

Young people gamble for some of the same reasons that adults do. Studies show 2-7% of children experience a gambling addiction, compared to about 1% of adults. Before you buy lottery tickets as stocking stuffers, think about what risks they may pose for your children.



Recovery from a gambling addiction is possible. If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, call

**1-800-BETS OFF**

**HOLD THE PHONE**

### Q: What services are available for my adolescent?

A: In April 2016, a mutual decision was made when Francis Lauer merged with Youth and Shelter Services (YSS) to no longer offer adolescent assessments and counseling services at Prairie Ridge in Mason City, IA. YSS specializes in adolescent treatment, so we felt their expertise would be a better fit for the community of Mason City. The Mason City office still handles all adolescent prevention education, such as Diversion and Adolescent PRI for all outreach offices. Our outreach offices in Algona, Charles City, Forest City, and Hampton still offer adolescent assessments and counseling services.

**We know these changes can be quite confusing. Hopefully this will clarify any misunderstandings for our community partners!**

## Prairie Ridge Locations

117 East Call St.  
Algona, IA  
(515) 295-5158

703 Main St. Suite #1  
Charles City, IA  
(641) 228-1477

109 S. Clark St. Suite B  
Forest City, IA  
(641) 585-2060

123 1st Ave SW  
Hampton, IA  
(641) 456-2365

320 N. Eisenhower  
Mason City, IA  
(641) 424-2391



December has begun, Halloween and Thanksgiving have already passed and we have countless holidays to ring in the New Year, taking us all the way to St. Patrick's Day. Everywhere you go, there are decorations, lights and signs of festivity. Families come together over magnificent feasts, old friends come to town, and companies throw office parties. December is the start of a festive month and ends with the New Year celebration. For many, the holiday season means a time of both joy and stress. It is no secret that alcohol consumption escalates during this season.

According to the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States, the \$49 billion distilled-spirits industry makes more than 25 percent of its profits from Thanksgiving to the New Year.



In addition to the increase in seasonal binge drinking, December is also designated as National Impaired Driving Prevention Month to bring awareness to the national problem of driving while impaired with alcohol and/or drugs. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration during December, alcohol related traffic fatalities average 25 per day. Studies also show that cases of depression, suicide, and domestic violence all increase during the holiday period.

This year, as the holidays approach and the festivities begin, use good judgment if you are going to partake in an alcoholic beverage by limiting consumption to no more than one serving per hour and two servings daily. Even better, why not make this an alcohol free season? If you

### Holiday Mocktails

**Here are two fun and easy mocktails for the holiday season.**

**Both beverages are one serving and can be found at <http://www.wpri.com/rhodeshow/day-one-of-festive-holiday-mocktails>**

#### Santa's Secret

**Combine: 3 ½ oz ruby red grapefruit juice and 2 ½ oz pomegranate juice**

**Put in a glass with ice and add a splash of Lime Juice**

#### Mistletoe Sweet Cider Martini

**Combine: 4 oz. Apple Cider**

**1 oz. Orange Juice**

**1 oz. Cranberry Juice**

**Shake vigorously and strain into a martini glass**

**Garnish with a sprinkle of cinnamon**



## Winter Happenings

### DECEMBER

*21st-First Day of Winter*

*25th-Christmas Day*

*26th-Kwanzaa Begins*

### JANUARY

*1st-New Years Day*

*16th-MLK Jr. Day*

*National Blood Donor Month*

### FEBRUARY

*14th-Valentines Day*

*20th-President's Day*

*American Heart Month*





# What’s in Your Basement?

A Prairie Ridge tradition is our annual Staff Christmas Party, which includes our White Elephant event. Prairie Ridge employees embrace the true meaning behind White Elephant. You are usually an outcast if you wrap up anything that was purchased after 2010. Dust on your gift is usually a prerequisite for this fun event. Staff search high and low in their basements weeks before the event to make sure they have just the perfect gift to create the best laughs. Below are a few of our favorite, most memorable white elephant gifts. No judgement!

Hotdog bun roaster

Toilet paper (from the staff bathroom)

Framed, Retro Garth Brooks Poster

A Laughing Pill

The Naked Statue (that comes back every year)

Handcrafted Pottery by the One and Only, Jay Hansen

Pink Furry Handcuffs

Hideous Christmas décor that doesn’t make it out the door, but just goes directly into the trash.

A cow tongue

Statue of David apron

## Buddy the Elf

Hello, I’m Buddy. Not to be confused with Buddy the Elf...If I had a doggie treat for every time someone said to me “Buddy the Elf, What’s your favorite color?!!” I’d be one pudgy pup! I’m new here at Prairie Ridge and I really like this place. I came to live here from Helping Hands Humane Society in Topeka, KS. I had a great trainer, Jessica, and she taught me how to train humans. Now I’m here and loving my time at this facility. I have several handlers. That’s the term for a human who I train to walk beside me with my leash and give me commands. They’re still learning, as am I, about our relationship and my role as a Therapy Dog.



I don’t really understand what the humans do, but I can sense things. It is my job to be the focus of attention for some humans. I make them smile and for a lot of them, they seem to breathe easier when they see me. They call this therapy something only animals can provide.

I’m learning my way around the building even though my space outside is restricted because of a huge construction project. It seems to be going well and is going to be pretty amazing when it is done. For now, I’m excited to meet new people and even get to go off-site and visit school kids too!

As we start the holiday season I am reminded about how important my role is here and also the wonderful work the employees do for those who need our services. I do what I can to be a part of this great place. So my gift to each of you this holiday season is to stop by and see me. I’ll put a smile on your face- and as Buddy the Elf says “I like smiling. Smiling’s my favorite!”

*Translated by Meagen Wentz*

# No Soup for You!

The Holiday Open House is always a fun time for Prairie Ridge staff, and we hope for our community partners as well. This year we are bummed that we aren’t able to hold this yearly event due to the construction for our new building. Below we put together the top 5 reasons why we are going to miss the Holiday Open House this year. Hope you enjoy and we can’t wait to celebrate with you next year!

- 5. We won’t be able to get out of work in order to decorate and plan for the holiday open house.
- 4. We aren’t able to put a mound of glitter into the holiday open house invitations and then hear about how much our community partners enjoyed that little surprise all over their desks.
- 3. The fun of tracking down the Big Guy (Jay) to remind him of his greeting duties and the humor of watching him forget people’s names.
- 2. The meet and greet with our community partners, that come for the free food (and to see us of course.)



## Closing In

Prairie Ridge has become a busy place the last few months. Walls have been erected, roofers have been running the roof line, masons laying block and truck after truck of concrete has been rolling in. Mother Nature pushed our schedule back with her dropping a lot of rain this summer but her kindness to us this fall is greatly appreciated. All our contractors are working feverishly to get the expansion closed in so work can be done on the inside. Now if we can only beg her to be kind this