

The Maple Lake MESSSENGER *Extra*

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Maple Lake Wine and Spirits on Highway 55 East in Maple Lake is celebrating the holidays and its eight-year anniversary with wine tastings, specials and new products. Above, General Manager Angela Berthiaume, left, leads a friendly, knowledgeable staff with the help of full-time lead Kate Hebreling, right.



Maple Lake Wine and Spirits will hold its Holiday Wine and Spirits Tasting at the Maple Lake Legion on Thursday, Dec. 6 from 7 to 9 p.m. Fourteen different vendors will be present. (Photos by Brenda Erdahl)

Maple Lake Wine and Spirits: Where your holiday fun begins

By Brenda Erdahl

Maple Lake Wine and Spirits off Highway 55 East is celebrating the holidays and its eight-year anniversary with tastings, specials and new products that will make your holiday party the talk of the town.

Get a taste of what they have available on Thursday, Dec. 6 at the Holiday Beer, Wine and Spirits Tasting at the Maple Lake Legion.

General Manager Angela Berthiaume has invited 14 vendors for guests to sample from for two hours, from 7 to 9 p.m. Several Minnesota wineries including Millner Heritage and Chankaska Winery will attend as well as distributors of brands Berthiaume sells in the store.

If guests order that night, they get a discount on their purchase. You must be a member of the local Wine Club to get the discount, but there will be an opportunity to sign up that night so guests can take full advantage of the event, Berthiaume said. Members will also receive a 50 percent discount on the \$20 cover charge.

The fun continues Saturday, Dec. 15 when Maple Lake Wine and Spirits celebrate eight years at its new location. Throughout the event there will be in-store beer, wine and spirits tasting, snacks, hot apple cider, giveaways and "super specials," Berthiaume said.

Throughout the month of December, Maple Lake Wine

and Spirits will continue to hold tastings so customers can explore new flavors. Berthiaume always stocks a vast variety of wines, liquors and champagnes that are sure to fit everybody's tastes. The store's expansive wine section includes holiday favorites like the always popular Reindeer Wines. These come with pictures of Santa's reindeer on the bottles, Berthiaume said. Donner, Blitzen, Comet and Cupid are all depicted on these fun but, limited edition wines.

"These are unique wines that are fun to have at a party," she said.

The store also carries Holiday eggnogs, cordials and gift packs suitable for that hard-to-buy for person on your Christmas list.

Maple Lake Wine and Spirits carries a vast variety of Minnesota-made wines and liquors. Customers will find wines from Carlos Creek Winery in Alexandria; Crow River Winery in Hutchinson; Northern Hollow Winery in Grasston; Indian Island Winery in Janesville and Millner Heritage Winery in Kimball.

The store has also expanded its spirits portfolio to include a larger selection of liquor, whiskey, rum and cordials, and is always adding to its craft beer options for the craft beer lovers out there. A recent addition is a new Minnesota spirit called Gray Duck Vodka. This should appeal to football fans out there

as it was inspired by Viking Ken Rudolph's famed endzone celebration that included an impromptu game of "Duck, Duck, Gray Duck." The brand was only launched in August of this year and is identifiable by the purple state of Minnesota on its label.

"We have a great selection for a small, hometown liquor store and customers like that we have such a wide variety," Berthiaume said.

If a guest can't find something they want, Berthiaume and her staff will happily order it for them.

"I'd say 95 percent of the time we can get it for the customer and then we stock it," she said.

To make shopping at Maple Lake Wine and Spirits even more economical, Berthiaume and her staff have started a rewards program called the Lucky Irish Rewards where every pre-tax dollar spent earns customers a point. When they reach 500 points they get a \$20 in-store credit.

Monthly specials on domestic beers, craft beers and wines, makes shopping at Maple Lake Wine and Spirits even more affordable.

Besides a wide selection of products, Berthiaume oversees a friendly, knowledgeable staff who will help you make the perfect selection then carry it out to your car for you. They also organize a successful Wine Club that currently has 275 members and meets every six to eight weeks.

Berthiaume reminds the community that when you shop at Maple Lake Wine and Spirits 100 percent of the profits go back to the city for projects and upkeep.

The municipal liquor store is open Monday through Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Thursday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Holiday hours will be as follows: Christmas Eve, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and New Year's Eve 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. The store will be closed Christmas Day and New Year's Day.



The Minnesota made Gray Duck Vodka was inspired by Minnesota Viking Ken Rudolph and is available in Maple Lake.

Business Buzz

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Stay safe when stringing holiday lights

Lighting displays are one of the many things that help make the holiday season a special time of year. Often awe-inspiring, holiday lighting displays present a perfect opportunity for communities and individuals to showcase their festive sides.

Safety should always be a priority when stringing holiday lights both inside and outside a home. The National Fire Protection Association notes that, between 2009 and 2014, fire departments in the United States responded to an average of 210 home fires that started with Christmas trees per year. Lighting displays strung on home exteriors also can pose safety risks if homeowners do not exercise caution. Fortunately, various strategies can help homeowners safely decorate their homes' interiors and exteriors this holiday season.

• Choose a fresh tree. The NFPA recommends celebrants who prefer natural Christmas

trees choose ones with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched. Dry trees are more likely to catch fire than freshly cut trees. Adding water to the tree stand each day will keep trees fresher longer. When placing the tree, avoid placing it too close to heat sources, making sure it is at least three feet away from fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents, or lights.

• Check all lights before stringing them. All lights, including those going on trees inside a home and those being strung outside, should be inspected prior to being strung. Look for any worn or broken cords and replace any defected lights.

• Employ the buddy system. When stringing lights, always work with at least one other person. This makes it safe for homeowners who must climb ladders to string lights on especially tall trees and/or on their home exteriors.

• Avoid working in inclement weather. The weather during the holiday season can sometimes be unpleasant or unpredictable. Check the forecast before stringing exterior lights to ensure Mother Nature won't pose a threat. Avoid hanging lights if the forecast predicts wet, icy or windy conditions that can make ladders unstable.

• Turn lights off when going to bed and/or leaving the house. Interior and exterior holiday lights should not be left on when no one is home or everyone inside is sleeping. If left on overnight or when no one is home, lights may contribute to fires that damage homes and may even prove fatal.

Holiday lighting displays help make this time of year special. Following some simple safety procedures when decorating with lights can ensure everyone enjoys a safe and happy holiday season.



Various strategies can help homeowners safely decorate their homes' interiors and exteriors this holiday season. (Photo submitted)

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A tasty take on turkey just in time for Thanksgiving

New Year's Eve is a time to celebrate. But for hundreds of people each year, the week between Christmas and New Year's Day proves fatal.

According to fatality data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, over the last five years an average of 300 people died in drunk driving fatalities between Christmas and New Year's Day. Holiday celebrations, and New Year's Eve festivities in particular, tend to include alcohol, raising the stakes during this festive yet too often fatal time of year.

The sobering statistics provided by the NHTSA don't have to prevent people from toasting a new year. In fact, there are many ways to have fun this New Year's Eve without putting yourself in harm's way.

- Don't overindulge in alcohol. For many people, overindulging in alcohol is part and parcel during New Year's Eve celebrations. Such behavior puts everyone at risk, even people who don't drive. According to the National Institute

on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, conservative estimates suggest that roughly one-half of sexual assaults on American women involve alcohol consumption by the perpetrator, victim or both. While alcohol and its relationship to traffic fatalities draw the bulk of the attention on New Year's Eve, even people who don't intend to drive should recognize the dangers of overindulging in alcohol and drink responsibly.

- Arrange for transportation. If you need a car to get around on New Year's Eve and plan to drink alcohol, arrange for someone else to do your driving for you. Groups of friends should choose someone to be their designated driver or pool their money and hire a taxi or bus service for the night so no one who's been drinking gets behind the wheel. The NHTSA even offers a free app called SaferRide that is compatible with Apple and Android devices and enables users to call a taxi or a friend to be picked up.

- Host responsibly. Even people who don't intend to leave their homes can take steps

to make New Year's Eve safer for everyone. If you're hosting a party at home, do so responsibly, making sure none of your guests overindulge and making the party less about drinking and more about having fun. Shift the focus from toasting drinks to games and activities that don't include alcohol. Make sure to have plenty of food and nonalcoholic beverages on hand and encourage people who are drinking to eat full meals and drink water throughout the night. People who fill up on food and water during the party may feel full, which may discourage them from having extra drinks. While many people will expect to drink alcohol on New Year's Eve, don't stock up on too much alcohol, the availability of which may encourage guests to overindulge. Hosts also should keep the phone numbers of local taxi services handy just in case some guests cannot drive themselves home safely.

New Year's Eve should be as festive as possible. Celebrating responsibly can ensure everyone has a fun and safe time.



There are many ways to have fun this New Year's Eve without putting yourself in harm's way. (Photo submitted)

Pets and holiday gifting

Furry, finned and feathered friends help make a house a home. These companions are more than just pets; they're often cherished family members. So it should come as no surprise that, come the holidays, people want to lavish extra attention on their animals by way of presents.

The American Pet Products Association says pet owners spend billions of dollars on their pets each year. The majority of pet owners plan to gift their pets on holidays such as Valentine's Day, Halloween and Christmas. DogTime.com says that pet presents are not a North American phenomenon, either. Pet owners in the United Kingdom are expected to spend the equivalent of \$46 U.S. per pet on gifts.

While dog owners are more likely to buy their pets gifts, cat

owners have been closing that gap over the years. Some pet parents even offer Christmas cards or hang Christmas stockings for their pets.

According to data from PricewaterhouseCoopers, shoppers between the ages of 17 and 21 are willing to spend more than anyone else (\$70) on holiday gifts for their pets.

Gifting pets has become the norm, but various animal welfare organizations advise that giving companion animals as pets should be avoided. Pets given as gifts may be at a higher risk for surrender to shelters by families who miscalculated the amount of time and money that's necessary to care for pets. Welcoming a pet into the family is often a personal decision, and one that should be weighed carefully by all members of the household.



Come the holidays, people want to lavish extra attention on their animals by way of presents.

(Photo submitted)

Get gifts there on time

Thanks to families being more spread out than ever before, today's holiday shoppers must figure out ways to get holiday gifts to their destination on time. The holiday season tends to be the busiest time of year for many delivery services. The following tips should help shoppers ensure their loved ones' gifts arrive on time.

- Ship directly. Adobe Analytics reported that online shopping hit a record high of \$108.2 billion in the 2017 holiday shopping season, and all indicators suggest online shopping will only increase in the years to come. Holiday shoppers who want to ensure their loved ones will receive their gifts on time can rely on online shopping. When checking out, have gifts shipped directly to loved ones' homes. Many online retailers will even wrap gifts for a nominal fee.

- Research shipping options. In 2018, Christmas falls on a Tuesday. Shoppers who plan to rely on two-day or overnight shipping should keep that in mind. Some delivery services may be open throughout the weekend before Christmas, while others may only be open on Saturday. Last-minute shoppers, whether they're shopping online or in-person, should confirm their shipping options well in advance of Christmas. Because Christmas is on a Tuesday this year, getting gifts to their destination on time may require shoppers to purchase and ship them earlier than they otherwise might.

- Purchase package insurance. Consumer Reports notes that UPS and FedEx shipments automatically come with declared-value coverage of up to \$100. (Note: Declared value is the carrier's maximum liability.) Purchasing

additional insurance can ease shoppers' concerns about lost or stolen packages. Just be sure to keep all invoices and receipts in case claims must be filed. Shoppers also should ask for tracking numbers on all packages so they can confirm when packages are delivered.

- Properly secure the package. Many delivery services now have off-site drop-off boxes that can make it easy to send gifts. This is a convenient service, but shoppers who use them won't be able to have a company employee provide in-person confirmation that their packages are secured to company standards. Poorly packaged items may never be shipped. Visit the shipping company's website for packaging guidelines, and include a business card and duplicate label inside the package just in case it is damaged after being dropped off.



The following tips should help shoppers ensure their loved ones' gifts arrive on time. (Photo submitted)

The history of Black Friday

Black Friday marks the unofficial start of the holiday shopping season. Come Black Friday, shoppers strive to get the lowest prices on gifts for their loved ones.

Much of the focus of Black Friday is on finding the best deals, but it can be interesting to take a breath and learn how this phenomenon developed and how it has evolved over the years.

"Black Friday"

The term "black Friday" was originally associated with gold prices and manipulation on the part of speculators Jay Gould and James Fisk. This scandal occurred in September 1869.

Commodity prices plummeted 50 percent as a result, and the term "black Friday" was coined to refer to that drop.

The phrase "black Friday" also became famous for all the wrong reasons in 1966. Philadelphia police used it to refer to the Friday traffic jams and crowding in downtown stores from tourists and shoppers who flooded into the city in advance of the Army-Navy football game held the Saturday after Thanksgiving each year. Bigger crowds and rowdiness contributed to long hours and stressful shifts for local police.

Black Friday reinvented

The retail industry started

using the term "Black Friday" in the late 1980s. Spin doctors turned previously negative connotations into positive ones by associating the phrase with stores turning a profit and moving accounting ledgers from "red to black" thanks to big year-end sales. Retailers and consumers rallied around low-cost "doorbusters" and other discounted prices.

Interestingly enough, according to the National Retail Federation, Black Friday really hasn't been the most lucrative day for retailers over the years. In fact, greater profits and larger crowds are often seen on the last Saturday preceding

Christmas.

Shopping weekend evolves

While Black Friday may have been the catalyst, in recent years shoppers have made the entire weekend of Black Friday a lucrative one for retailers. Many stores now open on Thanksgiving and extend sales through the entire weekend. Small Business Saturday and Sunday promote patronizing mom-and-pop stores. Cyber Monday emerged when online shopping became a popular way to grab deals, and it marks the close of the opening weekend of the holiday shopping season. In 2017, Black Friday weekend attracted 174 million shoppers who spent an average of \$335.47, according to the NRF.



Much of the focus of Black Friday is on finding the best deals, but it can be interesting to take a breath and learn how this phenomenon developed and how it has evolved over the years. (Photo submitted)

December 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 Jingle Ball Dance, 7:30 p.m.
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Silver Creek Township Meeting, 7 p.m. Corinna Township Meeting, 7 p.m. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maple Lake Chamber of Commerce meeting at the American Legion, 12 p.m. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legion Riders Meeting, 6:30 p.m. at Legion Club 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High School-End of First Quarter 	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chatham Township Meeting, 7 p.m. American Legion Meeting, 7:30 p.m. Late Start PTA Meeting, 4 p.m. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hasty-Silver Creek Sportsman's Club Meeting, 7 p.m. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sons of the American Legion, 8 p.m. Lions Club Meeting, 7 p.m. at The V 		
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maple Lake City Council Meeting, 7 p.m. Albion Township Meeting, 7 p.m. Corinna Township Meeting, 7 p.m. Maple Lake Township Meeting, 7 p.m. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wright Saddle Club Meeting, 7:30 p.m. Maple Lake Legion Auxiliary, 7 p.m. 	Last Day of School Before Christmas Break	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29 30 31
	 Christmas Eve	 Christmas Day		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knights of Columbus Meeting, 7 p.m. at St. Timothy's Church 		

Christmas Break - No School

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