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Punxsutawney Phil: The Famous Weather Forecaster

By Kay Poeth



On February 2 of every year Punxsutawney Phil, the esteemed weather prognosticator, will make his annual prediction on the length of winter. This year on Groundhog Day, the festivities will take place on Gobbler's Knob in Punxsutawney Pennsylvania to witness Phil's prediction. Punxsutawney Phil will be roused from his burrow at 7:25 am, observe the weather conditions, look for his shadow, and make his prediction for 2022.

At this point, the event will be held live. There are many fun activities leading up to the prognosticating announcement. Some include Lunch With Phil, The Groundhog Ball, The Groundhog Members Reception, The Annual Groundhog Banquet, and visiting the Hogspitality Village.

According to legend, if Punxsutawney Phil sees his shadow when emerging from his burrow, then there will be six more weeks of winter. If Phil does not see his shadow, then he predicts an early spring. Phil speaks only to the President of the Groundhog Club in "Groundhogese." Only the current president can understand Phil. His prediction is then translated and broadcast to the entire world. Follow the event on TV, online, Twitter, or Facebook!

Punxsutawney Phil, the Prognosticator of All Prognosticators, is never wrong in his prediction! Sometimes, during the excitement of the activities on Gobbler's Knob the President misunderstands Phil and relays in the prediction inaccurately. After the celebration, Phil is returned to his home in the town library where he lives with his "wife" Phyllis.

How did Punxsutawney Phil rise to fame as the Weather Forecaster Extraordinaire? Well, it all began in 1886 when a lively and fun-loving group of groundhog hunters dubbed themselves "The Punxsutawney Groundhog Club." One member was the editor of the local newspaper. In his paper he proclaimed Punxsutawney Phil to be the one and only weather prognosticating groundhog. Thus, Phil became a renowned weather forecaster and his fame has spread throughout the world.

For 136 years, Punxsutawney Phil has been a weather prognosticator and making his predictions. All other groundhog weathermen are denounced as imposters! Each summer Phil drinks a magical punch during the Annual Groundhog Picnic. This mysterious Groundhog Elixir magically adds seven more years to his life. Typically, a groundhog's life span is only 6-8 years. Punxsutawney Phil is also the heavy-weight of groundhogs weighing 20 pounds and measuring 22 inches long. The average groundhog weighs only 12-15 pounds and is 20 inches long.

Punxsutawney Phil even has his own special vehicle called the "Philmobile." This distinctive bus seats members of the Inner Circle inside with a specially-designated seat on the outside so Phil can be seen in parades. Sometimes, during summer parades spectators become alarmed when they spot Phil lying flat on his back with his legs pointing toward the sky, looking very much like a dead groundhog. However, that is just a ruse and Phil is merely cooling himself off in true groundhog style.

So, with all this wintry weather we wait with baited breath for Phil's prediction! What will it be? Six more weeks of winter... or six weeks until spring? What's your preference? "Snow-time" or perhaps a warm and filling bowl of groundhog stew! Only the shadow knows...Punxsutawney Phil's shadow.

Fernanders Sentenced To Life Without Parole For Double Murder

District Attorney Mike Piecuch (pronounced "pea-YET-sue") announced that Christopher T. Fernanders, formerly of Paxinos, has been sentenced in Snyder County court to life in prison without parole for the killing of Heather Campbell and Matthew Bowersox.

Fernanders shot and killed Bowersox and Campbell on July 10, 2020, in the parking lot of a restaurant in Monroe Township, Snyder County. Fernanders was then himself shot and incapacitated by a good Samaritan who was at the restaurant at the time. D.A. Piecuch had previously issued a determination that shooting Fernanders was legally justified for self-defense and defense of others.

Prior to the sentencing on January 20th, Fernanders entered guilty pleas to two counts of first-degree homicide, an offense that carries a mandatory sentence of life without parole. As part of the plea agreement, Fernanders withdrew his pretrial motions and waived most grounds for appeal. The District Attorney's Office then withdrew its notice of intent to seek the death penalty. President Judge Michael H. Sholley accepted the plea agreement and imposed the sentence. The District Attorney's Office negotiated the plea agreement after consultation with the victims' families.

D.A. Piecuch said, "Fernanders acted with premeditation, and with malice, and without any justification in murdering Heather Campbell and Matt Bowersox. In doing so, Fernanders destroyed their families and his own, not to mention traumatizing everyone at the restaurant forced to witness his brutality. This sentence can't bring the victims back, or undo any of the trauma Fernanders has caused. But it does put an end to the legal proceedings and it does mean that Fernanders will never again see the light of day as a free man."

D.A. Piecuch added, "I am grateful to the good Samaritan who prevented Fernanders from causing any further harm that day, and to the generous people who came out of the restaurant to give aid and comfort to Heather and Matt before first responders arrived. As always, I am thankful for the law enforcement officers and first responders who run towards danger when it happens. The Pennsylvania State Police and all the departments that assisted in the investigation did an excellent job, which directly resulted in today's resolution. Most of all, I want to extend my deepest condolences to the friends and family of Heather and Matt."

Country Cupboard Closing In Late February

By Kay Poeth



The Baylor-Hamm families announced that the iconic Country Cupboard Restaurant and Shops will close by the end of February 2022.

The iconic Country Cupboard Restaurant and Shops in Lewisburg will close by the end of February. The announcement made on Monday morning, January 24, 2022, by Chris Baylor, Country Cupboard CEO and co-owner, stunned the community.

Country Cupboard, a 77,000-square foot restaurant and gift store, has been a mainstay of the area since 1973. Over the years, the family-owned restaurant has been host to family reunions, class gatherings, holiday meals, large-scale meetings, and weekly breakfast, lunch, and dinner stops for many.

For nearly five decades, Country Cupboard has acted as an unofficial greeter and welcomed visitors to the area, many who returned often for the delicious, home-cooked meals, popular buffet, and relaxing atmosphere. The Shops also enticed customers to browse their many wares and feature Country Home & Interiors, a Greenhouse & Outdoor Living Shop, Women's Boutique, Candy & Confections and the Pantry.

"I am very saddened by the news that Country Cupboard will soon be closing its doors. For almost 50 years it gathered us together to dine with family and friends and offered us meeting rooms to collectively learn and connect with each other. Country Cupboard evolved into a unique destination spot for visitors from all over the world, contributing significantly to our local economy," said Union County Commissioner Stacy Richards. "We were so fortunate to have this unique resource in our community."

According to Baylor, there were many contributing factors that led to the decision to ultimately close the Country Cupboard. During the pandemic, restrictions impacted business, food costs soared, and it became difficult to hire and keep employees. Staffing decreased from a pre-pandemic 300+ employees to 140. The decrease in the volume of customers and buses also affected business.

The company adapted by limiting services, closing the restaurant on specific days, adjusting hours, and last minute closures due to staffing issues.

"There isn't one factor that led to our family's decision to close Country Cupboard. There are many reasons why we are announcing this sad news. Yes, food costs have skyrocketed. Yes, it's extremely difficult to hire and keep employees in today's job market and yes, restrictions from the pandemic made it incredibly difficult to serve our customers."

Continuing the press release states, "But all of those mitigating factors brought us to this day, much earlier than expected."

The Baylor and Hamm family hopes to transition as many employees as possible to other Baylor-Hamm owned businesses such as Best Western Plus, Country Inn and Suites by Radisson, and Matty's Sporthouse Grill or into new careers.

"Our employees mean the world to us. We owe our gratitude and respect for the long hours and hard work they've given to Country Cupboard, especially during the past two years."

Baylor also states, "Given the current staffing crisis, Country Cupboard will do its absolute best to remain open through February. We hope this time frame gives our employees a chance to transition."

"I am saddened to hear of the closing of Country Cupboard, a truly iconic regional business. Country Cupboard has been a destination for many people locally as well as a huge draw that brought visitors to our area, who then went on to support other businesses as well as explore the tremendous assets of our region," stated Union County Commissioner Jeffrey Reber. "The Baylor and Hamm families have been wonderful community partners as well as created jobs for thousands of people throughout the years. I have complete faith that the ownership of Country Cupboard will go above and beyond to help their employees find new opportunities and I look forward to seeing what is next for the property."

At this point, no immediate plans for redeveloping or reimagining the property have been announced.

So, in the meantime, plan a trip to the Country Cupboard to bid farewell to a nearly 50-year old landmark. Enjoy a home cooked meal with family and friends, browse the gift shops, and redeem your gift certificates.

18th Century Artisan Show Being Held Feb. 4 & 5

By Kay Poeth

18th Century Artisan Show will be held at the Country Cupboard in Lewisburg on Friday, February 4 from 9 am- 7 pm and Saturday, February 5 from 9 am- 4 pm. Four rooms are filled with juried vendors showcasing their wares and telling tales.

Come and see over 100 tables displaying the finest in Contemporary American Folk Art for the 1700's. A diverse group of premier artisans and craftsmen will dazzle visitors with their work including period jewelry, pottery, furniture, flintlock rifles, powder horns, blacksmiths, leatherworks, coppersmiths, tinmiths, silversmiths, paintings, floor covers, historic publications, and period correct clothing.

So, step back in history! Admission is \$5 per day. Visit www.18centuryartisanshow.com for more details.

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Spotlight on Local Business BY KAY POETH Oberdorf Carpet One Floor and Home CERAMICS • HARDWOODS • LAMINATES • CARPETS

Oberdorf Carpet One Floor & Home in Lewisburg is a locally owned business with 40 years of experience in the flooring industry!

"We specialize in the sale and installation of hardwood floors, luxury vinyl flooring, ceramic tile, vinyl, and carpeting. Each flooring project done by us is guaranteed to be professionally installed with prompt and friendly service! We are dedicated to helping our community with their flooring needs."

Oberdorf Carpet One is more than just carpets and tile! They also carry area rugs, wall tiles, and heated floors. They offer kitchen and bathroom designs and feature a Design Blog. The Room Visualizer feature helps customers picture what a new flooring would look like in their home. They offer free estimates and will even take measurements to assure accuracy for your upcoming installation.

And, with the Beautiful Guarantee you can't go wrong. "We want you to be 100% happy that the floor we've created together is as beautiful as the one in your dreams. If not, we'll replace it for free. That's what we call The Beautiful Guarantee®. We are confident and offer an easy-to-understand warranty system that gives you a tailored level of protection."

Established in 1983 by Kim Oberdorf, Oberdorf's relocated to the present site on Route 15, just south of Lewisburg, in 1990. Then in 1996, Oberdorf's Floorcovering joined Carpet One, a cooperative of over 1,000 independent store owners bringing together the advantages of a large company passing along volume discounts, but still offering hometown personalized professional services.

The Oberdorf Carpet One Floor & Home prides themselves on customer service and are very committed to a positive shopping experience. "We believe that our superior service, understanding of our clients' wishes and updated training is what helps bring our clients' visions into reality. Learning new techniques, design, and the value of new products and services coming onto the markets assists in helping clients choose the right products for their home."

Oberdorf's offers full installation services for all the floor coverings they sell. They serve both residential and commercial clients from small jobs to big installations.

The Oberdorf's recognize that most family-owned businesses are a 24/7 responsibility. Making the business succeed is a commitment by the entire staff. With some of the best employees having a combined level of experience of over 70 years in the flooring business, Oberdorf's Carpet One is ready to service any flooring projects for customers throughout Snyder, Union, Northumberland, and Montour Counties.

As we begin a brand new year, check out the latest design trends at Oberdorf Carpet One Floor & Home. Kick off your home refresh with new floors. Visit their Facebook page for suggestions on paint and flooring pairing, adding designer flair to your bathroom with marble mosaic tile, or adding a rustic wooden floors for a cabin or ski chalet feel.

Don't miss the Flooring Blowout Sale going on now through February 7 at Oberdorf Carpet One Floor & Home! They are offering savings on a selection of flooring such as hardwood, tile, luxury vinyl, and carpet to match every style and budget. Stop by Oberdorf's showroom today to find the best discounted flooring for every room in your home!

Located at 4446 Westbranch Highway in Lewisburg, Oberdorf Carpet One Floor & Home is open Monday-Friday from 9 am- 5 pm. Visit www.oberdorfcarpetone.com. Like them on Facebook at Oberdorf Carpet One Floor & Home, or call 570-523-0500.

Spotlight on Local Business showcases various businesses throughout the area that advertise in our newspaper. Ads allows us to continue offering a free distribution newspaper that is delivered to your home each week. Oberdorf Carpet One has been a long-standing advertiser in The Snyder County Times. If you would like your business featured in the Spotlight on Local Business or to place an ad, call the office at (570) 837-6065 for more information.

Heart of Lewisburg Ice Festival February 4-5, 2022 Live Ice Carving Children's Activities Chocolate Tour Downtown Shopping Pass Pregrame the Plunge Polar Bear Plunge Frost 5K Hearty Chili Cook off www.lewisburgpa.com @downtownlewisburg

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