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tulsakids

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HEAVY HOLIDAYS:
WORKING THROUGH GRIEF AND LOSS

THE MOTHERS GROUP:
GIVING EVERY CHILD A CHANCE

YOUR HAPPY HOLIDAY GUIDE
EVENTS, LIGHTS, SANTAS, PROGRAMS, PERFORMANCES + MORE!

A TEEN TOUR THROUGH TULSA

SAINTS PETER AND PAUL:
A SMALL SCHOOL WITH A BIG HEART

HANDLING HOLIDAYS
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To sign up or learn more about the Helmerich Women's Center Labor of Love program, visit LaborofLoveOK.com, call 918.579.8085 or e-mail LaborofLove@Hillcrest.com

Brooke and Mickey were fortunate to become parents twice in two years. They met their adopted son, Evan, in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) at the *Peggy V. Helmerich* Women's Health Center at Hillcrest Medical Center. After bringing Evan home, Brooke soon learned she was pregnant. And, exactly one year to the day after Evan was born, the family welcomed Sawyer. The boys spent a combined 139 days in the same NICU. Thanks to the compassionate and knowledgeable team who surrounded them, today the boys are healthy, energetic and happy. With such similar beginnings, these two boys were destined to be brothers.

To learn more about their life-changing experience at the Peggy V. Helmerich Women's Health Center, visit Hillcrest.com.

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tulsakids

December 2016

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editor's note

A Perfect Holiday….

…..doesn't exist. But that's ok. Sometimes we get so wrapped up (pun intended) in creating the perfect holiday that we forget to have fun. Why not start with what warm memories come to mind when you were a child. Was it that one, special gift? Time with grandparents or cousins? Special foods? Taking an annual holiday lights tour or going to a performance?

Whatever it is, identify it and build it into your family time.

There are so many free and low-cost events going on around town, you could stay busy every day right into the new year. Our print calendar lists lights, Santa sightings, shows, events…and then continues with even more online. So, ho ho hurry and make a list of family activities that you want to do.

If you've recently lost a loved one and are facing a holiday season tinged in sadness, read Bria Moore's feature about handling grief. Two families shared their experiences about loss. There are also unique ways to honor and remember those who have passed and ways to help children process their grief.

For those, like me, who enjoy cooking, food writer Natalie Mikles visits Gilcrease Museum's chocolate exhibit for inspiration and then provides some recipes that will satisfy your inner chocoholic. I especially enjoyed the truffle recipe – a great idea for gift giving or a homemade hostess gift.

For those of you who may have some teens visiting for winter break, you are probably wondering where you might take them in Tulsa. Julie Watson breaks it down for you in her column this month.

And I hope that every child will find a book under the tree every year. If you have a toddler, you're in luck. Laura Raphael, children's services coordinator for the Tulsa City-County Library, lists her favorite picture book picks of 2016.

As always, I hope you will find help, hope, information and inspiration in these pages. The staff at TulsaKids wishes all of you the warmest and happiest of holidays and we look forward to being here for you in 2017!





tulsakids
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If you like to read TulsaKids, you may not know that you can watch us, too! Every Thursday morning on Tulsa's Channel 8, the local ABC affiliate, join Editor Betty Casey on Good Day Tulsa for tips to plan your family's weekend and more. Watch Good Morning Oklahoma on Tuesdays for tips on timely topics and family information you'll want to know.

TULSA CAMPAIGN TO PREVENT TEEN PREGNANCY PRESENTS AWARDS

At a luncheon on November 10, the Tulsa Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy honored the Community Champion and Changemaker award recipients. Forrest Alton, a national leader in teen pregnancy prevention from South Carolina, was the keynote speaker. Community Champion Awards were presented to Youth Services of Tulsa (YST) for their PregNot program, accepted by Tania Pryce, assistant director of YST, and the Tulsa Carrera Program, which was accepted Dr. Kirt Hartzler, Union Public School Superintendent. An inaugural Community Changemaker Award was also presented to Sharon Gallagher, director of collaborative initiatives at Tulsa Area United Way.

While Oklahoma is second only to Arkansas in the number of teen births, progress has been made. Tulsa County's teen birth rate has declined 19 percent over the past two years and 47 percent since 1991. The Tulsa Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy hopes to reduce the teen birth rate by 30 percent by 2020 and to ultimately have teen pregnancy become a non-issue in Oklahoma.

For more information about Tulsa Campaign, resources for teens, parents and educators, go TulsaCampaign.org.



(PICTURED FROM LEFT) SHARLA OWENS (TULSA CAMPAIGN), SHARON GALLAGHER (TULSA AREA UNITED WAY), DR. KIRT HARTZLER (UNION PUBLIC SCHOOLS), KEVIN BURR (TULSA CARRERA PROGRAM), TANIA PRYCE (YOUTH SERVICES OF TULSA) AND ALICE BLUE (TULSA CARRERA PROGRAM)

LIBRARY ANNOUNCES ANNE V. ZARROW AWARD

New York Times best-selling author Laurie Halse Anderson is the winner of the Tulsa Library Trust's 2017 Anne V. Zarrow Award for Young Readers' Literature. She will accept the award at a public presentation at Hardesty Regional Library's Connor's Cove, 8316 E. 93rd St., Friday, May 5, 2017 at 7 p.m. She also will present awards to winners of the 2017 Young People's Creative Writing Contest at the ceremony.

Tulsa County teachers are invited to attend Mr. Henry's Books Teacher Workshop, Jan. 28, 2017, 9-11 a.m., at Central Library, Fifth Street and Denver Avenue, Pocahontas Greadington Learning and Creativity Center. Registration is $10 and includes a continental breakfast, 50 copies of *Chains* by Anderson and lesson plans on how to incorporate the work of Anderson in school subjects. One lucky participant will win a classroom visit from Anderson on May 5, 2017. For more information on registering for the workshop, call TulsaKids Magazine, 918.582.8504.

Anderson is being recognized for writing more than 18 books of fiction and nonfiction for "children of all ages" that address life's challenges with honesty, humor and sensitivity.

The Anne V. Zarrow Award for Young Readers' Literature gives formal recognition, on behalf of the Tulsa County community, to a nationally acclaimed author who has made a significant contribution to the field of literature for young adults. The award, presented by the Tulsa Library Trust, consists of a $7,500 cash prize and an engraved crystal book.

For more information on the Anne V. Zarrow Award for Young Readers' Literature or Mr. Henry's Books Teacher Workshop, call the AskUs Hotline, 918.549.7323, or visit the library's website, www.tulsalibrary.org.

HOLIDAY GIFTS THAT FEED HOPE

The Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma invites individuals, families or businesses to share the gift of food with people in need by purchasing holiday cards or by using the food bank's Holiday Smoked Meats program. For every dollar, the Food Bank can provide four meals.

Choose from Christmas, Chanukah, general holiday and New Year's cards with customized greetings. Cards can be ordered online at okfoodbank.org or by contacting Katy Dorais at 918.936.4506 or kdorais@okfoodbank.org.

The smoked meats program lets you choose from a selection of meats smoked by the food bank's professional chefs for your holiday meal or party. For more information, go to okfoodbank.org or contact Deb Hughes at 918.936.4507 or dhughes@okfoodbank.org.



TPS MAGNET SCHOOL APPLICATION PERIOD OPEN NOW

According to the Tulsa Public Schools website (www.tulsaschools.org), the application process for magnet school transfers began on Nov. 14, 2016 and will continue through Jan. 20, 2017.

Schools include the lottery magnets and the criteria-based magnets. A list of schools along with information on application materials needed for each school is available on the TPS website. Some schools require that parents or guardians tour the school; some require an entrance examination, interview or audition; criteria-based magnets use grades, test scores, attendance and teacher recommendation.

Applications are accepted electronically. For complete information, go to www.tulsaschools.org. Questions may be addressed to the transfer office at the Enrollment Center, 2819 S. New Haven or call 918.746.6138, 918.746.6335 or 918.746.6823.

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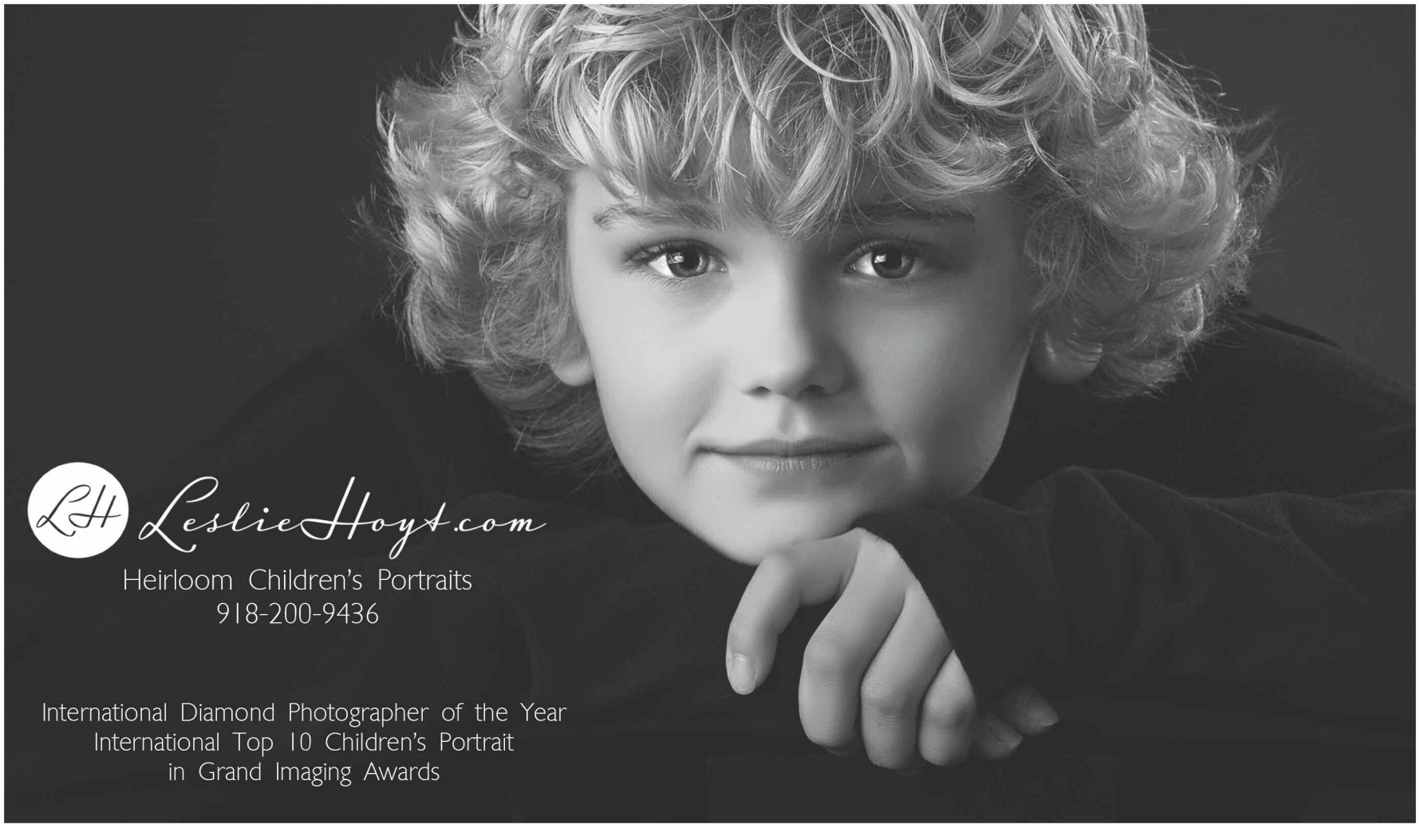
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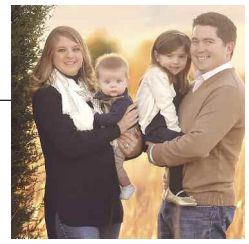
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BY KILEY ROBERSON

a loving touch

What parent doesn't crave a relaxing massage every once in a while? But you're not the only one who loves a nice body rub. Your little one also finds a gentle massage very calming — even therapeutic. That's because of the five senses, touch is the one that's most developed at birth, and there's research to suggest that infant massage has enormous benefits for helping babies grow and thrive.

"Infant massage is an age-old practice that has been passed down from mother to daughter for ages," explains Linda Storm an international trainer of infant massage. "Vimala McClure brought this practice to the U.S. in the late 1970s. She combined Indian massage, Swedish massage, reflexology and yoga into one routine."

Storm has been teaching infant massage for nearly 15 years and has trained hundreds of parents around the globe and here in Tulsa. But even before she was involved with infant massage, she was still doing the work. As a mother of three, Storm gave regular back rubs to her kids before bedtime to help settle them down for sleep. She says the benefits were obvious.

"The wonderful thing about infant massage is that it has benefits physically and emotionally for babies but also benefits parents and the community as well," Storm says.





Storm isn't alone in her praise of infant massage. Dozens of research studies by institutions like the American Academy of Pediatrics (APP) and the Mayo Children's Hospital have been supporting the benefits of infant massage for years. Evidence from these studies shows that it relaxes newborn's muscles, helps to increase circulation and reduces stress. Infant massage can also help ease babies' tummy troubles, teething pains and boost their muscle development. Research shows that newborns who receive a daily massage grow more in both height and weight during the first few weeks of life. Plus, a 15-minute bedtime massage can help infants go to sleep faster and rest better.

The advantages don't stop there: the rubbing and touching makes it easier for parents to bond with their newborns. What's more, giving your baby a massage can help you find your own inner Zen. Research suggests that mothers of infants had lower levels of depression and anxiety after massaging their babies.

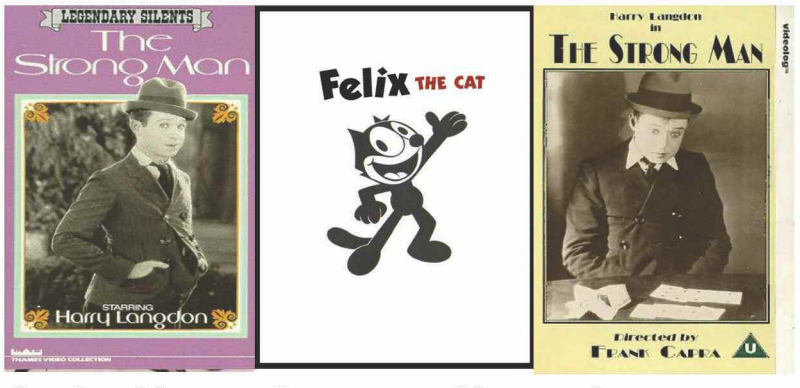
The benefits are clear for both parent and baby, and Storm says learning infant massage is just as straightforward. "If parents are changing diapers, they can do massage."

The Tulsa Health Department offers information about infant massage training for families.

continued next page

Second Saturday Silents

Live organist + Silent film+ Felix the Cat cartoon



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Celebrate the Holidays!

Enjoy special activities for families in December.

Dec. 4, 2-3:00 p.m.
Musical Performance, Sequoyah Elementary School choir.

Dec. 11, 2-3:30 p.m.
Musical Performance, Booker T. Washington High School choirs.

Dec. 13, 2-3:00 p.m.
Musical Performance, Lee Elementary School choir.

Dec. 18, Noon-5 p.m.
Funday Sunday. Free admission and Santa is here from 2:30-5 p.m.

Dec. 28, 1-4 p.m.
Winter Workshop. Chocolate Bonbon Boxes.

Dec. 29, 1-4 p.m.
Winter Workshop. Gift Wrapping Paper Weavings.

Dec. 30, 1-4 p.m.
Winter Workshop. Winter Scene Prints.

GILCREASE MUSEUM
Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art

For our full list of December programs, visit our website. TU is an EEO/AA institution.

GILCREASE.ORG

But parents can actually start these gentle massages the day they bring home baby. Here are some infant massage moves to get you started:

Legs and feet - Hold your baby's heel in one hand; with your other hand, start at the top of the thigh and slowly stroke all the way down to the ankle. Then rub the feet with your thumbs, gently uncurling and stroking the toes. Switch legs. You can do these same strokes on the arms and hands.

Chest - Fold your hands on your baby's chest, then push out to the sides, as if you were smoothing the pages of an open book.

Tummy - With your fingertips, draw an oval below your baby's belly button. (Move clockwise, to follow the natural path of digestion.)

Back - Stroke his back side to side and then up and down.

If you're interested in learning more, reach out to a certified educator of infant massage with the Tulsa Health Department for an in-depth training and technique overview. Infant massage can be a wonderful tool to help your baby grow, relax and bond with you.

"Touch is a baby's first language, it's how they feel loved," Storm explains. "Touching and stroking your baby helps you get to know them intimately and helps establish a strong attachment and relationship. A relationship that will be reflected in every other future relationship they have."

To learn more, visit infantmassage.org or call the Child Guidance Clinic at the Tulsa Health Department, 918.594.4720.



BRING YOUR FAMILY TO THIS SWEET EXHIBITION DURING THE HOLIDAYS!

October 9, 2016 – January 8, 2017

Chocolate and its national tour were developed by The Field Museum, Chicago. This exhibition was supported, in part, by the National Science Foundation.

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BY JULIE WENGER WATSON

a **teen tour** through **Tulsa**



The holiday season is upon us, and that can mean school breaks, visiting family and potentially bored teenagers. Looking for things to keep your own or someone else's teen or tween entertained this month? Check out these suggestions below.

Tis the Season

Tulsa's Performing Arts Center offers several holiday programs, including American Theater Company's performance of *A Christmas Carol*, a musical based on the original novella by Charles Dickens. This the 40th anniversary of this ATC production, and the amazing sets, props and costumes used to transform the intimate Williams Theater into Victorian England have grown over the years to fill over two semi-trailer trucks.

Tulsa Ballet's *The Nutcracker* is a holiday tradition for many families. More than 100 local children join the professional dance company to bring this tale to life. Set to the classic Tchaikovsky score, the costumes and production are larger than life, making it a great holiday event for all-ages. www.tulsapac.com.

Lights + Shopping

In midtown Tulsa, Utica Square boasts a lovely holiday light display, along with animatronic recreations of scenes from The Nutcracker. A sandwich at Queenie's or a stop at Starbucks followed by a run by Gap or Bath & Body Works for some last-minute gift shopping should be a teen-pleaser. www.uticasquare.com.

Take it to the Streets

Downtown Tulsa is thriving and full of both the weird and the wonderful this month. Winterfest returns with a large ice skating rink, horse and carriage rides, concessions and weekly live music all outside the BOK Center. www.tulsawinterfest.com.

While you're downtown, it's always fun to stop by the "Center of the Universe," an acoustic anomaly located on the Boston Street pedestrian bridge over the railroad tracks between First and Archer streets. Follow the brick path that leads to a brick circle. Stand in the middle and make some noise. You'll hear your voice echo, but others standing around you won't.

After that magical event, consider a stop by Glacier Chocolates in the Brady Arts District for some exquisite handcrafted delicacies www.glacierconfection.com, or stop for lunch at Chimera. This hipster café offers a variety of healthy and delicious food options, including vegetarian choices (www.chimeratulsa.com). Antoinette Baking Company, just across Main Street, is another great place to grab a snack downtown. www.antoinettebakingco.com.

Schedule your own private "Underground Tulsa" tour through Tours of Tulsa for your gang. Travel through some of downtown's gorgeous art deco and gothic design buildings and then go underground through the Tulsa tunnels that connect many of the city's skyscrapers. It definitely provides a different perspective on the town, while adding enough creep factor to keep teens interested. www.toursoftulsa.com.

Java

Tulsa has its fair share of coffeehouses, each with its own style and clientele. Gypsy Coffeehouse near 3rd & MLK, Jr. Blvd. downtown is urban cool, offering plenty of music, including open mic nights, along with a variety of beverages in a restored brick building at the edge of the Brady District. www.gypsycoffee.com.

In midtown, Shades of Brown in Brookside has local art on the wall, as well as handcrafted jewelry and pottery for sale. Browse the latest CD releases by some of Tulsa's best musicians. The baked goods are excellent. www.shadescoffee.com.

The Coffee House on Cherry Street, or "CHoCS," as the regulars call it, is another midtown favorite that serves a nice breakfast and lunch menu in addition to the usual coffeehouse brews. Open until midnight on the weekends, it's a good place to caffienate day or night. www.chocstulsa.com.

Get Physical

Bundle up and go outdoors for some urban hiking. Turkey Mountain, near 71st & Elwood, has miles of color-coded, marked trails for biking, hiking, horseback riding (provide your own horse) and running. Information and downloadable maps can be found at www.turkeymtn.com.

Redbud Valley Nature Preserve off N. 161st E. Ave., about

continued next page

three-and-a-half miles north of Highway 44, has a rugged loop of trails that lead from the bottom of a hill up to the top of a bluff. Limestone cliffs, small caves, springs and a creek all add to the adventure.

Oxley Nature Center, on the grounds of Mohawk Park north of the Tulsa Zoo, features a trail system with a number of individual loops and stretches of trail that link together. Most of the nine miles of trails are flat and fairly smooth, running through forested areas, around a lake and near a prairie. Information on both Redbud Valley and Oxley can be found on this website: www.oxleynaturecenter.org.

A winter hike at Tulsa Botanic Garden might be just the thing to get teens in touch with their inner Henry David Thoreau. The trails will lead them through the diverse vegetation that makes its natural home in Oklahoma. www.tulsabotanic.org

Foul Weather Fun

Oklahoma's unpredictable weather may necessitate some backup indoor plans. The Oklahoma Aquarium in Jenks on the Arkansas River has over 100 exhibits and thousands of creatures. The walk-through shark tunnel is always a thrill, as these impressive animals, some very large, swim alongside and overhead. www.okaquarium.org.

New Heights Climbing Gym, near E. 11th St. & Highway 169, challenges beginner and advance climbers alike with options for roped climbing, which requires two people – one to climb and one to manage the rope – and bouldering, negotiating a rock wall without a rope, but with a nice, padded floor to soften any fall. The gym has about 4000 square feet of climbing walls, a bouldering room and a traverse wall. First time climbers are welcome. www.newheightstulsa.com.

Retail Review

Music-loving teens will enjoy a visit to Holy Mountain at 4th and N. Main. This uber-cool shop is filled with vinyl records of all genres, magazines and comics. www.facebook.com/holymountaintulsa.

The legendary Guitar House of Tulsa is another must see for any young musician. In business since 1964, this shop specializes in both new and vintage guitars and amps and is a favorite of locals and touring professional musicians alike. www.guitarhouse.net.

Ida Red in Brookside is loaded with clothes, jewelry, art, Tulsa tchotchkes, and much more. It's the perfect spot to shop for souvenirs or gifts. www.idaredboutique.com.

A Spot of Culture

Of course, our city is filled with plenty of opportunities to culture up. From museums to galleries, Tulsa has it covered. Gorgeous grounds and a beautiful building are reasons enough to visit Philbrook Museum, but the art is also spectacular. During December, Philbrook has a wonderful display of holiday gingerbread houses made by local schools and other organizations, in addition to lights and a well-stocked gift shop. www.philbrook.org.

Gilcrease Museum has one of the most extensive permanent collections of Native American and Western art to be found. This month, check out the special "Chocolate: The Exhibition," to learn all about this sweet treat, its origin and its relationship to human culture. www.gilcrease.org.

The Woody Guthrie Center in the Brady Arts District houses the archives of Oklahoma's iconic folk troubadour, and it's also brimming with interactive exhibits that tell the story of Guthrie and his legacy. www.woodyguthriecenter.org.

Neighboring 108 Contemporary showcases the work of Oklahoma artists who use glass, fiber, metals and mixed media or wood as their primary medium. With frequent new exhibits, this is a great spot to find inspiring and unique works of craft art. www.108contemporary.org.





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BY DIANE MORROW KONDOS

handling holidays post-divorce



For the first eight or nine years after my divorce, my ex-husband and I spent Christmas Day together with our children. They were very young when we got divorced, so we decided it would be better for the kids if we celebrated the day, or at least part of it, together. Until we each got remarried, it worked for us, but there are other alternatives if you can't quite picture spending the holiday with your ex:

• **Alternate holidays.** Take turns with all the major holidays. If the mother has Christmas (or Chanukah, Kwanza, etc.) one year, the father gets it the next. The same goes for all the other big days such as Thanksgiving and Easter.

• **Split up the day.** This is great if you live in the same town. For example, one parent gets Christmas Eve and Christmas morning until 10 a.m., and then the other parent gets the rest of the day. This can be a perfect arrangement allowing the children, parents and extended family equal time.

• **New traditions.** If the other parent is no longer involved, it may be a good time to shake things up and start new traditions. Volunteer to deliver Meals on Wheels, invite friends over for dinner or spend the day in pajamas watching the Christmas classic movies.

• **Alternate date.** If the children are with the other parent on December 25, create an alternate date to celebrate. There is no rule that says Christmas stockings can't be hung by the chimney on December 26 or even January 1s. Emotional flexibility is the key.

• **Spend the day together.** This is a wonderful scenario if you have an amicable relationship with the other parent. If you choose this, both adults must be capable of making it a conflict-free day.

If your children are at their other parent's house for the holidays and you're alone, plan something. It's natural to feel a little lost and despondent on a holiday without your kids, so make sure you anticipate the day and make plans. Whether it's a day with friends or simply a good movie and a glass of wine, take care of yourself emotionally and physically.

Claudia Arthrell, senior program director of professional services at Family & Children's Services, advises, "The holidays can provide a challenge to many divorced parents. Remember to ask yourself, "How will my child see this?" as you consider your actions. Listen first when possible before responding. And always remember the big picture is creating a memorable holiday."

No matter how you divide the holidays, there are some general guidelines to keep in mind to make the holiday season a little less stressful for all involved.

• Do not compete to buy the most or best gifts. Although some kids may joke that one of the benefits of having divorced parents is double the presents, don't fall into the trap of overdoing gifts. If you have a good co-parenting relationship, consult with the other parent and split the gift list.

• Help your children purchase or make a gift for the other parent. This won't be easy for you, but remembering the other parent in this way shows respect and sets a good example of kindness.

• Talk to your children about their feelings. Although the parents are in charge of making the plans, children need to know the arrangements in advance and be allowed to express their feelings openly. Be aware that holidays may bring up feelings of loss and yearnings for family reconciliation. Especially if this is the first holiday since the divorce, children may feel sad.

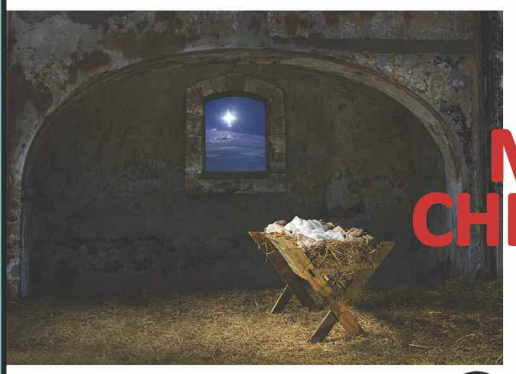
• As with everything, always keep in mind the children's best interests. Even if your ex is difficult to deal with, do your best to compromise. Never say negative comments about the other parent in the presence of your child. You never lose, and your children usually benefit, if you take the high road in co-parenting!

Holidays bring out extreme emotions for people; expectations and tensions are elevated and being in a divorce situation magnifies those feelings. Let go of the Norman Rockwell version of the family holiday and work on creating a healthy, happy "new normal." You are the creator of your child's childhood memories, a heavy responsibility but also an amazing opportunity.

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HEAVY HOLIDAYS

WORKING THROUGH GRIEF AND LOSS DURING THE "MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR"

BY BRIA BOLTON MOORE

On December 25, Mary Waller and her family will place candles atop a chocolate pistachio cake and sing Happy Birthday to Jesus, a tradition they've shared for decades.

But this year will be different. The matriarch of the family, the tradition's creator, won't be with them. Waller's mother, Linda Cubbage, lost her cancer battle in June.

"I think we will forever and always have the Jesus' birthday party on Christmas night, because that's something she started to pull everyone together," Waller said.

Waller's mother noticed she was having trouble reading and remembering, and in the fall of 2015, she was diagnosed with multi-form glioblastoma grade four, a brain tumor.

"My mother blessed us with some amazing things besides her faith, and one was her attitude toward cancer—we're going to do everything we can, we're going to fight, and its going to be what its going to be," Waller said.

Waller said she and her two siblings all experienced their mom's sickness and passing in different ways because of "birth order, geographic location, different personalities and approaches."

"Everybody's feelings are real, and everybody's opinions are valid," she said.

Waller waded through countless family dynamics and admits, "you can't know what everyone else is feeling."

She and her sister attended some appointments with her parents and while "idle chit chat in the waiting room" was just what her mom needed, it made her father nervous. In addition to facing the realities herself, Waller was also walking her two daughters, ages 18 and 21, through their Mimi's health changes. Waller's goal was to be "truthful but tender."

Waller knows she's not alone—many others are facing grief, intimidating diagnoses or the holiday season without someone they love—and that's why she wanted to share her story.

Joe Jennings can relate. His wife Kristen passed away from breast cancer in 2014.

"My daughters were actually with her when she passed," Jennings said of his girls, then 6 and 7 years old. "They were saying goodbye when she took her last breath. My oldest daughter started screaming, 'Mom, please don't go!'"

Kristen's death wasn't sudden, and her family had time to prepare. Jennings said he believed in being "honest and upfront even though they [his daughters] were young."

"The girls and I sat down, and I explained to them that barring a miracle, you're going to lose your mom."

After their mother died, one of Jennings' daughters "took it in stride" while the other started having "outrage fits."

"She would scream; she wasn't a nice person to be around, but understandably," Jennings said.

After months of encouragement from a friend at Oklahoma Project Woman, Jennings took his daughters to visit a counselor at The Tristesse Grief Center.

"They showed a level of compassion to my girls that I don't know I've ever seen," he said. "We didn't need to go too long before Kaitlin started bouncing back."

The fact that the individual members of the Waller and Jennings families experienced grief and loss in various ways is no surprise.

"Everybody grieves differently," said Sarah Reinhardt, counselor and group facilitator at The Tristesse Grief Center in Tulsa.

Reinhardt walks a lot of families through experiences like the Wallers' and Jennings'. One question she gets asked a lot: "What do I tell my kids?"

"In general, what I suggest to parents

>



LINDA CUBBAGE IN HER CHRISTMAS PARTY CROWN.

is that they follow the lead of the child," she said.

"Try to give them honest information in a soft way, or give them minimal information at first and let them know they can ask questions. Then, respond to their questions. They will lead you, and that gives you some insight into what they're thinking and feeling."

Reinhardt said the holidays can be difficult as there are lots of reminders of loss.

"Communicating and talking about it before the holiday comes is always a good idea," she said.

Reinhardt encourages people to have a family meeting to discuss traditions, what to keep and what to change, all while understanding it's going to be different without the person present.

Here are some activities she suggests to remember loved ones, especially around the holidays:

BRB (be right back) jar

Families decorate a jar and fill with strips of paper.

"Throughout their day if they've had a thought or a memory or a feeling about the person who's died, they can write that down and they put it in the jar. They agree to have a family meeting to read through the strips of paper together. It can be a catalyst to opening up communication and is especially good for those who have children. So much of loss and grief is abstract, and there's not a lot of tangible things, so an activity like the BRB jar can be helpful, because they have a visual representation."

Memory Box

Families decorate a box in memory or celebration of a loved one they've lost. Reinhardt says some families put the box on their holiday table or light candles.

Recognitions and Communication

Dr. David Wakefield, licensed psychologist and licensed marriage and family therapist with Cancer Treatment Centers of America, works with both cancer patients and their caregivers. He said it is not unusual to feel sad, down or depressed around the holidays after losing a loved one.

Like Reinhardt, Wakefield said he often encourages people to find something to help them remember the loved one such as leaving an empty place at the table, writing the deceased a letter or visiting the cemetery.

Wakefield also believes encouraging communication is essential.

"In dysfunctional families, the three primary messages are don't talk, don't trust, don't feel," he said. "You want to do the exact opposite."

Christmas will be different for many families this year, especially Waller's. They will still wear party crowns from party crackers while singing Happy Birthday to Jesus, but they're also planning new traditions like their first family vacation immediately following Christmas. A little old and a little new. Something to remember but something to move forward.



MARY WALLER WITH HER MOTHER LINDA CUBBAGE.

WALKING WITH CHILDREN THROUGH GRIEF AND LOSS

Provided by Dr. David Wakefield, licensed psychologist with Cancer Treatment Centers of America

Young Children:

- "Remind them that the loved one will not return, because they haven't developed permanency yet."
- "Give them realistic information, answer their questions, of course make it age appropriate—sometimes with young kids, parents give way too much information when it's ok to keep it simple. Don't try to answer all about life, death, grief and loss when they ask one question. As they ask more questions, answer the questions."
- "Keep them involved in the communication process, because it develops security and stability. Encourage questions and feelings."

Preadolescents and Teens:

- Remind them they are not responsible for the loved one's death.
- Encourage them to continue normal routines.
- "A lot of parents are energized to fight when they see their kids are having a normal life and a good time."

All Ages:

- Watch for changes in behaviors, mood and grades.
- Provide ways for them to remember their grandma/grandpa/mom/dad/brother/sister/whomever.
- Let counselors, Sunday school teachers, teachers, etc. know about the loss.
- Remember the child might regress and act younger than he or she is.

Castle Christmas
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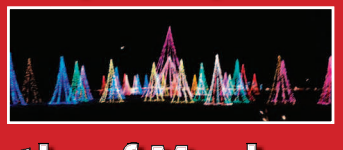


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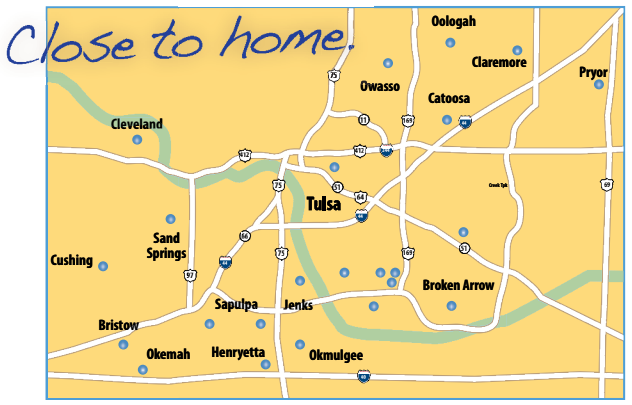
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BY DANIELLE HILL

a small school with a big heart

Every parent's dream is to have peace of mind knowing that his or her children are attending a school where they will not only feel safe and nurtured, surrounded by caring teachers, faculty and peers, but also will receive a quality education that will provide them with a solid footing for the future. Saints Peter and Paul, a small school in located at Pine and Sheridan in Tulsa, strives to provide that educational setting for students in the neighborhood, but changing demographics have left it struggling to stay afloat. More and more of its families are unable to pay tuition, so rather than turn students away, the administration is looking for ways to expand funding by reaching out to the Tulsa community.

Patrick Martin, Saints Peter and Paul School's principal of 14 years, explained why the school's need is especially crucial now more than ever. "Our school is funded by tuition income and three groups of very generous benefactors called the Friends of Catholic Education, the St. Francis Tuition Trust and Go for Catholic Education. These groups help with tuition assistance to families in need. Fortunately for us, they have helped us consistently for many years now. Unfortunately for us, our poverty level (based on the Federal Free Lunch Program) is at 90 percent. That means that our families have very little income to pay tuition. So our tuition collections have gone way down over the years and our needs, textbooks for example, have gone way up."



SAINTS PETER AND PAUL SCHOOL PRINCIPAL PATRICK MARTIN WITH STUDENTS ON THE SCHOOL'S ROPES COURSE. MARTIN USES THE COURSE WITH THE STUDENTS FOR TEAM-BUILDING AND CONFIDENCE-BUILDING. THE COURSE ALSO IS AVAILABLE FOR OUTSIDE GROUPS TO RENT.

Martin said Saints Peter and Paul's mission is to help underprivileged families receive a quality education that prepares them to succeed in high school and beyond.

Currently, however, the future of Saints Peter and Paul now depends on the school's ability to raise $20,000 in donations to not only meet a $17,000 mandate to replace a 10-year-old textbook, but also to purchase teachers' supplies. Because the school is largely dependent on donations to help cover this type of need, there are no funds to meet the mandate or purchase the essential supplies.

Saints Peter and Paul parent Claudia Davila said that the school has helped her children both academically and socially. "It's a good place to be and far exceeds our expectations," she said. "I don't think many people know about it. When we came, we were a little nervous coming from a public school to here. You could see the difference right away from the academics they were getting and their behavior. They [the children] adapted really quick and now they don't want to leave. I've had two graduate already and they wish they could stay for high school here instead of moving on. Everyone here cares about you. It's hard for us to pay tuition, but the school does everything it can to help us, and make it possible for us to go here. It's really worth it because I see the difference it's making in my kids."

Ines Maldonado graduated from high school in Tulsa and was

continued next page

looking for a school that she felt would give her children a good education and that she also felt comfortable with as a parent.

"Both my husband and I work very hard to raise them [our children] well and want to give them opportunities that we didn't have," she said. "I think they are getting a good education at Saints Peter and Paul. They have a lot of friends there, and the teachers stay on them to make sure that they are doing their work. If I have a problem or a question, I just walk over and ask the principal or the teacher, and they help me. It's a very caring place. Not every place is like that."

In fact, the school has a long history of involvement with the neighborhood. It was established in 1951 by three Dominican Sisters who sought to provide a Catholic education to children in the area. Over the years, the school has continued serving families who have been unable to afford the cost of sending their children to the school.

"The goal of living in a more civil, equitable and safer society could largely be achieved by better educated citizens. Be it in Tulsa, Chicago, London, Baghdad, Mumbai, Johannesburg or any other place on our globe. It starts with preschool and continues through all facets of educational programs," Martin said. "Here, we are working with families that live in a low socio-economic environment and we are giving them an education that is very personal and challenging. We ask them each day to rise above the difficulties they face and look forward to the future where a solid education can truly make a difference in their lives. An education that, in many cases, their parents did not have."

Martin and his staff work to create an atmosphere of hope and success at Saints Peter and Paul. That atmosphere translates to a labor of love for everyone who is involved, from the teachers and faculty to the families that the school assists. Many of the school's improvement projects, such as renovations to the gym and the construction of a cafeteria, were completed by parents who volunteered their own time.

"It is very motivating to work with them [the teachers]," Martin said. "I look around some days and see all the incredible things they're doing in the classroom, and it makes me proud to be associated with the teachers here. I couldn't do it without the help of all the teachers here and especially the school secretary, Maria Walsh."

Like the rest of his staff, Martin takes on many roles. Besides his duties as principal, he acts as an advisor, fundraiser, coach, curriculum developer, and bus driver for field trips.

"Our situation is very challenging," he said. "We do not have extra of anything: extra staff, extra uniforms, extra textbooks, extra desks or chairs. This spirit of working together and supporting each other instead of passing the buck to somebody else has made our community very strong and caring. I'm motivated by the fact that we do so much to help these kids and give them a chance to succeed. We are doing great things on the corner of Pine and Sheridan!"

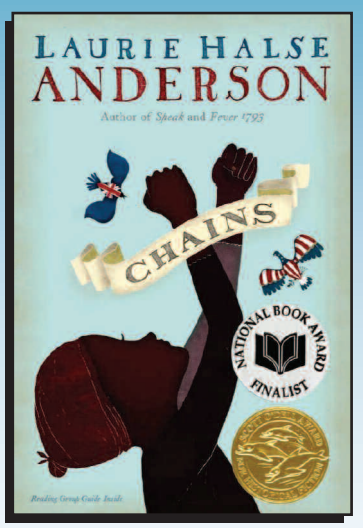
Saints Peter and Paul School has on-going need that is greater than in past years. Donations are always welcomed and appreciated. To help the school reach its current fundraising goal, donations may be sent to Saints Peter and Paul School at 1436 N. 67th East Ave., Tulsa, OK 74115. For more information, call the school at 918.836.2165.

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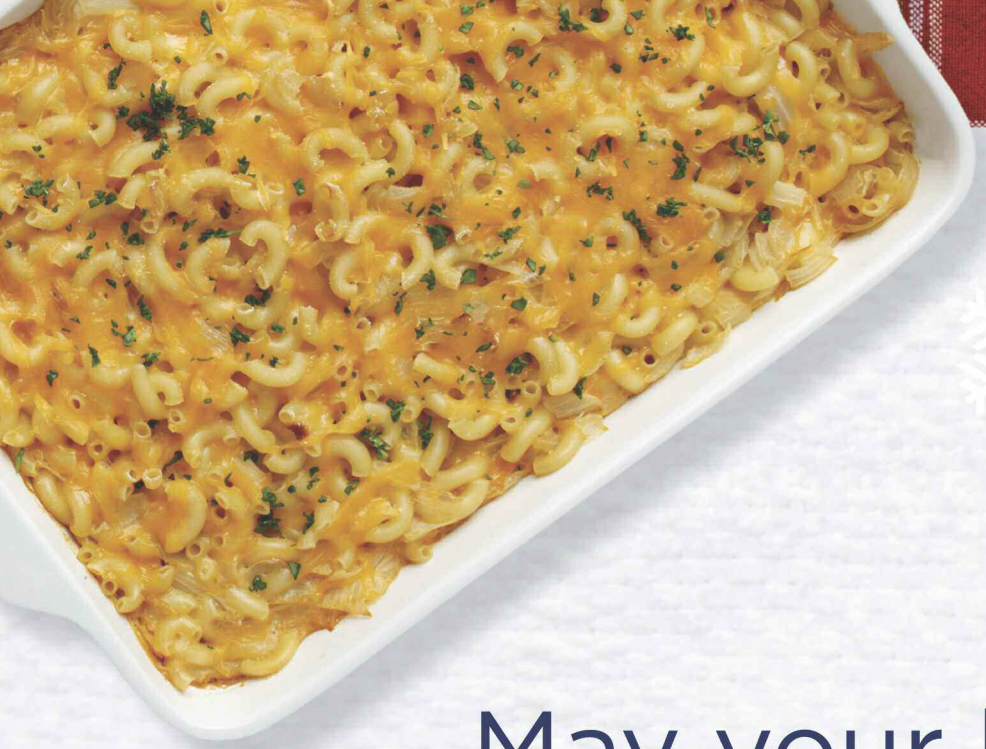
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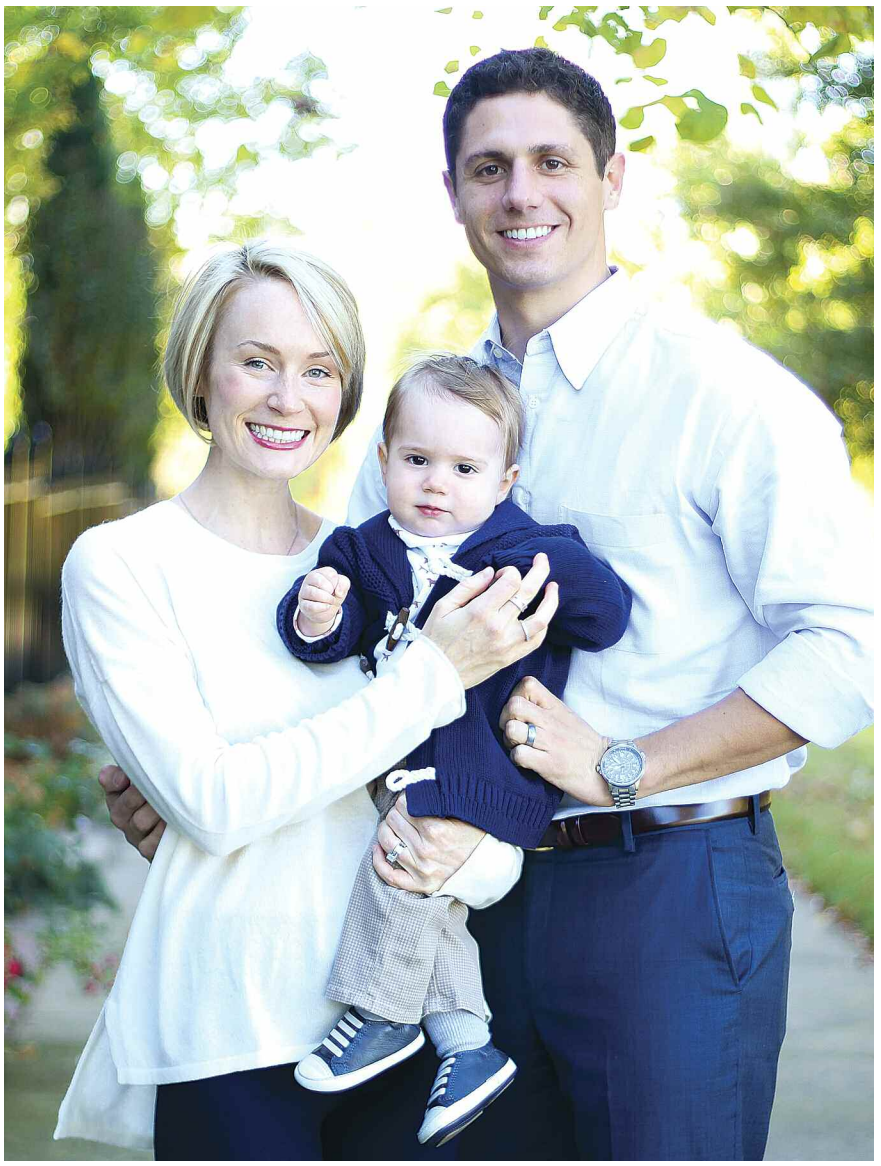
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BY NANCY A. MOORE

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Reid Brooks: helping foster kids have a Merry Christmas



Reid Brooks has been an active board member with the Tulsa Advocates for the Protection of Children (TAPC) for three years. Currently, he is serving as the Board President and is passionate about ensuring the organization's ability to support the resource needs of the many kids in the Department of Human Services (DHS) foster care system in Tulsa. In addition to the array of resources that TAPC's Foster Family Resource Center offers to the foster children in Tulsa, this month TAPC is focusing on "Christmas for Kids" which provides over 1,400 foster children with gifts for Christmas.

TK: What is Tulsa Advocates for the Protection of Children (TAPC)?

Brooks: TAPC is a nonprofit organization of community volunteers committed to improving the lives of the children in the foster care system by providing essential resources. TAPC's Foster Family Resource Center (FFRC), located at 3722 E. 51st Street, provides foster families critical resources including beds, car seats, strollers, clothing, diapers, books and toys. TAPC's Christmas for Kids program helps over 1,400 foster children each year by filling each child's wish for Christmas. We receive no government funding and rely on the support of the many generous foundations, corporate and individual donors in Tulsa and its surrounding areas.

TK: How did you become interested in volunteering for this organization?

Brooks: I found out about TAPC through friends who were already actively involved with the organization. My wife is a family law attorney, who has worked on numerous cases where children are impacted. As a result, I am aware of how profoundly these kids are affected. Once I understood TAPC's mission, which at its core, is people helping children through their difficult times, I knew I wanted to be involved. I encourage anyone looking for a way to improve their community to think about TAPC. I firmly believe support for these children is one of Tulsa's biggest needs; it all starts with kids.

TK: What does this organization provide to kids in foster care in Tulsa?

Brooks: TAPC's Foster Family Resource Center (FFRC) provides foster families critical resources

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The holidays are right around the corner, but that's no reason to get your tinsel in a tangle. Early December is actually a great time to have your family's dental care taken care of before the hectic holiday season is in full swing. Minimize any unnecessary holiday stress by having your children's dental health cared for now, so you can avoid any potential unwanted emergencies over the holidays. Silent night, indeed.

Call today to check the status of your unused dental insurance benefits or to schedule an appointment.

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including beds, car seats, strollers, clothing, diapers, books and toys. Additionally, the FFRC provides donated passes to summer camps, museums, water parks along with a host of other services with the goal of helping normalize the lives of Tulsa's foster children. In the month of August alone, the FFRC had over 375 visits by children and their families!

TK: Can you share a success story about one of the kids who has been helped by TAPC?
Brooks: Recently, a sibling group of five children had to be immediately removed due to abuse and neglect by their biological parents. The grandparents of these children were living in a retirement complex but were willing and anxious to provide a home for their grandchildren. Their retirement complex allowed the children to stay temporarily with their grandparents until a larger residence could be found. Once located, TAPC assisted by providing all five children with beds, cribs, bedding, car seats and furniture. TAPC also provided all the children with clothing, school uniforms and supplies, toys and diapers. TAPC will continue to provide aid on a monthly basis to the family as needed through visits to the FFRC. Without the cooperation of the grandparents, their retirement complex and TAPC this sibling group would not have been able to stay together and remain with their family.

TK: How can individuals get involved?
Brooks: Each person can make a lasting impression in a child's life. If you want to get involved, please go to our website www.tapchelps.org and contact Nancy Robison, TAPC's Executive Director at 918.728.6726 or by email at nrobison@tapchelps.org. She can provide all the details on how you can get a list of what to purchase, where to drop off, etc. I personally encourage anyone who would like to make a donation to stop by the FFRC and visit our dedicated employees and volunteers who make all of this possible!

Wrap-up:
Brooks: I would like to thank each and every person, foundation and company who donates money, time and resources in support of our mission. Without our donors, we wouldn't be able to impact the lives of the children in foster care. If you want to get involved, please go to our website to find out how you can help. Also, we need your donations! If you have gently used children's items, please think of TAPC. Extra donations would allow us to provide these children with additional clothing, diapers, etc. when they visit the FFRC at 3722 E. 51st Street.

TAPC's Christmas for Kids (CFK) Program:

There are several options available to assist with the CFK program:

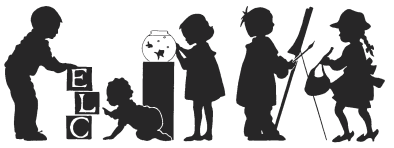
1. Sponsor a Child: You will be provided with a child's wish list which includes specific toys and/or gifts the child has personally requested along with clothing sizes and interests. Gifts purchased should not exceed $75 per child;

2. Toy Drives: Collect new, unwrapped toys to donate to the CFK program;

3. Monetary Donations: Checks/cash donations are used to purchase additional toys and gift cards for children ages 13 and up;

4. Volunteer: Help with set up, gift collection, gift distribution or shopping. (Note: Gift drop-off dates are Tuesday, December 12 – Friday, December 16 at the former Borders Books space located at 2740 E. 21st Street.)

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BY DIANE TRITT EATON

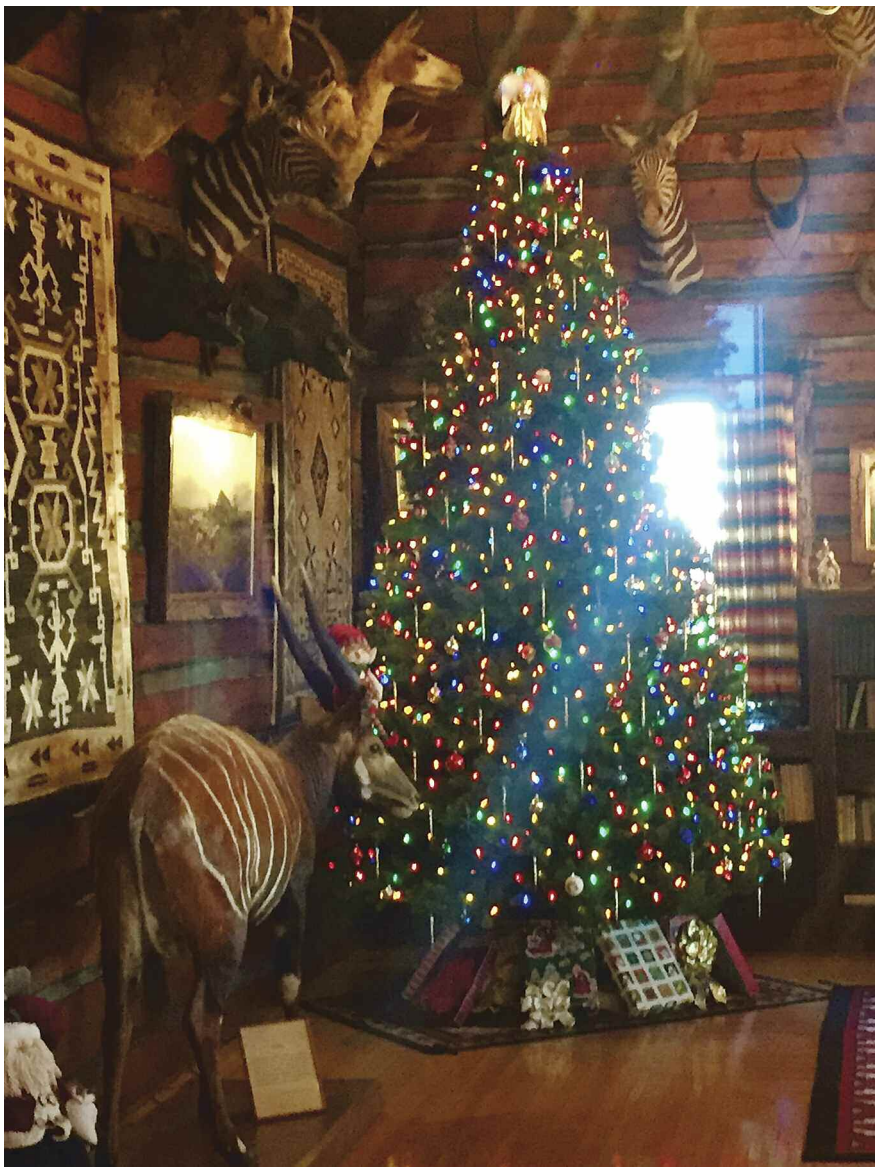
Photo credit: illuminated Woolaroc Grounds
Photos Courtesy: www.woolaroc.org
Woolaroc Lodge Ranch House

Woolaroc lights up **old-fashioned** holiday traditions

With the onset of the holidays, the child within awakens with a desire to experience traditions reminiscent of seasons past and share them with our loved ones. For me, the sounds like bells and carols, the sight of colorful lights flickering and smell of steaming hot cocoa evoke the spirit of holiday joy.

If you're looking to inject some old-fashioned holiday happiness into your "ho-ho-ho," look beyond what is already available in Tulsa and fold in a little family drive to Woolaroc's Wonderland of Lights near Bartlesville, OK. Whether or not you've been to Woolaroc, the Wonderland of Lights is a truly unique privilege to explore.

Woolaroc, a 3,700-acre Osage Hills country estate and former part-time residence of Frank Phillip's, founder of Phillips Oil Company, takes the holiday season to heart, turning the entire place into an illuminated magical fairyland. You and your troops will be dazzled by the more than 750,000 multicolored twinkling lights ablaze on hundreds of tree trunks and branches lining the paved walkways, and dotting windows and rooftops of the buildings and barn. Just try to envision nearly a million lights shining brightly, mirroring the stars above.



CHRISTMAS TREE IN THE WOOLAROC LODGE.

In addition to driving the grounds, you can park the car and explore the grounds. Visit Santa Claus in the magnificent museum and enjoy holiday refreshments (available for purchase) in the homey, Christmas-tree-clad lodge. There, you'll find hot apple cider, hot chocolate and freshly baked cookies. The holiday ambiance is beautifully punctuated by music piping through the trees and live performances being held in the Heritage Theater. Children will love the lit-up petting zoo with goats, sheep and miniature horses, and a wagon ride around the property.

"This is truly one of those wonderful family traditions for so many people," said Woolaroc CEO Bob Fraser. "We have families who meet here at Woolaroc each year to celebrate their 'family Christmas' during our lights, and, if you are lucky, you may catch a glimpse of the Holiday Horseman, covered in lights, riding across the grounds. To have the chance to walk the grounds — hearing the laughter of children — this is the way things should be this time of year."

For those who aren't familiar with Woolaroc (a name derived from three words: woods, lakes

continued next page

and rocks), it's been around for nearly a century. Established in 1925, it is the former private ranch of well-to-do oil tycoon Frank Phillips. Phillips built a rustic, log-cabin style lodge for himself and his guests and then, over time, after amassing a large collection of Southwestern and Native American style art, he created a world-class museum, which is now one of the largest of its kind. The nearly six square-mile grounds have been turned in to a wildlife preserve, where over 30 different animal species indigenous to Oklahoma and the region now roam virtually free. During a recent afternoon visit, I encountered a large herd of bison grazing along the roadside and stumbled upon some deer foraging for food. The grounds are also home to zebras, ostriches, llama, elk and more. Collectively, the Woolaroc Lodge, Museum and Wildlife Preserve are now part of the National Historic Register, which can be enjoyed year round.

What better way to evoke the holiday spirit than to bundle up the kids and make a trip to Woolaroc a part of your annual holiday tradition.

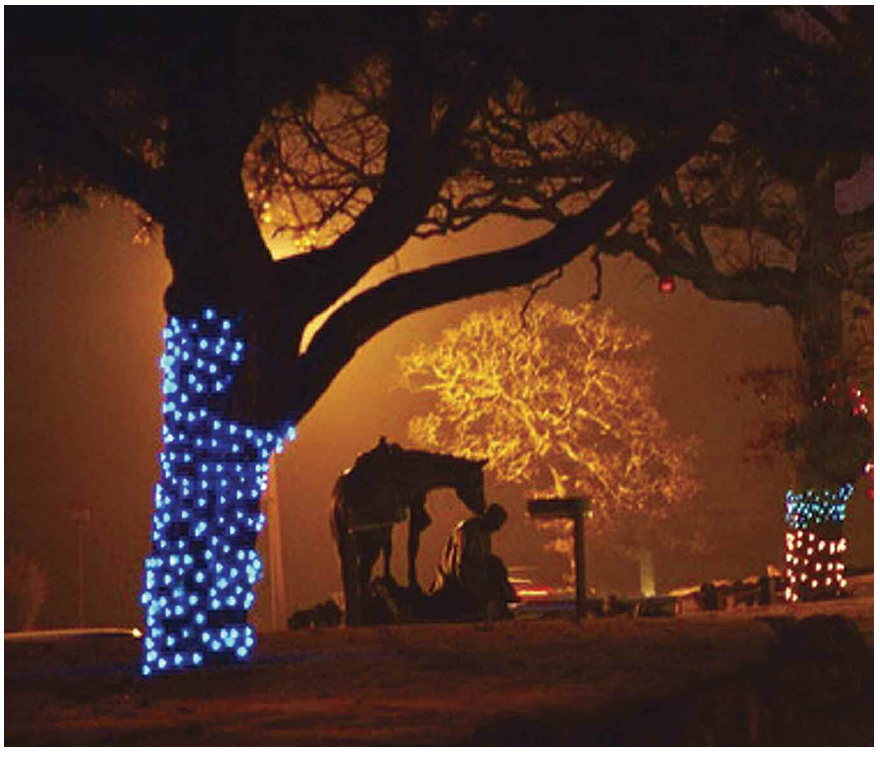
Woolaroc Wonderland of Lights

Friday through Sunday, 5 p.m.-9 pm, through December 23, 2016.

Admission is $4 for adults and $1 for kids 11 and younger. Performance schedules are provided upon arrival.

Visit www.woolaroc.org for complete descriptions of the holiday program and other events held throughout the year.





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will you help FILL THE PLATE?

You can help fill the plates of so many people in our community this holiday season. Your donation will go twice as far, thanks to the generosity of the George Kaiser Family Foundation.



"I had a good life as a child and I want to give that to my son. We are just trying to get on our feet."

-Kenny

Fighting Hunger, Feeding Hope

FOODBANK

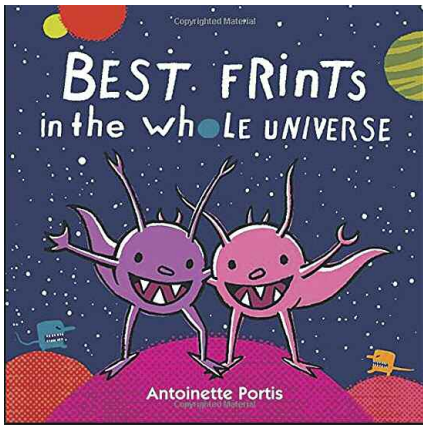
Community FOOD BANK of Eastern Oklahoma

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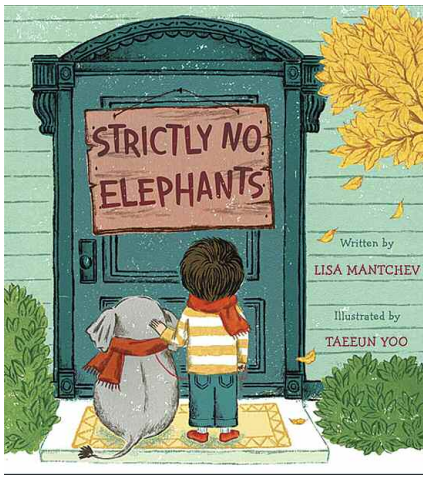
BY LAURA RAPHAEL, MA, MLIS

best children's books of 2016

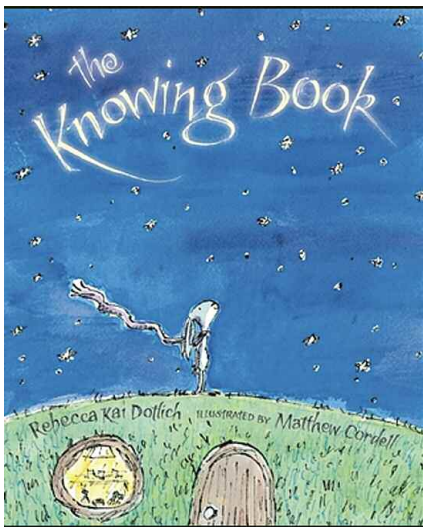
As Children's Services Coordinator for the Tulsa City-County Library, I am in the happy position of reading a LOT of children's books every year, particularly picture books. Here are some of my favorites from 2016 that are worthy to end up under your holiday tree… You also can check out these great reads from any Tulsa City-County Library location.



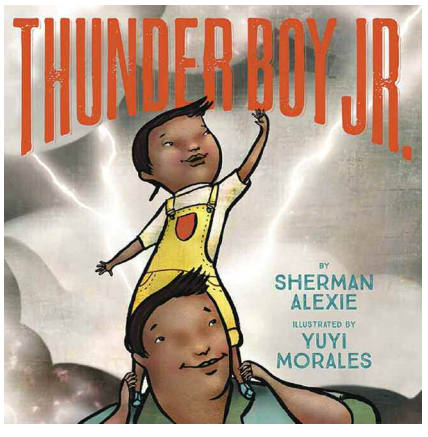
Best Frints in the Whole Universe written and illustrated by Antoinette Portis. Portis can always be counted on for mind-bendingly colorful illustrations combined with an unusual humor. Two aliens (Yelfred and Omek) of planet Boborp may be best frints (friends, in the Boborpian vernacular), but they don't always get along. See how they manage their disagreements while still being frints. Children who are starting to read will delight in the made-up language.

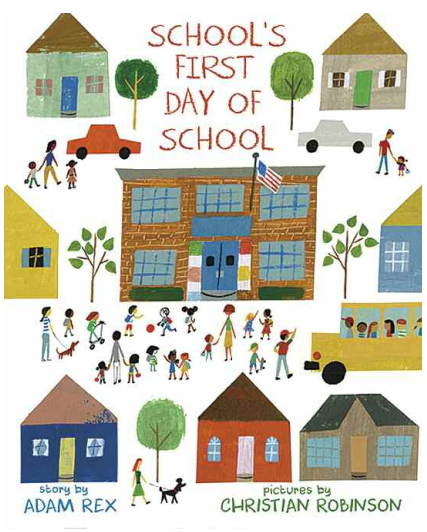


Strictly No Elephants written by Lisa Mantchev, illustrated by Taeeun Yoo. A young boy cares for his tiny pet elephant, carrying his pachyderm friend over sidewalk cracks (they are scary!) and dressing him warmly in a matching red scarf. But when they attempt to enter a meeting of pet owners, they – and those with other unusual pets – are turned away. The answer makes for a sweet and heartwarming story about acceptance and friendship.



The Knowing Book written by Rebecca Kai Dotlich, illustrated by Matthew Cordell. While this gentle picture book appears to start in the material realm (standing on a grassy yard and looking at the night sky), it ends in a philosophical exploration of much deeper issues: truth, the magic of the world, and what it means to be alive. A good one to introduce to your natural philosophers and discover what amazing thoughts they carry around every day.





Thunder Boy, Jr. written by Sherman Alexie and illustrated by Yuyi Morales. A name is a powerful thing, as Little Thunder – son of Big Thunder – discovers. Exquisite illustrations, humor that is both gentle and incisive, and a larger thematic look at identity and family that will resonate with many children.

School's First Day of School written by Adam Rex, illustrated by Christian Robinson. There are many wonderful books about children getting ready for the first day of school… but what happens when it's the first day for a newly built school? A clever twist on an old idea, complete with the school being nervous, making new friends, and getting used to the rhythm and rewards of daily school.

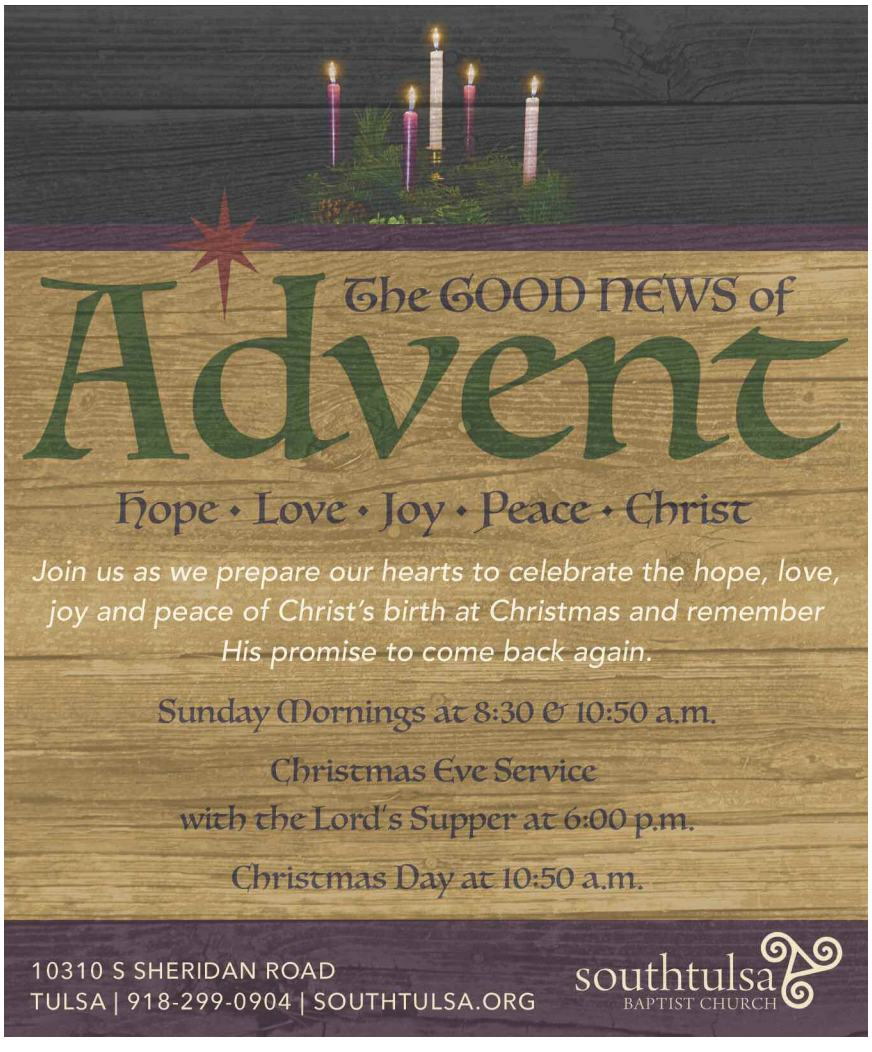
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tickets and info at tulsazoo.org

PHOTO: DR. JEN KILBURN

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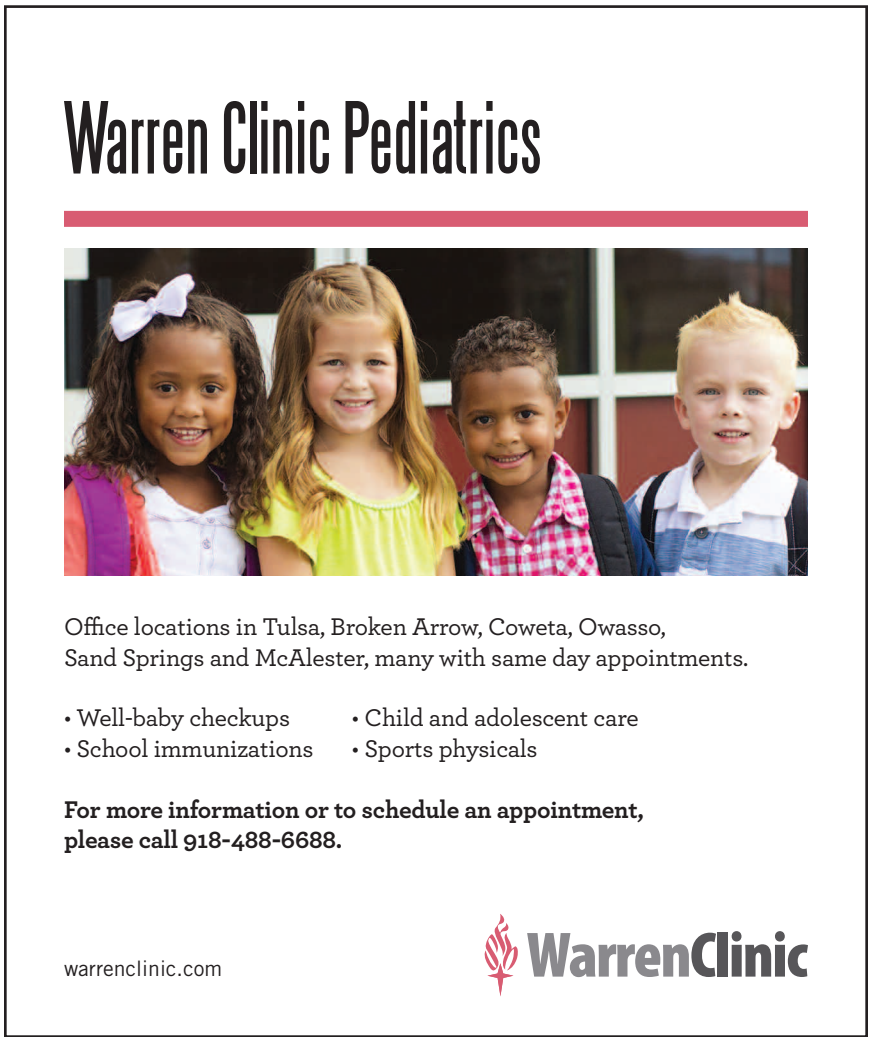

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Photo courtesy of Philbrook Museum of Art.

GET OUT AND GO IN THE TULSA METRO AREA! FIND THESE EVENTS AND MORE AT WWW.TULSAKIDS.COM/CALENDAR.

1 | THURSDAY

HANDS ON! {FREE}
Busy hands, busy brain! Children learn through hands-on activities. Explore, experiment and create. Be ready to get messy! For ages 3-5. Central Library, 400 Civic Center; 10:30 a.m.

BA SIDEWALK ASTRONOMERS {FREE}
Map out our 26,000-year precession and find out what other stars have been our north polar star in the past and those that will be in the future. For all ages. Broken Arrow Library/ South, 3600 S Chestnut Ave.; 6:30 p.m.

2 | FRIDAY

TULSA STEM EXPO {FREE}
Bring the kids to Tulsa Expo Square to explore their interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Encourage the kids to experiment with math, engineering, science and technology principles while connecting with other local students at this STEM Expo. Expo Square, Tulsa Fairgrounds; 9 a.m. Find out more at www.okstemexpo.com.

CUBELETS {FREE}
Build and play with simple robots called Cubelets. For ages 10-18. Brookside Library, 1207 E 45th Pl.; 4 p.m.

FIRST FRIDAY ART WITH GILCREASE MUSEUM {FREE}
Begin your First Friday Art Crawl with Gilcrease Museum at the Central Library! Gilcrease staff will help you explore artists featured at the museum while your young artist creates a masterpiece of his or her own. For ages 5-10. Central Library, 400 Civic Center; 4:30 p.m.

FIRST FRIDAY ART CRAWL {FREE}
This year-round monthly event features all of the galleries, studios and museums as well as the part-time galleries in various shops opening their doors to show art. First Friday is a perfect date night starting with a cocktail, coffee or early dinner on one of the many patios. It can also be a leisurely browse of the art and a great late dinner or nightcap at the District's unique restaurants or clubs. Families can find many options from kid-friendly gallery shows to live music in the park. The Art Crawl is held on the first Friday of the month and open from 6–9 p.m. in the Brady District.

3 | SATURDAY

MEET POET BILLY COLLINS {FREE}
Internationally renowned poet Billy Collins, winner of the Tulsa Library Trust's 2016 Peggy V. Helmerich Distinguished Author Award, will talk about his life and works, answer questions from the audience and sign books. Copies of his works will be available for purchasing at the event. Central Library, 400 Civic Center; 10:30 a.m.

MINI MASTERS: FIVE SENSES IN ART
Kids will explore the galleries and gardens of Gilcrease Museum as they use their five senses - sight, sound, hearing, taste and touch. Children will learn to look at the world in new ways, which will inspire their art creations. For ages 3-6, who must be accompanied by an adult.
Space is limited and advanced registration is required: 918.596.2774. Gilcrease Museum 1400 North Gilcrease Museum Rd.; 10:30 a.m.

4 | SUNDAY

See sidebars for on-going activities.

5 | MONDAY

See sidebars for on-going activities.

6 | TUESDAY

THE AUTUMN SKY AT THE JENKS PLANETARIUM
Take a tour of the skies and discover the constellations, planets, nebulae, and other stunning night sky objects that can be seen in the night sky. Recommended age is 8 years to adult. Jenks Planetarium, 205 East B St.; 8 p.m.





SANTA SIGHTINGS

SANTA AT WOODLAND HILLS MALL
When: Saturday, November 5 - Tuesday, December 24; times vary
Where: Woodland Hills Mall (Lower Level, Dillard's Court); www.simon.com (appointments available)

SANTA AT THE UTICA SQUARE COTTAGE
When: (Begins after Thanksgiving) Monday-Saturday; 10 a.m.-9 p.m. and Sundays; Noon - 6 p.m.
Where: 21st & Utica; www.uticasquare.com

SANTA COMMUNITY PROJECT
When: Saturday, December 3; 9 a.m.-noon
Where: Greenwood Cultural Center, 322 North Greenwood; 918.408.6163

SANTA CLAUS AT THE TULSA TOY DEPOT
When: Saturday, December 3; 9 a.m.-noon
Where: Tulsa Toy Depot, 10114 S Sheridan Rd., Tulsa

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA AT THE TULSA ZOO
When: Saturday, December 3; 9-10:30 a.m. and Saturday, December 10; 9 -10:30 a.m.
Where: The Tulsa Zoo; www.tulsazoo.org

SANTA IS COMING TO KIDDLESTIX
When: Sunday, December 11; 2-4 p.m.
Where: Kiddlestix Toy Store, 3815 S. Harvard Ave., Tulsa

VISIT WITH SANTA AT LAFORTUNE PARK
When: Saturday, December 17; 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
Where: LaFortune Park Community Center, 5202 S. Hudson Ave.; 918.496.6220.

BIXBY SANTA VISIT
When: Friday, December 16; 4-6 p.m.
Where: Bixby Community Center, 211 N. Cabaniss, Bixby; 918.366.4841.

CHANDLER PARK SANTA BRUNCH
When: Saturday, December 17; 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
Where: Chandler Park; 6500 W. 21st St.

SANTA TO VISIT THE LIBRARY
When: Tuesday, December 20; 3-5:30 p.m.
Where: Hardesty Regional Library, 8316 E. 93rd St., Tulsa

SUNDAY FUNDAY WITH SANTA
When: Sunday, December 18; Noon-4 p.m.
Where: Gilcrease Museum of Art, 1400 NW Gilcrease Expressway

THERE'S MORE! WWW.TULSAKIDS.COM/SANTA

7 | WEDNESDAY

MINI MASTERS
See previous description, 10 a.m.

HOMESCHOOL ART CLASS AT PHILBROOK
Ages 5-8. Each homeschool class offers gallery tours led by qualified art educators, an in-studio art-making project, as well as resources to guide parents through that week's class into a month-long learning opportunity. Philbrook Museum, 2727 S Rockford Rd.; 1 p.m. To find out more, go to www.philbrook.org

8 | THURSDAY

ZACH: TEEN TIME @ ZARROW
This exciting teen art program is designed especially for the homeschooling community. Students will enjoy an arts enrichment experience with a consistent concept of the month presented, such as Landscapes, Portraits, 2D/3D, Realism/ Abstraction based on the Elements of Art and the Principles of Design. Each lesson, materials and gallery discussions will be taught by qualified art instructors and designed to be age appropriate to create a targeted learning experience.For ages 13 - 16 years old. Registration required: 918.631.4402. Zarrow Center for Art & Education, 124 East M.B. Brady St.; 10 a.m.

MUSEUM BABIES AT GILCREASE
Museum Babies is designed to nurture the needs of parents and their infants and/or toddlers. Parents will enjoy a casual experience in the galleries, learning about the art of Gilcrease Museum, then it's "play time" for children with activities to stimulate the five senses. For ages birth to not yet three years old, accompanied by caregiver. Space is limited and advanced registration is required: 918.596.2774. Gilcrease Museum, 1400 North Gilcrease Museum Rd; 10:30 a.m. www.gilcrease.utulsa.edu.

9 | FRIDAY

MUSEUM BABIES AT GILCREASE
See previous description, 10:30 a.m.

DADDY DAUGHTER DANCE AT WHITESIDE
Join in for this annual event. Girls age 4-12 can bring their dad, grandpa, uncle or other significant male to dance the night away. Whiteside Recreation Center, 4009 S. Pittsburgh Ave.; 7-9 p.m. $8/person or $10 at the door.

10 | SATURDAY

SECOND SATURDAY AT PHILBROOK {FREE}
Enjoy free Museum admission and family friendly, hands-on art-making projects on the second Saturday of each month. Philbrook Museum of Art, 2727 S. Rockford Rd.; 10 a.m.-4 p.m. www.philbrook.org

SCALE MODEL GINGERBREAD BUILDING COMPETITION {FREE}
The Tulsa Regional STEM Alliance (TRSA) invites you to participate in its Scale Model Gingerbread Building Competition. Participants of all ages are welcome to build their own gingerbread replica of a famous architectural building, as an individual, class or group. Visit tulsastem.org to view competition rules, complete an entry form and register for the competition. For all ages. Hardesty Regional Library, 8316 E. 93rd St.; noon-4 p.m.

READY, SET, ANIMATE! {FREE}
Make your own animated minimovie using LEGOS and the free Stop Motion Studio app. Use iPads or download Stop Motion Studio to your device and bring it with you. For ages 10-18. Zarrow Regional Library, 2224 W. 51st St.; 2 p.m.

11 | SUNDAY

TULSA CHILDREN'S MUSEUM SENSORY FRIENDLY FAMILY TIME EVENT
This event will be geared toward families with children on the autism spectrum and those who have sensory processing disorders. Discovery Lab will open two hours early for families to explore. Once the doors open to the public, you are free to stay and explore the rest of the museum. Cost is $5 per person for adults and children 2 years old and older through pre-registration - December 10th. Walks-ins are welcome to come the day of the event and pay full price of $6. Tulsa Children's Museum, 560 Maybelle Ave.; 9:30-11:30 a.m.

12 | MONDAY

See sidebars for on-going activities.

13 | TUESDAY

COOKIES, COCOA AND A MOVIE {FREE}
Kick back, enjoy cookies and cocoa, and watch a holiday-themed family film. Snacks will be provided. Helmerich Library, 5131 E. 91st St.; 10:30 a.m.

14 | WEDNESDAY

See sidebars for on-going activities.

15 | THURSDAY

ZACH: TEEN TIME @ ZARROW
Discover the world of art at the downtown Zarrow Center for Art & Education through this exciting program designed especially for the homeschooling community. Students will enjoy an arts enrichment experience as they create their own works of art in this engaging approach to arts education taught by qualified art instructors. This is the same art class that is offered at three different times during each month from September through May. For ages 6 - 12 years old. AM Classes, 10:30 a.m.; PM Classes, 1:30 p.m. Zarrow Center for Art & Education, 124 East M.B. Brady St. Registration required: 918.631.4402.

LEGO LAB {FREE}
Learn new building ideas, partner with other children during team-building challenges and explore free building. For ages 6-12. Martin Regional Library, 2601 S Garnett Rd.; 4 p.m.

CONFECTIONARY CARPENTRY {FREE}
Come and build the wildest gingerbread house you can imagine. All materials are included and you will be able to take your creation home. For ages 8-12. Hardesty Regional Library, 8316 E. 93rd St.; 4 p.m.

MINECRAFT NIGHT {FREE}
Put your imagination to the test building your own world in the popular game Minecraft! For ages 10-18. Zarrow Regional Library, 2224 W. 51st St.; 6 p.m.

16 | FRIDAY

MINI MASTERS
See previous description, 10 a.m.

17 | SATURDAY

HELPING CHILDREN COPE WITH DIVORCE
Family & Children's Services is the place to turn for help when parents live apart by making difficult life transitions easier for you and your children. Family & Children's Services, Central Office, 650 S. Peoria Ave.; 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Register at www.fcsok.org.

18 | SUNDAY

FUNDAY SUNDAY AT GILCREASE {FREE}
It's an afternoon of museum fun for the whole family. Visitors can enjoy various art-making stations in the museum, each offering different materials and themes as well as teaching artists to help guide and inspire. Gilcrease Museum 1400 North Gilcrease Museum Rd.; noon-4 p.m.

19 | MONDAY

See sidebars for on-going activities.

20 | TUESDAY

HOLIDAY ART AND CRAFT POTPOURRI
Find something new and different to make each week for family and friends. For all ages. Judy Z. Kishner Library, 10150 N. Cincinnati Ave.; 3-6 p.m.

21 | WEDNESDAY

HOMESCHOOL ART CLASS AT PHILBROOK
Each homeschool class offers gallery tours led by qualified art educators, an in-studio art-making project, as well as resources to guide parents through that week's class into a month-long learning opportunity. Philbrook Museum, 2727 S Rockford Rd.; 1 p.m. www.philbrook.org

22 | THURSDAY

See sidebars for on-going activities.

23 | FRIDAY

MAKE AND TAKE SEA ORNAMENTS
Make a mini-ocean holiday ornament complete with sand and tiny starfish. Come early and work like an underwater elf. This is a popular event and supplies can run out, so get there faster than Santa's reindeer fly. Oklahoma Aquarium, 300 Aquarium Dr.; 10 a.m.-noon.

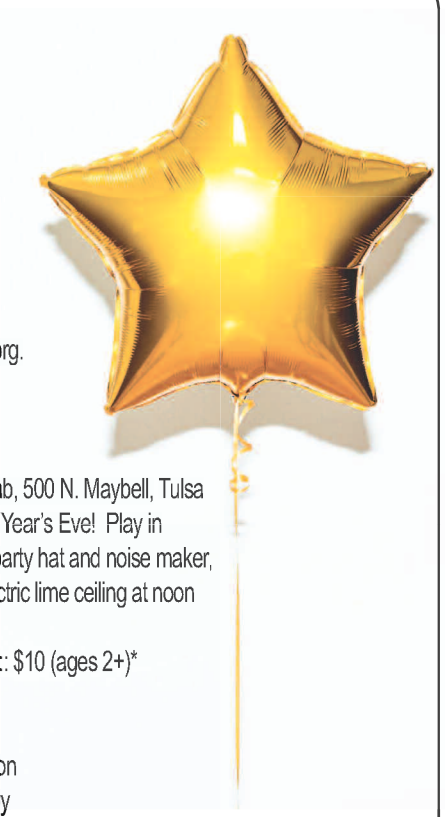
24 | SATURDAY

See sidebars for on-going activities.

25 | SUNDAY

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

NEW YEAR'S EVE



NEW YEAR'S SPLASH
When: Saturday, December 31; 10 a.m.-noon
Where: Oklahoma Aquarium,
300 Aquarium Dr., Jenks
Trashformation! Come transform trash into treasure, and swim away with a prize if your treasure is voted best at this annual event.
For more information, go to www.okaquarium.org.

NOON YEAR'S EVE AT DISCOVERY LAB
When: Saturday, December 31: 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
Where: Tulsa Children Museum's Discovery Lab, 500 N. Maybell, Tulsa
Ring in the new year at Discovery Lab on New Year's Eve! Play in the museum with your family, make your own party hat and noise maker, and catch the balloons as they fall from the electric lime ceiling at noon on December 31. Tickets are on sale now.
Cost: Members: $8 (ages 2+)*, Non-members :: $10 (ages 2+)*

NEW YEAR'S EVE FOR EARLY BIRDS
When: Saturday, December 31; 10:30 a.m.-noon
Where: Bixby Library, 20 E. Breckenridge, Bixby
Not all children are able to stay awake until midnight, but they shouldn't miss all of the fun! There will be a New Year's Eve party to celebrate the new year early. Supplies are limited; registration is required. Call 918.549.7514 to register. For ages 3-10.

26 | MONDAY

See sidebars for on-going activities.

27 | TUESDAY

See sidebars for on-going activities.

28 | WEDNESDAY

TARC TEEN "CONNECTIONS" GROUP
This a social skills group for middle and high school students with Asperger's and high functioning autism. TARC Office, 2516 E 71st St, Suite A; 4:30-6 P.M.

29 | THURSDAY

CODING FOR TEENS: STAR WARS EDITION
{FREE} Learning to code can be intimidating. Where do you start? At your library of course! Join in for an introduction to computer coding with a "Star Wars" twist. Registration is required. Class size is limited to 10. Call 918.549.7323 to register. For ages 12-18. Central Library, 400 Civic Center; 2-4 p.m.

MINECRAFT GAMING {FREE}
Log in for free and play with friends. It's going to Registration is required: 918.549.7645. For teens. Rudisill Regional Library, 1520 N Hartford Ave.; 2-4 p.m.

TARC MOMS & DADS SUPPORT GROUP
This a support group for parents of children with developmental disabilities. The purpose is to nurture and support families dealing with challenges and share in the joy of raising children with developmental disabilities. TARC Office 2516 E 71st St, Suite A; 7-9 p.m.

30 | FRIDAY

LEGO AFTERNOON {FREE}
Learn new building ideas, partner with other children during team-building challenges and explore free building. Leave your LEGOS at home and come play with ours! For ages 5-12. Martin Regional Library, 2601 S Garnett Rd.; 1-2 p.m.

31 | SATURDAY

SEE SIDE BAR ABOVE.

SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION

WINTER BREAK CAMPS & ACTIVITIES

SoccerCity Tulsa

Dustin Knight
dustin@soccercitytulsa.com
5817 S. 118th E. Ave., Tulsa
918.249.0044
www.soccercitytulsa.com

Winter Break Dates:
December 22 & 23 – $45 per camper ($22.50 per day)
December 26 - 30 – $95 per camper ($19 per day)
January 2 & 3 – $45 per camper ($22.50 per day)

Don't want your kids to get "cabin fever" over the Winter Break?? WE HAVE YOUR SOLUTION!!!! Bring your kids to SoccerCity for one of our Winter Break Camps, ages 4 years to 15 years welcome. The groups will be divided among age and ability. Children should come ready to listen, learn and most of all, HAVE FUN!!
*Pricing can be pro-rated by the amount of days you wish to attend.

Tulsa Children's Museum

560 N. Maybelle Ave., Tulsa
918.295.8144
www.tulsachildrensmuseum.org

Winter Break Dates:
Cool Concoctions (Ages 4-5) December 22-23, 2016; Time: 9 a.m. - Noon
Cool Concoctions (Ages 6-8*) December 27-28, 2016; Time: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Cool Concoctions (Ages 9-12*) January 2-3, 2016; Time: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
*** Extended Care: 8:30 am - 5:30 pm**

Keep it cool during Winter Break with chemistry! Students will experiment with simple chemical r eactions to create slime, oobleck, elephant toothpaste, canister rockets, and more at the Tulsa Children's Museum. Call 918.295.8144 or visit www.tulsachildrensmuseum.org today!

SSB Kids!

1700 N. Redbud Pl., Broken Arrow
918.258.5437
info@ssbkids.com
ssbkids.com

Winter Break Dates: December 21 - January 3
Camp times are 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Extended day programs are also available.

When school is closed SSB Kids is open for camp. For over 20 years, we have had the largest variety of climbing, jumping and tumbling facility in the region. Camp serves ages 3 to 12, no couch potatoes please! This place is full of movement and fun learning. Camps include inflatable jumping, sports, gymnastics, computer time, library, crafts, music, cookie and ice cream bars, devotion time and swim lessons (summers only). Our awesome staff comes back year after year to give your children positive and memorable experiences.This year camp themes include: Christmas Talent, Disney Christmas, Christmas Circus and Pajamas at the gym.



FREE MOVIES

Warren Theatre Holiday Series

- Where: Broken Arrow Warren Theatre; 1700 W. Aspen Creek Dr., Broken Arrow
- Saturday, December 3 at 10 a.m. – Miracle on 34th Street
- Saturday, December 3 at 10 a.m. – How the Grinch Stole Christmas
- Saturday, December 10 at 10 a.m. – It's a Wonderful Life
- Saturday, December 10 at 10 a.m. – Elf

Tickets will be free for the public and there will be a limited number available. All seating will be reserved. Doors will open at 9 a.m. with all shows starting at 10 a.m. There will be special appearances from costumed characters as well as a visit from Santa before the shows on December 3 and 10.

"The Santa Clause"

- When: Saturday, December 10; 2-4 p.m.
- Where: Bixby Library, 20 E. Breckenridge, Bixby

Enjoy free popcorn, hot chocolate and glow sticks while watching the popular movie "The Santa Clause" (rated PG). Bring your bean bag chairs, blankets or whatever makes you comfortable. For all ages.

Holiday Movies at Connor's Cove

- Wednesday, December 14; 6-8 p.m.: The Muppet Christmas Carol (rated G)
- Saturday, December 17; 2-4 p.m.: Arthur Christmas" (rated PG)
- Thursday, December 22; 2-4 p.m.: Elf (rated PG)
- Where: Connor's Cove at Hardesty Regional Library, 8316 E. 93rd St., Tulsa

Connor's Cove invites the public to come enjoy some free holiday classics.

Holiday Movie Night

- When: Thursday, December 15; 6-7 p.m.
- Where: Charles Page Library, 551 E. Fourth St., Sand Springs

Join in for the 1964 stop-motion animated television special "Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer." For all ages.

Winter Break Movie: "BFG

- When: Thursday, Dec. 29 • 2-3:30 p.m.
- Where: Owasso Library, 103 W. Broadway, Owasso

Join in for a showing of "The BFG" (rated PG).

Movie Afternoon @ the Library

- When: Thursday, December 29; 1-3 p.m.
- Where: Martin Regional Library, 2601 S Garnett Rd.

Join in for an afternoon at the movies, featuring "Zootopia." Rated PG. For all ages.



The Tulsa Ballet's The Nutcracker at the Tulsa Performing Arts Center

Transiberian Orchestra

- When: Thursday, December 1; 7:30 p.m.; Where: BOK Center

Trans-Siberian Orchestra will be performing a best of the Christmas trilogy show, "The Ghosts of Christmas Eve." To find out more, go to www.bokcenter.com.

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever

- When: Dec. 1- 4, 8-11, 2016; Where: Henthorne Performing Arts Center, 4825 S. Quaker Ave., Tulsa

The Herdmans never go to church. So how did they end up with the lead roles in the Christmas play? Chance, intimidation and maybe a little Christmas magic help bring the Herdmans as well as the rest of the town, to a new understanding of the holiday season. For more go to www.clarkyouththeatre.com.

Christmas Favorites: Michael W. Smith & Amy Grant

- When: Saturday, December 3; 7 p.m.; Where: BOK Center, Tulsa

KXOJ presents Christmas with Michael W. Smith and Amy Grant featuring Tulsa Symphony Orchestra with special guest Jordan Smith of NBC's The Voice. For more information, go to www.bokcenter.com.

A Children's Nutcracker

- When: Saturday, December 3 at 2 p.m., 7 p.m. and Sunday, December 4 at 2 p.m.;
- Where: Union Performing Arts Center

Presented by South Tulsa Children's Ballet, this heartwarming performance is a seasonal classic. A magical yuletide gift for all ages. For more information, go to www.southtulsachildrensballet.org.

TSO Pops: Home for the Holidays

- When: Dec. 2 at 7:30 p.m., Dec. 4 at 2:30 p.m.; Where: Tulsa PAC, 110 E. 2nd St., Tulsa

Tulsa's newest holiday tradition unites Tulsa Symphony, Tulsa Oratorio Chorus and area high school choirs to bring families and community together in a celebratory musical extravaganza.
Find more at www.tulsapac.com.

A Christmas Carol

- When: Dec. 8-9, 13-16, 19-23 at 7:30 p.m.; Dec. 10-11, 17-18 at 2 p.m.; Where: Tulsa Performing Arts Center, 110 E. 2nd St.

Follow Ebenezer Scrooge in his journey from Christmas curmudgeon to holiday celebrant as told through delightful song and dance in a world of Victorian costumes and settings.
Find more information at www.tulsapac.com.

A Christmas Story

- When: Friday, December 9 at 7:30 p.m; Saturday, December 10 at 2 and 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, December 11 at 2 and 7:30 p.m.; Where: Encore! Tulsa, 1511 S. Delaware Ave.

Encore! Tulsa takes on this holiday classic that tells the story of nine-year-old Ralphie Parker who wants only one thing for Christmas: a Red Ryder Carbine Action 200-shot Range Model air rifle with a compass in the stock and "this thing which tells time" (a sundial). For more information, go to www.encore-tulsa.com.

Tulsa Ballet's The Nutcracker

- When: Dec. 10-11, 17-18 at 2 p.m.; Dec. 16-17, 22-23 at 7 p.m.; Where: Tulsa Performing Arts Center, 110 E. 2nd St.

A young girl's fantasy unfolds in this remarkable production that mixes the visuals of a Broadway show with the heartwarming story of a fairytale Christmas. More than 100 local children join the professional company to help the larger-than-life Mouse King battle the Nutcracker Prince and his toy soldier brigade. New elements that premiered in 2012, including a brand new opening party scene and the return of beloved character Mother Ginger, return again.
Find out more information on www.tulsapac.com.

David Phelps Christmas

- When: Monday, December 12; 7:30 p.m.
- Where: Broken Arrow PAC, 701 S. Main St., Broken Arrow

A graduate from Baylor University, David Phelps is credited among today's most spectacular voices. Find more at www.brokenarrowpac.com.

Elf, Jr.

- When: Dec. 16 at 7:30 p.m.; Dec. 17 at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., Dec. 18 at 2 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.
- Where: Tulsa Performing Arts Center, 110 E. 2nd St.

The modern holiday hit comes to the stage! When Buddy the accidental elf goes to NYC to find his father, he discovers he has to revive the spirit of Christmas.

Red Dirt Christmas

- When: Friday, December 16; 7 pm.
- Where: Cain's Ballroom, 423 N. Main St.

Local musicians The Red Dirt Rangers and John Fullbright will perform at this annual holiday concert.
Find more at www.cainsballroom.com. title song.



HOLIDAY FAMILY FUN

LIGHTS

Chandler Park Lights on the Hill

- When: Friday, December 2 - Sunday, December 2 (Friday, Saturday and Sunday); Dusk-9 p.m.
- Where: Chandler Park, 6500 W. 21st Street

Take your loved ones for a drive through three miles of bright lights and whimsical displays in celebration of Christmas. For more information, go to www.parks.tulsacounty.org.

Woolaroc's Wonderland of Lights

- When: Every Friday, Saturday and Sunday, November 27 through December 20; 5-9 p.m.
- Where: State Hwy 123, 12 miles south of Bartlesville.

Woolaroc's Wonderland of Lights invites visitors to enjoy wagon rides across the grounds covered with more than 750,000 lights. For more information, visit www.woolaroc.org or call 918-336-0307, ext 10.

Castle of Muskogee's Holiday Inflatables

- When: Open Thanksgiving through New Year's Eve 2015; 6 p.m.-10 p.m.
- Where: The Castle of Muskogee, 3400 West Fern Mountain Rd., Muskogee

Enjoy over 2000 Holiday Inflatables all in one location. The Castleton Village is lit up with scenes made from your favorite holiday inflatables. Thousands of additional lights have been added to this amazing event. This event is free, but donations are accepted. Find more on www.okcastle.com.

Rhema Christmas Lights

- When: Thanksgiving Eve through New Year's Day; 5:30-11:30 p.m.
- Where: Rhema Bible Church, 1025 W. Kenosha, Broken Arrow

There are several ways to view the display -you can drive around the Rhema campus, walk around campus and through the park, or take a carriage (weather permitting). Rhema's Christmas lights display provides a safe, peaceful, and fun atmosphere in which people can enjoy the Christmas season.

Garden of Lights Festival

- When: Thanksgiving - New Year's Day; Sunday-Thursday: 5:30-10 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays: 5:30-11 p.m.; Where: Honor Heights Park, N Honor Heights Dr., Muskogee

Drive through Honor Heights Park and view 120 acres of trees, bushes and water areas decorated for the holiday season. Experience animated displays and more than 1 million shimmering lights while driving through the park.

River Lights

- When: Saturday, December 3; 3-5 p.m.; Where: Riverparks 41st St. Plaza, 41 & Riverside.

Featuring live music for all ages, River Lights is the perfect place to get into the holiday spirit. Free food and beverages will be on hand for everyone, and admission is also free!

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

The Eastern Flyer Polar Express

- When: November: 18-20, 23, 25-27, 29-30 and December: 1-23; Times*: 11 a.m., 1 p.m., 3 p.m., 5:30 p.m., 7:30 p.m. *not all dates have all departure times;
- Where: 400 E. 10th Ave. in Stillwater, OK

Set to the sounds of the motion picture soundtrack, passengers will relive the magic of the story as they are whisked away on THE POLAR EXPRESS™. Once onboard, hot chocolate and treats are served as passengers read along with the classic children's book, The Polar Express, by Chris Van Allsburg. Santa and his helpers greet passengers at the North Pole and then board the train, where each child is given the first gift of Christmas – a silver sleigh bell. .

Philbrook Festival

- When: Saturday, November 19 - Saturday, December 31 (Find specific events below.)
- Where: Philbrook Museum of Art, 2727 S. Rockford Road

Tour the beautifully decorated gardens and museum, which comes alive with artworks, trees and gingerbread houses created by local artists and school children for sale in time for holiday gift giving. All proceeds support year-round educational programs and Museum operations. For more information, visit www.philbrook.org/festival.

Philbrook Second Saturdays: Saturday, December 10 (Free and open to the public)

$5 After 5 Festival Nights: Experience the glowing gardens from the Terrace to the Tempietto with tens of thousands of lights. Adults $5, Philbrook members and children 17 and younger are free. Dates: Thursday, December 1, Thursday, December 8, Thursday, December 15, Thursday, December 22, Saturday, December 24 and Thursday, December 29

Tulsa Winterfest

- When: When: Friday, November 25, 2016 - Sunday, January 15, 2017
- Where: Third St. between Denver & Frisco, just outside the BOK Center

Skate under the skyline on the 60' x 150' frozen ice rink this season on Third Street. Bring your own skates or rent them at the festival. Spectators can watch all the action from the climate-controlled warming tent adjacent to the ice rink.

Bethlehem Walk at Christview Christian Church

- When: December 1 & 2 at 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. and December 3 & 4 at 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.
- Where: Christview Christian Church, 2525 S. Garnett

The Bethlehem Walk is a free 45-minute guided outdoor walk through a realistic nativity with live camels, donkeys and sheep in an authentic outdoor setting with a lighted pathway. Guests become participants in the experience as they travel through Bethlehem. Free. Large groups are welcome. For information or reservations, call 918.232.3587 or visit www.christview.org.

Christmas Unwrapped
- When: When: Friday, November 25, 2016 - Friday, December 23; times vary
- Where: Bristow Train Depot, 1 Burlington Northern Railroad, Bristow

Step through the portal into the North Pole and take an up-close, behind the scenes look at Christmas preparations. Meet fun, quirky characters and embark on an adventure to help Santa's elves solve a mystery and save Christmas. Maybe if you're lucky you'll get a peek at the Big Man himself. Find out more at www.bristowchamber.org.

Carols and Crumpets an Herbal Wonderland
- When: Saturday, December 3; 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.
- Where: Tulsa Garden Center, 2435 S. Peoria

Come and experience the sights, smells, and sounds of the upcoming Holiday season at Carols and Crumpets, the annual herbal craft fair sponsored by the Tulsa Herb Society. Tulsa Herb Society members spend the year crafting unique items. Other vendors will offer live wreaths, mosaic garden items, hypertufa pots, original art/cards, fused glass vases, glass and stoneware dishes, herbal soaps and spices, native crafts, garden sculpture, handmade clothing and jewelry, Chalkware, and vintage merchandise. Admission to Carols and Crumpets is free.

Christkindlmarkt
- When: Friday, December 2; 10 a.m.-7 p.m.; Saturday, December 3; 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sunday, December 4; Noon-5 p.m.
- Where: German American Society of Tulsa (GAST), 15th and Terrace Dr.., Tulsa

Cities and towns throughout Germany, feature Christkindlmarkt, a Christmas Market during December. These outdoor markets are usually set up somewhere in the heart of the city and decked out in seasonal splendor. For more information go to www.gastulsa.org.

Cascia Christmas Walk
- When: Sunday, December 4; 11 a.m.-4 p.m.
- Where: Cascia Hall, 2520 S. Yorktown Ave., Tulsa

Besides the homes, visitors can enjoy shopping from over 60 vendors at the Cascia Christmas Boutique and enjoy lunch at the Cascia Bistro. Santa and his elves will be available for photos. Tickets may be purchased in advance for $15 by visiting www.casciahall.com or the Cascia School offices, or the day of the event at the school for $20.

Castle of Muskogee's Christmas Kingdom
- When: Open Thanksgiving through New Year's Eve; 6 p.m.-10 p.m.
- Where: The Castle of Muskogee, 3400 West Fern Mountain Rd., Muskogee

Take a hayride or a carriage ride through the Village, or ride the ponies or the camel (all weather permitting). Don't miss the petting zoo. Make ornaments in Santa's workshop and warm up by the fireplace. For more information, visit www.okcastle.com.

Betty Selakovich Casey Book Signing
- When: Friday, December 16; 4-6 p.m.
- Where: Barnes & Noble Southroads, 5231 E. 41st St., Tulsa

Get your copy of May Finds Her Way and That is a Hat signed by author, illustrator and TulsaKids Editor Betty Selokovich Casey.

Hardesty Holiday Festival
- When: Saturday, December 17; noon-5 p.m.
- Where: AHHA, 101 E. Archer St.

Head to the Arts & Humanities Council's Holiday festival where you and your family can enjoy holiday-themed children's art activities and more. To find out more, go to www.ahhatulsa.org.

Carson & Barnes Circus
- When: Saturday, December 3 at 4:30 & 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, December 4 at 1:30 & 4:30 p.m.; Where: Expo Square, Tulsa

This year the tent comes to life with acrobats and performers from around the world. Be amazed by the death defying daredevils racing their motorcycles at high speeds in the globe of death. Sit in awe as they reach new heights spinning on the wheel of death. Get lost in laughter at the comedy created by our famous clown "Pinky". Be swept away as the acrobats demonstrate strength and agility soaring to captivating heights. Fall in love with our four legged friends, the cuddly canines and high stepping Appaloosa stallions. Find more at www.carsonbarnescircus.com.

Christmas at the Mayo
- When: Sunday, December 11; 3-5 p.m.
- Where: Mayo Hotel, 115 W. 5th St., Tulsa

Bring your holiday cheer to the Grand Hall to enjoy music by The Tulsa Honors Orchestra, photos with Santa and seasonal food and drinks. It is free to attend and all proceeds go to benefit the Child Abuse Network. Find more information at www.mayohotelevents.com.

CHRISTMAS TREE FARMS

Owasso Christmas Tree and Blackberry Farm
- Where: 11039 N 129th East Ave. in Owasso
- When: Open Saturday, Nov 19 (Sat prior to Thanksgiving) through Thursday, December 22. *Closed Thanksgiving day; Monday -Friday 1-7 p.m.; Saturday-Sunday: 9 a.m.-7 p.m.

The Owasso Tree and Berry Farm is a great place to find your special holiday tree. Whether you choose to cut your own Virginia Pine, or purchase a #1 Premium Grade or #1 Grade Noble Fir, Douglas Fir, Grand Fir or Fraser Fir, it is sure to be a tradition to cherish. Find out more at www.owassotreefarm.com.

Pleasant Valley Farms
- Where: 22350 W. 71st S., Sand Springs
- When: Open the day after Thanksgiving; weekends through Christmas Eve, 9 a.m. -7 p.m.

Bring the old time feel of Christmas back into your family's traditional celebration with the help of Pleasant Valley Farm. Wander through the rows of expertly trimmed Virginia Pine Christmas trees until you find the centerpiece of your holiday decor or browse our selection of imported, precut Fir trees. Use one of their saws to fell your tree or request the help of one of our Pleasant Valley woodsmen. Find more at www.pleasantvalleyfarmsok.com .

PARADES

Broken Arrow Civitans Christmas Parade
- When: Saturday, December 3; 10 a.m., Where: Main Street, Broken Arrow

"A Star Spangled Christmas" Claremore Christmas Parade
- When: Saturday, December 10 at 6 p.m., Where: Will Rogers Blvd. & Historic Downtown

"Christmas Cheer of Yesteryear" Tulsa Christmas Parade
- When: Saturday, December 10; 6 p.m.; Where: Downtown Tulsa

"A Storybook Christmas Parade" Sapulpa Christmas Parade
- When: Saturday, December 10; 6-8 p.m., Where: Taft & Main St.



BY NATALIE MIKLES

Gilcrease Museum's Chocolate Exhibit **is decadent holiday cooking inspiration**

My children may be young but they are already chocolate connoisseurs.

It's little wonder, really. I've stashed Ghirardelli bars, chocolate almonds and M&Ms since they were old enough to sniff it out. And they know exactly where their dad's stash is – on the top shelf of the refrigerator. Yes, the refrigerator. I've told him his chocolate license should be revoked.

Nevertheless, my chocolate-loving family was happy to make a trip to the Gilcrease Museum for Chocolate: The Exhibition, which comes to Tulsa through the Field Museum in Chicago.

Mark Dolph, Gilcrease's associate curator of history, said the universal appeal of chocolate makes the exhibit both fun and engaging for all ages. Dolph said every exhibit needs a hook, and with this one, it's easy.

"You need a hook, and the hook is chocolate. And you need a good story, and that story is chocolate," Dolph said.

This is the story of human interaction with chocolate, which began about 3,000 years ago, and the implications of that interaction from the aspects of biology, ecology, culture and history. I was surprised to learn it was just about 160 years ago that chocolate became something to eat. Before that, it was primarily consumed as a drink.



From the first gallery room, children will be entranced, first by the replica of a cacao tree. Children can touch a cacao pod, listen to the sounds of the rainforest and use touch screens to learn about animals and insects living near the cacao trees.

Dolph said one of the most fascinating aspects of the exhibit is learning about the cacao tree itself, which only grows in a few places on earth, near the equator.

"It grows in the rainforest, but has to have a canopy of trees to provide shade," Dolph said.

The exhibit is an all-senses experience, with the favorite of many being the smell of chocolate at the end of the exhibit. Dolph hopes that smell will lead visitors to the gift shop where they can buy chocolate, including from Glacier Confection in Tulsa.

But before you get that far, you'll travel through gallery rooms of chocolate art objects, education on historical significance and a fun presentation of nostalgic chocolate advertising, much of which was directed toward children.

I loved looking at all of the useful, but beautiful, objects used in the making of chocolate and chocolate products. There are tools used for grinding beans, ceremonial vessels used by the Mayans and Aztecs for drinking chocolate, and in more recent history, chocolate pots used by the European elite for warming and drinking chocolate.

Dolph said he's watched many children, and adults enjoy an area of the exhibit that helps

continued next page



you understand the value of the cacao bean in relation to other items. How much is a cacao bean worth compared to a tomato, a pepper, etc.? Children will have to use a bit of math to come up with the correct answers.

The exhibit will certainly leave you with a better understanding of what it takes to go from cacao pod to a Hershey bar.

In the last gallery room, you can take a family selfie sitting on chocolate stools with a giant box of chocolates.

Chocolate: The Exhibition runs through Jan. 8, in time for those on winter break to visit before or after the holidays.

Dolph reminded me it's also a good time for "one last chocolate fling," before making New Year's resolutions, which may or may not include chocolate.

Try these recipes to indulge your family's chocolate fling:

I usually make hot chocolate with a mix, but this version is even better.

Chocolate Bar Hot Chocolate

Makes 1 cup

- 1 regular-size milk chocolate bar (such as Hershey's), chopped
- 2/3 cup milk
- Pinch of cinnamon

On medium-low heat, warm chocolate bar with milk and cinnamon. Whisk until melted. Add more milk as needed. Top with whipped cream and mini chocolate chips.

Top these frosted brownies with festive sprinkles, and share with neighbors and friends.

Holiday Brownies

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 2 cups sugar
- 4 eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 6 tablespoons baking cocoa
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

Frosting:

- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 1/4 cup evaporated milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 tablespoons baking cocoa
- 3 cups powdered sugar
- Candy sprinkles

In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in vanilla. Combine the flour, cocoa, baking powder and salt. Add flour mixture to creamed mixture and mix well.

Spread into a greased 9-by-13-inch baking pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 25-30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean.

For frosting, beat the butter, milk and vanilla, then add the cocoa. Gradually beat in powdered sugar until smooth. Once brownies are cool, spread with frosting and decorate with candy sprinkles.

Roll these truffles in toasted coconut, nuts, sprinkles or cocoa powder.

Dark Chocolate Truffles

- 1/3 cup heavy cream
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into pieces
- 1 3/4 cups bittersweet chocolate chips
- 1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder (to roll truffles in)

Bring cream to a simmer in a small saucepan. Add the butter, and stir until melted. Add the chocolate chips, stirring until completely melted and smooth. Remove from heat, and pour into a bowl. Cool slightly, then refrigerate until firm, at least 2 hours.

Use a spoon or cookie scoop to roll into 1-inch balls. Roll each ball in cocoa powder. If you don't like cocoa powder, roll truffles in powdered sugar, toasted pecans or coconut or colorful sprinkles. You can refrigerate these truffles for about 2 weeks.

Chocolate: The Exhibition
Runs through January 8.
Gilcrease is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesdays through Sundays, except Christmas Day.
Admission is $8 for adults and free for children 18 and younger.
Admission is free to all on the first Tuesday of the month and the third Sunday of each month for Funday Sunday.

BY BETSY PENTURF

The Mothers Group: giving every child a chance

Because one young mother had a desire to build community for her son, Tulsa-area children are reaping the benefits almost 30 years later. This mother's idea grew to become The Mothers Group Inc., a nonprofit organization of women in the Tulsa area committed to enriching the lives of children through educational, cultural and social initiatives.

"What led me to create The Mothers Group in 1988 was a yearning to build a sense of family and community for my young son," said Brenda Lloyd-Jones, Ph.D., the group's founder and OU professor. "As relatively recent residents of Tulsa, my husband and I shared a common desire for our then toddler son to develop friendships with other children who lived in Tulsa, especially in light of the absence of our own relatives in Oklahoma. While a student in the Ph.D. program of Education Administration and Research at the University of Tulsa, I became friends with a wonderful woman who was the mother of adorable young twin girls. I asked her to join me in convening a group of women to discuss important issues related to children's development and overall wellbeing. The first group meeting lead to more group discussions, and The Mothers Group emerged out of several informative, lively and enjoyable discussions with other professional women. The Group members all held and continue to hold today a common passion for the educational and social-cultural flourishing of children."



CHILDREN ARE INVITED TO VISIT SANTA AND MRS. CLAUS AT THE GREENWOOD CULTURAL CENTER DEC. 3, 2016.

The Mothers Group is comprised of a group of strong, educated women who are committed to fostering an educational, cultural and inspiring presence in the lives of underserved children in their community.

"The women who compose the Mothers Group Inc. have essentially become my family members," Lloyd-Jones said. "Many of them I have known for over 25 years, and they all have a heart for the wellbeing of children. In underserved communities, children often experience well-intentioned community initiatives that are 'here today and gone tomorrow.' The Mothers Group members' commitment to meeting the desires of community children through the Santa Community Project has immensely strengthened my confidence in the power of collaboration, consistency and change."

One of the group's members is Carmela Hill, mother of three, grandmother of five and senior community relations specialist at Williams. She has served on numerous boards and organizations that strengthen women, families and the community in Tulsa over the past 20 years.

"As a single mom of three, The Mothers Group aligns with my personal beliefs of giving every child a chance to excel in life through making literacy and education important priorities in

continued next page

their foundational years. I've done this with my own family and find it rewarding to serve with an organization that aligns so closely with my passions," Hill said. "I'm honored to work with fellow leaders like Dr. Brenda Lloyd-Jones whose vision for serving Tulsa's kids through literacy continues to thrive."

Another member of the group, Joyce McClellan, Ed.D., chief development and diversity officer at Tulsa Tech, knows the importance of supporting and encouraging literacy in the community. One of the major events sponsored by the group is the annual Santa Project at the Greenwood Cultural Center. Children can share their Christmas wishes with a black Santa and Mrs. Claus, while enjoying holiday entertainment provided by local school, church and community performers. Each child will receive a book as a gift.

"The Mothers Group members are all committed to inspiring, elevating and promoting education," McClellan said. "I love sharing the joy of cuddling up with a favorite book. Our goal is for every child that visits to leave with a book that engages their imagination and intensifies their creativity."

Sharing the gift of literacy is at the heart of The Mothers Group's mission.

"At no cost to their family, children have an opportunity to visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus, pose for a complimentary photo with the Clauses, select an age-appropriate, gift-wrapped book, apply for a library card and be entertained as well as inspired by some of the best talent in the Tulsa community," said group member Yvonne Holmes, a retired corporate human resources manager whose former employer provides matching donations that help buy books.

The Santa Project actually happened by chance. A year after starting The Mothers Group, Lloyd-Jones was attending a genealogy lecture at Rudisill North Regional Library. While waiting to



check out library materials, she overheard a young girl ask her mother to drive her to a mall in south Tulsa to have her picture taken with Santa.

"The mother reluctantly said, 'No' after citing the long travel distance and high price of gasoline as reasons for her response. I was moved by the little girl's disappointment, and in that moment I thought about inviting Santa to visit with children in their community," Lloyd-Jones said. "I shared my observation of the mother and daughter and my subsequent idea about Santa visiting children in their own community with members of The Mothers Group. Shortly thereafter, the first Santa Community Project came to fruition at Rudisill Library. To our amazement, standing room only crowds of children filled the library. Within a few years, we transitioned the Santa Community Project to the Greenwood Cultural Center to accommodate the growing number of children and their families."

For Holmes, the Santa Project is a family affair – her daughter has provided entertainment and her granddaughter has volunteered at the event. Holmes has worked at the book table the past two years.

"The smiles on their faces after selecting a book are heartwarming. It's so rewarding to know that while Santa Day is a once-a-year event, the impact of giving a book is a life-long investment in promoting reading," Homes said. "I reflect back on something I shared with my son when he was in grade school and trying to assemble a small table without reading the instructions. After watching his frustration, I said, 'David, if you can read, you can do anything.' He immediately pulled out the instructions, began reading them and the table was assembled in a matter of minutes. To this day, he remembers those words, and I have heard him repeat them to kids."

Melissa Jones-Chunu, a music instructor at Booker T. Washington High School, has two young children who enjoy attending the Santa Project event.

"I remember my mom telling me about the Santa Project years ago. This event was a fun event for children and adults who attended. There was lots of dancing and singing and Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus – quite an exciting atmosphere. I now take my kids to this event," Jones-Chunu said. "The variety of talent that is present is amazing and my children truly enjoy the performances. I especially like the fact that books are given out to children and they are able to apply for a library card. I appreciate the Mothers Group for impacting their community in a positive manner by recognizing that literacy is an important component to student achievement with both short-term and long-term goals."

Since it was established in 1989, the Santa Project has attracted more than 20,000 children.

"The Santa Project has developed into a finely tuned production – an event larger than my personal vision. I describe the Santa Community Project as a gift of love to the Tulsa community from The Mothers Group Inc. While the Santa Community Project focuses on books and reading for children, it simultaneously features the importance of creating cheerful memories through photographs with the Clauses," Lloyd-Jones said. "According to research, photographs have therapeutic value. Therefore, I trust that the photos we give the participants will provide comfort during painful times, a feeling of stability during turbulent times and a sense of belonging during times of separation. From my perspective, The Mothers Group Inc. documents happy memories of families with Santa and Mrs. Claus, which instills pride and boosts self-esteem in children who attend the function."

"It is always so heartwarming to spread the joy of the Christmas season through books," McClellan added.

Santa Community Project
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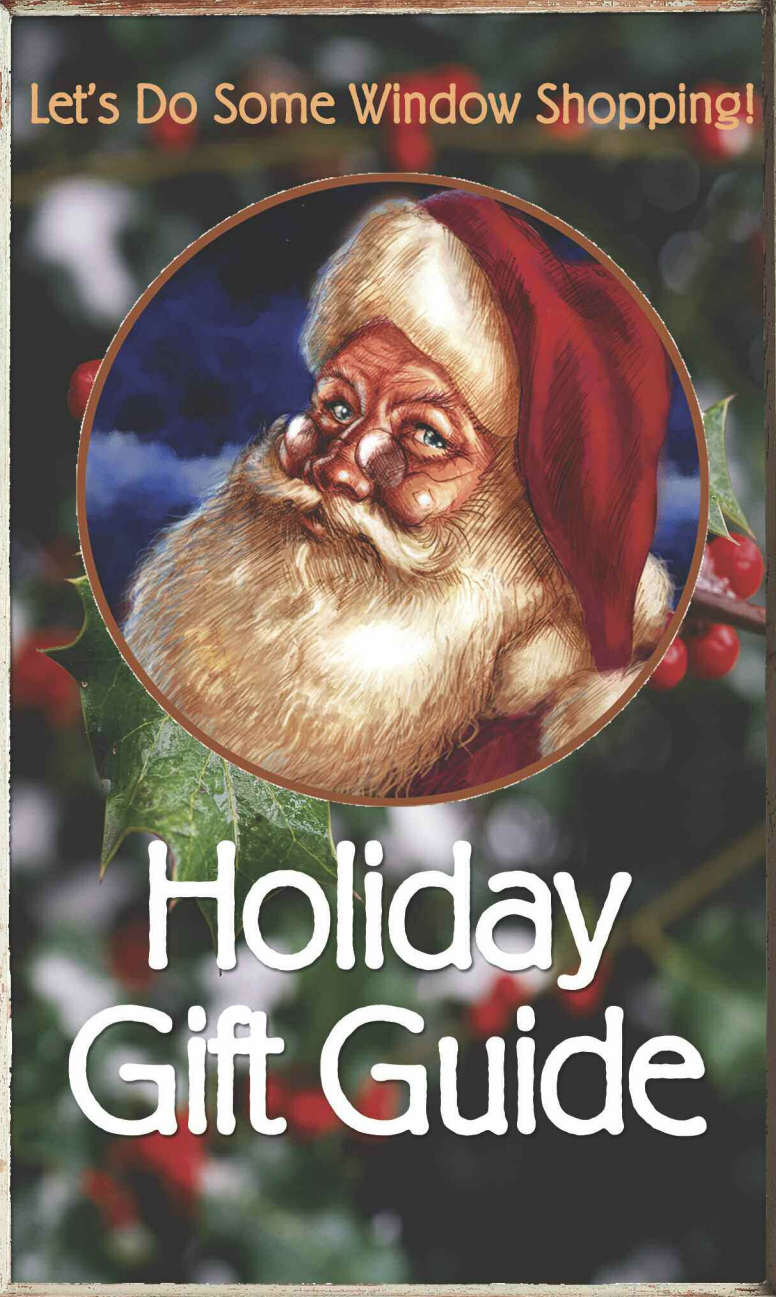
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BY MALIA JACOBSON

enjoy the present: help kids give with joy

Parenthood gives the term "generosity" a whole new meaning, especially around the holidays. As parents, we enjoy giving to our children (even when it involves building a three-level dollhouse with a working elevator at 12:47 a.m. on December 25). But our children may not always receive gifts with grace, or give with a generous spirit. Here's a guide to raising kids who give from the heart.

Elementary years 6-12
Give and take

As school-age kids become more aware of and interested in material possessions, parents can take steps to prevent an avalanche of "I want!" from burying the entire season. When kids start dreaming up their own most-wanted gift list, promote a balanced sense of give-and-take by asking kids to write down what they plan to give to others, enlisting siblings in "secret" missions to uncover a brother or sister's toy wishes, and asking kids to help plan a homemade holiday gift to give to neighbors and teachers.

As school friendships blossom, holiday gifting can stir up hurt feelings (who hasn't experienced the embarrassment of a one-sided gift exchange?). If a child gives a gift to a friend but doesn't receive one in return, embrace the teachable moment, says Greensboro, North Carolina parent coach Auria Chamberlain, LCSW. "Begin with an open dialogue with the child, and acknowledge feelings of being upset. Help your child remember the joy she gets from the friendship, and remind her that a present isn't given with an expectation of getting one back."



"When kids start dreaming up their own most-wanted gift list, promote a balanced sense of give-and-take by asking kids to write down what they plan to give to others..."

Teen years 13-18
Giving spirit

Teens can and should take responsibility for planning and buying gifts with their own money. In fact, doing so is central to becoming mature, thoughtful givers. Paying for the gifts teens give others, micromanaging what they buy, or simply writing their name on a present they had no part in picking out undermines their investment—and enjoyment—in the holiday season.

Volunteering with teens is a fun, meaningful way to shift the holiday spotlight off gifts and onto helping others. A teen can helm an "adopt a family" project at home, school, or church, or help bake cookies or sort clothes and toys to donate to a local shelter. Teens can plan a day to prepare holiday cards and care packages for overseas military or less-fortunate members of their local community, says Chaimberlain. "Giving to charity weaves a deeper meaning into the holidays, and helps kids appreciate all they've been given, whether the gifts are big or small."

Malia Jacobson is a nationally published journalist and mom of three. Her latest book is Sleep Tight, Every Night: Helping Toddlers and Preschoolers Sleep Well Without Tears, Tricks, or Tirades.

I'M A TULSA KID

BY SHEEBA ATIQI

PHOTO CREDIT: OH SNAP! PHOTOGRAPHY

Maya Jacob Visits the White House

Dinner at the White House with First Lady Michelle Obama is something not all can say they have done. Maya Jacob, age 10, a student at Immanuel Lutheran Christian Academy in Broken Arrow, can share her story for years to come. Maya is the recipient of the First Lady Michelle Obama's healthy lunch contest and had the opportunity to break bread with the First Lady in Washington, D.C.

TK: When and how did you start cooking?
Maya: I started showing interest when I was 5. Just watching my mom and dad cook in the kitchen and wanted to help them get dinner ready or other stuff.

TK: What inspires your recipes?
Maya: When I feel hungry I feel like cooking and creating my own recipes. Also, my brothers who are special needs can only eat certain foods, which help decrease their seizures, and I like to help my mom create new recipes that are also tasty for them.

TK: How did you feel when you won the First Lady's healthy lunch recipe contest?
Maya: I was super excited and couldn't believe it!

TK: How did you feel representing the state of Oklahoma at the White House?
Maya: It was an honor to be selected to represent my state, and I wanted to make sure I did a good job representing my state. I wanted my state to be proud of me.

TK: Did you get the chance to meet First Lady Michelle Obama? How was that experience?
Maya: Yes, the White House dinner was hosted by the First Lady. We got to meet her and she talked to me and my dad for a few minutes, and we took a picture with her! She was super kind and really tall! She loved my dress and even asked where she could get one in her size.

TK: How was your experience at the White House?
Maya: It was incredible! It's something I will never forget. It was really neat to meet kids from each state that enjoyed cooking as much as me. And so fun to see all their recipes. They had a great pre-dinner show with the Jungle Book performers from Disneyland there. I also got to meet our State Senators and Congressmen. That was really cool! They were all really nice and gave me state coins as souvenirs.

TK: What was something you learned during this experience?
Maya: The First Lady spoke about inspiring other kids to eat healthy, and I wanted to do this. If you start eating healthy at a young age, it becomes a habit and that's a good thing! Also, it's important to give back to your community and help others. This inspires me to educate other children to make healthy choices, too, when it comes to eating.

TK: Do you have any advice for other young chefs?
Maya: Don't be afraid to try new foods. It's fun to create your own recipes. Healthy foods can also be very tasty!

TK: What are your plans for the future?
Maya: I would like to work with children with special needs. Maybe even a brain doctor (pediatric neurologist) to find a cure for seizures and also have a boutique shop on the side.

TK: What other hobbies do you have?
Maya: Singing, writing, gymnastics, riding my bike, creating crafts.

TK: Name a fun fact about yourself.
Maya: I have visited six countries this year. Australia, Ireland, England, Scotland, Mexico and, of course, the USA. I love travelling and being on airplanes.





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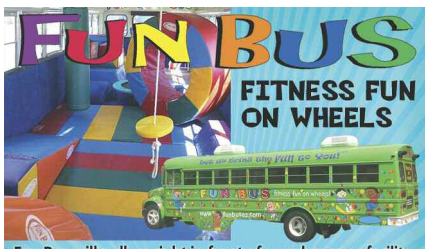
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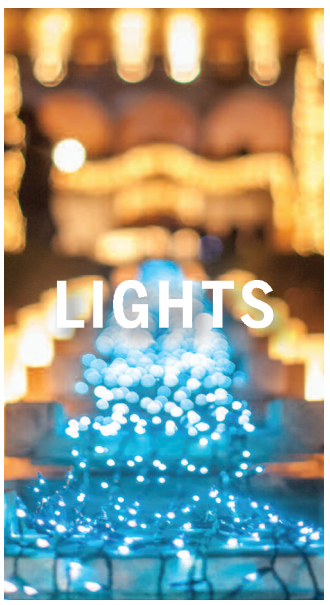
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