HomeTown Neighbors

FREE

Connecting our Northeast Georgia Neighbors for OVER 20 YEARS!

In this issue:

- Women's Wellness Edition
- New Business News
- A Christmas to Remember Contest Begins!
- And more!

October 2026

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TAMMY HART-CROOK

Comments continue to pour into the magazine from our wonderful readers. We love to hear from you! We also appreciate you supporting the local businesses that advertise with us. Be sure to mention to them that you saw their ad in the magazine, for without their advertising support we could not continue to bring you this quality monthly publication.

Send us your comments

By email: **hometownneighbors@windstream.net**
Or postal mail: **5721 West Avenue; Lavonia, GA 30553**

Appreciate all your hard work on the Hometown Neighbors magazine! We enjoy reading it each month. *- L. Y., Alto, GA*

I look forward to picking up your magazine each month with your inspiring articles! Thank you! *- M.W., Hartwell, GA*

I will be getting this magazine monthly. I Can learn a lot from this! *- S*

Find the hidden treasure chest in an advertisement in this issue for a chance to win a great prize.

Send us the location of the treasure chest along with your name, address, and daytime phone number through one of these methods:

Email: **hometownneighbors@windstream.net**

Fax: **706-356-0274**

Mail: **HTN Magazine, 5721 West Avenue, Lavonia, GA 30553**

We will draw a winner from all of the correct answers we receive.
The deadline to get your answer to us will be the 9th of each month.
Only one entry per person and no phone calls, please.

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Search for the treasure chest and win!

SEPTEMBER TREASURE WINNER:
Reney Stinchcomb of Clarkesville, GA won Beautiful Jewelry from Vintage Owl

DID YOU FIND IT?
The September treasure chest was located in the Lavonia Corn Maze ad on page 7

OCTOBER TREASURE:
Beautiful Jewelry from Vintage Owl

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MICHAEL SCOGGINS
Mar 14, 1962 — Aug 6, 2026
JOYCE SMITH
Apr 9, 1940 — Aug 7, 2026
TERRY BOBBY PEEPLES
Sep 5, 1963 — Aug 7, 2026
DEBORAH JEAN ISBELL
Sep 9, 1968 — Aug 7, 2026
REV. LLOYD WELLS
Nov 4, 1942 — Aug 8, 2026
CHARLES "RAY" KIRKPATRICK
Apr 2, 1945 — Aug 8, 2026
JOHNNY RECO JOHNSON
Apr 22, 1963 — Aug 9, 2026
ULYSES "J.R." HALL
Jul 18, 1966 — Aug 10, 2026
JERRI SHAW ANDREWS
Jan 15, 1933 — Aug 13, 2026
GLORIA DIANE LEE
Oct 21, 1957 — Aug 12, 2026
ANGELA NANETTE COLQUITT
Apr 1, 1972 — Aug 16, 2026
SUSAN HURT WOODALL
Nov 4, 2009 — Aug 17, 2026
MILDRED TEMPLE
Apr 18, 1949 — Aug 18, 2026
WILLIE JAMES RUCKER, JR.
Jul 28, 1961 — Aug 18, 2026
EVA JENNETTE DARTY
Sep 10, 1944 — Aug 21, 2026
RONNIE DRIVER
Apr 19, 1945 — Aug 22, 2026
SANDY MOORE
Aug 31, 1946 — Aug 23, 2026
MARY JANE CULBREATH HARDY
Nov 12, 1948 — Aug 25, 2026
SYLVIA BROWN
Oct 26, 1946 — Aug 26, 2026
MARK METHENY
Aug 26, 1957 — Aug 24, 2026
LARRY CURTIS BROWN
Jul 27, 1970 — Aug 26, 2026
OSCAR FRANKLIN KNIGHTON, JR.
Jan 21, 1942 — Aug 28, 2026
JOSE LOPEZ
Mar 5, 1966 — Aug 28, 2026
TRACY DENISE (FOWLER) TITTLE
Oct 9, 1973 — Aug 28, 2026
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Jun 19, 1949 — Aug 30, 2026
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Sep 17, 1966 — Aug 31, 2026

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Hello, Neighbor!

Trusting the Lord when it feels impossible is probably the hardest thing for any Christian to do, even those of us seasoned veterans! However, trust issues are not new for any Christian, even the disciples had a hard time believing everything that was about to happen was going to be for the Lord's greater purpose! For our SALVATION!

People have faced impossible situations from the beginning of time. Remember, when the Israelites came to the edge of the Red Sea, the people's fear was unimaginable. ***"But Moses said, "Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of the Lord which He will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again forever."*** (Exodus 14:13 NASB).

Trusting God in difficult times isn't about pretending you're strong. It's about learning how to anchor your heart when everything around you may feel uncertain. And thankfully, Scripture doesn't leave you guessing about how to do that. Because trusting God in difficult times isn't tested when life is calm. It's tested when everything seems to be going wrong. So, below are 3 Bible verses about trusting God in hard times I feel may help when you are struggling.

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight." Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)

Trusting God means releasing the need to figure everything out on our own. When life doesn't make sense, we're tempted to lean on our own logic and control. This verse reminds us that trust begins where our understanding ends. We don't have to see the whole picture; we just have to keep walking with Him.

"You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you." *Isaiah 26:3* (ESV)

Peace is directly connected to where our focus rests. Trust isn't passive, it's intentional focus. When we redirect our thoughts back to God instead of replaying fear, He steadies our hearts, reminding us that perfect peace isn't the absence of trouble; it's the presence of God in it.

"When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. In God, whose word I praise. In God, I trust and am not afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?" Psalm 56:3-4 (NIV)

Notice David doesn't say if I am afraid, he says when. Teaching us that fear and trust can exist in the same moment. Trusting God in difficult times doesn't mean our fears automatically disappear. It means we choose to put our faith in Him, even in the midst of them.

These are just 3 verses that I use to calm my mind when things seem lost. I pray they help you in times of struggle also.

Sincerely,

Raina C Troxell

Raina C. Troxell

The deadline for the November issue is October 1st. Please call us at 706.356.0273 with submissions. Thank you!

OCTOBER 2026

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Thank you to all of our wonderful advertisers!

OCTOBER COVER PHOTO WINNERS

Congratulations to Summer Holbrooks of Eastanollee for having this photo chosen for this month's front cover of our Franklin, Stephens, Hart and Madison county edition.

Congratulations to Donna Shirley for having this photo chosen for this month's cover of our Banks, Jackson, Habersham and Clarke county edition.

For Photo Contest Rules, go to: www.hometownneighbors.com

HomeTown Neighbors

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Missed a copy of HomeTown Neighbors? Check out **WWW.HOMETOWNNEIGHBORS.COM** past editions!

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A Christmas to Remember

Visit your local merchants this season, and have a Christmas to Remember! Fill out an entry form at the participating businesses below to be entered to win one of two Christmas Packages!

Grand Prizes

There will be 2 Grand Prize Packages - One from the BJHC entries and one from the FSHME entries. Two winners will win one of the packages listed below. This year - the flat screen TV will be part of the grand prize! So, hurry-in to enter at participating businesses!

Contest Rules

Each participating merchant will have a box placed inside their business with entry forms. Visit the participating business and enter your name, address and phone number. On December the 8th, all entry boxes will be picked up and a grand prize winner from each package will be drawn. Names of winners will be announced in January's issue of HomeTown Neighbors Magazine. You must be at least 18 years of age and a legal resident of Georgia. You may enter numerous times, but only ONE entry per visit.

Banks, Jackson, Habersham & Clarke Counties Package

Aimee's - *Maysville - $100 Gift Certificate*

HomeTown Neighbors Magazine - *Lavonia-Flat Screen TV*

Jewelry Expressions - *Cornelia - Sterling Silver Pendant & Earrings worth $200!*

PrissEllies - *Jefferson - $50 Gift Certificate*

Spoiled Rotten Boutique - *Cornelia - $50 Gift Certificate*

The Artfull Barn - *Clarkesville - $50 piece of Pottery (Tanya) and a $50 piece of art (Greg) and a $50 piece of Jewelry (Hemlock Gallery) plus a $50 gift certificate. Package work $200!*

The Coin Shop - *Maysville - Prize worth $50*

Doc's Coffee Shop - *Maysville - $50 Gift Certificate*

Chocolate Dog at Maysville Mercantile - *Maysville - $50 Prize Package*

Franklin, Stephens, Hart, Madison & Elbert Counties Package

Bright Sunny Day Flowers and Gifts - *Carnesville-$50 Gift Basket*

Hometown Interiors - *Ila-$50 Gift Certificate*

HomeTown Neighbors Magazine - *Lavonia-Flat Screen TV*

North Georgia Credit Union - *Toccoa, Lavonia, Hartwell-$50 Cash*

Downtown Biscuit Barn - *Lavonia - 2 Free Breakfast Buffets and 2 Free Lunch Buffets*

Vintage Home - *Lavonia - $50 Gift Basket*

Vintage Owl - *Lavonia-$100 Prize Package*

Second Seasons Market & Consign - *Lavonia - $50 Gift Basket*

Melissa NeSmith-Re/Max Classic - *Lavonia - Home Gift Basket*

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Please go to bestofgeorgia.com and vote under shopping and boutiques for VINTAGE OWL at the bottom of the list. (alphabetical order)

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706-356-0274

VINTAGE V-O OWL

Hurt at Work?

By **Attorney Derek Hays, Derek Hays Injury Law**

Getting hurt at work can turn an ordinary day into a complicated one very quickly. Maybe you slipped and fell, injured your back lifting something, were hurt using equipment, or were involved in an accident while doing your job. Suddenly you're dealing with medical appointments, missed work, lost income and a lot of questions about what happens next.

One of the biggest mistakes people make after a workplace injury is assuming their employer or the insurance company will automatically tell them everything they need to know.That's not always the case.

Georgia's workers' compensation system is designed to provide certain benefits to employees who are injured on the job. Depending on the circumstances, those benefits may include medical treatment, rehabilitation and a portion of lost wages while you're unable to work.

But there are rules and deadlines involved, and what you do immediately after an injury can matter.

First, report the injury to your employer as soon as possible. Even if the injury seems minor, don't assume it will simply get better. A sore back, shoulder or knee may feel manageable at first and become a much bigger problem several days later.

Be clear about how the injury happened and make sure it is documented. If anyone witnessed the accident, make note of who was there. Keep records of your medical treatment and any communication you receive regarding your injury or claim.

Another common misconception is that you have to prove your employer did something wrong in order to receive workers' compensation benefits.

Generally, workers' compensation isn't about proving that your employer was negligent. The question is whether you suffered a covered injury arising out of and in the course of your employment.

And workplace injuries aren't limited to construction sites, factories or jobs we traditionally think of as dangerous.

A nurse can injure her back helping a patient. An office employee can fall on a wet floor. A delivery driver can be hurt in a collision. A restaurant employee can suffer a burn. A warehouse worker can develop an injury from repetitive lifting. People can be injured at virtually any workplace.

It's also important to understand that a workers' compensation claim can become complicated quickly. Questions may arise about whether an injury is work-related, which doctor you can see, when you can return to work, whether your benefits are being calculated correctly, or what happens if your condition doesn't improve.

After nearly 30 years representing injured people, I've seen how overwhelming this process can feel, especially when someone is trying to recover physically while worrying about how they're going to pay their bills.

My advice is simple: don't make assumptions about what you are or aren't entitled to after a workplace injury. Report what happened, document everything, follow your medical treatment and get answers to your questions before making important decisions about your claim.

Hopefully, you'll never need to know how workers' compensation works.

But if an ordinary day at work suddenly isn't so ordinary, knowing what to do next can make a big difference.

Mediterranean Chicken

1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1 tsp. kosher salt
1/2 tsp. fresh thyme leaves (from about 3 sprigs)
1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
1/2 tsp. paprika
4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
1/4 cup chopped oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, plus 4 tbsp. tomato oil, divided
2 red onions, halved, thinly sliced
1 clove garlic, finely chopped
1 cup dry white wine
1 cup low-sodium chicken broth
1 lemon, juiced, divided
1/4 cup fresh green herbs (such as oregano, chives, and/or thyme), chopped
Drained capers or pitted olives, for serving (optional)

In a shallow dish, mix flour, salt, thyme, pepper, and paprika. Lightly coat each side of chicken in flour mixture. In a large pot over medium heat, heat 2 tablespoons tomato oil until shimmering. Cook chicken, turning occasionally, until golden brown on both sides, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer to a plate. In same skillet over medium heat, heat remaining 2 tablespoons tomato oil. Cook onion, stirring occasionally and adding 1 to 2 tablespoons water if onions are getting too dark, until softened and beginning to caramelize, about 12 minutes. Add sun-dried tomatoes and garlic and cook, stirring, until warmed through, about 1 minute. Add wine, broth, and half of lemon juice. Bring to a simmer over medium heat and cook, stirring frequently, until thickened enough to coat the back of a spoon, about 10 minutes. Reduce to medium-low and return chicken to skillet. Cover and cook, undisturbed, until chicken is cooked through, 7 to 8 minutes. Remove from heat. Squeeze remaining lemon juice over. Top with herbs and capers (if using).

Halloween Sangria

3 large Granny Smith apples
1 lemon, juiced
Ice
2 blood oranges, sliced into thin rounds
1 cup blackberries
1 cup pomegranate seeds
1 (750-mL) bottle light red wine, such as Grenache, Gamay, or Pinot Noir
3 cups Italian soda, either blood orange, orange, or pomegranate flavor
3 oz. créme de cassis
1 - 1/2 oz. simple syrup

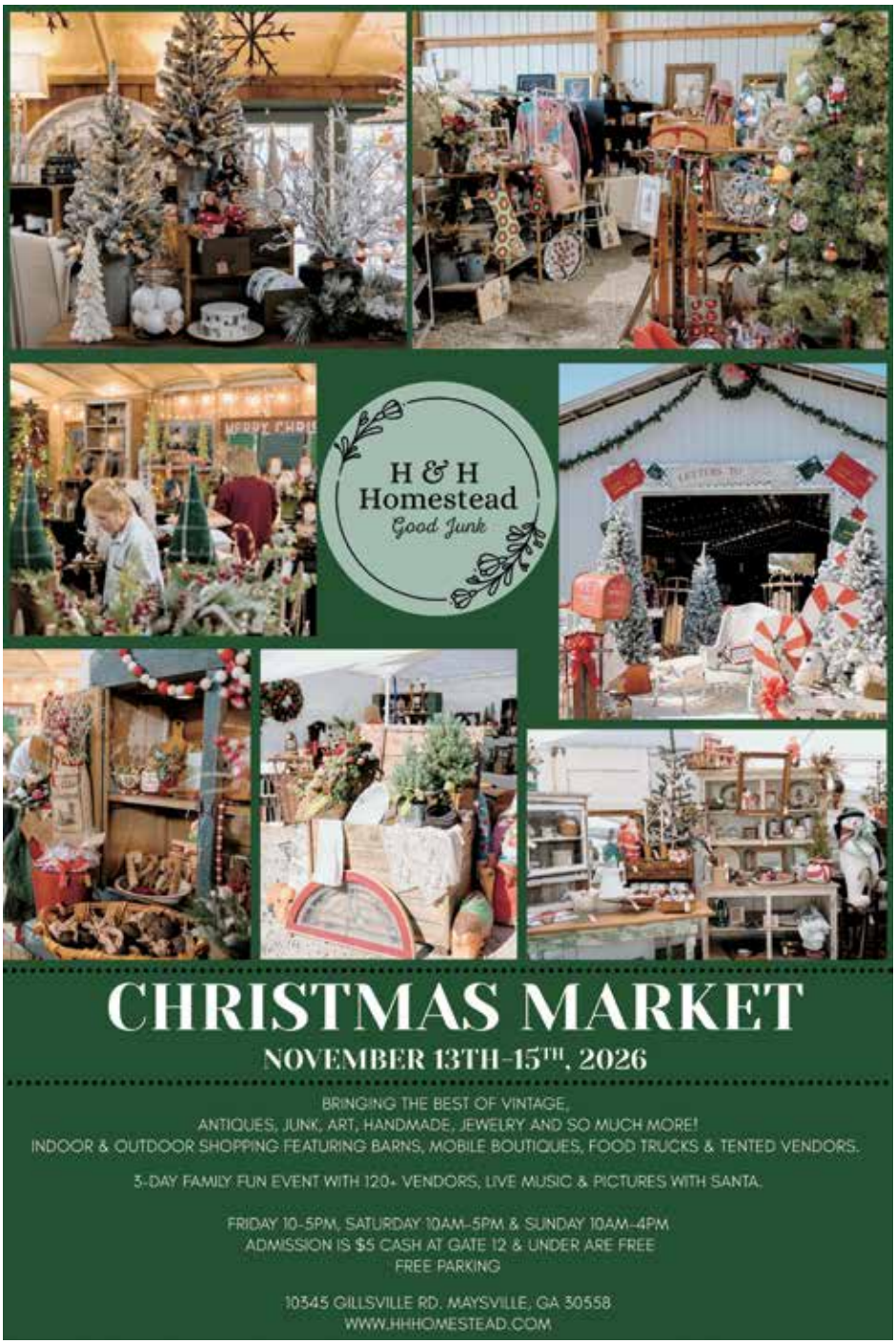
Slice apples lengthwise into 1/2”-thick slices. Using a ghost-shaped cookie cutter, cut out 12 ghost-shaped apple pieces. Using a straw or skewer, punch 3 holes into each apple to form eyes and a mouth. Transfer to a medium bowl, add lemon juice, and lightly toss to coat. Fill a large punch bowl with ice. Add apple ghosts, orange slices, blackberries, and pomegranate seeds and gently toss to combine. Add wine, soda, créme de cassis, and simple syrup and stir until combined. Serve cold Make Ahead: Apple ghosts can be made 3 hours ahead. Store in an airtight container with lemon juice and refrigerate. Wine, créme de cassis, and simple syrup can be mixed 1 day ahead. Store in an airtight container and refrigerate. Pour over ice, add fruit, and mix in soda right before serving.

H & H Homestead Christmas Market 2026

Hi, my name is Helena Dale. I am a lover of fashion, gardening and all things vintage. My family is the inspiration for this amazing journey! So, who is the other "H"? Hugh, my father, who taught me that "one man's trash is another man's treasure".

I truly believe he would be so proud if he could see how I have carried on the family tradition. And last but not least, Homestead represents my mother who taught me "there is no place like home". I hosted my first barn sale in my backyard in March of 2013.

H & H Homestead was inspired by my father's business, Jones Auto Parts (aka) The Junkyard. Little did we know that my random pickin' of the scrap pile would end up having thousands of people coming to our markets finding their perfect treasure.



I would personally like to invite you to the farm for our annual Christmas Market. We offer both indoor and outdoor shopping featuring barn finds, mobile boutiques, and tented vendors throughout our fields. You can bring the whole family and enjoy a 3-day weekend with a 100+ vendors, live music, food court and a bounce house playground for the kids.

This year's market will be held November 13th-15th on Friday 10am-5pm, Saturday 10am-5pm, and Sunday from 10am-4pm. Admission is only $5.00 admission and children 12 and under are. Free. We are located at 10345 Gillsville Rd in Maysville, GA. We love pets, but unfortunately due to safety concerns we request that your furry friends stay home.

Here is a run down of what you need to know about our event:

100+ hand-picked vendors, food trucks, live music and seasonal activities. We are kid & family friendly... I promise there is something for everyone. Including an area for the kiddos to play. We are located on our 50-acre farm. This is a working farm, so dress accordingly. We offer indoor and outdoor shopping that consist of barns, grounds, sheds etc. All with a combination of concrete, gravel and grass. Parking is on-site. We will have attendants to guide you to all the appropriate parking areas. Handicap parking is reserved at the gate.

Tickets can be purchased online. Tickets purchased at the gate is Cash Only. Admission Price: General Admission is $5 per day per person. Kids 12 & under free. We have a holding area and porters to help with large/heavy items. Cash is king, but we do accept all cards in the main barn. Most vendors accept cards, however some are cash only. Maysville is a small town that sits directly between Atlanta, GA and Greenville, SC. Approximately 1.5 hours from either. Conveniently located just 5 miles off I-85, exit 147.

We look forward to you visiting with us at the farm this holiday season!

Decorating with Antiques at Halloween

By Raina Troxell

While mass retailers are more than willing to sell you spooky decor, I love any excuse to wander our local antiques stores in the name of more one-of-a-kind seasonal scores, and it turns out those crowded aisles are rich with Halloween-friendly finds well beyond the creepy doll variety.

APOTHECARY CONTAINERS OR ANTIQUE MEDICINE BOTTLES

Whether you think of Frankenstein or some other mad scientist's lab, then you know why old medicine bottles are on the list. From the discolored labels that (might be) peeling off to the moody amber hues of the glass, they are ideally spooky for Halloween. Whether glass or porcelain, large or small, apothecary containers have long proven themselves worthy of being on your antique furniture shelves. The earliest bottles usually have shiny gold accents and often Latin or scientific names rather than more familiar present-day drug names.

HALLOWEEN DECORATIONS WITH ANTIQUE BOOKS

Scoring Victorian-era books with their gilded edges and silky binding is especially satisfying. And these books- no matter the title, author, or subject matter- work beautifully in Halloween-inspired decor. Add them to mantels, tablescapes, and shelves. Vintage books make for an economical decorative element and can be chosen for their fall-friendly colors.

CLOCKS

Every haunted mansion has a spooky grandfather clock, doesn't it? And I've even seen broken ones filled with fabric ghosts, spider webs, and other Halloween goodies.

HALLOWEEN DECORATION IDEAS WITH ODDITIES AND CURIOSITIES

Now this category of "antiques" is certainly open to interpretation, but it can play a decorating role in October. Oddities can mean any number of things, sometimes natural and sometimes not. For instance, foraged and cleaned animal skulls or turtle shells could be considered oddities.

WROUGHT IRON

Wrought iron pieces are often meant for outdoors use, but there are plenty of iron pieces for indoors, as well. Wrought iron elements are often bent or twisted by hand. This gives their craftsmanship a less perfected/clean look, which gives it a slightly eerier appearance. Wrought iron candlesticks are not uncommon, and can be found at many antique stores.

HEARTH BROOMS

Not to be swept aside as mere cleaning tools, brooms boast a surprisingly artful history, as they were painstakingly handcrafted throughout the early 19th century. Hearth brooms range from 24 to 36 inches and often feature spiraled handles that add a bit of wizardry to your Halloween décor.

OLD PHOTOS AND SILHOUETTES

Antique malls usually have scads of antique photos available for purchase. Whether black and white or sepia in tone, the unsmiling faces of curious strangers are hauntingly intriguing. This form of artwork can seriously affect the spooky mood. When housed in antique or ornate frames and surrounded by candles or other eerie curiosities, they really do work as Halloween decorations. For an extra layer of whimsy, consider adorning your portrait with a witch hat or cheeky black paper mask or adding fangs and a cape to your silhouette. If the silhouette is framed behind the glass, you can easily do this with a black dry-erase marker.

So, enjoy the hunt this season, and you may find some of these treasures already in display in your home, collecting dust in the attic, or waiting for you in the garage.

21st Annual Jefferson Holiday Market Kicks Off the Season

The Jefferson Holiday Market is back—for its 21st year! What started as a humble Saturday bazaar with just a few vendors (and one hardworking hotdog stand) has grown into a cherished community tradition, where hundreds come together to shop, celebrate, and embrace the holiday spirit.

This year's event will be held November 6th through the 8th and promises to be the perfect place to find unique gifts, decor, and delicious treats to jumpstart the Christmas season. With approximately 100 vendors, offering everything from handcrafted goods to direct sales items like Pampered Chef, the Jefferson Holiday Market truly lives up to its reputation as "Your One Stop Holiday Shoppe."

We encourage everyone to shop locally and make Jefferson your first stop for Christmas shopping, supporting small businesses while soaking in the festive atmosphere. Whether it's cold and rainy, sunny and warm, or even during those big high school football games, the market continues to draw a crowd, bringing joy, community, and holiday magic.

SPECIAL HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

Santa! So, bring the kids (or even the adults) for the first chance of the season to sit with Santa and share your Christmas wishes.

Live Music: Enjoy a full schedule of performances to keep the holiday cheer alive as you browse.

Yummy Food: Several food vendors and baked goods throughout the market.

All the fun begins with a Desserts and Cider Reception on Friday evening from 6pm-8pm- $8 a ticket-ticket good for all weekend, and Saturday from 9am until 6pm-$3 ticket-ticket good for Saturday and Sunday, and Sunday from 11am-4pm-$2 a ticket. For more information, please visit Discover Jefferson or Jefferson Market on Facebook or visit Jefersonga.gov or call 706-367-5754.

VINTAGE HOME

If you love vintage, then Vintage Home in Lavonia is the store where vintage, antique, and home décor treasures can be found. This store originally opened in 2021, and quickly became a downtown staple. In August, Missy Vaughn had the opportunity to purchase it from the second owner, and began a true transformation back to the store's original roots. She began purging items, adding brand new vendors, and bringing a new design focused on primitives, real vintage, farmhouse, and antiques. We sat down to speak with Missy about the changes she has already implemented.

Q HTN MAGAZINE: ***What made you decide to start your new business?***

A MISSY: Having my own vintage store has been a dream for many years, I knew it was meant to be when the opportunity arose.

Q HTN MAGAZINE: ***What sets your business apart from other businesses in the area?***

A MISSY: We are a multi-vendor vintage store with lots of small-town charm in historic downtown Lavonia..

Q HTN MAGAZINE: ***What type of merchandise or services are you offering the area?***

A MISSY:
A variety of vintage furniture and décor, home accents, including antiques and primitive items, art, gifts, and seasonal collections.

Q HTN MAGAZINE: ***How much planning, renovation, work was involved in opening?***

A MISSY: An overall reset of the store, including painting. We also built out partitions to create elevated booth spaces for our vendors. We wanted our store to be open, clean, and inviting. We felt like a new direction would be more appealing and less overwhelming for our customers.

Q HTN MAGAZINE: ***Tell us about your family, hobbies, and interests outside of the business.***

A MISSY: I am married to my best friend, Jared Vaughn, and a proud mother of two, Blane and Axle. I enjoy the outdoors, hunting and fishing. I love coffee and books!

Q HTN MAGAZINE: ***Is there anything else you think would be interesting to our readers about your new venture?***

A MISSY: Whether you have been a customer for years, never visited, or wanted a return back to authentic vintage items, we would love for you to visit us. Our vendors have worked really hard cleaning, organizing, and finding the perfect treasure for you. Please follow our new Facebook page Vintage Home. We look forward to seeing you soon.

Fall is Here! Well, Almost in South Anyway!

By Raina Troxell

There's something magical about ushering in the fall season. However, it is easy to get frustrated in the 90-degree weather here in the south. The best way I have found to beat the heat is to surround your home with everything that reminds you of the pumpkin season.

First, I find the perfect fall candle to fill the room with the scent of the season. Swan Creek candles are truly the best. Yes, I sell them at Vintage Owl, but honestly, I would not burn anything else in my home. They are safe for your family and pets. They are hand poured, 100% soy, and made in America. They also burn longer than any other candle for their size. They burn 75 plus hours, and we have put them to the test. They come in so many great fall scents in is hard to name them all, but my favs are Citrus Pumpkin and Ginger-this is a limited fragrance, Honey-Soaked Apples-a staple fragrance, Autumn Woods, and Leather-this one is great all year round.

Next, I bring the vibrant colors of fall inside. Ok, the leaves have not turned yet as of press time, but you can get fall leaf décor just about anywhere. You can also already find real pumpkins, and lots of pine cones in your yard. Bring these natural elements inside and decorate tables, your mantle, and especially your foyer or entrance table.

You can also take your favorite vase and fill it with autumn foliage to add texture and warmth. I usually use faux-dried berries for texture, then surround it with candles, pinecones, faux berries, and small

pumpkins to bring the warmth of fall.

Finish the look with woven baskets under the table, filled with mini pumpkins or fall blankets, adding storage and seasonal charm to your entryway.

The next thing I tackle is the living room; this one is easy. Fall pillows, luscious blankets, quilts, or crochet and knitted heirlooms thrown on the couch is the perfect way to add warmth and coziness to the season.

Adding these special comforting textures with your favorite fall scents create an inviting atmosphere that warms the soul.

From layering rich fabrics and pillows, adding the perfect candle scent, incorporating natural elements, and adding a few pumpkins to your home there is no better way to remind yourself fall weather is right around the corner.

Franklin County

OCTOBER 3, 2026 - CANNON FALL FESTIVAL

OCTOBER 8, 2026 - CHILDRENS SPECIAL NEEDS LATER YEARS,

6 PM–9 PM, at CSP

OCTOBER 16, 2026 - CSP RECHARGE FOR PARENTS,

CSP

OCTOBER 21, 2026 - CSP LATER YEARS DAY TRIP,

TBA

OCTOBER 30, 2026- 5 PM -7 PM FAMILY NIGHT GLOW PARTY,

CSP

OCTOBER 31, 2026 - TREATS ON DEPOT,

Canon

Habersham County

OCTOBER 9, 2026 - CLARKESVILLE CRUISE IN WITH A PURPOSE CAR SHOW

OCTOBER 17, 2026 - CLARKESVILLE DOWNTOWN FALL FESTIVAL,

10am - 5pm

OCTOBER 31, 2026 - HALF DEAD CAR SHOW,

Miles Through Time Automotive Museum, Clarkesville

OCTOBER 31, 2026 - CLARKESVILLE DOWNTOWN TRICK OR TREATING,

5-7 pm

Stephens County

OCTOBER 1–4, 2026, CURRAHEE MILITARY WEEKEND & OKTOBERFEST,

Downtown Toccoa. A four-day celebration honoring Toccoa's rich WWII military history alongside Oktoberfest festivities, food, and family entertainment at participating downtown businesses.

OCTOBER 3, 2026 - VACCINE CLINIC,

Toccoa- Stephens Humane Shelter, 9 AM – 1 PM, 706-282-3275

OCTOBER 21, 2026 - LOW COST SPAY AND NEUTER,

Toccoa-Stephens County Humane Shelter, Check-in 8:30 AM-9 AM, Pick-Up 2:30PM

OCTOBER 24–25, 2026 - TOCCOA HARVEST FESTIVAL,

Saturday, 10 AM – 5 PM | Sunday, 10 AM – 4 PM. Travel throughout downtown Toccoa and enjoy autumn in full bloom with arts and crafts vendors, seasonal food, entertainment, and activities across the downtown area.

OCTOBER 28, 2026- CSP LUNCH MEET-UP,

12 PM, M&J Restaurant, Toccoa

OCTOBER 30, 202 6- HALLOWEEN CHILDREN'S PARADE,

10:00 AM, Tugalo Street Greenspace. A festive Halloween parade for kids and families throughout downtown Toccoa.

Hart County

OCTOBER 3, 2026 - HARTWELL HELPS EXPO,

9 AM – 1 PM, Bell Family YMCA, Hartwell. Connect with local nonprofit and government organizations offering resources, assistance, and volunteer opportunities for Hart County residents. For more information, call Hart Interdenominational Ministry at (706) 377-4446.

OCTOBER 14, 2026 - CSP BREAKFAST MEET-UP,

9 AM At Duncan Hartwell

OCTOBER 24, 2026 - HARTOBERFEST & DEPOT DAY FESTIVALS,

10 AM – 4 PM, Downtown Hartwell. Enjoy a full day of fall fun in downtown Hartwell with Depot Day featuring local vendors, crafts, treats, and unique finds, along with HartOberfest featuring food, live music, and plenty of community celebration. More info at pilotclubhartwell@gmail.com

Jackson County

OCTOBER 17, 2026 - COMMERCE CITY-WIDE YARD SALE,

OCTOBER 19-23, 2026- COMMERCE CITY-WIDE CLEAN-UP

OCTOBER 29, 2026- DOWNTOWN COMMERCE BOO FEST,

Call 706-335-4200 for more information.

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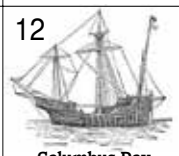
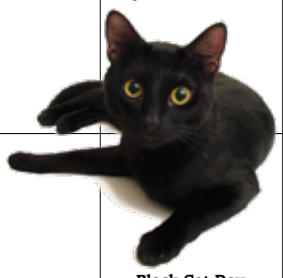
4 National Taco Day	5	6 Mad Hatter Day	7	Harry Potter Book Day	9	10
11 Chocolate Cupcake Day	12 Columbus Day	13 National Chess Day	14	15	16	17
18	19	20 Black Cat Day	21	22	23	NASCAR Day
25 World Pasta Day	26		28	29	30	31 Halloween





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Mid-century Perfection at Mary's Home

By Raina Troxell

If you have been reading this magazine for a while or have just found us after 22 years, I thank you! From the beginning I wanted to celebrate Northeast Georgia and what makes living here special. It began with a thought, and after 20 years it astounds me how many people still love HomeTown and search for the magazine monthly. One thing is for sure I couldn't have brought this magazine alive with my graphic designer and friend, Mary Brewer.

From the very first issue, she understood the assignment. I knew graphic design, but just because you know something doesn't mean you are great at it. I needed someone who was an artist, creative, and could think outside the box. She did just that, and being the last locally owned and operated monthly magazine left standing with the original owner in Georgia, it is proof we created something magical. When we started, Mary lived here in Lavonia. Over 15 years ago, she moved back to Butler, PA and has worked remotely since that time. My husband, Steve and I recently traveled to her family's home, and visited Pittsburgh. They graciously allowed us

to stay at their beautiful Mid-Century Modern house. When I say it was breath taking, it surely characterized the Mid- Century era. It had clean lines, organic elements, and was truly integrated with nature. This architectural style emerged in the mid-20th century, primarily between the 1940s and 1960s, and has maintained a lasting influence on contemporary design ever since.

Key features of Mary and Jason's home was the emphasis on simplicity and minimalism, avoiding ornate details, other than the gorgeous door that was built to be a masterpiece of the construction. There were windows and glass doors that all promoted natural light and a connection to the outdoors. The spaces were designed for flow and functionality, merging indoor and outdoor living. The use of wood, stone, and other organic materials enhanced the warmth and texture of the space. Even the outdoor areas, made you feel like you were in another era of time. The metal bridge that was set over a small stream on their property was rescued from an old amusement park near Pittsburgh.

The kitchen was original, and breathtaking. Jason, Mary's husband, had fixed the original intercom system that was installed with the house to play music from a record player throughout the home, and the sound even carried outside to the mounted speakers. It was magical. What made it even more magical is the fact Mary's aunt and uncle built this house, and even a lot of the furnishings and décor were Mid-Century Modern, high sought-after treasures original to the home.

This home was perfectly designed and will stand the ages of time. My love of Mid-Century Modern flows to my son Johnnie. He was very jealous of our trip, and we plan to return soon to Pennsylvania and visit my sweet friend and co-worker Mary and her family again. I just plan to return before a big snow!

Diverticular Disease - What you need to Know!

What is diverticular disease? Diverticular disease is a group of conditions in which tiny pouches form in the colon. The pouches are called diverticula. These pouches bulge out through weak spots in your colon. The pouches can become inflamed (red, swollen) or infected. When the pouches are infected, the condition is called diverticulitis.

Over half of people in the United States over age 60 will have diverticulosis. Some people with diverticulosis also get diverticulitis.

WHAT CAUSES DIVERTICULAR DISEASE?

Experts are not sure what causes diverticular disease. Research suggests that some possible causes may be related to genetic factors, a low-fiber diet, a diet high in red meat, lack of physical activity, obesity, some medicines, immune problems, or connective tissue problems in the colon.

Fiber helps make your stools soft and easy to pass. Eating more fiber helps stop constipation.

Constipation is the main cause of greater pressure in your colon. When you are constipated, your muscles strain to move stool that is too hard. The extra pressure from this straining makes the weak spots in your colon bulge out. These pouches that bulge out are the diverticula.

Experts do not know what causes the infection that leads to diverticulitis. They think the infection may start when stool or bacteria are caught in the diverticula.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF DIVERTICULAR DISEASE?

Each person's symptoms may vary. Symptoms may include:

Diverticulosis. Most people with diverticulosis don't have any pain or symptoms. If symptoms are present, they may include mild cramps, bloating, or constipation. These symptoms are common and don't always mean that you have diverticulosis.

Diverticulitis. The most common symptom of diverticulitis is belly or abdominal pain. The most common sign that you have it is feeling sore or sensitive on the left side of your lower belly. If infection is the cause, you may have fever, nausea, vomiting, chills, cramping, and constipation.

Diverticular colitis. This is when the colon gets inflamed (colitis) as a result of the diverticular disease. This is less common than diverticulitis.

Diverticular bleeding. The most common symptom of diverticular bleeding is painless bleeding from the rectum. You likely will see bright red or maroon-colored blood in your stool.

HOW IS DIVERTICULAR DISEASE DIAGNOSED?

Your healthcare provider will look at your past health and do a physical exam. They may also use some of the following tests such as a CT scan, Barium enema, Virtual colonoscopy, Flexible Sigmoidoscopy or Colonoscopy.

Treatment will depend on your symptoms, age, and general health. It will also depend on how severe the condition, but experts suggest eating 20 to 35 grams of fiber each day such as: Whole-grain breads, cereals, berries, apples, peaches, broccoli, cabbage, spinach, carrots, asparagus, squash, and beans.

WHAT IS THE TREATMENT?

Treatment for diverticulitis may also include pain medicines, antibiotics, medicines to control muscle spasms or a clear liquid diet for a short time to rest the colon, then slowly adding solid foods as your symptoms improve. You may need to stay in the hospital if you develop severe pain or infection. In some cases, surgery may be needed to remove part of the colon.

If you have diverticulosis, follow your healthcare provider's advice. Some people with diverticulosis will get diverticulitis. A few will have diverticular bleeding.

If your symptoms get worse or come back after treatment, call your healthcare provider or seek medical care right away. You should also call if you notice any bleeding.

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Fatty Liver Disease

If your last checkup revealed elevated liver enzymes or fat deposits on your liver, don't panic. Fatty liver disease is common, often reversible and very much within your power to manage, especially if you catch it early. Best part? Since the condition can slow your metabolism, clearing excess fat from the hardworking organ can make weight loss easier. Here's everything you need to know about how to reverse fatty liver disease after 50 at home, from kitchen-staple remedies to sound sleep to stress relief.

WHAT IS FATTY LIVER DISEASE?

Nonalcoholic fatty liver disease, now often called metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD), happens when too much fat builds up inside liver cells and over time, that buildup can lead to inflammation and scarring, known as metabolic dysfunction-associated steatohepatitis (MASH). The condition affects roughly one in four adults worldwide, and less than five percent of people even know they have it unless screened.

WHY WOMEN OVER 50 ARE MORE AT RISK

Age and hormones play a big role. When women hit midlife, hormone shifts often lead to belly fat accumulation. This visceral fat leads to fat deposits in the liver. Fatty liver is most common in adults between 40 and 60 who also have prediabetes or type 2 diabetes, high cholesterol or triglycerides, high blood pressure or excess weight. And the real dietary culprit isn't fat, it's processed sugar. The tricky part? Fatty liver disease often has no symptoms. Doctors typically diagnose it through blood tests (ALT, AST), a liver ultrasound or FibroScan.

HOW TO REVERSE FATTY LIVER DISEASE NATURALLY

The good news: Lifestyle changes work, often improving fatty liver disease within weeks by eating healthier. The Mediterranean diet has the strongest evidence for improving liver health. By increasing your diet with fish, chicken, eggs, nuts, olive oil, avocado, legumes and whole grains, one study found that 45 percent of fatty liver disease participants who followed a Mediterranean diet for a year saw dramatic improvement, and 20 percent achieved complete remission.

There are several spices that show real promise for reducing liver fat such as saffron, turmeric, ginger and garlic. Also, certain juices and drinks can help reverse fatty liver disease such as beet juice, mixed berry smoothies, lemon water and turmeric lattes to support detoxification and lower inflammation. Also, adding green celery juice can also stimulate liver enzyme production. More fruits can help too like avocado, grapefruit, blueberries and apples as top picks to fending off liver damage. Half an avocado a day can help lower cholesterol, and grapefruit compounds may improve fat metabolism. Skip dried fruits with added sugars and sugary fruit juices if you're looking to reverse fatty liver disease.

And of course, moderate exercise, getting enough sleep and reducing stress helps with just about all health issues.

Top Foods that Improve Your Cholesterol Numbers

Diet can play an important role in lowering your cholesterol. Cholesterol is important for your body. But too much low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol, also called "bad" cholesterol, can raise your risk of heart disease and stroke. Some people need medicine to manage cholesterol. But food choices and other heart-healthy habits such as exercise can help a lot. A heart-healthy diet is not about one "superfood." It is about building simple habits over time.

EAT MORE FIBER

Fiber helps remove cholesterol from your body before it gets into your blood. Foods such as oats, beans, lentils, apples, pears and vegetables can help. Even adding a little more fiber to your diet each day can lower your cholesterol.

CHOOSE HEALTHY FATS

The type of fat you eat also matters. Some fats are better for your heart than others. Healthy fats, such as those in olive oil, avocados, nuts and seeds, can help lower LDL cholesterol. At the same time, it helps if you cut back on unhealthy fats found in fatty meats, butter and full-fat dairy products.

ADD OMEGA-3 FOODS

You also can support your heart by eating foods with omega-3 fats. These do not lower LDL cholesterol, but they help your heart in other ways. They can lower another type of fat in your blood, called triglycerides, and increase high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol, the "good" cholesterol. Fatty fish such as salmon, tuna, herring and mackerel are good choices for omega-3 fats. Plant foods such as flaxseed and walnuts also are high in omega-3 fats.

PICK WHOLE GRAINS

Another simple step is to choose whole grains instead of refined grains. Whole grains such as oatmeal, brown rice, whole wheat bread, barley and quinoa have more fiber and nutrients that support heart health. They can help lower cholesterol and keep you feeling full longer.

FILL YOUR PLATE WITH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Fruits and vegetables should be a big part of your meals. They are low in fat and high in fiber, vitamins and other nutrients. Eating a mix of colorful fruits and vegetables such as leafy greens, berries, citrus fruits and broccoli can help protect your heart.

TRY PLANT PROTEINS

Replace animal-based proteins at some meals. Foods such as beans, lentils, chickpeas and soy give you protein without the unhealthy fats found in many animal-based foods.

LIMIT FOODS THAT RAISE CHOLESTEROL

At the same time, it is important to limit foods that raise cholesterol. These include red meats and processed meats, fried foods, baked goods, and full-fat dairy. Small changes can help, such as choosing lean meats, cooking with healthy oils and cutting back on processed foods.

BUILD HEALTHY EATING HABITS

Each healthy food or supplement may lower cholesterol only a little on its own. But using more than one together over time may have a much greater effect.

In the end, your overall eating pattern matters most. Diets such as the Mediterranean style or portfolio diet can help reduce and manage cholesterol. The Mediterranean diet focuses on whole foods, healthy fats and fiber. The portfolio diet focuses on eating a wide variety of plant-based foods. These patterns are known to help lower cholesterol and support heart health.

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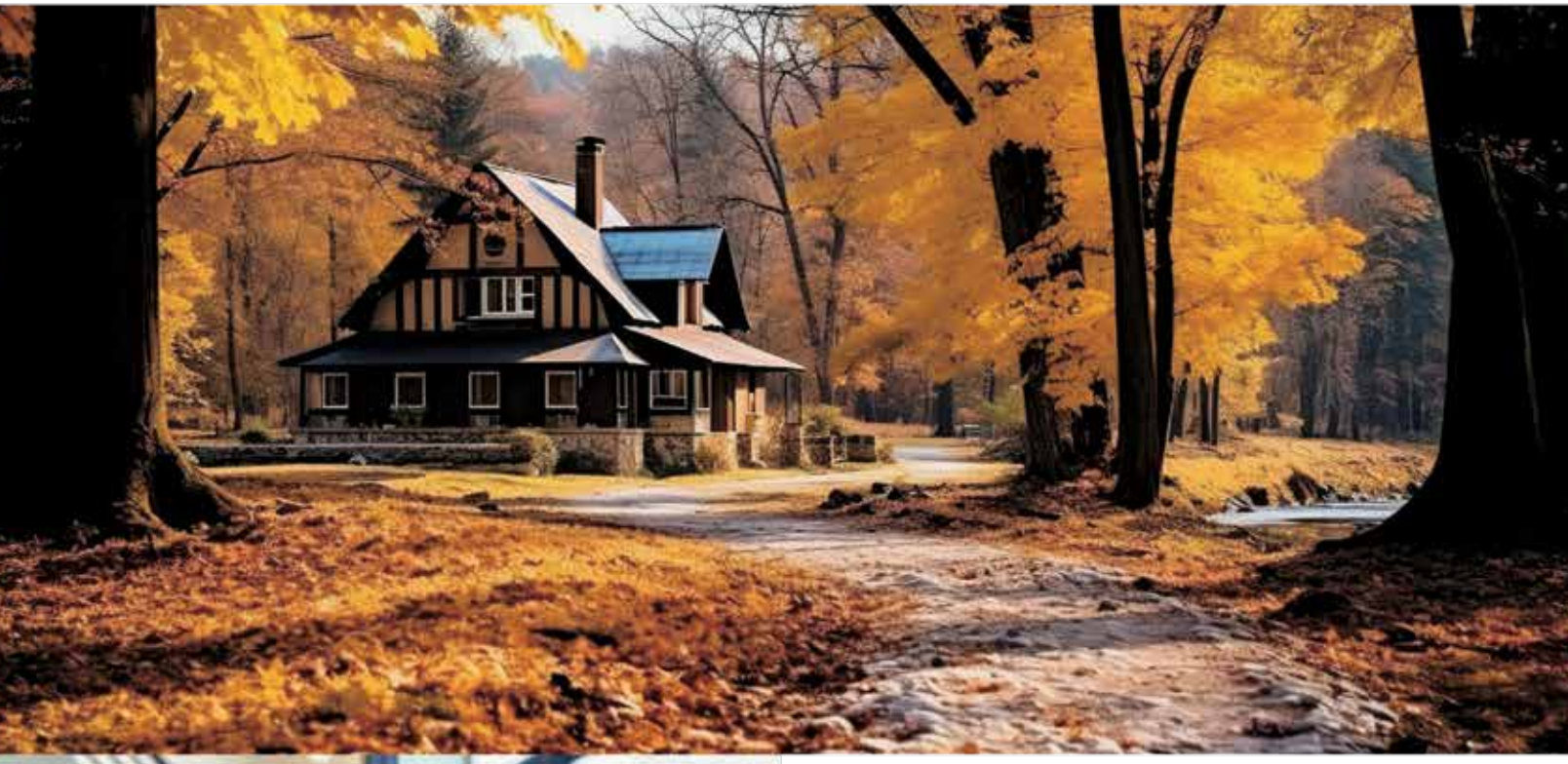

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