

Our Town

Neil and Betty Berkstresser celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on December 20.

Kevin Lynch of Big Cove Tavernery as on Washington television Channel 7 on Tuesday discussing the weather. He is the son of Polly Lynch.

Public Opinion weekly honor roll student-athletes were Chelsey Hollenshead, Luke Mellott and Brooke Whiteside, Southern Fulton; and Jesse Newman, Forbes Road, all for basketball.

Sympathy goes out to the family of Mary Ellen Martz, who passed away last Wednesday.

P&W held its annual Christmas party recently in the Mercersburg American legion Hall.

The FOVA held its employee Christmas party on Tuesday, December 23, after the members and guests party.

The descendants of the late Charles and Edna Matthews held their Christmas celebration recently in the VFW in Mercersburg.

Birthday wishes to Mary K. Seville, December 28; Kara Shives, December 26; Betty Cutchall, December 26; Bill Agesen and Ginger Peck, December 28; Larry "Sebole" Seville and Dave Peck, December 29; Isabel Miller, December 30; Chris Keepers and Cindy Strait, December 31.

The senior centers of the county held their annual Christ-

mas dinner on Wednesday of last week.

Christine McQuade and daughter Courtney attended the graduation of Christine's son Matthew, of the Navy in Great Lakes, Ill., this week.

The residents of Hann's Apartments held their annual Christmas party on Tuesday evening, December 16.

Thelma Grissinger recently fell, breaking her shoulder and is recuperating at her apartment.

G&P held its Christmas party on Friday night at the Orchards in Chambersburg.

Bobby Riggs, wife Colette and daughters Katie and Kellie, of Whidbey Island, Wash., visited a few days last week with his mother, Maggie, of town, and sister Lindsay Mellott and family of Needmore. Katie is finishing her senior year at University of Washington in Seattle, and Kellie is a sophomore at Rhode Island School of Design in Providence where she is studying jewelry design and metalsmithing.

Brenda Tolbert, formerly of McConnellsburg, entertained family and friends from here Saturday at a Christmas luncheon in her Camp Hill home.

Guests included her aunt, Carolyn Greenfelt, and sister Diane Tolbert, Maggie Riggs, Lindsay Mellott and Jean Snyder. Also enjoying the holiday get-together were friends and Camp Hill neighbors Mary Golini and Sherry Paylor, who is also a former McConnellsburg resident.

Hustontown

Winter arrived on Sunday with a windy vengeance and also dropped those temperatures way down.

We extend our sympathy to the family and relatives of Mary Ellen Martz who passed away last week.

Christmas Eve program will be at 6:30 p.m. at Fairview United Methodist Church. Also the Christmas Eve program will be at 8:00 p.m. at Knobsville United Methodist Church.

Shawn and Jackie Berkstresser and son Ryan of Slippery Rock and Kate Berkstresser spent Sunday, December 21 with Robert and June Bennett and families in Carlisle.

Sorry to hear Betty Malot was on the ill list on Sunday. We send get well wishes her way.

Wednesday will start the children's school vacation. Hope they have a nice vacation until they return.

Happy birthday to Tracy Cook on December 23.

Hope everyone has a Merry Christmas.

Take time to realize why we have this special holiday as we celebrate the birth of our Savior.

Household hint: Control wetness. Keep a wastebasket or attractive box inside door with plastic bag as liner. Place wet boots, etc., in to dry off. In corner area stand a stick to hold wet rain bonnets, etc.

Siphon Some Stress From The Holiday Season

When it comes to the holidays, emotions often run the gamut. Moments of great elation are often preceded by more than a few moments of stress and anxiety.

Such stress and anxiety has become the norm during the holiday season. Thanks to road trips to see family, busier social schedules and financial concerns, what should be a festive season can often be a restless one as well.

For many people, the most stressful part of the holiday season is holiday shopping. Long lines at the mall, the hunt for the perfect parking spot and the urge to overspend on gifts for loved ones is a difficult thing for many people to balance. The following shopping tips should help make the stressful art of holiday shopping a little easier to handle this season.

Resolve to use cash and only cash. Paying with cash can reduce the likelihood that you'll overspend. According to the Federal Reserve Board, the average American household currently has more than \$8,000 in credit card debt. Adding more to that already large pile is only going to make the holidays more stressful. Shopping with cash and leaving the credit cards at home will allow you to predetermine what you'll spend on a shopping trip, and it won't give you wiggle room to land yourself in any trouble.

Another benefit to cash is that you won't find yourself on any mailing lists. Each time a credit card is swiped, you run the risk of ending up on a junk mailing list. Paying with cash has no such risks.

* Comparison shop, both in person and online. Comparison shopping might take more time, but it can save lots of money. Particularly for big-ticket items like appliances, a little research can go a long way. Thanks to the Internet, comparison shopping is now easier than ever. Make online prices a part of your comparison shopping. Some appliance stores even offer lower prices on their Web sites than they do in-store, and even allow items to be bought online and picked up in the store. This can save time as well as money, as you can simply call the store to arrange a pickup time so you're not left wasting valuable time waiting for your purchases.

Read the fine print on warranties. Many times, big-ticket items offer extended warranties. While these seem like a good idea on the surface, that's not always the case. Often expensive, extended warranties can stretch your budget while pro-

viding little on your return. The Consumers Union reports that fewer than 20 percent of products covered on an extended warranty are ever brought in for repair. If you're really uncomfortable with just the manufacturer's warranty, consider purchasing the product with a credit card that offers to double the manufacturer's warranty. Certain credit card companies offer such specials to get people to use their cards during the holiday season. However, read the fine print to make sure using the card is worthwhile.

Don't be afraid to return items. If you notice your spending has gotten out of control, and the gifts have yet to be given, it's perfectly alright to return products (so long as it's within the allotted time the store allows). Especially in this current financial climate where money is tight, it's perfectly acceptable to tighten the purse strings and be more careful with your finances. If you've spent more than you planned, return items so you can stay within your budget. Many stores set 30-, 60-, or 90-day limits on returns, so you probably have ample time to return items and get back on track.

Keefer Inducted Into Sorority



Kappa Delta Pi, International Honor Society in Education, is pleased to announce that on November 1, Sarah Keefer, daughter of John and Patty Keefer, Needmore, was inducted into its membership through the Epsilon Chapter of Shippensburg University.

The society inducts only those individuals who have exhibited the ideals of scholarship, integrity in service, and commitment to excellence in teaching and its allied professions. Selection as a member of Kappa Delta Pi is based on high academic achievement, a commitment to education as a career, and a professional attitude that assures steady growth in the profession. To maintain membership, students must keep a 3.5 GPA and participate in service projects throughout the semester.

Sarah is also the granddaughter of Adrian (the late Veryl) Spade, Needmore, and Norma Jean (the late John Sr.), Hancock. She has one living great-grandmother, Mae Keefer, also of Needmore.

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Toys You'll Feel Good About Giving Children

In the race to find the ultimate holiday gifts for our children, sometimes we take the "oohs and aahs" into consideration more than we do seeking out presents that will allow for truly redeeming qualities to come to life in children. Gift-giving shouldn't be about being the "best" in the eyes of our kids and submitting to all of their holiday wants. It should be more about finding treats that will bring out the best in kids.

As our children become somewhat brainwashed by the toy commercials this time of year, it's easy to head to the store and buy the latest craze or video game installment that they're promoting on TV. But for those who are looking for something more uplifting and meaningful in terms of toys, it pays to work a little harder to find the right gifts.

Toys that evoke compassion: There's much to be said about a toy or game that will bring out the compassionate side of a child. A baby doll for whom a child has to care and nurture is a good example. Playsets that enable children to dress up as their unsung heroes, such as doctors, police officers, and firefighters, are another example of toys that instill compassion in a child.

Toys that encourage physical activity: Exercise is a known mood-booster, and every opportunity to get kids up and moving is good for their physical and mental health. What about a gift of a sled or snow shoes so that he or she can hit the fresh powder on a snow day? How about a membership to a swim club, so that your child can enjoy the joys of swimming year-round? Who knows, you might inspire the next Michael Phelps.

Toys that boost mental acuity: Making learning fun is one way to help children enjoy learning in and out of school. Hands-on experiences can make that learning even better. Consider constellation cards or books that help children identify those star clusters in the night sky, promoting an interest in astronomy. Puzzles and trivia games target different areas of the brain — ones responsible for problem-solving and fact recollection. For the young bookworm, a new library of books will keep reading comprehension and vocabulary building going even over holiday breaks.

Toys and other gifts that enable families to have fun together: Choosing gifts that are not bound by age restrictions can foster growth and closeness among the entire family. Games like Twister (R) remain family favorites for the fun factor and the opportunity to play together. For those thinking of investing in a Nintendo Wii console, now may be the time to foster some healthy competition among family members, and boost some physical activity as well. New board games are always being released in time for the holidays. Choose games that enable the family to sit around the table with snacks, conversation and good times.

When you're scouring the aisles of the toy store this holiday season, put more time and consideration into choosing redeeming children's toys.

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