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December • 2025

Issue 10
49th Year

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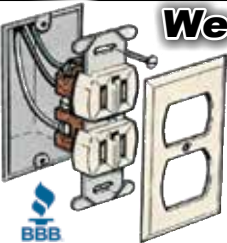
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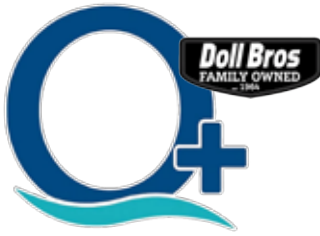
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Activity	Day	Chairperson(s)
AquaFit	Mon Wed Fri – 9:00am	Sandi Mousseau
Bingo	Wednesday 7-9:30 pm	Lucy & Don Bocchinfuso
Blood Pressure	As needed	Mary Ross & Larry Wills
Coffee Social	First Saturday of the month @ 9:00 am	Volunteers
Cribbage	Friday 1 - 3 pm	Kathy Spitzley
Clubhouse Decorating	Monthly	Ingrid Eby, Lore Bocchinfuso
Early Bird Dinner	3rd Thursday - monthly	Don Bocchinfuso
Euchre	Monday 7 - 9 pm	Sandi Mousseau & Kevin McInnis
Hand & Pony	Monday 6:30 - 9 pm	Ann Martin
Ice Cream Social	Ongoing	Judy & Santo Amenta
Ladies Golf	Monday 8:55 am	Judy Amenta
Librarian	Ongoing	Cindy Huettig
Mahjong	Wed. 1:00 p.m.	Dart Hartgerink
Pancake Breakfast	Last Sat. of month	Rob Bocchinfuso, Jim Norton
Pinochle	Tuesday 7 - 9 pm	Dart Hartgerink
Poolside BBQ	Ongoing	Judy & Santo Amenta
Potluck	2nd Tuesday of Month	Volunteers
Poker	Mon, 1 - 3 pm	Kathy Spitzley
Recycling	Ongoing	Jim Norton, Rob Bocchinfuso, John Bender
Rummage Sale	TBD	Lore & Rob Bocchinfuso
Rummikub	Thurs 7:00 pm	Virginia Fuchtman
Shuffleboard	Tuesday 10 & 11:15 am.	Santo & Judy Amenta
Skat	Sunday 7 - 9 pm	Matt Schwamberger
Sixty-Five	Thursday 6:45 - 9 pm	June Andrews
Swedish Embroidery/Quilting	Thursday 10 am - 12 pm	Kathy Spitzley/Ann Martin
Walk Walk	Mon, Tues and Thurs 8:30am	Debbie Norton
Welcoming Committee	Ongoing	





The Mysterious Gift Under the Tree

One Christmas Eve, a family gathered around the tree, finishing up the last of the cocoa and carols. As the children were sent off to bed, the parents noticed a small, unmarked gift tucked deep behind the tree. Neither of them had placed it there. Curious, they opened it to find a handmade ornament with the words: “Believe in the magic.” Inside was a note from their late grandmother, written years before she passed, thanking them for keeping the family traditions alive. She had hidden the gift during her last Christmas with them, hoping it would be found when they needed it most. That year, the family had been struggling with grief, and the unexpected message brought comfort and tears—reminding them that love endures, even after loss.



The Christmas Truce of 1914

During World War I, on Christmas Eve 1914, something extraordinary happened. British and German soldiers, entrenched in bitter combat, spontaneously ceased fire. Soldiers from both sides emerged from their trenches, met in no man's land, and exchanged greetings, food, and even played a game of football. They sang carols together and buried their dead with dignity. Though brief, the truce was a powerful reminder of shared humanity—even in the darkest of times. It remains one of the most poignant examples of peace breaking through conflict, if only for a day.



The Turkey That Got Away

One Christmas, a family decided to go all out and buy a fresh turkey from a local farm instead of the usual frozen one. The dad was in charge of picking it up, and he proudly brought home a massive bird. But when it came time to cook it, the oven door wouldn't close—it was too big.



So, they tried trimming it. Still too big. Then they tried rotating it. Still no luck. Eventually, they gave up and decided to cook it on the grill outside. But halfway through, it started raining—hard. The dad, determined not to let Christmas dinner be ruined, stood outside with an umbrella, flipping the turkey like a warrior defending his feast.

Hours later, they finally brought it in, only to discover... it was still raw in the middle. They ended up eating side dishes and pie for dinner, and the turkey became the next day's project. The family now jokes that the turkey was so big it needed its own zip code—and they've gone back to frozen ever since.

Enjoy Christmas in Florida!



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Writer's block? Vanquish it with these tips

Writers of all kinds sometimes fall prey to blocks. Whether you're writing a novel, a poem, or a business article, these tips can help you get past those blocks and get back on track:

- **Start early.** You have more willpower and energy in the morning, so use it to your advantage. You'll also have fewer interruptions and distractions while other people are just pouring their first cup of coffee, and you'll be able to put off less-important tasks for when you have the time to devote to them.
- **Select a goal.** Challenge yourself to write 5,000 words, work for two hours straight, finish a chapter, or write half your article before you move on. This gives you something concrete to strive for.
- **Warm up.** Spend a few minutes describing something around you, recreating a conversation from yesterday, writing down a dream, or just recording random thought as they come into your head. The practice of writing something—anything—will help get your mind in gear.
- **Leave it unfinished.** Some writers make a habit of stopping in the middle of a sentence so they have a natural starting point the next morning. If that doesn't work for you, try leaving what you're working on incomplete once you've reached your daily goal. You'll find it easier to continue when you have a natural jumping-off point.
- **Don't push yourself.** Sometimes the only thing to do is step away from the keyboard for a while. Let your mind wander without getting lost in another subject. After a few minutes (or hours) you'll be able to return with a fresh perspective.



Quotes

To invent, you need a good imagination and a pile of junk.
—Thomas Edison

Our imagination is stretched to the utmost, not, as in fiction, to imagine things which are not really there, but just to comprehend those things which are there.

—Richard Feynman

Do not be embarrassed by your failures. Learn from them, and start again.

—Richard Branson

You've got to get up every morning with determination if you're going to go to bed with satisfaction.

—George Lorimer





ACROSS

1. On-line journal
5. Rhinoceros
10. Gangs
14. Former Italian currency
15. A red fluorescent dye
16. Send forth
17. A Freudian stage
18. Totally
20. Vixen
22. Hypodermic
23. L
24. Donkeys
25. Class chums
32. Held on tightly
33. Japanese cartoon art
34. Beer
37. Not yours
38. Inscribed pillar
39. Make unclear
40. Damp
41. Villain
42. Communion table
43. Self-restraining
45. A long-legged S. American bird
49. Dawn goddess
50. Windfall
53. Detective (slang)
57. Noble
59. Greek cheese
60. Actors in a show
61. Give a speech
62. Relating to urine
63. Beers
64. Waste conduit
65. Lake (Scottish)



DOWN

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Ho-hum | 19. Delete | 41. Lose consciousness |
| 2. Connects two points | 21. Blockage | 42. "Smallest" particle |
| 3. By mouth | 25. Flat-bottomed boat | 44. Spay |
| 4. Square-rigged sailing ships | 26. Hint | 45. Hemp |
| 5. Summon to return | 27. Offended | 46. Small goat antelope |
| 6. Owl sound | 28. Married partners | 47. Licoricelike flavor |
| 7. Belief | 29. Concerning (archaic) | 48. Sail supports |
| 8. Bites | 30. Diacritical mark | 51. Animal menageries |
| 9. Unique | 31. An uncle | 52. Unit of land |
| 10. Anagram of "Smite" | 34. Countertenor | 53. Way in |
| 11. Portents | 35. Hawaiian feast | 54. Protagonist |
| 12. Cause to leak | 36. Makes a mistake | 55. Ear-related |
| 13. Infections of the eye | 38. Bro or sis | 56. Every single one |
| | 39. Happy | 58. Uncooked |





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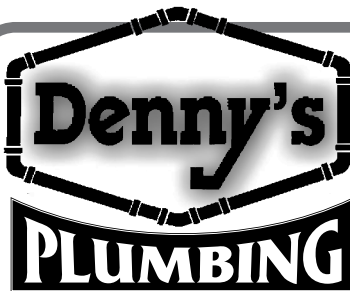


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SCAM ! ALERT

Romance Scams

www.fbi.gov/how-we-can-help-you/scams-and-safety/common-scams-and-crimes

Romance scams occur when a criminal adopts a fake online identity to gain a victim's affection and trust. The scammer then uses the illusion of a romantic or close relationship to manipulate and/or steal from the victim.

The scammer's intention is to establish a relationship as quickly as possible, endear himself to the victim, and gain trust. Scammers may propose marriage and make plans to meet in person, but that will never happen. Eventually, they will ask for money.

If someone you meet online needs your bank account information to deposit money, they are most likely using your account to carry out other theft and fraud schemes.

Tips for Avoiding Romance Scams:

- **Be careful what you post** and make public online. Scammers can use details shared on social media and dating sites to better understand and target you.
- **Research the person's photo and profile** using online searches to see if the **image, name, or details have been used elsewhere.**
- Go slowly and ask lots of questions.
- Beware if the individual **seems too perfect** or quickly asks you to leave a dating service or social media site to communicate directly.
- Beware if the individual attempts to isolate you from friends and family or requests inappropriate photos or financial information that could later be used to extort you.
- Beware if the individual **promises to meet in person** but then **always comes up with an excuse why he or she can't.** If you haven't met the person after a few months, for whatever reason, you have good reason to be suspicious.
- **Never send money to anyone you have only communicated with online or by phone.**

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Ask the right questions

Asking questions is the key to creative thinking, but you've got to ask the right kinds of questions. Here are some ideas for generating questions that get results:



- Write variations of the same question. Without overthinking it or second-guessing yourself, quickly write at least 10 variations of the question you're exploring. "How can we reduce expenses?" could become, "How can I persuade people to reduce expenses?" and "Where can we easily cut expenses?" and so forth. Each iteration will produce a new and different idea.
- Analyze everything. Don't go through life on autopilot. Take a hard look at little annoyances, for example, and try to find ways to eliminate them—"How can I stop getting interrupted for nonessential problems?" for example. Examine the tools that help you every day and look for ways to maximize them: "How can I get more out of all the applications on my computer?"
- Question your first solution. Maybe you've got an answer to your question, but don't stop there. Reinterpret it. For example, look for ways your solution could be improved, misused, or used to solve other problems. This helps you look past your assumptions and consider new perspectives.

Marvin Gaye's serendipitous accidents

One of singer/songwriter Marvin Gaye's most successful albums was *What's Going On*. Gaye worked hard on the album, but some of its most original moments came from mistakes. As an article of the LifeHacker website relates:

"Interestingly, two of the most singular aspects of *What's Going On* that were extended to the album began as errors. The opening alto-sax solo by Eli Fontaine actually was a warm-up phrase for an overdub that Gaye decided to keep. And Gaye's harmonized duets with himself occurred when Ken Sands, the engineer, accidentally played back two of his vocal versions on one mono tape."

Accidents can sometime produce surprising results.



Did You Know?

Christmas was originally celebrated by the Greeks on January 7th of every year, until Pope Julius I marked December 25th the official date for Christmas celebration in 350 A.D., and is still celebrated on that date to this day, nearly 1700 years later.



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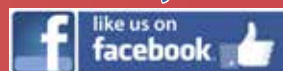
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Sunday	Monday	Tu
	1	
7	8	
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14	15	
21	22	
First Day of Winter		
28	29	



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2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
	Christmas Eve	Christmas		
30	31			
	New Year's Eve			

SCAM



ALERT



Family Scams

Scammers are good at **pretending to be someone that they're not**. They try to trick you into thinking **a loved one is in trouble**.

Once the scammer makes you think they're your grandson and in trouble, they pressure you to quickly send them money. **But it's all a scam.**

Your family member was never in trouble.

- The scammer will say it's **urgent** and that you're the only one who can help.
- The scammer might tell you it's **important to keep it secret**. They don't want you talking to other family members and friends and realizing it's a scam.
- The scammers will **play with your emotions**. They're counting on you to act quickly to help your family or friend. And they're counting on you to pay without stopping to check out whether there's really an emergency. If you get a call like this, you can be sure this is a scam.

Slow down. Verify.

Example of a Family Emergency Scam Call

Hi Grandpa, it's me.



Sebastian? Is that you?



Yes, it's me, Sebastian. Grandpa, I'm in trouble, and I need money for bail.

What happened?

Please don't tell Mom or Dad. I'll get in so much trouble.

Please help me!

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MONTHLY

Bingo's Birthday Month. With origins that date back to a 1530s Italian lottery game, different versions of Bingo were played in Germany and France for hundreds of years before it reached North America in 1929. The game has been popular in the United States since then, used by churches to raise funds and by casinos that promise huge jackpots to a lucky few.

Root Vegetables Month. Looking for something healthy to offset the sugary treats of the holiday season? Consider a carrot soup seasoned with turmeric and ginger; add shaved beets and radishes to a salad; or try a side of mashed parsnips or baked sweet potatoes with your next meal.

National Eggnog Month. Spike it with bourbon, whiskey, or rum; add a splash to your coffee; or enjoy a glass with a sprinkle of cinnamon on top. For those who love the rich, creamy beverage known as eggnog, this is the month to indulge.

Seasonal Affective Disorder Month. About 20 percent of the population suffers from a mild form of depression during the cold-weather months. Most experience fatigue, irritability, a lack of concentration and other symptoms in the winter months. Check in with your health care provider if you or someone you know experiences changes in moods and behaviors this winter.



WEEKLY

Clerc-Gallaudet Week, Dec. 3-9. Laurent Clerc (1785–1869) and Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet (1787–1851) worked to establish the foundation for American Sign Language, as well as the first school for the deaf in this country. Clerc-Gallaudet Week was established by the D.C. Public Library in 1974 to honor the December birthdays of these men and to raise awareness of issues in the deaf and library communities.

Christmas Bird Count, Dec. 14–Jan. 5. For more than 100 years, the Audubon Society has relied on volunteers birders throughout the Western Hemisphere to conduct an avian census. Go to <http://www.audubon.org/join-christmas-bird-count> to find out the details about CBC activities in your area.

National Gluten-Free Baking Week, Dec. 17-23. The treats and feasts of the season can be especially challenging for those with digestive issues or an intolerance for the complex protein found in barley, wheat, and rye. Consider adding a few gluten-free alternatives to your holiday spread this year.

Hanukkah, evening of Dec. 12–evening of Dec. 20. This eight day “Festival of Lights” is commemorated by the nightly lighting of a menorah, the recitation of special prayers, and feasting in the Jewish community.



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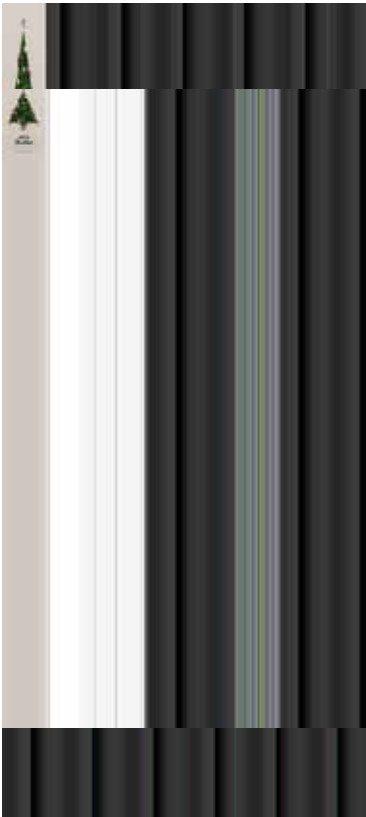
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DECEMBER SUDOKU

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



Major Global Holidays

World AIDS Day – Dec 1
St. Nicholas Day – Dec 6 (Europe)
Bodhi Day – Dec 8 (Buddhist communities)
Human Rights Day – Dec 10
Feast Day of Our Lady of Guadalupe – Dec 12 (Mexico)
Santa Lucia Day – Dec 13 (Scandinavia)
Winter Solstice / Yule – Dec 21
Hanukkah – Dec 22–30 (Jewish communities)
Christmas Eve – Dec 24
Christmas Day – Dec 25
Boxing Day – Dec 26 (UK, Canada, Australia)
Kwanzaa – Dec 26–Jan 1 (African-American heritage)
New Year's Eve – Dec 31. [jocalendars.com]



U.S. Observances & Fun Days

Giving Tuesday – Dec 2
National Cookie Day – Dec 4
Day of the Ninja – Dec 5
National Brownie Day – Dec 8
National Cocoa Day – Dec 13
National Ugly Sweater Day – Dec 20
Festivus – Dec 23 (pop culture holiday from Seinfeld). [today.com]



Week-Long & Month-Long Observances

National Cat Lover's Month
National Giving Month
Write to a Friend Month

Seasonal celebrations like gingerbread, peppermint bark, and fruitcake days are scattered throughout the month.



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1. Negative thoughts. If you were ever the last one picked for a team in P.E. or someone whose accomplishments were compared against those of an older sibling or a prodigy neighbor kid, then you'll know firsthand the doubt, dread and lack of confidence that can overtake a young mind. Don't allow your children to fall victim to a spirit of defeat.
2. Encourage them to share their thoughts. Then help them improve their outlook by exploring strategies and solutions that will empower their thinking and inspire a willingness to strive for more.
3. Feelings. Sometimes as parents we're too quick to step in and say, "Don't worry. Everything will work out." Yet this approach doesn't allow your children to recognize and process how they are feeling, nor understand how their feelings can influence behavior.
5. Give youngsters a judgment-free forum for exploring their emotions, and offer insight and constructive feedback for dealing with those emotions.
6. Fears. Confronting adversity helps to develop problem-solving skills and gives us the confidence to make better choices.
7. Don't allow children to give up when times are tough. Encourage kids to face their fears with positive actions and perseverance. They may not always come out on top, but they will be able to hold their heads up knowing they did their best.



Quotes

When trouble comes, it's your family that supports you.
—Guy Lafleur

Family means no one gets left behind or forgotten.
—David Ogden Stiers



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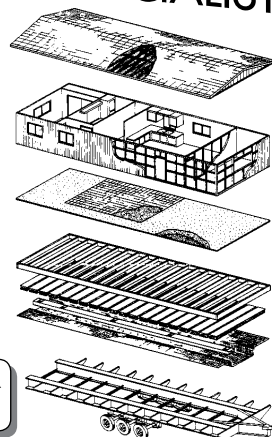


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- MAY 21, 5 DAY – **NEW ORLEANS JAZZ & MORE!** ...\$999*/\$1299

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- DEC. 11, THURS. – **GAYLORD PALMS** w/lunch buffet...\$159
- DEC. 14, SUN. – **"SUNKICKS HOLIDAY SPECTACULAR"**...\$139
- DEC. 18, THURS. – **LUNCH BUNCH** at **Reececliff Family Diner**...\$89
- DEC. 28, SUN. – **Sarasota's SAILOR CIRCUS HOLIDAY SPECIAL**...\$79

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OTHER	Lake Seminole Resort Christmas Craft Show and Flea Market. On Saturday, December 6th, 9:00am - 1:00pm. Located at 10245 110th Ave. N. Largo, Florida	
Sell Rickey's Jerky! Join our team—locally or see the country. Full time or part time. Have fun while you cover your expenses or make some money! We're hiring now through the end of the year! Contact Ryan: Info@RickeysJerky.com or 503-475-5613 https://rickeysjerky.com/pages/opportunities has more info.	Ranch Mobile Park, Park-Wide Yard Sale , Saturday, December 6, 2025, 8:00am -2:00pm at: 6800 - 150th Ave. N., Clearwater, (Largo).	VENTRILOQUIST MARK MINOR SHOW, January 17th, 7PM. Paradise Island Clubhouse, 1001 Starkey Road, Largo. Tickets only \$10, Contact Ken 386-450-0360
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ARTICLES FOR SALE	Annual Carport & Craft sale, Lincolnshire Estates: 1071 Donegan Rd., Largo FL 33771. Saturday December 6th 8AM to 1PM. Over 50 homes: housewares, arts & crafts, clothes, furniture, tools, and lots more. Maps available at entrances.	Lincolnshire Estates Annual Bazaar will be held Saturday Feb 7th, 8AM-1PM. 1071 Donegan Rd, Largo. Furniture, tools, jewelry, housewares, bake sale, nick-nacks, linens. Small appliances, silent auction, breakfast, and lunch for purchase.
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December Word Search



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C	O	H	E	E	M	X	P	C	A	N	D	Y
M	M	F	Y	B	A	P	B	A	Q	T	L	D
E	E	E	F	R	G	R	G	R	C	R	T	L
H	S	L	I	I	I	I	N	B	A	S	U	R
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A	I	N	O	G	T	E	L	S	Y	K	N	W
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C	T	O	W	A	R	D	F	W	U	H	E	R
H	E	E	T	D	R	E	A	M	S	T	R	A
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learn
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toward
world



The Great Eggnog Explosion

At an office Christmas party, one enthusiastic employee decided to make homemade eggnog to impress everyone. He brought in a giant glass punch bowl filled to the brim, complete with nutmeg sprinkles and cinnamon sticks. It looked amazing.



But what he didn't realize was that the bowl was sitting directly under the heat vent.

As the party went on, the eggnog slowly warmed up... and fermented. By the time people started ladling it into cups, it had developed a surprisingly fizzy texture. One brave soul took a sip and immediately spat it out, yelling, "It's ALIVE!"

Moments later, the bowl cracked from the heat, sending a tidal wave of eggnog across the table, soaking cookies, gifts, and one unfortunate intern's laptop. The smell lingered for days, and the punch bowl was never seen again.

The moral? Never mix dairy, heat, and ambition.

The Cat vs. The Christmas Tree

One family had a beautiful, towering Christmas tree decorated with delicate glass ornaments, shimmering tinsel, and twinkling lights. It was their pride and joy—until their cat, Mittens, decided it was her personal jungle gym.



On the first night, they heard a crash and found Mittens halfway up the tree, dangling from a branch like a furry ornament. She had knocked off several baubles and was batting at the star like it owed her money.

They tried everything: citrus spray, aluminum foil around the base, even a motion-activated air puffer. Nothing worked. Every night, Mittens launched a stealth attack. One morning, they woke up to find the entire tree tipped over, ornaments scattered like confetti, and Mittens sitting triumphantly on top of the fallen pine like she'd conquered Everest.

From then on, they decorated only the top half of the tree and left the bottom bare—except for a sign that read: "Mittens' Zone – Enter at Your Own Risk."

*"Santa Claus has the right idea. Visit people once a year."
— Victor Borge*

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