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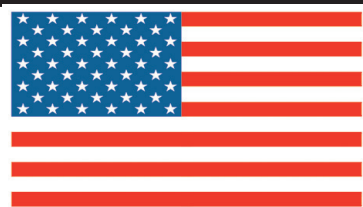
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Giving to the Salvation Army is a Big Spring holiday tradition

Upcoming Events

The second United Way and Friends Christmas Grocery Giveaway will be held from 5-7 p.m. today at Star Dodge, 821 W. Interstate 20. Enter at the main entrance. 100 grocery boxes, first come first serve. Call 267-5201 for info.

The Big Spring Symphony Orchestra's Christmas Concert, "Home is Where the Heart Is," will be performed at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 18, at First United Methodist Church. The holiday event will feature soloists Tara Trowbridge and Lawrence Thibeault. Tickets are on sale now at www.bigspringsymphony.org.

Special to the Herald

As America moves toward becoming a cashless society, and in-person donation concerns remain during the COVID-19 pandemic, The Salvation Army is making it easier than ever for donors to give back during the Christmas season!

In addition to the traditional red kettles and the familiar ringing bell, The Salvation Army has placed smart chips and QR codes on Red Kettle signs allowing shoppers to simply "bump" or scan their phones to make digital donations. Shoppers will be directed to a donation page that accepts Apple, Google and other payment options.

"We're hoping that the ability to donate through Apple Pay and Google Pay at each red kettle will make it even easier for donors to help The Salvation Army this year. And new for 2021 we've added PayPal and Venmo,"



HERALD photo/Roger Cline
Salvation Army Bell Ringer "Al" continued the local chapter's annual tradition of red kettles and ringing bells outside Wal-Mart Wednesday.

said Major Dean Moretz of The Salvation Army. "As fewer people carry cash, this is a simple and convenient way to

give, especially for our younger donors who do everything from their phones these days."

Another touchless way to donate this year is through Text-to-Give. "We're asking people to text KETTLE to 91999, enter the donation amount, and you're done. It's as easy as that!" said Moretz. "You can even give on Amazon Alexa this year by saying "Alexa, donate to The Salvation Army."

Now in its 131st year, The Salvation Army's Red Kettle Campaign is one of the oldest and largest charitable campaigns in the world. Every year, the campaign raises millions of dollars nationwide to provide toys for children at Christmas, clothes and shelter for the homeless, food for the hungry, after-school programs for kids, and other services to America's most vulnerable populations year-round.

"Lastly, we encourage everyone to take the Red Kettle Challenge or donate to our virtual kettle," said Moretz. "We're excited about this new opportunity for our supporters to set up their very own virtual Salvation Army red kettle, either as an individual or as part of a team. Spread the word on social media and challenge your friends, family members, or coworkers to donate and

See **KETTLE**, Page 3

Forsan recognizes band for State Marching success



Courtesy photo
 The Forsan School Board of Trustees recognized the Forsan High School Marching Band at the beginning of its December meeting. The band competed at the State Marching Competition at the Alamodome in San Antonio for the 13th time. This year, the band finished 10th in the state.

INDEX

News1 & 3
 Obituaries.....2
 Sports4
 Classifieds5-7
 Comics8

Coahoma ISD to hold public hearings tonight

By **ROGER CLINE**

Herald Staff Writer

The Coahoma ISD school board will meet at 6 p.m. this evening in the Elementary Board Room, 400 Ramsey St. in Coahoma.

The meeting will begin with roll call, establishment of quorum, call to order, and the opening ceremony, before the board will hold two public hearings.

The first hearing will address the Financial Rating System

of Texas (FIRST); while the second will consider the district's Texas Academic Performance Report (TARP).

The board will next consider the district's Audit Report for the 2020-21 school year.

The meeting's consent agenda consists of four items: approval of minutes of previous meetings; approval of budget amendments; approval of a resolution amending the list of the

See **CISD**, Page 3

ZBA to meet this evening

By **ROGER CLINE**

Herald Staff Writer

The City of Big Spring Zoning Board of Adjustments will meet at 5:30 p.m. Thursday in the City Council Chambers, 307 E. Fourth Street.

Following the call to order, citizens will have the opportunity to address the board during the public comments section of the meeting.

The board will consider approval of the minutes of its Nov. 18 regu-

lar meeting.

In New Business, the board will consider two permit applications for approval. The first is for a front yard carport to be located at 1025 Stadium Ave.; the second also involves a front-yard carport, to be located at 4110 Bilger.

Following considerations of the permit applications, members of the board will have an opportunity to offer input prior to the meeting's adjournment.

For more information, contact City Hall at 432-264-2346.



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Support Groups

FRIDAY

- Reformers Unanimous International is a faith-based addictions program helping people find freedom from addiction. Meetings begin at 7 p.m. Fridays at Trinity Baptist Church in Big Spring. Enter at the main entrance of the church.
- AA open discussion meeting from noon until 1 p.m. at 605 Settles. Open Big Book study meeting, 8 p.m. until 9 p.m.

SATURDAY

- Alcoholics Anonymous open discussion meeting, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m. Open podium/speakers meeting 8 p.m. until 9 p.m. Open birthday night, no smoking meeting the last Saturday of each month at 8 p.m. Covered dish supper at 7 p.m.

SUNDAY

- Alcoholics Anonymous closed meeting from 11 a.m. to noon at 615 Settles. Open meeting 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

MONDAY

- Alcoholics Anonymous, As Bill Sees It, 615 Settles, 8 p.m. to 9 p.m.

TUESDAY

- Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, noon to 1 p.m.; newcomers meeting 8 p.m. to 9 p.m.
- A six-week course in Wellness and Quality of Life with Chronic Pain will be held at Spring Creek Fellowship at the Spring Town Plaza, 1801 E. FM 700. There is no charge for the course, and a workbook will be provided. Contact Steve Purdy at 432-517-4840 for more information.
- Caregivers Support Group, sponsored by the Area Agency on Aging, meets the second Tuesday of every month at 10:30 a.m. The meetings are held at the Senior Citizens Center located at 100 Whipkey Drive. These meetings are open for any caregiver, whether medical professional or family member. For more information, please call Becky Letz at 267-1628.
- Al-anon family group meets at 8 p.m. at 615 Settles.
- DivorceCare is a biblical support group for those facing divorce or separation. Each DVD session features nationally respected experts, such as Christian Counselors and Pastors. Small group discussions and workbook exercises help participants apply the information to their own situations. We cover pertinent issues like: • Will I survive? • How to get out of debt. • How do you

know when you are ready for a new relationship? • How to lessen the impact of divorce on your children. • Is reconciliation possible? There is no charge for attendance. 13-week seminars are held two times per year on Tuesday evenings from 6 to 8 p.m. at Trinity Baptist Church in Big Spring. Visit the DivorceCare Ministry of TBC Facebook page for information. You can also call Donna Burcham at 267-6344 for information on seminar dates and how you can register to attend.

WEDNESDAY

- Celebrate Recovery meets at First United Methodist Church Youth Hall, 400 Scurry, from 6-8 p.m. Hurts, habits and hang-ups. Leave message for Joyce Webb at 325-212-860

Submit your Support Group information to be included or updated. Email information to editor@BigSpringherald.com or call 432-263-7331.

THURSDAY

- Alcoholics Anonymous, 615 Settles, open discussion noon to 1 p.m.; women's meeting 6:30 until 7:30 p.m. Newcomers' meeting 8 p.m. until 9 p.m.
- Weight Watchers meets at 6 p.m. at St. Paul Lutheran Church. Weigh-in is at 5:30 p.m. Weigh-in is confidential and you don't have to talk if you don't want to. Flexible payment options.
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder support group meeting is at 6:30 p.m. at the VA Medical Center Veteran's Healing Center.
- Bring Everyone Into The Zone, or BEITZ Support Group, is a veteran-based peer group. The purpose of the group is to provide peer-to-peer support to service members, veterans and families, especially those suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury (TBI), military sexual trauma (MST) and other traumatic events in their lives. BEITZ meets every Thursday at 6 p.m. at 501 Birdwell Lane. For more information, email francisco.garza@wtcmhmr.org, or call 432-268-3003.
- GriefShare is a biblical support group that focuses on helping people who are dealing with a loved one's death. Each DVD session features nationally respected grief experts and real-life stories, followed by small group discussion about the topics presented (with workbook support); there is no charge for attendance. 13-week seminars are held three times per year on Thursday evenings, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., at Trinity Baptist Church in Big Spring. Visit the GriefShare Ministry of TBC Facebook page. You can also call Vivian Gordon at 432-466-3583 for information on seminar dates and how you can register to attend.

Take Note

- Food distribution at Three Angels Food Pantry is held every third Tuesday of the month at the Big Spring Seventh-Day Adventist Church, located at 4319 Parkway Rd. Food is provided by the West Texas Food Bank. People will need to bring ID and plastic bags, and answer a few questions to pick up food. The food pantry also has a Facebook page where they will post any updates. <https://www.facebook.com/healthynuggetsofgold44>.

- Senior Citizens Dances are held the third Friday of every month at 7 p.m. at the Dora Roberts Community Center. The next dance is December 17. Music will be Western style. Entry fee is \$5 and includes a snack. For more information call 517-9097.

- The Big Spring Art Association is looking for community businesses to display pieces of their artwork. In an effort to build awareness for the importance of the arts and highlight local talent, the Big Spring Art Association displays different art pieces across the community. If you would like a piece of art work displayed in your business lobby contact any member of the Big Spring Art Association.

- Drive-through COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics are held every from 3-6 p.m. each Thursday afternoon at Whatley Plaza, located on the northwest part of the Scenic Mountain Medical Center campus, 1601 W. Martin Luther King Boulevard, also known as 1601 W. 11th Place. The vaccination is free. For more information, visit www.scenicmountainmedical.org/vaccine.

- The Big Spring Art Association meets the third Saturday of the month, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, in the basement of the Howard County Library. Come join us, we would love to have you. For more information, call 432-263-4155; Michelle Worthan at 325-227-3911; Kay Smith at 432-213-1153; or Ruby Bruns at 432-664-1943. The November featured artist/special speaker will be Denise Malm. The next meeting is Nov. 20.

- The Big Spring Symphony is celebrating 40 years. Shows remaining this season include: Dec. 18 "Holiday Spectacular" at First United Methodist Church; Jan. 22: 'The Music of Queen' at Big Spring High School; Feb. 19 "Winter Wonderland"; and Spring Pops Concert on April 23. Venues for the February and April concerts will be announced at a later date. Tickets can be purchased in season passes or per concert. For updates and general information, follow The Big Spring Symphony Facebook page or go to www.big-spring-symphony.org.

- The Great Courses history video lecture series is taking place each Wednesday in the Theater Room in the First Presbyterian Church, located at 701 Runnels Street. No charge for the lectures.

- Howard County Community Health Center is offering the Moderna – a two dose and Janseen – a single dose, Covid-19 vaccine to those over the age of 18. Businesses, churches, groups or organizations of 10 members or more who would like the vaccine can schedule a time to have a mobile vaccine clinic. The staff will to the business, church, or organization to administer the vaccine. For ore information, call 806-894-7842 ext 178 or 124 or e-mail Covid19@sprhs.org



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Take Note

• Scenic Mountain Medical Center Auxiliary is looking for new members. If you have a heart for serving people, have at least four hours a week to spare, SMMC Auxiliary might be the fit for you.

Duties include working in the gift shop, delivering newspapers to inpatients, hospitality services, popcorn and more. To find out more about opportunities available with the SMMC Auxiliary, contact Amy Miramontes at 268-4809 or April Arms at 268-4907.

• St. Vincent de Paul food distribution will take place the second Thursday of each month from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. and other assistance will take place the third Thursday of each month from 10 a.m. until 12 p.m. Both distributions will take place at 1009 Hearn at SVDP Building.

• Interim HealthCare is looking for volunteers. Those who would like to find out more about becoming a volunteer can call 432-263-5999.

• VFW Post 2013 meets the first Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. New members are being sought. The Post is located at 500 Driver Rd. Qualified veterans, those who have served in a foreign war, who are interested in joining the VFW are encouraged to attend a meeting to find out more information.

• DivorceCare is a biblical support group for those facing divorce or separation. Each DVD session features nationally respected experts, such as Christian Counselors and Pastors. Small group discussions and workbook exercises help participants apply the information to their own situations. We cover pertinent issues like: • Will I survive? • How to get out of debt. • How do you know when you are ready for a new relationship? • How to lessen the impact of divorce on your children. • Is reconciliation possible? There is no charge for attendance. 13-week seminars are held two times per year on Tuesday evenings from 6 to 8 p.m. at Trinity Baptist Church in Big Spring. Visit the DivorceCare Ministry of TBC Facebook page for information. You can also call Donna Burcham at 267-6344 for information on seminar dates and how you can register to attend.

• O'Neal-Kunkle, Chapter #47 of the Disabled American Vets (D.A.V.), meets the third Monday of every month at 6:30 p.m. at 2204 Runnels Street. For more information, please contact Mike Tarpley at 432-556-2227.

• Home Hospice is looking for volunteers (18+) and junior volunteers (9-16 years old). Applications can be picked up at the Home Hospice office, located at 111 E. Seventh Street, Suite A between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Adult volunteers will need to complete a training and must be able to pass a background check. Volunteer duties will include home visits; junior volunteers will be helping with office work, community events and holiday activities. More information can be obtained by calling 264-7599 or 432-967-0901.

• Keep Big Spring Beautiful meets at noon the first Monday of every month at Howard College in the Cactus Room. Our vision is that every Big Spring citizen will take individual responsibility for making Big Spring the most beautiful city in Texas. Visitors are always welcome. For more information call Tammy at 432-935-0057.

• Big Spring and surrounding counties are in need of foster families. Foster parents are the caretakers for the children in the community who have been abused or neglected. For more information on becoming foster parents or adoptive families, call the Children's Protective Services office at 432-263-9669.

• Victim Services is a non-profit independent community-based program serving victims of all violent crime, including, but not limited to, assault, sexual assault and domestic violence. Victim Services advocates are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to provide crisis intervention or accompaniment to the hospital and law enforcement agencies, as needed. If you can commit to 30-hour training, an interview process and a background check, we need you. For more information, call Linda Calvio at 432-263-3312.

• The mission of CASA of West Texas is to promote and support quality volunteers who speak for the best interest of abused and neglected children in court in an effort to find each child a safe, nurturing and permanent home. We need your help. If you're interested in volunteering, contact Sara Basaldua at 1-877-316-8346 or visit www.BecomeaCASA.org or www.casawtx.org.

• The Howard County Democrats meet every Monday at 5:30 p.m. at the Cactus Room at Howard College in the Student Union Building. For more information, e-mail howardcountytxdems@gmail.com.

• The Emergency Services Chaplains Corps is seeking volunteer chaplains. The corps provides spiritual services to Howard County residents and visitors in crisis situations. Prospective chaplains don't require any specific experience or education to qualify for the position, just a calling from God and a willingness to devote time to the program, which requires a 24- to 30-week training program and dedication of one day per week for emergency call-outs. Those interested should contact Senior Chaplain Jacqueline Roland at 432-213-1221.

• Howard County Republicans meet the second Monday of each month. Club members meet in the Cactus Room at Howard College at 11:30 a.m., with Dutch treat lunch and meeting at noon.

• The Christensen-Tucker Post-2013 Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) meets the first Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. at 500 Driver Road. For more information, contact David Leonard, Post Commander, at 432-816-6004. All combat veterans of foreign wars are invited to come.

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Beatrice Perry, 81, died Tuesday. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Penny Athas, 64, died Thursday. Services are pending at Myers & Smith Funeral Home.

Alepholia Velasquez, 69, died Saturday. Visitation will be Sunday 9 a.m. until 9 p.m. with prayer service at 7 p.m. at Myers & Smith Chapel.

Oscar Padilla, 41, died Sat. Nov. 27, 2021. A memorial service will be Thursday from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. at Myers & Smith Chapel.

Charles Evans, 85, died Thurs. Nov. 25, 2021. A memorial service will be Friday at 10 a.m. at Myers & Smith Chapel.

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CISD

Continued from Page 1

district's authorized representatives; and approval of remote counseling.

Next, the board will consider an update of annual required hours of continuing education for

school board members.

Information items to be discussed during the meeting include the Enrollment/ADA/WADA Report; financial reports; and board meeting updates.

Superintendent Brad Cox will present his reports on the status of COVID-19 in the school district; and updates on the Athletic De-

partment.

The board will adjourn into executive session to discuss personnel. If the board decides to take action on items discussed during the closed session, they will emerge into open session to do so.

Following the executive session, the meeting will be ad-

KETTLE

Continued from Page 1

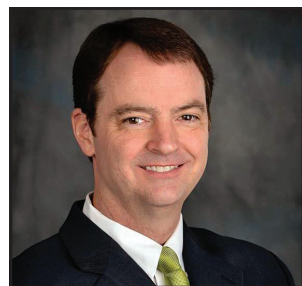
help reach your fundraising goal. Please go to www.SalvationArmyTexas.org/BigSpring/ to register, give to our virtual kettle, or find more ways to engage with The Salvation Army this Christmas."

For more information about the Christmas programs of The Salvation Army, please call us at (432) 267-8239, or visit us at 811 West 5th Street.

About The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army annually helps more than 23 million Americans overcome poverty, addiction and economic hardships through a range of social services. By providing food for the hungry, emergency relief for disaster survivors, rehabilitation for those suffering from drug and alcohol abuse, and clothing and shelter for people in need, The Salvation Army is doing the most good at 7,600 centers of operation around the country. In the first-ever listing of "America's Favorite Charities" by The

Chronicle of Philanthropy, The Salvation Army ranked as the country's largest privately funded, direct-service nonprofit. For more information, visit SalvationArmyUSA.org. Follow us on Twitter @SalvationArmyUS and #DoingTheMost-



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- Expedition Royalty - 220 S. Main St.
- Scenic Mountain Medical Center - 1601 W. 11th Pl.
- Big Spring Ford - 500 W. 4th St.
- Prosperity Bank - 1411 S. Gregg St.

The Westbrook Wildcats are the 2021 State Champions!!!!



Courtesy Photos

This Wednesday, Dec 15, the Westbrook Wildcats made school history by winning their first-ever State Championship. The Wildcats were a 32 point underdog heading into this game against the mighty May Tigers. However, Westbrook won this game by a final score of 72-66.

By DUSTIN POPE

Managing Editor

Well, I guess the first time is a charm for the Westbrook Wildcats. The Wildcats made the most of their debut in the State championship game. They upset the May Tigers 72-66 to win the 1A Division 1 State Championship on Wednesday at AT&T Stadium.

The Wildcats came into this matchup with an 11-4 record; they relied heavily on star athlete Cedric Ware in this game to get the job done. Ware was wall over the field for the whole game, making play after play; he was named MVP. Ware rushed for a fantastic 304 yards and seven touchdowns while also completing his only pass for a TD.

Ware was responsible for five touchdowns to get Westbrook the lead in the first half. This included a 56-yard deep ball to Aiden Sullivan to take a 46 to 44 lead into the half.

The May Tigers did not go away quietly as they came out fighting in the sec-

ond half, working their way to a 60 to 52 lead over the Wildcats, but that did not last for very long.

After a seven-yard touchdown by Ware for the Wildcats, Westbrook decided to attempt an onside kick. The kick bounced off a May player, and the Wildcats took full advantage of the play and got the ball back. Once they had the ball back, they took full advantage of the play by scoring another touchdown. This put Westbrook up by a score. Seemingly giving the Wildcats the state championship

May had other ideas, though; The Tigers drove down the field with under a minute left and on a fourth down with 11 seconds left. It seemed as though the May Tigers had tied this game up on a pass to the endzone, only to have a Wildcat defender make the defensive play of the game by knocking the ball loose just before the Tiger player could complete the catch. The defensive play saved the game for the Westbrook wildcats and gave them their first State title in the Schools history.

Amid signing day chaos, SEC powers grab top recruits

By ERIC OLSON

AP College Football Writer

Through all the changes to the college sports landscape with money-making opportunities for athletes and open transfers, one thing remains the same.

A bunch of Southeastern Conference schools along with venerable programs like Ohio State and Texas are at or near the top of the national recruiting rankings.

The three-day December signing period opened Wednesday, with Texas A&M finishing the day with the lead according to the 247Sports Composite rankings.

Aggies coach Jimbo Fisher put together his fourth straight top-10 class. Alabama, which won nine of the previous 11 recruiting titles, was No. 2. Georgia was No. 3, marking the fifth straight year the Bulldogs have been in the top five.

The team rankings could change with the next letter-of-intent period beginning Feb. 2.

Coaches said the recruiting process now has players taking into consideration where they could make the most money through endorsement work. The NCAA in July began allowing athletes to monetize use of their name, image and likeness. Some schools are better positioned than others in this new frontier and millions of dollars are swirling around the biggest programs.

"NIL has been going on for a long time. It just hasn't been above board," Fisher said.

The rapid increase in number of players entering the transfer portal and moving to another school with immediate eligibility has also changed the way coaches build their recruiting classes.

Instead of trying to sign a high school player and develop him, a coach

might instead pursue experienced players in the portal. And players interested in transferring also might be looking at NIL potential.

All things considered, signing day isn't what it used to be, Mississippi coach Lane Kiffin said.

"That's basically your draft class," he said, "but then you're going to have your free agent class. I don't think people really say it this way, but let's not make a mistake. I mean, we have free agency in college football. The kids a lot of times go to where they're going to get paid the most.

"No one else is saying that maybe, but the kid says, 'This is what I'm getting here for NIL.' It is what it is," Kiffin added. "Free agency has been created in college football — except you can't lock people into a contract. They can go any time. It's a new world that we're in."

TOP OF THE HEAP

Texas A&M signed 12 players ranked in the top 100 nationally. Two of its three five-star prospects are defensive linemen: Walter Nolen of Powell, Tennessee, and Gabriel Brownlow-Dindy of Lakeland, Florida. The other is quarterback Conner Weigman of Cypress, Texas. The Aggies have 17 four-stars.

Alabama brought in three five-star players and 16 four-stars, with edge rusher Jeremiah Alexander of Alabaster, Alabama, the highest rated of the 21 signed by coach Nick Saban. Five-star Ty Simpson of Martin, Tennessee,

joins a deep quarterback room led by Heisman Trophy winner Bryce Young.

Georgia signed 21 players, including four five-stars and 12 four-stars. Coach Kirby Smart downplayed the importance of those rankings.

"I care a whole lot more about how they play," he said. "We've seen evidence of the guys who have played a big role on our team, some of those guys were not the guys we talked about on this day during their career."

Completing the 247Sports Composite rankings were Ohio State, Texas, Penn State, Notre Dame, North Carolina, Michigan and Oklahoma.

FLIPPING OUT

Amid all the decommitments shadowing the coaching changes this fall, the most surprising came Wednesday

when cornerback Travis Hunter of Suwanee, Georgia, rated the No. 1 overall national recruit, spurned Florida State to sign with Deion Sanders and Jackson State of the lower-tier Football Championship Subdivision.

There were some notable flips among four-star recruits:

DB Terrance Brooks (Little Elm, Texas) signed with Texas after having pledged to Ohio State; CB Robert Woodyard (Mobile, Alabama) became the top player in Auburn's class after decommitting from Alabama; DL Tyre West (Tifton, Georgia) switched from Georgia to Tennessee; and LB Jaishawn Barham (Baltimore) became Maryland's highest ranked player when he flipped from South Carolina.

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Christmas Deadlines

- Friday 12/17 by 3pm Wednesday 12/15
- Weekend 12/18-19 by 3pm Thursday 12/16
- Monday 12/20 by Noon(12pm) Friday 12/17
- Tuesday 12/21 by 5pm Friday 12/17
- Wednesday 12/22 by 9am Monday 12/20
- Thursday 12/23 by Noon(12pm) Monday 12/20
- Friday 12/24 by 5pm Monday 12/20
- Weekend 12/25-26 by 12pm Tuesday 12/21
- Monday 12/27 by 5pm Tuesday 12/21



How to host a safe and enjoyable holiday office party

Many people look forward to annual celebrations with coworkers during the holiday season. The holiday office party is customary at many businesses, but those traditions were largely shelved in 2020.

COVID-19 had a direct impact on office parties, with the majority of employers opting out due to community-wide gathering restrictions. This holiday season, thanks to the successful rollout of vaccinations for people age 12 and up, social gatherings are once again increasing in frequency.

However, that doesn't mean caution should be thrown to the wind. Safety should be priority number one as businesses return to the tradition of hosting office parties this holiday season.

Take the party outside

Weather varies across the country during the holiday season. But if concerns of congregating in tight spaces still prevail, especially with new variants of COVID-19 driving up infection rates, it may be safer to socialize outdoors. Heaters and fire pits can warm up spaces if the weather is chilly.

Opt for individually plated or prepackaged foods

Prevent the spread of germs and safely address the myriad food allergies employees may have by serving individually packaged meals. Similarly, suggest that well-meaning employees refrain from annual Christmas cookie or fudge exchanges this year.

Limit alcohol

Set parameters for how much alcohol is served, perhaps setting a drink limit for each employee. Alcohol can loosen inhibitions, which may make people engage in risky behaviors that can make

them vulnerable to the virus and other threats to their health.

Provide transportation options

If the office party will include alcoholic beverages, develop a plan for getting attendees home safely afterwards. This may include hiring a ridesharing or cab company, or financing rides in a town car. In addition, ensure employees who do not feel comfortable leaving a venue alone at night can get home safely. Pair up employees who can carpool together. Allow employees to expense ride services.

Carefully consider location

Think about how location may play into overall safety risk. If there are plenty of bars or clubs nearby, then employees may indulge before or after the company party and their employer could be held responsible for their actions. Employers also must be cognizant of the neighborhood in which the event is held. Does it have a high crime rate? Is it far from public transportation? Is it desolate after certain times? Let safety be a driving force when choosing a location for the party.

Holiday office parties are returning to holiday season social schedules, and there are many ways to make them safe and enjoyable.

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THURSDAY

DEC. 16

Table listing TV channels (KMid, UNI, KPEJ, KOSA, etc.) and their corresponding programs throughout the day from 5:30 AM to 4:30 PM.

Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker
Free for the asking

East dealer. Both sides vulnerable. NORTH: K 8, 9 3, A Q 9 8 4, A Q 6 2. WEST: 7 6 5, J 6 5, K J 6 3, J 9 5. EAST: 4 2, Q 10 7 4, 10 7 5 2, K 10 8. SOUTH: A Q J 10 9 3, A K 8 2, 7 4 3.

The bidding: East South West North: Pass 1 Pass 2 Pass 5. Opening lead - six of spades.

Suppose someone offers you a bet where you can't lose, you might win, and the worst that can happen is that you break even.

Occasionally, this sort of situation arises at the bridge table. A hand comes along where a certain play might gain you a trick, while there is no chance it might cost you a trick.

Take this case where you're in six Tomorrow: Bidding quiz. ©2021 King Features Syndicate Inc.

Outdated Tradition?

Dear Annie: I am a baby boomer and appreciate the 20th-century tradition of "rising to the occasion" and taking in meals if a family member is ill or if there has been a death in the family.

This member is financially very well-off. Her husband retired from a

career in government, and his retirement income was well over six figures annually. She is a successful Realtor. In 21st-century America, supermarkets have deli departments, and restaurants have takeout options.

If you find you don't have time to cook, then picking up takeout is just fine, too. It's your stopping by that counts. Dear Annie: As a survivor of abuse, I would like to share some things with "Ostracized," whose adult children seem to have chosen their dad's side despite his abusive behavior toward her.

have been there), but new family dynamics call for new traditions. Anything you can do to make things easier for the kids will help them more than you know (and I've been the kid, too!).

Dear Happy Survivor: Thank you for your beautiful letter. I'm printing it to provide encouragement to "Ostracized" and anyone else who has left an abusive partner.

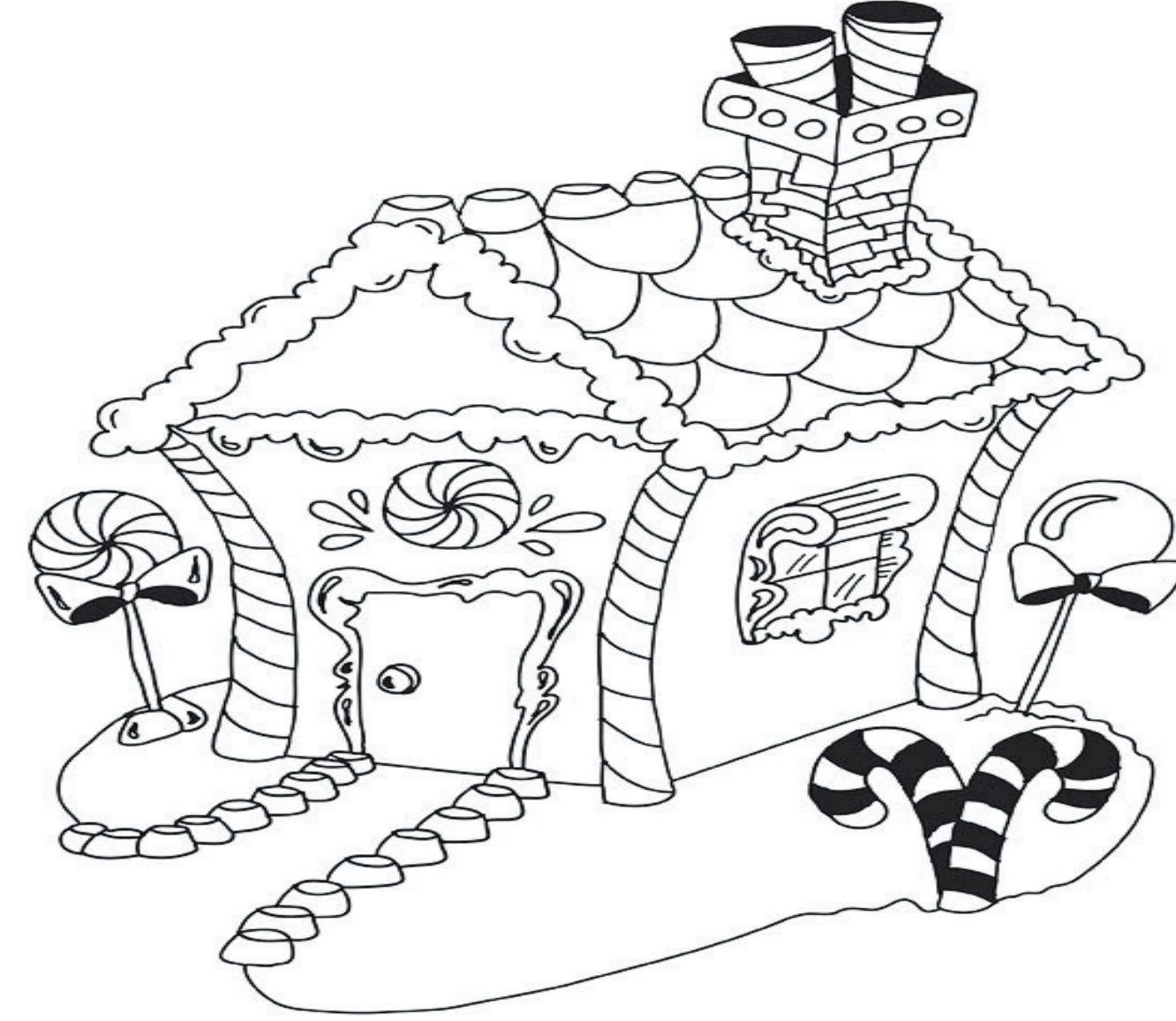
"Ask Me Anything: A Year of Advice From Dear Annie" is out now! Annie Lane's debut book -- featuring favorite columns on love, friendship, family and etiquette -- is available as a paperback and e-book.

Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com.

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Annie's Mailbox

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