Ron's Rants

Ron Middleton
Staff Writer

Ghost of Christmas past

12-21-2001

I had a real Scrooge moment the other day when the Ghost of Christmas past visited me - in the form of a dusty, old photo album.

The tattered binder contained a visual record of every Christmas since I was born, with one picture each year dedicated to the mountain of toys I received - the Christmas "booty."

Sorry for the bad pirate reference, but every year, I felt like I had discovered the *'Lost Treasure of the Toy People.'*

Each yellowed picture was the same - me in one corner smiling like I'd just won the lottery and toys... *EVERYWHERE!*

There were toys on the couch, on the back of the couch, on the arms of the couch, on the table in front of the couch, under the table in front of the couch, and in front of the table in frnpt of the couch.

They also came in every shape and size, from ones I could barely get my little arms around to the tiniest of trinkets.

But on December 24, 1979, I set in motion events that would change my holiday experiences forever.

I guess the excitement of the season had gotten to me and I was a bit delirious at getting my usual haul of toys in just a few short hours and I uttered the words that would echo through eternity:

"Mom, will you just go get all my presents out of the closets so we *BOTH* can get some sleep?"

DOH!

That day is now known as 'The Day I Ruined Christmas for My Parents.'

I wouldn't realize what seeds my words had sown until the *NEXT* Christmas.

While I still got a lot of toys (I was 10 years old after all), I noticed that a few more... ugh... *useful* gifts slipped in the mix.

Santa never brought me socks.

And underwear?

What had I done to deserve this?

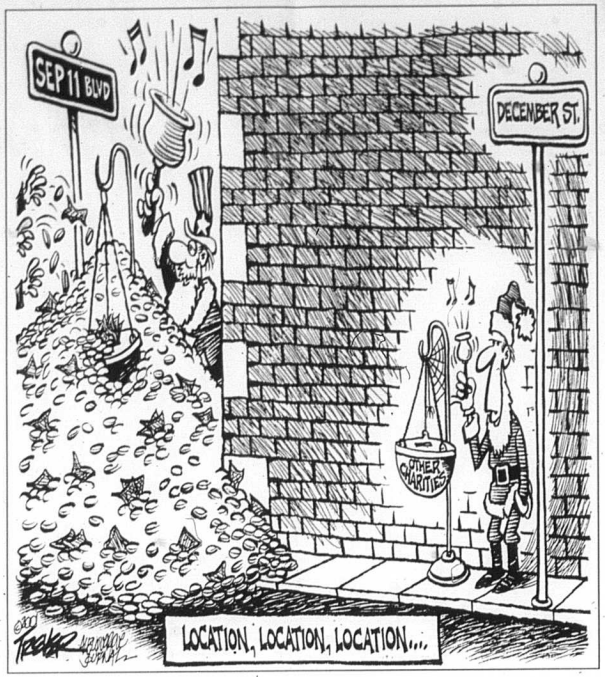
The *useful* gifts even crept their way into other family gatherings.

It's as if everybody knew that I had lost my belief in Santa and I was being penalized by getting what I needed, instead of what I wanted. I wasn't *THAT* grown up yet.

I had always questioned

See GHOST on 5

Viewpoint



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Commentary

A small break before b-ball heats up

From the Sidelines

Denver Brown
Sports Editor

Before the roundball action really heats up, it's time for the ol' sportswriter to take a bit of a seasonal break. It's not enough just to flip on ESPN Saturday and watch other people fightin' the finned beasts in Florida - it's time, again, for me to try my luck.

For the next few issues, I'll be down in the Sunshine State checking in on the vote counters and dropping a bait to-a grouper, a red snapper, a shark or a crab for that matter. It's vacation time again and the Gone Fishin' is on my desk.

My teams have turned in some pretty impressive hoops outings so far this season and I'm looking forward to the rest of the season; especially with District matchups highlighting most of the January scheduling.

But until then...

Nothing refreshes the tangled-up nerves and acid-producing guts of an aging community writer like the sun and the waves. The folks on *The Fish Finder* will be my next of kin for the next week or so. Getting up at 4 a.m. to pack a snack and get to the boat is a heckuva lot easier than waking to type before the sun climbs in the sky.

I'm not sure what I'll catch, and for that matter I don't really care. It's a vacation and anything on the stringer at the end of the day is a bonus. I say this before the plane leaves and before we head out in the Gulf - if I don't at least snag a "bait box" baby, I may have to take up shuffleboard or Bingo. After all, I'll be on the west coast of Florida. And if you need help filling out your senior discount club card, that's the place to be!

Here's to continued success to my teams over the next few games. And I'll be back under the baskets taking pictures and scribbling down notes before you know it - unless Saltwater Sportsman is looking for a conformed bluegill angler!

See you at the game - I'll be the tanned one with the fishing hook scars on my fingers!

THE CARLISLE MERCURY
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Jack McNeely
PUBLISHER

Ron Middleton, STAFF WRITER | Denver Brown, SPORTS EDITOR

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ON THE RECORD

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January 14.

Taquette Marie Crouch, pretrial conference, show cause order February 4.

Jeremy P. Day, pretrial conference, careless driving, failure wear seatbelt, operating vehicle under influence alcohol/drugs, possession of marijuana, use/possession drug paraphernalia, agreed order.

Jeff Farrow, show cause hearing, contempt hearing January 14.

Steven R. Fryman, pretrial conference, operating vehicle under influence alcohol/drugs, no operators license, pretrial conference January 14.

George Edward Gaffin III, pretrial conference, speeding, possession open alcohol beverage container in vehicle, operating vehicle under influence of alcohol/drugs, contempt hearing January 14.

Walter M. Gaskey, pretrial conference, operating vehicle under influence alcohol/drugs, speeding, pretrial conference February 27.

Christopher L. Gray, pretrial conference, fleeing/evading police, operating motor vehicle BAC, possession of marijuana, use/possession drug paraphernalia, pretrial conference February 27.

Kevin Wilson Hughes, pretrial conference, operating vehicle under influence alcohol/drugs, pretrial conference February 27.

Bryan Chris Hurst, pretrial conference, operating vehicle under influence alcohol/drugs, pretrial conference February 27.

Larry L. Joseph, show cause hearing, to be paid in full today.

Larry L. Joseph, pretrial conference, reckless driving, no operators license, operating vehicle under influence alcohol/drugs, agreed order.

Dwayne I. Martin, pretrial conference, illegal molest/pursue/turkey deer, possession of marijuana, failure to wear seatbelt, operating on suspended license, pretrial conference February 4.

Timothy H. McDaniel, pretrial conference, improper equipment, operating vehicle under influence alcohol/drugs, agreed order.

William M. McFarland IV, pretrial conference, careless driving, operating vehicle under influence alcohol/drugs, agreed order.

Julie Minton, review, report filled showing anger management completion.

Julie R. Minton, pretrial conference, assault, dismissed.

Steven Collins Minton, pretrial conference, speeding, operating vehicle under influence alcohol/drugs, minor possession alcohol, agreed order.

George Mitchell, show cause hearing, theft by deception, dismissed.

Ricky Ray Peters Jr., other hearing, continued to January 7.

Ricky Ray Peters Jr., other hearing, operating vehicle under influence alcohol/drugs, no tail lamps, no insurance, no KY registration plates, pretrial conference continued January 7.

Michael A. Puckett, pretrial conference, wanton endangerment, falsely reporting an incident, pretrial conference continued January 14.

David Salazar, pretrial conference, operating vehicle under influence alcohol/drugs, agreed order.

Tom T. Shrout, show cause hearing, paid in full, counseling and GED reports filed, show cause order March 4.

Jonathan A. Tapp, pretrial conference, reckless driving, operating vehicle under influence alcohol/drugs, possession of marijuana, possession open alcohol beverage container in vehicle, pretrial conference February 27.

Damon W. Taylor, show cause hearing, assault, cultivating of marijuana, possession legend drug, prescription in improper container, bench trial January 14.

Jeremy Adam Terrell, pretrial conference, fail to illuminate headlamps, operating vehicle under influence alcohol/drugs, possession of marijuana, pretrial conference January 7.

Randolph Q. Todd, pretrial conference, operating vehicle under influence alcohol/drugs, failure to wear seatbelt, agreed order.

Saul Vasquez, pretrial conference, failure to wear seatbelt, operating vehicle under influence alcohol/drugs, agreed order.

George Watkins Jr., pretrial conference, reckless driving, operating on suspended license, operating vehicle under influence alcohol/drugs, agreed order.

Victor W. Watkins, pretrial conference, alcohol intoxication, disorderly conduct, assault, by agreement, jury trial previously scheduled for December 20 is cancelled, pretrial conference January 9.

Kevin Trent Wells, show cause hearing, paid in full.

Kevin Trent Wells, show cause hearing, to pay $67 today, show cause order February 4.

Allie Carl Sexton Jr., pretrial conference January 14.

Estate of: Forrest Morris, probate hearing, will admitted to probate, order entered.

Jason D. Angel, other hearing, fines and cost to be paid in full out of bond, balance to be refunded.

Jason D. Angel, other hearing, fines and cost to be paid in full out of bond, balance to be refunded

Tamara M. Carey, court trial, operating vehicle under influence alcohol/drugs, possession controlled substance, drugs not in proper container, agreed order.

Woodrow Carpenter Jr., preliminary hearing, operating vehicle under influence alcohol/drugs, theft by unlawful taking, operating on suspended license, preliminary hearing and pretrial conference January 7.

Rickey G. Ecklar, other hearing, public intoxication, probation consideration set January 7.

Chad W. Evans, preliminary hearing, assault, review February 4.

David Farrow, other hearing, admits contempt, 30 days in jail, probated on compete community service by January 14.

David Farrow, contempt hearing, admits contempt, 30 days in jail concurrent with above by January 14.

David Farrow, other hearing, contempt hearing January 14.

Perry Feeback, preliminary hearing, fleeing/evading police, violation EPO, assault, dismissed.

Kendall Fryman, other hearing, admits contempt, 30 days in jail, probated 2 years on condition fines and cost paid in full by show cause order dates, show cause order June 17.

Kendall L. Fryman, other hearing, admits contempt, 30 days in jail, probated 2 years on condition fines and cost paid in full by show cause order dates, show cause order June 17.

Kendall Lee Fryman, other hearing, admits contempt, 30 days in jail, probated 2 years on conditioh fines and cost paid in full by show cause order/dates, show cause order June 17.

Terry Lee Fryman, other hearing, probation violation, hearing continued by agreement to February 27.

Darrin George, court trial, assault, disorderly conduct, pretrial conference January 14.

Darrin George, pretrial conference, alcohol intoxication, possession of marijuana, pretrial conference January 14.

Larry Mattox, court trial, driving under influence on suspended license, amended, pretrial conference January 14.

Rondall B. McClean,

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Ghost from 4

the existence of Santa because our home lacked the one entry point that was Santa's *modus operandi* - a chimney.

Mom always told me that he came in through the keyhole, and that satisfied me *- for a while.*

As I got older, the amount of gifts I received diminished until all I was getting was an envelope containing a Christmas card and money.

I was perfectly happy with just that at the time.

After all, how else was I going to satisfy my Christmas toy addiction?

And even though I had the means to buy toys at Christmas (or just after Christmas), I found myself buying more... ugh... *useful* gifts for myself like clothes, and, oh, making sure my car insurance was up-to-date.

So, as Scrooge did in 'A Christmas Carol,' I have learned the error of my ways.

So Santa if you're reading this (I checked and your subscription is still active), I still don't have a chimney, but I'll still leave some milk and cookies out for you Monday night if you want to visit an old kid.

Oh, and if you have some extra toys, I'll be happy to take those off your hands too, or an XBOX and some games, or a Nintendo Game Cube...

That's just my opinion.

Actual user opinion may vary.

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