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holiday

SHOP LOCAL GUIDE

2024



Thinking
outside
the gift box



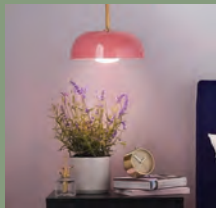
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THE HUDSON VALLEY is full of history. The immediate vicinity of our Uptown Kingston office contains the courthouse where Sojourner Truth had her fateful court case and the Four Corners, the only place in America where all four corners contain pre-revolutionary stone houses.

For those people who love history, the gift of learning more is an attainable one. There are dozens of interesting local history books. Most bookstores often display local history books front and center. It could be assumed most lovers of local history have read these books and have as much knowledge as they could possibly find within the pages of a book.

If this is indeed the case, how about giving this individual the experience of walking through local history? I remember when my kid was young we signed her up for a writing program at Historic Huguenot Street. We had walked through this area many times, passed by the



Above, the Four Corners in Uptown Kingston; right, give the Gift of History at Historic Huguenot Street.

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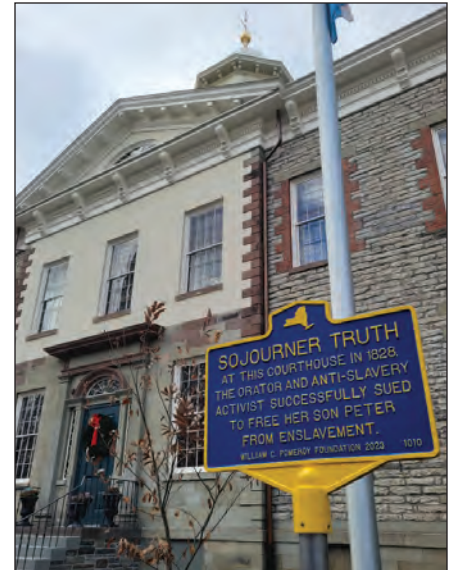
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graveyard, glanced at the buildings, and saw the wigwam.

We had a general understanding that this was land that once belonged to Native Americans. However, it took on a whole different meaning when my kid went there and learned the ghost stories about the way in which the families lived, the slaves they held, and even the ages at which these people died. Learning on the actual ground from local experts is an experience that brings much more understanding.



The courthouse where Sojourner Truth successfully freed her son from enslavement in 1828.



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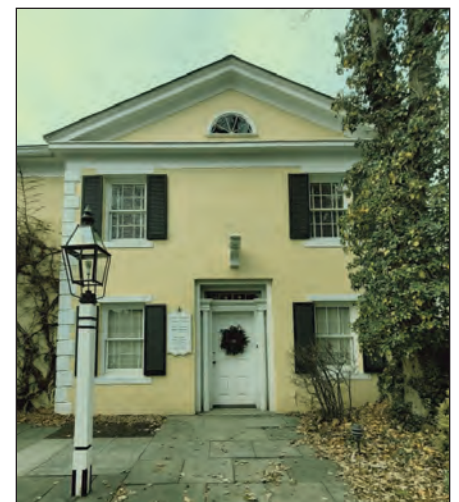
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Friends of Historic Kingston

Many local historical sites offer memberships and tours. Friends of Historic Kingston offers a membership with every \$50 donation. Historic Huguenot Street has memberships that can be gifted starting at \$40 with the tag line "Give a Historic Gift." The Ulster County Historical Society offers memberships starting

at \$25 for seniors and students, \$60 for other individuals and \$80 for households. Historical Society of Woodstock memberships start at \$25 for seniors and students, \$35 for individuals and

\$50 for households.

There are historical societies and memberships in almost every town in the area. A membership often includes free tours and exhibits and free or reduced-rate

entry to the talks, demonstrations and events held each year. You will be giving a gift that will help the lover of history in your life surround themselves with local history in a new and different way.

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NOT EVERY TEENAGER wants a football. Not every teenager wants a sweater from Abercrombie & Fitch. Not every teenager wants the trending gift.

For that kind of kid in the Hudson Valley, alternative styles and cultures are alive and well. When purchasing for them, going to a chain store is basically a waste of time and money. They don't want to look like everyone else. They also might be making a stand against mass-produced items.

If it is your own kid, you might know what they want and might be able confidently to purchase a skull, some dice or a sweatshirt with just the right edgy sentiment. As an aunt, uncle or friend, however, you might not quite get it. It would be easy for you to fail completely in your gift-giving.

I asked such a kid, what would you do? "Go to a vintage store!" was the immediate answer.

Vintage stores are sort of a battle cry for many teenagers. Vintage



Unique and locally designed clothing (above) and tote bags (left) from Rewind in Kingston.

stores in the area have used clothing rather than contributing to fast fashion. They also often have stuff from unique local crafters and clothing designers who adhere to an alternative style.

I know picking out clothes for a teenager

is daring. But I have been instructed not to worry too much. Part of the fun of looking different is creating something completely unique yourself. Equipped with scissors, fabric markers, needle and thread or safety pins, what you buy



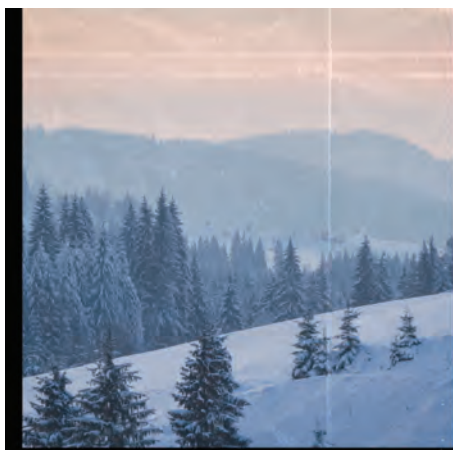
Hope

comes in many forms

For some, it means experiencing the magic of the holiday season through their eyes, one last time.

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**Pop Arts and Crafts displayed at
Red Owl Collections in Kingston**

might not look the same once they get done with it.

If you are intimidated by the act of buying clothes, buy your giftees fabric markers and white t-shirts! You have provided a canvas to start a project on.

Accessories also work. Pop Arts & Crafts makes unique jewelry like anatomical heart, plague doctor, mushroom and eye earrings. They can be found at both Red Owl in Kingston and Curio Cabinet of the Hudson Valley in Poughkeepsie. If fashion in general is still too intimidating still stick with vintage stores many will still have options. For example Rewind in Kingston carries vinyl stickers, collage kits, mugs and tote bags all designed by local artists.

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destination becomes a goal.

The peace within our pilgrimage brings us to the giving tree. We strive to create an environment where we can bestow upon others the experiences and remedies which will lead them nearer to their own Shangri-Las.

While we can never fully actualize this state for others, it will warm our hearts and calm our minds knowing we did what we could to assist them. Some local organizations pride themselves on the techniques they have developed to help others.

If we approach the holiday season as a time for spreading good will through more than the traditional methods of gift-giving, we realize that the potential exists for us to bestow upon others something greater: experiences of restorative healing, natural serenity, and perhaps even a tiny glimpse of enlightenment.

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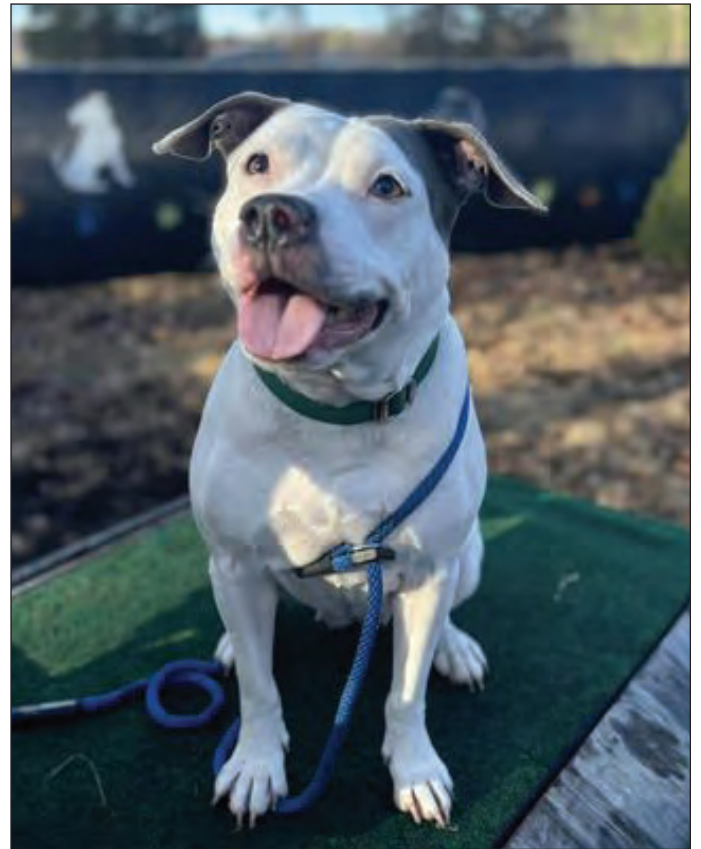


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Do you need a Snoopy?

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Left, Tucker is a male Bull Mastiff/Norwegian Elk Hound who enjoys tug-of-war, belly rubs, and running around outside; right, Brandi is a female American Pit Bull Terrier who loves to cuddle and enjoys humans of all ages.

MANY IN OUR local communities have difficulty during the holidays for any number of reasons. Think back

for a moment to the classic 1965 animated film, *A Charlie Brown Christmas*. Charlie Brown undergoes his seasonal soul-searching and existential crisis in a

five-cent therapy session with Lucy.

While this struggle for Charlie — what's the true meaning of Christmas? — may seem an eternal trope, there's one thing on which we can all agree, Charlie's seemingly endless need to depend on his best friend Snoopy for assistance and reliance when it comes to any holiday dilemma..

Our pets are often our stability, unwavering in their loyalty, and deserving of our affection. Pets are the gift we give ourselves, and what is returned is often far more rewarding. I would ask, then, at what better time of year than this should we support these animals and those that care for them?

Several of our local animal shelters need our assistance not only during the holiday season, but throughout the entire year. Yes, monetary donations

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the holidays are all about.....

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The gift of inspiration

All art is the story of its creator

ARTISTS COME IN all shapes and sizes. Painters, sculptors, carvers, writers Who are we to define art?

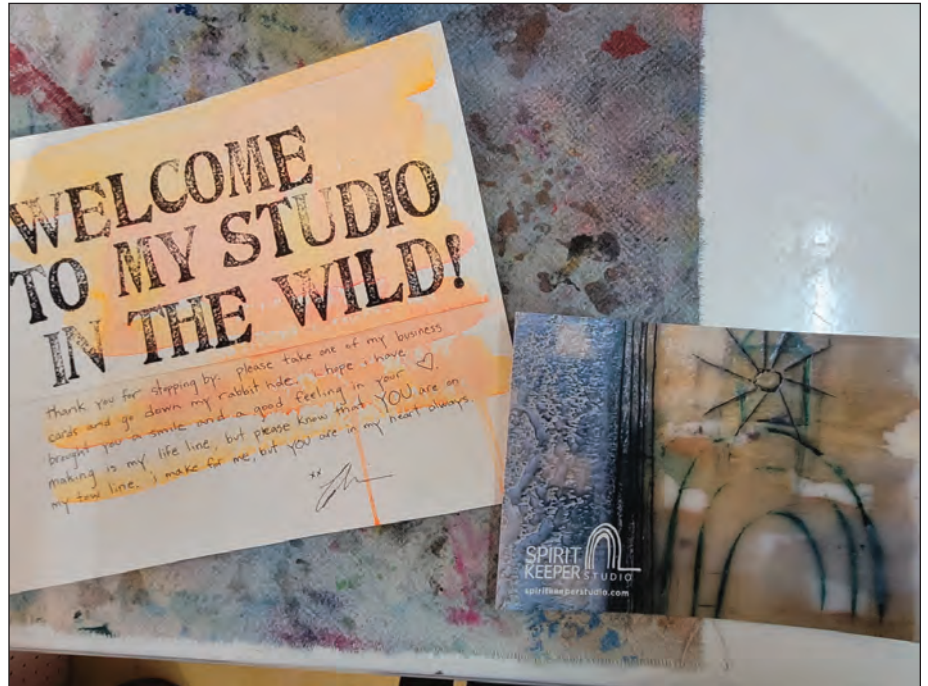
Not so long ago, one of my friends started to do paper-cutting as an art form. She told me how she suddenly felt compelled to carve and shape paper in different ways. Amazingly, she has found different things to carve and shape from paper. Photographs, magazine pages, paper of different textures and shades.

Her delicate and time-consuming work keeps evolving. She found out that there is a history of paper-cutters in her lineage and a small community of paper-cutters out in the wider world.

What she creates is really quite beautiful. It catches light and casts shadows. It can portray any number of different interpretations and meaning both to its creator and to those viewing it. I can talk to this artist friend of mine endlessly about her art.

Finding the right gift can be difficult. She has sculpting tools. She has a room full of paper and materials from everywhere.

How would I begin to purchase her something that can help her in this



Spirit Keeper studio tells her story in a note and on her business cards.

endeavor? Painters have paint, often a specific paint. They also already have brushes, often a specific kind of brush. Photographers have cameras. Potters have clay. And so on.

What do you buy an artist? My latest and greatest advice is: *inspiration*.

There are so many artists here in the Hudson Valley. This is their time to shine! Our local artists are often at the plethora of handmade local craft fairs throughout the holiday season. They use the season, as do our local stores, to get them through the slow and quiet winter. They are eager

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The gift can be for practical use or something to view from afar. However, no matter what it is, it is a story of an artist making a go at what they love. If they happen to have a card containing their website or a postcard, make sure to take that. When wrapping the gift, place the card at the top.

Perhaps when the gift is being opened you can tell the story to your artist friend. This person set up the most beautiful table ... this person was inspired by ... this person uses only salvaged materials ... this person went to school for this ... this person traveled here to learn more.

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The bookstore experience

Is there a word to describe the bookstore obsessed?

THOUGHT OF THE most stupendous gift for the bookstore lover. I'll tell you exactly what it is a little later in this article, but I want to set the stage first.

Is there a word to describe the person who is obsessed with local bookstores? A bibliophile is a lover of books, and that is not what I mean. Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines bibliomania as "the extreme preoccupation of collecting books." You can be defined by one or both of these words and never once step foot in a bookstore.

What I am talking about is the type of person who rates a new town by whether it has a bookstore or, all the better, three bookstores! That'd be the kind of person who feels compelled to go out of their way simply because they heard there was an interesting little bookstore on some back road somewhere only 45 minutes away. They're there for the sake of being there. They'd be just as happy around the corner seeing what is new at the bookstore in their neighborhood.

My family, we are these people. My husband, child and I seek out bookstores wherever we go. We arrive together at the doorstep and



Start the gift with the Hudson Valley Book Trail tote bag.

simply, without words, part ways. I head to the fiction section, my kid spends half the time in history and the other half in the horror section, and my husband heads for the travel section. Sometimes we stay for 20 minutes, sometimes an hour and a half.

The length of stay does not matter. It is the sense of absorption in the environment that makes

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Am I overselling their character? Not at all. They can quietly and calmly help a four-year-old full of ideas of creatures, colorful and diverse, from a world that exists only inside their mind locate the perfect place to fulfill their fantasies. They then can shift to help find a well-read old codger like my dad marvel at the small details that ring true to him in a historical recounting. These people will bring a smile to many faces throughout the day and will always have another recommendation at hand.

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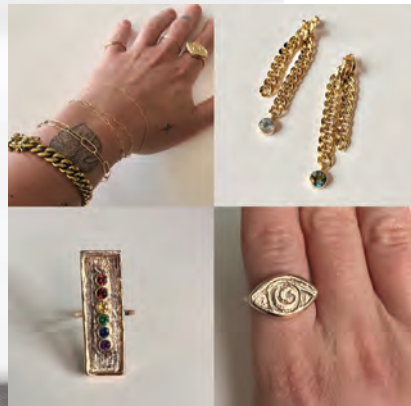
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already have it. More significantly, you are taking from them the very act of doing what they love — going to a bookstore.

I am back to my original purpose of disclosing the perfect gift for those people who love bookstores! Here in the Hudson Valley we have a Hudson Valley Book Trail. If you would like more info on what that is check out

Hudson Valley Holiday

Shop local guide

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our earlier article: <https://hudsonvalleyone.com/2021/04/24/exploring-the-hudson-valley-book-trail/>

The bookstores on the book trail have lovely little tote bags with a hand-drawn map of the trail and a list of the book-sellers. Buy this tote! Then buy gift certificates of whatever value you feel is sufficient and put them in the tote. A smaller gift might consist of five-dollar gift certificates from three stores along the route. You could pick only used bookstores or three stores near each other. You could stretch the bookstores out in such a way that the receiver of this gift might just have to stop at several others along the way.

If yours is a bigger gift, increase the amount or the number of stores. Three stores, four stores, all the stores on the book trail. The sky is the limit!

You are creating an experience, like a treasure map with golden doubloons

along the way. An excited bookstore lover may make the tour in one day. A more pensive bookstore lover will stretch the joy out over the dark winter months

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tempt at delaying the inevitable. I always snicker a bit when the final hardy plants of fall make their appear-

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ance. It's their – and our – attempt to say we have one last trick left up our sleeve. We hunker down, enjoy the delights of the holiday season, and wait for the first snowdrop to lift our spirits.

Personally, I think it's all about aspiration and subsequent expectation, something to plan for, something to count on, and something on which to then focus our hopes.

There are no guarantees that a planted seed will eventually bloom. One plants, and one hopes. The seed is the embodiment of a gardener's way of saying, "I believe in nature, I believe in the earth."

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Recollections of a collection collector

To know the collection is to know the collector

"I had a friend once. He had a cactus. Same cactus sitting on his windowsill for 15 years. And then one day, someone gave him a second cactus, and within six months he had to move to a bigger house with enough space for his cactus collection. My mate Paul, he collected collections. (He) wrote a memoir, Recollections of a collection collector. As far as I know, it's still unpublished."

— From *Detectorists*, Filmrise, BBC Four, 2014.

AS SOMEONE WHO has been both the subject and the object of collector's condescension (a term I have personally coined and one whose semantics I will attempt to explain) I can say with absolute certainty that these sentiments do in fact exist. As a collector of (insert obsession here), I have looked down on those who do not collect items as floating through life without purpose.

On the opposite side, we find non-collectors who look down their collective noses at those of us lining up at swap meets, flea markets, boot and garage sales and antique shops. They see us collectors as mindless drones. We cannot think, therefore we collect. The deeper meanings of life have been lost on us. Life in all its infinite magic has tragically passed us by.

What does this have to do with holiday gift-giving? I am going to argue that gift-giving provides a golden opportunity to introduce your loved one to the world of collecting.

It really does not matter what they are to collect, as long as passion and curiosity are what connects them to the genre. Many choices of direction can be enjoyable simply because that they are beloved by many. This transactional world provides not only the beginning of a new impetus but also plentiful opportunities for blossoming relationships with other collectors.

Think of wines (oenophiles), first edition and notable books (bibliophiles), cars and automobiles (automobilists), pre-war bottles (bottle collectors), stamps and post cards (philatelists and deltiologists), coins (numismatists) comic books, classic sneakers, couture and mode



Collections can start with anything. Check out a local vintage store for some ideas and start one this holiday season.

clothes/fashion, vintage tech (digital antiquarian), advertising and holiday memorabilia — everything from well-loved aged childhood relics to new and ultra-modern devices are suitable for collection.

To know the collection is to know the collector. Every collection will be as unique and idiosyncratic as its collector. The collection will provide your giftee the opportunity to glimpse purpose in the material world, perhaps one with a connection to the spiritual world as well.

A few of our favorite local hotspots to spawn the gift-giving of collections are Red Owl Collective in Kingston, Antiques Barn at Water Street Market in New Paltz, Hoffman's Barn in Red Hook, Hyde Park Antiques Center and Newburgh Vintage Emporium.



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