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**Publisher**  
Jennifer Allen

**Contributors**  
Darrell W. Brown  
Robin Raborn Burns  
Adrienne Cohen  
Lewis Delavan  
Mary Eliades  
Sandy Johansen  
Jeff Meek

**Advertising**  
Summer Benedict  
Kendall Kegley

**Design/Layout**  
Michael G. Fox

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*Hot Springs*  
**Village Voice**

PO Box 8508 • 3576 N. Hwy. 7  
Hot Springs Village, AR 71909

(501) 623-6397  
news@hsvvoice.com  
advertising@hsvvoice.com  
hsvvoice.com

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Hot Springs Village Voice

## Another year draws to a close in Hot Springs Village



The USS Arizona Memorial at Pearl Harbor.  
(Jeff Meek photo)

**D**ecember is the final chapter in the year 2024. We at the Hot Springs Village Voice hope it's been an exciting, blessed year for you. We can't talk about December without focusing on the upcoming holidays – Christmas and New Years.

This year Christmas comes on Wednesday, December 25. Prior to that day Santa Claus is finishing his last-minute preparations for all the children. That sleigh will again be packed with goodies.

Before Christmas comes the parties, the celebrations, the concerts by many of Hot Springs Village's fine choral and musical groups. They help us get into the spirit of Christmas with their singing and musical talents.

And there's Christmas Eve on the 24th. Gifts are placed under the Christmas tree, children (and adults) get excited, wondering what special item is inside that wrapping paper. Will it be that special item you've been wanting for months? Some families hand out gifts at this time, some wait until morning.

Christmas morning kids will check that plate of cookies and that



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glass of milk to see if Santa did in fact show up. Back up in Illinois where I grew up, we'd even peek outside to see if there were any reindeer tracks. Nope, but there might be up on the roof.

Amongst all the hoopla, lets hope we keep in mind the reason for the season, Christ's miraculous birth. As the saying goes, it's the reason for the season.

I can't write this without also mentioning December 7, 1941, "a date that will live in infamy," as President Franklin D. Roosevelt said. A day when approximately 2,300 lost their life and another 3,400 were injured. As you can tell by the November HSV Life magazine, we at the Voice share your appreciation of our military men and women in uniform. May they stay safe in the months to come.

**Jeff Meek**  
VOICE CORRESPONDENT

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**ON THE COVER:** Carol Friedman loves to bake, cook and decorate – and loves to share her creations with others. (Mary Eliades photo)

# *Christmas at the Capitol*

Arkansas State Capitol in Little Rock decked out for the holiday season.



Darrell W. Brown

This month in All Around Arkansas, I wanted to write about an Arkansas holiday tradition that's been in my family since I was a child — visiting the state Capitol in Little Rock to see the spectacular outdoor light display and beautiful decorations.

According to the Arkansas Secretary of State's office, the Capitol was first lit in 1939 by then-Secretary of State Crip Hall. A patient at nearby Children's Hospital wrote to Hall asking him to illuminate the

Capitol so he could see the lights from his room. Hall honored the boy's request and had a staff electrician rig strips of lights on metal that were then hung from the building's cupola. About 1,000 red and blue bulbs lit up the capitol dome. In 1940, the Capitol's Christmas lights were changed to all blue bulbs and loudspeakers were set up in the rotunda to play Christmas music.

The following year, a life size nativity scene was set up at the front entrance of the Capitol. The lights

were illuminated on Dec. 10. Just a few days earlier, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, marking the United States' entry into World War II. When asked by local reporters whether it was appropriate to decorate the Capitol in the wake of such an event, Hall said that in "such unusual times, the people of Arkansas needed to have a little reassuring normalness."

In 1942, as the war was in full swing, the lighting became a little more subdued with only colored flood lights on the dome. The nativity scene also took on a new look, featuring non-traditional figures such as a soldier, a sailor, a Marine and a Red Cross nurse standing guard over Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus.

The following year would mark the first time the exterior of the state Capitol was not lit since 1939. But some holiday decor remained; a 16-foot fir Christmas tree, sent by Arizona Gov. Sidney Osborne, was placed in the ground floor rotunda.

All holiday décor returned to the Capitol after the war's end in 1945. The dome was lit up, a live tree was set up in the rotunda and the nativity scene returned with the original figures. This would set the foundation for holiday celebrations at the state Capitol for decades to come. Unfortunately, in 1973, due to the worldwide energy crisis, the Capitol was not decorated. Thankfully, the lights returned to the building the following year.

From 1995 to 2002, the State Capitol grounds were decorated by local businessman Jennings Osborne, who was well known in central Arkansas for the massive light display at his home on Cantrell Road in Little Rock. Osborne, a close friend of then-Gov. Mike Huckabee, provided millions of twinkling white lights to the state free of charge. The lights on the Capitol dome were in constant motion, which gave the structure the nickname, "the Disco Dome." In 2006, the tree from the rotunda was moved after an extra-large tree knocked out parts of the Capitol's second floor marble railing. An artificial tree was substituted because of the fire hazards of a live tree, but a live tree returned in 2012.

The State Capitol lights and decorations are unveiled at a public lighting ceremony, which are accompanied by fireworks and a visit from Santa Claus, on the first Saturday in December. Throughout the holiday season, the Capitol is open from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. weeknights and 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. on weekends. These times are in effect until Jan. 2, when normal operating hours



Christmas tree in the Capitol rotunda.

resume. The Capitol is closed Christmas Day.

I wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

*A proud sixth-generation Arkansan, Darrell Brown is a lover of all things Arkansas. He lives in Saline County with his wife, Amy, and their Boston Terrier puppy named Tucker. Find him on Facebook and Instagram at AllAroundArkansas.*



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# FAITH FELLOWSHIP FOOD PANTRY

Faith Fellowship Food Pantry began serving the community in 2008. It's now the third-largest food pantry in Arkansas (Suzanne Sweeten photos)



Suzanne Sweeten  
VOICE  
CORRESPONDENT



Arkansas is currently ranked as the most food-insecure state in America. The situation is dire: one in five children sleeps hungry every night. Additionally, one in 13 seniors over the age of 60 experiences the same struggle, and one in six residents of Arkansas doesn't know where their next meal will come from.

Faith Fellowship Food Pantry gives away food twice monthly, on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month, from 9:00 a.m. to noon, by zip code only: the second Wednesday, zip codes 71901 and 71949; on the fourth Wednesday, zip codes 71909-71910-71913-71933 and 71956-71964-71968-72087. To qualify for a food box, one must provide a valid, original ID and place of residence, and no further questions are asked. It's as simple as that.

Jim Perry is the current director of Faith Fellowship

Food Pantry. He puts into practice Jesus' admonition in the Bible: If you know me, feed my sheep. "It's a real statistic, so we're just doing our part as a faith-based organization to offset some of this," he imparts.

On average, about 1,000 families are fed each month. The parking lot often fills up two or three times, accommodating around 250 cars, many of which have more than one family inside. Families drive up, verify their information, and then proceed through the distribution area, where two lanes operate simultaneously. It takes 30 volunteers to help on both days of the giveaways.

Perry elaborates: "Everyone receives a box of food that includes dry goods such as cookies, potato chips, baking items, cereal, and cereal bars. Additionally, the box contains microwaveable meals like spaghetti





A dedicated group of volunteers work together to ensure the needs of the community's residents, left to right Darren Bongo, Jan Deboer, Rick Triolo, Jim Perry, Director of Faith Fellowship Food Pantry, DeDee Phillips, and Steve Barnard.

dinners, fresh produce, fresh bread and pastries, and an equivalent of 15 pounds of meat products. We provide shelf-stable milk because it has a longer shelf life. We obtain this through the Arkansas Food Bank, and occasionally, Hiland Dairy supplies us with school milk due to overruns, though this does not happen very often."

In 2023, Faith Fellowship Food Pantry distributed 1,020,000 pounds of food, making it the third-largest food pantry in the state. FFFP operates as an agent for the Arkansas Food Bank, and both organizations collaborate with the Feeding America Program.

Perry details how FFFP manages to feed so many people in the area: "We have a team of two—one driver and one helper. They start at the South Central Walmart in Hot Springs, loading up whatever pallets

of goods they have. These include dry goods, deli items, fresh meats, dairy products, and produce. We do not distribute anything outdated or spoiled. While we encounter some spoilage that goes straight into garbage containers for disposal at the Garland County landfill.

"Next, we head over to Sam's Club. We collect most of what we need downtown between the Walmart and Sam's. We established a contract with the Supercenter on Albert Pike about a year and a half ago, which allows us to pick up an average of about six pallets from them. After that, we proceed to the HSV Walmart.

"People ask how we keep things fresh, I can explain. We have taken on Teen Challenge. Teen Challenge comes here on every one of these unloads. FFFP gives them our overage on bread, pastries, and produce. We can feed all of their students and staff three meals a day, seven days a week, every day of the year, and that's a lot of food.

"We also provide food to a big food pantry in Benton, about six to nine pallets a month. Project Hope in Hot Springs drops by on our off-giveaway days every other

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**Faith Fellowship  
Food Pantry  
distributed  
1,020,000  
pounds of food  
in 2023.**

Wednesday. And we load them up with four pallets of food. Nothing goes to waste.”

Perry says, “Nothing special is planned for Thanksgiving or Christmas because it would be so cost-prohibitive for us. We do have local establishments that donate hams and turkeys, but they come in haphazardly. With our operating expenses, if we purchase something or get something from one of the large stores downtown, we look at things in lots of 500; that way, everyone gets one of whatever

we take in.”

Brookshires has taken FFFP under their wing as the pantry it wants to serve as part of their community service. Brookshires starts around the second week of November, making up grocery bags. It equates to about 1000 bags of groceries, and they’re given out at Thanksgiving and Christmas. “They’ve been a blessing to us,” he relates.

There are many ways for the public to donate. In the past, area residents would call FFFP if a spouse



On each giveaway day, the parking lot can fill up two or three times. Approximately 250 cars drive through, and many of them have more than one family. (Submitted photo)

passed away, were moving or downsizing, and ask the pantry to pick up excess canned items and dry goods. FFFP can box food for people in the Village and take it to the pantry.

Perry talks about the finances of Faith Fellowship Food Pantry. “We’re running at \$65,000 cash that we need to keep our doors open. That includes diesel fuel, diesel repair, repairing industrial refrigerators, or replacing one. Donations and grants fund everything we operate here. Organizations and clubs like the Hot Springs Village Comm. Foundation, Lions, and Rotary Clubs account for \$8,000-\$9,000. The rest comes from local banks, businesses, churches, and individuals.

“This is called Faith Fellowship Church Food Pantry because our 501c3 nonprofit licenses through our church, but we call it a community pantry because 80 percent of those who come here to volunteer are from other churches. And some of the volunteers aren’t even churchgoers locally. Without all these other churches and volunteers, we couldn’t do what we do.”

For more information on Faith Fellowship Church Food Pantry, call Jim Perry at 501-282-6559 or email him at [jphsvar@gmail.com](mailto:jphsvar@gmail.com). To donate, mail your check or money order to Faith Fellowship Food Pantry, P.O. Box 8473, Hot Springs Village, AR 71910.

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# VILLAGE PEOPLE



Dean Jackson takes his turn.

## Looking for a '300'

*Dean Jackson still bowling in his 90s*

Lewis Delavan  
STAFF WRITER



Between the 10 pins and 8-balls, Villager Dean Jackson enjoys competing and socializing in his retirement years.

Typically he bowls and plays billiards four days weekly at Liberty Lanes, south of the West Gate.

"It beats sitting around at home," he quipped while waiting on the next set of pins.

His 92nd birthday was Nov. 24.

Working for what was then Northwestern Bell, Dean met his wife, Carolyn, in a Midwest dance hall.

They came to the Village around 14 years ago, and he enjoys the scenic beauty – and the opportunity to bowl and shoot pool on a regular basis.

"I used to be good – I had three 300s and two 299s." I'm not good any more, but I have a lot of fun," he said. Bowlers call a "300" a perfect game – it is the top possible score.

Larry Rhodes, Liberty Lanes owner/operator, is a former high-line power worker turned contractor, and has worked to improve the family-owned facility



Dean Jackson enjoys watching Gordon Fischer's turn recently. Also bowling with him that day were Rip Evans and Janice Fischer. (Lewis Delavan photos)

since 2022.

Improvements including new lanes, approaches, pin setters and other equipment have followed, along with Professional Bowling Association events.

Photos of winners from the recent PBA50 Hot Springs Village SWA Open on Oct. 11-13 line the counter. These events attract bowlers from states including Texas, Oklahoma and Tennessee.

The highest Arkansans were from HSV, No. 14 Jessie Cannon and No. 15 Jeff Atkins. Laurence Brandon of Murfreesboro, Arkansas, was No. 16.

During the winter Liberty Lanes is open weekdays and Saturdays: 4-10 p.m. Monday, Friday and Saturday; and 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday.

# 9 Night Divine

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# Christmas Carol - A Love Story

Mary Eliades  
VOICE CORRESPONDENT



Carol Friedman loves to bake, cook and decorate – and loves to share her creations with others. (Mary Eliades photo)

Carol Friedman still remembers the words her grandfather said to her when she was a young girl and her wide-flung family had gotten together for Christmas for the first time. “Make every day Christmas,” he told her. “Give people a hug, hand them a

cookie.”

He died not long after that Christmas, but Carol took those words to heart.

It was her grandfather who first dubbed her “Christmas Carol,” and the name has stuck.

Fifty-five years ago, she heard her future husband, Bill, say he’d marry anyone who could bake chocolate cookies. She went straight home and started working on those cookies, and ever since she has been baking, decorating, tending her gardens, and

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Carol's model of the HSV Voice office (Submitted photo)

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Carol's kitchen, decorated for Christmas (Submitted photo)

sharing the love with those around her.

Carol has been a diabetic for 75 years and has never eaten sweets, so she relies on her taster – husband Bill – to help her adjust recipes and create new ones.

Bill is an avid golfer, and his golfing partners are the happy tasters every week of Carol's cookies and cakes.



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She recently unearthed an oldie but goodie cookie recipe and whipped out 500 cookies to share with friends. “I usually keep eight to 12 dozen cookies in the fridge,” she said.

She shares her goodies with friends, local businesses, church groups, and just about anyone she thinks needs a bit of home-baked cheer. “I’m pretty famous for my apple pies and cheesecakes,” she said. She also cooks meals for the HSV police and fire departments and others who serve the community.

Because of her lifelong commitment to diabetes research and treatment, Carol develops recipes for the Joslin Diabetes Center and, in turn, experiments with new food products they send her for testing.

Carol said she and Bill included a phrase about “never a dull moment” in their wedding vows, and added, “It’s been true. We’re still on our honeymoon.”

Carol was a petite model – she started modeling at the age of 10 – and went into interior design after attending merchandising college. She had an interior design business in Dallas and later started a bridal show business.


After a successful career as a designer fashion buyer, Bill followed his dream of becoming a deacon in the Catholic church. He recently retired – again – as hospital chaplain at CHI St. Vincent.

Carol’s cakes are showpieces. She created a cake for Bill’s parents’ 50th wedding anniversary that any bridal bakery would be proud of. She often includes handmade marzipan “fruits” and “vegetables” that are delicious little gems.


Carol’s creative skills are not limited to cooking and baking. To entertain her grandchildren, she helped them make models of buildings in the community (including the HSV Voice office). She recently completed a model of the new pickleball courts at Diamante.

On visits to local businesses over the years, Christmas Carol noticed that not all of them had holiday decorations, so she created flexible, flat Christmas trees that could be displayed on walls or even around corners.

Carol and Bill have lived in the Village 24 years and have always welcomed the local critters. She feeds the deer, turtles, rabbits, birds – all are welcome, and many have names. Carol even helped deliver a baby deer when she noticed that the mother was in distress. “Never a dull moment,” she laughingly said. And always a sweet surprise when she comes knocking on your door.



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## VILLAGE PEOPLE

# Mr. Fixer Upper

Can you build it? Can you fix it? The answer is "Yes" said John Tidquist.

Sandy Johansen  
STAFF WRITER

John Tidquist grew up in rural Wisconsin. After serving two years in the Military, he came home to begin a career in logistics and transportation. He retired as a Vice President of Sales and Marketing for the Koch Companies in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

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**John Tidquist in his Design Shop. Just one of three areas for his creative hobbies and charity volunteerism.**

“Following retirement, my wife Karen and I were seeking a warmer climate and a place to play golf. After much searching, we ended up in the perfect place, Hot Springs Village and we are living the dream.

After a few years playing golf every day, I just felt the need to help people and give back to the community,” he said. It began with his church, Community of Joy Lutheran Church.

At this point, Tidquist got involved with Habitat for Humanity (HFH). “That organization has such a great effect on our

community, building homes for the needy.” He volunteered for 17 years driving to and from Hot Springs three or four times a week. “I learned a lot and was involved in building 100 homes.” He also served on the Board of HFH for 9 years with three years as President. “The biggest benefit was helping families also working alongside of and meeting great friends.”

John and Karen were selected to chair the HSV 40th Anniversary appointed by Bob Shoemaker, the POA Board of Directors President at that time. “With the help of great committees, we had a very successful 9-day celebration in April 2010.” Tidquist was off and running. He and his committees starting meeting a year and a half before the celebration, and scheduled 60 events to squeeze into the 9-day period. Activities for the 40th anniversary were numerous. The DeSoto club was decked out like days gone by as ladies and men were in their finest formal ware dancing with a full orchestra. This opening celebration was followed by multi-day events involving not only members of HSV, but surrounding schools and

residents participating.

Along with his good friend Ron Tetu, John started a HSV support group called Property Owners United. This group later joined with Friends of Hot Springs Village. "It was then I met John Hollansworth who became a close friend and with his great enthusiasm, he was a wonderful mentor to me." Tidquist served on the Friends Board for 16 years and was President for 12 years. "Friends was a very strong and positive support for the POA Board and Hot Springs Village."

Many of the HSV community groups lead from one to another. The Village Community Foundation was and is an outstanding organization, and Tidquist served on their Board for three years. "It was exciting to help our community with scholarships and grants to many students."

Hot Springs Village Good Samaritan, a great amenity for HSV, invited Tidquist to their Advisory Board on which he served for 10 years.

The Inter-Service Club is a group organizing the picking up of trash on HSV roads. Voluntary



Was there a race horse named Tidquist? Yes and John's buddies at Brookshire Farm in New York was happy to run this little boy, named after their good friend. The very special horse actually won a few races.



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*Happy Holidays!*

*Joanna Horton*

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**John and Karen Tidquist enjoying the afternoon of golf with their grandchildren, Charlie and Cooper Gaffney.**

this without Karen’s help,” said John.

Two ad-hoc committees followed regarding Village Signage and Election Procedures and again, Tidwell stepped up to the plate. The committee not only reviews resident signs placed on properties, but it also is involved in suggestions for new signs.

“When COVID was bringing everything down, a friend and I started building desks for the kids who had to study at home. We found out they didn’t have any place to finish their homework except perhaps the couch or a kitchen table,” He and his friends built 18 desks and he was helped for material costs by his giving neighbors. Many local families couldn’t afford special desks for their children.

Last, but certainly not least, neighbors are important, as John proved to be when Beverly Tallent walked her dog. “She asked if I could build a casket for her dog and I asked what dog? She said he’s the one standing here and he’s sick.” Tidquist looked down on the dog and he built the casket big enough for a pillow in it as she requested. “She sent me a thank you card after her pet was buried in the casket I built,” he said. “I was so honored.”

John and Karen have played golf with The Village Couples many years, and he was selected as president for two years. The couple can be seen at numerous golf and social events here in HSV.

“I have found volunteering and helping people is the most satisfying thing in my life. You meet great people that also like the same joy of helping others. There is no better feeling than being able to help someone.”

trash is picked up three times a year with Tidquist leading the group for nearly four years. These specially given days are called Village Pride Days. Many proud residents participate.

“My time with the Trails Committee was four years, serving as chairman for one year. This committee is one of the main interests to many residents for restoring energy or casual walking,” he said.

Who said retirement was going to be relaxing? It was just the beginning for John and Karen Tidquist, working tirelessly on Community events either together or separately. “I couldn’t have done

# The Power of a Dollar

Robin Raborn Burns  
VOICE CORRESPONDENT

It began in 2002 at the suggestion of Reverend Bill Leslie, the Senior Pastor at Christ of the Hills United Methodist Church (COHUMC). Leslie had instituted this program in other churches he served and that legacy continues today as a vital program at COHUMC.

The concept was built around the premise that each time a member of the Church comes to worship, even though they tithe and pledge, an offering should be given in thanksgiving to God for blessings received.

Each person places one dollar in the offering plate. These dollars are kept in a separate designated account and allocated to various charities at the end of the year.

The motion was adopted by the Church Council and the Council administered the fund for 2002 and 2003. In 2004, the job was delegated to the Mission Committee with the Church Council vote being designated as the final approval of the selections.

Each September, grant applications are available for charitable organizations; applications are due back in mid October. Specifically, the grant can only be used for a standalone project; it cannot be combined with other funds that are allocated for the project. The organization must be one that is a 501(c) (3) charitable organization, located within and benefitting people within 50 miles of Hot Springs Village.

The Missions Committee reviews the applications



Christ of the Hills United Methodist Church.  
(Robin Raborn Burns photos)



The COHUMC sign.



The sanctuary – where the giving happens.

and interviews representatives of the organization regarding the specifics of the request. The dollar value of each request varies depending on the requests received. Requests range from shelving units for food pantries, computers, appliances, linens, a pallet jack, a fork lift and a set of bleachers.

The first year, \$10,000 was received; over the years total amount received during the year now averages \$23,000. The number has risen from approximately 6

grant requests to approximately 18-20 each year. In 2012, the Missions Committee deemed that the largest amount given each year would be designated as the “Bill Leslie Memorial Award.”

At the end of 2023, \$489,746 had been raised - in July of 2024, over \$500,000. It is certainly hard to argue the significance of that ripple of blessings.

COHUMC Minister of Music Ken McKay says “that the dollar a week giving program is so successful because people want to belong to a church, and tithe to a church where they can see their donations working in their community. Through the tireless efforts of volunteers, COHUMC provides food, clothing, and essential items to hundreds of individuals throughout the region.

Church member Chuck Miller says that “just this small amount, one dollar a week, is amazing. This giving program has helped to transform our community. Together we have made a significant difference – funding essential products, uplifting local families and creating lasting change.”

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# CEDAR MOUNTAIN BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB

## Gearing Up for Christmas



Suzanne Sweeten  
VOICE CORRESPONDENT

The Cedar Mountain Boys and Girls Club is unique to most Boys and Girls Clubs in the United States. Collaboration with Great Futures Daycare can provide continuity of care, servicing children from birth through eighteen. CMBG offers summer and afterschool programs to 75 children each day, and Great Futures accommodates 85, sometimes more, children.

Club Director Susan Clark explains, “A majority of those who attend the CMBGC come from families who qualify for free or reduced lunch at school. Similarly, half of the families utilizing the Great Futures Daycare receive state vouchers to help with childcare costs. These statistics highlight the economic struggles many families face, making the service provided by CMBGC and Great Futures



Susan Clark is the director of the Cedar Mountain Boys and Girls Club. (Submitted photos)

Daycare even more critical.”

Clark believes the combination of early childhood and school-aged care allows the organization to support families throughout various stages of their child’s development, ensuring continuity of care and support.

November found the CMBGC honoring United States Military Veterans. The club held a special event where the children, working with staff, cooked and served a delicious meal. This showcased their teamwork and sense of responsibility, helping them learn the importance of service and giving back to those who sacrificed for the country.

Clark recounts the Thanksgiving celebrations at the club, “The CMBGC continued its beloved Turkey Bingo tradition. Before Fall Break, the club hosted a special family night of fun, laughter, and excitement. During the event, families played Turkey Bingo, enjoyed refreshments, and participated in raffles for prizes for all ages. The night’s highlight came when someone excitedly yelled ‘Bingo,’ the lucky winner

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received a complete Thanksgiving meal, including all the fixings needed to prepare a feast for their family. The children were so proud when they won a meal for their family.”

The CMBGC made certain no child went hungry during the holiday break. A Thanksgiving food bag program allowed children to take home bags filled with easily prepared meals, including breakfast, lunch, snacks, and dinner. The bags are essential for children who rely on the school districts for meals and may need extra food assistance while school is out.

Thanksgiving is over, and the CMBGC, especially Great Futures, is gearing up for Christmas and a visit from Santa Claus. Angel Trees are a long-standing tradition within each club, where the children’s names are placed on a tree. Hot Springs Village residents can come to pick a name and supply that child with their “Santa’s Wish List.” Angel Trees and a generous financial donation help guarantee no one is left behind.

“Besides giving gifts, the club supports families by providing Christmas dinners. These meals enable families who may otherwise struggle to enjoy a special meal together during the holiday season. Like during Fall Break, food bags are distributed during the winter holidays to assist families facing food insecurity,” Clark adds.

If she could sit on Santa’s knee and have three wishes granted, they would be increased funding for expanded programming, a larger facility with a gym, and scholarships for every child in need. She believes these wishes represent a solid commitment to the children and families in HSV and the surrounding communities.

“First, with additional resources, we could



**CMBGC sees each child’s family receives a complete Thanksgiving meal, including all the fixings needed to prepare a feast for their family.**

provide more educational, recreational, and social opportunities to help children grow and thrive. Second, we are outgrowing our current space. A gym would expand our physical activity programs and host indoor sports, while a larger space would allow us to serve more children. Finally, scholarships would guarantee that no child is ever turned away due to financial constraints.

CMBGC and Great Futures require the aid and assistance of the Hot Springs Village community to continue their good works. For more information on the Angel Trees or to contribute, contact Clark at Susan@scbgclub.com, call (501) 984-6996, or drop by the Cedar Mountain Boys and Girls Club at 5050 North Hwy 7, Hot Springs Village, AR 71909.

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# 4 unique holiday party themes

The holiday season is a festive time of year filled with plenty of opportunities to socialize with friends and family. Parties abound this time of year, and many people may find themselves hosting everything from intimate gatherings to large family dinners.

As people will be attending many different events in the weeks to come, savvy hosts and hostesses may want to set their occasions apart in different ways. One option is to pick an entertaining party theme that guests can get excited about. A fun theme can provide a break from the standard traditions. Consider these four unique party themes when planning holiday parties.

## 1. Ornament exchange

Decorating the home is commonplace this time of year. Who couldn't use a new trinket for the mantle or an ornament to adorn the tree? Ask all guests to bring a gift-wrapped ornament to the party. Then place numbers in a bowl and have each guest draw



## Welcoming Dr. Albezargan

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**3. Grinchy party**  
 A party devoted to the Dr. Seuss character The Grinch can be a fun way to pass time together. While the holidays are supposed to be holly and jolly, a Grinch-themed party can put the emphasis on being a little bit more naughty than nice. And who doesn't enjoy an ample serving of roast beast? Have guests come decked out in Grinch costumes or

**Holiday party fun.**

a number; this is the order in which they will then select an ornament. After the first person makes their selection, subsequent guests can choose a new ornament from the pile or 'steal' one from those already picked. The guest who picked first then has one last chance to keep or steal at the end.

**2. Tropical holiday**

The weather outside may be frightful, but a tropical island party can be utterly delightful. Give the event an island flair with fruity drinks, grilled kabobs, coconut desserts, and steel-drum music.

Grinch emblazoned t-shirts or other clothing.

**4. Christmas karaoke**

Set up the karaoke machine or utilize one of the services available online, and make sure that guests are prepared to belt out their favorite holiday tunes whether traditional carols or pop hits. A group of ladies can join together for The Waitresses' "Christmas Wrapping" or guests can try their hands at hitting the high notes of Mariah Carey's ubiquitous "All I Want for Christmas Is You." Chances are serving some liquid courage will help guests loosen up and be more inclined to grab the microphone.

These are just a few different party themes that holiday hosts can consider this season.

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# Be mindful of pets during the holiday season

The magic and wonder of the holiday season can be enthralling for people of all ages. There is so much to see and do during the holiday season, making it easy to forge lasting memories.

With so much to do in December, life at home can sometimes feel a little hectic, especially for the family pet. Although the holidays can be exciting, the season can induce anxiety in pets. Pets like cats and dogs often thrive on routine and familiarity. Switch up that routine and various behavioral issues can arise, including having accidents in the home. Pets also may become more destructive, chewing or clawing at items to release pent-up tension and anxiety. Pet owners who want the season to be festive for their pets can consider the following strategies.

- Gradually introduce new items. Gradually decorate living spaces so pets can grow acclimated to their newly decorated environs. Add a few pieces to rooms each day until you finally have all of your decorations out for display. This way pets can sniff around the decorations and realize they do not pose a threat.

- Keep familiar pet belongings. Try not to upset the apple cart too much in regard to pets' cherished possessions. For example, do not move the dog bed from the living room and place the Christmas tree in its place. Pets need that familiarity and having some of their items with familiar smells can make for a smooth adjustment to holiday decorations.

- Designate a pet-safe zone. If you will be inviting people over during the holidays, set aside a room for pets so they can be in relative quiet away from boisterous crowds. Locking pets away also helps prevent their escape from the home as guests come and go.

- Secure the tree and other decorations. Pets are often curious about new things, and they may climb or paw at items to try to understand them better. Decorative items may end up being knocked over by



curious pets. Secure the tree using a string and an anchor to the ceiling or wall like you might secure a large screen TV to prevent it from tipping over. Keep breakable ornaments and other trinkets behind display cases or beyond the reach of pets.

- Discourage pets from using decorations as toys. Reprimand pets or move them away from holiday decor so they don't get the idea that these items are now their toys.

- Be careful with holiday foods. Holiday foods and desserts are rich and full of ingredients that may not be healthy for pets. Keep a secure lid on trash pails and remind holiday guests that pets should not be fed table scraps.

# Maximize outdoor spaces during Holidays

The holiday season comes at a time when the weather can be anywhere from cool to frigid. But even if the weather outside is somewhat frightful, holiday entertaining in outdoor spaces can still be delightful. Making the most of outdoor spaces during the holidays and the rest of the winter can enable guests to spread out, which should make things more comfortable for them. With that goal in mind, the following are some tips for putting outdoor areas to good use when hosting loved ones this holiday season.



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- Decorate first. An easy way to make outdoor entertaining spaces more welcoming is to coordinate the decor with the interior of the home. Greenery wrapped with lights around railings and fencing can create the perfect ambiance. Candles, wreaths and small, decorated Christmas trees can finish the effect.

- Consider a fire or heating element. Unless you live in a temperate climate, you'll need some way to keep guests warm. Center the outdoor entertaining space around a fire pit, outdoor fireplace or an outdoor heater. Make sure to illuminate the outdoor area so that guests can find their way around with ease.

- Host an early gathering. The sun sets early in fall and winter, so it may not only get colder, but also darker at a time when guests typically arrive. Think about moving up the start time of your holiday event if you'll be having an outdoor area, so guests can see one another and stay a little warmer.

- Use the grill. Keep foods warm by using the grill or an outdoor griddle; otherwise, set up the food buffet-style inside so guests can make their plates and gravitate where they feel comfortable.

- Provide blankets or fleeces. In addition to warming

elements around your entertaining space, stock a large basket with cozy throws, blankets or fleece jackets that guests can use to warm up. Hats and scarves also may be appreciated.

- Invest in waterproof furniture. Upgrade your exterior seating with plush outdoor couches and lounges that are decked out in weather-resistant fabrics. Make them more comfortable with throw pillows that coordinate with a holiday entertaining theme.

- Set up two drink stations. Set up beverages both inside and outside the home so guests can easily refill their drinks wherever they are relaxing. Think about having some warm drinks outside, such as mulled cider or hot chocolate, so guests can be warmed from the inside as well.

- Use a wireless speaker. A Bluetooth-enabled wireless speaker placed outside allows guests to listen to holiday tunes while they are enjoying themselves.

Using well-equipped outdoor areas for entertaining can expand the possibilities and guest list for holiday gatherings.





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World Tour of Wines - Spain

Coronado Center

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Oaklawn Opening Day

Oaklawn Racing Casino Resort

December 6 at 11 a.m.

Colt and the Old 45s

Coronado Center

December 7 at 7 p.m.

Christmas in the Village

Woodlands Auditorium

December 8 at 3 p.m.

Yuletide Cheer Celebration

Woodlands Card Room

December 8 at 4:30 p.m.

Hot Springs Christmas Parade

Downtown Hot Springs

December 9 at 6:30 p.m.

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December 11-15

Hot Springs Concert Band Christmas Concert

Woodlands Auditorium

December 12 at 7 p.m.

Leave No Trace Workshop

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Coronado Center

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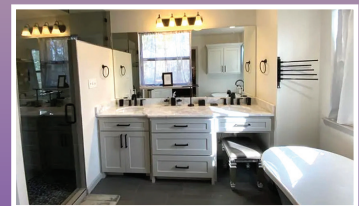
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