

LINCOLN PARK

Ho Ho Ho, Merry Christmas from the Goodfellows!

Santa and all of his helpers here at the Lincoln Park Goodfellows would like to send out a huge thank you to all of our longtime major supporters of the Lincoln Park Goodfellows.

Without all of you, our motto of "No Child Without a Christmas" would not be possible.

Santa wishes to humbly thank the following for their efforts in making sure "No Child Without a Christmas" rings true in Lincoln Park: Lincoln Park Public Schools along with the entire teaching staff and student body, The News-Herald, the city of Lincoln Park, Lincoln Park Police Department, Lincoln Park Fire Department, DBC America Marketing and Modeling, Meijer, Lincoln Park Credit Union and Fantasyland. Including so many private donors and volunteers that wish to remain anonymous, Santa thanks you!

We all know that without "Santa's helpers," our motto of "No Child Without a Christmas" would not ring true.

As we all get ready to celebrate the birth of Christ and spend time with our families and friends, I hope you all take a second, slow down and think about those who may have had an obstacle thrown at them. An obstacle that may have caused them to strug-



PHOTOS COURTESY OF LINCOLN PARK GOODFELLOWS

The Lincoln Park Goodfellows gather for another year of charity work.

CONTACT/DONATE

- Donations can be mailed to: Lincoln Park Goodfellows
P.O. Box 43 Lincoln Park, MI 48146
- Please make checks payable to Lincoln Park Goodfellows.
- 313-586-2336
- lincolnparkgoodfellows@gmail.com
- lincolnparkgoodfellows.com

gle to put food on the table, clothing on their child's back or roof over their family's heads. This is why the Goodfellows do what we do.

We help put food on the table for a Christmas dinner, clothing on a family's backs and a gift or two under the tree for those children on Christmas morning. There will always be obstacles that life throws at us, but trust in your faith, continue to do what's right and know you can overcome those obstacles. The Lincoln Park Goodfellows have always known that when difficult obstacles

arise, we will always find a way to make sure that "No Child Goes Without a Christmas!"

So please, be as generous as you can when you pass by and see all of our volunteers who will be out selling the Goodfellows newspapers on the street corners of Lincoln Park throughout the entire month of December.

We have all come across a family that we think could use a little help getting by, but fear of getting involved or possibly "hurting a person's pride" may hinder your intentions. You can

still help by making a donation and passing along the family's info to us and yet, still remain anonymous. There are so many good people out there who want to help, but just don't know where to start.

You can help out in several ways: donating your time selling newspapers on the streets of Lincoln Park or donating in any monetary form, be it cash, check or gift card. Feel free to reach out to us to find ways to help.

These last couple of years, there has been much turmoil in this world. I hope and pray that all of your loved ones are safe and well. Thank you again for your generous donations in the past and the Goodfellows look forward to it again this year.

Have a blessed and Merry Christmas!

May God bless all of you.



It takes many volunteers to pull off the charity work provided by the Lincoln Park Goodfellows.

TAYLOR

Goodfellows on track to have the biggest year ever

The holidays are in full swing, and the Taylor Goodfellow elves have been busy preparing for, what is on track to be, our biggest year yet.

Thanks to our amazing community partners, last year we were able to provide holiday assistance to 231 children from 93 different families. That is almost 50 more children than the previous year.

At the time this article was written, we had already received more applications than last year, with weeks left for families to apply.

When a family receives a holiday package from the Taylor Goodfellows, it is a package tailored to the needs and wishes of their children. We continue to see families asking for basic necessities that we often take for granted. That is why we provide not only toys and hobby items, but also essentials, such as cold weather gear, hygiene products and food.

In order to continue to provide for the children in our community, we are seeking the help of our generous community members. There are many ways to help us in our mission of "No Child Without a Christmas." Our organization runs on donations. Monetary donations and new, unused, items (toys, clothes, hygiene products, cold weather gear, etc) are always needed. These donations are collected year-round.

If you enjoy Christmas shopping, you can adopt a child to provide for this holiday season. We provide you with the details, including their needs, wants, sizes and interests. You then buy gifts based on those suggestions. For more information on adopting a child, reach out to us.

If you would like to donate the most valuable thing — your time — please contact us or visit our Facebook page for more information.



PHOTO COURTESY OF TAYLOR GOODFELLOWS

Volunteers gather to assist the charitable efforts of the Taylor Goodfellows.

Every donation we receive goes toward our goal of ensuring there is "No Child Without a Christmas."

We thank you for your generosity, and wish you a happy and healthy holiday season!

*Sara El-Rifaai, president
Taylor Goodfellows*

CONTACT US

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WYANDOTTE

Goodfellows to put smiles on kids' faces this Christmas season

By Jim Kasuba

jkasuba@medianewsgroup.com

Christmas is a season for giving and receiving.

The problem for some folks is that they don't have much to give, at least in monetary terms, which can make for lean holidays for families with young children.

Fortunately, Wyandotte residents who are feeling the economic pinch during the holidays can count on the Wyandotte Goodfellows to make sure their children don't wake up Christmas morning with few or no gifts under the tree.

Most of the funds raised by the Wyandotte Goodfellows are raised at this time of year when volunteers hit the streets to sell newspapers and collect donations. The cost of the newspaper is a donation that helps the organization live up to its motto of "No Child Without a Christmas."

Wyandotte Police Reserve Patrol Officer Joe Mayhew, chairman of the paper sales, said he is prepared for another successful season.

This year the Wyandotte Goodfellows look to be in good shape. Biddle Bowl Inc., 708 Biddle Ave., continues to be the largest donor to the organization, donating \$14,000 last year.

"Every year for the past several years they seem to set a record for being the highest donor," said Todd Browning, secretary/treasurer of the Wyandotte Goodfellows. "Let's hope they set a new record this year!"

The Goodfellows collect money in ways other than fundraisers.

"We also rely on donations from our generous and loyal Wyandotte residents to perform our work," said Larry Stec, the longtime president of the Wyandotte Goodfellows.

The Wyandotte Street Art Fair



PHOTOS COURTESY OF KAYLEE BARTON — KAYB PHOTOGRAPHY LLC

Members of the Wyandotte Goodfellows and their supporters gather outside the city's central fire station to kick off the group's newspaper sales fundraiser.

was back on track this year, which resulted in the Goodfellows' parking lot fundraiser doing well and subsequently helping to bolster the amount of funds they're able to spend this Christmas season.

The system the Wyandotte Goodfellows have been using for many years involves spending their funds on Christmas gifts with money that was collected the prior year. In that way, they go into the shopping season knowing exactly how much they can spend.

"Last year, we helped approximately 350 Wyandotte families with food and gifts during the holidays," Stec said.

Shoppers Valley Market said they're ready to assist the Wyandotte Goodfellows again this year with hams and turkeys.

Shoppers Valley Market is a mini market with a full line of grocery and frozen foods, fresh meat, deli, dairy, and fresh produce and has

partnered with the Wyandotte Goodfellows for many years.

This year, members will distribute gifts to income-qualified Wyandotte families over the course of three days at the Copeland Center, 2306 Fourth St. The distribution times and dates are 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 4 and Tuesday, Dec. 5. For those who can't make it during the morning/early afternoon, a later distribution time, from 2 to 8 p.m., will be available on Thursday, Dec. 7.

The easiest and best way to receive assistance from the Goodfellows is to go to the Copeland Center. Once there, you'll be asked to produce a government ID with photo; proof of residency; children's birth certificate or current school grade report (paper or digital); proof of housing (such as rental agreement, lease, mortgage statement or tax bill); or a letter from a relative with contact phone number; and proof of



Wyandotte Goodfellows Secretary/Treasurer Todd Browning; Mayor Robert DeSana; Goodfellows President Larry Stec; and Stephanie Badalamenti, Banking Center manager from First Merchants Bank's Wyandotte Office, take part in a tradition where the mayor makes the first official donation of the Wyandotte Goodfellows newspapers sales fundraiser.

income (such as child support, pay stub, Social Security statement, etc.).

For those requesting assistance who don't have all of the above, don't be discouraged. The Goodfellows say they can work with a variety of individual situations.

One other date to keep in mind is Sunday, Dec. 10, when the Toys for Tots & Wyandotte Goodfellows 15th annual Holiday Benefit Show will be held at the Knights of Columbus banquet hall, 3530 Biddle Ave. Doors open at 6 p.m. and the show starts at 7 p.m.

Because the Goodfellows have no full-time staff or phone number, the best way to donate or suggest a family who could use help is by mail at Wyandotte Goodfellows, P.O. Box 392, Wyandotte, MI 48192.

People also may leave a message on the group's Facebook page, but are asked not to post names of families in need, nor should they post any personal information online.



Comedian Mark Knope clowns around with Wyandotte Goodfellows President Larry Stec. Knope and Cori Hall are hosting the 15th annual Benefit Show Dec. 15 at Knights of Columbus banquet hall in Wyandotte. Proceeds benefit the Downriver USMC Toys for Tots campaign and the Wyandotte Goodfellows.

TWINKLE TWINKLE

Simple tricks to disentangle holiday lights

The joyous holiday season is enhanced by the beautiful and festive decorations that adorn homes and businesses during this special time of year.

Twinkling lights are part of the holiday decorating equation. However, tangled lights in storage bins and boxes can sap anyone's holiday spirit.

Lights can turn into a tangled mess no matter how hard people work to avoid such an outcome.

Lights get tangled partly because of their design. There is a metal wire inside the cord to help with the packaging of the lights, which gives the cord a natural curve. Furthermore, most light cords are made from twisted or braided wires that have spaces throughout. The lights themselves can get snagged in these pockets between the wires.

Although it can be frustrating to deal with tangled lights that look like balls of yarn in a knitting basket, there are ways to disentangle them with relative ease — and then pack them in a way that can reduce further tangles.

Begin by plugging all lights into the outlet to see if they work. If most of the bulbs are burnt out or the lights do not go on at all, discard the strand. There's no point untangling lights only to learn they don't work.

Start slowly, beginning on the plug end, when untangling the lights. Keep the strand you're working on separate from the other lights so they do not inadvertently become entangled. Tackle this job in a space with a lot of room. Lay the lights out on a large table or sit on the floor to do the untangling.

Utilize a pen or pen-



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cil to fish out more stubborn snags. This can help you loosen any knots and make it easier to pull snags through.

Lay the untangled strands out in a safe area away from your working space as you work through each strand.

One of the ways to avoid the hassle of tangled lights is to remember to store the lights in ways that will reduce their propensity for tangling in the first place.

- Rather than wrap lights around your hand or arm

to condense the strand, use something else. A piece of cardboard, a hanger and some PVC tubing can keep lights from becoming tangled.

- Store lights in a zip-top bag to keep them from tangling with other strands stored together.

- Save the original boxes and return the lights to them after each use.

- Icicle lights have hanging strands of lights on longer strands, which can compound tangling issues. Use

a rubber band to gather the hanging "icicles" together, or use some plastic wrap for the same purpose.

- Invest in a cord reel, similar to what you might use for a garden hose. Longer light strands or wires are stored on such reels, and they can be used with holiday lights.

Patience and care can prevent holiday lights from becoming tangled.

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MONEY MATTERS

The benefits of shopping local during the holiday season

Millions of people enjoy shopping for gifts and loved ones each holiday season. The spirit of giving is alive and well each December, and that can extend to giving back to one's own community.

In addition to supporting local charities when making donations during the holiday season, shoppers can patronize small local businesses over big box retailers and national chains.

The decision to do so can benefit communities in myriad ways.

▪ Small businesses inspire young entrepreneurs. The U.S. Department of Commerce reports that nearly half of all small business owners in the U.S. in 2018 were 54 or younger. In total, 6% of those owners

were 34 and under. Young entrepreneurs at the helm of thriving local businesses provide inspiration to the next generation of innovators.

▪ Thriving small business owners can send a positive message to traditionally underrepresented groups. The National Women's Business Council Annual Report for 2022 indicated women-owned employer firms increased by nearly 17% between 2012 and 2019. Similarly, the U.S. Census Bureau's 2021 Annual Business Survey found that there were more Hispanic-owned and minority-owned businesses in various sectors than a decade earlier. The success of women- and minority-owned businesses sends a positive message



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to young entrepreneurs and locals who are part of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented in business. That can help to create a more diverse and inclusive Main Street, the success of which depends

heavily on locals' willingness to patronize locally-owned businesses.

▪ Shopping local supports many small business owners. Family meals and social gatherings with friends and co-workers are a big

part of the holiday season, and it's not uncommon to break bread and share a few drinks during a night on the town. Choosing to gather at a locally owned restaurant or tavern instead of a chain restaurant can have a ripple

effect on an assortment of local businesses. Local restaurants often source their ingredients from local farms. A family meal at such a restaurant benefits both the restaurant owner and the hardworking local suppliers of the food that ends up on the plate. Local restaurants also are more likely to list locally produced wines and craft beers on their menus than national chains. That adds to the ripple effect of celebrating the holidays at a locally-owned restaurant.

A thriving small business sector is vital to a strong local economy. Shoppers can keep that in mind and patronize local businesses during the holiday season.

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GIVING BACK

Find the right volunteer opportunity for you

Giving back to one's community can provide a sense of purpose and improve an individual's overall well-being.

Data from Volunteer Hub indicates that people who volunteer improve their health by strengthening their bodies, improving their moods and reducing stress. Volunteerism also produces additional benefits, including boosting one's positive perception to others.

A study from Career-Builder found 60% of hiring managers see volunteerism as a valuable asset when making recruitment decisions. Furthermore, human resources executives attest that contributing to a nonprofit can improve leadership skills.

By understanding the value behind volunteer work — for the people or organization on the receiving end as well as the volunteer — more individuals may decide to donate their time and services. However, finding the right volunteer opportunity may take some trial and error.

The following are some tips for finding the right fit:

- Consider skills and interests. Before choosing a volunteer opportunity, make a list of activities that you enjoy. This may help guide volunteer choices. For example, if you like hiking, you may volunteer to clean up a local park.

- Assess your skill levels. Is there something you are particularly adept at doing? For example, if you are a certified



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public accountant, you may be able to volunteer by mentoring young accounting students, or doing taxes or book-keeping tasks for the elderly or less fortunate.

- Think about commitment level. Figure out how much time you can spend volunteering. Maybe you

only have the weekends or a few hours in the evenings? Understanding how much free time you have can help you choose opportunities that fit within these parameters.

- Research potential organizations. Not all nonprofit groups are created equal.

Consider skills and interests. Before choosing a volunteer opportunity, make a list of activities that you enjoy. This may help guide volunteer choices. For example, if you like hiking, you may volunteer to clean up a local park.

Utilize resources such as CreativeVolunteer that vet charitable groups to determine if they are trustworthy.

- Define your goals. Have goals in mind when selecting opportunities. Defining a goal can help you maintain the motivation to volunteer and see a project through to completion.

- Start small. Wade into a volunteer opportunity slowly

to see if it is the right fit. This may include volunteering one day a week or month. Increase the time you spend volunteering once you've found the right place for you.

Volunteering can bring joy to a person's life, especially when individuals find an inspiring opportunity.

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'NEVER TOO YOUNG'

When is the right time for kids to start volunteering?

Aristotle once said the essence of life is “to serve others and do good.”

It's well documented that volunteerism offers many benefits to those who are recipients of the charitable work as well as the volunteers.

According to The Corporation for National & Community Service, one in four Americans volunteers. Volunteers come from all walks of life and various age groups. Nearly one-quarter of all volunteers are people under the age of 24.

Parents and guardians who want to introduce their children to volunteerism may not know when is the right age to do so.

Many experts agree that there isn't a definitive age for children to get involved in volunteering. In fact, no child is too young to volunteer.

Dr. Joseph F. Hagan Jr., a clinical professor of pediatrics at Larner College of Medicine at the University of Vermont, says helping out during the toddler and preschool years helps shape a child's sense of morality.

Rather than wondering if a child is too young to volunteer, adults should focus on finding the right activity to match the child's age.

For example, a 3- or 4-year-old child can fill bags or boxes with donated food or help gather blankets and towels to donate to an animal rescue. However, a toddler or preschooler may not have the stamina to complete a 5K walk.

Volunteerism doesn't even have to be in the traditional sense of working with an established charity.

A youngster can pick flowers from a field and deliver them to an elderly neighbor. Or a preschooler can invite a child playing alone to come play together. A toddler who loves sorting items can help



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sort recycling items at home and watch a parent deliver them to the recycling center.

Another way to engage kids in volunteer work is to match their interests with

the tasks. Many kids can't get enough of animals, so they may want to help out an animal organization or be involved with a conservation group. A child can

collect change to “adopt” an endangered species. Kids also can visit a children's hospital and deliver gifts to youngsters battling illnesses.

In such situations, kids may be more engaged if they can help kids their own ages. Children are never too young to volunteer. Finding the right fit can inspire

a lifetime of giving back that benefits youngsters throughout their lives.

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TIME MATTERS

Unique ways to give back to older adults

Older adults offer much to local and national communities. Despite that, seniors do not always get the recognition they deserve.

According to data from America's Health Rankings, adults aged 65 and older comprised 16.8% of America's population in 2021. That is projected to grow to 22% by 2040.

It's always a good time to thank special seniors in your life, whether they are family, caregivers, friends, or mentors. Individuals can go one step further by giving back to seniors in the following ways.

Volunteer

Visit a senior center and find out how you can volunteer your services and do

something fun or informational with the seniors who are there. You may be able to guide a class in a certain activity, such as crafting or yoga. Volunteers may be needed to call bingo numbers or help with meal services.

Provide financial relief

Small business owners can offer discounts to senior clientele. Perhaps run specials on services, including anything from tax preparation to hair styling. If you don't own a business, you can provide some assistance in other ways, such as cutting the lawn or doing light gardening so that a senior does not have to spend money on a weekly service.

Tutor technology

If you are tech-savvy, you can help seniors navigate new technologies. Help seniors with social media accounts, downloading digital photos and more.

Dine out (or in)

Some seniors may be alone if a spouse has predeceased them or if they are divorced. Loneliness may grow into depression. One way to help a senior feel appreciated is by sharing meals together. Designate a day or two each week to gather at the dinner table.

Serve as a chauffeur

Offer to drive a senior to the store or appointments. While communities may have taxi services or even accessible senior rides,



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sometimes it can be more efficient for seniors to rely on others for rides. Take a senior along when shopping at the supermarket.

Invite seniors to events

If you have a special event coming up, such as a child's big birthday, graduation or religious occasion, invite an elderly neighbor. It can brighten his or her day and even provide a change of rou-

time and scenery. There's no shortage of ways to give back to the special seniors in your life and in your community.

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SAFETY

Age-based guidelines for buying toys and gifts

The holiday season involves making holiday gift lists and checking them twice, or even more frequently to ensure that gift-givers find the best fit for recipients. While age may only be a number in certain instances, when it comes to gifting, age should be a consideration — particularly when kids are involved.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission reports that an estimated 86,000 children treated for toy-related injuries each year are younger than five. Toy-related injuries are preventable, and prevention often comes down to choosing age-appropriate toys for kids.

Toys can be choking hazards when small toys or

those with small pieces are given to children who are too young to use them safely. Kids are curious and often put items in their mouths. Choking is the fourth-leading cause of unintentional death in children under age five, indicates The Emergency Center.

Falls, eye injuries, drowning, and motor accidents are leading causes of gift-related injuries.

Here's how to select age-appropriate gifts:

- Read the packaging carefully. Most toys and other children's products will come with an age range recommendation. While some kids may be mature beyond their years, it's best to choose gifts that fall within the recommended



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range. This is particularly the case for infants, toddlers and any child under the age

of five.

- Avoid fad gifts. Children often want the latest

and greatest gadgets and toys for gifts even if they are not the smartest choices for their ages. Resist the urge to buy something just to be the "cool parent or grandparent," especially if it isn't age-appropriate.

- Provide safety gear. As children age, they may be more interested in gifts that appeal to hobbies and abilities. Scooters, bicycles, skates and other items are popular among older children. These gifts should only be purchased for those with proven ability, and even then, accompanied with the appropriate safety gear. This can include helmets, knee pads and eye protection.

- Consider waiting before gifting certain electronics. Although children

may be able to use devices safely, there are many who advocate for waiting to give young children smartphones and tablets due to the consequences of excessive screen time. The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry says children ages 2-5 should limit noneducational screen time to about one hour per weekday and three hours on weekend days. Children should be encouraged to pursue healthy habits that limit use of screens, so gift-givers can look for gifts that help to this end.

Age-appropriate gifts ensure safety for the youngest people on holiday gift lists.

— Metro Creative Connection

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CHILL IS IN THE AIR

Fun ways to enjoy the start of winter

Winter begins on Dec. 21 and ends on March 19.

Many people lament the arrival of winter, perhaps thinking the colder temperatures and shorter hours of sunlight will compromise their chances of having fun. Even though particularly chilly thermostat readings or stormy conditions can hamper some plans, when people dig deeper they may find that even the coldest days present opportunities for enjoyment.

When winter begins, the following activities can make for an entertaining way to celebrate the arrival of the season.

- Build a snow creation. Use the first significant

snowfall of the season to organize a snowman, snowwoman, or snow-animal-making event or contest. Waterproof gloves are a necessary piece of equipment, as are buckets for moving snow, shovels, carving and shaping tools (which can be plastic cutlery), and accessories to dress up the final product.

- Go sledding on the best hills. Sledding is a popular wintertime activity that doesn't require too much equipment. Sleds can be purchased at sporting goods stores or toy stores. Sledgers of all ages should consider wearing helmets to protect against injury if they will be traversing espe-

cially steep hills.

- Host a winter block party. Many cities and towns across North America participate in Winter Fest events, which run the gamut from food and craft festivals to sporting events. Individuals can take cues from these types of activities and plan neighborhood festivals right on their streets. Neighbors can wheel out their fire pits or utilize outdoor propane heaters to keep spots cozy. Hot cocoa and cider stations and warm treats can keep everyone from feeling too cold. Electric slow cookers can keep everything from soups to chilis to stews warm and partic-

ipants can enjoy a buffet of hearty foods.

- Visit an ice rink. Whether a rink is indoors or outside, ice skating is a quintessential wintertime activity. Skaters of all skill levels can take to the ice and enjoy some exercise and laughs. Check local rink schedules to take advantage of open skate times when hockey games or practices are not dominating the ice.

- Mark the winter solstice. The winter solstice, also known as the start of astronomical winter, is the shortest day of sunlight on the calendar. It occurs when either of the Earth's poles reaches maximum tilt away from the sun. In the Northern Hemisphere, this occurs on Dec. 21. Because there will be only roughly seven hours of daylight, take steps to make the fact that

the sun will set at its earliest a little easier to swallow. Kids can run around outdoors with glow sticks, while adults can deck their homes in twinkle lights if they are not decorated for Christmas. Lanterns, campfires and candles can be lit, and everyone can gather outdoors to chat and socialize.

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YOU KNOW YOU LIKE IT

Festive facts about oft-misunderstood fruitcake

Certain sights and sounds are ingrained in the holiday season, from twinkling lights to carols piping over retailers' sound systems.

Amid the shelves of holiday wares and delicacies, fruitcake makes its annual appearance.

Fruitcake, sometimes referred to as plum cake or Christmas cake, can be prepared in various ways. However, a dense bundt-type cake dotted with dried, candied fruit and often soaked in rum or brandy has become the standard. Loathed or loved, seldom anything in between, fruitcake is typically mocked as the ultimate regift.

But just like Charlie Brown's scant Christmas tree, which was initially mocked, it's time to see fruit-

cake in a new light.

Consider these fruitcake fun facts:

- The texture of fruitcake can vary from cake-like to more of a sweet bread like brioche. Italians dig into panettone, Germans delight with stollen and Jamaicans serve black cake.

- The first fruitcakes weren't eaten. According to historians, fruitcakes were initially made by ancient Egyptians, who tucked the desserts into the tombs with their dead so a sweet treat could be enjoyed in the afterlife.

- Fruitcake gained popularity as military rations, as everyone from Roman soldiers to Crusaders found fruitcake provided a diverse array of nutrients and an energy boost in battle. Fruit-



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cake also stores well, which can be beneficial for military personnel in battle.

- Fruitcake seemingly is indestructible. While it likely cannot last forever, Tastemade says if a fruitcake is kept in an airtight container and stored in a

dark, cool place, it could be reheated years after being baked. Starch crystals and dried fruit in the cake will release stored water when warmed, rehydrating the cake.

- Historical accounts indicate Romans were among the first people to eat fruit-

cake, which they might have enjoyed as early as 100 A.D. A version called "satura" was made by mixing stale bread with pine nuts, pomegranate seeds, raisins, and then soaking it in a barley mash and an alcoholic beverage brewed from honey.

- Fruitcake became a popular dish to serve at British royals' weddings. Queen Victoria, Princess Diana and Prince William served fruitcake at their receptions.

- The Smithsonian Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C., has a fruitcake on display. It traveled into space on Apollo 11 in 1969, but was never eaten.

- Seth Greenberg, who worked in his family's New York City bakery, attests that fruitcake is delicious when made with the right ingredients. The neon-colored,

dry and overly sweet fruit that many bakers use is the problem with poor cakes. But proper ingredients like brandy, glace cherries, apricots, figs and dates can make for a delicious fruitcake.

- The average fruitcake weighs between two and three pounds. However, the heaviest fruitcake on record, according to "The Guinness Book of World Records," came in at 9,596 pounds. Despite the hefty weight of this cake, it's only around 92 to 160 calories per serving.

Regardless of its unfavorable reputation, fruitcake remains an unwavering holiday tradition. The website Serious Eats reports that more than 2 million fruitcakes are sold each year.

— Metro Creative Connection

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TIPS

7 ways to organize and store holiday decorations



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Decorating a home for holidays is quite popular.

A survey from the National Retail Federation found that 53% of respondents said they were planning to decorate their home or yard for Halloween in 2023.

Lombardo Homes polled 1,000 Americans in 2021 and 94% said they celebrate Christmas in at least some way, and 84% said they decorate.

With so many avid holiday decorators, individuals will need to find ways to organize and store their

seasonal items. Holiday decor comes in many different sizes — from the smallest tree ornaments to illuminated statues for the yard or inflatable items.

Figuring out a storage plan can take a little effort. These seven tips can help.

1. Purchase clear, similarly sized storage bins and shelving racks, hanging them where you plan to keep the decorations. Most people prefer an out-of-the-way spot, such as in the garage, attic or basement. Label each bin by holiday and put the

bins in chronological order to make finding items more convenient. Uniform bin sizes make it easier to stack and store.

2. Store smaller items inside larger decor items. Decorative baskets or wrapped boxes brought out for Christmas or Chanukah are ideal places to keep smaller tchotchkes like ceramics, dreidels, candlestick holders or mantel hooks. Delicate items can be tucked into Christmas stockings or wrapped and stored in a fluffy tree skirt. Egg car-

tons can be used to keep small items safe, as well.

3. Label everything so you will not need to dig through boxes or bins to know what is inside. This might be a good year to ask for a label maker for the holidays!

4. Use overhead or wall storage for holiday decor. Overhead spaces in the garage or basement walls can be good spaces to keep holiday decorations. Always keep bins and boxes off the floor so they are not vulnerable to damage related to leaks or

floods.

5. Garment bags can protect larger decorations, such as wreaths, artificial trees or signs. If you have a large number of inflatable lawn ornaments, consider investing in a small shed where these items can be safely kept. Wrap the extension cords and any bracing stakes or strings used with the decorations so it's easy to find.

6. Utilize pieces of cardboard as well as toilet paper or paper towel tubes to keep lights and

wires tidy. Tuck cords into the toilet paper tubes, and wrap lights around the cardboard to avoid tangles.

7. Each year, take inventory of your decoration collection and toss out anything that is damaged or has seen better days.

Storing holiday decorations will take some time, but once you establish a system, things will be simple year after year.

— Metro Creative Connection



Happy
Holidays



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DECKING YOUR HALLS

Home holiday decorating ideas

The holidays often involve purchasing gifts for close friends and loved ones, as well as making a delicious meal the entire family will love. But nothing sets the holiday scene and overall mood more so than beautiful decorations and other seasonal accouterments.

Many people leave no room untouched for the holidays, meaning color schemes or trinkets may carry through from top to bottom. Decking the halls this season can be made even easier with some of these handy ideas:

Holiday timeline

If you keep holiday photo cards each year, put them in chronological order and hang them from a piece of garland from the mantel or drape on a staircase banister. This can be a fun way to see how your own children or other members of the family have grown.

Make mini evergreen displays

Clip your favorite pieces of evergreen and push the

stems into floral foam. Display in small vases or other containers and place in groupings to emulate an evergreen forest.

Plan the outside

Exterior illumination and other exterior decorations share the holiday spirit with others. It can be overwhelming trying to visualize it all without a plan in place. Take a photo of the house and map out where you want lights and decorations to go. Then with your “map” in hand, you can more readily purchase supplies and start decorating.

Go for a specific natural color scheme

If you desire an overall holiday feel but aren’t interested in Santa figurines or kitschy elements, decorating with color in mind can be key. It’s easy to tie things together with some natural elements in your desired palette. For example, white, gold and green may look beautiful. Put boxwood clippings and white amaryllis flowers together. Pine cones, twigs and holly

pieces also can add touches to mantels, doorways and table centerpieces.

Ornaments elsewhere

Who says ornaments only have to go on a tree? Display antique or favorite ornaments by hanging them from beautiful ribbons throughout the home.

Scent the scene

Hang something aromatic on the tree to mingle with the pine. Fresh cinnamon sticks tied with twine or ribbon can be nestled among the boughs. Another scented idea is to make pine cone candles and use pine or cinnamon scents to make them smell just like the season.

Holiday decorating gets a hand from some creative ideas. Always follow safety precautions, especially when using candles, hanging lights and plugging in multiple items to electric sockets. With ingenuity and safety in mind, holiday decorations can be extra special.

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FAMILY TIME

Simple ways to involve kids in holiday decorating

Millions of people across the globe feel that the holiday season is a magical time of year. Though those people come from all walks of life, it's likely that no group is as taken by the unique spirit of the holiday season as much as children.

Whether they're looking forward to Santa's arrival or preparing for a school holiday pageant, kids have much to be excited about come December.

Parents can channel that enthusiasm by involving kids when decorating around the house this holiday season.

▪ **Make homemade ornaments.** The options are limitless when making holiday ornaments with children. From simple ornaments made from pine cones picked up outside to more complex projects designed for children nearing adolescence, parents can look to the

internet to find design ideas and directions for hundreds of ornaments.

▪ **Let kids lead the way when decorating the tree.** Families who celebrate Christmas can let kids lead the way when decorating their Christmas tree. Kids are likely to spend the weeks leading up to Santa's arrival gazing in awe at the tree, and knowing they decided where to place the various ornaments on it might make the season even more special for youngsters.

▪ **Take kids along when choosing lawn ornaments.** It's not safe to involve children when installing lighting displays, but kids will get a kick out of choosing inflatable lawn decorations and other items to place around the yard. Take kids along when buying new items and then seek their input when placing Frosty, Santa and his reindeer

friends around the yard.

▪ **Include kids in culinary decor.** Many celebrants cannot imagine a holiday season without gingerbread houses and cookies. These traditions provide another great opportunity to involve children in holiday decorating. Set aside some time to make homemade gingerbread houses, which can be used as decorations before they're ultimately eaten. Cookies may not have the shelf life of a typical gingerbread house, but kids can pitch in and decorate cookies prior to a holiday party or family meal.

The spirit of the holiday season can be seen on the faces of children each December. Inviting kids to pitch in when decorating for the holidays can make the season even more special for its youngest celebrants.

— *Metro Creative Connection*



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**From our Family to yours, wishing everyone
a Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year!**



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Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

WORDS

CAROLING
 CELEBRATION
 CHURCH
 COOKIES
 DECEMBER
 DECORATIONS
 ENTERTAIN
 EXCHANGE
 FAMILY
 FESTIVAL
 FESTIVE
 FRIENDS
 GIFTS
 HOLIDAY
 JOLLY
 LIGHTING
 NATIVITY
 PARTIES
 REINDEER
 SANTA CLAUS
 SHOPPING
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Christmas Movie Word Search

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

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

WORDS

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 BUDDY
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 CHARLIE
 CLARK
 ELF
 EXPRESS
 FAMILY
 FROSTY
 GRINCH
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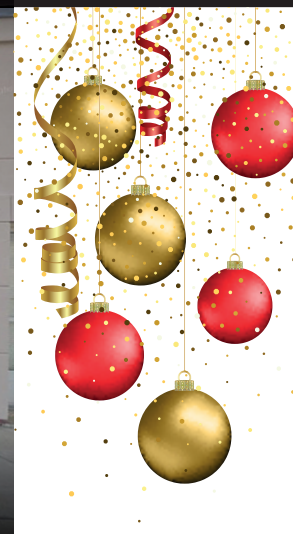
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