



Today
Partly Cloudy
H 37 L 24

Thurs
Cloudy
H 34 L 24

Fri
Snow
H 30 L 19

Sat
Cloudy
H 24 L 10

Sun
Mostly Cloudy
H 21 L 9

Wednesday, December 9, 2020

WE'RE ONLINE www.tricocanary.com

Vol. 46 Number 24

In this issue ... Strategic Farming 2021: Let's talk crops!



“Jack Frost nipping at your nose!” What a frosty, magical site covering the countryside last Sunday morning!

Photos by Grygla Eagle Newspaper



Grygla Lion’s will still hold Christmas Eve dinner

Though restrictions are in place not allowing the Grygla Lion’s Club to safely prepare, serve and distribute the annual Christmas Eve meal that’s normally held at the Grygla Community Center, plans have been altered to still allow the tradition to continue.

Instead of a sit-down meal this year, the Grain Bin Café is stepping in to help prepare the traditional turkey and dressing feast, available by delivery or curbside pick-up.

The Lion’s dinner will be a noon meal on Christmas Eve with the Grain Bin Café preparing the meal. It’s available free of charge to anyone in the community that wants or

needs a meal. There will be no sit-down dining; but meals can be picked up at the cafe. Also, Lions will deliver meals to anyone who wants that option. Deliveries will start around 11:30am. Meal pickups will start at 12pm at the Grain Bin that Thursday, December 24th.

To help plan, anyone wishing to get a Christmas Eve meal should contact the Grain Bin Café at 294-6306 by Friday, December 18th. Please indicate how many meals are needed and whether they will pick up or would prefer delivery.

Even in difficult times, the Lion’s motto continues – “WE SERVE.”



American State Bank holiday giveaway



The holiday season is a great time to express appreciation to friends and customers. American State Bank of Grygla invites you in during the month of December to sign up for the Christmas drawings. They will be giving away wagons full of toys to one girl and one boy, along with a \$150 cash card to one adult. The drawing will be held at 3pm on Tuesday, December 22nd. During the month of December, all fees for any gift card purchase will be waived. You’re also reminded to stop in and pick up your 2021 calendar! Merry Christmas from your friends at American State Bank of Grygla. Member FDIC. Photo courtesy of American State Bank

Chargers football news

Congratulations to the following Charger football players who were named to the 2020 All-District 9 West, North Sub-District team: Levi Kiesow, Andrew Loken, Gabe Arveson and Riley Manderud. (Honorable

Mention: Jared Haack and Jordan Coan.)

Congratulations to the GG Chargers football team on being named the Tri-Sub District Champions with Win-E-Mac and Stephen-Argyle.

Grygla Food Shelf news

Submitted by Cheryl Sistad

Did you know?

Of all the states in the U.S. with the highest projected increase in food insecurity, Minnesota ranks in the top five.

A recent report from Feeding America estimates that Minnesota could see as much as a 60% increase in food insecurity.

Right now, in northwest and north central Minnesota, more than 32,700 of our neighbors, family and friends are at risk of hunger including out-of-work parents, seniors, and more than 13,010 children.

Demand for food is likely to remain high in the weeks and months ahead.

(The above information was provided by the North Country Food Bank.)

It is still the goal of the Grygla-Gatzke Food Shelf that people in our surrounding community should always have access to the food they need.

Now that a lot of you have been staying at home because of Covid-19, temporary lay-offs or you are home with your children, you may be having a hard time stretching your income to meet all your needs. We are here to make sure that anyone who needs food will receive it and at this time all we require is your name, address, and age category of household members (0-17, 18-64 and 65+). No questions or forms to fill out. You are not signing up for a long commitment – if you only need to come for a month or two,

that’s fine.

New guidelines have been implemented for the winter months. We will allow one person at a time to enter the food shelf and be seated. They will be asked to answer basic covid questions (same as going to a clinic), have a temperature check and be wearing a mask (as do food shelf volunteers). Volunteers will still be pulling the items from the shelves for you. We will be sanitizing the area between clients.

If you do not feel comfortable coming into the food shelf, you may still come to the door to pick up your shopping list, fill it out in your vehicle, and return it to the door for us to put together your food items.

Meanwhile, we are asking our clients:

- Do NOT come to the food shelf location if you have a cold or are not feeling well. Send another person in your place to pick up your food.
- Please understand if you are asked to wait your turn. We try our best to accommodate our clients in the order they arrive.
- We are no longer allowed to help you load your vehicles, so please keep this in mind.

Here’s hoping everyone has a good holiday season and are not having to struggle with their food needs. Our next Food Shelf day is December 19th. (Just in time for Christmas!)

Any questions, call Cheryl Sistad at 218-684-4707 or Joni Anderson at 218-689-7418.



Congratulations to Grygla Kindergartener, Jaelynn Shaugabay, daughter of Bruce Shaugabay and Joette Alten, for her winning entry in the Kindergarten division for the Twin Cities in Motion Thanksgiving Coloring Contest. Twin Cities in Motion organizes races and events for people of all abilities, ages, and backgrounds.

Photo courtesy of Grygla School

Goodridge School releases 1st Quarter Honor Rolls

“A” Honor Roll

Grade 12: Kansas Jensen, Madison Paulson. Grade 11: Nick Groven, Kjerstin Nelson, Hannah Wilebski. Grade 10: Kylie Delage, Chantel Grindeland, Jennah Henrickson, Caitlyn Jacobson, Jorja Salo. Grade 9: Tiana Banasau, Lily Beavis, Emilea Johnson, Carter Lee Johnsrud. Grade 8: Ava Halvorson, Ashlyn Nelson, Madelynn Nelson, Chesney Salo, Madelyn Thompson. Grade 7: None.

“B” Honor Roll

Grade 12: Vivian Coan, Ian Haugen, Riley Manderud, Trinity Walseth. Grade 11: Jolson Sargent, Skya Wilson.

Grade 10: Sadie Anderson, Paige Burns, Brianna Carpenter, Payton Homme, Jordon Johnson, Sydney Langseth, Noelle Merrill, Anna Mickolio, Wyatt Seyller, Alliya Smith. Grade 9: Spencer Coan, Donny Johnsrud, Hunter Kiesow, Presley Kramer, Hannah Lovly, Chase Manderud, Caden Marquis, Kehan Nelson, Carson Rubischko, Paige Sturre. Grade 8: Isabelle Brown, Kylie Carpenter, Morgan Coan, Brooklyn Kriel, Brennan Parnow, Jamisen Wilson. Grade 7: Taylyn Banasau, Conor Sale, Sawyer Jacobson, Jennings Johnsrud, Nevaeh Kotrba.

CHURCH CALENDARS

GRYGLA LUTHERAN PARISH
Grace and Our Savior's, Grygla
Pastor Ken Bowman
In-person Worship services are suspended at Grace Lutheran and Our Saviors in Grygla until further notice.
Recorded services will still be available on-demand on the church website and will play on Garden Valley channel 36 on Wednesdays 7pm and Sundays 9am & 7pm.
gracelutherangrygla.weebly.com

GOODRIDGE AREA LUTHERAN PARISH, ELCA
Bethany, Ekelund, Faith
Pastor Kristin Dahlen Ostercamp
In-person Worship and activities are suspended through the end of 2020. Sunday services will be posted online on the Parish YouTube channel. They are rebroadcast on the GVT Channel 36 on Wednesdays at 9am and 6:30pm.

THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES OF St. Clement's - Grygla; St. Ann's - Goodridge
Fr. Adam Hammess
Sunday:
St. Clement's: 10:15am Worship in church
St. Ann's: 12pm Worship in church

BETHESDA LUTHERAN CHURCH
Skime
Pastor Steve Bliss
Sunday:
No In-person Worship at this time. 11am Facebook Live Broadcast every Sunday.

LIBERTY CHAPEL Grygla
Congregation-Led
Calendar/information not available at this time.
UNITED LUTHERAN PARISH Gatzke
8:30am Worship with 9:45am SS.

CLEARWATER LUTHERAN PARISH
St. Petri - Grygla; Mt. Olive, Nazareth - Trail; Oak Park - Oklee
Pastor Jeff Merseeth
Wednesday, December 9
5-7pm Wednesday School
Saturdays
9am Worship at Mt. Olive
Sundays
St. Petri: 8am Worship, 9:15am SS
OP: 8:30am SS, 9:45am Worship
Nazareth: 10am SS, 11am Worship

Send all church calendars & changes to: grygla.eagle@gmail.com

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Merry Christmas!



In spite of everything, we Americans are still uniquely blessed, not only with the rich bounty of our land but by a bounty of the spirit - a kind of year-round Christmas spirit that still makes our country a beacon of hope in a troubled world and that makes this Christmas and every Christmas even more special for all of us who number among our gifts the birth of being an American."

- President Ronald Reagan

We wish all of you a Merry Christmas!

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NOTICE
Benville Township will have two open positions on the March Annual Election Ballot.
Supervisor
Treasurer
If interested in applying, please file Affidavits of Candidacy to Benville Township Clerk.
Dates to file: December 29 to January 12.
G38C

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S	T	A	Y			S	O	D		P	A	L	E	S

Results from last week's StatePoint Crossword Puzzle.

GRYGLA LIBRARY LINK

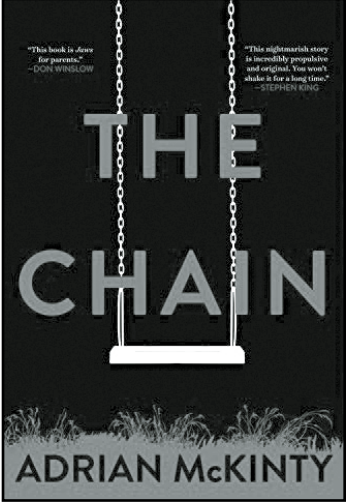
Written by Kari Sundberg, Grygla Librarian
We're diving right into this week's book suggestion. It's a thriller by Adrian McKinty called The Chain; it's one you won't be able to forget anytime soon. I have it on my coffee table to read this week, so I haven't started it yet, but my aunt told me it's a must-read that won't let up until the last page. It begins with a child being kidnapped - a very realistic fear in the mind of every parent. When I first read the summary, I'll admit it scared me a bit and didn't seem like a book I'd want to read, but I do love a gripping rollercoaster of a ride, so I'm heading in with an open mind. I'll probably want to add GPS trackers to my kids' shoes afterwards, though...

Summary:
It's something parents do every morning: Rachel Klein drops her daughter at the bus stop and heads into her day. But a cell phone call from an unknown number changes everything: it's a woman on the line, informing her that she has Kylie bound and gagged in her back seat, and the only way Rachel will see her again is to follow her instructions exactly: pay a ransom, and find another child to abduct. This is no ordinary kidnapping: the caller is a mother herself, whose son has been taken, and if Rachel

doesn't do as she's told, the boy will die.

"You are not the first. And you will certainly not be the last." Rachel is now part of The Chain, an unending and ingenious scheme that turns victims into criminals -- and is making someone else very rich in the process. The rules are simple, the moral challenges impossible; find the money fast, find your victim, and then commit a horrible act you'd have thought yourself incapable of just twenty-four hours ago.

But what the masterminds behind The Chain know is that parents will do anything for their children. It turns out that kidnapping is only the beginning.



Deadline for Coronavirus Food Assistance Program

Local FSA County Offices remind producers that the deadline to apply for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 (CFAP 2.0) is December 11, 2020. This program provides direct financial relief to producers due to market disruptions and associated costs because of COVID-19.

Most of the crops and livestock raised in Minnesota, including many of them raised in this area, are eligible commodities for this program. If you haven't already applied or contacted your FSA County Office to learn more about the

program, now is the time to do so. FSA staff will help you through the application process.

Row crops, livestock, dairy, specialty crops, aquaculture and more all are eligible for the

Food Program... Continued on page 3

kids' corner
COLORS
A calculator, a laptop, a pair of scissors, and a piece of paper are shown next to the text 'kids' corner' and 'COLORS'.

FOOD FACT
MANY FOODS SERVED DURING CHANUKAH ARE COOKED IN THIS INGREDIENT TO REPRESENT THE CHANUKAH MIRACLE.
ANSWER: OIL

How they say that in...
ENGLISH: Miracle
SPANISH: Milagro
ITALIAN: Miracolo
FRENCH: Miracle
GERMAN: Wunder

Northern Lights fishing report

Written by Ben Kucera
On this week's report, Mother Nature can't decide what to do. Ice fishing is here, mainly walk out, but some are letting wheelers out.
Red Lake is reporting most of the ice is 5"-7" with some spots less where it had opened up. It's been an absolute zoo on Red that they denied access to the fishermen, regardless if they were walking or not. Some of the resorts were worried about the ice holding up.
The fishing has been all over the place. The best has been in that 10' of water. With lots of people, and hit & miss fishing, I will be passing on Red for now and look to get out elsewhere.
Lake of the Woods is reporting 5"-7" on four-mile bay and 5" out to 20' of water and a big crack with sketchy ice, as well. On the west side 5"-7" out to about 17' and sketchy ice after that, also. Hopefully everything will get better this coming week and I can chase some walleye, but unless reports change, I will have to wait. We'll see what this week brings and see if I can get out or not.
On a side note sharp tail grouse season closed November 30 and I was able to get

out one last time. I was a little late and all the sharpies were heading out, but was able to get one. Muzzleloader has been really slow and seems that the deer are not moving at all until dark.
I've been busy in the tackle room building rods and tackle almost every day to try and stay on top of everything. If you have decided that you want something new check my page on Facebook out. I have been coming up with some cool designs and creating sensitive ice rods of various lengths. If you aren't sure what you want, let's talk and build a rod to best fit your needs.
As always, good luck hunting and fishing. Let's continue to be safe and hope for good hard water soon.

Ben Kucera is the owner and creator of Northern Lights Tackle & Custom Rods. He is also a Marshall County Sheriff's Deputy residing in Grygla with his wife and children. Ben is an avid fisherman who will be writing and submitting a fishing report weekly. You can follow his Facebook page at Northern Lights Tackle and/or contact him at 218-684-0588.



Make sure to check out the Northern Lights Tackle Facebook page for all your fishing needs, including any custom-made lures and rods. Photos courtesy of Ben Kucera

Creative Coloring
Celebrate Chanukah.
Color in this picture to create your own masterpiece.

THIS DAY IN... HISTORY
• 1817: MISSISSIPPI BECOMES THE 20TH U.S. STATE.
• 1901: THE FIRST NOBEL PRIZES ARE AWARDED IN STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN IN THE FIELDS OF PHYSICS, MEDICINE, CHEMISTRY, LITERATURE, AND PEACE.
• 2004: A UNITED STATES PASSENGER JET LANDS IN VIETNAM. IT IS THE FIRST TO DO SO SINCE THE VIETNAM WAR ENDED.

New word
COMMEMORATE
to recall and show respect for something

Did you know?
THE SHAMASH IS THE ATTENDANT CANDLE THAT IS USED TO LIGHT THE OTHER CANDLES ON THE MENORAH. TRADITIONALLY IT SITS HIGHER OR LOWER THAN THE REST.

GET THE PICTURE?

Can you guess what the bigger picture is?
ANSWER: POTATO LATKES

Only in Minnesota: a weekly feature in the Eagle

Minnesota's Downton Abbey – a 36,000 square foot mansion built for railroad titan James J. Hill

The Land of 10,000 Lakes may not be home to any real castles or fortresses. But we have plenty of the next best thing: century-old mansions that offer just as much beauty – if not quite as much history – as any medieval castle in Europe. There are plenty of these old mansions scattered all across Minnesota. But one of our favorites – and one of the most beautiful – is the historic James J. Hill House in St. Paul.

The James J. Hill House is a St. Paul landmark that every Minnesotan should visit at least once. It's found at 240 Summit Ave., St Paul, MN 55102.

The 36,000-square-foot mansion was built by the railroad tycoon James J. Hill in 1891.

With 13 bathrooms, 22 fireplaces, 16 chandeliers, a reception hall nearly 100 feet long, sophisticated technical systems, and a two-story, skylit art gallery, it was once the largest private residence in the state. The home served as the center for the public and private lives of the Hill family for 30 years. It was named a National Historic Landmark in 1961.

Even while Hill was still alive, the house was considered the showplace of St. Paul. Now kept by the Minnesota Historical Society, the house is a popular spot to visit today. As soon as you walk up, you'll be blown away by the incredible architecture of the place.

Rugged stone, massive scale, fine detail, and ingenious mechanical systems recall the powerful presence of James J. Hill.

Historic details and impressive architecture are everywhere you look. The carved wood, century-old furnishings, wide staircases, and tall columns make the James J. Hill house downright regal.

In warmer months, the grounds feature lovely flowers that provide a great backdrop to a summer day. During the month of December, the house is decorated for the holidays. It brings even more wonder to this already magical home.

The Minnesota Historical Society offers guided tours throughout the year. Guests can learn about the house's history in depth, from its chandeliers to its stained glass windows.

Self-guided tours are also available on Sundays throughout the year. You'll be able to explore three floors at your own pace, taking in the history and beauty of this Minnesota mansion, learning all about the family life AND servant life in the Gilded Age mansion.

Next time you're looking for something to do in St. Paul, consider stopping at the James J. Hill House. It offers a glimpse of Minnesota history in a beautiful setting that you just don't see every day.

You can learn more about the life of famed railroad magnate James J. Hill, his family, and his legendary Summit Avenue Mansion by visiting www.mnhs.org/hillhouse/learn or by visiting the James J. Hill Facebook page.

Note: For the continued safety of staff and visitors, and in accordance with Governor Walz's executive order, MNHS sites and museums are temporarily closed. This includes the James J. Hill House.



DO IT YOURSELF

Let's share some DIY ideas for those man caves OR for that hard-to-shop-for man in your life with Christmas coming up. These creative DIY ideas can all be completed in a day with specific instructions found anywhere online if needed.



Sports jersey pillows are a fun way to display some team spirit!



This tire coffee table is pretty sweet, and has plenty of storage inside for remotes, magazines, and other items that tend to clutter up surfaces. There's many different pattern/building instructions online if you just search "tire coffee table."



It's not officially a man cave until it has a dart board. This one is made from pallets...cheap and fun! And if you have some pallet boards left over, try your hand at this DIY basketball hoop with pallet backboard.



Turn an empty bottle into a "manly" soap dispenser for the bathroom.



If hunting is more your hobby, this is a great idea for a coat/hat hanger.

Word of the Week

...enhancing vocabularies

one Grygla Eagle at a time.

Antediluvian

Adjective

Very old, old-fashioned, or out of date; antiquated.

\\An-tee-di-loo-yee-uhn\\

SIMPLY DELICIOUS



By Kari Sundberg, Eagle Editor

Twix Cookies

Let's get into a little holiday baking this week. Yeah, I wouldn't be at all mad if these were sitting on my cookie tray this Christmas. Just sayin'. They look simply delicious, don't they? So soft and gooey. These are definitely getting added to my list this week. Twix Cookies are a soft sugar cookie crust, with a creamy caramel on top then topped with milk chocolate. I dare ya to have just one.

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 egg white
- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 20 caramels unwrapped
- 1 tbsp milk
- 2 cups milk chocolate chips

Instructions

Preheat oven to 350°. Cream together the butter and sugar. Add in the egg and vanilla. Mix until well combined. Add the flour and baking powder. Mix thoroughly.

Roll the dough out until 1/4 to 1/2 inch thick. Use a round cookie cutter to cut out circles. Transfer to an ungreased pan.

Bake at 350° for 6-8 minutes. Pull out of the oven when the cookies are puffy and no longer glossy. Transfer to a wire rack and allow to cool completely.

While the cookies are cooling, microwave the caramels and milk for 1 minute. Stir at the 30 second mark. Stir until smooth and creamy. Carefully spoon a few teaspoons of caramel onto each cookie, spreading until it almost covers the cookie. Place the cookies and caramel into the fridge for 10-15 minutes or until completely cold.

Melt the chocolate chips for 30 second intervals until completely melted and incorporated. Spread a small amount of chocolate onto each cookie. Let the chocolate layer cool and set up before serving.

EXTENSION NEWS

Strategic Farming 2021: Let's Talk Crops!

Liz Stahl, Extension Educator - Crops, U of MN Extension

Pull up a chair and join in or bring the conversation with you as you go about your day. Whatever works best for you, we hope you will join us this winter to discuss some of the key issues and questions around crop production facing Minnesota corn and soybean farmers today. Sessions will be held over Zoom, which can be accessed via your computer, phone or other mobile device, and run from 8:30 to 9:00 am on Wednesdays, January 6 through March 24.

These online sessions will be very informal and open to all interested. Each session will start with a brief presentation (about 10 minutes) by the discussion leaders for the day, followed by 20 minutes of discussion, framed around farmer/participant questions on the topic.

Speakers will include researchers and educators from the University of MN and North Central region, as well as area agency personnel. Topics and speakers include:

- January 6: Corn hybrid selection. Jeff Coulter, Extension Corn Agronomist, Dean Malvick, Extension Plant Pathologist and Tom Hoverstad, Researcher
- January 13: Soybean variety selection. Seth Naeve, Extension Soybean Agronomist and Dean Malvick, Extension Plant Pathologist
- January 20: Herbicide Technology traits: What to use where, when, and how? Debalin Sarangi, Extension Weed Specialist and Tom Peters, Extension Sugarbeet Agronomist
- January 27: Broadcasting versus Banding P & K. Jeff Vetsch, Researcher and Dan Kaiser, Extension Nutrient Management Specialist
- February 3: Third crops ready to work for you. Jochum Wiersma, Extension Small Grains Specialist and Craig Sheaffer, Forage Specialist
- February 10: We've got you covered: The latest on cover crop research and tools you can use. Axel Garcia y Garcia,

Sustainable Cropping Systems, Anna Cates, Extension State Soil Health Specialist and Gregg Johnson, Biomass Cropping Systems

- February 17: Adjusting Soil pH to Maximize Crop Production. Dan Kaiser, Extension Nutrient Management Specialist and Jeff Vetsch, Researcher
- February 24: The Nuts'n Bolts of On-Farm Research - Doin' it right. R.L. (Bob) Nielsen, Extension Corn Specialist, Purdue University and Seth Naeve, Extension Soybean Specialist
- March 3: Making every acre pay. Naeem Kalwar, Extension Soil Health Specialist, North Dakota State University, Tanner Bruse, MN Ag & Conservation Programs Manager, Pheasants Forever and Alan Lepp, NRCS

March 10: What insects are bugging your corn this year? Ken Ostlie, Extension Entomologist and Bruce Potter, Extension Integrated Pest Management Specialist

March 17: SCN: So tough a threat, it warrants a coalition. Greg Tylka, Nematologist, Iowa State University, Seth Naeve, Extension Soybean Agronomist and Samuel Markell, Extension Broadleaf Plant Pathologist, North Dakota State University

March 24: Stand Establishment for corn and soybean. Seth Naeve, Extension Soybean Agronomist, Jeff Coulter, Extension Corn Agronomist and Dean Malvick, Extension Plant Pathologist

For more details on each session and to register, go to: <https://z.umn.edu/strategic-farming>. You need only register once for the whole program series. At registration, please take a moment to let us know what questions you would like highlighted during the discussions. There is no charge to participate, and sessions will be recorded and posted for viewing later at your convenience.

If you are not familiar with Zoom, details will be included at registration on how to access the sessions on your computer (all you need is the link) or mobile device.

Food Program...

Continued from page 2

CFAP 2.0. Producers are encouraged to visit farmers.gov/cfap and click on the "Eligible Commodities Finder" to review eligible commodities and learn about the payment structure for each. CFAP 2.0 is a separate program from the first iteration of the program (CFAP 1) and interested producers must complete a new application to be eligible for payment for CFAP 2.0.

Producers are encouraged to call their local FSA County Office for guidance on the process to complete an application. Producers also have the option to visit farmers.gov/cfap and access the online application portal or learn about other application options. A call center is also available for producers who would like additional one-on-one support with the CFAP 2.0 application process. Please call 877-508-8364 to speak directly with a USDA employee

ready to offer assistance. Producers with questions about CFAP 2.0 should contact the, Marshall County at 745-4251 ext. 2 or Pennington County FSA Office at 681-1612 ext. 2

All USDA Service Centers are open for business, including those that restrict in-person visits or require appointments. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service or any other Service Center agency should call ahead and schedule an appointment. Service Centers that are open for appointments will pre-screen visitors based on health concerns or recent travel, and visitors must adhere to social distancing guidelines. Visitors are also required to wear a face covering during their appointment. Our program delivery staff will continue to work with our producers by phone, email and using online tools. More information can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.

Sending you a Merry New York Christmas



And a prayer for peace on Earth within our time



The tree in Rockefeller Center! Right below it, there's a big skating rink with Christmas music filling the air!



This view of the tree in Rockefeller Plaza was stunning. Just like the Merry New York Christmas song says, "The sidewalk angels echo hallelujah."



The view when you step inside Grand Central Station. Just levels upon levels of subway systems, restaurants and people. SO MUCH HISTORY in this building.



Left: the stairs I talked about in the story. And this picture doesn't even make them look that bad as half are hidden. Right: We literally ate pizza the entire trip. Never once did we even go to a restaurant. We lived on grab-n-go pizza, coffee & one Coney Island dog the entire trip. Ha!



Written by Kari Sundberg, Eagle Editor

'Tis the season! For no news. For being stuck at home due to Covid, quarantine or both. For Christmas music filling the house. For the desire to travel again. And a prayer for peace on Earth.

For all the reasons listed above, I'm filling this back page with a big "MERRY NEW YORK CHRISTMAS!"

I was telling my friend Tera that it's hard enough right now to come up with weekly news when most things are shut down, but especially after being stuck at home for almost two weeks now. She suggested I interview my Christmas tree.

(I'm going to give you a minute to do the same thing I did. I can only assume you're whispering "what the h....." right now.)

She thought it could be a cute idea that I could turn into a creative writing piece; she's not wrong. It's just that I'm not QUITE ready to interview my Christmas tree just yet, but give me a few more days of quarantine and we'll see what happens.

Instead, I want to share with you some pictures and a few fond memories of my favorite vacation I've ever taken. I've been lucky enough to travel to quite a few different places throughout my life. I've only left the country a couple of times, but have visited some incredible places around the United States. Nothing compares to New York City, though. Especially NYC at Christmas time.

Confession: I'm in a New York State of Mind 90% of the time. Before actually visiting the city, but especially after. It truly is one of the most magical places in the US. Give me Central Park over Disney World any day.

I grew up hearing a lot about Manhattan and the city because my step-mom Jayne used to live there. I always loved to hear her stories and see her pictures and just knew I'd explore the streets some day.

It was two Christmas' ago, when my sister-in-law Amber and I decided to go all in. It wasn't your typical vacation, though, and I wouldn't have it ANY other way. We didn't stay in a hotel, we never ate at one single restaurant and we walked that entire city from block to block. We felt like true New Yorkers in every way, shape and form.

Amber and I decided to go to New York City in December; while it was all decorated for Christmas. We opted out of a hotel and decided to stay in an AirBnB because it's way cheaper. It's also just a super cool experience. After weeks of searching for the most safe and perfect place, we found a woman our age, named Isha, who worked for United Nations. She was renting out a room on the New Jersey side of the Hudson River for only \$70 a night. She lived in the apartment and would be there with us, too, but you are given 100% privacy. However, we ended up getting to know her while we were there, hung out a little bit and even exchanged numbers. She still sends the occasional text to me today; it's just really cool to make those connections with people and try something new. Anyway, staying with Isha was way cheaper and the views of the NYC skyline were worth a million. Plus, it was really nice to get out of the city at the end of each day and be able to catch our breath.

When we first flew into New Jersey, we had to make our way down to the river side and find Isha's apartment. The uber dropped us off in Weehawken, New Jersey, which is a clifftown on the edge of the river, right across from NYC. Well, we had to make our way down the cliff via this INSANE set of stairs. I just laugh when I think about me and Amber arriving to the big city, rolling our big suit cases and lugging them down 100 flights of stairs (seriously Google the Weehawken Stairs of Doom!) Our first 10 minutes of vaca-

tion and we made the dumbest mistake ever. Instead of getting dropped off AT the apartment, we got dropped off BY the apartment, except it was, like, 2 miles away. So there we were walking, rolling our suitcases, carrying a lot of cash and lookin' like easy targets to rob.

Thank God we made it to the apartment safely. But first, we stopped many times along the road to just stare in awe of that concrete jungle across from us. I couldn't wait to get over there.

Amber and I have this joke when we talk about that trip. I had meant to say "I can't wait to see New York at Christmas" but instead said, "I can't wait to see Christmas!" So that's what we say now. "We went on a vacation to see Christmas."

And Christmas it was. ALL AROUND US.

Manhattan was adorned for the season. The big tree in Rockefeller Center was lit up. People were ice skating on the numerous rinks around the city and in the parks. Music was piped in and playing in the air almost everywhere we went - even just walking down the street. The store front windows are indescribable. They fly in some of the best people in the world to create the holiday displays - especially the stores on 5th Ave - which is the most expensive street in the world!

Do you know that Christmas song by Rob Thomas? It's called Merry New York Christmas? Anyway, it's always been a favorite of mine, but I love it even more so now. Especially the line that says: "Come down to the City. Gather around the big tree." Another line says: "The sidewalk angels echo hallelujah." Those lyrics just came to life in Rockefeller Center as strangers from near and far gathered around the big tree and the beautiful angels perched above us on the plaza. It was just incredible.

I won't even have enough room to talk about our entire trip and that's OK. You don't need to hear every detail or know about every stop we made. Because the point I'm trying to make is you need to see it at Christmas. It changes you. It really, really changes you and fills your heart to the max. Both Amber and I want to go back with our girls. This December is out of the question, but maybe next!? Don't tell Robert. Let's let him find out when he reads this. Ha.

Anyway, a fun fact about our trip: we never once hopped on the subway. I'm super claustrophobic and worried sick about taking it. Well, long story short, you can totally do NYC without ever stepping foot onto one. Every morning and night, Amber and I took the ferry across the river. From that point, we'd take a bus to a different section of the city each day and just set out walking about 10-13 miles a day. It was so worth it to walk, in my opinion, as we didn't miss a single thing.

Highlights include way too many to list, but let's give it a go: Times Square, Rockefeller Center, Grand Central Station, some celebrity sightings, New York pizza, Central Park, 9/11 Memorial, walking on the Brooklyn Bridge, riding the Staten Island Ferry round trip, to never even step foot on Staten Island, but rather to get a great, free view of Lady Liberty! The New York Public Library was amazing, as was walking down Wall Street. The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon was super cool, just so many things I could go on about all day.

That city just never sleeps. It's nonstop ON and each neighborhood is unique and beautiful in its own way. From the Upper West Side to Greenwich Village to Soho to Tribeca, back up to Midtown...I can't wait to be set free in Manhattan again soon. To take that trip with one of my best friends and to also see it at Christmas time...well...I feel blessed. And I can't wait until we can take our girls back again soon. I wish you a Merry Christmas, but also a Merry NEW YORK Christmas. Have a safe holiday season!



The Love Sculpture in Midtown; it famously stands on the corner of 55th and 6th.



Christmas details are found everywhere throughout New York City. One of our first sites from within was when we got off the bus near Rockefeller Center. These huge big Christmas bulbs were in the water fountain outside of the Radio City Music Hall.



Every store front and window display is worthy of seeing, but no one does it like Saks 5th Avenue. On the side of the entire store is a big Christmas light and music show!



You could spend an entire day in Central Park. There's so many sights to see. Gorgeous bridges, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, restaurants, John Lennon's Strawberry Fields, horse carriages trotting up and down the streets, the Belvedere Castle, the list goes on. The one thing we were most excited to see was the Wollman Rink, pictured above. It's iconic and it was such an experience just standing there taking it all in.