

# NBRC Senior Companion News



## We can “BEARLY” believe the year is nearly over!

Volunteers are invited to join us for our Winter Holiday Party

**Day:** Thursday, December 18th

**Time:** 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**Location:** SCP Office 520 Mendocino Ave  
7th Avenue parking garage (take your ticket to reception)

**On-street parking is at your own expense**



### The day's activities will include:

- Check-in at 10:00 a.m.
- Lite breakfast snacks
- Craft time
- Lunch
- Bingo & presentations
- Finishing at 2:00 p.m.



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## Join Us



If you know someone who would make a caring SCP volunteer, please have them contact:

**Melissa Slama**  
[melissas@nbrc.net](mailto:melissas@nbrc.net)

**707.566.3005**



# Winter Help for Seniors in Sonoma County

## Food • Clothing • Energy Assistance

### SCP Volunteers give—but sometimes they need help, too.

Below is a collection of services to help you or someone you know with food, clothing or energy assistance this winter.

#### Food Assistance

Council on Aging Meals on Wheels: (707) 525-0143

Redwood Empire Food Bank: Food boxes & Senior Baskets (707) 523-7903, [refb.org](http://refb.org)

2-1-1 Sonoma County: Call for meal sites & pantry locations

CalFresh – Apply for food benefits, (877) 699-6868



#### Clothing Assistance

Friends in Sonoma Helping (FISH) – Free clothing closet, <https://fishsonoma.org/>

St. Vincent de Paul Sonoma County – Clothing vouchers via partner agencies

Goodwill & Community Thrift Stores – Affordable winter gear

[Find Help](#) – Search 'clothing assistance' + your ZIP code



#### Energy & Utility Assistance

PG&E; CARE/FERA – 20%+ bill discount, [pge.com/assistance](http://pge.com/assistance)

REACH (via Salvation Army) – One-time bill help up to \$300

LIHEAP – Federal energy aid, (866) 675-6623

North Coast Energy Services – Weatherization & energy programs, [nces.org](http://nces.org)



#### Volunteers & Neighbors Can Help

- Share these contacts with seniors who may need help.
- Offer rides to meal sites or clothing closets.
- Help fill out applications for CalFresh, LIHEAP, or utility aid.
- Host a coat or blanket drive this winter!

For more Sonoma County senior resources, visit

<https://sonomacounty.gov/health-and-human-services>



# Filipino Holiday Trivia

Because many of our volunteers come from the Philippines, we thought it might be fun to share a Filipino trivia game for the holidays.

Did you know that the Philippines celebrates the longest Christmas season in the world? Holiday songs start playing as early as September, and many families don't take down decorations until well after New Year's Day! Whether you grew up on the islands or just love the joy that comes with the season, **Paskong Pinoy** (Filipino Christmas) is a time for food, faith, family and fun.

Feel free to share a little holiday cheer through this trivia activity. It's a wonderful way to spark conversation, laughter and connection. Here are a few questions to get you started:

## Trivia Time

1. What is the colorful star-shaped lantern called that symbolizes the Star of Bethlehem?
2. When do many Filipinos begin celebrating Christmas?
3. What sweet rice cakes are enjoyed after attending Simbang Gabi (Night Mass)?
4. How do you say "Merry Christmas" in Filipino?
5. What special church service takes place before dawn for nine days leading up to Christmas?

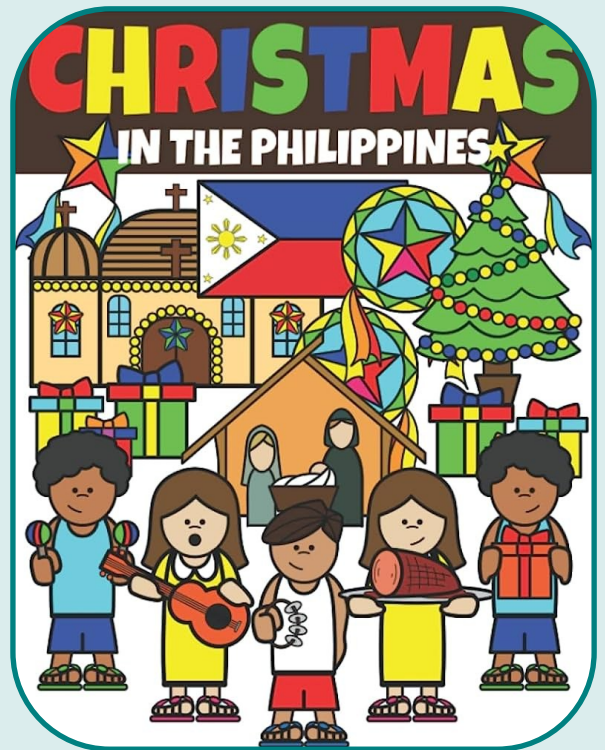
*See answers bottom, right on this page.*

Feel free to share this trivia page with your companions and site staff. Even those that don't know the answers can join in the fun by guessing or learning something new.

Celebrate your heritage even more by sharing a favorite holiday recipe, a story from your childhood, or a favorite song.

Whether you're from Manila or Petaluma, the spirit of Christmas is the same—kindness, sharing and togetherness.

**Maligayang Pasko, volunteers,** and thank you for bringing joy to every season!



Answers:

1. The Parol
2. In September, the start of the "Ber" months.
3. Bibingka and Puto Bumbong
4. Maligayang Pasko
5. Simbang Gabi



# Holiday Cheer Without The Chaos

## Simple ways to spread holiday joy without stress this December:

The holidays can be the most wonderful time of the year, but also, the noisiest, busiest, and most overstimulating. For many adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, too much sparkle, sound, or schedule change can feel overwhelming. Fortunately, it doesn't take tinsel or flashing lights to make December special; just a little creativity and a lot of kindness.

### Keep it Simple and Sensory-Friendly

Bright lights, strong scents, and loud music can be too much. Instead, create a calm, cozy space with:

- \* **Soft lighting:** battery candles or paper lanterns
- \* **Gentle decorations:** snowflakes or paper stars, or nature-inspired garlands
- \* **Pleasant scents:** try a bit of cinnamon, vanilla and orange peel in sachets instead of sprays or strongly scented candles.

### Easy Craft Ideas

Crafting brings everyone together and simple projects work the best.

- \* Friendship ornaments: write kind words or names on paper ornaments and hang them on a shared tree
- \* Gratitude garlands: each person adds a note of something they're thankful for (we did this in an in-service last year)
- \* Snowman faces: decorate foam or felt snowmen with smiles, buttons and silly hats

### Moments that Matter

Play quiet holiday music or sing familiar songs together, but skip the high-energy versions. Ask each person what their favorite part of December is. Maybe it's a food, a memory, or just the feeling of being together.

### Volunteer Tip Corner

If holiday excitement gets too high for you or your companions, try a few calming tricks:

- \* Step outside for a short walk (always include a staff member)
- \* Offer favorite comfort item (toy, blanket, or memento)
- \* Take slow, deep breaths together; counting as you breathe in for four, hold for four and release slowly for four, then pause and repeat four times.

### Closing Thoughts:

You don't have to overspend, over indulge, or overdo to make the holidays meaningful. Just being there for those you care about. Listening, laughing and sharing small joys, are the greatest gifts we can give to one another at this busy time of year.



Be the Calm, the  
Connection,  
and the Cheer  
That Everyone  
Needs this  
Year!



# STRETCH Your Brain

## Sudoku Directions:

Use each number 1 to 9 just once within each row, column, and block.

## UNSCRAMBLE WORDS

How many words can you make out of the letters in the word: **CHESTNUTS**

(Total possible words of 2 letters or more = 154 )

[illegible]

<https://wordfinders.com/solver/#results>



**A**

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

## B

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



## Upcoming Paid Days Off / In-Service Dates

In-service dates are subject to change

NAME OF HOLIDAY	DAY OF HOLIDAY	DAY YOU TAKE OFF
Dec. In-Service	Holiday Party	Thu—Dec 18
Christmas / Winter	12/24	Wed—Dec 24
Christmas / Winter	12/25	Thu—Dec 25
New Year's Eve	12/31	Wed—Dec 31
MLK Jr. Holiday	3rd Monday in January	Mon—Jan. 19

## DECEMBER 2025

Click the [links](#) in the digital version of this newsletter to learn more.

### A Few Celebration Days

- 12/1 [World AIDS Day](#)
- 12/1 [National Handwashing Week](#)
- 12/1 [National Flu Vaccination Week](#)
- 12/1 [Crohn's & Colitis Awareness Week](#)
- 12/3 [People with Disabilities Day](#)
- 12/5 [International Volunteer Day](#)
- 12/10 [Human Rights Day](#)
- 12/14 to 12/22 [Hanukkah](#)
- 12/15 [National Bill of Rights Day](#)
- 12/16 [Boston Tea Party Day](#)
- 12/21 [Winter Solstice](#)
- 12/26 to 1/1 [Kwanzaa](#)

### Awareness Topics

- [Impaired Driving Prevention](#)
- [Universal Human Rights Month](#)
- Learn a Foreign Language Month
- [Seasonal Affective Disorder Awareness](#)
- [National Car Donation](#)
- [Safe Toys and Gifts Month](#)
- [Decembeard](#)

Is there something you'd like to learn more about? Let us know: [lbordner@nbrc.net](mailto:lbordner@nbrc.net)



### Senior Companion Program

North Bay Regional Center  
520 Mendocino Ave  
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

Email: [infoSCP@nbrc.net](mailto:infoSCP@nbrc.net)  
Phone: 707.566.3005



North Bay  
Regional Center



AmeriCorps  
Seniors

**HAPPY  
BIRTHDAY  
DECEMBER  
BORN**



### December 2025

Cora M ----- 12/7  
Irene L ----- 12/15  
Valeriana M ----- 12/15  
Iris P ----- 12/24  
Imelda P ----- 12/25

### January 2026

Rkia M ----- 1/1

Shhh...the answers are below!

A

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

B

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