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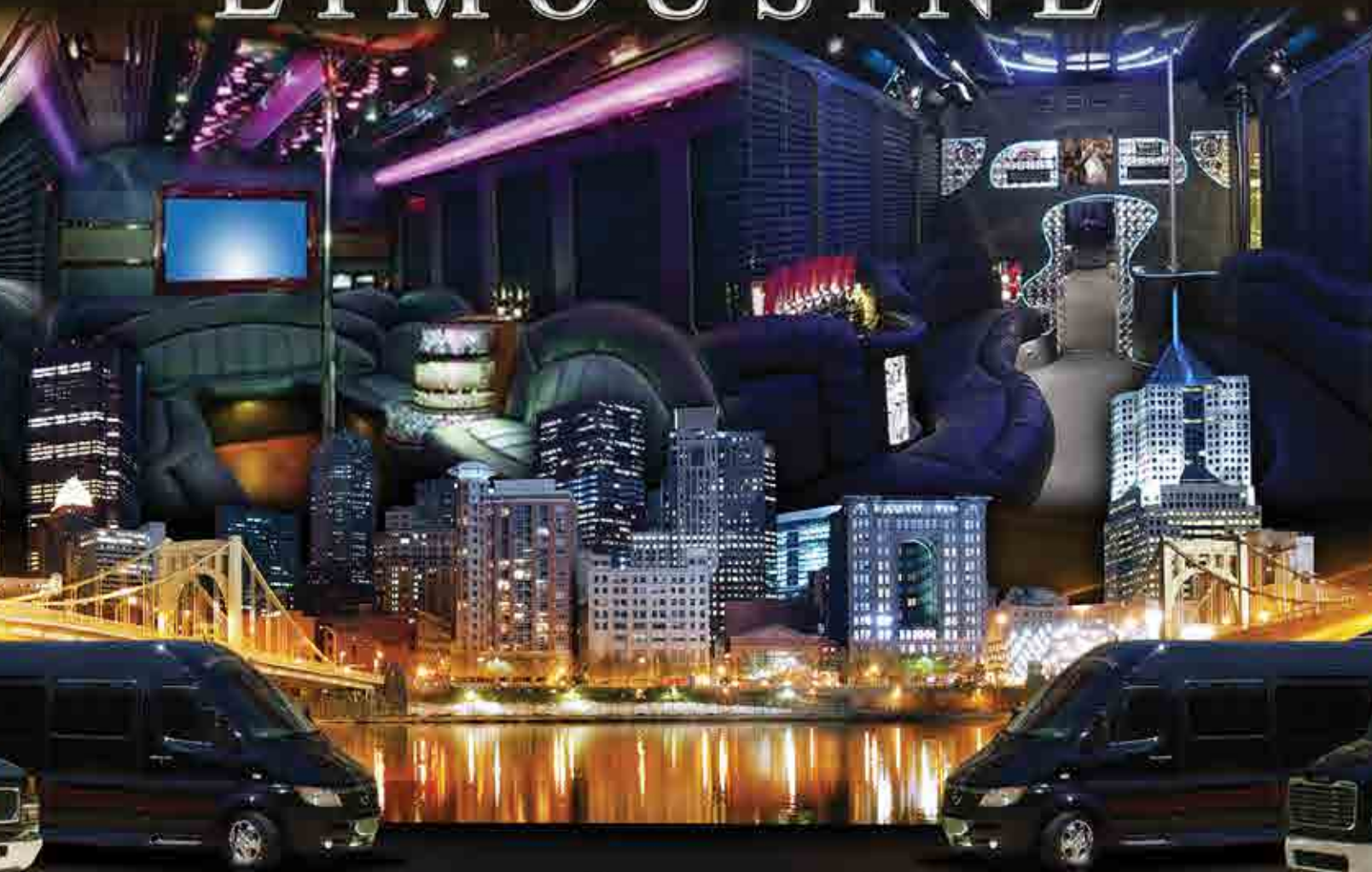
December 2016

NIGHTWIRE

A Pittsburgh Steelers player, wearing a white jersey with the number 97 and yellow pants, is running with the ball during a game. He is wearing a black helmet with the number 97 and a black facemask. The background is a blurred stadium with spectators.

A Six Game Season

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SPORTS:

A Six Game Season... Thank You Cleveland

by Stacy Kauffman, Sports Editor, Nightwire Magazine
Pittsburgh Steeler Photos ©2016Pittsburgh Steelers, Karl Roser

Not for blowing a three games-to-one lead in the World Series to save the city of Pittsburgh from agonizing over their little, hapless brother laying claim to the “City of Champions” moniker. No. While that was nice, it wasn’t what warranted these thanks.

Edging further onto the ledge, Steelers fandom needed something to draw it back away from the lure of jumping off one of the many bridges connecting the banks of the three rivers running through the region. Something to slow the skid that had dragged the team and its fans through the mud for most of October and November.

Thank you, Cleveland, for being who we thought you were and standing tall as the NFL punching bag that you are, allowing the Steelers to regain a sense of normalcy after losing four games in a row. Heading into Week 11, the Blitzburgh label had long since been removed from a defense starving for sacks and third down stops. Dead last in the NFL with just a baker’s dozen worth of quarterback takedowns, Defensive Coordinator Keith Butler’s crew erupted for eight sacks in Cleveland, including a special milestone for a Steeler great, James Harrison.

Named a starter during the week leading up to the Browns

game, the 38-year old linebacker became the franchise’s sack leader after notching one to give him 77 and a half for his Steelers career, passing Jason Gildon. While a win against winless Cleveland doesn’t necessarily do anything





for the barometer, it can give what was a lackluster team – especially the defense – a little something to hang their hat on as they face the home stretch, vying for a division title and of course, the playoffs.

The Steelers began the season winning four out of five games, stuffing the run and lighting up the scoreboard. In the four losses since, the rushing defense fell to 16th in the NFL, allowing 102.7 yards per game. On a blustery Sunday on the shores of Lake Erie, just 33 yards were gained on the ground as the Steelers reasserted themselves in the shadow of Cameron Heyward’s move to injured reserve, under a code red on their season.

Whether or not this win will build confidence in a team that began to question itself inwardly and outwardly in the media is yet to be seen, however a loss would have been disastrous. Making that 132-mile trek back from Cleveland, Steelers players and fans – those who braved the conditions – can gain a little perspective on the 42-day span between





wins and find some mental footing for considering a late season run.

A trio of losses came against division leaders New England, Baltimore and Dallas. No shame in losing to the Ravens on the road, the Steelers haven't won there since 2012 and haven't swept their rivals since 2008. The Patriots and Cowboys have the two best records in the NFL. And the team that kicked off this streak of misery - the Miami Dolphins -





have won five in a row. If you are the rationalizing type, you can go to town with that and feel good that the black and gold took care of business against the orange and brown.

Approaching Thanksgiving, Pittsburgh sits at 5-5, tied atop the AFC North with Baltimore and faces just one team with a record over .500 the rest of the season, the New York Giants (7-3) at home. They play each team in their division once more, plus Indianapolis and Buffalo (both 5-5).

The Ravens are 2-3 in their last five games and have a somewhat tougher schedule. On paper, at least. They also have one more game against each division team, but take on Miami (6-4) and Philadelphia (5-5), with a trip to New England looming.

With Cincinnati at three wins and superstar wide receiver A.J. Green suffering a torn hamstring, the AFC North is a two-team race in what has become a six-game season to decide the division winner and play beyond New Year's Day.



Stacy Kauffman, Sports Feature Writer for Nightwire Magazine can be heard weekends on CBS Sports Radio 93.7 The Fan, has appeared on numerous sports media outlets including Fox Sports Pittsburgh, CBS and ESPN Radio. She can be reached on Twitter @SportsnWhatnot or at sportsnwhatnot@gmail.com



Movie Reviews

NIGHTWIRE - FILM REVIEWS by FIORE

DOCTOR STRANGE

The current cinema craze for superheroes is bringing many to the big screen who should truly stay on the inked page. This is the situation with DOCTOR STRANGE. It is a film totally dependent on its own special effects, wasting the talents of top cast and crew members. Director Scott Derrickson pilots a venture into mysticism and magic with convoluted visual effects and a mere mundane plot.

Dr. Stephen Strange is a brilliant surgeon. Like most brilliant surgeons, he is arrogant, egotistical and self-centered. A car accident deprives him of the use of his hands. Numerous operations fail and in an act of total desperation, he seeks to return to his previous glory through magic and mysticism. This template is standard fare in the world of superheroes. Yet, while watching DOCTOR STRANGE, I had a strange (pardon the word usage) deja-vu experience. Then it occurred to me this script, penned by Jon Spaihts, Scott Derrickson and C. Robert Cargill is basically the same story in Ryan Reynolds's GREEN LANTERN; a film many comic fanboys despised, but I enjoyed. Even the evil presence from the Dark World bears a striking resemblance to Parallax.

KEY SCENES TO LOOK FOR:

1. **STRANGE'S BATTLE WITH LUCIAN**
2. **THE ASTERAL BODY OPERATING SCENE**
3. **THE FOLDING CITY IN THE ROOM OF MIRRORS**

Benedict Cumberbatch plays Dr. Stephen Strange. It is not his best performance, with the script partially to blame. One can



easily see he is trying his best in key scenes, but the transition from ego-centered surgeon to alternate universe warrior is haphazard.

Tilda Swinton is the Ancient One, an all-powerful mystic who recruits Strange. Swinton is a chameleon actress, changing her look into bizarre caricatures with every outing. Here, she does her best impression of Master Po. While she attempts to bring gravitas to the endeavor, she is stilted by The Ancient One's insistence of repeating the same mantras, as if somehow, they will gain more meaning.

Much more comfortable in their roles are Benedict Wong, as Wong (really, I couldn't make that up), Chiwetel Ejiofor as Mordo and Mads Mikkelsen as Kaecillius. They have embraced the absurdity of this superhero tale and seem to be reveling in its milieu.

Behind the camera, kudos abound for Production Designer Charles Wood. Folding realities upon one another is no easy feat, and in 3D IMAX it does look spectacular. Of course, Director of Photography Ben Davis is complacent in this look. It is his use of cant camera angles and arc camera movements that allow worlds to collapse on one another.

DOCTOR STRANGE is not a bad movie, but like its main character, it suffers from an identity complex. It is not as serious as the CAPTAIN AMERICA series, and not as humorous as the GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY, even though it tries to be both. The computer geeks rule this film, and it didn't have to

be so. There is enough talent here that story and character development would have been more entertaining.

THE GRADE FOR DOCTOR STRANGE = C

HACKSAW RIDGE

HACKSAW RIDGE is proof positive Mel Gibson is a most excellent filmmaker. It is, without question, one of the best films of the year. HACKSAW RIDGE is the tale of Desmond Doss, the only man to ever be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for heroic deeds while maintaining his strong religious beliefs, and never lifting a gun, during WWII.

Gruesome war scenes broke a glass ceiling with Tom Hank's SAVING PRIVATE RYAN; but the battles in HACKSAW RIDGE reach a new level of brutality. Production Designer Barry Robison unleashes war's hell with no veiled sensitivities, making Doss' deeds even more astounding.

KEY SCENES TO LOOK FOR:

1. **THE NAKED RECRUIT**
2. **TOP OF THE RIDGE**
3. **STRETCHER DOWN**

Gibson orchestrates HACKSAW RIDGE masterfully. The film is easily divided in two; the second half concentrating on the battle and Doss' attempts to save his ravaged battalion. The first half establishes the characters and Doss' internal conflict of wanting to help with the war effort, while still remaining true to his personal and religious beliefs. This first section could easily have dawdled the film, but screenwriter Andrew Knight fills it with downhome humor, providing laughs and chuckles as a set-up for the horrors to come.



Starring with Andrew Garfield are Teresa Palmer, as Dorothy Schutte, Doss' love interest; Vince Vaughn as Sergeant Howell; Sam Worthington as Captain Glover; and Hugo Weaving as Tom Doss, Desmond's father. Weaving's performance is especially noteworthy.

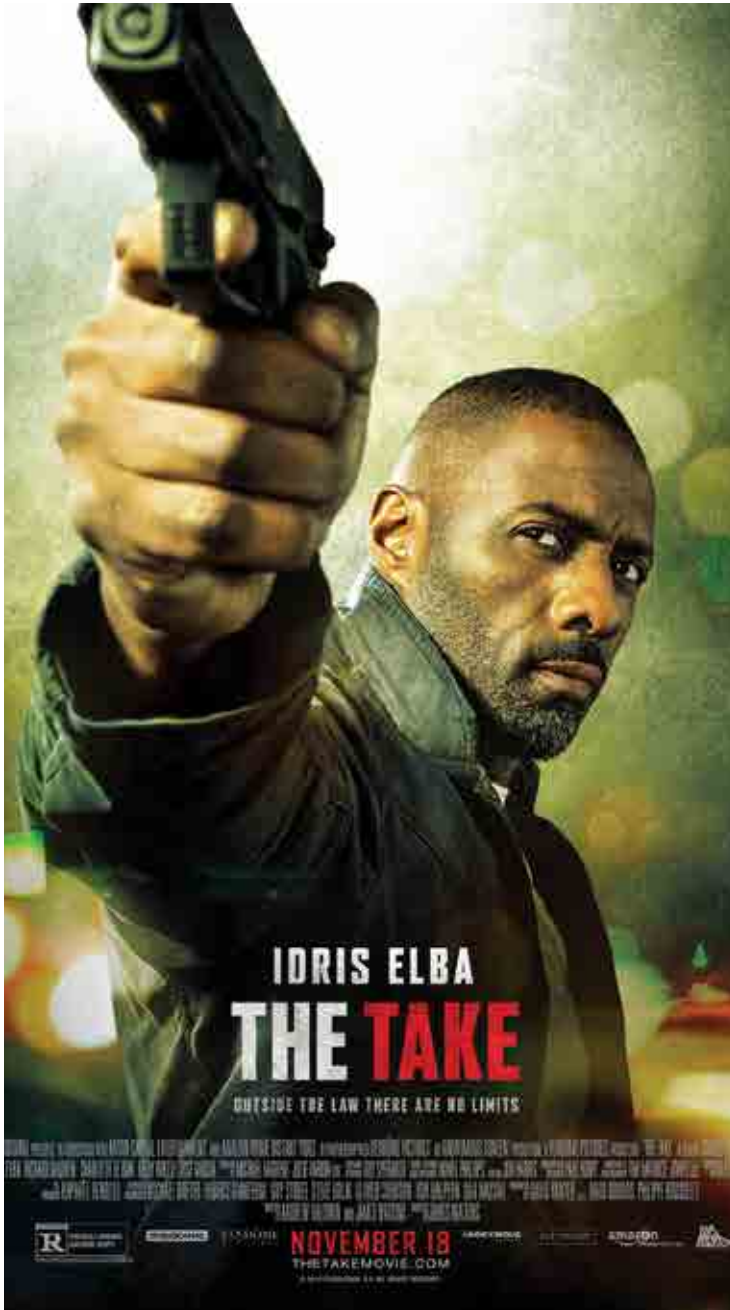
Topping off the excellent cast is a rousing score by Rupert Gregson-Williams. There is a special thank you note to James Horner, music writer extraordinaire as it is apparent Williams patterned his music after the legendary composer. Simon Duggan, a stalwart in cinematography, provides exemplary work in HACKSAW RIDGE, especially during the battle. His use of camera angles is exceptional on the stretcher scene; strong enough to earn one of the key scene spots in this review.

Gibson, still demonstrating disdain for the Hollywood elite and the machine they run, crafts a fine film, returning to his homeland of Australia for the film's production and incorporating a few family members into the cast and crew, to create a truly fine American film. Don't miss this one. See it on the big screen. It is that good.

THE GRADE FOR HACKSAW RIDGE = A

THE TAKE

One could easily have the impression the only decent French action films involve long sequences of par quor and Luc Besson. THE TAKE provides a more eclectic response. Director James Watkins sits atop a very fast-paced and intriguing action flick, easily keeping par with any of Besson's work. The film has fight sequences, car chases, plot twists, innocent victims forced to act heroically and a rogue agent who proves to be a one-man army. Good stuff for an action film.



Richard Madden plays Mike Mason. Mike is a kingpin pick-pocket. His style and precision in sleight of hand thievery is unheralded. He does not have a comfortable home life, however, so he moves to Paris to practice his trade. He is doing quite well for himself, until he makes the fatal mistake of lifting a handbag from Zoe. Zoe is played by French actress Charlotte Le Bon. Zoe is a leftwing activist who wants revolution, but doesn't want anyone to be hurt while revolting. When Zoe realizes the bomb she is carrying might actually kill people, she backs out of the deal. Before she can toss the bomb, hidden in a teddy bear, into the river, Mike comes along and steals the handbag. He takes the money, cell phone and discards the bag outside of an apartment building, when the bomb explodes, killing four people. Unfortunately for Mike,

surveillance cameras capture his visage and he is soon labelled a terrorist and becomes the subject of a massive manhunt. Laren Dacre, played by Kelly Reilly is head of American Intelligence in France. When it is discovered Mike, an American, may be a bomb terrorist, she initiates her own investigation. Her point man is field agent Sean Briar, played by Idris Elba. It's not long before Briar discovers Mike is not a terrorist, and Zoe is not a criminal jihadist. Now he must prove their innocence and capture the real bad guys before Paris is thrown into flames from riotous mobs. To do this, he must avoid Victor Gamieux, played by Jose Garcia, the head of France's Homeland Security and antagonist Rafi Bertrand, played by Thierry Godard. Acting for THE TAKE is superb for an action film, even for audiences who may not be familiar with the French stars.

KEY SCENES TO LOOK FOR:

- 1. SPECIAL DELIVERY**
- 2. THE CHASE THROUGH THE BIZARRE**
- 3. THE STORMING OF THE BANK**

Director of Photography Tim Maurice-Jones who is best known for his work on Guy Ritchie's LOCK, STOCK AND TWO SMOKING BARRELS, provides complimentary shots of Paris. His camera angles on the fight sequences are suspect, as they highlight not the fight itself, but rather large swinging limb movements.

All told, THE TAKE is a respectable action yarn with predictable, yet enjoyable plot twists. Fans of the genre will be happy.

THE GRADE FOR THE TAKE = B



The 2016 Winter Warmer Beer List

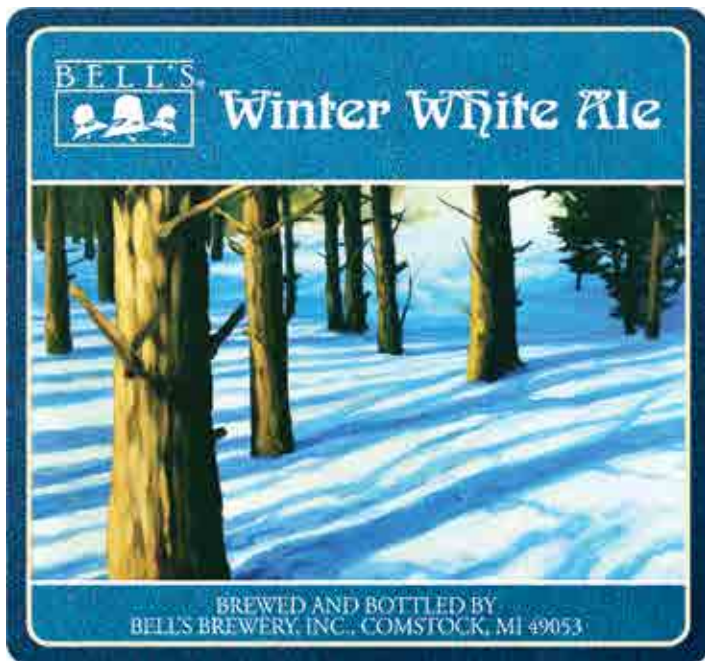
There aren't many people that say winter is their favorite season. Fall and Spring tend to take the cake when it comes to the general consensus, but that doesn't mean there aren't some die-hard winter fans that get extra excited when the first snowflakes fall.

A great way to not only survive winter, but learn to love it is to check out all the seasonal offerings from your favorite breweries. From stouts to hoppy IPAs, to the titular winter warmers...there's a lot to love in the world of craft beer when the temperature drops.

Check out our list of winter seasonal beers to get you in the winter spirit and get on board with giving winter the credit it deserves.

Anderson Valley

Kicking off our alphabetical list is Anderson Valley Brewing Company. Founded in 1987, Anderson Valley has grown into a varied and respected brewery that produces everything from the tried and true styles to the wild and interesting Gose


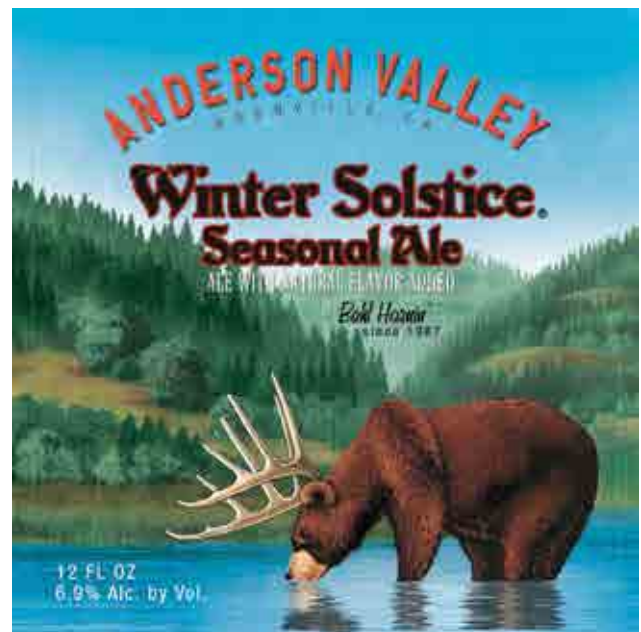


series. Continuing their annual tradition, this winter AVBC is again releasing Winter Solstice, their take on the classic winter warmer style. At 6.9% ABV, this beer pours a translucent copper with a thick and creamy head. Expect to taste sweet malt and caramel as well as some nutty tastes in the background.

Bell's Brewery

Bell's Brewery is no stranger to seasonal beers, and their ever-popular Winter White Ale is making a comeback once again this year. An odd entry into our list, this beer is a wheat ale fermented with Belgian yeast to give it subtle banana and clove flavors with absolutely no spices added, and at 5% ABV it's very easy to drink and very refreshing.

When it comes to big winter beers, it's hard to beat the Russian Imperial Stout. These big, intense beers were once favored by the Russian Tsars, but today you don't have to be Russian to fall in love with the big kids on the stout block. Bell's brews their Expedition Stout to have a huge malt body that features complex flavors including chocolate, dark fruit, and sweet malt that coincide nicely with American hops. Great as a fresh beer,



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Expedition Stout is brewed to age with the best of them, with a 16-year old vintage winning a Great American Beer Festival gold medal in 2011.

Dogfish Head Craft Brewery

Hailing from Milton, Delaware is none other than Dogfish Head Craft Brewery. Known for their weird and wild beers that always seem to work surprisingly well, their love of collaboration could be argued as second to none, too.

A great example of this love of collaboration paired with a penchant for experimentation is their Pennsylvania Tuxedo. This 8.5% ABV beer is a pale ale that's brewed with Pennsylvania spruce tips, and is a homage to the flannel-suited hunters that fill the woods of north-central Pennsylvania. Brewed in partnership with Woolrich clothing company, the beer features a grassy citrus kick with undertones of spruce, the source of which were hand-picked by Dogfish Head themselves.

Who says you can't have a beer for breakfast? Dogfish Head decided to take the idea of the breakfast stout to the

next level with their Beer For Breakfast Stout. Originally released in 2014, this beer features a little of everything that makes breakfast great, including Guatemalan Antigua cold press coffee, maple syrup, and Rapa Scrapple. Add to this Applewood-smoked barley, flaked oats, molasses, milk sugars, brown sugar, and roasted chicory and what you have is a 7.4% ABV beer that's calling for you to make breakfast any time of the day.

East End Brewing Company

In a bid to clear the snow and warm things up for everyone in Pittsburgh, Scott Smith from East End Brewing makes his Snow Melt Winter Ale each year, and even though this substantial 7% ABV beer helps, the snow still seems to stick. This mahogany red ale has a unique malt character and a bright hop flavor that has hints of pine. This beer will help keep you warm and while we all can't wait for it to warm up, at least we have this to clear the snow for us.

Erie Brewing Company

While it's typically good advice to steer clear of Johnny Law when drinking, Erie Brewing releases their Ol' Red Cease & Desist each year, going against that advice. Ol' Red is an up-front powerful ale that makes its own set of laws about what a winter beer should be. Coming in at 10.1% ABV, this beer has a balanced mix of oak, spices, dark fruits, and even a little caramel. While the alcohol and flavors are up-front about their intentions, this beer finishes smooth and easy to drink.

Lancaster Brewing Company

Located in...you guessed it...Lancaster, PA, Lancaster Brewing Company loves the winter season as much as might be possible, and they showcase that love with their Winter Warmer Ale. This 8.9% ABV beer skips the spices found in most winter beers to give you a full-bodied beer that features a monster of a malt bill along with British and American hops to give this beer a balance that's not often found in a winter ale. Classified as an Old Ale, Winter Warmer will do as its name implies, and it'll do it with style.

North Country Brewing Company

Originally brewed in 2005, Jack Frost Winter Warmer Ale from North Country Brewing is a great example of what a winter warmer should be. Coming in at 7.7% ABV, this malty beer

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focuses on the malt body, allowing only enough spice into the beer to hint at their presence.

You'll find some hop flavor in Jack Frost, but not much of the bitterness you'd expect along with it. In short, this is one great malty beer that uses a touch of spice to give you a beer that's perfect for a cold winter night, and best of all it's available in cans!

Saugatuck Brewing Company

Brown Ales are the perfect balance of toasty malt character, rich roasted malt, and bitter chocolate all wrapped together in one delicious beer. Add to this tastes and aroma of oak aging and what you have is SBC's Snow Wizard Oak Aged Brown Ale. This beer comes in at 7% ABV and 49 IBUs, featuring that toasty malt brown ales are known for while adding in a little extra bitterness and oak character for good measure. Unlike the other beers listed above, Snow Wizard is only available October through December so check this unique brown ale out while it's still here.

Smuttynose Brewing Company

For those of us that love their Belgian-style beers, Smuttynose Brewing has long held their Winter Ale as the perfect beer for winter, and while they still feel this way, this 7.5% Belgian Dubbel has a new name Single Digit Dubbel for the beer we love with a few additional ABV that before, and it's still brewed with a special Trappist ale yeast as it has always been. This beer features fruity aromas and flavors as well as a soft hop background. Mellow yet surprisingly complex. The perfect brew for the winter months when you're looking for something different.

Springhouse Brewing Company

Those pesky Martians are at it again, and this time they've gone after Santa. While we send the National Guard to go rescue him, you can take solace in Spring House's The Martians Kidnap Santa Egg Nog Stout. This 8.3% ABV beer pairs the chocolate darkness you'd expect from a stout and the creamy booziness we all love about egg nog and places them together in a match that's way better than milk and cookies could ever be.

Straub

Straub Brewery has been in the brewing business since 1872 and today they're not only producing quality beers that have been around for much of their history, but new and innovative beers as well. Take for example their Legacy Sampler, a mix pack of



beers that show the history of Straub Brewery better than any history book ever could. The sampler includes their 1872 Lager, a 5.4% ABV pre-prohibition style lager, longtime favorite Helles Lager, a 5.5% ABV lager, Dopplebock, a 7% ABV Winter Bock, and their Dunkel, a 5.2% ABV Munich-style Dunkel Lager.

While we're just getting started with winter, there's nothing wrong with thinking about our favorite seer of seers and prognosticator of prognosticators and what his prediction for the length of winter will be. We may have to wait to see what Groundhog Phil has to say about the coming weather, but one thing we're certain about is Straub's Groundhog Altbier. Coming in at 5.4% ABV, this beer is brewed in the old German style and pours a deep gold with a pronounced malt flavor and a hearty dose of hops to balance everything out. Straub's Groundhog beer will be making you want to repeat Groundhog Day again and again.

Troegs Independent Brewing

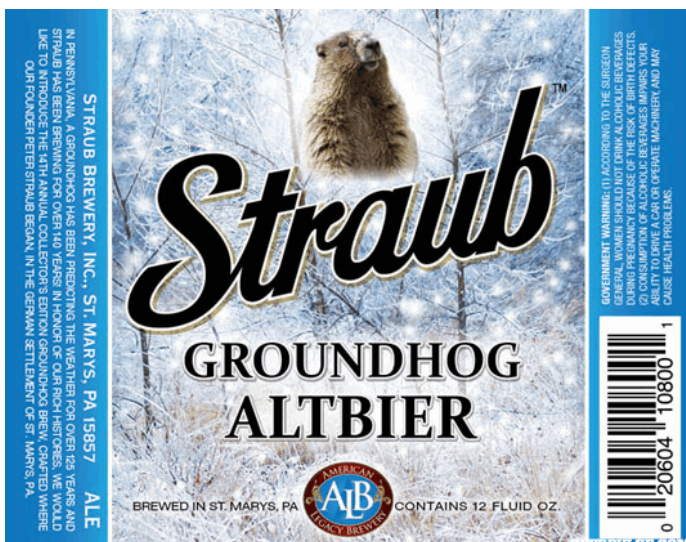
It wouldn't be a holiday season without the wild and wonderful Mad Elf from Troegs. Coming in at a surprising 11% ABV, Mad Elf uses pilsner, Munich, and chocolate malts paired with spicy Belgian yeast and cherries to make a rich and flavorful beer that might possibly drive you mad, too. Mad Elf is possibly the perfect beer for the holidays. Falling in line with Troegs' new look, Mad Elf has a new label on a bottle filled with the same holiday beer we've all grown to love.

A beer making its return this year for the winter season from Troegs is their Blizzard of Hops winter IPA. This 6.4% ABV beer has notes of pine and citrus in it as well as a solid malt backbone. If you're tired of spiced and flavored beers this holiday season, Blizzard of Hops is one beer you can't miss.

Victory Brewing Company

Victory Brewing from Downingtown PA has quite the catalog of beers available throughout the year, but they wait until the winter months to release some of their absolute best. First up is Winter Cheers. This 6.7% ABV wheat beer uses Tettnang and Citra hops to make a hoppy wheat beer that's ready to warm you up and give some winter cheer to spread.

Another phenomenal beer brewed for the winter months is Hop Ranch IPA, which is a celebration of the seasonal hop harvest fit nicely into bottle. At 9% ABV, Hop Ranch is an imperial India pale ale that uses Mosaic and Azacca hops for a pungent, floral and intense taste and aroma that's a refreshing change from the typical winter beers.



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For more information, check out: www.blisslights.com.



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Move over chocolate indulgences and unwanted fruitcake, introducing Zing Anything Citrus Gift Set, which offers a healthy and easy way to extract juice and flavor from fruits and infuse them directly into your water bottle. The gift set features a 28oz BPA/EA-free bottle that comes with three easy-to-use attachments: a citrus press, a cucumber slicer and a kiwi reamer. More effective than other passive infusing methods, these tools squeeze and slice fruits directly into water, harnessing the power of fresh fruit and letting recipients customize their water experience with an endless combination of delicious antioxidant-rich infusions. The individual bottle also makes a great stocking stuffer. Designed in the US, easy to clean, and dishwasher-safe, the Citrus Zinger Infusion Set is available online and at retailers nationwide for an SRP of \$19.99. The individual bottle is \$15.99. Visit www.zinganything.com to learn more.

New Zuke's® Mini Naturals® Trees Bring Festive Fun for the Holidays

New Zuke's® Mini Naturals® Trees Bring Festive Fun for the Holidays
Low-Calorie, Seasonal Recipe Combines Quality Protein and Antioxidant-Rich Fruits
in a Moist Dog Treat

Has your pup been good this year? Then reward them with new Zuke's® Mini Naturals® Trees! Dogs everywhere will delight in these tree-shaped treats that are perfect for encouraging positive behavior during the hectic holiday season. Available in a mouthwateringly delicious Turkey with Cranberry recipe, Zuke's Mini Naturals Trees are made with quality, lean protein and antioxidant-rich cranberries, cherries, rosemary and turmeric to support a healthy lifestyle.

Like Zuke's original Mini Naturals, these wholesome, bite-sized, moist treats are made in the USA, fortified with vitamins and minerals, and are completely free of harsh additives, preservatives, and the common allergens wheat, corn and soy. At only 3 ½ calories each, four-legged family members can indulge in guilt-free holiday cheer throughout the season!

Zuke's Mini Naturals Trees are available while supplies last at independent retailers and PetSmart locations nationwide for an SRP of \$5.79 per 6oz re-sealable bag. \$69 at 1voicencyc.com



Bakery On Main Organic Hot Breakfast New Certified Gluten-Free, Non-GMO Project Verified, Whole-Grain, Organic Ancient Grains Cereal



Wonderfully warm spoonful's of hearty whole grains kick start a morning like no other and enjoying hot cereal when the sun comes up is one of life's most delicious, simple pleasures. Bakery On Main is introducing a new addition to their family of certified organic products with Organic Creamy Hot Breakfast. This new line of oat-free, certified gluten-free hot cereal will bring you back to the comforting warm feeling you enjoyed at your breakfast table as a child but with an on-trend, ancient-grain twist! Made in the USA at Bakery On Main's GFCO certified, dedicated gluten-free facility, the audaciously premium lineup is available in two unsweetened varieties: Amaranth Multigrain and Quinoa Multigrain. Each offers 27.5g of whole grains per serving, are an excellent source of ALA Omega-3, and a good source of fiber. This nutritional powerhouse of ancient grains and flax gives consumers a customizable cereal that can be enjoyed exactly as they like- savory, sweet, or traditional! Bakery On Main's Hot Breakfast is also Non-GMO Project Verified, OU Kosher, and free of sodium, cholesterol, saturated and trans fat, dairy, casein, wheat, and gluten. "Combining powerful nutrition with bakeshop delicious taste, we feel this new line of Organic Creamy Hot Breakfast is the perfect addition to our current offerings," shared Bakery On Main's founder Michael Smulders. "When you're craving a warm bowl of goodness, it really hits the spot!" Bakery On Main's Hot Breakfast are available at natural food retailers across the country and online for an SRP of \$5.99 per 8.5oz box. Six individual 40g serving packets are included that cook in under two minutes at only 150 calories each. Happy mornings start with Bakery On Main!

Kelvin 36

Is there a Mr. or Mrs. Fix-it on your holiday list? Kelvin 36 is so innovative and efficient you'll want to gift it to yourself!

With the new and improved Kelvin 36, you can build and fix just about anything you can think of. This all-in-one gadget contains 36 features such as a screwdriver, hammer, flashlight, level, measuring tape, and more. Known as the Ultra-Urban Super Tool, the Kelvin 36 is a well-designed, universal device that can complete a multitude of tasks around the house.

With Kelvin 36 you can fix toys and chairs, hang pictures, towels racks and paintings, put up shelves and more. This gadget is also perfect for DIY projects, home improvements and of course for the handyman or woman in your life.

Versatile and compact, this rugged and stylish multi-tool is small enough to fit in the back of your pocket, which means no more dragging around a heavy toolbox!

Includes the most common everyday household tools such as bottle opener and corkscrew.

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Highmark First Night Pittsburgh



Ring in the New Year with live music and family fun at the Highmark First Night Pittsburgh 2017 celebration!

The 23rd annual Highmark First Night Pittsburgh, a production of the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, is an arts-focused and family-friendly New Year's Eve celebration in downtown Pittsburgh's Cultural District. It is the largest single-day celebration in the region offering 100+ events at dozens of indoor and outdoor locations within the 14-block Cultural District. The celebration offers something for everyone.

Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield will be the presenting sponsor for Highmark First Night Pittsburgh 2017 for a sixth consecutive year.

"We have plans to make this year's First Night Pittsburgh Bicentennial celebration even bigger and better by making the footprint slightly bigger, elongating the parade, and adding a new outdoor stage," shared Sarah Aziz, director of Highmark First Night.

This year's headline act, the Nigel Hall Band, will be ringing in the New Year with soul-inspired tunes to move and excite the 40,000 anticipated attendees. As a reflection upon Pittsburgh's year-long Bicentennial and immergence into the future, the





celebration's theme, PITTSBURGH: THE NEXT 200 YEARS, focuses on an evening of events that ruminate upon the past, present, and future.

Attendees can anticipate some new, old, and hybrid activities and live performances, including an opening act on the Benedum Center stage performed by the winner of the 7th annual Sing-Off Competition, chosen by Smokey Robinson and five of the competition's past winners.

Ninety percent of all Highmark First Night Pittsburgh events are held indoors, heated, and remain accessible, so visitors need not fear the cold! Families can be mesmerized by crowd favorites, like Fire & Ice, march along with the FedEx Ground Parade, dance at a Silent Disco party, watch Japanese sword dancers, or grab some local food at one of the many food trucks.

The evening will culminate with the Future of Pittsburgh Grand Finale: the countdown to midnight, the slow raising of the Future of Pittsburgh ball above Penn Avenue Place, and the Zambelli fireworks finale, a breathtaking display.





“Highmark First Night Pittsburgh 2017 is like an open house of the Cultural District, welcoming everyone in for a safe and fun evening to celebrate the year,” said Sarah Aziz.

The Highmark First Night Pittsburgh 2017 sponsors include: Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield as the presenting sponsor, Dollar Bank, First National Bank, Giant Eagle and PNC. FedEx Ground returns as a title sponsor for the annual parade which includes special themed puppets designed by Studio Capezzuti. Community supporters include The Buhl Foundation, The Fine Foundation and The Grable Foundation.

Attendees can purchase Admission Buttons for \$10 in advance or at the door (children 5 and under FREE). These buttons should be worn all New Year’s Eve, giving access to all indoor and outdoor attractions at Highmark First Night Pittsburgh. Admission Buttons are available for purchase at TrustArts.org/FirstNightPGH, the Box Office at Theater Square (655 Penn Avenue), or at 412-456-6666. Admission Buttons can also be purchased at participating Giant Eagle. Some indoor performances also require seating vouchers, which are free with admission but must be reserved prior to the performance. Events requiring vouchers are listed at TrustArts.org/FirstNightPGH.

For more information, please visit www.TrustArts.org or call 412-456-6666.





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Pittsburgh's Premier Holiday Event Gets Even Sweeter

Kennywood's Holiday Lights opens Black Friday, featuring new Gingerbread Village



The stockings are hung, the lights are strung, and all that's left is to flip the switch to begin the sixth year of Holiday Lights at Kennywood!

Holiday Lights, sponsored by Duquesne Light Company, begins on Friday, November 25 and continues every Friday, Saturday and Sunday night through December 23 from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Kennywood will again boast Pennsylvania's tallest Christmas tree

(90 feet, plus a 10-foot tree-topping ornament), featuring a nightly tree lighting ceremony at 5:45, where a local family will turn on the roughly 250,000 LED lights adorning the tree.

New to this year's Holiday Lights event is a Gingerbread Village from GingerBread Lane. Housed in the Penny Arcade, Kennywood's delicious village will feature 189 houses consisting of 211 pounds of gingerbread, 750 pounds of icing, 280 pounds of





candy and 720 candy canes.

"Holiday Lights has quickly become an essential part of the holiday season around Pittsburgh," says Kennywood General Manager Jerome Gibas. "Adding a Gingerbread Village will make Holiday Lights even sweeter!"

Other Holiday Lights favorites also return, including The Polar Express™ 4-D Experience movie, local choral and band groups performing classic holiday carols, and displays featuring roughly 1.5 million lights.

Duquesne Light Company will also raise money for the Dollar Energy Fund, a non-profit organization that provides assistance to income-eligible households to help with their energy bills. Donors will receive a holiday ornament for every \$5 contribution made.

Tickets for Holiday Lights can be purchased online at www.Kennywood.com, with prices starting at \$15.99. Children two years of age and under are free. Parking is also free. To see a full list of activities, plus information on schedules, discounts and more, visit www.kennywood.com/holidaylights.

Kennywood is part of the Palace Entertainment family of parks.

Kennywood is America's Finest Traditional Amusement Park! The Pittsburgh-area park offers a unique mix of classic rides and modern thrills, including seven roller coasters, a 14-ride Kiddieland, and several attractions that cannot be found anywhere else. Kennywood, founded in 1898, continues to provide unforgettable fun for all ages.



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POLITICALLY CORRECT VERSION OF THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS:

Twas the night before Christmas and Santa's a wreck...
How to live in a world that's politically correct?
His workers no longer would answer to "Elves"
"Vertically Challenged" they were calling themselves
And labor conditions at the north pole
Were alleged by the union to stifle the soul
Four reindeer had vanished, without much propriety
Released to the wilds by the Humane Society
And equal employment had made it quite clear
That Santa had better not use just reindeer
So Dancer and Donner, Comet and Cupid
Were replaced with 4 pigs, and you know that looked stupid!
The runners had been removed from his sleigh;
The ruts were termed dangerous by the E P A
And people had started to call for the cops
When they heard sled noises on their roof-tops
Second-hand smoke from his pipe had his workers quite frightened
His fur trimmed red suit was called "Unenlightened"
And to show you the strangeness of life's ebbs and flows
Rudolf was suing over unauthorized use of his nose
And had gone on Geraldo, in front of the nation
Demanding millions in over-due compensation
So, half of the reindeer were gone; and his wife
Who suddenly said she'd enough of this life
Joined a self-help group, packed, and left in a whiz
Demanding from now on her title was Ms
And as for the gifts, why, he'd ne'er had a notion
That making a choice could cause so much commotion
Nothing of leather, nothing of fur
Which meant nothing for him. And nothing for her
Nothing that might be construed to pollute
Nothing to aim. Nothing to shoot
Nothing that clamored or made lots of noise
Nothing for just girls. Or just for boys
Nothing that claimed to be gender specific
Nothing that's warlike or non-pacific
No candy or sweets ... they were bad for the tooth
Nothing that seemed to embellish the truth
And fairy tales, while not yet forbidden
Were like Ken and Barbie, better off hidden

For they raised the hackles of those psychological
 Who claimed the only good gift was ecological
 No baseball, no football ... someone could get hurt;
 Besides; playing sports exposed kids to dirt
 Dolls were said to be sexist, and should be passé;
 And Nintendo would rot your entire brain away
 So Santa just stood there, disheveled, perplexed;
 He just could not figure out what to do next
 He tried to be merry, tried to be gay
 But you've got to be careful with that word today
 His sack was quite empty, limp to the ground;
 Nothing fully acceptable was to be found
 Something special was needed, a gift that he might
 Give to all without angering the left or the right
 A gift that would satisfy, with no indecision
 Each group of people, every religion;
 Every ethnicity, every hue
 Everyone, everywhere ... even you
 So here is that gift, it's price beyond worth ...
 "May you and your loved ones enjoy peace on earth"

IMMEDIATE DOWNSIZING MEASURES EMPLOYED

The recent announcement that Donner and Blitzen have elected to take the early reindeer retirement package has triggered a good deal of concern about whether they will be replaced, and about other restructuring decisions at the North Pole. Streamlining is due to the North Pole's loss of dominance of this season's gift distribution business. Home shopping channels, the Internet, and mail order catalogs have diminished Santa's market share. He could not sit idly by and permit further erosion of the profit picture.

The reindeer downsizing was made possible through the purchase of a late model Japanese sled for the CEO's annual trip. Improved productivity from Dasher and Dancer--who will retrain at the Harvard Business School--is anticipated. Reduction in reindeer will also lessen airborne environmental emissions for which the North Pole has received unfavorable press. I am pleased to inform you that Rudolph's role will not be disturbed. Tradition still counts for something at the North Pole.

IS THERE A SANTA?

A few days after Christmas, my six year son and I were talking. He asked, "Mom, is there a Santa Claus?" "Well, what do you think?" I asked him. He replied, "Well, my X Box that I got and my gifts

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from Santa were wrapped in the same kind of wrapping paper." He thought for a minute and said, "I'll tell you what ... you and Dad can go on buying me presents and let's just forget we ever had this talk!"

ANNUAL OFFICE CHRISTMAS PARTY:

FROM: Patty Lewis, Human Resources Director

TO: All Employees

DATE: December 1

RE: Annual Office Christmas Party

I'm happy to inform you that the company Christmas Party will take place on December 23, starting at noon in the private function room at the Grill House. There will be a cash bar and plenty of drinks! We'll have a small band playing traditional carols. Feel free to sing along. And don't be surprised if our CEO shows up dressed as Santa Claus! A Christmas tree will be lit at 1:00 p.m. Exchange of gifts among employees can be done at that time, however, no gift should be over \$10.00 to make the giving of gifts easy for everyone's pockets. This gathering is only for

employees! A special announcement will be made by our CEO at that time! Merry Christmas to you and your family.

Patty

+++++

FROM: Patty Lewis, Human Resources Director

TO: All Employees

DATE: December 2

RE: Holiday Party

In no way was yesterday's memo intended to exclude our Jewish employees. We recognize that Chanukah is an important holiday, which often coincides with Christmas, though unfortunately not this year. However, from now on we're calling it our "Holiday Party." The same policy applies to any other employees who are not Christians or those still celebrating Reconciliation Day. There will be no Christmas tree present. No Christmas carols sung. We will have other types of music for your enjoyment. Happy now?

Happy Holidays to you and your family.

Patty

+++++

FROM: Patty Lewis, Human Resources Director

TO: All Employees

DATE: December 3

RE: Holiday Party

Regarding the note I received from a member of Alcoholics Anonymous requesting a non-drinking table... you didn't sign your name. I'm happy to accommodate this request, but if I put a sign on



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a table that reads "AA Only" you wouldn't be anonymous anymore. How am I supposed to handle this? Somebody? Forget about the gift exchange, no gifts are allowed since the union members feel that \$10.00 is too much money and executives believe \$10.00 is a little chintzy. NO GIFT EXCHANGE WILL BE ALLOWED.

Patty

+++++

FROM: Patty Lewis, Human Resources Director

TO: All Employees

DATE: December 7

RE: Holiday Party

What a diverse group we are! I had no idea that December 20th begins the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, which forbids eating and drinking during daylight hours. There goes the party! Seriously, we can appreciate how a luncheon at this time of year does not accommodate our Muslim employees' beliefs. Perhaps the Grill House can hold off on serving your meal until the end of the party or else package everything for you to take it home in a little foil doggy baggy. Will that work? Meanwhile, I've arranged for members of Weight Watchers to sit farthest from the dessert buffet and pregnant women will get the table closest to the restrooms. Gays are allowed to sit with each other. Lesbians do not have to sit with gay men, each will have their own table. Yes, there will be a flower arrangement for the gay men's table. However, to the person asking permission to cross dress, no cross dressing allowed.

We will have booster seats for short people. Low-fat food will be available for those on a diet. We cannot control the salt used in the food we suggest for those people with high blood pressure to taste first. There will be fresh fruits as dessert for Diabetics, the restaurant cannot supply "No Sugar" desserts. Sorry! Did I miss anything?!?!?

Patty

+++++

FROM: Patty Lewis, Human Resources Director

TO: All Employees

DATE: December 10

RE: The Holiday Party

Vegetarians!! I've had it with you people!!! We're going to keep this party at the Grill House whether you like it or not, so you can sit quietly at the table furthest from the "grill of death," as you so quaintly put it, and you'll get your salad bar, including organic tomatoes. But you know, tomatoes have feelings, too. They scream when you slice them. I've heard them scream. I'm hearing them scream right NOW! I hope you all have a rotten holiday! Drive drunk and die, you hear me?

Patty

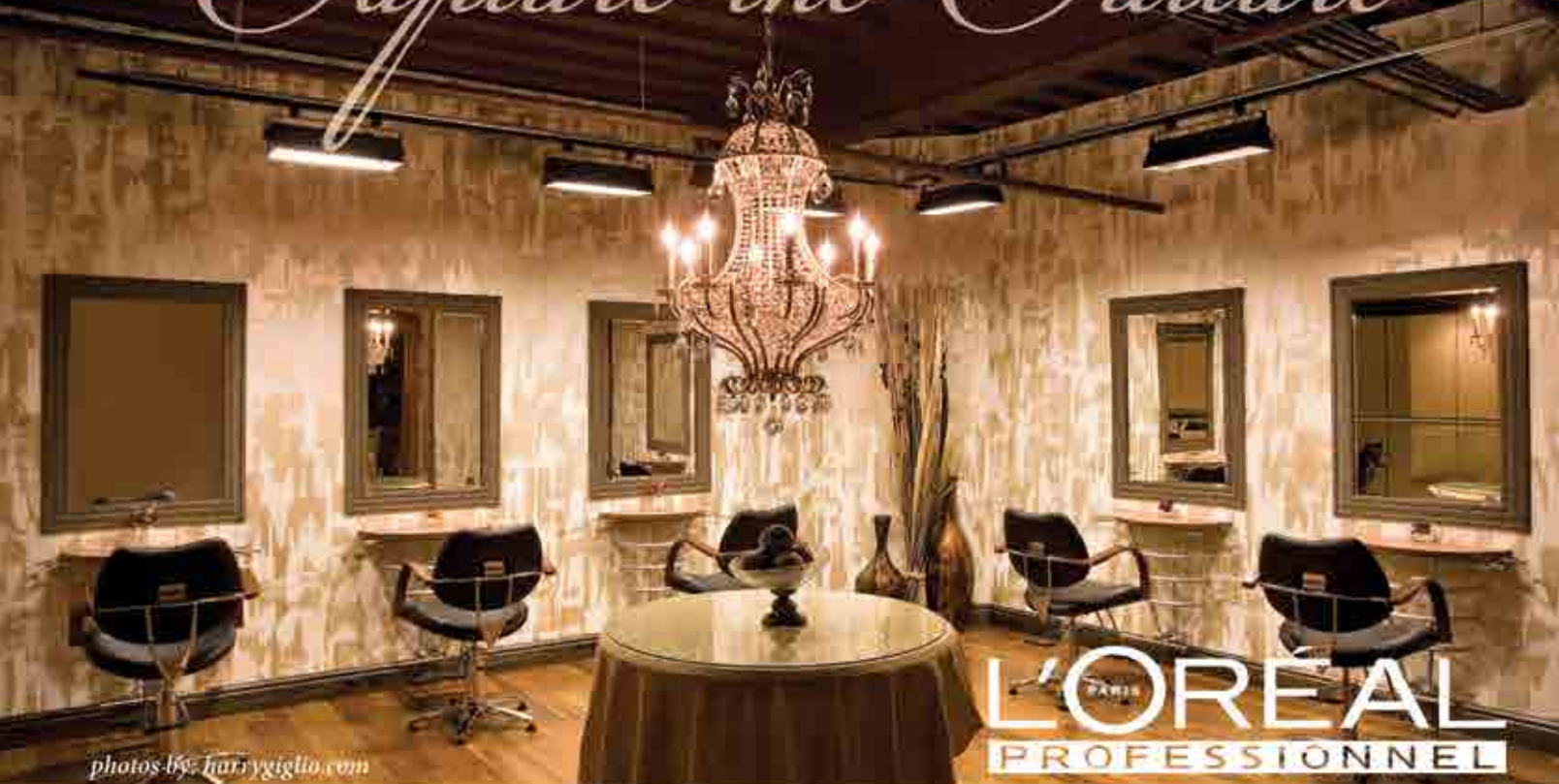


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Humor

+++++

FROM: Joan Bishop, Acting Human Resources Director

DATE: December 14

RE: Patty Lewis and Holiday Party

I'm sure I speak for all of us in wishing Patty Lewis a speedy recovery and I'll continue to forward your cards to her. In the meantime, management has decided to cancel our Holiday Party and give everyone the afternoon of the 23rd off with full pay. Happy Holidays!

PS: HAVE A FANTASTIC WEEKEND!!!

MISTLETOE:

It was the beginning of December. The trip had gone reasonably well, and he was ready to go back. The airport on the other hand had turned a tacky red and green, and loudspeakers blared annoying elevator renditions of cherished Christmas carols. Being someone who took Christmas very seriously, and being slightly tired, he was not in a particularly good mood. Going to check in his luggage (which, for some reason, had become one suitcase with entirely new clothes), he saw hanging

mistletoe. Not real mistletoe, but very cheap plastic with red paint on some of the rounder parts and green paint on some of the flatter and "pointier" parts, that could be taken for mistletoe only in a very Picasso sort of way. With a considerable degree of irritation and nowhere else to vent it, he said to the lady attendant, "Even if I were not married, I would not want to kiss you under such a ghastly mockery of mistletoe." "Sir, look more closely at where the mistletoe is." (pause) "Ok, I see that it's above the luggage scale, which is the place you'd have to step forward for a kiss." "That's not why it's there." (pause) "Ok, I give up. Why is it there?" "It's there so you can kiss your luggage goodbye."

THE GOLFERS:

A priest, a doctor, and an engineer were waiting one morning for a particularly slow group of golfers. The engineer fumed, "What's with those blokes? We must have been waiting for fifteen minutes!" The doctor chimed in, "I don't know, but I've never seen such inept golf!" The priest said, "Here comes the greens keeper. Let's have a word with him." He said, "Hello, George!

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what's wrong with that group ahead of us? They're rather slow, aren't they?" The greens keeper replied, "Oh, yes. That's a group of blind fire fighters. They lost their sight saving our clubhouse from a fire last year, so we always let them play for free anytime." The group fell silent for a moment. The priest said, "That's so sad. I think I will say a special prayer for them tonight." The doctor said, "Good idea. I'm going to contact my ophthalmologist colleague and see if there's anything he can do for them." The engineer said, "Why can't they play at night?"

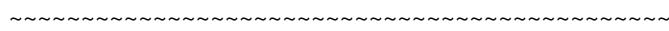
EGGS:

A wife was making a breakfast of fried eggs for her husband. Suddenly, her husband burst into the kitchen. "Careful ... CAREFUL! Put in some more butter! Oh my GOD! You're cooking too many at once. TOO MANY!TURN THEM!!! TURN THEM NOW!!!! We need more butter. Oh my GOD! WHERE are we going to get MORE BUTTER? They're going to STICK! Careful ... CAREFUL! I said be CAREFUL! You NEVER listen to me when you're cooking! Never! Turn them! Hurry up! Are you

CRAZY? Have you LOST your mind? Don't forget to salt them. You know you always forget to salt them. Use the salt. USE THE SALT! THE SALT!" The wife stared at him. "What is wrong with you? You think I don't know how to fry a couple of eggs?" The husband calmly replied, "I wanted to show you what it feels like when I'm driving."

On Drinking:

"Sometimes when I reflect back on all the wine I drink I feel shamed. Then I look into the glass and think about the workers in the vineyards and all of their hopes and dreams If I didn't drink this wine, they might be out of work and their dreams would be shattered. Then I say to myself, "It is better that I drink this wine and let their dreams come true than be selfish and worry about my liver."
 WARNING: The consumption of alcohol may leave you wondering what the hell happened to your bra and panties.



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"I feel sorry for people who don't drink. When they wake up in the morning, that's as good as they're going to feel all day. "

~Frank Sinatra

WARNING: The consumption of alcohol may create the illusion that you are tougher, smarter, faster and better looking than most people.

"When I read about the evils of drinking, I gave up reading."

~ Henny Youngman

WARNING: The consumption of alcohol may lead you to think people are laughing WITH you.

"24 hours in a day, 24 beers in a case. Coincidence?

I think not."

~ Stephen Wright

WARNING: The consumption of alcohol may cause you to think you can sing.

"When we drink, we get drunk. When we get drunk, we fall asleep. When we fall asleep, we commit no sin.

When we commit no sin, we go to heaven. So, let's all get drunk and go to heaven!"

~ Brian O'Rourke

WARNING: The consumption of alcohol may cause pregnancy. !

"Beer is proof that God loves us and wants us to be happy."

~ Benjamin Franklin

WARNING: The consumption of alcohol is a major factor in dancing like a retard.

"Without question, the greatest invention in the history of mankind is beer. Oh, I grant you that the wheel was also a fine invention, but the wheel does not go nearly as well with pizza."

~ Dave Barry

WARNING: The consumption of alcohol may cause you to tell your friends over and over again that you love them.

To some it's a six-pack, to me it's a Support Group. Salvation in a can!

~ Dave Howell

WARNING: The consumption of alcohol may make you think you can logically converse with members of the opposite sex without spitting.

And saving the best for last, as explained by Cliff Clavin,

of Cheers. One afternoon at Cheers, Cliff Clavin was explaining the Buffalo Theory to his buddy Norm.

Here's how it went: "Well ya see, Norm, it's like this... A herd of buffalo can only move as fast as the slowest buffalo. And when the herd is hunted, it is the slowest and weakest ones at the back that are killed first This natural selection is good for the herd as a whole, because the general speed and health of the whole group keeps improving by the regular killing of the weakest members. In much the same way, the human brain can only operate as fast as the slowest brain cells. Excessive intake of alcohol, as we know, kills brain cells. But naturally, it attacks the slowest and weakest brain cells first. In this way, regular consumption of beer eliminates the weaker brain cells, making the brain a faster and more efficient machine. That's why you always feel smarter after a few beers." WARNING: The consumption of alcohol may make you think you are whispering when you are not. . Help keep Bartender's Employed - Drink more Alcohol!

UNDERSTANDING WOMAN'S PROBLEMS:

Okay, Okay, it finally all makes sense now.. I never looked at it this way before:

MENtal illness

MENstrual cramps

MENTal breakdown

MENopause

GUYnocologist

AND

When we have REAL trouble, it's a HISterectomy.

Ever notice how all of women's problems start with MEN?

THINGS I'VE LEARNED FROM MY KIDS:

For those who already have children past this age, this is hilarious

For those who have children nearing this age, this is a warning.

For those who have not yet had children, this is birth control. The following came from an anonymous mother here in Pittsburgh, PA! Things I've learned from my children (Honest and No Kidding):

1. A king size waterbed holds enough water to fill a 2,000 sq. foot house 4 inches deep.
2. If you spray hair spray on dust bunnies and run over them with roller blades, they can ignite.
3. A 3-year-old's voice is louder than 200 adults in a crowded restaurant.
4. If you hook a dog leash over a ceiling fan, the motor is not strong enough to rotate a 42 pound boy wearing Batman underwear and a superman cape. It is strong enough, however, to spread paint

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- on all four walls of a 20 X 20 foot room.
5. You should not throw baseballs up when the ceiling fan is on.
When using the ceiling fan as a bat, you have to throw the ball up a few times before you get a hit. A ceiling fan can hit a baseball a long way.
 6. The glass in windows (even double pane) doesn't stop a baseball hit by a ceiling fan.
 7. When you hear the toilet flush and the words "Uh-oh," it's already too late.
 8. Brake fluid mixed with Clorox makes smoke, and lots of it.
 9. A six-year-old can start a fire with a flint rock even though a 36-year-old man says they can only do it in the movies. A magnifying glass can start a fire even on an overcast day.
 10. Certain Lego's will pass through the digestive tract of a four-year-old.
 11. Play Dough and Microwave should never be used in the same sentence.
 12. Super glue is forever.
 13. No matter how much Jell-O you put in a swimming pool you still can't walk on water.

14. Pool filters do not like Jell-O.
15. VCR's do not eject PB&J sandwiches even though TV commercials show they do.
16. Garbage bags do not make good parachutes.
17. Marbles in gas tanks make lots of noise when driving.
18. You probably do not want to know what that odor is.
19. Always look in the oven before you turn it on. Plastic toys do not like ovens.
20. The fire department in Pittsburgh has a 5 minute response time.
21. The spin cycle on the washing machine does not make earth worms dizzy. It will however make cats dizzy and cats throw up twice their body weight when dizzy.

WASHINGTON POST'S STYLE INVITATIONAL:

The Washington Post's Style Invitational asked readers to take any word from the dictionary, alter it by adding, subtracting, or changing one letter, and supply a new definition.

Recent winners:

Intaxication: Euphoria at getting a tax refund, which lasts until you realize it was your money to start with.

Reintarnation: Coming back to life as a hillbilly.



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Foreplay: Any misrepresentation about yourself for the purpose of getting laid.

Giraffiti: Vandalism spray-painted very, very high.

Sarcasm: The gulf between the author of sarcastic wit and the person who doesn't get it.

Inoculate: To take coffee intravenously when you are running late.

Hipatitis: Terminal coolness.

Osteoporosis: A degenerate disease.

Karmageddon: It's like, when everybody is sending off all these really bad vibes, right? And then, like, the Earth explodes and it's like, a serious bummer.

Glibido: All talk and no action.


Doppler effect: The tendency of stupid ideas to seem smarter when they come at you rapidly.

Ignoramus: A person who's both stupid and an asshole.

HR DIRECTOR:

One day while walking down the street a highly successful HR Director was tragically hit by a bus and she died, Her soul arrived up in heaven where she was met at the Pearly Gates by St. Peter himself.

Welcome to Heaven," said St. Peter. "Before you get settled in though, it seems we have a problem. You see, strangely enough, we've never once had a Human Resources Director make it this far and we're not really sure what to do with you." "No problem, just let me in" said the woman. "Well, I'd like to, but I have higher orders. What we're going to do is let you have a day in Hell and a day in Heaven and then you can choose whichever one you want to spend an eternity in." "Actually, I think I've made up my mind, I prefer to stay in Heaven," said the woman. "Sorry, we have rules..." And with that St. Peter put the executive in an elevator and it went down-down-down to hell. The doors opened and she found herself stepping out onto the putting green of a beautiful golf course. In the distance was a country club and standing in front of her were all her friends -- fellow executives that she had worked with and they were all dressed in evening gowns and cheering for her. They ran up and kissed her on both cheeks and they talked about old times. They played an excellent round of golf and at night went to the country club where she enjoyed an excellent steak and lobster dinner. She met the Devil who was actually a really nice guy (kind of cute) and she had a great time telling jokes and dancing. She was having such a good time that before she knew it, it was time to leave. Everybody shook her hand and waved good-bye as she got on the elevator. The



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elevator went up-up-up and opened back up at the Pearly Gates and found St. Peter waiting for her.

"Now it's time to spend a day in heaven," he said. So she spent the next 24 hours lounging around on clouds and playing the harp and singing. She had a great time and before she knew it her 24 hours were up and St. Peter came and got her. "So, you've spent a day in hell and you've spent a day in heaven. Now you must choose your eternity," he said. The woman paused for a second and then replied, "Well, I never thought I'd say this, I mean, Heaven has been really great and all, but I think I had a better time in Hell." So St. Peter escorted her to the elevator and again she went down-down-down back to Hell. When the doors of the elevator opened she found herself standing in a desolate wasteland covered in garbage and filth. She saw her friends were dressed in rags and were picking up the garbage and putting it in sacks. The Devil came up to her and put his arm around her. "I don't understand," stammered the woman, "yesterday I was here and there was a golf course and a country club and we ate lobster and we danced and had a great time. Now all there is...is a wasteland of garbage and all my friends look miserable." The Devil looked at her and smiled. "Yesterday we were recruiting you, today you're staff..."

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DEAR GOD: FROM THE DOG!

Dear God: Why do humans smell the flowers, but seldom, if ever, smell one another?

Dear God: When we get to heaven, can we sit on your couch? Or is it still the same old story?

Dear God: Why are there cars named after the jaguar, the cougar, the mustang, the colt, the stingray, and the rabbit, but not ONE named for a dog? How often do you see a cougar riding around? We do love a nice ride! Would it be so hard to rename the "Chrysler Eagle" the "Chrysler Beagle"?

Dear God: If a dog barks his head off in the forest and no human hears him, is he still a bad dog?

Dear God: We dogs can understand human verbal instructions, hand signals, whistles, horns, clickers, beepers, scent ID's, electromagnetic energy fields, and Frisbee flight paths. What do humans understand?

Dear God: More meatballs, less spaghetti, please.

Dear God: Are there mailmen in Heaven? If there are, will I have to apologize?

Dear God: Let me give you a list of just some of the things I must remember to be a good dog.

1. I will not eat the cats' food before they eat it or after they throw it up.
2. I will not roll on dead seagulls, fish, crabs, etc., just because I like the way they smell.
3. I will not munch on "leftovers" in the kitty litter box, although they are tasty.
4. The diaper pail is not a cookie jar.
5. The sofa is not a "face towel". Neither are Mom and Dad's laps.
6. The garbage collector is not stealing our stuff.
7. My head does not belong in the refrigerator.
8. I will not bite the officer's hand when he reaches in for Mom's driver's license and registration.
9. I will not play tug-of-war with Dad's underwear when he's on the toilet.

10. Sticking my nose into someone's crotch is an unacceptable way of saying "hello".
11. I don't need to suddenly stand straight up when I'm under the coffee table.
12. I must shake the rainwater out of my fur before entering the house - not after.
13. I will not throw up in the car.
14. I will not come in from outside and immediately drag my butt.
15. I will not sit in the middle of the living room and lick my crotch when we have company.
16. The cat is not a "squeaky toy" so when I play with him and he makes that noise, it's usually not a good thing. And, finally, My last question . . .

Dear God: When I get to Heaven may I have my testicles back?

AN INTERESTING OBSERVATION ABOUT PEOPLE AND SPORTS!

1. The sport of choice for the urban poor is BASKETBALL.
2. The sport of choice for maintenance level employees is BOWLING
3. The sport of choice for front-line workers is FOOTBALL.



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4. The sport of choice for supervisors is BASEBALL.
5. The sport of choice for middle management is TENNIS and....
6. The sport of choice for corporate executives and officers is GOLF.

THE AMAZING CONCLUSION:

The higher you go in the corporate structure, the smaller your balls become.

Snow Story

A Russian couple are walking when it begins to precipitate. The man, Rudolph tells his wife it is raining but she insists that it is snowing. Again and again she says that it is snowing but again and again he says that it is raining. Once more she says to him, Rudolph, it definitely is snowing to which he replies, "Rudolph the red knows rain dear".

THE URBAN LEGENDS TOP 25

1. Monster Crocodile Found in New Orleans
2. Photos: Marzipan Babies
3. Bill Gates Is Sharing His Fortune!
4. The Urban Legends Slide Show
5. Photo: World's Highest Bridge
6. 'Hurricane Rules' by George Carlin
7. Photos: Mule vs. Mountain Lion
8. Swiffer WetJet Is Toxic to Pets
9. Snake Swallows Man!
10. Ciara's Sex-Change Operation
11. Photo: Water Bridge in Germany
12. The Giant Grizzly Bear
13. Photos of Hurricane Katrina's Approach
14. Attack of the Camel Spiders!
15. 'Eye of God' in Outer Space
16. 'Bill Sux' Etched on Pentium Chip
17. Missing Child: Penny Brown
18. Phenylpropanolamine Recall
19. World's Tallest Woman
20. 'Do Not Call' List for Cell Phone Users

21. Do They Eat Babies in China?
22. Dogs, Puppies, Cats Used as Shark Bait
23. Phony Freebie: Old Navy Gift Cards
24. Crocodile Eats Golfer
25. Strange Photo of Animal/Human Hybrid

HOLIDAY EATING TIPS:

1. Avoid carrot sticks. Anyone who puts carrots on a holiday buffet table knows nothing of the Christmas spirit. In fact, if you see carrots, leave immediately. Go next door, where they're serving rum balls.

2. Drink as much eggnog as you can. And quickly. Like fine single-malt scotch, it's rare. In fact, it's even rarer than single-malt scotch. You can't find it any other time of year but now. So drink up! Who cares that it has 10,000 calories in every sip? It's not as if you're going to turn into an "eggnog-aholic" or something. It's a treat. Enjoy it!!!! Have one for me. Have two. It's later than you think. It's Christmas!

3. If something comes with gravy, use it. That's the whole point of gravy. Gravy does not stand alone. Pour it on. Make a volcano out of your mashed potatoes. Fill it with gravy. Eat the volcano. Repeat.

4. As for mashed potatoes, always ask if they're made with skim milk or whole milk. If it's skim, pass. Why bother? It's like buying a sports car with an automatic transmission.

5. Do not have a snack before going to a party in an effort to control your eating. The whole point of going to a Christmas party is to eat other people's food for free. Lots of it. Hello?

6. Under no circumstances should you exercise between now and New Year's. You can do that in January when you have nothing else to do. This is the time for long

nap, which you'll need after circling the buffet table while carrying a 10-pound plate of food and that vat of eggnog.

7. If you come across something really good at a buffet table, like frosted Christmas cookies in the shape and size of Santa, position yourself near them and don't budge. Have as many as you can before becoming the center of attention. They're like a beautiful pair of shoes. If you leave them behind, you're never going to see them again.

8. Same for pies. Apple. Pumpkin. Mincemeat. Have a slice of each. Or, if you don't like mincemeat, have two apples and one pumpkin. Always have three. When else do you get to have more than one dessert? Labor Day?

9. Did someone mention fruitcake? Granted, it's loaded with the mandatory celebratory calories, but avoid it at all cost. I mean, have some standards.

10. One final tip: If you don't feel terrible when you leave the party or get up from the table, you haven't been paying attention. Reread tips: start over, but hurry, January is just around the corner.

The Hotel is Full

Jewish lady named Mrs. Rosenberg many years ago was stranded late one night at a fashionable resort - one that did not admit Jews. The desk clerk looked down at his book and said, "Sorry, no room. The hotel is full." The Jewish lady said, "But your sign says that you have vacancies." The desk clerk stammered and then said curtly, "You know that we do not admit Jews. Now if you will try the other side of town..." Mrs. Rosenberg stiffened noticeably and said, "I'll have you know I converted to your religion." The desk clerk said, "Oh, yeah, let me give you a little test. How was Jesus born?" Mrs. Rosenberg replied, "He was born to a virgin named Mary in a little town called Bethlehem." "Very good," replied the hotel clerk. "Tell me more." Mrs. Rosenberg replied, "He was born in a manger." "That's right," said the hotel clerk. "And why was he born in a manger?" Mrs. Rosenberg said loudly, "Because a jerk like you in the hotel wouldn't give a Jewish lady a room for the night!"

The Week Before Christmas

was the week before Christmas and all through the school Not a pupil was silent, no matter what rule. The children were busy with paper and paste; The mess that they made with it couldn't be



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facéd. The teacher half frantic and almost in tears, Had just settled down to work with her dears, When out in the hall there arose such a clatter up sprang the kids to see what was the matter! Away to the door they all flew like a flash; The one who was leading went down with a crash. Then what to their wondering eyes did appear But a green Christmas tree! (To decorate I fear!) When the teacher saw this, she almost grew sick. She knew in a moment it must be (the janator) Old Nick! She ran to the door (all her efforts were vain) But she shouted, and stamped, and she called them by name; "Now Tommy! Now Sandy, Now Judy and Harry! Stop Billy! Stop Robert! Stop Donny and Sherry! Now get to your places get away from the hall Now get away! Get away! Get away all! As leaves that before the wild hurricane fly The pupils, pell mell, started scurrying by. They ran to the blackboard and skipped down the aisle; Their faces were shining and each had a smile. First came a basket of popcorn to string -Then came the Christmas tree (menacing thing). As the tree was brought in there arose a great shout; The pupils were merrily romping about. The state they were in could lead to a riot; The teacher was sure, if allowed, they would try it. Her nerves how they jangled! Her temples were throbbing! The rush of her breath sounded almost like sobbing! The lines of her face were as fixed as a mask; It was plain that she didn't feel up to her task. The look in

her eye would have tamed a wild steer, But the children ignored it; they did every year. A tear from her eye and a shake of her head Soon led me to think that she wished she were dead. She spoke not a word but went straight to her work, Strung all the popcorn which broke with a jerk. But at last it was finished and placed on the tree; Then came the bell and the children were free! Their shrill little voices soon faded away And peace was restored at the end of the day. As she looked at the Christmas tree glistening and tall, She smiled as she whispered, Merry Christmas to all!

Is There A Santa

1. Santa's Workload

There are two billion children in the world, but since Santa doesn't appear to handle the Muslim, Hindu, Jewish, and Budist children, that reduces his workload to 15% of the total, or 300 million. At an average rate of 3.5 children per household, that's 85.7 million homes. Santa has 31 hours of Christmas to work with, thanks to the different times zones and the rotation of the Earth, assuming he travels East to West. This works out to 767.9 visits per second. So for each household with good children, Santa has about 1/1,000th of a second to park, hop out of the sleigh, jump down the

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chimney, fill the stockings, distribute the presents, eat whatever snacks have been left, get back up the chimney, into the sleigh and move on to the next house."

2. The Time/Distance Factor

Assuming that these 91.8 million stops are evenly distributed around the Earth, we're talking about .78 miles per household, a total trip of 75.5 million miles.

3. Calculation of Estimated Speed

This means that Santa's sleigh is moving at 650 miles per second, or 3,000 times the speed of sound.

4. Santa's Payload

Assuming that each child gets nothing more than a medium-size Lego set (about two pounds), the sleigh is carrying 321,300 tons, not counting Santa, who is invariably described as "heavy." On land, normal reindeer could pull no more than 300 pounds, and even granting that flying reindeer could pull 10 times the normal amount, Santa's going to need 214,200 reindeer to pull his sleigh. This increases the payload to 353,430 tons, or four times the weight of the "Queen Elizabeth."

Conclusion:

A craft of 353,000 tons, traveling at 650 miles per second, creates enormous air resistance. This will heat up Mr. Claus and his sleigh like a spacecraft reentering Earth's atmosphere.

Translation:

If there is a Santa, he's toast.

Athiest Holiday

An atheist complained to a Christian friend, "You Christians have your special holidays, such as Christmas and Easter. Jews celebrate their national holidays, such as Passover and Yom Kippur. But we atheists have no recognized national holidays. It's unfair discrimination." His friend replied, "Why don't you celebrate April first?"

Santa's A Woman

think Santa Claus is a woman....I hate to be the one to defy a sacred myth, but I believe he's a she. Think about it. Christmas is a big, organized, warm, fuzzy, nurturing social deal, and I have a tough time believing a guy could possibly pull it all off! For starters, the vast majority of men don't even think about selecting gifts until Christmas Eve. Once at the mall, they always seem surprised to find



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only Ronco products, socket wrench sets, and mood rings left on the shelves. On this count alone, I'm convinced Santa is a woman. Surely, if he were a man, everyone in the universe would wake up Christmas morning to find a rotating musical Chia Pet under the tree, still in the bag. Another problem for a he-Santa would be getting there. First of all, there would be no reindeer because they would all be dead, gutted and strapped to the rear bumper of the sleigh amid wide-eyed, desperate claims that buck season had been extended. Blitzen's rack would already be on the way to the taxidermist. Even if the male Santa DID have reindeer, he'd still have transportation problems because he would inevitably get lost up there in the snow and clouds and then refuse to stop and ask for directions.

Other reasons why Santa can't possibly be a man:

- Men can't pack a bag.
- Men would rather be dead than caught wearing red velvet.
- Men don't answer their mail.
- Men would refuse to allow their physique to be described even in jest as anything remotely resembling a "bowlful of jelly."
- Men aren't interested in stockings unless somebody's wearing them.
- Having to do the Ho Ho Ho thing would seriously inhibit their ability to pick up women.
- Finally, being responsible for Christmas would require a commitment.

Desperate Measures

Little Johnny went to his mother demanding a new bicycle. His mother decided that he should take a look at himself and the way he acts. She said, "Well Johnny, it isn't Christmas and we don't have the money to just go out and buy you anything you want. So why don't you write a letter to Jesus and pray for one instead." After his temper tantrum his mother sent him to his room. He finally sat down to write a letter to Jesus.

Dear Jesus,

I've been a good boy this year and would appreciate a new bicycle.

Your Friend,

Little Johnny

Now Little Johnny knew that Jesus really knew what kind of boy he was (Brat). So, he ripped up the letter and decided to give it

another try.

Dear Jesus,

I've been an OK boy this year and I want a new bicycle.

Yours Truly,

Little Johnny

Well, Little Johnny knew this wasn't totally honest so he tore it up and tried again.

Dear Jesus,

I've thought about being a good boy this year and can I have a new bicycle?

Signed,

Little Johnny

Well, Little Johnny looked deep down in his heart, which by the way was what his mother was really wanting. He crumpled up the letter and threw it in the trash can and went running outside. He aimlessly wandered about; depressed because of the way he treated his parents and really considering his actions. He finally found himself in front of a Catholic Church. Little Johnny went inside and knelt down, looking around not knowing what he should really do. Little Johnny finally got up and began to walk out the door and was looking at all the statues. All of a sudden he grabbed a small one and ran out the door. He went home hid it under his bed and wrote this letter.

Jesus,

I've broken most of the Ten Commandments; shot spit wads in school, tore up my sister's Barbie doll and lots more. I'm desperate. I've got your mama. If you ever want to see her again, give me a bike.

Signed,

You know who

Rudolf to Blitzen

According to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, while both male and female reindeer grow antlers in the summer each year (the only members of the deer family, Cervidae, to have females do so). Male reindeer drop their antlers at the beginning of winter, usually late November to mid December. Female reindeer, however, retain their antlers till after they give birth in the spring. Therefore, according to every historical rendition depicting Santa's reindeer, every single one of them, from Rudolf to Blitzen.... had to be a female. We should've known this when when they were able to find their way.

The Lost Purse

A lady lost her handbag in the bustle of Christmas shopping. It was

found by an honest little boy and returned to her. Looking in her purse, she commented, "Hmmm.... That's funny. When I lost my bag there was a \$20 bill in it. Now there are twenty \$1 bills." The boy quickly replied, "That's right, lady. The last time I found a lady's purse, she didn't have any change for a reward."

Star in the East

A woman takes her 16-year-old daughter to the doctor. The doctor says, "Okay, Mrs. Jones, what's the problem?" The mother says, "It's my daughter, Debbie. She keeps getting these cravings, she's putting on weight, and is sick most mornings." The doctor gives Debbie a good examination, then turns to the mother and says, "Well, I don't know how to tell you this, but your Debbie is pregnant - about 4 months, would be my guess." The mother says, "Pregnant?! She can't be, she has never ever been left alone with a man! Have you, Debbie?" Debbie says, "No mother! I've never even kissed a man!" The doctor walked over to the window and just stares out it. About five minutes pass and finally the mother says, "Is there something wrong out there doctor?" The doctor replies, "No, not really, it's just that the last time anything like this happened, a star appeared in the east and three wise men came over the hill. I'll be darned if I'm going to miss it this time!"

The Gift

Thanks for the electric guitar you gave me for Christmas," little Chris Cody said to his uncle the first time he saw him after the holidays. "It's the best present I ever got." "That's great," said his uncle. "Do you know how to play it?" "Oh, I don't play it," the little fellow said. "My mom gives me a dollar a day not to play it during the day and my dad gives me five dollars a week not to play it at night.

The Perfect Woman

Once upon a time, a perfect man and a perfect woman met. After a perfect courtship, they had a perfect wedding. Their life was, of course "perfect." One snowy, stormy Christmas Eve, this perfect couple was driving their perfect car (a SUV) along a winding road, when they noticed someone at the side of the road in distress. Being the perfect couple they stopped to help. There stood Santa Claus with a huge bundle of toys. Not wanting to disappoint any children on the eve of Christmas, the perfect couple loaded Santa and his toys into their vehicle. Soon they were driving along delivering the toys. Unfortunately, the driving conditions deteriorated and the perfect couple and Santa Claus had an accident. Only one of them survived the accident.

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