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# kern county **Family** free m a g a z i n e

DECEMBER 2020



find rudy and win! pg 4 local artist teaches life skills with art pg 10  
2020 holiday gift guide pg 16 KCFM christmas song & activity book pg 23

Goodbye Paper Checks,

# Hello WIC Card!



Families can now get the new California WIC Card at their local Women, Infants and Children (WIC) office. Flexible shopping and easier checkout at the grocery store with the WIC Card!

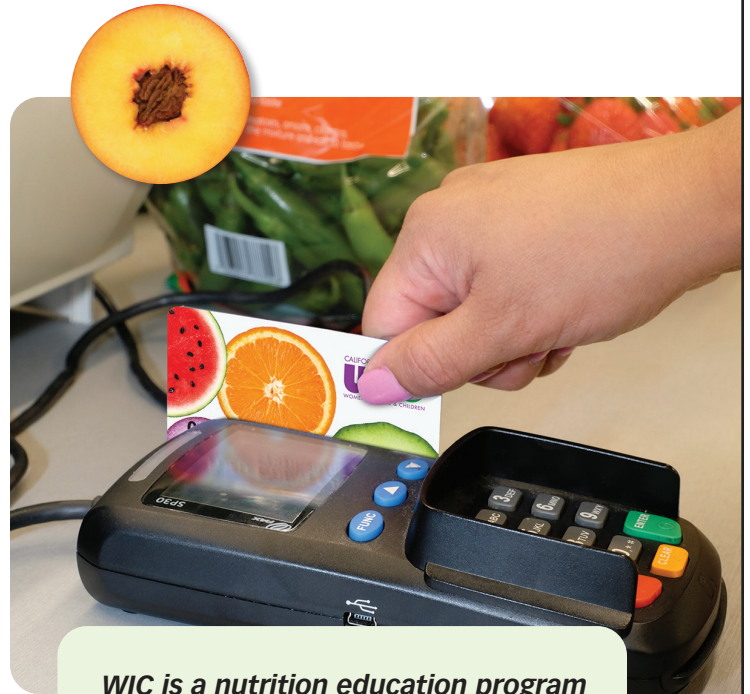
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Due to COVID-19 all appointments will be completed by phone. Call to see if your family qualifies today!  
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**MEMBERS OF**



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Vaun Thygerson,  
Contributing Writer

Shakespeare once wrote, “When words fail, music speaks.” This could not be more true than in today’s crazy, upside-down world. There have been many times since March when I have literally been at a loss for words (and anyone who knows me knows that is rare, because I am a certified talkaholic). So, many of us have turned to music to express ourselves. My younger son ordered a banjo to learn to play, and my older son has been teaching himself his favorite songs on my husband’s guitar.

Going to live concerts has been my favorite activity for most of my life. It’s one of the things I have missed most during quarantine. To make up for it, I now have my children perform songs for me. The other night, I listened to my younger son practice the piano with his new, upbeat version of “Let it Snow,” for a good half hour. The holidays NEED music and the heart knows it.

I love Christmas carols, and even though I cannot carry a tune, I have no problem belting them out for all to hear! The KCFM Songbook (pages 23-32), published each year and included with the magazine, is my go-to for Christmas carols! Although we can’t spread Christmas cheer in person, we can still find joy in the lyrics and the time spent with our immediate family. I’ll just have to host a Zoom caroling night with my loved ones complete with our ugly Christmas sweaters and hot chocolate!

Like music, art has a healing property to help us become better people. In the article, “Creating Skills for Life: Art, Confidence, and the Power of Early Learning,” on page 10, you can read about local artist Jennifer Gardiner. She

has taught art to many children via her studio, Jennifer’s Designs, and as an artist in residence with nearby schools. Hoping to welcome students back to her classes in 2021, she looks forward to teaching children to appreciate all facets of art for a lifelong love of it.

One thing about 2020 that we can all relate to is how much change we have learned to manage. We are adaptable! In Janelle Capra’s last Hello Mama article for KCFM, “Do You See What I See?” on page 12, she writes about finding the silver lining in 2020. When she looks at the world, she sees people smiling behind the masks and taking on unimaginable challenges. She explains that we can take this personal growth and make next year even better. We are going to miss Janelle’s fun and creative column, but we know she will forever be part of our KCFM family.

In the monthly Humor at Home article, “Too Much Stuff,” on page 13, Julie Willis writes about how stuff can create chaos in our lives. As her children love to collect too many things, she has the answer to keep the clutter at bay. She begs with the makers of things to just stop making things. If that doesn’t work, she is forced to engage Operation Get Rid of Stuff, which always brings on the mom guilt. It’s a cycle!

The true meaning of the 2020 Holiday Season seems more important this year than ever before, as we need to extend more giving, empathy, love, and compassion to our loved ones. This holiday season might be different this year with more COVID restrictions and fewer gatherings, but we can still find a way to make our season brighter with music! From our KCFM family to yours, have a safe and happy holiday season!



# Find Rudy Reindeer and You Can WIN!

Count the Rudys you find throughout this issue, let us know how many you find, and you'll be entered to win a

## \$100 Grocery Outlet Gift Card!



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Thank You All for Being Loyal KCFM Readers!

Enter after November 30, 2020 at [bit.ly/findrudy2020](https://bit.ly/findrudy2020)

..... in your own words

## Readers Respond: **Holiday Traditions For the Whole Family**

Compiled by Callie Collins

We asked our readers to share their favorite holiday traditions and what their plans are for this season. Here are featured answers to start your December with cheer:

### **Making tamales with the women in my family.**

- Amy Downum

We always visit our families on Christmas Eve. We make homemade sugar cookies for Santa. We also wear matching family pajamas.

- Yolanda Mefford

We made it a tradition to go after Thanksgiving to get our fresh Christmas tree and we start to decorate it.

- Anamarie Grijalva

### **We always do a gift exchange with our family and homemade ornaments.**

- Brittney Skinner

I look forward to preparing my 18 Christmas stocking stuffers for all my family.

- Diane Sanchez

### **Wrapping gifts, cooking with my dad.**

- Joshua Padgett

### **Caroling in our downtown neighborhood!**

- Jennifer Resolme

Every year, we have a party where we buy or make an ornament and tell why we picked it and then do a name pick to see who gets each other's ornament.

- Kathy Oros

### **We love to visit the lights at CALM,**

a tradition started when I first moved here to Bakersfield with my husband. This year will be different, but we are making plans to pack snacks and make cocoa for a drive into the lights.

- Heather Ward

Because our families have gotten so big, my four sisters and I have breakfast at Spencer's or Old River Grill now on Christmas Eve. So good to spend time with the ones who grew up together and love you no matter what.

- Margaret Aguilera

### **Every year, my family hides a pickle ornament in the Christmas tree.**

Whoever finds the ornament first in the Christmas tree is the one who first opens their present on Christmas Eve.

- Marina Medrano

We like to take trimmings from the Christmas tree and make decorations around.

It makes the house smell so good in every room.

- Charlinda Black

As a family, we always get hot cocoa and go look at the holiday lights. We also bake trays of goodies for our friends and family.

- Beth Hubbard

### **I make homemade ornaments with my daughter every year.**

Thank you, Pinterest!

- Vanessa De La Cruz

**KGET 17**

Days of Christmas

# TOY DRIVE

**Drop off a new unwrapped toy between December 1 - 17 at the KGET TV lobby and help brighten the holidays for children in need.**

**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF KERN COUNTY**

**BAKERSFIELD HOMELESS CENTER**  
A WAY UP

## Volunteers Needed for Shafter Christmas Store

The Shafter Christmas Store is looking for volunteers who are available to sort and pack donated toys from November 30th-December 11th and help on the morning of December 12th for toy distribution. Ideally, volunteers would include cohorts of people who interact with each other regularly (families, coworkers, friends, etc.) to reduce the COVID-19 spread risk. To minimize the exposure of volunteers and staff, all participants will be required to wear masks and all toys will be purchased online and distributed at a curbside pickup event.

The Christmas Store, under the umbrella of the Shafter Chamber of Commerce, partners with Shafter Healthy Start and works with families in the Richland School District to select families that are invited to the store. Throughout the fall months, community members, service groups, churches, and businesses work together with the Shafter Christmas store team to collect brand new toys that are then offered to parents at a one-day shopping event in December at an 80-90% discount.

Donations are being accepted. Due to COVID-19, the Shafter Christmas Store is only accepting gift card and monetary donations or toys purchased from its Amazon wishlist.

To donate or sign up to volunteer, visit [shafterchristmasstore.com](http://shafterchristmasstore.com).



## Bank of America Names Boys & Girls Clubs of Kern County as Neighborhood Champion



Bank of America recently named the Boys & Girls Clubs of Kern County as a Neighborhood Champion and will receive \$50,000 in grant support for flexible funding and leadership skills development training to advance economic mobility in Kern County.

The Neighborhood Champions program is an extension of the bank's signature philanthropic initiative, Neighborhood Builders®, the largest corporate philanthropic investment in nonprofit leadership in the country. The Boys & Girls Clubs of Kern County was selected for its work connecting youth and families with resources, activities, and programs to support stability and education.

"As we consider many of the challenges that our communities are facing – from the health crisis brought on by the coronavirus to the need for progress on racial equality and economic opportunity - the Neighborhood Champions program is a relevant and timely initiative to support the communities we serve," says Karen Zuber, Bakersfield market manager, Bank of America. "This program enables partners like the Boys & Girls Clubs of Kern County to plan strategically for growth and long-term sustainability as they navigate the changing pandemic environment to address childcare needs and support at-risk youth."

Through this partnership with Bank of America, we are developing a comprehensive training plan that addresses skill-building and promotes pathways for advancement for our youth development team members," says Zane Smith, Executive Director, Boys & Girls Club of Kern County. "Now more than ever, it is imperative that our staff have an elevated capacity to meet the safety, health, and welfare needs for our children and that talent can be aggressively identified and activated as part of our plan for the future. Bank of America's investment has made this possible for over 450 local Boys & Girls Club employees."

For more information, please visit [www.bgclubsofkerncounty.org](http://www.bgclubsofkerncounty.org) or [about.bankofamerica.com](http://about.bankofamerica.com), and connect on Twitter (@BofA\_News).



## 18th Annual HolidayLights at CALM

The 18th Annual HolidayLights at CALM will feature a drive-thru light display with millions of lights to create a new, safe entertainment experience all from the comfort of your own vehicle from November 28 through January 2 from 5:30 to 9 p.m. (Closed Christmas). Presented by Dignity Health, sound for this event will be broadcast from your car stereo on 89.7 FM.

The entrance for HolidayLights at CALM, 10500 Alfred Harrell Hwy, is from Lake Ming Road towards Lake Ming and the Lake Ming boat ramps. Teen Challenge drive-thru concessions will be available at the entrance. Tickets start at \$30 per vehicle, with passengers not to exceed the number of available safety belts and/or seats. Vehicles must be under 10 feet in height.

For more information, please visit [www.calmzoo.org](http://www.calmzoo.org).

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## MARE Outdoor Holiday Pop-Up Shop

Join MARE Riding Center for its annual Outdoor Holiday Pop-Up Shop on Saturday, December 5th, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 18200 Johnson Road, Bakersfield. This event will feature DJ Danny Hill and include over 90 local vendors, Kern Tap Truck, a holiday wreath raffle, horse kisses, food, and so much more.

For more information, please visit [www.mareridingcenter.com](http://www.mareridingcenter.com).

## Toys for Tots Jingle Bell Run

Let it SNOW! There will be snow this year at the start and finish lines of the Toys for Tots Jingle Bell Run on Saturday, December 19th, from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. at The Park at River Walk, 11200 Stockdale Highway. This event will have a timed 5K and 2K fun run and each registered participant will receive a Christmas sweatshirt and jingle bells. Every runner who donates a new, unwrapped toy will be awarded a Santa hat. After the run, treat yourself to Christmas cookies and hot chocolate.


For more information and to check on new Covid 19 restrictions closer to the event, please visit <https://runsignup.com/Race/RegistrationLookup/?racelid=70583>.





## 11 Ways to Make This Holiday Season Shine With Joy, Peace, and Family Memories


2020 has been an unconventional year. Whether you take comfort in the familiar or want to do something different to add variety to the season, celebrating is not cancelled. The human spirit, after all, endures. Good finds a way. And so will we this holiday season.


Here are 11 ways to enjoy the holidays any year, even this one:


 **Spend time with a child:** Quarantine may be the order of the day but finding a way to spend time with a child brings the holidays to life. That time does not have to be in person. Read a story via Zoom for younger children if you can't be in the same space as young grandchildren or other relatives.


 **Take a break:** If you are a parent, it is entirely possible that you've spent an amount of time with your child that is above and beyond normal expectations. While making holiday memories together can be an excellent way to spend the season, you may need a break. Don't leave yourself out of the gift-giving this year, whether that's something tangible or intangible. Permission to do less is reasonable, especially now. Time and self care can be gifts, too.


 **Pass along a family tradition:** This year more than any other, put your tradition down in writing. Store written instructions with your holiday decorations to enjoy year after year or schedule it into next December's digital calendar.


 **Connect with a local charity:** From Toys for Tots to The Mission at Kern County, there are many worthy causes this season and beyond. Throughout the year, the need continues. Start a new tradition by connecting with a charity in December and through 2021.


 **Indulge in Advent:** Advent traditions may have been lost in the shuffle previously but now could be a perfect time to resume favorite ways to count down together. A daily surprise or ritual can bring joy. A 2021 paper chain counting down to the new year can be fun to make with children if Advent is not part of your belief system.


 **Play music you love:** If holiday music is your jam, go for it. If not, play music you love and share the experience with the people you love, even if it's with a shared YouTube playlist.

 **Create a five senses experience:** Dedicate an hour to making a holiday memory by engaging your five senses this holiday season. What do you want your children to remember through taste, smell, textures, sounds, and visual memory?

 **Cook together:** Get kids into the kitchen for a hands-on experience. Make what you can't buy: time together and homemade recipes.

 **Conquer your task list:** Choose one aspect of the holiday you can manage well and tackle it. Getting started is often the hardest part when you feel overwhelmed.

 **Make games part of the festivities:** Board games teach life skills besides the usual family fun. Play a game you wouldn't normally make time for during the school year. Children notice what you make time to do that's out of the ordinary.

 **Take a picture:** We may not want to remember all of 2020, but with the wish that we experience only one pandemic, take a photo to commemorate the occasion. Even if it's not with all our loved ones at this time, a significant object, landscape, or home setting may still mark the year the holidays came during an unusual time.

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18th Annual

# Holiday Lights at CALM

**CALM**  
CALIFORNIA LIVING MUSEUM  
with designs by Josh Barnett's Lightasmic!®

**Nov. 28 – Jan. 2 • 5:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.** Gates close 8:30 pm. Closed Christmas.

The 18th annual Holiday Lights at CALM is a new, safe **DRIVE THRU** entertainment experience that celebrates the tradition of CALM's Holiday Lights—all from the comfort and safety of your own vehicle! Enjoy holiday music broadcast on your FM dial while you enjoy millions of lights in this yearly family favorite.

[www.calmzoo.org](http://www.calmzoo.org) for more info

**PLEASE PURCHASE TICKETS IN ADVANCE**

Get tickets at [www.calmzoo.org](http://www.calmzoo.org), CALM Gift Shop, Vallitix and all Valley Strong Credit Union Branches.

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## National Handwashing Awareness Week



December 1 – 7 is National Handwashing Awareness Week. According to the CDC, keeping hands clean is one of the most important steps we can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. Many diseases and conditions are spread by not washing hands with soap and clean, running water. The guidance for effective handwashing and use of hand sanitizer was developed based on data from a number of studies. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.

## 6 Immune Boosting Foods to Keep Your Family Healthier

By Tiffany Doerr Guerzon

Kids get sick often, and although colds and tummy bugs are a part of childhood, keeping their bodies strong with a healthy diet can give them an edge against the germs they encounter in everyday life. Here are six superfoods to add into your meal repertoire along with kid-friendly serving suggestions.

### BERRIES

This one isn't a hard sell with kids. Berries are bursting with bioflavonoids, the plant chemicals that help to activate the immune system and work as antioxidants to prevent cell damage. And all berries are good for you, one cup of strawberries contains the same amount of Vitamin C as a cup of OJ. Best of all, it's been proven that frozen blueberries retain all of the good vitamins and chemicals, so you can benefit all winter long. Add berries to cereal, smoothies or yogurt.

### YOGURT

Yogurt that has "live or active cultures" (listed on the label) offers probiotics which have been shown to reduce inflammation, which is implicated in viral and gut issues. The other immunity boosting properties of yogurt are due to magnesium, selenium, Vitamin D and zinc. The healthiest yogurt is the plain, unsweetened type with active cultures. Mix in a berry such as blueberries to sweeten plain yogurt, or try a commercial brand with probiotics such as Activia.

### NUTS & SEEDS

Nuts are powerhouse foods. Almonds, for example, contain Vitamin E, an antioxidant which helps to fight off infection. Nuts and seeds are not only yummy, they offer an array of phytochemicals and minerals. Nuts

have different nutritional profiles, so consume a variety to give your body what it needs. Nuts are great as a yogurt topper or just for snacking.

### SWEET POTATOES

Sweet potatoes are worthy of the dinner table year-round with the numerous health benefits. Their bright color comes from carotenoids, which is an antioxidant. Just one sweet potato contains 400 percent of the daily requirement of Vitamin A as well as Vitamins B, C and D, plus many good-for-you minerals. To get your kids to eat this goodness, try serving a baked sweet potato with butter and brown sugar instead of a regular baked potato or have mashed sweet potatoes as a side dish.

### RED BELL PEPPERS

These brightly colored veggies taste sweeter than their green counterparts making these more palatable for kids, plus they contain three times more vitamin C than oranges. Vitamin C is thought to boost white cell production- the cells that fight infection. Red bell peppers also pack a healthy amount of beta carotene which is good for eye health. Serve raw with a dip or sauted in a stir fry.

### BROCCOLI

Mom was right, broccoli is good for you. Broccoli contains Vitamin C, B, D, E and K as well as folate. More importantly, broccoli and other cruciferous vegetables contain glucosinolates which protect cells from DNA damage and have been shown to have anti bacterial, antiviral and even anticancer effects. Other vegetables in this family include cauliflower, cabbage, bok choy, arugula, brussel sprouts, kale, radish and turnips. Try enticing kids with raw broccoli or cauliflower served with a yummy dip or steam it and top with cheese. Roasting vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower and brussel sprouts bring out the sweet flavor and tones down the bitterness of cruciferous veggies.

## 5 Reasons to Add Peppermint Tea to Your Holiday Season and New Year

By Callie Collins

Peppermint tea is a favorite beverage that often makes an appearance at the holiday season but boasts health benefits year round. More than a dozen positive effects are associated with peppermint tea, some of which are attributable to its high quantity of antioxidants, which are linked to the prevention of cancer and heart disease.

Before starting a peppermint tea regimen for health purposes, consult with your doctor. While mints of many varieties are used for nausea, including pregnancy, peppermint may not be something professionals recommend. It can worsen symptoms of gastrointestinal issues like heartburn and gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD).

Because the herb has been proven to lower blood sugar, it is best avoided by diabetic patients who also use blood sugar-lowering medications. Peppermint allergies are uncommon but may occur, especially if consumed in large quantities. Sticking with a cup of peppermint tea each day should be perfectly reasonable for most consumers, according to leading herbal references.



Here are five proven benefits of peppermint tea, according to the National Center for Biotechnology Information, a division of the National Institutes of Health:

- 1. Improved alertness:** Although peppermint tea does not contain caffeine unless mixed with other caffeinated tea leaves, it has been associated with improved alertness. Memory function is also heightened immediately after consumption.
- 2. Anxiety relief:** Tension and anxiety have been shown to be less problematic after drinking peppermint tea. Fatigue and frustration have also been shown to lessen. The International Journal of Neuroscience even reports that some patients report increased self-confidence as well.
- 3. Improved sleep:** As part of reduced anxiety, peppermint may promote better sleep.
- 4. Reduced symptoms of illness such as congestion:** The menthol properties of peppermint can help relieve symptoms of the common cold like coughing, sneezing and feelings of congestion. Because it can help give a sensation of improved breathing, peppermint is considered a natural decongestant.
- 5. Better digestion:** Peppermint's effects on nausea vary. Some people find it soothing, while in others, it may actually cause nausea. While negative effects on GERD have been observed, Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) and Crohn's Disease patients can benefit from drinking peppermint tea or taking peppermint in capsules per a doctor's recommendation.





Youth Connection would like to thank our faithful sponsors and Bakersfield North Rotary for their generosity to the Youth Connection Program during this COVID Pandemic of 2020.



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for serving our community!**



"Pastures surround the art studio on our family's farmland. It's inviting. The farm is nestled in the countryside and I feel blessed every day," said Gardiner, whose studio came about on the property as an alternative to the huge spaces she was having to rent to house massive projects. Items like a lifesize Jeep, jungle scenes, and other creations from sculpture to papier-mâché were better suited to a space originally intended as one of three RV storage bays on the farm. While the space no longer houses vehicles, it does continue to greet Gardiner and her guests, students of all ages.

Positive correlations between outdoor play, art, and future problem-solving skills continue to emerge in child development. Gardiner has seen first-hand the pivotal role early exposure to art can play.

"All I know is what art has done for me and what I've seen it do for others. Art allows for problem-solving. I observe that all the time. When kids get off track, it happens right in front of you. The paint has spilled. The child has messed up. What they were afraid could happen has happened. Now what?" said Gardiner. "Well, I always encourage them to work that mess into art, and it often becomes the best part. So what does that do for a child? They figure things out and learn not to quit. They learn how to work with the situation when things don't go their way and how new plans can be better than the original plan. With young ones, using too much glue is extremely common. What they learn there, very quickly, is that a little bit goes a long way."

According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), supporting creativity in early learning connects critical thinking, math skills, spatial reasoning, and even language arts. Fine and gross motor skills that help children control their bodies and develop the skills they'll use for, say, handwriting and more precise fingerwork come together in art class.

# Creating Skills For Life: Art, Confidence and the Power of Early Learning

By Collie Collins

Jennifer Gardiner, artist, illustrator, and author, has a way of making projects come to life. And, in so doing, she has changed the lives of local children in ways both visible and yet to be seen.

Artists sometimes stand in the shadows of their own work, which could literally be the case for Gardiner, who is known for making large-scale pieces for Vacation Bible Schools, art upon request, and art for art's sake. Her most recent project, a four-foot-by-four-foot commissioned portrait of a dog, brought her a measure of joy, but there is a quiet kind of humility in the way she describes her art, a quality that underscores the earnestness of it all.

Only an artist close to their projects and truly capable could create a 16-foot tall parakeet with a sense of its existence being an everyday occurrence - especially considering the project wasn't something she chose to keep forever despite all the effort that went into its creation. Art is an integral part of life at her studio, Jennifer's Designs.

Gardiner is a small business owner who has known other titles, too. While she and her husband operate a family farm about 20 minutes outside of Bakersfield, the California native's creativity has fueled her personal and professional life, with projects large and small. One particular talent, however, stands out less neatly described by her many professional titles: a thoughtful approach to children characterizes the work she chooses to pursue with them. "Teacher" is a title she has known through private sessions, along

with "artist in residence" through working with nearby schools.

While art itself is clearly fulfilling to Gardiner, it is matched by the joy of seeing children learn.

"You never know how you can influence someone's life," said Gardiner as she reflected over a lifetime of being involved with art and young artists. "I am passionate about working with children. That's where my heart lies. Ages 4 to 14 are absolutely magical."

Welcoming children back to her studio space in 2021 is what Gardiner looks forward to, whether through neighborhood classes or longer sessions this summer. Camp offerings cover work in a variety of media, including watercolors, chalk, block printing, pottery, sculpting, and seasonal themes. A spectrum approach exposes learners of all ages to hands-on opportunities, most of which may be totally unfamiliar.

The newness of it all adds to the experience, along with fun on the farm. A typical summer session could also feature a hayride and visits to see chickens, cows, and horses. The in-person experience and chance to interact in a new setting will be a welcome change for students after the current pandemic subsides.



"I also see confidence when kids are working on a project and they make it come together despite some difficulties," said Gardiner. "The area I wish parents would focus on more as they go to teach their children is simple shapes. Kids can learn the simple shapes and everything has simple shapes when you train your eye, which can help later with math and proportion. You learn balance, measurements, and how to take a design off a piece of typing paper and blow it up to fill a big space like a church sanc-

tuary. We used to have to do all that the old-fashioned way and, although technology can help us, just knowing the basics helps."

Gardiner cites skills she learned in junior high mechanical drawing as critical to her career. Despite having learned them in seventh or eighth

grade, she considers them essential to her ability to make a living as an artist. Bakersfield College art teacher Chalita B. Robinson helped teach her drawing, sculpting, and calligraphy.

"I can personally speak to the confidence art gives a person. I would look at other girls' handwriting and think 'Oh, she has such cute writing and I don't.' That was handwriting insecurity. I took a calligraphy class and that calligraphy allowed me to have a fun side to me," Gardiner explained, who is grateful for the professional instruction she received but also for the example she saw from a young age of her mother's creativity.

"My mother, Jeannette Townsend, was the most creative person in my life," said Gardiner. "I know why I do what I do. It's because of what I experienced with a mother who could do anything. We grew up in Oildale and my mother could take on any project. She would make cabinets, she would sew, and she was just fearless."

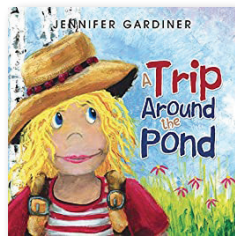
That confidence has recently been important for Gardiner as well.



"I was happy to donate my time and give it all to the Lord for 18 years," she says of her role in designing and creating master projects for Valley Baptist Church. Children who studied with her or helped closely on projects have carried forward many of the skills imparted. Among them, Gardiner is still in touch with a set of twins who continue to lead projects now as adults, one of whom owns her own art studio. "It was time to pass the baton."

A different stage of creating began for Gardiner through the fulfillment of a lifelong dream.

"I had always wanted to publish a book, but I didn't think it was going to happen. I thought I could do the art, but I didn't know about the story," she said. "It all came together. Even though I'm a granny, at 66, I'm suddenly also an author."



"A Trip Around the Pond" was published by Westwood Books Publishing in May. It is available for purchase on Amazon.com but also through local retailers like Kern County Museum and Redhouse Beef.

The book has also brought fulfillment for Gardiner. Knowing that skills taught will continue to inspire the next generation of artists is what motivates her to continue creating. Not unlike her art, those abilities, large and small, will resurface through children's lives.

"I'm grateful for the opportunity, but I also want to give the opportunity," she said.

Find out more about upcoming classes at [www.jennifergardiner-books.com/](http://www.jennifergardiner-books.com/).

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# Do You See What I See?



*Hello Mama!*

We finally made it to the last month of 2020. Can I get an “Amen” from the seats in the back?! And, what a wild ride it has been!

I recently read a post on social media that resonated with me:

**“Plot twist: 2020 has actually been the best year**

**of your life. You’ve faced challenge after challenge, you’ve adapted, and you’ve overcome. 2020 has forced you to grow exponentially. Don’t take that for granted.”—Unknown**

So, as you look back on all that was 2020, what do YOU see? Do you see what I see?

No, I’m not breaking into the Christmas song, but I am encouraging you to look a little deeper to see what holds true for your growth this past year. Here’s what I see...

**I see a mom who, despite having her world turned upside down by a global pandemic, still chose to get up every single day to make breakfast for her children, helped them log on to their virtual classroom, and learned how to Zoom at home and at work.**

**I see a mom who learned to cook more than she ever thought possible!** She tried out new recipes via Pinterest, Rachel Ray and good ole’ Betty Crocker. She failed at some but overall provided healthy, home-cooked meals for her family.

**I see a mom who was declared an Essential Worker from day one.** Who pushed past her fear of Covid-19 to take care of others. Who wore ALL the PPE! All. The. Time. And, no matter how she was feeling, chose to get up every day to save lives.

**I see a mom who chose to sit with her pain and the pain of others when racial tensions almost broke her.** But, instead of avoiding hard

conversations, she leaned in to that very pain to support others and to make the necessary steps toward her own healing.

**I see a mom who is emotionally, mentally, and physically exhausted but who never gave up.** Who chose to show up for her children, her community, and most importantly, for herself.

**I see a mom who is wonderfully and beautifully made.** Who may rock sweat pants, business suits, or dress in full PPE for others. Who wears a smile behind her mask, even on the hardest days.

**I see you.**

Yes, I feel like this year has given me 20/20 vision to really see “All The Things” in 2020. What I now see with extreme clarity is that I can do hard things, learn new things, and be willing to take a pause on almost everything. I see my children and family who have bonded more over the last year than we have in the last decade. I see friends who have come together during tough times despite their differences. And, I believe that we will take all these lessons learned and personal growth into a New Year that is full of possibilities.

Oh, Mama, it has been a pleasure writing for

you. I want to thank my publisher and friend, LJ Radon, for the opportunity to share my voice with you in this column over the past year and a half. We have laughed, we have cried, we may have challenged our own beliefs and mindset, but I hope, overall, that we have learned to lean in and support each other on this journey of motherhood.

This is my last article in this monthly series, but I know it won’t be the last time I contribute a story to this treasured family magazine.

Please stay in touch via social @hellomama on Facebook or Instagram, or send me an email to [Janelle@caprapr.com](mailto:Janelle@caprapr.com) with subject: Hello Happy Mama. From my family to yours, I wish you all a very blessed Christmas and a healthy and Happy New Year!

**Happy Mama December Contest**  
 Win a Nespresso machine and pods, valued over \$150, sponsored by  
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# TOO MUCH STUFF!

To the Makers of Things: Can you please stop making things? While I do appreciate the abundance of Stuff you have blessed our little family with, our house is already full of Things. Mostly things that have no place and whose purpose expired years ago. When I walk past a table, or even a bedpost, the part of me that is bigger than I remember it being knocks something down.

My children have clothes hangers hanging from their curtain rod. They have named them. One of my children will say to me, "Mom, have you seen Silver?" I will imagine Silver is a plastic horse or a stuffed animal. But it turns out that Silver is one of the clothes hangers they have named. They have an entire herd of them.

Dear Makers of Things, you can have your clothes hangers. And plastic horses and stuffed animals. Also, please, can you be a little faster about collecting the recycling? Too often, my children recover a precious piece of "art" that I, in my incomprehensibly vast ignorance, have mistaken for a scrap of used paper.

Piled on my children's dressers are books and pictures, mixing in company with an orange juice cap, sticks, soap shavings, the carefully peeled off label from a shampoo bottle, and a small collection of the little plastic "tables" that hold the center of a pizza together when you order delivery.

And the boxes! Oh, my. I do realize that toddlers (also cats) are attracted to boxes and that they largely ignore the Stuff that comes in the boxes. My toddlers graduated to children who not only hoard the Stuff, but ALSO insist on keeping the box. And any wrapping paper or labels that came with it.

Here's a challenge for the Makers of Things: Can you please package things in unattractive—or better yet, invisible—containers? Because, as it is, I find myself cutting off tags and hiding them and taking new shoes out of the box before I hand them over.

My neighbors sometimes give my kids their cast-off Stuff. Grandparents send Stuff. Even my husband has been known to bring swag back from conferences and gift it to my kids. (Like, doesn't he know?)

And then, when I ask my little darlings to get rid of an old T-shirt that doesn't fit, they sob like I'm trying to take a puppy away from them. My husband recently found one of my 7-year old's old onesies in the garage. He brought it in to show her how little she used to be. She responded by insisting that it still fit her and that she needed it. And then she proceeded to demonstrate that it fit by stepping into the leg holes and trying to stretch it over the clothes she already had on.

When they act like this, my Mom Guilt rises up and catches in my throat, and I am sure I am The Absolute Worst Parent Ever. After all, how bad is it to want to keep stuff?

This whole inner conflict necessarily leads to Operation Covert Get Rid of Stuff, which also makes me feel like the Worst Parent Ever—but without the added crying and complaining. So there is that.

So, yeah, You Who Make Stuff, please stop. We have exceeded capacity. As for friends, neighbors, and family members, instead of a gift, perhaps you could arrange a trade: Your gift for an equal size box of junk from my kids' room.

# CALIFORNIA OLIVES:

## Unique Crop Yields Health Benefits, Family Recipes and Farming Traditions

By Callie Collins



The California Olive Committee (COC) is comprised of two canneries and nearly a thousand growers who are responsible for producing 95% of olives grown in the United States. Over 56% of California Ripe Olives are located in Tulare County, while 36% are grown in Sacramento, Glenn, Tehama, and Butte counties. California Ripe Olives are one of two varieties: Manzanillo and Sevillano. These two varieties produce different sizes of olives ranging from small to colossal with harvest beginning in early September and concluding in mid-November. Each California olive is treated with the highest level of care from planting to harvesting by some of the finest stewards of the land.



The Aguiar and Silveira Family

### Ripe olives: Grown in California, enjoyed by families everywhere."

That slogan has varied through the years but it touts a single important fact: California is the only state where olives are grown. California agriculture includes an abundance of fruits, vegetables, grains and more but a particular pride surrounds olive growing unique to the area.

The California Olive Committee offers an official history of olives in California that traces their literal roots back to the San Diego Mission where cuttings were planted in 1769. Franciscan monks in northern Mexico used olives in their cuisine, traditional dishes

adapted from old world traditions based in Spain and Morocco.

California's tropical climate proved ideal for the cultivation of olives, a standout ingredient in a variety of recipes from around the world.

### The Health Benefits of Olives

Nutritionists have long touted the benefits of the Mediterranean diet, of which olives are an important part. They also fit with paleo, keto, low-carb and other specialty diets. The cardiovascular benefits of olive consumption is often associated with the use of olive oil, which is often a staple of these diets too. Fiber is also an added benefit, along with lowering blood sugar.

Olives are an excellent source of monounsaturated fatty acids, which lower LDL, known as bad cholesterol, while helping maintain HDL, good cholesterol. Nutritionists recognize their role in cardiovascular health, as they positively correlate with lower blood pressure and reductions in the inflammation that causes heart disease, especially when consuming olive oil or a low sodium version of the fruit.

As a rich source of antioxidants, olives have also been shown to reduce the risk of certain cancers by protecting cellular DNA.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) have published multiple studies about the benefits of polyphenols, which also reduce inflammation, and help prevent bone fractures. Olives not only offer that unique compound, but also vitamin E, which benefits brain health and has even been associated with a lower risk of Alzheimer's disease according to the NIH.

Making olives part of your daily diet is a healthy habit and an ideal choice for snacks, side dishes and more. Find olive recipes online at <https://calolive.org/recipes/>.

### Pride in California Agriculture: Olive Grower Mike Silveira

The U.S. Department of Agriculture lists California as a primary producer of olives with about 4% market share worldwide. The olive industry contributed more than \$500 million to the state's economy last year, with more than 100,000 tons of olives produced for consumption.

While those statistics are impressive, so are the people behind the industry: local growers, of which there are more than 1,200 in California who dedicate more than 35,000 acres to olive production.

Mike Silveira of Orland grew up on family-owned land where he enjoyed growing plants as a child. From the age of 10, he decided to pursue the family business and started picking olives the same year; it wasn't long before he knew how many olives it takes to fill a box.

That work ethic underscores all that he does on the farm, which has been in the family for nearly a century. Mike's cousin, Jeff Aguiar, also farms nearby. It was their grandfather who emigrated from Portugal to start a new life in California, first with a dairy and later with olives. The family business has grown and changed along with the industry but the natural glory of the land remains.

"I love working with my husband because, at the end of the day, we walk around and enjoy the beauty of our farm and we can enjoy being with each other," said wife Susan Silveira.

Mike now serves as chairman of the California Olive Committee and looks forward to sharing traditions as a multigenerational farmer. "It's a great lifestyle and we're hoping future generations will enjoy it," said Mike.

## CHEESY STUFFED GREEN CHILE OLIVE BREAD

Recipe courtesy Britney Breaks Bread

### Ingredients

- 2 1/4 tsp. Active Dry Yeast
- 2 tbsp. Granulated Sugar
- 1 cup Whole Milk, lukewarm
- 1 cup Green Chiles, drained
- 2 cups Sharp Cheddar Cheese
- 1 cup Black Olives, sliced
- 2 Eggs
- 5 cups All-Purpose Flour
- 1 tsp. Salt
- 2 tbsps. Salted Butter, room temp.

### Filling

- 1 1/2 cup Sharp Cheddar Cheese
- 3 tbsps. Salted Butter, room temp.
- 1/2 cup Black Olives, diced
- 2 tsp. Garlic Powder

### Directions

1. In a mixing bowl, gently whisk together active dry yeast, lukewarm milk, and

sugar. Allow yeast to bloom for about 10 minutes (it should be foamy and bubbly).

2. Fit a stand mixer with the dough hook attachment and add the yeast mixture, drained green chiles, sharp cheddar cheese, olives, eggs, and salt. Add one cup of flour at a time and begin mixing on low speed and gradually increase to medium speed once dough begins to form. Continue to mix for 5-8 minutes. Dough should be smooth and should pull away from the bowl.
3. Add 2 tablespoons of butter, one at a time, and continue to mix for an additional 5 minutes. If dough is still sticking to the bowl, add an additional tablespoon of flour.
4. Add dough to a well oiled bowl and allow dough to rise in a warm place for about 1 hour, until it has doubled in size. (Tip: Leave in the oven with



the light on and allow dough to rise in the oven)

5. While dough is rising, make the filling by combining the sharp cheddar cheese, butter, black olives, and garlic powder in a bowl and mix until combined. Preheat oven to 350°F.
6. Once dough has risen, add dough onto a well floured work surface. Use a rolling pin to roll dough into a 12 x 18 rectangle. Lightly coat the dough with the cheese/olive filling. A light layer is all that is needed.
7. Roll into a log by rolling the dough lengthwise. Cut log into 1 inch rolls and pinch the sides and roll into a ball. (if the sides aren't sticking, wet your fingers with water and pinch again). Add rolls to a cast iron skillet OR 9 x 13 baking lined with parchment paper. Allow dough to rise again for 20 minutes.
8. Brush dough with a beaten egg and bake for 35-40 minutes. Garnish with fresh thyme, additional thyme, and flake salt.

you can do it .....

## Festive and Flavorful Holiday Snacks (Family Features)

Although beloved in pie, pecans are a versatile nut that can be used beyond the pie shell - add them to a snack mix, incorporate them into granola or munch on them straight from the bag. Delicious and nutritious, 1 ounce of pecans offers 3 grams of plant-based protein and 3 grams of fiber, plus 12 grams of "good" monounsaturated fats and only 2 grams of saturated fat - perfect to power you through long days of holiday shopping. Discover more nutritious, delicious and festive recipes at [AmericanPecan.com](http://AmericanPecan.com).



### REINDEER PECAN BROWNIES

Prep time: 20 minutes | Cook time: 15 minutes | Yield: 20 brownies

#### Ingredients

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 1 stick (1/2 cup) unsalted butter, melted
- 1 tablespoon pecan or canola oil
- 1 cup, plus 2 tablespoons, granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon espresso powder (optional)
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 20 raw pecan halves, cut in half
- 40 candy eyeballs
- 20 red chocolate candies
- 1/4 cup chocolate chips

#### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Spray mini muffin tin with nonstick cooking spray.
2. In large bowl, whisk melted butter, oil and sugar until well combined. Add eggs and vanilla extract; beat until mixture is thick and pale in color, about 1 minute.

3. Sift in flour and cocoa powder. Add espresso powder, if desired, and salt. Using rubber spatula, fold dry ingredients into butter mixture until just combined. Batter should be thick.
4. Using 1-tablespoon cookie scoop, transfer batter to prepared mini muffin tin. Bake 13-15 minutes until toothpick inserted in center comes out mostly clean, with some lingering crumbs.
5. Add chocolate chips to heat-proof bowl; microwave until smooth and melted. Pour melted chocolate into sandwich bag and cut off small portion of one corner to use as tip. Use melted chocolate to "glue" on pecan antlers, candy eyeballs and red candy noses to brownies.
6. Allow chocolate to set before transferring brownies to airtight container.

Note: Brownies will stay fresh for up to three days.

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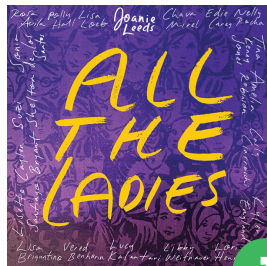
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# 2020 HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

NAPPA award winning items compiled by Elena Epstein

## GIFTS THAT LIGHT UP THE WORLD



1



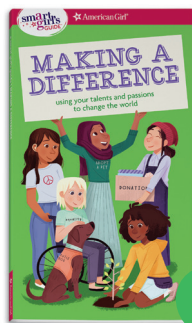
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## HANDS-ON BOARD GAMES & ACTIVITIES



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13



14

1. All the Ladies by Joanie Leeds \$10, ages 5-8, joanieleeds.com
2. Healthy Roots Dolls \$79.99, ages 6+, healthyrootsdolls.com/
3. Cooking Class Global Feast! 44 Recipes That Celebrate the World's Cultures \$18.95, ages 8+, storey.com
4. Kindness Cards for Kids \$18.95, ages 5-9 and parents, shambhala.com
5. A Smart Girl's Guide: Making a Difference \$12.99, ages 10+, americangirl.com

6. Artsy Fartsy \$24.99, ages 10+, artsyfartsygame.com
7. BUILDZI: The fast-stacking, nerve-racking, block-building game! \$24.95, ages 6+, ilovetenzi.com
8. Kidizoom® Creator Cam \$59.99, ages 5+ years, vtechkids.com
9. Trailz \$14.99, ages 7+, playmonster.com/product/trailz
10. Chocolate Pen \$29.99, ages 6+, SkyrocketOn.com
11. Spirograph Scratch & Shimmer \$19.99, ages 8+, playmonster.com/product/spirograph-scratch-shimmer/
12. Back to the Future: Dice Through Time \$29.99, ages 10+, target.com
13. The Little Mermaid Tubby Time \$14.99, ages 3+, amazon.com
14. High Contrast Baby Pack \$16.99, ages birth+, banana-panda.com/



15. Dough Parlour Deluxe Build-Your-Own Gift Box \$60, ages 2+, doughparlour.com/

16. Ravel Tales \$9.99, ages 5+, sunnydaysent.com

17. Cool Maker Hollywood Hair \$24.99, ages 8+, spinmaster.com/

18. Squeakee the Balloon Dog \$59.99, ages 5+, squeakeepets.com

( LEARN & PLAY )

19. Magical Tales Black and White Gymini \$47.99, ages birth-6 months, tinylove.com

20. Telly Jr. Teaching Time Clock \$27.99, ages 3+ years, TheLearningJourney.com

21. 100 Animals Book \$17.99, ages 18+ months, store.leapfrog.com

22. Octobo, The Tech Toy That Teaches \$139, ages: Birth-7, thinker-tinker.com/

23. Real-Action Fire Engine \$49.99, ages 3+ years, lakeshorelearning.com

24. Disney Junior Doc McStuffins Wash Your Hands Singing Doll \$24.99, ages 3+, JustPlayProducts.com

25. Hairdorables Hair Art Series \$12.99, ages 3+, hairdorables.com

26. PJ Masks Romeo's Flying Factory Playset \$44.99, ages 3+, JustPlayProducts.com

27. Animal Rescue Large Truck \$59.99, ages 3-8, schleich-s.com

28. Gol Gol Cory Carson® Cory's Stay & Play Home™ \$39.99, ages: 2+, www.vtechkids.com



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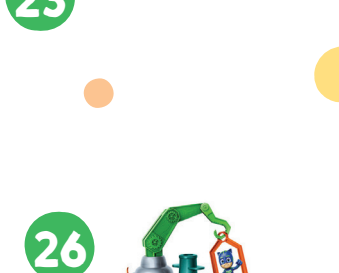
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28



# KERN COUNTY FAMILY MAGAZINE *daily happenings* THE **BEST** LOCAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS!

Our printed version of the calendar has been edited for space.  
For more details about these events or activities not listed please visit  
[www.kerncountyfamily.com](http://www.kerncountyfamily.com)



**November 28 – January 2**

## HolidayLights at CALM

Enjoy the 18th annual HolidayLights at CALM – presented by Dignity Health, as a safe, drive-thru event for 2020! Questions – email [HolidayLights@kern.org](mailto:HolidayLights@kern.org)

**CALM**  
10500 Alfred Harrell Hwy,  
Bakersfield, CA 93306  
661-872-2256  
Time: 5:30pm-9pm  
<http://calmzoo.org>

**December 1 – 17**

## 17 Days of Christmas

Boys & Girls Clubs of Kern County is partnering with the Bakersfield Homeless Center and KGET - TV 17 Bakersfield to help brighten the holidays for children in need in our community as part of our annual 17 Days of Christmas Toy Drive. Drop off your new unwrapped toys between December 1 – 17 at the KGET lobby.

**KGET - TV 17**  
2120 L Street  
Bakersfield, CA 93301  
661-325-3730

**December 5**

## Holiday Pop-up at MARE

Join MARE, Mamas from the Block, and over 85+ local vendors for a day of outdoor shopping, sipping, and horse kisses at their Outdoor Holiday Pop-up! Come get your holiday shopping on while you sip & support MARE Riding Center. Family friendly crafts, a Holiday Wreath Raffle, Kern Tap Truck, food, and music!

**MARE Therapeutic Riding Center**  
18200 Johnson Rd,  
Bakersfield, CA 93314  
(661) 589-1877  
Time: 10am – 3pm  
<https://www.mareridingcenter.com/holiday-open-house>



**December 5, 6**

## Skateland's Farmers Market & Christmas Craft Fair

Come to Skateland's Farmer's Market and Christmas Craft Fair on Saturday Dec. 5th and Sunday Dec. 6th, 2020 from 9am to 4pm. There will be numerous booths for you to shop for the holidays. Food, Crafts, handmade treasures, Garden art, Seasonal gifts, Re-purposed items, Handmade jewelry, Art, so much more. MASKS are required. If you do not have a mask we have masks available to purchase from vendors.

**Skateland**  
415 Ming Ave,  
Bakersfield, CA 93307  
(661) 831-5567  
Time: 9am – 4pm  
<https://www.facebook.com/events/1128771544205247>

**December 9**

## Drive-Thru Toy Drive

Let's spread the Joy this holiday season and benefit the Bakersfield Local Toys for Tots! Please bring a new, unwrapped toy for a child in need to BMW of Bakersfield. Santa Claus will be on our lot for you to drive by and wave.

**BMW of Bakersfield**  
5400 Gasoline Alley Drive  
Bakersfield, CA 93313  
661-396-4040  
Time: 4pm-7pm  
<https://www.facebook.com/events/395143168504277>

**December 11 & 12**

## A Rez Christmas Story

We are excited to be hosting a brand new, free, drive through, Christmas event. We will be using the parking lot at our River Campus, 48 Manor Street, to set up scenes depicting the story leading to the birth of Jesus. A few other drive-through surprises are happening along with a spot to receive a Christmassy sweet goodie bag.

**Resurrection Church**  
48 Manor St,  
Bakersfield, CA 93308  
(661) 616-3399  
Time: 6pm-8pm  
<https://www.facebook.com/events/781373465923683>

**December 12**

## Safe Santa Express Stop

This year the Autism Society-Kern Autism Network's Santa will provide a safe express visit all done by your vehicle. Registration is required as Santa and his reindeer, Rudolph, will have goodies for the children who come to visit him.  
**Canyon Hills Assembly of God Church- Gymnasium**  
7001 Auburn Street  
Off of Hwy.178 and Fairfax  
Bakersfield, CA 93306  
(661) 489-3335  
Time: 11am-12:30pm  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/safe-santa-express-stop-registration-128693749469>

## Holiday Teen Biz Expo

Do you, your child or teen have a business? Reserve a space at the Holiday Teen Biz Expo. This event will be inside, if permitted, or outdoors in a sheltered garden.

**Upstart Village**  
201 New Stine Rd. Bakersfield  
(661) 343-8280  
Time: 10am-2pm  
[www.teenbizexpo.com](http://www.teenbizexpo.com)



**December 19**

## 3rd Annual Jingle Bell Run for Toys for Tots

The Bakersfield Jingle Bell Run returns to Bakersfield with Covid Protocol Safety Measures, Christmas Sweatshirt, Medallion/ornament, Jingle bells, Christmas Music and more. Bring a toy for Toys for Tots and receive a Santa Hat!  
**The Park at River Walk**  
11298 Stockdale Hwy,  
Bakersfield  
Time: 8am  
(559) 289-8444  
[www.BakersfieldJingleBellRun.com](http://www.BakersfieldJingleBellRun.com)

## Feliz Skavidad 2020!

It's the most wonderful time of the year! Let's dance into Christmas with some tasty brews and great food with Mento Buru & special guest DJ Mikey at Temblor Brewing Company!  
**Temblor Brewing Company**  
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(661) 489-4430  
Time: 6pm – 11:30pm  
<https://www.facebook.com/events/540239019911290>



**December 30**

## Full Moon Ride

Join us for a family-friendly, all-ages cruise starting at Beach Park and following the bike path to the Marketplace. All ages and skill levels are encouraged to come. The ride is a comfortable, 10-12 mph pace and welcomes riders of all kinds. Questions? Email [info@bikebakersfield.org](mailto:info@bikebakersfield.org)  
**Beach Park**  
3400 21st St. Bakersfield  
(661) 321-9247  
Time: 7pm-9pm  
<http://bikebakersfield.org>

## SUBMIT YOUR EVENTS!

Our happenings section is dedicated to bringing the most current events to you, but we need your help! You can submit your calendar events at [kerncountyfamily.com](http://kerncountyfamily.com) by choosing Calendar on our website's menu bar and clicking the pull down tab, "Submit Calendar Event." Please submit calendar events by the 10th of each month prior to ensure we have enough time to consider your event. Best of all, it's FREE!

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Kern Autism Network

"Autism Society Chapter-Kern Autism Network provides support, awareness, information and education to families and the public throughout Kern County"



**Upcoming December Events**

Safe Santa at Canyon Hills Assembly of God Church

Driveway- Saturday, December 12th from 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Registration is required via Eventbrite,

see our Facebook link for further information.

We wish all of our families a very safe Merry Christmas!

Although our office still remains closed, we are still taking emails and calls to further assist families during this time of need.

**EARLY SIGNS OF AUTISM:**

- Delayed language development
- Repetitive language
- Little or no eye contact
- Repetitive mannerisms
- Inflexible routines or rituals
- Preoccupation with object parts
- Little interest in friendships

**SERVICES OFFERED:**

- Monthly Parent Support Groups
- Adults on the Spectrum Support Group
- Law Enforcement Trainings
- Autism/Asperger Workshops-Seminars
- Local Resources, Community Projects
- Camps & Activity Scholarships
- Evening & Weekend Phone support

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*Wishing Joy & Peace to All!*

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3. Limit the number of sugary snacks you eat each day
4. Visit your dentist every six months or as recommended



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# 2020 Christmas Song & Activity Book



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# The Holiday Season is Upon Us!



Christmastime in Kern County is always a magical time.

We may not have snow, but we've got spirit! From the garland and trees and lights to cookies and hot cocoa, there's plenty to enjoy this season.

Here at Kern County Family, we've been as busy as Santa's elves getting our annual holiday kids' activity book together. Each

year, as our gift to you and your family, we assemble festive puzzles and games, because it's great to take some time to just have a little fun!

But what would the holidays be without music? We've included a few carols so your family can lend some song to the season. Gather your family, friends, and neighbors-virtually, of course-and make some holiday memories!

**Wishing You a Merry Christmas  
& a Wonderful New Year—  
from our family to yours!**

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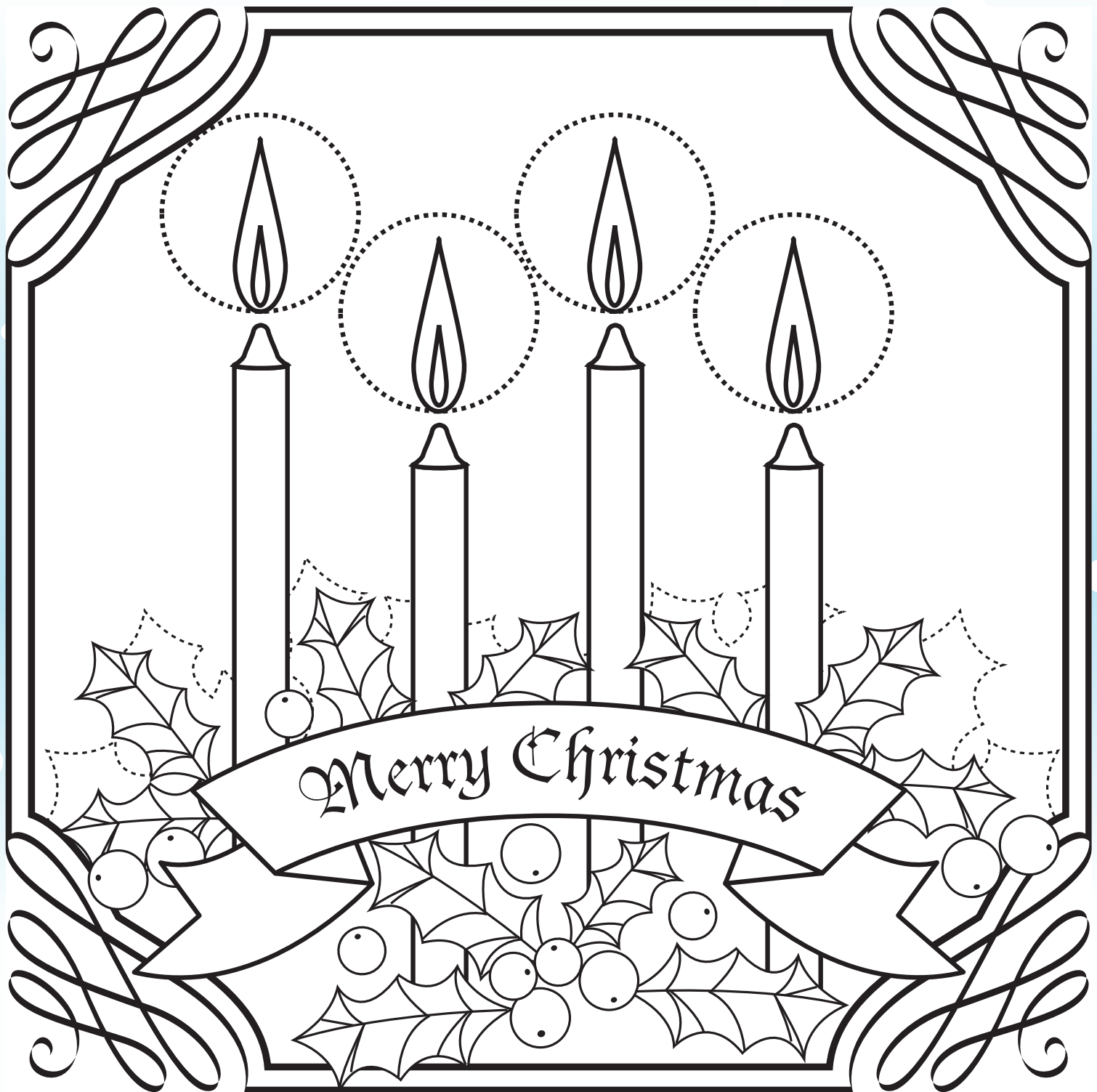


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# Christmastime Word Search

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 G U C Y B S S D T V V F A P U C W F G J  
 N O G U T M E K N Y H D C S P R G E N C  
 I C N Y C N G C H E T H U N A R U F S A H  
 M O I U I F N E O J I H R Y I T C R I C N  
 I K H E C I E E G E V G F T I P K V X Y  
 R I G T A E W B S S G N L A R S Y Y H E L  
 T E I I K N E R U L L I V R O J A D S B N  
 M S L D X T T A P N S P H O J A D S B N  
 H I F E R E M T H W T P S C M D T B U B  
 T B N V C R Y I E C G O L E Y I U X R Y  
 M Y F X L T X O A L M H D D V L T I Y Y  
 R T Y Y W A E N S Y T S E A N O L S H N  
 A I L W P I F I J O Y I L E U H A O J L  
 W V I X G N P I O R E B M E C H E D C J S  
 J I M L F T P O W A W T W D H Y O M O T  
 H T A S U A L C A T N A S S T K I H K F  
 J A F C A R O L I N G E M D L U X H N I  
 E N E U X P Y N I L O R E E D N I E R G

CAROLING  
 CELEBRATION  
 CHURCH  
 COOKIES  
 DECEMBER  
 DECORATIONS

ENTERTAIN  
 EXCHANGE  
 FAMILY  
 FESTIVAL  
 FESTIVE  
 FRIENDS

GIFTS  
 HOLIDAY  
 JOLLY  
 LIGHTING  
 NATIVITY  
 PARTIES

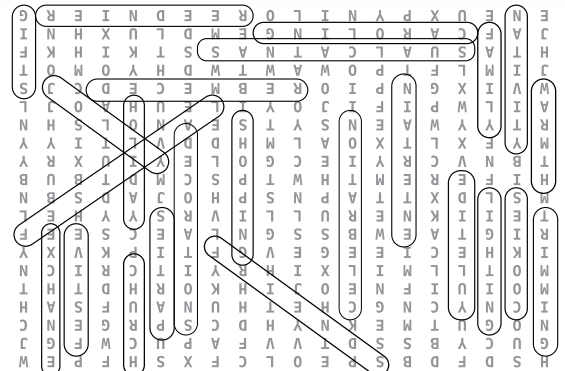
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# “Jingle Bells”



Dashing through the snow  
In a one-horse open sleigh  
O'er the fields we go  
Laughing all the way

Bells on bobtail ring  
Making spirits bright  
What fun it is to ride and sing  
A sleighing song tonight! Oh,

Jingle bells, jingle bells  
Jingle all the way,  
Oh what fun it is to ride  
In a one-horse open sleigh. Hey!

Jingle bells, jingle bells  
Jingle all the way,  
Oh what fun it is to ride  
In a one-horse open sleigh.

A day or two ago  
I thought I'd take a ride  
And soon, Miss Fanny Bright  
Was seated by my side,  
The horse was lean and lank  
Misfortune seemed his lot

He got into a drifted bank  
And then we got upsot.

Jingle bells, jingle bells  
Jingle all the way,  
Oh what fun it is to ride  
In a one-horse open sleigh. Hey!

Jingle bells, jingle bells  
Jingle all the way,  
Oh what fun it is to ride  
In a one-horse open sleigh.



Lyrics written by James Lord Pierpont  
Lyrics courtesy of Digital Music News

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# “Deck the Halls”

Deck the halls with boughs of holly,  
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

'Tis the season to be jolly,  
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

Fill the meadcup, drain the barrel,  
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

Troul the ancient Christmas carol,  
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

See the flowing bowl before us,  
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

Strike the harp and join the chorus,  
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

Follow me in merry measure,  
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

While I sing of beauty's treasure,  
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

Fast away the old year passes,  
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

Hail the new, ye lads and lasses!  
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

Laughing, quaffing all together,  
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

Heedless of the wind and weather,  
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

English lyrics written by Thomas Oliphant  
Lyrics courtesy of Digital Music News



# Winter Retreat Word Search

U O H P L A C N A L A Z C S B C W V P T  
 I Z I T K U K H B K D E L D N U B B O M  
 W Y B N A K B L S T O K E V C M E C V F  
 F R B M E O Y P C A C H U B C V U M V Y  
 Z C D T D L C A C H E I L M E I K B W M  
 I I O E L K H U D L I U I E M K P I K G  
 T Z D O R H D C P E S M E I I Z N A E E  
 F U H F O D E K O T L S N N B E T N C Y  
 I C L O L A L N E F K S D E E C A O D  
 W T D E S Y H R R I A L B R Y M L B K C  
 U I H Y H O Y O I K I W G M I P Y L Z S  
 T S V E M I S N N N F R C U E B B I D S  
 C N G Z R T G G G T E V H R Z L I Z P C  
 A O O M B M N E D V E G I O P A P Z P U  
 R W C I U U O L E G K F L S S N F A H P  
 L R T P C O M M L Z G U L Y E K R R F G  
 H E E S S I L O E D C L Y K K E A D E P  
 M T S D P O V O H T Z U V L A T C V O E  
 I T H O Y E A A U B E C K G L M S S A T  
 W N B V S C A B I N C R K U F Z D D D C

BLANKET  
 BLIZZARD  
 BLUSTERY  
 BUNDLED  
 CABIN  
 CHILLY

CHIMNEY  
 COAT  
 CUDDLE  
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 FIREPLACE  
 FLAKES

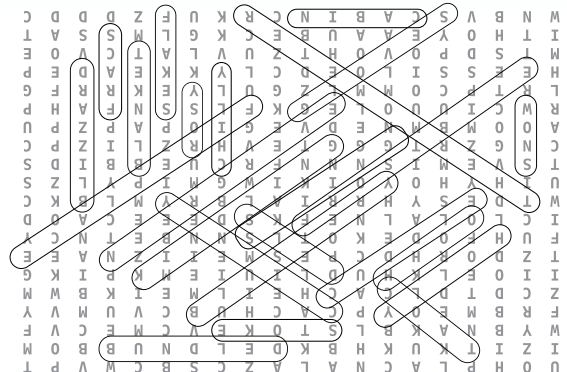
FROSTBITE  
 GLOVES  
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