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• Tops Market P
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Seneca Santa, Inc. is a non-profit tax-exempt organization that has been in Schuyler County for over 80 years. Its sole purpose is to help provide Christmas for children in need who reside in Schuyler County. We deal with five school districts and are all volunteers. Gifts are delivered Christmas Eve morning by the volunteer fire men and women.

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NEW FINGER LAKES TRAIL ROUTE OPENS NEAR WATKINS GLEN STATE PARK



A newly completed section of the Finger Lakes Trail (FLT) near Watkins Glen State Park is now open to hikers, creating a more scenic route along Glen Creek and reducing the amount of road walking in the area. The project now provides an almost continuous off-road footpath from the fire tower at the top of Sugar Hill State Forest all the way to downtown Watkins Glen, interrupted only by a short road walk across the highway bridge over Glen Creek.

The new segment, shown on Map M14 of the FLT, begins on the east side of Sugar Hill State Forest at “Ebenezer’s Crossing” on Templar Road, where shoulder parking is available. From there, the route crosses Templar Road and heads north-east across Glen Creek to VanZandt Hollow Road, where there is roadside parking just east of the bridge and a short walk to the trailhead.

From VanZandt Hollow Road the trail crosses the Columbia and Empire pipeline corridors, then enters land owned by the Finger Lakes Trail Conference (FLTC). It follows the north bank of Glen Creek for roughly a half mile, offering a quiet creekside walk before turning south, crossing the stream, and entering Watkins Glen State Park to rejoin the existing FLT route.

Hikers can use the new route to reach the Village of Watkins Glen or to create loop hikes that combine the FLT, park trails, and nearby roads. The reroute significantly reduces road walking in this part of the FLT and provides a new way to experience Glen Creek.

Trail stewards emphasize that the new route should only be used when water levels in Glen Creek are normal. During or immediately after heavy rainfall or spring snowmelt, hikers should follow the signed “high water route,” which keeps them on roads and higher ground.

FLTC and Watkins Glen State Park are also in discussion about eventually adding the FLTC property along Glen Creek to the state park, which would further secure the long-term route of the FLT in this area. The project was completed by volunteer trail crews, Bill Meehan, FLTC staff, state partners, and the Columbia and Empire companies, with support from donors to the Sidote Trail Preservation Fund.



Obituary

HOWARD THEODORE SPENCER, 81, of Rock Stream, NY passed away on Saturday, December 6, 2025.

He was born in Montgomery County, Maryland on August 3, 1944 the son of the late Addison H. and Lisa (VonGuten) Spencer. He graduated from Canton High School in Canton, PA. Howard served his country honorably for three years with the US Army, with tours in Korea and Vietnam.

When Howard was 54 years old he retired from Fairway Spring where he had worked for 30 years and returned to school to become an Over the Road Trucker. He enjoyed living out his life driving truck.

Howard was a Christian whose faith was lived each day of his life in seeing his children and grandchildren grow and thrive. He enjoyed hunting and working in his garage. Howard loved riding with his grandson, Addison A. Spencer this past summer.

Howard was predeceased by his sister, Janice Spencer of Phoenix, AZ. He is survived by his loving wife of 58 years, LaVonne M. Spencer; son, Addison Howard Spencer; siblings, Emily Steele of Oshawa, Ontario, Canada and David (Kathy) Spencer of Toronto, Ontario, Canada; grandsons, Joseph Whipple, Jay Lee Osborne and Addison Anthony Spencer; and by several nieces and nephews.

Relatives and friends are invited to call on Thursday, December 18, 2025 from 4-6 pm at Vedder-Scott & Zinger Funeral Home, 122 N. Genesee St., Montour Falls, NY. To leave the family a message of condolence, please visit www.vedderscottzinger.com



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ODESSA HISTORY TALKS 2026:

With Gary Emerson, Schuyler County Historian, All programs begin at 10am. Village of Odessa Community Room, No Registration Required. Lehigh Valley Railroad – January 17th. The Lehigh Valley Railroad arrived in Schuyler County in the early 1890s when the tracks were built along the east side of Seneca Lake. Several large culverts were built to carry the railroad over some of the deep ravines along the lake and there is one right in the village of Odessa. The Lehigh Valley Railroad changed the villages it passed through as it brought passenger service, milk transport, and other services to improve the lives of the people along the tracks in Odessa, Burdett, and Hector. Crimes, Chaos, and Craziess on the Chemung Canal - February 21st. When we think about the Chemung Canal, we tend to focus on the important changes it brought to the area in the realms of transportation, commerce, and population growth. But there was a darker side to the canal's history as well. For many of the working-class people who lived near and worked on the canal, the canal was not necessarily the harbinger of progress. This talk will reveal the violent and strange events that were once part of the canal culture in our communities, including murders, strikes, thievery, fighting, and other bizarre incidents. CCC Camps in Schuyler County – March 21st. During the Great Depression, the Civilian Conservation Corps was created to provide work to unemployed young men. Schuyler County had four CCC camps that worked to plant trees, promote soil conservation, and build parks for recreation. This presentation will use maps, photos, and newspaper articles to tell the interesting story of the CCC camps in Schuyler County, whose work can still be seen today. The CCC not only changed the landscape, but it changed the men who served as well.



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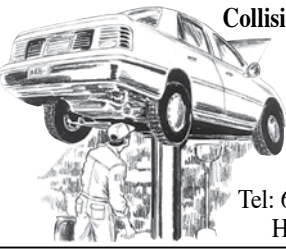
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HOW TO STAY HEALTHY WHILE TRAVELING FOR THE HOLIDAYS

The holiday season is always a busy time of year for the travel industry, and 2025 figures to be no exception. A November report from CNN indicated that the aviation analytics firm Cirium reported that passenger booking on major airlines for Thanksgiving were up by 2.22 percent from a year earlier, when holiday travel reached a record high.

Traveling is indeed a key component of the holiday season for millions of people, and long lines at airports, crowded train stations and trains, and even heavily trafficked roadways are among the challenges such individuals must navigate as they aim to spend time with loved ones between late November and the first week of January. Finding ways to stay healthy while traveling is another challenge such individuals face. While that can be difficult, travelers can look to various strategies to stay healthy when taking to the rails, roads or friendly skies this holiday season.

Take some creature comforts to ensure a good night's rest. The Clayton Sleep Institute reports that as much as 80 percent of travelers report sleeping worse while traveling than they do at home. Jet lag, general weariness and unique sleeping environments can compromise travelers' ability to get sufficient and quality rest while away from home. When possible, taking some creature comforts along, such as the pillow you sleep on at home, can facilitate better rest on the road. That can promote a healthier holiday season, as the Mayo Clinic notes people who don't get enough sleep are more likely to get sick after exposure to a virus, including the common cold.

Do some homework on nutrition. Healthy food and the holiday season are not exactly synonymous, and it's easy to overindulge in unhealthy fare like baked goods when visiting loved ones between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. It's also more difficult to eat healthy when traveling, regardless of the time of year. Some pre-travel home-

work can help travelers find restaurants that offer healthy fare on the road to their destination and locate restaurants with nutritious foods once they arrive. Travelers also can pack healthy snacks to enjoy during their travels.

Stay somewhere you can exercise. Many hotels now feature on-site fitness facilities and/or

(continued on page 6)



Wishing you a season filled with warm moments and cherished memories.

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and
Happy Holidays!

MARIA'S

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continued from page 5....

swimming pools so guests can exercise during their stay. Travelers can book stays in these facilities rather than staying in hotels with no such offerings or in loved ones' apartments. Some hotels may include access to a local fitness facility with each booking in lieu of an on-site exercise room. Travelers who want to stay healthy while on the road can take advantage of these offerings during their stay.

Take something along to calm the stress. Even the most seasoned travelers can succumb to travel-related stress, especially during the busy holiday travel season. Take along an engaging book, a tablet pre-loaded with films and television shows, a smartphone with a full array of podcasts to listen to, or additional items that might help you remain calm should a stressful situation arise during your travels. Stress can compromise the immune system, so having a distraction during travel delays can help people get through their holiday travels in a healthy way.

Staying healthy when traveling during the holiday season can come down to some simple planning. TF261538

UNIQUE CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS AROUND THE WORLD

Christmas celebrations span the globe. According to a 2025 report from the Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, there are roughly 2.6 billion Christians worldwide, a figure that undoubtedly contributes to the popularity of Christmas. Christianity continues to have the most adherents of any religion in the world, and the Christian population is expected to top three billion before 2050.

Christians bring unique cultural touches to their Christmas celebrations each year. Celebrations vary widely, and here's a look at some notable Christmas traditions across the globe.

YULE GOAT

The Yule Goat is a Christmas tradition in Sweden. The goat is believed to be an invisible spirit that ensures that Yule preparations are done correctly. A popular theory connects the goat to the Norse god Thor, who rode a chariot pulled by two goats.

KRAMPUS

While many people celebrate the benevolence of Santa Claus, some celebrate a much grumpier alter-ego of sort. Krampus is a man-goat, half-demon monster who punishes misbehaving children at Christmastime, says Britannica. He is the evil companion of St. Nicholas, and is believed to have originated in Germany. His name comes from the German word "krampen," which means, "claw."

CHRISTMAS CHICKEN

Christmas Eve is a popular romantic occasion for couples and families in Japan. In addition to gift-giving and a romance, many people choose to feast on a meal of KFC fried chicken and strawberry shortcake for dessert.

ROLLER-SKATING TO MASS

In the city of Caracas, Venezuela, it's customary for Christmas Eve celebrants to roller skate to early morning Mass. Known as "Misa de

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*Best wishes to all
for a Peaceful and
Blessed Holiday!*
Merry Christmas

Aguinaldo," these special church services take place on the days leading up to Christmas, with the most festive held on December 24. On this day, the streets of Caracas are closed to automobiles, enabling revelers to cheerfully skate to church.

MUMMERING
In Newfoundland, Canada, celebrants known as mummers dress in elaborate disguises featuring mismatched clothing and whimsical accessories. The mummers obscure their identities and visit neighbors' homes during the 12 days of Christmas, performing songs, skits or dances while others attempt to guess their identities.

LAS POSADAS
In some Hispanic regions, including Mexico, participants reenact Mary and Joseph's search for shelter in Bethlehem through vibrant processions. They travel from house to house, singing traditional songs and requesting shelter only to be turned away until they reach a final home or church that will symbolically welcome them in.

SPIDERWEB DECORATIONS
Individuals in Ukraine decorate their Christmas trees with artificial spider webs. This tradition is inspired by a tale of a poor widow and her children who didn't have money for tree ornaments. Upon waking up on Christmas morning, they found their tree covered in sparkling, glimmering spider webs that resembled tinsel. A spider had spun the beautiful display as thanks for finding shelter and warmth in the family's humble abode. Today's spider webs symbolize unexpected blessings and gratitude.

Plenty of unique touches set Christmastime celebrations apart across the globe. TF25C432



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• **Dundee Baptist Church**, 20 Seneca St., Dundee, NY 14837. 607.243.7313. Sunday Worship at 10:00 a.m.

BAPTIST:
• **Alpine Baptist Church**, 5950 Cty Rt. 14. 607-594-2128. Thursday 7pm, Sunday School 10am and Sunday Worship 11am. KJV1611
• **First Baptist Church**, 213 5th St., Watkins Glen NY. 14891. Pastor Jeff Miller. Sunday service 9:30am. Sunday School 10:30am. Live stream on Facebook. All are welcome, come as you are.
• **Glen Baptist Church**, 33311 Reading Road, Watkins Glen. Sunday School 9:40am; Sunday Morning Worship 11:00am; Sunday Kids/Adult Bible Study 5:30pm; Wed. Prayer Meeting 6:30pm
• **Grace Baptist Church**, 2032 Chambers Rd., Beaver Dams NY 14812, 607-962-4864. Service Times: Sunday school 9:45am; Sunday morning service 11:00am; Sunday Evening 6:00pm; Wednesday evening Bible study; 7:00pm. Nursery available each service. Junior Church 12 and under Sunday morning. We are a independent, fundamental, Kings James only, Bible believing Baptist church.
• **New Hope Baptist Church**, 5528 State St. Millport, NY 14864. 607-739-2482. Pastor Jack Deyo. Church Service Wednesday 6pm, Sunday Service 11am, Sunday School youth & teenagers.
• **Odessa Baptist Church**, 111 Fowler Place, Odessa, NY 14869. 607-594-2800. Adult and Teen Sunday School 9:30am. Service 10:30am Young Kids Sunday School during service. Wed. Women’s Bible Study 9:30am. Sat, Men’s Bible Study 6:30am. Sun, Group Bible Study 6:00pm.
• **Pine Valley Baptist**, 4872 Pine Crest Rd., Millport, NY 14864. 607-739-7767. A.M. Service 11:00am, Sunday School 9:45am

CATHOLIC:
• **St. Benedict’s Church**, 307 Speedway, Odessa, NY, Saturday 5:00 pm Mass
• **St. Mary’s of the Lake Church**, 905 N. Decatur St., Watkins Glen, NY, Sunday 8:00 am & 10:00 am Masses
• **St. Stanislaus**, 7646 Whitehead Hill Rd., Bradford, NY. Mass: Saturday 6pm, Sunday 11:30am
• **The Parish Of Mary Mother Of Mercy:** St. Francis Solanus, 3660 Orchard St., Interlaken. Mass: Sat., 4:00pm; St. James the Apostle, 17 Whig St., Trumansburg, NY, Mass: Sunday, 9:00am; Holy Cross, 7231 Main St., Ovid, Mass: Sunday, 10:30am. For more info phone 607-294-0064. Or email: immmercy@dor.org

EPISCOPAL:
• **Episcopal Church of the Epiphany**, 11 Elm Street, Trumansburg, NY 14886. 607-387-6274. Sunday service at 9:30am, Rev. April Stace.
• **St. James’ Episcopal Church**, 112 Sixth St., Watkins Glen 10:45 service, Fr. David Hanselman
• **St. John Episcopal of Catharine**, 4938 County Rd. 14, Odessa, NY 14869. Services begin at 8:45am. Since 1810.

LUTHERAN:
• **Our Saviour’s Lutheran Church**, 2872 Westinghouse Rd., Horseheads. 607-739-9412. Sunday 10:30 Community Worship Service with Music. All are welcome.

METHODIST:
• **Burdett United Methodist Church**, Lake Street, Burdett. Sunday Worship, 11-Noon. Live stream on Facebook.
• **Cayutaville Methodist Church**, Sunday Service at 9:30.
• **Fresh Start Church**, Service held at the Glen Theater, Franklin St., Watkins Glen, NY 14891. Sunday service at 10:00am.
• **Mecklenburg United Methodist Church**, 6069 Turnpike Rd., Mecklenburg, NY 14863, Sunday Services at 8:30AM All are welcome! Come as you are!
• **Montour Falls United Methodist**, 128 Owego Street, Montour Falls, service time 9am.
• **Odessa-Catharine United Methodist Church**, 305 Church Street, Odessa. Sunday School 9:30-10:30AM Sundays, Church 11:00 AM Phone: 607-594-2271 . Pastor Mike Kelly
• **Reynoldsville United Methodist Church**, Sunday service 9:30-10:30
• **Tyrone United Methodist Church**, 3647 Church Hill Road, Tyrone, NY 14887. 607-292-3239. Pastor Lee Capodagli. Worship service every Sunday beginning at 10:15am.

NON-DENOMINATIONAL
• **Beaver Dams Community Church** (Formerly Beaver Dams UMC) 1285 Co. Rt. 19, Beaver Dams. Sunday Worship at 9:30. All Welcome, Independent Christian Church
• **Bethel Fellowship Church**, 2035 State Route 14, Montour Falls Sunday Service begins at 10:30am. Wednesday Reborn Free Recovery Meeting begins at 6pm.
• **Full Gospel Church of Catlin Center**, 683 Backer Road, Beaver Dams, NY 14812. Pastors Terrence and Melissa Passmore. Sunday Worship 11:00am, Children’s Sunday School 11:30am, Prayer Meeting Sunday 5:30pm. Wednesday night Bible Study 6:30pm. 607-873-7185, email: fgccatlin@gmail.com Facebook page: Full Gospel Church of Catlin. We look forward to seeing you.
• **Full Gospel Covenant**. 4227 Perry Hill Road, Altay. Sunday Service 10 a.m. All are welcome. Come as you are.
• **Tompkins Corners Country Church**, 402 Chambers Rd., Horseheads 10:00am, Sunday School 10am. All are welcome. Independent Christian Church.

PRESBYTERIAN:
• **Burdett Presbyterian Church**, 3995 Church St., Burdett, NY 14818 607-546-8560, Sunday worship starts at 10am. All are welcome!
• **First Presbyterian Church of Watkins Glen**, 520 N. Decatur St. Sunday Worship 11:00am.
• **Hector Presbyterian Church**, State Rt 414, Hector, NY. 9:30am Sunday Worship service
• **Moreland Presbyterian Church**, 3045 Beaver Dams Moreland Rd. Beaver Dams NY 14812. Reverend Paul Yoder, Sunday 9:30-10:30. All are welcome to join in person or by phone. Call in at 701-802-5357, access code 2568066
• **Rock Stream Presbyterian Church**, 6062 Reading Road, Rock Stream, Sunday Worship 10:00am.

REFORMED:
• **Interlaken Reformed Church**, 607-532-4321. 8315 Main Street, Interlaken, NY. Morning Worship Services at 10:30. “GO Church” for children ages held during the worship service. All are welcome!!

WESLEYAN:
• **Grace Lee Wesleyan Church**, 2075 Chambers Road, Beaver Dams. 9am Discipleship Hour; 10am Connection Cafe; 10:30am Worship; 6:30pm Youth Group.

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CLUES ACROSS

1. American automotive titan
4. Tire term
7. Two-year-old sheep
10. Indigenous people of Thailand
11. Anti-Soviet Cold War group
12. Actress de Armas
13. Not moving
15. Cool!
16. Plants of the arum family
19. Connected with touch
21. Pen stain
23. Monetary units
24. School kids’ art project
25. Early Bell Canada executive
26. Sword
27. Hates
30. Fixed in one place
34. Pie _ _ _ mode
35. Moved swiftly on foot
36. Carrier on vehicle
41. A path to get through
45. “Rule, Britannia” composer
46. Spiritual leader
47. Flowing
50. Respectful compliments
54. Cure
55. Soft, lightweight fabric
56. Building material
57. Japanese delicacy
59. A way to cause to be swollen
60. One and only
61. You might get one in summer
62. Wreath
63. Thus far
64. They _ _
65. Employee reference number

CLUES DOWN

1. Policemen (French)
2. Toy dog
3. Intestinal condition
4. Muscular weaknesses
5. Helps little firms
6. Alphabetical lists
7. Takes down
8. Facilitates
9. Ethnic people of Ethiopia
13. Engine additive
14. Explorers group
17. Written account
18. Consumed
20. Opposite of first
22. No (slang)
27. Government lawyers
28. NY Giants great
29. Small amount
31. A way to save for your future
32. Fall behind
33. Midway between northeast and east
37. Head pain
38. Wildly popular sport
39. “Princess Diaries” actress Hathaway
40. Boat race
41. About fish
42. Nursemaid
43. Able to be marketed
44. Not as large
47. Parts per billion (abbr.)
48. Paddle
49. Oneness
51. Bitter chemical
52. Not around
53. Very fast airplane
58. Main tributary of the Rhine

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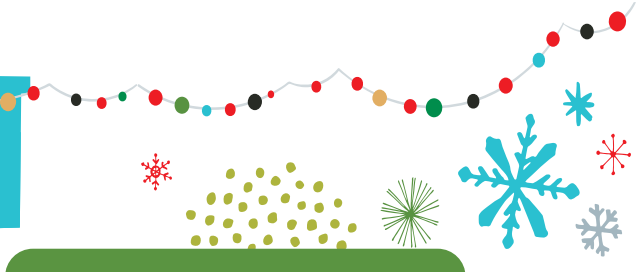
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Chill-dren

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The snowbank

How much does Santa pay to park his sleigh?
Nothing, it's on the house!

What do you call a reindeer with bad manners?
Rude-olph



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HILITES HOLIDAY HOURS:

There will be an **EARLY DEADLINE** of Thursday, December 18th at 3pm for the December 24th issue. Office will be **CLOSED** from Monday, December 22nd, 2025 through January 6th, 2026. There will **NOT** be a December 31st issue. The deadline for the January 7th issue will be Friday, January 2 at 3pm.