

December 2016, Issue # 24



# Palmer CITY LINKS



## Alaska Recycles Day...

On November 15<sup>th</sup>, the City of Palmer celebrated Alaska Recycle Day. The event was hosted in the Palmer Railroad Depot and began with a Mayor's Proclamation read by City Council Member, Linda Combs. In the Proclamation, the Mayor encouraged businesses, non-profit organizations, schools and individuals to improve their daily lives by increasing the effort of



recycling and keeping the environment healthy. The presentation and discussion were hosted by the City of Palmer, the Mat-Su Borough and the Valley Community for Recycling Solution (VCRS). The event had a lot of interest from the residents of Palmer and surrounding areas that attended. The City of Palmer looks forward to partnering

and welcomes any organization or business that wants to make a difference and keep Palmer at its Best!

## Annual Mayor's Forum.

During the Annual Joint Mayor's Forum held by the Wasilla and the Palmer Chambers of Commerce, the Mayors of Palmer, Wasilla and Mat-Su Borough gave an update on



their community. At the end of the forum the Mayor of Palmer, Edna DeVries presented a Key to the City to the Presidents of Palmer and Wasilla Chambers.

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## Glorious Time for MTA Event Center!



On December 3<sup>rd</sup>, the MTA Event Center hosted the Denali Destroyer Dolls. It was the second Derby of the season for DDD that battled against North Pole. The score was 289 to 86 with the Denali Dolls getting the big win!

The PHS Moose Hockey Team is an exciting team and has been working hard this season with 9 wins, 3 losses and 2 ties'. Come check them out as they have 2 more home games and the North-Star Conference Championships at the MTA Events Center on February 4<sup>th</sup>.

On December 9<sup>th</sup>, the MTA Event Center hosted the annual C-Cup Woman's Tourney. C-Cup is the oldest tournament that the Event Center hosts. The past 11 years has been full of great hockey and fun.

On December 11<sup>th</sup> Colony Christmas Skate drew a nice crowd of skaters celebrating Colony Days. They kept the staff busy and happy. As the holidays approach,



the staff of the MTA Event Center wish everyone a wonderful

holiday season. *(Info and picture courtesy of Steve MacSwain)*

## December, the Month of Special Fun and Celebration...

The Palmer Library always has something to offer. The library staff is unstoppable and unbeatable in finding new ideas for the events that attract more kids and adults.



"December has been a festive month at the library. Colony Christmas brought a lot of visitors through for a chance to warm up and try their hand at making origami cranes. "Friends" program

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hosted a beautiful performance by Alaska Celtic Pipes & Drums and visits from a special man in a red suit. Santa greeted story time participants on two different occasions. Several children shared their Christmas wishes and spent the morning crafting and snacking at the library. It was a very special time for celebration. *(Info and photo courtesy of K. Schweisthal)*

show at the Palmer Museum, various contests, free public skate at the MTA Events Center, pictures with Santa and

## Colony Christmas Festival



much more were offered for all families to enjoy during this special event. The streets of Palmer were beautifully decorated with colorful Christmas lights, and were filled with public, cheer, laughter and Christmas carols sung by the carolers. Colony

On December 9<sup>th</sup> Palmer hosted the three-day annual festival, Colony Christmas. Colony Christmas attracted thousands of people to downtown. A lot of free games and concerts at the Palmer Public Library, pony rides, a fire spinning

Christmas spirit was felt in the air with the parade marching through the streets of Palmer. This year the theme of the parade was "Mountains of Fun". Certainly, it was a



*Photo courtesy of Vann. From the left: A. Vann, M. Deckert and A. Anderson*

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mountain of fun, excitement, enjoyment and a mountain of Christmas spirit! The City of Palmer won the 2016 Colony Christmas parade of lights! Thank you to Department of Public Works for their hard work and ideas that brighten our town. Congrats! Colony Christmas Parade ended with a splendid display of fireworks that lit the sky above the town. Definitely, it was the best Colony Christmas ever! *(Photo courtesy of Ailis Vann)*



- MTA Events Center
- Dec 29 Snow Day! Come play at 10am – Library
  - Dec 31 MTA Events Center - CLOSED
  - Jan 1 MTA Events Center - CLOSED
  - Jan 2 Library – CLOSED
  - Jan 2,9,23,30 – Adult Shinny – MTA – 9:15pm – 10:15pm
  - Jan 3 Public Skate – every Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday of January – MTA – 12noon-1pm
  - Jan 5 every Thursday of January - Adult Stick Time – MTA – 1:15pm-2:30pm
  - Jan 10-12 Public Skate – MTA – 12-1pm (every Tues., Wed., and Thurs.
  - Jan 13 Foreign Film “Sea Fog” – Library 7pm
  - Jan 14 Inside the Artist’s Studio – 2pm-6pm - Museum
  - Jan 14 CHILL - Library 6pm-8pm
  - Jan 15 Untold Stories @ 6-8pm - Museum
  - Jan 15 Scrapbooking – Library 2pm-4pm
  - Jan 16 FRIENDS Meeting – Library – 7pm
  - Jan 16 Open Youth Broomball - MTA - 1:45pm – 2:45pm
  - Jan 27 Teen Movie & Pizza Night – Library 6pm-8pm

- Dec 23 Public Skate 12 to 1pm – MTA Events Center
- Dec 23 Youth Open Broomball 1:45 to 2:45pm – MTA Events Center
- Dec 24 Closed – MTA Events Center
- Dec 25 Closed – MTA Events Center
- Dec 26 Adult Shinny Hockey 9:15 to 10:15pm – MTA Events Center
- Dec 27 Public Skate 12 to 1pm – MTA Events Center
- Dec 27 Movie Time! At 11am Visit [pplak.org](http://pplak.org) for details - Library
- Dec 28 Science of Sled Dogs (VTC) at 11am - Library
- Dec 28 Public Skate 12 to 1pm – MTA Events Center
- Dec 29 Public Skate 12 to 1pm – MTA Events Center
- Dec 29 Adult Stick Time 1:15 to 2:15pm –



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# Colony Christmas Cookie Contest 2016

*The award winners:*

## Child Category (2-9)

### Best Drop Christmas Cookie "Clara's Sparkley"



Clara Pester

- 3 cups butter, softened
- 1 ½ cups confectioners' sugar, sifted
- 4 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 ½ cups cornstarch

In a large bowl, cream butter and confectioners' sugar until light and fluffy. Gradually add flour and cornstarch, beating until well blended. With hands lightly dusted with additional cornstarch, roll dough into 1-in. balls. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Press lightly with floured fork. Top with sparkly sprinkles. Bake at 300° for 20-22 min or until bottom are lightly browned. Cool for 5 min before removing from pans to wire racks. Yield 1-18

## Best Specialty "Reindeer Treats"



Birdie Barkwood

- ¼ cup butter
- 1 ¼ cup Butterscotch Morsels
- ½ cup peanut butter
- 1 TSP vanilla
- 2 cups Chow Mein Noodles
- 1 ½ cups salted peanuts

Melt butter in sauce pan and add Morsels, PB and Vanilla stirring till melted and smooth. Mix in noodles one cup at the time then peanuts. Coat well and use ice-cream scoop to place balls on wax paper lined cookie tray. Place in fridge for at least 2 hrs. Serve to your favorite Reindeer Family and Friends. Makes 18 treats.

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### Runner up Drop Christmas Cookie "No Bake Mountains"



**Charles Larsen**

- ½ cup butter
- 1 ½ cups white sugar
- ½ cup packed brown sugar
- ½ cup milk
- 4 tablespoons cocoa
- 1 pinch kosher salt
- ½ cup creamy peanut butter
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 2 ½ cups oatmeal

Serves 24

Add the first six ingredients into a 4-quart sauce pan. Bring to a rolling boil and hold for 1 min. Remove from heat. Add peanut butter into the hot mixture and stir until melted. Add in vanilla (almond extract is good also, but I only use ½ teaspoon almond extract with 1 ½ teaspoon vanilla extract). Mix in the dry oats until they are completely coated. Drop cookies by tablespoonsful onto wax paper. Let cool until set.

### Runner up Specialty "Peanut Butter Surprise"



**Kegan Pester**

- 1/3 cup butter, softened (if using salted butter, omit salt)
- ½ cup brown sugar
- ¼ cup + 2 tablespoons white sugar
- 1 egg
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup peanut butter (smooth or crunchy)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 package of Rolos

Preheat the oven to 350 and place non-stick baking sheets for cookies aside while you prepare cookies. In a small mixer combine the butter, peanut butter, sugar and vanilla. Beat on med-high speed for about 2 min, scraping down the sides of the bowl as needed. Add the egg and beat for about 30 secs. until just incorporated. Add the flour mixture and beat on low speed until combined. Using a medium cookie scoop, place a Rolo in the middle and form the dough into the balls and place them onto the backing sheets allowing about 2 in between each cookie. Slightly flatten each ball of dough with the tines of a lightly-floured fork creating crisscross pattern. Bake for 8 min. The tops should look underdone, they will firm up as the cookies

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are cooling. Remove the baking sheets from the oven and allow the cookie to rest for about 5 min before removing. Transferring to a cooling rack.

### Youth Category (10-17)

#### Best Drop Christmas Cookie "Chippers"



Lucas Fisher

- 1/2 – 1 cup softened butter
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon vanilla
- 2 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 bag chocolate chips

Mix butter, eggs, brown sugar and vanilla together. Add flour (1 cup at the time) to mixture. Next add baking powder and chocolate chips. Bake in oven at 350° for about 15-20 min.

#### Best Rolled Christmas Cookie "Autumn's Sugar Cookies"



Autumn Howe

- Beat.
- 6 Tb shortening
  - 6Tb butter
  - 1 cup sugar
  - 2 eggs
  - 1 tsp vanilla
- Add:
- 2 ½ cup flour
  - 1 tsp baking powder
  - 1 tsp salt
- Chill on hour. Bake 350° 8 min.
- Frosting.
- 3oz cream cheese
  - 4T butter
  - Tsp vanilla
  - 2 cup powder sugar

#### Best Specialty "Coco Cookie Cup"



Ella Bowers

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- ½ cup heavy whipping cream
  - 2 tablespoons hot cocoa mix
  - 1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips
  - ½ cup white chocolate chips
  - 1 cup Jet-Puffed Mallow Bits
- Put 1 tablespoon of the sugar cookie dough into 24 greased mini muffin tins. Bake for 12-14 min at 350°. Allow the cookies to cool completely in the pan before gently removing them. Make the chocolate ganache by bringing the whipping cream to a boil. Stir in the hot cocoa mix. Pour the hot cream over the semi-sweet chocolate chips and let it sit for 3 min. Then, stir until the chocolate chips are melted and the ganache is smooth. Break off the loops on some mini pretzels to use as handles. Melt the white chocolate and use it to attach the pretzel handles to the cookie cups. Spoon the chocolate ganache into the cookie cups and top with mini marshmallows.

#### Best Alaskan Christmas Cookie "Tis the Season"



Libby Evans

- 1 ½ cup butter (softened)
- 2 cups white sugar
- 4 eggs

- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 5 cups all-purpose flower
- 2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt

In the bowl mix butter and sugar until smooth. Beat in eggs and vanilla stir in flower, baking powder, and salt. Cover and chill for one hour. Preheat oven to 400°. Roll out dough ¼ - ½ thickness and cut it. Bake 6-8 min. Chill. Makes 6-12 cookies.

#### Runner up Rolled Christmas Cookie "Joy to the World"



Emma Evans

- 1/2 teaspoon lemon extract
- 3 cups all- purpose flower
- 1teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup butter
- 2 eggs
- 1 ½ cups sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Mix in the bowl flower, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. In a small bowl beat eggs. Gradually add sugar, vanilla and lemon extract. Beat until light. Add flower. Mix. Stir by hand until doughy. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hr. Preheat oven 375°roll out the dough to 1/3-1/8 thickness. Cut. Cook for 6-11 min. Chill for 15 min.

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December 2016, Issue # 24



**Runner up Specialty  
"White Chocolate Yummy Canes"**



**Randi Bunsen-Riffle**

- 1 cup (2sticks) butter, softened
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 eggs
- ½ cup Hershey's Cocoa
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup packed light brown sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 11oz white chocolate chips
- Peppermint chips

Preheat oven to 375°. Beat butter, granulate sugar, brown sugar, vanilla and salt in large bowl until creamy. Add eggs; beat well. Stir together flour, cocoa and baking soda; gradually add to butter mixture, beating until well blended. Drop by rounded teaspoons onto ungreased sheet. Bake 8-10 min or until set. Cool slightly; remove from cookie sheet to wire rack. Cool completely. Melt white chocolate chips in a double boiler, dip cookies, place on drying rack and sprinkle with peppermint.  
COOL.

**Special Mention  
"Gingerbread Mountains"**



**Lyssia Larsen**

- ¾ cup butter, softened
- 1cup packed brown sugar
- 1 egg
- ¾ cup molasses
- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons ground ginger
- 1 ½ teaspoons baking soda
- 1 ½ teaspoons ground cinnamon
- ¾ teaspoon ground cloves
- ¼ teaspoon salt

In large bowl cream butter and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Add egg and molasses. Combine the flour, ginger, baking soda, cinnamon, cloves and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Cover and refrigerate for 4hrs or overnight or until easy to handle. On the lightly floured surface, roll dough to 1/8 in thickness. Cut with floured 2 ½ in cookie cutters. Place 1 in apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 8-10min or until edges are firm. Remove to wire racks to cool. Decorate cookies.

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December 2016, Issue # 24



## Adult Category

### Best Drop Christmas Cookie "Chocolate Chip Date"



#### Micaela Wedge

- Crisco
- 1 cup pitted dates
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¼ cup light brown sugar (packed)
- ¼ cup granulated sugar
- 2 large egg whites
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup whole wheat flour
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- Pinch salt
- ½ cup mini chocolate chips
- ½ cup water

To make the date pure, combine the dates and water in microwave -safe dish and cook on high about 5 min.

Drain the dates and put them in a food processor. Add the vanilla and puree until smooth. You should have about ½ cup. Scrape the date puree into a mixing bowl. Add the brown sugar and granulated sugars. Using a mixer beat

the dates and sugars on medium-low speed until creamy. Add the egg whites and continue to beat about 4 min. In a separate bowl combine the flours, baking powder and salt using rubber spatula, mix the creamed date and sugar mixture, blending gently but thoroughly until a batter forms. Fold in the chocolate chips. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Coat two cookie sheets with Crisco. Drop the dough by tablespoonful onto the prepared cookie sheets. Bake until the edges of the cookies are golden brown, about 7 min. Cool in pan for 5 min, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Make about 18 cookies.

### Best Rolled Christmas Cookie "Anise-Cranberry Biscochitos"



#### Bonaventura Johnson

- ¾ shortening
  - ¼ butter
  - 1 egg
  - 1/3 cup cranberry juice
  - 1 cup sugar
  - 3 ¾ cup whole wheat pastry flour
  - 1 ½ tsp baking powder
  - ¼ tsp salt
  - 1 ½ cup cranberries finely chopped
  - 1 tsp anise seeds (finely ground)
- Frosting
- 1 ½ cup powder sugar

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- 1 tsp butter
- 1 cup finely chopped cranberries
- 1 tsp milk or more as needed
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

Preheat oven at 375°. Line 3 baking sheets with parchment paper. Mix flour, baking powder, salt, ground anise seeds in a bowl and set aside. Cream shortening, butter and sugar until super creamed. Slowly add egg, cranberry juice to creamed fats. Mix well. Now add flour mixture to mixer. Mix until blended well. Add finely chopped cranberries and stir until well blended. Divide dough into three equal places. Working with one dough at a time roll out to ¼ in thick and cut out using your favorite cookie cutter shape. Place on cookie sheet and bake for 9-11 min until tops spring back. Remove from cookie sheet and place on wire rack. Frosting; Mix all frosting ingredients together in a bowl. Take each cookie and dip tops into frosting and return to rack to harden. Decorate the with cranberry or sugar sprinkles.

### Best Bar Christmas Cookie "Carmel coconut Chocolate Bars"



Rebecca Custer

#### Crust.

- 1 cup oats
- 1 cup flour
- ¼ teas salt
- ¼ teas baking soda
- ½ butter melted
- ½ cup packed brown sugar

Mix dry ingredients – stir in sugar and butter. Mix well. Put into bottom of greased (butter or cooking spray) pan. Bake 15 min. Remove from oven.

#### Carmel topping.

- 1 cup sugar
- 2 table light corn syrup
- ¼ cup water
- ½ cup whipping cream
- 4 tablespoon butter
- 1 ½ teas vanilla

In heavy saucepan add sugar, corn, syrup, water, over medium heat, let cook until light amber in color. Stir occasionally. When lightly browned, removed from heat, stir in cream. Mixture will bubble up – careful! Return to low heat, stir for a minute or so to get mixture smooth again. Pour into the glass bowl, add butter, stir till melted, add vanilla.

#### Topping.

- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1 cup chocolate chips
- 1 cup coconut

Spread caramel over baked crust. Sprinkle on coconut, then nuts, lastly chocolate. Return to oven for 20 min. Remove from oven. Let cool. Cut into bars.

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**Best Specialty**  
**"Colony Christmas Bark"**



**Cynthia McMillan**

- 2 PKG saltine crackers
- 1 cup dark brown sugar
- 1 cup butter
- 2 cups white chocolate chips
- 1 dark choc chunks
- ¼ cup sliced almonds
- 

Preheat oven to 450°F. Line large cookie sheet with foil. Lay saltine crackers out until they fill the sheet.

Toffee.

Bring butter and brown sugar to boil on stovetop (3 min). Pour toffee over crackers. Place cookie sheet in oven (preheated). 5 mins or until bubbly toffee. Remove from oven and sprinkle white and dark chocolate. let it melt and spread with spatula. Sprinkle almonds on top. Let cool. Either cut or brake like bark.

**Best Alaskan Christmas Cookie**  
**"Maple Pecan Shortbread"**



**Chanelle Farwell**

- 2 ¼ cups Flour
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¾ cup pecans (chopped)
- 1 cup butter (2sticks) room temp.
- ¾ granulated sugar
- ¼ cup real maple syrup
- 1 large egg yolk
- ¼ tsp purple maple extract

Preheat oven 350°, line baking sheet w /parchment paper, set aside. In medium bowl sift flour and salt. Wisk in pecans. Set aside. In electric mixer, cream butter and sugar until smooth and light (about 1 min). Add syrup, egg yolk, extract and beat till well combined. On slow speed, slowly add flour mixture, just till combined. Wrap in plastic and chill till firm (2hrs. overnight). Floured surface, roll out dough to ¼ in. Cut out w/cutters, place on sheet. Bake 10-12 min or till golden.

Maple glaze.

- 1 cup powder sugar
- ¼ cup pure maple syrup
- ½ tsp maple extract

In a bowl mix powder sugar, syrup and extract. Gradually add water (up 2tsp) to make thin and spreadable. Top your cookies, sprinkle w/Bacon Brittle.

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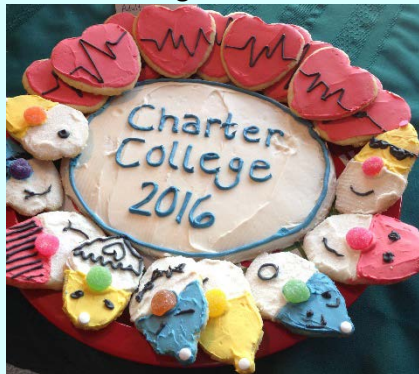


December 2016, Issue # 24

**Maple Bacon Pecan Brittle.**

- 2 cups sugar
- ½ cup light corn syrup
- ½ cup pure maple syrup
- ½ cup water
- 1 tsp sea salt
- 1 cup cooked maple bacon (crispy)
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1 ½ tsp baking soda

Line baking sheet w/parchment paper. Mix sugar, syrups, water and salt in a pot. Cook medium heat until sugar has dissolved. Place candy thermometer on side of pot and keep cooking till mix reach 255°F. Add your bacon, turn your heat up to medium high. Keep cooking, keep stirring. When the temperature reaches 265°F, add your pecans. Keep stirring until the temperature reaches 300°F. Turn off heat and add your baking soda quickly stirring well. Pour on your baking sheet and allow to cool, then break into pieces.

**Runner up Rolled Christmas Cookie  
"Christmas Sugar Cookie"****Joshua Bicchinella**

- 2 ¾ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 ½ cups white sugar

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- 1 Tsp baking soda
- 1 egg
- ½ Tsp baking powder
- 1 Tsp vanilla extract
- 1 cup butter, softened

**Frosting.**

- 1-2 cups powder sugar
- 1 stick soft/melted butter
- 1-2 cup full of vanilla
- 1 Tsp milk

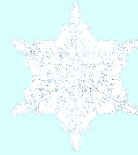
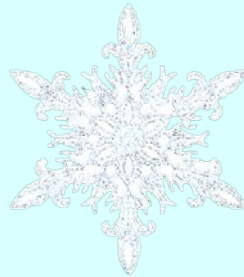
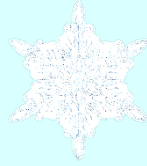
**Runner up Specialty  
"Springerlee"****Nina Chambers**

- 4 eggs
- 1 lb. confectioner sugar
- 2 t anise extract or ½ t anise oil
- 3 cups flour
- Crushed anise seeds

Beat eggs until light in color. Put eggs in a double boiler and beat in sugar gradually. Beat until mixture is like a soft margarine (about 10 min). Remove from heat and beat until cool. Add anise flour. Sift in flour or mix at low speed. Divide dough into 4 pieces and wrap each in plastic; let rest 15 min. Working on one piece at the time, roll to ¼ - ½ in thickness, press with springerlee rolling pin or press with forms. Cut out cookies and place on parchment sprinkled with anise seed. Leave on the counter to dry 12-18 hrs. Bake at 300° for 20 min until light straw color.



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*Disclaimer*  
*The City of Palmer is not responsible for the content of the recipes. The original versions of the recipes were provided by the participants of the Colony Christmas Cookie Contest 2016*

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