

STAFFORD STAR

Volume 7, Issue 5

December 2011

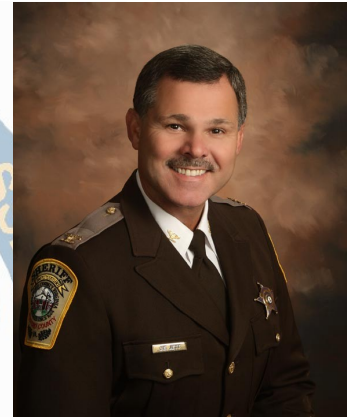
STAFFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Message from Sheriff Jett

Enclosed in this December newsletter are some very helpful tips to help keep your holiday safe. The tips range from keeping your home safe and secure if you leave the area for the holidays or popular scams that are often seen during the holiday season. I urge you to take a few minutes and read over this bit of timely information. I think you will find it beneficial.

On behalf of my family, both at home and at the Sheriff's Office, I would like to extend to you and your family a most enjoyable and safe holiday. Take some time and enjoy this very special time of year! As always thank you for your efforts and your willingness to make a difference in your community.

Sheriff Jett.



Building the Foundation of Community and Law Enforcement Partnerships

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Upcoming Events

- **Scam Buster's (Business Watch)**
2nd Tuesday of each month
Tuesday, December 13 (2PM at PSC)
- **Christmas Holiday-** Friday December 23 and Monday December 26, 2011. County Offices Closed.
- **New Years-** Monday January 2, 2012. County Offices Closed.

Holiday Nutmeg Floats

Ingredients:

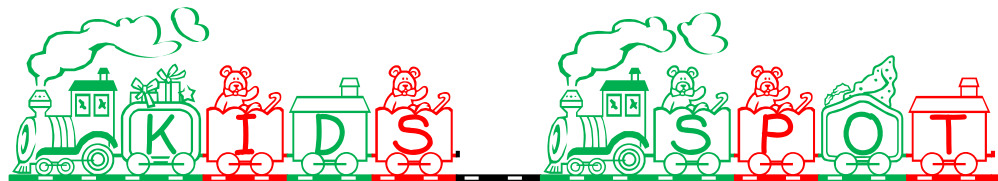
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon Nutmeg
- 1 dash salt
- 1 1/2 teaspoons Almond extract
- 1 teaspoon Vanilla
- 1 quart cold milk
- 1 pint vanilla ice cream.



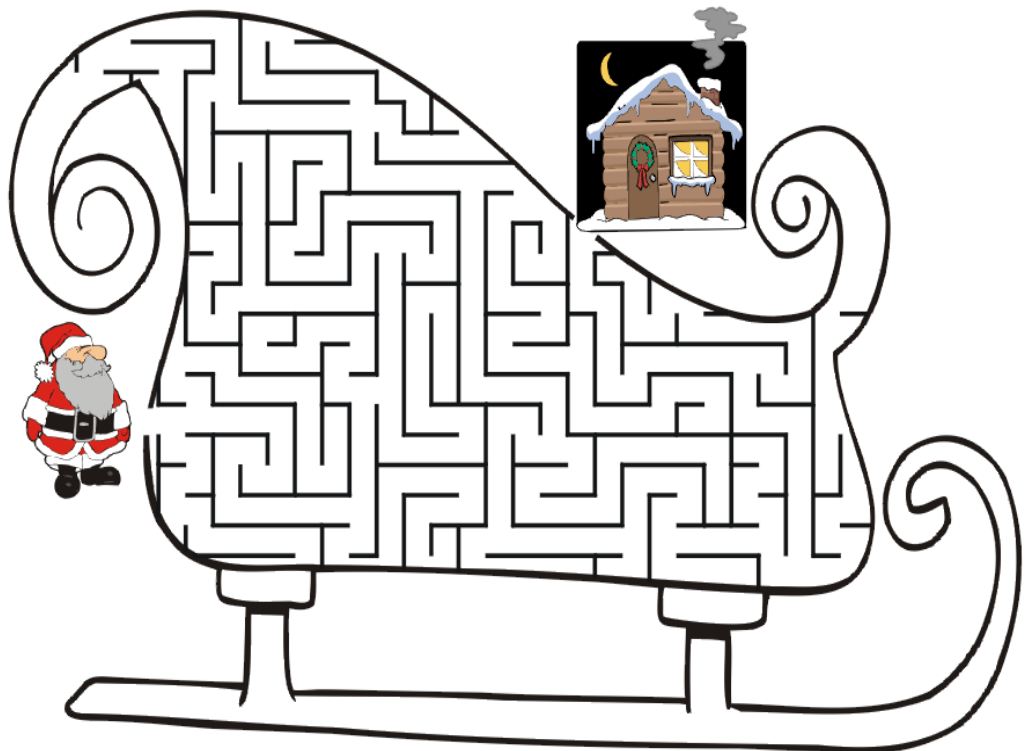
Directions:

Add sugar, nutmeg, salt and flavorings to milk and stir until sugar is dissolved. Pur into chilled glasses and top with ice cream.

Enjoy



Help Santa through the Sleigh maze to find the next house to go to.



Visit McGruff online at:

www.McGruff.org

Child Safety Info

More information about child safety can be found on our website

www.staffordsheriff.com/content/childsafety/

and

www.staffordsheriff.com/content/safkids/

Home (and away) for the Holidays



Don't Gift wrap your home for would-be thieves

The holiday season can bring out the best in people, but it can also bring out the worst in burglars. The thought of all the homes with packages and presents available for the taking can be very tempting for thieves. Here are some ideas for keeping your valuables safe.

A Room with a View– Gifts that are visible from the windows of your residence can be very tempting and may even encourage a would-be burglar to make their move.

Up on the roof top– Burglars aren't likely to come in through the chimney but they will look for unlocked doors and windows. Protect your home and its contents by making sure all windows and doors are closed and locked when you are away.

I'll be home for Christmas, if only in my dreams– Burglars looked for homes that are unoccupied. Even if your miles away from your home at the Holiday's take some simple steps to make your home looked lived in.

- * **Keep it lit!** Using timers to turn on lights helps discourage would-be burglars.
- * **Make some Noise!** Have a radio or television on a timer as a sign someone is home.
- * **Pick up your mail/newspaper!** Have a neighbor pick up your mail and newspaper. A home piled high with papers and mail is a great target for Burglars.
- * **Take in the Garbage!** Don't leave the garbage can on the street. Have a neighbor take it in.
- * **Don't Advertise!** When putting your trash out after Christmas make sure you don't advertise what you got for Christmas. Place boxes in a none see thru bag or cut up boxes and place in can.



3-D Program Kicks off in Stafford County!

The 3-D Program is an effort by the Sheriff's Office to identify, and take off the roads, those individuals who are driving in an impaired state, whether it is from alcohol or drugs. The 3-D Program will run during the holiday season starting Thanksgiving and go through the New Year's weekend. The Sheriff's Office will be setting up checkpoints on various roads in Stafford County looking for individuals who are driving in an impaired state. "The Stafford County Sheriff's Office is committed to helping ensure that citizens have a safe and happy holiday season," states Sheriff Charles Jett. "Drunk or drugged drivers not only impact their own well being but are also a very real danger to innocent, law abiding citizens. We want to stop these drunk or drugged drivers before they harm themselves or others."

The Stafford County Sheriff's Office reminds citizens that if they see a suspected drunk/drugged driver to call 911. The Emergency Communication Officer will relay your information to deputies in the area.

Important Facts:

1. One person is killed every 30 minutes due to drunk driving.
2. 1 in 10 drivers after midnight is driving impaired. 1 in every three drivers is impaired after 2:00 am.
3. A first time drunk driving offender, on average, has driven drunk 87 times prior to being arrested.
4. In 2010 Stafford Deputies charged 520 individuals for driving under the influence with 75 of those charges coming from the 3-D checkpoints.
5. In 2010 Stafford County had 99 alcohol related motor vehicle accidents.

Business Corner

The Crime Prevention Unit Business Watch lead Deputy Jim Hamilton notes a few of the current trends:

- With Holidays fast approaching cashiers should be aware of security features of US cash, particularly \$20.00 and \$100.00
- The use of cloned credit cards are also on the rise. Check photo ID with credit card purchase and match credit card number on card with cashier screen.
- Organized groups are targeting laptops, TV's, game systems, watches, knife sets, jewelry and other electronics.
- Other trends are alcohol thefts as well as high dollar grocery items.



Be aware and have a safe holiday season.

Crime Prevention tip: Be safe and keep the eyes open!

SCAM BUSTERS WORKS!

You either work for a business or visit a business almost every day. It is important to be aware of the various crime trends that are occurring in and around Stafford County!

At the **Scam Busters** meetings, area businesses share and learn what the crime trends are in the area. There can be pictures, videos, descriptions, and specific incidents shared! Criminal cases have been solved because of the information shared at this meeting!

Tuesday, December 13	2-3 PM	Stafford Public Safety Center (1225 Courthouse Rd.)
Tuesday, January 10	2-3 PM	Stafford Public Safety Center (1225 Courthouse Rd.)

Come to a Scam Busters meeting to learn ...
what is happening, what could happen, and how to help prevent loss for you company!

For more information, contact Deputy Jim Hamilton 540-658-4112 or jhamilton@co.stafford.va.us

The 12 Scams of Christmas

This post is from Jason Steele at partner site [Money Talks News](#).

The holiday season is a great time for giving, but, sadly, there are always people who want to prey on our generosity and rip us off. But you don't have to be a victim.

Fake holiday help. Getting a seasonal job can be a great idea. In fact, it is one of our 5 best ways to make more money. But there are people out there preying on those who need work. Common scams include all manner of work-from-home jobs. If the so-called employer asks for money upfront or your Social Security number, you might be on the verge of becoming a victim rather than an employee.

Fake charities. Don't give money to any charity -- even spare change -- without checking them out first. And that's something you can't do if someone is on your porch, at an intersection, or on the sidewalk asking for money.

Fake-check scams. If someone is giving *you* money, how can you be scammed? In these instances, buyers want what you're selling on sites like eBay or Craigslist. Their next step is to offer you a cashier's check for *more* than your asking price, on the condition that you return the difference. Weeks later, you are informed by your bank that the check was a phony, and you're now out your money and your goods. The American Bankers Association has some tips to avoid being a victim, but in short, avoid cashier's checks in situations like this and never return any difference in cash.

Counterfeit merchandise. In New York and other major cities, it is common to see street vendors selling watches and purses that appear to be high-end, name-brand goods. The modern version of these scams is to sell the merchandise online where the buyer has even less opportunity to inspect it. Beware of items that are priced well below their competitors, and be sure to buy from an authorized retailer.

Fake vacation rentals. This growing scam involves people who advertise a property they don't own. Sometimes the scammer goes to the effort of hijacking the real owner's email, as in [this case recently reported in The Washington Post](#). Other times, the scammers merely show pictures of a place they pretend to represent. You send them money and show up to find you have no place to stay. Solution? Take every possible step to ensure you're dealing with the true owner of the property, and always pay by credit card, not wire transfer.

Non-delivery of stuff bought online. Whether it's an online store, eBay or Craigslist, this scam is avoided by knowing who the seller is. Be suspicious of deals that seem too good to be true. Fortunately, eBay protects buyers from this scam, and credit card users can request a chargeback if goods are not delivered. Also, keep in mind that Craigslist always recommends conducting transactions in person so that you know exactly what you are receiving.

Email scams. Many scams start with email, so be skeptical of anything that shows up in your inbox. Some messages involve references to recent events, such as a natural disaster or the death of a public figure. Others purport to award lottery winnings or the transfer of wealth from a foreign country. Don't ever respond to unsolicited email.

Phishing scams. Here's how this works: You get an email that appears to be from a legitimate company, like your bank, that insists you log in at their website. You're then directed to a copycat site that steals your user name and password. If you have doubts about an email, don't reply. Instead, call the company or open up a new browser window and go directly to their website. Check out these [anti-phishing tips from the Securities and Exchange Commission](#).

The "items-off-of-a-truck" scam. A friend of mine once paid hundreds of dollars for a stereo system that was barely worth the carton it came in. He was a victim of one of the roving gangs of scammers masquerading as delivery men. They park a truck in a parking lot and offer items for sale at big discounts. At best, the goods will be low-quality knockoffs. At worst, you could be receiving stolen goods.

Limited quantities. An unscrupulous online merchant advertises a fantastic product -- often cameras or electronics -- at an unbeatable price. But when you place your order, you're told they have limited quantities of that particular item. If the seller demands additional purchases to get the deal, or can't produce a tracking number within 48 hours of any sale, cancel your order through your credit card company and move on.

Bait and switch. This might be the oldest trick in the book, but it still happens. A seller advertises a popular product at a great price. When you attempt to buy it, either online or in person, you're told the product is sold out, or not as good as a similar model at a higher price. Before you know it, you're paying more than you intended for something you weren't planning on buying.

Layaway plans. Retailers are bringing back layaway, but sometimes with a catch -- not exactly a scam but something to look out for. You have to pay upfront fees and make regular payments. Fail to make the payments, and you could end up losing the fee and paying a "restocking" charge. To avoid feeling scammed by a layaway plan, be sure to closely examine the terms and conditions. And if you can, avoid these plans entirely by saving all year, then paying cash.

STAFFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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MISSION STATEMENT

We, the men and women of the Stafford County Sheriff's Office, in partnership with the community, are dedicated to enhancing the quality of life by maintaining order, protecting life and property, and reducing the fear of crime.

We will ensure the peace and safety of all citizens by upholding the Constitution of the United States and of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

As leaders of the community,
we will embrace our core beliefs:

Integrity, Compassion, Fairness, and Professionalism

STAFFORD

**CRIME
SOLVERS**



Crime Doesn't Pay - Crime Solvers Does!

659-2020

TEXT-A-TIP to CRIMES (274637) keyword STAFFORD

WEB-TIP online at www.stafforderimesolvers.com

**Merry Christmas
and
Happy New
Year**