for him to take advantage of the opportunity. Vincent currently resides along the river in Fort Miller adjacent to the Fort Miller Meetinghouse. The corresponding sanctuary and current church structure was originally built as a community meeting house for Fort Edward and the surrounding area in 1816 and celebrated its 200th anniversary last Oc-

tober. Given its scenic and historic location on a prime stretch of the Hudson River, BkC decided that would be the perfect setting for the talk. Attendees are encouraged to come early and tour the grounds, the church sanctuary, the historical archives and the River Road cemetery located just down the road. The meeting is open to the public and all are welcome. Seasonal refreshments and light fare will be served.

The Meetinghouse is located at 1239 Fort Miller Road in the town of Fort Edward. Look for the signs off Route 4 to direct you across the canal at Lock 5 and to the Meetinghouse.

For more information contact: Lorraine Merghart Ballard @ 917-658-3589 or email battenkillconservancy@gmail.com



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Making sense of nutrition labels

(BPT) - You can find them on the side of most every product at your local grocery store. They are plain and kind of boring but nutrition labels were designed to contain vitally important information for good health and wise food choices. These labels tell you the number of servings in a container, how many calories per serving, and what amounts of vitamins and essential nutrients (like sodium) they contain.

However, they don't just give you the raw data, they also tell you what percentage of your daily allowance of needed nutrients you are getting. When it comes to sodium, however, that may be a problem. The daily allowances are based on the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines, with guidance from the Institute of Medicine (IOM), now known as the Health and Medicine Division (HMD) of

the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (the National Academies).

The current FDA Dietary Guidelines call for a maximum daily sodium allowance of 2,300 mg, well below what the average American eats, which



is about 3,400 mg per day of sodium. But, when the IOM studied this issue and released

their report in 2013, "Sodium Intake in Populations: Assessment of Evidence," they found no evidence to lower the daily allowance below 2,300 mg per day and some indication that doing so would be harmful. The level set by the FDA not

only represents a significant population-wide sodium reduction effort, it also ignores the latest evidence.

An increasing amount of research is contradicting the FDA's sodium guidelines. A 2014 study, published in the New England Journal of Medicine found that the healthy range for sodium consumption was between 3,000 and 6,000 mg per day and eating less than 3,000 mg per day may increase the risk of death or cardiovascular incidents. And a 2011 study published in the Journal of the American Medical Asso-

ciation found that low-sodium diets were more likely to result in death from cardiovascular disease.


Low-salt diets can lead to insulin resistance, congestive heart failure, cardiovascular events, iodine deficiency, loss of cognition, low birth weights, and higher rates of death. Dr. Michael Alderman, editor of the American Journal of Hypertension and former president of the American Society of Hypertension, has repeatedly cited his concern that a population-wide sodium reduction campaign could have unintended consequences.

Very few countries in the world meet the government recommendations. A study of almost 20,000 people in 33 countries shows the normal range of consumption around the world is 2,800 to 4,800 mg/day. This is consistent regardless of where people get their food, either from home-cooked meals, pre-packaged meals or restaurants.


The new nutrition labels were supposed to go into place this year, but now the FDA has indefinitely delayed their implementation. Hopefully this will allow them time to adjust the sodium limits to more accurately reflect the evidence as well as how real people eat and the safe range of sodium consumption.


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Locally Grown

5 tips to keep sniffles and sneezes out of your holiday plans

(BPT) - With the holidays upon us, there's a lot to look forward to: seeing old friends, eating too much, wearing ugly sweaters; the list goes on. One question millions of Americans should keep in mind this holiday season is how to best handle their asthma and allergies. While everyone else is singing along to carols and letting their food digest, others are tearing up, coughing and going into a sneezing fit.

"People don't realize how many hidden triggers are associated with the holidays and winter season," said allergist Bradley Chippis, MD, president of the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (ACAAI). "Those who suffer from allergies and asthma assume things will ease up once the cold weather hits, but there are other factors that can cause your allergies and asthma to flare. In fact, two-thirds of allergy sufferers have year-round triggers and symptoms." To help make the holidays as enjoyable as possible, here are five tips to manage your allergies this season.

An excuse to stay out of the hugging circle. There are a lot of hugs and kisses during the holidays, which can make it easy for germs and viruses

to spread. Catching a cold or coming down with the flu is pretty awful, but because those illnesses make asthma and allergy symptoms even worse, those with allergies must take extra precautions. One more reason to avoid the mistletoe!

Watch out for that ... tree! For many, picking out a Christmas tree is a holiday tradition. For others, a tree can be pure misery. Mold on the tree and terpene found in the sap can trigger allergies you thought you had under control. A much better option is to use an artificial tree - just be sure to dust it off! Dust allergies can be a problem year-round.

Keep an eye on holiday treats. Holidays are about food, and people usually share the food they make. As a result, you need to be extra careful about food allergies. If you or your kids have food allergies, let your host know what ingredients should be avoided. If you are hosting, prepare food you know everyone in your clan can eat.

Your nose knows to sniff out those "pleasant" scents. People love to add those little touches to create a cozy holiday atmosphere in their homes. Unfortunately, scented candles,



wood-burning fireplaces, aerosols and potpourri can trigger allergies and asthma. There are plenty of other nice touches you can add, but this year, forgo the scents!

Leave the house prepared. Whether it's someone's lovable dog, a co-worker wearing too much perfume or a moldy Christmas tree, many

triggers exist out there. Before you leave the house, take your medications, and if your allergy and asthma symptoms worsen during the season, be sure to schedule an appointment with your allergist.

If you need help with allergies, visit AllergyandAsthmaRelief.org to find a board-certified allergist in your area.

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For Those Who Have No Clue... This One's For You

By Stacey Morris

Why doesn't that out-of-control pig just stop eating?

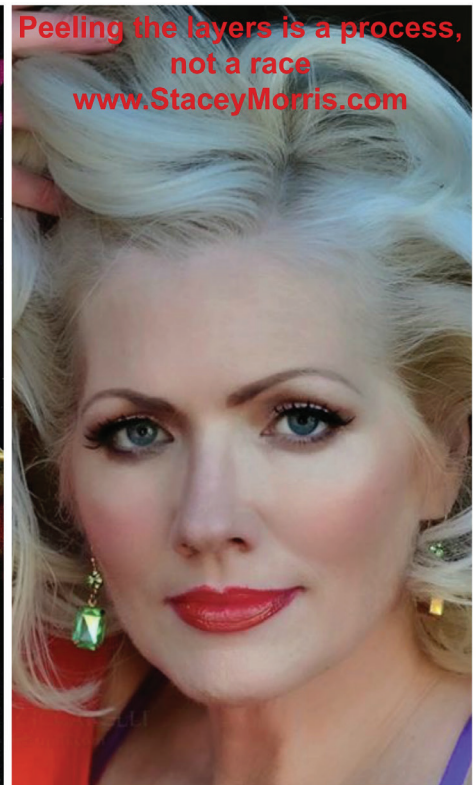
Helllooo? Just push yourself away from the table – it's simple.

Or my favorite cut-and-dry prescription: *Whack your portions in half and start exercising.*

Those who have no clue about the inner workings of a person of size piously say phrases like these aloud or to themselves while disdainfully assessing imagined, but glaring character flaws. And in the interest of not playing games with ourselves, let's come clean and admit the negativity's root: a visceral response to appearance.

If health concern is your argument, please don't use it unless you're also vocally disdainful of the habits of habitual drinkers, smokers, and shop-a-holics. For the 20 years I weighed in excess of 300 pounds, I was more than familiar with disapproving remarks and reproachful looks. As a survival tool, I unconsciously developed an invisible 'back away from the fat chick' forcefield around my parameter. Most of the time, a withering look from me was enough to put a would-be lecturer in their place, but a few of the well-meaning health-mongers penetrated the forcefield and they'd commence dispensing some "It's so simple if only you'd just..." pearl of great price...as if they had just helped me crack the wall of the most potent secret since the Da Vinci Code.

If only they had a little more information and a lot more compassion, they may have been able to connect the dots a little differently.



Pushing yourself away from the table is fine and good if you're the average Joe or Sally who have slowly let 15-20 pounds creep on due to 'that's life' factors such as middle age, a sedentary desk job, and perhaps a few too many complex carb choices that dot our fast food nation.

But for someone like me, who carried 180 extra pounds on her frame, eating wasn't just eating. It was a psychologically loaded activity. How could I just abruptly cut the cord that connected me to emotional salvation?

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The answer is, I couldn't. Any attempts I made at an abrupt disconnect via calorie-counting, pre-packaged meals, metabolism-enhancing pills and other Molotov cocktails always ended in a steaming pile-up of a mess.

For those fortunate enough to never have been ensnared in this sort of trap, think of it this way: It's kind of like your arm being on fire and looking for a bucket of water...food is that bucket. Some of you reading relate to this while others are shrugging, wondering why a simple visit up on the roof isn't enough to quell stress on those days when the world is too much to bear.

That's the eternal mystery. I don't have the time or expertise to debate the issue of nature vs. nurture, but let me be clear about the simple truth that people of size don't need your judgement or your two cents, whether in the form of a mini-lecture or a look. If being unhappy with my size, or breaking into a cold sweat at the prospect of fitting into an airplane seat, or feeling disgusted after yet another dieting attempt failed were any kind of valid motivation, obesity would be wiped off of our nation's map. For decades, I directed copious amounts of disappointment and disgust at myself. But it wasn't enough to turn the tide. It really only escalated my defense mechanism of eating to sedate.

People write to me confessing they want to do what I've done but "can't stop" with the food. I know exactly where they're coming from. After my 475th attempt to force myself to be a good girl, a modest eater, a person who was dispassionate about Eggs Benedict and potato salad, I finally waved the white flag and admitted my efforts were futile. And in fact, maybe even a little detrimental to my mental health. A decade ago, when I was riddled with rage and frustration over a toxic job I'd remained in for about eight years too many, the orange Tupperware bowls full of homemade potato salad carted from my refrigerator to the office probably prevented me from committing a homicide or two. See? Even destructive habits can have a silver lining.

I'm not suggesting I was happy with my size or the way my misusing food was siphoning my mental and physical energy. Binge-eating was an automatic habit and coping technique that wasn't in my best interest for a variety of reasons. And speaking of reasons, I decided it was time to start listing the ones that led to me reaching for potato chips and clam dip in the first place. I guess you could say it was a commitment ceremony of sorts, a sacred vow between the self I projected to the world and the humiliated fat girl who had some accrued anger, sorrow, remorse, and other sundry emotions I needed to say hello to.

A lot of people don't want to hear this next part, but healing from the inside out was a long process and a journey that doesn't really ever end. It's the nature of life's bumpy road. But wouldn't you rather hear truth for a change instead of lies and manipulation from someone with a financial agenda?

The good news is, if you're ready to begin, it's more simple and freeing than you ever imagined. And there are no hidden fees or membership dues.

Stacey Morris is a cookbook author, health coach, and DDPYO-GA instructor based in Albany, N.Y. Her website is www.stacey-morris.com.



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Michael Benedict Jazz Vibes

MICHAEL BENEDICT JAZZ VIBES will be held on Friday, October 20, 2017 from 8:00pm - 10:00pm at the Bennington Center for the Arts.

Michael is currently the leader of three ensembles; Jazz Vibes, BOPITUDE and The Gary McFarland Legacy Ensemble. Jazz Vibes is an ensemble featuring Michael on vibraphone, David Gleason on piano, Mike

Lawrence on bass and Pete Sweeney on drums. The reper-

toire of the group includes straight ahead jazz standards, Latin American songs and original material. Jazz Vibes has been the leading vibraphone group in the Capital Region of New York State for over a decade.

House opens at 7:30pm, performance begins at 8:00pm. Tickets: \$15 advance/members, \$20 at the door. Kids 12 and under are admitted free of charge! Call The Bennington Center for the Arts at 802-442-7158 to purchase tickets.

Rebecca Penneys to Perform at Williams College

The Williams College Department of Music presents Rebecca Penneys, piano on Tuesday, October 17 at 8 p.m. in Brooks-Rogers Recital Hall on the Williams College campus. There is also a piano master class featuring talented Williams student pianists on Monday, Oct. 16 at 4:15 p.m. in the Brooks-Rogers Recital Hall. These free events are open to the public.

Presenting a program of the riches of keyboard repertoire, Rebecca Penneys plays music of Soler, Scarlatti, Brahms, and Chopin. She concludes her performance with rags by Williams Albright and William Bolcom.

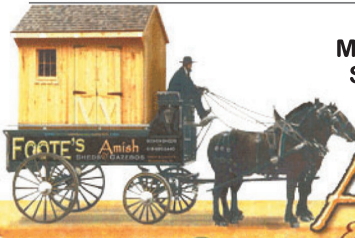
Pianist Rebecca Penneys is a recitalist, chamber musician, orchestral soloist, educator and adjudicator. For over six decades she has been hailed as a pianist of prodigious talent. Rebecca has

played throughout the USA, East Asia, Australia, New Zealand, South America, Europe, Middle East and Canada. A Steinway Artist, she is popular guest artist, keynote speaker and celebrated teacher. Combining concerts with seminars and master classes worldwide, she taught at Eastman School of Music for thirty-seven years and at Chautauqua Music Festival for thirty-four years. Her prior positions were at Milwaukee Conservatory of Music (1974-1980) and North Carolina School of the Arts (1972-1974). Her current and former students include prizewinners in international competitions, and hold important teaching posts on every continent.

Rebecca Penneys is presented by the Williams College Department of Music with the generous support of the W. Ford Schumann '50 Performing Arts Endowment.

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The holidays throw in a lot of temptations from every direction if dieting or watching your weight. Holiday parties and get-togethers in particular can be a healthful-eating challenge. Caught up in conversation among friends and family, surrounded by tasty food and drinks, it's easy to lose track of what and how much is being eaten. Registered Dietitian Sarah Galicki offers tips for staying the course through the holidays.

"There are a lot of calories packed into this time of year. You're doing your holiday baking, people are dropping off candy and treats, there are parties with all-you-can-eat buffets and creamy drinks like eggnog, so it's important to be prepared. It is possible to navigate the holidays without gaining weight by doing these things."

Eat first.

Never go to a party hungry. If you do, chances are you'll wind up eating too much, too fast. Eat a snack before you go, such as some Greek yogurt, which is loaded with protein and calcium. Add fruit for extra taste and nutrients, and top with pistachios for crunch and good fats.

Drink wisely.

If you want to indulge a little bit, have some champagne or white wine. A 4-ounce glass has approximately 100 calories. By comparison, a cup of traditional eggnog has 344 calories and 19 grams of fat (11 grams saturated fat). Skip the creamy drinks. The best bet is to avoid alcohol altogether if possible. Drink a spritzer made with sparkling water, cranberry and a lime instead. It looks festive, tastes great and has hardly any calories.

6 Tips for Navigating Holiday Food Temptations

Fill up on finger foods.

Small, bite-size appetizers limit the calorie impact. A good option? Pistachios. They're great to snack on; 49 have exactly 150 calories, and they satisfy that crunchy craving. Plus, they're full of nutrients and fill you up. The healthy fats will help regulate your blood-sugar level throughout the night, which is really helpful if you're drinking. Wrap some up decoratively and take along for a hostess gift to be sure there's a healthy choice on hand. And everyone loves pistachios.

Survey your options.

Mindful eating is always key in any situation. Once the buffet table opens, take a visual sweep past it before jumping in line and making your selections. This way you'll avoid

piling one of everything onto your plate needlessly when you eventually pass through.

Avoid the white stuff.

Given other options, skip the white rice, white pasta and white bread. They're loaded with calories but no nutrients. Choose items with whole grains instead. They're full of nutrients and have fiber, which will fill you up so you won't eat as much.

Delight in dessert.

Dessert is probably the toughest temptation of all. But there's no reason to skip. Most of us have a sweet tooth. Satisfy that sweet craving with some fresh fruit. To make sure it's available, bring some as a hostess gift; it's always welcome.

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Zambezi Marimba Band Performs in Chapin Hall

The Williams College Department of Music presents the Zambezi Marimba Band in concert on Saturday, October 28 at 8 p.m. in Chapin Hall on the Williams College campus. This performance is free of charge and open to the public.

The Zambezi Marimba Band features danceable and melodious marimba music from Zambia and Zimbabwe. Zambezi is a diverse group and employs singers, a horn section, and other instruments to its

solid marimba fundament. More a joyous celebration than just a concert, the band wins over every audience with its flair and irresistibly kinetic energy. This is an event for the whole family - for those who want to move, or if you want to sit. clap along, smile, and enjoy a wonderful evening.

About Tendai Muparutsa

Tendai Muparutsa is an internationally known performer, music educator, ethnomusicologist and bandleader. He belongs to in a multitude of Zimbabwean and African music circles in North America, and collaborates with musicians and instructors from all over Africa. He performs with afro-pop groups and directs mbira, marimba, and dance ensembles. His high energy, humor and passion for sharing African music delight audiences and students alike.

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Upcoming Events at Hubbard Hall

Whispering Bones

Whispering Bones, an annual fundraiser and evening of spooky stories returns just in time for Halloween. You'll be sure to get a kick out of these bizarre, sometimes scary, and hilarious stories told by our company of storytellers on October 27 at 7:30pm.

Hubbard Hall-o-ween Monster Mash Ball October 31

Hubbard Hall-O-Ween moves INSIDE the Hall this year for a Monster Mash! Costumes are encouraged as you dance your way through spooky corners and delicious treats like Apple Cider and Pumpkin Bread will surely please all members of your party from the tiniest trick-or-treater to the strongest super hero. Tickets and concession sales go to support the Hubbard Hall Dance Costume Fund!

The McKrell Brothers

Singer/Songwriter Kevin McKrell has toured extensively in both the US and Ireland with his unique Celtic bluegrass sound. An Irish and Folk Festival top-pick, we are thrilled to have him and his band here with us at Hubbard Hall on November 4 at 7 pm. Make sure to check out their Christmas Show as well!

The Mystery of Edwin Drood Book

The Mystery of Edwin Drood Book, music, and lyrics by Rupert Holmes Based on the unfinished novel by Charles Dickens Directed by David Snider November 17-December 3 A part of Christmas in Cambridge! Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30 pm Saturdays and Sundays at 2 pm Special Matinees: Tuesday, November 21 at 10 am and Friday, December 1 at 10 am. Performance: Saturday, November 18 at 6 pm.

For more information on these events or about Hubbard Hall visit www.hubbardhall.org or call 518-677-2495. Hubbard Hall Center for the Arts and Education is located at 25 East Main Street in Cambridge.



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Regional Events to Check Out

NOVEMBER

November 1-2 (3-6) - Greenwich Farmers' Market, 106 Main Street, Greenwich. Vegetables, eggs, grassfed beef, honey, pastured chicken and pork, maple syrup, and more! Every Wednesday from 3pm to 6pm. Market is open every week through December 20. For more information greenwichfarmersmarket@gmail.com or (518) 944-7149

November 2 (6-8 p.m.) - McCartee's Barn (25 East Broadway, Salem), Healthy Living, with Donna Orlyk

November 4 (1-1:30 p.m.) - 4 Gardenworks (1055 County Route 30, Salem), Open House. Dare to Decorate Demonstration. Preview demonstration of Holiday Color. Free.

November 5 (2 p.m.) - Fort Salem Theater (11 E Broadway, Salem), Story Circle from Proctor's. Challenge. Siri Allison hosts story telling series.

November 6 (6:30-8 p.m.) - French Group at the Library, 148 Main St. Greenwich. The French Group: 1st Mondays. A short lesson and guided discussion

November 7-28 (6:30-8 p.m.) - The Knitters at the Library, 148 Main Street, Greenwich. Tuesdays. All ages and abilities welcome!

November 8 (2-3:15 p.m.) - Bereavement Support Group at the Library, 148 Main Street, Greenwich. 2nd Wednesdays.

November 8 (6-8 p.m.) - McCartee's Barn (25 East Broadway, Salem), Salt Dough Santas

November 11 (2 p.m.) Gardenworks (1055 County Route 30, Salem), Holiday Open House. Book Signing: Untold Stories: Tales of the Battenkill. Free cider and samples.

November 11 (10 a.m. - 3 p.m.) - Veterans Day Friday, November 11 Visitor Center Join Saratoga National Historical Park in honoring all those who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces, including the Continental soldiers and militiamen who served here at Saratoga in 1777. Musket firing demonstrations and discussions about Revolutionary War American soldiers will take place throughout the day.

November 14 (6 p.m.) - Courthouse Community Center (58 East Broadway Salem), HSPCA Potluck Dinner/Annual Meeting.

November 15 (3-5 p.m.) - Contemporary Classics Book Club, 148 Main St. Greenwich. Led by Barry Targan. Read and discuss recent works by noted authors.

November 17 (5-7 p.m.) - Celebrating 10 Years at bjsartworks Framing Gallery Studio & Saunders Gallery of Fine Art Friday, November

17, 5-7pm. Refreshments/Door Prizes. Enjoy savings all month on framing and art!

Nov. 24,25,26 10 (5 p.m.) & Dec. 9&10 (10-5 p.m.) - 16th Annual Holiday Open House - The Shirt Factory Art & Healing Arts, 71 Lawrence Street Glens Falls, NY. Guest Vendors, Artisan Gifts, Raffles and more!

November 18 (6:30 p.m.) - 5th Annual Holiday Lighted Tractor Parade, Historic Downtown Greenwich. Join us for the 5th year of our annual Holiday Lighted Tractor Parade and choose your favorites! For more information, call the Chamber office at 518-692-7979.

November 18 (10 a.m. - 2 p.m.) - Courthouse Community Center (58 East Broadway Salem), Shoppe off Broadway Christmas in November Sale.

November 19 (8:30-11 a.m.) - Sunday Morning Breakfast Buffet, Greenwich Elks Lodge, 130 Bulson Road, Greenwich.

November 25 - Annual Salem Christmas Parade at 3:30 p.m.

November 25 (10 a.m. - 2 p.m.) - Salem NY Main Street: Small Business Saturday, Scavenger Hunt

November 25 (10 a.m. - 6 p.m.) - The Flower Shop @ Laura's Garden (207 Main St, Salem), Holiday Open House, Discounts & Samples.

November 25 (2 p.m.) - Gardenworks (1055 County Route 30, Salem), Holiday Concert with the LaMothe Gee Family singing carols of the season. Free.

November 25 (2-4 p.m.) - 25 McCartee's Barn (25 East Broadway, Salem), Art Reception: Giving Thanks in So Many Ways. Free.

DECEMBER

December 2 (10 a.m. - 2 p.m.) - Courthouse Community Center (58 East Broadway Salem), Annual Art & Craft Sale Unique homemade items and gifts.

December 2 (2-4 p.m.) - McCartee's Barn (25 East Broadway, Salem), Art Reception: Traditions at McCartee's Barn. Make snowflakes with Marilyn Chambers. Free.

December 2-3 (9 a.m. - 4 p.m.) - Gardenworks (1055 County Route 30, Salem), Holiday Wreath, Kissing Ball or Table Top Tree Workshop. Materials provided. Register; Photos with Santa. For kids of all ages - 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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Much to do as the holidays near!

December 4 (6:30-8 p.m.) - French Group at the Library, 148 Main Street, Greenwich. The French Group: 1st Mondays 6:30-8pm. A short lesson and guided discussion

December 7 (4-8 p.m.) - Gardenworks (1055 County Route 30, Salem), Shopping Night: Find quality gifts & treats. Free chili & gift wrapping.

December 7 (6-8 p.m.) - McCartee's Barn (25 East Broadway, Salem), Healthy Living, with Donna Orlyk

December 9 (9-11 a.m.) - Gardenworks (1055 County Route 30, Salem), Evergreen Table Top Tree or Candle Centerpiece Workshops. Materials provided. Register.

December 9 - McCartee's Barn (25 East Broadway, Salem), Little Gallery Wonders and Holiday Open House.

December 12 (6:30-8 p.m.) - The Flower Shop @ Laura's Garden (207 Main St, Salem), Wine & Design.

December 12 (2-3:15 p.m.) - Bereavement Support Group at the Library, 148 Main Street, Greenwich. 2nd Wednesdays.

December 17 (8:30-11 a.m.) - Sunday Morning Breakfast Buffet, Greenwich Elks Lodge, 130 Bulson Road, Greenwich. Served on 3rd Sunday of every month. A family event! \$8 Adults / \$7 Seniors (62+) / \$5 children. For more info: Bill Curley (518) 692-2061 or greenichelks2223@yahoo.com

December 20 (3-5 p.m.) - Contemporary Classics Book Club, 148 Main St. Greenwich. Led by Barry Targan. Read and discuss recent works by noted authors.

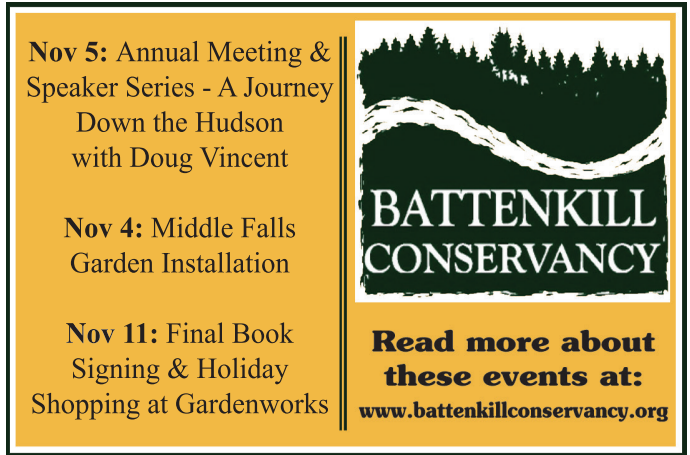


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Nov 5: Annual Meeting & Speaker Series - A Journey Down the Hudson with Doug Vincent

Nov 4: Middle Falls Garden Installation

Nov 11: Final Book Signing & Holiday Shopping at Gardenworks

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Art, and the process of creating it

By Jane Bloodgood-Abrams

Art, and the process of creating it, can have a powerful effect on both the viewer and the artist. Art can be cathartic, healing, and soothing. When I began my career I used my expressionistic, figurative painting to express my angst from difficulties in life and relationships. Using garish colors and sharp violent brushstrokes to evoke the feelings of pain and suffering gave me a sense of 'release' through the active motion of painting expressively. To the viewer, the work no doubt raised a sense of tension and agitation of the senses, which many people find intriguing and invigorating when viewing art.

In my late twenties, however, I began to spend more time in nature, witnessing beauty in solitude. Whether on a bluff above the river or alongside a road at sunset, I felt deep peace, calm, and a connection to some sense of a higher energy. I found out that nature was where I felt most nurtured, took deeper breaths, and that in stopping to notice these transient moments of beauty, I was taken out of the stress of everyday life. Gradually I began to use these experiences in my art. I realized I didn't have to 'paint angry' to release my tensions and frustrations. In-

stead I found that connecting to nature and re-experiencing those moments in the studio brought me calm and peace, much as meditation does.

When I paint in the studio or on-site, using the emotional memory of what I witness in nature, I'm able to again be in that moment of deep awe, re-creating it for myself. What is also amazing to me, is that the paintings can then convey that same awe and beauty to others, creating a shared experience. It's not unusual for people seeing a beautiful landscape or painting to begin to weep. Whether witnessing nature itself, or it's portrayal in art, we can experience what I often refer to as an 'intolerable beauty,' that moves us to tears. How cathartic it is, to feel awe and remember beauty in a world that often seems to steer us away from that. Technology, living in cities, the fear of leaving the safety of one's home, and even the scourge of Lyme Disease are factors that have been shown to greatly reduce the amount of time we spend in nature. However, I feel that human beings are actually physiologically meant to pay personal witness to, and fully experience the beauty and healing qualities of nature.

Our current culture is in-



Light over the Berkshires

deed, too far withdrawn from nature. The ill effects of this on our health has been studied and documented. We are meant to spend time outdoors, to see trees and sky, and to breathe fresh air. My youngest daughter now works as a Wilderness Therapist with young people going through treatment for drug and alcohol addiction. Through the various challenges of backpacking in the woods for a week at a time, they learn to become connected to and nurtured by the natural world. It is a very healing experience that has allowed thousands of people to look within for their strength, using solitude in nature as their medicine.

We can also find great personal symbolism in nature and landscape imagery. The theme

of emerging or transcendental light is very important in my work. The idea of light emerging out of the dark can express aspects of our life, and of rebirth after setbacks. Likewise, the day ends in spectacular melancholic beauty, only to renew again as the dawn rises.

I know I will continue to use my time in nature, and in the studio, to re-create this sense of well-being, and connection to a higher energy. During these stressful times in the age of information, the world news can feel like an assault on our sense of well-being. I hope all of us will remember to look to both art and nature as antidotes. We owe it to our own mental and physical health, and I believe we can help create a better world in doing so.

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Attributed to the Dentzel Company, possibly Salvatore Cernigliaro (1879-1974), *Rabbit Carousel Figure*, ca. 1910, basswood and paint, 57 1/4 x 50 x 13 inches, Courtesy of the Barbara L. Gordon Collection. Exhibition organized and circulated by Art Services International, Alexandria, Virginia.

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