

Christmas' true meaning lost

We have lost the true meaning of Christmas by allowing our priorities to be jumbled up in our hectic society. Shoppers gripe about stores putting up Christmas items before Thanksgiving but the reason they do it is because there is a demand for it. Those who do not want to see Christmas decorations before Nov. 1, shouldn't go shopping until after Thanksgiving.

We get so carried away with buying gifts, decorating trees, and plugging in the lights we have lost the meaning of Christmas. We have no one to blame but ourselves and we are the only ones who can change it.

The American marketing system creates something new each season to take our money. Just this year there is a new chocolate nativity scene. Jesus Christ was not born to make marketers rich.

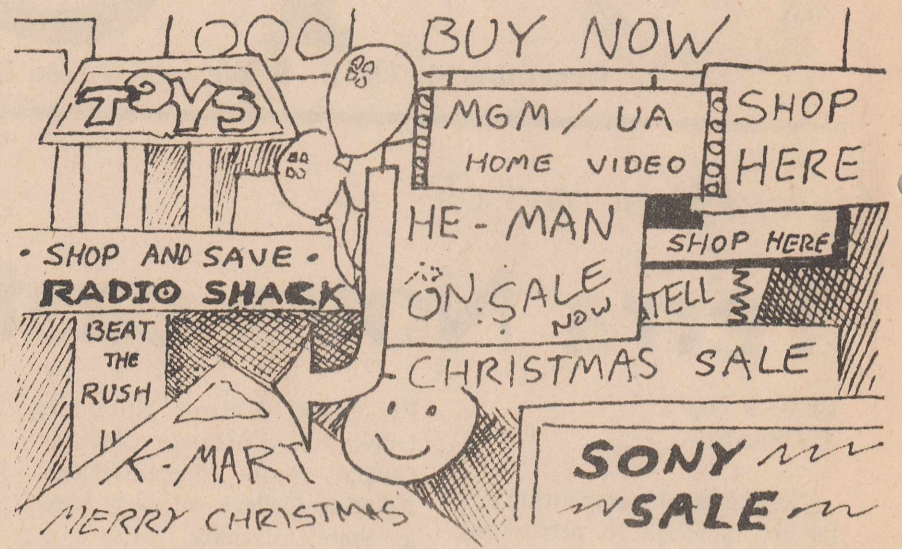
Generations are being raised with all the gifts and tinsel. Perhaps they are not being told the true meaning of Christmas. It is the parent's and the grandparent's responsibility to pass it down from generation to generation. This is one holiday we can't afford to lose.

We realize that this is the gift giving season, but some people think it's more important to receive a gift than to give one. They have it just backwards, you are receiving something far more rewarding than a gift by giving someone something. We all talk about how expensive Christmas is getting, but we still go out and buy hundreds and hundreds of dollars worth of gifts.

There are many types of gifts. We have gotten away from making homemade gifts. People think you have to go out and buy an expensive gift, when really a simple homemade gift or card is all it takes to express the true meaning of Christmas. It takes so little effort to write a card, draw a picture, or what ever you do creatively.

Sometimes the best gift is the gift of ourselves. What better way to give than to give of our time and talents to someone who needs them. Many of the elderly in nursing homes depend on strangers to bring Christmas into their lives.

Generations before us did without Dillard's, Kmart and Walmart - so can we.



WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS
WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS
WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND AN EXPENSIVE RETURN. NO LOANS
NO AID., THATS RIGHT YOU MUST
PAY. WE WISH YOU A MERRY
CHRISTMAS AND A
FLUNKING NEW YEAR



Coffee Break

By Sandy Ross

No joy in smoking

In the last issue of *The Western Texan*, the editorial was about the foolishness of smoking. In all fairness, you should be told about all the joys of smoking. As a person who has smoked for over 20 years, I am more than qualified for the job.

Every morning, I get to wake up with a hacking cough. But that's all right; it only lasts for a few minutes and then I can have the first cigarette of the day.

I never have to worry about spending money on expensive perfumes, because no matter what I do, I am always surrounded by the exotic aroma of "Essence of Ashtray". Anyway, who can afford perfume when they're supporting a \$500 per year habit.

I never have to worry about resisting the temptation for a midnight snack, because by that time of day, my throat is too sore to swallow.

Mark Twain once said, "It is easy to stop smoking. I've done it hundreds of times." I can definitely understand that.

I am an expert on every sure fire method ever put forth, but my good intentions only last until my throat stops hurting and my cough goes away. After a period

of abstinence, that first cigarette tastes great. Unfortunately, after that they start tasting like a dirty ashtray again.

As you may have begun to suspect by now, I'm really not too wild about this habit. One of the few things that I have real battles with my daughter about is smoking. She hates the smell of cigarettes, and since we live in a tiny house, she is as much a victim of my habit as I am. Every time she gets a chest cold, I feel like it is my fault—and probably it is.

Guilty feelings aside, that doesn't keep me from lighting up. I don't feel that I have any choice.

I have a feeling that the shorter the length of time you have been smoking has a bearing on how difficult it is to quit. Maybe if I had made a real effort 10 or 15 years ago, I would have been more successful.

I know from experience that being lectured on the hazards of smoking doesn't do any good. But maybe being told about the pitfalls by someone who is neither a reformed smoker nor someone who has never smoked, may make a new smoker stop and think before it's too late.

Counselor's Corner

By Dan Osborne

Medical careers on upswing

Medical careers are expected to provide a good supply of job openings and better than average salaries through the next decade. Excellent opportunities await technicians in radiology, biomedical equipment, nuclear medicine, medical records, as well as nurses.

Advanced medical careers often overlooked are dentistry, optometry, speech pathology and occupational therapy.

For the first time in many years, dental schools are actively recruiting junior college students. A significant drop in enrollment has allowed students with 60

hours of college credit to enter dental school (a bachelors degree has traditionally been a minimum criteria). Four years of study are then required at a dental school. Average starting salary: \$30,000 plus.

Optometrists also need 4 years of training after completing 60 semester hours. The University of Houston houses Texas' only school of optometry. Average starting salary: \$35,000 plus.

Due to public law mandates for handicapped children, more opportunities are opening for speech pathologists and occupational therapists. Speech

pathologists treat such disorders as stuttering, aphasia, delayed language development and stroke related voice problems. Average starting salary: \$20,000.

Schools of physical therapy are finding an oversupply of applicants. On the other hand, occupational therapist programs are recruiting qualified applicants, because their programs are less well known, and the demand for graduates is increasing.

Occupational therapists combine imagination and ingenuity to help handicapped persons function in daily life. They may figure out ways for a paraplegic to get

into a car and use hand controls; a stroke victim to utilize a paralyzed arm to cook and take care of himself; or help a brain damaged child to overcome a learning disability. Average starting salary: \$19,000.

Science and research are learning so much, so fast, that health careers are multiplying faster than our schools can train new workers.

This growing imbalance between jobs available and the people to fill them, has caused a manpower shortage in the health care field that is predicted to last into the next century.

Long Talk

By Tom Long

Special "magic" in pride for America

In January when 1986 becomes 1987 it will be another bicentennial year. Many people do not realize that in 1987 our constitution will be 200 years old. This is a document that is still very useful and perhaps the most important part of the United States.

Our country was built and has prospered with those very ideas. On Walt Disney's 15th Anniversary special a while back, there

was a segment dedicated to the writing of the constitution and its meaning.

It brought across the fact that in the Magic Kingdom there was a special "magic" in the air. I then began to realize that there is that same "magic" across the U.S.

This "magic" has made Americans realize that we, as a nation, were falling behind and

certain citizens met that challenge to make America number one. The "magic" brought the Chrysler Corporation out of the red. It also took that same "magic" that inspired millions to send their donations to restore the Statue of Liberty.

This "magic" can be considered the pride of America. There is a certain kind of pride to be an American. Abe Lincoln

once said, "Pride is the planting seed for freedom, when it dies so does freedom."

In about a week, students will be going home to be with family as they unwrap their Christmas presents. Let us not forget what the true meaning of the holiday is and also take into mind that this is what created the "magic" in this country.

Have A Merry Christmas!



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