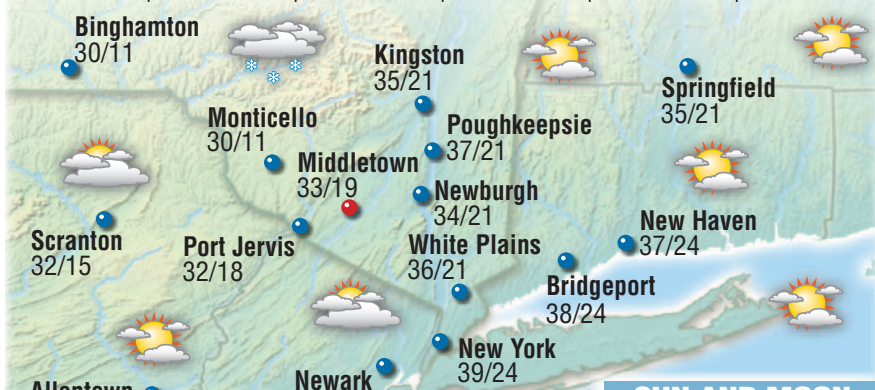


OUR REGION

SIX-DAY FORECAST FOR MIDDLETOWN

TODAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Rather cloudy	Clouds and sun; colder	Mostly cloudy; windy	Not as cold	Clouds and sunshine	Partly sunny
HIGH: 30 to 36 LOW: 16 to 22	HIGH: 22 to 28 LOW: 11 to 17	HIGH: 21 to 27 LOW: 18 to 24	HIGH: 31 to 37 LOW: 15 to 21	HIGH: 29 to 35 LOW: 11 to 17	HIGH: 29 to 35 LOW: 19 to 25



Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.

TIDES

Kingston	Today	Mon.	Newburgh	Today	Mon.
High	7:05 a.m.	8:07 a.m.	High	5:31 a.m.	6:33 a.m.
Low	1:17 a.m.	2:21 a.m.	Low	12:33 p.m.	12:50 a.m.
High	7:29 p.m.	8:35 p.m.	High	5:55 p.m.	7:01 p.m.
Low	2:04 p.m.	3:09 p.m.	Low	none	1:38 p.m.

SUN AND MOON

The Sun	Rise	Set	
Today	7:21 a.m.	4:55 p.m.	
Mon.	7:21 a.m.	4:56 p.m.	
The Moon	Rise	Set	
Today	11:56 a.m.	12:39 a.m.	
Mon.	12:37 p.m.	1:47 a.m.	
Full	Last	New	First
Jan 23	Jan 31	Feb 8	Feb 15

ALMANAC

Montgomery through 4 p.m. yest.

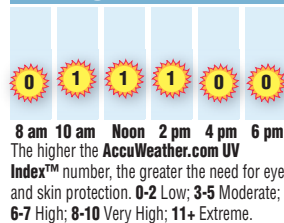
Temperature
High/low 47/37
Normal high/low 34/16
Record high 64 in 1995
Record low -9 in 1957

Precipitation
24 hrs ending 4 p.m. yest. . . 0.40"
Month to date 1.60"
Normal month to date 1.90"
Year to date 1.60"
Normal year to date 1.90"

Humidity
5 p.m. 67%

WEATHER HISTORY
On Jan. 17, 1817, St. Elmo's Fire flashed during a storm in Vermont and Massachusetts.

UV INDEX



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Bottom line: Don't put off that dreaded colonoscopy

I'd love to tell you that I suffered through excruciating pain and a pretty tender tush in a courageous move to thwart colon cancer.

I'd love to tell you that all the horror stories you hear about how the colonoscopy "prep" makes Montezuma's revenge seem like a simple upset stomach were true.



BARRY LEWIS

And I really wish I could tell you that I woke up in the middle of the procedure, looked back at Dr. Walker and said, "I get half of everything you find," as not-so-amused nurses scampered about to find more anesthesia.

But alas, none of that was true. My entire colonoscopy experience was pain-free.

The only thing left bruised after it all was my ego as I regretted having waited nearly six years past the recommended time frame to finally gather up enough courage to get a procedure that I hope will still prevent me from being a medical statistic.

More than 140,000 Americans are diagnosed with colorectal cancer every year, with nearly 50,000 dying largely due to late detection. It has become the second leading cause of cancer deaths among men and women in the United States.

Believe me, I would have loved to have milked the whole pity-me, pamper-me, I'm in pain for a few more weeks. Maybe walk with a limp and scream every time I go to the bathroom for dramatic effect. But I was fine.

The only hurt I endured was when I tried to peel the band-aid off on the top of my hand where the intravenous needle had been.

I'm pretty sure I lost some skin and a few hairs.

As for real discomfort, that came when I suddenly had to go to the bathroom just before they wheeled me in for the procedure. I had to pull the IV pole in one hand while holding close the backside of my hospital gown with the other as I slowly made my way down the hall. I prayed that the swift breeze I felt was a door opening and not the back of my gown.

I'm opening up to you, pardon the pun, if only to convince baby boomers like myself who have foolishly put off having a colonoscopy because of the perceived discomfort associated with the dreaded prep and the actual procedure.

Hey, I was one of you. Plenty of excuses.

Cancer doesn't really run in my family.

I'm pretty healthy. Why would I voluntarily want to down enough Miralax and Dulcolax to clear out the Lincoln Tunnel and then take up residence on my toilet for 16 hours, all for the unique opportunity to have a doctor confirm that I don't have my head up there.

I'm sure the nurses at Crystal Run were convinced otherwise when my answer to one of their pre-procedure questions, "What are you here for?" was "I'm having a baby."

Next thing I remember I'm waking up to one of the best sleeps I've ever had.

Dr. Walker said he took out two little polyps. I said "Merry Christmas."

I see him in five years. I'm sure he can't wait.

Folks, I was stupid but lucky. Be smart and don't push your luck.

Get a colonoscopy. *-blewis@th-record.com*

TODAY'S FOCUS: HOMES, P. 1E | VOLUME 60, NUMBER 157

B. Bedell 27	Communities.....27	Opinion 10
Books 29	Dear Abby 38	Puzzles..... 37
Bridge 37	Horoscope 38	Sports.....43
Business 25	Lotteries 6	Television.....34
Classified ... Pullout	Movies 30	
Comics..... Pullout	Obituaries..... 39	

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