



AlfredNY.Biz

WINTER 2006 ISSUE

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A Note From The Owner:

As always, many thanks to our contributing writers and area merchants for their continued support of this Ezine (Free Online Magazine). I also wish to extend a special thanks to Matt Mueller (Alfred Sun Reporter) for her article about Winter in Alfred,

And finally, since I am publishing this issue during the Christmas season, a special note of overwhelming thanks for the very reason we celebrate Christmas ~ the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

As a child I was very fond of the work of cartoonist and author Charles M. Shulz and of particular pleasure to me were his "Peanuts" characters. Probably my very favorite animated special was, "Merry Christmas Charlie Brown" from which I quote the following monologue by Linus as he explains to Charlie Brown what Christmas is all about.

Quoting from Luke 2:8-14, standing at center stage Linus says, "Lights please" and as the houselights dim and a warm spotlight embraces him he continues, " Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this *will be* the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: " Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

"That's what Christmas is all about Charlie Brown."

Well said Linus,

Be sure to check out our Christmas Page
<http://www.alfredny.biz/Christmas/Christmas.htm>



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Winter in Alfred, NY

by **Matt Mueller**
Alfred Sun Reporter

Is it difficult to know when it is winter in Alfred? For many residents, yes!

For one thing, the calendar date of December 21 is absolutely no guide as to when winter weather will start in any particular year. If snow which covers the ground and remains there for several hours indicates winter's onset, then in 2006 it began in October. If unusually heavy rainfall and local flooding indicates that winter is over and spring is here, then this time around winter ended less than a month later.

The deer which frequent the Alfred environs had already changed into coats of a different color well before November. Attribute that to the abundance of educational institutions around here with classroom windows for deer to peer in. Obviously, they have learned to read. From there it is just a matter of a loose newspaper blowing about in which the deer find out when hunting season starts. They don

their camouflage for that season rather than for winter protection. After all, once wintry mud or snow sets in their tracks will give away their whereabouts regardless of which uniform the deer are wearing.

Likewise, the clothing which people wear hereabouts is no indicator of the season. In fact, their attire only shows that humans do not agree on appropriate outdoor garb at any time of the year in Alfred. On more than one occasion during six months of the year an attentive observer will spot at least one person wearing shorts within a short distance of another bundled up in a parka.

So what does indicate that winter is really here?

Well, it seems to be revealed by what the local dogs are wearing. If they were shorn in the summer, after a few cooler days they gain permission to begin growing back their customary fur coats. If they are short-haired, small, or just plain shivering, they may find themselves wearing fabric dog coats.

So is the only way to know that it is winter in Alfred come down to reading the dogs' fashion statements?

Maybe not. Isn't winter when all of those holidays are observed, beginning with Labor Day in September and ending with Flag Day in June? Oops! Those just bracket the school "season" more or less.

Obviously, to find out when it is winter in Alfred it really is easiest for the humans just to go to the dogs.



Winterize Your Car

Get Ready for Winter Safety Tips for Your Car

Wintertime is one of the most beautiful seasons in Western NY but the truth is the cold temps and potholed roads can be very unfriendly to a vehicle.

Cold temperatures make it harder for your engine to work properly. Snow and ice limit traction. Potholes damage wheels and tires. Salt causes rust and damages the paint. But there are things you can do to help your vehicle in this time of extreme cold. There are many do-it-yourself steps you can follow to keep you car running at its best and of greater importance—keep you and your family safe this winter. Remember, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

1. Consider using snow tires. The condition of your car's tires is critical during the winter. If the tires are worn, or they are high performance tires, braking, acceleration and handling are all negatively impacted while driving on slippery roads. Because of reduced traction, the likelihood of an accident increases. They aren't *magic* tires—even with winter tires, your car will still be worse on slick roads than dry ones. But winter (snow) tires are optimized for snow and ice and they help to improve traction on slick surfaces better than all-season tires.

2. Check the tire pressure. Proper tire pressure is important year round but especially important during the winter when traction is often at a minimum due to wet or snowy conditions. It is critical to have properly inflated tires, as this guarantees the best possible contact between the tire and the road.

3. Change the engine oil and adjust the viscosity to a lower weight (follow manufacturers guidelines). The colder an oil is, the thicker it will be. A thicker oil doesn't circulate as well in an engine during start-up as a thinner oil would. If the oil is too thick, the engine doesn't get the proper lubrication.

5W30 is thinner than 10W30 in the cold

4. Inspect the belts and hoses. The belts and hoses in modern cars lead long lives. But that doesn't mean they don't die. Cold temperatures can accelerate the demise of a belt or hose. Before winter starts, have the belts and hoses inspected on your vehicle by a good mechanic.

5. Inspect the wipers and wiper fluid. Visibility is particularly key in winter, as it is often compromised by precipitation, salt buildup on the windshield and road spray. If your car's blades are older, or don't wipe clean replace them. Also check and fill your wiper fluid reservoir frequently buy fluids that have a lower freezing temp to keep the fluid working properly.

6. Check the battery. A battery gives little notice before it dies. Very cold temperatures can reduce a vehicle's battery power by up to 50 percent. If your vehicle battery is older than three years, have it tested by a good mechanic. Also, make sure the posts and connections are free of corrosion.

7. Check antifreeze mixture. The ideal mixture of antifreeze (coolant) and water inside your vehicle's radiator to prevent freezing and/or overheating is 50:50. Have it tested by a good mechanic.

8. Consider carrying an emergency kit inside the car. Wintertime requires you to load more junk into the back of your vehicle. But as they say, better safe than sorry, right?

Things you might want to consider carrying:

- A flashlight, flares and a first-aid kit.
- Jumper cables, a tool kit and tire chains.
- A blanket, warm clothes and gloves.
- Paper towels.
- A bag of traction material, such as sand, salt or non-clumping kitty litter. Use this for added traction when a tire is stuck.
- A snow brush, ice scraper and snow shovel.
- Extra washer fluid.
- Extra food and water.

Need a good mechanic?

You'll find several local automotive shops with ratings listed here:

http://www.alfredny.biz/bus_category/auto_service.htm



Great Recipes & Ideas

Winter 2006 Issue Christmas Cookies

This recipe is courtesy of my wife of 25 years, Cathy. It is a favorite in the Williams household around the holidays and we hope you'll like it too. Have fun...

Christmas Cookies

Makes: 9 dozen
Preheat oven 325
Bake 10-15 minutes

Ingredients

3 ½ cups sugar
1 ½ cup Crisco shortening
½ cup margarine
4 eggs
2 cups sour milk (2 cups milk with 2 tablespoons vinegar, set aside)
4 teaspoons baking powder
Pinch salt
11 cups flour
4 teaspoons vanilla, or orange or any type flavoring
1 teaspoon baking soda

Mix sugar, Crisco, margarine, eggs, baking powder, salt, flavoring, and baking soda. When that is all mixed together, alternate adding the flour and milk to the other ingredients to bring the dough to proper consistency. Roll out the cookie dough on a floured surface, and cut with cookie cutters, place cookies onto ungreased cookie sheets, and bake until lightly browned (or your favorite variation).

Remove from oven and place on a cooling rack to cool before frosting.

Frosting

Ingredients

1/3 cup Crisco shortening
1 bag confectioner's sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla (or desired flavoring)
½ cup milk

Put Crisco into a mixing bowl*, and use your mixer to blend the Crisco until it is nice and smooth (Make sure to continually scrape the sides of the bowl). Add the flavoring. Alternate adding the confectioner's sugar and milk. You may not need the whole ½ cup of milk; it depends on your desired consistency for the frosting.



My husband came up with a clever idea that we had never done before. After you are done making your frosting, and you have it separated into different colors (in different bowls), set a bowl of frosting in the microwave for 45 seconds, let it melt a little, and then hurry and dunk the front of the cookies in and add your candies/decorations before the frosting thickens again. The nice thing about this little trick is that the frosting takes on a nice glaze as it cools—and it hardens the frosting just enough to make for better stacking of the finished cookies when storing them.

*Make sure that when you are making your frosting that you use a metal or glass bowl because if you use plastic, plastic holds onto grease from previous uses, and it may interfere with the consistency (or even the flavor) of your frosting.

All the very best in 2007
Cathy Williams

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We appreciate our sponsors so we are recognizing a few 'great' local businesses. These are some of the finest people, businesses and organizations in Western NY and their support keeps this publication going. Please take the time to shop with them, call them and/or visit their websites.

Christmas Trees, Gifts, Foods

The Christmas season can make us feel as though we are in perpetual motion. These great businesses can help you ease the burdens with everything from Christmas Trees and Wreaths—to deli platters, to a good mechanic to get your car ready for the winter.

We shop these businesses and we recommend that you shop with them too!

In Alfred:



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