

## Magazines are a Christmas Tradition

By Laura Stoll, Assistant to the Director/Office Manager

Library Lines column Waterville Times

December 16, 2020

This holiday season, I have been thinking back on some of the special Christmas traditions my parents established. On Christmas morning, we would wake up early and open our stockings, counting on a few surprises as well as few standards. You could always expect an orange making a soft bulge in the heel and a shiny penny stuck in the tip of the toe. I would usually get a Pez dispenser in the shape of Santa with an accompanying package of the sweet and tart candies. My parents' stockings would also include the orange and the penny but, sticking out of the top, would be a tightly rolled cylinder wrapped in festive paper. Feigning surprise, they would open it and reveal another of our Christmas traditions: a magazine.

My dad would usually get my mom the year-end issue of "People," which featured photos and stories on their best features of the past year. Everyday heroes, finely-dressed celebrities, and cute pets covered each page. After my mom was done flipping through it, it would be passed around the living room, my grandparents, aunts, and uncles each taking their turn reading it, trying to stay awake after the delicious Christmas dinner.

The Christmas stocking magazine tradition has stayed with us even though, as time has passed, magazines aren't as ubiquitous as they used to be. Much of the information found in weekly and monthly periodicals can now be found online in an instant. As a result of declining subscriptions, prices have risen, and nowadays, we're more likely to read a magazine while we wait for an appointment than receive one in our mailbox.

Thankfully, Kirkland Town Library patrons can still access all of the information in magazines in printed or digital editions. We currently receive more than twenty different print editions; we keep back issues of each title for about a year. Digital magazines are available through RB Digital; there are hundreds of titles available in numerous languages and genres.

Here are some magazines and their most recent feature stories that you might enjoy:

"Consumer Reports" December 2020 issue features top-rated gift ideas for \$50 or less, products that will help you have a happy and healthy pandemic-era holiday season, and how to shop smart when there are supply-chain shortages. Available at the KTL front desk.

"National Geographic" employs its usual combination of stunning photography and expert journalism in a cover story about the Great Lakes. What was once North America's greatest natural resource is now threatened by climate change, pollution, and invasive species. Available in the Reading Room and on RB Digital.

"Cook's Illustrated" is a go-to publication for home chefs and the November/December 2020 issue includes recipes and tips for a delicious holiday meal. Get some quick tips on holiday meal prep, learn how to master Beef Wellington, and get some new-to-you holiday cookie recipes. Available on RB Digital.

"Scientific American's" December 2020 cover story is on extreme supernovae but the issue also has shorter articles about the top ten emerging technologies, viruses, and hand transplants. A subscription to this magazine usually appears under the Stoll family Christmas tree! Available in the Reading Room.

“The Week” is a current affairs magazine that promises to make sense of the news by curating national and international stories into a succinct digest. The December 4 issue covers news headlines like the presidential election and Covid vaccines as well as books, food, business, and more. Available on RB Digital.

The December 2020 issue of “HGTV Magazine” is filled with colorful photos of holiday decorating ideas, storage solutions, and even a feature on how to choose the best white paint. You don’t need to be an HGTV viewer to enjoy this magazine, nor do you have to be a DIY expert. There are plenty of ideas to inspire anyone with an interest in their home and garden. Available on RB Digital.

If you would like to learn how to access RB Digital on your device, just give us a call at 315-853-2038 or email [clinton@midyork.org](mailto:clinton@midyork.org). We also have a helpful how-to video on our website at [www.kirklandtownlibrary.org/digital-resources](http://www.kirklandtownlibrary.org/digital-resources).