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CHRISTMAS

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Want to help your community?

Then shop locally-owned this holiday season...

Every year, we make the case on this page for our readers to shop locally. That's always an important message, and this year is no exception.

As we head into the holidays this year, our local retailers face tremendous uncertainty about the direction of the economy, as well as the continuing pressure from big box stores and the giant online retailers.

The decisions we all make on how and where to spend our holiday dollars will determine the futures of many of our community-minded local businesspeople. With that in mind, we urge everyone to make their purchases with the interests of their community in mind.

Before heading to a Walmart or Target, or clicking on Amazon this holiday season, take a few moments to think about how your local retailers can meet your needs. They often provide something that's unique, as opposed to the mass merchandizing of the big retailers.

And many locally-owned retailers in our region have excellent websites, which can make your shopping experience easy and fun. You can shop locally and shop online at the same time.

Before you purchase from one of the big online retailers, ask yourself how much they contribute to your community. Do they build new stores that provide construction jobs for your neighbors? Do they maintain facilities that pay property taxes in your community? Do they hire local residents, providing

wages that circulate in your town? Do they contribute to your hometown sports teams or other local fundraising efforts?

If the answer to these questions is no, then why would you send your dollars to a company that doesn't return the favor?

For those who still enjoy shopping in-store, our smaller, locally-owned retailers are always your best bet. In many cases, the owners or employees there are friends and neighbors and they're going to go out of their way to make your shopping experience a good one. In many cases, they'll be happy to special order just the right gift for that special someone.

More importantly, the dollars we spend at our locally-owned shops make a difference in our communities. Main Streets struggle as retail dollars that used to be spent in locally-owned shops, restaurants, and other businesses are increasingly ending up in the pockets of huge chain or online retailers. While big box retailers do at least provide a few jobs locally, they don't provide the same community im-

pact as retailers with local ownership. What's more, numerous studies have shown that these big chain retailers often displace as many jobs as they create. They also bring with them new demands on community infrastructure and a variety of other public services, that local property owners must pay for.

Big chain retailers don't spend much in the local economy. When they build a new store, they don't employ local architects or planners, since each store is essentially a clone of all the others. They use national suppliers for the building materials they use in construction and for the products they eventually sell. They don't use the local ad agency, or the insurance broker on Main Street. They don't use a local accountant and they rarely advertise in local newspapers.

Locally-owned businesses do all of these things, and because they do, the money you spend with a local merchant works its way throughout the area economy, creating a "multiplier effect" that benefits all of us.

When we shop online or at big chain retailers, we

also contribute to the loss of local identity. The big box stores and big chain restaurants all look and feel the same wherever you travel. It's local businesses that provide our communities with their unique flavor.

All of which makes our point. Our locally-owned small businesses contribute to the character and the economic vitality and diversity of our communities and our local economy. They absolutely deserve our support.

In the past, we've highlighted that point by stressing special events, like Small Business Saturday, set this year for Nov. 25. While it's good to focus on our small, locally-owned businesses on a special day, we'd like to encourage everyone to make a commitment to an entire holiday season focused on small business. They make a difference and we can, too, when we spend our money where it matters!

Special area events this holiday season

Details for many of our area's traditional holiday events were not finalized by our press time, so please check the Timberjay for the most up-to-date information.

ELY- Sunday, Nov. 19 - Festival of Trees sponsored by Northwoods Partners. Lighting ceremony and bidding for trees and wreaths opens at 7:30 p.m. at Grand Ely Lodge. Holiday Boutique, tree displays, Memorial Tree, and silent auction run through noon on Sunday, Dec. 3.

ELY- Thursday Nov. 23 – First annual Thanksgiving Day Turkey Trot

presented by End of the Road Yoga. 5k walk/run and 10k run, 8:00 a.m. Trezona Trailhead. Register at EndoftheRoad.Yoga/Events.

ELY – Thursday Nov. 23 –Join the Ely Folk School on Thanksgiving for a community potluck from 3 – 5 p.m. This annual tradition is a great way to celebrate the community-centric day, even if you do not have holiday traditions in Ely yet. Perhaps this will be your new tradition! We would love for you to bring something to share, though it is not required. 209 E Sheridan St., Ely.

ELY- Thursday, Nov. 23 – Shine Bright Ely! Ely businesses are busy decorating their storefronts and windows for

our 3rd annual Shine Bright Ely holiday lights event starting on Thanksgiving evening and running through the end of December. Kick-off the holidays with a walk or drive and view the festive lights. Visit participating businesses and enjoy their holiday decorations, maps available at Ely Chamber of Commerce, ely.org.

COOK- Thursday, Nov. 23 – 37th annual Thanksgiving dinner at St. Mary's Catholic Church from noon - 2 p.m. For the homebound in the Cook area who would like a meal delivered contact Robyn at 952-412-0576. 124 5th St. SE, Cook.

SOUDAN – Thursday, Nov. 23 – St. Paul's Lutheran Church Community



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Holiday Events

Thanksgiving dinner from 2 – 6 p.m., eat in or take out, RSVP's appreciated. No charge but donations can be made to the Tower Area Food Shelf. 36 Church St., Soudan.

ELY- Friday, Nov. 24 - Small Town Christmas. Shop Local and Shop Small Businesses! Friday after Thanksgiving Nov. 24 through Sunday Nov. 26. Ely is known for its Northern flare and vibe of locally made artisanal crafts and unique products. Everything from locally made products to stores filled with Northwoods-style gifts, clothing, outdoor gear, artwork, and artist-made goods.

COOK- Friday, Dec. 1 – 4th annual dinner theatre, “A Wild West Christmas” at 6 p.m. at the Evangelical Covenant Church. Great food and fun, price per seat will be a generous freewill



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Holiday Events

donation with all proceeds going to the Cook Area Food Shelf. Call 218-666-5892 for reservations through Nov. 20.

COOK- Friday, Dec. 1 - Virgie Hegg Hospice Partners Lights of Love Tree Lighting ceremony and carols at 6 p.m. at the City Gazebo.

ORR- Saturday, Dec. 2- Virgie Hegg Hospice Partners Lights of Love Tree Lighting ceremony and carols at 6:30 p.m. at the Orr Center.

TOWER- Saturday, Dec. 2- Christmas Craft Show, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. at the Herb Lamppa Civic Center in Tower.

ORR- Saturday, Dec. 2 - Orr Snow City Christmas Festival and Craft Show, 7 a.m. - 7 p.m. at the Orr Community Center/American Legion. Pancake Breakfast to benefit the Orr Fire Department, lunch by Sugarlicious Cheesecakes & More, Santa, parade, bean bag tournament, dinner, and live music. Visit the Orr Snow City Facebook page for more details.

COOK- Saturday, Dec. 2 - 9th annual Community Lutefisk and Meatball Dinner from 4 - 6:30 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church. Take out meals available, net proceeds will be donated to the Cook Community Food Shelf and Trinity's National Youth Gathering Krewe. 231 2nd St. SE



EMBARRASS- Saturday, Dec. 2 - Holiday Boutique and Pancake Breakfast at Timber Hall, 8-11 a.m.

COOK- Sunday, Dec. 3 - Santa's Workshop presented by Cook Friends of the Parks, 3-6 p.m., Cook Community Center. Santa, sleigh rides with horses, treats, activities, crafts to-go, and a movie presented at the Comet Theater. 510 Gopher Dr., Cook.

EMBARRASS- Thursday, Friday & Saturday, Dec. 7-9 - Woodland Christmas at the Nelimark Homestead, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. all three days. Handcrafted

and ethnic gifts, baked goods, coffee and conversation. 4839 Salo Rd., Embarrass.

BABBITT- Saturday, Dec. 9 - Hayride with Santa and Mrs. Claus, 4-8 p.m., Babbitt Municipal Building. Caroling, hot dogs, cocoa. This is a free event but donations are appreciated.

ELY- Saturday, Dec. 9 - Mrs. Claus Party, 10 a.m. - 12 noon. Grand Ely Lodge. Kids can Meet Mrs. Claus and participate in various activities. More details available at ely.org.

ELY- Saturday, Dec. 9 - Christmas at the State Hometown Holiday Concert 7 p.m. Come and hear local singers celebrate the most wonderful time of the year! Free will donation or donation to the Ely Area Food Shelf. Concert held at the Ely State Theater.

ELY- Saturday, Dec. 9 - Ely Folk School Holiday Party, Semer's Park, 3-5 p.m. Free outdoor community gathering - dog sled rides, bonfire, Ojibwe snow snakes (game) demonstrations, winter bowling and more. Glögg, hot cocoa and snacks provided. More info at lucy@elyfolkschool.org or 218-235-0138.

EVELETH- Sunday, Dec. 10- Mesabi Symphony Orchestra Christmas Pops Concert, 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. at the Rock Ridge High School Performing Arts Center.

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Holiday Events

TOWER- Thursday, Dec. 14 - Tower-Soudan Elementary School Winter Music Concert, 1:30 p.m.

VIRGINIA- Thursday, Dec. 14 - Mesabi Community Band Presents A Holiday Concert, 7-8 p.m. Eveleth Auditorium, 413 Pierce St., Eveleth. Admission is a free will offering that will help cover band expenses.

ELY- Thursday, Dec. 14. Ely Elementary School winter concert, 1:15 p.m.

COOK- Friday, Dec. 15- North Woods Elementary Concert, 1 p.m.

EMBARRASS- Saturday, Dec. 16 - Ice Candle Lighting at the Embarrass Cemetery. Holiday Gathering



follows at Embarrass Town Hall, 4-6 p.m.

TOWER- Sunday, Dec. 17 - Tower- Soudan Area Singers Christmas concert, 2 p.m. in the Tower School gymnasium.

COOK- Tuesday, Dec. 19- North Woods winter band concert, 7 p.m.



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Gifts for the bird lovers on your list

It's a long, cold winter here in the North Country, but for many of us the activity and color at our bird feeders this time of year helps to keep us entertained throughout it all. Interest in birds and bird feeding is so ubiquitous these days that it's a safe bet that you have more than one bird lover on your Christmas list, and that makes it pretty easy to find a gift that won't be returned or unappreciated.

There are three general kinds of



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gifts that you should consider for that bird feeding fan on your shopping list—bird foods, bird feeders, and bird gear.

Bird foods

Birds eat a wide variety of foods, but there's one food in particular that will attract the widest variety of birds here in the North Country, and that's black oil sunflower seeds, which are purchased most often

at area feed stores in 40- or 50-lb. bags. This is the food that will keep a North Country feeder busy with chickadees, nuthatches, purple

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Facing page: Nuthatches are most often attracted to suet feeders but also like sunflower seeds.

Right: Pine grosbeaks can be attracted with sunflower seeds, preferably in open platform feeders.

finches, blue jays, redpolls, pine siskins, and our two most colorful feeder visitors, pine and evening grosbeaks.

Black oil sunflower seeds are packed with the kind of fats that North Country birds need to stay warm when the temperature drops to minus-40, so they'll take advantage whenever they show up in a feeder. While seed prices vary quite a bit around the area, you can usually pick up a 40-lb. bag for about \$25 and about \$32 for a 50-lb. bag.

If you're buying sunflower seeds, just get the pure sunflower seed for your feeders. The wild bird mixes typically have some sunflower seeds as well, but they're often loaded with other, cheaper seeds that most of our winter birds don't eat. Wild bird mixes are useful in the fall and spring when the sparrows and juncos are migrating through the area, and I typically scatter these mixes



on the ground at those times of year, since that's where sparrows prefer to feed.

Thistle seed is another good option for certain kinds of small birds. Thistle is popular with redpolls, siskins, and goldfinches, although most goldfinches winter to our south so offering thistle seed may not do as much good in winter as it does in other seasons. I've found that interest in thistle seed is highly variable. I've had thistle feeders that sit untouched for months, only to be mobbed at a later point in the winter.

Peanuts are a more predictable winter bird food, and it's one that's almost always on offer at my feeder even though they're a little spendy, at about \$18 for a ten-pound bag. It's best to feed peanuts in a feeder specifically designed for peanuts that makes the birds work a bit to get the seeds out. That's part of the fun, anyway, and it allows your ten-pound bag of peanuts to last longer than a few days. A peanut feeder will attract chickadees, nuthatches and downy and hairy woodpeckers as well as the occasional blue

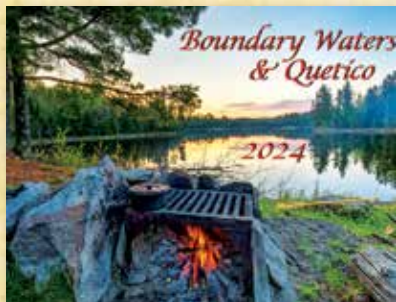
jay. I hang mine right under the eaves in front of our picture window for best viewing. Be sure you're buying the shelled, unsalted peanuts that are packaged specifically for birds. Don't feed them salted peanuts.

Suet is another food that will keep your feeder busy and I go through a lot of it each winter. Use a suet feeder in the similar manner to a peanut feeder so the birds, red squirrels, or a hungry pine marten can't haul it all away at once. Suet is nearly pure fat so it's an incredibly valuable food for birds in winter and it will bring in chickadees, nuthatches, downy, hairy, and even the occasional pileated woodpecker, as well as gray jays or magpies for those living out of town. Magpies have become a more regular visitor in our region in recent years even as gray jays have become increasingly uncommon.

You can usually find packages of suet at most grocers this time of year, although it can be pretty expensive. I usually buy mine at F&D Meats in Virginia, since they offer generally larger packages at a better price than other places.

Bird feeders

When it comes to bird feeders, the sky is the limit and the best advice I have for people



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is to use a variety of sizes and shapes. I always make sure to hang a couple small feeders that are easily accessible only for small birds like chickadees and nuthatches, which can be intimidated when a flock of blue jays or evening grosbeaks takes over your larger feeder. Small plastic tubular feeders work fine, but I also like a small orb-shaped feeder that's made of mesh that allows the chickadees and nuthatches to work the sunflower seeds out with minimal effort.

A typical peanut feeder is a mesh cylinder, about three inches in diameter, with a lid at the top and a handle for hanging. A ten-lb. bag of peanuts should allow for several refills, so a bag of peanuts and a feeder makes an excellent combination gift that will set you back about \$25-\$30.

While you can buy any number of bird feeders at local feed stores or regional outlets like L&M Supply, they also make a relatively easy project for anyone with moderate woodworking skills.

My main feeder is so basic that anyone could build it. It's just a platform built of plywood, about ten inches wide by 36 inches long, with wood strips around the edges to keep the seed from sliding off. It hangs on wires with a small roof overhead. It works well because it gives the birds a 360-degree view, which makes them more comfortable since they're always on guard for predators. By hanging it on wires, bears can raid it without damaging it. I've had this same feeder for decades, with only minor repairs over that time.

I also built a more traditional feeder, with the central seed repository that's disbursed into trays on either side. It's



Above: Male evening grosbeaks can be highly entertaining around bird feeders. They prefer black sunflower seeds.

large and will hold an entire 40-lb. bag's worth of sunflower seeds at a time so it helps keep your birds fed even if you're going to be gone for a week.

One final note about feeders. Spread them out so the smaller birds have a place to go when the blue jays show up in force. I have feeders on two sides of the house so there's plenty of options for them. It's also nice to be able to watch birds from different parts of the house.

Bird gear

I'm not much into birding swag myself. A good pair of binoculars is a top

item, but that's a whole other topic which we won't get into here. For a younger birder, just starting out, consider a good bird book. Back when I was in junior high, I virtually memorized the 340-page "Golden Guide to North American Birds." While it was excellent in its time, and is still a worthwhile book for a beginner, the Sibley Guide to Birds is now considered the standard for birders from novice to expert, and it will run you about \$25.

And since most of us rely on our smartphones for just about everything, consider treating the bird lover on your list to the app version of the Sibley Guide, which comes with all the information in the printed version plus more than 2,700 recorded calls covering the vast majority of species you're likely to encounter in North America. It's like having a full bird book and dozens of cassette tapes of bird calls in your pocket at all times, and it's just \$19.99 for either Apple or Android phones.

That's one of the nice things about having a bird lover on your holiday list... they're usually easy to buy for. A bag of sunflower seeds, a new peanut feeder, or a bird guide can always make the perfect gift.



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Christmas bird count is worthwhile fun

REGIONAL—Looking for a great way to work off a few of those extra holiday pounds, while making a contribution to science? Then make plans to take part in a Christmas Bird Count near you. Here in the North Country, you've got plenty to choose from.

The Christmas Bird Counts were first established by the National Audubon Society in 1900 as an alternative to New Year's Day bird shoots, which used to be a tradition in much of the U.S. The annual bird count is a longstanding tradition that annually gets tens of thousands of birders out in the woods and fields every year between mid-December and early January.

It's a fun way to spend a day, but it's also important scientific work that has helped professional researchers document changes in bird populations over the decades. Every year, tens of thousands of people take part in the many hundreds of

counts held throughout North America and even overseas.

You don't need to be an expert to take part. In fact, the organizers can usually pair you up with an experienced counter, which makes it a good way to learn more about our winter birds and how to identify them.

Area counts and contacts for each are as follows:

- ☛ Aurora- Contact compiler/organizer Steve Falkowski at debfalk@gmail.com
- ☛ Cook- Contact compiler/organizer Julie Grahn at jg.grahn@gmail.com.
- ☛ Ely- Contact compiler/organizer NJ Gates at njgates5@gmail.com
- ☛ Isabella- Contact compiler/organizer Steve Wilson at clevergrayjay@gmail.com
- ☛ Virginia- Contact compiler/organizer Steve Falkowski at debfalk@gmail.com



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Pears and chocolate, an unexpected pairing

Opportunities to entertain or visit with family and friends abound during the holiday season. Dessert is always a big hit during festive occasions, and the following recipe for “Pear and Chocolate Frangipane Tart” melds many popular flavors. Frangipane is an almond-flavored cream. In this recipe from “Chocolate: Deliciously Indulgent Recipes for Chocolate Lovers” (Ryland, Peters & Small) by Maxine Clark, it is paired with decadent chocolate and sweet pears.

Pear and Chocolate Frangipane Tart

Serves 8-10

4 medium, firm pears, unpeeled
2/3 cup seedless raspberry jam
2 tablespoons Ruby Port
Toasted shredded or slivered almonds, to scatter (optional)

Pastry

2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon salt
1 stick (8 tablespoons) unsalted butter, softened
1 large egg yolk
2 1/2 to 3 tablespoons chilled water

Chocolate Frangipane Filling

6-1/2 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
1/2 cup granulated sugar
2 eggs, beaten
1 to 2 tablespoons chocolate liqueur
2/3 cup ground almonds

2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa

To make the pastry, sift the flour and salt onto a sheet of waxed paper. Put the butter and egg yolk in a food processor and blend until smooth. Add the chilled water and blend again. Pour in the dry ingredients and blend until just combined. Turn out onto a lightly floured work surface and knead gently until smooth. Form into a disk, wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes. Bring to room temperature before rolling out.

To make the chocolate frangipane filling, put the butter in a large bowl and beat with an electric mixer until creamy. Gradually add the sugar and beat until pale and fluffy. Gradually beat in the eggs and the chocolate liqueur, then stir in the ground almonds and the cocoa. Cover and set aside.

Roll out the pastry on a lightly floured work surface and use to line the tart pan. Prick the pastry all over with a fork and refrigerate until firm.

Preheat the oven to 400 F, and put a heavy baking sheet on the middle shelf.

Spread the chocolate frangipane evenly over the chilled pastry crust.

Halve the pears and scoop out the cores.



Cut each half into thirds and arrange them randomly over the chocolate frangipane.

Transfer the tart to the preheated baking sheet and bake for 10-15 minutes, or until the pastry starts to brown. Reduce the oven temperature to 350 F and bake for a further 15-20 minutes or until the pears are tender and the frangipane is set. Remove from the oven and transfer to a wire rack to cool.

About 20 minutes before serving, melt the jam with the port in a small pan and boil for 1 minute to make a glaze. Remove the tart from the pan, brush with the glaze, scatter with the almonds, if using, and serve at room temperature — never chilled — with cream, if using.

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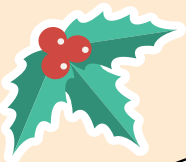
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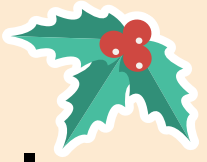
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Gingerbread from the history books

Gingerbread is a popular sweet that often finds its way onto holiday dessert tables. Some people bake and construct lavish gingerbread houses, while others make cut-outs of gingerbread people to turn into cookies.

Legend suggests that gingerbread originally landed in Europe in 992 with an Armenian monk named Gregory of Nicopolis, who brought a honey-and-spice cake to other monks in France, where it quickly became a favorite and was considered a “food from heaven.” Historians are not really sure if the original gingerbread had any ginger in it at all. In fact, typical medieval recipes for gingerbread include no ginger and the French would later refer to it as “pain d’epices,” or spiced bread.

Gingerbread once was a treat only for the elite, but as the masses discovered it, recipes evolved to include soft cakes to

hard biscuits and everything in between. The following recipe for medieval “Gingerbread” produces a chewy, almost candy-like texture with potent ginger flavor. Try it for holiday gatherings, courtesy of “Tasting History” (Simon Element) by Max Miller.

Gingerbread

Makes 20 to 25 1-inch pieces

12 to 14 slices (238 g) stale white bread
1 cup (330 g) honey
1 tablespoon ground ginger

3/4 teaspoon ground long pepper (a spice similar to black pepper but with more heat that typically must be ordered online)

1/2 teaspoon sandalwood powder, if desired, for color (one drop of red food dye can be used instead)

1/2 cup (50 g) or less sugar (enough for sprinkling)

20 to 25 whole cloves
Gold leaf

1. Either with a food processor or by hand, grind the bread into coarse bread crumbs. Commercially bought bread crumbs will work as well, though the texture from homemade bread crumbs is preferable.

2. Pour the honey into a large saucepan set over medium heat, and heat to a rolling boil; the honey will become like syrup. Note that it will boil up quite a bit, so do not use a small saucepan. Slowly add the bread crumbs to the honey while stirring. The mixture should come together and begin to pull away from the sides of the saucepan. Continue to mix until fully combined. Remove the pan from the heat and quickly stir in the ginger, long pepper and sandalwood, if desired. Turn the



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mixture out onto a sheet of parchment and spread with a spatula. Then, place another sheet of parchment and, with a rolling pin, roll the gingerbread out to about 1/2-inch thick (1.2 cm). Wrap in plastic wrap and chill in the refrigerator until stiff, about 2 hours.

3. Once the gingerbread is cool, sprinkle sugar on top and cut into 1-inch squares or whatever shape you like. Keep in mind that each piece should be bite size, as they are very strong. They will also be quite sticky, so handle them as little as possible. Insert a whole clove into each piece of gingerbread and fleck with gold leaf. Leave the clove in until serving, then remove it just before eating.



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Gifts from your holiday kitchen: Make your own turtles



A favorite candy is surprisingly easy to make

When it comes to a homemade holiday gift that is easy to make and you can rest assured won't be returned or re-gifted, you can't do much better than a box of turtles. Who can resist that perfect combination of chocolate, caramel, and crunchy pecans?

And while a box makes a great gift for families and friends, you'll want to make at least one extra for yourself!

As with any candy making, the quality improves with the quality of the ingredients. I used homemade caramels (here's a link to my favorite recipe- <https://www.kingarthurbaking.com/recipes/moms-car->



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amels-recipe). You can purchase high-quality caramel that comes in blocks, or use some from your favorite candy shop.

I use Ghirradelli melting chocolate disks, which you can find at larger grocery stores in the baking section. You can use chocolate chips, small pieces of high-quality bar chocolate, or specialty baking chocolate wafers you can find online.

The following recipe is adapted from kingarthurbaking.com:

Pecan caramel turtles

Ingredients:

2/3 cup chopped pecans, toasted
4 ounces of caramel, cut and shaped into 16 coin-size disks
16 bittersweet chocolate wafers (I use 2 of the Ghirradelli discs for each candy)

Facing page: A plate full of home-made turtles won't last long when served at your holiday party.

Right: You can form the candies in parchment paper in a muffin pan to achieve a more perfect shape.

Preheat the oven to 325°F.

Divide the pecans into 16 small piles on a parchment-lined or lightly greased baking sheet (a scant 2 teaspoons pecans each).

Flatten each caramel cube into the size of a half dollar, and place on the pecans.

Heat in the oven until the caramel softens and begins to melt, check after 3 minutes, may need a minute or two longer.

Remove from the oven; wait 1 minute, then top each cluster with one or two disks of chocolate, pressing it into the softened caramel gently.



Place back in oven for one minute, until the chocolate gets soft and begins to melt.

Top each candy with a few flakes of Fleur de Sel, or other coarse sea salt.

Allow the caramel and chocolate to cool and set before removing candies from the pan.

Be sure to toast your nuts first: Spread the nuts in a single layer in an ungreased sheet or cookie pan. Bake in a preheated 350°F oven for 6 to 10 min-

utes, until they're a light, golden brown. Remove from the oven, and pour onto another sheet pan so they quickly cool. Then coarsely chop.

Tips:

☞ Cover the entire pan, lined with parchment

paper, with the chopped pecans, and then once the first batch of candies are done and chocolate and caramel are set, remove the candies. Then just rearrange the pecans on the sheet to make the second batch.

☞ Can be made in parchment-lined muffin tins.

☞ Can use other nuts such as walnuts or peanuts (raw and unsalted, be sure to toast them first).

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The end of the year marks a period of heightened festivity. Come the holiday season, homes and businesses are decorated and everyone seems to have an extra spring in their step.

The sight of snowflakes, candy canes, evergreen wreaths, and Christmas trees can elicit nostalgia for happy holidays of the past, as well as excitement for what is yet to come. When it comes to decorating for the holidays, there are certain items that set the scene.

► **Christmas trees:** Germany is credited with starting the modern Christmas tree tradition. It dates back to the 16th century when devout Christians brought trees into their homes and decorated them. German settlers brought Christmas tree traditions to America upon their ar-



rival in Pennsylvania in the 19th century.

► **Mistletoe:** Mistletoe is known as the “kissing plant” and it is customary for couples to kiss while standing beneath

the plant, typically hung in doorways and arches. Mistletoe was once hung to drive off evil spirits and ensure fertility. Kissing under the mistletoe was first found associated with the Greek festival of Saturnalia and later with primitive marriage rites.

► **Lights:** Lights are commonly seen during the holiday season. The custom of having holiday lights dates back to when Christmas trees were decorated with candles, which symbolized Christ being the light of the world. These traditions evolved from pagan rituals that

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would celebrate the return of light of the sun as the days grow longer after the winter solstice.

► **Yule log:** Many families burn a yule log in the fireplace and watch it burn while listening to Christmas carols. The familiar custom of burning the log dates back to solstice celebrations and the tradition of bonfires. The Christmas tradition

called for burning a portion of the log each evening until Twelfth Night, also known as the Epiphany, which takes place on January 6.

► **Poinsettias:** Poinsettias are a tropical plant that originated in Mexico. Joel Roberts Poinsett was the first Ambassador from the United States to Mexico. He became enamored with the plants, and brought them back to

his native South Carolina. An old Mexican legend suggests a poor girl had nothing to offer baby Jesus at Christmas Eve services, so she picked a handful of weeds and put them at the bottom of the nativity scene. These weeds burst into bright red flowers and became known as “Flores de Noche Buena,” or “Flowers of the Holy Night.”

Holiday decorations borrow traditions from all over the world to help establish a festive wonderland.



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Tasty tidbits about eggnog

Eggnog is a rich and delicious beverage that has become synonymous with the most festive time of year. This milk- and egg-based concoction is tasty on its own, or it can be dressed up with other flavors and spiked with a favorite spirit when celebrating the holiday season with other adult partygoers.

December is National Eggnog Month, and December 24 is National Eggnog Day. There is no more perfect time of year to learn everything you can about eggnog — all the while sipping a cup of this creamy concoction. Indulge in these festive facts about the beverage, courtesy of Mental Floss, The Fact Site and Tastemade.

➤ Eggnog likely originated in the medieval period and was known as “posset,” a hot, milk-based drink made of spices and wine. Even though posset could be a cocktail, it also was used as a remedy for colds and flu for its soothing properties.

➤ Milk, eggs and sherry used in the early recipes were difficult to come by, so when eggnog first appeared it was a drink only the wealthy could enjoy. That changed when eggnog was popularized in the American colonies, where dairy products and liquor were more readily available.

➤ Entymologists believe “eggnog” stems from the word “noggin,” which refers to small wooden mugs often used to serve strong ale, known by the slang word “nog.”



➤ In the Medieval period, it was risky to drink milk straight because it wasn't pasteurized. Eggnog contained alcohol so that it would kill off any harmful bacteria in the milk.

➤ A typical homemade version of eggnog has roughly one egg per serving. However, commercial eggnog is regulated by the FDA and can only contain 1 percent of the product's final weight in egg yolk solids. That stems from fear of raw egg and salmonella.

➤ President George Washington apparently enjoyed serving eggnog at Christmas, and even had his own special recipe (see below), according to the Old Farmer's Almanac.

➤ There is no right or wrong alcohol to use when preparing eggnog. Distilled

spirits like rum, sherry, cognac, and whiskey all have produced suitable eggnogs.

➤ Puerto Rican coquito is a traditional drink that is very similar to eggnog.

➤ Individuals concerned about eggs or milk in eggnog can enjoy a vegan recipe made from nut milk instead. Commercially produced vegan eggnog offerings are now more widely available.

➤ One of the more notable flavors in eggnog comes from the use of nutmeg. Nutmeg is a fragrant spice made from grinding the seed of the nutmeg tree.

Now that you've learned about eggnog, whip up a batch of George Washington's original recipe this holiday season.

George Washington's Eggnog

- 1 quart cream
- 1 quart milk
- 12 tablespoons sugar (3/4 cup)
- 1 pint brandy
- 12 pint rye whiskey
- 12 pint Jamaican rum
- 1/4 pint sherry

Eggs (Washington forgot to include the number of eggs, so home chefs can improvise or use six, which seems to be the standard in traditional recipes)

Mix liquor first, then separate yolks and whites of eggs, add sugar to beaten yolks, mix well. Add milk and cream, slowly beating. Beat whites of eggs until stiff and fold slowly into mixture. Can store in the refrigerator for several days.

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The image of thankfulness

The winding story of an iconic portrait

Growing up on the Iron Range, I often noticed the picture that epitomized thankfulness hanging on the wall of so many homes in our neighborhood. We've all seen it—the image of an elderly, white haired man with hands folded at a small wooden table saying a prayer over a simple meal. Titled simply and appropriately, “Grace,” it eventually became one of the most ubiquitous portraits of faith in America. And its humble beginnings came from right here on the Iron Range.

It all began in 1875 in Sweden, with a man named Erik Edward Enstrom. As a young man he had earned wages cleaning the studio for famous painter and sculptor Anders Zorman and studied his work to begin to develop his own artistic skills. At age fifteen, Enstrom emigrated to the United States then traveled by train to Minneapolis. He worked various jobs, one of which was selling Watkins products and at one point traveled north to Blackduck to home-



**SCARLET
STONE**



stead but was drawn back to Minneapolis to study photography at the Minnesota School of Photography. Enstrom then worked at various studios including one in Malacca that he purchased in 1904.

He soon met and married Esther Peterson, from Long Prairie, Minn., and in 1907 they moved to Bovey, a new boomtown on the Mesabi Iron Range with a large Scandinavian population. Here

they opened an elegant new photography studio and lived upstairs, raising their six children. Enstrom specialized in various promotions that he advertised in the *Bovey Itasca Iron News*. These included holiday sittings, the baby's smile featuring infants and he also did “pieced together” panoramic views of the Canisteo Mine and the Bovey/Coleraine area, always signing his work, “The Photographer.”

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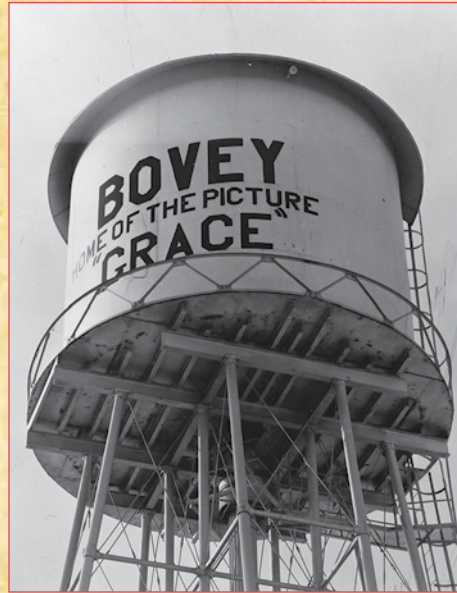


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In late October of 1909 a fire destroyed much of the town and the contents of his studio but he was insured and able to rebuild soon after. He soon was able to open an additional studio in Nashauk followed by two others in neighboring communities.

Around 1920, Charles Wilden, a salesman who frequented Bovey selling gadgets to earn a meager living, stopped at the studio to show Enstrom some boot scrapers. The elderly man, with his deeply creased face impressed the photographer who invited him to stay for lunch, demonstrating his Swedish hospitality. He then asked Wilden to pose in the studio where simple props including a loaf of bread, knife, bowl of food and a Bible (that was actually a dictionary), were set with Wilden taking a position of prayer above the props. The humble photograph depicting thankfulness in an era with negative effects of World War I reflected that there was still much to appreciate in life. He titled the photo,



“Grace,” based on the old man giving prayer before eating and it soon began to be recognized as a masterpiece of photographic art. After Enstrom captured the iconic image, it’s not known what happened to Wilden. In 1926, he was said to

have been paid \$5 by Enstrom in return for waiving his rights to the photograph then he disappeared. As the photograph gained in popularity, Enstrom attempted to locate Wilden but was unsuccessful.

Enstrom Studio made the photo available for purchase and displayed a print in the studio window. It certainly had appeal in a time when many other artists were reflecting the devastations of war, communism, fascism and growing Nazism in their works, often with distorted images. Grace was not surreal nor distorted and even the most common of persons could understand it.

In the mid 1930s, Enstrom’s daughter, Rhoda Nyberg went to Minneapolis to study fashion design with the help of a \$200 loan from one of her brothers for tuition. While she was there her father urged her to take a five-day class on the art of colorizing black and white or sepia toned photographs. Oil tinting was being used by photographers to enhance black and white pictures and Kodak sold a sup-

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ply of oil colors for use with the idea that a wash of color would give a piece more appeal. Rhoda began colorizing the photos by hand and this version was featured in prints produced during the 1940s onward and became the more widespread and popularly

known version of the photo. The photograph was legally under copyright, however Enstrom was liberal in allowing church groups and select organizations the use of Grace. In the 1940s as retirement approached the request for Grace had grown to the

point that the studio could no longer keep up so lithographs were produced to meet the need. Orders were arriving from all over the world and in 1955 Enstrom transferred the copyright on the photograph to the Augsburg Publishing House for \$1,000. Over time an estimated 1,000,000 copies of the photo were sold worldwide. Quality lithographs on a variety of papers were printed and more than ever the photo was assumed to be a painting.

Earning a good living from the work over the years, Enstrom retired at age 71, but remained involved in studio affairs throughout his life until his death in 1968. In 2002, an act of the Minnesota State Legislature established Grace as the state photograph. Its fame is also represented on the water tower in Bovey with the following words painted on it, "Home of the picture Grace."

It is inspiring to know the story behind the photograph and that a former Watkins salesman was responsible for giving the serene and grateful image to persons to be reflected upon through the years.

Source book: "Bovey, A Century of Change," by Donald Boese and Patricia Walls. Available through the Arrowhead Library System's inter-library loan program.

You can purchase a copy of the photograph at <https://gracebyenstrom.com/purchase/>.

Read more about the photo and its 100th anniversary at <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2018/06/20/giving-grace-celebrating-minnesotas-state-photograph-on-its-100th-birthday>



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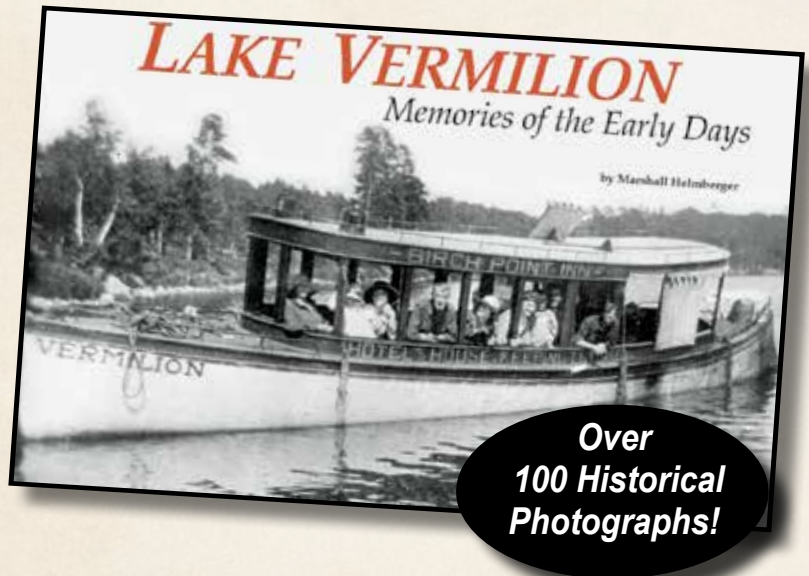
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Easy gifts from the kitchen



Homemade skincare products can be a simple and fun gift to create for the holiday season. Using many ingredients found in your kitchen, plus a few specialty ingredients that can be found at shops that sell soap-making supplies or online, you can create a gift that will be both practical and one-of-a-kind.

Oils do degrade and spoil over time. So, if you are purchasing specialty oils like almond, buy only as much as you are planning to use within six months or so. This isn't an issue with solid oils, like coconut or shea oils. You can also store oils in the refrigerator to keep them fresh longer.

This recipe makes one cup of lotion, and you can easily double the recipe. Package the lotion in glass jars, either 4 or 8-ounce (half-pint or pint) canning

jars, or you can reuse other decorative jars. Then decorate with a pretty label and ribbon, and you are all set.

Lotion- makes one cup (8 oz.)

This makes a firmer style lotion that is quickly absorbed into your skin once applied. I like this recipe because it uses fewer ingredients. You can use any type of essential oil to create a scent. I like to use lavender or lemon verbena.

Double-boiler: The easiest way to melt the lotion is to put the ingredients into a Pyrex measuring cup (2 or 4-cup size) and to use a medium-size pan, with canning rings placed on the bottom (so measuring cup doesn't touch the bottom of the pan). Fill the pan a little less than halfway with water and bring to a simmer. Place the Pyrex measuring cup in the water.

½ cup almond or olive oil

¼ cup coconut oil

¼ cup beeswax granules (used for candle-making). You can also use solid beeswax, but will need to shave it into thin



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pieces.

1 teaspoon vitamin E (optional), will keep the lotion fresh longer. I use vitamin E capsules, prick the end with a pushpin, and then squeeze out the liquid.

Essential oils, if desired, approx. 8 drops per Batch

Combine oils and beeswax in a glass (Pyrex) measuring cup, melt over simmering water in a double-boiler, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat and add vitamin E and essential oil drops. Pour into a jar, the liquid will solidify as it cools.



Sugar Body Scrub

This is a no-cook recipe!

- ½ cup coarse sugar
- ¼ cup almond or olive oil (or combination)
- ½ tsp. vitamin E
- Essential oils (6-10 drops)

Mix the ingredients together. Since this is for use in the shower or bath, I like to package it in small plastic jars so you don't need to worry about the glass breaking.



Above left: Melting the oil and beeswax mixture for the lotion, in a pPyrex measuring cup in a double boiler.

Above: The finished lotion turns white once it cools.

Left: The no-cook sugar scrub comes together in minutes.

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Frazer Bay Island Log Home

COOK, MN Gorgeous custom Lake Vermilion log home on your own island in Frazer Bay! Short boat ride from mainland. Furnished yr-rnd home, 2 stall wet boathouse, wd fired sauna. Vaulted great room w/massive wd burning firepl. Cherry/granite/Wolf kitch open to great rm, dining & covered porch, all lakeside. Main flr lakeside suite & office. Upstairs, 2 beds, glass door to deck w/water views.

OFFERED AT \$998,500
DETAILS 2 BED/2 BATH 1,817 SF
0.5 ACRES 555 FT SHORELINE
ON THE WEB JANISCHREALTY.COM MLS#145479



Price Reduced!

Oppel's Point - White Iron Lake

ELY, MN Lumber baron's restored vintage lakeside cabin near Ely! Historic Oppel's Pt, pvt retreat in majestic pines at waters edge on White Iron Lake chain. Gentle slope to swimming shoreline, grandfathered boat slip, 5 mi to Ely. Cedar cabin w/handmade doors, wd floors, old fashioned porch. Updated elec. New bath, water lines, furnace, cent air, appls. Elegance of bygone era, but w/modern amenities.

OFFERED AT \$724,900
DETAILS 3 BED/1 BATH 2,016 SF
1.3 ACRES 550 FT SHORELINE
ON THE WEB JANISCHREALTY.COM MLS#143026



Vermilion Headwaters Escape

TOWER, MN Lake Vermilion area dream escape in Boundary Waters like setting. Furnished retreat tucked in majestic boreal forest on headwaters of Lake Vermilion, the Pike River Flowage. Pristine island studded vistas. Just 6 mi to town. Prow front great room w/natural light pouring in from 2 story tall windows, massive wood burning fireplace, glass doors open to lakefront deck.

OFFERED AT \$897,000
DETAILS 3 BED/3 BATH 2,696 SF
18.2 ACRES 1,255 FT SHORELINE
ON THE WEB JANISCHREALTY.COM MLS#145198



Wakemup Narrows Retreat

COOK, MN Lake Vermilion mid century modern retreat at waters edge + over the water boathouse w/guest quarters above! Ideal location on Wakemup Narrows features panoramic views w/protected swimming area, Great rm right on waters edge offers sounds of water lapping shore, fireplace, glowing wood walls, floor-ceiling glass lakeside open to large wrap around lakefront deck & patio.

OFFERED AT \$548,500
DETAILS 2 BED/1 BATH 816 SF
0.5 ACRES 130 FT SHORELINE
ON THE WEB JANISCHREALTY.COM MLS#145683

Vermilion Timber Frame & Beach

COOK, MN Gorgeous Lake Vermilion home w/swimming beach, pvt gradual lot. Central location on lake on beloved Frazer Bay, just 12 mi to town. Cedar sided home, 2 stall garage, 2 stall wet boathouse w/2BR guest quarters over the water. Two story great rm w/natural light pouring in, glowing oak floor, glass doors open to lakefront deck & screen porch, lake breezes. Walkout LL.

OFFERED AT \$1,495,000
DETAILS 4 BED/4 BATH 3,129 SF
1 ACRE 175 FT SHORELINE
ON THE WEB JANISCHREALTY.COM MLS#144036



Riverside Country Sanctuary

MT. IRON, MN High end custom cedar home on a thousand feet of pvt shoreline on the river flowing from Buhl to McQuade Lake, pvt pond w/sand swimming hole, beautiful country views & abundant wildlife. Ideal location between Virginia & Hibbing. Unbelievably well built, att garage, office/guest quarters above. Stunning kitchen w/2 islands, SubZero & top quality appls.

OFFERED AT \$749,500
DETAILS 3 BED/3 BATH 5,240 SF
26 ACRES 1,000 FT RIVERFRONT
ON THE WEB JANISCHREALTY.COM MLS#143219



Burntside Paradise

ELY, MN Burntside Lake handscribed log home in pvt bay at the end of a pristine granite fjord. Set in acres of park-like forest w/walking trails, surrounded on 3 sides by Fed forests at edge of the BWCA. Huisman custom built home with wrap around deck. Open great room with a wood burning fireplace and a wall of windows showcasing majestic panoramic views over the lake and surrounding forest.

OFFERED AT \$985,000
DETAILS 1 BED/1 BATH 800 SF
38 ACRES 1,703 FT SHORELINE
ON THE WEB JANISCHREALTY.COM MLS#141299



Giants Ridge Log Estate

BIWABIK, MN Secluded log estate retreat on amazing 450+ ft sunset beach w/sand bar extending into coveted Wynne Lake! Ideal Giants Ridge lifestyle location. Forest of 100+ yr old pines. Built 2007, stone & log home, yr-rnd log guest cabin, timber grill gazebo, 3+ st stone & log garage. Trussed great rm w/wood flr, massive firepl & french doors to screen porch w/firepl & pizza oven.

OFFERED AT \$1,748,500
DETAILS 3 BED/4 BATH 3,444 SF
2.5 ACRES 550 FT SHORELINE
ON THE WEB JANISCHREALTY.COM MLS#143026



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COOK, MN Like new log retreat on the rapids offers relaxing white water sounds & blue water vistas. Tuck under gar & att 2 st gar w/guest quarters above, 60x30 htd bldg, launch on

OFFERED AT	\$1,498,500	
DETAILS	4 BD/4 BTH	4,018 SF
	895 ft shoreline	22 acres

Vermilion River and on Lake Vermilion next door.



TOWER, MN Lake Vermilion: Like new dream home at waters edge w/sunset sand beach, gradual yard, island studded views! On paved road, minutes to town, golf, dining. 2 kitchs/2

OFFERED AT	\$1,698,500	
DETAILS	4 BD/4 BTH	4,153 SF
	150 ft shoreline	0.7 acres

fp/2 decks/ 2 docks, att 3 stall gar & sauna/wet boathouse.



COOK, MN One of a kind waterfront estate on Lake Vermilion. Property incl pvt island & bay, one mile of shoreline, 46 acres adj ST/ST forest lands, 3 cabins grandfathered on waters edge,

OFFERED AT	\$1,750,500	
DETAILS	4 BD/1 BATH	2,080 SF
	5,288 ft shoreline	46 acres

Permanent elec., new septic. Surveyed & potential to divide.



GILBERT, MN Dig your toes into the sand beach or relax on the deck or screen porch as the sun sinks down across Cedar Island Lake, 10 mi to Giants Ridge, 20 to Virginia. Yr-rnd 1943

OFFERED AT	\$549,500	
DETAILS	3 BD/2 BTH	2,218 SF
	208 ft shoreline	3 acres

stone beach-house w/2 st gar & cedar sauna. New septic.

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Sold Oct.

Vermilion - \$550,000



Sold Sept.

White Iron - \$827,500

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Sold June

Vermilion - \$1,250,000



Sold Aug.

Crane - \$649,500