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Predictions for 2021

Now that 2020 is heading into the history books it seems appropriate to look forward to 2021 and predict with the greatest of accuracy what will happen in the next year. As some of you may remember, in last year's column I did not predict the worldwide pandemic. I'm hoping to do better this year.

In 2021, I predict we in the Granite State can expect:

- A real blow-up with Massachusetts after the U.S. Supreme Court rules that Massachusetts can continue to tax the income of Granite Staters who work for Massachusetts-based employers but who, because of the pandemic, are working at home (in New Hampshire). The ruling so thoroughly Ps off Granite Staters that we hike the cost of cigarettes. Can we keep them from buying our lottery tickets?

- After discovering that Ghislaine Maxwell, an associate of billionaire Jeffrey Epstein, was living in Bradford, N.H., this summer, Granite Staters will be mildly surprised to find that we have another somewhat famous resident living in the state — Paul Manafort, President Donald Trump's 2016 presidential campaign chairman. Manafort was convicted of tax fraud in 2018 and then recently pardoned. Apparently New Hampshire is the place to go to escape the limelight.

- Hospitality impresario and philanthropist Alex Ray will create his next attraction, Common Man Land, a barn-themed amusement park complete with a hay toss and painting (mostly barns and fences). Interestingly, there is no charge to get in but visitors must complete three hours of manual labor. And visitors love it!

- After losing the NH House, Senate and Executive Council, Democrats reassess their messaging and tactics. First up will be the introduction of Covid-safe hug tunnels (look it up) and then after that less discussion of an income tax and more discussion of legalizing weed.

- Nashua will break ground on its performing arts center and get a surprise artist in residence, singer, songwriter and actor Mandy Moore. Moore, a native of Nashua and avid hiker, decided it was time to climb all 48 4,000-footers in New Hampshire. Go, Moore, Go.

- Bill Binnie, owner of Binnie Media and former owner of NH1, will make a deal to buy WMUR from Hearst. And yes, he'll bring with him Al Kaprielian. On top of that Binnie will promise to bring back the Uncle Gus Show — though reimagined as the Auntie Sarah Show — starring none other than Sarah Silverman.

- Former Manchester School Board at-large member Rich Girard will run for mayor of Manchester.

- UCLA football coach and New Hampshire native Chip Kelly will team up with Greg Landry, also New Hampshire native and NFL quarterback-back, to open a football-themed destination steakhouse called the Red Zone at the Manchester-Boston Regional Airport. Come on, you know you would want to eat there.

If any of these things happen, do not call or email me. Just enjoy them. 🍷



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**ON THE COVER**

GOODBYE, 2020! We take a look back at how the pandemic affected the arts, food and music scenes in New Hampshire, and we (attempt to) look ahead at what we can (maybe, possibly) expect in the early part of 2021 and beyond.

ALSO ON THE COVER, find in-person fun for the whole family, p. 14, or make your own beef stew with beer, p. 21. And flex your mind with all kinds of puzzles, starting on p. 31.

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Covid-19 news

During a Dec. 22 press conference, state epidemiologist Dr. Benjamin Chan reported that New Hampshire had seen an average of 750 to 800 new infections of Covid-19 per day over the last week, numbers that were slightly down from the week before. While the test positivity rate has remained stable, at 9.1 percent as of Dec. 22, the number of hospitalizations has been up, he said. Dr. Beth Daly, Chief of the Bureau of Infectious Disease Control of the New Hampshire Department of Health & Human Services, also provided an update on vaccine distributions in the state. Over the previous weekend the Moderna vaccine received emergency use authorization and it is now approved for people ages 18 and older. “We received 24,200 doses of Moderna vaccine ... here in New Hampshire,” Daly said during the Dec. 22 press conference. “About half ... will be distributed to our hospitals ... and about half are going to be used to launch our state-run fixed vaccination sites, as well as our mobile teams.” According to a press release from the Governor’s Office, 13 sites across the state — most locally in Concord, Hooksett, Londonderry and Nashua — were set to open Dec. 29 to vaccinate first responders and high-risk ambulatory care providers. It’s part of Phase 1A of the state’s vaccination plan,

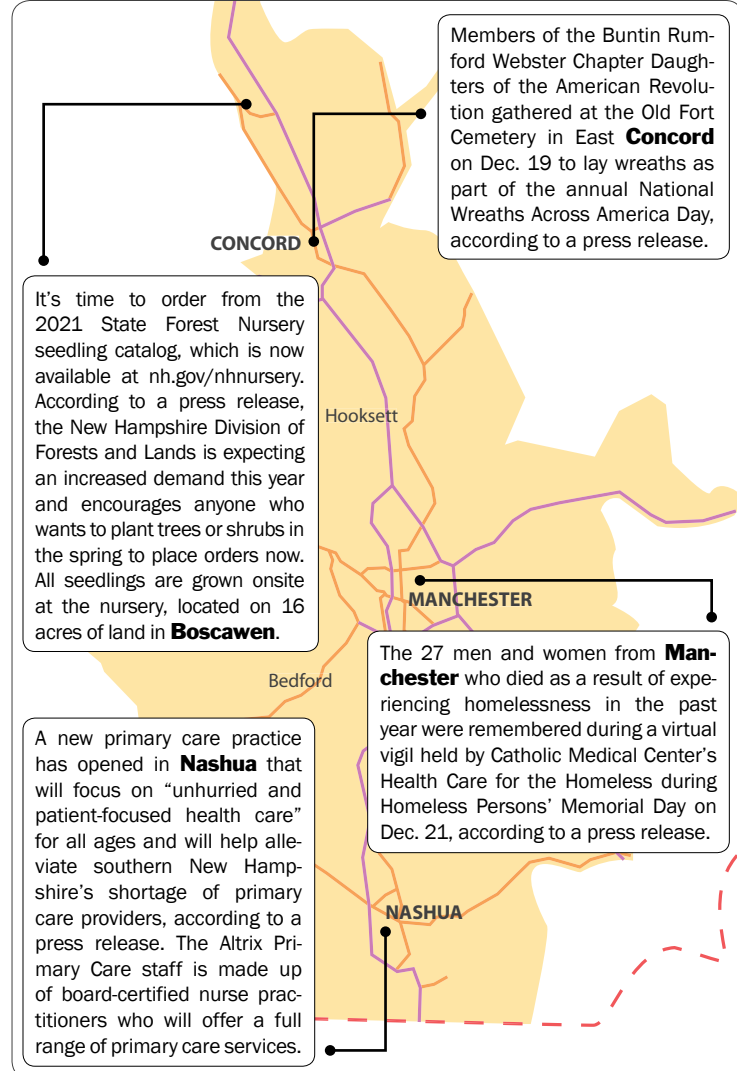
which includes approximately 110,000 people and is expected to be completed by mid-January. Over the next few weeks, Daly said, state health officials expect to receive approximately 9,000 doses each of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, with the exact number subject to change by the week.

On Dec. 23, Gov. Chris Sununu issued Emergency Order No. 77, an order amending Emergency Order No. 37, which had been issued back on April 28 to temporarily halt the hiring of all full-time and part-time employees of the state’s executive branch for positions that are already vacant or will become vacant during the state of emergency, with a few exceptions, including employees in roles related to combating the pandemic and those working in child protective services. Emergency Order No. 77 adds that all full-time and part-time employee positions may be posted for internal and external applicants, provided they certify in writing that projected federal funds used to pay for the position can support it through the end of State Fiscal Year 2023, or however long the contract period lasts.

Drive-in House session

On Dec. 28, acting New Hampshire House of Representatives Speaker Sherman Packard sent a letter with details of the upcoming Jan.

6 House session to state representatives. According to a press release, the event will be conducted as a drive-in, with all representatives and staff staying in their own vehicles, spread apart across the largest parking lot on the UNH campus in Durham. The New Hampshire Supreme Court has said remote sessions are constitutional, but the House has not yet adopted a rule that allows it to meet remotely, which means it is obligated to meet in person, according to the letter. “Additionally ... the anticipated cost in establishing a secure voting mechanism would be in excess of \$300,000,” the letter reads. “In the absence of a rule which permits remote participation, such an expense cannot be justified at the present time, nor is it possible to resolve the significant logistical requirements of a remote session given the short timeframe and the unique challenges of the 400-member House.” On Dec. 29, Democratic House members held a press conference in response to the announcement of a drive-in legislative session, and Deputy Democratic Leader Representative David Cote released a statement saying that “This is the New Hampshire Republican Party saying that they are unable to do what the government has required individuals and businesses to do since the pandemic began ... by working remotely to protect public health,” and that the plan does not



account for Representatives who can’t drive or sit in their car for hours.

Supreme Court case

New Hampshire has filed a reply brief in the United States Supreme Court in response to Massachusetts’ position that the court should not hear New Hampshire’s case against Massachusetts for taxing New Hampshire residents who work remotely for Massachusetts companies, according to a press release from the Office of the Governor. “Massachusetts’ current position is a far cry from our country’s rallying call of ‘no taxation

without representation,’ — which they seem to have forgotten originated in their state,” Gov. Chris Sununu said in a statement. The reply brief argues that Massachusetts is downplaying the seriousness of New Hampshire’s claim in that it contends that the Tax Rule does not impede any tax policy New Hampshire desires to implement, that the Tax Rule maintains the status quo because Massachusetts continues to impose an income tax on nonresidents solely for Massachusetts-sourced income, and that the Tax Rule addresses a temporary problem, according to the release. 🌧️

Covid-19 update	As of December 21	As of December 28
Total cases statewide	37,388	41,670
Total current infections statewide	6,688	5,508
Total deaths statewide	656	715
New cases	5,513 (Dec. 15 to Dec. 21)	4,282 (Dec. 22 to Dec. 28)
Current infections: Hillsborough County	2,290	1,908
Current infections: Merrimack County	929	609
Current infections: Rockingham County	1,580	1,264

Information from the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services

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'We can't relax yet'

Where we're headed with Covid-19

Beth Daly, chief of New Hampshire's Bureau of Infectious Disease Control and director of Public Health Preparedness at the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, provided an overview of Covid-19 in New Hampshire, from when the pandemic first emerged to what we might see in the coming months. She also answered questions about the Covid-19 vaccine, a new strain of the virus, the flu and more.



Beth Daly. Courtesy photo.

Case trends

Q: *What did you observe about Covid cases during the summer?*

We had very low case counts overall in the summer. ... Many states experienced a second wave in cases in the middle of the summer, but we did not; ours remained low. That's probably attributable to a number of different factors: we closed a number of different sectors in the spring, and by the end of June we were seeing as few as 14 or 15 cases per day. Then, we had a phased reopening and were able to reopen in a safe manner. I think implementing those measures helped to control the outbreak at that time and [prevent] a resurgence of cases over the summer. But, of course, heading into the fall, we did see a resurgence like many other states, and [cases] have now far exceeded what we even experienced in the spring.

What's currently happening with Covid cases in New Hampshire?

On average, we're seeing between 800 and 900 cases per day, which, of course, is very, very high, especially in comparison to what we had thought was our peak back last spring. ... The increase started at the end of October and has increased

on a daily basis all the way through until the middle of December, but over the last week the increase appears to be slowing down and possibly moving toward a plateau.

Were you expecting there to be an increase in cases during the holiday season?

We expected there to be some increase after the holidays because of people getting together, of course, but we can't specifically attribute any amount of transmission to Thanksgiving, for example, since the rapid increase in cases started at the end of October. ... We know through contact tracing that there was some transmission that occurred from Thanksgiving, but by and large, it's been community transmission in workplaces and community settings. ... The increase is probably more of a reflection of people being indoors [due to the weather] and coming into closer contact with each other inside, where there's not as much ventilation as being outside.

What do you predict will happen with Covid in the early months of 2021?

We can't make any predictions about what will or won't happen with Covid-19 ... but we're hopeful that, with the vaccine, we'll start to see some declines in cases. Ultimately, it's going to take a large proportion of the population to get vaccinated in order to really keep Covid-19 at bay, but every little bit of immunity being acquired in our communities, either through vaccinations or through infection, does help us prevent future cases of Covid-19.

Covid and kids

What trends have you seen with Covid-19 cases in people under age 18?

We have seen a number [of cases among] children, and that number increased in the fall. However, we have not had a significant number of outbreaks or large clusters of outbreaks in school settings. We think the measures that schools put in place to prevent the spread of Covid-19 really helped to prevent transmission in a school setting. ... We see more transmissions occurring outside of school, like from sports teams ... sleepovers and birthday parties ...

and close contact with someone in their household who has Covid-19.

What protocols were put in place by schools the most effective for reducing transmission?

Their protocols and procedures varied widely, but a lot of schools set up staggered schedules for students so that they could reduce the total number of people in the school setting at one time. That was helpful for carrying out social distancing by making sure the desks were at least three feet apart or, ideally, six feet apart. ... Many schools also implemented mask requirements for students and staff.

New Hampshire's response

How prepared was New Hampshire to handle a pandemic when Covid first hit?

We had been preparing for a pandemic for two decades, since the 9/11 funding that came through that gave all states funding for public health and health care preparedness. From that, a lot of relationships were developed and a lot of plans were put in place that suited us very well in responding to the pandemic. We knew what needed to be done and had already worked toward having the capabilities that we knew would be needed.

What has New Hampshire done right in its response to the pandemic?

The partnerships that we had going into the pandemic that we then built stronger — our health care associations, medical associations and hospital associations, along with the Emergency Management Agency here at the state and their partners in the local municipalities — have been one of our greatest assets. They have been really critical in helping us make sure that, together, we are serving the needs of the frontline health care staff in all kinds of different facilities, and that the public is getting

the testing and care they need. The flexibility that the governor has had in terms of declaring a state of emergency, bringing funds into the state and being able to execute contracts quickly has also been incredibly important and helpful.

Is there anything it should have done differently?

I think overall New Hampshire has mounted a strong response to Covid-19. The thing that slowed down our capacity [to respond] was ... testing. I think a lot of what has transpired with the pandemic reflects on the existing health care and public health infrastructure in our country.

Having stable investments in public health laboratory testing, case investigation [and] contact tracing is important. A lot of these systems have been here for decades but were clearly not funded enough to support us during a pandemic. Now, we've ramped those systems up, but it took a while to do.

What are your top priorities right now?

Our focus and attention is on the vaccine right now, and on getting that out to people as quickly as possible. ... We also stand ready to be able to open up alternative care sites and work with our health care partners to make sure that, if there is a resurgence that exceeds our health care system, people are able to access care. Hopefully, that won't be needed, and we'll keep our case counts where they're at or, ideally, even lower.

Are we more prepared now, if another pandemic were to come along in the future?

We're obviously in a much better place to respond to a future pandemic because we've done it now; we've figured things out, and we've learned from it, and we'll be able to take our experience with us into the future.



It's going to take a large proportion of the population to get vaccinated in order to really keep Covid-19 at bay, but every little bit of immunity being acquired in our communities, either through vaccinations or through infection, does help...

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The vaccine

What's happening with the vaccine?

Right now, we're getting a small amount of vaccines each week, and we're rolling out Phase 1A, which includes health care workers, long-term care facility residents and staff and first responders. There are about 100,000 to 110,000 people in that group. Assuming we get the vaccines as we're expecting from the CDC, we should be able to have that group vaccinated by the middle to end of January. Then, in February, we would be able to move forward with the next phase, Phase 1B. We have not shared yet who is going to be included in that group, but we plan to share that information with the public in the next week or two.

When will it be available to the general public?

That depends on how large the Phase 1B group is. For example, if that group has 200,000 people and [New Hampshire continues] to get the same amount of vaccines each week, that could take us into February and March, and we'd be looking at opening up vaccines more broadly to the general public in April. ... It also depends on just how much vaccine we're going to get. We expect that we're going to get more and more over time as more formulations become available, but there are still a lot of unknowns that make it difficult to predict the trajectory of when we'll be done [vaccinating] the 1.3 million people in New Hampshire.

How is it being distributed?

There are two formulations available right now: Pfizer and Moderna. Both require two doses. For Pfizer, you would get the doses 21 days apart, and for Moderna, you would get them 28 days apart. ... In order to vaccinate everyone, the plan is to leverage everyone who's able to provide vaccines in our state in all of our different settings. That will include a combination of hospitals, health care providers, pharmacies and state-run sites that we're opening up to assist with the vaccinations and make sure that we can reach everyone.

A new strain

There's been talk of a new strain of the virus. What's going on with that?

We're following [updates] coming out of the United Kingdom, where they are investigating a potential new strain of the Covid-19 virus that is emerging there. This is something that can happen with viruses. The virus can recombine and have different proteins on the surface of the cell that cause it to behave differently. You can detect these changes through molecular testing of the virus-

es themselves. In this case, [the U.K. is] reporting that [the new strain] is more transmissible [but] does not appear to be more severe.

How concerned are you about the new strain?

It's certainly something we're keeping our eye on. We don't know what will happen with that strain and if it will continue to circulate or not, so all we can do is monitor it. Fortunately, the same prevention measures for the [original] Covid-19 virus — social distancing and mask use — work for the other strain as well.

The flu

Has influenza been a problem this year?

We've seen very little flu activity in our state. In fact, we haven't confirmed any influenza in our public health laboratory. We've heard that there have been some detections of it by rapid tests in the community ... so it's out there, but it could be out there in a very sporadic way. It's certainly not widespread or being detected frequently right now in our population. ... The flu and Covid-19 are transmitted in similar ways, so we think a lot of the measures that we're taking to prevent Covid-19 spread — social distancing, washing hands, wearing masks — could also be helping to protect us from influenza and other respiratory illness and keep those cases down.

Is it still important to get a flu shot?

Absolutely. We typically recommend that everyone six months and older get the vaccine to protect themselves from influenza, which is also a serious respiratory virus that we don't want people to get. We have people die from it every year in our state. We also don't want people getting influenza and getting hospitalized, because that's going to increase the pressures that are already put on our health care system due to Covid-19. Keeping people out of the emergency room and doctors' offices and from being hospitalized will help our whole health care system be able to better respond to Covid-19.

What now?

Is there anything else the New Hampshire public should know as we head into the new year?

Please, keep social distancing, wear masks, exercise good hygiene, stay home if you're not feeling well and avoid travel. We know people are tired of it, but this is not the time to give up on those precautions. We want to stay strong as we roll out the vaccine. We can't relax yet.

— Angie Sykeny

End of the year 2020 awards



With the year coming to a close, it's time for the Hippo Sports unorthodox awards that annually focus on things big and small that no one else does.

Beat the Expectations: Tom Brady. I was not one of the many who thought he'd take the magic with

him to Tampa Bay without missing a beat, as I've never seen a guy who looked old at 42 get better at 43. At least until now, because after initial acclimation issues, TB has already thrown for the third-most TD passes of his career and his team is playoff-bound with the offense hitting its stride. My one caveat to predicting another year of decline was saying it's probably dumb to bet against TB-12. And it was.

Comeback Player: You could see Brady there for just-mentioned reasons, Ditto for LeBron after winning the title in Year 2 after his first year in L.A. was a disaster. However, both pale to what **Alex Smith** did by getting back on the field to play solidly after nearly losing his leg to a gruesome break 18 months earlier. But he's just my runner-up to one-time Sox reliever

Daniel Bard for making it back to the majors for the first time since 2014, when after finally solving his baffling control issues he struck out 27 in 24.1 innings while compiling a 3.67 ERA. **Didn't Live Up To Expectations:** L.A. Clippers. With their blockbuster trade for **Paul George** that helped reel in free agent **Kawhi Leonard**, expectations were through the roof. That they didn't win was a fan letdown, but they earn the award for gagging away a 3-1 lead to Denver to prevent what every NBA fan wanted to see — a battle for L.A. Western Conference Final.

Dumbest Set of Expectations: While every person on local sports talk radio and the Football Night in America and Monday Night Football brass are in the conversation, it goes to Patriots Nation for its sense of entitlement assuming the Pats would be in the playoffs because they're the Pats, despite losing seven key defensive players and their all-world QB. Particularly galling was how little appreciation was shown by the "what have you done for me lately" crowd during their first bad year after two decades of astonishing success.

Biggest Mistake – Player: Technically it was 2019, but since the suspension continued into this year, it goes to Cleveland DE **Myles Garrett**. He gets it for being the first NFL player to conk someone on their head with their helmet since Raiders linebacker **Matt Millen** did it to Pats GM **Pat Sullivan** after New England upset Oakland in the 1985 playoffs. In this case the victim was Pittsburgh QB **Mason Rudolph** and it got Myles suspended until his 2020 reprieve.

Biggest Mistake – Coaching: This one wasn't just the 2020 winner, it's in the top three of all time along with Seattle passing instead of

giving it to **Marshawn Lynch** from the one in SB 49, and **Grady Little** sticking with Pedro after the **Jeter** and **Matsui** doubles in 2003. It's **Kevin Cash** yanking **Blake Snell** in the sixth despite his having allowed one measly hit and striking out 10 hapless Dodgers batters because the analytics said to. All that did was blow the World Series by opening the door to L.A.'s three-run rally and its 3-1 Game 6 win.

The New Boston Award: After winning NBA and MLB titles within days and in position to repeat, while having a pretty good football team playing in the planet's sports mecca, it's looking like Los Angeles this year will wrest away the title that has resided in Boston since 2001.

Biggest Name On The Hot Seat: With the Sox brass having fired GM's twice within two years of winning a World Series since 2015, you'd think after last year's unmitigated disaster it would be **Chaim Bloom**. But that was Year 1 and he got a pass. So after seeing him do what all in-trouble football coaches do, I'll take Michigan's **Jim Harbaugh**. That would be scapegoating someone else to bring the heat down on him, as he just did by firing one-time Plymouth State Coach **Don Brown** as Defensive Coordinator.

Sports Executive of the Year: **Andrew Friedman** basically had the same job Bloom has in Boston now when he arrived in L.A.: extract the Dodgers from the payroll mess caused by taking on three giant contracts from Boston in 2012. Then build a farm system to regularly produce high-end talent to have enough surplus talent available and the payroll low enough to pounce when a difference-making talent like **Mookie Betts** came on the market. Mission accomplished. All done while winning seven straight division titles, going to three series and being in position to keep doing the same.

Toughest Thing To See: The Mookie Betts trade. History eventually may show it was the right thing to do, but it was tough seeing my favorite Red Sox player ever lead L.A. to win the World Series immediately after being traded away from Fenway.

Best Thing To See – Misery Upon Others Department: Seeing Cash and Tampa Bay demonstrate to the baseball world in the worst and most painful possible way that analytics are simply a tool to be used in decision-making and not the gospel so many self-important stat geeks make them out to be.

Most Valuable Player: **LeBron James**, and not just by, as Brady did it, showing he's still the best while leading the Lakers to Title No. 17 with a performance that kept Father Time on the sidelines, but also for his executive-of-the-year level move to (unethically) maneuver around tampering rules to be the catalyst behind **Anthony Davis** wanting out in New Orleans, which led to his trade to benefit LBJ in L.A.

Biggest Hope For The New Year: That things will get back to normal sooner than later. Happy and safe new year to all. *Email Dave Long at dlong@hippopress.com.*

With Diane Davidson

Good Deeds

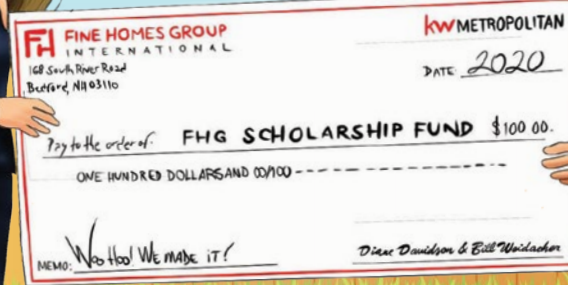
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QUALITY OF LIFE INDEX

Tons of toys

Hundreds of kids in Manchester and Nashua got to open presents this Christmas thanks to two very successful holiday programs. The Tower of Toys in Manchester saw its biggest number of donations and recipients in its nine-year history, ultimately providing two gifts each to approximately 1,500 children, according to a press release. And the Front Door Agency in Nashua distributed gifts to nearly 500 children through its annual holiday program, which pairs families in need with “adopters,” according to a press release. This year more than 215 families were given almost \$100,000 worth of toys, clothing and groceries.

Score: +2

Comment: Both organizations noted that despite the widespread financial hardships caused by the pandemic, local communities really stepped up to help those in need.

Well-deserved thank yous

Frontline health care workers at St. Joseph Hospital and Southern New Hampshire Health got a big thank-you last week, in the form of gift cards to local eateries. The United Way of Greater Nashua presented each facility with 350 gift cards that were purchased with \$7,000 worth of donations from the community, according to a press release.

Score: +1

Comment: The fundraiser was ultimately a gift to small local businesses too, as the gift cards were purchased from 15 small local eateries, including Main Street Gyro, Mr. Macs and SubZero Ice Cream, according to the release.

Vaccine scams

New Hampshire Attorney General Gordon J. MacDonald issued a warning last week urging residents to be aware of potential scams related to the distribution of the Covid-19 vaccine. According to a press release, there is concern that high demand for the vaccine may create an opportunity for scammers to try to take money or personal information by saying they can provide fast access to the vaccine. Though it's not widely available right now as doses are first being provided to health care and front line workers, the vaccine will be available to everyone at no cost regardless of insurance status, and you will never be asked for payment in any form to reserve a vaccine or for confidential personal information, including your Social Security number or bank or credit card information.

Score: -1

Comment: If you receive a call or email from anyone offering quick access to the Covid-19 vaccine in exchange for money or personal information, call the Consumer Protection Hotline at 1-888-468-4454 or email DOJ-CPB@doj.nh.gov. You can also call 2-1-1 for information about the vaccine and its availability.

Pandemic struggles

A new report from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, which offers support for at-risk children, was recently released, identifying pandemic pain points — indicators that show families struggling with economic stability, food security, health insurance access and mental health — in all 50 states. According to a press release, *Kids, Families and Covid-19: Pandemic Pain Points and the Urgent Need to Respond* highlights how households with children are coping in the midst of the pandemic. In New Hampshire 15 percent of adults over the age of 18 living with children reported feeling down, depressed, or hopeless in the previous week, while 12 percent of New Hampshire families reported having slight or no confidence in paying rent or mortgage, and 10 percent reported they sometimes or often do not have enough food to eat, according to the release.

Score: -1

Comment: The report, which can be downloaded at aecf.org, also offers state-specific information about child well-being prior to the pandemic, federal and state support of families and children during the pandemic and strategies to help meet the needs of kids and families now and after the pandemic.

QOL score at the end of 2019: 93

QOL score at the end of 2020: 76

Change in QOL from 2019 to 2020: -17

What's affecting your Quality of Life here in New Hampshire? Let us know at news@hippopress.com.

Art adapts

2020 became a year of unexpected innovation for arts organizations

By Angie Sykeny
 asykeny@hippopress.com

In 2020, we saw art galleries and performance venues closed, shows and festivals canceled and classes and programs suspended. But in the face of the many challenges brought about by Covid-19, the New Hampshire arts community did what it does best: It got creative.

“Many New Hampshire arts organizations and artists are finding creative ways to engage the public during the pandemic, reimagining events and activities in both physical and virtual spaces,” said Ginnie Lupi, director of the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts.

Performance venues erected new outdoor stages and spaces to welcome socially distanced audiences; theater companies, musicians and authors accommodated audiences at home through livestreamed and recorded shows and discussions, and educators in the arts carried on with classes and lessons remotely.

Now, as a Covid vaccine brings hope that a return to normalcy is on the horizon, artists and arts organizations are reasoning that the solutions they improvised to get through the pandemic may still have merit in a post-pandemic world.

“We expect many of these changes to become permanent,” Lupi said. “Many organizations are finding that online performances and activities are reaching more diverse and distant audiences.”

Living room theater

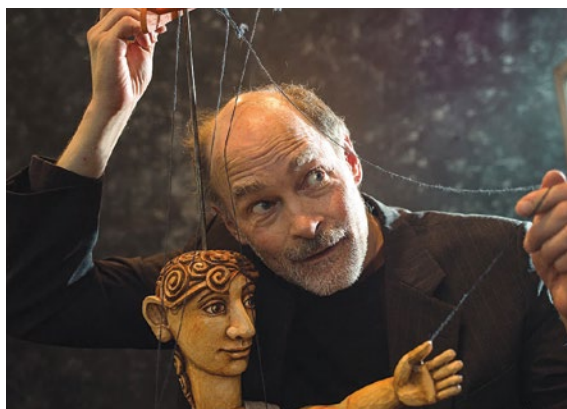
The Majestic Theatre in Manchester is one of many local theater companies that installed new video equipment to offer virtual performances.

“The virtual component has been a valuable tool to share our performances with those who are homebound,” artist director and CEO Rob Dionne said. “Now, a virtual component will be a part of most of our shows moving forward.”

Genevieve Aichele, executive director of New Hampshire Theatre Project in Portsmouth, said that purchasing new video, audio and computer equipment and hiring a part-time associate producer for media was an advantageous use of the CARES relief funds it received.

“The board and staff of NHTP views this as an investment for the future,” she said. “NHTP will be continuing to offer programs online for the foreseeable future.”

Though New Hampshire Theatre Project is presenting in-person performances again, it and many other theater companies that are able to do so are now using both formats,



Peter Josephson in Theater Kapow's virtual production of *A Tempest Prayer* in November 2020. Photo by Matthew Lomanno.



Pottery by Shana Brautigam, artisan featured in the virtual Craftsmen's Fair in August 2020. Courtesy photo.

giving audiences the flexibility to experience theater in a way that meets their needs and comfort level. Aichele said the virtual option remains the most popular, noting that New Hampshire Theatre Project's November production of *The Adventures of Sleepyhead* brought in 36 tickets for the in-person show and 245 tickets for the virtual one.

Matt Cahoon, artistic director of Theatre Kapow in Manchester, said the company's “significant [investment in] time, energy and money” to offer virtual performances will “define this company for the next decade.”

“I would hate to see us just leave that behind,” he said. “I imagine that some of the technology will come back with us, and that we will find ways to meld together the live and virtual experiences.”

Unexpectedly, Cahoon said, the virtual format has given Theatre Kapow the opportunity to enhance the theater experience for audiences by incorporating storytelling elements that aren't feasible on a live stage. For example, the use of cameras allows him to draw the audience's attention to small details that they might miss in person.

“The audience's perspective of the actors was closer than ever,” he said. “It seems impossible to me to go back to a time where we say to audiences, ‘OK, you sit over there in the dark and we will be up here with the lights on us.’”

Art on screen

The visual arts have also found a new place in the virtual realm, with many arts organizations and art galleries shifting to an online format.

Lauren Boss, co-president of the Nashua Area Artists' Association, said the Association moved its operations online when the months-long closure of its brick-and-mortar art gallery, ArtHub, limited members' opportunities to sell their art.

“The pandemic forced us to figure out how to make e-commerce work for us,” she

said. “This is something that will definitely remain after the masks are gone.”

The League of New Hampshire Craftsmen made a successful transition online after Covid made it impossible for the League to host its annual Craftsmen's Fair in-person. The nine-day arts and crafts fair held in August at Mount Sunapee Resort typically draws 20,000 paying attendees, provides 80 percent of the League's yearly operating income and is the largest opportunity for more than 300 local and regional artisans to sell their work; canceling the event altogether, League executive director Miriam Carter said, was simply not an option.

The League held the fair virtually on its website by providing links to the artisans' online shops as well as a virtual exhibition tour and exclusive video content including craft demonstrations, musical performances and guided try-at-home craft projects for all ages.

While the virtual fair was a success in that artisans were still able to sell their work, it also had some silver linings that extended far beyond the fair itself, Carter said.

“[It] inspired 80 of our craftsmen to create websites or online sales capability for the first time,” she said. “This is a significant and welcome culture shift in a membership that is generally slow to adopt technological innovation ... [and gives] craftsmen online tools they need to sustain their business through the Covid era and beyond.”

Carter said the League plans to make virtual elements a permanent feature of the Craftsmen's Fair moving forward.

Learning from home

During the pandemic, many local arts organizations started offering classes, lessons and educational programs remotely, with students and educators meeting over video conferencing apps like Zoom, and some plan to continue offering remote education as an option indefinitely.

New Hampshire Writers' Project hosted its annual 603: Writers' Conference, normally held in Manchester in the spring, remotely in October. The reimagined 603: Writers' “Sit and Click” Virtual Conference featured most of the same activities as the in-person conference, including panels, classes and a keynote speaker, accessible live on Zoom and through recordings that were available to participants for 90 days following the conference.

“We also have become more creative with our programming,” New Hampshire Writers' Project board chair Masherri Chappelle said.

Many of New Hampshire Writers' Project's regular programs are now offered virtually, which has increased membership and participation, including writers from as far as Utah and Australia.

Peggy Senter, president of Concord Community Music School, said there has always been a number of students who travel from out of state to participate in the school's programs as well as students who discontinue their education after moving farther from the school. Remote classes and lessons have eliminated that barrier, she said, and have proven to be “a wonderful opportunity for people who live far away and otherwise wouldn't be able to participate.”

“Going forward, we will most likely offer remote learning to those who would be unable to participate due to distance, illness or adverse weather,” she said.

Additionally, virtual student recitals have given students a chance to share their musical abilities with people who would not be able to attend the recital in person.

CCMS has produced 11 student recitals on YouTube since March, Senter said, the most recent of which featured 40 students.

“Going forward, we will look forward to in-person recitals again, but also having a recorded version is allowing friends and family to access these performances from around the country and the world,” she said.

Supporting the arts

Lupi said that while the creativity exhibited by the New Hampshire arts community to keep the arts alive has been “encouraging” and “speaks to the value of the arts,” local arts organizations aren't out of the woods yet.

“The pandemic will definitely have an ongoing, long-term impact on New Hampshire's arts sector,” she said. “Some organizations and businesses may not survive, and those that do will have a long financial and programmatic recovery. ... More aid to the sector will definitely be necessary for 2021 and beyond.”



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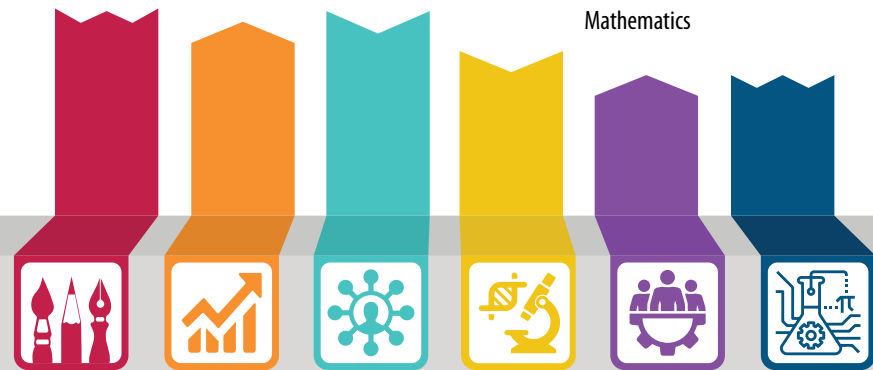
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ARTS

THE ROUNDUP

The latest from NH's theater, arts
and literary communities

• **A gift from the harp:** Salem resident Dr. Diana Kolben has donated her harp to the Manchester Community Music School. Kolben, who studied music at Oberlin College and worked as a music educator throughout her life, has owned the harp for more than 50 years. No longer able to play it, she reached out to the New Hampshire Philharmonic Orchestra about finding the instrument a new home, and The Phil coordinated the donation to MCMS. "We are so happy to continue working with MCMS and its own mission to change lives through the power of learning, sharing and making music," The Phil music director Mark Latham said in a press release. "We hope and anticipate that one day a student from MCMS, having studied on Diana's harp, will perform ... with The Phil." The 1938 Lyon and Healy Model 23 concert grand harp was refurbished in 1983 and was freshly restrung before it was given to the school.

• **Live performances on hold:** The Capitol Center for the Arts in Concord announced in a newsletter that it has extended its suspension of in-person performances, originally set to end Jan. 15, through March 1, at which point it will resume a limited schedule of in-person performances. All in-person performances and events that were scheduled between Jan. 15 and Feb. 28 have been canceled or will be rescheduled. "Although we are encouraged by the new vaccines being distributed, the risk of indoor performances at this time remains higher than we would like," the newsletter said, adding that a schedule for a new virtual series of performances including concerts, comedy, theater and dance will be announced in mid to late January. Call 225-1111 or visit ccanh.com.

• **NHAA new member exhibit:** The New Hampshire Art Association will highlight 35 of its new members in an exhibit titled "A New Day," viewable online, in the front windows at the NHAA's Robert Lincoln Levy Gallery (136 State St., Portsmouth) and at the gallery in person by appointment from Jan. 6 through Jan. 31. "We are thrilled to welcome so many talented artists into NHAA and are happy to provide them opportunities to show and sell their work," NHAA board president Renee Giffroy said in a press release. "The fresh perspectives they bring help everyone in our community continue to grow." Among the featured artists are Carla Zwahlen, a landscape painter from Mont Vernon; John Kessler of Windham, an oil



Harp donated to the Manchester Community Music School. Photo courtesy of Toni DeGennaro and the NH Philharmonic Orchestra.

painter of landscapes and still life; and Howard Muscott, a nature photographer from Amherst. A virtual opening reception for the exhibit will be held on Thursday, Jan. 7, at 6 p.m. on Zoom. NHAA's next jurying opportunity for new members is scheduled for March. "We look forward to having more local artists join us next year," Giffroy said. Call 431-4230 and visit nhartassociation.org.

• **Still time to see *The Nutcracker*:** Catch a live performance of *The Nutcracker* by Safe Haven Ballet at The Music Hall Historic Theater (28 Chestnut St., Portsmouth), with showtimes on Saturday, Jan. 2, at 2 and 6 p.m., and Sunday, Jan. 3, at 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. Safe Haven Ballet is a nonprofit that provides trauma-sensitive ballet, art and movement opportunities for survivors of sexual assault and trauma. Seating will be socially distanced. Tickets cost \$50 for adults and \$45 for seniors and children. Visit themusichall.org or call 436-2400.

If you'd rather enjoy *The Nutcracker* from home, the Northeastern Ballet Theatre of Wolfeboro is streaming a video of its 2019 performance of *The Nutcracker* now through Sunday, Jan. 3. Virtual tickets cost \$8. Visit northeasternballet.org or call 834-8834.

• **Virtual author events:** New Hampshire author KJ Dell'Antonia will present her new novel, *The Chicken Sisters*, which was chosen as the December book of the month for Reese Witherspoon's Reese's Book Club. Dell'Antonia's friend and the producer for NHPR's *The Exchange* Jessica Hunt will join the conversation. Then, on Thursday, Jan. 7, at 7 p.m., K Woodman-Maynard, formerly of Concord, will provide a look at her graphic novel adaptation of *The Great Gatsby*. Concord novelist Virginia Macgregor will join Woodman-Maynard in the discussion. The events will be held on Zoom, and registration is required. Visit gibbonsbookstore.com or call 224-0562.

— Angie Sykeny 🍀

Pops of color

How to make cut flowers last

By Henry Homeyer
listings@hippopress.com

— THE GARDENING GUY —

Snow is finally here in Cornish Flat. The cardinals and blue jays are providing a little color to an

otherwise unremarkable world. The sun is lurking behind gray clouds, and on a good day we get nine hours of light. I *do* miss the colors of summer. I still keep fresh cut flowers on our table — just not flowers from my garden.

Cut flowers are among modern America's true bargains. For the price of a bottle of wine — or a few cups of fancy coffee — you can buy flowers that will grace your table for up to three weeks. But there are some things you should know about getting good table-life for your investment.

Where you buy your flowers may affect how well they last. A floral shop or a good Food Coop has trained personnel who trim each stem in the store every other day. And someone who regularly changes the water to keep it fresh. Chain grocery stores probably count on you buying their flowers before the flowers need to be trimmed or their water changed.

In either case, you should cut off half to three

quarters of an inch from each stem before you put them in a vase, and change the water regularly. Never let leaves sit in the water. Leaves will rot, promoting growth of bacteria, which will impede water take-up. Ask for the little packets of powder that florists provide, and add that to the water to prolong the life of your flowers. A couple of drops of chlorine bleach may work, too.

Keep your arrangement cool if you can. Putting it near a radiator or woodstove will shorten its life. If you've invested in roses or tulips, you may wish to move the vase to the entryway or mudroom at bedtime to keep the flowers extra cool during the night.

Some flowers are better picks than others if you're on a budget and can't afford to buy new flowers every week. Here are my recommendations for good cut flowers:

Alstroemeria: Each long stem has clusters of two-inch lily-like blossoms in pinks and reds, with yellow throats. Very long-lived. Great value. Most grocery stores sell them inexpensively.

Chrysanthemums: These come in a variety of sizes and colors, from the huge spider mums to little guys. I love the scent of the flowers — it's not overpowering, but it's there if you sniff them.

Lisianthus: These look like silk flowers to me: perfect white, pink or lavender-colored bell-

shaped flowers on long stems. Tough to grow in the garden, they are perfect in a vase — I've kept them for up to 3 weeks.

Miniature carnations: Each stem has two to four blossoms. They come in a variety of colors. Mix dark red "minis" with red roses to make a bouquet of roses look fuller. And even after the roses go to Valhalla, the carnations will still be good!

Baby's breath. Tiny white pompoms are great on their own or mixed with colorful flowers. I have kept them in a dry vase for months.

Stative: I grow these for use as dry flowers, which tells you that they really do last forever, even out of water. They come in blue, purple, pink and white. You can put them in a dry vase and they will last all winter.

Spray roses: Instead of a single blossom per stem, these have two to five blossoms, giving you more bang for your buck. Will last about a week with proper care.

Orchids: While not cheap, orchids can last up to a month. I love dendrobiums, though they are not common, even in floral shops. Cymbidiums have bigger blossoms but also last extremely well. And of course you can buy potted ones, which bloom even longer and can be coaxed to rebloom next year if you put in the effort to keep them happy.

Kangaroo paws: These Australian natives are fuzzy and cute. They come in pinks, reds and browns, and last very well. Not every florist will have them. I grew them in a pot on the deck one year and love them — like teddy bears on a stem!



I grew Kangaroo Paws in a pot last year, and they are fabulous. Courtesy photo.

It's possible to change the colors of cut chrysanthemums. Here is what has worked for me: leave a few stems of a white mum out of water for 12 hours, then cut off two to three inches and put it in water with food coloring. Try it with a few stems, to see if you like the results. Put eight drops of food coloring in a glass with just an inch of water.

When I tried it with blue food coloring, my white mums had turned color — but not the true blue I wanted, more of a ghastly greenish blue. Still, if you want to have some fun with your kids, this is an easy way to show how water and dye move up a flower's stem.

Everyone loves to receive the gift of cut flowers, even guys. So treat your loved one — or yourself — to fresh flowers this winter. They're cheerful, and can make winter less oppressive for gardeners.

Henry can be reached at PO Box 364, Cornish Flat, NH 03746 or emailed at henry.homeyer@comcast.net.

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INSIDE/OUTSIDE KIDDIE — POOL —

Family fun for the weekend

Fun at the museum

Watch a special demonstration of an iBOT at the SEE Science Center (200 Bedford St., Manchester, 669-0400, see-sciencecenter.org), which is open Thursday, Dec. 31, Saturday, Jan. 2, and Sunday, Jan. 3, with sessions from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. or 2 to 5 p.m. The iBOT wheelchair is SEE's newest demonstration and shows how technology can help people with limited mobility do things they could never do in any other wheelchair. The demonstration is part of regular museum admission, which is \$9 per person for ages 3 and up. Registration is required to reserve a time during one of the sessions; register online or via phone. SEE will be open each weekend in January, as well as on Monday, Jan. 18.

The Children's Museum of New Hampshire (6 Washington St., Dover, 742-2002, childrens-museum.org) will be open for a couple more days before winter break ends. Reserve a play session Thursday, Dec. 31, or Saturday, Jan. 2, from 9 to 11:30 a.m. or 1 to 3:30 p.m. either day. The cost is \$11 for adults and kids older than 1 and \$9 for seniors 65 and older. Reservations are required and can be made on the museum website.

Sweet game

Chunky's Cinema Pub is hosting a family-friendly Theater Candy Bingo event



The iBOT wheelchair is SEE's newest demonstration. Photo courtesy of SEE Science Center.

on Friday, Jan. 1, at 6 p.m. at its Manchester location (707 Huse Road); on Saturday, Jan. 2, at 6 p.m. at its Nashua location (151 Coliseum Ave.), and on Sunday, Jan. 3, at 6 p.m. at its Pelham location (150 Bridge St.). Purchase a ticket online to reserve a spot; for \$4.99 you get a ticket and a box of Chunky's theater candy. Players will turn in their candy to the host to get a bingo card, then play a few rounds to try to win some of that candy as well as other Chunky's prizes. Visit chunkys.com.

Live performance

There's still time to catch a performance of the holiday classic *The Nutcracker* at The Music Hall Historic Theater (28 Chestnut St., Portsmouth) on Saturday, Jan. 2, at 2 and 6 p.m., and Sunday, Jan. 3, at 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. Seating is socially distanced. Tickets cost \$50 for adults and \$45 for seniors and children. Visit themusichall.org or call 436-2400. 🍷

TREASURE HUNT

Dear Donna,
This cast iron plaque was mounted on our shed door. We removed it when the shed was replaced and now would like to know a little more about it. It weighs around 10 pounds and is 11 inches wide and 8.5 inches tall. Anything you can tell me will be greatly appreciated.
Ellen



information online. The interesting point I found was that the originals were never painted in red. Gold was colored to show up clearly.

With so many reproductions around today, the market for even the older ones is in the range of \$20 to \$30. For more information, check out the history of fire markers. I found it all very interesting.

Dear Ellen,
What was in your shed is a reproduction of a fire marker. This one was representing The United Firemen's Insurance Co. These markers were used back in the 1800s on homes to show the owners were insured. They were mounted on the exterior of the home in full view.

To find an original one is tough, and there are reproductions out there. There are many ways to tell a reproduction from an authentic one; you can find much of this

Donna Welch has spent more than 30 years in the antiques and collectibles field, appraising and instructing, and recently closed the physical location of From Out Of The Woods Antique Center (fromoutofthewoodsantiques.com) but is still doing some buying and selling. She is a member of The New Hampshire Antiques Dealer Association. If you have questions about an antique or collectible send a clear photo and information to Donna at footwdw@aol.com, or call her at 391-6550 or 624-8668. 🍷

How to get a 32-year-old Mercedes home from Minnesota



By Ray Magliozzi

Dear Car Talk:
 On a recent business trip to Minnesota, I succumbed to a local Craigslist posting for a 1988 Mercedes 560 SL convertible. Rust-free and smooth-shifting, it was more than your brother ever asked for in a car. I bought the car, parked it in a friend's barn and flew home to Oregon until I can return to make the road trip. I know the timing chain and slide rails were recently replaced, and the brakes were serviced with new pads and rotors not 10,000 miles ago. The battery is new, the tires are good and the transmission fluid and coolant have been flushed at an appropriate interval. I am not a mechanic. What preparations should I take to ensure strife-free travel to the West Coast so I don't end up as bison food while passing through Yellowstone? This is what I have on my checklist so far: screwdrivers and crescent wrenches, multi-tool with assorted torques and other bits, flashlight, small battery jump pack, mini air compressor, assorted fuses, rags, spare set of belts, two quarts of oil, a spare oil filter, a gallon of water, AAA membership with 200-mile tow, and a cellphone with the Greyhound bus reservation line on speed dial. What else

should I consider when taking a road trip with this 32-year-old car? I'll send you a postcard from wherever I break down. — Richard

Well, make sure you have your hair piece glued on really well, because the first thing to break will be the hydraulic mechanism that puts the convertible top back up. The problem, Richard, is that there's really no way to fully prepare for an adventure like this. You've covered yourself for 15 or 20 things that can go wrong. But there are thousands of things that can go wrong. And it's simply impossible to anticipate them all. And Murphy's Law (which is called Mercedes Law in Germany, by the way) says that what does go wrong will be something that requires a part that hasn't been in production since 1998.

So you have to make a choice. Either you want the adventure of making this trip, with all the thrills and potential tragedies and stories to tell that come along with it. Or you really just want to get the car home, in which case you can pay a car carrier \$1,200 to trailer the car home for you and discover what's wrong with it while staying within "Hi hon, can you come pick me up?" distance.

If you really want the adventure, then accept that it's largely unpredictable, and you may get stuck for a month waiting for parts in Wyoming. If I were you, I'd plot out any Mercedes dealer-

ships between Minnesota and Oregon on a map and plan a route that takes you right by every one of them. Finding someone who can work on this car and getting parts may be your biggest challenges if you have an unusual problem.

And then, plan to make the trip in the summer, when you won't freeze to death if you do get stranded. But bring some fall and winter clothes with you, just in case. Enjoy, Richard.

Dear Car Talk:

I have a 2004 Nissan XTerra with a standard transmission. There is a pretty substantial leak that is dark in color. It looks like oil, but my oil level isn't dropping. The leak is under the engine on the passenger side. Since the oil level isn't dropping, what could it be? My power steering level is fine. Thanks. — Jeff

If it's really dark, it could be a 2016 Preston Vineyards Petite Syrah, Jeff. But more likely, the leak is coming from your front differential.

Differentials allow the left and right wheels to rotate at different speeds, which they have to do when you're turning, or you'll drag your outside wheel all the way through the turn. You have two differentials on this XTerra, because it has four-wheel drive; one on the front axle and one in the rear. And guess where the front differential sits? Under the engine, just to the passenger side of the oil pan. Bingo!

Unfortunately, it's hard to check the oil level in the differential, because it doesn't have a dipstick. We check it by removing the plug on the outside of the housing, sticking a finger in there (the original dipstick!) and seeing if our finger comes out with oil on it. My guess is yours won't, Jeff. So you'll save a little money on soap, and you can put that toward your new differential.

Actually, you might be OK. It depends on how low the oil level has gotten and how long you've been driving it this way. If you already hear a howling sound when you drive — if you keep looking in the rearview mirror, wondering why the state police are after you — then the differential is shot, and you'll have to replace it. But if it's not making noise yet, you can have your mechanic find the leak and fix it. It's most likely leaking from the pinion seal, which is right next to the oil pan. Although it could be one of the axle seals, too. Replacing the seals is actually a relatively easy job. It doesn't require removing the differential, and it'll probably cost you in the neighborhood of \$250.

On the other hand, if it starts howling, you'll need to find yourself a good, used differential, and you'll be looking at three to five times that price. So stop reading and go get it taken care of now, Jeff.

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News from the local food scene

By Matt Ingersoll
food@hippopress.com

• **Free coffee for health care workers:** Now through Jan. 31, participating Aroma Joe's locations across New Hampshire are offering **free daily coffee to health care workers**, according to a press release. The Portland, Maine-based company had previously run this promotion, which featured a free 16-ounce cup of hot or iced coffee every day to health care workers, resulting in more than 50,000 cups of free coffee, according to the release. Aroma Joe's, known for its handcrafted coffees and espresso drinks, has 72 locations, a majority of which are in New Hampshire and Maine. Visit aromajoes.com/locations to find the shop closest to you.

• **Pipe bursts at Revival:** A heating pipe at **Revival Kitchen & Bar** in Concord burst early in the morning on Dec. 21, causing extensive damage to the restaurant's dining space and forcing its temporary closure. According to a post on Revival's Facebook page, the burst pipe also significantly damaged the space inside Angelina's Ristorante Italiano, just next door. Since Revival's kitchen space was unaffected, all holiday take-and-bake orders were expected to be fulfilled with no issues, according to the post. "Clean-up crews were quick to respond and have begun cleaning the space, assessing damages and creating a plan to move forward and get the door back open," the post read. "We will know more as the days continue, so stay tuned for updates."

• **Hospitality fund gets a boost:** The **New Hampshire Hospitality Employee Relief Fund**, which provides grants of \$250 to hospitality employees in the state who have been impacted by the pandemic, recently received a \$5,000 donation in local grocery store gift cards, according to a press release from the New Hampshire Lodging & Restaurant Association. The donations, featuring several \$50 or \$100 gift cards, came from the Beer Distributors Association of New Hampshire, in partnership with Anheuser-Busch, Molson Coors and the National Beer Wholesalers Association, and will be distributed throughout the fund. "We wanted to help in some small way, so we rallied our member companies from across the state and joined forces with a few of our key partners to support workers in need before Christmas," New Hampshire Distributors President and CEO Chris Brown said in a statement. According to the release, the fund has distributed more than \$164,000 in direct aid to state restaurant and hospitality workers since its formation in March.

FOOD

A taste of what's to come

A look at the food scene in 2020, plus a preview of 2021

By Matt Ingersoll
mingersoll@hippopress.com

In what has been a tough year for the industry, New Hampshire restaurateurs were forced to pivot their operations in all kinds of ways to stay afloat, from increased or extended outdoor dining to a greater emphasis on takeout and prepared meals.

But as we get ready to turn the page on a new year, immediate relief may be in sight. A \$900 billion Covid-19 relief package passed by Congress on Dec. 21 has several special provisions for the food service industry, including a second round of Paycheck Protection Program [PPP] funds that would be tax deductible. Restaurants in particular can also seek the funds at 3½ times their monthly payroll, compared to 2½ times that amount for all other types of small businesses.

The bill would be a crucial lifeline in getting restaurants in the Granite State through to the spring, said Mike Somers, president of the **New Hampshire Lodging & Restaurant Association**. Up to October, the industry has been down more than \$600 million in combined gross sales for the calendar year, according to Somers, while food service jobs in the state still remain down between roughly 10,000 and 15,000 from where they would normally be.

With 2021 on our doorstep, here's a look at some of the biggest restaurant trends of the past year in New Hampshire and how they'll continue in the months ahead.

Moving outdoors

The first significant blow to businesses came in mid-March when, on the day before St. Patrick's Day, Gov. Chris Sununu issued an emergency order limiting all restaurants and bars in New Hampshire to takeout, delivery and drive-thru only. The original order was only set to last through April 7, but as cases of Covid-19 in the state continued to climb, an extension was soon put in place that ended up lasting an additional month and a half.

On May 18, New Hampshire eateries were given the green light to reopen for outdoor dining only. Even as reopening at a limited capacity indoors became allowed the following month, in mid-June, outdoor dining became a major trend throughout the summer and fall

in the Granite State, with restaurants utilizing their space in ways they never had before.

At the **Tuscan Kitchen and Market** in Salem, outdoor patio seating was extended all along its center piazza under a large open-air tent, complete with a pizza oven and a pop-up container bar. The company's new "al fresco" dining model was so successful, Joe Faro Jr. of the Tuscan Brands marketing team said, that a winterized version with outdoor heated igloos and even a synthetic ice skating rink was recently unveiled. The Winter Giardino at Tuscan Village officially opened on Dec. 12 and will continue well into the new year, Faro said.

The rink itself is in the parking lot in front of the Tuscan Market building and is open for public skating from Wednesday through Sunday, featuring skate rentals available from TSR Hockey & Lacrosse. Since its launch, Faro said, a few special events have been held, like skating with Santa Claus and an '80s and '90s themed skating party. As for the igloos, those are located exactly where the open-air tent had been during the summer months, with two-hour dining times available to parties of between two and six diners who reserved them.

"We've obviously done things outdoors, but we've never taken it this far before," Faro said of the igloos and the skating rink. "We've consistently been trying to get better at providing our guests with fun and exciting things to do in this new environment, and we've had a good time doing just that."

Also in December, the **Bedford Village Inn** announced it will be offering outdoor dining in several heated igloos on its patio. According to sales and marketing director Melissa Samaras, the plan to bring an "igloo garden" to the Inn was in the works even before the pandemic hit, as the company was looking for a replacement for its annual Ice Bar event in February. The igloos can be reserved for dinner nightly, or brunch on the weekends, and special Valentine's Day packages are already being booked now, Samaras said.

In Brookline, **Averill House Vineyard** went from gearing up at the beginning of 2020 for what would have been the biggest tour season of its history to changing almost everything about its business model by year's end. Owner Bob Waite said the vineyard recently unveiled the "Vine to Wine" igloo and gazebo expe-



An igloo at Averill House Vineyard in Brookline. Courtesy photo.

rience, which allows guests to safely enjoy private wine tastings with charcuterie boards in small groups inside of heated igloos. Each igloo, Waite said, has a Norwegian theme with soft wood furniture.

Waite added that the vineyard has also introduced several new products over the course of this year that have been a hit, like multiple flavors of single-serve "wine cream," or wine-mixed ice cream from a partnership with **Sub Zero Nitrogen Ice Cream** of Nashua, as well as mulled wine. They can also be enjoyed inside the igloos.

"The wine creams have been a real hit, especially for someone who's not a big wine drinker but they like ice cream," Waite said.

Larger cities in the state even opened up public sidewalks and parking spaces downtown to accommodate additional outdoor dining space for restaurants, another defining theme for much of 2020. In Concord, new outdoor dining permits for 2021 will become valid on April 1, according to city health and licensing officer Gwen Williams.

Manchester Mayor Joyce Craig had issued an announcement back in mid-May allowing restaurants to also expand dining into privately owned parking lots, as long as business owners had written permission to use the space from the property owner. Jersey barriers were in place for much of the summer and fall along Elm Street before they were all removed by the first significant snowstorm of the season earlier this month.

According to Lauren Smith, chief of staff for Mayor Craig, a similar program may be returning next spring or summer for downtown business owners who again want to take advantage of additional outdoor seating. In the meantime, the possibility of utilizing certain parking spaces as 15-minute curbside pickup locations during the winter is being considered.

Nashua also had parking restrictions along



NEW YEAR'S EATS

Depending on when you're reading this, there may still be time to make a reservation for a New Year's Eve (Thursday, Dec. 31) meal — in a restaurant or, in a few cases, to go. See our list of New Year's Eve meals available to everyone at hippopress.com thanks to our contributors and members.

Main Street for much of the year, said, has returned to a focus on takeout since the summer ended, featuring options like hand-cut steak and wine pairings for two. The Hanover Street Chophouse also found success with takeout through its weekly "pop-up butcher shop" events, selling a variety of its house-cut meats and fresh sides a la carte.

Local breweries have been hit hard this year too, sustaining large losses in sales due to the closures of tasting rooms and the suspensions of growler fills.

Keep on brewing

As 2020 comes to an end, however, the craft beer community is coming away with a significant win. A permanent extension of the Craft Beverage Modernization and Tax Reform Act, passed by Congress on Dec. 21 as part of its stimulus package, will provide major tax relief for breweries and thus save the industry millions of dollars.

According to C.J. Haines, executive director of the **New Hampshire Brewers Association**, the bill makes the federal excise tax rates of \$3.50 per barrel permanent. Without the legislation, the rates would have gone back up to \$7 after Dec. 31.

At the state level, Haines said the Association was able to secure \$3.9 million in aid from Gov. Sununu's Main Street Relief Fund in the pockets of local brewers, all while holding several virtual events and fundraisers throughout the year. New Hampshire Craft Beer Week, she said, is indeed due to return in 2021 with tentative dates of April 7 to April 17, but details on what it will look like are still being ironed out.

"We've also had conversations about potentially doing something at the end of summer or maybe mid-fall, kind of like a seated festival where you purchase a table space, share beer samples and brewers would walk around and talk to you about them," she said. "Everything's up in the air."

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garden in Merrimack, the **New Hampshire Bacon & Beer Festival** is scheduled for May 22, with tickets due to go on sale in mid-February, while the **Great American Ribfest & Food Truck Festival** will take place on June 18, June 19 and June 20, Jeremy Garrett of the event management company J2L Events confirmed. Both festivals had been canceled this year due to the pandemic.

To maximize social distancing, Garrett said, all parking and entry tickets will need to be purchased in advance for both events, as there will be no shuttle services. All of the vendors will be spread out, and masks will be required while waiting in lines. The Bacon & Beer Festival typically brings together around 40 craft breweries with 20 locally made bacon dishes, while the Ribfest and Food Truck Festival has between 20 and 24 food vendors.

"Almost all of the [barbecue vendors] and food trucks that had committed to the 2020 Ribfest are returning," Garrett said in an email, adding that he doesn't expect to add

and more that can be ordered online for pickup. We also had a number of people tell us that artisan doughnuts have been a recent trend. Other answers we received for specific foods included gourmet burgers, street tacos, grain or rice bowls and salads, chicken tenders, chili dogs, and steak and cheese subs.

A fun question we also ask, "What celebrity would you like to see eating at your restaurant?" or "What celebrity would you like to have a meal with?," always produces a wide array of answers, and this year was no exception, with several musicians, Hollywood actors, athletes and celebrity chefs all receiving mention. The No. 1 answer of 2020 was Gordon Ramsay, of the hit cooking competition television series *Hell's Kitchen*, followed closely by actor, comedian and New Hampshire native Adam Sandler. Actor Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson and chef Paul Hollywood of *The Great British Bake Off* also received multiple answers.

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The year of takeout

Ordering takeout also became an inevitable trend for local eateries in 2020 as a result of the pandemic, even for those that had previously only generated a small percentage of overall revenue from it, or had not been set up for takeout at all.

Restaurants like **Greenleaf** in Milford, **Revival Kitchen & Bar** in Concord and the **Hanover Street Chophouse** in Manchester, all of which had regularly drawn in an in-house dining crowd and had special attention to detail in the presentation of their plates, were among those that especially felt these impacts. They and many others across the state had to change or significantly scale down their menus to provide more takeout-friendly options. To help restaurants bring in a little bit more revenue with just takeout, Sununu would also issue an emergency order on March 18 to temporarily authorize those with a liquor license to sell bottled or canned beer and wine with all food orders.

Early on, Greenleaf introduced a new menu of takeout-friendly options like sandwiches, soups, and small plates, many of which included previews of its sister restaurant, Culture, which would open in August. Though it recently has been open for dine-in eating most days of the week, Greenleaf owner and chef Chris Viaud announced Dec. 28 that the restaurant will suspend dine-in service starting Jan. 3 and will revert back to a takeout-only model.

The Tuscan Kitchen and Market, according to Faro, launched an online grocery service, allowing its products to be shipped all over the country.

"That's really been our biggest saving grace throughout this whole time period," he said. "That arm of the company that we started has been doing unbelievable for us."

Revival, owner and chef Corey Fletcher

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A Year in the Kitchen: 2020 edition

The Hippo's In the Kitchen Q&A series continued throughout 2020, featuring dozens of diverse voices of the state's food scene over the course of the year, from restaurant chefs and food truck owners to homestead bakers and other business owners.

One question we always ask our industry experts, "What is the biggest food trend in New Hampshire right now?," yielded a variety of answers depending on the time of year it was. Plant-based foods, craft breweries and food trucks were all recurring answers throughout the year, but especially as the impacts of the pandemic drew on, the most common trends we heard about had to do with shopping and eating local, takeout and online ordering at restaurants, and returning to the simplicity of home-cooked meals.

"Family meal deals from local restaurants ... help alleviate the enormous tasks of working from home while homeschooling children," **Elizabeth Silva of Cafe El Camino in Plaistow** told the Hippo in May. The eatery, which specializes in authentic Puerto Rican cuisine, has continued to offer family-sized meals throughout the summer and fall and into the holiday season, featuring meats, rice, vegetables

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A fun question we also ask, "What celebrity would you like to see eating at your restaurant?" or "What celebrity would you like to have a meal with?," always produces a wide array of answers, and this year was no exception, with several musicians, Hollywood actors, athletes and celebrity chefs all receiving mention. The No. 1 answer of 2020 was Gordon Ramsay, of the hit cooking competition television series *Hell's Kitchen*, followed closely by actor, comedian and New Hampshire native Adam Sandler. Actor Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson and chef Paul Hollywood of *The Great British Bake Off* also received multiple answers.

"If I'm going to be criticized by anyone for my cooking, I would want the most critical person, and it's [Ramsay]," **Ken Mosher of The Country Chef in Wilton** told the Hippo in April.

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IN THE KITCHEN

WITH **JARED DEBERNARDO**



Jared DeBernardo's family has been in the restaurant business for more than three decades, dating back to the mid-1980s, when his grandfather Harry owned a small chain of Italian eateries in New Hampshire and Massachusetts. DeBernardo's Restaurant (175 Main St., Epping, 734-4520, debernardos.com), which has been at its current location since December 2016, offers a scratch-made menu of Italian items, from fresh pizzas using its own homemade dough to classic dishes like lasagna, chicken piccata and more, all made to order using recipes from his father, Nick. The eatery is currently closed to dine-in customers, but takeout and curbside pickup are available, in addition to delivery to Epping and more than a half dozen other surrounding towns, like Raymond, Fremont, Stratham, Exeter, Brentwood, Kingston and Newmarket. DeBernardo's also has an extensive offering of family-sized meal pans of items like bruschetta, stuffed shells, chicken, veal or eggplant Parmigiana, baked ziti and pan-fried ravioli.

What is your must-have kitchen item?

I always have a pen in my hand, because I have 9,000 things going on during the day, and if I don't write it down I won't remember to do it.

What would you have for your last meal?

I am a sucker for a really good chicken Parm, so that would definitely be something I would go for. That and a super Tuscan wine.

What is your favorite local restaurant?

Goody Cole's [Smokehouse and Catering Co. in Brentwood]. I am a huge fan of them. All of the sandwiches are amazing. The pulled pork is probably one of my favorites.

What celebrity would you like to see ordering from your restaurant?

I think it would be cool to have another ... perspective from someone who's in the business, like Jon Taffer from *Bar Rescue*. Same thing with Gordon Ramsay and *Hell's Kitchen*.

What is the biggest food trend in New Hampshire right now?

I would say that takeout, and specifically online ordering, has definitely become more of a trend. ... Our industry as a whole has to be able to adapt no matter what.

What is your favorite thing to cook at home?

I like to do a lot of pastas with my own sauces I make in my house.

— Matt Ingersoll 🍷

Homemade "date night" bruschetta

Courtesy of Jared DeBernardo of DeBernardo's Restaurant in Epping (quantities dependent on preference)

- 1 sub roll
- Butter
- Freshly chopped garlic
- Freshly diced tomatoes
- Freshly chopped basil
- Olive oil
- Balsamic vinegar
- Shredded mozzarella cheese
- Romano cheese

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. Open and lightly butter the sub roll, then add the chopped garlic and diced tomatoes. Sprinkle on the shredded mozzarella cheese. Bake in the oven until the sub roll is golden brown and the cheese is melted. Sprinkle freshly chopped basil on top. Garnish with olive oil and balsamic vinegar. Sprinkle Romano cheese to desired level.

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TRY THIS AT HOME

Spinach & goat cheese mini tarts

At the start of a new year, many people have healthy eating on their minds. After the holidays and the decadent foods, it can be good to refresh your eating habits with less indulgent dishes. However, that does *not* mean that you have to abandon snacks and appetizers. You simply need to make snacks and appetizers that are healthier.

Thus, I'd like to introduce you to these simple mini tarts. They aren't fully a health food, but they are much healthier than most cheesy tarts. Let's look at the recipe.

First, rather than using a pastry dough, the crust is made with lavash. The lavash will provide the tart with crispy edges but will keep the fat and calorie counts low. Second, the only cheese used in this recipe is goat cheese. Goat cheese adds a nice tangy flavor but not a lot of calories. That's a cheese win-win. Finally, these tarts have a lot of spinach in them, so you're getting all sorts of nutrients.

When you're thinking about all the tasty snacks from the holidays but still want to



Photo by Michele Pesula Kuegler

stay on the healthy eating track, give these mini tarts a try. I'm pretty sure they'll satisfy your cravings without taking you off your diet path.

Michele Pesula Kuegler has been thinking about food her entire life. Since 2007, the New Hampshire native has been sharing these food thoughts and recipes at her blog, Think Tasty. Visit thinktasty.com to find more of her recipes. 🍷

Spinach & Goat Cheese Mini Tarts

2 pieces lavash
1 tablespoon olive oil
1/2 cup diced sweet onion
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 pound baby spinach
4 ounces goat cheese, softened
Freshly ground black pepper

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
Cut 4-inch circles out of lavash bread. Set aside.*

Heat nonstick frying pan over medium heat and add oil.

Add onion and sauté for 5-7 minutes or until onions are tender.

Add garlic and sauté for an additional minute.

Add spinach, and sauté until wilted, approximately 5 minutes, mixing well.

Remove from heat, and add goat cheese. Season with pepper, and mix well. Using a mini muffin pan, place one lavash circle in a muffin cup, pressing down to form a shell. Repeat with remaining lavash circles. Divide spinach mixture evenly among the lavash shells. Bake for 10 minutes, or until shell is golden brown and cheese is melted. These can be served immediately from the oven. They also can be refrigerated and served cold or reheated.

Notes: This can be done with a biscuit cutter or using a knife to trace around a glass with a 4-inch diameter.

Food & Drink

Farmers markets

• **Cole Gardens Winter Farmers Market** is Saturdays, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., at Cole Gardens (430 Loudon Road, Concord), now through mid-April. Visit cole-gardens.com.

• **Danbury Winter Market** is Saturdays, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the Blazing Star Grange Hall (15 North

Road, Danbury), now through April. Visit blazingstargrange.org.

• **Deering Winter Market** is Fridays, from 4 to 7 p.m., at the Deerish Fish & Game Club (Fish & Game Road, Deering). Find them on Facebook @deeringwintermarket.

• **Peterborough Farmers Market** is Wednesdays, from 3 to 5 p.m., at Peterborough Community Center

(25 Elm St., Peterborough). Find them on Facebook @peterboroughnhfarmersmarket.

• **Rolling Green Winter Farmers Market** is on most Saturdays, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Rolling Green Nursery (64 Breakfast Hill Road, Greenland). Upcoming market dates are Jan. 2, Jan. 16, Jan. 30, Feb. 13 and Feb. 27. Visit rollinggreennursery.com.

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Hopes for a better vintage

A conversation with winemaker Mark Neal

By Fred Matuszewski
food@hippopress.com



Mark, with sales marketing director and daughter Jessica, and winemaker Jordan Stanley. Courtesy photo.

On several Napa Valley winery tours, my wife and I were asked by the tasting room manager what plans we had for our visit. Our response usually was, "To visit the best wineries in the valley recommended by our friend, Mark Neal." That was always greeted with a smile; Mark is well-known in the valley, an authority on vineyard farming and experienced in producing some of the best wines from his vineyards in the valley and on the slopes of Howell Mountain. I've known Mark for about 15 years. We met at Leary's Fine Wines & Spirits in Newburyport, Mass., and I was one of the people who convinced him to sell his wines in New Hampshire.

Recently Mark and I had a long phone conversation about his years in the wine business with some follow-up questions by email; here (edited and condensed) are his responses to my questions.

How did you get involved in the production of fine wines?

Upon returning from the Korean War, my father, Jack Neal, worked for other farmers, managing their ranches and orchards. ... In 1968 he formed his own company, Jack Neal & Son, to manage these ranches and orchards, the same year I bought my first tractor.

When did you begin to buy land and grow your own grapes for wine?

At the age of 20 I bought my first property, 1 1/2 miles away from my parents in Rutherford. ... In 1990 I bought land on Howell Mountain to develop into a vineyard. ... Our first wine from this property was produced in 1998.

The year 2020 has been a challenging year for all of us. Napa Valley was much in the news twice, with fires threatening the valley from different directions. What have been the effects of these fires?

The Aug. 17 LNU fire ... was in the eastern part of Napa County and it headed east. The second fire, called the Glass Fire ... started Sept. 27 and came down Calistoga to St. Helena ... then crossed over the valley.... The fires spread rapidly because of a surplus of deadwood within the forests. These trees typically have a lifespan of 30 to 40 years, and the forests must be managed. This has not happened, and in its path not only did [the fire] devastate the forest but [it] destroyed many wineries, homes and vineyards. Both fires left the smoke and ash to settle on the grapes for weeks. Our grapes were damaged by smoke and ash, so

we didn't make wine this year ... You cannot make ultra-premium wine with damaged fruit or with these conditions that were left from the smoke that would have resulted in a smoke-tainted wine.

However, beyond losing one vintage, a greater cost has come as a result of the continuing Covid shutdowns. This not only has sent ripples through the vineyards but through the entire distribution chain with the closing of restaurants, other businesses, and employment.

What is the biggest challenge you and/or the California wine industry faces in 2021?

I believe that [the impact of] Covid 19 ... will continue into the 2021 wine business. ... We [have] already seen the destruction of wine sales in the restaurants and wine retail shops in the last nine months. Some have shut the door for good. Some I believe held on for the holiday rush and that of course has been shut down.

What is the biggest opportunity of 2021?

We will continue to strengthen relationships with our distributors, retail and restaurants ... to meet everyone's needs during these times. ... We will also continue to support and grow our direct-to-consumer segment.

Neal Family Vineyards has several wines available at the New Hampshire Liquor & Wine Outlets. The **2018 Napa Valley Sauvignon Blanc**, priced at \$19.99 and sourced from the Rutherford Vineyards, has tropical notes of pineapple and citric, with a clean finish. The **2017 Rutherford Dust Vineyard Zinfandel**, priced at \$23.99, has a bit of petite syrah added to it, enhancing the fruit. The **2015 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon**, priced at \$49.99, is superb with great dark cherry notes and a long finish.

Fred Matuszewski is a local architect and a foodie and wine geek, interested in the cultivation of the multiple strains and varieties of grapes and the industry of wine production and sales. Chief among his travels is the annual trip to the wine producing areas of California.

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Beef stew with beer

Let's get cooking

By Jeff Mucciarone
food@hippopress.com

Usually, we make New Year's resolutions that involve eating less food or at least less of the stuff that tends to add pounds to our waists.

Many of you will very likely try to take a similar approach this year, and hey, I don't blame you. It's just that I know from personal experience it's not worthwhile for

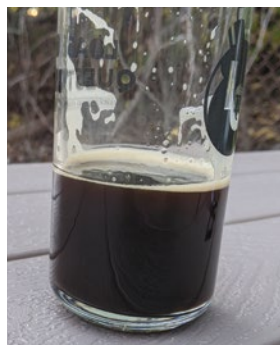
me, so I'm going to slap on an apron and get cooking because this guy needs to eat.

At this time of year, when the holidays are just about behind us and the weather is cold, I'm craving rich stews and roasted meat — aren't we all?

Stews are great for a number of reasons but I love that you can take a tough cut of meat, like beef chuck or pork butt, and just simmer it for hours until the meat is tender and delicious. The finished product is nearly always flavorful, warming and satisfying and that's really what we're going for.

So let's make some beef stew — and in case you were wondering when I was going to bring up beer, that moment is now because we're going to use beer in the beef stew.

Beef stew is so forgiving, especially if you use chuck. Really, the only issue is that you have to be patient and just keep simmering it until the meat is as tender as you want it. I like big chunks of meat and vegetables but chop or dice the ingredients to whatever size you please — just try to be



Let's make stew with some stout.
Photo by Jeff Mucciarone.

consistent so items cook at the same rate.

Using stout for the broth adds a layer of complexity and richness that, I'm sorry, you can't get from broth alone. I really like how the flavor of the thyme — and I would emphasize that fresh thyme is critical in this case — pairs with the beef, garlic and the maltiness of the stout.

In choosing a stout, I think Guinness is your baseline

but any dry stout or porter will work. Smuttynose Brewing Co.'s Robust Porter or the Workingman's Porter by Henniker Brewing Co. would be great choices. I think stouts with lots of coffee and chocolate notes are delicious but I'm not sure how well they'd work in this stew. I'm not saying don't try them; I'm just saying don't blame me if it doesn't work out.

Get your apron on.

Jeff Mucciarone is a senior account manager with Montagne Communications, where he provides communications support to the New Hampshire wine and spirits industry.

What's in My Fridge

Fat Tire Amber Ale by New Belgium Brewing Co. (Fort Collins, Colorado)

This is just an easy-drinking beer that has just enough flavor to make it memorable. I bought a six-pack recently just to make sure I had one beer that would please anyone. Cheers!

Beef and Stout Stew

- 4 pounds beef chuck, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 2-3 large carrots, chopped
- 2-3 large celery stalks, chopped
- 3 large onions, chopped
- 3-4 large potatoes, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 16 ounces stout
- 4-6 cups beef broth
- Salt & pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 sprig fresh thyme
- Fresh parsley

Heat a large Dutch oven over high heat and when hot, add oil. Season meat with salt and pepper. Brown meat, in batches, until all sides are browned. Remove meat with a slot-

ted spoon and set aside.

Turn the heat to medium and add onions, celery and a big pinch of salt and cook, stirring for 5-10 minutes. Add garlic and stir for a minute or so. Add carrots and cook for 5 minutes so carrots soften up a bit.

Add flour and cook for a couple minutes, stirring. Pour in stout carefully as it will bubble up, and scrape the sides and bottom of the pot. Add meat back in, along with another pinch of salt, pepper, potatoes and thyme.

Pour in 2-4 cups of the beef broth and assess the consistency. Bring to a gentle simmer and cook for roughly two hours, adding more broth if needed, until meat reaches desired tenderness and the stew has reduced to your desired consistency.

Serve with fresh parsley and a beer.



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...Or at least the two advance singles from the third EP from this Minneapolis-based jangle-pop band, as they couldn't seem to send over the full five tunes (not that I really cared either way, but point of order, the other three include a reprise version of one of the songs we'll go over here). Anyhoo, the guitar line on the title track is crazy bright and, of course, jangly, with gentle amateurish singing so deeply buried in reverb that half the shoegaze bands of the Aughts are probably lining up to sue them. In other words, yeah, it's like if Glasvegas covered

a Byrds song (and who wouldn't be into such a novel, experimental thing, in case you're from Neptune or whatnot and had never heard the 22 billion other bands who tried the same thing). OK, I don't mean for it to sound like I hate this stuff; I definitely don't, it just feels like its expiration date has long passed. Meanwhile, "Darling" is super cool if you can handle shoegaze-twee, like if Brian Jonestown Massacre covered a Belle & Sebastian song, or vice versa. **B+** — *Eric W. Saeger*

All Who Wander, *Daylight* (self-released)



From the wilds of Amherst comes this four-piece, consisting of Matthew Fiffield and four other guys, two of them having the surname Mavrogeorge, which leads me to assume they're brothers, unless this super-weird year has recently taken up the hobby of dumping bizarre coincidences in my lap. Anyway, one drop of the cyber-needle on this emo-hard-rock conflagration had me sold: Where I'd basically expected the usual bit involving some gamer kids doofing around with a boombox and a few Minecraft samples just to troll me, the sound is as big as it

gets, like latter-day Black Veil Brides, Panic! At The Disco, and so on and so forth, with some technically precise Linkin Park bits and big Minus The Bear-style angles that don't rely solely on guitars. No, I'm not jerking you around, this one is for real, like these guys need to drop everything and spend a month in New York trying to find the right agent. Seriously, if you're a forward-thinking power-pop-head, go find this on Spotify, iTunes or whatever, just freaking do it. **A+** — *Eric W. Saeger*

• I know what you're thinking: Hooray, 2020 is over, no more murder hornets or news stories about Sean Connery passing away and whatever else happened during Literally The Worst Year In History. But it's only Jan. 1, or at least that's the next scheduled general album release date, as if any band or artist would put out a new album on New Year's Day. It'd probably be more interesting if I just filled this space with pictures of clowns throwing cream pies at each other, but for the sake of Odin and Poseidon and whatnot I shall go forth, forthwith, for duty and humanity, in search of crazy people who decided to put out albums while everyone is sleeping off the end of 2020. Toward that, I've started at Metacritic, which tells me there is an album coming out from **The Dirty Nil**, called *F--- Art*. And thus the cosmic jokes continue even into the new year, when I have to censor the title of whatever stupid music thing this is. Wiki says that the band won the Juno Award for Breakthrough Group of the Year at the Juno Awards of 2017, which means they're from Canada, which means they'll be annoyingly proper and PC despite the album's edgelord title. Whatever, here's the new song, "Doom Boy," and — guys, this is so cute, it's like emo (in other words power pop, and yes, it used to be that Google would only find articles by me if you searched for "emo band," but now everyone calls trashy tuneage like this "emo," which means I should be monetarily remunerated for inventing a term for something I detest, which is usually how the remunerations process works when you're a veteran writer, someone please tell me how to use the Patreon!) There's some metal riffing that goes on, but don't worry, in this case your little brother won't go on to buying actual cool music with his allowance, because it's been washed and scrubbed in soapy suds, with all traces of Ministry and Slayer and Meshuggah completely gone. No worries, mom and dad!

• Gick, what else do we have, I can barely stand it. Since there's literally no one else dumb enough to put out an album on National Hangover Day, we'll fast-forward to Monday, Jan. 4, when we get *Querencia*, the debut album from Kim Chung-ha, better known mononymously as **Chungha**, the South Korean singer, dancer, songwriter and choreographer! The first single, "Tell Me That You Will," was on TikTok; the song is pretty standard house-infused technopop, nice enough, sexytime grinding in the video, blah blah blah. Supposedly the whole album is sung in Korean, but this isn't. Anyway, that.

• We'll wrap up this week's horror with *J.T.*, the new LP from **Steve Earle & The Dukes**, which also streets on Jan. 4. It's the 21st album from the Texas-born hayseed-rocker, and the single, "Harlem River Blues," isn't bad at all! It's high-end bluegrass chill-folk containing elements of zydeco, like, I'd dance to it if I were drunk at a Deerfield Fair pig scramble afterparty, and I wouldn't even insist on a partner. Maybe I'd dance with one of those black billy goats. Do people do that at Deerfield Fair afterparties or would it just be awkward? — *Eric W. Saeger*

CDs pg22

- Real Numbers, *Brighter Than* **B+**
- All Who Wander, *Daylight* **A+**

BOOKS pg23

- *The Office of Historical Corrections* **A**

• Book Notes

Includes listings for lectures, author events, book clubs, writers' workshops and other literary events.

To let us know about your book or event, email asykeny@hippopress.com.

To get author events, library events and more listed, send information to listings@hippopress.com.

FILM pg24

• Movies of 2020

- *Wonder Woman 1984* **B-**

Retro Playlist

Eleven years ago this week, MySpace was a thing. There was even a "MySpace Records" imprint of sorts, and so without any trace of irony I brought to your attention *Qu*, an album by the band **Sherwood**. What was it? It was something that was OK but not wildly brilliant.

"Happy-face subtropical surf-indie safely reminiscent of Reliant K and Hansen," said I. "Not much for herd-thinkers to stress about with regard to where this fits in the grand scheme of 'alternative' pop things when one of the tunes here once pattered around helping to background MTV's *College Life*." It was eminently radio-ready, or wanted to be; in many places there's a hook



they just can't seem to wring out of the correctly chosen bunches of notes gathered at the choruses (that is unless you like a dab of Springsteen B-sides with your boy-band fetishism, in which case you'd probably love this LP from start to what-me-worry finish). The curveball consists of soccer-stadium roars trading blows with Cuban timbales drums in "Not Gonna Love," but aside from that it's harmless, finger-snappy all around. Put it this way, their slot at the Warped Tour was probably the point in the festivities when it was time to sit in the grass indulging in ice cream and blank stares.

The same week, I also dissected **DYSE's** *Lieder Sind Bruder Der Revolution*, an album

that was, on paper at least, a German response to Cro Mags. The hmm-that's-somewhat-cool part is that this is/was a two-man operation, a welcome trend that historically took hold not so much out of any blind obeisance to White Stripes but more out of basic necessity, that is to say a dearth of local talent. In practice, DYSE are like

an undiscovered entry in the SST catalog or whatnot, something from when post-punk hated radio, i.e. there's quite a bit of Nick Cave, Redd Kross and Minutemen in the air. Thing is, and this is a problem often heard in European bands, DYSE doesn't seem fully possessed of that aura of genuine deconstructive craziness common to bands from the States or



England, unless of course you're German, in which case, sure, maybe they sound like they're ready to smash wedding cakes or copy something they saw in an old Iggy video, whatever denotes crazy underground punk-tude nowadays. Pretty typical underground-record-store vibe, not that I have any problem with that.

If you're in a local band, now's a great time to let me know about your EP, your single, whatever's on your mind. Let me know how you're holding yourself together without being able to play shows or jam with your homies. Send a recipe for keema matar. Email esyeger@cyberontix.com for fastest response.

The Office of Historical Corrections, by Danielle Evans (Riverhead, 288 pages)

The late science fiction writer Harlan Ellison once said that he went to bed angry every night and woke up every morning angrier. Like-minded scribes have said that should be true of all writers, and there has been plenty of anger vented in books this year, particularly on the subject of race and injustice.

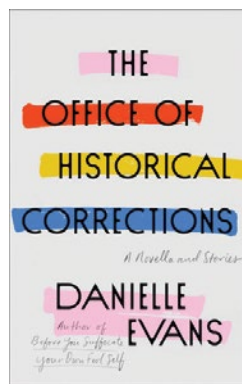
So it's a pleasure to come across a collection that makes its points in a quiet and even understated tone, in language that reads like prose but feels like poetry.

Danielle Evans is that good. Her second book, *The Office of Historical Corrections*, comprises a titular novella and six short stories that swirl around race, poverty, family and culture. The plots are riveting; the characters, so real they try to escape the page. Within the stories are subtle commentary on issues of the day. The only thing that's missing is a pandemic, and that's a good thing.

Evans is a graduate of the storied Iowa Writers Workshop, but hers is the sort of talent that isn't taught but bestowed. Take, for example, the descriptions in "Boys Go to Jupiter," a story about a college student, Claire, who becomes embroiled in controversy after a date posts a picture of her wearing a bikini emblazoned with Confederate flags on social media.

The present drama is entwined with a story from the girl's past, during which she grew up best friends with a Black girl whose family came from South Carolina. "The whole family," Evans writes, "talks with drowsy vowels and an occasional drag that gives some words—her name, for example—a comforting dip in the middle. In Mrs. Hall's mouth, Claire's name is a tunnel from which a person can emerge on the other side."

At first Claire is bewildered by the reaction to a swimsuit that she didn't buy, made public by a post she didn't make, but then increasingly she becomes angry at the dorm mate who brought attention to it. In short order, she is championed by libertarians defending free speech and by supporters of the Confederacy, who urge her to defend her "southern" heritage, even though she



was only in the South to visit her father and her relatives had never lived south of northern Virginia.

There are comic undertones to this potent story, even as it becomes more disturbing and complex.

Similarly, in "Alcatraz," Evans mines family history for poignant exploration of injustice and loss.

The narrator has recently moved near the infamous prison, where her great-grandfather was confined when Alcatraz was a military prison used to house people for crimes such as desertion during the Civil War.

The narrator's mother has spent much of her life trying to clear the name of her grandfather, who had been ultimately cleared of the accusations against him but was unable to escape the stigma and trauma of having been at Alcatraz.

She invites her mother, and some other family members, to take a tour of the facility, hoping it will provide some sort of closure for the family. When the mother arrived, Evans writes, she "was dressed like an actress auditioning for the part of my mother in a movie."

"A different daughter might have been reassured, but I looked at my mother and saw a person directing all of her energy toward being outwardly composed because the inside was a lost cause," Evans writes.

The novella, "The Office of Historical Corrections," like the short stories, punches above its weight in Orwellian form.

It's about an America that has put into place a federal agency charged with ferreting out truth, and sending government workers to issue "corrections stickers" when they come across statements or claims that are counter to the official truths.

The narrator, Cassie, was a college history professor before she joined the agency, whose origins are explained this way:

"An ambitious freshman congresswoman demanded funding to put a public historian in every zip code in the country, a correction for what she called the contemporary crisis of truth. It was pitched as a new public works project for the intellectual class, so many of us lately busy driving cars and delivering groceries and completing tasks

BOOK NOTES

The Great Reset, according to the World Economic Forum, is the opportunity afforded by Covid-19 to recalibrate the world economy. While conservatives aren't happy with the initiative, "the great reset" is a catchy phrase that holds more appeal than the tired old "new year's resolution."

If you're looking to launch your own great reset in January, the publishing industry is here to help. Here are a couple of recent and forthcoming titles intended to make you be a better version of yourself in 2021:

Badass Habits, by Jen Sincero (Penguin Life, 256 pages): Here in the fourth book in Sincero's "badass" series, she promises to help you "cultivate the awareness, boundaries, and daily upgrades you need to make [badass habits] stick."

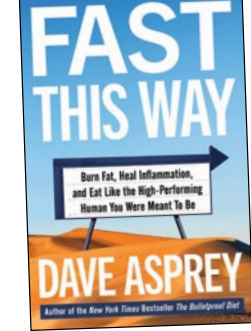
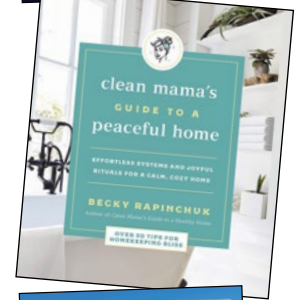
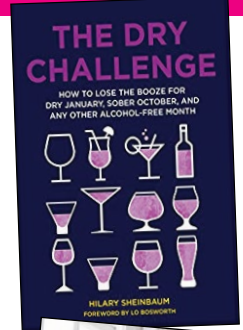
The Dry Challenge, by Hilary Sheinbaum (Harper Design, 224 pages): For anyone considering Sober January, as is the rage, Sheinbaum makes the case for going alcohol-free for a month and provides tips on how to effectively "lose the booze."

Clean Mama's Guide to a Peaceful Home, by Becky Rapinchuk (HarperOne, 240 pages): "How to establish systems and rituals to transform your home into a clean, organized, and comfortable space for you and your family," the publisher says.

Keep Sharp: Build a Better Brain at Any Age, by Dr. Sanjay Gupta (Simon & Schuster, 336 pages): CNN's chief medical correspondent, a neurosurgeon, provides a shape-up plan for your brain.

And, for the obligatory "lose weight" resolution, pandemic version: **Fast This Way**, by Dave Asprey (Harper Wave, 288 pages), notes on losing weight, getting smarter and living "your longest, healthiest life," from a Silicon Valley entrepreneur and "professional biohacker."

— Jennifer Graham



on demand to make ends meet. Government jobs would put all those degrees to work and be comparatively lucrative."

Sometimes the corrections are relatively small and easily proven, such as the origin of Juneteenth, which a cake shop has gotten wrong in one of its promotions. But she is ultimately drawn into a more serious case that involves the purported death of a Black man who started a business in an all-white town in Wisconsin. The business had been set on fire one night, and the owner was said to have died in the blaze. But the accuracy of the plaque outside the site came to the attention of another agency official who had issued a correction, beginning a series of events that Cassie is called upon to unravel.

Perhaps the most memorable of the collection is the story that precedes the novella. "Anything Could Disappear" reflects the sub-suburbia desperation that is often evident on a Greyhound bus. The

main character, Vera, is traveling from Missouri to New York when another traveler deposits a 2-year-old on the seat next to Vera, saying "Keep an eye on him, will ya, hon?"

The woman then disappears, leaving Vera — who for unrelated reasons has a desire not to be near police — unsure of what to do when the bus reaches its destination. She winds up keeping the child with her for a few days, which turns into a few months, as Vera builds a life much different than she expected. Eventually, however, she learns that the child's father is looking for him, and has to make an agonizing decision about what to do, not just with the child but with her life.

Mark Twain famously said he could have written a shorter letter to a friend if he'd had more time; it can be difficult for even the most celebrated writers to pack profundities in a small space. Evans does so beautifully here. **A** — Jennifer Graham

Books

Author events

• **KJ DELL'ANTONIA** Author presents *The Chicken Sisters*. Hosted by Gibson's Bookstore in Concord. Online, via Zoom. Wed., Jan. 6, 7 p.m. Registration required. Visit gibsonsbookstore.com or call 224-0562.

• **K WOODMAN-MAYNARD** Author presents graphic novel adaptation of *The Great Gatsby*. Hosted by Gibson's Bookstore

in Concord. Online, via Zoom. Thurs., Jan. 7, 7 p.m. Registration required. Visit gibsonsbookstore.com or call 224-0562.

• **SUSAN CONLEY** Author presents *Landslide*. Hosted by Gibson's Bookstore in Concord. Online, via Zoom. Thurs., Feb. 11, 7 p.m. Registration required. Visit gibsonsbookstore.com or call 224-0562.

• **THERESA CAPUTO** the star of TLC's *Long Island Medium*

will present "Theresa Caputo: The Experience Live" at the Capitol Center for the Arts (44 S. Main St. Concord, ccanh.com) on Wed., April 7, 7:30 p.m. Tickets start at \$39.75 (with option for a VIP Photo Op for an additional \$49.95).

Book Clubs

• **BOOKERS** Online. Monthly. Third Thursday, 6 p.m. Bookstore based in Manchester. Visit

bookerymht.com/online-book-club or call 836-6600.

• **GIBSON'S BOOKSTORE** Online, via Zoom. Monthly. First Monday, 5:30 p.m. Bookstore based in Concord. Visit gibsonsbookstore.com/gibsons-book-club-2020-2021 or call 224-0562.

• **TO SHARE BREWING CO.** 720 Union St., Manchester. Monthly. Second Thursday, 6 p.m. RSVP required. Visit

tosharebrewing.com or call 836-6947.

Writing

• **POSTCARD POETRY CONTEST** Peterborough Poetry Project seeks submissions of original poems written on picture postcards for an upcoming anthology. Deadline is Dec. 31. Visit peterboroughpoetryproject.org/contests for more information.

• **CALL FOR BLACK WRITERS** New Hampshire-based theater company and playwright collective New World Theatre announces an open call to Black writers to submit monologues that reflect their personal experience of living while black, to be published in an anthology titled "08:46." The deadline for submissions is Jan. 1, 2021. Visit newworldtheatre.org/08m46s.

2020 'at' the movies

It was a horrible and great year for movies

By Amy Diaz
adiatz@hippopress.com

What even is a 2020 movie?

This year's Oscar race will include films that at least dip a toe in theaters by Feb. 28. I spent at least the first month of this year watching 2019 movies as they trickled into local theaters. And then there's that long stretch, between March 13 and right this moment, when I have seen exactly three movies on a big screen. Do all those small-screen movies — some great, some blech, some perfectly shrug whatever — count as part of 2020 cinema?

Yes. Like Stephen King used to say when he'd do his annual favorite film list in Entertainment Weekly, whatever we see this year is on this list for a great movie of this year. And, as much as I love the hot popcorn and cool air conditioning of a movie theater, it hasn't been all bad for movies in 2020. After an Oscar season that was excitingly accessible, it was a silver lining to the terrible 2020 cloud to have movies like *First Cow*, *Never Rarely Sometimes Always* and *Hamilton* available to view as they were having their moment, instead of waiting for films to filter out of the big cities. And those movies are on a pretty long list of good and great films that came out this year. Finding a way to balance the fact that *Ammonite* is available to every interested Kate Winslet fan (I haven't had a chance to rent that VOD release yet) and that most movie-lovers are also movie-theater-lovers and want them to survive will be the challenge of 2021 and beyond. (Some new movies are still hitting area theaters before they get to small screens, including Christmas Day releases *News of the World* and *Promising Young Woman*, but, of course, big budget theater-only releases are still far fewer than normal.)

But first, we have to get through winter.

What follows are my picks, not just for the best films of 2020 (endless movies also means there are endless movies to catch up on and plenty of 2020 greats that are still on my to-watch list) but for the films that might offer you some fun, escape, artistry and entertainment as we wait out the socially distanced season and hope for a return to more robust movie theater offerings sometime soon. (The streaming locations listed here are based on December offerings, which may change in January.)

• **Excellent movies I saw this year that are technically 2019 movies:** *Portrait of a Lady on Fire* was totally robbed during last year's award season; it is beautiful, swoony, bittersweet and at times haunting (currently on Hulu). I didn't get to review *Little*



Trolls World Tour

Women, the adaptation of the classic novel by director Greta Gerwig, before I did my 2019-in-review roundup; this is a perfect movie (currently on Starz but I may have to spring for the two-movie bundle that also comes with the 1994 *Little Women* and sells for \$16.98 on iTunes). *1917* (currently on Showtime and available for rent or purchase) was also a basically perfect movie that dazzles with the visual feat of a “one-shot” movie that takes soldiers through battlefields on a mission during World War I. If you want to make an argument for the supremacy of seeing a movie in theaters, *1917* does a good job of selling that point.

• **2020 movies that literally saved my life:** I mean “literally” in the figurative sense though an argument for “literal” could be made as the precious moments of peace and quiet these movies brought to homebound children in the spring and summer of 2020 meant a calm cup of coffee or some other sustenance-providing thing for me. *Trolls World Tour* (available on Hulu and Peacock if you didn't buy it the second it appeared on iTunes) may not be the best movie of 2020 but who cares, all of my children were happy to watch it the first time it came out and continue to watch it now. It is a bright and fun animated movie with cute music and, if you need to feel like your kids' media has merit, it has some decent stuff about celebrating differences.

A Shaun the Sheep Movie: Farmageddon (available on Netflix) is another movie that kept all the kids entertained, but this one has legitimate claim for a “year's best animation” prize. From Aardman Animation of *Wallace & Gromit* fame, this tale of sheep and their fellow farm animals encountering a friendly young alien is sweet, well-crafted and full of funny sci-fi Easter eggs. It's also basically language-free and very little-kid friendly.

• **More good kid fare:** *The Willoughbys* (on Netflix) is a beautifully animated story about four siblings trying to dump their neglectful parents and learning to appreciate their kind nanny. It has shades of *A Series of Unfortunate Events* and just the right amount of Ricky Gervais. *Phineas and Ferb The Movie: Candace Against the Universe* (on Disney+) is another great movie about siblings working together that called to mind *The Simpsons* in its ability to pack every minute and every frame with jokes (though still with the right amount of slapstick for the little viewers). The eight-minute short *Once Upon a Snowman* (also Disney+) shows us snowman Olaf's adventures between his “Let It Go” creation and his finding Anna.

• **Add this to the family holiday rotation:** Eleventy bazillion Christmas movies hit screens this year but here are three that are worth holding on to for next year — *Jingle Jangle* (on Netflix), a fun musical about a toymaker and his plucky granddaughter; *Lego Star Wars Holiday Special* (Disney+), totally great use of both Lego and fan-service, and *Mariah Carey's Magical Christmas Special* (AppleTV+), which is like the grown-up (but family-friendly) version of *Elmo's Christmas Countdown* (and both feature Jennifer Hudson!).

• **Excellent movies I'll never watch again:** A movie can be great and a stone cold bummer at the same time. Thus, *Never Rarely Sometimes Always* with its heart-breaking performance by Sidney Flanagan as a young woman who needs abortion services but runs into so many obstacles is definitely on my list for 2020's best and I don't think I can put myself through seeing it again. (It's on HBO Max and available for purchase.) Another movie great at stoking rage is *The Assistant*, a quiet film about a young woman working her first job for

an unseen but monstrous movie producer boss. (It's currently on Hulu and available for rent or purchase.)

I doubt I'll bring myself to watch *The Invisible Man* again. Elisabeth Moss brings genuine terror not to the idea of an invisibility suit in the wrong hands but to the toll of domestic violence and, sure, this is one of those Universal Pictures horror movies but Moss deserves some awards attention for her top-shelf performance. (Available on HBO Max and for purchase.) *Blow the Man Down* is a smart movie with excellent performances (Sophie Lowe, Morgan Saylor and, as always, Margo Martindale) and a Coen Brothers-y feel (it's available on Amazon Prime) that feels like an atmospheric mystery novel read in one sitting.

• **Pretty good middle-of-the-road movies:** We need not just great movies but pretty good movies that might be able to stand up to casual rewatching.

Netflix has a fair amount of these offerings. I have already rewatched parts of Will Ferrell's wacky comedy *Eurovision Song Contest: The Story of Fire Saga*. I liked the Charlize Theron superhero movie (based on a Greg Rucka comic) *The Old Guard* and truly hope there will be a sequel. And I wouldn't mind a next chapter of the kinda stupid Mark Wahlberg-fronted *Spenser Confidential*, an upbeat procedural that shares some DNA with the TV show *Spenser for Hire*.

The “Tom Hanks on a Navy boat in World War II” movie *Greyhound* (Apple TV+) delivers exactly on that premise. I liked Melissa McCarthy in *Superintelligence* (HBO Max); it might not rival *Spies in the House* or *The Heat* but it's an enjoyable comedy. *Love and Monsters* (available for rent or purchase) is an optimistic movie about the end of the world. I'd even put *Birds of Prey* (now on HBO Max) in that category, especially if you can fast-forward to the last half-hour.

• **Pretty-good good movies:** A rung up, you'll find movies like *Valley Girl* (available on Hulu), a jukebox musical update of the 1983 film. *An American Pickle* (HBO Max), the “two Seth Rogens” movie was funny, sure, but also sweet and contemplative. *The Sunlit Night* (now on Hulu) has some of those qualities as well, and a solid Jenny Slate performance. I liked the indie *Buffaloed* (also on Hulu and available for rent or purchase) for its spunkiness. Sofia Coppola's *On the Rocks* (Apple TV+) was a crisp gin and tonic of a dramedy. *Unpregnant* (HBO Max) is the comedy, *Booksmart*-ish version of *Never Rarely Sometimes Always*, based around a sweet

friendship. *Vampires vs. The Bronx* (Netflix) offers fun horror and something to say.

• **Great docs:** This was a great year for documentaries and at the front of the pack is *Crip Camp: A Disability Revolution* (on Netflix) that is about a camp for kids and teens with disabilities in upstate New York in the mid-20th century but sprawls to cover the political movement for legal protections for the rights of people with disabilities (and introduced me to American hero Judith Heumann). Another solid Netflix offering is *Mucho Mucho Amor: The Legend of Walter Mercado*, which brings us the life of a hugely popular TV personality. In Netflix's *Dick Johnson Is Dead*, a filmmaker deals with the dementia and mortality of her beloved father with grace and humor.

On AppleTV+, *Boys State* gives us the best and worst of present-day American politics as filtered through a high school government program in Texas.

And speaking of young nerds (and I mean that in the very best sense), watch a pre-*Hamilton* Lin-Manuel Miranda and his crew of improv rappers make theater and song and comedy in *We Are Freestyle Love Supreme*.

• **More of the best movies I saw this year:** The best movie I saw in theaters this year (at least, of 2020 offerings) was *Emma* (currently on HBO Max and also available for rent or purchase), a beautiful and stylish-looking and cleverly cast and acted adaptation of the Jane Austen novel.

The 40-Year-Old Version (Netflix), about a woman reinventing herself, and *The Vast of Night* (Amazon Prime), a sci-fi suspense film, are two movies with an indie feel that nevertheless earn their place next to any glossy mainstream fare.

Palm Springs (Hulu) was one of those woulda-been theatrical releases that wound up on a streaming site, which means I'll be able to watch this charming rom-com with Andy Samberg and Cristin Milioti again and again.

Remember when everybody was raving about *First Cow* (currently on Showtime; available for rent or purchase)? They are right! This Western about friendship and baked goods is gentle and charming.

Enola Holmes (Netflix) puts the plucky little sister of Sherlock and Mycroft in the middle of her own mystery to solve (and the women's suffrage movement). This bubbly action and adventure has a sweet story about mothers and daughters at its heart.

Mank (Netflix) is the most awards-season movie to ever awards-season with its Old Hollywood setting and its behind-the-scenes look at the writing of *Citizen Kane* using *Kane*-like visuals but it also would actually deserve those awards for its technical and performance feats.

Speaking of eyeball-grabbing style, *Black Is King*, Beyonce's visual album riff on *The*

Lion King, is absolutely beautiful (visually, musically, fashion-ally) and heartfelt (on Disney+).

Make room on the Oscar nominations list for all kinds of entries for *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, which features what appears to be the last Chadwick Boseman performance we'll ever get and another knock-out Viola Davis role.

Two more movies with standout storytelling and performances: *Shirley* (on Hulu and available for rent or purchase) a gothic thriller mixed with a Shirley Jackson biopic starring Elisabeth Moss, and Spike Lee's *Da 5 Bloods* (Netflix), another chance to see strong work from Chadwick Boseman.

• **Absolute best time with a movie in 2020: *Hamilton*.** As I said, what even is a 2020 movie? Can a filmed 2016 theatrical production count as a movie from this year? I say sure. *Hamilton* was a joy to watch (and rewatch; it's available on Disney+). The experience of watching a Broadway play with its original cast and shot in a way that made it feel alive and not locked on a stage (even though this was on a stage it felt less boxed in than, say, Netflix's adaptation of the musical *The Prom*) is maybe one of the most optimistic parts of whatever happens next in movies. More art to more people — let's hope we can find a way to have that and our movie theater popcorn too. 🍿

2021 'at' the movies

Who the heck knows what 2021 will bring, but here are some early 2021 movies that I'm looking forward to:

• ***One Night in Miami*** Directed by Regina King, this movie tells the story of a fictional meeting between Muhammad Ali, Malcolm X, Sam Cooke and Jim Brown, according to Amazon, where it will be available on Jan. 15.

• ***The Little Things*** This Denzel Washington movie is slated to be released by Warner Bros. in theaters and on HBO Max on Jan. 29.

• ***Supernova*** This movie also sounds like it has awards potential with Stanley Tucci playing a man with early onset dementia and Colin Firth playing his longtime partner. It has a Jan. 29 theatrical release date.

• ***Nomadland*** Based on the nonfiction book of the same name, this movie is showing up on some top 10 lists and earning Frances McDormand buzz for her performance. The movie currently has a theatrical release date of Feb. 19; no word yet on streaming access.

• ***The Many Saints of Newark*** This *Sopranos* prequel movie is another Warner Bros. release and could hit movie theaters (and HBO Max) March 12.

• ***In the Heights*** This movie was on my list of things I was excited about for 2020 last year and I am hoping it will see the light of screens this year. Currently, Lin-Manuel Miranda's pre-*Hamilton* musical is slated to hit theater screens (and HBO Max) on June 18.

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Wonder Woman 1984

Diana Prince suits up in her golden armor for an all-too-brief fight sequence in the otherwise extremely long *Wonder Woman 1984*, a sequel to the 2017 *Wonder Woman* available until near the end of January on HBO Max and in theaters.

Though we last saw Wonder Woman hanging with Batfleck and the other Justice League-ers in roughly the current day, this takes us back to 1984 when Diana (Gal Gadot) is working in antiquities (for the Smithsonian, I think?) in Washington, D.C., and trying to discreetly protect people from baddies and other danger on the side. Despite a full professional life, Diana has a lonely private life, still aching from the death of Steve Trevor (Chris Pine) during World War I. Despite Diana's inner sadness, her outer awesomeness has fellow museum science and antiquities person Barbara Minerva (Kristen Wiig) wishing that she could be like Diana. Barbara makes that wish while holding an artifact that claims to grant wishes, though both Barbara and Diana initially have their doubts about the authenticity of the item. Diana has also made a Steve-based wish while holding the artifact. While they might not believe in the artifact, we see the little wind blow-y effect in their hair and so we are not so surprised to see their wishes come true: The formerly awkward Barbara can suddenly walk with ease in heels projecting sexy confidence and finds she has increasing physical strength. Diana is approached by a man she's never met before — who then says and does the last things Steve Trevor ever said and did, and suddenly she can see that it's him, returned.

After initially just giving in to the delight of having Steve back, Diana and Steve decide to go figure out how it is that he has returned. Unfortunately, by the time they start their quest, the artifact has been stolen by Maxwell Lord



Wonder Woman 1984

(Pedro Pascal), who had long been on the hunt for it. A large donation to the Smithsonian and some flirting with Barbara gets him access to the artifact and he convinces her to let him take it to get it looked at by an expert. What he actually does is, essentially, wish for all the wishes by wishing to *become* the artifact (which at some point people start calling “the Dreamstone”). People wish on Maxwell to get their heart's desire and in return he takes something — their company, their wealth, their henchmen, etc. Their wishes seem to take from him too; he gets weaker and sicker-looking with each wish. Diana and Barbara discover that their wishes have a cost for them as well. These individual costs, however, are minor compared to the mounting societal costs as more and more people wish on Maxwell for more — more nukes, more power, more money. Diana discovers that this may be a feature, not a bug, of the Dreamstone, which has a dark history and was forged by a god known as the “god of lies.”

The lies are seductive and the truth is often sad and bittersweet but the world

has to acknowledge and live in the truth to save itself — I think this is the working philosophy of this movie, which I feel like would have played a little different in the alternate timeline of June 2020 (the movie's original release date), where all anybody is thinking about is the election and we're all seeing movies in the theater, than it does now. There are some choices made with Pascal's Max (some of the elements of his character read pretty Trump-y) that make me feel like this movie, without being overtly political, is trying to say something about the state of discourse. I feel like that element is maybe one of the many “too many accessories” that this movie should have taken off, Coco Chanel “take one thing off” style. (I always misremember that quote as “before you leave the house, look in the mirror and take three things off” and I feel like three is the minimum number of things this movie needs to take off.) There is a lot to do with Max that takes away from the development of Diana, Diana and Steve, Diana and Barbara, and Barbara and her own sense of self. Somehow,

this two-and-a-half-hour movie feels like it doesn't have time to give us any relationship or theme in depth — and yet the movie does not fly by. More editing? Less story? More editing of fewer plotlines and a more consistent tone — this movie just felt all over the place and needed streamlining in all things.

That said, there are nice elements. Because we can, I went back to watch some of the highlights of this movie before I wrote this review. The scenes between Diana and Steve do a good job of capturing the sparkle of that pairing, even if somehow the sparkle isn't sustained. There is a nice start to a friendship between Diana and Barbara but then there is just so much plot business that it kind of gets lost. And there are some fun action stretches, nothing quite as fun as the No Man's Land scene from the first movie, but nice work, to include an intro that gives us little-girl-Diana in Themyscira and brings back Robin Wright and Connie Nelson. (Much like Thor and Asgard in the *Thor* movies, Diana in Themyscira feels like a stretch where the movie really knows itself and what it's doing.) And we get the golden armor that has been part of this movie's marketing, though not for nearly as long as you'd hope given the general coolness of it.

Wonder Woman 1984 is a sequel to maybe the best recent vintage DC Comics movie and one that had a lot of Strong Female Lead hopes-and-dreams stuff attached to it. Living up to that is a tall order, and this movie doesn't quite. But that's not going to stop me from watching it, or at least parts of it, again.

B-
Rated PG-13 for sequences of action and violence, according to the MPA on filmratings.com. Directed by Patty Jenkins with a screenplay by Patty Jenkins, Geoff Johns and Dave Callaham, Wonder Woman 1984 is two hours and 31 minutes long and distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures.

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By Michael Witthaus
mwitthaus@hippopress.com

By Michael Witthaus
mwitthaus@hippopress.com

• **Junk out:** Ever since *America's Got Talent* made them a national sensation, **Recycled Percussion** has returned for a run of shows across their home state; in 2019 they performed for 22,000 people in three weeks, including a sold-out New Year's Eve at Manchester's Palace Theatre. The junk rockers will ring out this year virtually from their New Hampshire headquarters. A 12-hour marathon is planned with support from local artists. Thursday, Dec. 31; tickets are \$40 at chaosandkindnessstore.com.

• **Fresh start:** Whatever challenges 2021 may bring, it won't match 2020's misery index. **Tyler Allgood** helps kick things off with hope at a rustic restaurant that has supported local musicians throughout the plague year. Allgood released *The Weight of Thunder* in 2019 and has written some good new songs since, including the mournful "Dirty Red Shoes," up on his Facebook page. Friday, Jan. 1, 6:30 p.m., Molly's Tavern, 35 Mont Vernon Road, New Boston, tinyurl.com/ya9uzyd7.

• **Local hero:** Hunkered down area musicians like **Lucas Gallo** used the quarantine to polish and release original material. A tireless booster of the Concord scene for years as a performer and promoter, Gallo completed *From The Attic* and debuted it at an outdoor summer show in his Concord hometown. His album contained recently written songs along with some dating back nearly two decades. Saturday, Jan. 2, 4 p.m. Concord Craft Brewing, 117 Storrs St., Concord, facebook.com/NHMusicCollective.

• **Staged act:** Seacoast supergroup **Marble Eyes** launches a series of livestream shows from the stage of storied club The Press Room. The songwriter collective promises "rock 'n' roll for the soul" and includes Eric Gould of Pink Talking Fish, Indobox guitarist Mike Carter, Adrian Tramontano of Kung Fu and The Breakfast, along with Max Chase, solo performer and scene staple. Monday, Jan. 3, 8 p.m., airing on nugs.tv, nugs.net, YouTube and Facebook Live, facebook.com/marbleeyesband.

• **Spiced up:** A celebration of Latin culture stars **Chimbala**, a Dominican singer who had a hit with "Rueda" in 2019, garnering nearly 50 million streams. The indoor fiesta is hosted by Chocolate & Rafide Los Santos and features additional music from DJs Jundaddy, Bently and Coró King. Covid-19 regulations will be strictly enforced at the socially distanced, 21+ event. Thursday, Jan. 7, 8 p.m., Jewel Music Venue, 61 Canal St., Manchester, tickets \$40 at boletosexpress.com.

The year 2020 began well enough, as the ball dropped on a retro-themed party at Bank of NH Stage in Concord and a bare-foot Adam Ezra once again lit up Tupelo Music Hall, an annual tradition. Headliners Comedy Club offered laughter up and down the state.

The newly opened Rex Theatre in Manchester slated a wide range of shows in its upcoming calendar; the year's first was E Street Band saxophone player Jake Clemmons. Town Meeting, one of the brightest lights in the region's Americana scene, debuted a new album at The Rex in early February.

March looked to be even better, with St. Patrick's Day events scheduled at multiple venues throughout the month. Former *Celtic Woman* fiddler Máiréad Nesbitt's appearance at Saint Anselm's Dana Center on March 14 was among the most eagerly anticipated, but she was interrupted by a Friday the 13th that confirmed every horror story concocted about the date — especially for live entertainment.

Tupelo CEO Scott Hayward put it succinctly from the empty stage of his venue that night.

"I boarded a plane to come home from vacation, and arrived to find my industry gone," he said at the time.

The pandemic has consumed every aspect of life, beginning that weekend.

Through it all, however, there have been more than a few so-called Covid silver linings. Foremost among them was the rise of livestreaming. Concord native Dan Zanes launched a daily Social Isolation Song Series with his wife Claudia, a kid-centric effort. Lucas Gallo's Local Music Quarantine Video Challenge invited musicians to record themselves at home.

There were many, many more, and the best part was hearing original songs from performers best known for playing covers in restaurants and bars. It was a gift that kept giving. When places began reopening in May, patrons were more receptive to local musicians, who were at that point the only game in town. It became a cultural renaissance, born from crisis.

Venues presenting national acts faced a bigger challenge. They responded ingeniously, with drive-in shows at Tupelo — the effort received national press — and at the Cheshire Fairgrounds in Swanzy, which kicked off its effort with rock tribute act Echoes of Floyd and offered a massive capacity of 750 cars.



A teddy bear audience at Headliner's Comedy Club helped facilitate social distancing. Courtesy photo.

Miraculously, the weather was mostly kind at these and other pop-up events throughout the region. Honking horns took the place of applause from early spring to late summer. The Music Hall booked shows into the streets of downtown Portsmouth, while Concord's Capitol Center for the Arts took over Fletcher-Murphy Park, and Manchester's Palace Theatre ran a series of summer events at Delta Dental Stadium, including one starring the Beatles-esque Weaklings.

Plenty of restaurants added tents and used live music as a lure for business. Local promoter Paul Costley saw his bookings spike as a result. "In normal times, I usually have 60 to 80 events a week," Costley said in September. "I was up to 135."

Indoor venues offered socially distanced shows, with comedians like Juston McKinney leading the charge by playing multiple sets to reduced crowds. Before returning to the stage, McKinney was playing to a crowd of family members and the ether. "I never thought I would look forward to having four people in an audience so much in my life," McKinney told the Hippo in June for a *Comedy After Covid* story. "I would kill for four people right now."

With new movie releases experiencing a drought, Chunky's Cinema & Pub welcomed Rob Steen's comedy acts.

Economically, it can't sustain. "Being open is one thing and being able to stay open is another thing," Hayward said in mid-autumn. "If we don't have the capacity to do the shows we normally do, it doesn't work. A good show for us is 500 people. ... A big show for a small club is 60 people ... but I can't live on 60 people."

There's hope on the horizon. Congress included \$15 billion in recently passed legislation to help independent venues, theaters and talent agencies weather the crisis, prodded by the live music industry's *Save Our Stages* effort. Though most regional venues are currently closed, live shows are scheduled to resume mid-winter at some of them. A few venues are sticking with more vague reopening plans. Tupelo, for example, sent out an update at the end of November saying that challenges with lower capacity shows in 2020 and shows scheduled for 2021 "are causing all sorts of problems for the artists, patrons and venue," and it is "all but guaranteed that we will be closed through February of 2021 at least."

Meanwhile, is still scheduled at Portsmouth's Music Hall on Feb. 13, along with Vapors of Morphine Feb. 19 and Livingston Taylor Feb. 20. The Capitol Center for the Arts in Concord, which announced just before Christmas that it was extending its "pause" and canceling all live shows through the end of February, has comic Juston McKinney set for March 28, followed the next night by Celtic Woman Celebration.

Until then, January is Virtual Month at Manchester's Palace Theatre, with three Thursday shows: a Carole King tribute on the 8th, local rocker Brooks Young on the 15th and Piano Men which offers classic songs from Stevie Wonder, Billy Joel, Elton John and others, on the 22nd. Actor and musician Jeff Daniels streams an acoustic concert on Jan. 12, with a Q&A following. 🍷

MUSIC THIS WEEK

Bedford
Copper Door
 15 Leavy Dr.
 488-2677

Bow
Cheng Yang Li
 520 South Bow St.
 228-8508

Chichester
Flannel Tavern
 345 Suncook Valley Road
 406-1196

Concord
Area 23
 State Street
 881-9060

Cheers
 17 Depot St.
 228-0180

Concord Craft Brewing
 117 Storrs St.
 856-7625

Lithermans
 126 Hall St., Unit B

Penuche's Ale House
 16 Bicentennial Square
 228-9833

Epping
The Community Oven
 24 Calef Hwy.
 734-4543

Telly's Restaurant & Pizzeria
 235 Calef Hwy.
 679-8225

Exeter
Sawbelly Brewing
 156 Epping Road
 583-5080

Goffstown
Village Trestle
 25 Main St.
 497-8230

Hampton
CR's The Restaurant
 287 Exeter Road
 929-7972

The Goat
 20 L St.
 601-6928

Shane's BBQ
 61 High St.
 601-7091

Wally's Pub
 144 Ashworth Ave.
 926-6954

WHYM Craft Pub & Brewery
 853 Lafayette Road
 601-2801

Londonderry
Coach Stop Restaurant & Tavern
 176 Mammoth Road
 437-2022

Stumble Inn
 20 Rockingham Road
 432-3210

Manchester
Backyard Brewery
 1211 S. Mammoth Road
 623-3545

Bonfire
 950 Elm St.
 663-7678

Cercle National Club
 550 Rockland Ave.
 623-8243

Derryfield Country Club
 625 Mammoth Road
 623-2880

Firefly
 21 Concord St.
 935-9740

The Foundry
 50 Commercial St.
 836-1925

Fratello's
 155 Dow St.
 624-2022

Salona Bar & Grill
 128 Maple St.
 624-4020

South Side Tavern
 1279 S. Willow St.
 935-9947

Strange Brew
 88 Market St.
 666-4292

Wild Rover
 21 Kosciuszko St.
 669-7722

Meredith
Twin Barns Brewing
 194 Daniel Webster Hwy.
 279-0876

Merrimack
Homestead
 641 Daniel Webster Hwy.
 429-2022

Nashua
American Social Club
 166 Daniel Webster Hwy.
 255-8272

Fody's Tavern
 9 Clinton St.
 577-9015

Fratello's Italian Grille
 194 Main St.
 889-2022

New Boston
Molly's Tavern & Restaurant
 35 Mont Vernon Road
 487-1362

Newmarket
Stone Church
 5 Granite St.
 659-7700

Portsmouth
The Gas Light
 64 Market St.
 430-9122

The Goat
 142 Congress St.
 590-4628

Rochester
Porter's Pub
 19 Hanson St.
 330-1964

Salem
Copper Door
 41 S. Broadway
 458-2033

Seabrook
Chop Shop Pub
 920 Lafayette Road
 760-7706

Red's Kitchen + Tavern
 530 Lafayette Road
 760-0030

Thursday, Dec. 31

Bedford
Copper Door: Phil Jakes, 6 p.m.

Concord
Area 23: New Year's Eve with a jam session featuring Brian Booth, 7 p.m.
Penuche's: Llava Llama, 8 p.m.

Chichester
Flannel Tavern: Rat Pack New Year's Eve with live music (call for tickets), 5 p.m.

Exeter
Sawbelly: Brian Walker, 5 p.m.

Hampton
CR's: Rico Barr Trio, 6 p.m.
Wally's: Pat Downing, 9 p.m.

Manchester
Derryfield: Jonny Friday, 9 p.m.
Fratello's: Clint Lapointe, 5:30 p.m.
South Side Tavern: Jodee Frawlee, 8 p.m.

Merrimack
Homestead: Austin McCarthy

Nashua
American Social Club: Pete Peterson, 9 p.m.
Fratello's: Dave Zangri, 5:30 p.m.

Newmarket
Stone Church: Consider the Source, 8 and 9 p.m.

Portsmouth
Gas Light: Ben Lyons, 8:30 pm.
The Goat: New Year's Eve with Isaiah Bennett, 9 p.m.

Rochester
Porter's: Max Sullivan, 7 p.m.

Salem
Copper Door: Brad Bosse, 7 p.m.

Seabrook
Chop Shop: Wildfire, 6:30 p.m.

Friday, Jan. 1

Concord
Area 23: NH Vintage Vinyl, 7 p.m. (spinning records & vinyl pop-up store)
Cheers: Team Trivia, 8:30 p.m.

Epping
Telly's: Emily Rae Shively, 8 p.m.

Goffstown
Village Trestle: Acoustic music with Rose, 6 p.m.

Hampton
The Goat: Rob Pagnano, 9 p.m.
Wally's: MB Padfield, 9 p.m.

Londonderry
Coach Stop: Jodee Frawlee, 6 p.m.
Stumble Inn: Joanie Cicatelli, 8 p.m.

Manchester
Derryfield: Jonny Friday, 7:30 p.m.
The Foundry: Alex Cohen, 6 p.m.

Fratello's: Dave Zangri, 5:30 p.m.
South Side Tavern: Justin Jordan, 8 p.m.

Merrimack
Homestead: Tim Kierstead, 5:30 p.m.

Nashua
American Social Club: Matt Jackson, 8 p.m.
Fratello's: Jeff Mrozek, 5:20 p.m.

New Boston
Molly's: Tyler Allgood, 6:30 p.m.

Portsmouth
The Goat: Alex Anthony, 9 p.m.

Seabrook
Chop Shop: Bite the Bullet, 7 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 2

Bow
Chen Yang Li: Alex Cohen, 7 p.m.

Concord
Area 23: Saturday jam, 2 p.m.; live local music, 7 p.m.
Concord Craft Brewing: Lucas Gallo, 4 p.m.

Epping
Telly's: Tim Theriault, 8 p.m.

Exeter
Sawbelly: Rich Amorim, 5 p.m.

Goffstown
Village Trestle: Jennifer Mitchell, 6 p.m.

Hampton
The Goat: Jonny Friday, 9 p.m.
Wally's: Rob Pagnano, 9 p.m.

Laconia
The 405: Max Sullivan, 7 p.m.

Londonderry
Coach Stop: Clint Lapointe, 6 p.m.
Stumble Inn: Munk Duane, 8 p.m.

Manchester
Backyard Brewery: Andrew Geano, 6 p.m.

Cercle National Club: Lewis Goodwin, 6:30 p.m.
Derryfield: Chad LaMarsh, 7:30 p.m.
The Foundry: Justin Cohn, 6 p.m.
Fratello's: Paul Gormley, 5:30 p.m.
South Side: Maven Jamz, 8 p.m.

Meredith
Twin Barns: music bingo, 6 p.m.

Merrimack
Homestead: Doug Thompson, 5:30 p.m.

Nashua
Fratello's: Sean Coleman, 5:30 p.m.

New Boston
Molly's Tavern: Justin Jordan, 6:30 p.m.

Newmarket
Stone Church: George Barber & Derek Fimble, 7 p.m.

Portsmouth
Gas Light: Matt Luneau, 7:30 p.m.
The Goat: Brad Bosse, 9 p.m.

Seabrook
Chop Shop: Hit Squad, 7 p.m.

Sunday, Jan. 3

Bedford
Copper Door: Phil Jakes, 11 a.m.

Chichester
Flannel Tavern: Mikey G, 4 p.m.

Goffstown
Village Trestle: Bob Pratte, 3:30 p.m.

Hampton
WHYM: Max Sullivan, noon

Manchester
Shaskeen: Marty Quirk, 2 p.m. (Irish music)

Newmarket
Stone Church: Brunch live with Chris O'Neil, 11 a.m.

Portsmouth
The Goat: Rob Pagnano, 9 p.m.

Salem
Copper Door: Nate Comp, 11 a.m.

Monday, Jan. 4

Manchester
Fratello's: Clint Lapointe, 5:30 p.m.

Merrimack
Homestead: Justin Jordan, 5:30 p.m.

Nashua
Fratello's: Chris Cavanaugh, 5:30 p.m.

Portsmouth
The Goat: Alex Anthony, 9 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 5

Hampton
Wally's: Musical Nation Bingo, 7:30 p.m.

Manchester
Fratello's: Justin Jordan, 5:30 p.m.

Merrimack
Homestead: Chris Cavanaugh, 5:30 p.m.

Nashua
Fratello's: Clint Lapointe, 5:30 p.m.

Portsmouth
The Goat: Isaiah Bennett, 9 p.m.

Stratham
Tailgate Tavern: Musical Bingo Nation, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 6

Hampton
Wally's: Chris Toler, 9 p.m.

Manchester
Fratello's: Chris Cavanaugh, 5:30 p.m.

Meredith
Twin Barns Brewing: trivia night, 6 p.m.

Merrimack
Homestead: Clint Lapointe, 5:30 p.m.

Nashua
Fratello's: Justin Jordan, 5:30 p.m.

Portsmouth
The Goat: Brad Bosse, 9 p.m.

Thursday, Jan. 7

Epping
Telly's: Dave Gerard, 7 p.m.

Hampton
Shane BBQ: Brad Bosse, 5 p.m.

Londonderry
Stumble Inn: Lewis Goodwin, 7 p.m.

Manchester
Fratello's: Doug Thompson, 5:30 p.m.

Merrimack
Homestead: Phil Jakes, 5:30 p.m.

Nashua
Fratello's: Austin McCarthy, 5:30 p.m.

Newmarket
Stone Church: Dave Ogden, 6 p.m.

Portsmouth
The Goat: Isaiah Bennett, 9 p.m.

Seabrook
Red's: Max Sullivan, 7 p.m.

Music plays on

These listings for live music are compiled from press releases, restaurants' websites and social media and artists' websites and social media. Call the venue to check on special rules and reservation instructions — and you may want to double check before you head out for the evening, as cancellations for weather or virus concerns are not uncommon. Get your gigs listed by sending information to music@hippopress.com.

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1999 Honda Civic 2HGEJ6679XH594041
2015 Dodge Journey 3C4PDDGG5FT725473
2001 Mercedes E320 WDBJF82J11X059444
2019 Chevy Sonic 1G1JF5S85K4126440

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Concerts

Note: Some venues have canceled their slate of upcoming performances through the end of 2020 but still have early 2021 events listed on their websites with tickets for sale. Though schedules for the early part of next year are likely to change, we have included events where tickets are still on sale. See venues for safety procedures, ticket information and information about rescheduled shows.

Venues

Dana Center
Saint Anselm College
100 Saint Anselm Drive, Manchester, anselm.edu

The Flying Monkey

39 Main St., Plymouth
536-2551, flyingmonkeynh.com

Palace Theatre

80 Hanover St., Manchester
668-5588, palacetheatre.org

COMEDY THIS WEEK AND BEYOND

Note: Some venues have canceled their slate of upcoming performances through the end of 2020 but still have early 2021 events listed on their websites with tickets for sale. Though schedules for the early part of next year are likely to change, we have included events where tickets are still on sale. See venues for safety procedures, ticket information and information about rescheduled shows.

Venues

Capitol Center for the Arts
44 S. Main St., Concord
225-1111, ccanh.com

Film

Movie screenings, movie-themed happenings & virtual events

Bank of NH Stage in Concord

16 S. Main St., Concord
225-1111, banknhstage.com

Capitol Center for the Arts

44 S. Main St., Concord
225-1111, ccanh.com

Chunky's Cinema Pub

707 Huse Road, Manchester; 151 Coliseum Ave., Nashua; 150 Bridge St., Pelham, chunkys.com

Red River Theatres

11 S. Main St., Concord
224-4600, redrivertheatres.org

Wilton Town Hall Theatre

40 Main St., Wilton
wiltontownhalltheatre.com, 654-3456

Stone Church

5 Granite St., Newmarket
659-7700, stonechurchrocks.com

The Strand

20 Third St., Dover
343-1899, thestranddover.com

Shows

- **Consider the Source** Thursday, Dec. 31, 8 & 9 p.m., Stone Church
- **George Barber & Derek Fimble**, Saturday, Jan. 2, at 7 p.m., Stone Church
- **A Natural Woman (A Carol King Tribute)** Friday, Jan. 8, 7 p.m., virtual concert via Palace Theatre
- **SOUP (featuring members of Slack Tide and Clandestine)** Friday, Jan. 8, 8 p.m., Stone Church
- **Dave Gerard & Tim Theriault** Saturday, Jan. 9, 7 p.m., Stone Church
- **Jeff Daniels with music from his album *Alive and Well Enough*** Tuesday, Jan. 12, 8 p.m., live streamed acoustic concert via Palace

Chunky's

707 Huse Road, Manchester; 151 Coliseum Ave., Nashua; 150 Bridge St., Pelham, chunkys.com

Palace Theatre

80 Hanover St., Manchester, 668-5588, palacetheatre.org

The Strand

20 Third St., Dover
343-1899, thestranddover.com

Shows

- **Bob Marley** Flying Monkey, Thursday, Dec. 31, 5:30 & 8:30 p.m.
- **Bob Marley New Year's Eve Streaming Event** on Thursday, Dec. 31, 8 p.m., livestreamed via Cap Center or Palace
- **New Year's Eve Live Comedy with Drew Dunn, Jody Sloane and Paul Landwehr** Chunky's Manchester, Thursday, Dec. 31, 8 p.m. and 10 p.m.
- **New Year's Eve Dueling Pianos Party** Thursday, Dec. 31, 10 p.m., Chunky's Manchester
- **New Year's Eve Live Comedy with Kyle Crawford, Matt Berry and Tim McKeever** Chunky's Nashua, Thursday, Dec. 31, 8 p.m.
- **New Year's Eve Live Comedy with Tim Colton, Amy Tee and Jason Merrill** Chunky's

Shows

- **Red River Virtual Cinema** Red River Theatres is currently offering indie, foreign language and documentary films via a virtual cinema experience. See the ever-changing lineup on the website.
- **Bob Marley New Year's Eve Streaming Event** on Thursday, Dec. 31, 8 p.m., livestreamed via Cap Center. Tickets cost \$25 plus a \$4.50 fee.
- **Lucinda Williams in studio concert series** livestreamed event offered by the Capitol Center for the Arts. Tickets start at \$20 per event. The last show is "It's Only Rock and Roll: Tribute to the Rolling Stones" on Thursday, Dec. 31, at 8 p.m.
- **Theater Candy Bingo** at Chunky's in Manchester on Friday, Jan. 1, at 6 p.m.; Saturday, Jan. 2, at 6 p.m. at Chunky's in Nashua, and Sunday, Jan. 3, at 6 p.m. at Chunky's in Pelham. Admission costs \$4.99 per person.

Brooks Play Brooks (Garth Brooks tribute)

- Friday, Jan. 15, 7 p.m., virtual concert via Palace Theatre
- **Wood & Bone** Friday, Jan. 15, 7 p.m., Stone Church
- **A Night of JGB & The Dead** Saturday, Jan. 16, at 5 p.m. & 9 p.m., Stone Church
- **The All New Piano Men (hits from Stevie Wonder, Billy Joel, Elton John, Barry Manilow, Freddy Mercury & more)** Friday, Jan. 22, 7 p.m., virtual via Palace Theatre
- **Brian O'Connell Fellowship** Saturday, Jan. 23, at 8 p.m., Stone Church
- **Mairead Nesbitt** Saturday, Jan. 30, 7:30 p.m., Dana Center
- **Dueling Pianos** Saturday, Jan. 30, 8 p.m., The Strand
- **Croce Plays Croce (A.J. Croce performs the music of Jim Croce and more)** Thursday, Feb. 11, at 7:30 p.m., Flying Monkey
- **Phil Vassar** Friday, Feb. 19, at 7:30 p.m., Flying Monkey

COMEDY THIS WEEK AND BEYOND

- 31, 8 p.m., Pelham, Thursday, Dec. 31, 8 p.m.
- **Kyle Crawford** Chunky's Manchester, Saturday, Jan. 2, 8 p.m.
- **Steve Scarfo** Chunky's Manchester, Friday, Jan. 8, and Saturday, Jan. 9, at 8 p.m.
- **Brian Glowacki** Chunky's in Manchester, Friday, Jan. 15, at 8 p.m. and Chunky's in Nashua, Saturday, Jan. 16, 8 p.m.
- **Brian Beaudoin** Chunky's in Manchester, Friday, Jan. 22, 8 p.m. and Chunky's in Nashua on Saturday, Jan. 23, 8 p.m.
- **Comedy Nights (Best of Boston)** The Strand, Saturday, Feb. 13, 8 p.m.

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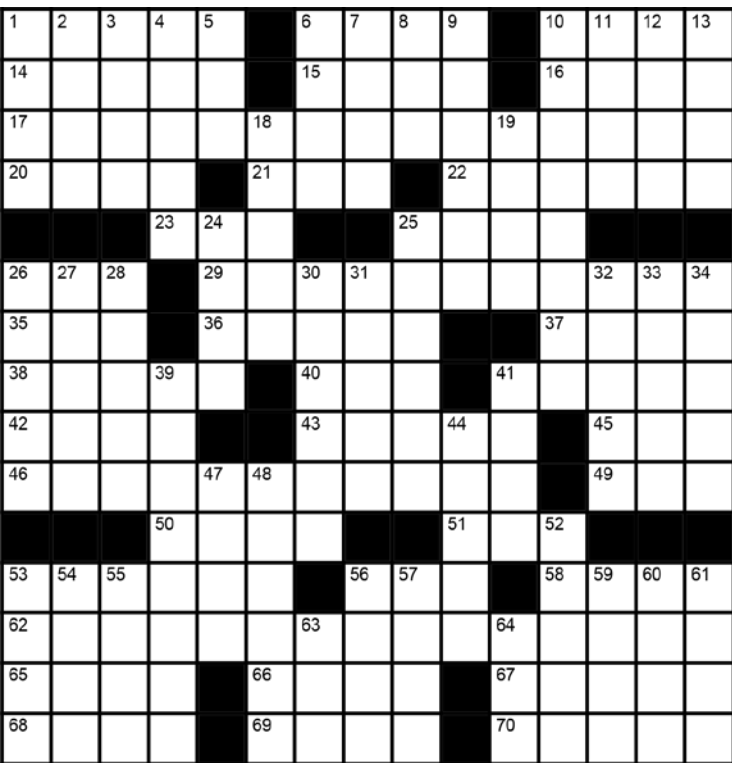
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WE'RE ALL STARS HERE



Across

- 1. Yo-Yo Ma's instrument also used in ELO
- 6. Travis/Jones '___ Ole Country Boys' (1,3)
- 10. Can't put on show w/out roadies, aka these guys
- 14. Willie Nelson 'On The Road ___'
- 15. Reaganomics song about singer Hendryx?
- 16. Ministry song about volcanic hot rock, perhaps
- 17. '76 'Calling Dr. Love' Kiss album (4,3,4,4)
- 20. Tracy Chapman "Maybe when and if ___ you again" (1,3)
- 21. Like sought-after stage "contact" from the star
- 22. Not the winners of band contests
- 23. 'Leader Of The Band' Folgelberg
- 25. '04 Gavin DeGraw hit 'I Don't Want ___' (2,2)
- 26. Bruno Mars smash 'When I ___ Your Man'
- 29. will.i.am told us to '___ Stars' w/historic broadcast from Mars (5,3,3)
- 35. Irish band that smokes then flicks it?
- 36. Mother Love Bone's 'Dancer' had this girl's name
- 37. Metallica 'Better ___ You'
- 38. '91 Simply Red album you see when knocked out by a punch?
- 40. UK studio for live transmission
- 41. 'Give Me Just A Little More Time' Chairmen Of The ___
- 42. Madonna "When you call my __, it's like a little prayer"
- 43. Mika song you tape over previous song?
- 45. Green Day album after ¡Uno! and ¡Dos!
- 46. Film composer/Yes '90125' guitarist (6,5)
- 49. 'Shine On You Crazy Diamond' inspiration Barrett
- 50. Sought-after barroom sign when bad band plays

- 51. AC/DC "Shake a __, get stuck in"
- 53. Sound investment?
- 56. 'First Issue' John Lydon/Johnny Rotten band (abbr)
- 58. Jill Scott "I can't even think at night, ___ dream about is making love" (3,1)
- 62. '09 worldwide Michael Bublé hit (6,3,3,3)
- 65. Early MTV VJ Hunter
- 66. 'Walking Distance' Robert ___ Keen
- 67. Arctic hut Karen O sings of on

- 'Where The Wild Things Are'
- 68. Al Green 'How Can You ___ A Broken Heart'
- 69. Cylinder of tape
- 70. 'How Do I Live' country singer Rimes

Down

- 1. Swedish electronic music producer/DJ Lekebusch
- 2. They inflate on prima donna stars
- 3. Shoestring-type material wardrobe uses
- 4. What you did to band page on Facebook
- 5. Tom Petty "Workin' ___ mystery, goin' wherever it leads" (2,1)
- 6. Police guitarist Summers
- 7. '86 Huey Lewis 'Stuck With You' album that means "Watch out!"
- 8. Producer/artist Brian that worked w/ Slowdive
- 9. Course Of Nature got put on the '___ Shame' (4,2)
- 10. Indigo Girls staple '___ Fine' (6,2)
- 11. Buddy Holly was excited and wrote '___ On'
- 12. Def Leppard 'Have You ___ Needed Someone So Bad'
- 13. Band battles can be all out these
- 18. 'Buffalo Stance' Cherry
- 19. 'Me And You And A Dog Named Boo' guy
- 24. Career's popular and irrelevant times are rainbows or these
- 25. Las Vegas 'Whisper War' band (3,3)
- 26. They Might Be Giants 'If I ___ Shy'
- 27. 'Swinging On ___' Frank Sinatra (1,4)
- 28. '92 Lemonheads album 'It's A ___ About Ray'
- 30. 'It Never Rains In Southern California' Hammond

WORD ★ Roundup™

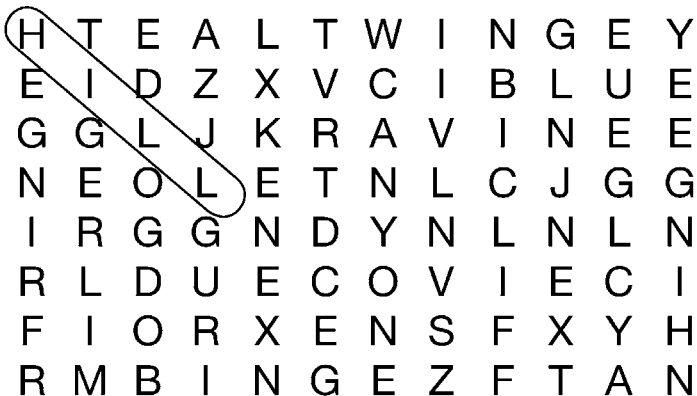
by David L. Hoyt & Jeff Knurek

Find and Circle...

- Seven land formations □□□□□□
- Five words rhyming with "cringe" □□□□□
- Five colors □□□□□
- Siberian or Bengal _____
- Gas in many Vegas lights

Last Week's Answers: SNAKE MOOSE MOUSE HORSE MOLE MULE TOAD FROG DEER BEAR / CABLE FABLE GABLE TABLE / BALM CALM PALM FILM / SPLASH / TREAT

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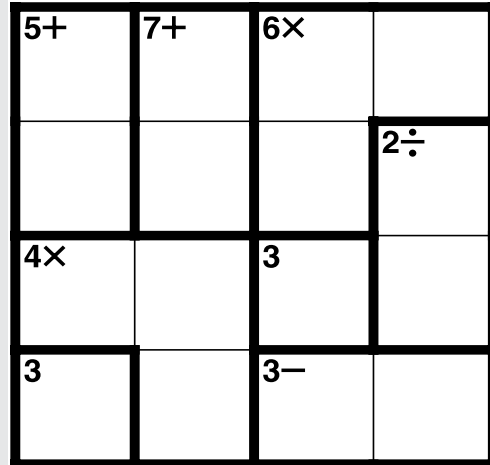
- 31. 'Good Girls Go Bad' ___ Starship
- 32. Elvis "Well ___ all right mama"
- 33. 70s 'Taxi' Chapin
- 34. The Drums told us how it started then 'How It ___'
- 39. The ___ Horton Heat
- 41. Drifters/solo soul singer ___ King (3,1)
- 44. Paul McCartney '___ Love Songs'
- 47. Grant Lee Buffalo "Even the ___ ramming their heads on wood rails"
- 48. This type of guy will smash windows when there's a no-show
- 52. Casey Donahew shoots a 'Twelve' ___ one
- 53. 'Wooly Bully' Sam The ___
- 54. Primos might tell one 'From The Punchbowl'
- 55. Jethro Tull keyboardist John Avont Galle Cleveland garage band ___ Ubu
- 57. Concrete Blonde '___ Chew You Up & Spit You Out'
- 59. Oasis 'Don't Believe The Truth' single
- 60. 'On Call' Kings Of ___
- 61. '80 Genesis hit 'Turn ___ ___ Again' (2,2)
- 63. Maggie's last name, to The Beatles
- 64. What Soul Asylum's 'Black Gold' is about, perhaps

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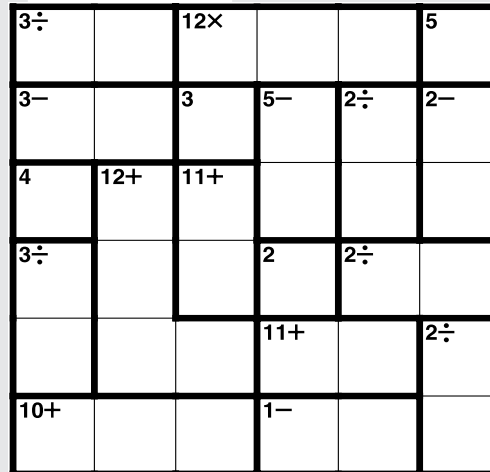
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CHALLENGING



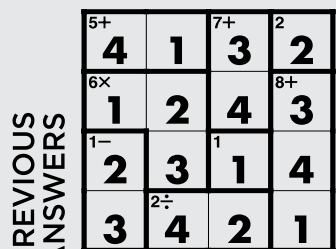
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RULES

- 1 Each row and each column must contain the numbers 1 through 4 (easy) or 1 through 6 (challenging) without repeating.
- 2 The numbers within the heavily

outlined boxes, called cages, must combine using the given operation (in any order) to produce the target numbers in the top-left corners.

- 3 Freebies: Fill in single-box cages with the number in the top-left corner.



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"I'm Gonna Have Some Words" — themeless time again!

Across

- 1 Underscores?
- 6 Belt holders near belts?
- 15 Establish by law
- 16 Subject of a constitutional clause
- 17 Culminated in
- 18 Porcelain, when around electricity
- 19 "Must have been ___ news day"
- 20 Fall apart
- 21 Expand
- 22 Semiconductor classification whose first letter stands for "negative"

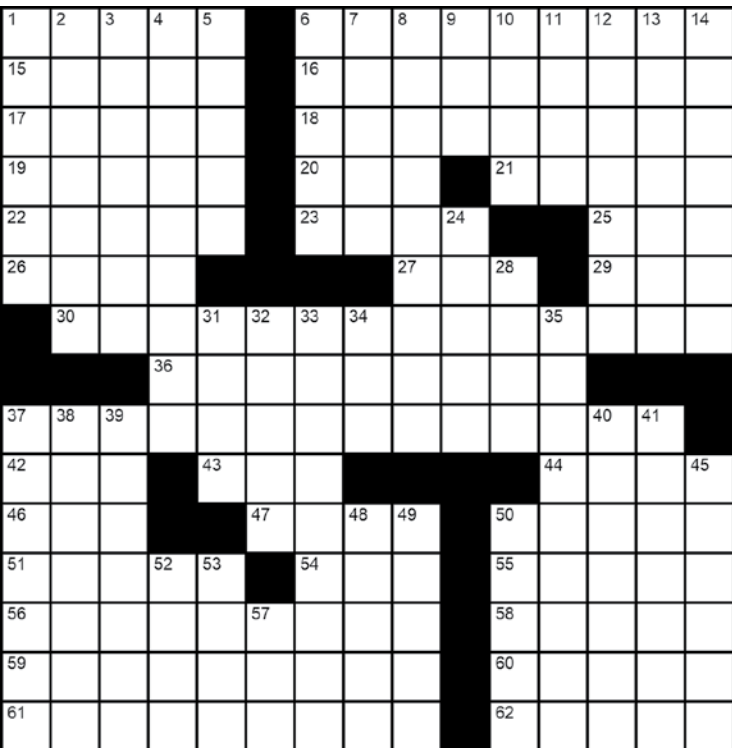
- 23 "Remove plastic," e.g.
- 25 Wagering venue, for short
- 26 ___ Webster (Twain's "celebrated jumping frog")
- 27 BBC's Italian counterpart
- 29 Like some hours
- 30 Salty snack from an air fryer, maybe
- 36 Popeye, as the theme song goes
- 37 Passive-aggressive message header implying you should've read
- 42 Projectile at some bars
- 43 Formula One racer Vettel, to fans

- 44 Aberdeen resident
- 46 Spinning stat
- 47 Spoil, with "on"
- 50 Search engine input
- 51 Slacker's sin
- 54 Edge
- 55 Store-hours word
- 56 Restoration site of 2019
- 58 Stops on ___
- 59 Kind of phenomenon that explains why Ouija board planchettes move
- 60 1996 presidential candidate Alexander
- 61 Edge
- 62 Powers portrayer

- 8 Medium that was often psychedelic in the 1960s
- 9 Reason for a winter shot
- 10 Former Brazilian president ___ da Silva
- 11 "Diary of ___ Black Woman" (2005 film)
- 12 Put in writing
- 13 Tangled
- 14 Rave flashers
- 24 ___ d'Or (prize at Cannes)
- 28 Mosque leader
- 31 "The cow ___ [mooooo]" (pull-string toy output)
- 32 Like some bathrooms
- 33 Full of detail
- 34 "¿Por qué no los ___?"
- 35 When Easter falls
- 37 It's "like a carrot doused in perfume," according to cookscountry.com
- 38 Go boom
- 39 More out-of-the-way
- 40 Hockey player's concern

- 41 Producers of "Dallas," "Falcon Crest," and "Knots Landing"
- 45 1840s First Family
- 48 East ___ (nation since 2002)
- 49 Nail file material
- 50 Feeling of uneasiness
- 52 Enterprise counselor Deanna
- 53 Natural rope fiber
- 57 Exclamation often prompted by Bart Simpson

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Down

- 1 College founder Stanford
- 2 It's the least you can rate
- 3 Phrase said with a downcast look
- 4 "Ghostbusters" stuff
- 5 Author Harriet Beecher ___
- 6 Beneficiaries of some trust funds
- 7 "___ telling anyone"

R&R answer from pg 35 of 12/24



Jonesin' answer from pg 36 of 12/24



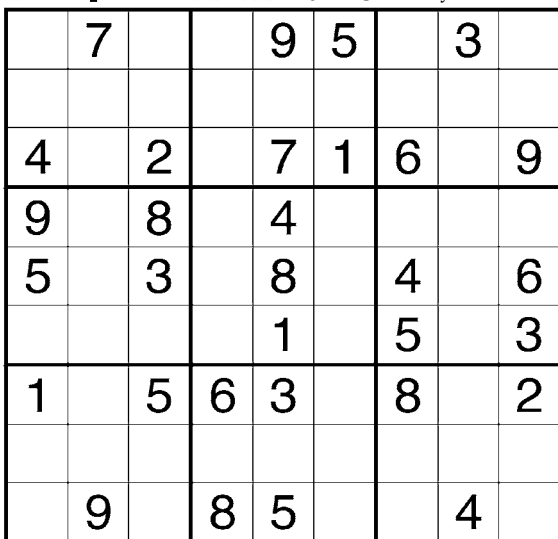
Jonesin' Classic answer from pg 38 of 12/24



NITE SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9. See last week's puzzle answers on pg xx.

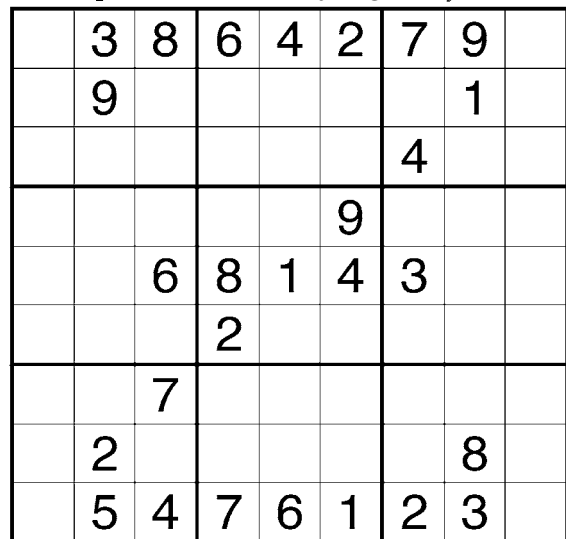
Conceptis Sudoku Puzzle A By Dave Green



Difficulty Level ★

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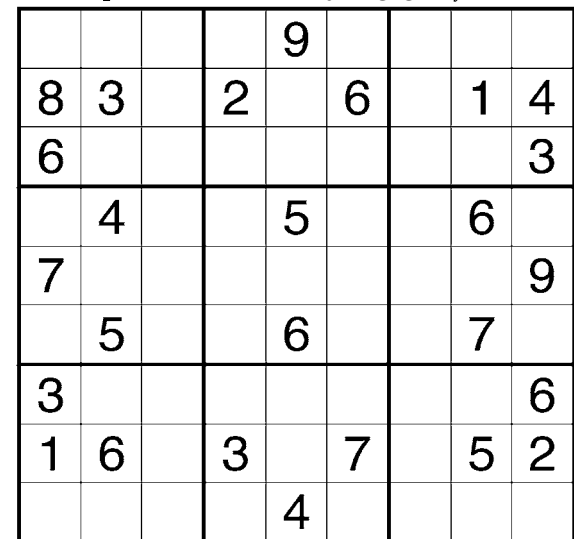
Conceptis Sudoku Puzzle B By Dave Green



Difficulty Level ★★★

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Conceptis Sudoku Puzzle C By Dave Green



Difficulty Level ★★★★★

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All quotes are from *Mars: Our Mysterious Neighbor*, by Isaac Asimov, born Jan. 2, 1920.

Capricorn (Dec. 22 – Jan. 19) *The Mariner 4 television ... camera took pictures as it passed Mars, stored them on tape, and beamed them back to Earth. Each picture took about eight hours to play back, or reconstruct, from the radio transmission. No whining about your slow YouTube.*

Aquarius (Jan. 20 – Feb. 18) *We can imagine cities built underground on Mars, or perhaps domed cities on the surface. Imagination rules the day.*

Pisces (Feb. 19 – March 20) *Night after night in 1877, he looked through his telescope at the space near Mars and could find nothing. Finally, he made up his mind that it was no use. ... His wife said, 'Try it one more night.' He did, and discovered the satellites. And now she has a crater on Phobos named after her.*

Aries (March 21 – April 19) *Mars' surface proved to be much more interesting than that of the Moon. Look beyond the surface.*

Taurus (April 20 – May 20) *Phobos travels around Mars in 7.65 hours! It travels about Mars faster than Mars turns on its axis! Phobos overtakes Mars, so if you were standing on Mars' surface, you would see Phobos rise in the west, hurry across the sky, and set in the east. You are not in a race to see who can spin the fastest.*

Gemini (May 21 – June 20) *A beautiful watchtower formation at Kasei Vallis, Mars.*

This might make a two-year trip to Mars worthwhile to someone who really loves to travel. How about you?

A small getaway could be nice but you don't have to go that far. Maybe from the kitchen to the family room?

Cancer (June 21 – July 22) *With an axial tilt similar to Earth's and a day that is virtually the same length as ours, Mars has the same type of seasons as Earth. Of course, Mars is much farther from the Sun than Earth is, so Mars has a longer 'year' than we do. Winter is winter — make the most of it!*

Leo (July 23 – Aug. 22) *Let's leave Earth, heading away from the Sun. Mars is the first planet we come to. What do we know about our neighbor Mars? Get to know your neighbors.*

Virgo (Aug. 23 – Sept. 22) *Earth is not the only place in the Solar system where the weather can act up! Keep an ice scraper in the car.*

Libra (Sept. 23 – Oct. 22) *Think of how much we'd still be wondering about Mars if not for fancy probes like Mariner and Viking. There's plenty to wonder about.*

Scorpio (Oct. 23 – Nov. 21) *At 86,592 feet (26,400 km), Olympus Mons is easily taller than any of Earth's peaks. When on Mars, use Martian reference points.*

Sagittarius (Nov. 22 – Dec. 21) *After years of thinking about the possibility of life on Mars, scientists know it's not likely. Many people were relieved, but others were disappointed. How do you feel about it? Would you have liked to meet Martians? Would they have liked to meet you?*

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7 LITTLE WORDS

Find the 7 words to match the 7 clues. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in each solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.

CLUES	SOLUTIONS
1 in an unpretentious way (9)	_____
2 without sufficient attention (10)	_____
3 profusely (9)	_____
4 in a funny way (10)	_____
5 with courage (10)	_____
6 exuberantly (8)	_____
7 without chatter (10)	_____

TLES

ELE

RLES

CAR

SLY

SSLY

USLY

ORO

OU

DLES

AR

COPI

FEA

USLY

HUM

SLY

WOR

SLY

SLY

JOYO

Last Week's Answers: 1. BACKSTAB 2. BENNUMB 3. BLURB 4. BREADCRUMB 5. BAFFLEGAB 6. BATHTUB 7. BEACHCOMB

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A 2020 metaphor

An Amazon delivery driver in Nuthall, Nottingham, England, is out of a job after Sharon Smith, 53, discovered him defecating in her back garden in late July. Smith said she saw the man run toward her garden and went to investigate. "I asked what the heck he was doing," Smith told Metro News, "and he just remained poeing whilst asking me what my problem was -- the cheek of it." The driver told police he wasn't feeling well and was desperate, and he didn't realize he was in a private garden. Smith agreed to not press charges as long as he cleaned up the mess and his employer was informed; Amazon promised a gift voucher as a goodwill gesture.

Revenge

An unnamed man in Cairns, North Queensland, Australia, posted notices offering a \$100 prize to the person able to best impersonate Chewbacca from "Star Wars," but the contest turned out to be a hoax designed to harass the woman who dumped him. The posters listed the woman's phone number and invited contestants to call and deliver their best Chewbacca roar. The woman, identified only as Jessica, told 9News: "I'm getting phone calls at really strange hours of the night. ... I thought it was quite funny, actually, a good joke." However, she drew the line when the ex abandoned his car, without tires, in the driveway of her home, blocking her in. "The police ... are going to do something about it," she said.

Frontiers of farming

Cockroach farms are not new in China, where the bugs have long been used in Chinese medicine, but a new facility near the eastern city of Jinan is gaining attention as a way to deal with food waste while producing organic protein supplements for animal feeds. In four industrial-sized hangars, Australia's ABC News reported, rows of shelves are filled with food waste collected from restaurants through an elaborate system of pipes. A moat filled with roach-eating fish surrounds each building to keep the roaches from escaping. "In total there are 1 billion cockroaches," farm manager Yin Diansong said. "Every day they can eat 50 tonnes of kitchen waste." Said project director Li Yanrong, "If we can farm cockroaches on a large scale, we can provide protein that benefits the entire ecological cycle."

Scheme

Residents in the upscale neighborhoods of Woodway and Edmonds, Washington, have been visited recently by people carrying official-looking documents who knock on doors, tell homeowners they own the property and "they're there to repossess the home and want the people to vacate the premises," Edmonds police Sgt. Josh McClure told KIRO. The group identifies itself as Moorish Sovereign Citizens, McClure said, who "believe that they own all of the land between Alaska and Argentina." So far, the people have cooperated with police and left after being told they are trespassing.

Visit newsftheweird.com.

Sudoku Answers from 12/24

Puzzle A pg 34

9	2	1	7	6	3	4	5	8
3	6	8	9	4	5	1	2	7
4	7	5	2	1	8	9	3	6
1	8	6	3	2	9	7	4	5
2	3	4	5	7	1	8	6	9
7	5	9	6	8	4	3	1	2
8	4	2	1	9	6	5	7	3
6	1	3	8	5	7	2	9	4
5	9	7	4	3	2	6	8	1

Difficulty Level ★★★ 11/37

Puzzle B pg 34

7	2	6	3	9	8	4	5	1
5	4	3	6	1	7	2	9	8
8	1	9	2	5	4	7	6	3
4	9	1	5	7	6	3	8	2
2	7	5	1	8	3	6	4	9
6	3	8	4	2	9	1	7	5
3	8	4	9	6	2	5	1	7
1	6	7	8	3	5	9	2	4
9	5	2	7	4	1	8	3	6

Difficulty Level ★★★ 11/14

Puzzle C pg 34

8	2	3	1	9	6	4	5	7
6	5	1	7	2	4	8	9	3
4	9	7	8	5	3	2	1	6
9	4	8	2	6	1	3	7	5
1	7	2	5	3	8	9	6	4
5	3	6	4	7	9	1	8	2
3	1	4	6	8	5	7	2	9
7	6	9	3	1	2	5	4	8
2	8	5	9	4	7	6	3	1

Difficulty Level ★★★ 11/15

Puzzle D pg 36

5	1	7	9	2	8	6	4	3
9	4	6	7	1	3	8	5	2
3	8	2	5	6	4	1	9	7
1	9	8	3	4	7	5	2	6
4	7	5	2	8	6	9	3	1
2	6	3	1	5	9	4	7	8
6	5	1	4	3	2	7	8	9
8	2	9	6	7	5	3	1	4
7	3	4	8	9	1	2	6	5

Difficulty Level ★ 12/21

Puzzle E pg 36

4	9	5	7	8	1	3	2	6
7	8	2	3	5	6	4	1	9
3	6	1	9	2	4	5	8	7
6	4	7	2	9	5	8	3	1
8	2	9	4	1	3	7	6	5
5	1	3	6	7	8	9	4	2
1	3	4	5	6	7	2	9	8
2	5	6	8	3	9	1	7	4
9	7	8	1	4	2	6	5	3

Difficulty Level ★★★ 12/23

Puzzle F pg 36

2	7	8	9	5	3	4	1	6
6	5	4	7	1	2	9	8	3
3	9	1	4	8	6	2	7	5
4	8	2	5	6	7	3	9	1
7	6	9	1	3	4	8	5	2
1	3	5	8	2	9	6	4	7
8	2	7	3	4	1	5	6	9
5	1	3	6	9	8	7	2	4
9	4	6	2	7	5	1	3	8

Difficulty Level ★★★ 12/25

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- Treatment of Stress Incontinence
- Body Contouring
- Skin Tightening
- IV Infusions
- Bio-Identical Hormone Replacement
- Anti-Aging Peptide Therapy
- Advanced Platelet Rich Plasma Procedures
- Medical Microneedling
- Cellulite Removal/ Cellfina
- Sun Damage and Rosacea Management
- Tattoo Removal
- Laser Assisted Liposuction
- Medical Grade Skin Care
- Chemical Peels
- Hydrafacial MD Elite



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