

FREE

City Revealed

DECEMBER 2023

Heritage Bites:
New Holiday Recipes to try

12 Fun Christmas Traditions

Holiday Events in the Corridor





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A Note from the Publisher

Greetings and Happy December!

As we approach the close of another year, it's incredible to reflect on the moments that have shaped us. For me, December is a time filled with thoughts of cookies, festive decorations, and cherished moments shared with family and friends.

The Amanas never disappoint with their enchanting Tannenbaum Forest and other festive events. Be sure to check out that information, and for more family fun, Macaroni KID Cedar Rapids has a comprehensive guide to holiday events throughout the Corridor.

Amidst the hustle and bustle, consider exploring Uptown Marion, Cedar Rapids shopping centers, Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Brucemore, The History Center, National Czech and Slovak Museum & Library, as well as NewBo. These places offer delightful strolls and so many unique gifts waiting to be discovered. I know it's easy to shop online, but let's remember to support and shop local - there is a treasure trove of one-of-a-kind finds that our local shops hold for us.

I'm excited to share my 12 Fun Christmas Traditions with you. Even as my kids grow older, I pledge to uphold these traditions and create cherished moments, for traditions are timeless, meant to be passed down through generations. So yes, kids, you will get your PJs from Frosty on Christmas Eve well into your 40s and beyond!

Enjoy all things to come this month, and above all, stay warm, take it all in, and enjoy every moment.

Happy Holidays!



Char

Charlotte Linde
Publisher & Chief of Inspiration

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



CITY Revealed

Find us on





BBB Alert: Holiday Delivery Scams

Most consumers love the convenience of making purchases online and having them shipped straight to their doorstep. With millions of packages delivered each year, con artists and thieves have developed many unique ways to steal from shoppers. Fortunately, there are also many ways to protect your purchases.

Popular delivery scams

Delivery scams and theft are particularly prevalent during the holidays when more packages are shipped, but they can happen year-round. Scammers are hoping shoppers are busy or distracted and will act without thinking through the consequences.

Scams include phishing texts or emails posing as official notices from delivery companies. These may contain a "tracking link," a message that the shipper is having difficulty making a delivery or a link to update delivery preferences. Clicking the link could lead to a form requesting personally identifying information or to a site that downloads malware.

Another delivery scam involves fake "missed delivery" notices. Scammers place a note on your door claiming delivery problems. They provide a phone number to reschedule the delivery, but it's a ruse to get personal information or demand a further fee.

A very significant issue is outright package theft. Many consumers have deliveries stolen from their homes as thieves snatch packages from doorsteps, lobbies of apartment or condo complexes. Criminals even follow delivery and postal trucks. When the truck leaves, the crooks move in and grab the parcels.

How to avoid delivery scams

1. Take precautions to ensure safe delivery. If you have a valuable or fragile item delivered, purchase shipping insurance. Always get tracking numbers for purchases and check the shipping progress periodically.

2. Watch out for texts, calls or emails about a missed delivery. Legitimate delivery services may leave a "missed delivery" notice. If you receive notice, examine the form to make sure it is authentic and only then follow their instructions. Keep track of what you've ordered to better understand what is coming and when. Don't click on links; go to the carrier's website or use the retailer's tracking tools.

3. Request a signature. This feature may come with a price tag, but could be worth the fee. Requesting a signature means that a delivery service won't be able to drop a package on your doorstep unless someone must be available to sign for it.

4. Don't leave packages sitting on your doorstep. Packages left sitting are vulnerable to theft. To ensure safe delivery, have your package delivered to your workplace or a trusted friend or neighbor who is able to accept delivery. Some companies provide package lockers.

5. Open your delivery upon receipt to check for damage or tampering.

Contact the seller immediately if something is wrong with the shipment or it's not what you ordered. Review the seller's return policy for damaged or unwanted items.





5 tips to host a heart-healthy holiday party

By: American Heart Association News

'Tis the season of celebrations. We know they're important — and a key to our emotional and physical health. Here are some ways to make merry at your holiday gathering:

1. Make it official. Create a guest list, set a date and time, and invite friends and family to attend. Mail some sparkly invites or take advantage of free online invitation makers or templates and email or text invitations to your guests.
2. Create the menu. Send out your favorite healthy recipes and ask your dinner companions to vote on the holiday menu. Need some suggestions? Try some of our tasty recipes at [recipes.heart.org](https://www.heart.org/recipes).
3. Set the scene. Choose a mood and theme for your party. Deck your halls with balloons, flowers and holiday décor — and don't forget the mood music. Make a playlist with traditional favorites or mix it up with modern versions of old classics. Ask your guests to send you their top three songs to include. Plus, dancing is a fun way to get your heart pumping, so enjoy the added bonus of making healthy moves while you're enjoying your favorite holiday tunes.
4. Dress for success. Invite your guests to dress to complement the theme of your party. If it's silly and fun, maybe make it an ugly holiday sweater party. (You can even make it a contest by voting on winners in different categories, such as Funniest, Most Colorful and, of course, Ugliest.) If you want to get super casual, throw a holiday pajama party.
5. Say "Cheers!" No holiday or celebration is complete without a toast. You can drink a glass of sparkling water between each alcoholic beverage or whip out the mocktails. Celebrate your accomplishments and express gratitude for your guests with a group toast or take turns sharing something each one of you is thankful for.

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Brrrrr...chill...Winter is here!



Simple cost-free tips for staying warm!



Close your curtains

Curtains and blinds provide an extra barrier to radiant heat loss by adding insulation and reducing drafts.



Cover your walls

Cover walls with pictures, mirrors, bookcases, tapestries, or carpets. Even a poster adds an extra layer of insulating air.



Cover your doors

Use door curtains and door stoppers to eliminate a vast amount of heat loss.



Use your ceiling fans

Set it to spin clockwise at low speed. The warm air trapped at the ceiling will circulate throughout the room.



Cover your floors

Floors can account for as much as 10% of home heat loss. Where practical, use rugs and blankets to mitigate.

THE HOLIDAYS ARE COMING!

12 Reasons to consider



- Maintenance Free – No more yard work**
- Staff that make you feel like family**
- Dining Services – No meal preparation**
- Activities to fill your day**
- Housekeeping and laundry services**
- Scheduled Transportation**
- Emergency Assistance**
- Physical Activity to increase wellness**
- New Lifelong Friendships**
- Discreet Support as needed**
- On-site Hair Salon**
- Local Owners and Management**

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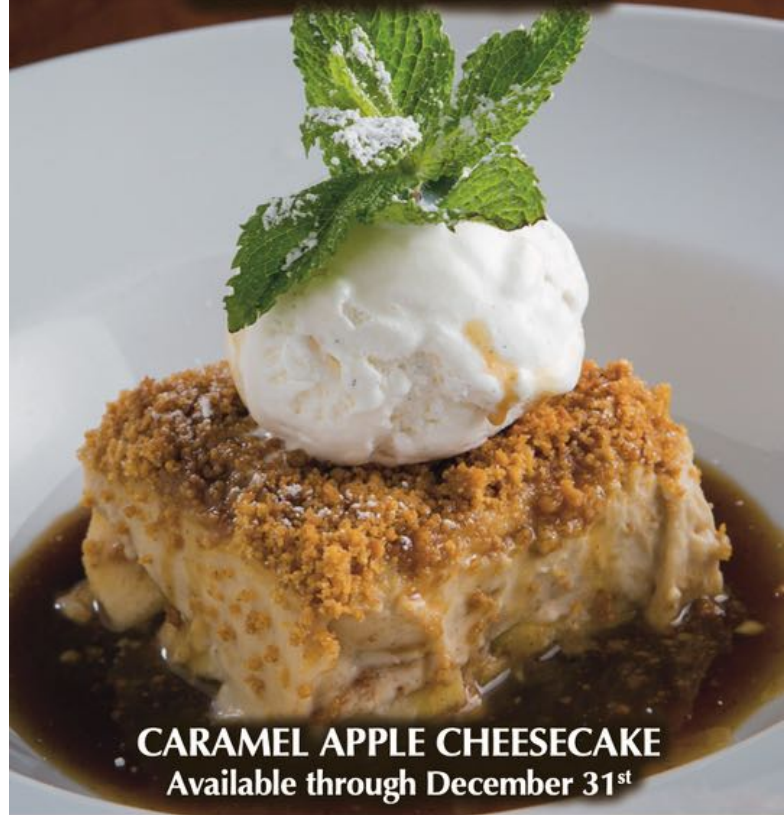
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The smile on a loved one's face when you pick the perfect gift.



The joy in a child's eyes when they feel the magic of the holiday.

It all starts with hearts.

So this holiday, give a gift that protects all hearts.



Give a gift to the American Heart Association online at heart.org

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Cold Winter Weather for Aging Adults

The harsh winter is fast approaching and we want aging adults to be prepared for what's to come. A home can sometimes be hard to manage during the winter months with shoveling snow, keeping the home warm, transportation, etc. If you are wanting to remain in your home, here are some good winter tips to abide by.

- Set your heat around 70 degrees. Make sure to close off rooms that you are not using.
- Keep your blinds and curtains closed so cold air does not get through.
- Be sure that you are keeping your weight on during the winter months. Body fat helps you stay warm.
- If you need to go outside, make sure you are dressing for all types of weather. Also wear a hat & scarf to retain your body heat.
- If your clothes happen to get wet, be sure to change them as soon as possible.
- When you go outside, make sure your sidewalks and walkways are clear of ice and snow. If you are unable to shovel or ice your sidewalks or driveways, look into hiring someone to do it.
- Check into getting an icepick for the end of your cane or a new rubber tip.
- If you still drive in winter weather, be sure to pack your car with an emergency snow kit. This may include blankets, flashlights, first aid kit, booster/jumper cables, shovel, rock salt, dried food, and extra clothes.

When you feel that winter is becoming to much to handle, call a senior living community, like The Views, so that you can leave winter worries behind. Things like transportation, utilities, activities, snow shoveling, and three meals a day are covered under you rent! Call one of our three communities to learn more.



The Views of Marion 319-390-8439



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Heritage Bites:

Vanilkové Rohlíčky

Here's a simple and traditional Czech Christmas cookie recipe called "Vanilkové rohlíčky" (Vanilla Crescents)

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup unsalted butter (1 stick), at room temperature
- ¾ cup powdered sugar
- 1 cup ground almonds or walnuts
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- A pinch of salt
- Additional powdered sugar for dusting
-

Instructions:

1. Preheat your oven to 320°F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a mixing bowl, combine the flour with ground almonds or walnuts and a pinch of salt.
3. In another bowl, cream together the softened butter and powdered sugar until smooth and creamy.
4. Add the egg yolk and vanilla extract to the butter-sugar mixture. Mix until well combined.
5. Gradually add the dry ingredients to the wet mixture, stirring until a dough forms.
6. Take portions of the dough and roll it into small logs about 2-2.5 inches long. Shape them into crescents and place them on the prepared baking sheet.
7. Bake the crescents in the preheated oven for about 12-15 minutes or until they turn a light golden color.
8. Let the cookies cool for a few minutes on the baking sheet before transferring them to a wire rack to cool completely.
9. Once cooled, lightly dust the crescents with powdered sugar.

Enjoy your homemade Czech Christmas Vanilkové

December

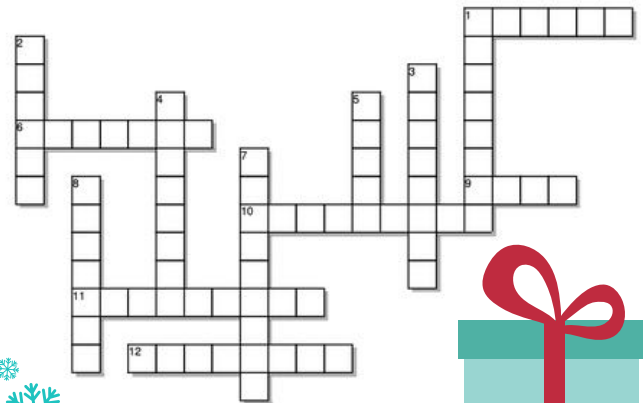
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Snow
 Candles
 Winter
 December
 Holidays
 Cookies

Celebrate
 Frost
 Noel
 Joy
 Christmas
 Hanukkah
 Kwanzaa

HAPPY HOLIDAYS



ACROSS

- 1 Vehicle pulled by reindeer
- 6 Santa's entrance point
- 9 Feeling of warmth and comfort
- 10 Unique ice crystal
- 11 Trees that stay green all year
- 12 Warming winter drink

DOWN

- 1 Marks the shortest day of the year
- 2 Hanging frozen water formation
- 3 Severe snowstorm with strong winds
- 4 Last month of the year
- 5 Neck-warming accessory
- 7 A plant symbolizing love and romance
- 8 Hand coverings for cold weather



12 Christmas Traditions

Every year, I include these 12 traditions during the holiday season. My kids really look forward to them and, to be honest, so do I! They are fun, easy, and will spark magic and create memories that you and your kids will remember for years to come - no matter what age they are! Enjoy.

1. Frosty Visits.

Every Christmas Eve, there is a knock at the door after dinner and before bedtime. The door is opened to find presents wrapped in snowman wrapping paper or gift bags and a trail of round snow tracks. Frosty was here! What did he leave? Well, their Christmas PJ's of course! Now the whole family is picture-perfect ready in their new PJ's for Christmas morning. I know...genius right? And yes, my kids are 16 & 19 and each of them really love and look forward to this every year. They still can't figure out who is actually leaving the PJ's. "Guys - I told you, it's Frosty!" As you can imagine, it's gotten a bit tricky over the years as the kids get older and add in dodging doorbell camera's - but that Frosty still has some sneaky Ninja Skills!

2. Forgetful Santa.

Oh no! Santa left his glasses and one of his white gloves next to the eaten plate of cookies he enjoyed! My kids loved seeing the evidence that Santa really did come. This is also a great way to have your kids write a thank you letter to Santa for their gifts when you send him back his belongings. I still have every letter.

3. Elf on a Shelf.

Where is that silly elf today? Every year our elf Sheldon fly's in on December 1st and brings them their chocolate advent calendars. Although it's easy to forget to move these little magical creatures every night, it's fun to orchestrate elf shenanigans and listen to the kids giggle in the morning. Oh, and if your "elf" forgot to fly back to the north pole and come back to a different spot - you can use the ole' "Oh, he can't report back to Santa if someone didn't sleep in their bed - and I fell asleep on the couch - I'm so sorry!" (shhh!)

4. Wrapping-Paper Trap.

Unroll wrapping paper down the hallway or where your kids will usually sneak out to peek at the presents in the morning. This works double duty as an alarm that alerts you to tiny (or big) feet trying to get a sneak peek (or night before when you are trying to finish wrapping at 3am!) Got really sneaky kiddos? As mine got older, I kid you not, they learned to scale the walls to escape the crinkly paper. What's a Santa's helper to do? Tape and block off the end of the hallway in plastic wrap from floor to ceiling. OR you can use wrapping paper if you don't want them to see at all. If you opt for the wrapping paper- they LOVE tearing through it when you say ... "OK ... GO!"

5. Tinsel Magic.

First, I must confess that I have a love hate relationship with tinsel. I kid you not, every year I find a piece of tinsel at Easter and a piece of Easter grass while decorating for the holidays. But, tinsel can be magical. In our home, it's proof that Santa was here. That messy Santa will leave tinsel on their bedroom door knobs while checking to make sure the kids are asleep, in their new slippers by their beds, by the empty plate of eaten cookies and milk, hanging out of their stockings, and beautifully hung all over the tree. Something about waking up to tinsel glimmering on the tree on Christmas morning is magical. So, I guess we will forgive Santa for leaving a mess of tinsel all over the place. The Easter Bunny still has some explaining to do.

6. The Guess a Gift.

Everyone receives a gift (or two) two days before Christmas. The goal is to try and "guess" what the gift is by feeling the package without opening and asking yes or no questions. If you cannot guess the gift, you have to wait until Christmas to open. Tips: As your kids get older, you can get sneaky and camouflage the wrapping by adding coins or putting in a different box. Trust me - they get really good at this game the older they get! Oh - and write down what each gift is so you don't forget- because if you are like me - you absolutely will.

7. Reindeer Food.

Have the kids leave carrots, celery, and a big bowl of oats and green and red colored sugar outside for the reindeer before they head to bed on Christmas Eve. The next day they will run out to check and will find a mess of chewed up veggies and oats scattered all over. Set an alarm on your phone to remember - nothing worse than picky reindeer that didn't want to eat the snacks the kids put out. Yep, done that too. Whoops!

8. Dollar Store.

When my kids were younger, I would take them to a dollar store (at different times) to pick out gifts they'd like to get for each family member. It was so heart warming to see what they'd pick out. It only costs a few dollars, but is priceless.

9. Christmas Ornaments.

Every year I pick out a special Christmas ornament for each of the kids and initial and date each one on the bottom. It's usually something remenecent of the year. Each year when they help decorate the tree it's nice to hear them talk about each ornament. To this day, they still expect to find one every year in their stocking. But really the end goal to gift them all of their ornaments when they have a home of their own one day as part of their housewarming gift. I'm not crying - you're crying!

10. The Magic Key and Whistle.

At our house, we don't have a chimney for Santa to come in through, so we have a magic key! It's a big glittery key that we hang on the outside of the front door. Only Santa's special magic works in order to use the key. We also have an old red and white magic whistle. If anyone was misbehaving - I'd say - "If I blow the whistle, Santa is gonna see what's going on here!". Is that a parent win or fail? Still up for debate. (PS. works on adults too!)

11. No more tagging gifts.

Have your kids open their stockings before gifts and place a small piece of wrapping paper for them to find at the bottom. Each person has a different design of wrapping paper and will know which gifts are theirs based on the paper. They'll have no idea which gift is for who until they find their designated paper. How about that trying to peek now?

12. The Christmas Pickle.

This tradition of finding a small pickle ornament on the Christmas tree is one of my favorite's. Whoever finds the pickle first gets to open a present first. But what I love - is that it slows the morning down and teaches to appreciate the tree and each other before tearing into gifts. *And* gives you time to grab that cup of coffee or ... *ehem* ... a spiked eggnog. (Hey - Santa-ing is hard - you deserve it!)

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Sweet Potato Latkes



Ingredients:

(Makes about two dozen latkes)

- 5 large sweet potatoes, washed, shredded, and squeezed dry*
- 1 scallion chopped (white and light green part only- reserve dark greens for garnish)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ginger
- 2 Tablespoons matzoh meal
- 2 eggs
- Vegetable oil for frying
- Applesauce and sour cream for dipping (optional)

Directions:

1. Add sweet potatoes, scallions, seasonings, and matzoh meal in a large bowl.
2. Beat eggs and then add to your sweet potato mixture and mix well.
3. Heat oil in a frying pan over medium-high heat, gently drop potato mixture in heated oil and flatten (we used a large ice-cream scoop).
4. Cook for about 5-7 minutes on each side.
5. Place on a paper towel to drain excess oil.
6. Top with green scallions, sprinkle with more cinnamon, and serve with applesauce, sour cream, or honey for dipping.

Serve hot or at room temperature — heck, we even like the leftovers cold right out of the fridge — that is, if you have any leftovers, of course!

Latkes are as much a tradition during Hanukkah as the lighting of the candles. We can't get enough of latkes — anytime of year! What's not to love about this crisp fried potato pancake served with applesauce or sour cream?

Potatoes are such a delicious comfort food, and sweet potatoes are no exception. So we switched up the traditional potato latkes by using sweet potatoes — a twist that is delish at Hanukkah -- or any holiday!

Holiday Events in the Corridor



Critter Crusaders Annual Double Banger Holiday Bake Sale

Saturday December 16th

9:00am to 4:00pm

At both Cedar Rapids Theisen's Locations

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WE NEED BAKERS!

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11:00 am - 1:00 pm

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Event Time: 10am - 4pm

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KID'S ACTIVITIES

EVERY WEEKEND

Ackerman Winery
Join in on some good old-fashioned, family fun! Ackerman Winery will be having a Nutcracker Scavenger Hunt. Find 18 of the 36 hidden Nutcrackers in the store. Return a completed form to be entered in a weekly drawing for a prize. Drawings will be held on December 3, 10, 17, and 23.

Festhalle Barn
Write your letter to Santa and mail it in our special, Direct-to-Santa, mailbox!

Fireside Winery in the Village
Bring the littles in for a special Kids' Holiday Cocktail for \$5. Place your guess on how many candy items are in the candy jar for a chance to win a special prize drawn December 17th.

PRELUDE WEEKEND Dec. 1-3

The Noble Stone
12 big mining sluice bags for purchase that will contain extra special treasures inside along with the already amazing treasures you'd normally get. Limited supply, so get in early for the best pick! All day, indoor mining sluice. Mine for your own treasure and take home a bag of goodies with a flyer to identify your collection. Fun for kids of all ages. Free outdoor pebble dig. One free treasure per person.

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ON-GOING EVENTS

GERMAN CHRISTMAS PICKLE HUNT!

We invite you to search for the German Pickle Ornament at participating local businesses. Find the Pickle in 10 shops and enter to win a \$25 Amana Colonies Gift Certificate!

Pickle Hunt forms can be found at the Visitors Center & participating businesses.

EVERY WEEKEND

TANNENBAUM FOREST HOURS

THANKSGIVING WEEKEND
Friday, November 24 11am-7pm
Saturday, November 25 10am-7pm
Sunday, November 26 11am-4pm

PRELUDE WEEKEND
Santa will be at the Forest all weekend long!
Friday, December 1 10am-8pm
Santa: 10am-3:30pm
Saturday, December 2 10am-8pm
Santa: 10am-3:30pm
Sunday, December 3 11am-5pm
Santa: 11am-3pm

CHILDREN'S WEEKEND
Friday, December 8 11am-5pm
Saturday, December 9 10am-7pm
Santa: 10am-3:30pm
Sunday, December 10 11am-4pm
Live Reindeer: 1pm-4pm
*weather dependent

HOLIDAY TRADITIONS WEEKEND
Friday, December 15 11am-5pm
Saturday, December 16 10am-7pm
Sunday, December 17 11am-4pm

Proceeds of Tannenbaum Forest benefit the University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital, Amana Colonies Playground, non-profits of Amana, and Compass Memorial Healthcare.

Amana Colonies Convention & Visitors Bureau
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PRELUDE TO Christmas 2023

DEC. 1-3

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Farrier - Horse
Hoof Care Info
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or write a letter to Santa. Play with all our fun,
fuzzy residents and who knows, maybe you'll
meet your newest family member for the
holidays!

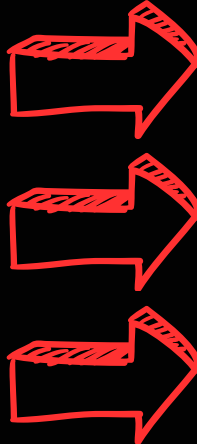


What is Macaroni KID?

Macaroni KID Cedar Rapids is a free weekly newsletter and website that delivers news on all the kid and family friendly events going on in your community. From story times to festivals, from open gyms to fun parades to painting classes, you can find all the amazing events happening in your own backyard with Macaroni KID Cedar Rapids!



Looking For Family Fun HOLIDAY Events?



DECEMBER 2023

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31 AirFX Junior J... Crafternoon... Macaroni Di... Macaroni Di... Philly's Pla... 2 more	1 Philly's Pla... Early Learning... Philly's Pla... 5 more	2 Baby Storytim... Storytime wit... Philly's Pla... 7 more	3 Baby Storytim... Baby & Toddle... Toddler Time... Doodlies at... CR Chess Club... Philly's Pla... 1 more	4 Sunrise! Art... Science for So... Sensory Story... Preschool Pla... Philly's Pla... Family Fun Ni... 1 more	5 Homeschool... Friday Aftern... Macaroni Di... A Breakfast... Open Gym for... 13 more	6 Kids Are Fishin... Open Studio a... Macaroni Di... A Breakfast... Open Studio a... Minute To Wi... 13 more

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HOLIDAY MARKET
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Saturday | December 16 | 1-5 PM

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9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

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CEDAR RAPIDS, IA 52402

\$5/SOUP LUNCH
11:30 AM-1:00 PM
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6 DECEMBER 2023

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Main floor, Coliseum
Questions? 319.286.5038

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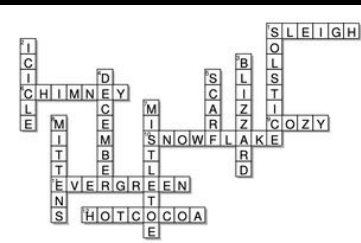
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