

Craft an edible holiday classic from the comforts of home

Symbolism features prominently throughout the holiday season. When walking around in December, or even earlier, individuals can't help but notice lighting displays, decked out Christmas trees in town centers and other symbols that are synonymous with the holiday season.

DECEMBER 2024

Gingerbread houses may or may not be on public display, but these impressive constructions are yet another notable sign that the holiday season has arrived. As families prepare to celebrate the holiday season, they can work together to create this impressive, and edible, "Gingerbread House" courtesy of Lines+Angles.

Gingerbread House *Makes 8 servings or 1 house*

For the house:

3 1/4 cups all-purpose flour, plus extra as needed

3 tablespoons cornstarch

1 tablespoon ground ginger

3/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon

3/4 teaspoon salt

1 cup unsalted butter, at room temperature

3/4 cup molasses, warmed

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

For the frosting:

2 cups confectioners' sugar, plus extra as needed

1 1/2 tablespoons meringue powder 1 to 2 tablespoons warm water

To decorate:

Assorted colorful candies, sugared

chocolate candies, round peppermint candies, candy canes, etc.

1. For the gingerbread: Combine the flour, cornstarch, spices, and salt in a large mixing bowl. Stir well and set aside.

2. Beat the softened butter with the molasses and vanilla in a separate mixing bowl until pale and creamy, about 2 to 3 minutes

3. Beat in the flour mixture in 4 additions, mixing well between additions until you have a rough dough; add more flour as needed to form a stiff dough.

4. Turn out and knead briefly. Shape into a round, wrap in parchment paper, and chill for 2 hours.

5. After chilling, preheat the oven to 325 F. Grease and line 2 large baking sheets with parchment paper.

6. Remove the dough from the refrigerator. Roll out to about 0.333" thickness on a lightly floured surface.

7. Cut out two rectangles approximate-

ly 4.5" x 4" for the roof. Cut out 2 pointed rectangles approximately 5" at their tallest points and 3.5" wide at the base; these will be the front and back of the house as per the image. Make sure that one side has a round window cut out.

8. Using some of the remaining dough, cut out the 2 rectangles to be the sides of the house, approximately 3"x 4" in diameter. Use the remaining dough to cut out 4 even rectangles, approximately 2" x 1.5", to shape the chimney.

9. Arrange the pieces across the baking sheets. Bake for about 25 minutes until browned and dry to the touch. Remove to cooling racks to cool.

10. For the frosting: Combine the confectioners' sugar, meringue powder and 2 tablespoons warm water in a large mixing bowl

11. Beat with an electric mixer until the frosting is thick and glossy, about 4 to 5

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Notable Christmas celebrations around the world

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas all over the world. Christmas celebrations include various time-honored traditions that celebrants hold near and dear to their hearts. Depending on where someone lives, their Christmas traditions may look quite different from those in other parts of the globe

It can enjoyable to learn how Christmas is celebrated elsewhere and perhaps even incorporate a few new traditions into your celebrations. Take a peek at these customs near and far.

• Seafood and beachside celebrations: Australia is located in the southern hemisphere, which means Aussies are enjoying the peak of their summer come December 25. A white Christmas is unlikely, unless the "white" refers to white, sandy beaches. Santa is probably swapping

SEE CELEBRATIONS, 11



2024 OPCC **Board of Directors**

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Publication Policy

The function of the community newsletter, "Behind the Gate" is to serve the entire gated community of Loch Rane and Orange Park Country Club and is a product of

Clay Today.
Priority will be given to reporting news and activities of the community and other news and events that directly affect the residents. Second priority will be given to articles of general interest as space permits. Articles and photos must be sent to Randy Rutan at randy@randyrutan. com by the deadline date below. Due to space limitation, all articles are subject to editing.

Letters of opinion must be signed, as well as brief and in good taste. Views expressed are those of the writer and do not express the viewpoint of the publisher, OPCCOA or LRIA.

Acceptance of advertising does not constitute an endorsement or approval of any product or services by the publisher, OPCCOA or LRIA. The publisher reserves the right to refuse advertising that does not meet the standards of the publication.

The publisher of "Behind the Gate" agrees to indemnify and hold harmless OPCCOA and LRIA for any claims asserted against or financial liabilities incurred by them arising from commercial content of this publication or anything contained in any advertising copy, including without limitation any claims of whatever nature asserted by advertisers or potential advertisers.

OPCC Board of Directors Meeting

By Bob McKinney

A good turnout for this month. We got to hear presentations by three of the four residents running for the two vacancies on the Board beginning in January 2025. You are encouraged to look at the candidate applications on our website to help you determine who you would like to represent you on the Board. They are also included in the Annual Meeting package sent to residents as along with the ballot, meeting agenda and the 2025 budget.

Prior to the Board meeting, the ARC approved one roof replacement, two tree removals, one exterior modification, and two paint projects. As cooler temperatures arrive, more projects are expected to be requested. As always, any exterior work requires prior approval, with few exceptions. If in doubt, contact a member of the ARC or our management company representative.

Q&A with Jim

We also had a Q&A time with our auditor, Jim Hutchens. There were discussions about the best ways to invest our Reserve Funds, what to consider for future use of the Reserve Funds and tax implications for decisions.

Road Repairs

The Roads Committee has surveyed our roads and has developed a list of roads needing repair, in order of need. In 2025, the Board will be considering ways to accomplish

these repairs in the most cost-effective way. It would be beneficial for you to attend monthly meetings to weigh in on this topic since the total cost is estimated to be approximately \$1.5M. Any future Board must be proactive when addressing road and drainage issues. Waiting for problems is not a good policy.

The Grove plans bring great changes

The Grove plans are still a work in progress. 2025 will bring real changes as the project moves on to completion.

Updates & Improvements

Updates/improvements to our gatehouse are coming very soon. As can be expected, the gatehouse has been neglected for years and considerable work is required. New security cameras and interior work are scheduled. We are still emphasizing the need for residents to sign up and use Gatekey. Once you start to use this system, you'll wonder why it took so long to be on-board. The gate staff does not prioritize answering resident calls and must focus on clearing/dealing with those coming through the gate.

Annual Meeting

Please plan to attend our Annual Meeting, December 3 at 6pm at the Advent Lutheran Church (just outside the gate).









Loch Rane Board of Directors Meeting

By Brian Rogers

The November meeting of the Loch Rane BOD was held on 11/26, thank you to all who attended in person and online via zoom!

Dues/Assessments

\$37,000 remains unpaid for the 2024 Annual Dues and \$42,000 remains unpaid for the 2024 Special Assessment. We continue to urge all residents to reach out to the CAM team to make arrangements for a payment plan as that is a much better (and cheaper) solution than being turned over to the association attorney for collections. Note that the association sees NONE of the late fees or collections fees as those are all paid to the attorney and or the CAM Team and is just more money leaving the community. It does, however, cost the Association hundreds if not thousands of dollars a year to send out late payment notices and certified letters to residents who remain in arrears.

2025 Budget

The Board approved the proposed budget for 2025 which includes a 5% increase. This means the 2025 annual dues will be \$1,463 per home. A copy of the 2025 budget (and previous years budgets) is available on the Loch Rane website.

2025 BOD Election

No homeowners submitted their request/bio to run in the upcoming election and as such, no election will take place at the Annual Meeting in January. Only 3 of the 4 existing board members have agreed to stay on and retain their seats for another 2 years thus leaving a vacancy that will have to be filled by the 2025 board. If you would like to be considered for this vacancy, please send an email to the CAM Team or any existing board member. Even better, please attend the Annual Meeting and express your interest in the open seat!

Storm Drain Relining

Insituform has completed the storm drain relining project for 2024 and provided us a 2% discount on the total amount for prompt payment. This saved the community over \$7000 and the final amount for the project was \$349,994.38.

Devonshire Repaying/ Construction

Contractors will begin the repaving/excavation/repairs of Devonshire starting the first week of December. Please avoid Devonshire during the construction if possible and avoid parking on the road at all times as vehicles will be towed if they are in the way of the heavy equipment being used on the project. Kudos to board member Chuck Bryner for hand delivering notices of the construction to residents on Devonshire. We are doing our best to minimize the inconvenience for all residents on that street as this is a significant project. The BOD

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2024 Loch Rane Board of Directors

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OPCC/Loch Rane Steering Committee Report

November 21, 2024 By Randy Rutan

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman, Daniel Butler. There was a quorum of members present.

Guests present were Corey Scott, head of the Joint Landscape Committee and Diane McCarthy, site supervisor for Giddens Security.

October minutes and revised entry policy

The October meeting minutes and financials were approved. Copies of the revised entry policy based on changes suggested at last month's meeting were provided to all committee members. The first paragraph of the document now states the Residents include homeowners/property owners, family members of homeowners (including family members who are not residents all year), caregivers who do not reside in the neighborhood and renters who reside in the LRIA or OPCCOA communities. The committee approved a request from Giddens Security to add Grub Hub, Door Dash, Uber Eats and other food delivery services to the Scheduled Deliveries section on page 3 of the Entry Policy.

Flowers, mulch, pump and gatehouse

Corey Scott reported that flowers and mulch are in the

process of being installed throughout the community and the irrigation pump has been repaired. The committee approved for payment two invoices from Pumps Done Right totaling \$3,962.76. Repairs and maintenance to the gatehouse will begin in early December and will include replacement of a badly fogged window, wood, and caulking repairs inside and out, floor tile replacement, counter replacement with addition of some storage cubicles and repainting, etc. Brick repairs at the 4-way have been completed.

Due to the impact the Steering Budget has on the Budgets for both associations, the committee is considering restricting the annual Steering Budget increases to 5%. Unless something unexpected comes up, there will be no meeting in December. A review of the shared expense report will take place online.

Next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for January 16, 2025 at 6 pm at the Community Center.



2024 Steering Committee

Daniel Butler, Chairman Randy Rutan, Secretary Jerry Deans, Member Kathy Marko, Member Gary McMahill, Member

The Steering Committee meets on the third Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at the community building. The purpose of the committee is to oversee issues of joint interest in the common areas of Loch Rane and OPCC. Homeowners of both communities are invited to attend.







Go 'mutts' for these perfect pet gifts

Pet parents try to ensure their companion animals never want for anything. People will go to great lengths to pamper their pets with the best care, food and accessories. According to the American Pet Products Association, consumers in the United States spent \$147 billion on pets in 2023. And it's not just the essentials that have people opening up their wallets for pets. A 2022 YouGov survey found that 57 percent of owners buy holiday gifts for their pets and 40 percent host birthday celebrations.

With the holiday season on the horizon, there's a good chance that beloved pets are on gift lists this year, particularly for Gen Z pet owners. A study of 1,000 U.S. adults conducted by Talker Research for Newsweek found that Gen Z spends an average of \$148.50 on their pets each month, the highest of all surveyed. For those shopping for gifts their pets will enjoy, these options could have tails wagging.

- Treat dispenser: It isn't possible to be home with their pets all of the time. A dispenser that can be programmed to offer treats at certain intervals or connected to an app that enables a person to release one at the push of a button can be a nice gift to surprise stay-at-home pets.
- **Puzzle toy:** Pets need to keep their brains working; otherwise, they may get bored and into trouble. A puzzle toy that has treats or kibble hidden behind panels helps pets remain mentally sharp.
- **Pet booties:** When the weather gets chilly, walking dogs outdoors on the ice and snow can be painful on their paws. A pair of booties can protect the delicate pads of pets' feet from ice melt products, snow and sharp objects.
- **New bed:** Upgrade a pet's bed to something even more lush and comfortable. A fleece blanket and a dedicated pet pillow can help pets feel even more pampered.

- **Safety belt:** Guarantee that trips in the car to the dog park or other excursions are safer by gifting a safety pet harness that works like a seatbelt in a vehicle.
- **Grooming package:** Everyone wins when a pet is washed, dried and primped to perfection. Professional groomers have the skills to tame excess fur and trim nails so pets smell wonderful and remain comfortable.
- **New toys:** Whether a pet is a parakeet or poodle, gifts of new toys can be engaging for animals who have grown bored with their old ones.

Be sure to wrap up clever gifts for pets so that every member of the family has something to enjoy come the holidays.







How some popular holiday traditions got their start

Will you be baking gingerbread or hanging stockings by the fireplace this holiday season? Perhaps you'll be lighting the menorah or playing a game of dreidl? The holidays are steeped in tradition, some of which are older than celebrants may realize.

Individuals gather during the holidays and participate in various traditions that have withstood the test of time. Most people engage in these traditions or recognize symbols automatically, but it can be interesting to learn how these traditions came to be.

Christmas caroling

The British traditions of wassailing and mumming and the Slavic tradition of koliada were some of the precursors to more modern caroling. People would go doorto-door and recite poetry or sing with the hope of bringing about good fortune or influencing a future harvest, according to

Rutgers University. Carolers spread hope and good tidings through song during a time of year when sunlight was limited.

Christmas trees

Pagans once displayed evergreen branches as a reminder that spring would come again, while Romans placed them around temples to honor Saturn, the god of agriculture. Eventually the evergreen was used in conjunction with Christian Christmas celebrations. In the sixteenth century, German Christians put trees inside their homes as symbols of everlasting life.

Santa Claus

Children who celebrate Christmas eagerly await the arrival of a jolly sort who goes by the name of Santa Claus. His origin story stretches back to the third century, when Saint Nicholas became the patron saint of children. Saint Nicholas was a monk in what is modern-day Turkey. It is

said that he traveled helping the poor and the sick. History.com says he is believed to have saved three impoverished sisters from slavery by providing them with a dowry so they could be married, and he also provided gifts to children.

Mistleto

Kissing under the mistletoe is a holiday season tradition that can lead to some red faces when couples are caught beneath the plant. Norse mythology paved the way for kissing under the mistletoe. Legend has it the gods used mistletoe to resurrect Odin's son, Baldur, from the dead. Baldur's mother, Frigg, the goddess of love, made the plant a symbol of love and vowed to kiss anyone who passed under it. Mistletoe blooms under cold conditions, which is how it became associated with the holiday season



Yule log

Yule logs were once part of winter solstice celebrations to bring good luck and fortune, but America is where a yule log really caught on as a holiday tradition. In 1966, the WPIX television station in New York City aired a continuous loop of a fireplace burning for three hours with holiday songs playing. It became an annual tradition, says History.com. Some people even serve a cake that looks like a yule log. The Buche de Noel is a traditional Christmas cake that is especially popular in France.

Gingerbread

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minutes; beat in more confectioners' sugar if too thin and more water if too thick.

- 12. Spoon into a piping bag fitted with a thin, round nozzle. Chill for 15 minutes.
- 13. To decorate: Using the frosting as "glue," assemble the chimney using the 4 even rectangles of gingerbread. Let dry and set.
- 14. Start to assemble the rest of the house by glueing the pieces together as per the image, attaching the front and back of the house to the sides before attaching the roof in place. Let set dry and set at each building interval.
- 15. Once the sections are dry, pipe more frosting onto the edges of the roof and down their sides, shaped as icicles.
- 16. When the chimney is set, attach it to the top, cutting the pieces to fit if necessary, and decorating the outside with frosting.
- 17. To decorate: Attach the assorted candies to the house, decorating the roof with a tiled pattern using the frosting.
- 18. Let the house dry and set until ready to serve.

Preparation time: 2 hours Cooling time: 2 hours, 15 minutes Total time: 4 hours, 15 minutes Difficulty: Difficult

Tips: Some of the gingerbread pieces will bake quicker than others depending on their size; keep an eye on them and remove from the oven when ready.

Meringue powder is available online or from specialty cookware stores.





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Clay County libraries, A fantastic resource



What do you know about your local Clay County Library System?

Do you have a current library card? Do you check out books, books on CD, DVD movies, or just go there to read the many periodicals. That is what we generally think of when we think of a library.

In today's world, our libraries are so much more. You can do early voting in elections at our Orange Park library. See https://www.clayelections.gov/Election-Information/Early-Voting-Sites for information on dates and times.

You can search the Library Catalog online to find a book to check out: https://insignia.claycountygov.com/Library/Home

How about the digital library. Your library card gives you access to online content you can check out any time, anywhere! https://www.claycountygov.com/community/library/digital-library

You can also download the Libby app through either Google Play or the Apple App Store to access many of the same titles from the library, including books on CD that you can listen to on your devices offline or by using your Apple Carplay or Android Auto support. Check out times vary but as with most titles from the Library, you can use the materials for 2 weeks and you can extend if that is available for your title.

There are also Events and Classes at the Libraries for Children, Teens, and Adults. https://www.claycountygov.com/community/library/events-and-classes

Clay County Libraries are a resource in our community that is probably underrated. Take some time this autumn to check out the many opportunities and materials that are offered by the Library. And, say a big "Thank you" to the many library personnel and the volunteers who help to make the library a vital part of Orange Park and Fleming Island.







The ladies of Orange Park Country Club and Loch Rane enjoyed more than just an excellent meal at their November gathering at Club Continental. An inspiring program was presented by Linda Grabowski, the Executive Director of Miriam's Basket, Inc.

This local nonprofit provides clothing and shoes for children experiencing the trauma of being removed from their homes due to abuse, neglect or another family crisis. Linda shared that almost 4000 children have been served since December 2011 when this organization began; over 400 children in 2024 alone.

Miriam's Basket is funded and supported by civic and church groups, community businesses, and many individuals. You are encouraged to learn more about the mission and how you can help by visiting: www.MiriamsBasket.org. Loch Rane resident, Norma Layton, Community Coordinator for Miriam's Basket, would be happy to answer any questions you may



WHEN: Wednesday,
December 18 at 11:30
WHERE: Club Continental.

CHARITY BENEFIT: Kids First of Florida
Attendees are asked to bring gift cards to Walmart and/
or McDonalds or Burger King. These will be given to Kids
First to distribute to the children they are working with
over the holidays.

have or to schedule a presentation with your neighbors or civic group. Just call her at 904-891-2050.

This month's luncheon will take place on Wednesday, December 18 at 11:30 at Club Continental. It will be a Charity Luncheon for Kids First of Florida, a community-based agency that works with families whose children are either at risk of abuse or neglect or who have already been victims of abuse or neglect. Barbara Mancini will be the hostess. She asks that attendees bring gift cards for Walmart and/or McDonalds or Burger King. These



will be given to Kids First to distribute to the children they are working with over the holidays. If you choose to donate cash instead, the cash will be put into an account that goes directly to the children. A case worker and CPA from Kids First will attend the luncheon to explain how things

work. You can also choose to wrap a gift to be given to one of the ladies attending the luncheon in our holiday raffle.

If you want more information or would like to add your name to the luncheon list, please email or call Frances Smith: fk-smith63@comcast.net or 904-579-3008.

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May your Home be filled with Sweet Memories this Holiday Season

Kenneth Hahn, P.A.

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Did you know? Curb appeal may increase a property value by 6% -13%







December 3 | 5:00 pm - 6:30 pm Lighting of the Park

Orange Park Town Hall Park 2042 Park Avenue, Orange Park

December 1 - 31 | 6:00 pm - 10:00 pm Parade of Trees in Spring Park

Spring Park 200 Spring Street, Green Cove Springs December 1-21 A Christmas Carol

Spotlight Center 1809 E West Pkwy, Fleming Island

December 5-24 A Year Without Santa Claus

Spotlight Center 1809 E West Pkwy, Fleming Island



December 13 & 14 | 5:00 pm - 9:00 pm Hometown Holiday 2024

Clarke House Park 1039 Kingsley Ave, Orange Park

December 17 | 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm Christmas with the Celts

Thrasher-Horne Center 283 College Drive, Orange Park December 21 | 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm Wehner's Christmas Spectacular 2024 Thrasher-Horne Center 283 College Drive, Orange Park









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Better Business Bureau unveils holiday shopping guide

CLAY COUNTY – The Better Business Bureau unveiled its 2024 Holiday Shopping Guide to help consumers and businesses navigate the busiest shopping season with confidence, safety and savvy decision-making.

With the holiday season fast approaching, BBB has the ultimate guide to a stress-free holiday shopping season. It offers valuable tips and resources to assist shoppers in making informed decisions, protecting themselves from scams, and supporting ethical businesses. As online shopping continues to dominate, the BBB's advice has never been more critical for ensuring a safe and satisfying shopping experience.

Key Highlights from the 2024 BBB Holiday Shopping Guide

Holiday Shopping Tips:

The holiday season is here, and whether you're shopping for the perfect gift, budgeting for the festivities, or preparing for travel, we've got you covered! From

receiving packages safely and finding the best decorations to participating in charitable giving, BBB's expert tips will help make your holidays hassle-free. Plus, check out advice on handling returns and exchanges so you can shop confidently and stress less.

Holiday-Related Scams:

The holiday season is a prime time for scammers looking to take advantage of busy shoppers and businesses. From fake delivery texts to gift exchange schemes, it's important to stay vigilant. On this page, you'll find tips to help you avoid common holiday scams, protect your personal information, and keep your business safe during the busiest time of year. Let BBB guide you through staying secure this holiday season. Consumers can also visit BBB. org/ScamStudies and check out the latest BBB update to online purchase scams study: Protect yourself this holiday season.

Business tips for the holidays:

As the holiday season approaches,

businesses must prepare and maximize their potential. Our expert tips cover everything from organizing inventory and crafting effective marketing strategies to ensuring customer satisfaction and boosting sales on Black Friday, Small Business Saturday, and Cyber Monday. Get ready to make the most of this busy time and create a memorable customer experience.

Online Shopping Guide:

BBB tips and best practices for purchasing online. Let BBB guide you on what to look for when buying online, how to shop for the perfect gift online, and how to be a savvy online shopper. Consumers can also visit BBB.org/ShopSmart to learn what they can do to shop safely online and avoid scams during this holiday season.

"The holiday season is a time of giving and joy, but it can also be an opportunity for scammers to take advantage of unsuspecting consumers," said Tom Stephens, President of the Better Business Bureau serving Northeast Florida and the



Southeast Atlantic. "Our Holiday Shopping Guide is crucial for helping people shop smarter and avoid common pitfalls. By being informed and vigilant, consumers can ensure their shopping experiences are safe and enjoyable."



Loch Rane

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also approved a 3rd party inspector to be on site during the project to ensure all work is done properly and to spec/code/requirements. The cost for the inspector is to be no more than \$5,925.

Dunrobin/Dunster issues:

What is it with the "D" roads this year? An estimate to repair Dunster came in at \$86,000. This will be deferred to next

A resident informed the board of an apparent sinkhole forming on Dunrobin adjacent to a storm drain. Thankfully this drain has already been relined, but the base for the road had already eroded into the drain just like what happened on Perthshire. The BOD pre-approved up to \$10k for this repair to see if we can get it accomplished while the paving company is already on site working on Devonshire

the first week of December, though we do not expect the cost to be anywhere near that amount.

The next meeting of the BOD will take place on December 18th @ 6:30pm, all residents are encouraged to attend. (Note: this meeting will be held

a week early to avoid the Christmas holiday).







Celebrations

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his thick coat for a pair of board shorts, and heavy, roast-laden meals are unlikely to make it on to the menu. Instead, Australians dine on seafood feasts and spend Christmas outdoors camping or at the beach

• Krampus parade: Some Christmas elves are not so jolly. Just ask residents of the Austrian, German and Hungarian Alps. Each year in this region, a true "Bad Santa" is the talk of town. Villagers believed that Krampus, a half-man, half-goat creature with a legion of ill-tempered elves, roamed the mountains wreaking havoc. Krampus was said to abduct miscreants and set unruly youth or even intoxicated adults

straight. Today, Krampus is more the "bad cop" to Santa's "good cop" persona. Krampus is celebrated as an antihero at parades and other events.

- Las Posadas: According to scripture, Joseph and Mary had to make an arduous journey from their hometown to Bethlehem for census purposes while Mary was pregnant. When the couple arrived, they found lodgings were nonexistent, and Mary ended up giving birth to Jesus in a manger surrounded by animals. In celebration of that journey, people in Mexico and Guatemala celebrate Las Posadas, a procession representing Mary and Joseph's journey and their struggle to find lodging.
- •La Befana: In Italian folklore, La Befana is a witch-like old woman who, like Santa, delivers gifts to children throughout



Italy. Instead of this gift-giving taking place on Christmas, La Befana hands out gifts on the Epiphany Eve in a similar way to how the Three Magi brought presents to Baby Jesus. Le Befana also is believed to fly through the night sky to sweep away all the troubles of the old year and clear the way for a fresh start.

• Move over reindeer: Although reindeer often garner fanfare this time of year, the Yule goat is a Christmas symbol and tradition in Scandinavia and northern Europe. Each year in towns throughout Sweden and other areas, large statues of Yule goats are built on the first day of Advent and stand throughout the holiday season. This tradition dates back to ancient Pagan festivals, and some believe the goat is connected to the Norse god Thor, who rode in the sky in a chariot pulled by two goats.

Holiday traditions differ considerably in various regions of the world. Celebrants may want to consider incorporating foreign traditions into their own Christmas celebrations this year.





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