

# Connections

The News Magazine of Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties

## NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020

You're Invited to Join CCE  
Virtually for an Informative  
Get-together. Association  
Annual Meeting Scheduled  
for Thursday, November 5 1

Educator Refreshes Healthy  
Connections 3

Get your Popcorn! The Shows  
Are About to Start 4

4-H Happenings 5

Guide Makes Navigating  
Resources Easier 6

4-H Afterschool Back in Action 7

My 4-H Story 8

Community Development 9

Join us—Grow with Cornell  
Cooperative Extension 10

Staying Social Despite  
Distance 12

Seed-to-Supper Project  
Looking for Community  
Garden Partners 14

Holidays Interrupted—Easy  
Holiday Recipes to the Rescue 16

Good Advice Twice 18

Program Events 19



*Unlike the camaraderie enjoyed at the Association Annual meeting of 2019, shown here, this year's meeting will be held virtually on your tabletop. We look forward to seeing you in what we hope will be recalled in future years as the one to remember.*

## You're Invited to Join CCE Virtually for an Informative Get-together. Association Annual Meeting Is Scheduled for Thursday, November 5

Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) of Schoharie and Otsego Counties has announced its upcoming annual association meeting, scheduled for Thursday, November 5, at 6 p.m. CCE will conduct the meeting virtually, online, utilizing Zoom and invites all residents to learn more about the work and accomplishments of the organization, especially with its COVID-19 response in our communities.

"Conducting a meeting virtually is certainly not our preference, but for now, it is the only option that allows us to meet as a group during this unique public health crisis," said Don Smyers, Association Executive Director. "We always prefer, of course, to meet in an evening dinner environment when participants can renew friendships and make new acquaintances."

To participate in the virtual annual meeting, register online at [www.cceschoharie-otsego.org](http://www.cceschoharie-otsego.org). Registration is open now and participation is free. After registering, an online link will be returned to you by email for you to enter the meeting space on November 5.

*Continues on page 2*

## PRODUCT ENDORSEMENT

Cornell Cooperative Extension and its employees assume no liability for the effectiveness or result of any product. Any reference to consumer or commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by Cooperative Extension is implied.



173 South Grand Street, Suite 1  
Cobleskill, NY 12043  
518-234-4303  
e-mail: [schoharie@cornell.edu](mailto:schoharie@cornell.edu)



123 Lake Street  
Cooperstown, NY 13326  
607-547-2536  
e-mail: [otsego@cornell.edu](mailto:otsego@cornell.edu)

[www.cceschoharie-otsego.org](http://www.cceschoharie-otsego.org)

## OUR MISSION

Cornell Cooperative Extension puts knowledge to work in pursuit of economic vitality, ecological sustainability, and social well-being. We bring local experience and research-based solutions together, helping New York State families and communities thrive in our rapidly changing world.

**Vol. 3, No. 6, November/December 2020. Published six times per year by Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties**

*Don R. Smyers, Editor*

*Jan Ryder-Carter, Associate Editor*

*Cathleen Berry, Design and Layout*

*Madelyn Sanchez, Proofreader*

173 South Grand Street, Suite 1  
Cobleskill, NY 12043  
518-234-4303 or 518-296-8310  
[schoharie@cornell.edu](mailto:schoharie@cornell.edu)

123 Lake Street  
Cooperstown, NY 13326  
607-547-2536  
[otsego@cornell.edu](mailto:otsego@cornell.edu)

[www.cceschoharie-otsego.org](http://www.cceschoharie-otsego.org)

Office hours both locations: 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Monday–Friday

New York State College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, New York State College of Human Ecology, and New York State College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University, Cooperative Extension Associations, county governing bodies, and U.S. Department of Agriculture, cooperating.

## Annual Meeting, continued from page 1

“Like most years, we have regular agenda items, but we plan to move through them quickly to allow for the educator presentations,” added Smyers.

Educators will discuss their educational efforts and outcomes, and the meeting will conclude with staff 4-H educators presenting an abridged version of the 4-H Virtual Showcase, which was created to acknowledge this year’s fair-bound 4-H’ers. The Showcase highlights the stories of 4-H’ers whose year of program participation and project work could not be shared at the fairs because of their postponements until next year.

To enrich the user’s virtual experience, the Association Annual Report and meeting agenda will be available for review. Visit our webpage at [www.cceschoharie-otsego.org](http://www.cceschoharie-otsego.org) to learn more about the annual meeting.

The Association will also conduct a brief business meeting, which allows for participants to ask questions regarding the business of the organization. The election of at-large board members and program advisory committee members is planned to coincide with the meeting.

If you have questions regarding the meeting or the registration process, please call either the Cobleskill office at 518-234-4303, ext. 111 or the Cooperstown office at 607-547-2536, ext. 0.

## NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTION

To subscribe to **Connections**, the bi-monthly e-newsletter of Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties, visit our website, [www.cceschoharie-otsego.org](http://www.cceschoharie-otsego.org). Click on “Connections,” button in the lower right corner, and fill out and submit your subscription. It’s free, and by subscribing you are assured of receiving future issues, without missing any news or programs of the Association. Printed copies are also available at the Association offices in Cobleskill, Cooperstown, and Oneonta. Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties does not share readers’ personal information with third parties. Our emails are to keep you up to date with current events. If you do not wish to receive our notices, you can unsubscribe at any time.



*Join us in welcoming Kimberly Ferstler, CCE's new Healthy Connections nutrition educator.*

## Educator Refreshes Healthy Connections

Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties has a new Healthy Connections nutrition educator! Kimberly Ferstler grew up in NYC and never thought about where her food came from . . . until she joined a CSA—Community Supported Agriculture group.

“Through that direct partnership with a farm on Long Island, I became aware of food production, access, and justice issues,” said Kimberly. “I started reading books on food and agriculture by authors like Wendell Berry, Michael Pollan, and Joel Salatin, and was struck by the idea that people can be both overweight and undernourished at the same time.”

About ten years ago, she decided to make a big change, and left the classical music industry to learn to farm, with an eye towards bringing local, seasonal vegetables to more people. Her first apprenticeship was at Solstice Hill Farm in Seward, and she spent additional seasons at farms in Dutchess and Sullivan Counties, as well as in Massachusetts and Pennsylvania. Just before coming to CCE, she worked for the Center for Agricultural Development and Entrepreneurship (CADE). She keeps a small flock of dairy-cross sheep at her home in West Oneonta. She is again a CSA member, this time with a farm in Otsego County.

“Healthy Connections is the sister nutrition education program to CCE’s Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP),” said Kimberly.

“Where EFNEP focuses on families with children, Healthy Connections aims to reach older adults, senior caregivers, and other individuals who want help creating and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.” Healthy Connections is funded by Rural Health Education Network of Schoharie, Otsego, and Montgomery Counties (RHENSOM), and Kimberly pointed out that “the program happily serves people in all three counties!”

About the Healthy Connections program:

### Who?

- Groups
- Individuals
- Adults of any age residing in Schoharie, Otsego, or Montgomery Counties

### What?

- Series of nutrition lessons, or
- One-time nutrition lesson/event
- Just one hour a week!

### Why?

- Start where you are
- Experience nutrition education hands-on
- Try small changes that lead to healthier living!

The program’s interactive and supportive classes are based on MyPlate, the USDA’s current nutrition guide, which highlights delicious nutrient-dense ways to eat and fun, easy ways to incorporate daily physical activity. As part of a lesson, said

*Continues on page 4*



### **Educator, continued from page 3**

Kimberly, participants “might prepare—and sample!—recipes for tasty, healthy, low-cost meals; get tips on meal planning to save time and money; read food labels to make better choices; or explore new ways to keep active.”

For those who aren’t comfortable with the idea of in-person sessions, lessons have been adapted for Zoom (it will require a computer, a laptop, or other device, and a reliable internet connection).

While the COVID-19 numbers remain stable, those who prefer in-person classes can come to the CCE office. There is a large meeting room appropriate for social distancing. All safety protocols will be followed.

If you are interested in learning more about Healthy Connections has to offer, please don’t hesitate to contact nutrition educator, Kimberly Ferstler, at kmf239@cornell.edu or at (518) 234-4303, ext. 120.



## **Get your Popcorn! The Shows Are About to Start**

Throughout the year Schoharie County 4-H members and Otsego County 4-H members have completed hands-on projects that have helped them grow in knowledge and develop lifelong skills. With the absence of the Schoharie County Sunshine Fair and the Otsego County Fair, CCE collaborated to create a Virtual Showcase for 4-H youth. Although this showcase cannot replace the fair, we have created a memorable record to celebrate youth accomplishments this year. We are proud to have been able to provide a platform for 4-H’ers to showcase their hard work and perseverance.

The 2020 Schoharie County and Otsego County 4-H Virtual Showcases are available for viewing on the Association’s webpage, [www.cceschoharie-otsego.org](http://www.cceschoharie-otsego.org), or from your TV, through the 4-H Schoharie & Otsego Counties YouTube Channel:

**Schoharie County Showcase:**  
[www.youtu.be/x\\_uUVrKb0WM](http://www.youtu.be/x_uUVrKb0WM)

**Otsego County Showcase:**  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=D-GfolbSXSE&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D-GfolbSXSE&feature=youtu.be)



# 4-H Happenings

## Schoharie County Happenings

October 1 marks the end of one 4-H year and the beginning of the next. After spending the last six months working diligently, but mostly individually at home, our 4-H members are looking forward to participating in safely organized groups again. 4-H has always been geared to group activities and learning situations, and with care, our clubs are following the prescribed COVID-19 Safety Plan and are beginning to meet together when possible. We have received reports from several clubs of successful meetings and very happy youth.

The Clover Club has been meeting weekly in the farmyard of their leader, following social distancing and masking requirements. The youth of the club have begun work on a poultry project utilizing 4-H curriculum called *Scratching the Surface*. As they work through the project book, the youth will learn the stages of embryo development, how to care for newborn chicks, how to grow healthy pullets, and the best practices for poultry and egg production.

The Animal Aggies Club met on a beautiful fall afternoon in their leader's yard to elect officers, carve pumpkins, and create a 4-H-inspired scarecrow to be displayed in the village for National 4-H Week and as an entry into the Cobleskill Rotary's Scarecrow Contest. Each member worked at a separate table to ensure social distancing, and they came together only once, properly masked of course, for a quick photo at the end of the meeting.



Everything Under the Sun Club met on a chilly afternoon, spread out on their leader's lawn to make traditional Native American corn husk dolls. Youth were assisted by a parent or guardian, and each pair was set apart from each other. Everyone wore masks for the entire activity, but their eyes were smiling.



Club leaders are being fully trained on proper COVID-19 procedures and 4-H Educator, Catherine Roberts, is keeping records of each club event and participants. This pandemic has forced us to change how we do things, but it has not changed our mission. Educators, leaders, parents, and volunteers are all still committed to providing programs and content that helps Schoharie County 4-H youth "Learn by Doing." The programming may look different and new this year, but the purpose remains constant.

The pandemic has also opened up opportunities to collaborate with counties across New York State and the entire nation. Already on the calendar, our youth can register for a Horse Knowledge event from Kentucky 4-H, a Pet Knowledge series from Oswego, Onondaga, and Herkimer Counties, and a STEM Summit from the National 4-H Office. Likely, in a "normal" year, these clinics would have been available only to 4-H members in the surrounding areas. This year has given our youth a chance to experience a variety of clinics taught by experts from around the country.

*Continues on page 6*



#### 4-H Happenings, continued from page 5

Although all of our youth and leaders will be relieved to resume normal activities once the pandemic has subsided, there has been a silver lining throughout. These new ways to produce and disseminate programming will continue to allow 4-H educators and leaders to enrich the experiences of their 4-H youth into the future.

#### Otsego County Happenings

During the month of October, the Otsego County 4-H program had been busy celebrating National 4-H Week, from October 4-10, 2020. 4-H clubs have been displaying their 4-H spirit around the county.

October is a time to start the new 4-H year. 4-H members have been busy completing last year's paperwork and planning new projects and activities for the new 4-H year. Many 4-H leaders have taken the required COVID-19 training for 4-H clubs for meeting in person. Some clubs have been meeting following

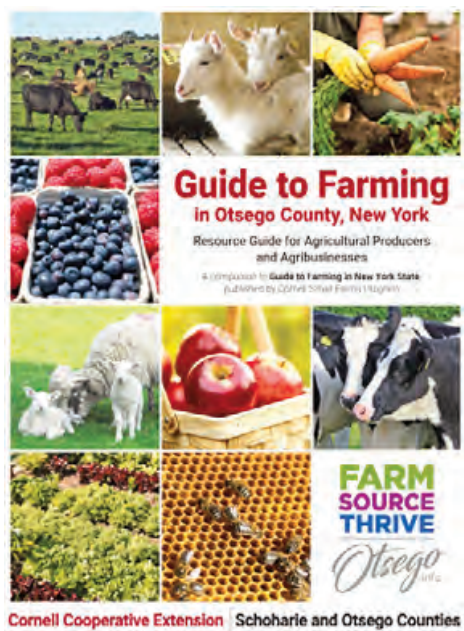
these procedures and guidelines. It is still an option for clubs to not meet in person at this time.

The fall 4-H Dog Training program is underway with 4-H dog trainers learning tips and tricks on dog showmanship by Sonja Galley.



Teresa Adell, 4-H Educator, set up a display at the Farmers' Museum for their Celebration of Autumn Festival, where visitors were able to find information about joining 4-H.

## Guide Makes Navigating Resources Easier



Farm Source Thrive Otsego has assembled a comprehensive resource guide in a unique format to assist agricultural producers and agribusinesses with the information and resources they are looking for.

The *Guide to Farming in Otsego County* is a new approach to an old concept and was developed as a complement to the Cornell Small Farms Program, *Guide to Farming in NY*. It provides farmers, food producers and processors, and agribusinesses with con-

tact information and brief descriptions of services provided by local, regional, and national organizations and agencies.

It features an innovative cross-reference table to help users navigate the ninety-four resources listed in the guide. The layout of the *Guide to Farming in Otsego County* is usable in every county in the state, where regional, state, and national resources are found.

Find the *Guide* online on the CCE website at [www.cceschoharie-otsego.org/resources/guide-to-farming-in-otsego-county-new-york](http://www.cceschoharie-otsego.org/resources/guide-to-farming-in-otsego-county-new-york), complete with searchable links. It is also available in print format at our offices upon request.

We all benefit when farms and agribusinesses succeed. Rural economies are dependent on an agricultural economy. Revenues generated through the local food system circulate repeatedly through rural communities, which provides a significant multiplier effect within the economy. Cornell Cooperative Extension is here to provide education, support, and assistance to area farmers to help them succeed.



# 4-H Afterschool Back in Action

Although the CCE 4-H Afterschool Program has operated under difficult challenges since the pandemic began, the program was back in action when schools opened up for in-person education in Cobleskill-Richmondville and Schoharie Central Schools as the 2020 school year began. The Afterschool Program continues to be fully licensed and operates under the supervision of NYS Office of Children and Family Services.

“We are following all the new regulations for COVID-19. So things are a little different at the 4-H Afterschool Program,” said Program Coordinator Susan Salisbury. “We are wearing masks at all times with scheduled mask breaks, practicing six-foot social distancing, and doing enhanced cleaning, all while continuing to do science, art, and other activities.”

Hands-on activities are still what sets our 4-H Afterschool Programs apart.

In Schoharie the 4-H Afterschoolers have been busy with art projects so they can help out their school community by decorating a 4-H Afterschool Program bulletin board that will represent the different seasons as they occur.

In Cobleskill the 4-H Afterschoolers conducted a science experiment about how clouds produce rain. To understand how rain occurs in real time, they recreated the process by following the experiment step by step with their individual jars.



*Waiting for rain.*



*Starting to rain.*



*Rain.*



*Halloween bulletin board.*

“Back in action” are the words of the day in both programs when Afterschoolers are given a chance to go outside to move and play.



*Active play in Schoharie.*

We look forward to continuing to update you on our afterschool activities as the year moves forward.



# MY 4-H STORY

A summation of previous *My 4-H Stories* printed in *Connections* and is an excerpt from Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties 2020 Annual Report to the Community, which can be accessed on our website at [www.cceschoharie-otsego.org/2020AnnualReport](http://www.cceschoharie-otsego.org/2020AnnualReport).

## Their Words Describe the Impact



“4-H has taught me communications skills, the importance of community service . . . and, most importantly, leadership skills,” writes Makayla Ryder, a recent alumnus of the Schoharie County 4-H program. Makayla shares her story in the ***My 4-H Story*** column of the September–October ***Connections***, the news magazine of CCE Schoharie and Otsego Counties.

4-H is a unique non-formal education program for youth, ages 5 to 19, that engages youth in learning by doing. Few organizations can boast the influence on positive life skills that Cornell Cooperative Extension’s 4-H program can.



The ***My 4-H Story*** column in ***Connections*** is a voice of adult 4-H alumni who share stories of their 4-H years. Enjoy these short excerpts from select articles published in recent months.

*“I am sure the experience of being immersed in a structured group of like-minded adolescents, led by compassionate, nurturing leaders helped develop a variety of personal and social skills, especially finding the self-confidence that was buried deep within me. The experience helped shape who I am today . . . ”* Kristin Pullyblank, CCE Board Member **(March/April 2020)**

*“Early exposure and experience with public speaking has been very beneficial with my work and volunteer activities . . . being a leader . . . becoming Board President. It feels like I am really giving back to the family that gave so much to me. So, my message to all 4-H members and alumni is to continue paying it forward because it truly does come back tenfold.”* Jason Stone, CCE Board President **(May/June 2020)**

*“I have obtained certain skills that started in 4-H that have helped me excel through life and certain interests that have brought me to where I am today. I have lived it. I know what 4-H is capable of doing for a child . . . ”* Catherine Roberts, 4-H Educator **(July/August 2020)**



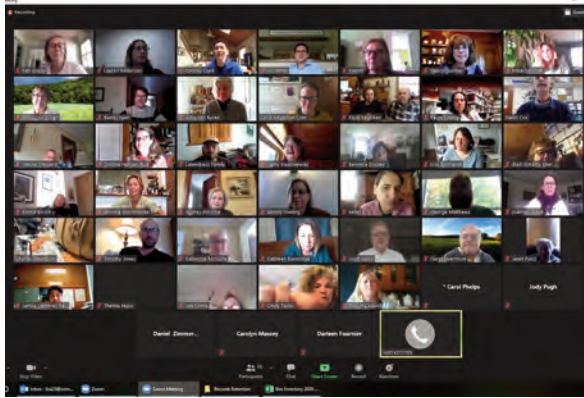
Did you grow up as 4-H'er, and would like to share how 4-H influenced your life? We invite you to share your **My 4-H Life** story in an upcoming issue. Contact Jan Ryder, Associate Editor, by emailing her at [jrc28@cornell.edu](mailto:jrc28@cornell.edu) or by calling 518-234-4303.



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

*Excerpt from Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties 2020 Annual Report to the Community, which can be accessed on our website at [www.cceschoharie-otsego.org/2020AnnualReport](http://www.cceschoharie-otsego.org/2020AnnualReport)*

## Online Learning Answers the Need



Until 2004, Master Gardener Volunteer candidates from Schoharie, Otsego, and surrounding counties attended training at CCE Saratoga Co. in Ballston Spa. At the time, we were drawing one or two new volunteers annually. Something had to change. So surrounding county CCE educators and Association Ag Educator, David Cox, developed a new comprehensive Master Gardener Volunteer Training program, so participants could train closer to their home community. Since then, training classes have averaged between fifteen and twenty trainees.

Fast forward to 2020. By January, CCE colleagues Carla Crim, Delaware Co.; Garet Livermore, Herkimer Co.; and David Cox had outlined the ninth Master Gardener Volunteer Training program for our region, held on ten consecutive Mondays, September 21–November 14, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., for fifty hours of required class time. To share the travel burden, they planned to host classes among three locations in Cooperstown, Cobleskill, and Hamden.

Soon after, everything changed. The pandemic safety mandates closed our offices and suspended programming temporarily. So they had to change delivery method yet again. The program shift to online training was inevitable and relatively simple—half the class time for twice as many sessions, running through March 15, 2021.

Surprisingly the enrollment grew to forty trainees, the largest class since 2004, and by an odd twist of fate, an unexpected positive outcome during the pandemic.

Scientific studies have concluded that access to nature is essential to human health and well-being. Our current Master Gardeners are helping people connect with nature by creating accessible gardens and gardening opportunities that also reignite one's connections with each other. What an enthusiastic boost this new class will bring to increase our Master Gardeners' capacity to engage our communities in need!



Upon course completion in the spring, this year's 40 Master Gardener trainees will become Master Gardener apprentices, who are expected to complete 50 hours of Master Gardener Volunteer service within a twelve-month period. The combined 2000 hours of volunteer service will benefit their communities as they join ranks with the over 23,000 Master Gardener Volunteers nationwide.

# Join us—Grow with Cornell Cooperative Extension



*Gardens are inherently beautiful, and the gardens at the Education and Outreach Center will enhance the NYS Rt 80 gateway through the north end of Cooperstown. Illustration by Anne Wilfer*

Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) Schoharie and Otsego Counties has kicked off the first phase of its Grow with Cornell Cooperative Extension fundraising campaign. The proceeds of the campaign will be invested in CCE's Education and Outreach Center at 123 Lake Street, Cooperstown, to redesign the grounds into a hands-on place for garden learning.

The Grow with Cornell Cooperative Extension campaign is an investment in an outdoor informal learning center featuring teaching and display gardens. Currently, box planters on the site are planted with All-America Selections for demonstrating the performance of new flower and vegetable variety selections. The new gardens will provide greater space for variety evaluation and much more.

The project calls for improving the site by adding necessary infrastructure and improved parking and lighting; creating a rain garden to demonstrate surface water remediation before it leaves the site; a garden pavilion for instruction, preparation, and storage; garden fences, benches, and gateway arbors; hardscape pavers for connection to public walkways and the Education and Outreach Center; and educational signage and places for quiet reflection and active gardening.

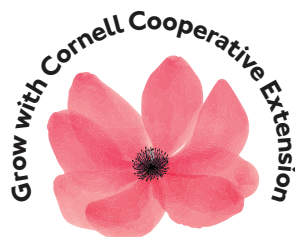
On the site, CCE will promote gardening and landscape themes, such as raised beds, composting, low maintenance plants and cultural systems, annual and perennial flowerbeds, vegetable or kitchen garden, and small fruit demonstration. It will support programming focused on sustainability, the selection of growing systems and plants, and the use of reduced inputs to create productive gardens for the 21st century gardener.

Gardens are an invaluable asset in informing staff and volunteers of new approaches to hands-on learning by adults and youth, and for enhancing the lives of an aging population.

The construction of the garden pavilion will become the architectural center piece of the garden. It is a 352 sq. ft. freestanding building, which will serve as a gathering place for program participants and visitors and a work shed for garden tasks and storage.

Master Gardeners of Otsego County, who are trained to provide outreach assistance on behalf of the organization, conceived of the project to provide garden-based learning for the community. As gardeners, they value the transformative nature of gardening for youth and adults, for making houses into homes, for encouraging healthier life styles and well-being, for satisfying the pioneering spirit





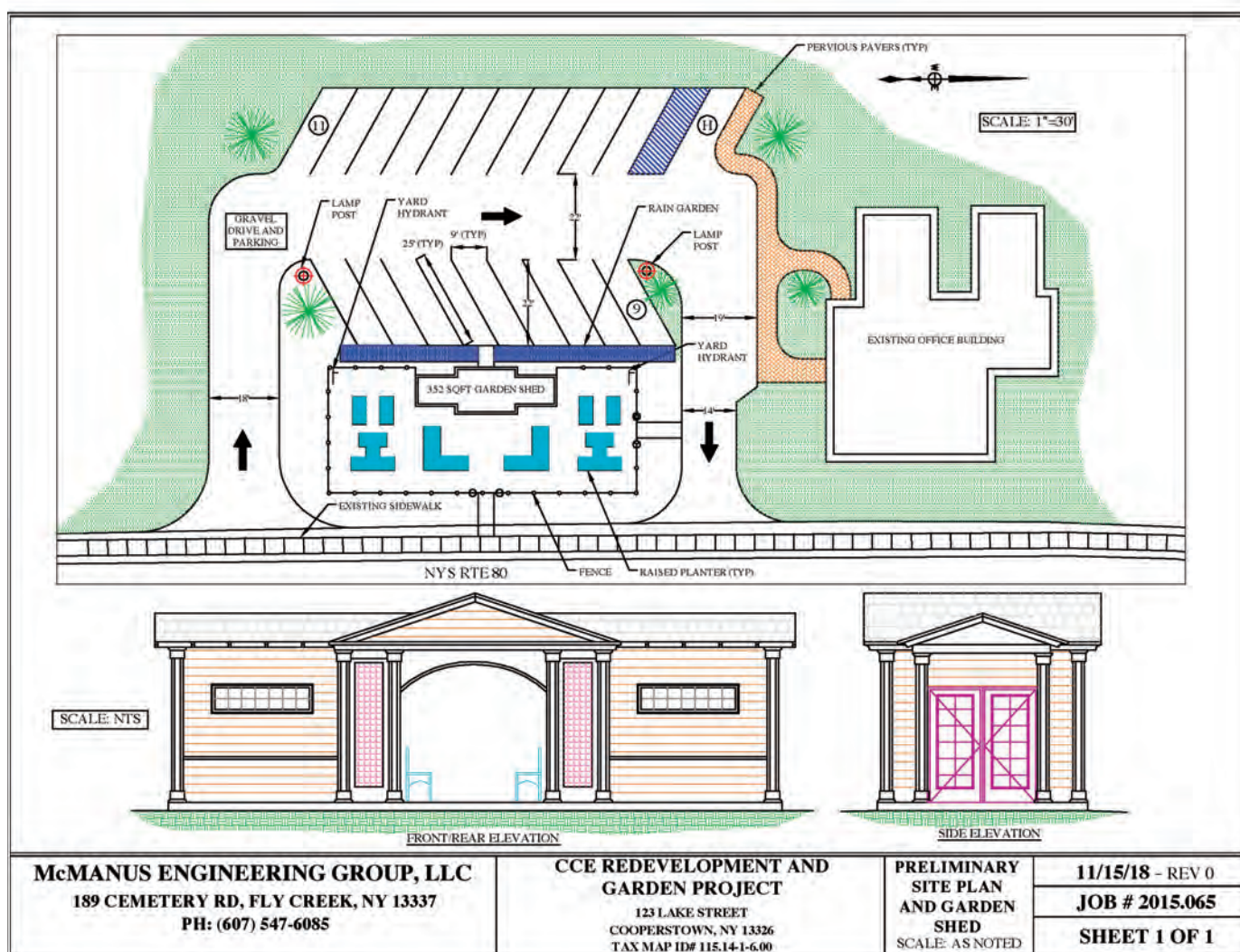
Creating a Place for Learning  
through Gardening

for self-sufficiency (particularly apt in the new normal of COVID-19), and for providing enjoyable and nutritious fresh fruits and vegetables for the table.

The cost of the undertaking is estimated at \$200,000, which will be raised through contributions and grants. The campaign will begin its public fundraising phase in the upcoming weeks. Individuals who wish to contribute should contact Don Smyers, Executive Director, by emailing him at [drs269@cornell.edu](mailto:drs269@cornell.edu) for more information.

The fundraising committee members are Pati Grady, co-chair, and Betsy Sywetz, Master Gardener Volunteers; Jason Stone and Bill Woodward, co-chair, and board members; Bob Sutherland, garden advisor; and Don Smyers, Association Executive Director.

The site is on the 1.3-acre Education and Outreach Center, owned by organization at 123 Lake Street within the Village of Cooperstown. The site has been the home of Cornell Cooperative Extension since May 1948, when it was gifted from the Farmers' Museum to the Otsego County Farm and Home Bureau and 4-H Club Association, a former name of Cornell Cooperative Extension.



*The gardens will utilize portions of the existing sprawling parking lot with a conversion into teaching and demonstration gardens. Raised and ground-level beds will be accessible by gardeners of all ages and of varying degrees of physical mobility.*



# Staying Social Despite Distance

BY LAUREN ANDERSON, FINANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

For some, the short days and frigid temperatures of winter signal the rise of depression, anxiety, and loneliness. Experts predict deeper bouts of seasonal depression this year, as people become increasingly isolated during the dark winter months. Now, exacerbated by recommendations that extended families not gather over the upcoming holiday season, it is important to stay connected with those you love.

The COVID-19 pandemic has cancelled events and imposed travel restrictions, but friends and families can retain a feeling of togetherness regardless of distance through the holidays and beyond. Video calls and virtual get-togethers can be a great way to keep in touch with distant relatives or stay close with friends. Most of the services listed below are available at little or no cost. We recommend researching each option to determine what will best suit your needs.

## Programs/Apps

- **Zoom** is a very popular platform for video and audio meetings, conferences, webinars, etc. Available on all platforms, Zoom offers secure meetings, screen sharing, call recording, and instant messaging.
- **Skype** offers free online video and audio calling, instant messaging, and instant online meetings. Skype offers live subtitles, call recording, screen sharing, and inexpensive international calling packages.
- **Google Hangouts** is available on all platforms to anyone with a Gmail account, and allows users to send multimedia, instant messages, and participate in voice and video calls for up to ten people.
- If your cell phone is on a limited data plan, **WhatsApp** can conserve data by using your phone's internet connection to send and receive messages, calls, and multimedia.
- **Slack** and **Microsoft Teams** are virtual collaboration software designed for groups and organizations to communicate quickly, exchange ideas and information, and share files.
- **Social Media** remains a great way to keep in touch with friends and family, and to share interests and gain inspiration from like-minded people by joining groups and following pages that resonate with your lifestyle. Share photos, videos, stories, and events quickly and easily.
- **Houseparty** is a "face-to-face social network" that offers video chat, games, karaoke, screen sharing, and trivia.
- **Teleparty** is an extension for Google Chrome that lets you watch movies and TV shows with friends online. The extension synchronizes playback and adds group chat to Netflix, Disney+, Hulu, and HBO.
- **Steam** is a web- and mobile-based software storefront with games to fit any budget. The ability to play local multiplayer games remotely, add friends, join groups, and participate in in-game message and voice chat makes Steam a great way to stay connected while killing boredom indoors.



- **Spotify** allows users to create shared playlists with friends and family.

Do you need some inspiration to keep things interesting? Host a virtual family reunion to catch up with distant relatives, arrange a movie or game night, prepare and eat a meal together, start a virtual book club or crafting group, or hold your own virtual paint and sip.

### **Troubleshooting Network Issues**

The only equipment needed to stay connected is a computer, smart phone, or tablet with an internet connection. Although this technology has become relatively commonplace, it does have limitations, especially when a reliable network connection is unavailable. Not all communities have access to high-speed internet service, particularly in rural areas. If you find your home network is slow or spotty, try the following to improve your connection.

- Check your internet provider's plan speeds and upgrade if necessary.
- Disconnect or power off Wi-Fi-enabled devices when not in use to conserve bandwidth.
- Move your wireless router to a central location in the home, or closer to your work space if you mainly use your connection in one area of the house. A mesh network configuration may be a good option if your Wi-Fi signal does not cover your whole home.
- If your router is more than three to five years old, consider upgrading to a newer model, especially if your connected devices are significantly newer.
- Connect your computer directly to your router with an ethernet cable. A wired connection will generally give you a noticeable speed boost with added reliability.

If high-speed internet is unavailable at your location, you may opt to use a mobile data plan from your cell phone provider rather than home internet service. First, ensure your data limits are sufficient for your usage, and increase them if needed. Some phones allow you to tether your phone with your computer to share mobile data, or you can use a wireless hotspot from your cell phone provider. If you have a wireless home network available, you can improve poor cell-phone call quality in your home by enabling Wi-Fi Calling. A signal booster can also strengthen your cell phone's connection.

## **Cybersecurity – Keep Your Information Private**

### **PASSWORD MANAGEMENT**

As the tools used by hackers to access your information have evolved, so have password requirements! Nearly every website, app, account, and device requires a password, and these tend not to be easy to keep track of. Effective password management is essential for an organized workflow. LastPass is a web-based password manager, which stores your encrypted data in an online interface, a smartphone app, and/or a browser plug-in. If you prefer to manage your passwords yourself but have trouble remembering them, try using a **passphrase** rather than a **password**. A passphrase is a short sentence that may contain upper and lower case letters, spaces, symbols, punctuation, and numbers. See [www.it.cornell.edu/ncsam/talking-about-passphrases](http://www.it.cornell.edu/ncsam/talking-about-passphrases).

### **IDENTITY VERIFICATION**

Two-Factor Authentication adds a second layer of security to your accounts by requiring that you prove your identity with something you know (your password), as well as something you have (your cell phone or hardware token). You can activate two-factor authentication in the settings of popular apps, including Office 365, Google, Facebook, Twitter, and Amazon. To find out which of your frequently visited sites support two-factor authentication visit [www.twofactorauth.org](http://www.twofactorauth.org).

Additionally, biometric security requires that you verify your identity with *something you are*. Biometric identification is readily available on many devices in the form of fingerprint scanners, facial or speech recognition software, and key-stroke dynamics.



### **PHISHING**

Be on the lookout for suspicious emails or web pages and do not click on any links, open any attachments, or enter any personal information unless you are certain that what you are interacting with is secure and from a legitimate source. Attackers send emails under the guise of trusted individuals or businesses, often requesting that you click on a link or send a reply email with information, account numbers, or passwords. This is an attempt to gain personal or financial information about you,

*Continues on page 14*

## Staying Social, continued from page 13

or to gain access your password-protected accounts, commonly known as phishing.

Be wary, and if you feel something is not right with an email you receive, contact the sender separately to verify that the email is safe. DO NOT reply to the suspicious email; instead reach out with a new email or by phone.

## INFORMATION SECURITY

Be aware of how your private data is stored, and avoid storing sensitive information on mobile de-

vices, as these are more likely to be lost or stolen. Connect only to secure wireless networks whenever you will be sending or receiving private information, and secure your home network with a password. Some organizations require the use of a Virtual Private Network (VPN) to remotely access secure servers, programs, or services. Install programs and apps only from trusted sources, and keep your devices up to date with the latest security patches from the manufacturer or software developer. Finally, the importance of having your data backed up cannot be stressed enough!

## Seed-to-Supper Project Looking for Community Garden Partners

Article prepared by Schoharie Master Gardener Pamela Hart, adapted from CCE Erie County Master Gardener Seed-to-Supper Program and the Oregon Food Bank's Learning Gardens.



*Seed to Supper, A Beginner's Guide to Low Cost Vegetable Gardening* is a comprehensive beginning vegetable gardening curriculum designed for adults gardening on a budget. The program has been adopted by Cornell Cooperative Extension as a shared program of the Oregon Food Bank's Learning Gardens in conjunction with the Oregon State University. Partners across New York, including CCE Master Gardener Volunteer Programs, are training volunteer Garden Facilitators, who then will teach the Seed to Supper curriculum to interested community members. The course highlights practical, low-cost techniques for building, planning, planting, maintaining, and celebrating the harvest of a successful vegetable garden.

The Seed to Supper Project in New York State is partnering with New York Food Banks and Cooperative Extension offices to support more food-secure communities, increasing access to garden produce to provide healthier food choices. The curriculum focuses on low-budget strategies and provides a springboard for making connections among community garden partners and program participants.

A comprehensive 4–6-week beginning gardening course gives novice gardeners the tools needed to connect

with others in community, build confidence in growing fresh produce, and successfully grow a portion of their own food on a limited budget.



### Program Basics

- Introduction to low-cost vegetable gardening
- Offered at no cost at host sites serving the community
- Gardening activities for kids
- Taught by trained volunteer garden facilitators

### Which gardening topics are covered?

- Planning a garden; building healthy soil
- Planting your garden from seeds or transplants
- Caring for a growing garden
- Harvesting and using garden bounty
- Roles and Responsibilities with Seed to Supper

### Program Participants

- Attend a 4–6-session Seed-to-Supper course. (All sessions are free!)
- At completion, receive a print copy of NYS Seed to Supper curriculum
- Learn about building healthy soils, planning, planting, caring for, and harvesting their garden

### Garden Facilitators

- Facilitate classes for program participants at community garden partner venues





Vegetables growing in Delaware County STS Community Garden.

- Must complete a comprehensive preparation training, usually a one-day intensive program; builds skills working in teams and provides instruction on effectively engaging diverse adult audiences
- With the community garden partner, provide program participants with a survey to record their opinions on their experience; share the information with satellite partner(s).

#### Satellite Partners:

- Organization(s) responsible for the county-based Seed to Supper Program(s)
- Recruit and prepare garden facilitators in their county
- Match trained volunteer garden facilitators with community garden partners
- Provide support and course materials to community garden partners and garden facilitators
- Provide summary of efforts locally and any pre-/post-participant data to NYS Satellite Partner, Cornell Garden Based Learning

In 2020, CCE Delaware County received a grant from NYS Department of Health to implement a Seed-to-Supper Program, focusing locally on building community gardens with community partners. CCE Schoharie and Otsego Counties' Master Gardeners currently are preparing their respective programs for 2021 and are looking for potential community garden partners with whom to collaborate in a Seed-to-Supper Program or other garden-based learning programs. For more information or if you would like to be a community garden partner, contact David Cox at CCE at 518-234-4303, ext. 119, or email [dgc23@cornell.edu](mailto:dgc23@cornell.edu).

## Join Cornell Cooperative Extension's Nutrition Programs

### EFNEP and Healthy Connections



- ✓ Build habits of healthy eating and activity for a lifetime
- ✓ Learn to make meals that save time and money
- ✓ Try out new dishes and skills
- ✓ Practice food safety and reduce food waste when selecting, prepping, and storing food

*Where adults and youth learn by doing!*



Whether participating in a group class, one-on-one lesson, or a nutrition event, either online or in person, these programs can make a difference for your family and you!

**To learn more about these programs or to sign up, contact our Nutrition Program Educators:**



**Michelle Leveski**  
EFNEP Nutrition Program  
Educator  
**518-234-4303 Ext. 115**  
[mm139@cornell.edu](mailto:mm139@cornell.edu)



**Kimberly Ferstler**  
Healthy Connections Nutrition Program  
Educator  
**518-234-4303 Ext. 120**  
[kmf239@cornell.edu](mailto:kmf239@cornell.edu)

# Holidays Interrupted—Easy Holiday Recipes to the Rescue



Holidays interrupted is how many felt when we were given the most recent COVID-19 guidance to avoid gathering for the holidays to help stop the spread. That means spending holiday meals solo or in your own small family group.

Now that doesn't stop us from reaching out socially through the telephone or internet. We can share with our extended families all the things we are grateful for and be given the gift of hearing what they have to share, as well. Sharing the gift of pictures can bring even greater joy to all.

The gap some of us need to fill is the holiday meal itself, after all, perhaps you only planned to take a dish to pass, or not have to cook at all. To solve this dilemma, we have gathered some recipes and created a couple menus that require minimal cooking, but capture the traditional flavor and smells of holiday meals.

You may want to add that one dish that just says "holiday" to you or your family to the menus suggested. If cooking for one or two you can cut the recipes ingredients in half making less servings, but just remember, one of the great joys of holiday meals are the leftovers so you might want to make the recipes in their entirety.

## Easy Holiday Rescue Menu #1



**INDIVIDUAL TURKEY OR HAM PANINI SANDWICH**  
**CARROTS L'ORANGE**  
**INDIVIDUAL PUMPKIN CUSTARD**

### Individual Turkey or Ham Panini Sandwich



#### INGREDIENTS:

- 2 slices Italian bread or bread of your choice
- 1 teaspoon vegetable or olive oil
- 2 slices (about 2 oz.) cooked turkey or cooked ham
- 1 slice (1 oz.) low-fat mozzarella or cheese of your choice
- 4 thin slices peeled or unpeeled and cored apple
- 1 tablespoon cranberry sauce
- Lettuce leaves (optional)

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Using a pastry brush spread oil on one side of each piece of bread and lay the bread oil-side down on the work surface.
2. Place the turkey or ham, cheese, apple slices and cranberry sauce on top of one of the slices of the bread. Place the second slice of bread on top, oil side up.
3. Heat a grill or frying pan over medium heat. Grill the sandwich on each side until golden brown, about 3-4 minutes per side.
4. Transfer the sandwich to the work surface, lift one piece of bread and arrange the lettuce inside, then replace the bread. Slice the sandwich in half and serve.

#### Servings: 1

*Nutrition information per serving: Calories:370, Total Carbohydrates: 33 g, Fiber: 2g, Sugar: 8g, Protein: 28g, Total Fat: 14g, Saturated Fat: 5 g, Trans Fat: 0g, Cholesterol: 55mg, Sodium:430mg*

### Carrots l'Orange

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups thinly sliced peeled carrots
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
- Dash salt
- Dash pepper
- ¼ cup orange juice
- 2 teaspoons butter

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Peel and slice carrots thinly.
2. Place sliced carrots in a microwaveable 1½-quart casserole dish. Add ginger, nutmeg, salt, and pepper to carrots.
3. Pour orange juice over the top. Dot with butter, cover with plastic wrap, vent.
4. Microwave for 5 minutes on high, stir, and microwave 5 minutes more. Serve hot.

#### Servings: 6, Serving Size: ½ cup

*Nutrition information per serving: Calories:40, Total Carbohydrates: 7 g, Fiber: 2g, Sugar: 4g, Protein: 1g, Total Fat: 1.5g, Saturated Fat: 1 g, Trans Fat: 0g, Cholesterol: 5mg, Sodium:100mg*





## Individual Pumpkin Custard

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (15 oz.) can pumpkin puree
- 2 large eggs, beaten
- 1 (12 oz.) can evaporated skim milk
- $\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon vanilla
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon ginger
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon cloves
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Crack eggs into small bowl and beat with a whisk or fork.
2. In a large bowl combine all ingredients including eggs, stirring to mix well.
3. Spoon mixture equally, about  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup, into 6 small individual ramekins or custard cups.
4. Place ramekins or custard cups on a baking sheet or in 9x12 baking pan.
5. Bake in a 350°F oven for 50-60 minutes or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean.
6. Cool on a rack. Refrigerate until serving.

*Servings: 6, Serving Size: 3/4 cup*

*Nutrition information per serving: Calories:167, Total Carbohydrates: 31g, Fiber: 2g, Sugar: 27g, Protein: 7g, Total Fat: 2g, Saturated Fat: .7g, Trans Fat: 0g, Cholesterol: 65mg, Sodium: 194mg*



6. Cover baking dish with foil and bake in a 350°F oven for 30-40 minutes. Remove foil. Serve hot.

*Servings: 6, Serving Size: 1 roll*

*Nutrition information per serving: Calories:340, Total Carbohydrates: 14g, Fiber: 2g, Sugar: 3g, Protein: 51g, Total Fat: 8g, Saturated Fat: 3g, Trans Fat: 0g, Cholesterol: 133mg, Sodium: 707mg*

## Waldorf Salad

### INGREDIENTS:

- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup raisins
- 2 tablespoons sugar, divided
- 4 medium apples, cored and cubed
- 1 stalk celery, chopped or sliced
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup plain low-fat yogurt
- 3 tablespoons light mayonnaise
- 3 tablespoons cider vinegar
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup chopped walnuts (optional)

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Prepare apples and celery.
2. In a large bowl combine raisins, 1 tablespoon of sugar, apples, and celery. Mix well, and set bowl aside.
3. In a medium bowl combine yogurt, light mayonnaise, cider vinegar, and remaining tablespoon of sugar. Mix well, and add to apple mixture in large bowl stirring gently.
4. Serve immediately or refrigerate until serving time.

*Servings: 6, Serving Size: 1 cup*

*Nutrition information per serving: Calories: 140, Total Carbohydrates: 29g, Fiber: 4g, Sugar: 23g, Protein: 1g, Total Fat: 3g, Saturated Fat: .5g, Trans Fat: 0g, Cholesterol: 5mg, Sodium: 85mg*



## Easy Holiday Rescue Menu #2



### EASY TURKEY OR HAM ROLL UPS WALDORF SALAD APPLE COBBLER

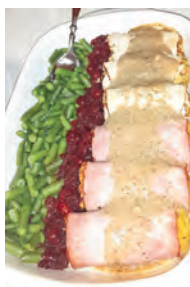
## Easy Turkey or Ham Roll Ups

### INGREDIENTS:

- 12 slices of deli turkey or ham, sliced medium thick
- 2-3 cups prepared stuffing, boxed or homemade
- 1-1 $\frac{1}{2}$  cups prepared gravy, jarred or homemade
- 3 cups frozen green beans
- 1 cup cranberry sauce, canned or homemade
- 1 tablespoon butter

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Use a 9x12 baking dish.
2. On a utility mat lay out 2 overlapping slices of meat, place  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup to  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup prepared stuffing in center and roll, place seam side down in baking dish on one side. Repeat process with remaining ingredients.
3. Place 3 cups frozen green beans on opposite side of baking dish, dot with a tablespoon of butter.
4. Spoon a cup of cranberry sauce in the center of baking dish between beans and roll ups.
5. Spoon prepared gravy over roll ups.



## Apple Cobbler

### INGREDIENTS:

- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- Vegetable cooking spray
- 4 cups apples, peeled or unpeeled, sliced thinly
- 2 cups biscuit baking mix
- 1 egg, beaten
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup 1% milk

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. In a small bowl combine sugar and cinnamon. Set aside.
2. Prepare a 9x12 baking dish with vegetable oil spray.
3. Core and thinly slice apples, placing them in prepared baking dish evenly. Sprinkle with reserved cinnamon sugar mixture.
4. In medium bowl beat egg, then add baking mix and milk, and mix well.
5. Spoon mixture over the apples in baking dish evenly.
6. Bake at 400°F for 20-25 minutes. Serve warm or cold.

*Servings: 12, Serving Size: 1 piece*

*Nutrition information per serving: Calories:140, Total Carbohydrates: 28g, Fiber: 1g, Sugar: 14g, Protein: 3g, Total Fat: 2g, Saturated Fat: 0g, Trans Fat: 0g, Cholesterol: 20mg, Sodium: 250mg*





*Black-legged deer tick on a leaf, just waiting.*

## Good Advice Twice

BY JAN RYDER, ASSOCIATE EDITOR *CONNECTIONS*

Sometimes we don't follow our own good advice. That's exactly what happened to me in October of this year. In an article entitled "Some Like It Hot and Some Don't" in the September/October issue of *Connections*, I warned tick activity would be on the rise with cooling fall temperatures and increasing humidity after our hot, dry summer, and recommended the following steps to guard against tick bites.

Resume those daily tick checks, being sure to dress for the part (light colored clothing with long sleeves and pants tucked into socks—you could even wear tick-killing clothing), use repellents, steer clear of hitchhikers (when you come inside put your clothes in a clothes dryer and run it on high heat for 20 minutes to kill ticks and similar critters), and don't forget to protect your pets. Follow these steps and continue to enjoy the great outdoors!

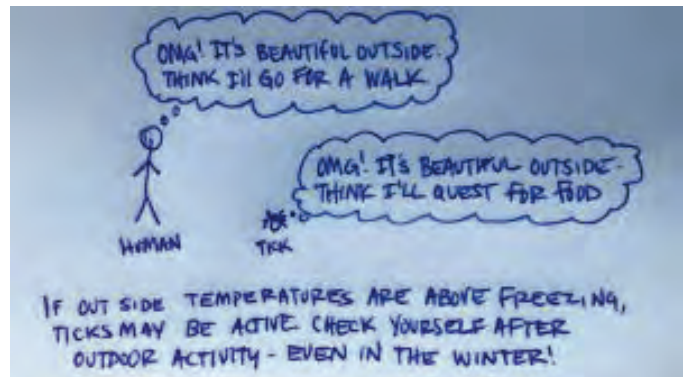
Did I follow any of the good advice listed above when I when hiking on October 10? No, I did not. Pictured here is the evidence which I did not discover until three days later (after I properly removed the tick with tweezers). Had I followed



*My tick bite. The eraser-sized red area at the site of the tick bite indicates only a local reaction to the tick bite and is not considered an Erythema Migrans, or bulls-eye rash. But I was told to keep an eye on the area for about thirty days.*

even some of the steps listed above, even a simple tick check at the end of the day, I might have avoided a trip to my doctor's office for treatment, possible exposure to tick-borne illnesses, and an annoyingly itchy bite that has lingered. I learned my lesson the hard way, but I hope to spare you by recommending that you follow the steps listed above a second time. I know I will.

You might think my twice-good advice comes a little late what with our snowy season being just around the corner. But it bears telling, because blacklegged deer ticks and dog ticks are adapted to this climate and will survive just fine under the blankets of leaf litter and snow. As soon as the temperatures rise into the mid-30s (and we know we want will be out enjoying the veritable heat wave), ticks will be questing for their next meal. Don't let it be you.



*Drawing by Matt at Cornell CALS-New York State Integrated Pest Management*



# PROGRAM EVENTS

Due to New York State's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, our programming has become more fluid and is being brought to you online. Go to our website [www.cceschoharie-otsego.org](http://www.cceschoharie-otsego.org) to see the most up-to-date listings offered. Check us out on **Facebook: cce schoharie-otsego**

## **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Schoharie and Otsego Counties Hosts its 2020 Virtual Annual Meeting**

Thursday, November 5, 2020, 6:00 p.m.-7:30 p.m., via Zoom. Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) of Schoharie and Otsego Counties would like to invite you to our upcoming annual Association meeting, scheduled for Thursday, November 5, at 6 p.m. CCE will conduct the meeting virtually, online, utilizing Zoom. We encourage all residents to join us and learn more about the work and accomplishments of the organization, especially with its COVID-19 response in our communities. **To participate, please register online at [www.reg.cce.cornell.edu/2020AnnualMeeting\\_243](http://www.reg.cce.cornell.edu/2020AnnualMeeting_243).** Registration is open now and participation is free. After registering, an online link will be returned to you by email for you to enter the meeting space on November 5.

## **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Schoharie and Otsego Counties—November Board of Directors Meeting**

Thursday, November 12, 2020, 6:30-9:00 p.m.  
Meetings are open to the public. If interested in attending, please check with the office at 518-234-4303 to confirm the day and location of the meeting.

## **Free Nutrition and Wellness Series—Parent and Child Cooking Classes**

Wednesdays, November 18, December 2, 9, 16, 23, and January 6, 4:30–5:30 p.m., **Virtual classes** via Zoom; or Mondays, November 23, 30, December 7, 14, 21, and January 4, 4:30–5:30 p.m. **In-person classes** to be held at Extension center in Cobleskill; or Thursdays December 3, 10, 17, and January 7, 14, and 21, 4:30–5:30 p.m. **In-person classes** to be held at Extension center in Cobleskill. Would you like to learn ways to improve your health and that of your family? Join us for a free virtual or in-person nutrition and wellness series for families with children. During in-person classes masks must be worn at all times and sanitizer and gloves will be provided. Each family will also be provided their own ingredients and space. In-person classes will be limited to 2 to 3 families. Receive a gift certificate to the Shoe Department upon completion of 6 lessons. Stipend for certificate is awarded by Bassett 5210 Initiative. **If interested in attending online or in-person classes** listed above, contact **Michelle Leveski at 518-234-4303, ext. 115**, or email her at [mml392cornell.edu](mailto:mml392cornell.edu).

## **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Schoharie and Otsego Counties—December Board of Directors Meeting**

Thursday, December 10, 2020, 6:30-9:00 p.m.  
Meetings are open to the public. If interested in attending, please check with the office at 607-547-2536 to confirm the day and location of the meeting.

*Visit our website, [cceschoharie-otsego.org](http://cceschoharie-otsego.org), to see additional events not listed.*

## Are you a commercial tree fruit, small fruit, or vegetable grower managing...

- Food safety standards and practices
- Variety evaluation and market development
- Pest management and diseases
- Conventional or organic growing practices
- High- and low-tunnel production
- Soil health
- Business management

**Did you know that the Eastern NY Commercial Horticulture Program's team of specialists is here for you?**



Go to their website:  
<https://enych.cce.cornell.edu>  
for more information and  
to enroll in their services.

# CCE in Action!



## Here is how you can support CCE outreach:

Making a donation is as simple as going to [cceschoharie-otsego.org](https://cceschoharie-otsego.org) and clicking this button:



Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Your contribution is tax deductible to the extent provided by law.

**Cornell Cooperative Extension | Schoharie and Otsego Counties**