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# Happy Thanksgiving

## FROM OUR FAMILY TO YOURS!

## From the Editor's Desk

**By James Lauffer  
of Hometown magazine**

In 1979, the late Robin Williams released the comedy record "Reality ... What a Concept." As I pondered Thanksgiving, a unique national holiday, I continually thought to myself, "Thanksgiving Day ... What a concept!" A day set aside for giving thanks, for expressing gratefulness, for acknowledging the bounty — both material and spiritual — that we each possess in varying amounts.



The objects of my thankfulness are not unlike those of others and primarily center around my family and my memories. Sure, I am grateful for the Thanksgiving Day meals that spilled from the dining room table to the buffet to the small table in the breakfast nook, but these meals would be merely gluttonous, albeit glorious, repast if not for the loved ones with whom I blessed and shared the annual feasts, generally, back in the day, prepared by my mom with assists from sisters and my late grandmother.

A few years ago, as he and I approached our mid-60s, my brother-in-law Scott said to me, "Jim, we're getting old!" Indeed, we were and are, and as the years accumulate, I am ever more grateful for the family members with whom I can spend time and share a meal. In addition, I cherish the memories of family members who have passed away, who can no longer sit at the table and laugh at anecdotes of shared experiences. I embrace these memories; in them, I can still hear the words and laughter of loved ones.

I am thankful for a second family — the Hometown family, whose members are committed to the Punxsutawney community. I asked them to share their thoughts and feelings about Thanksgiving — as the muse moved them. Well, like the cornucopia that overflows with the harvest's bounty, my inbox quickly overflowed with the work of

fingers flying over keyboards. As always, I thank them for their efforts, and I urge you to read them.

I would be remiss if I didn't send a special thank you to the readers of Hometown and to the advertisers who support the magazine.

Finally, regardless of whether we bow our heads, let each of us pause to give thanks on this Thanksgiving Day. It will do our souls good. Happy Thanksgiving!



**Marty Armstrong**

I was thinking about what to contribute. Lots of good thoughts regarding family and get-togethers. Good meals, too, although I do not ever remember having turkey. My family raised chickens in quantity when I was a child so that was the go-to meal for Sundays and special occasions. What I like best is that Thanksgiving is a special time that falls during my favorite season of the year. It has connections to our early history and finally falls in the same month as a special day, Armistice Day, which signaled the end of a major war as opposed to the beginning of one. Having spent so many years studying our military service persons, I am thankful for the positive message of that service, especially in November, the month of Thanksgiving and Armistice Day.



**S. Thomas Curry**

From Thanksgiving Days of past years, there are many memories as a child, teen, adult, and senior citizen in the Punxsutawney Curry family. The earliest memories would go back to the late 1940s with the family gathering of the clan of uncles, aunts, and cousins at the Curry homestead in Punxsutawney's West End. Yes, there was lots of turkey, stuffing, gravy, sweet potatoes, etc., served to the kids at the smaller table set aside from the larger adult family table in the formal dining room. To follow were the many years of "giving thanks" before eating the luscious turkey dinner.

Most importantly in memory was that short time when family members, one by one, shared a "blessing" for which to be thankful. The experience gave more meaning to the

church hymn "Count Your Blessings" — "name them one by one." While there are more distractions on Thanksgiving Day in recent years, the tradition continues among family members. It gave more meaning in explaining to younger family members why one Thanksgiving Day was set aside as a U.S. national holiday on the fourth Thursday of each November. Certainly, it was not a day to watch an NFL football game on TV!

Another memory from past Thanksgiving dinners is a tradition gained from marriage. To be appreciated is a family tradition of my wife's family of grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins in Big Run. While it is well-known that the women of the families mostly prepared and contributed to the Thanksgiving dinner, it was learned that the Fike family tradition in Big Run was for the men to clean up after the large family meal and wash the dishes and pots and pans. The invitation (or was it a command) from one of my wife's uncles was "Come on, Tom, now that you're in the family, join us in washing dishes and pots and pans." For sure, stacking dishes, etc. in a kitchen dishwasher today cannot replace the memorable good times among family men after a Thanksgiving Day dinner. The women rested and chatted.



**Gloria Kerr**

My most cherished memories of Thanksgiving date back to the 1970s and '80s when my parents were both alive. My husband and I were parents of a young son, and my brother, sisters, and I invariably showed up for an amazingly bountiful holiday dinner totally prepared by my mother.

In that era, the world was smaller but safer. Globalization and the internet had not yet shrunk our world with instant communications about earth-shaking events on other continents. We were safer from gun violence, pandemics, catastrophic weather disasters, fears of terrorists, and fires propelled by global warming. In fact, we could almost count on hunters being able to track their deer in the snow as deer hunting season, a beloved Pennsylvania tradition, opened two days after the big family feast of Thanksgiving. We might even be able to sled ride on the school day

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## From the Editor's

Continued from previous page

off the Monday after Thanksgiving.

My mother's dinners were legendary – a 20-25 pound turkey, roasted, and packed with at least three loaves of perfectly seasoned Strohmann's bread stuffing; gravy; always both white and sweet potatoes, mashed, baked, or in some gooey casserole; noodles bathed in turkey broth; a green bean or broccoli-with-cheese casserole, or both; cole slaw; homemade buns freshly baked; cranberries whole or in some orange sauce; pumpkin bread; a chilled red or green jello salad made with Philadelphia cream cheese, apples, and celery for dessert; pies of several kinds – pumpkin, mincemeat, and maybe an oatmeal crust cherry pie or Dutch apple pie. But the most eagerly awaited, once-a-year treat was an impossibly tall spice chiffon cake, baked in an angel food cake pan and then frosted with yummy penuche icing made with brown sugar, confectioner's sugar, and walnuts.

For years, Mom made Everything Herself! In our defense, we always cleaned up the table and did the mountain of dirty dishes, pots, and pans she had accrued on all the surfaces of the kitchen as she prepared her solo family feast. Then, as she was getting older, we, her children, became more appreciative of the time, money, effort, and LOVE that went into that fabulous feast, so we began taking major side dishes to Thanksgiving dinner.

It also became a habit for us all to gather at her house, as soon as we were home from work or whatever on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, to help bake the pies, the buns, and the pumpkin bread and try some samples as we well knew there would be impossibly more food choices on the feast-day table than any of us could manage to sample all. But that marvelous spice chiffon cake, a Pillsbury Bake-Off winning recipe from the early 1950s, was hers to bake. After she passed away in 2009, my sister and brother and his wife, Bonnie, practiced

baking it for several years on the day before Thanksgiving. They finally did learn how to measure ingredients, mom's way, to bake a spice cake that rose as tall as mom's and to make as much gooey penuche icing to cover the cake and have some left over still for my brother Jim and me to lick from the pan.

Eating the dinner itself was the culmination of this beloved annual ritual. My brother-in-law became the go-to man to say grace at the table as we sat in our regular Sunday dinner seats, unless mom had invited a friend she worked with at the Standard Pennant Company in Big Run whose husband has passed or an unmarried aunt who rotated holidays at her sisters' homes. After dinner, weather permitting, we were outside, the grown-ups throwing a football with the younger ones, taking walks on our country road to enjoy the last days of a colorful autumn, and finally settling in to watch football, play some raucous family game like Pictionary, and just laugh and talk together. Sometimes we got so loud that my dad initiated the humorous habit of raising his hand, like a kid in school, to get everyone's attention so he could speak, and we lovingly imitated that gesture for years after. Ahh! If we could only go back to the good, old days!

### Gloria's Postscript

What I'm most grateful for: At this time in history, I am most grateful that my ancestors chose to settle here in peaceful, beautiful, rural western Pennsylvania. As I watch the national and world news, I am appalled by the violence, the inhumanity of humans to their fellow men and women, and the extreme natural disasters we're told will become more common because of global warming. We have neither neighbor nations shooting at us nor tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, or wildfires threatening to destroy our homes and livelihoods. We can be relatively sure that the world we see around us when we go to bed will be the same world we wake up to in the morning. Boring? Not at all. Accepting the inevitable changes age brings to us all, we are blessed to live here in this Jefferson County area where we can live out our lives with the same constancy as the rising and the setting of the sun.

### Danielle Merrow

When asked what I'm most thankful for, the obvious answer is always my family. Moments. Those things money can't buy. I come from a big, loud, amazing family (three brothers and a sister, all of whom have a significant other, plus our two nephews and a niece), and my husband and I have produced a big, loud, amazing family (three boys: an eleven-year-old and eight-year-old twins). Family truly is everything, and I am

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## From the Editor's

Continued from page 4

proud of the example my parents set for my siblings and me, and the examples and traditions I can pass down to my own children.

I am thankful for a supportive and loving husband who is a true partner in our marriage and the best father our boys could ask for. I'm thankful for the three boys we've created and all their glorious similarities and differences. I am thankful for the opportunity to watch them grow and discover who they are and to help guide them toward the adults they will become. I'm thankful for the moments spent at the baseball field; the race tracks; the hockey rink; and the basketball court, cheering them on as they chase their dreams. And I'm eternally thankful for their unwavering support as I pursue my own goals.

I'm thankful for the opportunity to keep one foot deeply rooted in our hometown, and to give our children the Punxsutawney experience, while we reside in another county. I'm thankful that my boys call Punx'y "home," even though they've never been residents (and that they share our preferences for the best pizza places in town!). I'm thankful for the presence of parents, grandparents, siblings and siblings-in-law, nieces and nephews, cousins and friends both near and far. I'm thankful to know that when we come home, we have a big, loud, amazing family waiting for us, ready to make some big, loud, amazing memories!

Mary Ellen Pollock-Raneri

I have to write about this because it's weighing so heavy on my heart, and tonight was one of the few times I ever saw my husband cry. As we walked along the city streets, a homeless woman set up her

compound there. She had cardboard for some shelter from the cold. She had a shopping cart with her possessions, and she held a little dog wrapped in blankets close against her. She had a plastic blue dish for money from passersby. Yes, I know she could use the money for bad stuff, but I really don't know that, now, do I?

She looked like someone trying to survive on the streets, and all around her, peoples' reactions ranged from pity to anger, to choosing not to see the person at all. Phil bought her food – a couple bagels, cream cheese, and a hot drink, and he cried after he gave it to her.

He said to me, "I don't care what is going on, no one wants to be like that. She cried when I gave her the food and kind of sobbed."

At first, we were probably clichés for thankfulness as I thought, "No one, no matter what, wants to have no home, no food, and no support network, to be cold or hungry or sick, to have hundreds of people walk by you each day and pretend you don't exist. You should be grateful for everything that God gave you."

But it was more than that. I was thankful that we could treat her with the dignity everyone deserves. I was thankful for everyone who stopped and showed her a small act of kindness. I was thankful that she accepted the small meal we bought her in a nearby coffee shop.

And (don't get this wrong) yes, I was thankful that we had a wakeup call. That we got a glimpse at a side of the human condition we don't want to see. That we don't know. That we think only exists on television shows or in movies. That we all could help change if we really tried.

*What if God was one of us,  
just a slob like one of us,  
just a stranger on the bus trying to make his  
way home? (Joan Osbourne)*

Mary Ellen Pollock-Raneri's postscript

We should have had our pictures hanging in the post office for "Most Wanted." Friday nights were always more fun because of her; it was our night to howl or paint the town red – or blue or striped or whatever color that was outrageous. Then, on Saturdays we typically went shopping or hung out at the mall. It was a good time with your best friend. She listened to me laugh and cry and hope and dream. We sunbathed at the shore together and checked out the guys and ate junk food. She put on eye makeup in the car while she drove (don't judge), and I let her.

- Continued on next page

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**Happy Thanksgiving**

## From the Editor's

Continued from previous page

"I like to party at night and sleep all day on the beach," she grinned and chuckled. Sounded like a good plan to me.

Life was a groove and it was groovier with my best bud.

Later, we both married – things changed, you know. She moved and I stayed.

Last year though, we got one more chance to reconnect – it was a bunch of us – she and I and all our friends. Even though she was really sick, we didn't realize that it would be the last time we would all be together, laughing, and just being – well, the way we always were. We had never missed a beat.

I'm so grateful we had that ONE day – a fleeting couple hours in a lifetime. That tiny dot of time was more valuable than I could ever have imagined. And now – she's gone. So, I am hoping to see her again someday, you know, along with everyone I have loved. That Rainbow Bridge is going to be quite the party.

Keep driving through the tunnels while putting on eye make-up at traffic lights up there and laugh extra loud when you watch a funny movie – you will surely brighten everyone's eternity.

Rest in peace, my buddy. I will never forget you, and I'm so thankful you were in my life.

Shirley Sharp

Thanksgiving was never a day of Pilgrims, Indians, and turkey when I was a youngster.

First, my family heritage is Irish, English, German, and Italian. Second, the Native Americans I knew lived on the Seneca

Reservation in New York. Third, we didn't raise or hunt turkey.

Our Thanksgiving was a day for the family to gather. My mother had nine siblings, and my father had four. In addition there were all the cousins. The purpose of the gathering was to get ready for the "hunt." Well, for the males to prepare for the hunt! The family would gather, and the males would head to the back pasture and set up targets. They would all take turns shooting at the targets using the "family guns" – a shotgun and .22s. I think there were three guns and about 15 males. This meant that five males had to share each gun. They would knock tin cans off their roosts, try to hit the bullseye on a hay bale, and occasionally shoot a pear off the tree.

While the sharpshooters were out in the back pasture, the females were in the kitchen where the senior cooks were preparing the feast. Home-cured smoked ham and red-eye gravy, a tub of beans baked in the coal stove oven, huge fluffy biscuits, and pies – apple and pumpkin.

The junior cooks were grating cabbage for coleslaw and peeling potatoes. Those too young to be considered cooks were setting the make-shift table of sawhorses and planks, covered with bed sheets, on the barn floor, the only room on the place large enough to hold the crowd.

When the meal was ready, grandmother would ring the cowbell to call the sharpshooters in from the field. Grandpap would give thanks and everyone would shout, "Let's Eat!" Each would fill a real plate (didn't have paper ones back then) and head for a seat in the hay mow – we left the chairs for the old folks. Seconds were

encouraged!

After the food was consumed, the dishes dumped in the cleaning tub for the wash and dry crew, the barn floor cleared, the fun began. The chairs were put in a circle, and several shocks of corn were deposited in the middle. Everyone husked corn and threw the ears in a tub. Stories were told, songs were sung, and every now and then someone would find a special "red" ear of corn, which entitled him or her to a special wish. By the time the sun was dipping in the west, all of the corn had been shucked.

It was time to return to our respective homes. With fond memories of another family gathering, more stories to tell, and for the males, the hope that on Monday they would be the lucky one to get the buck.

Wendy Veitz

Thanksgiving, to me, is about my family. Most Thanksgivings were my parents, my brother, and me around the table. I

remember Mom getting up early to put the turkey in the oven and making all the side dishes – the sweet potatoes my brother liked, her wonderful gravy that I loved, and a whole table full of food. I realize now how hard Mom worked all day to prepare all that delicious food. My parents both worked outside the home to give my brother and I a great childhood. But I guess I saw Mom's inside-the-home efforts more, as they were right in front of me, so to speak. As I look back now, I realize just how hard Mom worked, especially on the holidays, to make the days extra special for us. Mom's gone now, and while I've tried, my efforts certainly didn't measure up to her's. My Thanksgiving memories make me smile and realize how fortunate I've been and what a wonderful childhood and family I had.

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Dried pieces of bread for stuffing, a green bean casserole, homemade bread, cans of goodies for a cranberry salad, and our traditional turkey breadbasket all wait for the Thanksgiving feast! (photos submitted by Mary Ellen Pollock-Raner)

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## Stuffing: My Seventh Heaven

By Mary Ellen Pollock-Raner  
 for Hometown magazine

**B**ored? Weary of the same old questions: "How about this weather?" or "Do you think the rain will hurt the rhubarb?" Fed up with political discussions? Tired of making small talk that goes nowhere? Here's a tip: There is nothing like the word, "stuffing," to get people involved in an engaging conversation. Invite them to share their



grandmother's most secret recipe for this seasonal treat. Better yet, ask them if they prefer "moist" or "dry" stuffing. And if you really feel adventurous, ask them if they prefer "dressing" or actual "stuffing."

Stuffing – one of my favorite parts of the Thanksgiving meal. I swear that I would pass on everything else – the turkey, the gravy, the potatoes, the yams, the cranberry sauce, and even (gasp!) the green bean casserole, which I love dearly. Yes, I would give it all up for a steaming plateful of stuffing. I don't even need gravy (double gasp!). Just



Mom keeps all her bread "odds and ends" in the oven, drying all the pieces for her traditional stuffing recipe.

with butter, onion, celery, and Mom's seasonings, and I would forsake the entire rest of the feast.

I remember when I was teaching high school, the school cafeteria's biggest draw was the Thanksgiving meal that the cafeteria workers prepared a few days before our vacation began. The cooks roasted real turkeys and deboned them. They had the traditional green beans baked with mushroom soup and dried onion rings. In addition, the ladies made real mashed potatoes, hot buns, and pumpkin pie. Most importantly, they prepared stuffing balls. For those of you who never had this delicacy,

stuffing balls are like regular stuffing but baked outside the bird. Through a bit of research, I discovered that stuffing made in a casserole devoid of the turkey is called, "dressing," so I guess this qualifies as "dressing balls," but "stuffing balls" sounds better. I would wait all morning and teach my way through four classes as the aroma of the best meal of the school year drifted through my classroom. Finally, at lunch time, I trotted to the cafeteria and got my prize. One of their light green plastic cafeteria soup bowls filled with four stuffing balls. No turkey, no

- Continued on next page

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Mom displays her collection of bread cubes that she has ready for her Thanksgiving stuffing recipe.

## Stuffing

Continued from previous page

gravy, no taters, no pie. Four stuffing balls. That was my lunch. I was in seventh Heaven – maybe even eighth!

Sadly, when I enjoyed the cafeteria's stuffing balls, I felt like I was cheating on my mom. You have to understand that "Mom's Food" was sacred. You never ever intimated that anything else could remotely be as good or better than "Mom's Food" – especially to Mom. Mom had her customary recipes that she used for everything, and her stuffing was no exception.

I can still remember my mother gathering all the old stale bread and cubing it in preparation for the holiday meal. She would cut up any bread leftovers and put them on a cookie sheet to dry in our gas oven for weeks before she prepared her stuffing. Heels of the bread loaf, hot dog buns, sandwich buns, her homemade bread, store-bought bread – everything that was leftover bread went into the mix. If the bread started to turn green, she cut off the color and dried the rest of it. We survived.

Today, folks are kind of spoiled by all the stuffing products out there on the market. You get seasoned boxes of stuffing, bags of dried stuffing, and packets of seasoning ready for you to put together with some boiling water and butter. I'm surprised that they don't have tubs of frozen stuffing ready for you to put in the oven; they probably do, but I'm a dinosaur, and I walked the earth before the advent of this great, deep-freeze delicacy. Anyways, when I was a kid, back in a land far, far away – they didn't have "stuff to stuff" the bird that was premade. Well, not that I can recall, and it's not like my mother would ever have bought it anyways. She was too frugal and completely convinced that her way was the only way. Furthermore, my mother would have been appalled that people didn't do the following: save their old bread, cube it and dry it; make their own concoction of herbs to season the stuffing; and use broth from the turkey parts to moisten the recipe along with the onion and celery that she carefully prepared the day before.

(Before I continue, let me reassure you that I have, indeed, used boxed or bagged

stuffing. Please don't feel like I am targeting you. In fact, I am certain I have prepared boxed and bagged stuffing mixes, and probably have eaten such stuffing before cooking it! Raw stuffing. In the bowl. No bird. Moreover, I confess that I have prepared my stuffing without using Mom's recipe and method. For that, I am guilty of "Stuffing Shortcuts," but, sadly, I have very little remorse and will probably continue to do so.)

Now, let's get to the "heart" of the stuffing (and the wings, neck, giblet and liver). Thanksgiving morning, my mother carefully simmered the above parts of the bird. She cut off the wings, and found the rest of the "innards," as she called them, in the turkey cavity, plus the neck, and cooked them in a pot with an onion and some cel-

ery stalk (including the celery leaves, which, according to Mom, contained the best flavor). After several hours of brewing, the turkey stock was ready. I ate the heart and the giblet; my mom picked at the neck and the wings. The dog got the liver. Anyway – back to the stuffing. After mixing the bread, stock, herbs and seasonings, par-cooked onion and celery (which she made the day before), and some Cream of Chicken soup in her giant aluminum bread pan, my mother stuffed the turkey.

My job was to hold the stuffing cavity open as she crammed the stuffing inside – not too loose and not too tight – just right like the porridge in "Goldilocks and the Three Bears." Then, as the crown jewel of the process, my mom stitched up the bird with her huge darning needle and special

cord. That cotton thread was thick and beige. Mom kept the cord (which was on a big spindle) under the sink and used it only on special occasions – usually holidays and anytime she performed surgery on a turkey. Truly, her sewing expertise was amazing – she should have been a surgeon. The trussed turkey immediately went into the oven in her big black-and-white-speckled roaster. Leftover stuffing was cooked later in a greased casserole or on a cookie sheet in the shape of "balls."

Please understand that I know that many of you have your own traditional stuffing recipes and procedures. Please continue to carry them on. For instance, one of my girlfriends refuses to eat anything cooked in the turkey. Her mom must prepare every-

*- Continued on next page*



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*There is nothing better than a Thanksgiving meal, complete with stuffing!*

## Stuffing

Continued from previous page

thing in a separate casserole, devoid of anything crunchy – namely celery or onion! Another friend puts chopped red pepper in her stuffing – which I loved! I told my mom about this addition, and she grudgingly did it for me, but she remained suspicious. Yes, stuffing can be prepared with sausage or with giblets chopped in it. Some people use oysters. Some folks embellish their stuffing with raisins, cranberries, and walnuts! I have seen recipes for stuffing that use cornbread, cranberries, figs, roasted garlic, cream cheese, broccoli, chestnuts, and even sweet potatoes!

Whatever method you use, enjoy your Thanksgiving Day and your stuffing adventure! Moist or dry. Inside the bird or outside. With or without gravy. With onion and celery or with sausage or peppers or whatever you choose. Prepared from a box in a saucepan or prepared “homemade” in Mom’s big aluminum bowl. Just savor the moment, pile on the stuffing, count all your blessings, and sing this little tune (which I took the liberty of changing to fit the moment)!

*Over the river, and through the wood—  
now Grandmother’s cap I spy!  
Hurrah for the fun! Is the stuffing done?  
If it’s not there – I’ll cry!*

“Over the River and Through the Woods”  
by Lydia Maria Child,

...



*Mom’s recipe for her stuffing balls can be used as basic stuffing for turkey, pork chops, chicken, and beef!*

## Mom’s Stuffing Recipe

### Ingredients

- 1 lb. of bread that is dried and cubed
- 1 sm. onion – finely chopped
- 2 T. red sweet pepper – chopped very fine (opt.)
- 1 rib of celery – chopped very fine
- 1/2 c. butter
- 1 tsp. poultry seasoning
- 1/2 tsp. ground sage
- 1 (10.5 oz.) can of cream of chicken soup
- 1/4 – 1/2 soup can (10.5 oz.) of water
- 1/2 tsp. pepper
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder or 1/2 clove garlic – minced fine

### Directions

1. Make sure your bread is cubed and dried.
2. Chop the onion and celery until it’s very fine.
3. Boil with about 1 c. of water until the vegetables (and chopped red pepper, if you use it) are tender.
4. Drain and set aside.
5. Melt the butter and cook vegetables in this a bit. Do not burn. Stir constantly. Just tenderize them for about 5 min.
5. Combine the butter/vegetable mixture with the bread.
6. Add the spices.
7. Then mix the soup with the water. Add to the stuffing, little by little, until you get the consistency that is not too dry or too wet.
8. Form stuffing into balls, the size of a small fist and place in a greased baking dish.
9. Cover and bake for about 30 min. in a 350-degree oven.

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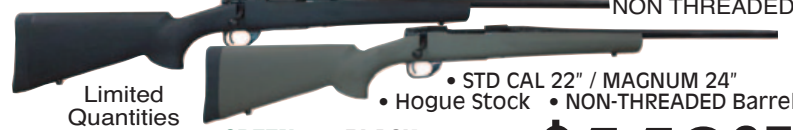
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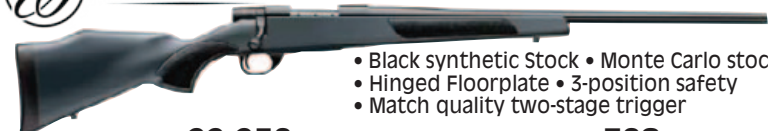


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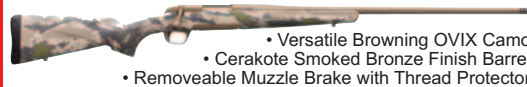
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# Mahoning Valley Milling Receives Business of the Year Award

By Danielle Merrow  
for Hometown magazine

On October 26, 2023, the Punxsutawney Chamber of Commerce named Mahoning Valley Milling the Business of the Year. Diane Wehrle and son Nick accepted the award – “We are truly honored.”

Chamber of Commerce president Katie Laska presented the award, saying, “This business has been a steadfast cornerstone of the Punxsutawney community and the

that means the most. In turn, mill employees will go out of their way to make sure feed deliveries remain consistent.

“And we’ve had great employees, both past and present, who have kept going to serve the community throughout the years,” she says, adding that one employee deserves special recognition for years of service. “Melvin Whitfield worked at the Mill for over 40 years, retiring in 2018. He started working at the Mill in the late ’70s, retiring in 2018. But he still comes in to help out from time to time.”

Nick adds his appreciation for the employees who contribute to the longevity of the family business.

The Mill has been in the same location since opening more than 114 years ago. The business has endured the test of time, surviving the peaks and valleys of the years. “We lost everything in the flood of ’96,” Diane recalls. “We still had people coming in that day. I told them if they could find what they were looking for, they could have it. And after the flood, we bounced back. It wasn’t easy; it took a long time to clean up, but with a lot of community support, we were able to keep going.”

The COVID pandemic and lockdown presented its own set of challenges to overcome. “While the rest of the world shut down, the farmers kept going. We were essential to the farmers,” Diane explains. “We helped each other through. When so many other smaller businesses struggled, we were fortunate enough to make it through that.”

There are two different sides to the business, she explains: the feed mill side, which keeps the business running in the summer months, and the guns and ammo side, which started in 1985 and supports the fall and winter months when farmers have their own stores of feed to depend upon.

Nick adds that there is a new feed manufacturing system coming to the Mill, to replace the current equipment that has been in operation for over 60 years. “The new system will produce better feed at better prices and will be a great addition to our business,” he explains.

Diane says it warms her heart to hear patrons who walk into the store talking on their phones say, “I’ll call you back; I’m at the Mill.”

Congratulations to Diane, Nick, and the employees of the Mill for being named Punxsutawney’s 2023 Business of the Year!

...



*Diane Wehrle and her son, Nick — who operate the Mahoning Valley Milling and accepted the 2023 Business of the Year award — expressed their gratitude to all who made the award possible: their employees, their customers, and the Punxsutawney Chamber of Commerce. (submitted photo)*

surrounding areas. For generations, they’ve had the honor of serving our community, becoming a trusted name in homes and businesses across this region.”

“As we look ahead, this business remains committed to keeping the spirit of small family businesses alive while embracing the opportunities of the future,” she concluded.

Diane and Nick express their gratitude to Laska and the Chamber for recognizing their business. Diane says that receiving the award was a dream come true and an answer to their prayers. She points out that the business – a Punxsutawney mainstay since the early 1900s and family owned since 1909 – has endured thanks to the support of the community. Nick is the fourth generation of the family to run the Mill.

Local farmers keep the business running, and it is their loyalty, according to Diane,

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Mon., Dec. 18: Christmas Sock Challenge  
Tues., Dec. 19: Hunt For The Christmas Elf at 10 am/Justin from SNAP at 11 am  
Wed., Dec. 20: Games Day - Get Ready!  
Thur., Dec. 21: Lunch at 11:30 am/Center Closing at 12:30 pm  
Tues., Dec. 26: Nat’l Candy Cane Day  
Wed., Dec. 27: Nat’l Fruitcake Day - Fruitcake Toss  
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In this early picture of Walston Mine, mine openings one and three are in the foreground, and the miners' housing is on the hill in the background. (photo courtesy PAHGS)

## Walston: the Beginning

By the Coal Memorial Committee  
for Hometown magazine

**W**alston was the first industrial mine opened in the vicinity of Punxsutawney. Phineas W. Jenks, of Punxsutawney, had dreamed of this possibility ever since the 1830s when as a young man, he had assisted state geologists as they conducted the first geological survey of the area. Throughout his adult life, he had invested in activities that would have made this possible, only to find his dream thwarted over and over again. Finally, in his 62<sup>nd</sup> year, he saw a possibility and made a daring move. He made an offer that would spark an economic boom all along a new railroad connecting Punxsutawney with the Buffalo and Rochester area in New York.

The Philadelphia Inquirer, on January 10, 1881, carried an item on the sale of the State Line Railway located at Rochester, New York. The railroad was purchased by Walston H. Brown of New York City.

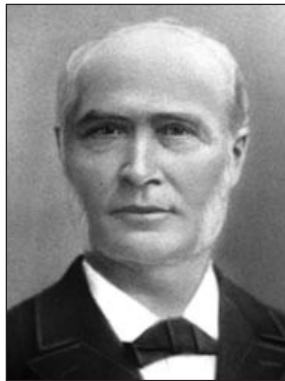
In July 1881, newspapers carried a public notice of a charter granted by the governor of Pennsylvania to the "Pittsburg and New York Railroad Com-

pany" for a 140-mile railroad. The new railroad would extend from a point on the Pittsburg and Western Railroad opposite the mouth of Red Bank Creek, Armstrong County, to the mouth of Mahoning Creek, then by way of Brookville and Ridgway to a point in the city of Bradford, McKean County. The counties of Armstrong, Indiana, Jefferson, Elk, Forest, and McKean would gain an efficient transportation system and access to markets. The president of this new railroad was Walston H. Brown of New York City.

On August 4, 1881, the Elk County Advocate carried an item that stated, "Walston H. Brown, President of the P. & N.Y. R.R. Co., Geo. E. Merchant, General Manager of the Rochester & Pittsburgh R.R.; Z.A. Latcha, Consulting Engineer, and Wm. E. Hoyte, Chief Engineer of the Rochester and Pittsburgh Railroad, were in Ridgway last Thursday and Friday."

George A. Jenks, the youngest brother of Phineas Jenks, who had served in the 44<sup>th</sup> United States Congress and was residing in Brookville, wrote to his

brother about the potential of this railroad. Phineas Jenks replied by letter on August



*George Augustus "G.A." Jenks was the youngest son of John W. and Mary D. Jenks. He studied law with his older brother, Phineas W. Jenks, and they were both admitted to the bar in Jefferson County in 1851. G.A. Jenks was elected to serve as representative from the 25<sup>th</sup> Congressional District to the 44<sup>th</sup> Congress, serving until 1877. He also served as Assistant Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Solicitor General of the United States from 1886 to 1889. (photo courtesy Punxsutawney Area Historical & Genealogical Society)*

- Continued on next page

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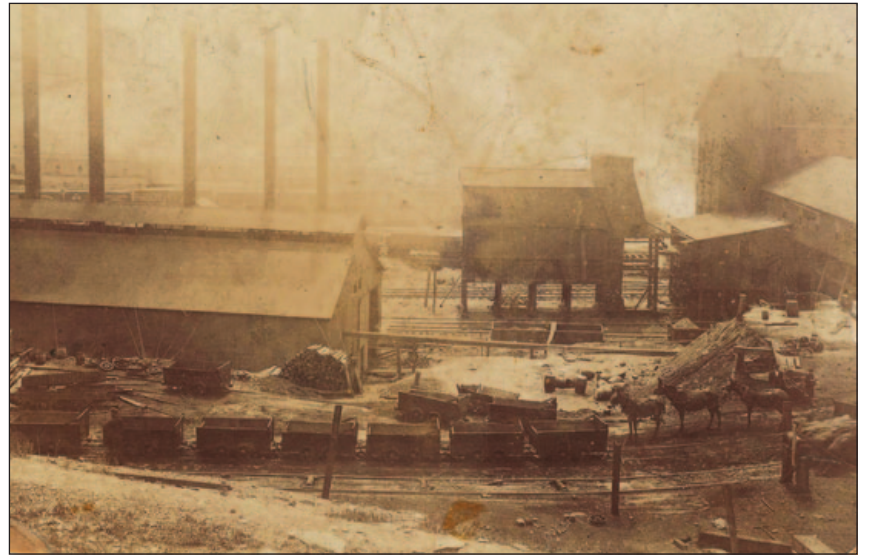
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*This view of the Walston mines looks eastward. In the far left are the coke ovens that once were aligned along Saw Mill Run. The smoke from the coke ovens made it difficult to see. (photo courtesy of PAHGS)*

## Walston

Continued from previous page

12, 1881, providing information about the railroad and made an offer: "If you meet Mr. Brown you can say to him I will let him have my 6000 acre tract in fee simple at 65 dol per acre. You know this is the best and cheapest lot of coal, iron and timber land in the basin. If he desires to control other lands along his line in the basin, I will arrange so that he will get them at First Price and not through middle men."

Three months later, on Monday, November 21, 1881, a charter was issued by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to the Rochester and Pittsburg Coal and Iron Company, for the purpose of mining and manufacturing iron and steel. The principal business would be conducted in Jefferson County. The shareholders included: Herbert P. Brown, F.A. Brown, Walston H. Brown, Thomas F. Westworth, and August Kountze of New York; James Callery and

W.C. Mobly of Pittsburgh; and George A. Jenks of Brookville.

By the summer of 1882, the Walston Mine had been opened, and miners were working. John McLeavy, an Irishman from Connellsville, was the first mine superintendent. Nine thousand tons of coal was piled outside the mine, waiting for transportation. McLeavy would remain in Punxsutawney his entire career and open the Adrian, Helvetia, and Eleanora mine towns for the company.

The grading for the railroad from the mine to Clayville was almost completed. The section of the railroad from Mitchell's meadow (the Punxsy Plaza area) to Jenks' tan house (at Elk Run) was made wide enough for two or three tracks. The grading on the road south of DuBois was being pushed rapidly, and the laying of track toward Punxsutawney would soon begin. The company expected to begin shipping coal from Walston later in the summer.

The plan for a new town, to be named Walston, containing 81 lots was released by the company in November 1882. The town would be located a mile and a half northwest of Punxsutawney on the hillside east of Saw Mill Run. According to predictions, construction would commence in the spring of 1883.

In July 1883, the DuBois to Punxsutawney section of the Rochester & Pittsburg Railroad was completed and coal shipments began. As the early trains rumbled north from Punxsutawney to Buffalo, economic growth began spreading. Names of obscure places – Custer City, Big Shanty, Crawfords, Alton Summit, Ormsby Mill, Wilcox, Rolfe, Johnsonburg,

- Continued on next page

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# Walston

Continued from previous page

Whistletown, Ridgway, Little Toby Creek, Brockwayville, Rattlesnake Junction, Beech Tree Mines, Bells Mines, DuBois, and Punxsutawney – became well known.

The value of the Walston coal for creating coke was discovered early, and by 1883 Walston had 300 coke ovens.

The impact of the industry was being felt in the community. The Grand Jury Presentments at the Jefferson County Court Session in December 1883 and February 1884 noted concerns: the unsafe nature of the railroad crossings in Henderson Township and the frequent Sunday shiftings and making up and running of trains with the accompanying ringing of bells and blowing of whistles in the Punxsutawney area. The latter was deemed an unnecessary nuisance and a violation of the Sunday law. In addition, the liquor law violations in Punxsutawney and Clayville were deemed demoralizing and destructive in their influence on the community. The county attempted to control these through licensing.

During its first decade Walston grew rapidly. The Walston coke ovens had become a famous tourist attraction. In June 1885, Grier Brothers received a contract to provide doors and sash for 56 houses at Walston. In August, Ed and Jim Murry and Sam Graffius were painting the 26 blocks of new houses. In October, Elijah Kelly and crew finished their job of plastering the Walston houses. Estimates said that they had put on more than 13,000 yards of “mud” there during the summer.

The Rochester and Pittsburg Coal and Iron Company had reorganized, matured, opened mines, and created towns at Adrian and Eleanor.

Phineas W. Jenks, the first child born in Punxsutawney, lived to see the economic boom beginning in his hometown. On April 14, 1890, he quietly passed away knowing his dream of a railroad had become a reality.

All along the railroad, villages were growing. In Big Run, A.M. McClure built a large new three-story hotel. In Sykesville, three large sawmills were in operation and attracting employees, who built homes on newly developed lots. In Punxsutawney, businesses, hotels, and industries were growing. The borough boundaries were increased, and Clayville became “West End Punxsutawney.”

*This article has been prepared by the Coal Memorial Committee of the Punxsutawney Area Historical & Genealogical Society. Resources used in preparing his article are from PAHGS, Punxsutawney News @ Newspapers.com, and the Library of Congress. Direct comments to PAHGS, P.O. Box 286, Punxsutawney, PA 15767. Individuals desiring to honor a coal or coal-related industry worker in 2024 are encouraged to purchase their tile by June 30, 2024. A Coal Memorial tile may honor persons who worked in any aspect of the coal industry, including railroads and ancillary services. Additional information and forms may be found online at [www.punxsyhistory.org](http://www.punxsyhistory.org) or may be requested by sending an email to [punxsyhistory@outlook.com](mailto:punxsyhistory@outlook.com), or by calling (814) 938-2555 and leaving a message.*

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# Hometown Community Happenings

From the staff of Hometown magazine and the Community Calendar at Punxsutawney.com, here is a list of events coming up in our area:

Scheduled events may change. Hometown magazine is not responsible for changes or cancellations.

■ **Steelers Football Contest Winner Named.** Punxsutawney is a land of prognosticators! Three entrants in Hometown's Steelers Football Contest not only predicted that the Pittsburgh Steelers would defeat the Green Bay Packers on Sunday, November 12, but they also predicted that 42 total points would be scored – thus creating the need for a tiebreaker! Hometown publisher Mary Roberts broke the three-way tie by selecting the winning entry from a hat.

So in a tiebreaker, Raymond Marsh of Punxsutawney is the most recent winner of the Steels contest. He plans to redeem his gift card at Punxsy Shop 'n Save. Congratulations, Raymond!

■ Support the **Punx'y Memorial Library** with the purchase of a t-shirt or hoodie. More information can be found at [www.punxsutawneylibrary.org](http://www.punxsutawneylibrary.org) or visit the library's Facebook page.

■ **Punx'y Memorial Library** is selling gift cards to various stores and restaurants. Orders and payments are due by Dec. 1. Ask for an order form at the circulation desk.

■ **Gobbler's Knob Visitors Center & Gift Shop** is open Wednesdays-Sundays, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

■ The **Presbyterian Church** of Punx'y is holding **Mahjong Mondays**, 10 a.m. to noon.

■ Nov. 17: **Mother/Son Dance**, 5 to 7 p.m., at Punx'y Area Community Center. \$20 per couple, contact PACC for ticket information.

■ Nov. 17: **Mastering Communication** with facilitators Tiffany & Chris Brooks, 6 to 7:30 p.m., at Punxsy Pizza. Presented by Young Entrepreneurs & Professionals of Punx'y.

■ Nov. 17: **Scotland Ave. Church of God** hosts Canoe Ridge band, 7 p.m.

■ Nov. 17 & 18: **PAHS Drama Club Play**, "I Never Saw Another Butterfly," at PAHS auditorium. Friday, 7 p.m., and Saturday, 5 p.m., tickets available at the door, \$3 general seating, or \$5 reserved seating.

■ Nov. 18: **SSCD Christmas Bazaar**, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at SSCD auditorium & gym, benefits the SSCD School.

■ Nov. 18: **BSA Oceanography Badge Program**, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., at Punx'y Weather Discovery Center, \$20 cost. Register by Nov. 10 at 938-1000 or by email [educator@weatherdiscovery.org](mailto:educator@weatherdiscovery.org).

■ Nov. 18: **Thanksgiving Dinner**, 4 to 6 p.m., at The Salvation Army. Free and open to the public.

■ Nov. 19: **SSCD School Giving Thanks Breakfast & Bake Sale**, 7 a.m. to noon, at SSCD Auditorium. Adults, \$10; kids age 6-12, \$5; and kids age 5 & under, free. Benefits the school.

■ Nov. 19: **All You Can Eat Breakfast**, 7 a.m. to noon, McCalmont Township Fire Co. hall in Anita. Adults, \$10; kids 5-12, \$5; kids 4 & under, free.

■ Nov. 23: **Thanksgiving!** Give thanks for all you have.

■ Nov. 24 & 25: **Punx'y Memorial Library** will be closed.

■ Nov. 25: **Mistletoe Madness & Small Business Saturday**, 10 a.m. Watch for Punx'y PRIDE's shopping passport.

■ Nov. 25: **Red Kettle Kickoff** by The Salvation Army, noon, at Barclay Square.

■ Nov. 25: **Home for the Holidays Parade**, 6 p.m., downtown Punx'y. Brings Santa to town and opens the holiday season. Followed by the tree lighting at Barclay Square.

■ Nov. 25: **Free Christmas Movie**, "Elf," 6 p.m., at Moonlite Drive-In Theatre, Brookville. Entrance fee is a monetary donation or an unwrapped toy. Benefits Abate Clarion County Toy Drive.

■ Nov. 26: **The Salvation Army** hosts guest speaker Andy Burkett at its 11 a.m. service.

■ Nov. 27: **Adult Coloring Club**, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., at Punx'y Memorial Library. Bring your own supplies or borrow some from the library.

■ Nov. 28: **Used Book Sale**, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., at Punx'y Memorial Library. Give a donation for whatever books you'd like.

■ Nov. 28: **Giving Tuesday**. Give to your favorite local charity through the Punx'y Area Community Foundation.

- Continued on page 25

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# Punxsutawney Area Hospital Patients, Staff to Benefit from Safe Steps Program

**T**he Punxsutawney Area Hospital (PAH) is excited to announce the start of a new mobility and patient handling program called Safe Steps.

According to Robin Moran, Patient Safety Officer at PAH, "Increasing a patient's mobility is a vital part of improving their health. Having the equipment and the processes to safely assist patients during movement protects both the patient and the staff."

The Safe Steps Program is led by a team

of patient handling equipment totalling more than \$220,000.

According to the American Nurse Journal, a publication of the American Nurse Association, on average the cumulative weight lifted by a nurse in one typical eight-hour shift is equivalent to 1.8 tons. Constant lifting has made nursing and other health care professionals' injury prone. Many injuries give no warning signs; muscle strains, torn ligaments, ripped rotator cups, sprained wrists or ruptured discs can happen in an instant or after years

of wear and tear.

"The Safe Steps Mobility and Patient Handling Program is a tool to keep our patients and staff safe. We are delighted to have the new equipment in our facility and feel it will continue to increase great patient outcomes while keeping our staff safe," stated Paula Spack, Chief Nursing Officer at PAH.

For additional information about the Safe Steps Program and equipment, please visit [www.pah.org](http://www.pah.org).

...




Punxsutawney Area Hospital's Siobhan Barnett, LPN (left), and Mikayla Olsakousky, CNA, Safe Steps Coach, try out a new piece of equipment purchased for PAH's recently launched Safe Steps Program. (submitted photo)

of internal leaders from various departments in the organization who have had extensive training. These leaders are the internal coaches for the staff at PAH and are charged with ensuring their peers have been educated on the proper use of the new equipment and techniques.

For the new equipment, PAH has partnered with ARJO, a company that believes empowering movement within health care environments is essential to quality care. Their products and solutions are designed to promote a safe and dignified experience through patient handling, medical beds, personal hygiene, disinfection, diagnostics, and the prevention of pressure injuries. Punxsutawney Area Hospital has made a significant investment in new mobility and

*Thank You  
and Happy  
Thanksgiving!*

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*"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:6-7*


*"Oh come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise! For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods." Psalm 95:1-3*

*"You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God." 2 Corinthians 9:11*

Remember the "thanks" in Thanksgiving

**Happy Thanksgiving from the office of Dr. Delroy M. Moore**

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# Day of Giving Set for November 28

**N**on-profit organizations in Punxsutawney have their roots in the "volunteer spirit" of our country. We are a community and a nation of "doers." People who are willing to volunteer their time and talents to improve the quality of life of all in the community.

During the Day of Giving, sponsored by the Punxsutawney Area Community Foundation, Inc., on November 28, residents of Punxsutawney will have an opportunity to give to the organizations that work 365 days a year to improve the quality of life for residents and visitors. Punxsutawney area non-profit organizations and their volunteers provide services that enhance the quality of life in the community. They undertake activities that beautify the community, preserve the environment, support those in need, and create opportunities for volunteers who make the community a better place to live.

The 14 non-profit organizations participating in the 2023 Day of Giving represent the broad range of activities through which the Punxsutawney area is enhanced. Their presence enables individuals to engage in activities that support and enhance the community.

The volunteers involved in three participating organizations focus on improving

and maintaining the environment in the Punxsutawney area. They volunteer their time and talent and ask the community to help support their work so they will have the resources to make good things happen.

The **Punxsutawney Area Rails to Trails**

**Association** volunteers maintain the Mahoning Shadow Trail, which follows the Mahoning Creek from Winslow, through Punxsutawney to Fordham for 15 miles. Opened to the public 20+ years ago, the trail provides year round activities, including walking, non-motorized biking, and cross country skiing. It is a place where folks

can enjoy the seasonal beauty of nature. However, it is also a place that needs to be maintained. Volunteers do most of the work, but costs are incurred when trash must be removed, when the trail itself requires maintenance, and when fallen trees must be removed. Donations will support costs of these maintenance activities.

**Punxsutawney Revitalization: Investing, Developing, Enhancing (PRIDE)** volunteers work to maintain the environment in the commercial areas of Punxsutawney. During the past 20 years they have, through the Façade Improvement Program, provided challenge grants to encourage the maintenance of the external façades of the town's public buildings and have sponsored murals on downtown buildings. Their goal is to keep the downtown looking fresh, inviting and cared for. They sponsor downtown clean-up events and activities. Their most recent project is the Pocket Park on West Mahoning Street, which has turned a vacant lot into a welcoming mini park for residents and visitors to enjoy.

**Punxsutawney Arts Association Inc.** are artists who promote the visual arts through their current "Gallery without Walls" effort. The artists create and donate their work to the community. The Association strives to make the community more beautiful through artistic philanthropic contributions. The miner and mule mural at the Coal Memorial and the "Trash Can" art in Barclay Square are among their efforts at beautifying the community. Art to enjoy and inspire is their contribution to the Punxsutawney

- Continued on next page



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## Day of Giving Set

Continued from previous page

The Arc of Jefferson and Clearfield Counties provides information and support to people with intellectual and developmental delays or other disabilities, their families, and the community. They help by identifying barriers, building relationships, and finding solutions so all children and adults with disabilities can be included in every community. Donations are used to provide supplies and support for socialization and educational activities conducted in the community.

The Salvation Army has served in Punxsutawney to support those in need for over 133 years. They are known for their service when people are most in need. Through committed volunteers, the Salvation Army provides a variety of programs and activities designed to assist individuals to get through difficult times, to support children and families, and to engage individuals in activities. Donations are used to provide services needed at the time of need.

Child Evangelism Fellowship sponsors Good News Clubs that provide youngsters with information upon which to base their values and hopes for their fu-

ture. Donations support the hosting of the Good News Clubs in the community.

We Care Pregnancy Center began working in Punxsutawney 30 years ago. The center provides support for women, children, and families in need. They provide education, material items, and encouragement for those who find themselves in difficult circumstances. They are able to do so because of the generous support provided by the community.

Veterans of Foreign Wars volunteers work together to provide a supportive environment for those who have served their country and sponsor a variety of community activities in which veterans volunteer and are engaged in supporting the community. Currently the VFW hosts the North Findley Street Cemetery Guild, which works to maintain Punxsutawney's Historic Cemetery.

Punxsutawney Area Hospital Foundation was established to advance community health and wellness through philanthropy and support of the Punxsutawney Area Hospital. Punxsutawney, as a small community, is fortunate to have a full-service hospital. The Foundation will continue the work to ensure that residents of the Punxsutawney area have access to quality health care.

Other non-profit organizations provide services that enable access to information, connection with local history, and promote the community to the world.

Punxsutawney Memorial Library volunteers have served the community for well over 100 years. The library is a free, public, non-sectarian source for information. It serves the geographic area of the Punxsutawney Area School District and enables individuals to have access to computers, research databases, recreational resources, and a link to WiFi. Regular programming is provided for youth, ages 18 months to 18 years, families, and adults. Donations help the Library to maintain public services.

Punxsutawney Area Historical & Genealogical Society Inc. preserves, maintains, and displays the history of the

Punxsutawney area at its facilities on West Mahoning Street. Lattimer House collections include artifacts from Native American history, Groundhog Day history, and coal-era history. The Tibby Library and Winslow Genealogy Room provide resources for family history research. Bennis House collections include artifacts from early settlers through the 1950s. The Coal Memorial commemorates the era in which coal dominated the economy of the Punxsutawney area. The facilities are open to the public and staffed by volunteers. Donations assist the Society in its mission to preserve Punxsutawney's history.

Coal Memorial Fund, which is a designated fund of the Punxsutawney Area Historical & Genealogical Society, sup-

- Continued on page 21

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# Punxsutawney Community Center to Host Holiday Concert Show to Feature Crystal Gayle, Twitty & Lynn

**M**ark your calendar! Put a bold, red circle around December 10! On that date – the second Sunday of the month – the Punxsutawney Community Center will host a concert of classic country hits and Christmas classics, featuring the legendary Crystal Gayle and the duo Twitty & Lynn, who recreate the music of legends Conway Twitty and Loretta Lynn – their grandparents.

Tickets are on sale for \$50, \$60, or \$70 (administrative and processing fees not included) and may be purchased by calling (814) 938-9632 or at the Community Center – located at 220 North Jefferson Street – between the hours of 9 a.m. and noon.

On the evening of the concert, the doors will open at 6 p.m. and the show will begin at 7 p.m. You don't want to miss it!

## Crystal Gayle

Grammy®-winning songstress Crystal Gayle is a beloved country music icon

timeless, international smash hit “Don't It Make My Brown Eyes Blue” – a song that she today admits she has never grown tired of singing.

Crystal has three Academy of Country Music Awards statuettes for “Top Female Vocalist” and has won four American Music Awards. Not surprisingly, she was named the Most Performed Country Female Artist on radio for the decade of 1975-1985. Perhaps nothing sums up Crystal's career achievements better than being awarded with a star on the fabled Hollywood Walk of Fame in October 2009.

Famous for her nearly floor-length hair, Crystal was voted one of the 50 most beautiful people in the world by People Magazine, and in 2016 the Academy of Country Music honored her with the Clifflie Stone Pioneer Award. Gayle was inducted into the Grand Ole Opry in January 2017 by her sister and Opry legend Loretta Lynn. For more information, visit [crystalgayle.com](http://crystalgayle.com).

## Twitty & Lynn

There's a moment right at the very beginning of any Twitty & Lynn show that



whose time in the music business includes 22 No. 1 country hits, four Top 20 pop hits, six albums certified Gold by the RIAA and three certified Platinum, including “We Must Believe in Magic,” which was the first album by a female artist in country music history to reach platinum sales.

Her list of platinum and gold is matched by her awards and accolades. The Country Music Association's “Female Vocalist of the Year” for two consecutive years, Crystal is also a Grammy® Award winner for “Best Female Vocal Performance,” thanks to her



affords country music fans the chance to look back in time. Just after the band has played the signature introduction to “Louisiana Woman, Mississippi Man,” Tre Twitty and Tayla Lynn shoot each other a glance that summons the electrifying chemistry of their grandparents: Tre is the grandson of Conway Twitty, and Tayla is

- Continued on next page

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## Holiday Concert

Continued from previous page

the granddaughter of Loretta Lynn.

Audiences can't believe their eyes. From that moment, for the next 90 minutes, they're in the presence of living country music history.

"Fans have told Tayla and me that when they see us on stage singing, talking, and just looking at each other, they think, 'Wow, there must be something genetic in those two families,'" Tre says. "It validates the experience of the concert for them. We're telling our grandparents' story through our story."

But Twitty & Lynn – and their internationally popular show "A Salute to Conway & Loretta" – aren't impersonators. Tre doesn't groom Seventies sideburns and perm his hair; Tayla doesn't mimic her grandmother's mannerisms. Rather, they are onstage celebrating country music, the lost art of duet singing, and the two beloved icons they refer to as "Poppy" and "Memaw."

"I think of us as the ambassadors of the Twitty and Lynn names – we're just the new version of what they've already established," Tre says. "But we also want to be caretakers of the past. At our shows, we get generations of fans because country music is passed down."

"It's about family – the fans' families and our own," Tayla says. "We have so much love and respect for Conway and Loretta and we want to carry this on in such a way that we make our families proud."

Honest emotion, along with Tre and Tayla's innate chemistry, is what defines their onstage performances. Whether they're singing to each other or interacting with the audience, there's an easygoing authenticity that comes across. Tayla even talks to the crowd about her sobriety, sharing a personal tale of struggle and redemption.

In the end, though, their goal is to entertain while, at the same time, honoring their grandparents. "Conway and Loretta used to do everything with so much passion: the way they dressed, the way they recorded, the way they performed," Tayla says. "We want to bring that to fans who were lucky enough to see our grandparents before and to those who are just learning about them."

"Our show gives people an idea of what Loretta and Conway were like through their grandchildren's eyes," adds Tre. "It's a special gift to keep that flame burning."

For more information about Twitty & Lynn, please visit their website at [www.twittandlynn.com](http://www.twittandlynn.com).

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## Day of Giving Set

Continued from page 19

assist the Society in its mission to preserve Punxsutawney's history.

**Coal Memorial Fund**, which is a designated fund of the Punxsutawney Area Historical & Genealogical Society, supports the development of the Punxsutawney Area Coal Memorial. It seeks to preserve the history of the people who came to Punxsutawney, mined coal, and made Punxsutawney a name known around the world. Donations to the fund will support the development of a facility to house the industrial collections of the Punxsutawney area.

**Weather Discovery Center:** Punxsutawney's first claim to fame was as the "Weather Capital of the World." This is celebrated at the Weather Discovery Center on North Findley Street where this claim is still held forth. Visitors from around the world and of all ages enjoy learning about weather, Punxsutawney, and the building, which is historic in and of itself. Donations to the Weather Discovery Center support the maintenance and expansion of exhibits and the educational programs conducted at the Weather Discovery Center and the preservation of one of Punxsutawney's historic buildings.

**Punxsutawney Area Community Foundation (PXYCF):** The Foundation has as part of its mission the assisting of local area non-profit organizations to fulfill their community missions and to establish resources to improve the quality of life for the residents of the community. Currently PXYCF accepts donations for the Arts & Humanities Fund, Firefighters Fund, SPLASH Fund and Unrestricted Fund. Through these funds the Foundation is able to make grants to support activities in the community.

When you support these non-profit organizations, you support the many volunteers who give their time and talent to make our community a great place to live. Make your donation in the name of the organization or organizations of your choice on the **Day of Giving, November 28**.

You may make your donation in the following ways:

**In Person** by dropping off your donation at the Punxsutawney Memorial Library, 301 East Mahoning Street, on November 28 between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

**Online** by or going to [PXYCF.org](http://PXYCF.org), selecting the organization of your choice, and making your donation.

**By mail** by sending a check made payable to PXYCF with the name of the organization you wish to support written on the memo line. These must be postmarked no later than November 28.

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 Sat, Jan 6 @ Clarion Area Tourn 9am  
 Tue, Jan 9 @ Clarion Area 9am  
 Thur, Jan 11 @ Sheffield Area 7pm  
 Sat, Jan 13 @ Philipsburg-Osceola Tourn 9am  
 Tue, Jan 16 **BROOKVILLE** 7pm  
 Thur, Jan 18 **MARION CENTER** 7pm  
 Tue, Jan 23 @ Brockway 7pm  
 Thur, Jan 25 **JOHNSONBURG AREA** 7pm  
 Tue, Jan 30 @ West Shamokin 7pm  
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 Fri, Dec 15 **BRADFORD AREA** 6pm  
 Tue, Dec 19 @ Redbank Valley 6pm  
 Fri, Dec 22 @ Elk Co. Catholic 6pm  
 Thur, Dec 28 **TOURN TBA** 7:30  
 Fri, Dec 29 **TOURN TBA** TBD  
 Thur, Jan 4 @ Brookville 6pm  
 Wed, Jan 10 **ELK CO. CATHOLIC** 6pm  
 Fri, Jan 12 **OIL CITY** 6pm  
 Tue, Jan 16 @ St. Marys 6pm  
 Fri, Jan 19 @ Moniteau 6pm  
 Wed, Jan 24 **BROOKVILLE** 6pm  
 Fri, Jan 26 **DUBOIS AREA** 6pm  
 Tue, Jan 30 **KARNS CITY** 6pm  
 Wed, Feb 7 **ST. MARYS** 6pm  
 Fri, Feb 9 @ DuBois Area 6pm  
 Mon, Feb 12 **UNITED** 6pm  
 Wed, Feb 14 @ Homer-Center 7:30pm  
 Fri, Feb 16 @ Bradford Area 6pm

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# Local Salvation Army Aims to Raise \$32,000 in 30 Days

**P**unx's community invited to support fundraising challenge

The Salvation Army of Punxsutawney has announced its goal of raising \$32,000 during its Red Kettle Campaign.

The local chapter of The Salvation Army is throwing its hat into the ring at Walmart and Shop 'n Save during the month of December to raise funds for services in Punxsutawney during the holidays and into the new year.

"We have dedicated the time we spend ringing bells and raising funds at our iconic Red Kettles each year, so we can provide Christmas gifts, food, and more to families around the holidays," said Capt. Matt Stacy, corps officer of The Salvation Army of Punxsutawney, "but even so, the need we have seen take shape over the last

few years makes the Red Kettle Campaign even more important. It is a rallying cry to support our neighbors in need.

"It's a joyful thing when people from all walks of life give what they can to help others at the kettle," continued Capt. Stacy. "Raising \$32,000 locally this year will be a sign to everyone that there are a lot of caring people out there."

One hundred percent of the funds raised through the Red Kettle Campaign stays local to support services during the holidays and into 2024.

To help reach the amount of the Red Kettle Challenge, support other Salvation Army services, and support the organization's mission, you can do one (or more) of the following:

- Enlist in Love's Army with a sustaining gift of \$25 per month at Punxsutawney Corps.

- Visit SAVolunteer.org and sign up to volunteer at a Red Kettle or distribute Angel Tree gifts to children in need.

- Donate digitally with Apple Pay,

Google Pay, PayPal, and Venmo at any Red Kettle.

- Donate cryptocurrency such as Bitcoin or Ethereum.

- Ask Amazon Alexa to donate by saying, "Alexa, donate to The Salvation Army," then specifying the amount.



Lieutenant Stacy Stacy and Captain Matthew Stacy (submitted photo)

- Provide new toys and clothing through The Salvation Army Angel Tree for local children of families in need.

- And something NEW this year! The Salvation Army encourages people to text "Kettle" to 31333. Donors will then be prompted to enter their ZIP code to ensure that each donation goes back into each local community.

Visit <https://easternusa.salvationarmy.org/western-pennsylvania/punxsutawney/> or visit us on social media using @TSA-PUNXSU to learn more about how you can help this year. If you need services or know someone in need, then contact Capt. Matt or Stacy Stacy to ask about available local services.

#### About the Salvation Army

The Salvation Army annually helps more than 25 million Americans overcome poverty, addiction, and economic hardships through a range of social services. By providing food for the hungry, emergency relief for disaster survivors, rehabilitation for those suffering from

- Continued on page 27

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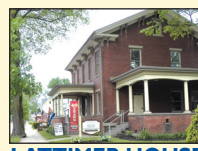
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# With Heartfelt Sympathy

## LOCAL AREA FUNERAL NOTICES



**Eugene E. Rolls**, 85, of Littlestown, Pa. passed away on October 23, 2023. Eugene attended Punxsutawney High School and graduated in 1955. He graduated from



Clarion State College in 1962 and began his teaching career at Eisenhower High School in Russell, Pennsylvania, where he was also a basketball and baseball coach as well as an athletic director. In 1972, he moved the family to Maryland and taught at Brunswick High School and later at John T. Baker Jr. High School in Damascus, Maryland, where he retired in 1998.

He enjoyed teaching, mentoring, and coaching youth as well as spending time with his wife, children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. He coached the Civitans Little League baseball team as well as many all-star teams in the Frederick National Little League in Frederick, Maryland, for over 20 years. He was also an avid fisherman and enjoyed his annual trip to Canada with his father and brothers.

He is survived by his wife, Gail Oliver Rolls; children, Elaine (Ron Cekovich) Berry, Dave (Niccole) Rolls, Emily (Jerry) Kephart, and Ellen (Arthur) Rollman; siblings, Janet (Culver) Rolls Miller, John (Priscilla) Rolls, and Jean (Richard) Duncan Rolls; grandchildren, Dave Berry, Megan (Tivoli) Berryyoung, Nicholas Shelley, Hollister (Andrew) Bowling, Jarrett (Jordan) Rolls, Sara Kephart, Dalton Kephart, Patrick Rollman, Madison (Dontae) Angus, and Greyson Rollman; great-grandchildren, Olivia Berry, Liam Shelley, Colton Shelley and Hannah Shelley; and a special nephew, Randy Rolls, with whom he corresponded daily.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Alvin Rolls and Sara Luellen Armstrong Rolls.  
*McCabe Funeral Home Inc.*  
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**Barbara A. Benson** of Punxsutawney March 8, 1947 - October 24, 2023. Barbara formerly attended the Woodland Avenue United Methodist Church. She had her master's degree in education and taught social studies and social sciences at Jeff Tech for 40 years.

She loved her children and enjoyed traveling, going to the beach, cruises, her pets, reading, and doing sudoku puzzles.

She is survived by two children, son, William B. Benson, III, and significant other, Avis Huey, and daughter Kelley Benson; a sister, Bev Kauffman, and a brother, Lynn Baun.

In addition to her husband, William B.

Benson, Jr., and parents, Maxine L. (Burkett) and Mervin O. Baun, she was preceded in death by a brother, Ron Baun.

*Deeley Funeral Home Inc.*  
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**Catherine C. "Tootsie" Senott** of Rossiter October 2, 1927 - October 25, 2023

Tootsie was a member of the Church of the Resurrection in Rossiter. She was a Class of 1945 graduate of Rossiter High School. She worked at the shoe factory and Loree Footwear. She enjoyed cooking and entertaining her family and friends.

She is survived by a niece, Alice Mancuso; two nephews, the Rev. Anthony Mancuso and Joseph (Kelly) R. Senott; and two great-nieces, Rachael and Ava Senott.

In addition to her parents, Philomena (Pennett) and Joseph A. Senott, she was preceded in death by her siblings, sisters, Rose Ashenfelter and Mary Mancuso, and brother Joseph Senott.

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**Jane A. Peace** of Punxsutawney May 31, 1950 - October 26, 2023

Jane was a 1968 graduate of Punxsutawney High School. She enjoyed crafts, her grandchildren, reading, ceramics, traveling, and going to a monthly lunch with her friends.

She was a member of the Ladies Auxiliary for the Punxsutawney Eagles.

Jane managed a cookie store and then worked as a receptionist while she and her husband lived in Rochester, New York.

In addition to her husband, Robert D. Peace, she is survived by two sons, Steve (Julie) Peace and Jerry (Colleen) Peace; four grandchildren, Martin, Justeen, Darren and Shawn Peace; a brother, Dan (Sandy) Kauffman; a sister, Linda (Mark) Strawcutter; an uncle, Bob Smith; and several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Norma (Smith) and E. Bert Kauffman.

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**Gregg A. Golias** of LaJose, Pa. formerly of Milltown, NJ April 17, 1961 - November 1, 2023

Gregg retired from ExxonMobil after 34 years of service. He enjoyed gardening and was an avid hunter and a lover of the outdoors. He was an Eagle Scout and volunteered his time for



many years as an Eagle Scout Mentor. He was known for his sense of humor, kindness, and willingness to help others. Gregg was devoted to his friends, his family, and most importantly his faith in God.

He is survived by his wife, Barbara (Smith) Golias; a son, Michael (Johanna) R. Golias; a daughter, Lauren (William) G. Dodd; his two grandchildren, Delaney and Reid; his mother, Elizabeth Golias; two brothers, John Golias, Jr., and Glenn Golias and wife Stephanie; brother-in-law, Barry Smith, and wife Kay; two grand dogs, Ellie and Poppy; and numerous nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his father, John, and his in-laws, Arnold and Helen Smith.

*McCabe Funeral Home Inc.*  
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**Bradley Michael Ophaug** of Indiana September 7, 1962 - November 2, 2023

Brad was a graduate of Northern Colorado University and received his law degree from Nova South East College in Florida. He practiced law in Indiana for over 22 years. Brad was passionate about the U.S. Constitution and the laws that followed it. He enjoyed gardening, planting trees, road trips, and traveling.

He is survived by two daughters; Alexis and Madison Ophaug; a brother, Brian (Kim) Ophaug; a niece, Amanda Ophaug; and three nephews, Nicholas Ophaug, Jarred Ophaug, and Casey Ophaug; several great nieces and nephews; and long-time companion, Toni Schaffron.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Ross Emmet Ophaug and Marion J. Bichler.

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**Merenia R. Schrock**, 100 of Punxsutawney

September 4, 1923 - November 3, 2023

Merenia was a graduate of Punxsutawney High School. She was a member of the First United Methodist Church of Punxsutawney and the Hannah Esther Circle at the Church, and the Pocahontas Club.

She enjoyed her family, traveling, cleaning, and the flowers around her home. Merenia worked for Sylvania, Loree Footwear, Sportswear, did home cleaning, and was a caregiver.



She is survived by one brother, Donald (Janet) Schrock; several nieces and nephews, Linda (Vern) Smith, Roxanne Gillies, Jim (Luann) Schrock, Terri Jean Schrock, Charles (Paula) Schrock, and Darlene Schrock; and several great-nieces and great-nephews.

In addition to her parents, Mary Jeannette (Snyder) and Ezra Wayne Schrock, she was preceded in death by three brothers, Clayton, Earl, and Merle Schrock, and nieces and nephews, Watha, Donald, Thomas, Joey Fleming, and Charlene Schrock.

*Deeley Funeral Home Inc.*  
(www.deeleyfuneralhome.com)

**Patricia A. Hayes** of Punxsutawney March 22, 1944 - November 6, 2023

Pat graduated from Punxsutawney Area High School in 1962. After high school she worked for the federal government in Washington, D.C. After she raised her family, she opened Pat's Haven Personal Care, which she owned and operated for over 15 years before her retirement. Pat enjoyed tending her vegetable garden, picking apples and canning. Most of all she loved spending time with her family. She was a very giving and generous person.

She is survived by her children, Drema Poerio, Troy Kromer, Gordon (Michelle) Hayes, Jr., Trisha (Dan Zurenda) Hayes, and Russ (Rhonda) Hayes; nine grandchildren, Adalida Hayes, Ryan Hayes, Grace Hayes, Russell Hayes, Rylee Hayes, Caylia Hayes, Cylea Hayes, Luchi Poerio, and Roman Poerio; seven great-grandchildren, Joseph Hayes, Sofie Hayes, Olivia Hayes, Paighen Hayes, Chance Hayes, Caroline Poerio, Atlas Poerio; three sisters; Elaine Steele, Linda Thompson, and Susan Carney; and a brother, Robert (Sylvia) Kromer; and numerous nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Edward L. and Isabelle Marie (Maniscalco) Kromer; husband, Gordon L. Hayes, who passed away in 1998; three brothers, Samuel, Edward, and Dick Kromer; and a sister, Wendy Eiler.

*McCabe Funeral Home Inc.*  
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**Sgt. 1st Class Earl L. Roach (ret.)** of Punxsutawney

March 1, 1966 - November 6, 2023

Earl graduated from Central Cambria High School in 1985, where he lettered in wrestling,

Continued on next page

# McCabe

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# With Heartfelt Sympathy

Continued from previous page



football, and track and field. "Go Red Devils!"

After graduating, he enlisted immediately into the United States Army, proudly following in his father's footsteps. He served 10 years with the US Army in active duty, with another 12 years serving with the National Guard before his retirement in 2008 as a Sergeant First Class (SFC, E7). He was a veteran of the Persian Gulf War, as well as serving three tours in Korea, Germany, and Iraq. His extensive military career took him all over the US and the world.

After leaving active duty, he moved back to the area from Georgia. He worked briefly at Brookville Wood Products before starting his career with Universal Well Services as a mechanic. He worked there for over 25 years before his early retirement in 2021. He is remembered by countless coworkers over the years as a hardworking and laid-back man who could fix anything in his path.

In his free time, he was an avid hunter and fisherman. He enjoyed spending time with his pets and his wife and family.

He is survived by his wife, Betty J. Donnelly (Daptko) Roach; a brother, Greg (fiancée, Carol Fleming) W. Roach; a sister, Diane (Kevin) L. Shaffer; and two nieces, Jenna Roach and Katelynn Shaffer.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Earl William and Linda Diane (Boucher) Roach.

McCabe Funeral Home Inc.  
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**Goldie G. Hicks** of Punxsutawney  
September 27, 1936 - November 8, 2023



Goldie was a sweetheart who loved all and who was loved by all. She loved her family, playing bingo and cards with her friends at the Towers, and enjoyed doing word puzzles. She is known for having a photo

wall of her whole family.

She had worked for Loree Footwear, Rola Jensen, and at SSCD School.

Goldie is survived by six children, daughter Joyce (Bruce) Aufderklam, daughter Mary (Don) Ross, son Jack (Lynn) B. Hicks, Jr., daughter Kay (Joe) Mennetti, and twin sons Dan (Kasie) Hicks and David (Heather) Hicks; 12 grandchildren, Shawn (Michele) Becker, Sherry (Mike) Snyder, Shana (Tom) Barnes, Donnie (Emily) Ross, Jesse (Sarah) Hicks, Colin (Jenna) Hicks, Dana (Tom) Bowser, Kayla (Brian) Stiglitz, Connor Hicks, Jordann Hicks, Brynn Hicks, and Bailee (Cody) Hill; 22 great-grandchildren; a brother, Robert (Linda) Geist; a sister, Lois Elkin; a special niece Shirley (Al) Brothers; a sister-in-law, Nancy Geist; and numerous nieces, nephews, and great-nieces and great-nephews.

In addition to her husband, Jack B. Hicks, and parents, Cozie V. (Troutman) and Paul S. Geist, she was preceded in death by her in-laws, Boyd and Velma Hicks; her siblings, Clair (Elsie) Geist, James (June) Geist, Harold (Isabella) Geist, Marie (Orvis) Newcome, Ethel (Russell) Shantz twin Paul "Jum" Geist, Carl Geist, and Pam Troutman; and a brother-in-law, Hugh Elkin.

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Please visit the websites of the funeral homes listed to view the complete obituary, sign their guestbooks, plant a tree, and offer your condolences.

If you have a loved one who has passed away and would like to publish the obituary in Punxsutawney Hometown magazine, please contact us at [hometown@punxsutawneymagazine.com](mailto:hometown@punxsutawneymagazine.com) or call (814) 952-3668.



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## Hometown Community

Continued from page 16

■ Nov. 29: **Book donations accepted** from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Punx'y Memorial Library. Limit 2 boxes or bags per person.

■ Dec. 1 & 2: **Grange's Helping Hands free clothing**, Friday, noon to 4 p.m., and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Grange Church of God.

■ Dec. 2: **Smicksburg Cookie Tour**, various locations around town.

■ Dec. 2: **Christmas Bazaar** at First Church of God, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., sponsored by FCOG Youth.

■ Dec. 2: **3rd Annual Last Stop Christmas Shop**, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Heritage House, Brookville.

■ Dec. 2: **2nd Annual Pj's & Pancakes with Santa & Phil**, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., at Gobbler's Knob. \$10 per person, tickets needed. Presented by Groundhog Club and Weather Discovery Center.

■ Dec. 2: **Dinner** at Rossiter Vol. Fire Co., 4 p.m.

■ Dec. 3: **2nd Annual Hilltop Holiday**, noon to 5 p.m., at 695 S. Main St., Punx'y, presented by Hilltop Co-op and The Barking Lot. This is an outdoor event.

■ Dec. 6: **PAHS Chorus Concert**, 7 p.m., at PAHS Auditorium.

■ Dec. 7: **Hanukkah** begins at sundown.

■ Dec. 7: **Blood Drive**, noon to 5 p.m., at Solid Rock Community Church, Big Run. Benefits American Red Cross.

■ Dec. 7: **Military Share Food Program**, 3 p.m., at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds, sponsored by Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest PA. For information, call Second Harvest at (814) 459-3663, ext. 117. Must meet income requirements and have at least one person who has served or is serving in the Armed Forces or National Guard.

■ Dec. 9: **Solid Rock Bundles of Blessings Free Clothing Ministry**, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the parsonage next to Solid Rock Community Church, 102 Church St., Big Run. Donations accepted by pre-arrangement only.

■ Dec. 9: **Big Run B.R.A.N.C.H.H. food distribution**, 11 a.m. to noon, at First Christian Church of Big Run.

■ Dec. 10: **All You Can Eat Breakfast**, 7 a.m. to 1 p.m., Perry Township Vol. Fire Co. Adults, \$10; kids, \$5; under 5, free.

■ Dec. 10: **Holly Tour**, 1 to 4 p.m., benefits the Weather Discovery Center. Contact the center for a map or more information.

■ Dec. 13: **PAHS Band Concert**, 7 p.m., at PAHS Auditorium.

■ Dec. 16: **"A Christmas Carol,"** a one-man performance by Brent Alan Burrington, 2 p.m., at Brookville Presbyterian Church, sponsored by Jefferson County Historical Society. Tickets are \$15 and are available at the History Center or at [jchconline.org](http://jchconline.org). Youngsters aged 16 and under are free admission.

■ Dec. 17: **All You Can Eat Breakfast**, 7 a.m. to noon, at McCalmont Township Fire Hall in Anita. Adults, \$10; kids 5-12, \$5; kids 4 & under, free.

■ Dec. 19: **Blood Drive**, noon to 6 p.m., at Punx'y VFW. Benefits American Red Cross.

■ Dec. 20: **Drive-Through Community Dinner**, 4:30 p.m., at Punx'y Presbyterian Church. Enter the alley off East Mahoning St. beside the hotel and drive toward Union St. Meals will be handed to the driver. The meal will include an entrée to heat at home and a dessert.

\*If your church will celebrate a milestone anniversary, such as the 50th anniversary of its founding, please let Hometown know about it. Such longevity should be recognized with a story! You can email [hometown@punxsutawneymagazine.com](mailto:hometown@punxsutawneymagazine.com)



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# From Our Past

Newsbriefs from the Punxsutawney Historical and Genealogical Society

("From Our Past," researched by S. Thomas Curry, features items of interest from past editions of Punxsutawney and area newspapers.)

**November 17, 1886** — The Burgess and Town Council of the borough of Punxsutawney have passed an ordinance prohibiting the erection of frame buildings of any sort whatever in the business portion of town under penalty of having them removed as nuisances. In doing this the council has acted wisely and for the best interest of all, although, as might be expected, there are a few kickers. (Punxsutawney Spirit)

**Note:** The ordinance was passed a month after the destructive fire of October 6, 1886, that destroyed three blocks of downtown Punxsutawney, leading to rebuilding and the erection of the Pantall Hotel in 1888.

**November 19, 1954** — Baseball fans of the area were interested in "baseball's biggest deal" because it took Billy Hunter, formerly of Rossiter, to the Yankees. Hunter was the key figure in the gigantic deal and is to be groomed to take Phil Rizzuto's spot at shortstop. Billy's qualities should make him a star in Yankee uniform when Phil, one of the all-time greats, begins to slow down. (Punxsutawney Spirit)

**November 24, 1902** — It has been suggested that people do not pay enough attention to their back yards. The front yards are kept clean and beautiful with flowers, and there is no reason why the back yards should not receive the same attention. Instead of filling the back yards with rubbish and old outhouses, they should be kept as clean and as much care taken to beautify them as in the case with the front yards. This would tend to decrease the danger of disease which is often contracted through allowing rubbish, etc. to accumulate. (Punxsutawney News)

**November 24, 1897** — The Punxs'y High School foot ball team is to play the return game

with the DuBois team tomorrow afternoon. Quite a large crowd will accompany the local team to DuBois where the game will be played. The first game was won by the High School team. (Punxsutawney News)

**Note:** Before 1913, a high school "foot ball team" was organized in each town to include high school age youth to play football in other communities with teams of similar ages. In 1913 the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) was organized with rules and guidelines for high school sports and recognized officially as high school teams.

**November 29, 1899** — It is rather odd that a town the size of Punxsutawney should have no way of conveying to strangers and residents the names of various streets. Clearfield, Indiana, and in fact all the towns in this vicinity of any considerable size have the names of the streets posted on every corner, thus eliminating the inconvenience and uncertainty of guessing where one is located. At a slight expense, cards or tin strips bearing the names of the streets could be posted in their proper places. Our streets should be properly "tagged." (Punxsutawney News)

**December 1, 1899** — J.L. Shields purchased a phonograph and has put it in his drug store for the gratuitous amusement and entertainment of his friends and customers. The other evening he entertained an audience with the Battle of Santiago, the Battle of Manila, the Charge of Rough Riders, and many solos such as "Old Rag Time" and "There'll be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight." He is ready at all times to start the famous "talking machine" for customers to hear it talk, sing, play or fight a battle. (Punxsutawney News)

**Note:** The reference to Santiago, Manila and Rough Riders was related to the Spanish-American War fought in 1898 that involved the United States in Cuba and the Philippines.

...

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## Local Salvation

Continued from page 23

drug and alcohol abuse, and clothing and shelter for people in need, The Salvation Army is doing the most good at 7,200 centers of operation around the country. In 2021, The Salvation Army was ranked No. 2 on the list of "America's Favorite Charities" by The Chronicle of Philanthropy. For more information, visit [SalvationArmyUSA.org](http://SalvationArmyUSA.org). Follow us on Twitter @SalvationArmyUS and #DoingTheMostGood.

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## Red Kettle History



The Salvation Army's Red Kettles are a familiar part of the holiday landscape. (photo courtesy of The Salvation Army)

In 1891, Salvation Army Capt. Joseph McFee was distraught because so many poor individuals in San Francisco were going hungry. During the holiday season, he resolved to provide a free Christmas dinner for the destitute and poverty-stricken. He only had one major hurdle to overcome – funding the project.

Where would the money come from, he wondered. He lay awake nights, worrying, thinking, praying about how he could find the funds to fulfill his commitment of feeding 1,000 of the city's poorest individuals on Christmas Day. As he pondered the issue, his thoughts drifted back to his sailor days in Liverpool, England. He remembered how at Stage Landing, where the boats came in, there was a large, iron kettle called "Simpson's Pot" into which passers-by tossed a coin or two to help the poor.

The next day Capt. McFee placed a similar pot at the Oakland Ferry Landing at the foot of Market Street. Beside the pot, he placed a sign that read, "Keep the Pot Boiling." He soon had the money to see that the needy people were properly fed at Christmas.

Six years later, the kettle idea spread from the west coast to the Boston area. That year, the combined effort nationwide resulted in 150,000 Christmas dinners for the needy. In 1901, kettle contributions in New York City provided funds for the first mammoth sit-down dinner in Madison Square Garden, a custom that continued for many years. Today in the United States, the Salvation Army assists more than four-and-a-half million people during the Thanksgiving and Christmas time periods.

Capt. McFee's kettle idea launched a tradition that has spread not only throughout the United States, but all across the world. Kettles are now used in such distant lands as Korea, Japan, Chile, and many European countries. Everywhere, public contributions to Salvation Army kettles enable the organization to continue its year-round efforts at helping those who would otherwise be forgotten. (from [salvationarmyusa.org](http://salvationarmyusa.org))

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2023-24 SCHEDULE

Sun. Sept. 10	49ers	1:00
Mon. Sept. 18	Browns	8:15
Sun. Sept. 24	@ Raiders	8:20
Sun. Oct. 1	@ Texans	1:00
Sun. Oct. 8	Ravens*	1:00
Sun. Oct. 22	@ Rams*	4:05
Sun. Oct. 29	Jaguars*	1:00
Thu. Nov. 2	Titans	8:15
Sun. Nov. 12	Packers*	1:00
Sun. Nov. 19	@ Browns*	1:00
Sun. Nov. 26	@ Bengals*	1:00
Sun. Dec. 3	Cardinals*	1:00
Thu. Dec. 7	Patriots*	8:15
TBD	@ Colts*	TBD
Sat. Dec. 23	Bengals*	4:30
Sun. Dec. 31	@ Seahawks*	4:05
TBD	@ Ravens*	TBD

\*Some Weeks May Be Subject To "Flexible Scheduling"

**CONTEST RULES**

1. Complete the coupon on this page.
2. Guess the winning team and the total number of points you think will be scored in the **Steelers vs. Patriots Game** and enter the guesses in the spaces provided on the coupon.
3. Enter one of the participating advertisers on this page in the space provided to redeem your coupon should you be the contest winner.
4. Clip and forward the coupon to: "Steelers Football Contest", c/o Hometown magazine, 129 Aspen Road, Punxsutawney, PA 15767. **PLEASE MARK YOUR TEAM PICK & TOTAL POINTS ON THE OUTSIDE OF THE ENVELOPE. ONLY ONE ENTRY PER ENVELOPE.**
5. Entries must be received by 4 p.m. **Mon., Dec. 4.**
6. No purchase necessary to participate. All entries must be original magazine coupon (no photocopies).
7. In the event two or more contestants correctly pick the winning team and total number of points, one winner will be randomly selected and awarded the winning prize. In event two or more contestants tie for closest to the total score, one winner will be randomly selected to win the \$20 certificate. Each issue we will give one \$20 certificate.
8. Hometown magazine retains the right to make any final decisions regarding the contest, and by submitting an entry, contestants agree to abide by the rules of the contest.

**Steelers vs. Patriots**  
**Thursday, Dec. 7 • 8:15 p.m.**

Hometown magazine 'Steelers Football Contest':  
Complete, Clip, Drop off or Mail to: Steelers Football Contest  
c/o Hometown magazine, 129 Aspen Road, Punxsutawney, PA 15767

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
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Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**TO QUALIFY FOR THE CONTEST YOU MUST MARK YOUR TEAM PICK & TOTAL POINTS ON THE OUTSIDE OF THE ENVELOPE ONLY ONE ENTRY PER ENVELOPE**

**Coupon for Game of Mon., Dec. 4**

**Step 1: Guess the Winning Team:**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Steelers vs.** \_\_\_\_\_ **Patriots**

**Step 2: Guess the Total Points that will be Scored in that Game:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Total Points**

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