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Living Christmas Tree

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# AVIOR OF THE MULTI-GENERATION

Multi-Generation Christmas Musical

DECEMBER 9, 10 & 11

FRIDAY 7:00PM, SATURDAY 6:00PM, SUNDAY 10:30AM & 6:00PM



# Christmas Open House

9201 State Highway 17 • Elgin, OK 73538 • 580-492-4906

- Nov. 18th Friday 10-6
- Nov. 19th Saturday 10-4
- Nov. 20th Sunday 12-4

# SECTION SHOPPING SPREE!

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### **Holiday Happenings**

Many Christmas parades and light displays are taking place across southwest Oklahoma this holiday season. We suggest checking local sources for adaptations before attending any event.

### **Christmas Parades**

Lawton – 6 p.m., Nov. 19. Theme is "Beloved Christmas Movies." More information at https://lawtonfortsillchamber.com.

Marlow – 10 a.m., Dec. 3. More information at marlowchamber.org/events.

Duncan -3 p.m., Dec. 3. Parade route runs along Walnut and Main streets between 7th and 11th streets. Decorate floats for the theme "A Cinema Christmas." More information at mainstreetduncan.com.

Walters - 6 p.m., Dec. 3. Downtown Walters.

Comanche – evening of Dec. 3. Fireworks will follow parade.

Cache – 5:30 p.m., Dec. 10. Theme is "Christmas in Candy Land." More information at cacheareachamber.com/events-page/Christmas-parade.

Waurika - 6:30 p.m., Dec. 10. Theme is "Hometown Christmas." More information at waurikachamber.com.

Medicine Park -9 a.m., Dec. 17. Parade and carnival. More information at medicinepark.com/event-calendar.

### Holiday Events

• Holiday in the Park, Lawton: Lots of activities are happening this year at Lawton's Elmer Thomas Park. The Frost Your Fanny 5K & 1 Mile Glow Fun Walk starts at 5:30 p.m., right before the parade on Nov. 19. Christmas lights start Nov. 12. New for 2022 are more than 50 new light displays and a larger skating rink. Holiday movies "Elf" and "The Polar Express" are planned for Nov. 12, and Christmas crafts on Dec. 4. The Snider Petting Zoo will bring fun animals to show off on Nov. 20, 21, 26, 27 and 28; and Dec. 3-5. Stories with Santa will be at 2 p.m. on Dec. 11.

Most events are free but some require admission. Holiday in the Park Winter Classic hockey games will be held each Sunday from 11 a.m.-1p.m., Nov. 27-Dec. 18. Learn more at www.lawtonfortsillchamber.org and look for the Holiday in the Park tab.

- The 41st annual Living Christmas Tree, Lawton: "Savior for All, a Multi-Generation Christmas Musical" will take place on Dec. 9, 10 and 11 at First Baptist Church in Lawton. Several performances are scheduled. Visit www. fbclawton.org for more details.
- Festival of Light, Chickasha: Enjoy 43 acres of illuminated displays at Chickasha's Shannon Springs Park. Hours are 6-10 p.m. Sunday-Thursday and 6-11 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, Nov. 19-Dec. 31. Ice skating, carriage rides, food trucks and amusement rides make for a fun family outing. Find out more at chickashafestivaloflight.org.





### Give your energy bills a break this holiday season

If you plan to spend time away from home this holiday, Cotton Electric and Safe Electricity have tips to lower your energy bill and keep your gone.

•Unplug some of your appliances. household Your house has many items, like that new coffee pot Santa brought, that use electricity while plugged in, even when turned off. This is known as phantom power draw. Unplugging these items not only saves energy, but in some cases, can prevent fires in your absence. Appliances guilty

of phantom power draw include: television sets, DVD players, VCRs, cable TV boxes, microwave ovens and toasters.

•Adjust the refrigerahome safe while you are tor control to a warmer setting. The fridge's temperature can be as high as 40 degrees without spoiling food; the freezer can reach 5 degrees. On these settings, refrigerators use up to 40 percent less electricity. If you are going on an extended trip, consider emptying the fridge and turning it off (remember to leave the door open to prevent mildew).

•Set the thermostat

higher or lower than the typical comfort level. You should consider lowering your thermostat, but to no lower than 55 degrees. Typically, by doing this your heating will cost 10 to 30 percent less. You can shut the heater off during your absence, or at least consider setting it to a lower than normal temperature, such as 67 degrees. A programmable thermostat can make these adjustments automatically.

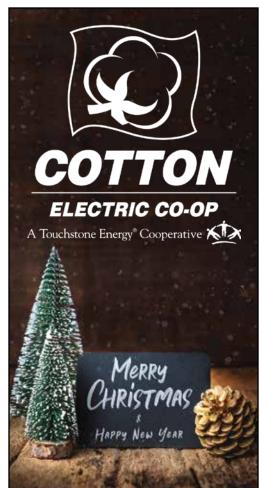
•Turn down the water heater. A large percent of the cost of running a water heater comes from just keeping the water warm. If you are going on a lengthy trip, turn the water heater's temperature to the coolest setting. This can save you up to \$10 a month.

Cotton Electric Cooperative and Safe Electricity want to remind everyone this holiday season that a safe and efficient celebration is the best celebration. Please keep your holidays bright, and follow the suggestions of Safe Electricity.





Unplugging countertop appliances when not in use saves electricity.







### Reduce risk of home fires this holiday season

Safety might not be the first thing people think of as the holiday season approaches.

Faith, celebrations, decorations, and holiday dinners all come to mind when considering the holiday season. But that doesn't mean safety should be left out of holiday planning.

Fire safety bears special consideration during the holiday season, when the prevalence of fire hazards like Christmas trees, holiday lighting displays and other decorative items increase the risk for home fires.

Such tragedies can be averted with a few simple safety measures.

Christmas trees are awe-inspiring, but they also pose a significant fire risk.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) urges celebrants to purchase only healthy trees with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched.

Such trees are less likely to dry out, especially when well-watered throughout the season.

Dry trees can catch fire more easily than healthy trees if embers from nearby fireplaces or candles drift in their direction.

• Recognize that location matters when decorating. The

• Tend to your tree. Live NFPA notes that Christmas trees should always be placed at least three feet away from any heat source, including fireplaces, space heaters, heat vents, candles, and even overhead lights.

> If decorating with candles, never place them on the tree or on tables where other flammable decorations have already been placed.

> Hanukkah menorahs should never be placed near curtains or other decorations.

• Turn off all lights and extinguish all lit decorative items when leaving the home or going to bed. Lit candles and menorahs should never be left unattended.

The NFPA recommends turning tree lights and exterior decorative lights off when leaving the home or going to

• Utilize a fire screen on fireplaces. Embers can catch on trees, decorations or anything else that's flammable if they escape the fireplace.

Fire screens prevent that from happening by ensuring embers from burning logs stay in the fireplace. Like candles and menorahs, fires burning in a fireplace should never be left unattended.

Make sure all embers have been extinguished before leaving the home or going to bed.

• Keep discarded trees away from your home. A 2014 analysis from the NFPA found that none of the ten days with the largest share of Christmas tree fires were before Christmas. Dried out trees still pose a fire risk even after they've been removed from a home.

When discarding a tree at the end of the holiday season, place it at the curb or keep it a safe distance away from your home and garage until you can discard somewhere safe.

Fire safety measures are an important component of the holiday season that can prevent this joyous time of year from turning tragic.



### Add safety to your holiday traditions

year, the holiday season comes with traditions of festive lights and decorations, extraordinary foods and lavish parties. Add an extra measure of caring to your time-honored traditions. Make a point to take care of yourself and those you love by taking time to decorate safely—without skipping any safety steps.

Shawn Miller knows firsthand how important every safety step is and how quickly this holiday activity can turn tragic. Each year, he would help his mother decorate her yard, and each year, the display grew as she added another area. That year, she decided to light the large trees in the far front. As Shawn tossed lights up into the trees, they came in contact

For millions of people every with overhead power lines and he hooks to hang lights. received a high voltage shock. He was hospitalized for months, went through numerous surgeries and lost his dominant hand.

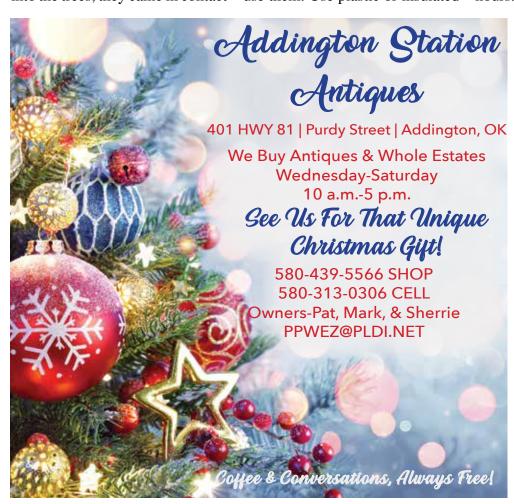
> Miller and Safe Electricity urge everyone to follow these precautions:

- •When decorating outside, look up and look out. Never throw holiday lights or other decorations into trees near power lines.
- •Be especially careful when working near power lines attached to your house. Keep ladders, equipment, and yourself at least 10 feet from power lines.
- •Use only lights, cords, animated displays, and decorations rated for outdoor use. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on how to use them. Use plastic or insulated

- •Cords should be plugged into outlets equipped with Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GF-CIs). Use a portable GFCI if your outdoor outlets are not equipped with them. GFCI protection is very important outdoors, where weather conditions can create dangerous electrical situations.
- •Do not staple or nail through light strings or electrical cords, and do not attach anything to utility poles.
- •Outdoor holiday lights are for seasonal use, up to 90 days. Bring them inside after the holidays.
- Avoid decorating outside on windy or wet days. Choose to decorate in favorable weather conditions and during daylight



Stay safe this holiday season.





### Thank You For Your Continued Support!









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SHOP LOCAL



### Five ways to support small businesses this Christmas

Small businesses long have been the heart and soul of local communities here in southwest Oklahoma. There is something to be said about being on a first-name basis with a local restaurateur or another small business owner, as such familiarity often translates into exemplary service.

According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, small businesses account for 99.9 percent of companies in the country, due in large part to the broad definition of small businesses (those with fewer than 500 employees). However, the vast majority of businesses in the United States have a staff that's

Small businesses long have smaller than 20 workers, acceen the heart and soul of cording to the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council. These firms employ nearly something to be said about eing on a first-name basis SBA.

Despite the prevalence of small businesses, fewer than 80 percent of entrepreneurial small business ventures make it beyond their first year, and only around half make it beyond five years.

Consumers who want to help their favorite small businesses survive can use the holiday season and beyond to set the course for success. Consumers can make a concerted effort to fuel this important cog in their local economic engines.

- Shop local. The concept is simple but effective. Opting to shop in local stores over larger conglomerates and franchises can help small businesses take root. Before making holiday shopping lists, visit local stores and base gift ideas on items they have in stock. Chances are those gifts will be one-of-akind.
- Purchase gift cards/certificates. All businesses have slow periods, and post-holidays is often a time when sales stagnate. Gift cards may bring new customers into local businesses who might otherwise not have patronized them, potentially creating new repeat customers.
- Cater holiday meals and gatherings. The holiday season is chock-full of entertainment opportunities. Individuals can rely on nearby restaurants and other food and beverage businesses to cater holiday parties. Some businesses also may be willing to discount or donate food for nonprofit group activities, such as church holiday bazaars, school holiday concerts or fundraising fairs.
- Mention small businesses on social media. The holiday season breeds excitement. Therefore, when shoppers are in local stores, they can snap pictures of products and overflowing shopping bags and post them online while

praising local businesses.

• Think about subscription gifts. Enrollment in a health club or a massage therapy service are gifts that keep on giving for the recipient, but also help ensure consistent incoming cash for the business providing the service.

When shopping this holiday season, consumers can look to the small, local businesses in their communities that help make towns and cities unique.





## Warm up with real 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, hot toddies, 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."

Real Hot Chocolate

Serves 1 to 2



1 1/4 ounces semisweet chocolate, broken into pieces

1 1/4 cups milk 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 chocolate curls.

Serve immediately.



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# AUDII the holidays

#### with Rachel Ray's special roast chicken

Roasts are customary during the holiday season because they often feed a crowd and look impressive on serving platters. Some people opt for a roast beef while others prefer to roast a turkey. However, chicken just as easily can be turned into a Christmas dinner since it is versatile and tasty. In addition, the cooking time for a roasted chicken is much shorter than it is with other roasted dishes. This recipe for "Roast Chicken with Whole Roasted Garlic,"

from "Rachael Ray 50: Memories and Meals from a Sweet and Savory Life" (Ballantine Books) by Rachael Ray provides the basis for a tasty holiday meal. Simply multiply the recipe as needed depending on the number of guests.

#### Roast Chicken with Whole Roasted Garlic

Serves 4

1 4-pound chicken Kosher salt

2 lemons, one pierced several times with the tines of a fork and one halved

Few sprigs each of thyme and rosemary

4 large bulbs garlic, 1 per person or portion, ends cut to expose the cloves (keep the hairy root end intact)

Extra-virgin olive oil for drizzling freshly ground black pepper

- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 cup white wine

warm, crusty bread

Place the chicken in a shallow baking dish. Salt the chicken inside and out and place uncovered in the fridge overnight.

Preheat the oven to 450 F. Pat the chicken dry and fill with the pierced whole lemon, thyme and rosemary.

Tie the legs up.

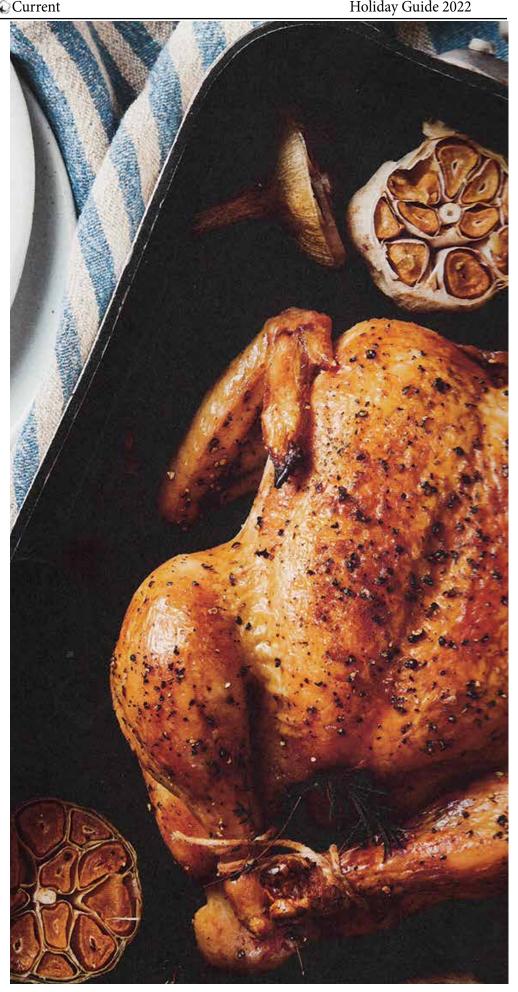
Dress the bulbs of garlic with extra virgin olive oil; season with salt and pepper.

Arrange the garlic in the baking dish around the chicken. Rub the skin of the chicken with butter and season with pepper. Pour the wine into the bottom of the dish.

Roast the chicken for 1 hour or until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the dark meat reads 165 F.

Let the chicken stand for a few minutes on a carving board until just cool enough to handle.

Carve the chicken, dividing the white and dark parts and slicing the breast meat on the bias. Arrange the chicken on plates or a platter and top with drippings, juices and the juice from the remaining halved lemon. The garlic may get dark but it won't be charred. Serve in the skins or squeeze the paste from the skins with your knife and pass with a spoon to eat with the chicken or to slather on the warm chunks of bread.



### Sugar cookies art you can eat

clean

piece of

by Paula Huckabaa

Sugar cookies are a classic holiday treat and perfect for gift-giving.

For beginners or children, try frosting them with vanilla buttercream icing and top with sprinkles.

There are lots of festive holiday sprinkle colors and shapes these days. Colored sanding sugar is perfect for kids to dust on the cookie tops.

For a more advanced technique, try your hand at royal icing. Search YouTube to find many talented bakers who share their best decorating tricks.

Tipless piping bags and gel food coloring give the best results for icing details.

No matter how you decorate them, the main ingredient is always love.

#### No-Spread sugar cookies

by Paula Huckabaa

1 cup salted butter, slightly softened

2 cups white sugar 2 large eggs, cold

1 tsp. vanilla extract

1 tsp. lemon extract

1 tsp. orange extract

1/2 tsp. almond extract

1 tsp. baking powder 1/2 tsp salt

4 cups all-purpose flour, plus 1 cup for rolling

**Decorations** 

Makes 2 doz. 3" cookies

This is best done with a stand mixer. If you use a hand mixer, you will likely need to stir and mix the last two cups of flour by hand.

Cream butter & sugar. Add eggs, one at a time (scrape bowl after each is incorporated). Add extracts and mix. Add salt, baking powder and 2 cups

flour. M i x0 n low until all flour is incorporated. Repeat until you've mixed in

flour.

Have a large baking sheet (or jelly roll pan) on standby next to you.

remaining two cups of

On a smooth, clean work surface, place a

parchment paper. Sprinkle a bit of flour onto the parchment and place half of your dough on the parchment. With clean hands (or wear food handling gloves), press the dough out a bit. Flour your rolling pin

and roll the dough as evenly as you can to 3/8" thick-

ness.

Take the entire sheet of parchment and dough off the work space and place on the baking sheet. Repeat

this, using a clean sheet of parchment until all the dough is rolled out. Stack the sheets of dough on top of each other on the baking sheet.

For best results, place the baking sheet stacked with sheets of dough in the freezer for 15 minutes while you heat your oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.

When it's time to cut

out cookt h e work with ies. one sheet at a time, leaving the remaining sheet in the freezer. Dip the cutters in flour for easy removal. Use an offset spatula to place cookies on another parchment-lined baking sheet. Dock the

cookie the in middle by lightly piercing it with a fork.

Bake the cookies 350 degrees

Fahrenheit for no longer than seven minutes. Do not overbake.

Baked, unfrosted cookies can be stored in the freezer for two months.

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### Shop locally for gifts to avoid supply shortages

Consumers across the globe have been forced to contend with supply shortages since the early days of the pandemic, and that same issue could cause problems this holiday season. Consider these tips to help beat the supply shortages:

• Shop local. Many big box retailers rely on imports to fill their shelves, and that could make it hard for such sellers to deliver items in time for the holiday season.

Shopping local and buying items directly off the shelf can ensure no one is given an IOU this holiday season.

Check out local Co-op es. It's a win-win. Connections partners at www.connections.coop to find deals near you.

• Give gift cards. If shipping estimates make it unlikely that gifts will arrive on time for the holiday season, pivot to gift cards. Put the amount of money you would have spent on the item on the card instead.

For example, if an ereader costs \$150, give a \$150 gift card in its place.

Many Co-op Connections partners have gift cards available. You save time and help support your local business-

• Ship directly to recipients. It might not offer the same heartwarming charm as handing a loved one a gift in person, but shipping gifts directly to their recipients increases the likelihood that the person will receive the gift by Christmas morn-

Many online retailers now offer wrapping at additional cost, and shoppers can splurge and have directly shipped gifts wrapped to add a more traditional feel to gift-giving.

Give homemade gifts. Homemade gifts

don't need to be shipped, so there's no way such items will spend the holiday season sitting on a ship in a congested port.

If you choose to make crafts, decide early what you want to create so you can secure all of the necessary supplies in plenty of time to deliver the items on Christmas morning.

Supply shortages could make for a tricky holiday season again this year. Planning ahead for such shortages can ensure gifts make it into the hands of loved ones without delay.

Happy gifting!



Ensure only good surprises on Christmas Day.



### The origins of popular Chistmas carols

Christmas carols can be heard far and wide from Thanksgiving weekend through Christmas Day.

"The 12 Days of Christmas" is one of the most recognizable carols, and for good reason, as the popular song can trace its history back several centuries.

Researchers have traced the earliest printed version of the poem on which the song is based all the way back to 1780. That's three years before the signing of the Treaty of Paris, which officially ended the American Revolutionary War.

What is known is that the version many people recognize today, namely in song form, can be traced to the early twentieth century, when English singer and composer Frederic Austin first popular-

ized the melody for the song. Austin performed that version of the song beginning in 1905, and it was first published in 1909.

The instantly recognizable "Jingle Bells" has become a wildly popular Christmas carol despite not mentioning Christmas or any other holiday.

Written by New England native James Lord Pierpont, "Jingle Bells"

is commemorated with plaques in two different cities, each of which claims to be the place where Pierpont wrote the song in the 1850s.

One plaque is in Medford, Massachusetts, where Pierpont is said to have written the song from a tavern while watching sleigh races taking place outside. The other plaque is in Savannah, Georgia.

"The First Noël" (also known as "The First Nowell") is among the oldest songs now sung as a Christmas carol.

The song is believed to be of Cornish origin, which means it can be traced to an ethnic group associated with the historic county of Cornwall in southwest England. According to Classichistory.net, historians believe "The First Noël" was written as early as the 13th century. During that time, Miracle Plays that depicted Biblical stories were very popular in Europe, and "The First Noël" is believed to have been inspired by those plays. The song tells the story

of the birth of Jesus as depicted in the Gospels of Luke and Matthew.

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The origins of "O Holy Night" can be traced to a request made by a 19th century French priest. In the fall of 1847, that priest asked a French merchant named Placide Cappeau to write a Christmas poem. Cappeau's poem was eventually shared with French composer Adolphe Adam, who quickly set the poem to music. The song made its debut on Christmas Eve 1847.



Christmas carols have a rich tradition



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just for Cotton Electric members.

Got a loved one who loves antiques? In need of stocking stuffers? Want a monogrammed or personalized gift? Would your friend or loved one prefer a nice holiday bouquet? You can find deals on these and so much more on www.connections.coop, or by using the Co-op Connections app.

Think outside the (gift) box, because sometimes the best presents can't be wrapped! Your golf enthusiasts will enjoy the discounts for green fees, and the sportsmen in your life would love a personalized hunting guide.



shop, either by zip code or the type of business you want (i.e., boutique, gifts, books, etc.). This lets you efficiently route your day, saving time and helping you make the most of your trip.

While you're out shopping, the sitter can get help entertaining the kiddos at local attractions. They'll have fun while learning, and you'll keep money in your pocket with the discounted admissions.

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