

# Country Village News

March 2025

**250 Theodore Drive, Coram, NY 11727**

## Happy Birthday



04 Charlie Buscaglia  
05 Betsy Burbige  
08 Kathy Gasiewski

12 Jim Brendel  
16 Greg Gasieswski  
Richard Maffucci

Frances Salzano  
Venetia Maffucco



## Happy Anniversary



15 Teri and Gene Flynn



## **The History of Bagpipes in Celtic Culture**

Bagpipes are a beloved musical instrument that has played a significant role in Celtic culture and music for centuries. Their historical significance and enduring appeal have made them an iconic symbol of Celtic heritage and musical tradition.

In this article, we will delve into the role of bagpipes in Celtic culture and music. We will explore their origins, their use in ancient Celtic tribes, and their evolution over time. We will also discuss their significance in Scottish Highland culture, their unique sound in Irish Uilleann pipes and Celtic music, and their use in military bands and folk music.



Beyond Celtic culture, we will showcase the bagpipes' versatility as a musical instrument in other traditions such as Arabian and Indian music. We will also explore the continued presence of bagpipes in contemporary culture, their use in modern music genres, and their role in preserving Celtic heritage.

## Key Takeaways

- Bagpipes have played a significant role in Celtic culture and music for centuries
- Their historical significance and enduring appeal have made them an iconic symbol of Celtic heritage and musical tradition
- Bagpipes are closely associated with Scottish Highland culture, the Irish Uilleann pipes, and military bands and folk music
- They are a versatile musical instrument that transcends cultural boundaries and has presence in Arabian and Indian music
- Bagpipes remain relevant in contemporary culture, preserving Celtic heritage and contributing to modern music genres
- If you wish to learn the bagpipes head to either [The Highland Bagpipe Academy](#) or [Uilleann Pipe Academy](#) to get started.
- 

## The History of Bagpipes in Celtic Culture

Bagpipes have been an integral part of Celtic culture for centuries. The use of bagpipes in ancient Celtic tribes can be traced back to at least 1000 BCE, but the exact origin of the instrument is unclear. Some historians believe that the bagpipe was introduced to the Celts by the Romans, while others suggest that it may have originated in the Middle East and traveled to Europe via the Silk Road.

Regardless of their origin, bagpipes quickly became a prominent symbol of Celtic culture, especially in Scotland and Ireland. In fact, the bagpipe is often associated with Scottish and Irish heritage and is considered one of the most recognizable symbols of these cultures.

## The Evolution of Bagpipes in Celtic Culture

Over time, bagpipes evolved to suit the unique needs and preferences of different Celtic cultures. For example, the Scottish Great Highland Bagpipe became one of the most iconic versions of the instrument, while the Irish Uilleann pipes were known for their distinct sound and elaborate design.

Bagpipes were also used in a variety of contexts, including religious ceremonies, cultural celebrations, and military processions. In some cases, bagpipes were even used as a means of communication during battles or raids.



## The Historical Significance of Bagpipes

Despite their many variations, bagpipes have always held a special place in Celtic culture. They were not only a symbol of Celtic heritage but also a way for people to come together and celebrate their shared traditions and beliefs.

Today, bagpipes continue to be an important part of Celtic music and culture, with many people around the world learning to play the instrument as a way of connecting with their roots. Whether you're enjoying the soulful melodies of an Irish Uilleann player or the rousing marches of a Scottish military band, there's no denying the historical significance and enduring appeal of bagpipes in Celtic culture.

## Highland Bagpipe in Scottish Highland Culture

When we think of bagpipes, we are often transported to the rolling hills of Scotland, where the Scottish Highland Bagpipe has become synonymous with Scots Highland culture. These are often played at traditional Scottish events such as weddings, funerals, and Highland games where they celebrate being a highlander and wear tartan kilts.

The Scottish bagpipe dates back hundreds of years and has played an important role in Scottish music and traditions. The Great Highland Bagpipe, in particular, is the most iconic Scottish bagpipe, characterized by its melodious sound and intricate design.

### Component Description

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Chanter  | Chanters create the melody by playing the notes                        |
| Drones   | Provide a constant background sound that complements the melody        |
| Blowstick  | Used to blow air into the bag to create pressure for playing the notes |
| Bag  | Stores the air for playing the notes                                   |
| Bagpipes have played an important role in Scottish military bands and have been used in battle to intimidate enemy soldiers. Today, bagpipes remain an essential part of Scottish music and are often played at cultural events and festivals. |  |

## Bagpipe Competitions

In Scotland, bagpipe competitions are a popular pastime. These competitions, known as pipe band contests, involve bands of bagpipers competing against one another in various categories such as selection, march, strathspey, and reel.

Bagpipe competitions are not only held in Scotland but have also become popular in other countries such as Canada, the United States, and Australia.

Overall, bagpipes and Scottish Highland culture are inseparable, with the Great Highland Bagpipe playing a significant role in Scottish music and traditions.



## Irish Uilleann Pipes and Celtic Music

While bagpipes are often associated with Scottish culture, their Irish cousin, the Uilleann Pipes, play an equally important role in Celtic music. The Uilleann Pipes have a distinct sound that sets them apart from other bagpipes and make them an essential part of Irish culture and heritage.

The Uilleann Pipes are a complex and challenging instrument to play, requiring significant skill and practice. Their sound is produced by a bellows that the player operates with their elbow, allowing for a more consistent and controlled airflow. This results in a unique sound that is mellower and more versatile than other bagpipes.

The Uilleann Pipes have a strong association with Irish traditional music and often feature in pub sessions around the country. The instrument has also captured the attention of contemporary musicians, who incorporate the Uilleann Pipes into their work to showcase their Irish heritage and cultural identity.

The Uilleann Pipes are an essential part of Irish culture and musical history, playing a significant role in traditional and contemporary Celtic music. Their unique sound and challenging nature make them a beloved instrument for musicians and music enthusiasts alike, and their cultural importance continues to endure to this day.

## Bagpipes in the Military and Folk Music

Bagpipes have long been associated with military and folk music, particularly in Celtic culture. Their distinctive sound and powerful presence make them a natural fit for these contexts.

In military bands, bagpipes are often used to add a sense of tradition and ceremony. They are a staple of many parades and military events, and their sound can be heard for miles around. In addition to their use in the military, bagpipes also have a strong presence in folk music. They are often featured in Celtic cultural celebrations, such as weddings and festivals.

## The Use of Bagpipes in Military Bands

| Event  | Country  |
|--|----------|
| Edinburgh Military Tattoo  | Scotland |
| Changing of the Guard  | Canada   |
| Memorial Day Parade  | USA      |
| Military bands around the world use bagpipes to add a sense of tradition and ceremony. In Scotland, the Edinburgh Military Tattoo is a popular event that features bagpipes prominently. The bagpipes are also frequently heard during the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace in London. |          |

In Canada, the bagpipes are an essential part of the country's military traditions. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) Pipes and Drums is a celebrated band that performs at many national events, including the Changing of the Guard ceremony on Parliament Hill in Ottawa.



In the United States, the bagpipes are often heard during Memorial Day parades. They are also frequently used at military funerals in recognition of the deceased person's service.

## **Bagpipes in Folk Music**

"Bagpipes have a special place in Celtic culture. They have been a part of our traditions for centuries and continue to be an essential part of our cultural celebrations today." - Irish musician, Seamus Kennedy

Bagpipes are also a popular instrument in folk music, particularly in Celtic culture. They are often featured in cultural celebrations such as weddings and festivals.

- The Edinburgh Festival Fringe, held annually in Scotland, features many bagpipe performances. The festival attracts thousands of visitors from around the world.
- In Ireland, bagpipes are often used during St. Patrick's Day celebrations. They are also a common feature at weddings and other cultural events.
- In the United States, bagpipes are often used during Highland Games, which celebrate Scottish culture. These events often feature traditional Scottish music and dancing.

Whether in military bands or folk music, bagpipes have played an important role in Celtic culture for centuries. Their enduring appeal is a testament to the power of music to connect people across generations and cultures.

## **The Bagpipe as Scotland's National Instrument**

The bagpipe is a musical instrument steeped in history and tradition and nowhere is this truer than in Scotland. Known as Scotland's national instrument, the bagpipe has become synonymous with the country's rich cultural heritage and is a symbol of Scottish pride and identity.

The bagpipe has been a prominent feature in Scottish culture for centuries, with the earliest references to the instrument dating back to the 15th century. Over the years, the bagpipe evolved into the instrument we know today, with the Great Highland Bagpipe becoming the most recognized and iconic version of the Scottish bagpipe.

Despite its long history, the bagpipe has maintained its popularity and relevance in modern times. It continues to be an essential part of Scottish culture, with many Scottish events and celebrations featuring bagpipe music prominently.

The bagpipe's place as Scotland's national instrument highlights the importance of Celtic culture in Scottish identity. The instrument's distinct sound and unique style serve as a symbol of Scottish pride and heritage, transcending cultural boundaries and reaching audiences all over the world.



## Bagpipes Beyond Celtic Culture and Kilts

Despite being closely associated with Celtic culture, bagpipes have made their way into other musical traditions around the world. The unique sound and captivating melodies of bagpipes have found a place in Arabian and Indian music.

### Bagpipes in Arabian Music

In Arabian music, the bagpipe, known as the mijwiz, is a popular instrument. It is typically made from bamboo and features two reeds. The mijwiz is played alongside drums and other traditional instruments to create lively and upbeat music that is enjoyed by people across the Middle East.

### Bagpipes in Indian Music

Bagpipes have also made their way into Indian music. The mashak is a type of bagpipe that is popular in the northern parts of India. It is typically made from animal hide and features two reeds. The mashak is often played during traditional festivals and celebrations, adding an energetic and festive element to the music.

Thanks to their versatility and adaptability, bagpipes have become a beloved musical instrument beyond Celtic culture. While their roots may lie in ancient Celtic tribes, bagpipes have evolved and spread around the world, showcasing their enduring appeal and cultural significance.

### Bagpipes in Contemporary Culture

Although bagpipes have a strong association with Celtic heritage, they have found a place in contemporary culture as well. In recent years, bagpipes have been used in various music genres, ranging from rock to hip-hop, bringing the unique sound of the bagpipe to new audiences.

Scottish musician, Paul Mounsey, is known for his fusion of bagpipes with electronic music, creating a sound that is both modern and distinctively Celtic. He has collaborated with renowned artists, including Michael Jackson and P. Diddy.

Bagpipes have also made their way into the world of film and television. The soundtrack of the popular television series, *Outlander*, features bagpipes prominently, contributing to the show's Scottish Highlands setting.

Despite their newfound popularity in different music genres and media, the bagpipe remains a symbol of Celtic heritage. It is still played at traditional cultural celebrations, such as weddings, funerals, and parades, and continues to be an essential element of Scottish and Irish music.



## Conclusion

In conclusion, the bagpipes have played a significant role in Celtic culture and music for centuries, and their historical significance cannot be overstated. From their use in ancient Celtic tribes to their iconic status in Scotland and Ireland, the bagpipe has remained a beloved musical instrument that continues to captivate audiences across generations.

The enduring appeal of the bagpipe lies in its ability to evoke a sense of nostalgia and pride in one's Celtic heritage, no matter where in the world one may be. The sound of the bagpipe has a unique ability to transport listeners to another time and place, making it a truly special musical instrument.

While the bagpipe is often associated with Scottish and Irish culture, its reach extends far beyond that. The bagpipe has been incorporated into other musical traditions, such as Arabian and Indian music, demonstrating its versatility and ability to adapt to different styles.

Exploring the Celtic Bagpipe reveals a captivating history of these iconic instruments. Bagpipes were used in ancient Egypt before making their way to Celtic countries, with people commonly associating the bagpipes with Scotland. The Highland Bagpipe and the Irish Uilleann Bagpipe are the two most popular types, each boasting distinct features like reeds and drones. The bagpipes have deep roots in Celtic backgrounds and have been a cherished Scottish instrument for centuries. They played a role in Scottish culture during pivotal moments, such as the time of Bonnie Prince Charlie, and were even used by Scottish highlanders as they marched into battle. Bagpipes are an integral part of Celtic music, and their unmistakable sound is often heard at parades or processions. The connection between bagpipes, tartan, sporran, and traditional attire is also intriguing, with bagpipers often donning white gaiters that rise up to the shins. The use of bellows in some European bagpipes helps to explain their unique variations, and bagpipes are not only limited to Scotland but have found their way to other parts of the world, including Arabian and Indian music traditions. Today, they remain a common instrument of choice at various events, including weddings and are closely associated with famous Highland regiments.

As we look to the future, the bagpipe remains an important part of contemporary culture, with modern musicians infusing it into various genres of music. It is a testament to the enduring appeal of the bagpipe and its ability to transcend cultural boundaries.

Overall, the bagpipe is an iconic symbol of Celtic heritage and musical tradition, and its continued popularity ensures its place in the hearts of people around the world for years to come.



## **PMI Gold Coast Properties**

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### **Country Village Website**

Website: <https://country-village.net>

**Password:** TheoDrive250

Webmaster: Roland Diehl (631)433-2198

### **Country Village Board Members**

|                 |                  |                |
|-----------------|------------------|----------------|
| President:      | Phyllis Benanti  | (631) 790-3238 |
| Vice-President: | Greg Williams    | (631) 220-8862 |
| Finances        | Ellen Forestieri | (631) 226-0714 |
| Secretary       | Linda Bily       | (631)721-5280  |
| Director        | Carl Schroder    | (570)955-9999  |

### **Country Village Newsletter Committee**

|            |                  |                |
|------------|------------------|----------------|
| Editor:    | Doreen McCrystal | (917) 270-0426 |
| Co-Editor: | Sandy Bakofen    | (631) 745-6152 |
|            | Debbie Buscaglia | (631) 559-9480 |
|            | Marie Palagonia  | (516) 301-6780 |
| Treasurer: | Francine Leiboff | (631) 846-1070 |

### **Country Village Entertainment Committee**

|                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Jackie Bromberg | (631) 320-3086 |
| Francine Davino | (631) 696-4750 |
| Sandy Bakofen   | (631) 745-6152 |
| Betsy Burbige   | (631)987-9507  |
| Carol Fox       | (631)790-3239  |

### **Finance Review Committee**

|                        |                |
|------------------------|----------------|
| Gene Flynn Chairperson | (631) 921-2417 |
| Charlie Buscaglia      | (516) 805-2074 |
| Mike Ellis             | (347) 386-8802 |
| Greg Gasiewski         | (631) 526-2027 |
| Ed Tomaiuoli           | (516) 233-5473 |

# COUNTRY VILLAGE NEWS

## Enjoy Our Community

Times of events are located on the back calendar page of the newsletter.

- Monday: Mexican Train Domino's, Woman Cards, Exercise "Walk Away the Pounds" and Bunco 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month.
- Tuesday: Exercise "Walk Away the Pounds"
- Wednesday: Knitting Group, Ladies Game Day, Bingo, Exercise "Walk Away the Pounds"
- Thursday: Men's Club, Chair Yoga and Mahjongg, Exercise "Walk Away the Pounds"
- Friday: 3rd Friday of the month Left Right Center (unless there is an event on Saturday), Exercise "Walk Away the Pounds"

## NEWS HIGHLIGHTS:

## ATTENTION:

1. ***To contact PMI (our management company)  
CountryVillage@PMIGoldCoast.com  
631-621-2150***

***After-hours/weekends/emergency  
800-549-3568***

***An operator will take your call and relay the message to the management team.***

2. ***National Waste Services (631) 242-0300 will now take your bulk items for FREE, BUT you need to call the office and speak with Kim to arrange a pickup. If they give you a hard time reminding them it was agreed to in the contract that was signed.***

- **Senior Shenanigans St. Patrick's Day March 17<sup>th</sup> Coram Diner 4:00p.** Corn beef dinner, salad, drink and dessert \$25 dollars, plus tax & tip. Debra Dougherty, (631) 834-3661, for whoever wants to go to pay her \$10 up front to hold the table. **Pay by March 10<sup>th</sup> she will make the reservations.**

## The CVE Boards Corner

Board members will be in the clubhouse on the ***first Saturday*** of each month from ***9am-10am***, for any homeowner who would like to express an issue.

# COUNTRY VILLAGE NEWS

## Entertainment Committee Future Events:

|                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| • Breakfast        | March 15, 2025 |
| • Golden Girls     | May 2, 2025    |
| • Italian Night    | June 7, 2025   |
| • Chinese Luncheon | TBD            |
| • Tea Party        | TBD            |

## HEALTH And WELLNESS

This month "Water, Water Everywhere"

## BINGO

Bingo is every Wednesday at 7:00 pm.

We would love more people to join in the fun, the more people the bigger the pot. So, if you do not have anything to do on Wednesday come down to Bingo, we would enjoy seeing you.

## BUNCO

2<sup>nd</sup> Monday (July 8th) of the month at 7:00pm, please arrive at 6:50. We need twelve people to have a game, but we always would love more. It's open to men and women, we did have a few men join the game last month and they loved it.

If you are interested call Linda Bily (631) 721-5280. The regulars if you cannot make the game, PLEASE call Linda Bily.

## Mahjongg:

Mahjongg starts 7:00p at the clubhouse. We have a fun time; we are not at a professional level so no need to hesitate to join in. If interested in learning how to play, please reach out to Doreen McCrystal, 917-270-0426 or Sandy Bakofen (631) 745-6152.

## Donations

Please help our local community, we are still in need of your support, which is always appreciated, nonperishable can be left at the club house in the lobby.

## Supporting Our Advertisers

The newsletter would not be possible without our advertisers. **When you do patronize our advertisers, please remember to tell them you are from Country Village Estates.** They have been loyal to us so let us reciprocate our patronage. If anyone has information regarding someone who is interested in advertising with us, please reach out to me, Doreen McCrystal, [cvenews@yahoo.com](mailto:cvenews@yahoo.com)



## 'Irish She Is'

The Irish Way

A Strange blend of shyness of pride and conceit  
and a stubborn refusal to bow in defeat.

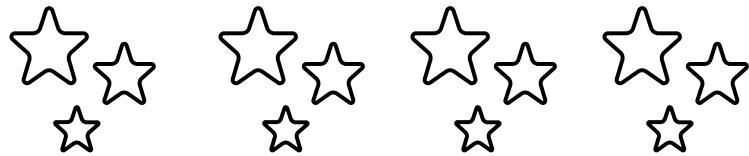
She spoiling and ready to argue and fight,  
yet the smile of a child fills her soul with delight.

Her eyes are the quickest to well up in tears  
and her strength is the strongest to banish your fears.

Her hate is as fierce as her devotion is grand  
and there's no middle ground on which she will stand.  
She's wild and she's gentle, she's good and she's bad.  
She's proud and she's humble, she's happy and sad.

She's in love with the ocean, the earth and the skies  
She's enamoured with beauty ~ wherever it lays  
She's victor she's victim, a star and a clod ...  
But mostly she's Irish, in love with her God.





## **COMMUNITY BREAKFAST**

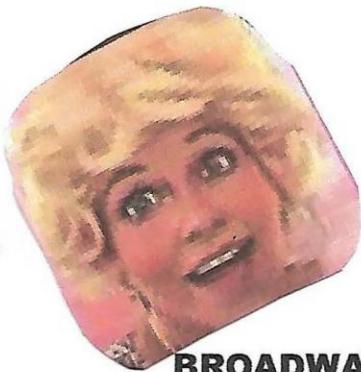
**Saturday, March 15, 2025, at 10:00am**

Choices will include eggs, bacon, sausage, pancakes, French toast, home fries, bagels, juice, coffee, and tea  
**50/50 Raffle**

**\$20 per person**

Sign-up sheet will be in the Clubhouse.

**Cash payment** will be accepted at the Clubhouse on **Wednesday, March 5, 2025, between 10:00 - 11:00am & 6:00 - 7:00pm.**



**BROADWAY ENTERTAINMENT COMES TO THE VILLAGE**

**TV'S GOLDEN GIRLS MYSTERY BIRTHDAY BASH**

**After Sophia hit a jackpot at the casino, she decided to throw her pussycat a surprise birthday bash.**

**Wanting to be sure that her daughter had a date to her own party, Sophia arranged to have a dating game here tonight. Men, beware, you may become one of the contestants AND Blanch is also on the prowl. The hilarity ensues when Dorothy's ex, Phil, among other ex-boyfriends, show up as well. Will Phi survive the night? If not, the ladies will need to help solve the crime! Come on down to find out! The fun escalates to new levels with our audience participation!**

**HOMEOWNERS AND GUESTS ARE WELCOME!**

**DATE: FRIDAY, MAY 2ND, 7:00P**

**\$25 PER PERSON (*CASH PLEASE*)**

**50/50 RAFFLE**

**COFFEE, TEA, WATER, SODA & DESSERTS.**

**BYOB AND ANY SNACKS YOU'D LIKE!**

**MONEY TO BE COLLECTED AT THE CLUBHOUSE:**

**WENDSDAY, APRIL 16TH, 10-11A & 6-7P**



# INSIGHTFULL

At age 80, Josephine Geluso wrote her first poem, but not her last. She self-published 5 volumes until her passing at age 100+. I share this poem, '*THROUGH WITH YOUTH*', from her book, *BOW TO TIME*.

## ***'THROUGH WITH YOUTH'***

*don't worry about oldness  
I'm already there  
my body has changed  
inside. I'm me  
holding tight to my dreams  
spirit unbroken.*

*carry youth with me  
into winter  
memories highlighted  
in my crest.*

*climb the mountain  
of gathering years  
age has taught me  
to see the view better.*

---

## **BEATITUDES ON AGING**

Blessed are those who *understand*  
my faltering step  
and weakened hand.

Blessed are those who know  
that my ears *today*  
must strain to catch the things they say.

Blessed are those who never say  
"You have already told that story twice *today*."

Blessed are those with a friendly smile  
who just stop by to visit a while.

Blessed are those who make it *known*  
that I am loved, respected and not alone.

Blessed are those who through love and care  
ease the *day*  
of my journey in so many ways.

# **DOG RULES AND REGULATIONS**

## **1. Picking Up After Your Dogs:**

There are some residents or their guests not picking up after their dog. We are finding huge loads of poop and of course smaller loads.

It is disrespectful to the entire community and their guests. How would you feel if someone tracked dog poop into your home. I would think you would not like it. How difficult is it to pick up your dog poop. There is *NO EXCUSE*, it is just irresponsible and lazy.



## **2. When dog(s) urinates pour water over spot:**

Dog owners must carry a *bottle* of water to pour over their dog's urine, not spraying. It really does not matter if it is a female or male dog, female dogs have more of nitrogen. Female dogs urinate in a specific spot which makes it more concentrated, and males lift their leg and it's sprayed (exception to rule for males as pups they urinate like a female and also when they get much older)

Right after your dog goes to the bathroom, water that spot thoroughly to flush nitrogen and salts from the soil. Do not be stingy with the water. You want to use about twice as much water as there is urine to dilute the nitrogen content sufficiently.

Female **MORE** concentrated area



Male spraying **LESS** concentrated area



### **3. Letting dogs roam free on common property.**

No dogs should be running free on the common property, it is a safety hazard to your neighbors. This is a fifty-five and older community with rules and regulations. When you moved into this community you received the booklet with the rules, it would have been great if you read it, I am sure if you felt you could not abide by the rules you would not have purchased a home here.

### **4. Brookhaven does have a leash law.**

Town of Brookhaven 2024-02-22 The Code Chapter 23 Dog Control and Animal Welfare§ 23-1 Declaration of legislative findings and intent.[Amended 4-17-2001 by L.L. No. 9-2001, effective 4-20-2001]It is hereby declared and found that the health, welfare and safety of the inhabitants of the Town of Brookhaven require regulations supplementing and superseding Articles 7 and 26 of the New York State Agriculture and Markets Law and pertaining to the licensure, seizure and disposition of privately owned dogs and cats and the humane treatment

of animals. Articles 7 and 26 of the New York State Agriculture and Markets Law are incorporated by reference herein. The Town Board of the Town of Brookhaven has determined that the running at large and other uncontrollable behavior of dogs have caused physical harm to persons and damage to property and have created nuisances within the Town. It is the intent of the Town Board in the enactment.

It is the intent of the Town Board in the enactment of this chapter. to protect the health, safety and well-being of persons and property by imposing restrictions on persons owning or possessing dogs within the Town.

As used in this chapter, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

**AT Large** Off the premises of the owner and not under the control of the owner, his agent, or a member of his family, whether by rope, leash or similar device

***Dog on leash laws are laws that require dogs to be restrained by a leash or a similar device when they are outside of an enclosed area. These laws vary by state and locality, and some states may not have any leash laws at all. The purpose of these laws is to prevent dog-related incidents, such as bites or attacks. Dog owners should check the local dog leash laws before taking their dogs to public places.***

# **Book Review: “How to Know a Person” by David Brooks**

**by Michael Ettinger,  
Attorney at Law**

Subtitled “The Art of Seeing Others Deeply and Being Deeply Seen,” author Brooks explores the art of human connection. To connect with others, to make them feel seen, heard and understood, and to be understood ourselves, is a learnable skill.

Of a pastor friend named Jimmy he says, “when Jimmy sees a person, any person...he also sees a soul of infinite value and dignity...as a result, Jimmy is going to greet people with respect and reverence...if you see people as precious souls, you’ll probably wind up treating them well”.

Exploring the concept of “accompaniment” your interactions with others should be marked by willingness, not willfulness, allowing the other person to be perfectly themselves. There is a realization that everyone is in their own spot, on their own pilgrimage and your job is to meet them where they are, helping them chart their course. “Sometimes we need to hitch a ride on someone else’s journey, and accompany them, part of the way”.

Citing Aldous Huxley, Brooks observes “Experience is not what happens to you, it is what you do with what happens to you.” Or, as the writer Anais Nin put it, “We do not see things as they are, we see things as we are.”

In trying to understand others, it is helpful to ask “how are they perceiving the situation? How are they experiencing this moment and constituting their reality.” People who are lonely, who feel unseen, become bitter and mean. Hostility and callousness are rising along with our social isolation. Surveys show to 60 – 70 percent of people put themselves on the negative emotion side of the meter – empathy and compassion are needed when many people you meet are suffering within.

“Human beings, John Stuart Mill writes, are under a moral obligation to seek the improvement of our moral character.” Will we be generous and considerate or judgmental and cruel? To become a social, humble, understanding and warm person, David Brooks’ new book illuminates the way.



# Healthy You

## Water, Water Everywhere

*Supermarket aisles are flooded with all different types of bottled water. Are any of them worth the money?* By ANDREA WICKSTROM

**W**HEN WE were kids, most of us were happy to drink tap water. Today, not so much: Americans spent an estimated \$49 billion in 2023 on bottled water and drank about 16 billion gallons, according to the Beverage Marketing Corporation. Buying water for your family can be confusing and a bit stressful, though, because we're not just buying jugs that say "water" on them. Now we have to choose between vitamin water, hydrogen water, mineral water, electrolyte water. How are all these options different, and do they offer any real health benefits beyond what you can get for pennies from your kitchen sink?

### The case for tap water

In general, the United States has some of the world's safest drinking water, thanks to quality standards and ongoing monitoring by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Public water is treated before it arrives in homes, to remove potential chemical and bacterial contamination before consumption.

In addition, an estimated 43 million Americans get their water from private underground wells. This water is not regulated, so homeowners are responsible for ensuring their supply is safe for drinking, usually through annual testing.

Tap water doesn't always taste or smell good—especially water from private wells, which can be cloudy or smell of sulfur—but that doesn't necessarily mean it's not good for you. "Water can sometimes have a bad smell, taste or appearance, but these features don't usually last long



or indicate a public health concern," says registered dietitian Kourtney Johnson. If there is an issue such as flooding or a chemical spill that endangers the local water supply, your local government or water utility will issue an advisory. (Be sure not to use ice or drink water from your refrigerator during an advisory.)

Still, there has been a lot of media attention around contaminated drinking water. In April 2024, the Biden administration finalized limits on "forever chemicals" in drinking water, requiring utilities to reduce them to the lowest measurable levels. In October 2024, the Biden

administration also finalized rules requiring water systems around the country to identify and replace lead pipes within the next 10 years.

### The facts about bottled water

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requires bottlers to maintain sanitary conditions, protect the approved water sources and test the final product. So like tap water, bottled water is generally safe. But that doesn't mean there aren't concerns.

Filtered water may remove fluoride, which at currently approved levels is safe to drink and helps prevent tooth decay.

Another concern is the plastic bottles most water comes in, which may leach microplastics and chemicals such as bisphenol A (BPA) into the water.

"Growing evidence shows that microplastics negatively affect the endocrine, reproductive and immune systems, as well as bacteria found in the gut. The thyroid plays a role in regulating almost all organs in the body, and long-term exposure to plastics negatively affects its ability to regulate growth, development, metabolism and reproduction," Johnson says.

What are the different types of bottled water? These categories often overlap, but here's a general breakdown.

# HEALTH & WELLNESS



## Your Bottled Water Guide

Here's what the labels really mean



### Bottled Water

(Dasani, Aquafina, Pure Life)

► Many large brands of bottled water come from municipal water supplies—the same place tap water comes from. Bottlers may then use additional purification measures, such as reverse osmosis, to remove unwanted tastes.



### Spring Water

(Acqua Panna, Crystal Geyser, Evian, Poland Spring)

► Spring water originates from rainwater that moves underground and is filtered naturally by rocks and minerals. After it is pushed up to the ground's surface, the water is collected from the spring. Per FDA regulations, when manufacturers bottle and sell it, it must have the same composition

and quality as the spring water at its source.



### Mineral Water

(Gerolsteiner, Perrier, Topo Chico, San Pellegrino)

► To be labeled mineral water, this type of spring water—which can be either sparkling or still—must contain at least 250 parts per million total dissolved solids (minerals and trace elements) that are present at the water source, which may include calcium, chlorine, magnesium, potassium, and iron.



### Alkaline Water

(Evamor, Flow, BodyArmor SportWater)

► Alkaline water is altered to a higher pH, which some claim can neutralize acid in the bloodstream, provide for enhanced

workout recovery and help prevent disease. The science on these claims is limited, however.

“The body does an incredible job at keeping our pH within a very tight and controlled range. Consuming more alkaline water will not shift your pH outside of its normal range,” says Jen Hernandez, a registered dietitian who works with people with kidney disease.

### Enhanced Waters

(Vitaminwater, Essentia Hydroboost, Adirondack Enhanced Water)

► Some manufacturers enhance water by adding micronutrients, including vitamins and sometimes minerals. This water usually comes in sugar-sweetened and sugar-free options. In some brands, a 20-fluid-ounce bottle has up to 27 grams of added sugar—more than the American Heart Association recommends women consume in an entire day.

Vitamin-infused waters may contain more than 100 percent of the daily recommended value of vitamins B and C. But these are water-soluble vitamins, meaning that the kidneys will excrete any excess in your urine, Hernandez says. “It is ideal to get our vitamins from foods as they provide many other nutrients.”



### Electrolyte Water

(Core Hydration, Propel, Gatorade)

► Sports drinks are intended for athletes who lose a lot of fluid and electrolytes through sweat. Such drinks often aren't necessary for moderate exercisers or sedentary

people. Electrolyte water may be beneficial under certain circumstances, such as intense exercise, prolonged exposure to heat or when coping with vomiting and diarrhea. Experts say regular water is usually sufficient for meeting moderate exercise hydration needs.



### Hydrogen Water

(HFactor, H2 for Life, Susosu)

► Hydrogen water is plain water with hydrogen gas added to it. The water can be bought with the hydrogen in it, or people can purchase hydrogen tablets to add to water at home. Because hydrogen molecules are very tiny, they don't create fizziness the way carbon dioxide molecules do, nor do they change the flavor of the water. A 2024 review of studies found that hydrogen water may have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, as well as improve physical endurance. Most studies have been small, however, and findings are mixed.



### Purified Water

(Pure Life, Dasani Purified, Refresh)

► To be labeled purified, the water goes into a production plant and through a process that can include distillation, deionization or reverse osmosis. It is then sold in individual, sanitary, sealed containers. Purification typically removes all unpleasant tastes and odors from the water as well.

*Andrea Wickstrom is a registered nurse who has covered health and medical topics as well as health-related news for multiple publications including Next Avenue, Nurse Journal, HeartValveSurgery.com and Health News.*