



Merry Christmas



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MIAMI News-Record

REID NEWSPAPER GROUP

Serving Miami and surrounding communities since 1903.

Friday, December 24, 2021 | Vol. 120 No.99 | 50¢



Brothers in Law members, Commerce Volunteer firefighters and their families help pack food boxes for their Christmas giveaway on Dec. 21.



BIL BIKERS, COMMERCE FIREFIGHTERS  
make Christmas brighter

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The Brothers In Law bikers have been running a relatively low-key Christmas program for more than two decades. The Commerce Volunteer Fire Department started helping them with this project about 18 years ago. Together, the two groups make Christmas a little brighter for needy families in the community. On Dec. 22, members of the BIL

and CFD met up at the Commerce fire station to pack food boxes for 57 families. Using a highly efficient assembly line, they made short work of the large task.

"We got done in record time," said coordinator Janet Trease. "We've honed it down to kind of an art. It's taken several years to get it to go so smooth."

Trease has been with the Commerce Fire Department for the last 18 years, she's the department's secretary and is also a trained First Responder.

"When we started way back when, there were only like 20 families and 25 would be a lot of families," she said. "Last night, we completed a total of 57 baskets of food and got toys for 137 kids."

Trease explained that they really didn't do food at first, just toys. Then, they added the food baskets and that was even better for those in need. She said the BILs were the biggest

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Hams bought for the annual Christmas giveaway through a joint effort of Brothers in Law members and the Commerce Volunteer Fire Department.

EVENT



Numerous area churches in the area are planning special Christmas Eve activities

Friday night:

\* First Methodist Miami will have three services, a 4 p.m. family service, a 7 p.m. communion service and an 11 p.m. candlelight service.

\* All Saints Episcopal will hold a 6:45 p.m. service. It will be available live on Facebook.

\* Bethany Christian Church will hold a 6 p.m. candlelight service.

\* Hudson Creek Baptist Church, located on SH125 between Fairland and Miami will have a 5 p.m. candlelight service.

\* A community candlelight service will be at 5:30 p.m. at the Fairland First United Methodist Church, 122 W Church Street.

\* First Baptist Church of Miami, 24 A SW, will hold a 6 p.m. candlelight service.

\* Mt. Olive Lutheran of Miami will have a service at 8 p.m.

\* A candlelight service will be held a 7 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church of Miami.

\* New Beginnings Life Church across from NEO will have food and conversation on Christmas Eve.

\* First Assembly Church of Miami will have a candlelight service during its regular worship at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, Dec. 26.

WHEN SCHOOL'S OUT, THE BOYS & GIRLS CLUB IS IN

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Parents looking for a fun and safe place to take their children over the Christmas/winter break can still take advantage of the Christmas break program at the Boys & Girls Club of Ottawa County.

The program is available through Dec. 30 from 7:45 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the Riverview Park and Teen Center (the former Will Rogers Middle School) sites.

"The club understands parents need to work and have a safe place for their kids to go over breaks," said Executive Director Mackenzie Garst. "Kids no longer need to sit at home



The program is available through Dec. 30 from 7:45 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the Riverview Park and Teen Center sites.

bored in front of a TV when they can be in a safe and supervised location having fun with their friends. When

school's out, the club is in."

Garst has been the executive director for the Boys & Girls Club of Ottawa County for five years, but she's been part of the club for 15 years. After graduating with a degree in psychology from Pittsburg State University in 2009, she joined the U.S. Peace Corps and served three years in Grenada as a youth development volunteer. She then returned to work at the Joplin Boys & Girls Club for three years before the job at the Ottawa County club became available.

"I love working in Ottawa County and partnering with the schools, tribes and local businesses to serve kids," Garst said.

She anticipates serving

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Kids no longer need to sit at home bored in front of a TV when they can be in a safe and supervised location having fun with their friends.

NEWS

County to raze VFW building

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The Ottawa County commissioners have approved an interlocal agreement with the City of Miami that will mean the razing of the VFW building here.

Chairman and District 3 commissioner Russell Earls said at the regular commissioners' meeting Monday morning, "This spells out what we have agreed to do by taking down the VFW building in Miami to basically pay a water bill for the sheriff's department. It's a little more complicated than that, but it's nothing we haven't done in the past."

"The city was gracious enough to work out a deal with us in exchange for an outstanding bill," Sheriff David Dean said.

In other matters at the meeting, commissioners approved three unattainable lien waivers for projects in District 3, parcels 21, 22, and 23; a statement in the amount of \$8,000 for the Grand Gateway annual membership fee for Fiscal Year 2022 (through June 30, 2022), and an Ottawa County shared leave plan recipient.

District 1 commissioner

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# Christmas

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contributors to the event.

“On the fire department side, we try to do a fundraiser and we take donations, whatever anybody can give,” she said. “We’re not that big. My group of guys and gals donate, we’ve always had a big participation from our fire department. But the BILs, they put in the biggest amount of money. They buy the food and the big stuff. We buy the little stuff, the fill stuff and I put it all together.”

To get the funds to buy all the food and larger toys for the annual Christmas project, the BILs have an annual fundraiser specifically for this event.

“We put on a toy run in October at the Elks Lodge,” said current BIL President Aaron Johnson. “All vehicles are always welcome. We had our 22nd annual toy run this year and we always fund the Christmas project with it.

“Our toy run has grown every year. We have a lot of people show up and support it because they know what we’re doing. We just want to thank everyone who comes and helps us because they make it possible.”

When the BILs say they’ve been doing this for 22 years, they’re not bragging, though they’ve earned it. They’re just amazed at how long

they’ve been at it and how much it’s grown over the years. They also love doing it.

“Let me tell you something,” Trease said with a smile, “those BIL guys, they shop like little kids. They love this. . . Here are these old guys, these biker guys and people think they’re all hard, but they’re not. They’ve got hearts of gold. They have the biggest heart and like the Grinch it grows 100 times huge when they do this. This is their big thing; this is what they do and it’s awesome.”

Trease wears many hats. She’s also the secretary at Commerce High School, where she’s worked for the last nine going on 10 years. She wanted to give a shout out to the Commerce High School and Commerce Middle School where the kids have been doing a canned food drive for several years and for the last six years, they’ve been donating their collection to the BIL/CFD food baskets.

“That’s where we get our canned goods for the food boxes,” said Trease. “They do a canned food drive in December for that purpose, for the Christmas baskets. It helps out a ton.

“I’d also like to thank Brenda Arnold down at Tiger Stop here in town. She bought 10 bikes and donated those this year. That was awesome!”

She also wants to thank the entire Commerce community.

“The whole town donates,” she said. “They come out for our fundraisers. We had a toy box at the Christmas parade and there were a few things put in there. The big thing is that they support our fundraisers and they support the BIL’s fundraisers. That’s what takes care of the Christmas giveaway.”

Trease usually does a lot of the shopping herself, along with her daughter. But her daughter had a baby and wasn’t able to help this year.

“I introduced my grandkids to it,” said Trease. “My grandson is 12 and my granddaughter is 7 so they got to shop with me this year. I think it’s kind of a character-building thing for them. My grandson loves it. I give him ages and he gets toys for the boys. My granddaughter helped out a lot because it’s been a long time since I’ve been a kid.”

Trease said last year was kind of hard because of COVID but it changed how they delivered the items in a good way.

“We’ve always delivered the baskets to people’s homes, but last year with COVID we had the people come pick them up at the station and we delivered them to their cars instead of

their houses. I wish we’d done that forever. It made it so much easier and quicker.”

However, she said delivering to people’s houses really humbled her children.

“When my children were small, I’d have them come with me and we delivered inside the houses,” she explained. “Some of the people just didn’t have anything. It kind of opened my kids’ eyes a little bit to the fact that there are people who don’t have what they have. I think every little kid needs to see that.

“For several years, we’d buy presents ourselves and leave them on some of the porches because these people just had nothing. Helping those less fortunate, that’s the passion that I think all of us in the BILs and the fire department have.”

The group continued the new way of delivering this year by having most people come to the fire station to pick up their items. However, they continue to make some home deliveries.

“We still deliver some food baskets to the elderly,” said Trease. “We have several here in town. We don’t mind doing that at all.”

For updates on next year’s fundraisers for the BIL/CFD Christmas baskets as they become available, visit the CFD’s Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/commerceokfiredept](http://www.facebook.com/commerceokfiredept).

# Building

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Mike Furnas gave an update on his district, saying, “We have been very fortunate to have bridge crew help from District 3 with the Five-Mile Bridge. It would have taken months alone to bid it out, not to mention how much more

money it would have cost. We are doing signage for it this week, although the road is still closed for curing, but it will be open for Christmas travelers.”

During his District 3 update, Earls said he

has been working with numerous entities and agencies about administering the \$2 million one of the tribes has pledged.

“It is looking positive that we will be able to do this with the help of Grand Gateway and the

Corp of Engineers, if we can get over the hurdle of the legal steps,” Earls said. He noted that one of the first orders of business when the funds are distributed will be to do the upgrades at the jail to improve security in several areas.

# S U D O K U

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

## Tuesday’s Sudoku

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

Sudoku uses pure logic and requires no math to solve. It is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers.

The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once.

# C R Y P T O Q U I P

HPSSC WTGMN VDM RU PUPWKKC  
 UZZS VZWNRSB TKMGDZU LWAZ  
 MH TDRSM, UZNBZ MN AZSRL:  
 GVRKK HZNNZKK.

**Tuesday’s Cryptoquip:** MUSICAL MOVIE FEATURING A VOCALIST IN A REGION OF NORTHEASTERN FRANCE: “SINGIN’ IN LORRAINE.”  
 Today’s Cryptoquip Clue: S equals N

# C R O S S W O R D

### Across

- 1) Little salamander
- 5) At an impasse
- 10) Poker variety
- 14) Jazz players are found here
- 15) Asian capital
- 16) Voicemail signal
- 17) No\_ Traffic
- 18) Iron\_ (rust)
- 19) Jessica of TV and film
- 20) Jimmy Buffett classic song
- 23) Hurricane heading, sometimes
- 24) Small cyst
- 25) Born to the purple
- 27) Columbus’ birthplace
- 29) Third letter of the Greek alphabet
- 33) Had a bite
- 34) Tonic’s go-with
- 36) Not to
- 37) “It’s OK after all” in editing
- 38) Bond’s bar order
- 42) Pitchfork point
- 43) Ford product
- 44) Utter
- 45) Anti-apartheid party, for short
- 46) Colonist to be shunned
- 48) Send in, as payment
- 52) False cover
- 54) Strange craft
- 56) Folk-rocker Difranco
- 57) Classic song by the Eagles
- 62) Indigenous people of Japan
- 63) It may be found in runes
- 64) Dignified “Shucks!”
- 65) It’s fed to computers
- 66) Prepare to propose
- 67) Maitre d’s offering

- 68) Hot-sauce quality
- 69) Poet William Butler

- 70) Get ready for the operating room

### Down

- 1) Eggnog spice
- 2) Natural gas component
- 3) Beatty of “Reds”
- 4) Goon squad member

- 5) Driftwood site
- 6) Arduous
- 7) Any police vehicle
- 8) Ending passage in music
- 9) Ukrainian capital
- 10) No longer fresh
- 11) Tunnel-entrance structure
- 12) Without a single defeat
- 13) Org. with a crack staff?
- 21) Lie in store for
- 22) Rolled-over item

- 26) Replayed tennis shot
- 28) Folklore fiend
- 30) All excited
- 31) Bride’s title
- 32) Hardness scale
- 35) Pleasant to be around
- 37) Scottish terrier
- 38) Small details
- 39) Those who lived long ago
- 40) Toddler’s afternoon ritual
- 41) Golden-calf maker
- 42) “You’re it!”
- 46) Romanian currency
- 4 7) Variety of apple
- 49) Protective envelope
- 50) Certifiable
- 51) Snarls, as traffic
- 53) Baseball catcher’s position
- 55) Gasoline and kerosene, for two
- 58) Like a squid’s squirt
- 59) “The\_ Ranger”
- 60) Rug stat
- 61) Highway exit
- 62) Wood finishing tool

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
17					18						19			
20					21						22			
23					24						25			26
27			28		29	30	31	32				33		
			34		35		36				37			
42					43				44					
45					46			47		48		49	50	51
52				53				54	55			56		
					57		58	59	60			61		
62					63							64		
65					66							67		
68					69							70		

### Answers to Tuesday’s crossword

A	N	T	I		I	B	E	A	M		S	W	A	M
C	O	R	N		C	A	L	L	I		L	I	L	A
H	O	O	D		W	I	N	K	E	D		A	G	O
E	N	T	W		I	N	E	S		B	I	L	G	E
					E	R	G	S		E	R	R	O	L
C	Y	C	L	E	S		C	L	A	I	M	E	R	S
A	A	R	L	S		K	A	D	I	S		R	I	O
E	A	M	O	S		A	I	K	E	N		T	O	F
S	E	W		A	L	T	E	R		T	R	O	L	L
E	N	N		O	B	L	E	S		S	H	A	M	E
					J	I	B	E	S		A	C	I	D
C	H	E	N	E		O	P	E	R	E	T	T	A	
H	A	W	K		C	A	P	A	N	D		G	O	W
A	L	E	E		A	L	E	R	T		A	G	I	N
T	O	L	D		T	I	N	T	S		P	A	G	E