



Wife goes on a binge with lights and garland

My house is awash in a sea of decorations. My wife has gone on a binge with the lights and garlands and little trees and whatnot. Every flat surface invites more.

And she's not done yet. We haven't had this much Christmas fancy since the year our house was on the Holiday Homes Tour. And frankly, it's getting so it has more decorations than most of the houses on the tour this year.

Cynthia started with the outside lights. I was gone that day. We'd gotten the boxes and bins down from the garage attic the day before.

By the time I got home that night, she had most of the bushes in the front yard covered. I pitched in to help fill some holes, but the job was pretty much done. Next day, she was out stringing more white lights on the corner bushes. You'd think three strings each would be enough, but they are big bushes.

Then she replaced the rope lights I'd put on the front walk with C7 lights. I'm not sure why, but they do look better. She even put lights on the dried-up mum plants.

The next time I came home, she was on a ladder, using a long pole and a hook to string lights on what we still call "the little cedar tree." We discovered the tree 10, 12 years ago, growing at the corner of the old garage. The guy who tore the garage down saved her in a coffee can, and we planted her between the back and side yards.

While she's still our little cedar, she's close to 20 feet today. Getting lights up there is a chore, and Cynthia was not having much luck. Most of them sorta fell into a clump. I promised to get out and help fix them, but we went to Lawrence to see our son's new house instead.

Cynthia was not deterred, however. She just moved indoors. The next week, she started with the tree, then decorated the mantle. That involves moving all the hardback books stored there and replacing them with little trees. Then she puts all our Christmas cards among the little fake evergreens.

She cleared out the fireplace, hauling the logs we never burn and the heavy iron fire basket to the garage. Swept and cleaned, the fireplace is

ready for the big ceramic Nativity set whenever she gets another day.

Then she turned her attention again to the tree, an artificial one my mom bought years ago. I thought it was looking a little peaked, but a friend came in and asked if was a real tree. Go figure.

She festooned it with lights and ornaments and tinsel, then wrapped all the packages and put them under it, along with the three leather camels from Tunisia, including the big one named Sweeney, and the alligator she found in the tree. (See her column last week for an explanation.) For good measure, or to complete the tableau, Molly, the diabetic cat, took up residence under the tree, too.

Then Cynthia started looking for flat surfaces. She cleared off the top of her cedar chest and filled with my old oil lanterns, white fluff and Christmas lights. I had to fix the string, but it was the least I could do. Then she covered the top of the old ice box that serves as our liquor cabinet and strung lights across it and three houseplants taking refuge in the dining room.

Not done yet, she moved to the kitchen, where I'd just completed the finish on the inside of the new bay window. She filled that in a flash with a little tree, a lantern, garland and lights.

Then she was on to the "TV" room upstairs, where I'd mostly cleared off the antique table by the windows. I'm not sure what happened to the pile of stuff I hadn't figured out what to do with yet. Maybe it just got covered in fluff and lights. I'm sure I'll find it come spring.

One good thing about all this: When I have to get up in the middle of the night, I can see what I'm going to trip over. Most of the rooms have lots of lights, and those that don't bask in the glow from the bushes and the cedar tree outside. You could read a book in a couple of those rooms.

The scary part is, she's not done. She's still got to put out that Nativity set and probably string lights and fluff all around it. If we're lucky, she'll finish before Epiphany, when it's time to put all the lights and wreaths away.

—Steve Haynes



Reader wants newspaper owner's opinion replaced

Letter to the Editor— Please replace the Steve Haynes' opinion column with something like the Pledge—Bill of Rights—Constitution, instead of Progressive Blatting of non Facts! When the attack on Kris Koback does not include, Airlines—Drivers license—Social Security—Banks—U.S. Gov't Buildings—Medicare Hospitals, for a photo I'd, the facts are being distorted! Well we wouldn't want facts to interfere with A Really good Opinion. There is a new book out, "The Joy of Hate," good read Mr. Haynes. U.S. Supreme Court seems to agree with Mr. Koback.

Letter to the Editor

I suspect the Taxpayer Bailout of a Private Business that has been in the county for years, taking the profit elsewhere, and not keeping the business upgraded is OK? Now we will sell it to the county for \$1, DUMPING this Dinosaur, that needs to be bulldozed, onto the county taxpayer! Then they will run it for us if we guarantee them a profit—without a monthly profit and loss statement! The reason it is a dollar, is that every nickel they sell it for over ZERO is capital gain—because I'm sure Good Sam has depreciated it out a long, long time ago. If it is so

Great for The Cheyenne County Taxpayers, why don't they keep it? I fail to understand why our Commissioners haven't ceased talking to these people a long time ago! Progressive's Love the Idea—Smaller Government—Lower Taxes—Government owning private Business, (Illegal) sure don't seem to fit here! So here it is Editor—and if you need a Photo I'd print it, I as a Proud Republican Taxpaying American, will show it to you! Larry B. Wilson St. Francis

Open Season

The Gift of the Magi

By Cynthia Haynes



I'm calling it "The Gift of the Magi."

No, I'm not talking about the wise men from the east. I'm talking about the O'Henry short story about a young couple with no money and a desire to give each other a wonderful Christmas present.

Each gets rid of their most prized possession to buy a gift. She cuts and sells her long hair to purchase a watch fob for him and he pawns his watch to purchase fancy combs for her hair.

Well, I wanted to get something special for Christmas for our oldest daughter and her husband. We had already gotten presents for the youngest daughter and our son, but the oldest was a problem.

I finally hit on the idea of giving them money. But, not just any money – this would be something that would say "we love you and want you to have a great time."

For several years, they have talked of visiting Ireland, and when his sister married and moved to England a year ago, they said they were going to go visit her – and maybe see a bit more of the British Isles while they were there.

This fall, they said, they were definitely going to England next spring or summer. So, I decided to get them foreign currency. England is part of the European Common Market, so I went to the bank and ordered \$200 in euros.

It would have been cheaper to just give them the check, but I thought this would be more fun. We would be blessing their trip and encouraging them to have a good time. I also viewed it as shopping at home, since the bank here gets a small commission on this type of transaction.

The day the money was to come in, Steve said he woke up in the middle of the night and remembered that they don't use euros in England. While they joined the Common Market, he explained,

they kept their own currency.

Well great, now it was too late to get English money, and I had a whole fistful of money good in places my children weren't planning to visit. Except, I discovered, Ireland. They use euros in Ireland.

I told my story to some friends and one offered me a couple of pound coins. They were very pretty, he said. He and his wife had brought them back from Egypt as small presents for friends.

OK, I got the coins. They are pretty. They are also worthless unless you are shopping in Egypt, but they ARE pound coins. I added them to my collection and mailed the whole mess off to Georgia.

I'm not sure what the kids are going to do with an envelope of "funny money," especially since daughter called the other day to say she wasn't sure if they would get to go to England this year.

Her sister-in-law and husband are coming to the U.S. in the spring, our younger daughter is having a baby then and the upstairs bathroom leak turned into a huge, expensive project.

I wonder if their plumber would take euros?

Honor Roll

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As this year fades and the dawn of the next approaches, I am struck with a thought.

The other day I was lamenting with a friend about the recent shootings across our country. We arrived to the theory that it all comes down to common respect for others.

There is so much finger pointing going on that blame is being thrown in every direction. But maybe we all are to blame?

We seem to live in a society where individual rights are out weighing the good of all. Folks are so busy demanding respect for themselves that the needs of others are not a concern.

Being a simple Irish-American working stiff, I don't understand many things. But there is one idea I have picked up along my journey through life. That is, we are all in this together.

I truly believe God created us

to care for one another. It isn't enough to pay taxes and put a couple bucks in the plate at church each week. We need to think of the people around us and try to help each other where needed.

While on a visit before I moved to this area I was talking with a local farmer. His words were, "Out here you can get along okay if when a neighbor needs a hand, you help."

GOD SAYS

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

John 14:1-2

Those are such simple words. But I think we forget the simple things sometimes.

Now I'm the first person who needs to put this concept into practice. I hope to do a better job in 2013.

By Casey McCormick
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Church of Christ
332-2380, Pars. 332-3424
502 W. Spencer
Norman Morrow - Minister
Bible Class 9 a.m.
Morning Worship 10 a.m.

St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church
625 S. River • 332-2680
Fr. Carlos Ruiz Santos
1st Sunday of the month
Morning Mass 8:30 am
Sunday Mass 10:30 a.m.
Weekday Mass 8:00 a.m.
Confessions Sat. 4-4:30

First Baptist Church
2nd & Scott • 332-3921
J.W. Glidewell, Pastor
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Service 6:30 p.m.,
Wed. AWANA Club 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

United Methodist Church Office 332-2292,
Church 332-2254,
512 S. Scott
Pastor Warren Cico
Early Bird Service 8:30 a.m.
Sunday School 10:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30 a.m.

Salem Lutheran Church
332-3002
Pastor Chris Farmer
Sunday School 10 a.m.
Morning Worship 11 a.m.
Communion 3rd Sunday

St. Francis Community Church
332-3150
204 N. Quincy Street
www.sfccfamily.com
Pastor: David Butler
Sunday School 9:15 a.m.
Worship Service 10:30 a.m.
Potluck & Communion - Every 2nd Sunday
Wednesday Bible Study 7 p.m.

Solid Rock Baptist Church
412 S. Denison
Welcomes You!
Pastor Allen Coon
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30
Prayer Meeting, Wed 7:30 p.m.

Seventh-Day Adventist Church
423-650-5663 • 3rd & Adams
Pastor James McCurdy
Sabbath School 9:30
Morning Worship 10:45

Peace Lutheran Church, AFLC
202 N. College
Pastor Randy Nelson
Church 332-2928
Parsonage 332-2312
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30 a.m.
Communion 1st Sunday

First Christian Church
Pastor Jeff Landers
332-2956 • 118 E. Webster
Church Service 10 a.m.

St. Francis Equity

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