



**COLOR IT MERRY!**  
coloring contest

— Inside today's Valley Courier



Lady Falcons remain  
undefeated with win over  
Salida

— Page 6



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VOLUME 97, NO. 194

# Valley Courier

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LOCAL NEWS... LOCAL VIEWS

December 9, 2023

\$1

**SLV Today**  
Next Forest  
Specialist  
Series Dec. 13

**DEL NORTE** — The Rio Grande National Forest will be presenting this month's Forest Specialist Series at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 13. Local author and retired professor Sandra Wagner will be presenting "An Upper Rio Grande Fishstory: Historical fish stories from the Upper Rio Grande."

She'll talk about the early days of commercial aquaculture and the development of recreational fishing in the Upper Rio Grande area.

This online event is part of the Rio Grande National Forest's Forest Specialist Series, a once-monthly online presentation in partnership with the San Juan Mountains Association to share information with the community.

Visit the Rio Grande National Forest website or Facebook page for event information.

**Winter Fiesta in Conejos**

**CONEJOS** — Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church in Conejos is celebrating this weekend with a Winter Fiesta that runs through Sunday afternoon.

On Saturday, events begin at 7 a.m., with Mananitas followed by a Mass. Entertainment runs throughout the day with entertainment and concessions with food. There is a dance from 7-10 p.m.

On Sunday, Mass is at 7:30 a.m., followed by a procession at 9:45 a.m., and Mass at 10 a.m. followed by a dinner. Events run through 2:30 p.m. with a raffle.

**Santa coming to Antonito on Dec. 10**

**ANTONITO** — Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus will be stopping at 1 p.m. on Dec. 10 at the Antonito Water Park in Antonito to bring toys, candy and a special gift.

**SLV WEATHER**

Mostly Sunny, Wind Chill 33/-4

Sun: Sunny 39/4

Mon: Mostly Sunny 44/7

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## It's official: Gay retains seat on ASD Board of Education

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER  
Courier reporter

**ALAMOSA** — An automatic recount in the race to see who will represent District One on the Alamosa School District Board of Education has been completed, and the official results stand as they were initially reported with incumbent Andria Gay maintaining her seat by a razor-thin margin of four votes over challenger Kaylee Gomez-Romero.

Out of 3,003 votes cast in Alamosa County, Gomez-Romero carried the race with a lead of 1,512 to 1,491 over Gay, but the 37 votes cast in a portion of Conejos County where students attend school in the Alamosa School District changed the tide with Gay coming in at 31 votes to Gomez Romero's 6, a difference of 25 votes that were just enough to push Gay over the finish line.

The Valley Courier reached out to Gomez-Romero for a

statement, learning that she had not been informed the results were official until she was contacted by the newspaper.

"It has been a privilege to run

■ See ASD BOE page 3

**Andria Gay, newly re-elected trustee representing District One on the Board of Education. A margin of only four votes in the election prompted an automatic recount that confirmed the results that Gay retained her seat.**



## Conejos County Sheriff's Office deputies honored for going above and beyond



**Pictured left to right, Conejos County Sheriff's Office Undersheriff Garth Crowther, Sgt. Servando Moreno and Conejos County Sheriff Garth Crowther at presentation where Moreno was honored with a Lifesaving Award for hiking miles in a snowstorm to rescue a hunter suffering from altitude sickness and hypothermia.**



Photo courtesy of Conejos County Sheriff Garth Crowther  
**Twelfth Judicial District Attorney Anne Kelly, pictured on the left, presented a 'Certificate of Excellence' to Conejos County Sheriff's Office Deputy Melinda Salazar for her role in the investigation of Alejandro Sandoval.**

By PRISCILLA WAGGONER  
Courier reporter

**CONEJOS COUNTY**

— Actions taken by two deputies with the Conejos County Sheriff's Office demonstrating an exemplary devotion to duty were recognized on Thursday when Conejos County Sheriff Garth Crowther presented awards to Sgt. Servando Moreno and Deputy Melinda Salazar during a meeting of the Conejos County Commissioners.

In regard to Salazar, 12th Judicial District Attorney Anne Kelly presented her with a "Certificate of Achievement" ■ See HONOR page 3

## Lobatos Bridge project is moving forward

By JOHN WATERS  
Courier News editor

**SAN LUIS VALLEY** — The Lobatos Bridge Recreation and Interpretive Plan that the the Great Outdoors Fund is working with the Bureau of Land Management is moving along, according to Lori McCullough with the non-profit fund. The historic

■ See BRIDGE page 3

**The Lobatos Bridge was built in 1892 by the Wrought Iron Bridge Company and is a double-span truss. According to documents filed to obtain a listing on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984, this type of structure 'never quite took off,' and only 30-40 of these types were built and at the time of listing, was one of three remaining. The Great Outdoors Fund is working on a recreation and education project for the area near the bridge.**

Courier photo by John Waters



## Serenity at the Little Shepherd in the Hills Chapel



**On Dec. 17, the Little Chapel in the Hills in Crestone will host services and a performance of the Crestone Choir. The chapel will also hold services on Christmas Eve at 2 p.m.**

Courier photo by John Waters

**Christmas Eve service at 2:00 p.m.**

By JOHN WATERS  
Courier News Editor

**CRESTONE**—Nestled among trees on Alder Street in Crestone is the smallest Episcopal church in Colorado, the Little Shepherd in the Hills Chapel. The rustic log cabin was originally built in 1913 and began being used for religious purposes in 1949, according to the website of the Episcopal Church of the Ascension in Salida that oversees the historic chapel.

Measuring only about 24 feet by 32 feet, the chapel is home the town's Episcopal population who have been worshipping in the

area since the 1880s. The chapel was built by Ruben Charles Barnes, a local rancher and businessman just a few years after the devastating Crestone flood in 1911.

The wooded area and the nearby babbling North Crestone Creek, the chapel is conducive to contemplation, serenity, and worship.

Rev. Melissa George, Episcopal priest and rector of the chapel, told the Valley Courier, "Little Shepherd will have a service on Christmas Eve at 2 p.m., in our historic chapel.

"The service will include the singing of Christmas Carols, communion, and a brief reflection from me on the season. All ■ See CHAPEL page 3



**Happy Holidays & Merry Christmas**  
from all of us at **RG BANK!**

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# Record

## OBITUARIES

### Becky Jean Owsley

Well-known and longtime Alamosa resident Becky Jean Owsley, 77, died Dec. 7, 2023, at Evergreen Nursing Home in Alamosa.

Becky's life began in Denver, Colo., where her family lived for a year before moving to Alamosa. She was born on Oct. 29, 1946, to Theodore (Ted) M. Curtis and Kathryn (Kay) C. (Michael) Curtis.

She married the love of her life, Chuck Owsley in Denver, Colo., on Feb. 2, 1964. They have enjoyed over 59 years together. In her early years, Becky was a varsity cheerleader in high school. She also volunteered as a storyteller at the public library and loved reading stories to all the children.

Becky was a Den Mother for both Cub Scouts and Brownies. She enjoyed playing cards and belonged to various bridge clubs. Some of her favorite memories and greatest joy were spending time with her family playing games at the dining room table.

Becky owned and operated the family business Dairy Queen in Alamosa for a time, then worked with her husband and son David at Curtis Brothers for more than 15 years. She also was a longtime



camp counselor with Mary Hennessey's Camp, which she did with her daughter and son.

Becky is a member of PEO Chapter DP, Order of the Eastern Star in Alamosa, and was an active supporter of athletics at Adams State University. She and her husband Chuck received the Grizzly Club Member of the Year in 2014. Becky and Chuck traveled extensively throughout Europe, Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean Islands. She enjoyed geocaching all throughout the United States.

Becky was loved by many and was one of the sweetest people most would ever meet.

She is survived by her husband Charles Franklin Owsley of Alamosa; her children C. Jeff Owsley of Alamosa, David (Tonya) Owsley of Alamosa, and Kathy

(Jeremy) Soden of Rocky Ford, Colo., her grandchildren Charles (Kerry) Owsley, Laura Owsley, John (Matt) Owsley, Bowen (Liz) Soden, and Sawyer Soden; his great-grandchildren Warren, and Clementine Soden; her grand dog Duke; her sister Marjory (Chuck) Asay of Colorado Springs, Colo.; as well as numerous extended family and friends.

Becky was preceded in death by her parents, an infant brother Michael Curtis, and her daughter-in-law Halcyon "Hallie" Owsley.

Cremation was chosen and all are invited to a visitation to greet family Wednesday, Dec. 13, 2023, from 5-7 p.m. at the Rogers Family Mortuary in Alamosa. A Celebration of Life will be held 11 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 14, 2023, at the First United Methodist Church in Alamosa. Contributions in her memory are suggested to the Adams State Foundation and may be made here: [www.adams.edu/foundation/online-donation/](http://www.adams.edu/foundation/online-donation/)

Rogers Family Mortuary is in care of the arrangements. To leave online condolences, tributes and words of comfort for Becky's family, please visit [www.RogersFunerals.com](http://www.RogersFunerals.com).

### Richard (Dick) Eagles Jan. 26, 1940—Nov. 29, 2023

Dick Eagles, 83, died at his home in Center, Colo., on Nov. 29, 2023. He was born at Monte Vista Hospital, the son of Virgil and Helen Eagles. He was raised on the family farm in the Center area, alongside his three siblings, and their tight-knit family. Dick was known for his orneriness and being game for almost anything, especially pranks, in his younger days. His love of fun was apparent. He was also known for being a hard worker and it showed in the way Dick and Marilyn built their farming legacy.

Dick graduated from Sargent High School in 1958, in the same year he enlisted in the US Army. He honorably served his country for just over three years. Upon returning from the Army, he carried out his lifelong passion to be a farmer in the San Luis Valley, where he would be a 3rd Generation Farmer.

While recovering from a critical automobile accident, he met his future wife and best friend, Marilyn Burton, his ICU nurse at St. Lukes hospital in Denver, Colo. Dick married the love of his life, his Marilyn Kay, on Dec. 7, 1963, at Brentwood United Methodist Church in Denver. They built a beautiful life together, on their homestead in Center, Colo. Dick and Marilyn were married nearly 60 wonderful years, and proudly raised their two children, Julie, and BJ. They were overjoyed to be grandparents and fully loved and supported Nolan, Skylar, Lindsey, and Elle in every way.

Dick was very proud to be a farmer and all the work that it entailed. He raised potatoes, Coors barley and alfalfa for over 50 years. From the back-breaking be-

ginnings of flood irrigation and hand sacking potatoes to central pivot irrigation and modern machinery, he embraced and loved it all. He also had sheep for close to 30 years and lambed 200 Suffolk ewes at the peak of his production years.

Dick was well respected in his community where he served his local Center Kiwanis Club and made many life-long friendships at Monday night meetings and fundraisers. He most looked forward to the pancake supper, seeing all the people, and became an excellent pancake flipper. Dick also loved high school basketball, was a big fan and followed the Center and Sargent teams everywhere.

Dick's most memorable adventures and stories came from motorcycle rides, flyfishing, snowmobiling, skiing, and family picnics and rides in the Colorado mountains. He was an avid outdoorsman, though on the rare occasion when he was not outdoors, you could find him enjoying an eventful afternoon of cards with friends and family, where he often would earn the title of 'card-shark.' Some favorite games included: Pitch, Pinochle, Poker, Michigan Rummy, Cribbage, and Kings on the Corner. Dick and Marilyn enjoyed extensive travel around the state and country, visiting family and friends. Their biggest adventure was with Sherrill and Linda Mix, to Australia and New Zealand.

Dick was overjoyed to have four amazing grandchildren that he constantly supported, by never missing the opportunity to cheer them on at numerous school sporting events and rodeo. His grandchildren especially enjoyed playing cards with him,



never turning down the opportunity to beat their grandpa at a hand of Kings on the Corner, and getting him to express some of his famous 'one-liners.' In more recent years, there were fun memories made on trips to the mountains.

Dick was preceded in death by his parents, Virgil and Helen Eagles, and brother Norman Eagles and many special friends.

He is survived by his wife Marilyn, daughter Julie and husband Troy Baker, son BJ Eagles and partner Amanda Stagner; four grandchildren, Nolan and wife Shelby Baker, Skylar Eagles, Lindsey and husband Alex Trujillo, and Elle Eagles.

A funeral service will be held on Saturday, Dec. 16, 2023, at 1 p.m. at the Center Methodist Church. A reception will follow to culminate Dick's celebration of life. Arrangements are made through Strohmayer's Funeral Home, in Monte Vista, Colo. Flowers can be received there until Friday, Dec. 15, at 4 p.m.

Memorial contributions can be made to: Center United Methodist Church or Kiwanis Club of Center, through Strohmayer's Funeral Home.



Courtesy photos

The Herencia Lucero property is a working ranch with significant water rights that includes 1.4 miles of the Rio San Antonio and 344 acres of wetlands, as well as grasslands, riparian shrubland, and cottonwood forests. These lands and waters provide critical habitat for numerous species such as bald eagle, northern harrier, golden eagle, sandhill crane, elk, mule deer, pronghorn, and Rio Grande chub.

## GOCO board awards \$50K grant to permanently protect 805 acres in Conejos County

By GREAT OUTDOORS COLORADO

DENVER — The Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) board on Dec. 8 awarded a \$50,000 grant to Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust through the nonprofit coalition Keep It Colorado to permanently conserve 805 acres of the Herencia Lucero Property in Conejos County.

The grant is part of Keep It Colorado's Transaction Cost Assistance Program (TCAP), which re-grants GOCO funds to nonprofit land trusts to help cover the costs associated with conservation easement transactions. It enables landowners who have urgent opportunities to conserve their properties, but who face financial barriers to facilitating the transaction, to conserve land more quickly.

The property is a working ranch with significant water rights in the Rio San Antonio irrigation system. Leveraging both conservation easement tax credit and bargain sale funding from North American Wetlands Conservation Act and a private foundation, the project will help Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust conserve 805 acres in this first phase with plans to conserve another 670 acres in the future.

Located within the Bureau of Land Management's San Luis Hills Area of Critical Environmental Concern and 1.5 miles from the San Luis Hills Wilderness Study



The Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) board awarded a \$50,000 grant to Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust through the nonprofit coalition Keep It Colorado to permanently conserve 805 acres of the Herencia Lucero property in Conejos County.

Area, the property includes 1.4 miles of the Rio San Antonio and 344 acres of wetlands, as well as grasslands, riparian shrubland, and cottonwood forests. These lands and waters provide critical habitat for numerous species such as bald eagle, northern harrier, golden eagle, sandhill crane, elk, mule deer, pronghorn, and Rio Grande chub.

The landowners are part of a sixth-generation Hispano family that contributes to agricultural production in the San Luis Valley. The Lucero family is pursuing climate resiliency planning and working with ditch companies and Natural Resource Conservation Service to make irrigation improvements that will benefit over 20 families.

To date, GOCO has invested more than \$5 million in projects in Conejos County and partnered to conserve

5,598 acres of land there. GOCO funding has supported the Conejos Ranchland Initiative conserving important agricultural lands, the North Conejos Activity Complex, and the protection of Rainbow Trout Ranch, among other projects.

Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) invests a portion of Colorado Lottery proceeds to help preserve and enhance the state's parks, trails, wildlife, rivers, and open spaces. GOCO's independent board awards competitive grants to local governments and land trusts and makes investments through Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Created when voters approved a constitutional amendment in 1992, GOCO has since funded more than 5,600 projects in all 64 counties of Colorado without any tax dollar support. Visit [GOCO.org](http://GOCO.org) for more information.

## ALAMOSA SHERIFF'S REPORT

ALAMOSA — Law enforcement officers with the Alamosa County Sheriff's Office took the following actions in the past several weeks, including but not limited to:

Seven citations were written for speeding 10-19 mph over the speed limit.

Nine citations were written for speeding 20-39 mph over the limit plus one citation for speeding 20-39 mph over the limit in a school zone.

One citation was written for driving with a defective headlamp.

One citation was written for expired tags.

One citation was written for driving while license was under restraint, operating a vehicle without insurance and passing on the left when prohibited by markings.

One citation was written for driving while license was under re-

straint, driving under the influence of alcohol, drugs or both and driving with a blood alcohol content of .008 or more.

A citation was written for pedestrians walking on the highway and a second citation was written for disorderly conduct disturbing the peace.

A citation was written for dog at large.

Robert Joseph Mesta of Alamosa was cited for harassment and domestic violence at 7703 Basalt Court.

Gilbert Vigil of Pueblo was cited for aggravated motor vehicle theft in the first degree, driving an off-highway motor vehicle on the highway when license/privilege to drive was under restraint for express consent or alcohol or drug related offense at 102 U.S. Highway 160.

Gabriel Sanchez, 27, of Alamo, Texas was cited for criminal mischief at

333 Santa Fe (Quality Inn).

Matthew Salazar, 27, of Alamosa was cited for theft at 151 Broadway Avenue.

School Menu  
Monday  
December 11, 2023

### BREAKFAST

Pop Tarts  
Fruit & Milk

### ELEMENTARY

Chicken Slider on a Bun/Pickle  
Waffle Fries  
Veggie Bar  
Fruit & Milk

### MIDDLE SCHOOL

Chicken Slider on a Bun/Pickle  
Waffle Fries  
Veggie Bar  
Fruit & Milk

### HIGH SCHOOL

Chicken Slider on a Bun/Pickle  
Waffle Fries  
Veggie Bar  
Fruit & Milk

Breakfast & Lunch Free for all students

Alamosa School District

To sponsor the School

Menu call 589-2553

# Valley News

## GOCO board awards \$19K grant to City of Alamosa for trail improvements

**STAFF REPORT**  
**DENVER** – On Dec. 8, the Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) board awarded a \$19,700 grant to the City of Alamosa for trail maintenance and improvement projects in the city.

This grant is part of GOCO's Conservation Service Corps program. GOCO partners with Colorado Youth Corps Association to employ conservation service corps crews across the state on outdoor recreation and stewardship projects. The corps represents a statewide coalition of eight accredited corps that train youth, young adults, and veterans to complete land and water conservation work and gain professional skills.

conservation service corps crews across the state on outdoor recreation and stewardship projects. The corps represents a statewide coalition of eight accredited corps that train youth, young adults, and veterans to complete land and water conservation work and gain professional skills.

With this funding, Alamosa Parks and Recreation will partner with Southwest Conservation Corps-Los Valles youth crews for two weeks of work. Crews will conduct trail maintenance, remove half a mile of abandoned barbed wire fencing, and treat roughly two miles of trail affected by invasive plant species including Russian Knapweed, Hoary

Cress, and Canada Thistle. The city continues to grow its trail network, and this project, set to be completed in 2024, is crucial for the upkeep of existing trails.

To date, GOCO has invested more than \$8.7 million in projects in Alamosa County and partnered to conserve 30,462 acres of land there. GOCO funding has supported Mosca Community Park, Alamosa Riparian Park, and the local Generation Wild community, San Luis Valley Generation Wild, among other projects.

Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) invests a portion of Colorado Lottery proceeds to help preserve and enhance the state's parks, trails, wildlife, rivers, and open spaces. GOCO



Courier file photo by John Waters

**The City of Alamosa has been awarded \$19,000 from Great Outdoors Colorado for trail improvements.**

CO's independent board awards competitive grants to local governments and land trusts and makes investments through Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Created when voters approved a constitutional amendment in 1992, GOCO has

since funded more than 5,600 projects in all 64 counties of Colorado with-

out any tax dollar support. Visit GOCO.org, for more information.

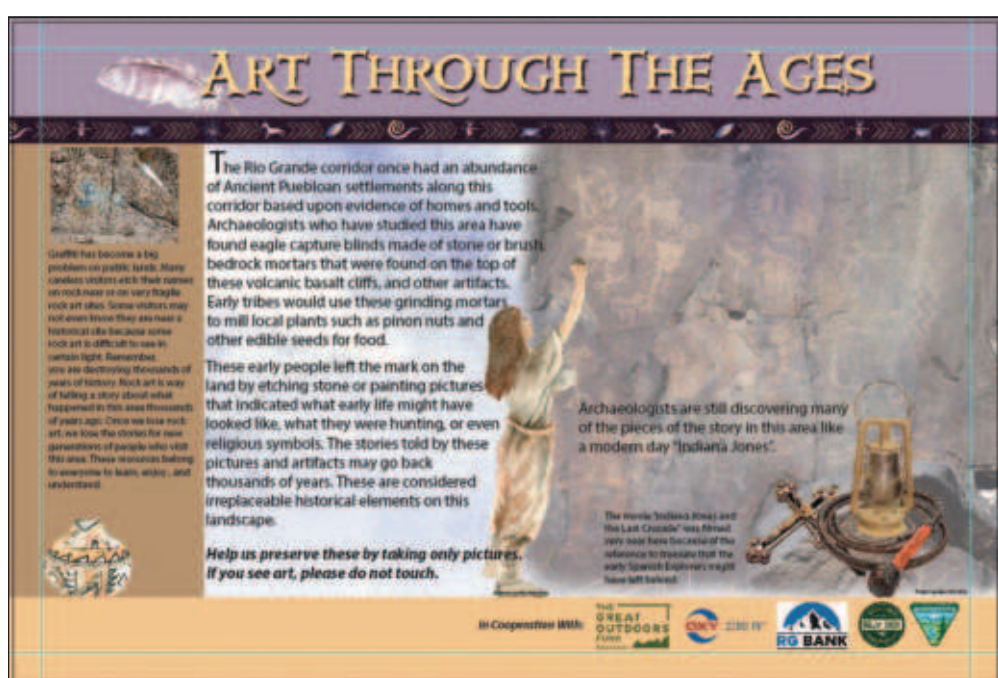
## Bridge

Continued from Page 1

bridge connects Conejos and Costilla counties and spans the Rio Grande River.

The project, which is adjacent to the historic Lobatos Bridge, primary purpose is to develop a nature-based classroom to interpret the rich cultural, historic, and natural heritage of the Rio Grande Natural Area (RGNA). This project will also enhance public access and recreation opportunities. According to McCullough, "It will benefit people of all ages, abilities, and socioeconomic backgrounds, especially the surrounding underserved communities."

As part of that nature-based classroom, the fund is working on 10 interpretive signs to tell the region's natural and human history. Topics for the signs include the Battle of Kiowa Hill, the ferry crossing, the Lobatos Bridge, built in 1892 and



Courtesy photo

**One of the ten interpretive signs planned for the Lobatos Bridge area the Great Outdoors Fund is working on.**

the Navajo sacred lands. The signs are the product of a team of researchers that include historians, anthropologists, and tribal members led by Kelly Ortiz, an architectural designer.

To date, the fund has raised \$158,927 of the \$711,751 needed for the project and has ap-

plied for a grant from Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) for \$468,101.

McCullough said GOCO will announce if the grant application is funded on March 15. If the Lobatos project receives the funding, a ribbon-cutting for the project will be in the fall of 2024

The Great Outdoors

Fund is interested in hearing from the public regarding the project and as part of their commitment to community outreach, can be reached by email at lori@greatoutdoorsfund.org Architectural designer Kelly Ortiz can be contacted at kelly-ortizlandscapearchitect@yahoo.com.

## Chapel

Continued from Page 1

are welcome. Christmas snacks and coffee in the parish hall to follow." The chapel will also have a service on Dec. 17 and a performance of the Crestone Choir at 4 p.m.

Regular services at Little Shepherd are on the first and third Sundays of every month at 2 p.m. Sunday School for children ages 4-15 years old is on the first Sunday at 1 p.m.

**The interior of the small, yet charming Little Chapel in the Hills in Crestone.**

Courier photo by John Waters



## ASD BOE

Continued from Page 1

for the Alamosa School District School board," Gomez-Romero said, "and I appreciate all of

the support from the community for my first time running for public office. I congratulate Andria Gay on her success of winning the election. I know that it was a close race and goes to show

that every vote counts and matters."

Gay was appointed to ASD Board of Education earlier this year when the District One seat was vacated by former school board member

Justin Rilling in May. Despite attempting to reach her by phone and email, the Valley Courier was unable to obtain a comment from the newly re-elected board member by press time.

ADAMS STATE UNIVERSITY  
 COLORADO

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## December

SUNDAY • 10
Theatre Holiday Production: <i>The One-Act Play That Goes Wrong</i> 2 p.m. Theatre Building SLV Federal Bank Main Stage 719-587-8499 theatre.adams.edu

MONDAY • 11
Study Day - No Classes

TUESDAY • 12
Finals Week

WEDNESDAY • 13
Finals Week
Zacheis Planetarium Free Movies: Closed Through Winter Break

THURSDAY • 14
Finals Week
Zacheis Planetarium Free Movies: Closed Through Winter Break

FRIDAY • 15
Finals Week
W Basketball vs Colorado Mesa University 3:30 p.m. Plachy Hall
M Basketball vs Colorado Mesa University 5:30 p.m. Plachy Hall

SATURDAY • 16
Fall 2023 Fall Commencement Ceremony: 10 a.m. Plachy Hall Gym Livestream: adams.edu/live
www.adams.edu

**Through December 15**  
**Cloyde Snook Gallery:** *Light and Glass - in the spirit of Taos Alchemy* Robin Stanaway  
**Hatfield Gallery:** *Upcycle: a Play on Light* Mary Hoffman  
**Gallery Hours:** 8:30 a.m. until 5 p.m. Monday through Friday

### Holiday Specials!

*Stop in and shop at Krivanek Jewelers where we make the holiday shopping easy! With a new Sale every week! So you never miss an opportunity for the perfect gift!*

**November 21st - December 2nd** all engagement rings and wedding sets will be **20-30% Off**

**December 3rd - 9th** all Diamond and fashion jewelry will be **20-30% Off**

**December 10th - 16th** all colored stone jewelry will be **20-30% off**

**December 17th- 24th** Select Estate Items will be **20-30% Off**

**Only at Krivanek Jewelers • 101 F St. • Salida**

# Opinion



Schroeder, the other reindeer.

## Smiles are the best for customers to feel at home

One of the best smiles this week was on Thursday. My dog Schroeder was styled at All Four Paws Grooming which is a stone's throw away from the Valley Courier. Andie fetched him even before I parked. She clicked his leash

on and let me know when to return for him. Her smile was the best. (I do miss Cher who was Schroeder's groomer earlier; and I hope she gets better soon.) On return, I received a text that my boy was finished. As a side note, Andie added to check their Facebook post as Schroeder was listed as "Schroeder, the other reindeer." Indeed, my pup was fuzzy where it counts and soft as a new baby's toy. If anyone were to ask me how I feel when I go there, I would say, "I feel like I'm home."

As a treat for Schroeder, we checked out Dairy Queen. I have yet to catch anyone with a frown as they hand me and Schroeder an ice cream cone, dipped or not, and a dog treat. It is inspiring to get served so happily. Even when I select Door Dash (because of a free-no charge coupon), the Dasher is tilted in a friendly dance like the reindeer might be pulling Santa Claus' sleigh.

It was more than a half-century ago now that I had my first soft-serve ice cream cone at the El Sombrero drive up in Mercedes, Texas. Mama was driving and Aunt Nono was on the passenger side. Barbara and I were scrambling for the first look out over the middle hump and we finally peered out the front window of Mama's green 1955 Chevy.

While Mama went up to the window to order our cones, Aunt Nono would sing with us; sometimes we sang, "This is the way we wash our hands, wash our hands, wash our hands;" she would start singing and we would follow when she sang, "Here we go round the Mulberry Bush," or other times we'd sing "Home again, home again, jigged-y jiggy." On wintery occasions, the sing-a-long would be, "Oh, you better watch out, you better not pout. Better not cry, I'm telling you why, Santa Claus is comin' to town!"

When we licked that first mountainous cone, heaven opened up and hugged us. Temperatures could be 90 degrees in the shade, but we didn't care as we gobbled the fast melting ice cream glacier. And to think, they were only a nickel back then. Oh, my. Passing Dairy Queen on Hwy 160 in Monte Vista brings back the memories of Mama rewarding us girls by getting us a curly cone and singing in her tank-like Chevy. My motto now is, when in Monte Vista, drive through Dairy Queen.

I worked at Alaskaland Ice Cream Parlor for a while as a senior in high school when I lived in Anchorage some part of half a century ago. We dressed in turn of the century garb with straw hats, silky miniskirts and bright red vests. When it was a customer's birthday, the whole staff ran out, (much like I saw Chili's staff in Alamosa do), singing and banging a drum and carrying a bulging ice cream mountain to wish the surprised birthday person a happy, HAPPY day.

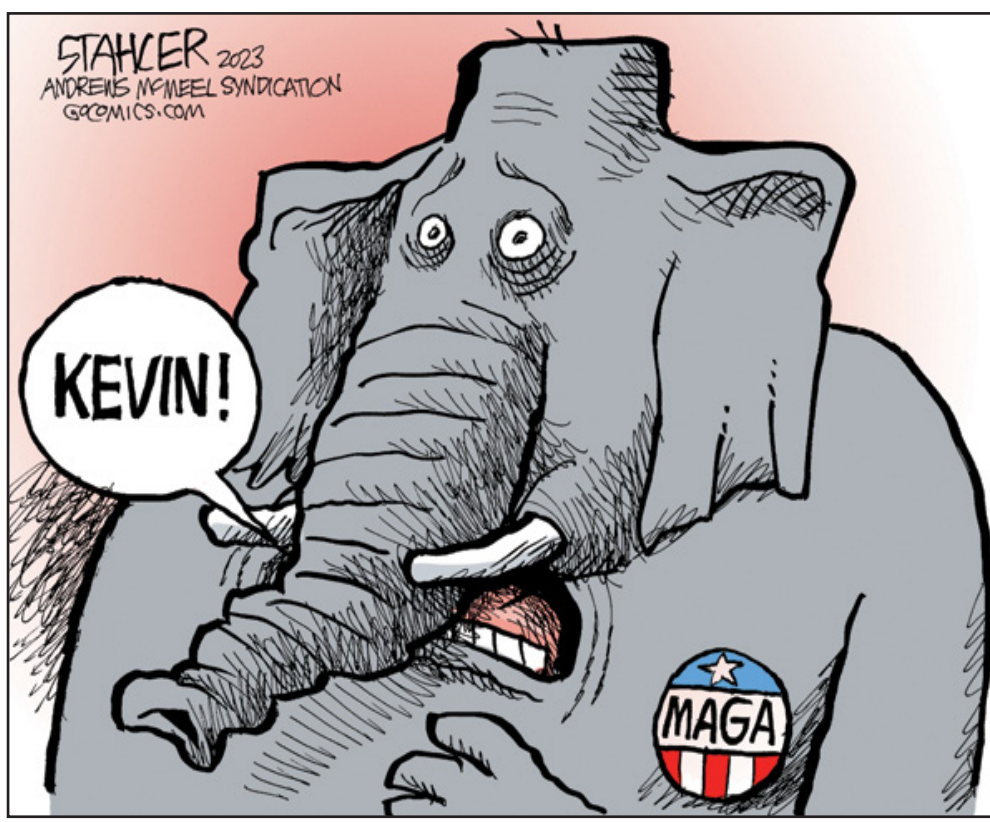
No matter which memories pop up, after a fluffy styling at All Four Paws Grooming, ice cream and DQ come in handy, don't you know!

Nelda Curtiss is a retired college educator and long-time local columnist. Reach her at [columnsbynellie.com](mailto:columnsbynellie.com) or email her at [columnsbynellie@gmail.com](mailto:columnsbynellie@gmail.com).

## Movin' On with Nellie



Nelda Curtiss



To submit news, email:  
[news@alamosanews.com](mailto:news@alamosanews.com)

To submit sports, email:  
[khamrick@alamosanews.com](mailto:khamrick@alamosanews.com)

### Letters policy

Letters are welcome and encouraged. All letters submitted for publication in the Valley Courier must be typewritten, signed by the author, and must include a phone number and address where the author can be reached. Letters must not be libelous. The Courier will not run letters that are negative to specific businesses. We reserve the right to edit for clarity, civility and accuracy. Please limit letters to 500 words or less.

The Courier's editorial board reserves the right to reject a letter for reasons it believes are appropriate. Letters may be subject to editing to fit available space, or exclusion from the Opinion Page. Please, no poetry. Please send signed letters to P.O. Box 1099, Alamosa, CO 81101 or email them to [news@alamosanews.com](mailto:news@alamosanews.com). Letters to staff, not for publication, should be marked "personal!"

## LETTERS

# South Fork Kiwanis gives thanks

Editor,  
The Kiwanis Club of South Fork would like to thank everybody that came to dinner to help and to eat. Your donations were so appreciated and enabled us to do Christmas for the kids in the Valley and other events. We also appreciate the food and clothes that were donated. They will be put to good use!

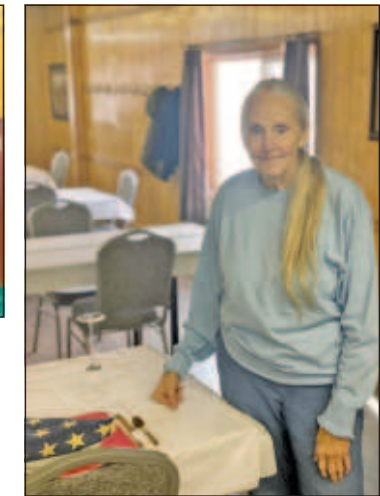
It was a great event as always, but we would have loved to see a few more folks but maybe next year will be better and not so cold! We did have folks from Mexico, Galveston, Texas, and other areas around the Valley and beyond. Our business sponsors went above and beyond the call of duty with their generous donations.

Karen Miller, club president, said it felt like we had celebrities at our dinner.

The awesome guys from Ramons restaurant came and helped serve! They did a wonderful job for their first time and people were really happy to see them! We got a lot of giggles in!!! We also had Miss West Tennessee, our own Heather Brooke. She was beautiful of course with her blingy crown and sparkly earrings. She even had her sash with her to get some pictures like a Miss America event.

I cannot possibly thank everybody for all the help and for coming to chow down. Before our Pledge of Allegiance and the prayer done by David Daniel of Emmanuel Church, our member Steven Valdez, made a few announcements, one of which was this may be the last community dinner we will have.

With only three members, it makes it so hard to do all



that work and get this event rolling. Just to say a few, we also cook lunch for the Fishing Derby on Father's Day. You should see the fish they pull out of the private lake we go to. No parents fishing, just the kids!!! We cook hamburgers and dogs for the three Little Britches rodeos we have here. We would love to have more members so that we can do even more events. This is our 50th year for our South Fork club and I hate to see it end.

If anybody is interested in getting together, planning some fun stuff with kids and the community (and us of course), please feel free to

come to our meetings and just see what we're about. We meet on Thursdays at noon at Los Chavollos in South Fork and would absolutely love to have some new faces!! We don't want to stop doing all the things we do for the community, but it's rough with only three people. To find out more call Karen at 720-313-4834 or email her at [mkmiller-mink@aol.com](mailto:mkmiller-mink@aol.com).  
South Fork Kiwanis Club



Courtesy photos Karen Miller

The South Fork Kiwanis thanked everyone who helped with the club's annual Thanksgiving Dinner hosted on Thanksgiving Day in South Fork.

# A bit more of the history of Mennonite Voluntary Service

Editor,  
I'd like to thank Vanessa Rene for her article in the Dec. 3, 2023, Courier about Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS). As the long-time Local Program Coordinator for MVS, I will add a bit more history.

MVS first brought full-time volunteers into the San Luis Valley in 1983, making this our 40th year of providing service workers to local nonprofits and public agencies. In our initial years, our volunteers worked alongside other faith-based volunteers from the Catholic VIDA program and Presbyterian Volunteers in Mission, as well as volunteers from the federal government's VISTA program. More recently, we have enjoyed collaborating with various Ameri-

Corps programs active in our Valley. MVS placement sites have varied over the years, depending on local needs and the interests of volunteer applicants. We began primarily with nursing and other health-related placements, in order to help fill unmet hospital and public healthcare needs. Over time, we also began to place volunteers with what are now long-time Valley nonprofits such as Tu Casa, the Immigrant Resource Center, and Center for Restorative Programs. More recently, the trend for young adults serving in our program has gravitated more to environmental and agricultural sustainability efforts, such as the Rio Grande Farm Park and Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project. As Vanessa's article noted, many

of our volunteers have stayed in the Alamosa area and now provide on-going leadership to nonprofits for which they first volunteered or, in the case of the Alamosa Bicycle Coalition, that they had a role in creating.

Our newest placement is with the Alamosa School District, where an MVS volunteer is providing support to English Language learners at Ortega Middle School. We are grateful to the many community partners who have welcomed and supported our volunteers over these many years, and look forward to on-going engagements in the community.

Alice M. Price, Local Program Coordinator  
Mennonite Voluntary Service

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Publisher

Brian Williams  
Managing Editor

# Valley Courier

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Editor's Note: The views expressed in individual columns on this page do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Valley Courier.





# Lifestyle

## Unexpected driving hazards: Don't get caught off-guard

(NAPSI) — The holiday season, with its festive spirit, family gatherings, and vacation plans, can also include some unexpected driving challenges—but you can still navigate them safely.

### How to Drive Down Your Risk

Here's a rundown of unanticipated driving hazards of the fall and winter holidays and how to tackle them.

- **Distractions Galore:** The holiday season can be distracting with dazzling light displays, roadside decorations, and parades. While they add to the festive spirit, they can divert your attention. Solution? Stay focused. Remind yourself constantly to keep your eyes on the road and be extra cautious in areas with heavy decorations.

- **Early Sunsets:** With Daylight Saving Time over, it gets dark earlier. Combined with fog or rain, early sunsets can reduce visibility considerably. Be sure your vehicle has fog lights and that all lights are functioning correctly. Avoid high beams in foggy conditions as they can reflect back and impair visibility further.

- **Increased Traffic:**

Holiday shoppers, travelers, and delivery trucks flood the roads during this time. Try to plan your trips during off-peak hours and always factor in extra time. Check traffic updates before heading out and consider alternate routes.

- **Unpredictable Weather:** Fall and winter bring a mix of rain, fog, ice, and sometimes even snow. Regularly check tire pressure and tread depth. Ensure wipers are in good condition and use defrosters to keep windows clear. If you're driving in snowy regions, consider investing in snow tires or chains.

- **Impaired Drivers:** Unfortunately, the holidays see a spike in alcohol consumption, and consequently, impaired drivers. Stay vigilant, especially during nighttime. If you spot a vehicle swerving or driving erratically, maintain a safe distance and consider reporting them.

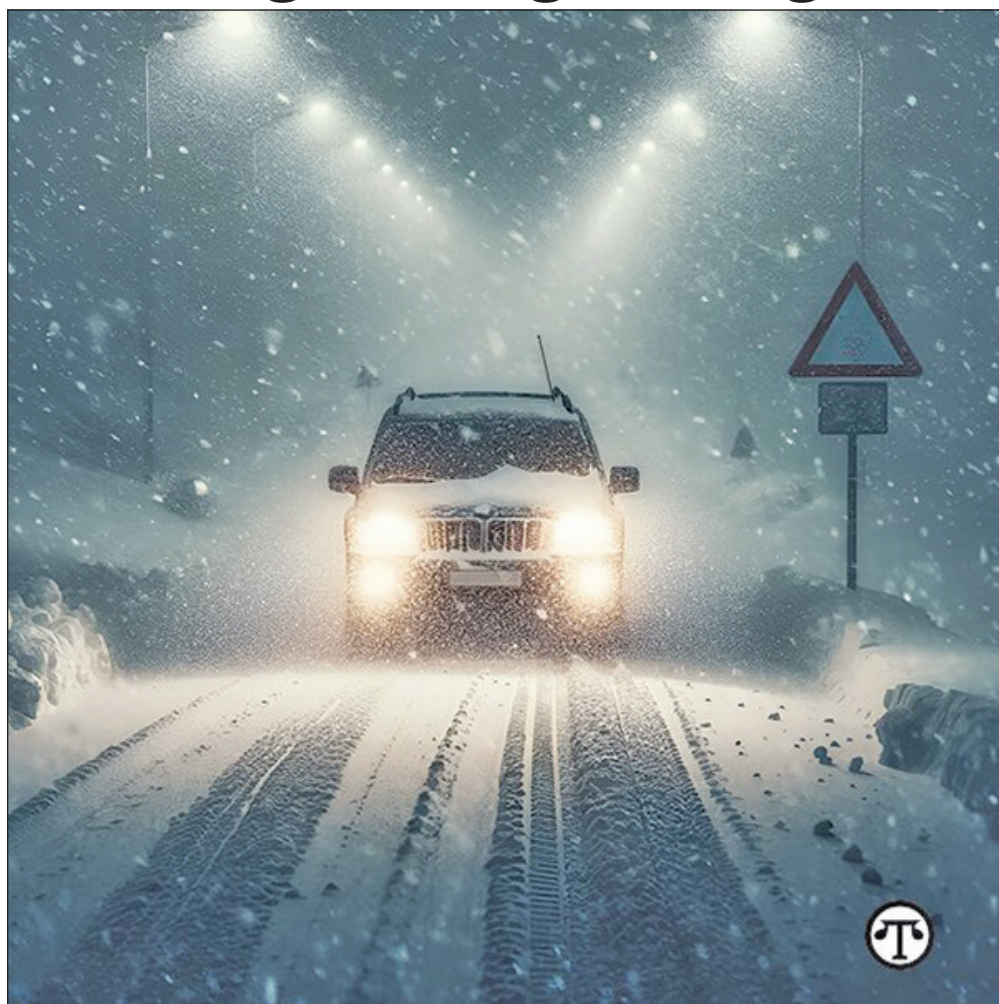
- **Parking Lot Perils:** With malls and shopping centers bustling, parking lot incidents increase. Watch out for pedestrians and cars backing out without noticing. Always park in well-lit areas and

be patient; rushing can lead to fender benders.

- **Fatigue:** Between holiday preparations and long drives, fatigue can set in. Remember, a drowsy driver is as dangerous as a drunk one. Plan breaks during long trips, share driving responsibilities if possible, and consider an overnight stay instead of driving back late.

- **Wildlife:** Fall and winter are active times for wildlife. Deer, in particular, can be more prevalent on roads, especially during dawn and dusk. Always scan the road ahead and use high beams when there's no oncoming traffic.

The holiday season does present unique driving challenges, but with awareness and preparation, you can get around them. As you celebrate and travel, make safety a priority. After all, the best gift you can give your loved ones is ensuring you arrive safely.



NAPSI photo

For happier holidays and a safer new year, be extra careful on the roads.

## How Americans plan to spend and save this holiday season

(NAPSI) — The holidays can bring the pressure to overspend — but you can resist it and still be merry and bright.

### What The Gens Are Doing

With festivities fast approaching, Rocket Money surveyed 2,000 U.S. adults celebrating this year to find out how they prepare financially for the season.

### Gen X leads the holiday spending spree, while Gen Z prefers in-person shopping

When asked about budgeting for the season, nearly three out of five U.S. adults report setting a budget. The study found that Gen X plans to spend the most money, with an average budget of \$717 for holiday gifts, décor, entertainment and more. Meanwhile, Gen Z plans to spend the least with \$591 total but set the highest amount for all generations when it came to holiday décor.

Although Gen Z has the smallest budget, they are the ones most likely to shop in-person, with over 40% saying they prefer to shop at physical stores. This contrasts with the approximately 60% of Gen X, Millennials and Boomers who plan to find gifts online.

### Budgeting for holidays and beyond

Americans have learned to prepare their finances for the increase in spending during the holidays. The survey found that approximately 157 million Americans (60%) plan to create a budget or set aside money this year specifically for the holidays — a 12% increase from last year. This suggests that Americans are becoming more conscious of their financial habits, especially in the current economy.

Beyond the holidays, nearly half of all Americans plan to make budgeting a part of their New Year's resolutions, according to the survey. Of those who plan to make budgeting a goal, 66.7% have already started eval-

uating their overall 2024 financial budget as of October 1, 2023. Americans are also planning long-term. For those looking to manage their finances and make the holidays a little less taxing monetarily, Rocket Money can help users track spending and create budgets.

"The holidays are a time of celebration, but that can also mean high spending. Rocket Money helps users easily track their expenses and set budgets so they can more easily work toward their financial goals," said Yahya Mokhtarzada, co-founder of the company. "Rocket Money can also provide insight into subscription spending and cancel any unwanted subscriptions with the push of a button — putting money back in users' pockets."

The holiday season can cause mixed emotions for many Americans, as they balance their desire to celebrate with their need to save and budget. By being aware of spending during the holidays, they can make more informed and responsible financial decisions — and enjoy a happier and healthier season.

## "ISN'T IT TIME WE MET?!"

### What Are the Limitations in Your Life?

- Do you cover your mouth when you laugh, cough or sneeze, fearing your dentures will slip and fall out?
- Do you avoid going out for dinner with friends and family because all you can eat is soft, mushy foods?
- Do you dream of one day eating the foods you used to eat, like a big juicy steak or delicious green salad?
- Do you have that 'sunken denture' look, with lines and wrinkles around your nose and mouth?

Hi! I'm Dr. Todd Rogers, born and raised in Colorado. Almost weekly I meet individuals who say, "I just don't go out in public anymore because I am too embarrassed. Can you give me my life back?"



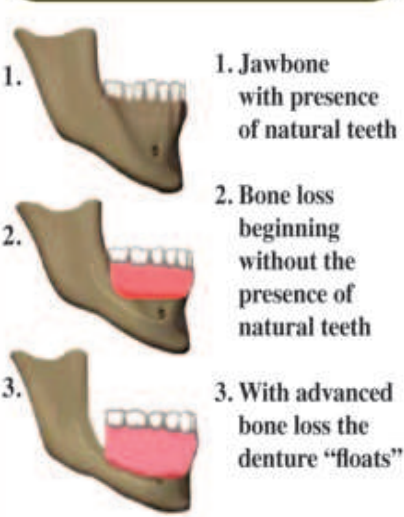
Over the years, as I've placed Dental Implants, I've realized that there are many wonderful people with limitations emotionally, mentally and physically. They are desperately searching for a way to improve the quality of their life. Loose, ill-fitting dentures or teeth that cannot be restored feels like a condition that is disabling and almost impossible for those around you to understand.

### I Can Change Your Life!

- Think of the 'end' in mind...a denture that will look good, feel good, and last a long time.
- Start to finish, all dental treatment is done in just one location, with one dentist. And, Yes! You will leave with teeth that day.
- During your personal consultation, you and Dr. Rogers will discuss exactly what you would like to have done, the cost, and the time necessary to achieve the expected results.
- A painless, comfortable procedure is of utmost importance to us. To help you relax, oral medications as well as IV sedation are available.
- Dr. Rogers has many years of specialized training and experience in the surgical placement and restorative placement of Dental Implants.

### "Why Don't Your Dentures Fit, No Matter How Many Relines You've Had?"

### The Problem: My Dentures Don't Fit = Bone Loss!



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My staff and I encourage you to call my office and schedule a consultation, including a complete oral examination to determine if you are a candidate for dental implants. **ALL AT NO CHARGE!!!** Together, we will discuss exactly what YOU would like to have done, the cost, and the time necessary to achieve the expected results. You will find that the procedure is **AFFORDABLE, IMMEDIATE** and has **GUARANTEED** results!

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# Christmas Light Parade

Saturday-December 23<sup>rd</sup> 6:00pm





# Classifieds

**221 - HELP WANTED**

**ALAMOSA SCHOOL DISTRICT** is now accepting applications for the following positions: **GIRLS INTRAMURAL BASKETBALL COACH (OMS)**. Applications are available online at <https://www.alamosaschools.org>. For more information, contact Tracy Vigil at 719-587-1600. Application deadline is until filled. EOE. (12/9/23AS)

**COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY** is hiring an Extension Area Specialist, 4-H Youth Development, for the SLV Area. This position will foster strong, healthy, youth by providing leadership, guidance, direction, and assistance in the implementation of the overall 4-H Youth Development program. This is a full-time, twelve (12) month, non-tenure track Extension faculty position. For the job announcement, required qualifications, salary range, and application instructions, go to <https://jobs.colostate.edu/postings/136813>. Application deadline is December 17, 2023. We are committed to increasing the diversity of our staff and providing culturally responsive programs and services. Therefore, we encourage responses from people of all backgrounds and abilities. We invite you to review Colorado State University's Principles of Community that guide our mission and vision of access, teaching, service, and engagement. CSU is an EO/EA/AA employer and conducts background checks on all final candidates. For more information, call Larry Brown at 719-852-7381. (12/16/23AS)

**221 - HELP WANTED**

**MARKET & OUTREACH COORDINATOR:** Join Us and Make a Difference! Market & Outreach Coordinator Opportunity at SAN LUIS VALLEY LOCAL FOODS COALITION. Elevate our programs through marketing, events, and community engagement. Bilingual English/Spanish preferred. 32-40 hrs/week, \$23/hr. Enjoy benefits like PTO, holidays, health/dental insurance, and more. Submit your Resume and Cover Letter to opportunity.slvlocalfoods@gmail.com. Details at [www.slvlocalfoods.org/jobs/](http://www.slvlocalfoods.org/jobs/). Act now to be part of positive change! (1/2/23AS)

**HEAD JUNIOR HIGH GIRLS' BASKETBALL COACH** needed at DEL NORTE JR. HIGH SCHOOL. Experience as a coach or assistant coach at the middle school and/or high school level is preferred. Must possess: effective coaching techniques and a thorough knowledge of the rules of the sport; and have the ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with school administrators, parents, and students. Please contact Gibbs Sanchez, Athletic Director, at [gsanchez@urtigers.co](mailto:gsanchez@urtigers.co) 719-657-4020; or Annie Hardy, Principal, at [ahardy@urtigers.co](mailto:ahardy@urtigers.co), 719-657-4020. Applications may be found on our website, [urtigers.co](http://urtigers.co). (12/30/23AS)

**221 - HELP WANTED**

**EXECUTIVE COORDINATOR: JOIN** us and make an impact! Executive Coordinator wanted at SAN LUIS VALLEY LOCAL FOODS COALITION. Manage budgets, fundraising, and projects for a dynamic nonprofit fostering local food equity. Bilingual English/Spanish preferred. 32 hrs/week, \$25/hr. Benefits include PTO, holidays, health/dental insurance, and more. Send your Resume and Cover Letter to opportunity.slvlocalfoods@gmail.com. For more information, visit our website at [www.slvlocalfoods.org/jobs/](http://www.slvlocalfoods.org/jobs/) (1/2/24AS)

**LOOKING FOR TRUCK DRIVER** WITH CDL and clean driving record. Must be willing to work on farm/ranch when needed. Full-time position. Call John 719-937-1591. (12/30/23AS)

**BOOKKEEPER: LOCAL, WELL-RESPECTED NON-PROFIT** agency hiring a full-time bookkeeper. Responsibilities include payroll and benefits administration and support for other accounting projects. We're looking for a motivated, values-driven individual with experience in QuickBooks, Excel. Initiative essential; training and support provided. Join our staff of dedicated professionals and learn the joys and satisfaction of serving others. Salary \$40k-45k, DOE, full benefit package. Send cover letter, resume/request job description to [hr@lapunte.net](mailto:hr@lapunte.net), 719-589-5909 ext238. [www.lapunte.net](http://www.lapunte.net) (12/20/23AS)

**221 - HELP WANTED**

**DEL NORTE JR/SR HIGH SCHOOL** is accepting applications for a SECONDARY FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER and ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER (ELL) K-12 SITE COORDINATOR. The applicant will need to be able to teach Spanish. The applicant will also be responsible for managing the ELL requirements of CDE, including ACCESS testing for ELLs, ELL identification, and ELL classroom supports. If interested, please send a completed application, resume, and cover letter to Annie Hardy, DNHS Principal at [ahardy@urtigers.co](mailto:ahardy@urtigers.co) or contact Mrs. Hardy at (719) 657-4020 for more information. Applications can be downloaded from [www.urtigers.co](http://www.urtigers.co). (12/15/23AS)

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# Comics

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE

### NEA Crossword Puzzle

- ACROSS**
- 1 Brillo alternative
  - 4 Talk
  - 7 Preschooler's lesson
  - 11 Fodder for animals
  - 12 Aqua
  - 13 Actor — Beery
  - 14 Electrical unit
  - 15 Addict
  - 16 Make adjustments to
  - 17 Marionette
  - 19 Fair-haired ones
  - 21 Big sandwich
  - 22 Actor — Garcia
  - 23 Parade vehicle
  - 25 Like breakfast dishes
  - 27 Many years indeed
  - 28 Pot
  - 30 Makes imperfect
  - 34 — and means
  - 36 Building annexes
  - 38 — generis
  - 39 Net in hockey
- DOWN**
- 1 Workplace
  - 2 Lanai neighbor
  - 3 Composition for orchestra
  - 4 Vigor
  - 5 100 square meters
  - 6 Remark that stings
  - 7 Synonym's opposite

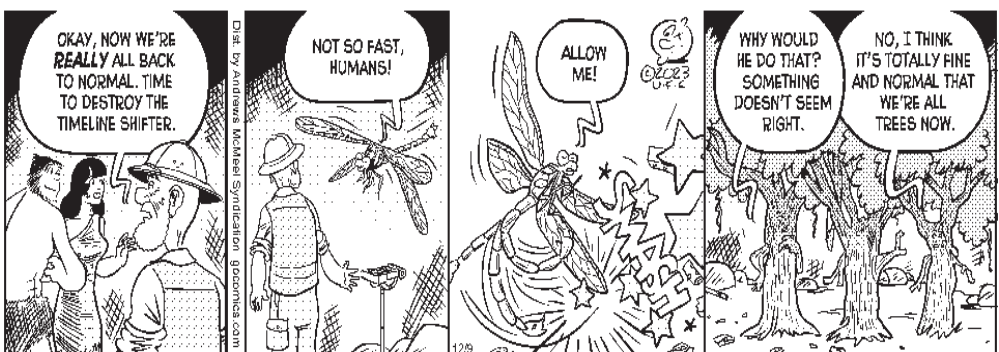
### Answer to Previous Puzzle

S	L	O	W	M	A	P	A	L	M	S	
T	A	M	E	A	R	E	M	O	A	T	
E	V	I	D	E	N	C	E	I	G	L	U
P	A	T	V	I	A	L	S	O	L	D	
			D	E	A	D	E	N	S		
S	H	O	E	C	E	D	E	R	E	P	
A	I	M	E	D			E	T	U	D	
C	R	E	P	E			R	O	D	I	N
K	E	N		C	A	P	S	L	E	T	S
			T	O	T	A	L	E	D		
E	T	C	H	O	P	A	L	K	E	A	
R	O	A	R	N	A	V	Y	S	E	A	L
I	D	L	E	E	Y	E	P	E	R	T	
C	O	L	E	S	A	D	A	N	N	O	

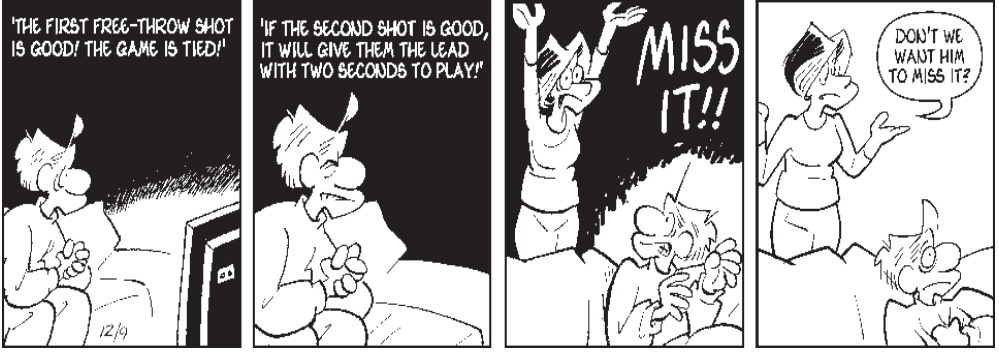
- 8 Obligated
- 9 Halloween loot
- 10 "— Out of My League"
- 12 — Rico
- 18 Legume
- 20 Fall behind
- 23 One or two only
- 24 Mauna —
- 25 Fashion magazine
- 26 Liquid meas.
- 29 Chair part
- 31 Outer space object
- 32 Regret
- 33 Knight's title
- 35 Burned with steam
- 37 Turn
- 40 "What — — supposed to do?"
- 42 High card
- 43 "— — of Two Cities"
- 44 Wet thoroughly
- 45 Bravery
- 46 Did in part
- 47 Assignment
- 49 Venue
- 50 "Born Free" lioness
- 53 Feather scarf

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
11			12					13		
14			15					16		
17			18			19	20			
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46					47		48		49	50
51					52	53			54	
55					56				57	
58					59				60	

## ALLEY OOP



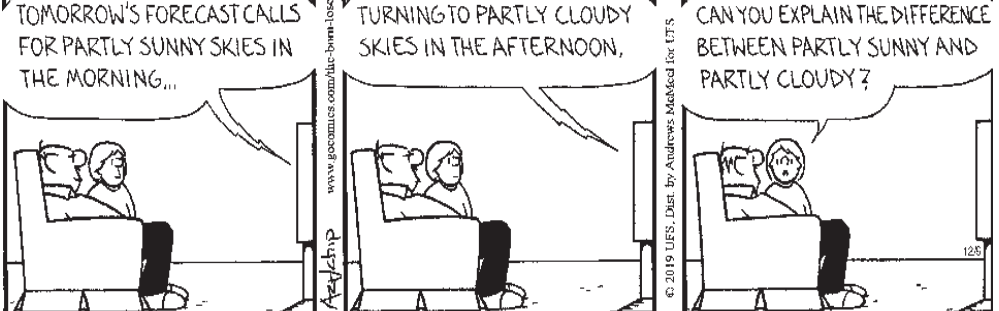
## ARLO & JANIS



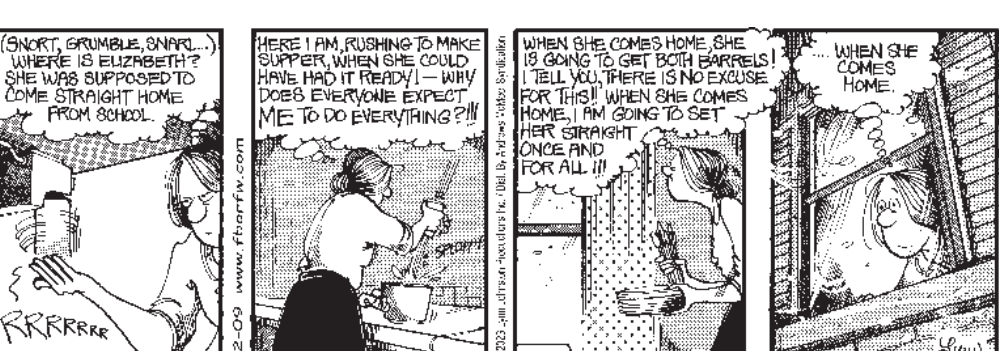
## BIG NATE



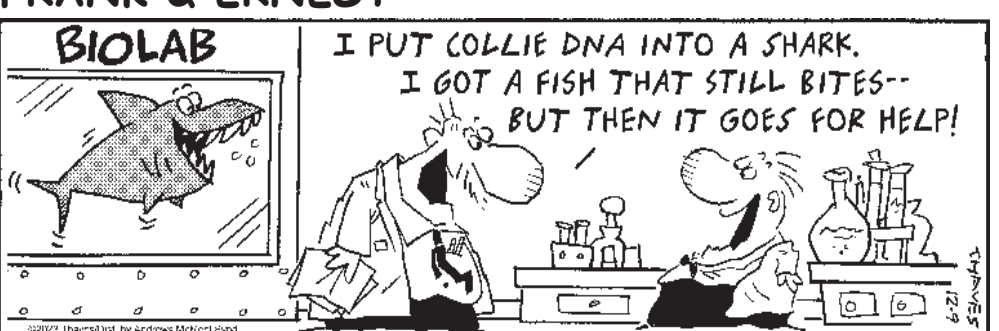
## THE BORN LOSER



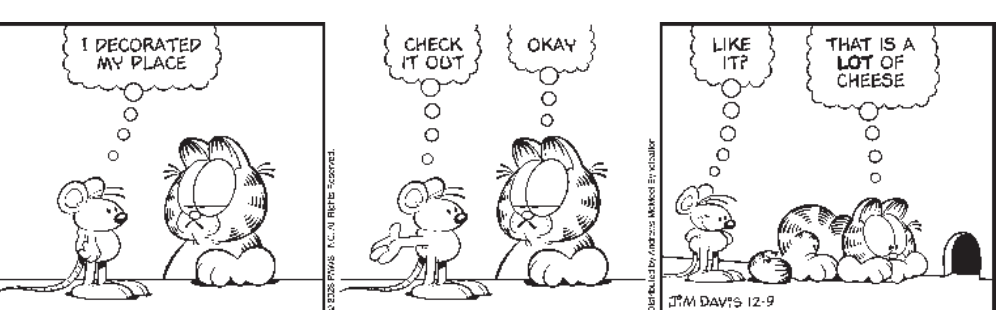
## FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE



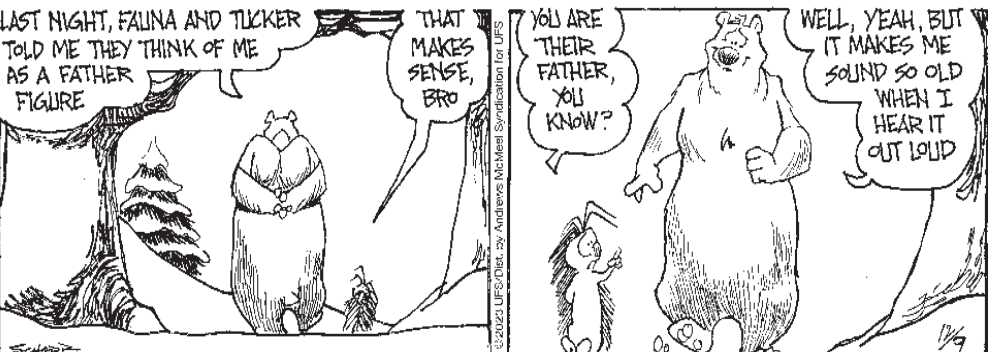
## FRANK & ERNEST



## GARFIELD



## THE GRIZZWELLS



## PEANUTS



## SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

5	2			9	4					
				8		4	3			
8				3			5			
3		1		5		2		9		
			4		3		8		5	
	8			3					2	
	3	7			4					
				5	6				1	8

### PREVIOUS SOLUTION

9	6	7	1	3	4	2	5	8
2	3	1	6	8	5	7	9	4
5	8	4	7	2	9	3	1	6
1	4	5	8	6	2	9	3	7
8	7	9	4	1	3	6	2	5
6	2	3	9	5	7	8	4	1
4	5	2	3	7	6	1	8	9
7	9	8	2	4	1	5	6	3
3	1	6	5	9	8	4	7	2

**HOW TO PLAY:**  
Each row, column and set of 3-by-3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 through 9 without repetition.

## HERMAN



# Son caught off guard by parents' reconciliation

DEAR ABBY: My husband's parents divorced 50 years ago when he was a newborn. Both remarried within a few years. My husband was raised by his mom and stepdad. His mother and father had little contact after their divorce. Because of that, my husband does not have a close relationship with his biological father, who made little effort to be in his life or the life of our children.

Recently, both of my husband's stepparents passed away. After their passing, his mom and dad decided to get back together. They told us recently that they plan to remarry. My husband is having a hard time with their reunion. He feels they are rebounding from the death of their spouses. How can he learn to accept a relationship he doesn't agree with but ultimately has no control over? -- HISTORY REPEATS IN THE SOUTH

DEAR HISTORY REPEATS: Unless his mother and biological father can resolve the issues that drove them apart in the first place, their remarriage isn't likely to be successful. Suggest to your husband that he

withhold judgment until he sees how the reunion works out. If he sees his mother is happy, he must accept that although he and his birth father may never be close, this was her choice.

DEAR ABBY: Shortly after my daughter's surgery, I got a text that I had received a food delivery gift from a friend. The text came from the delivery service, with a photo of the package sitting at the front door. The trouble was, it wasn't MY front door -- the package had been delivered to the wrong address.

What would be the polite way to address this? Of course I want to thank the gift-giver, but should I let them know I never actually got the gift? I'd feel bad having them put even more effort into their gift, as I know those delivery services can be a real hassle. And I wouldn't expect them to buy it again if, say, the food was redelivered correctly later, but cold. Thanks for your advice. -- GIFT GONE IN ILLINOIS

DEAR GIFT GONE: Notify the delivery service of the screw-up. Then let your friends know you



## ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

are grateful for their thoughtfulness, but do not want them charged for something that was misdelivered. They may want to dispute the charge on their credit card.

DEAR ABBY: My niece just had a baby. She's going to marry a man who has two children. I will be sending money to her child on birthdays and Christmas. Should I do the same for her husband's children? -- UNCLE J. IN MASSACHUSETTS

DEAR UNCLE J.: That would be a lovely gesture. If you didn't, it could cause resentment when the children become old enough to realize they were being treated as "less than."

# Lifestyle

## A veterinarian's top tips for a safe, festive holiday season with pets

By **DR. WHITNEY MILLER**

(NAPSI) — Pet parents across the country are gearing up to spread holiday cheer with their favorite furry family members. Whether cuddling by the fire with your cat, tossing snowballs for your dog or sprucing up your small pet's habitat with seasonal décor, you can make every moment merry with your pets all season long with these essential tips:

- Find value all season long: Petco's Merry Makings collection has everything pets and pet parents need to make the season easy, affordable and special. Stock up on gifts under \$10 including tennis ball ornaments, cake pop-inspired treats, pre-filled stockings for dogs and cats, and more than 40 toys under \$7 such as cat teasers and plush toys. The Vital Care membership program is a gift that keeps on giving with year-round savings on regular check-ups and everyday essentials for cats, dogs and small animals.
- Watch the winter chill: A good rule of thumb is if it's cold enough that you need a coat outside, your pet might need an extra layer as well. Adorable, cozy knit sweaters and red-and-green plaid jackets make terrific holiday accessories that

will also keep your furry friend warm. Petco's lifestyle and fashion brand, Reddy, offers stylish, functional winter gear including bomber jackets, puffer coats and beanies. For chilly morning walks, pet parents can use the sherpa-lined hand warmer leash attachment that offers protection from the elements. If your pet is walking on frozen ground or salt-treated sidewalks, protect their paws with a set of booties to prevent irritation or pain.

- Make memories together: The holidays are often filled with visits to loved ones and social gatherings. Help get your pet ready for all the festivities with a special holiday grooming package featuring a gingerbread-inspired bandana, sugar cookie spritz and more. On Dec. 2, pet parents can bring pets to participating Petco pet care centers nationally for free Photos with Santa. They can also consider donating to Petco Love at checkout to help pets in need.

- Brush up on manners: Schedule a positive dog training session to help ensure pups are confident going into the holiday season. If it's your dog's first holiday season, try out a group Puppy, Beginner or Fundamentals class to help them learn basic cues and build your bond.

If your dog struggles with mild separation or social anxiety, a personalized one-on-one session can help address triggers and develop strategies to make experiences more comfortable for your pet.

- Put their healthiest paw forward: The holidays are an excellent time to check in with your veterinarian and confirm pets are up to date on vaccinations and routine care. During this time of gathering and increased travel, it's important to follow best practices such as regular handwashing to prevent the spread of illness; monitor pets for signs of sickness and keep them away from other pets if they are unwell. Pet parents can also incorporate supplements such as a calming chew or probiotic powder into their dog's diet to help address anxiety or an upset stomach over the holidays. Finally, while humans may want to eat cookies for breakfast and candy canes for dessert, pets should keep their treats to no more than 10% of their diet during the holiday and year-round. Also, make sure pets avoid typical holiday foods such as chocolate, turkey skin, bones and onions as well as poisonous plants such as mistletoe, pine needles, holly and poinsettias.

Dr. Miller is the Chief Veterinarian at Petco, The Health + Wellness

Co. and a member of the Petco Pet Wellness Council. She received her DVM and MBA degrees from

Colorado State University and has been board certified in Preventive Medicine since 2018.

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## State leaders urge action to combat rise in hate crimes in Colorado

By **LYNDSEY TOOMER**

Colorado Newsline

With Colorado seeing a new spike in incidents of hate, Democratic state officials and other leaders gathered Wednesday to discuss the causes of the increase and how to prevent future hate crimes.

At a roundtable discussion led by state Sen. Rhonda Fields of Aurora and Attorney General Phil Weiser in Denver, participants shared data and anecdotes about recent trends in hate crimes in Colorado. While a rise in antisemitic and Islamophobic hate has been making headlines nationwide, many other communities are being increasingly targeted, too.

Fields said while she knows tackling hate in Colorado is an ambitious goal, she couldn't ignore the increase she has seen in her own neighborhood and wanted to take steps to do something about it. She said a goal of the roundtable was to turn data into action.

"This has been an issue that has been troubling me for the last six months, I would say, and I've been reaching out to different agencies to get a sense of what can we do better," Fields said. "And I didn't want to act like this issue that we're going to be talking about today is invisible, because it's not."

Scott Levin, director of the Anti-Defamation League's Mountain Region, which includes Colorado, New Mexico and Wyoming, said having laws in place working to prevent hate crimes sends a message countering those who commit hate crimes that Colorado values every identity and wants to protect its residents.

"When someone commits a crime that includes a hate crime, it is not

just because they want to rob you or hurt you or do something," Levin said. "They want to send a message, which is that people that look like you that pray like you love like you who have a different identity than maybe they do, that they aren't welcome in this community."

Jeremy Shaver, senior associate regional director of the ADL Mountain Region, said most recent data has shown that Colorado has seen a steady increase in reported hate crimes since 2015, with 2022 seeing the highest increase reported in the 30 years the Federal Bureau of Investigation has been collecting data. Hate crimes include incidents in which people are targeted for their race, ethnicity, ancestry, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability and religion.

"Hate against any group is viewed to me as hate against every group," Weiser said. "We know we've got work to do with law enforcement to develop greater sensitivity, greater tools to investigate and address hate

crimes."

One idea several at the roundtable supported is creating a hotline for people who want to report a hate crime, but aren't necessarily comfortable calling and reporting to the police. Local hotlines already exist in Aurora and Boulder, but a statewide version could help connect more victims of hate crimes to resources that can help them.

Based on data collected from different organizations at the table, somewhere between 4-18% of Coloradans who have been victims of a hate crime have reported it to law enforcement, advocates said.

The roundtable also included a presentation of data from the Colorado Bureau of Investigation. Other attendees included representatives of the American Civil Liberties Union, the Colorado Organization for Victim Assistance, law enforcement officials and state Rep. Mike Weissman, an Aurora Democrat who chairs the Colorado House Judiciary Committee.

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- 3

**Local businesses sell a wide range of great products at affordable prices and cater to the needs and wants of the community.**
- 4

**Shopping Local saves you money and time!** Travel expenses and personal time make the overall cost of items higher.
- 5

**Shopping Local retains our community:** Without the support in the local community, restaurants, shops and services are forced to close.
- 6

**Shopping Local retains our distinctiveness:** Local businesses respond quicker to the needs of the customers and stock products to meet the core community's needs.
- 7

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- 8

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- 9

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December 2023



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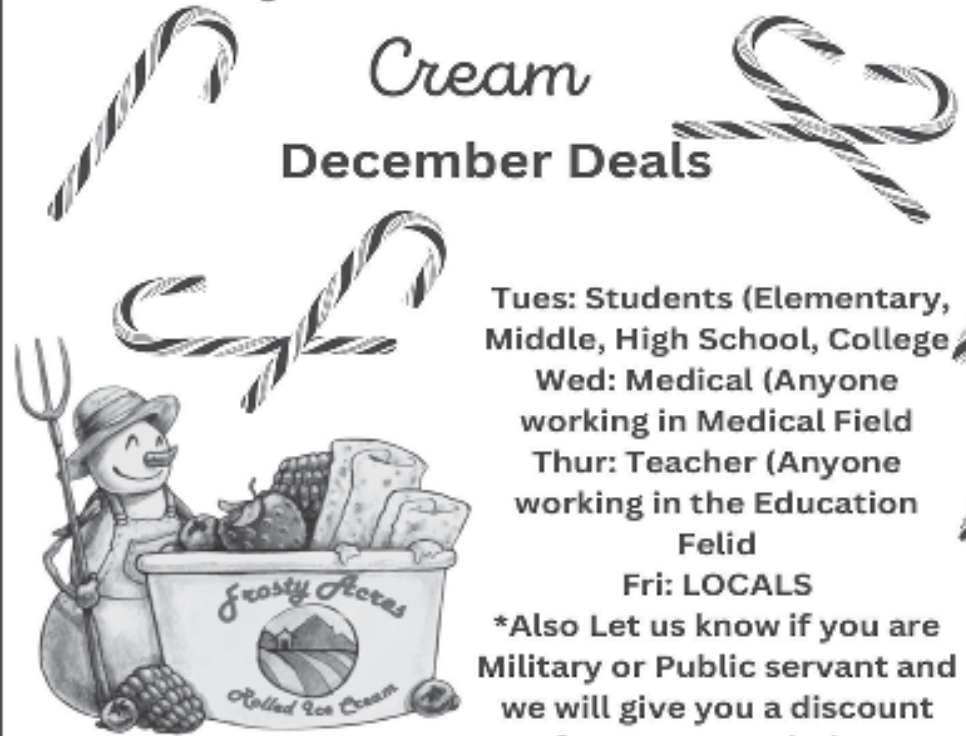
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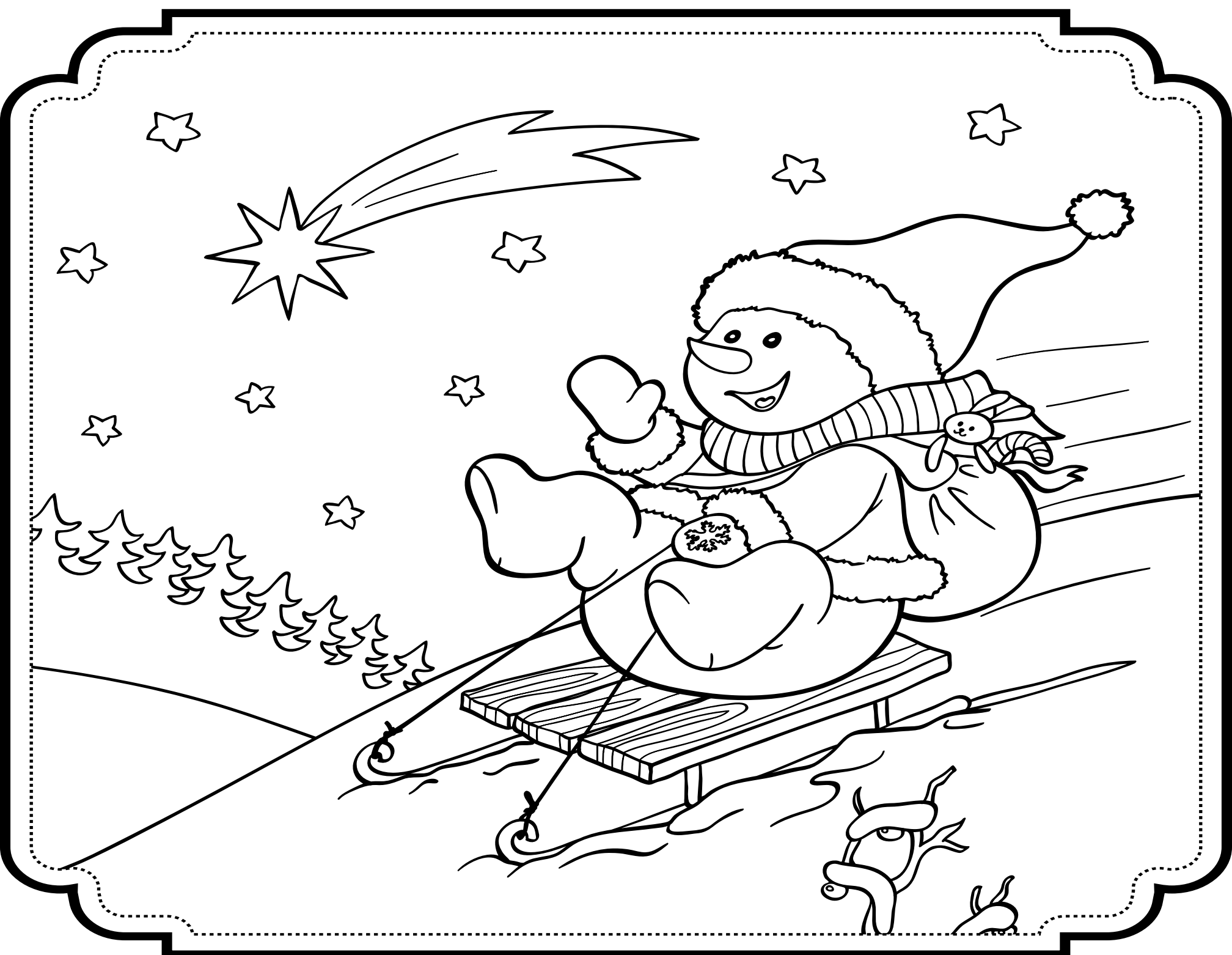
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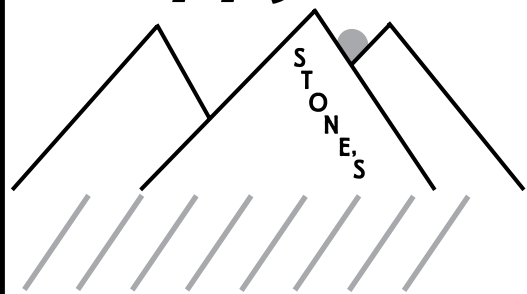
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# Hope it's mAGical!

As another holiday season comes rolling in, we'd like to share our best wishes and gratitude with all of the folks who have helped make our year so special. Your trust in us means a lot, and we greatly appreciate your loyal support.

*We wish you and your family a merry Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year!*



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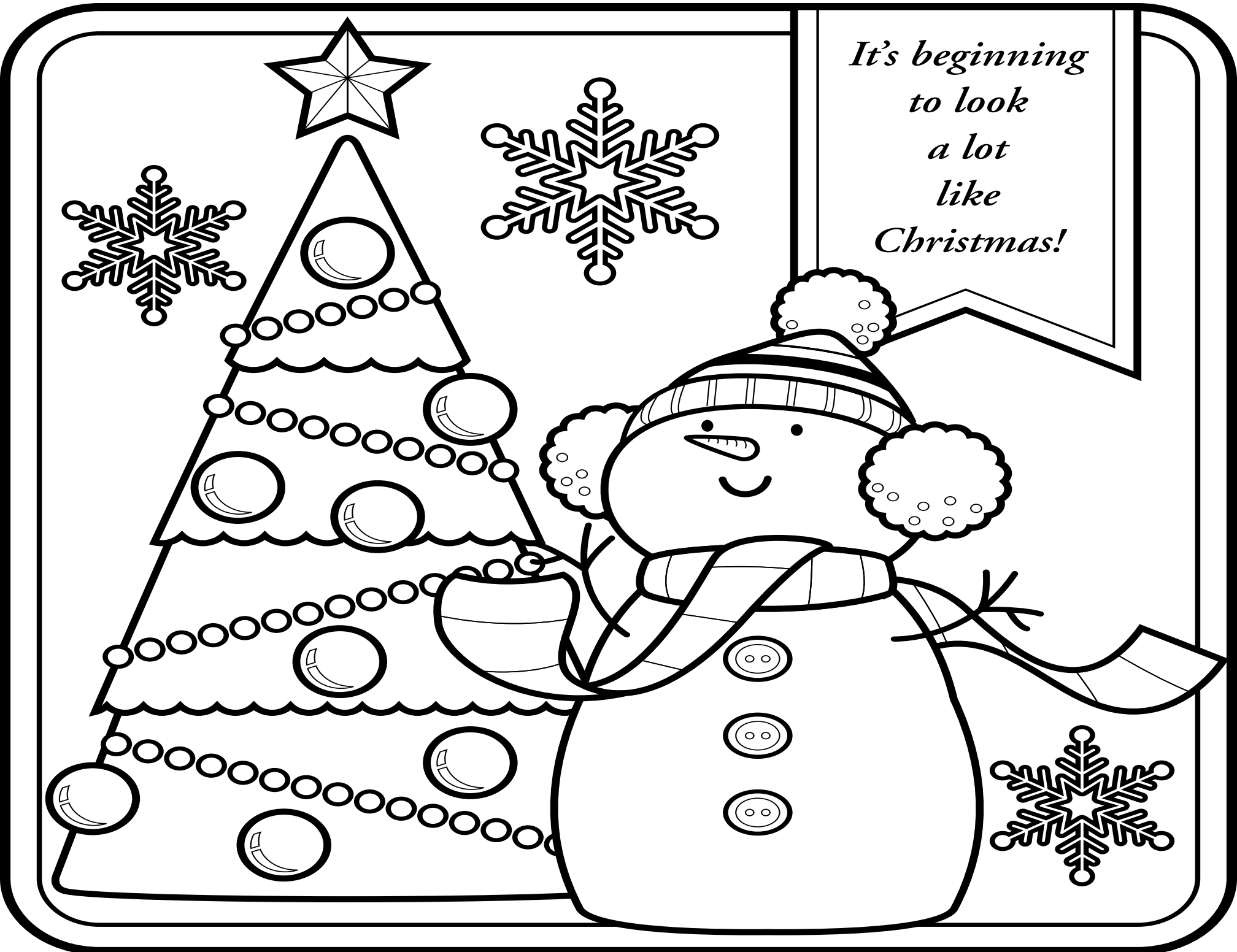
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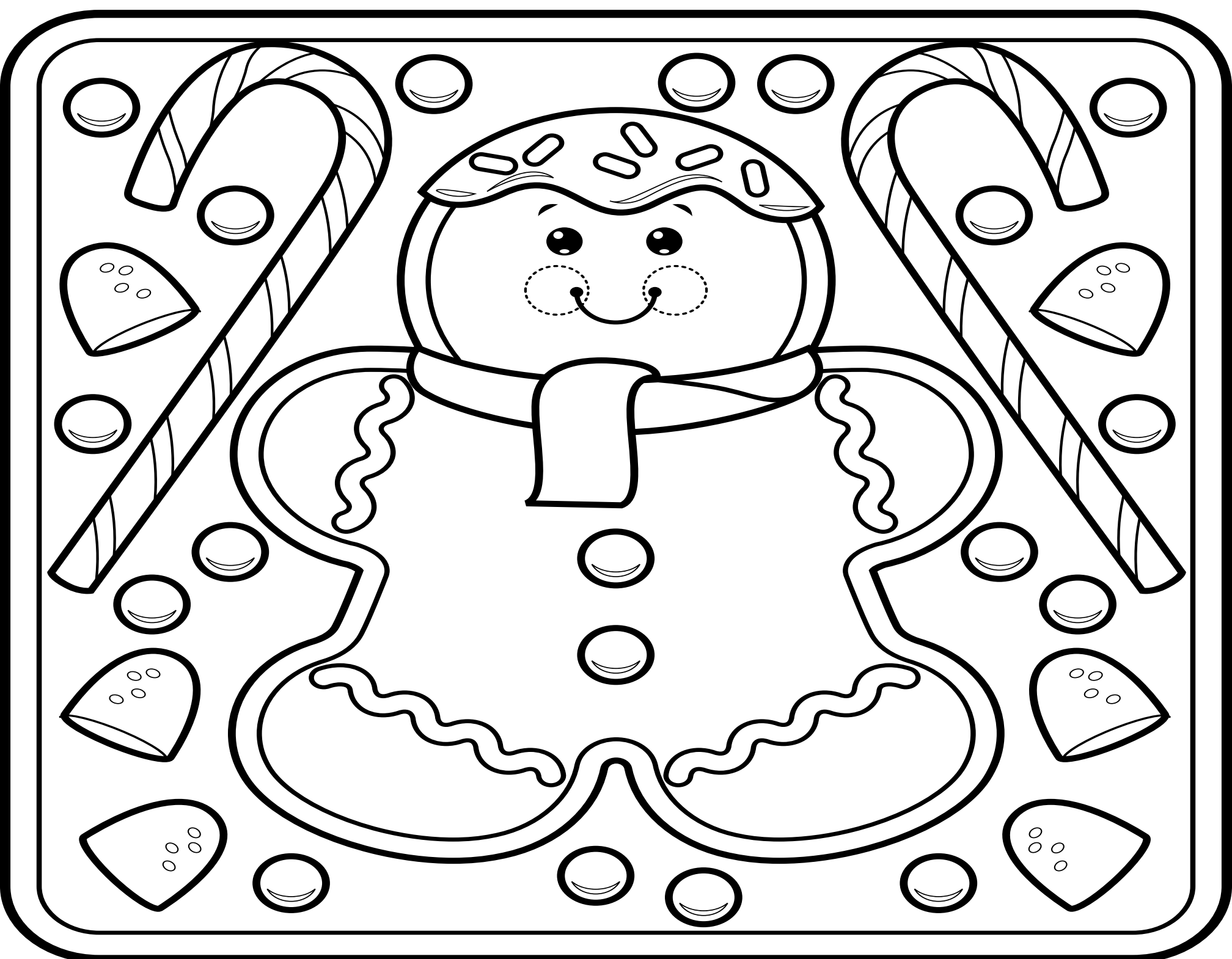


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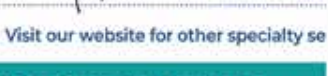
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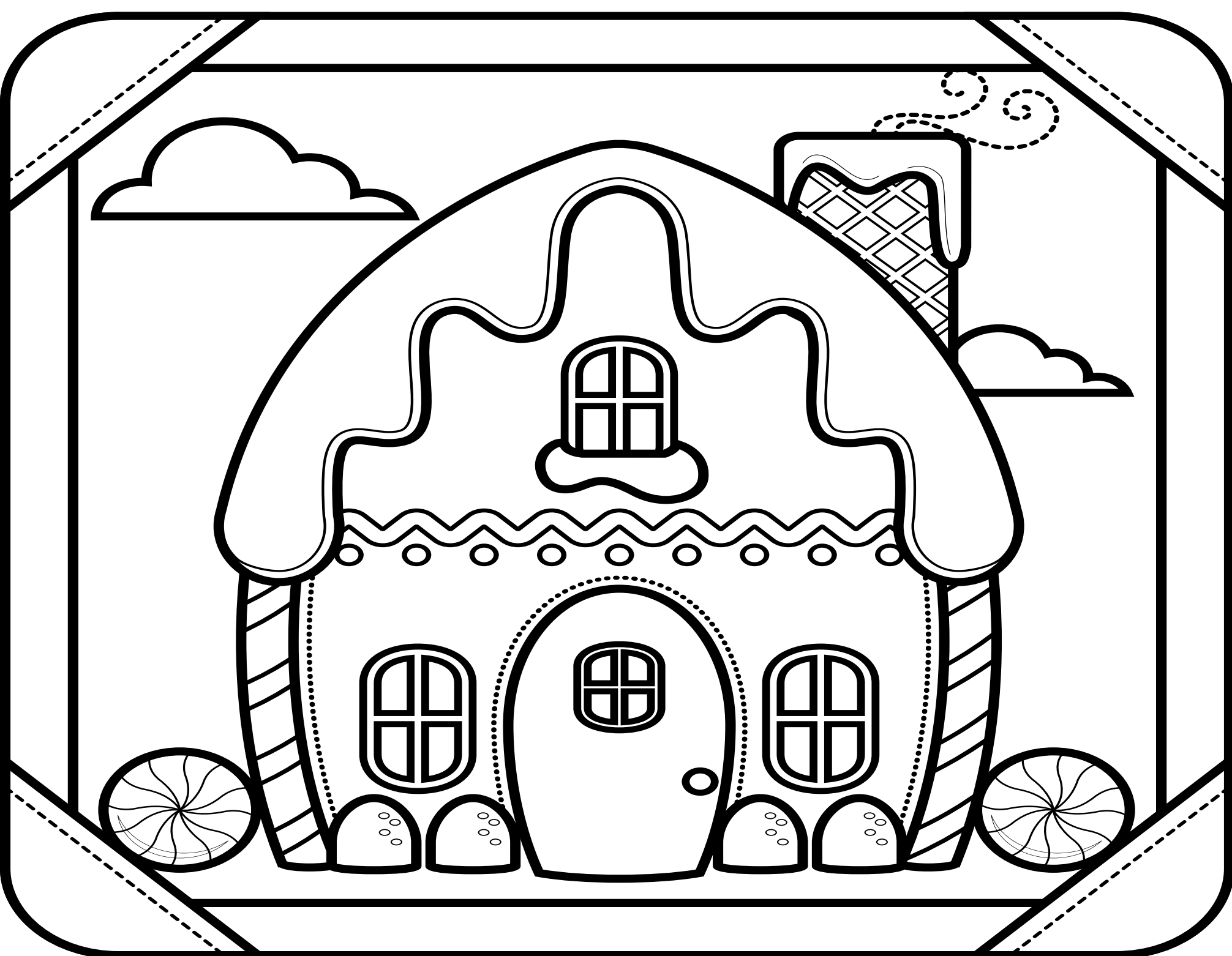
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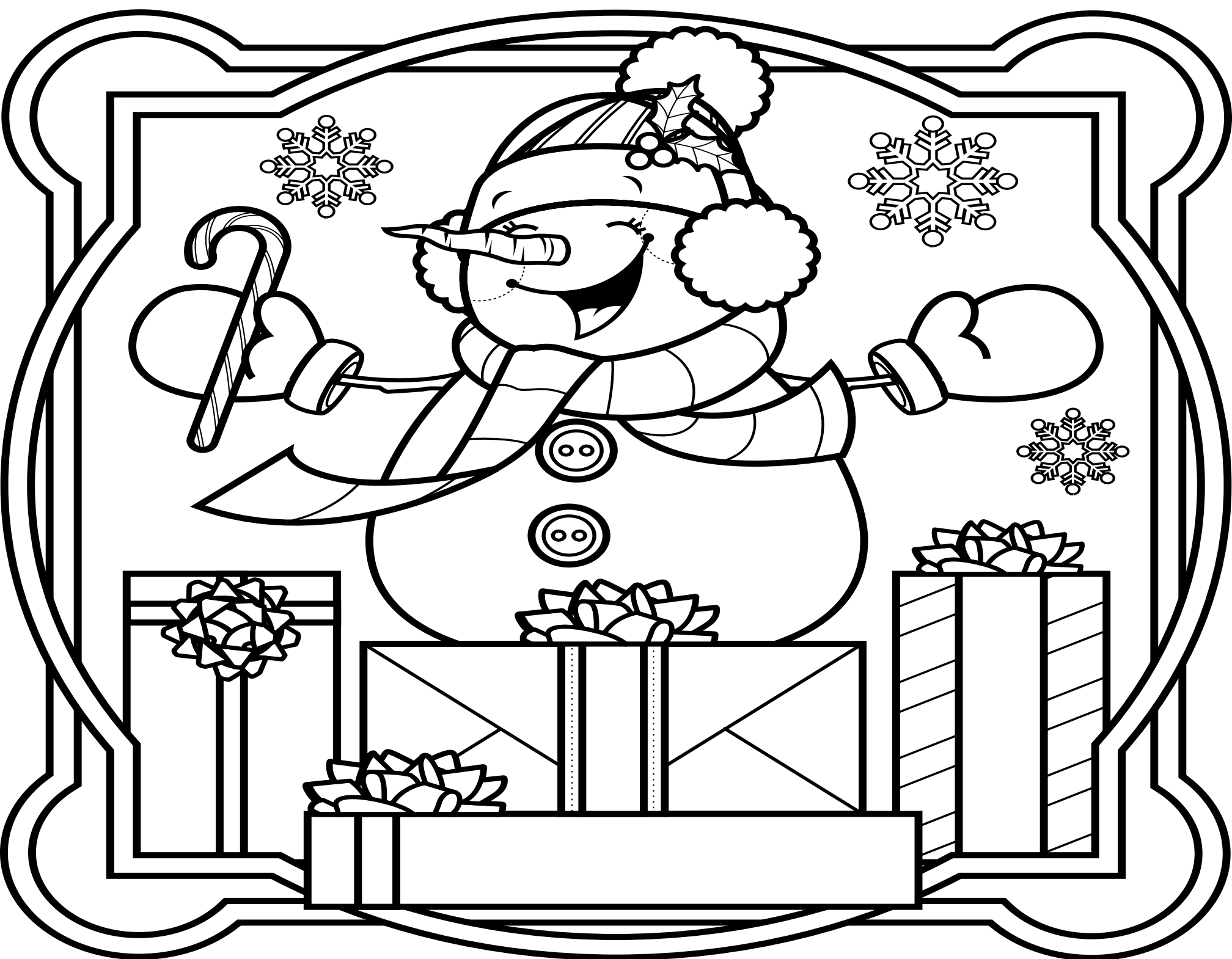
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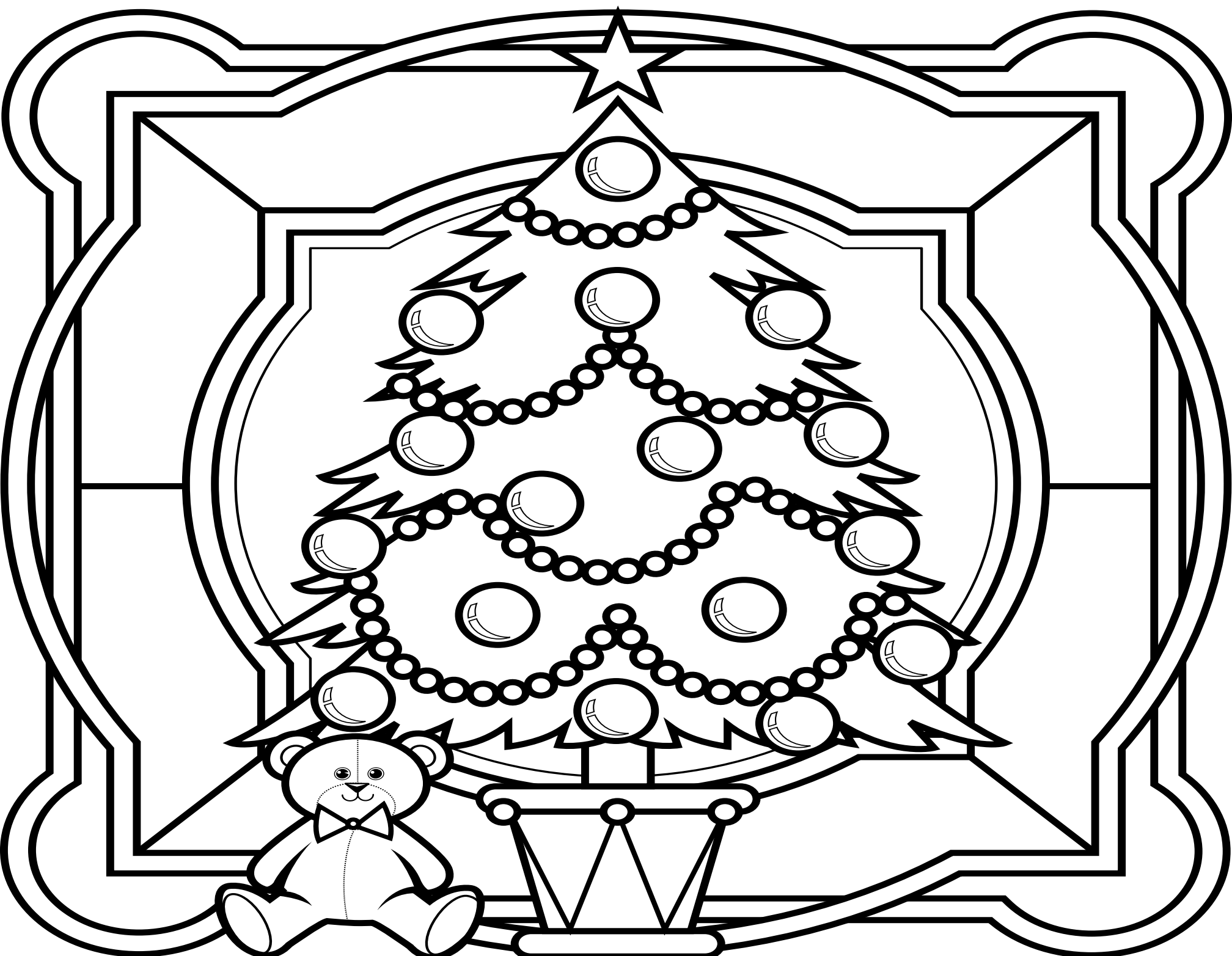
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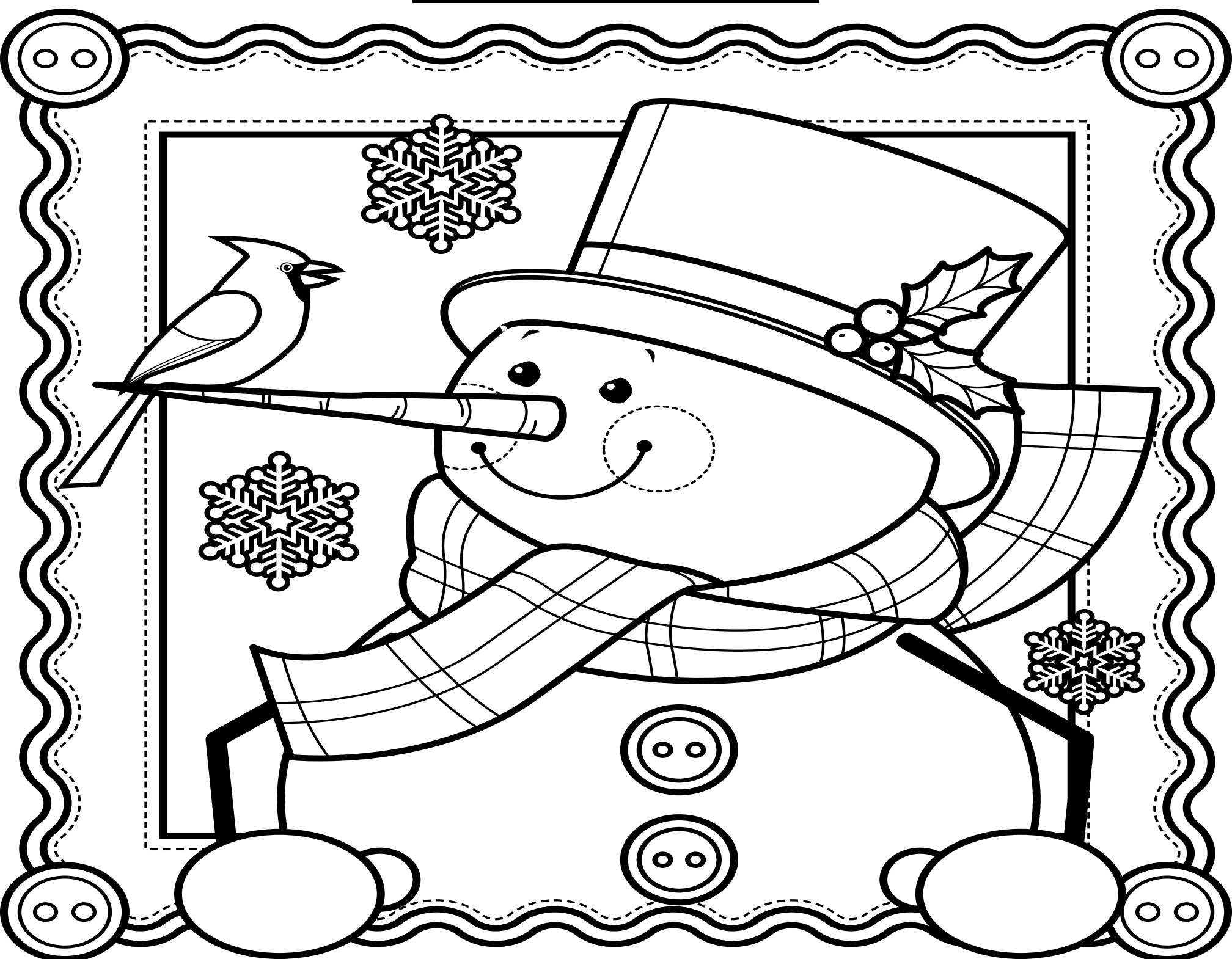
Coming Your Way.

## Our Best Wishes!

# Jim's Tire Store

711-1/2 State Ave.  
Alamosa  
(719) 589-9690





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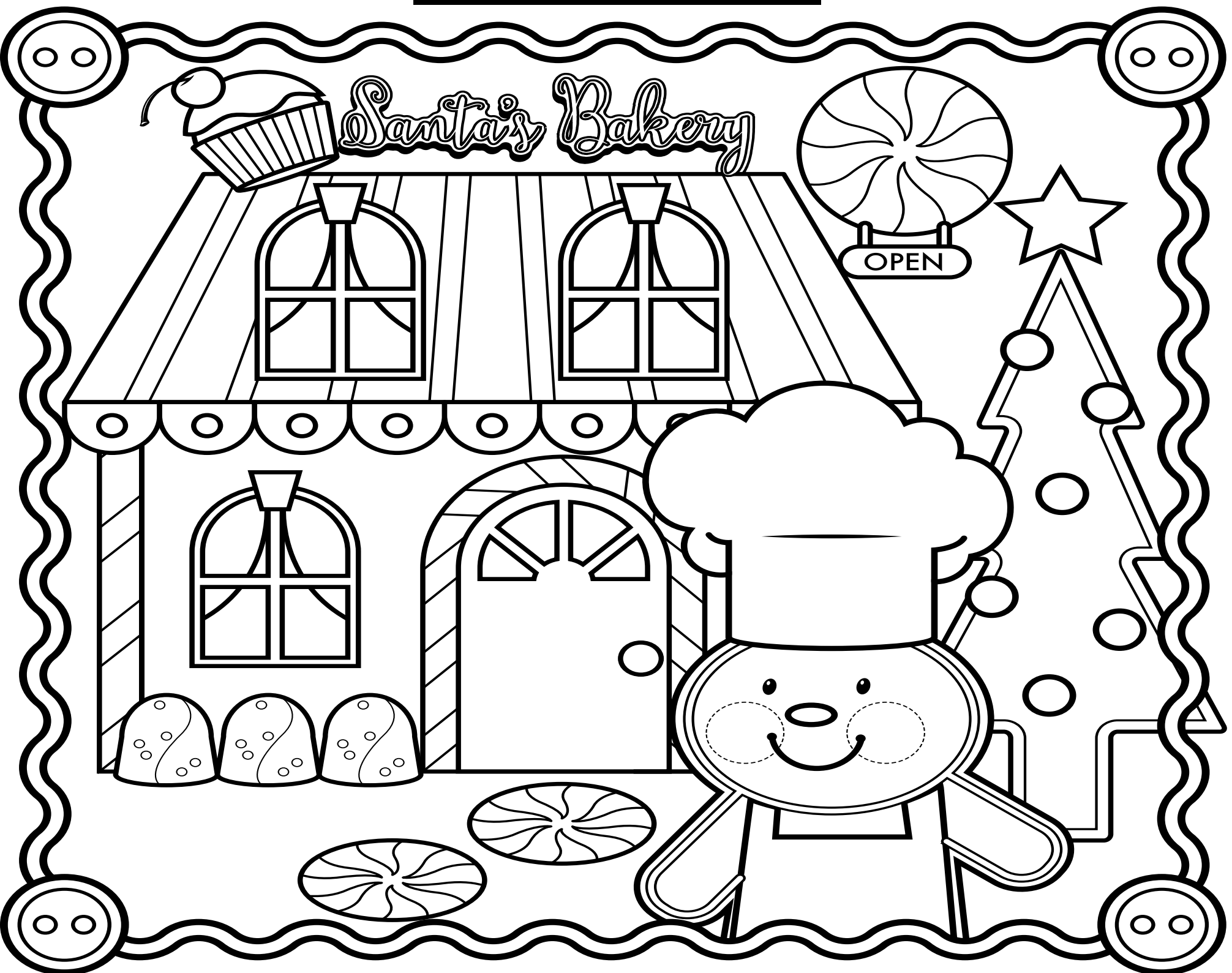
**EXCEED EXPECTATIONS**

**San Luis Valley  
Auto Repair LLC**

**Complete Automotive Service**

Matt Ratzlaff 150 N. Broadway  
(719) 852-2536 Monte Vista 

 Wishing You All the  
**Nuts & Bolts**  
of a **Great Holiday**



*Thanks for the Gift of Your Friendship!*



We'd like to express our deep gratitude to this community for making our year so special. The support of good friends like you is a gift we value beyond measure. Happy Holidays!

**La Jara Pharmacy, Inc**  
 HealthMart PHARMACY  
*Serving our Community for over 40 years!*  
 412 Main Street  
 La Jara  
 (719) 274-5109



**719-589-3957**  
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[www.valleyelectricinc.com](http://www.valleyelectricinc.com)



**Light Up The Season!**



# KIDS & TEENS AGES 6-18 CAN JOIN THE BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF THE SAN LUIS VALLEY



## PROGRAMMING & POSITIVITY!

- ✓ HEALTHY EATING & ACTIVE LIVING
- ✓ CULTURAL ARTS
- ✓ SCIENCE TECH ENGINEERING MATH
- ✓ SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING
- ✓ OUTDOOR ADVENTURE PROGRAM
- ✓ TEEN PROGRAMMING
- ✓ INTERNSHIPS & WORK READINESS
- ✓ FREE NUTRITIOUS SNACK

**MON-THU | AFTER SCHOOL  
FRIDAY | FULL DAY**

### SIX LOCATIONS ACROSS THE SAN LUIS VALLEY

- ALAMOSA CLUBHOUSE (1115 10TH STREET)
- ALAMOSA K2 SCHOOL
- TEEN CENTER (420 STATE AVE. ALAMOSA)
- GUADALUPE SCHOOL (ANTONITO)
- SIERRA GRANDE (BIANCA/FT. GARLAND CC)
- MOUNTAIN VALLEY SCHOOL (SAGUACHE)

SCAN ME



**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT US AT  
(719) 589-5252 OR [WWW.BGCSLV.ORG](http://WWW.BGCSLV.ORG)**