

## Opinions

### OUR VIEW

#### Christmas Is Actually A Matter Of The Heart

It's a special season with its special kind of songs.

It's Christmas. As Christmas day nears (Sunday), we pause for moments of reflection.

We feel the Christmas season when we go to a shopping mall and see a little child sitting on the lap of Santa Claus. "Yes, Santa, I've been good...all year."

We think of the Christmas season when we see nativity scenes. That's the real meaning of Christmas to many of us. The stable scene because there was no room in the inn, then the birth of Jesus Christ. It's a celebration in His praise.

We usher in Christmas by doing last-minute shopping. There are many other things that help usher in the yuletide.

Wreaths on a front door; candles burning; the smell of oranges and tangerines when they are peeled; thousands of Christmas lights; Christmas cantatas with voices blending in with the music to herald in this special time of the year; seeing the 1951 movie version of Scrooge, with Allister Sim, an old miser who is reformed by visions of his past, present and future; hearing Christmas carols such as "Silent Night," "O Little Town of Bethlehem," and such Christmas songs as "Jingle Bells," and "I'm Dreaming Of A White Christmas."

There are things such as Christmas, all brightly decorated; it's whistling or humming a Christmas song; it's seeing the shining eyes of a little boy or girl as they tear open a Christmas present; it's the exchanging of gifts on Christmas eve or Christmas morning.

For some, it is memories of Christmases past; things such as the simple little tree of ivy, holly, rosemary and pine; stockings hung by the fireplace; mother's special applesauce cake, and a little white church across the way ringing bells on Christmas day; it is a rare white Christmas, talked about for days and remembered for decades; it is riding on a sled at breakneck speed, usually ending in a spill at the bottom of a hill; it is a toboggan coated with snowflakes; it is building a snowman.

And it is a music box playing a few bars of a Christmas tune; it is a Christmas card from someone you haven't heard from in years; it is going over to grandmother's house for a Christmas dinner, followed by the televised Blue-Gray football game played in Alabama; it is remembering the famous lines of a newspaper publisher: "Yes, Virginia. There Is A Santa Claus."

For some who are less fortunate, it is just a time of surviving - those who are destitute, who have been burned out of their homes, and for those just plain down on their luck. This is the time when relief organizations step in and try to make their Christmas a bit happier, and when those who have plenty chip in with some of what they have. For others, who find themselves alone with no family, no job, and no friends to count on, it is unfortunately a time for sad reflection, remembering when times were happier and fortunes kinder.

Through Christmases past and present, and for those of us who are going to be blessed by seeing future ones, we are cognizant of the fact that Christmas has been, is, and always will be, in one's heart.

From the staff of this newspaper, we wish you and yours the happiest, merriest, and most prosperous Christmas you've ever had. That's what's in our heart.

#### A Diet Better Than Oprah's

At the top of everyone's news interest, the headlines and the space devoted to the story would indicate, is the fact that Oprah Winfrey has lost a million or so pounds. We're very happy for her. It's always inspirational to read that here in America there are still people who can lose weight and make headlines all over the world.

Who knows? Another world war might have erupted and no one heard about it because we were all so engrossed in learning how Oprah learned to "just say no" to potato chips and tamale pies.

Maybe the national media missed out on a serial killer or a lost whale or duckbill platypus, or maybe another movie star entered the Betty Ford treatment and no one noticed because we were all learning that Oprah can not wear the jeans that have hung in her closet since 1981.

Well, we've discovered a diet plan that works better than Oprah's. You see, we occasionally eat in front of the television set, and while we contemplate our food, we can watch commercials that show us people's stomachs churning up food, people's sinuses draining all over the place, talking tummies welcoming antacid tablets that soothe the trouble waters therein, and heads swelling abnormally with headaches "this big".

We also are instructed in the use of laxatives of all sorts, feminine hygiene products, ways and means of easing the pain and shame of hemorrhoids, treatment of the heartbreak of psoriasis, and, worst of all, clips from the latest films of Ernest saving Christmas. Try it. You'll lose your appetite, too.

### Cartoonitorial



Looking Both Ways

#### Christmas Buying Can Be Trying

(Ed. Note: At this time of year we ought to be thankful for all of our good fortune, and that includes being thankful for the one and only Rusty Gates. We are particularly thankful about that one and only part. Two of him would be three too many.)

Yesterday my wife Pearl and I went Christmas shopping, and by Valentine's Day I expect to be fully recovered.

Pearlie and I don't shop alike, you see. For instance, this trip found us at cross-purposes: she was doing next year's shopping and I was still doing last year's.

Pearlie is, if you meet her on the street or in church or on the creek bank, a perfectly wonderful woman who has one outstanding quality: she thinks I'm a pretty good sort of guy. There aren't many women like that around any more.

In fact, there have never been many women like that around.

But let her get into a department store and she becomes the less desirable half of the Jekyll and Hyde team.

She can get into a rack of dresses and be holding three up to see how they'd fit on me (I'm roughly the same size as her Aunt Hill), have eleven draped over her shoulder, and somehow manage to juggle the remainder of the dresses in the size 46 category. At one time I counted four gruff-looking men, one sort of happy one, and two boy scouts with dresses wrapped around them—all because they happened to be passing the dress rack where we had been since shortly after Custer's Last Stand.

I gingerly removed the dresses from the truck drivers and boy scouts, and then I tried to remove the one from the sweet-looking man until I found that he wasn't wearing anything under it. I didn't like him very much, I decided, and that was even before he squeezed my hand and blew a kiss at me. Fuschia just wasn't his color.

After we left the dress rack we went to all other racks in the store, including rack and ruin, so that Pearl could inspect flaring tools, welding torches, blow-out kits, hinges, torque wrenches, camouflage jackets, plumber's friends, staplers, battery acid, wading boots, coal scuttles, hawks and handsaws, and an amazing set of battery operated gimmicks and one wind-up possum.

"All of this is for your Aunt Hill?" I asked, dreading the answer.

"Don't be silly," she replied. "What would my aunt want with a bunch of stuff like this? This is for her sister Uppa."

I should have known.

We lifted, rubbed, patted, and counted every article in the entire store, which is roughly the size of Rhode Island. When we were finally ready to leave (after two emergency food drops by the Red Cross and three Federal Disaster Aid visitations), we made it to the cash register with the paper clips and band-aids we had bought, and spent the rest of the week there.

#### Rusty Gates



Can anything beat a check-out line? Here we saw lines of customers long enough to be at a mess hall in an army reception center, and all of them had what looked like Mount Everest piled up in their buggies. And as each one reached the cashier, the girl in charge of taking money would lift each item in slow motion, study the price tag as if she would later take a final exam on it, and gingerly push a button on the register. She opened every box to see that no one had smuggled anything extra out of the store.

She looked inside the band-aid box, inside the panty hose that comes in strange-colored ostrich eggs, inside socks, and she even tried to look inside the light bulbs the lady in front of us had bought.

The most alarming part of the entire trek, however, had come earlier when the man on the public address system announced that a special counter filled with pith helmets and mortar mix would be the site of a half-price sale.

I was caught in the middle of a sea of women. They pushed, shoved, lurched, groped, grabbed, hissed, snarled, grunted, and pawed wildly in every direction. It was like being in a landslide of girdles and proplasm. I was nearly suffocated, crushed, mangled, folded, spindled, and bent. When it was over, I thought I had been in a Seka movie.

There's another sale tomorrow. And I'm going back. I couldn't buy that kind of thrill with two weeks' pay.

#### Letter Policy

We ask that you follow these guidelines and deadlines when submitting letters:

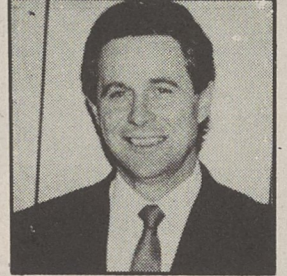
Keep the letters brief and to the point. Type and double-space them, if possible, but sign them in ink and include your full name, address and telephone number for verification.

The Herald reserves the right to edit the letters for spelling, good taste, libel, or any other reason, and reserves the right to refuse the letters for any reason.

All letters must be mailed to Letter to the Editor, P.O. Box 769, Kings Mountain, N.C. 28086. Under no circumstances will hand-delivered letters be published.

### Guest Column

By WARREN GOFORTH  
Kings Mountain Police Chief



#### Don't Drink

During this holiday season someone you know will be involved in a serious traffic accident. There is a 50% chance that the accident will be caused by a driver who is intoxicated.

Alcohol can be dangerous. It alters the mind, changes the way a person thinks, affects judgment, slows reactions, and interferes with coordination. Put that alcohol-touched mind behind the wheel of a car and you double the danger. And not just for the driver. The danger is doubled for anyone who crosses the path of someone who is drinking and driving.

Over the last 10 years, about 250,000 Americans lost their lives in alcohol-related traffic crashes. This is 25,000 deaths each year; 500 every week; 71 every day; and 1 every 20 minutes.

In addition, approximately 560,000 people are injured each year in alcohol-related crashes; about 43,000 of these seriously.

Because two out of every five Americans will be involved in an alcohol-related, police reported traffic crash in their lifetime, the following statistics are worth knowing:

Between 7 p.m. and 3 a.m. on weekends, in some parts of the country, 10 percent of all drivers are legally impaired or drunk.

Between midnight and 4 a.m. on any night of the week, about 80 percent of all fatally injured drivers had been drinking prior to the accident.

About 40 percent of all the fatal crashes involved an intoxicated driver or pedestrian: in 1987, about 38 percent of all fatally-injured drivers were considered legally intoxicated as defined by most states.

For teenagers and young adults, the problem calls for particular attention:

More than 40 percent of all teenagers (15-19 years old) death results from motor vehicle crashes. More than half of these fatal crashes involve drinking.

Drivers between 16 and 24 years old have twice as many fatal crashes per mile driven as older drivers. When alcohol is involved, the fatal crash rate of these drivers is more than three times greater than that of older drivers.

Approximately 9,000 people between 15 and 24 years old were killed in alcohol-related traffic crashes in 1987. Additionally approximately 200,000 (age 15-24) were injured.

About 33 percent of teenage drivers (age 16-19) involved in fatal crashes were drinking prior to their crash. About 21 percent were legally intoxicated, as defined by the laws in most states.

Yet, the news has a good side. Federal, state, and local attempts to reduce the double danger of drinking and driving are having an impact. The number of intoxicated drivers killed in traffic crashes decreased 22 percent between 1980 and 1986. And the proportion of 15 to 19 year old drivers who were involved in fatal crashes and were legally drunk dropped from 28 percent in 1982 to 19 percent by 1987, the largest decrease of all driver age group during this time.

These successes stress that public information and education and other community efforts can work. The current figures show, however, that our community still has a long way to go to remove from our streets the double danger: drinking and driving.

Hey Kings Mountain! GIVE A GIFT OF LOVE TO YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS. DRIVE SAFELY BY STAYING FREE OF ALCOHOL OR OTHER DRUGS.

For more information about double danger: contact the Kings Mountain Police Department, Capt. Bobby G. Hayes.

#### News Deadlines

The Herald welcomes your news items for publication in each Wednesday's paper. We ask that you follow these guidelines when presenting stories or information for stories:

All material for the People Section (Section B) must be submitted by 5 p.m. Friday. These items include weddings, anniversaries, engagements, birthdays, feature stories, club news, school news and church news.

Items received after 5 p.m. Friday will appear in the B section if time and space permit. If not, they will be withheld until the following week.

Items for the A section must be received by 5 p.m. Tuesday. In cases of emergencies, or for meetings or ballgames occurring on Tuesday nights, items will be accepted until 10 a.m. Wednesday.

News normally carried in the A section include community news, obituaries, and sports.

Deadline for all advertising copy is 5 p.m. Tuesday.

#### SIDEWALK SURVEY

#### What Was Your Most Memorable Christmas Gift?



MARY McMACKIN  
My first Christmas as a bride in 1928.



CHARLIE WALKER  
Our First Christmas as a family with our first-born child.



KELLENE WELLS  
Getting to spend Christmas with our Senior Citizens at The Depot.



BARBARA WOODWARD  
The hugs we get every year when we deliver meals to home-bound senior citizens.



BARBARA COXEN  
My volunteer work with the Aging Program in Kings Mountain at Christmas means so much to me.



GEORGE WOOD  
My most memorable Christmas gift was at age 8 when I received my first electric train set from Santa Claus.

#### Kings Mountain Herald

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