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INSIDE: STEELERS WISH LIST





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Merry Christmas!

Nightwire and Staff Would Like to Wish Everyone a Very Merry Christmas and Happy Holiday Season!! This is a reprint from several years ago. We wanted to share it again because it has such heartfelt meaning and hopefully this holiday season we will take a moment to think about our military. We will never forget those that have served or are currently serving our country. To All Our Military, Service Men, Woman and Their Families... From the Bottom of our Hearts.. "We Thank You for Your Service!!"

Twas The Night Before Christmas,
He Lived All Alone,
In A One Bedroom House
Made Of Plaster And Stone.
I Had Come Down The Chimney
With Presents To Give,
And To See Just Who
In This Home Did Live.
I Looked All About,
A Strange Sight I Did See,
No Tinsel, No Presents,
Not Even A Tree.
No Stocking By Mantle,
Just Boots Filled With Sand,
On The Wall Hung Pictures
Of Far Distant Lands.
With Medals And Badges,
Awards Of All Kinds,
A Sober Thought
Came Through My Mind.
For This House Was Different,
It Was Dark And Dreary,
I Found The Home Of A Soldier,
Once I Could See Clearly.
The Soldier Lay Sleeping,
Silent, Alone,
Curled Up On The Floor
In This One Bedroom Home.
The Face Was So Gentle,
The Room In Such Disorder,
Not How I Pictured
A United States Soldier.
Was This The Hero
Of Whom I'd Just Read?
Curled Up On A Poncho,
The Floor For A Bed?
I Realized The Families
That I Saw This Night,
Owed Their Lives To These Soldiers
Who Were Willing To Fight.
Soon Round The World,
The Children Would Play,

And Grownups Would Celebrate
A Bright Christmas Day.
They All Enjoyed Freedom
Each Month Of The Year,
Because Of The Soldiers,
Like The One Lying Here.
I Couldn't Help Wonder
How Many Lay Alone,
On A Cold Christmas Eve
In A Land Far From Home.
The Very Thought
Brought A Tear To My Eye,
I Dropped To My Knees
And Started To Cry.
The Soldier Awakened
And I Heard A Rough Voice,
"Santa Don't Cry,
This Life Is My Choice;
I Fight For Freedom,
I Don't Ask For More,
My Life Is My God,
My Country, My Corps."
The Soldier Rolled Over
And Drifted To Sleep,
I Couldn't Control It,
I Continued To Weep.
I Kept Watch For Hours,
So Silent And Still
And We Both Shivered
From The Cold Night's Chill.
I Didn't Want To Leave
On That Cold, Dark, Night,
This Guardian Of Honor
So Willing To Fight.
Then The Soldier Rolled Over,
With A Voice Soft And Pure,
Whispered, "Carry On Santa,
It's Christmas Day, All Is Secure."
One Look At My Watch,
And I Knew He Was Right.
"Merry Christmas My Friend,
And To All A Good Night."

STEELERS



By: Stacy Kauffman Sports Feature Writer for Nightwire; Photos Karl Roser, Pittsburgh Steelers Photographer

The Steelers Wish List...

Until there is continuity along the line, chemistry will never exist and without chemistry, holes will be exploited by opposing defenses and Roethlisberger will be one with the ground as he has been 36 times so far this season.

Dear Santa,

Nearly three quarters of the way through the season, Pittsburgh has gone from naughty to nice. They are on a three game win streak, have won five of their last seven games and look to be headed in the right direction after going in the wrong direction for most of the season. To keep trending upward, there are a few areas they need to shore up to finish strong and stay in the playoff hunt. With that said, I'd like to submit to you a wish list on their behalf, loaded with goodies to bring smiles to the sidelines and joy to the fans.

Offensive Line Continuity. There's not a game that goes by without an offensive lineman writhing in pain on the turf. The decimation of the big guys up front has created as inconsistent a pocket as any in the league. Tackles are playing guard positions, guards are playing tackle positions. Used to playing on the right side of the line? Sorry we need you on the left side. Until there is continuity along the line, chemistry will never exist and without chemistry, holes will be exploited by opposing defenses and Roethlisberger will be one with the ground as he has been 36 times so far this season. At least three times a game, someone is picking Ben up off the field after a sack. When you add in the amount of hits he takes when he isn't

sacked, the injury risk to the face of the franchise is sky high. The offensive line is where you win or lose the game. I will assert this to infinity and beyond.

A Jacked Running Game. To this point, rushers have put the ball in the end zone just four times. ALL SEASON. Those four scores came courtesy of just one player, the rookie from Michigan State, Le'Veon Bell. Ravaged by injuries through camp and the pre-season, Bell played his first NFL game week four, so as he gets acclimated to the pro level I expect him to be more productive. But right now, the team is averaging less than 80 rushing yards a game. The ability to run, or at least the threat of a leg churner hammering through the defense, keeps opposing coordinators honest. Having a ground game gives the offense another dimension and as the weather gets colder, windier and more inclement overall, it's critical to be able to move the chains by running the ball.

More Turnovers Forced. Negative turnover ratio has been haunting the Steelers for the past two seasons and this year is no different. As it stands, after week twelve the turnover ratio is negative four, and the team is working its way back to the black with three fumble recoveries and an interception returned for a touchdown versus the Browns. This was the first



defensive touchdown for the Steelers in 16 regular season games. An entire season worth of football has gone by without the defense contributing on the scoreboard. Hopefully this is a sign they have turned the corner on the turnover battle, because as we all know, when you win it you typically put the team in a position to win the game.

A Solid Punter. Big Ben has a mean pooch punt, but the fact that the Steelers have to turn to him to pin an opponent deep is ridiculous. Field position plays a monstrous role in both offensive and defensive efficiency. If the defense can get the opponent off the field quickly while on their own side of the fifty yard line, the offense gets a short field. Much easier to get three first downs to score than it is eight. Obviously. When your punter is shanking left and right, your opponent gets the short field and bingo bango. The Zoltan Mesko experiment went horribly wrong. Unfortunately none of the Pirates' zoltan mojo came with the kicker who was released after being unable to nail kicks inside the 20. He had three out of 34 punts downed deep. By contrast, his replacement Matt McBriar has matched that in just 13 attempts. Will McBriar be the answer moving forward? Maybe. But if not, the Steelers would love to have a reliable, accurate option.

Different Throwback Uniforms. I get the intent to honor teams of the past. But use some fashion-

able discretion, will ya? The 1934 throwbacks worn the past two seasons, which have been given the "bumble bee" moniker, are reminiscent of a state penitentiary uniform. Time to bury those threads for good and bring back the 1960 uniforms they wore twice during the 75th anniversary season. Simple and timeless. And if you want a bit of a crazier look, why not the 1967 "Batman" kit designed to pay homage to downtown Pittsburgh's golden triangle? A gold triangular shape draped the shoulders of a black jersey with white numbers. Hines Ward made a cameo appearance in the Batman movie filmed here in Pittsburgh and at Heinz Field, so it sounds good to me! Anything but what they are wearing now. They sting.

Even though they are the men of steel, coal isn't something they would look forward to getting in their stockings this year. Give the boys of black and gold some of the above and Steeler Nation will rejoice in more wins and the nightmarish start to the season will be long forgotten.

Stacy Kauffman, Sports Feature Writer for Nightwire Magazine and Weekend Talk Show Host on 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

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The holiday season can be a bit of a mixed blessing – you love binge-watching Christmas movies and decking the halls just as much as anyone, but picking up presents for your family and friends can be a fairly daunting task. How are you supposed to enjoy all that hot buttered rum and cheddar-flavored popcorn with a gift-list hanging over your head?

Don't worry – Nordstrom has you covered. We've tackled your holiday gift list and pulled together presents that fit the bill for every fashion fanatic, guy's guy, expert hostess, and charity-lover you know. Still not enough? We've also hunted down gifts that are perfect for the person who has everything – they've never seen a present like these before. Now take a deep breath, grab a sip of hot chocolate, and relax.



Every guy's secret wish: become James Bond. He may not be a secret agent, but with fancy flash-drive enabled cuff links he'll certainly feel pretty stealthy when he gets gussied up for a holiday soiree. Ravi Ratan 4GB Flash Drive Cuff Links, \$200

Even little girls benefit from a bit of sparkle, so get her started on the right foot – literally – with TOMS in shimmery red, silver, and gold. TOMS Glitters-Tiny Mary Jane Flat (Baby, Walker, and Toddler, \$37.95



Help her get dressed up for holiday parties without breaking the bank – these sets of glam crystal necklaces and earrings are under sixty dollars and look super luxe. Lydell NYC Boxed Frontal Collar Necklace and Stud Earrings Set, \$58; Boxed Spike Necklace and Stud Earrings Set, \$58



Your music sounds good and feels good when you pick up a pair of LSTN headphones from the 4U: Bright Lites_Gift City Pop-In installation in select Nordstrom stores and at nordstrom.com. That's because for each pair of headphones sold, LSTN works with the Starkey Hearing Foundation to help restore hearing to a person in need. LSTN Troubadors Zebrawood Headphones, \$150



"Home-brewed beer" and "mustaches" are both terms that probably pique his interest, so give him the best of both worlds with a make-your-own beer kit and a set of mustachioed pilsner glasses to drink from once the recipe is complete. Brooklyn Brew Shop Bruxelles Blonde One Gallon Beer Making Kit, \$40; Cathy's Concepts Mustache Pilsner Glasses Set, \$44

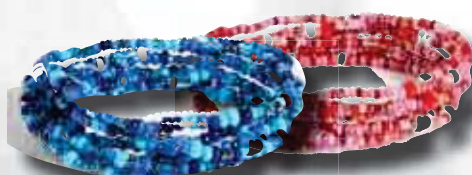
Planning to host a few guests yourself? Send out-of-towners on their way with a parting gift that will help them remember their trip; we think a cutting board emblazoned with your home state will do quite nicely. Etsy and Nordstrom present: Richwood Creations Large Cutting Board, \$48





Tour The Studio Of Dolce Vita

Packages as described start at \$5,900 for two people, for three nights in New York at the Bowery Hotel, February 4-6. For more information or to purchase a package, call 1.877.283.4050 beginning at 7:30am PDT on November 11. Hurry, they'll be open to everyone starting November 18. All packages are limited in availability and may sell out. Individual package prices include transportation to and from all package-related activities; unless otherwise specified, they do not include flight arrangements, Nordstrom store merchandise or dining expenses. Package events cannot be purchased separately; packages must be purchased in their entirety.



Spread the love around the world without sacrificing style. Me to We's super on-trend beaded bracelets are handmade by self-employed Kenyan artisans, and half of Me to We's net profits go directly to Free The Children, an international charity dedicated to helping children achieve their full potential. Me to We Artisans Poa Beaded Wrap Bracelet, \$99.99

He may not wear his heart on his sleeve, but he can certainly wear his civic pride on his socks. Pick up a pair that shows him you cheer for the home team too. Strideline City Socks, \$14



The lady who craves bling all week long doesn't save bedazzled sweaters for the weekends. Set her up with a sparkly crewneck she can don under a blazer on a weekday and show off with a flirty skirt on Saturday night.

A Diptyque candle is the perfect way to give your host something a little luxurious without being too over-the-top, and their Orange Chai fragrance is ideal for the holidays. Diptyque Orange Chai Candle, \$32-\$68.



LUSH - I Want Candy, \$14.95

She always stocks the office candy dish, so treat her to some sweets without the guilt! Candy Mountain bubble bar creates mounds of fluffy, fragrant sugar-sweet bubbles, and when in a rush, Rock Star soap provides the same sweet smell (and suds!) for the shower.



LUSH - FUN Tin, \$29.95

Add a little FUN this holiday with a 4-in-1 multipurpose soap, moldable toy, bubble bath and shampoo! We've included six colors of FUN and cookie cutters in one collectible tin for hours of endless enjoyment. It's great for kids of all ages! **2.5 percent of sales from this gift will be donated to our FUNd, which supports charities in Fukushima, Japan that create safe places for children to play.



LUSH - Dirty gift set, \$44.95

Our minty-fresh Dirty scent is perfect for guys looking for an invigorating blast of spearmint and menthol. This gift has him covered from tooth-to-toe with refreshing toothy tabs, shower gel and deodorizing body spray.

LUSH - Winter Garden gift set, \$37.95

This bauble-shaped gift is an elegant addition to anyone's Christmas tree, but is an especially decadent option for your favorite female. Along with softening Snowcake soap and solid hand serum, this gift also contains our most luxurious rose-scented shower gel and body conditioner.



LUSH - Fab Christmas, \$139.95

A fabulous hatbox filled with pampering products to condition, polish and moisturize your special someone into a state of perfection. Sexy jasmine and rose scents abound in this gift and the sparkly pink and gold wrap is simply diva-licious!

ALL LUSH Products AVAILABLE AT SELECT MACY'S OR ONLINE AT WWW.LUSHUSA.COM

Early Holiday Gift Idea, the Telescoping Magnetic Flashlight New flashlight makes a great holiday gift idea. The light has is extendable and has magnetic ends that can help illuminate hard to reach areas. Lost your keys behind the couch? Need to look under your sink or into the back of kitchen cabinet, but it's too dark to see what's really back there? Impeltronics' LED Telescoping Magnetic Flashlight is up for the job. With two magnetic ends on each side of the flashlight, the tool makes picking up magnetic items a breeze. Since the flashlight can also stretch to nearly two feet, just like a telescope, it is also convenient for lighting up places where a normal flashlight might not be able to venture. With a flexible LED 360- degree directional rotation, the tool stays bright longer, to allow for optimal visibility. Offered in black, silver, red or blue, the flashlight is made from a company that has knowledgeable industry experience. Impeltronics, a supplier of high lumen flashlights for police, military, hunting, camping, tactical use, recreation and boating, designs products ready to survive and thrive under extreme conditions. Lighting the way for your next adventure or household project, Impeltronics' LED Telescoping Magnetic Flashlight provides a bright solution for functionality. LED flashlights hold many benefits, including a longer battery life. They are also brighter than standard bulbs, bringing better durability and reliability to every project and every trip. Constructed from aluminum, the flashlight also has a stainless steel clip, as well as batteries to get the device working on first use. Perfect for keeping in a tool kit or putting in the back of a car or truck, the flashlight is also energy efficient and easily moved from one place to another. For more information about Impeltronics' LED Telescoping Magnetic Flashlight, visit www.impeltronics.com.



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THE BEER MARKET

by: Chris Wise

Ever feel disappointed with a bar's beer selection—even those that proclaim themselves beer houses? Ever find yourself needing a place to grab a quick brew with friends before a Steelers or Pirates game? Ever want to see live music in an intimate yet spacious venue with nearly limitless food offerings with great beer to match?

A bar that combines all these qualities sounds too good to be true, but The Beer Market offers all this, and so much more. In 2011, The Beer Market was launched in the Greater Chicago by a group of restaurateurs and local businessmen, and was met with immediate success. So much success in fact, that there are now three Chicago locations, two in Cleveland, and now one in Pittsburgh, opened in May of 2013. The Beer Market has been so successful because unlike some other beer houses with a limited selection, The Beer Market offers over 550 choices of beer. With around 50 continually rotating taps on at all times, and 500 bottled offerings, The Beer Market's beer list is truly impressive. In addition to rotating the taps constantly, The Beer Market has a seasonal fridge which serves guests beers based on the most current offerings. From Summer Shandy's to Winter Stouts and Pumpkin beers in the fall, The Beer Market aims to always have the right beer to match the season outside. The Beer Market also has a wine list available for guests to satisfy more than simply beer drinkers. In addition to the nearly limitless choices of beer, guests also have a nearly limitless amount of food options.

The professionals at The Beer Market decided to focus on providing their customers great beer, and left the great food portion to other professionals. The Beer Market operates on a BYOF basis—allowing patrons to bring in food from other establishments, or order-in from local restaurants—which allows guests to bring in whatever food they chose to pair with their brews. Since The Beer Market in Pittsburgh is conveniently located at 110 Federal Street, directly across the street from PNC Park and well within walking distance from Heinz Field. Its location also boasts a number of food options right around the corner—including pizza, wings, sandwiches, and burgers.

Manager Tim Conti, who was instrumental in pushing for a location in Pittsburgh and a lifelong Steelers fan, explained that neighboring establishments have been very supportive. Giovanni's Pizza, Jimmy John's sandwich shop, BZ's Bar and Grill, and Mullen's Bar Grill have supplied Beer Market customers with a take-out menu offering, which has been very popular so far. And the choices don't stop there; Atria's Restaurant and Tavern at PNC is located across the street, The Warhol Café is around the block, and The Hyde Park Prime Steakhouse is two blocks away. This means whether you want a quick slice of pizza or sandwich to go with your beer you can or you want to sit down for a nice steak dinner, and then grab a few beers with friends afterwards, The Beer Market is perfect option for you.

The Beer Market's spacious location in the Boggs Building allows it to get jam packed with guests at a moment's notice, yet not feel overcrowded. "During the summer, the bar would fill up before Pirates games with excited fans, with everyone impressed by our vast beer selection," said Conti. Conti found that the most popular beers sold during Pirates and Steelers were locally brewed, including Helltown (Mt. Pleasant) and Full Pint (North Versailles), in addition to local classics such as Iron City. The Beer Market's large open-seating area means it's usually easy to find a place for you and all your friends to grab a seat. Also, if you know you want to have a small get together with friends at The Beer Market, they are



more than willing to accommodate by blocking off sections for you and your party.

In addition to great beers and a food menu only limited to the imagination of the guest, The Beer Market offers live music most Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. According to Conti, they try to bring in a variety of acts including cover bands (everything from classic rock to popular 90's tunes), original bands, singer-songwriters and blues bands. The Beer Market Pittsburgh's Facebook page is the best way to keep up to date with their entertainment offerings. (www.facebook.com/TheBeerMarketPGH)

Live entertainment was important to the owners of The Beer Market because two of the major investors have spent most of their lives in the entertainment industry. Steve Burton and Bradford Anderson, actors on the television show General Hospital and the musical act Port Chuck (www.PortChuck.com), found themselves so attracted to the concept of The Beer Market they signed on to invest in the Chicago openings. Burton says "the fact that you can go to a cool neighborhood place like The Beer Market and try different specialty beers with friends and listen to great live music...it was a 'no-brainer' for me to become a partner." Anderson echoes this, saying "The Beer Market is a blend of my favorite things: live music, a variety of menu options, and, well, beer...I'm

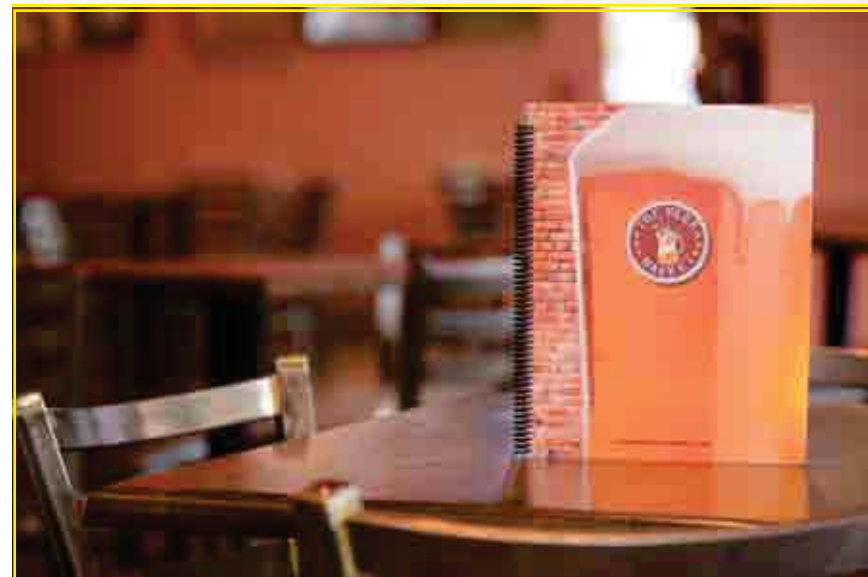


proud to be a part of The Beer Market.” Burton is going to make an appearance at the Pittsburgh location on Saturday December 7th at 11:00am as part of the Nashville Nights event, as part of an acoustic set featuring fellow ex-General Hospital star Scott Reeves and singer-songwriter Emily Reeves.

Guests may think that a bar offering over 550 beers could be intimidating, but The Beer Market is doing their best to educate their customers to find the best beer for them. The Beer Market's servers are all very knowledgeable on their selections, and their menu's provide detailed descriptions about all their beers. In addition to this, The Beer Market offers “Beer Flights” which provide guests a sampling of beers, typically based on region or seasonal variety. You can even do an online database search through their “Beer University” of their menu to come up with your own sampling next visit. And they offer a beer club loyalty program to track which beers you've tried and reward you for the points you accumulate by trying different varieties, including prizes from \$20



gift card to a catered party for you and your friends at The Beer Market with a \$250 complimentary tab. Conti says they also offer a 25% discount on Sundays for Pittsburgh residents, Cornhole and Trivia on Tuesday nights, and a 25% discount for Beer Club mem-



bers on Wednesday. Conti also said The Beer Market group has plans to open a new location in Rochester, NY, next spring, and are beginning to consider opening a second location in Pittsburgh, this time further out of the city. The Beer Market is also going to offer franchising opportunities next year for eager investors, which you can read about on their website.

So if you need to stop in for a few quick beers with friends before a Steeler's or Pirates' game; if you need a relaxing place to listen to live music with a wide variety of food options; or if you need a place to go where you could (almost) never run out of new beers to try, remember The Beer Market is the place for you.

The Beer Market is located in the Boggs Building at 110 Federal Street, Pittsburgh, PA, 15222, and open Monday-Thursday from 3:00pm to Midnight, Friday from 3:00pm to 1:00am, Saturday from noon to 2:00am, Sunday from noon to midnight with extended hours on game days. Phone number: (412)-322-2337 www.The-Beer-Market.com

LAVERY BREWING COMPANY

By: Rick Perrotta

In 2009 Jason and Nicole Lavery, founders of Lavery Brewing Company in Erie, Pennsylvania, were about to move to Ireland. Mrs. Lavery had applied for a job as an occupational therapist there and the couple, along with their three children, being of the adventurous sort, were ready to pack up move across the Atlantic. However, the process was taking longer than expected and finally Mrs. Lavery was told she would not be offered the position.

It turned out to be a serendipitous turn of events. "The same day she didn't get the job was the day I won an award for my smoked porter," recalls Mr. Lavery. "We figured if we could move our whole family to Ireland, we could start our own brewery." Thus, Lavery Brewing Company was formed. In 2010, the Laverys received their brewing license and began brewing "innovative beer in small batches."

It seems the family made the right choice. Lavery Brewing Company's business has doubled, or come close, every year since its inauguration and they enjoy a reputation for creativity and attention to detail uncommon for a brewery so relatively young. Says Mr. Lavery, "I didn't want to be the kind of brewery that made only brown and pale ales." We make those too, but they're not our focus." Looking at their current roster of beers, it is easy to see what he means. Their Belfast Black Ale is the aforementioned smoked porter that got them started, and it is made from four kinds of malts and their own version of a "noble" hop, Northern Brewer. In the summer they make an Imperial French Ale dedicated to Napoleon, made from "wheat, rye, pale, and specialty malts," which is "hopped and dry hopped to double IPA levels." Their flagship beer is the Imperial Red Ale, a red, hoppy masterpiece with a robust ABV of 8.2%. And earlier in 2013, their Liopard Oir farmhouse ale, described on their website as a beer "for the ladies, the crazies and the connoisseurs," received in a huge compliment in the form of a gold medal at the Great American Beer Festival in Colorado.

"We felt like we had arrived," Mr. Lavery says of the gold medal. "It's pretty cool being told you have the best saison in the country, and there were only three gold medals won by all of Pennsylvania."

Success has not gone to the Laverys' heads. Mr. Lavery has a personable, friendly way of speaking, laughs in starts during our conversation, and is as happy to discuss putting his children to bed as he is the brewing process. His affinity for brewing and his excitement concerning the creative aspect of his endeavors comes through in his enthusiastic tone. He also likes to interact with his customers, and tells me about a contest Lavery Brewing is holding, which they have dubbed the Wort Transformation Challenge. People who wanted to participate were able to purchase



a five gallon wort, which is the liquid extracted from the mashing process that also contains the sugar to be fermented into alcohol, and will transform it into their own home brew. Awards will be given in February for the categories of Continental, Belgian, American, and Experimental. Then they're going to start all over again with another contest! The Wort Transformation Challenge is just one example of the great things going on in the world of American craft brewing right now as home brewers, young and old alike, have found an audience for their fresh ideas and intrepid spirit. We are all reaping the rewards.

The Laverys also opened their own pub in September of 2013, so if you're in the Erie area make sure to stop by and see what all the excitement is about.

THE DEVIL BIRD

"Leave it to us to name a Christmas beer after the Devil," says Mr. Lavery with a laugh.

The Devil Bird Holiday Ale is Lavery Brewing Company's Seasonal winter beer. It is a handcrafted Imperial Porter, weighing in at a hefty 8.5% ABV, it is aged in Makers Mark barrels. Hopped with northern brewer hops and fermented with their house ale yeast. It's thick, boozy, pitch-black testament to oak aging. The

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wood compliments the beer and the bourbon adds extra layers of complexity. It is made from five kinds of malts and Columbus and Northern Brewer hops. This ale pours deep brown, almost black, with hints of red. The body is creamy and smooth and the subtle flavors compliment one another superbly. Expect plenty of dark fruit, coffee, bitter chocolate, vanilla and bourbon flavors with the aroma of chocolate and spices, almost reminiscent of eggnog and the taste is just as delicious!

The Devil Bird is named after the Irish tradition of carrying a dead wren through the streets on the day after Christmas (they celebrate a bit differently on that side of the pond) and comes with a great story. During Viking raids on Ireland in the 700s, Irish soldiers attempted to sneak up on their enemies early one wintery morning.

Unfortunately, the soldiers were betrayed a wren who, munching on breadcrumbs while perched atop the head of a drum, woke the Vikings before the attack could take place. The Irish were slaughtered. The carrying of the dead wren through the streets is Ireland's bitter form of retribution.

Mr. Lavery says the Devil Bird can be found at the Carson Street Deli and Giant Eagle six pack shops amongst other places, but Lavery Brewing makes a very limited production just one 310 gallon batch a year, bottled in 750ml bottles with a wax top. Their wax tops change with vintage their 2013 wax seal is red, so if you see this ale make sure to buy it up. It may be your only chance to bring the Devil home for Christmas.

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33 ROTATING CRAFT & IMPORT BEERS ON TAP

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Top 10 Christmas Beers From Vecenie Distributing Company

by: Rick Perrotta

Tony "The Beerman" from Vecenie Distributing wishes everyone a Beery Christmas & Hoppy Holidays!

Tony is (proclaimed mostly by him) the local go-to craft beer guy. His short bio .. national accredited beer judge with the BJCP, conductor of Beer School for the Pgh. Cultural Trust, teacher of a yearly beer seminar at the University of Pittsburgh & past/present member of TRASH, the oldest local home brewing club. Currently he is Specialty Brand Manager for Vecenie Distributing Co.

Here is his "Top Ten Winter Beers List". Unlike David Letterman's, Tony's is in alphabetical order by brewery.

ANDERSON VALLEY - WINTER SOLSTICE



The brewers at Anderson Valley have been plying their trade for decades and their well-honed craftsmanship is on full display with this fabulously balanced winter warmer. The beer pours a translucent copper accompanied by a thick, creamy head and the aroma of molasses and pecans. At the outset, the Winter Solstice tastes strongly of malts, caramel, and nuts. The finish is smooth as silk. A hint of spice really brings this beer to life and makes it a perfect pairing for deserts. At

6.9% ABV, it's strong enough to create that nice warming sensation associated with the style but just light enough that drinkers can enjoy multiple offerings.

BELL'S - DOUBLE CREAM STOUT

Beer lovers need to put this dark, malty stout at the top of their wish list. Many beers are dark, but this one is pitch black, with a coffee colored head that has great retention. This goes for any good beer, but make sure to pour the Double Cream Stout into a pint glass to fully appreciate its cosmetic value. According to the label, which features a stark picture of leafless, winter branches on a white background, this beer is made from 10 different malts and it shows in the complex flavor. Coffee and chocolate abound, but there are also hints of toffee, spices, and raisins. Letting it warm a little will reveal its hoppy character as well. 6.0%ABV.

BELL'S - WINTER WHITE



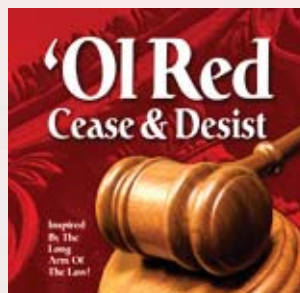
The good people at Bell's have made the list twice! This wheat beer is made from a Belgian yeast strain and, surprisingly, considering its sharp character, no spices. It pours a wonderfully cloudy golden-straw color and carries a thick white head. The Winter White comes with a moderate amount of carbonation which makes it very refreshing and helps bring out the flavors of tart apple and even some subtle banana. 5.0%ABV.

EAST END - SNOW MELT



Most readers are probably already familiar with East End Brewing Company as it resides right here in Pittsburgh and has a well-deserved reputation for brewing quality beers, including the perennial favorite Big Hop IPA. Their seasonal winter beer, the Snow Melt Winter Ale, pours chestnut brown and is topped with a very attractive foamy white head. Taste wise it's a mix of toffee, malts, and piney hops. The body is reminiscent of English porters but with a touch more carbonation. Very smooth and very drinkable. 7.0%ABV.

ERIE BREWING - OL' RED



The label for Ol' Red reads, "Inspired by the long arm of the law," and indeed, this beer packs quite a punch. Pours a deep reddish brown. The taste and smell is a nicely balanced mix of spices, oak, fruits, and caramel. The Ol' Red is very powerful up front, but has a smooth finish that makes it easy to drink even considering the 10.1% ABV.

HEAVY SEAS - WINTER STORM

Pours a dark red color with a thick, creamy head. Carries the aroma of butterscotch and caramel. Like many of the Heavy Seas varieties, the Winter Storm has a very well-balanced, complex flavor featuring hops and malts almost evenly. Do not serve this one too cold, as the flavor really comes to life as it warms, revealing hints of toffee and brown sugar. Heavy Seas uses English malts & hops to Americanize and create this Imperial Extra Special Bitter at 7.5%ABV.

LANCASTER - WINTER WARMER



Pours an immaculate red mahogany, with a tan head featuring tight lacing. Evident is the aroma of plums, raisins, and homemade bread. The smooth feel and moderate carbonation help to balance out the 8.9% ABV. The flavor is a complex blend of English and American hops. You can feel good about this one long after it's gone as well - proceeds help support the wolf sanctuary of Pennsylvania.

STONE BREWING- DOUBLE BASTARD ALE

What can be said? One of the best beers in the world from one of America's finest breweries. The Double Bastard, a stronger, sweeter version of Stone's famed Arrogant Bastard, pours a deep red-amber with a creamy, off-white head. It smells and tastes strongly of caramel and hoppy bitterness. Initially sweet, tasting of burnt sugar, with a warming sensation on the back-end that goes on forever. Incredibly well-balanced with moderate carbonation, and smooth like honey. Complete with their trademark verbose write-up on the back of the bottle, this beer is a pleasure in every regard, from packaging, to pouring, to of course drinking. At 11.2% ABV, feel free to take your time and savor the "liquid glory."



VICTORY BREWING — OLD HORIZONTAL (now in 22oz "beer to share" bottles)

Wow. Talk about a beer that lives up to its name! Drinkers who aren't careful are sure to end up horizontal, thanks to the 11.0% ABV. It tastes of chocolate, caramel, and

honey, and the body is downright chewy. It is so sweet it is a

desert unto itself, and what a desert it is. Old Horizontal is definitely a sipping beer, and is perfect for the cold winter months. Enjoy this now or buy a bottle and let it sit for a year.

WOLAVERS ORGANIC — ALTA GRACIA COFFEE PORTER



Wolaver's is the premier brewer of organic beers, and they bring the same exquisite level of detail to the Alta Gracia Coffee Porter as they do their other styles. Pouring almost black, with a thick, creamy colored head, this beer is a wonderfully complex blend of chocolate, vanilla, caramel, nuts, and of course, coffee, that is not overpowered by any one flavor. Coffee drinkers and beer drinkers alike will enjoy this terrific porter. Alta Gracia is the small Farm Community in the Dominican Republic where the organic, fair trade coffee is grown for this brew. 5.0%ABV.



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GREAT DIVIDE

By: Chris Wise

Brian Dunn grew up in a family with a true passion for food and drink, and has turned this passion into his life's work. He may have taken a detour or two along the way, Dunn seems to have found his path in life when he founded Great Divide Brewing Company in 1994. Before that, Dunn spent five years travelling the world, going to developing countries and helping the inhabitants build farms. During those years, Dunn was able taste and experience beers around the world few have ever heard of, and knew he found his calling in life.

Upon returning stateside, Dunn began home brewing in his basement and working on completing graduate school. After graduating in 1993, Dunn began looking for business opportunities when Denver's craft beer scene began taking shape. Dunn decided to found his own brewery in Denver's Ballpark Neighborhood, and after receiving some financial help from friends and family, as well as a loan from the city of Denver, Great Divide Brewing Company was launched in 1994.

Dunn remained the only full-time employee for a while, having to brew, bottle and sell his beer, but the brewery grew quickly as demand grew for Dunn's unique brew. Having to keep up with the increased demand, Dunn purchased an old dairy processing plant which would greatly increase Great Divide's brewing capacity. This new brewery has allowed Great Divide to continue growing over the past decade; in 2012, Great Divide produced 32,000 barrels of brew, and in 2013 expects that number to hit 38,000. Within a few years, Great Divide expects they will reach their current facility's limit of 60,000 barrels, and have begun discussing plans to expand their production.

Looking in the River North area of Denver, Great Divide is weighing the possibility of becoming the city's largest brewery by dramatically increasing their production; if plans for a new brewery are realized, Great Divide will jump from a capacity of 60,000 barrels to 100,000 barrels immediately, as well as the capacity for up to 250,000 barrels eventually. Great Divide, which is currently home to around 45 full-time employees currently, could employ as many as 29 new employees right away. Plans for the project are still in the very early stages, but for a company with such deep roots in the Denver community, this would only strengthen those roots.

Till the plans for the new brewery are realized, Great Divide encourages patrons to stop by their current taproom to sample their latest brews or take a tour of the brewery, both offered seven days a week. Tours are free to the public, operating on a first-come first-served basis with no reservations (no open-toed shoes, no one under 12 years old and adult supervision for those under 21 as well). At the taproom patrons are encouraged to sample new brews direct from the source or grab a six-pack, growler or even keg of your favorite Great Divide brew. Great Divide encourages their customers to "Join us for a beer...in downtown Denver. We do it because we love it—come see how." Not wanting their customers outside of the Denver area to feel left-out, Great Divide has tried to



make their presence felt around the country by hosting numerous events around the country. (A calendar of events Great Divide hosts can be found under the events section of their webpage.)

Great Divide is so eager to spread the word about their beer not only because they are supremely confident and proud in their product, but also take pride in how they produce this outstanding product. According to Great Divide, they brew operate under one simple philosophy: "Let's do our part for the environment and run our business responsibly." Great Divide is so proud of their environmental practices, they list them online for everyone to see. Not only does Great Divide recycle 100% of the glass, cardboard and grain they use, they use less water than most other breweries in their process, and focus on producing draft beers because of the conservation of materials associated with draft kegs. It's refreshing in a corporate world dominated by profit for a company to admit "Our bottom line isn't our only guiding principle."

Great Divide's continued excellence in brewing has allowed the company to become one of the most highly regarded in America. Their different beers have landed Great Divide an impressive 18 Great American Beer Festival medals and 5 World Beer Cup awards. As a company, Great Divide has been named both "Top Brewer in Colorado" and 12th on their list of "Best Brewers in the World" by Ratebeer.com, and 7th on BeerAdvocate's list of "All-time Top Breweries on Planet Earth." Great Divide has managed to become one of America's top breweries because of the tasty brews they're known for producing and the high standard they hold for themselves.

Known for producing big, bold brews that are long on flavor and complexity, Great Divide's brews are what set the company apart from the tasteless, faceless varieties of beer that dominate the market. Great Divide has a wide variety of brews to accommodate the wide variety of tastes among beer drinkers. Their Hercules Double IPA comes in at a whopping 10% ABV and has been named #48 on BeerAdvocate's "Top 100 Beers on Planet Earth," while their new release Lasso IPA is a much more tame 5% ABV. Great Divide offers three different seasonal varieties, which are rotated four times

a year, and are known for their seasonal line of Yeti Imperial Stouts. Offered as the year round variety, Great Divide's Yeti Imperial Stout is the recipe that kicked off the incredibly popular Yeti line of brews.

For a company that has experienced great success in their relatively short run, Great Divide has not lost sight of their goal: producing great tasting, full-bodied beers while trying to repay and respect the community that has allowed them to flourish. Poised to expand their influence over the craft beer world even further over the next few years, Great Divide is a brewery to keep your eye on. Whether you prefer the big, bold tastes of their Yeti line or less intense but still-complex flavors of their other brews, Great Divide has something to offer all fans of great beer.

YETI IMPERIAL STOUT

Coming in at 9.5% ABV, their flagship of the Yeti line is an onslaught of the senses. It starts with big, roasty malt flavor that gives way to rich caramel and toffee notes. This recipe gets its bold hop character from an enormous quantity of American hops. Coming in at a hefty 75 IBUs, this stout has won the silver medal at the Great American Beer Festival twice for best Imperial Stout, and rates a perfect 100 on RateBeer.com.

ESPRESSO OAK AGED YETI IMPERIAL STOUT (JANUARY-MARCH)

A generous infusion of Denver's own Pablo's espresso adds yet another layer of complexity to this beer, combining with the vanilla oak character, intense roasty maltiness and bold hop profile to create a whole new breed of magical creature. It's official: You can now have Yeti with breakfast. With a 9.5% ABV and another perfect 100 on RateBeer.com, this Yeti was named #43 on RateBeer.com's list of "Top 50 Beers in the World" in 2013.

CHOCOLATE OAK AGED YETI IMPERIAL STOUT (APRIL-JUNE)

Another revered incarnation of Great Divide's legendary Yeti line, they toned down the hops a bit to allow coco nibs to contribute some pleasing bitterness, while vanilla notes from the oak combine with the cocoa to create an aroma and flavor akin to a gourmet chocolate bar. A dash of cayenne keeps things lively, adding just bit of heat to the finish. This Yeti incarnation comes in at 9.5% ABV, and was awarded the Gold Medal at the 2013 Great American Beer Festival in their Chocolate Beer competition and won their Yeti line its third perfect 100 rating on RateBeer.com in a row.

OATMEAL YETI IMPERIAL STOUT (JULY-SEPTEMBER)

This big, bold and dark variety of the Yeti line has all the familiar tastes of a delicious oatmeal cookie; The addition of rolled oats softens Yeti's notoriously roasty backbone and the small amount of raisins added in the brew kettle create a unique dark fruit character. At 9.5% ABV, this Yeti is just as strong and just as admired as those that came before it, pulling in a 99 rating on RateBeer.com, one point shy

of another perfect rating.

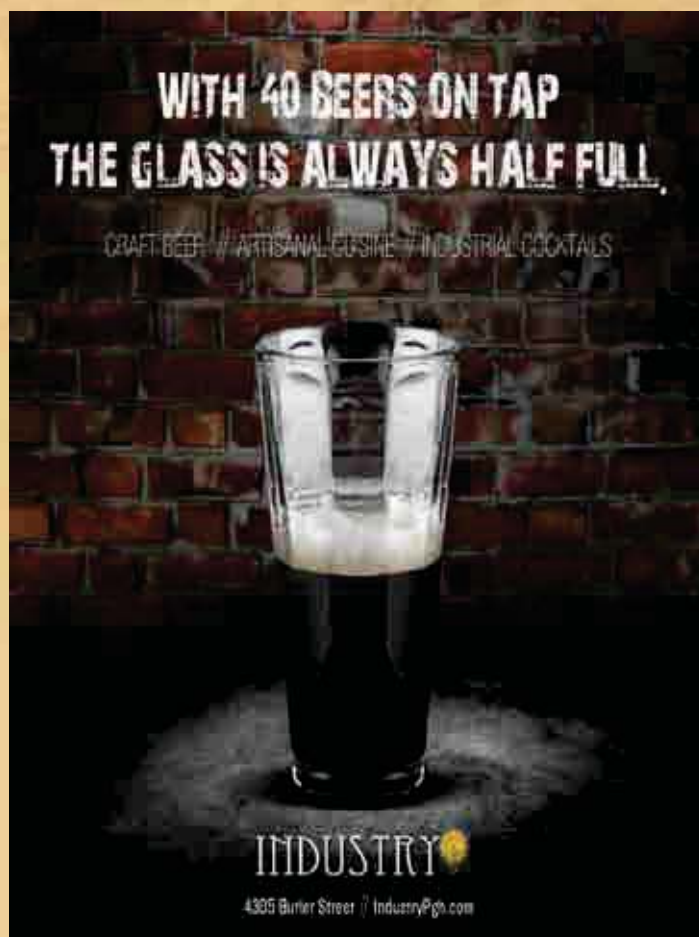
OAK AGED YETI IMPERIAL STOUT (OCTOBER-DECEMBER)

The sophisticated sibling of the mainstay Yeti Imperial Stout, this Yeti may be from the same clan as the original, but has a personality all its own. Oak aging gives this 9.5% ABV brew a subtle vanilla character, rounding out the Yeti's intense roastiness and huge hoppy nature. This tamer version of their wild Yeti line earned the #29 spot on BeerAdvocate's "Top 100 Beers on Planet Earth" list and another perfect 100 rating on RateBeer.com.

HIBERNATION ALE (OCTOBER-DECEMBER)

Great Divide's celebrated winter tradition since 1995, this robust, dry-hopped ale has a malty richness balanced with a complex hop profile and hearty, warming character. Coming in at 8.7% ABV, Hibernation Ale was awarded Gold Medal at the 1997 Great American Beer Festival in the Strong Ale/English-Style Old Ale category, Silver Medal in the same category at the 1998 World Beer Cup, and a 98 rating on RateBeer.com

Great Divide Beers are proudly distributed locally by Galli Beer Distributing Company.



BOULDER BREWING

Tim Korenich

In the late 1970's, two Colorado University physics professors that were unhappy with the variety of beers readily available in the US began brewing their own. Their initiative and ingenuity led to the thirty-plus year tradition that is Boulder Beer.

After locating to a goat farm just outside of Boulder, they began working towards some of the flavors and styles English ales they had tasted during their travels. After developing a few that they liked and shared with friends, they began producing and selling them commercially, and after a friendly visit from the authorities in 1979 they received their brewing license -- which was only the forty-third in the country at that time. Today there are more than 2,500! Despite some bumps in the road, Boulder Beer remains the oldest continuously operating craft brewery in the country. When you take a look at their offerings, it's easy to see why.

Hazed & Infused

This dry-hopped ale is infused with Crystal and Centennial hops, as well as two other hop varieties to give Hazed & Infused a flavorful aroma and a taste that smooth and easy to drink. 5% ABV

Mojo India Pale Ale

An American take on the English style IPA, the Mojo India Pale Ale blends the bitterness of their Amarillo hop variety with the flavor of their malt to deliver a crisp, dry finish. 7.2% ABV

Sweaty Betty

Named after a woman who was the hardest worker on their production line, Sweaty Betty is a Bavarian Style Hefeweizen. With flavors of clove and banana, it pairs well with most foods and is very enjoyable. 5.2% ABV

Flashback India Brown Ale

Created to commemorate their 30th Anniversary, Flashback pays homage to the spirit of the creators of the Boulder Beer Company.



Brewed using five separate hop additions, it boasts citrus flavor with a prominent hop aroma. It finishes on the malty side with biscuit and chocolate malt flavors complementing the citrus of the Cascade hops. 6.8% ABV

Buffalo Gold Golden Ale

Boulder's lightest beer, Buffalo Gold features Cascade hops and a mild malt flavor. It pairs well with almost everything, which has made it a staple for many CU Buffalo fans' tailgates. 4.8% ABV

Singletrack Copper Ale

Brewed with toasted rye and caramel malt, Singletrack Copper Ale is a refreshing medium bodied ale that has a slightly nutty flavor and a bold copper color. 4.9% ABV

Planet Porter

While it's been moved to a smaller spot in the rotation of Boulder Beer's offerings due to newer varieties and seasonal porters, you can still find Planet Porter on tap in their pub and occasionally find it on store shelves. Their oldest recipe dating back to 1979, Planet Porter is a smooth dark ale that features black malt and a hint of coffee.

Shake Chocolate Porter

With a name like Shake, one would expect something dark, chocolatey, and delicious. Boulder's version of an American Porter, Shake combines cacao nibs, chocolate wheat, and four other grains for a delicious chocolatey brew.

SEASONALS

Mojo Risin' Double IPA

Released annually in January, Mojo Risin' Double IPA is an in your face, extreme version of the Mojo IPA. Lots of extra malt and twice



the amount of Amarillo hops go into making this souped-up brew, creating a stronger grapefruit-like flavor and aroma and a higher alcohol content. 10% ABV

Kinda Blue

Released in March/April each year, Kinda Blue is a blueberry wheat beer that uses pureed organic Oregon blueberries in the fermentation process to add subtle notes of flavor. Perfect for the spring and summer time. 5.2% ABV

Hoopla Pale Ale

Hoopla Pale Ale is a dry-hopped with a blend of Nugget, Glacier and Centennial hops for a fruity, floral hop aroma and flavor and a very drinkable beer. 5.7% ABV

Never Summer Ale

Released in October annually, Never Summer Ale is Boulder's attempt to make a stronger, more aggressive winter seasonal. With a strong caramel malt base, Never Summer Ale is sure to keep you warm on a cold night. 6.5% ABV

Killer Penguin Barleywine Ale

Following the precedent set by the Never Summer Ale, Killer Penguin Barleywine Ale is yet another strong winter seasonal. It features Nugget, Willamette, and Cascade hops and twice the malt of other winter seasonal beers to an end result of a complex and tasty beverage. 10% ABV

Dragonhosen Imperial Oktoberfest

What seasonal beer list would be complete without an Oktoberfest? Brewed with Vienna and Munich malts for rich, full-bodied, malty flavor, Dragonhosen is Boulder's take on a traditional Oktoberfest lager. Hallertau and Czech Saaz hops add balance with a mild earthy aroma and flavor with moderate bitterness. 9% ABV

When I spoke with Marvin Simpson, a representative for the company, he told me that they brew in a year what breweries like Budweiser brew in a day. He also informed me that almost all of the varieties and flavors of their beers come from their brewers' cookbooks. Those sentiments seem to really paint the best picture of Boulder Beer: People doing what they love, and striving to make the best tasting product. With such wide variety offered, there's surely something for everyone to fall in love with.

If you are ever in the Boulder area, you can stop in to try some of these new creations at their pub, where they often have some small batch test runs available on tap. They also offer tours of the brewery. For more information and where to buy them locally, check them out at <http://www.boulderbeer.com/>

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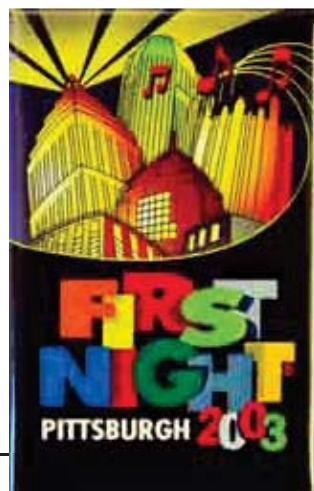
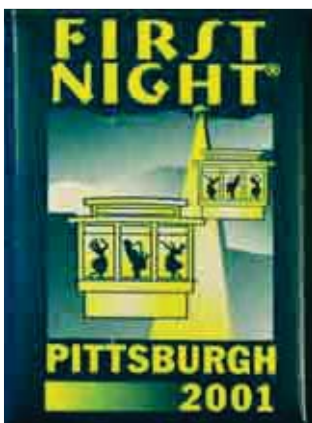
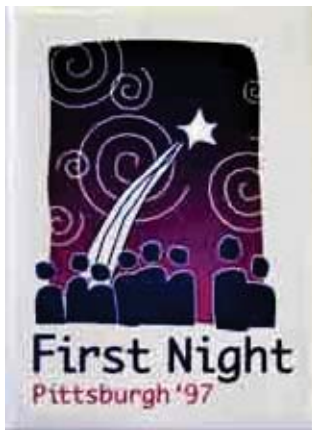
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First Night Pittsburgh

PITTSBURGH CULTURAL TRUST ANNOUNCES HIGHMARK® FIRST NIGHT® PITTSBURGH 2014

CELEBRATES 20TH ANNIVERSARY ON NEW YEAR'S EVE



The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust announced that this year's New Year's Eve celebration, scheduled to take place in the heart of downtown Pittsburgh's Cultural District on Tuesday, December 31, 2013, will highlight the history of Highmark First Night Pittsburgh and commemorate 20 years of the family-friendly community event through special programs and new activities. Highmark First Night Pittsburgh 2014 is produced by the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust with generous support from Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield, the event's longtime supporter and returning presenting sponsor. Highmark First Night Pittsburgh provides the city with a chance to ring in the new year while celebrating the arts: dance, music, theater, comedy, magic, visual art and film, plus hands-on activities for children and adults.

"This 20th anniversary year is special. In 1996, one major-daily headline read - 'A New Year's Celebration with the best of Pittsburgh.' We seek to continue that legacy. Highmark First Night Pittsburgh has contributed to the vitality of the city over the past two decades. Through this year's exciting programming, the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust is able to illuminate how relevant the event was, and continues to be, to the cultural fabric of our city," says Darcy Kucenic, Director of Highmark First Night Pittsburgh for the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust. "The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust is grateful to the vision of former Mayor Tom Murphy and to Jamee Todd, the founder of First Night Pittsburgh. The Trust is also grateful to Highmark for its third consecutive year as the presenting sponsor of the region's largest New Year's event and to all of the event's supporters throughout the years."

This year, nearly 150 arts-focused and family-friendly events will be held in nearly 50 indoor and outdoor venues throughout the Cultural District. Buttons will be available for sale on Friday, November 22, 2013 at TrustArts.org/FirstNightPGH, by phone at 412-456-6666 or

Highmark First Night Pittsburgh 2014 media partners include KDKA TV, Trib Total Media, and WYEP 91.3 FM/WESA 90.5FM. Individuals and families interested in participating in the puppet-making can do so according to the following schedule: FedEx Ground Parade Puppet-Making Workshops. Puppet making workshops are free, and advance registration is recommended. Both workshops will take place in the Trust Arts Education Center located at 805-807 Liberty Avenue, downtown Pittsburgh.

Adults 21+ Happy Hour Workshop

Thursday, December 12, 2013, from 5:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

*Identification will be required for entry, food and drink will be provided, with Music by DJ SMI.

Family & Friends Workshop

Saturday, December 14, 2013, from 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

at the Box Office at Theater Square (655 Penn Avenue at the intersection of Penn Avenue and Seventh Street in Downtown Pittsburgh). Buttons will also be available at Giant Eagle locations following the December 4th announcement.

The Highmark First Night Pittsburgh website provides even more event details and allows users to sort through the schedule of events and customize plans. TrustArts.org/FirstNightPGH is also mobile-friendly and will allow smartphone users to plan on-the-go during New Year's Eve.

EQUITABLE GAS SING-OFF

Community members are not only encouraged to attend Highmark First Night Pittsburgh 2014, but also some qualifying youth grades 6–12 will have the opportunity to perform! The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust is now accepting applications for the annual Equitable Gas Sing-Off. Equitable Gas and the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust are teaming up for the fourth consecutive year to hold a contest for Southwestern Pennsylvania performers. The winner will have the opportunity to perform live as the opening act for the Equitable Gas Marquee Performances at the Benedum Center during Highmark First Night Pittsburgh 2014, receive a cash prize of \$500 and four complimentary Highmark First Night Pittsburgh 2014 all-access buttons. In addition, the winner's school will receive a cash prize of \$1,500 designated to the music department, compliments of Equitable Gas Company. To apply, please visit TrustArts.org/FirstNight-PGH.

SPONSORS & MEDIA PARTNERS

Highmark First Night Pittsburgh 2014 sponsors as of release date include: Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield as the presenting sponsor, Equitable Gas Company, Dollar Bank, First National Bank, Giant Eagle, PNC, and Bobby Rahal Motor Company. New this year, FedEx Ground will serve as the sponsor for the annual parade with special puppets designed by Studio Capezzuti. Highmark First Night Pittsburgh 2014 community supporters include The Buhl Foundation, The Fine Foundation, and The Grable Foundation.

ABOUT HIGHMARK FIRST NIGHT PITTSBURGH

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 around 150 events at nearly 50 indoor and outdoor locations within the 14-block Cultural District. The celebration offers something for everyone.



TASTY HOLIDAY COCKTAILS

Playing bartender has never been easier. You can whip up a batch of these spirited drinks in two shakes.



Pomegranate Martinis

This pretty red-hued cocktail, fortified with Cointreau and sweetened with simple syrup, is perfect for the holidays.

Ingredients

1/4 cup sugar
3/4 cup vodka
1/2 cup pomegranate juice
1/3 cup fresh lime juice
1/4 cup Cointreau
lime slices, for garnish

Directions

Chill 4 martini glasses. Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, bring the sugar and 1/4 cup water to a simmer. Remove from heat and let cool.

In a large pitcher, combine the sugar syrup with the vodka, juices, and Cointreau. Add 2 cups ice and stir until well chilled.

Strain the martinis into the chilled glasses; garnish each with a lime slice.

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Mulled Wine With Cranberries

Cranberry juice cocktail and fresh cranberries give this favorite winter warmer a tart kick.

Ingredients

1 1/2 cups cranberry juice cocktail
1/2 cup sugar
2 cinnamon sticks
2 pieces star anise
3 cups dry red wine (such as Merlot or Cabernet Sauvignon)
1/2 cup fresh cranberries

Directions

In a large saucepan, combine the cranberry juice cocktail, sugar, cinnamon sticks, and star anise. Simmer for 15 minutes.

Stir in the wine and cranberries and bring back to a simmer. Serve warm.

Apple Brandy Cordials

Garnish each glass with apple slices to add an extra hint of fruitiness.

Ingredients

3/4 cup brandy
1/2 cup apple juice
1/3 cup Cointreau
1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon angostura bitters
apple slices, for garnish

Directions

In a large pitcher, combine the brandy, apple juice, Cointreau, lemon juice, and bitters. Serve over ice; garnish each glass with apple slices.



Easy Blender Eggnog

Use your blender to easily whip up this warm nutmeg-spiced drink.

Ingredients

2 cups heavy cream
1/2 cup sugar
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
4 large eggs
3/4 cup brandy

Directions

In a medium saucepan, bring the heavy cream, sugar, and nutmeg just to a simmer.

In a blender, blend the eggs on low speed for 1 minute. With the motor running, gradually add the hot cream mixture. Blend until frothy, about 30 seconds more. Add the brandy and blend to combine. Serve warm.

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Recap on a “Soiree of Style; A Night of Matchmaking and Makeovers at Izzazu!”

By: Lori Czekaj, Associate Matchmaker

The lights have dimmed on the first annual “Soirée of Style” hosted by The Modern Matchmaker and Izzazu Salon, Spa and Se-rata, but the buzz about town can still be heard. This was a unique event, the first of its kind for The Modern Matchmaker, where an elite singles event was held as a private, by invitation only cocktail party accompanied by style, fashion and flare!

The evening featured “extreme makeovers” presented by Emilio and Gino, co-owners of Izzazu Salon. Three clients were chosen to undergo a makeover, giving the stylists complete control over their cut, color and style. Before photos were presented on a large overhead projection screen, while the live “models” were presented with their new looks at the front of the salon “stage”. It was amazing to see the transformations and the new air of confidence and charisma that the clients possessed simply “wowed” the crowd! They all looked completely amazing!

In addition to the makeover presentation part of the evening, a date attire fashion preview by Bear Brandegee of Doncaster, for ladies and Charles Spiegel for the men, was also featured. This was the first time Charles Spiegel has ever participated in a private party event, and the gentlemen were thrilled to take part! The two designers offered image consulting and suggestions for singles to “update” their look, while being age appropriate and dressing for various venues and events. Acqua Blu Medical Spa and Premier Plastic Surgery’s Dr. Brian Heil and his wife Dana, along with members of their staff were present to address questions and concerns regarding various image care and procedures.

All of the aforementioned entertainment took place amidst a sassy cocktail mixer of the hottest singles in the Pittsburgh area. As swing music played, delectable appetizers from The Capital Grille were served, along with the launch of a brand new sparkling beverage by Absolut called Absolut Tune. Eyetique, Exceptional Limousine, and Whirl magazine completed the evening’s co-sponsors. Fabulous gift prizes from Acqua Blu, Izzazu, Doncaster and Exceptional Limousine were presented to some lucky guests, in addition to “swag bags” valued at over \$500 to all those who RSVP’d before the deadline. It was a fabulous time had by all, with over 145 guests in attendance.

For your makeover and holiday look call Izzazu today and let them work their magic!

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MACY'S

Holiday Windows & Traditions

Fun Facts

This year's holiday window story is about "The Magic of Christmas", celebrating the holiday spirit and holiday traditions, such as Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade® and "Yes Virginia" – the animated special that depicts the story of eight-year-old Virginia O'Hanlan in 1897 asking if there is a Santa Claus. In addition to these Macy's traditions, the windows will also have a distinctly local feel as Macy's celebrates iconic Pittsburgh traditions and landmarks that comprise the city's landscape:

- The Rink at PPG Place
- The meeting place for generations of Pittsburghers – the historic Kaufmann's Clock which turned 100 years old this year
- The My Macy's Holiday Parade
- Light Up Night with a scene of the BNY Mellon Fireworks Finale.
- Macy's Downtown Pittsburgh holiday window display is a tradition that dates back more than 100 years.
- Past holiday window themes include: The Nutcracker, Journey of a Letter to Santa, The Magic of Making Iconic Christmas Elements and Cinderella.
- For more than 35 weeks, a small army of carpenters, machinists, artisans and animators work to bring each scene to magical life.
- In the early days, people powered the animated holiday scenes. Employees inside took turns walking a treadmill below the windows that kept everything in motion.
- The windows are closed for installation for approximately 4 weeks from the end of October until they are unveiled on Light Up Night.
- The design of the following year's windows is a 1-year process that begins shortly after they are unveiled on Light Up Night.
- Downtown visitors can view this year's holiday display through January 7, 2012.
- Macy's Breakfasts with Santa are incredibly popular with families; normally selling out with more than 3,000 guests attending in total during the event's run in the month of December!
- The Children's Very Own gift shop has been a tradition for more than 30 years where children ages 4 through 12 can shop to purchase gifts for family and friends with help from Santa's elves.



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Dating

By: Michael Kyle

The Holidays are upon us! Christmas lights are going up, people are in the holiday mood; it truly is a time of giving. The month of December has a tendency to go by quickly due to all the shopping and preparation for Christmas. There are so many fun date options whether it is a first date, or a fun date night for established couples. Here are some Pittsburgh date ideas:

Ice Skating:

Ice skating is very romantic. It will force couples to rely on each other, depending on their experience level. Ice skating encourages couples to hold hands for support and really builds trust. This can be a great bonding experience. There's nothing cuter than a couple ice skating together! Afterwards, you can grab a hot chocolate and enjoy the holiday ambiance. There are several places to go ice skating in the Pittsburgh area during the holidays.

Christmas Light Tours:

Whether it is Overly's Country Christmas lights or Light Up Night in downtown Pittsburgh, Christmas lights are always fun and festive to look at. If crowds are too much to handle, an individual, downtown walking tour is always a good option. There are several restaurants Downtown that a couple could explore, after their Christmas Light sightseeing. Take a walking tour of all the lights and finish with a romantic dinner. It can be casual, and still very romantic. Be sure to stop at landmarks like Market Square to check out their holiday market, the crèche at the USX Tower Plaza,



and finish with stopping at the PPG Holiday Display.

Office or Holiday Parties:

Depending on how long a couple has been dating, holiday office parties are a great date idea. There are so many holiday parties going on around this time of year. Why not bring your special someone along? It's a great place to introduce your significant other to friends and coworkers, as well as show them another aspect of your life. This is a good opportunity to get dressed up and mingle with other couples in your community as well.

Sled Riding:

Sled Riding is great for couples of all ages! This is a way to relax, and have fun. (Bring along the kids and make it a day trip!) This date idea may not be a great first date idea, but good for later on in a dating relationship. It shows that a person can have fun and isn't afraid to get a little bit messy. Finish the day with a home cooked meal, or stop by your favorite restaurant.

New Year's Eve Party:

Bring in the New Year with your special someone! There are several public and private events for New Year's happening in and around the city. Get dressed up (in your Sunday's best,) and be sure to grab that special someone for a kiss when the clock strikes midnight



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A Holiday Shopping Guide

-- Gifts for Children --

This is easy. You never have to figure out what to get for children, because they will tell you exactly what they want. They spend months and months researching these kinds of things by watching Saturday-morning cartoon-show advertisements. Make sure you get your children exactly what they ask for, even if you disapprove of their choices. If your child thinks he wants Murderous Bob, the Doll with the Face You Can Rip Right Off, you'd better get it. You may be worried that it might help to encourage your child's anti-social tendencies, but believe me, you have not seen antisocial tendencies until you've seen a child who is convinced that he or she did not get the right gift. -- Dave Barry, "Christmas Shopping: A Survivor's Guide"

-- Gifts for Men --

Men are amused by almost any idiot thing -- that is why professional wrestling is so popular -- so buying gifts for them is easy. But you should never buy them clothes. Men believe they already have all the clothes they will ever need, and new ones make them nervous. For example, your average man has 84 ties, but he wears, at most, only three of them. He has learned, through humiliating trial and error, that if he wears any of the other 81 ties, his wife will probably laugh at him ("You're not going to wear THAT tie with that suit, are you?"). So he has narrowed it down to three safe ties, and has gone several years without being laughed at. If you give him a new tie, he will pretend to like it, but deep inside he will hate you. If you want to give a man something practical, consider tires. More than once, I would have gladly traded all the gifts I got for a new set of tires.

-- Dave Barry, "Christmas Shopping: A Survivor's Guide"

12 Days of Christmas Correspondence

Dearest John:

I went to the door today and the postman delivered a partridge in a pear tree. What a delightful gift. I couldn't have been more surprised.

With dearest love and affection, Agnes

December 15th

Dearest John:

Today the postman brought your very sweet gift. Just imagine, two turtle doves.... I'm just delighted at your very thoughtful gift. They are just adorable.

All my love, Agnes

December 16th

Dear John:

Oh, aren't you the extravagant one! Now I must protest. I don't deserve such generosity. Three french hens. They are just darling but I must insist.... you're just too kind.

Love Agnes

December 17th

Today the postman delivered four calling birds. Now really! They are beautiful, but don't you think enough is enough? You're being too romantic.

Affectionately, Agnes

December 18th

Dearest John:

What a surprise! Today the postman delivered five golden rings. One for each finger. You're just impossible, but I love it. Frankly, John, all those squawking birds were beginning to get on my nerves.

All my love, Agnes

December 19th

Dear John:

When I opened the door there were actually six geese-a-laying on my front steps. So you're back to the birds again, huh? Those geese are huge. Where will I ever keep them? The neighbors are complaining and I can't sleep through the racket. PLEASE STOP! Cordially, Agnes

December 20th

John:

What's with you and those birds???? Seven swans-a-swimming. What kind of joke is this? There's bird do-do all over the house and they never stop the racket. I'm a nervous wreck and I can't sleep all night. IT'S NOT FUNNY.....So stop with those birds.

Sincerely, Agnes

December 21st

OK Buster:

I think I prefer the birds. What am I going to do with eight maids-a-milking? It's not enough with all those birds and eight maids-a-milking, but they had to bring their own cows. There is poop all over the lawn and I can't move into my own house. Just lay off me. .

Ag



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December 22nd

Hey:

What are you? Some kind of sadist? Now there's nine pipers playing. And do they play! They never stopped chasing those maids since they got here yesterday morning. The cows are upset and are stepping all over those screeching birds. No wonder they screech. What am I going to do? The neighbors have started a petition to evict me. You'll get yours.

From Ag

December 23rd

You Creep!

Now there's ten ladies dancing - I don't know why I call them ladies. Now the cows can't sleep and they've got diarrhea. My living room is a river of poop. The commissioner of buildings has subpoenaed me to give cause why the building shouldn't be condemned. I'm sicking the police on you.

One who means it, Ag

December 24th

Listen Idiot:

What's with the eleven lords a-leaping? All 234 of the birds are dead. I hope you're satisfied, you rotten swine.

Your sworn enemy, Miss Agnes McCallister

December 25th (From the law offices Taeker, Spedar, and Baegar)

Dear Sir:

This is to acknowledge your latest gift of twelve fiddlers fiddling, which you have seen fit to inflict on our client, Miss Agnes

McCallister. The destruction, of course, was total. All correspondence should come to our attention. If you should attempt to reach Miss McCallister at Happy Dale Sanitarium, the attendants have instructions to shoot you on sight. With this letter, please find attached a warrant for your arrest.

-Merry Christmas

A Trip to the Dentist

This guy goes into his dentist's office, because something is wrong with his mouth. After a brief examination, the dentist exclaims, "Holy Smoke! That plate I installed in your mouth about six months ago has nearly completely corroded! What on earth have you been eating?" "Well... the only thing I can think of is this... my wife made me some asparagus about four months ago with this stuff on it... Hollandaise sauce she called it... and doctor, I'm talkin' DELICIOUS! I've never tasted anything like it, and ever since then I've been putting it on everything... meat, fish, toast, vegetables... you name it!" "That's probably it," replied the dentist "Hollandaise sauce is made with lemon juice, which is acidic and highly corrosive. It seems as though I'll have to install a new plate, but made out of chrome this time." "Why chrome?" the man asked. "Well, everyone knows that there's no plate like chrome for the Hollandaise!"

All I Need To Know I Learned From Santa

1. Encourage people to believe in you.
2. Always remember who's naughty and who's nice.
3. Don't pout.
4. It's as much fun to give as it is to receive.
5. Some days it's ok to feel a little chubby.
6. Make your presents known.
7. Always ask for a little bit more than what you really want.
8. Bright red can make anyone look good.
9. Wear a wide belt and no-one will notice how many pounds you've gained.
10. If you only show up once a year, everyone will think you're very important.
11. Whenever you're at a loss for words, say "HO, HO, HO!"

Frequently Asked Questions About Christmas

Q: If Santa doesn't have to age, then why has he become old?
A: He only appears to be old. He's an undercover kid.

Q: How can a sleigh possibly fly through the air?
A: If you were being pulled by eight flying reindeer, wouldn't you fly too?

Q: Why do reindeer have red noses?
A: They are not equipped with ABS and thus tend to bump into things on slippery surfaces. This is why Santa is often seen with a red nose (the sleigh doesn't have an airbag, either).

Q: Why do we wish people a "Merry Christmas" instead of a "Happy Christmas"?
A: The two are about the same, but with "Merry Christmas" an extra twinkle is seen in the eyes.



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Q: Why is a Christmas tree that has been chopped down called a "live Christmas tree?"

A: It's dead but doesn't know it, and yet it's having the time of its life.

Q: Why do we wrap our Christmas gifts with paper?

A: Because we like to see surprise and joy (real or kindly faked) in the recipients.

Q: How many angels can dance on the head of a pin?

A: Nowadays, only four angels can dance there. Formerly there was no limit, but OSHA passed the Angel Safety Law recently, which also requires that the pin must be inspected twice each year for structural defects.

Q: How many gifts can Santa Claus's bag hold?

A: One less than infinity. Why one less? Because there's a limit to everything.

Q: How could a star that is high in the sky lead the Wise Men to a tiny manger on the ground?

A: Wisely, toward the end of their journey they asked directions from someone on the road. Had they not been so wise, they might have missed the manger by several hundred miles. (That person on the road has never been identified.)

Q: Is there really a Mrs. Santa Claus?

A: The best way to know for sure is to ask Santa Claus next time you see him.

Q: Why do we hear so many bells at Christmas time?

A: Because so many people ring them.

Q: Why do so many people ring bells at Christmas time?

A: For the poor, for the joy, and because a bell can say what words can't say.

Q: What can't words say?

A: The moment you wake up on Christmas morning, listen carefully. You may hear then what words can't say.

How To Tell If You Are A Grinch

1. You reuse last year's Christmas cards and send them out under your own name. (5 points)
2. You steal light bulbs from you neighbor's outdoor display to replenish your own supply. (5 points, 10 if neighbor's whole light sets or lighted Santa goes out)
3. You have dressed a dog or cat as Santa Claus, elf helper, or reindeer. (10 points for each; if you dressed an endangered species, 5 extra points)
4. You put out last year's stale candy canes for children. (1 point for each piece of sticky candy). If you put out a chocolate or



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marzipan Santa also, add 10 points.

5. You enclose a shoddy and inferior gift from Target, Walmart, or K-Mart in a Bloomingdale's or other prestige box to impress your friends. (5 points for each infraction).
6. You make collect long distance phone calls to your family on Christmas day. (5 points, 10 if from a cell phone), claiming you are stuck in a phone booth.
7. At the office Christmas party, you horde huge stockpiles of goodies for later consumption at home. (5 points; 15 points if you use this stuff for your own party)
8. You steal the wreath from a parked car to use on your own (5 points -- anyone dumb enough to dress a car deserves to have its decorations stolen)
9. After an invitation to a friend's house, you bring a commercially produced fruitcake and try to pass it off as home made. (5 points; 15 points if the fruitcake is from last year).
10. Any stealing from the Toys-for-Tots collection bins is a definite no-no. (20 points)

Evaluate your score on the "Grinch Scale" from 20 to 100.

20-30: You are just a cheese ball.

30-50: You are an apprentice in Yuletide larceny and are probably wanted by the police for overdue parking tickets.

50-100: Grinch, move over. The Meyer Lansky of Christmas crime has arrived.

Helpful Holiday Diet Tips

1. If no one sees you eat it, it has no calories
2. If you drink a diet soda with a candy bar, they cancel each other out
3. If you eat standing up, it doesn't count!

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4. STRESSED is just DESSERTS spelled backwards
5. If you eat the food off someone else's plate, it doesn't count
6. Cookie pieces contain no calories because the process of breakage cause calorie leakage
7. Food used for medicinal purposes have no calories. This includes: any chocolate used for energy, brandy, cheesecake, and Haagen-Daz Ice Cream
8. When eating with someone else, calories don't count if you both eat the same amount
9. Movie-related foods are much lower in calories simply because they are a part of the entertainment experience and not part of one's personal fuel. This includes: Milk Duds, popcorn with butter, Junior Mints, Snickers, and Gummi Bears.

Christmas Riddles

What do elves learn in school?

[The Elf-abet!]

What was so good about the neurotic doll the girl was given for Christmas?

[It was already wound up.]

Did you hear that one of Santa's reindeer now works for Proctor and Gambel?

[Its true, Comet cleans sinks!]

How many reindeer does Santa Have???

[10 (named below)

Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner, Blitzen

Rudolph (the one with the red nose)

Olive (Olive the other reindeer {all of})]

Mom, can I have a dog for Christmas?

[No, you can have turkey like everyone else.]

What nationality is Santa Claus?

[North Polish.]

What do you call a cat on the beach at Christmastime?

[Sandy Claws!]

What kind of bird can write?

[A PENguin.]

Why did Santa spell Christmas N-O-E?

[Because the angel had said, "No L!"]

Who is never hungry at Christmas?

[The turkey, he is always stuffed.]

What do you call people who are afraid of Santa Claus?
[Claustrophobic.]

Judge: "What are you charged with?"
Prisoner: "Doing my Christmas shopping early."
Judge: "That's not an offense. How early were you doing this shopping?"
Prisoner: "Before the store opened."

What do you get if you cross Father Christmas with a detective ?
[Santa Clues!]

A woman went to the Post Office to buy stamps for her Christmas cards. Clerk: "What denomination?"
Woman: "Oh, good heavens! Have we come to this? Well, give me 50 Baptist and 50 Catholic."

What do you do if Santa gets stuck in your chimney?
[Pour Santa flush on him.]

What do snowmen eat for breakfast?
[Snowflakes.]

What's the best thing to put into a Christmas cake?
[Your teeth.]

Why does Santa's sled get such good mileage?
[Because it has long-distance runners on each side.]

What are Christmas trees like bad knitters?
[They both drop their needles.]

Why does Scrooge love Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer?
[because every buck is dear to him.]

How do sheep in Mexico say Merry Christmas?
[Fleece Navidad!]

What do you get if you deep fry Santa Claus?
[Crisp Cringle.]

Knock Knock
Who's there ?
Avery
Avery who ?
Avery merry Christmas !



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Why is Christmas just like a day at the office ?
[You do all the work and the fat guy with the suit gets all the credit.]

What do you get if you cross an apple with a Christmas Tree?
[A pineapple.]

What did the guest sing at the Eskimo Christmas Party?
[Freeze a jolly good fellow...]

What did Adam say on the day before Christmas?
[It's Christmas, Eve!]

What did the ghosts say to Santa Claus?
[We'll have a boo Christmas without you.]

What did Santa shout to his toys on Christmas Eve?
[Okay everyone, sack time!!]

If athletes get athletes foot, what do astronauts get?
[Missletoe!]

If Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus had a child, what would he be called?
[A subordinate claus.]

Just before Christmas, there was an honest politician, a kind lawyer and Santa Claus travelling in a lift of a very posh hotel. Just before the doors opened they all noticed a \$5 bill lying on the floor. Which one picked it up??
[Santa of course, the other two don't exist!]

What do you have in December that you don't have in any other month?
[The letter "D"!]

Why does Santa have 3 gardens?
[So he can ho-ho-ho.]

Why was Santa's little helper depressed?
[Because he had low elf esteem.]

What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire?
[Frostbite.]

Knock Knock
Who's there ?
Holly
Holly who ?
Holly-days are here again !

What do you get when you cross an archer with a gift-wraper?
[Ribbon hood.]

The 3 stages of man:
1) He believes in Santa Claus.
2) He doesn't believe in Santa Claus.
3) He is Santa Claus.

What if it had been three Wise Women instead of three Wise Men?
[They would have asked directions, arrived on time, helped deliver the baby, cleaned the stable, made a casserole, and brought practical gifts.]

One Christmas I got a battery with a note saying, "Toy not included."

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Patient: Doctor, doctor, I keep thinking I'm a Christmas bell.
Doctor: Take these pills and if they don't work, give me a ring.
Patient: Doctor, I'm scared of Father Christmas.
Doctor: You're suffering from Claus-trophobia.

Knock, knock.
Who's there?
Mary.
Mary who?
Merry Christmas.

Q: How do cats greet each other at Christmas?
A: Have a furry merry Christmas and a Happy Mew Year.

Q: How do sheep greet each other at Christmas?
A: A merry Christmas to Ewe.

Is There A Santa Claus?

As a result of an overwhelming lack of requests, and with research help from that renowned scientific journal SPY magazine - I am pleased to present the annual scientific inquiry into Santa Claus.

1. No known species of reindeer can fly. BUT there are 300,000 species of living organisms yet to be classified, and while most of these are insects and germs, this does not COMPLETELY rule out flying reindeer which only Santa has ever seen.
2. There are 2 billion children (persons under 18) in the world. BUT since Santa doesn't (appear) to handle the Muslim, Hindu, Jewish and Buddhist children, that reduces the workload to 15% of the total - 378 million according to Population Reference Bureau. At an average (census) rate of 3.5 children per household, that's 91.8 million homes. One presumes there's at least one good child in each.
3. Santa has 31 hours of Christmas to work with, thanks to the different time zones and the rotation of the earth, assuming he travels east to west (which seems logical). This works out to 822.6 visits per second. This is to say that for each Christian household with good children, Santa has 1/1000th of a second to park, hop out of the sleigh, jump down the chimney, fill the stockings, distribute the remaining presents under the tree, eat whatever snacks have been left, get back up the chimney, get back into the sleigh and move on to the next house. Assuming that each of these 91.8 million stops are evenly distributed around the earth (which, of course, we know to be false but for the purposes of our calculations we will accept), we are now talking about .78 miles per household, a total trip of 75-1/2 million miles, not counting stops to do what most of us must do at least once every 31 hours, plus feeding and etc. This means that Santa's sleigh is moving at 650 miles per second, 3,000 times the speed of sound. For purposes of comparison, the fastest man-made vehicle on earth, the Ulysses space probe, moves at a poky 27.4 miles per second - a conventional reindeer can run, tops, 15 miles per hour.
4. The payload on the sleigh adds another interesting element. Assuming that each child gets nothing more than a medium-sized lego set (2 pounds), the sleigh is carrying 321,300 tons, not counting Santa, who is invariably described as overweight. On land, conventional reindeer can pull no more than 300 pounds. Even granting that "flying reindeer" (see point #1) could pull TEN TIMES the normal amount, we cannot do the job with eight, or even nine. We need 214,200 reindeer. This increases



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the payload - not even counting the weight of the sleigh - to 353,430 tons. Again, for comparison - this is four times the weight of the Queen Elizabeth.

5. 353,000 tons travelling at 650 miles per second creates enormous air resistance - this will heat the reindeer up in the same fashion as spacecrafts re-entering the earth's atmosphere. The lead pair of reindeer will absorb 14.3 QUINTILLION joules of energy. Per second. Each. In short, they will burst into flame almost instantaneously, exposing the reindeer behind them, and create deafening sonic booms in their wake. The entire reindeer team will be vaporized within 4.26 thousandths of a second. Santa, meanwhile, will be subjected to centrifugal forces 17,500.06 times greater than gravity. A 250- pound Santa (which seems ludicrously slim) would be pinned to the back of his sleigh by 4,315,015 pounds of force. In conclusion If Santa ever DID deliver presents on Christmas Eve, he's dead now.

Name That Christmas Carol (Quiz)

(Answers at the bottom)

1. Quadraped with crimson proboscis
2. 5 p.m. to 6 a.m. without noise
3. Miniscule hamlet in the far east
4. Ancient benevolent despot
5. Adorn the vestibule
6. Exuberance directed to the planet
7. Listen, aerial spirits harmonizing
8. Monarchical trio



9. Yonder in the haystack
10. Assemble, everyone who believes
11. Hallowed post meridian
12. Fantasies of a colorless December 25th
13. Tin tintinnabulums
14. A dozen 24-hour Yule periods
15. Befell during the transparent bewitching hour
16. Homo sapien of crystallized vapor
17. I merely desire a pair of incisors
18. I spied my maternal parent osculating a fat man in red
19. Perambulating through a December solstice fantasy
20. Aloft on the acme of the abode
21. Slumber in ethereal quiet.
22. Hey there! The announcing celestial beings carol.
23. O greetings of ease and happiness.
24. On commencement of Yuletide my honey bestowed upon me.
25. Decorate the passage with branches of evergreen sprigs.
26. Once upon a misty night prior to Christ's birthday.
27. Ooh, celestial body of marvel, celestial body of strength.
28. With a vegetable stem smoker and clothes fastening snout.
29. It's a fluff-ball sphere in the cold season.
30. Come on, come on, come on, get moving.
31. O scared darkness, the asterisks are brilliantly shimmering.
32. It's fixin' to appear extremely similar to December 25th.
33. Small children with their optical aids entirely illuminated.
34. Loyal buddies that are important to ourselves collect closely to ourselves again.
35. Boppin' while circling the tannenbaum...
36. Royalty of royalties always and always...
37. O approach, y'all devoted happy and victorious...
38. Urban walkways, congested walkways, trimmed in a festive manner...
39. Ah! The atmospheric condition beyond is terrific...
40. Percussion instruments jingle, are you harking...
41. Remarked the evening breeze to the tiny sheep...
42. Wishing your dates be gleeful and intelligent...
43. Harmony on the planet, kindness to Homo sapiens...
44. Hop in the sack, hide your noggin, since the fat man comes this evening...
45. Ourselves bid yourselves a joyous Noel and a cheerful neoteric 365 days...

ANSWERS:

1. Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer
2. Silent Night
3. O' Little Town of Bethlehem
4. Good King Wenceslas (or some say Jolly Old St. Nicholas)
5. Deck the Halls
6. Joy to the World
7. Hark the Herald Angels Sing
8. We Three Kings
9. Away in a Manger
10. Come All Ye Faithful
11. O Holy Night
12. I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas
13. Silver Bells
14. The Twelve Days of Christmas
15. It Came Upon a Midnight Clear
16. Frosty the Snowman
17. All I Want for Christmas is My Two Front Teeth
18. I Saw Momma Kussin' Santa Claus

19. Walking Through a Winter Wonderland
20. Up on the Rooftop
21. Sleep in heavenly peace... "Silent Night"
22. Hark! the herald angels sing... "Hark the Herald"
23. O tidings of comfort and joy... "God rest ye merry gentlemen"
24. On the first day of Christmas my true love gave to me... "The Twelve Days of Christmas"
25. Deck the halls with boughs of holly... "Deck the Halls"
26. Then one foggy Christmas Eve... "Rudolph the Red-nosed Rein deer"
27. Ooh star of wonder, star of might... "Star of Wonder"
28. With a corn cob pip and a button nose... "Frosty the Snowman"
29. It's a marshmallow world in the winter... "It's a Marshmallow World"
30. Giddyap, giddyap, giddyap let's go... "Let it Snow"
31. O Holy night, the stars are brightly shining... "O Holy Night"
32. It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas... "It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas"
33. Tiny tots with their eyes all aglow... "The Christmas Song"
34. Faithful friends who are dear to us, gather near to us once more... "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas"
35. Rockin' 'round the Christmas tree...
36. King of Kings, forever and ever... "Hallelujah"
37. Oh come all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant... "Oh Come All Ye Faithful"
38. City sidewalks, busy sidewalks, dressed in holiday style... "Silver Bells"
39. Oh, the weather outside is frightful... "Let it Snow"

40. Sleigh bells ring, are you listening... "Walking in a Winter Wonderland"
41. Said the night wind to the lamb... "Do You Hear What I Hear"
42. May your days be merry and bright... "White Christmas"
43. Peace on Earth, goodwill toward men... "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day"
44. Jump in bed, cover up your head, 'cause Santa Claus comes tonight... "Here comes Santa Claus"
45. We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year... "We wish you a Merry Christmas"

RESULTS:

34 - 45 Correct - You don't need any Yuletide spirit!

21 - 33 Correct - You could use something in your stocking!

0 - 20 Correct - Are you the grinch??

Abracadabra

A man walks into a bar with a paper bag. He sits down and places the bag on the counter. The bartender walks up and asks what's in the bag. The man reaches into the bag and pulls out a little man, about one foot high and sets him on the counter. He reaches back into the bag and pulls out a small piano, setting it on the counter as well. He reaches into the bag once again and pulls out a tiny piano bench, which he places in front of the piano. The little man sits down at the piano and starts playing a beautiful piece by Mozart! 'Where on earth did you get that?' asks the bartender. The man responds by reaching into the paper bag. This time he pulls out a



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magic lamp. He hands it to the bartender and says: 'Here, rub it.' So the bartender rubs the lamp, and suddenly there's a puff of smoke and a beautiful genie is standing before him. 'I will grant you one wish - just one wish - each person is only allowed one!' The bartender gets really excited. Without hesitating he says, 'I want a million bucks!' A few moments later, a duck walks into the bar and is soon followed by another duck, then another. Pretty soon, the entire bar is filled with ducks and they keep coming! The bartender turns to the man and says, 'You know, I think your genie's a little deaf. I asked for a million bucks, not a million ducks.' 'Tell me about it!' says the man, 'do you really think I asked for a 12-inch pianist?

Off to Vegas

A man came home from work one day to find his wife on the front porch with her bags packed. "Just where the heck do you think you're going?" said the man. "I'm going to Las Vegas", said the wife, "I just found out I can get \$400.00 a night for what I give you for free!" The man said, "Wait a minute!" and then ran inside the house only to come back a few minutes later with his suitcase in hand. "Where the heck are you going?" said the wife. The man said, "I want to see how you're gonna live on \$800.00 a year!"

Don't Mess with Old Farts

A farmer went out one day and bought a brand new stud rooster for his chicken coop. The new rooster struts over to the old rooster and says, 'OK old fart, time for you to retire.' The old rooster replies, 'Come on, surely you cannot handle ALL of these chickens.

Look what it has done to me. Can't you just let me have the two old hens over in the corner?' The young rooster says, 'Beat it: You are washed up and I am taking over.' The old rooster says, 'I tell you what, young stud. I will race you around the farmhouse. Whoever wins gets the exclusive domain over the entire chicken coop.' The young rooster laughs. 'You know you don't stand a chance, old man. So, just to be fair, I will give you a head start.' The old rooster takes off running. About 15 seconds later the young rooster takes off running after him. They round the front porch of the farmhouse and the young rooster has closed the gap. He is only about 5 feet behind the old rooster and gaining fast. The farmer, meanwhile, is sitting in his usual spot on the front porch when he sees the roosters running by. The Old Rooster is squawking and running as hard as he can. The Farmer grabs his shotgun and- BOOM - he blows the young rooster to bits. The farmer sadly shakes his head and says, 'Dammit.....third gay rooster I bought this month.' Moral of this story? Don't mess with the OLD FARTS - age, skill, wisdom, and a little treachery always overcome youth and arrogance!

Body Statistics

It takes your food seven seconds to get from your mouth to your stomach. One human hair can support 3 kg (6 lb). The average man's penis is three times the length of his thumb. Human thigh-bones are stronger than concrete. A woman's heart beats faster than a man's. There are about one trillion bacteria on each of your feet. Women blink twice as often as men. The average person's skin weighs twice as much as the brain. Your body uses 300 muscles to balance itself when you are standing still. If saliva cannot dissolve something, you cannot taste it. Women reading this



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will be finished now. Men who read this are probably still busy checking their thumbs.

Blonde Alligator Shoes

After becoming very frustrated with the attitude of one of the shopkeepers, the young blonde declared, 'Well, then, maybe I'll just go out and catch my own alligator and get a pair of alligator shoes for free!' The shopkeeper replied with a sly smile, 'Well, little lady, why don't you go on and give it a try?' The blonde headed off to the swamp, determined to catch an alligator. Later in the day, as the shopkeeper was driving home, he spotted the same young woman standing waist deep in the murky water, shotgun in hand. As he brought his car to a stop, he saw a huge 9-foot gator swimming rapidly toward her. With lightning reflexes, the blonde took aim, shot the creature and hauled it up onto the slippery bank. Nearby were 7 more dead gators all lying belly up. The shopkeeper stood on the bank, watching in silent amazement as the blonde struggled mightily and barely managed to flip the gator onto its back. Then, rolling her eyes heavenward, she screamed in frustration..... 'CRAP! THIS ONE'S BAREFOOT, TOO!

Bubba Had Shingles

Those of us who spend much time in a doctor's office should appreciate this! Doesn't it seem more and more that physicians are running their practices like an assembly line? Here's what happened to Bubba: Bubba walked into a doctor's office and the receptionist asked him what he had. Bubba said: 'Shingles.' So she wrote down his name, address, medical insurance number and told him to have a seat. Fifteen minutes later a nurse's aide came out and asked Bubba what he had. Bubba said, 'Shingles.' So she wrote down his height, weight, a complete medical history and told Bubba to wait in the examining room. A half hour later a nurse came in and asked Bubba what he had. Bubba said, 'Shingles.' So the nurse gave Bubba a blood test, a blood pressure test, an electrocardiogram, and told Bubba to take off all his clothes and wait for the doctor. An hour later the doctor came in and found Bubba sitting patiently in the nude and asked Bubba what he had. Bubba said, 'Shingles.' The doctor asked, 'Where?' Bubba said, 'Outside on the truck. Where do you want me to unload 'em??'

Old Age, I decided, is a Gift

I am now, probably for the first time in my life, the person I have always wanted to be. Oh, not my body! I sometime despair over my body, the wrinkles, the baggy eyes, and the sagging butt. And often I am taken aback by that old person that lives in my mirror (who looks like my father!), but I don't agonize over those things for long. I would never trade my amazing friends, my wonderful life, my loving family for less gray hair or a flatter belly. As I've aged, I've become more kind to myself, and less critical of myself. I've become my own friend. I don't chide myself for eating that extra cookie, or for not making my bed, or for buying that silly cement gecko that I didn't need, but looks so avant garde on my patio. I am entitled to a treat, to be messy, to be extravagant. I have seen too many dear friends leave this world too soon; before they understood the great freedom that comes with aging. Whose business is it if I choose to read or play on the computer until 4 AM and sleep until noon? I will dance with myself to those wonderful tunes of the 60 & 70's, and if I, at the same time, wish to weep over a lost love ... I will. I will walk the beach in a swim suit that is stretched over a bulging body, and will dive into the waves with abandon if I choose to, despite the pitying glances from the jet set. They, too, will get old. Sure, over the years my heart has been broken. How can your heart not break when you lose a loved one, or when a child suffers, or even when somebody's beloved pet gets hit by a car? But broken hearts are what give us strength and understanding and compassion. A heart never broken is pristine and sterile and will never know the joy of being



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imperfect. I am so blessed to have lived long enough to have my hair turning gray, and to have my youthful laughs be forever etched into deep grooves on my face. So many have never laughed, and so many have died before their hair could turn silver. As you get older, it is easier to be positive. You care less about what other people think. I don't question myself anymore. I've even earned the right to be wrong. So, to answer your question, I like being old. It has set me free. I like the person I have become. I am not going to live forever, but while I am still here, I will not waste time lamenting what could have been, or worrying about what will be. And I shall eat dessert every single day. (If I feel like it) May you always have a rainbow of smiles on your face and in your heart forever!

Church Logic

The lady was a Southern Baptist who attended services and taught Sunday School every week. On one Sunday, an out of town acquaintance, a gentleman, was in the pew right behind her. He noted what a fine looking woman she was. While they were taking up the collection, the man leaned forward and said, "Hey, how about you and I having dinner on Tuesday?" "Why yes, that would be nice," the lady responded. Well, the gentleman couldn't believe his luck. On Tuesday he picked the lady up and took her to the finest restaurant in that part of South Carolina. When they sat down, the gentleman looked over at her and suggested, "Would you like a cocktail before dinner?" "Oh, no," said our circumspect fine example of southern womanhood, "What ever would I tell my Sunday School class?" Well, our gentleman was set back a bit, so he didn't say much until after dinner, when he pulled out a pack of cigarettes and asked, "Would you like a smoke?" "Oh my goodness no," said the woman. "I couldn't face my Sunday School class if I did?" Well, our boy felt pretty low after that, so they left, got in his car

and as he was driving the lady home, they passed the local Holiday Inn. He'd been morally rebuffed twice already, so he figured he had nothing to lose so he ventured forth with, "Ahhh .. mmmm how would you like to stop at this motel?" "Sure, that would be nice," she said in anticipation. The gentleman couldn't believe his ears, and did a fast u-turn right then and there, and drove back to the motel and checked in. The next morning, after a wild and passionate night of the most incredible sex and perversions imaginable, the gentleman awoke first. He looked at the lovely Dixie darling lying there in the bed and with remorse thought, "What the hell have I done? He shook her awake and pleaded, "I've got to ask you one thing, whatever are you going to tell your Sunday School class?" The lady said, "The same thing I always tell them. You don't have to smoke and drink to have a good time."

The Ring

An old, white haired man walked into a jewelry store one Friday evening with a beautiful young gal at his side. He told the jeweler he was looking for a special ring for his girlfriend. The jeweler looked through his stock and brought out a \$5,000 ring. The old man said, 'No, I'd like to see something more special.' At that statement, the jeweler went to his special stock and brought another ring over. 'Here's a stunning ring at only \$40,000' the jeweler said. The young lady's eyes sparkled and her whole body trembled with excitement. The old man seeing this said, 'We'll take it.' The jeweler asked how payment would be made and the old man stated, 'by check. I know you need to make sure my check is good, so I'll write it now and you can call the bank Monday to verify the funds and I'll pick the ring up Monday afternoon,' he said. Monday morning, the jeweler phoned the old man. 'There's no money in that account.' 'I know,' said the old man, 'But let me tell you about my weekend!' Not all seniors are senile!

Christmas Eve Shopping:

A couple was Christmas shopping at the mall on Christmas Eve and the mall was packed. As the wife walked through the mall she was surprised to look up and see her husband nowhere to be found. She was quite upset because they had a lot to do. Because she was so worried, she called him on her mobile phone to ask him where he was. In a calm voice, the husband said, "Honey, you remember the jewelry store we went into about 5 years ago where you fell in love with that diamond necklace that we could not afford and I told you that I would get it for you one day?" The wife choked up and started to cry and said, "Yes, I remember that jewelry store." He said, "Well, I'm in the bar right next to it."

Three Blondes and The Texas Highway Patrol:

Three blondes were all applying for the last available position on the Texas Highway Patrol. The detective conducting the interview looked at the three of them and said, "So y'all want to be cops, huh?" The blondes all nodded. The detective got up, opened a file drawer, and pulled out a folder. Sitting back down, he opened it, pulled out a picture, and said, "To be a detective, you have to be able to detect. You must be able to notice things such as distinguishing features and oddities like scars and so forth." So saying, he stuck the photo in the face of the first blonde and withdrew it after about two seconds. "Now," he said, "did you notice any



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distinguishing features about this man?" The blonde immediately said, "Yes, I did. He has only one eye!" The detective shook his head and said, "Of course he has only one eye in this picture! It's a profile of his face! You're dismissed!" The first blonde hung her head and walked out of the office. The detective then turned to the second blonde, stuck the photo in her face for two seconds, pulled it back, and said, "What about you? Notice anything unusual or outstanding about this man?" "Yes! He only has one ear!" The detective put his head in his hands and exclaimed, "Didn't you hear what I just told the other lady? This is a profile of the man's face! Of course you can only see one ear! You're excused too!" The second blonde sheepishly walked out of the office. The detective turned his attention to the third and last blonde and said, "This is probably a waste of time, but.....". He flashed the photo in her face for a couple of seconds and withdrew it, saying, "All right, did you notice anything distinguishing or unusual about this man?" The blonde said, "I sure did. This man wears contact lenses." The detective frowned, took another look at the picture, and began looking at some of the papers in the folder. He looked up at the blonde with a puzzled expression and said, "You're absolutely right! His bio says he wears contacts! How in the world could you tell that by looking at his picture?" The blonde rolled her eyes and said, "Well, Helloooooooooooooo! With only one eye and one ear, he certainly can't wear glasses."

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 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!"

Rudolph:

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".

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

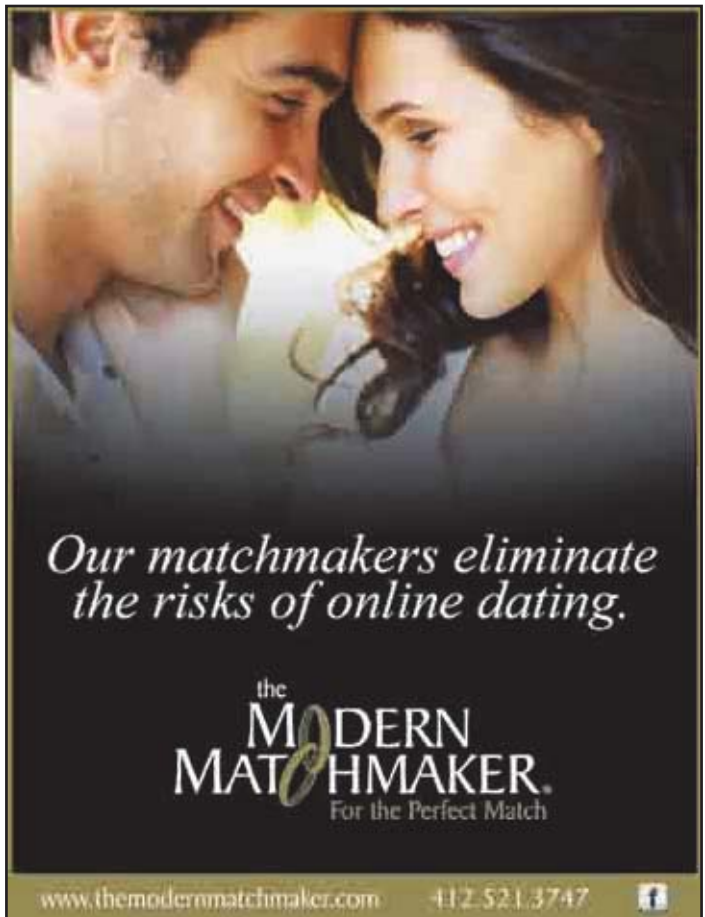
easy for everyone's pockets. This gathering is only for employees! A special announcement will be made by our CEO at that time! Merry Christmas to you and your family.
Patty

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 a table that reads "AA Only" you wouldn't be anonymous anymore.



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FROM: Patty Lewis, Human Resources Director

TO: All Employees

DATE: December 7

RE: Holiday Party

What a diverse group we are! 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 lettuce and 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

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."

Santa Hates Your Kid

8. Kid's letter to North Pole comes back stamped, "Dream on, Kid!"
7. Kid asks for new bike, gets pack of gum.
6. Along with presents, Santa leaves hefty bill for shipping and handling.
5. By the time he gets to your house, all he has left is foam packing.
4. Christmas day, your kid wakes up with a Reindeer head in his bed.
3. Instead of "Naughty" or "Nice", Santa has him on the stupid list.
2. Labels on all your kid's toys read "Straight from Craptown."
1. Four words: "Off my lap, Tubby!"

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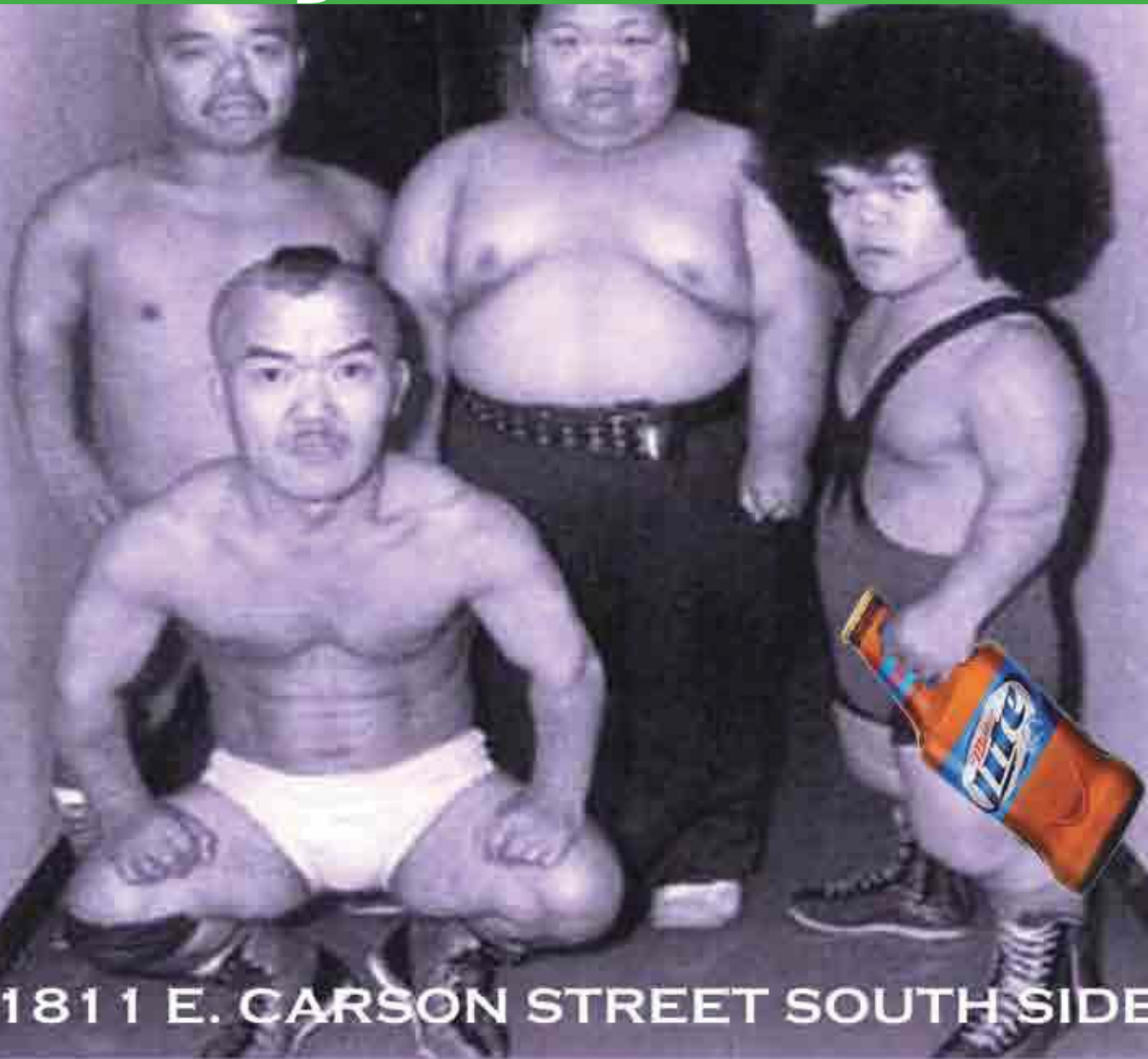
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