



TEENS MATTER

A PARENTING TEENS DIGEST

BOONE COUNTY STEP AHEAD COUNCIL

DECEMBER ISSUE

December is here once again and many people are preparing for the holiday season. Some of us will be traveling, others will be hosting gatherings with family and friends and still some, unfortunately, may be experiencing a loss or loneliness. Whatever circumstances or traditions you have this time of year, we wish everyone pleasant memories from the past, peace and hope for the future and a wonderful beginning to a New Year.

During the month of December I try to read articles on “How to Reduce Stress”. I don’t always follow them, but at least I know what I *should* do. Therefore, for one month only, trivial information will fill your head. You never know when these bits of knowledge that deal with the Holiday season might come up in conversation and you will have the answers! All of the information presented to you comes from a really great web site: www.howstuffworks.com



WHO IS THIS REINDEER NAMED RUDOLPH?

...who guides Santa’s sleigh with the biological aberration of a red, glowing nose capable of penetrating thick fog?

The whole story of Rudolph appeared, out of nowhere, in 1939. Santa’s at Montgomery Ward stores gave away 2.4 million copies of a book entitled “Rudolph the Red-Nose Reindeer.” A person in the advertising department named Robert May wrote the story, and Denver Gillen illustrated the booklet. The original name of the reindeer was not Rudolph, according to the book “Extraordinary Origins of Everyday Things”, by Charles Panati. The original name was Rollo, but executives did not like that name, or Reginald. The name Rudolph came from the author’s young daughter? In 1949, Gene Autry sang a musical version of the poem and it was a run-away best seller. The Rudolph song is second only to “White Christmas” in popularity.

WHY IS THERE A SMALL EVERGREEN TREE IN THE LIVING ROOM?

This is a German tradition, started as early as 700 A.D. In the 1800s the tradition of a Christmas tree was widespread in Germany, then moved to England and then to American through Pennsylvanian German immigrants, who settled primarily in Pennsylvania. You might think that all people in the 1800s went out to their back yard or to the closest patch of forest to chop down their holiday tree, but Christmas trees have been sold commercially in the United States since the mid 1800s. In North American alone, there are more than 15, 000 tree growers with more than 1 million acres of land planted with Christmas trees. Oregon is the leading producer and Michigan offers the greatest number of varieties grown by any state. It can take from seven to 12 years of field growth for the average 6 or 7-foot tree to be ready to harvest.



WHY IS THIS EVERGREEN DECORATED

...with ornaments, lights, fake snow and Mylar plastic tinsel

In Victorian times, people had already started decorating trees with candies and cakes hung with ribbon. In 1880, Woolworth's¹ first sold manufactured, the now very popular, Christmas tree ornaments. Martin Luther, in the 16th. century, is credited as being the first person to put candles on a tree, and the first electrically lighted Christmas tree appeared in 1882.

Calvin Coolidge in 1923 ceremoniously lit the first outdoor tree at the White House starting that long tradition. Fake snow and tinsel...Who Knows? It's probably related to that very popular song by Bing Crosby "White Christmas".

WHO IS THIS SANTA PERSON?

Amazingly, but true, is the common popular view of Santa that we have today, along with the things around him like the sleigh, reindeer and the chimney, all came largely from two

publishing events that occurred in the 1800s and one advertising campaign in this century. Clement Moore wrote "The Night Before Christmas" in 1822 for his family. It was picked up by a newspaper, reprinted in magazines and spread like wildfire. Moore admitted authorship in 1838. If you read the poem you find that he names



the reindeer, invents the sleigh, comes up with the chimney and the bag of toys, etc. Nearly everyone in American has been able to recognize or recite this poem since the 1830s. Between 1863 and 1886, Harper's Weekly (a popular Magazine of the time) ran a series of engravings by Thomas Nast. From these images come the concepts of Santa's workshop, Santa reading letters, Santa checking his list and so on. The red and white suit came from the original Saint Nicholas. Those colors were the colors of the traditional bishop's robes.

THE ORIGIN OF A POPULAR CHRISTMAS CAROL

Another well known Christmas carol, "Silent Night" was written and first performed on Christmas Eve at St. Nikolas Church in Oberndorf, Salzburg, Austria, in 1818. According to legend, the church organ was broken and the town was snowbound. Church vicar, Joseph Mohr wrote the lyrics on the spot and handed them to organist Franz Gruber, who composed the original melody for two voices and a choir with guitar accompaniment, just in time for midnight mass. By 1955, "Silent Night" had become the most recorded song of all time.

Percolator Punch

1-quart apple cider, 1 pint cranberry juice, 1 cup orange juice, and 3/4 cup lemon juice

Put the above juices in a percolator. Put following ingredients in the perk basket.

1 c. sugar, 1 tsp. whole allspice, 1 tsp whole cloves, 3 sticks of cinnamon.

Allow to go through the perk cycle. Serve hot. Makes 16 (punch size) cups.

Perked Punch (recipe # 2)

Combine in bottom of a 6-cup percolator:

1 pint cranberry juice cocktail

1 No. 2 can unsweeten pineapple juice

1/2 cup water

1/3 cup brown sugar, packed

Put spices in basket: 1/2 T. whole cloves, 1/2 T. whole allspice, 3 2-inch sticks cinnamon, broken.

Perk till hot, remove spice basket.

(Tip: can use about half of spices; still will flavor nicely)

¹ For those of you who are too young to remember, Woolworth's was a very popular 5 & 10¢ store.