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DECEMBER 2020

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LOCAL INTEREST CALENDAR HEALTH FINANCE HOME & GARDEN ENTERTAINMENT THEATRE TRAVEL DINING FAMILY RETIREMENT LIVING



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From the Publishers

DECEMBER 2020



CUDA posing Santa fashion.

Join us in celebration of the magic, the wonder and the spirit of this glorious Christmas and Holiday Season!

The month, the approaching season brings back the childhood anticipations of magic, gifts, cookies and the mystery of Santa. What a thrill it was to actually believe in the jolly good man and his midnight flight through the stars and down the chimneys. Yes, I wholeheartedly believed and remember standing by the picture window in the living room with my mother after Midnight Mass and watching to see if we could spot his sleigh and reindeer! I wouldn't trade that well-intended illusion for all the figgy pudding (recipe on page 12) in the world. And, maybe, we all could still believe a little bit just for the joy of it!!

It certainly is a different style of celebration this year with social limitations impacting our interactions and cheer-giving. But love conquers all... and so does Christmas. Blessings to all and to all a good read!

LIFE. *Enjoy it!*

Sandy and Tom Draelos

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MILWAUKEE December/Holiday CALENDAR



Dec 12

Outdoor Live Nativity Walk

Divine Redeemer Lutheran Church & School
31385 Hill Rd (hwy 83) Hartland
5-7pm (FREE tickets required). Please bring a non-perishable food donation!

Jesus is the reason for the season! This year at Divine Redeemer Lutheran Church & School, we are excited to host a Live Outdoor Nativity Walkthrough Event including live animals and actors, a 1/4 mile lighted trail, free hot chocolate and more. Free tickets are available every 15 minutes from 5-7pm to encourage spacing/distancing. Here is what you need to know: Tickets are for various timeslots - you need a ticket to attend and should come at your timeslot.

Tickets are 1 per family or group (no matter group size). If you can no longer attend, please release your ticket so others can come. The event will offer a 1/4 mile walk through 6 different stations with storyboards telling the Nativity story from Luke 2. At the end families will receive a candy cane and we will take any prayer requests so that we can pray for you and your families! 100% of donations will go to support hunger needs in our community. FREE tickets required at www.bit.ly/3mgPAuA

December 12

The Canadian Pacific Holiday Train

Coming to Wisconsin, Virtually Due to COVID-19, the Canadian Pacific Holiday Train will be virtual for the 2020 season. Watch the live premiere concert 'Holiday Train at Home' on CP's Facebook page on December 12 at 6pm, and if you can, please give a little bit to support those in need! The CP Holiday Train is hosting a virtual concert and will donate to food banks in communities along its network. Serena Ryder and The Trews will headline and will also feature performances by JoJo Mason, Logan Staats and Kelly Prescott

Now thru - December 20

A Fireside Christmas In Concert

Fireside Dinner Theatre

A live concert of Christmas music - secular and sacred - performed by a quartet of The Fireside's great singers. Popular hits, traditional favorites, inspiring carols and hymns, and tons of Christmas cheer. Limited seating to allow for social distancing

Now thru - December 31

Crossing Over 2020

(Virtual Exhibition)

UWM Union Art Gallery

The Crossing Over exhibition showcases work created by undergraduate students of the UWM Peck School of the Arts department of Art and Design who have received a scholarship and/or fellowship award in 2020. This exciting annual event highlights the exceptional artwork produced by these promising emerging artists in a wide range of mediums and unpredictable themes.

Please join the Union Art Gallery in celebrating these outstanding UWM artists. Free virtual admission, just visit uwm.edu/studentinvolvement/event/crossing-over-2020-virtual-exhibition

Now thru - Dec 31

Wisconsin Christmas Carnival of Lights

Jellystone Park Camp-Resort in Caledonia
One of Wisconsin's biggest, brightest, & most dazzling holiday lights display. Over 2 million lights on a 1.6 mile path that dance along to the music with synchronized lights, from the comfort of your own vehicle! For a unique experience, check out our giant Sleigh Ride or the Golf Cart Holiday Train to view the show in open air. Visit Santa's Workshop at the end of the show for a hot beverage & a photo with Santa. Be sure to browse our gift shop for fun and unique holiday gifts. Per Car (up to 8 people): \$25 Large Passenger Van, Senior Home Mini Bus: \$35

Now thru - Jan 3

Racine County Zoo

2131 N. Main Street, Racine

An illuminated drive-through holiday adventure for the season. Enchanting light displays of delightfully decorated trees, charming characters, a 96 ft. tunnel with an incredible show of dynamic designs, and more. \$5 per person

Now thru - January 2

Country Christmas

The Ingleside Hotel

2810 Golf Rd, Pewaukee

Celebrating the 25th year as one of Wisconsin's largest and most spectacular drive-through holiday lights events. As part of admission to Country Christmas, you can experience the Country Christmas Trail, Christmas Village, and the Streets of Bethlehem. \$20 carload or minivan

Now thru - January 2

Mitchell Park Domes Holiday Show

Poinsettia Promenade

Poinsettias like you've never seen before! Showcased alongside the classic red and popular white are rare varieties in golds and pinks as well as specialty poinsettias. New reservation system and one-way routes with physical distancing. Your reservation holds your timeslot, and when you arrive, you check in and pay admissions for your group. Wearing face masks is REQUIRED

Now thru - January 3

Boerner Botanical Gardens

9400 Boerner Dr, Hales Corners

The drive-through holiday lights display is back for its second year! Enjoy a variety of dramatic lighting techniques and new displays throughout the forests and fields of the Boerner Arboretum and Whitnall Park. The show has been re-imagined by theatrical lighting designer "Laser Bob" Mullins and his team

Now thru - January 3

Holiday Fantasy In Lights at Olin Park, 1156 Olin-Turville Court, Madison

4:30pm-10pm

Annual event featuring dazzling lights and music. Admission is free, donations appreciated. Fifty plus lighted displays. A Covid safe drive thru event

December 10-24

Virtual - Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol Milwaukee Repertory Theater at - Virtual 45th Anniversary Production

The fully realized production of "Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol" starring Lee E. Ernst with an original soundscape by Foley artist Dan Kazemi, is available to stream December 10 - 24, 2020. This intimate tour-de-force performance embodies the very heart of the beloved holiday classic celebrating love, hope and redemption. Visit www.MilwaukeeRep.com to purchase a \$20/household ticket and continue Milwaukee's favorite holiday tradition from the comfort of your own home

January 1

Polar Plunge

Noon

Bradford Beach

2400 N. Lincoln Memorial Drive

Get a literal running start to your New Year as you head into the chilly waters of Lake Michigan for the Polar Plunge. The event is a free non sponsored event, open to the public and does not require registration. If you are driving to the event, you'll want to make sure to give yourself plenty of time, as parking will be limited. This is a Milwaukee tradition made to share with friends and family. Most importantly make sure to follow all safety precautions and have someone help you get warmed up and safe after you're out of the water



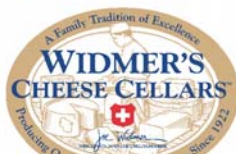
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'Tis the season to **SPEND MONEY**. Now more than ever is the time to consider feeding our local economy the benefits of consumption and buying from our very own neighborhood of small businesses.

Buy Local for the Holidays (and every day!)



VISIT: www.localmke.com/shop

There are many well-documented benefits to our communities and to each of us to choosing local, independently owned businesses. We realize it is not always possible to buy what you need locally and so we merely ask you to *think local first!* **Top ten reason to buy local:**

1) Buy Local -- Support yourself: Several studies have shown that when you buy from an independent, locally owned business, rather than a nationally owned businesses, significantly more of your money is used to make purchases from other local businesses, service providers and farms -- continuing to strengthen the economic base of the community.

Support community groups: Non-profit organizations receive an average 250% more support from smaller business owners than they do from large businesses.

Keep our community unique: Where we shop, where we eat and have fun -- all of it makes our community home. Our one-of-a-kind businesses are an integral part of the distinctive character of this place. Our tourism businesses also benefit.

Reduce environmental impact: Locally owned businesses can make more local purchases requiring less transportation and generally set up shop in town or city centers as opposed to developing on the fringe. This generally means contributing less to sprawl, congestion, and habitat loss.

Create more good jobs: Small local businesses are the largest employer nationally and provide the most jobs to residents.

Get better service: Local businesses often hire people with a better understanding of the products they are selling and take more time to get to know customers.

Invest in community: Local businesses are owned by people who live in this community, are less likely to leave, and are more invested in the community's future.

Put your taxes to good use: Local businesses in town centers require comparatively little infrastructure investment and make more efficient use of public services as compared to nationally owned stores entering the community.

Buy what you want, not what someone wants you to buy: A marketplace of tens of thousands of small businesses is the best way to ensure innovation and low prices over the long-term. A multitude of small businesses, each selecting products based not on a national sales plan but on their own interests and the needs of their local customers, guarantees a much broader range of product choices.

Encourage local prosperity: A growing body of economic research shows that in an increasingly homogenized world, entrepreneurs and skilled workers are more likely to invest and settle in communities that preserve their one-of-a-kind businesses and distinctive character.

Sustainableconnections.org
A forum where businesses come together to transform and model a vibrant local economy built on sustainable practices.



Milwaukee Makers Market A "one-stop shop local experience"

Dec 20

Milwaukee Makers Market
Discovery World
10am-4pm

Explore the market, have fun, meet amazing artists and artisans, shop, and support independent maker spirit in Milwaukee. Shop one-of-a-kind, locally-made diverse selection of nearly 40 rotating vendors who offer art prints, paintings, jewelry, plushes, food, clothing and everything in between. The Market is free, but General Admission applies if visiting entire museum.

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Foster Parents Urgently Needed in the Milwaukee County Area

The Myth of Multitasking

The benefits of focusing on one activity at a time

By Christine Kunert, Meditation/Mindfulness Instructor/Spiritual Life Coach

Life coach, Tony Robbins, popularized the quote, "Where focus goes, energy flows." When you are truly present, your focus can only be on one thing at a time, not many, not even two. The term multitasking originated in the computer engineering industry. It refers to the ability of a microprocessor to seemingly process several tasks simultaneously. The operative word in that sentence is "seemingly." The computer seems to be performing more than one task at a time, but it's not. Computer multitasking in single-core microprocessors actually involves time-sharing the processor; only one task can actually be active at a time, but tasks are rotated through many times a second. With multi-core computers, each core can perform a separate task simultaneously. The first published use of the word multitasking appeared in an IBM paper describing the capabilities of the IBM System/360 in 1965. The term multitasking was picked up by the general public, to the point where people are even including it as a skill on their resumes. We are discovering that it is, in fact, not a skill at all but a detriment to cognitive functioning.

Dr. David Frawley, specializing in Vedic sciences, the basis for the yogic traditions, which is wisdom that goes back about 5000 years, says in *Ayurveda and the Mind*, "The most important thing we see about the mind's structure is that the mind is atomic or point-like in nature. This atomic nature of the mind leads to various limitations. We can only focus on one particular object at a time." The operative word here is focus. You may certainly say that you can chew gum and walk, listen to music and dance, stain the siding on your house and talk on the telephone, or (as I saw in the park recently) juggle and jog at the same time. The fact is that your body may be doing two things at the same time; however, the mind is only able to focus on one particular activity at a time.

Dr. Edward Hallowell, a Massachusetts-based psychiatrist who specializes in attention deficit disorder, says that multitasking is the "mythical activity in which people believe they can perform two or more tasks simultaneously." In 2005, research funded by Hewlett-Packard at the University of London reported that "workers distracted by email and phone calls suffer a fall in IQ more than twice that found in marijuana smokers." So, if you attempt to multitask AND smoke pot, you're in big trouble. In 2007 the New York Times reported that multitasking is costing the US economy \$650 billion a year due to lost productivity. The brain loses time because it has to take the time to decide which task to perform.

Multitasking continued on page 15



Give your body the best chance of doing what it was meant to do – fight illness and keep you in good shape

By Norm Hacker

Most of us have grown up with a fairly straightforward system: we live our lives, and if we get sick, we head either to the drug store or doctor, take the medication, and wait for things to improve.

What this has led to is a culture in which we don't really think about what made us sick – we just accept that we are sick and try and figure out how to get better as quickly as possible.

Unfortunately this mindset has not served us well as we are now faced with very high levels of serious diseases that take more than a pill to cure. It's time we take a fresh approach to our health.

It's important to give our bodies the best chance of doing what they were meant to do – fight illness and keep us in good shape. Food plays one of the greatest roles in health. It's unfortunate that we focus more on what foods will stimulate our taste buds than on those that will nourish our bodies. If you can make that mental switch, and adopt simple changes, you'd be surprised at how your food choices will become more responsible.

Take the time to prepare some cut celery, carrots, cucumber, broccoli and nuts as a snack rather than buying candy or chips to fill that mid-meal hunger. Choose water rather than coffee or soda. Read labels so you can avoid chemical sweeteners, artificial colors and products high in fats. Better still, avoid highly processed, packaged foods – perishable food is preferable to food with a shelf life of several years.

Our health vigilance also needs to encompass the chemicals we place on our skin and those we use in our homes. Most of us are familiar with the medical patches that are placed on the skin to help stop smoking or relieve backache. They work because the

skin, our biggest organ, is a great delivery system for the substance impregnated on those patches.

Similarly, the ingredients in shampoo, body products and makeup need to be reviewed. Read their ingredient labels and there's hardly a recognizable word on them. The chemicals they contain penetrate the skin. Even minute doses, when applied often, accumulate over time.

The chemicals sitting in bottles under your sink are dispersed in small amounts around your house on a daily or weekly basis. Some are absorbed by the skin, some are inhaled. There are many alternatives that clean just as well without harsh chemicals. An online search for 'natural body care products' or 'natural cleaning products' will turn up many.

There are simple ways you can manage everyday life on your health. Even a busy person can set aside ten minutes a day for meditation or relaxation. There are many simple techniques that can have a positive effect on stress, from focusing on the breath to color or light visualization exercises. The role of the mind in maintaining good health can never be underestimated – after all, it is the mind that decides what to eat, what products to buy, and how we spend our time and energy.

No matter what state of health you may be in right now, we are all on a healing journey of one type or another. By helping each person do a little better and be a little better, collectively as a people, we all we will do a little better and be a little better.

© 2012 Norm Hacker is the producer of Heal Your Self, a new documentary about taking responsibility for your health. www.healyourself.tv

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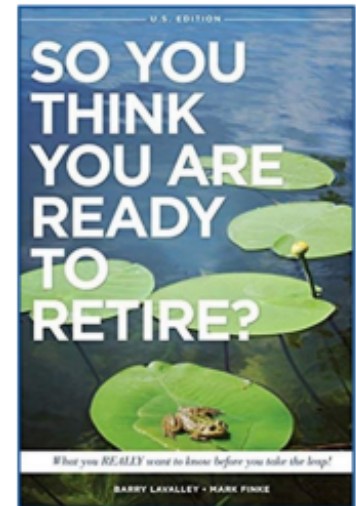
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**Interesting, isn't it, that "take
out" refers to food, romantic
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**If people evolve from monkeys,
why are monkeys still around?**

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Protecting the Non-Digital Generation From Online Holiday Scams



By Adam Jackson/360 Privacy.com

Though they may make jokes or act annoyed, your children and grandchildren do in fact think it's sweet when older generations have a technology mishap such as saying LOL thinking it means lots of love or printing out memes to show them instead of emailing. However, they certainly don't think it's cute when their favorite people who didn't grow up with the same technology get targeted for digital scams. Even if they are on the digital savvy side, it can still happen.

Every year there are scams that specifically get sent to those of certain generations. And as we head into another holiday season, with technology at the forefront for a multitude of reasons, the last thing anyone needs is yet another financial hardship this year.

Anyone can be targeted for online scams, but phishers know that non-digital-natives are easier to sway.

With the 2020 holiday season looking a little different, it's important to be digitally vigilant. There are three core matters that scammers target:

1. Online Shopping

With holiday gatherings being cancelled and limited travel, gift giving is going to look a little different this year. Whether you can't bear to not send grandchildren a little something or you want to send a struggling friend a pick-me-up, you'll most likely be shopping online. The easiest thing to do is ship directly to the recipient to reduce the amount of hands touching the gift. But let's start with the shopping portion.

Look for insecure websites – using a name very similar to a known site is by far the most common way scammers will try to trick users. An example would be a bad actor registering “anazon.com” or “amazon.net” and creating a site that looks similar to the real amazon.com. This tactic is often accompanied by an email campaign that encourages users to visit the fraudulent site.

There are so many scams on the internet that people who are just wading into the world of ecommerce should only use well known and reputable sites. For users that want to support local and small business they can still use sites like Amazon and purchase from a 3rd party local or small business vendor.

The biggest indicators of fraud are typos, broken English, and technical glitches. Reputable sites have teams of proof readers and technical staff that look at everything that goes online. Also, be weary of a website asking for something out of the ordinary. No sites need to know your credit card information before you shop. No reputable ecommerce site needs your bank account information, SSN, or automatic payments if you are buying a product.

2. Donations

Donation scams are not new and are extremely common. It's easy to solicit money from unsuspecting, empathetic people. This time of year, it can become increasingly difficult to spot fake emails and phishing scams. And once you provide a key piece of information, your checking and savings accounts are at an extreme risk.

No reputable charity requires anything more than a credit card to accept a donation. There are several ways to verify that charity is real. The first is to visit the IRS list of tax exempt organizations (<https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/tax-exempt-organization-search>) Charitywatch.org is also a reputable source to find the most efficient charities. (<https://www.charitywatch.org/>)

3. Video Chat

The amount of Facetime and Zooming has already increased exponentially this year. With parents not being able to see their grandchildren in person and grandparents not able to meet their great grand-children or see the joy of their faces in person as they open that special gift, family Facetime options are the next best thing. There has been a major uptick in video chat services that are built to steal people's personal information. Always use reputable video services like Facetime, Zoom, Skype, etc. Facetime is the most secure of the large well-known products, but do not be scared to use other reputable services.

Adam Jackson spent 10 years in the Army as an Infantryman and Green Beret. Upon concluding his service he began helping high profile individuals and celebrities secure their homes, tours, and personal information before founding 360 Privacy.

I received another letter from some lawyer yesterday. It had “Final Notice” written on the envelope. Good. They won't be bothering me anymore.

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Beware of one of the latest Medicare Scams: Plastic Medicare Cards

By Ingrid Kunder, Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol Project Manager

Many Wisconsin Medicare beneficiaries have called our toll-free Helpline in the last several weeks to ask if Medicare is issuing new, plastic Medicare cards. Beneficiaries are receiving calls asking them if they have received their new plastic card from Medicare, and if not, the caller is more than happy to help them get that card.

Here's the Scoop: Medicare is NOT issuing plastic Medicare cards to replace your paper card. If you receive this call, simply hang up, as the caller is trying to get your information to scam you. It's unfortunate, but it's true.

The caller, upon learning that you have not received your plastic Medicare card, will offer to help you by asking to "verify" your Medicare number. This is the catch; they are

trying to get your Medicare number so that they can use it to submit a fraudulent claim to Medicare for payment. Beneficiaries have reported that once they "verify" their Medicare number, they are often transferred to another person who is then talking to them about back pain and back braces. This can lead to the receipt of unwanted braces on the beneficiary's doorstep and thousands of dollars of fraudulent claims to Medicare for the unwanted and unneeded braces.

You can protect yourself from this entire situation by simply hanging up the phone if you get this type of call. And share this information with your friends and family to help protect them as well. And remember, we strongly discourage you from sharing any personal information over the phone with someone unknown to you or calling you unexpectedly. Simply hang up!

If you have received this type of call and did share your Medicare number, please call us so that we can talk about next steps and things for you to be on the lookout for. Don't be embarrassed that it happened to you, we make no judgements and realize that the fraudsters are very convincing and good at what they do. It's important to report these things and make sure that your Medicare number is protected.

Please know that the Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol is here to help if you have been receiving these calls or if you shared your Medicare number with someone over the phone. Our toll-free Helpline number is:

(888) 818-2611.



**Toll-free Helpline:
888-818-2611**

Fax: 866-813-0974 | Email: smp-wi@gwaar.org

gwaar.org/senior-medicare-patrol

WisconsinSeniorMedicarePatrol

Senior Medicare Patrols (SMPs) empower and assist Medicare beneficiaries, their families, and caregivers to prevent, detect, and report health care fraud, errors, and abuse through outreach, counseling, and education.

SMPs are grant-funded projects of the federal U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), U.S. Administration for Community Living (ACL).

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STOP! Unwanted Robocalls

By the GWAAR Legal Services Team

UNWANTED CALLS – including illegal and spoofed robocalls - are the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) top consumer complaint. Not only can the sheer volume of unwanted calls be aggravating, they can also put your financial and personal information at risk.



- Beware that Caller ID showing a “local” number does not necessarily mean it is a local caller.
- If you answer the phone and the caller (or a recording) asks you to press a button to stop getting the calls, you should just hang up. Scammers often use this trick to identify potential targets.
- Do not respond to any questions, especially those that can be answered with “Yes.”
- Never give out personal information such as account numbers, Social Security numbers, mother’s maiden names, passwords, or other identifying information in response to unexpected calls or if you are at all suspicious.
- If you get a call from someone who says they represent a company or a government agency, hang up and call the phone number on your account statement, in the phone book, or on the company’s or government agency’s website to verify the authenticity of the request. You will usually get a written statement in the mail before you get a phone call from a legitimate source, particularly if the caller is asking for a payment.
- Be suspicious if you are being pressured for information immediately.
- If you have a voicemail account with your phone service, be sure to set a password for it. Some voicemail services are pre-set to allow access if you call in from your own phone number. A hacker could spoof your home phone number and gain access to your voicemail if you do not set a password.
- Talk to your phone company about call-blocking tools they may have and check into apps that you can download to your mobile device to block unwanted calls.
- If you use robocall-blocking technology already, it often helps to let your provider know which numbers are producing unwanted calls so they can help block those calls for you and others.
- To block telemarketing calls, register your number on the Do Not Call List (<https://www.donotcall.gov/>).

Legitimate telemarketers consult the list to avoid calling both landline and wireless phone numbers on the list. Note, however, that even after you register, other types of organizations may still call you, such as charities, political groups, debt collectors and surveys.

For more information, visit: <https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/stop-unwanted-robocalls-and-texts>



“...so bring me some figgy pudding...”

Similar to Fruitcake, Figgy Pudding is sticky and gooey and historically rooted in the 15th century

Figgy pudding goes by many names. There's "Christmas pudding" and even "plum pudding," even though plums aren't in the pudding. It has its roots in medieval English sausages, when fat, spices and fruits (the best preservatives of their day) were mixed with meats, grains and vegetables and packed into prepared animal stomachs or intestines so they would keep as long as possible. The first records of plum puddings date to the early 15th century, when "plum pottage," a concoction heavy on the meat and root vegetables, was served at the start of a meal. The plum pudding was a generic term for any dried fruit—most commonly raisins and currants, with prunes and other dried or candied fruit added when available. By the end of the 16th century, dried fruit was more plentiful in England and plum pudding made the shift from savory to sweet.

12 dried figs, chopped
1/2 cup raisins
1/2 cup water
1/2 cup spiced rum
1/4 cup brandy
1 1/4 cups flour
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground ginger
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
1/4 teaspoon salt
3 large eggs
1 cup brown sugar
2 cups bread crumbs
1/2 cup unsalted butter, melted
1 cup dried cranberries
1 cup dried apricots, chopped (or other dried fruits)
Whipped cream

Recipe: tablespoon.com

1. In a small sauce pan, add chopped figs, currants, water, rum, and brandy and bring to a simmer. Once simmering, carefully light the mixture and remove pan from heat. Burn off alcohol for about a minute. Be very careful while doing this.
2. In a separate small bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, cloves, and salt.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together eggs, sugar, bread crumbs, and melted butter. Once combined, stir in fig mixture (let it cool slightly) add dry ingredients.
4. Use a flat spatula to fold in other dried fruit.
5. Butter a large Bundt pan or angel food pan. Add a few cups of water to a pan that is large enough to hold the Bundt or angel food pan. Place the Bundt or angel food pan into the larger pot and make sure the water comes at least halfway up the side of the pan. Adjust water levels accordingly. Remove pan from larger pot.
6. Scoop thick pudding batter into buttered Bundt or angel food pan, smooth it out, and cover with foil. Place pan into larger pot.
7. Cover and bring pot to a simmer, reduce heat to low and let pudding steam for 2 hours. Check water levels every 30 minutes or so.
8. After steaming, let the pan cool and then remove it from the water bath. Remove foil and flip it over so pudding comes out.
9. Slice and serve with whipped cream!

TIPS: When burning off the brandy from the fruit mixture in the beginning of this recipe, move the sauce pan away from your oven, especially if it is a gas range, and do not leave the sauce pan unattended as the alcohol burns away. Blow the flame out after a minute has passed.

When adding the dry ingredients into the figgy pudding batter, we call for dried cranberries and apricots, but feel free to substitute with your favorite dried fruits instead.

As is customary in English puddings, this cake-like dessert is steamed, not baked, making it moist and delicious.



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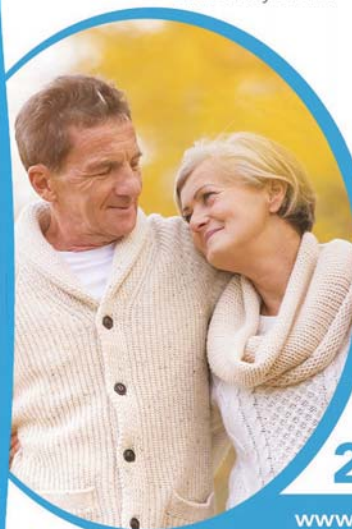
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My Mother and Bob Hope Taught Me the True Meaning of Christmas

by Joel L.A. Peterson

It was Christmas Eve, 1987. I was a young naval officer and I had been at sea nearly 100 days straight escorting U.S.-flagged tankers through the Persian Gulf. In the Gulf of Oman, in the North Arabian Sea, a young man serving in the US Navy finds the answer....

On this particular Christmas, my ship, the aircraft carrier, USS Midway, was just outside the Strait of Hormuz, off the coast of Iran, while Iran and Iraq were approaching their sixth year of war.

It was December 24th and Bob Hope flew aboard my aircraft carrier. Of course it wasn't just Bob. He brought a bevy of beauties, singers and actors and beauty contest winners.

I was thinking back on previous Christmases while waiting for the show to begin. Christmas was my mother's favorite holiday and she always pulled out all the stops and all her Hummel Christmas figurines were paraded out and displayed. I could remember so many of my mother's perfectly orchestrated Christmases, but not all distinctly and separately. Many seemed to run together to where I couldn't remember which Christmas had brought me the Hot Wheels set and which brought me the blue blazer.

Thanks to my mother, there were Christmases throughout my past, when the world around me was still so very new. Those Christmases were white and cold on the outside, but warm and glowing on the inside. As I waited for Bob Hope's Christmas show to start, I felt so distant from the wonder of the season seen through the eyes that I had when I was waist high.

As I waited on the hanger deck, I thought of my childhood home and all the seasonal aromas in the house. Breads and cookies that spread their scented glory throughout the rooms and struck one in the soul with the first step inside from the winter wind. A smell that said "home" like no other. A smell that welcomed all to the glowing promise of the ancient hearth. A smell that welcomed Christmas.

Eventually, the show got started with Bob leading the way. I was surprised at how talented and engaging he was, live and in person. Bob Hope actually was a very funny man with a wicked sense of looking at the world and twisting his words to make everyone laugh at their own worst weaknesses and gaffes.

But when the laughs were done, the reality of this Christmas and how far away it was from any I remembered - that reality crushed my soul.

After the show, I went to my bunkroom where I opened

the presents that my mother had sent me. She'd sent a little do-it-yourself, put'em-up plastic Christmas tree. I had put the thing up in my tiny and crowded bunkroom. It was something that resembled the little Christmas tree in *A Charlie Brown Christmas*. Pathetic in a cute sort of way. Mom had also sent a couple of my old and faithful Christmas tree decorations - like the tiny clothes pin soldiers I had made back in first grade. Decorations that had tiny red pipe cleaners for arms and colored cotton balls for hats. I hung all those decorations on the u-do-it-yourself, put'em-up plastic Charlie Brown Christmas tree, and didn't care if anyone might laugh at it.

I sat alone opening brightly wrapped packages that contained the presents sent by my mother to represent the love and warmth of family. And in the flashing hues of that plastic tree, I was suddenly swept with a loneliness so absolute, so profound and pure, a desperate longing that gripped my soul and squeezed and squeezed, until tears were squeezed from my eyes. And as I sat and stared amid the torn wrappings, so happy in their colors and cheery brightness, I cried.

I cried for the loss of those long-ago Christmases that were warmth and childhood. I cried for that forever-ago feeling when I had sat between my parents at church on Christmas Eve, warm and safe and oh so large on each side of me, and sang the ancient songs of harking herald angels and mangers that were far and away. I cried for a world that needed men like me, in uniform, in harm's way, flung across the world, separated and gone away.

In the tear-blurred lights and at that moment, I missed my mother and my family as I had never before. I missed the staggering perfume clouds of the powder room when aunts came to visit. I missed the cooking smells. I missed every one of them in my crystal pure, absolute loneliness. It was the kind of missing that stripped away my outer man, leaving only the naked little boy that still lived inside me, exposed and crying.

I believed in what I was doing. I believed in the duty I had as a US Navy officer. I firmly believed that societies grow and flourish only so long as there are those who are willing to sacrifice on their behalf. But theories and duty and abstract beliefs can be pretty inconsequential when a man is exposed to the icy winds of his little-boy

loneliness, in the winking lights of my plastic Charlie Brown tree.

And then I thought how someone as famous as Bob Hope - who was such an American icon - had traveled so far to give a show to me and my shipmates. How he and so many had given up their families at Christmas to come such a long way to reach out to men like me. Just to let us know that we weren't alone - not really - that we were all part of a society of shared hopes and shared striving. Suddenly, I felt that I understood more clearly than ever the beliefs I'd been taught by my mother regarding Christ's birth and sacrifice - that our God had taken on the frailty and limited form of humanness that He might share in human joys and pains and lonelinesses. I suddenly grasped with new insight what my mother had always said - it is in the wonder and hope and belief in the love of a God who would willingly share in the crushing mortality and limitations of His fleeting creations which is at the heart of Christmas.

My mother's teachings found their mark that lonely Christmas. I came to understand as never before what Christmas meant to my mother. For Mom, Christmas was not in the glitter and props and material objects offered and received. It was not in rituals, half pagan, whose meanings had long been forgotten. Christmas, for my mother - and now for me - would always be in the warmth of family, in the hearts of loved ones and of those who one care's about. It would always be in the drawing together against the world's cold to share the warmth that only we can give to each other, and together, to dare hope for a time when the world won't be quite so mean, quite so lonely, or quite so cold.

I hope that my future Christmases and yours will have that magic that it once had when we had heroes and they were just and good, when the night was cold but the hearts that surrounded us were warm and big and oh so safe. And when the wonder of God's love and my mother's love was the wonder of the world itself.

Joel L. A. Peterson is the founder and CEO of Student Planning Services, LLC and the author of the book, *Dreams of My Mothers*.
www.dreamsofmyothers.com

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WHAT HAPPENED THIS DAY IN HISTORY?

This Day... in December History...

Day by Day

1. Sherlock Holmes appeared for the first time in print in "A Study in Scarlet." (1887)
 1. In Montgomery, Rosa Parks is arrested for refusing to give up her seat in the front section of a bus. (1955)
 2. The toilet paper roll was patented. (1891)
 2. Barney B. Clark receives first artificial heart transplant. (1982)
 5. The 21st Amendment repeals Prohibition. I'll drink to that! (1933)
 7. Martin Van Buren becomes the eighth President of the United States, and the first president to be born in this country. (1837)
 7. Thomas Edison exhibited the phonograph in (1877)
 7. Pearl Harbor was bombed in a surprise Japanese attack. It marked the U.S. entry into WWII. (1941)
 8. John Lennon, singer, guitarist, songwriter, and poet for the Beatles, was assassinated in New York City by Mark David Chapman in 1980.
 10. Wyoming allowed women to vote and hold office (1869).
 10. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. receives Nobel Peace Prize. (1964)
 13. The Clip-on tie is created. (1928)
 15. The Bill of Rights are enacted, amending the Constitution (1791)
 15. Sioux Chief Sitting Bull was killed by Indian police. (1890)
 15. Gone With the Wind premiered in Atlanta, Georgia. (1939)
 15. Infamous band leader Glenn Miller died in a plane crash over the English Channel. (1944)
 16. Boston residents protesting British taxation threw tea overboard on a British ship. The Boston Tea Party was the beginning of the American fight for independence. (1773)
 16. The famous World War II "Battle of the Bulge" began. (1944)
 17. The Wright Brothers made their first airplane flight at Kitty Hawk, N.C. (1903)
 19. Charles Dickens published "A Christmas Carol". (1843)
 21. The Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, Massachusetts. (1620)
 21. "Snow White" premiered at theaters. (1937)
 23. The transistor was invented by U.S. physicists John Bardeen, Walter H. Britain, and William Shockley. (1947)
 24. Franz Joseph Gruber composed "Silent Night". (1818)
 25. Jesus Christ is born in a little town in Bethlehem (0)
 25. William the Conqueror is crowned the King of England. (1066)
 26. James Mason invents the coffee percolator. (1865)
 27. Radio City Music Hall in New York City opens. (1932)
 28. William F. Semple patented chewing gum. (1869)
 30. Edwin Hubble announces existence of other galactic systems. (1924)
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"Christmas Tree Ship" Disappeared in 1912



By Michael Edmonds

Every November, beginning in 1890, captains August and Herman Schuenemann loaded evergreens onto the three-masted schooner Rouse Simmons in Michigan's Upper Peninsula and sailed for Chicago. For city many residents, it wasn't Christmas until the Schuenemanns docked the "Christmas Tree Ship" downtown.

But by 1912, when she made her final voyage, the Rouse Simmons was dangerously old and weak. On Nov. 23rd, she departed the UP loaded with 3,000 trees – so many that her deck cleared the water by only a foot. About 4:00pm she was spotted flying a distress flag offshore from the Keweenaw Life-Saving Station, whose crew telegraphed the Two Rivers station to send a lifeboat out. The lifeboat dashed into the storm, but rescuers never spotted the Rouse Simmons – a mystery for six decades.

In 1971, Milwaukee diver Kent Beltrichard discovered her remains 12 miles northeast of Two Rivers in 165 feet of water. Since then, underwater archaeologists from the Wisconsin Historical Society have explored the wreck and deduced how the Christmas Tree ship sank.

Six miles northeast of Rawley Point in Manitowoc County, the ship encountered strong winds and heavy seas. Her crew tried to anchor her facing into the wind, but the ship was top heavy with eight feet of Christmas trees, anchors, and chains piled high on her deck. Large waves swamped the bow and sent the old schooner into a fatal nose-dive.

Her impact carved a ten-foot crater in the sandy bottom, the final resting place of 16 crew and passengers.

Sources: "The Christmas Tree Ship: Captain Herman E. Schuenemann and the Schooner Rouse Simmons." Wisconsin Sea Grant & Wisconsin Historical Society, at wisconsinshiprecks.org.



Underwater view of two archaeologists surveying and investigating the bow of the Rouse Simmons (also known as the Christmas Tree ship)



An illustration of the schooner Rouse Simmons on the water near a shoreline

The Myth of Multitasking

continued from page 7



Psychologist David Meyer at the University of Michigan has also found that

multitasking contributes to the release of stress hormones, including adrenaline, which cause long-term health problems if not controlled, and contribute to the loss of short-term memory.

From an episode of Frontline called *Digital Nation*. Dr. Clifford Nass, a former researcher at Stanford, wanted to conduct a research study to determine what made high multitaskers so good. What he discovered, to his surprise, is that not only were they not so good at multitasking; they were horrible. He says, "The research is almost unanimous, which is very rare in social science, and it says that people who chronically multitask show an enormous range of deficits. They're basically terrible at all sorts of cognitive tasks, including multitasking." Nass calls multitaskers "suckers for irrelevance." They've lost the ability to focus because their attention is always pulled away to things that are not important. They actually do much worse than people who don't multitask. On MRI these individuals actually show brain deficits. Being a meditation teacher, I was hoping to find research showing that these changes could be improved with meditation. Unfortunately, Nass goes on to state they can't tell if these cognitive deficits can be reversed because they can't get enough of these people to give up their devices for the two weeks it would take to do a study.

The bottom line - slow down, focus and change your life!



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EMPOWERMENT

Regardless
of Age

By Sandy Cowen

Empowerment is an interesting word. People use but don't always understand how to make it work for them, especially when they really need to become empowered. Here are a few examples of where empowerment would be of benefit: living in an abusive setting (emotional/physical); suffering from a chronic illness; feeling situationally depressed; not reaching your full potential on the job or in school; experiencing an unsuccessful dating life. The list could be endless but, in all cases, a dose of being more self-empowered would work like a charm.

Sidebar on me: I've recovered from six different chronic and life-threatening conditions in my life – leukemia twice (seven occasions) – all without conventional medicine or pharmaceuticals. I've owned my own successful business twice and reinvented myself three times. I'm 76, look 55 and have the energy of a 50-year old. I have survived much, including the loss of my only child, two-years ago and now have just finished my second book. In all cases, I've changed negatives into positives. I'm resilient because I'm also empowered. So, let me share a few hints on how that all works. It's not complicated.

First: Take personal responsibility for your situation. If you constantly blame others for the state of your life, you'll never realize a different result. You did whatever it was that got you here: made bad choices that put you in a lousy relationship or left you with bad health; thought so little of yourself that others began to believe it too; and finally created a boring life because you did nothing to change that. Sound familiar? So, step one is to accept responsibility and then open your heart and mind to different options. You can't keep doing the same thing and expect a different result.

Second: Make a plan but not a specific plan. Have a vision, that's all. "See" where you want to end up long term and then trust the process of life to take you there. Don't expect a straight line but rather the path will zig and zag. That's the fun of the journey. Hold the vision and have faith, moving ahead with each step. Don't be rigid about the steps to get there, be flexible and you'll feel less frustrated, impatient and disappointed. The key is to enjoy life and the ride.

Third: Drop fear. All fear-based emotions keep you paralyzed. Instead, take action without fear. Sitting on a couch wishing things were different never works. Action, is better than no action at all. Even mistakes – at least you'll learn from those. Baby steps, at first, are fine. Like Nike says: Just do it.

You can't release fear if you don't know what it looks like. Here are a few examples: believing things are unfair or not as easy as they should be; feeling hopelessness, having insecurity, self-doubt, hostility, resentment, worry, anxiety or feeling embarrassed. Fear of the unknown, competitiveness, frustration, bitterness, having a lack of confidence and so many more. Fear is counter-productive and will hold you back.

Love-based emotions fuel progress: practice gratitude – it will open doors for more to come; an open-heart and loving attitude will attract more people and they'll like you – because you like them; having compassion, trusting, respecting, making connections, being cooperative and less judgmental. With these emotions you will become happier, more certain, feel more belonging in your life and open yourself to wonder. Practice those emotions. Humor helps, too.

People who are empowered are fearless; they take chances, take risks, make decisions and step out of the shadows. They reach out their hand to others and somehow find their power by helping others find theirs. There is no age limit to changing your life for the better. Open your eyes to the possibilities of life. You'll not only feel more empowered through new actions, but you'll draw more people to you, age more youthfully and find peace you never thought possible.

Sandy Cowen has always been dedicated to the empowerment of others as an entrepreneur, community leader and expert on the holistic healing process. Prompted by her son's passing, Sandy is coming forward to help others find peace and even joy in the face of profound loss. Find out more about her on her website: www.sandycowen.com



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I am not adding this year to my age. I didn't use it!

WEIGHT of Santa's sleigh loaded with one Beanie Baby for every kid on earth: 333,333 tons.
NUMBER of reindeer required to pull a 333,333-ton sleigh: 214,206 -- plus Rudolph.
TO DELIVER his gifts in one night, Santa would have to make 822.6 visits per second, sleighing at 3,000 times the speed of sound. At that speed, Santa and his reindeer would burst into flame instantaneously.



If you wear your jeans 5 days in a row they become all baggy and it looks like you lost weight.

-Stay tuned for more quarantine life tips...

I would never believe a few months of uncut hair would weigh 20 pounds but that's what the scale says.

Legal Team Sues Santa to Prevent List Recount

(Dec. 4) - Attorneys for an anonymous Governor filed suit in federal court today, seeking to prevent Santa Claus from making his list and then checking it twice. The complaint seeks an immediate injunction against the beloved Christmas icon, asking the court to effectively ban his traditional practice of checking the list of good boys and girls one additional time before packing his sleigh.

The suit, filed in the Federal District Court, asks a federal judge to "hereby order Mr. Claus to cease and desist all repetitive and duplicative list-checking activity, and certify the original list as submitted, without amendment, alteration, deletion, or other unnecessary modification."

"There are no standards for deciding who is naughty, and who is nice. It's totally arbitrary and capricious. How many more times does he need to check? This checking, checking, and re-checking over and over again must stop now," said a former Secretary. They further claimed that unnamed observer witnessed an elf removing all boys named Justin from the 'nice' list, filing them under 'naughty' instead because "everyone knows all boys named Justin are brats."

The Governor cited the potential for unauthorized list tampering, and blasted what he called the "crazy, crazy mess up there at the North Pole."

"Their security is really awful, really bad," said an anonymous source. "My mother just walked right in, told 'em she was Mrs. Claus. They didn't check her ID or nothing."

Santa Claus could not be reached for comment, but a spokeself said he was "deeply distressed" by news of the pending legal action against him.

"He's losing weight, and he hasn't said 'Ho Ho' for days," said the spokeself. "He's just not feeling jolly."

A weary nation can relate.

Three men died on Christmas Eve and were met by Saint Peter at the pearly gates.

"In honor of this holy season," Saint Peter said, "You must each possess something that symbolizes Christmas to get into heaven."

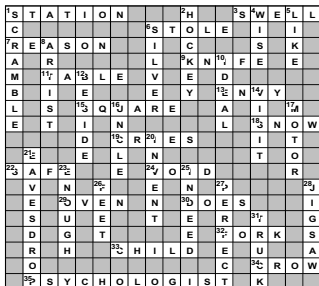
The first man fumbled through his pockets and pulled out a lighter. He flicked it on. "It represents a candle," he said. "You may pass through the pearly gates," Saint Peter said.

The second man reached into his pocket and pulled out a set of keys. He shook them and said, "They're bells." Saint Peter said, "You may pass through the pearly gates."

The third man started searching desperately through his pockets and finally pulled out a pair of women's panties.

St. Peter looked at the man with a raised eyebrow and asked, "And just what do those symbolize?"

The man replied, "They're Carol's."



And God said to John, "Come forth and you shall be granted eternal life." But John came fifth and won a toaster.

I wonder what dirty talk looks like in sign language.

My wife and I decided not to have kids. The kids are taking it pretty hard.

How do you make holy water? You boil the hell out of it.

Joke resources: short-funny.com, laffgaff.com, pun.me, jokesoftheday.net, bestlifeonline.com, humormatters, kickasshumor.com and reader emails

Crossword on page 18

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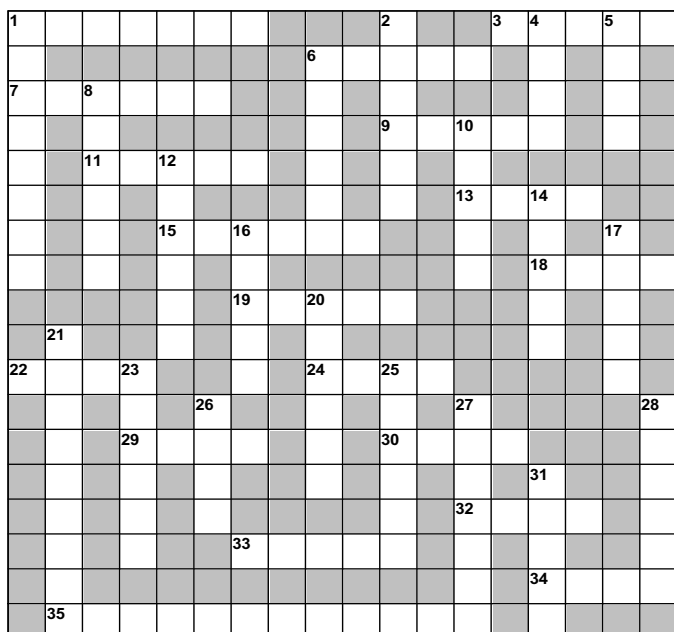
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Answers page 17

ACROSS

1. Where the train stops
3. To grow in size
6. Garment of Mink
7. Thinking an issue through
9. Slicing tool
11. Dining platform
13. Jealousy
15. Number multiplied by itself
18. Winter precipitation
19. Shed tears
22. Not in danger
24. An unused check
29. Used to bake in
30. Not Bucks but
32. Eating utensil
33. Parents offspring
34. Large black bird
35. Mind doctor

DOWN

1. Popular egg preparation
2. Violent winter sport
4. Exhibiting common sense
5. magnets repel
6. Precious metal
8. One who has expressive talent
10. Unequaled perfection
12. Next to
14. Go to see someone
16. Your dad's brother
17. Cars power plant
20. To create the first
21. Listen to others inadvertently
23. The last straw
25. Most certainly
26. Bipedal
27. As good as it gets
28. Type of puzzle
31. Used to haul items

FINANCE QUESTIONS and ANSWERS

2020 Year-End Strategy

This holiday, make time for financial reflection and planning with loved ones

With one year ending and a new one on the cusp of starting, many people will consider their resolutions—not their estate strategy. But the end of the year is a great time to sit down and review your preparations, especially when you're spending more time with your loved ones; even more important if you have a complicated estate that may need to get managed after you're gone.



Call a family meeting. Many people don't let their family know their wishes or who is appointed to handle the estate. While two-thirds of Americans say that the pandemic has brought them closer to their family, only 28% of those 65 and older have started discussing their estate strategy with their families.

You may be able to get ahead of any potential family issues down the line by discussing your wishes, what needs to be handled by your estate, and reviewing what you have in place. No one wants to think about their family members passing away, but an awkward conversation now may mitigate future problems.

Get organized. Ensure that your documents are up to date and remain aligned with your wishes. Two things to consider are a financial power of attorney and a power of attorney for your healthcare needs. Both can play a role should you become too ill to make decisions. Also, consider adding "Transfer on Death" or "Pay on Death" to ensure that your spouse or surviving family can have access to your accounts.

Be flexible. Tax law changes adjust and change over time. For example, the SECURE Act, which went into effect at the end of 2019, did away with "stretch IRAs." The change forced some to consider a new approach to that portion of their estate. Your estate strategy should be flexible enough to adjust to whatever happens.

As you talk about your estate with your family and set your preparations in motion, the end of the year is a great time to connect with your fiduciary financial professional, tax attorney, and estate attorney.



Do you have a financial question for Tim? Tim can be contacted at (262)369-5200, emailed at info@aegiswi.com, or his website at www.aegiswi.com. He is the Founder and CEO of Aegis Wealth Advisors, LLC, a Registered Investment Adviser firm in Hartland, WI. Tim and his team specialize in providing insightful and objective financial guidance to individuals, families, and small business owners. This material was prepared from independent sources and should not be construed as investment advice.

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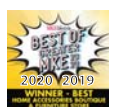
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