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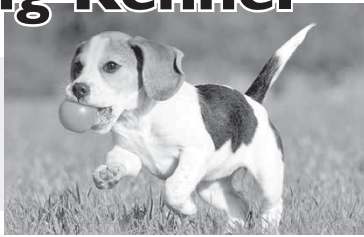


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Medina High School Students Help Fill St. Peter's Food Pantry



Thanks to the efforts of 35 Medina students, some community members will have food on their table. The Medina Junior-Senior High School's Student Association recently collected over 1,600 non-perishable food items for St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church Food Pantry. The church is located at 1355 West Avenue in Medina and provides emergency food once per month to residents of Medina in need.



Student Association co-advisor Sara Cinquino says she was thrilled what the students and staff were able to achieve this year. "We doubled what we collected last year and we have to thank the Medina Teacher's Union for swapping drives with us. They are collecting essential items, which we normally do, to make it more affordable for the students to participate in this event. I have to also thank fellow

teacher Joe Byrne who helped me to oversee the food drive while my co-advisor is out on maternity leave."

The Student Association collected, counted and sorted the food every day the week of November 18th-22nd. Lieutenant Steve Cooley and other members of the Medina Fire Department volunteered on their day off to come to the school and collected the boxes from the students who carried them out to their vehicles. "Every year, we as a club are so thankful that we can do something at the Junior-Senior High School and give back to the community," says Cinquino. "It takes just a small effort on our end, but we can make a difference and impact for so many people in this community."



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NOTICE OF FORMATION: Repairs With Care LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 10/5/2024. Office Location: Orleans Co. SSNY designated as agent upon whom process against LLC may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: 318 Eagle St. #3 Medina NY 14103 Purpose: Any Lawful Purpose.

ORLEANS COUNTY NOTICE OF FORMATION OF A LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY Notice of Formation of Medina Bakery, LLC. Articles of Organization filed with Secretary of State of NY (SSNY) on 12/06/2024. Office location: Orleans County, SSNY designated as agent of Limited Liability Company (LLC) upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY should mail process to The LLC: 11840 Harrison Rd Medina, NY 14103. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

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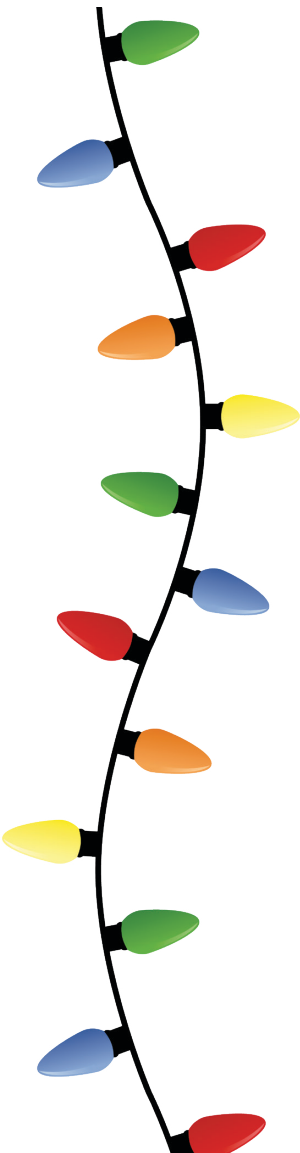
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Homelessness: Myth vs. Reality

By Karen Kinter, CEO of Oak Orchard Health

You might think homelessness could never happen to you or your loved ones. But life can bring sudden changes that leave you with impossible choices. Statistics show that 70 to 80 percent of individuals facing homelessness are from the community or have lived there for a year or longer before becoming unhoused.

The homeless population in Genesee, Orleans, and Wyoming counties (GOW) is growing. The Homeless Alliance of Western NY states that in 2023, 710 people in GOW counties lost their housing, a 12.9% increase from the previous year. This included an 8% rise in youth homelessness and a 17.9% increase in clients 62 years and over.

When people talk about homelessness, there are many misconceptions and myths about how someone might have become homeless or what homelessness looks like.

Here are some common myths—and the facts that clear up these misperceptions.

MYTH 1: "THEY DID THIS TO THEMSELVES."

Fact: Homelessness is more often due to sudden illness or an accident, job loss, or financial problems that lead to eviction. The NYU Silver School of Social Work Professor Deborah K. Padgett and the Coalition for the Homeless says that some are fleeing domestic violence or are living in overcrowded, substandard housing.

MYTH 2: "THEY'RE LAZY AND DON'T WANT TO WORK."

Fact: The primary cause of homelessness is the lack of affordable housing, according to the Coalition for the Homeless. The National Alliance to End Homelessness estimates that 53% of those who are unhoused are employed full-time or part-time and sometimes working two to three jobs. A job does not guarantee stability because they are not earning life-sustaining wages to afford to pay rent or other bills. Those looking for employment face additional barriers when applying for jobs, including no permanent address or transportation, internet access to apply for jobs, or access to showers or appropriate clothes for interviews.

MYTH 3: "THEY'RE ALL ADDICTS OR MENTALLY ILL."

Fact: Substance use disorders are rarely the sole cause of homelessness and, more often, are a response to it. Living on the street or in overcrowded housing puts the person in frequent contact with those who are in active addiction and

facing the same issues, according to the Homeless Alliance of Western New York (HAWNY). However, the trauma of becoming homeless can certainly lead to depression or other mental health disorders and make it harder for people to find help because of the stigma of being homeless.

MYTH #4: "THEY'RE DANGEROUS CRIMINALS."

Fact: The reality is that most people without housing spend their time and resources trying to survive, improve their situation, or find a job. Others are teens with no place to turn or older adults on fixed incomes who can't make ends meet. Unhoused individuals are more likely to be victims of a violent crime than to commit one, according to the Coalition for the Homeless. The risks of being victims of a crime were higher for older adults, women, or those who were homeless for more than two years.

Oak Orchard Health and its Community Partners are here to help with warming centers.

Winter in Western New York is especially brutal for those individuals facing homelessness. In 2023, Oak Orchard Health and its community partners opened the Orleans County Warming Center at Christ Church. It provides a warm and safe environment when the temperature hits 32 degrees or below, called Code Blue. Code Blue is activated when temperatures or the wind chill are at or below 32 degrees Fahrenheit for at least two consecutive hours.

The Orleans County Warming Center at Christ Church served 60+ people in the 2023 winter season. People come here not only to get out of the cold but also to get a hot cup of soup, snacks, toiletries, and rest. Working with community partners, they can also get referrals to the county and local non-profits for ongoing support.

If someone you know is in a housing crisis, call 211.

This is a central human services hotline for the Western New York region that can direct the appropriate community resources for help with housing, emergency services, food, utilities, healthcare, and employment.

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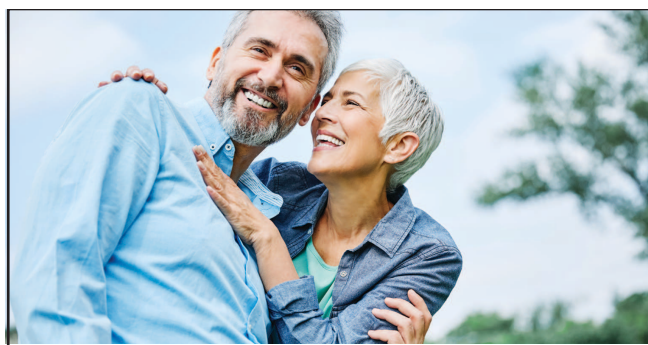
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REQUIREMENTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- Must be a Town of Shelby resident.
- Mandatory attendance for Grievance Hearings taking place 9am-9pm on the 4th Wednesday of May. Must have flexible availability (including daytime and evening hours) for the remaining Grievance Hearings lasting approximately one month.
- Must be able to participate in mandatory training(s).

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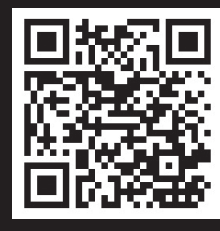
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NEW LISTINGS



Lockport- 3 Bedroom, 3.5 bath 2 Story Home. **\$339,900** (B1579973) **Barbara McGaffin- Okoncza*** 716-504-7418



Grand Island- 4 Bedroom, 1.5 bath 2 Story home. **\$299,900** (B1570191) **Michael Bartlett*** 716-622-9008



Shelby- 4 Bedroom, 2 bath Farmhouse home. **\$245,000** (B1580351) **Deborah Carpenter*** 716-998-0039

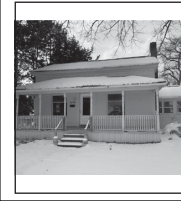


Pavilion- 3 Bedroom, 2 bath Ranch home. **\$219,000** (B1580586) **Gary Miller*** 585-406-0269

NEW LISTINGS



Lockport- 3 Bedroom, 2 bath Colonial Home. **\$205,000** (B1579389) **Lisa Ciccirelli*** 716-523-4040



Newfane- 3 Bedroom, 1 bath 2 Story Home. **\$157,900** (B1580645) **Michael Bartlett*** 716-622-9008



Hornell- 5 Bedroom, 2 bath 2 Story home. **\$115,000** (R1579382) **Samantha Raduns*** 585-735-8282



Hilton- 3 Bedroom, 1.5 bath Apartment for rent. **\$1,595** (B1578767) **Mark Zambito**** 585-576-3435



Medina- 579 Sq ft Commercial space for rent. **\$800** (B1580406) **Tammy Fearby**** 716-239-0185

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Ian Mayhew*
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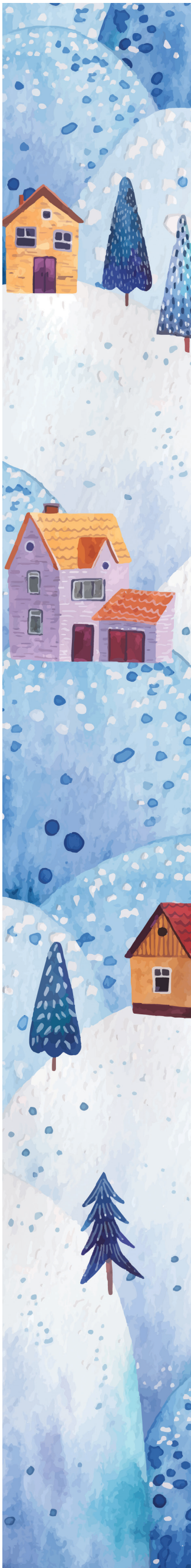
Featured Listings of the week



Barre- 4 bedroom, 2 bath Colonial Home. \$299,900 (B1571532)
Rita Zambito** 585-317-8513
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Gaines- 5 Bedroom, 2 bath Farmhouse. \$289,900 (B1572083) **Mark Zambito****
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MEDINA • 1120 S. Main St. This spacious 3, possible 4 bed home is perfect for a family. 1 1/2 baths, 2 living rooms, large bedrooms and great storage. The second floor includes an open common area...perfect for studying, playroom or living area on the second floor. The 4th bedroom is on the first floor with an adjoining 1/2 bath or use it as an office, exercise room, playroom...the possibilities are endless. The extra large eat in kitchen with great storage is a cooks dream. The dining room, double living room and the rocking chair front porch complete the crowning touch. New appliances included and it is across the street from Butts Park for family entertainment. Patio area and shed in the back yard. Ready to move in! Ginny Hughes \$140,000.



YATES • 10961 W Lake Shore Rd. Lots of potential on this piece of property with waterfront and acreage. There is room to build at the road, AND a private rolling, wooded 3.78 acreage by the lake AND a 40x200 foot lovely waterfront piece of land with a low bank. Imagine a secluded cabin or camper within walking distance of your own lakefront to watch sunrises, sunsets and enjoy Lake living. This is your chance to own acreage at the lake. Ginny Hughes \$120,000.



ALABAMA • 1277 Lewiston Rd. This lovely 3 bed 1 1/2 bath ranch is waiting for its new owners. This home features beautiful, refinished hardwood floors in the dining room and living room & updated bath. The dining room leads to deck & partially fenced yard. The man of the house is not forgotten—16x46 Amish built outbuilding for his toys/man cave. The basement is neat, clean & dry. Garage walls & floors have been freshly painted with 2 new man doors in 2024. Many updates in 2022 to include roof, completely new electric service, central air & furnace. Your finishing touches will make this house your home. Jan Nudd \$239,900.



YATES • 11030 Roosevelt Hwy Wow! Check out this 3 bedroom 2 1/2 bath colonial home on 3.4 Acres! You will step onto the covered front porch and enter through the front door into the formal dining room that has been freshly painted and has new flooring. Tucked away to the left is the 1st floor 1/2 bath. From the dining room you can look into the bright kitchen with an entry door to the attached 2 1/2 car garage or look out the back French Doors that lead to the back deck overlooking the massive back yard. 1st floor laundry. Open floor plan into the living room with brand new flooring. Upstairs you will find the Primary Suite and 2 more freshly painted bedrooms with another bath to share. Full basement is dry and ready to be finished off for extra living space. Dawn Fox \$295,000.



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R1483401: Albion • \$174,900 The National Registered listed "Skinner-Tinkham House" has entered the second phase of restoration • A historic tavern waiting for you to transform into a family room with historical overtones. The 1829 brick part (historical portion) retains a remarkable amount of historic fabric and its 2,664 sq. ft. have seen little change through the centuries. The 1875 residential rear wing has been rehabbed into a 1,540 sq. ft. apt. w/ kitchen, pantries, liv. room, studio/den bedroom, bath & laundry. Buyer can live comfortably separate from construction. The seller is a retired preservation architect seeking a buyer who meets specific qualities an talents to continue the restoration work on brick part • Call Judy Koehler for more information & details 749-1515



CALL JIM!



PENDING!

R1557204: MEDINA • New lower price: \$149,900 Convenient village location • 3 bedrooms, 1 1/2 baths (upstairs) • 1st floor laundry • living room open porch • "sparkling" kitchen (eat-in) • some ceramic, some laminate, some tile • Call Jim @ 615-0800 with any questions



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R1556315: • ALBION • NOW \$279,900 • Clean and tight small home with plenty of room for expansion on 11.7 acres! • Nestled in woods- room for agricultural or commercial development • 325' frontage on Route 31 and 375' on Allen Road, with driveway connecting the two. • Home has 2 bedrooms, 1st floor laundry living room, cathedral ceiling, circuit breakers, some copper plumbing, sliding glass door • Also 2 car garage, 11x14 mini barn and a 15 x 30 machinery shed kitchen (6 yrs ago) • 5 yr old furnace/ 2 yr old hot water tank • lovely country setting • 1.7 acres • Call Jim @ 615-0800 for all info.



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R1560827: ALBION • \$199,900 • BUILT INTO SIDE OF HILL W/ IN-LAW APT. • 4 bdrms, 3 1/2 baths • lower level has liv. rm., kitchen, 2 bdrms, 2 full bathrooms • main level has hallway, great rm., w/ cathedral ceiling, and wood stove. liv. rm, kitchen w/ bin. area, 2 bdrms, 1 full bath, 1/2 bath, laundry rm. • lg. deck off the rear of the main level • seller would like to include all furnishings w sale • Call Jim @ 615-0800 for more info

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We have always offered the community the ability to submit FREE obituaries to the Lake Country Pennysaver. We would like to continue keeping obituaries free for everyone. To make sure we can provide this service to the community, we ask that all obituaries have a word limit of 300 words. There will be a charge of \$30 for 300-400 words and a charge of \$60 for 400-500 words. We will not accept any obituaries over 500 words. Thank you for your understanding and your families are always in our thoughts. - Lake Country Pennysaver



Adelbert (Dell) Davis Jr., 64, of Port St. Lucie, Florida, passed away on Dec. 5, 2024, peacefully at his home. Predeceased by his father, Adelbert Davis Sr; stepmother, Jane Davis, mother, Dorothy Holmes, stepfather Robert Holmes and brothers Steven and Richard Davis. He is survived by his loving wife Debra Davis, brothers, Gerald (Terri) Davis, Alan Davis, Jeffrey Davis and sisters, Karen Davis and Janet (James) Howard, uncle, Thomas Furness and many nieces, nephews and cousins. Dell grew up in Kendall, NY, he was a die-hard Bills and NASCAR fan and enjoyed classic cars.



Arlene F. Flatt, 71, of Medina, NY, passed away on Sat., Dec. 7, 2024, at Rochester General Hospital after a short illness. She was born on March 25, 1953, in Lockport, NY, the daughter of the late Stanley and Frances (Davis) Ozimek. Arlene attended Lockport High School and graduated with a Secretarial Associate's Degree from Genesee Community College. In May 1976, she married Danny Flatt, and together, they raised four children. She was employed with the former Fisher-Price until its closing and later worked as a Nurse's Aide at Orchard Manor Nursing Home, from which she retired. Arlene loved camping and being outdoors. She enjoyed playing euchre, poker, and bingo. Arlene is survived by her husband of 48 years, Danny; her children, Christopher (Denise) Hare, Shawn (Mary) Flatt, Kimberly (Michael) Schoolcraft and Danny P. Flatt. Also surviving are five grandchildren, Gavin Flatt, Trevor and Alexis Hare, Jaret Schoolcraft and Sawyer Flatt; a brother, Richard Davis; and many nieces, nephews and cousins. Besides her parents, Arlene is predeceased by three sisters, Mary and Anita Ozimek, and Susan Wheeler. Relatives and friends may call on Friday, Dec. 13, 2024, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Bogan & Tuttle Funeral Home, 226 Pearl St., Medina, NY 14103, where a funeral service will be held at 1 p.m. Burial will be private for the family. Instead of flowers, donations may be made in her name to the Orleans County Joint Veterans Council, 13996 Route 31 West, Albion, NY, 14411. Please light a candle or share a memory of Arlene at www.bogantuttlefunerals.com.



Kenneth R. "J.R." Flickner Jr. age 68, died Dec. 11, 2024 at home unexpectedly. He was born Aug. 30, 1956 in Lockport to Kenneth (Sr.) and Lois (Tincler) Flickner and had lived in this area all of his life. Ken was a social worker for New Directions

for over 15 years helping troubled youth find their way. He then worked part time for the CarQuest auto parts store in Medina delivering parts. Ken enjoyed fishing and loved his animals, especially his cats. Mr. Flickner was predeceased by his parents, a brother Daniel and a brother-in-law Jack Jones. He is survived by his brother: John (Lori) Flickner of Middleport, and his sister: Cindy "Sara" Flickner-Jones of Gasport. There will be no calling hours or service per his wishes. A private interment will be held at the convenience of the family. In lieu of flowers memorials may be made to the Niagara County SPCA, 2100 Lockport Rd., Niagara Falls, NY, 14304. Ken's arrangements have been entrusted

to the Bates, Wallace & Heath Funeral Home of Middleport. To share a special memory of Ken, please visit: www.mitchellfamilyfuneralhomes.com



David Ging, beloved father to James and his wife Sarah, funcler (fun uncle) to Sandy and her wife Mary Beth, Nicole and her husband Derek, Melissa and her fiancé John, Ellis, Danielle, and Amanda, and great funcler to John, died on Nov. 30, 2024, at the age

of 71. He was also a cherished brother of Terry, Linda, Tim and his wife Kathy, and Judy and her husband Oula. He leaves behind a legacy of laughter, generosity, and unforgettable memories. Known as a pun-stoppable wordsmith, David's quick wit was always welcome—though often met with a chorus of groans. As a labor mediator for the EEOC, David skillfully resolved disputes, and as an investigator, he worked tirelessly to uphold civil rights for the people of Buffalo. Yet, the role that meant the most to him was being a father. He instilled kindness, curiosity, and a love of learning in his son, James, teaching him how to think, explore, and grow, rather than simply telling him what to do. David's generosity knew no bounds. From caring for his late father and stepmother to creating over-the-top care packages, he found joy in supporting others. He also delighted in small but meaningful acts of joy and protest—like leaving cheerful rubber ducks in potholes to brighten a passerby's day or make a playful statement. David's humor, kindness, and playful spirit have left an indelible mark on all who knew him. The family will hold a private memorial. In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation to: Center For Youth 905 Monroe Ave, Rochester, NY 14620 <https://www.centerforyouth.net/> David's arrangements have been entrusted to the Christopher Mitchell Funeral Home of Holley, NY. To share a special memory of David, please visit www.mitchellfamilyfuneralhomes.com.

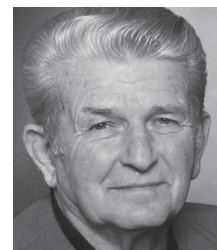


Peter Fenton Merrill, on Nov. 14th passed away after a long illness. Peter was born in 1958 to Ruth and Douglas Merrill in Haddonfield, New Jersey. In 1972 the family moved to Key West Florida. There Peter's father bought a restaurant which they named, "The Hukilau" – (the feast of seafood in Hawaiian). Life revolved around the restaurant, but in his free-time Peter was an avid scuba diver. He was also a letterman on the Varsity Football team at the Key West High School. After Graduating he was accepted into the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York. He became the chef at the Hukilau where he worked until it closed in 1991. Peter worked in many starred restaurants in South Florida, New York and Philadelphia. Food was his passion. He is survived by his wife Jodie Merrill (Mascarella).



Larry "Thomas" Moore, 71, of Batavia, N.Y., passed away unexpectedly at his home in Batavia. Born on May 12, 1953 in Clay County, West Virginia, he was the son of the late Kelly and Alma R. (Jeffers) Moore. Thomas graduated from Albion

High School and worked various jobs in the area. He enjoyed riding his motorcycle, playing guitar and tinkering on small engines. Tommy is survived by his seven siblings, Marsha Prince, Gwen Whipple, Steve Moore, Eldridge (Pam) Moore, Cathy (Bob) Mufford, Rob Moore and Jennifer (Eric) Jones. Also surviving are many nieces and nephews. There are no calling hours. A public graveside service will be held at the Union Cemetery, Albion, NY in the spring and will be announced closer to the time. Arrangements were entrusted to the Bogan & Tuttle Funeral Home, 226 Pearl St. Medina, NY 14103. Please light a candle or share a memory of Thommas at www.bogantuttlefuneral.com.



Benjamin "Frank" Murrell, died Dec. 4, 2024, in Elderwood of Lockport following a long illness. He was born August 30, 1939 to Degraff and Anna Murrell and had lived in this area most of his life. Frank was a United States Army Veteran having served during the Korean War in the SeaBees. He enjoyed fishing, building things and loved animals. Frank was very mechanically inclined and was considered a Jack-of-all-Trades. Mr. Murrell was predeceased by his wife Marsha. He is survived by his children: Douglas (Roselle) Murrell of Appleton, Andrew Murrell of Lockport, Nancy (Edward) Bartoszewski of FL, Michelle Criswell of Lockport, Dawn (Charles) Rickard of Lockport, 10 grandchildren, 4 great grandchildren as well as several nieces and nephews. There will be no calling hours. A Celebration of Frank's Life will be announced at a later date. Private interment in WNY National Cemetery will be at the convenience of the family. Frank's arrangements have been entrusted to the Sherrie Bream Funeral Home of Gasport. To share a special memory of Frank, please visit: www.mitchellfamilyfuneralhomes.com.



Ronald L. Nichols, age 45, of Albion, NY, formerly of Lyndonville, passed away unexpectedly at his home on Wed., Dec. 4, 2024. Born on March 3, 1979, in Medina, he was the son of Ronnie and Jeannine (Haley) Nichols. Ronald was a devoted

husband to his wife, Erica L. (Austin) Nichols and a loving father to his two boys, Ronald L. Nichols, Jr. and Garrett M. Waters. He was a great storyteller and loved to make others laugh. Ronald lived by the Fast and Furious Family First rule and would do anything for those he cared for. As a car enthusiast, his passion for creating show cars brought together his Twisted Trezn family. Ronald could always be found with a tool in hand, whether it be a wrench or a pencil, he was an artist who put his heart into every piece he created. His artwork can be found hanging in the homes of many and will live on in their hearts forever. As an avid "bully" breed rescuer, Ronald treated his dogs like his babies. Ronald was a panda bear with a fierce tiger's soul. He is loved and will be greatly missed by those who were in his life. Ronald was predeceased by his son, Ronald L. "RJ" Nichols, Jr. who was the light of his life, as well as his grandparents and multiple aunts, uncles and cousins. In addition to his parents, he is survived by his wife, Erica Nichols; son, Garrett Waters; grandmother, Roxy Nichols; siblings, Sarah and Anthony (Brandi) Nichols; nieces and nephews, Victoria Newman, Lena (Bethany) Newman, Logan Nichols and Greyson Nichols; and many aunts, uncles and cousins. He is also survived by his in-laws, Dennis and Eleanor Austin; brothers and sister-in-law, Nicholas, Mariah and José Austin. A celebration of Ronald's life will be held on Mon., Dec. 9 from 3-7PM at the Shelby Volunteer Fire Hall, 4695 S. Gravel Rd., Medina. Arrangements are in the care of Cooper Funeral Home, 215 W. Center St., Medina. Share condolences at www.cooperfuneralhome.com.



Lori A. Nottingham, age 58, passed away Dec. 6, 2024 at home surrounded by her loved ones. She was born March 17, 1966 in Montgomery, WV to the late William and Nancy (Williams) Nottingham. Lori worked for over 20 years at Associated Brands in

Medina as a Line Leader. She loved spending time gardening and going to auctions with her partner, Jim. Lori cherished time spent with her family, especially her sons, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Lori is survived by her loving companion of 40 years, James Stone, sons, Jim Stone Jr., Rich (Alicia Cascino) Stone, Ben Stone, several grandchildren and great grandchildren, siblings, Debbie Johnson, Sherry (Matt) Wilson, William "C.J." Nottingham Jr. as well as many nieces, nephews and cousins. A Celebration

of Lori's life will be held at a later date. Memorial contributions in Lori's name may be made to the American Cancer Society. Lori's arrangements have been entrusted to the Christopher Mitchell Funeral Home of Albion, NY. To share a special memory of Lori, please visit www.mitchellfamilyfuneralhomes.com.



Lee G. Plummer, 79, of Lyndonville, NY, passed away on December 8 at the Medina Memorial Hospital following a long illness. He was born in the same hospital on March 15, 1945, the youngest son of the late Howard and Marion (Axtell) Plummer. Lee served his country with honor in the Army during the Vietnam war as a gunner on the Bell UH-1 Iroquois "Huey" helicopters. He worked as a computer programmer for Pennwalt and Lyndonville Vinegar,

and ended his working years as a Correctional officer at the Orleans correctional facility. After retirement, Lee volunteered with the Orleans County Veteran Services to provide transportation for veterans to medical appointments. He was an avid outdoorsman, who loved hunting and taking care of his land. He fulfilled his dream of visiting every state and major league baseball park in the United States. Most of all, Lee loved spending time with his family. Lee is survived by his life partner of more than 30 years, Valerie Maher; his children, Raymond Plummer, Lori (Jamie) Schlegel, and Penny (Thomas) Barry; seven grandchildren, Austin (Amber) Bane, Cierra (Michael Mesler) Riley, Brooklynn (Garren) Bayne, Andrew Schlegel, and Alexander, Daniel, and Elena Barry; three great-grandchildren, Maverick Mesler, Tatum Bayne, and Bentley Bane. Besides his parents, Lee is predeceased by two brothers, Carlton and Gary Plummer, and a daughter-in-law, Cindy Plummer. Relatives and friends may call on Saturday, December 14, 2024, from 11AM-1 PM at the Bogan & Tuttle Funeral Home, 112 N. Main St. Lyndonville, NY, 14098, where a Funeral Service will be held at 1:00 PM. Burial will be in the Bates Rd. Cemetery, Medina, NY, with full military honors. We invite you to share your memories of Lee. Please light a candle or share a story at www.bogantuttlefunerals.com. Your memories will be a source of comfort and strength for us during this time. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Lee's name to Hospice of Orleans, 14080 NY-31, Albion, NY 14411 or the Orleans County Joint Veterans Council, 13996 Route 31 West, Albion, NY, 14411.



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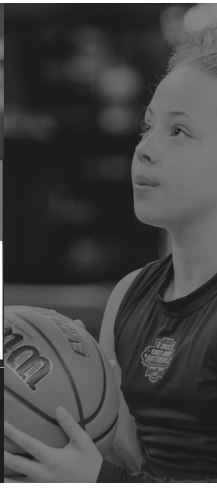
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Refill with Randy

by Randy LeBaron



Good morning! Grab your favorite cup. Fill it up. And let's start this week right TOGETHER!!!



As I am writing this Christmas is only a couple of weeks away and I am eagerly looking forward to starting the day off with worship and then getting to spend the day with my family, including my oldest daughter Ashlyn and her husband Carson who will be traveling up from Kentucky. I already have my Christmas Mix playlist going, which features songs by Burl Ives and Ella Fitzgerald as well as classics like "Christmas in Hollis" by Run DMC and "O Come All Ye Faithful" as performed by Twisted Sister (Don't Judge Me), and as a family we have watched Elf and other essential Yuletide Classics. Our tree is up, though most of the ornaments are down thanks to our curious new kitty Georgie, and at least some of the gifts have been purchased though most won't be wrapped until 11:59pm on December 24th.



As an adult I don't get into the gift giving as much as I used to, or rather the gift getting, but there was a time when the anticipation of finding out what was under the tree seemed

almost unbearable to me. One of those times was back in December 1980 when I was 6 yrs. old. I was at that age where I wanted to be just like my dad who just happened be one heck of a harmonica player. I can still hear it now, the melodious sound coming out of the kitchen where my dad would often spend hours going back and forth strumming his guitar and playing the mouth organ.

One of our family traditions at the time was having all of the gifts, except for Santa's of course, wrapped and placed under the tree in early December so that you had a chance to try and guess what you were getting. You were allowed to pick them up, shake them, smell them, etc. The only rule was that you were not allowed to open them or try to peek inside.

That year in particular I had done an excellent job of dropping hints for what I wanted, just picture Ralphie from A Christmas Story but replace BB Gun with harmonica, so I was not too surprised to look under the tree and see a small rectangular shaped box with my name on it. I picked it up and felt the weight and then I shifted the box back and forth and felt the object slide back in forth. It was definitely a harmonica!!!

For the next few weeks I would come home from school, pick it up, and gently run it across my pursed lips as I imagined what sounds would soon be flowing from it.

Finally, Christmas morning came and I eagerly grabbed my gift, opened it, and held out my new, shiny... jackknife. Don't get me wrong, a jackknife was a great gift for a 6 yr. old boy but after all of the anticipation I'm sure that my disappointment showed. After the rest of the presents were unwrapped, and I had managed to get over my initial let down, my dad pulled out one more present which turned out to be, you guessed it, a harmonica. In less than an hour I had gone from excited anticipation to deep disappointment to utter joy. It was a Christmas miracle! Well, not quite but it did make me think about a real pre-Christmas miracle.

In the book of Luke chapter 1 we learn that an older couple, Zechariah and Elizabeth, were considered upright and blameless. We also learn that they were unable to have children and that it really weighed on Elizabeth in particular. One day when Zechariah, who was a priest, was chosen by lot to go into the Temple to burn incense he encountered an angel who told him that he would not only have a son but that the boy would be a blessing and a joy to him and his wife and that many would rejoice because of his birth. Zechariah doubted at first, and lost his voice for 9 months because of it, but when Elizabeth eventually had the baby Zechariah sang out because of the joy in his heart. The baby of course was John the Baptist, who went on to prepare the way for his cousin Jesus fulfilling everything that the angel had prophesied about him.

I share both of these stories with you because perhaps you too are experiencing disappointment this holiday season and are feeling stuck. The good news is that what you may be feeling in this moment is not the end of the story, what you long for might be just around the corner. It may not be what you thought you needed, I ended up using the jack knife a lot more than I ever did the harmonica, or it may not come when you wanted but don't give up hope. After all, hope is what Christmas is all about.

Speaking of Christmas, I would like to invite you to join me December 25th @7am at New Hope Community Church (203 W. Center St. Medina) for a time of Celebration followed a free breakfast. All are welcome!

See you in two weeks!
Pastor Randy

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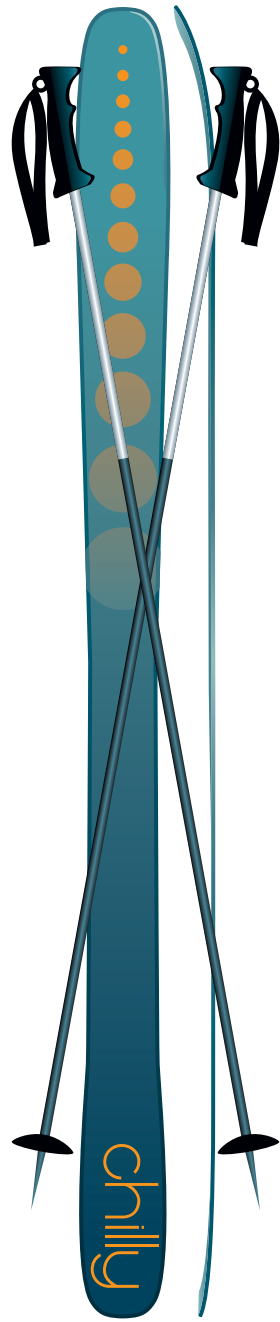
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