



1 Section Tuesday, December 16, 2025 Volume 67 Number 2



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By Christine Smallman

Countdown to Christmas

With the current date being December 16, 2025, there are only 9 days left until Christmas!

It's a great time for last-minute shopping, wrapping gifts, and getting into the festive spirit for the big day!.

Some of the numerous activities to prepare for that day are:

Shopping: You've got about a week and a half for online orders and in-store purchases.

Decorating: Time to put up the final touches!

Festivities: Enjoy holiday parties, baking, and cozy nights at home.

Christmas cards: Sending out your yearly cards and Christmas letter.

It's the peak of the holi-

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Poor Will's Farmland News Almanack

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December 17 - 23

Poor Will's Almanack
The third Week of December
The Second Week of Early Winter

If we are to live in the present, being truly alive, then everything recedes except these simple things that we observe, these particular movements that we make, a walk in the garden, the watching of birds.

Robert Orwell

Record Average Temperatures For The Farmland News Area (Toledo Station)

December 17: Record High: 58 - 1877 Record Low: - 8 - 1951 Average High: 35 Average Low: 20

December 18: Record High: 56 - 1939 Record Low: - 7 - 1945 Average High: 34 Average Low: 20

December 19: Record High: 59 - 1895 Record Low: - 8 - 1884 Average High: 34 Average Low: 20

December 20: Record High: 62 - 1895 Record Low: - 7 - 1963 Average High: 34 Average Low: 19

December 21: Record High: 63 - 1967 Record Low: - 15 - 1989 Average High: 34 Average Low: 19

December 22: Record High: 61 - 1949 Record Low: - 19 - 1989 Average High: 34 Average Low: 19

December 23: Record High: 59 - 1941 Record Low: - 11 - 1960 Average High: 33 Average Low: 19

The Moon in December

The Moon: The Moon is full on December 5
The Moon enters its last quarter on December 14

The Moon is new on December 20
The Moon enters its second quarter on December 27

Sun Time: Between the 19th and the 25th, the day's length remains steady at about nine hours 20 minutes for most of the region, the shortest span of the year. Winter Solstice occurs on December 21 at 10:02 a.m.

The Stars: you go outside an hour or so before sunrise, look up to find the Big Dipper high overhead, its winter position before dawn. Like the hands of a great clock, the Dipper's motion around the North Star tells the time of year.

When it lies in the west before sunrise, daffodils bloom.

With the Dipper deep along the Southern horizon in the early morning dark, lilies and roses are flowering.

And when the Dipper has moved to the eastern sky, the first leaves are starting to turn for

autumn.

Shooting Star Time: The Ursid Meteors fall after midnight at the rate of about five to ten per hour on December 21 and 22.

Weather Trends

December 15 Front: The coldest December days, those with better than a 35 percent chance for temperatures in the 20s or below, all come within several days of this front.

The most bitter day in December weather history is the 19th, with a 30 percent chance for highs only in the teens.

Zeitgebers:

Events in Nature that Tell the Time of Year:

Instead of hundreds of wild flowers changing the landscape weekly, winter brings the gift of constancy.

The black centers of the empty milkweed pods face the sun, free from change, hiding nothing.

Basal leaves of thistle and garlic mustard lie flat, close to the ground; they remain passive and unmoving until March.

Sleek heads of ironweed, dry and soft, wait for sparrows week after week.

Only one flower blossoms in the warmest years: the skunk cabbage in the swamp; it often stays in bloom all winter, long enough for almost anyone to find it.

Farm and Garden Time:

Be on the lookout for small whiteflies that may have come indoors on the house plants you kept outside during the summer.

Whiteflies seem harmless enough in early winter, but they can get out of hand by February and destroy otherwise healthy plants.

Also look for the tiny spider mites with a magnifying glass when leaves begin to become discolored or diseased.

Scale insects (looking a little like elongated bumps on plant leaves and stems) may have taken over your spider plants during the late summer.

If you see them on one plant, they may be on others.

Mind and Body Time:

When the barometer falls in advance of the Christmas cold front and the New Year's cold front, your emotions could also take a tumble..

And arthritis, sinusitis and old surgical sites may also cause you problems until those weather systems pass through.

Creature Time

(for fishing, hunting, feeding, bird watching):

As the barometer falls in advance of the December 20 and December 25 cold fronts, fishing and hunting should improve.

Increase the amount of seed and suet available for weather worsens.

The birds not only provide entertainment and

company, they often stay throughout the year eating insects. Some people put out decorative seed wreaths for the holidays.

Squirrels, partial to dried Indian corn, enjoy playing on spinning devices that make them work for their treats.

Journal

Several years ago, I took our two bulldogs out for a walk in the woods. It had snowed a few more inches over night, for a total of several feet in some places, and we were the first to navigate the path.

The dogs worked their way through the high snow, the puppy, six months old, breaking trail with his chest.

The older bulldog was invigorated by the cold, ranged on ahead, leaping fallen trees, cacing bcd from time to time for reassurance and to check the puppy.

Above the dam, the river was frozen over.

Below, in the open channel that led to the mill, the water was black and the current strong and loud.

Halfway to the old sycamore where vultures used to roost, a formation of geese flew over heading north.

Then at the bend of the river, suddenly there was a whinny of robins as we walked into the large flock that had been here feeding on honeysuckle berries since October.

On both sides of the path, birds moved through the undergrowth, calling and playing.

I felt surround by and included in several separate societies then; I was part of the flocks and part of the pack.

Making my way through the snow, I thought back about the year I used to take a litter of puppies out through the overgrown fields of a farm I rented.

On those walks, I experienced an excitement forgotten until today's outing in the snow, and I recognize now how important that excitement was and how I miss it.

I think that when I am lonely, it is because I've slipped too far away from some prerequisite communion, a hard running with the pack, a romp with my clan.

I think we were all made to dance and cavort together in community of species.

Although the lesson for me has much to do with my relationships with people (or the lack of relationships), I do not seem to learn that that lesson from or with other people.

I only glimpse its truth in these woods with the dogs and with the robins, recalling our ancestry and our innate design, what we must have been and still could be.

Almanack Literature

A Scary Halloween

By Ibbie Ledford

Willard, Ohio

Just last week, I attended the funeral of my cousin and best friend Nellie, whose mind Al-

(Continued on Page 3)

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(Continued From Page 2)

zheimer's disease had destroyed.

Growing up, Nellie and I had been as close as sisters, and vivid memories of things we did together came flooding back, especially one Halloween when my sisters played a scary prank on us.

Nellie was spending the night with me, as she often did. We wanted to go trick-or-treating but we had no costumes.

So Mama gave us each a flour sack, a scissors and crayons to make our own.

The sacks fit perfectly over our heads.

Places needed for eyes and mouths were carefully marked, cut

out and painted as scary as we could make them.

We put them on and began to pester Mama to let us walk down to my brother Chock's house, about a quarter of a mile away, to peek in the windows and scare him and his wife.

Mama warned us it was very dark and we might be afraid, but we assured her we wouldn't.

After all, we weren't babies; we were ten years old.

As we walked down the road, we didn't feel a bit afraid.

We watched the moon peek out ever so often from behind a cloud to light our way.

As we approached Chock's house, we crept to the window, quickly showed our masks, then ducked

down, trying to muffle our giggles.

Chock, suspecting the goblins were Nellie and I, slipped up behind us, and as we lifted our heads to peek in the window again, he grabbed us and yelled, "Boo!"

It scared the daylights out of us, as he picked us up, one under each arm, and carried us into the house where his wife, Mae, had teacakes and milk waiting.

After we ate our fill, Chock offered to walk us back home, but we declined.

We were giggling and talking when we suddenly heard rustling in the bushes right beside us.

Then two white figures, looking like what we had been told ghosts looked like, lunged at us from the roadside.

We ran toward home, screaming and crying.

My body tried to outrun my legs, and I fell face-down, sliding in the gravel.

The next thing I knew the "ghosts" had me cradled in their arms, only they looked a lot like my sisters, Margaret and Irene, with sheets draped over their heads.

They had meant to scare us but never dreamed it would be so traumatic.

They made a "pack saddle," interlocking their arms so I could sit on them and hold on to their shoulders, and they carried me home with Nellie following, holding on to their skirts.

The packsaddle ride home was almost worth the scare. FN

FARMLAND NEWS – A Gift That Lasts All Year!

Why Are Flies So Attracted To My Nose

Words of Inspiration

By Dr. James L. Snyder

Throughout my life, I have dealt with many "pesky" things that provoke the dickens out of me.

I sure do miss those "dickens."

Recently, a new "pesky" thing entered my life.

I never knew flies could be so dominating in a person's life.

After all, they're just little things with wings.

I was having lunch with The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, and just as we were getting started with lunch, a fly buzzed around my nose.

I tried swatting him with both hands, but only hit my nose.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage looked at me and said, "What are you doing?"

I responded, "Don't you see these flies buzzing around me?"

It wasn't long until that fly came at my nose again.

I clapped my hand on my nose, and wouldn't you know it, I got that fly.

Even when riding in the Sissy

Van, I am being attacked by these frustrating flies. When I sit down in the Sissy Van, I buckle my seatbelt and then look around very carefully to see if there are any flies, and I don't see any.

Somehow, they have a way of hiding long enough, then attacking my nose.

Finally, Sunday came and The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and I went to our church service as we do every week.

She plays the piano; I lead the

singing, and then the preaching.

As I began preaching, all of a sudden, there was a fly right in front of my face.

I just swatted, hoping to chase it away.

For a few seconds, I didn't see it and thought it had just gone away.

Then it all began.

The fly landed on my nose, almost going up my nostril.

I chased it away and thought it was gone forever.

However, it came back and land-

ed on my cheek, then on my ear, and I was getting very frustrated. I didn't want anybody to know that I was being distracted by this lousy fly.

I was preaching, and when I preach, I open my mouth. I never gave that a thought, but as I was preaching, all of a sudden, the fly went inside my mouth.

Now I have a dilemma here.

What do I do?

How do I get rid of the fly?

Do you think I should spit it out in front of everyone? I didn't know what to do.

I swallowed the fly, hoping nobody would see what happened.

Did you ever swallow a fly?

It is the most disgusting experience I've had in my whole life.

I could feel that fly fluttering down my throat, landing in my stomach.

I didn't want anyone to know what I just did, so I coughed a little and then took a sip from my water bottle. FN

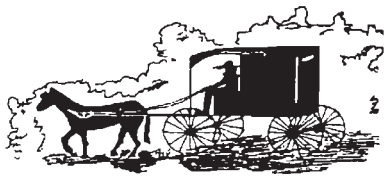
Dr. James L. Snyder
Ocala, Florida

Phone 1-352-216-3025

e-mail: jamesnyder51@gmail.com
website: www.jamesnyderministries.com

The Amish Cook

by Gloria Yoder



Who Sleeps Where?

Should the top bunk be reserved for the oldest, or should the younger ones take a turn in it?

The novelty of sleeping in the top bunk deteriorated some years ago.

We were delighted when Daniel built two sets of sturdy cherry bunk beds for the children.

They met the specs for DCFS for those who were in the foster system at the time.

There was a girls' and a boys' room.

It worked great.

Then Daddy went to heaven.

Things changed.

Everyone wanted to be as close to Mom as they could—especially at night.

Making room for them all in my little bedroom seemed like the only reasonable thing to do.

The youngest ones slept crosswise on a half bed mattress we had placed on the floor.

Floor space was basically non-existent, but we didn't care.

We had each other, and that was really all that mattered.

Prior to my husband's death I could not sleep well when sandwiched between two people when we had children with us in bed for one reason or another.

Now I found myself sometimes sleeping with up to four or five children by morning.

What a faithful God we serve—He knows just how much we can handle—down to allowing us to sleep in crowded quarters!

Transitioning back to bedrooms has been a stretch, yet we need to function as normally as possible.

This summer the children were completely impressed with sleeping on our screened-in deck.

Two queen mattresses worked well for all six of them.

I recall being in Haiti at an orphanage where I was enthralled with all these

dear children.

When we were told that they find comfort in sleeping together, my heart was touched.

Today it makes sense in a way that goes deeper than it did back then.

If little hearts are lonely or sad, they find comfort in being close to others.

Now that summer is long gone and the temperatures on the deck have dropped well below freezing, it is a thing of the past for this year.

I debated, prayed, and debated some more.

There is a practical way to decide on a sleeping arrangement; we just needed to find it.

Finally this week I told the children I will need their help—I have a plan.

We'll take apart the bunk bed in the boys' room and place a large mattress on the floor where the boys can all sleep together.

They were sold on the idea.

I had young helpers as we backed out screws, disassembled, and carried out piece by piece of the bunk bed.

We stood back to survey the change and the empty spot.

"I can see where the bedpost was," I remarked, referring to smudges on the wall.

"I can see where feet were," Julia quipped.

I laughed.

Yes, that is right.

This room had a lot of loving, and someday it could certainly use another painting.

I got out some sudsy cleaner and sprayed that wall while Hosanna and Joshua scrubbed away on it.

We certainly wouldn't want to do without dirt—surely then we would be missing out on healthy youngsters or healthy fun.

Once the floor was cleaned and dried, we fetched a queen mattress and placed it in the corner.

Warm circles chased around my heart as I thought of our friends, the Razvi family,

* A Christmas Wish *
Recipe Of The Week
* A Christmas Wish *

Bohemian Christmas Cookies

1 cup butter
3/4 cup powdered sugar
6 egg yolks
3 tablespoons cream

4 cups flour
2 tablespoons water
1 cup powdered sugar
1 cup chopped, blanched almonds

Cream together butter and 2/3 cup powdered sugar, beat in 4 egg yolks and cream.
Gradually stir in flour until dough is just stiff enough to roll, chill.
Sprinkle board lightly with mixture of flour and powdered sugar combined in equal parts.
Place dough on the board and roll 1/4 inch thick.
Cut with star shaped cookie cutter.
Place on ungreased baking sheet and bake in moderate oven 350 to 375 degrees for 15 to 20 minutes.
When cold, spread with icing made by beating together the remaining egg yolks and water and adding powdered sugar to thicken mixture.
Sprinkle almonds thickly over iced cookies.
Makes 4 to 5 dozen.
NOTE: This is a Vintage Recipe: 1963

This Recipe of the Week is from Lori Wachtman, Napoleon, Ohio

* A Christmas Wish *
* A Christmas Wish *
* A Christmas Wish *

who also used mattresses on the floor for their large family and had experienced the miracle of adoption.

At their house, our children loved playing on the mattresses on their level where they could easily get on and off.

Along the front side of our mattress, I placed a row of pillows for the four boys where I could easily reach all of them when I came to bless them and pray for them before they fall asleep.

Bedtime is not perfect, but it is precious.

How well I remember before Daniel passed, how it was one of the most intense part of the day for us.

We both felt like there is a better way to get children (including those who had been through trauma) to settle down peacefully in a timely manner.

Today I don't feel like I have found all those keys, but I look back and I see that God has been faithful every one of those nights both before and after Daniel's death.

Before Daniel passed there would be times he would sing homemade songs for the children.

I knew how exhausted he was, yet it brought smiles to their faces.

The songs he made up as he went were usually about the three young men in the

fiery furnace and how Jesus came to be with them and kept them safe in the fire.

Even now as we walk this pathway of life there are times when it feels fiery, and yes, there is One who walks with us.

He keeps us from being burned and brings much joy and peace.

Last evening we all gathered in the boys' room for our bedtime story and prayer.

It is important to the children that we pray for protection over our dreams.

They notice a distinct difference in not having bad dreams, especially when they personally pray out loud about it before falling asleep.

And who is supposed to make the bed, with four boys in it?

I have yet to find a boy who enjoys the job!

I took Julia's idea of each of them using their own blanket then tossing it into a tote the next morning.

Presto.

Too easy—though I'm discovering it's up to me to get even that simple habit grooved into their brains of placing the blanket where it belongs!

This morning we did a practice run before they went to school, to simplify things for the future—they really won't mature with a

dozen reminders.

Butterscotch-Graham Cracker Christmas Candy

Saltines or graham crackers

1 cup butter (use only 1-1/2 cups for crunchier candy)

1 cup brown sugar
1-1/2 cups chocolate chips

Put a single layer of saltine or graham crackers side by side (with 4 sides touching one another) on a 10 by 15-inch rimmed cookie sheet, lined with parchment paper.

Bring butter and brown sugar to a rolling boil. Boil for three minutes.

Spread mixture on top of crackers.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Bake crackers with sauce for 5 minutes.

Remove from heat and immediately sprinkle with 1 1/2 cups chocolate chips.

Let set three minutes and then spread melted chips over with a butter knife.

Cool and break into sized pieces of your choice.

Readers may write Gloria with culinary or cultural questions at: Gloria Yoder, 10510 E. 350th Avenue, Flat Rock, IL 62427.

Christmas Traditions

The Empty Nest

by Becky Corwin-Adams

When I was a child, Christmas shopping was a lot different.

I loved to spend hours looking at the Sears, Penney's and Montgomery Ward catalogs and making a wish list

I hoped I would get everything on my list.

Of course, that never happened but I was always happy with the gifts I received.

Mom didn't have a driver's license in the 60s, so we often walked downtown to do our shopping.

In the winter, it was a long, cold walk.

One Christmas I really wanted a Mary Poppins doll.

Mom picked up at package at one of the catalog stores and I was hoping it was the doll.

There was an item number on the box.

So I memorized that number and when I got home, I grabbed the catalogs, took them to my bedroom, and looked at the doll pages.

Sure enough, I was getting the doll I wanted so badly!

Of course, I acted surprised on Christmas morning.

When my own sons were young, they would go to great lengths to find out what they were getting for Christmas.

They would shake the packages and hold them up to the light in an attempt to see what was inside.

Sometimes I would put

gifts in bigger boxes or wrapped the gifts in double layers of paper to throw them off.

I shouldn't have been surprised at their curiosity because I know they inherited it from me.

Layaway used to be a popular service.

Shoppers could pay a small amount as a down payment and then make weekly payments until the layaway was paid in full.

This was an excellent way to secure the gifts you really wanted to give if you didn't have the money upfront.

When I worked at G.C. Murphys and later at Kmart, the layaway counter was always busy.

In the 60s, my Mom saved Top Value stamps she received at the grocery store.

I enjoyed licking the stamps and putting them in the saver books.

The only item I remember getting with the stamps was a pink stuffed elephant named Toppie, the Top Value Stamp mascot.

Fast forward about ten years and I was a young mom saving S & H Green stamps.

When my oldest son was a toddler, I redeemed the stamps to get him a ride on

green worm toy.

He really wanted the popular Inchworm toy, however that was out of our budget as a young Air Force family.

My son was happy with the toy and he happily rode it around our small apartment.

In the 60s, most people put tinsel on their Christmas tree.

Mom would buy a package of 1000 tinsel strands and we had to put them on every branch of our tree.

After Christmas was over, we had to remove the tinsel and save it for the following year.

Some people would string popcorn but my family never did.

Every year, Mom's family had a Christmas Dinner and it was usually held at our house.

I was so excited to see my aunts, uncles, and cousins.

The kids had a gift exchange and Grandma Etchey bought each of her grandchildren a \$1 gift.

In later years, Aunt Millie decided we should have a White Elephant gift exchange.

Family members brought so many gifts that it took several hours to open all of them... A few of the gifts were not fit for children to see.

When I worked at Kmart, we always had an Angel Tree.

People could choose a paper tag from the Christmas tree with the name and age of a child who needed a gift.

I enjoyed participating in that holiday tradition.

Now my seven-year-old great granddaughter raises money to go shopping on Black Friday for Toys For Tots.

She sells some of her old toys and I also donate money for her to use to buy gifts.

This is her fourth year of shopping for kids in need.

I haven't gone shopping on Black Friday for many years.

A fond memory of mine

ing the grandkids open their gifts.

Every year after the big day is over, I think about how much time I spent wrapping the gifts and it's all over in an hour.

My grandsons were always so excited when we made the three-hour drive from Englewood to Montpelier.

Their noses would be pressed against the window watching for us to arrive.

Now the trip to their house is only ten minutes long.

However, opening the mountains of gifts takes several hours.

We all take turns opening one gift at time so everyone can see each gift.

The youngest member of the family goes first and since I'm the family matriarch, I am the last one to open a gift.

I really don't need any gifts because time spent with family is the only gift I need.

Becky Corwin- Adams is originally from Defiance and now lives on a 31-acre farm in Williams County. She and her husband have two sons, four grandchildren, two great grandchildren, five cocker spaniels, and two corgis.

FN



Merry Christmas to our Customers and Friends!

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TIS THE SEASON (Continued From Page 1)

day season, so soak up the Christmas cheer as the big day approaches!

Why Shop Local

Shopping local is important because it strengthens the local economy, fosters community connections, and reduces environmental impact, providing benefits that circulate beyond a simple transaction.

Economic Benefits

A significant portion of the money spent at a local, independent business stays within the community, often recirculating 2-3 times more than money spent at a national chain . . . which creates a powerful "multiplier effect" that boosts the entire local economy.

Small businesses are major job creators, offering stable employment opportunities for your neigh-

bors and contributing to a healthier local workforce.

Local businesses contribute to the local tax base, which in turn helps fund vital public services like

Schools

Libraries

Police

Fire departments

Local infrastructure improvements.

Locally owned businesses are more likely to purchase goods and services from other local suppliers, fostering a supportive network of economic activity within the community.

Most towns have a Chamber of Commerce which offer gift certificates for product sold in town and a double spend for the community

Local shopping stimulates economies, supports public services, and fosters a number of unique community and environmental benefits such as:

Unique Character and Identity:

Local shops and restaurants give a community its own distinct personality and charm, preventing homogenization that can come with an excess of chain stores.

Personalized Service: Small business owners often know their customers by name and provide a more personalized, attentive service experience that is often lacking in larger retail chains.

Charitable Giving: Local businesses donate to local non-profits, events, and school sports teams at a much higher rate (around 250% more) than large corporations, helping to fund community causes.

Fosters Connections: Shopping at local markets or boutiques provides a chance to connect with business owners and neighbors, building stronger social ties and a greater sense of community pride.

Environmental Benefits Reduced Carbon Footprint: Locally sourced products require less transportation, which means fewer carbon emissions and a reduced environmental impact.

Less Waste and Packaging: Products from local sources often involve less processing and packaging waste compared to mass-produced items shipped long distances.

Sustainable Practices: Many local businesses prioritize sustainable and ethical practices in their operations, such as using local materials or energy-efficient lighting, aligning with envi-



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ronmental responsibility

delivery without shipping worries.

Last Minute Gift Ideas

Last-minute Christmas gift ideas include: digital options such as e-gift cards and subscriptions; quick-delivery physical items like; gift baskets and tech gadgets; also experience gifts like cooking classes or local attraction passes.

You can also obtain Instant Digital Gifts: These gifts are delivered instantly via email, making them perfect for Christmas Day

E-Gift Cards: Local stores in your area offer gift cards which are highly practical as the receiver of the card can purchase almost anything they need. Specialty retailer gift cards feel more personalized if they cater to a specific interest like outdoor activities, fashion, beauty, or gourmet food.

Experiential gift cards

(Continued on Page 8)

Ready to finally kick your feet up?

After weeks of shopping, cooking, and hosting, you deserve a real break. Herron's Amish-made recliners are built for lasting support, so when you finally sit down, your whole body can breathe.

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Merry Christmas



Rath Builders in Defiance, Ohio adds warmth and charm to your home inside and out.

TIS THE SEASON (Continued From Page 7)

like those for a future getaway, or a local food delivery service for a night off cooking, offer convenience and a thoughtful break from routine.

Another option is Subscriptions & Memberships

Online Classes: Provides access to a wide array of classes taught by industry leaders, perfect for someone looking to learn a new skill.

Audible Gift Membership: Ideal for book lovers or those with long commutes, offering credits to choose from thousands of audiobooks.

An experience Gift Box: The recipient chooses their own experience from thousands of options worldwide, with a digital confirmation available instantly.

Babies, Children and Pre-Teens

Popular gifts for babies include developmental play mats, interactive plush toys, and practical items like

quality bath sets and soft blankets.

Many parents also appreciate gifts of essential gear or contributions to a savings account.

Developmental toys and play gear support a baby's rapid cognitive and motor skill development during their first year.

Popular gifts for children in 2025 include classic building sets like LEGO and Magna-Tiles, interactive STEM toys such as AI robots, science kits, or there are imaginative play items like pretend kitchen sets and interactive plush animals.

Building toys are perennial favorites that encourage creativity and engineering skills.

Popular gifts for pre-teens in 2025 often blend independence and personal style with entertainment and technology.

These include trending room decor, the latest tech gadgets, and hobby-related kits.

Pre-teens love tech gifts that offer entertainment and a sense of independence.

AirTags: This lost-item tracker is a practical gift for a pre-teen who might be a little forgetful, helping them keep tabs on their backpack, keys, or other essentials.

Mini 12 Instant Camera: Instantly prints photos, a great way for them to capture memories and decorate their space.

Noise-Cancelling Headphones: Offer quality sound and noise cancellation at a good value, perfect for studying or listening to music on the go.

Virtual Reality Instruments: A popular choice for gamers, offering an immersive virtual reality experience.

Room Decor & Lifestyle: As pre-teens spend more time in their rooms, decor items that personalize their space are very popular.

LED and neon signs are a trendy way to add ambience to their room or "gaming cave".

LED lights with clips to hang photos and mementos, allowing them to personalize their space.

Popular gifts for teenagers include the latest tech gadgets, items for personalizing their room decor, and trendy fashion and beauty products that align with their social media-driven interests.

Gift cards and money are also a universally appreciated option, offering independence in choosing their own items or to put in a savings account for post-high school graduation plans such as college, trade school, a car or other goals the teen has for the future.

Tech & Gadgets are items that consistently rank at the top of teens' wish lists, especially those that enhance their music, gaming, or content creation experience.

Popular gifts for young adults often focus on independence, style, and utility.

Some of these items are: the latest tech accessories, and fashion staples like a



Lily Creek Farms and Mahnke Orchards in Napoleon, Ohio serve the special needs community through events, services, sales from the orchard and 20 onsite vendors offering a variety of gift items.

travel drink tumbler, practical items for a dorm room or apartment, such as espresso machines or single serve, a mini-fridge, coffee makers, quality kitchenware, clothing or a digital picture frame for their home or office.

Gift cards to shoe stores, bath and body stores, gaming stores and restaurants are also popular options.

Dinks

Dinks are couples with no children - Double Income No Kids.

Popular gifts for couples with no children often center on enhancing their shared life experiences, from luxurious at-home upgrades to travel and culinary adventures.

Gifts that encourage the couple to spend quality time together or travel are highly appreciated.

Experience Gift Boxes: A "Fun Together" Experience Box lets the couple

choose their own adventure from thousands of options worldwide, such as cooking classes, a couples' massage, or a hotel stay.

"A Year of Dates" Jar/ Cards: This box of 52 sealed, color-coded envelopes provides unique date night ideas for at home or for a night out, a thoughtful way to inspire quality time together without the planning hassle.

Mystery Picnic Date for Two: This gift involves a self-guided scavenger hunt where the couple picks up gourmet treats from local vendors, culminating in a secluded picnic spot.

This is a fun way to explore a new city or their local area.

Cooking Classes: A gift certificate for a local cooking class provides a fun, hands-on activity where they can learn a new skill

(Continued on Page 9)



Merry Christmas
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AJ Door in West Unity, Oh. has been serving their neighbors for over 25 years. Whether you're repairing or upgrading, their experienced team uses the latest tools and training to deliver reliable, high-quality service every time.

TIS THE SEASON (Continued From Page 8)

together, from pasta making to mixology.

These curated gift ideas focus on shared experiences, home upgrades, and high-end kitchen items for childfree couples.

Families and Parents

Popular gifts for married couples with children include: items that facilitate shared family experiences, provide a much-needed convenience to busy parents and also offers opportunities for relaxation or personal time.

Popular Family Activity & Experience Gifts that are popular that the entire family can enjoy together help create lasting memories and encourage quality family time.

Experience Vouchers/Annual Passes: A gift

certificate for a local zoo, museum, or an experience-based service like escape rooms provides opportunities for fun family outings without the financial strain on the parents' budget.

Family Game Night Package: Assemble a basket with a variety of family-friendly board games or games (board or card), gourmet popcorn, seasoning, or a gift card for a family-friendly streaming service.

Outdoor Activities: Encourage outdoor play with a gift of a corn hole set, a large trampoline with sides, or a sandbox set which will help get their children outside and enjoyed by all ages.

Creative Kits & Cooking Sets: Hands-on gifts like science kits, craft kits or cooking sets, a set of personalized aprons and a fun cookbook encourage cre-

ativity and a shared sense of accomplishment in the kitchen or during craft time.

Gifts for Parents' Convenience & Relaxation

Busy parents appreciate gifts that make their daily lives easier or give them a rare chance to unwind.

Couple massages, dinner and a movie will perk up their marriage experience and give them a chance to reconnect.

A night of free daycare is also welcomed.

The Gift of Time: One of the most valued gifts is an offer to babysit for a few hours or even overnight which gives parents the chance for a "date night" or simply some quiet time alone.

Home Services: A gift certificate for a one-time professional house cleaning service or a meal delivery service can significantly reduce a busy parent's workload and stress.

Relaxation & Self-Care Items: Help them create a spa-like retreat at home with a quality towel warmer, luxury bath soaks or a gift certificate for a massage or facial.

Smart Home Cleaning: High-tech helpers like a robot vacuum can automate cleaning tasks, freeing up valuable time for the couple.

Personalized & Sentimental Keepsakes: Gifts that capture memories of their growing family hold a special place in parents' hearts.

Personalized Family Art: Custom prints, engraved ornaments, or unique items like a family portrait painting from a photo are thoughtful and unique mementos.

Family Photo Items: A custom photo album, a professionally printed photo book of their shared memories, or a digital picture frame that family and friends can instantly send



Homestead Bulk Foods in Archbold, Ohio offers quality bulk food at an affordable price. This store is a baker and cooks delight.

photos to are cherished gifts.

Keepsake Kits: Items like a family handprint kit allow parents to capture their children's small handprints, creating a permanent memory of their early years.

Message Boards for Family: This unique, Wi-Fi-connected device allows family members to send messages, drawings, and photos directly to a screen

(Continued on Page 10)

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TIS THE SEASON (Continued From Page 9)

inside the box, which then causes a heart on the front to spin to indicate a new message, providing a sweet way for loved ones to stay connected.

Grandparents

Popular gifts for grandparents include sentimental personalized items, practical home upgrades and services that offer convenience, and shared experiences such as cooking classes or getaways.

Personalized & sentimental gifts have high emotional value and are excellent for grandparents who

appreciate family memories.

In addition to some of the items listed above for parents, grandparents may also enjoy:

Custom Family Tree or Map Art: Personalized wall art, such as a wooden family tree frame or a custom print featuring the star maps from significant family dates (like birthdays or anniversaries), makes for a unique and heartfelt display piece.

Personalized Cookbook or Journal: A custom recipe book filled with family recipes is a great way to preserve culinary history.

A guided journal like "Tell Me Your Life Story,

Grandma/Grandpa" provides prompts to help them share their life stories and family history, creating a cherished heirloom.

Handwritten Letter: A thoughtful, old-fashioned letter expressing gratitude and sharing favorite memories is a priceless gift that can be more impactful than a material item.

Practical home upgrades and services for grandparents who have everything or appreciate practicality, gifts that enhance their comfort and convenience at home are ideal.

Robot Vacuum: Automates floor cleaning, reducing physical strain and freeing up time for other activities.

Quality Kitchenware or Small Appliances: Upgrading their kitchen with items like a high-quality chef's knife or a single-serve coffee maker is a practical luxury they can use every day.

Luxury Comfort Items: Bamboo Sheet Set: A high-end, luxurious sheet set for a comfortable night's sleep.

Back and neck massagers provide muscle relief at home and is often available for a good price.

A Towel Warmer or Plush Robe: These items can bring a spa-like experience to their daily routine.

Home Services: The gift of a one-time professional house cleaning, a gardening service, or snow removal can be incredibly helpful for busy or aging parents.

Experiences & Hobbies

Experience gifts create new memories and cater to their personal interests, providing opportunities for fun and relaxation.

Classes or Workshops: Signing them up for a local cooking, pottery, or dance class can encourage new hobbies and provide a fun shared activity.

Tickets to Events: Tickets to a concert, a sporting event, or a play can be a great outing, especially if paired with arranged transportation for ease.

Gourmet Food Baskets & Subscriptions: A specialized food gift basket offers a variety of treats for them to enjoy.

Subscription to a coffee club, wine delivery service, or a "Book of the Month"



Casey's in N. Baltimore, Ohio is every man's dream store. They have earned a solid reputation for over 20 years in Northwest, Ohio.

club provides ongoing enjoyment throughout the year.

Weekend Getaway: A gift certificate for a weekend trip to a meaningful destination can create cherished new memories.

Other Gift Ideas

Check out your local stores in your communities for unique or practical gifts.

Peruse this week's issue for advertisers who specifically picked this issue of the paper to highlight their businesses.

Most of them provide gift certificates or carry items or

services that can be easily given as gifts.

Whether it be a membership, subscription, gifts certificates for services or goods, gift baskets and so much more you don't have to travel far to find a Christmas gift for everyone.

We would like to thank AJ Door, Archbold Chamber of Commerce, Carpet Outlet and Flooring, Casey's/JMJ Bulldozer, Cummins Farm, Dimension Hardwoods, Deventhal Landscaping, Facklers, Herron's Furniture,

(Continued on Page 11)

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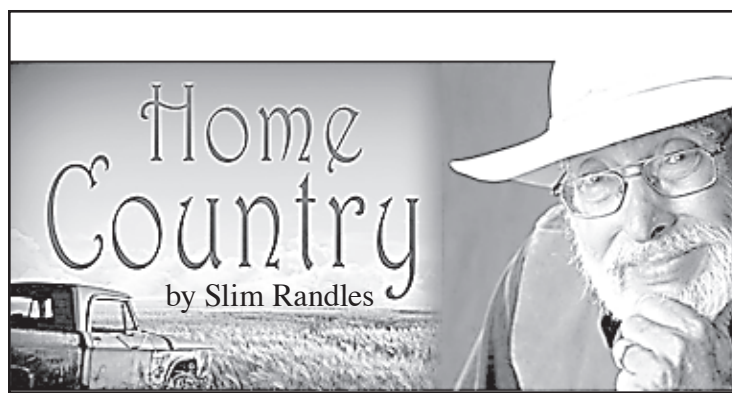
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Check out their ads in this week's paper for their location, contact information and good or services they offer.

*Merry Christmas!
Farmland News would like*

to thank all the vendors who chose to advertise their businesses in this week's issue.

Christine M. Smallman and her husband, Terry, live on a small hobby farm outside of Delta, Ohio. She has enjoyed a rich and diverse career in the field of education. She enjoys gardening, reading, painting, writing, and camping. She is a firm believer in the teachings of Khalil Gabri: Do what you love and love what you do - and you will never work a day in your life. FN



When the new college opened in the next town – a somewhat larger town than ours – our folks began wondering if making the 30 minute drive to class would be worth it.

Dud was the first to figure out that it was.

"Boys," he said, sitting at the Mule Barn philosophy counter and flipping his cup upright with one poetic motion, "I'm signed up over at J.H.T.. I'm going to get me an education."

"That's great, Dud," said his mentor and straight man, Doc.

"What are you taking?"

"Just one class to start out, Doc," Dud said.

"Thought I'd kinda e-e-e-ease into it, you know.

I'm taking functional literacy.

We're going to study words and their meanings."

"I thought you did that in high school.

Maybe even in grammar school?"

"Right, Doc.

But this is college, you know.

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Jerry did well in hockey, naturally, but endowing a two-year institution of semi-higher learning became possible only after he married the heiress to a pork-belly fortune.

You might call that "functional matrimony."

So J.H.T. J.C. was born, having innovative classes like "Pruning for the New Millenium," "Creative Sword Swallowing," and "First-Strike Self Defense."

It got some of the rest of us considering a return to the halls of Virginia creeper for a tune-up.

After all, as charter members of the Mule Barn truck stop's world dilemma think tank, it's our duty to stay on the cutting edge.

Let's see if your local junior college boasts a class in "How to teach an old dog new tricks." FN

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We wish you a warm, joyful Christmas and a healthy, prosperous New Year!

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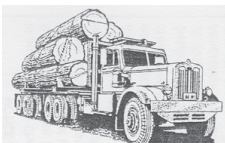
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