

Punxsutawney Hometown

**Happy Groundhog Day
– Celebrating Phil's Big Day!**

**Welcome, Jay Lundy! The Inner
Circle's Newest Member!**

An Infamous Pie Disaster!

**What's a Groundhog Day
Without a Bit of Lore?**

The Bennis Family's Punx'y Legacy

**Hall of Famer to Speak
at Groundhog Banquet**

Groundhog day
2.2.24

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AND GROUNDHOG CLUB
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ALBUM INSIDE**

February 2024 - Issue Number 280

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On the cover:
Artist Dave Klug's rendition of Phil's big day captures the whimsical essence of Groundhog Day -- it's a light-hearted, hope-filled, good-time holiday! Happy Groundhog Day to all!

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Jay Lundy and wife Danielle outside Hogspitality Village in 2023 wearing their Phil beanies. They'll be making visitors comfortable at that coveted warm spot at the Knob with hot food and drinks again in 2024. (submitted photo)



Lundy's son Patrick, daughter Hazel, and wife Danielle at the PJ's and Pancakes Breakfast with Santa and Phil in December. (submitted photo)



Jay Lundy next to the official movie poster for Groundhog Day, the movie, starring Bill Murray. Released in 1993, the film led to the explosion of Groundhog Day festivities in Punxsutawney. (submitted photo)

Jay Lundy, Newest Inner Circle Inductee

**By Gloria Kerr
for Hometown magazine**

The newest Groundhog Club Inner Circle member is Jay Lundy. As the son of Attorney Jeff Lundy, a long-time Inner Circle member and its past president, Jay is one of seven "legacy members" — the term for descendants of Inner Circle members who are invited to join this exclusive group of 15.

The other six legacy members are Tom Dunkel, A.J. Dereume, Jeff Grube, Butch Philliber, Jon Johnston, and Rob Gemmell. All are second-generation legacy members except Gemmell; he is a third-generation legacy member, descended on his mother's side from his great-grandfather William Means and grandfather Jim Means, who were once Inner Circle members. Longtime Inner Circle member and former club treasurer Jeff Grube opted for



Jay Lundy, newest Groundhog Club Inner Circle member (submitted photo)

emeritus status in April 2023, thus creating an opening for a new 15th Inner Circle member.

Only Inner Circle members can nominate candidates to be considered for membership, unbeknownst to the candidates. Then the Inner Circle votes, aiming to choose new members who have that "Phil gene," an intangible quality of individuals who embrace Punxsutawney Phil lore, love the magic and fun of the holiday, and want to preserve it and share it with others.

Jay Lundy is fully prepared to take on that duty as a keeper of Groundhog Day traditions, and he knows how much time, work, and energy his new commitment requires. Considering his dad's key roles

in the Groundhog Club for over two decades, Jay has been on the sidelines of the club's activity for years, "learning the ropes" as he's worked in the background to promote Groundhog Day and make the February 2nd event into the spectacular, globally celebrated event that it is today.

Jay sees himself continuing his role behind-the-scenes, helping wherever he's needed, particularly working with other members to maintain the Knob's building and property year-round. For over 10 years, he's been working with high school buddies A.J. Dereume, Jory Serrian, and Pat Osikowicz, all three of them already Inner Circle members, on grounds maintenance, maybe two to three times a year. Now his

time commitment has increased dramatically to monthly responsibilities as he'll be involved in the club's decision-making, crafting new programs, and directing programs.

Jay is an attorney working with his dad in the Punxsutawney law office of Lundy and Lundy. He says he always planned to become a lawyer, come back to Punxsutawney, and continue with his dad in their law office after college. He attended Westminster College for four years (1997–2001), and then spent three years at Ohio Northern University to earn his law degree. He joined his dad's firm in 2004 as soon as he graduated. Like so many young people in Punxsutawney, Jay recalls bringing college friends home with him in the late 1990s to relish the Groundhog Day experience. They'd stay at his parents' home, one time sharing space with a television camera crew here to televise the event.

Jay met his wife Danielle (Reitz) Lundy after they both came back to Punxsutawney after college. Married in 2007, they have two children, Patrick and Hazel, ages ten and four, respectively. From his own experience growing up around parents Jeff and Jackie Lundy, who've been deeply involved with Groundhog Club activities for decades, Jay knows that his being a Groundhog Club member is a family commitment. Indeed, less than two months after his induction into the Inner Circle, Jay was working an event at the Knob that Danielle and their two children attended on the first Saturday in December.

It was the second annual PJ's & Pancakes with Santa & Phil breakfast on December 2 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 a.m. The breakfast is a collaborative fundraiser hosted by

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Guests at Hogspitality Village 2023 around the outdoor fire pit that Lundy will be stoking again this year. (submitted photo)

Punxsutawney Weather Discovery Center
By Gloria Kerr
for Hometown magazine



(standing) Lisa & Sean Waksmunski's son Kal-EL, Kal-EL's dad as the Grinch; (seated on Santa's lap) Amanda & Allan Behrendt's daughter Cecelia. Lisa Waksmunski is the PWDC's Executive Director; Amanda Behrendt is Director of Education and Programming. (submitted photo)

Jay Lundy, the newest member of the Groundhog Club's Inner Circle, believes that the Punxsutawney Weather Discovery Center is one of Punxsutawney's finest attractions for visitors. Having served on the Discovery Center's board of directors from 2008 to 2011, he says the center's Meteorologist Hall of Fame is "one of the coolest" ideas our town has had. Mary Jean Johnston became the first Weather Discovery director in 2006 and filled that role until 2013.

In Johnston's second year on the job in 2007, the center began to "honor individuals who have advanced the knowledge of weather science, climatology, and meteorology" in its Hall of Fame. Honorees help to represent and promote the center's "mission to help visitors explore and understand the science behind weather phenomena."

From 2007 to 2023, 19 professional meteorologists were inducted into the Meteorologist Hall of Fame, the first being Dr. Joel Myers, a Penn State graduate, who went on to found AccuWeather, which became the world's leading commercial weather service. Others were these Weather Channel celebrities: Stephanie Abrams in 2009, Jim Cantore in 2013, and Jen Carfagno in 2019. Meteorologists honored from local television stations include KDKA-TV's Jeff Verszyla in 2008, WTAJ-TV's Joe Murgo in 2018, and WJAC-TV's Jim Burton in 2010 and Tony Martin in 2022. The most recent and final inductee in 2023 was Punxsutawney Phil himself, as the program has been paused for now, according to Lisa Waksmunski, the current executive director of the Weather Discovery Center.

...

Jay Lundy

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the Groundhog Club and the Punxsutawney Weather Discovery Center. Groundhog Club Executive Director Marcy Galando coordinated the event for both organizations.

While Jay was busy bussing breakfast tables and cleaning up, his son, Patrick, helped take tickets before he and his sister, Hazel, enjoyed the breakfast and activities with mom, Danielle, including a visit with Santa and interaction with the Grinch. Preparing food for the breakfast were Katie Laska, Sharon Murray, Casey Lellock, and Cindy Gemmell, wife of legacy Inner Circle member Rob Gemmell.

Inner Circle Duties at the Knob

The core duty of the Groundhog Club Inner Circle is to orchestrate events on and around Groundhog Day to ensure it's a fun, totally non-political event. However, members are responsible for helping with a number of club-sponsored events throughout the year. As the newest and one of the younger club members, Jay will be on hand for many of these, learning from his senior members and easing into more responsibilities.

Jay is metaphorically one of "the seeds" who are charged with the important task of keeping the Groundhog Day tradition growing locally and internationally. Their job is vitally important, given the significant impact that Groundhog Day celebrations have on Punxsutawney, as well as on adjacent businesses in Jefferson, Clearfield, and Indiana counties.

On the second Saturday in September, the club hosts its annual Groundhog Picnic and conducts the traditional Punxsutawney Phil Elixir of Life ceremony. Here Phil gets his longevity from drinking the "elixir of life," a secret recipe. Phil takes one sip every summer at the Groundhog Picnic and it magically gives him seven more years of life. The picnic celebrates Phil's immortality, his legend and lore. Another event is the Gobbler's Knob Wine Festival, held in May in 2023, that's a fundraiser co-hosted by the Punxsutawney Chamber of Commerce and Punxsutawney Groundhog Club.

In the three to four days leading up to the big events on February 2, Inner Circle members put in hours of intense preparation at the Knob. They always hope the ground freezes so there's no mud at the venue; to prevent it, crews spread a gener-

- Continued on next page

Jay Lundy

Continued from previous page

ous carpet of straw over the large area where 15–20,000 visitors' feet will be trampling around for at least five hours on Groundhog Day morning, from 3 a.m. when the Knob gates open to 7:30 a.m. when Phil makes his televised prediction.

As soon as Phil's televised performance is over, Lundy says he marvels every year as he watches the massive rush of people, who've come from all over the United States and the world, bolting from the stage area and running toward the shuttle busses to get back in a warm environment, having enjoyed one of the coldest and most enjoyable celebrations of their lives.

As Groundhog Day 2024 draws closer, Jay and wife, Danielle, know one of their duties will be working at the Groundhog Club's Hogspitality Village again this year on February 1 and 2.

Hogspitality Village

What is Hogspitality Village? Now in its fifth year, Hogspitality Village was first offered in 2019, and it has grown in size every year since, discounting the year 2021 when no events took place at the Knob on Groundhog Day because of the COVID pandemic. Located behind the Gobbler's Knob Visitors Center at the pavilion and opening at 4 a.m., it's a sell-out opportunity for warmth, food, and an up-front view of the Knob's stage entertainment on closed-circuit tv – if visitors are lucky enough to purchase one of the limited \$75 tickets.

Ticket-holders can enjoy the heated pavilion that features a warm space to relax and enjoy good food and hot coffee, view a live feed of activities on the Knob's main stage, warm themselves by the outdoor firepit, and access private porta potties. The ticket includes a voucher for an exclusive souvenir, a red or blue beanie with Phil emblem in the past two years, and a photo opportunity in the pavilion with Punxsutawney Phil after he's made his televised weather prediction to the world.

Jay and Danielle Lundy have been working at Hogspitality Village for the past couple of years. For the second year, it is being co-sponsored by the IUP Culinary Academy and Nemaquin Resort who send their chefs to prepare first-class breakfast food for the Village's guests. Jay's job is to keep the outdoor firepit burning brightly, take out the garbage, clean-up, and, with his wife, serve food and wait tables. Of course, they are to make the lucky inhabitants feel welcome by actively engaging with them, a job they thoroughly enjoy, thus the name "Hogspitality Village."

Jay says he is amazed at the optimism and good spirits of those visitors who come from 3 a.m. February 2 through 7:30 a.m. to experience Phil's weather prediction in person, often on freezing cold mornings. He chuckles at the inappropriate footwear of some, wearing sneakers or other lightweight shoes, as they spend hours in the freezing cold waiting for the fireworks and Phil's public appearance.

Community support for Groundhog Day and the Inner Circle

In closing, Jay reiterates his commitment as an Inner Circle member: "I am a custodian of Punxsutawney Phil and the holiday" with responsibility "for perpetuating the lore and legend. We have a duty to the

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Groundhog Club Executive Director Marcy Galando with the Inner Circle's newest member Jay Lundy inside the Souvenir Shop's mini-theater. Galando holds Inner Circle Section passes, while Lundy holds Hogspitality Village tickets. (submitted photo)

Groundhog Club Souvenir Shop at the Knob

By Gloria Kerr
for Hometown magazine

The Groundhog Club Souvenir Shop at Gobbler's Knob is now open year-round from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. seven days a week. Marcy Galando, the Groundhog Club's executive director, has her office next to the shop, and she is on-site every day during this busy time of year. College senior Hannah Davie is Galando's office assistant, while Punxsutawney Area High School senior Dannika Brocius, on a school work-release program, completes the souvenir shop's team.

Galando's office in the shop is ticket-sales central for all those wanting to purchase select opportunities over the holiday from February 1–3. These include VIP parking passes for the Knob, VIP Inner Circle passes to be up front by the stage when Phil makes his forecast, or tickets to hang out in Hogspitality Village, attend the Groundhog Banquet on the eve of Groundhog Day, be guests at the Groundhog Ball or have lunch with Phil at the Eagles on February 3. When these tickets went on sale December 12, Galando says all of them sold out within 15 to 30 minutes.

In addition to a wide variety of Punxsutawney Phil souvenirs, the Inner Circle's shop at the Knob has a small theater room, the walls of which feature a wrap-around mural painted by local artist Kelly Porada. Those who step into the room find themselves in the center of a Groundhog Day morning at the Knob surrounded by thousands of cheerful visitors, a warm bonfire on the hill, and fireworks lighting the pre-dawn sky.

One wall of the theater features the Knob's stage where Phil makes his eagerly awaited weather prognostications. A television screen mounted on the stage shows a continuous loop of past Groundhog Day scenes and celebrations, stage shows from past years, and other Groundhog Club activities. Visitors get to experience vicariously what it feels like to be at the Knob when Phil reveals his prediction of an early spring or six more weeks of winter.

Galando says traffic at Gobbler's Knob is brisk, with about 100–125 people visiting the Knob daily year-round and then thousands coming for the February 2 celebration. Bus trips and school field-trip groups sometimes bundle a visit to the Knob with their stop at the Punxsutawney Weather Discovery Center. A couple of the Inner Circle members enjoy meeting these busses to regale visitors with Groundhog lore and Inner Circle history, Harry "Butch" Philliber being one of them.

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Punxsutawney Area Hospital Foundation Employee Spotlight

Kara Milligan began her career at the Punxsutawney Area Hospital Radiology Department in January 2020. She is a lead mammography technologist, and her responsibilities include performing mammograms, scheduling diagnostic follow-up procedures, and maintaining equipment. She also manages quality control in accordance with federal credentialing and licensure.

Kara attended ACMH School of Radiologic Technology and earned her certification in 2003. With over 20 years of experience, Kara is proud to provide quality and personalized care to her patients at PAH. "I am able to take care of my family and friends and my community," she said. "At PAH we make 'mammo' screenings and follow-up testing accessible to all. There are programs available for the uninsured and underinsured. Women in need of mammograms or those who have a strong family history should not have to go without."

Currently, the Mammography Department is housed in the Medical Arts Building of the PAH campus. With the proposed renovation project, plans include a new Women's Health Center. "The women's suite will be state of the art and convenient for everyone," Kara stated excitedly. "We will have mammography, ultrasound, biopsy, and changing rooms all in one area."

Kara lives with her husband, Dan, and daughter, Laikyn, on her family's farm (Stear Farm) in Punxsutawney. She enjoys being an active member in the community. She is the secretary of the Livestock Committee for the Dayton Fair and president of the Punxsutawney Area Elementary School PTO.

Thank you, Kara, for caring for our community. We appreciate your dedication and commitment to the Punxsutawney Area Hospital.

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Fri., Feb. 2	7am - ?
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Jay Lundy

Continued from previous page

community, and I look forward to that collaboration." He particularly appreciates the



Hogspitality Village co-sponsors, IUP Culinary Academy (its crew pictured) and Nemacolin Resort, send their chefs to prepare first-class breakfast foods for Village guests. (submitted photo)

way the whole town, businesses, and many nonprofits work together and cooperate to promote Groundhog Day – the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, the Weather Discovery Center, and more. It's not about egos.

That community support is crucial to enhance the positive experience visitors have when they come to Punxsutawney to celebrate Groundhog Day. One example is the Chamber of Commerce's sponsorship of a public art project: the installation of Phantastic Phil statues throughout the

downtown and many other local sites. Over 40 of the colorful, whimsical, six-foot tall fiberglass groundhogs have been purchased by businesses, individuals, churches, health care groups, nonprofits, schools, and even the local police and fire departments. The

buyers then hire artists to tailor their own Phil's design to highlight their interests, among them Get Your Phil of Roses, Officer Phil and police dog Fury, Healthy Phil, Tourist Phil, and Sgt. Major Phil.

Jay's dad, Jeff Lundy, who's been an Inner Circle member for 34 years, mindfully says that "it is not a given that Punxsutawney will forever own the

worldwide holiday of Groundhog Day. We [the Groundhog Club and the community] have to work at it every day. It's a responsibility."

Jeff adds, "An Inner Circle member's prime directive is always to be the guardian of Phil" and to help ensure "that the worldwide holiday of Groundhog Day is owned by and forever celebrated here in Punxsutawney." His son Jay, the newest legacy Inner Circle member, fully appreciates this charge, and he's looking forward to doing his part.

...

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from the kitchen of Melissa Salsgiver (This dough needs to be refrigerated for several hours before rolling it out, or refrigerate it overnight.)

1/2 cup margarine (1 stick)
 1/2 cup peanut butter
 1/2 cup brown sugar
 1/2 cup granulated sugar
 1 egg
 1/4 cup French vanilla coffee creamer (or milk)
 1 1/2 cups flour
 3/4 tsp. baking soda
 1/2 tsp. salt
 Icing and/or sugar for decoration



- Cream the first four ingredients. Add the creamer and egg. Beat again. Sift the dry ingredients and add to the others. Form into a ball and refrigerate in a covered container for several hours or overnight.

-Roll dough out on floured counter in small batches. Decorate with any sugars. Bake at 350 degrees for 8-10 minutes or until the edges and tails are brown. The small groundhog cookie cutter I have makes about 6 dozen.

...

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The Apple Pie Almost-Disaster

By Mary Ellen Pollock-Raneri
for Hometown magazine

I remember reading this quote, “If you want to make an apple pie from scratch, you must first invent the universe.” I think I invented a small piece of



our beautiful universe anew over the holidays this year.

Heck! I never had any problems making pies — never! My mom was an incredible baking teacher, and I learned the hard way. Her way! The only way! I did it and did it again until I got it right. Scrubbing floors, hanging clothes, washing clothes, ironing the clothes, gardening or ... baking. I did it over and over until it was accepted

right? If something is wrong — add more of what you already put in.

Wrong. Not a good idea!

In fact, it was a terrible idea. Probably the worst idea since I decided to back the car out of our garage and the garage door was down.

I tasted my apple filling again, and it was way, way worse. I detected some flavor that was totally out-to-lunch. Maybe I was out to lunch! For sure, I wouldn't want to eat this pie for my lunch. What was that crazy flavor?

Then, I spied my bottle of cinnamon. It was not cinnamon. **CLEARLY** and in **BIG RED LETTERS**, I read the label: Chili Powder!

Gasp. I was spent. Tired. I made marinara, made Mom's cranberry salad, baked biscotti, and got the fish ready. This was the last chili pepper I could muster.

But, determined woman that I am, and I **AM** my mother's daughter — I got out a big colander and rinsed everything until it was sparkling clean. I washed behind each apple chunk's ear and between the fruit's toes too. Those were the cleanest apples on the block.



There is nothing better than a hot apple pie with all the right ingredients! (submitted photos)

by Mom's watchful eye.

I was raised in a household of homemade pies. Apple, cherry, pumpkin, blueberry, huckleberry, lemon, or coconut cream — all made from scratch. Made as quickly as 1, 2, 3 — all with homemade crusts and baked to a golden-brown perfection. The fillings were deep with fruit or creamy pudding. They were so perfect and a testament to my mother's pie-baking expertise.

So, when I was determined to use up some apples that were going bad (I sound like my mom), I didn't foresee a problem. Not one. After all, I had learned from the best.

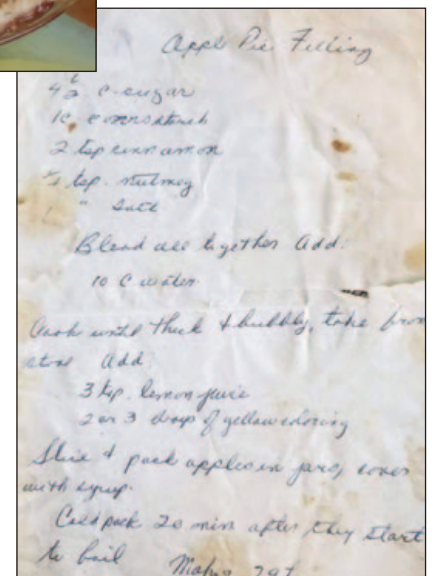
I peeled the hide off them, dug out the bad spots, and cut up my apples, just like my mom. I sprinkled them with a wee bit of lemon juice, as instructed by my lifelong teacher. I tossed them lightly with cornstarch, a sugar mix, added about a half cup of some raisin filling that was leftover from my raisin-filled cookies (again, waste not, want not). Then, I got out some spices. You know — a dash of this, a dab of that. Why measure? I could eyeball everything — just like I have done 1,000 times before. I tossed in a wee bit of nutmeg, a dash of all-spice, and a couple generous shakes of cinnamon.

Then, I took a taste test.

“Hmmm?” I pondered my mixture.

My eyebrow lifted. Possibly not enough cinnamon. Or ... something was odd. Something was a bit off. I couldn't figure it out. Maybe the nutmeg was old. I had memories of my mother telling me to be careful with too much nutmeg, and to watch the expiration date. I peered at the nutmeg bottle. Perhaps that was the culprit of the weird flavor. I was nonplussed. I just could not figure out that taste.

So, of course, I put in more cinnamon,



Mom's homemade apple pie filling was always a hit at our house. Enjoy her recipe during canning season — here written in her own hand and

Then, I re-added the sugar, corn starch, and seasonings, seasoning that included CINNAMON. Yes, my friends, when the going gets tough — the tough get going. When you think you want to quit and put away your fish spatula — pull up your gutchies and put on your big girl baking pants.

I hope that I make you laugh, or cry, or something! Heck! As my mother, Lucy, always said, “What would the world be without mistakes. Pretty boring, I imagine.” She was always right.

And remember these words of Irving Berlin, written for the 1932 musical comedy “Face the Music”:

Things that really matter

Are the things that gold can't buy

So let's have another cup o' coffee

And let's have another piece o' pie!

Great lyrics and great advice! But remember to hold the chili powder!

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Lore, Legend, Tradition – Another Groundhog Day?

By S. Thomas Curry
of Hometown magazine

Punxsutawney history has been reported and recorded in print in a weekly newspaper, the Punxsutawney Spirit, from 1885 until it became a daily paper in 1904. Local readers would



When visitors arrive at the new entrance to Gobbler's Knob, they might be unfamiliar with the steeped history behind the lore of Groundhog Day and the years of Punxsutawney's association to it. (photo by S. Thomas Curry)

also find news supplied in the Valley News, a weekly that began in October 1885 and changed its name to the Punxsutawney News in 1888.

However, the oldest newspaper available at the Punxsutawney Area Historical & Genealogical Society for Punxsutawney area news was the weekly Punxsutawney Plaindealer, bound in volumes from 1868 through 1871. Those old newspapers have been available as primary sources for research into the past of the Punxsutawney area.

From these newspapers the lore of Groundhog Day can be established as fact. Regularly, in early February, settlers of German heritage from eastern Pennsylvania were reminded of the lore of February 2. It was familiar to them from the roots of the Pennsylvania Dutch that settled in the Lancaster area in the 1600s.

Many years ago, when pioneers to this area migrated from the settled and cultured east, weather forecasting was the "human kind" – people observing nature, the sky, animal life, and plants. Sensitive to the change of seasons, they gained "weather knowledge" that was passed on to family by word-of-mouth or in written journals. Folk didn't have radio, television, computer technology, weather satellites in the sky, or weather channels with daily reports. For example, a line in the November 12, 1868, Punxsutawney Plaindealer was evidence of a necessity to "read" the weather signs – "WEATHER PROPHETS tell us that flocks of wild geese are flying southward earlier than usual this year, and this, they add is a sign of a hard winter."

On Thursday February 3, 1870, the Punxsutawney Plaindealer shared the following note: "GROUNDHOG DAY – Believers in this sign can prepare for an abundance of cold weather, for yesterday was a sunshiny day, which would afford the ground-hog a delightful opportunity to see

its shadow if it ventured out." This research affirms that February 2 and its lore were in the minds and life of early Punxsutawney area residents.

In 1886, with a young W.O. Smith as editor of the Punxsutawney Spirit, the newspaper of February 3 offered this bit of news to readers, "Yesterday was ground-hog day, and the venturesome woodchuck that was curious enough about the weather to come out and take a look around would undoubtedly see his shadow, then sneak back into his hole, carefully draw the hole in after him, and stay there for six weeks." In 1887 the Spirit's weekly issue was published on Groundhog Day, and the report to readers was a brief, "Today is ground-hog day, and up to the time of going to press, the beast has not seen its shadow."

On February 1, 1888, the weekly Punxsutawney News reminded its subscribers and readers that, "Tomorrow being ground-hog day, will decide the condition of the weather for the next six weeks." On February 8, 1888, a week after that established moment, the Punxsutawney Spirit commented, "The groundhog might have stood all day and looked at his shadow on the day set apart



In the years of the 1880s, Punxsutawney's weekly newspapers published brief notes about the lore of Groundhog Day on February 2. As interpreted in an artist's drawing, in 1906 local news began to connect Punxsutawney to a groundhog appearing on Groundhog Day. (drawing from Hometown files)

by our ancient brethren for that purpose if it had been so disposed, and yet he has had no shadow to hasten back into his hole."

In observing these news items, it is noted that "ground-hog" is hyphenated and "groundhog day" is not capitalized as is common in publications today. In the local editor's reporting, the groundhog is recognized for merely what it was – a familiar rodent to farmers in the area. With references as "venturesome woodchuck," "little beast," "little marmot," "hibernating woodchuck," there is no admiration for this animal, whether a woodchuck or groundhog by name. No treks to some high spot by any group, no names of local leaders, no community organized celebration of the "prognostication" – a groundhog maybe saw a shadow, maybe not. The old groundhog lore passed from generation to generation.

For a half dozen years in the 1890s in early February, there was no reference to

- Continued on next page

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Lore, Legend

Continued from previous page

Groundhog Day in the Punxsutawney newspapers, but in the Spirit's weekly Wednesday edition in February 1897, editor W.O. Smith commented, "Mr. Groundhog, the great American weather prognosticator, has had his day again. So, with all due regards for his hogship's mission, you had better prepare to accept the weather just as it is sorted out to you." (No association of Groundhog Day with Punxsutawney is noted.)

As time moved into the 20th century, Smith, a popular editor since 1885, on February 6, 1901, commented about Groundhog Day with these words in a four-paragraph article, "The ground hog is the only animal that has a day set apart to himself as an annual holiday all over the civilized world. According to the woodchuck's prediction we should have six weeks of solid winter."

As a note, Punxsutawney grew from a village surrounded by farms to a developed center of many industrial and commercial interests supported by two railroads. Its population in 1870 was 500 people. It grew to a population of 3,000 in 1890. The early

what was to be named the Punxsutawney Groundhog Club in 1899 by the new "city editor" Clymer Freas on the staff of the Punxsutawney Spirit newspaper. From then on, into the 20th century, the Spirit announced the date of an annual Hunt and Feast, reporting details of the event that was attended by hundreds of "faithfuls" — all men. Thus, the Punxsutawney version of Groundhog Day began, promoted by the



Inspired by words born in the imagination of newspaper editor Clymer Freas, Punxsutawney's attention to Groundhog Day was created in the early 1900s. The site was named the "Weatherworks" and changed later to Gobbler's Knob. When publicity photos became necessary, imaginative visual images were created for Gobbler's Knob and "shadowcasting." (photo courtesy of Punxsutawney Area Historical & Genealogical Society)

Punxsutawney Spirit with the imagination of Clymer Freas embellishing the groundhog day lore.

Clymer Freas spent a short 10 years as city editor with the Punxsutawney Spirit. Because of his health he left Punxsutawney and moved to Florida in 1910 leaving a legacy as the father of the concept that Punxsutawney is the Home of the Groundhog and is the Weather Capital of the World.

It was he who identified a sight of the annual sighting of a weather prognosticator called "Br'r Groundhog." Freas prompted the minds of readers to imagine a "weatherworks perched high above the clouds on the top-most bulge on Canoe Ridge mountain." Thus, Canoe Ridge Weatherworks was the title until Groundhog Knob and later Gobbler's Knob began to be used to identify the official site for Groundhog Day. (It was in the 1970s when the Punxsutawney

was named "Punxsutawney Phil.")

Using his imagination, Freas identified the roles of the individual "groundhog hunters" that he named as the Punxsutawney Groundhog Club. In his accounts and imaginative stories, his official group was referred to as "weather scouts," "shadowgraphers," and the "wigwag corps." The leader of the group of hunters was "chief weather scout," "master of shadows," or "official shadowgrapher." (In the 1950s, with Sam Light as president of the Punxsutawney Groundhog Club, the "official" group of men began to be called the Inner Circle.)

Clymer Freas was also the creator of the term "Groundhogese" for the forecast message of the Punxsutawney Groundhog when it was interviewed by the club president with his "official" cane. His use of the

- Continued on page 15



When the first Punxsutawney Groundhog Festival was held in the summer of 1966, Gobbler's Knob was relocated and "reimagined," giving the appearance of a realistic, wooded site to welcome "Br'r Groundhog." (photo from Hometown files)

years of the 1880s were years when coal mines and coke ovens were opened in communities around Punxsutawney. In 1898-1899 the Buffalo, Rochester and Pittsburgh Railroad was extended from Punxsutawney to Pittsburgh, improving the travel and marketing opportunities from the "Groundhog Town" with the "Smoky City." The events of the late 1890s were newsworthy in the Punxsutawney's two weekly newspapers as times and life was changing with new immigrants to the area.

As often reported, groundhogs were plentiful. They were shot at or trapped by farmers who saw them as pests and by others practicing their marksmanship. In the Punxsutawney vicinity, properly prepared groundhog meat became a part of a meal. Inspired by a local group of groundhog hunters, the first Punxsutawney Groundhog Hunt and Feast was held in the summer of 1897. The group became the nucleus of



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The family of Susan Quigley and Thomas E. Bennis in 1907: (front) Leo Bennis, Thomas E. Bennis, Arthur Bennis and (rear) Dorothy Calista Bennis; Helen B. Bennis, Susan Quigley Bennis, Irene Cecelia Bennis, and Elsie Marina Bennis. Missing from the picture is Earl V. Bennis (1894-1895). (photo courtesy of PAHGS)

The Bennis Family of Punxsutawney, Part II

By Coal Memorial Committee
for Hometown magazine

John G. Bennis left his family in Punxsutawney and went to Alaska in 1898. A letter from Skagway, Alaska, printed in the Brookville Republican on April 5, 1899, told of his experience: "I came here one year ago. I got it into my head that I could go to Alaska, be gone a few months, make a big stake (I am a hustler) get back to Pennsylvania and tell the boys between drinks how

resident, Larry Farrell's experience in search of gold. Farrell spent four years there and knew a good many people. He reported that John Bennis and Frank Maxon were in a coast town and would likely come out with some money.

John G. Bennis relocated to San Francisco, California, about 1902, where his wife and children eventually joined him.

After the death of John and Thomas E. Bennis' father in 1890, their mother, Bridget, and younger brothers, Michael

and Martin, relocated to the Punxsutawney area.

Their sister Mary had joined the Sisters of Mercy in Cincinnati.

Michael W. Bennis began his career in the hotel business operating the Travelers' Home Hotel at Troutville.

He married Ida L. Quinlisk of Clayville and later moved to Butler, Pennsylvania, where he worked for the Standard Steel Car Company.

Martin P. Bennis found work with the Susquehanna and New York Railroad as a

car inspector and was killed in a railroad accident in 1909. He married a Punxsutawney girl, Sarah Keefe.

Thomas E. Bennis remained in Punxsutawney where he continued to live in and operate the Bennis Hotel. Although he was not the same type of hustler as his brother, he had speculative ideas and he worked with others to attain them.

In 1895 he thought that having an elegant opera house centrally located in Punxsutawney, one that could host a large audience, would be a good investment. He speculated that a new opera house could be built on Findley Street on lots he had purchased at the rear of the Johnston Brick Building. He invested upwards of \$200 to have a Pittsburgh architect design a three-story building that

- Continued on next page



A Punxsutawney map from Caldwell's 1878 Atlas shows the Mill Property and the millrace that separated the property from the rest of the town, creating the Island. One writer stated filling in the old millrace to eliminate the waterway was a task only second to the building of the Panama Canal. The portion enclosed in the red outline became the playground for children, known as Harmon Field, with the efforts of the Punxsutawney Land and Improvement Company Limited. (image courtesy of Punxsutawney Area Historical & Genealogical Society)

easy it is to pick up a fortune in Alaska and carry around a pocketful of nuggets to give to the children."

His letter also described the hotel and liquor business in Alaska, the challenges faced in the gold fields, and ended with the following paragraph: "So boys, when you crawl between mother's warm blankets at night and stretch your legs under father's well-laden table three times a day, consider seriously before you conclude to invade the Klondike. And the girls, God bless them, if they talk of coming to this country, unless under a father's or a husband's protection, and are determined - well, shoot them on the spot. T'were better thus than they should come here."

An article in the August 2, 1899, edition of the Punxsutawney Spirit, "Back from the Klondike," told of former Walston

The Bennis Family

Continued from previous page

would house the theater on the first floor, sleeping apartments for the members of the visiting theater companies on the second floor, and a grand hall for other purposes on the third floor. It would take 10 years and the creation of the Punxsutawney Opera House Company consisting of C. S. Aldrich, D.H. Clark, T.E. Bennis S.A. Rinn, Ben Record, Thomas McMillen, A.W. Calloway, and others before this idea became a reality.

The 1,200 seat Jefferson Theater opened at 226 North Findley Street on November 24, 1905, with the comic opera "The Princess Chic." The Jefferson Theater served the community for 73 years with entertainment, evolving from vaudeville to movies and hosting local events, until

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Advertisement for the first show to be presented at the Jefferson Theater from the Punxsutawney Spirit, November 23, 1905. (image courtesy of PAHGS)



A 1930s photo of crowd outside the Jefferson Theater on North Findley Street. The entrance to the theater was on Jefferson Street. Visitors would walk through an extended lobby to the theater, which stood behind the stores that fronted on Jefferson Street. (photo courtesy of PAHGS)

it was closed in 1978. In 1985 the vacant building was added to the National Register of Historic Places. It was demolished in 1998.

In 1888, the Borough of Punxsutawney was made aware of a sewerage system problem. Sewerage, being piped into Mahoning Creek, was stagnating in cesspools and ponds, and polluting the air as well as the water. Engineer Van Rensselaer and plumber T.J. Cutler proposed a

solution to create a sewer system that would carry the Punxsutawney wastewater well downstream from the town.

As the wheels of government turned slowly, T.E. Bennis, saw opportunity, and in 1899 he purchased the old St. Clair Grist Mill property from Mitchell, North & Davis for \$6,000.

In 1902 Thomas E. Bennis, in cooperation with J.B. Phelan and Ben Record, organized the Punxsutawney Land and Improvement Company Ltd., for the purpose of turning the old mill property into a new subdivision of the Borough of Punxsutawney. The plan was to move the mill, fill in the old race, extend Gilpin Street to the creek, and lay out town lots on the nice level piece of ground.

At the April 1902 meeting of Borough Council, they requested the streets and alleys in the new subdivision be ordained. On May 2nd of that year, they sold their first lot to Emma Perry. After that the lots sold well. Buyers were having their own homes built, and investors were purchasing several lots and building houses to rent or sell. Their investment was turning

- Continued on page 15

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Artists of Punxsutawney create many images of the groundhog. These images are symbols of hope for an early spring. The groundhog means positivity. The positivity of the groundhog is pervasive and brings people to Punxsutawney from all over the world on Groundhog Day. (photo by Morgan Penkalski)

A Peek at the History of Groundhog Day

By Morgan C.S. Penkalski
for Hometown magazine

Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, is known worldwide as the place to be on Groundhog Day. Punxsutawney did not invent Groundhog Day, but the local celebration has captured its essence.

An 1840 diary mentions Groundhog Day. It records the Germanic people's observation that when the groundhog came out of its winter quarters and if he saw his shadow, he returned and remained there 40 days. Other people would argue that the observation of

brated the changes of the sun, the stars, and the seasons. Ancient Romans had the Brumalia Festival, which was celebrated at the end of winter with night dinners and drinking. Native Americans observed the lengthening of the days and the quickening of the sap in the maple trees, enabling them to make sugar. A quickly warming spring brought a short sugar-making season and enabled an early planting of their crops.

Animals were not part of these celebrations until Christian Germanic people encountered Celtic beliefs. They introduced the

badger, known as "The Candlemas Prophet." *Dachstag*, or Badger Day, is a German folk expression for Candlemas. The story is that if the badger saw its shadow, it crawled back into its hole to stay four more weeks until winter would end.

When Christian influence reached the Celtic people, February 2 became known as "Candlemas Day." Candlemas was when people would go to church and have their candles blessed, hence the name. In 1678 John Ray wrote this poem

for Candlemas Day:

*If Candlemas be fair and bright
Winter will have another flight
If on Candlemas day it shower and rain,
Winter is gone and will not come again*

Early German settlers brought this practice with them to America in the 1700s. Dubbed "Pennsylvania Dutch," these settlers found that badgers were not common here. Since the badger and groundhog both are small, hibernating, forest rodents known for being shy, the groundhog was used in place of the badger. Although the groundhog's scientific name is the *Marmota Monax*, many people call it different things such as woodchuck, *wojak*, whistle-pig, wood-shuck, whistler, marmot, thickwood badger, red monk, land beaver, *weenusk*, *monax*, groundpig, and for some reason a *siffleaux*!



Prehistoric people gathered at Stonehenge in on February 1 to celebrate Imbolc a festival held February 1 through February 2, near Salisbury, England. (Title from the Detroit Publishing Co., Catalogue J foreign section, Detroit, Mich : Detroit Publishing Company, 1905, picture from The Library of Congress)

Groundhog Day started way before then, with a different name.

Ancient British people, also known as Celtic people, had observed turning points in the year in addition to solstices. One of their turning points was "Imbolc" celebrated from February 1 through sundown February 2. The people would gather around fires built to encourage the return of the sun. Other transitional days were May 1, later May Day; August 1, Loaf-Mass Day; and November 1, All Saint's Day. These were known as transitional days because they were halfway through the season. These days were important to the Celtic people because they used them to foretell the upcoming weather. This helped them know when to plant their crops and how to prepare for the weather.

Other ancient people tracked and cele-

- Continued on page 17

The Bennis Family

Continued from page 13

a community nightmare into a nice neighborhood and making profit.

Thomas E. Bennis continued to invest in the community. The Punxsutawney News reported on August 26, 1908, "The new Bennis building on Findley Street is progressing very rapidly and it will be ready for occupancy next month. There are three stories in it and the second and third stories consist of thirteen commodious rooms each. The lower story consists of two sections, one of which will be occupied by S.B. Gleckler, who will conduct a first class restaurant."

In 1910 the T.E. Bennis family, which had made their home at the Bennis Hotel on North Findley Street, moved to a private residence located at 309 East Liberty Street where they resided for the next eight years. Thomas E. Bennis continued to operate his hotel and manage his other properties, support his family, and perform his civic duties. In 1911 as part of the Punxsutawney Land and Improvement Company, he was instrumental in setting aside land for a playground for the children of Punxsutawney. Today we know this playground as Harmon Field.

In 1913 he was elected to serve on the Board of Directors of the Punxsutawney National Bank, a position he held for 22 years.

The Bennis' lifestyle changed significantly in 1916 with the passing of the Prohibition Act, which banned the sale of alcoholic beverages and forced the closing of all hotel bars. The closing of the bars caused most of the Punxsutawney hotels to close. As a lifelong realist, Thomas E. Bennis opted to close the Bennis Hotel. He converted the barroom and office to storerooms for rent and made the upper portion of the hotel into flats (apartments). By this time his son, Arthur Bennis, had become a certified accountant and was managing the Bennis business interests.

In 1918 Thomas and Suzie Bennis purchased and moved to the McKibben House at 401 West Mahoning Street. This house was the Thomas E. Bennis Family home from 1918 through 1982.

Their daughter, Dorothy Bennis Cooney, donated the house to the Punxsutawney Area Historical & Genealogical Society in 1982. The Society makes the house available for the public to visit.

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. Please 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 or may be requested by an email to: punxsyhistory@outlook.com, or call (814) 938-2555 and leave a message.

...

Lore, Legend

Continued from page 10

word originated from the summer Groundhog Hunt and Feasts, explaining that the Weather Scouts had eaten so much groundhog that they had absorbed the language.

As the years passed with Groundhog Days through the 20th century into the 21st century, the Punxsutawney-style Groundhog Day celebration and its traditions evolved into a crowd-pleasing celebration as numerous "impersonators" sought publicity for their events – for example, Quarryville in eastern Pennsylvania, Sun Prairie in Wisconsin, General Beauregard Lee in Georgia, and more. For a small town in Pennsylvania, the groundhog distinguishes Punxsutawney as a special place in the

United States with many visitors also from around the world. Often, the emphasis on the town's Groundhog Day heritage is at the expense of the Punxsutawney's rich Native American history and unique name.

Among all the publicity surrounding and search for the history of Punxsutawney and Groundhog Day, there is no room for "fake news" to confuse the reader. A few years ago, a Pennsylvania governor stated, "February 2nd is an exciting day for Punxsutawney as the nation turns to the charming town to celebrate this cherished Pennsylvania tradition. Groundhog Day began right here in Pennsylvania in 1886." In the same year, another new story focused on Groundhog Day and stated, "America's Groundhog Day started in Punxsutawney in 1887 with the first official trek to Gob-

bler's Knob." Untruthful.

A booklet, "It Happened in Pennsylvania" was published in 2005 and began its chapter "The Whole Truth about the Groundhog" with the note, "Bright and early on the morning of February 2, 1887, the official gathering of the Punxsutawney Groundhog Club made its first historic journey up to Gobbler's Knob. Their fearless leader and founder was Clymer Freas, editor of the local newspaper, The Punxsutawney Spirit." From research in primary sources for Punxsutawney news. The facts are unfortunately mixed to become "fake news." Beware.

What, another Groundhog Day? Lore, legend, tradition? A big day in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania! Just the facts, please.

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Hall of Fame Meteorologist to Speak at Groundhog Day Eve Banquet

The Punxsutawney Groundhog Club is pleased and excited to announce that Jen Carfagno of the Weather Channel will be the special guest speaker at the Annual Groundhog Day Eve Banquet on February 1, 2024.

Jen is co-host of AMHQ ("America's Morning Headquarters") weekdays from 5 a.m. to 9 a.m. ET on The Weather Channel television network. Jen is a close friend of Punxsutawney Phil, and on Groundhog Day you can always find her on camera in front of Knob covering Phil's Prognostication.

She is also a member of the Punxsutawney Weather Discovery Center's Meteorologist Hall of Fame, having been inducted as the Hall's 16th member in January 2019.

During her more than 20 years at the Weather Channel, Jen has covered all types of extreme weather in the studio, on-camera, behind the scenes, and in the field. She's been out battling the wind and snow during blizzard warnings, slopping through torrential rain and flooding, sliding in ice storms, and bracing against the wind and rain in landfalling hurricanes.

Jen is born and raised in Collegeville,

Pennsylvania, and earned her bachelor's degree in meteorology from the Pennsylvania State University in 1998 – a year after an internship with the Weather Channel. Following graduation, she joined the Weather Channel as a full-time meteorologist.

Jen began her career off-camera in the meteorology department, creating on-air graphics, forecasting, and contributing to the modernization of weather warning delivery to your pagers (and then to cell phone in her role in the Science and Strategy Department). She started full-time on-air as the Travel Analyst for First Outlook, and contributed

to the flagship morning shows Your Weather Today, Morning Rush, and Wake Up with AI, and hosted Weekend View.

In her spare time, Jen enjoys running, relaxing at the beach, working in the yard, going to country music shows, trying out the latest exercise trend, or sitting on the sidelines and bleachers cheering on her kids at their athletics. Her favorite weather measurement is dew points as she is often referred to as the "Dewpoint Diva." Her life-long goal is to help people understand how important they are to everyday life.



Jen Carfagno (Hometown file photo)

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A Peek at

Continued from page 14

The first local evidence of Groundhog Day in the Punxsutawney area is a diary entry on February 2, 1869, by Squire Samuel J. Kuntz, who records, "This was Gr'd Hog Day – but it seen no shadow today." His belief in the groundhog's ability to predict an early spring gave him hope for the future.

For Squire Kuntz, the groundhog's prognostication represented hope for good weather. This hope continues today, especially for the people in Punxsutawney.

The name Gobbler's Knob has two theories about its origin. The first one being that it was home to a large group of turkeys. The second was that, after an annual hunt, the people would "gobble" up the creatures that they caught. Today, Gobbler's Knob is where the groundhog, known as "Punxsutawney Phil" issues his annual prediction for the arrival of Spring.

Although Groundhog Day is celebrated in many places and countries, Punxsutawney Phil is perhaps the most famous groundhog of all. This may be because of the media hoopla surrounding Phil. Punx'y Phil's first public debut was on the television on the show "Today" in 1960. He visited the White House in 1986. Perhaps one of Phil's most famous appearances is in the 1993 movie "Groundhog Day," in which Phil was portrayed by a groundhog named Scooter. Phil also appeared on Oprah Winfrey's show in 1995.

Visitors to Punxsutawney may see Phil with members of the Groundhog Club's Inner Circle. The Inner Circle members are responsible for caring for Phil and continuing Punxsutawney's tradition of greeting Groundhog Day on a hilltop, at sunrise, with fun and fireworks. Every Groundhog Day they lift Phil from his burrow at Gobbler's Knob, where

thousands of people, hoping for an early spring, come to see Punxsutawney Phil, Weather Predictor Extraordinaire.

At Gobbler's Knob, on February 2, a celebration as old as mankind will take place, a celebration of the return of the sun to the northern hemisphere, which provides hope for an early spring. So, from the lands of old to Gobbler's Knob, humankind has celebrated this late winter holiday. We've celebrated it as *Imbolc*, *Candlemas*, *Dachstag*, *Badger Day*, and *Groundhog Day*. No matter the name it's always been a gathering to have fun and to hope for warmer days ahead.

Morgan C. S. Penkalski is a student at Punxsutawney Area High School and a volunteer at the Punxsutawney Area Historical & Genealogical Society.

...

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Phil's Souvenir Shop offers Groundhog Stuff

By Danielle Merrow
for Hometown magazine

In Punxsutawney, there is no shortage of places to find Phil-themed “merch,” and one shop that locals and visitors alike should not miss is Phil’s Souvenir Shop, located at 102 West Mahoning Street.

The shop offers a wide variety of customized Phil memorabilia, including this year’s newest addition, a 5-foot, 9-inch tall by 4-foot wide, lighted, blow-up Phil decoration.

The store also offers Phil-themed hats, gloves, shirts, cups, glasses, stuffed animals, tea towels, and even freeze-dried groundhog “droppings” (Tootsie Roll candy).

Store manager Mary Ann Jacobson says the store offerings are based largely on what has historically sold best, but she is always researching for new and different ideas, and she’s always open to taking suggestions. She then sources the production of these items, using as many local artisans as possible but

always outsourcing within the United States.

Another newer offering is a Phil Memory card game, which has been in development for a few years.

The shop is open seven days a week, hosting enough foot traffic to keep busy. This year

alone, patrons from all over the world have ventured into the shop, placing their push pin on the world map in the store. Countries represented include Poland, Germany, Norway, Dubai, Turkey, Bavaria, Finland, the UK, Australia, Canada, Japan, Ireland, Scotland, and others.

Jacobson attributes the success of the

store to “good staff and volunteers who help out tremendously and keep things running smoothly.”

The website, groundhogstuff.com, generates another portion of revenue for those who can’t make it into the store. Store hours are Monday through Saturday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., Sunday 11–3, and will be extended during the Groundhog Day season.

...

Support Local Businesses During Groundhog Day

By Danielle Merrow
for Hometown magazine

Groundhog Day is the biggest day of the year for Punxsutawney – for the town, its residents, and its economy. Each year over the past century plus, the tradition of Groundhog Day has grown in popularity and brings spectators from all over the world to witness Phil’s prognostications and explore the town and its evolving offerings.

Punxsutawney – a small town with a big name – is the perfect place for smaller businesses to showcase the talent and hard work that residents pour into making a living here year-round. While out-of-town visitors explore the Punx’y area all year long, Groundhog Day is the biggest celebration of

the year and the largest source of revenue for many business owners.

The influx of visitors to town is not only fodder for Phil’s ego, but also a great opportunity to highlight the town’s commerce. From local restaurants and pizza shops to coffee shops, bakeries, breweries, wineries, and watering holes, to artisans, crafters, boutiques, and vendors of other wares, Groundhog Day is the small business owner’s opportunity to shine – not only for tourists, but also for locals to wander out and sample something new and unexplored – and maybe find a new favorite!

So, enjoy the variety that Punxsutawney’s local businesses offer, not only on Phil’s big day but also throughout the year!

...

New Exhibit Debuts at the Weather Discovery Center

Things have become a lot cooler at Punxsutawney’s Weather Discovery Center with the installation of their newest exhibit – “Ice is Nice Interactive Glacier”!



According to Executive Director Lisa Waksmunski, planning for this exhibit began over 18 months ago with the design team at Carnegie Science Center and former director Marlene Lellock, who helped conceptualize the piece. Construction on the exhibit began in early November with installation concluding last week.



“Ice is Nice” prompts visitors to use ice picks to help guide them across a large glacier. They will be able to learn about where glaciers came from and what state they are in today. Waksmunski noted that there are child-sized and adult-sized picks, so every visitor will be able to enjoy this new exhibit. The new ice wall feature is the first of two pieces that will highlight glaciers and ice for the center.

Stop by to try the new “Ice is Nice Interactive Glacier” and to reconnect with old favorites like the “Twist & ’n’ Shout Tornado Slide,” the AccuWeather Green Screen Forecasting Station, and the “Landscape Topobox” augmented reality exhibit. The Weather Discovery Center is currently open Thursday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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Third graders Alex, Lauren, Grace, and Layla design Native American shelters as a learning extension challenge. Third grade scored above the national average in math, reading and science! Way to go!

Celebrate Catholic Schools Week: Jan. 28 to Feb. 3

National Catholic Schools Week begins on the last Sunday in January and runs for an entire week. This year it is celebrated from January 28 to February 3. It is annually celebrated in the United States to promote the exceptional education received from a Catholic school. Education has always been a vital part of decision-making for every family and parent, and with this week-long occasion, people can have a glimpse of the excellent standards, formation, programs, and teachings that Catholic schools can offer.

History of National Catholic Schools Week

National Catholic Schools Week is held for seven days, starting on the last Sunday in January. In addition to its promotion of education, this set-aside week is also a great opportunity to recognize the value, principles, and contributions that the Catholic schools have made to the Church and every citizen for decades. Showcasing what makes Catholic schools the best for every parent, family, and child is the priority for celebrating Catholic Schools Week.

What usually happens during Catholic Schools Week is the observance of Catholic Masses, assemblies, open houses, seminars, and many other activities for every family, parishioner, and community member. The quality and distinction of Catholic schools can be seen through these, especially for the young – those who will attend and enter school.

The first Catholic school that opened in the United States was St. Mary's School in Philadelphia, which opened in 1783. After some time, the enthusiasm and curiosity for Catholic education grew, and the nation noticed a massive inflow of Catholics from all over the world. By the 1920s, more than 6,000 Catholic elementary schools accepted and enrolled almost two million students and employed 42,000 teachers. By the latter half of that century, enrollment had grown even more, reaching double the number of students. Ever since, Catholic schools have been widely perceived and established as a viable and valuable means of education.

Release is courtesy of the National Catholic Education Association (www.NCEA.org/CSW).

...

Saints Cosmas & Damian School Catholic Schools Week 2024 Celebration, Jan. 28–Feb. 3

SSCD School alumni, parish and community members are invited to attend all Catholic School Week events by signing into the school office.

During the week-long celebration, the school's gym will be open daily from 2:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. Families and friends are invited to sign-in to play with their youngsters in the SSCD gym!

SUNDAY: Our parish and school celebrate their faith as Catholic Schools Week begins. Attend Mass with friends and family at either 8 a.m. or 11 a.m.

The public is welcome to attend Super Hoop Shoot Sunday. Noon – 1 p.m., Registration; 1–3 p.m., Free throw competition; 4–5 p.m. District competition.

MONDAY: Celebrate the Students of SSCD! Monday Moovoo Madness dress-down day! Dress as a farmer or a farm animal. Families are invited from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. for the Cows in the Classroom assembly. Also, join the laughs at the Student Standup Comedy Show!

TUESDAY: Celebrate Our Nation! At 8 a.m. families can join faculty and students for prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance in front of the church. Also, a dress-down day – students can wear anything with the SSCD logo or dress in patriotic red, white, and blue. The day will also include a field trip to Standard Pennant to see the SSCD logo being made.

WEDNESDAY: Celebrate Vocations! Students are encouraged to dress down as their future selves in their future careers. Students will make career presentations. From 8 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. in the gym, Mr. Francis Catalano, a member of Knights of Columbus and the owner of Back2Basics Fitness, will challenge students, staff, and parents to have fun and stay fit in 2014.

THURSDAY: Celebrate our Families! Dress-down day is show attire. Families are invited to the following: 10 a.m., Mass; 11 a.m., pizza lunch (RSVP); 11:30 a.m., recess; 12:15 p.m., play Bingo for Books; 1:30 p.m., SSCD Talent Show.

FRIDAY: Celebrate Community! Happy Groundhog Day! School is closed, so students can enjoy our community's unique holiday with their families.

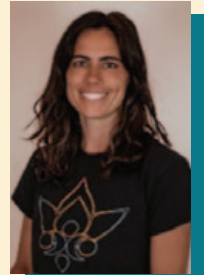
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Hometown Community Happenings

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

■ See inside Hometown magazine for the official **Groundhog Day** schedule of events!

■ **Steelers Contest Winner Named:** On December 31, the Pittsburgh Steelers defeated the Seattle Seahawks 30-23 at Lumen Field in Seattle. Dorothy Painter of Rossiter picked the game's outcome and predicted that 52 total points would be scored – only a single point less than the actual points tallied. Her prognosticating skill has made Dorothy the most recent winner in Hometown's Steelers Football Contest. She plans to redeem her \$20 gift card at the Punxsutawney Shop 'n Save. Congratulations, Dorothy!

■ Feb. 3: **Groundhog Jog 4 Mile Run/Walk** live & virtual races, 10 a.m. For more information or to register, go to <https://runsignup.com/Race/PA/Punxsutawney/GroundhogJog4MileRunWalk>. Registration for the live (\$20) and virtual (\$30) races ends Feb. 2 at 1:59pm EST.

■ **PACC Saturday Morning Basketball** will start (target date) Jan. 27, for kids ages 4 to 8. \$20 per person. Register at the Community Center office. Call 938-1008 for more information.

■ **Punx'y Memorial Library's Youth Programs** will begin Feb. 5. Visit or contact the library for registration information before programs start.

■ **The Salvation Army's Club 3:16** youth program will begin in February. Call 938-5530 or visit their Facebook page for registration information.

■ The **Punx'y Memorial Library** is holding "Love Your Library Month" Feb. 5-29. Readers can select a "blind date" wrapped book. You will only know the genre and a basic description of the book.

■ The **Big Run Spring Peepers Banquet** will be March 17 at the War Memorial. Watch local media for ticket information.

■ **Free Income Tax Preparation** is offered by Jefferson-Clarion Community Action's VITA program. Income limits do apply. Call (814) 226-4785, ext. 107 for more information.

■ Support the **Punx'y Memorial Library** with the purchase of a T-shirt or hoodie. More information can be found at www.punxsutawneylibrary.org or visit the library's Facebook page.

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

■ The **Punx'y Memorial Library** will be guided by the action of the Punx'y school district during inclement weather. If the schools are on a 2-hour delay, the library also will be. If the schools are closed for the day, the library will decide by 11:30 a.m. whether to open at noon or stay closed. The library will post a sign on the doors and updates on social media and its website.

■ Jan. 27: **Little Mr. & Miss Groundhog Crowning**, 10 a.m., at lobby of Weather Discovery Center.

■ Jan. 27: **WWE Royal Rumble Party** at

The Salvation Army, \$5. Pre-show, 7 p.m.; rumble starts at 8 p.m., includes food, predictions challenge card and a chance to win prizes.

■ Jan. 27: **PAHS Winter Formal**.

■ Jan. 28-Feb. 3: **SSCD Observes Catholic Schools Week**.

■ Jan. 28: **SSCD Super Hoop Shoot Sunday**, registration noon to 1 p.m., free throw 1 to 4 p.m., district competition, 4 to 5 p.m. Public welcome.

■ Jan. 30: **Used Book Sale** at Punx'y Memorial Library, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., give a donation.

■ Jan. 31-Feb. 4: **Punx'y Memorial Library closed**.

■ Feb. 1-3: **Groundhog Days in the Park**, sponsored by the Punx'y Chamber of Commerce, at Barclay Square. Thursday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Friday, open at 8 a.m.; and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

■ Feb. 1: **Food & Vendor Sale**, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., at Jefferson County Social Hall, 201 N. Jefferson St., by Punx'y Beta Sorority. Dine in or take-out. Soups, sandwiches, and baked goods. Craft vendor tables \$20, call Linda Bittle at (724) 919-3574.

■ Feb. 1: **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.

■ Feb. 1: **Caregiver Support Group**, 3 p.m., at Heritage House, Brookville. For more information or to RSVP, call 849-3096.

■ Feb. 1: **Punx'y Chamber of Commerce Wine & Hops Walk**, 5 to 8 p.m., must be 21. Pre-sale tickets, \$15, available online; at the gate, \$20.

■ Feb. 1: **Groundhog Day Eve Coffee-house & Live Music**, 6 to 9 p.m., at Journey Church. Music at 7 p.m. Art by Punx'y Art Association on display.

■ Feb. 1: **Rockin' Groundhog Eve Dance**, 8 to 11 p.m., at Punx'y Eagles, featuring "Almost Mulberry," must be 21. \$15 per ticket. Sponsored by Punx'y Area Community Foundation.

■ Feb. 1, 6, 8, 13, 15, 20, 22, 27 & 29: **"Green Light" program** for those with special needs, noon to 2 p.m., at First Church of God. Those attending must be accompanied. Call Dawn McKenrick at 939-1979 for information.

■ Feb. 2: **Groundhog Day! Events** happen from 3 to 8 a.m. at Gobbler's Knob. Shuttle buses available.

■ Feb. 2: **Pancake Breakfast**, 7 to 10 a.m., at The Salvation Army, \$5 per person.

Feb. 2 & 3: **Punx'y Art Association art display**, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Journey Church.

Feb. 2 & 3: **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.

- Continued on next page

Hometown Community

Continued from previous page

■ Feb. 5, 12, 19 & 26: **Adult Coloring Club** at Punx'y Memorial Library. Bring your own supplies or borrow some from the library.

■ Feb. 7, 17 & 21: **Book donations** accepted from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Punx'y Memorial Library. Limit 2 boxes or bags per person.

■ Feb. 7 & 21: **Bingo** at the Big Run Event Center, benefits the Big Run Area Vol. Fire Co. Doors open at 4 p.m., early bird games start at 6 p.m. and regular games, at 6:30 p.m. Food & beverages available.

■ Feb. 10: **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.

■ Feb. 10: **Big Run B.R.A.N.C.H.H. food distribution**, 11 a.m. to noon, at First Christian Church of Big Run.

■ Feb. 10: **SSCD Knights of Columbus's Night at the Races**. Doors open 6 p.m., race begins at 7 p.m. \$20 tickets available from any Knight and if available, at the door.

■ Feb. 11: **All You Can Eat Breakfast**, 7 a.m. to 1 p.m., Perry Township Vol. Fire Co. Adults, \$10; kids, \$5; under 5, free.

■ Feb. 11: **Rossiter Vol. Fire Co. wings**, 3 p.m., fundraiser for the fire company.

■ Feb. 12: **Catastrophic Book Club**, 5:30 p.m., at Punx'y Memorial Library. This month's book is "The Color of Water" by James McBride. Call the library at 938-5020 to reserve a copy.

■ Feb. 14: **Valentine's Day**. Remember your special someone with a gift from one of Hometown's advertisers.

■ Feb. 14: **Ash Wednesday**. Begins the religious season of Lent.

■ Feb. 17: **Snowman in the Forest**, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Cook Forest State Park.

■ Feb. 17: **Drop-In Storytime**, 3 p.m., at Punx'y Memorial Library. Parents/guardians must remain in the library with their children under age 10.

■ Feb. 17: **Valentine's Dance**. Big Run Recreation presents "Night Train," at the War Memorial, 7 to 10 p.m., for those age 21 and over, doors open at 6:30 p.m. \$10 advanced tickets, \$15 at the door. Proceeds benefit Big Run Recreation.

■ Feb. 18: **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.

■ Feb. 19: **President's Day**.

■ Feb. 20: **Blood Drive**, noon to 6 p.m., at Punx'y VFW, benefits the American Red Cross.

■ Feb. 21: **Drive-Through Community Dinner**, 4 p.m., at Punx'y Presbyterian Church. Enter the alley off E. 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.

Feb. 24: **Bowdish Birthday Celebration**, noon to 3 p.m., at Jefferson County History Center, featuring the Bowdish model railroad.

■ Feb. 24: **Guns & Purse DJ Bingo**, presented by SPLASH, at Punx'y Eagles. Doors open 3 p.m., games start at 4 p.m. \$30 tickets available from SPLASH members, at Eagles, or contact SPLASH on Facebook.

■ Feb. 27: **Book Sale**, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., at Punx'y Memorial Library, by donation.

■ March 1: **Blood Drive**, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., at Cobblestone Hotel & Suites, benefits American Red Cross.

■ March 1, 2 & 3: **"Annie,"** presented by the PAHS Drama and Musical Theater clubs, at 7 p.m. Friday & Saturday; 2 p.m. Sunday, at the PAHS auditorium. Seating is \$15 reserved, \$10 general.

■ March 2: **Pancake & Sausage Breakfast**, 7 to 11 a.m., at Big Run War Memorial. Price is \$8 for those 12 & over; \$5 for 11 and under. Proceeds benefit Big Run Recreation.

■ The **Citizens Band of Punx'y** will begin rehearsals for the 2024 season on April 2, from 6:30 to 8 p.m., at First English Lutheran

Church. New members are welcome. Rehearsals will continue Tuesday evenings.

■ Tickets may be available for the **Big Run Area Vol. Fire Co.'s Spring Gun Raffle** on April 6 at the Big Run Event Center. Check with any firefighter.

■ **PA Fishing Licenses** are available online. Go to the PA Fish Commission website for more information.

■ The **Punx'y Memorial Library** no longer has access to Heritage Quest. Patrons will be able to access genealogy sources provided by POWER Library's My Heritage Library Edition located on the library's website. A valid library card is needed.

■ *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

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LOCAL AREA FUNERAL NOTICES



Constance S. "Connie" Kandare
of Big Run, formerly of Smethport
July 25, 1960 - December 3, 2023

Connie was a graduate of Port Allegany High School in 1978. Connie owned the Cottage House Restaurant in Smethport.

She is survived by a son Dylan James Reed, three brothers; Gary Long, Richard Seger, and Daniel (Paula) Seger, a sister Pamela (Marlin) Rearick and numerous nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents Norman and Lucille (Brady) Seger and a sister Cindy Cole.

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Julius Edward Burke of Punxsutawney
(and formerly of Treasure Lake, Dubois)
April 11, 1937 - December 14, 2023



He is survived by his devoted wife of sixty-seven years, Kathy L. (Walter) Burke.

Julius was the proud father of one daughter and six sons; Michale (Charles) Herrmann, Robert (Colleen), Alan (Martha), Lewis (Theresa), John (Joy), William (Lisa) and David (Casey). His greatest joy was having his entire family together under one roof, including his 21 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren, and many relatives.

Julius was the founder and past-president of Burke and Sons Windows and Doors, a company he started in the basement of his home after a career with Season-All Industries of Indiana. Following retirement, he consulted for Winchester Windows of Saltsburg for several years.

Julius enjoyed golfing, bowling, fishing, and hunting, especially spending time with loyal friends, relatives, and his family. He also liked to dabble in the stock market and collect coins.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Helen R. (Pastor) and Lewis H. Burke, his best friend and big brother Louis, and sisters Dolores and Irene.

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David Lee Stonbraker of Timblin
December 24, 1941 - December 18, 2023

He graduated from Dayton High School in 1959. After high school, Dave joined The



United States Marine Corp as a rifleman and also served as a member of the Protestant Chapel Choir.

Dave served the Lord for more than 30 years as a Pastor and was also employed as a mine inspector

for the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources.

Dave pursued his degree in Theology from Indiana University of Pennsylvania and established New Life Fellowship in Timblin, PA.

Dave enjoyed watching Pittsburgh sports, board games and crossword puzzles. He proudly followed his grandchildren's sports, military and academic achievements. Dave looked forward to family dinners in their home, especially his traditional "all you can eat crab" on his Christmas Eve birthday.

Dave is survived by his wife of 60 years, Janet M. Stonbraker, four sons, Mark L. (Tracy), Christopher L. (Tammy), Shawn D. (Jonna), Nathan P. (Jamie), grandchildren, Andrew, Amber, Adam, Shane, Madison, JD and Ashton, great granddaughter, Nora, brother, Michael Stonbraker (Jane), Alabama and numerous nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents Paul M. and Florence (Blose) Stonbraker.

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Patricia A. Stewart of Punxsutawney
September 30, 1945 - December 19, 2023



Pat was a member of Saint Cosmas and Damian Catholic Church in Punxsutawney. She began working at West End Comet in 1964. She retired when the store closed in 2012. She enjoyed watching the Steelers and visiting her friends camp. She loved living in Fairview and visiting with the neighbors.

She is survived by three nephews; Timothy Stewart, Patrick J. (Dottie) Stewart and Charles R. (Kristin) Stewart and numerous friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents Charles R. and Elizabeth (Holland) Stewart, four brothers; Robert Stewart, Charles E. Stewart, Daniel G. "Guy" Stewart and George H. Stewart, a niece Tammy Stewart, and a God son, Adam Garvin.

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Shirley J. Sheesley of DuBois
formerly of the Stanton Area
September 13, 1936 - December 20, 2023



On August 10, 1968, she married William M. Sheesley, who survives. Shirley was very active within the First Church of God of Punxsutawney. She sang in the church choir, taught Sunday School, and participated in their Living Christmas Tree program.

She was a graduate of the Brookville High School Class of 1954 and then attended DuBois Business College, graduating from there in 1965.

She retired in 1999 as the Office Manager at Plunkett and Webster.

Shirley enjoyed going to the beach, traveling, going on cruises, shopping, decorating, and spending time with her family.

In addition to her husband William, she is survived by a sister Carol (Bill) Hawthorne.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Gertrude Mabel (Hoffman) and Howard R. Ames, daughter and son-in-law Judy and Rick Reitz, grandson Isaac Fraust, and brother Jim Ames.

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Thomas A. Fusco, Sr.

formerly of Punxsutawney

March 6, 1936 - December 21, 2023

Tom served in the United States Navy from 1955 to 1957 and the Naval Reserves till 1961. On October 14, 1961, he married Frances Darlene (Wachob) Fusco, who survives.

Tom was the owner of Toms Auto for many years and formerly worked for Becks Neighborhood Auto.

He was a lifetime member of the Eagles and the Elk Run Volunteer Fire Company. He enjoyed tinkering and picking on his family.

In addition to his wife Darlene, he is survived by two children, daughter Cindy (Sam) Williams and son Thomas A. (Michele) Fusco, Jr.; seven grandchildren, Heather (Tony) Adams, Heidi (Nick) Fallara, Shane Williams, Timothy (Kristen) Fusco, Amanda Williams, Haley (Brandon) Stahlman and Kayla Fusco; six great-grandchildren, Ryan Fallara, Zoey Robinson, Jacob Fallara, Cooper Stahlman, Tripp Stahlman, and Joshua Bracken, Jr.; and two sisters, Anna Marie Meterko and Patricia (Richard) Serge.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Anna C. (Chase) and John W. Fusco, two brothers John, Jr. and Richard Fusco, and a daughter-in-law Susan Fusco.

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James L. Shaffer, II of Oliveburg

June 23, 1950 - December 22, 2023

Jim served in the United States Army Reserve. Jim worked for PennDot as a Foreman and then a Lowboy Truck Driver from 1971 to 1986.

He was a member of the John W. Jenks Masonic Lodge, the Shriners, and attended the

Presbyterian Church of Oliveburg. Jim enjoyed hunting and fishing and was an aluminum can collector.

He is survived by two sons, James L. (Laura) Shaffer III, and Cory J. (Angela) Shaffer; two grandsons, Blake and Grant Shaffer; a sister Connie (Fred) Engeholm; a niece Kelly (Jamie) Salsgiver; a nephew Robert (Haley) Engeholm and a great-nephew Gibson Cochran.

In addition to his parents Agnes D. (Swab) and James L. Shaffer, I., he was preceded in death by two brothers, William and Clifford Shaffer.

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Clinton Reed of Punxsutawney

August 1, 1963 - December 23, 2023

Clint was deeply passionate about his musical journey and the craftsmanship of guitars, which he lovingly repaired for a business he cherished. He was a treasured member of the Grange Church of God and led worship services every Sunday. Clint's life was woven with the melodies of multiple bands, a testament to his dedication to music.

He is leaving behind a legacy embraced by his fiancé, Judy Wright, and his devoted family. He is survived by his mother Diana Jean (Whitesell) Reed, his son Christopher Reed, daughters Jessica Reed, Whitney Reed and fiancé Cory Deahl, Lindsey Fonseca and husband Federico Fonseca and their families, including three beloved grandchildren: Lennon, Amelia, and Aurora. Also cherishing his memory are his sister Brenda VanDerEems, her husband Chuck, and their 3 children, Hannah Rish and husband Adam Rish, Noah, and Julia.

He is preceded in death by his father Mervin Reed, his maternal grandparents, Harry and Maude Whitesell and his paternal grandparents Glenn and Helen Reed.

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Randy L. Howard of Punxsutawney

October 4, 1956 - December 23, 2023

Randy was a member of Saint Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church; He was a member of the National Wild Turkey Federation, where he participated in different projects and events. Randy worked for Dover-spike Coal Company as a foreman for over 25 years. He then owned and operated, with his brother, R&R Pro Clean. Randy also took pride in the years he worked as the custodian at the First United Methodist Church in

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Continued from previous page

Punxsutawney.

He is survived by his wife of 33 years, Regina A. (Gresock) Howard, a daughter Stacey Howard-Getch, two grandchildren, Jayden and Tyler Getch, a sister Kathy (Jim) Walker, a brother, Scott (Holly) Howard, sister-in-law's Connie Howard, Beth Gresock, Nicolette Boy, Michele (Ernie) Huey, and a brother-in-law, John (Carol) Gresock, and numerous nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents Bernard "Ben" and Louise (Kotula) Howard and two brothers, Tim and Ricky Howard.

McCabe Funeral Home Inc.
(www.mccabewaldronfh.com)

John E. Belford "PapKat" of Mahaffey

March 9, 1955 - December 25, 2023

John was a 1973 graduate of Purchase Line High School. He was a member of the Noble



Masonic Lodge 480 of Curwensville. He worked at the Greenwich Collieries until he enlisted in the United States Navy. He spent four years serving his country. After he was honorably discharged, he went to work at the Shawville Power Plant for 15 years before his retirement in 2015. After retiring, he worked parttime for Curwensville School District and most recently he was working at V.E.C. Energy as a well tender. He enjoyed hunting, visiting with his friends, and working on projects in his garage but most of all he loved spending time and helping his family.

He is survived by his wife of 29 years, Kimberly J. Belford, a daughter, Nicole Turner, grandchildren, McKenzie Nixon, Austin Nixon, Wyatt Nixon, Jerry Goho, Erika Lucas, Gracie Wilt, a great grandson, Cameron Goho. EmKat, Tyler, Tessa, Duane, and Ben, who he also considered his extended grandchildren. Two brothers, James (Susan) Belford, Steven (Cindy) Belford, three sisters-in-law Kathy Graham, Patti Barr, Rose (Dan) Lee, and numerous nieces and nephews and his favorite cat Kitkat and his dog Skittles.

He was preceded in death by his parents, James and Helen (Ackerson) Belford, a sister Barbara Misko, and a brother Kenneth Belford.

McCabe Funeral Home Inc.
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Mary F. Bellomo of Reynoldsville

October 19, 1954 - December 25, 2023



Mary was a member of St. Mary's Catholic Church in Reynoldsville. She worked at the Adrian Hospital before working and retiring from Sports Wear in Punxsutawney as a seamstress. Mary was passionate about cooking, reading, and crocheting. Most of

all she loved spending time with her family. Mary appreciated all her aids that helped her in various ways. She made a special connection with Tammy whom she considered like family.

Mary is survived by a sister, Patricia (Dave) Snyder, a brother, R. Joe Bellomo, two sisters-in-law Jeannie Allenbaugh, Lois Allenbaugh, and numerous nieces and nephews and great nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents, John and Nora Jane (Kromer) Bellomo, three brothers, John, Phillip and Richard Allenbaugh and a sister-in-law Mary Roberta Bellomo.

McCabe Funeral Home Inc.
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Janet Lee Niel of Indiana

August 19, 1931 - December 25, 2023

She was a 1949 graduate of Dayton High School. Janet was dedicated to her work; first working at the Sports Wear Factory in Punxsutawney and then spending the rest of her career as a quality control supervisor at the Seasonal/Thermal Guard window factory.

She loved the outdoors and enjoyed nature and watching the birds and deer in her backyard. She regularly helped take care of stray animals in her neighborhood. She enjoyed hunting but her true passion was fishing the local streams. She loved going to Yellow Creek Park and Blue Spruce.

She volunteered at the Indiana Salvation Army for over 20 years; helping with the winter coat program, helping provide meals to those in need, and after the Flight 93 crash in Somerset in 2001 she volunteered for several weeks helping first responders.

Janet was preceded in death by her parents, Frank and Leitha (Cochran) Niel, her two sisters; Natalie Ann (Niel) Stiteler and Mildred "Mim" (Niel) Stiteler.

She is survived by her brother John F. "Buck" Niel of Smicksburg.

McCabe Funeral Home Inc.
(www.mccabewaldronfh.com)

Joan L. Reagle of Stump Creek

November 30, 1950 - January 5, 2024

Joan was a graduate of Purchase Line High School. She attended Paradise United Church of Christ. Joan was a member of the Sykesville

American Legion Ladies Auxiliary and she was a board member of the Devers Cemetery Association. She worked at Utilities and Industries in Reynoldsville for 25 years before her retirement in 2013. She was a seamstress for family and friends and loved sewing. Traveling was special to Joan and she traveled all over the United States and Canada. Joan loved spending time with her family and visiting her grandson. She was her grandson's biggest cheerleader at every event. Joan never turned down a chance to watch her young great



nieces and nephews and her friends' children. She and her husband Glenn celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on April 28, 2023. Her family had a surprise party for them which she enjoyed very much.

She is survived by her husband of 50 years, Glenn A. Reagle, two daughters, Kristie M. Reagle, Kerrie A. Reagle, and son Timothy S. Reagle and Libby Parise, a grandson Owen J. Falkenhagen, two sisters, Joyce (Herbert) Haagen, Judy (John) Leslie, a brother Jim Hopkins and numerous nieces, nephews, and special close friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents She was born to Homer and Anna L. (Home-feldt) Hopkins in Mahaffey at her family home. McCabe Funeral Home Inc.
(www.mccabewaldronfh.com)

Frank G. Boboige

of Punxsutawney (Albion)

February 12, 1943 - January 1st, 2024

He was a 1961 graduate of Sykesville High School where he was involved with managing several sports teams. He worked at the Loree



Shoe Factory (Big Run) which is where he met the love of his life, Judy, in 1962. They wed shortly after in February of 1963. He enlisted in the Navy in 1966 and served for four years. During that time, he was stationed in San Diego, California before being deployed on the USS Skagit which was a supply ship that serviced the front lines of the Vietnam War. Upon returning, he attended Williamsport Community College, obtaining his associate degree as a machinist. He worked at a Cardboard Factory while there. Upon completion of his studies, the family returned to the Punxsutawney area where he was then employed by Riverside Markets as a baker. He worked there for 37 years until his retirement in 2007.

Frank was a devout member of St. Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church in Punxsutawney. Frank shared his love of baseball by coaching in various leagues in Punxsutawney, including the church league in which his entire family played. He enjoyed listening, recording and sharing music with those he loved. Frank loved accompanying Judy on numerous bus trips throughout the years and family vacations to Florida with Anna, Fred and their family. In the latter years of his life Alzheimer's began to rob him of his memories but he still enjoyed talking about sports, music, and his military experiences.

Frank is survived by his loving wife of 60 years, Judy Ann (Bodenhorn); a daughter, Anna (Eugene) Smith; three sons, Fred (Theresa) Boboige, Frank J. (Melissa) Boboige and Chuck R. (Marie) Boboige; nine grandchildren, Sue Ann (Thomas) Troutman, Kaitlyn (Jaykob) Cowden, Jeanie Smith, Elizabeth, Bruce, Charlie, Lilly, Ben and Xavier Boboige; and two great grandchildren, Eden Troutman and Izabella Cowden; a brother, Paul Boboige a sister, Marion Hoover.

He was proceeded in death by his parents

Joseph and Stella (Zavatsky) Boboige; brothers Ronald and Thomas Boboige; and a sister, Eileen Annarino.

McCabe Funeral Home Inc.
(www.mccabewaldronfh.com)

John DiTucci Jr. of Punxsutawney

(Gaskill Twp.) and formerly of Rochester, NY
September 12, 1949 - January 3, 2024

John was a veteran of the Vietnam War, serving with the United States Army.



John was an active member of the First Baptist Church in Punxsutawney, including service as a deacon, youth teacher, and occasionally filled in for the pastor to write and deliver sermons. John

found meaning in providing transportation to anyone in need – for any reason; from medical appointments, to college classes, or groceries. John was a journeyman machinist in Rochester for over twenty years. After moving to Punxsutawney, PA, with his family in 1994, John worked for Acme Machine for several years until transitioning into sales at Sears. John was proud of his home-made pizza recipes, including his signature "Little Buddies" pizza muffins, and would make specialty pizzas for birthdays and events. He was fond of the family pets including horses, cats, and dogs – especially his dog Venus, to whom John taught many tricks and took everywhere with him. John was involved in several productions with the Punxsutawney Theater Arts Guild.

John placed his utmost trust in God, never ceased to awe at the morning sunrise, maintained a penchant for humor, and most of all, loved his family.

John is survived by his wife of 38 years, Cynthia L. "Cindy" DiTucci, his children Tina (Mike) Ventrella and Matthew (Joelle) DiTucci, his four grandchildren: Colin, Hayden, Emma, and Jules, his three brothers: Charlie (Joanne) DiTucci, Thomas (Sharon) DiTucci, and Al (Susan) DiTucci, and numerous loved nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, John DiTucci Sr. and Frances (Colaruotolo) DiTucci. McCabe Funeral Home Inc.
(www.mccabewaldronfh.com)

Ruth E. VanHorn of Smicksburg

September 15, 1930 - January 6, 2024

She was a graduate of the Marion Center High School Class of 1947. Ruth retired as a waitress at Kings Restaurant after twenty-five years. She attended the Solid Rock Church of God, was a member of the Washington Township Ladies Auxiliary in Apollo, PA, and bowled in the Camp Joann Bowling League.



She is survived by five children, Karen Rotto, Blaine Jr., Ronald (Judy) VanHorn, Judy Keibler and Timothy VanHorn; many grandchildren and great-grandchildren; and a sister Martha Rickard.

In addition to her husband Blaine E. VanHorn, and parents Maude (McDivitt) and Lloyd C. Waltz, Ruth was preceded in death by three

Continued on next page

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With Heartfelt Sympathy

Continued from previous page

children, Melinda, Kenneth, and David Van-Horn; three sisters, Marilyn Waltz, Virginia Waltz, and Thelma Winebark; three brothers, Donald, Lloyd, and Robert Waltz; and sons-in-law John Rotto and Earl Keibler.

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(www.deeleyfuneralhome.com)

David Kim Anthony of Punxsutawney
July 22, 1942 – January 7, 2024

Dave was a son of the late L. Thomas Anthony and Kathryn (Gould) Anthony. On February 23, 1963, he married the former Mary Jane Conrad, with whom he enjoyed 60 years of marriage. She survives Dave and resides in Punxsutawney.

Dave worked as a heavy equipment operator and proudly helped build many roads around the region. He retired from HRI Corporation. Following retirement, he loved to mow grass for hours and hours each week; it kept his mind and hands busy doing something constructive.

He was a good husband and father to his children; he enjoyed his grandchildren above all else.

In addition to his wife, Mary Jane, he is survived by four children, Brenda Anthony of Jacksonville, North Carolina, David (Paulette) Anthony of West Moreland City, Sharon (Frank) Roberts of Punxsutawney, and Brian (Kristy) Anthony of Kittanning; six grandchildren, Nathan Berti, Jamie Berti, Amber (Mark) Lang, Cory Anthony, Matthew Anthony, and Brooke Anthony; four great-grandchildren, Devin, Gavin, Ava and Koryn; one sister, Kay Anthony of Punxsutawney; and one sister-in-law, Nancy Anthony.

In addition to his parents, Dave was preceded in death by a brother, Kon Anthony.

In accordance with his wishes, there was no visitation or viewing.

Pamela J. Aaron of Punxsutawney

April 1, 1951 – January 8, 2024

On April 8, 1972, she married William “Doug” Aaron, who survives.

Pam was a 1969 graduate of Redbank Valley High School. She loved to quilt and do hand quilting. She served as the neighborhood seamstress, was willing to make food for any occasion and was well known for her specialties of potato salad, gobs, and homemade apple butter. She enjoyed spending time with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, cooking and baking, and was always willing to help out or lend a hand to anyone in need no matter the circumstances.

In addition to her husband Doug, surviving relatives include two children, daughter Janie L. (Robert) Strawcutter and son Scott (Darlene) Aaron; six grandchildren, Brittany (Cullen) Frye, Derek Brown, Hunter Aaron, Jake (Alexis) Frank, Jessica Frank, and Emily Frank; six great-grandchildren; and four siblings, brother Tom Ortiz, sister Della Young, brother Tim (Michelle) Ortiz and sister Anita (John) Dougan.

In addition to her parents, Lucy M. (Henderson) and Blair M. Ortiz, she was preceded in death by infant twin sons Tad and Todd Aaron.

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(www.deeleyfuneralhome.com)

Emily E. (Shirey) Rapp of Mayport
August 16, 1978 – January 12, 2024

Emily – owner and operator of the Animal Hospital of Punxsutawney (formerly of Hoof

and Paw Vet Services) – passed away at Armstrong County Memorial Hospital after an accidental fall. Emily was a third grader when she decided to become a veterinarian. She graduated from River Valley High School in 1996, Clarion University in 1999, and the Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine in 2004, earning her doctoral degree.

Emily never met a disabled animal that she didn’t want to adopt or lovingly pass along to a family member. Her animals were her extended family. When Emily saw the Rainbow Bridge on January 12th, no doubt, she was mobbed by critters of every kind.

Emily helped form Country Clovers 4H Club to help children learn about animal care and rearing. She was active with Just Us for the Animals, providing low-cost spay and neuter clinics. She coached youth soccer for 13 years and was a former board member of the United Veterinary Services Association.

Emily is survived by husband, Gene of Mayport; children, Cameron Smith of Punxsutawney and Jeb and Libby at home; her parents, Galen and Sue Shirey of Mayport; brother, Dr. Jesse, and wife, Jessica, of St Mary’s and, their children, Grady, Sophia, Stella, and Colton. She is also survived by her mother-in-law, Shirley Rapp; numerous, much-loved aunts, uncles, cousins, friends, and clients; and her current fur babies Lamb, Brice, Squirrel, and multiple felines.

Emily was predeceased by maternal grandparents, Donnell and Dolores Hiwiler; paternal grandparents, J. Russell and Dorothy Shirey; an uncle, Allen Shirey; an aunt and uncle, Sally and Larry Shirey; and a cousin, Adam Shirey.

Zach Brown was Emily’s favorite musical artist. The lyrics of his song “Remedy” contain the line “Know you get what you give.” Emily had these words tattooed on her arm – this was her life’s motto.

Donations in Emily’s memory may be directed to Just Us for the Animals, 98 Morrison Ave, Punxsutawney, PA. 15767 or to Country Clovers 4H Club in care of Mandy Smith, PO Box 51, Hawthorn, PA. 16230.

Ronald C. Meckley of Curwensville

November 28, 1943 – January 14, 2024

Ron attended the Mahaffey Brethren Church and most recently attended the Banner Ridge Church. He started working at 15 years, driving a dump truck for his uncle and



then moving on to work for various coal companies driving tri-axle and heavy equipment. He worked for Benjamin, Brown Brothers and Hepburnia Coal Company. Ron enjoyed going to church and talking about God, working on vehicles, spending time with his family and his beloved dog Annie.

He is survived by his wife Joyce M. (Howe) Meckley, three children; Renee (Ed) Howell, Ronald S. (Cansas) Meckley, Kimberly (Roger) Campbell, seven grandchildren; Luciann Marsh, Donelle Drummond, Lindsey (Alex) Holt, Shayne, Mason, Kaleb and Makenna Derrick, two sisters; Carol (Vance) Bracken and Joanne (Doug) Turner and a brother Michael (Caroline) Meckley and numerous nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Ray and Olive “Ruth” (Billings) Meckley and a daughter Jodi M. Derrick, great
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(www.mccabewaldronfh.com)

Richard S. Painter, of Rochester Mills

August 11, 1952 – January 16, 2024

Richard attended Marion Center area schools. He worked at N.A.C. Carbon and Asplundh Tree Service. He enjoyed hunting, working on cars, and always keeping an eye out for Big Foot. Most of all he loved spending time with his family and especially his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

He is survived by his wife of 45 years, Janet L. (Mallory) Painter, three children; Jason A. Painter (Stacy Domb), Tara E. Painter (Randy Shank), Steven R. (Melissa) Painter, five granddaughters; Bree (Dustin) Maines, Jada (Dallas) Whittaker, Shilynn Shank (Devin Johnson) Hannah Painter, and Makenzie Painter, ten great grandchildren, two brothers, Ernest P. Painter, Jr. and David Painter, two sisters, Donna McCullough, and Sandra Painter (Ernie Siverling), and numerous nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents Ernest and Dorothy (Haight) Painter, a brother John Painter and a grandson.

McCabe Funeral Home Inc.
(www.mccabewaldronfh.com)

Jay W. Elbel of Rossiter

June 21, 1934 – January 16, 2024

Jay was a graduate of the Punxsutawney High School Class of 1951. He worked for the B&O Railroad for twenty years as a clerk and then retired from the United States Postal Service as a mailman on the Rossiter route after thirty-nine years.

He was a fan of the Pittsburgh Steelers and the Pirates. He enjoyed working on his father’s farm, watching game shows, mowing grass, working, and growing strawberries.

Jay was an avid blood donor and was proud for having donated many gallons of blood throughout his lifetime.

He is survived by four children, daughter Paula Elbel, son Donald J. Elbel, daughter Beth (David) Gioskey and daughter Joy Elbel; four grandchildren, Jennifer (Jack) Hill, Donald E. (Heather) Elbel, Sr. and Tyler and Evan Gioskey; two great-grandchildren, Donald E. Elbel, Jr. and Tavia Henry; and two brothers, George (Norma) Elbel and Bill (Jo) Elbel.

In addition to his wife Nancy J. (Mallory) Elbel, and parents Alice M. (McFarland) and Edward C. Elbel, he was preceded in death by an infant daughter Melinda Elbel, an infant granddaughter Brianna Galentine, daughter-in-law Jennifer S. Elbel, sister Mary E. Justice, and three brothers, Glenn, Emery, and Eugene Elbel.

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

F. Elizabeth “Betsy” Quinlisk of Punxsutawney

August 28, 1937 – January 19, 2024

Betsy was born on August 28, 1937, in Punxsutawney, the eldest daughter of William and Frances (Hufnagel) Quinlisk.

She graduated from Ss. Cosmas & Damian High School in 1955. She was a 1959 graduate of Immaculata College, earning degrees in economics and accounting. Betsy went on to work at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia as a computer programmer. She then moved on to a long career with IBM, first as a systems analyst and then as an international corporate internal auditor. Betsy was one of the first women employed by IBM, and she loved her work, traveling the world. She regaled her nieces and nephews with stories about her work and being on the ground floor of the computer age.

Betsy was predeceased by her parents and her brother-in-law, James D. Bowser. She is survived by her siblings, Judy (Richard) Shaffer of Hermitage, Pennsylvania; Michael (Annette) Quinlisk of Ligonier, Pennsylvania;

and Anita Bowser of Punxsutawney. She is also survived by 10 nieces and nephews and numerous grand-nieces and -nephews. Betsy was a devout Catholic and devoted to her family. She was dedicated to giving back to the less fortunate in the communities in which she lived. Betsy will be remembered by her family and friends for her abiding faith, her great sense of fun, and her generous nature.

Memorial contributions may be made, in memory of Betsy, to SSCD School, 205 North Chestnut Street, Punxsutawney, PA 15767.

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

Betty Lou Depp of Punxsutawney

December 24, 1925 – January 20, 2024

She was born December 24, 1925, to the late Norman S. and Lucille (VanBrunt) Scava in Punxsutawney.

Betty Lou was a lifetime active member of First English Lutheran Church in Punxsutawney. She served the church in various roles, singing in the choir and being involved in the music of the church. She once went with the choir on a trip to perform in Germany. She worked as an administrative assistant for West Penn AAA, then moving on to work for Bill Means of Bankers Life of Nebraska and retiring with Ameritas Financial in Punxsutawney.

Betty Lou served on the Circle Hill Cemetery Board and volunteered at the Punxsutawney Area Historical & Genealogical Society, where she was presented with the Volunteer of the Year Award by Senator Chris Dush at a formal dinner at the local VFW in September 2018.

Betty Lou also sang in a quartet with Adare and LeRoy Hetager and Alice Morris, performing at weddings, churches, and other events. She held her bridge club friends especially close to her heart, calling themselves the Golden Girls. Betty Lou enjoyed cooking, gardening, taking care of her yard, singing, and reading. She served as a Cub Scout leader when her boys were in Scouts. Most of all she loved spending time with and taking care of her family.

She is survived by her three sons, N. Richard “Rick” Depp, Douglas (Wendy) Depp and Philip “Flip” Depp and Peggy Young; three grandchildren, Scott Depp, and fiancée, Tricia, Indiana, Becca (Zeb) Zinzella and Alexander Depp and fiancé Alex; 10 great-grandchildren, Ethan, Braden and Dylan Depp, Adele and Francesca Zinzella, Avary, Alyse, and AJ Powell, and Keaton and Kennedy Young.

She was preceded in death by her husband, James Miller Depp, in 2004; a son, James Michael “Mickey” Depp; and brother, Norman Samuel “Skip” Scava.

Memorial contributions may be made in memory of Betty Lou Depp to the First English Lutheran Church, 104 North Gilpin St., Punxsutawney, PA 15767.

McCabe Funeral Home Inc.
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Please visit the websites of the funeral homes listed to view the complete obituary, sign their guest-books, 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 or call (814) 952-3668.

Groundhog Day 2.2.24

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

SATURDAY, JANUARY 27

5 a.m. – 3 p.m., **Lily's Restaurant, Bakery, Deli & Catering**, 535 W. Mahoning St. (814) 938-9419. www.lilysrestaurantandbakery.com

6 a.m. – 10 p.m., **Wendy's**, 212 Hampton Ave. (814) 938-8979.

6 a.m. – 11 p.m., **Burger King**, 235 Hampton Ave.

7 a.m. – 8 p.m., **Punxy Phil's Cakes & Steaks**, Rt. 119 S. at the bottom of Indiana Hill. Serving breakfast all day!

7 a.m. – 9 p.m., **Punxsy Shop 'n Save**, 201 Hampton Ave.

7:30 a.m. – 2 p.m., **Grandma's Kitchen**, Rt. 36 N. halfway between Punx'y and Brookville. 814-849-6396.

8 a.m. – 7 p.m., the "**Home**" **Made Restaurant & Catering**, 5820 Rt. 119 Hwy. North, Home. (724) 397-2089.

8 a.m. – 2 a.m., **Rumors Tavern**, 901 W. Mahoning St. Open for breakfast! (814) 938-2414.

10 a.m., The crowning of **Little Mr. and Miss Groundhog 2024** in the lobby of the **Punxsutawney Weather Discovery Center**, 201 N. Findley St. The winners will each receive a \$50 Walmart gift card and a gift bag. Little Mr. and Miss Groundhog are also invited to be in the Fireman's Old Home Week parade and the Home for the Holidays parade. All contestants will receive a complimentary admission ticket to the Weather Discovery Center.

10 a.m. – 5 p.m., **Phil's Official Souvenir Shop**, www.groundhogstuff.com. Downtown Punx'y (814) 938-7700 or 1-800-752-PHIL.

10:30 a.m. – 9 p.m., **Fox's Pizza Den**, 207 N. Hampton Ave. (814) 618-5653. foxspizza.com/store/pennsylvania/punxsutawney-pa.

11 a.m. – 8 p.m., **Laska's Pizza**, 405 N. Main St. Enjoy your Groundhog Day brews at Laska's! (814) 938-4647.

11 a.m. – 9 p.m., **New Anchor Inn**, Rt. 310, Elk Run Ave. Italian cuisine. (814) 938-8060.

11 a.m. – 10 p.m., **Taco Inc. Mexican Bar & Grille**. Groundhog Plaza, 225 Hampton Ave. (814) 618-5229.

11 a.m. – 10 p.m., **Pizza Town**, W. Mahoning St., Punxsy Plaza. (814) 938-2380. www.pizzatownpunxsy.com.

12 p.m. – 9 p.m., **Sandfly Brewing Co.**, 659 S. Main St. Ext., (814) 249-7567. www.sandflybrewing.com

12 p.m. – 2 a.m., the **Burrow Bar & Grill**, 108 N. Findley St. (814) 618-5083, theburrowpa.com.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1

5 a.m. – 3 p.m., **Lily's Restaurant, Bakery, Deli & Catering**, 535 W. Mahoning St.

6 a.m. – ???, **Wendy's**, 212 Hampton Ave., will be open 24 hours from Groundhog Day Eve through Groundhog Day! Enjoy all your favorites! Hot drinks and more available. Eat in or take out. (814) 938-8979.

6 a.m. – 11 p.m., **Burger King**, 235 Hampton Ave.



6:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m., **Grandma's Kitchen**, Rt. 36 N. halfway between Punx'y and Brookville.

7 a.m. – 8 p.m., **Punxy Phil's Cakes & Steaks**, Rt. 119 S. at the bottom of Indiana Hill. Serving breakfast all day!

7 a.m. – 9 p.m., **Punxsy Shop 'n Save**, 201 Hampton Ave.

8 a.m. – 7 p.m., **Rumors Tavern**, 901 W. Mahoning St., Punx'y. Open for breakfast!

8 a.m. – 7 p.m., the "**Home**" **Made Restaurant & Catering**, 5820 Rt. 119 Hwy. North, Home.

9 a.m. – ???, **Phil's Official Souvenir Shop**. Downtown Punx'y

9 a.m. – 5 p.m. (or until sold out), **Annual Food and Bake Sale**, sponsored by **Punxsutawney Beta Sorority** (a nonprofit organization) at the Jefferson Co. Social Hall, 201 N. Jefferson St. Soups, sandwiches, and homemade baked goods as well as hot beverages and bottled water will be the order of the day. Craft vendors will also display their wares. Every penny raised at this event will go back into the community! Come warm-up and dine in, or take-out our homemade food!

10 a.m. – 5 p.m., **Punxsutawney Museums**, 401 W. Mahoning St., **Bennis House**. **Punxsutawney History** and doll houses on display.

10 a.m. – 6 p.m., The **Punx'y Weather Discovery Center** will have Groundhog Day activities with paid admission of \$8 (children 2 years old and younger admitted free of charge), and visitors will get to experience the Center's brand-new exhibit, "Ice is Nice!"

10 a.m. – 7 p.m., **Punxsutawney Museums**, 400 W. Mahoning St., **Lattimer House**. **Groundhog Day & Native American History**. 6 p.m. – 9 p.m., **Friends & Family Game night**.

10:30 a.m. – 8 p.m., **Fox's Pizza Den**, 207 N. Hampton Ave.

11 a.m. – 2 a.m., bar open at the **Burrow Bar & Grill**; 11 a.m. – 9 p.m., meals with Villallas Meats; 9 p.m. – midnight, live music: **Dark Water Duo**. 108 N. Findley St.

11 a.m. – 5 p.m., **Groundhog Days in the Park** in Barclay Square, sponsored by the Punx'y Chamber of Commerce. Food trucks, local artisans & craft vendors, live music, and wine & beer tastings. Cold Snap, brewed by Samuel Adams, is the official beer of Groundhog Day! Food vendors: J & C Brick Oven, The Chuck Wagon, Queen Bees Sweet Sips, Larry's Barbeque,

- Continued on next page

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Fri., Feb. 2 • 9am to 5pm

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Thur. 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Fri. 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Sat 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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Groundhog Day 2.2.24

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

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Fair Weatherman

Continued from previous page

and Ricco's Concessions. Wineries & distilleries: Sandfly Brewing Co., Excise Distillery, and Punx Cider Worx. Live entertainment: **12 p.m. – 1 p.m., Gary Bickerstaff**; **2 p.m. – 3 p.m., 3 of M**; and **4 p.m. – 5:30 p.m., Derek Woods Band**. For up-to-date information, please see the Chamber's website (punxsutawney.org).

11 a.m. – 8 p.m., Laska's Pizza, 405 N. Main St. Enjoy your Groundhog Day brews at Laska's!

11 a.m. – 9 p.m., New Anchor Inn, Rt. 310, Elk Run Ave. Italian cuisine.

11 a.m. – 9 p.m., Pizza Town, W. Mahoning St., Punxsy Plaza.

11 a.m. – 10 p.m., Taco Inc. Mexican Bar & Grille. Groundhog Plaza, 225 Hampton Ave.

12 p.m. – Midnight, Sandfly Brewing Co., 659 S. Main St., Tap room open with two food trucks, the Garbage Pit and Pig Iron BBQ. **Photo booth from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.**

2 p.m. – 9 p.m., the Punxsutawney Art Association's **Groundhog Day Art Show**, hosted by the New Journey Church, 301 W. Mahoning St.

12 p.m. – ???, The Punx'y Area Community Center, 220 N. Jefferson St., hosts a variety of events and offers a crucial amenity during the Groundhog Day Celebration: **Craft Show** (12–9 p.m.); screenings of **"Groundhog Day"** (5, 7, and 11 p.m.), and the **"Crash Pad"** (10 p.m. – 6 a.m.) for the sum of \$10 per person.

12 p.m. – 1 p.m., Gary Bickerstaff plays live at **Groundhog Days in the Park**, Barclay Square.

12 p.m. – 9 p.m., annual **Craft Show**, held in the gym of the **Punx'y Area Community Center**, 220 N. Jefferson St.

1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m., Gobbler's Knob Got Talent held at the **Community Center**. This is an open, judged talent show. Two finalists will be chosen by a panel of judges to perform at Gobbler's Knob on Groundhog Day morning. The winner at the Knob will be selected by voting at the Celebration. The winner will be awarded \$500. This event is free to the public; no ticket is needed. To be a talent show participant, you must complete the form found online at www.groundhog.org.

2 p.m. – 3 p.m., enjoy the music of **3 of M** at **Groundhog Days in the Park**, Barclay Square.

3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m., Groundhog Club Members-Only Reception at the Eagles in Punxsutawney. No ticket needed, but only current members of the Groundhog Club will be admitted. This is a fun time to interact with other Phil Phans from around the world who are also Members of the Groundhog Club. The Seer of Seers will make an appearance at this event for a photo opportunity! You must be a current member of the Groundhog Club to attend this event. You must call (814) 618-5591 or email admin@groundhog.org to be added to the list of attendees. (To become a member of the Groundhog Club, please sign up on the website at www.groundhog.org.)

4 p.m. – 5:30 p.m., the **Derek Woods Band** plays live at **Groundhog Days in the Park**, Barclay Square.

5 p.m. – 8 p.m., Groundhog Eve Wine & Hops Walk sponsored by the Punx'y Chamber of Commerce. Pre-event tickets cost \$15 and can be purchased on the Chamber's website (punxsutawney.org) through Jan. 30. Tickets at the gate the evening of the walk cost \$20. You must be 21 years of age or older and have an ID to attend. For participants utilizing the Wine Courier service, please keep your ticket stubs; pickups must be completed 8:30 p.m. View the map for the event on the website of the Punx'y Chamber of Commerce (<https://punxsutawney.com/about-punxsutawney/groundhog-day/>).

5 p.m., enjoy a viewing of the legendary film, **"Groundhog Day"** – free of charge at the **Punx'y Area Community Center**, 220 N. Jefferson St.

6 p.m., Annual Groundhog Banquet. Doors open 5:30 p.m. Held at the Punxsutawney Area High School Cafeteria. For decades the Banquet has been a favorite for locals and for Phil Phans traveling from out of town. This event features a catered

- Continued on next page

Groundhog Day 2.2.24

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Continued from previous page

dinner, guest speakers, the Man and Woman of the Year announcement, a gift, and so much more. Jen Carfagno is the guest speaker. Visitor Center. **SOLD OUT!**

6 p.m. – 9 p.m., Groundhog Day Eve **Coffeehouse & Live Music** at Journey Church. Music at 7 p.m. Art by Punx'y Art Association on display.

7 p.m., enjoy a viewing of the legendary film, "Groundhog Day" – free of charge at the **Punx'y Area Community Center**, 220 N. Jefferson St.

8 p.m. – 11 p.m., Prepare for Phil's rockin' prognostication by attending the **Rockin' Groundhog Eve Dance**, sponsored, and hosted by the **Punxsutawney Area Community Foundation, Inc.**, featuring the classic rock band, Almost Mulberry! Held at the Fraternal Order of Eagles, E. Mahoning St. Must be 21 or older. Enjoy a cash bar, dancing, small games of chance, and revelry! 50/50 tickets will be available at the door, and a drawing will be held at 10:30 p.m. Your \$15 ticket may be purchased online at www.groundhog.org or in person at the Gobbler's Knob Visitor Center.

9 p.m. – 12 a.m., **Dueling Pianos**. Doors open at 8:30 p.m. Held on the second floor of the ATA Building. Groundhog Eve is topped off with this high-energy event. This lively musical show with interactive performances is an event you should not miss. Must be 21 or older to attend. Alcoholic beverages are served at this event, and other beverages are available. This is a cash-only event. A ticket is needed for this event. **SOLD OUT!**

10 p.m. – 6 a.m., catch a few winks and recharge your batteries at the **Punx'y Area Community Center's "Crash Pad"** for the sum of \$10 per person. 220 N. Jefferson St.

11 p.m., enjoy a viewing of the legendary film, "Groundhog Day" – free of charge – at the **Punx'y Area Community Center**, 220 N. Jefferson St.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2 HAPPY GROUNDHOG DAY!

3 a.m. – 8 a.m., The **Gobbler's Knob Grounds** open for the 2024 Groundhog Day Celebration. The Celebration is free of charge. Even though parking passes and tickets are sold out, you can still enjoy the festivities on the Knob! You will just need a shuttle pass to get to Gobbler's Knob, where there will be concessions, souvenirs, and port-a potties on the morning of Groundhog Day!

Getting to Gobbler's Knob

There are three ways to make your trek to Gobbler's Knob on Groundhog Day morning:

- Purchase a parking pass and drive up to the grounds with your permit after 3 a.m.
- Purchase a bus pass prior to the morning of Groundhog Day or at the shuttle locations and ride the shuttle to the grounds.
- Park in town and walk the approximately 2-mile trek to the Knob via Woodland Avenue.

Parking Passes

There are a very limited number of vehicle parking passes at Gobbler's Knob for regular sized vehicles. These parking passes can be purchased at www.groundhog.org and in the Visitor Center on the day of ticket event release. No buses or recreational vehicles are permitted on the grounds! Please call to discuss a vehicle larger than regular sized one. **SOLD OUT!**

A limited number of **Gobbler's Knob Handicapped Parking Passes** are available for \$75. Please call (814) 618-5591.

VIP Passes

For those who would like to be closer to the Groundhog Day celebration and to be as close as possible to the Seer of Seers as he makes his prediction, the Inner Circle has set aside a section at the front of the natural amphitheater, known only as Gobbler's Knob. You must have a ticket to enter this area. All areas in the Natural amphitheaters are standing room only. No chairs are permitted on the grounds at Gobbler's Knob. **SOLD OUT!**

- Continued on next page



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Groundhog Day

2.2.24

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

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Head Huntsman

Continued from previous page

3 a.m., **Shuttles will be available.** A \$5 bus pass is required. A handicapped-accessible bus will be available for shuttling from shuttle locations. A \$5 bus pass is required. In addition

3 a.m. – ???, The **Groundhog Club's Souvenir Shop** in the Visitor Center on Gobbler's Knob will be open during the morning of the Groundhog Day celebration. The regular hours are 10 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. seven days a week!

3 a.m. – ???, **Phil's Official Souvenir Shop**, 102 W. Mahoning St., will be open during the morning of the Groundhog Day Celebration. Stock up on all things groundhog with a capital "G"! For more information, please call (814) 938-7700 or (800) 752-7445 or visit the store's page on the Chamber of Commerce's website (punxsutawney.org).

4 a.m. – 9 a.m., **Hogspitality Village** held at the **Gobbler's Knob Visitor Center** Pavilion. This is a limited-entry, ticketed event in the heated pavilion on the grounds of Gobbler's Knob. This event features a warm space to relax, food and coffee, a live feed of the Knob, firepit, and access to the private Porta Potties. You will receive an exclusive souvenir at the event with each ticket purchase. You will have a chance to have a photo with Phil after the Groundhog Day Ceremonies in the pavilion with your ticket. Must have a ticket to enter. **SOLD OUT!**

5 a.m. – 3 p.m., **Lily's Restaurant, Bakery, Deli & Catering**, 535 W. Mahoning St.

6 a.m. – 10 p.m., **Wendy's**, 212 Hampton Ave.

6:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m., **Grandma's Kitchen**, Rt. 36 N. halfway between Punx'y and Brookville.

6 a.m. – 11 p.m., **Burger King**, 235 Hampton Ave.

7 a.m. – 8 p.m., **Punx'y Phil's Cakes & Steaks**, Rt. 119 S. at the bottom of Indiana Hill. Serving breakfast all day!

7 a.m. – 9 p.m., **Punxsy Shop 'n Save**, 201 Hampton Ave.

7 a.m. – ???, The **Punx'y Area Community Center**, 220 N. Jefferson St., hosts a variety of events during the Groundhog Day Celebration: annual **Craft Show** (7 a.m. – 1 p.m.), showing of **"Groundhog Day"** (8 & 10 a.m.), **Phil's Birthday Celebration** (9–11 a.m.).

7 a.m. – 10 a.m., The **Salvation Army's Groundhog Pancake & Sausage Breakfast**. All you can eat. Juice, coffee, hot chocolate, and tea. Cost: \$5 (kids ages 3 and younger eat for free!) 229 W. Mahoning St.

7 a.m. – 1 p.m., annual **Craft Show** held in the gym of the **Punx'y Area Community Center**, 220 N. Jefferson St.

7 a.m. – 2 a.m., bar open at the **Burrow Bar & Grill**; 7 a.m. – 9 p.m., breakfast, lunch & dinner with Villellas Meats; 9 p.m. – midnight, live music: **8 Years After**. The Burrow is located at 108 N. Findley St.

7:30 a.m., enjoy breakfast at **Rumors Tavern**, 901 W. Mahoning St.

8 a.m. – ???, **Groundhog Days in the Park** in Barclay Square, sponsored by the Punx'y Chamber of Commerce. Food trucks, local artisans & craft vendors, live music, and wine & beer tastings. Cold Snap, brewed by Samuel Adams, is the official beer of Groundhog Day! Food vendors include: J & C Brick Oven, The Chuck Wagon, Queen Bees Sweet Sips, Larry's Barbeque, and Ricco's Concessions. Wineries & distilleries include: Sandfly Brewing Co., Excise Distillery, and Punx Cider Worx. Live entertainment: **The Kevin Briggs Blues Experience** (10-11 a.m.), **Black Ridge** (12–1 p.m.), **Alex Shumaker** (2–3 p.m.), and **Fuse** (4–5 p.m.). For up-to-date information, please see the Chamber's website (punxsutawney.org).

8 a.m., The **Punxsutawney Senior Center** located within the ATA building (222 N. Findley St.) will open to the public, offering hot beverages and baked goods at no cost! Stop by, come in, and get warm!

8 a.m. – 10 a.m., screening of the legendary film, **"Groundhog Day"** – free admission! **Punx'y Area Community Center**, 220 N. Jefferson St.

8 a.m. – 11 a.m., **Hair of the Hog** breakfast buffet, tickets online or at the door. **Sandfly Brewing Co.**, tap room open and the Garbage

- Continued on next page

Groundhog Day 2.2.24

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Continued from previous page

Pit & Pig Iron BBQ, food trucks (11 a.m. – 10 p.m.), 659 S. Main St. Ext.

8 a.m. – 11 a.m., **B's Books, Etc.**, 122 E. Mahoning St., celebrates Groundhog Day by offering free hot chocolate! Stop by and "warm" up with a good book and a cup of hot chocolate.



8 a.m. – 3 p.m., The **Punx'y Weather Discovery Center** will have Groundhog Day activities with paid admission of \$8 (children 2 years old and younger admitted free of charge), and visitors will get to experience the Center's brand-new exhibit, "Ice is Nice!" and to see Punxsutawney Phil in the Meteorologist Hall of Fame.

8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., **Stello Foods Rocks – Find Phil's Peppers!** – a scavenger hunt giveaway, sponsored by Stello Foods. 25 rocks with a pepper and #StelloFoodsRocks will be hidden throughout

Punx'y (in public spaces, outside of local businesses, and other high foot traffic areas). Find a rock and exchange it for any off-the-shelf product at Stello Food Outlet Store, 551 E. Mahoning St.

8 a.m. – 5 p.m., **Punxsutawney Museums**, 400 W. Mahoning St., **Lattimer House. Warming & charging station and Groundhog Day & Native American History.**

8 a.m. – 7 p.m., the **"Home" Made Restaurant & Catering**, 5820 Rt. 119 Hwy. North, Home.

8 a.m. – 8 p.m., the Punxsutawney Art Association's **Groundhog Day Art Show**, hosted by the New Journey Church, 301 W. Mahoning St.

9 a.m. – 11 a.m., **Phil's Birthday Celebration**, held in the Meeting Room of the **Punx'y Area Community Center**, 220 N. Jefferson St. If you were born on February 2, come and celebrate!

9 a.m. – Noon, **Ice Carving** at the **Academy of Culinary Arts**, 125 S. Gilpin St. Pay us a visit and view the icy artistry!

10 a.m. – 11 a.m., hear **The Kevin Briggs Blues Experience** at Groundhog Days in the Park, Barclay Square. Sponsored by the Punx'y Chamber of Commerce.

10 a.m. – 5 p.m., **Punxsutawney Museums**, 401 W. Mahoning St., **Bennis House. Punxsutawney History** and doll houses on display.

10:30 a.m. – 9 p.m., **Fox's Pizza Den**, 207 N. Hampton Ave.

11 a.m. – 8 p.m., **Laska's Pizza**, 405 N. Main St.,

Enjoy your Groundhog Day brews at Laska's!

11 a.m. – 9 p.m., **New Anchor Inn**, Rt. 310, Elk Run Ave. Italian cuisine.

11 a.m. – 10 p.m., **Taco Inc. Mexican Bar & Grille**. Groundhog Plaza, 225 Hampton Ave.

11 a.m. – 10 p.m., **Pizza Town**, W. Mahoning St., Punxsy Plaza.

11 a.m. – 10 p.m., **Sandfly Brewing Co.**, 659 S. Main. St. Tap room open with two food trucks, the Garbage Pit and Pig Iron BBQ.

12 p.m. – 1 p.m., enjoy the music of **Black Ridge** at **Groundhog Days in the Park**, Barclay Square. Sponsored by the Punx'y Chamber of Commerce.

2 p.m. – 3 p.m., **Alex Shumaker** plays at **Groundhog Days in the Park**, Barclay Square. Sponsored by the Punx'y Chamber of Commerce.

4 p.m. – 5 p.m., come and listen to **Fuse** at **Groundhog Days in the Park**, Barclay Square. Sponsored by the Punx'y Chamber of Commerce.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3

5 a.m. – 3 p.m., **Lily's Restaurant, Bakery, Deli & Catering**, 535 W. Mahoning St.

6 a.m. – 10 p.m., **Wendy's**, 212 Hampton Ave.

6 a.m. – 11 p.m., **Burger King**, 235 Hampton Ave.

7 a.m. – 8 p.m., **Punxy Phil's Cakes & Steaks**, Rt. 119 S. at the bottom of Indiana Hill. Serving breakfast all day!

7 a.m. – 9 p.m., **Punxsy Shop 'n Save**, 201 Hampton Ave.

7:30 a.m. – 2 p.m., **Grandma's Kitchen**, Rt. 36 N. halfway between Punx'y and Brookville.

8 a.m. – 2 a.m., **Rumors Tavern**, 901 W. Mahoning St. Open for breakfast!

8 a.m. – 7 p.m., the **"Home" Made Restaurant & Catering**, 5820 Rt. 119 Hwy. North, Home.

9 a.m. – 2 p.m., the Punxsutawney Art Association's

- Continued on next page



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Jan. 31 - Feb. 4 from 9 am - 9 pm

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Groundhog Day 2.2.24

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Continued from previous page

Groundhog Day Art Show, hosted by the New Journey Church, 301 W. Mahoning St.

9 a.m. - 4 p.m. **Phil's Official Souvenir Shop**, www.groundhogstuff.com. (814) 938-7700 or 1-800-752-PHIL.

10 a.m. (Sharp!), for the **Punxsutawney Groundhog Jog 4 Mile Run / Walk**, starting at 261 E. Mahoning St., Punx'y. Registration for the **Live Race 4 miler** to Gobbler's Knob and back: \$20. The race is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 12 Noon. Registration ends February 2 at 1:59 p.m. EST. Registration for the **4 Miler Virtual**: \$30. Registration ends February 2 at 11:59 p.m. EST. "Live" participants will receive long sleeve shirts for preregistering! Collector coins will be given to all finishers. Virtual runners will get their shirts and coins mailed to them. For questions, see the race's website (<https://runsignup.com/Race/PA/Punxsutawney/GroundhogJog4MileRunWalk>).

10 a.m. - 3 p.m., **Groundhog Days in the Park** in Barclay Square, sponsored by the Punx'y Chamber of Commerce. Food trucks, local artisans & craft vendors, live music, and wine & beer tastings. Cold Snap, brewed by Samuel Adams, is the official beer of Groundhog Day! Food vendors: J&C Brick Oven, The Chuck Wagon, Queen Bees Sweet Sips, Larry's Barbeque, and Ricco's Concessions. Wineries & distilleries: Sandfly Brewing Co., Excise Distillery, and Punx Cider Work. Live music: **Cravin' Waves** (Noon-2 p.m.) For up-to-date information, please see the Chamber's website (punxsutawney.org).

10 a.m. - 5 p.m., **Punxsutawney Museums**, 400 W. Mahoning St., **Lattimer House. Groundhog Day & Native American History**. 6 p.m. - 9 p.m., **Friends & Family Game night**.

10 a.m. - 5 p.m., **Punxsutawney Museums**, 401 W. Mahoning St., **Bennis House. Punxsutawney History** and doll houses on display.

10:30 a.m. - 9 p.m., **Fox's Pizza Den**, 207 N. Hampton Ave.

11 a.m. - 1 p.m., **Lunch with Phil** at the Fraternal Order of Eagles, 238 E. Mahoning St. The fun and excitement are not over! Enjoy Lunch with Phil and visit and relive those memories with other Phil Phans. Phil will make an appearance. \$20 per ticket, which includes admission, lunch, and photo opportunities with Phil and members of the Inner Circle. **SOLD OUT!**

11 a.m. - 3 p.m., The **Punx'y Weather Discovery Center** will offer classroom activities with paid admission of \$8 (children 2 years old and younger admitted free of charge), and visitors will get to experience the Center's brand-new exhibit, "Ice is Nice!"

11 a.m. - 8 p.m., **Laska's Pizza**, 405 N. Main St. Enjoy your Groundhog Day brews at Laska's!

11 a.m. - 9 p.m., **New Anchor Inn**, Rt. 310, Elk Run Ave. Italian cuisine.

11 a.m. - 9 p.m., **Pizza Town**, W. Mahoning St., Punxsy Plaza.

11 a.m. - 10 p.m., **Taco Inc. Mexican Bar & Grille**, Groundhog Plaza, 225 Hampton Ave.

11 a.m. - 10 p.m., **Sandfly Brewing Co.**, tap room open with two food trucks, the Garbage

Pit & Pig Iron BBQ (6-9 p.m.), photo booth. 659 S. Main St. Ext.

11 a.m. - 2 a.m., bar open at the **Burrow Bar & Grill**; Bar Open 11 a.m. - 9 p.m., meals with Vilellas Meats; 9 p.m. - midnight, live music: **The Edge**. The Burrow is located at 108 N. Findley St.

12 p.m. - 2 p.m., enjoy live music with **Cravin' Waves** at **Groundhog Days in the Park**, Barclay Square. Sponsored by the Punx'y Chamber of Commerce.

7 p.m. - 11 p.m., The **Groundhog Ball** at the Punxsutawney Country Club. The Groundhog Club's traditional formal attire event, the ball will feature a live band, alcoholic beverages, food, and a great opportunity to engage with the Inner Circle and out-of-town Phil Phans. The theme and ban of this year's ball will be announced soon. This event is always a sellout! Must be 21 or older to attend. Must have a ticket to attend. **SOLD OUT!**

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4

6 a.m. - 2 p.m., **Lily's Restaurant, Bakery, Deli & Catering**, 535 W. Mahoning St.

6 a.m. - 10 p.m., **Wendy's**, 212 Hampton Ave.

7 a.m. - 6 p.m., **Punxsy Shop 'n Save**, 201 Hampton Ave.

7 a.m. - 11 p.m., **Burger King**, 235 Hampton Ave.

7:30 a.m. - 2 p.m., **Grandma's Kitchen**, Rt. 36 N. halfway between Punx'y and Brookville.

8 a.m. - 7 p.m., the "Home" **Made Restaurant & Catering**, 5820 Rt. 119 Hwy. North, Home.

8 a.m. - 8 p.m., **Punx'y Phil's Cakes & Steaks**, Rt. 119 S. at the bottom of Indiana Hill. Serving breakfast all day!

11 a.m. - 3 p.m., The **Punx'y Weather Discovery Center** will offer classroom activities with paid admission of \$8 (children 2 years old and younger admitted free of charge), and visitors will get to experience the Center's brand-new exhibit, "Ice is Nice!"

11 a.m. - 8 p.m., **Laska's Pizza**, 405 N. Main St. Enjoy your Groundhog Day brews at Laska's!

11 a.m. - 9 p.m., **Pizza Town**, W. Mahoning St., Punxsy Plaza.

11 a.m. - 9 p.m., **Taco Inc. Mexican Bar & Grille**, Groundhog Plaza, 225 Hampton Ave.

12 p.m. - 6 p.m., **Sandfly Brewing Co.**, 659 S. Main St. Ext.

1 p.m. - 8 p.m., **Fox's Pizza Den**, 207 N. Hampton Ave.

© 2024 This schedule compliments of **Punxsutawney Hometown Magazine**, the **Punxsutawney Chamber of Commerce**, and the **Punxsutawney Groundhog Club**. For up-to-date information or changes please visit

www.groundhog.org,
www.punxsutawney.com or
www.punxsutawneymagazine.com.

Our sincere apologies for any errors or omissions. Schedule as of 01/25/2024.

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

January 23, 1907 — For the second time this winter several of the small bayous and swamps are frozen over and afford a chance for skating that on account of its scarcity should be taken advantage of while it lasts. On the old bayous the school children have been taking a great deal of a recreation after school hours. East End neighbors say that it would be an excellent place for the truant officer to hang out during the afternoon session of school. The creek, on account of the high water, cannot be persuaded to freeze. (Punxsutawney Spirit)

Note: The popular bayou in this article was a nearly stagnant body of water at the base of the East End hills. Water drained slowly into Mahoning Creek. It was located in the flat land behind the old Mary A. Wilson school.

January 24, 1903 — While crossing the trolley line at Adrian mines last Saturday morning Phelan & Wilson's handsome gray team, driven by Peter Haverilla, was struck by the street car, horses and driver were hastily flung down the embankment in a heap. The driver escaped without injury but the horses were considerably hurt, hit squarely by the moving car. The accident occurred at a point where the dinky engine track crosses the public road. (Punxsutawney Spirit)

Note: The "public road" is what is now PA Route 310.

January 27, 1886 — Following the recommendation of two hundred and fifty Philadelphia ministers, Punxsutawney area ministers assembled in a hall a few days ago and discussed the question of Sunday newspapers, and finally adopted a resolution calling on all pastors to preach against Sunday papers, advising all congregations to boycott them and declaring that the resolving energy would support only such papers as printed no Sunday edition. (Valley News)

Note: In 1886 Punxsutawney had two weekly newspapers — the Punxsutawney Spirit and Valley News, which was renamed as the Punxsutawney News. Neither published a Sunday edition.

January 31, 1908 — J. F. Robinson, captain of Troop D, State Police, yesterday received from a friend in the South two young Georgia bloodhounds which will be trained to track members of the Black Hand and other malefactors of great ingenuity. (Punxsutawney Spirit)

Note: Troop D in Punxsutawney was one four state troops founded in December 1905. The "Black Hand" was a gangster group that threatened, by blackmail and extortion, Italian merchants and coal miners in area mines. In September 1906 two Punxsutawney troopers were killed at Florence in a battle with Black Hand gangsters.

February 5, 1902

Sunday was groundhog day, and in one field the woodchucks came out in such vast numbers that when the sun did shine a little bit not one woodchuck was able to see its own shadow. (Punxsutawney News)

Note: In this weekly newspaper, the editor's note does not capitalize Groundhog Day as it is identified in current news reports about February 2.

...

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3. Enter one of the participating advertisers on this page to redeem your coupon should you be the contest winner.
4. Mail entry to: 'Super Football Contest,' Hometown magazine, 129 Aspen Rd., Punxsutawney, PA 15767
5. ALL ENTRIES MUST BE POSTMARKED/EMAILED BY **THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2024**.
6. No purchase necessary. Please only enter once.
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 prize. If two or more contestants tie for closest to the total score, one winner will be randomly selected to win the prize.
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.

Hometown magazine's 'Super Football Contest':
ENTRIES MUST BE POSTMARKED BY THURSDAY, FEB. 8, 2024
Mail to: Super Football Contest, Hometown magazine, 129 Aspen Rd., Punxsutawney, PA 15767

Name _____
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Coupon for Super Bowl Game of February 11th

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The Original Punxsutawney Spicy Groundhog Cookies

from the kitchen of Elaine Light (1922-2021)

2 c. sifted all purpose flour
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. ground ginger
1 tsp. ground cloves
1 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 c. soft butter
1 c. sugar
1/2 c. molasses
1 egg yolk
1 egg, slightly beaten
Currants or raisins

Sift flour, salt, soda, baking powder, and spices together. Set aside. Cream butter and sugar to-



gether until fluffy. Blend in molasses and egg yolk. Stir in flour mixture and mix well. Form into a ball. Wrap in plastic wrap or waxed paper. Chill one hour or longer.

Roll out a small amount at a time on a sugar-sprinkled board. Roll 1/8-inch thick. Cut out cookies with lightly-floured groundhog cookie cutter. Place cookies on greased baking sheet. Brush with slightly beaten egg. Decorate with currant eye, raisins, etc. Bake 8 to 10 min. in a pre-heated 350 degree oven. Cool slightly before removing from cookie sheet.

Yield: Makes 12 to 15 large size groundhogs, or 3 to 4 dozen smaller ones.

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