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on the cover: The City of Elkhorn has many Christmas traditions, including the Christmas Card Town Parade, Let It Glow and a children's holiday market.

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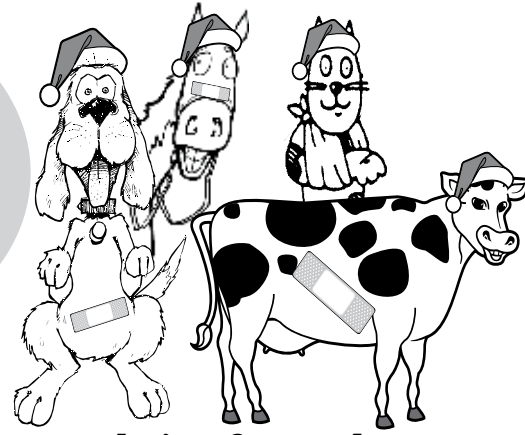
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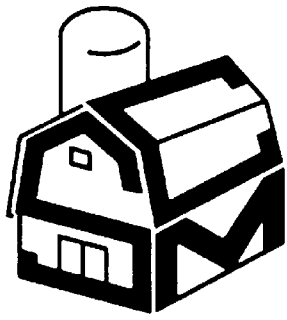
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Keeping safe during the holidays

As the holiday season approaches, many people are transforming their homes with seasonal sparkle and yuletide joy. While these decorations are merry and bright, ReadyWisconsin is encouraging everyone to keep safety in mind while decorating for the holidays.

“The best way to enjoy peace of mind during the holidays is to remember safety comes first,” said Wisconsin Emergency Management Administrator Greg Engle. “By taking a little extra care your home can be a place of cheer, not danger.”

Holiday lights and candles can brighten homes, but that glow can quickly turn into a disaster. Fire departments across the country responded to an average of 835 home fires that began with decorations and an average of 155 fires started with holiday trees, according to the National Fire Protection Association.

Keep holiday decorating safe with these helpful tips:

- Water your live holiday tree regularly and look for the “Fire Resistant” label when buying an artificial tree.

- Place trees at least three feet away from heat sources, such as a heater or fireplace.

- Never leave candles unattended.

Keep burning candles in sight, away from anything flammable. Extinguish candles before leaving the room. Use flameless candles whenever possible.

- Never string together more than three sets of incandescent lights and never overload electrical outlets.

- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Read manufacturer’s instructions for number of light strands to connect.

- Follow manufacturer’s instructions for using lights, including indoor and outdoor usage.

- Use clips, not nails, to hang lights so the cords do not get damaged.

- Be sure to turn off all lights on trees and other decorations when going to bed or leaving the house. Unplug extension cords when they are not in use.

Unexpected injuries could also occur while decking your home with some holiday magic. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, there are about 160 holiday decorating-related injuries each day during the holiday season, with nearly half of the injuries involving falls. In last year’s holiday season, about 14,900 people were treated in emergency rooms across the country due to holiday decorating-related injuries.

To prevent holiday decorating injuries:

- Choose as sturdy ladder is the correct height and weight limit.

- Wear shoes that allow for good traction.

- Do not stand on chairs or tables when decorating.

- Clear pathways of trip hazards, such as clutter, power cords and extra furniture.

- Fix uneven walkways and steps inside and outside the home to help prevent falls.

The holidays also mean gatherings with families and friends. If you’re hosting a holiday party, stay fire safe by keeping the kitchen free of distraction, clearing decorations away from around the stove and oven, and always having a fire extinguisher available nearby.

Test your smoke alarms to make sure they are working properly and replace any batteries if you have not done so recently. Smoke alarms should be located on every level of your home and be tested monthly. Create an escape plan with your family and practice it so everyone knows two ways to get out of the house in the event of a fire.

For additional holiday safety tips this season, visit readywisconsin.wi.gov. You can also follow ReadyWisconsin on Facebook, X, and Instagram for regular safety tips throughout the year.



The City of Elkhorn’s annual Christmas Card Town Parade takes place in early December. Shown here are some scenes from last year’s event. From the top: the Grinch snuck in, maybe looking for some Christmas cheer; the Lions’ trick car entertained spectators; Santa and Mrs. Claus made an appearance.

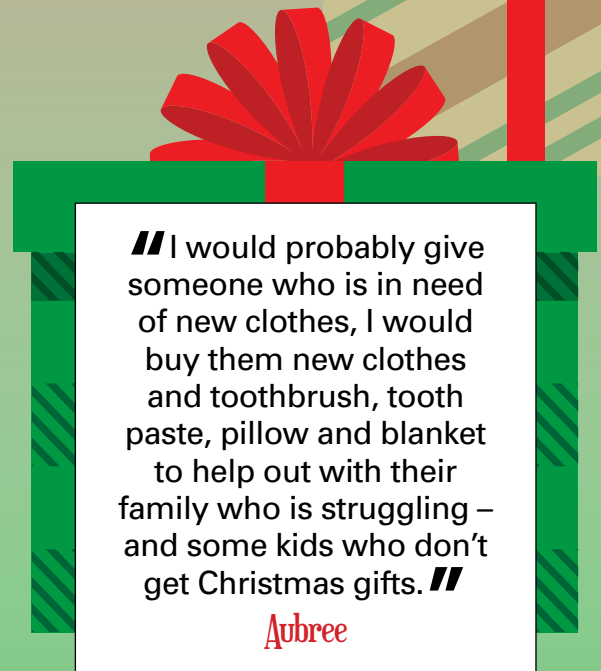
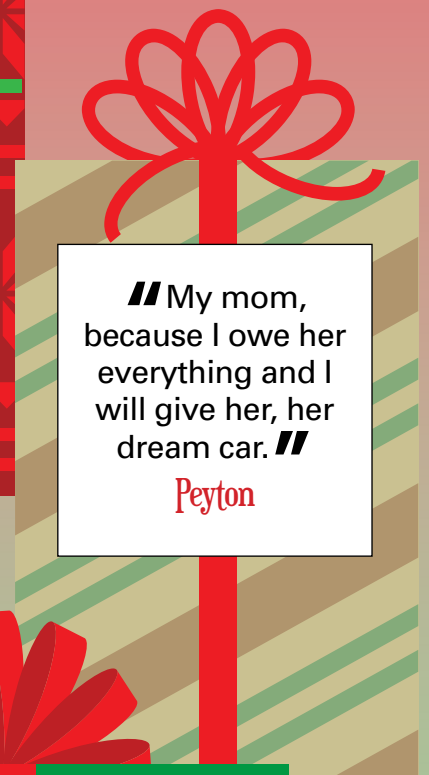
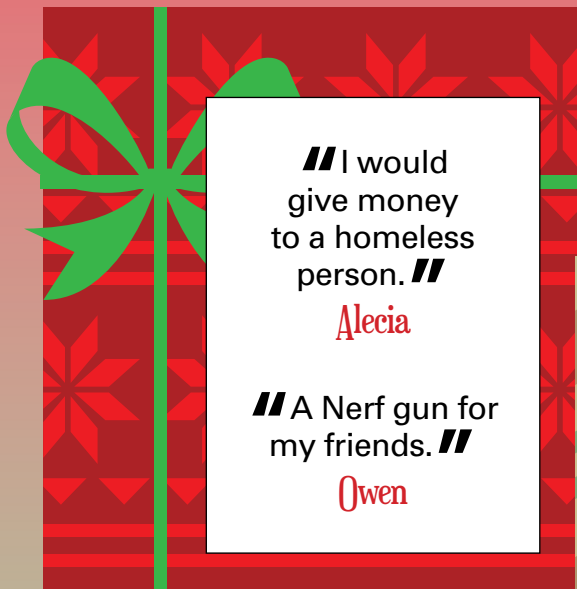
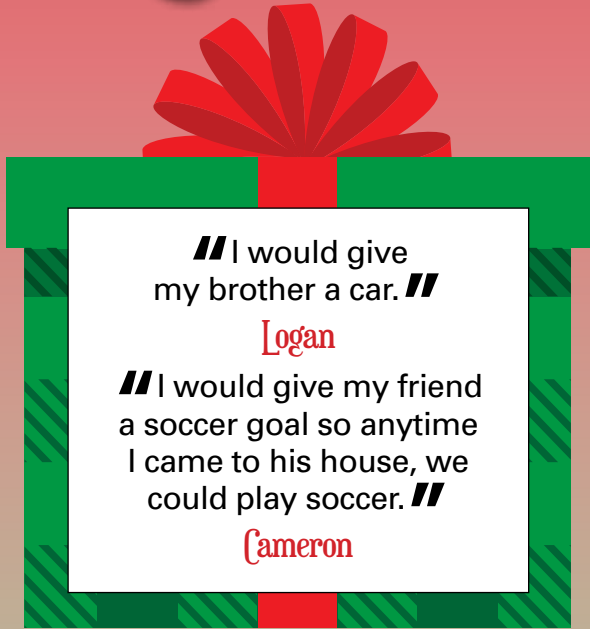
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Christmas Card Town Parade



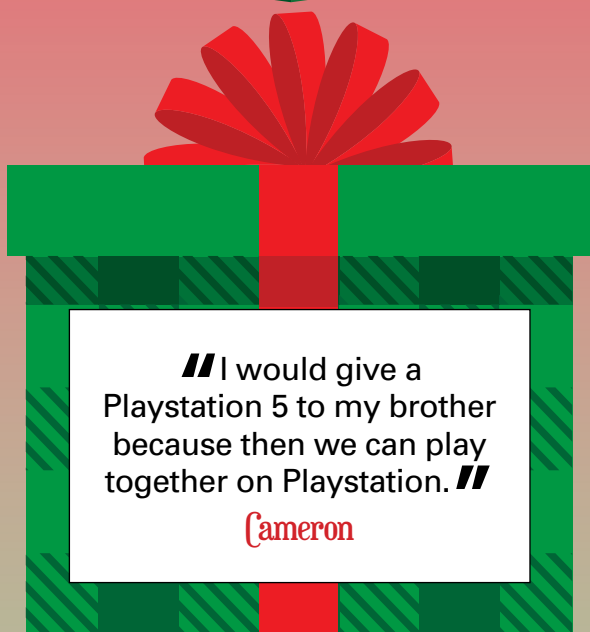
Sixth graders at Elkhorn Area Middle School were asked:

If you could give a gift to anyone, what would you give, to who and why?

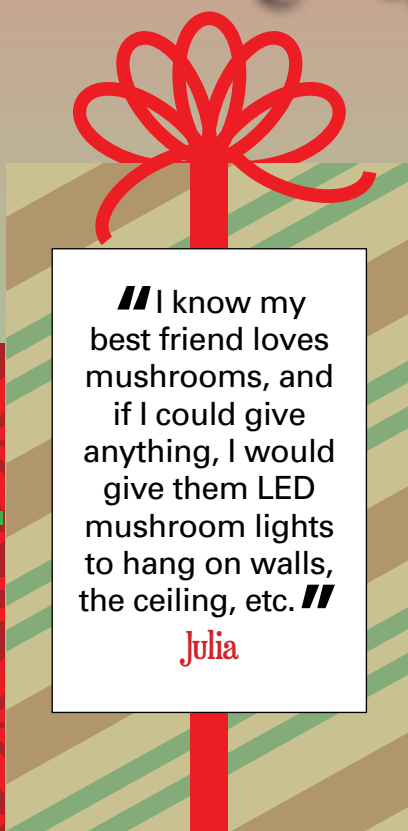




If you could give a gift to anyone, what would you give, to who and why?



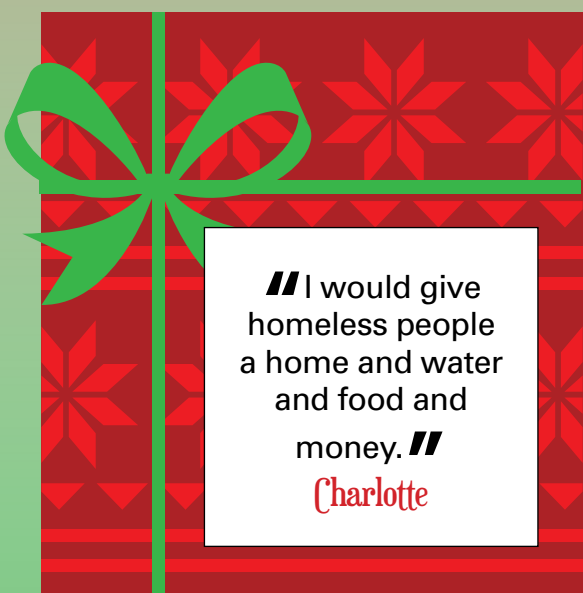
// I would give a Playstation 5 to my brother because then we can play together on Playstation. **//**
Cameron



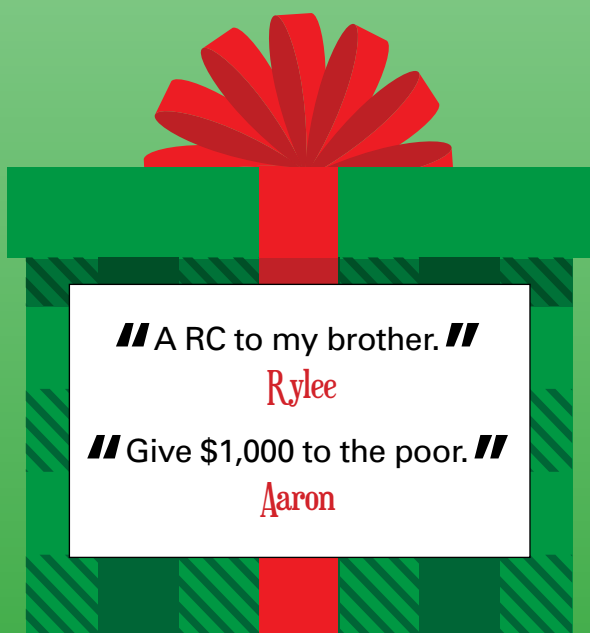
// I know my best friend loves mushrooms, and if I could give anything, I would give them LED mushroom lights to hang on walls, the ceiling, etc. **//**
Julia



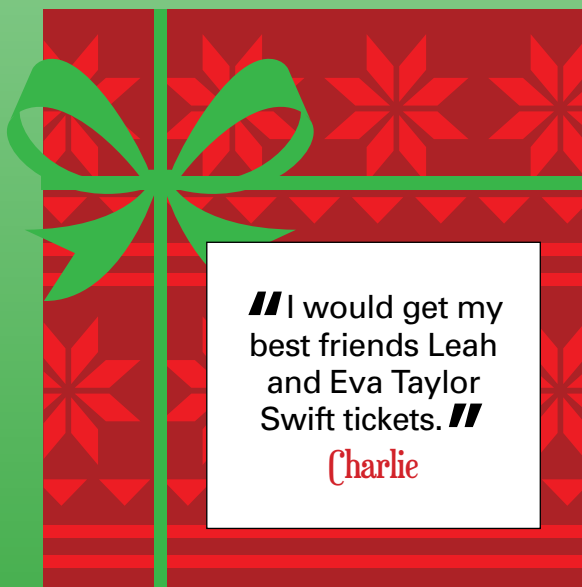
// I would get a jellycat bunny for Khloe. **//**
Olivia
// A bike to my sister. **//**
Ryan



// I would give homeless people a home and water and food and money. **//**
Charlotte



// A RC to my brother. **//**
Rylee
// Give \$1,000 to the poor. **//**
Aaron



// I would get my best friends Leah and Eva Taylor Swift tickets. **//**
Charlie



// I would get a new car for my mom since her car isn't working very good and she won't be able to drive it soon. **//**
Kelsie

Fun gift exchange ideas

Gift-giving is a significant component of the holiday season. Families can embrace traditional gift-giving, but those who want to add a touch of whimsy to gatherings with loved ones can consider these five creative and fun ways to exchange gifts.

Play the plastic wrap game

To exchange small stocking stuffer gifts, compile gift cards, cash, small toys, candy, and even some larger gifts (all participants can chip in and one person shops for the gifts).

The designated person in charge begins rolling up the gifts in the plastic, adding one every few rolls. Turning the ball 90 degrees while wrapping helps make a more round, finished gift ball.

To play, the person with the ball puts on oven mitts and tries to unwrap as much as they can to access the gifts, while the person to the left is attempting to roll doubles on dice. When doubles are made, that person passes the dice to the left and starts their



METRO CREATIVE Holiday Greetings

own attempts to get at the gifts in the plastic ball.

The game ends when all the gifts are revealed, whether everyone has had a chance to unwrap or not.

Plan a white elephant gift exchange

A white elephant exchange is like a secret grab bag. Everyone brings a wrapped gift and takes turns choosing a gift based on the number they've been given.

When the gift is chosen, the person opens it. The next player can select a fresh gift or steal one of the presents that has already been opened.

Host a make-and-take craft party

With this type of exchange, participants will

engage in some form of crafting for the duration of the event, whether it's pottery, painting, epoxy resin pouring, or even knit crafts.

At the end of the night everyone can swap their creations with another or keep their own crafts as gifts.

Give the gift of a group outing

Instead of exchanging material gifts, focus on sharing experiences with friends and family.

A trip to watch a sports game or a theater performance can be an excellent way to spend time together, and something a person may not be inclined to do on his or her own.

Certain venues will offer discounts on group tickets,

so everyone can pool their resources.

Host a DIY cookie and cocoa exchange

Cookies, cocoa, and the holidays are a perfect combination. A gift exchange where participants supply ingredients for these sweet treats, share their favorite recipes, and put together the finished products can make for an entertaining and festive afternoon.

Each person can fill a cookie tin with baked cookies to take home, and mason jars filled with homemade hot cocoa mix and marshmallows can be an additional gift to enjoy later on a chilly evening.

There are plenty of fun ways to exchange gifts during the holiday season.

Great gifts for globetrotters

John Denver sang about "leavin' on a jet plane," inspiring many to take a flight to parts known and unknown.

Millions of people travel to and from the country every year, with TravelPerk estimating the market size of the United States tourism sector at \$798.81 billion last July.

Tourism took a hit during the global pandemic, but traveling has since rebounded in a big way.

With so many people taking to the roads, rails, and skies, shoppers can customize their gift lists when shopping for people who have caught the travel bug.

Below are several gifts for those with wanderlust.

- **Portable Bluetooth speaker:** Music can make the journey more interesting and create a welcoming ambiance upon arrival. People who don't want to leave home without their favorite tunes often have curated playlists on popular music streaming services.

- **Ergonomic neck pillow:** Getting some rest and being comfortable while traveling is key. Ergonomic neck pillows keep the neck and head in a comfortable position when sitting upright during long flights or rides.

- **Compression packing bags or cubes:** Travelers want to ensure they can bring all their gear when getting away, but sometimes suitcase space can come at a premium. Compression products work like a vacuum sealer, removing air to reduce the space that items take up.

- **Travel adapter:** International travel requires contending with different power outlets. In order to use electronic equipment brought from home, travelers will require the right adapter. Look for ones with multiple ports.

- **Pouch or money belt:** Keeping valuables out of the hands of pickpockets means being savvy about safe storage. Travel pouches and money belts are designed to be discrete, and some can be hidden in waistbands or under clothing to protect valuables.

- **Travel journal:** Journals allow travelers to capture memories along the way, with space to jot down experiences and add photos. It can make for a cherished keepsake in the future.

- **New luggage:** Every traveler needs a durable piece of luggage or two when the desire to see the world strikes. A rolling, vibrantly colored carry-on ensures the luggage is easily spotted and gives travelers the option to skip baggage check and bring it right on board.

- **Travel enthusiasts** can appreciate gifts that cater to their desire to get away from home. (METRO CREATIVE)



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Because we truly appreciate your business, we want to take this time to thank you, and extend our best wishes for a Happy Holiday Season and Wonderful New Year!

~Pete & Jennifer~

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Let the light shine!



Elkhorn's holiday happenings feature a variety of events including the tree lighting in Veterans Park, the Christmas Card Town Parade and Let It Glow, which is now held in Uncle Hunk's Junk Park by the Chamber. This year, the event was touted as a three day Christmas Block Party including food trucks, live entertainment, a North Pole Pop N Shop, Santa and his elves at the Elkhorn Garage, and more.

DAVE DRESDOW *Holiday Greetings*

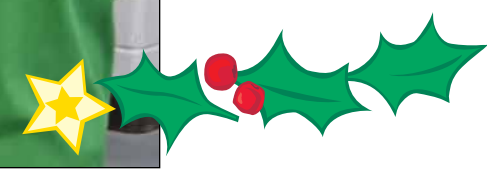


Waffles with Santa



Lakeland School will host its annual Waffles With Santa event Saturday, Dec. 14, from 8:30 to 11 a.m. Waffles, sausage, juice, milk, and coffee will be served, with the Lakeland School Choir performing and more. The cost for breakfast is \$10 and all money is being raised through the Friends of Lakeland School, a 501c4 non-profit that helps fund the school. Shown here from last year: In addition to the variety of food (and toppings) offered – and the visit by Santa, David Weber was honored by the Friends of Lakeland School. A Walworth County Board supervisor until last year, Weber's "personal and professional experiences were critical" in the concept and construction of the new Lakeland School.

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