

## On the lighter side

by Stephani Veff  
Opinion/Copy Editor



## Domestic issues

by Tammy Swartzendruber  
Columnist

### Halloween: it's not so bad

Well, Halloween is here again with all its ghosts and goblins, pumpkins and candy. In my opinion this has got to be the most stupid holiday of the year. As a full time student and mother it's hard to justify the time involved in taking my daughter trick-or-treating. But I think we as parents need to enter into the spirit of the season regardless of how time consuming or senseless it all seems.

Several days ago my daughter asked me if she was going to be able to go trick-or-treating this year. I told her that if it was okay with her cousins she could go

with them. Her big blue eyes filled with tears. "What's the matter," I asked. "Don't you want to go with your cousins?" She laid her head on my lap and wouldn't answer. Sensing that there was more to this than I thought, I laid my books aside and took her on my lap. "Shelly," I said, "Tell Mommy what's the matter."

The tears were running down her cheeks as she sobbed, "Mommy, I just want to keep company with you." I felt awful. Her real question was not whether she'd be able to go trick-or-treating, but rather, if Mommy was going to take out time for her that night. Needless to say, I assured her that Mommy would spend that evening with her.

Since then I have actually gotten excited about this Halloween. Our windows are now dotted with shapeless characters my daughter calls "ghosties." The garbage holds the remains of a pumpkin that met it's fate in the hands of my daughter. A toothless jack-o-lantern now peers out into the night from his vantage point on our window sill. Pumpkin shaped sugar cookies await their day in the dark recesses of the freezer. Halloween isn't so bad after all. Parents, let's make sure we "keep company" with our kids, especially as we approach these busy holidays. We have all our lives to go to school but only a few years to be with our children.

### Get back to basics this holiday season

The holiday season has arrived! Can you believe there are only 57 more shopping days left until Christmas? Already shopping centers and stores are getting decked out in their holiday garb. Some of these shops, like Hallmark card stores, have had their Christmas decorations up for weeks.

I look forward to the holiday season each year, but I've begun to notice that the holidays have become so commercialized that everywhere you turn there's something else to remind you to get "ready" for the season.

Some holidays have begun to lose their prestige (so to speak) because they don't have as much "sell appeal" as Christmas. Thanksgiving is all but lost in the rush to get prepared for what is supposed to be a celebration of Christ's birth. No one cares to give thanks any more, Thanksgiving, to many, just means a day off from work or school. There is much to be said for Thanksgiving, though, as it gives families a chance to gather together and count their blessings.

Personally, I look forward to Thanksgiving. For my family, it is sort of a "dry run" for Christmas, only without the gift-giving that sometimes gets in the way of the real reason for

the holidays. Thanksgiving (because it does not involve gift-giving) is less commercialized and therefore has remained much more traditional.

Christmas, too, can regain some of its "lost traditions" if only it is looked at for what it is meant to be. Christmas, while not only a religious holiday, is also a traditional holiday.

In my opinion, Christmas is best when it's celebrated in an old-fashioned way. What I mean by old-fashioned is gathering the family together to celebrate just being together. I like to get together with my mom and my sisters and bake cookies while listening to Christmas carols more than I like opening gifts on Christmas morning.

Christmas is only one day out of the year, yet many people spend months preparing for it. Sometimes they spend so much time and energy preparing, that when the day finally comes they are too exhausted to enjoy it before they begin cleaning up after the celebration.

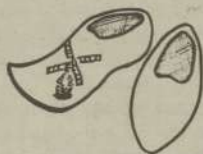
This year why not lie back and get back to basics - spending quality creative time with your family and friends as the holidays near. Whether you spend the time baking cookies, singing carols, or just sitting by

the fire reliving past holidays, all that really matters is spending time with the people you really care about all year long, not just on Christmas day.



## Wooden shoe like to know?

by Heleen Veenstra  
Editor



### Stereotyping becomes unacceptable

Intolerance, narrow-mindedness, prejudice, injustice, discrimination. These are not very fun words, nor a fun topic to write about. But due to some things I have seen around me the last couple of weeks I want to write about it to, hopefully, get some points across.

I don't want to talk about racial discrimination this time. Simply because that is a whole new subject and not very much related to what I want to say. I would like to talk about those people who are being stereotyped and made fun off basically because of the way they look, dress, behave, or talk.

First of all I would like to talk about being stereotyped. Is every California blond dumb? Is every athlete a jock? Is every

Sports Writer like Slap Maxwell? Does every black engage in criminal activities? Does every Dutch person wear wooden shoes? Can you judge somebody on the way they look?

The answer is NO! You can't and shouldn't. Being stereotyped is really unfair, because in most cases it isn't even true. These persons actually are being judged on...nothing.

Then something else: is there any reason to make fun of somebody just because they are a little different than you are? I don't think so! Everybody has their own way of dressing, behaving or talking. It's kind of stupid that they are always the ones being made fun off. I mean, these persons have feelings too, so why should they be hurt. Kind of ridiculous if you

ask me. Also, making jokes about these people shows bad taste. That person who does that probably doesn't have a good sense of humor and doesn't know any better jokes. That is about the only excuse I can think of to justify this person's behavior.

I think all this shows a good dose of narrow-mindedness. If that person would have had the chance to really communicate with this group I'm talking about, that person would realize that they can be fun, without being made fun off. Do you understand what I mean?

So from now on don't be prejudice, narrow-minded, or even worse, intolerant of these people because it is really unfair and should be unacceptable.

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