

EDITORIALS

'A Visit from St. Nicholas'

(Also known as, "Twas the Night Before Christmas")

By Clement Clarke Moore

"Twas the night before Christmas,
when all through the house

Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;
The children were nestled all snug in their beds;
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads;
And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap,
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter.

Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.
The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow,
Gave a lustre of midday to objects below,
When what to my wondering eyes did appear,
But a miniature sleigh and eight tiny reindeer,
With a little old driver so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment he must be St. Nick.
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name:
"Now, Dasher! Now, Dancer! Now, Prancer and Vixen!
On, Comet! On, Cupid! On, Donner and Blitzen!
To the top of the porch! To the top of the wall!
Now dash away! Dash away! Dash away all!"

As leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky;
So up to the housetop the coursers they flew
With a sleigh full of toys, and St. Nicholas too —
And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.
He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;

A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a peddler just opening his pack.
His eyes — how they twinkled! His dimples, how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard on his chin was as white as the snow;
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke, it encircled his head like a wreath;
He had a broad face and a little round belly
That shook when he laughed like a bowl full of jelly.
He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself;
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread;

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And he filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose;
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight —
"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good night!"

Source: *The Random House Book of Poetry for Children, 1983*



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Mail not delivered due to lights?

In the Christmas spirit (as we have the last two years), we decorated our house and yard with lights. We cautiously kept the walkway and porch clear both for the mailman and also for the children and parents who come to my home (I run a day care). The first week was fine the second week we stopped receiving mail and were concerned that it was being stolen. Since I do run a day care I watched as the mailman did not even approach our home. Confused, I looked up tracking numbers to see my packages had been marked as delivered. I called the post office. After two phone calls and two days later, our mailman's supervisor came out and said our lights placed in the yard are a tripping hazard. I asked why he didn't use the sidewalk (the professional thing to do). She said he didn't have to and needed to save time. I was told she would call Monday after she could speak to the union representative (to protect the mailman's rights). She has not called, so I now go to you, the public. Am I the only one not receiving mail? Do I have no rights to have Christmas lights?

Jessica Sheldon
Dallas

Editor's note: Sheldon's mail now is being delivered again.

YMCA auction huge success

It's no secret that in recent years, the Y has had its struggles. My job over the past year and a half has been to repair our reputation, reinvigorate our programming, and once again become an organization the community can trust and rely on to provide quality, values based, programming for children, adults, and families.

On Dec. 11, the community came together and demonstrated their belief in the Y. Our 16th Annual YMCA Christmas Party and Auction was a massive success. For the first time our event sold out — 193 people packed the historic Green Villa Barn. We had two local bands, a delicious dinner (organized, cooked, and served by volunteers), a performance by the Y's Inspira-

tion Dance Company, over 170 silent auction items, a video highlighting Y participants, and a very lively oral auction. In the past, if we reached a net of \$9,000, we considered the evening a success. This year, because of the generosity and hard work of all those involved, we raised over \$20,000! All the money raised stays in our community to allow those in need to attend our programs.

Thank you to our corporate sponsor, Pacific Power, whose sponsorship allows us to cover most of our operational costs for the event. Thank you to Green Villa for such a beautiful space and thank you to all the volunteers, especially the Silber-nagel's, for your time, talent, and effort. We received food donations from Ovenbird Bakery, the Grove Coffee House, Roth's, Sysco, and the Bermudez Family Farm — all of which helped us to retain more of the money raised. There are so many more people to thank; everyone's help is greatly appreciated and truly benefits many in our community.

Thank you to those who helped and to those that attended our event — see you next year!

Natascha Cronin
Monmouth-Independence Family YMCA
Branch Director

Choose love over differences

The main virtue of Christianity is love, but love hasn't been relevant enough lately. I've been a supporter of the people who have been targeted within Dallas because of who they are (specifically, Muslim and transgender communities). To say the least, people who have been targeted do not feel safe or welcomed because words of hate inspire actions of hate. This is not a matter of political correctness, this is a matter of human beings under persecution. I was part of an effort to put forth a welcoming community initiative to help make everyone in Dallas feel safe and welcomed, but our effort was swept under the rug. Because of that, nothing has been done to protect those citizens, except the reminder of Title IX within the high school. Even if you don't agree with how the people targeted live their lives, please help them

feel welcomed and loved. If you're able to set aside your differences and pursue love: thank you. This is usually the happiest time of each year, so let's make that happen. Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays.

Justen Noll
Dallas

Talk provided needed education

St. Thomas Episcopal Church of Dallas provided a much-needed service to our community last Sunday by presenting a most enjoyable and educational talk by Dr. Allen Fromherz, "The Religions of Abraham." Based on his extensive research and study of the Middle East and Muslim culture, Dr. Fromherz clarified the facts about much of the misinformation which currently circulates as knowledge of Islam. The standing-room-only crowd provided a dose of support to my belief that Dallas is not the bigoted and xenophobic community which one might think from recent local events.

Thank you to the congregation of St. Thomas and the ad hoc task force for human rights in Polk County, for sponsoring this event. I hope it is only the beginning of a much deeper conversation on the issues which seem to divide us.

Dale Derouin
Dallas

Sixth extinction of life is inevitable

During the last 500 million years, Earth has had five major extinctions and is now advanced far into the sixth and worst and possibly final extinction of all life on Earth, including ISIS and the U.S. Barack is moving to the right. Global warming is the greatest threat to life on Earth. President Barack Obama is right ISIS is the second greatest threat to life on Earth. Obama is right weapons of mass destruction and all guns are the third greatest threat to life on Earth.

Albert Einstein once said that there are only two things that might be infinite: the universe and human stupidity. And, he confessed he wasn't sure about the universe. I have spent over 80 years considering these issues and sincerely hope that I am wrong.

Walden Joura
Dallas

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PUBLIC AGENDA

Public Agenda is a listing of upcoming meetings for governmental and nongovernmental agencies in Polk County. To submit a meeting, send it at least two weeks before the actual meeting date to the *Itemizer-Observer* via fax (503-623-2395) or email (ionews@polkio.com).

MONDAY, DEC. 28

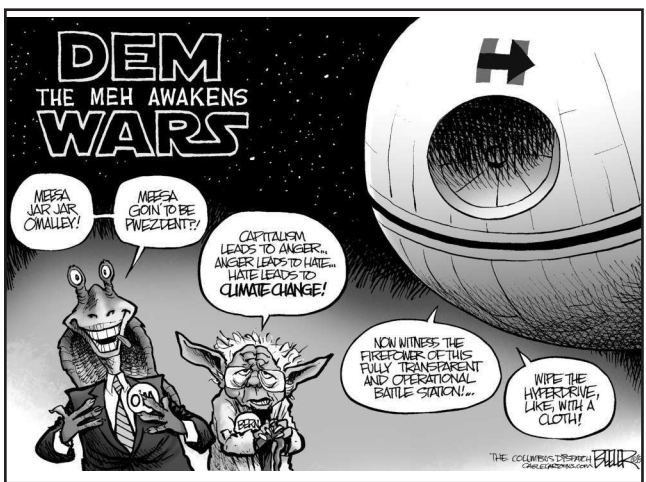
• **Independence Library Board** — 4 p.m., Independence Public Library, 175 Monmouth St., Independence. 503-838-1811.

TUESDAY, DEC. 29

• **Polk County Board of Commissioners** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 30

• **Polk County Board of Commissioners** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.



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