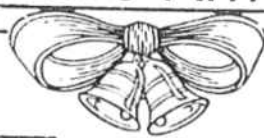


Santa's Arrival



Pets are often given during the holiday season. This youngster just picked out a puppy at Petland. Puppies are among the most popular items given each year.

Christmas Means Puppy Sales, Locals And Children

Copy provided by
Briarcliffe Mall

Christmas means a lot of different things to different people — children think of Santa, churches stress the real meaning of Christmas, and teachers think of vacation time away from school.

But when you say Christmas to merchants, it means their livelihood. To many, this is a make or break time of year. It means long hours, crowded stores, extra inventory, and of course, sales.

To Ray Brinn, owner of Petland at Briarcliffe Mall, it means puppy sales.

"This is definitely our biggest time of year as far as pets go and especially puppies," Brinn said. "Giving a pet as a gift is a way of bringing life to Christmas."

Brinn must bring a lot of life to the holiday season because he says he sells as many as 10 puppies a week during the six weeks leading up to Christmas.

"I guess kids have always been at the top of the list at Christmas and toy stores and pet stores traditionally do well this time of year," he says. "Because of what we sell, this is obviously a happy place to work and especially so during the holidays. You see the parents come in with their children and their eyes light up when they see those little puppies with wagging tails."

Christmas Joy, a specialty shop at Briarcliffe Mall that sells nothing but Christmas items, deals with Christmas all year long. Tourists come in during the summer and buy Christmas-related items, but it's not like

the holiday season.

"Christmas, to us, means locals from Conway, Loris, Myrtle Beach, and North Myrtle Beach coming in and picking up Christmas scenes, lighted houses, old-timey Santas, ornaments and lights," said Jan Ardan, manager of the Briarcliffe Mall store. "Summer is probably bigger for us in terms of business, but this time of year just seems to bring out the spirit in most people. We have some summer customers coming in chanting 'Ho, Ho, Ho,' but you really see it this time of year."

K & K Toys at Briarcliffe Mall is another popular place during the holidays for obvious reasons.

Assistant manager Brian Stone says Christmas at K & K means Nintendo cartridges and systems such as Pac Man and Bases Loaded for younger and older children; Micro Machines, a variety of small toys that younger children fancy; and word games for adults like Pictionary and Scruples.

Christmas at Radio Shack at Briarcliffe means anything and everything that makes noise, plays music or displays visuals, according to store manager Brent Anders.

"This time of year, we sell everything from flashlights for kids that bounce when you drop them to computers, boom boxes and battery-operated radio sets."

Anders says the national retailer also sells business systems, but not usually during the busy holiday season. "During the holidays, it's gifts and stocking stuffers," he said. "A lot more \$2.99 items are moved than the \$1,200 systems."

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