

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2019
SECTION C

Bountiful Harvest

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LONE TREE FOOD PANTRY

7C

WELLMAN MITTEN TREE

8C

CHRISTMAS IN KALONA



The News



JIM JOHNSON/THE NEWS

Abby Buckman, Holley Johnson and Allison Marshek are the Lone Tree FFA members leading the food pantry project.

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Lone Tree student food pantry gains popularity

BY JIM JOHNSON
 The News
LONE TREE

Abby Buckman met with the Lone Tree school board in September.

FFA members had launched a food pantry to help students and their families who may be experiencing tough times.

She told the school board that the food pantry had not had anybody come in during the short time it was opened, and the shelves were sparsely stocked.

That quickly changed.

ON THE COVER

Golden corn is poured into a semi on Nov. 18 at the fields at 140th and Highway 1 in Kalona.
 Photo by Bridget Johnson of The News.

In an interview last week, Buckman said six to eight families are regularly helped and the shelves are filled with donated items.

"We are getting there," she said.

In addition to food, the pantry has added personal hygiene products as well as hats, coats and scarves.

Some of the donated items come from HACAP – the Hawkeye Area Community Action Program – while other items are randomly dropped off at the school.

The pantry has added frozen foods such as frozen pork patties and bread products.

While the number of families being helped has risen, the pantry leadership team – Buckman, Holley Johnson and Allison Marshek – think there are more that could use the services.

"I think it's hard for people to know they need help some-

times," Buckman said.

FFA adviser Bridget Mahoney added that the program is designed for families that may be having some temporary difficulties.

"Everybody goes through hard times," she said. "We're just here to help during those hard times."

The students who work in the pantry go through food safety and civil rights training.

Freezer temperatures are regularly monitored, and food is pulled from the shelves when it hits its expiration date.

The pantry is open after school on Wednesdays, but school counselor Shelby Bryce sometimes opens it up for a student in need during the week.

"We are never really closed," Mahoney said.

Johnson added that the student-run pantry supplements the Lone Tree food pantry by being open at times that are convenient for students.



Thanks to donations, the shelves are now full.

Are you in the Club?

Need a hand to help with the Holiday Shopping Woes?
Christmas Club is an account offered by Federation Bank that encourages saving toward Christmas.

You decide how much you would like to put into this club each week. (Contributions can also be made biweekly or monthly.) When October comes, Federation Bank will mail a check to your home with your accumulated savings plus interest and a bonus to use for holiday shopping!

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Take some time to revisit lesser-known Christmas traditions

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Christmas celebrants participate in many different traditions year after year, but some may not fully understand the meaning behind such activities.

A Christian holiday, Christmas did not originate with all activities centralized to the church. In fact, many of the traditions people hold dear have pagan roots, which were adapted as Christmas celebrations evolved.

People who hang mistletoe in doorways may be surprised to learn that this tradition dates back to the ancient Druids. The Druids believed mistletoe possessed mystical powers that brought good luck to the household and warded off evil spirits.

Evergreen trees are now associated with Christmas trees, but evergreen boughs were once used to decorate homes during the winter solstice to help people envision the spring to come.

Christians often look at evergreen trees as a sign of everlasting life and their relationship with God.

However, while many Christmas traditions continue to be an integral part of annual celebrations, there are some customs that have fallen out of

favor.

Although these traditions may no longer be widely practiced, anyone can revive them and make them part of their holiday celebrations.

Wassailing is a custom that has ancient origins and is not as popular today as it once was.

“Wassail” comes from the Anglo-Saxon phrase “waes hael,” which means, “good health.”

Wassail is a drink made of mulled ale, spices and other ingredients.

To go wassailing meant to travel door-to-door singing and offering a drink from a wassail bowl in exchange for gifts.

Wassailing has been mentioned in certain Christmas carols, including “We Wish You a Merry Christmas.”

Largely an English tradition, wassailing was brought to America by British settlers.

Jan. 17, the old Twelfth Night, is the traditional date for wassailing.

Although wassailing has largely fallen by the wayside, increased interest in ales and craft brewing may help revitalize this Christmas tradition, which can inspire community spirit.

Gifting with fruit cake is another tradition that has been much maligned and does not



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Wassail is an ancient spirited beverage that was brought house-to-house with the goal of spreading Christmas cheer.

enjoy the same popularity that it once did.

Fruit cake is a cake made with chopped candied fruit, nuts and spices and is occasionally soaked in spirits.

Fruit cakes have been enjoyed all over the world, but Americans may never have embraced the Christmas fruit cake tradition as much as those from other countries.

However, with the right rec-

ipe and an open mind, it may be possible to resurrect the fruit cake tradition once again.

Mummers plays are another British tradition that arrived in North America with settlers but has largely fallen by the wayside.

Mummers plays involved miming folk dramas, and the plays were commonplace around the holiday season.

Celebrants may want to

research such dramas and include them in this year's festivities to live up celebrations even more.

Traditions passed on through the years help make Christmas a favorite time of celebration.

People may want to explore the less popular traditions today and once again make them interesting parts of this year's festivities.

Save time holiday shopping

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The weeks between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day are exciting, joyous and memorable.

With so much to do during that period, holiday shoppers may feel pressed for time.

However, savvy celebrants know there's plenty of time to spread holiday cheer and still find the perfect gift.



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Tame some of the holiday bustle with tips to streamline shopping.

Establish where to buy

One way to save time during the holiday season is to decide in advance where to shop for holiday gifts.

Some people are firm believers in shopping in one department store, while others hop between retailers to find the best deals.

Others strictly stick to online shopping or go the gift card route.

Choosing a strategy in advance and sticking to it can make shopping less time-consuming.

Create a wish list

Even if you do not plan to shop online, use popular online retail sites like Amazon to browse for popular items and save them to a wish list.

Then, with list in hand - either digitally or on paper - purchase items at local brick-and-mortar stores.

Think about bulk gifts

Figure out one or two gifts that would be fitting for many people on your list and then buy them in bulk.

Assembling gift baskets of bulk items can save time, as putting the baskets together will become second nature af-

ter one or two baskets.

Compare prices and get alerts

With sites like PriceGrabber, Google Shopping, Shopzilla, and PricePinx, it's easier than ever to compare prices at various retailers without having to make the trek to each and every one.

Price alerts can let you know when an item goes on sale so you can grab it quickly.

Set up loyalty accounts

Create a separate email account strictly for retailer promotions and loyalty clubs.

This way all sale information and coupon codes are sent to a single email address.

Ship directly

Instead of having items shipped to your home and then repackaging them for out-of-town relatives and friends, have them shipped directly to their final destination.

Weigh the costs of having the merchant wrap the presents if you feel it's necessary.

Save time and money with some smart holiday shopping strategies.

Alliant offers holiday meal energy-saving tips

Alliant Energy offered some tips for an energy-efficient holiday:

- **Let the furnace rest.** If your holiday cooking doesn't heat up your house, your guests will. Turn your thermostat down three to five degrees to save energy while staying comfortable.

- **Skip the preheat.** The turkey is traditionally stuffed early in the morning and roasted for hours. When cooking meats or dishes for several hours, there is no need to pre-

heat your oven.

- **Use glass or ceramic pans.** They heat faster than metal pans, and you can lower the temperature by 25 degrees, reducing energy use.

- **Cooking together saves energy.** Cook as much of your meal at one time as possible. Foods with different cooking temperatures can be cooked together, if the temperature difference is less than 25 degrees.

- **Close the oven door.** This Thanksgiving, resist the urge to open the oven door and

check the meal. One open of the door will decrease the temperature inside by 25 degrees. This means your oven has to use more energy to stay on temperature.

- **Coast to the finish.** Food keeps cooking even after you turn off the burner. When food is almost ready, turn off the oven or burners and let existing heat finish the cooking.

- **Don't overlook the microwave.** Efficient microwaves use about half the energy of conventional ovens.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF GARDENER'S SUPPLY COMPANY

Indoor herb kits keep gardeners growing all year, while providing fresh herbs for flavoring and garnishing meals.

Holiday gift ideas for the gardeners in your life

BY MELINDA MYERS
Gardening Expert

Holidays are a wonderful time to gather with friends and family, share a special meal and exchange gifts.

Finding the perfect gift for those we love can be overwhelming and stressful. No need to fret; give the gift of gardening that provides seasons of joy.

It doesn't matter if your recipient is young or old, new or experienced, an avid gardener or one who just likes the benefits gardening provides. You can find something special for everyone on your gift list.

Small and large space gardeners will appreciate help keeping their tools handy as they work their way through their landscape.

Give them a bucket, pair of gloves and a few tools to keep by the door for those quick planting, weeding and dead-

heading sessions.

Or decorate an old mailbox and turn it into tool storage to be mounted in the garden. Their tools will be handy and they'll spend less time and fewer steps hunting down forgotten tools.

Or purchase a tool caddy. Look for one that's colorful and waterproof like the Puddle-Proof Tote that holds and keeps hand tools, gloves and seeds dry.

Help them wrangle larger tools for easy transport from the shed to the garden and from bed to bed with a wheeled tool caddy that handles larger tools.

The Mobile Tool storage caddy (gardeners.com) has pockets for small tools, secures large handled tools and provides a place to hold compost, cut flowers or vegetables. It's easy to maneuver, eliminates multiple trips to the shed and is perfect for gardeners of all

ages and abilities.

Tools are always a favorite of gardeners. Newbies need to build their tool collection, while experienced gardeners may need to replace broken or time worn hand tools.

Consider giving a harvest basket, bucket or tool caddy filled with some basics. All gardeners will appreciate a new innovative tool that makes gardening easier or more fun.

Look for ergonomic tools that are built to ease stress on joints and allow gardeners to work longer with less pain.

Multifunctioning tools like the Golden Gark Rake that rakes, scoops and sifts helps save storage space and the need to haul around multiple tools.

Help your favorite gardener keep their green thumb in shape all winter long. Provide them with pretty pots, potting mix and seeds.

Look for kits like the Galvanized Organic Kitchen Herbs Growing Kit that provides all they'll need to grow their own fresh herbs.

Increase their indoor gardening success with supple-



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Amaryllis flowers can make great colorful gifts.

mental lighting. You'll now find light stands that sit on the table, mount on the wall or attach to plant pots.

Furniture quality Bamboo Mini LED Grow Light systems provide energy efficient lighting in a set up pretty enough for any room.

And for those that like the flowers but have limited time or interest in growing, give them a waxed amaryllis bulb. They won't need to water or fertilize.

Beginning and experienced gardeners will watch in amazement as this plant bursts into bloom with no effort on their part.

Don't know what to send? Cut flowers, flowering bulbs and plants are sure to generate a smile in just seconds.

Take care of special occasions throughout the year in one single order. Place one order for three, six, or 12 months of blooming beauty delivered right to your loved one's door, providing joy throughout the year.

So, break out your gift list and look for ways to give the gift of gardening. Your family and friends will appreciate your thoughtfulness all year long.



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Extravaganza will provide hands-on learning experiences

Projects available for area youth fourth grade and older on Dec. 7

WASHINGTON

Washington County 4-H is hosting a Winter Project Extravaganza for any youth fourth grade and older.

The Project Extravaganza will be held on Dec. 7. Times vary by class.

Each 4-H'er brings in their own level of experiences and is able to apply that to all of these project areas.

Youth are encouraged to come, listen and learn with hands-on experience to boost knowledge and spark new project interests while having a good time, meeting new friends and building upon skills.

Projects available are:
• Intro to Welding (9 a.m. – noon) is open to fifth grade above to create a reindeer made of horseshoes. Each participant will learn basic welding, terms, safety and tips with hands-on practice at the Kirkwood Regional Center in Washington. Cost \$30.

• Ready, Set, Sew – Candy Bag (9 a.m. – noon): This workshop will make a small drawing candy bag. Participants should be able to thread their

machine on their own, sew a straight seam with an even seam allowance, safely use a rotary cutter and follow simple pattern directions. Free to attend but must bring required supplies for project. Supply list provided upon registration.

• Scrabble Letters and Tray (9 a.m. – noon) will be led by RePurpose It. Participants will start with bare wood and sand, stencil, paint, build their own Scrabble letters. Participants may select two words with three letters. Cost \$30. Open to fourth grade and above. Workshop will be held at RePurpose It in Washington.

• Call of the Wild (9-10:15 a.m.) will be led by Washington County naturalist Megan Jorgensen at Marr Park Conservation Center. Participants will get out into nature and call the wild – ducks, geese, turkey, deer. Learn about the art of speaking to nature through these man-made calls. See, experiment and make some of your own tricks to talk with nature.

• Copper Wire Tree Sculpture (10:30 am-noon) is led by Ashely Stout of River Bottom



SUBMITTED

A 4-H'er receives help with her welded horseshoe snowman at last year's 4-H Project Extravaganza.

Hill Company with her unique wire art. Create a small 10-inch tree from copper wire. Use needle nose pliers to twist and create. Open to fourth grade and above. Cost \$20.

• Merry & Bright String Art (9-10:30 a.m.) will create an 8-inch by 10-inch sign. Follow the provided pattern with supplies provided to create a Merry & Bright table top sign or wall hanging. Cost \$20. Open to fourth grade and above.

Pre-registrations required by Dec. 2. Contact the Washington County Extension with any questions at 319-653-4811.



Area youth will have the opportunity to weld a horseshoe reindeer at the 4-H Project Extravaganza on Dec. 7.

Helpful tips for building a durable gingerbread house

METRO CREATIVE SERVICES

Gingerbread cookies and houses are one of the many symbols of the holiday season, alongside Christmas trees and twinkling lights.

In fact, few confections symbolize the holidays more so than gingerbread.

Many a child (or a child at heart) has spent hours carefully trying to create decorative gingerbread houses.

Although gingerbread recipes span various cultures, gingerbread houses originated in 16th century Germany.

The fairy tale "Hansel and Gretel" helped solidify the popularity of gingerbread, which became part of Christmas traditions.

Even though gingerbread houses can be fun to make, there's no denying it can be exacting work – especially for those who strive for perfection.

Prepackaged kits attempt to take some of the guesswork out of the equation, but those who are crafting from scratch can employ these tips as they build their gingerbread houses.

• Go for form and not flavor. Few gingerbread houses ever get eaten, so focus on finding a dough that will bake up rock hard as opposed to one that tastes good.

• Get the right icing texture. Pastry artist Catherine Beddall says royal icing is the preferred "glue" to adhere gin-

gerbread pieces. Beddall says icing should be thick like peanut butter and not runny.

• Mind the dough. Do not roll out the gingerbread dough too thin or it may become brittle after being cooked. Always cut out shapes before the gingerbread is baked. Let the baked pieces sit overnight to cool completely before using them to build.

• Patience is key. Allow the icing to dry for at least a couple of hours after adhering each piece and before moving and handling the house, says Beddall. Work in stages so that individual items can be decorated and allowed to dry. Then the walls can be put together, followed by the roof pieces.

• Kids likely will need help. Children may not have the patience or steadiness to handle complete gingerbread construction. They can decorate the separate pieces of the house while the components are laying flat, which is easier for kids. Adults can do the main assembly later on.

• Utilize a template. Free-handing may not be easy. Cut out templates using cardboard or posterboard for various gingerbread pieces.

One of the most important tips is to have fun.

Don't take gingerbread house making too seriously as a novice. Rather, enjoy the experience and the centuries-old tradition.



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Few confections symbolize the holidays more so than gingerbread with lots of icing.

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VICHYSOISE: A GREAT THANKSGIVING APPETIZER

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Thanksgiving hosts understand that turkey and trimmings are often the stars of the holiday menu. But some tasty tidbits serve as a precursor to the main meal and can set a strong precedent.

Since preparing the poultry often takes a lot of effort, it behooves hosts to keep appetizers simple.

Vichyssoise can be traced to a Frenchman employed as a cook at a Ritz-Carlton hotel in the United States.

Because the soup is served cold, there's no need to worry about coordinating its completion with the arrival of Thanksgiving guests.



METRO CREATIVE SERVICES

This recipe for "Vichyssoise" from Sara Woodward's "The Food of France" (Kyle Books).

Vichyssoise

Serves 4 to 6

- 4 large leeks
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 medium-sized potatoes, around 1 1/2 pounds when peeled and roughly chopped
- 5 cups mild vegetable or chicken stock
- Salt
- White pepper (optional)
- 4 teaspoons crème fraiche or sour cream
- 2 teaspoons chopped chives

Chop the white parts of the leeks only. Ideally you will already have used the green parts to make your stock, together with a white onion, a carrot or two, some sprigs of parsley and leaves of celery, and perhaps a few chicken wings.

Melt the butter in a heavy casserole and gently stew the leeks until soft, 15 minutes. Now add the chopped potatoes and stir well.

Meanwhile heat the stock in

another pan. After a further 10 minutes, add the stock to the leek and potato mixture, bring to the boil, turn down to a simmer, cover, and cook, 40 minutes.

Remove from the heat and leave to cool to tepid before liquidizing. The soup should be completely smooth.

When you have achieved this, check the seasoning and salt to taste, depending upon whether or not the stock was salty.

Traditionally, pepper is not added to vichyssoise, although, if you like, you can add a pinch of white pepper.

Chill well and, just before serving, swirl in the crème fraiche or sour cream. If the crème fraiche is very thick, whisk in a little whole milk to loosen it and sprinkle with the chives.



METRO CREATIVE SERVICES

Baking is a science, and sometimes it takes practice to get the results just right. However, there are some tips that can help yield better, buttery bounties.

Tips for baking better Christmas cookies

METRO CREATIVE SERVICES

Cookies and other baked treats are everywhere come the holiday season. It's not uncommon to give cookies as gifts.

Novice bakers making cookies for the first time may be a little overwhelmed when perusing recipes.

Baking is a science, and sometimes it takes practice to get the results just right.

However, there are some tips that can help yield better, buttery bounties.



METRO CREATIVE SERVICES

Handle butter with care

Butter can make or break a cookie recipe, as butter is often the glue that holds the cookie together. Therefore, it is key to follow the directions carefully regarding how to handle butter.

Smithsonian.com says to leave butter at room temperature for 30 to 60 minutes to properly soften it. This takes patience, but fiddling with butter too much can damage its delectable integrity.

While purists may say butter is best, margarine may be acceptable if it has a high fat content; otherwise, cookies may spread out and flatten.

When it comes time to cream the butter with sugar, be sure to do so thoroughly to

Follow these tips to yield a better, buttery bounty of cookies.

incorporate air into the butter and remove the grainy texture of the sugar.

Measure flour properly

Measuring flour the right way can ensure cookies come out right.

The Cooking Channel says to spoon the flour lightly into a dry measuring cup, then level it off with a knife. Do not dip the measuring cup into the flour or tap the knife against the cup. This will pack too much flour

into the measuring cup and result in dry, tough cookies.

Slow down the eggs

Add eggs one at a time to make sure each will emulsify properly with the fat in the butter. Adding eggs en masse may cause the emulsification to fail.

Chill out

Follow recipes that call for chilling cookie dough carefully. This process is important for making sliced and shaped cookies.

By chilling, the dough becomes more malleable for rolling and even slicing.

Use a bottom rack

Too much heat may compromise cookie integrity. The food experts at Delish say to try moving cookies onto a lower rack in the oven if they aren't retaining their shape when baked.

Put an empty cookie sheet on the top rack. That will block the cookies from the most intense heat that rises to the top of the oven.

Mastering cookies takes a little patience and some trial and error. Once bakers get their feet wet, Christmas-cookie-baking becomes even more special.

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Shop small businesses on Saturday, November 30

It's the time of year when newspapers thicken with sales circulars and holiday advertisements. Consumers looking to beat the hustle and bustle and steer clear of the crowds this year may want to pay attention to local businesses in lieu of trekking to nearby shopping malls.

Every time consumers visit local coffee shops to grab a latte, pick up a dress at a nearby boutique or patronize a farmers market down the street, they are supporting a small business. The Friday and Saturday after Thanksgiving are some of the busiest shopping days of the season, and they also can be some of the friendliest to small businesses.

Plaid Friday was conceptualized in Oakland. It may have been born in the Golden State, but the movement soon spread across the country. Plaid Friday is an alternative to big box stores' Black Friday bonanzas. It is designed to promote both local and independently-owned

businesses during the holiday season. The name Plaid Friday was used to help people visualize the various threads of small businesses coming together to create a strong community fabric that was diverse and creativity.

Shoppers can continue their small business patronage with Small Business Saturday. This, too, is a counterpart to Black Friday and Cyber Monday. The first event was created by American Express in conjunction with the nonprofit National Trust for Historic Preservation. Since its inception, many small business groups, merchants and politicians have touted the event and the Shop Small® mantra. The idea is that when small businesses thrive, communities and individuals thrive along with them.

The Small Business Administration says that, since 1995, small businesses have generated 66% of all new jobs in the United States. There are a number of big reasons to shop small.

One can start around the holidays and then continue all year long.

- **Shopping small businesses helps give back to the community directly.** According to Civic Economics, a strategic planning business, on average 48% of each purchase made at independent businesses is recirculated locally through tax money and other support.

- **Small business owners often strive to provide personalized, hands-on customer service.** Repeat business is key to their survival, so they want to ensure shoppers are happy.

- **Small businesses are not beholden to corporate oversight.** That allows them to offer a diverse product selection.

- **Small business owners often live nearby.** They're the people you see in town, schools and elsewhere in the local community. Many consumers are comforted to know they're supporting their neighbors, especially during the holiday season.



CREATIVE METRO SERVICES

Specific events are geared to direct shopping traffic to local businesses during the holiday season.



JAMES JENNINGS/THE NEWS

Lisa Miller-Allen (left) and Jayne Hochstedler place winter items on the mitten tree at Wellman Cooperative Telephone Company.

Mitten tree back for another year at Wellman Telephone

BY JAMES JENNINGS
The News

WELLMAN

A familiar holiday tradition is back for another year.

Wellman Cooperative Telephone Company is once again taking donations for its mitten tree.

WCTC collects winter hats, mittens, gloves and scarves for school children in Wellman.

"They go to the needy kids at the elementary school here in Wellman and the preschools," WCTC Manager Jayne Hochstedler said.

Customer Service Representative Lisa Miller-Allen said that Mid-Prairie West Elementary School keeps a supply of winter items for students who need them.

"They have a room in the school loaded with all these supplies, including snow pants," Miller-Allen said. "When the weather gets bad enough, kids have to wear snow pants and boots. If kids didn't have these things for recess, they would give them whatever piece they were missing. They go through them all every year."

Collections begin around Thanksgiving and continue through December.

"We sort them, then take

them up to the school some time after Christmas," Hochstedler said.

The goal is to collect at least one piece for every student.

WCTC collected more than 300 pieces last year.

"We had 300 pieces or so last year," Miller-Allen said. "The kids go through them all."

Hochstedler added, "Last year, we had the most we've ever gotten."

Some people make cash donations instead of bringing in items.

"We take the cash and order as many pieces as we can with the money that's donated," Miller-Allen said.

Hochstedler said that additional donations of children's-sized snow pants and boots are also appreciated.

"The kids can't go out for recess without them," she said.

WCTC recently received word that the Lime Creek Lighthouse 4-H club is also collecting winter items to donate to the mitten tree.

"It's great when groups like this get involved and help us out," Hochstedler said.

Donations can be dropped off at WCTC, 305 Eighth Ave., SW during regular business hours, which are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

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Christmas in Kalona

Activities at Community Center

9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

- Christmas DJ
- Handmade & Craft Market
- Vendor Market
- Gaga Ball Tournament
- Missions Market at Elements

11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Face Painting

12 - 2 p.m.

- Pictures with Santa
- Cookie Decorating
- Ornament Decorating

3 p.m.

- Window Decorating Judging
- Holiday Costume Contest Judging
(Selfie backdrop available. Share your photo with #ChristmasinKalona to enter to win)

Activities in Downtown Kalona

- Walking Stocking
- Business Bingo

9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

- Cookie Walk at Library
- Piano Playing at Library
- Toy Drive at Kalona Auto

12 - 6 p.m.

- Wine & Beer Tasting
- Hot Cocoa & Cider
- Holiday S'mores

3 p.m.

Movie at Kalona Brewery

6 - 8 p.m.

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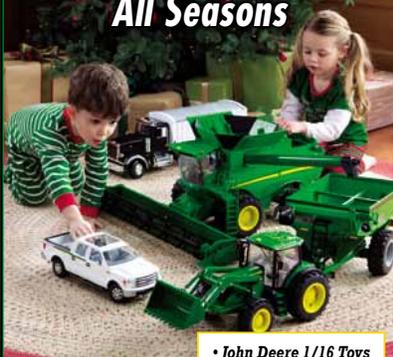
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Holiday Jazz Selections

Thurs., 12/19, 7 PM
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