

## Christmas Legends

### St. Boniface and the Christmas Tree by Charlotte Langley

A popular legend of the origin of the Christmas tree involves Saint Boniface. In the 8th century, he was trying to convert the pagan Germans over to the worship of Christ. One Christmas Eve in the great forest, he was shocked to come upon a ceremony of human sacrifice taking place at the foot of the sacred oak tree of Odin at Geismar. Seizing an ax, he hit the tree with a great blow, which was knocked over by a great wind. The people were amazed, and won over to Christianity, but felt lost without the symbol of their tree. St. Boniface pointed to a thin fir tree and told them to take that as their sign. Christ was the bringer of life "evergreen" and the fir tree became His symbol. (Source: The Christmas Almanac by Gerald and Patricia Del Re)

### The First Christmas Tree Lot by Shelley Schreiber

Until the early 19th century, a Christmas tree was only available to those who went to the woods and cut it down themselves or by those rich enough to pay someone else to do it. A woodsman named Mark Carr was the first to make buying holiday trees a business. Born among the foothills of the Catskill Mountains, he had heard of the festivities that occurred in New York City. In December, 1851, he loaded a couple of sleds with trees cut down from around his home and proceeded to the corner of Greenwich and Vesey streets where he rented a strip of the sidewalk for a mere silver dollar. Customers flocked to his corner. Since then, "hundreds of thousands of trees are yearly sold from Mark Carr's old corner" and from thousands of other corners around the world. (Source: The Christmas Almanac by Gerald and Patricia Del Re)

## HAVE HEALTHIER AND HAPPIER HOLIDAYS - AND MANY MORE NEW YEARS

By Cathy Annas

The holidays are fun-filled parties, family get-togethers, and special times with friends. There are myths about alcohol and driving that can translate into behaviors with detrimental results. Learning the facts can mean the difference between life and death during the holidays and throughout the year.

Myth: "Drinking coffee sobers me up."

Fact: Coffee **cannot** rid your system of alcohol. It just makes you a nervous, wide-awake drunk. Only time reverses impairment.

Myth: "I always stay away from the hard stuff."

Fact: Alcohol is alcohol. Beer has the same effect as straight scotch. One 12-ounce beer has as much alcohol as a 1.5-ounce shot of whiskey or a 4-5-ounce glass of wine.

Myth: "I'm bigger so I can handle my liquor better."

Fact: Size is only one factor in how much you can drink. Metabolism, amount of rest, and food intake all play a part in how you handle liquor. Impairment can begin with the first drink.

Myth: "All I have to do is splash my face with cold water."

Fact: Splash all you like. You can even take a cold shower. It may make you cleaner, but it won't sober you up or make you a safe driver.

(Taken from Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, *PREVENTION WORKS.*)

### AAA Potomac's Holiday Fruit Punch

1/2 c. grapefruit juice

1 c. apple juice

1/4 c. orange juice

1/2 t. ground ginger

1/2 t. cinnamon

Dash ground cloves

Mix all ingredients together and serve over ice or blend with 8 to 10 ice cubes for a frothy drink.

Serves 4.

Alcohol does not have to be a prerequisite to getting in the holiday spirit. Have a happy and safe holiday.



## DATES TO REMEMBER

December 15 - 17:

December 17:

January 5:

January 6:

January 7:

January 13:

January 19:

Final Exams

Last Day of Classes

Spr. Semester Tuition Payment Period Begins (1 p.m. - 4 p.m.)

Registration Day (9 a.m. - 8 p.m.)

First Day of Classes for Spring Semester

Late Registration Ends

Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday