

Casino tree lighting celebration

The holiday spirit shines bright as Indian Head Casino will kick off its Annual Christmas Tree Lighting Festival—a celebration bringing the community together in dazzling style.

The celebration features a 40-foot walk-through Christmas tree, live music, festive activities for all ages, and a drone light show finale.

The free, family-friendly event takes place from 6-9 p.m. on Sunday, November 30 at Indian Head Casino.

From the moment guests arrive, they'll be immersed in holiday magic—with Santa and Mrs. Claus greeting visitors for photos and candy giveaways, children writing letters to Santa, and face painting by local artist Mia Mitchell. Guests can warm up with complimentary cookies, cupcakes, cocoa, Native tea, and coffee, and browse holiday craft and food booths featuring local artists and vendors.

“This is one of our favorite events of the year,” said Shawn McDaniel, casino general manager.

“It brings together families, friends, and our entire community to share in the spirit of the holidays—from the first carol to the final glow of the drone show.”

Festival highlights

• 6 p.m. – Welcome ceremony: Warm greetings kick off the evening as the community gathers beneath the towering, walk-through Christmas tree—the largest holiday tree in Central Oregon.

• 6:10: Prayers and blessing.

A special prayer and blessing will be offered by Carlos Calica, Tribal Council vice chair, honoring the spirit of unity and the season.

• 6:20 p.m. – Live choir performance: The United Methodist Choir fills the night with classic Christmas songs and joyful harmonies.

• 6:35: Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony: Join the crowd countdown as the massive tree comes alive in a brilliant display of color and light—a breathtaking moment that marks the official start of the holiday season.



• 6-8: Family festivities: Children of all ages can write a letter to Santa at the Letter-Writing Station, then personally hand it to Santa Claus and take photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Guests can also enjoy face painting by Mia Mitchell, complimentary holiday treats, and local craft and food booths showcasing the creativity of the Warm Springs community.

• 7-8: Native Round Dance: Guests of all ages are invited to take part in the Round Dance—a vibrant social and spiritual tradition performed in a circle, celebrating unity, healing, and the cycle of life. Come dance beneath the stars and feel the joy of the season coming alive

• 8: Drone Light Show Finale: Look to the sky as a mesmerizing drone show lights up the night above Warm Springs, closing the celebration with a modern twist on holiday magic.



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Community notes....

The **Free Food Market** at the Madras Community Food Pantry is open on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month. The pantry will be open this Wednesday, November 12. Sign-up begins at 4 p.m. and doors open

at 4:30. Location is 370 SW Culver Highway.

Youth **drumming and singing practice** with Gavin Begay is on Wednesday evenings at the Campus cafeteria. This is for youth ages 10-17. Classes are from 6-7:30 p.m., this Wednesday, November 12; November 19, and December 3, 10 and

17. Learn proper drum etiquette, singing-drumming on beat and in harmony; powwow and hand drum; a variety of songs and drum beats, teachings of keeping tobacco sacred. Sponsored by Warm Springs Prevention; drug- and alcohol free class. Contact Gavin at 541-410-3293.



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