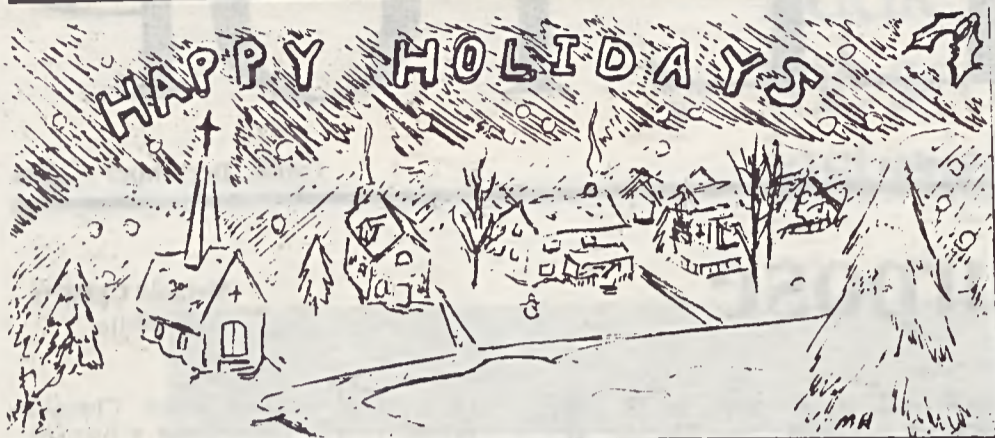


# Editorial



## Editor's Corner

Becky Homer  
Editor-in-Chief

'Twas the night before Christmas  
And all through the mall  
The shoppers were rushing  
And having a ball.  
They ran store to store  
Bearing their bags  
Buying more and more  
China, toys, books, and gags.  
No one spoke a word  
But flew about madly  
Hitting every shop in the place  
Soon they'd be done, and gladly.  
For weeks they had delayed  
Made excuses and portrayed  
A tendency to put off buying  
And now, they were trying  
To get it all done in one hurried motion  
I looked through the mall  
What a furious commotion!  
I, who was done  
And had only come to watch  
The last-minute bunch run  
Searching for the best catch.  
Like an angry river in a flood  
Worry growing in their blood  
Fear that they would not find  
That perfect gift they had in mind.  
It was ten o'clock  
The stores would soon be closed  
I watched more people flock  
I was mesmerized, and dozed.  
When I awoke, I found  
People were still rushing 'round  
Then the "ten minute" warning came  
And they hit the checkouts like heavy rain.  
I escaped from the mall  
So I wouldn't be trampled  
When they were thrown out, one and all  
As I walked to my car  
I was, again, glad  
That I'd finished my buying early  
So much unlike my dad--  
Who ran to the car as I started the engine  
Laden with boxes and bags  
And exclaimed with a sigh as we drove away  
"I'm finally finished--not a minute too late,  
And next year, to the last day I won't wait!"

Note: In this holiday season, during the seemingly endless hours of searching for the perfect gifts, let us not forget the true meaning of Christmas. We celebrate this holiday not so that we can have an excuse to spend money, get presents and party--but in order to remember the greatest gift ever given to mankind: Jesus Christ.

In the long days of shopping and otherwise preparing for this holiday, it will be easy to lose the "Christmas spirit." However, if all of our gifts are given from the heart--Jesus was such a gift from God--that spirit will remain with us.

*It is more blessed to give than to receive.--Acts 20:35*

## Second Opinion The Spirit of Christmas

Craig Cox  
Columnist

To anyone who read "Just the Facts" last year, some of this may sound familiar; indeed, it had been my intent to reprint a piece from last year verbatim, but a disk data disaster that occurred not too long ago is helping to keep me honest and original.

Christmas time is the retail merchant's biggest moneymaking season of the year. This is the time when all of the gadgetry and junk that wouldn't sell during the rest of the year is dragged out and offered "at special holiday savings." Stuff that person A personally wouldn't be caught dead with is suddenly a unique and fascinating gift for person B.

It is a time when people can shop for things for themselves that they otherwise wouldn't, because they can do it under the cover of "Christmas Shopping." A spectacular number of adults go through toy stores during this season. Who knows how many of them may simply be secretly, anonymously regressing?

People-watching can be especially interesting, if dangerous, during this time of year. Simply walking through a store is an adventure in avoiding the small children that seem to come out of the woodwork for the express purpose of bothering parents about Christmas gifts while tripping other adults in the store. But while other people's children can be a pain, they should be the object of some concern.

Very often, amid the insanity which accompanies Christmas shopping, the central reason behind it all is lost. I can remember working for a major retail chain one year at Christmas time, and seeing a child being dragged by his mother away from a toy display; the kid wanted -- immediately -- some

sort of toy which looked as if it could destroy whole city blocks with a plastic-triggered shot. The child, happy at the prospect of losing the neighborhood's strategic weapons, was screaming incoherently at the top of his lungs. The mother, unhappy at the prospect of a Mastercard bill that looked like a small defense budget, answered the child back -- at almost the same volume -- that this was Jesus' birthday, not his. To my mind, this was an excellent point, although at the time it failed to impress the kid.

It is difficult to go to a place like a shopping mall and not learn. Perhaps we couldn't devise a test to measure the knowledge gained at such a place, but that knowledge exists--and is passed up especially by small children. What does a child learn when we teach an old man with a white beard, who can fly, who has omniscient and accurate knowledge of all of the activities of all of the children on the planet, and who rewards those who were good? Even better, when we put Santa on a throne in the middle of the mall, and allow the little kids to come up like so many supplicants to an oracle, each with a greed list? It sounds uncomfortable like a lesson in a new kind of mystic religion. It's not Santa who is in Mark 10:14, "Suffer the children to come unto Me, and bid them not..." nor is it Santa who died on the cross.

It seems drastic to say that Santa is a tool of the Devil. He seems to be a nice legend, a tale to be told around Christmas. But Santa needs to start taking a seat to the One who really is Christmas, just as fairy tales need to be secondary to real historical

## Forum

Dear Faculty and Staff of Mars Hill College:

A lot of the work that Greek organizations accomplish at Mars Hill College is often overshadowed by either bad experiences in the past or by stereotyped Greek organizations found on other campuses.

I am writing this letter to hopefully present a different perspective on Greek organizations and demonstrate some of the positive benefits that we do. For instance, we just recently had a canned-food drive for Neighbors-in-Need. A box was placed by the faculty mailboxes for you to place canned goods in for Thanksgiving. This box did not generate many donations at all. However, the Greek organizations collected over 400 cans from student donations. The Neighbors-in-Need

program was overwhelmed at the amount of food and also very appreciative of the gesture.

I would like to take this opportunity to challenge the faculty at MHC to support the Greeks in their next endeavor. We will be having another canned-food drive for Christmas and we need your support. Boxes will be placed by the mail box area and also in the and Cornwell buildings. This will be going toward the Neighbors-in-Need program.

Please help us, so we can express some of our gratitude to this community.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,  
Chuck Phelps, President  
Inter-Greek Council