

GREEN TREE TIMES

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February is Filled with **Snow** Much Fun!



Get creative with your snowman building!

As I write, the sky outside is a very bright blue and the ground is white! Beautiful! The temperatures, however, are too cold for my liking! It seems they will be rising this week according to our local meteorologists, so that's good news for me!

I, along with everyone else, will have eyes on Phil, the most trusted meteorologist of all, on February 2nd. We will watch with bated breath as we wait to hear our fate. I am hoping for putting away our winter coats early, but if there's one thing that I've learned to do lately, is to accept what comes and make the best of it! Well, try at least.



What's it going to be Phil?

Either way, Pittsburgh is a great place to be during any season, with plenty of fun both inside and out.

This is the third year that Sweetwater Center for the Arts is having Folk February and offering two nights of live folk music along with hors d'oeuvres and cocktails from 6:30 - 9 p.m. on Feb. 7 and 21. Info about the bands at sweetwaterartcenter.org.

Monster Jam is back again this year at PPG Paints Arena! These giant custom designed trucks perform amazing stunts and it may not be the event for everybody but it is definitely anything but boring to watch! The event is Feb. 14-16. Info and tickets at monsterjam.com.

The Annual Pittsburgh Winter Beerfest is being held at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center on Feb. 21-22. This event features hundreds of craft beers to sample, live music, entertainment, and delicious local food. There are special priced tickets for designated drivers as well. Information at pittsburghbeerfest.com.

Dress warm and enjoy the crisp cold winter weather and some hot soup at the South Side Soup contest on Sat., Feb. 22. This event pairs businesses with restaurants and offers a variety of soups to taste while show-

casing the South Side and all there is to offer. Proceeds benefit the Brashear Association Food Pantry. Tickets sell out fast, so check southsidesoup.com for the next couple weeks to get in on the delicious fun!

Dive in to celebrating the winter outside at a fun cold weather event to the north of Pittsburgh at *Franklin On Ice* on Sat., Feb. 8, 10 a.m.- 4 p.m. This day includes professional ice carving demonstrations and contests, indoor sidewalk sales, a chili cook-off and more. Info at franklinpa.gov.



Having fun on an ice sculpture!
~photo courtesy Leigh-Anne Williams

You can't mention February without mentioning Valentine's Day. There are many ways to celebrate the holiday all throughout the month.

Have a fun Valentine's shopping experience with local artists, makers and sellers at the I Made It! Sweet in the South Hills at the Galleria on Sat., Feb. 1, 10 - 3 p.m. and the I Made It! Mine at The Block Northway, Sat., Feb. 8, 10 - 3 p.m.

An annual tradition is to put on your coat, hat and gloves and go skating at Schenley Park's *Valentine's on*



Valentine's On Ice.
~photo courtesy pittsburghpa.gov

Ice on Feb. 14, 7-9 p.m. Admission includes roses, raffles, Betsy Anne Chocolates, and more. This is for 18

yrs. old and over.

Celebrate Valentines in a unique way at The Carnegie Science Center's 21+ Night: Seductive Science on Fri., Feb. 14, 6-10 p.m. Play around with science, enjoy Valentine's Day themed cocktails and experience a night under the stars in the Buhl Planetarium. You can attend solo, with friends or as a couple.

There is snow on the ground now but you never know when that is ending, so have some FREE snow fun now!

Head out alone or gather a group and start building a snowman. Get creative and if there's not a lot of snow, build a mini!

Another absolute must, especially for kids, is making a snow angel. Just dress warm or be ready to run inside to take the chill off when you are done with your masterpiece.

Hills can be found all around us in the Pittsburgh area, so grab a tube, sled, saucer or even a thick trash bag and fly down the hill as if you are a kid again or if you actually are a kid!



Kids having some free sledding fun!

Seems unlikely, but taking a winter walk, whether in nature or in the city, can be really enjoyable as long as you dress for it. That's what some people say, so it's worth giving it a try.

I'm going to enjoy the remaining winter season as best as I can but I will have my fingers crossed that Phil gives us the news that spring is coming sooner rather than later!

MUSINGS...BALANCING SORROW AND SWEETNESS



Editor's Note: Sharon Eakes is a personal and executive coach, who is a regular columnist for our paper as well as for the Huffington Post. She is the author of Fresh Views on Resilient Living.

The deeper that sorrow carves into your being, the more joy you can contain.

~Kahlil Gibran

The human experience is one of paradox—bound by the sorrow of the world's great challenges and uplifted by its joys. The devastation wrought by global warming, chaotic politics and fragile economic systems often seems overwhelming. Yet, against

this backdrop, the sweetness of life—found in nature, art, relationships, and fleeting moments of joy—offers a counterbalance.

The Weight of Sorrow

Global warming, perhaps the greatest challenge of our age, underscores the fragility of the natural world. From rising seas to vanishing biodiversity, the climate crisis disrupts ecosystems and livelihoods alike. It is a collective sorrow, one that transcends borders and generations. Chaotic politics compound this grief. Divisions deepen, undermining the shared vision needed to address global issues.

The economic systems we depend on are equally precarious, fostering inequality and uncertainty. Millions face poverty, while the relentless pursuit of growth often overlooks sustainability. These systemic failures create a cascade of challenges. The weight of the world's suffering can feel unbearable, leading many to despair.

The Sweetness of Life

Yet, even in the face of such devastation, life continues to offer sweetness. Nature itself embodies balance.

The changing seasons remind us that nothing lasts forever—neither the harshness of winter nor the bloom of spring. The ocean waves crash violently against the shore, yet they also retreat in a rhythmic, calming ebb and flow. I recently saw a sunset so vibrant that I gasped! The laughter of a child, the melody of a song, or the touch of a loved one reminds us of the tenderness that still exists. Art and literature provide solace, creating bridges between people across time and space.

In the last 5 months, I have 2 new great-grandchildren! A 3rd will arrive in March. I am touched to the core as I watch my grandchildren embrace parenthood. Relationships form the heart of life's sweetness. In these connections, we find solace. They remind us that joy, however fleeting, is always within reach.

Living Into Balance

Finding balance in a world of extremes requires both awareness and acceptance. It means acknowledging suffering without letting it consume us and embracing joy without becoming blind to injustice. It is the willingness to act where we can—to

fight for climate solutions (though we may be too late), to strive for political unity, to challenge economic disparity—while also cherishing the small, beautiful moments that life offers. This equilibrium is not about ignoring sorrow or indulging only in sweetness, but about understanding that one defines the other, and that true peace comes from holding both.

Ultimately, balance is the art of living fully in an imperfect world. The presence of sorrow does not negate sweetness; rather, it makes it more precious.

Coaching Questions

1. How fully do you allow yourself to see the harrowing realities of life on earth just now?
2. How fully do you allow yourself to see and enjoy the sweetness of so many moments every day?
3. How do you experience holding the balance —sorrow on the one hand and sweetness on the other?

Note from the Publisher: If you enjoy reading Musings, Sharon has gathered them together in a book, titled "Fresh Views on Resilient Living." It would make a great holiday gift! It's available on Amazon or you can scan the QR code to go to the link.



GREEN TREE TIMES

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Community News and Events

Green Tree Woman's Civic Club Spring Luncheon "Taking Flight" Sun., Mar. 30 at 12 p.m. with lunch at 1 p.m. Fashion show by White House Black Market. Tickets \$40. Contact Donna Gall 412 592-3325 or seagall@verizon.net.

On Thurs., Mar. 6 the **Green Tree Garden Club** will have lunch at 11 a.m., followed by a presentation entitled, "Frugal Gardening: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle," by Pat Morgan, Penn State Master Gardener. You can incorporate these three 'R's into your garden. Many of us are looking for ways to save money. Others are looking for ways to live more ecologically friendly lives. Following the yearly garden calendar, we will discuss ways to reduce costs and save time! It will take place in the Hemlock/Sycamore Meeting Room at the Green Tree Municipal Center, 10 West Manilla Ave. Guests are welcome. Reservations are required for lunch for a small fee. Interested in Membership? Contact Roni Conard, 717-747-6565 or Kevin Maurer at 412-922-8816.

Green Tree Rotary will be awarding two \$2,000 scholarships to two graduating seniors this year, to help pay for college or trade school related costs. Applicants must be Green Tree residents. Students must be graduating high school this year and attending a college or trade school the next academic year. Candidates will be evaluated on community service, school involvement, scholastic excellence, financial need, and quality of the applications. Applications available at the school guidance counselor's office or at greentreerotary.org. Applications are due by April 30, 2025.

Scholarships will be awarded by May 30, 2024. The recipients and their families will be invited to a Rotary luncheon meeting at the end of May for the presentation of the scholarships. Send completed applications to Steve Burkett, Green Tree Rotary, 10 West Manilla Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15220.

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Shelly Davis
pittsburghjuniortimes.com

Valentine's Day Traditions Through the Years



Beautifully decorated sugar cookies are a perfect Valentine's Day treat.

Valentine's Day is a day of love nestled in the middle of February. This day is an opportunity to show the people you care about just how deep those feelings run. This holiday isn't just for couples. It's for everyone you care about. Historical spending trends, according to the National Retail Federation, shows that this year spending for your significant other will total around \$14 Billion and total spending for friends, family and even pets will total around \$26 Billion. This is a big money holiday! Helping build the economy is great, but you can also make something handmade, or shop local for the perfect unique gifts.

Valentine's Day is awash in many different customs. Here's a look at some of those enduring traditions and others that some may feel should be brought back into favor or adopted entirely.

Handwritten cards

It's a common scene each year in card retailers and pharmacies: people three-deep in the aisle trying to pick out Valentine's Day cards in the eleventh hour. People can save themselves the hassle of fighting the crowds if they make their own handmade cards. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, people created unique cards from scratch. And prior to products produced by greeting card companies, people used to send one another cards customized with personalized messages.

Puzzle purses

Sweethearts in Victorian England created "puzzle purses," which were a series of love letters that could be

read separately, but also fit together to create a design and message. These intricately folded sheets of paper had parts of messages or verses written on different corners and were meant to be read in a specific order. You can find templates online to make your own. They have instructions how to fold and design. Everything you need is there for the perfect puzzle purse.



This pocket purse can be purchased and downloaded to print on your own through DearDelilahDesign on Etsy.

Homemade Sweet Treats

The holiday has grown sweeter over the centuries and now usually includes some type of delicious sugary treat for Valentine's Day. Some sweets include heart shaped decorated sugar cookies, chocolate covered cherries, anything and everything

chocolate, and of course, the hard candy conversation hearts.

Bouquets

These days a dozen long-stemmed red roses might be the norm for Valentine's Day gifting. However, roses weren't always the preferred flower for the holiday. History.com reports that, in the nineteenth century, bouquets might contain all sorts of flowers, each chosen to convey certain messages. Individuals can research the meanings behind certain flowers and put together a Valentine's Day gift this year that expresses exactly what they are feeling. Also, the number of flowers in the bouquet have meaning. Did you know that seven roses signifies a new crush or secret admirer.

Pampering gentlemen

It is common in North America for Valentine's Day celebrations to lean significantly toward favoring women, who are often on the receiving end of flowers and chocolates. However, in South Korea and Japan, it is the men who are pampered with such gifts. Women purchase chocolates for their male partners, family

members and coworkers as tokens of appreciation and affection. Never fear, a month later on White Day (March 14) men reciprocate with candy, cake and flowers.

Heart-shaped chocolate boxes

British chocolatier Richard Cadbury is credited with creating the first heart-shaped box for Valentine's Day. The boxes were intended to be so beautiful they would be kept to hold trinkets or love letters. Ornate chocolate boxes are not quite as common today, although the gifting of chocolate for the holiday is still strong.

Celebrating in June?

Many Brazilians skip Valentine's Day in February and choose to celebrate Saint Anthony, the patron saint of marriage and matchmaking, on June 12. Celebrating both is fine for those who prefer to shower affection on loved ones multiple times a year.

Valentine's Day traditions are still strong and can add a little something extra to celebrations this February.

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The Fishin' Hole



by Sam Hall

If you are waiting for some open water fishing, the great news is the first day of trout season is, as I type this, exactly ten weeks away. That is seventy days. Twenty of those days are weekend days, so they don't really count. That takes the waiting time down to fifty days. If you are getting the proper sleep, you are sleeping one-third of the time there, which is around sixteen days, so ne need to count that time and suddenly we are down to just thirty-four days. So, by the time you are reading this your "real wait time" for Opening Day, is less than a month. You still have to wait until April 5, at 8 a.m. of course, but isn't it nice to know how close April 5th really is? Somehow, it makes me feel so much better.

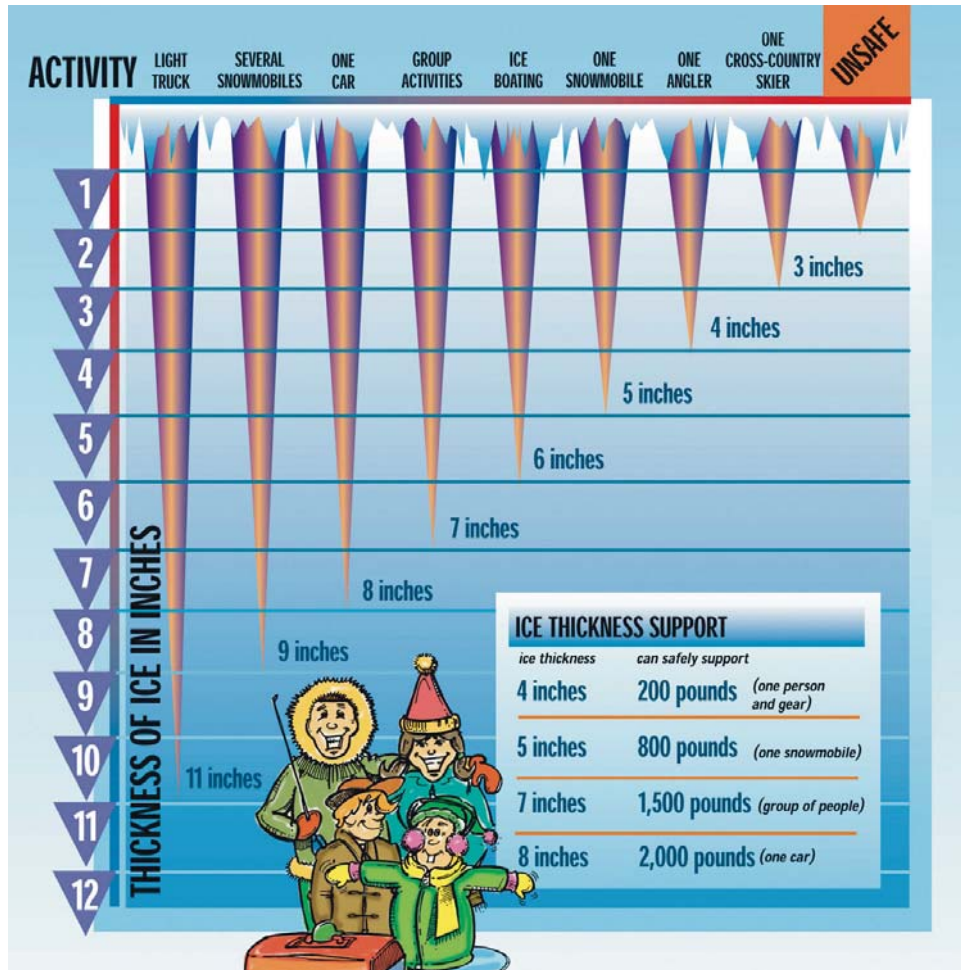
You can purchase your 2025 fishing license right now at pa.gov/agencies/fishandboat.html.

The price for the resident annual fishing license required for everyone 16 years of age and older this year is \$27.97. If you are over 65 years of age you can get your license for \$14.47 and if you want to fish for trout the required stamp is \$14.97 for the year. Once you reach 65 years old you can purchase a lifetime fishing license for \$86.97 and never have to think about it again. You will need to buy the trout stamp every year though, if you want to chase the pellet-heads. The countdown is on, spring and spring fishing are just around the corner, despite what the thermometer has said during the last couple of weeks! Send you pictures and stories to samdhall@comcast.net.

If you are heading onto the ice, BE SAFE!! Next time we chat we will be talking about March fishing!

The middle and tail end of January certainly made a dramatic change to fishing conditions in our area, especially if you like the hard water. Many of our local fisheries have fishable ice and some of those have nice newly stocked trout for the taking as well. As I do every year, I remind you to take extreme caution when ice fishing and to never do so alone. The ice to be safe just for yourself and your gear, should be a minimum of four inches thick. Even our rivers have ice covering them now, but I would never trust river ice no matter how thick it was. River ice or, ice on any moving water, can change in thickness so quickly that venturing out onto it seems to me, a reckless act and I would never do it, or recommend that anyone does.

If you are an experienced hard water fisherman, I have attached a chart from the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission outlining their ice thickness recommendations if you are heading out with more than just yourself and your fishing pole to try your luck. Maggot or Mealworm tipped jigs will be very rewarding on the ice as will making sure you have the proper clothing to keep yourself warm and dry.



Take a picture of this chart or keep it handy so you can check the guidelines before ice fishing.

~photo courtesy of PA Fish and Boat Commission

LIBRARY INFORMATION

Ask a Librarian!

Most libraries throughout the area are offering daily activities for all ages. Some activities are in person and some are still remote. Check with the library near you for the details.

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Fun and Games for Kids

(Answers on back page)



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Check out the last
Big Kit Lil' Kaboodle issue!



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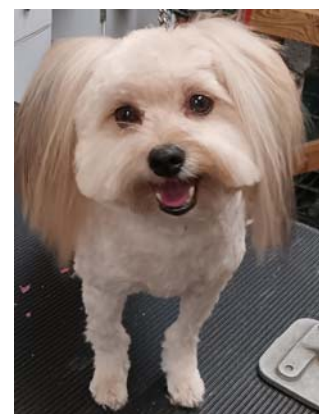
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Word Scramble:

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- Word winter color
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- color of gloves
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- snowman
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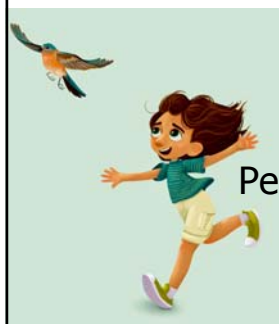
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