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GREER & TAYLORS, SOUTH CAROLINA
Leaps of Growth in Town and Community

March 2026
www.GTmagazineSC.com

Leprechaun
Stories

Crafty little men in
Irish Mythology

Shepherds Pie
Traditional
St. Patty's Day Recipe

**What's Driving
Higher Tax Refunds
in 2026?**

*The Cheerful
Daffodil*

A winters end to
lift your spirits



The 83rd
Running of the

AIKEN TRIALS
— Where Champions Start —

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— DID YOU KNOW — Ruby-Throated Hummingbirds Migrate to South Carolina in March

Excerpts from article written by Robin Jarvis

Spring is just around the corner and with it comes the annual hummingbird migration north from overwintering spots in Florida, Mexico, southern Texas, and South America. Hummingbirds will arrive in South Carolina during the month of March. Prepare your best hummingbird feeders for the beautiful birds coming our way.

Here in South Carolina, the most predominant species of hummingbirds is the Ruby-throated hummingbird, named for the brightly colored bib on its neck. It's the male of this species that has the signature red-throat plumage that the bird is named for. The females have grey or brown feathers at the throat. You'll spot many other species during the migration as well, each with different colorings and feather patterns. The Ruby-throated hummingbirds are by far the most popular. The males will show up first with the females about 10 to 14 days behind.

Although more of them are expected to be seen during the migration north, many may have overwintered right here in the Palmetto State. Still, more may return to South Carolina for the purpose of breeding before migrating southward again in the fall.

Hummingbirds will beef up their body weight ahead of the migration period in order to store fuel for the long journey. As they journey to their breeding ground, they'll stop at flowering plants and hummingbird feeders in South Carolina along the way. Hummingbirds are drawn to tubular flowers in bright colors, so plant those if you're hoping to attract some of these interesting birds.

If you don't have much of a green thumb, you can always buy a hummingbird feeder. It's very easy to make your own hummingbird food. You most likely already have the ingredients in your kitchen! A ratio of one part sugar to four parts water will do the trick. Nothing fancy, just normal, white, granulated sugar. No need for red dye. Experts now believe that the red dye may be causing more harm than good. Don't worry, your tiny feathered friends will have no problem finding the feeders.

Once they arrive, the breeding begins and a nest is built in a small tree or shrub where the female is the predominant overseer of the eggs and the babies.

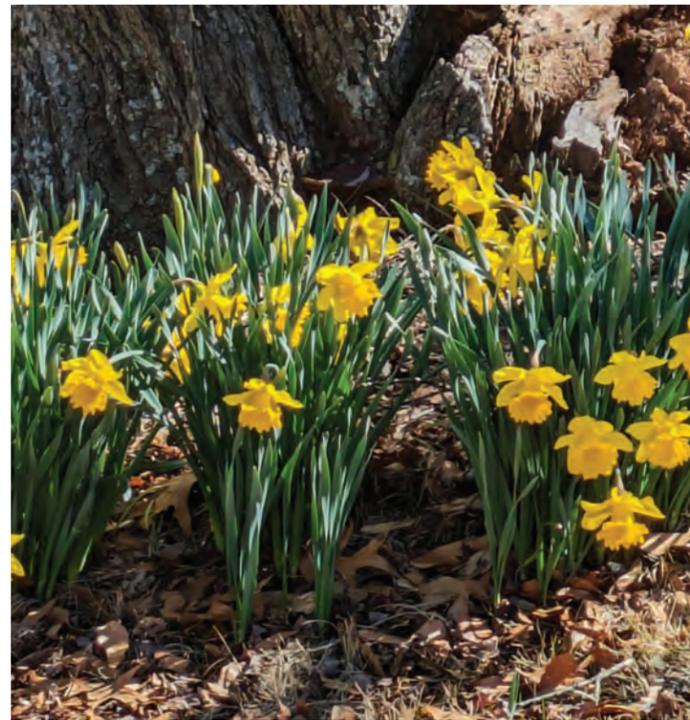
Soon, it will be spring and with it, thousands of adorable hummingbirds in South Carolina will arrive!

Enjoy all that March will bring!
Shea & Bruce Schaefer
Publishers of GT Magazine

The Cheerful Daffodil

These flowers emerge at winter's end to lift our spirits.

Excerpts from article written by Catherine Boeckmann



Daffodils are hardy perennials that come back year after year, spreading and often naturalizing. They are fall-planted bulbs usually planted in October, and the flowers bloom in late winter or early spring. (They are the March birth flower) Most daffodils grow easily in most regions of North America, except in the hottest, wet areas of South Florida.

There are thousands of daffodil varieties. The traditional daffodil flower may be a showy yellow or white, with six petals and a trumpet-shaped central corona. They are suitable for planting between shrubs, on a border, in pots, or in a woodland garden and large groves. Many gardeners plant the bulbs not just by the dozens but by the hundreds! Daffodil flowers can also be forced inside to add cheer to the winter months.

Daffodils do best in full sun, though they will grow in partial shade. They're generally not picky about soil, but good drainage is vital as they are susceptible to rot when kept too wet. Hillsides and raised beds work well. Otherwise, improve clay soil by amending it (12 inches deep) with organic material such as well-rotted compost.

Plant daffodil bulbs in the fall—at least 2 to 4 weeks before the ground freezes. Plant the bulb with the top (pointy end) set about 2 to 3 times as deep as the bulb is tall. For example, the top of a 2-inch bulb should be about 4 inches in the ground, while a 3-inch bulb should be planted 5 to 6 inches deep. Where winters are severe, make sure there are at least 3 inches of soil covering the bulb.

After the flowers fade, you can deadhead (pinch off) the faded flowers. However, do NOT remove the leaves until they turn yellow. Daffodils use their leaves to store energy in the bulbs for next year's flower. The plant continues to absorb nutrients for about 6 weeks after the flowers have faded. If you cut or mow them back too early, they will not bloom next year.

Keep watering the plants even if the blooms have faded. Once the leaves have yellowed and died back naturally, you can snip off the dead leaves at the base (or pull lightly while twisting the leaves). You can also mow the area without worry.



The Greer Children's Theatre

The Greer Children's Theatre is among GCAC's most popular programs. Each year, GCT performs three musicals or plays at either the The Cannon Centre or the Edward R. Driggers City of Greer Center for the Arts. Auditions for most GCT shows are open to children in first grade through High School, though some shows do call for adult roles as well. Audition notices are posted on our Facebook page and anyone is welcome to audition.

UPCOMING EVENTS . . .



Disney's The Lion King has captivated the imagination of audiences around the world, and now you have the opportunity to produce this one-of-a-kind musical in your community. Bring the African savanna to life on your stage with Simba, Rafiki and an unforgettable cast of characters as they journey from Pride Rock to the jungle and back again in this inspiring, coming-of-age tale.

March 6-8 & 13-15, 2026

The Cannon Centre
204 Cannon Street Greer SC 29651

ACCESSIBILITY

Sensory Friendly Tool Kits: The theatre can be a bright, loud, and overstimulating experience for many people. Borrow one of our Sensory Friendly Tool Kits to use throughout any performance, then return it to us at the end of the show.

ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION

Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a program, service, or activity of the City of Greer, should contact the office of Keith Choate, ADA Coordinator, at 864-848-5386 or TTY at 864-968-7014 as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours before the scheduled event.



Join Junie B. on her first day of first grade, where many changes are in store: Junie's best friend Lucille has found new best friends -- and Junie B. makes friends with Herb, the new kid at school. While in Mr. Scary's class, Junie has trouble reading the blackboard -- and she may need glasses. Add in a friendly cafeteria lady, an intense kickball tournament and a "Top-Secret Personal Beeswax Journal," and first grade has never been more exciting.

AUDITIONS

Date: Saturday, April 4, 2026
(Sign Up for an Audition Slot)

The Center for the Arts
804 Trade Street, Greer SC 29651

AGE REQUIREMENT:

- This audition is for ages 8 through Seniors in High School.
- If casted, any High School Seniors that are 18 years old will need to pass a background check.

WHAT TO BRING:

- Wear shoes and clothes that you can move and dance comfortably in.
- A recent, color headshot. (Directors use this photo to remember you when they're casting the show after seeing a hundred other kids in one day, so make sure to give us a photo that looks like you, not one that's overly filtered or from a weird angle.)

PERFORMANCES

June 5-7 and 12-14, 2026

The Center for the Arts
804 Trade Street, Greer SC 29651

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- If you are asked for a callback, those will be later that afternoon, starting at 5 pm.

• Rehearsals are every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday evening (6-9 pm) and Saturdays 9 am-4 pm, starting April 13. The week (Sunday - Thursday) before opening night will be evening rehearsal every day for Tech Week.

• Because of the tight rehearsal schedule for this show, we will not be able to accommodate any conflicts for vacations. Additionally, if you anticipate having to miss more than 3 rehearsals for any reason, we recommend not auditioning for this show.

864-848-5383 • artscouncil@cityofgreer.org
www.greerculturalarts.com

Irish Cream Pecan Pie

by Jennifer McHenry • www.bakeorbreak.com
Layout and Design by GT Magazine



INGREDIENTS

• For the crust:*

- 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon granulated sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup cold unsalted butter, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 2 to 4 tablespoons very cold water

• For the filling:

- 2 1/4 cups firmly packed light brown sugar
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup milk
- 3 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 3 tablespoons Irish cream liqueur**
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, melted and cooled
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans
- 1 cup pecan halves

TO MAKE THE CRUST:

Whisk together the flour, sugar, and salt in a large bowl. Add the butter and mix with a pastry blender or fork until the mixture resembles coarse meal and the butter is the size of small peas. You can also do this in a food processor.

Add 1 tablespoon of water and continue mixing. Add more water as needed until a dough forms. Wrap the dough tightly in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours. Remove the dough from the refrigerator. Let it sit at room temperature for 10 to 15 minutes until slightly softened but still cold. Lightly flour a work surface. Roll out the dough into a circle about 1/8-inch thick. Transfer the dough to a 9-inch pie plate. Trim and crimp the edges as desired. Place the pie plate in the refrigerator while you make the filling. **Preheat oven to 375°F.**

TO MAKE THE FILLING:

Combine the brown sugar, flour, and salt. Add the milk and eggs, and mix well. Stir in the Irish cream and vanilla. Stir in the cooled butter and the chopped pecans. Pour the mixture into the crust. Scatter the pecan halves over the top of the filling. Place the pie plate on a lined, rimmed baking sheet to catch any potential spills. Bake 45-50 minutes, or until the top is puffed and set. The center should wobble just a bit when you gently shake the pan.

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And . . . They're Off!



— SATURDAY MARCH 14th 2026 —

The 83rd Running Of The

AIKEN TRIALS

— Where Champions Start —

03.14.2026

A Time-Honored Tradition

••• 10:00 am •••
Gates Open

••• 11:30 am •••
Opening Ceremony

••• 12:00 pm •••
First Race Begins

TICKET INFORMATION:

General admission tickets/parking passes.
Children ages 10 under are free – ages 11 and up must have a valid admission ticket.

Advanced General Admission - \$25
Advanced General Admission Parking - \$25
Tent Permit (for reserved tailgate spaces) - \$20

TICKET LOCATIONS:

Aiken Training Track Office
538 Two Notch Rd, Aiken

Aiken Saddlery
1090 East Pine Log Rd, Aiken

Odell Weeks Activity Center
1700 Whiskey Rd, Aiken

Local Threads Aiken
124 Laurens St NW, Aiken

724 Two Notch Road
Southeast Aiken, South Carolina

Aiken Training Track Office
538 Two Notch Road
Aiken, South Carolina
803.648.4631
www.AikenTrainingTrack.com

The Aiken Trials has become a time-honored tradition as the first leg of Aiken's Triple Crown. This is a fun, family friendly event.

Beginning in 1942, the Aiken Trials has given young horses in training the enlightening opportunity to experience every aspect of live racing. This has become a time-honored tradition as the first leg of Aiken's Triple crown, held annually for three consecutive Saturdays in March. The Aiken Steeplechase and Pacers & Polo make up the other two events.

The Aiken Trials draws upwards of 10000 spectators who enjoy a day of family fun that includes tailgating, vendors and competitive racing.

We are anticipating five races on the program consisting of four races for two-year-olds and maidens (horses that may have started in a race, but have never won), running a 1/4 mile to 4 1/2 furlongs, and one race for older horses that have already won. As in the past several years, Pony races will also be featured.

The jockeys typically are local exercise riders who have an afternoon in the spotlight after paying their dues exercising horses each morning (in all weather) throughout the year. Occasionally, a trainer has brought in a licensed jockey to compete; making some exciting competition for the exercise riders!

Please join us for the 83rd Running of the Aiken Trials!





*Forget looking for a Leprechaun
... the gold is here!*



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FINDING A RARE

Four Leaf Clover

Four-leaf clovers are rare, genetic variations of the common three-leaf clover. They are produced by a combination of recessive genes and environmental conditions like temperature or soil composition, and they thrive in moist, partly shaded soil, with early spring being the best time for hunting.

Finding a four-leaf clover is no small feat, and if one four-leaf clover is found, it is likely that more exist in the same area, as the plant that produced one is likely to produce more.

Clovers have become synonymous with Ireland, and most especially, St. Patrick's Day. While the three-leaf clover, the shamrock, is traditionally associated with Irish culture, the elusive four-leaf clover has captured the imagination of people as a rare token of luck. Yet what is it that makes this small, green plant so special?

A SYMBOL OF GOOD LUCK

The four-leaf clover has long been associated with luck and prosperity. This belief dates back centuries and even spans multiple cultures outside of just Ireland. Ancient Celtic priests, or Druids, considered the four-leaf clover a powerful protective charm against evil spirits and would bring blessings to those who carried them. Medieval children believed that carrying a four-leaf clover would allow them to see fairies. President Abraham Lincoln was known to carry a four-leaf clover for good luck. Legend says the four leaves represented faith, hope, love, and luck, making it an all-encompassing symbol of positivity.

SHAMROCKS VS. FOUR-LEAF CLOVERS

It's important to note the distinction between the shamrock and four-leaf clover, as they can often be confused with each other. The shamrock has just three leaves, and is what is seen on the tail of Irish airlines Aer Lingus and used for a lot of St. Patrick's Day décor. According to legend, St. Patrick used the shamrock to explain the concept of the Holy Trinity to the Irish people. The four-leaf clover is a cousin, and does not have the same religious connotation and is instead revered for its rarity and association with good luck.

FIND YOUR OWN FOUR-LEAF CLOVER

If you want to try your luck at finding a four-leaf clover this St. Patrick's Day, consider heading to a patch of clover and scanning carefully rather than going one-by-one. Many experienced finders recommend softening your gaze and looking for an odd pattern among the sea of clovers. Often, a four-leaf clover stands out due to its unique shape.

This St. Patrick's Day, take a moment to appreciate the small, but extraordinary details in the landscape around you. You never know when you might find a bit of luck growing right at your feet!



IS CLOVER BENEFICIAL TO LAWNS?

Surprisingly, clover was once considered a common lawn weed. But, it is now standard practice to include clover seed in lawn seed mixes; it is valued as a built-in fertilizer since it can fix atmospheric nitrogen in the soil. Its has nitrogen-fixing bacteria that lives in nodes along the roots. A clover lawn provides a low-maintenance landscaping solution for many environmental concerns. Beneficial clover can also accomplish the following:

Reduces excessive irrigation: Clover tolerates drought conditions better than grass because it has long roots that enable it to access water at deeper levels.

Looks better longer: It has a lasting green color and stands up better to heavy foot traffic than grass.

Improves tough soil: Clover tolerates compacted soil better than lawn grass, and its long tap roots also help to aerate your soil.

Minimizes pollution: Clover lawns reduce the pollution caused by herbicides, pesticides, and chemical fertilizers, and they don't need to be mowed as often as grass lawns.

Attracts pollinators: Clover puts out a mildly attractive flower that draws bees and other pollinators to your landscape.

Shepherds Pie

Recipe by Elise Bauer, www.simplyrecipes.com • Layout ad Design by GT Magazine



INGREDIENTS

- 1 teaspoon salt, plus more to taste
- 3 large potatoes, peeled and quartered
- 8 tablespoons (1 stick) butter, divided
- 1 medium onion, chopped (about 1 1/2 cups)
- 1 to 2 cups mixed vegetables, such as diced carrots, corn, or peas
- 1 1/2 pounds ground round beef
- 1/2 cup beef broth
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- Pepper and/or other seasonings of choice

INSTRUCTIONS

Place the peeled and quartered potatoes in medium sized pot. Cover with at least an inch of cold water. Add a teaspoon of salt. Bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer, and cook until tender (about 20 minutes).

Preheat the oven to 400°F.

While the potatoes are cooking, melt 4 tablespoons of the butter in a large sauté pan on medium heat. Add the chopped onions and cook until tender, about 6 to 10 minutes. Carrots should be cooked with the onions, because they take as long to cook as the onions do. If you are including peas or corn, add them toward the end of the cooking of the onions, or after the meat starts to cook, as they take very little cooking time.

Add ground beef to the pan with the onions and vegetables. Cook until no longer pink. Drain the pan of excess fat, if necessary (anything more than 1 tablespoon). Season with salt and pepper.

Add the Worcestershire sauce and beef broth. Bring the broth to a simmer and reduce heat to low. Cook uncovered for 10 minutes, adding more beef broth if necessary to keep the meat from drying out.

Taste the cooked filling and, if needed, add more salt, pepper, Worcestershire, or other seasonings of your choice.

When the potatoes are done cooking, remove them from the pot and place them in a bowl with the remaining 4 tablespoons of butter. Mash with a fork or potato masher, taste, and adjust seasonings with salt and pepper.

Layer the meat mixture and mashed potatoes in a 9 x 13 inch casserole dish. Spread the cooked filling in an even layer in a large baking dish.

Spread the mashed potatoes over the top of the ground beef. Rough up the surface of the mashed potatoes with a fork so there are peaks that will get well browned. You can even use a fork to make creative designs in the mashed potatoes.

Place in a 400°F oven and cook until browned and bubbling, about 30 minutes. If necessary, broil for the last few minutes to help the surface of the mashed potatoes brown.

(Be careful when broiling using Pyrex or glass dishes, they have been known to shatter under the high heat of the broiler. It's not a worry if you are using a ceramic or metal casserole dish.)



Classic, Quick and Easy Irish Beer Cheese Dip

Irish beer cheese is a popular, savory, and often spicy, appetizer or dip made by combining sharp Irish cheddar cheese with stout or lager, typically Guinness or Harp. It is widely served as a creamy, warm, or cold spread with pretzels, soda bread, crackers, or vegetables.

www.cookwhatyoulove.com • by Chef Jenn Allen • Layout and Design by GT Magazine

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/4 cup butter
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup milk
- 2/3 cup Guinness or Harp beer
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 1/4 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 pinch cayenne powder
- 1/8 teaspoon ground white pepper
- 2 1/2 cups Irish cheddar cheese shredded

INSTRUCTIONS:

Heat the butter in a saucepan over medium heat until it is sizzling. Turn off the heat, and whisk in the flour until combined, then turn the heat on low and cook the flour-butter mixture for 2 minutes. Turn off the heat.

Whisk in the milk, beer, mustard, Worcestershire sauce, garlic and onion powders, paprika, cayenne, and white pepper. Mix well. Turn the heat to medium-low and whisk continuously until thick and bubbly. Turn the heat off.

Add the cheese and whisk until smooth and creamy. Adjust the seasoning and serve warm with your pretzels or favorite dippers.

CHEF JENN'S TIPS:

For the smoothest, creamiest dip, use cheese you shred yourself. Pre-shredded cheese is tossed with an anti-caking agent, which is grainy in dips and sauces. Yes, you'll have some beer leftover. Drink up!

There's a hint of spice in this cheese dip – feel free to add a bit more spice if you like. This dip doesn't reheat very well – it'll separate and get greasy. It is best eaten fresh.





Leprechaun Stories

Leprechauns are crafty little men in Irish mythology and if you find one of the little people of Ireland, according to folklore, you may find a pot of gold.

Tale of a Poor Mother's Misfortune

By Richard Kennedy • Appears here with the kind permission of the author.
Layout and Design by GT Magazine

In fair Ireland there came along a country road a village tradesman, strolling at his ease. While walking alongside a hedgerow, he heard a soft humming from the other side. So with care not to make a sound, he parted the branches to see the matter of it. And right there was sitting a leprechaun busy at making a pair of small soft boots, for leprechauns are cobblers to fairies, as you might know.

"Arrah!" cries the tradesman with a great shout, jumping through the hedge. "There ye be, ye little imp, and my eyes are right on ye till ye take me to the gold treasure!"

The leprechaun looks up and says, "Faith, and it's the truth, I must take ye to the gold. But ye'll have no use for gold if ye don't look out for that tree that's about to fall on yerself."

"Bad luck to ye, leprechaun," says the tradesman. "D'ye think ye'll be tricking me so easy?" And he did not look around for any falling tree, but kept his eyes on the little man.

"Ye may be clever," says the leprechaun, "but not clever enough to keep that tiger from leaping on yer back."

"Och! and that's a feeble trick," says the tradesman. "There be no tigers in Ireland." And he did not look, but kept his eyes steadily on the leprechaun. The leprechaun glanced down the road. "Ah, and there's a glorious sight! A prancing white horse and a bonny lass riding with her skirts blowing in the breeze."

"Ye come closer that time," says the tradesman. "Sure, and there are beauties in Ireland, but I'll not be looking. Me eyes are right on ye."

"That they are," says the leprechaun. "Another stitch at my work and it's off to the gold with us." He put his attention to his work for a few moments as the tradesman watched him, and with a final snip he was done with the boots. "There!" says the leprechaun and stands up.

But on that moment he jumps backward and cries out, "God's mercy! The devil himself has popped up behind ye!"

"Aye?" says the tradesman. "And he may have reason. But away with yer tricks, me little darling. I haven't blinked me eyes since first spying ye, and now it's off to the gold with us."

"Sure, and there's no fooling ye this day," sighs the leprechaun, tucking his needles in his belt. "Aye, it's off to the gold. Do ye be ready for the journey?"

"Ready as yerself," says the tradesman. "And please yer tinyness, just walk in front where I can keep me eyes on ye-" So off they went across the lovely green countryside. Soon they came upon a rope bridge stretched over a small river, and the leprechaun crossed first. As the tradesman was crossing the swinging bridge the leprechaun says, "Watch yer feet or ye'll be falling." But the tradesman crossed safely without taking his eyes off the little man.

A shallow lake stood in their way a short distance onward, and a flat-bottomed skiff was pulled upon the shore. Boarding it, the leprechaun handed the tradesman a pole and took one himself; then they proceeded to push themselves across the lake. In the center of the lake the skiff tipped dangerously to one side. The leprechaun cries out, "Look to yer pole or we'll go over!" But the tradesman stared at the leprechaun and the boat righted itself and they landed safely on the farther shore. They came next to a small canyon. A rope was fastened to a high tree branch on which they could swing across. The leprechaun did so and landed lightly on the other side. He swung the rope back to the tradesman, who then pushed off from his side.

"Watch the ground when ye drop off or ye'll be breaking a leg!" cries the leprechaun, but the tradesman keeps his eyes right on the little man and lands safely after all.

The last difficulty was a high cliff in their way. It was a dangerous ascent, and the leprechaun climbed slowly and carefully. When he was at the top, the tradesman began his climb. Many times the leprechaun called down to him to watch his hands and mind his feet, and to be careful for this and that loose rock, and to give him good advice regarding broken necks and cracked skulls. But still the tradesman would not take his eyes off the leprechaun, and finally he made it safely to the top. There they sat down and rested.

"Whew!" says the leprechaun. "Ye be a greedy man to go along so blindly in those dangers."

"Call it what ye will," says the tradesman. "And now for the gold, according to the rules."

"Aye," says the leprechaun, "and ye deserve it, the whole pot of gold. Yet it's very sad I am for the woman."

"What woman is that ye speak of?"

"The poor woman I was thinking to give the gold to before ye discovered me. So needy she is, and such a fine soul."

"Truth, and many people are poor," says the tradesman.

"Truth indeed," says the leprechaun, "but for this poor woman it's been just one misfortune against another. Close yer eyes and picture how it is with her while I tell ye the story of it."

"It's very well I can picture the story with me eyes open and looking right at ye."

"As ye say," says the leprechaun. "Well, she lives in a hut that's no more than a patch on the ground, and she has five children. Her husband was made blind when he was kicked in the head by the horse."

"Ah, that's a shame," says the tradesman. "But it's lucky he is to be alive, and a horse is always valuable."

"That it is, but the horse broke his leg when he kicked the man and had to be put out of his pain, ye know. Then the man went to walking into a well, and it was through for him in this world."

"But sure the poor family was left with a cow at least?" asks the tradesman. "Faith, and ye might call it a cow," says the leprechaun. "It gave no milk. The beast wandered into the forest and was lost, but not until she trampled the garden down. So the poor family hasn't a garden even. It's grubs and roots for them now," says the leprechaun, "and sore hungry the children are. The oldest is only eight. None have shoes, and the baby hasn't any clothes."

"Pitiful," says the tradesman, taking a handkerchief out and touching the corner of his eye. "I was a poor lad meself."

"Then ye have the heart to understand. The baby crawls on the filthy floor when the poor woman is out digging grubs, and it's terrible the way the rats go at him, and the other children just sit about crying from hunger."

"But sure they have a dog to catch the rats?"

The Legend of the Leprechaun and Mending Shoes

By Hannah Logan • Layout and Design by GT Magazine

The legend of the Irish leprechaun is a well-known one; little wee well-dressed men, often angry or drunk (or both) with a certain fondness for gold. Traditionally these fair folk are rumoured to keep their treasures at the end of a rainbow. But what is the real story behind these moody little men and their hordes of treasure?

Leprechauns are, by trade, cobblers. And their number one customers are the fairies. Fairies love to dance and will frequently dance the night away wearing and ruining their tiny shoes. When this happens, the leprechauns are paid by the fairies for their trade. But sometimes there aren't fairy dances, so there are no fairy shoes to be mended. It is during times like these that the leprechauns will venture into the human world in search of work.

When this happens, a leprechaun will knock on a human's door begging for work in the hopes that you have shoes in need of mending. If you do, the leprechaun will happily take them away to be fixed and return them, as good as new, when he is done. In exchange for his services he will be paid a gold or silver coin, which he would take to hide away at the end of the rainbow with the rest of his treasure.

But what if you don't have any shoes to be repaired? Leprechauns don't take well to not getting what they want, so if you were to say no

"They have, but he's got only three legs and is no use for it."

"God's toes, it's a sad story," says the tradesman, blowing and wiping his nose.

"Aye, a sainted mother this woman is," says the leprechaun. "The children are starving away before her eyes, sick most often now in want of money for a doctor to attend their fevers."

The tradesman began to weep softly. "And think of it," says the leprechaun. "Yer own self will soon have a whole pot of gold – yet there's a favor I'd be asking ye."

"And what is that?" sobs the tradesman.

"So very little they have," says the leprechaun. "And the poor woman is so weak she can't raise the axe to chop wood. Last of all they sold their cooking pot. Now the children eat their grubs raw and cold."

"Och, the poor woman, the poor children!" the tradesman sobs out.

"For the favor then," says the leprechaun. "D'ye suppose that when ye take the gold ye could leave the pot for the poor family to cook their grubs in?"

"God's name!" bawled the tradesman. "It's the saddest story I've ever heard. Merciful heaven, let's leave them the pot!" And he was so overcome by the plight of the poor family and his own charity that he began to weep in fullness, and he buried his face in his hands and shook with sobbing.

A few moments later when he looked up, the leprechaun was gone. Then the tradesman realized that the little man had made up the story. There was no poor woman, no hungry children, no rats and no three-legged dog. It was all a trick to make him cry and look away from the leprechaun. So the tradesman put his face into his handkerchief again and bawled more than ever before.

when one came knocking, he would curse you. The most frequent curses involve spoiled milk, or cursing your child so that he or she can only speak backwards. But whatever the curse, it's never a pleasant one, so it is best to always have a shoe in need of mending.

Now, with all the work done for the fairies, and the humans, you can imagine that these little leprechauns have quite a large stash of gold at the ends of their respective rainbows. However, the leprechaun's gold is too well hidden for a human to find. For that you would need the help of the leprechaun himself, but first you need to catch him.

Catching a leprechaun is a tricky business. With them being so small and quick, leprechauns can easily escape; something you cannot let happen unless you wish to be cursed. You can't go grabbing a leprechaun by his clothing, he is too quick. The best way to catch a leprechaun is to grab him tightly around the neck. But you need to be careful, you don't want to hurt him, just get a good enough grip on him that he can't break free. Once you have a hold of him and he can't get away you are entitled to one wish only. It is at this point that you can wish for the leprechaun's hidden gold. Having been caught, the leprechaun is bound to grant your wish and will lead you to his treasure. Just don't be surprised when he shows up at your door looking for work in an effort to get his gold back!



What's Driving HIGHER TAX REFUNDS IN 2026?

For more information go online to www.bipartisanpolicy.org • Layout and Design by GT Magazine

**The 2026 tax filing season
opened on January 26
and closes on April 15 (Tax Day).**

Policymakers have been telling taxpayers to anticipate much larger tax refunds this year than in recent years, due to several tax cuts enacted in the 2025 One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBA).

But which tax cuts are driving those higher refunds? The refund amounts for 2026 can generally be separated into two categories: OBBA tax cuts that are newly available to tens of millions of taxpayers but average in the hundreds of dollars, and OBBA tax cuts that are newly available to millions of taxpayers but average in the thousands of dollars.

SMALLER AND MORE BROADLY AVAILABLE TAX CUTS

Several new policies—from the standard deduction boost to the Child Tax Credit (CTC) increase—stand to benefit tens of millions of taxpayers.

STANDARD DEDUCTION

In recent years, more than 90% of taxpayers have claimed the standard deduction rather than itemizing their deductions. The 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) nearly doubled the standard deduction, and the 2025 OBBA not only made that larger standard deduction permanent but increased it further—from \$15,000 to \$15,750 for single taxpayers, \$22,500 to \$23,625 for head of household taxpayers, and \$30,000 to \$31,500 for married taxpayers filing jointly.

Normally a larger standard deduction is reflected in tax withholding from workers' paychecks, but OBBA's mid-year boost did not lead to larger withholdings for 2025. That means the entire standard deduction boost will be reflected in larger refunds (or in reduced tax liability for those who owe an additional payment when they file their taxes).

As with all tax deductions, the size of the tax cut from the standard deduction boost depends on the taxpayer's tax bracket. The higher the tax bracket, the larger the tax cut.

CTC - CHILD TAX CREDIT

Each year tens of millions of tax returns claim the CTC. The 2017 TCJA temporarily doubled the maximum CTC from \$1,000 per child to \$2,000 per child, and the 2021 American Rescue Plan Act increased the CTC to \$3,000 per child (and up to \$3,600 for children under 6) for the 2021 calendar year only.

OBBA permanently extended the TCJA enhancement and then increased the maximum CTC from \$2,000 per child to \$2,200 per child in 2025 (and beyond), which will show up for many families as a \$200 per child boost on their 2025 tax return. Parents may receive less than the full \$200 per child boost if they owe nothing in federal income taxes or if their modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) is greater than \$200,000 (single filer) or \$400,000 (married filing jointly).

EXPANDED SENIOR DEDUCTION

OBBA included an additional \$6,000 deduction for Americans aged 65 and older. The Tax Policy Center (TPC) estimates that approximately 24 million tax units (a tax unit is an individual filing taxes or a married couple filing jointly) will benefit from the new senior deduction.

The lowest-income seniors will see no benefit from the deduction, as they already owe \$0 in federal income tax liability. Specifically, for households making below \$17,350 in MAGI (or up to \$34,700, depending on the number of eligible seniors and their filing status), the standard deduction and the existing, pre-OBBA senior deduction already exceed their income.

The same is true for high-income seniors. The new deduction phases out when MAGI exceeds \$75,000 (for single seniors) or \$150,000 (for married taxpayers filing jointly). The maximum tax cut from the deduction is \$2,640, for two seniors filing jointly in the 22% tax bracket.

LARGER TAX CUTS AVAILABLE TO FEWER TAXPAYERS

While OBBA's larger standard deduction, larger CTC, and new senior deduction will cut taxes by hundreds of dollars for tens of millions of taxpayers, another set of rule changes will cut taxes by thousands of dollars for a smaller slice of the population.

TIPS DEDUCTION

OBBA included a new deduction for qualified income from tips. There are limitations based on the taxpayer's income and occupation, along with the line of business that their employer is in (though the latter set of limitations is not being enforced for the 2026 filing season).

Because the maximum deduction is \$25,000 and is available to single taxpayers with MAGI up to \$150,000 (and married taxpayers filing jointly with MAGI up to \$300,000), the tax cut from the deduction may be as large as \$6,000 for someone in the 24% tax bracket. TPC estimates that around five million tax units will benefit from the tips deduction, with an average tax cut of \$1,400.

OVERTIME DEDUCTION

The new tax law also included a deduction for qualified, Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) overtime. The deduction is for the "half" in time-and-a-half pay, and, like the tips deduction, has a maximum of \$25,000. (Unlike the tips deduction, the maximum overtime deduction is only \$12,500 for single or head of household taxpayers.)

TPC estimates that around 17 million tax units will benefit from the overtime deduction, with an average tax cut of \$1,400.

AUTO LOAN INTEREST DEDUCTION

Under OBBA, some taxpayers may also be eligible for a new auto loan interest deduction, limited to \$10,000 and to new, assembled-in-the-U.S. vehicles only.

Treasury data suggest that several million taxpayers may claim the deduction in 2026, though the average deduction is likely to be well under \$10,000. For example, a new car owner with a 60-month loan on a new \$50,000 vehicle—at a 7% interest rate and with a 20% down payment—would pay slightly more than \$2,500 in interest in the first year of the loan.

HIGHER SALT (STATE AND LOCAL TAX) CAP

Finally, many high-income taxpayers may see a significant new tax break via the state and local tax (SALT) deduction cap. From 2018 through 2024, taxpayers faced a \$10,000 cap on SALT deductions. In 2025, the cap is \$40,000, though that cap phases back down to \$10,000 once MAGI surpasses \$500,000.

For a married taxpayer in the 32% bracket, a \$40,000 SALT deduction equals a \$12,800 tax cut, which is \$9,600 higher than the tax cut they would have received with only \$10,000 in SALT.

In 2022, over nine million taxpayers making more than \$100,000 deducted SALT. In 2017, before the \$10,000 SALT cap was in place, 22 million taxpayers making more than \$100,000 deducted SALT. The generosity of the standard deduction will still lead many taxpayers to forego itemized deductions, though millions more may revert to itemizing to claim SALT this filing season.

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“WE WILL LOAN YOU MORE!!”

The Story Behind Green Beer



Why Green?
Green was not
always the color
associated
with Ireland
let alone beer!

You create a green beer using blue food coloring! You may be surprised to learn that this quirky tradition is not Irish at all. Green beer is actually American. It was first introduced in 1914. In preparation for a St. Patrick's Day dinner at the Schnerer Club in New York City, mastermind Dr. Thomas Hayes Curtin decided the best way to make his event more festive would be to make absolutely everything green - including the beer! But the physician's secret ingredient - a laundry whitener called "Wash Blue" was just as shocking to partygoers as the color of the beer. While many were concerned about the potential health risks of his concoction, Curtin assured them that because the solution was added to the beer in a small enough quantity, the blue dye it contained would successfully tint the beer green without causing his guests any illness.

Ironically, "green beer" had previously been used to describe young beer that had not been fully fermented and could make consumers sick. Despite the addition of a potentially poisonous dye, Curtin's guests were able to enjoy the festive drink completely unharmed. There is reason to believe that Curtin may have received the idea to dye beer from a mysterious article written in the Spokane Press circa March 17, 1910. The article divulged news of a bar on First Avenue in Spokane, Washington, that was serving green beer - though the bartender wouldn't share how he made his concoction.

WHY GREEN?

Green was not always the color associated with Ireland - let alone beer! In the 17th century, the color became a symbol of unity for the Irish people in their struggle against oppressive English rule. It was particularly important to distinguish between Catholics and Protestants in the country, where Catholics were represented in green and Protestants in orange.

Of course, today, Ireland's flag proudly flies green and orange, with a white stripe between the two to symbolize peace. Every March 17th, Irish people around the world celebrate St. Patrick, the foremost patron saint of Ireland, for driving snakes off the island - though this is really just an allegory for how he converted many Irish people to Christianity. Over time, St. Patrick's Day has taken on new meaning as the way the holiday is celebrated has also evolved. So, although the practice of drinking green beer on St. Patrick's Day is a relatively recent tradition, it represents a beverage innovation that is - much like the holiday itself - enjoyed globally.

GREEN BEER CHANGE WHAT THE WORLD IS DRINKING!

Regardless of who started it, the tradition of drinking green beer quickly spread in association with St. Patrick's Day. In 1985, the American people showed their appreciation to Ireland by shipping their homegrown green brew to pubs across the Atlantic.

Over the last century, green beer has continued to go hand-in-hand with St. Paddy's Day festivities. This is especially true for the US, which boasts a strong Irish immigrant population that dates back to the nation's inception. In fact, the number of Irish Americans in the US today exceeds 7 times the population of Ireland!

Just like many holidays, traditions can change over time. Although they sometimes seem to make little sense within a modern context, revisiting this important history allows us to trace those changes and gain a new understanding of the past and the future.

*No matter the color of your beer this St. Patrick's Day, remember to drink responsibly!
Cheers!*

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