A lifestyle magazine for Costco members

SPECIAL SECTION: ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT 40

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Rethinking IDEAS FOR THE FUTURE CHOCKET

By Al Gore

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ALSO: Holiday Gift Guide

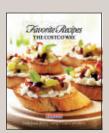
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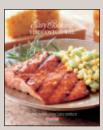
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- To the left there is a tab called "Resources." Here's where
 Costco members will find information that they will likely refer
 to often, such as the <u>Kirkland Signature Wine Connection</u>, all
 of the *Costco Way* cookbooks and location guides for <u>Gas</u>
 <u>Stations</u> and <u>Hearing Centers</u>. Also included in "Resources" are
 buying guides for <u>digital cameras</u> and <u>diamonds</u>.



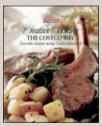
The latest cookbook is here: In The Kitchen The Costco Way 2008 Cookbook



Favorite Recipes



Easy Cooking



Creative Cooking



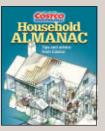
Cooking in Style



Cooking



Entertaining

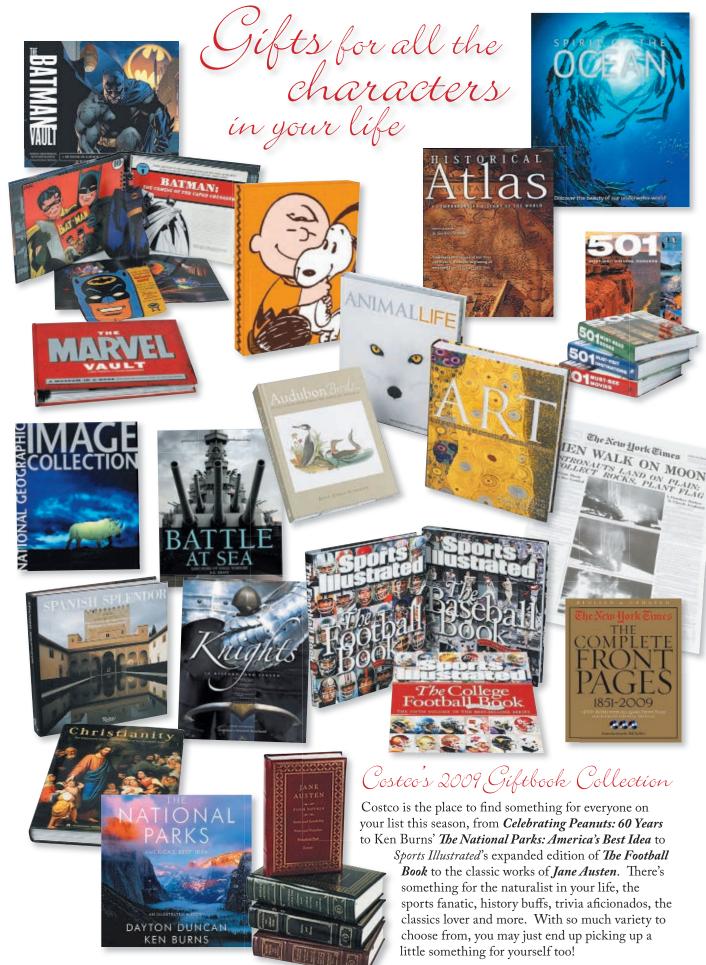


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UNDER THE DOME

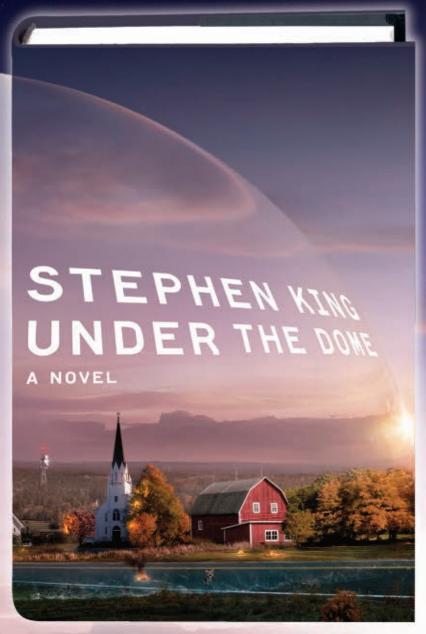
FROM UNDER THE DOME:

shoulder of Route 119, headed in the direction of Chester's Mill, although the town was still a mile and a half away and even Jim Rennie's Used Cars was only a series of twinkling sunflashes arranged in rows at the place where the highway curved to the left. The chuck planned (so far as a woodchuck can be said to plan anything) to head back into the woods long before he got that far . . .

He waddled a complacent old fellow's waddle, watching the human walking on the other side of the road.

The man stopped. The chuck realized he had been spotted. To his right and just ahead was a fallen birch. He would hide under there, wait for the man to go by, then investigate for any tasty—

The chuck got that far in his thoughts—and another three waddling steps—although he had been cut in two. Then he fell apart on the edge of the road ... ??





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Let's talk.



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Memoir made easy

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Combine Cirque du Soleil and dinner theater, and you'll have a good idea of the zany and delicious entertainment at Téatro ZinZanni.

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Creative holiday cooking

Easy-to-prepare-and-serve hors d'oeuvres and side dishes, courtesy of Home Cooking The Costco Way.

BY TIM TALEVICH

The king of brandy

Cognac's vintage lineage can be traced back several hundred years.

BY FRED MINNICK

Days of wine and turkey

The varied tastes of a typical Thanksgiving Day meal mean it's best to have a variety of matching wines.

BY ANNETTE ALVAREZ-PETERS

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BY ANGELA PIRISI

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LUMIX

Panasonic ideas for life

- * 1GB = 1 billion bytes. Usable capacity will be less. SD Card utilizes a portion of the memory for copy protection and other purposes. Therefore, usable capacity will be less.



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43 Book Pick: *The Lacuna*

Barbara Kingsolver's latest novel explores the often enormous chasm between perception and truth.

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45 Splendiferous!

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Holiday cards and more New card designs and gift items are at Costco's Photo Centers, just in time for the holidays. BY DAVID WIGHT

Tax forms made easy

Costco Check Printing has great prices on all the forms businesses need to make tax time go smoothly.

BY DAVID WIGHT

Medicare Part D

Costco and Aetna team up to offer members a Medicare Part D prescription drug plan.

BY DAVID WIGHT

New products and features make online exploration even more fun.

Costco in the news

Execs give advice, magazines rate Costco products and a new Costco opens in Melbourne.

Buying Smart: Kirkland

You'd have to be a little nutty not to appreciate the quality and value of these little gems.

BY PAT VOLCHOK

members changing the world

A follow-up to our July cover story shows there's no shortage of good-hearted Costco members.

ALSO: 90 Special Events





Splendiferous! Fancy Nancy 45

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from the publisher's desk

Ginnie Roeglin

AT A LOSS for holiday ideas? You need look no further than this issue of The Costco Connection! We've included several special sections to help you plan your gift list, your menu and more.

You'll find lots of great gift ideas in the Arts & Entertainment section, which starts on page 40. In addition to previews of the latest books, our buyers present their picks of books, music, movies and video games.

Starting on page 62, the Creative Cooking section offers ideas for your holiday meals and parties. You can learn about pairing wines with cheeses and party foods, and find several delicious and easy appetizer recipes.

Costco wine expert Annette Alvarez-Peters offers her suggestions of wines to serve with your Thanksgiving meal, including what to drink with your Costco pumpkin pie.

The Holiday Gift Guide following page 69 showcases many great Costco items, including fresh meat, seafood, electronics, bikes and toys, cameras and computers, jewelry and more. You'll also find a selection of seasonal trim to decorate your home.

And, last but not least, a special catalog of holiday gifts available on Costco.com follows page 83. We carry an additional selection of merchandise online, such as furniture, mattresses, floral bouquets, exercise equipment, large TVs and all of the latest electronics, gift baskets and gourmet foods, for delivery direct to the recipient's home. You can read more about our latest online features on page 83.

Be sure to visit a Costco warehouse on the Friday following Thanksgiving to take advantage of Thanksgiving weekend special savings. That's also when, as a thank-you to our members, we will be handing out our latest cookbook, Home Cooking The Costco Way, free to the first 2 million Costco customers. This book is filled with easy and inexpensive recipes from our food suppliers, using ingredients that are sold at Costco.

From all of us at Costco, thank you for your loyal membership and your business. We wish you and your family a very Happy Thanksgiving!



David W. Fuller is Assistant Vice President, Publishing, and Editor of The Costco Connection.

from the editor's desk

David W. Fuller

LET'S TALK ABOUT Al Gore and Glenn Beck. One of them appears on our cover this month, having penned an article for us concerning his ideas about climate change. The other's book was promoted in a full-page paid advertisement in last month's issue.

These two people have little in common in terms of politics or stature. (There is only one person I can think of who has both a Nobel Peace Prize and the title of vice president of the United States on his résumé.)

There is one overwhelmingly important point they do have in common: They are American citizens whose right

to express their opinions is protected under the First Amendment of the U. S. Constitution. The right to print articles or sell and promote books written by these two people is also protected by that cornerstone of our democracy.

Some of our readers either do not understand that particular protection or do not care for the choices we make in our editorial coverage or the books we sell.

Although it saddens me to have to point it out, I want to assure you that Costco does not believe in censoring books. As with all of the products we sell, we emphasize those books that have or are certain to have the greatest customer demand. Unlike conventional bookstores, we carry books primarily at the time they are released. That means when a conservative or a liberal book is on the table, there may not be a book counterbalancing it. That is a matter of timing and numbers, not politics or opinions.

In terms of the articles we publish in the magazine, our coverage has included—and will continue to include—everyone from Tim LaHaye to Howard Stern. Again, we rely on time for the balance and on each member's judgment to choose what he or she wants to read.





DIALOGUE etters



In response to the October Debate, "Should we rely more on wind energy?"

NO. The wind does not blow at reliable times. If the wind blows when there is less demand, then large batteries will be required, which is bad for the environment.

> Dennis Tishma Bakersfield, California

YES. Saves on electricity. Cleaner form of energy. Smart and efficient. We need to seriously invest in new forms of energy in our country.

> Virginia Imbrogno Cos Cob, Connecticut

NO. I am not in favor of more wind power until senators and congressmen allow it in their own backyards.

Philip Abbott Camino, California

YES. Wind energy is green and environmentally sustainable. The cost to install is nothing compared to the benefits.

Trudy Olcott Lehi, Utah

In response to the September Debate, "Is legislation the right way to deal with cyberbullies?"

NO. I don't think we need more legislation regarding communication devices. I think it's too intrusive and not government's place to police common transmission.

> Nicholas DeAngelo Danvers, Massachussetts

YES. It's the law to protect our children! Valerie Ferronato Vallejo, California

Odds and ends

Kirkland Signature fan

As a Costco member of 11 years, I have come to appreciate both the quality and value of my Costco membership. One of those things that make it so valuable for me is the Kirkland Signature[™] line of products.

I have carefully compared the Kirkland Signature line against similar items both at Costco and at other retailers, and have found little if any difference. Sometimes I have found the Kirkland Signature product to be much better in terms of overall quality and pricing-for example, the men's shirts, which are the same or better than similar shirts sold at high-end retailers for much more. Even when the quality is the same, the Kirkland Signature product gives you more and/or sells for less.

I only wish that Costco would expand the Kirkland Signature line to cover more products so that members such as myself could reap even more benefits and savings from our membership.

Carlos Jurado Hollywood, Florida

Cheers for Kirkland Signature vodka

I belong to a gourmet dinner group. Prior to one of our recent group dinners, we conducted a vodka blind tasting. Each individual brought one vodka for the competition. The vodkas included Kirkland Signature, Ketel One, Absolut, Belvedere, Skyy, Grey Goose, Cîroc and Chopin. Each of the eight chilled vodkas was tasted in small amounts, separated by a mouth rinse and crackers to cleanse the palate. We judged for taste, smoothness, aftertaste and aroma. The results: the Kirkland Signature brand was first by a large margin! Not only was everyone very surprised, but many have now changed to the Kirkland Signature brand.

Ron and Janet Carr Las Vegas, Nevada

Unclear picture

We believe your article "Picture perfect" (Buying Smart, June 2009) was very misleading in the home-movies-to-DVD section.

We were very excited to see Costco provide this service, as my husband has three cases of 16 mm films from his childhood. some of which we were interested in transferring to DVD as a surprise for his mother (88) and his siblings. One of the films is of his mother's wedding in the 1940s.

Your article stated that the DVD holds about 1,600 feet of old film. It then shows a price of \$19.95.

When we brought 1,600 feet of film to the photo department at our local Costco, we were informed that the price would be \$193.00 for the 1,600-feet conversion. Obviously we were very surprised, as we had never done this before.

> Brian Siplo and Maria Lombardo Pepperell, Massachusetts

Glen Hutchinson, Photo Center operations manager, responds: We could have been more

clear, and I apologize. There were a number of specific details that we were not able to outline in the limited space of the article. The staff and the brochure at the 1-Hour Photo Lab explain each service in much greater detail.

You are correct that processing a full DVD with 1,600 feet of movie film costs \$193.99. That price includes a second DVD at no extra charge, and we use archival grade DVDs which protect the data for more than 100 years. At another retailer, transferring the same quantity of movie film would cost \$402.98 for two DVDs and would not be on a true archival-grade Gold DVD.

I appreciate that you let us know of your concern. Our goal is to provide a service to preserve family memories at a great value.

VCR to DVD is A-OK

I had several family VCR tapes transferred to DVD [at the Costco Photo Center]. I was very impressed with the DVDs that we received. Not only had they done their best with poor-quality tapes, but they also provided an index and menu just like a commercial product. Because of the great job that was done, I am going through other family tapes and will be having Costco Photo transfer them onto DVD. This was another Costco job well done.

Carol Colemaan Adrian, Michigan

"Green" electronics

Dan Daley failed to mention in his "Energy vampires" paragraph ("Living in the green house," August 2009) that some entertainment devices really do need to remain powered up when not in use.

Cable boxes and personal satellite receivers need to remain on because they are constantly downloading digital information needed to keep them authorized and to populate their program guides. Attempts to turn them off overnight or for longer periods will almost certainly lead to support calls to trip those devices and to frustrating issues with program guides.

Most of the newest cable boxes and satellite receivers now being installed have built-in

Have something to say?

Readers are encouraged to submit letters to our editors on any topic or issue covered in The Connection. Please include your full name and phone number or address. Send an e-mail to dialogue@costco.com; or write to: Dialogue, The Costco Connection, P.O. Box 34088. Seattle. WA 98124-1088: or fax to (425) 313-6718. The editors reserve the right to edit letters for publication.

DVRs, and they need to remain on in order to record programs requested by their owners.

Green-conscious owners of entertainment devices need to exercise some judgment if they decide to unplug their equipment to save energy.

> Herb Drake San Rafael, California

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The Crayola® Crayon Maker™ lets kids recycle crayon pieces into swirling color concoctions! Melt crayon pieces, pour into a mold and let harden. Makes new crayons in cool color combinations. Includes crayon maker, crayon mold, 6 crayon holders and 72 crayons for endless coloring surprises.



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Create awesome, animated light-up drawings with the Color Explosion™ Glow Board! Includes 12 markers and 16 image sheets to keep the fun glowing. The Glow Station™ On-the-Go lets you design and draw with light. Portable glow pad with handle stores light wand, stencils and texture sheets for take-along fun.



LEGO° Indiana Jones™ 2 The Adventure Continues

With a unique, tongue-in-cheek take on all the *Indiana Jones* films—including, for the first time ever, *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*—LEGO Indiana Jones 2 follows Dr. Jones' escapades from the jungles of South America to the Peruvian ruins and beyond. Players can build, battle and brawl their way through their favorite cinematic moments— or create their own.

For Xbox 360, Wii and Nintendo DS

Star Wars® The Clone Wars™ Republic Heroes™

For the first time ever, players can fight as their favorite Jedi and clone troopers from the preeminent animated television series—from familiar faces like Anakin Skywalker to new heroes like Clone Captain Rex. Built around two–player cooperative action, with accessible controls for family–friendly game play.

For Xbox 360, Wii and Nintendo DS

WAREHOUSE/COSTCO.COM

Capture and share your memories.



Sony® Cyber-shot® W290 Digital Camera

- Intelligent Auto Mode (iAuto) makes capturing brilliant images easy
- 12.1 MP resolution, 5x optical zoom
- Carrying case and Memory Stick® included
- Records 720p high definition movies¹

Sony® DVDirect® MC6 DVD Recorder

- Transfer home movies and digital pictures to DVD with the touch of a button
- Enjoy movies and slideshows in high definition with your Blu-ray Disc™ player and your compatible HDTV

Sony® SX41 Handycam® Camcorder

SONY

- Hybrid Recording to internal memory or Memory Stick® media (sold separately)
- 60x optical zoom
- Carrying case included



¹ Maximum of 29 minutes continuous recording per video clips, limited to available capacity on storage media.

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The SBA goes You Tube

THE U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is always looking for new ways to help small businesses across the country with information, mentorship, grants and more. Now they've tapped into YouTube as part of a larger trend within the federal government to use the Web to



reach a larger audience.

"With millions of visitors, the majority under 35, You-Tube offers a prime opportunity to use current technology and the appeal of a popular online platform to further promote the agency's programs and services," says SBA administrator Karen G. Mills. "By expanding its outreach, SBA will be providing more current and potential entrepreneurs with the necessary tools to start, grow and succeed in their businesses."

The SBA YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/sba) debuted with a 60-second introduction to the SBA and its programs and services, and a 10-part "Delivering Success" series co-produced with the U.S. Postal Service.

Future content will include more in-depth information about SBA programs, such as how small businesses can take advantage of the Recovery Act loan programs, government contracting opportunities, exporting, how to start and grow a small business, and small-business success stories.

WALLY AMOS: BE POSITIVE



Wally Amos is the founder of Uncle Wally's Muffin Company. You can reach him at www.wallyamos.com.

Be positive, regardless

BY NOW, WE ALL KNOW we are in tough economic times. It is a phrase that has become a permanent part of our language. I believe it is also a phrase that prevents us from climbing out of a negative situation. We are focused on tough economic times, not on answers and solutions. What you give attention to grows. I have learned through my personal challenges that the only way we can move through adversity is to maintain a strong, positive mental attitude, regardless. It is not a sign of weakness. A positive attitude is as strong as steel. It will consistently lead you to the answers and solutions you need to move through challenging situations.

We have been conditioned to believe that adversity is negative. Overcoming adverse situations is how we gain strength and character. It forces us to get on top of the circumstances and not lie down under them. Adversity reminds us that we are stronger than we could ever imagine. It's a mind-set that actually helps us to flip a situation upside down.

This quote from 365 Tao, by Deng Ming-Dao, sums it up: "Without the difficulty of being hemmed in, the tree in the forest would not be forced to marshal its power to grow toward the light. It must truly bring forth all its inner strength to spread its branches. If it becomes grand, it is in part because of its suffering. Thus the times of adversity can be crucial to the development of one's inner personality."

I remember when my wife, Christine, was in the final stages of labor as our daughter, Sarah, was entering the world. I told her that contractions are her friend, and they are. The contractions mean the baby is turning to make his or her entry through the birth canal.

And so it is with life. Adversity and challenges are simply showing you a better way to achieve your goals and dreams. Quit resisting. As Robert Schuller says, "Tough times never last, but tough people do." Your attitude creates the conditions in your life. Relax and be positive, regardless!

More in archives
On Costco.com, enter
"connection." At Online Edition,
search "Wally Amos."

ways to eliminate speaker's anxiety

THE NUMBER-ONE fear of most Americans, according to many studies, is public speaking. Yet it is an integral element of success in business.

Professional speaker, coach,

author and Costco member Arnold Sanow (www.arnoldsanow.com) works with companies and individuals to improve their presentation and communication skills. He says, "To enhance your chances for success in business you must conquer this fear. People who speak well are perceived as smarter, more competent, trustworthy and knowledgeable. By improving your speaking ability you will win more oral proposals, close more sales, persuade and influence customers and investors, and motivate employees." He suggests these six guidelines:

1 Join Toastmasters. This international club focuses on helping people to curb their fears and boost their speaking ability. For more information, go to *www.toastmasters.org*.

Plan. Ninety percent of a good presentation revolves around planning. To decrease your anxiety, know your audience, research your topic, prepare a good outline and then follow it.

3 Meditate. Use relaxation exercises, such as tensing up parts of the body and then relaxing them.

(4) Focus on a friendly face. There is always at least one person who is smiling, looking at you or nodding in agreement. Keep your eyes on that person until you feel relaxed.

(5) Visualize a successful presentation.

Picture the opening, the body of the speech and the close. Picture everyone smiling, laughing at your humor, applauding at appropriate times and then coming up afterwards to tell you about the great job you did.

(6) **Use your own style.** Be yourself. Many fears can be attributed to a speaker trying to adapt to a style that is not his or her own.

Sanow cites Walter Cronkite, who said, "It's natural to have butterflies; the secret is to get them to fly in formation." By following the formation above, your fears will be replaced with confidence.







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All Nikon products include Nikon Inc. USA limited warranty. ©2009 Nikon Inc.

WAREHOUSE/COSTCO.COM

Robocal bans Also: • Investment traps

THE FEDERAL TRADE Commission (FTC) is banning many types of prerecorded telemarketing solicitations, dubbed "robocalls." Jon Leibowitz, chairman of the FTC, declared, "American consumers have made it crystal clear that few things annoy them more than the billions of commercial telemarketing robocalls they receive every year."

Until recently, consumers had to specifically join a do-not-call list to avoid them. But as of September 1, telemarketers now need written permission from the customer in order to make such calls. Violators face penalties of up to \$16,000 per call.

This still doesn't ban all such annoying interruptions: Exempt from the new ban are informational calls such as flight cancellations, delivery notices and calls from debt collectors. Also allowed are calls from politicians, charities, banks, insurers, phone companies, surveys and certain healthcare messages such as prescription notifications.

Live calls are still allowed, unless the recipient's phone number is on the National Do Not Call Registry. People who get an unauthorized call can file complaints with the commission online at www. donotcall.gov or by calling toll-free (877) FTC-HELP (382-4357).

Investment traps

The North American Securities Administrators Association (NASAA) is warning investors to resist trying to rebuild their savings through dangerous investments. Many of these schemes promise high returns, but they provide little, if any, disclosure of risks and offer high commissions to aggressive sales forces. Here are a few types to avoid.

- Entertainment investments. Movies, infomercials, Internet gambling and pornography sites are among the scams.
- Gold bullion and currency. In these scams, the seller offers to retain "purchased" gold in a secure vault and promises to sell it for the investor as it gains in value. In many instances the gold does not exist, including many forms of foreign exchange (aka forex) schemes in which the money is simply stolen.
- Life settlements. The rising popularity of life settlements, otherwise known as viaticals, has prompted a Congressional investigation. While cashing out of life-insurance policies has provided some people with necessary funds for medical expenses and other purposes, this comes at a high

price for investors, particularly senior citizens. ■ Natural resource investments. These usually involve energy and precious metals, promising quick, high returns. Particularly attractive to the naive are oil and gas schemes, as well as fraudulent

On Costco.com, enter "connection." At Online Edition, search

offerings of investments tied to natural gas, wind and solar energy, and the development of new energy-efficient technologies.

- Ponzi schemes. In a typical Ponzi scheme, such as the recent Bernard Madoff scandal, high returns are paid to initial investors out of the funds of later investors, who usually lose their investment to the promoter.
- Leveraged exchange-traded funds. These funds are traded like stock, but use exotic financial instruments, promising the potential to provide greater-than-market returns. These are very volatile, and typically not for most retail investors.

■ Real estate investment schemes. Homeowners caught up in the crashing housing market are rushing to save their homes. They fall victim to these scams, which require upfront payment, but pro-

vide no legitimate loan relief. Scammers also target homeowners who are considering reverse mortgages, duping them out of their homes.

■ Short-term commercial promissory notes. Short-term notes are those nine months or less in duration. Often they're touted as being "insured" or "guaranteed," but the insurance companies generally are located offshore, are not licensed to do business in the United States and fail to deliver.

■ Speculative inventions and new products. These may be fine for venture capitalists, who know how to assess the risks, but dangerous for those gambling their retirement money.

For more information about these trading traps, check out www. nasaa.org.

Ask David.

MY MOTHER-IN-LAW has invested \$2,000 in a networking system, and is planning on investing more. She thinks it'll be a good business venture since she is aging and could do it from home. I think it sounds like a pyramid scheme. I tried to do an Internet search to find negative information, but they must have flooded the search engines with only positive posts about the company.

> **Dennis** San Marcos, CA

Many businesses offer Internet investment "opportunities" similar to what you describe. The specific company you mentioned is not a

> home business, but a marketing program sold on the Internet. Such systems can

become scamlike if they're selling "success in selling" but there's no actual product for sale. Investigate

this company with the Federal Trade Commission before your mother-in-law invests any more money. They're online at www.ftc.gov, or call toll-free (877) FTC-HELP (382-4357).

Hint: If you're looking for negative reviews about any business, try inserting the word "complaint" after the company name in your Internet search

David Horowitz is a leading consumer advocate

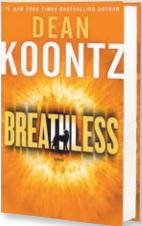
(www.fightback.com). He is a frequent guest on radio and television stations. Consult your local listings for dates and times.

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Do you have a question for David?

Just log on to www.fightback.com and "Ask David." He will personally respond to your problem if you follow the instructions printed on his Web site. (Costco members receive a rebate off the normal fee.) Questions and answers of the greatest interest to Costco members will be used in this column with the permission of the contributor and will be posted on www.fightback.com.

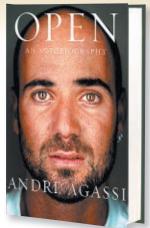
"A room without books is like a body without a soul." —Cicero



On sale November 24

A NOVEL OF SUSPENSE AND ADVENTURE

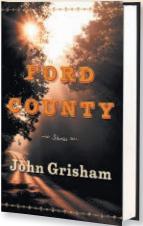
The discovery of a pair of beautiful furred animals—the likes of which have never been seen—brings Grady Adams and Cammy Rivers together to observe the mysterious and fascinating new creatures. But as the two study they are also being watched, and it's not long before they are on the run with the creatures in tow in a riveting race for freedom in **Breathless** (Bantam), the latest from Dean Koontz.



On sale November 9

AGASSI IS AN OPEN BOOK

Open (Knopf) is an intensely personal account of life both on and off the court by one of the world's most beloved athletes. In his autobiography, Agassi candidly discusses his father, his family, his best friends and his first loves. He describes the grind of championship tennis, the physical and mental toll it took, as well as the feeling after humiliating defeats and astonishing victories. Agassi celebrates the maturity to which all his experiences have led in *Open*.



On sale November 3

GRISHAM RETURNS TO FORD COUNTY

John Grisham's first novel, *A Time to Kill*, was set in Ford County, Mississippi.

Now he returns with his first collection of short stories. **Ford County** (Doubleday) reminds us why Grisham is America's most beloved storyteller.

NOW IN PAPERBACK

Kyle McAvoy is a promising lawer, but he also has a dark secret that could land him in the morgue in **The Associate** (Dell).





Available now

10 IS YOUR LUCKY NUMBER!

great anticipation.

THE UNMISTAKABLE VOICE OF JOHN IRVING

When a 12-year-old boy

girlfriend for a bear, both

the boy and his father become fugitives—pursued

mistakes the local constable's

mercilessly by the constable.

In a story that spans five

Twisted River (Random

House) proves once again why the author of *The*

popular and why fans look

forward to his novels with

decades, Last Night in

Cider House Rules is so

Rachael Ray's latest cookbook from Clarkson Potter offers her top 10 recipes in every category. Get her top 10 family favorites, top 10 comfort foods, top 10 most requested, the top 10 meals that can be made for under \$10 — and many more. With 300 favorite recipes, it's easy to cook the Rachael Ray way every day!



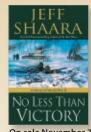
A ruthless present-day contract killer comes face to face with a seraph and is given a chance to save lives rather than destroy them. So the murderer seizes his chance and is whisked back to 13th-century England, where he begins his perilous quest for salvation in **Angel Time** (Knopf), a thriller about angels and assassins—new from Anne Rice.



Available now

HISTORICAL MILITARY FICTION AT ITS BEST

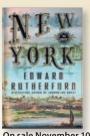
Jeff Shaara takes readers on a journey through the final trials of World War II as seen through the eyes of those who were there—Eisenhower, Patton, young GIs on the front lines and even Hitler's golden boy, Albert Speer. In **No Less Than Victory** (Ballantine), Shaara presents both the courage of the soldier and the desperation of a madman in danger of losing his dream.



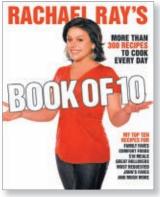
On sale November

A CELEBRATION OF AMERICA'S GREATEST CITY

Edward Rutherfurd recounts the momentous events that shaped the city of New York from its founding to the present day in his latest incredible work of historical fiction. With a brilliant mix of romance, family drama and war, as seen through the lives of a diverse set of families, **New York** (Doubleday) is the book that Rutherfurd's American fans have been waiting for.



n sale November 10



On sale November 3

Ask SUZE

E-mail your personalfinance questions to: suze@costco.com. Please include "Suze Orman Q&A" in the subject line; or fax to (425) 313-6718; or mail to **Q&A** with Suze Orman The Costco Connection P.O. Box 34088 Seattle, WA 98124-1088.

Suze will answer selected questions in this bimonthly column. She regrets that unpublished questions cannot be answered individually.

Suze Orman's TV show airs Saturday nights on CNBC. Suze can be contacted at www.suzeorman.com.



■ Following your 401(k)■ Paying off a mortgage

Getting due credit

By Suze Orman

I am 69 years old, female, retired and receiving a state pension and Social Security. I paid off my condo mortgage 15 years ago, and am now renting it out while I live with and care for my mother in her home, which is also paid off. I have three credit cards and always pay off the entire balance. I have no outstanding debts. I received my credit score last month, and it had gone down from three years ago. I called the credit score company and was told my score went down because, as I have not had a loan for so many years, there is no information as to whether I could handle loan payments. Does that explanation make sense?

> Susan B. Honolulu, HI

NOPE. JUST 10 PERCENT of your FICO credit score is based on your mix of credit, so it's a pretty small factor. Besides, plenty of people who have never had a loan have great FICO credit scores of 720 or higher. (The scale is 300 to 850; any score of 720 or more typically puts you in the driver's seat for great deals.) It was your FICO score you checked, right? While other firms offer credit scores that use different formulas, it is the FICO score that is most often checked by lenders and businesses, so that's the one that matters. If your FICO credit score is at least 720, I say relax. You're just fine.

If it's lower than 720, you want to work to get it higher. The two biggest bangs for your buck: Pay down your balances and always pay your bills on time (even if it is just the minimum due). Those two moves play a major role in determining your FICO score. (Timely bill payment is 35 percent of your score. Low balances relative to your total available credit are 30 percent of your score. So that's 65 percent of your score you can work to improve.) To learn more, go to www.myfico. com and click on the credit education tab.

> Full disclosure: I have a business relationship with FICO: Suze Orman's FICO Kit. But I do not receive one penny when anyone buys a FICO score.

A year ago, my husband's company closed after 20 years of service. Our 401(k) is still in the company, and it's losing money. What should

> Florence E. Elk Grove, CA

LET'S CLARIFY a few things. The 401(k) is actually not a part of the company; it is managed by a third party on behalf of the company. The performance of your 401(k) is dependent on the investments you have chosen for the account; if you invest in stocks, there is the chance of losses from time to time.

If you will not need that money for at least 10 years—and preferably more—then you should still have exposure to stocks. How much? It depends on a lot of factors, but a very general rule of thumb is to subtract your age from 100; that's the percentage you might want to keep in stocks. If the mutual funds offered in the 401(k) aren't super low cost, I recommend that your husband roll over the 401(k) to a discount brokerage or no-load mutual fund company and then he will be able to invest the account in any low-cost mutual funds or exchangetraded funds.

We are retired, in our mid-70s. Our total assets amount to about \$280,000. We receive \$2,300 per month in combined Social Security payments. We are considering paying off our adjustable-rate mortgage (ARM), which has a balance of \$238,000 and a present payment of \$1,250 per month. Our monthly expenses without the mortgage are about \$1,700. What do you advise?

> Alex G. Lake Forest, CA

I THINK PAYING OFF your mortgage could make a lot of sense. My first concern when I am asked this question is how much someone will have left in an emergency fund after paying off the mortgage; it is mandatory to still have ample liquid assets. As you know, I advise maintaining an emergency fund to cover eight months of living expenses. That would be \$13,600 based on your \$1,700 in non-mortgage costs. But given that your Social Security income would cover all your monthly expenses and then some, I am not that worried. So assuming you intend to stay in that home for as long as possible and it does not need much repair, and you have savings tucked away at a federally insured bank or credit union, you pass that test. It could also make a lot of sense to get out of your ARM now, depending on what type of adjustable loan it is. If you face a higher payment when it resets, that's another motivation to get it paid off.

Should we have a **Consumer Financial Protection Agency?**



THE CURRENT ADMINSTRATION has proposed creating a new Consumer Financial Protection Agency that would regulate a wide array of consumeroriented credit, savings and payment products, including mortgages and credit cards. The plan would consolidate oversight and authority into one agency with the power to write rules and enforce them.

Supporters say it will protect consumers from deceptive practices; give them better access to financial products; and make sure information is simple, transparent and accurate. They say community banks and credit unions would not have to compete against unregulated, unsupervised providers who push the market to bad practices.

Critics argue that having a single agency would result in fewer options for consumers, stifle the development of innovative and beneficial financial products and penalize providers who had nothing to do with the current economic crisis. They say it will yield little consumer protection and increase the cost of financial products. What do you think?



Find out more about this topic on the Web:

- www.consumersunion.org/pub/core_financial_services/013697.html
- www.aba.com/Industry+Issues/RegulatoryRestructuring.htm
- http://energycommerce.house.gov (search "consumer protection agency")

from members:

Mary Masterson Clackamas, OR



It can be beneficial to help educate consumers, ensure standardization and have the power to put pressure on unscrupulous entities.

David Lanouette Sun City Center, FL



Multiple regulators with different standards allow financial firms to avoid most regulations.

Albert Hill Nashville, TN



Financial lenders take advantage of customers' lack of savvy. Many do not understand the fine print.

from members:

Stacy N. Marino Cleveland, OH



People should take responsibility for educating themselves about financial products. Don't use what you don't understand.

Kenneth E. Bryars Agawam, MA



There are enough laws providing oversight to financial institutions already. Increasing the bureaucracy would not be a good thing.

Jane Hallett Minneapolis, MN



As citizens of this country, we have developed an attitude that the government should protect us from everything.

from an expert in the field:



Ira Rheingold is executive director of the National Association of Consumer Advocates (www.naca.net).

THE EXTENT OF OUR current economic crisis could have been dramatically lessened, and we all would have more money in our retirement accounts and more value in our homes, and more of us would still have jobs, if only regulators who are supposed to be protecting consumers had actually done their jobs.

For years, consumer advocates warned the Federal Reserve Board and the other federal banking regulators that predatory subprime mort-

gage lending would lead to a foreclosure epidemic, yet because the Federal Reserve and the other federal regulators were interested in protecting bank profits and bank assets, they either did nothing or actively made things worse. For instance, when state and local governments attempted to protect the public from the banking industry's dangerous practices by passing anti-predatory-lending laws that would have stopped the worst mortgage practices, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency and the Office of Thrift Supervision—both federal banking regulators—declared their allegiance to the banks they were supposed to regulate (and their hostility to American consumers) by using their powers to announce that none of these laws would apply to any of the banks they regulated.

We need a robust, independent federal agency whose sole mission is to look out for you and me. We need an agency that will protect all of us from unfair and usurious credit-card practices, abusive payday loans, excessive overdraft loan fees for small debits, confusing fine print and predatory mortgages that have devastated our neighbors and our communities. We need an agency that creates rules that establish basic standards for financial products and behavior benchmarks for the financial institutions that offer them. And we need an agency that helps increase competition in the marketplace by making bad behavior unprofitable and promoting innovative practices that help consumers choose fair and economically healthy financial products.

Restoring consumer protection must be the cornerstone of any effort to properly rebuild our broken banking system and to once again get our economy to work for all of us. A powerful Consumer Financial Protection Agency, not controlled by the banks, but designed to put public protection first and foremost, is an essential step in making that actually happen.

from an expert in the field:



Chris Stinebert is president and chief executive officer of the American Financial Services Association in Washington, D.C. (www.americanfinsvcs.com).

CONGRESS, CONSUMERS and industry share the goal of effective consumer protections for financial products and services. Where we disagree is how to get there.

Despite its name, the proposed Consumer Financial Protection Agency (CFPA) is not the best way to protect consumers, especially

those who own small businesses. The agency's wide scope would give it authority over many financial entities that had little or no involvement in the events that led to the current economic crisis. Auto dealers, accountants and retailers offering prepaid cards could be among those swept into a web of scrutiny and reporting requirements that will do little to protect consumers and much to increase their costs.

Foremost among the CFPA's tasks would be requiring companies to offer "plain vanilla" products and services. Companies offering nontraditional choices that could be deemed unfair or abusive may be subject to lawsuits and other punitive action, discouraging innovation.

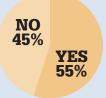
Some borrowers may be unable to get credit because they won't qualify for "plain vanilla" financing. Subprime borrowers will be hit especially hard.

Funding for this massive agency will come from fees assessed on those it regulates fees that undoubtedly will be passed on to consumers. In essence, small-business owners will get hit twice, as borrowing money will become more difficult and expensive for them and their customers. Costco shoppers could feel the effects of the agency every time they use a credit or debit card to pay for their purchases.

If the CFPA becomes a reality, the government will have more say in the selection of financial products than the people who use them, and consumers will face increased costs, less choice and reduced access to credit. But we don't have to go that route.

Instead, we can increase consumer protection in the financial services marketplace with clear, easy-to-understand disclosures, improved financial education, adjustments to the current regulatory structure and better use of the expertise and experience of existing agencies. This approach is likely to be far more effective, while leaving choice with consumers.

OCTOBER DEBATE RESULTS: Should we rely more on wind energy?



Percentage reflects votes received by October 6, 2009.

SEPTEMBER DEBATE RESULTS: Is legislation the right way to deal with cyberbullies?

YES: 46% NO: 54%

Percentage reflects votes received by September 30, 2009. Results may reflect Debate being picked up by blogs.





See Dialogue pages for more debate responses

Opinions expressed are those of the individuals or organizations represented and are presented to foster discussion. Costco and *The Costco Connection* take no position on any Debate topic.

It's just a matter of time

SUUNTO X6M Men's Watch: The ultimate timepiece for any adrenaline-packed outdoor activity! This digital watch keeps you informed with an accurate barometer, altimeter and compass. Featuring a stainless steel case with a stylish

black rubber band. Item #421891



SUUNTO

mio

Motiva Ladies Petite Fitness Watch: With its built-in calorie counter and a patented calorie-management system, the Motiva Petite is equipped to revolutionize the way people manage their weight and their health over the long term. Also features ECG accurate heart rate, exertion-level indicator, heart-rate display, alarm, exercise timer, date, backlit display and water resistance to 30 meters. Item #459793



Kenneth Cole Ladies Stainless Steel Watch: Stylish and sleek, this watch features a solid stainless steel barrel case with a mother of pearl inset. Item #440721

KENNETH COLE NEW YORK

Kenneth Cole Men's Stainless Steel Watch: This fashionable timepiece features a solid stainless steel round case with a midnight black skeleton dial with three-hand automatic movement. Item #436874 Wenger Commando Men's Swiss Military Watch: With the assurance of 100m (330 ft.) water-resistance and a 3-year limited warranty you can be confident that it will serve loyally no matter what the occasion or the challenge. Item #441270





Wenger Ladies Swiss Military Watch: Features a distinctive two-tone style with a white dial. Item #441271



Skagen Ladies Watch: The elements of Danish design are all here with this mother of pearl watch that features Swarovski crystals on the bezel and a black leather strap. Item #439092



Skagen Men's Titanium Watch: This watch features a carbon fiber dial and a titanium link bracelet that showcases this fine Danish timepiece. Item #450660





Waterford Kilbarry Pen: Offers a smooth and balanced feel when writing. Includes a capless rollerball refill. Item #425352





Invicta Men's Lupah Dragon Black Dial Chronograph Watch: Water resistant to 100 meters. Item #328675

Invicat Men's Lupah Dragon Cream Dial Chronograph Watch: Water resistant to 100 meters. Item #328671









small **business**

The gen of Jun

Brian Scudamore proves that one man's junk is an entrepreneur's treasure

By Stephanie E. Ponder

AT 1-800-GOT-JUNK?, the writing is on the wall. Painted near the main entrance are the company's plans for the next two years. The overarching goal: build a globally admired brand.

To get there, Brian Scudamore, the company's founder and CEO, has assembled a team of employees who share his enthusiasm for being *the* name in junk removal.

Scudamore (pronounced Skoo-da-more) started the business as a 17-year-old high school dropout. Twenty-one years later, it is a chain with 31 franchise locations in Canada, 183 in the U.S. and four in Australia. He's achieved success through an unfaltering vision of his company and faith in his employees.

"Nobody has ever built a brand in this industry," says Scudamore, a Costco member. That is, not until now.

Dump luck

The idea behind the business is simple. Everyone has junk. What they don't have is the time or resources to remove it. 1-800-GOT-JUNK? does the dirty work for them.

Scudamore bought his first truck for \$700 in 1989 and started The Rubbish Boys in Vancouver, British Columbia, as a way to pay for university (which he had talked his way into). The inspiration came to Scudamore one day when he saw a hauling business's beat-up pickup truck filled with junk drive by. He thought, "There's my ticket."



PERRY ZAVITZ

For more than three years he balanced classes and work. "I was being asked by my professors to speak about my business," Scudamore tells *The Connection*. "I was making money, and I had a great team of people."

The young entrepreneur found himself so busy answering his cell phone during classes that, with only a semester left, he again dropped out of school.

The business continued at a slow but steady pace for the next few years until 1998, when Scudamore made two important moves. First, he changed the company's name to 1-800-GOT-JUNK?, a catchier name that better described the business. Second, he spent time at a one-man retreat at his parents' cabin on Bowen Island, British Columbia, where he visualized the future of the business. He drew up a two-page document outlining his vision of how the company would feel, look and act.

"I envisioned us creating ... a company built on passion, integrity, professionalism and empathy," explains Scudamore. "A place where people could find great meaning through what we were all creating. A place where we could build something bigger than any one of us could ever have created alone."

Motivated by that vision, the first franchise opened in Toronto in 1999. Between 1999 and 2002, another 23 franchise locations opened. After that, business exploded, with the United States and Canada now nearly saturated as far as franchise opportunities are concerned.

Slightly more than a business

Anyone passing the reception desk at 1-800-GOT-JUNK?'s Vancouver corporate offices, better known as the Junktion, is greeted by one of Scudamore's favorite expressions, also painted on the wall: "It's all about people." To him, that means everyone from the employees at the Junktion to the people on the trucks.

Scudamore, 39, believes employees cannot be motivated. "All you can do is inspire people and empower them with the right tools," he says. "You have to find those who are already motivated."

For example, potential franchise partners go through a multi-step application process to make sure they are a good fit. That holds true for everyone involved with the company. "You can measure a company in the quality of people," says Scudamore. "You never just need a body. You need a personality."

Several employees hurry through the Junktion wearing blue 1-800-GOT-JUNK? vests and jackets. With the company's bright blue logo, clean trucks and uniformed drivers, Scudamore works to make sure the business makes a positive and professional impression.

"Yes, we're in the junk-removal business, but we're of the highest order," he says.

Transition for future growth

Scudamore says the hardest lesson he's had to learn is the importance of having the



right people in place.

That lesson led him to remove himself from day-to-day operations and hire Launi Skinner as president and chief operating officer during the summer of 2008.

"We needed someone to take the company to the next level," says Scudamore, who now spends his time brainstorming and providing a face for the company by making appearances on programs such as Oprah and The Big Idea.

Skinner, who had 14 years of experience at Starbucks, most recently as president of Starbucks U.S., was looking to work for a company that puts people first, exhibits excellent customer service and has potential for growth.

She wasted no time in developing a strategic plan.

"When I started we had a strong vision of culture and people, but we didn't have a strategy," she tells The Connection.

A key element of the new strategic plan includes exploring ways to grow despite a weak economy and a slow housing market. Three or four years ago people moved more often and were less inclined to hold on to and make do with their possessions. Then the financial crisis hit and the housing bubble burst. With residential business down, 1-800-GOT-JUNK? is focusing on commercial business by targeting areas such as property management, real estate and retail.

Another area of focus is brand awareness.

Scudamore says that although the North American market is saturated, a recent survey found that "3 percent of the population in North America knows who we are. There is much room for growth."

Whether it's alerting people to the fact that such a business exists or educating customers about additional services, people are still at the heart of 1-800-GOT-JUNK?. Skinner says, "We know that by involving people, people will be the solution."

The ultimate goal

Since the company's creation, Scudamore has insisted on keeping it private to retain control. But, he adds, the vision is the only thing he really controls.

'I know there are a lot of people here who are smarter than I am," he says. "If I micromanage, I'll get in the way of them doing what they're good at."

One way Scudamore inspires his employees to put their best into the business is by having a profit-sharing program. Although on hold for the current year, it typically works out that at the end of each year, 25 percent of the company's profits are split among the employees based on their performance. The profit-sharing plan is part of the company's history of costcutting measures—such as using office equipment it's been hired to remove and sharing hotel rooms on business trips. The Australian operations were set up entirely over the phone, e-mail and the Internet.

At the Junktion's call center, words such as "superb," "terrific" and "sensational" are painted on the walls to serve as additional inspiration for employees who book and track junkremoval jobs. Just outside the call center is an open space where all employees meet every morning at 10:55 for "the huddle." The sevenminute meeting is a chance to go over goals and share good news-professional and personal.

member

Name: 1-800-GOT-JUNK? Founder: Brian Scudamore

Employees: 160 corporate staff; nearly 1,600 system-wide U.S. franchises: 183

Address: 1055 W. Hastings Vancouver, BC V6E 2E9 Phone: 1-800-468-5865

Web site: www.1800gotjunk.com Weird finds: 18,000 cans of expired sardines; 19,000 pounds of frozen animal

carcasses; prosthetic legs

Comments about Costco: "I believe that Costco has developed the greatest programs to meet the needs of smallbusiness owners. Beyond shopping at Costco for my business and personally, I also encourage all 218 of our 1-800-GOT-JUNK? franchise partners to utilize the programs Costco offers. From their longdistance phone plans to merchant creditcard programs, Costco's team has our junk team covered." —Brian Scudamore

In addition to building a global brand and hitting their goal of \$1 billion in sales by 2015—they're currently around \$100 million there's plenty to do. And the wall says it best: Make an appearance on The Late Show with David Letterman, create a second franchised brand and operate in 10 different countries.

"The goals are out in the open so that employees will think, 'I can impact us positively," says Scudamore. "I want everyone to know that's what they're part of."





[CONNECTION EXCLUSIVE]

By Al Gore

s a nation, we face three interrelated crises that collectively threaten to destabilize our way of life: the climate crisis, the continuing economic crisis and the secu-

rity crisis, all stemming from our absurd overdependence on foreign oil, the largest reserves of which are controlled by sovereign states in the Persian Gulf.

Fortunately, there is a growing realization that the solutions to the climate crisis are also the most important solutions for the other two crises. We can simultaneously protect our climate and establish stability for our economy and our national security.

Solutions Summits

Three years ago, I began convening a series of "Solutions Summits" to bring together the world's top leaders from government, science, engineering, industry, agriculture and the nonprofit community. Since that time, I have held more than 30 such gatherings, with participants presenting cutting-edge solutions across a wide variety of fields. In addition to these summits, I have engaged in lengthy one-on-one conversations with experts in fields as diverse as neuroscience, economics, information technology and agriculture. The information that I learned from these specialists, coupled with my own experiences in government, advocacy and business, form the back-

bone of my new book, *Our Choice: A Plan to Solve the Climate Crisis*, which picks up where *An Inconvenient Truth* left off.

One of the many conclusions I have drawn from these Solutions Summits is that we have all the tools we need to solve this crisis many times over.

Solving one problem creates another

Our economy, although improving, still faces challenges with high unemployment rates, fluctuating energy prices and instability in key industries such as banking and automobiles. Top intelligence experts and retired military leaders have raised warnings about the national security implications of our reliance on foreign oil and the climate crisis itself, including the possibility of hundreds of millions of climate refugees destabilizing nations around the world.

One reason we've seemed paralyzed in the face of these crises historically is our tendency to offer solutions to each separate crisis without taking the others into account. These outdated proposals have not only been ineffective, they have almost always made the other crises even worse.

Yet, when we step back and look at these difficult challenges simultaneously, we can see the common thread running through all three: our dangerous

Ending our reliance on carbon-based fuels Peparate, problem of Solution 2 One Solution 2



"Ye need a variety of creative solutions ... which will play an essential role in a clean-energy economy."

overreliance on carbon-based fuels. We're borrowing money from China to buy oil from the Persian Gulf to burn it in ways that destroy the planet. Every bit of that has got to change, and no solution to our environmental, economic and national security crises is possible without unraveling this common thread.

Taking the "buckshot" approach

A responsible and effective approach to solving the climate crisis would avoid the mistaken search for a single "silver bullet" and instead recognize that the answer will involve what environmentalist Bill McKibben has called "silver buckshot." We need a variety of creative solutions, none of which is sufficient on its own, but all of which will play an essential role in a clean-energy economy.

We must change the source of our energy from dirty and expensive carbon-based fuels to clean energy from the sun, the wind and the earth itself. Solar photovoltaic energysuch as the solar cells you might have seen on rooftops-and concentrating solar thermal energy are both rapidly declining in price due to new technological breakthroughs. Wind energy is already competitive as a mainstream source of electricity and will continue to grow in prominence and profitability. Geothermal energy, which relies on the heat of the earth itself, lets us generate a constant supply of clean energy. We can also produce new clean fuels for our cars and trucks. And while I am skeptical about the role that can be played by nuclear power and carbon capture and sequestration, continuing research into both could create new opportunities.

Moreover, dramatic improvements in the efficiency with which we generate, transport, store and use energy will almost certainly prove to be the single biggest source of sharp and immediate reductions in global warming pollution. Because pollution has been systematically ignored by the artificial measure-

ments of value we have imposed on the free market, there are many relatively easy ways to use new and more efficient options to cheaply eliminate it. Since pollution is, after all, waste, business and industry almost always become more productive when they eliminate inefficiencies. Many of the

technologies on which we have come to depend are actually so old and outdated that they are inherently far less efficient than newer technologies that we haven't started using.

Working smarter

Just as a robust information economy was triggered by the introduction of the Internet, a dynamic new clean-energy economy can be stimulated by the development of a smart grid that allows individual homeowners and business owners anywhere in America to use their own solar panels, windmills and other sources of energy to sell surplus electricity to their utilities. The same smart grid will give us powerful tools to measure our energy use and save money by eliminating unnecessary costs and wasteful usage patterns. Coupled with this new smart grid, we can take advantage of new energy-storage technologies to improve the efficiency with which we store renewable energy, thus enabling the full development of a clean-energy economy.

We should also continue retooling our failing auto giants to assist them in the manufacture of plug-in hybrid and electric vehicles. Using electricity to power our cars would give consumers incredible market power to push the entire system to much higher levels of efficiency and sharply reduce global warming pollution. This reconstruction of the automotive economy would also save tens of thousands of good jobs here in America when we can finally compete against the more efficient cars and trucks made by foreign competitors.

We must also use the natural systems of

our planet to solve the climate crisis. The planet's forests are being cut down at an alarming rate. Planting new trees can reverse this trend and create new opportunities to remove carbon from the atmosphere. Similarly, our soils can play a vital role in storing carbon, but they are currently threatened by practices that have become commonly accepted in industrial agriculture. Moving toward more ecologically sensitive agricultural practices, including changes in diet, can revitalize the soil. We must also continue to make progress in ensuring sustainable population growth globally.

A real chance for a bright future

Several obstacles stand in our way, but I am confident that if we change the way we think about the environment, the value we place on the planet from an economic standpoint and the role that powerful industries play in our political system, we can make a bold step forward toward a clean-energy future.

Many Americans now see, as I do, a bright future of new green jobs, greater stability in

our economic and international systems, and a safe planet for our children and grandchildren. We must make the choice—as a country and as a global civilization—to embrace a multifaceted plan to solve the climate crisis once and for all.

DUR CHOICE

Numbe

In the first quarter of 2009, the U.S. current account deficit stood at \$101.5 billion (lower than usual because of the recession)—driven in part by \$46 billion in imports of foreign petroleum and petroleum products.1

\$206 BILLION

The estimated annual cost to society of the outdated U.S. electricity grid is \$206 billion per year.2

50 PERCEN

From the late 1800s through the beginning of World War II, the carbon content of U.S. soil decreased by more than 50 percent.3

20 YEARS

The U.S. could reduce its projected energy consumption 23 percent by 2030 simply by making economically beneficial investments in energy efficiency.4

Sources: 1 Current account deficit: 2 Department of Energy National Energy Technology Laboratory; Charles Rice, Kansas State University 4 McKinsey & Company, 2009

The Costco Connection

Al Gore's new book. Our Choice: A Plan to Solve the Climate Crisis, is available at Costco warehouses and Costco.com.

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WAREHOUSE ONLY

Creating

Every life is a story, and more people are sharing theirs

By Anita Thompson

DO YOU EVER look at old photos of your relatives and wish you could sit down and have a conversation with them? Who were the people behind those solemn faces? What were their lives like?

It makes one realize that each of us is part of a continuum that stretches back centuries and, hopefully, many generations into the future. The desire to leave something of ourselves behind for future generations inspires many people to record their lives, or those of family members, as a kind of legacy.

Costco member Ying Chang Compestine (www.yingc.com) turned her experiences growing up in the midst of China's Communist

Revolution into young-adult fiction, *Revolution Is Not a Dinner Party.* She wrote the story, she explains, to honor her father, a physician who was jailed for refusing to betray his friends and his beliefs.

In her book, *Flora, I Was But a Child*, Flora Mendelowicz Singer (*FloraMSinger@yahoo.com*) told her story of the people who helped her family survive the Holocaust. "That book is her legacy," says her husband, Costco member Jack Singer, of his late wife's project.

But one does not need to have had traumatic life experiences to have stories to share or tales to tell. More and more people are delving into their personal or family histories,

committed to recording and passing them on. In fact, this trend has spawned a new career field: personal historians, individuals who in a sense "come alongside" in this process through interviewing, organizing, conducting research, compiling materials or whatever is needed to create the appropriate format for a particular project.

Most personal historians started by recording something about their own families or loved ones. Chicago-area Costco member Ed Kaiser (www.savetheirstory.com) started by sitting down with a tape recorder as he and his father sorted through old photographs. What had felt like an onerous undertaking brought him and his father closer.

Paula Slavens (www.special editionscb.com), a Costco member in Beaverton, Oregon, created a memory book about her father. She says, "I feel very blessed to have been able to use Dad's own words and document his story. It proved to be a healing process for me and for others, who have read his book and perhaps now understand him more in death than in life."

The motivations for recording one's personal history are as varied as the many new

Learn more

CLASSES IN CREATING personal biographies are often taught by local libraries, historical museums, veterans groups, genealogical societies and many other organizations. Here are a few resources:

- www.personalhistorians.org—Association of Personal Historians, professionals who assist individuals, families and organizations craft histories using a variety of formats. The site contains numerous additional resources, including how to order the book My Words Are Gonna Linger: The Art of Personal History, edited by Paula Stalling Yost and Pat
- Remembering ... Life Story Triggers & Memory Essays, by Hella Buchheim (http://lifestorytriggers.com/wordpress)
- Tell Me Your Story, by Cynthia Hart (Workman, 2009)
- www.loc.gov/vets—The Veterans
 History Project of the American Folklife
 Center collects, preserves and makes
 accessible the personal accounts of
 American war veterans.
- www.cynthiajan.com—Costco member Cindy Canizales creates personalized watercolor family trees.—AT

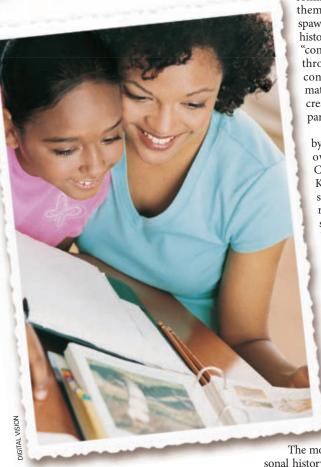
options available—from low tech to high tech—for preserving it. But as those who've completed the project agree, the results become treasured heirlooms.

"One of my clients," reports Bruce E. Smith, a Bay Area Costco member (www.lifes mark.com), "asked me to capture his mother reading children's stories. Even though he didn't yet have his own children, he knew it would be a special keepsake for his nieces and nephews."

What's important to remember is that your chronicle can take many shapes, from a recipe book to a personal Web site. To help you get started on creating your own chronicle, on the following pages you'll learn how to begin writing a memoir, how to use the new technology tools and how to start doing genealogical research. We've also included a piece on StoryCorps, the nonprofit program whose mission is to honor and celebrate one another's lives through listening.

With the holiday season approaching, maybe this is the year to interview your grandparents or parents about their lives, ask for their help in identifying everyone in family photographs or just have someone record the preparations for and the sharing of Thanksgiving dinner.

As Slavens says, "Life is too short, and there's always a longing for one more conversation—a chance to confirm love, ask for forgiveness or share a special memory that's etched in our minds as clearly as if it happened yesterday."







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It's easier than you thought

By Eva Shaw

YOU SAID YOU'D do it. You promised, "This is the year." When will you write your life story? Or help family members write the stories in their life? Or turn your life story into a novel? Here's how.

Discover your focus. As you begin, read other memoirs to see what formats you like and decide if you want to add photos or perhaps a DVD to accompany your life story. You can write your full life story or focus on amazing periods or events. Check out "yearin-the-life" books such as Kathleen Flinn's The Sharper Your Knife, the Less You Cry (Viking, 2007) or The Know-It-All by A.J. Jacobs (Simon & Schuster, 2005).

Write a page a day. If you write a page of your life story each day, in a year you'll have a book. Don't and you won't. Make an appointment with yourself, negotiate time with the family to write or ask someone to make you accountable to a writing schedule.

Start small. Write about your life in manageable increments, much like essays, and on topics, at least at the beginning, that are fun to remember. This will make the process easier. Make it a goal to write about each experience to its fullest.

Look at life's journey. The best life stories begin with a bang, typically a life-changing event. I call this the fork in the road, and it's a good place to start. What choices did you make to be who you are? Even negatives set us on unplanned paths, and if we had taken another direction we'd be in another place today. Where was your fork?

Bubble it. In the middle of a large piece of paper, draw a big circle (or bubble), and inside that circle write "MY LIFE." Draw 10 lines radiating out from the circle, like a child's drawing of the sun, and at the end of each line draw a circle. Fill in each circle (or sub-bubble) with experiences you want to write about.

These bubbles might be your chapters. Repeat the process with each sub-bubble in the middle of a sheet of paper, create an outline from your bubbles and your life story will be ready to write in an organized format.

Write the details. Listen to music, eat childhood foods, revisit places where you lived, reread letters and quiz family members. Old family photos are gold mines; look at the backgrounds, clothing and faces of the people.

Everyday essentials. Write about typical days from your past, the people who influenced you and especially everyday experiences. Write about life lessons, jobs, teachers, family, friendships and fears. Ask yourself questions and write out your answers.

Tell your truth. When three people see the same event, they'll relate three versions. In your life story, you must tell your truth. Don't fret about what might offend someone until you've finished all of your life story, and then make changes if necessary.

Let people talk. Dialogue will bring your story to life. I could write about how pleased Dad was to move to New Mexico. But see what happens when Dad speaks: "We're moving to Albuquerque," Dad said, rubbing his hands together. "Oh, the smell of roasting chiles and sagebrush. Oh, the salsa and sunsets. Did *I mention food?*" Simply note in the beginning of your book that you've written dialogue as you remember it.

Leave it in? Take it out? Will straightlaced Aunt May fuss or laugh if you reveal she was once a trapeze performer? Seriously, all families have secrets. We all have secrets we'd prefer not to share. It's OK to leave things out.

Editing is like furniture polish. When your book is done, put it aside. Then, a week or month later, read it out loud. What needs to be changed, added or covered in more detail? Expect to polish your writing enough times to make it shine.

Are you done yet? Plan for a natural ending, such as completing a season in life or accomplishing a goal. Perhaps a final chapter might include your philosophies, hopes and dreams.

Just write. Don't worry about format. Write from your heart. This is your story, and you are the only one who can write it.

Eva Shaw, www.evashaw.com, is a ghostwriter specializing in memoirs. She teaches memoir writing online at colleges worldwide and lives in Carlsbad, California.

Get creative

WITH A BIT of thought you can create family heirlooms that will be treasured forever. Letters to grandchildren, written monthly, during their first year will be priceless. A family cookbook will bring joy to everyone. Scrapbooks will be adored.

You can use fill-in-the-blanks memoir workbooks that are like a much more personal job application. Or write out a legacy letter, in which you explain what you believe in and what you'd like to be remembered for.

Just for fun, ask kids to draw pictures of themselves while you write their life stories. Little ones love this, and grandparents gobble it up. And what of those Christmas letters you've had forever? Scan, print and bind them for everlasting family gifts.

You can do it. You can create heirlooms that will forever be appreciated.—ES

Videographer RJ McHatton shoots interview footage of client Joseph Regan, part of a detailed 40-minute life-story production.





HERE IS GOOD news for chroniclers of all ages: There are more do-it-yourself tools and methods available than ever before for capturing, recapturing, presenting and distributing your personal or family story.

If you're a boomer, like me, those old family photo albums, scrapbooks and Super 8 movies languishing in the attic or basement can be easily digitized, breathing new life into old media.

Those from younger generations can appreciate incredibly affordable new technology for starting to capture their chronicles. The prices of high-definition (HD) camcorders and sophisticated movie-editing software have never been lower.



And for all ages, if you don't want to tackle the technical and creative tasks yourself, there are more opportunities than ever before to sit in the Steven Spielberg executive-producer chair as a professional videographer crafts your story, Hollywood style.

The basics: Tools you should have

Personal computers have really opened the door for all chronicling opportunities. You'll need to know your way around a **computer**, how to save and edit images, and how to burn a CD or DVD. An Internet connection is a must, providing you with access to resources, tips, ideas, projects and support from countless sources on the Web. A **scanner** will prove vital when using old images, artwork or documents in

your story. The scanner digitizes those old hard-copy elements, making them digital files that you can easily store, copy, edit and manage on your computer.

Creating new images for your story requires a **digital camera**. Here's an area where the prices have dropped as features have grown in sophistication and number.

Digital camcorders are also getting more features as their prices shrink: Quality HD video can be captured with a \$200 camcorder. A good microphone is important if you are planning to interview family members; don't rely on the built-in microphone to do the job, because placing the microphone closer to the subject than the camera is often necessary. A tripod to stabilize the camcorder is a must, and good lighting requires some trial and error.

Digital cameras and digital camcorders usually come with bundled **image-editing software**. Explore the capabilities available with those tools before deciding to invest in any additional software.

Easy photo chronicles

Boomers remember the one-of-a-kind family albums that used black corner adhesive tabs to hold photos on the pages. This wasn't the greatest presentation, and each album was very labor intensive.

Now photobooks are available that walk

you through the process of quickly creating your own coffee-table (or smaller) book of images or images plus text. And once you've created one, ordering multiple copies basically requires only a mouse click.

Most photobook publishers have you download an application that you use to build the book on your computer, then electronically send your final design to the publisher to be produced

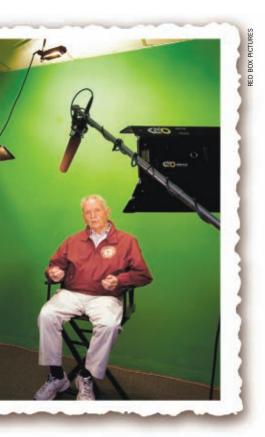
and shipped to you. In the design process you work with the photos already on your computer, so you would need to use your scanner to digitize any old snapshots or artwork that you want to include in the book. Each publisher also has specific image requirements for the pixel size, so you'll need to know in advance if your images meet those specs.

You'll be prompted to make choices about the size and style of the book, the layout of the pages, the organization of your photos and the captions or text you want included. You'll need to carefully preview your final design before uploading the order.

Similar services are available that deliver a **DVD photo show** instead of a book as the end product. Again, a downloaded application walks you through building your DVD show. You can choose from an array of styles, and different music selections can be sampled for use as a soundtrack.

Breathing new life into old media

Luckily, computer technology enables the conversion of obsolete media types to DVDs for playback on your home TV or computer.



But this is not done via your computer. Instead, you send your old media to a lab for conversion, a process that takes two to four weeks.

Transferring 8 mm, Super 8 and 16 mm movie film, just about all videotape formats

and 35 mm slides to a digital format lets you revisit so many discarded memories. You no longer are limited by the lack of a movie or slide projector, or a Betamax player. Leave all of those devices in the museum.

When you submit an order for movie film and slide conversion, you'll often have the option of adding a music

track selected from a variety of styles.

Once your old-media images have been converted to DVD, you will be able to extract the newly digitized versions for use in other chronicling projects.

DIY multimedia alternatives

Searching the Internet will produce many options for producing your own family video history. Most people will benefit from some assistance or guidance with this project. Whatever method is selected, the more planning you do in advance, the better the final results.

Building a **Web site** devoted to a family history opens up the project to sharing with a wide audience and gives you the ability to update the site easily as new content becomes available. Still photos and videos are perfect Web elements, and there are many good soft-



ware applications that simplify building a Web site.

Consider starting a **blog** as a wide-open family-history journal. A blog is different than a Web site because its entries are organized chronologically. Photos and video work just as well as components. The real plus for blogs is the feedback mechanism—every entry encourages comments from all readers. Many family members can become regular contributors, and no special software is required.

Costco member Dick Liersch provides another alternative with a CD-ROM (www. mylivinglegacy.net) that provides detailed step-by-step instructions for assembling a multi-

media life history on DVD, with an emphasis on good advance planning.

"Don't bury your family story," Liersch exclaims over the phone from his home in Saukville, Wisconsin. "There's a death in the family, then the genealogy starts, but that's

backwards. People should have family reunions and record all the sto-

ries—how everyone is related and what they mean to each other."

Going Hollywood

Many families like turning the whole project over to a professional videographer to produce. Typically running 30 to 60 minutes, these histories can rival the type you might see aired on the popular A&E *Biography* series.

RJ McHatton is a videographer who has traveled to 20 states this year as he's shot video histories for clients. Active in the Association of Personal Historians and as a lecturer to genealogy societies, McHatton has a studio, Inventive Productions (www.inventiveproductions.com), in Redmond, Washington. He is a Costco member.

"My style is autobiographical, and I've come up with 124 questions that I ask a person about their life," says McHatton. "We try

The Costco Connection

A variety of basic tools for chronicling, including digital cameras, camcorders, computers, scanners, printers, external hard drives for backup, blank media and image-editing software, can be found in warehouses and on Costco.com.

All Costco 1-Hour Photo locations can copy your photos to Gold Photo DVDs—a new standard in archival discs, with seven times the capacity of the old Gold CDs, but at the same price. You can also bring in your old home movies, videotapes and 35 mm slides for transfer to DVD.

The Photo Center on Costco.com offers photobooks from My Publisher, DVD slide shows through Moments Captured and several other creative photo gifts.

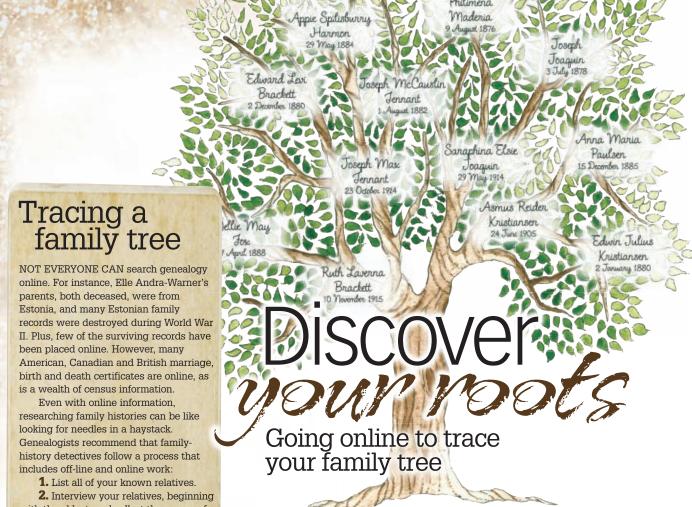
Your images can be uploaded to the Photo Center for archiving on Gold Photo DVDs with pickup at the 1-Hour Photo near you.—DW

to focus on the values of the person, their character, their wisdom, their advice to a future generation."

It's often easier for a third party to draw stories from subjects that wouldn't have been as easy for a family member to elicit.

When seeking a professional videographer, be sure to review demo videos to find a style you like, and be sure to check references. Prices vary widely depending on the amount of creativity desired. A big budget affords stock footage and even special effects. Typically, productions range from \$500 to \$20,000 or more.

Regardless of the approach you commit to—simple photobook to full-blown Holly-wood production—it's never too early to start. Recorded video and the sound of a loved one talking and laughing can effectively convey the character of the subject for generations to come.



By Paul Lima

GLENN ANDRA-WARNER would not have known that his ancestors lived on an estate beside Sir Walter Raleigh if Glenn's wife, Elle, had not started to research his family tree. He also would not have known that a fifth cousin lived two blocks away from the Andra-Warner house in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

A freelance writer, Elle, 63, was researching a book about the Hudson's Bay Company and found a wealth of ancestral records online about Pierre-Esprit Radisson and Médard des Groseilliers, the explorers who inspired Charles II, king of England, to grant a charter founding the fur-trading company. That got her thinking about tracing the roots of her husband's family.

Glenn had been told that ancestors on his mother's side had come to Canada from England, via the United States, and had been early pioneers in Ontario. However, he had no real information on this branch of his family tree. All he had was an old family Bible with the names of three ancestors—Albert James Cook, Peter Trowern and Henry Georgeand a few dates. "Nothing more," says Elle.

Armed with that information, "the online historical sleuthing began," she says.

Using a variety of genealogy Web sites that let her track marriage, birth and death certificates, residences and the movement of her husbands' relatives, Elle traced her husband's family tree to the 1400s in England. She found family connections to Roger Conant, the founder of Salem, Massachusetts; Levi Annis, a famous early resident of Scarborough, Ontario, who built the cordurov road from Toronto to Oshawa; and Rhoda Randall, a prominent Oshawa, Ontario, pioneer.

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"The Roger Conant connection was amazing," she says. Conant was baptized in East Budleigh, Devonshire, England, in 1592 and immigrated to Plymouth, Massachusetts, with his wife, Sarah, in 1623. Uncomfortable with the strict Puritan society in Plymouth, he moved his family to Nantasket in 1624 and then, in 1626, led a group of people to Naumkeag, now Salem, where he served as governor. In addition, Elle discovered that the Conant family estate in Devonshire was located beside Sir Walter Raleigh's estate.

There is a great deal of valuable genealogy information online, Elle says. However, there

The Costco Connection

Costco warehouses and Costco.com have several items to help chronicle your family's history for future generations, such as photo albums, scrapbooks, and scrapbooking tools and kits. Costco and Costco.com also carry Family Tree Maker 2009 Deluxe, software that can help you build your family tree, gather stories and photos, and create charts and books to share with your family.

- with the eldest, and collect the names of all of their known relatives and places of birth and death.
- 3. Conduct research into family names on the Internet (see the sidebar "Start your search online").
- 4. Use Internet genealogy message boards to connect with others tracing similar family names.
- **5.** If family information is not online, review records in church parishes located where relatives were born, married and/ or died.
- 6. Document and organize what you find.

A lot of information is available online, but it can be difficult to find data directly related to your family. For instance, there are many Smiths and Joneses, but they might not all be related to you. At the same time, your last name might be Smith, but distant relatives might have spelled their last name "Smythe," so you should look for familytree relationship clues to help you establish connections.

To keep yourself organized as you gather information, use genealogy software to assemble and organize family data, produce family-tree reports and charts, and exchange information and files with other relatives who may also be creating family trees.—PL

are also people online who want to sell you research services, family crests and other products. "If that's not what you are looking for, ignore them," she advises.

Elle did purchase several old, interesting news clippings that featured relatives and also bought a copy of a birth certificate of a relative who lived in England. "We had a gap in the family tree and found a birth certificate that indicated she died giving birth. It was worth paying for a copy of the birth certificate," she says.

As much as Elle has relished the historical connections she has made, perhaps her greatest find has been Glenn's fifth cousins. She e-mailed a genealogy inquiry to a records archivist who put her in touch with someone doing research on similar names—a fifth cousin Glenn had never met. It turned out that the cousin lives in Thunder Bay, two blocks away from the Andra-Warners.

"It's fascinating where you can go," says Elle. "Who knows how far from home, or close to home, your genealogy adventure will take you!"

Freelancer Paul Lima can be reached online at www.paullima.com.

Start your search online

THERE ARE MANY genealogical Web sites, as an Internet search will quickly show. Selecting the right ones to use depends on where your relatives were born, lived and died. Here are a number of popular and effective genealogy Web sites that will help get you started on your family tree sleuthing:

- www.1930census.com—general reference for the U.S. Federal Census
- www.archives.gov—the National Archives and Records Administration
- www.familysearch.org—Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints genealogy records and resources
- www.ellisisland.org—the American
 Family Immigration History Center at
 Ellis Island; site includes genealogy and
 passenger search tabs
- www.shipslist.com—contains the Ellis Island database of U.S. immigrants
- www.immigrantships.net—volunteers focused on transcribing passenger arrival records and publishing work online
- www.loc.gov—online home of the Library of Congress

- www.myfamilyinc.com—includes Genealogy.com and Ancestry.com, with more than 7 billion names and 26,000 searchable databases
- www.rootsweb.com—conduct a variety of searches and meet people conducting similar research on message boards; part of Ancestry.com
- www.usgenweb.com—a group of volunteers working together to provide links to Web sites for genealogical research in every U.S. county
- www.ancestry.ca—offers a large number of Canadian family-history records online
- www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/genealogy/ index-e.html—Library and Archives Canada, with excellent advice for beginners
- www.ourroots.ca—history books about pioneer towns and profiles of citizens
- www.pier21.ca—Canada's equivalent to Ellis Island
- www.freebmd.org.uk—British ancestry site with parish birth, marriage and death certificates from 1837 on
- www.genuki.org.uk—census figures from every county of England, Ireland, Wales, Scotland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man. and other resources.—PL

Talk to me

FROM DOCUMENTING a daughter telling her mother, a cancer nurse, that she's an angel on earth, to capturing colleagues talking about rescuing suicide jumpers on the Golden Gate Bridge, the nonprofit project StoryCorps promotes and encourages family and friends to both talk and listen.

Documentary producer Dave Isay founded the Brooklyn-based StoryCorps (www.storycorps.org) in 2003. It began as a lone booth in Grand Central Terminal in New York City where two people could sit down and talk for 40 minutes about whatever they wanted and walk out with a CD recording of their conversation. The program now has a national scope, with permanent booths in San Francisco and Atlanta, mobile units that have traveled to all 50 states and weekly broadcasts of two-minute segments on the StoryCorps Web site and National Public Radio.

"StoryCorps tells people that they matter and won't be forgotten," says Costco member Heather Burke, the program's deputy director of development. She adds that more than 27,000 interviews have been conducted. Copies of the interviews are archived at the Library of Congress' American Folklife Center.

In addition to gathering the stories of everyday people, StoryCorps has a few specialized initiatives, including plans to



honor the stories of September 11, of those with memory loss and of African-Americans and Latinos.

"Everyday people are the real celebrities," says Frank Kingman, a Costco member and facilitator at the San Francisco StoryCorps booth. "It's a validating thing to know people are listening."

His job is to help out with the equipment, help people feel comfortable and even be the one asking questions if someone shows up alone.

"I have to be really brave sometimes when I'm there," says Kingman, who says a box of StoryCorps helps immortalize everyday people by allowing them to share their stories with each other and with the world.

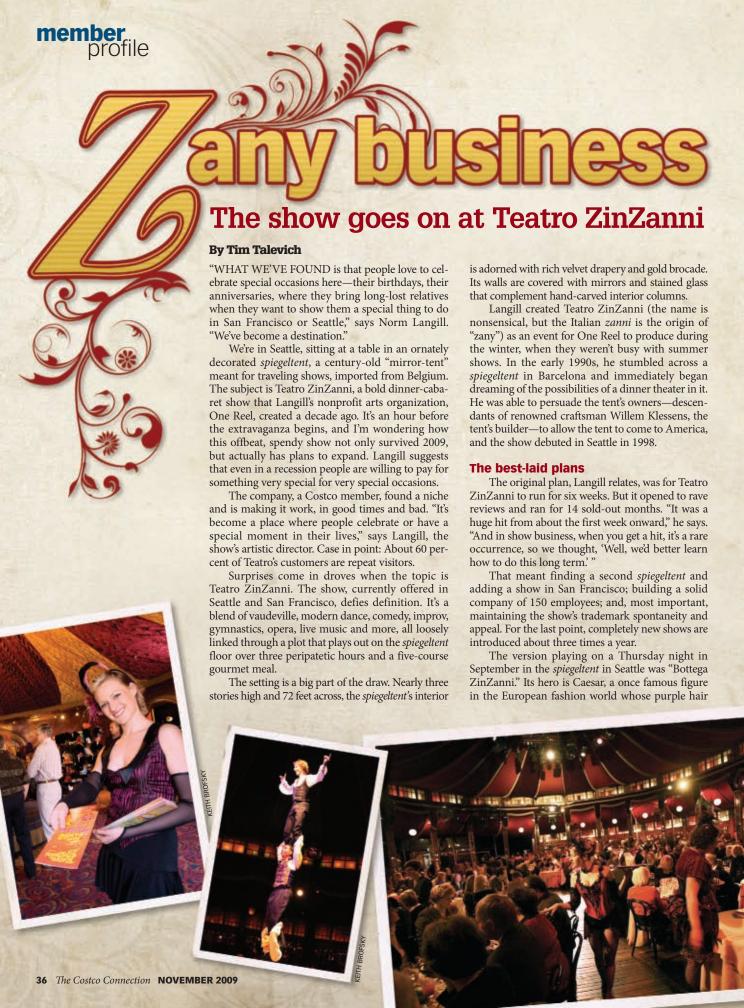
tissues is kept on the table in the booth. "It's very emotional."

People don't have to wait for a mobile unit to show up in their hometown to sit down and talk with family and friends. StoryCorps has named the Friday after Thanksgiving as the National Day of Listening (www.nationaldayoflistening.org). This year marks the second annual event, and the Web site includes a Do-It-Yourself Guide (www.storycorps.org/diy/) to help people record and archive stories at home or in the classroom.

For those who are intrigued by the idea but feel they need help figuring out what to ask, the StoryCorps Web site has a list of suggestions to get conversation flowing. Questions cover everything from love and school to illness and family heritage. Regardless of what questions the "interviewer" has in mind, Burke recommends "letting the conversation go where it will." She tells *The Connection* that she's heard from several people who didn't expect the conversation to take the path it did.

Kingman agrees, and adds that he particularly enjoys the times when he hears about conversations between two people who've known each other for years that result in one of them saying, "I never knew that."

-Stephanie E. Ponder





shoulders—and is spread over both the seattle and San Francisco shows.

"We have a creative team and a business team," says Langill, a former vaudeville performer and accomplished stage and screen actor who has been involved in producing high-profile projects for several decades. "I am in the middle of the two. I do spreadsheets and balance sheets. I also direct most of the shows and do most of the creative work. But it's a big process and involves influence from a lot of directions, so it really relies on a collaboration between all of those elements—getting the best ideas out of everybody, working together."

Their goal is constant reinvention. "We're putting on an interactive party with our audience in a very intimate state. What can we do with the audience and the crowd?" Langill explains. "How can we get them more involved? How can we break the separation between performer and guest? They're really on stage with us here. You should think of this not so much as a theater and a set but as a dinner scene, and we happen to be in it and you're in it, too."

As to the next act, Langill discloses that Teatro ZinZanni has received invitations from cities around the world. The company is narrowing in on adding one new location, but all the pieces must be in place before making a commitment. "It's important to us that it's the right city and we have the right friends and producers in the city so that the labor-intensive, handcrafted nature of our show is preserved," he says. "Anyplace we go, we have to keep the creative spirit going."

matches his sequined purple suit. He has lured his former lover and muse, Liliane, to America, where he hopes to impress her and possibly resume their dalliance. The scheme starts off poorly when Liliane rejects Caesar's latest idea: hot pants for men.

The evening unfolds from there, with a dozen performers taking the center of the floor in various roles: two Chinese men, appointed as fashion police, shed their uniforms and perform stunning aerial acrobatics; a shy young woman chosen as a protégée by Liliane is actually a mesmerizing hula hoop artist and contortionist; two other actors ascend a pole in a sensual vertical tango; two waiters engage in a circus act on a ladder—all an arm's length, and sometimes closer, from the audience.

Food is somehow served without major catastrophe throughout the performance. The crowd's mood (the tents hold about 300 people) moves from belly laughs brought on by Caesar's improv to utter captivation during Liliane's soulful ballad, "Le Temps," in the darkened house. In the end, she proclaims the evening "fun, warm and divine," an accurate summation.

The creative spirit

Teatro ZinZanni faces the same challenges as any small business: finding the right employees (in this case, world-class entertainers), maintaining cash flow, choosing effective marketing programs and keeping customers satisfied. But perhaps most important to the show's success is finding time and energy to be creative while handling the daily chores of running the business. A lot of that falls on Langill's

member Drofile

Name: Teatro ZinZanni Employees: 150

Locations:

Seattle (Seattle Center) Box office: (206) 802-0015

San Francisco (Embarcadero)

Box office: (415) 438-2668

Web site: www.zinzanni.org

Available at Costco:

Costco offers \$100 Teatro ZinZanni gift certificates for \$79.99 in select Seattle and Bay Area warehouses.

Comments about Costco:

"I love going to Costco. We buy supplies, bulk materials, that sort of stuff. As a shopping experience, I don't think there's a more diverse customer base than at Costco."

—Norm Langill



Kids Kids Kids

Ekils Pek.

I love reading my Fisher
Price books! I can pull up the sturdy die-cut
flaps that appear on each page and find
surprises that help to tell the story.



Interactive adventures are loaded with early-learning concepts that take kids to a different world, where they lift the flaps to discover something new. Each Reader's Digest book has bold labels to enforce vocabulary and early word recognition, while the busy, colorful pages really keep kids engaged.

POSTERS

THE ULTIMATE GUIDES TO THE COOLEST STUFF

The ultimate guide to learning from Silver Dolphin Books! Each 64-page, spiral-bound book includes full-color photos and cool illustrations, diagrams, acetates and two full-size posters! Take an interactive look at the

mysteries of the universe in

Space, travel the world in Atlas or
learn about the latest discoveries in Science!

Available late November

THE DEFINITIVE HARRY POTTER COLLECTION

Once you enter the world of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry you may never want to return to reality. Now, for the first time ever, all of J.K. Rowling's bestselling *Harry Potter* novels are



available in an eye-catching paperback box set from Arthur A. Levin Books. Fans of all ages will return to these novels again and again!

GOOD THINGS COME IN SMALL PACKAGES

Young readers will have hours of fun with collectible Disney Activity Tins. Each comes with a storybook, a coloring and activity book, 10 felt-tip markers, and more! Create your own photo frame with Mickey Mouse

and his clubhouse gang, or choose from the other tins: Disney Pixar, Disney Fairies and Disney Princess.

Available now

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Favorite characters teach young readers about letters, shapes and other important fundamentals. The magnetic drawing pad is erasable so the books can be enjoyed again and again. Have

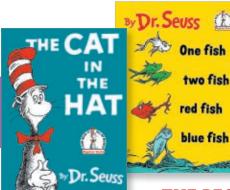
fun with Woody and
Toy Story Drawing
with Pals, take a
trip with Tinker Bell
in Disney Fairies
Magical Drawing
and more!

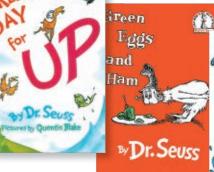


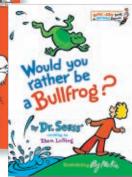
EVERYONE LOVES LITTLE GOLDEN BOOKS!

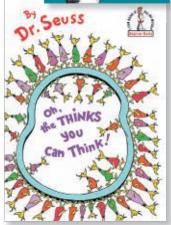
Little Golden Books from Random House appeal to the young and the young at heart. Little readers can't get enough of the rollicking tale of two mischievous kittens in the ageless story of **The Color Kittens**. Children will also embrace the new classics as they travel through the mountains of Sodor for a special day at the railway with **Thomas and the Big, Big Brigade**, and follow Ariel under the sea with **The Little Mermaid**. Each set contains eight family favorites and makes the perfect gift!





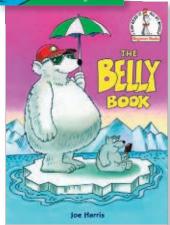






THE BEST PLACE TO START IS FROM THE BEGINNING!

Welcome to Dr. Seuss' playground for beginning readers! Children who enjoy story time will love diving into the entire line of **Beginner Books** (Random House/Board book). First started by Dr. Seuss, the Beginner Books have become a phenomenon in the world of literacy. With their easy-to-follow stories and bright illustrations, this series, which is available in 3-packs, encourages kids to read and enjoy reading! And there are also the popular Bright and Early Board Books (Random House/Board book) to choose from! These wonderful books contain all the brilliant illustrations and story lines that the Beginner Books have, but in a shorter, more user-friendly format for the youngest readers, and are available in 4-Packs.



Available early November

THE FUN WAY TO LEARN

Brain Quest (Workman Publishing) makes learning fun, with lively curriculum-based questions and answers on exactly what kids need to know in preschool through 3rd grade, from math and science to geography, language arts and social studies. Quiz yourself or play with a friend (there are 2 decks in each box, so it's easy to share). A smart holiday gift!



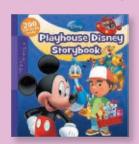


Available early November

STORIES THAT WILL LAST A LIFETIME.







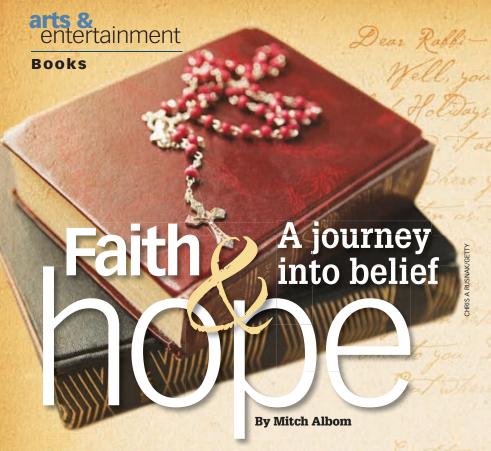








Available now



itch Albom is the author of *Tuesdays with Morrie* and *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*. Having just finished a new book, he recently took the time to pen something for our readers. In this *Costco Connection* exclusive, Albom writes about the inspiration for his new book, *Have a Little Faith*, and what he learned along his journey from the book's inception to its finish.

DO YOU BELIEVE in anything?

I had to ask myself this question.

The reason was rather unusual. A eulogy. I was asked to give one. By a man who hadn't died yet. And not just any man. A clergyman. My clergyman. The only one I'd ever known.

"Will you do my eulogy?" he'd asked.

"What?" I'd responded, dumbfounded.

"My eulogy."

"Are you dying?"

"Not yet," he said, grinning.

"Then why—?"

"Because I think you would be a good choice. And I think, when the time comes, you will know what to say."

Picture the most pious man you know: your priest, your rabbi, your pastor, your imam. Now picture him asking you, upon his death, to say goodbye to the world for him.

Picture the man who sends people off to heaven asking you for his send-off to heaven. There he was, asking me—me, a fallen, barely participating member, a guy who attended services once a year. And now I should stand in

front of the congregation and sum up our spiritual leader?

Why me?
I never felt less

worthy. And I had to ask myself, "Do you believe in anything? Do you believe in God, heaven, a life beyond this one? If so—or if not—how do you stand there and convince grieving friends and family that their man of God is in a better place?"

Mitch Albom

That request began a journey into belief, hope and religion that ultimately became my new book, *Have a Little Faith*, the first nonfiction work I've done since *Tuesdays with Morrie*. In some ways, it's a lot like *Tuesdays*, full of wisdom from a dying old man. But in other ways, it is as different as can be.

Have a Little Faith follows an eight-year journey between two worlds. There is the world that began with the eulogy request, the world of visits to my ailing clergyman, in his home, at

his workplace, observing how he leads a simple, contented life and never loses his wit or wisdom, even as he slowly succumbs to old age.

And there is a second world, the world of a broken-down church in the heart of innercity Detroit, where the paint peels and the floorboards are rotted and a large hole in the roof allows rain and snow to pour through during services.

That church is led by a pastor named Henry Covington, who, as a younger man, was a thief, an addict, a drug dealer and a convict. He turned his life over to Jesus on a night he thought he would be murdered. When he survived to the next morning, he began walking in a new direction.

Today, as a penance for his former life, he works for almost no money tending to the poorest citizens in Detroit, feeding and sheltering the homeless, teaching that there is hope, even in the most hardscrabble of cities.

When I first met Henry Covington, he was wearing a white T-shirt and perspiring from his forehead. He weighed more than 400 pounds, and when he shook my hand I said to myself, "If this is a man of God, I'm the man in

the moon."

But that only proved how much I had to learn. Over time, I came to see how people of faith come in all types of packages. Pastor Covington had taken over the church when it was all but abandoned, and at one point cleaned the toilets and bathrooms, mopped the floors, locked the doors. He still sits until nearly midnight as a lonely sentinel above a floor full of homeless men who sleep in the church on cold winter nights.

Once, Henry Covington made hundreds of thousands of dollars in the drug trade. He had any material possession he wanted. Today, he lives in a ramshackle home nearly as decayed as his church.

"I am where I'm supposed to be," he says, contentedly.

Clearly, there was much to learn from this man.

What I learned from my time with Pastor Covington, what I learned from all those visits with my beloved clergyman, Rabbi Albert Lewis, is the backbone of *Have a Little Faith*. The story deals with their views on many issues that confront us in our daily lives: money, love, marriage, happiness, forgiveness, ritual, heaven, God. It follows the tribulations that Covington endures as the gas company shuts off his heat and he is forced to build a plastic

naged to get us all here w knew this day would come fould be down there. You

> tent in which his congregation can pray. It follows the struggles Lewis endures as a medical error temporarily robs him of his ability to communicate, and his impending death brings him face to face with his concept of heaven.

> And it concludes, as you might expect, with the eulogy I never wanted to write, a eulogy I never wanted to deliver, because it meant my teacher was gone.

But while he was here, through this most unlikely journey—one that bounced me between two worlds, between my childhood home and where I live now, between the suburbs of New Jersey and the inner city of Detroit, between a synagogue and a church, between white and black, between rich and poor, between thinking faith is something that divides people to realizing it may be the single biggest thing we humans have in common—through all that, I was able to craft what I hope were the right farewell words to a special man of God. And to reintroduce myself to what it means to believe in something bigger than me, bigger than all of us.

I don't know about you, but personally that was a big test. The journey tested my preconceived notions of faith, tested my idea of what a "man of God" should look like and what a church should look like, tested my comfort zone, tested lots of prejudices.

In the end, however, I learned more than I ever imagined about those people who stand on the pulpit each week, who they really are, what moves them, what scares them and how much they are really like us, even if we feel they are better than us.

Do you believe in anything? I had to ask myself that in *Have a Little Faith*. And by the end, I found that I believe in more than I

thought. Perhaps you will, too.

I hope you like this small new book, and find it inspiring for you and those you love. I know that writing it changed my life.

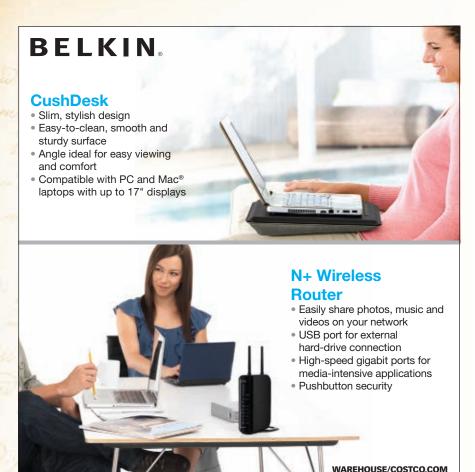
Thank you to all who have embraced my books and stories.

The Costco Connection

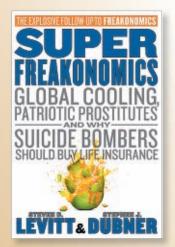
have a little faith

a true story

Mitch Albom's Have a Little Faith is available at Costco locations and on Costco com.







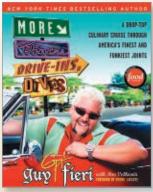
FREAK OUT ONCE MORE!

The creators of the worldwide bestselling Freakonomics (more than 4 million copies sold!) return with a surprising new look at global financial matters and how they affect our everyday personal lives—and vice versa. SuperFreakonomics (William Morrow/ Hardcover) is a funny yet compelling read from University of Chicago economics professor Steven D. Levitt and New York Times writer Stephen J. Dubner.

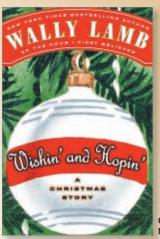
On sale now

DIVE IN!

Renowned chef Guy Fieri once again takes you for a ride through the least-expected culinary delights in the U.S. in More Diners, Drive-ins, and Dives (William Morrow Cookbooks/ Paperback). Put the top down and enjoy four-star cuisine of a totally different kind, sure to make your taste buds sizzle.



On sale November 3

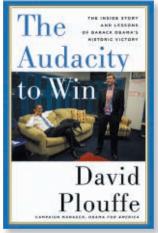


November 10

A NEW HOLIDAY CLASSIC

From the author of the beloved bestsellers I Know This Much Is True and She's Come Undone comes a new timeless Christmas classic. Wally Lamb brings you Wishin' and Hopin' (Harper/Hardcover). Enjoy the spirit of the season with one of our bestloved writers!

THANKFULLY new books for the holidays



On sale November 3

From the names

of recipes you'll

love! Whatever

your pleasure,

and easy with

Recipe Collection, Hershey's Recipe

and the Crock-Pot

International/Ring-bound), three

essential cookbooks for every kitchen!

make it fast

Campbell's

Collection

YES, HE COULD ... AND HERE'S HOW

In **The Audacity to Win** (Viking/ Hardcover), campaign manager David Plouffe explains his winning strategy and tactical choices, as well as the key mistakes he feels the Clinton and McCain campaigns made, in this blow-by-blow account of Barack Obama's historic upset victory in 2008.



Available early November HISTORY AS YOU'VE NEVER READ IT BEFORE

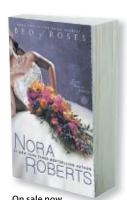
Mark Mazower, a historian from Columbia University, delivers a powerful new examination of the reason behind the rise of the Nazis in Hitler's Empire (Penguin/Paperback), praised by

The Washington Post as "a fascinating read." In Napoleon's Wars (Penguin/Paperback), Charles Esdaile

writes a "masterly account of the Napoleonic wars" (The Economist). And don't miss Stalingrad: The Fateful Siege 1942–1943 (Penguin/ Paperback), Antony Beevor's mesmerizing account of Hitler's attempt to invade Russia.



The queen of women's fiction, Nora Roberts, returns with **Bed of Roses** (Berkley/Paperback), the second novel in the best-selling *Bride Quartet* series.



On sale now

Book Pick

The storyteller

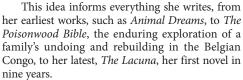
Barbara Kingsolver's novels dissect and confront beliefs

By Valerie Ryan

"I AM TALKING TO you from my very cluttered office in an old farmhouse, looking through windows onto the forest." The farmhouse, located in southern

Appalachia, sounds like the perfect setting for the tireless research and roving imagination of Barbara Kingsolver, author, poet, essayist, classical pianist, biologist, small-scale farmer.

"I think of myself as a scientist of the human heart, untangling personalities, personal and social histories," says Kingsolver of her work. "No person acts in a vacuum. We are all interconnected with history and family. I try to construct relationships that remind people of their own lives. Fiction can create empathy in readers and help them to understand themselves and others."



Kingsolver attended DePauw University, in Indiana, where she studied classical piano before switching her major to biology. Despite her scientific bent, she has always been a storyteller, writing stories and essays as a child, keeping a journal from the age of 8.

In the late 1970s, Kingsolver lived in Greece, France and Tucson, Arizona, working at a variety of jobs: archaeological digger, copy editor, housecleaner, biological researcher and translator. In the early



Barbara Kingsolver

1980s she took up graduate studies at the University of Arizona, where she earned a master's degree in ecology and evolutionary biology. She then became

a science writer for the university, which led to freelance feature writing and journalism.

Pregnant with her first child in 1986, Kingsolver suffered from insomnia. Rather than baking, cleaning or counting sheep, she sat in a closet at night and wrote *The Bean Trees*, which became an instant success with readers and critics.

"I always begin with a theme," Kingsolver tells *The Connection*. "In *The Lacuna* I looked at art in politics and politics in art. There was a certain uneasiness in this country that needed

exploration—around World War II and then during the McCarthy era. What happened to create such discomfort with political dissidents? What effect did that have on the American psyche, and, ultimately, what does it mean to be an American?"

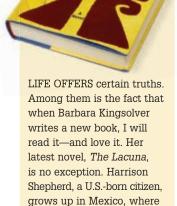
The dictionary defines lacuna as "a gap or missing part, as in a manuscript, series, or logical argument." In *The Lacuna* it is used as a foreshadowing of events to come and, in its larger meaning, as the enormous chasm between truth and perception. The author's insight into human nature encourages readers to develop what she refers to as "a healthy suspicion of gossip."

Because of protagonist Harrison Shepherd's sojourn—as cook, typist and general dogsbody—in the Mexican households of Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera while they harbored Leon Trotsky, he is accused of being a Communist. The accusation comes years later, and Shepherd goes from being a celebrated author to one reviled by the media, dropped by his publisher and shunned by his neighbors.

That kind of fall from grace is one Kingsolver can only imagine. This multitalented, self-described "working mom" has been awarded two honorary degrees. To round out her accomplishments, Kingsolver is also a member of the Rock Bottom Remainders, a rock-and-roll band consisting of published writers, including Amy Tan, Matt Groening, Dave Barry and Stephen King, among others.

Despite all that she has going on, let's hope that we won't have to wait another nine years for that cluttered officeto produce Barbara Kingsolver's next novel.

Valerie Ryan owns Cannon Beach Book Company, on the north coast of Oregon.



he holds several odd jobs.

Frida Kahlo come back to

haunt him.

Years later his work for Leon

Trotsky and friendship with

One of the riveting aspects of the novel is the way Kingsolver brings Frida Kahlo's artistic temperament and physical suffering to life, portraying her feisty nature, sarcasm, flamboyant clothes and utter fearlessness—all shot through with intensity and humor.

The Lacuna is available in most Costco warehouses and at Costco.com.

For more book picks, see page 47.



Signed book giveaway

COSTCO HAS 50 signed copies of Barbara Kingsolver's *The Lacuna* to give away. For a chance to win, send an e-mail to *give* away@costco.com, with "Barbara Kingsolver" in the subject line. Or print your name, address and daytime phone number on a postcard or letter and send it to: Barbara Kingsolver, *The Costco Connection*, P.O. Box 34088, Seattle, WA 98124-1088.

NO PURCHASE OR PAYMENT OF ANY KIND IS NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN THIS SWEEPSTAKES

Purchase will not improve odds of winning. Sweepstakes is sponsored by HarperCollins Publishers, 10 East 53rd 5t., New York, NY 10022. Open to legal residents of the U.S. (except Puerto Rico) who are age 18 or older at the time of entry. One entry per household. Entries must be received by December 1, 2009. Winners will be randomly selected and notified by mail on or before January 2, 2010. The value of the prize is \$26.99. Void where prohibited. Winners are responsible for all applicable federal, state and local taxes. Odds of winning depend on the number of eligible entries received. Employees of Costco or HarperCollins and their families are not eligible.

GET BACK TO THE CLASSICS

Three classic books that have been required reading for teens for decades have been re-released in these hot new paperback editions from HarperTeen! Look for Pride and Prejudice, by Jane Austen; Romeo and Juliet, by William Shakespeare; and Wuthering Heights, by Emily Brontë.

Available now



Pride & Prejudice IANE AUSTEN



SCRAPBOOKING IS ART

If a picture is worth a thousand words, then scrapbook albums are priceless! Tweens can preserve their memories in albums that they customize to fit their personality and lifestyle. Vibrant colors, meaningful clip art and creative

layouts add to the fun. Choose from All About Me. Me and My Friends and morel





Available early November

from Publications International

GINETTE MATHIOT I KNOW HOW

FROM THE OUEEN OF FRENCH DOMESTIC **COOKING**

Dog-eared copies of Ginette Mathiot's cookbooks can be found in kitchens throughout France. Her most popular, I Know How to Cook (Phaidon), is now available for the first time in English. With more than 1,200 recipes, the classic guide has been carefully updated to suit modern cooks and their kitchens. I Know How to Cook reveals just how easy French cooking can be.

Available now

VAMPIRES ARE HOT

L.J. Smith has created a vampire series that fans are really sinking their teeth into. When the beautiful and popular Elena meets two mysterious brothers, Stefan and Damon, she finds herself undeniably drawn to both. Get the first and second

volumes in one with The Awakening and The Struggle, and the third and fourth books in the series in The Fury and Dark Reunion. And don't miss The Vampire Diaries, a new television series based on the books—now on the CW.

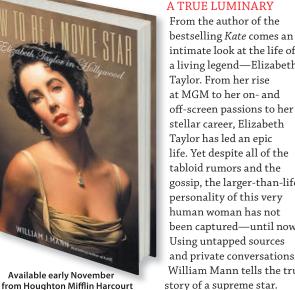




journals for years to come. Capture baby's first successes with Baby's First

Year, reminisce with someone special with Grandmother's Memories and chronicle that special time of the year with Christmas Memories. Each journal has a special item inside.

THE HUMAN SIDE OF A TRUE LUMINARY



intimate look at the life of a living legend—Elizabeth Taylor. From her rise at MGM to her on- and off-screen passions to her stellar career, Elizabeth Taylor has led an epic life. Yet despite all of the tabloid rumors and the gossip, the larger-than-life personality of this very human woman has not been captured—until now. Using untapped sources and private conversations, William Mann tells the true story of a supreme star.

entertainment

Books

Fancy Nancy elevates the wonder-and vocabulary of childhood

Simply fabulous!

By J. Rentilly

"SMASH HIT," "knockout," "blockbuster," "triumph"—these are all fancy words for "successful" or wildly successful, which is exactly what Jane O'Connor's children's book series, Fancy Nancy, is. In the series, already 13 books strong, a spritely, precocious young girl enjoys glamour and adventure,

both real and imagined, while bucking the banal and, only incidentally, building her vocabulary by learning fancy words for other words.

Any resemblance Fancy Nancy bears to her creator, O'Connor, is purely a matter of the 61-year-old author reconnecting with the child of wonder she once was. "Six-yearold me definitely had a glittery side that the grown-up me had somehow lost," says O'Connor, who lives on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, only three blocks from where she grew up.

If Nancy's opulent fantasia of colors and comedic scenarios provide the books with their sizzle, the synonym-find-

ing imparts their nutritional value—no surprise, since O'Connor has spent almost four decades working in the publishing industry as a well-regarded children's book editor. "I love editing and also feel that working on other people's manuscripts makes me a sharper writer," she tells *The Connection*.

Today, O'Connor is enjoying the authorial career most of her clients would kill for, what with Fancy Nancy becoming a virtual cottage industry—millions of books sold, a mad rush of tie-ins and merchandising, and more than 100 weeks on the New York Times bestseller list.

"My whole career has been about getting kids

The Costco Connection

Fancy Nancy, Fancy Nancy and the Posh Puppy, Boniour Butterfly and Splendiferous Christmas are available in most Costco warehouses.

to love reading," says the self-described "die-hard New Yorker." "So Fancy Nancy is the absolute acme, zenith and whatever other fancy word for 'high point' you can think of. It's been an unbelievable experience, just completely happy and rewarding in every single way."

Fancy Nancy's genesis—"fancy word for 'beginning," cracks O'Connor—came in

> the author's own longing for childhood fantasy, specifically female oriented. "All of my children are sons, so I think I was looking to connect with the little diva that was my inner child," she says. The first Nancy story was penned quickly, but O'Connor held on to it until acclaimed and distinctive illustrator Robin Preiss Glasser became available. "We never knew each other before the first book, but now we often say that we share one brain. I can only see Nancy as Robin draws her now."

Despite nearly 40 years in the publishing world, nothing prepared O'Connor for the blockbuster success of Fancy Nancy.

"You never do know about these things. It's baffling," she says. "And delightful."

hristmas

HARPER COLLINS

O'Connor, who published her first foray into adult fiction last year, especially cherishes the rambunctious book tours that promote Nancy. "I never got to play dress-up with daughters, and now I get to be with all these little divas," she says. "It's so much fun to do these book tours. I did a few for my adult book, but I never got hugged or kissed at any of them."

imagines Costco through the eyes of young readers' favorite fabulous little girl.

There's a lot about shopping that my mom doesn't understand. She thinks it means buying stuff you need like laundry detergent. But she's mistaken, which is fancy for wrong, wrong, wrong! Shopping is for purchasing things you want, like sunglasses that make you look like a celebrity or a lifetime supply of glitter markers.

When we go to Costco we are both happy. My mom finds what she needs and I find what I want.

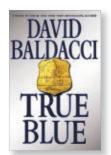
The merchandise (that's fancy for stuff) is big too! Today we are buying gigantic jars of mayonnaise and peanut butter, a package of chopped meat that will probably make about a million burgers and a carton of ice cream almost the same size as my sister. (I'm only exaggerating a little.) I adore the food aisles because Costco people offer such yummy free samples. I never refuse a free sample, and I always curtsey and say, "Merci."

When my mom is all done, she lets us each buy a treat. My sister wants a harmonica, and I select (that's fancy for choose) some velvet ribbon, which will look lovely tied around my wrist.

Our shopping spree is over, and everyone is happy. Costco may not look fancy, but everything you want is there. To me, it's not a warehouse; it's a shopping metropolis! -Jane O'Connor

> **Author Jane** O'Connor, in her own "Fancy Nancy" days.

J. Rentilly is a Los Angeles-based journalist.



DEATH IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL

What begins as a routine homicide case takes a horrifying and unexpected turn for a cop who is trying to clear her name and a young lawyer who is caught in the middle in True Blue (Grand Central Publishing), the latest thriller from David Baldacci.

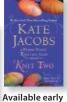
On sale now

WARM AND FUZZY READING

Jacobs weaves another compelling story about the

popular New York City knitting circle in her latest installment of The Friday Night Knitting Club series with Knit Two. A celebrity chef going through a midlife crisis decides to boost her ratings in the delicious Comfort Food.





November

THE PERFECT GIFT FOR TWILIGHT FANS

The Twilight Journals set includes four beautifully packaged journals in a collectible

keepsake tin. Inspired by the series, each features stunning designs, complete with images and quotes from each of the books, as well as from classic works of literature that inspired them.







Available November







CALENDARS FROM ACCORD GET CRAFTY!

Why keep a yearly calendar that simply hangs on the wall when you can have one that teaches you something new each day? Create hundreds of models, including flowers, birds and even Christmas ornaments, with the **2010 Origami Calendar**. Get a whole year of decorative borders and designs with the 2010 Scrapbooking Calendar. Enjoy new patterns for every skill level with the 2010 Knitting Calendar. So many to choose from, you'll want one for every room of the house!

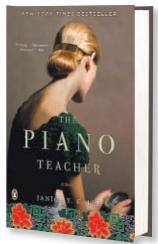
ALL ABOARD!

Loved by children everywhere, The Polar **Express** (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt) is the Caldecott Medalwinning story of a train trip to the North Pole to meet Santa Claus on Christmas Eve. The enchanting story gets more magical and meaningful the more it's read!



PASSION CAN BE AS **DESTRUCTIVE AS WAR**

Former Elle editor Janice Y. K. Lee delivers her debut novel, a gripping tale of love and betrayal set in war-torn Hong Kong. Claire Pendleton, the wife of a British civil servant, arrives in Hong Kong and is hired by a wealthy family to teach piano to their daughter. Claire is instantly swept away by the exciting social life and quickly finds herself falling for a man with a dark past. As Claire begins to understand the world she has entered, she also discovers the high price of survival in The Piano Teacher (Penguin).



On sale November 17

A COMPELLING READ

Fourteen-year-old Susie Salmon is murdered on a cold December evening, and that's just the beginning of Alice Sebold's haunting novel. As Susie watches from heaven, her friends and family struggle with her passing and she deals with her new reality. The Lovely Bones (Back Bay Books) is a remarkable coming-of-age story, soon to be a feature film starring Mark Walhberg and Rachel Weisz.



Available now

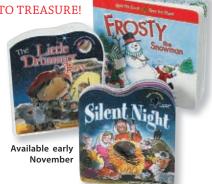
THE LIFE OF A LEGEND

Michael Jackson's dazzling and turbulent life is captured in this richly illustrated book from Parragon. The life of the superstar is chronicled, from his days in the Jackson 5, to his stellar solo career, to the announcement of his shocking death—reminding us why he will forever be remembered as the King of Pop.

Available now

SING-ALONG BOOKS TO TREASURE!

Timeless Christmas tales for children come to life and the music of the season guides the stories of Silent Night, Little Drummer Boy, **Frosty the Snowman** (Ideals) and more. These interactive books are destined to become annual favorites.



TWO-IN-ONE FUN!!

Play-a-Song books from Publication International bring music and reading together. Musical buttons correspond with playful text to enhance the reading experience and encourage little readers to follow along. Christmas Songs and Mickey's

Play-Along Christmas Songs will make perfect holiday additions this year.



Available mid November

Books

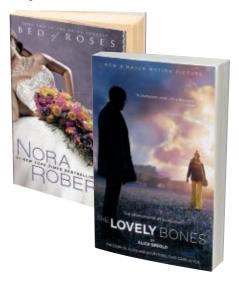
Book buyers' picks

Nonfiction

Gourmet Today: More Than 1000 All-New Recipes for the Contemporary Kitchen, edited by Ruth Reichl. Not only did this book catch my attention because Reichl, editor in chief of the recently closed Gourmet magazine and former food critic for The New York Times, has her name on the cover, but also because of its down-to-earth approach to cooking. Right away Reichl acknowledges that most of us aren't cooking like we used to. We want healthy, seasonal, sustainable food, and this book delivers. The recipes also focus on saving money and time, and many of them can be made in 30 minutes or less. You'll find what you'd expect, such as recipes for starters, soups and main courses, but also international and vegetarian recipes, along with tips, a glossary and a directory of sources. The book also includes a voucher for a one-year subscription to Bon Appetit magazine.

-Melissa McMeekin, assistant book buyer

More Diners, Drive-ins and Dives: A Drop-Top Culinary Cruise Through America's Finest and Funkiest Joints, by Guy Fieri. This is for Food Network fans, like me, who can't help but watch every time Fieri is on. Just once I would love to accompany him while he visits all those diners, drive-ins and dives, trying the best comfort food across America. I'm always watching for him to highlight a Seattle spot, and I tell myself that I should write down some of the places he visits just in case I'm ever in those cities. With this cookbook, you don't have to leave your kitchen-Fieri brings his fabulous finds into your home. If you find yourself on a road trip looking for the best local food in every town, Fieri includes all of the details on the locations he scouts out and the great food that's served there.—MM



Costco book buyers' picks are available in Costco warehouses and online at Costco.com.

Art for Obama: Designing Manifest Hope and the Campaign for Change, edited by **Shepard Fairey and Jennifer Gross.** The 2008 presidential election was memorable for several reasons. One of the most apparent reasons, to me at least, was the use of striking imagery in President Barak Obama's campaign. Fairey's Hope image became the face of the campaign, launching its graphic element. This book includes collages, photo composites, paintings, computer-generated images and more. It's ideal for Obama supporters and those who are interested in art and graphic design. Another aspect of the book I find particularly appealing is the fact that 100 percent of the author's proceeds will be donated to Americans for the Arts, a nonprofit dedicated to advancing the arts in America.

—Jonna Erickson, assistant book buyer

Fiction

Bed of Roses, by Nora Roberts. Once November hits, there's no escaping the madness of the holiday season. Roberts' novels are an ideal choice for a little escape. As a seasoned writer, she knows how to deliver an engaging story and believable characters. This novel, part of her Bride Quartet series, is no exception. Emma Grant is part owner of a wedding-planning business and suffering no lack of suitors. The only problem is, she hasn't found Mr. Right. Enter Jack Cooke, who's been right there in front of Emma for ages. My tip for managing seasonal stress? Put this charming read at the top of your to-do list.

-Shana Rawers, assistant book buyer

The Collected Short Stories of Louis L'Amour, Volume 7: The Frontier Stories, by Louis L'Amour. A friend of mine has long joked that cowboys are her weakness. Me? I'm partial to stories of the West, and the king of the genre remains L'Amour. These short stories feature some of his beloved characters, along with ordinary men and women who face adventures readers aren't likely to soon forget.—SR

The Lovely Bones, by Alice Sebold. When this book came out in 2002, it was a huge success.



November 3

The Audacity to Win, by David Plouffe
Ford County, by John Grisham
It's Your Time, by Joel Osteen
Kindred in Death, by J.D. Robb
Knit the Season, by Kate Jacobs
No Less Than Victory, by Jeff Shaara
One Simple Act, by Debbie Macomber
Rachael Ray's Book of 10,
by Rachael Ray

November 9

Open, by Andre Agassi

November 10

Ice, by Linda Howard *Under the Dome*, by Stephen King

November 16

I, Alex Cross, by James Patterson

November 17

The Wrecker, by Clive Cussler and Justin Scott

November 24

Breathless, by Dean Koontz
Hot, Flat, and Crowded 2.0,
by Thomas Friedman
The Imperial Cruise, by James Bradley
Pirate Latitudes, by Michael Crichton
Shadowland, by Alyson Noël

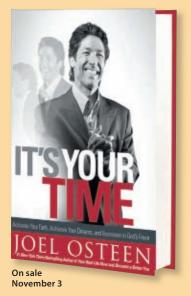
With the film opening early in December, I think many readers will want to revisit this haunting novel or read it for the first time to get the full story that only a book can offer. *The Lovely Bones*, which is about a 14-year-old girl who is brutally murdered and then watches over her family and killer from heaven, isn't always an easy read, but it's the kind of story that will stay with you for years to come. For those of you who didn't read it when it first came out, I urge you to pick it up now.—*SR*

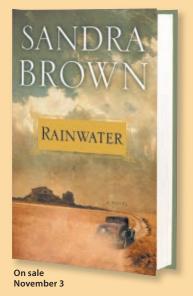
GET INSPIRED BY A GOOD READ

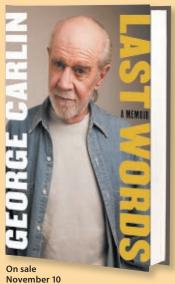
Joel Osteen is the most-watched inspirational figure in America today. In his latest book, It's Your Time (Free Press), the bestselling author of Your Best Life Now offers an exciting new message about how to seize the day—today.

From acclaimed bestselling author Sandra Brown comes Rainwater (Simon & Schuster), a moving novel that celebrates the foresight of a bygone generation and proves that love is worth the price that one must pay for it—even during the Great Depression.

In the autobiography that George Carlin had nearly completed before he died, the comedian presents the man behind the material that made people laugh for more than 50 years. Last Words (Free Press) is Carlin's life story as it's never been told—and told as only he could tell it.

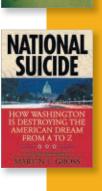






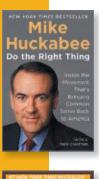
One more thing to be thankful for—great books!

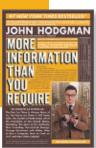
JAMES WESLEY, RAWLES POUNDER OF SURVIVE THE END OF THE WORLD AS KNOW IT TACTIOS, TECHNIQUES AND TECHNOLOGIES FOR UNCERTAIN TIMES



Available early November







SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT...

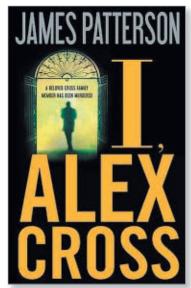
In these uncertain times there's no such thing as being too prepared. How to Survive the End of the World as We Know It (Plume) is the definitive guide on how to prepare for any crisis, from survivalist James Wesley, Rawles.

Martin L. Gross, the best-selling author of *The Government Racket*, returns with a scathing indictment of government waste and mismanagement in **National Suicide** (Berkely Trade).

Denis Leary's sardonic wit supplies hilarious, irreverent social commentary about the crazy world and its crazier inhabitants in **Why We Suck** (Plume).

Former presidential candidate Mike Huckabee offers his campaign memoir, his manifesto and his down-to-earth vision for America's future in **Do the Right Thing** (Sentinel Trade).

John Hodgman, *the Daily Show*'s "Resident Expert," is back with another handy volume of fake trivia and made-up facts, picking up where his *The Areas of My Expertise* leaves off—on page 256—in the hilarious **More Information than You Require** (Riverhead Trade).



On sale November 16

THE NEW ALEX CROSS THRILLER

When a dear relative of Alex Cross' is brutally murdered, Cross vows to hunt the killer down. But the grieving detective soon discovers that this isn't the first time the murderous fiend has struck, and all evidence points to a revelation that could have worldwide implications in I, Alex Cross (Little, Brown and Company).



Louis Stevenson called 'Christmas at Sea,' and I was wondering how I could possibly work it into the album," says Sting during a recent phone interview with *The Costco Connection*. The former bassist and vocalist for rock trio The Police was explaining how, during the recording of his new album, *If on a Winter's Night*, the 10th studio release of his solo career, he was stumped as to how to set this poem, which fits the theme of the new recording perfectly, to music.

Stumped? He's Sting, who has sold more than 100 million albums during the course of his career, earned scads of awards and, as a member of The Police, been inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

He has also been an outspoken activist who, in 1989, with his wife, Trudie Styler, formed The Rainforest Foundation (www. rainforestfoundation.org), an organization that strives to support indigenous people of the world's rain forests. He's appeared in 15 movies and earned all kinds of humanitarian awards and honorary titles.

Yet, for all his experience and musical prowess, he was stumped, and he was clearly excited to tell this story as we spoke at length while he walked from a rehearsal to his hotel in Durham, England. In fact, he was excited about the entire album and the strong connection between many of its 15 songs—most of which are based on folk music of the British

The Costco Connection

You'll find *If on a Winter's Night*, Sting's new recording of winter songs, at selected Costco warehouses now.

"We started [this project] in the end of January, in my home in Tuscany, which is warm in the summer but in the winter is very, very cold. We all huddled around the kitchen fireplace, eight or nine musicians, all wrapped up in coats and big boots, and we explored these songs together. We figured out what would work and what wouldn't work. But I

"The songs [on this album] are ... all connected by the theme of winter in what I call magical elements."

—Sting

think the tone of the album generally has a kind of traditional tone. The songs [on this album] are secular songs, sacred songs, folk songs, some of my songs, classical songs, all connected by the theme of winter in what I call magical elements," Sting explains.

"I didn't have the pressure of having to write all the material," he says. "The material was preexisting. And I was allowed to bring my own songs into the canon. In many ways the pressure was off in that sense, but it was interesting to put my own songs alongside much older work and realize that a kind of lineage or DNA [exists]. I recognize the DNA between a modern song like, for example,

Not many people know about Gordon Sumner, 59, a former schoolteacher from Newcastle, unless you call him Sting, the name he adopted before joining rock trio The Police in 1977. If on a Winter's Night is the latest release of his solo career.

STING

"The Hounds of Winter" [Sting's original composition, track 10 on the new album] and a seasonal traditional song."

Because he'd worked with all the musicians before, some for more than 20 years, many of the songs didn't have the mystery, the hidden part to discover, that "Christmas at Sea" presented. "I couldn't quite work it out," he says of his quest to put "Christmas at Sea" to music, "until I heard Mary [Macmaster] play this Gaelic song. While I couldn't understand the lyrics, I figured what it was telling me about was all about the gravitational pull that home has at Christmas. I think all music speaks a narrative, if it's well constructed. I thought I'd juxtapose that song with a musical rendition of the Stevenson poem. It's my favorite track."







By J. Rentilly

ED ASNER IS not a grouch, but he's played one on TV. In hundreds of hours of episodic television (most notably, *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* and its dramatic spinoff, *Lou Grant*), not to mention feature films such as last summer's breathtakingly beautiful and soul-stirring Pixar film, *Up*, Asner has played gruff and grumbly, but always with a noble and compassionate heart at his core. So it's often been for Asner, who has forged a formidable career on screen, radio, stage and TV, merging presence, substance and political conscience.

Asner is not one to mince words, or to suffer fools kindly, but those who earn his respect—and, at 79, with seven grandchildren to go with seven Emmys, one might say he's earned the right to have others earn his respect—will know great affection, wisdom and laughter. A conversation with Asner is much like watching *Up*: a real journey, enlightening, edifying, playful and very, very human.

The Costco Connection: For more than 50 years, you've been doing child's play for a job. I've heard you say that acting is playing.

Ed Asner: Well, I have to be careful who's listening. I don't want to admit to my infantilism. [Laughs] All of this work is merely an opportunity for my inner child to come out.

CC: You've also said that you've forged a career out of simply playing yourself. Does that mean that audiences know the real Ed Asner?

EA: Hell, I don't know him. How could you know him if I don't? I can't be sure that the exter-

The Costco Connection *Up*, available in DVD and Blu-ray, is available at Costco locations and on Costco.com.

nals I project to the world aren't merely the mask and the costume that I've adopted. If you were to plunge your knife through all of that dreck, I don't know that you'd find the central core then. But I'm hoping you might find something.



As curmudgeonly Carl, the lead character in *Up*, Ed Asner voices a man who, rather than fading into twilight, is embarking on his most epic adventure.

CC: How have you improved as an actor? **EA**: One of the reasons I'm better now is I've

acquired all of the tricks and the expertise that 50-some-odd years have given me. But, also, I still believe. I still relish. I still cherish. I love the work. If there is a marriage of good work and me, and I'm right for a part, I'm like a pig in the mire; I'll wallow in it.

CC: A film like Up is a story about healing, about moving forward from loss and regret. I'm wondering what this means to you as a man approaching 80.

EA: It makes a lot of sense to me. I believe in this picture profoundly. Being the worthwhile character that he is, and being inspired by the greatest wife he could ever have wished for, Carl [the elderly protagonist of *Up*] puts his shoulder to the wheel and pushes and gets involved in something bigger than he is. He's not allowed to look upon his navel and yearn for his lost wife and mourn his lost adventures; he's given the adventure of being alive

and being responsible to a few other creatures. That can really get you to look outside of your navel-gazing.

CC: You've done a lot of voiceover work in the past few years. How is that different for you? **EA**: You're talking to a man whose greatest

influence growing up, dramatically, was radio. I used to thrill at radio. I love that work, and I'm able to involve myself in that work and invest all of my believability in that work that I'm doing, as extensively as anything on film or stage.

cc: A lot of journalists, writing about your work in Up, say, "Cranky old man plays cranky old man." This seems to underestimate both you and the character you play in the film.

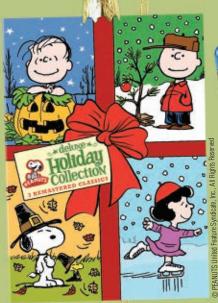
EA: It's like the liberal old ladies I'd run into after the success of *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*. They'd be so inflamed because I was so mean to Mary [on the show]. Grouchy as Lou Grant may have been, or grouchy as Carl may have been, we've all known these people. After you get past the grouch, they're the sweetest creatures you'll meet, and they've instilled in us the idea that we must prove ourselves before we are accepted. That's not a bad thing either.

CC: Do you ever reflect on the mountains you've climbed or the valleys you've crossed in this life and career?

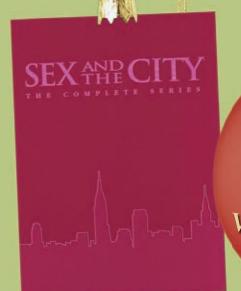
EA: This has been a good year. I also have to realize, I don't have that many years left. When they lower me in the box, I'll still be spouting lines and kicking, though. The mountains are glorious. The valleys can be dark and very steep to get out of. I've had valleys, primarily when work dried up or *Lou Grant* got canceled, and the wonderment as to whether or not there would be a tomorrow. But my career has been a joy, it really has, and if *Up* turns out to be the last thing I do, that certainly would be an up note. I am inordinately proud of that movie.

J. Rentilly is a Los Angeles-based journalist.









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IT HOME.







Blu-ray/DVDs

Marvelous movies

DVD buyers' picks

Star Trek. PG 13. I've always kind of enjoyed the Star Trek TV series. But I loved the latest film in this longtime franchise. It explores a new frontier: the surprising back story of the crew of the USS Enterprise. Captain Kirk has always had a flighty quality about him, but the young Captain Kirk (Chris Pine) is almost crazy. Famous for his logic, Spock (Zachary Quinto) struggles with emotions. The young Dr. McCoy (Karl Urban) is more hotheaded than ever. Sulu (John Cho) is a surprising asset to the crew, and Montgomery "Scotty" Scott (Simon Pegg) is hilarious. Together the crew faces a formidable antagonist: Nero (Eric Bana), an angry Romulan out to destroy the entire Starfleet.

—Wendi Wamboldt, assistant DVD buyer

Monsters vs Aliens. PG. This animated film reminds me of the old sci-fi movies from the 1950s, but a lot more fun. When a meteorite from outer space hits a young California woman named Susan Murphy (voiced by Reese Witherspoon) and turns her into a giant platinum-haired woman, she is taken to a secret government compound where she meets a ragtag group of monsters, including Dr. Cockroach (Hugh Laurie), The Missing Link (Will Arnett) and an amorphous blob called B.O.B. (Seth Rogan), under the guidance of General W.R. Monger (Keifer Sutherland). When

aliens attack, this motley crew of monsters is called into action to save the world from imminent destruction.

—Claudia Augello, Costco DVD buyer

G-Force. **PG.** A team of trained secret agent guinea pigs takes on a mission for the U.S. government: stopping a diabolical billionaire who plans to take over the world with household appliances. Believe in yourself is the motto of this sweetly madcap and amusing 3-D family adventure in which talking guinea pigs turn the world upside down in order to save it. The execution is inventive and the cast works well.—*WW*

Ice Age 3: Dawn of the Dinosaurs. PG. I love the wild mishaps of Scrat, the saber-toothed squirrel, as he desperately tries to gather acorns for the winter. For me, the hilarious antics of this subplot eclipse the main story: Manny and Ellie, a woolly mammoth couple, are expecting a baby, and Manny is anxiously trying to make everything perfect. Meanwhile, Diego, a saber-toothed tiger who has be-

An amazing young cast portrays the crew of the USS Enterprise in Star Trek.





scarily plausible scenario, as criminal mastermind Travolta and his armed gang threaten to execute the train's passengers unless a large ransom is paid. It is up to Washington to outwit Travolta and save the hostages. It will keep you on the edge of your seat.—WW

friended Manny, wonders if he's gone too soft. And Sid, a sloth and longtime friend of Manny, steals some dinosaur eggs because he wants to have his own family. When the dinosaurs come looking for their eggs, many other comical complications ensue.—WW

Angels and Demons. PG-13. Harvard symbologist Robert Langdon (Tom Hanks) is once again called upon to decipher the clues to a catastrophic conspiracy in this thriller directed by Ron Howard and also starring Ewan McGregor and Stellan Skarsgård. If you're like me, you'll enjoy the breathless pace, set against a fantastic European background, as Langdon must race against time to solve the murder of a pope and prevent a terrorist act against the Vatican.—CA

The Taking of Pelham 123. R. Hijack a New York City subway train? At first I thought the premise sounded farfetched, but with actors such as Denzel Washington, John Turturro and John Travolta, the movie (a remake of the 1974 classic with Walter Matthau) became a

The Ugly Truth. R. If you're a fan of Sex and the City, this movie will hit all the right spots. The battle of the sexes heats up between Abby Richter (Katherine Heigl), a romantically challenged morning-show producer whose search for Mr. Perfect has left her hopelessly single, and Mike Chadway (Gerard Butler), a hard-core TV personality who promises to spill the ugly truth on what makes men and women tick. Abby becomes reluctantly embroiled in a series of outrageous tests by her chauvinistic correspondent to prove his theories on relationships and help her find love.—CA

Also look for *G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra*, *Up* and many other movie titles and selected seasons of TV series, many of which are available on Blu-ray Disc.

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One low price — two great games

Getting in the game

Active video games are all the rage

By Scott Steinberg

STOP SITTING THERE twiddling your thumbs, and start getting in the game. Thanks to motion-sensing "active" titles—digital diversions designed to get the entire family up and moving—physical activity is rapidly becoming the future of play.

Courtesy of cutting-edge outings such as Wii Sports Resort, All Star Cheer Squad 2 and DJ Hero, fans of all ages are rediscovering the joy of interactive entertainment. Nearly seven in 10 households now play PC or video games, enthusiasts are 35 years old on average and women represent a whopping 40 percent of the joystick-loving population, according to the Entertainment Software Association.

"These types of video games are a lot easier to get into [than traditional titles]," explains George Jones, editorial director for GamePro Media, which publishes *GamePro*, one of the world's bestselling game magazines, and a number of online publications. "The notion that you can actually play a plastic guitar or swing a virtual baseball bat is just more visceral and engaging. But the great part is that it's even more fun to do so with friends who wouldn't necessarily call themselves 'gamers'. Suddenly, it feels like family boardgame night all over again."

Clearly, it's a concept that resonates strongly with everyone, as evidenced by the success of Nintendo's Wii system, which has sold more than 52 million copies worldwide. The first-of-its-kind console, which features custom movement-tracking controls, has become a global sensation, popping up everywhere from Westin hotels to Princess Cruises and even nursing homes. It's also prompted renewed global interest in health and physical fitness, courtesy of bestselling high-tech workouts *Wii Fit Plus*, Ubisoft's *Your Shape*

The Costco Connection

Costco offers a variety of video games and consoles in the warehouses and at Costco. com. Quantities are limited in some cases.

and EA Sports Active, plus unique peripherals, including balance boards, cameras and vitality sensors.

"Technology has finally caught up to our imagination," explains celebrity trainer Jillian Michaels, whose own *Fitness Ultimatum 2009* brought the thrill of computerized cardio and strength-building routines to more than 600,000 individuals. "Now you're really playing football with John Madden, golfing with Tiger Woods or working out with me. In the future, anything will be possible using these games, from training for Olympic sports to undergoing physical rehabilitation."

So why the sudden surge of interest in literally going hands-on with games? After all, decades before titles such as *Dance Dance Revolution* or *Rock Band* popularized active play, late-'80s accessories such as the NES Power Pad floor mat and Power Glove controller were already living room fixtures.

"It's a question of implementation," responds Mike Musgrove, consumer tech reporter for *The Washington Post*. "So often, ideas that sound good on paper are tough to execute from a technical standpoint. The Wii succeeded because it really works as advertised, and, more important, the system's interface is intuitive and easy to learn."

At the very least, the category is proving fertile ground for game designers' imaginations. You'll find active games for every system from the PlayStation 3 (*EyePet*) to Xbox 360 (*Lips: Number One Hits*) and even handheld devices such as the DSi (*Personal Trainer: Walking*). The PS3's SIXAXIS controller can be tilted to steer cars or spaceships, while Nintendo's Wii MotionPlus add-on lets you fish or shoot arrows with a flick of the wrist.

In 2010 Sony plans to release a motionsensing wand that will be compatible with its PlayStation Eye camera and capable of doubling as a sword or tennis racquet. But it's Microsoft that may surprise most with its upcoming Project Natal, a 3-D camera-based interface that eliminates the game pad entirely



Today's video games are not just for couch potatoes. Active games lead players through routines such as yoga and exercise.

and uses the player's own body as a controller. It's expected late in 2010.

Still, with countless innovative offerings, from the plastic-skateboard-equipped *Tony Hawk: Ride* to the full-size musical-instrument-packing *The Beatles: Rock Band*, experts say the sky's the limit.

"It's exciting because active titles open entirely new avenues for games and game designers to explore," says Musgrove. "Because of this, we're constantly discovering new ways to play ... and ones that the entire family can enjoy."

Get Rich Playing Games author and TV/ radio host Scott Steinberg covers entertainment and technology at www.thevideogame expert.com.

Get connected and play!



Jillian Michaels Fitness Ultimatum 2010 for Nintendo Wii: Players land on a tropical island packed with new features and energetic workout modes that fully utilize the motion capabilities of the Wii Remote™ and the Wii Balance Board™ accessory. Available 11/10.

The Biggest Loser for Nintendo Wii: A complete workout containing more than 88 exercises, including upper and lower body, core, cardio and yoga.

Your Shape for Nintendo Wii: Featuring Ubisoft's proprietary Body Tracking technology with a camera peripheral, the game will scan your body to create a personalized and interactive workout. Available 11/24.

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iCarly for Wii: Create your very own webisodes with skits from the show. Also available for Nintendo DS.

Toy Story Mania! for Wii: Players experience the zany fun of the interactive Toy Story Mania theme park, requiring 3-D glasses and involving rapid-firing shooting galleries.

Mario & Sonic at the Olympic Winter Games for Nintendo Wii: Players face off in intense winter competitions, taking you to lifelike Olympic venues.

Drawn to Life: The Next Chapter for Nintendo DS: Your hero. Your adventure. Once again, the Raposa need your help to save their civilization! Also available for Wii.



Planet 51 for Nintendo DS: Players can immerse themselves in the amazing world of Planet 51 in this missionbased driving game with various characters from the film. Also available for Wii. Available 11/17.



The Princess and the Frog for Nintendo DS: In the magical, jazz-infused world of 1920s New Orleans, young Tiana must overcome the hurdles set before her to discover that dreams really do come true. Also available for Wii. Available 11/17.



Littlest Pet Shop Friends for Nintendo DS: Brimming with all-new elements girls will love! New adorable pets, customizable accessories and fun mini-games. Your choice of Country Friends, City Friends or Beach Friends.



Disney Fairies: TinkerBell and the Lost Treasure for Nintendo DS: Allows girls to take flight as the beloved Tinker Bell and go on an exciting quest.



Spore Hero Arena for Nintendo DS: Players create a unique gladiator hero creature and guide it from planet to planet as they fight enemy creatures and complete special missions. Also available for Wii.





video games are a portal to new worlds that we can't enter in real life. This year's crop of hot games will transport players to futuristic wars, show them worlds through the eyes of toys and even let them compete in the Olympics.

Leading the list of heavy hitters for the holidays are a family-friendly foursome of mostly familiar names. Here's a look at some of the titles available in the warehouses and online at Costco.com.

LEGO Indiana Jones 2: The Adventure Continues. It started with *Star Wars* and spread to Indiana Jones—interactive adventures based on hit movies featuring characters and items seemingly created out of LEGO blocks.

LEGO games are adventuresome. Indy 2 re-creates the action from all four Indiana Jones movies, giving fans of the archaeologist/ adventurer a huge world filled with interesting characters, puzzles and mystic relics. (Rated E, suitable for players ages 6 and up; for DS, PC computers, PlayStation 3, PSP, Wii, Xbox 360)

Bakugan Battle Brawlers. Move over, Pokémon. This year's best battling beasts are brawling Bakugan, from another dimension. In Bakugan Battle Brawlers, players meet in 3-D arenas to match their monsters and their wits. (Rated E, suitable for players ages 6 and up; DS, PlayStation 2, PlayStation 3, Wii, Xbox 360)

Mario & Sonic at the Olympic Winter Games. Two of the biggest celebrities in video game history are about to go head to head. In Mario & Sonic at the Olympic Winter Games, Nintendo's plumber mascot takes on Sega's spiky character in tennis shoes. Both mascots, of course, are escorted by teams of familiar friends as they compete in events such as ice Sonic is a multi-player event. (Rated E, suitable for players ages 6 and up; DS, Wii)

Toy Story Mania. Based on a theme-park attraction in which players shoot at targets while riding through a funhouse, Toy Story Mania ups the ante on the Disney Studios ride by adding multiple shooting galleries in which players shoot rings, darts, pies and hoops at Toy Story-themed targets. (Rated E, suitable for players ages 6 and up; Wii)

Halo 3: ODST. Not all of the top-tier games are meant for kids. Take, for example, Halo 3: *ODST*, the return of the bestselling series that put Microsoft's Xbox on the map.

Seen through the eyes of an "Orbital Drop Shock Trooper," ODST adds a new singleplayer perspective to the Halo experience, along with a treasure trove of multi-player maps and options. (Rated M, suitable for players ages 17 and up; Xbox 360)

Not what you are looking for? There's

This Christmas, Guitar Hero fans will have a chance to expand their virtual-gig experience with Band Hero and DJ Hero (both games are available for DS, PlayStation 2, PlayStation 3, Wii and Xbox 360). Those hooked on drumming, strumming and humming in Guitar Hero World Tour will feel right at home with Band Hero. Players looking for something new can add a turntable to the experience with DJ Hero.

Action fans will have plenty to keep their adrenalin pumping. One of the heaviest hitters this year will be Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2 (for PC computers, PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360), the sequel to one of the mostly highly acclaimed games of 2007.

A first-person shooter set in the present

Hot games this year include LEGO Indiana Jones (top); DJ Hero (middle) and Band Hero (right).

day, Modern Warfare 2 packs enough guns, grenades and explosions to keep players coming back for more.

And online players will adore this game for its multi-player action.

Other greats are back for another go as well. Hoping to attract a new round of players to PlayStation 3, Sony Computer Entertainment is publishing Uncharted 2: Among Thieves, a new Nathan Drake action adventure. Electronic Arts hopes lightning will strike twice when it releases Mass Effect 2 for Xbox 360 and PlayStation 3. And Activision plans to take a whole new generation of players shredding with *Tony Hawk: Ride*, a game that comes with its own skateboard peripheral for PlayStation 3, Wii and Xbox 360.

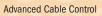
Science-fiction novelist and journalist Steven L. Kent, www.sadsamspalace.com, lives near Seattle.

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Room withacue

Game rooms are the new home hub spaces

By Dan Daley

WHEN CRAIG AND DESIREÉ Griffiths moved into their new home in an Atlanta suburb, Desireé says, the pool table went in before the furniture. "The game room is the social hub of the home," she says of the Rocket Diner, the family's name for their 1950s-themed basement game room, which also holds a pinball machine and dartboard, and is used to host birthday parties for their 8-year-old daughter, Marisol, and her friends. "What I love most is how a game room encourages us to spend more family time together."

The growing sophistication of video games and the plummeting costs for electronics such as flat-screen LCDs and video game consoles (both Sony and Microsoft cut the prices on their popular consoles by about a third this year) produced a cornucopia of electronic games over the past two decades; it's not unusual for a household to own two or three major video game consoles, as well as scores of game cartridges for them. And plenty of "analog-era" games remain popular, including full-size and scaled-down pool tables, air hockey tables and foosball, as well as hundreds of board games from checkers to Monopoly, which tend to migrate around the house, winding up wherever they were last played.

Space, the final frontier

The dedicated game room brings order to this playful chaos. How well that space is planned is important to maximize its use and enjoyment. Start with the amount of space you can dedicate to gaming. If it's just going to be video games, a typical spare bedroom is fine, with the video monitor positioned against a wall and some seating behind the players' positions. If it's going to be a multi-game environment, you may need to reach into the basement for more space. For instance, a 5-by-10-foot pool table requires a space 12 feet 8 inches by 17 feet 4 inches to allow the players to extend their cues. (You can find great tools for estimating billiards space at www.fgbrad leys.com/plan room.html.)

A counter or bar is a great place for spectator to congregate in a game

room to watch the action.

Interior décor

Use warm but vibrant colors for walls, says DeAnna Radaj, an interior designer and owner of Bante Design LLC in Milwaukee, who's studied the effect of colors on human physiology. "Warm colors increase blood pressure and body temperature," she says. "Yellow is perfect—it's the hardest color for your eye to break down, so it increases mental agility and concentration."

Game rooms are high-activity places, so good-looking commercial carpeting is the also helps hold the noise level down, and so # do cork wall panels. These panels come in a wariety of colors and can be arranged around by the room in patterns, doubling as sound 5 absorbers and bulletin boards on which to post pictures and high-score bragging rights.

ainment

Pick a theme

Themed rooms can intensify the game experience—as long as everyone agrees on the theme. There are plenty to choose from: favorite sports teams, films, music and more. While one Nashville family painted their entire game room orange and white, in honor of the University of Tennessee football team, expressing a theme can be easily accomplished

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The Costco Connection

Setting up a game room? You'll find video game consoles, video games, arcade games, furniture for multimedia, rocker chairs, sports memorabilia and more at Costco and Costco.com.

with posters, pictures and ornaments. For instance, Long Island-based interior designer Marlaina Teich used team posters and signed memorabilia such as jerseys and basketballs to decorate a game room for a client with sports-mad kids. "Often the theme picks itself, based on the kinds of games people play most," she says. "And then you'd be surprised how many things they already have around the house that are perfect for that."

Sometimes the games themselves can be the decorations. Try using museum putty to hang game boards on the wall, with a planter box below them on the wall to hold the game pieces.

Where to sit

Furniture not only serves to hold games and gamers, but also delineates the game room's various spaces. Costco member Joe Schmieder, creator/owner of Game-Room-Decorating-Ideas.com, suggests that a corner of the room have some kind of bar or counter with swiveling stools. Whether it's kids with soda or parents sipping a beer, it suggests that the room is open to the whole family and their friends. "Portable fold-up bars are great for this, and they also give you some storage space behind the bar, too," he says.

When it comes to seating, Schmieder says, the central piece of furniture should be a sofa or sectional. "A couch gives people a chance to sit next to each other and get to know one another, especially when you have a wide range of visitors who have never met before," he explains. With a video game screen and console set up opposite the couch and spectators at the bar overlooking the action from behind or to the side of the couch, this tiered-type seating lets more people in on the action in a smaller space.

Consoles and armoires can accommodate video display systems as well as plenty of game cartridges and DVDs. One way to maximize floor space is to mount video displays on articulating wall brackets, available from companies such as Chief and Omni. These not only free up floor space but also allow the screens to be tilted, to adjust for seating type, and panned left and right, adding flexibility to the room's layout. Cables on the wall from the console to the LCD screen can be covered with plastic wire molding, which can be painted to match the décor.

Power to the people

Managing the technology of the game room is important. The power supply for many game devices is often a cumbersome "wall wart," an oversize electrical plug, and game rooms can accumulate lots of them. David Jasak, owner of audio-video systems installation company AV Design Associates in Austin, Texas, suggests using hometheater-type power strips, which have widely spaced outlets to accommodate wall warts

Game room furniture can really rock

TO ADD TO THE game experience, consider video-game chairs, which are becoming as sophisticated as the games themselves. For example, the X-Rocker offers built-in surround sound, wireless connection to the game console and other features, for around \$100.

Most video-game chairs on the market are compatible with the major game formats: Xbox, PlayStation and Wii. Chair sizes vary, and most offer a maximumweight rating, so you can find a good fit for everyone. Look for head-





and also offer surge protection, usually in the form of a resettable circuit breaker.

Many video games offer cinema-like 5.1 surround sound (the "5" indicates five main sound channels: a stereo pair in front flanking a center channel, and two "surround" speakers placed on the rear wall; the ".1" represents a subwoofer for low frequencies). Jasak recommends placing the stereo and center channel speakers at ear level and mounting the surround speakers behind the field of play, 24 inches higher than the front array. "Home-theater-in-a-box systems are fine for most game rooms," he says, "but place the subwoofer in a corner to maximize the bass response."

Finally, lighting can give the game room a dramatic touch. Add dimmers to wall light switches. Track lights can be used to intensify lighting over board and tabletop games as well as used for wall washes. And rope lighting can be both decorative and used to mark out specific game spaces in the room.

The diversity of entertainment options these days can pull family members in different directions. With a family game room, everyone is engaged and in the same space. And as Desireé Griffiths likes to point out, "You know where the kids are."

Dan Daley is a journalist and author who covers technology and business for numerous publications.

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Wii console sold separately.
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WAREHOUSE/COSTCO.COM



By Natalie MacLean

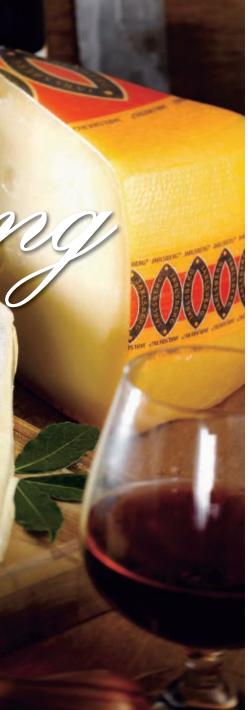
ONE OF THE lingering myths about matching food and wine is that cheese should be paired only with red wine. This notion arose in Victorian England, when the ladies would leave the table at the end of the meal so that the gentlemen could enjoy cigars, loose talk, cheese and wines such as port and claret.

Today, thank goodness, we've thrown out that rule, along with corsets. We have much greater freedom to drink what we want with the foods we want. The only downside is that now there's almost too much choice: Wine and cheese are both available in such a staggering variety of styles that it could take years to figure out how to combine them.

Luckily, a few simple rules can help. The first is that the milder the cheese, the easier the match. That's why the easiest cheeses to pair with wines are mild-flavored fresh and semi-fresh cheeses, such as mozzarella, feta and Jarlsberg. Especially suitable are light white wines, with 12 percent alcohol or less, crisp acidity and bright notes of fruit. Try Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc, Gewürztraminer or Pinot Gris.

One of my favorite cheeses is goat cheese (chèvre), with its chalky heart and grassy flavor. It pairs well with zingy Sauvignon Blanc from New Zealand or South Africa, or with a flinty, unoaked Chardonnay from California. The racy acidity of these wines cuts through

MARK FOWLER



RIDIO PHOTOGRAPHY

the fat of the cheese. Also good with goat cheese is the Italian bubbly Moscato d'Asti, with its lovely orange-blossom taste.

Personally, I can't resist a thick, rich Brie, slightly warmed, with its white savory lava oozing onto a baguette and its creamy aromas blooming in my mouth—mmmm! Brie and Camembert, like other creamy cheeses, are tougher to match because their opulent texture can overpower wine. The best choice, therefore, is a robust white, such as an oak-aged Chardonnay from California, Chile or Australia. Such wines have aromas of vanilla, smoke, toast and cedar to complement the buttery notes in the cheese.

Party foods and wines

DURING THE HOLIDAY season, a good wine can die a thousand deaths at the hors d'oeuvres table due to mismatching. Fortunately, a few tips can save your wine—and your sanity.

Peanuts, walnuts, pecans, almonds and other nuts all have an oily, salty taste and need a wine with an acidic backbone, such as Riesling or Sauvignon Blanc, to balance their taste.

50 Spicy Asian and Thai foods need some sweetness to temper their heat. Late-harvest Sauvignon Blanc and Riesling complement these foods without getting clobbered.

Fishy snacks, such as oysters, shrimp and salmon, are too briny for red wines and make wine taste metallic. Instead, try sparkling wines to cleanse your palate and to toast the new year.—NM

Having suggested so many white wines with cheese, I don't want you to think that red wine can't be a good match. My favorite reds for pairing with cheese are medium-bodied with lots of fruity character, such as Pinot Noir. But when it comes to well-aged cheese, such as Parmigiano-Reggiano, you want a more full-bodied red.

The longer a cheese ripens, the higher its fat content and the stronger its flavors, so it can hold its own against a robust red. Bordeaux, for instance, with its aromas of dried herbs, cassis and black currants, is a traditional companion for the tang and earthy notes of cheddar. Go even more full-bodied to port, the fortified red dessert wine, for blue cheeses, such as Roquefort, Cambozola and a Bleubry–Saint-Honoré duo.

Despite all I've said here, there are no hardand-fast rules when it comes to matching wine and cheese. The fun is in trying different pairings for yourself, especially nontraditional ones.

Costco member Natalie MacLean, author of Red, White, and Drunk All Over (Anchor Canada, 2007), offers an online wine and food matcher at www.nataliemaclean.com.



- 🔊 Brie
- Maria Cambozola
- Camembert 50
- Canadian Cheddar
- **SO** Chévre
- Bleubry–Saint-Honoré duo
- ➣ Fondue cheese
- Frulano
- Parmigiano-Reggiano
- port-Salut
- Roquefort

*Many of these cheeses are available at Costco, depending on location and season. Check your local warehouse for availability.

The Costco Connection

Costco carries a wide variety of wines, wine-friendly cheeses and a host of other foods and beverages to make holiday entertaining a rich experience.

creative cooking

IF VARIETY IS the spice of life, then living is especially flavorful during the holidays. Afterwork socials, family gatherings and casual evening parties are most impressive when the focal point is a wide assortment of appetizers. Consider creating this palette of small foods a chance to let your culinary creativity loose.

Featured here are recipes from Costco's latest cookbook, Home Cooking The Costco Way, which features recipes using products available in the warehouses. The book will be handed out for free to 2 million members in the warehouses on the weekend after Thanksgiving on a first-come, first-served basis. If you don't get your own copy, you can find an online version after November 30 at Costco.com; click on "Costco Connection Magazine" and see "Recipes the Costco Way."—Tim Talevich

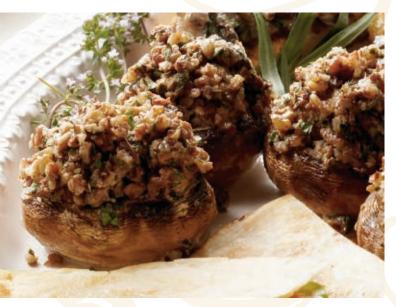


Prosciutto-Wrapped Grapes

41/2 ounces very thinly sliced prosciutto, cut into 36 strips (about 11/2 inches wide by 3 inches long, if possible)

36 Delano Farms black seedless grapes 36 decorative toothpicks

Wrap a strip of prosciutto around each grape. Arrange on a large plate or platter and place a toothpick in the center of each grape. Serve immediately. Makes 6 servings.



Nuts-and-Cream-Stuffed Mushrooms

1 pound Cardile Brothers* large white mushrooms

1 cup finely chopped pecans

3 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

1/4 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme

Pinch of salt Dash of pepper 1/4 cup softened cream cheese 1 garlic clove, minced to a paste 1/2 cup heavy cream

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Rinse mushrooms and pat dry. Remove stems from mushrooms and chop enough to make 1 cup. Arrange the caps in a shallow baking dish.

Mix the chopped stems, pecans, parsley, thyme, salt, pepper, cream cheese and garlic together. Spoon into the mushroom caps.

Pour cream over the mushrooms and bake for 20 to 25 minutes, basting with the cream once or twice. Serve warm. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

* Brands may vary by region; substitute a similar product.

Spiced California Walnuts

1 egg white

1 tablespoon water

2 cups Kirkland Signature™ California walnut halves and pieces

1/2 cup sugar

1 tablespoon Kirkland Signature cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon ground allspice

Preheat oven to 225°F. Line a large shallow baking pan with foil.

In a bowl, combine egg white and water; beat until foamy. Add walnuts and toss to coat. Pour the mixture into a strainer and let drain for 2 to 3 minutes.

Combine sugar, cinnamon and allspice in a plastic or paper bag; shake to mix. Add the walnuts; hold the bag shut and shake vigorously to coat the nuts. Spread the nuts in one layer in the baking pan.

Bake for 1 hour, stirring every 15 minutes.

Remove from the oven and let cool completely, stirring occasionally and breaking the nuts apart if they are stuck together. Don't worry if they stick to the foil—it's easy to peel them off. Store in a tightly capped jar. Makes 2 cups.





Party Cheese Log

16 ounces Raskas* cream cheese, softened

1 10-ounce package sharp Cheddar cheese, shredded

1 tablespoon chopped red bell pepper or pimiento

1 tablespoon finely chopped onion

2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce

4 teaspoons lemon juice Dash of ground red pepper Dash of salt

Chopped pecans, for garnish Chopped fresh parsley, for garnish

In a large mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and Cheddar cheese with an electric mixer at medium speed until well blended. Add bell pepper, onion, Worcestershire sauce, lemon juice, red pepper and salt; mix well. Chill for several hours or overnight.

Shape the cream cheese mixture into a log. Garnish with pecans and parsley.

Serve with crackers. Makes 6 servings.

Tip: To soften cream cheese, microwave in a bowl on medium (50 percent) for 2 minutes.

*Brands may vary by region; substitute a similar product.



By Fred Minnick

IN COGNAC, FRANCE, history is found in earthy, humid cellars aging countless French oak barrels of the "king of brandy."

This quaint French country town, located 100 miles north of Bordeaux along the Charente River, is home to rustic dark rooms filled with charming cobwebs, mold and single-distilled white wine vintages more than 200 years old.

When one cognac firm's cellar master siphons out tastes of his 1806 vintage, the scent brings an immediate connection to that time and all it has endured: Napoleon's life and his wars, the Franco-Prussian War, World War I, World War II and the founding of the French Fifth Republic. This time capsule, which will one day be blended with other vintages, was made from grapes harvested when cognac was beginning to capture the world's palates.

The spirit's roots are traced to Dutch ships carrying French wines in the 16th century. When the wines did not survive long voyages, the Dutch distilled them to save what they could.

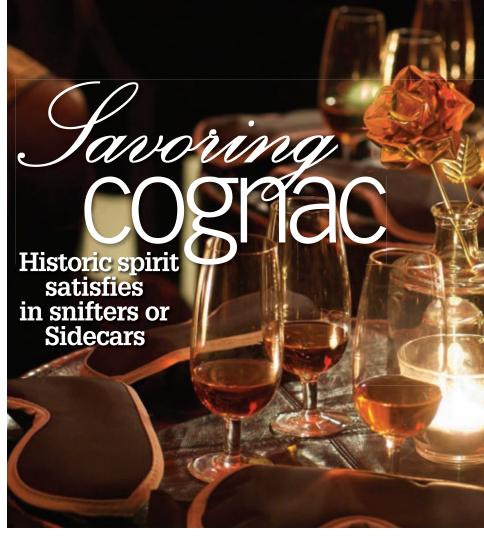
Today, cognac is a reemerging spirit finding attention in rap songs, new and innovative cocktails, and Costco. Bottles can cost as much as a new car or as little as a school lunch.

Creating a special spirit

The Cognac appellation consists of six crus, or French wine-region areas, that comprise more than 185,000 acres. The grapes used to make cognac—Ugni Blanc (most widely planted), Folle Blanche and Colombard—must be produced in this region's distinctive, chalky limestone soils.

Those crus include, in order of quality, Grande Champagne, Petite Champagne,





Borderies, Fins Bois, Bons Bois and Bois Ordinaires. As with wine, the region is designated on each bottle's label.

Harvested in October, the grapes are pressed in horizontal baskets and fermentation immediately follows. On November 1, the unfiltered white wine begins the first distillation process to create a slightly cloudy liquid known as the *brouillis*, which is returned to the boiler for a second distillation. During the second distillation, the master distiller separates alcohol vapors and a clear spirit emerges. By law, in order for it to be cognac, this process must be completed by March 31. Otherwise, the spirit is produced and sold as brandy. (All cognac is brandy, but not vice versa.)

After the second distillation, the white wine, now called *eau de vie* ("water of life"), is transferred to oak casks created from the sapwood and heartwood of trees more than 100 years old. The old wood transforms the clear eau de vie to a golden yellow and eventually, if it is aged long enough, to an amber color. The wine must be aged at least two years.

The master blender tastes the aging spirits and, once satisfied, blends single eaux de vie with eaux de vie of different ages to create consumer-ready cognac. When bottled, the cognac must have a minimum alcohol content of 40 percent. Unlike wine, cognac does not age in the bottle.

Perfect cognac pairings

Selecting the right cognac should never be daunting. Although cognac has a countryclub aura, it's by no means a rich man's drink.

Most affordable, VS (Very Special) cognac blends consist of eaux de vie two years old and older. VS is most enjoyed in a refreshing cocktail after work or during social occasions.

At the next level of the cognac hierarchy is VSOP (Very Superior Old Pale). It consists of blends at least four years old. With just a drop of water, VSOP's hazelnut and dried-apricot aromas travel toward the nose and let you enjoy the subtleties of the golden spirit.

VS or VSOP can be used in classic cocktails such as the Sidecar (cognac; Cointreau, Grand Marnier or another triple sec; and lemon juice) or in up-and-coming drinks such as the Summit (lime peel, fresh ginger, cucumber peel, cognac and sparkling lemonade). In both cocktails, the ingredients complement cognac's subtle woody and floral flavors.

Both cognac types pair delightfully with sweets after dinner. So does XO (Extremely Old) cognac. Made with single eaux de vie at

The Costco Connection

Costco offers a variety of cognac in select warehouses in states that allow retail liquor sales. Check your local warehouse for availability.



least six years old, XOs are best served straight. When swirled, XOs leave long "legs" and fill the nose with robust, sweet aromas, such as vanilla, chocolate, honey and dried apricot. On the tongue, this special spirit is smooth, with the alcohol taste nonexistent among the velvety complexities. But XO's finest characteristic is the long and mellow finish, which invites relaxation on even the most stressful of days.

Whether it's VS for an after-work cocktail or XO to enjoy by the fire, cognac is an extremely versatile spirit that can enhance any liquor cabinet. Let its subtle notes and harmonious flavors add a touch of spirit and history to your household.

Fred Minnick, a writer and photographer, lives in Louisville, Kentucky. He covers food, wine and spirits for numerous publications.

Pregnant?

How long can you bear the question?

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Now the most anxious question you may ever face can be resolved as soon as possible.



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By Annette Alvarez-Peters

ONE OF MY favorite holidays is Thanksgiving. It's a day to spend time with family and friends, watch football, have a wonderful meal and drink some of my favorite wines. Wine has become a part of most Thanksgiving dinners, but many of my family, friends and colleagues have a difficult time choosing wine for the occasion. One reason this can be trou-

blesome is that there are so many flavors to match. Meals can feature turkey (somewhat bland, with a dry texture), stuffing and gravy (savory), sweet potatoes (sweet), cranberries (tart) and pumpkin pie (spicy and sweet). With such a menu, what wine do you choose: white, red or both?



Bubbly and whites

Start your meal with a bottle of champagne—it's festive and always appropriate. Champagne can pair perfectly with appetizers or hors d'oeuvres. Kirkland Signature™ non-vintage Brut Champagne is a great value in French bubbly. It's made from Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier grapes in a traditional method. The lemon and grapefruit zest flavors with hints of toasty notes please most people's palates.

There are many white wines to seek out; your best bet is to look for one with intense fruit and crisp acidity to complement your meal.

Chardonnay ranks as the top-selling white

For information on Costco's Kirkland Signature wines, go to Costco.com, click on "Costco Connection Magazine," then "Kirkland Signature Wine Connection."

varietal in the United States. A full-bodied Chardonnay can take on the texture of turkey. Find a fruity Chardonnay from California or Australia that isn't overly oaky. (An oaky Chardonnay may overwhelm some of the flavors on the dinner table.)

A crisp, refreshing Sauvignon Blanc from Sancerre or New Zealand can complement

the stuffing and the many vegetable side dishes. Albarino from Spain is another good choice, thanks to its mineral flavors and crisp acidity. Aromatic wines pair nicely tooperhaps an off-dry Riesling or a wonderful Gewürztraminer; both have a hint of sweetness that can add layers and balance the spicy nature of some of the dishes.

Fruity, friendly reds

Red wines should be fruity, food friendly and not overly tannic. A traditional Thanksgiving wine is Pinot Noir. This lighterbodied wine with delicious red-fruit flavors can be an elegant choice to pair with your meal. Older Bordeaux wines can also be extremely satisfying. An older Bordeaux, with its lovely and refined flavors of fruit and earthiness, along with the softer tannins, will enhance your dining experience.

If you are looking for a big, full-bodied wine with a lot of flavor, try a fruity Zinfandel with bold, jammy notes, or a spicy Syrah or Shiraz with intense fruit flavors and aromas. Both varietals have lower tannin levels, which can pair well with turkey.

For a wine that's fun, try a Beaujolais Nouveau from the southern area of Burgundy. Each year, Beaujolais Nouveau is released

worldwide on the third Thursday of November. This is the first wine from the new harvest to be released from France's famed Beaujolais region. The red wine, which is often served slightly chilled, is a simple and fruity expression of the Gamay grape. Whether you choose a red that is elegant, bold or fruity, you can find one that's truly enjoyable.

Chateau Ste. Michelle Gewürztraminer

Jadot Beaujolais Item #54953

Cline Ancient Vine Zinfandel Item #199145

Item #850335

The finishing touches

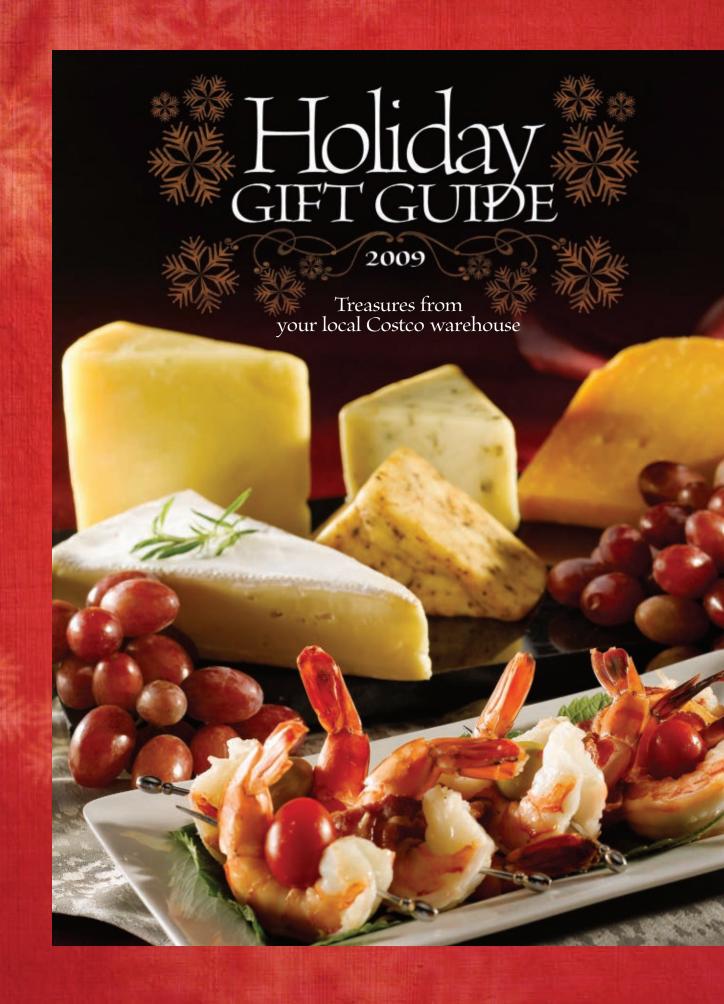
Costco makes the best pumpkin pie ever, annually selling more than a million pies the week of Thanksgiving. If this pie happens to be on your table for dessert, try pairing it with a 10- or 20-year-old tawny port. The nuttiness of the port can make a lovely pairing with the spiciness of the pie. If you prefer your pie with coffee, enjoy a glass of tawny port by itself to finish the evening.

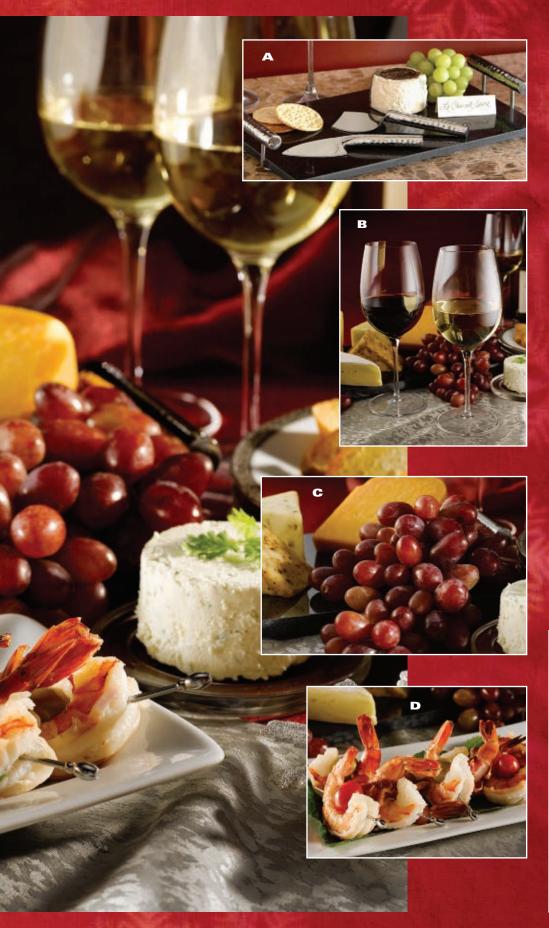
As you put your Costco shopping list together, finding bottles of red and/or white wine doesn't have to be a challenge. Seek wines with descriptors that sound interesting or varietals that you know your guests will enjoy.

By the way, if you need new glassware, try the newest wine stems from Italy by Luigi Bormioli (Costco item #428182). These are great, attractive glasses, and, best of all, they are break resistant!

Thanksgiving is a time to give thanks and be grateful for what we have. I raise my glass to you and yours, and wish you a very happy Thanksgiving.

Annette Alvarez-Peters oversees Costco's national wine, spirits and beer program.





A. Hampton Forge Granite Cheese Set

This three-piece set features a granite cheese board with hammered stainless steel handles and two hammered stainless steel cheese tools. A beautiful and functional way to display the fine cheeses you buy at Costco. Item #311756

B. Luigi Bormioli Break-Resistant Wine Stems

Constructed from SON.hyx lead-free glass, each stylish wine stem is break- and chip-resistant. Set includes eight all-purpose wine stems and comes with a 25-year limited warranty. Try them with your favorite Kirkland Signature wine. Item #428182

C. Delano Farms Crimson Seedless Table Grapes

Light red with a sweet, juicy flavor, these late-season grapes feature a crisp, firm texture and have an exceptional shelf life. They are perfect for accompanying appetizers or as garnishes for meals during your holiday entertaining. Item #83337

D. Black Tiger Prawns

Our U15 farmed black tiger prawns are 100% chemical-free and are never treated with moisture-enhancing agents. They have been split along the back and deveined for your convenience. Serve as an entrée, salad or appetizer; great on the grill. Item numbers vary by region.

ABOUT PRICES: Item prices have not been included in this catalog because prices vary by region due to shipping expenses. Additionally, in many cases, negotiations with suppliers may still have been underway at press time.

We strive in every case to offer the best value on an item and invite members to compare prices. Please note that products may not be available at all warehouse locations and that quantities are subject to change. Some items can be found only at our warehouses; some are also available online at Costco.com.

Savoring the season

A. Fresh Turkey

Costco's fresh turkeys contain no preservatives, additives or added salt, and are all USDA Grade A. Great grilled, roasted or fried. Butterball turkeys in some regions; Foster Farms turkeys in other regions. Item #57513, #97705

B. Sunkist Oranges

A healthy dose of Mother Nature arrives for the holidays: nutritious navel oranges from the sun-kissed groves of California and Arizona. Item #47479

C. JBS Swift/Kirkland Signature™ Rack of Pork

This eight-rib rack is tender, juicy and flavorful, with frenched bones for an elegant touch. A perfect centerpiece for your holiday meal. Item #46371











D. Beef Bone-in Rib Roast

The flavor and generous marbling of this hand-trimmed, grain-fed USDA Choice beef rib roast make it a cut above the rest. Item numbers vary by region.

E. Grade A Scallops

Juicy and rich with flavor, these delicacies are harvested in the depths of the Atlantic and processed with utmost care to ensure the highest quality. Pairs well with a crisp Sauvignon Blanc. Item numbers vary by region.

F. Kirkland Signature Leg of Lamb

Perfect as the centerpiece of a holiday meal, this boneless leg of lamb is free of artificial preservatives, naturally fed and trimmed of excess fat. Prepare it with one of Costco's rubs for mouthwatering results. Item #27801

G. Beef Tenderloin

Hand-peeled, extreme-trim USDA Choice beef tenderloin. With no waste, this cut of meat is a lean and tasty choice. Item numbers vary by region.

A. Ferris Wheel Spice Rack

This 20-jar spice rack revolves like a Ferris wheel, putting just the right spice at your fingertips. Glass jars have a unique flip lid for easy pouring or shaking. Includes 20 spices. Item #142913

B. Kirkland Signature 6-Quart Enameled Cast-Iron Dutch Oven

Sporting a classic design, this cast-iron piece features a rich porcelain finish, self-basting lid, large handles and a classic oval shape that provides plenty of room for meats, stews and any other desired dish. Perfect for your holiday meals and beyond. Item #838383

ALSO AVAILABLE ON COSTCO.COM

C. Beaded Serving Utensil Set

These stainless steel serving utensils feature handmade glass decorative beads and are both elegant and functional for your dinner table. Set includes serving spoon and fork, two appetizer spoons and four spreading knives. Item #420159

D. FoodSaver Vacuum **Sealing System**

Keep your foods tasting fresh by vacuum packaging with convenient FoodSaver bags and bag rolls. SmartSeal™ technology features hands-free operation that automatically senses the bag and food type to create a perfect airtight seal. Simply insert the bag and the machine does the rest. Item #522516, #409153 (bag pack) ALSO AVAILABLE ON COSTCO.COM

E. Westbury Glass Beverage Dispenser

Featuring mouth-blown, handmade glass, this beverage dispenser looks more like a piece of art than a home essential. Features a 3-gallon capacity. Can be used indoors or outdoors—perfect for your holiday party.

Item #420093







Kirkland Signature™ 13 Piece **Tri-Ply Clad Stainless Steel Cookware Set**

Each piece in this cookware set features a 3-layer construction that consists of an 18/10 stainless steel interior, a thick aluminum core and an 18/0 stainless steel exterior, making it induction ready. Set includes a 1.5-quart and 3-quart covered saucepan (with steamer insert), 8-quart covered stockpot, 4-quart covered deep saute, 8" and 10" skillet

and a 11" covered everyday pan. Item #402580 ALSO AVAILABLE ON













F. Cuisinart Burr Grind & Brew 12-Cup Automatic Coffee Maker

Features a fully automatic burr grinder for a highly uniform grind that protects bean oils and releases more flavor for superior coffee. A sealable hopper holds half a pound of beans, and strength selector and grind controls let coffee lovers customize every pot. Item #399291

ALSO AVAILABLE ON COSTCO.COM

G. Keurig Select Gourmet Single-Cup Brewing System

Featuring Quiet Brew technology, this system lets you choose from more than 200 varieties of coffee, tea and hot cocoa. You can also choose from four serving sizes: 4, 6, 8 and 10 oz. Other features include 60-oz. water tank and programmable LCD display. Item #433240

ALSO AVAILABLE ON COSTCO.COM





A. Sony Blu-ray™ Disc Player

Enjoy Blu-ray Disc movies in full HD 1080p quality and upscale the quality of your DVDs with the Sony BDP-BX2 Blu-ray Disc player. The player supports BD-Live™ technology to download bonus interactive entertainment on select movies (Internet access and accessories required). HDMI cable included.

Item #432360 ALSO AVAILABLE ON COSTCO.COM

B. Sony Bravia® 52" 1080p HDTV

The Sony Bravia KDL\$2VL150 HDTV features a slim design and Motionflow™ 120 Hz technology. It's engineered for fast-action movies, sports and games.

Item #521500 ALSO AVAILABLE ON COSTCO.COM

C. Sony Blu-ray™ Home Theater System

Experience high-definition picture quality and sound with the Sony BDV-T11 Blu-ray Disc home theater system. **Item #439792**

ALSO AVAILABLE ON COSTCO.COM

D. Vizio HD Sound Bar with Wireless Subwoofer

Designed for home theater enthusiasts, this sound bar is a complete audio solution, featuring a wireless subwoofer that can be placed up to 60' away with a clear line of sight. Cutting-edge sound technologies include SRS TruSurround HD and SRS TruVolume. Item #407520 ALSO AVAILABLE ON COSTCO.COM



The sights of the season

E. Vizio 55" 1080p 240Hz LED LCD HDTV

An innovative design, cutting-edge sound quality and the latest TruLED, Smart Dimming technology for blackest blacks and whitest whites are showcased in the VF551XVT. Featuring 2,000,000:1 contrast ratio, full 1080p resolution and 240 Hz SPS (scenes per second) for lifelike detail. Item #888551 ALSO AVAILABLE ON COSTCO.COM

F. Panasonic VIERA 54" 1080p Plasma HDTV

The 54PS14 features full 1080p and 600 Hz Sub-Field Drive, so even fast-moving scenes are crisp and clear. Plus, enjoy your digital photos with VIERA Image Viewer SD Card Slot and control compatible devices with VIERA Link, Item #541080 ALSO AVAILABLE ON COSTCO.COM

G. Samsung 23" 1080p HDTV

The P2370 features a built-in digital HDTV tuner for sharp, full HD images, making it excellent for Blu-ray Disc movies and video games. Also features stunning 1920 x 1080 resolution, 50,000:1 contrast ratio and Dolby Digital Plus for great sound. Item #432370 ALSO AVAILABLE ON COSTCO.COM

H. Panasonic VIERA 32" 720p LCD HDTV

Enjoy movies and sports, and even display your digital photos with the built-in VIERA Image Viewer SD Card Slot, which makes photo sharing easy. The 32LX14 also features VIERA Link to control compatible devices with a single remote, plus a 12,000:1 dynamic contrast ratio for true blacks and crisp whites.

Item #943232

ALSO AVAILABLE ON COSTCO.COM



I. Sharp AQUOS 60" 1080p 120 Hz LCD HDTV

The LC6077UN sports an ultra-clear full HD 1080p image with 120 Hz Fine Motion Enhanced technology for excellent fast motion picture quality. Also features five HDMI inputs, two composite inputs and one PC input for use as a PC monitor. Item #601080

ALSO AVAILABLE ON COSTCO.COM









Variety is the spice of the season

A. iHome iPod/iPhone **Dual-Alarm Clock Radio**

This dual-alarm clock radio for your iPhone or iPod features AM/FM presets, EQ and balance controls, Reson8 ported cabinet stereo speakers and remote control. It plays and charges iPhone and docking iPod models. Item #446191

B. Casio Keyboard

The Casio WK-210 features a 76-key piano-style touch-sensitive keyboard, 570 onboard tones, 180 rhythms, plus reverb and chorus effects. The keyboard also comes with a built-in lesson feature, audio inputs for an MP3 player, microphone input and 10-second sampling features. Item #444151

C. VTech Bluetooth® **Home Phone System**

Simplify your life with this cordless phone system. Cellular connection through Bluetooth technology lets you make and receive cellular or land-line calls from the comfort of your home or office, using one of four handsets. Item #454585

D. Ion USB Turntable

Converting your music to digital format has never been easier! The Ion TTUSB10 turntable digitizes music from albums, and can also convert music from cassettes and other sources through a stereo line input. It sports a sleek design and includes easy-to-use audio recording software. Item #393682





E. Buddies 4-Movie Collection

Disney's irresistible talking puppies star in four action-filled, heartwarming movies overflowing with adventure, humor and the power of teamwork. Available 11/24/09. **Item #420892**

F. iPod nano

The popular iPod nano now has a video camera to capture those great moments, a larger 2.2" color display screen and FM radio with Live Pause. The Genius Mix feature searches your iTunes library, then makes mixes you'll love. Sports a flashy polished anodized aluminum finish in five colors. Item numbers vary by color.

G. Lost: The Complete Fifth Season Dharma Initiative/ Orientation DVD Kit

This collector's edition includes the complete fifth season of television's most addictive series in a five-disc set with hours of bonus features including deleted scenes and exclusives. The kit also features a Dharma Initiative orientation video, brochures and exclusive Dharma Initiative patches. Available 12/8/09. Item #442690

H. Gone with the Wind DVD Collector's Set

The most celebrated movie of all time in an all-new restored and remastered edition! Limited and numbered, this gift set includes a 52-page book, frameable art prints and CD soundtrack sampler, all packaged in a velvet box. Item #450094

ALSO AVAILABLE ON COSTCO.COM

I. 20th Century Fox DVD Gift Set Assortments

The brilliant movies of Paul Newman, the fictional Charlie Chan, Marilyn Monroe and Shirley Temple are now yours to own or give as a gift. These four brand-new collections include 13 to 18 DVD movies and various DVD extras, depending on the gift set. **Item #466663**

A. St. Eve Kids' Microfleece Lounge Pants

These warm, cozy and comfortable pants are perfect for lounging. Available in assorted boys' and girls' prints. Item #412287

B. Flip MinoHD

Put the power of HD in your pocket. MinoHD offers stunningly crisp, HD-quality video in a sleek, simple camcorder with a 2.0" LCD screen. Convenient flip-out USB arm plugs directly into your computer to launch built-in FlipShare software. Holds 120 minutes of HD video and includes HDMI cable and fast charger. Item #461942

C. Smart Globe Deluxe Edition

Touch the wireless pen to the Internet-updatable globe or book to learn amazing world facts. Download in eight languages! Includes 30 around-the-world activities and free two-year Internet-updatable subscription. Item #113318

ALSO AVAILABLE ON COSTCO.COM

D. The Singing Machine Karaoke Pedestal System

Have karaoke fun with family, friends and neighbors all season long. Comes complete with iPod docking station (with video output), 7" color LCD screen, CD/CDG player, video camera, AM/FM radio, digital key control, two tower speakers, two microphones and demo disc. Item #450776

Mikala, daughter of Becky, Home Office

Santa's special stash







10 Holiday Gift Guide 2009



Gadgets galore, and more



A. Panasonic LUMIX DMC-ZS3 Digital Camera

Capture holiday moments and treasured memories throughout the year with the ZS3. It features a convenient 3" LCD display, powerful 12x Leica zoom lens and a video option for HD motion images with 1280 x 720 pixel resolution. The ZS3 uses the AVCHD Lite to achieve higher image quality. Includes 2 GB memory card and camera case. Item #449793



B. Canon EOS Rebel T1i Lens Kit

The EOS Rebel T1i features an all-new 15.1-megapixel CMOS sensor with DiGIC 4 Image Processor, a 3" clear-view LCD with anti-reflective and scratch-resistant coating, full HD video capture up to 1920 x 1080 and more. Kit includes Rebel T1i camera, EF-S 18-55 mm and EF-S 55-250 image stabilizer lenses, Rebel gadget bag, tutorial DVD, 4 GB SDHC memory card and mini-HDMI cable. Item #453776

C. Pandigital Digital Picture Frame

Display up to 6,400 of your favorite digital images on the 8" screen! The new one-step touch-screen interface makes it easy. Also features music and video file capability, built-in speakers, clock, calendar, programmable on/off and six-in-one memory card reader. Includes remote. Item #454081

D. Roxio Creator Special Edition 2010

The easiest way to capture, edit, enhance and share photos, videos and audio projects using your PC. Also convert VHS, Hi8 and V8 movies to DVD with included USB device and cable. Costco exclusive. Item #800161 ALSO AVAILABLE ON COSTCO.COM











Gifts from the heart

- **A.** Surprise her with this 14-kt. white gold circle pendant featuring alternating diamonds and blue sapphires. Diamond total weight .66 cts. **Item #445692**
- **B.** Complement your collection with this beautiful blue topaz ring accented by .14 ctw round brilliant-cut diamonds. Set in 14-kt. white gold. **Item #450385**
- **C.** This 2.03-ct. round brilliant diamond is accented by 10 round brilliant diamonds totaling 2.34 ctw. Set in platinum.

 Item #228763 SPECIAL ORDER ONLY
- D. Round brilliant-cut 3.48 ctw diamond earrings. This sparkling pair is set in 14-kt. white gold with threaded posts. Item #172715 SPECIAL ORDER ONLY
- E. Say "I do" with this 3.57-ct. princess-cut diamond set securely in 14-kt. white gold. Item #433863 SPECIAL ORDER ONLY

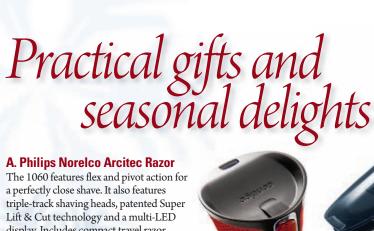
- **F.** Two strands of beautiful multicolored freshwater pearls make this necklace a perfect addition to her jewelry box. Adorned with a 14-kt. yellow gold clasp. **Item #444915**
- **G.** These dazzling .60 ctw diamond earrings will warm her heart this holiday season. Set in 14-kt. white gold, these hoop earrings are a timeless classic with diamonds both outside and inside the hoop. Item #944503

H. This stunning diamond ring has 1.82 ctw diamonds set in multiple rows of 14-kt. white gold, and can be worn every day or for special occasions.

Item #449763







В

G

display. Includes compact travel razor.

Item #448551 ALSO AVAILABLE ON COSTCO.COM

B. Contigo Vacuum Insulated Mugs 2-Pack

Each spill-proof mug features a stainlesssteel double wall, auto-seal technology and a 16-ounce capacity. A perfect gift for the beverage drinker on the run. Item #278571

C. Jabra Cruiser In-Car **Bluetooth Speakerphone**

The Jabra Cruiser is equipped with dualmicrophone technology to improve call quality by eliminating background noise while enhancing voice communication. Also features Voice Announcements function, StatusDisplay function and FM transmitter. Item #450775

D. Garmin GPS Navigator

This GPS unit features a wide, 4.3" touch screen for a crisp picture and is loaded with nearly 6 million points of interest. It also features Bluetooth™ handsfree calling and lifetime FM traffic updates from NAVTEQ Traffic™ without subscription fees. Item #386383

E. Innova Check Engine Light **Diagnostic Tool**

Innova's Diagnostic Tool tells why your "Check Engine" light is on and quickly gives the solution to major problems on all 1996 and newer vehicles. Item #421480 (Northwest region only)

F. CodeKev

Designed to unlock the mystery of why your "Check Engine" light is illuminated. Works on all 1996 and newer foreign and domestic passenger vehicles and light trucks. Compatible with both OBDII and CAN systems. Item #375265 (All regions except Northwest)

G. Kenneth Cole Reaction Wallet

This handsome Colombian leather, bi-fold wallet features eight card pockets, fully lined divided bill compartment, distinctive turned-edge construction and six Mylar card sleeves to accommodate additional cards. Available in black or brown, Item #441693





A. Faux Fur Throws

These attractive 60" x 60" throws feature a super-soft finish, tough-wearing velboa back and a seamless binding all around, with mitered corners. Various styles available to spruce up your house for the holidays. Item #793639

B. Kirkland Signature™ **Round Pet Bed**

This 42" round pet bed provides a plush sleeping surface for warmth and comfort. Filled with 7.2 pounds of 100% virgin fibers with cedar. Also features zippered cover for easy removal and gusset on side walls for maximum support.

Item #28229 ALSO AVAILABLE ON COSTCO.COM

C. CleanWave **Sanitizing Wand**

Utilizing powerful UV-C light, the CleanWave® sanitizing wand eliminates up to 99.99% of H1N1, MRSA, viruses, bacteria, dust mite eggs and molds on household surfaces. Ideal for sanitizing bedding, upholstery, toys, electronics, pet areas and other difficult-to-clean items. Set also includes UV-C sanitizing travel wand and storage case.

Item #432884

D. Snuggie Blanket

The Snuggie Blanket keeps you warm on winter nights while giving you the freedom to use your hands. Work the remote, use your laptop or read in total comfort! Made with super-soft, luxurious fleece and featuring roomy, oversize sleeves. Item #428558 ALSO AVAILABLE ON COSTCO.COM

E. Pacific Coast Down Pillows

Find pure comfort with these luxuriously fluffy Hyperclean down pillows. Down pillows provide natural, adjustable support for healthy sleeping posture and cozy comfort for years to come. Available in a 2-pack. Available in standard/queen and king. Item #665146, #665176









F. Shark Steam Pocket Mop

Clean and sanitize sealed hard floor surfaces, including wood, linoleum and tile, with a double-sided cleaning system. Super-heated steam loosens dirt while sanitizing. Includes three quick-release mop heads, three washable microfiber pads and one steam duster pad.

Item #469653

G. Philips Sonicare HealthyWhite Rechargeable Toothbrush Premium Edition

The No. 1 recommended power toothbrush brand by dental professionals, this product is clinically proven to whiten teeth two shades in two weeks. Premium Edition includes two toothbrush handles, UV sanitizer, three brush heads and two travel cases.

Item #425087
ALSO AVAILABLE ON COSTCO.COM

H. Wood Folding Chair

Made with a solid wood frame that has a warm brown finish, solid steel folding mechanism and padded upholstered seat, this chair is the perfect extra seating alternative for your home. **Item #439648**

I. Jar Candle 4-Pack

Each 10-oz. candle is made in the U.S. and includes its own gift box. Includes four scents: Brandied Pear, Persian Pomegranate, Plum Cassis and Mandarin Orange and Clove. **Item #389772**

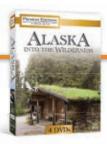


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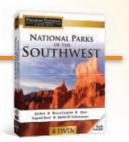
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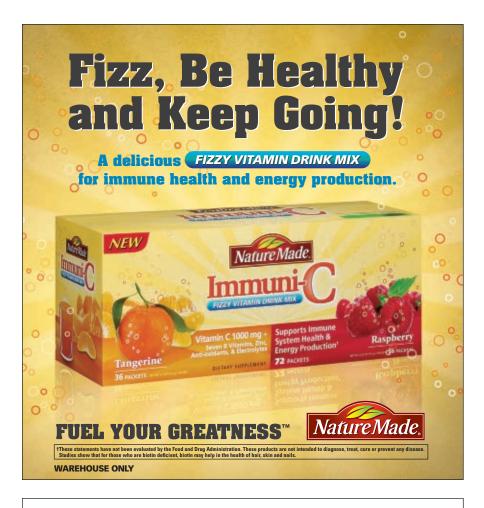


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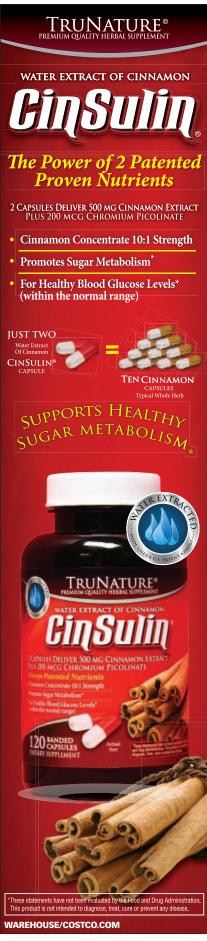
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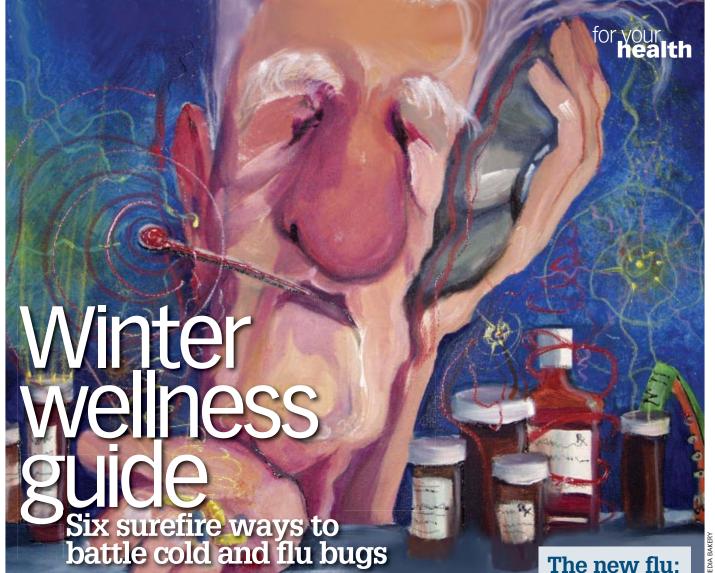


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By Angela Pirisi

THE COLD AND FLU season is here, and no matter how often you wash your hands or avoid people with colds, you can't avoid those nasty bugs forever. Or is it possible to coast through the winter season without a sniffle? Here's the latest, best advice about warding off and beating down a bout of cold or flu so you at least have a fighting chance.

Sleep more. Longer, better sleep can lower your chances of catching a cold, suggest findings published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine*. Science has already shown that chronic sleep loss can tax the immune system; conversely, getting enough shut-eye can strengthen your defenses

against many diseases, including the common cold.

After surveying the sleep habits of 153 healthy adults, ages 21 to 55, for two weeks, researchers gave them nasal drops containing a cold virus and then monitored them for five days.

Getting less than seven hours of sleep per night tripled the chances of catching a cold, compared to logging eight or more hours. And participants with sleep disturbances (e.g., waking up, tossing and Act fast. Even more important than taking fast-acting drugs is acting quickly on symptoms when they first appear. Research shows that early action can reduce the frequency of

sneezing and blowing your nose. It may also reduce the occurrence of ear complications. So says cold scientist Jack Gwaltney, professor emeritus, University of Virginia School of Medicine.

Considering that cold symptoms gather momentum within the first 48 hours of onset before tapering off, he recommends starting with regular doses (every 12 hours) of an older-class antihistamine (e.g., chlorpheniramine) and ibuprofen until symptoms resolve, then adding other symptom relief, such as decongestants, as required. If you feel worse, consult your doctor or pharmacist.

Wash up. Hand hygiene is still the numberone way to reduce transmission, but what you use to scrub up matters too. Edith Blondel-Hill, M.D., an infectious-diseases specialist at Kelowna General The new flu: H1N1

THE H1N1 FLU (or human swine influenza) virus is similar to seasonal flu, including complications such as pneumonia. A vaccine is now available, but prevention is still your best protection.

The Center for Disease Control (www.cdc.gov) advises:

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water, or use hand sanitizer.
- Cough and sneeze in the crook of your arm or sleeve.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Check www.who.int for more information.
- Check www.usembassy. gov for travel notices and advisories.
- Talk to a health professional if you experience severe flu-like symptoms.

Hospital in British Columbia, suggests choosing plain old soap and : water, hands down. Here's why: "Antibacterial soap contains antibiotics, which don't help to kill viruses such as colds and flu, and they can contribute to antibioticresistant bacteria." She's more forgiving

of antiseptic soap, "which kills both bacteria and viruses; and alcohol gels [e.g., hand sanitizers] kill everything but don't give bugs time to become resistant." Still, while soap and water don't kill bugs, they effectively remove them from your hands.

Clear out. Using a saline nasal wash daily can help lessen congestion. It's not fully clear why it works, but experts suspect that squirting saline up . your nose flushes out viruses and

. bacteria, thins mucus and makes it easier to remove. "It's a drug-. free decongestant that provides relief," says Peter Ford, a community pharmacist in Moncton, New Brunswick, specializing in natural products. Commercially available oral decongestants can adversely

affect blood pressure, while locally applied sprays can cause rebound congestion, so you can't use them for more than three or four days. You can ... buy a saline nasal wash or make your own. Ford suggests using sea salts instead of table salt because they contain extra minerals.

The Costco Connection

Most Costco warehouses and Costco.com carry a variety of items to help you fight seasonal illnesses, including medications, tissues, soap, healthy foods and exercise equipment. If you have particular questions on products, please speak with your Costco pharmacist.

Keep moving. The American Council on Exercise (ACE) reports that regular exercise doesn't give bugs a chance to stick around because it increases the number of killer cells (macrophages) available to attack them when they invade your body. It also makes immune cells mobilize faster so they have a better reaction

time when a bug does try to strike. However, more isn't better: More than 90 minutes of high-intensity endurance exercise can make

you susceptible to illness . for up to 72 hours afterwards, reports ACE. If you're already sick, light to moderate exercise is OK if you feel like it, but put off intense training until symptoms pass. If you have flu symptoms

(e.g., fever, swollen glands), it's better to rest now and move later.

Target symptoms. No one can blame you for running to the shelter of over-the-counter relief when you feel miserable. However, you should treat only the symptoms you have, so tread carefully when considering all-in-one cold products that contain antihistamines, pain/fever

· medication (e.g., acetaminophen), . decongestants and cough suppressants. You may overmedicate yourself, increasing the risk of an adverse reaction, especially if you're also taking other medication. Ask your pharmacist for help choosing the right product-tell

him or her what you're thinking of taking and any other medications you're already taking for your cold or other condition.

Angela Pirisi is a Hamilton, Ontario-based writer who covers health, fitness and nutrition.

Flu shot facts

SOMETHING IS IN the air: the seasonal flu. If you're hemming and hawing about rolling up your sleeve, here are some facts about the seasonal flu vaccine, your best shot at prevention.

- The flu shot contains dead (not live) pieces of the flu virus, so it's not as if you're infecting yourself.
- The flu season typically starts in November and stretches out to April, so even getting vaccinated late offers some protection.
- The best time to get your shot is before the flu season begins. It takes two weeks for the vaccine to become fully effective-and for your body to develop flu antibodies.
- Seasonal flu is not the same as bird or pandemic flu, so the regular flu shot won't protect against them. A separate vaccine will become available for the H1N1 flu strain.
- The flu shot helps to prevent infection, plus it reduces the severity and chances of complications if you do get the flu.
- It's not all about you. Even if you only ever get a mild case of the flu, you can still pass it on to someone whose defenses are weaker who may develop more severe symptoms. So getting the flu shot helps to protect everyone.—AP

Cold or flu: Symptom checker

PEOPLE OFTEN CONFUSE colds and flu. They do have some similar symptoms, but each is caused by a different virus. So what did you catch? Here's how to tell.

Symptoms	Cold	Flu
Sore throat	Usually	Sometimes
Runny, stuffy nose	Usually	Sometimes
Cough	Sometimes	Often, and can worsen
Fever, chills	Rarely, maybe low-grade fever up to 102° F	Usually, and high temperature over 102° F
Headache	Rarely	Usually
Muscle aches	Rarely	Usually, and often severe
Fatigue and weakness	Uncommon	Usually, and persists for two to three weeks
Nausea	No, but loss of appetite is possible	Usually
Disease severity	Usually milder symptoms and few complications, which may include sinus or ear infection	Higher risk of complications (e.g., pneumonia, hospitalization, death), especially in children, the elderly and people with ear infections or chronic conditions



Ocean Complete® Sinus Irrigation provides drug-free relief for sinus allergies, dryness and irritation. Ocean—the brand you've trusted for more than 40 years.

Now there's a Complete Saline Solution that can gently irrigate your sinuses or mist and moisturize your nose, all with one product.



• The orange actuator tip is used to *flush and irrigate* your sinuses with a fuller stream of saline.

Removable

adapter

• The white actuator tip is used to release a fine saline mist to restore moisture to dry, clogged nasal passages.

For moisturizing mist: Place white actuator tip into nostril and press down. Change nostrils and repeat.

For irrigating stream: Place the orange nasal adapter (optional) on the orange actuator tip and position into nostril.

Press down on actuator 2 to 3 seconds or until saline flows out the other nostril. Change nostrils and repeat.

Watch for \$3 off at register Nov. 9 - Nov. 29.





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Healthy treats for your dog.

With more than 600 million Kingdom
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"My dogs just love them."

champion dog breeder, trainer and Costco member

"Used as an everyday reward for proper behavior, the Kingdom Pets Chicken Jerky treats can be a great training tool. My dogs just love them," states Lenora Rosendahl. "The Kingdom Pets dog treats have been a big part of my dogs' training regimen. If it weren't for the treats, I don't think my dogs would perform the way they do."

Treat feeding tips: Watch your dog while he or she is consuming treats • Always provide your dog with plenty of fresh water • Treats are not intended to replace your dog's normal diet • Always follow the recommended feeding guidelines on the package

Costco members save up to 50%.



Costco members are expert shoppers. We know it. You know it. And that's why we're offering Costco members up to 50% off daily, weekend and weekly rentals with BCD # W852850. Plus, Costco members never pay for an additional driver! That's how you Rent Like a Genius.

Terms and Conditions: The savings of up to 50% applies to Budget leisure daily, weekly and weekend rates and is applicable only to the time and mileage charges of the rental. Offer applies to all car groups. Taxes, concession recovery fees, vehicle license recovery fee, customer facility charges (\$10/contract in CA) may apply and are extra. Optional products



such as LDW (\$29.99/day or less, except in Louisiana \$49.99/day) and refueling are extra. Please mention **BCD #W852850** to take advantage of this offer. Offer is available for U.S. residents only for rentals at participating locations in the U.S. Offer may not be used in conjunction with any other BCD number, promotion or offer. **Renter must** show proof of Costco membership at time of rental. Weekly rates require a minimum five-day rental period. Weekend rate available Thursday noon; car must be returned by Monday 11:59 p.m. or higher rate will apply. **Discount valid on rentals checked out no later than 3/30/10.** Offer is subject to vehicle availability at the time of rental and may not be available on some rates at some times, including some online rates at Costco.com. Holiday and other blackout periods may apply. Renter and additional driver (if applicable) must meet Budget age, driver and credit requirements. Minimum age may vary by location. An additional daily surcharge may apply for renters under 25 years old.

Budget features Ford and Lincoln Mercury vehicles. ©2009 Budget Rent A Car System, Inc. A global system of corporate and licensee-owned locations.

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- Reserve a minivan, SUV or convertible in the U.S.
- Keep it for a minimum of three days.
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To save \$25 off your rate, simply rent a minivan, SVU or convertible for at least 3 days and get behind the wheel December 31, 2009. This offer is good at participating U.S. Alamo locations. Make your reservation 24 hours ahead off in This offer cannot be combined with any other offer except your Costco member discount. Drivers must meet standard ren qualifications. Drivers under age 25 may have to pay higher rates. Here are some things that might cost you extra: tax (including GST), other governmentally-authorized or imposed surcharges, license recoupment/air tax recovery and concessive recoupment fees, airport and airport facility fees, hel, one-way rentel charge, or optional tems, i.e. CVW Waiver Savers[®] up \$30 U.S. per day, Remember to check your insurance policy and/or credit card for rental vehicle coverage. Availability is limit. This offer may change without notice. Blackout dates may apply and this offer is void where prohibited. Alamo and the Alar logo are trademarks of Vanguard Trademark Holdings USA LLC. © 2009 Alamo Rent A Car. A00883 9/09 AM



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When you're ready to go, we make it easy with everyday low rates on great vehicles along with your Costco member discount.

Mention customer # CSTCNV9.



10% Discount applies to minivans and SUVs reserved in advance for a minimum of five (5) days (maximum of fourteen (14) days) at participating North American locations. Rates are as posted at time of reservation at Costco.com or by calling 1-877-849-2730. Rental must begin on or after October 1, 2009 and end on or before December 15, 2009. Discount does not apply to taxes, surcharges, recovery fees, and optional products and services including damage waiver at \$30 or less per day. In the U.S. check your insurance policy and/or credit card agreement for rental vehicle coverage. Discount may not be used with any other coupon, offer or discounted rate, Normal rental qualifications apply, Vehicles subject to availability. Other restrictions, including holiday and blackout dates, may apply. Pick-up and drop-off service is subject to geographic and other restrictions. Void where prohibited.

UP TO 40% OFF RENTALS WITH AVIS



With your Costco membership, you can enjoy a premium rental experience and receive up to 40% off daily, weekend and weekly rentals with AWD # A108365

Plus, now you'll save up to 35% on where2® GPS rentals with Avis! You can rent a where 2 GPS for only \$8.99 per day!

Terms and Conditions: The savings of up to 40% applies to Avis leisure daily, weekly and weekend rates and is applicable only to the time and mileage charges of the rental. Offer applies to all car groups. Taxes, concession recovery fees, vehicle license recovery fee, customer facility



charges (\$10/contract in CA) may apply and are extra. Optional products such as LDW (\$29.99/day or less except in Louisiana \$49.99/day) and refueling are extra. Please mention AWD # A108365 to take advantage of this offer. Offer is available for U.S. residents only for rentals at participating locations in the U.S. Offer may not be used in conjunction with any other AWD number, promotion or offer. Renter must show proof of Costco membership at time of rental. Weekly rates require a minimum five-day rental period. Weekend rate available Thursday noon; car must be returned by Monday 11:59 p.m. or higher rate will apply. Discount valid on rentals checked out no later than 3/31/10. Offer is subject to vehicle availability at the time of rental and may not be available on some rates at some times, including some online rates at Costco.com. Holiday and other blackout periods may apply. Renter must meet Avis age, driver and credit requirements. Minimum age may vary by location. An additional daily surcharge may apply for renters under 25 years old.

Avis features GM vehicles.

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Book online at Costco.com or call Costco Travel toll free at 1-877-849-2730.

When picking up your car, please be prepared to show your Costco membership card to the rental agency representative. Travel purchases are not included in the Executive Membership 2% Reward program. Seasonal surcharges, availability, blackout dates and restrictions may apply. All prices are in U.S. dollars. Costco Travel disclaims liability for any inaccuracies or typographical errors. Costco Travel is registered as a seller of travel in each of the states listed: California registration number: CST 2054248-50 • Florida registration number: ST 32555 • Hawaii registration number: TAR 5595 • lowa registration number: TA 620 • Nevada Seller of Travel registration number: 2007-0060 • Washington registration number: WST 602042600 • Registration as a California Seller of Travel does not constitute approval by the state



feet after the tough economic times, and for everyone else, a road trip can be a fun and affordable vacation option. If a road trip, family vacation or family get-together is in your future, you might want to consider the advantages of using a rental car rather than your own.

For instance, if you have family and friends visiting during the holidays, rather than putting wear and tear on your car or trying to squeeze everyone into a compact sedan, you can rent a van or SUV.

If a ski trip or other winter getaway is in your plans, renting a car specifically designed to handle those types of weather and road conditions can not only make the trip easier, but provide you with safety and peace of mind.

Many rentals have state-of-the-art features such as GPS and electronic toll payment service.

For a special occasion, what's cooler than cruising in a dream vehicle such as a Cadillac, a Corvette or a Hummer? Or, if you're thinking green, you might choose a hybrid or a flex-fuel car.

Steps to take before hitting the road

Whether you're traveling on business or with the family, a little preparation can make the car rental process relatively simple.

Make your reservation at least one week in advance, and find out about the company's cancellation policy when you make your reservation. Then check back from time to time leading up to your rental date to see if the price has gone down. Most car rental reservations do not have a penalty for changing your reservation since a credit card is not usually required at the time of booking.

Car rental companies have a menu of insurance policies. According to experts, if you're renting for a couple of days as a business traveler or a few days to a week as a vacationer, it's a good idea. If you have a long-term rental, however, you'll probably find that the

becomes too expensive.

Possibly your own auto insurance policy applies to rental cars, as well. It's important to consult your policy and your



insurance agent to verify coverage. This is especially true if you're going to rent a highend car that exceeds the value of your insured personal vehicle.

Once you are at the rental counter, be sure to read over your contract carefully. A common mistake that renters make is unintentionally accepting or declining insurance.

vou let someone not included in the rental contract drive

the vehicle, you risk voiding the contract, and claims against the company's insurance coverage—and even your own personal insurance coverage—may be compromised.

So, play it safe and put everyone in the contract. Most companies won't charge extra for your spouse, but you should ensure that his or her driving privileges are provided for in the contract.

Rental companies generally offer you the option of either paying for a tank of gas in advance (at a self-serve rate) and bringing the vehicle back empty or refueling it yourself. While the prepay option is cheaper than returning the vehicle empty and paying the higher per-gallon amount in the contract, there is no guarantee that it will be cheaper than refueling the car on your own. Plan accordingly: If you know that you won't be using a full tank (250 to 300 miles), don't use the prepay option.

Happy trails!

Costco Travel drives some deals

BECAUSE MANY TYPES of vehicles and special offers (for weekends, weekdays, upgrades and more) are available through Costco Travel, you're likely to find the deal that works for your road-trip budget.

"A real money saver is that Alamo, Avis and Budget waive the additionaldriver fee for Costco members who book through Costco Travel," says Sarah Gaudet of Costco Travel's car rental program. When more than one person can take the wheel at no additional cost, everyone can relax and enjoy the ride.

Costco Travel offers great savings

and special offers when you rent a car from Alamo, Avis, Budget or Enterprise. And there's one more way to save on your road trip: Costco members receive special savings at Hyatt Hotels & Resorts (U.S. and Canada) and Best Western hotels, so you get great value when you drive and when you arrive! Book online in the Travel section of Costco.com, or call Costco Travel tollfree at 1-877-849-2730.

Restrictions apply. For complete terms and conditions, visit the Travel section of Costco.com.—TFJ

More than cards for the holidays

Get personal and creative at 1-Hour Photo



Canvas prints

THIS YEAR COSTCO 1-Hour Photo adds value to the tradition of holiday photo cards with a sweeping introduction of 20 allnew card designs. Included are 12 new single-image card designs, five new multi-image card designs and three new Disney card designs. More than twice that many designs are available if you order your cards from the Costco. com Photo Center for warehouse pickup.

All cards are 6 by 7½ inches and require just one postage stamp for mailing first class in the U.S.

The price for 50 cards with envelopes resists recession again this year, staying at \$14.99. Additional sets of 25 cards and envelopes are available for \$5.99.

For in-person orders, just bring your favorite photo (digital media card, CD or 35 mm negatives) to any 1-Hour Photo location. For online orders with warehouse pickup, go to the Costco.com Photo Center to upload your digital photos and complete the online order process.

Two other items at 1-Hour Photo are ideal as holiday gifts. Wide-format poster prints are now available at all 1-Hour Photo locations, and can also be ordered on Costco.com for warehouse pickup. The two poster sizes are 16 by 20 inches and 20 by 30 inches, and are usually ready in three hours.

Preserving old home movies, videos and 35 mm slides by transferring them to DVD is a fantastic gift for family and friends.

This process requires up to a four-week

lead-time, so, for a holiday gift, keep an eye on the calendar. Dust off those old, obsolete media types, including 8 mm, Super 8 mm and 16 mm movie film; VHS, S-VHS, VHS-C, 8 mm, Hi8, Digital8, MiniDV and Betamax videotape formats; and 35 mm slides (cardboard or plastic mounts). By converting those forgotten moments to DVD you'll be preserving them for generations to come.

Photo gifts galore on Costco.com

While you're uploading your holiday card order at the Photo Center on Costco.com, take a look around at the full range of holiday gift items offered—actually, gifts for all occasions.

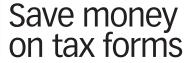
Photobooks from MyPublisher are one of the most popular items. You simply download a program that guides you through producing a hardbound coffee-table book by dragging and dropping your photos into designed templates that you select on your computer. The end product is stylish and durable, and you're the author.

Canvas prints (above) are a hot new gift item this season. Available in a range of 10 sizes from 8 by 10 inches up to 16 by 48 inches, these professional-quality prints come gallery wrapped and ready to hang. They also feature a special fine-art protective coating that protects them from ultraviolet light, prevents fading and cracking, and makes them easy to clean with ordinary window cleaner.

Photo throws (below) are another popular gift item. Made of 100 percent cotton and measuring an oversize 54 by 70 inches, these durable and washable throws perpetuate your favorite memories while providing snug comfort.

It's also the perfect time to think of photo calendars—as a gift or even for yourself. You'll never find a more perfect calendar than one you design with your own photos. Drag-and-drop layouts available in two sizes and a variety of styles makes this a fun project.

The Photo Center also offers several other photo gifts, including mugs, mousepads, ornaments, stickers and much more—making it a super photo gift shop destination all year round.—David Wight



NOBODY IS EAGER to think about tax season, which is still a few months away. But there's good news for Costco members who operate businesses. Costco Check Printing has great prices on all of the forms businesses need for making tax time go smoothly.

And to sweeten that news, Costco members save up to 50 percent off retail prices on a wide variety of IRS-approved tax forms and envelopes compatible with most popular accounting software programs.

"This is definitely a product that most of our members are not aware of, and one that offers a tremendous value," says Lisa Yaple, Costco services coordinator.

Helpful ordering tips

- Save time and money with tax form bundles, including the most popular W-2 and 1099-MISC forms, with matching self-seal double-window envelopes in one easy-to-order package.
- Select tax forms for laser, bubble jet or inkjet printers.
- Select continuous forms for dot-matrix or pin-feed printers.
- Order the number of W-2 forms you need based on the number of employees.
- Order the number of 1099-MISC forms you need based on the number of vendors or contractors.
- Receive three free W-3 Transmittal forms with every W-2 order.
- Receive three free 1096 Transmittal forms with every 1099 order.
- IRS-approved plain paper forms are also available.

The number of parts and copies required for W-2s and 1099s varies by state. If you are uncertain as to the parts required, call a Costco checks and forms expert toll-free at 1-866-393-6048 for the latest requirements.

For more information, go to Costco.com and enter "tax season" in the search box.—*DW*







Costco and Aetna team up to offer prescription drug savings

COSTCO HAS TEAMED up with Aetna to offer a Medicare Part D prescription drug plan.

"At Costco, our members expect us to deliver better value on the things they need," says John Conlon, Costco insurance director. "By teaming up with Aetna—one of the most respected names in healthcare—we believe we have delivered on that expectation. Our members should find the Aetna Medicare Rx-Costco Plus Plan to be a great value in Medicare Part D, especially when filling their prescriptions at Costco pharmacies."

The Aetna Medicare Rx-Costco Plus Plan provides several benefits.

- Zero deductible, so the savings start right away.
- More than 90 percent of covered generic drugs are available at the lowest co-pay.
- Coverage is provided for most Medicare-approved Part D prescription drugs.
- Mail-order service is available.

Special savings and benefits unique to Costco pharmacies include:

- Additional cost savings on many prescription drugs.
- \$2 co-pays for preferred generic prescription drugs.
- Coverage for certain non– Part D prescription drugs (limitations apply.)

This plan is available to Medicare-eligible residents of Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Michigan, Nevada, New

Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Utah, Virginia and Washington. Plans are offered by the Aetna Life Insurance Company, and there are certain exclusions and limitations. Other pharmacies are available in the Aetna network. Coverage is provided through a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Sponsor with a



Medicare contract.

Additional information about benefits is available to assist you in making a decision about your coverage. To learn more or to enroll, visit www.aetnamedicare.com/Costco or call toll-free 1-888-261-1915, ext. 153 (TDD: 1-888-760-4748).—David Wight

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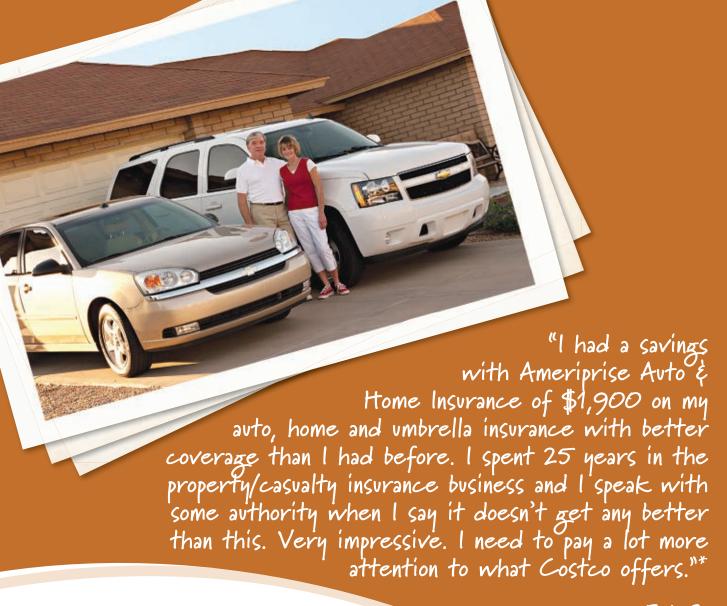


Service is provided by Hostway.



Costco members pay as low as \$14⁹⁵ per month





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THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING new at Costco.com. Exciting products are added to the site every day, and improvements are made to make finding and purchasing them a joy. Here's a look at this warehouse without walls, including some great products featured this holiday season. Check out the sidebar for cool new tools to make your shopping safari much more fun and productive.

Great new products

"We're very excited about our holiday lineup this year," says Ginnie Roeglin, a Costco senior vice president who oversees Costco.com.

"You'll find something on Costco.com for everyone on your list. We have all of the latest electronics, such as Garmin GPS, TVs, Blu-ray Disc players, cameras and computers. But we also carry a wide variety of other items, including furniture, gourmet foods, housewares, jewelry and watches, sports and exercise equipment, wine cellars and outdoor items. We also have a great selection of gift baskets, including our beautiful Holiday Tower from The Fruit Company, for delivery to the recipient's home or office."

If you expect to see a mirror image of Costco warehouses, you are in for a surprise. Costco.com doesn't seek to copy the warehouse experience; instead it offers alternative items, as well as thousands of things a warehouse couldn't hold.

Sharing experiences

Ever wonder before you buy what other people think about a product? Ratings and reviews are now featured with most items on Costco.com. These ratings (based on a fivestar scale) and comments are submitted by others who have purchased the product.

Costco's reliability

A hallmark of Costco shopping is the security of knowing that any purchase is backed 100 percent by the company. Members who are dissatisfied with a purchase need only return it to receive a full refund. Purchases on Costco.com are backed by the same policy. Items can be returned via mail or taken to the local warehouse for a

refund. Refund instructions are listed on the Web site.

The key to finding deals

Since new items and super offers are changing regularly at Costco.com, it's imperative that the savvy shopper stay informed on what's available. You can bookmark the site and set your clock to visit it on a regular basis, or make life easier and sign up for e-mail alerts.

Go to Costco.com and enter your e-mail address on the right sidebar menu.

Costco.com's cool tools

THE WEB WIZARDS at Costco.com are always looking for new ways to improve your online shopping experience. Below are some recent additions.

• "In the Warehouse" section

Click on "In the Warehouse" at the top of Costco.com's home page and you'll find an entire menu of information relating to what's available at warehouses across the country. Click on "What's New at Costco" and you'll see the latest items Costco buyers are most excited about. Click on "Special Events" and you can check any region in the United States to see what special roadshow offerings will be coming to your town

New, improved warehouse locator

Click on "Locations" for an intuitive approach to finding where Costco warehouses are located. The locator features

helpful search capabilities, including limiting by offered services, maps and more.

Business Delivery

Shop for thousands of items not available at the warehouse, available for delivery to your business.

Rebates

Look for items that offer rebates and submit a rebate online.

Costco publications

Looking for sumptuous new recipes for your holiday meals? See the latest Costco cookbook, *Home Cooking The Costco Way*, or search for great recipes from all Costco cookbooks. You'll also find current and back issues of *The Connection*, as well as handy resource guides and more. Go to Costco.com and click on "Costco Connection Magazine."

Visit Costco.com often to see what else is new!

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Garmin nüMaps Lifetime™ **North America** \$99.99 #409545

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Navigation Takes a High-Tech Turn

With the nüvi 755T, featuring Lane Assist. This feature guides you to the proper lane for navigation. The nüvi 755T also includes preloaded maps, turn-by-turn directions that call out streets by name and lifetime traffic alerts.

Know the Lane Before It's Too Late

nüvi 755T takes navigation to the next level with Lane Assist. No more guessing which lane you need to be in to make an upcoming turn. Lane Assist guides you to the correct lane for an approaching turn or exit, making unfamiliar intersections and exits easy to navigate.

Get Turn-by-Turn Directions

nüvi 755T's intuitive interface greets you with two simple questions: "Where to?" and "View map." Touch the color screen to easily look up addresses and services and get voiceprompted, turn-by-turn directions.

Avoid Traffic Tie-ups

Steer clear of traffic with nüvi 755T's integrated FM traffic receiver. Receive alerts about traffic delays and road construction that lie ahead on your route. Simply touch nüvi's screen to view traffic details or detour around the problem area.

Garmin™ nüvi 755T 4.3" GPS \$199.99 After \$100 OFF

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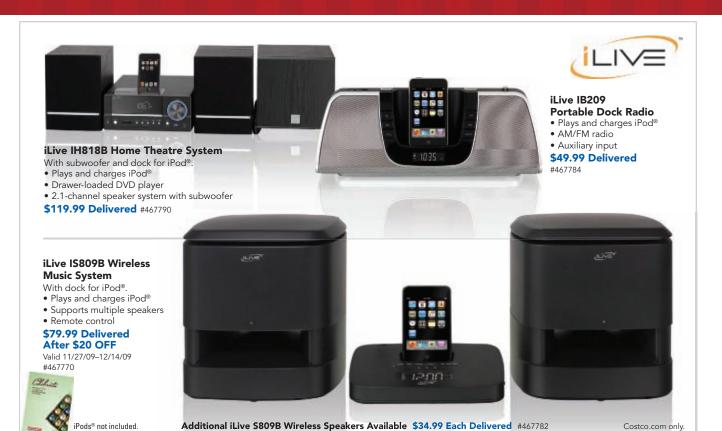
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Plug your home phone into the ooma device.

Step 2

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Step 3

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All diamonds are minimum VS2 clarity, I color. Costco.com only.





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Vinotemp Concord 450-Bottle Wine Cabinet

- Hand-carved grape motifs
- Mahogany finish on white oak
- Brass-finish security locks



Vinotemp 160-Bottle Stainless Steel Wine Cellar

- Multi-zone cooling
- 14 pull-out wood shelves
- 1 stationary shelf
- Front venting (stand alone or built-in capacity)

Vinotemp 500EC 450-Bottle Wine Cellar

- Dark cherry stain on luan mahogany
- Adjustable temperature control (50° to 65°F)
- Built-in humidity control.



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Vinotemp 26-Bottle Wine Cooler

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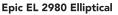
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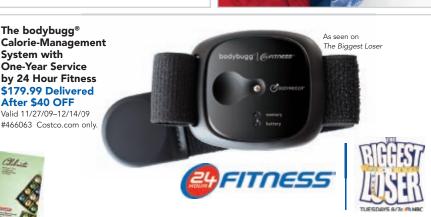






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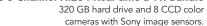
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Saving money with a Costco membership

THE SIX-WORD strategy for saving on food from *Kiplinger's Personal Finance* magazine (March, 2009): "Get in car. Drive to Costco." The magazine compared prices on 37 staples at Costco, Safeway and Whole Foods, calculated the prices for equivalent sizes, multiplied the total for each list by 12 (representing monthly shopping expeditions) and added Costco's \$50 annual membership to the cost. Result: "Costco can supply a family of four with many of the basics for an annual tab of \$1,708, followed by Safeway, at \$2,417, and Whole Foods, at a pricey \$3,498."

To back that up, *Kiplinger's* October 2009 cover story, "Your Spending: Rein It In," details Costco members Joanna and Adam Abrahams'

(pictured at left) crash course in household budgeting. The Silver Spring, Maryland, couple had to take a hard look at their spending when Adam lost his job as a lawyer for a title-insurance firm in late 2008. Although Joanna kept her job as an attorney for the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, they had to rethink their finances so they could afford child care for their two daughters plus make payments on their mortgage, their law-school loans and their credit-card debt.

One of their belt-tightening measures: signing up for a Costco Executive Membership—which cut the family's grocery bill by a third and provides 2 percent a year in merchandise rewards.

How it all **began**

AN ARTICLE IN Fortune <u>Small Business</u> in September 2009 detailed Costco's development as it went from concept in 1983 to \$1 billion company in just three years. Interviewing founders Jeff Brotman (now Costco's board chairman) and Jim Sinegal (Costco president and CEO), FSB reporter Lenora Chu was able to elicit answers to questions such as where they got the idea for Costco (Paris, says Brotman; Price Club, says Sinegal), how the business was originally financed (credit cards), their original growth predictions (no more than 12 Costco locations, primarily in the Northwest, with \$1 billion in sales) and how different the predictions were from reality (now more than 560 locations throughout the United States. Canada. the United Kingdom, Japan, Korea and Australia, and \$70 billion in sales). C

Down under up and running

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA'S *Herald Sun* reported that shoppers started lining up at 5 a.m. to be among the first through the doors of the new Costco warehouse, which opened on August 17.

The keenly anticipated opening attracted thousands of shoppers.

"We had about 900 people come in the first half hour, and about 450 shoppers coming every half hour [after that]," said Patrick Noone, managing director of Costco Australia.

Among the early shoppers, reported *The Age* newspaper, were Colin Sandlant and Kate Griffin, who stayed with friends in Melbourne on Sunday night in order to get to the warehouse before the doors opened at 7:30 a.m. Griffin, who emigrated from California 14 years ago, says she has missed the retailer's presence here. "I love Costco. I shopped at Costco in the States for years," she said.

Sandlant said Australians have been wanting more competition in the grocery market. "There are a lot of people out there who are only working part time jobs, so the prices will



Costco members shop the new Melbourne, Australia location, which opened in August.

suit them a lot better," he said.

Taking a tour of the warehouse, Victorian Premier John Brumby told *Australian Food News* that Costco would provide a boost to the local economy.

"Costco's arrival will deliver great opportunities for local manufacturers and suppliers to supply the store and potentially tap into Costco's worldwide distribution network," he said.

Trade Minister Martin Pakula said, "Costco will increase competition in the retail sector and provide choice for Victorian consumers."

"We look forward to contributing to the community in many ways, and to making a positive impact on the local job market," said Patrick.

Kirkland Signature wins praise

IN THE OCTOBER issue of a national consumer magazine, trained taste testers compared 18 high-fiber cereals on the basis of nutrition and taste. They selected their top seven, and Costco's Kirkland Signature™ Spiced Pecan cereal topped the list with a rating of "Excellent."

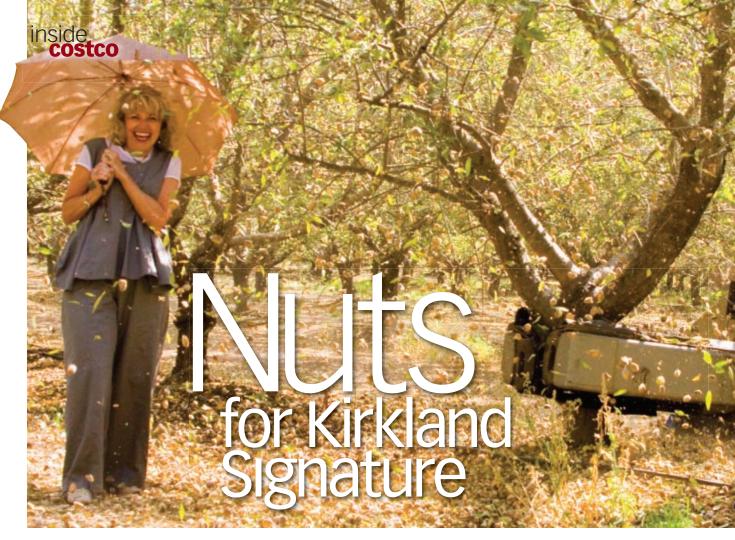
"A flavorful blend of toasted grains, fresh nuts and seeds.

with a big cinnamon-and-nutmeg flavor, and just 33 cents per serving," wrote the magazine.

The same publication compared store brands with name brands in an article, "It pays to buy store brands," that showed that the price, not the quality, was often the only difference.

For instance, comparing McCormick Pure Vanilla (\$3.34

per ounce) with Kirkland Signature Pure Madagascar Bourbon Vanilla (35 cents per ounce), the magazine concluded that either would work just as well. Frozen strawberries (Dole versus Kirkland Signature) showed the quality was the same, but the Kirkland Signature berries were almost half the cost of Dole's.



Kirkland Signature nuts are a best sheller

BuyingSmart

Consumer reporter Pat Volchok gives a behind-the-scenes look at Costco products and services. Send your questions about this article to:

buyingsmart@ costco.com.



THE QUESTION POSED by a friend seemed simple enough: "How many different nuts does Costco package under the Kirkland Signature™ label?" My guesstimate was eight: walnuts, pecans, almonds (whole and Marcona), pine nuts, pistachios, mixed nuts and cashews. I was off by five.

Costco nut buyer Becky Schmidt reports, "Many members don't realize how extensive our private-label Kirkland Signature nut program is because it's scattered throughout the warehouse. For instance, Kirkland Signature Grade A Pine Nuts are displayed near the Kirkland Signature olive oil. Some varieties are also offered exclusively on Costco.com."

The five Kirkland Signature nut varieties I missed reside in Costco's snack aisle: Dry Roasted Almonds; Salt & Pepper Pistachios; Super X-Large Peanuts; Whole Macadamia Nuts; and Variety Snacking Tube Nuts, featuring cashews, almonds and Variety Snacking Tube Nuts, featuring cashews, almonds and extra crunchy roasted and salted peanuts (be on the lookout for this last one's new packaging, arriving soon.)

Nuts everywhere: You'll find Kirkland Signature nuts in the baking aisle, snack aisle and more.

Nuts from around the world

I learn Costco sources nuts from wherever they are at their best. This explains why Costco's delicate-tasting Kirkland Signature Marcona almonds come from Spain; Kirkland Signature by Mauna Loa dry-roasted, whole macadamia nuts are purchased in Hawaii; and the gorgeous Kirkland Signature pecan halves are sourced only from the southern U.S. and northern Mexico.

No matter the country of origin, all Costco nuts come from suppliers who have state-of-the-art processing facilities to ensure each nut is handled impeccably. Food safety is of utmost importance from tree to table, with traceability protocols, good farming and harvesting practices, and testing mandatory at every step.

The team works diligently to create the best in each category. For example, Kirkland Signature Extra Fancy Mixed Nuts now include cashews, nonpareil almonds, pecan halves, Brazil nuts and macadamia nuts. Kirkland Signature Whole Fancy Cashews are the premium large size, and Kirkland Signature Super X-Large Peanuts are extra crunchy due to the reinstatement of traditional water-bath and roasting techniques. You can taste the difference in each handful.



A mechanical tree-shaker showers almond fruit for harvest. Kirkland Signature almonds are U.S. No. 1 grade Nonpareil Supreme.

Paramount processing

After I express curiosity about processing techniques, Becky suggests I join her and Costco nut team members Sheri Flies and Michael Yi on a quick visit to the almond harvest in California's Great Central Valley.

I jump at the chance and soon find myself outside Lost Hills (about 80 miles southwest of Fresno). It is home to Paramount Farming Company, the largest grower of almonds and pistachios in the world. The company is also one of Costco's suppliers for Kirkland Signature almonds and Kirkland Signature California pistachios.

Our host is Paramount Farming Company president Joe MacIlvaine. We talk about the transformation of nuts from baking ingredients to healthy snacks and the mounting stack of scientific evidence suggesting that including most nuts as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease and act as a weight-gain deterrent.

This is because many nuts are an excellent source of antioxidants, tummy-filling fiber, vegetarian protein, healthy monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats—the same kind of healthy fat found in olive oil—and vitamins and minerals, including calcium and magnesium for strong bones, phosphorous, iron, potassium, and vitamins E and B (including folic acid, important for expectant mothers).

We stop to watch a mechanical tree shaker approach a nearby almond tree, grasp its trunk and shake. The tree's peach-like almond fruit rain down. I am mesmerized

The next stop is Paramount's high-tech processing facility. It is enormous and takes us almost two hours to tour. A U.S. Department of Agriculture inspector is always on-site during operations.

Sustainability is key to success AS PART OF Costco's sourcing strategy, it

AS PART OF Costco's sourcing strategy, it considers viable ways the Kirkland Signature nut program can give back to the communities that produce the products.

For example, I learn that currently 35 percent of the world's raw cashews are grown in Africa; the majority are processed in Vietnam and India. Costco is working with others to help develop local processing in Africa to increase the economic viability of cashewfarming communities there for the Kirkland Signature Whole Fancy Cashew program.

At the moment, the group is looking for ways to utilize the cashew apple, the fruit of the cashew tree and a potentially valuable byproduct that is now discarded



While snacking on Kirkland Signature/Everybody's Nuts Salt & Pepper Pistachios, we spend time talking about this tasty nut.

I'm told Costco requires all Kirkland Signature pistachios—which are U.S. Extra No. 1 grade—to be hulled and dried within 24 hours of harvest. And while some processors may blend in cheaper, immature, mechanically opened pistachios or use bleach to stain shells unnaturally white, Costco specifications do not allow such practices. Costco's pistachios open naturally on the tree and are simply hot-air roasted.

Paramount's list of environmentally sustainable programs is impressive. We visit the company's recently built private solar field. It is one of the largest in the country, and the energy it produces is used to help run the processing facility. Additionally, waste byproducts, such as hulls and shells, are sold as cattle feed, and nontoxic pesticides are utilized.

Walnuts and almonds

The team's next stop is Winters, California (about 35 miles west of Sacramento), at Costco supplier Mariani Nut Company, one of the largest privately held walnut and almond processors in the world.

Third-generation owner Marty Mariani and director John Aguiar show us around. They are very proud of their long-term relationship with Costco.

While Sheri and I try our hand at working a mechanical almond tree shaker, Aguiar tells us, "For over 15 years Costco has entrusted us with their private-label brand. We don't take such a responsibility lightly. Quality is always discussed first, never price. I know of no other major retailer who demands such tough standards."

When pressed for examples of Costco's requirements, he pulls me away from the tree shaker and walks me to the almond processing plant. Together we count the 16 cleaning and grading steps Costco almonds must pass.

Aguiar returns repeatedly to Costco's insistence on the highest quality. He reports, "The U.S. No. 1 Nonpareil Supremes specified for the 3-pound bag of Kirkland Signature whole almonds are the most expensive and sought-after almond of any variety. They are king of the snacking almonds and recognized for their rich, sweet flavor, attractive uniform appearance and crisp bite." (Kirkland Signature walnuts are California U.S. No. 1 grade.)

Mariani's sustainability efforts are also impressive. Recycling is a top priority, natural clay-based pest deterrent is sprayed on trees to repel insects, free employee wellness and nutrition classes are offered and a college scholarship program for local students is in its 20th year. (Aguiar is rightfully proud to be the first graduate.)

As we head to the airport, I reflect on the quality that Costco demands for its 13-item Kirkland Signature nut program, its partnered suppliers and the results: always at a savings, always divine. You'd have to be nuts not to try them!



Costco members changing the world



IN 2008, HIGH SCHOOL juniors Ben Eveslage and Jessica Forzano (son of Michigan Costco member Nancy Eveslage and daughter of Costco member Rick Forzano, respectively) traveled to Ghana for two months. When they returned, they started a school group called Volunteer Africa (www.vafrica.org), a nonprofit intended to connect communities, raise awareness and serve the underprivileged youth of Africa through programs such as "I'm Hungry" and the Online Tutor program, which connects Michigan residents with children in Ghana. Ben also created a short movie, The Seaholm Ghana Project, which can be found on YouTube, and which won the Connie Ernst award, a top state award.

"I'm Hungry" is a project that stemmed from the problem in Nkwantakese, Ghana. "A primary school was in the process of closure because the government did not provide funds for the lunch program," says Eveslage. "Children were skipping school to work on farms to get fed for the day.

"Jessica and I are living proof that people do change, and it was the inspiration we found in Africa that did that."—T. Foster Jones



LIGHTening the load

IN TODAY'S ECONOMY, many underinsured cancer patients are overwhelmed by treatment costs.

In southwest Florida, some of them have seen the light, thanks to Costco member Sandy Zinschlag, a former financial counselor at Florida Cancer Specialists, who in July 2007 started LIGHT, Long-term Impact through the Gift of Hope and Treatment (www. lightswfl.org).

Run by local volunteers, LIGHT assists people with cancer who need financial assistance for treatment.

The money comes from fundraising, grants and bracelet sales. All profits go directly to help patients—who have applied and been accepted by the program—to defray treatment costs.

To date, 120 people have received from \$200 to \$6,000 per month, paid directly to the physician or medical facility.

"We're just one small group, but we're hopefully making the first small steps to making this right," concludes Zinschlag.

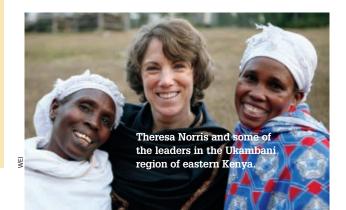
-Shana McNally

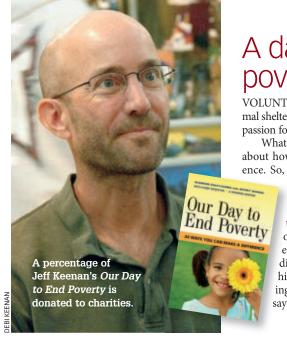
It takes a village

MORE THAN A DECADE AGO, Theresa Norris left her Seattlebased job as a Microsoft executive, and in 1999 the Costco member founded Women's Enterprises International (WEI; www.womensenterprises.org), a nonprofit aimed at helping women and children overcome poverty in rural villages in the developing world.

WEI connects with communities of women who are pooling funds to build rainwater catchment systems, send their children to school or start their own businesses. Based on the model of corporate matching grants, WEI pledges to double the community's efforts: Once the women raise enough money to build one cistern or send one child to school, the organization puts forth enough resources for a second.

"All of our programs are started by and run by local indigenous leaders—women who on their own have identified a need and taken the initiative to address that need," Norris says. "They're the ones who are the architects and the authors of this work. Each of these women is an amazing, capable person with gifts and talents that are—for the first time ever—being unlocked, realized and recognized."—Sarah van Schagen





A day to end poverty

VOLUNTEERING EVERYWHERE from animal shelters to food banks, Jeff Keenan found a passion for helping those affected by poverty.

What he didn't find was a solid resource about how one could start to make a difference. So, he and co-writer Shannon Daley-

Harris wrote one: Our Day to End Poverty (www.ourdaytoendpoverty. com), a how-to guide on easy ways to get involved and help with not only global, but also domestic, poverty. Asked for advice on making a difference, Keenan, who recently lost his own job, suggests integrating helping others into your day-to-day life. He says, "Make it part of who you are."

—Krista Fisher

Lessons in love

IN 2005, WHEN Kellie O'Brien, then 62, arrived in the middle of the Tanzanian desert, surrounded by dust storms, dung huts and herds of cattle, she met her future: a community of Masai who wanted nothing more than for their children to be educated.

Touched by the Masai's love and compassion for life, O'Brien, who runs a landscaping business, returned home to Chicago, ready to fulfill her promise to build the village a proper school.

Since 2005, with the help of family and friends, \$350,000 in donations and tens of thousands of dollars' worth of donated goods, O'Brien (www.obrienschool.org) has constructed six classrooms for nearly 300 students, as well as a clinic, a library and a women's center.

Two semitrailers of goods have been sent to the village, including a year's worth of Quaker oatmeal from Costco that was donated so the children would have a healthy breakfast each morning. In 2009, electricity was turned on for the first time, and water was brought up

from a well O'Brien helped build, allowing the school to have hygiene stations and water for irrigating its garden.

"The smallest donation, the simplest act, can begin to make a difference," she says. "Generosity given in the right spirit multiplies."

—Alexa Jenner

Out of Africa

SINCE 1956, civil wars in Sudan have claimed more than 500,000 lives and displaced huge numbers of people, many of them children separated from their families. Mostly boys between 7 and 17 years old, they have wandered the unforgiving terrain of their country. Close to 3,800 of these "Lost Boys" arrived in the United States in 2001.

Around 400 of them settled in the Phoenix–Scottsdale area, and Costco member and real estate agent Reita Hutson wanted to help. A chance encounter with one of them, Gabriel Kuany, provided the opportunity.

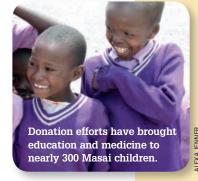
They formed a friendship, first by e-mail. Soon, Kuany, 23, started calling Hutson "Mom." Hutson accepted that, saying, "I believe he is my son in my heart."

Six of Kuany's teeth were missing due to a tribal ritual in his homeland; the remaining ones protruded. Healthy teeth were the first thing the Lost Boys noticed upon arrival in America, and their self-esteem suffered. Hutson helped find dental care for Kuany. When others saw the results, they wanted to call his "mom."

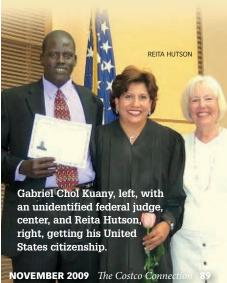
Hutson started Gabriel's Dream (www.gabrielsdream. org) out of her church in 2003 to help the Lost Boys in Arizona, and obtained 501(c) nonprofit status in 2005. To date, the organization has procured more than \$1 million in dental care and close to \$80,000 in scholarships. "We just had a number of boys graduate from Arizona State [University]," Hutson says.

As to why education is so important for the young men,

Hutson says, "They believe education is their mother and father, because they have no mothers and fathers to speak to them."—Steve Fisher







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Nov 27-Dec 6 Hand-knotted and handcrafted rugs Nov 27-Dec 9 Nordic sweaters

IDAHO

Boise

Nov 6-15 Pothia comfort footwear Nov 6-15 Women's layered

Coeur d'Alene

Nov 6–15 Pothia comfort footwear Nov 6–15 Roma Designs jewelry Nov 30-Dec 8 Women's lavered apparel

Nampa

Nov 6–15 Women's apparel Nov 12–22 Religious and Americana art Nov 26-Dec 6 Women's fashion

apparel **Pocatello**

Nov 5–14 Food rotation systems Nov 27–Dec 6 Religious and Americana art

Twin Falls

Nov 19–28 Food rotation systems Nov 27–Dec 6 Religious and Americana art

MONTANA

Helena

Nov 26-Dec 6 Women's fashion apparel

Kalispell

Nov 6-15 Pothia comfort footwear Nov 6-15 Women's apparel Nov 13-22 Blendtec blenders

Missoula

Nov 20-29 Women's apparel

OREGON

Albany

Nov 6–15 Women's layered apparel

Aloha

Nov 27-Dec 6 Women's layered apparel

Clackamas

Nov 6-15 Kazia Digo jewelry Nov 13-22 Silesia handmade Polish pottery

Nov 20-29 Human Touch massage chairs

Eugene

Nov 6–15 Lucky Clover jewelry Nov 6-15 Women's layered apparel

Nov 26-Dec 6 Women's fashion apparel

Hillsboro

Nov 19-29 Lucky Clover jewelry **Portland**

Nov 20-29 Spa-inspired bedding and robes

Salem

Nov 6-15 Human Touch massage chairs Nov 6-15 Roma Designs jewelry

Tigard

Nov 20-29 Women's apparel Wilsonville

Nov 6-15 Pothia comfort footwear Nov 6–15 Women's apparel Nov 27-Dec 6 Silesia handmade Polish pottery

Nov 28-Dec 6 Nordic sweaters

UTAH

Nov 24-Dec 5 Women's and girls' dresses Nov 27-Dec 6 Roma Designs iewelry

Murray

Nov 20–29 Pothia comfort footwear

Nov 20-29 Women's apparel Nov 27-Dec 9 Nordic sweaters

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Nov 12-22 Religious and Americana art Nov 13-22 Pothia comfort footwear

Nov 27-Dec 6 Little Giant ladders Orem

Nov 5-14 Greg Olsen assorted art Nov 6-15 Human Touch massage

Nov 12-22 Women's fashion apparel Nov 24-Dec 5 Women's and girls'

dresses **Salt Lake City**

Nov 6-15 Women's layered apparel

Nov 12-22 Women's fashion apparel

Nov 19-29 Lucky Clover jewelry Nov 27-Dec 6 Silesia handmade Polish pottery

Sandy

Nov 6-15 Lucky Clover jewelry Nov 6-15 Women's layered apparel

West Bountiful

Nov 10–21 Women's and girls' dresses

West Valley

Nov 10-21 Women's and girls' dresses

Nov 13–22 Silesia handmade Polish pottery Nov 20–29 Modesty apparel

Nov 26-Dec 6 Women's fashion

WASHINGTON

Aurora Village

Nov 6–15 Lucky Clover jewelry Nov 27-Dec 6 Pothia comfort footwear

Bellingham

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Clarkston

Nov 27-Dec 6 Pothia comfort footwear

Covington

Nov 6–15 Modesty apparel Nov 30–Dec 6 Kazia Digo jewelry

Everett

chairs

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Nov 13–22 Pottery Avenue handmade Polish pottery Nov 20–29 Modesty apparel Nov 27-Dec 9 Nordic sweaters

Federal Way

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Nov 26-Dec 6 Women's fashion appare

Kennewick

Nov 4-13 Women's layered apparel Nov 6–15 Little Giant ladders Nov 27–Dec 6 Pothia comfort footwear Nov 27-Dec 6 Roma Designs

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Puyallup

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Nov 28-Dec 6 Nordic sweaters Seattle

Nov 12-22 Women's fashion apparel

Nov 19-29 Lucky Clover jewelry Nov 27-Dec 6 Human Touch massage chairs

Sequim

Nov 20-29 Human Touch massage chairs

Nov 27-Dec 6 Pottery Avenue handmade Polish pottery

Silverdale

Nov 6-15 Human Touch massage Nov 6-15 Women's apparel Nov 26-Dec 6 Women's fashion

apparel Spokane

Nov 6-15 Human Touch massage chairs Nov 6-15 Women's layered

Nov 20-29 Pothia comfort footwear

N Spokane

Nov 6-15 Women's layered apparel Nov 20-29 Pothia comfort footwear

Tukwila

Nov 27–Dec 6 Pottery Avenue handmade Polish pottery Nov 28-Dec 6 Nordic sweaters

Tumwater

Nov 20-29 Little Giant ladders Nov 25-Dec 6 Jewelry To Your Doorstep

Nov 27-Dec 6 Women's layered apparel

Vancouver Nov 13–22 Pothia comfort footwear

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