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December 2022



BRING ON
the **MERRY, JOLLY**
HOLIDAY

plus

find rudy reindeer to win big *pg 4* homemade hot chocolate *pg 31*
hello, happy mamas reflect on a good year *pg 11* gift-worthy books *pg 8*



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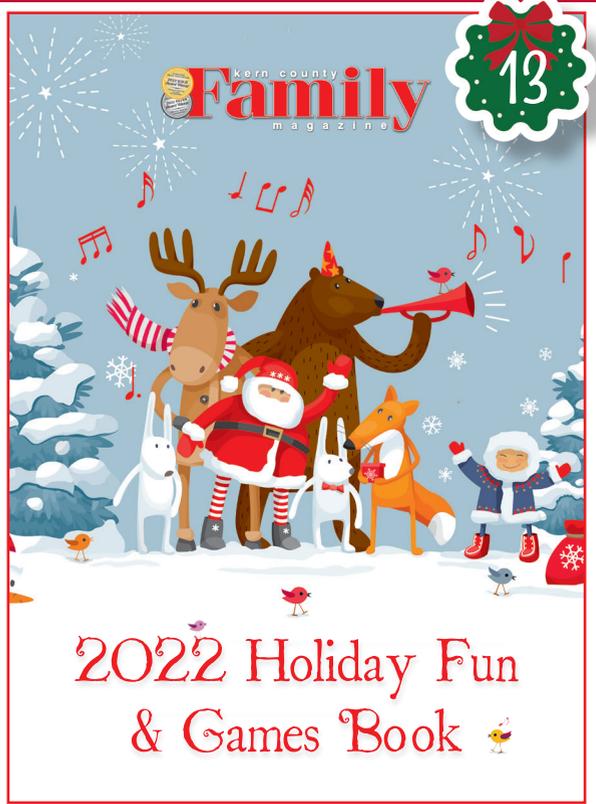
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MEMBERS OF



Find Joy in the Season



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Vaun Thygerson, Contributing Writer

The Christmas Spirit found its way to our house a littler earlier than usual this year thanks to my 16-year-old son. I normally decorate for Christmas around the week of Thanksgiving, but my son had other plans. He kept telling us we should decorate November 1st and I kept telling him that was too early. Not to be detracted, he took matters into his own hands.

When he and his friends were done passing out candy on Halloween, and my husband and I were at our neighbors' house, these boys, who were dressed like scary clowns and movie villains, put up our artificial Christmas tree, sans ornaments. They did a great job and it looks perfect sparkling with multi-colored lights from our front-room window. Thanks to his enthusiasm, we officially started the Holiday Season at 10 p.m. on Halloween. This is a definite first for me!

Dressing up the tree with its ornaments came later because it's a tradition for us to do it together. My tree is a family tree, one with all the ornaments my children made in school, lots of pictures, and fun tributes to pop culture icons. While we are decorating it, I love looking through all of the old ornaments and reminiscing about past Christmases. Maybe one day I will have two trees: one with all the mismatched ornaments and one that's a statement piece, but for now I am a sucker for nostalgia.

KCFM readers are also excited to ring in the Holiday Spirit. In Callie Collin's article, "Readers Respond: What are You Looking Forward to this Month?" on page 12, she received many great responses. Most readers are looking forward to family time and all the traditions that go along with the season.

Make sure to check out our 2022 "Holiday Fun & Games Book" on page 13. You will find all kinds of activities and family fun for the Holidays. I use it for singalongs around the piano. I grab a few extra books

so we all have copies for the lyrics, and my son plays the piano while we sing. It's so much fun!

For this month's **Humor at Home** article on page 30, "Twelve: The Age of Loud Sighs and Eye Rolls," Julie Willis writes about how she and her daughter are navigating their relationship as her daughter is TWELVE. We all remember that awkward age, right? As Julie writes, she can remember being a pre-teen and she knows this too shall pass, and one day her daughter will be all grown up and remember these years with fondness.

In **Callie Collins'** article, "Hello, Happy Mama," she spends some time catching up with the 11 Happy Mamas featured this year. To find out what these ladies have been up to this year, you can turn to **page 11**. As one of the lucky ones featured, you can read how my 2022 parenting mantra and hashtag changed as my family had a milestone of sending our son off to college.

The Holiday Season really is the best time of year, so I am lucky that mine started earlier than I planned! I enjoy it all: music, decorations, cider, peppermint, shopping, gift-wrapping, and treats! But, most of all, I enjoy spending it with those I love. As we learned in *The Polar Express*, "Just remember, the true spirit of Christmas lies in your heart."

We want to send a VERY special thank you to our readers this beautiful season. KCFM has a lot to be grateful for this year, as we recently won four awards, one gold and three silver, from Parenting Media Association's 2022 Design and Editorial Awards Program. We could not have done it without YOU and your families.

Thanks so much for letting us be a part of your lives!



FIND RUDY REINDEER

Count the number of Rudy Reindeers you find throughout this issue, then submit your answer by midnight on Wednesday, December 21st at <http://bit.ly/3XdsNmE> for your chance to win!

A \$100 AMAZON GIFT CARD AND A \$100 FRUGATTI'S GIFT CARD



This Rudy doesn't count.

A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR CONTEST SPONSOR

Kristi Barnhard



Bakersfield College Drum Line Headed to World Championships



You can help send the Bakersfield Drum Line to the World Championships. This Spring Bakersfield College (BC) Drum Line will head to the Winter Guard International (WGI) Percussion PIO World Championships in Dayton, Ohio to compete against some of the best drum lines in the country. In fact, in 2019 BC's Drum Line were awarded WGI Percussion PIO World Champions. PIO stands for Percussion Independent Open.

To help cover the costs of traveling to Ohio, BC's Drum Line is offering fresh, beautiful Christmas trees, handmade wreaths, garland, and swag straight from the Pacific Northwest. These trees are different than what you would find in your local tree lots as they are fresh-cut, premium nursery-quality trees.

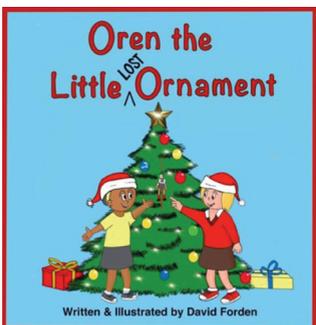
If you have an artificial tree or would rather not have a tree, BC's Drum Line offers an option where you can support them and donate a tree and/or wreath to an active-duty military member and their family. They partner with the national "Trees for Troops" program that will deliver these donations to bases the first week of December.

To help BC's Drum Line or donate to an active-duty military family, please visit <https://fundraiser4us.com/shop/BC-Drum-Line>.

WWII Veterans Memorial Dedication Day

Dedication day for Kern County's WWII Veterans Memorial to honor some of the community's greatest heroes will be held on Saturday, December 10 at 10 a.m. at Jastro Park, 2900 Truxtun Avenue. The ceremony will feature VIP seating and special recognition for WWII veterans. In fact, if you are a WWII veteran, **please RSVP to Wendy Ward at 661-619-3070** to be included in the festivities. Salty's BBQ will provide meals for purchase after the dedication.

Local Therapist Writes and Illustrates Children's Book



Local retired family therapist, Dr. David Forden, recently published his second children's book called Oren the Little Lost Ornament. The book is a golden rule parable that teaches the importance of listening to our kinder values, even when it is difficult. The book illustrates how, with thoughtful parental guidance, children can learn to make loving and empathetic decisions on their own. Dr. Forden is a retired licensed Marriage & Family Therapist, an ordained minister and retired U.S. Army Reserve Chaplain who served 29 years. Available on Amazon and at the Bakersfield Majesty Bible & Gifts.

Kern County Family Magazine Wins National Awards

Parenting Media Association recognizes Kern County Family Magazine (KCFM) with four awards in its 2022 Design and Editorial Awards Program. Competing with parenting magazines from around the nation, KCFM wins one Gold Award for an Ancillary Cover and three Silver Awards in the Table of Contents, Column: Humor, and Non-Traditional Story Format categories.



For PMA's Table of Contents category, KCFM's LJ Radon and Pam Huber win a Gold Award for July 2021's entry. Judge comments noted, "A harmonious thematic color palette enables the teaser images to stand out. Images are well cropped to command attention. Placement of firework imagery frames the content without overwhelming and adds good visual dynamics."

In the ancillary publications category, Ancillary Cover, KCFM's "2021 Holiday Fun & Games Book: Our Gift to You from Kern County Family Magazine," PMA awards a Silver Award to LJ Radon, Pam Huber, and Andrea Rose. PMA writes, "This illustration of an animated bear and snowman carrying gifts is simple enough to immediately grab attention and complex enough to provide many interesting details."



KCFM's Julie Willis, LJ Radon, and Ginger Lynch receive the Silver Award in the Column: Humor category for its "Humor @ Home" article. PMA writes about Willis' sense of humor, "The writer brings the reader along as she navigates some awkward parenting moments like a secret chocolate binge and the arrival of a new puppy. The self-deprecating reflections show other moms how to find humor amid the uncomfortable."



Another Silver Award for Non-Traditional Story Format goes to KCFM's LJ Radon and Callie Collins for Collins' article, "Readers Respond: Conserving Local Resources." PMA writes, "The list of conservation ideas solicited from the community provides a nice sense of collective problem-solving and enables readers to be seen in the publication."



Refrigerator Door feature continued on page 10

Free NARCAN Nasal Spray Distribution at Kern County Libraries

by Vaun Thygeron



You can save a life and help to prevent an opioid overdose. Kern County Library has joined local efforts championed by Kern Behavioral Health & Recovery Services and Drug Free Kern to provide free NARCAN, a naloxone nasal spray, that reverses the effects of an opioid, heroin, or

fentanyl overdose. All 22 library branch locations in Kern County will have the NARCAN kits available to the community.

Easy to use and needle free, NARCAN is administered as a nasal spray to one nostril and is safe for all ages. NARCAN can quickly restore consciousness and regulate breathing for someone overdosing from an opioid drug. It has no effect on someone with no opioids in their system.

There are six signs to spot an opioid overdose, which include:

- 1) deep snoring or wheezing
- 2) blue or grayish skin tint, usually starting in the lips and fingertips,
- 3) pale, clammy skin
- 4) not responding to stimulation
- 5) pulse is faint
- 6) breathing is slow and irregular or has stopped.

If you think someone is experience an overdose, check their responsiveness, and if non-responsive, administer NARCAN, and then call 911. You should place the person in recovery position on their side with their hand supporting their head while waiting for medical help.

If the person does not respond, you can administer NARCAN every two to three minutes.

For more information, please visit narcannasalspray.org or call 1-844-4NARCAN (1-844-462-7226). For a digital download on NARCAN, visit https://kerncountylibrary.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/NARCAN_Webpage_DigitalInfo_2022.pdf.

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Source: USA Pears for a single medium-sized pear



Battling the Holiday Bulge

+ 0.4%
over Christmas

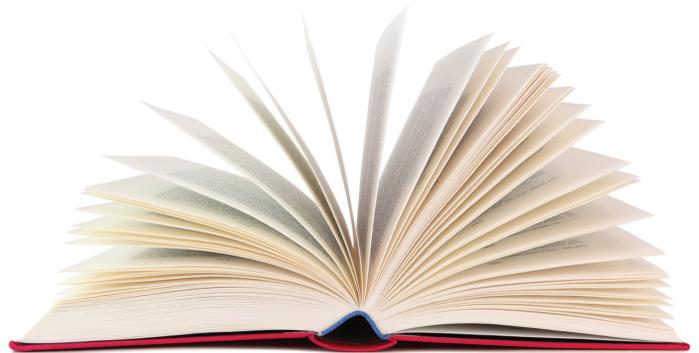
+ 0.2%
over Thanksgiving
Weight Increase for
the Average American

Curiously, researchers found that the majority of weight gain occurs in the 10 days after Christmas!

Source: 2016 study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*



Reading Makes You Smarter Than You Think



Though entertainment value might be the force behind books' popularity, the benefits of reading on long-term cognitive health provide another great reason to read. In a 2020 study published in the journal *International Psychogeriatrics*, researchers reported that people age 64 and older with higher reading frequencies had a reduced risk of cognitive decline.

217,000 Children Are Treated at Hospitals for Toy-related Injuries Each Year



When buying holiday gifts for youngsters, adults must consider safety. Holiday shoppers are urged to stick to age-related recommendations on product packaging and avoid toys that do not contain the ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials) label.

Source: Alliance for Children and Families

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17 Days of Christmas Toy Drive

Drop off a new unwrapped toy between December 1 - 19 at the KGET TV lobby and help brighten the holidays for kids in need.



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KCFM Recommends: Sponsored by Kern Literacy Council ●●●●

Gift-Worthy Books

6 Books to engage young minds

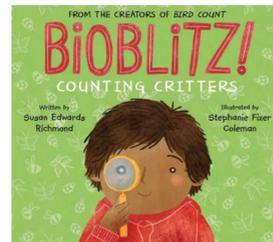
Tap into the curiosity that kids naturally possess with these six new titles. These books are packed with engaging illustrations and fascinating content that both teaches and encourages critical thought and exploration. Browse these books online, at your favorite bookstore or reserve online through the Kern County Library.



Logan's Greenhouse (Where in the Garden? #3)

by JaNay Brown-Wood, illustrated by Samara Hardy (Peachtree, for ages 3-7)

Logan, a boy who uses a wheelchair, hunts for carrots in his accessible-equipped greenhouse. Like his predecessors, Amara and Miguel, Logan uses his compare and contrast skills to help the reader identify produce. Every book in the Where in the Garden series winds down to a celebration with each of the friends making a cameo in each other's books, and back matter includes a yummy recipe to try featuring the produce discovered within.



Bioblitz!: Counting Critters

by Susan Edwards Richmond, illustrated by Stephanie Fizer Coleman (Peachtree, for ages 4-8)

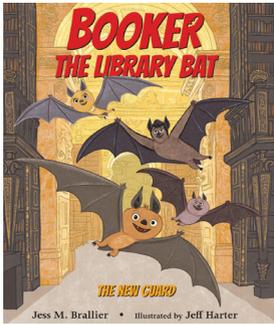
Come along as Gabriel and his cousin Ava (from Susan Edwards Richmond and Stephanie Fizer Coleman previous collaboration, Bird Count) join in a Biodiversity Day at a local nature park. Placed on different teams, the two compete to see which group finds the most species of animal life in the time allotted. Kids will enjoy finding all the species (even the ones that are hidden away in the illustrations) that appear on the lists compiled in each habitat.



I Don't Care

by Julie Fogliano, illustrated by Molly Idle and Juana Martinez-Neal (Neal Porter Books/Holiday House, for ages 3-6)

In I Don't Care, a New York Times bestselling author and two Caldecott Honorees share their delight in the little things that set two friends apart, and the big things that bring them together. Julie Fogliano's rhythmic text celebrates the similarities and differences between two unlikely best friends. Co-illustrators Molly Idle and Juana Martinez-Neal—who are best friends in real life—have added their own special touch to the book.

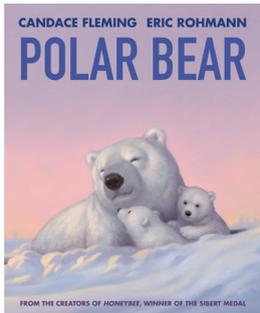


Booker the Library Bat 1: The New Guard

by Jess Brallier, illustrated by Jeff Harter (Pixel+Ink, for ages 4-7)

In Portugal, there are two libraries filled with antique books. Insects eat at the leather bound books, so at night, the libraries open the windows to let bats in to feed on the bugs. The New Guard kicks off a picture book series about the adventures

of a book-loving bat and his buddies as they patrol and protect their library home. Booker the bat is ready to report for duty, but he's nervous the other guards won't like him. When bad guys break into the library, Booker swoops in with a plan to save the day!

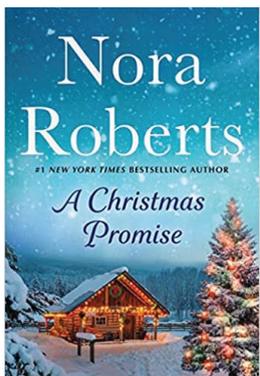


Polar Bear

by Candace Fleming, illustrated by Eric Rohmann (Neal Porter Books/Holiday House, for ages 4-8, on sale 12/26/22)

Candace Fleming and Eric Rohmann are following up their Sibert Medal book Honeybee with a new title that takes us to the ice floes of Hudson Bay. Follow a polar bear and her two cubs as they make their way across a polar seascape made

treacherous by global warming. Through rich emotive language and those spectacular panoramic vistas, Polar Bear will give readers a newfound appreciation for the animal. Like Honeybee, there is a spectacular double gatefold and copious back matter.



A Christmas Promise: A Will and a Way and Home for Christmas: A 2-in-1 Collection

For Adults:

by Nora Roberts
Celebrate the holidays with #1 New York Times bestselling author Nora Roberts's A Christmas Promise, featuring two charming tales in one volume--a perfect present to warm up your winter.

A heartwarming, home for Christmas story with all the elements to keep you enthralled. Available at Amazon and other booksellers.



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Merry Christmas! *Jesus is the Reason for the Season Luke 2:10-11*

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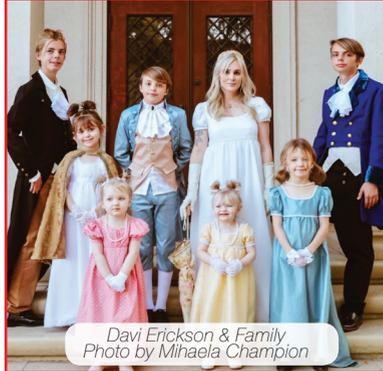
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hello, happy mama by Callie Collins

Hello, Happy Mama: Featured moms reflect on 2022



Tara Haner & Family



Davi Erickson & Family
Photo by Mihaela Champion



Vaun Thygerson & Family

Each month, our Hello, Happy Mama column features a resident of Kern County who stands out. They have life experiences to share and inspire others. We are so proud to share our community with each person who has graced our pages. This year, we've featured 10 women and one man in our special Father's Day edition. Our staff circled back with a few interviewees to get their take on good end-of-year questions as we look to 2023. Visit us online at www.kerncountyfamily.com to see all our Hello, Happy Mama featured stories and responses!

Q. Looking back on 2022, what is your best parenting advice?

A. Carla Barrientos: My best parenting advice is take your time and go at your own pace. This year has been so busy and many of us feel the pressure to get back to normal, but still have lingering struggles from the past few years. It's okay to slow down.

A. Davi Erickson: Treat your kids with respect as fellow humans. Yes, they still need your guidance & boundaries...but do this with love & kindness. One day, they will move out (my oldest son just left for college) and the shoe is on the other foot. We are now at their mercy, as to how involved they wish us to be. The more you have treated them with dignity and respect, the more open they are to keep you in the loop and in their lives for monthly visits with dinner, holidays and nightly phone calls! And eventually with being involved with grandchildren.

A. Tara Haner: Take time to listen. Listen to your intuition, listen to your children when they speak, listen to the rhythm of life around you and how it can be better enjoyed, explored and understood.

A. Jennifer Rogers-Etcheverry: Now that so many of the COVID restrictions have been lifted, I find most activities and events back on track. I see my daughter running her kids in all directions. My advice is "take time for you!"

A. Lauren Skidmore: Let go of the guilt and allow yourself grace. Your kids will love you if you show love to them.

A. Vaun Thygerson: 2022 was a year of change for our family as my son went to college and left home. It is such a bittersweet moment as a mom because on one hand, you're so happy for their new adventure, and on the other, you are super sad and miss them a lot! I have tried to embrace this change and be more happy than sad with his new adventure. Even though he is missed around our house, we have all been able to see him a few times and it's such a blast to watch him play lacrosse at college. As a mom, change is inevitable. I've had to learn that change can be something to celebrate rather than fear!

Q. Considering the year it has been, do you have a new parenting hashtag to share?

A. Carla Barrientos: The new parenting hashtag should be #ItsOkayToLaugh. Humor can be one of the best additions to throw into this wild parenting journey. On days where your kids are tantruming and really struggling, take a moment and get a little silly, make a joke, give some tickles or a cuddly hug and add some laughter. It can completely change the moment.

A. Davi Erickson: This is my first year being an adoptive mom of 4 little girls, so this is the first year I have participated in #NationalAdoptionAwarenessMonth or #naam.

A. Tara Haner: #SlowDown

A. Jennifer Rogers-Etcheverry: #RememberToBreathe

A. Lauren Skidmore: #LoveYourChildAndLoveYourself

A. Vaun Thygerson: #CelebrateChange

Q. The holidays can be a stressful time for families. What's making you laugh lately?

A. Carla Barrientos: My kids dancing to music always makes me laugh. We love to have random dance parties and they GET DOWN! They are only 1 and 4, but they already have better moves than me and my husband!

A. Davi Erickson: Doing Christmas decorating and shopping ahead of time has definitely made more room for a relaxed mama who laughs more. I have more time to pay attention to the little nuances of my children and they have me laughing with all their silly antics!

A. Tara Haner: My husband's silly jokes and puns. I'm thankful for humor in our marriage every day. Even when things are rough, I know if we can still pray together and laugh together, we'll be okay.

A. Jennifer Rogers-Etcheverry: Always my grandkids!

A. Lauren Skidmore: My daughter is at the age where bodily functions are funny. I'm looking forward to the random outburst when the first family member passes gas at Christmas. Kids have no shame or filter and it's great.

A. Vaun Thygerson: I have found a new Instagrammer I love to follow. Her name is @Pamelathemostes and she calls herself a pop culture reporter for the "Instagrammas." She calls us that because we are die-hard Instagram fans who don't branch out to explore other social media apps. Her weekly reports are so fun to watch to learn about new trends and styles that are popular with the younger generations.

Find all of our Hello, Happy Mama profiles at www.kerncountyfamily.com.



ENTER TO WIN
DETAILS ON PAGE 32

December inspires kind feelings in so many individuals. We asked our readers to share what they are looking forward to during this special month and their answers might help others find their own holiday spirit.

Q. What are you Looking Forward to This Month?

Monica Licon

Blessing someone in need.



My family and I are looking forward to our favorite local traditions this December like the Bakersfield Christmas Parade, Christmas Town, and visiting a tree lot to find the perfect tree!

-Tori Ramay

Spending quality time with my grandchildren during their school breaks.

-Angela Gray

I'm most looking forward to seeing all the Christmas lights and baking and decorating cookies with my kiddos.

-Shanelle Aguayo

Sitting by my fireplace and playing games with my kids.



I'm looking forward to giving out goodie bags to the less fortunate around Christmastime. My beloved husband who is now passed away left a kind of legacy behind. However, me and my daughters are gonna do whatever it takes to keep his outreach and legacy alive. Christmas is about giving, not receiving.

-April Pizano



I love all the holiday lights that come out for December. It makes everything more cheerful. I also love sharing the spirit of joy and celebration of the birth of Jesus. It is definitely my most favorite time of year!

-Melissa Martin



Corrie White

My young boys have grown up overseas, so we are happy to be seeing lots of family this Christmas, and enjoying American goodies and traditions!



Getting together with my family and friends cooking tamales with champurrado [a traditional hot chocolate and cinnamon drink] and enjoying each other's company.

-Rosalba Reynoso

I am looking forward to our little family traditions: matching Christmas PJs and gingerbread houses as well as Christmas tree decorating and buying each other an ornament.

-Elizabeth Bailon

I'm looking forward to continuing to bring the Christmas spirit to my kids. My newest baby will be 6 months and I can't wait to show him the holidays as well.

-Yolanda Mefford

Yoceline Torres

I look forward to spending time with my kids and family. I love when my whole family gets together to enjoy these special times while we are still here.





kern county
Family
m a g a z i n e



2022 Holiday Fun
& Games Book 



It's the holiday season again in Kern County—where does the time go?!

This year, we may not know what the weather will bring or what the economy will do, but we can celebrate the spirit of the season with some Kern County Family holiday magic.

We hope you are looking forward to festivities, whether you plan to celebrate quietly at home with just your family or at a gathering with extended family and friends.

We are grateful for each and every member of our Kern County Family and we hope you will find peace and joy this month. Again this year as our gift to you and your family, we assemble the best puzzles and games in our annual activity book, because it's great to take some time to just have a little fun!

And what kid doesn't enjoy singing and dancing to classic holiday tunes? We've included a few carols, so your family can share a song—and maybe a dance!

**Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Wonderful
New Year from our family to yours!**

kern county
Family
magazine

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contact Clinica Sierra Vista
WIC at 661-862-5422



**FIND
7 DIFFERENCES**

Answers
under
Jingle Bells



DECK THE HALLS

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



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.

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



BHK

BARBICH HOOPER KING
DILL HOFFMAN

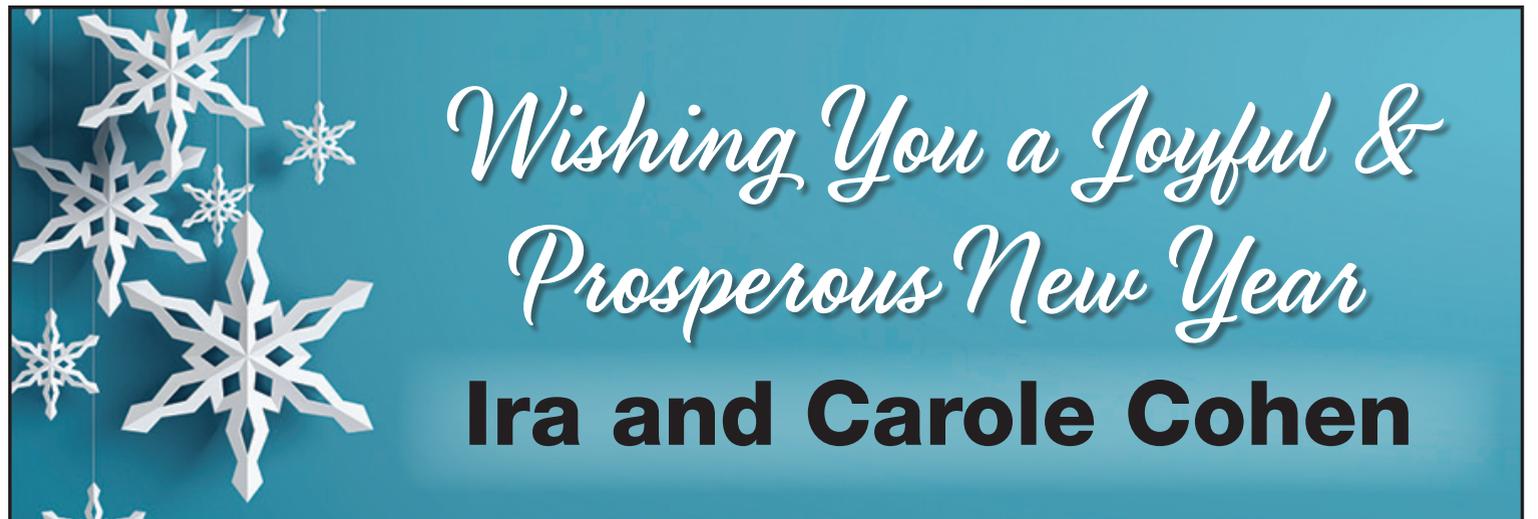
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MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY HOLIDAYS

5001 E. Commercenter Dr. Suite 350
Bakersfield, CA 93309
Phone: 661.631.1171



HAPPY
HANUKKAH



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Prosperous New Year*

Ira and Carole Cohen



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Bakersfield Swim Academy

Wishes You a Very
Merry Christmas!

**Luke 2:14 “Glory to God in the highest
and on earth peace among those with
whom he is pleased”**



**BAKERSFIELD
SWIM ACADEMY**



JOY TO THE WORLD



Lyrics written in 1719 by Isaac Watts
Music "Antioch" by George Frideric Handel

Joy to the world, the Lord is come
Let Earth receive her King
Let every heart prepare Him room

Joy to the world, the Lord is come
Let Earth receive her King
Let every heart prepare Him room

And Heaven and nature sing
And Heaven and nature sing
And Heaven, and Heaven,
and nature sing

And Heaven and nature sing
(And Heaven and nature sing)
And Heaven and nature sing
(And Heaven and nature sing)
And Heaven, and Heaven, and
nature sing

Joy to the Earth, the Savior reigns
Let all their songs employ
While fields and floods, rocks, hills
and plains

And Heaven, and Heaven,
and nature sing

Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy

Joy to the world, the Lord is come
Let Earth receive her King
Let every heart prepare Him room

He rules the world with truth and
grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness

And Heaven and nature sing
(And Heaven and nature sing)
And Heaven and nature sing
(And Heaven and nature sing)
And Heaven, and Heaven, and
nature sing

And wonders of His love
And wonders of His love
And wonders, wonders, of His love

And Heaven, and Heaven,
and nature sing





I'm Dreaming of a Quiet Christmas

Lyrics by Andrea Rose
Music by Irving Berlin

I'm dreaming of a quiet Christmas!
Without the drama we know so well.
It's quiet moments I'm missin'
Where children listen
So I don't have to scream and yell.

I said I'm dreaming of a quiet Christmas.
Where a Peppermint mocha makes things all right.
May your kids be happy and not fight.
And may you watch Hallmark Christmas movies all night!

I said I'm dreaming of a quiet Christmas!
Without the drama we know so well.
It's quiet moments I'm missin'
Where children listen
So I don't have to scream and yell.

I'm dreaming of a quiet Christmas.
Where a Peppermint mocha makes things all right.
May your kids be happy and not fight.
And may you watch Hallmark Christmas movies all night!



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800-391-2000

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Jingle Bells



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

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

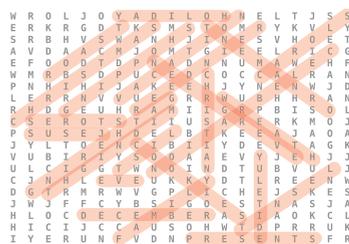
He got into a drifted bank
And then we got upsot.

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.



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ADAKC's Annual

CINNAMON *roll* DRIVE

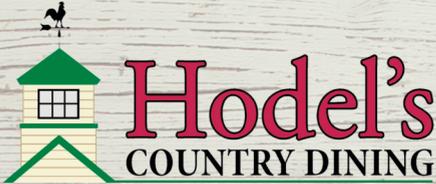
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CAROLS
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CHRISTIAN
CHRISTMAS
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GATES CLOSE PROMPTLY AT 8:30. CLOSED CHRISTMAS DAY

The 20th annual HolidayLights at CALM again celebrates the season with a drive through experience! With holiday music broadcast on your FM dial, you will enjoy millions of lights from the comfort of your own vehicle.

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www.calmzoo.org for more info

Find us on  

11 WAYS TO

add joy to your holiday season and into the new year



Find joy in friends and family! Focus on building memories and doing simple things together.

The holidays don't always feel like the most wonderful time of the year. Seasonal cheer can feel like a stressful chore, especially as deadlines loom large before important dates.

Enjoy all the best this time of year has to offer with these 11 tips:

1. Choose to notice details:

Take the time to notice how our community has invested in celebrating the season, from individual efforts to organized events.

2. Let joy in:

Sometimes, choosing to notice details requires accepting what we see with an open mind and an accepting spirit, which can be difficult if holidays don't necessarily spark happiness. Try to find the positive. The holidays may trigger memories of traumatic events or make us wish for loved ones who cannot be in our everyday lives. Recognize your feelings and seek help with a mental health professional if necessary.

3. Focus on others:

There is joy in helping. Volunteer with a local charity, buy a gift or simply be kind when you do not have to, especially when there is no reward for you in doing so.

4. Bring out family items:

Those well-worn family items that make an appearance each year have a way of bringing happiness along with their arrival. Dust them off, decorate and make your space festive.

5. Share a holiday story:

Whether it's the Christmas Story or the miracle of Chanukah or other stories you love, share your own reason for the season with a child in your family, neighborhood or congregation. Read picture books with favorite fables, too, like " 'Twas the Night Before Christmas," "The Nutcracker," "The Story of Holly and Ivy" and "Hanukkah Bear." Try books from other cultures and religions to broaden your family's horizons.

"Joy is not found in things; it is in us. Write music with an exclamation point!"

Richard Wagner, German composer


6. Add music:

Traditional songs, hymns and carols have a way of inspiring happiness. YouTube has veritably every version of common songs a heart could ever desire.

7. Create comfort:

Find what gives you comfort and add more of it in this season. While so much is focused on giving gifts and creating an experience for others, the organizer of all that glitters may need a different kind of gold. Take time out for yourself this month. Make it shine for you, too.

8. Delegate where possible:

There is no prize for the most exhausted parent on Jan. 2. Instead of just getting through the holiday season, make it feasible for yourself. Hire a cleaning service, get gifts wrapped at the store or choose not to attend every event

9. Cook favorite recipes:

Traditional dishes can make an important difference. Prepare what you look forward to each year and share the recipe with someone else.



10. Try something new:

Traditions are a beloved part of the holidays but variety is the spice of life. Choose to spend your time with one new event or activity this year and decide if it should be added to your roster of holiday fun.

11. Find joy in friends and family:

People make the world go round. Leave material worries aside and focus on friends and family. They will likely remember your warmth and happiness more than anything else this year.

Twelve

The Age of Loud Sighs and Eye Rolls

The way Samantha describes our relationship:

“OK, so I’m like, ‘Mom, can I show you something?’ and then Mom sighs because I interrupted her and so then I say, ‘Never mind,’ and I look down at my feet and mope and then she’s like, ‘No. It’s ok. I’m sorry. What is it?’ and then I’m like, ‘Nothing,’ and I try to go away and she says, ‘Don’t walk away,’ and then I sigh and she says, ‘Don’t huff at me,’ and I’m like, ‘You huffed first,’ and then she says, ‘Just show me what you wanted to show me,’ and then I show her and she says, ‘Wow.’”

And that’s not too far from the truth.

We were just playing Uno as a family. Samantha was viciously attacking me with every undesirable card, one after another. I had about 25 cards in my hand when my husband won the game. I think she was regretting not being able to attack him, so she was done after one hand and my husband had to follow her into her room and guide her back out to the living room floor to get her to play one more hand.

If you didn’t already guess, Samantha is 12.

She is at the age where she has perfected her eye rolling, her huffing, her sighing, and her absolute lack of patience for the rest of us.

We recently took her and some of her friends to see a play. She commented that her friends were lucky because they weren’t with their moms. And I’m thinking, “But they are here with ME. I’m a mom. How is that better?” But the point was (as it turned out) that they could spend their money on junk food at the concession stand during intermission, while I (no doubt in a perceived effort to embarrass her) restricted her junk food intake.

And I’m inclined to tell her, “MY mom would not have let me have ANY thing. She would not have even taken me to

a show that ended later than my bedtime in the first place.” But I don’t remember those, “I had to walk four miles to school every day—uphill, in the snow” stories that I did not really appreciate at her age.



Twelve does not feel like that long ago that I was twelve. Everything before twelve does seem like a lifetime ago. But twelve. I can name my friends, my favorite songs, which movies I saw, every time my parents embarrassed me, what electives I took in school, which boys at school were cute, all of my teachers’ names, my schedule, particular illnesses and injuries and small victories. It is like it just happened a week ago instead of years (and years) ago.

I know what is going on inside that brain of hers because I lived it. I remember how important it was to have my bangs look just so. I remember feeling out of place because I brought my PE clothes to school on Mondays in a grocery bag while all the other girls used plastic bags from Wet Seal. If I had only thought to go into Wet Seal and ask to buy a bag for a dollar, it would have changed my entire junior high school experience.

One more thing I know about being twelve: It passes. Some day she will remember that she loves me. Some day she will roll her eyes at herself for doing the very things that I now do that make her crazy.

Until then, there is medication by chocolate.

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Rich, Cozy Hot Chocolate

Nothing beats sipping a hot, soothing beverage after a day of choosing the perfect Christmas tree or lobbing snowballs in the backyard.

Teas, coffees, and mulled ciders certainly can fit the bill, but a mug of rich hot chocolate is a holiday season staple.

Hot chocolate can be whipped up quickly from premade packets, but many such packets are loaded with sugar. Chocolate lovers should have a reliable hot chocolate recipe to lean on when the moment is right. This recipe for "Real Hot Chocolate" from "Chocolate" (Parragon) by the editors of Love Food is sure to please.



Ingredients:

11/2 ounces semisweet chocolate, broken into pieces
1 1/4 cups milk

Optional to decorate and embellish:

Mini-Marshmallows
Whipped Cream
Red Sprinkles
Chocolate curls to decorate

Place the chocolate in a large, heatproof pitcher. Place the milk in a heavy-bottom saucepan and bring to a boil. Pour about one-quarter of the milk onto the chocolate and leave until the chocolate has softened.

Whisk the milk and chocolate mixture until smooth. Return the remaining milk to the heat and return to a boil, then pour onto the chocolate, whisking constantly.

Pour into warmed mugs or cups and top with the whipped cream, red sprinkles, chocolate curls or whatever your imagination can come up with. Serve immediately.

Gluten-Free Mint Slims

2 cups blanched almond flour
2 tablespoons coconut flour
1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon fine sea salt
1/4 cup maple sugar
1/4 cup light-colored raw honey
1/4 cup expeller-pressed coconut oil
2 ounces unsweetened chocolate
1/2 teaspoon pure peppermint extract

Coating

10 ounces semisweet chocolate chips
3/4 teaspoon expeller-pressed coconut oil
1/4 teaspoon pure peppermint extract



In the bowl of a stand mixer combine the almond flour, coconut flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, salt, and maple sugar and mix thoroughly on medium speed.

In a saucepan, combine the honey, coconut oil, chocolate, and peppermint extract and cook over low heat, stirring until melted. Pour the melted chocolate mixture into the dry ingredients and beat on medium speed until fully combined.

Using your hands, pack the dough firmly into two balls, then flatten each into a thick disk. Roll each disk into a 1/4-inch-thick circle on a piece of parchment paper. Stack the pieces (with parchment paper in between) on a baking sheet and refrigerate for 1 hour. When you're ready to bake the cookies, preheat the oven to 350 F and line two or three baking sheets with parchment paper.

Remove one of the dough pieces from the refrigerator. Use a 2-inch-round cookie cutter to cut out circles and place them on a prepared baking sheet. Repeat with the remaining dough until all the dough is used.

Bake one sheet at a time for 8 minutes, rotating the sheet halfway through baking. Cool the cookies on the sheets for 5 minutes, then transfer them to a wire rack to cool completely.

COATING: Melt the chocolate chips and oil together in a double boiler or a heatproof bowl set over a saucepan filled with about 1 inch of boiling water. Stir the mixture frequently until the chocolate melts. Stir the peppermint extract into the melted chocolate. Turn off the heat and remove the bowl from the pan.

Dip each cookie completely into the melted chocolate and use a fork to lift it out.

Place the dipped cookies on the prepared baking sheets, then refrigerate the cookies for 1 hour to help the chocolate set. Serve chilled.

Merry Christmas!

May this holiday season bring joy to your heart and happiness to your home.

Families helping families

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'TIS THE SEASON FOR GIFT GIVING!

Kern County Family Magazine wants to spread some holiday cheer with A Very Merry Holiday Giveaway! We want to thank you for being loyal readers by giving you a chance to win some of our favorite family-themed products. Beginning December 5th, enter every day for a chance to win fun & festive daily prizes. For a complete look at all of the giveaway items, log on to our website www.kerncountyfamily.com to enter.



Wixelene's Calming Ointment

Made in collaboration with Hilaria Baldwin, The Calming Ointment is specially formulated to moisturize dry skin while providing a breathable water-proof barrier to allow healing. It's organic, petroleum free and hypoallergenic. Available on Amazon and at <https://wixelene.com/> Price; \$28.99.



American Girl Doll: Corrine

When the powder's fresh, Corinne snaps on her skin and takes a deep breath of crisp mountain air. Read more about her adventures in the accompanying Corrine book. \$115, www.americangirl.com.



The Table Tyke

The silicone placemat hugs the table to keep messes from the floor, and to keep wandering mouths protected from table germs and bumps. The mat is medical grade silicone, BPA free and dishwasher safe. \$24.99, available on Amazon, and TheTableTyke.com.



The Spunky Spork

A happy + modern fashion brand passionate about creating organic, non-toxic clothing for children and parents. Their whimsical designs are printed on baby bodysuits, youth tees and adult tees. Available at <https://spunkystork.com/> and Amazon.



New Evenflo Feeding Deluxe Advanced Double Electric Breast Pump

Designed with leading lactation professionals, includes premium features, and is available at a price that doesn't break the bank. Recommended by Breastfeeding Experts & Moms (\$140.00).



Evenflo Feeding Balance + Bottle

Balance + Bottle has a unique, naturally sloped nipple designed to support healthy bottle feeding without interfering with your breastfeeding journey (\$12 -\$25).



Bako Themed T-shirt & Candle by kinley m. designs

Check out this local designer to get your hands on adorable hometown merchandise. <https://kinley-m-designs.square.site/> or on Instagram @kinley_m_designs.



KeKe Bag

Keke - which stands for "Keep Every Kid Engaged" - modular, grab-and-go bag with pouches full of educational and fun activities for kids age 3-6. The (optional) subscription service lets you swap out pouches every three months. \$64.99 for the initial bag, and the subscription service is \$39.99 per quarter. <http://www.kekekid.com>.



Paint By Stickers

"Rainbows Everywhere" and "Holly Jolly Christmas" - These sticker books are all the fun of arts and crafts without the mess. (Workman Publishing; ages 5-9; \$10.99).



TeeTurtle-Reversible Unicorn Plushie & Unstable Unicorns Game

Gift your kiddos an adorable unicorn plushie and the Unstable Unicorns Game this holiday season! Unstable Unicorns is a strategic card game that will destroy your friendships but in a good way. (Unstable Unicorns: \$20.00, Reversible Plushie: \$15.00).



Creative QT- Tickle & Main Unicorn Gift Set with Book

Absolutely adorable 3-piece unicorn gift set which includes a rhyming illustrated book, a soft and fluffy unicorn plush toy, and a child size matching unicorn headband (\$18.99)



Zoey Naturals Soothing Lavender Lotion & Body Oil

Zoey Naturals is a skincare line created by a mom and dad, that offers effective and gentle products to keep your kids fresh, clean, and moisturized from head to toe. (\$11- \$15) Available at www.zoey-naturals.com.

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



November 26 - December 31

Holiday Lights at CALM

This year's event will be a drive-thru experience. Passenger vehicles will embark on a mile long winding path flanked by dazzling, animated Christmas lights. Tickets are \$30 per car.

CALM
10498 Alfred Harrell Hwy. Bakersfield, CA
5:30pm-8:30pm
www.calmzoo.org/holidaylights/

November 25 - January 1



Bakersfield Christmas Town

A holiday experience for all ages featuring a light spectacular, train ride, sledding hill & much

more!
Kern County Fairgrounds
1142 P St. Bakersfield, CA
5:30pm
<https://www.christmastown.net/>



December 1-19

17 Days of Christmas Toy Drive

The Boys and Girls Club of Kern County is partnering with The Open Door Network and KGET TV-17 for the annual toy drive benefitting local children in need. Drop off a new, unwrapped toy in the lobby at KGET.

KGET TV-17
2120 L St. Bakersfield, CA
(661) 283-1700



December 1

40th Bakersfield Christmas Parade

This beloved holiday tradition is back! The parade will weave its way through downtown Bakersfield and will be aired live on KERO Channel 23.

6pm-8pm
<https://www.bcparade.com/>

December 2

CHP Holiday Toy Drive

California Highway Patrol officials will collect toys for their annual toy drive, benefitting kids infant to 16 years old.

Corner of 28th & Chester Ave.
5am-6pm
For more information call 661-396-6653

December 2

First Friday Art Walk

Highlight the vibrant creativity of downtown Bakersfield. Walk showcases, artists, poets, galleries and vendors.

The Corner of 21st & Eye St. Bakersfield, CA
5pm-9pm

December 2 & 3

Chez Noel Holiday Home Tour

The 33rd annual event to raise money for The Assistance League of Bakersfield.

10am-3:30pm
<https://www.assistanceleague.org/bakersfield/>

December 3

Breakfast with Santa

Come take photos with Santa and dine out on pancakes! Event benefits The League of Dreams. Tickets are \$10. Children 2 and under are free.

Applebee's Restaurant
9000 Ming Ave. Bakersfield, CA
8am-10am
<https://ourleagueofdreams.com/breakfast-withsanta.php>



December 3

Christmas Craft Fair

Dozens of local vendors offering crochet and knitted items, candles, jewelry & much more!

Coronado Baptist Church
516 Norris Rd. Bakersfield, CA
9am-2pm

December 3

Tehachapi Hometown Christmas

Come celebrate everything Christmas with a fun-filled night in Tehachapi.

Green Street Tehachapi, CA
2pm-5pm

December 3

Ronald McDonald House Toy Drive

Classic Dreams car club will have their cars on display. Come enjoy food & music. Donate a toy for a child staying at the Ronald McDonald House.

420 34th St. Bakersfield, CA
10am - 4pm



December 4

Christmas Craft Fair

More than 50 vendors will be on hand offering the perfect gifts for this holiday season.

Skateland
415 Ming Ave. Bakersfield, CA
9am-4pm

December 4

The Bako Market – Holiday Edition

The Merriest Market of the year! Featuring homemade Christmas crafts, customized gifts, & more!

Centennial Plaza at Mechanics Bank Arena
1001 Truxtun Ave. Bakersfield, CA
10am-3pm

December 5

Screening of The Muppet Christmas Carol

Come watch this classic holiday film with your family.

The Fox Theater
2001 H St. Bakersfield, CA
7pm
Tickets \$5
www.fox.theaterbakersfield.org



December 8

A Merry-achi Christmas

Mariachi Sol de Mexico performs a festive musical tribute to Mexico's Christmas traditions.

The Historic Fox Theater
2001 H Street Bakersfield, CA
6:30pm - 11pm
www.fox.theaterbakersfield.org

December 10

NOR Christmas Parade

It's time for the 49th Annual North of the River Christmas Parade. This year's theme is Merry Grinchmas!

N. Chester Ave. Bakersfield, CA
10am

December 10

Feliz Skavidad

Temblor Brewing Company
3200 Buck Owens Blvd. Ste. 200

6pm-10pm
<https://temblorbrewing.com/events/>



KERN COUNTY FAMILY MAGAZINE *daily happenings*

THE **BEST** LOCAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS!

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December 10

Christmas in the Park

Kick off the Christmas season with a screening of the holiday classic "The Grinch", a silent auction, holiday treats, and pictures with Santa! Help raise money for Orlie's Shoe Drive.

The Windermere Neighborhood
Oakley St. Bakersfield, CA

6pm
www.orliessoehdrive.com



December 11

Bakersfield Toy Run & Food Drive

The 39th annual ride starts at Beach Park and winds its way to the Kern County Fairgrounds. All motorcycles, car clubs, and street-legal vehicles are welcome. Bring an unwrapped toy and canned food to donate.

Beach Park & 21st St. Bakersfield, CA
7am

<https://bakersfieldtoyrun.org/>

December 11

Sensory Friendly Santa Visit

Santa and his elves will be visiting the Kern Autism Network. Registration is required and this event is only open to families of Kern Autism Network.

Kern Autism Network
2200 Oak St. Ste. A Bakersfield, CA

2pm-4pm
661-489-3335

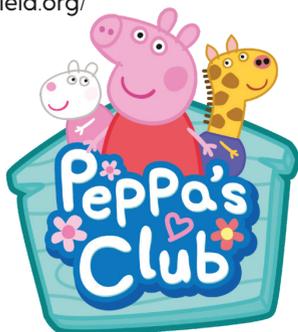
December 14

Peppa Pig's Adventure

Come join Peppa this holiday season on an exciting camping trip in the winter woods.

Mechanics Bank Theater
1001 Truxtun Ave. Bakersfield, CA

6pm
For tickets: <http://mechanicsbank.theater-bakersfield.org/>



December 17

MARE Holiday Pop-Up Shop

The annual outdoor holiday pop-up shop will feature dozens of local vendors, a holiday wreath raffle, food and much more!

MARE Riding Center
18200 Johnson Rd. Bakersfield, CA
10am-2pm



December 17

Toys For Tots Jingle Bell Run

The annual 5K run/walk to benefit Toys for Tots. Each participant is asked to bring a new, unwrapped toy for a child in need.

The Park at River Walk
11200 Stockdale Hwy. Bakersfield, CA

7am
<https://runsignup.com/Race/CA/Bakersfield/BakersfieldJingleBellRunforToysforTots>



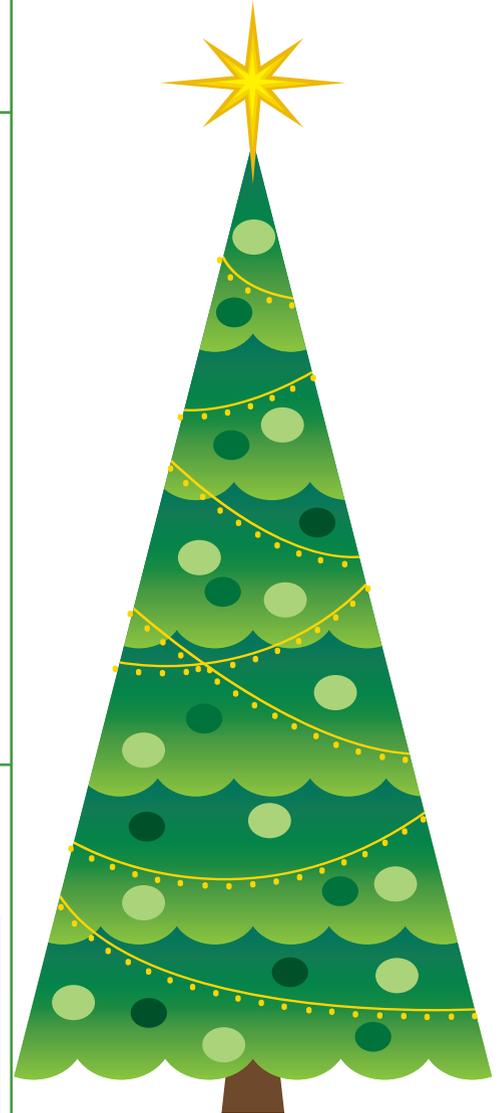
December 18 - December 26

Happy Hanukkah!



December 25

From all of us here at Kern County Family Magazine ~
We wish you joy, peace and a very Merry Christmas!



December 31

New Years Eve



ONGOING HAPPENINGS

Our printed version of the calendar has been edited for space. visit www.kerncountyfamily.com for full recurring calendar.

Every Thursday through December 22

Toddler Time

Songs, rhymes, finger plays and stories just for toddlers. Ages 1-3 years old.

Beale Memorial Library
701 Truxtun Ave. Bakersfield, CA
11am-12pm

Every Tuesday through December 20

Preschool Story time

Promote literacy and practice school readiness with songs and stories for preschool age children.

Beale Memorial Library
701 Truxtun Ave. Bakersfield, CA
11am-12pm

Every Friday, Saturday & Sunday until

December 23

The Gaslight Holiday Extravaganza

The Gaslight Melodrama
12748 Jomani Dr. Bakersfield, CA
7pm
<https://themelodrama.com>

Each weekday through December 16

Snacks in the Stacks

Children can enjoy a snack and dinner, while hanging out and doing homework in a safe space.

Beale Memorial Library
701 Truxtun Ave.
3pm-5pm
info@kernlibrary.org

Every Tuesday

Optimal Hospice Grief Support

First United Methodist Church
44600 Stockdale Hwy Bakersfield, CA
10am
(661) 716-4000

Baby Café: Drop-In Breastfeeding Support Group

Beale Library
701 Truxtun Ave. Bakersfield, CA
11:30-1:30pm
<https://www.babycafebakersfield.org/>

Every Sunday

Haggin Oaks Farmers Market

8800 Ming Ave. Bakersfield, CA
9am-2pm

Third Wednesday of every month

Women's Self Defense Workshop

Learn to defend yourself. Lessons are free.
Alliance Against Family Violence Outreach
1921 19th Street Bakersfield, CA
6pm

First Saturday of every month

Kids Tool Safety Workshop

Home Depot locations in Bakersfield, CA
9am-12pm

Second Saturday of every month

Bakersfield Second Saturday Event

Second Saturday is a monthly event where community members can support local businesses and enjoy the Downtown area.

Bakersfield, CA
<https://www.bakersfieldsecondsaturday.com/>

Third Thursday of every month

Kern River Astronomy Club

Kernville Museum 49 Big Blue Rd. Kernville, CA
<https://kern-river-valley-astronomy.weebly.com/>

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"Kern Autism Network Inc. provides support, awareness, information and education to families and the public throughout Kern County"



Merry Christmas and Happy Holiday's from the Board of Directors
Parent Support Group: Wednesday, December 7th register via Eventbrite
Sensory Friendly Santa Sunday, December 11th registration required
Females Support Group Christmas Party TBD

- | | |
|---|---|
| EARLY SIGNS OF AUTISM: | SERVICES OFFERED: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delayed language development • Repetitive language • Little or no eye contact • Repetitive mannerisms • Inflexible routines or rituals • Preoccupation with object parts • Little interest in friendships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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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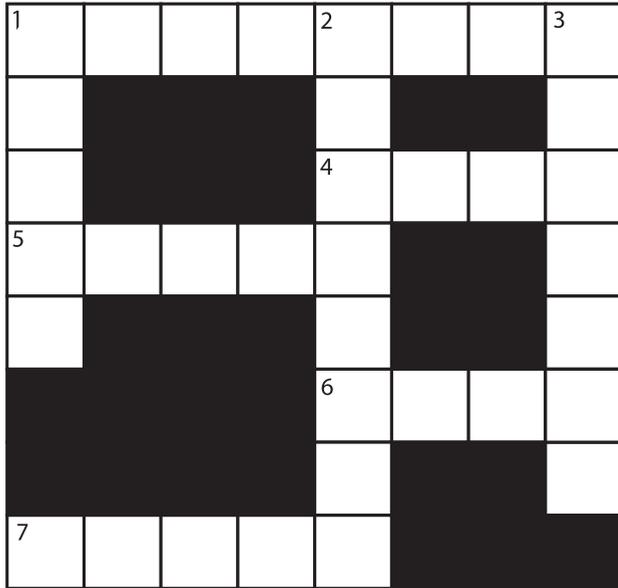




DECEMBER ACTIVITY CORNER



Crossword



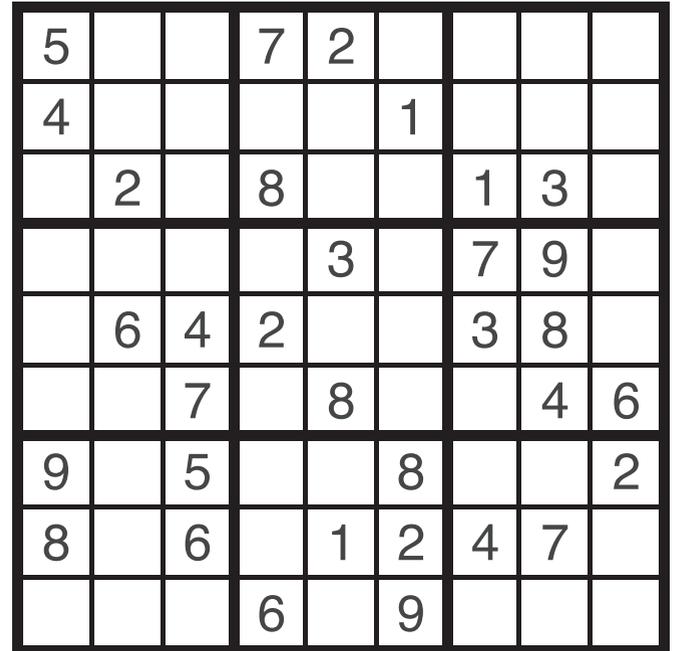
ACROSS

1. In good spirits
4. Large grain cereal plant
5. Come together
6. Animated film
7. Joyous

DOWN

1. Santa _____
2. Lately
3. Yearning, desire

Sudoku



Level: Beginner

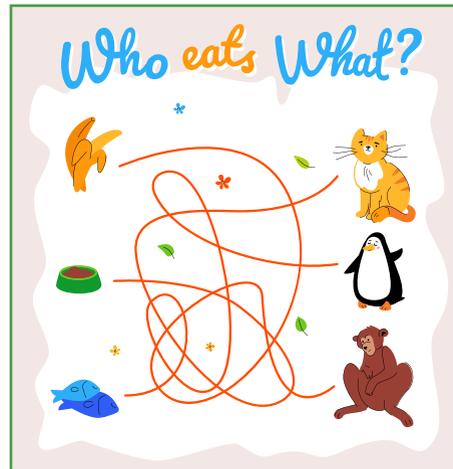
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve: the number 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. Figure out the order the numbers will appear by using the clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets!

DID YOU KNOW?

Santa Claus has lots of different names all around the world. Even in parts of the USA, people call him Kris Kringle. In the UK, he is often called Father Christmas; in France he is called Père Noël / Papa Noël; in Poland he goes by Święty Mikołaj; and in Germany, Santa is known as Weihnachtsmann.



Who eats What?



Crossword & Sudoku Answers

- CROSSWORD
- Across
1. Cheerful
4. Corn
5. Untie
6. Toot
7. Jolly
- Down
1. Claus
2. Recently
3. Longing

5	8	1	7	2	3	9	6	4
4	7	3	9	6	1	5	2	4
3	9	7	1	8	5	2	4	6
2	5	8	4	3	6	7	9	1
6	2	9	8	5	4	1	3	7
4	7	3	9	6	1	5	2	8
8	1	7	2	3	9	6	4	5



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2022 Year End Review

In 2022, children in Arvin, Bakersfield, Boron, Delano, Tehachapi, and Wasco received books and backpacks in their classroom, in summer school, in a library, when they got their shots, or when they visited the hospital.

A main feature of Stories and Stethoscopes is great advice from Adventist Health Medical Professionals. Kern County Family Magazine readers may want to revisit back issues for health tips Dr. Luis Mariscal, Medical Director for AIS Cancer Center and Chief of Staff of Adventist Health, Bakersfield (1/22); Gabriel Villachica, Mobile Health Program nurse practitioner (3/22); Adventist Health Bakersfield nurse practitioner and physician assistant, Iain Gallego (8/22) and Bibsy Cabunoc, CDM, CFPP, Director of Nutritional Services Adventist Health Delano Regional Medical Center (11/22)

Another customized feature is the library boxes of books that are being distributed to various Adventist Health locations and mobile units, libraries, and schools. The boxes were made and donated by Bradley Andersen as part of his Eagle Scout Project. Each box can hold 40 books. The book choices for this year were Monsters Don't Eat Broccoli, Gregory the Terrible Eater, Splat the Cat Goes to the Doctor, Eating the Alphabet, and Leo Gets a Checkup. Two other small books—Visit to the Doctor and First Aid allow the child to put their picture in the back of the book and have their face show up on every page.

Stories & Stethoscopes focuses on teaching children the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, from healthy eating to physical wellness and is a great way to inspire, encourage and advance literacy in pre-K through elementary age children. Sponsored by a generous donation from Adventist Health Medical Staff Kern County, the program takes place throughout Kern County.



Kyoshi Tomono and Sofia Perez at Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary



Dr. Luis Mariscal and Naimah Arriaza

**Stories & Stethoscopes...Health, wellness and literacy...
the perfect prescription!**



**FAMILY
LITERACY
PROGRAM**

For more information on Kern Literacy Council, call us at 661-324-3213, or check out our website at www.kernliteracy.org.

STORIES & STETHOSCOPIES

HEALTHY TIPS

If a toy is on your holiday shopping list, you're not alone. Toys are fun—and traditional—holiday gifts for kids of all ages. The ideal toy for a child is one that brings happiness. And that means the perfect plaything should also be safe. Before you settle on a plaything, ask yourself the following questions.

Is it age appropriate?

Read the toy's warning label. Toys above a child's age range may pose a safety risk.

Are there choking hazards?

Toys with small parts can be dangerous for babies, toddlers and curious older kids who put toys in their mouths. If these kids are on your gift list, skip marbles, small pieces, and toys with removable parts.

Is a stuffed toy well-made?

Be sure all parts (such as eyes) are on tight. Skip toys stuffed with small, bean-like pellets, which babies and tots might choke on. Do you see any loose strings or ribbons? Take them off.

Does the label say non-toxic?

Otherwise, toys might contain materials that could cause poisoning.

Does it make loud noises?

Noisy toys can harm hearing. If you can, listen to a toy before you buy it. If it's too loud for you, it's too loud for kids.

Keeping this checklist in mind, here are great toy ideas for:

Babies

Soft, washable stuffed animals; rattles larger than a baby's mouth; unbreakable mirrors; stacking rings; and squeeze toys, especially ones that make gentle noises. Push-pull toys, puzzles with only a few pieces, sturdy building blocks, shape sorters and simple musical instruments (such as tambourines).

Pre-schoolers and grade schoolers

Non-toxic art supplies and craft kits, bikes and other riding toys with helmets, construction toys, board games, and role-play toys (such as doctor's kits).

Teens

Chemistry sets, model and magic kits, strategy games (such as chess), three-dimensional puzzles and sports equipment with protective gear.

Books

Books are always a great gift idea no matter the occasion!

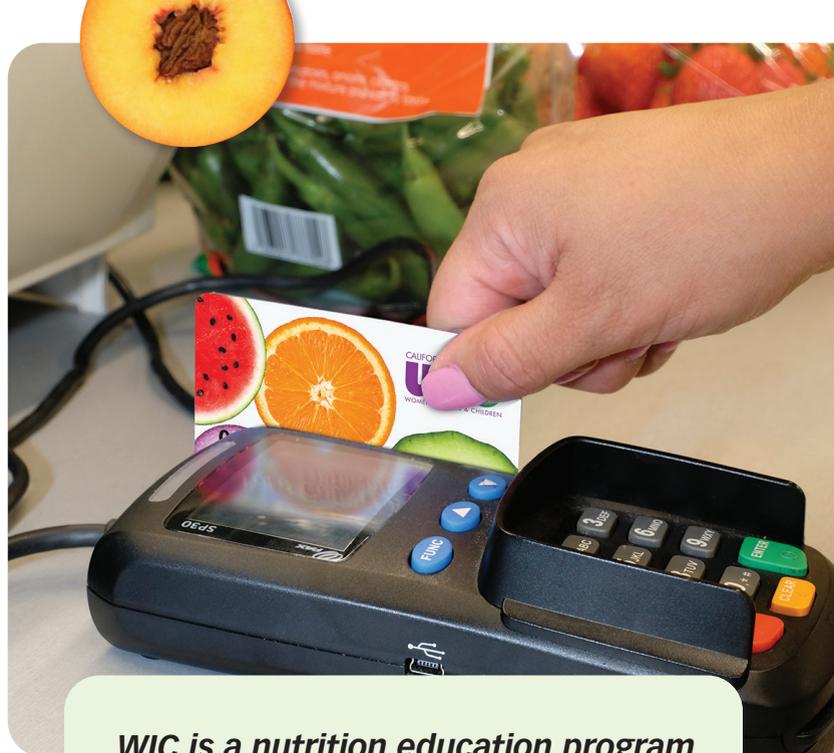
Hello WIC Card!



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!

Newly pregnant women, working families, including military and migrant families are encouraged to apply! WIC welcomes dads, grandparents, foster parents, or guardians who care for eligible children.

YES!



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Clinica Sierra Vista WIC

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