

Opinion



Free Press Viewpoint

Baby's birth is still mankind's #1 story

We are just hours away now from Christmas. It's a safe bet that you are done, finally, with your Christmas shopping.

Christmas, celebrating the birth of the baby Jesus has, over the years, become one of the hottest revenue generating seasons for the business world. For many it's a do-or-die time — do the sales...or die.

Like Christmas itself, each year at this time chatter abounds as it relates to overlooking the real meaning of the celebration. But when you think about it, the birth of the baby Jesus was also celebrated with gifts.

So perhaps the practice of buying gifts on this most celebrated holiday got its start at that very special birth.

We were never the kind to heap criticism on the commercialization of Christmas. And contrary to so-called popular belief, the baby Jesus hasn't been eliminated. Just look around. He's everywhere. While we have never taken Christ out of Christmas it's a sure bet most of you haven't either. He's always been there, always will be.

The nativity scene we have at home speaks volumes of the special day that is peeking over the horizon. And while we have joined the untold millions of others who have picked from the shelves of merchants to satisfy the ever growing list, we focus on the reason for so doing.

So don't feel guilty, We don't. Giving is one of the positives, character building if you wish, on which we will all be judged.

And here's something else about Christmas that you probably have never given thought: it's the lone holiday that literally brings this country and many others to a complete standstill? Talk about the power of a baby's birth.

Tom (TD) Dreiling
Free Press Publisher
Merry Christmas to each of you!

Comments to any opinions expressed on this page are encouraged. Mail them to the Colby Free Press, 155 W. 5th St., Colby, Kan., 67701. Or e-mail td@nwkansas.com, fax 785 462-7749 or drop by the office. All submissions must carry the signature of the writer, address and telephone number — address and telephone are for verification only.

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No winner in Colby-Pratt link

NOBODY came up with the right answer to last week's question (#4 in my series), "What does Colby, Kansas and Pratt, Kansas have in common?" I even gave you a clue — it has to do with music.

This column is appearing today because we won't be doing a newspaper on Friday, Christmas Eve. If a holiday, such as Christmas, falls on the weekend, we generally observe it on either Friday or Monday. The Christmas holiday is one of six we observe each year, the others being New Year's Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day and Thanksgiving.

Back to the question, "What does Colby, Kansas and Pratt, Kansas have in common?" And music being the clue? I told you the answer would really be off the wall and you would have to stretch your imagination to come up with it.

Most people guessed the Miss Kansas Pageant inasmuch as it is held in Pratt and Colby figured in the title some years back. You would think there could be no other answer.

But there is, and remember I warned you. So, here it is:

"Colby, Kansas and Pratt, Kansas have the same state song, 'Home on the Range.'"

Among comments received were:

√Ronan Sramek, "You got me there—the only thing I can think of is that frogs and eagles both make music of some kind..."

√Arlen Walters, "Miss Colby won the Miss Kansas Beauty Pageant at Pratt, Kansas while the band played the K-State fight song."

√Jeff Emmot, "I want to say there was a Miss Kansas (can't remember the year) from Colby, Ks...and of course the Miss Kansas Pageant is held at Pratt. I'll even bet the Miss KS from Colby sang for her talent competition."

Pretty much all answers swirled around the pageant.

Are you ready for question #5?

"What does Colby, Kansas and Derby, Kansas have in common?" No clues because this one is rather simple. Just think.



Tom Dreiling

● My Turn

I won't be in my office next week so this will give you lots of time to come up with an answer, which will appear on Friday, Jan. 7.

Any ideas? E-mail me at td@nwkansas.com, fax 462-7749, or mail to me at 155 W. 5th, Colby 67701. You can even drop off your answer at the office.

ON the lighter side...

One winter morning a couple was listening to the radio while eating breakfast. They hear the announcer say, "We are going to have 8 to 10 inches of snow today. You must park your car on the even-numbered side of the street, so the snowplows can get through." Norman's wife goes out and moves her car. A week later while they are eating breakfast again, the radio announcer says, "We are expecting 10 to 12 inches of snow today. You must park your car on the odd-numbered side of the street, so the snowplows can get through." Norman's wife goes out and moves her car again. The next week they are again having breakfast, when the radio announcer says "We are expecting 12 to 14 inches of snow today. You must park..." Then the electric power goes out. Norman's wife is very upset, and with a worried look on her face she says, "Honey, I don't know what to do. Which side of the street do I need to park on so the snowplows can get through?"

With the love and understanding in his voice that all men who are married to blondes exhibit, Norman says, "Why don't you just leave it in the garage this time?"

Teach the children

T D

● At Week's End

Today's submission is courtesy Joan Albers and also Grace Jones. Timely. Read and enjoy.-td

Teach the Children

This is how it happened...

I just finished the household chores for the night and was preparing to go to bed, when I heard a noise in the front of the house. I opened the door to the front room and to my surprise, Santa himself stepped out from behind the Christmas tree.

He placed his finger over his mouth so I would not cry out. "What are you doing?" I started to ask. The words choked up in my throat, and I saw he had tears in his eyes. His usual jolly manner was gone. Gone was the eager, boisterous soul we all know.

He then answered me with a simple statement.

"TEACH THE CHILDREN!"

I was puzzled; what did he mean? He anticipated my question, and with one quick movement brought forth a miniature toy bag from behind the tree. As I stood bewildered, Santa said, "Teach the children! Teach them the old meaning of Christmas. The meaning that now-a-days Christmas has forgotten."

Santa then reached in his bag and pulled out a FIR TREE and placed it before the mantle.

"Teach the children that the pure green color of the stately fir tree remains green all year round, depicting the everlasting hope of mankind, all the needles point heavenward, making it a symbol of man's thoughts turning toward heaven."

He again reached into his bag and pulled out a brilliant STAR.

"Teach the children that the star was the heavenly sign of promises long ago. God promised a

Savior for the world, and the star was the sign of fulfillment of His promise."

He then reached into his bag and pulled out a CANDLE.

"Teach the children that the candle symbolizes that Christ is the light of the world, and when we see this great light we are reminded of He who displaces the darkness."

Once again he reached into his bag and removed a WREATH and placed it on the tree.

"Teach the children that the wreath symbolizes the real nature of love. Real love never ceases. Love is one continuous round of affection."

He then pulled from his bag an ornament of himself.

"Teach the children that I, Santa Clause symbolize the generosity and good will we feel during the month of December."

He then brought out a HOLLY LEAF.

"Teach the children that the holly plant represents immortality. It represents the crown of thorns worn by our Savior. The red holly represents the blood shed by Him."

Next he pulled from his bag a GIFT and said, "Teach the children that God so loved the world that HE gave HIS begotten SON..."

"Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift," he said.

A PANEL was discussing the drug mess we find ourselves in on one of the radio stations in the Denver vicinity. They were giving tips on how to lower your prescription costs. The #1 tip: buy generic. Oh sure, buy generic. Those panelists need to climb out of their caves to get a touch of reality. I asked my pharmacist if they had generics for Vioxx and Lipitor. Of course they don't. Those are the Cadillacs of the drug world and generics for those are many years away. I caught the very end of a report this morning and didn't catch the name but apparently there is another over-the-counter remedy that is coming into focus as possibly another culprit in this game of chance — with your life.

IF YOU really love snow, then Ohio should be your state of choice. Some areas up there have upward of 15 to 20 inches of the white stuff, with howling winds. We could get a couple of inches from this first winter disturbance surrounding our area.

I SEE where Washington state still doesn't know who its governor is. The Republican man was declared the winner by less than 45 votes out of several millions cast several days after the election. Then recounts were forced and now the Democrat lady is head by 10. People, what in the world gives? Florida, now Washington state, and a few others have shadows over their heads. How come it's so difficult to count votes, if by hand or machine? We keep concerning ourselves with fair elections in foreign countries while right here at home there doesn't seem to be any fairness. Why?

HAVE a good evening, a Merry Christmas and a nice weekend. And be sure to fit church into your schedule.

Tom Dreiling is publisher of the Free Press. His column appears Wednesdays and Fridays. td@nwkansas.com.

"Teach the children that the wise men bowed before the Holy BABE and presented HIM with gold, frankincense and myrrh. We should always give gifts in the same spirit of the wise men."

Santa then reached in his bag and pulled out a CANDY CANE and hung it on the tree.

"Teach the children that the candy cane represents the shepherds' crook. The crook on the staff helps to bring back strayed sheep to the flock. The candy cane is the symbol that we are our brother's keeper."

He reached in again and pulled out an ANGEL.

"Teach the children that it was the angels that heralded in the glorious news of the Savior's birth. The angels sang 'Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace and good will toward men.'"

Suddenly I heard a soft twinkling sound, and from his bag he pulled out a BELL.

"Teach the children that as the lost sheep are found by the sound of the bell, it should ring mankind to the fold. The bell symbolizes guidance and return."

Santa looked back and was pleased. He looked back at me and I saw that the twinkle was back in his eyes. He said, "Remember, teach the children the true meaning of Christmas and do not put me in the center, for I am but an humble servant of the One that is, and I bow down to worship HIM, our LORD, our GOD."

From this corner to yours, Merry Christmas!

If you would like to submit something for this column, please e-mail it to td@nwkansas.com, fax it to 462-7749, mail it to 155 W. 5th, Colby 67701, call 462-3963 or drop by the office. Thanks...and a Merry Christmas to all of you readers. - td

DEAR EDITOR - HERE IS THE CHRISTMAS CARTOON, HAPPY HOLIDAYS - DICK