

TODAY'S family

November 2022

Cuyahoga

FREE!

**Weaning your
teen off the
water bottle**

Humor Essay

National Adoption Month

Open your heart
and your home to
a child in need

Cuyahoga Parents Connect

Facebook group
provides parents
a safe space to
share advice

Holiday Events

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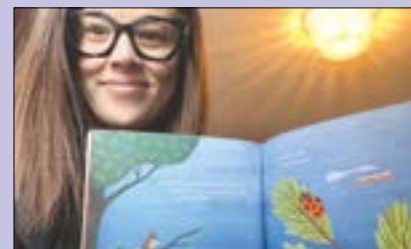
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Adoption: An alternate path to parenthood

By Nina Polien Light

The perception of adoptive parents may be of a loving wife and husband who are unable to have children of their own. The couple go to a private adoption agency, shell out tens of thousands of dollars and, after what could be a years-long waiting period, bring home the newborn son or daughter they've always dreamed about raising.

Working with a private adoption agency with the goal of adopting an infant is an admirable approach to offering a home to a child in need. But some folks—married or not—find the process to be too costly and drawn out. Fortunately, there are other avenues for adoption, especially if prospective parents are open to providing forever homes for youngsters with special needs, older children, sibling groups or children of different races or ethnicities.

November is National Adoption Month, a 30-day platform for raising awareness and bringing attention to the need for permanent families for minors in foster care. It is an initiative of the Children's Bureau, which is part of the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

"National Adoption Month is a celebration of those members in our community who have taken a chance on children and made them a member of their family," says Eugene Tetrick, supervisor of the Substitute Care Unit (foster care/adoption) for the Lake County Department of Jobs and Family Services. "These people had the courage and determination to 'change their normal' by bringing a child in need into their home."

Beverly Torres, senior manager for permanency support (adoption) at the Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services, says many children are in county custody because of abuse, neglect, a parent's mental health issues and other reasons. "When they can't be safely reunified with their caregivers and when parental rights are terminated, we owe these kids a family. November highlights foster care, and especially adoptive care, for our families and children."

In honor of National Adoption Month, Today's Family answers questions about adopting youngsters currently in the foster care system.

What is the difference between fostering and adopting?

Foster parents are state-certified caregivers, who provide a temporary home for children while social service agencies attempt to reunify youngsters with their families. If reunification with birth parents does not happen, the public agency holding temporary custody of the child receives permanent custody of them, matches them with an adoptive family (most often in the dually licensed foster/adoptive home they are currently in) and works with the adoptive family to finalize an adoption through probate court.

Who is eligible to adopt children in foster care in Ohio?

Prospective adoptive parents must be at least 18 years old, have sufficient income to meet the child's basic needs and be in good physical, emotional and mental health. They may be single, married, part of a same-sex couple or the child's older sibling. If part of a couple, they must



Torrance (7) and Terrance (11) are siblings with the Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services. They are looking for their forever home.

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be in a stable relationship for at least one year. Education level, religion and home ownership are not factors.

How great is the need?

Every day, children throughout Ohio enter the custody of children services. This results in 2,000 to 3,000 children at any given moment waiting to be adopted in Ohio. The need for adoptive families is great and every child deserves a forever family.

According to Torres, Cuyahoga County has permanent custody of 800 children. The county has potential adoptive parents for about half (slightly more than 400) of them; the remainder are still in need of forever families.

Tetrick adds, "From 2017–2019 we finalized adoptions for 37 children. With those adoptions, our foster homes close as their families are now 'complete' when the adoption is

finalized. Therefore we are continuously trying to recruit new families to replace the ones that left after they completed their families."

And the need is definitely very real as Lake County had 120 children in their custody in 2020.

So many people wish to adopt. Why haven't these children found forever families?

It's important to match youngsters with families who are committed to meeting the children's specific needs for the long term. Many children in foster care deal with physical, psychological or behavioral concerns as they all have been exposed to abuse and/or neglect.

"Any time a child moves from one home to another, it's a traumatic experience," Torres explains. "Some adoptive families are looking for a specific type of child. When kids

See ADOPTION page 4

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come in to our custody, they are experiencing a trauma in their life, a separation, a loss. That comes out in different ways for different children. Sometimes they've been removed from their home because of a relative's mental-health issue and they've inherited that mental-issue. The specific needs of our children dictate the kind of families we're looking for."

Placing older children, such as teenagers, can be challenging because some people prefer to adopt infants or toddlers. Keeping siblings together can also be difficult if families wish to adopt one child at a time.

What is the cost?

"Oftentimes, those who become licensed as foster and adoptive parents through the county are looking to grow their family through adoption as the costs of private adoptions are too expensive," Tetrick says. "Some costs involved in the adoption process are court costs for the adoption and paying for updated birth certificates, which are minimal comparatively to private adoptions. Adoption of a child in the custody of Lake County costs less than \$200."

Cuyahoga County's Torres says a required fire inspection may run \$30-\$100. If the compulsory home study visit reveals the need for making home improvements to meet Ohio mandates, there may be costs associated with those upgrades.

By comparison, voluntary adoption of a newborn at a nonprofit organization in Ohio typically costs \$10,000-\$25,000, according to the Franklin County Law Library website.

I want to adopt a child currently in foster care. Now what?

Start with contacting the county agency. Cuyahoga residents may call 216-881-5775 or visit <https://hhs.cuyahogacounty.us/adoptable-kids>.

Those in Lake may dial 440-350-4218 and those in Geauga may call 440-285-9141.

According to Torres, prospective adoptive parents are required to attend pre-service training to become licensed as a foster or adoptive parent. Once licensed, they will complete an application and undergo a home study, which includes a fire inspection. Following approval, the county agency will work to match the adult and child. After a match is made, an adoption assessor and the child's social worker will present the prospective adoptive parent with the youngster's medical and educational records, photographs and other pertinent information. The adult and child will then have preplacement visits in the adoptive home and the child's current home. After the child moves in with the adult, a judge or magistrate can finalize the adoption. Classes, support groups and referrals to community agencies will then be available to the new family.



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With Kulture Kids' Robin Pease

Sunday, November 20 • 1:30 pm

Maltz Museum

2929 Richmond Road, Beachwood

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Join Kulture Kids' Robin Pease, a Mohawk descendant, to "become" the animals, speak some native language and be thankful for new friendships and great teamwork!

Suitable for ages 3-10 and families. After the program, all guests are welcome to participate in a self-guided treasure hunt in the special exhibition gallery, featuring, "This Light of Ours: Activist Photographers of the Civil Rights Movement."

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Weaning your teen off the water bottle

By Cheryl Maguire

I can honestly say I don't ever remember drinking a glass of water when I was growing up in the 1800s (at least that's when my teens think I grew up). And I definitely never owned a water bottle. I'm sure I must have had water at some point, but it's not ringing any bells. Of course, anyone who grew up in the 1800s is not going to remember lots of things, but I do remember drinking juice, milk, and soda, so I did get some form of hydration.

My three teenage kids are an entirely different story. If they go five minutes without a sip of water, they start panting like dogs, tongues extended and everything. Witnessing their overly dramatic reaction, you would think they had been stranded in the desert without water for three days.

Don't even get me started on their water bottles, which are their main mode of hydrating themselves. That is plural because all three of them own about 500 different water bottles each. And my kids aren't the only ones toting around a water bottle wherever they go. All you have to do is look at any school lost and found pile and see a mountain of orphaned water bottles to know that we are all in this together.

The real issue for me is the attachment to the bottle. They are so attached to their bottle that they have seriously asked me to bring it to school on the rare occasion they forget it. It's sort of like



their baba. Don't get me wrong. I think it's great that they love to drink water, but I think it's more about needing the bottle that is an issue. So here's my plan—feel free to use it, too.

their phone or another appendage that seldom leaves their general vicinity. And just like with their phone, they start hyperventilating when they are separated from it for even a second.

HOW TO WEAN YOUR TEEN FROM THEIR BOTTLE (AGAIN)

I know it may seem like a long time ago, but do you remember weaning your baby from the bottle? It was a bit of a nightmare for us because my kids loved their bottle, or their “baba” as we lovingly referred to it. They never used a pacifier, probably because they attached to their baba instead. Well, I harkened back to those baby days to wean my teens from the water bottle, which I also refer to as

Step 1: Introduce a real drinking glass

First, get your teen used to the idea of using an actual drinking glass instead of a bottle. Most teens are not able to break from the bottle without any type of transition period. So introduce the glass by placing it on the table next to them. It's okay if it's empty — just allow them to see that there is another option. When they give you the same confused expression as when you revealed you didn't have Internet as a kid, it's okay. Just identify the object as a glass that has the option of being filled with water. You can leave it at that — you don't want to overwhelm them.

Step 2: Offer a full glass of water

The next step is to place a full glass of water next to their water bottle. The idea is to help them associate seeing the water through the glass with drinking the water. If necessary, you can put a straw in the glass to aid with the transition from a water bottle to glass. It's okay if they don't drink from it yet. But if they do, that's great, too!

Step 3: Hide the water bottles

I know what you are thinking—“Whoa, hold

See **WEAN TEEN** page 7

'tis the season to



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Cuyahoga Parents Connect

Facebook group provides a safe space for parents to ask each other for advice and share successes

By Stacy Turner

These days, people have a general discontent with traditional social media platforms, where opinionated posts and comments often focus on the cynical or bleak. In fact, in a recent study, 64% of respondents agreed that social media has a mostly negative effect. Turning back the contentious tide, online communities are on the rise, connecting friends, family, and like-minded individuals, returning social media to its original purpose.

Cuyahoga Parents Connect (CPC) is one such online group, providing a platform open to expecting Cleveland-area parents, and families with infants through kindergarten. This private Facebook group provides a nonjudgmental platform for fellow parents to learn

valuable information and receive practical and emotional guidance.

"This resource supports families during the crucial early years of a child's life to help them grow, learn, and develop to their fullest potential," explained Tom Wetzel, manager of the Parent Support Department at Bright Beginnings, the organization that administers the group. "It's a safe space for parents to ask each other for advice and share successes."

Funded by the Cuyahoga County Office of Early Childhood/Invest in Children, CPC initially included just Facebook users from Bright Beginnings, an organization that provides early intervention and home visiting services in the county. The online group was used to provide additional resources to families enrolled in the Parents as Teachers program. At the start of the pandemic, as more services moved online out of necessity,



Heather Sakai, administrator of the Cuyahoga Parents Connect page, reads to families during a Facebook Live story time

Cuyahoga Parents Connect expanded, providing even more resources to additional participants. Based on its success, CPC expanded even more this past June to include families from all across Cuyahoga County.

"Our group has seen a marked increase in interest since opening to all families in the county," said Heather Sakai, social media engagement coordinator. Sakai noted Cuyahoga

Parents Connect currently has nearly 500 members, growing organically as new members are introduced to the group by friends. Others find Cuyahoga Parents Connect through community partnerships, while some find the group on Instagram or Pinterest, or via digital ads.

Parents relish this safe place to ask questions or seek advice from other

See **CONNECT** page 7



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The membership program is presented by



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parents – without judgment. A new mom posted recently, “I have a 2-month-old... He slept for six hours straight twice but hasn’t been able to do it again since last week. He wakes up for one or two feedings a night. Any advice?”

Sakai shared another recent post, where a frustrated mom asked for advice about how to discipline her 4-year-old daughter. “She was at the end of her rope and didn’t know what to do,” Sakai noted. The group responded in record numbers with suggestions, advice, and support for the struggling mother.

“YUP!!!” one poster commented. “My 5-year-old works my nerves, mama! She’s going through precocious puberty so she’s testing the water with the last half of a nerve I have. I just look at her knowing she’s growing and not gonna be my little Muppet forever. I give her a pass or two!”

Another parent commented, “I can completely relate to feeling different from your child. I feel that way every single day, and while I have moments of disappointment, I try to intentionally lean into his differences from me and frame them from a different light. For example, instead of seeing him as demanding and bossy, I can identify my own tendency toward passive communication and low self-advocacy, and then I see his strengths as a strong communicator and self-advocate.”

“I was touched by all the heartfelt comments,” Sakai, a stepmom herself, noted. “And the original poster was overwhelmed by the support she received,” Sakai nodded. “She took the time to respond to every comment.”

Sometimes, the group provides more than simply emotional support. According to Wetzel, near the end of one month, a mother shared that she was low on funds and considered watering down her baby’s formula.

Concerned with the safety of such a measure, she asked the group for advice. Another group member, moved by the original poster’s plight, made a special trip to drop off formula to the struggling mother and child. “This just supports the mission of the group,” Sakai explained. “In this parenting journey, it’s important to know we’re not alone. We need a community to hear us out and share our burdens and our joy.”

Posts across all of Cuyahoga Parents Connect social media platforms include helpful items like potty training tips, phrases to calm tears, inexpensive sensory play materials, simple recipes, and easy crafts. And every Friday on Facebook, parents are encouraged to share big or small parenting wins of the week. “It’s encouraging to see parents cheering each other along,” Sakai exclaimed.

Cuyahoga Parents Connect also offers online workshops, Zoom Rooms, and online resources like story time via Facebook Live. The community calendar on the Facebook page highlights activities and events of interest to local families.

If you are an expecting parent or have children from infancy through kindergarten in the Cleveland area, join the Cuyahoga Parents Connect Facebook group. This inclusive community provides parents with a safe, nonjudgmental place to gain valuable insight and receive practical and emotional support.

To join the group, click <https://linktr.ee/cuyahogaparentsconnect>, or to learn more, scan the QR code below with your smart device, or follow Cuyahoga Parents Connect on Facebook, Instagram, or Pinterest.



Wean teen from page 5

on a second, that’s a bit drastic!” But let’s face it. Carrying around a water bottle all day like another appendage is a practice that must be dealt with dramatically. After they have finished searching the house for the water bottle and start panting from lack of hydration, offer a full glass of refreshing water. It’s normal if they resist, but eventually, they will drink

from that glass, I guarantee it.

I hope it goes as well for you as it did for me. Actually, I should clarify that: I hope it goes as well as can be expected for three teens weaning from their water bottles. Cheers!

Bio: Cheryl Maguire holds a Master of Counseling Psychology degree. She is married and is the mother of twins and a daughter.



Elf (the Musical)

December 2–30, 2022 at the Beck Center in Lakewood

Based on the beloved holiday film, this hilarious big-elf-living-in-a-small world comedy follows Buddy the elf in his quest to find his true identity in a holiday-bedazzled New York City. Featuring songs written by the creator of Disney’s Aladdin on Broadway and a book by writer of Annie, The Producers and Hairspray this feels and sounds like a sweet holiday treat for all ages. (Maple syrup not included.)

Individual tickets to each show can be purchased at beckcenter.org with ticket prices from \$38 (adults), \$34 (for seniors 65 and older) and

\$17 for students with valid ID, and \$12 for children between five and 12 years of age. A \$3 service fee per single ticket will be applied at time of purchase.

Curtain times are 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, and 2:30 p.m. Sundays. Preview performances are 7:30 p.m. the Thursday before opening night, with general admission seating for just \$10. Smart Seats® are available for each performance at just \$10 per person.

For more information on the 2022-2023 Professional Theater Season please visit beckcenter.org.



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Friendsgiving and solitary celebrations to make the most of Thanksgiving Day

By Kimberly Blaker

The long-held tradition of the family gathered around a table for a savory Thanksgiving feast carries fond memories for most. Yet, single parents and empty nesters often find themselves spending the day alone. Whatever the reason, there are plenty of ways to enjoy the holiday without family. Whether you go it alone or decide to hold a Friendsgiving, the following tips will help you make the most of your holiday.

Solitary celebrations

The upside of spending Thanksgiving alone is that you can celebrate any way you choose. But be sure to plan ahead so you don't waste it away. Unless that's what you want to do, which is perfectly fine, too.

One of the benefits of spending the day alone is that you can feast on anything your heart desires. If you like cooking, it's the perfect day to pull out your favorite recipes and treat yourself to a gourmet meal.

If cooking isn't your thing, you can still indulge by eating out. A few restaurants are open on Thanksgiving. Some will even serve a Thanksgiving dinner. Just make your reservation a week or so in advance because restaurants book up early



for the holiday.

One thing that doesn't shut down on Thanksgiving is the movie theater. So catch a flick and treat yourself to some hot buttery popcorn.

If weather permits, get some fresh air and go for a bike ride or hike.

On the other hand, you might want to stay in where it's cozy and warm and bask in a home spa treatment. Give yourself a manicure, pedicure, facial, and try out a new hair color.

Thanksgiving is also an excellent day for a trip down memory lane. Pour a glass of wine, play some music from your past, and flip through photo albums.

Is there a book you've been dying to read? Curl up on the couch and spend the entire day relaxing and reading.

It's also the perfect opportunity to call family or friends you haven't spoken to in a while. So give them a ring and catch up.

Maybe you'd really like to do something good for the soul and others. If so, offer to help at a soup kitchen. Another option is to take up a coat collection. Then on Thanksgiving, deliver the coats to a shelter or distribute them to other charitable organizations.

Friendsgiving

Even if you don't have family around for the holidays, you don't have to spend it alone. In fact, many parents opt to spend the day with friends to avoid the hot political climate that all too often erupts at family Thanksgiving gatherings.

Odds are you have friends, co-workers, neighbors, or acquaintances who'll also be spending the day alone. So why not hold a Friendsgiving?

Even if you spend Thanksgiving with family, Friendsgiving has gained so much popularity, many hold a Friendsgiving on Friday or Saturday so they too can enjoy the holiday with friends.

There are a lot of ways to do your Friendsgiving,

See FRIENDSGIVING on page 9

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Friendsgiving from page 8

which might depend, in part, on the size of your guest list. If it's only a couple of you, split the grocery list, then plan to cook together that day. You could also skip the hassle and enjoy dinner out. If you choose the latter for Thanksgiving day, make reservations well in advance.

If you'd like to celebrate with several friends, a potluck might be best. Just plan everything ahead so the day will be a success without a ton of work and stress on your part. As the host, you might offer to do the turkey or meat yourself. Then ask each person to bring one or two specific types of dishes. For example, ask a couple of friends to bring a vegetable dish. Ask them to let you know in advance what specifically they plan to bring so you don't have multiples of the same vegetable. You can assign a couple of other guests to bring dessert, and another to bring dinner rolls and snacks.

For beverages, you could offer to supply soda. But ask everyone to bring their own alcoholic drinks. Or, if you know everyone likes beer or wine, ask each person to bring something to share so you can all enjoy

tasting and a variety.

Additional items you can ask guests to bring include ice, coolers, tableware, serving utensils, folding chairs, folding tables, and tablecloths.

In addition to the day's main event – delicious food – you could also plan for some form of entertainment. Put together a variety of music to fit everyone's tastes. You could also play cards or games. If all your guests are football fans, it couldn't get any easier.

Will any of your guests bring their kids? If so, have a clean childproof room available where they can play away from the adult ruckus.

Whatever way you choose to spend your day, the most important thing is to enjoy it and know you're in good company — whether it be in the company of acquaintances, friends, or your own.



Find unique handcrafted gifts at the Beary Merry Christmas Show

It's holiday shopping time at the 36th annual Beary Merry Christmas Show Handcrafted Market on Wednesday, November 30 and Thursday, December 1 at the Normandy Party Center in Wickliffe.

This craft extravaganza showcases over 50 talented artisans from Ohio and Pennsylvania, displaying unique holiday gifts for your shopping pleasure. The show will again feature a deluxe Chinese raffle extravaganza to benefit Susan G. Komen for the Cure Northeast Affiliate. This will include over 50 baskets for all members of the family including lottery tickets, spa packages, variety of dinners, sports items, toys, family fun and more. Delicious lunch and dinners catered by Normandy Party Center will be available for purchase. Admission is \$3.00.

Beary Merry organizers are excited to announce that family owned and operated Monreal Srnick Funerals & Cremations of Eastlake is their corporate sponsor this year. They are celebrating their 130th anniversary of creating memorable remembrance

services in our community and will be sponsoring hourly door prize drawings.

Once again, the show is collaborating with Asa Cox and Asa's Angels, a support program for families in need in the community during the holidays. She distributes over 15,000 toys, helping more than 3,000 families. Each family is personally interviewed and provides a wish list for their children.

During the Beary Merry Show, toys will be collected for her annual Christmas outreach drive for kids. Her goal is "to make all children smile on Christmas morning" and Beary Merry is here to help! Bring a toy to the show and make a child happy this Christmas. Please support this "beary" worthwhile cause.

Mark your calendars! This is one holiday market you do not want to miss!

If you have questions, contact Denise McPherson at (216) 481-9229 or bearymerry@roadrunner.com. Follow them at www.facebook.com/TheBearyMerryShow.



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Cuyahoga County
Together We Thrive
Division of Children and Family Services



Chagrin Falls girl wins national Girl Scout Gold Award

Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) is recognizing the 3,500 members of the 2022 Gold Award Girl Scout class who identified the root cause of pressing issues in their communities, created sustainable solutions, and took action to earn the Gold Award — Girl Scouts' highest achievement. This year's class of world-changers invested over 300,000 hours in addressing real-life problems such as environmental sustainability, racial justice, mental and emotional wellness, and gender inequality in STEM.

This year, Gold Award Girl Scout Celia Hawk from Girl Scouts of North East Ohio (GSNEO) was a recipient of a national scholarship. After learning that 17 million tons of textile waste ends up in landfills annually (according to the Environmental Protection Agency in 2018), Celia decided to address the effects the fashion industry has on the environment. Celia's Gold Award was carried out in two parts — a website and an event. Her website, clothingswaps.com, was her space to share everything she learned about the practices of the fashion industry and their negative impacts on the environment.

She researched and wrote articles about greenwashing, a practice where companies market that they're environmentally conscious but, in reality, aren't making any notable sustainability efforts. Celia also wrote how-to guides for donating clothes you no longer wear, and how to check whether or not the brands you shop for are



Celia Hawk

sustainable.

One topic Celia found she was particularly passionate about educating her peers on was social media's impact on fashion. It is trendy to share "hauls" of clothing ordered from large companies, which often have unsustainable and unethical methods of production.

GSUSA's 111 councils were each provided the opportunity to nominate one of their outstanding Gold Award Girl Scouts to receive a national scholarship for over \$2,000 each. The GSUSA Gold Award Scholarship recipients represent

\$225,000 invested, made possible by Insight Global, The Coca-Cola Foundation, and Kappa Delta Foundation.

Gold Award Girl Scouts become innovative problem-solvers, empathetic leaders, confident public speakers, and focused project managers. They learn resourcefulness, tenacity, and decision-making skills, giving them an edge personally and professionally. As they take action to transform their communities, Gold Award Girl Scouts gain tangible skills and prove they're the leaders our world needs.

According to recent research, Gold Award Girl Scouts are more likely to fill leadership roles at work and in their personal lives and are more civically engaged than their non-Girl Scout peers. Eighty-seven percent (87%) of Gold Award Girl Scouts agree that earning their Gold Award gave them skills that help them succeed professionally. Seventy-two percent (72%) said earning their Gold Award helped them get a scholarship. Changing the world doesn't end when a Girl Scout earns her Gold Award. Ninety-nine percent (99%) of Gold Award Girl Scout alums take on leadership roles in their everyday lives.

Girls in grades K–12 can join Girl Scouts any time during the year to begin their Girl Scout journey. As girls grow with Girl Scouts, they learn hands-on leadership skills they'll use to make their mark through the Gold Award and beyond. To join or volunteer, visit gsneo.org/join.

Foundations for Lifelong Learning

Open House Dates

Wednesday November 2, 2022 / 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday January 18, 2023 / 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.

A child's preschool experience should build a foundation for their education and lifelong skills of

perseverance independence

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Unlock your child's potential with a solid foundation for life.

Applications are now being accepted for PreK through 8th grade.

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Cleveland Art hosts holiday markets

Cleveland Art is hosting its second annual Holiday Markets Friday and Saturday, November 11 & 12 and December 9 & 10 at Reithoffer's Art, Spirits and Entertainment in the Auburn Arts District at 17711 Ravenna Road in Chagrin Falls.

Local artisans will sell their products and Cleveland Art, a company famous for repurposing salvage into functional works of art, will be featuring a new line of furniture made of historical materials recently recovered from Cleveland's Terminal Tower.

The markets will be open Friday, 3–8 pm and Saturday, 11 am–6 pm.

Daily admissions cost \$10 per person, giving guests access to a unique, local shopping experience just in time for the holidays, as well as a selection of local beverages and charcuteries to enjoy in Auburn's most eclectic art gallery.

Reithoffer's Art, Spirits and Entertainment was founded in 2019 by Jason and Debby Wein, owners of Cleveland Art. The couple bought the property after the passing of its previous owner, Johnathan Reithoffer, a prominent character during his life in Auburn, who also had a keen eye for salvage.

The best craftspeople of this time will be at the Holiday Markets this year, with over a dozen vendors.

For more information and inquiries, please, email events@clevelandart.com, and follow Cleveland Art and Auburn Arts District on Facebook and Instagram.

No shopping, shipping or waiting

Save 10–20% on annual passes to the Greater Cleveland Aquarium

Looking for a hassle-free gift giving idea? Black Friday (November 25, 2022) through Cyber Monday (November 28, 2022) the Greater Cleveland Aquarium is offering 20% off annual passes purchased online using the code Holiday20Aq.

"An annual pass is gift that's big enough to wow and small enough to wrap," says GM Stephanie White. "You can give a year's worth of aquatic adventures hassle free—no shopping, shipping or waiting."

Standard annual pass levels range from \$45 – \$130 (\$36–\$117 during the promotion) and include daily admission and other perks for one (adult/senior individual) to as many as eight (family/grandparent) named passholders. While the year-end promotion runs through December 25, the discount drops to 10% after the initial weekend.

Gift annual passes are valid for one year from activation by the gift recipient. "If you send a gift membership to your sister in December and she doesn't activate it until February, we extend the expiration through February of the following year to ensure she receives 12 months of event and gift shop discounts, free parking, members-only programming and other perks," White explains.

Greater Cleveland Aquarium's holiday mem-



bership promotion isn't just for gift-givers. The discount codes can also be used by anyone purchasing an annual pass for themselves, rejoining after having lapsed as members or extending their current annual pass for an additional 12 months.

20% off pricing

- Senior Individual \$36 (originally \$45)
- Adult Individual \$40 (originally \$50)
- Senior Couple \$64 (originally \$80)
- Couple \$72 (originally \$90)
- Family/Grandparent \$104 (originally \$130)

*Must purchase online between 11/25 – 11/28/22 using code Holiday20Aq.

For a complete list of Aquarium Pass levels, visit greaterclevelandaquarium.com. No returns or refunds.

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Lakeshore 7, Euclid • (216) 731-1701

Atlas Cinemas at Shaker Square • (216) 331-6825

Call today to schedule your own private screening. Please allow a minimum of 24-48 hours to schedule.

Christmas Connection returns to I-X Center November 18-20

It's the most wonderful time of the year! Cleveland's 36th annual Christmas Connection is back, taking place Nov. 18-20 at the I-X Center. Visitors of the 2022 show will experience the magic of Christmas while finding great gift ideas from more than 450 exhibitors.

Favorite holiday songs will be performed on the stage while families stroll the aisles of exhibitors featuring everything from crafts, specialty foods and soaps to ornaments, wood creations, jewelry and more. And kids of all ages won't want to miss Santa Land and the chance to visit and take a picture with Santa, Mrs. Claus and the Elves! Bring your letters to Santa and mail them in the Santa Mailbox.

2022 Christmas Connection features and attractions include:

- The spirit of Christmas will envelop guests as they walk down the decorated entryway to the tallest Santa in Cleveland – 30 foot – waiting to greet them!
- The holiday spirit comes to life with live entertainment on the stage where guests can relax and kick up their feet and sing along to festive entertainment.
- Visit with Santa, Mrs. Claus and the Elves in Santa Land. Kids can also bring their letters to Santa to mail in the Santa Mailbox. (Don't forget to bring your camera!)
- Take a break from shopping to rest your feet and catch up on a classic Christmas movie in the Movie Area.
- Take a string art class hosted by Strung by Shawna in the Craft



Area located in the NEW South Hall. (Small fee applies)

- Kids can shop in the Sugar Plum Shoppe featuring over 3,000 pre-wrapped gifts (under \$8.00 each), perfect for pint-sized wallets.
- Convenient Shop & Drop lets guests leave their purchases and pick them up when they are ready to leave. And when you pick up your purchases, make life easier and take advantage of free gift wrapping. Donations to GiGi's Playhouse appreciated.
- Visit the Ohio Lottery booth for fun games and prizes as well as Holiday Lottery scratch-offs for purchase. There will be three second-chance drawings each day where each winner will receive \$100 in Ohio Lottery Christmas cash!

The latest show information will be posted on ClevelandChristmasConnection.com.

Ticket Information

\$14 general admission at the box office (adult admission)

\$12 general admission online at ClevelandChristmasConnection.com (adult admission)

FREE children 12 and under

\$10 group/bus sales of 15 or more

HO-HO-HOPING TO "SEA" SCUBA CLAUS?



MERRY MEET & GREET @CLEAQUARIUM

Wednesday – Friday, December 14 – 16, 5 – 7:30pm
Saturday & Sunday, December 17 & 18, 8:30 – 10am

Merry Meet & Greet include full Aquarium access, the unique opportunity to share "fish-mas" wishes with a scuba-diving jolly old elf AND a commemorative digital photo.

Limited capacity; advance tickets required.

216.862.8803 | greaterclevelandaquarium.com



Botanical Garden Holiday Show

The Cleveland Botanical Garden's winter show opens Saturday, November 19 and runs through Saturday, December 31, 2022 and will celebrate the historic character of Cleveland's neighborhoods as they are all aglow for the holiday season.

The indoor and outdoor gardens will pay a festive holiday homage to the beautiful blocks that knit neighborhoods, people, and plants together. Guests seeking a holiday escape a little farther from home can enter the Madagascar and Costa Rica glasshouses, transformed in



the spirit of the season with special horticultural displays, lights, and "postcard" vignettes referencing iconic towns within the spiny desert and cloud forest.

Visit <https://holdenfg.org/events> to purchase tickets.



Holiday Happiness: A Multicultural Celebration

Sunday, December 11 • 1:30 pm

Maltz Museum

2929 Richmond Road, Beachwood

Free with advanced registration

Everyone has a culture! This holiday season, young families are invited to explore the universal message of joy and peace across all faiths, cultures, and backgrounds through music, theater, art, and books.

Cultural organizations from across northeast Ohio will gather to share what they do to celebrate in winter. Enjoy a Hanukkah story performed by Mandel JCC's Playmaker's Youth Theater, hear Christmas music and poetry from Antioch Baptist Church's youth, hear readings of peace from the youth at Chagrin Valley Islamic Center, learn about kindness from Horvitz YouthAbility, and spend time in the multicultural story corner.

Double your fun this fall with two new exhibits at the Great Lakes Science Center

Great Lakes Science Center is doubling the fall fun for families with kids of all ages when it opens a unique pair of hands-on special exhibitions, "Curious George: Let's Get Curious" and "Run! Jump Fly! Adventures in Action."

Perhaps no other character from children's literature better represents the Science Center's spirit of "Stay Curious" than Curious George. The little monkey with the insatiable curiosity has captured the imagination of millions of children and adults for more than 80 years. In this special exhibition, young children will enter the larger than life world of Curious George for a fun, and interactive math, science and engineering based adventure.

The Curious George exhibit inspires young children's natural curiosity as they explore early science, math and engineering concepts through hands-on interactive play. The immersive exhibit environment takes place in

the neighborhood where Curious George lives with his friend, The Man with the Yellow Hat. Guests will recognize familiar characters and places featured in the stories and the animated series as they navigate through a park, a sidewalk produce stand, construction site, mini golf course, farm and more.

In Run! Jump! Fly!, guests will rediscover the fun of being physically active in a noncompetitive environment. Families explore activities such as kung fu, surfing, snowboarding, yoga and climbing. Featuring the theme of action adventures popular in children's books and movies, the exhibition invites guests to jump into "Action Star Training" – play activities that build strength, coordination, balance and endurance.

Both exhibitions run from Saturday, October 22 through Sunday, January 8 and are included with the price of general admission. For more information, visit GreatScience.com.



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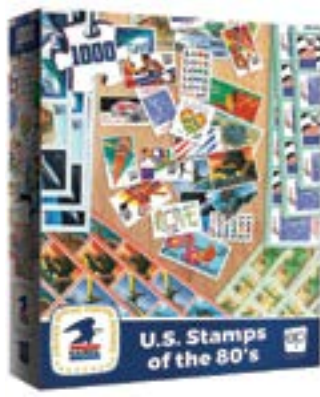
Great puzzles from “The Op Games” for the entire family!

Visit www.theop.games to see more puzzles and games!



Care Bears™ “Best Friends Forever” 1000-piece puzzle

Celebrate 40 years of sharing and caring as you piece together an homage to the 80s Care Bears in “Best Friends Forever,” a 1,000-piece jigsaw puzzle featuring the adorably expressive characters and their signature bellies. Make room for memories between Wish Bear, Tenderheart Bear, Cheer Bear, Bedtime Bear, Grumpy Bear, and more in this 19”x27” rendition of the classic American Greetings mascots!



USPS “U.S. Stamps of the 80s” 1000-piece puzzle

Get a bigger picture of postage from the past by adding “U.S. Stamps of the 80s” to your collection! Created in partnership with USPS, this 1,000-piece jigsaw puzzle takes philatelists back to a decade of Americana with collections such as 1981’s Desert Cactus Plants, the 1984 Olympics, 1987’s Special Occasions, 1989’s Dinosaurs, and more, all within a 19”x27” collage.



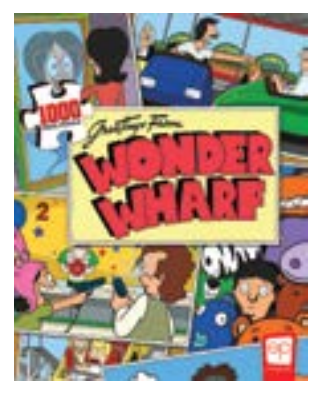
Squishmallows “#Share My Squad” 1000-piece puzzle

Grow your Squishmallows Squad with the plushiest puzzle you’ll ever put together! This 1,000-piece Squishmallows “Share My Squad” jigsaw puzzle features Squishmallows from various Squads including Puff the Penguin, Austin the Avocado, Monica the Axolotl, and more, all cuddled up around Cam the Cat for a collection you can display in a 19”x27” frame!




Dr. Seuss “The Dr. Seuss Collection” 1000-piece puzzle

Instantly relive memories of childhood stories as you assemble this nostalgic 1,000-piece “Dr. Seuss Collection” jigsaw puzzle, featuring nine iconic covers of titles by the prolific author, including “Green Eggs and Ham,” “The Lorax,” “The Cat in the Hat,” and more in a 19”x27” grid.




Bob's Burgers “Greetings from Wonder Wharf” 1000-piece puzzle

Join the Belcher family for amusement park antics with the Bob’s Burgers “Greetings from Wonder Wharf” 1,000-piece jigsaw puzzle! Collide into bumper cars with Bob, faceoff with Louise at the water race, and find Linda getting her curve on in the funhouse mirror as you put together this 19”x27” post-card-style collage.



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Candy Land Gone to the Birds

November 19 through January 1 • 10 am–5 pm

Bring the entire flock back to Penitentiary Glen Reservation to experience a family-favorite holiday tradition—the childhood game of Candy Land — brought to life with an avian twist! It’s all about birds, birds, birds as your adventure begins on a life-sized game board where YOU become the playing piece, moving from space to space through an enchanting holiday display of birds. Colorful habitats surround you, and familiar feathered friends are around every twist and turn.

While on your journey, stop at the pretend Wild Bird Clinic and try your hand at helping wildlife. At the very end, climb the bird tower and do some birdwatching, then slide down the spiral slide and play all over again!

But don’t stop there — your visit continues with other fun activities at the Nature Center including special weekend programs, indoor and outdoor scavenger hunts, a holiday craft for kids, activity pages, wildlife programs, nature exhibits and more. A keepsake holiday key will be given



to each participant. Shop for unique nature-themed gifts at The Nature Store and relax with hot chocolate in Snowshoe Lodge. Snowshoe rentals are also available for the whole family (rentals available weather permitting).

Special Candy Land Gone to the Birds opens November 19 and is open 10 am to 5 pm daily through January 1. The exhibit will be closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year’s Eve. Admission is free for all ages. Registration is not required.

Penitentiary Glen Reservation is located at 8668 Kirtland-Chardon Road in Kirtland.

For more info visit <http://goto.lakemetroparks.com/penitentiary-glen>.



Get your home ready for holiday entertaining!



**Pfaltzgraff Evergreen Ernie
16-Piece Dinnerware Set**
www.pfaltzgraff.com

Bring the snowy fun of winter to your dining table with Evergreen Ernie dinnerware. Plump and jolly, Evergreen Ernie sports a variety of jaunty hats and scarves decorated in winter blues, evergreen, kiwi and medium brown. The dinner plates, mugs and bowls are a simple blue and white snowflake design. Use this cheery dinnerware all winter long to chase away those seasonal humdrums. Crafted of porcelain.

Sixteen-piece dinnerware set, service for four, includes four each: 11" dinner plate, 8-1/4" salad plate (includes four different snowman designs), 6" (26 ounce) soup bowl and 10 ounce coffee mug. Microwave and dishwasher safe.



**Newair FlipShelf™
Wine and Beverage Fridge**
www.newair.com

Stock up and be ready for your holiday guests! The Newair FlipShelf™ Wine and Beverage Fridge is a game changer. Want an icy six-pack? Flip the shelf to the flat side for traditional cans. Need a perfectly chilled bottle of bubbly? Flip again to nestle wine bottles — no more unstable rolling and clinking. With convenient freestanding or built-in installation options, this wine and beverage fridge works in any room of the house. The precision thermostat lets you pick the ideal temperature from 37°F-65°F, so everything from cola to cabernet always tastes its best.

Model: NWB180SS00



**Puleo Christmas Tree 7.5 ft
Prelit Fraser Fir Pencil Tree**
www.puleointl.com

During the holiday season your home is not complete without the addition of a Puleo Christmas Tree. Puleo is The Oldest Family Name for Christmas Trees in America® and their trees will bring joy and holiday spirit year after year. Puleo Christmas trees are handcrafted using only the highest quality materials to achieve an incredibly realistic appearance. Their prelit Fraser fir pencil artificial Christmas tree features plentiful branch tips with room for many treasured Christmas ornaments and lights that warmly illuminate the room. SKU: FFPT-75C35.



Gifts for the special grown-up in your life!



**Sugar Plum Chocolate
Kilimanjaro Gift Assortment**
www.sugar-plum.com

This is the ultimate holiday gift for chocolate lovers! Larger than the Chocolate Mountain, the Chocolate Kilimanjaro Gift Assortment is Sugar Plum's largest standard gourmet chocolate assortment.

Featuring a heaping pile of chocolate-covered treats, each Kilimanjaro comes with:

- 4 bags of chocolate-covered popcorn (10 oz)
- 2 bags of chocolate-covered potato chips (8 oz)
- 2 milk chocolate-covered sandwich cookies
- 2 dark chocolate-covered sandwich cookies
- 2 white chocolate-covered sandwich cookies
- 4 chocolate-covered peanut butter cookies
- Plus, chocolate-dipped biscottis, pretzel rods and marshmallows



**Birkenstock Oswego
Canvas/Suede**
birkenstock.com

Meet the Birkenstock Oswego. The perfect casual slip-on shoe. With a flexible rubber sole and extra padding, stay comfortable all day long. Take these sporty shoes anywhere and everywhere. The upper is made from smooth canvas and soft suede. Various colors available.

- Removable, anatomically shaped cork-latex footbed
- Upper: canvas, suede
- Footbed lining: suede
- Sole: natural rubber
- Made in Portugal



**Olive & June
Mani System**
oliveandjune.com

Change your nail game! Meet the mani system:

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 3. Award-winning Cuticle Serum
 4. Mani-perfecting Cleanup Brush
 5. Acetone-free Polish Remover Pot
 6. Straight-edge Nail Clipper
 7. Salon-quality Nail Buffer
 8. Dual-grit Nail File
 9. Top Coat (based on chosen formula)
- Plus, the 15-free polish of your choice (Long-Lasting, Quick Dry, or both)

See the December/January issue for lots of great gift ideas for the kids!

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