

Enjoy Holidays: Reflect, Recharge, Celebrate

By Jeff Thomas

Editor's note: With much appreciation for the author of this article, we also remember another holiday—New Year's Day, celebrated throughout the world—that reflects the birth of Jesus 2025 years ago. For short film versions, see The Shepherd (https://watch.thechosen.tv/video/184683594365) and The Messengers (https://watch.thechosen.tv/video/184683594463).

The holiday season is a time of joy, reflection, and unity, marked by diverse celebrations that hold profound significance for millions of people worldwide. Across cultures and religions, the holidays remind us of the values that unite humanity: love, gratitude, and hope. Beyond their religious or cultural roots, they offer an opportunity to connect with loved ones, recharge, and prepare for the coming year.

Religious Celebrations and Their Significance

The holidays are steeped in religious traditions that offer spiritual guidance and meaning.

Christmas, celebrated by Christians, commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ, emphasizing themes of goodwill, generosity, and divine love. For many, the nativity story and traditions like midnight Mass and Advent are reminders of faith and hope.

Hanukkah, the Jewish Festival of Lights, celebrates the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem and the miracle of the menorah's oil lasting eight days. This holiday symbolizes resilience and divine intervention, with traditions like lighting the menorah, playing dreidel, and enjoying foods fried in oil.

Kwanzaa, a weeklong celebration honoring African heritage and culture, is rooted in the principles of unity, self-determination, and collective responsibility. Founded by Dr. Maulana Karenga in 1966, Kwanzaa encourages reflection on shared values and the importance of community.

Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha are significant Islamic holidays. Eid al-Fitr marks the end of Ramadan, a month of fasting, prayer, and reflection, while Eid al-Adha commemorates the willingness of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) to sacrifice his son in obedience to God.



These holidays emphasize charity, gratitude, and devotion.

Diwali, celebrated by Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, and Buddhists, is the Festival of Lights that signifies the triumph of light over darkness and good over evil.

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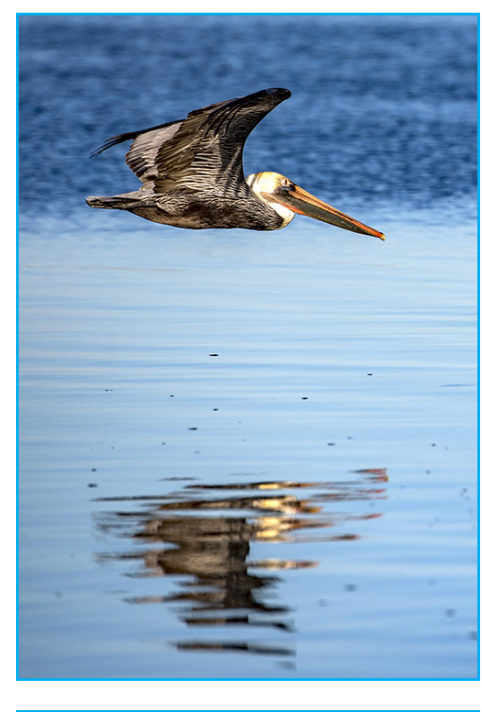
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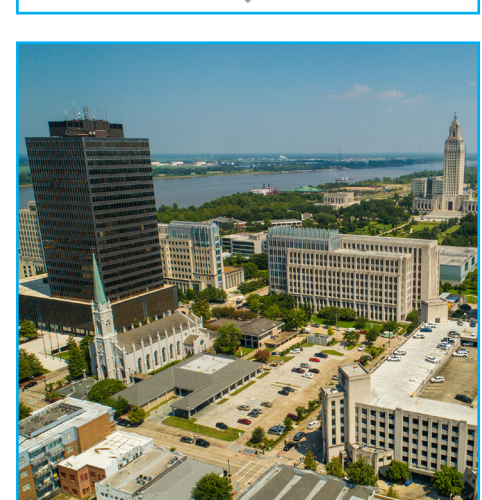
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For more info contact Valerie Voorhies at vvv@sbeinc.com



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Federal Contracting: Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) Certification Program Webinar
Tuesday, January 7, 2025, 12:00 pm–2:00 pm CST Online
Main Sponsor(s): Urban League of Louisiana Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation
Contact: Klassi Duncan, 504-620-9647, kduncan@urbanleaguela.org
Fee: Free; registration required

The Woman-Owned Small Business Federal Contract Program (WOSB Program) is designed to offer a level playing field for women business owners. In this session, learn the benefits of WOSB certification, eligibility requirements, and the certification process. Gain insights on how to best leverage your WOSB certification to access government contracting opportunities. This session will be facilitated by Courtney Elzey, Owner, MCDS, LLC. There is no cost to attend. However, registration is required at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/get-certified-as-a-woman-owned-small-business-wosb-tickets-1102486580039>

8(a) Orientation and SAM Registration Webinar
Wednesday, January 15, 2025, 9:30 am–11:00 am CST Online
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
Contact: SBA Illinois District Office, 312-353-4528, illinois.do@sba.gov
Fee: Free; registration required

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Illinois District Office for a virtual workshop providing an overview of the 8(a) Business Development program, eligibility requirements, and program benefits. Also learn how to increase your potential for federal contract opportunities through System for Award Management (SAM) registration, including information that you need for the registration process. SBA presenters will offer additional tips, address FAQs, give directions on where to get further assistance, and answer your other questions. To register for this free webinar, <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/basics-of-sbas-8a-business-development-orientation-and-sam-registration-tickets-1030099444167>

Selling to the Federal Government Webinar
Thursday, January 23, 2025, 12:00 pm–3:00 pm CST Online
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
Contact: George Tapia, 610-382-3086, george.tapia@sba.gov
Fee: Free; registration required

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