

More Time To Play Christmas Music Would Please Song Writers, Publishers

New York (U.P.)—Ask a songwriter what he'd like Santa Claus to bring him for Christmas and the answer might be: "Five or six weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas."

This calendar-stretching would come to him because of an unwritten disc jockey law which says, in effect, "No Christmas music until after Thanksgiving." And in many cases, the rule is even stricter: "No musical Yuletide spirit until Dec. 1."

It wasn't always like that for our songwriters, publishing firms, record companies and recording artists.

In 1949, for example, "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" poked his ruby schnoz into our lives in the middle of September. The deejays played it all through October, November and December—plenty of time for it to sink in and register as a fantastic hit. Two years needed.

In recalling those weeks, composer Johnny Marks said: "We knew we had a solid hit by the end of September."

It can't happen that way anymore. For one thing, the new Christmas songs don't get played until the last week in November, at the earliest. By the time

Christmas arrives, the song just would be getting off the ground. The record company might release the disk the following year, provided the first exposure showed promise.

"The effect of the time limit is that it now takes at least two years to discover whether a new Christmas song will be a popular success," said Marks. "But most of the new songs are dropped after the first go-round."

Marks said radio and television stations imposed the ban because too many Christmas novelties were coming out. And each song meant a small army of song-pluggers were at work looking for action.

Good and Bad
The situation got pretty bad, and finally the station managers and sponsors decided it was silly to give the public ditties about Santa when Halloween was still waiting in the wings.

"The ban," said Marks, "puts big television shows at a disadvantage, since they plan their Christmas shows well in advance. Nowadays, they can't tell what new Christmas song will be the most popular, so they concentrate on the tried-and-true ones."

Marks, whose publishing firm

China Expected To Release Prisoners

Washington (U.P.)—American diplomats are on the alert for possible release soon of the last 10 Americans imprisoned in Red China.

They think the Peiping government may be planning such a move on the eve of Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's visit to Washington next week.

The release would be aimed at backing up Nehru's expected plea to President Eisenhower that the United States soften its present attitude toward Red China.

Diplomats emphasize that Red China has not given any solid hint that release of the Ameri-

cans is forthcoming. They simply think that such a step would be a smart move for the Peiping government to make now as they are therefore preparing for the possibility.

Nehru will arrive Sunday for four days of talks with Mr. Eisenhower on world problems. He has just completed a round of talks with Red Chinese boss Chou En-lai.

HEADS CHAMBER

Pendleton (U.P.)—Ford Robertson, a 42-year-old tire dealer, yesterday was elected as president of the Pendleton chamber of commerce. He succeeds Dr. John Murphy in the post.

Wednesday, December 12, 1956

MEDFORD (OREGON) MAIL TRIBUNE—NINE

Night Fire Damages Portland Buildings

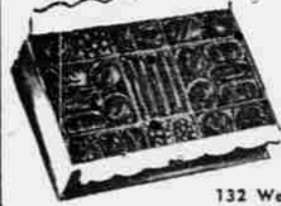
Portland (U.P.)—A two-alarm fire in the downtown section of Portland last night damaged a toy shop, a jewelry store, a super-market and an unused luncheonette. Damage was estimated as high as \$39,000.

Damaged by the blaze were the Columbia market, Peterson's Jewelry Store, Cook's Toy Store and Roy's Lunch, a closed cafeteria. The businesses were all located near the corner of SW 5th ave. and Yamhill st.

About three million persons in the U.S. change their homes every year, and the trend is believed increasing.

Oregon originated state gasoline tax in 1919, but within about 10 years all the states had similar tax laws.

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Gentle Treatment For Christmas Trees Promotes Longer Life

Ann Arbor, Mich. (U.P.)—The best way to keep your Christmas tree sprightly is to treat it as gently as you would a baby.

"It takes 15 to 20 years to grow the average Christmas tree, but it takes no time at all to dry one out if it's mistreated," warned Prof. Stephen H. Spurr, University of Michigan forestry expert.

He noted that the state's \$5,000,000 Christmas tree industry began moving trees to market with Christmas 32 tree-drying days away.

"It makes little difference if you buy a tree now or wait till a day or two before Christmas," Spurr pointed out. "Most trees have already been cut anyway."

Buyers should buy wisely first and then "baby" a tree along, said Spurr who spent the World War II years testing trees for the Army to determine which varieties last longest and make the best camouflage. Scotch pine, spruce and Norway spruce are the most popular yule trees in Michigan, he noted.

"We found they have about the same life expectancy after they're in the house—a week to 10 days," he said. "But you can double their life span by keeping them moist."

"Christmas trees may be twice as old as the kids unwrapping presents beneath them," Spurr explained, "but it's wise to treat them as gently as you would a baby."

Shake Tree
Spurr said there's no trick to recognizing a good tree.

"Just shake it," he advised. "If a shower of needles falls to the ground, the tree has begun to dry out. The less needles that fall, the better the tree. Color is another indication. Look for a rich shade of dark green."

"It's best to wait till tree-trimming time before bringing the tree indoors. Keep it outside in the shade, standing in water or snow until needed."

Indoors, where heat threatens the tree's life, moisture is doubly important. Water is needed to keep the tree fresh and to cut down the fire hazards.

Cut Trunk at Angle
Spurr suggested sawing off the bottom of the trunk or cutting it at an angle with a very sharp knife to keep the trunk greater absorbency.

Other tips:
The water should be kept level at all times by refilling daily. The tree should be placed away from furnace registers, radiators and fireplaces.
Never use candles.
Make sure the wiring on tree lights is in good condition.
If needles start to turn brown near a socket, move the tree light.

Never leave children alone in a house with a lighted tree. Don't overload circuits.

Hope Grows Slim For 62 on Plane

Vancouver, B. C. (U.P.)—Weather stalled Air Force searchers today and hope grew slim that any of 62 persons aboard a Trans-Canada plane missing in the mountains of British Columbia could be alive.

As the sun rose on the third day of the search for the airliner that vanished Sunday night in a snowstorm, the mountains about 100 miles east of here remained wreathed in clouds, as they had been almost since the hunt began.

Nothing more was known of the plane's fate than when the search began. But the searchmaster, Squadron Leader George Sheehan, was confident that some sign of the airliner could be found if the weather cleared.

"Given one hour of unlimited visibility, we would be almost certain to find some trace of the plane," he said.

More than 50 planes were on call. But all the would-be rescuers could do was wait.

Navy Missile Escapes Electronic Controls

Edwards Air Force Base, Calif. (U.P.)—A Navy Regulus guided missile slipped free of its electronic controls Tuesday and out-raced a pursuing jet plane before crashing on the eastern edge of Death Valley.

Navy officials said the 33-foot craft's guiding mechanism failed shortly after it was launched on a routine test flight. The jet plane was sent to bring the missile back under electronic control.

Officials said the missile out-distanced the jet and crashed in an unpopulated region near Furnace Creek about 120 miles from here.

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