

It's time for a seasonal, if rueful, laugh

At this time of year, it seems appropriate to enjoy a good laugh. This piece, entitled Letter to a Well Known Insurance Company, will provide that laugh. Our thanks to Vernonia City Administrator Mike McAlvage for passing on this gem from the League of Oregon Cities Newsletter. Ed.

Sirs:

I am writing to answer your request for additional information about my recent accident. In block number 3 of the accident report form, I put "trying to do the job alone" as the cause of the accident. You said in your letter that I should explain more fully; so I trust that the following will suffice.

I am a municipal employee by trade. On the day of the accident, I was working alone hanging Christmas decorations from the City water tower. At the end of the day I found that one of the Santa Claus decorations for the tower would not be able to be used on the tower as anticipated. Instead of trying to carry it down the 130 ft. ladder by hand, I decided to lower him on a rope attached to a pulley which, fortunately, was attached to the catwalk of the water tower.

Securing the rope at the ground level, I ascended the 130 ft. ladder to the tower catwalk, swung the Santa Claus figure out and then descended back to the ground. At ground level I untied the rope, holding it tightly to ensure a slow descent of the welded steel 12 ft. X 20 ft. Santa Claus figure that weighs about 250 pounds. You will note in block number 11 that I weigh only 165 pounds.

Due to my extreme surprise at being pulled from the ground so suddenly, I lost my presence of mind and forgot to let go of the rope. Needless to say, I proceeded up the side of the tower at a rapid rate. At about 65 ft. above ground level I met Santa Claus on his way down. This explains the fractured skull and collar bone.

Slowed only slightly, I continued my rapid ascent, not stopping until the fingers of my

right hand were two knuckles deep into the pulley. Fortunately, by this time I had regained my presence of mind and was able to hold tight to the rope in spite of my pain.

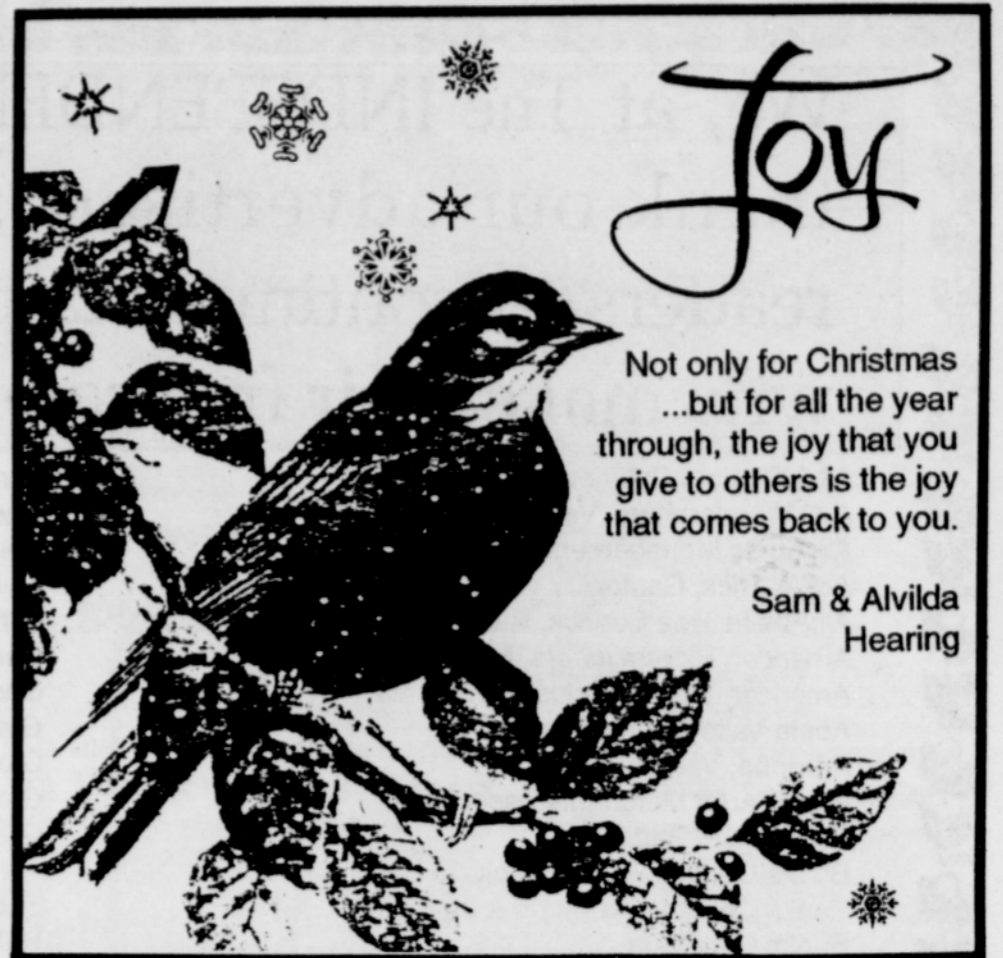
At approximately the same time, however, the Santa Claus figure hit the ground, with the welded steel 12 ft. X 20 ft. Santa Claus figure breaking apart and, upon breaking apart, Santa weighed only about 50 pounds. I refer again to my weight in block 11. As you might imagine, I began a rapid descent down the side of the water tower.

At about 65 ft. above the ground, I met a much smaller Santa on his way up. This accounts for the fractured ankles and the lacerations of my legs and lower body. The encounter with the smaller Santa slowed me enough to reduce the level of injury when I fell into the pile of twisted steel that was all part of the original larger-than-life sized Santa and, fortunately, only three vertebrae were cracked. I am sorry to report, however, that as I lay there in the twisted steel, in pain, unable to stand, and watching the smaller Santa swing at 130 ft. above me, I again lost mental control and released the rope. The smaller Santa, weighing more than the rope, descended quickly and broke both of my legs.

The questions about the continuing psychiatric therapy that I am receiving as a result of this injury stem from the nightmares that I have endured since my accident. These nightmares about Santa Claus, as an attempted murderer, have forever changed my belief in Santa. My therapist has mentioned that there may be some hope for recovery; however, now at Christmas time when I hear "Here Comes Santa Claus" it usually ends in a police call and a visit to our local mental health facility for doses of tranquilizers.

Sincerely,

Source Unknown



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